

CS Randall  
 Edited version  
 of original translation

## I

After a bitter quarrel with his father, reputedly a family tyrant, Meyer Levy left Copenhagen for Hamburg, Germany. He was twenty three years old, and disinherited. The year was 1833.

A few months later, he bought a steerage passage to America aboard an American sailing vessel, the Washington, owned by Gerard W. Livingston. The ship registered at 290 tons, and carried cargo and six cabin passengers, nineteen steerage passengers, and its crew. The captain was William C. Neilson.

On shipboard, Meyer Levy kept a journal which he wrote in German with a few very private notations in Danish. He used a grey paper-bound copybook that survives, mottled with old stains.

The young emigrant never returned to Europe, after he reached the New World.

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The 22nd of September, 1833, I boarded a boat in Altona Harbor and came out to the ship Washington, in which I am sailing to New York. I don't know which feeling predominated - that of my utter helplessness, left to depend entirely on myself and with thirty three dollars in my pocket, going to a distant part of the world - or the still more terrible feeling that none of my

formerly so numerous friends deigned to wish me "adieu" - Except you, my dear Cohen; you are the only friend, among so many, who takes an interest in me. May God reward you with my daily prayers for my good and beloved mother, brother and entire family.

I came on board with tear filled eyes turned toward the city where I experienced so many beautiful and also bitter hours, firmly convinced I should never set foot on German soil again. My first care was to find a place for my small traveling bag, (which I made myself), and for my hatbox. (My trunk was already on board.) Everyone was running about in confusion - passengers, sailors, helmsman; here, a couple talking sadly about the parting; there, a woman falls sobbing on her husband's neck; brothers, friends, relatives who intend to accompany their loved ones a short distance - a heartrending scene.

I stand among them alone, foresaken; but have courage! I know that my beloved mother daily, and especially today, thinks of her Meyer and surely prays for the protection of the Almighty for me. Although despair is in my heart, I call "Courage!" to myself - courage to fight against all the passions that may overpower me, courage to bear even the impossible.

I swear that my spirit, free as the land we hope to enter, will rise above these unworthy, faint-hearted thoughts. I will become another person.

After I looked around for a sleeping place, several people surrounded me, and questions, answers, instructions partly drove

away my pain. When I finally found a bunk, four unplanned boards, I needed to procure a mattress, pillow and blanket. However hard, in my position, to spend money, I decided to go ashore and hurriedly buy them. When I returned, still more people had arrived, so I could scarcely get through. The pilot came aboard, the Captain went off, and slowly we began to move. Thus we sailed, withna slight wind, to Flatbeck, where we cast anchor.

All the passengers with those who accompanied them went ashore. We drank coffee, ate bread and butter, and drank whiskey to our "farewell" and "aurevoir"; a gaity reigned comparable to the last meal of the condemned. Once more farewells were said, people kissed, embraced, shouted "hurrah", and we returned to our ship more or less intoxicated.

Finally, whist was suggested, and I agreed to be a third man in a game of dummy. Many might have a bad opinion of me for exposing myself to loss, in my position; but it was, as I've said, the last meal of one condemned to death. I won 16 points. But nothing was paid, and I was glad to escape in this fashion.

We went down into the steerage to ready our beds. How it looks here! Boxes, bales, water barrels made it almost impossible to get to the bunks. After laughing, weeping, and consoling with hopes for the morrow, we arranged things. Now, tea without milk, and ship's bread, a thick cracker called biscuit, were served; the tea in thick bowls passed from hand to hand; one more smoke, and at eight o'clock everyone went to bed.

September 23

After a restless sleep, I rose to hear that the wind was contrary, and that going on today was impossible. The cook informed us that whoever had no dishes must supply himself. I was forced to go ashore. Finally, I got two plates, one earthenware bowl, a knife, fork and spoon for 17 sh. as a favor from the innkeeper, Nagel. I don't know, yet, who is going along as the farewell visits continue.

For the first time, we had ship's food, black coffee at nine in the morning, with syrup, pork and potatoes; at noon, pea soup, salt meat and bread. The meat is exceedingly salty and strong, but one must get used to it. Many a pampered German tongue will not like the fare, but for me, accustomed to so strange a diet, these last four months, it is very good.

This evening after their work was finished, the sailors stretched themselves in a circle. I mingled with them and found, to my surprise, three ladies among them. [The ladies were probably not sailors, but, as with the passengers' guests, prepared to disembark before the ship made for the open sea.] And to my great joy, the son of the esteemed Justitgrath Blom in Copenhagen [was among the crew]. We talked about father, mother, native land etc. There are also two Danish sailors on board; and one sailor who speaks seven languages - a nice chap. Altogether, the crew seems to consist of fine fellows.

September 24

This morning, with the best of East winds, we sailed down to Stade, where we waited until the Captain came aboard with the Cabin passengers. The rest of the water barrels were filled, and the

sails were brought in order until they arrived. A doctor and his wife, from Holland, and two other ladies and gentlemen, but I don't yet know who they are. Probably they will be very reserved toward the steerage passengers. Let them - for all I care! I won't be a burden to them!

My mouth is completely skinned, from so much salt. But there is nothing to do about it. Boats with fruit surround the ship all day. But it is very expensive so I shall not buy any.

September 26

By three o'clock we were already in Brunshüttel, and we sailed, without stopping, toward the sea. The pilot left the ship, loaded with letters from all the passengers. I, too, gave him a letter to my dear Cohen.

The sailors, who get the same food we do, last night raised a row with the cook. Whereupon, today, the Captain gave the week's menu: Sunday, meat, potatoes and pudding; Monday, potatoes and salt meat; Tuesday, pea soup and meat of bacon; Wednesday, potatoes and bacon; Thursday, meat and pudding; Friday, peas and meat; Saturday, codfish and potatoes.

This afternoon, seasickness showed its effect. The ladies in the first cabin began it, and a little one in the steerage followed. Tonight there was a general vomiting brigade. What I feared, happened. I had scarcely come down, when I became sick. I started hastily up, but only reached the steps, where I paid tribute to Friend Neptune.

September 27

It has rained almost continuously, so we are forced to stay in our cabin almost all the time. Not a pleasant place to stay. My

trousers and coat are all spotted, and the stains won't come out. Although I'm not hungry, but feel sicker, I breakfasted, for not taking anything makes the matter more difficult. Today we caught a few birds, but they died right away.

Nothing but sky and water are to be seen. We are like a fly swimming in a glass, a beautiful but awesome sight. This afternoon we played whist and Lady Fortune was kind to me.

Tonight everyone is in the cabin, where a few lamps cast a faint light over the different groups, not unlike a gypsy camp. Here we play whist on a barrel; there a couple play the flute, not always in the best harmony; there someone sings; here, eating, laughing, scribbling; animated life everywhere, until ten o'clock and everyone seeks his bunk, and I, too, creep into my covering.

September 28

A good wind, but stormy, Most of the passengers are seasick. This noon a very bad meal. The food is so dreadful it is shameful one must pay forty five dollars for such a place. Considering the contrast between Cabin and the steerage, one wonders the former must not pay four times as much. There is only rebellious talk against the treatment the Captain gives us. I feel dizzy and sick.

September 29

The sun comes out and everyone appears on deck. The Cabin passengers are eating their dinner of the finest food:

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ML's list of passengers, here, is amplified by details from Captain Neilson's passenger manifest for this voyage. Errors in both lists may account for occasional discrepancies.

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A Dutch doctor and his wife, a very nice pair.

B. (possibly Bernard, name unclear) Sabalies, Physician, age 30  
Julia Sabalies, "Lady", age 24

A New York merchant with his sister-in-law, a pretty young woman.

John D. Kleindgen, merchant, age 25  
Sarah Kleindgen, "Lady", age 19

Later, ML refers to the Kleindgens as "K and his wife".

A Mad. Bergman from Hamburg, a horror.

(First name unclear) Bergman, "Lady", age 24

And a clerk, a still greater horror.

Charles F. Richard, architect, age 25

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The above are the six Cabin passengers.

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Steerage passengers received pudding - really a paste with syrup - not a delicacy, but in our position much desired. We consist of:

A plumber, Ruprecht, with wife and child.

John Ruprecht, (occupation unclear), age 28  
Sophia Ruprecht, "Woman", age 28  
Amel (Unclear) Ruprecht, "Girl", age 3.

A Tailor, Bytel, from Philadelphia

Andrew Roedel, tailor, age 30

A potter, Dehm, with his child and assistant

Christian Dohm, potter, age 45  
Mathilda Dohm, "Girl", age 11  
Charles Croser, potter, age 21

A farmer, a cabinetmaker's assistant, and a small boy

Christian Kluge, farmer, age 34  
Charles Isactgeither, cabinetmaker, age 28  
Charles Bloch, clerk, age 14

A goldsmith, Mowius, with son

Ernest Mowius, dyer, age 41  
Herman Mowius, "Boy", age 13

3 Clerks, Meyer, Warnecke and Wiese

George Meyer, merchant, age 23

William Vaukey, merchant, age 29

John L.W. Wiese, teacher, age 28

I tradesman, Heineman, Jew

Alexander Heynman, merchant, age 23

And my insignificant self.

Meir Levy, merchant, age 23

We approach the coast of Holland, and have cast anchor because the winds drove us toward shore, and we heard the breakers on the sand bars. It would be dangerous if a storm came up.

Everyone on the ship is resting. The sailors wash, mend and brush their clothes. But they don't sing, for the Americans keep Sunday very strictly.

#### September 30

Today we are nearing the Falmouth banks. Several English sailboats approached us and offered fish for sale. We bought shellfish, crabs, rays, but they only want to exchange them for tobacco and brandy. Money, these people can't use, who lie on the water summer and winter in an open boat, and only gain a meagre living by bartering their catch for provisions. For a bottle of brandy and half a pound of cheap tobacco, we steerage passengers received enough fish for three good meals. This noon we had our first decent meal on board of our new life, in the lovely autumn air.

I passed the time reading Baggeson's poems, and out of boredom made a little poem, myself, while lying on a boat. After dinner they wanted to dance, but only two screeching flutes were to be had. Finally, I began to sing, and it went better. Bad though it was, they liked it.



Several of the Cabin passengers who had spoken to us before joined me, and when someone mentioned Raimunda, I began the Ash-song which brought much applause. I talked with a merchant from New York about the dear Fatherland and business, until everyone went to bed. I, not without smiling that this song, which made me popular in Hamburg, also got me into the best society here.

Today we saw, about a cable's length from our ship, a very large fish that rose several times; which some thought to be a very young whale, others, a swordfish.

#### October 1

Today the wind was favorable, the weather beautiful. All the passengers were on deck. The food was so stingily rationed that I, who came a little late, had to content myself with the smell of bacon and potatoes. In rage, I lay down on my poet's desk, the pig-stye, and wrote a ~~small~~ little ode about an ox. A small and gentle revenge against an empty stomach, but it helps pass the time. The steerage passengers are good humored: teasing, jokes, pranks go back and forth.

From Calais we saw the beacon which appears and disappears, a revolving light. On the English coast we saw three beacons, two light houses, and one light ship. As the night was dark but starry, and a little fleet of sailboats, fishing boats, and several brigs appeared in the distance, the view was delightful.

(In Danish): Today I made a conquest, a lively little woman who is madly in love with my physiognomy. Too bad her husband is on board.

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October 2

We intended to challenge the Captain because of the bad food, without carrying out our plan. When we got slopwater this morning, instead of coffee, we were furious. Since I was the only one who spoke a little English, I complained to him. This, together with some arguments among the Cabin passengers, angered the Captain. What the devil do I care! It's strange that among the so-called cultured people quarrels and rowdyism occur, and among us, so many varieties, unity and good spirits prevail.

(In Danish): NB. Cupid is favorably disposed. The lively little lady is mine with life and soul. Too bad her husband is along and we can never be alone for a moment. However, she consoles me with promises for New York. Distant prospects, but good ones.

October 3

The wind was again favorable. We played whist nearly all day, and fortune was still kind to me. The evening was beautiful but dark, and the sea shimmered in the starlight like sparks of fire. This luminousness comes from the salt.

Tonight we emerged from the canal. To celebrate the transition to the ocean proper, we made punch to drink to Europe in farewell, to America in welcome. Now, my cursed pride played me another bad trick. They took a collection for the punch. One gave wine, another sugar, and so on. I, who had nothing with me, could give nothing. I decided in advance that I wouldn't drink anything, not to be an uninvited guest. When someone, perhaps in jest, said something that in my mood I took as an insult, I decided definitely not to drink anything. The punch was brought, and true to my resolution, I went

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on deck. One deputation after another came to invite me, but no.

After an hour, I went down, took a glass, touched it to my lips, and proposed the health of the company. Someone suggested throwing a bottle overboard, with a flag on top, and a paper inside where each was to write his name, birthplace and journey, since it would probably ....

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Seven pages of the journal were torn out, here, presumably by ML, and are missing: entries Oct 4 - 9.

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.... A storm is approaching, an awesomely beautiful sight, the ship careening, the waves foaming like fire, ship creaking in all its joints. There won't be much rest.

October 10

At twelve o'clock the storm broke. The sails were shortened, reefed, and the towering waves tossed the ship up and down like a ball. We could hardly keep on our feet. Yet the sailors said this was child's play compared with the storms that usually rage here. To be frank, I have no longing for the real thing. Every moment, we are so pounded that everything in the room, though nailed fast, flies around. The elements fight with each other, and amid it all, the commands of the Captain, the work and climbing of the sailors, who seem to take on new life, in this weather. Even though one isn't afraid, one has an uncanny feeling. I am going to bed and let the old father have the responsibility.

October 11

The sea is still in a turmoil. We have the delightful discovery that several cases of gonorrhoea exist among the steerage passengers,

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and we have one chancre patient, the cabinetmaker. The doctor has taken charge of him. That was all our pig-stye lacked.

Every day they skimp more and more on the paltry things we get; little more than biscuits, meat one can hardly eat, and stale water. Scurvy treatment for forty five dollars! To lament here doesn't help, but in the proper place I'll talk with the dirty pig - God damn him!

This evening Heiman put on Timmerman's clothes and lay down in Mrs. Timmerman's bed, to tease her. She began to caress him tenderly, and was amazed when she realized her mistake. Such scandals cheer our spirits momentarily, even though we feel discouraged.

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ML failed to include the Timmermans on his list of passengers., and they do not appear on the Captain's manifest. This, however, lists a Charles Hassing, butcher, age 30, and an Agnes Delf, occupation "Woman", age 25. Neither appears in the journal. Probably, bedding together in the steerage, they passed as "The Timmermans". Agnes Delf, alias "Mad. Timmerman" is a likely candidate for the "lively little lady".

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October 12

Today the cabinetmaker was treated, and the women had to be involuntary witnesses of this delightful operation. The doctor has practice enough, on board. Several sailors are sick; the steward has been bled; now our steerage passengers - a veritable hospital. The doctor, although in my opinion no great light, since he speaks no other language than Dutch, is a very good man, and the only one of the Cabin passengers who does not act proud. Not so the Hamburg-American, X, who is impertinent, proud, and a bad example of American equality.

October 13

On Sundays the sailors do no work. One mends his stockings, another

sews his shirt; others wash, shave, perform small tasks, and entertain their friends with scandalous stories and sea adventures they, themselves, have experienced. Songs enliven the work. I enjoy my three fellow countrymen, especially Blom, because we talk of our beloved homeland.

This morning we saw a small brig in the distance. At noon, we caught up with it and we sailed straight ahead, about two English miles apart. Conjectures varied, until the brig changed course and sailed directly for us. Suddenly one heard on all sides the possibility expressed that it might be a pirate ship.

At first, we only jested. When we saw the brig heading toward us, something it had not done all day - and when the sailors told of a certain Gibs who roamed these waters as a pirate, and only two years ago was captured in New York, I noticed a slight anxiety on many a laughing face.

I am not ashamed that though I completely doubted the possibility, I yearned for, rather than feared, a small adventure. In sport, people took broomsticks, shovels and the like, and even a little drum, to sound the alarm. But it was all a dream, and dreams are nothing but air. When the brig reached us it lost its place in the wind and had to steer West. The imagined danger was over. I went to bed commending the pirates, and everything else, to Him who cared for us and will watch over us further.

October 15

Today I gave the cook a dollar for a few of the left-overs from the First Cabin table. Sad that I, who otherwise objected to accepting an invitation to a meal, now creep before a villainous black man, and bribe him for what he otherwise throws overboard. I asked the steward [also Black] for a little butter, and pressed a quarter of a dollar into his hand. In the evening, he returned the

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money, and at the same time gave me a quarter of a pound of butter. I don't know if the money was too little for him, or if he really didn't want to accept it. At any rate, it was a kindness, especially since there is a scarcity of it in the cabin class, itself.

At ten o'clock, the steward, who is a negro, came into the steerage, and we experimented by burning rum on a chest and putting out the lights, whereby we looked like ghosts. Fear stood written on his face, and if someone hadn't laughed he would have run away, for he cried out "That's the devil's work!"

October 16

This morning I had to get up, as it was my turn to cook, to breathe coal smoke, to wash dishes, to grind coffee. There was a brawl again, in the cabin class. But even in our sad position, I live very pleasantly, for Herr Ruprecht and his wife, very nice people, take an interest in me. The cabinetmaker began a quarrel with me, but I soon silenced him. When will our hour of release strike?

October 18

Today the wind is strong but contrary. To break the monotony, Heiman proposed raffling a watch. Although I knew in advance I would not win, I took a ticket. The performance takes place tomorrow. This Heiman is a skillful, clever Jew, in the essential meaning of the word. Without having any education, he has mother-wit.

October 19

And so the lottery was held. Twenty two participants entered. Since the watch was estimated at only four dollars, there would be an extra drawing for a dollar and seventy five cents, as the tickets were a quarter.

The lottery took place in all formality. Little Mathilda stood on an elevation, and beside her, Meyer and I, each with a hatbox. The watch was won by a steerage passenger, Kluger, a poor man, and this was as it should be. The architect got the money prize. This fun was to everybody's taste, and a music box was put up. I took over the raffling, but wisely stipulated I was to have a free ticket. The steward won the box. It is impossible to describe the joy of the Black man over this devil's trumpery - as impossible to describe as the peevish faces over disappointed hopes. This wasn't the case with me, since I knew in advance I wouldn't win, and I only joined in the game to avoid being exclusive.

Today a hog was butchered before a large crowd of spectators, though feelings varied. The Cabin passengers in a foretaste of the beautiful roasts and chops. We, the steerage people, with a bitterness in seeing the Holy Land, without enjoying it.

October 20

I had a bedfellow, tonight, Ruprecht's child. There is room in my bed, and I have obligations to both man and wife for many kindnesses.

October 21

This morning, Heiman had the misfortune, on the afterdeck, to be almost swept into the abyss by a wave. His retreat was funny. Dripping with water, he scolded in every possible language, and had the still further misfortune to be laughed at. Ridicule always follows damage.

The doctor gave me a small bottle of cognac, today, which he stole from the cabin class. C. is a general rascal, and does everything to plague the doctor. I am afraid he will get the worst

of it.

(In Danish): Tonight the dear little lady visited me. I was almost afraid. But who dares nothing wins nothing.

October 22

Suddenly the Captain called us on deck. A storm was coming and we had to draw in the sails, while the sailors were in the masts to fasten them. Sky and water merged - and then the howling of the wind, the crashing of the ship, the commands of the Captain and his helmsman, a downpour that wet to the skin, cries of terror from the woman, the ship so aslant one could hardly stand - and amidst it all, working so hard the sweat mixed with the water, I tore off my coat, put on my storm hat which was soon soaked. After three hours, the storm abated and I went to bed.

(In Danish): NB. Tonight we had our wish. She came, I finished, and everything went well.

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At this point there is a confusion of dates. The storm is dated Tuesday, October 22. The next entry is Wednesday, October 21. The loss of two days continues in chronological order.

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October 21

This morning, the quarrels began in our steerage. Heiman opened the dance with the cabinetmaker. The latter became brutal, even toward the doctor, who is a decent, quiet person.

Because of my unfortunate nature not to tolerate injustice, I mixed in the affair. The forenoon passed in continuous brawls.



When I came up from dinner, I saw the Captain engaged in a half friendly, half hostile conversation. Not to listen rudely, I went to the after-deck and talked with several people.

While we prosed about the matter, I heard a scream on deck. To my amazement, I saw the doctor in full battle with K. [Kleindgen] Supposing the doctor to have been attacked, I hurried to assist him. But his wife told me to desist, since the doctor, with full justification, wanted to punish him for his horrible insults. Finally we succeeded in separating the two men. Fortunately for K., since the doctor would surely have killed him.

K., this big-talking, boasting matador, stood there like a schoolboy, calling out continuously "It is not true, Mein Herr". But the doctor's wife and Mad. Bergman taught him differently. And when he was aggressive toward the latter, he received one "dirty pig" after another.

When they were calmed down, we learned the cause of the quarrel. K., knowing the doctor and his wife did not understand English, had constantly called the doctor "dirty pig", at table, and said nobody knew where the doctor got his money, and God knew what sort the doctor's wife was, and more such insults. Finally the doctor grew aware of this, and the results could be predicted in advance.

K. was in terrible condition. Tie, shirt, coat, cap, everything was gone or torn to pieces. He wanted to resume relations with the steerage passengers, but we sided with the doctor and his wife.

October 23

Today resembles the day after a battle. The defeated party

despondent, the victors full of courage. K. and his wife stay apart from the rest; the doctor and his wife draw near the steerage passengers, with glowing faces, and try to entertain us. The architect, who was the go between [trouble-maker?], has the worst of it. Trusted by none, he stands entirely alone.

(In Danish): Tonight I had my "da capo"

October 25

Today the air was as mild as in summer. I put on a pair of white trousers and didn't wear my woolen jacket. I'm sure it's not wise, but the heat is unbearable. All troubles are forgotten, in the warmth of the sun and the clear air, and depressed spirits are lifted.

October 26

Because I took off my jacket yesterday, I have such a cold today that I stayed in bed until four o'clock without eating anything at all. Tonight, potato soup. I longed for this refreshment, so I undertook the office of serving, to insure my portion. Two of our wooden troughs were already empty; everyone had a dish, and I, thinking the soup served, started to take my portion, when someone called down, "Take the potatoes!"

Unhappy officiousness! Instead of potatoes, boiling soup was in that dish, and I received all of it over my face and body. The first pain was frightful. I tore off my steaming clothes, put my face in cold water, and felt some relief. The doctor gave me a soothing salve, and I went to bed with my face bound up.

October 27

My face is better, red and inflamed, but without blisters. The rest of my body is only slightly injured.

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The doctor's wife is a very lovely woman, young, beautiful and witty. No wonder my happiest moments are those when she is on deck and I can converse with her. The doctor, who is a good and liberal man, seems a little jealous.

I had to walk around, today, in my black coat, for my ship's coat looks like a potato field.

October 28

The Captain is now jollier and less surly toward the steerage passengers. He too seems to feel we do not get our rights, but, badly provided as he is, he can't do anything about it.

October 29

The doctor's wife wanted something to read. As she had already read through the ship's library, I gave her that little product of my intellect, "The False Baron Rothschild". For me, as author, it was no small triumph to hear this bagatelle praised by such beautiful lips.

October 30

The wind has been so good, we hope to be in New York in six or seven days. [They arrived November 18] But I fear the American coast. They say the wind is always contrary there, at this time of year. Today, many bets of wine were made as to when we would get there, or if we would get there at all. I also bet a few bottles that we would not be there a week from Sunday, and am sure I will win them.

October 31

This noon, the Captain argued with the second helmsman because of his laziness. Instead of working, he sits calmly on the forward deck, smoking a cigar. When the Captain remonstrated with him, he

remained bold. But when the Captain's tenor voice ordered him to be silent or he would kill him, he soon found his senses.

The ship is painted inside, a good sign that the Captain, himself, expects a speedy arrival. Also, the Captain gave us a box of claret, today, which was spoiled, that would otherwise be thrown overboard.

November 1

We are in the Gulf Stream, which we know because the sea water is warmer. Out of boredom, I played several rubbers of whist this evening. This evening is wonderfully beautiful, and very quiet.

November 2

The wind changed, during the night, to our advantage. We are going at a speed of nine miles, but the weather is continuously bad. Rain all day, and terribly cold, which means we are not very far from the coast.

This evening we played whist, and I won 90 points. But never have I played in such confusion. Since no one could be on deck, we were all below. Some were laughing, telling stories, singing; and a little American sailor, who had heard the Jewish vendors calling their wares in Hamburg, called out in his gibberish "Shilling! Shilling!" In short, a confusion like Noah's Ark.

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This ark, the Washington, registered its arrival at New York on November 18, 1833, although the journal ends with the above entry. Appended to the journal is another "little product

of my intellect", a parody recaptulating the highlights of the voyage, written to the tune of "Dankst Du Daren". Meyer called it: "Song written on shipboard when we saw the coast of America". It concludes with this reflection:

.....

No better life than to be on the sea,  
If one has good food on the hearth  
And also a good glass of wine.

Yet even without this, one can live  
If only one has courage and good spirits.  
We are all striving toward a goal,  
Everything is past, once we reach it.  
Always remember it is only a passage  
And fortunately doesn't last forever,  
And so, my friends, be gay and don't lose heart!  
The coast, yes the coast, is not far away!

Little is known of Meyer Levy, after his arrival in America. He became Martin Lewis in his "new Life", and settled permanently in Baltimore. There he found the path of upward mobility. By 1842, the Baltimore Directory listed him as "Dry goods dealer"; in 1851, as "Cloths, cassimers and vests dealer"; in 1855, as "Dry goods commission and merchants"; and in 1858, as "Bill and Stockbroker". Norway, Sweden and Denmark appointed him their representative in the Baltimore area, as Vice-Consul, in the Presidency of Andrew Johnson, in 1866.

Martin Lewis, of Baltimore, married Rebecca Freyer, who came from a Harford County, Maryland family of Presbyterians. They had six children, over whose baptism a controversy arose. A rough draft

of a letter on the subject, addressed to a Reverend Dr. Stewart Robinson, survives with the shipboard journal. It seems that in maturity it remained Martin's "unfortunate nature not to tolerate injustice"; and that despite the Christianization of his name, he made no concessions in his religious convictions:

Letter undated

My Dear Doctor:

..... I do not understand if you consent to baptize our children under present circumstances, or not. Will you oblige me by saying so.

I have always left my wife to follow the bent of her own heart in religious matters, feeling satisfied that one who so artlessly and nobly performed the characters of daughter, wife and mother must be sustained by, whatever else you may call it, a practical Christianity in fact.

My own idea of baptism ..... is.....that it is an ordinance of the church, tending to good government, which all who call themselves Christians ought to obey; but that it is not an essential virtue to salvation. I could not believe otherwise, unless I was prepared to admit .... the endless perdition of millions of human beings who, by accident or doctrine, were deterred from its saving grace.

But even if I were wrong in this .... I could not subscribe to a creed which forbade its ministers to save the child because of the view of the parent. It would indeed be to visit "the sins of the father upon the children", and in my humble view, but little in accordance with the mercy and goodness of our heavenly Father, who was willing to forgive the iniquities of a whole city, were there but "ten righteous in it".....

Martin Lewis' family handed down few memories of him. Indeed, there seems to have been a conspiracy of silence about a man whose only personal legend is of having alienated his children. He quarrelled bitterly with his four sons, three of whom all but cut themselves off from him, when they came of age.

In 1869, Martin Lewis purchased a lot in Green Mount Cemetery, in Baltimore. His stone, there, reads:

Martin Lewis  
Born in Copenhagen, Denmark  
Died in Baltimore  
November 17, ~~1887~~ 1873  
Age 64

Some  
numerical  
confusion here  
Either he had to  
be born in Denmark  
in 1823 - or  
if ~~born~~ died in 1887  
he was age 74

64? ← (The age is illegible is added in parenthesis)  
This makes M L ~~born~~ in 1823 &  
only 10 years old in 1833 when he  
wrote the journal. Impossible -  
How did I decide he was 23 on the voyage -  
The title page of the diary is dated  
1833 -

Ship's manifest gives his age as 23.  
Jr 2014