

Chapter Title: David Sugarr and Henry Mundy: escaping from colonial planters in London

Book Title: Freedom Seekers

Book Subtitle: Escaping from Slavery in Restoration London

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Published by: University of London Press, Institute of Historical Research. (2022)

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv293p4c5.21>

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### 13. *David Sugarr and Henry Mundy: escaping from colonial planters in London*

*TWO Negroe Servants, David Sugarr and Henry Mundy went away from their Master Colonel Drax, from his house in Hatton-Garden, on the 27th instant, with several of his Goods; being young men both, Pock-broken; Mundy hath Gold Ear-rings and is very black, the other Tauney, their Liveries are black, with grey Campain Coats and Swords. Whoever gives notice of them to their Master, so that they may be apprehended, shall have a Guinea reward for each.*

*The London Gazette*, 1 December 1679

What may well have been the very first newspaper advertisement for a freedom seeker in London appeared in the *Mercurius Politicus* in September 1655. Six years after the execution of Charles I and just four months after the fleet dispatched by Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell had captured Jamaica, an unnamed fourteen-year-old 'Negro Boy' in a blue livery, who ingeniously 'wears a Perriwig for disguise', eloped in London.<sup>1</sup> He was the first of a number of London freedom seekers who had spent part of their lives in the colonies. But this runaway was unusual in that he was 'A Negro Boy of the Lord Willoughbys of Parham': he had escaped from Willoughby when the latter was incarcerated in the Tower of London, where the unnamed freedom seeker had resided with and served him. Willoughby was deeply involved in England's New World colonies and their developing use of enslaved Africans, and later appointed a deputy to take control of his colonial interests in Surinam. This deputy's family included the young Aphra Behn, whose experiences of racial slavery would inspire her to write *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave*, one of the first English-language works of prose fiction about enslaved Africans.<sup>2</sup> The very, very little we know of this boy who

<sup>1</sup> 'A Negro Boy', *Mercurius Politicus, Comprising the Sum of All Intelligence, with the Affairs and Designis now on foot in the three Nations of England, Scotland, & Ireland, In defence of the Commonwealth, and for Information of the People*, 20 Sept. 1655.

<sup>2</sup> Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko; or, The Royal Slave* (London, 1688). For Willoughby's release and his appointment of a deputy, and the likelihood of this deputy's family party including Behn, see J. Rodway, *Chronological History of the Discovery and Settlement of Guiana, 1493–1668* (Georgetown, Guyana, 1888), p. 138; L. Brown, 'The romance of empire: *Oroonoko* and the trade in slaves', in *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century Literature*, ed. L. Brown (Ithaca, N.Y., 1993), at pp. 26–7.

escaped into a city wearied by Civil War and half-way through the Cromwellian Protectorate contrasts with the huge archival impression made by Willoughby. However, the records of Willoughby's colonial ventures may suggest something about the young freedom seeker's background, and they reveal a great deal about the ways in which elite colonial adventurers began developing and profiting from colonies built upon plantation agriculture and racial slavery, and how some of these colonists would bring enslaved people with them on their return to England.

Francis, the fifth Baron Willoughby of Parham, acceded to his title following the death of his elder brother in about 1618 (Figure 32). During the 1630s he opposed the autocratic policies of Charles I and began the Civil War as a Parliamentarian, commanding their forces in his native Lincolnshire. But in September 1647 his disagreements with Cromwell and other army commanders led to his arrest and impeachment for treason. Following his release on bail and the confiscation of his ancestral lands in Lincolnshire, Willoughby fled to Holland and declared his allegiance to Charles I. In 1647 the earl of Carlisle leased his claim to Barbados and the West Indies to Willoughby for twenty-one years. After securing Charles II's confirmation of this lease and a commission as lieutenant general of the West Indies, Willoughby sailed for Barbados in early 1650. His tenure was short-lived for in January 1652 a Parliamentary fleet with support from some Parliamentarian colonists removed Willoughby from power. Willoughby's surrender of Barbados to Sir George Ayscue included a guarantee that his own lands, plantations and property in Antigua, Barbados and Surinam would 'be to him entirely preserved'. Willoughby may have been displaced from the governorship but his control of the enslaved Africans he owned remained secure. Having been relieved of his command, Willoughby travelled back to England via the nascent colony of Surinam. While attempting to regain control of his sequestered family lands in Lincolnshire, he gave his support to a planned Royalist uprising in the spring of 1655, and it was this failed rebellion that resulted in his imprisonment in the Tower of London between June 1655 and September 1657.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 'Patent from Jas. Earl of Carlisle to Fras. Lord Willoughby of Parham, constituting him Lieut.-general of the Caribbee Islands, "for the batter settling and securing" of them for 21 years from Michalmas 1646', 26 Feb. 1647, 'America and West Indies: February 1647', in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies: i, 1574-1660*, ed. W. N. Sainsbury (London, 1860), p. 327, *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/america-west-indies/vol1/p327>> [accessed 27 April 2020]; 'Articles agreed on by Lord Willoughby of Parham and Sir Geo. Ayscue, Daniel Searle, and Capt. Michael Packe for the rendition of Barbadoes to Sir Geo. Ayscue, General of the State's fleet before said island, for the use and behoof of the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England', 'America and West Indies: Addenda 1652', in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies: ix, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674*, ed. W. N. Sainsbury (London, 1893), pp. 85-7, *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/america-west-indies/vol9/pp85-87>> [accessed 27



Figure 32. ‘Francis Willoughby, 5th Baron Willoughby of Parham’, published by Edward Harding (1798), National Portrait Gallery, London.

April 2020]; ‘To receive into the Tower Lord Newport, And. Newport, his brother, Francis Lord Willoughby of Parham ... and keep them in safe custody till delivered in course of law’, 9 June 1655, in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, [Commonwealth] 1649–1660, preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty’s Public Record Office*, viii: January–October 1655, ed. M. A. Everett Green (London, 1881), p. 164. For biographical details of Willoughby see S. Barber, ‘Power in the English Caribbean: the proprietorship of Lord Willoughby of Parham’, in *Constructing Early Modern Empires: Proprietary Ventures in the Atlantic World, 1500–1750*, ed. L. H. Roper and B. Van Ruymbeke (Leiden, 2007), pp. 189–212; M. A. LaCombe, ‘Francis, fifth Baron Willoughby of Parham’ (2004), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29597>> [accessed 27 April 2020]; M. Parker, *Willoughbyland: England’s Lost Colony* (London, 2015).

After his first arrival in Barbados in 1650 Willoughby had written a long letter to his wife Elizabeth: 'since all is gone at home it is time to provide elsewhere for a being.' He described Barbados enthusiastically as 'one of the best and sweetest islands in the English possession' and Surinam as 'the sweetest place that ever was seen', and promised to send sugar to her as a valuable commodity with which she might compensate unnamed third parties who had loaned her money. But what was only implicit in this letter was that Willoughby's hope of a restoration of his own fortune and property rested on the importation and exploitation of enslaved Africans. His only mention of such people in this correspondence was an aside about the utility of 'negroes, which are the best servants in these countries, if well tutored'.<sup>4</sup> It was during the 1650s, with the English Civil War little more than an inconvenient distraction, that Royalists and Parliamentarians in Barbados were transitioning from White bound and indentured servants to enslaved Africans, and Willoughby believed that a constant supply of enslaved labour was essential to the success of the colonial endeavour and the production of sugar. In about 1655 Willoughby proposed a series of incentives for all 'Such as are able & willing to transport themselves at their own charge' to Surinam. In addition to fifty acres of land per adult and thirty acres per child, Willoughby promised to advance provisions and tools as well as enslaved 'Negroes'.<sup>5</sup>

Some seven years later, following the Restoration and Willoughby's resumption of his governorship of Barbados and Surinam, and with sugar production generating tremendous profits, Willoughby and the Barbados Council sought assurances that the Royal African Company would furnish a sufficient number of enslaved Africans at reasonable prices. The duke of York, the company's governor, responded to Willoughby by promising to supply at least 3,000 Africans annually.<sup>6</sup> Although Willoughby's estate in England had been restored to him, it was his plantations in Barbados, Surinam and Antigua that significantly increased his wealth. When Willoughby was lost with his ship in a hurricane in 1666 his will left his plantations in Surinam, Barbados and Antigua to his children and grandchildren, as well as numerous bequests, including a grant of 100,000 pounds of sugar annually

<sup>4</sup> Lord Willoughby to Lady Willoughby, c.1651, in *Memorials of the Great Civil War in England from 1646 to 1652, edited from the Original Letters in the Bodleian Library*, ed. H. Cary (London, 1842), ii. 317, 314, 316, 312.

<sup>5</sup> 'Certain Overtures Made by Ye Lord Willoughby of Parham Unto All Such As Shall Incline to Plant in Ye Colonye of Saranam on ye Continent of Guiaiana', British Library, Sloane MS. 159, fol. 21.

<sup>6</sup> G. F. Zook, 'The Company of Royal Adventurers trading into Africa' (unpublished Cornell University PhD thesis, 1919), p. 74.

to his nephew Henry Willoughby, 50,000 pounds of Muscovado sugar to Peter La Rouse 'for his constant care', 20,000 pounds of sugar to Jane Frith 'for her faithful care in the government' of his family, and 20,000 pounds of sugar to each of his five executors. Sugar was as significant a currency in his will as land or money, an object of enormous value. Yet the enslaved who produced it were not mentioned, an invisible yet essential part of the wealth that Willoughby bequeathed to his heirs.<sup>7</sup>

Willoughby had spent only two months in Surinam – which he called Willoughbyland – before returning to England. Quite possibly he had brought the enslaved young boy who would escape from him in London from Barbados via Surinam, for, like Willoughby himself, a good number of the early Surinam settlers had come from Barbados, bringing with them enslaved workers, and the first English ship bringing enslaved Africans directly from Africa to Surinam did not arrive until 1664. The arrival of that ship, the *Swallow*, was referred to in a letter that mentions 'The Ladeyes' who 'live at St Johnes hill', quite possibly Behn and her mother and sisters; perhaps this was the slave ship that at least partially inspired Behn's later description of the Middle Passage in *Oroonoko*.<sup>8</sup>

In 1652, more than a decade earlier, Willoughby had sailed back to England, probably with an enslaved boy as his personal attendant, and three years later this boy took advantage of Willoughby's incarceration to escape. The freedom seeker was part of an unknown number of enslaved people owned by the aristocrat, most if not all of whom had been born in Africa. Over the eleven years between the arrival of the first slave ship in Barbados in 1641 and Willoughby's departure in 1652 records survive for thirty of these ships depositing more than 6,600 enslaved Africans on the island. The African regions from which twenty-one of these ships sailed are known, and of these 67 per cent came from Calabar and the Bight of Benin, so this was the most likely point of origin for the young runaway.<sup>9</sup> This

<sup>7</sup> Will of Francis Lord Willoughby of Parham, 17 July 1666 (proved 10 May 1678), National Archives, PROB 11/356/511.

<sup>8</sup> 'Letters to Sir Robert Harley from the Stewards of his Plantation in Surinam, 1663–1664', repr. in *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623–1667*, ed. V. T. Harlow, 2nd series, no. 56 (London, 1925), p. 90. This first transatlantic slave ship to arrive in Surinam was the *Swallow*, which landed 130 enslaved Africans in Feb. 1664. See Voyage of the *Swallow*, Voyage 9587 in Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade – Database <<https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database>> [accessed 27 April 2020]. See also J. Roberts, 'Surrendering Surinam: the Barbadian diaspora and the expansion of the English sugar frontier, 1650–75', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, lxxviii (2016), 225–56; Parker, *Willoughbyland*, p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> It is very likely that there were more voyages but that records of these have not survived or have not yet been added to the Slaves Voyages database, but these 30 (and the 20 for

region was home to various political and ethno-linguistic groups, and the boy might have come from the Igbo, Ibibio, Duala or any of a number of such communities.<sup>10</sup>

While it is tempting to wonder if this young African met Aphra Behn and perhaps influenced *Oroonoko*, it is impossible given that when he escaped she was fifteen and living in Canterbury. She would not meet Willoughby until the 1660s, and her story was probably shaped by the people she met during her own visit to Surinam.<sup>11</sup> Behn described Oroonoko as a native of ‘Coramantien’ on the Gold Coast, a different people from a different region some 800 miles to the east of the probable home region of the freedom seeker who had eloped from Willoughby. Yet some of what Behn described, presumably gleaned from her own observations and perhaps from discussions with the enslaved themselves and with the Whites who trafficked and enslaved them, might easily have applied to the Africans who sought liberty in London. Thus, for example, she described the country marks inscribed on the bodies of some West Africans as ‘so delicately Cut and Rac’d all over the fore-part of the Trunk of their Bodies, that it looks as if it were Japan’d; the Works being raised like high Poynt round the Edges of the Flowers. Some are only Carv’d ... at the Sides of the Temples’.<sup>12</sup> Today most historians believe that Behn visited Surinam, but whether or not she did, it is entirely possible that the enslaved and free Africans she encountered in London may very well have helped inspire and shape *Oroonoko*.

Elite and aristocratic prisoners held in the Tower of London were sometimes afforded relatively comfortable apartments in which they might be attended by personal servants and to which food and other goods were brought in. These servants could come and go, perhaps running errands and delivering or receiving messages and goods for those they served, making escape for this particular young African a real possibility. And perhaps he had attempted escape before, given that Willoughby’s advertisement noted that ‘he wears a Perriwig for disguise’. It seems unlikely that a highly stylized English wig could have disguised a fourteen-year-old African boy, so this may indicate a broader contemporary usage of the word ‘disguise’ meaning to dress, cover or conceal,

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which no point of origin is recorded) provide an indication of where many of the first generation of enslaved Africans in Barbados had originated.

<sup>10</sup> Map 83, ‘Political and ethnolinguistic boundaries along the Bight of Biafra during the slave-trade era’, in D. Eltis and D. Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven, Conn., 2010), p. 125.

<sup>11</sup> J. Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (London, 1996), pp. 14–15. See also E. Campbell, ‘Aphra Behn’s Surinam interlude’, *Kunapipi*, vii (1985), 25–35; Brown, ‘The romance of empire’; K. M. Rogers, ‘Fact and fiction in Aphra Behn’s “Oroonoko”’, *Studies in the Novel*, xx (1988), 1–15.

<sup>12</sup> Behn, *Oroonoko*, p. 139.

in this case covering the boy's own hair. Whatever Willoughby meant, he was clearly indicating a knowledge of the ability of this young boy to at least partially conceal his identity as the enslaved property of another man, and to travel unhindered around London. The young freedom seeker escaped into Cromwell's London, the metropolitan hub of a fast-expanding commercial empire. An English naval force had captured Jamaica a few months before this young freedom seeker eloped from Willoughby: whatever the domestic situation, and regardless of whether parliament or the king ruled, England's slave empire was rapidly expanding.

Willoughby was one of a significant number of colonial governors, planters, merchants and others who brought enslaved people back to London. While Willoughby spent only a relatively short period of time in Barbados and Surinam, other Englishmen settled in the colonies and in some cases established large and successful plantations built upon enslaved labour. One of these was Henry Drax, who established one of the first Barbados plantations to grow and process sugar. He built Drax Hall on the plantation in the 1650s, a mighty English country house that is owned to this day by his descendants and that continues to dominate St George parish as one of two surviving Jacobean plantation houses on the island. By the time of the Barbados census of 1680, Drax was one of the island's largest and wealthiest planters, owning more than 700 acres and 327 enslaved Africans, and shipped £5,000 worth of sugar to England annually.<sup>13</sup> But a year earlier, and by then fabulously wealthy, Drax had sailed to London never to return to his Barbados plantations again. He took with him at least two enslaved 'Negroe Servants, *David Sugarr* and *Henry Mundy*', both of whom eloped from Drax some four months after their arrival in the capital. They were dressed as befitted their role as servants to a very wealthy man who was living in a fashionable house in Hatton Garden, 'very gracefully built, and well inhabited by Gentry'. The freedom seekers' 'Liveries are black, with grey Campain Coats and Swords' and '*Mundy* hath Gold Ear-rings'.<sup>14</sup>

Before leaving Barbados Drax had written detailed instructions for Richard Harwood, the man he employed to manage his plantation in his absence. These provide the most detailed guide to the lives and working conditions for enslaved Africans during the early years of English sugar plantations. An arduous agricultural regimen was matched by several months of

<sup>13</sup> Barbados Census, Sir J. Atkins to Mr Blathwayt, 1 April 1680, CO 1/44, item 47, 173; R. S. Dunn, 'The Barbados census of 1680: profile of the richest colony in English America', *William and Mary Quarterly*, xxvi (1969), 3–30, at p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> 'Two Negroe Servants', *London Gazette*, 1 Dec. 1679. 'Hatton Garden', in J. Strype, *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster ... written at first in the year MDXCVIII by John Stow ...* (London, 1720), i. 255–6.



semi-industrialized processing of the crop, so that semi-refined sugar, molasses and rum could be exported to England. Decades of intensive agriculture had exhausted the island's soil, and the work regime described by Drax and designed by him and others to extract sugar and profit from people and the land involved an almost unimaginable amount of back-breaking labour. With blithe indifference, Drax told Harwood that to keep sugar agriculture and production on track it would be necessary 'to supply the places of those who shall be deseased or Dy' by annually purchasing fifteen or so 'Choyce Young Negros', implying that all members of the sizeable original workforce he left to Harwood would have died within little more than twenty years.<sup>15</sup>

Drax was right and enslaved Africans died in astonishing numbers in mid- to late seventeenth-century Barbados. The 1680 census recorded a total of 38,782 enslaved people on the island, even though an estimated 116,000 had been brought to Barbados between 1626 and 1675.<sup>16</sup> Few people had been born, but many had died. One might assume that for Sugarr and Mundy, the former named for the crop that had made Drax so wealthy, life in London would have been infinitely preferable to the harsh working conditions and early death facing them on the Drax Hall plantation. We cannot know the circumstances of their escape shortly after arriving in London: perhaps Drax was a cruel master, and maybe he had threatened to return them to plantation slavery. These men had probably experienced the Middle Passage and then plantation slavery: even if their working lives in London were dramatically better than they would have been in Barbados, Sugarr and Mundy knew what White Englishmen were capable of doing to enslaved Africans, and that a return to the horrors of the Caribbean was always possible. Whatever the immediate cause, these young men chose to take their chances. Escape in London may have been somewhat easier and less dangerous than it would have been in Barbados, and perhaps the opportunity to seek out a new life was too tempting.

Henry Drax died in 1682, some three years after David Sugarr and Henry Mundy had eloped. His will detailed the disposal of extensive land and property holdings but contained no direct mention of the enslaved people he owned in the colonies or perhaps in England. Drax allowed his wife £400 per annum 'to be paid her out of the yearly produce of my Plantation in Barbados', as well as bequests to others 'out of the profits of my Barbados estate'. Drax's male heir would receive a life interest in 'All my Manors, Lands Tenements Plantations ... whatsoever with their appurtenances

<sup>15</sup> P. Thompson, 'Henry Drax's instructions on the management of a seventeenth-century Barbadian sugar plantation', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, lxvi (2009), 565–604, at p. 585.

<sup>16</sup> Estimates function, Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade database.

whatsoever in England and Barbados'.<sup>17</sup> The enslaved who had generated all this wealth were no more than 'appurtenances', and neither those in Barbados nor any in England were identified. David Sugarr and Henry Mundy may have been returned to Barbados, or perhaps they were still in England and either bound in service to the Drax household or free.

Nine years later, on 25 October 1691, Hannah Sophia Drax was baptized at St Martin in the Fields, which lay about one and a half miles southwest of Drax's home in Hatton Garden. The parish register recorded that Hannah was the daughter 'of Henry Drax a Negroe & Sarah'.<sup>18</sup> Was Henry Drax the same Henry Mundy who as a young man had eloped from Drax in 1679? If so, why had he taken the name Drax? Perhaps it was a mark of gratitude for having his freedom recognized by Drax, or perhaps for his position as a nominally free servant: London's parish records suggest that at least some people of colour took on English last names, especially when seeking baptism or marriage. The name Drax was synonymous with colonial wealth and power and may have helped Henry Drax make his way in London. If Henry Drax's wife Sarah had been Black, this would almost certainly have been registered in the parish record, as for her husband, so the absence of any indication means that she was probably White. If Henry Drax was indeed the man who had attempted to escape from the planter Henry Drax over a decade earlier, this simple baptismal record suggests that at least some of London's runaways ended up free, whether through their own agency or because their actions encouraged enslavers in England to make provision for these bound workers' freedom.

Just a couple of years before Hannah's baptism, another bound servant of a colonial planter escaped in London. Born in Barbados, Anthony was described in an advertisement as 'a black above 20 years old ... tall, and well set' and with 'a broad full Visage'. Speaking 'very good English', he wore 'his hair longer and fuller than Ginney blacks' from West Africa.<sup>19</sup> The advertisement began with the formulaic statement 'RUN away from Mr. William Bird', who was almost certainly William Byrd I, the owner of Westover, one of Virginia's largest plantations. The son of a London goldsmith named John Bird, William Byrd I had travelled to Virginia in 1670 at the invitation of his maternal uncle Thomas Stegge, and a year later

<sup>17</sup> Will of Henry Drax of Saint Giles in the Fields, 20 Sept. 1682, National Archives, PROB 11/370/554.

<sup>18</sup> Baptism of Hannah Sophia Drax, 25 Oct. 1691, Baptized, Parish Register 1681–1692, St Martin in the Fields, 151. London Metropolitan Archives, London, England, STM/PR/6/32. Digitized copy of original consulted at <<https://www.ancestry.co.uk>> [accessed 1 April 2021].

<sup>19</sup> 'RUN away from Mr. William Bird ... Anthony', *London Gazette*, 9 Aug. 1688.

Byrd inherited Stegge's estate. He married Mary Horsmanden in 1673, and all five of their children were sent back to England for their education under the watchful eye of Mary's family.<sup>20</sup>

In the spring of 1687 William Byrd I had sailed to England, where he succeeded in securing several major appointments, including deputy auditor and receiver general of revenues in Virginia. Presumably he also visited his children including his son William Byrd II, then about thirteen years old and in school but soon to begin working for the mercantile firm of Micajah Perry and Thomas Lane. Specialists in the Barbados and Virginia trade, Perry and Lane handled much of the Byrd family's business. William Byrd I left England for Virginia on 19 January 1688, some seven months before Anthony eloped. Had he left Anthony with family or business associates in London or as a personal servant for his son? The advertisement specified that if captured Anthony should be returned to Edward Bird in Durham Yard in the Strand, perhaps a member of the large extended family descended from John Bird.<sup>21</sup>

Anthony's birth in Barbados can easily be explained by the fact that William Byrd I – like other Virginians of this era – regularly purchased enslaved people from Barbados, and his correspondence with Perry and Lane (the merchants with whom his son would gain work experience) includes instructions to purchase enslaved people and goods from the island. On 30 December 1684, for example, William Byrd I asked the merchants to secure from Barbados '5 or 6 Negro's between 12 and 24 years old[,] about 1000 gallons of rum[,] 3 to 4000 pounds of sugar (muscovado) & abou[t] 200 pounds ginger'. A year later he wrote to another firm about his desire to purchase from Barbados '4 Negro's, 2 men 2 women not to exceed 25 years old & to bee likely', and he would later write that these 'Negro's proved well'.<sup>22</sup> Perhaps Anthony was one of these, and because Byrd was pleased

<sup>20</sup> The extensive family in London used both Bird and Byrd, and it was only later in life that William Byrd I began using only Byrd.

<sup>21</sup> While it is possible that Anthony belonged to a William Bird with no connection to the Byrds of Westover, there is no evidence of anyone with that surname in London having any kind of connection to the plantation colonies who might have owned an enslaved African. For the Byrd family in Virginia and London see *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684–1776*, ed. M. Tingling and L. B. Wright (Charlottesville, Va., 1987), i. 4; P. Marambaud, *William Byrd of Westover, 1674–1744* (Charlottesville, Va., 1971), pp. 15–17; *The Commonplace Book of William Byrd II of Westover*, ed. K. Berland, J. K. Gilliam, and K. A. Lockridge (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2001), pp. 7–9.

<sup>22</sup> W. Byrd I to M. Perry and T. Lane, 30 Dec. 1684, in *Correspondence of the Three William Byrds*, p. 29; W. Byrd I to Sadler and Thomas, merchants in Barbados, 10 Feb. 1686, pp. 50–1; Byrd to Sadler and Thomas, 18 Oct. 1686, p. 65.

with the young enslaved man's performance of his duties he had decided to take him to London, and then leave him there to serve his family.

It was not just colonial planters who used enslaved people to serve them during their visits to London. In late 1702, for example, the Barbados merchant Benjamin Quelch brought with him to London a young enslaved Black woman. Described in his advertisement as 'A Negro Maid, aged about 16 Years', she was 'much pitted with the Small-Pox, speaks English well, having a piece of her left Ear bit off by a Dog'. Only an unusual accident could have caused the latter injury, and it is possible that dogs had chased and bitten her during an earlier escape attempt in the colonies. She may have been serving both Quelch and his wife Elizabeth when she eloped on 8 December, and a first advertisement on 12 December was followed by a second on 2 January 1703, by which point the young woman had been at liberty for three weeks.<sup>23</sup> A year later Quelch and his wife would join the exodus from Barbados to South Carolina, taking enslaved people with him and buying land and establishing his business in the new colony. If she had been recaptured in London and brought back to Barbados, it is possible that this young woman would have been part of the human property Quelch transferred to South Carolina. But if she had eluded Quelch and had not been returned to him or to his representative 'Mr Lloyd, at his Coffee House', what might have happened to her? Well-dressed and experienced personal servants of colour were highly desirable appendages to the households of affluent Londoners and were beginning to appear in portraits of such people, human emblems of their wealth and success. With her experience and her proficiency in English, perhaps this young woman could have secured employment in such a household on her own terms rather than as the enslaved property of a man who would return her to Barbados and then South Carolina where her options would be far more limited and her situation far worse. Or perhaps she had found somebody with whom she might seek refuge. She might also have fallen prey to those who would not hesitate to seize her and sell her to a captain of a ship heading to West Africa or directly to the colonies where she might be sold at a handsome profit.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> 'A Negro Maid', *The Flying Post: Or, The Post-Master*, 12 Dec. 1702; 'A Negro Maid', *The Post Man: And The Historical Account*, 2 Jan. 1703.

<sup>24</sup> J. P. Greene, 'Colonial South Carolina and the Caribbean connection', in *Imperatives, Behaviors, and Identities: Essays in Early American Cultural History*, ed. J. P. Greene (Charlottesville, Va., 1992), at p. 74; R. Waterhouse, 'England, the Caribbean, and the settlement of Carolina', *Journal of American Studies*, ix (1975), at p. 277; H. A. M. Smith, 'Georgetown: the original plan and the earliest settlers', *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, ix (1908), at p. 85.

Some colonists, like Henry Drax, made their fortunes and then returned permanently to England. One such was Captain Richard Pery, who had been born in London but then emigrated and made his fortune as a merchant ship captain and planter in Maryland. He returned to London in about 1672, retaining his Maryland plantation while establishing a trading business in London. This trade may have included enslaved people, for a decade later ‘a Black Boy, aged about 10 years, born in Mary Land, [who] speaks only English’ escaped from Pery.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, Samuel Tidcombe had returned from Barbados to take up residence in Little Chelsea, which lay a little over a mile south-west of Westminster. Tidcombe had married a wealthy Barbados heiress named Anna Kendall, and he had represented St Lucy parish in the Barbados Assembly (at the same time that Henry Drax was a member of the Bajan Governor’s Council), and the 1680 census revealed him to own a 300-acre plantation and 135 enslaved people.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps one of these was John Mings, ‘A Blackamore Foot-man’ who escaped from Tidcombe in August 1683. Mings was ‘three and thirty years of Age, middle sized, with the sign of the Small-Pox in his face’, and he was dressed smartly in a ‘dark coloured Livery lined with Crimson, and Brass Buttons’.<sup>27</sup>

Another migrant from Barbados was Sir Edwyn Stede. He had travelled to Barbados as a government official and had become the Royal African Company’s agent on the island. Between 1685 and 1690 Stede served as governor of Barbados, after which he returned to London with at least one enslaved servant in tow. On 14 June 1694 Quomino (also known as Thomas Baker) eloped from Stede’s house in Great Queen Street, just west of Lincoln’s Inn Fields in the parish of St Giles in the Fields. This thirty-year-old freedom seeker’s original name indicated that he had probably been born in West Africa, and his new name may have been acquired in London rather than Barbados. Stede reported that Quomino ‘speaks

<sup>25</sup> ‘ON Thursday the 11th ... a Black Boy’, *London Gazette*, 18 May 1682. See ‘Pery (Pery), Richard’, in *A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature 1635–1789*, ed. E. C. Papenfuss, A. F. Day, D. W. Jordan and G. A. Stiversson (Baltimore, Md., 1985), ii. 644. There exist various documents relating to Pery’s Maryland property: see R. Pery, letter of attorney, 12 Nov. 1674 in *Proceedings of the Provincial Court of Maryland 1670/1–1675*, *Court Series (10)*, *Archives of Maryland LXV*, ed. E. Merritt (Baltimore, Md. 1952), p. 470; Petition of C. Rousby to manage the affairs of Captain R. Pery, in *Proceedings of the Council of Maryland, 1671–1681*, ed. W. H. Browne (Baltimore, Md., 1896), pp. 76–7.

<sup>26</sup> Barbados Census, p. 217. For Tidcombe’s service as an assemblyman see ‘Names of the Assembly’, 1 April 1680, ‘America and West Indies: April 1680’, in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies: x, 1677–1680*, ed. W. N. Sainsbury and J. W. Fortescue (London, 1896), pp. 507–21, *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/america-west-indies/vol10/pp507-521>> [accessed 30 April 2020].

<sup>27</sup> ‘A Blackamore Foot-man named John Mings’, *London Gazette*, 13 Aug. 1683.

English very well', and this, together with years of experience of domestic service, equipped the man to seek freedom in London. Escape was a wise move, for when Stede died a year later his will ordered his executors to take possession of 'my Negro Servants both here and in Barbados and also my lands and Plantations and all my estate in Barbados' and 'sell the same as soon as may be conveniently [*sic*]', with the proceeds to be placed in trust for his son Dutton. Informed by decades of living in Barbados as racial slavery hardened, Edwyn Stede regarded Quomino and the other enslaved people he owned as property, whether they were in Barbados or in London. He did not hesitate to order the sale and probable transportation back to the plantation colonies of people who had served him in London. Little wonder, then, that Quomino sought freedom.<sup>28</sup>

That Barbados was the source of so many of the enslaved Africans brought to Restoration London is not surprising. Between 1627 and 1700 some 236,725 enslaved Africans were taken to Barbados, while during that same period as few as 16,152 enslaved Africans were transported to the Chesapeake colonies of Virginia and Maryland, and 119,208 to the newly acquired colony of Jamaica.<sup>29</sup> The 1680 Barbados census revealed that Colonel William Allambey owned a 101-acre plantation with thirty-seven enslaved people in St Thomas parish, and served as a member of the Governor's Council. When he returned from Barbados to England he brought with him Jemmy, a twenty-four-year-old 'very black Negro Man ... woolley Hair'd, well set, middle Statured'. Allambey reported that Jemmy 'speaks good English, but [*is*] somewhat slow of Speech'. In a separate and longer advertisement Allambey listed the goods he believed the resourceful Jemmy had stolen when he escaped, including notes of debt, bonds and lottery tickets, twenty-seven guineas in gold, and three rings. This represented a significant theft: if Jemmy remained at liberty these items may well have helped him forge a new life, but if he were recaptured he would almost certainly have faced a significant punishment.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>28</sup> 'A Negro Servant run away from his Master ... his Name was Quomino', *London Gazette*, 18 June 1694; Will of Sir Edwyn Stede, 7 Sept. 1695, National Archives, PROB 11/429/154. For further information about Stede in Barbados, see R. S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: the Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624–1713* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972), pp. 101, 197.

<sup>29</sup> See S. P. Newman, *A New World of Labor: the Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic* (Philadelphia, Pa., 2013), p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> Barbados Census, p. 224; Note of Barbados Council membership in *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1689–1692*, ed. J. W. Fortescue (London, 1901), xiii. 636; 'Jemmy, alias James, a very black Negro Man', *London Gazette*, 3 June 1700; 'Stolen the 28th Instant out of Colonel William Allambey's Lodgings', *London Gazette*, 30 May 1700.

Among the White men who brought enslaved people to London on a more temporary basis were colonial ship captains, and one of these was a slave-ship captain from New England named Thomas Edwards. In 1676 Edwards had captained the *Society* on a slave-trading voyage to Madagascar, quite possibly the first such direct voyage from the American colonies to this island in the Indian Ocean. It was perhaps on this voyage that Edwards had acquired Joseph as a young teenager, and several years later the 'Answers from Massachusetts' to a series of questions posed by the Committee for Trade and Plantations recalled the arrival in the colony of Edwards's ship. Noting that 'No Company of blacks has been brought there [Massachusetts] for fifty years from the beginning of the plantation' the report then described the exception, 'one small vessel ... after 20 months voyage from Madagascar with 40 or 50 negroes', a reference to Edwards's ship the *Society*.<sup>31</sup> Twelve years later in October 1688 'a Malegasco Negro Man, his Name ... Joseph, aged about 25' eloped from Edwards in London.<sup>32</sup> If Joseph had been aboard the *Society*, this was an example of an enslaved person seeking liberty in London after a relatively long period of enslavement, probably spent in New England and on board Edwards's ships. Edwards continued his slave-trading voyages, and if this had been Joseph's background perhaps he no longer wanted to participate in these voyages. Alternatively, he may have preferred the possibilities open to him in London rather than the life he faced on board ship or back in Boston.

Whether freedom seekers who escaped in London were running from colonists who were either temporarily in the capital or who had moved back to their permanent residence in England, these people of colour may have felt particularly vulnerable to being trafficked back to the colonies. The men who commanded them were intimately connected with colonial societies and regularly travelled to or communicated with them. An enslaved servant who displeased their master might easily find themselves being transported back to the plantation colonies, or sold back to the colonies after their master's death. Whatever their motivations, a significant number of the bound servants of colonists in London did not hesitate to seek freedom.

<sup>31</sup> Voyage of the *Society*, Voyage 21510 in Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade database; 'Answers from Massachusetts to the 27 inquiries of the Committee for trade and Plantations', 18 May, Boston, 'America and West Indies: May 1680, 17–31', in *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies: x, 1677–1680*, pp. 524–43, *British History Online* <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/colonial/america-west-indies/vol10/pp524-543>> [accessed 30 April 2020]. See also L. Mosca, 'Slaving in Madagascar: English and colonial voyages in the second half of the 17th century AD', in *Tadia, the African Diaspora in Asia: Explorations on a Less Known Fact*, ed. K. K. Prasad and J. P. Angenot (Bangalore, 2008), pp. 595, 604–5. The voyage of the *Society* was also recorded in *Précis of the Archives of the Cape of Good Hope: Journal, 1671–1674 & 1676*, ed. H. C. V. Leibbrandt (Cape Town, 1902), pp. 249, 303.

<sup>32</sup> 'RUN away ... Joseph', *London Gazette*, 8 Oct. 1688.