

# **Slave Trading to Virginia**

Edmund Jennings to the Board of Trade

Virginia, November the 27th, 1708

*May it please yr Lordships,* It was the 11th of last moneth and the Fleet then sailed, before I had the honr to receive yor Lordships of the 15th of April concerning the Negro Trade Since which I have' endeavoured by the means of the proper Officers, and the informations of the ancient Inhabitants, to answer Yo'r Lordps Commands, and in Order thereto have herewith sent yo'r Lordships an account of all the Negros imported into this Colony from the 24th of June 1699 to the 12th of October last past distinguishing those imported by the Royal African Company (679), and those by Seperate Traders (5928 ), wherein yo'r Lordships will perceive the latter have had much the greater Share. As to the particular Rates at which those Negros have been sold, they have been variable according to the Different times of their coming in and the quality and ages of the Slaves, but the medium for men and women may be reckoned from 20 to 30 pounds a head for those sold by the Company and from 20 to 35 £ a head for the like .kinds sold by the Seperate Traders, who in gen'll have sold theirs at a higher rate than the Company.

How the Country was supplied with Negros before the Trade to Affrica was laid open in the year 1698, I have endeavoured to Inform my Self from some ancient Inhabitants conversant in that Trade as well as by recollecting what hath happened in my own knowledge, and find that before the year 1680 what negros were brought to Virginia were imported generally from Barbados for it was very rare to have a Negro ship come to this Country directly from Africa since that time, and before the year 1698, the Trade of Negros became more frequent, tho not in any proportion to what it hath been of late, durjng which the Affrican Company sent several Ships and others by their Licence (as I have been informed) having bought their Slaves of the Company brought them in hither for Sale, Among which I remember the late Alderman Jeffrys and Sr Jeffry Jeffrys were principally concerned, but all this time the price of the Negros was currant from £18 to 25 per head for men and women and never exceeded that Rate. Whether the opening the Trade to Africa having created an Emulation between the Company and the Seperate Traders which should outbid the other in the purchase of their Slaves there, or whether the dexterity of their Factors therein taking advantage of the prevailing humour of our Inhabitants for some years past of buying Negros even beyond their abilities, or the Concurrence of both, hath raised the Rates of Negros so extravagantly I shall not pretend to determine but this I may venture to say that it will be much harder to lower the price again now 'tis raised unless there be the same Freedome of Trade continued as formerly for tho the Inhabitants of this Country in gen'll will not be so fond of purchasing Negros as of late being sensibly convinced of their Error which has in a manner ruined the Credit of the Country yet there will still be some that must, and others that will at any rate Venture to buy them, and if the Company alone have the Management of the Trade, they'l find pretences enough to keep up the price if not to impose what higher rate they please, which the buyer must submit to, knowing he cannot be supplied by any other hand. As for Vessells trading directly from this place to the Coast of Africa I never knew of any nor is the same practicable this Country not being provided with Comoditys suitable for carrying on such a Trade. This is the best account I am able to give in answer to yor Lordships Commands wherein if I have failed or mistaken in any point I beg yo'r Lordships favourable Construction thereof Since I can with truth assure, yo'r Lordships that no man .hath a greater Desire to serve yo'r Lordships.

Barbados 8 Dec 1673

I, Thomas Jarvise of Virginia doe acknowledge to have received as the proper goods of Thomas Jolley of the Island of Barbados, Merchant as undermentioned (to say) three hogshead and six barrells of Molasses conteyning fourhundred ninety and one gallons, five hogsheads and five barrells of Rumme conteyning five hundred sixty five gallons and halfe, all with the caske amount unto ten thousand one hundred and fifty pounds of muscavado sugar according to the usual rates here, also three negroe men and one negroe woman at the rate of twelve thousand pounds of Muscavado sugar. The whole amounts of Molasses, Rumme and Negroes being twenty two thousand one hundred and fifty pounds of muscavado sugar which I hereby acknowledge to have received and shipped on board the ship Thomas and Mary now bound for James River in Virginia and God sending the said ship in safety at the said port to arrive this shall oblige me my heires, executors and administrators to render and give to the said Thomas Jolley his heires executors or assignes just and true accounts of the sale of the above mentioned goods, and the neate proceeds thereof to make good unto the said Thomas Jolley on his order. This shall further oblige me, my heires, executors and administrators to the neate produce of the above mentioned goods the same value to adde thereunto in goods of the growth of Virginia and in the ship above mentioned or some other good ship whithin ninety days after my arrival in Virginia to make returns unto the said Thomas Jolley or his assignees in Barbados there to be disposed of on a joynt account of partnership the one moyety thereof to be carried to the credit of account of the said Jolley the other moyety to the credit of account of said Jarvise. And is likewise agreed betweene the said Jolley and Jarvise that neither of them shall charge commission for disposall of any goods on the joynt account and that the goods or Merchandizes now shipped as on the other side is specified the said Jarvise is to runne the equal adventures and risque thereof on the seas as also of what damage may any wages accrew unto the same. And that the true intent and meaning hereof is that the neate produce of the aforesaid goods and the like vallue which the said Jarvise hath obliged himselfe his heires executors and administrators within ninety days after his arrival in Virginia to send unto the said Thomas Jolley his heires, executors or assignes shall be employed in a trade from Virginia to Barbados in equal partnership betweene them both. And that as often as any part of the produce of any such goods by either of them consigned shall be received the same per first conveniency of transportation to be Imbarqued and Loaden in goods which shall be by them deemed most proper and advantagious to each other. And that notwithstanding anything else here conteyed to the contrary if either of said partyes shall find himselfe grieved shall give notice thereof unto the other that account may be justly settled between them both and the balance of each account justly paid when thereunto required. In Witnesse whereof the partyes above mentioned have hereunto sett to their hands and seales by which they doe oblige themselves each to other for the true and reall performance of the above agreement in the penalty of five hundred pounds sterling. Dated in Barbados the 25<sup>th</sup> Aprill 1671

Testis

Thomas [Orebrye]  
Wm Spring  
Abraham Donner

Tho Jolley  
Tho Jarvise

Mr. Thomas [Oreby] this day personally appeared before me and made oath that he saw Thomas Jolley and Thomas Jarvise signe, seale, and deliver this contract as their voluntary Acts and Deede for the uses therein mentioned. Given under my hand this 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1673

John Mallett

Virginia 8 October 1688

Mrs. Ann Randolph

I hear must aquit you of the sorrowful news of your husband Mr. John Randolph's death. he departed this life the 24th of July mentioning nothing of his concerns. I have therefore according to your request taken care of what I have bills of lading for and will be accomplable to you for them, the two women and the girl I have sould for thirty eight pounds but am not yet paid. The boy George I have sold for eighteen pounds which I have received In Plait, but am dubious in Sending it to you. Neither is there one Vessel in the Country that is coming your way. You may expect me with you in April God willing I am being bound for London. I have here Inclosed sent you one bill of Exchange for five pounds six shillings and did leave in Barbados a bill for thirty pounds five schillings and seven pence in the hand of John White to send to me in Virginia. Now if the said bills are not out of his hands you may have them if you think fit likewise they properly belonging to me. I will give you another accompt for (from?) London, being now just ready to saile. I know not by whome this will come or whether when you may receive it, otherwise would have been more large, but to conclude Mrs. Barry has married John (Sanlason?) and he is now very ill they all present thure Kind loves unto you as Mrs. Pitts and my selfe who is Madam

Your humble servant to  
Comand

Nath: Huberd

## **William Byrd to Perry & Lane**

Gentlemen

Virginia, June 21th, 1684

Last weeke I received yours by the Quaker ketch which advise of Capt. Hall & Capt. Paggen's arriveall & the losse of Sugars, whose ship I never saw but was recommended to mee by some that shipd on board her to bee a ship the best man'd & provid'd of any in this river, but its too late now to dispute that. I hope my last to you by Wynne with four hogsheads of fures will get safe to your hands. I designe you two more herewith if I can gett them about to Yorke River. I hope what you send will bee early, Mr. Paggen & c. haveing sent about a fortnight since in these parts 34 Negro's, with a considerable quantity of dry goods, and 7 or 8 tun of rum & sugar, which I fear will bring our people much, debt, & occasion. them to bee carelesse what tobacco they make. Pray send mee by the first convenience after this comes to hand, about 400 foot of glasse of the large twelves, with drawne lead and sodder proportionable 10 boxes of Lockyers pills & 1 pair Smiths bellows. I hope if my bills of exchange for impost of tobacco in Sugars comes to your hands, you will pay them our law given damages notwithstanding the ships being lost. Not else but am gentlemen your friend & servant WB.

Postscript. June 26. Gentlemen since the above written I have got my 2 hogsheads of furs to Middle Plantation & Col. Ludwell hath promised mee to ship them & take bills of ladeing for them. Inclosed is the contents. Pray send mee by the first convenience some borers or augurs such as they use to search for coale or lead with, what may serve for three fathoms or thereabouts, for I have a present occasion for them. W.B.

## **Henrico County Order Book Entries (Order Book 1678-1693)**

1 August 1684 Upon the petition of Mr. John Pleasants & Motion of Mr. Richard Kennon, [Consignors] of Willm. Paggen & Comp. desiring th resolution of this Wor[shipful] Court conserning Some Negroes by the Company Consigned them to sell, but at ye time of listing tythables remaining in their possession undisposed of Whether or no they ought to pay Levy's for them this year It is the opinion of this Court that they ought no, the sd Negroes being goods belonging to the Mercht. in England & ought not (in any reasonable time) to put them more in charge (by taxes) then other their Comoditys imported hither p. 163

1 April 1690. Land Certificate to Richard Kennon for the transportation of 90 whites and "fifty Negroes at one time & twenty Negroes more at another time." p. 326-27.

## **William Byrd to Sadler & Thomas**

Gentlemen Virginia,

February 10th, 1685[/86]

I should long since acquainted you with the receipt of yours by Wyn but was prevented by my long stay at N. Yorke. Mr. Wynne saild for England in November last, & hath orders to returne by Barbados. By him I desire the goods and Negroes hereunder written, I have allready wrote to Messrs. Perry & Lane about itt. Pray lett care bee taken about the caske for rum & molasses, for wee sufferd great losse by the last. Though mine escaped the best, yett I lost all the limejuice, one caske of rum wholly out, many others ½ and ¼ .

I hope suddenly to send you a few barrells of flower for a sample, next year hope to provide better, being yet in want of a bolting mill & other conveniencys. Shall not trouble you farther, but with due respects take leave gentlemen you  
humble servant WB.

I desire these following goods may bee sent on my particular account, vizt. "

4 Negro's, 2 men 2 women not to excee.d 25 years old &to bee likeley~

About 1200 gallons of rum

3000 lbs. muscovado sugar

1 barrell of white about 2 [cwt.]

3 tun of molasses

1 caske limejuice & 2 [cwt.] ginger.

To Messrs. Sadler & Thomas merchants in Barbados per Mr. Wells

### **William Byrd to Sadler & Thomas**

Gentlemen Virginia,

October the 18th, 1686

Yours per Jacob Green & Wynne came safe to hand with what goods you sent. The white sugar very bad, I bought better here at 19S. & 6d. per [cwt.?] the limejuice was not worth one farthing, all the rest of the goods very dear, as all others affirme that had goods from Barbados at that time. I doubt not but you will hear of itt largely from others. Our designe was to have sent the ship immediately backe to you with corne, pipe staves &ca. but the sickness of Wyn & all his men hath occasioned a long stay, & I fear lost his market. However I desire hee may bee immediately dispatchd from Barbados, least hee allso loose his voyage to Madera's. His wheat is now all ready, & wee designe shall bee at one place ere his return. I desire you to send mee the goods underwritten, but pray lett the rum mellasses & sugar bee all in barrells, which are much fitter for sale here then great caskes. You will receive herewith from mee 12 hogsheads of corne 8 barrells of flower & about 2500 pipe staves, what they will come to I know not. I beg pardon now, my family being very sicke with the small pox but hope to have oppertunity to write more largely hereby if not have desired Capt. Randolph to take my bills of ladeing. The Negro's proved well, but two of them have the small pox which was brought into my family by the Negro's I received from Gambo. Not else at present but with best respects take leave gentlemen your humble servant Wm Byrd.

I desire these following goods to bee sent on my particular account vizt.

1200 gallons rum

3000 muscovado sugar

1 barrell of white, about 2 cwt lett it bee better then last year

2 tun of mellasses

I caske limejuice, 2 [cwt] ginger

To Messrs. Sadleir & Thomas merchants in Barbados per Wyn

### **Charles City County Order Book Entries:**

5 October 1691 In case of Hon. Wm Byrd, Esq., agst John Thomas and Thomas Sadleir & Co. of Barbadoes, Merchants, the deft. being non est inventus, an order of attachment granted against them for £ 59/19/8.5 (below follows: Acct of Wm Randolph for £ 9/1/1/4; Capt. Francis Eppes for £ 42/12/10½ ; and Capt. Peter Perry for an unlisted amount, all against same company, and orders for attachment granted in all cases.

10 November 1691 In attachments sought by Hon. Wm Byrd, Capt. Wm Randolph, and Capt. Fra. Epes agst Messrs. Jno. Thomas and Thomas Sadleir Company, Merchants, of Barbadoes, are granted.

3 December 1691 In suit of Capt. Pr. Perry agst Jno Thomas & Thomas Sadleir Company, Merchants, of Barbadoes, attachment granted agst deft. for £52/14

4 January 1692 In suit of Mr. Ben: Harrison vs Messrs. Jno. Thomas & Thomas Sadleir & Co., Merchants in Barbadoes, attachment is granted agst defts. and agst estate of defts. in hands of Hon. Wm Byrd, Esq., (In next paragraph same follows for Henry Hartwell vs Thomas and Sadleir Co.)

3 February 1692 Upon return of attachment of Capt. Peter Perry agst estate of Messrs. Jno. Thomas and Tho. Sadleir Company of Barbadoes, Merchants, a judgement granted for £52/4 levved on goods and chattels of deft. in hands of Capt. Perry.

3 Febuary 1692 Upon return of attachment sued forth by Mr. Benj. Harrison and Mr. Harry Hartwell agst estate of Messrs. Jno. Thomas and Tho. Sadleir & Co. of Barbadoes, Merchants, for £39/2/4.75 Hon Wm Byrd, Esq. says he has no effects of thomas and Sadleir Co.. Mr. Edward Chilton, Their Majesties Attorney General, is to inform the court how to summon a member of Council to appear at court. He replies that the Hon. Secretary notifies the Member of Council through the Sheriff. Chilton quotes the recent case of Alderman Jeffreys and Sir Henry Chicheley and Hon Ralph Wormeley, Esq.

Barbados this 23<sup>d</sup> June 1686 of £600. Sterl.

At Sixty days sight pay this our first bill of Exch.<sup>a</sup> our second  
or third not being paid unto the Roy.<sup>ty</sup> African Comp.<sup>y</sup> of England  
or their Order Six hundred pounds Sterling for value received  
of the right hon.<sup>ble</sup> Edwyn Stodd and the hon.<sup>ble</sup> Stephen  
Gascoigne by order of Mess.<sup>rs</sup> Micajah Perry & Thomas  
Lans by credit given them by Mess.<sup>rs</sup> John & Jeffrey Jeffries  
of London Merch.<sup>ts</sup> at the time due make good payment  
and placid it to your own acct.

£ 600 - -

To Mess.<sup>rs</sup> Micajah Perry  
& Tho. Lans. Merch.<sup>ts</sup>  
In London

Yo: humble Serv.<sup>t</sup>  
Charles Thomas  
Tho. Sadler



### **African Companies, Letter Books, Instructions to Captains, 1685-1700.**

To Capt. Thomas Jarnes. 18 March 1685. Orders to sail the Two Friends to James Island etc. and collect about 190 Negroes (according to the agreement with Messrs. Micajah Perry and Thomas Lane), and deliver them at James River in Virginia to Mr. Peter Perry and Company. In stated circumstances, Capt. James is to deliver the Negroes at Antigua. T 70/61, f.6rv.

### **William Byrd to Perry & Lane**

Gentlemen

November the 10th, 1686

I miss'd the oppertunity of writeing per Gadsden, hee haveing (notwithstanding his reiterated promises to Mr. Peter Perry) left out all my fures & skins, six hogsheads whereof with 26 hogsheads of tobacco I hope will come safe to your hands herewith. I have been mighty unhappy in the Negro's by Capt. James, Mr. Hartwell stopping the ship at towne, Mr. Peter Perry Mr. Harrison & himselfe lotted them there, & kept the ship 3 or 4 days in bitter cold weather; all that had the small pox (itt seems) hapned into my lott one dyed on board, & another in the boat, my people that went. for them caught the distemper & brought itt into my family, whereof poor Mrs. Brodnax, & 3 of my Negro's are allready dead, & about fifteen more beside my little daughter have them. Pray God put a stop to itt, for I have allready cause to repent I ever was concern'd in James. I allways understood they were to bee deliverd att Swinyards, & not for one mans convenience to run the hazard of the whole, but now there's no help for itt. No news as yet of Hall, by that time the Booth goes out hee may bee here (if hee bee well) God send hee may. Hee hath ever been a charge & disappointment to us, I wish I was fairly rid of him. Tobacco proves' generally good this year & bright (especially the forward) of which I must not expect much. My goods (if they come at all) will bee for a latter market. I received 15 Negro's from James beside one dy'd in the boat, & one (they say) dyed on board which was design'd for mee therefore hope I shall bee charged no more than I received alive from on board. I hope the new ship you intend may prove more successfull than any of those I have hitherto been concerned in. The Booth (I suppose) may saile about the 1st of next moneth, & Capt.. Bradly about the middle, therefore shall not trouble you farther att present but remain your friend & servant WB.

If you have not sent mee any small white beads, pray send mee by the 1st oppertunity 2 cwt. Lett them bee small or none. Mr. Herberts 1st bill for £50 sent herewith.

To Messrs. Perry & Lane per James

### **Land Certificates**

Charles City County, 3 October 1689. Land Certificate granted Capt. Peter Perry for the transportation of Mrs. Eliz: Perry, Mrs. Joanna Lowe, Wm Downes, Peter Wielden, Dan. La, bert, Timothy Reading, Eliz: Clarke, Wm Dredge, George, Sam, Guy, James, Martha, Sue, Antelope, Amy, Nero, Loppeares, Robin Hood, Jacke, Tom, Africa, Jacke, 4 Negroes in the Friendship and 16 Negroes in the Two Friends p. 254.

Surry County, 3 May 1687. Exhibited 29 September. Certificate is granted to Mr. Benja. Harrison to the Secretaries Office for one thousand acres of Land due for the Importacon of twenty negroes into this Collony in the Shipp Two Friends in Sept. last he haveing made oath according to Law p. 561

Henrico County, 1 February 1688. Land Certificate granted to Mr. Francis Eppes for the transportation of himself, 21 whites and Tom, Sno, Santy, [Brandy], Betty, Abram, Maria, Moll, Farthing, Dick, and Tony, Negroes. p. 262

Henrico County, 9 October 1689. Land Certificate granted Capt. William Randolph for the transportation of himself, 12 whites, and 23 Negroes vizt: Will, Tom, Tony, Eastham, Condy [or Conely], Yeiman, Dewy, Scipio, Hanniball, Toby, Sambo, Lymbo, Tomboy, Ned, [Jenny], Jack, Maria, Jupiter, Hector, Nero, Pompey, Mingo, and George. p. 315