

Reminiscences of the family of Webb.
Samuel Webb, a native of Great Britain,
in the latter part of the seventeenth century,
was commander ^{owner} of a slave ship, which for
number of years, made regular voyages to
Africa, and purchasing cargoes of slaves, ~~we~~
would carry them to the West Indies, by which
accumulated a large fortune. He purchased
an estate in Redrifi in the vicinity of the
city of London, where his family resided,
which consisted of his wife and three children,
one son and two daughters, viz Susanna,
Samuel and Margaret. ~~His~~ His wife
died, when he was at sea. In 1708 he again
manned his ship, which was of the largest
class of slavers, with about forty men, and
set sail from London, and arrived in
Africa, at a place where he used to trade for
slaves. The African chief came on board,
and appeared to be much pleased that he
had come again to purchase the prisoners
that he had taken in a late excursion to
the territory of a neighbouring tribe. He
invited the Captain and as many of the
crew as could be spared to go on shore to
see his prisoners, and dine with him the
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Date: ca. 1800

Description: Story of slavery, poisoning, and piracy in the seventeenth century, as a
reminiscence from the Webb family.

next day; and they accepted the invitation.

The next day, having arrived, they all went on shore, except four men and four boys, of which, his son Samuel was one, he being about seven years of age. When they arrived at the Chief's house, dinner was prepared, and the custom of the country was, that a separate dish was set for each individual.

The Chief sat at the head of the table, and the Captain at his left, and the other officers according to their rank, and then the seamen.

The African chief had contemplated the capture of the ship, and for that purpose, had ordered poison to be put in every dish except his own. As soon as they discovered the treachery, they returned to the Ship, cut the cable and put to sea; and within twenty-four hours, every man that went on shore was dead.

There was a large ship on the broad ocean, with only four men and four boys to navigate her back to England. They had fair weather southerly winds, with^{out} speaking with

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a vessel until they arrived in the English Channel. The ship was sold and the proceeds deposited in the Bank, where he had large funds, and the children put under guardianship; to be supported at school, out of the interest thereof until they should become of age.

Samuel Webb son of Samuel Webb, ~~was~~ was born in Redrift, England on Christmas day 1696, and after the death of his father, as above stated, was sent to school, where he ~~was~~ remained until the year 1711, at which time a ship, with emigrants, was fitting out in London, for Newport, Rhode Island; some of the passengers being his acquaintance, he was persuaded to run away from his guardian, and take passage for America; having barely money, at his command, sufficient to pay his fare.

When the ship was off the Western Islands, she was taken by a pirate, which infested the sea in those days, and never before spared a soul that fell into his hands, and never before boarded a ship that he captured, but sent his officers who did the work of plunder and death; but at this time he came

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himself
on board, and found one of the passengers
to be a lady, to whom he was betrothed, when he
became a pirate. At the sight of her he was
melted to tears; he told her he would spare her
life, and for her sake the lives of the crew, and
gave her money and clothing enough to support
and clothe her during life. The piratical
crew were in a great rage, because they could
not "have the fun," as they said, "of making them
walk the plank." This was the fourth year that
this pirate ship had been on the sea, and it was
the first time that it was known she was a
pirate; it was thought that she was cast away.
The ship and passengers all arrived safe at
Newport. After arriving at Newport he
[Samuel Webb] found himself without money
and among strangers, and had it not been for
the fear of being taken again by the pirate,
would have returned to England, he thought
that life was better than money, and so he
made the best of his situation, and bound
himself out to a blacksmith and
learned the trade.

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