

District of Connecticut  
In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit of the U. States

& The President of the United  
States of America.

The Marshall of  
the District of Connecticut  
Greeting

We command you that you have before  
our Circuit Court now in session at  
Hartford in and for said District of  
Connecticut at the opening of the Court

the bodies of the thirty ~~seventy~~<sup>six</sup> africans  
called by the names

Burnah	Carfre	Forru	Shumah
Conomah	Chonlay	Carler	Cabbah
Bangyah	Lah	Yahonah	Yammamu
Kicabo	Dammah	Burnah 2 <sup>d</sup>	Bah
Poomah	Peiah	Bahoo	Morrah
Nahquoi	Quahto	Lese	Can
Firrie	Fahjonah	Fah	Yahboi
Fahbannah	Berrin	Fawnu	Cookamah
Gahbow	Kennah	Carler 2 <sup>d</sup>	Antonio
L Singua			

or by whatever names they are  
called now in your custody & keeping  
whether in Prison or elsewhere in and under  
your charge & care together with the  
cause of their caption and detention & to  
receive and do what said Court may  
order and adjudge in the premises & have  
you there this writ with your return  
thereon - Witness the Hon. Roger B. Taney Esq  
Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States  
at Hartford the 21<sup>st</sup> day of Sept. 1839.

Chas. A. Ingersoll  
Clerk.

# The *Amistad* Case

Citation: Warrant for Habeas Corpus, United States v. Cinque and the Africans, 1839; Record Group 21: Records of District Courts of the United States, 1685 – 2004; National Archives at Boston. National Archives Identifier [2641484](#)

*"...each of them are natives of Africa and were born free, and ever since have been and still of right are and ought to be free and not slaves . . ."*

S. Staples, R. Baldwin, and T. Sedgewick, Proctors for the *Amistad* Africans, January 7, 1840

In February of 1839, Portuguese slave hunters abducted a large group of Africans from Sierra Leone and shipped them to Havana, Cuba, a center for the slave trade. This abduction violated all of the treaties then in existence. Fifty-three Africans were purchased by two Spanish planters and put aboard the Cuban schooner *Amistad* for shipment to a Caribbean plantation. On July 1, 1839, the Africans seized the ship, killed the captain and the cook, and ordered the planters to sail to Africa. On August 24, 1839, the *Amistad* was seized off Long Island, NY, by the U.S. brig *Washington*. The planters were freed and the Africans were imprisoned in New Haven, CT, on charges of murder. Although the murder charges were dismissed, the Africans continued to be held in confinement as the focus of the case turned to salvage claims and property rights. President Van Buren was in favor of extraditing the Africans to Cuba. However, abolitionists in the North opposed extradition and raised money to defend the Africans. Claims to the Africans by the planters, the government of Spain, and the captain of the brig led the case to trial in the Federal District Court in Connecticut. The court ruled that the case fell within Federal jurisdiction and that the claims to the Africans as property were not legitimate because they were illegally held as slaves. The case went to the Supreme Court in January 1841, and former President John Quincy Adams argued the defendants' case. Adams defended the right of the accused to fight to regain their freedom. The Supreme Court decided in favor of the Africans, and 35 of them were returned to their homeland. The others died at sea or in prison while awaiting trial.

**The records of the case heard in US District Court and US Circuit Court for Connecticut are in the holdings of the National Archives at Boston.**

## **Plea to the Jurisdiction of Cinque and Others, August 21, 1839**

United States of America  
District of Connecticut



To the honorable Andrew T. Judson.  
Esqr. judge of the District Court of the  
United States for the District of  
Connecticut.

The several pleas of Cinque, Burnah 1,  
Capree, Dammah, Fourrie 1st, Shumah,  
Fowlick, Conoma, Choolay, Burnah 2nd,  
Bach, Cabbah, Poomah, Kimbo, Piea [?],  
Bang ye ah, Saah, Carlee, Parle, Morrah,  
Yahome, Nahquoi, Quato, Sesse, Con,  
Fourri 2, Kennah, Lammane, Fajanah,  
Faah, Yahboy, Laguanuah, Berrie,  
Fawnci, Chockanaw, Gabbo, Carre, Teme,  
Kene, Mahpra – Africans now in the  
custody of the Marshall of said District  
under color of process issued from this  
Honorable Court on the 29th day of  
August 1839, against the Schooner  
Armistad and the articles of personal  
property on board of her then lying in the  
harbor of New London in said district, on  
the libel of Thomas R. Gedney, a Lieut in  
the United States Navy, commanding the  
United States Brig Washington, in the  
service of the United States in the coast  
survey, & on behalf of Richard W. Meade,  
a Lieut on board said Brig & the officers  
and crew thereof & all others interested  
or credited claiming salvage to be  
awarded them by this Honorable Court as  
for a meritorious service in searching and  
securing the respondents & holding them  
as slaves to certain Spaniards belonging  
to the Island of Cuba, named in said  
Libel;

And also under process of this Honorable  
Court issued and served at Hartford on  
the 18th day of September 1839, while the

respondents were in custody of the Marshall of said District as aforesaid, & within the body of the County of Hartford & within said District & State of Connecticut – and that this libel & claim of Wm S Hollabird Esq. District attorney of the United States for the District of Connecticut and on the libels respectively of Pedro Montez & Jose Ruis:

The said Respondents severally, by protestations not confessing or acknowledging any of the matters & things in said several (inserted) libels to be true, as therein alleged, for plea thereto respectively say -  
That they are severally natives of Africa and were born free, and ever since have been, and still of right are and ought to be free, and not slaves, as in said several libels pretended, or surmised  
– that they were never domiciled in the Island of Cuba, or the dominion of the Queen of Spain, or subject to the laws thereof; – that on or about the 15th day of April 1839 they and each of them were, in the land of their nativity, unlawfully kidnapped & forcibly and wrongfully carried on board of a certain vessel, near the coast of Africa then & there unlawfully engaged in the slave trade, by certain persons to them unknown, and were thence in said vessel contrary to the will of these respondents, unlawfully transported to the Island of Cuba for the unlawful purpose of being there sold as slaves, and were then illegally landed for the purpose aforesaid: -

That Jose Ruis, one of said Libellants, well knowing all the premises, and confederating with the persons by whom the Respondents were unlawfully held as aforesaid and intending to deprive them of their liberty made a pretended purchase of the said respondents, except (illegible) Carre, Teme, Kemi, and Mahgra [?], and that the said Pedro Montez, well knowing the premises and confederating in like manner with the said persons for the purpose aforesaid, made a pretended purchase the said: Carre, Teme, Kemi, and Mahgra [?]; - that said pretended purchases were made from fr persons who had no right whatever to the Respondents or any of them, and were null and void, and conferred no title on the said Ruis or Montez. or right of control over the Respondents or either of them.

That afterward on or about the 28th day of June 1839, the said Ruis and Montez, confederating with each other, and with one Raymon Ferrer, now deceased, Capt of said Schooner Armistad, caused the Respondents severally without law or right to be placed by force on board of said Schooner, to be transported with said Ruis & Montez to service place unknown to these Respondents, and there severally enslaved for life.

That the respondents, being treated on board said vessel by said Ruis & Montez, & the Capt, & crew thereof with great cruelty and oppression, and being of right free as aforesaid, were incited by the love of liberty natural to all men, and by the

desire of returning to their families and kindred, to take possession of said vessel, while navigating the high seas as aforesaid near the Island of Cuba, as they had right to do, with the intent to return therein to their native country, or to seek an asylum in some free State where Slavery did not exist, in order that they might enjoy their liberty under the protection of its government.

That this said Schooner, on or about the 26th day August, 1839, arrived in the possession of the Respondents at Culloden point near Montauk & was there Anchored within about  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of a mile of the shore and within the Territorial jurisdiction of the State of New York; - that the Respondents Jinguah, Camferi, Carlee, Dammah, Baboo, Shumah [?], Nabguoi, Inalte, Con, Fajanah, Berrie, Gabbo, Foola & Teme, while said Schooner lay at anchor as aforesaid, went on shore within said State of New York to procure provisions and other necessaries, and while there, within the jurisdiction of a free state where slavery does not exist, and under the protection of its laws, the respondents were severally seized, as well those who were on shore as aforesaid, as those who were on board of & in possession of said schooner, and were by the said Lieutenant Gedney, his officers & crew of said United States Brig Washington, forcibly & unlawfully taken at the instance of said Spaniards, Ruis & Montez with intent to keep & secure them as slaves for the said Ruis & Montez respectively & to obtain an award of

salvage therefore from this Honorable Court, as for a meritorious act; - that for that purpose the said Respondents, were by said Lieut Gedney and his crew forcibly & unlawfully withdrawn from the jurisdiction [illegible] limits of the State & District of New York where they were seized as aforesaid, & brought to the port of New London in the District of Connecticut, where they were taken into the custody of the Marshall on process issuing on the Libel of Lieut. Gedney as aforesaid, & were by said Marshal confined in the gaol [jail?] in the city of New Haven in said District, & subsequently in the gaol [jail?] in the city of Hartford and were while so confined within this body of said District & State of Connecticut, subjected to the further process of this Honorable Court on the several libels & claims subsequently filed as aforesaid.

Wherefore the Respondents severally say that neither by the Constitution or laws of the United States, or any Treaty pursuant thereto, nor by the law of nations doth it pertain to this Honorable Court to exercise any jurisdiction over the persons of these respondents or any of them by reason of any of the proceedings aforesaid – and they severally pray to be hence disrupted, and suffered to be and remain as they of right ought to be free & at liberty from this process of this Honorable Court aforesaid under which, or under color of which they are holders as aforesaid.

By Staples & Baldwin

[Court information written on the back]  
Thomas R. Gedney [illegible]  
Thomas Armistad [illegible]  
[illegible]  
File in [illegible].  
CAJ Clrk.

## 1. The *Amistad* Case ; Libel of Lieutenant Thomas R. Gedney, on behalf of himself and the officers and crew of the U.S. Brig *Washington*, August 29, 1839

The *Washington* was the brig that seized the *Amistad* off the coast of Long Island. Its commander was Lt. Thomas R. Gedney. In his libel, or written statement, to Judge Andrew T. Judson of the district court, he described the encounter with the *Amistad*. Because he sought salvage of the schooner and its cargo, he was very detailed in his account and itemized all of its cargo, estimating its value at \$40,000 and the value of the Africans as slaves at \$25,000. In maritime law, compensation is allowed to persons whose assistance saves a ship or its cargo from impending loss. The libelants claimed that with great difficulty and danger to themselves they recaptured the *Amistad* from the Africans. They claimed that had they not seized the vessel, it would have been a total loss to its "rightful" owners. Therefore, Gedney and his crew believed they were entitled to salvage rights. At that time in U.S. history, even individuals acting in their official capacity as officials of the government were entitled to salvage rights.

In addition, Gedney relayed that the Africans could speak only native African tongues and that one of the two Spaniards, Jose Ruiz, spoke English. Gedney included in his libel the account of the mutiny as told by Ruiz.

## 2. The *Amistad* Case: Answer of S. Staples, R. Baldwin, and T. Sedgewick, Proctors for the *Amistad* Africans, to the several libels of Lt. Gedney, et. al. and Pedro Montes and Jose Ruiz, January 7, 1840



After the *Amistad* was seized, the schooner, its cargo, and all on board were taken to New London, CT. Had it not been for the actions of abolitionists in the United States, the issues related to the *Amistad* might have ended quietly in an admiralty court. But they used the incident as a way to expose the evils of slavery and generate significant opposition to the practice. Abolitionists asked Roger S. Baldwin, a lawyer from New Haven, and two New York attorneys, Seth Staples and Theodore Sedgewick, to serve as proctors for, or represent, the Africans. The answer to the libels of Lt. Gedney, et. al. and Pedro Montes and Jose Ruiz that the proctors submitted to the district court conveyed the position of the Africans.

### 3. The *Amistad* Case: John Quincy Adams' request for papers relating to the lower court trials of the *Amistad* Africans, January 23, 1841

After the Federal District Court ruled in favor of the Africans, the U.S. District Attorney filed an appeal to the Supreme Court. In the trial before the Supreme Court, the Africans were represented by John Quincy Adams, a former U.S. President and descendant of American revolutionaries. Preparing for his appearance before the Court, Adams requested papers from the lower courts one month before the proceedings opened. For 8 ½ hours, the 73-year-old Adams passionately and eloquently defended the Africans' right to freedom on both legal and moral grounds, referring to treaties prohibiting the slave trade and to the [Declaration of Independence](#).

### 4. The *Amistad* Case: Opinion of the Supreme Court in *United States v. The Amistad*, March 9, 1841

Senior Justice Joseph Story wrote and read the decision of the Supreme Court. The Court ruled that the Africans on board the *Amistad* were free individuals. Kidnapped and transported illegally, they had never been slaves.

Although Justice Story had written earlier that ". . . it was the ultimate right of all human beings in extreme cases to resist oppression, and to apply force against ruinous injustice," the opinion in this case more narrowly asserted the Africans right to resist "unlawful" slavery.

The Court ordered the immediate release of the *Amistad* Africans.

## 5. The *Amistad* Case: Statement of the Supreme Court to Circuit Court, March 9, 1841

Following its decision, the Supreme Court submitted this statement to the lower court where the case originated. The statement indicated that the decision of the circuit court was in part upheld and in part reversed. The part that was upheld related to the freedom of the Africans. The part that was reversed related to Judge Andrew T. Judson's application of the Congressional Act of March 3, 1819. Judson's decision authorized the President to return the Africans to Africa. Ultimately, the abolitionists arranged for their return in early 1842.



District of Connecticut. p.

The President of the  
United States of America to the  
Marshal of the District of Connecticut.  
Gentle-

Whereas a bill is filed in  
the District Court of the United States for  
said District in behalf of Thomas R.  
Gidney for himself and others against the  
School Amistad and other articles of  
personal property, that bill is in the  
words following, to wit,



To the Honorable Andrew Dudson Esq  
Judge of the District Court of the United  
States in and for the District of Connecticut

The Libel of Thomas R Gedney Lieut-  
enant in the United States Navy Commanding  
the United States Surveying Brig Washington  
employed in the Service of the United States  
in the Coast Survey. and on behalf of Richard  
W Mead a Lieutenant on board said Brig  
and the officers and Crew of said Brig Wash-  
ington and all others interested or entitled  
humbly sheweth — That on the 20<sup>th</sup> day  
of August A<sup>D</sup> 1839 the said libellant being  
in with said Brig Surveying between Montauk  
Point & Gardiners Island in the State of New  
York discovered a strange and suspicious looking  
Vessel off Culloden Point near said Montauk  
Point. that they took possession of said Vessel  
which proved to be a Spanish Schooner called the  
Armistad of Havana in the Island of Cuba  
of about 120 tons burthen. and the said libellants  
found said Schooner was manned by forty five  
negroes. some of whom had landed near  
said point for water & there were also on board  
two Spanish Gentlemen who represented and  
as the Libellants verily believe were part owners  
of the Cargo & of the Negroes on board who were  
Slaves belonging to said Spanish Gentlemen.  
That said Schooner Armistad sailed on the



28th Day of June AD 1839 from the Port of Havana  
bound to a port in the Province of Principi  
both in said Island of Cuba under the Command  
of Raymen Ferrer as master thereof, that said  
Schooner had on board and was laden with  
a large & valuable Cargo Consisting of and Amounting  
as the libellants believe to be. 1 box with 4 fowling  
pieces 1 Crate 11 boxes Crockery & Glapwan. 200 Boxes  
Vermicelli. 15 ps linen Stuff. 1 Case Sugar. 25 Bags  
Beans. 25 Boxes Raisins. 50 Horse equipments. 10 doz  
Morocco Skins. 5 Doz Calf Skins. 5 Saddles. 2 doz Bells  
200 feet Rods. 20 hides Sole Leather. 6 Iron Drums for  
warehouse. 8 Crowns 1 Box with 200 Images. 3 Iron  
Kettles. 14 packages Common Linen. 4 packages Holland  
linen. 4 doz parasols or umbrellas 30 pieces Muslin 10  
yds each. 2 doz /r Horse 3 doz Ovens 21 Ingots 90 ps  
Lilia 2 ps Victoria 7 ps Drilling 34 ps Long lawn  
54 ps Calicoes 5 ps Laces 14 ps Muslins 6 ps Stripes  
24 ps Stripes 148 ps Ribbons 10 ps Linen Cambric 45 ps  
Glazed Linen 4 ps Rouen Cassimere 12 doz Shawls  
Fans. Gloves. Shirts. Tapes thread. Towels umbrellas  
29 Muslin Dress patterns 16 woolen Shawls 4 Silk  
15 Rugs Buttons Saddles 75 ps Stripes 48 ps Lilia  
30 ps Long lawn 1 ps Black HKffs 7 ps French Linens  
8 doz Linen Cambric HKffs umbrellas 42 ps Stripes  
Robbins 2 ps Ribbons 6 Coloured Mantles 40 ps  
linen Cambric 800 yds Stuffed linen 2 ps of Merino  
30 Dress patterns 6 Mosquito nets 6 ps Satin 18  
Blankets 1 box Hardware 12 doz HKffs 18 ps Coarse  
linen 50 vols Books. 2 Boxes Books. 70 Sheets



of Copper. Hardware 50 Demijohns Olive Oil 20 Boxes  
Pernicelli 20 Quintals Jerked Beef 15 Hides Sole Leather  
5 Kegs Olives 2 Quintals Hams 190 ps Muslins 26 ps  
Stripes 3 ps Brown Drilling 4 ps Linens 21 ps Colours & fine  
linens 11 doz Ladies Hats 2 Doz Belts 10 doz linen  
Cambric Handkerchiefs 12 Common Do and a large quantity  
of Silks Linens Hardware & provisions to the amount  
in all of \$40,000 Dollars— And also fifty four  
Slaves to wit fifty one male Slaves and three young  
female Slaves who were worth Twenty five thousand  
Dollars, and while on said voyage from Haranna  
to Principe the said Slaves rose upon the Captain  
& Crew of said Schooner & killed & murdered the  
Captain & one of said Crew & two more of said Crew  
escaped & got away from said Schooner, that the  
two Spaniards on board, to wit Pedro Montes and  
Jose Ruiz— remained alive on board said Schooner  
after the murder of the Captain and after the said  
Negroes had taken possession of said vessel & Cargo  
that their lives were spared to assist in the sailing  
of said vessel & it was directed by said Negroes  
that said Schooner should be navigated for the  
the Coast of Africa & said Pedro Montes & Jose Ruiz  
did accordingly steer as thus directed & compelled  
by said Negroes at the peril of their lives in the  
day time & in the night altered their Course & steered  
for the American Shore. but after more than two  
months on the Ocean they succeeded in coming round  
Montauk point. then they were discovered and



boarded by the libellants and the said two Spanish  
Gentlemen begged for and claimed the aid and  
protection of the libellants, that said Schooner  
was accordingly taken possession of & recaptured from  
the hands & possession of said Negroes who had taken  
the same as aforesaid, that said Schooner was brought  
into port of New-London in the District aforesaid  
where she now is and said Schooner would with great  
difficulty exposure and danger have been taken  
by the Libellants but for the surprise upon the said  
Blacks she had possessed thereof a part of whom were  
on Shore, and but for the aid assistance and services  
of the Libellants the said vessel and said Cargo would  
have been wholly lost to the respective owners thereof  
That said Cargo belongs to divers Spanish Merchants  
& others resident in said Island of Cuba & to the  
said Pedro Montes & Jose Ruiz the latter owning  
most of said Slaves—

Now inasmuch as the said  
Thomas R Gedney & said officers & Crew have with  
so much difficulty & danger saved said Schooner  
Armadad and said Cargo and said Slaves  
which would otherwise in all human probability  
have been totally lost to the owners thereof respectively  
Will your Honor please to order the said vessel  
<sup>cargo and Slaves now in her possession</sup>  
to be attached and taken by the process of this Hon-  
-orable Court and that a monition issue to all  
persons concerned to show cause if any they have  
why a reasonable Salvage should not be decreed  
thereon to the Libellants & all others entitled



And that such further and other steps shall be  
taken as the Course of this Honorable Court  
shall direct —  
Thos R Gedney Secy Commr M. B. Big  
Washington  
R. W. Meade by J. Shum's atty  
Lieut. U. S. A.

District of Connecticut  
District Court at New London Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 1839  
Personally appeared Richard W. Meade  
and made oath to the truth of the foregoing libel  
According to his best knowledge and belief —  
attest  
Chas A Ingelsoll  
Clerk

And, Thomas said, that he has been  
employed by said District Court, and the first  
thing directed to be done, at a Special  
District Court, of the United States, for said  
District to be held at Westbury, in said  
District on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of September A.D.  
1839, at 10 o'clock A.M. and the Clerk  
of said District Court is directed to issue  
all necessary and proper process thereon — there  
for we commenced now to take the said  
Schuman Amended, and the articles of Personal  
liberty mentioned in said libel into our  
possession and custody and then, return about



t the value of said Court. Any fact not  
but make due service as return. Witness  
the Hon. Andrew T. Mason District Judge  
of the District of Columbia at Washington  
the 29<sup>th</sup> day of August. A.D. 1839.

Chas A. Pomeroy

District of Columbia

U.S.

New London / Harbor / Aug 30<sup>th</sup> 1839

Thence by Virtue of this warrant at said New London / 2 Miles  
down the Harbor / I took into my custody & keeping the aforesaid  
disarmed Schooner Amistad her Tackle, apparel & furniture  
together with her cargo & as aforesaid & there held subject  
to the order of the Court to which this warrant is returnable.  
And the said cargo being found to be in a damaged state & daily  
receiving more damage I have discharged the same & found  
the Cargo to Inventory as follows to wit  
2 Pairs Dickiey 2 Pairs & a 4 Pairs 68 Pairs Cotton Shirts and  
Shirts 190 Pairs, 2 pairs Cotton Shirts Gingham 3 3/4 Pairs 1. Ditto  
8 Pairs, 1 ditto 4 Pairs 3 pairs Dickiey 5 1/2 Pairs, 1 Pair Pink Muslin  
fig. 17 1/2 Pairs, 4 Mosquito Nets, 3 Cotton Hats, 12 blue cotton Pants  
21 Cotton Hats, 3 pairs dark calico 4 Pairs 1 Pair blk Muslin 2 Pairs  
1 Pair brown Satin gowns 22 Pairs 10 Pairs Cotton socks, 1 pair white  
Caps, 1 Box Artificial flowers, 5 Pairs Madras Hats, 1 Pair  
dark Gingham 8 Muslin aprons, 3 Pairs Cotton Lace  
3 Pairs Linen Cambric 3 Pairs book Muslin, 3 Pairs white  
cotton Lace 1 pair coach Lace, 1 pair white cotton Lace 11 Pairs  
1 Pair Satin gown Laylock 8 Pairs 1 Ditto black 11 Pairs, 1 ditto  
Shirts 20 Pairs 2 pairs white cotton lace 5 pairs checked gingham  
70 Pairs 4 Pairs Dickiey 3 7/4 Pairs 9 pairs Telling 17 1/2 Pairs  
10 pairs checked Cotton 180 1/2 Pairs 5 pairs Striped Linn 95 1/2 Pairs



4 pairs check? Lingham  
9 pairs Light striped Lingham 28 1/2 yds, 1 Bale striped Picking 2 yds  
1 ditto 7 yds. 1 Box dry goods P.M. 1 Box Madras Handkerchiefs P.M. 1 Bale Cotton striped  
& checks 2 yds. 1 Box linen 41 yds. 12 Cotton Handkerchiefs. 11 Shaws. 1 yd Indian  
Muslin 1 1/2 yds. 9 yds Lingham (each 15 yds) 135 yds. 3 yds ditto. one dress in cash  
yds. 1 yd Black Marino full yds. 1 yd ditto 4 1/2 yds. 6 yds Linen 42 1/2 yds. 2 yds  
Striped Taw 40 yds. 1 yd Salin gauze 11 yds. 3 yds Black Marino 11 yds. 5 yds Boas plates  
for Bonnets. Part of yd light duck. 46 yds Stripes & checks 123 1/2 yds. 25 yds Lingham  
27 1/2 yds. 6 yds Picking 28 1/2 yds. 1 yd Calico 11 yds. 1 Bale dry goods R.B. No 14. 1 Bale  
ditto R.B. No 10. 1 Bale ditto R.B. No 12. 1 Bale ditto R.B. No 13. 1 Bale ditto  
A & L No torn off. 1 Box Umbrellas R.B. No 18. 1 Box containing 34 coils wire & packages  
and 61 loose glass knobs. 1 Box dry goods R.B. No 4. 1 Box ditto R.B. No 5. 1 Box ditto  
T No 4. 1 Trunk wearing apparel No 10. (Supposed to be the Capt's) 1 Box 20 yds galoon.  
6 yds Ribbons. 10 yds Lymph. 6 yds pique. 1 Box thread & lace. 26 fans. 1 lot silk lace.  
1 Box needles. 1 Box Ribbons & 2 Bunches quills. 1 Box IT. 40 yds Muslin. 1 Bundle  
hoine 36 Skins. 5 Bundles Umbrellas. 26. 28 pair Frösers. 6 Rocks. 11 British  
7 shirts. 3 Crates. 2 beds. 2. Cloaks. 10 Cloak bags. 5 Empty trunks. 35 demijohns  
olive oil. 194 Boxes Vermacelli SC. 2 Boxes ditto partly filled SC. 7 Boxes Raisins  
SC. 1 Box Glass R.B. No 10. 1 Box ditto. R.B. No 8. 1 Part Fox charts TH. 12 Boxes  
Castile Soap SC. 2 ditto part full SC. 1 Box dry goods T. 1 Box ditto R.B.  
No 16. 1 Box ditto. A & L No 4. 1 Box ditto T No 3. 1 Box ditto T No 5. 1 Box  
ditto P.M. 1 Box ditto R.B. No 6. 1 Box Soap R (part full). 1 Box Books A &  
1 Box part full of books. R.B. No 15. 5 Muskets (in bad order) 1 Box Crockery  
R.B. No 7. 1 Box Leather A & R. C. 1 Box Sheet Copper C. M. L. No 1. 1 Looking glass  
No mark. 1 Box crockery R.B. No 11. 1 ditto R.B. No 9. 1 Bale Calf skins TV. No 2.  
1 ditto No 3. 1 Box Crockery R.B. No 4. part full. 1 Box Horse equipments TV No 1  
1 Box dry goods A & L No 11. 1 Box Crockery R.B. No 6. 1 ditto No 3. 1 ditto No 5  
1 Empty keg. 1 Empty demijohn. 1 Bbl pitch F & C. 1 Keg snuff C & R. C. 1 Small  
roll window blinds. 1 Mariners Compass (brass) 1 Spy glass. 5 papers of Coffee  
(Ground). 2 Horse pistols. and one pocket ditto. 7 1/2 doz plate loose. blue & green  
edged. 20 Tumblers. and one de antw. 8 glass dishes (loose). 4 tinpots (loose) 2 long



bottles (contents unknown). 1 Box dry goods A. L. No. 9. 1 ditto A. L. No. 2. 1 ditto No. 6  
 1 ditto A. L. No. 8. 1 ditto A. L. No. 4. 1 ditto A. L. No. 1. 1 ditto A. L. No. 10. 1 ditto  
 A. L. No. 5. 6 pictures. 1 Box dry goods R. B. No. 1. 1 ditto. A. L. No. 3. 3 Iron  
 Pans S. C. 1 Bundle twine 46 Skins. 2 Bundles. 21 Sticks Carriage tops. 1 Key of  
 Iron Wedges. 1 Saddle. Bridle. & Holsters. 1 Roll Morocco Skins D. C. 2 Tins. and part  
 Blk. piece. 18 bags ditto (Cork in last row) 1 Box Machetes E. F. (Cane Knives) 1 Key  
 Snuff E. R. C. 1 Box Screws. 6 Screw Augurs. 1 Spike gimblet. 1 Box containing 48  
 packages of fancy article. comb &c. R. B. 1 Roll Sole Leather C. B. 4 Rolls of  
 Sole leather J. V. Nos. 4. 5. 6. 7. and also a quantity jerked beef.

Attest Norris Wilcox U. S. Marshal  
 for Dist. Dist.

District of Connecticut

New London August 30<sup>th</sup> 1839

Then I took into my custody, & keeping by virtue of the foregoing  
 Warrant of seizure forty three out of the fifty four slaves within  
 named to wit forty males & three females being all same able  
 to fend within my precinct, whose names are as follows viz  
 Cinque, Antonio, Barnab 1<sup>st</sup>, Carbon, Damiah, Fournie 1<sup>st</sup>, Dura,  
 Malwah, Toosh, Bonomah, Ghoolaj, Durnah 2<sup>d</sup>, Baah, Gabbah, Poomah,  
 Kimbo, Poca, Bang-gelak, Baah, Carlee, Parlee, Moirah, Mahonie  
 Narguoi, Quarta, Sepe, Gon, Fournie, 2<sup>d</sup>, Kinnah, Sammanu,  
 Pakjanah, Paah, Chahoy, Pakquannah, Berrie, Fawnu, Chackamaw,  
 Gabbow, Carre, Peme, Rene, Mahgra Waja & three Chala subject  
 to the order of the Court to which this warrant is returnable,

Attest Norris Wilcox U. S. Marshal  
 for Dist. of Conn.

Manas. R. Gedney

Scholar Amistad

Warrant of Seizure



United States of America,  
District of Connecticut.  
<sup>District</sup> Special Court holden at New Haven in said  
District on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Jan<sup>y</sup> 1840.

To the Honorable Andrew T. Judson Judge  
of the District Court of the United States in and for the  
District of Connecticut.

The several answer of Singua, Burnah,  
Dammah, Fourni 1<sup>st</sup> otherwise called Frederica Shuma, Conoma,  
otherwise called Kdrhaulel Chorlay, Burnah 2<sup>d</sup> Baah, Poma,  
Kumbo, Paah, Bangyeah, Saah, Garte, Parli, Morrah, Nat  
quwi Quato, Sepe, Con otherwise called Kcoony, Fourni 2<sup>d</sup> otherwise  
called Pouli wa lu, Kennah, Lamana, Fajanah, Yabtoy, Taguanah,  
Bernie, Fawnee, Chockman, Gabbe, otherwise called Galabara,  
Carr, Temu, Nemi & Mahzu Africans, now in the custody  
of the Marshall of said District under Color of process  
issued from this Honorable Court on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of August  
1839 against the Schooner Amistad and the articles of personal  
property on board of her then lying in the harbor of New Lon-  
don in said District, on the libel of Lieutenant W. R. Geaney  
a Lieutenant in the United States Navy commanding the United  
States Brig Washington in the service of the United States in  
the coast survey, and on behalf of Richard M. Meade a Lieut  
on board said Brig, and the Officers and crew thereof and  
all others interested or entitled, claiming salvage to be awarded  
to them by this Honorable Court as for a meritorious service, in <sup>securing</sup> ~~securing~~  
and securing the Respondents severally and holding them as slaves  
to certain Spaniards belonging to the island of Cuba, named in



said libels: - and also under process of this Honorable Court issued and served at Hartford on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of September 1839 while the Respondents were in custody of the Marshall of said District as aforesaid in at Hartford within the body of the State and District of Connecticut, in the libel and claim of William I. Hollabird Esq; United States District Attorney for said District of Connecticut and the libels respectively of Pedro. Monte & Don River, and also under process of this Honorable Court issued at Hartford aforesaid on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of November 1839 on the claim and representation of the said District Attorney then and there made and filed.

The said respondents severally by protestations not admitting or acknowledging that the Government of the United States, or any department, Court, or officer thereof hath jurisdiction over the persons of these Respondents or any of them, by reason of any of the allegations & proceedings aforesaid, & not confessing or acknowledging any of the matters & things in the libellants said several libels & Claims to be true in manner and form as the same are therein and thereby alleged, appear before this Honorable Court, and for answer to the several libels, claims & representations aforesaid severally say.

That they and each of them are natives of Africa and were born free, and ever since have been and still of right are and ought to be free, and not slaves, as is in said several libels or claims pretended or surmised: - That they were never domiciled in the Island of Cuba, or in the dominions of the Queen of Spain, or subject to the laws thereof, - that on or about the 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 1839 they and each of them were in the



lands of their nativity unlawfully Kidnapped and forcibly and wrongfully by certain persons to them unknown, who were then and then unlawfully and piratically engaged in the slave trade, between the Coast of Africa and the island of Cuba contrary to the will of these Respondents unlawfully, and under circumstances of great cruelty, transported to the S<sup>d</sup> island of Cuba, for the unlawful purpose of being sold as slaves, and were then illegally landed for the purpose aforesaid:

That Jon Ruiz one of the said Libellants well knowing all the premises, and confederating with the persons by whom the Respondents were unlawfully taken and holden as aforesaid, and intending to deprive the Respondents severally of their liberty, made a pretended purchase of the said Respondents except the said Carr, Carme, Kem and Mahym; and that the said Pedro Monter also well knowing all the premises and confederating with the said persons for the purpose aforesaid made a pretended purchase of the said Carr, Carme, Kem & Mahym, That said pretended purchase were made from persons who had no right whatever to the Respondents or any of them, and that the same were null and void, and conferred no right or title on the said Ruiz or Monter or right of control over the Respondents or either of them. That afterwards on or about the 28<sup>th</sup> day of June 1839 the said Ruiz & Monter confederating with each other and with one Ramon Ferrer now deceased, Capt. of said Schooner Amistad & others of the crew thereof caused Respondents severally without law or right under color of certain false and fraudulent papers by them procured & fraudently used for that purpose to be placed by force on board said Schooner to be transported with said Ruiz



and a Monitor to some place unknown to the Respondents and there enslaved for life: — That the Respondents, being treated on board said Vessels by said Ruiz and Monitor, and their Confederates with great Cruelty and oppression, and being of right free as aforesaid were incited by the love of liberty natural to all men, and by the desire of returning to their families and Kindred, to take possession of said Vessels, while navigating the high seas, as they had right to do with the intent to return therein to their native Country, or to ~~seek~~<sup>seek</sup> an asylum in some free State where slavery did not exist, in order that they might enjoy their liberty under the protection of its Government — that a Schooner on or about the 26<sup>th</sup> of August 1839 arrived in the possession of the Respondents at Bulloden point near Montauk and was then anchored near the shore of Long Island within hailing distance thereof and within the waters and territory of the State of New York. — That the respondents, Singua, Carter, Dammah, Baah, Monat, Chahquai, Quate, Bon, Faganah, Berni, Gabto, Foulcar, Numbo, Faguannah, Cononia, others called Adran, Ma. Yaboi, Burnet, Shuma, Fawm, Peab, Ba & Shode, while said Schooner lay at anchor as aforesaid went on shore within the State of New York to procure provisions and other necessities and while there in a State where slavery is unlawful and does not exist under the protection of the Government and laws of said State by which they were all free, whether on board of said Schooner, or on shore the Respondents were severally seized, as well those who were on shore as aforesaid as those who were on board of & in possession of said Schooner by the said Lieut Gedney, his officers and crew of said United States Brig Washington, without any lawful warrant or authority whatever, at the instance of said Spaniards, Ruiz and Monitor, with



the intent<sup>to</sup> to keep and secure them as slaves to the said Ruiz and Montez respectively and to obtain an award of salvage therefor from the Honorable Court as for a meritorious act. That for that purpose the Respondents were by the said Lieut. Gedney, his officers, and crew aforesaid forcibly and unlawfully withdrawn from the jurisdictional limits of the State of New York and brought to the port of New London aforesaid and while there and afterwards under the subsequent proceedings in this Hon Court taken into the Custody of the Marshall of said District of Connecticut and confined and held in the goal in the Cities of New Haven and Hartford respectively as aforesaid. Wherefore the Respondents severally pray that they and each of them may be set free, as they of right are and ought to be, and that they be released from the custody of the Marshall under the process of this Hon Court under which or under color of which they are holden as aforesaid.

S. P. Staples, & R. S. Baldwin }  
J. T. Sedgwick } Proctors

And at said ~~District~~ Court holden at New Haven in said District on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of January A.D. 1840, here in open Court, came Jose Antonio Velazquez and the House of Asbe & Laca, subjects of the Queen of Spain, and by counsel of the Court file their claim in the under following to wit:



In the matter of the United States Appellants

Singue and others generally claimants and appellees

J. 2 Adams, of Counsel for the said Africans, moves the Court for a certiorari to the <sup>Judge</sup> Clerk of the Circuit and District Court of the United States, for the District of Connecticut, to arrange the Record of the proceedings in the said District and Circuit Courts in this case, by sending up copies of the following papers.

1. The proceedings of the Court of Enquiry held by the Honourable Judge of the District Court on board the Schooner *Amistad* on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1839, and particularly the Indictment against the said Africans for the murder of the captain and mate or cook of the said Schooner. The warrant of Seizure issued by the said District Judge on the said 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1839, directed to the Marshal of the said District, together with the motions and other procees according to Law and the return made by the said Marshal to the said 30<sup>th</sup> of August aforesaid to the said warrant of Seizure; and the return to the said motions.
2. The two warrants of Seizure issued by the said District Judge on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September 1839, and the returns of the Marshal thereon with the procees of motion and return thereon.



The United States. App 4  
No

42.  
The Libellants & Claimants of the  
Schooner Amistad, her tackle  
apparel and furniture, together  
with her cargo, and the Africans  
mentioned and described in the  
several Libels and Claims.

On appeal from the Circuit  
Court of the United States for  
the District of Connecticut.

This Cause came on to be  
heard on the transcript of the re-  
cord from the Circuit Court of  
the United States for the Dis-  
trict of Connecticut and was ar-  
gued by counsel. On considera-

tion whereof, It is the opinion of this Court, that there is error in that  
part of the decree of the Circuit Court affirming the decrees of  
the District Court which ordered the said Negroes to be delivered  
to the President of the United States to be transported to Africa in  
pursuance of the Act of Congress of the 3<sup>d</sup> of March 1819; and that  
as to that part it ought to be reversed; and in all other respects  
that the said decrees of the Circuit Court ought to be affirmed. It is  
therefore advised and decreed by this Court that the decrees  
of the said Circuit Court be and the same is hereby affirmed except  
as to the part aforesaid, and as to that part, that it be reversed;  
and that the cause be remanded to the Circuit Court with di-  
rections to enter in lieu of that part a decree that the said Ne-  
groes be and are hereby declared to be free and that they  
be dismissed from the custody of the Court and be discharged  
from the suit and go thereof quit without day.

March 9. 1841.



United States of America, ss:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

To the HONORABLE the JUDGES of the *Circuit Court of the*  
*United States for the District of Connecticut*

greeting:

WHEREAS, lately, in the *Circuit Court of the United States for the*  
*District of Connecticut*  
before you, or some of you, in a cause, between *The United States, Jose Antonio*  
*Tellinas and others* Appellants from a decree of the  
*District Court of the United States for the District of*  
*Connecticut*, and *José Joaquín Lathens* severally Plaintiffs  
and Appellees, wherein the said *Circuit Court* affirmed the decree of the said *District Court* except as  
respects the claims of *José Antonio Tellinas* and the  
*House of Aspa and Casa*—

as by the inspection of the transcript of the record of the said *Circuit Court*

which was brought into the Supreme Court of the

United States, by virtue of <sup>*an appeal*</sup> ~~a writ of error~~, agreeably to the act of Congress in such case made and provided, fully  
and at large appears.





**JOSEPH CINQUEZ** Addressing his Compatriots, on board the Spanish Schooner, **AMISTAD**, 26 Aug 1839

*Friends and Bishop: we would have returned, till the past year.*  
*I expected it - It would have been long - You had better be better able*  
*to give I could give a many of my brethren than all combined, if the*

... I would not see you with the white stain on I showed you to help me tell the Captain. I thought I should be called  
me, instead as enemy. I don't know why. I'm all to be kept, but the does not pain me. I would be happy if I  
May 7.

1. *Plan of the river of the T. Prop. Washington.* 2. *The then existing plans of Mexico.* 3. *The two*

[illegible]

Wm. Charles H. Cook July 4 1843



1  
United States of America

District of Connecticut

To the Honorable Andrew T. Judson  
Esq. Judge of the District Court of  
the United States for the District of  
Connecticut.

The several pleas of Singa, Bur-  
nack 1<sup>st</sup> ~~Camp~~, Dammah, Fournie 1<sup>st</sup>  
Shumak, ~~Fournie~~, Conoma, Chooloy  
Burnack 2<sup>nd</sup>, Back, Cebbak, Poomak,  
Kimbo, Peck, Bangyak, Saak, Carlee  
Paik, Monak, ~~Fournie~~, Mahquai, Quak,  
Sofe, Con, Fournie 2, Kenuak, Larmanee  
Fajarak, ~~Zach~~, Yekboy, Fagunamah, Berie  
Fournie, Cheekamaw, Gabbo, Cene, Tome  
Keme, Mahora - Africans now in the  
custody of the Marshal of said District  
under color of process issued from this  
Honorable Court on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of August  
A 1839, against the Schoon Amistad,  
and the articles of personal property on  
board of her, then lying in the harbor  
of New London in said District, on the



