

### MURDER AND PIRACY.

The *Sag Harbour* Corrector of August 11, gives the following account of an atrocious murder and piracy sent them by the American Consul at the island of St. Helena, to put persons visiting the Nicobar Islands on their guard:—

“After leaving Timor, in July, we cruised off Sandalwood for three months, thence to the coast of Sumatra, Java, &c. We had been rather unsuccessful in not seeing whales, and every other ship we have seen had been the same. In November we steered for the Pogy islands, off Sumatra, and took some whales, but could not remain, the weather proving very unpropitious; therefore Captain G. Wheeler determined to run up the Bay of Bengal, and endeavour to obtain refreshments, some of the crew having the appearance of scurvy. We made the Chowry Islands in December, and by the winds being changeable, and calms, we were delayed some days. At length a breeze sprang up, and we made Teressa and Bompoka, but the captain conceiving the shelter for the ship not sufficient, continued a course intending to enter Nanchowry harbour. On December 22, 1840, we made the land, and in the afternoon came near. Several large canoes with natives came off towards the vessel, but could not come up with us; at last one came up, and we threw them a rope. They requested to know what we had to trade for, where we came from, and where we were going to. Our answer was—‘Nanchowry harbour.’ They promised to bring pigs, yams, cocoa-nuts, &c., on the following day, stating that they had plenty. Another canoe came up alongside, and two or three natives and one European, who said he was a Portuguese, and spoke broken English, as also the natives, asking the same questions as the others had, and had the same replies. They also proposed to come and trade on the following day. Another canoe came up, and one of the natives presented some papers to our captain, which, he said, were certificates from different captains of vessels that he had supplied with refreshments, some in English, Dutch, &c. It raining very fast at the time, Captain Wheeler asked him down into the cabin, whilst he read the papers, and gave him a glass of grog and a striped cotton shirt, which he put on, they all being naked. I wrapped up his papers again; they were in a piece of red bunting; they then went into the canoe again, and appeared well pleased, and promised to bring cocoa nuts, &c., on the morrow. The rain prevented our seeing the entrance to the harbour plainly, and the captain said he would not go that night unless it cleared up before dark. The natives, through one of our boatsteerers, who could speak and understand the Malay language, told him to lower a boat, and sound the entrance; the second mate Mr. Snowden, and his crew, went and sounded, found plenty of water, one of the native canoes leading the way, and returned to the vessel and reported. The rain by this time had ceased, and as it was tolerably clear, the harbour and entire entrance could be distinctly seen; the captain went out on the bowsprit, and we entered the harbour, and anchored in about 15 fathoms water, completely landlocked on all on all sides. At about five o’clock in the afternoon of the 22d of December, some of the natives came to the vessel from the several villages or towns around us, and promised to come and trade on the morrow; a little before dark, the second and third

mates, with one boat and crew, went on shore at one of the villages, and returned in about two hours, having purchased one small tortoise shell, turtles’ shell, and some few trifles, and stated the natives appeared very friendly, and spoke a little English. On Wednesday morning, about 7 o’clock, the captain took his boat, containing William Hardy and George Preston, and went to two of the villages and requested the natives to come early and trade; we saw plenty of fine pigs, poultry, &c. About 8 o’clock the captain returned on board, bringing with him a native, who appeared a chief, or something of the kind, and said many were gone up the interior to gather fruits, &c., to trade with us, and he would see we had plenty of everything after breakfast. He took some with us in the cabin. The captain ordered one of his casks of slops to be brought on deck, and it was opened, and such articles as were required were taken down the cabin to trade with. A number of natives were on the quarter-deck at the time. They appeared pleased, but being lazy, did not haste to trade, and the captain fancied they were frightened. During the day some pigs, cocoa-nuts, oranges, &c., were brought on board. During the morning the captain, this native, the same two boys, and myself, went to look at the watering place, and on our returning to the vessel called at a small village; the natives gave us some toddy to drink, and we went on to the vessel, taking this same native again, and he dined with us in the cabin. After dinner the captain, the same two boys, and myself, also J. Robinson, went on shore to another town, taking with us some handkerchiefs, calico, dungaree, &c., to trade with; upon our coming near this place the natives ran into their houses, and pulled the ladders up after them, and looked out at the little low doors of the houses, they being built upon piles about eight feet from the ground, the water coming entirely underneath when the tide rises. By degrees a great many natives gathered round the boat. I showed them the articles, and, although there were plenty of pigs, fowls, &c., we only succeeded in purchasing one pig for calico, and returned on board, the rest of the ship’s company being engaged in getting up casks for watering the ship, and recovering some dry provisions. Directly after 4 o’clock, in the afternoon, when all work was put aside for the day, the second mate, Mr Snowden, and third mate, Mr Clark, said they were going on shore, at the same village they went to on the evening previous, and asked me to go also; we left the vessel almost immediately, in one of the old whale boats, and 9 hands, in all 12 of us. Upon our nearing the village we perceived another of our old boats leaving the ship, containing either the mate or the captain and some of the ship’s crew; they went towards another village, but cannot say how many were in her. We went on shore, saw several natives, and went up into one of their houses, and gave them some tobacco and cigars, and they gave us fire, and we all commenced smoking (they are very fond of tobacco); we did not make any purchases, and they promised to come to the ship in the morning. In about a quarter of an hour we left this house, and in walking amongst the others saw more natives; all of a sudden we heard a kind of howl or scream, which appeared to proceed from the ship. Mr Snowden said it imported something he did not like to hear, and said, ‘Let us go to the boat and return.’ At the same instant he saw several natives arming themselves with spears, and Robinson asked one old man in the Malay language what they were going to do; his answer was, ‘I do not know;’ and immediately a number of natives came running from the bush at the back of the houses, and attacked us with spears. One struck Mr Snowden, the second mate, through the body; he

fell, and the native then pierced him through with another, and pinned him to the ground, James Robinson was struck immediately afterwards by another native in the same way. Mr Clark was struck through the side with the spear, close to the boat. William Burt, wounded in two places. These two and the rest succeeded in getting into the boat and pushing off towards the vessel, although numbers of spears struck the oars, boat, &c. Upon our nearing the vessel, great was our consternation to find her in the possession of the natives, who were standing all round the rail, in the boat, and every one armed with ship’s cutlasses, cutting spades, lances, harpoons, &c., and in such numbers that we had not the slightest chance to get on board, being totally unarmed ourselves; therefore we had no other alternative than either to be killed there, or endeavour to proceed to sea and risk being picked up by some vessel. As soon as the natives saw us retiring from the ship, they immediately pulled off in canoes from the village we had been attacked at, as also from another village, both being between us and the entrance of the harbour, but though the good management of James Clark, who took the steering oar, they could not come up with us sufficiently to throw their spears to injure us, although they pursued us till dark; we continued at the oars all night; in the morning Chowry Island hove in sight, about seven miles off, we continued pulling against wind, tide, and a heavy sea, and when it came near, about midday, saw some natives fishing, and endeavoured to buy some cocoa nuts from them for handkerchiefs, tobacco, razors, knives, &c., and one rapoe, which we had about us. We succeeded in inducing the natives to let us have 27 cocoa nuts, and we then put to sea without bread, water, sail, or anything to subsist upon besides the 27 cocoa nuts, amongst 10 men, in an open boat, 1,000 miles from Ceylon, and 700 from any other place we could pull towards, having no compass. We agreed to live upon two cocoa nuts per day if possible, but our thirst became so great we were obliged to use more; we cut off the legs of our trousers to make a sail, and tore up the boards from the bottom of the boat, and tied them with handkerchiefs together and made a sail, the mast being one of the oars; in this way we were picked up at sea by her Majesty’s ship *Cruiser*, who took us on board on December 29th, at half-past 8 in the morning, and immediately gave us sago, &c. In the afternoon the captain inquired the particulars of us, and although he had General Sir Hugh Gough, for the China expedition on board, proceeding to China, he altered his course, and on the 31st of September, at 5 in the evening, we re-entered the place, where the pilot was still lying, but not one of our crew was to be found and there was every appearance of their having been all massacred. The vessel was found to be plundered of every article of clothing, bedding, sails, rope, blocks, lances, harpoons, muskets, guns (large), cutlasses, all the spirits, wine, ale, porter, bread, and every piece of iron cut out from her bulwarks, davet-heads, the copper stripped off her bottom, and, in fact, such destruction committed in the short space of one week, as no person can accurately describe, and in a day or two more she would not have been worth removing. We visited the villages, but the natives had fled upon our coming in; found a great quantity of rope, canvass, sails cut in pieces, lances, &c., iron hoop bands from masts, &c., but no clothing or article of dress.

“Twenty-one of the officers and crew are missing, two we saw killed, and ten only escaped.

“There cannot be any doubt of every one missing being massacred—the decks stained with blood in many places, also old sails, canvass, &c. In one part of the deck, the shape of a man having been apparently smashed to pieces can be distinctly traced, and in several places the print of a man’s bloody hand can be seen.

“W. BLACKWELL,  
“Surgeon, whaling bark *Pilot*, of London.”