



Durham University Library

Sources for the study of slavery

Durham University Library

**Sources for the
study of slavery**

**How and why did
slavery start?**

Source 1: An inventory of a merchant's shop in Durham

1691/W5/1

An Inventory of y^e goods & Chattells of John Walker late of
 y^e City of Durham Alderman deceased appraised & valued by us
 whose names are hereunto subscribed y^e 11th day of February
 1691

Goods in y^e Shop

	£	s	d
10 basket of Sug ^r quantity 41 ^l at 7 ^d 2 ^l	01	09	04 1/2
3 Slo. 1/2 of Sug ^r at 40 ^b 2 ^l Cent	00	17	06
6 Slo. of Sug ^r at 52 ^b 2 ^l Cent	01	19	00
5 Slo. 1/2 of Sug ^r at 5 ^l 2 ^l Slo.	01	07	06
8 Slo. of Sug ^r at 40 ^b 2 ^l Cent	02	00	00
5 doz: 3/4 of blow lyncs at 6 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l doz	01	13	03 3/4
13 doz of white lyncs at 5 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l doz	03	11	06 1/4
6 ^l of snits lyncs at 4 ^d 2 ^l	00	02	00
fine white thread 6 ^b	00	06	00
4 ^l 1/2 of white & colored thread at 1 ^b 3 ^d 2 ^l	00	05	07 1/2
a roll of narrow Giltse at 5 ^b	00	05	00
a roll of colored & white filloknit at 10 ^b	00	10	00
8 doz: of Cottons fustet & tayls at 4 ^b	00	04	00
3 cut piece of silk fustet at 5 ^b	00	05	00
a grob 1/2 of hair but at 3 ^b 2 ^l grob	00	04	06
thread & leather lace at 3 ^b	00	03	00
11 silk lace 11 ^d	00	00	11
8 grob of gimp but at 4 ^d 2 ^l 2 ^l	00	04	03
lagging plate 3 quarter 3 ^b	00	01	00
5 doz: 1/2 of Cards at 3 ^b 2 ^l doz	00	06	05
3 doz: 1/2 of wash balls at 4 ^d 2 ^l doz	00	01	02
A Room of 5 quire of curst writing paper 2:6:00	00	02	06
A Room of fine writing paper at 5 ^b	00	05	00
A Slo: of poppe at 17 ^b	00	17	00
6 page of pins at 2 ^d 2 ^l 11 ^l	00	01	05
6 pair of necklaser 6 ^d	00	00	06
2 Slo: of bell ging ^r at 4 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l Slo.	00	09	00
5 Slo: of Sug ^r in box at 5 ^b 3 ^d 2 ^l Slo.	01	06	03
a Slo: of Raco Ging ^r 4 ^b	00	04	00
2 Slo: of Rasins at 3 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l Slo	00	07	00
3 Slo: 1/2 of Carrans at 3 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l Slo:	00	12	03
3 Slo: of starch at 1 ^b 9 ^d 2 ^l Slo.	00	05	03
3 ^l of Sug ^r candy at 7 ^d 2 ^l	00	01	09
1 ^l 3/4 of Clove at 3 ^b 2 ^l	00	14	00
1 ^l of Maco at 15 ^b 6 ^d	00	15	06
1 ^l 1/4 of Nutmegs at 6 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l	00	08	01 1/2
6 ^l of Cardway seeds at 2 ^d 2 ^l	00	01	00
9 ^l of Almonds at 8 ^d 2 ^l	00	06	00
4 ^l of Cardway Comforte at 6 ^d 2 ^l	00	02	00
1 ^l 1/4 of Jamaica pepper at 1 ^b 4 ^d 2 ^l	00	02	04
3 ^l of Tobacco at 3 ^b 4 ^d 2 ^l	00	04	00
15 ^l of Tobacco at 11 ^d 2 ^l	00	13	09
12 ^l of Corriand ^r seeds at 2 ^d 2 ^l	00	02	00
12 ^l of Anniseeds at 3 ^d 2 ^l	00	03	00
2 Slo: of Brimstone at 2 ^b 6 ^d 2 ^l Slo	00	05	00
2 Slo: 1/2 of Gall at 7 ^b 2 ^l Slo:	00	17	06
	25	03	04 1/4

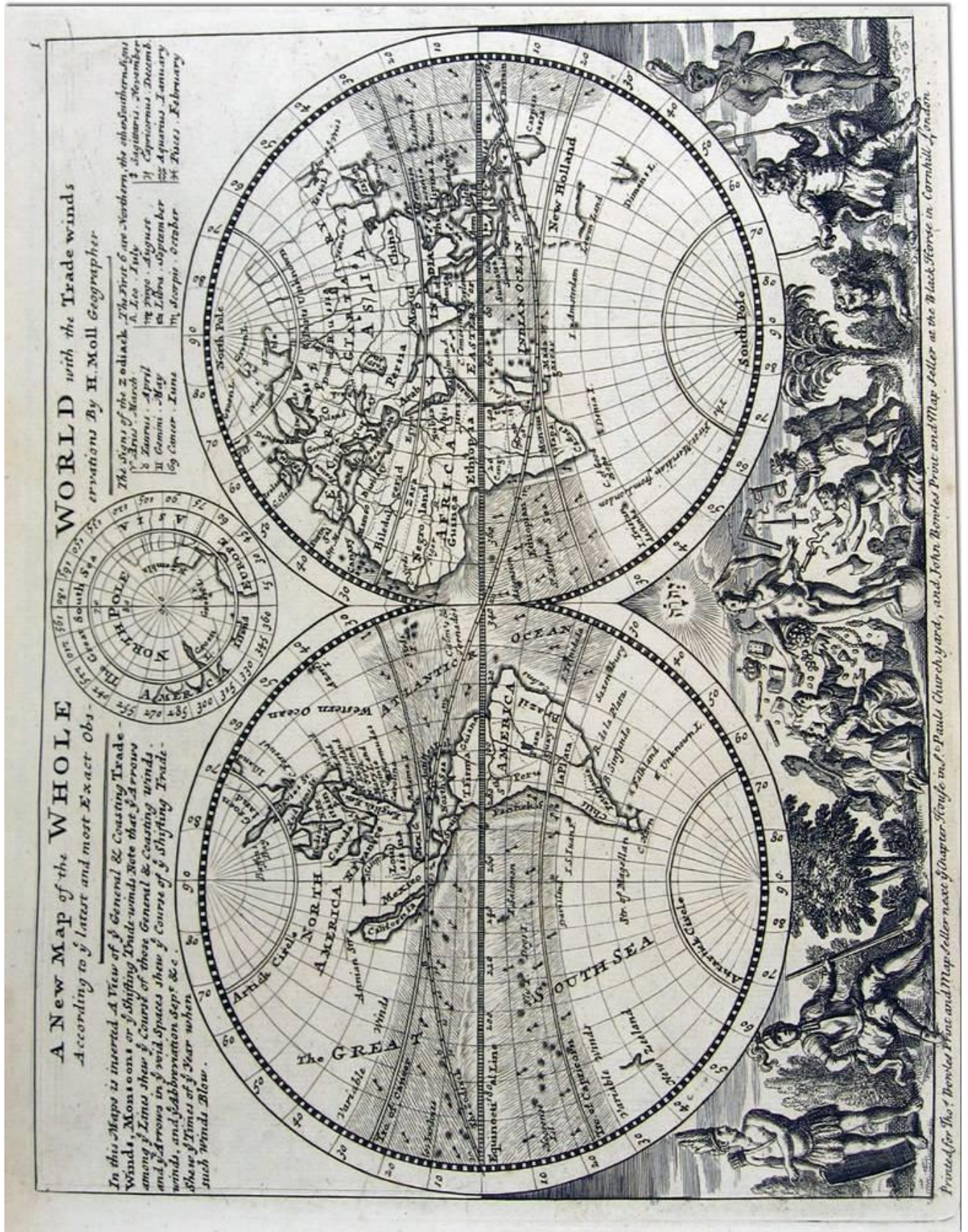
The inventory of John Walker. (DUL ref: DPR 1691/W5/1)

Source 2: A Bill of Sale

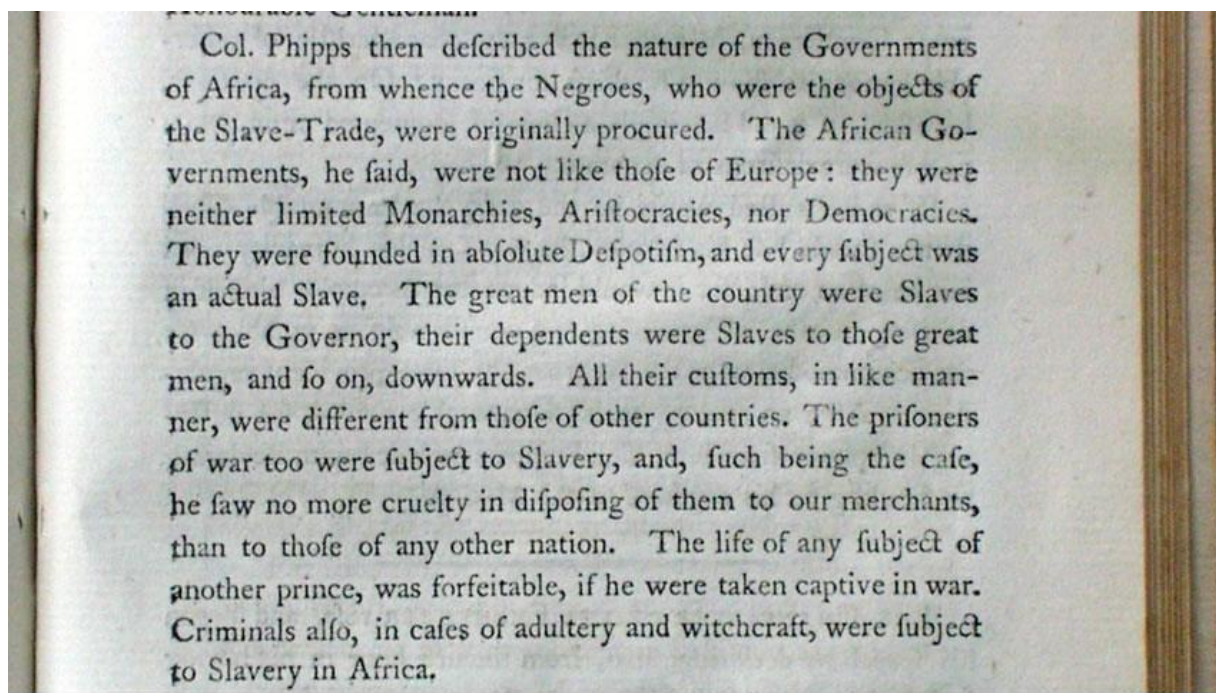
Mr Thomas Raceback 2.
 on pond of Candles -- 0-0-7
 on gortie of Sugar -- 0-0-1 1/2
 on gortie of Sugar -- 0-0-2
 2 ons of tea -- 0-1-3
 1/2 pond of Sugar -- 0-0-4
 2 ons of tea -- 0-1-0
 Reben -- 0-0-10 1/2
 3 ons of woosted -- 0-2-8
 handkerchief -- 0-0-11
 gortie of Sugar -- 0-0-2
 Lard -- 0-3-0
 Snuff -- 0-0-3
 1/2 pond of Sugar -- 0-0-4
 gortie of Sugar -- 0-0-1 1/2
 ons of tea -- 0-0-6
 gortie of Sugar -- 0-0-2
 gortie of Sugar -- 0-0-2
 Reben -- 0-0-10 1/2
 Sugar -- 0-0-1 1/2
 Candle -- 0-0-1
 tea -- 0-1-3
 feet maces -- 0-0-10
 tea -- 0-1-3
 Sugar -- 0-0-2
 Reben -- 0-0-8 1/2
 feet maces -- 0-0-9
 tea & Sugar -- 0-0-9 1/2

Bill of Sale detailing the purchase of sugar and other items. (DUL ref: CCB B/218/34/2)

Source 3: Map of the world



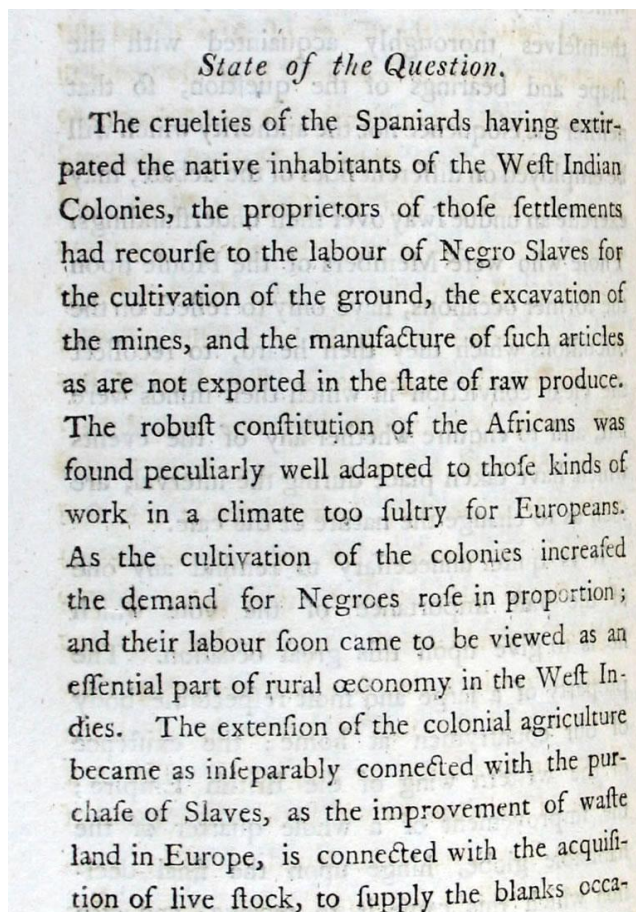
Source 4a: A justification for slavery



Col. Phipps then described the nature of the Governments of Africa, from whence the Negroes, who were the objects of the Slave-Trade, were originally procured. The African Governments, he said, were not like those of Europe: they were neither limited Monarchies, Aristocracies, nor Democracies. They were founded in absolute Despotism, and every subject was an actual Slave. The great men of the country were Slaves to the Governor, their dependents were Slaves to those great men, and so on, downwards. All their customs, in like manner, were different from those of other countries. The prisoners of war too were subject to Slavery, and, such being the case, he saw no more cruelty in disposing of them to our merchants, than to those of any other nation. The life of any subject of another prince, was forfeitable, if he were taken captive in war. Criminals also, in cases of adultery and witchcraft, were subject to Slavery in Africa.

Extract of a speech made by Colonel Phipps. Taken from *The Debate on a Motion for the Abolition of the Slave Trade*, 1791. (DUL ref: *Bamburgh O V 14*)

Source 4b: Another justification for slavery



State of the Question.

The cruelties of the Spaniards having extirpated the native inhabitants of the West Indian Colonies, the proprietors of those settlements had recourse to the labour of Negro Slaves for the cultivation of the ground, the excavation of the mines, and the manufacture of such articles as are not exported in the state of raw produce. The robust constitution of the Africans was found peculiarly well adapted to those kinds of work in a climate too sultry for Europeans. As the cultivation of the colonies increased the demand for Negroes rose in proportion; and their labour soon came to be viewed as an essential part of rural œconomy in the West Indies. The extension of the colonial agriculture became as inseparably connected with the purchase of Slaves, as the improvement of waste land in Europe, is connected with the acquisition of live stock, to supply the blanks occa-

Source 4c: An explanation for why slavery necessary

(3)

What renders the *Negroe-Trade* still more estimable and important, is, that near Nine-tenths of those *Negroes* are paid for in *Africa* with *British Produce* and *Manufactures* only ; and the Remainder with *East-India* Commodities. We We send no Specie or Bullion to pay for the no Specie or Bullion Products of *Africa*, but, 'tis certain, we to *Africa*, but bring Gold from thence. *Gold* ; and not only that but *Wax* and *Ivory* ; the one serves for a foreign Export without the least Detriment to our own Product ; the other is manufactured at Home, and afterwards carried to foreign Markets, to no little Advantage both to the Nation and the Traders. From which *Facts*, the Trade to *Africa* may very truly be said to be, as it were, all Profit to the Nation ; the *direct* Trade thither affords a considerable national Ballance in our Favour, and is apparently attended with such a Series of advantagious Consequences, that no other Branch whatever of our foreign Traffic admits of.

Extract from *The National and Private Advantages of the African Trade Considered* by Malachy Postlethwayt, London 1746. (DUL ref: Winterbottom K 12)

Source 4d: A justification for slavery

And it may be worth Consideration,
that while our Plantations depend only on
Planting by *Negroe-Servants*, they will
neither depopulate our own Country, be-
come independent of her Dominion, or
any way interfere with the Interests of the
British

(4)

Negroes
will pre-
serve the
Depen-
dency of
our Colo-
nies in
*Great-
Britain.*

*British Manufacturer, Merchant, or Land-
ed Gentleman* : Whereas were we under
the Necessity of supplying our Colo-
nies with *White-Men* instead of *Blacks*,
they could not fail being in a Capacity
to interfere with the Manufactures of this
Nation, in Time to shake off their De-
pendency thereon, and prove as injurious
to the *Landed, and Trading-Interests* as
ever they have hitherto been beneficial.

Extract from *The National and Private Advantages of the African Trade Considered* by Malachy Postlethwayt, London 1746. (DUL ref: Winterbottom K 12)

Source 4e: Another justification of slavery

Many are prepossessed against this Trade, thinking it *a barbarous, inhuman, and unlawful Traffic for a Christian Country to Trade in Blacks*; to which I would beg leave to observe; that though the odious Appellation of *Slaves* is annexed to this Trade, it being called by some the *Slave-Trade*, yet it does not appear from the best Enquiry I have been able to make, that the State of those People is changed for the worse, by being Servants to our *British Planters in America*; they are certainly treated with great Lenity and Humanity: And as the Improvement of the Planter's Estates depends upon due Care being taken of their Healths and Lives, I cannot but think their Condition is much bettered to what it was in their own Country.

Extract from *The National and Private Advantages of the African Trade Considered* by Malachy Postlethwayt, London 1746. (DUL ref: Winterbottom K 12)

**What was the Middle
Passage really like?**

Source 1: The view of a slave ship captain

Slaves on board are, most assuredly, treated humanely. Rice is a principal article of their food on the Windward Coast, also cassada, palm-oil, many glutinous herbs, pepper; on the coast often fish. When rice enough cannot be got, ships carry out beans and stock-fish; and from Africa, palm-oil, pepper, sheep, goats, fowls. The beans are generally split, but has seen them otherwise. Never knew slaves on board without plenty of food. It is almost the sole employment of the officers to serve P. 82. them. The natives of Angola live on cassada, fish, and a little Indian corn. Angola affording no food, ships always carry out beans, and he always called at

22

A F R I C A .

K N O X .

1789. at the Wood Coast for rice, when to be got (see p. 93.) Never saw the negroes want water on the passage. Ships from the Windward Coast sometimes water at S. Leone; though all ships employ the natives to bring water. They constantly take about one gallon per head per day, for two months, but generally 10 weeks, from the Windward Coast. The passage being more certain from Angola, less water is supposed sufficient.

In good weather, the slaves are on deck all day, and the grown ones below at night. Many of the younger ones run where they please night and day. Never supposed one died from crowding. Trade-wind, they go from under the gratings to keep from cold.

Every attention is paid to the sick. For his 6 voyages as surgeon he visited them 3 or 4 times in the night. All ships are amply supplied with medicines, fago, wine, &c. Cleanliness, fumigations, &c. and above all, fresh air supplied.

Source 2: The view of a slave ship surgeon

P. 84. Slaves in the passage are so crowded below, that it is impossible to walk through them, without treading on them; those who are out of irons, are locked spoonways (in the technical phrase) to one another; it is the first mate's duty to see them stowed in this way every morning; those who do not get quickly into their places, are compelled by the cat. In this situation, when the ship had much motion, they were often miserably bruised. In the passage, when the scuttles must be shut, the gratings are not sufficient for airing the rooms; he never himself could breathe freely, unless immediately under the hatchway. Never saw ventilators used in these ships; a wind-fail

A F R I C A.

T R O T T E R.

37

fail was often tried on the coast, but he remembers 1790. none used in the passage. Has seen the slaves draw-Part II. ing their breath with all those laborious and anxious efforts for life, which is observed in expiring animals, subjected by experiment to foul air, or in the exhausted receiver of an air pump; has also seen them, when the tarpawlings have inadvertently been thrown over the gratings, attempting to heave them up, crying out, "Kickeraboo, kickeraboo," i. e. "We are dying;" on removing the tarpawlings and gratings, they would fly to the hatchway with all the signs of terror, and dread of suffocation; many whom he has seen in a dying state, have recovered, by being brought thither, or on the deck; others were irrecoverably lost, by suffocation, having had no previous signs of indisposition. P. 85.

Slaves, on being brought on board, shew signs of extreme distress and despair, from a feeling of their situation, and regret at being torn from friends and connections; many retain those impressions for a long time; in proof of which, the slaves being often heard in the night, making an howling melancholy noise, expressive of extreme anguish; he repeatedly

Extract of evidence given by Mr Trotter to a Select Committee of the Privy Council. Taken from *Abridgement of the Minutes of Evidence taken before a Select Committee on the Slave Trade, 1789.* (DUL ref: Bamburgh O V 13)

Source 3: Evidence of a slave – Olaudah Equiano's account

what I was to undergo. I was not long suffered to indulge my grief; I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on my refusing to eat,

one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across I think the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before; and although, not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it, yet nevertheless, could I have got over the nettings, I would have jumped over the side, but I could not; and, besides, the crew used to watch us very closely who were not chained down to the decks, lest we should leap into the water: and I have

Slave life

Source 1: Account of a feast

60 W. INDIES.—N. AMERICA. CAMPBELL.

1790. Negroes are naturally fond of gay dress, and tho' Part II. allowed sufficient working day cloaths, they buy fine cloaths for Sundays. It is very common, in Grenada and the Ceded Islands, to see field-negroes in white dimity jackets and breeches, and fine Holland shirts; and the women in muslins, and 4 or 5 India muslin Handkerchiefs on their heads, at 8 or 10 sh. each. He has often seen slaves give feasts to P. 146. 100 or 200 other slaves, with every rarity and wines, which he could not have given for £ 60 ster. and they very often borrow their master's plate and linen to entertain their friends. These feasts are very frequent amongst the slaves. When large hogs are killed by the plantation-negroes, they are commonly sold to the rest, in small quantities.

Extract of evidence given by Alexander Campbell to a Select Committee of the Privy Council. Taken from *Abridgement of the Minutes of Evidence taken before a Select Committee on the Slave Trade, 1789.* (DUL ref: Bamburgh O V 13)

Source 2: Account of punishments

General treatment of the negroes was very cruel. He lived neat the market-place of St. George's, at Grenada, where negroes were flogged every day by the particular orders of their masters; they were tied down upon the ground, every stroke brought blood, and very often took out a piece of the flesh. Saw them often in chains, thus marked. A French planter sent for a surgeon to cut off the leg of a negroe, who had run away. On the surgeon's refusing

120

AFRICA.—W. INDIES.

DALRYMPLE.

1790. fusing to do it, the planter took an iron bar and broke Part II. the leg in pieces, and then the surgeon cut it off.

~ This planter did many such acts of cruelty, and all with impunity. It did not appear to be the public P. 300. opinion that any punishment was due to him, for tho' it was generally known, he was equally well received in society afterwards as before.

Walked into the country at Grenada, almost daily. Many of the field-negroes bore the marks of the whip on their bodies, and several worked in the fields in chains. Whip is made of a thong of cow's hide, about half an inch in breadth, with large knots on it in several places. The day after his arrival at An-

Extract of evidence given by William Dalrymple to a Select Committee of the Privy Council. Taken from *Abridgement of the Minutes of Evidence taken before a Select Committee on the Slave Trade, 1789.* (DUL ref: Bamburgh O V 13)

Source 3: Account of work on a plantation

86 W. INDIES.—N. AMERICA. THOMAS.

1790. Negroes in Nevis appear in the field about 6 o'clock; work till about 9, when they breakfast; at $\frac{1}{4}$ before 10 resume their work, which is continued to 12, they are then discharged till 2, in this interval, out of crop, the major part of the gang are expected to bring a small bundle of grafs, during crop: the cattle fed with sliced cane-tops. At 2 o'clock they enter the field again, and work till 6, and about 7, if out of crop, a few bundles of grafs are again thrown. Once a week allowance given out to the head of each family, either at 12 at noon, or about 7 at night.

Part II. P. 248. Women with children at the head of

Extract of evidence given by Mr Thomas to a Select Committee of the Privy Council. Taken from *Abridgement of the Minutes of Evidence taken before a Select Committee on the Slave Trade, 1789.* (DUL ref: Bamburgh O V 13)

Source 4: Account of a slave sale

...instructive and interesting...
vey a more precise idea of the scene:—"The poor Africans, says he, who were to be sold, were exposed naked, in a large empty building like an open barn. Those who came with intention to purchase, minutely inspected them; handled them, made them jump, and stamp with their feet, and throw out their arms and their legs; turned them about; looked into their mouths; and, according to the usual rules of traffic with respect to cattle, examined them, and made them shew themselves in a variety of ways, to try if they were sound and healthy. All this was distressful and humiliating; but a wound still more severe was inflicted on the feelings, by some of the purchasers selecting only such as their

135

judgment led them to prefer, regardless of the bonds of nature and affection."

"The husband was taken from the wife, children separated from their parents, and the lover torn from his mistress."

Account of a slave sale taken from William Wilberforce, *A Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, addressed to the freeholders and other inhabitants of Yorkshire*, London, 1807. (DUL ref: Winterbottom M 80)

Source 5: The separation of families

On the 7th of August, 1823, nineteen individuals became escheats of the Crown; and in eleven days from that time, namely, on the 18th of August, 1823, they were all sold by public auction, with the exception of two who effected their escape, and the net proceeds of their sale were paid into the Treasury of Great Britain. The transaction, bad enough in itself, will be in no small degree aggravated, when we consider all the circumstances of it, and especially the cruel separation of families which was sanctioned by the agents of the Crown. The following are the particulars of this opprobrious sale, as they are given under the official signature of "Lionel Parke, Receiver General of his Majesty's Casual Revenue."

1. Quow, aged 55, father of Cæsar, sold to Thomas Louis, for £45.
2. Cæsar, aged 27, son of Quow, to Samuel Henery, for £90.
3. Orange, aged 67, mother of October, to B. T. Young, for £5.
4. October, aged 44, son of Orange, to C. Crouch, for £46.
5. Abel, aged 49, husband of Lubbah, and father of Thomas, Kitty, and Becky, sold to Henry Tudor, for £32. 10s.
6. Lubbah, aged 40, wife of Abel, and mother of his children, sold also to Henry Tudor, for £38. She appears to have been put up separately, and Mr. Tudor appears to have bid high in order to obtain her.
7. Thomas, aged 16, son of Abel and Lubbah, sold to H. Mozely, for £51.
8. Kitty, aged 13, daughter of Abel and Lubbah, to Joshua Levi, for £46. 10s.
9. Becky, aged 6, daughter of Abel and Lubbah, to Mr. Alsup, for £28.

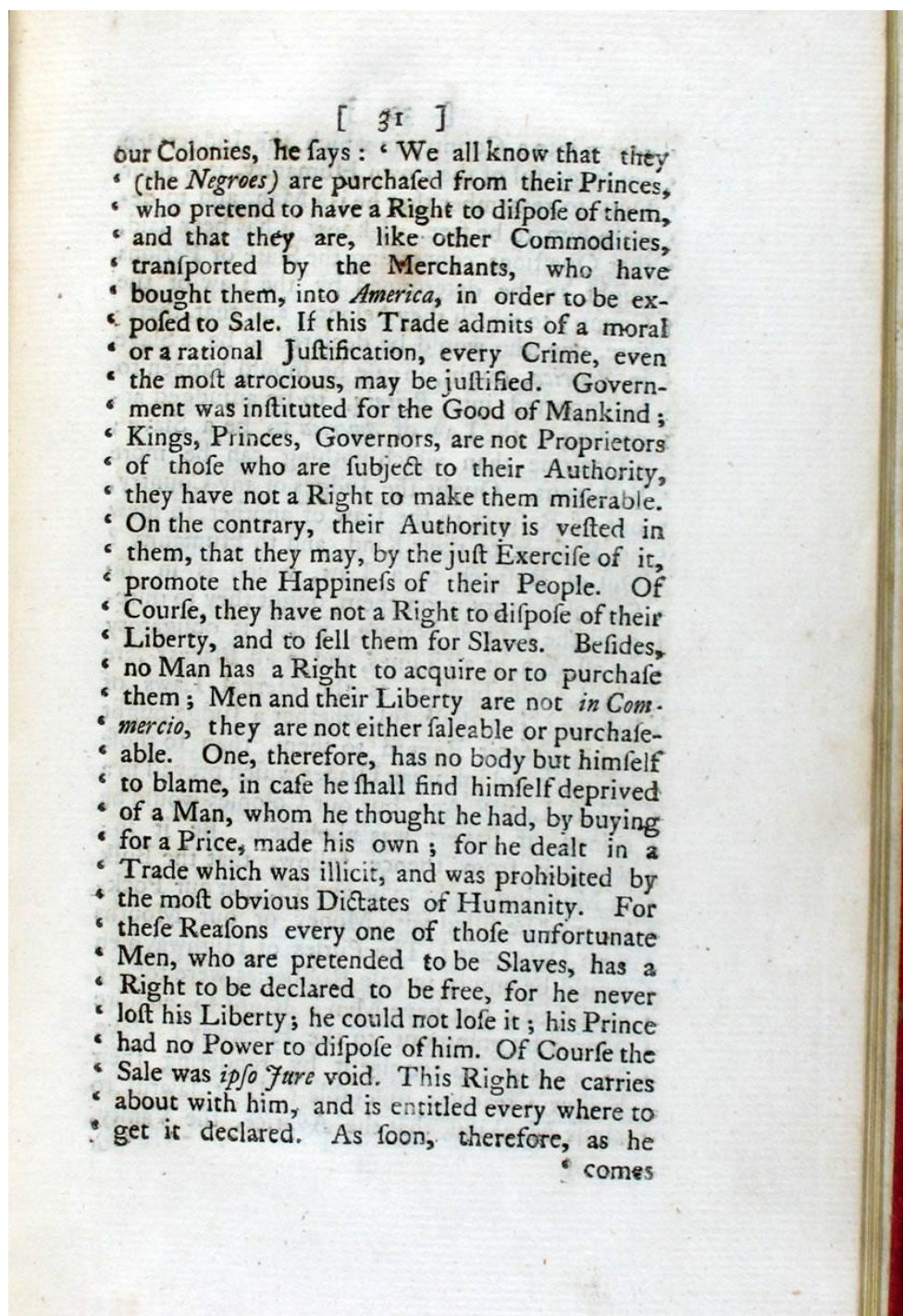
Again, Deborah, Sukey, Betsey, Polly, and Thomas, are brothers and sisters. Sukey has one child, Betsey three, and Polly one. They are thus disposed of,

10. Deborah, aged 28, is sold to W. Straker, for £15.
11. Sukey, aged 26, mother of Jas. William, } are sold, in one lot,
12. James William, aged 1½, son of Sukey, } to Thomas Howell,
13. Betsey, aged 34, mother of Caroline, } are sold, in one lot,
14. Grace, and Medorah, } to James Lealted,
15. Caroline, aged 4, daughter of Betsey, } for £50.
16. Grace, aged 2½, daughter of Betsey, }
16. Medorah, aged 9, daughter of Betsey, is sold to William Austin, for £51. 10s.

Extract from *The slave colonies of Great Britain; or A picture of negro slavery drawn by the colonists themselves*, London, 1826. (DUL ref: Routh 66 E 8/8)

The Anti-Slavery debate

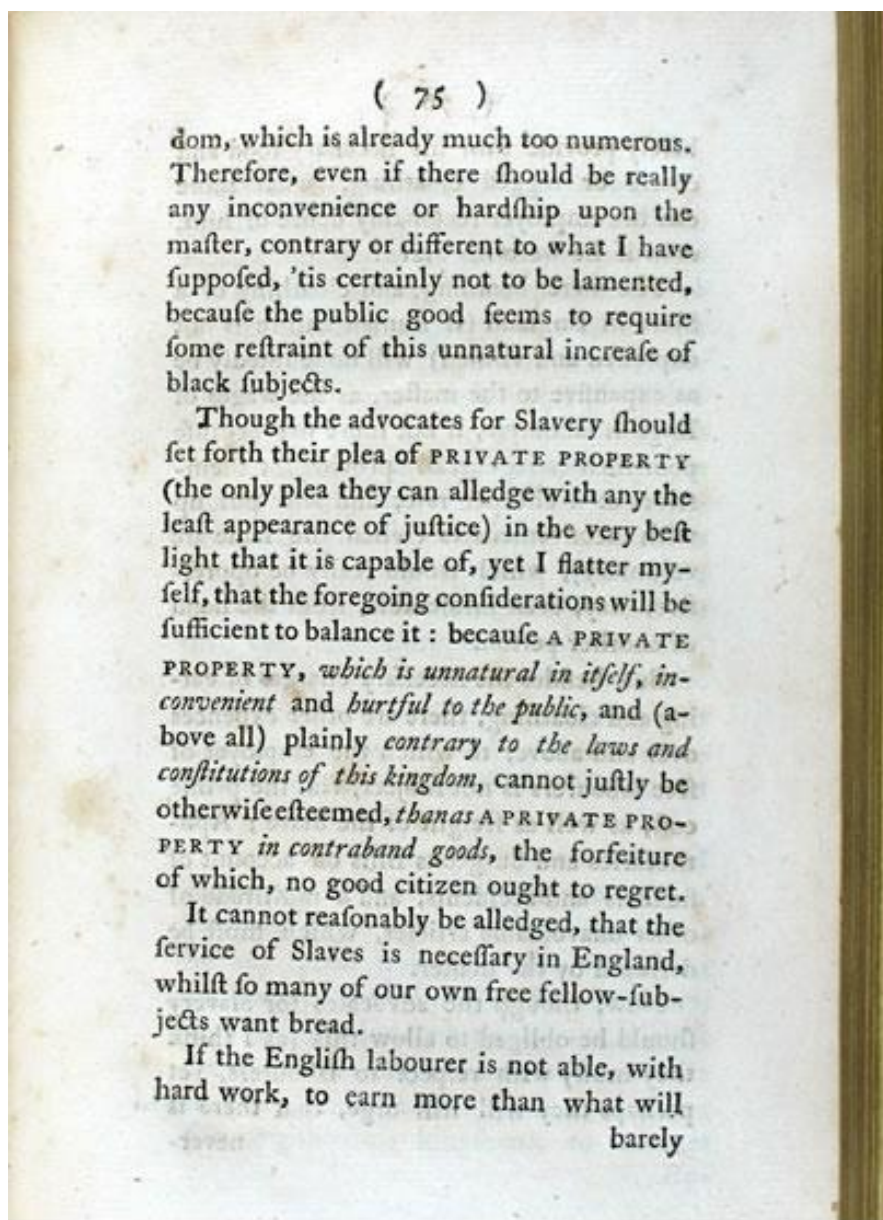
Source 1: An early attack on slavery



Extract from *A short account of that part of Africa, inhabited by the negroes* by Anthony Benezet, 1768. (DUL ref: Bamburgh O V 15)

Arguments against the institution of slavery first started to be heard in the 1760s voiced by men such as Granville Sharp and Anthony Benezet. The stance they took was simple: men and their liberty were not commercial products and therefore should not be sold. Today this belief is enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but in the 18th it was far from being accepted. Indeed, it was not until the 1780s that popular interest in the anti-slavery movement started to awaken.

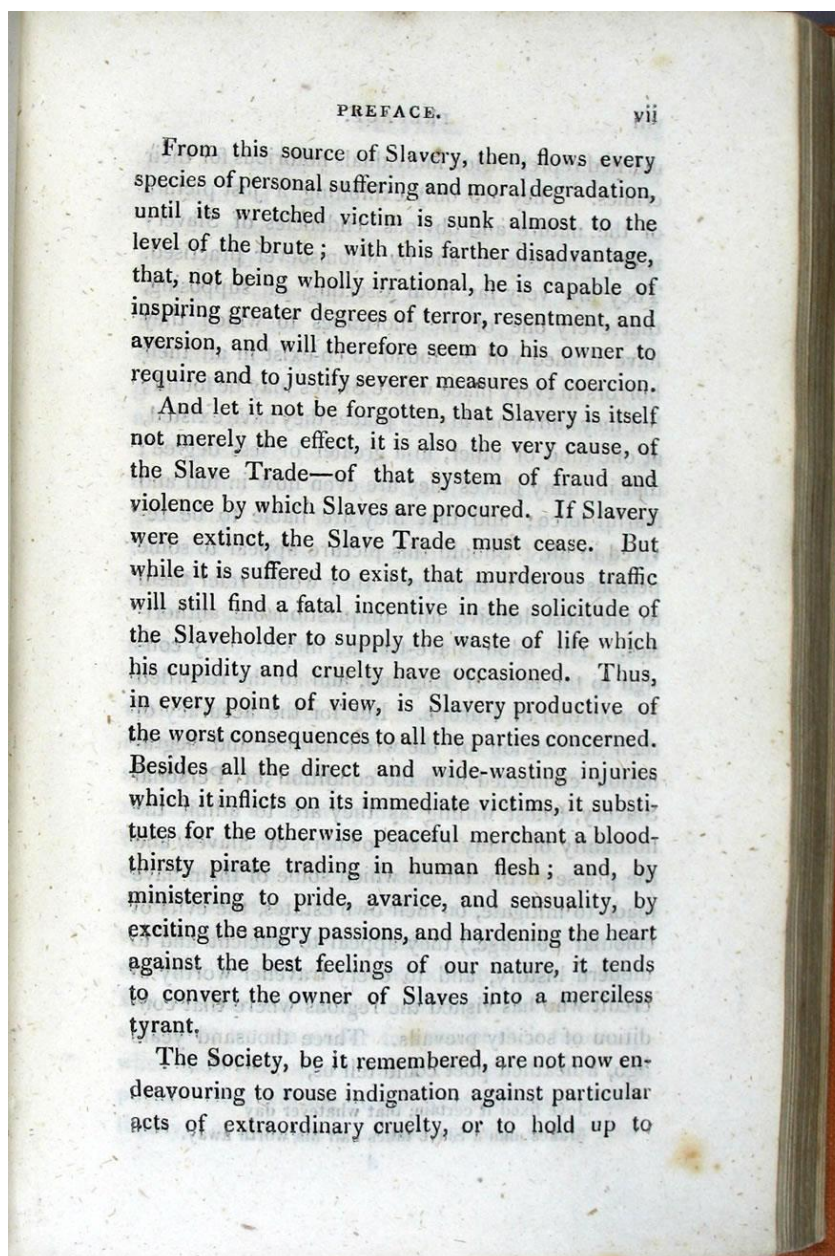
Source 2: The view of Granville Sharp



Extract from *A representation of the injustice and dangerous tendency of tolerating slavery* by Granville Sharp, 1769. (DUL ref: Bamburgh O V 17/1)

Granville Sharp was one of the first people in this country to speak out against slavery. Born in Durham, he moved to London and eventually took up a post in the civil service. In 1765, Sharp was at his surgeon brother's house when a black man called Jonathan Strong arrived. Strong was a slave who had been very badly beaten by his master, David Lisle, and was close to death. Sharp and his brother took him to hospital where it took him four months to recover. Once in full health, Lisle paid two men to recapture Strong. Sharp argued that since Strong was in England he could not be a slave since slavery did not exist in this country. In 1768, the Court accepted this argument and ruled in Strong's favour. Sharp later took up the cases of other slaves such as Thomas Lewis and James Somersett and in 1787 founded the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade with Thomas Clarkson.

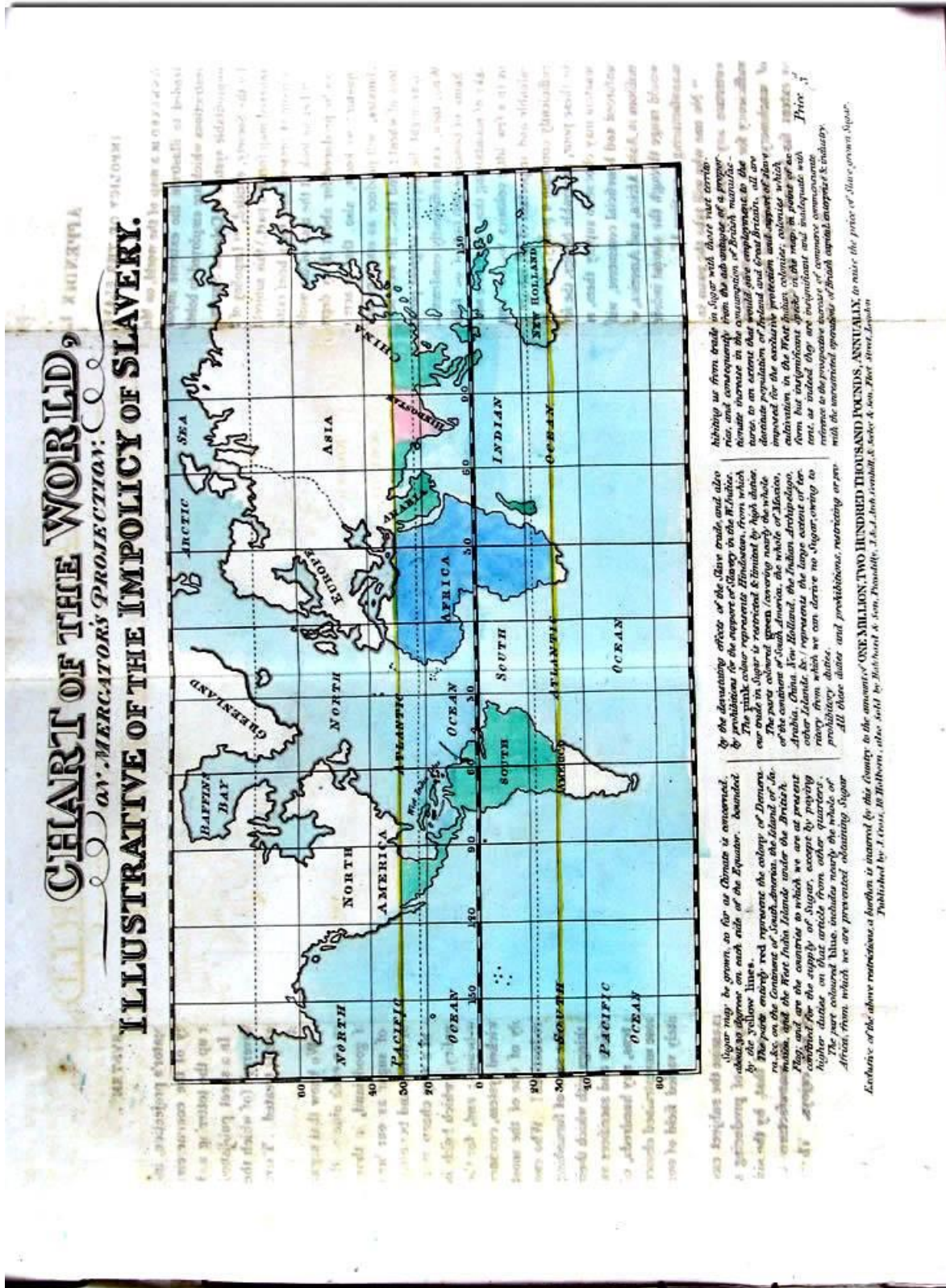
Source 3: The moral impact of slavery



Extract taken from *Substance of the debate in the House of Commons, on the 15th May, 1823, on a motion for the mitigation and gradual abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions, 1823.*

The anti-slavery campaigners were keen to point out the impact of slavery not only on the slaves but on all those involved in the trade. In this extract, the author writes that slavery causes men to become cruel and tyrannical. Slave owners become more and more terrifying and merchants become blood-thirsty pirates. The only way to end the suffering of all concerned is to put an end to slavery.

Source 4: An economic argument



One of the most common arguments used by the pro-slavery movement to defend slavery was to draw attention to the economic benefits that derived from it. Much of their literature refers to the value of the West Indies trade and its importance to the maritime industry. The anti-slavery campaigners tried hard to refute these arguments knowing they would hold sway with Parliament. This map was used by the anti-slavery movement to show that the duties used to protect the sugar producers of the West Indies made little economic sense.

Source 6: Resistance by slaves

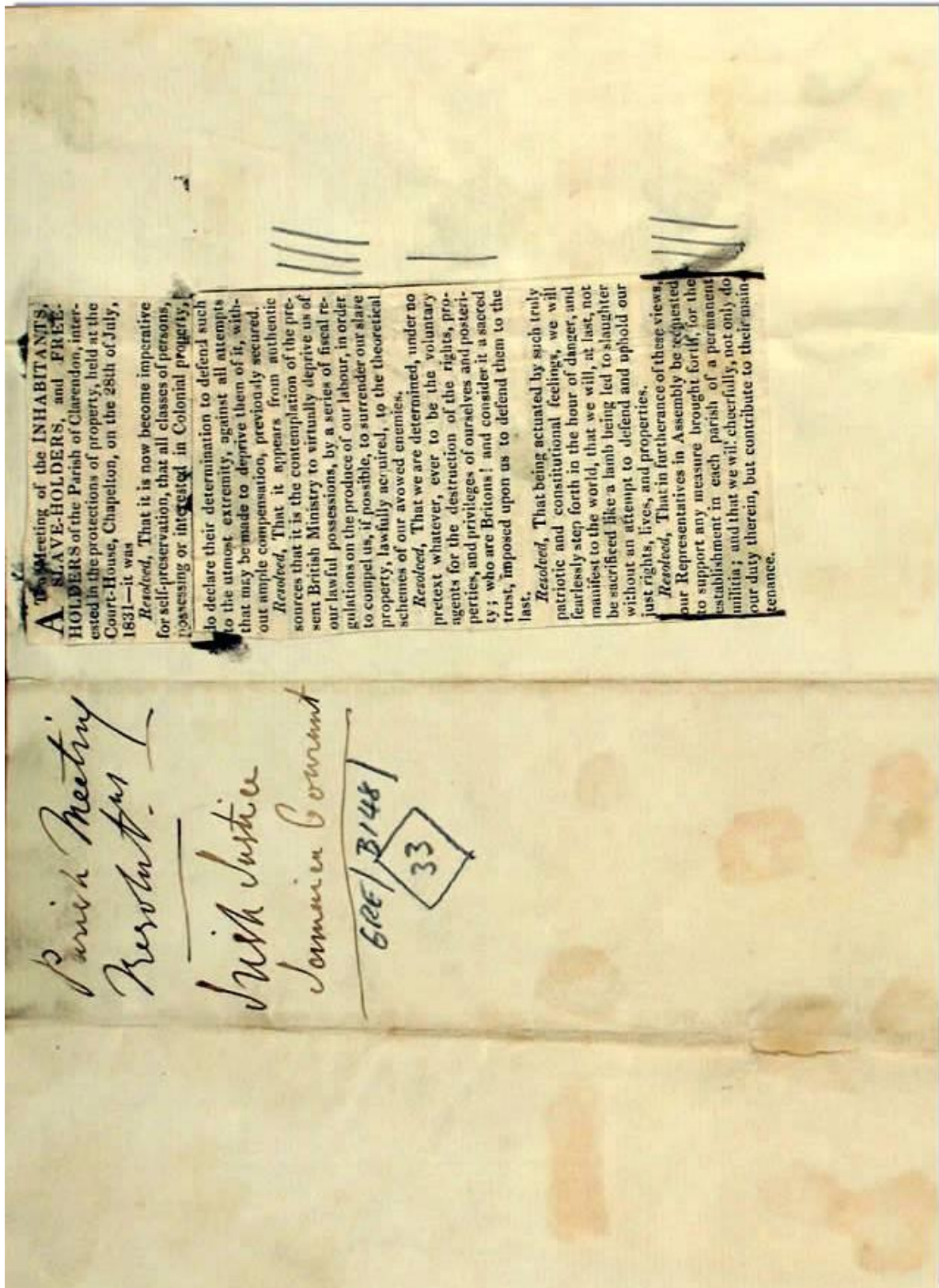


Illustration of an insurrection on board a slave ship taken from *An essay on colonization, particularly applied to the western coast of Africa, with some free thoughts on cultivation and commerce* by Carl Wadstrom, 1795. (DUL ref: Winterbottom + L45-46)

It is often easy to overlook the part played by the slaves themselves in the struggle to end slavery: their efforts overshadowed by the parliamentary campaigners and the actions of people in this country. However, this is a mistake. Resistance to enslavement often started on board the slave ships; with some slaves preferring to throw themselves overboard rather than endure enslavement. This caused many masters to shackle the male slaves together or to erect nets round the sides of the ship to prevent their escape.

The defence of slavery

Source 1: The rights of property



Newspaper cutting from the Jamaica Courant detailing the resolutions of a meeting held in July 1831. (DUL ref: GRE B148/33)

To many slave owners, slaves were merely chattels and should, therefore, be subject to the same laws as any other kind of property. At this meeting held in July 1831, the slave owners declared their intention to uphold their rights as Britons and make a stand against any measure designed to deprive them of their property.

Sources 2 and 3: Economic arguments submitted by the West India Planters and Merchants

The Committee of West India Planters and Merchants was formed in the late eighteenth century to represent the interests of plantation owners and traders who lived in the West Indies and in England (specifically around London). In the first few decades of its existence, much of its time was spent defending slavery and the slave trade. In this memorial found amongst the papers of Earl Grey, they argue that ending slavery would result in commercial disaster for the country.

Although they were unsuccessful in their attempts to prevent the abolition of slavery the Committee of West India Planters and Merchants did manage to win a substantial compensation package - they were given £20 million when slavery was abolished in 1833. After slavery was abolished, the Committee remained in existence and started to campaign against the removal of beneficial duties on West Indian sugar and encourage immigration of labourers from India, Africa and China to replace slave labour.

Source 2: An economic argument

if His Majesty's Ministers will admit it to be produced, will prove that in the most material measures ~~of importance~~ proposed, the Colonial Legislatures have actually given legislative authority, to what has been recommended, and have hesitated only in respect of some measures which, in their deliberate judgment, are in direct violation of the rights of property and of the welfare of the whole population of the Colonies whether slave or free.

That in this vital question is involved the existence of the property of a numerous body of His Majesty's subjects, and of a very large portion of British Commerce, and of British Naval power connected with these great and ancient Colonies, the destruction of which would effect the ruin of all connected with those Colonies, and reduce Great Britain from the Rank of the first Commercial Country in the World to a state of comparative destitution and insignificance.

That every measure which tends to the decrease of Cultivation in the British West India Colonies, and to their consequent destruction, will in the same degree promote the prosperity of Foreign Colonies and of the Foreign Slave trade for the extinction of which this Country has made and is making such costly sacrifices. If sugar is to be obtained from a Foreign Country, so far from one slave the less being employed, their number (beyond all reach of the control of this Country) will be largely increased, and from the demand for fresh hands (more especially in the Spanish and Portuguese Colonies) the Foreign Slave trade,

GRE/B57/12/19/1

West-India Committee Rooms,
60. Saint-James's Street,
25th February, 1833.

The Acting Committee of West-India Planters and Merchants respectfully invite your Lordship's attention to the enclosed Statement, exhibiting the case of a large class of your fellow-subjects who are wholly unrepresented in the British Legislature.

The West-India Colonists do not propose to vindicate the system of Slavery; but they consider that (to use the words of Lord Stowell) "if it be a sin, it is a sin in which the Country has had its full share of guilt, and ought to bear its proportion of the redemption."

The Colonists are themselves ready to bear their share of any national sacrifice which may be required for the purpose of cautiously substituting a better system, if such should be the national determination; but they mean to show, by the accompanying Paper, that Great Britain is herself responsible for the establishment and actual existence of Colonial Slavery — that with the view of extending the Market for her African Trade she passed Laws and made grants of Land expressly enjoining cultivation in the Colonies by Slave Labour — and that thus, through the instrumentality of her subjects, all eagerly contending for participation in the traffic, she gradually peopled the West-India Colonies

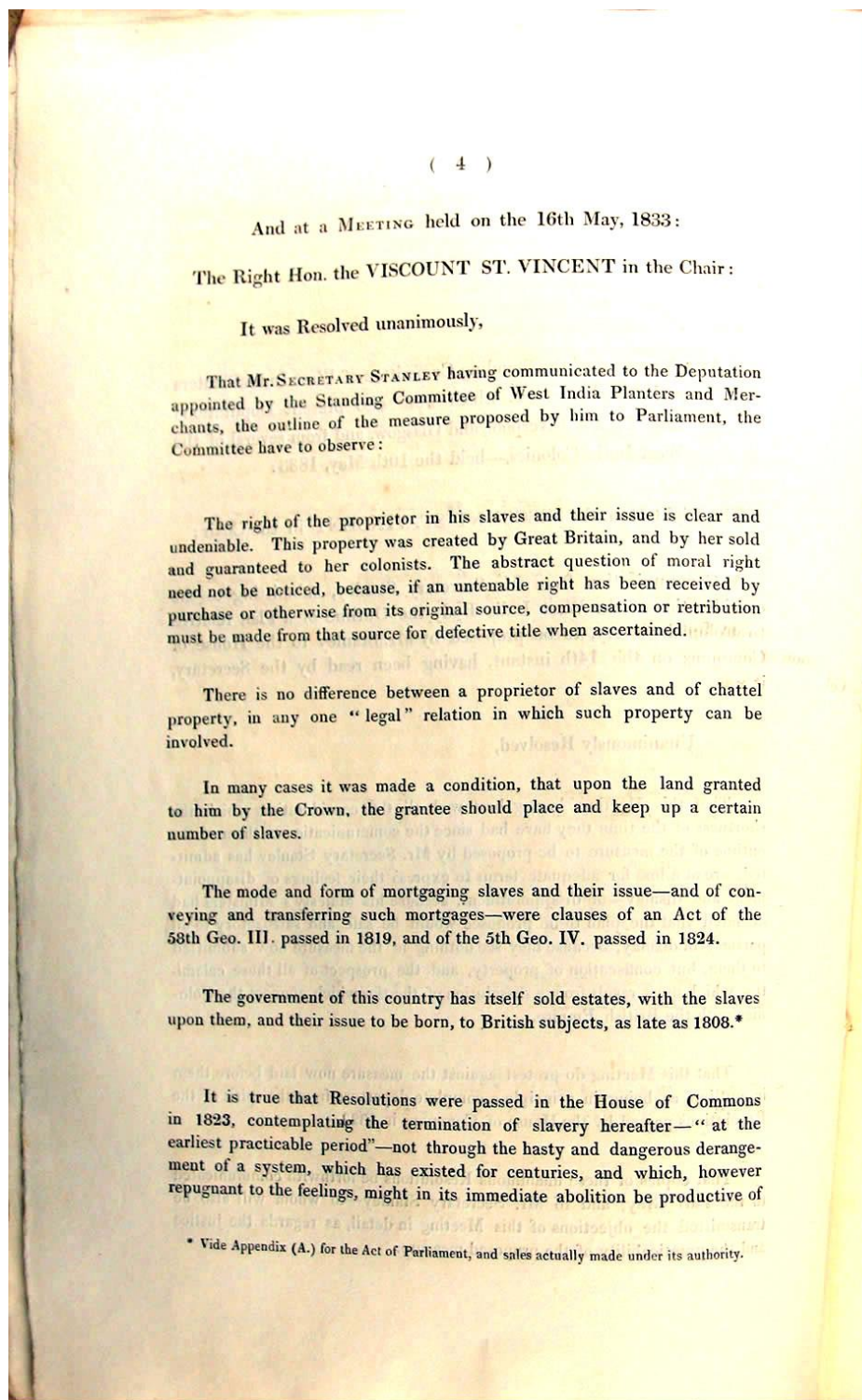
Source 3b: A shared sin continued

Colonies with slaves and received the value of them in money: consequently that any measure of Legislative interference tending to impair or endanger the value of Property so acquired, must either be accompanied by adequate compensation, or give a death-blow to that confidence in the national faith and character which has hitherto been the sole support of private property in this Country.

But without reference to the just claim of the Planter to Compensation, there are other considerations which ought to suggest caution to the Statesman and the Philanthropist when dealing with the question of Slavery.

It will be admitted that, under any change of system, the continuance of active Cultivation in the Colonies by Europeans is not only of vital importance to the interests of the Mother Country, but indispensably necessary to the desired object of raising the Negro in the scale of society: while, therefore, it remains unascertained by actual experiment that the Negro will give continuous labour, and for reasonable wages, as a free man, — and while the weight of evidence and experience discourages the expectation of his willingly consenting to do so, — there must be the greatest danger that any hasty change of system, unaccompanied by regulations calculated to ensure the Slaves becoming an industrious peasantry,

Source 4: Resolutions of the planters and merchants



Extract of resolutions passed by the West India Planters and Merchants, 1833. (DUL ref: GRE/ B148/52)

Like many of the other sources, this extract of resolutions passed by the West India Planters and Merchants in 1833, demonstrates their fundamental belief that slaves were chattels and should be treated as such. What is distressing about this source is that nowhere in the entire document are slaves referred to as people - only as a form of property.

Source 5: Graphs showing level of imports and exports

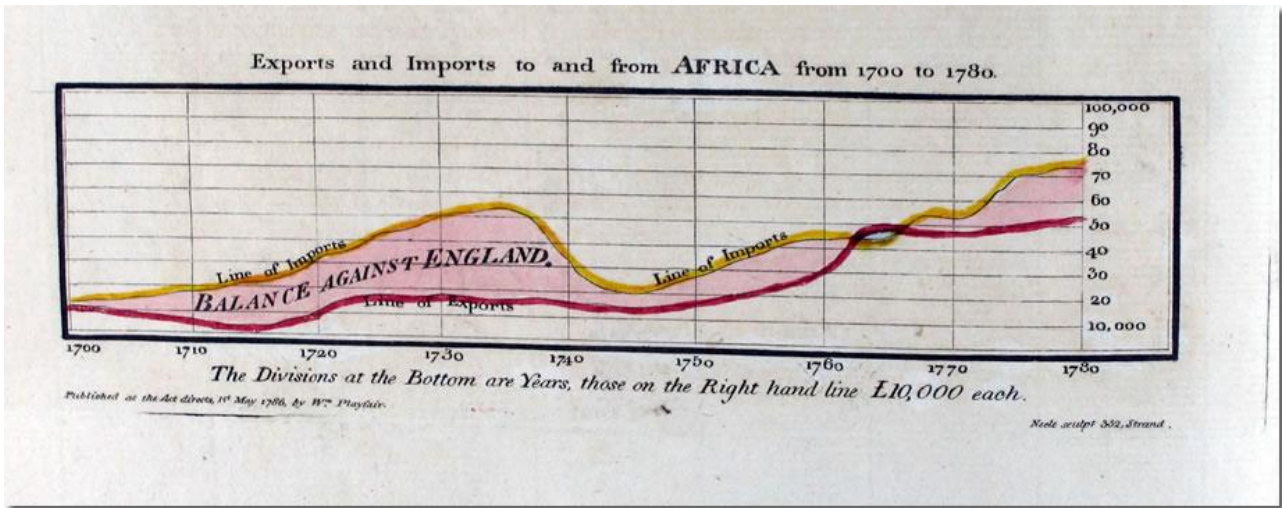
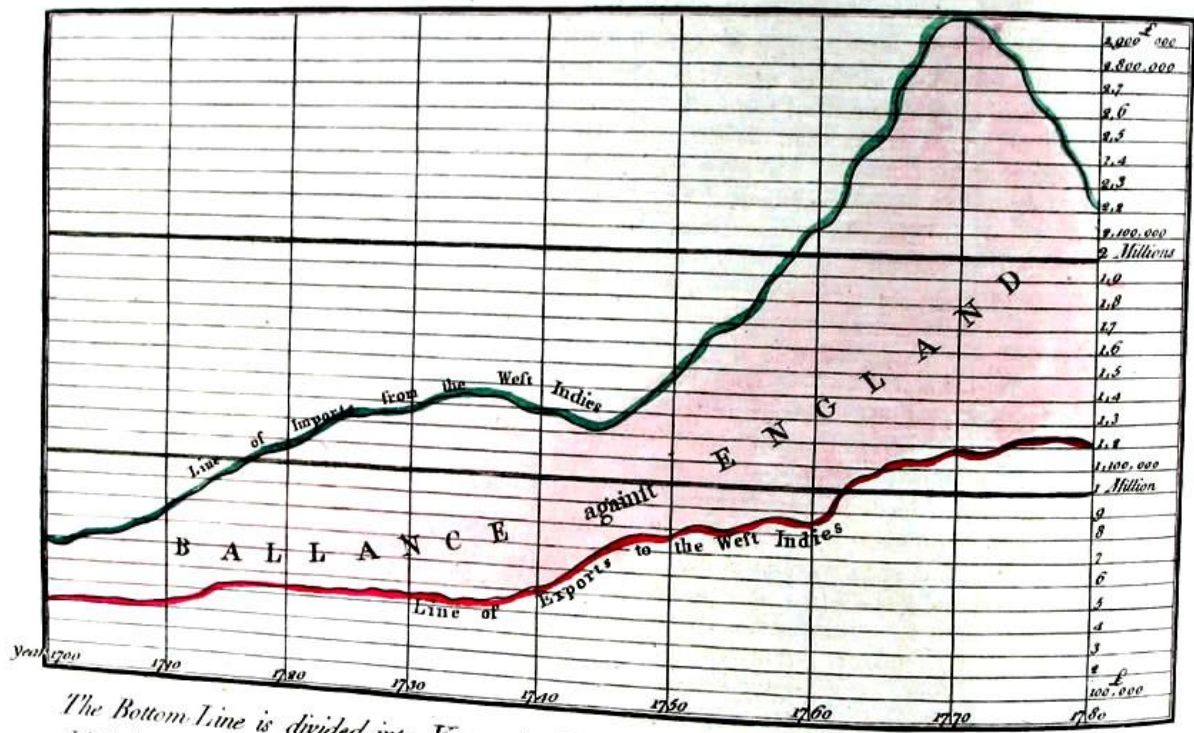


CHART of the EXPORTS and IMPORTS to and from the WEST INDIES From the Year 1700 to 1780 by W Playfair



to Face Page 15.4

Published as the Act direct 10th Aug^r 1786

Graphs taken from William Playfair, *The commercial and political atlas*, London, 1786. (DUL ref: Winterbottom K12)