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Freedmen and Slaves in the Barbados Militia

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As is well known, Barbados was one of England's oldest colonies in the New World and its wealthiest during the last half of the seventeenth century. As a valuable colony and a small, albeit heavily populated, insular community in a region which witnessed almost incessant warfare among European powers. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Barbados's military strength was of major continuing importance, especially to the island's white propertied classes and their governmental apparatus.

Imperial troops were occasionally temporarily quartered in Barbados in times of war during the last half of the seventeenth century and at intervals throughout the eighteenth, usually for a month or two while preparing to attack other European-held Caribbean territories — primarily those of the French. For two years (1694-1696) during King William's war, a regiment of perhaps 200 men was stationed at Barbados for its protection, but during subsequent wars of the eighteenth century no forces were formally stationed on the island. It was not until February 1780 that the Imperial government established a permanent garrison (which was to endure for over a century thereafter).¹ In earlier years, Barbados's government or private individuals had sometimes requested or suggested such troops when they believed the island was threatened from within or without and its own defences were particularly weak; throughout most of its pre-emancipation history, however, Barbados largely depended on its own militia for its security.

In this paper I do not pretend to comprehensively treat the structure and organization of Barbados's militia. Nor do I attempt to evaluate its efficiency as a military force, or consider

how it was integrated into the wider society. Rather, I focus on a little treated subject in Caribbean history, the position of non-whites, particularly the recruitment and arming of slaves, a practice which may have regularly occurred earlier in Barbados than in any other of Britain's Caribbean and continental colonies.

Slave participation in Britain's New World colonial militias during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries has received scant attention from scholars. Although Caribbean historians occasionally have mentioned such participation, their treatment is usually in passing and cursory. But the recruitment and arming of slaves in the militias of societies dependent on slavery poses a curious anomaly. As far as I am aware, this anomaly was first systematically addressed by Benjamin Quarles over twenty years ago when he examined free "Negroes" and slaves in the militias of Britain's continental colonies.² Nothing comparable to Quarles's study has yet appeared in the literature of British Caribbean history, and in this paper, within the limits of a relatively sparse and often sketchy body of source materials, I hope to make some contribution along these lines.

Deriving from a well-established English precedent that "every citizen may be required to assist in the defense of the state,"³ the directives issued by governors established some type of military organization in England's Caribbean and North American colonies, with the exception of Pennsylvania, not long after each was settled. Barbados conformed to this general pattern and, as the years progressed, on the island, as elsewhere, legislative actions codified and formalized the militia structure and the qualifications of those who were expected to serve and function in leadership positions. Shortly after colonization in 1627 Barbados established limited military fortifications and an apparently rudimentary militia organization, and by the mid-to-late 1630s, if not earlier, large planters held military titles and were the militia's chief officers.⁴ During the 1640s, the militia was reorganized; several acts pertaining to military defences were passed, a militia muster role existed, and militia training was apparently occurring with some regularity. By the late 1640s, a formally organized militia, codified in law and numbering in the thousands, was an important feature of Barbadian society as, indeed, were the militias in England's

other New World colonies. In 1650 and 1651 additional legislation constructed an apparently more formal militia structure than had hitherto existed, and further reorganization took place in 1652 and again in 1656.⁵ Subsequent years saw additional structural modifications, but as a societal institution the militia was to persist for the duration of the slave period and into post-emancipation times.

Viewed over the span of Barbados's pre-emancipation history, the evidence clearly shows that, with varying degrees of intensity (depending on England's/Britain's international relations at any given period), the pre-eminent colonial interest in the militia's organization and the maintenance of its strength (as well as the strength and state of the island's fortifications) derived from a concern over external attack by foreign forces, particularly the French. However, especially during the last half of the seventeenth century, there was also a concern with the suppression of slave revolts and, in the earlier periods, revolts or other threats to the public order by white indentured servants, notably the Irish. When slave plots were suspected or discovered in the 1670s, 1680s, 1690s, and in 1701, militia units were rapidly alerted, and several militia units, in conjunction with regular British troops, were responsible for suppressing Barbados's one actual slave rising in 1816. As in other colonies, the militia functioned as a police force and, for example, it was sometimes used to patrol slave gatherings and dances when officials feared these activities had the potential for disrupting the public order, and militia units were also employed to capture runaway slaves (and indentured servants), especially the small bands of maroons which sought refuge in the island's forested interior prior to the 1660s.⁶

For most of the slave period, the militia normally included two or three mounted regiments, composed of about six troops each, one troop of life guards (a cavalry unit of about one hundred men, the governor's personal escort which was primarily used on ceremonial occasions), and from six to seven foot regiments, each including from eight to ten or twelve companies. The mounted units were disbanded in 1795 and the militia was reorganized into eleven parochial regiments, later defined as battalions or corps. Whatever its structure at any given period, each militia unit had its complement of non-commissioned and

commissioned officers, the latter being drawn from among the wealthier members of the plantocracy. The rank and file consisted of small land-holders, landless freemen, and indentured servants. Free militia men were expected to provide their own uniforms, weapons, and ammunition, and their units were expected to train regularly, usually once a month.⁷

The size of particular units, as well as the total number in the militia, varied over the years as a result of population changes. Statistics on militia size are unavailable for most of the slave period, and existing ones are often of questionable reliability and precision. Moreover, the sources report the number of men "able to bear arms" or the number given in the militia rolls. The men actually "under arms" at any given period, who could be counted on for active military service, was usually quite less. Nonetheless, militia statistics show a general and consistent trend of a reduction in numbers from the middle of the seventeenth century to the early decades of the nineteenth. From the mid-1660s to the early 1680s, when Barbados's white population averaged about 20,720 (59 percent males), the militia averaged around 6,050 white men.⁸ From 1707 to 1787, it had about 4,500, while the general white population during this period averaged 17,240 (46 percent male).⁹ During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, there was an approximate average of 15,370 whites (46 percent male), and the militia averaged close to 3,300.¹⁰ However, by the very end of slavery the militia showed a significant increase: from 3,050 men in 1829, it jumped to around 4,260 in 1833, although during these years the general white population showed a slight decline.¹¹

This increase in militia size was undoubtedly due to the greater number of freedmen who were being enrolled in the parochial units. In 1773, 177 freedmen were in the militia, about 3.5 percent of the total; ten years later, about four percent of the militia was its 186 freedmen; and in 1802 the militia contained, at the most, 400 freedmen, about 12 percent of its strength. By 1833, however, about 25 percent of the militia's "effective force" of 4,260 were freedmen.¹²

Although freedmen were participating in the militia by the last half of the eighteenth century, if not earlier, it was probably only in the 1820s, when they came to average about one-

fourth of the free (non-slave) population, that they were of any numerical significance. Because there were so few freedmen in the general population during the earlier periods, there were far fewer freedmen in the militia — for from the seventeenth century onward, Barbados's militia laws noted the service obligations of *all free* adult (usually specified between the ages of sixteen or seventeen and sixty) males without referring to racial origins.

The laws often implied or stated all "freemen able to bear arms," but under certain conditions militia acts occasionally exempted legislators, clergy, civil and judicial officers, and plantation managers. Similar exemptions existed in other Caribbean and North American colonies. Throughout the latter colonies, however, "Negroes," whether slave or free, "were excluded from the militia, save as non-combatants or in unusual emergencies."¹³ And when the United States Congress organized the post-colonial militia in 1792, it "restricted enrollment to able-bodied white male citizens"; various states also prevented freedmen from joining their militias.¹⁴ Freedmen in Barbados, observed an American visitor to the island in 1814, "possessed one privilege of citizenship which the same class of men do not have in the United States,"¹⁵ and it was not until July, 1833, with impending slave emancipation, that the Barbados legislature passed the first act in the island's history that was designed to limit the number of non-whites. It did so by establishing minimal property qualifications for service and was intended to exclude many non-whites "who may hereafter become free"; finding even these restriction insufficient, one year later the legislature raised the qualifications.¹⁶

By the 1833 act, persons ineligible for militia service because they lacked the minimal property qualifications were prohibited from keeping "any firearms or warlike weapons of any description." Although not legally excluding non-whites from possessing firearms, the law was clearly intended to do so and for the first time curtailed the possession of firearms among certain categories of free persons. But until the very end of the slave period, militia laws did not prohibit freedmen from bearing the firearms that were denied to slaves, nor did the laws confine freedmen to non-combatant roles. Yet, freedmen were discriminated against because of their racial backgrounds and could not, for example, become commissioned officers and were segregated into units of their own. Regardless of the

discrimination against them, however, freedmen viewed militia service positively and it was an important aspect of the self-image as *freemen* and citizens; in fact, "enrolling themselves in the parochial militia units where they reside" was one of the first steps taken by manumitted slaves in establishing their new identities.¹⁷

Barbados was a racist society. Permitting or requiring freedmen to participate in the militia was not an act of magnanimity designed to enhance their self-image as free British citizens or to ensure their participation, however circumscribed, in a major societal institution. Rather, it was a pragmatic solution, as it was in other Caribbean islands, to the ongoing issue of concerns with Barbados's security and the size of its defence force — concerns which, as will be discussed below, also led to the recruitment of slaves under certain conditions. Moreover, as time went on and as the freedman population grew in size and wealth, elements within the Barbadian plantocracy, prompted by events elsewhere in the Caribbean, became increasingly concerned that further discrimination against freedmen would increase their separation from the whites, and bring them closer to the slaves; it was believed that this would also help weaken the island's security.¹⁸

Whatever their role and numbers in the militia, freedmen were, as indicated above, relatively few in number throughout most of the slave period; thus, for a considerable span of years Barbados's militia was, for all intents and purposes, a white organization. However, over the years, as in Britain's other Caribbean colonies, provisions were also made for the recruitment and mobilization of slaves in contingency situations and as particular needs arose. As Benjamin Quarles has written with respect to the British continental colonies: "The arming of slaves was considered particularly risky in time of war . . . Yet equally serious in wartime was the paucity of manpower. It was this shortage that often overcame customary precaution." Thus, despite a "general policy" that excluded "the Negro from military participation and armsbearing," several of these colonies provided for the employment of slaves, including their receiving firearms, in the event of war.¹⁹

In Barbados the recruitment and arming of slaves was also prompted by similar considerations of practical expediency, and it seems to have begun in the mid-1660s, during a period when there was considerable white emigration. The exodus of whites

was largely stimulated by the profound changes occurring in Barbados while its economy and society were being transformed during the "sugar revolution." A decline in the white population continued throughout the last half of the seventeenth century, particularly affecting the poor free and indentured servant male groups, that is, those groups which formed the militia's backbone. Natural increase could not adequately replenish the white population, whites emigrated on a massive scale, and by the 1670s and 1680s the immigration of new whites, especially indentured servants, had become virtually non-existent. The decrease in white males very seriously affected the militia, and throughout the seventeenth century governors, legislative bodies, and public and private individuals expressed their concern over the depletion of the pool of white men needed "to keep their vast number of Negroes in subjection and [to] defend the islands."²⁰

The actual and perceived shortage of white males potentially available for the militia, on the one hand, and the concern with and fear of foreign invasion, on the other, caused colonial officials and the local elite to view Barbados as particularly vulnerable. This perceived vulnerability resulted in a variety of measures which, in one way or the other, were designed to build up the militia's manpower. Most of these measures dealt with servants or other poor whites and were intended to encourage them to refrain from emigrating or to provide incentives for their immigration or importation,²¹ these measures, however, also included governmental decisions "to arm part of their blackmen."²²

That the recruitment and arming of slaves for militia service did not occur prior to the onset of mass emigration in the mid-seventeenth century is indicated, for example, by Richard Ligon. Reflecting on the period of his residence in Barbados from 1647 to 1650, he believed that one major reason why slaves "did not commit some horrid massacre upon the Christians" was that "they are not suffered to touch or handle any weapons"; and other early sources, including the island's militia laws, prior to the middle of the seventeenth century, fail to mention the participation of slaves in any capacity.²³ During the latter part of the seventeenth century, however, and continuing until the first decade or so of the nineteenth, slaves were recruited and mobilized through provisions in various legislative enactments and by gubernatorial proclamations, orders, or other directives

which were intended to augment the number of slaves such enactments permitted.

The earliest provision for slave recruitment appears to have occurred in 1666. Over previous years emigration had been especially heavy and, most importantly, England was at war with France and Holland. Barbados's governor and assembly were particularly concerned about the island's defences, and their anxieties had been greatly intensified during April of the preceding year when Barbados had been attacked by a large Dutch fleet that had sailed into Bridgetown harbor.²⁴ Although the invasion was repelled, the attack provoked several measures to strengthen Barbados's defences. These included an "ordinance," decreed by the governor on July 14, 1666, "with the advice and consent of his council," which directed "that every trooper have two lusty able Negro-men, well armed, to attend such service, as shall be required on alarms."²⁵ The "ordinance" (a gubernatorial directive of a less permanent nature than a law or statute), as well as conditions of the period, make it plain that the sole reason for recruiting slaves "on alarms" was the fear of foreign invasion combined with what was perceived as an insufficient white fighting force.

Provisions for slave recruitment were renewed in the early 1670s, during the third Dutch war (1672-1674), when emigration was very heavy and it was reported that only a maximum of 5,000 white men were "capable of military service."²⁶ Despite a general mistrust of slaves and a fear of slave plots, it is apparent that whites were generally more fearful of foreign invasion than of slave revolts. In 1697, for example, a major militia act was passed when England was at war with France; in addition, Barbados's militia was considered to be extraordinarily weak.²⁷ Only five years earlier, in 1692, an elaborately organized and widespread slave revolt was aborted before the uprising could take place. The major alleged leaders were plantation slaves, tradesmen "and such others that have more favour shown them by their masters," but the conspiracy also involved the complicity of a "Negro armourer" at the Bridgetown magazine.²⁸ Although the conspiracy reinforced mistrust of the slaves and the events of 1692 had not been forgotten in 1697, in the latter year the Barbados legislature observed that "by good experience it is well known that many . . . slaves are worthy of great trust and confidence"; and the 1697 militia act ordered that all landowners with 100 or more acres who were to provide one mounted

militiaman for every 100 acres owned were also to send "with each horseman . . . one able man-slave armed . . . with a bill and lance, and apparell'd with a black hat and a red jacket upon every alarm." In addition, every landowner with at least forty acres was required to provide a male slave for every forty acres when the alarm was sounded that enemy shipping was sighted.²⁹

Which slaves were considered "worthy of great trust and confidence" and the criteria to be employed in their selection for militia duty are unknown for this as well as later periods. In any case, there was no codification of these criteria and by implication slaveowners were free to exercise their own judgements in choosing trustworthy slaves. There is a great deal of evidence that the plantocracy had little doubt that its slave population contained *some* who were trustworthy. Despite individual and group acts of resistance, there is ample support from Barbados, as well as the West Indies in general, that this confidence was not entirely unfounded, although it was severely shattered on several occasions in Barbadian history, particularly with the discovery of major conspiracies in 1675 and 1692 and the outbreak of a revolt in 1816.³⁰

With the practice of arming slaves in contingency situations firmly established by the end of the seventeenth century, the practice became incorporated into island tradition and was continued in later times; and there is no indication that white Barbadians ever seriously challenged the merits of this policy for many years to come. In fact, the major features of the 1697 militia act, including its provisions concerning slaves, were to remain in force until the end of the eighteenth century. During that century, militia size fluctuated, and Britain was frequently at war, particularly with France. Although slaves vastly outnumbered whites, with the lack of slave insurrections and no discovered slave plots, a general view seems to have evolved among Barbados's whites that the island's slaves were not apt to organize rebellions. As late as July 1795, while Britain and France were at war, a militia act provided "for the furnishing of Negroes in the several regiments . . . to be drawn out on alarms," including their being furnished with "offensive weapons."³¹

The 1795 act was one of several militia acts passed during the mid-to-late 1790s (the earliest of these, enacted on January 7, 1795, appears to have been the first major militia act since 1697).³² During this general period natural increase could not maintain the white population, and there was a new emigration

base of poorer whites.³³ This emigration seems to have largely accounted for the reduction in Barbados's militia; between 1787 and 1802, its numbers dropped from about 4,940 to 3,000-4,000.³⁴ Thus, it is curious that a major militia act, passed in December 1799 and superceding earlier ones of the 1790s, only briefly mentioned slaves in their capacity as pioneers "upon the appearance of an enemy" and omitted any reference to their being mobilized and armed for fighting.³⁵ The reasons for this omission are unknown. The act remained in force for several years. Yet, the more traditional pattern was reverted to in 1805 when, during February and March, there was considerable fear that a French attack was imminent. A new militia act, passed in the latter month, ordered slaveowners to contribute, at the first alarm, a certain proportion of their slaves who were to be "armed in the best manner possible, firearms excepted."³⁶ The 1805 act was renewed over six months until 1809, when another militia bill was passed. However, neither the 1809 act nor subsequent militia acts passed during the remainder of the slave period provided for the arming of slaves or their incorporation into the militia.³⁷

Several reasons can probably account for why the practice, which had endured for about 140 years, was discontinued. For one, during the early decades of the nineteenth century, Barbados's military defences were strengthened by the garrison of white troops of the regular British Army as well as by the black troops of the West India Regiments. This permanent garrison had been established in Barbados in 1780, although it was sometimes required to leave and join expeditionary forces against the French. The number of troops on the island fluctuated, however, and it is difficult to obtain figures for all years during the early nineteenth century. But, for example, in 1806 or 1807, 600 to 800 white troops were garrisoned at Barbados, in addition to close to 1,000 men of the 7th West India Regiment. As of January, 1820, there were 1,197 British troops, and by early 1835 about 1,384; both figures include 39 and 51 men, respectively, of the 1st West India Regiment.³⁸

Composed of black troops and white officers, ten or eleven West India Regiments, whose ideal strength was 1,000 men each, were formed by the British government in 1795; by 1798 or 1799 there were twelve regiments, but by 1817-1818, with the end of the Napoleonic Wars, most had been disbanded. The companies of each regiment were often moved and were usually

distributed among garrisons on several islands. Barbados received contingents of these troops from 1795 and throughout various remaining years of the slave period. In 1802, for example, the island had 2,000 West India Regiment troops, and in 1807, there were 984. In March, 1816, all ten companies of the 1st Regiment were stationed at Barbados; some of these troops, along with contingents of the island's militia and 400 white soldiers of the British garrison, were to play a crucial role in the following month in suppressing the only large-scale slave rebellion in the island's history. In November, 1816, the 1st Regiment's ten companies were distributed among other West Indian colonies, but over subsequent years companies were to return to Barbados, albeit in decreasing numbers.³⁹

In addition to the presence of British military forces, another reason for no longer incorporating slaves in the militia probably resulted from the 1816 slave revolt, a major effect of which, as a prominent planter wrote, was that "it will be very difficult to regain the confidence we all had in our slaves"; also, an increasing number of freedmen were joining the militia, and the case for their loyalty and utility had been strengthened by the way in which their militia companies had behaved during the revolt and its aftermath.⁴⁰ Finally, the last serious fear of a foreign attack seems to have occurred in 1805, and by 1815, with the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the almost continuous military activities which had engaged the British in the Caribbean since 1793 had come to an end; and for the remainder of the pre-emancipation period (and into the early twentieth century) Barbados and Britain's other Caribbean colonies were to be exempt from the consequences of war among European nations.

Although the practice of mobilizing and arming slaves for militia duty was discontinued by the end of the nineteenth century's first decade, the practice characterized a considerable portion of the slave period. Aside from provisions in militia acts, the number and proportion of armed slaves could be increased if conditions warranted it. For example, in late 1707, when Barbadians feared that a French attack was at hand (and but about a half-dozen years after an unwarranted slave revolt scare), the governor notified the home government of his actions "to put this island into the best posture of defence." One measure was a proclamation specifying that upon alarm, in addition to slaves required by the 1697 law, slaveowners were also to send an

armed" and "able" slave for every forty acres they owned. In the late 1770s, conflicts with the French, who had captured St. Vincent and Grenada, "produced a considerable sensation in Barbados"; the steps taken by the House of Assembly to strengthen defences included provisions "to arm a proportion of effective Negroes." The "American war" also caused special provisions to raise "considerable bodies of slaves [who] were trusted with pikes and cutlasses (but not with fire-arms) for the defense of Barbados."⁴¹ During this period American privateers "infested the seas [and] materially injured . . . trade," and on two occasions in 1777 such privateers appeared in Barbadian waters. In April, a ship came into the bay at Speightstown but was driven off by a shore battery, and a little over a month later another privateer "captured several fishing boats, with many valuable slaves on board" off the island's north coast; "these alarming attempts excited the apprehensions of the inhabitants of Speight's Town for their safety" which led them to appeal to the House of Assembly to "take proper measures for their effectual protection."⁴² The arming of slaves during the "American war" may have directly resulted from these events.

The sources fail to mention how slaves were to be organizationally incorporated into the militia, but, interpolating from the known practice of placing freedmen in separate units, slaves probably were formed into separate groups that were attached to the units of their owners or other whites from their plantations. Normally, they were commanded by the same officers; the 1697 militia act, whose provisions endured for most of the eighteenth century, ordered that mobilized slaves were to be "enlisted, commanded and directed . . . by that officer that commands the rest of the forces in that division." Under special circumstances, however, particular officers were placed in charge of the slave troops. Whatever the case, as Governor Seaforth emphasized in a letter to one "commander of Negroes" he appointed in 1805, "there must be a white man with them."⁴³ In general, it is apparent from the militia acts and special governmental orders that slaves were only to be mobilized in declared emergencies. Thus, as in the continental and other Caribbean colonies, they were called upon only as specific needs arose, and were not formally included in Barbados's militia organization as permanent and continuing participants.

Some slaves, however, seem to have served on a more or less permanent basis. In 1735, the *Barbados Gazette* carried an advertisement for a runaway, "a young Barbadian Negro-man named Tom," who was identified as a "trumpeter in the Life-Guard"; in the late 1740s and early 1750s all of the militia's 100 or so drummers and trumpeters were slaves, and musicians were sometimes considered as two men in calculating the number of slaves property-holders were expected to provide for militia service; and the 92 "drums" in the 1787 militia were also probably "Negroes."⁴⁴ For lack of evidence, it is unknown when slaves began to assume the role of musician, but clearly it was a minor expectation; for those slaves who were expected to serve in the militia other potential demands were of far greater importance.

From the seventeenth century, slave labour was regularly commandeered for public works projects, including repair of roads and fortifications; slaves were also called on to move artillery and military stores.⁴⁵ Provisions were also sometimes made to press slaves into service as pioneers "upon the approach of an enemy" or under similar alarm conditions.⁴⁶ However, most militia acts or other directives for slave recruitment clearly, or explicitly stated that the major expectation of slaves in wartime was that they were to actively fight.

This expectation was not unique to Barbados and also occurred in Britain's other Caribbean colonies. Despite a general distrust of slaves and questions about their potential utility as soldiers, these colonies, especially in the Leewards, also confronted white manpower shortages and vulnerability to foreign attack. By the first decade or so of the eighteenth century, slaves were being armed in Nevis and probably other of the Leewards (as well as in the continental colonies), and during the decades of wars from the middle to the end of the eighteenth century, Leeward island colonists continued to rely on armed slaves for their defence; slaves were also armed in Jamaica on at least several occasions during the first two decades of the eighteenth century.⁴⁷ Available evidence, however, indicates that Barbados may have been the first of England's Caribbean (and continental) colonies to institute the regular practice of providing slaves with "offensive weapons" with the explicit recognition that such slaves were to directly engage the enemy.

The "offensive weapons" that Barbadian slaves were to receive

from their owners were to be allocated only in times of emergency for on the island, as Quarles observed for the continental colonies, "an armed slave was an anomaly seldom tolerated in normal times"; and, as in the northern colonies, Barbados's laws also forbade slaves from keeping weapons. A 1661 slave act directed slaveowners to carefully search their slaves' houses every two weeks for "clubs, wooden swords, or other mischievous weapons" and to burn whatever was found; and for fear that they might be used for "raising mutinies or rebellion," slaves were forbidden from collecting "arms, powder, or offensive weapons." These directives were continued in another slave act, passed in 1676, about a year after the discovery of a revolt conspiracy and during a period when provisions were made for slave recruitment to the militia. In addition, the 1676 act authorized the arrest and whipping of any slave found off his plantation, even if on his master's lawful business, if that slave was carrying a club, wooden sword, "or other mischievous and dangerous weapons." In 1688, another major act, although repealing all previous slave laws, repeated many of their major features, including the 1661 and 1676 provisions relating to weapons; the act emphasized how "it is absolutely necessary to the safety of this place" to prevent slaves from "using and carrying . . . clubs, wooden-swords, or other mischievous and dangerous weapons." The weapon restrictions of the 1688 law persisted throughout most of the period when slaves were armed for militia duty and until Barbados's entire slave code was revised in 1826 with the final passage of the "slave consolidation act." In one form or another this act continued various earlier provisions prohibiting slaves from keeping any "mischievous or warlike instruments," forbade the selling, trading, or giving of such weapons to slaves, authorized the search of slave houses for weapons, and so forth.⁴⁸

Earlier laws and custom, however, explicitly or implicitly permitted slaveowners to allocate weapons to certain slaves in contingency situations and for the "lawful defence" of their owners' persons or property. An American sailor, imprisoned in Barbados in late 1814, reported how fourteen of his shipmates escaped from their prison ship in Carlisle Bay. They were captured within a day or so in the area of Speightstown "by seventy or eighty Negroes, and some whites, armed with clubs, knives, etc." Sometimes slave masters, acting to project their self-interests, armed their slaves in a questionable manner, as when,

in 1761 or 1762, a member of the House of Assembly "had, with a body of armed slaves, opposed the provost marshal in the execution of his office."⁴⁹ However, the most common and accepted way in which slaves were armed for the "lawful defence" of their owners' properties was in their role as plantation watchmen. Because theft was so frequent from plantations, "the most trusty" slaves were appointed to guard the fields, storehouses, and other plantation property. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, by "the permission of our laws," watchmen carried wood "lances and darts," but by the 1740s "a late custom hath allowed these the use of swords." "Tis law here," explained a plantation manager in 1798, "to kill any Negro you find plundering on your lands and the watchmen are generally armed with swords."⁵⁰

The arming of individual slaves for the protection of white-owned property was one thing, but the arming of groups of slaves, even carefully selected ones, for occasional military service was something else. In the latter case, the risks the planters were willing to entertain with respect to internal security were offset by the greater risks they perceived if Barbados were to be invaded. As noted above, the earliest provision for the arming of slaves and their service in the militia appears to have occurred in 1666; provisions for their receiving weapons and interest in calculating how many of them "were fitt to beare armes" continued throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. This period was dominated by considerable warfare between Britain and other European nations, broken by periods of usually uneasy peace, as well as a decline in Barbados's white population.

There is no indication that slaves were ever to be allocated firearms in performing their militia duties. This prohibition was dictated by custom until 1805, when a militia act of that year contained the first specific legal exclusion of firearms.⁵¹ The arms that slaves were to receive, and which were only to be distributed at alarms and emergencies, varied over the years, but always included two types: most commonly a bill (the widespread agricultural implement) or a cutlass or sword, on the one hand, and some type of lance, spear, or pike on the other.⁵²

There does not seem to have been any explicit formulation for the training of slaves in the use of these weapons, but in arming their slaves the Barbadian plantocracy and colonial apparatus clearly expected them to risk their lives in protecting the

interests and property of the very population that was responsible for their enslavement. The preamble to a 1707 act, passed during Britain's war with France and Spain (1702-1713), providing for slave manumissions (see below), emphasized that "there are many slaves . . . who are worthy of trust and confidence . . . and therefore may be of great service to this island, should the same be invaded"; and in early 1805, when a French invasion was feared, the elaborate defence plans provided for armed "Negroes [who] will be made use of . . . to harass and distress the enemy."⁵³ That slaves were viewed not only as a potential source of combatant strength but also as willing to fight when mobilized and armed is reflected in this and other laws and military directives, as well as in various other sources and statements of white contemporaries. How slaves who were considered trustworthy actually felt about risking their lives in the protection of white interests is, of course, another matter, and West Indian whites were prone to exaggerate the number of their own slave available for defence.⁵⁴

In any case, during the early eighteenth century, while Britain was at war with France, the British historian John Oldmixon (who, though he had never visited Barbados, had derived considerable information from residents and former residents in England) reported: "In case of an alarm, the government can arm 10,000 stout Negroes, dextrous at handling a pike, who would defend . . . against any invader." A count of the island's population (exclusive of Christ Church parish) in 1712 included over 11,000 slaves out of a slave population of almost 42,000 who were "fit to bear arms," and in 1747, toward the end of the war of 1739-1748, when Barbados's slave population approached 68,000, the Barbadian Richard Hall asserted "in case of invasion 10 to 12,000 able Negroes may be raised for . . . defence." William Dickson, who had been secretary to Barbados's governor and had lived on the island for about thirteen years from 1772 wrote: "I have often heard it affirmed that though the French might take Barbados . . . they could not possibly keep it; and one reason always assigned was that the Negroes would cut their garrisons to pieces, which I verily believe would be the case. The very slaves in Barbadoes are inspired with something like loyalty."⁵⁵

Although several thousand slaves were believed capable of joining in Barbados's defence in the event of an invasion, the number mobilized on alarms was considerably less, albeit still

significant when considering the militia's total strength. Only a handful of figures exist, however, which show the number of slaves attached to the militia. In 1708, 3,000 "disciplined Negroes" were reported, in 1747, 2,829 "Negroes [were] sent on alarms," and in 1748 there were 2,741; in 1707 the militia contained about 4,110 whites, and in 1747 and 1748 about 4,900.⁵⁶ During these three years, then, a consequential percentage, between 36 and 42 percent, of the men who were mobilized on alarms were slaves. These figures yield a very clear idea of the importance that whites attached to slaves as an essential element in their defence system; the figures, along with literary evidence, also suggest the pattern that existed in other years.

Whatever the number of slaves in the militia in earlier and later periods, whites clearly expected slaves to risk their lives in combat. A 1697 militia act specified that the Public Treasury was to compensate the owner of a slave "kill'd, lost, maimed or disabled" while engaging the enemy. In addition, as an incentive to slaves, the government was to allot any slave who "shall engage and manfully behave himself in fight against the enemy" an annual allowance of a "livery coat and hat," and the slave's master was to give him "white servants allowance of victuals"; an indentured servant who behaved similarly was to be declared free "from all future service." The legislature followed suit in 1707 by offering freedom to any slave who, in the event the island was invaded, "shall engage and courageously behave himself in time of battle, so as to kill any one of the enemy."⁵⁷ Granting freedom to slaves "who had won military distinctions" became a "universal practice" in West Indian warfare,⁵⁸ and the 1707 Barbados law remained in force until 1826 when its substance was included in the "slave consolidation act." By this year the militia laws no longer provided for slave recruitment but it was still possible through gubernatorial directives in times of declared emergencies. Clause 50 of the "slave consolidation act" specified that in the event of a foreign invasion or a slave rebellion, a slave who "shall engage and courageously behave in battle, or who shall by any means kill . . . one or more of the enemy or rebels, shall . . . be rewarded . . . as the legislature may think fit"; if the legislature decided the slave "should be rewarded with freedom," it was empowered to do so.⁵⁹

It is relevant to note that the greatest reward the plantocracy believed it could bestow for defending its interests and the island's security was the slave's freedom. In practice, however, the

acts providing for manumission as a result of military activity had very little significance. Not only do the sources yield no evidence that they resulted in manumissions, but also Barbados was never invaded—despite the fears that were occasionally awakened during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. In fact, there are only a few known occasions when enemy shipping actually came into Barbadian coastal waters: in 1665 a Dutch fleet sailed into Bridgetown harbour; in 1745, six or seven French ships came within sight of Bridgetown; and in 1777 two incidents involved American privateers.⁶⁰

There were more occasions, however, when Barbadians, reacting to external events, were called out on alarms and the militia was mobilized. As with their brethren elsewhere in the British Caribbean, particularly in the Leeward Islands, they keenly believed they were vulnerable to external attack. The actual experiences of West Indian colonists in general during various wars, especially in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as Richard Pares has written, “account for the moans of terror which the West India interest so freely uttered upon the slightest apprehension of a French naval superiority in the Caribbean, and the extraordinary credulity with which it magnified the size of every French force which went that way. It was not enough to know that the enemy had no army in the West Indies which was capable of subduing such a colony; the planters were equally afraid of a few ships which could only snatch a momentary opportunity of devastation.” Barbadians generally shared these feelings and perceptions, but probably to a lesser degree than colonists in the Leewards who had experienced the reality of external attacks and invasions. Relative to the other islands, Barbados “was comparatively safe and well manned” for reasons of population size and geographical location, particularly its position vis-a-vis the prevailing trade winds which were of crucial importance in dictating naval operations during the days of sailing ships.⁶¹

Although perceived threats of an imminent invasion seem to have been relatively rare in Barbados's history, there were fears of possible attack, and whether real, exaggerated, or imagined these fears led to the sounding of alarms. However, when viewed over the many years in which provisions existed for slave recruitment and arming, these occasions seem to have been rather limited; and mobilization during these periods seems to have been for relatively short durations. Alarms appear to have been

called during the 1670s and they may have been, though it is not certain, sounded on several occasions during the first decade of the eighteenth century. Alarms apparently were a fairly regular occurrence during the governorship of Thomas Robinson (1742-1747), and one evidently took place in 1759; there were a number during the late 1770s and early 1780s, and another in 1805.⁶²

Whatever the actual number of alarms, concern with the possibility of external attack caused Barbados's elite in the mid to late seventeenth century (and for many years afterwards) to define the weakened state of the island's defences as a major societal problem. Whether the defence system was, in fact, inadequate to meet the reality of security needs is another matter. But the number of white males available for the militia's ranks had dwindled, and foreign invasion was viewed as a possibility. In the face of perceived external threats and a militia that was considered weak, slaves provided an obvious source of available manpower. Beginning in the 1660s slaves deemed “worthy of trust” were armed and formally incorporated into militia units. The practice may have begun in Barbados earlier than in any other English New World colony; it continued until the first decade of the nineteenth century, when the presence of a permanent British Army garrison, as well as other military and political changes, caused it to be viewed as unnecessary.

Slaves apparently served in their own segregated units, but were always commanded by whites. They probably trained, but there is no evidence on the regularity of such training and what their “disciplining” meant in military terms. However, they were only mobilized when alarms or emergencies were formally declared; and only then would they receive the pointed and edged “offensive weapons” (but not firearms) that the law normally denied them. The allocation of such weapons testifies to the fundamental expectation of whites that slave militiamen would actively fight and risk their lives in combat. Several thousand slaves formally incorporated into the militia or performing military duties were viewed not merely as attendants, grooms, drummers, and pioneers (although they performed all these roles); rather, most were perceived as fighters and expected (willingly?) to shed their blood in defence of Barbados. The island's white elite conceived the slave fighting force as a basic feature of its defence system.

Neither slaves nor white militiamen ever actually fought a foreign enemy on Barbadian soil; since the island was never invaded, its militia faced no real test. Yet, the participation of slaves in the militia, however limited their actual mobilizations and formal training may have been, afforded opportunities to interact with and observe whites; this participation was probably one of the many forces that contributed to the creolization process. Moreover, their familiarity with the militia probably influenced the organizational format slaves developed for their intended revolt in 1692 as well as their combat strategies in the 1816 uprising.

Despite the limited practical significance of slave participation in the militia, the expectation that slaves perform combat duties, as expressed in laws, gubernatorial directives, and contemporary evaluations of the island's military strength, symbolizes one of the contradictions in Barbados's slave society (and in other British Caribbean colonies). In many ways, whites profoundly mistrusted slaves and recognized that arming them carried the potential for trouble. On the other hand, they believed themselves vulnerable to external attack. This tension encouraged a view that some slaves could be relied on to defend the very society whose socio-economic foundation rested upon their exploitation. How such "trustworthy" slaves actually felt is unknown, but despite the risks inherent in arming slaves, whites clearly felt more secure in their ability to control the slave population in the event of a revolt than in their ability to withstand a foreign invasion without a slave fighting force. In Barbados, as in Britain's other Caribbean and continental colonies, "to arm the Negroes was hazardous, but the latent military strength they represented was undeniable — a manpower potential often too badly needed and too readily available to be ignored."^{6 3}

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NOTES

1. C.P. Clarke, "Imperial Forces in Barbados," *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, XXXII (1968), 175-177 (hereafter cited as *JBMHS*); P.F. Campbell, "St. Ann's Fort and Garrison," *JBMHS*, XXXV (1975), 6; Richard Pares, *War and Trade in the West Indies 1739-1763* (London and Edinburgh, 1963), 257.
2. "The Colonial Militia and Negro Manpower," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* XLV (1959), 643-652.
3. Douglas E. Leach, *Arms for Empire: A Military History of the British Colonies in North America 1607-1763* (New York, 1973), 11.
4. V.T. Harlow, ed., *Colonizing Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana. 1623-1667*, (London, 1925), 30, 40. 54-102; "An Account of Barbados and the Government Thereof," 1683/84, Sloane Mss. 2441 (British Library [hereafter, BL]); J. Harry Bennett, "Peter Hay, Proprietary Agent in Barbados, 1636-1641." *The Jamaican Historical Review*, V (1965), 9-29.
5. Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados* (London, 1657), 46, 100; John Scott, "The Description of Barbados," [1668], Sloane Mss. 3662, fols. 54-62; Jerome S. Handler and Lon Shelby, eds., "A Seventeenth Century Commentary on Labor and Military Problems in Barbados," *JBMHS*, XXXIV (1973), 117-121; Richard Hall, *Acts, Passed in the Island of Barbados* (London, 1764), 459-463; John Jennings, *Acts and Statutes of the Island of Barbados* (London, 1654), 116-125 and *passim*; "An Essay Evenly Discussing the Present Condition and Interest of Barbados," n.d. [1650-1651], Ayer Mss. 276, Newberry Library, Chicago; Searle to Thurloe, November 6, 1656, in Thomas Birch, ed., *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe* (London, 1742), V, 564.
6. Jerome S. Handler, "Slave Revolts and Conspiracies in Seventeenth Century Barbados," *Nieuwe West-Indische Gids*, LVI (1982), 5-43.
7. See, for example, Atkins, "Answers to 32 Queries by the Lords of Trade and Plantations," July 4, 1676, CO 1/37, no. 67 (Public Record Office, London [hereafter, CO]); Dutton, "Answers to the Heads of Inquiry Respecting Barbados," June 11, 1681, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1681-1685*, 70 (hereafter *CSPCS*); "Account of Barbados," 1683/84; *CSPCS*, 1696-1697, 47-50; *ibid.*, 1706-June 1708, 618-620; "Account of the Strength of the Following British Islands in the West Indies. Anno 1736," *Gentleman's Magazine*, X (1740), 241; Richard Hall, *A General Account of the First Settlement . . . of Barbados, Written in the Year 1755* (Barbados, 1924), 22-24; Pinfold, "Copy of the Answers . . . to the Queries Proposed by the Lords of Trade," June 1, 1762, Kings Mss. 205, fols. 456-473 (BL); John Poyer, *The History of Barbados* (London, 1808), 617-618; Barbados militia acts, January 7, 1809, December 1, 1812 (CO 30/18, no. 277, 30/19, no. 321).
8. Population figures are for 1668-1669, 1673 (or 1664), 1675, 1679, and 1684: *CSPCS*, 1661-1668, 586; *ibid.*, 1699, 590; *ibid.*, 1669-1674, 495; *ibid.*, 1677-1680, 620; CO 1/44 and 1/36, no. 20. "Account of Barbados," 1683/84. The militia average has been calculated from statistics for 1666-67, 1668, 1673, 1679, 1680, and 1683: Scott, "Description of Barbados"; Handler and Shelby, "Seventeenth Century Commentary," 118; *CSPCS*, 1661-1668, 431-432, 586; *ibid.*, 1669-1674, 493-494; *ibid.*, 1677-1680, 510, 550, 566; *ibid.*, 1681-1685, 70, 71; "Account of Barbados," 1683/84.
9. Eighteenth century militia figures are available for 1707, 1712, 1724, 1734,

- 1736, 1747, 1748, 1757, 1762, 1773, 1783, and 1787: CSPCS, 1706-June 1708, 618-620; L.F. Stock, ed., *Proceedings and Debates of the British Parliaments Respecting North America* (Washington, D.C., 1924-1941), IV, 240; John J. McCusker, "The Rum Trade and the Balance of Payments of the Thirteen Continental Colonies, 1650-1775". (Ph.D. diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1970), 645, 646, 647; Frank W. Pitman, *The Development of the British West Indies 1700-1763* (New Haven, 1917), 372: "Account of the Strength . . . 1736"; Hall, *General Account*, 22; Pinfold, "Copy of the Answers"; CO 28/14, no. 21, 28/29, no. 25, and 28/61, f. 123.
- The population average has been calculated from figures for 1715, 1724, 1734, 1740, 1748, 1757, 1762, 1768, 1773, 1783: E.M. Shilstone, "The Population of Barbados," *JBMHS*, XIII (1945), 14; Patricia A. Molen, "Population and Social Patterns in Barbados in the Early Eighteenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly*, XXVIII (1971), 287-300; CSPCS, 1724-1725, 240; McCusker, "Rum Trade," 646, 647; "Account of the Strength . . . 1736"; CO 28/29, No. 25; Pinfold, "Copy of the Answers"; *British Parliamentary Papers*, XXVI (1789), pt. 4, 3rd suppl. to no. 15.
10. The population average is from statistics for 1801-1802, 1809-1816, 1825-1829: Jerome S. Handler, *The Unappropriated People: Freedmen in the Slave Society of Barbados* (Baltimore, 1974), 18-19; "Barbados 1802," Pinckerton Papers, Ms. 1711, fol. 75 (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh). The militia average has been calculated for 1801, 1802, 1823, and 1829 figures: Seaforth to Duke of Portland, August 22, 1801, Seaforth Papers GD 46/7/4 (Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh); Grinfield to Seaforth, November 6, 1802, CO 28/69; "Barbados. 1802," Pinckerton Papers; Haynes, "Return of the Militia of the Island of Barbados," 1823-1824, *JBMHS*, XII (1946), 180-182; Lyon, "General Return of the Militia of Barbados 1829." March 10, 1830, CO 28/104.
 11. *Ibid.*; Smith to Stanley, July 29, 1833, CO 28/111; Handler, *Unappropriated People*, 18-19.
 12. McCusker, "Rum Trade," 647; Smith to Stanley, July 29, 1833, CO 28/111; Handler, *Unappropriated People*, 18-19, 21, 114.
 13. Quarles, "Colonial Militia," 643, 646.
 14. Leon F. Litwack, *North of Slavery: The Negro in the Free States, 1790-1860* (Chicago, 1965), 31, 32, 35.
 15. [Benjamin Browne], *The Yarn of a Yankee Privateer*, Nathaniel Hawthorne, ed. (New York, 1926), 103.
 16. Militia acts, July 3, 1833, July 29, 1834, CO 30/21, nos. 545, 561; Handler, *Unappropriated People*, 15.
 17. J.W. Orderson, *Cursory Remarks and Plain Facts Connected with the Question Produced by the Proposed Slave Registry Bill* (London, 1816), 15. See also, Handler, *Unappropriated People*, 110-116.
 18. *Ibid.*, 76-81.
 19. Quarles, "Colonial Militia," 645, 647, 648-652.
 20. [Ferdinando] Gorge[s] to Council for Trade, March 17, 1674, CSPCS, 1669-1674, 565-566. To fully describe and document the demographic changes in Barbados's white population (including factors affecting natural increase, emigration, and immigration) during the last half of the seventeenth century, and their implications for the actual and perceived strength of the militia, would greatly increase the length of this paper. For various materials on the large scale emigration of whites, the effects of diseases and epidemics, the reluctance of minority religious groups to participate in the militia, demographic factors bearing on the natural increase of the white population, and the reduction in white immigration, particularly that of indentured servants, see, for example, CSPCS, 1661-1668, 189, 431-432, 486-487, 541-542; *ibid.*, 1669-1674, 141, 565-566; *ibid.*, 1675-1676, 288; *ibid.*, 1677-1680, 618-621; *ibid.*, 1681-1685, 497; *ibid.*, 1689-1692, 573; 696-697; *ibid.*, 1693-1696, 444-448, 585-586; *ibid.*, 1697-1698, 29-30; *ibid.*, 1699, 517; Scott, "Description of Barbados"; Handler and Shelby, "Seventeenth Century Commentary"; Searle to Thurloe, November 6 and 24, 1656, in Birch, *Collection*, V, 564, 652; Alfred D. Chandler, "The Expansion of Barbados," *JBMHS*, XIII (1946), 106-134; Richard Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1972), 88, 112-113, 301, 325-334; Hilary M. Beckles, "White Labour in Black Slave Plantation Society and Economy: A Case Study of Indentured Labour in Seventeenth Century Barbados" (Ph. D. diss., University of Hull, 1980), *passim*; Gary Puckrein, "The Political Demography of Colonial Barbados, 1627-1800" (paper presented to the Thirteenth Conference of Caribbean Historians, Guadeloupe, April, 1981); David Galenson, "The Indenture System and the Colonial Labor Market: An Economic History of White Servitude in British America" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1979), 213-277 *passim*.
 21. See, for example, Beckles, "White Labour," 129-130, 267-270, 300-301; P.F. Campbell, "The Barbados Militia 1627-1815," *JBMHS*, XXXV (1976), 109; Jill Sheppard, *The "Redlegs" of Barbados* (New York, 1977), 38-39, 59.
 22. Barbados Council to Council for Trade, May 28, 1673, CSPCS, 1669-1674, 493-494.
 23. Ligon, *History*, 46; Jennings, *Acts*, *passim*. Also, Hall, *Acts*, 459-463.
 24. Scott, "Description of Barbados"; Handler and Shelby, *Seventeenth Century Commentary*; V.T. Harlow, *A History of Barbados 1625-1685* (Oxford, 1926), 155-157.
 25. Hall, *Acts*, 472 (later repealed).
 26. Barbados Council to Council for Trade, May 28, 1673, CSPCS, 1669-1674, 494.
 27. *E.g.*, *ibid.*, 1696-1697, 47-50; *ibid.*, 1697-1698, 7-8, 29-30.
 28. Handler, "Slave Revolts."
 29. Militia act, November 3, 1697, in Hall, *Acts*, 138-155 (*cf.* William Rawlin, *The Laws of Barbados* [London, 1699], 217-230, wherein October is given as the month of passage).
 30. Handler, "Slave Revolts." For comparable planter attitudes elsewhere in the West Indies, see Roger N. Buckley, *Slaves in Red Coats: The British West India Regiments, 1795-1815* (New Haven, 1979), 141; Pares, *War and Trade*, 253-254.
 31. Handler, "Slave Revolts"; militia act, June 20, 1795, in Samuel Moore, *Public Acts in Force; Passed by the Legislature of Barbados* (London, 1801), (in list of acts not in force; known by title only); Wood to Lane, July 1796, Newton Papers 523/289 (University of London Library).
 32. See Moore, *Acts*, 77-79, 381-408.
 33. Handler, *Unappropriated People*, 23, 123-124.
 34. Parry, "Return of the Effective Strength of the Militia," December 18, 1787, CO 28/61, f. 123; Grinfield to Seaforth, November 6, 1802, CO 28/69; "Barbados. 1802," Pinckerton Papers.
 35. Militia act, December 4, 1799, in Moore *Acts*, 381-408.
 36. Militia act, March 7, 1805, CO 30/17, no. 249. See also, for example, Seaforth to Holder, March 8, 1805, Seaforth Papers, GD 46/7/11.

37. Militia acts, January 7, 1809, December 1, 1812, and July 3, 1833, CO 30/18, no. 277, 30/19, no. 321, 30/21, no. 545; Robert Schomburgk, *The History of Barbados* (London, 1848), 190.
38. William Young, *The West-India Common-Place Book* (London, 1807), 213-214; Buckley, *Red Coats*, 152-153; Jerome S. Handler, ed., "Memoirs of an Old Army Officer: Richard A. Wyvill's Visits to Barbados in 1796 and 1806-7," *JBMHS*, XXXV (1975), 22-23; *British Parliamentary Papers*, XXXII (1849), Report 56, page 4.
39. Buckley, *Red Coats, passim*; Alfred B. Ellis, *The History of the First West India Regiment* (London, 1885), 2-3, 347-359; Alan Burns, *History of the British West Indies* (London, 1954), 552, 667; Seaforth to Hobart, December 9, 1802, Seaforth Papers GD 46/7/7; Young, *Common-Place Book*, 213-214, 218, 241-242; Codd to Leith, April 25, 1816, CO 28/85.
40. Haynes to Lane, June 10, 1816, Newton Papers 523/791/1; Handler, *Unappropriated People*, 85-86.
41. Crowe to Council of Trade, December 7, 1707, *CSPCS, 1706-June 1708*, 618-620; Schomburgk, *History* 336; Poyer, *History*, 395; William Dickson, *Mitigation of Slavery in Two Parts* (London, 1814), 362.
42. Schomburgk, *History*, 335; Poyer, *History*, 382-383.
43. Hall, *Acts*, 149; Seaforth to Holder, March 8, 1805, Seaforth Papers, GD 46/7/11.
44. *Barbados Gazette*, April 30-May 3, 1785; Hall, *General Account*, 23-24; Parry, "Return of the Effective Strength."
45. See, for example, *CSPCS, 1681-1685*; 70; *ibid.*, 1689-1692, 472-473; Hall, *Acts*, 222-223, 492, 493, 502, 518; Poyer, *History*, 318, 515, 580, 590.
46. Militia acts, November, 1697, December 4, 1799, in Hall, *Acts*, 148 and Moore, *Acts*, 400; Schomburgk, *History*, 360.
47. Pares, *War and Trade*, 253-256; Buckley, *Red Coats*, 4, 13-14, 39-40; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 144; Pitman, *British West Indies*, 49; Quarles, "Colonial Militia," 648-652.
48. *Ibid.*, 647; slave acts, September 27, 1661, April 21, 1676 (CO 30/2, 16-26, 114-125), December 19, 1688 (Hall, *Acts*, 112-121), October 23, 1826 (*British Parliamentary Papers*, XXV [1826-1827], [report not numbered], 211, 220, 225-226).
49. [Simeon Coleman], *A Concise Narrative of the Barbarous Treatment Experienced by American Prisoners in England and the West-Indies, etc.* (Danville, Vt., 1816), 12-13; Poyer, *History*, 324.
50. Griffith Hughes, *The Natural History of Barbados* (London, 1750), 155; Wood to Lane, October 19, 1798, Newton Papers 523/381/1.
51. Militia act, March 7, 1805, CO 30/17, no. 249. This act also included a clause which prohibited, under penalty of a fine, any "free person" from firing a gun after 8 o'clock at night unless "in the defense or preservation of his property, or in case of alarms." However, a slave found guilty of the same offence could receive whatever "corporal punishment" a Justice of the Peace considered appropriate, thus suggesting that slaves sometimes had access to firearms. The same clause also appeared in the November 1697 and December 1799 militia acts, (Hall, *Acts*, 153-154; Moore, *Acts*, 405). During the 1816 uprising, slaves stole and armed themselves with bills, pikes, hatchets, swords, and knives, as well as with muskets or "firelocks." That they knew how to use the firearms is reflected in the fact that when one military unit was attacked, the "insurgents fired, and killed one private, and wounded a sergeant" (Codd to Leith,

- [report on the 1816 slave revolt], April 25, 1816, CO 28/85).
52. Weapons are specified in, for example, Rawlin, *Laws*, 223-224; *CSPCS, 1706-June 1708*, 618-620; Hall, *General Account*, 22-24; William Dickson, *Letters on Slavery* (London, 1789), 94; *ibid.*, *Mitigation*, 362; Wood to Lane, July 1796, Newton Papers 523/289; militia act, March 7, 1805, CO 30/17, no. 249; Seaforth, advertisement in the *Barbados Mercury* and handbills appointing persons to command slave in "case of alarm," March 5, 1805, Seaforth Papers GD 46/7/11.
 53. Hall, *Acts*, 175; Seaforth, [Letter to the Officers of the Barbados Militia], published at Barbados, June 5, 1805.
 54. Pares, *War and Trade*, 252-256.
 55. John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America* (London, 1741), II, 126; "A List of the Inhabitants . . .," August 16, 1712, CO 28/14, no. 21; Hall, *General Account*, 23; Dickson, *Letters*, 94.
 56. *CSPCS, 1706-June 1708*, 618-620, 688-689; Hall, *General Account*, 22; Grenville to Board of Trade, June 22, 1748, cited in Pitman, *British West Indies*, 372.
 57. Rawlin, *Laws*, 223-225; Hall, *Acts*, 175.
 58. Buckley, *Red Coats*, 26.
 59. October 23, 1826, *British Parliamentary Papers* XXV (1826-1827), [Report not numbered], 226.
 60. Harlow, *History*, 155-157; Hall, *Acts*, 520; Schomburgk, *History*, 335; Poyer, *History*, 382-383.
 61. Pares, *War and Trade*, 226-227, 232-233, 257. See also, J.W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army* (London, 1911), III, 263.
 62. *CSPCS, 1669-1674*, 493-494; *ibid.*, 1706-June 1708, 618-620; Hall, *Acts*, 520; Poyer, *History*, 177-178, 395; Pares, *War and Trade*, 238; Schomburgk, *History*, 336; Dickson, *Mitigation*, 362; miscellaneous items in Seaforth Papers GD 46/7/11.
 63. Quarles, "Colonial Militia," 652.