

Africans and African Americans

Maro (Barrow): Parkman purchases slave from father, 1728

Note: This advertisement suggests the possible origins of the slave, Maro, whom Parkman bought from his father. Elias Parkman was Ebenezer Parkman's brother.

A parcel of likely Negro Boys, and one Girl, arrived from Nevis, and were brought from Guinea, to be Sold by Mr. Henry Richards, at the House of Mr. Elias Parkman, Mast-maker at the North End, where the Negroes may be seen. (New-England Weekly Journal, Mar. 25, 1728, [2]. The advertisement also appear in the issue of April 1.

1728 August 8 (Thursday). I entered into Obligation to my Father for the Negro Barrow. My Father gave me 5£. I pay'd him 3£ and gave a promissory Bill to pay 66£, the whole making 74£ which was the price of him.

1728 August 9 (Friday). I rode to Cambridge, Barrow, alias Maro, running on foot. Though somewhat rainy, it clear'd away after noon. After 4 o'Clock I set out, my Self on one horse and the Negro on the other.

1728 August 27 (Tuesday). Under the Engagements of my Family by reason of our want to Help, our Negro being New, I am much taken off from my Work, but I trust in God it may be better with me and more leasure ere long.

1729 December 5. It is a Day of great Darkness and Distress with both me and my Family. My own Weakness and Infirmitys increasing daily upon me and trouble of my heart greatly enlarged by my Disorders mocking the force of all Medical methods with me hitherto. My Wife also, under much Indisposition and trouble with her Breast. The Children likewise afflicted with Cold and very peevish under their uneasinesses. But Especially Maro at the Point of Death. The waves and Billows roll and roar out of the Deeps. I would Cry: Lord hear my Voice! Let not the Water floods overflow us, neither let the Deep Swallow us up!

1729 December 6. The Hand of God is still heavier upon us. Exceeding weak, low and faint, my Self, almost ready to lie down under my prevailing Infirmities. But when both my Flesh and Heart fail, God is still the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for Ever. But Dark as it has been with us it is become much Darker at or about the Sun setting. The Sun of Maro's Life Sat. The First Death in my Family! God enable me to See His Sovereign Mind, and Comport with his holy Will!

As my Servant is Summon'd to go before, So God only knows whether his Master is not Shortly to follow after; and so the former to prove as an Harbinger to the latter. O that the whole Family may be getting ready, in another Sort than ever heretofore! But Especially O that God would enable Me to Live apace, Seeing I am Dying apace; to give Diligence, to work with my might, and to stand Waiting all the few Dayes of my appointed time, till God shall call; that

when I hear the Summons, I may, with Serenity, Say, Speak Lord, thy Servant heareth, may Depart in Peace, and See the Salvation of God! While God is Stripping me of Outward Enjoyments I humbly trust God will let me have more of Himself and bestow more of Spiritual, invaluable Blessings. Every Comfort is that to us, that God makes it, and is so long with us as He pleases to Continue it.

“Negro Boys in Masquerade,” 1740

1740 August 28 (Thursday). [Cambridge.] A.M. at Sir Gay’s Chamber where was Mr. Obadiah Ayres, Mr. Samuel Coolidge, etc. Din’d at Sir Princes Chamber. P.M. Negro Boys in Masquerade.

Coollidge, Samuel: dragged by a negro, 1745

1745 July 3 (Wednesday). I din’d in the Hall. N.B. Poor Mr. Samuel Coollidge -- his Distractions and Deliriums -- pluck’d out of the presidents Chair in the Meeting House and dragg’d out on the Ground by a negro, like a Dead Dogg in presence of all the Assembly. Most piteous Sight!

Note: Samuel Coolidge (HC 1724), the former schoolmaster at Westborough and other places, who had become a public charge; *Sibley’s Harvard Graduates* 7:326-331.

Negro man from Mendon murders mistress, 1745

1745 September 16 (Monday). Captain Fay told me that a Negro man from Mendon was committed to gaol last night for murthering his Mistress.

1745 October 17 (Thursday). N.B. The Negro that murder’d his Mistress at Mendon, was hanged, and Mr. Campbell preach’d the Lecture at Worcester.

Pito: slave to Mrs. Parkman, Sr., and brother Samuel

1744 April 3 (Tuesday). To Boston. My Kinsman confin’d for Months past. I think ever since the 22d of last October and not able to go out of his Chamber yet. My aged Mother there with him to be Company for him. Pito carry’d back my Horse to Cambridge.

1745 May 15 (Wednesday). I rode to Boston Early -- broke fast at my Honor’d Mother’s (who is in much Comfort, except her Trouble about her Negro, Pito, who gives her much Trouble).

1746 April 21 (Monday). After Sundry Visits in the Day I met my Brethren at sister Willards to read our Honoured Mothers Last Will and Testament, and attend upon the Duty Consequent,

Particularly we valued the negro Pito: and as my Mother had given him leave to choose which of us should be his Master, he chose Brother Samuel -- who took possession of him.

1757 May 24 (Tuesday). At Boston visit Cousen *Procter*, who has the Care of the Alms House; but we put up at Brother *Samuels*. He keeps a stable and an Horse but is gone a Journey to Nottingham: N.B. *Pito* dyed last Friday, at *Chelsey*.

“Negro Girl” murders bastard child, 1747

1747 May 5 (Tuesday). N.B. Most sorrowful News from Brookfield, Captain Buckminsters Negro Girl having murder’d her Bastard Child last Lords Day.

“We hear from *Brookfield*, that on the third Instant, in the Evening, a Negro Woman belonging to Capt. *Thomas Buckminster*, was deliver’d alone of a Bastard Child, which she put into the Fire and cover’d over with Coals and Ashes, and it was almost entirely consumed when discovered.” *Boston Evening-Post*, May 11, 1747, Issue 613, p. [2].

Capt. Stansbury’s Negro, 1750

1750 April 25 (Wednesday). I rode to Mr. Jonas Brighams to Send an Answer to a Letter from my Brother William concerning Captain Stansbury’s Negro. But they Set out Early -- however I put on hastily after them and proceeded down the Road till overtook Mr. Twitchell with the Team.

Barrett’s “Negro man” in barn that was blown down, 1751

1751 February 13 (Wednesday). I rode to Hopkinton to See Mr. Barret in his Sickness -- find he is much better. I din’d there. The Desolations in Hopkinton by the great Storm much greater than among us. Mr. Barretts, Mr. Price’s, and 10 or 11 Barns more in that Town blown down. Mr. Barretts Cattle, and his Negro Man also in the Barn at that Instant.

Roxbury: “Negro man” of Parkman’s kin - death, 1751

1751 March 26 (Tuesday). There was a Mr. Childs at Madam Dudley’s -- put up my Horse at Cousen Cowels -- visited my Kinsmans Widow -- Roxbury, her Negro man dy’d to Day -- little Elias very ill of a Fever. Lodg’d at Brother Samuels.

1751 March 27 (Wednesday). My Brother Parkman, Cozen Cowel and I attended the Funeral of poor Roxbury. I lodg’d at Brother Parkmans, and rejoice in his New Spouse.

Primus: Phinehas Rice's Negro, 1754

1754 July 6 (Saturday). Sent an Answer to Mr. Smiths second Letter by Primus -- Mr. Phinehas Rice's Negro.

Scipio, Ebenezer Parkman's brother Alexander's Negro: "very low," 1755

1755 May 28 (Wednesday). Mr. Checkley preach'd the Election Sermon.... Poor old Scipio (one of my Brother Alexanders Negro Men) very low. Instructed and prayed with him.

Codman, Capt., of Charleston: poisoned by a Negro, 1755

1755 July 4 (Friday). Captain Codman of Charleston was poison'd lately by a Negro.

1755 September 22 (Monday). In the Morning Mr. Jeduthun Baldwin here -- he came last Night -- is going to Crown Point -- and takes leave accordingly. N.B. He tells me the Negro Man and Negro Woman who murder'd Captain Codman of Charlestown, were Executed last Thursday, at Cambridge. The Man was hang'd, and was afterwards to be hang'd in Irons on Charlestown Neck: the Woman was burnt to Death, a frightfull Spectacle! May all hear and fear! especially to be punish'd Eternally in the Flames of Hell! May my own Soul be suitably affected with the Thought!

Gosport, Mr. Gardner's "Servant," 1755

1755 December 26 (Friday). The Negro Gosport, Mr. Gardners Servant here, and din'd here.

Sister Rebecca's Negro woman dies, 1756

1756 February 26 (Thursday). Visited my Sister *Rebecca*. N.B. her Negro woman dead Since I was last there.

"little Negro Boy": dies at Lt. Maynard's, 1756

1756 September 13 (Monday). *Mr. Eliphalet Adams's* little son of 3 and 1/2 dyed of Fever and Flux, as did a little Negro Boy of Lt. *Maynards*.

1756 September 14 (Tuesday). A.M. at the Funeral of Mr. Eliphalet *Adams's* Child; P.M. at the Burying of Lt. Maynards little Negro Boy. At Each House another Child is taken with the Distemper, and we have great reason to fear its Spreading.

Essex, Mr. Mason's slave: father of Mercy Maynard's child, 1756

1756 October 6 (Wednesday). N.B. Old Mr. Maynard and his Children in much sorrow intermixed with their Joy. Neighbour *Nathans* Wife is brought to bed and has a Son -- but *Mercy* likewise and the Latter has a black one. Thought to be by Mr. *Masons Essex*. A most grievous and Sore Evil! God grant her Repentance and her Wicked Companion also: and Support the wounded Relatives, and give to each of that Grace which may be sufficient for them!

Scipio and Titus: slaves of Rev. Samuel Barrett of Hopkinton, 1759

1759 January 9 (Tuesday). Capt. *Wood* and I rode to visit Mr. Barrett and his son; They and theirs having gone through a variety of Changes, especially the Death of one Negro man (*Scipio*) and sickness of another (*Titus*) but great Mercys intermixed; their House saved from Burning -- but especially young Mr. Barrett a son lately born *John*.

Nero: Daniel Wheeler's slave, 1760

1760 December 1 (Monday). I rode to Mr. Daniel Wheelers to engage *Nero* for my son Baldwin.

Baldwin, Jeduthun (Parkman's son-in-law): buys Negro from Major Curtis of Sudbury, 1761

1761 February 20 (Friday). At Night in the Rain comes my son Baldwin and a Negro he has bought of Major Curtis of Sudbury -- a Chair and 2 Horses.

1761 February 21 (Saturday). A Rainy Morning. About 10 cleared. My Baldwins and their Negro Set out on their Journey.

Allen, Mrs.: her "Negro Boy," 1761

1761 May 17 (Sunday). P.M. Mrs. *Allen*, her sons and Negro Boy here.

Hope, Capt. Maynard's "Negro Girl": blamed for death of Maynard child, 1765

1765 July 30 (Tuesday). At Eve Jonathan Cook came to me with a Sorrowful Message from Capt. Maynard that his youngest Child was drowned and dead and prayed me to go over. I went hastily. Found the Child laid out as a Corps. It was little *Robert-Breck Maynard* in his 16th

Month -- fell into a Kittle of Wort (not hot) about 4 o'Clock p.m., no one in the room; *Hope*, the Negro Girl, who had the Care of him, was gone to get Apples: when She came back, She pulled him out -- but he expired. May God Sanctifie His holy Hand! I prayed, Counsell'd them all; supped and then returned.

Surcomb, Mr.: sends "his Negro" with chaise for Mrs. Parkman, 1766

1766 May 30 (Friday). Mr. Surcomb sends his Negro with Chaise, in which Mrs. P_____ goes. I take our own (which we have for our Journey) and packing and taking Leave go to Mr. Surcombs to dinner.

Neptune, Mr. Loyd's "young Negro" to be buried, 1768

1768 October 1 (Saturday). At Night came *Sarah* and *Suse* from *Boston*. They inform that Six more Men of War are come in to *Nantasket* -- that the People of *Boston* are in Consternation. My son *Samuel* is gone to live at Mr. *Hopestill Capon's* for a Year. That *Neptune*, Mr. *Loyd's* young Negro is to be buried this Day.

Arthur: executed for rape, 1768

1768 October 10 (Monday). [Worcester.] Called at Mr. *Eaton's*. Dined at Mr. *Sergeants* (Gratis) -- at Mr. *Maccartys* -- he perswades me to call and see the poor Condemned Criminal, *Arthur*, of but 18 years. Convers'd and prayed with him.

1768 October 20 (Thursday). The Day of the Execution of *Arthur*, who was condemned for committing a Rape: but I could not go to *Worcester*.

1768 October 23 (Sunday). P.M. read Rom. 11. Preached on Eccl. 7.17 occasioned by the Death of *Arthur*, Negro, executed last Thursday.

Eccl. 7.17: Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?

1768 December 21 (Wednesday). Mr. *Cushing* from *Ashburnham* -- and lodges here. He brings me Mr. *Maccartys* sermon on the Execution of *Arthur*, from the Author.

Maccarty, Thaddeus (1721-1784). *The Power and Grace of Christ Display'd to a Dying Malefactor: A Sermon Preached at Worcester, October the Twentieth, 1768, Being the Day of the Execution of Arthur, a Negro of About 21 Years Old, for a Rape*. Boston: Kneeland and Adams, 1768. Evans 10952

Maynard, Capt.: sells "his three Negroes," 1769

1769 February 23 (Thursday). Capt. Maynard, I hear, has sold his three Negroes.

Barrett, Samuel, merchant of Boston: "waited on by his Black," 1769

1769 November 13 (Monday). Mr. *Samuel Barrett* of Boston Merchant returning from a long Journey, waited on by his Black, calls to See me.

Quilla, Rev. Nathan Stone's Negro: illness

1771 June 18 (Tuesday). To Southborough Ministers Meeting. But met Mr. Stone overwhelmed in Trouble, going to Hardwick, his Daughter Bangs in Travel and could not be delivered. I went to his House -- Miss *Judith* ill: Quilla very low.

1771 October 1 (Tuesday). Mr. Bangs of Hardwick came from Mr. *Stones of Southborough* to Mr. Hannaniah Parker with a message to me, which Mr. Parker sent by his daughter to go to them in great Trouble by dangerous sickness. Whereupon I rode down at Evening, found Miss *Judith* very low of Cholic, Strangury etc. and Miss *Joanna* ill of Throat Distemper. *Quilla* their Negro Women, also, very low of Consumption. Prayed with them -- but went with Dr. Parker to Col. Brigham and lodged there.

1771 October 3 (Thursday). My Sister Cushing and her Grand Daughter Miss Lydia here. They came from Mr. Stones. Miss *Judith* is living, but is dispaired of: Miss *Joanna* worse. *Quilla* much as She was.

1775 December 2 (Saturday). At Mr. Stones was Mr. *Moses Gill*. *Quilla*, the Negro Woman, very bad and consuming. I lodged at Southborough.

Newman, Widow: funeral of "a Negro child," 1771

1771 November 10 (Sunday). Preached at *Hopkinton*.... Attended at the Funeral of a Negro Child at the Widow *Newmans*.

Edwards: on enslaving Negroes, 1772

1772 September 16 (Wednesday). At Night came Mr. *Searl* of *Stoneham* from *New-Haven*, and lodged here.

1772 September 17 (Thursday). N.B. Mr. *Searl* borrows of me Mr. Edwards on enslaving Negroes.

Note: John Searle (1721-1787), Yale 1745, was born in Northampton. He served as minister of Sharon, CT, 1748-1754; Stoneham, 1759-1776; and Royalton, VT, 1783-1787). According to Franklin Bowditch Dexter, Searle's education "is said to have been due to the interest taken in him by him" by Jonathan Edwards, and he "is said to have studied theology" with Edwards. (Dexter, *Yale Graduates*, 2:53.) While serving in Stoneham, "he is said to have assisted in preparing for posthumous publication some of the writings of his preceptor, Jonathan Edwards." (Ibid., 54.)

The reference to "Mr. Edwards on enslaving Negroes" is fascinating. If the reference is in fact to Jonathan Edwards, there's nothing in Parkman's diary to indicate how Parkman obtained the manuscript. On Edwards's complicated relationship to slavery, see Kenneth P. Minkema, "Jonathan Edwards on Slavery and the Slave Trade," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 54:4 (Oct. 1997), 823-34; idem, "Jonathan Edwards' Defense of Slavery," *Massachusetts Historical Review* 4 (2002), 23-59; and George M. Marsden, *Jonathan Edwards: A Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 255-58.

Hutchinson, Rev. Aaron: criticized for baptizing Negro, 1772

1772 September 21 (Monday). I went again to the Church Meeting at Grafton.... N.B. Mr. Shermans Exception against Mr. Hutchinson for baptizing a Negro without Administering the Covenant to him. Mr. Hutchinson told us he judged he did, for he did it as he, the Negro, could bear -- in such Language as, by its being familiar, he might understand -- spoke Negro, That is, such broken words and accents as they Speak. Mr. Sherman hastily took him up, and asked him if he could speak Negro? And grew ready to accuse him for this, which was to us Surprizing.

Hardy, Sim., free Negro: mows for EP, 1774

1774 July 29 (Friday). *Sim. Hardy*, a Free Negro, came (according to Agreement), and mowes with Asa and John McCulloch, at the Interval, for me.

Gin: "black Girl" of the Eli Forbes (Parkman's son-on-law), 1775

1775 March 11 (Saturday). My son and Daughter *Forbes* with their black Girl came.

1775 March 13 (Monday). Mr. *Forbes* and my Daughter Set out on their Journey to *Boston*, designing to go to Mr. Pope, to consult him on her Sad Case, of her Breast. *Gin*, their Negro Girl, rides in Mr. *Elisha Forbes's* Waggon.

Caesar: Mrs. Surcomb's Negro, 1775

1775 March 18 (Saturday). Mrs. Surcombs Negro, *Caesar*, here with an Indian Woman whom he calls his Wife. She said her former name was *Betty Speen*. After their Eating some Dinner, they left us to go to *Amasa Maynards* but have little Reason to think they did.

1775 April 1 (Saturday). We called at Mr. *Gales* partly to bear a Message from Mrs. *Surcomb* concerning her *Caesar*, who had left his Mistress's Horse there, and was upon Charge....

1775 April 13 (Thursday). Hearing that Mrs. *Flagg* of *Boston* was come up to *Gales* after *Caesar* (her Mother *Surcombs* Negro) and was detained there by the storm, I rode down there, in the Morning; but she and two sons with her (*Thomas* and *Richard Surcomb*) were gone.

Happy: Rev. Aaron Smith's "Negro Woman," 1776

1776 March 31 (Sunday). I preached at *Marlborough*.... At Eve it was so wet, and So difficult travelling, that I was obliged to tarry there. Neither did Mr. *Smith* return home. His Negro Woman *Happy*, has a strong Fitt. They needed, and had, my Help. And call in a Neighbour who was Strong to lift her, being very heavy. The Fitt came on again. She was lifted to the Bed, and lay composed, though she had not her Senses.

1774 August 11 (Thursday). Came home in Safety. Thanks to God. In returning called at Col. *Weeks*. Dined at Cousen *Uriah* *Brighams*. Visit Mr. *Smith* in Affliction. His negro woman, *Happy*, under a Dropsie.

Constant (alias Enoch Noble): "pretends to practise Physick," 1777

1777 June 1 (Sunday). N.B. A Negro Man, who calls himself *Enoch Noble*, and pretends to practise Physick, and was Sent here (we suppose) by Deacon *Woods* Wife, has come to See *Hannah* this Morning and She inclines to take Something of him.

1777 June 27 (Friday). Mr. *Joseph Roberts* here in pursuit of his Negro *Constant* who strols about under the Name of *Enoch Noble*. The same that came here on the 1st.

1777 June 28 (Saturday). Mr. *Roberts* returns home to *Weston*, with his Runaway, *Constant*.

Clark, Dr. [Anthony?], of Hubbardston

1777 July 17 (Thursday). *Breck* also goes to *Worcester*, and designs then for *Hubbards* Town to one Dr. *Clark*, to bring him to See *Hannah*.

1777 July 18 (Friday). *Hannah*, though She was pritty Comfortable Yesterday, had a bad night for coughing, etc. The morning Mr. *Wood* who is out of Health and rides about to help her, came here and in the *Baldwin* Chaise took *Hannah* and rode up to *Shrewsbury* to meet with the abovesaid Dr. *Clark*. But they all returned without that Part of their Errand.

Note: Possibly Anthony, “the celebrated colored doctor,” whose daughter Anna married Ralph Adams (“colored”). “He, his sons, his daughter Anna (Mrs. Adams), and his grandsons, Amos and Benjamin, all had a wide reputation for skill in curing diseases by the use of roots and herbs.” J. M. Stowe, *History of the Town of Hubbardston, Worcester County, Mass...with the Genealogy of Present and Former Resident Families* (Hubbardston, Mass.: Published by the Committee, 1881), 220, 250.

Hill, Gershom: “Molatto from Squire Bakers,” 1778

1778 October 6 (Tuesday). Elias returns from *Cambridge* and has been also to *Boston*. But what we are somewhat Surprized with is, he rides home *Brecks* Mare, which was found in a Pasture at [blank] by *Gershom Hill* the Molatto from Squire Bakers, who going down below, *Breck* furnished with an Advertisement. We are now whole footed again: but the Charges by the Loss and Recovery amount to 40 Dollars.

Cato: “Negro Man” of Rev. Jonathan Moore (Parkman’s son-in-law) – taken by the British, 1779

1779 June 26 (Saturday). Received from Mr. Moore two Letters dated [blank]. He informs me that his Negro Man, Cato, is taken by the British force, and that he has lost 1500 wt. of Rice.

1779 September 29 (Wednesday). Breck returns from Boston, and brings Sally and her son Sam. A letter from Mr. Moore, says his Negro man Cato is dead.

“negro Family of Natick”: sold as slaves, recovered, 1779

1779 October 2 (Saturday). Surprizing Story concerning a negro Family of Natick, whom one Mr. Damon has sold, Surprized and sent off as slaves, they are recovered, and now on the Road returning to Natick.

“in bad scituation with a Negro Man,” 1782

1782 May 7 (Tuesday). P.M. Col. *Cyprian How* and Col. *Blackden* were here, and gave me an Account of the Robbery at *Marlborough* between last Saturday night and Sabbath morning at Col. *Blackdens* store. N.B. Among Suspected Person who were (by Col. Jonathan *Ward* and Col.

Wood) examined Several Men, and there were two women who being of ill fame, were found (particularly one of them) in bad scituation with a Negro Man -- yet was She very Bold and impudent -- etc. etc. The Colonels first named had been at *Grafton*, on the Affair of *Search* after the Thieves, but without Success. They returned to Marlborough.

Chowin, John: "an Indian, or rather Molatto" - death and funeral of infant, 1772

1772 June 10 (Wednesday). *John Chowin*, an Indian, or rather Molatto, here, and acquaints me with the Death of his infant Child and desires I would be the Funeral of it tomorrow.

1772 June 11 (Thursday). Rode to *John Chowin's* Wigwam; prayed there and attended the burying the Child.