

## The Jamaica Packet



### Orkney Islands

The ship Jamaica Packet left Scotland for the West Indies and North Carolina during 1774. The passengers were from the Orkney Islands and had been forced to leave the Highlands because of high rents. As all voyages in that day, accommodations consisted of a small compartment below deck, poor ventilated. According to the contract made between the tacksman and the captain, these emigrants had a weekly diet of a pound of meat, two pounds of oatmeal, biscuit and some water. After awhile they consumed spoiled pork, moldy biscuit and oatmeal and drank brackish water.

The journey took about two months. The passengers had only enough money for the regular charges, and were forced to sell themselves to the

ship owner as indentured servants in order to pay for their transportation. As the vessel crossed the Tropic of Cancer, threats from the the crew to drag them behind the ship with a rope extorted the little property which they still possessed.