

Chapter 2

Father Antoine Biet's Account Revisited

Irish Catholics in Mid-Seventeenth-Century Barbados

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IN 1654 ANTOINE BIET, A FRENCH CATHOLIC priest, travelled to Cayenne, in South America, but unforeseen circumstances led him to a short stay in Barbados; ten years later he published an account of his experiences in the New World, including his visit to the island. In 1967 Jerome Handler published a translation of the two chapters of Biet's volume that describe his three-month Barbados sojourn.¹ Since this publication, historians and other writers have found the translation useful in their discussions of Barbadian society in the middle of the seventeenth century.² Biet's account offers a unique first-hand glimpse into life in Barbados during a period when the so-called sugar revolution was well underway and the island was generating an enormous amount of wealth from sugar produced on large-scale plantations worked largely by enslaved Africans. Although, as we discuss below, writers have used Biet's account to illustrate a number of features of Barbadian society, little attention has been paid to his interactions with Irish nationals on the island, and how such interactions reflect broader issues concerning the lives of Irish Catholics in a Protestant-dominated English colony. We contend that colonial antecedents in Ireland informed perceptions of Irish Catholics in Barbados, conflating Catholicism and socioeconomic status while fostering an environment of anti-Irish discrimination.

Antoine Biet's New World journey began in mid-1652, when, at the age of

thirty-one, he left his congregation near Paris to join a group of priests accompanying a several-hundred-member expedition intending to re-establish a colony in Cayenne. The earlier French colony had collapsed about a decade before; the new one would suffer a similar fate within a year because of internal personal and political conflicts, attacks from indigenous populations, and problems of basic sustenance. A particularly decimating epidemic forced the remaining settlers to leave Cayenne, and they, Biet included, made their way to the English colony in Surinam.³ There they found a ship bound for Barbados, and in February 1654 the French party of about sixty persons arrived at the island. Biet remained in Barbados for about three months before returning to France, via Martinique and Guadeloupe, in August 1654 – a little over two years since his voyage had begun.⁴

Two short chapters of Biet's account, which was based on his recall and notes he had made earlier, are devoted to Barbados. Chapter 31 is primarily a chronological narrative relating various incidents that befell him and his party during their stay on the island. He briefly records, for example, his arrival, his attempts to pray, the celebration of Catholic services, the French party's accommodations in Bridgetown and their purchase of a plantation, interactions with neighbouring planters and their feasting and drinking, and the party's eventual departure from Barbados. Chapter 32 provides a more systematic view of the "situation, climate and wealth of the island of Barbados and the customs, morals, and religion of its inhabitants".⁵ Here Biet offers brief descriptive passages on Barbados's geography, ports, towns and architecture, shops, taverns and climate, but most of the chapter treats socioeconomic conditions, including the relationship between planter wealth, sugar, and slavery; the lives and treatment of enslaved Africans and indentured servants; the status of various religious denominations; and finally, festivities honouring James Drax, the island's wealthiest and most important planter, who was about to embark on a trip to England.

Richard Ligon's well-known and classic account *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*, first published in London in 1657, was based on his stay in 1647–50.⁶ It provides a wealth of materials on early Barbadian life which has been mined by scholars and other writers for generations. Although Biet does not come close in richness of detail and subject matter, in a primary-source literature that is generally devoid of first-hand accounts of Barbados during a crucial period in its history, his account has proved useful to researchers, primarily to complement other contemporary accounts on a variety of top-

ics.⁷ For example, writers have used and often quoted from Biet to illustrate and comment on the lavish lifestyle and opulence of the new sugar planters, including their elaborate meals and abundant consumption of alcohol as well as their ostentatious display of wealth and concerns about social status. Biet's observations on the enslaved population, particularly their fundamental role in the sugar industry and in generating wealth for the planter class, have also been noted, as well as his comments on the harsh treatment and disciplinary measures meted out to enslaved Africans and the severity of their working and living conditions.

Given Biet's occupation and his purpose for being in the New World, it is not surprising that he devoted a relatively substantial amount of his book to commenting on the state of European religious denominations and what he perceived to be the state of religion in Barbados in general. As a Catholic priest, Biet was critical of what he considered to be a lack of – or only superficial engagement with – religious practices, the English planters' preoccupation with pecuniary matters, and their disinterest in and antipathy towards extending Christianity to the enslaved population. His observation that "Calvinism is the only [religion] that is professed in public", but that nonetheless "one is free to do what one wants in his house",⁸ has been cited by scholars to illustrate the relatively tolerant religious environment of Barbados, despite the colony's control by English Protestants. While he was initially anxious about how Catholicism was perceived in Barbados, Biet was to discover that his apprehension was unfounded; he would come to experience the official legislative and governmental stance of religious tolerance.

The principle of tolerance was encoded in the Barbados Charter and subsequent legislation. When the forces of the Commonwealth of England ("the Roundheads") took control over Barbados from the Royalists ("the Cavaliers") in late 1651, as a consequence of the English Civil War and the Battle of Worcester, "articles of agreement" – commonly known as the Charter of Barbados – were signed between representatives of both political interests in January 1652. The first article of the Charter, which is reproduced in the earliest published compilation of Barbados's laws, specified "that a libertie of conscience in matters of religion be allowed to all". Echoing this article, the first law, enacted in October 1652 and published in the same collection, states that "all the Acts which are now of force within the Common-Wealth of England, concerning free enjoyment of Religion, be published within this Island; And that the same be duely observed by all the Inhabitants of the same, in such manner . . . as in, and by the said Statutes of the

Parliament of England”.⁹ On the island there was a general acceptance of Jews and Protestant dissenters, including Quakers, until the Quakers started being persecuted around 1660. However, despite the “strain of anti-Catholicism on the island”, as Peter Campbell, a historian of Barbados, has observed, “Roman Catholics for the most part escaped persecution so long as they conducted their religious exercises privately and unobtrusively”.¹⁰

Father Andrew White, an English Jesuit en route from England to Maryland, spent three weeks in Barbados in January 1634. He reported that on the island “some few Catholiques there be both English and Irish”, clearly establishing the presence of Catholics from both national groups at this early date.¹¹ By the time Biet arrived in Barbados in 1654, some twenty years later, the white population – augmented by prisoners taken in military campaigns in England, Ireland and Scotland and transported to the West Indies – may have been around twenty-five thousand persons, approximately 56 per cent of the total population, which included enslaved Africans.¹² The white population, reported Henry Whistler, an English visitor in early 1655, included “English, French, Dutch, Scots, Irish, and Spaniards”. While there are no contemporary figures or estimates of the size of each group, Pedro Welch has argued that “for Barbados, there are some detailed lists of the early migrants, along with statements about their origins, to suggest that while there was a sizable Irish component, the bulk of the servant population was probably of multi-ethnic origin”.

Of this heterogeneous white population, Biet claims that “more than two thousand Catholics” lived on the island, likely repeating a conventional figure given to him by local residents. In any event, despite the presence of English Catholics (as noted by Andrew White), we assume that most of the Catholics were Irish, since the Irish population was sizable at the time of Biet’s visit, and according to Richard Dunn, Irish Catholics “constituted the largest block of servants on the island, and they were cordially loathed by their English masters”.¹³ However, it bears emphasis that not all Irish in the English Caribbean were Catholic, nor were all of them impoverished. In Montserrat, for example, although 40 per cent of its population was Irish in 1678, this demographic consisted of native Irish (who were overwhelmingly Catholic and a clear majority); “Old English”, who had arrived during the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in the twelfth century; and “New English”, mainly Protestants who settled in Ireland during the late 1500s and 1600s.¹⁴

However, unlike Montserrat, which received a large number of New English planters, most of the Irish who came to Barbados were native Irish Catholics,

including priests exiled to the West Indies. In addition, although Ireland in the seventeenth century contained individuals of various socioeconomic classes, as well as people who had come largely from England and Scotland, explicit discrimination against native Irish Catholics was an essential component of England's colonizing ideology, and such prejudices were transferred to the Americas, including Barbados. In Barbados, most of the island's Irish were servants and poor; their arrival was a major aspect of the new Cromwellian colonizing schemes, in which migration played a major role.¹⁵ Following such migrations, the servant population of Barbados in 1667–68 was described by an anonymous writer as “being poor men that are just permitted to live, and a very great part Irish, derided by the Negroes and branded with the epithet of white slaves”.¹⁶

Biet arrived in Barbados at a time of heightened tension between English colonists and Irish exiles, given the recent influx of immigrants and threats of rebellion (both in Ireland and in Barbados). Specific incidents involving Biet reveal the fragile social position of Irish Catholics in Barbados and suggest Biet's preconceived notions of how English Protestants would treat Catholic priests. When he first arrived at Barbados, a member of the French party who held a grudge against him – because Biet had “always been critical of his dissolute life” – was waiting on the wharf. As soon as Biet landed the Frenchman cried out, “‘A priest, a priest,’ by his shouts wanting to excite the English, who abhor priests . . . I do not know what would have happened if most of the people on the roadstead had been able to understand French.” The tension was relieved with the assistance of one Donat O'Shea, who came to Biet's defence.

Years earlier, O'Shea had gone to France from Ireland to study for the priesthood; he recognized Biet as a French priest from his past. In describing their reunion on the dock, Biet writes, “neither of us could refrain from shedding tears of joy”. O'Shea explained that he had arrived in Barbados as servant to a “gentleman whose name was Major Bayanne”; this was Major William Byam, a prominent Royalist who had been forced to leave Barbados in 1652 for the English colony in Surinam. O'Shea, more familiar with the social climate of the island, was quick to jump to Biet's defence, assuring those within earshot that Biet was not a Catholic priest but rather “a gentleman who he had served in France”. O'Shea purposely concealed Biet's religious identity in favour of proclaiming his socioeconomic position.¹⁷

Days later, while still in the Bridgetown area, Biet walked to a secluded spot in order to say his prayers. Another man of the “Irish nation” soon approached

him, speaking a “corrupt language intermixed with Italian, Portuguese, and Provençal . . . which those who sail on the Mediterranean understand very well”. Biet, by his own admission, did not speak or understand English well, if at all. The man addressed Biet as “*Signor Padre*”, identifying himself as “a servant of your Lady”. Biet “gave him an angry look”, replying in the same language that he was “not a priest”; he explains this denial by noting that he “feared that [the man] was someone who came to expose me and reveal me as a priest”. But the man persisted, bowing deferentially to Biet, making the sign of the cross and reciting various Catholic prayers – all to affirm his strong Catholic identity and assure Biet that the priest had nothing to fear from him. Biet was moved and finally revealed his true identity, confessing, “I considered myself happy to be able to serve him and all good Catholics . . . who were in great distress without any spiritual comfort.”⁸

During Holy Week, Biet visited Bridgetown and was led by a “Captain Halay” (or Hallett, a family name found in Barbados at this period) into a “large dwelling” containing a “very large room which was decorated with a great number of palm leaves; which led me to believe that this was the house of some Catholics who were observing the solemnity of Easter as much as they could”. Men and women, Biet writes, “kissed my hands and threw themselves at my feet, crying with joy to find themselves so close to a priest”. Humbled by the experience, he notes that he was “unable to console them” because of the language barrier, but the encounter that he describes is a powerful scene despite the lack of direct dialogue.⁹ Biet does not mention the nationality of those observing the Easter holiday during this encounter, but we can infer from the previous two interactions with Irishmen that some, if not many, in the room were Irish.

When Biet arrives in Barbados, as described above, an Irishman quickly conceals his identity by announcing that Biet is a gentleman rather than a priest. Later, a different Irishman bemoans the lack of spiritual comfort and guidance facing the island’s Catholics. During Holy Week, several Catholics are overjoyed to be in the company of a priest, possibly illustrating the delicate position on the island of such individuals. These incidents, we believe, suggest that the social precariousness felt by Irish Catholics derived not from explicitly anti-Catholic sentiment but rather from anti-Irish feelings that reflected tensions along class and ethnic lines, materializing in practices of religious discrimination. Additional clues pertaining to the discrimination faced by Irish Catholics in Barbados can be gleaned from a broader look at Irish Catholics within the English Atlantic world and from contemporaneous records and legislation of Barbados.

Throughout the English West Indies in the seventeenth century, the large majority of Irish inhabitants fell into the category of labouring Irish Catholics, who were perceived by colonial authorities to be rebellious and undesirable for the purposes of establishing a civilized and successful colony. English–Irish relations in Barbados were fuelled by tensions that had begun centuries earlier in Ireland; the attitudes of early English planters in Barbados seem to have been heavily influenced by these earlier prejudices, as were, undoubtedly, the sentiments of the Irish who laboured for them.²⁰ These prior prejudices were surely exacerbated by labour conditions in Barbados, the treatment that indentured servants experienced, and their reactions to this treatment.

As early as 1631, Henry Colt, an English visitor, reported that about forty servants had escaped from the island. Father White learned that not long before his arrival in Barbados, on 3 January 1634, “the servants of the iland had conspired to kill their masters and make themselves free . . . The ringleaders were 2 brothers named Westons”; the plot was discovered before it could be put into effect.²¹ In neither case are Irish servants specifically mentioned, but the colonial authorities and the Barbadian plantocracy viewed them as particularly rebellious and associated them with various plots throughout the seventeenth century.²² Other “rebellious” incidents in Barbados and sea escapes from the island were major problems for masters throughout the period; occasionally servants and slaves helped each other escape, and a number of early laws dealing with fugitives – an omnipresent problem for planters during the seventeenth century – dealt with servants as well as slaves. Such incidents were compounded by English antipathy towards the Irish and mistrust of Irish servants. These sentiments seem to have been reflected in a 1644 act “for the prohibition of landing Irish persons” aimed at limiting the size of the Irish population. However, as Gragg has observed, this act became “meaningless” because of the island’s labour demands.²³

Servants in Barbados received harsh treatment in general and were restricted in their actions and movements. Many of Barbados’s early laws passed in the 1650s were intended to circumscribe the daily lives of servants and control the conditions of their servitude. As for their actual treatment, Richard Ligon, while living in Barbados in the late 1640s, observed:

as for the usage of the servants, it is much as the master is, merciful or cruel; those that are merciful, treat their servants well . . . But if the masters be cruel, the servants have very wearisome and miserable lives . . . some cruel masters will provoke their servants so, by extreme ill usage, and often and cruel beating them, as they grow desperate, and so join together to revenge themselves upon them.

A few years later Biet made similar observations:

All are very badly treated. When they work, the overseers . . . are always close by with a stick with which they often prod them when they do not work as fast as is desired. I found it strange that they sent from England those persons who were suspected of being Royalists, and who had been taken prisoner [at the Battle of Worcester] . . . They were sold, especially when it was discovered that they were Catholics, the husband in one place, the wife in another, and the children in another place so as not to receive any solace from each other.²⁴

The treatment received by Irish indentured servants, undoubtedly fuelled by long-standing antipathies of the English, caused the former to react violently to their situation. For example, although Ligon does not specifically mention either Catholics or Irish, he does report on a large plotted revolt by servants which was discovered in 1649 before it could be put into effect; given the number of Irish among the island's servants, it is hard to believe that they were not involved. In the 1650s tensions continued between the English settlers and planters and the Irish, whether free or indentured. In July and November 1655, about one year after Biet's visit, the Barbados Council learned "there are several Irish Servants and Negroes out in Rebellion".²⁵ During this period, Larry Gragg reports (using Barbados Council minutes), an Irish servant received a severe whipping for uttering a curse against the English and was forced to leave the island, and several others "were flogged and put in a pillory for slander and mutiny"; two others "so frightened their master" that he had them arrested, and for behaving "rebelliously and mutinously" they also received a severe whipping. Events such as these apparently caused the passage in November 1655 of an act aimed to "restrain the wandering of servants, and to suppress the insolencies of the Scotch and Irish servants".

Irish servants later joined with enslaved Africans in several plots of revolt. In fact, the large presence of both Irish servants and enslaved Africans caused alarm in Barbados, and Governor William Willoughby, presumably reflecting the sentiments of the plantocracy, lamented to his superiors in London that Barbados was "in an ill condition, in regard of the multitude of negroes and Irish".²⁶ The friction between Irish servants and English masters continued through the seventeenth century. It was, for example, reflected in false rumours that spread in late 1685 or early 1686, concerning a "rising designed by the Negroes . . . in combination with the Irish servants . . . to destroy all masters and mistresses". In general, as Hilary Beckles has argued, "It was the Irish who were perceived

by English masters as a principal internal enemy – at times more dangerous and feared than the blacks”, and it was Irish servants who were viewed “as belonging to a backward culture, unfit to contribute anything beyond their labor to colonial development”. This view of the Irish poor was strongly expressed in 1697 by Christopher Codrington, the governor of the Leeward Islands. In his opinion, Zacek summarizes, “Irishmen were lower than many animal species; they were automaton-like ‘brutes’ whose only skill lay in warfare.”²⁷

The Irish population in the West Indies was not socioeconomically homogeneous. However, the Irish whom English planters regarded as security threats and disparaged ethnocentrically were not the Protestant “New English” Irish settlers who became large landowners and sometimes held high administrative positions. Although we cannot be certain of the religious affiliations and class backgrounds of the Irish in Barbados, the evidence indicates that the majority were Catholic and from the labouring class.²⁸

Following the Irish rebellion of 1641, a strong English anti-Irish Catholicism existed, before and during Cromwellian times. The prejudice against Irish Catholics as Catholics, exacerbated by Cromwell’s conquest of Ireland from 1649 to 1652, is reflected in an incident that occurred two years after Biet’s stay in Barbados. Four Irish Catholic priests arrived at the island, probably as “political” exiles of Cromwell’s campaign in Ireland, which resulted in the transportation of many other Irish to Barbados as servants.²⁹ In May 1656 the Barbados Council gave the priests “15 days liberty to seeke passage for their departure”, prohibiting their settling on the island.³⁰ Politics certainly played a heavy role in the religious environment of Barbados, since the perception of Irish Catholic priests as possibly catering to an already rebellious and dangerous population made them a potential threat to the social order. Additionally, socioeconomic class was a significant variable of identity; Biet, perceived by Barbadians as a French “gentleman”, experienced a religious freedom that was afforded only to residents and visitors who belonged to social categories acceptable to the governing authorities and the plantocracy.

The combination of characteristics that defined an “Irish identity” has led the historians Kristen Block and Jenny Shaw to argue that, “In the English colonies, servants of all nationalities were subject to harsh working conditions, but Irish Catholic subjugation was magnified by English Protestants’ sense of cultural and religious superiority.” In the eyes of colonial authorities and the Barbadian plantocracy, the Irish were comprised of distinct strata and were not characterized solely by adherence to Catholicism. Rather, Catholicism was one

element of an Irish identity that marked the Irish as having, Beckles notes, the “lowest socioeconomic status within the West Indies’ Anglican-dominated communities”. What Biet initially perceived as anti-Catholicism in Barbados, we believe, was largely anti-Irish sentiments fuelled by the political and rebellious character of Irish Catholics and those who were perceived to be leaders, particularly Irish Catholic priests. Such an interpretation explains why Biet’s experience on the island as a Catholic differed greatly from that of Irish Catholics. As a French “gentleman”, Biet’s presence did little to threaten colonial and plantocratic authority. For the Irish, their Catholicism signalled political and socioeconomic elements of their identity and therefore helped perpetrate their rebellious reputation. “At the most basic level”, Zacek has written, “Irishness denoted Catholicism, and Catholicism Irishness, and both were connected in the public consciousness with rebellion and treachery”.³¹

Father Antoine Biet’s account of his stay in Barbados has proven useful as an eyewitness record of Barbadian life in the middle of the seventeenth century. However, although Biet in fact says very little about the Irish in Barbados, his report is to our knowledge the only seventeenth-century account which describes actual encounters with the island’s Irish Catholics and expresses their voices, however indirectly through the passage of time and his recollections. Gragg has argued that Barbados was a colony of “growing religious pluralism and toleration” in the mid-seventeenth century, an argument supported by the early Barbados charter and established laws. However, a broader analysis of the Irish in Barbadian society at the time of Biet’s visit presents the possibility that English discourse concerning the Irish “presented them as a monolithic group”.³² Class, religious, ethnic and political identities were conflated to portray the Irish as an inferior yet dangerous group. At a pivotal period in the development of Barbadian society, Biet’s account suggests the prejudices against Irish Catholics, as their identities were judged based on colonial antecedents and produced and reproduced in the New World by Anglican society.

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Notes

1. Antoine Biet, *Voyage de la France équinoxiale en l'Isle de Cayenne, entrepris par les François en l'année MCDLII* (Paris, 1664), 268–95; Jerome S. Handler, “Father Antoine Biet’s Visit to Barbados in 1654”, *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society* 32 (1967): 56–76.
2. For example, in one form or another, the translation of Biet’s account has been cited by Susan Dwyer Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges: Slavery and the Transformation of English Society, 1640–1700* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 31; Hilary McD. Beckles, “Plantation Production and White ‘Proto-Slavery’: White Indentured Servants and the Colonisation of the English West Indies, 1624–1645”, *Americas* 41, no. 3 (1985): 21–45; Carl Bridenbaugh and Roberta Bridenbaugh, *No Peace Beyond the Line: The English in the Caribbean, 1624–90*, vol. 2 of *The Beginnings of the American People* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 119, 120, 139, 142, 145; Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624–1713* (1972; reprint, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 69, 240–41; Larry Gragg, “A Vagabond in Paradise: Thomas Verney in Barbados”, *History Today* 45, no. 8 (1995): 40–46; Larry Gragg, “The Pious and the Profane: The Religious Life of Early Barbados Planters”, *Historian* 62, no. 2 (2000): 265–83; Larry Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted: The English Colonization of Barbados, 1627–1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Derek Hughes, *Versions of Blackness: Key Texts on Slavery from the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 313–17; Frederick C. Knight, *Working the Diaspora: The Impact of African Labor on the Anglo-American World, 1650–1850* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 54, 68, 77; Karen Kupperman, introduction to Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2011), 1–36; Matthew Parker, *The Sugar Barons: Family, Corruption, Empire, and War in the West Indies* (New York: Walker, 2011), 80, 83–84, 151, 155; Peter Thompson, “Henry Drax’s Instructions on the Management of a Seventeenth-Century Barbadian Sugar Plantation”, *William and Mary Quarterly* 66, no. 3 (2009): 565–605; John K. Thornton and Linda M. Heywood, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 274, 329; Katharine Graebner, “The Ultimate Sin: Christianising Slaves in Barbados in the Seventeenth Century”, *Slavery and Abolition* 31 (2010): 60.
3. This colony had been founded in 1650 with settlers from Barbados. When a group of prominent Royalists was forced to leave Barbados in 1652, they joined the Surinam settlement. The new settlers included Major William Byam, who was very hospitable to Biet’s group when it arrived.
4. Handler, “Father Antoine Biet’s Visit”, 50–51.
5. *Ibid.*, 64. All quotations in English are from the Handler translation.

6. The second edition, with the same contents as the first, was published in London in 1673; it was reprinted by Frank Cass (London, 1970) and we cite the reprint here.
7. Ligon is the most outstanding of these accounts. For others around the same period, see Jerome S. Handler, *Guide to Source Materials for the Study of Barbados History, 1627–1834* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971), 2, 136, 163.
8. Handler, “Father Antoine Biet’s Visit”, 69.
9. John Jennings, comp., *Acts and Statutes of the Island of Barbados* (London, 1654), 1, 12–13.
10. P.F. Campbell, *The Church in Barbados in the Seventeenth Century* (Bridgetown: Barbados Museum and Historical Society, 1982), 64. See also Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 74–77, 182; and Gary A. Puckrein, *Little England: Plantation Society and Anglo-Barbadian Politics, 1627–1700* (New York: New York University Press, 1987), 98.
11. Father Andrew White, “A Briefe Relation of the Voyage unto Maryland”, in *Narratives of Early Maryland, 1633–1684*, ed. Clayton Colman Hall (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1910), 37. There are two versions of the original White manuscript, one in English and the other in Latin, and several translations. For background, see C.C. Hall, ed., *Narratives of Early Maryland*, 27–28; and cf. Handler, *Guide to Source Materials*, 98. The sentence we quote appears only in the Hall volume.
12. For example, in England prisoners were taken following the Battle of Worcester, while a number of prisoners were taken during Cromwell’s invasion of Ireland in 1649–50, most notably during his raid on Drogheda. There was no systematic census of the Barbados population before 1679–80, and population estimates are not available for many earlier years. Citing early manuscripts in the British Library, Harlow estimates a white population of twenty-three thousand in 1655. Of these the majority were labourers, and Richard Dunn has argued that the Irish made up the largest portion of servants on the island in the mid-seventeenth century; V.T. Harlow, *A History of Barbados, 1625–1685* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), 338; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 69; cf. Puckrein, *Little England*, 131.
13. The journal of Henry Whistler, in Frank W. Pitman, *The Development of the British West Indies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1917), 5–7; Pedro L.V. Welch, “Poor Whites in Barbadian History”, in *Narratives of the Occluded Irish Diaspora*, ed. Mícheál Ó hAodha and John O’Callaghan (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012), 125–48; Handler, “Father Antoine Biet’s Visit”, 61; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 69; cf. Hilary McD. Beckles, “A ‘Riotous and Unruly Lot’: Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644–1713”, *William and Mary Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (October 1990): 506.
14. Natalie Zacek, *Settler Society in the English Leeward Islands, 1670–1776* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 85; Donald Harmon Akenson, *If the Irish Ran the World: Montserrat, 1630–1730* (Belfast: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 16–17.

15. For transportation in general, see John P. Prendergast, *The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland* (University of California Libraries Press, 1868), and specific to the West Indies, see Aubrey Gwynn, "Documents Relating to the Irish in the West Indies", *Analecta Hibernica* 4 (1932): 139–286. Also see Nicholas Canny, "The Ideology of English Colonization: From Ireland to America", *William and Mary Quarterly* 30 (1973): 575–98. Cf. Alison Games, *The Web of Empire: English Cosmopolitans in an Age of Expansion, 1560–1660* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 256.
16. Jerome S. Handler and Lon Shelby, "A Seventeenth Century Commentary on Labour and Military Problems in Barbados", *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society* 34 (1973): 118.
17. Handler, "Father Antoine Biet's Visit", 58, 59.
18. *Ibid.*, 60–61.
19. *Ibid.*, 63.
20. Beckles, "Riotous and Unruly", 503–22; Akenson, *If the Irish*; Nicholas Canny, *Making Ireland British, 1580–1650* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).
21. Henry Colt, "The Voyage of Sr. Henry Colte", in *Colonizing Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623–1667*, ed. V.T. Harlow (London: Hakluyt Society, 1925), 74; White, "A Briefe Relation", 34.
22. See Beckles, "Riotous and Unruly"; Jill Sheppard, *The Redlegs of Barbados: Their Origins and History* (Millwood, NY: KTO Press, 1977), 23–24, 125n22.
23. Beckles, "Plantation Production"; Jerome Handler, "Escaping Slavery in a Caribbean Plantation Society: Marronage in Barbados, 1650s–1830s", *New West Indian Guide* 71 (1997): 183–225; Richard Hall, *Acts, Passed in the Island of Barbados* (London, 1764), 450; Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 158. The full text of the 1644 act is unknown, so we cannot establish the precise reasons that led to its passage or for how long it was in effect. The act is listed as "obsolete" and is known by its title only in Hall, *Acts*, 450.
24. See, for example, Jennings, *Acts and Statutes*, passim; Hall, *Acts*, 449–71; Ligon, *True and Exact History*, 44–45; Handler, "Father Antoine Biet's Visit", 66. See also Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges*, 123–29. For examples of punishment of Irish servants under the laws, see Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 129; and Beckles, "Riotous and Unruly", 513–15.
25. Ligon, *True and Exact History*, 45–46; Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 159; Barbados Council, quoted in Jerome Handler, "Slave Revolts and Conspiracies in Seventeenth Century Barbados", *New West Indian Guide* 56 (1982): 9.
26. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 158; Hall, *Acts*, 467. Cromwell had sent many Scots to the West Indies after the Battle of Worcester in 1651, and there was no love lost between the Scots and the English. Writing of the Leewards but in a comment that could also be applied to Barbados, Zacek observes: "The Scots carried their own burden of prejudice, but outside of certain exceptional circumstances 'Scot' generally

did not function, as ‘Irish’ usually did, as a term of opprobrium denoting an individual’s poverty, criminality, or disloyalty” (*Settler Society*, 99). On Willoughby’s comments, see “Report of the Committee for Foreign Plantations”, 12 March 1668, in Noel Sainsbury, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1661–1668* (London, 1880), 553.

27. Handler, “Slave Revolts”, 20–21; Beckles, “Riotous and Unruly”, 504, 510–11; Zacek, *Settler Society*, 98. Cf. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 158.
28. Beckles, “Riotous and Unruly”; Campbell, *Church in Barbados*, 80; Handler and Shelby, “Seventeenth Century Commentary”, 118; Games, *Web of Empire*, 255–88.
29. Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted*, 142; for the transportation of Irish priests, see Prendergast, *Cromwellian Settlement*. Between 1646 and 1668, the laws of Montserrat prohibited Catholic priests “from residing on the island, of even visiting it to celebrate Mass or to dispense any of the other sacraments” (Zacek, *Settler Society*, 75).
30. Quoted in Campbell, *Church in Barbados*, 65.
31. Kristen Block and Jenny Shaw, “Subjects Without an Empire: The Irish in the Early Modern Caribbean”, *Past and Present* 210 (2011): 35; Beckles, “Riotous and Unruly”, 506; Zacek, *Settler Society*, 98.
32. Gragg, “Pious and Profane”, 267; Block and Shaw, “Subjects Without an Empire”, 57.