

ARBETSBLAD



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THE CAMBRIA

Episode two – Travelling first class

❖ About the characters

Mr. Dodd is the owner of a massive slave plantation in the Deep South. He claims to be an acquaintance of Samuel Cunard, owner of The Cambria. This gives his opinions some weight with Captain Judkins, a point he is not averse to emphasising. He dotes on his daughter Matilda. He is convinced, in the smug self-justified way of those who benefit from systems of cruelty, of the righteousness of his cause in plotting Frederick's demise.

Captain Judkins is a sea captain of some renown. He is quite full of himself, but sees himself as earthy and no-nonsense. His main aim is to win the Blue Riband for fastest trans-Atlantic crossing for the Cunard line. He also runs "a tight ship".

Cecily Hutchinson comes from a Quaker background and is bringing her choir on a tour of England and Ireland. She is based on a member of an actual band, The Hutchinsons, who sang campaigning songs for the abolitionist movement.

Dignam is a ship's steward from Dublin, and fancies himself as a wit and raconteur in a way that infuriates Frederick. He's nose-y and loud and cock-o-the-walk. Still, he has a conscience, and is a staunch follower of Daniel O'Connell. This gives him some awareness of what Frederick has come from, and what he's facing. He would avoid any trouble if he could, and he complies with the order to confine Frederick to the brig, but he facilitates Frederick's escape from confinement, helps to stop him being thrown overboard, and he is a person more at peace with himself at the end of the voyage. For how long is anyone's guess.





Discuss before listening:

- What do you know about the different opinions around slavery in America in the mid-1800's? Who supported slavery and who were opposed?
- How do you think free African-American men were treated in the mid-1800's? Could they do whatever they wanted? Were there any restrictions, do you think? What about women? What do you think it was like being a free African-American woman in the mid-1800's? How much freedom do you think they had?
- How do you think children were treated by their parents at this point in history? Do you think they could play freely? Do whatever they wanted?
- While listening: study the language of the series. What words can you find to indicate that the language is old or archaic? What do words such as Jove and Mammon signify?

Discuss after listening:

- Why do you think Vincent feels telling Leanna this story is pointless? Why do you think he changes his mind?
- Why do you think Mr. Dodd manages to persuade Captain Judkins to run his errands? Why do you think it is so important for Mr. Dodd to convince Mr. Douglass to do a minstrel show?
- Why do you think Mr. Douglass agrees on moving to steerage instead of staying in 1st class?
- What do you think Colette meant when she says "We were all complicit. We let it happen"?

Exercises after listening:

- Study and research: How did African-American people travel on board ships in the time of slavery? Did they? See if you can find facts about such journeys. How were they treated on board? Could they just travel, or did they have to work on board? Could they stay in first class or were they confined to steerage and below?
- Find out as much as possible about the different sides of the slavery debate. What were the opinions in the North? In the South?
When you have collected as many facts as possible, act it out and have a mid-1800's U.S. congress debate. What arguments can you collect beforehand? What arguments will the opposing side give? Try to imagine which arguments they will have and collect counter arguments.

Make it more real and adopt the role of a "typical" congress man.

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| North: | *A spokesmen of American independence |
| | * A Quaker (find out more about Quakers using links below) |
| | * A Christian |
| | * Someone with a lot of European contact |
| | * A suffragette |
| South: | * A plantation owner |
| | * Someone who inherited his wealth |
| | * A conservatist |
| | * An economic |

- Find out what you can about the Hutchinsons and similar traveling bands. Some of their songs have been recorded. See if you can find an old recording and listen to it. What do you think of their music? Why do you think bands like these were successful back in the days?
- What did a ship in these times look like? A trans-Atlantic ship – how big was it? How large of a crew did the ship employ? How much cargo could it keep? Can you find images of such ships? Is there a maritime museum close to you? Do they have an old ship that you can visit?
Compare with today. What do trans-Atlantic ships of today look like? What do they mainly do today? What do they transport? Who travels with them? Can you find a crew member or Captain of such ship and interview them?
- Find out what you can about the refugee situation in Ireland today. What is it like? How many can stay? Where do they live while they wait for asylum? What does an asylum-seeker centre look like?
Compare it with Sweden! Who seeks asylum in Sweden today? Where do they come from? Where do they live? What do they do while they wait for asylum? Visit an asylum centre and talk to the refugees. Interview them about their waiting.

Useful links:

- On abolition:

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam007.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/african/afam006.html>

<http://www.historynet.com/abolitionist-movement>

<http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/abolitionist-movement>

- Suffragette abolitionists:

<https://www.nwhm.org/html/exhibits/rightsforwomen/abolitionandsuffrage.html>

<http://afroamhistory.about.com/od/biographies/fl/Mary-Ann-Shadd-Cary.htm>

- About the Hutchinsons:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hutchinson_Family_Singers

http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Hutchinson_Family_Singers



- On trans-Atlantic journeys:

<http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/passenger-arrival.html>

<http://www.gjenvick.com/SteamshipArticles/TransatlanticShipsAndVoyages/OceanSteamships/1882/index.html#axzz3txQHc7tT>

- On paddle steamers:

<http://paddlesteamers.info/steamerindex.htm>

- On Quakers:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Quakers

<http://www.quakerinfo.org/index>

- On the asylum process in Ireland:

http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/asylum_seekers_and_refugees/the_asylum_process_in_ireland/

Did you know?

“Our nig: sketches from the life of a free black” by Harriet E. Wilson published in 1859 is considered to be the first novel published by an African-American woman in North America.

The novel, which is autobiographical, was not well received by North American abolitionists as it implies that some sorts of slavery existed even in the North. Also, it challenges the concepts of race, something abolitionists were not very concerned with as they wanted to focus on slavery only.