



My dear Colleague:

I have no desire to interfere with your jurisdiction or to shield a deserter but the man Mitchell of the barkentine Mary L. Prout appealed to me with a story so serious and yet unpressuring on his part, that as a mere matter of reasonable precaution, I took his affidavit. If the Captain has not done anything to bring him under your jurisdiction, I think there is no doubt that he has violated our shipping laws. The desertion of the rest of the crew of which Mitchell knew nothing when he came to me, very much strengthens his report. It seems to me, either that the Captain desired the crew to desert in order to ship another in the same way or else the Mate was an unmitigated brute. Of course, I know you will do the fair thing.

Very truly yours,

Sept. 6th, 1899.

Albert H. Bourges
U.S. Consul, Bordeaux.

United States Consul at Bordeaux, France.

TO HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S CONSUL

AT BORDEAUX:

The undersigned respectfully represent, to you as her Majesty's representative in all matters concerning the rights of sailors on British ships:

That we shipped as seamen on the British barkentine 'MARY L. ~~Trou~~ ^{Thank it is Dawson}, the name of whose captain is to us unknown, at New York on or about the first day of September 1899. We do not know the terms of the articles we signed, but have been informed that we signed receipts for one month's wages and may have done so, but have no knowledge of having received the same.

During the entire voyage to Bordeaux, we have received at the hands of the Mates, the most brutal treatment, having been kicked and cuffed, ropes ended and marlinspiked without limit.

When we arrived at the harbor of Bordeaux, we were told by the Mates that we had better leave the ship and threatened with even worse treatment if we remained.

We believe the Captain desired us to desert in order that he might not have to pay us or take us back to New York where we might make complaint of mis-treatment.

We therefore, make complaint against the Captain of the barkentine Mary L. ~~Trou~~ and respectfully ask that you make full investigation of the same and require him to pay us such sums as we may be entitled to demand and grant us proper discharges so that we may obtain service on other ships, being in fear of our lives if we continue to sail with him.

Signed at Bordeaux, France this 7th day of October, 1899.

E. E. Mitchell

Gustav Gabler

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
DISTRICT OF BORDEAUX, FRANCE.

Personally appeared before me, Albion W. Tourgée, United States Consul in and for said District, CHARLES E. MITCHELL, a citizen of the United States, who being first duly sworn deposes and says as follows:

I shipped on board the British barkentine Mary A. Troup, of Nova Scotia (I think of Halifax register) at New York on or about the 1st of September, 1899. This vessel was commanded by Captain ----- (name unknown), The name of the first mate was Carson, and that of the second mate was Black. The treatment of the hands was very brutal. There were only 11 hands besides the officers and a cook. On the day we sailed while the tug was taking us out of the harbor, one man was very brutally used by the first mate who made several attempts to strike him with an iron pin after which he kicked and beat him, and the man was so frightened that he jumped overboard and swam ashore.

On or about the fourth day out the second mate sprang in our midst and began striking right and left saying he would show us the difference between land and sea for which he had no cause. One night I was with four or five of the other sailors up aloft furling a sail and because I was the last one down, the 2d mate struck me violently on the back of the head, knocking me down, then he kicked me a number of times before I could get on my feet and out of his way. Every day he used the expression that he would massacre the whole lot of us before we got to France. The nearer we got to France the more severe grew the treatment. Every day some of the officers beat the men. This was usually done with a knotted rope's end, but everything that came handy was used for this purpose. I never gave any one of the officer an ill-word, but I was beaten almost every day, kicked and cuffed about worse than a mangy dog. The fare was of good quality and well-

(2)

cooked, but very scant in amount--about half what a man would naturally eat.

After we dropped anchor in the Garonne River, the 2d Mate made the assertion that if any one of us was on board in the morning, he would take a capstan-bar and knock our brains out; on the next day he made the same threat a good deal stronger, and on that day I jumped overboard to swim ashore and was picked up by a man in a row-boat; I left the vessel because I was afraid I would be killed if I remained.

E. E. Mitchell

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 5th day of September
1899.

Abner W. Fonges

United States Consul at Bordeaux, France.

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
DISTRICT OF BORDEAUX, FRANCE.

Personally appeared before me, Albion W. Tourgée, United States Consul in and for said District, CHARLES E. MITCHELL, a citizen of the UNITED States, who being first duly sworn deposes and says as follows:

I shipped on board the British barkentine Mary A. Troup, of Nova Scotia (I think of Halifax register) at New York on or about the 1st of September, 1899. This vessel was commanded by Captain ----- (name unknown), The name of the first mate was Carson, and that of the second mate was Black. The treatment of the hands was very brutal. There were only 11 hands besides the officers and a cook. On the day we sailed while the tug was taking us out of the harbor, one man was very brutally used by the first mate who made several attempts to strike him with an iron pin after which he kicked and beat him, and the man was so frightened that he jumped overboard and swam ashore.

On or about the fourth day out the second mate sprang in our midst and began striking right and left saying he would show us the difference between land and sea for which he had no cause. One night I was with four or five of the other sailors up aloft furling a sail and because I was the last one down, the 2d mate struck me violently on the back of the head, knocking me down, then he kicked me a number of times before I could get on my feet and out of his way. Every day he used the expression that he would massacre the whole lot of us before we got to France. The nearer we got to France the more severe grew the treatment. Every day some of the officers beat the men. This was usually done with a knotted rope's end, but everything that came handy was used for this purpose. I never gave any one of the officer an ill-word, but I was beaten almost every day, kicked and cuffed about worse than a mangy dog. The fare was of good quality and well-

(2)

cooked, but very scant in amount--about half what a man would naturally eat.

After we dropped anchor in the Garonne River, the 2d Mate made the assertion that if any one of us was on board in the morning, he would take a capstan-bar and knock our brains out; on the next day he made the same threat a good deal stronger, and on that day I jumped overboard to swim ashore and was picked up by a man in a row-boat. I left the vessel because I was afraid I would be killed if I remained.

C. E. Mitchell

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 5th day of September
1899.

Abio W. Tourgic

United States Consul at Bordeaux, France.