

*no
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Daniel
Coker*

One Way Passage

Weary with the long struggle for freedom, and inspired, no doubt, by the success of the Republic of Haiti, some Negroes were lulled into believing that the coloniza-

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tion plan was a solution of their problems. Two ships were outfitted by the government for the pilgrimage to Africa, one of which, the Elizabeth, left New York in February, 1820 with eighty-six Negroes, forty of them New Yorkers. A day-to-day account of the voyage was kept by Daniel Coker,⁶ a Negro, whose first notation was, "thousands of colored and white persons" came to see the ship sail. There were three white agents of the Colonization Society aboard. A convoy ship, the Cyane, set sail with the Elizabeth, but was soon lost sight of, and was not again seen until the migrants had reached Africa.

When Elizabeth was a few days at sea, a dog belonging to one of the Negroes bit a dog belonging to one of the white crew and the owners clashed. Tempers flared. A riot between the white crew and the black passengers was only averted when the captain drew his pistols. "I feared for a few moments," wrote Coker, "that there would have been several deaths." On their arrival in Sierra Leone, after a stormy voyage, one of the first sights that greeted the colonists was a ship with one hundred slaves

6. Journal of Daniel Coker; published by Edward J. Coale, Baltimore, 1820.

in iron. Coker says that there was talk of seizing the vessel and freeing the slaves, but nothing further was recorded. His last entry is dated March 30, 1820.

We must save the negroes,
or the negroes will ruin us.
--Samuel J. Mills. 7