

## Tracking the Brig Uncas in Historic Newspapers



One of the most useful sources for doing historical maritime research are local newspapers. Just like today, newspapers in the 18th and 19th centuries were sources for all kinds of information, ranging from national and international news, to local rumors and gossip, to advertisements and other public announcements. From a surviving ship manifest, we know that Franklin & Armfield sent 92 enslaved people from Alexandria to New Orleans aboard the Brig *Uncas* in the fall of 1833. Using historic newspapers, we can better reconstruct the voyages of specific ships as they moved from port to port.

The advertisements published in historic newspapers can tell us about the businesses that were operating in the past. On October 30th, 1833, the same day the *Uncas* left Alexandria for New Orleans, Franklin & Armfield published this ad in the *Alexandria Gazette*, advertising the services of the firm's two ships, the *Uncas* and the *Tribune*, and regular service between Alexandria and New Orleans. During the shipping months (the fall, winter, and spring), these ships would travel back and forth between Alexandria and New Orleans, carrying enslaved people to New Orleans and goods and commodities like sugar back to Alexandria.

py to 1833

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**Alexandria and New Orleans**  
**PACKETS.**

 The Brig *TRIBUNE*, Captain Wm. Smith, and Brig *UNCAS*, Capt. Joseph C. Moore.  The *Tribune* is now ready for sea, and will sail as soon as the health of New Orleans is restored. The *Uncas* will follow in fifteen or twenty days thereafter. Should the Potomac keep open, one of the packets will sail from this port as above every thirty days throughout the shipping season. These vessels are commanded by experienced and accommodating officers—will at all times go up the Mississippi by steam—and every exertion used to promote the interest of shippers and benefit of passengers. For cabin or steerage passage, only, apply to

**FRANKLIN, ARMFIELD & Co.**

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Port town newspapers published lists of arriving and departing ships. Sometimes appearing under the heading "Marine Lists," "Marine Intelligence," "Marine Journal," or simply "Ship News," these pieces would list the names of vessels coming into or leaving port and often included the names of their captains and where they were going/coming from. On October 31, 1833, the *Alexandria Gazette* reported that the Brig Uncas, captained by [Joseph] Moore, departed Alexandria the day before, on October 30, 1833, for New Orleans.

### ALEXANDRIA MARINE LIST.

SAILED, Oct. 30,

Brig Uncas, Moore, New Orleans.  
Wind N. W.

Schr. Washington, Knapp, hence at New York 28th.

Schr. Live Oak, in 13 days from St. Thomas, left Brig Remittance, Beers, of this port for St. Domingo.

Spoken, October 22d, off Cape May, Schr. Ranger, from Bangor for this port.

### ALEXANDRIA MARINE LIST.

SAILED, Nov. 5,

Ship Virginia, Turner, Amsterdam.  
British Brig Fair Barbadian, Ryland, Barbadoes.

British Schr. Caraboo, Doane, Halifax.

Ship Jupiter, Knapp, sailed from Norfolk 2d instant for Liberia, with emigrants.

Brig Uncas, Moore, hence for New Orleans, in Hampton Roads 4th.

A week after the Uncas left Alexandria, it was reported in the *Alexandria Gazette* [11-6-1833] that the ship had made it to Hampton Roads at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.

On Wednesday, November 13, word had already reached New Orleans, as reported in the *New-Orleans Commercial Bulletin*, that the Brig Uncas had sailed from Alexandria and was on its way. The paper uses the date the departure was announced in the *Alexandria Gazette*, not the date the ship left port.

... news, &c are sent by this route.

### MARINE INTELLIGENCE:

PORT OF NEW-ORLEANS.

CLEARED.

Packet ship Huntsville, Allen; New York.  
Schr Amella, Caro, Pensacola, Foster and Hutton, Master.  
Schr San Antonio, Arcene, Havana, J E Jolly, Master.  
Schr Libre Zeupollica, Astopol, (Vera Cruz.) Lizardi & Brothers, Master.  
Schr Dorchester, Sibou, West India.

ARRIVED.

Schr Calocanto, from Thibodauxville.  
Steamer Onichuta, Harrison from Grand Gulf.  
Steamer Transport, Patterson, from St Louis.  
Steamer John Nelson, Littleton, from St. Louis.  
Steamer Union, Lord, from Vicksburg.  
Steamer Telegraph, Pryor, from Bayou Tunica.

MEMORANDA.

PHILADELPHIA, Oct. 30--Cpd, brig *Criterion*, McQuillen, for N. Orleans.  
BATH, Oct. 19--Sailed, ships *Carlton*, Howard, *New Orleans*; brigs *Billore*, Coburn, do; *Uncas*, Cross, Barbadoes. Cpd 20th, ship *Champion*, Duncan, Bermuda.  
NEW YORK, Oct 19--Cpd, brig *Alpine*, Parker, for New Orleans.  
PORT SAUOH, Oct. 23--sailed, ship *John Hale*, for N. Orleans.  
ALEXANDRIA, Oct. 31--Sailed brig *Uncas*, Moore, for N. Orleans.  
Ship *Acob Perkins*, 350 tons, was launched at Newburyport 25th ult.  
A copper fastened ship of 477 tons, was launched at Bath, 19th ult. Also on the 16th, ship *Roman*, 350 tons, intended for a packet between Savannah and Liverpool, to be commanded by Capt. Weots.

# MARINE INTELLIGENCE:

## PORT OF NEW-ORLEANS.

### CLEARED.

Ship Henry, Lee, Pierce, Liverpool, Lincoln & Green.  
 Barque Ballochun, Dufour, Bordeaux, Hagan, Jr. & Co.  
 Brig John A Robo, Butnot, Marsolles, Harrison, Brown & Co.

### ARRIVED.

Packet ship Louisville, Price, 15 days from N York, to  
 Foster & Hilton  
 Ship America, Hillman, from N York, to White & Co.  
 Ship Emerald, Food from Boston, L. H Gale.  
 Brig Gustave Barquet, Martny from Bordeaux, to J  
 Gardner.  
 Brig Uncas, More, from Alexandria.  
 Brig Elvira, Grace, from Portsmouth, N B, to Wm G  
 Hewes & Co  
 Brig Globe, Fruto, 63 days from Malaga, Wm G Hewes,  
 and co.  
 Brig Willow, Coburn, from Bath, to master.  
 Schr St Iago, Ludner, from Apalachicola.  
 Steamer Chester, Price, from St Louis.  
 Steamer Warsaw, Keating, from Cincinnati.  
 Steamer Arab, Myers, from Natchez.  
 Steam toy boat Huntress, Herriman, from the S West

On Friday, November 29, 1833, four weeks after the Uncas departed Alexandria, the brig finally arrives in New Orleans. This notice, while difficult to read, appeared in the *New-Orleans Commercial Bulletin* the following day and tersely states, "Brig Uncas, Moore, from Alexandria," noting that it was towed into port by steam tow boat Huntress.

While this marine list makes no mention of the 92 enslaved people known to have been aboard the Uncas, the next time the brig lands in New Orleans on February 7, 1834, the does note, "Brig Uncas, Moore, from Alexandria, via Norfolk, with slaves to Franklin, and to order."

# MARINE JOURNAL.

## PORT OF NEW ORLEANS.

### CLEARED TO-DAY.

Ship Sencor, Stacey, Liverpool, Tievman, Curddy & co  
 Ship Lonsa, Godday, New-York, Master  
 Barque Hannibal, Lott, Liverpool, Gordon, Forstall & co  
 Brig Janet Dunlap, Scott, Glasgow, A & J Dennistown  
 Brig Henry Pa'lman, Lemont, Philadelphia, L H Gale  
 Brig Charles Miller, Knight, New York, Harrod & Quarles  
 Brig Wankineo, Wing, New Bedford, Cockayne, Watts & co  
 Schr. Ontario, Wish, Port au-Prince, Harrod & Quarles

### ARRIVED TO-DAY.

Steamer Chief Justice Marshal, from Grand Gulf, with cotton, &c. to consignees.

### ARRIVED YESTERDAY.

Toyboat Natchez, Morrison, from the Passes, towed to sea ship Bohvar, brigs Horace and Napoleon, and schr. Elizabeth—brought up ship, Crescent, and brig Uncas. Nothing new in the river. Left the bar on Tuesday. At anchor out side, the brig and packet ship Louisville waiting steam.

Ship Crescent, Haley, 18 days fm Portsmouth, with cargo to the master.

Brig Uncas, More, from Alexandria, via Norfolk, with slaves to Franklin, and to order.

Steamer Heroine, Castleman, fm Tchula, with cargo to Reynolds, Byrne & co; Harris, Wright & co; Martin, Pleusants & co; Wilkinson, McNeill & co; J G Greeves, Lockhart & Arrot, and others.

Steamer Bayou Sara, Mumford, from Bayou Sara, with cargo to J Hagan & co; Harris, Wright & co; Wallace & co, and others.

Steamer Abeona, Glover, fm Manchester, with cargo to Harris, Wright co; J Hagan & co, and others.

Steamer Lady Washington, Gordon, from Opelousas, with cargo to J Hagan & co, and others.

Steamer Caspian, Kimball, fm Natchitoches, with cargo to J Hagan & co, and others.

Steamer Amulet, Basham, fm Point La Hache, with cargo and passengers.

Steamer Adolphe, Carrier, fm Opelousas, with cargo to order.

THE price of fresh flour being this day \$4 12


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[By the *M. George*.]  
**LIVERPOOL**, Oct. 5.—Sailed, Prince Regent, White, Savannah; Bradshaw, McCoy, do. Magnet, Sullivan, do.; Ana, Underwood, N. Orleans, Teveo, Sale, Chambers, Baltimore; Superior, Brown, Mobile, Adelaar, Moran, Philadelphia.—27th, Potomac, Marbury, Alexandria; Delaware, M. Michael, Philadelphia.—29th, arr. George Washington, Holdredge, N. York, (off.) Sailed, Tally-Ho, Peabody, Virginia; George, Bristol, Boston.  
**BOSTON**, Dec. 7.—Arr. brig Aquilla, Boardman, London Oct. 15.  
**PROVIDENCE**, Dec. 7.—The brig reported on the Tomgas, proved to be the Franklin, (of Warren,) as stated yesterday.  
**HOLMESHOLE**, Dec. 5.—Arr. brig Grampus, Brewster, Malaga; schr. Eagle, Hinchman, Trinidad.  
 A pilot was yesterday put on board of a brig from Honduras, (probably the Franklin,) and has no doubt put into the Cove.  
**NEW-ORLEANS**, Dec. 7.—Arr. ship Isaac Hicks, Ingraham, Havre 41 days.  
 Cleared, brig Uncas, Moore, Alexandria.

While no New Orleans newspapers could be found online for December 1833 to document the Uncas's departure from that city, the comings and goings of ships was newsworthy enough that some papers frequently published regional or even national arrivals and departures of ships. Listed on December 18 as the very last line in this two-column list, the *Charleston Courier* in South Carolina notes the Brig Uncas of Alexandria left New Orleans two weeks prior on December 7.

**ALEXANDRIA MARINE LIST.**

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ARRIVED, DECEMBER 29,

Brig Uncas, Moore, New Orleans 14 days; to Franklin, Armfield & Co, and Sugar to Edw. Dangerfield.  
 Schr. Armada, Philbrook, Eastport; Salt to A. C. Cazenove & Co.  
 Schr. Globe, Snow, Boston; Plaster to W. Fowle & Co. and freight to the District.  
 Three-masted Schr. Mary, Cahorn, Boston; Plaster to W. Fowle & Co.  
 WIND South East.

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Brig King Lear, Arey, hence at Charleston 23d. Schr. Eliza Jane, Kelly, do. do.  
 Schooner Palestine, Wilson, hence at Charleston, 72 hours from the Capes, 23d.  
 Schooner Baltimore, Dutch, hence at New York 28th.

Finally, on the last day of the year, the *Alexandria Gazette* reported that the Brig Uncas arrived back in port from New Orleans two days earlier. The paper also reported that it was carrying a cargo of sugar belonging to Edward Dangerfield and that the trip took 14 days, about half the time of the journey there.

Combining information published in historical newspapers with other kinds of documents (like ship manifests) helps us reconstruct the movement of specific ships and trace the domestic slave trade between places like Alexandria and the rest of the country.