

Bibliographic Addenda to Guides for the Study of Barbados History, 1971 & 1991: Installment Two

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The first installment of “Bibliographic Addenda” was published in the 2006 issue of this *Journal*.¹ As with that installment, the materials discussed here have come to my attention since the publication of my 1971 and 1991 *Guides to Source Materials for the study of Barbados History*.² In the present article I follow the same procedures I used in the first “Bibliographic Addenda.” The interested reader is referred to that article for background information.

Anonymously Authored Published Works

Another out-cry of the innocent & oppressed; being a true account of the unjust and illegal proceedings of Richard Rainsford and Roger Norwich and others against Thomas Allen, Francis Child, Richard Coe, and William Line, being such as are called Quakers ... to transport the servants of the Lord to the island of Barbados. London, 1665. 10 pp. [Early English books online, reproduction from copy in the Huntington Library].

Events as described in the title, reflecting transportation to Barbados as punishment, but this tract has nothing to do with the island per se.

The routing of De-Ruyter, or The Barbadoes bravery, by the author of the Broad-side. London, 1665. broadside. [Early English books online, reproduction from copy in Harvard University Library].

A long poem, printed in double-column on one side, extolling Barbados's defenses when it repelled the Dutch attack in late 1654. An excerpt: "Before our Isle thou cam'st with great Bravadoes/But we had Boars enough in the Barbadoes/And Men, that made it to thy Teeth appear/There was no Planting for a Dutch-man there." This item provides no substantive information on this attack that cannot be obtained elsewhere.

The strange adventures of seven Liverpool sailors, who failed out in the Russian trade ... With a discription [sic] of the Island of Barbadoes. London, 1786. 8 pp. [Bodleian Library, Oxford University]

The description of Barbados is confined to one paragraph on the last page: "This famous island is one of the chief of the Carribees, and the most considerable after Jamaica of all the British lands in America. It was first settled and [is the] mother country of all our sugar colonies. It is situated 59 degrees west long. And 23 degrees North lat. And the most easterly of all the windward islands: 90 miles S.E. of Martinico, nearly the same of Grenada, 25 miles long and 15 broad, computed in the whole to contain 140 square miles and about twenty thousand white inhabitants and fifty thousand black, the latter are chiefly in slavery". The author's source for the population figures is unknown, but similar figures, of questionable reliability, were reported in the 1660s.

Strange news from Shadwell, being a true and just relation of the death of Alice Fowler. London, 1684. 4 pp. [British Library]

This small tract has little to do with Barbados per se. It gives an account of Alice Fowler, a woman of about 80, who "had always been a malicious ill-natured Woman and for many years had been reputed a witch." About 16 years prior to this publication, Alice's son Walter Fowler, "who always used to declare that his mother was a witch ... was transported to Barbados." Walter claimed that she had "bewitched him and several others" and continued to bewitch him, so that until about 9 years earlier Walter was "hang'd in the island of Barbados, for murdering his wife and breaking open a house." Walter presumably attributed his actions to the machinations of his mother. Alice died in London not long before this tract was published.

Published Works by Identified Authors

ADIS, HENRY

A letter sent from Syrranam, to His Excellency, the Lord Willoughby of Parham, General of the Western Islands and of the continent of Guiana, etc. then residing at the Barbados. London, 1664. 7 pp.
[The John Carter Brown Library; British Library]

Written in December 1663 by a Quaker in the English colony in Surinam, this item has nothing to do with Barbados per se; the author makes various requests on behalf of the Quaker community in Surinam. Willoughby's response, January 1663/64, was written from Barbados.

BAXTER, RICHARD

How to do good to many; or, the publick good is the Christian's life. London, 1682. 48 pp. [British Library]

A Quaker tract containing a brief passage on slaves with a specific reference to Barbados (p. 45): "Is it not possible to do more than hath been done to convert the Blacks that are our own slaves or servants to the Christian faith? Hath not Mr. Goodwin justly reprehended and lamented the neglect, yea and resistance of this work in Barbados? And the like elsewhere? Might not better teachers be sent thither for that use? Is it not an odious crime of Christians to hinder the conversion of these infidels?"

The reference to "Mr. Goodwin" is to Morgan Godwyn, an Anglican minister who had resided in Barbados in the 1670s and whose book, *The Negro's and Indians Advocate* (London, 1680) made an elaborate case, unusual for this period, for Christianizing enslaved Africans. The Quaker leader George Fox visited Barbados in 1671, and during this visit made the rather radical suggestion that slaves should be exposed to Christianity (for these works, see Handler, *Guide*, 1971, pp. 10, 11-12).

BOYLE, ROBERT

General heads for the natural history of a country, great or small. (London, 1692). 134 pp. [British Library].

A sort of handbook containing questions/issues concerning natural history, plants, fauna, etc. to be investigated by travelers to various parts of the world. In the section "enquiries and directions for the Antilles, or the Caribe [sic] islands (pp. 109-122), there are thirty-three queries. The author has obviously read Ligon's classic *History*, and bases a number of his questions on points or passages in Ligon. However, Barbados is only specifically mentioned twice. Queries are raised about the island's Royal Palm and travelers are encouraged "to send over some of the roots of the herb, called . . . , L'herb aux fleches" (the Dart Herb) which being stomped is said to have the vertue of curing the wounds made with poysoun'd darts." This is a very early reference to arrowroot, an Amerindian crop that was introduced to Barbados in the late 17th century, probably from contact with Caribs in Dominica. Arrowroot was used medicinally in Barbados, and later grown by some plantations as well as enslaved persons as a minor export cash crop; it continued to be cultivated well into the 20th century, primarily in the Scotland District (until around the mid-1960s), and in the late 1930s it was the foundational crop for the island's first peasant marketing cooperative.³ In query 16, the author requests that a specimen of "all medical herbs" be sent to England, including the "prickle with[e] at the Barbados," and the "Barbados Ceder."

CLARK, THOMAS

The voice of truth, uttered forth against the unreasonableness [sic], rudeness [sic], and deboistnes [sic] of the rulers, teachers and people of the island Barbados. London, 1661. 11 pp. [Early English books online, reproduction from the Friends Library, London

In late 1661, this tract was "written in the Common Prison in Barbados." It condemns the immoral behavior and practices of (white) Barbadians and argues that the Anglican clergy leads them in their mistreatment and persecution of Quakers in general and the author in particular. The flavor of this tract is reflected in descriptions of particular incidents; for example, the author's wife was taken out of her house by Samuel Graves, an Anglican minister, "who also tore off some of her clothes, in the open street, in sight of many people, by which my children that were crying about her, were affrighted and received hurt thereby, and my People beaten from their work and haled [sic] by the hair of the head and threatned with grievous language." Clark also describes how he was beaten

"with great cudgels and staves, with forekicks on my belly and other parts of my body; and . . . carried . . . to the stocks with my hands and feet with the small of my back cross a cudgel, shaking and abusing me in that manner unto the stocks . . . and after, with my Friends, committed to prison."

CRISP, THOMAS

The first part of Babel's-Builders unmasking themselves, as appears by the following judgement from Barbadoes (promoted by George Fox for his party, and subscribed by eighty-two of them). London, 1682. 16 pp. [British Library]

One of several tracts critical of the Quakers published around the same period by the same author. This item has little substantive information on the Barbados Quaker community, but the signatories to the "judgement" included 39 men and 43 women (unnamed); named are several Quakers, e.g., Ralph Fretwell, Solomon Eccles, and documents relevant to them are printed in this tract.

EQUIANO, OLAUDAH

The interesting narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavas Vassa, the African. Written by himself. 2 vols. (London, 1789)

This celebrated autobiography, which underwent a number of contemporary editions, was reported in Handler, *Guide*, 1971 (p. 53), but over subsequent years a great deal of scholarship has been devoted to this *Narrative*. According to his account, Equiano was born in what is present-day Nigeria, kidnapped, and transported to the New World. His slave ship first stopped at Barbados. Most of the Africans on board were sold on the island, and although Equiano was not sold but shipped elsewhere, his vivid first-hand account of enslavement and the Middle Passage reflects what many other African-born Barbadians must have experienced; moreover, Equiano provides a unique, albeit brief, account of how newly arrived Africans were sold aboard the slave ship.

Until recently scholars commonly accepted at face value that Equiano had been born in Africa, as he claimed. In recent years, however, a leading scholar of Equiano, Vincent Carretta (Professor of English, University of Maryland), discovered documentary evidence indicating that Equiano had in fact been born in South

Carolina; therefore, by implication, he had neither made the Middle Passage nor had he landed in Barbados. Carretta's discoveries remain controversial, and his assessment of their implications is not universally accepted within the scholarly community.⁴

Sir Philip Gibbes, a prominent late-eighteenth-century Barbadian planter, was one of Equiano's original subscribers. Gibbes had authored several works on slave management, arguing that Barbadian slaves, including his own, were not cruelly treated and that many plantation owners were concerned about the welfare of their slaves. In his *Narrative*, Equiano makes a point of mentioning that he had "the honour of knowing a most worthy and humane gentleman, who is a native of Barbados, and has estates there"; and even though Equiano remained skeptical of the slavery system, he accepts Gibbes's argument about how his own slaves are treated and that amelioration of the treatment and living conditions of Barbadian slaves would benefit the economic interests of their owners.⁵

GRONNIOSAW, JAMES ALBERT UKAWSAW

A narrative of the most remarkable particulars in the life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African prince. Related by himself. (London, 1840) 2nd ed; reprinted, Kraus Reprint 1972; New York, Readex 1995).

This *Narrative* was first published in 1770. Although a number of editions were subsequently published in America, Ireland, England, and Scotland, the 1840 edition cited here is the most conveniently available full text. Gronniosaw, a Muslim from Borno/Bornu, in present-day north-eastern Nigeria, was enslaved at about the age of 15, taken overland for many miles, and in the late 1720s was transported from the Gold Coast on a Dutch slaver bound for Barbados. He was sold on the island shortly after his arrival but his new owner took him to New York not long thereafter. Gronniosaw's *Narrative* describes his childhood in Nigeria, how he was enslaved and shipped across the Atlantic, but gives no information on Barbados or the Middle Passage, aside from mentioning he was sea sick.

LILLY, WILLIAM

Monarchy or no monarchy in England. Grebner his prophesy concerning Charles son of Charles, his greatnesse, victories,

conquests ... Aenigmatically types of the future state and condition of England for many years to come (London, 1651). 119 pp. [Early English books online, reproduction from copy in the British Library]

One of many works by this famous and popular seventeenth-century English astrologer (see *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*), *Monarchy or No Monarchy* includes a reference to Barbados in one of his prophecies: It "was exactly verified in King Charles, or the White Kings time, for in 1648, after the defeat of the wretched Scots in Lancashire, the English merchants did give money for as many of the common soldiers as were worth anything, and sent them for Barbados and other forraigne plantations. Some were sold deare, others cheape ... It is reported that many of those miserable wretches, since their being in Barbados do say they have left Hell, viz. Scotland, and are arrived into Heaven" (p. 43).

MAYLINS, ROBERT

A letter which was delivered to the King ... 1660, sent from the Barbadoes, on the behalf of many thousands in the West-Indies. London, 1661. Broadside [Early English books online, reproduction from Friends' Library, London]

Written in Barbados in late 1660, this appeals to the King to protect Quakers in his colonies and to give them leave "to go into any place under thy Dominions" to preach "the Gospel of glad tidings," and for colonists to "come to witness the salvation of God unto their soules." Does not include any information on Barbados.

PERROT, JOHN

Glorious glimmerings of the life of love, unity, and pure joy. Written in Rome ... 1660, but conserved as in obscurity until my arrival at Barbados in ... 1662. London, 1663. 15 pp. [British Library]

A Quaker religious tract which mentions Barbados in the title but has nothing to do with the island per se.

PRENTISS, BENJAMIN

The blind African slave, or memoirs of Boyrereau Brinch, nick-

named *Jeffrey Brace*. ... by Benjamin F. Prentiss, Esq. St. Albans, Vermont, 1810. 204 pp.

Briefly described in Handler, *Supplement*, 1991, p. 30, which characterized this work as an American abolitionist novel, written as an African's life story narrated to the author, Prentiss, an antislavery lawyer. Brace was literate but blind when he narrated his life story. He claimed to have been captured in Africa in 1758, when he was about sixteen, and then shipped to Barbados in 1759 or 1760; he remained on the island for several months before being taken to the North American colonies. Much of his account of life in Barbados is devoted to lurid descriptions of his sufferings and the malevolent treatment he received from white owners. The book has been recently reprinted and copiously edited. In a lengthy introduction, the editor makes an extensive attempt to demonstrate the credibility of Brace's account of his stay in Barbados, and provides considerable corroborative evidence that the account of his later life is real and not a novel (see Kari Winter, ed., *The Blind African Slave* [The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004]). If, indeed, Brace had spent time in Barbados, his account of the island represents a very rare perspective by an enslaved person born in Africa.

ROBERTS, GEORGE

The four years voyages of Capt. George Roberts; being a series of uncommon events, which befell him in a voyage to the islands of the Canaries, Cape de Verde, and Barbadoes, from whence he was bound to the coast of Guiney. ... Written by himself. London, 1726. 458 pp. [The John Carter Brown Library; British Library]

Recorded in Handler, *Guide*, 1971 (p. 24) with a misleading entry that was corrected in the *Supplement*, 1991 (p. 9). This fictional account briefly mentions Barbados in several places, and was actually written by Daniel Defoe who compiled his information from a variety of sources but did not himself set foot on the island. *The Four Years Voyage* was reprinted several decades later in John Green, compiler, *A new general collection of voyages and travels* (Printed for T. Astley : London, 1745), Vol. 1, pp. 599-680, under the title "Account of a voyage to the islands of the Canaries, Cape de Verde, and Barbadoes, in 1721. By Captain George Roberts. Written by himself." The account in Green/Astley is a condensed

and frequent paraphrasing of the original Roberts/Defoe work, interspersed with excerpts from other published contemporary sources as well as footnoted comments by the editor.

ROBINSON, SAMUEL

A sailor boy's experience aboard a slave ship in the beginning of the present century. (originally published Hamilton, 1867; reprinted Wigtown, Scotland, 1996. 137 pp. [British Library])

In 1800, at the age of 14, the author, an Englishman, shipped aboard a slaving vessel which travelled from Liverpool to West Africa to the Caribbean. Because war had broken out between England and France, the vessel anchored at Barbados to await instructions as to where to take its contingent of captive Africans. They arrived at Barbados around 1802 but only stayed for a very short period and there is no indication that any of the captive Africans were sold in the island (pp. 95-96). The author apparently never even disembarked and, aside from commenting that the island is "low," his comments on Barbados are limited to a sentence. They anchored in "the lively Carlisle Bay ... surrounded by boats and canoes loaded with all manner of goods, vegetables, fruit, etc. A sufficient supply of vegetables and fresh meat was soon served out." From Barbados the ship went to Jamaica.

SMITH, CHARLOTTE

The wanderings of Warwick. London, 1794. 293 pp. [British Library; University of Virginia Library]

Mentioned in Handler, *Guide*, 1971 (p. 57), but not examined at the time. The protagonist in this novel by the well-known English poet and novelist (who never actually visited Barbados herself), spent "some months" in Barbados around the late 1780s. The island is treated in Chapter 3 (pp. 59-67), most of the pages dealing with slavery and the condition of the slaves. Smith's views were obviously informed by pro-slavery interests in Britain. Some examples: "... the idea of their being the property of their master makes them take a peculiar interest in whatever relates to him. They are pleased if his house is better, his equipage finer, and his property greater than that of his neighbors" (p. 61); "the condition of the Negroes is certainly in some respects even preferable to that of the English poor" (p. 62); "... dreadful as the condition of

slavery is, the picture of its horrors is often overcharged" (p. 65). Wylie Sypher (*Guinea's Captive Kings* [Chapel Hill, 1942], p. 291) refers to this as an "anti-slavery novel," but there is no condemnation of the institution in Smith's pages on the island.

SMITH, VENTURE

A narrative of the life and adventures of Venture, a native of Africa; but resident above sixty years in the United States of America. Related by himself. (New London, Connecticut, 1789; reprinted Middletown, Conn, 1897) [Copy of 1897 reprint in the Library of Congress]

Born around 1729, Smith was captured in warfare when he was about 8 years old, and taken overland in Africa hundreds of miles; ultimately he was shipped from Annomaboe, a major British slaving station on the Gold Coast. With about 260 other Africans he was transported to Barbados. Sixty of the captives died of smallpox during the Middle Passage. The remainder were sold in Barbados, except for Smith and three others who were taken to Rhode Island. Smith related his life story when he was about sixty-nine years old, but provides no details on his Middle Passage experience or his stay in Barbados.⁶

MANUSCRIPTS

Bodleian Library (University of Oxford)

"Two narratives by female slaves at Barbados, written down there by John Ford, 1799." MS. Eng. Misc. b. 4, fols. 50-51.

Recorded and summarized in Handler, *Supplement*, 1991 (p. 58). These two foolscap pages contain the brief accounts "related to the writer by an Old African female slave named Sibell ... [and] an old female slave named Ashy of the Fantee tribe." This unique document by two African women describing their experiences of enslavement is one of a handful of first-hand accounts by African-born persons who were enslaved in British America. These are the only accounts to be transcribed in what appears to be the English Creole language of Barbados (i.e., Bajan), rather than in one form or another of standard English. Although the transcriber, John Ford, has not been identified, he may have been a white Barbadian. Both accounts have been edited and published in their entirety in J. S. Handler, "Life Histories of Enslaved Africans in Barbados,"

Slavery and Abolition 19 (1998), pp. 129-141; they are also discussed as well as placed in the wider context of other first-hand accounts by enslaved Africans in Handler, "Survivors of the Middle Passage: Life Histories of Enslaved Africans in British America," *Slavery and Abolition* 23 (2002), pp. 25-56.

British Library, London (Manuscript Room)

"A short journal of my voyages and travels. Voyage to Guinea, 1713-1714"; [Alternate title] "Voyage to Guinea, Antigoe, Bay of Campeachy, Cuba, Barbados, etc." Add Mss 39946.

Briefly, but somewhat inadequately, described in Handler, *Guide*, 1971 (p. 132). The British Library printed (now, on-line) catalog title is given as "Voyage to Guinea, Antigoe, Bay of Campeachy, Cuba, Barbados, etc." whereas the item's title page reads "A short journal of my voyages and travels. Voyage to Guinea, 1713-1714."

The author, a seaman, has not been identified. He addresses his account to his sister, Mrs. Penelope Hill of Leicester, and the account is in the form of an extended letter to her. In February 1714 he boarded a slaving vessel bound for the west coast of Africa. In Calabar the ship purchased 360 slaves, then went to Antigua, and then to the Bay of Campeachy and Cuba. It is unclear how many of the enslaved were sold in these places, but from Cuba the ship proceeded to Barbados, arriving in August 1716. The author remained on the island for about two months, but finding no employment there he shipped out on a slaver for Hispaniola and Cuba. Although he returned to Barbados briefly in December 1716, he says nothing about this visit, and his description of the island on his first visit is confined to a few lines of conventional observations (p. 54): "This island certainly affords ye finest prospect at sea in ye world, especially to windward, it being all over planted without any waste ground at all, & one would take it to be a continual garden for there's nothing of vegetables appears above ground but what is planted in a mathematical regularity & ye number of well built houses & windmills agreeably intermixt makes it as beautiful a landskip [landscape] as can be seen."

University of Virginia Library, Special Collections (Charlottesville, Virginia)

[Letters of Henry Lee, 1813-1814]. Charles Carter Lee Papers, Box 1, no. 9934.

General Henry Lee, otherwise known as "Light-Horse Harry," was a prominent officer during the American Revolution, a confidant of George Washington, and a one-time governor of Virginia. In 1813, primarily for health reasons, he went to the West Indies although the U.S. was then at war with Britain. He lived in Barbados for about six months, from May 1813 to around January 1814.

Materials relating to Henry Lee, including locations, dates, and overviews of his letters from Barbados have been described in Handler, *Guide*, 1971 (pp. 44, 69, 72, 73); none of Lee's letters appear to contain descriptive materials or observations on the island.

The University of Virginia Library holds about six letters (originals or contemporary copies) written by Lee from Barbados. These letters, all written in August and September 1813, are addressed to various correspondents, including James Madison, his wife and sons (Charles Carter Lee, Henry Lee), and a merchant in Alexandria, Virginia. They appear to deal entirely with his health and personal family and business matters, with occasional references to the war between the U.S. and Britain and goods that he is shipping back to Virginia for family use. As with letters held elsewhere, these do not appear to contain descriptive materials or personal observations on Barbados.

These letters, and others, still belong to the Lee Family, and were formerly on deposit at the Library of Virginia (Richmond). The Library of Virginia holds photostats of the Henry Lee letters, including those written from Barbados which are now at the University of Virginia (see "Henry Lee papers, 1768-1816 (record #26824).

Notes

1. Jerome S. Handler, "Bibliographic Addenda to Guides for the Study of Barbados History, 1971 & 1991," *JBMHS* 52 (2006), pp. 35-53.
2. *A Guide to source materials for the study of Barbados history, 1627-1834* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971) and *A Supplement to A guide to source materials for the study of Barbados history, 1627-1834* (Providence, RI: The John Carter Brown Library, 1991).
3. Handler, "The History of Arrowroot Production in Barbados and the Chalky Mount Arrowroot Growers' Association, a Peasant Marketing Experiment that Failed," *JBMHS* 31 (1965): 131-52; *Ibid.*, "The History of Arrowroot and the Origin of Peasantries in the British West Indies," *Journal of Caribbean*

History 2 (1971), pp. 46-93.

4. For a summary of some of the major pro and con arguments, see Paul Lovejoy, "Autobiography and Memory: Gustavas Vassa, alias Olaudah Equiano, the African," *Slavery and Abolition* 27 (2006), pp. 317-347; Vincent Carretta, "Response to Paul Lovejoy's 'Autobiography and Memory: Gustavas Vassa, alias Olaudah Equiano, the African,'" *Ibid.*, 28 (2007), pp. 115-119; Paul Lovejoy, "Issues of Motivation-Vassa/Equiano and Carretta's Critique of the Evidence," *ibid.*, pp. 121-125. Vincent Carretta has edited the most definitive modern edition of Equiano's autobiography: *Olaudah Equiano: The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings* (Penguin Books, 1995; rev. ed. 2003). Carretta is also the author of the most recent biography: *Equiano, the African: biography of a self-made man* (Penguin, 2007), in which issues surrounding his place of birth are summarized.
5. See *Ibid.*, *Olaudah Equiano*, pp. 105-106, 270-271, note 306; Handler, *Guide*, 1971, pp. 49-50, 57-58.
6. The 1789 edition is reprinted in Vincent Carretta, ed., *Unchained voices : an anthology of Black authors in the English-speaking world of the eighteenth century* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), pp. 369-387; and Dorothy Porter, ed., *Early Negro writing, 1760-1837* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 538-558. See also Handler, "Life Histories of Enslaved Africans in Barbados," *Slavery and Abolition* 19 (1998), pp. 129-141.