

A RHODE ISLAND SLAVER

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TRADE BOOK OF  
THE SLOOP ADVENTURE

1773-1774



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## TRADE BOOK OF THE SLOOP ADVENTURE

1773-1774

FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT IN THE LIBRARY OF  
GEORGE L. SHEPLEY, WITH NOTES AND INTRO-  
DUCTION BY PROF. VERNER W. CRANE  
OF BROWN UNIVERSITY.

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## .. Preface ..

THE document which is here printed from the original in the library of Col. Geo. L. Shepley is a unique memorial of the African slave trade as it was conducted from New England in the later eighteenth century. Some few letters and other papers of merchants and captains engaged in that trade have been published.<sup>1</sup> But so far as the editor is aware no such intimate record of the actual day-to-day conduct of the barter in rum and negroes upon the Guinea coast as this item from the Champlin has yet seen light.

The Trade Book for the owners of the sloop *Adventure* is an account book kept by the master, Robert Champlin. In it he recorded purchases and expenditures made upon account of his brothers Christopher and George Champlin, merchants of Newport. The first entry is dated Sierra Leone, December 28, 1773; the last, St. Eustatius, July 7 of the following year. Fortunately other papers have been preserved relating to this voyage, including the invoice, the portage bill, the bills for outfits and cargo, and ledger accounts of the whole preliminary expense of the venture.<sup>2</sup> Exact records of the returns on the slave cargo and on the probable cargo of molasses from the West Indies to Newport are lacking; but by other means the approximate profits can be determined. It is possible, then, to set forth with substantial completeness this typical episode in "the systematic plunder of a continent."

In the African slave trade each of the maritime peoples of the Atlantic trading area had at some time participated. The "castles" which the Portuguese had planted in the fifteenth century along the great curving sweep of the West African coast had, by the eighteenth century, mostly fallen into Dutch and English hands. English merchants of Bristol and Liverpool were in the middle-century the greatest shippers of blacks from Africa to the plantation colonies. But New England merchants, notably the Newporters, were vigorous competitors, whose trade with Guinea was a lucrative branch of their widespread commerce. The British found in Africa one outlet for their manufactures of cloth and hardware, which they transported in vessels of a hundred to two hundred tons burden; while the New Englanders sought a market there for a part of their production of rum, which they carried in smaller vessels, schooners and sloops of fifty or sixty tons. Selling

their slaves in the West Indies they secured the bills of exchange which they required—lacking any exports that were wanted in England—to redress the unfavorable balance of their trade with the mother country. These African-West Indian ventures were the most famous of the "triangular voyages" upon which rested the commercial prosperity of New England. In the seventeenth century the monopoly of trade in West Africa had been enjoyed by European chartered companies which established forts under several flags in Gambia, Senegal, and at intervals of a few miles along the populous Gold and Slave Coasts. The last of the English companies, the Royal African Company, had been dissolved in 1751 after unsuccessful competition with independent traders, English and colonial. The forts were still maintained, however, as trading posts. From the factors of the "castles" at Cape Coast, Anamaboe, and the rest, and from Dutch Elmina, the slavers of Newport in the later eighteenth century secured many of their negroes; but at times they found profit in buying directly from the native chieftains of the coastal region, who brought down the coffles of slaves from the vast interior.

This trade, so repugnant to the sentiments of a later generation, roused only occasional opposition in America until the Revolution released powerful forces of humanitarian reform. Then the commerce to Africa was relegated to a baser sort of traders; but in colonial Newport it had engaged some part of the energies of the most respectable and wealthy merchants—Wilkinsons, Ayraults, Hazards, Wantons, Champlins. The voyage of the *Adventure* in 1773-1774 was the third in a series of four such voyages in a vessel which the Champlins had previously employed in direct trade to the West Indies and in the huckstering traffic with the southern continental colonies.

Christopher Champlin, senior partner in the enterprise, was a Newport shopkeeper and importer who had risked his own capital, since 1756, in a variety of maritime ventures: in privateering and illicit trade with the French West Indies during the Seven Years' War, in intercolonial commerce, and in the grain trade with Europe. By such means he had sought, in many markets, specie and bills of exchange with which twice a year to restock his shelves with the latest merchandise from London.

<sup>1</sup>See especially *Commerce of Rhode Island, 1726-1800*, Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, LXIX-LXX, and *American Historical Record*, I, 311-319, 338-345. Journals of two Dutch slavers, in 1659 and 1663, were printed in *New York Colonial Tracts*, III. U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (1918), has an excellent chapter on the maritime slave trade with many references.

<sup>2</sup>The Waste Book is in the Newport Historical Society; the other papers make part of Col. Shepley's collection.



The Champlins were of planter origin, and Christopher inherited one of the great Narragansett estates. But like other agrarian families in the amphibious colony of Rhode Island the Champlins produced merchants and seamen as well as squires. An uncle, Oliver Champlin, had been a master of West Indian trading vessels. George Champlin, junior partner in the *Adventure*, was graduated from the quarter-deck to the counting-house. Robert Champlin was given his first command in 1773, but he had previously shipped as a sailor to the West Indies, and had learned the African trade as mate in two Guinea voyages. At his death in 1787 he was still a captain in the African trade.

To fit out even a small sloop for an African voyage consumed three or four months, and required the services of several score of tradesmen, carpenters, joiners, painters, caulkers, sailmakers and riggers—the folk who, with the sailors, made up the populace of the northern sea-port towns, ruled socially and commercially by the wealthier merchant ship-owners. Among a mass of itemized bills for the outfitting of the *Adventure*, which was in progress from early July, 1773, until she was cleared October 25, were bills for a pair of swivel guns and 100 grape shot; for a variety of "double warded secret padlocks", "12 pr. Hand Cufs & Shackeles"; for a 21 foot boat; for 26 gallons of vinegar to cleanse the cramped slave-quarters between decks; for a medicine chest well-stocked with Peruvian bark; and for the usual provisions—pork, beef, sugar, molasses, wine, beans, tobacco, butter, bread, flour and the like. Rum of Newport manufacture made up the bulk of her cargo; it was furnished by the partners at 46s (Rhode Island currency) a gallon: 9885 gallons by Christopher Champlin for his 11/16ths share of the enterprise, the remainder of the invoice of 14495 gallons by George Champlin. The invoice entire, including cargo and stores, amounted to £37628 15s 9d (old tenor Rhode Island currency): a sum twice or thrice the average invoice in the Champlins' trade with the southern continental colonies, or in their direct trade with the West Indies. For an African voyage, too, a larger crew was required. The *Adventure* shipped ten men, besides the master, including two mates, a cooper, a cook, a boy, and five sailors. On a voyage in the same vessel to the Windward Islands in 1769 one mate, four seamen and a boy had been sufficient. For insurance on his share of the vessel and her cargo, Christopher Champlin paid his London correspondents a premium and commission of £78 15s 6d sterling, at the rate of 7 guineas per hundred pounds. The low rate in 1772, Hayley and Hopkins explained to another Newport merchant, was due to "the great success which the African Vessels have had".<sup>1</sup>

The instructions for the guidance of Robert Champlin in his first command have not been found, but instructions issued by the owners of the sloop in 1772 and in 1774 and 1775 exist.<sup>2</sup> Capt. Tuell in 1772 had been ordered to trade if possible at the "castles" instead of with the natives: "to lay a long time on

the Coast to piddle with the blacks must be against the voyage." On that voyage Tuell found that the tribes had gone to war and that no black trade was running; but he was able nevertheless to buy slaves cheaply at the stations—for 140 and 160 gallons. In the light of this experience it is probable that the owners in 1773 instructed Robert Champlin to deal with the European traders. But the new master was unlucky, and the prices which he paid were extraordinarily high. For women they averaged 190 gallons; for men over 220 gallons. In the next year, therefore, he was advised if the price exceeded 140 and 160 gallons to "endeavour to make what Trade you can with the blacks for a month or five Weeks, until you find what price the Castles will finally lower their slaves to."

Detailed instructions were also furnished a master to guide him in seeking the best West Indian market. These had frequently to be altered as news of current sales was secured; supplementary instructions were then sent by West Indian vessels to the slaver's first port of call at Barbadoes or Grenada. In 1775 five sets of orders were despatched to Robert Champlin in the West Indies. Ordinarily in the Champlin voyages a market was first sought in the Windward Islands; then at St. Christopher's; but if prices there were low, and encouraging reports were received from Jamaica, the voyage might be continued to Kingston.

The passage from Newport to Sierra Leone was made by the *Adventure* in about five weeks. On the Windward Coast rice was purchased for the further voyage, but no blacks; the negroes of that region were accounted poorer slaves than the negroes of the Gold Coast and Whydah, though superior to those from the Bight of Guinea, which the *Adventure* did not visit. The trade throughout was barter, but prices were set down in the Trade Book in the local money of account. Slaves were the chief purchase, though a little pepper and some palm oil were obtained, and enough gold-dust to pay a part of the master's wages. Rum was, of course, the principal medium of payment. The account of the rum expended should be compared with the amount which appears in the invoice before cited. The excess of rum sold over that laden—a matter of about 500 gallons—is evidence that Robert Champlin followed the notorious practice (sometimes explicitly prescribed in the owner's instructions) of watering his rum.

After four months' cruising and trading between Sierra Leone and Whydah—of which the Trade Book furnishes, in its brief entries, a sufficiently vivid account—and when the subsequent Middle Passage of seven weeks from Anamaboe to Grenada had been accomplished, another stage in the enterprise was begun: the marketing of the slave cargo. At this point the reader who is curious to discover the profits of the voyage will require further data. He will find aid in a paper drafted in 1752, the sub-

<sup>1</sup> *Commerce of Rhode Island*, I. 492.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.* 399 for the 1772 instructions. Those for the voyage of 1774-1775 are in the Manuscript Letter Book in the Newport Historical Society.



stance of which was printed in Phillips, *American Negro Slavery*, pp. 38-39, entitled "An estimate of a voyage from Rhode Island to the Coast of Guinea and from thence to Jamaica and so back to Rhode Island for a sloop of 60 tons." He will need also certain facts, gleaned from the Champlin Waste Book in the Newport Historical Society, which appear below.

It was customary to charge against the voyage the whole outfit and one-third of the original cost of the vessel. Including wages advanced and clearance fees, the *Adventure's* outfit was £4716l 11s 11d old tenor; while the hull, rigging, sails, boats, etc. of the sloop "as she came from the sea" were valued by her owners at £9000. The wages due on her return to Newport in July, 1774, were £1642 2s. Other charges were insurance and commissions. The customary "Coast commission" to the master was "4 in 104" on the gross sales of the cargo; while the factors' commissions in the West Indies ranged from 2 1/2 to 5% on all sales and purchases. Apparently the sixty-two slaves enumerated in the Trade Book were all bought on owners' account, and no deduction need be made from the sale of the fifty-eight survivors for the "privileges" usually accorded masters and mates of transporting slaves on their private

account. In 1774 slaves sold in Grenada at £35 to £39 sterling, and in the previous year some cargoes in Jamaica had averaged considerably more. Probably £37 sterling is not too high an estimate of the average upon this small cargo. It was usual for the master to invest about one-third of the net proceeds in molasses, which the *Adventure* probably took on at St. Eustatius. The rest of the returns were taken in bills of exchange upon London. In the Champlin Waste Book under July 25, 1774—on which day the *Newport Mercury* recorded the return of the "sloop *Adventure*, Robert Champlin [from] Africa & St. Eustatia"—there appears a charge against the account of Hayley and Hopkins of London for nine sets of bills, amounting in sum to £1451 3s 10d sterling.

When the ratio of 36 to 1 between Rhode Island currency and sterling is used, the gross returns from the venture (excluding the uncertain proceeds of a return West Indian cargo) will be found to approximate £77250 old tenor, and the expenses £62750. A profit of £400 sterling, or about 23%, if not spectacular in a highly speculative trade, was at least respectable. In spite of the excessive price of slaves at Anamaboe and Cape Coast Castle, it appears that the *Adventure* had "made a voyage."

*Brown University*

VERNER W. CRANE

NOTE—The manuscript is reproduced without alteration, except that where the pagination of the original cannot be followed exactly, the heading "Rum Brought Over" is omitted. The appearance of "Rum Brought Down" indicates in each instance the foot of a page in the manuscript. The Trade Book measures 6 1/4 inches by 12 inches, is bound in rough paper, and contains 28 pages, of which pages 1, 20-21 (just preceding the West Indies entries), and 28 were left blank.



**Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.**

	bars <sup>1</sup>	S	d
<i>Sirelone</i> <sup>2</sup> December 28, 1773			
To Kings toms Costom <sup>3</sup>	15	00	
To 100 gall of Rice	12		
	<hr/>		27 00 00
29 To 3 Tun of Rice	270	00	00
To 1 Cag of Tallow	2	00	00
To 1 Hat	2	00	
	<hr/>		274 00 00
<i>the Dutch mines</i> <sup>4</sup> Janaory the 30, 1774			
	oz	ack	T <sup>5</sup>
To 1 woman Slave No 1	9	00	00
To 6 oz 6 ackeys of gold	6	6	
To Connoa hire	1		
To Rum Expended	6		
	<hr/>		15 13
<i>Cape Cost</i> <sup>6</sup> 31			
To Coneoa Hire	1		
To 2 oz of gold	2	00	
To large fish	1		
To 4 fouls	2	00	
	<hr/>		2 4 00
<i>annamoboe</i> <sup>7</sup> Feby the 3			
To 200 billets of wood	4		
To 700 Billets of wood	14		
	<hr/>		1 2 00
4 To 1 Woman Slave N 2	9	6	
To 4 Emty Cask	12		
To Rum Expended	6	00	
	<hr/>		10 8 00

**Contra - - - - - Cr.**

	Bars	s	d
<i>Sirelone</i> December 28, 1773			
By 15 gall of Rum	15	15	
By 12 gall Do	12	12	
	<hr/>		27 00 00
29 By 360 gall of Rum	360	270	
By 2 gall Do	2	2	
By 2 gall Do	2	2	
	<hr/>		274 00 00
<i>Dutch mine, June 30, 1774</i>			
	oz	ack	T
By 1 Tun of Rice		9	00
By 250 gall of Rum	250	6	6
By 1 gall Do	1	1	
By 6 gall Do	6	6	
	<hr/>		15 13 00
<i>cape Cost Jen 21</i>			
By 1 gall of Rum	1	00	1
By 80 gall Do	80	2	00
By 1 gall Do	1	1	
By 2 gall Do	2	2	
	<hr/>		2 4 00
<i>Annamboe Feb: 3</i>			
By 4 gall of Rum	4	4	
By 14 gall of Rum	14	14	
	<hr/>		1 2 00
4 By 140 gall of Rum & 10 ackeys of gold	140	9	6
By 12 gall of Rum	12	12	
By 6 gall Do	6	6	
	<hr/>		10 8

1 On the Windward Coast a bar of iron of about forty pounds in weight was the unit of value. Francis Moore, *Travels in Africa* (1738), p. 45.

2 Sierra Leone.

3 Bryan Edwards, *History of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (1793), II. 53: "In some parts of the coast there is a duty paid on each ship, to the king or chief man of the country; which is called his customs. In other parts this is not exacted; but it is only in such places as have but little trade."

4 Elmina, most ancient of the Gold Coast stations. In 1482 the Portuguese built the fort of San Jarge D'Elmina. In 1637 the Dutch secured possession by conquest, and in the eighteenth century this was the principal Dutch post.

5 On the Gold Coast values were measured in ounces of gold and in fractions of an ounce called "ackeys" and "tacoets". The former was one sixteenth of an ounce (the equivalent of an "angel");

the latter a variable measure, but here used as one-eighth of an ackey. A Dutch factor wrote: "We use here another kind of weights, which are a sort of beans, the least of which are red, spotted with black, and are called Dambas; twenty-four of them amounting to an angel, and each of them reckoned two stiver weights; the white beans, with black spots, or those entirely black, are heavier, and accounted four stiver weights; these they usually call Tacoets; but there are some which weigh half or a whole gilder; but these are not esteemed certain weights, but used at pleasure, and often become instruments of fraud". William Bosman, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea* (1705), reprinted in Pinkerton, *Voyages and Travels* (1814), XVI. 374.

6 Cape Coast Castle. English fort about seven miles east of Elmina.

7 Anamaboe, an English fort ten miles east of the principal station at Cape Coast.



*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*winebe*<sup>8</sup> 5 Day  
 To 6 Emty Hohh 9  
 To 3 Emty Hohh 6  
 To Caring the mate of 1  
 1 00 00

*Quittrau*<sup>9</sup> 7  
 To 720 gall of Corn 4 8  
 To 4 Hogs 8  
 To 4 Douzen fous 4  
 5 4 00

*whydah*<sup>10</sup> Feb 17  
 To a Canoa for Caring me ashore 1 00  
 To Rum Expended 2  
 to 1 Bag of limes 4  
 3 4

21 To 2 Santagoes Cloaths<sup>11</sup> 11  
 To 2 trips of water 2  
 00 13 00

*Quittrau* 26  
 To 480 gall of Corn 2 00 00  
 To 6 Small Pigs 8  
 To 3 goats 4  
 To 1 Douzen of fous 1  
 To 6 Small shots 4  
 3 1 00

*Winnebe march the 10*  
 To 1 Man Slave No 3 12 8  
 To 4 Emty Hoghh 8  
 To Carring the mate of 1  
 13 1

*annamboe* 17  
 To 2 women Slaves No 4 & 5 25 00  
 25

*Cape Cost* 21  
 To 7 Emty Hoghh 14  
 To wom slave No 6 4 6 00  
 5 4

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

*winebe the 5*  
 By 9 gall of Rum 9 9  
 By 6 gall Do 6 6  
 By 1 gall Do 1 1  
 1 00  
 Rum 924 gall

*Quittra 7*  
 By 72 gall of Rum 72 4 8  
 By 8 gall Do 8 8  
 By 4 gall Do 4 4  
 5 4 00

*whydah the 17*  
 By 1 gall of Rum 1 1  
 By 2 gall Do 2 2  
 By 1/2 gall Do 1/2 4  
 3 4

21 By 11 gall of Rum 11 11  
 By 2 gall Do 2 2  
 00 13 00

*Quittrau 26 Feb*  
 By 32 gall of Rum 32 2  
 By 8 gall Do 8 8  
 By 4 gall Do 4 4  
 By 1 gall Do 1 1  
 By 4 gall Do 4 4  
 3 1 00

*Winnebe march the 10*  
 By 200 gall of Rum 200 12 8  
 By 8 gall Do 8 8  
 By 1 gall Do 1 1  
 13 1 00

*annamboe*  
 By 400 gall of Rum 400 25 00  
 25 00 00

*Cape Cost 21*  
 By 14 gall of Rum 14 14  
 By 4 oz 6 ackeys of gold 4 6  
 5 4

Rum Brot Down 1696

<sup>8</sup> Winnebah (Simpa), on the Gold Coast, about fifty miles east of Cape Coast Castle.

<sup>9</sup> Quitta (Keta), on a sandy isthmus just east of the mouth of the Volta River, which divides the Gold Coast from the Slave Coast, and about one hundred and seventy-five miles east of Cape Coast Castle. "On the densely populated Slave Coast, the factories were few and the trade virtually open to all comers." U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (1918), p. 26.

<sup>10</sup> On the Slave Coast (Dahomey), ninety miles from the Volta. This was the eastern limit of the *Adventure's* cruise; from Sierra Leone she had followed the coast southward and eastward some twelve hundred and fifty miles.

<sup>11</sup> Probably slave cloths. St. Jago was a hill, north-east of Elmina, where Fort Conradsburg was built by the Dutch in 1638.

*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

*Cape Cost march the 22*

To 1 wom Slave N 7	12	13
To 1 woman slave N 8	12	13
To 1 woman slave No 9	12	13
To 1 woman Slave No 10	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 11	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 12	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 13	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 15	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 16	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 17	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 18	12	13
To 1 woman Do No 14	12	13
	<u>153</u>	<u>12</u>

23 To 1 man Slave No 19	14	1
To 2 Men Do No 20 & 21	28	2 00
To 2 Men Do No 22 & 23	28	2 00
To 2 Men Do No 24 & 25	28	2
To 2 Men Do No 26 & 27	28	2
To 2 Men Do No 28 & 29	28	2
To 2 Men Do No 31 & 30	28	2
To 2 Men Do No 32 & 33	28	2
	<u>210</u>	<u>15 00</u>

24 To 9 trips of water	9	
To 40 Conkeys <sup>12</sup>		4
To 2 Douzen of fouls	4	
To 1 Basket of limes	1	
	<u>00</u>	<u>14 00</u>

25 To 1 woman slave No 34	6	00 00
To Beef and Tobacco &[c.]	1	00
To Rum Expend.	4	
	<u>6</u>	<u>5 00</u>

26 To 7 Emty Hoghh	1	00 00
To 80 Conkeys	1	
To 30 Do		3
To fouls	3	
To 1 oz of gold	1	00 00
	<u>2</u>	<u>4 3</u>

28 To 9 gall Pomoile <sup>13</sup>	9	00
To Ducks	1	00
To 80 Conkeys	1	
To 11 Trips of Water	11	
	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>

Rum Brot over 1696

*Cape Cost march the 22*

By 205 gall of Rum	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
By 205 gall Do	205	12 13
	<u>153</u>	<u>12 00</u>

23 By 225 gall of Rum	225	14 1
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
By 450 gall Do	450	28 2
	<u>210</u>	<u>15</u>

24 By 9 gall of Rum	9	9
By 4 Tackcoes of gold		4
By 4 ackeys of gold		4
By 1 gall of Rum	1	1
	<u>00</u>	<u>14 00</u>

Rum Brought Down 7512

25 By 96 gall of Rum	96	6 00 00
By 3 p of beef & do tobacco	00	1
By 4 gall of Rum	4	4
	<u>6</u>	<u>5 00</u>

26 By 16 gall of Rum	16	1 00 00
By 1 ackey of gold		1
By 3 Tackcoes of gold		3
By 3 ackeys of gold	00	3 00
By 32 gall of Rum	32	1 00 00
	<u>2</u>	<u>4 3</u>

28 By 9 gall of Rum	9	9 00
By 1 gall Do	1	1
By 1 ackeys of gold		1
By 11 gall of Rum	11	11
	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>

12 Conchas or conchs: shell fish.  
13 Palm oil: with slaves and gold a principal

commodity of West Africa in the eighteenth century, and today the chief export.



*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

29 To 3 oz of gold 3 00 00  
 To 1 man slave No 35 12 8 00  
 To Beef and Tobaco 1  
 To 3 Bottles of mustard 1  
 To Caring me a shore 1  
 15 11 00

*annomoboe 31*  
 To 7 felts 14  
 To 1 Canvis frock 2  
 To 300 Planting<sup>14</sup> 1 4  
 To Billets of wood 6 00  
 1 7 00

*April the 1 Day*  
 To 12 gall of Pomoil 12  
 To 660 Billets of wood 13  
 To 6 Emty Cask 15  
 To 6 Emty Hoghh 1 8  
 4 00 00

2 To 1000 phramfros<sup>15</sup> 4  
 To 400 Plantings 4 00  
 To 600 Do 3 00  
 To 1 Basket of Peper 1  
 To 60 Billets of wood 1  
 To 6 Emty Hoghh 1 8  
 To Rum Expend 4  
 2 9 00

3 To 1 man slave No 36 12 8  
 To 100 Billets of wood 2  
 To 1000 Phramfroes 4 00  
 To 2 Basket of Peper 1  
 12 15

4 To 300 Planting 1 4  
 To 4 gall Pomoile 4  
 To 1 man slave No 37 13 8  
 13 13 4

5 To 200 Planting 1  
 To 300 Do 3  
 To Costoms payd agartown<sup>16</sup> 6 00  
 To 2 Not[e]s that Cap tuell<sup>17</sup>  
 left Not Payd 6  
 1 00 00

29 By 120 gall of Rum 120 3 00  
 By 200 gall Do 200 12 8  
 By 1 ackey of gold 1  
 By 4 p tobaco & 2 Do beef 1  
 By 1 gall of Rum 1 1  
 15 11 00

*annomoboe 31*  
 By 14 gall of Rum 14 14  
 By 2 gall Do 2 2 00  
 By 1 ackey 4 Tackcoes gold 1 4  
 By 6 gall of Rum 6 6  
 1 7 00

Rum Brought Down 8022

*april the 1 Day*  
 By 12 gall of Rum 12 12  
 By 13 gall Do 13 13  
 By 15 gall Do 15 15  
 By 24 gall Do 24 1 8  
 4 00 00

2 By 4 gall of Rum 4 4  
 By 4 gall Do 4 4  
 By 1 gall Do 1 1  
 By 1 gall Do 1 1  
 By 3 ackeys of gold 3 00  
 By 24 gall of Rum 24 1 8  
 By 4 gall of Rum 4 4  
 2 9 00

3 By 200 gall of Rum 200 12 8  
 By 2 gall Do 2 2  
 By 4 gall Do 4 4  
 By 1 gall Do 1 1  
 12 15

4 By 1 ack & 4 Tackcoes 1 4  
 By 4 gall of Rum 4 4  
 By 216 gall of Rum 216 13 8  
 13 13 4

5 By 1 ack of gold 1  
 By 3 gall of Rum 3 3  
 By 6 gall Do 6 6  
 By 6 gall Do 6 6  
 1 00 00

8565 gall

<sup>14</sup> Plantains.  
<sup>15</sup> Unidentified, but apparently provisions.  
<sup>16</sup> Agah is a village on the coast, about a mile east of Anamaboe.  
<sup>17</sup> Captain Samuel Tuell commanded the *Adventure* in 1772-1773 on a voyage to Africa and the

West Indies. He made a successful voyage, purchasing slaves at from 140 to 160 gallons, and losing none of them in the Middle Passage. He sold his cargo in Barbadoes at £35 a head, round. See *Commerce of Rhode Island, 1726-1800*, I. (Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, LXIX), p. 397-429 *passim*.

*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

<i>april 9 Day</i>	
To 300 Plantings	1 4
To 1/2 gall of Pomoil	4
	<u>2 00</u>
13 To 3000 Phramfroes	12
To large Turtle	5
To the long Boats Expences	13
	<u>1 14 00</u>
16 To 4 Trips of water	4
To 2 Baskets of Peper	1
To 1 Basket of limes	4
To 1 Cag of Tallow	1 4
	<u>00 7 00</u>
17 To 8 Trips of water	8
To 1 Basket of limes	4
	<u>8 4</u>
18 To 400 Billets of wood	8
To 4 Trips of water	4
To Basket of Peper	1
	<u>00 13 00</u>
19 To 5 Trips of water	5
To Pay for the Pond	8
To 1 Basket of limes	4
To Rum Expended	3
	<u>1 00 4</u>
23 To 100 wood & 8 trips of water	10
To 4 Trips of water	4
To Canoa Hire	3
<i>annamaboe april 25</i>	
To 100 Billets of wood	2
To 5 trips of water	5
To 30 p of shugar	5
To 1 Guinea Stuf	4
To 4 Remols <sup>18</sup>	1 4
To 2 guinea stufs	8
	<u>2 12 00</u>
26 To 1 man Slave No 38	14 1
To 2 men Slaves No 39 & 40	28 2
To 1 man Slave No 41	14 2
	<u>56 4</u>

Rum Brought over 8565	
<i>april the 9</i>	
By 1 ackey & 4 Tackcoes gold	1 4
By 1/2 gall of Rum	1/2 4
	<u>2 00</u>
13 By 12 gall of Rum	12 12
By 5 gall Do	5 5
By 13 gall Do	13 13
	<u>1 14 00</u>
16 By 4 gall of Rum	4 4 00
By 1 gall Do	1 1
By 1/2 gall Do	1/2 4
By 1 akey & 4 Tack of gold	00 1 4
	<u>7 00</u>
17 By 8 gall of Rum	8 8
By 1/2 gall of Rum	1/2 4
	<u>8 4</u>
18 By 8 gallons of Rum	8 8
By 4 gall Do	4 4
By 1 gall Do	1 1
	<u>00 13 00</u>
19 By 5 gall of Rum	5 5
By 8 gall Do	8 8
By 1/2 gall Do	1/2 4
By 3 gall Do	3 3
	<u>1 00 4</u>
23 By 10 gall of Rum	10 10
By 4 gall Do	4 4
By 3 gall Do	3 3
	<u>8654</u>
<i>April 25</i>	
By 2 gall of Rum	2 2
By 5 gall Do	5 5
By 5 ackeys of gold	5
By 4 gall Do Rum	4 4
By 20 gall Do	20 1 4
By 8 gall Do	8 8
	<u>2 12 00</u>
26 By 225 gall of Rum	225 14 1
By 450 gall Do	450 28 2
By 225 gall Do	225 14 1
	<u>56 4</u>

18 Romals, or "sea handkerchiefs".



*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

27 To 1 man Slave No 42	14	1
To 1 man Slave No 43	14	1
To 1 man Slave No 44	14	1
To 1 man Slave No 45	14	1
To 1 man Slave No 46	14	1
To 600 Billets of wood	12	
To 1 Basket of Peper	1	
To Fish for the Slaves	5	
To 1 Trip of water	1	
	<u>71</u>	<u>9 00</u>

28 To 1 Emty Hoghh	1	
To 200 of wood	4	
To 2000 of wood	2	8
To Bringing the wood to the Boat	2	
To fish for the Slaves	1	

*april the 29*

To Half firken of Boter	00	12	00
To 14 large Spikes	3		
To 4 trips of water	4		
To 3 gall of Pomoile	3		
To fis[h] for the Slaves		4	
	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>

30 To 3 gall of Pomoil	2		
To 4 Trips of water	4		
To 1 quire of Paper	1		
To 4 Baskets of limes	2		
To fish	1		
	<u>00</u>	<u>10</u>	

*may the 1*

To 1 woman slave No 47	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 48	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 49	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 50	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 51	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 52	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 53	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 54	12	8
To 1 woman Slave No 55	12	8
To 1 woman slave No 56	12	8
To 1 man Slave No 57	13	12
To 1 man Do No 58	13	12
To 2 men Boys No 59 60	26	8
To 2 men Boys Do No 61/62	26	8
	<u>207</u>	<u>8</u>

27 By 225 gall of Rum	225	14	1
By 225 gall Do	225	14	1
By 225 gall Do	225	14	1
By 225 gall Do	225	14	1
By 225 gall Do	225	14	1
By 12 gall Do	12		12
By 1 gall Do	1		1
By 5 gall Do	5		5
By 1 gall Do	1		1
		<u>71</u>	<u>9 00</u>

28 By 1 ackey of gold			1
By 4 gall of Rum	4		4
By 40 gall Do	40	2	8
By 2 gall Do	2		2
By 1 gall Do	1		1
	10784		

*april 29*

By 12 gall of Rum	12		12
By 3 ackeys of gold			3
By 4 gall Do [i. e. rum]	4		4
By 4 Tackcoes of gold			4
By 3 ackeys of gold			3
		<u>1</u>	<u>6 4</u>

30 By 2 gkeys of gall D (sic)			2
By 1 gall of Rum	1		1
By 4 gall Do	4		4
By 2 gall Do	2		2
By 1 ackey of gold			1
		<u>00</u>	<u>10</u>

*may the 1 Day*

By 200 gall of Rum	200	12	8
By 200 gall of Rum	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 200 gall Do	200	12	8
By 220 gall Do	220	13	12
By 220 gall Do	220	13	12
By 440 gall Do	440	26	8
By 440 gall Do	440	26	8
		<u>207</u>	<u>8</u>
	rum 14107	gall	

*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

may the 2

To 1 Box of Pipes 3  
 To 1 fish 1  
 To 1 Douzen of fowls 4  
 To the water had at Cap Cost 1 14  
 To 1 wom Slave Bought for  
 the Co[o]per <sup>19</sup> 4 1  
 To 2 p of tea 2  
 To 17 P of shugar 3  
 To 2 Double Spring Padlocks 4  
 To gold Takers Pay 4

By 1 oz of gold Brot of  
 Belonging to you I Brought  
 of the Cost

Sold the long Boat  
 Sails and Riging  
 for 96 gall of Rum & one  
 Barrel of flower

rum 14107

may the 2

By 3 ackeys of gold 3  
 By 1 ackey of gold 1  
 By 4 ackeys of gold 4  
 By 30 gall of Rum 30 1 14  
 By 65 gall of Rum 65 4 1  
 By 2 ackeys of gold 2  
 By 3 acks of gold 3  
 By 4 ackes of gold 4  
 By 64 gall of Rum 64 4 00 00  
 By 34 gall of Rum Charge[d]  
 our People 34  
 By 16 gall Trouted  
 Sundre People on yours accompts  
 16  
 Leaks and wants of  
 your Cargo 676  
 By 36 gall of Rum 36  
 Cept for the Vessels youse

Rum Brot Down 15028 gall

Rum Expended on Board

Shugar Do  
 Tobacco Do  
 Molasses Do  
 Beef and Pork  
 Bread and flower

19

Newport, October 20th, 1773.

I promise to pay Messrs. Christopher & George Champlin Three Hundred & Ten Pounds Six Shillings Old Tenor being Value Receiv'd in Rum advanc'd for Me as an Adventure in their *Sloop Adventure*, for Africa As witness my Hand

John Davis, Jr.

(Champlin Papers, Shepley Library.)

In the Letter Books, Newport Historical Society, is the following, addressed to the English governor of the Gold Coast:

Sr:

Messrs. Wanton of this Town having Showed us the Copy of a Declaration recd. from you said to be made by one Davis which shiped himself in our Vessell a Cooper, We have Enquired into the matter and find no foundation for his base Aspersion, sav-

ing he was utterly Incapable of doing his duty on our Vessell, and from our advancing him a large Sum for which he is still in Debt, joined with some crimes we are informed he was guilty of in said Sloop, for which he may be called to an account — and thereby solicited his Discharge. From these circumstances we can easily account for Calumny and must think if you have trusted him within the reach of Rum, you will not be at a loss for his behavior. There may be a time when it may be in our power to do ourselves Justice, and in the mean time we are respectfully,

Sr Your most obedient humb.

Servt. Chris. Champlin  
 Geo. Champiin

Newport  
 Nov: 19th 1774  
 David Mills, Esqr.  
 Governor  
 Cape Coast



*Sloop adventure & owners, Dr.*

*Contra - - - - - Cr.*

<i>Grando</i> <sup>20</sup> <i>June the 20</i>	old tener <sup>21</sup>	
	£ s d	
To a Permit for Sailing	£12 00 00	
<i>Sant Christophers</i> <sup>22</sup> <i>July 4</i>		
To a Permit for Sailing	12 00	
<i>Esasy</i> <sup>23</sup> <i>July 7</i>		
To my Pashage up to San Cits <sup>22</sup> and Down a gain	£32 00 00	
To 2 Tarces of Bread	£64 00 00	
To Cash advanced the People	£232 00 00	
To a Permit for Sailing	8 00	
	£370 00 00	
To 11 Boats Loads of Stone Balles £ 32	32 00 00	
	402	

<i>Cant Christophers July 4</i>	£ s d
By Cash Received of the marchant on your accmpts	
	£448
	370
	£78
Ballance Due	32
Chris & George Champlin	£46 00 00

*May the 18, 1774*  
Bured one man Slave<sup>24</sup>  
  
31 Bured one woman Slave  
  
*June the 5*  
Bured one man Slave  
  
*the 10*  
Bured one man Slave

<sup>20</sup> Grenada, in the Windward Islands. April 22, 1774 Threlfal and Anderson, merchants in Grenada, had written to the Champlins that their market was not as good as might be expected from the small number of slaves lately sold. "Out of 17 Cargo's (say 3750 Slaves) that came in full expectation of selling at this Market in the space of 5 Months last past, only six Cargos, (say abt: 1320) has been sold all the rest gone to Jamaica or Carolina but believe mostly to the former place." Those sold had "averaged a tolerable good price say from £35 to 37." The demand continued, but the factors were deterred from buying by the bad credit of the planters, whose bills had been protested. They hoped to keep up the price of Gold Coast slaves, especially in small cargoes. A month later they wrote that they had averaged a cargo of 90 odd slaves brought in by the brig *Polly* of Newport at £39 17s 6d sterling. They then hoped to do as well with the *Adventure's* slaves; but apparently were disappointed, as the sales were made at St. Kitt's. (Champlin Papers, unbound, Rhode Island Historical Society.)

<sup>21</sup> In 1774 old tenor Rhode Island currency passed at a ratio to sterling of 36 to 1.

<sup>22</sup> St. Christophers, or St. Kitts, in the Leeward Islands.

<sup>23</sup> St. Eustatius: a small Dutch island north-east of St. Kitts, notorious as an entrepot of illicit trade, where European manufactures and French sugars and molasses were taken on board by New England traders, to be smuggled or entered as goods of English origin.

<sup>24</sup> This is the record of deaths during the dreaded Middle Passage from Africa to the West Indies. The proportion of loss of four out of sixty-three was not, perhaps, excessive; the average mortality has been estimated at from eight to ten per cent. U. B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (1918), p. 38.

Decembe[r] the 29, 1773

MR. THOMAS NEWTON, <sup>25</sup> DR.  
Starling

To 2 SanTagoes Cloaths @/20 £2 00 00  
30 To 1 Pare of Stripe Cotton  
Trousers @/10 10  
£2 10 00

oct 15, 1773

GEORGE HURST, SEAMAN, DR.  
Starling s d

To Wayges advanced before  
Sailing £4 8 11

Decem the 15

To Sundres advanced on our Voyge  
To 6 gall of Rum @ 5s £1 10  
To 1 Felt Hat @ 5s 05  
To 4 p of Coffe 05

old tenor £90 ----- old tenor

april the 27, 1774

To 2 gall of molasses 10  
£6 18 11

£ 6.18.11

4. 8.11

£ 2:10: 0 is £90—old Tenor

June the 20, 1774

Ranaway in the Island of Granado

Oct 20, 1773

WILLIAM MORRISON, DR.  
Starling d

To wayges advanced Before  
Sailing £2 09 03

To 5 gall of Rum 1 5 00  
To 1 felt Hat 5 00

Cant Christopher June 30, 1774

To Cash 3 6  
Currense for Starling £7 05 03

To 1 Shirt & 1 Pare of trouse 1 00 00  
£8 05 03

£ 5:16 is £ 208:16

December the 3, 1773

WILLIAM AYERS, SEAMAN, DR.  
Starling

To 6 gall & 1/2 of Rum @ 5s £1 12 6  
To 2 gall of molasses 10 00

Eustatia July 6, 1774

To 2 Pare of trouses 1 00 00  
To Cash 1 13 00

Currense for Starling £4 15 6

is old tenor £ 171:18

25 Second mate. His monthly wages as shown by the portage bill were £60 old tenor, or £1 13s 4d sterling. The same wages were paid Robert Champlin and George Battey, first mate. But the master of a slaver received a coast commission of "4 in 104" on sales, besides his "privilege" or right to carry an adventure for sale on his own account. Privileges were also accorded to the other officers, and on the *Adventure* to the cooper. At Anamaboe,

May 3, the first mate dispensed to six members of the crew, out of his privilege, 16 1/2 gallons of rum, for which he received £4 2s 6d sterling. Davis the cooper signed at £64; Merrigan, Ayers, Hurst, and Morrison at £52; Mevous and Warwick the cook (an Indian) at £48. Thomas Eyres signed "for my Servant, named Frank" who, as cabin boy, was paid £40 a month. Christopher Bond signed July 6 at £64 in place of George Hurst who had decamped.



MICAJAH MERRIGAN, SEAMAN, DR.

*Decem 23 Day, 1773*

To 8 gall of Rum @ 5s	£2 00 00
To 4 gall of molasses @ 5s	1 00 00
To 1 Hat & 4 P of Coffee	10

*Eu[s]tatia July the 6, 1774*

To 2 Pare of Trousers	1 00
To Cash	1 13
Currense for Starling	£6 03 00

old Tenor £ 221.7

*Decem the 14, 1773*

EPHRAIM MEVOUS, SALOR, DR.

Starling

To 6 gall of Rum	£1 10
To 6 gall of molasses	1 10
To 2 felt Hats	10
To 4 Checks shirts	2 00 00
To 3 Pare Trousers	1 10 00
To 1 flanning Jacket	10
To 4 P of Coffe	5

*Eustatia July the 6, 1774*

To Cash	1 13
Currense for Starling	£9 08 00

£ 338.8. old Tenor

*Decem 23, 1773*

JOHN WARWICK, COOK, DR.

Starling

To 6 gall of Rum	£1 10 00
To 2 Checks Shirts	1 00 00
To 3 Pare of trousers	1 10
To 3 gall of molaseses	15
To 1 Hat	5
To 4 P of Coffee	5

*Eustatia July 6 Day, 1774*

To Cash	1 13
Currense for Starling	£6 18 00

£ 248:8. old Tenor

FRANK, SARVANT DOCT EY [RES]

EARS, DR.

*march the 20, 1774*

Starling

To 3 Check Shirts	£1 10
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*Eustatia July 6*

To 2 Pare of trousers	1 00 00
To 1 flanning Jacket	10
To 1 Hat	5
To Cash	4 6

£ 3.9 is £ 124

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