

A historical painting of a three-masted sailing ship at sea. The ship is filled with a large crowd of people, likely enslaved individuals, on the deck. The sails are yellow, and the ship is moving through choppy blue-green water. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall scene is somber and historical.

The life of a slave

OLE3245 - Belfast and Slavery, 1613-1866

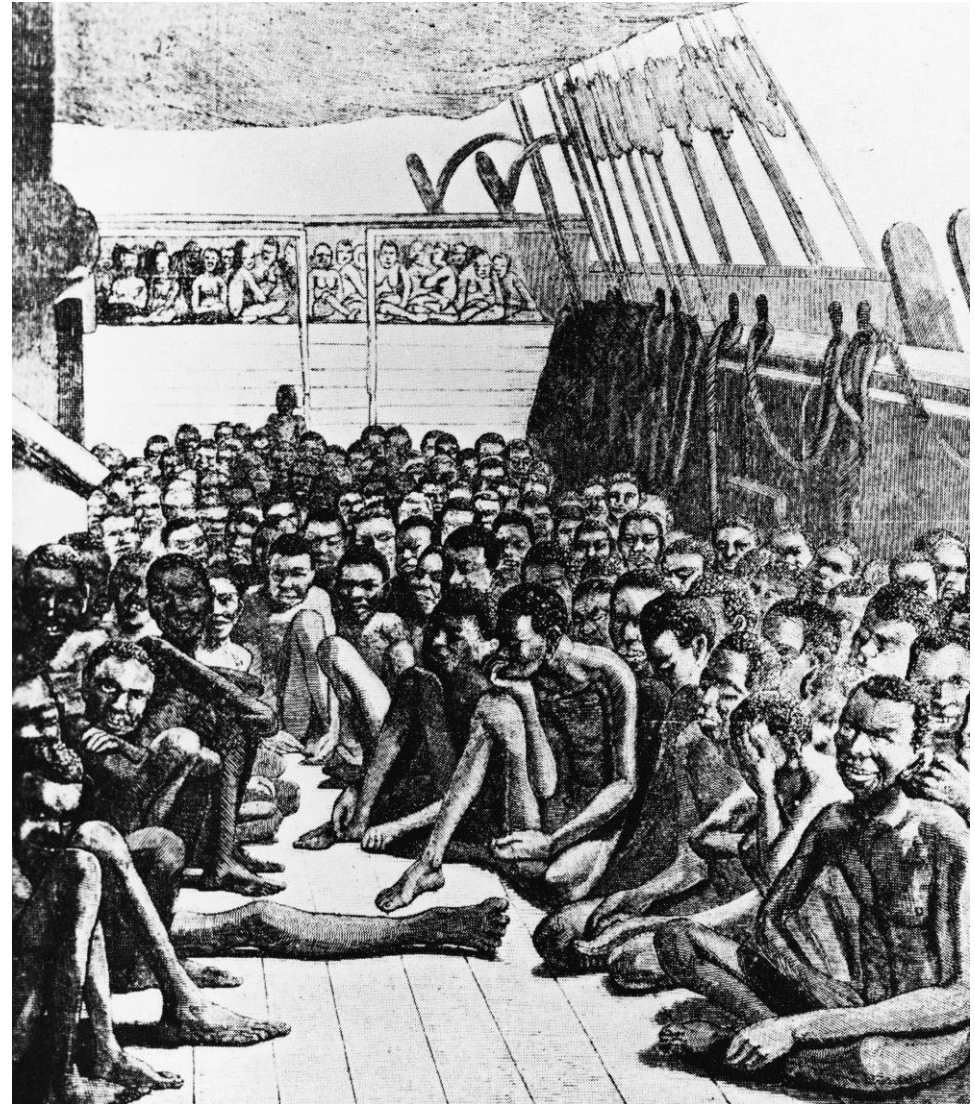
Dr Tom Thorpe

Purpose



Objectives

- Outline how the 'system' worked.
- Chart the journey of an African from enslavement, transportation to sale.
- To outline life on the plantation, how coercion enforced compliance.
- Provide context to the anti slavery work undertaken by people in Belfast.



Entering into slavery



Kidnapping and trade

- At first, European slavers simply went ashore to capture as many Africans as they could.
- This proved difficult however and later Europeans found it easier to trade with the local African leaders.
- West African coast was often called "the White man's grave" because of death from illnesses such as yellow fever, malaria and other diseases
- In 1841, 80% of British sailors serving in military expeditions on the Niger River area were infected with fevers.



Cape Coast Castle

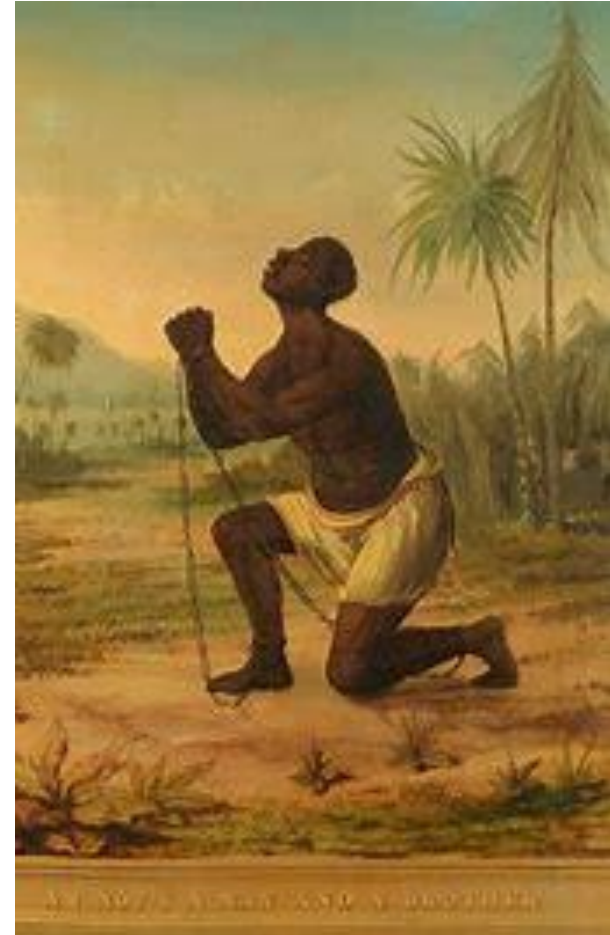
Historical Prevalence of Slavery in Africa

- Slavery has a deep historical presence in Africa, with systems of servitude and slavery being common in ancient times, similar to other parts of the world.
- When the trans-Saharan, Indian Ocean, and Atlantic slave trades began in the 16th century, existing local African slave systems started supplying captives to markets outside the continent.
- Despite being illegal, slavery continues to be practiced in contemporary Africa.



Categorising African Slavery

- African slavery is categorized into indigenous slavery and export slavery based on whether slaves were traded beyond Africa.
- Various forms of slavery were practiced in historical Africa, including debt slavery, enslavement of war captives, military slavery, slavery for prostitution, and enslavement of criminals in different regions.
- Slavery for domestic and court purposes was widespread across the African continent, reflecting the diversity of its manifestations.

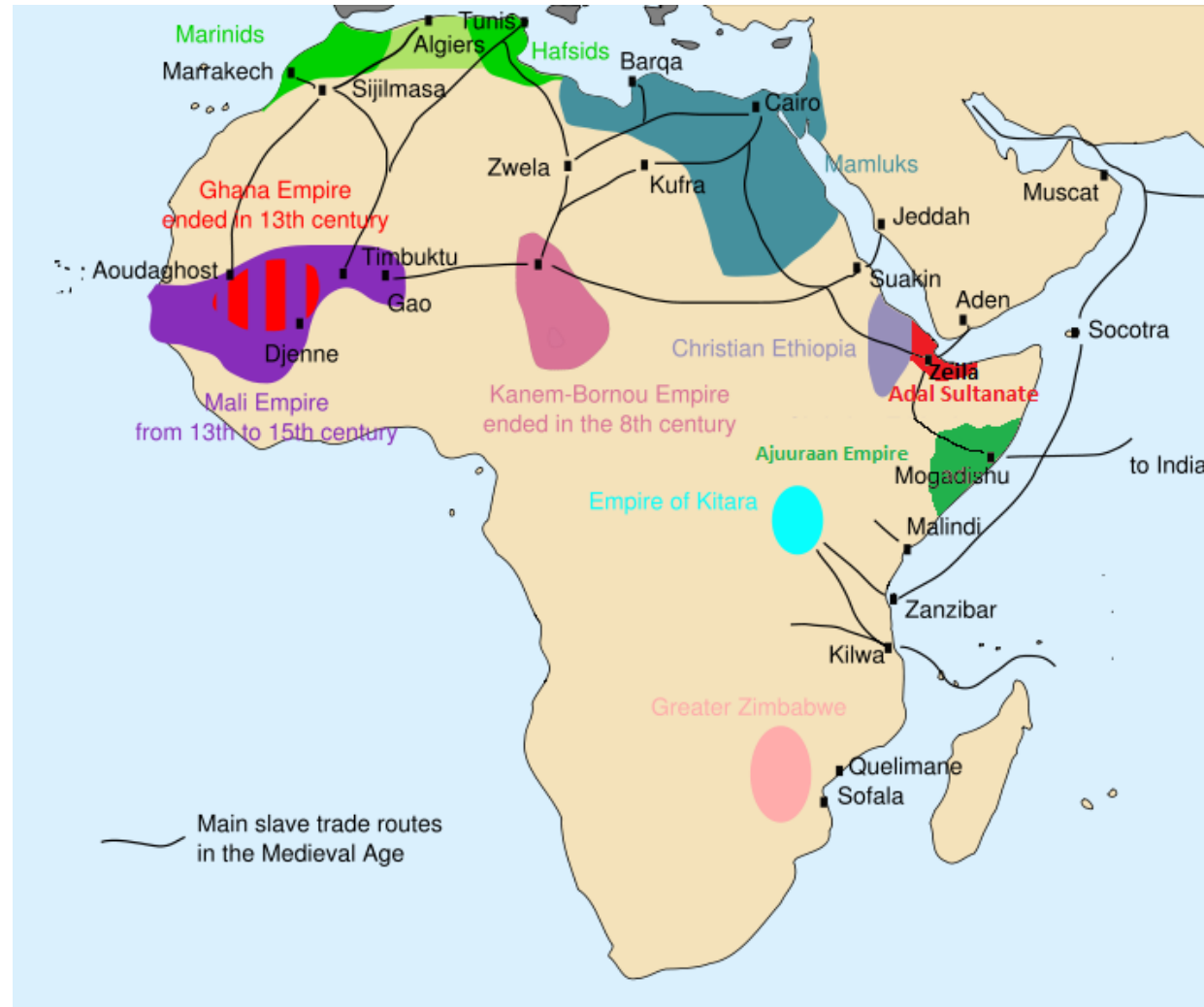


Plantation Slavery and Economic Shift

- Plantation slavery was not limited to the Americas; it also occurred on the eastern coast of Africa and in parts of West Africa.
- The significance of domestic plantation slavery increased in the 19th century, driven by the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade.
- Many African states, previously dependent on the international slave trade, shifted their economies towards legitimate commerce, often utilizing slave labour.

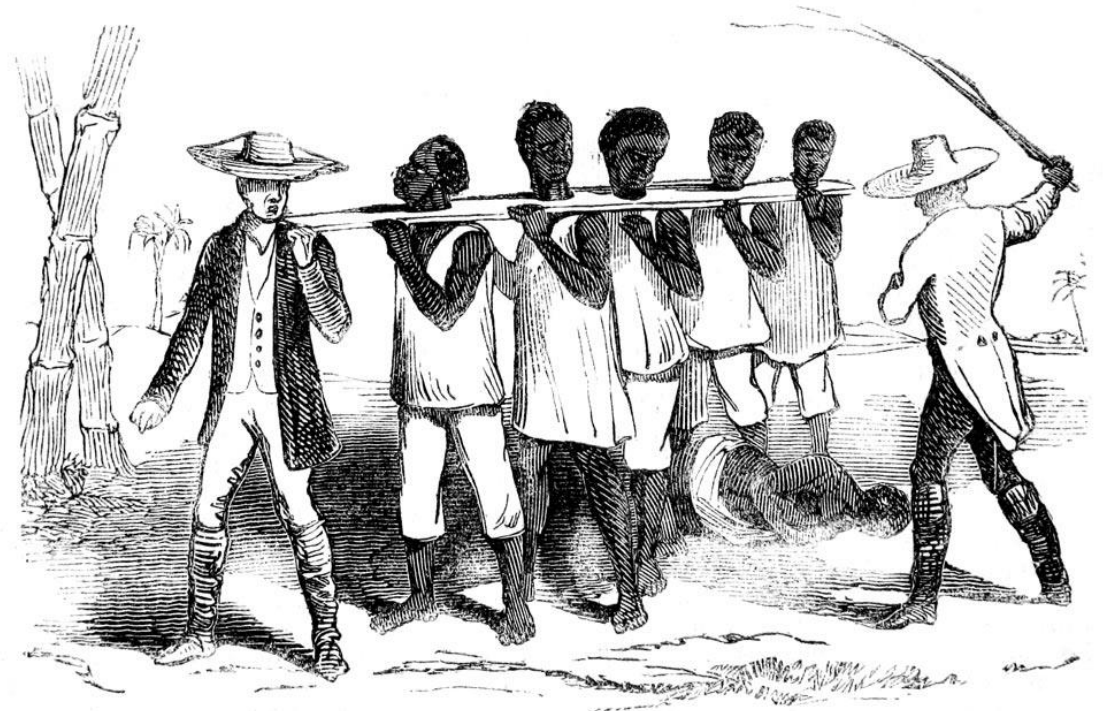


Slave trade in medieval Africa



The land journey

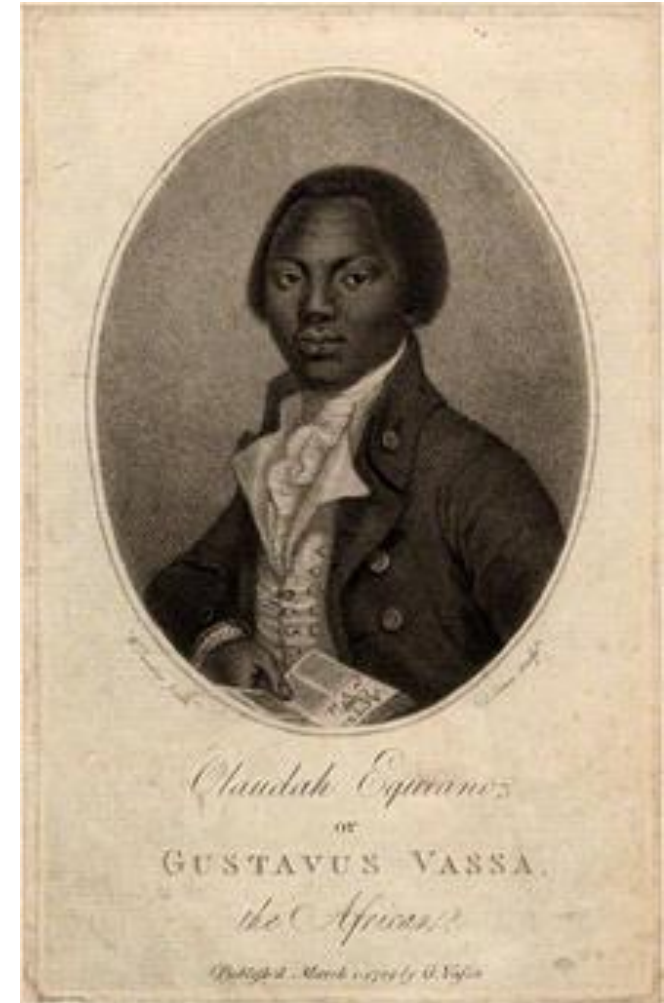
- Journeys could be as long as 485km (300 miles)
- Two captives were typically chained together at the ankle
- Columns of captives were tied together by ropes around their necks
- 10%-15% of captives died on the way



NEGROES JOURNEYING TO THE COAST.

Olaudah Equiano's story

- Equiano was born around 1745 in the Igbo village of Essaka in what is now southern Nigeria. He claimed his home was in the Kingdom of Benin, but this was likely a geographical error.
- He recounted an attempted kidnapping of children in his Igbo village, which was stopped by adults.
- At around age eleven, he and his sister were left alone to care for their family premises when adults went out to work.
- They were kidnapped, separated, and sold to slave traders. Equiano attempted to escape but was unsuccessful.
- Equiano experienced multiple changes in ownership.
- He briefly reunited with his sister but was separated again.
- Six or seven months after being kidnapped, he reached the coast and boarded a European slave ship.
- He was transported with 244 other enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to Barbados in the British West Indies.
- Later, he and a few other slaves were sent for sale in the Colony of Virginia.



Slaves moved from inland Africa to collection, holding and departure ports

- Europeans set up permanent trading camps or forts on the West African coast.
- They lived there themselves, collecting people to sell to passing slave ships.
- In 1662 the British seized the Cape Coast Castle 'slave factory' in what is now modern day Ghana.
- Its large underground dungeons could hold up to 1,000 enslaved people until a ship arrived to transport them.





Cape Coast Castle

Goree Island, Senegal, door of no return



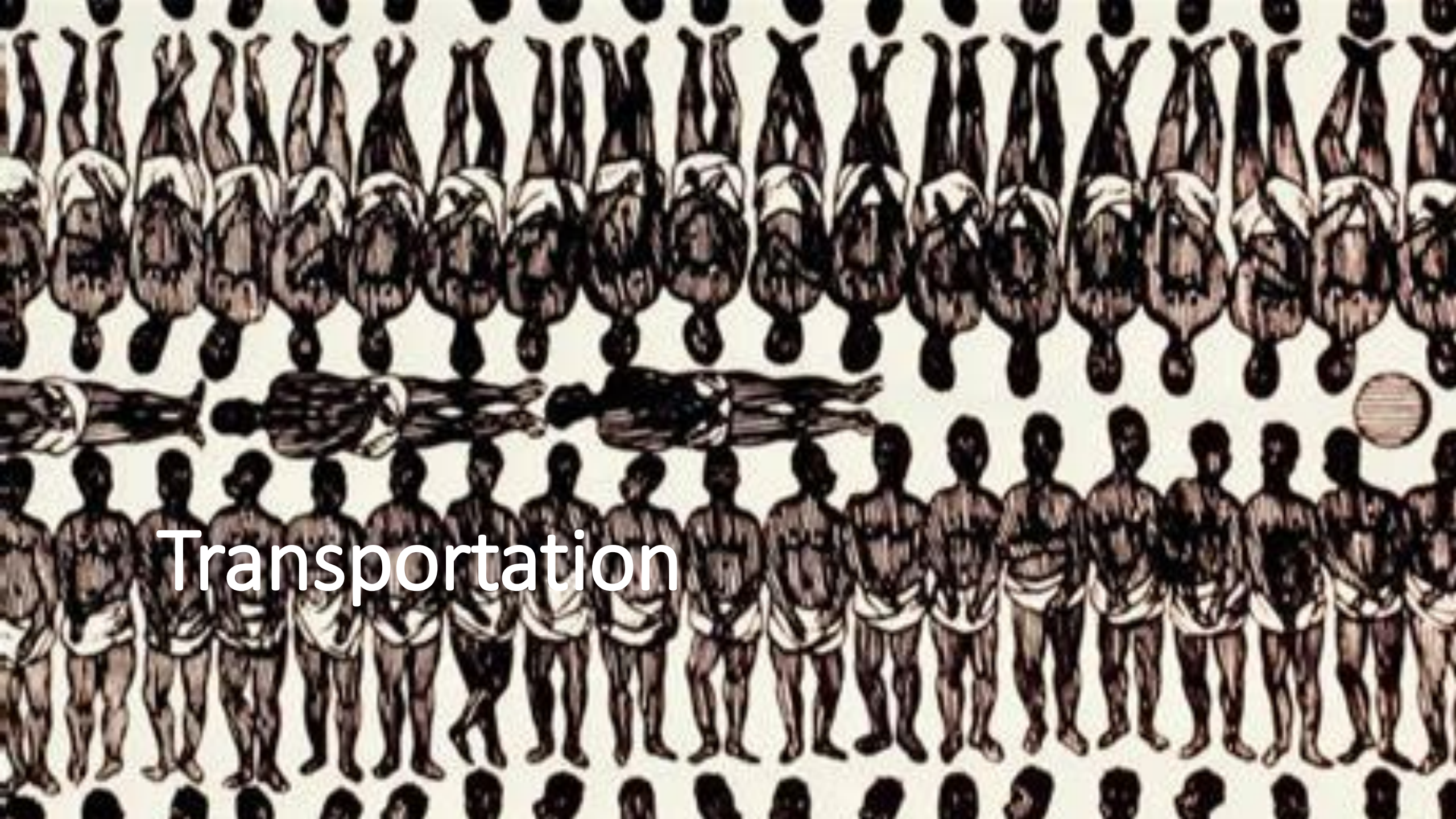
Deaths on arrival at disembarkation points

DEATHS OF SLAVES AFTER ARRIVAL BUT BEFORE DISEMBARKATION OR SALE.

<i>Period of Arrival</i>	<i>Voyages</i>	<i>Mean Deaths</i>	<i>Mean Number Arrived</i>	<i>Mean Loss Rate (%)</i>
1674–1700	91	14.9	272.4	8.6
1701–1725	86	14.8	217.9	9.5
1726–1750	29	10.6	270.2	6.7
1751–1775	48	9.9	305.9	3.6
1776–1800	100	4.0	375.5	1.3
1801–1825	162	2.6	450.5	0.6
1826–1841	2	27.0	365.0	7.3
Totals	518	8.3	342.3	4.3

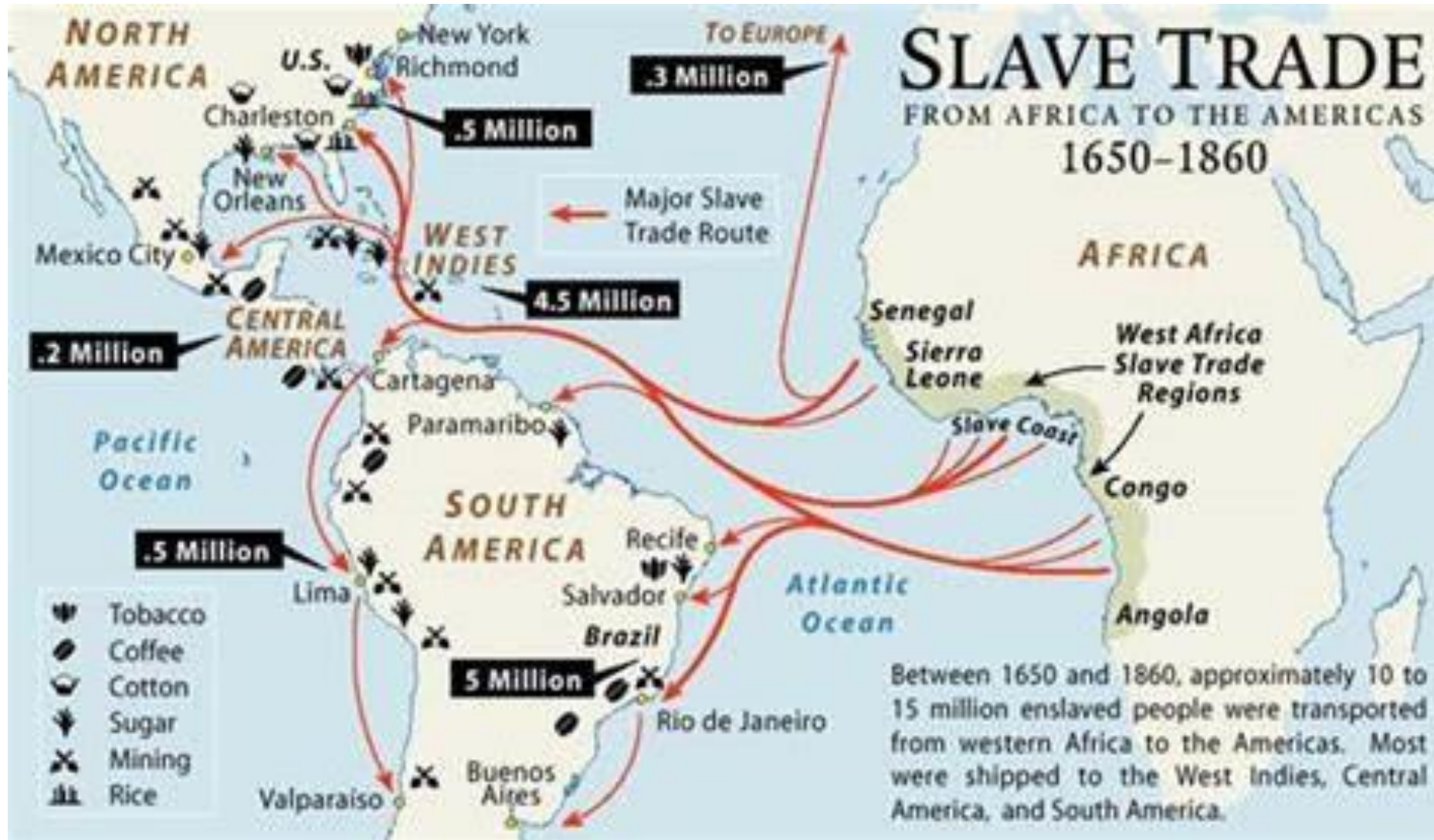
Slave ships would collect their cargo for transport





Transportation

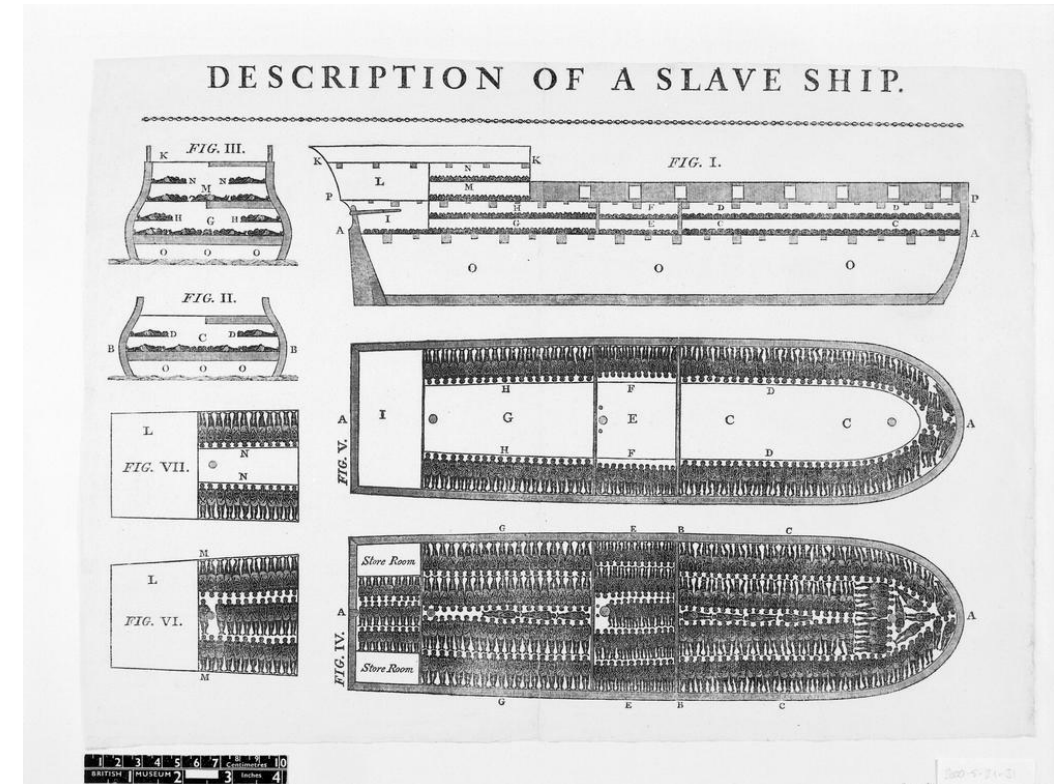
Transatlantic slave trade





The Brooks

Tons	297
Length	30 metres (98 ft)
Beam	8.2 metres (27 ft)
Complement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1794: 15 •1799: 25 •1804: 50
Armament	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1781: 18 × 9 & 6-pounder guns •1794: 12 × 6-pounder guns •1799: 18 × 9-pounder guns •1800: 18 × 9-pounder guns + 2 × 18-pounder carronades •1804: 18 × 9-pounder guns + 2 × 18-pounder carronades



Brooks' operational life

- Brooks (or Brook, Brookes, or Bruz) was a British slave ship launched at Liverpool in 1781.
- She became infamous after prints of her were published in 1788.
- Between 1782 and 1804, she made 11 voyages in the triangular slave trade, transporting 5,021 enslaved people.
- During this period, she spent some years as a West Indiaman, which was a ship used in trade with the West Indies.
- She also recaptured a British merchantman and captured a French merchantman during her voyages.
- Brooks was condemned as unseaworthy in November 1804.



Early voyages

1st voyage (1781–1783): - Captain Clement Noble sailed from Liverpool on October 4, 1781, and returned on February 22, 1783. - 650 slaves embarked, 4 died, and 8 crew members died.

2nd voyage (1783–1784): - Captain Clement Noble sailed from Liverpool on June 3, 1783, and returned on August 28, 1784. - 619 slaves embarked, 33 died, and 3 crew members died.

3rd voyage (1785–1786): - Captain Clement Noble sailed from Liverpool on February 2, 1785, and returned on April 10, 1786. - 740 slaves embarked, 105 died, and 608 actually landed.

4th voyage (1786–1788): - Captain Thomas Molyneux sailed from Liverpool on October 17, 1786, and returned on February 8, 1788. - 609 slaves embarked, 13 died, and 6 crew members died.



Late voyages

7th voyage (1796–1797): - Captain John Richards sailed from Liverpool on July 8, 1796, and returned on May 28, 1797. - Acquired 453 slaves, arrived with 384 (15% mortality rate), and lost 2 crew members.

8th voyage (1797–1798): - Captain Richards sailed from Liverpool on August 24, 1797. - Brooks arrived in Kingston on May 7, 1798, with 446 slaves. - Captain John Williams replaced Richards and sailed for Liverpool on August 14. - As Brooks was leaving Jamaica, she ran aground at Port Antonio and lost her rudder. - Brooks arrived back in Liverpool on October 25, bringing with her the ship Clermont, which had been captured near the Newfoundland Banks by the French privateer Gironde.

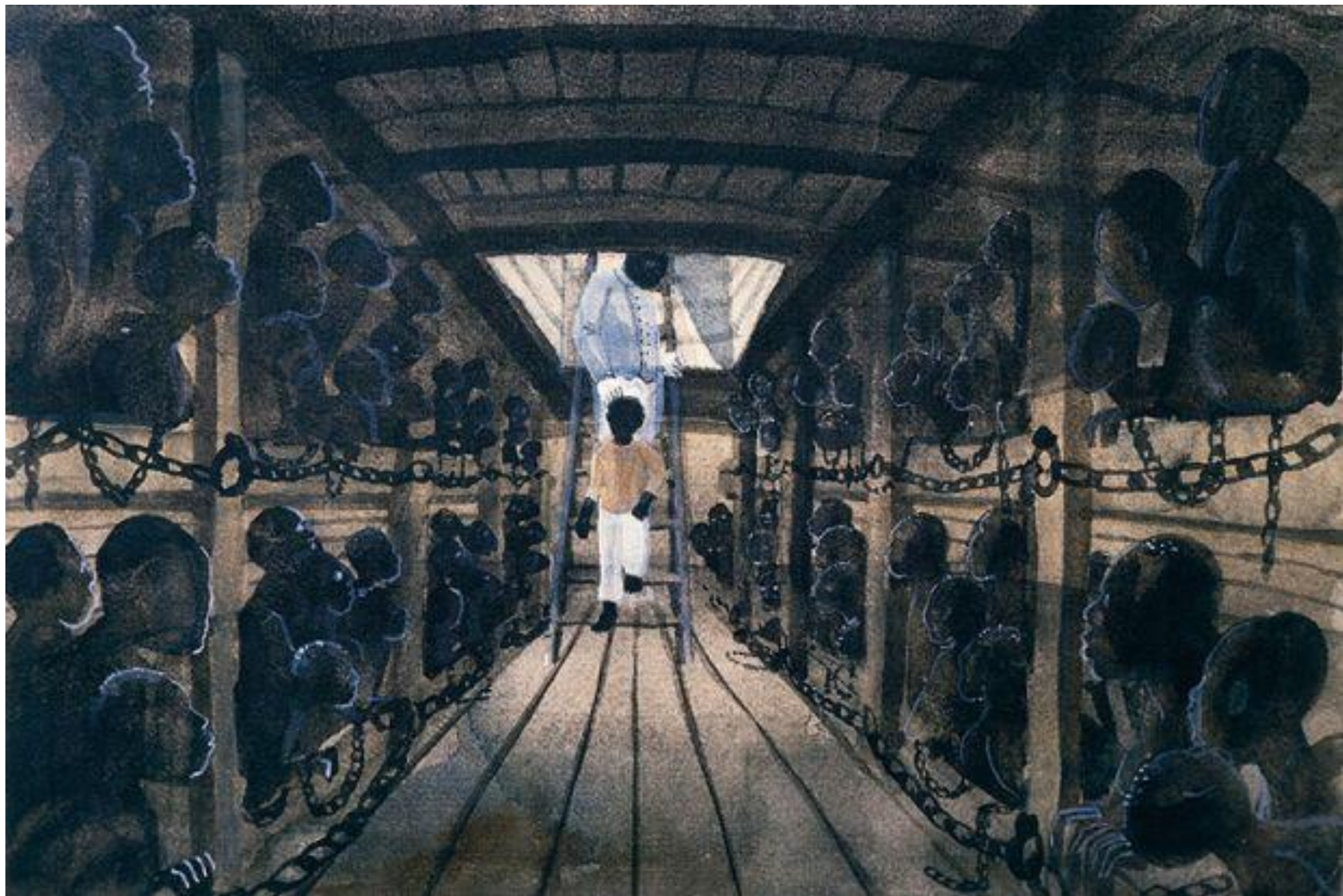
9th voyage (1799): - Captain Moses Joynson acquired a letter of marque on January 16, 1799, but faced difficulties. - Brooks ran aground and was filled with water. Brooks was rebuilt in 1799 with a burthen of 353 or 359 tons, with Captain J. Slothart listed as the master, but later voyages confirm Captain Joynson as the master.

10th voyage (1800–1801): - Captain Joynson sailed from Liverpool on November 18, 1800. - Acquired slaves at Malembo and delivered them to Demerara on June 9, 1801, with 324 slaves. - Brooks and William Heathcote of Liverpool captured a prize schooner bound for St Domingo from Bordeaux.



Conditions







Five measures to improve survivability

- 1. Improved Ship Design:** Some ship owners attempted to improve the design of slave ships to enhance ventilation and reduce the spread of diseases. However, these modifications were limited and often prioritized maximizing the number of enslaved individuals that could be transported, sometimes compromising living conditions.
- 2. Medical Provisions:** Some slave ship captains carried medical supplies on board, including medicines and basic medical equipment. However, the quality and effectiveness of these provisions varied, and access to medical care for enslaved individuals was generally inadequate.
- 3. Dietary Considerations:** Some ship owners recognized the importance of providing an adequate diet to reduce malnutrition and related health issues. However, the food provisions were typically minimal, and nutritional deficiencies remained a significant problem.



Other measures

- 4. Quarantine Periods:** In some instances, ships implemented a brief quarantine period upon arrival in the Americas. This was intended to separate enslaved individuals who may have been exposed to contagious diseases during the voyage. However, the effectiveness of these measures was limited, and conditions in holding facilities after arrival were often harsh.
- 5. Regulations and Legislation:** In response to public pressure and growing awareness of the inhumane conditions on slave ships, some governments implemented regulations to govern the slave trade. For example, the British Parliament passed the Slave Trade Act of 1788, which aimed to improve conditions on board ships. However, enforcement was often lax.



Data set

- Of the more than 27,000 voyages included in the Du Bois Institute dataset, more than 5,000 have information on shipboard mortality
- Herbert S. Klein, Stanley L. Engerman, Robin Haines, and Ralph Shlomowitz, 'Transoceanic Mortality: The Slave Trade in Comparative' Published in the William & Mary Quarterly, LVIII, no. 1 (January 2001), pp. 93-118.

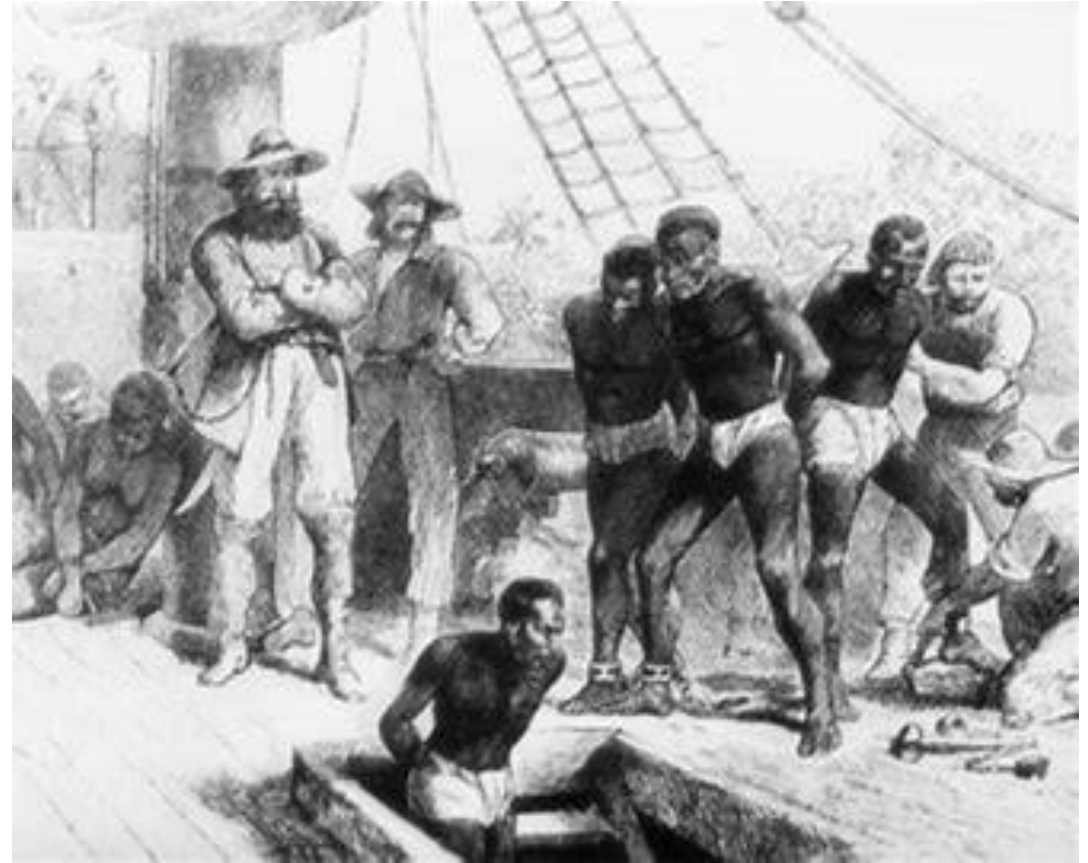
SCHEDULE 2. Slave Inhabitants in *North Carolina*, enumerated by me, on the *18* day of *August*, 1850. *John A. Weeks* Agent

in the County of *Robeson* State

NAME OF SLAVE OWNER	SEX AND AGE			PROPERTY	REMARKS	NAME OF SLAVE OWNER	SEX AND AGE			PROPERTY	REMARKS
	M	F	C				M	F	C		
<i>John Wilson</i>	1	10	f	0	1	<i>Jefferson Best</i>	1	10	f	0	
	1	10	m	0		<i>Whisper Keaton</i>	1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	m	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0		<i>John Payne</i>	1	10	f	0	
<i>Benj. Little</i>	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
<i>Benj. Little</i>	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
<i>Wm. Lewis</i>	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
<i>P. H. White</i>	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
<i>A. A. Green</i>	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
<i>James H. Payne</i>	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0			1	10	f	0	
	1	10	f	0		<i>John Lewis</i>	1	10	f	0	

Mortality rates

- The mortality rate on slave ships was very high, reaching 25% in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and remaining around 10% in the nineteenth century
- The high death rate was due to malnutrition and diseases such as dysentery, measles, scurvy, and smallpox.
- Sailors on slave ships were often poorly paid and subject to brutal discipline and treatment, with a crew mortality rate of around 20% expected during a voyage
- 14.5% of captured slaves who embarked on ships in African ports died en route to their destination.



Mortality rate and length of voyage

MEAN DEATH RATES (DR) OF SLAVES PER MONTH BY LENGTH OF VOYAGE (RATES PER 1,000).

Voyage Length (days)	1676-1700		1701-1725		1726-1750		1751-1775		1776-1800		1801-1825		1826-1850		All Years	
	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR	Voyages	DR
16-29	5	93.1	7	43.6	7	64.6	5	223.9	22	111.6	28	48.0	111	53.5	188	69.9
30-39	10	111.6	15	47.4	16	59.7	18	107.3	58	38.0	55	66.3	210	61.8	387	61.9
40-49	11	94.4	25	86.2	20	49.4	33	52.8	136	42.1	35	40.9	65	58.1	330	53.6
50-59	10	57.6	42	64.4	18	49.9	73	52.0	132	41.2	35	71.1	47	58.6	360	53.1
60-69	9	82.6	57	83.7	20	43.1	76	44.3	122	39.3	19	94.0	27	64.4	332	57.1
70-79	18	67.9	49	60.9	18	97.5	56	41.5	89	39.5	9	117.2	18	85.1	257	56.0
80-89	11	125.3	24	74.1	8	43.2	35	50.2	30	39.0	5	218.5	8	89.4	122	68.7
90-99	17	101.8	24	81.0	24	51.2	34	56.9	22	61.0	6	109.7	4	36.2	133	69.0
100-09	5	131.5	19	74.4	18	35.5	28	40.9	16	71.7	1	32.7	1	127.0	89	59.1
110 or more	9	147.1	24	83.6	48	62.9	92	47.6	23	90.6	2	165.6			198	66.4
Totals	105	97.6	286	72.6	197	56.6	450	52.2	650	46.0	195	71.1	491	60.5	2,396	59.8

The "All Years" category includes 2 voyages that sailed before 1676 and 20 that sailed after 1850.

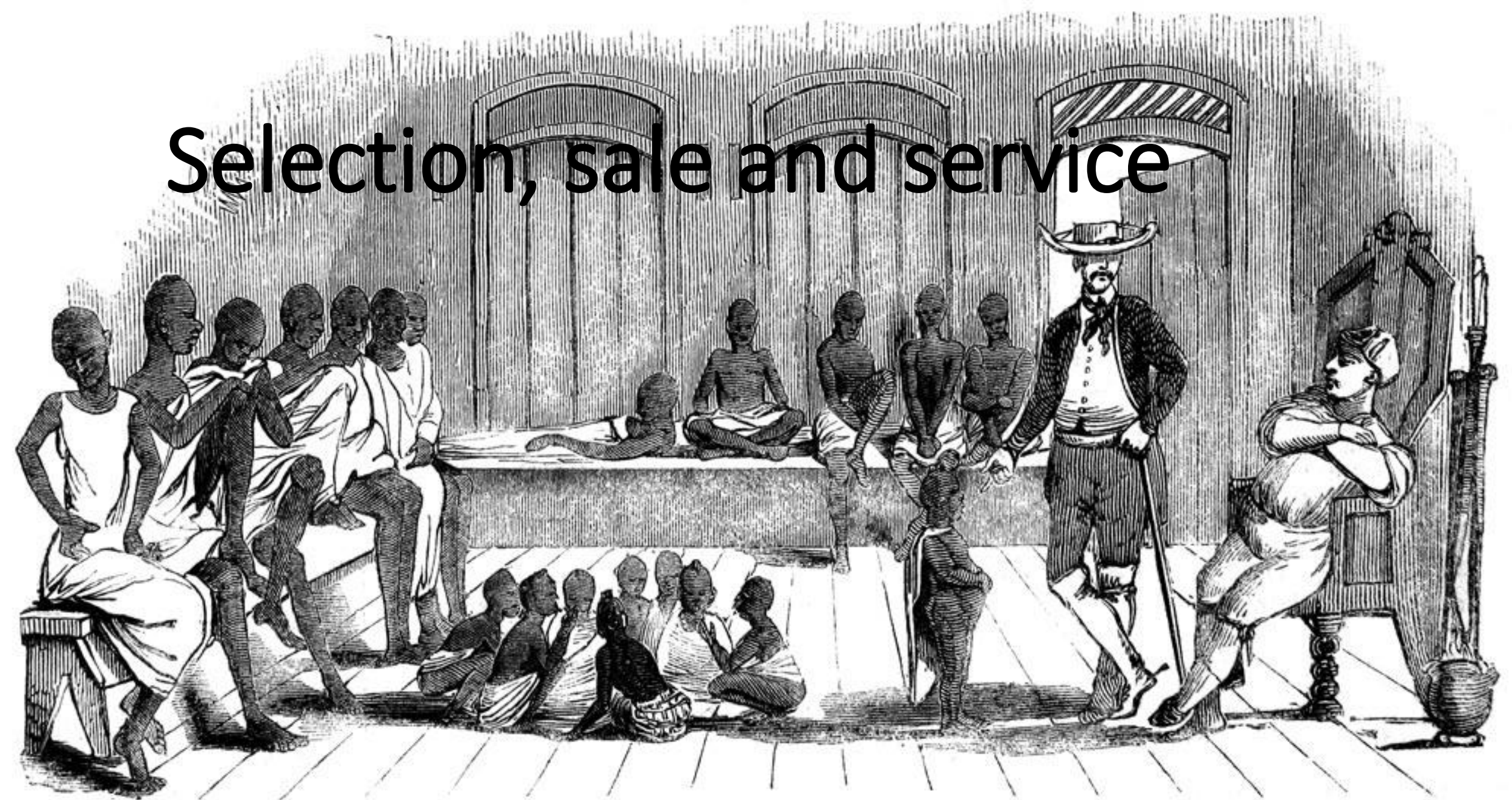
Loss rate of non slave ocean crossings

TABLE III
CRUDE DEATH RATES (CDR) ON NON-SLAVE OCEAN VOYAGES, 1719-1917.

<i>Passengers</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Voyages</i>	<i>Mean Length of Voyage (days)</i>	<i>CDR per Month per 1,000</i>	<i>Loss Ratio (CDR per voyage per 100)</i>	
British Convicts to North America	1719-1736	38	60	56.5	11.3	
	1768-1775	12	60	12.5	2.5	
British Convicts to Australia	1788-1814	68	174	11.3	6.6	
	1815-1868	693	122	2.4	1.0	
German Emigrants to Philadelphia	1727-1805	14	68	15.0	3.4	
European Emigrants to:	New York	1836-1853	1077	45	10.0	1.5
	Australia	1836-1853	258	109	7.4	2.7
		1854-1892	934	92	3.4	1.0
	South Africa	1847-1864	66	75	4.8	1.2
African Indentured Labor to West Indies	1848-1850	54	29	48.7	4.7	
	1851-1865	54	29	12.3	1.2	
Indian Indentured Labor to Mauritius, Natal, West Indies and Fiji from:	Calcutta	1850-1872	382	88	19.9	5.8
		1873-1917	876	65	7.1	1.5
	Madras	1855-1866	56	62	5.6	1.2
	Chinese Indentured Labor to Americas	1847-1874	343	116	25.5	9.9
Pacific Islander Indentured Labor to:	Fiji	1882-1911	112	117	3.6	1.4
	Queensland	1873-1894	558	111	3.0	1.1

Source: For detail, see Robin Haines, Ralph Shlomowitz, and Lance Brennan, "Maritime Mortality Revisited." *International Journal of Maritime History*, 8 (1996), 133-72, Table 1.

Selection, sale and service



SLAVE MART

Methods of sale

There were two methods of selling enslaved people:

- **Auction** - An auctioneer sold enslaved people individually or in lots (as a group), with people being sold to the highest bidder.
- **Scramble** - Here the enslaved people were kept together in an enclosure. Buyers paid the captain a fixed sum beforehand.



How much did a slave cost?

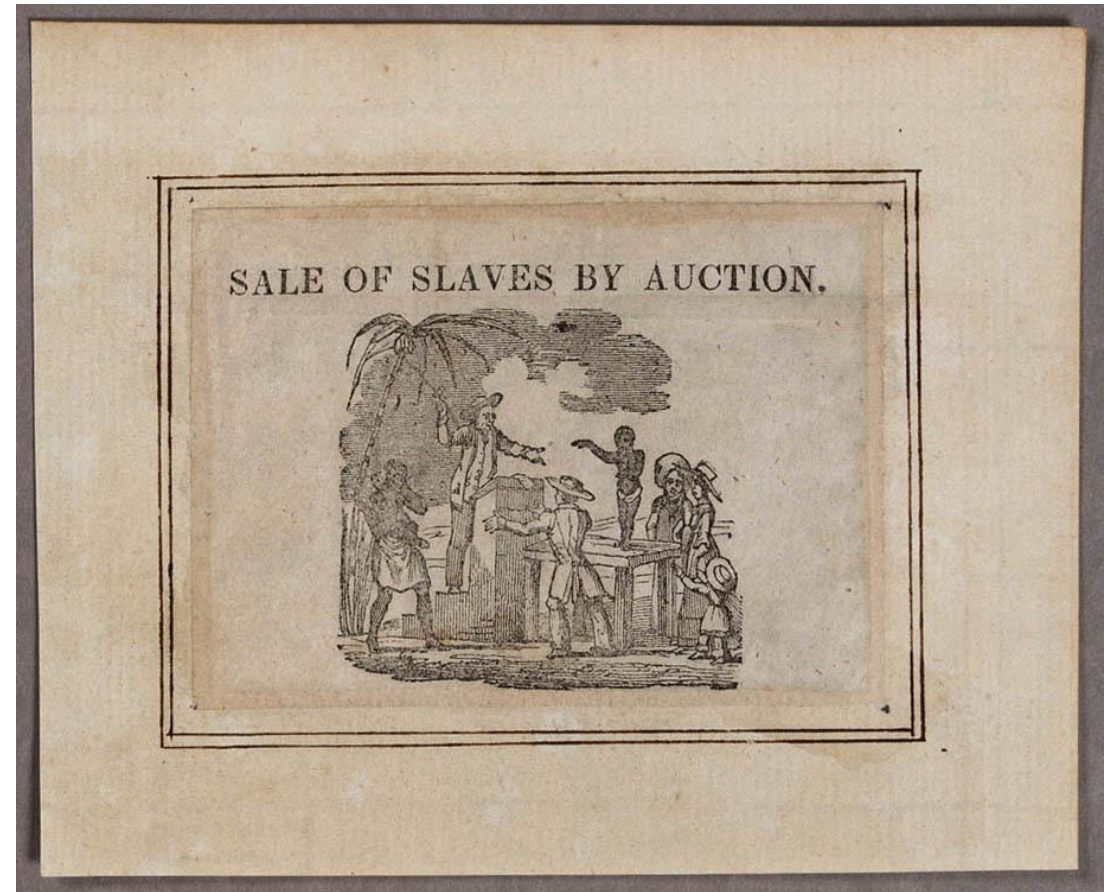
Different factors affected the price:

- The condition of the enslaved people after the voyage.
- The island they had landed on.
- How many other slave ships were in that particular port at the same time.



Prices

- In 1790, John Newton told Parliament that a captive could generally be bought in Africa for £3 and sold at auction in the Caribbean for £25.
- Auctions or scrambles were the most popular way to sell slaves.
- Children were separated from parents without any regard for the emotional ties between them as documented in accounts by Mary Prince and Frederick Douglass.



Altering the price

- Their skin was rubbed with oil to make them appear healthy.
- Enslaved people who had been punished with whipping or flogging had their scars disguised by filling them with tar.
- Older slaves often had their heads shaved to hide signs of grey hairs and make them appear younger.



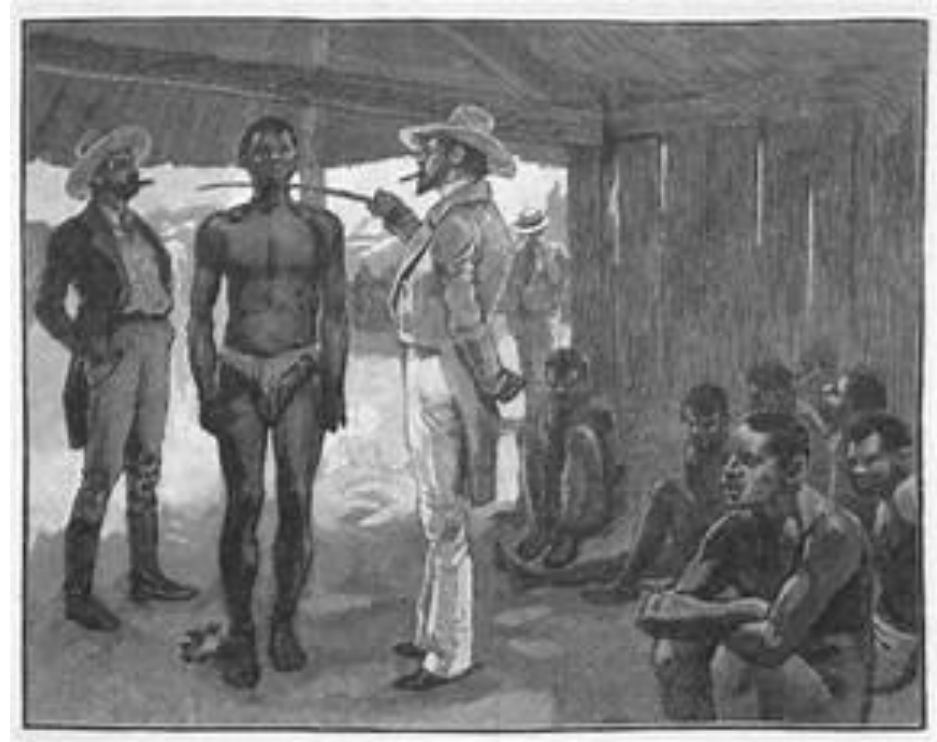
Unsold slaves

- Enslaved people left behind were called 'refuse'.
- They were sold cheaply to anyone who would take them.
- This often lead to their quick death as their 'owners' did not see any value in treating them well enough to keep them alive.



After the auction...

- Enslaved people who resisted or fought back were sent to 'seasoning camps'.
- Some historians suggest that the death rate in the 'seasoning camps' was up to 50 per cent.





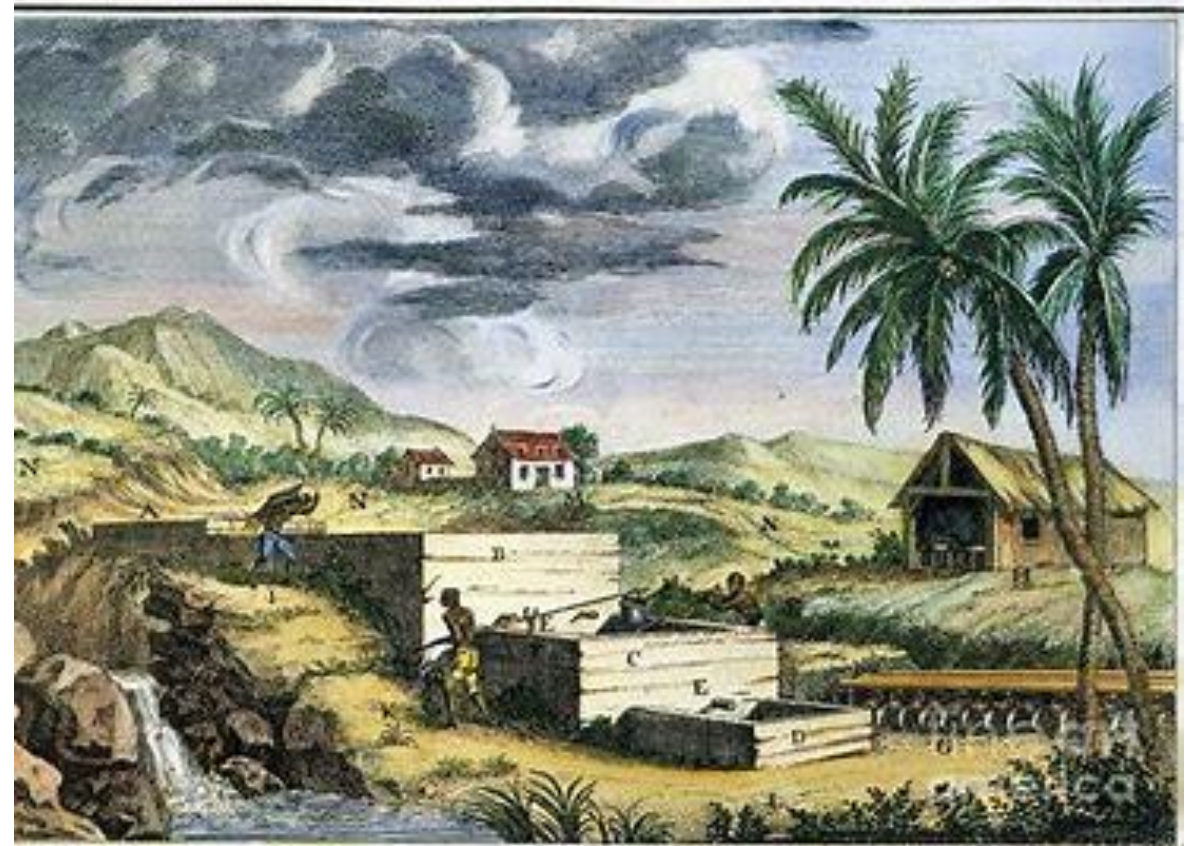
Life on the plantation

What did they do?

Slaves on plantations were engaged in the labor-intensive tasks of planting, cultivating, and harvesting various crops, depending on the type of plantation.

In tobacco plantations, slaves worked on the manual cultivation and processing of tobacco leaves, while on rice plantations, they managed the complex tasks of cultivating and harvesting rice.

Cotton plantations relied on slaves for the planting and handpicking of cotton fibers, while on sugar plantations, they played a crucial role in the labor-intensive cultivation and harvesting of sugar cane.



Slaves were involved with a vast array of work

Indigo plantations saw slaves involved in the cultivation and processing of indigo plants to extract the dye, and on coffee plantations, they participated in planting, cultivating, and harvesting coffee beans.

Slaves also worked on other crops such as corn, wheat, and various fruits and vegetables, depending on the region and time period.

Additionally, some slaves were engaged in managing livestock on plantations, including tasks like herding and caring for animals.

Beyond crop-related activities, slaves often contributed to the construction and maintenance of plantation infrastructure, including buildings, fences, and irrigation systems.



Sugar Production - Overview

- Sugar production in the Caribbean became the dominant industry, relying on large plantations and a labour-intensive system.
- Due to a shortage of local labour, a significant number of African individuals were forcibly transported to work on the sugar plantations during the 18th century.
- Enslaved individuals, including women, children, and the elderly, were expected to work in harsh conditions, resulting in high mortality rates and a constant demand for replacements.



Growing Sugar - Plantation Life

- Plantation life involved labour-intensive processes such as digging, hoeing, weeding, planting, and fertilising the soil under the intense West Indian sun.
- Slave gangs, overseen by white supervisors, worked from dawn until dusk, facing corporal punishment for perceived inadequacies in their labour.
- Harvesting sugar cane involved back-breaking work, with enslaved individuals using machetes to cut the cane and load it onto carts.
- The gruelling tasks, combined with harsh working conditions and constant supervision, contributed to high mortality rates among the enslaved population.



Sugar Production Process

- Between 1766 and 1791, the British West Indies produced over a million tons of sugar, reflecting the immense scale of the industry.
- The production process included harvesting sugar cane, which was then taken to the sugar mill for crushing and boiling, extracting a brown, sticky juice.
- Working in the sugar mills was hazardous, with the machinery posing risks of injury or death. The boiling houses were unbearably hot, and enslaved individuals often worked long hours, some up to 48 hours without breaks.



End Products and Export

- The extracted sugar juice was left in barrels until molasses, a brown syrup, could be drawn off. Molasses was a key ingredient in the production of rum, another significant Caribbean export.
- The clarified sugar left behind was packed into barrels and shipped to Europe, contributing to the economic success of the sugar plantation system.
- The entire process required a well-coordinated and labour-intensive effort, with enslaved individuals processing the sugar juice immediately to prevent spoilage, working under demanding and often dangerous conditions.



A MAP
OF THE
ISLAND
of
JAMAICA.



A Scale of Leagues.

West Long^{de} from London

Maintaining control



The challenge of control

- Spanish colonization began in 1509. By 1600, the Taíno people nearly extinct, leaving an overwhelmingly European population.

- Jamaica became an English colony in 1655. - The demographic landscape shifted, with a decline in the white population. - By the end of the 17th century, only about 15% of the population was white.

- Over the 17th century, a significant number of African slaves arrived.

- 1662 Census: 87% whites, 13% blacks.

- 1673: Shift to 45% whites, 55% blacks.

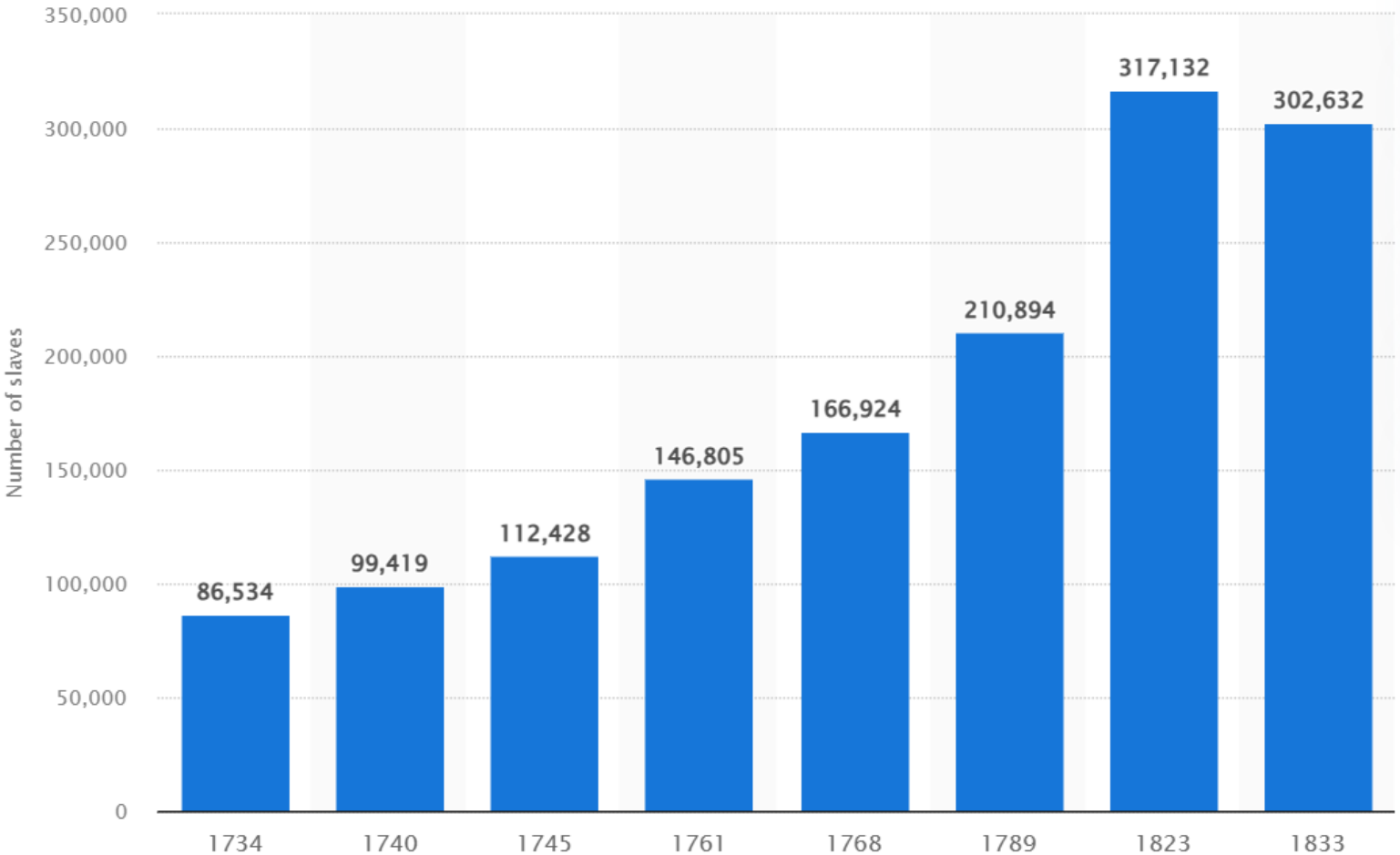
- 1734: Proportion of white people dropped to below 10%.

- 1787: 12,737 whites out of 209,617 (around 6%).

- 1844 Census: 15,776 whites out of 377,433 (around 4%).



Jamaica's slave population in select years between 1734 and 1833



How did they maintain control?

- Enslaved individuals endured brutal physical punishments, including whipping and beating, for disobedience or escape attempts.
- Slave codes, a set of laws, restricted movement and rights, reinforcing the subordinate status of enslaved people.
- Economic coercion, rooted in dependency on plantations, was used by slave owners to maintain control.
- Dehumanization through racial ideologies justified mistreatment and reinforced a sense of entitlement among slave owners.



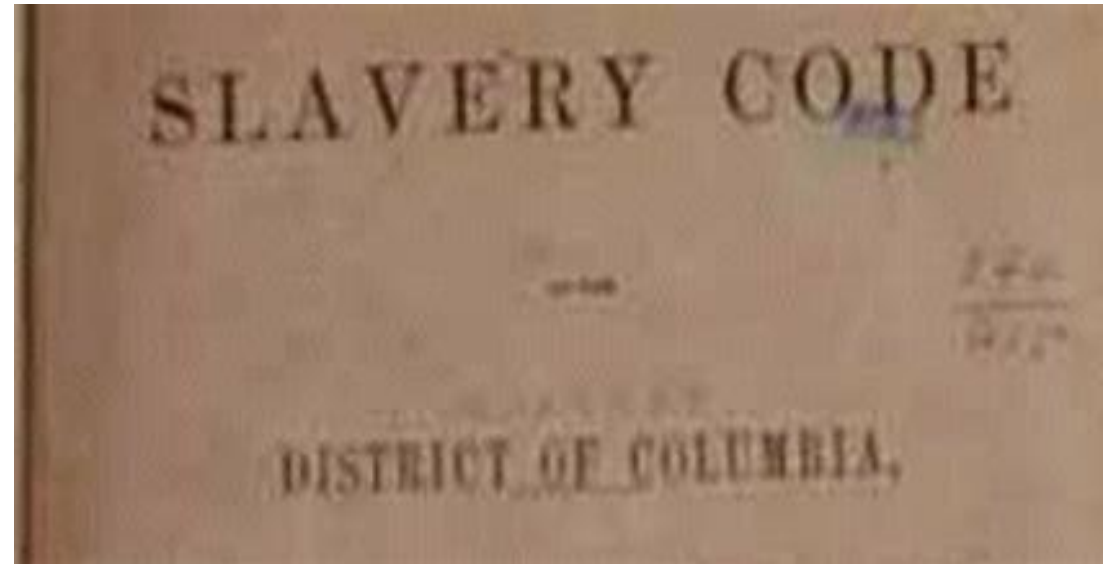
Fear and control

- Constant surveillance by overseers and informants ensured strict monitoring of enslaved individuals.
- Forced family separation and control over reproduction disrupted familial bonds and prevented collective resistance.
- Manipulation of religious teachings encouraged obedience and subservience.
- Fear, achieved through violence, intimidation, and isolation, deterred rebellion or disobedience.
- Agreements with Maroons.



Slave codes

In Jamaica and the West Indies, the planters used colonial assemblies to construct a body of laws known as the slave code, which defined the nature of slavery, the position of slaves, and the power of their masters



Common Elements in Slave Codes

- Movement Restrictions: Enslaved individuals faced stringent movement restrictions, often requiring passes from their masters to travel beyond plantations or city limits. Some regions mandated the use of slave tags, small copper badges denoting permission for movement.
- Marriage Restrictions: Marriage rights of enslaved individuals were commonly restricted, ostensibly to prevent attempts to change masters through inter-plantation marriages. Restrictions on interracial marriages were also prevalent in most regions.
- Prohibitions on Gathering: Slave codes uniformly prevented large gatherings of enslaved individuals away from their plantations, aiming to control social interactions and prevent potential uprisings.
- Slave Patrols: Slave-dependent regions in North America employed legal authority to support slave patrols, ensuring nighttime restrictions on enslaved individuals and enforcing overall code compliance.




Punishment and restrictions

- Trade and Commerce Restrictions: Initially granting some land and market freedom, slave codes evolved to restrict the rights of enslaved individuals to buy, sell, and produce goods. Some regions required the use of slave tags to indicate permission for specific types of work.
- Punishment and Killing of Slaves: Slave codes regulated the punishment of enslaved individuals, often exempting slave-owners from penalties for accidentally killing a slave during punishment. Over time, some legal restrictions emerged, but slave-owners were rarely punished for killing their slaves.
- Education Restrictions: Some codes prohibited teaching slaves to read, reflecting a deliberate effort to restrict access to education.



Controlling identity - names

Twenty Dollars Reward.

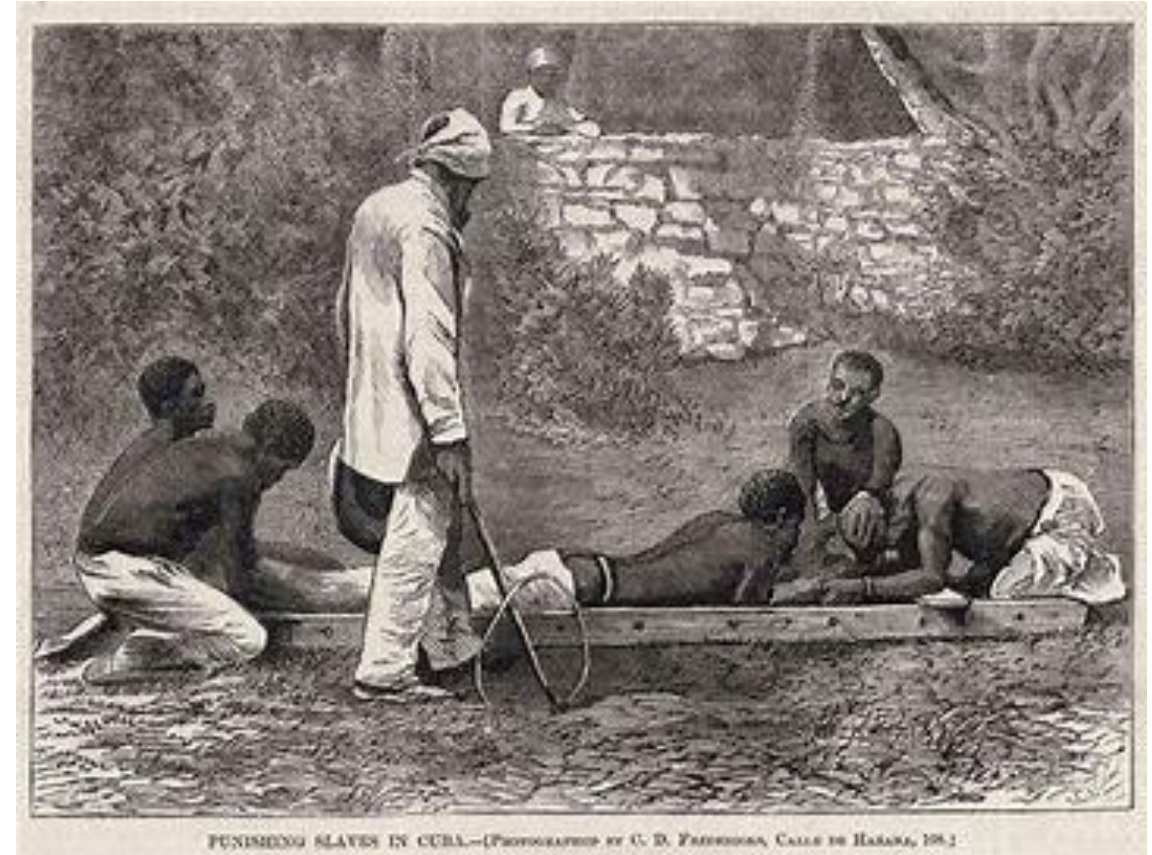


RAN Away, on Thursday evening, the 18th inst a Negro Man Servant, the property of the Subscriber, named BELFAST; but who commonly goes by the name of BILL. ———. -At the time of his elopement he was in the service of William Forsyth, Esq; and had meditated an attempt to get on board a ship that night which lay in the harbour, bound to Newfoundland; but was frustrated: It is probable, however, he may still endeavour to escape that way, therefore, the masters of all coasters going along shore, or other vessels bound to sea, are hereby forewarn-



Punishments

- White masters had complete control over the lives of enslaved people and treated them like mere property.
- As enslaved people had no rights, plantation owners were free to act as dictators.
- Enslaved people who disobeyed or resisted even in small ways were violently punished - in Antigua it was not a crime to kill an enslaved person until 1723.
- The lawyers and judges of the island were slave owners, so there was little interest in prosecuting for the mistreatment of enslaved people.



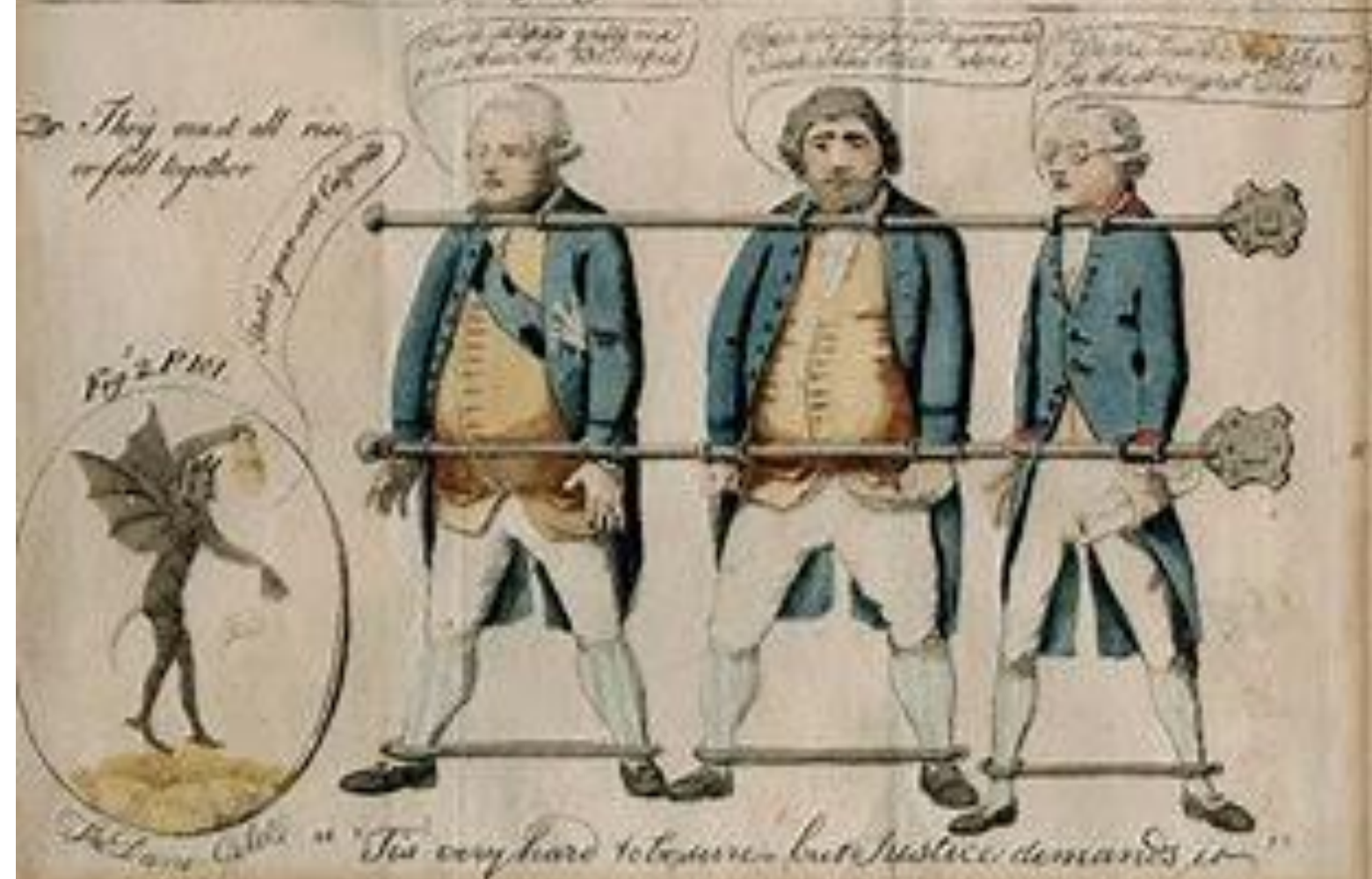
Olaudah Equiano's perspective

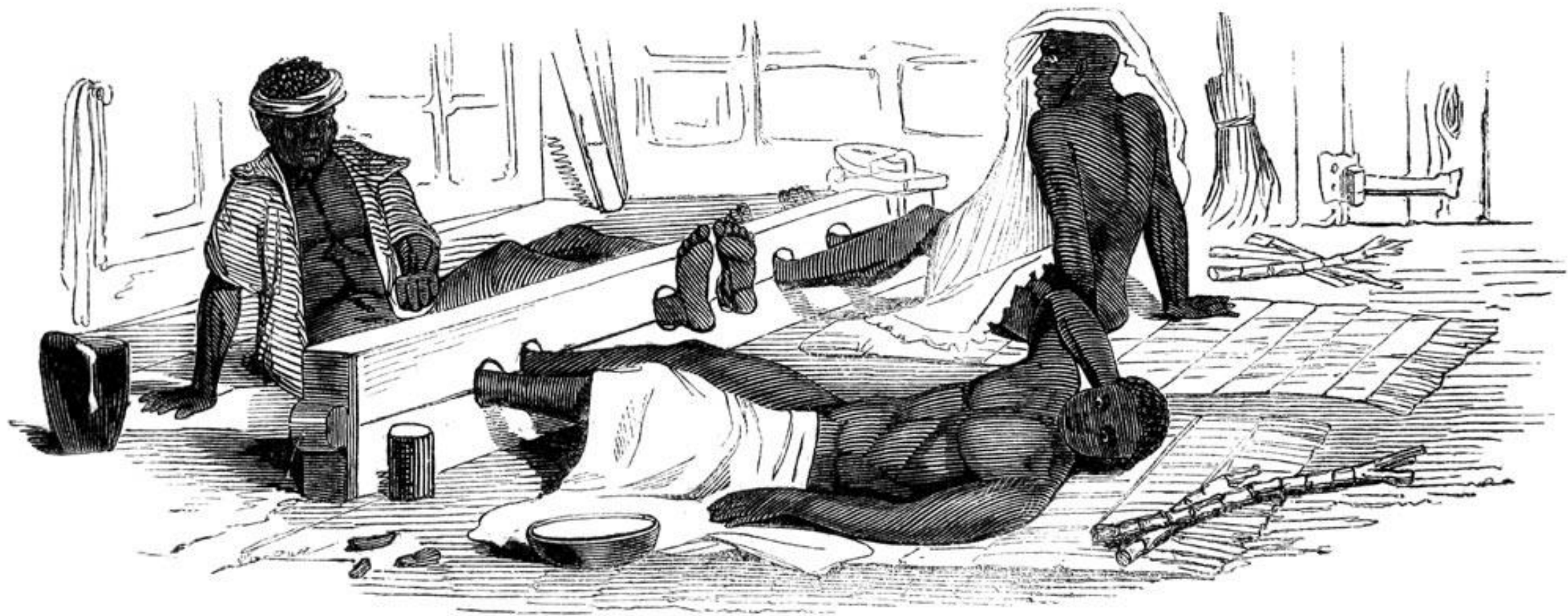
Olaudah Equiano was a formerly enslaved person who published his own life story in 1789. He wrote:

- 'It was very common...for slaves to be branded with the initial letter of the master's name and a load of heavy iron hooks hung about their necks.'
- '...they were loaded with chains and often instruments of torture were added.'
- 'The iron muzzle, thumb screws etc...were sometimes applied for the slightest fault.
...I have seen a Negro beaten till some of his bones were broken for even letting a pot boil over.'



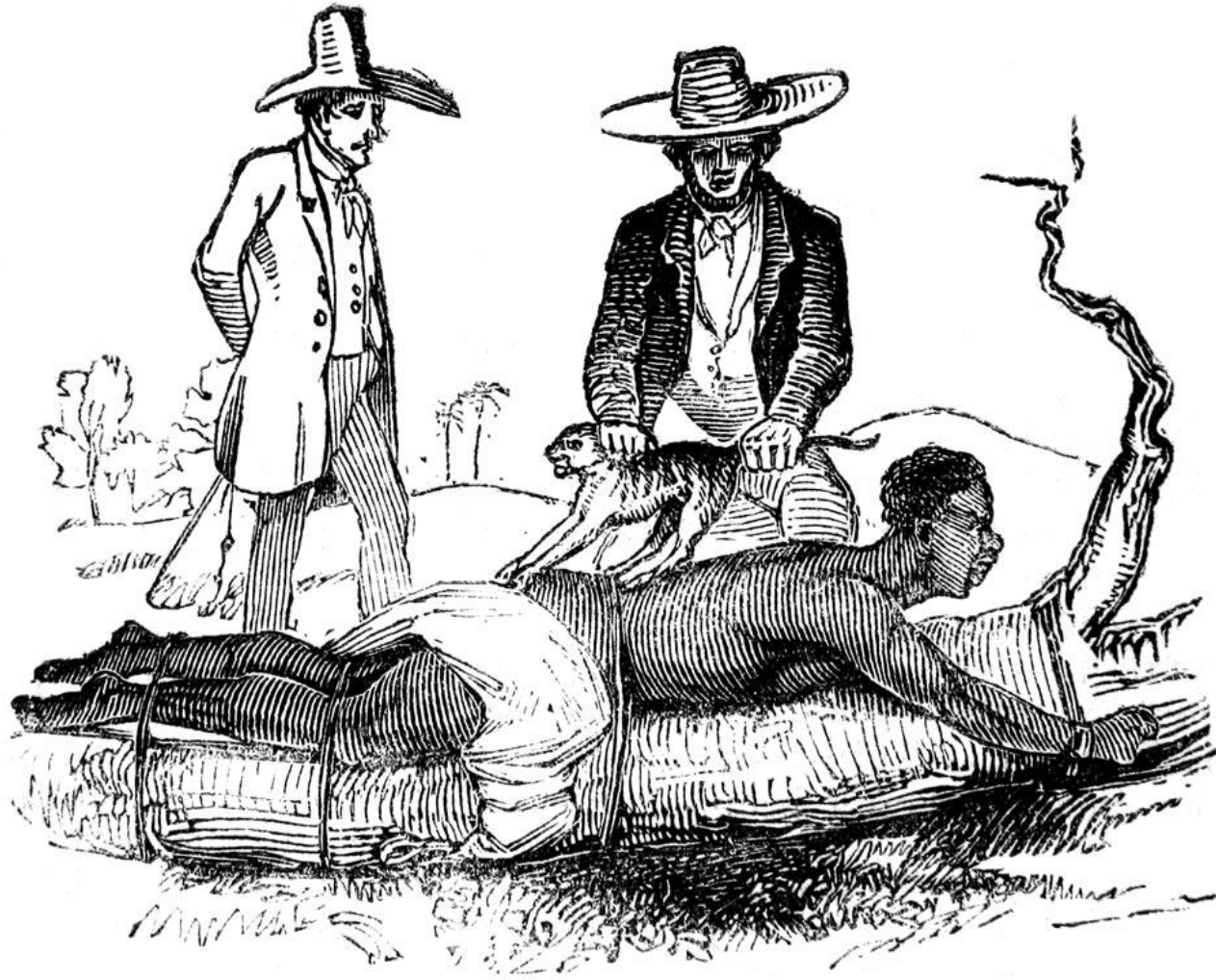
New Plain Dealer, Number 2.
The COALITION in the BILBOES or the Sufferings of the
BLUE and BUFF, for going out of their PROPER TRACK.



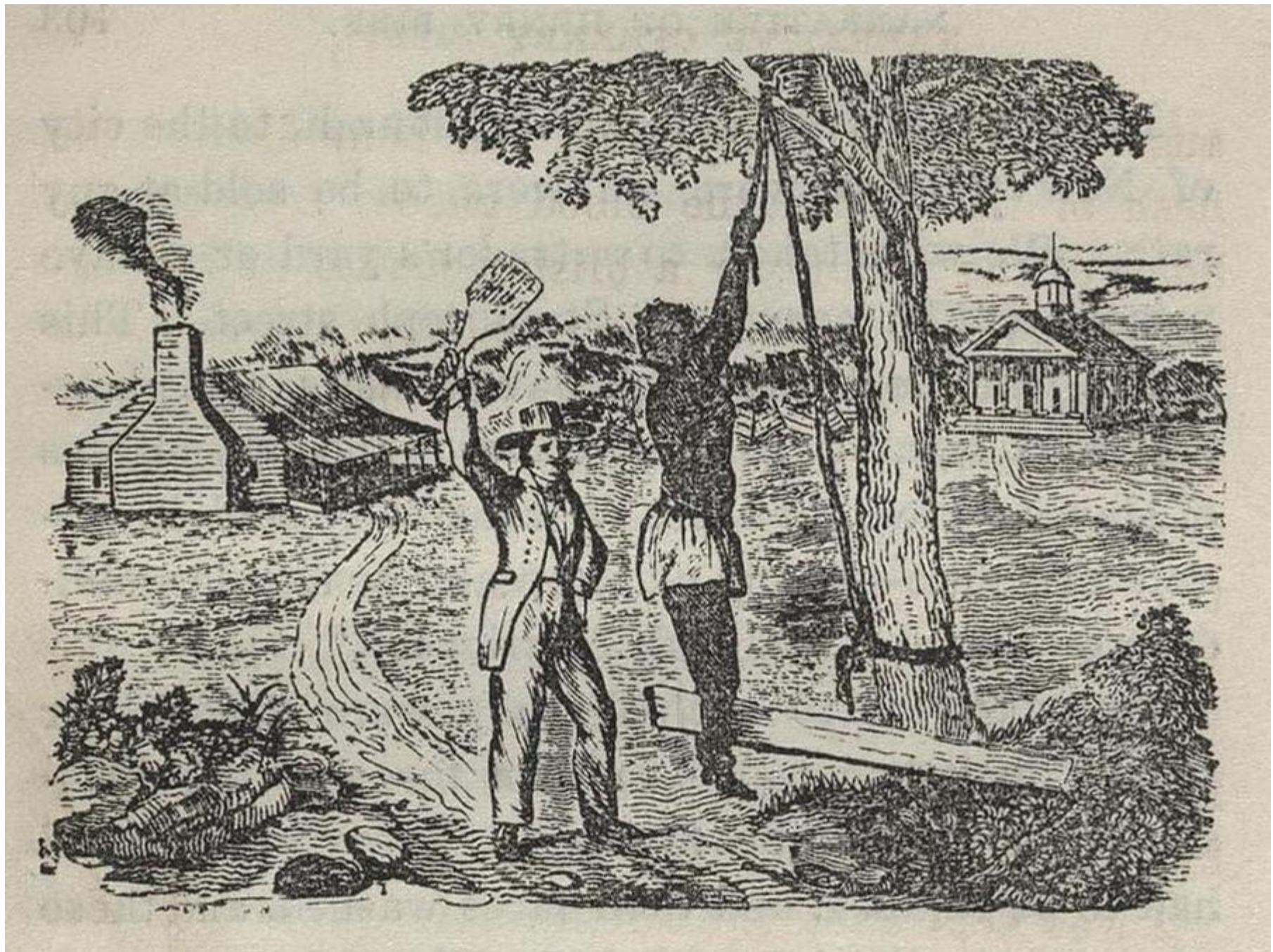


NEGROES IN THE STOCKS.





CAT HAWLING.



Preventing run aways

1. Physical Restraints: Iron chains and shackles restricted the mobility of slaves.
2. Surveillance and Patrols: Overseers closely monitored slave activities on plantations, and armed patrollers conducted regular rounds to catch runaways.
3. Punishments and Threats: Severe whippings and physical punishments deterred escape attempts, while branding served as a permanent identifier for runaways.
4. Legal Restrictions: Slave codes enacted laws to control and restrict slave movements, including prohibitions on traveling without permission.
5. Isolation and Surveillance: Slave quarters were strategically located for close monitoring, and informants were rewarded for reporting escape plans or rebellions.
6. Fugitive Slave Laws: Legal consequences awaited those who assisted escaping slaves, and laws penalized individuals aiding or abetting runaways.
7. Fear and Psychological Control: Intimidation and fear tactics discouraged escape attempts, with threats of family separation or selling family members serving as powerful deterrents.
8. Tracking Devices: Bloodhounds and trained dogs were employed to track and capture runaways, and pursuit with hounds was a common method of recapturing escaped slaves.
9. Advertising: using local media outlets to warn others.

RUN away from the subscriber, living in Northampton county, North Carolina, on the 10th of April 1769, a mulatto woman slave named ANNIS, about 21 years of age, near 5 feet high, thick and well set, straight hair, scarred on the back part of her neck by cupping, has a scar on the elbow joint of her right arm, branded on the right cheek E, and on the left R, is very cunning, and will endeavour to make her escape. Whoever apprehends the said slave, and secures her so that I get her again, if taken in this province shall have 5 l. reward, if out thereof 7 l. 10 s.

EDWARD RUTLAND.

Kingston, January 16, 1781.
Twenty Pistoles Reward!



RUN AWAY from the subscriber, about ten weeks ago, a short black fellow, of the *Mandago* country, named **CUPID**. He is a Fisherman by trade, and is marked **WB** on his right shoulder; was formerly the property of Mr. Philip Reid of Kingston, and was employed by him at *Port Morant* in the fishing business. He has been seen within these ten days at *Port Morant*, working with some white people as a Freeman; at which place, or *Morant-Bay*, he is now supposed to be. Any person seeing him in *Port-Morant* gaol, shall be entitled to a Half Jor reward; or if they will deliver him to the subscriber in Kingston, **FIVE BOUNDS** reward. And if they can inform by whom he is harboured, if a white person (on conviction), they shall receive the above reward, from

W. BAILEY.

June 20, 1780.

RUN AWAY from *Liswayney* Estate, in the Parish of *Trelawny*, in October last, **Two New Negro Men**,

Of the *Congo* Country, each about 20 years of age, marked on the right shoulders **ID**, diamond on top. Whoever will give information where the said Negroes may be found, or will lodge them in any of the gaols in this island, shall receive a reward of **TWO PISTOLES** for each negro, and all reasonable expences, by applying to Mr. **NEWMAN CURTIN**, Attorney-at-law in Kingston, or to the subscriber at *Martha-Brag*. And should any person harbour or conceal them after this public notice, they may depend upon being prosecuted according to law.

HENRY CUNIFFE.

Kingston, July 8th, 1780.

RUN AWAY, about 15 months ago, a Negro Man, of the *Mandago* country, named **JAMBAICA**, of a black complexion, about 5 feet 3 inches high, pretty stout made, his forehead very much wrinkled, and marked with the letter **R**, or **RS**, on one or both cheeks; about 45 years old, was formerly the property of *Richard Simmons*, deceased, and has been used to the brick-making and fishing businesses. Also, about two months ago, two Negro Men, named **JAMES** and **JAMBO**. — **JAMES** of the *Congo*

89-- 8th June, 1780.
WANTED



ON LEASE and SALE,
FROM 10 TO 100
NEGROES,

For the Payment of the Annual Rent, and the Principal at the end of the Lease, undoubted security will be given. For particulars, apply to **DAVID CHRISTIE** in Kingston, to **HUGH MILLER** at *Gothen*, *St. Mary's*, **WILL. CAUTIONER** at *Fairfield*, *St. Tho.* in the East, or to **FAIRLIE CHRISTIE** at *Fairfield*, or **BURTON'S**, *St. Thomas* in the Vale.

Kingston, 1st December, 1780.



RUN AWAY, a Negro Man Slave, named **CUDJOR**, but now known by the name of **GEORGE FOOT**; he is pitted with the small-pox, speaks good English, and limps in one of his feet:—he is supposed to be harboured on board some of the vessels, or perhaps gone to *Leeward* in a dregger.

Whoever apprehends and secures the above Negro, shall be entitled to a reward of **TWO PISTOLES**; and any person harbouring him, will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law.

JOSEPH AFLALO.

Kingston, February 9, 1781.

RUN AWAY from the Sloop **Captain Isaac Harvey**, at *Savanna* in Mar, on the first day of January last, a Negro Man Slave, named **CUFFEE**; he is about 25 years of age, five feet 10 inches high, broad and well set, speaks good English. Whoever will apprehend said slave, and secure him in any of the gaols, giving notice thereof to the subscriber in this Town, shall receive a Reward of **TWO POUNDS, FIFTEEN SHILLINGS**, and all reasonable Charges.

E. TYLER.

Kingston, 22d September, 1780.

RAN AWAY, two Months since, from **Wm. POLSON** of *Saint Mary's*, to whom they are hired, two Negro Carpenters named **POMPY** and **QUAW**, the property of the Trustees of *Henry Polson*, Esq. — **Pompoy** is well known here, and at *Spanish-Town*, was purchased of **GOTENAL LEYDEN**.

Kingston, December 15, 1780.



ARSCONDED about four weeks ago from the subscriber property at *Port-Morant*, a Negro Man named **PLYMOUTH**, rather elderly, much pitted with the small-pox, marked **DC** on his forehead, and **BD** on his chest, and **BD** on his back. He is supposed to have taken the route

Juan de Bolas, or near about that vicinage. He never apprehends, and secures him in the jail of this Town, or will deliver him at the above property, shall have forty shillings reward, besides all reasonable charges:—and whoever can prove where he is harboured, concealed, shall, on conviction of the offender, receive a bounty of **TEN POUNDS** reward.

Thomas Stoakes Harris.

93-- *Liswayney, Greenwood Estate*, 20 JANUARY, 1781.



RUN AWAY from the Estate, this day, a Mulatto boy, named **BILLY TROTT**, alias **John Duff**. He is a well made lute fellow, and complete willing-boy; marks on both shoulders **HD**; about 12 years of age, and 5 feet high; pitted a little with the small-pox, and speaks very good English; his head was shaved all over two or three days before he ran away. As he has formerly attempted to pass for free, he may again endeavour to impose on shipmasters and others; but the above particular description of him will render such persons excusable who will harbour or employ him, and he will be prosecuted as the law directs.

Whoever will bring said Mulatto Slave to the subscriber, or lodge him in any of the gaols in this island shall receive **FIVE POUNDS** reward.

Duncan M'Lachlan.

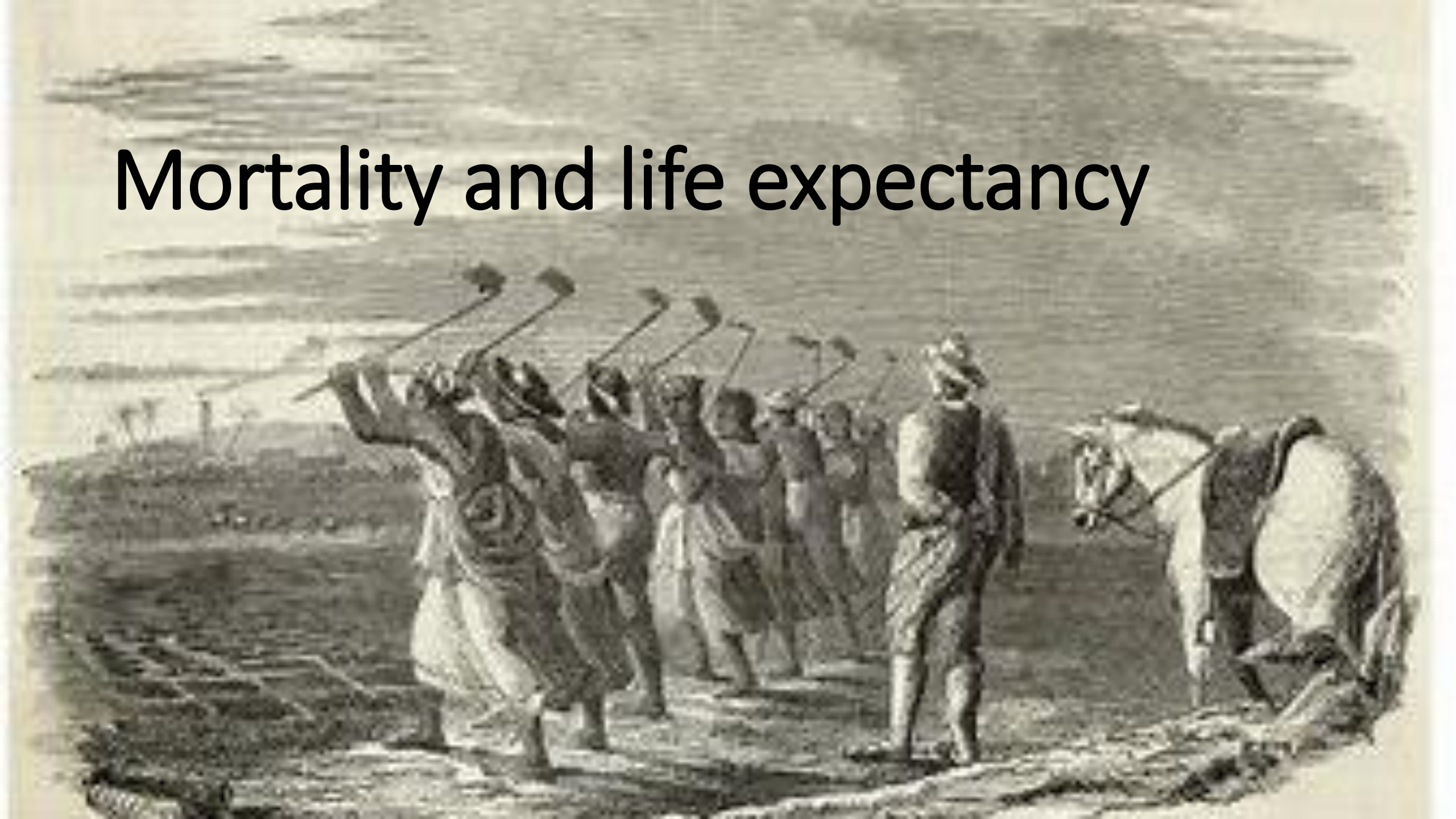
Kingston, 22d December, 1780.



WANTED immediately to lease or hire, for six, ten, eighteen months, or two years certain, from ten to fifteen **FIELD NEGROES** who have been used to *Plantation* Work. They are to be employed in *Liguera*, cutting wood, and making Lime. The hire will be paid quarterly, in Cash or Navy Bills. Any person

The Royal Gazette, 16 Jan 1781

Mortality and life expectancy



Mortality – Wilberforce's view

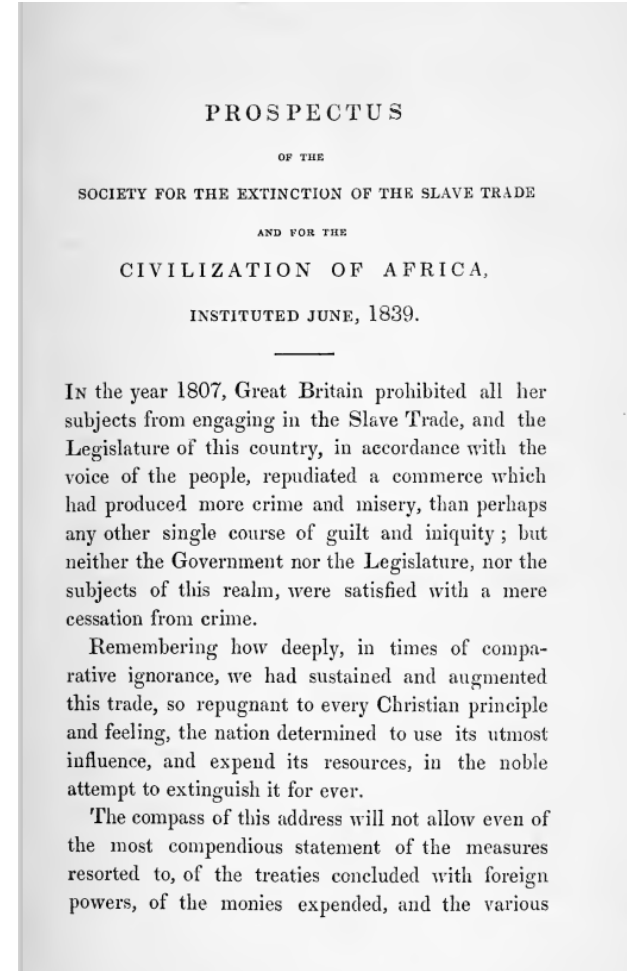
In 1789, William Wilberforce had estimated that about:

- 12.5 percent of slaves transported died in the Middle Passage
- 4.5 percent died on shore before the date of sale
- one-third died in the process of acclimating to the Americas
- a total mortality of about 50 percent



Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton

- Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was a British reformer, philanthropist, and Member of Parliament, known for his efforts in advocating the abolition of slavery and his role in the formation of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.
- Buxton estimated that 50 percent of all those intended for transatlantic markets died during seizure, march, and detention.
- Twenty-five percent of the survivors died on the Middle Passage (12.5 percent of all those captured), and 20 percent of those reaching the Americas (7.5 percent of the originally enslaved group) died during "seasoning."



Mortality rates in the America

- During the 1750s and 1760s in Boston and Philadelphia, the death rate was over sixty per 1,000, nearly one third to one-half more than the death rate of white people.
- In 1763, more than one-quarter of the slaves who died in Boston were new arrivals



How long did people last?

- Estimating the life expectancy of slaves is challenging due to limited historical records and the varied conditions experienced by different individuals.
- Some historians have suggested that the average life expectancy of a slave on a Caribbean sugar plantation was less than seven years.



What killed them?

- Harsh Work Conditions: Enslaved individuals endured grueling labor in extreme environments, leading to physical deterioration and reduced life expectancy.
- Poor Living Conditions: Crowded, unsanitary living spaces facilitated disease spread, compounded by inadequate housing, nutrition, and limited access to clean water.
- Disease and Epidemics: Forced migration exposed slaves to new diseases, resulting in high mortality rates, exacerbated by close living quarters on plantations.



Violence and neglect

- Violence and Punishment: Physical punishment, including whipping, caused injuries and fatalities, fostering a constant state of fear and stress.
- Limited Medical Care: Restricted access to medical care meant minimal treatment for illnesses or injuries, driven more by economic interests than humanitarian concerns.
- Resistance and Revolts: Attempts to resist enslavement through rebellion or escape led to violent reprisals and harsher control measures, further reducing life expectancy.



What moderated their lives?

Community Support: Strong community ties among enslaved individuals provided emotional support and solidarity, potentially moderating the challenges they faced.

Natural Immunity: Over time, some enslaved individuals may have developed immunity to prevalent diseases, contributing to their ability to withstand health challenges.

Family Structures: Presence of family members provided a social support system, positively impacting mental and emotional well-being.

Maroon Communities: Escaping to Maroon communities allowed some individuals to live independently, avoiding harsh plantation conditions and potentially improving life expectancy.



Geography and luck

Skills and Occupations: Those with specialized skills or occupations might have experienced slightly better treatment or living conditions.

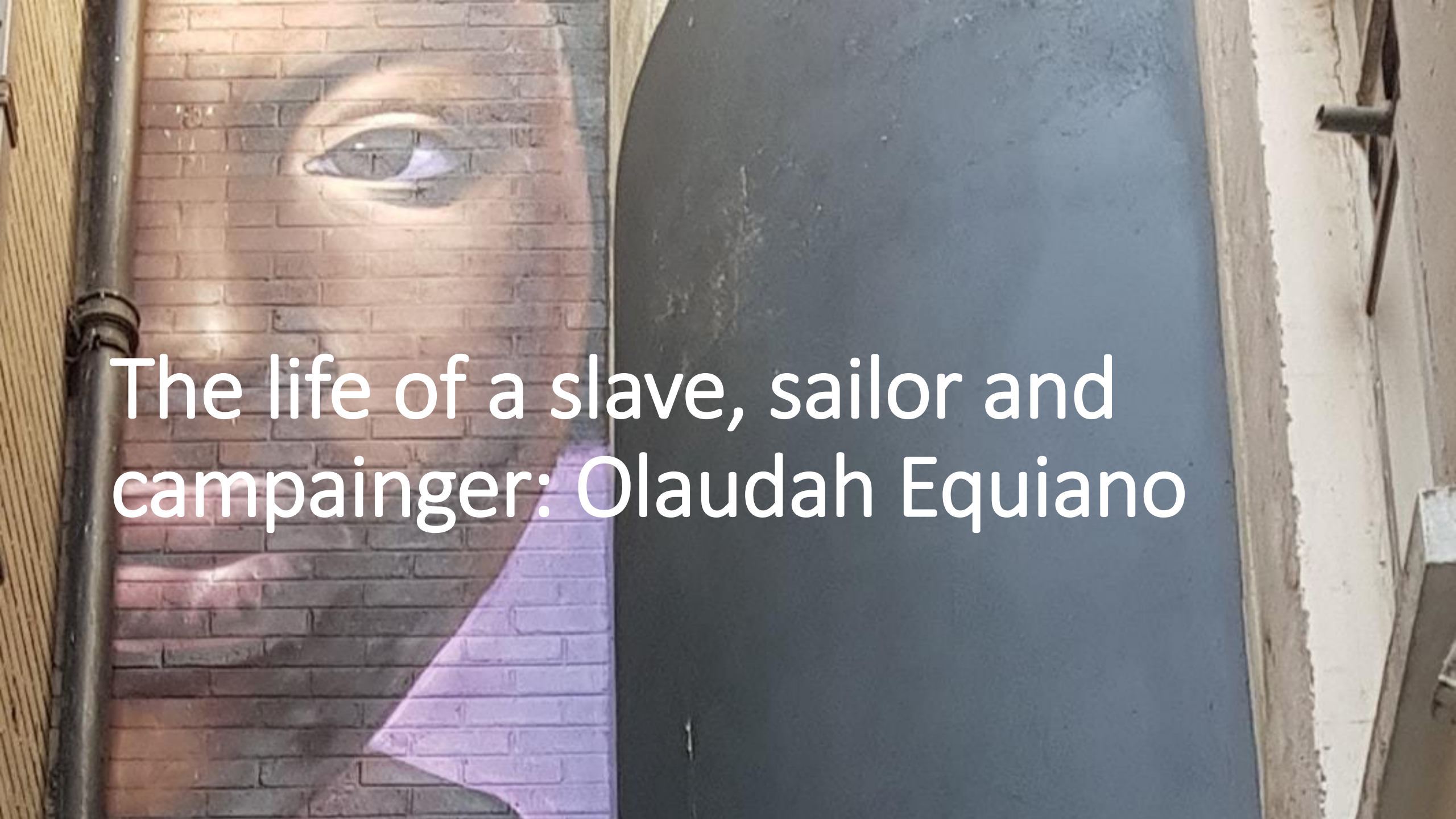
Economic Value: Slaves deemed valuable for their skills or productivity might have been treated with more care, aligning with the economic interests of slaveholders.

Geographical Location: Enslaved individuals in regions with milder climates or fewer diseases might have faced improved living conditions and better overall health.

Religious Practices: Religious beliefs and practices, whether rooted in African traditions or developed within the enslaved community, offered spiritual resilience and a sense of purpose.



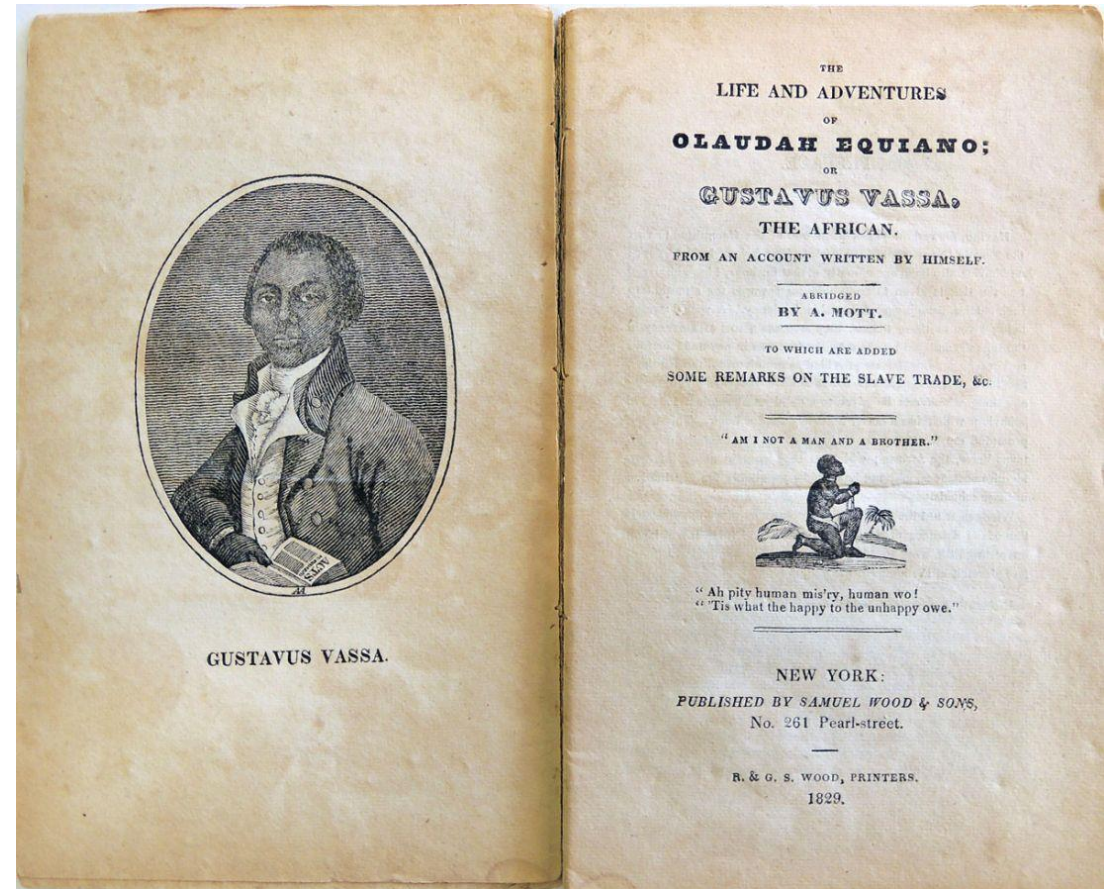
COTTON PLANTATION IN SOUTH CAROLINA.



The life of a slave, sailor and
campaigner: Olaudah Equiano

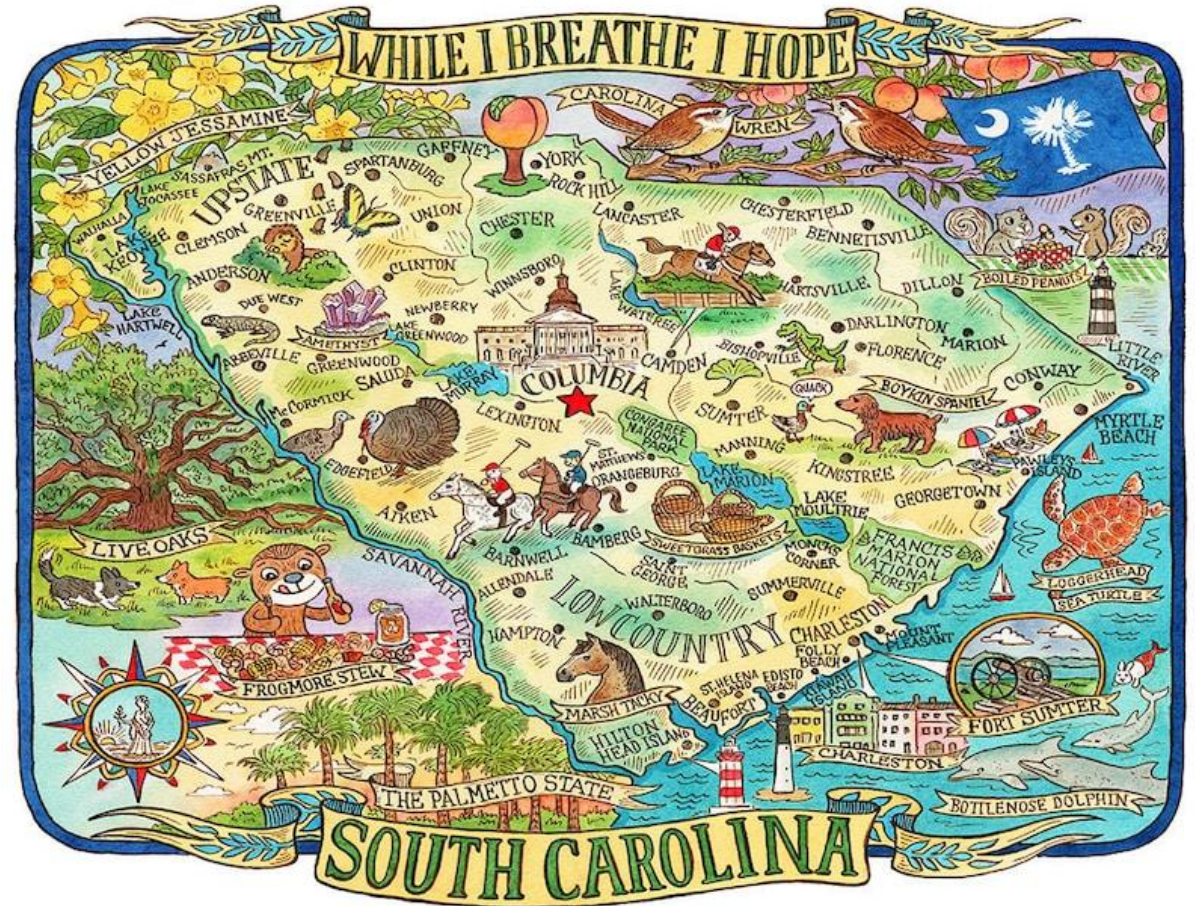
Early Life

- Olaudah Equiano (c. 1745 – 31 March 1797), known as Gustavus Vassa, was a prominent writer and abolitionist.
- Born in Essaka, modern southern Nigeria, he was enslaved as a child, transported to the Caribbean, and later purchased his freedom in 1766.
- Equiano's memoir places his birth in 1745 in the Igbo village of Essaka.
- Kidnapped at around age eleven, he was sold to slave traders and transported across the Atlantic.
- Renamed multiple times, he was eventually bought by Royal Navy officer Michael Henry Pascal.



Controversy

- Scholars, like Vincent Carretta, suggest Equiano might have been born in colonial South Carolina, challenging his African origins.
- Disputed viewpoints exist, with some supporting Equiano's account.



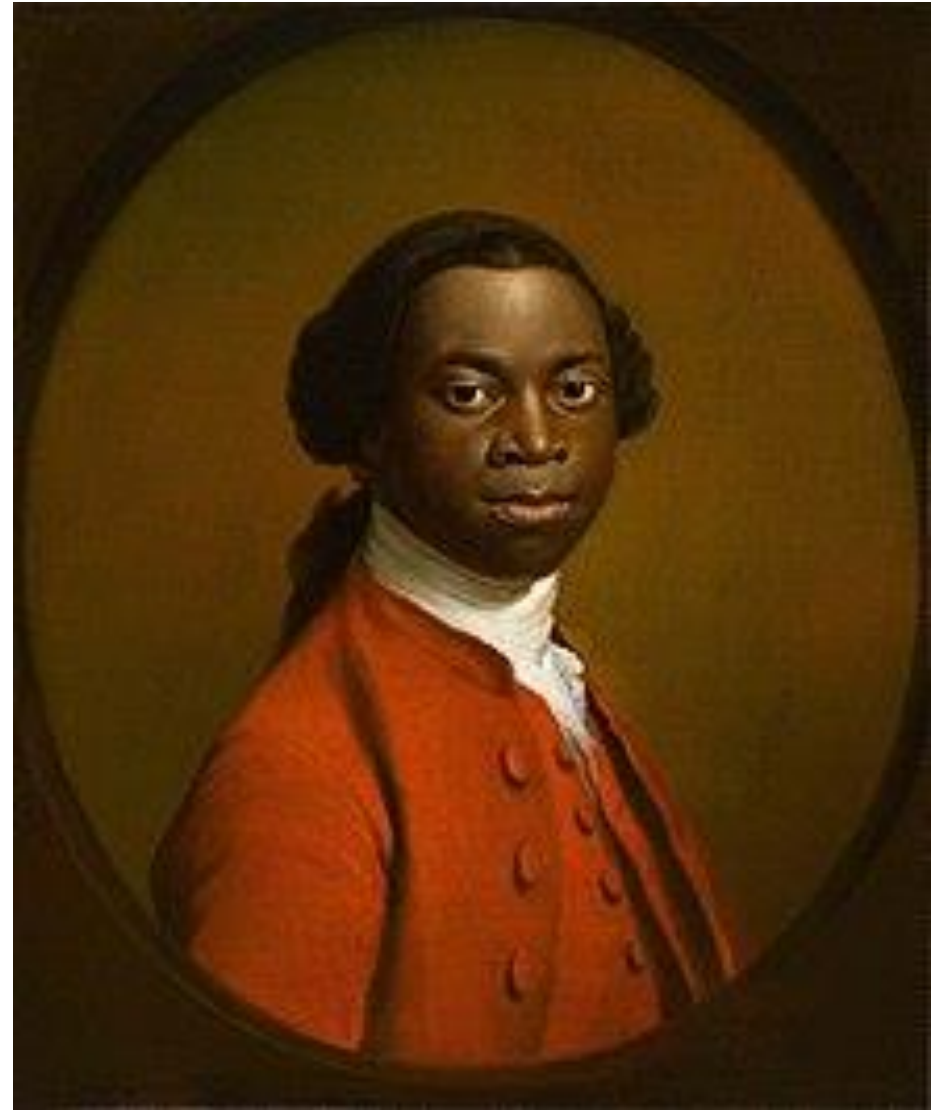
Slavery and Freedom

- Sold to Captain James Doran in 1762, Equiano was later bought by American Quaker Robert King.
- King allowed Equiano to engage in trade, promising him freedom for £40, achieved in 1766.
- Equiano arrived in Britain around 1768 and continued working at sea.
- In 1773, he joined a Royal Navy expedition to the Arctic and later worked on the Mosquito Coast.



Later Life

- Settling in London in the 1780s, Equiano became a prominent figure in the abolitionist movement.
- He informed abolitionists about the slave trade and played a crucial role in the Zong massacre case.
- Equiano's autobiography, "The Interesting Narrative," published in 1789, contributed to the abolitionist cause.
- The book, detailing his life and the horrors of slavery, became a best-seller, influencing the British Slave Trade Act of 1807.

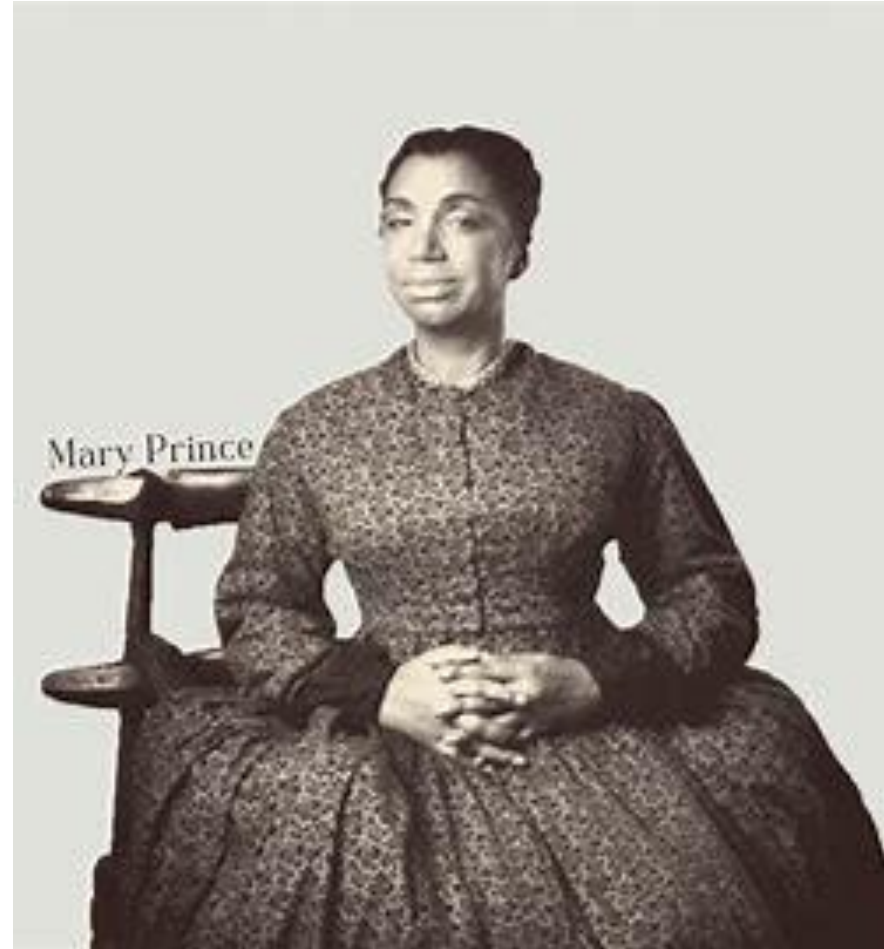


Mary Prince, slave, author and
free woman



Mary Prince - Trailblazing Autobiography

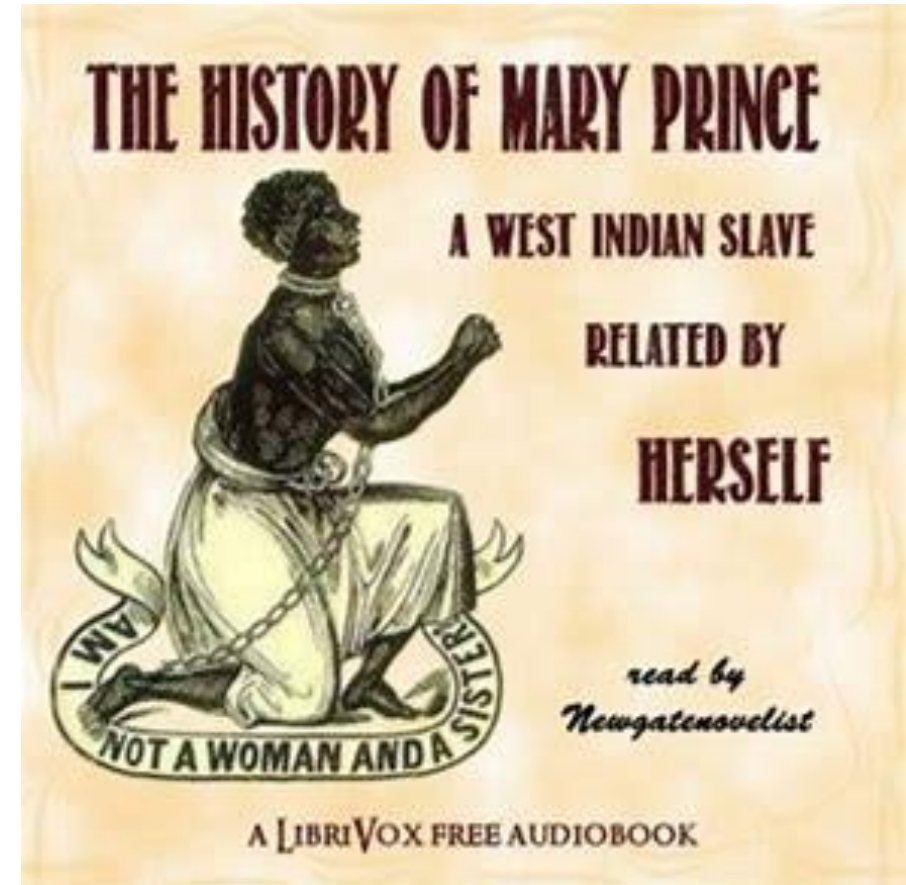
- Mary Prince (c. 1 October 1788 – after 1833) holds the distinction of being the first black woman to publish an autobiography recounting her life as a slave.
- Born in the colony of Bermuda to an enslaved family of African descent, Prince endured multiple sales and relocations across the Caribbean before arriving in England as a servant in 1828. Subsequently, she bravely liberated herself from enslavement.



Impactful Narrative and British Anti-Slavery Movement

- Mary Prince's autobiography, "The History of Mary Prince" (1831), the first account of a Black enslaved woman's life published in the United Kingdom, was dictated by Prince to Susanna Strickland, a resident in Thomas Pringle's home, the secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society.

- Despite her own illiteracy, Prince's vivid description of the brutalities of enslavement, published when slavery was legal, profoundly influenced the British anti-slavery movement, leading to two reprints in its first year.



Mary Prince - Early Years in Bermuda

- Mary Prince, born enslaved in Devonshire Parish, Bermuda, was the daughter of Prince (a sawyer enslaved by David Trimmingham) and her mother (a house-servant held by Charles Myners).
- Following Myners' death in 1788, Mary, her mother, and siblings were sold as household servants to Captain George Darrell. Mary became the companion servant to Darrell's granddaughter, Betsey Williams.



Mary Prince's Struggle for Freedom

- At the age of 12, Mary was sold to Captain John Ingham for £38 sterling facing cruelty from her new enslavers, including severe floggings for minor offenses.
- Ingham later sold Mary to a drug dealer on Grand Turk, where she worked in the labour-intensive salt industry, a crucial pillar of Bermuda's economy.



Mary Prince's Life in England

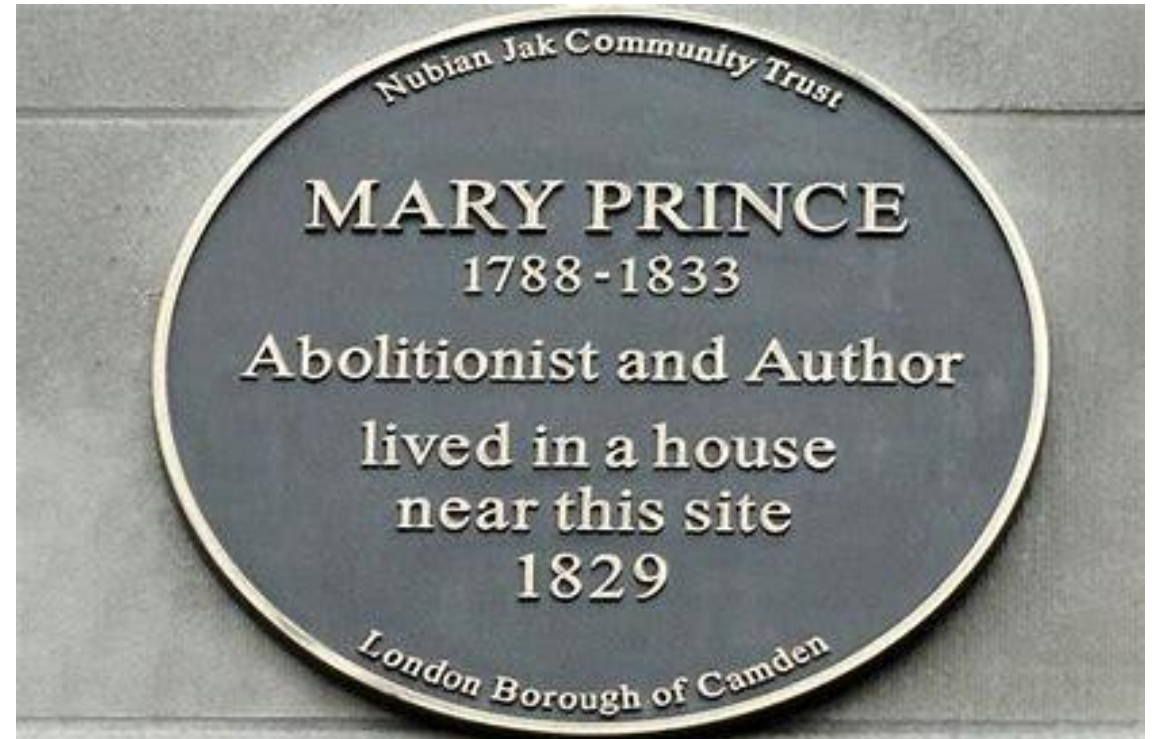
- In 1826, Mary married Daniel James, a free black man. However, her floggings increased as Adams Wood and his wife opposed a free black man on their property.
- In 1828, Adams Wood and his family traveled to London, taking Mary as a servant. Conflict with the Woods led to Mary taking shelter with the Moravian church in Hatton Garden.

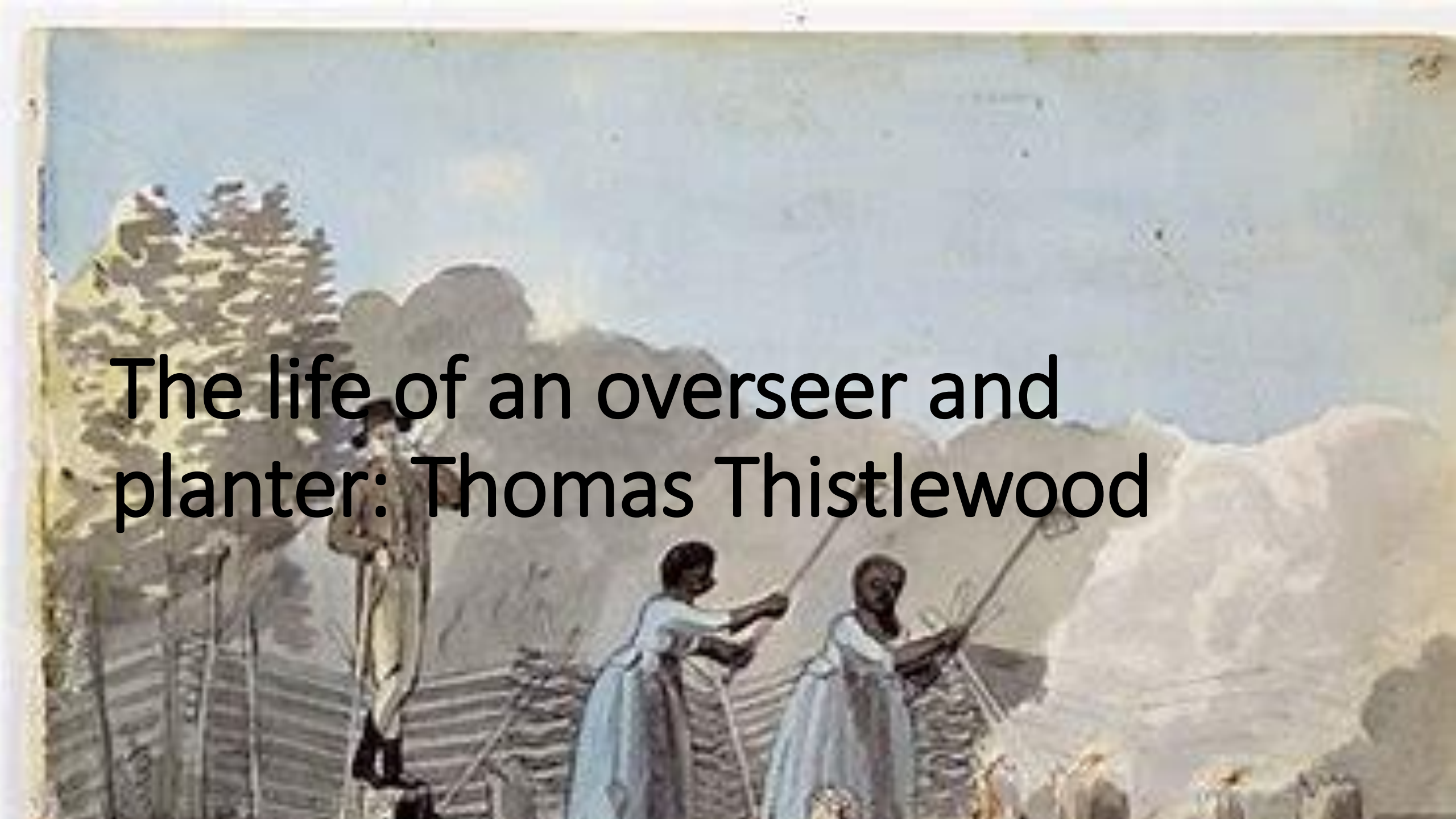


The History of
Mary Prince
A West Indian Slave

Impact

- Mary Prince remained in England until at least 1833, testifying in Washington cases. In 1834, the Slavery Abolition Act passed, officially abolishing slavery in the British Empire.
- Prince's book played a crucial role in the abolitionist movement, presenting a personal perspective that resonated with the public, challenging prevailing notions about slavery.

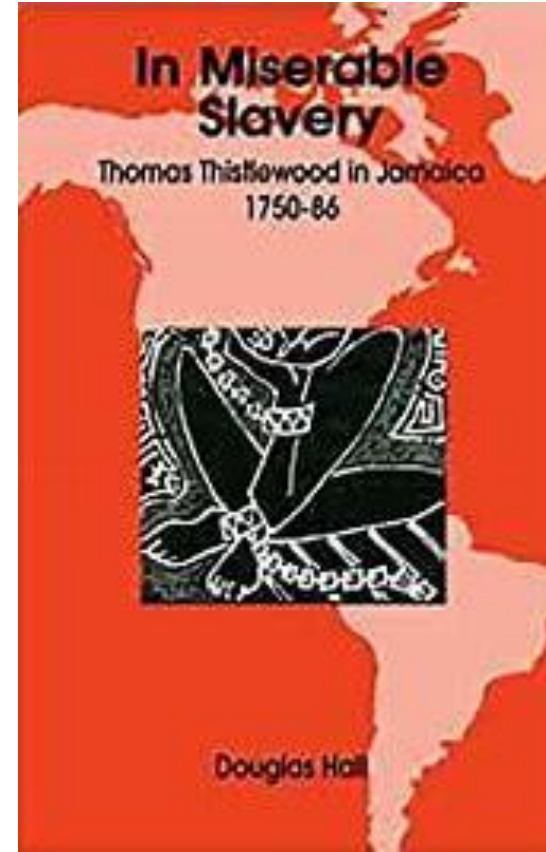




The life of an overseer and
planter: Thomas Thistlewood

Life in Jamaica, 1750-1785

- Thomas Thistlewood was born on March 16, 1721, in Tupholme, Lincolnshire, as the second son of a farmer.
- He received his education in mathematics and "practical science" in Ackworth, West Yorkshire.
- At the age of six, he inherited 200 pounds sterling from his father, but most of the estate went to his brother, allowing him the opportunity to leave England.
- Initially training as a surveyor, Thistlewood abandoned this path after a fellow surveyor, possibly William Wallace or James Crawford, reportedly went mad and committed suicide.
- Following a two-year voyage on an East India Company ship as a supercargo, Thistlewood returned to England briefly at 29 and decided to seek employment in Jamaica.
- On February 1, 1750, he boarded the Flamborough bound for Savanna la Mar, Jamaica, with letters of recommendation but no prearranged employment.
- He arrived in Jamaica on May 4, 1750.
- His famous 14,000-page journal, known as "The Diary of Thomas Thistlewood," documents in detail the brutality exhibited by British slaveowners in Jamaica in the 18th century.



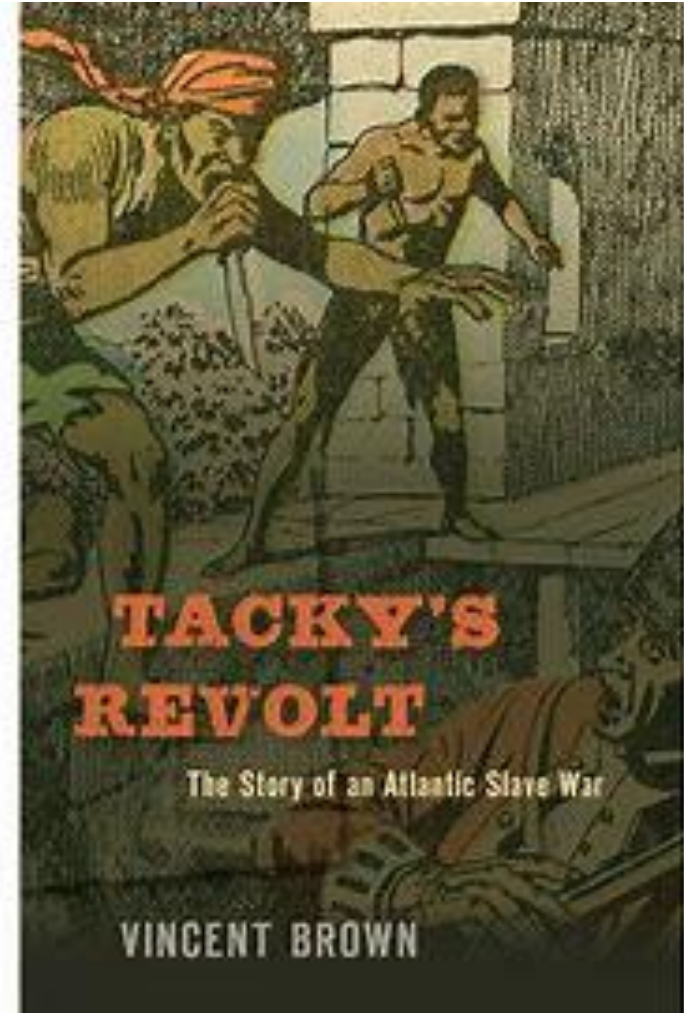
Early life

- Thistlewood's Caribbean life commenced as an overseer, starting at Vineyard Pen, a cattle pen supplying meat and vegetables to sugar plantations.
- His primary overseer role was at Egypt, a sugar plantation owned by John Cope and William Dorrill, where he served from 1751 to 1767 in Westmoreland Parish.
- Egypt, spanning 1,500 acres, faced challenges as 1,200 acres were unsuitable for sugar production. Thistlewood's first crop was so poor that there was consideration to shift to a cattle pen.
- During these years, Thistlewood acquired his own slaves, whom he rented out to other planters, and engaged in a tumultuous and quarrelsome long-lasting relationship with a slave named Phibbah.
- Thistlewood hired Jamaican Maroons to hunt runaway slaves, claiming meetings with leaders Cudjoe and Accompong in the 1750s and 1760s, although historical inaccuracies exist in these accounts.
- In 1752, while strolling, Thistlewood encountered a runaway slave, Congo Sam, whom he tried to recapture. Sam attacked him with a machete, leading to a trial where Abigail and Bella received lashes for supporting Sam.
- Slaves on Jamaican plantations faced inadequate food, resorting to theft. In 1755–56, a slave named Scotland was shot and fatally chopped by a watchman for stealing corn and plantains at Egypt.



Tacky's Revolt

- Thistlewood documented the fear among planters during Tacky's War in 1760 and subsequent slave revolts in the same decade.
- He praised the bravery of Jamaican Maroons in Cudjoe's Town (Trelawny Town) for their efforts in fighting against the rebels.
- Thistlewood expressed anxiety over the rebellion's progress and disappointment with Royal Navy sailors who prioritized drinking over combating the rebels.
- Noted instances of rebel slaves killing white men, including Mr. Smith and Captain Hoar.



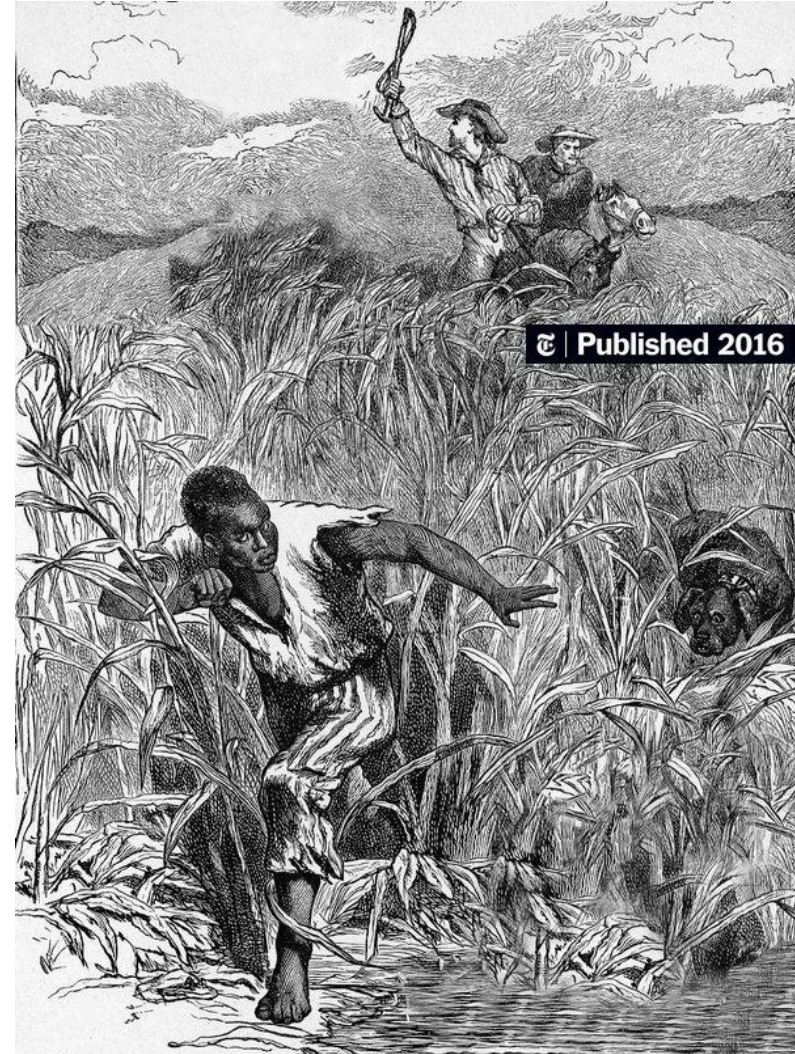
Suppression

- Thistlewood wrote about attempts to quell spin-off rebellions, particularly in western Jamaica, led by Apongo, a slave belonging to Cope.
- Claimed Apongo, a "prince in Guinea," was surprised, taken prisoner while hunting, and sold into slavery.
- Described John Jones's house being burnt by rebel slaves who initially defeated a contingent of white militias, resulting in soldier casualties.
- Despite the turmoil, Thistlewood engaged in reprehensible acts, raping several of his slaves during this period.
- The revolt was eventually suppressed on both the eastern and western ends of the island.



Subsequent rebellions and suppression

- Some slaves in western Jamaica, including those belonging to Cope like Apongo, were executed in the aftermath of the rebellion.
- Two of Thistlewood's Egypt slaves, Quacoo and Abraham, were sentenced to be resold in the Spanish Caribbean colonies for their role in the rebellion.
- In 1766, Thistlewood participated in the militia that quelled another slave revolt inspired by Tacky, this time in western Jamaica.
- In 1776, armed again, as white Jamaicans heard rumors of another rebellion that did not materialize.



Slave holdings increase

- Thistlewood, as overseer of Egypt, began acquiring slaves whom he rented out for additional income.
- All his slaves bore the "TT" brand on their right shoulders.
- Instances of cruelty include branding Bess's son, Bristol, at the age of seven, and flogging and branding Mary upon her capture, placing her in a steel collar.
- By 1762, Thistlewood owned 12 slaves, and this number increased to 28 by 1767.
- In 1767, he purchased Breadnut Island Pen, a 160-acre plantation, where around 30 slaves were involved in raising provisions and livestock.
- Slave population fluctuations: 26 in 1770, 32 in 1779, and 34 by 1782, comprising nine men, 12 women, and 13 underage individuals.



Challenges to his wealth

- Lacking capital for a sugar plantation, Thistlewood hired out slaves during the crop season to larger sugar plantations.
- On his own land, he cultivated provisions such as turnips, cabbages, parsley, nutmeg, coconuts, and coffee, selling them to sugar estate owners.
- Pursued scientific and intellectual interests, amassing a collection of several hundred books and documenting medicinal plants, botanical specimens, and a 34-year weather record.
- Breadnut Island's gardens, once considered among the finest in western Jamaica, were ruined in a hurricane in October 1780.
- Thistlewood's slaves were allowed to consume sheep killed by the hurricane due to food shortages.
- Hurricanes in 1780 and 1781 damaged Thistlewood's dwelling, slaves' houses, and crops, leading to food shortages for the slaves.



Treatment of his 'property'

- Thistlewood routinely subjected his slaves to fierce floggings and other cruel and gruesome punishments.
- Hazat, recaptured in 1756, faced extreme torment: placed in bilboes, gagged, hands locked, rubbed with molasses, exposed to flies all day, and mosquitoes all night without fire.
- Slaves were often beaten, and salt pickle, lime juice, and bird pepper were rubbed onto their open wounds.
- Introduced a gruesome element known as "Derby's dose," involving whipping and making other slaves excrete in the mouths of offenders.
- Instances include Derby being whipped for stealing sugar cane, and Thistlewood making Egypt excrete in Derby's mouth.



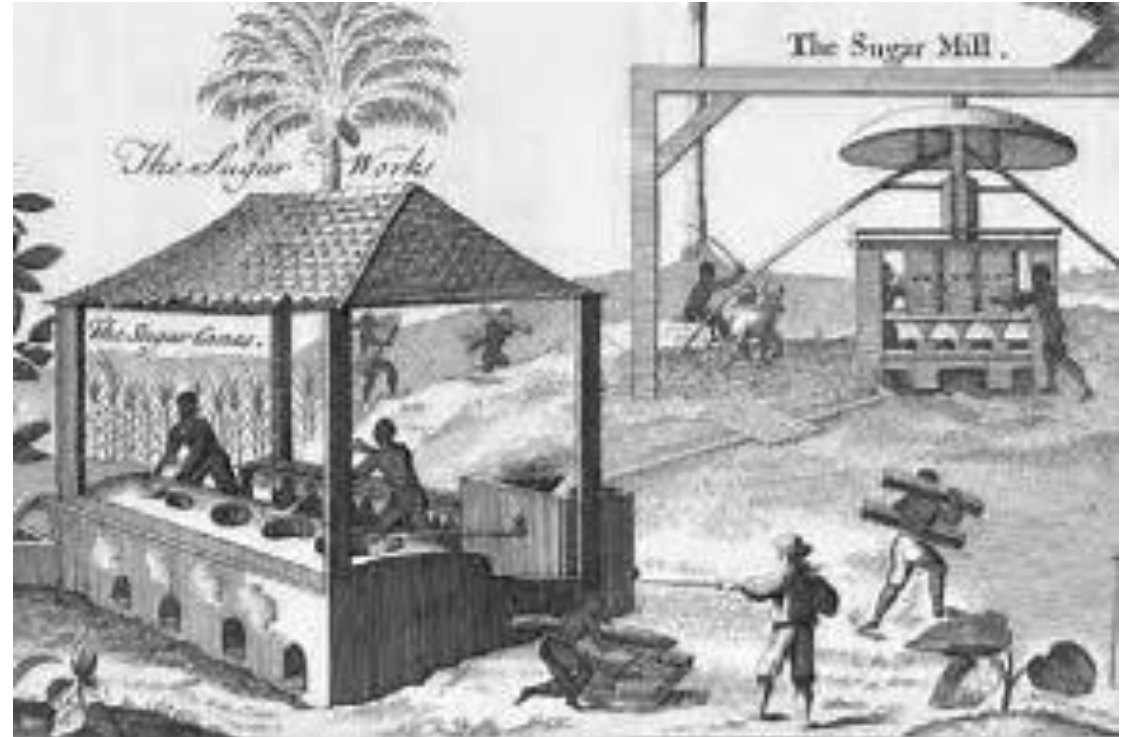
Everyday life was hard

- In 1770, Coobah sought revenge by excreting in a "punch strainer" in the cookroom; Thistlewood responded by having the excrement rubbed on her face and mouth.
- Systematic rape of enslaved girls and women, documented in his journal, was another brutal aspect of Thistlewood's treatment.
- Enslaved women who ran away faced severe whippings, collars, yokes, or placement in field gangs, and were raped by Thistlewood for the slightest infractions.
- Dick was flogged for planting potato slips at the wrong end of the ground.
- Coobah ran away 14 times between 1770 and 1774, each time facing floggings and additional punishments upon recapture.
- Solon, failing to catch enough fish, faced repeated floggings, collar and chain, and immediate return to fishing after running away.
- In 1774, a party of slaves was flogged for not working hard enough.
- Lincoln, failing to catch enough fish, was flogged and placed in the bilboes in 1776.
- Thistlewood expressed dissatisfaction with slave driver Dick and ordered Jimmy to flog him. Dissatisfied with Jimmy's efforts, Thistlewood ordered Jimmy to be flogged.
- Slave driver Strap, overfond of the whip, caused severe injury to Peggy, resulting in Strap being flogged and Dick reinstated as the slave driver.



Managing ill health

- There was a high mortality rate among children, with instances such as Coobah's child Silvia dying at one year old in 1768.
- Deaths included babies of Maria, Rachel, Abba, Nanny, Phoebe, Fanny, Sally, Damsel, and Bess, among others.
- Thistlewood resorted to European doctors and various remedies for ailments among slaves, including bleeding, purging powders, mercury pills, spirits of turpentine, and sea punch.
- Instances where slaves were given mercury pills for yaws, venereal disease, and the "clap."
- Unpleasant medical experiences, such as Peggy fearing death after consuming an unnamed liquid and hiding ailments from Thistlewood.
- Some slaves resorted to myal and obeah prescriptions instead of European medicine, reflecting a lack of trust in the latter.
- Instances of slaves hiding injuries and ailments from Thistlewood to avoid European medical practices, opting for creole "doctresses" and obeah men.
- Resistance and punishment for hiding injuries, as seen with Damsel and Phoebe.
- Despite various medical treatments, including mercury pills, burnt wine, and other remedies, the death rates among both enslavers and the enslaved continued to rise.



Sexual relationships

- Thistlewood's diary recorded 3,852 acts of both "consensual" and nonconsensual sexual intercourse with 138 women, the majority of whom were enslaved Black women.
- His sexual habits were formed in England, where he engaged with prostitutes, and he migrated to Jamaica due to a lack of steady employment.
- Thistlewood had a lifelong sexual relationship with his slave Phibbah, a Coromantee, resulting in the birth of his only son, Mulatto John.
- Over 33 years, Phibbah and Thistlewood developed what is described as a "warm and loving relationship" despite the power dynamics.
- Thistlewood had sexual relationships with other enslaved women, including Marina, Ellin, Dido, Jenny, Susannah, Big Mamber, Belinda, Aurelia, Phoebe, Sally, Franke, and others.
- Instances of rape, often in multiple locations such as the morass, plantain walk, curing-house, and boiling-house.



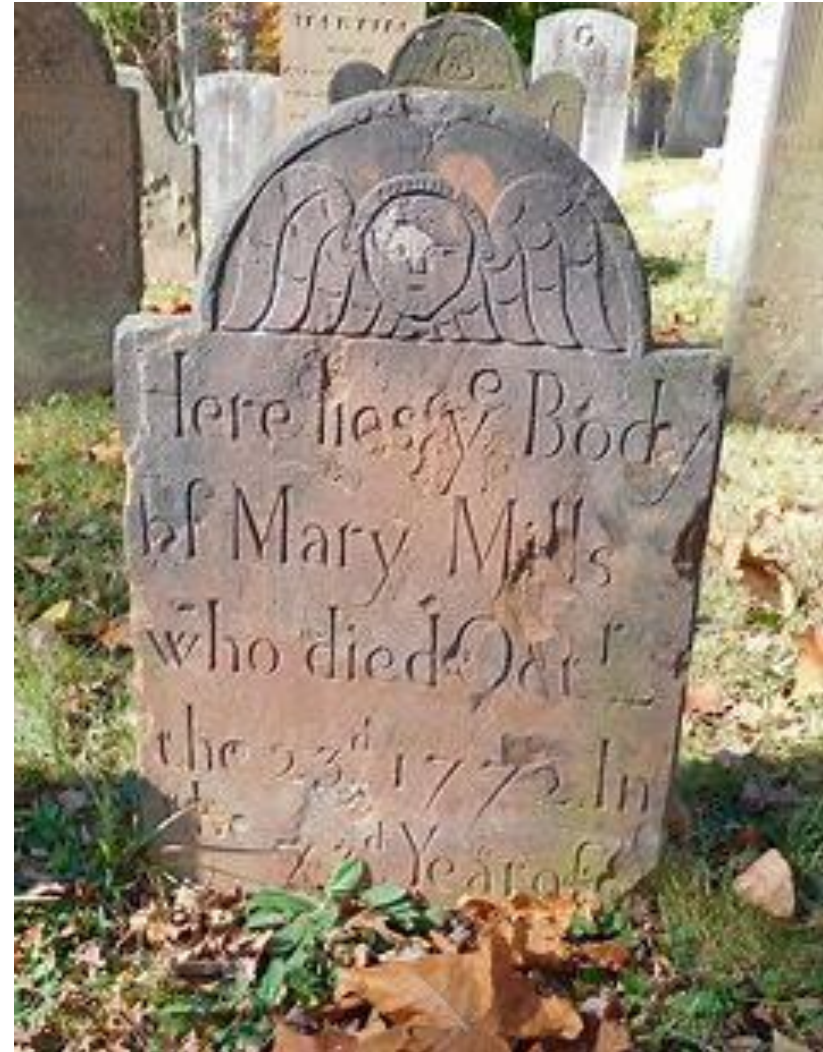
Consequences

- Thistlewood and Phibbah suffered from venereal diseases, leading to the use of mercury pills as a remedy.
- Instances of passing on venereal diseases, such as Thistlewood allegedly infecting an underage slave, Mulatto Bessie, whom he had raped multiple times.
- Thistlewood attempted to "match" his male slaves with female partners but continued to rape female slaves he had paired off.
- Disapproval of slaves changing partners and punishment for sexual activities, including putting slaves in iron restraints and flogging.
- Rape was common in Jamaica under slavery, with instances of white enslavers, including Dorrill, Fewkes, and Cope, raping slave women.
- Thistlewood's sexual activity and sexual abuse declined from 1781 due to regular illnesses, leading to observations that Phibbah sought sexual gratification elsewhere.



Family and death

- Born on April 29, 1760, Thistlewood's son Mulatto John was manumitted by Cope on May 3, 1762.
- Thistlewood apprenticed Mulatto John to William Hornby as a carpenter in 1775, but John showed little interest in reading, disappointing his father.
- Mulatto John joined the "Brown Infantry," a British military regiment in Jamaica, anticipating a French invasion that never occurred.
- In 1780, Mulatto John fell ill and died of a fever on September 7, 1780. Thistlewood and Phibbah suspected poisoning by a jealous slave.
- In 1784, Thistlewood became seriously ill, facing difficulty writing in his diary.
- He died at Breadnut Island in November 1786 at the age of 65.
- Phibbah, referred to as his "wife" in the will, was freed by paying £80 to Cope on November 26, 1792.
- Thistlewood's estate, valued at £3,000 and comprising 34 slaves, was considered modest by Jamaican standards but substantial compared to other British colonies.





Military service

West India Regiment

- Between April and September 1795, eight battalions of the West India Regiment were established.
- The original plan involved recruiting free blacks from the West Indian population and buying slaves from West Indian plantations.
- This resulted in approximately 13,400 slaves being purchased for service in the West India Regiments between 1795 and 1808 at a total cost of about £925,000.
- This constituted roughly 7% of all enslaved Africans imported into the British West Indies during this period.



Why form the West India Regiment?

- The West India Regiment was formed to have soldiers better adapted to the local conditions, particularly the challenges posed by tropical diseases and harsh climates.
- To address the difficulties of climate and disease, the original plan was to recruit free blacks from the West Indian population and purchase slaves from West Indian plantations to serve in the regiment.
- The presence of a dedicated regiment in the West Indies allowed the British to have a standing military force ready to defend and maintain control over their Caribbean colonies, protecting them from external threats and potential uprisings.
- The West India Regiment served against locally recruited French units in the region, providing a military response to the presence of French forces in the Caribbean.
- Black Caribbean soldiers, being more adapted to the tropical environment, were considered valuable assets in military service in the West Indies.



Slaves to free men

All serving black soldiers recruited as slaves in the West India Regiments of the British Army were freed under the Mutiny Act 1807 passed by the British parliament that same year.

Though as slaves they received pay, medical attention, promotion and pensions.

HER MAJESTY'S ARMY SOLDIERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE 1881-1902



THE WEST INDIES
West India Regiment



Operational service 1800-1812

- The West India Regiments, formed during the Napoleonic Wars, played a crucial role with 12 battalion-sized regiments in the British West Indies by 1800.
- In 1808, three companies of the First WIR, along with local fugitive slaves from the Corps of Colonial Marines, repulsed a French attempt to recapture Marie-Galante.
- During the War of 1812, the Regiments were involved in battles on the Atlantic coast and in the Gulf of Mexico, including the unsuccessful British attack on New Orleans.



Operational Service 1812-1870s

- After the Slave Trade Act of 1807, a recruitment shortfall led to hopes of new enlistments from fleeing U.S. slaves during the War of 1812, but only a small number joined the regiments.
- Following the War of 1812, the regiment numbers were progressively reduced, with two disbanded regiments settling in Trinidad, forming a significant Muslim population.
- Throughout most of the 19th century, there were consistently at least two West India Regiments.
- The 1st West India Regiment from Jamaica participated in the Ashanti War of 1817-18 in the Gold Coast of Africa.
- The St. Joseph Mutiny of 1837 witnessed a rebellion by 60-100 soldiers of the 1st West India Regiment against forcible conscription, resulting in casualties and executions by British authorities.



What was their value?

- Became a valued part of the British forces garrisoning the West Indies, where losses from disease and climate were heavy amongst white troops.
- Black Caribbean soldiers, in contrast, proved better adapted to tropical service.
- Served against locally recruited French units that had been formed for the same reasons.





Resistance and Rebellion

Types and nature of rebellions

- Enslaved resistance through planned rebellions.
- Risks included torture and death.
- Some plantations destroyed, impacting profits.
- Varied in size and frequency.
- Often quelled with British Army or Royal Navy intervention.
- Approximately every 20 years saw some form of rebellion.



Notable rebellions

Antigua 1736:

- Plan to blow up island's gentry.
- 88 enslaved people put to death, many burned alive.

Tacky's Revolt 1760:

- Largest uprising in a British colony in the 18th century.

Saint Domingue 1791:

- Led by Toussaint L'Overture.
- French-controlled island renamed 'Haiti' - first free black republic.
- Removed France as a major competitor in Caribbean sugar production.

Grenada 1796:

- Fédon's revolt defeated by British troops.

Barbados 1816:

- Enslaved uprising burned a quarter of the island's sugar crop.

Jamaica 1831:

- Massive rebellion; 20,000 rebels seized control.
- British Army and militia took a month to restore order.
- Significant casualties, both enslaved and white.



Maroon

The term "Maroon" has its roots in the word "cimarrón," which originally comes from the Spanish language.

The word "cimarrón" was used by Spanish colonizers in the Americas to refer to domesticated animals, like cattle or horses, that had become wild or feral.

Over time, this term was applied to escaped or fugitive slaves who formed independent communities in remote and often inhospitable areas, such as mountains, swamps, or forests.



Maroons in Jamaica

Mix of indigenous islanders and runaway enslaved people. Lived in mountains, avoiding British rule.

Over 80 years of guerrilla warfare.

Raids on plantations, conflicts with British army.

1739 Treaty: Peace treaty with the British and Maroons received land and agreed not to harbor more runaway enslaved people.

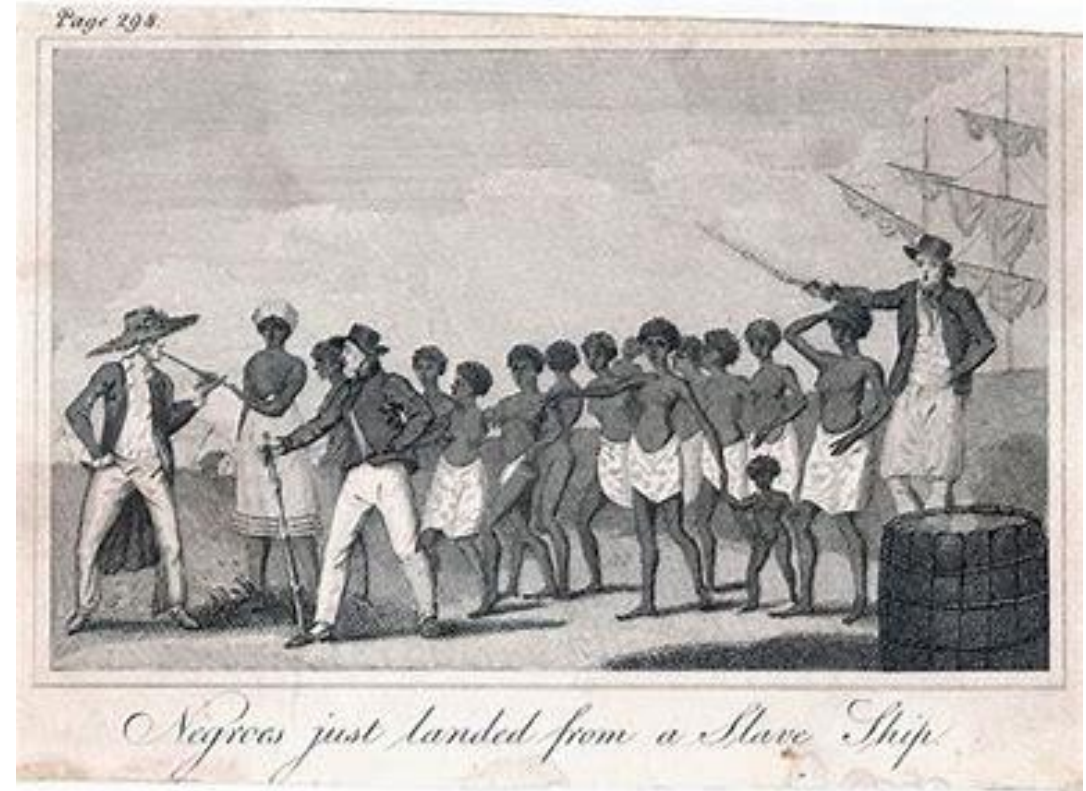




What impact did the misery of slavery have?

Role of the Slave Trade in British Industry

- Stimulating British Manufacturing:
 - The demand for goods like plantation utensils and clothing for enslaved people fueled British manufacturing and industry.
- Joseph Inikori's Perspective:
 - Historian Joseph Inikori suggested the slave trade played a pivotal role in triggering the Industrial Revolution.
- Supply and Demand in British Industry:
 - British industry thrived by exchanging factory-made goods for enslaved individuals, with profits from the slave trade fostering investment in British industry.
- Growth of Financial Institutions:
 - Banks and insurance companies servicing slave merchants expanded, contributing to the wealth of cities like London.



Wealth of Ports and Merchants

- Enslaved Labor's Impact:
 - Enslaved labor on plantations generated immense profits for merchants and ports in Britain and the Caribbean.
- Rapid Growth of British Ports:
 - Key British ports involved in the slave trade experienced significant growth and increasing wealth during the 18th century.
- Financial Returns:
 - From 1761 to 1807, British traders hauled 1,428,000 captive Africans, yielding £60 million in profits (£8 billion today).



The Royal Africa Company

- Formation and Purpose:
 - Established in 1672 by Charles II and London merchants to supply enslaved Africans for the West Indies.
- Transportation and Influence:
 - Transported around 100,000 Africans into slavery in the Caribbean, contributing to the wealth of British ports.
- Legacy:
 - The Royal Africa Company lost its monopoly on the slave trade in 1689, leading to increased involvement by Bristol, Liverpool, and Glasgow merchants.



West-Indian Plantation Owners

- Barbados' Economic Dominance:
 - Throughout the 18th century, Barbados was the wealthiest European colony in the Caribbean, primarily due to profits from sugar plantations.
- Formation of the West India Interest:
 - In the 1740s, British merchants collaborated with West Indian sugar planters, forming the influential West India Interest.
- Political Influence:
 - The West India Interest had a significant voice in Parliament, advocating for the slave trade and influencing key decisions.



Questions?