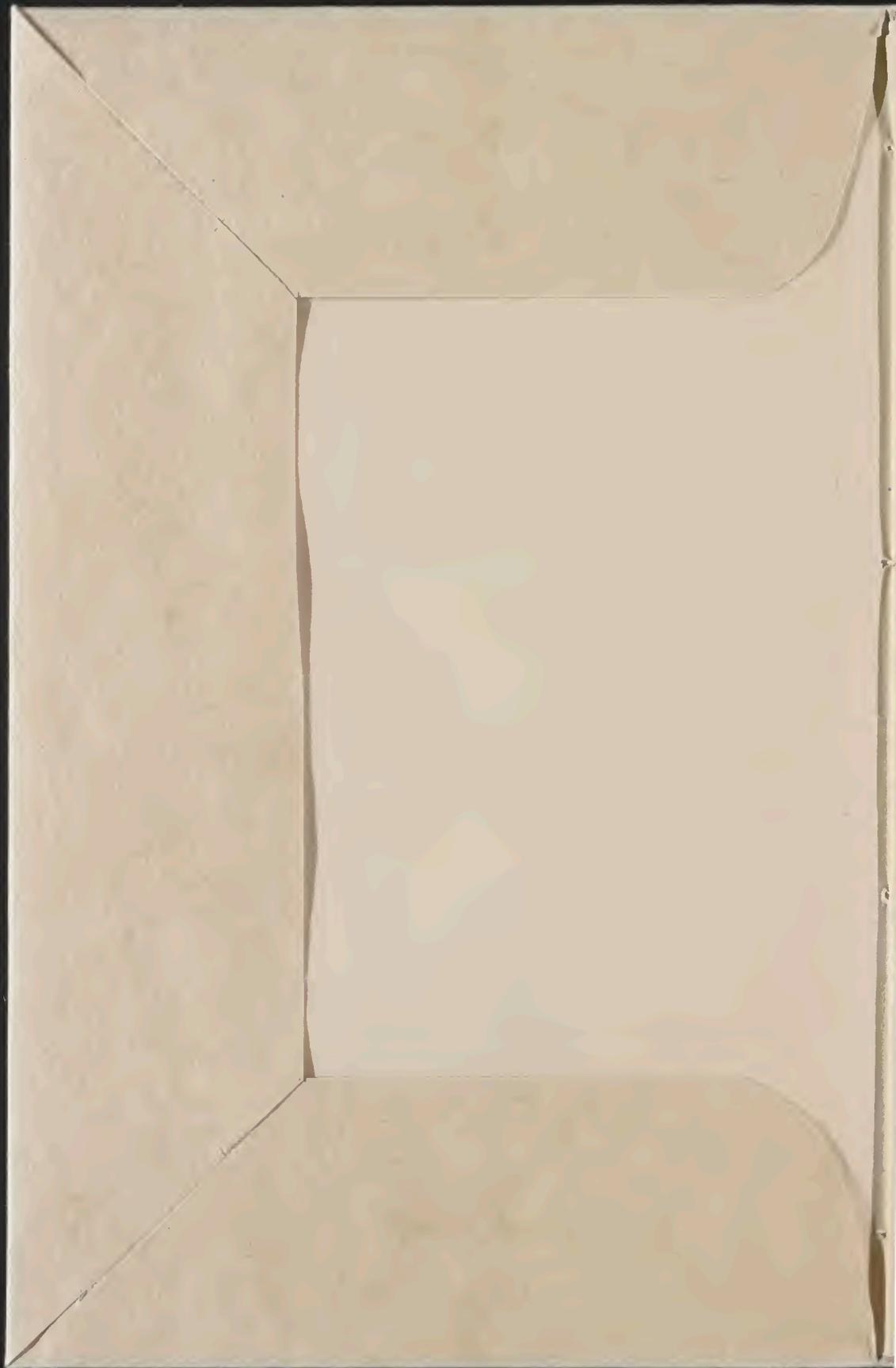


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Trials, A&E

Confession of Chas. Gibbs
Executed for Piracy & Murder
Aboard the Brig Vineyard
Boston, 1831







THE

CONFESSION OF

CHAS. GIBBS *alias* JAMES JEFFREYS.

WHO HAS BEEN SENTENCED TO BE EXECUTED AT N. YORK,
ON THE 22^D APRIL, 1831, FOR PIRACY AND MURDER,
ON BOARD THE BRIG WINEYARD.



BOSTON:

1831.

CONFESSION OF

CHAS. GIBBS *alias* JAMES JEFFREYS.

THE criminal who stands convicted of the murder of William Roberts, mate of the brig Vineyard, on the high seas, on the 23d of November last, and who is to be executed on the 22d inst. is a native of the State of Rhode Island. As the name by which he is known to the community is Charles Gibbs, we shall accordingly designate him by that name, in the history of his bloody atrocities which is here subjoined.

Soon after his arrest, and before his trial, she expressed a desire to Henry W. Merritt, one of the Police Marshals, to make some communications to a magistrate respecting his career and crimes. The officer made known his wish to James Hopson, Esq one of the Police Magistrates of this city, and that gentleman, presuming that a developement of the circumstances attending his piracies would be highly important and valuable to the mercantile community, proceeded to the prison at Bellevue, to receive his confession. The disclosures made to that gentleman will be found in the sequel. The other details presented in the following narrative, were communicated to Mr. Merritt, Police Officer, the deputy keeper of Bridewell, and another person, at different times

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and were committed to paper by them on the spot, very nearly in his own language. That they are all true we do not undertake to affirm; but that they are in the main, founded in truth, we do most sincerely believe. Some of them are so strongly corroborated by circumstances, as to leave hardly a doubt on the minds of the most sceptical.

The first account which he gives of himself is, that his father obtained a situation for him in the United States sloop of war *Hornet*, Capt. Lawrence, during the last war with England, in which vessel he made two cruises; in the last of which she captured and sunk the enemy's sloop of war *Peacock* off the coast of Pernambuco, after an engagement of 20 minutes. On the arrival of the *Hornet* in the U. S., Captain Lawrence was assigned by the government to the command of the frigate *Chesapeake*, then lying in Boston harbor, and Gibbs accompanied him to that ill-fated vessel in the month of April, 1813. "Early in the month of May," says he, "we received a challenge from Capt. Broke, of the frigate *Shannon*, and we instantly made preparations to go to sea, and risk a battle. We stood down the harbor about 11 o'clock, and commenced the action about 3, P. M. off Cape Ann. It lasted about 30 minutes, with great slaughter, especially on board the *Chesapeake*. I escaped miraculously, with only a sabre wound upon my nose, the only wound I ever received in my life. The loss of the *Chesapeake* was 65 killed dead, and 100 wounded—one half mortally. We were taken into Halifax, where I remained about four months."

After his exchange, he abandoned all idea of following the sea for a subsistence, went home to Rhode Island, and remained there a few months, but being unable to conquer his propensity to lead

a roving life, he entered on board a ship bound to New Orleans and thence to Stockholm. On the homeward passage they were compelled to put into Bristol, England, in distress, where the ship was condemned and he proceeded to Liverpool, and returned to the United States in the ship Amity, Captain Maxwell. Shortly after his return home, the death of an uncle put him in possession of about two thousand dollars, with which he established himself in the grocery business in Boston. This undertaking was far from being profitable, and he was often under the necessity of applying to his father for assistance, which was always afforded, accompanied with good advice and his blessing. The stock was finally sold at auction, for about 900 dollars, which he soon squandered in ale-houses and among profligates. His father hearing of his dissipation, wrote affectionately and earnestly to him to come home, but he stubbornly refused, and went to sea again, in the ship John, Captain Brown, bound for the Island of Margareta.

After their arrival, he left the ship, and entered on board the Colombian privateer Maria, Capt. Bell. They cruised for about two months in the Bay of Mexico, around Cuba, but the crew becoming dissatisfied in consequence of the non-payment of their prize money, a mutiny arose, the crew took possession of the schooner, and landed the officers near Pensacola. A number of days elapsed before it was finally decided by them what course to pursue. Some advised that they should cruise as before, under the Colombian commission; others proposed to hoist the Black Flag.— They cruised for a short time without success, and it was then *unanimously determined to hoist the black flag, and declare war against all nations.*

Their bloody purpose was not carried however into immediate execution. They boarded a number of vessels, and allowed them to pass unmolested, there being no specie on board, and their cargoes not being convertible into any thing valuable to themselves. At last one of the crew named Antonio, suggested that an arrangement could be made with a man in Havana, that would be mutually beneficial; that he would receive all their goods, sell them, and divide the proceeds. This suggestion being favourably received, they ran up within two miles of the Moro Castle, and sent Antonio on shore to see the merchant and make a contract with him. Previous to this, Gibbs was chosen to navigate the vessel. Antonio succeeded in arranging every thing according to their wishes, and Cape Antonio was appointed as the place of rendezvous. The merchant was to furnish drogers to transport the goods to Havana, which was done by him for more than three years.

The Maria now put to sea, with a crew of about 50 men, principally Spaniards and Americans, with every hope of infamous success. The first vessel she fell in with was the Indispensable, an English ship, bound to Havana, which was taken and carried to Cape Antonio. *The crew were immediately destroyed*: those who resisted were hewn to pieces: those who offered no resistance, were reserved to be shot and thrown overboard. Such was the manner in which they proceeded in all their subsequent captures. The unhappy being that cried for mercy in the hope that something like humanity was to be found in the breasts even of the worst of men, shared the same fate with him who resolved to sell his life at the highest price. A French brig, with a valuable cargo of wine and silk, was taken shortly after: the vessel was burnt and *the crew murdered*.

The sanguinary scenes through which Gibbs had passed now effectually brought up his desperation to the highest pitch, and being as remarkable for his coolness and in reply as he was for his skill in navigation, he was unanimously chosen to be their leader in all their future enterprises. To reap a golden harvest without the hazard of encountering living witnesses of their crimes, it was unanimously resolved to *spare no lives* and to *burn and plunder without mercy*. They knew that the principle inculcated by the old maxim, that "dead men tell no tales," was the safe one for them, and they scrupulously followed it.—Gibbs states that he never had occasion to give orders to begin the work of death. The Spaniards were eager to accomplish that object without delay, and generally every unhappy victim disappeared in a very few minutes after they had gained the deck of a vessel.

He now directed his course towards the Bahama Banks, where they captured a brig, believed to be the *William*, from New York from some port in Mexico, with a cargo of furniture; *destroyed the crew*, took her to Cape Antonio, and sent the furniture and other articles to their friend at Havana. Sometime during this cruise, the pirate was chased for nearly a whole day by a U. S. ship, supposed to be the *John Adams*; they hoisted Patriot colors, and finally escaped. In the early part of the summer of 1817, they took the *Earl of Moira*, an English ship from London, with a cargo of dry goods. *The crew were destroyed*, the vessel burnt, and the goods carried to the Cape. There they had a settlement with their Havana friend, and the proceeds were divided according to agreement.

Gibbs then prepared to Havana, introduced him-

self to the merchant, and made further arrangements for the successful prosecution of his piracies. While there, he became acquainted with many of the English and American naval officers, inquired respecting the success of their various expeditions for the suppression of piracy, and all their intended movements.

On his arrival at Cape Antonio, he found that his comrades were in a state of complete mutiny and rebellion, and that several of them had been killed. His energy checked the disturbance, and all agreed to submit to his orders, and put any one to death who should dare to disobey them.

During the cruise which was made in the latter part of 1817 and the beginning of 1818, a Dutch ship from Curacoa was captured, with a cargo of West India goods, and a quantity of silver plate. The passengers and crew, to the number of 30, *were all destroyed*, with the exception of a young female about 17, who fell upon her knees and implored Gibbs to save her life. The appeal was successful, and he promised to save her, though he knew it would lead to dangerous consequences among his crew. She was carried to Cape Antonio, and kept there about two months; but the dissatisfaction increased until it broke out at last into open mutiny, and one of the pirates was shot by Gibbs for daring to lay hold of her with a view of beating out her brains. Gibbs was compelled at the end to submit her fate to a council of war, at which it was decided that the preservation of their own lives made her sacrifice indispensable. He therefore acquiesced in the decision, and gave orders to have her destroyed by poison, which was immediately done.

The piratical schooner was shortly afterwards driven ashore near the Cape, and so much damag-

ed that it was found necessary to destroy her. — A new sharp built schooner was in consequence provided by their faithful friend in Havana, called the *Picciana*, and despatched to their rendezvous. In this vessel they cruised successfully for more than four years. Among the vessels taken and *destroyed, with their crews*, were the *Belvidere*, *Dido*, a Dutch brig, the British barque *Larch*, the other vessels enumerated in the list furnished to Justice Hopson, and many others whose names are not recollected. They had a very narrow escape at one time, from the English man-of-war brig *Coronation*. In the early part of October, 1821, they captured the ship *Lucius* of Charleston, took her to Cape Antonio, and were busily engaged in landing her cargo, when the U. S. brig *Enterprise*, Capt. Kearney, hove in sight, and discovering their vessels at anchor, sent in her barges to attack them. A serious engagement followed; they defended themselves for some time behind a 4 gun battery, but in the end, were defeated with considerable loss, and compelled to abandon their vessels and booty, and fly to the mountains for safety. In the list of vessels destroyed as stated in the confession to Justice Hopson, Gibbs speaks of this ship as the *Caroline* of Charleston. But he afterwards recollected that it was the *Lucius*, and proceeded to state a variety of circumstances, which prove beyond a question the correctness of his recollections. By a recurrence to newspaper files, we find that such a ship was captured by the pirates off Cape Antonio in Oct. 1821, and was shortly after retaken by the U. S. brig *Enterprise*, Capt. Kearney, while the pirates were landing her cargo. Gibbs states that according to the best of his belief only one of the crew had been killed at the time they were

forced to abandon the ship. The same account says that the British brig Larch of St. Andrews, from Kingston for Havana, was taken by the pirates, and recaptured at the same time by the Enterprise. This is doubtless the Larkin spoken of by Gibbs in the confession made to Justice Hopson, which we here subjoin :

City Prison and Bridewell, March 6, 1831.

Question. Charles Gibbs,—my name is Mr. Hopson. I understand from Mr. Merritt you wished to see me. He told me some ten or twelve days since, and the weather being so cold, I have put off coming until now. He informed me you wished to make some communications which you would not make to any other person.

Ans. I have.

Ques. Gibbs, are you going to tell me the truth, or is it to amuse me, and make me write a long story that will not amount to any thing.

Ans. I shall tell nothing, but the truth; and it is only on condition that you will swear not to divulge any thing I may say, when I am on my trial, and at no time after, if I should get clear.

My reply was, (says Mr. Hopson,) that I should not take my oath, but I would give him my word that it should be kept a secret according to his request.

Under this promise he stated as follows:—that he had commenced piracy in the year 1816, in the schooner Sans Sousee, belonging to the Island of Margarettia, and that since that time, has been in several other vessels engaged in the same business. That many of his comrades are now living in the United States, but whose names he never would mention. That they had taken from many vessels large sums of money, and various articles of merchandise. He had no doubt he had been con-

cerned in robbing forty different vessels; and on reflection, could mention many of the names. He then gave me the names of the following vessels; Brig Jane, of Liverpool; cargo dry goods.— Crew destroyed, vessel burnt. Brig (name forgotten,) of New York, from the Spanish Maine; took money from her. Crew destroyed, vessel burnt. Brig Belvidere, of Boston, taken in the Gulf; crew and vessel destroyed. Two French brigs, in the Gulf Mexico; money taken—crews and vessels destroyed. Ship Providence, of Providence; took from her \$10,000, she was suffered to pass, as Examinant could not consent to destroy his own townsmen. Ship William, of Salem; took from her dry goods and money; crew and vessel destroyed. Bark Dido, of Bremen; took from her dry goods. Vessel and crew destroyed. Bark Larkin, of London; took from her a large quantity of dry goods. Vessel and crew destroyed. Genoese brig, name unknown; took from her a large quantity of plate, some gilt edge paper, and from twenty to thirty piano fortes. A French ship, cargo wine; vessel and crew destroyed. The William Dawson, of New York; boarded her and let her pass. Ship Earl of Morria, of London; took from her dry goods and money. Vessel and crew destroyed. Ship Indispensable, of London; took from her dry goods and money. Vessel and crew destroyed.

A Dutch ship from Curacoa, bound to Holland. There were thirty passengers in her; some of them were females. Took a large quantity of plate, destroyed the vessel, and all on board except a young girl, the daughter of one of the families. Took her to the West end of Cuba, Cape Antonio, where we had a rendezvous, and where we had a small fort that mounted four guns. We kept her about two months, and she was then killed; and this circumstance hurt his feelings more than any act of his life; and which is the only act he can say he was sorry for. [Afterwards told me that she was

poisoned.] The girl was about 17 or 18 years of age; her father, mother, and all her relations were on board the vessel.

There was many other vessels taken and destroyed, and among them Americans. Every thing valuable was taken from them, and vessels and crews destroyed. The goods were sent to a Spanish House in the Havana, who sold them. We had a contract with the House, received half the proceeds.

While I was in the schooner *Margaretta*, we took the American ship *Caroline*, and ran her on shore at Cape Antonio, (Cuba.) The United States armed vessel, the *Enterprise*, came along shortly after, and before we had a chance of taking any thing out of her the crew or some of the crew of the *Enterprise* landed; we had a fight with them, some of our men were killed, and I believed some of theirs. We were beaten and driven to the mountains, where we remained some days. We then separated; some got to Trinidad, south side Cuba; others got to the Havana. The crew of the *Enterprise* destroyed our fort, took the goods from the *Caroline* and our two vessels, the *Margaretta* and *Picciana*, which were principally dry goods. The cargo of the *Caroline* was dry goods principally, as appeared from the bills of lading.

[Here is a long statement given of the monies taken, and where secreted.]

Ques.—Gibbs; why were you so cruel as to kill so many persons, when you had got all their money, which was all you wanted?

Ans.—The laws are the cause of so many murders.

Ques.—How can that be? what do you mean?

Ans.—Because a man has to suffer death for piracy; and the punishment for murder is no more. Then you know, all witnesses are out of the way, and I am sure if the punishment was different, there would not be so many murders.

Ques.—Have you any objections to tell me the names of any persons who have been concerned in piracy, or who received the gains of pirates?

Ans.—There are many now in the U. States, but I will not mention their names. I know that when I was cruising, the Governor of the Isle of Pines was concerned with pirates, and I wont mention any others.

Here we separated (says Justice Hopson) and he wished me to call again, which I promise.

I visited him again on the 19th March. At that visit, nothing but conversation took place. I asked him many questions; he conversed with great freedom: repeated to me the vessels he first informed me had been robbed and destroyed. At this visit I questioned him about the following vessels, at the

request of Mr. Butler, who handed me a list of them, viz:—Mary Augusta from Antwerp to Mobile? said he had no recollection of her.

Dutch vessels from Europe for Curacoa? To this question he said that in the year 1822, a Dutch ship and a bark were taken off the Bahama Bank; and two days after they (the pirates;) run in under the Moro Castle. Their vessel was a privateer schooner, with a *Big Gun* amidships, which they had under cover. After they had been in port two days, two boats' crews came in and said their vessels had been taken off the Bahama Bank.

Providence, of Providence? Two times: once from Liverpool to New-York, and once from Mobile to N. York; stopped her once, as will be seen by his first account.

Br. brig Lacoover, two years ago from Jamaica to St. Johns? Knew nothing of her.

Brig Transit, Ellet, from Trinidad to N. York, two years ago? Knows nothing of her. Candace, from Porto to Sumatra, in 1824, robbed of \$19,000. Knows nothing of her.—Topaz, in 1823, from Calcutta, crew murdered? Knows nothing of her.

I then left him, under the promise that I would come and see him again. He set the following Wednesday week.

I again visited him on Wednesday morning, 23d March, and then told him I expected all he had told me could not be true; and as I had a list of the various vessels he said had been plundered, and the crews murdered, I wished him to go on and repeat them again, and such others as he could recollect. Here follows the account given this day:

Brig William, of N. York, vessel and crew destroyed.

Brig Larkin, of London, do. Brig Belvidere, of Boston, do. Ship Indispensable, of London do. Ship Earl of Moira, of London do. Two French brigs, on Bahama Banks do. A Geroese brig, from Straits do. A N. York brig name forgotten do.—A French ship from Europe do. Dutch ship, on South Cuba, cargo dry goods, do. Dutch ship Dido, do. Dutch brig from Europe, do. Providence, of Providence, took out \$10,000, and let her pass because the crew were his townsmen. Bark Transit, in the year 1824 or 25, cargo molasses, vessel and cargo destroyed. Dutch ship from Curacoa, in 1819, vessel and cargo destroyed.

Commenced in the year 1816, in the privateer Maria, Capt. Bell, of the port of Margaretta, in the Island of Santa Martha. Capt. Bell was from somewhere up North River, at or near Hudson. Took the vessel from the officers, and set them on shore at Pensacola. The Picciana was sent to Cape Antonio for them, from the Havana; wout tell by whom.

The ship he mentioned as having been run on shore at Cape Antonio, was the *Caroline* of Charleston, from Liverpool— [Gibbs afterwards recollected that this ship was the *Lucius*.]

I then withdrew from the prison, and left Merritt with him.

When I saw Merritt afterwards, he informed me that Gibbs had given him an account of himself up to the time he commenced piracy.

Delivered to Mr. Merritt, March 31st, 1831, at the request of Gibbs.

On one occasion Gibbs states that he cruised for more than three weeks off the Capes of the Delaware, in the hope of falling in with the *Rebecca Sims*, a Philadelphia ship, bound for Canton. They knew that she would have a large quantity of specie on board, but they were disappointed in their booty. The ship passed them in the night.

Sometime in the course of the year 1819; he states that he left Havana and came to the United States, bringing with him about \$30,000. He passed several weeks in this city, and then went to Boston, whence he took passage for Liverpool in the ship *Emerald*. Before he sailed, however, he had squandered a large part of his money by dissipation and gambling. He remained in Liverpool a few months, and then returned to Boston in the ship *Topaz*, Captain Lewis. His residence in Liverpool at that time is satisfactorily ascertained from another source besides his own confession. A female now in this city was well acquainted with him there, where she says, he lived like a gentleman, with apparently abundant means of support. In speaking of his acquaintance with this female, he says, "I fell in with a woman, who I thought was all virtue, but she deceived me, and I am sorry to say that a heart that never felt abashed at scenes of carnage and blood, was made a child of for a time by her, and I gave way to dissipation to drown the torment. How often when the fumes of liquor have subsided, have I thought of my good and affectionate parents, and of their Godlike advice! But when the little monitor began to move within me, I immediately seized the cup to hide myself from myself, and drank until the sense of intoxication was renewed. My friends advised me to behave myself like a man, and promised me their assistance, but the demon still haunted me, and I spurned their advice."

He subsequently returned to Boston, sailed for Havana, and again commenced his piratical career. In 1826, he revisited the United States, and hearing of the war between Brazil and the Republic of Buenos Ayres, sailed from Boston in the brig *Hitty* of Portsmouth, with a determination, as he states, of trying his fortune in defence of a republican government. Upon his arrival, he made himself known to Admiral Brown, and communicated his desire to join their Navy. The Admiral accompanied him to the Governor, and a Lieutenant's commission being given him, he joined a ship of 24 guns, called the *Twenty Fifth* of May.

"Here," says Gibbs, "I found Lieutenant Dodge, an old acquaintance and a number of other persons with whom I had sailed. When the Governor gave me the commission, he told me they wanted no cowards in their Navy, to which I replied that I thought he would have no apprehension of my cowardice or skill when he became acquainted with me. He thanked me, and said he hoped he should not be deceived; upon which we drank to his health and to the success of the Republic. He then presented me with a sword, and told me to wear that as my companion through the doubtful struggle in which the Republic was engaged. I told him I never would disgrace it, so long as I had a nerve in my arm. I remained on board the ship in the capacity of 5th Lieutenant for about four months, during which time we had a number of skirmishes with the enemy. Having succeeded in gaining the confidence of Admiral Brown, he put me in command of a privateer schooner, mounting 2 long 24 pounders and 46 men. I sailed from Buenos Ayres, made two good cruises, and returned safely to port. I then bought one half of a new Baltimore schooner, and sailed again, but was captured seven days out, and carried into R'o Janeiro, where the Brazilians paid me my change. I remained there until peace took place, then returned to Buenos Ayres, and thence to New York.

After the lapse of about a year, which he passed in travelling from place to place, Gibbs states that the war between France and Algiers attracted his attention. Knowing that the French commerce presented a fine opportunity for plunder, he determined to embark for Algiers and offer his services to the Dey. He accordingly took passage from this port in the Sally Ann, belonging to Bath, landed at Barcelona, crossed to Port Mahon, and endeavored to make his way to Algiers. The vigilance of the French fleet prevented the accomplishment of his purpose, and he proceeded to Tunis. There finding it unsafe to attempt a journey to Algiers across the desert, he amused himself with contemplating the ruins of Carthage, and reviving his recollections of her war with the Romans. He afterwards took passage to Marseilles, and thence to Boston. From Boston he sailed to New-Orleans, and there entered as one of the crew of the brig Vineyard. To a question why he who had been accustomed to command, should enter as a common sailor on board the Vineyard, he answered that he sought employment to assuage the horrors of reflection.

He solemnly declares that he had no agency in the murder of the mate, for which he was tried and convicted, and is unable to understand how he could be found guilty, when he stood by and looked passively on the scene of destruction. He readily admits, however, his participation in the mutiny, revolt and robbery, and in the murder of Capt. Thornby. He often asks if he should not be murdered in the streets, if he had his liberty, and was recognized, and frequently exclaims, "Oh, if I had got into Algiers, I never should have been in this prison to be hung for murder."

Though he gives no evidence of a "contrite heart" for the horrible crimes of which he confesses himself guilty, yet he evidently dwells upon their recollection with great unwillingness. If a question was asked him, "how were the crews generally destroyed?" he answers quickly and briefly, and instantly changes the topic either to the circumstances that attended his trial, or to his exploits in Buenos Ayres. Since his trial, his frame is somewhat enfeebled, his face paler, and his eyes more sunken; but the air of his bold, enterprising and desperate mind still remains. In his narrow cell he seems more like an object of pity than vengeance; is affable and communicative, and when he smiles, exhibits so mild and

gentle a countenance, that no one would take him to be a villian. His conversation is concise and pertinent, and his style of illustration quite original.

To correct the impression which some of our public prints have thrown out that Gibbs, like other criminals, is disposed to magnify and exaggerate his crimes, it may be well to state that a few days since a chart of the West Indies (Jocelyn's) was handed him, containing the names of about 90 vessels which were boarded and plundered by pirates from 1817 to 1825, with a request that he would mark those of whose robbery he had any recollection. The chart was returned with but one mark, and that upon the ship *Lucius*, of Charlotson. When questioned afterwards in regard to that vessel, he gave such an account of her, and of her subsequent re-capture by the enterprise, as left no doubt respecting the truth of his statement. Had he been desirous of increasing the black catalogue, here was so fine an opportunity, that he would undoubtedly have availed himself of it. He has repeatedly stated that he was concerned in the robbery of more than *forty vessels*, and in the destruction of more than *twenty with their entire crews*. Many of those destroyed had passengers on board, which makes it probable that he has been an agent in the murder of nearly **FOUR HUNDRED HUMAN BEINGS!**

Gibbs was married in Buenos Ayres, where he now has a child living. His wife is dead. By a singular concurrence of circumstances, the woman with whom he became acquainted in Liverpool, and who is said at that time to have borne a decent character, is now lodged in the same prison with himself. He has written her two letters since his confinement, both of which are before us. They indicate a good deal of native talent, but very little education. The spelling is bad, and no regard is paid to punctuation, capitals, &c. One of these letters we subjoin, to gratify the perhaps innocent curiosity which is naturally felt to know the peculiarities of a man's mind and feelings under such circumstances, and *not* for the purpose of intimating a belief that he is truly penitent. The reader will be surprised at the apparent readiness with which he make quotations from Scripture,

Bellevue Prison, March 20, 1831.

It is with regret that I take my pen in hand to address you with these few lines, under the great embarrassment of my feelings, placed within those gloomy walls, my body bound with chains, and under the awful sentence of death. It is enough to throw the strongest mind into gloomy prospects, but I find that Jesus Christ is sufficient to give consolation to the most despairing soul. For he saith that he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. But it is impossible to describe unto you the emotions of my feelings. My breast is like the tempestuous ocean, raging in its own shame, harrowing up the bottom of my own soul. But I look forward to that serene calm when I shall sleep with kings and counsellors of the earth. Where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the vice of the oppressor. And I trust that there my breast will not be ruffled by the storm of sin, for the thing which I greatly feared has come upon me. I was not in safety, neither had I rest; yet trouble came. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to him good. When I saw you in Liverpool, and a peaceful calm wafted across both our breasts, and justice no claim upon us, little did I think to meet you in the gloomy walls of a strong Prison, and the arm of justice stretched out with the sword of the law, awaiting the appointed period to execute the dreadful sentence. I have

had a fair prospect in the world, at last it budded, and brought forth the gallows. I am shortly to mount that scaffold, and to bid adieu to this world, and all that was ever dear to my breast. But I trust when my body is mounted on the gallows high, the heavens above will smile and pity me. I hope that you will reflect on your past, and to fly to that Jesus who stands with open arms to receive you. Your character is lost it is true. When the wicked turneth from the wickedness that they have committed, they shall save their soul alive. Let us imagine for a moment that we see the souls standing before the awful tribunal, and we hear its dreadful sentence, depart ye cursed into everlasting fire. Imagine you hear the awful lamentations of a soul in hell. It would be enough to melt your heart, if it was as hard as adamant. You would fall upon your knees and plead for God's mercy, as a famished person would for food, or as a dying criminal would for a pardon. We soon, very soon, must go the way whence we shall ne'er return. Our names will be struck off the records of the living, and enrolled in the vast catalogue of the dead. But may it ne'er be numbered with the damned. I hope it will please God to set you at your liberty, and that you may see the sins and follies of your life past. I shall now close my letter with a few words which I hope you will receive as from a dying man: and I hope that every important truth of this letter may sink deep in your heart, and be a lesson to you through life.

Rising griefs distress my soul,
 And tears on tears successive roll,
 For many an evil voice is near,
 To chide my woes and mock my fear;
 And silent memory weeps alone,
 O'er hours of peace and gladness flown,
 I still remain your sincere friend.

CHARLES GIBBS.

11/14/46
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 LL RBR

10 MARCH 1846





