

THE AMERINDIAN SLAVE POPULATION OF BARBADOS IN  
THE SEVENTEENTH AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES \*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The first European colony in Barbados was established in 1627 when a handful of Englishmen arrived directly from the mother country. Throughout the first fifteen or so years of the colony's life its cash economy rested upon the production of tobacco and cotton which were largely grown on relatively small holdings cultivated with the help of indentured servants. The transformation of the island's economy into one based on plantation sugar production and African slave labor effectively began in the 1640s. As emphasis upon sugar increased many small holdings were obliterated thousands of Europeans emigrated, and many thousands more of African slaves were imported to take their place. Within the much better known story of African slavery in the colony lies another dealing with Amerindian slaves: although the English seldom used such slaves, they were occasionally employed in Jamaica and some of the Lesser Antillean islands as well as Barbados.

What makes the case of Barbados unusual, however, is that shortly after the Island's colonization a small group of Arawaks from Guiana was imported to teach the English colonists how to cultivate tropical crops and, generally, to assist in the development of their settlement. These Indians came voluntarily and as freemen (offering a rare instance

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Although many primary sources have been searched, references to Amerindians have been infrequent and often quite cursory. This sparsity of materials limits the writer to a broad sketch of the Amerindians' history and role in Barbados with conjecture by necessity often taking the place of concrete evidence. While attempting to state explicitly my own interpretations, I have also quoted extensively from the sources (modernizing the spelling in so doing) so that the reader is in a better position, not only to evaluate my own interpretations, but also to offer alternative ones.

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in which Amerindians came to a European Caribbean colony under such circumstances), but shortly after arrival they were enslaved.<sup>1</sup> In the ensuing years of the 17th century other groups of Indians, from a variety of areas, were intermittently brought to the island — these new immigrants invariably coming as slaves. However, Indian slaves always formed a very insignificant minority of Barbados' population and by the end of the first few decades of the 18th century there are few traces of them existing as a distinctive sub-cultural group.

Most modern writers who have concerned themselves with Barbados' 17th century history have remarked upon the introduction of the original group of Guiana Arawaks [5; 24; 41; 45; 46], but none have made any comprehensive attempt to deal with the subsequent history of these Indians nor with the island's Amerindian slave population as a whole. Thus, this paper will chronicle the story of Amerindians in Barbados and examine their legal and social position on the island during the 17th and early 18th centuries. Ethnographic aspect of Amerindian life on Barbados and the kinds of contributions such Indians may have made to the island's early culture are considered in a separate presentation [21].

II. THE EARLY INTRODUCTION AND ENSLAVEMENT OF  
AMERINDIANS

There is considerable archaeological evidence that various Amerindian populations visited and inhabited Barbados in pre-Columbian times [5; 8, pp. 16-19], and historical sources attest to the presence of Indians on the island during the first decades of the 16th century [37, pp. 192-195]. It was during this period that the Spanish were most involved in raiding the Lesser Antilles for Indians to work the mines of Hispaniola. Possibly such raids were largely, if not entirely, responsible for depopulating the island, and by 1541 a Spanish commentator "wrote of the people of Barbados in the past tense" [37, p. 194]. It is difficult to say how often the island was visited by Europeans in the mid to late 16th century but, it was not settled by any European power. Caribs from neighboring islands may have visited Barbados during the latter 16th and early 17th centuries,<sup>2</sup> but an

<sup>1</sup> Edgar Mittelholzer present a fictionalized version of this incident in his novel *Children of Kaywana* (New York, 1952).

<sup>2</sup> Major John Scott [7 B], without citing his source of information, notes that a 16th century European mariner (presumably either Spanish or Portuguese) left hogs on Barbados "...which the Indians of St. Vincent coming to know, they did some years after often visit [Barbados] for hunting." Some Arawak groups from South America also may have made occasional landings (see italicized sections of Powell's petition, quoted below).

English captain who briefly landed around 1620 remarked that "he with others did hunt and take hogs without discovering or hearing of any people upon the said island" [46, p. 20].<sup>3</sup> No colonizing attempts resulted from this visit, but five years later another English ship, returning from Brazil, also reported the island as uninhabited. Upon returning to England, the captain of this ship informed his merchant employer that the island had possibilities for colonization [24, pp. 3-4]. A syndicate was formed, an expedition financed and, after an initial failure en route, a ship, captained by Henry Powell, landed at Barbados in February, 1627 with about 40 English colonists plus a handful of Negroes who had been captured during the voyage.<sup>4</sup> Again finding the island unpopulated the group set to establishing Barbados' first European settlement and the island was to remain under continuous and uninterrupted British rule until its political independence in November, 1966.

Thus, the English colonization of Barbados was a peaceful one. Although the island was soon torn by internal political conflict, the first settlers were not forced to compete with other Europeans for its control and they encountered no native population.

About two weeks after he landed, Powell took a small group of men and sailed for the Dutch settlement on the Essequibo river in Guiana [43 F].<sup>5</sup> The syndicate, of which Powell was a member, had close connections through one of its principals — William Courteen — with an Anglo-Dutch firm. It had been part of the original plan to

<sup>3</sup> Williamson also suggest the possibility that the 1620 date is incorrect, and that the captain's landing may have taken place a few years later.

<sup>4</sup> Although independent sources agree that some Negroes arrived in Barbados with the first colonizing party, their number is not certain. John Cleere, who was the boatswain on Henry Powell's ship, noted that there were "ten Negroes taken in a prize" while Tuckerman, the ship's carpenter, claimed there were only "2 or 3 blacks" [43 B, pp. 80-84]. John Smith, a close contemporary account based on first-hand information by a former Barbados governor and another early settler, noted that Henry Powell came to Barbados with "forty English [and] with seven or eight Negroes" [44, p. 55]. Whatever the number, it seems clear that these Negroes came as slaves (See note 8).

<sup>5</sup> A major source for the reconstruction of events in the island's colonization and the introduction of the Arawaks is the surviving manuscript notes of hearings held in 1647 and 1656 with respect to litigations arising from earlier disputes concerning the proprietorship of the island (see below, the Courteen-Carlisle controversy). In these hearings members of the first colonizing party testified to the events in which they had participated in 1627. These notes survive largely in two manuscript collections: in Trinity College Dublin (Trinity Mss. G. 4. 15) and the Bodleian Library at Oxford (Rawlinson Mss. C. 94). I have only had the opportunity to examine the Trinity College manuscripts, but some of these as well as some of the Rawlinson ones have appeared in print, and, where relied on, these printed transcriptions have been noted in bibliographic citations.

send Powell onto Guiana, where the Governor was also an acquaintance, in order to deposit a variety of trade goods brought from England [13, pp. 658-661]. With the help of the Dutch Governor, it was also intended to acquire various crops which could be transplanted and utilized for commercial and subsistence purposes in Barbados. It was on this trip that Powell encountered the Indians whom he brought back to the island. The story is perhaps best told in his own words:

"...I proceeded in my voyage to the Main to the river of Essequibo and there I left eight men and left them a cargezon<sup>6</sup> of trade for that place. And I traded with the Indians of the aforesaid Main for all things that was to be gotten for the planting of this island of Barbados. And coming down the river of Essequibo, there was three canoes with Indians of the people that I had traded with, followed me to the river's mouth and upon a small island at the river's mouth went ashore, a little before night, fair by the ship. Your petitioner perceiving that they followed the ship and had a desire to speak with me, I went ashore to them and lay that night upon the island to know their intent to follow me so far. Their answer was that they did perceive by the things that I had bought of them that I was bound to plant an island that lay to the northward of them and that they had relation from their forefathers that had been upon an island that way that was not inhabited and they described the manner of the island to me. And that they had a desire to go with me as free people to manure those fruits and that I should allow them a piece of land, the which I did and they would manure those fruits and bring up their children to Christianity, and that we might drive a constant trade between that island and the Main for there was many more of the Indians of that place that had a desire for to come for that island the next year if I would come there again. And some of them that I brought were the wives and children of men that tarried behind and sent their wives and children with me..." [27 in 23, pp. 36-381].

In the above account, Powell notes that it was the Indians who brought up the subject of going to Barbados. Major John Scott, on the other hand, states that Groenewegen, the Dutch Governor of the Essequibo colony, because of this friendship for Powell "persuade[d] a family of Arawaks consisting of forty persons to attend Powell to Barbados to learn the English to plant" and further implies that it was primarily Groenewegen's idea to send the Indians along [7 B].<sup>7</sup> Whatever the

<sup>6</sup> *Cargezon* was a technical Dutch word for goods used in trade with the Indians [13, p. 660].

<sup>7</sup> Scott's account of Barbados' early settlement was written in the 1660s (no later than 1668) many years after the events he describes transpired. Scott was not a participant in these early events, yet he had lived on the island and had apparently made use of elder informants as well as of documents which are now lost. In a closely reasoned and elaborately documented study, Edmundson [13] argued for the accuracy of Scott's account, especially as it relates to events in Barbados and Guiana and their bearing on the Arawak group. Although Scott's account is not without

details, it is clear that these Indians were among those who, through several years of friendly trading (and probably mating) relations with the Dutch, were not only amicably inclined towards Europeans, but also were somewhat acculturated to their ways.

Thus, the Arawaks came voluntarily, as free men,<sup>8</sup> and came under some kind of contractual agreement which Powell and Groenewegen had worked out to the Indians' satisfaction. Under the terms of this agreement the Indians were to be allowed "a piece of land" in Barbados [27 In 23] and further,

"...That at the expiration of two years, if they did not like the country, or should upon any other occasion desire to go back to Essequibo, they should be transported with their reward, which was to be fifty pounds sterling in axes, bills, hoes, knives, looking-glasses, and beads..." [7 B].

Powell returned to Barbados approximately six months after he had left [43 P; 44, p. 56] bringing with him the Arawak group of about 30 persons,<sup>9</sup> comprising men, women and children as well as a plant complex which included cassava, maize, "potatoes," tobacco, pineapples and sugar cane.<sup>10</sup>

ambiguities, and he may have been careless in his chronology" [46, p. 189], his brief references to the Guiana Arawaks are crucial and often unique pieces of information.

<sup>8</sup> That the Arawaks did not come as slaves is attested to in various sources cited above and in the following pages. Yet, the opposite is indicated by Henry Winthrop in two early letters written from Barbados. In the first letter, dated August 22, 1627 (shortly after Powell's return from Guiana), Winthrop notes that Barbados is "without any inhabitants of any other people of other nations save English men, save a matter of 50 slaves, or Indians and blacks." In a letter written October 15, 1627, he states that the island has "but three score Christians and forty slaves of Negroes and Indians" (both of these letters are printed [12, pp. 32-34]. Winthrop seems to be saying that the Indians at this very early date were already slaves; yet I cannot reconcile this statement with other sources which lead to the conclusion that the Arawaks were not enslaved until at least a few years later.

<sup>9</sup> In various statements, Powell [43 C, pp. 157-161; 43 P] says that the number of Indians he transported amounted to thirty-two. Depositions by other participants in Powell's voyage to Guiana claim that the number was 25 or 26 and thirty [43 D]. Scott claims the number was forty, and Captain John Smith places the figure at "thirty Indians, men, women, and children of the Arawaks, enemies both to the Caribs and Spaniards" [44, p. 55].

<sup>10</sup> These are the plants mentioned by various eyewitnesses, and were compiled from the notes of their testimonies [43 C, D, E, FL]. To this list Scott adds yams, plantains, bananas, oranges, limes, lemons, melons, cotton, and amotta. Although Powell [43 C] and Broune [43 E] explicitly mention sugar cane as one of the plants brought from Guiana, Scott notes that "the sugar cane was brought thither [to Barbados] first by one Peeter Brower of North Holland from Brazil anno 1637, but came to no considerable perfection till the year 1645..." The plant may have been simply reintroduced in 1637

The enslavement of the Indians took place not very many years after they arrived. The precise dating of this event and the exact circumstances under which it occurred are not certain. But the event and the reasons for it seem to have been by-products of political animosities which arose from conflicting claims on the proprietorship of the island. Harlow, in his classic study of Barbados' early political history, reasonably suggests that the Arawaks were "betrayed and reduced to slavery... by those who robbed the Courteens of their Barbadian interests" [24, p. 5],<sup>11</sup> but offers no further details. In order to investigate his suggestion, a digression into early Barbadian history is needed.

As has been noted, Powell's expedition to Barbados had been financed by a syndicate whose principal member was William Courteen. Courteen continued to provide capital for the colony's development, paid the settlers' wages, and received the profits made from their activities. Courteen's proprietary interests in Barbados were seemingly assured until the Earl of Carlisle entered the picture. Carlisle had fallen in debt to a group of London merchants who were interested in expanding their interests into the West Indies. This group pressured Carlisle into obtaining a grant to the Caribbean islands from Charles I. In order to rid himself of his debts, Carlisle then leased 10,000 acres of land in Barbados, sight unseen, to the merchant group. Courteen retaliated by enlisting the aid of a well-placed friend who induced the King to grant four specific islands, including Barbados, to himself in trust for Courteen. These various maneuvers were completed by February, 1628, approximately one year after the island was settled [24, pp. 6-9].

Thus, two different interest groups vied for the proprietorship of Barbados. The bitter dispute that erupted during this period often involved physical conflict as representatives of each faction tried to wrest control of the island from the other. This period has been neatly summarized by Harlow:

"Violence... bred further violence. No sooner would one party gain control over the island than an expedition sent by the other would execute a *coup d'etat* and the position would be reversed. Thus feud and faction became the order of the day" [24, p. 12].

It was not until August, 1630, that the issue of proprietorship was

as Watts has suggested [45, p. 47], but whatever the date of its earliest introduction, it is clear that the growth of cane for commercial purposes did not get effectively underway until the 1640s.

<sup>11</sup> The same assertion is made, but not developed, by Williamson [46, p. 37].

resolved in Carlisle's favor although bitterness between the two sides continued for some years afterward. We can now suggest how these events influenced the status of the Arawaks.

Henry Powell had left Barbados not long after he returned from Guiana, but in February, 1629, in the midst of the controversy and still a member of the Courteen syndicate, he returned and helped to reinstate a Courteen governor. Soon afterwards he left for England. Years later, Powell reported that at the time of his departure the Arawaks were still "free people" [27 in 23]. The period 1629-1630 saw no less than three Carlisle Governors, one of these being Henry Hawley, a "man who quickly became notorious for unscrupulous audacity" [24, p. 13] and who, a few years later, once again entered the picture with respect to Indian slaves (see below). One consequence of the increased Carlislist power was an unsettling of the relationship between the English colonists and the Indians. In Major Scott's words:

[the] Indians not likint; the several changes [i.e., the various Carlisle governors] pressed their contract made between them and Mr. Powell at Essequibo... but instead of performing the agreement with the poor Indians the then Governor and Council made slaves of them, separating the husbands and wives of some, parents and children of others, one from another.

Up to this point the Indians probably lived in their own community, apart from the white settlers. At least it is known that they had been promised "a piece of land" in their original contract with Powell [27 in 23].<sup>12</sup> Now the Indian group was apparently dispersed, and various sources [27 in 23; 7 B; 24] suggest that its dispersal and subjugation took place sometime before 1631, probably between 1629 and 1630.

The reasons for the Indians' enslavement also remain conjectural, but are likewise suggested by the Courteen-Carlisle controversy as well as by wider socio-economic considerations. The Indians had made their initial agreement to come to Barbados with Henry Powell who presumably became the major point of articulation between themselves and the island's European population. Powell was deeply involved in Courteen's interests and he unequivocally displayed his loyalty to

<sup>12</sup> Griffith Hughes, writing in the 1740s, records an oral tradition which may be apocryphal, but which may also lend support to this conjecture. He writes: "...there is a tradition in a family of Negroes, belonging to Thomas Tunkes, esq.; the ancestors of which family came over with the first Negroes that ever came hither from Guiney, that before the country was cleared from woods, there was an Indian town near a pond, in his estate in the Parish of St. Michael's, which place to this day is called the Indian Pond..." [26, p. 81]. The conjecture can be possibly further supported by noting that two of the plantations established in 1627-1628 were named Indian Bridge plantation and the Indian Plantation Eastward [46, p. 204].

Courteen during the Carlisle controversy (even defending Courteen's claims to the island for many years afterwards). Associational ties, then, could have linked the Indians to Courteen's faction as far as the Carlislists were concerned. Second, the Courteen interests were friendly to and involved with the Dutch colony in Guiana whose Governor enjoyed the friendship of the Arawak Indians and who had been a key intermediary in negotiating their passage to Barbados in the first place. Third, from the time of their arrival and throughout the first crucial year, the Arawaks lived and worked in Barbados while Courteen's capital and ships provided much of the tools and material necessities for the colony's survival; that is, they helped to build a Courteen settlement. Whether the Arawaks themselves ever became partisans in the dispute is not known, but Scott's reference (see above) to their dissatisfaction with the Carlisle governors indicates some positive linkage to the Courteen faction.

Assuming that the Indians were identified with Courteen's interests and given the bitter nature of the conflict, it seems reasonable to conclude that the subjugation of the Indians was one consequence of the victory of the Carlislists and the absence of any need on their part to honor a commitment made by the Courteen syndicate. In addition, the change in the Arawaks' status could have been affected by the colony's need for labor, the social precedent of slaves in the form of the small group of Negroes, and the fact that the Indians did not have recourse even to the minimal protective agencies available to white indentured servants in the event of excessively harsh treatment or contractual ambiguities.

The Arawaks, then, were reduced to involuntary servitude no later than three years after they had come to Barbados. Labor conditions were generally harsh throughout the 17th century, and were especially so for indentured servants during the early years of the colony's life. The scanty evidence suggests that once formally subjugated the Indians did not receive any different treatment from indentured servants in general.

Henry Colt, in his description of Barbados, based on a two-week visit in early July, 1631 [23, pp. 54-102], commented on the island's inadequate defense system, its slovenly kept farms, and the laxity of the indentured servants. He felt that much of this was due to the islanders' internal disputes and quarrels, and mentions that during his stay forty indentured servants "stole away in a Dutch pinnace" [23, p. 74],<sup>13</sup> but offers no other details. During the same year one

<sup>13</sup> Ill treatment as well as conditions of scarcity in food and other provisions may have precipitated this escape; the period 1630-1631 having been described as Barbados' "starving time" [46, p. 90].

of the Guianese Arawaks "getting on board a Dutch ship got passage for Essequibo" [7 B], quite possibly the same ship on which Colt reports the forty indentured servants to have escaped. On returning to Guiana, the Indian gave such a negative report on conditions in Barbados that Governor Groenewegen had serious trouble with local Arawaks. According to Major Scott, the Governor

"...had like [sic] to have lost his fort and colony for that cause only [i.e., the English treatment of the Arawaks in Barbados] and was forced to marry a woman of the Carib nation, to balance the power of the Arawaks, and afterwards was at the charge of great presents to make up the business between the Dutch and Arawak nation."

By placing the Guianese Arawaks in a position of involuntary servitude, a firmer precedent was established for the introduction of other Indian slaves who may have included Caribs from neighboring islands. This practice was supported by the actions of Henry Hawley, the Carlisle Governor, who returned to Barbados in 1636. Hawley proceeded to institute a number of measures among which was one highly relevant to slavery and the status of Indians: In July, 1636, the Governor and his Council specifically

"resolved... that Negroes and Indians, that came here to be sold, should serve for life, unless a contract was before made to the contrary" [2, p. 19].<sup>14</sup>

Why the last clause was included in the resolution is uncertain, but an explanation is suggested by the general context of labor conditions at the time and the manner in which much of the colony's labor force was recruited.

The fact that Africans and Indians were trickling into the island (the former probably in greater numbers) probably stimulated Hawley's resolution in the first place, but the great demands for African slaves in particular did not occur in Barbados until the 1640s with the expansion of sugar production under the plantation system. Prior to this time thousands of whites, many of whom were indentured servants, were responsible for the maintenance of the island's agricultural economy. Increasing demands for laborers were largely directed towards the acquisition of white indentured servants and not Africans

<sup>14</sup> The records incorporated into this book (which may have been written by William Duke, clerk of the Island's Assembly from 1738-1765) contain, in Harlow's words, "some serious chronological mistakes [but] they are based on original documents which are now lost" [24, p. xvi]. However, this book contains the only reference I have been able to find to this early and important slave "law."

or Indians.<sup>15</sup> Since those who came as indentured servants came under contractual agreements which specified the length of their service obligations, it is not unreasonable to expect that Hawley's 1636 resolution was modeled in accordance with the ordinary procedures by which indentured servants were acquired while providing a legal mechanism, as well as incentive, for the acquisition of laborers on a permanent basis.

### HI. THE IMPORTATION OF INDIAN SLAVES IN THE 17TH CENTURY

More Indians were brought to the island during the following decades, and Richard Ligon, in his description of Barbados between 1647 and 1650, noted that they were "fetched from other countries; some from neighboring islands, some from the Main, which we make slaves" [29, p. 54]. Such Indians were few in number,<sup>16</sup> and there is no evidence that the English colonists ever attempted even a small-scale version of the systematic trade which characterized their acquisition of African slaves. Rather, Indians brought to Barbados in the decades following 1627 came intermittently and were sometimes acquired during military and trade activities in other Caribbean islands and the northern coast of South America. In addition, there is some evidence that recalcitrant Indians were occasionally shipped from New England to Barbados (see below), but little is known of such people.

In fact, details are generally lacking as to how Indian slaves were acquired and brought to Barbados especially in the mid-17th century. Yet, Richard Ligon's account of Yarico, a South American Indian woman

<sup>15</sup> The transformation of Barbados' economy into one based on sugar plantations caused an exodus of thousands of indentured servants (leaving after their contracts expired) and other poor whites. Barbados no longer offered the opportunities which had motivated their coming in the first place. But, later in the 17th century, even when the island's economy was fully dependent on sugar production and African slave labor, white servants were a much sought after commodity. By this time, however, they were wanted, not as field laborers but, rather, to serve as a protective buffer between the plantocracy and the African slaves, to fill lower managerial positions on the plantations, and to provide an array of skilled craftsmen and artisans.

<sup>16</sup> No figures are available to indicate the total number of Indians brought to Barbados up to the early 1650s, nor are there any figures on the size of its Indian population. By the late 1640s and early 1650s both Ligon [29, p. 54] and another observer [43 A] remarked that there were "but few" Indians on the island, neither writer offering any quantitative estimates. Such Indians were noted as being "through the generations... slaves to their owner" [43 A]. Henry Whistler, who spent two months in Barbados in early 1655, remarked that the island's population included "...Indians and miserable Negroes born to perpetual slavery, they and their seed" [7 C]. However, other travellers visiting Barbados during this period do not even mention an Indian population, thereby indirectly attesting to its small size [6, pp. 268-295; 32 in 15, p. 5; 30, pp. 19-20].

(who became his house slave) became a favorite illustration of later historians who generalized on the Barbadians' duplicity in their enslavement of Amerindians [9, Vol. II, p. 83; 12, p. 48; 38, p. 143; 14, p. 793]. According to Ligon, Yarico was living near the coast, "upon the Main," when an English ship landed part of its crew to search for food and water. During this search the men were attacked by unspecified Indians who killed most of them. However, one of the crew managed to elude his attackers, and, while wandering in the forest, "was met by this Indian maid, who upon the first sight fell in love with him." The woman hid and fed the Englishman, and, when it seemed safe, they returned to the waiting ship which took them to Barbados. Ligon, whose existence in Barbados had depended upon the labor of African slaves, plaintively concludes his tale in the following words:

"But the youth, when he came ashore in the Barbadoes, forgot the kindness of the poor maid, that had ventured her life for his safety, and sold her for a slave, who was as free born as he: And so poor Yarico, for her love, lost her liberty" [29, p. 55].

However, Ligon's account (based, presumably, on Yarico's own narration) could hardly have typified Indian slave acquisition in its details, but it is suggestive of the ruse and kidnapping elements: Since one can assume that Indians would not have voluntarily come to Barbados as slaves, such elements must have figured prominently in their acquisition. Some Indians, however, may have come voluntarily for trade or other reasons, only to be enslaved after arrival. This is suggested by Griffith Hughes. Writing sometime in the 1740s, Hughes reasoned that since Indians came to Barbados from St. Vincent during the 1730s they may have done so previously. He supports this reasoning by relating family traditions of his European informants in Barbados,

"...several of whom [i.e., the informants] were between 80 and 90 years old who, not only agreed in their received tradition that there were Indians formerly in this island, but likewise some of them added farther, that their frequent arrival to, or departure from it, was always in the wane of the moon, for the benefit of light nights; and that when a difference arose between them and the English, the Indians retired to their fastness in the woods" [26, p. 5].

<sup>17</sup> Aside from its influence on later historians, Ligon's account of Yarico also became the source for an embellished and romanticized essay which appeared in the *Spectator*, a widely read London daily [4]. This essay encouraged the imagination of others who added further embellishments and compassionately told the story of the beautiful Indian princess whose love for the handsome young Englishman tragically ended in betrayal and enslavement [3; 11].

<sup>18</sup> In a later passage, Hughes [26, p. 6] adds that "we are informed

The events to which Hughes refers can perhaps be dated roughly to the 1640s or the early 1650s. According to Hughes' tradition the Indians were able to escape the English by hiding in the woods. In a recent study, Watts has established that Barbados' wooded areas were, for all intents and purposes, gone by 1665 (most of the deforestation rapidly occurring during the 1650s) but that during Ligon's stay (1647-1650) there were still large tracts of uncleared forest [45, pp. 41-45]. The attempted enslavement of Indian visitors is the most obvious explanation of why they had "differences" with the English and sought refuge from them in the woods.

The norms governing the importation and enslavement of other Indians, for which there is evidence later on in the 17th century, were also a by-product of the vicissitudes of England's relationships with various European powers in the Caribbean. That is, the inter-European struggles which characterized the Caribbean in the 17th century often found particular Indian groups involving themselves, sometimes as active partisans, in the battles which were being fought. England's (and/or Barbados') relations with the Indians, including the issue of slavery, depended on the depth and directions of Indian alliances with any given hostile European power — or the anticipated role of such alliances.

We cannot attempt to unravel in detail the tangled skein of European-Indian political relations in the Caribbean during the 17th century.<sup>19</sup> There is little doubt that future research along these lines could shed much light on the issue of Amerindian enslavement in general, but here I am only able to illustrate some facets of this relationship which have immediate relevance to Indian slaves in Barbados, and the general slaving pattern suggested above.

The second Anglo-Dutch war was formally terminated in late 1667 by the Treaty of Breda. Under the terms of this treaty the English were obliged to return to the Dutch their colony in Surinam which had been captured in October of that year. But the treaty itself did not eliminate animosities towards the Arawaks who had previously harassed English settlements and, during the war itself, had "committed horrid cruelties against the English by the instigation of the Dutch" [33 D, p. 49]. Thus, not long after the Treaty of Breda was signed, an English force was granted a commission by Barbados' Governor to raid coastal Arawak villages. The expedition happened to

by tradition, that five Indian women, upon promise of good usage from the English upon the desertion of the rest of the Indians" lived out the remainder of their lives in Barbados.

<sup>19</sup> Douglas Taylor provides a useful overview of such relations concentrating on the position of the Island Carib [42, pp. 15-27].

attack one settlement located in Dutch-claimed territory and captured "five Indians from the river Marowyn" [33 E, p. 51], who were carried to Barbados. The Dutch Governor of Surinam requested Willoughby, Governor of Barbados, to return the Indians. Willoughby, in his reply, noted that the leader of the expedition had been specifically instructed.

"...that he should not take any [Indians] out of the rivers possessed by the Dutch... I have not, nor shall grant any commission to take... any Arawaks or any other Indian nation who immediately live under the power of the Dutch nation in any river possessed by them [and if he could discover who was responsible for the kidnapping] I shall do my utmost to have him severely punished and to have the Indians safely restored to their native country" [33 E, p. 51].

I have been unable to discover if the Indians were actually returned to Surinam, but the episode itself illustrates not only one method of Indian slave acquisition, but also the manner in which England's (or Barbados') relationship with another European power could potentially affect the status of Amerindians on the Island.

Additional illustrative materials also derive from this period. Although the Treaty of Breda also established peace with France, Anglo-French relations continued to be marked by mistrust and occasional open conflict in which Island Caribs generally aligned themselves with the French as they had done during the declared war. After peace between England and France had been nominally established, Caribs, reputedly from Dominica, continued their attacks on some of the English colonies, particularly Antigua and Montserrat, at that time still under the jurisdiction of the Governor of Barbados. In retaliation, and in an attempt to establish control over the islands they claimed against the French, British military expeditions were dispatched, in early 1668, against Caribs on various islands. From Antigua, Colonel James Walker commanded a force sent against the Dominica Caribs and one of his instructions from Governor Willoughby was to capture recalcitrant Indians and ship them to Barbados [33 C, No. 32]. These instructions were carried out although the number of Indians Involved is not known.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Some of the Indians captured during this military campaign were also sold as slaves in Jamaica [33 Q, p. 39]. Walker's expedition helps clear up some points concerning the introduction of arrowroot, an Amerindian plant which later became a minor cash crop in Barbados. Previously I stated that the plant was first identified in Barbados in 1690, but the exact date of introduction and point of origin were unknown [22, p. 132]. Subsequently I discovered Sloane's remarks that arrowroot "...was first brought from the Island of Dominica by Colonel James Walker, to Barbados and there planted. From thence it was sent to Jamaica..." [39, Vol. I, pp. 253-254]. Since as noted above, Walker came to Barbados after his expedition in Dominica, the date of the plant's introduction in 1668 can now be established.

While Walker moved against the Dominica Caribs, Willoughby led a force against the Indians on St. Vincent and St. Lucia, islands where he also wished to establish English settlements. Although Willoughby had intended to physically subdue the Indians, his expedition found it "an impossibility of reducing them by force" [33 A, pp. 129-130], and instead he made a "treaty" with them. This treaty [33 B, p. 96], for the time being affected the importation of Indian slaves for it permitted the Indians to

"...have free liberty to come to and depart from at pleasure any of the English islands, and receive protection therein during their residence, and that the English enjoy the same freedom of commerce and protection in St. Vincent and St. Lucia" [33 B, p. 96].<sup>21</sup>

The treaty, despite early optimism on Willoughby's part, did not eliminate mistrust of the Indians and the fragile relationship was further threatened by the French who were "very frequently among [the Indians of St. Vincent] and very ready to invite them to breach and blood" [33 L, p. 117]. Nonetheless, people from Barbados continued to go to the neighboring Windwards while the temporary absence of Indian hostility encouraged them further. For example, in the early 1670s woodcutting expeditions to St. Lucia reported, on their return to Barbados, that the Indians had visited them often and were very friendly, thereby rekindling English hopes of establishing a settlement on that French-claimed island [10 A, pp. 152-153]. Similarly, a nominal friendship with at least some Carib groups on Dominica encouraged the Barbados Council to seek a commission from the King to claim the island and to search for a silver mine whose existence had been reported by the Indians [33 N, pp. 194-195].

Yet, such islands continued to be the base from which increased

<sup>21</sup> Other provisions of the treaty required that the Indians acknowledge themselves as subjects of the English King, that they "shall be friends to all in amity with the English nation and enemy to their enemies;" that all English subjects captured by the Indians or French be returned, and "if any Indians captive amongst the English when demanded shall be returned;" that all runaway Negro slaves hiding in St. Vincent be returned to the English. By this period the population of St. Vincent included a considerable number of Negroes, many of whom were escaped slaves from Barbados [42 *passim*]. Taylor summarizes the position of such Negroes as follows: "It is evident that those Negroes who... sought refuge on... St. Vincent, and later became the Black Caribs, were treated as fellow citizens by their Indian hosts, and there is no reason to doubt that the brunt of the ensuing wars with the whites was borne equally by both races. At the same time, it is just as clear that no real fusion of these two groups ever took place; but that early in the 18th century the 'Blacks' came greatly to outnumber the 'Reds', some of whose women were abducted, and whom they soon supplanted as masters of the island" [42, p. 27].

Indian attacks were launched on British settlements in the Leewards [33 F, pp. 156-157]. Nonetheless, Barbadians pursued their own self-interests and apparently did not engage in hostilities with the Caribs in these islands in the decade or so following Willoughby's 1668 treaty. One consequence of this was that Indian slaves from these islands — islands which were coveted for their wood resources or settlement possibilities — were seemingly not imported.

A final illustration of the way in which Indian slave importations into Barbados could be affected by external conditions and inter-European power struggles can be found in the following incident: During the third Anglo-Dutch war of the early 1670s, official English policy tried to maintain friendly relations with mainland Carib groups who were hostile to both the Dutch and to their Arawak allies. Despite this, in 1673 or 1674, an English force, perhaps confused as to ethnic distinctions, as well as being motivated by pecuniary considerations, captured eleven coastal Caribs and transported them, against their will, to Barbados [33 R, pp. 61-62]. Charles the Second, being apprised of this event, was not pleased. His letter to Jonathan Atkins, Barbados' new Governor, not only shows the Crown's interest in the Indians, but also illustrates how the status of Indian slaves could be affected by wider political issues. In this letter, the King points out that

"...considering of how great importance it is to the good of our affairs in those parts that a fair correspondence should be preserved between the Caribbee Indians and the English and that the provocation should be avoided which the detention of these Indians would in all likelihood prove, we... require that you cause the foresaid Indians to be sent home... by the first convenient opportunity, and that in the meantime they be... kindly used upon our island of Barbados. And since it hath appeared within these late years by the assistance the people of these countries have afforded the French of what value that friendship is, we do also recommend it unto you and require that for the future you take all proper occasions to gain to you... the affection of that people and to promote a good understanding between them and our subjects under your Government" [33 R, pp. 61-62].

It is not entirely clear if the King's directive was ever implemented. Atkins later noted that some of the Indians had died, but he gave assurance that the remaining ones would be returned as early as possible [33 G, p. 20].

In sum, while it is clear that Indian slaves intermittently came to Barbados after 1627, the numbers involved, their points of origin, the manner in which they came, and the circumstances surrounding their enslavement are only partially known in a handful of cases. Ruses and capture or kidnapping seem to have been prominent mechanisms. In addition, it seems highly probable that as the island increased its

dependence on African slaves, Indian slave importations in the 17th century became more and more related to the island's external political and economic aims (e.g., settlements and wood resources elsewhere) and to England's struggles with other European powers. Thus relationships with various Indian groups in different areas fluctuated; yet, although slave importations from one area may have temporarily ceased, this did not seem to affect importations from other areas nor affect the status of Indian slaves already on the island.

#### IV. THE POSITION OF INDIAN SLAVES IN BARBADIAN SOCIETY

By the 1650s one finds evidence of the first manumissions of Indian slaves. The information, however, is not without ambiguity. John Scott notes that Barbados' Governor, George Ayscue (who was on the island between January and March, 1652), "...did free some of those poor Indians that had been long unjustly kept In slavery;" by the context of Scott's remarks, it is clear that he is referring to some of the survivors of the original Arawak group. Later in his account, Scott relates that between 1663 and 1664, during the chancellorship of Robert Harley, "...one thing was remarkable, viz., the freeing the remaining part of the Indians which Sir George Ayscue could not hear of, and the preceding Governors were remiss in." Scott gives no reasons for these manumissions, but a reason is suggested by other sources of information which also deviate, to some extent, from Scott's account.

Beginning on September 5, 1654, brief entries in the Barbados Council minute books [33 M] indicate that some type of litigation was occurring between a group of unnamed Indians (represented by a Mr. Cole) and Colonel Thomas Ellis, who was the defendant. The brevity of these entries makes it difficult to ascertain the exact nature of the case, but it appears that Ellis was claiming ownership of the Indians while they were asserting their free status. In the minutes for January 2, 1655, it is noted that in October 1652 a written deposition by Captain Henry Powell was submitted to be considered as evidence "in behalf of the plantiffs." This deposition is undoubtedly the petition mentioned earlier in this paper [27 in 23]<sup>22</sup> where parts of it were reproduced. In this petition Powell pleaded for the release of the five descendents and/or survivors of the original Arawak group whose names were "...Yow, a woman and her three children, [and] Barbados, a boy living at Coll. Ellses" [27 in 23]. After summarizing the events which had led to the Introduction of Arawaks in 1627 and noting that they were free when he had last left Barbados, in 1629, Powell concludes by saying

<sup>22</sup> See section II, above.

"Therefore my petition is to the... Governor [Daniel Searle] and... Assembly of this island that they would take the petitioner's humble suit into consideration and to set these poor people free that have been kept this long in bondage; whereas I left them here free people but the former government of this island has taken them by force and made them slaves; therefore my desire is you would be pleased to make them free people" [27 in 23].

When Powell's deposition first had been entered on the Indians' behalf in 1652 no representative of the defendant was present; since the law required, in cases where evidence was submitted in writing by persons not resident on the island, that the defendant or his representative be present, the Governor ordered a new trial so that Powell's deposition could "be left to the jury to consider as they see fit." [33 M, Vol. I, Jan. 2, 1655].

Both the outcome of this trial and the nature of the litigation are briefly recorded in a letter written from Barbados in early 1655:

"We have had lately a trial... to wit, a man brought from other parts a certain number of Indian Christian Protestants, and having found them faithful in his life, at his death he left them all freemen. But the intolerable baseness of this island is such in that point, that they rather strive to keep their slaves in ignorance, thereby thinkine to make them honeless of freedom... on behalf of these Indians there was an honest man that arpeared and Drosecuted on tbMr bpbalfs... and upon a full hearine of the business the Indian Christians were set free, after they had all been destroyed by oppression except five" [28, Vol. III, p. 159].

Berkenhead seems unaware of some of the details relating to the introduction of the Arawaks, but, as was pointed out in Section n, after their enslavement in the late 1620s they were dispersed, presumably among several owners. It is not unlikely that an owner of some of the Indian slaves granted them freedom at his death, and that the Indians were either unaware of their "rights" with respect to the grant, or that the grant was ignored by claimants to the decedent's estate. Whatever the details, Berkenhead's letter explicitly indicates that the matter was brought to a close by January or February of 1655. It is thus difficult to reconcile this date with Scott's comments (see above) that the remaining Arawaks were not freed until 1663-1664.

Regardless of the precise dates of these manumissions, the evidence does agree that they applied solely to the survivors and/or descendents of the original Arawak group. Thus, despite these manumissions the slave status of other Indians on the island did not change, and, as has been noted, Amerindians continued to be sporadically imported during the subsequent decades of the 17th century. Although not much can be said about such Indians ethnographically [21], their status as slaves

on the island during the 1670s is attested to in a handful of 17th century Quaker sources.

During his three month visit to Barbados in 1671-1672, George Fox, the Quaker leader, took note of Indians in a number of statements on the status and condition of slaves on the island [16; 18; 19]. An illustration of his position is found in his uncompromising and forceful critique of Barbados' Anglican ministry in which he makes it quite plain that Indian slaves (as well as African ones) were an object of his concern, *viz.*,

"And if you [the ministers of Barbados] be ministers of Christ, are you not teachers of Blacks and Taunies (to wit, Indians) as well as of the whites. For, is not the Gospel to be preached to all creatures? And did not Christ taste death for everyman? And are not they men? ...And why do you find fault with the Quakers (so called) for teaching of their families, and instructing them (to wit) the Blacks, and Taunies..." [18, p. 5].

While in Barbados, Fox preached directly to slaves who belonged to Quakers [18, pp. 76-77; 17, pp. 5-39], and he also included Indians in a "discourse" given at a meeting entirely devoted to outlining his position on the treatment and religious education of slaves in Barbados [16].

Not all Quakers in Barbados were slaveholders, but given the relatively radical position that Fox took on the status of slaves<sup>23</sup> as well

<sup>23</sup> A brief discussion of the relationship between Quakers and slaves in Barbados might be relevant here. Although this relationship has often been idealized in the literature, it can be noted that George Fox's position, in particular, was, for the period, more radical than a simple acknowledgement that Christ "did... die for the blacks and taunies as well as for the whites" [18, p. 77], and that slaves should be exposed to Christianity. Although Fox admonished the slaves themselves for such behavior as plural mating and theft and urged them to "yield subjection to their masters and those over them" [18, pp. 76-77], he pleaded to the masters for milder treatment. A handful of non-Quakers in Barbados had taken similar positions, but the manner in which Fox stated the case was probably unique for the period: "Consider," he told the slaveholders, "if you were in the same condition as the blacks (and indeed you do not know what condition you or your children, or your children's children may be reduced and brought into before you or they shall die) ...you would think it hard measure; yea, and very great bondage and cruelty. And therefore consider seriously of this, and do you for and to them as you would willingly have them or any other to do unto you were you in the like slavish condition..." [16, pp. 18-19].

Fox also made an extremely radical suggestion for the time, *viz.*, that masters should let their slaves "go free after a considerable term of years, if they [the slaves] have served them faithfully, and when they go, and are made free, let them not go away empty-handed" [16, p. 16]. Although Barbados' Quakers did allow slaves to their meetings — later being formally prohibited from doing so by a 1676 law [34, pp. 120-121], it is doubtful that Fox's suggestions on manumission had much, if any, effect on the Quaker slave holding community.

as the considerable antipathy to Quaker doctrine and behavior<sup>24</sup> from a number of quarters in Barbados, one can conjecture that the only slaveholders who would have permitted their slaves to attend Quaker meetings would have been the Quakers themselves. Thus, one might assume that Quakers were prominent among the persons who owned Indian slaves, for it is otherwise difficult to explain Fox's notice of them in a population where they were certainly an insignificant minority. However, the size of this minority at the time of Fox's visit is difficult to ascertain. There are no population estimates and one can only make a qualitative judgment based on the general absence of references to Indians in the sources. For instance, Robert Rich, a prominent Barbadian, writing not long before Fox's visit, detailed Barbados' population as consisting of English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, French, Jews, and Colored and Negro slaves, omitting any mention of Indians [35, pp. 378-379]. It is difficult to reconcile this and other omissions in the literature with the 1671 Quaker statement that "Negroes and Tauny Indians make up a very great part of families here in this island..." [19, p. 70] unless it is accepted as lending further support to the assumption stated above that Quakers were prominent among the holders of Indian slaves.

The only 17th century population count of Indians that I know of, aside from estimates made on the 1627 Arawak group, dates from around 1684. At this time it was reported that the island had an Indian population of seventy-two persons, as compared to 46,204 Negroes and 19,468 whites [7 A, pp. 22-23]. It is difficult to assess the degree to which the figure of seventy-two represents an average, but high mortality rates as well as escapes probably caused considerable fluctuations in the size of the Indian group at various periods. Such a low figure as quoted above, however, does generally support other qualitative estimates which have been made, and it is doubtful that Indian slaves (except for the first one or two years of the colony's life) ever exceeded more than a few percentage points of Barbados' total slave population.

By the last twenty-five years of the 17th century, the importation of Indian slaves apparently became even more sporadic and a number of measures were introduced into the Barbados Assembly to regulate their importation and sale.

During the early 1670s, relationships between the English and the Island Caribs, in particular, continued to be fragile. While King Charles, in late 1674, was advising Barbados' Governor of the need to maintain friendly relations with the Caribs [33 R, pp. 61-62],

<sup>24</sup> For a variety of reasons such as their refusals to pay for the upkeep of the Anglican ministry and to participate in the island's militia, to say nothing about their "holier than thou" criticisms of Barbados' whites.

Dominica Caribs continued their attacks on the Leewards. An attack on Antigua just before Christmas in 1674 finally prompted the Leeward islands' Governor,<sup>25</sup> William Stapleton, to send a military force against these Caribs. The soldiers killed some eighty Indians, captured others, destroyed houses and gardens, and carried off number of canoes [33 H, pp. 10-11]. This attack increased Carib animosities towards the English even more, and the general uncertainties and vicissitudes of Anglo-Carib relations combined with reported acts of Indian hostility against various of England's North American colonies [33 I, p. 70], were not without their repercussions in Barbados. The nature of these repercussions, however, are known only in broad outline.

In June, 1676, after a month's consideration, the Barbados Assembly passed an "Act... to prohibit the bringing of Indian slaves to this island" [33 O, pp. 222-223]. The Barbadian Assembly was perhaps motivated by frustrations in external relationships with various Indian groups;<sup>26</sup> In addition they may have been trying to insure the safe passage of wood collecting parties in the neighboring islands by stabilizing relationships. Although I have been unable to find a copy of this act, the Assembly's brief explanation offers some clue for its passage as well as concrete evidence that North American Indians were an occasional commodity in the extensive trade between Barbados and the North American colonies. Thus, the act was passed

"...to prevent the bringing of Indian slaves, and as well to send away and transport *those already brought to this island from New England* and the adjacent colonies, being thought a people of too subtle, bloody and dangerous inclination to be and remain here..." [33 O, pp. 222-223].<sup>27</sup>

I have been unable to ascertain if this law in fact resulted in the release of Indian slaves, but the law itself expired [20, p. 479; 34, p. 122],

<sup>25</sup> since 1671 the Government of Barbados had been separated from that of the Leewards.

<sup>26</sup> Relations with the Island Caribs, in particular, had apparently so deteriorated that Governor Atkins could report that "all correspondence with [the Indians of the islands] is taken from us" [33 J, p. 63].

<sup>27</sup> My italics. It can be added here that not only were Indians being sent from New England, but also that some Barbadian Indian slaves may have been shipped to this area under more pacific circumstances. In the 17th and 18th centuries it was not an unusual practice for whites to take with them household slaves when they travelled or emigrated from Barbados. In one such case, where Indians are specifically mentioned, a trader in Barbados in the 1680s, upon return to his native New England, brought with him "...two slaves, relics of his Barbados venture... [the man] John Indian and his consort, the ageless Tituba, said to be half-Carib and half-Negro" [40, p. 2]. In the early 1690s Tituba, in particular, became a major figure in the course of events which precipitated the celebrated Salem witch hunts [40 *passim*].

perhaps not long after its enactment, and was apparently not renewed until a similar act was passed in 1688.

Although Atkins could report in 1676 that Barbados had lost "all correspondence" with the Indians in the neighboring islands, circumstances changed not long after. The following episode well reflects not only how the Caribs could display a differential policy *vis-a-vis* the English colonies, but how the colonies themselves were divided in their relations with the Indians; it also reflects how Barbadians perceived their wider interests, and how these perceptions influenced Amerindian slave importations.

On July 4, 1681, Caribs from St. Vincent and Dominica attacked the English settlement at Barbuda (in the Leewards) killing some of the settlers. As a matter of interest one of the Carib leaders was a man "...who spoke good English (called Captain Peter) who lived formerly at Barbados with Colonel Morris" [33 K, p. 95]. Nothing else is known of Captain Peter but he must have spent some time in Barbados to learn English so well and one might assume that he left Barbados — either by escape or repatriation — with no great love for the English. At any rate, this attack on Barbuda followed other more minor actions against the English in various of the Leewards by the Caribs. These attacks had prompted William Stapleton, The Governor of the Leewards, to urge Barbados, because of its proximity, to join him in an expeditionary force against the Indians of St. Vincent and Dominica. After the Barbuda incident, Stapleton urgently renewed this request several times, but with no success. Governor Atkins of Barbados, who himself was not much in favor of such reprisals, told the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations that

"Barbados will never be persuaded to agree [to Stapleton's plan] being in amity with those Indians and needing their friendship when they go to cut wood on the neighboring islands, it being also impossible wholly to destroy them since they are continually recruited from the Main [33 S, p. 291.

Although Atkins' successor, William Dutton, was strongly in favor of such an expedition he could not persuade the island's Assembly to grant the necessary funds and men, noting that the Barbadians felt the matter to be none of their business — this, despite the fact that a Barbadian woodcutting group had been attacked in St. Lucia with four persons being killed [10 B, pp. 179-181]. Stapleton's expedition left Nevis-St. Kitts in March, 1683 and, in the next few months, had some military successes in Dominica and St. Vincent, but without any help from Barbados.

The Barbadian legislature's refusal to participate against the Indians represented a self-interest policy that seemed short-sighted to

the island's critics. However, in a small, intensively cultivated island practically depleted of its wood resources and entirely dependent upon sugar production, it was essential that wood for a variety of purposes be imported. Despite a dependency upon importations from North America (especially for building timber) and Guiana, wood could still be most cheaply obtained from neighboring islands where some peace — however tenuous — had to be maintained with the local Indians.<sup>28</sup>

Thus, the kidnapping and enslavement of Indians from these islands, at this period, would have been detrimental to Barbados' wider interests, though it is unknown if this policy arrested the importation of Indians from other areas. However, for reasons perhaps similar to those which prompted the law of 1676 (see above), the Barbados legislature, in December, 1688, appended the following clause to "An Act for Securing the Possession of Negroes and Slaves," *viz.*, "...all persons whatsoever are prohibited to bring, sell, and dispose of any Indians on this Island, upon pain of forfeiting the same to His Majesty..." [34, p. 171]. This clause made no provision for sending away Indian slaves (as had the 1676 law) and thus the law itself presumably did not affect the status of such slaves already on the island.

Since Indian slaves had always formed such an insignificant minority of Barbados' slave population, separate laws regulating their behavior were not enacted; rather they were legally governed by much of the same code as that devised for Negro slaves. Indians, as such, are usually not mentioned, but a wide variety of these 17th and early 18th century laws contain the phrase "Negroes and other slaves" [34, *passim*; 20, *passim*]. It seems most likely that this phrase applied to Indians. For example, most of the twenty clauses of the inclusive and major "Act for the Governing of Negroes," passed in August, 1688 [34, pp. 156-164], contain this phrase, and its application to Indians is clearly implied in the Act's preamble, *viz.*,

"Whereas the plantations and estates of this islands cannot be fully managed, and brought into use without the labour and service

<sup>28</sup> This position became more formally stated in the following decade. In 1697 the Agents for Barbados noted that "it is absolutely necessary to keep St. Lucia for the preservation of Barbados," and offered three primary reasons the first being "because of the timber upon it" [10 C, p. 545]. In 1698, Governor Grey's instruction to Tobias Prere were as follows: "You having signified... your desire of going down to St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Dominica... to cut and bring up windmill and cart timber which is much wanting [in Barbados] and will be for the common good of this island... And whereas I am informed that the Indians inhabiting those islands do earnestly desire that peace may be conducted betwixt the English and them. If therefore you shall meet with any of the said Indians that... do desire to come to treat with me you may promise them... that they shall have kind reception, civil usage, and safe transport back..." [33 P, pp. 372-374].

of great numbers of Negroes and other slaves: And for as much as the said Negroes and other slaves brought unto the people of this Island for that purpose are of barbarous, wild and savage natures, and such as renders them wholly unqualified to be governed by the laws, customs and practices of our nation..." [34, p. 1581.]

The slave status of Indians as well as the meaning of the phrase "Negroes and other slaves" is also apparent in a series of laws designed to prevent the clandestine removal of slaves from the island. This trade had been going on for some time as the demand for slaves (and indentured servants) increased throughout the Caribbean. Captains of vessels would kidnap or lure slaves aboard their ships with promises of freedom, only to sell them to new owners at other ports of call. Laws passed at various periods remarked on this trade,<sup>30</sup> and in 1719 it was noted at the Court of Grand Sessions in Barbados that "Negroes and other slaves" were being illegally taken from the island and sold in places such as Martinique and St. Lucia [10 D, p. 193]. In 1727, a law was passed which plainly indicates that Indian slaves were part of this trade, its preamble specifying that "...ships lying offshore at remote parts of the island... [come] to steal, force, or entice several Negro, Indian, and Mulatto slaves to go off this island."<sup>31</sup>

It is perhaps one of the ironies of Indian slavery in Barbados at this period that while there was concern about the illegal removal of such slaves, Indians from elsewhere could visit the island with apparent impunity. An English traveller in 1730 wrote that Caribs of Dominica set out on trading expeditions

"...once or twice a year... to the number of forty or fifty, to visit Barbados and some of our Leeward islands, as well as Martinique, Guadeloupe, etc. and... carry with them a cargo of Indian baskets, bows and arrows, crabs, etc., which they exchange at those places for old clothes, hats, ribbons, and trinkets. Wherever they come, the public provides them with suitable lodgings and entertainment during their stay, which is seldom above three or four days at one place..." [1, pp. 77-78].

And Griffith Hughes also commented that Caribs coming to Barbados

<sup>29</sup> Similarly, among the Instructions given by the King to Richard Dutton, Barbados' governor, is the following: "...you are also... to find out the best means to facilitate and encourage the conversion of Negroes and other slaves to the Christian religion wherein you are to have due caution and regard to the property of the Inhabitants and safety of the Island" [33 T].

<sup>30</sup> E.g., in 1661 [34, p. 32], 1651, 1652, 1701, and 1706 [20, pp. 172, 463, 465, 492].

<sup>31</sup> "An Act to Prevent the Vessels that Trade Here to and from Martinique or Elsewhere from Carrying off any Negro, Indian, or Mulatto Slave" [20, pp. 283-284].

from St. Vincent in the 1730s came "...in their small canoes... even for their pleasure" [26, pp. 5-6].

Barbadians might have been able to refrain from enslaving the Island Caribs during this period because there were no real demands set upon their labor, and because non-aggressive behavior towards these groups, as previously noted, was advantageous in terms of wider issues such as external wood supplies and England's competition with the French. However, for the Barbadian to give up property already held was another matter, and the welcoming of visiting Indians from other islands did not affect the status of those Indians who were already slaves. As noted above, Indians continued to be governed by the island's slave laws and were apparently treated similarly to African slaves. For example the property status of Indians is reflected in a will, dated 1725, which includes the bequest of "the Indian wench Sary" as well as a number of Negro slaves [36, pp. 60-61], and Indians were also the occasional concern of Anglican ministers in then: not too consistent efforts to baptize slaves in general: In 1732, the Anglican minister of Christ Church parish proudly notified the Bishop of London that he had "...lately baptized an Indian slave... and three Negroes" [25, pp. 31-32].

Thus, there is concrete evidence that Indian slaves were still on the island in the early 1730s, and this evidence is later reinforced by Indians being included in occasional laws of the time designed to modify the status of slaves in general.<sup>32</sup> Yet, Griffith Hughes, in his relatively detailed discussion of Barbados' inhabitants, implies, in a number of passages, that Indians were no longer residing in Barbados during his stay in the late 1730s and 1740s. By this period, it can be safely conjectured that Indians were not being imported, and that deaths, escapes, miscegenation, and acculturative processes had combined to all-but-eliminate them as a distinctive ethnic group. At any rate, in 1747 Barbados' Governor Robinson was able to report to the Board of Trade that the island had no Indian slaves [31, p. 60].<sup>33</sup>

<sup>32</sup> a law of February 27, 1739, (An Act for Amending an Act of this Island, entitled an Act for the Governing of Negroes; and for providing a proper maintenance and support for such Negroes, Indians, or Mulattoes, as hereafter shall be manumitted or set free) permits a slave to legally testify "against any free Negro, Indian, or Mulatto, whether baptized or not" [20, pp. 323-325].

<sup>33</sup> Some persons, phenotypically identifiable as Indians, may have lived on after these years, or there may even have been an occasional importation of an Indian slave later in the 18th century as well. Such a suggestion is prompted by an advertisement in the Barbados Mercury newspaper of October 25, 1783, which notes that a slave, "a dark complexioned Indian fellow named James" had run away from his owner. By the treaty of Paris, signed in 1763, England formally annexed Dominica and St. Vincent, and this event may have had some repercussions with respect to the enslavement of an occasional Indian.

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