

Source 1- Document

Runaway Advertisements

Boston News-Letter, December 10, 1705. P.4

Boston News-Letter, April 22, 1706. P.4

Images from:

<https://stirlingcentrescottishstudies.wordpress.com/2015/10/01/john-campbell-and-the-runaway-slave-advertisement>

These two newspaper clippings are from the advertisement section in a 1705 edition of the *Boston News-Letter*. The first tells the public to be on the lookout for two missing people who were traveling together. Peter was an enslaved black man whose master was “William Pepperil” (his name seems to be misspelled) and Issaac Pumatuck was a Native American who was in the British military or navy. They somehow came together and escaped in 1705. Another newspaper clipping over a year later says that both men were caught and returned to their “owner.” They made it all the way from Kittery in the Province of Maine to South Carolina before they were caught.

Isaac Pumatuck may have been Wabanaki, though the clipping doesn’t provide his tribal identity. It may seem strange that he was running away, since he was not enslaved. It seems like he ran away from either the British navy or military (“Her Majesties Service”). In 1705, “Her Majesty” was England’s Queen Anne. Men were sometimes conscripted, meaning they were forced to fight for England whether they wanted to or not.

It is interesting that the men ran south, instead of north, where later generations of enslaved people would seek freedom. Southern plantations and farms were especially known for their brutal treatment. It is possible that nowhere was safe for them. In 1705, slavery was legal in all the American colonies.

This is one of the first slave runaway advertisements to appear in an American newspaper. They were used many times in the years to come. Runaway ads usually described the person or people in detail and offered a reward for their capture.

Source 2- Image

Portrait of Sir William Pepperell

1745

Painting by John Smibert [1688-1751]

Gift of George Atkinson Ward, 1821. 106806

Image from Peabody Essex Museum. Photo by Mark Sexton.

This is a portrait of Sir William Pepperell, who was from Kittery in the Province of Maine. It is an oil painting by the artist John Smibert, and was made in 1745.

Pepperell was one of the wealthiest men in New England. He was born in 1696 and died in 1759. This painting has the words “The Victor of Louisburg” because he was a commander at the Siege of Louisburg in 1745, during the French and Indian wars. He was a Lieutenant General.

In this painting, Pepperell is pointing to a battle scene in the lower right background. Cannonballs are falling on a French fort. This painting celebrated Pepperell’s military career.

We know Pepperell was a slave owner. In 1705, Pepperell or someone working for him placed an advertisement in a newspaper seeking the return of an enslaved man named Peter who ran away from him. Peter risked punishment and death to escape from the Pepperell family.

In later years, his loyalty to the English Crown put him on the losing side of the American Revolution and his family was exiled from the country.

Source 3- Artifact

Leg and Wrist Shackles

Ca. 1840

Shackles on loan from the National Park Service, Gettysburg.

These shackles are from around 1840—25 years before slavery was outlawed in America. They are not from Maine, but shackles like these were used across the country to bind enslaved people's arms and legs and restrain them.

Enslaved people constantly resisted, although they faced extraordinary danger and constraints on freedom. In Maine resistance came in small everyday actions as well as through the act of seeking freedom. The fact that so many ran away, risking violent punishment and death, shows the cruelty of their lives in Maine. Some were treated brutally, some just wanted freedom at whatever cost.

Maine had a colonial slave market as early as 1650. Slaves disembarked from ships docking at York, Maine for the local market. By the 1754 census, there were approximately 154 enslaved men and women, with roughly a two-to-one ratio of males to females, in the District of Maine. Massachusetts outlawed slavery in 1783.

Source 4- Image

Diagram of the slave decks of the ship “Brookes”

1788

Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade London, England

Image from the Library of Congress

Maine-made ships participated in the slave trade—whether carrying slave-made products or actual enslaved people. This diagram is from the British parliament’s Regulated Slave Trade Act of 1788. They took the measurements of a slave ship and filled it with images of men, women, and children. There are about 450 people packed into the ship in this drawing. On a voyage in 1786, this ship actually carried 609 people. Can you imagine that many humans in one space?

In the forced migration called the Middle Passage, Africans were packed into ships like this. They did not know where they were going. About 15 percent of people did not make it to the Americas. They died of thirst, hunger, overheating, and violence. Many Africans resisted, whether through mutiny (trying to take over the ship) or committing suicide by refusing to eat or jumping overboard.

Source 5- Document

Bates Mill Cotton Invoice

1854

Photograph by Anelise Shrout.

Bates Manufacturing Company Records, Lewiston Public Library, Lewiston, Maine.

Vocab and Information

Bates Manufacturing Company was a cotton mill in Lewiston, Maine.

Brokerage can mean a fee or commission charged by a broker (someone who buys and sells things for their client).

Drayage is the transport of goods over a short distance in the shipping industry. Drayage is usually part of a longer overall move. For example, you may carry something thousands of miles by a ship, but you still need to carry it from the ship to a warehouse.

This is in invoice, or bill, recording the sale of cotton to the Bates Manufacturing Company in June, 1854. The Bates Manufacturing Co. (or Bates Mill) was a large cotton mill in Lewiston, Maine.

Bates was one of many Maine cotton mills that bought raw, unprocessed bales of cotton from the south and used it to make fabric and finished products. Bates was famous for its woven cotton bedspreads.

The 63,795 pounds of cotton shown on this invoice came to Maine on a shipment from the New Orleans, Louisiana. In 1854, slavery was illegal in Maine but legal in Louisiana. This cotton was picked by enslaved people. The fact that slavery was not allowed in Maine did not stop Maine businesses from profiting from slavery.

Enslaved labor kept the prices of cotton low, meaning Northern businesses could make larger profits, build more mills, and hire more workers. Many Maine industrial towns grew large and thrived because of this. The Maine shipping industry also profited from its links to ports in the South.

Source 6- Artifact

Sugar Bowl and Tongs

Sugar Bowl

Staffordshire, England

ca. 1820

Maine State Museum, Gift of James H. Phelan, 70.18.9

Sugar Tongs

Made by Enoch Moulton

Portland, Maine

1805-1820

Maine State Museum, Gift of Charles Burden, 80.111.65

This ceramic sugar bowl and set of silver tongs were used in Maine. The blue package is sugar, which used to be sold in hard cones wrapped in blue paper sealed with wax. This image also shows white sugar broken up from a cone.

Mainers have used cane sugar for hundreds of years. At the time of Maine's statehood, that sugar was a product of the work of enslaved people. Not only did Mainers eat sugar, but the Maine economy benefited from sugar sales and shipping profits.

Before cotton dominated American agriculture, sugar was the main product of slave plantations in the Caribbean and Spanish Americas. Sugar exploded in popularity as slave labor made it cheaper in the early 1700s. By 1800, sugar growth and production in the West Indies accounted for more than 80% of the trade in enslaved people and nearly half of all seagoing shipping.

Sugar comes from sugar cane, which was a hard and dangerous crop that needed work six days a week. Each plantation had a sugar mill that crushed and boiled the cane to extract the sugar, leaving molasses as a by-product. Maine timber fueled the fires that boiled the sugar.

Enslaved laborers were maimed, burned, and killed trying to grow and process sugar. Their average life span was as short as seven years on a plantation. In the sugar colonies, death rates exceeded birth rates. That meant that the only reason slavery survived was the transatlantic slave trade. Plantation owners kept a steady stream of new people coming in to replace those who were worked to death. Cakes and sweetener for coffee and tea were placed above human life.