"To Be Sold: A Negro Wench"
Slave Ads of the Montreal Gazette 1785 – 1805

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ABSTRACT

Thesis Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a close textual reading of representations of slavery in *The Montreal Gazette*, primarily within the period of 1785-1805, the first twenty years after the newspaper became bilingual. This project has three main outcomes. Firstly, it provides a history of black slavery in Montreal details the founding of *The Gazette* and evaluates its spatial layout, particularly the classified section where slave ads appear. Secondly, it analyzes the representation of black slaves in two distinct news forms: (1) ads of sale and (2) notices of escaped slaves, with particular focus on representations of race, gender, class, and criminality. Thirdly, it addresses the presentation of race and national identity in *The Gazette*, through both textual analysis and comparative analysis with the United States and Haiti. The project engages with conceptions of Canadian national identity throughout, particularly with respect to issues of tolerance and selective memory.

Résumé du mémoire

Ce mémoire présente une analyse attentive des représentations de l'esclavage dans *The Montreal Gazette* entre 1785 et 1805, les vingt premières années où ce journal est devenu bilingue. Ce projet a trois objectifs principaux. Il offre une histoire de l'esclavage des Noirs à Montréal, détaille la création de la *Gazette* et évalue l'espace de sa mise en page, notamment des sections où les esclaves sont mentionnés. Ensuite, il analyse la représentation faite des esclaves à travers deux formes journalistiques : (1) annonces de ventes et (2) notices des esclaves en fuite, avec une attention particulière à la race, au genre, la classe et la criminalité. Enfin, il étudie les représentations de l'appartenance raciale et de l'identité nationale dans la *Gazette* à travers une analyse textuelle et comparative avec les Etats-Unis et Haïti. Ce projet discute les conceptions de l'identité nationale canadienne, dont les questions de tolérance et de mémoire sélective.

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INTRODUCTION

Canadian scholar Eva Mackey asserts that "nationalist narratives of tolerance such as the [benevolent] Mountie myth misrepresent the encounter between cultures and the brutal history of conquest and cultural genocide that Canada is founded upon" (1999: 2). This myth of tolerance is reinforced by the effacement of black slavery in Canada through privileging the 'Underground Railroad', particularly in American literature, which refers to Canada only as a place of freedom. Through my work, I hope to temper this asymmetrical portrayal of Canadian history. My research pursues the topic of black slavery in Montreal through an examination of *The Montreal Gazette*.

Still a prominent newspaper today, the (then) bilingual *Gazette* was an important source for the dissemination of news of world events, royal proclamations, church ordinances, and local happenings such as celebrations and auctions. Because of its role as a tool of information, the *Gazette* undoubtedly played a role in influencing and representing public opinion.[1] I am examining notices of escaped slaves and slaves for sale in the first twenty years after it became bilingual in 1785, seven years after its founding in 1778. My interdisciplinary approach employs a combination of anti-racist, feminist and semiotic methodologies and explores the historical, sociological and political dimensions of slavery in Montreal. I will analyze the ways in which the plain text

[1] It is difficult to ascertain precisely how central a role *The Gazette* played, as historical circulation data is unavailable. Similarly, census data are very sporadic and usually do not record figures for literacy, so it is only possible to speculate how many people would have had access to it. This is also true because the *Quebec Gazette* also circulated in Montreal, thereby potentially limiting the readership of the Montreal-based newspaper.

advertisements facilitated the codification of the black slave body through the technique of physical description, reliant on a series of ideological systems surrounding race and gender.[2]

The myth of tolerance fails to call into question Canada's colonial beginning, and consequently, to question its legitimacy. Even within twenty short years of abolition, "there was little awareness in the provinces of there having been any slavery in Canada at all" (Winks: 20). One well-respected historian, Francois-Xavier Garneau, even went so far as to claim that slavery never existed in the French colonies (Winks: 9-20). In actuality, the enslavement of blacks in Quebec lasted over two hundred years – from 1628 to 1834 – though not officially legalized until 1689. Slaves were legally defined as *muebles*, movable personal property, and were therefore bound to their owners rather than to the land (Elgersman 1999). As such, slaves were bound to their masters until freedom was granted or the slaves died.

In New France, the colony established in Canada by French monarchy, which later became the province of Quebec, the majority of black slaves lived in Montreal, Quebec and Trois-Rivières (Winks: 21). These were the most established cities, with populations of 55,634, 44,760 and 12,618 respectively.[3] Over the entire period of slavery, Marcel Trudel successfully traced 3,604 slaves,

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[2] Unlike the *Quebec Gazette*, slave ads in the *Montreal Gazette* were not accompanied by images depicting black slaves. This is most likely because slave ads ran so infrequently that the cost of printing materials could not be justified. Instead, the 'picture' of slaves was reliant solely on textual description of the slave's appearance and readers' preconceptions of the appearance of black slaves.

[3] 1784 Census of Canada, E-STAT Table. Census Canada website. <*http://estatcan.ca/cgi-win/CNSMCGI.EXE*>, accessed 12/05/03. This page cannot be accessed directly by entering the URL, but a table can be generated once criteria are selected.

of whom 1,132 were black.[4] Over three quarters of all black slaves resided in towns (rather than rural settings), with 52.3% of the total number living in or near Montreal (Winks). Though Montreal housed the most slaves, the black slave population numbered only 592, comprising a mere 0.01 percent of the total population.[5]

The infrequent use of black slaves was due largely to their considerable expense. While aboriginal slaves cost 400 livres, black slaves cost over double that amount – 900 livres (Winks: 17), likely due to their greater longevity[6] and the prestige of owning them, as black slaves in Montreal were luxury commodities (Nelson 1998). The failure of slavery to establish a strong foothold in Canada has also been erroneously attributed to the inability of blacks to withstand harsh Canadian winters (Winks: 18). More accurately, it has been speculated that slavery in Canada never reached the scale of the United States or Caribbean because of the lack of a profitable large-scale crop or other form of economic production requiring mass labour (Elgersman 1999).

But scale is not the sole determinant of importance. The study of slavery in Canada is necessary primarily *because of* its smaller scale. It is because slavery in Canada was less prevalent than in most slave societies that the myth of benevolence and tolerance continues to flourish, and many Canadians remain unaware of the colonial history that lies beneath the surface but is buried in newspaper archives. Within a historical context, the smaller scale of slavery

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[4] The rest were aboriginal slaves, known as panis or 'pawnees', a term which became synonymous "slave" and was ultimately became used to refer to blacks also (Winks 1997).
[5] My calculations, based on the data presented.
[6] See footnote 17 for mortality age.

meant that few Montrealers had interpersonal contact with enslaved blacks. Consequently, newspapers comprised a disproportionate amount of the discourse representing slaves, and hence took on even greater significance.

My analysis is facilitated by an examination of two different types of texts, ads for the sale of slaves, and notices requesting the capture and return of escaped slaves.[7] I am analyzing the ways in which sale ads serve to codify black bodies as a type of "machinery, valued primarily for their muscle, endurance, and productive capability" (Guy-Shetfall 2002: 23). Ads of sale coded slaves with quantifiable value – that is, as strong or healthy – through physical description. Fugitive slave notices underscore this representation as chattel; moreover, they serve to conflate blackness with criminality. I will elucidate the criminalization of black slaves through a comparison of runaway slave notices to those for escaped white criminals, with specific emphasis on the deployment of identifiers that mark the racialized body.

In chapter one, I analyze the spatial organization of *The Montreal Gazette*, with respect to the evaluation of newsworthiness and placement of slave ads in the classified section. I also examine the formal characteristics of classified advertisements generally, and conduct a comparative analysis of different types of classified ads. In chapter two, I closely analyze the ads of sale of four slaves, three men and one woman. Through my searches of *Gazette* microfilm, I located few ads for the sale of female slaves, and no notices solely for fugitive women. This is not to suggest that no female slaves escaped; such a claim would be

[7] In an effort to be clear and avoid redundancy, I am drawing a distinction between *ads*, as relating to commerce, and *notices*, as relating to public dissemination of information.

unfounded, in part because I am conducting a close textual analysis of select ads rather than an exhaustive survey of all slave ads ever run in *The Gazette*.

Moreover, some circumstances suggest that escape ads of female slaves were fairly rare. Firstly, there was a disproportionately small female population (Elgersman 1999; Winks 1997). Secondly, as Robin Winks points out, "[o]ne may presume that there were also many unsuccessful attempts at escape or short-termed flights that did not receive public notice." (1997: 15). So while *The Gazette* may be an imperfect resource for gathering historically accurate data concerning the numbers of slaves that escaped or were sold, it is nonetheless exceedingly useful in examining how slavery and blackness were portrayed in the public imagination. I take up this question of imagination in chapter three, where I address the presentation of a concept of national belonging in runaway slave notices, with particular focus on the relationship between race and citizenship. I also conduct a comparative analysis of slave ads in Montreal and the United States, and of differing *Gazette* portrayals of slave rebellion in French and British colonies in the Caribbean.

CHAPTER ONE:
ORIGINS OF THE GAZETTE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF FORM

The aim of this project is to examine representations of slavery and blackness in slave ads in *The Montreal Gazette*, but as Stuart Hall argues, "form is actually part of the content" (1984: 7). Consequently, an analysis of the content of these ads would be remiss if it failed to examine the form of both these ads and the newspaper itself. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a context for the analysis of the slave ads that form the body of this work, through an examination of the form of *The Montreal Gazette*, and the classified section in particular.

This chapter serves three important functions indispensable to the examination of *Gazette* slave ads. Firstly, it details the history of *The Montreal Gazette*, including a discussion and analysis of its statement of intent. Secondly, it describes the formal layout of the paper, and analyzes the significance of the placement of news pieces within its sections, with particular attention to issues of race, gender, and class in determining placement and coverage. And finally, it provides a more focused analysis of the *Gazette* classified section itself, including a comparison of different types of classified ads and discussion of questions of agency and access to resources of (self-)representation.

Classified ads have long been a sorely neglected site of analysis. In a 1977 article, "Classified Advertising: A Neglected Medium", E.S. Lorimor lamented the lack of attention paid to the medium of classified advertising within academia. She maintains, "[t]he academic treatment of classified advertising is incredibly cavalier...the most lengthy treatment of classified advertising covers

about two pages; many of the books covered fail to list it in the index, and some make no mention of it at all" (19).

In the nearly thirty years since her article was published, little has changed. The same argument can still be made today. Relatively little attention is paid to classified advertisements, and as yet there has been no comprehensive study of their formal aspects. The few analyses that do exist generally focus on histories of personal ads and representations of the self in dating ads (English and Stephens 2004; Smith and Stillman 2002; Harris 2001; Coupland 2000) or tend toward quantitative analyses of either the types of commodities being advertised (Liebermann 1986) or the respective merits of online versus print-based classified advertising (Gardyn 2000). However, there is little discussion of issues of power, access, and race in classified advertising.

Similarly, while there are excellent analyses of both the power dynamics that exist within news organizations and the conventions and formal aspects of news presentation (Barnhurst and Nerone 2001; Nerone 1995; Fishman 1980; Tuchman 1978), most analyses do not address classified advertising specifically, let alone the issue of slavery in classified advertising (though admittedly, this is not their project). There are a number of analyses of runaway slave notices and ads of slaves for sale, but these deal primarily with the United States (Costa 2003; Hodges and Brown 1994; Parker 1994; Meaders 1993; Smith and Wojtowicz 1989). Still others focus only on the pedagogical value of slave advertisements (Mason and Korman 2003; Desrochers 2002).

There are few sources that explore slave ads in Canada, and specifically in *The Montreal Gazette* (Mackey F 2004; Elgersman 1999; Winks 1997), and those

that do generally use them as part of larger projects of historical compilation or recuperation of slave identities. So there is little which provides a model for analysis of the formal aspects of classified advertising, particularly as most analyses of advertising tend to focus on more contemporary and corporate advertising forms. As Lorimor maintains, although it "is usually less criticized than advertising generally...classified advertising is largely regarded with condescension by the trade and ignored by academia" (17).

I would argue that this is because classified ads are seen as neutral and even dull sites that would yield little of interest under analysis. This seems to be borne out by the fact that there is little apparent academic interest in classified ads, and what interest there is focuses mainly on issues of (self-)representation in personal ads, ignoring other types and aspects of classified advertising. As Stuart Hall argues "over certain periods, certain genres acquire [a] naturalistic reality illusion" (1984: 11). He goes on to argue that "in any society, we all constantly make use of a whole set of frameworks of interpretation and understanding, often in a very practical unconscious way" (1984: 7). Part of my purpose here is to reveal the constructivity of these seemingly 'natural' – and therefore *'neutral'* – formal aspects of these ads. I intend to reveal their 'naturalness' as illusory and to examine the sort of frameworks Hall refers to.

History of The Gazette and the "Beginnings of Advertising"

Advertising in general and newspaper advertising in particular has certainly come a long way since the *Gazette* was founded; however, "[c]lassified advertising in its present form was generally well-established by 1860" (Lorimor: 18). Advertisements in *The Montreal Gazette* began as small text notices in the classified section of the paper, much as they are today. As I have already discussed, while the broad fields of "advertising" and "news" have received a good deal of scholarly attention, classified ads themselves have been notably undertheorized. The purpose of this section of my thesis is to think about the role of form in shaping representation, with special emphasis on the classified section.

In terms of form, what do we think of when we consider classified ads? I would argue that one of the most important formal characteristics of classified ads is their reductive limitation to basic and supposedly factual language used to describe objects and services, which clearly springs from the desire to minimize the cost of placing the ad. But what happens when a person is advertised in the classified section? What is the consequence of positioning a human being within a textually-constrained space of consumption? If as Hall insists, form is part of content, how does the narrative form of the classified ad shape its content? And how do the identities and relative social positions of the person(s) both placing the ad and being advertised influence representation?

Such an example of textually-constrained representation appeared in *The Gazette* on December 28, 1795 when the paper ran a classified reading "FOR SALE: A Young healthy Negro Wench between 12 and 13 years of age, lately

from Upper Canada, where she was brought up." (Figure 1) As far as references to slavery go, this is standard. Slaves are represented almost exclusively in the classified section. However, it is not only the fact that slavery existed that is ultimately disturbing, but also the coldness and discursive dismissiveness invoked when a human being is described using such alienating and objectifying language as "Young healthy Negro Wench". This commodification of human subjects has a long legacy in *The Gazette*. In fact, it was one of the cornerstones on which the paper was built. Despite its founder's assertion of altruism, the 'public service' he rendered contributed directly to the buying, selling, capturing, and punishing of slaves. However, it is true that this service was indeed useful to a miniscule segment of slave-owning elites and was 'legitimate' insofar as slavery was legal.

Fleury Mesplet (1734-1794) founded The French weekly newspaper *La Gazette du Commerce et Litéraire* in June 1778.[8] Seven years later, it became the bilingual *Montreal Gazette*. In his August 1785 "PROPOSAL For the Establishment of a new Gazette English and French, under the Title of *the MONTREAL GAZETTE*", Mesplet wrote "THERE is scarce a Dominion in Europe that has not it's (sic)[9] Gazette. Why should not this extensive Country have it's own[?]" (Figure 2). He goes on to appeal,

> It must be allowed from the extent of the Enterprise, it may be taxed with rashness, for who would not tremble the moment he is to appear before the Public, a judge always formidable: therefore I feel the necessity of imploring it's Indulgence, and beg it to make allowance for the Purety of my Intentions, and the Endeavors I shall make to put it in Execution.

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[8] The exact date appears differently in various sources; an August 1985 Gazette article on Mesplet's life insists he published the first issue on June 3, 1778, while in a short 1980 essay, "Following...the Followers", Glen Allen maintains that the first issue "appeared on the streets" on June 5, 1778. Likely a lag between publication and initial distribution accounts for this disparity.

[9] All quotes from *The Gazette* (including punctuation and capitalization) have been carefully reproduced precisely as they appear, unless otherwise indicated.

Mesplet's 'pure intentions' in founding *The Gazette*, as stated in his 1785 proposal included the provision of world and literary news in both English and French. He also vowed to uphold the ideals of journalistic integrity and public accessibility, stating "[i]n all that shall be inserted in this Gazette I shall inviolably observe to Have the Sacred Image of Truth in view, and not fall into Licentiousness. I shall endeavour to render the stile plain and correct..."

The grand values of transparency and objectivity are espoused, while the mention of the profit-motive of advertising is completely absent. It may seem logical that such a proposal laud these higher virtues and ignore crass materialism. However, although advertising itself is not mentioned, an awareness of the bottom line is clearly always present, couched in the *laissez-faire* liberal rhetoric of praise for the high quality of the news commodity, and the virtues of a strong work-ethic and public participation through consumer sovereignty. It becomes apparent that Mesplet realizes that virtue doesn't pay the bills when he writes,

> If it is considered the Experience it requires for the Impression in both Languages, the Beauty of the Paper, and of the Character, the Exactness of the Correction which requires much more Attention in the Country where Orthography [10] is not yet well known, if I say, it is considered the Application the Enterprize requires of the Printer, the Public will be convinced that nothing has been neglected to render myself worthy of their favour, and that the Subscription [cost] is moderate[11].

So while advertising is not explicitly mentioned, there is a clear concern for financial viability, despite the grandiose claims to higher principles. In fact, the paper was originally founded in part with the express motive of advertising.

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[10] "Correct or proper spelling; spelling according to accepted usage or convention" (Oxford English Dictionary Online at <http://dictionary.oed.com>, accessed on December 4, 2004)

[11] The cost of the subscription was three Spanish Dollars per year. Spanish Dollars could be valued anywhere from 4 Shillings, 6 pence to 8 Shillings. Although I have been unable to determine the equivalent cost relative to income, it seems apparent from Mesplet's proposal that this would have been considered quite expensive by some potential subscribers.

On August 25 1985, the paper ran "Beginnings of advertising in *The Gazette*", a retrospective article commemorating the two-hundredth anniversary of the printing of its first bilingual paper. The 1985 article reprinted Mesplet's original 1778 statement of intent upon founding the paper. It included among its objectives "[t]he facility of giving notice to the public at any time of the sale of goods, of merchandise, moveables, houses, lands, beside the conveniency of advertising for lost effects, slaves deserted from their masters, the want of clerks or of servants, and many other things."[12] The article then went on to reproduce a number of ads that appeared in early issues of *The Gazette*. However, although a wide range of advertisements – from dental services to notices of escaped prisoners – is reprinted, none of the ads mention escaped slaves or slaves for sale, and the issue is not addressed further. It is as though the inclusion of slave trading with advertisements for paid clerks or the sale of land is simply value-neutral, even in 1985, long after the demise of slavery in 1834.

The attribution of altruism and neutrality to the motive of slave advertisements is unsurprising in 1778 when slave-ownership was seen as an unassailable right for the wealthy few who could afford to do so. However, it is incongruous so long after the official practice of slavery has fallen into disrepute.[13] Why is it that the mention of escaped slaves is still able to pass as neutral in the twentieth century? Perhaps a part of the seeming neutrality of these advertisements is their placement and form.

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[12] Figure 2. Although it is not expressly stated in the 1985 article, this was most certainly translated from original French, as *The Gazette* did not include English until 1785.

[13] I say "official" slavery, because the use of prison labour in the US and Canada and offshore labour by North American companies elsewhere in the world constitute exploitative labour practices which closely mirror slavery in substance, if presumably not in ideology.

Spatial Dimensions of Newsworthiness: Layout & Placement in The Gazette

Before I go on to discuss classified ads specifically, I would like to analyze the greater layout of *The Gazette* within which the classified section is found. Unlike Royal Ordinances and news of war abroad, classified ads do not appear in a prominent position in the paper but are instead relegated to the latter pages. Like the perceived importance of the news commodity itself, the importance of the people represented is directly proportional to their proximity to the front of the paper. I will illustrate this by presenting a July 13, 1796 issue of *The Gazette*. In this typical issue, news moves from the more 'important' and geographically distant to the more local and presumably banal. Front-page news generally concerns Europe, and this issue of *The Gazette* is no exception.

The front page features an April 20th article from London concerning speculations of impending military conflict between Russia and the Turkish Empire. The article is fairly long and detailed, taking up the majority of the page. It features few stylistic textual devices such as centering and special type—subheadings are capitalized, but none of the body text is made to stand out. A background context for the conflict is laid out and the current political climate is narrativized: "The march of Russian troops to the Ottoman frontiers, has long announced an approaching rupture between Russia and the Port. It is expected that hostilities will soon break out." The second page article concerns the April 12th sitting of the "COUNCIL OF FIVE HUNDRED" in France, in which selected excerpts are reproduced in paragraph form. The names of the speakers are

indented and capitalized and a clear effort is made to capture the dramatic mood of the council's debate:

> The PRESIDENT put on his hat. This signal of public danger calmed them for a moment; but it gave way to more violent agitation at the sight of Jourdan in the Tribune. He implored as a favour to be heard, but he could not obtain it, and descended the tribune with visible despair and agony. He raised his hands to heaven with the most expressive energy, and exclaimed
> *You are striving to excite a Civil War!*

As will be seen, such use of special formatting and print style is prevalent in the classified section, though such narrative storytelling is exceedingly rare.

News from the Hague from March 26 begins at the end of the page and continues on to page three, where shorter and articles from Frankfort (March 24th) and Milan (March 14th) appear, before shifting to national news of June 10th from the "PROVINCE OF LOWER CANADA". The transition from international to national news illustrates how, in terms of placement, the perceived importance of featured personalities and locales is privileged over currency and immediacy. International news appears in reverse chronological order; however, national news is excluded from this section regardless of its currency.

Despite the fact that local events generally had far more impact on most people's daily lives—not to mention that national news is over a month and a half more recent—the ostensible importance of imperial figures still outweighs that of local leaders. [14] Because it had to be brought by mail delivery on merchant ships, news took a long time to arrive from Europe, so excitement over its long-awaited arrival is understandable. However, I suspect that something more is going on

[14] I am not denying here that certain international news, such as some Royal Ordinances, would have had very real impact; however, the vast majority seems more important solely as a source of information than anything with direct material consequences. And while it is arguable that newspapers are an important site of civic participation, as Nerone and Barnhurst point out, the press was vested with this role at a time when it was incapable of living up to it (2001: 1).

here. I believe at least part of the reason that international news is prized so highly is to create and maintain a sense of cosmopolitanism. This theory is reinforced by Meplet's insistence that Montreal should have a Gazette as "THERE is scarce a Dominion in Europe" that lacks one. Although people in Montreal lived nowhere near Europe, they clearly held fast to imperial allegiances and wished to feel involved in the dramatic goings on across the Atlantic.

This is not to say, however, that there is not still a very clear social hierarchy at the local level. In fact, although local happenings are undervalued with respect to placement, from a narrative standpoint the social asymmetries are sometimes far more pronounced as a result of the more immediate mechanisms of self-interest. The most prominent provincial news section features a letter of address, apparently from a group identifying themselves as "The MECHANICS of the City and Town of Montreal", put forth to Montreal's representatives in Parliament.[15] The letter is virtually overflowing with effusive words of praise for the work of the elected representatives, who are "great, meritorious, and unremiting" and serve as a "glorious example of disinterested conduct". Most glowing of all is its flowery conclusion,

> Accept then Gentleman, of our sincere and hearty thanks; while we beg leave to assure you, that the sentiments of esteem for your Persons and Virtues; are indelibly stampt on our minds, as will (till memory fails) look back with pleasure, and reflect with an honest pride; that we by our VOTES, gave to the first Parliament of Canada; some of its brightest Ornaments.

Though it is unclear precisely *what* the mechanics are proposing, it seems their letter did not elicit the desired outcome, as the undated response from the

[15] One of whom was The Honourable James McGill Esquire, a prominent Montrealer, the founder of McGill University, and also incidentally, a slave owner (Collard, Edgar Andrew. "Negro Slavery in Montreal". *Montreal Gazette*. August 13, 1945.).

representatives—"your most obedient and very humble servants"—continues on to the following page replying, "[p]laced in a situation to us new and arduous, we cannot but regret that our abilities were not equal to our inclinations..."

The end of this article marks another transition to the increasingly local. Here two more short political affairs pieces merge seamlessly with business announcements, an offer of employment, and notices of sales and services offered to the public. It is impossible to tell where one section ends and the next begins. The only formal distinction that might suggest a section change is the appearance of a large, bold, capitalized first letter at the start of the paragraph. However, this also appears in the representatives' letter of reply, further complicating the task of discerning the point of transition. Moreover, it is certainly probable that what looks like local news actually marks the start of the paid announcements, though this has no observable effect on the overall deference to international news.

"stile plain and correct"? Debunking the Myth of the Neutrality

Now that I have worked through the layout of the paper and arrived at its final section, the classified ads, I wish to explore the significance of classified advertisements, with specific attention to how form functions to obfuscate social asymmetry. Whereas longer articles can appear obviously biased or contentious, it seems there is something about the form of the classified section that allows its content to appear free of value judgments, and instead simply in keeping with such efforts as Mesplet's "endeavour to render the stile plain and correct". I have identified three formal characteristics of classified ads that allow them to pose as neutral. The most significant elements are their use of minimal language and the virtual absence of narrative, their banality and presumed accessibility, and the fact that they generally concern the representation of inanimate objects.

Because the cost of placing a classified ad is generally assessed on the basis of word count, [16] classified ads tend to be very concise, often containing abbreviations. Unlike other newspaper content, much of which strives to create a sense of excitement, urgency, and drama, classified ads generally eschew the use of narrative devices, aiming instead to be dryly prosaic. Although efforts may be made to keep the cost of placing an ad low, classified ads are generally thought to be affordable and therefore accessible to most people. This not only relegates

[16] It is unclear whether this is how the cost of *Gazette* ads was assessed. Mesplet's original proposal lists the cost of placing an ad as one to two Spanish dollars, depending on the number of insertions (Figure 11). But no specifics regarding wordcount or the use of special typesets are included. However it seems unlikely that a plain short ad would cost the same price as a longer or fancier one, so I would speculate that costs for specifical ads varied and were decided upon by printer and subscriber on the basis of length and style.

them to the realm of the mundane but also gives them a false appearance of transparency.

The ads' air of banality and neutrality is heightened by the fact that they are generally thought to exist for the purpose of representing inanimate objects, so are therefore rarely contentious. Certainly this is often true; classified ads function as a forum for popular commerce, and many people are likely to spend their time and money placing a classified ad only when they hope to make money by selling, or save money by buying something used. But although certain formal characteristics of classified ads might allow them to appear neutral, they are just as much cultural products as are books, movies, and news itself. Similarly, they are just as far from being neutral.

I hope to derail erroneous conceptions of classified ads by analyzing how their seeming banality is largely illusory, and proving that their minimal language actually speaks volumes. Contrary to popular conception, classified ads are not only concerned with things. The presence of slaves, though considered "things" in the legal sense of being property, certainly contests the supposed neutrality of the ads. There is a strong human presence in the classified section of *The Gazette* – all sorts of services, social activities, and general notices contain references to the people of Montreal. However, not all people are represented equally. Those with access to the means to represent themselves choose to portray themselves very differently from the way those lacking such means are represented.

The *Gazette* issue of December 28, 1795 provides a fitting illustration of the sharp contrast between representations of people from disparate social classes.

The slave ad I refer to on page two appears in this issue, directly below an advertisement for a lecture to be given on the subject of geography and the solar system. The lecture ad, which is made to stand out even more than some front-page articles through its use of through textual devices, reads

> On Wednesday, the 30th instant, will be delivered, by
> J.D. SKETCHLEY,
> At his House No. 5. St. Peter Street, near the Recollet Church;
> A Clear and Comprehensive Lecture on
> GEOGRAPHY AND THE SOLAR SYSTEM.
> With such PARTS of ASTRONOMY and NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.
> As are necessary to elucidate the same:
> AMONG a variety of other subjects, will be explained the Figure and motion of the Earth cause of Eclipses, Rain, Hail, Snow, Thunder, Lightning, Winds, Hurricanes, Earthquakes, Tides, Seasons of the Year, length of Days and Nights, Twilight, Changes of the Moon, Latitude and Longitude, True and apparent Heavenly Bodies; Nature, distance and situation of the Planets and many of the fixed Stars, with various and other curious and entertaining Phenomena of the Heavenly Bodies.
> Admittance, 2*t*. 6*d*. each.
> To begin at precisely half past SIX o'Clock.
> TICKETS may be had at Mr. Sullivan's, Mr. Dillon's Mr. Cushing's Mr. McAdam's. Mr. Sketchley's Quebec Suburbs, and of J.D. Sketchley St. Peter Street.[17]

This ad is followed directly by an ad of a slave for sale, reading "FOR SALE: A Young healthy Negro Wench between 12 and 13 years of age, lately from Upper Canada, where she was brought up.—Enquire of ----RE [illegible] & PRIOR "

Before I delve into an analysis of these two ads, I should note here that while the slave ad is typical, Sketchley's ad is *not* the norm. It is incontestable that ads placed by merchants and other wealthy entrepreneurs are far longer than ads concerning slaves, but even among the former, Sketchley's ad is exceptional, providing a level of detail rarely seen. His lecture ad is however very useful as a

[17] Figure 12. Although it may not adhere to academic form, I have tried to reproduce this ad as closely as possible to how it appears in *The Gazette*, as I will be discussing typographical presentation in addition to content.

juxtaposition of this disparity at its most extreme, particularly because of its proximity to the ad for the slave.

Most non-commercial ads were generally quite short, reinforcing the persistence of their brief form and also their appearance of accessibility (in terms of both brevity and moderate cost). The fact that even those who do not own the means of production can pay a relatively small sum to make their voices heard suggests a degree of popular accessibility. But as a forum, the classified section is also fundamentally undemocratic in that it promotes a generality and brevity of advertisements which, even in the case of human commodities, makes it appear wholly uncontentious. It is to be expected that there are not slews of detail about slaves, as every additional word costs money. However, this very dearth of words speaks volumes.

In the context of colonial Canada, the saturation of classified ads with minimal language is clear textual evidence of their *in*accessibility; those who can afford to represent themselves favourably do. Conversely, when the prevalent form of popular cultural production is a newspaper requiring literacy, a significant investment of capital, and an advanced level typesetting of expertise, those who are marginalized socially and economically lack the cultural capital, material means, and technical skill to participate in their own self-representation.[18] The juxtaposition of these two advertisements demonstrates that although the tendency towards brevity is a formal characteristic of classified ads, members of the ruling

[18] That is not to say that slaves were outside the realm of cultural production. Naturally, literate slaves participated in the creation of narratives, poetry and other cultural production. However, the institution of the press was generally inaccessible to them.

class were not equally subject to the financial constraints that imposed adherence to this form.

Sketchley's ad illustrates that those who could afford to exhaustively list their virtues did. Conversely, the only obvious information provided about the slave is her age, race, and where she was raised. There is not even a mention of her country of origin, let alone relevant details to prospective owners, such as what languages she speaks and what duties she can perform. Although potential owners would likely expect the slave to be a competent housekeeper, there is no mention whatsoever of her abilities. It is telling that Sketchley provides a staggering level of detail on subjects covered by his lecture—capitalizing words like "Rain" and "Hail"—while the slave is not even named, let alone given a full line devoted to printing her name in large, centered, upper-case text.

The access to resources and perceived (self-)importance of individuals placing classified ads plays a huge role in shaping the final form of the printed ads. However, I wish to avoid positing this factor as the overdetermining reason for the disparity. The inability of slaves to participate in their own representation only accounts for part of why they are presented in such a cursory manner. I introduced this juxtaposition to illustrate how social asymmetry is textually (re)produced in *The Gazette*. However, it must not be forgotten that slave owners were themselves extremely wealthy and could certainly have afforded to place more detailed descriptions of their slaves had they been so inclined.

The fact that they felt no such inclination is significant. There are two highly probable reasons for this. The first and most obvious is the fact that slaves were not seen in the same way as wealthy, well-educated Europeans such as

Sketchley—that is, as rational, capable, autonomous individuals meriting respect. Slaves were not only legally defined as property, but a far wider ideological and discursive paradigm supported this conception. Blacks were seen as unintelligent and infantile—vastly inferior to their European counterparts. The polygenist school of pseudoscientific thought even maintained that blacks and whites were different *species* (Dain 2002; Ernst and Harris 1999). Establishing and perpetuating colonial institutions like slavery required Europeans to conceive of non-white races as less fully-human than themselves; how else could such iniquity be reconciled with an ostensibly virtuous Christian morality?

It was not only the perceived inferiority of blacks that resulted in the lack of detail in slave representations. The second factor responsible for this phenomenon is the ubiquitous profit motive. Whereas J.D. Sketchley charges admission for every person attending his lecture, a slave is only one piece of property, albeit a valuable one. It makes sense for Sketchley to go to great lengths to sell the commodity of his reputation and expertise. But from a financial standpoint, there is no reason a slave should merit a higher word count than any other commodity. Since there was no form of organized gang labour around cash crops like cotton or sugar in Canada, slaves yielded little potential for financial returns. Though some indigenous slaves were used as farm labourers or dock workers, black slaves in Canada were used primarily as domestic servants, so the motive of ownership was more one of status than profit (Winks, 1997). If placing a slave ad was seen as an investment with limited returns, only the level of detail required to secure a buyer was necessary. This is further borne out by the slave ads which will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER TWO:
"A STOUT HEALTHY NEGRO MAN"– THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SLAVERY

The purpose of this section is to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the ads of slaves for sale than that conducted in the previous section. In the first part of this chapter, I will present ads for the sale of slaves which I analyze through a Marxist framework of use value. Here, I explore how the black body is commodified, through descriptors of physicality, strength, and ability. I will similarly address the representation of skin colour, through an examination of historical meanings of the terms "Negro" and "mulatto". This will include a discussion and analysis of the colonial myths embodied in the creation of meaning around these terms. In attempting to recuperate the historical context in which the slave ads circulated, I will examine these constructions, such as pseudoscientific racial hierarchies and Rousseau's noble savage archetype, in order to reveal the mutually-constitutive nature of colonial discourse on race. In the second part of this chapter, I will compare runaway slave notices with those for escaped white criminals, in order to elucidate the importance of colonial conceptions of race in shaping how criminality is discursively constructed.

Complexion & Commodification of Slaves in Sale Ads

The first ad reads "To be Sold: a stout healthy Negro man, about 28 years of age, is an excellent Cook" (Figure 3). Apparently, the man was not sold immediately, as the same ad ran the following week with the addition "and very fit for working on a Farm" tacked on to the end (Figure 4). This advertisement illustrates the manner in which black slaves are marked with value – utility is suggested through the description of visible physical characteristics. Perhaps most immediately noticeable is the fact that the slave is not named.[19] While the slave's physical attributes are described, he is not vested with personhood. He is described in the same manner as livestock, simply in terms of use value.

The word "stout" indicates strength and hardiness, textual evidence of his soundness as an investment. The slave's robust constitution is echoed in the adjective "healthy" and the description of his fitness for "working on a farm". His suitability as a servant, the most common use of black slaves (Winks 1997), is emphasized by the mention of his cooking ability. Also significant is the slave's age, 28 years old. To present-day readers, this would suggest he is still within the prime years of his life. However, in the historical context, he is actually quite old. The average age of death for black slaves was 25.2 years old.[20] Evidently, this

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[19] The practice of naming is extremely important, and I will explore it at greater length in my section on runaway slaves (where the names of escaped slaves are given)

[20] As Marcel Trudel notes, the average age for the indigenous *Panis* was even lower (Winks:10). Panis slaves lived to an average of 17.7 years, due in large part to their lower resistance to smallpox, as well as their more prevalent use as field labour. The figures for both blacks and indigenous peoples are markedly lower than the overall average death age of 39 for women and 38 for men, as presented in a demographic analysis by the Canadian government: Borbeau, Robert, Jacques Légaré and Valérie Édmond. New Birth Cohort Life Tables for Canada and Quebec 1801-1991. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. 1997. 26. Available electronically at: <http://www.statcan.ca/english/research/91F0015MIE/91F0015MIE1997003.pdf>

unnamed slave is past his prime, and therefore a questionable investment – a fact which the other adjectives attempt to obfuscate (but which would presumably have been a factor in the negotiation of his sale).

Another identifier of great significance is the word "Negro". This term may simply be seen as a rather politically incorrect synonym for being of African ancestry. Yet in actuality, it embodies a series of complex associations. In recuperating the historical context in which these advertisements circulated, it is useful to examine dictionaries of the era to mine the significance with which terms such as Negro are invoked in the ads. The *Century Cyclopedia of Names* (1889) has no entry for Negro alone, but defines "Negro race" as "[a] race of which the physical characteristics are a large and strong skeleton, long and thick skull, prognathic[21] jaws, skin from dark brown to black, woolly hair, thick lips, and a broad and flattened nose." What is most remarkable about this definition is that the description is entirely visual. "Negro" is not defined by social or cultural practices but entirely by (ascribed) visible physical characteristics.

Moreover, this conception of appearance is not isolated, but polarized against European physiognomy, which is held to be the norm.[22] The visual description of black features – particularly the nose as "flattened" – holds European features as a racialized aesthetic ideal of which black features are a distortion. 'Negroid' features are not positioned simply as different, but rather as mangled reproductions of normative 'Caucasoid' features. Moreover, black traits

[21] protruding

[22] It is interesting to note that while there is an entry for "Negro race", there is no entry for "white race". This conspicuous selectivity further illustrates the obvious positioning of whiteness as normative.

are presented as being distinctly animalistic in character. The description of the hair as "woolly" conjures up the image of sheep; more problematically, the description of the skull, jaw, and skeleton strongly suggests a resemblance to the ape. Eurocentric pseudoscience ensured that "the Negro's similarity to apes on the basis of the shape of his jaw was asserted, while the white man's similarity to apes on the basis of his thin lips was ignored" (Stepan 1990: 51).

The trope of the black subject as ape-like was echoed in popular fiction and visual culture,[23] as well as scientific discourse. Within the field of craniology, the size and shape of the skull took on paramount importance, as it encased the brain. Dimensions of the skull were thought be indicative of differences in the brain, so were believed "to correlate with equally presumed differences in intelligence and social behaviour" (Stepan 1990: 43). The ostensible physical proximity of blacks to animals was seen of evidence of a psychical conjoinment. This constructed intellectual and cultural inferiority was harnessed as justification for the subjugation of the "Negro race" under slavery, while "other aspects of reality and human experience that were incompatible with the metaphor tended not to be 'seen'" (Stepan 1990: 51).

Such contradictions also abound in colonial conceptions of gender. This is illustrated in the ad for the sale of a female slave. The ad reads, "To be Sold: a Very Stout Negro Wench of about 25 years of age, she can Wash, Iron, Cook, and do any kind of House work" (Figure 5). As in the first ad, the slave's name is

[23] Linda Williams (2001:103-4) discusses how a black male character in Thomas Dixon's *Clansmen* is described as having a "receding forehead", "strong and angular jaws" and "an oblong, protruding stomach, resembling an elderly monkey's". He is also vested with distorted facial features, alternately described as "mashed", "bulged" and "crushed". Similarly, Uncle Tom is portrayed as an ape (66-7).

conspicuously absent. This is the norm; it is a slave's ability and physical condition, not her personhood or individuality, which confers value. Nevertheless, it seems particularly incongruous in this ad of sale. The capitalization of various nouns, verbs and adjectives creates a striking juxtaposition against this lack.

The absence of defining characteristics of individual personality is a phenomenon which will be explored at length in the comparison between notices for fugitive slaves and white criminals. Rather than any sense of character, what is evoked through the description is a picture of physical health. The word "stout" is again present, perhaps invoked in an effort to compensate for the slave's age. This woman is presumably older than is desirable for a slave;[24] however, the mention that she is "very stout" suggests that what she lacks in youth she ostensibly makes up for in sheer robustness. Perhaps she also makes up for youth with experience; we can assume she has already worked for a number of years as a domestic servant. Like the first slave, she is described as a "Negro", indicative of the darkness of her complexion.

But most notable is the use of the term "wench". In order to excavate the historical meaning, I again turn to the *Century Cyclopedia* (1889). Definitions of the term include, in order of appearance, "A female child; a girl; a maid or damsel", "A girl or young woman of a humble order or class", "A lewd or immodest woman; a mistress; a concubine; a strumpet" and "a colored woman of any age; a negress or mulatress, especially one in service". These problematic definitions clearly illustrate the primacy of the visual. Distinctions in age, class,

[24] Particularly as her best childbearing years were likely behind her. As Franklin and Schweninger explain in *Runaway Slaves: Rebels on the Plantation* (1999), female slaves "had often begun to raise families by their late teens and early twenties" (212).

even behaviour, are all subsidiary to that difference which is most observable: race. Evident in the first two definitions, the fact that only a young or unmarried woman of European descent is generally referred to as a wench, while the term is applied to a black woman of *any age*, illustrates the conflation of blackness with an inherently child-like disposition. The Noble Savage myth places blacks closer to nature, codifying 'Negroes' as socially-delayed and more innocent, lacking the shame and modesty of Europeans, just as children were seen to lack the shame and 'decency' of adults.

This facilitates what Nancy Ordover calls an "alibi of altruism" on the part of white male patriarchy. Because the liberal tradition relies on rationality as the cornerstone of its dictates, "the irrational, those deemed incapable of acting on their own best interests...(including women, youth, the poor, the colonized, the enslaved), may be acted *on* for their own good" (2003: 128). Generally used only to address young whites, the application of the term "wench" to black adult women is indicative of the linguistic embeddedness of a patriarchal, paternalistic ideology. This naming is symptomatic of a larger phenomenon of social practice in which black subjects are routinely stripped of autonomy through discursive construction. Later emasculatory references to black adult males as "boy" (and women as "girl") are emblematic of the same racist socio-economic and political hierarchies in language as those implicit in the definitions of "wench".

The last two definitions illustrate the conflation of blackness, and more specifically black womanhood, with hypersexuality. It is telling that the same term connotes "[a] lewd or immodest [European] woman" and "a colored woman

of any age". While a white woman[25] must engage in specific behaviours to earn the label "wench", the black female is assumed to be lascivious and promiscuous by default. The tropical heat of Africa and the Caribbean was commonly thought to result in overdeveloped sexuality (Dain 2002; Guy-Shetfall 2002). "Black women came to be seen as hypersexual, so lustful that sexual intercourse with them was always voluntary, never coerced. The black woman could not be raped." (Dain 2002: 235)

This mythologized sexual appetite ostensibly extended even beyond human relationships. Black women were believed so promiscuous that they even engaged in sexual acts with apes. Through the construction of this imagined bestial union, "Europeans marked this group of women as lewd, lascivious, and savage—the antithesis of virtuous, European women" (Guy-Shetfall 2002: 21)[26]. While the white woman was enshrined in a position of sanctity, "[t]he notion of woman as saint or virtuous lady in the minds of white men could not have applied to Black women...given the need to justify slavery." (Guy-Shetfall 2002: 23)

The structural significance of the institution of slavery underlies every assertion embodied in the deployment of the term "wench". The qualifier "especially one in service" is extremely significant. A black woman's condition of servitude renders her *especially* wench-like. The fact that the master-slave

[25] Though race is not stated, it is a given that 'woman' without racial qualifiers is necessarily white, as race is explicitly mentioned when referring to non-white women. Just as there is no dictionary entry for "white race", European descent assumed to be is the norm.

[26] Though it should be noted that, as Lisa Lindquist Dorr argues, both class and perceived character of white women—the latter being judged by women's level of adherence to puritanical standards of sexual propriety—can act as a mitigating factor in the outcome of rape cases—and concurrently the extension of white men's protection—on the basis of perceived worthiness (2004). An ideal of pure white womanhood assumes respectability, both through good social standing and an apparent chastity, which is why white woman can also be "wenches", though not by default through sheer virtue of their skin colour as with women of colour.

power relationship might render a female slave incapable of refusing her master's sexual advances is entirely ignored. It is paradoxical that the animalistic and irrational female slave is considered so different from Europeans as to be outside their ostensibly universal conception of civil liberties, yet is held to their stringent moral code. The black female slave, normally legally disenfranchised and institutionally disempowered, is here suddenly vested with great agency. Despite the fact that a white master legally *owns* the body of the enslaved female, and despite the fact that the black woman is apparently both irrational and childlike in nature, it is somehow *she*, not her master, who is held morally responsible for acts of sexual congress which transpire between them.[27]

That such acts did in fact transpire is apparent through evidence of 'miscegenation'. This is illustrated in the next two ads, which are also extremely helpful in comparing different representations of black slave utility. The first ad for "a Mulatto Boy sixteen years old, capable of Cooking and doing all kind of House Work" illustrates the same emphasis on knowledge of duties seen in the previous ad, yet makes no mention of physical attributes (Figure 6).[28] Perhaps the slave's youth renders the discussion of his health redundant. He is in his

[27] I use this term loosely because under so coercive a system as slavery it is likely that a number of the sexual acts between black women and white men actually constituted rape rather than consensual sex, particularly under plantation systems. Patricia Hill Collins insightfully explores these issues at the intersection of race, power and sexuality in her presentation of the "Jezebel" archetype of black womanhood. Collins explains that function of the archetype under slavery was to "relegate all Black women to the category of sexually aggressive women, thus providing a powerful rationale for the widespread sexual assaults by white men typically reported by Black slave women" (1990:77; citing Davis 1981; Hooks 1981; D. White 1985).

[28] This is perhaps the best of all the ads for exemplifying the codification of black slave as chattel. This is not due to any peculiarity of the ad itself but to its placement within the page. On the same page is an advertisement for a ladies saddle-horse, which presents details about the horse in the same fashion the young slave is described. Additionally, the ad for the horse is nearly the same length and provides roughly the same level of description, emphasizing how the black body is codified in a similar manner to livestock or consumer goods.

prime, so it would likely be assumed that he is youthfully vibrant and energetic (which requires less textual emphasis than a claim of mature stoutness).

The second ad is also less explicit in its description of health, but makes no mention of the slave's skill set. The ad, "To be Sold by Private Sale: A Mulatto, of about 24 Years old, just arrived from Detroit; has had the Small Pox, speaks good English and French" does not specifically mention physical condition. However, the fact that the slave survived a smallpox infection certainly speaks to his resilience. Readers can infer that he is unlikely to contract smallpox again, and therefore unlikely to die or get seriously ill as a result of contact with the virus. Also highly significant is the fact that he is bilingual, and therefore of use to either an English or French master, though more French than English owned domestic slaves.[29]

The word "mulatto", derived from the word "mule", is defined as "[o]ne who is the offspring of parents of whom one is white and the other a negro." (*Cyclopedia* 1889) The definition elaborates, "[t]he mulatto is of a yellow colour, with frizzled or woolly hair, and resembles the European more than the African." It is extremely interesting that while an interracial union between white and black parents can produce children with a variety of physical traits,[30] a more European likeness is ascribed. Yet despite ostensibly exhibiting Caucasian features in greater measure, mulattos are clearly distinct from whites. This is particularly true in the eyes of the law, since mulattos could be legally enslaved. Similarly,

[29] Marcel Trudel traced a total of 1509 slave owners, only 181 of whom were English (Winks:10).
[30] That is not even to speak of the diversity within the group "African", here deployed as a totalizing unity.

mulattos are grouped not with European women but with "negress" in the definition of "wench".

The positioning of mulattos closer to whites illustrates the contradictory rhetoric around miscegenation. This definition is perhaps an attempt to laud the superior potency of European blood. There is evidence of this stream of thought, such as the statement that "not more than a single drop of the Missouri River had been added to the greatness of the St. Lawrence" through the 'mixing' of French-Canadian blood with that of 'Negroes' or 'panis' (Winks 1997: 11). However, the discussion of miscegenation generally centered around a fear of 'race degeneracy', of white blood being 'weakened' or 'tainted' by that of other races.

This mortal terror of race pollution suggests paradoxically that 'Negro' blood was very potent – so powerful a small amount could render its recipient black. Rhetoric of taintedness heightened this fear by positioning racialized blood, not as white blood – potent in its purity – but strong in its very degenerateness. It was maintained that "interracial unions resulted in progeny that were weak, with attenuated lifespans. Mentally and morally, these children could not measure up to either 'parent race' and were frequently infertile." (Ordover 2002: 38) Claims of infertility were justified by eugenics proponents' belief that as different species blacks and whites were biologically incompatible (Dain 2002; Waltraud and Harris 1999). This mythologized mulatto barrenness contradicts racial purists' fear of the genetic infiltration of blacks "passing" as whites, and highlights the ludicrous nature of their contradictory assertions. Yet the lack of logical basis had little effect on their power. However asinine, these representations were discursively branded on the black body, with serious material consequences.

Comparison of Runaway Slave & Escaped White Criminal Notices

Consequences of the codification of the black body carried over to ads of runaway slaves, where such representations were further compounded by the associations conjured up by the perceived dishonesty and immorality of slaves who fled their masters. Many of these associations were mutually-constitutive with those I discuss in the previous section, but fugitive notices added the additional connotations of treacherous and criminal. As one Georgia overseer, galled over the escape of 138 slaves, lamented in a letter to their master, "I can never git over the Baseness of your ungrateful Negroes...to treat Negroes with humanity is like giving Pearls to Swine, it is throwing away value and giting insult and ingratitude in return." (Franklin and Schweninger 1999: 29) The perception of escaped slaves underscored their representation as chattel and animalistic; in fact, fugitive slaves were often literally "hunted down like dogs".[31] Moreover, it served to cement an association between blackness and criminality. The purpose of this section is to explore the criminalization of the black slave body, through a comparison with notices for the capture of escaped white criminals.

By contrasting notices requesting the capture of escaped black slaves and criminals (the two are essentially merged in this instance) and white fugitives, it becomes clear that blackness is conflated with criminality. Through textual representation, the black body becomes visually marked with a series of associations to illegality. As with ads of sale, minimal information is given,

[31] Particularly in the American South. Whereas in Montreal there were fewer slaves, in many U.S. states there was a significant political economy around the hunting and capture of escaped slaves.

though many contentious assumptions are implicitly embedded in seemingly straightforward texts. In both types of texts, what is absent is as significant as what is observably present. What is different in runaway slave notices is the importance of recognition. Because of their function, fugitive ads must attempt to textually create a recognizable picture of the runaway slave. But despite the significance of their role, these notices provide very little detail. One might assume that this is the norm for any text with this intent, which is why a comparison to the notices of escaped white criminals is useful. The contrast between the notices for black and white escapees illustrates that minimal description is not in fact the norm.

Perhaps the best ad for illustrating the comparison is one for an escaped black criminal. It is significant that this man is actually charged with a crime, and that it is unclear whether he is a slave. Rather than weakening its value for the purpose of comparison, this actually strengthens it, as it provides a more direct parallel to notices of escaped white criminals. Unlike with clear notices of slaves, the only apparent difference is race, not necessarily civil status. The notice reads as follows, "Broke Goal and escaped on Sunday the 18th instant...William Spencer, a Negro, charged with petty larceny; he is about five feet and six inches high, well made and wore a short blue Jacket, and red waistcoat, black breeches, a round hat and generally a wig." (Figure 7)[32] This is a far cry from the level of the detail included in the description of escaped white criminals, as will be shown at length.

[32] It should be noted here that "Goal" is seen in context and was the common spelling of "jail" at the time.

Even the most detailed fugitive slave notice reveals little that would allow for identification. The most detailed account is of "A NEGRO MAN SLAVE named JOE, born in Africa, twenty-six years of age, about five feet seven inches high, a little pitted with the small pox, has several scars on his legs, speaks English and French fluently, and is by trade a Press-Man" (Figure 8).[33] There is also one sentence describing the clothing he wore at the time of his escape. This notice is the only one which comes close to providing the level of the detail included in the description of escaped white criminals.

Take, for example, James Lawrence (Figure 9), "a native of Ireland, about twenty five years of age, came into this country four years ago, and was formerly a Surgeon's Mate on board of a Ship of War, he is about five feet four inches high, sandy coloured hair tied behind, freckled, and talks in a mild tone of voice". There are also *three* lines of text describing his clothing alone. Discussed in the same ad is Samuel Reeves, who has "dark brown Hair loose, a down look, [and] speaks in a harsh and daring manner". Even more personality is communicated in the next notice (Figure 10). Antoin Goslin is "30 years of age, Brown Redish [sic] hair, Ferntickled,[34] about 5 Feet 3 or 4 Inches High, medling stout make, and talks much with an impudent air". Another white criminal who escaped with Goslin is

[33] Also important here is the mention of a very specific skill set. This is also evident in the ad for an escaped nineteen year-old Mulatto apprentice (Figure 10), who is a "Shoe-maker by trade". Evidence of trade apprenticeship of black slaves serves to debunk the myth of their savage incivility and inability to be educated. It flies in the face of paternalist rhetoric which claims that blacks are incapable of caring for themselves and therefore should be controlled and 'cared for' by the institution of slavery. While this mention of skills lacks the emphasis on character and mastery apparent in ads requesting (European) labour it nonetheless evidences a diverse range of skills and abilities among slaves. It also means that if they successfully escaped, these slaves had the potential to earn a livelihood.

[34] Although I was unable to find a definition of this adjective, it most likely means "freckled", as suggested by the similarity of these words.

granted such individual specificity as "speaks slow and seems Timorous", "Black hair full face'd", "sullen down look; and seems to have a hurt in his neck".

Through textual encoding, the escaped black slave or criminal is vested with very little specificity, unlike the white fugitive. This serves to conflate blackness with criminality, in a way that whiteness is not. This occurs in a number of significant ways. Primarily, physical description is minimal and there is no description of personality or character. Blacks are only described as being either Negro or mulatto. While Negro is indicative of a dark or "black" complexion and mulatto refers to a lighter or "yellow" one, these terms are extremely unspecific. A wide range of skin colours exists, but only two categories are used to encompass all possible degrees of pigmentation.

Additionally, there is no description of facial features or hair colour, texture or style. Such scant descriptions provide little in the way of identifiers. It would be extremely easy to confuse a fugitive slave with a free black, on the ambiguity of these physical descriptions.[35] The physical description of the white criminal, on the other hand is so detailed as to include specific descriptions of hair colour and style. The colour of white criminals' hair is described, for instance "Brown Redish" and "sandy coloured", so is style, for example "tied behind" and "loose".[36] Similarly, the face is described in detail, including "Ferntickled" and "Black hair full face'd".[37]

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[35] In this sense, appallingly little has changed, as the same critique has been made of contemporary descriptions of black criminals in mainstream news reports.

[36] This also gives an indication of length, though this was quite likely a very popular style at the time. It is also essential to note that the style in which the hair is worn can of course be altered in an effort to evade capture, but what is most significant is not whether the style remains intact but the fact that it is even noted and conveyed, which is certainly not the case for black slaves.

[37] I could not find a definition for this expression, but speculate that it refers to a thick beard.

Not only is a great deal more physical specificity conferred on white criminals; far more individual personality and character is textually created. There is more evidence given that the white criminal is a *particular* individual, rather than a generic *type*. While the black fugitive is detailed minimally, the white criminal is described even with regard to posture and manner of speaking. Two of the white criminals are described as having a "down look", presumably indicative of how they angle their heads or eyes. Moreover, speech patterns are distinctly portrayed, for instance, "talks in a mild tone of voice", "talks much with an impudent air" and "speaks slow and seems Timorous".

It is adjectives such as "mild", "impudent" and "timorous" that create personality. This type of colorful description gives a picture of a particular individual that readers could actually imagine personified or recognize in an encounter. Similarly white criminals' style of dress is also described in great detail, for example "a pair of European shoes, white yarn stockings, Black Britches and Wastecoat, a striped cotton shirt with Ruffles of the same, a black silk Cravat[,] a brown yarn Cape and a Blanket Coat" (Figure 10).[38] Through textual codification, the white criminal is distinguished from other individuals of European descent, while the slave is described in fairly generic terms.

[38] The opposite extreme to this lavish description is illustrated in Figure 16 in which a black criminal's clothing is described, "had on a green jacket and old brown trousers".

Fugitive Slave Notices as a Site of Agency

> It was the institution of slavery that created the runaway slave...[r]unning away was only one of several means employed by slaves to overtly express their hatred of slavery. (Windley 1983: intro)

Now that I have laid the groundwork for the representation of black slaves through my chapter one analysis of their placement in *The Gazette* in Chapter one, and of their textual representation in the previous section, I wish to complicate the site of the runaway slave notice, as one that is very rich and highly contradictory. The fact that it was criminal for black slaves to attempt to gain a modicum of the freedom legally accorded whites clearly meant the manufacture of a disproportionate number of black criminals. However, notices of runaway slaves are the site of a fascinating and important paradox. Although they problematically conflate blackness and criminality (particularly in the virtual absence of oppositional representations in *The Gazette*), runaway slave notices concurrently represent an important site of slave agency. Whereas slaves in sale ads are represented as unnamed and inert items of property to be bought and sold, runaway notices depict a degree of slaves' agency in that they name escaped slaves and record their actions. I would argue that these ads constitute an inadvertent portrayal of slaves' resistance and subversion of unjust colonial regimes.

Slaves employed many different forms of resistance under the oppressive institution of slavery. As Marietta Morrissey explains, "[p]rotests against work and slavery varied in form with what was possible and what was effective." (1989: 153) Consequently, such actions could be large scale or individual, violent or

passive—ranging from large, well organized armed revolts to passive-resistance, such as refusing to work or intentionally working at a slow pace. But as Orlando Patterson explains, regardless of size and nature, all such attempts served to chip away at the institution of slavery (1982).

Although certain forms of resistance, such as the sabotaging of equipment and poisoning of livestock, would probably not have been practiced in Montreal given the specific conditions of domestic slavery, slaves in Montreal undoubtedly resisted their oppression. But how are we to see the agency of slaves when their very condition prohibited their access to means of representing their lives and struggles? This is a question Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak tackles in her piece "Can the Subaltern Speak?"[39] Here she explores the possibilities for creating what she terms "counterhegemonic ideological production"—that is, ways of representing oppressed subjects that oppose the elitist, colonial and patriarchal ways in which they have historically been represented.[40] Although our projects differ—Spivak employs a Derridean deconstruction approach to her analysis of dominant interpretations of Hindu *sati* practices of 'widow-sacrifice'—I find her exhortation "not to abstain from representation" heartening and her attempt to "learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for) the historically muted subject" (295) useful in my own attempts to locate the agency of black slaves.

In answer to her question "with what voice-consciousness can the subaltern speak?" (285), Spivak introduces Foucault's assertion that "'to make

[39] Although this piece is controversial and has been critiqued by a number of scholars, most notably Benita Parry (1987).

[40] I should note here that Spivak is particularly interested in allowing the voices of subaltern *women* to be heard. While I am interested in the special concerns of women under slavery, I my analysis is not limited to the sole examination of women slaves' experiences. Rather I find Spivak's model potentially useful for alternate readings of all subjugated populations.

visible the unseen can also mean a change of level, addressing oneself to the material which has hitherto had no pertinence for history and which had not been recognized as having any moral, aesthetic or historical value.'" (285) This has certainly been borne out by my own research, which relies almost exclusively on what are essentially the scraps or fragments of *The Gazette* (in one sense, quite literally, as large gaps, sometimes years long, appear frequently in the newspaper archives, while yet other sections are stained, torn, marked on and so forth; what is left is truly a collection of fractured remnants).

Moreover, even within the intact sections of the paper, slaves are generally contained within the least prominent section. Those deemed unimportant are found in the rubble of history. Black slaves in Montreal are either buried in dusty archives or relegated to miscellaneous or classified sections. So how then can I locate the agency of these slaves? I don't want to be accused, as Spivak has been, of affecting a "deliberated deafness to the native voice where it is to be heard" (Parry 2004: 23) Yet, as John Blassingame argues, "[t]he fundamental problem facing anyone interested in studying black views of bondage is that the slave had few opportunities to tell what it meant to be chattel" (Meaders 1993: 9). I have found only scattered references to narratives of slaves owned by Canadians, no trace of narratives of Montreal slaves specifically, and mentions of Montreal only in narratives of U.S. slaves who escaped there.

It is certain that most slaves and other 'insignificant' people are found in the scraps of history, but this becomes particularly strikingly in the case of Montreal. While the small scale makes it possible to conduct a close textual reading of slave ads, it also necessarily means that there is less historical material

to work with. Fewer slaves means even fewer scraps of documentation. And because the primary source of this project is *The Montreal Gazette*, analysis is constrained by the material conditions of the newspaper. This refers not only to the availability of archival materials, but also to the temporal scope of *Gazette* coverage. One of the few better-known cases of black slave resistance in Montreal occurred in 1734, over forty years before *The Gazette* was established.[41]

The case concerns Marie-Joseph Angélique, a 'Portugese-born Negress' who belonged to a Montreal widow. After learning she was to be sold following her master's death, Angélique set fire to her Mistress' house, and fled with her lover, a white endentured servant from France. The fire spread, burning down a significant portion of the city. Angélique was captured, arrested, taken to trial, convicted of arson, and sentenced to death. On execution day, she was tortured until she confessed, then driven through the city streets with a noose on her neck with a burning torch in her hand and a sign reading "incendiary" (arsonist) on her back and chest. When she reached Place D'Armes, she was made to kneel in front of the Church, confess her crimes and beg forgiveness, then her hand (ostensibly the one with which she had set the fire) was cut off. After this grotesque display, Angélique was returned to the cart, driven to the gallows and hanged until dead, after which her body was taken down and burned, and her ashes scattered (*Gazette* 08/06/1945; Elgersman 1999). As slaves were customarily buried, this literal engulfment of her corpse by flame was likely a symbolic gesture intended to suit the nature of her crime.

[41] I say better known in the sense that it has received more attention than most slave ads. Angélique's case is the subject of an essay by George Elliott Clarke (2004), the play "Angelique" by Lorena Gale, as well as an upcoming book by Afua Cooper.

So while this dramatic case boldly evidences both slave agency and resistance, and also the colonial brutality of the ostensibly benevolent European-Canadians, Angélique's story of rebellion and punishment remains absent from the as yet non-existent *Gazette*.[42] Rather, what later prevails are dominant accounts of slave escapes—and ironically this fire may well have destroyed other valuable evidence of slave resistance—so all that remains is the opportunity to read these dominant narratives against the grain. This also means acknowledging the priviledged position of scholars, and the biases this priviledge can bring.

Spivak self-reflexively recognizes that postcolonial intellectuals are influenced by what she calls "masculine imperialist ideological formation", and argues that "[p]art of our 'unlearning' process is to articulate that ideological formation—by *measuring* silences, if necessary—into the *object* of investigation." (296) So according to this model, silences and negations are as significant as that which is represented. Silences represent a lack of access, voices that have been stifled. Following Spivak's model then, I attempt to read the agency of slaves into runaway slave ads. What is represented is slaves' ostensible criminality and duplicity, but what is absent is their suffering, dissatisfaction, or hope for freedom and a better life. Consequently, I feel it is essential to read these silences into the scraps in order to counter the dominant presentation of slaves as criminal, lascivious, or passively contented with their lot. Moreover, the recognition of silences as significant is fruitful. It raises crucial questions concerning the relationship between representation and power. It forces us to ask what is not

[42] I should note that although Marie-Joseph Angélique is not mentioned in *The Gazette* in the time period I focus on, she is mentioned in a twentieth century retrospective column entitled "All Our Yesterdays", while I will examine in the conclusion.

being said or shown. Who is being denied access? How and why? And what are the consequences?

In runaway slave ads in Montreal, clearly the slaves being described are denied access to the representation of their own experiences. The consequence of this is a form of representation that delegitimizes their struggles. Yet reading the silences in these texts makes visible some aspects of slaves' agency. While the true depth and complexity of Montreal slaves' experience is lost for good, a counterhegemonic reading of slave ads makes it clear that slaves objected to their enslavement, wished to be free, and were willing to act on this wish. Unlike the sale ads, which represent slaves in much the same way as a horse or a cask of rum—simply as inert objects that are bought, sold, and otherwise acted *upon*—by virtue of their form, runaway slave ads are forced into some recognition of slaves' agency.

Because their aim is the return of human property, runaway slave ads include slaves' names and details of their escape. Although these additional details are only intended to increase the chance of apprehending escapees and again revoking their freedom, they also paradoxically represent slaves' subjective will, the fact that they exercised what little freedom they did have. Moreover, they constitute some small impact of slaves upon their representation. Had they not bravely attempted escape, these slaves' names or deeds would never have appeared in *The Gazette*; they would eternally remain nameless Negro slaves. Though it is not acknowledged by dominant readings, and may not have mitigated their marginalized social position, it is here that slaves might become people with wishes and desires.

CHAPTER THREE:
"ESCAPED: A NEGRO SLAVE, ALSO ESCAPED, A CANADIAN": RACE AND NATIONHOOD IN RUNAWAY NOTICES OF CANADA & THE U.S.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the place of runaway slave notices within a discourse of nationhood. In the first part of this chapter, I will examine the construction of an idea of nation in fugitive slave notices of *The Montreal Gazette*. Here, I aim to show that race is constructed as a category of belonging outside of the category of national belonging. That is, race plays an overdetermining role in how blacks in *The Gazette* are represented. Race appears either to transcend or subsume questions of membership within the imagined community defined as "Canadian".

As Eva Mackey argues after Michel Foucault, "power is not essentially repressive, but rather constructive and constitutive" (1999: 18). The power of slavery lies not only in its ability to revoke freedom or deny rights, but also its ability to create categories of difference. In the previous chapter, I illustrated how the workings of power serve to construct black slaves as criminal. In the first part of this chapter, I will show how it creates a further category of difference by defining black slaves as non-Canadian. In the second section, I will compare runaway slave notices from *The Gazette* to those from colonial newspapers of the United States, with respect to the national differences in the practice and representation of slavery. And in the third section, I will analyze an 1804 article concerning the Haitian Revolution.

Although the specific focus of this project is the analysis of *Montreal Gazette* runaway slave ads and notices, I found it essential to devote a section of this project to a comparison with fugitive slave notices of the United States. There are a number of reasons I feel such a comparison is crucial. Firstly, the vast majority of analysis of slave sale ads and runaway slave notices has been done in the United States, and I would be remiss to discount this extensive work of analysis and compilation solely because it is not conducted on slave ads in Canada. Secondly, because of the shared border, a number of Montreal slaves previously lived in or passed through the United States at some point, blurring the distinction of official designations of nations and borders. Thirdly, although boundaries could be crossed, some national initiatives such as the Fugitive Slave Act had important implications for slaves in both the U.S. and Canada. A fourth and overarching reason is the fact that the myth of Canadian benevolence has been constructed *in relation* to what has been construed as the more brutal and genocidal process of U.S. nation-building (Mackey E 1999). Consequently, it is only through a comparison of the two colonial regimes that such a myth can be debunked, and that the actual confluence of factors that concretely affected the lives of slaves can be analyzed in a way that acknowledges their complexity and power.

Nationalism and Race in The Montreal Gazette

Before I go on to examine the representation of race and nationality in *Gazette* fugitive slave notices, I must acknowledge that I do not see nations as the only meaningful units of political analysis, a view I find overly simplistic and fundamentally limiting and alienating. Similarly, I wish to avoid positioning nation-states as inherently natural formations. Nevertheless, I cannot avoid addressing the tremendous power of nations, both as political entities and as economic and ideological forces. It is undeniable that in colonial Canada, as in contemporary Canada, ideas of citizenship and nation have a concrete impact on people's lives and play an important role in dictating access, rights and responsibilities within states. Moreover, it is important to be cognizant of how categories of belonging are constituted or denied on the basis of race, ethnicity and origin. As the runaway notices illustrate, blacks are seen as being outside the category of "Canadianness". This is clear in a October 11, 1792 *Gazette* notice (Figure 11), which reads,

> *TWENTY DOLLARS REWARD.*
>
> RAN away from the Subscriber on Sunday the 7th instant, a Mulatto apprentice about nineteen years of age, and about 5 feet 9 inches high a Shoe-maker by trade, had on when he went away a brown Surtout coat, a Jean Coat and Leggins, a pair of boots and a new coarse hat.
>
> Also a Canadian man about twenty-six years of age, much marked with the small-pox, speaks broken English, had with him a brown Surtout coat, a brown coat and striped vest, he is a Tanner and Currier by trade. Whosoever apprehends the above mentioned men, and delivers them at Montreal, or to the Subscriber at Sault au Recollet shall receive the above reward and all reasonable charges, paid by
>
> JOHN TIEPLE
>
> *N.B.* The apprentice's name is Eber Welden, and the Canadian Pierre Agie.

As this notice illustrates, blackness and Canadianness are presented as mutually-exclusive categories of belonging. According to bell hooks, the creation

of dichotomous categories is "the central ideological component of all systems of domination in Western society" since it allows of the objectification of an 'Other' (Collins 1990: 68). Although there is no mention of the origins of the "Mulatto apprentice", it is clear that he does not fit within the category of "Canadian", as he is first and foremost a mulatto. Similarly, while it is nowhere stated that the escaped Canadian is white, it is clear that he is, since whiteness is the norm through its invisibility while blackness is always explicitly stated. As Richard Dyer argues, the power of whiteness is that it "colonizes the definition normal"; it can position itself as "unmarked, unnamed and invisible" (Mackey E 1999: 21).

Eva Mackey writes, "[u]nlike marginal groups, 'whites' are rarely thought of as an homogenous category, in part because 'whiteness' secures its dominance by 'seeming not to be anything in particular' in a general sense, because the category of whiteness always breaks down into more specific categories." (1999: 21) While Dyer talks about ethno-religious and national affiliations as constituting these 'subcategories of whiteness', in the case of colonial Montreal these categories are primarily linguistic. The case of Pierre Agie—"the Canadian"—illustrates this well. Although his name is clearly French, and he "speaks broken English", Agie is nonetheless positioned as Canadian rather than French. The categories of English or French whiteness are subsumed under the greater rubric of Canadianness. Eva Mackey sheds light on how this process of creating definitions of nationhood operates specially in the context of colonial Canada and other 'settler societies'. She writes,

> Bennet *et al.* argue that new settler societies, unlike traditional European nations, have to 'undertake the process of nation formation urgently, visibly, defensively'. They are always being 'caught in the act, embarrassed by the process of

> construction (1994). Indeed, to speak of culture and identity in Canada is to speak 'not only of a terrain that is fractured and contested, but of a terrain whose identity *as Canadian* is in dispute' (Allor *et al.* 1994, emphasis mine). (1999: 9)

So while Agie may be more accurately described as French-Canadian, he and other whites of European descent are considered staunchly "*Canadian*-Canadian" (Mackey E 1999: 20) regardless of their membership in a linguistic subcategory of whiteness—a way of cementing the legitimacy of the new colony called Canada. This *Gazette* ad illustrates how whites are essentially homogenized against their opposite: the "Mulatto", "Negro" and "pani" outsiders in relation to whose exclusion insider status was conferred.

The next fugitive notice, which ran on May 16, 1793 (Figure 12), supports this notion of oppositional constructions but goes on to complicate it even further through its remarkable description of the complexion of an escaped Canadian:

> BROKE Goal and escaped, this morning, *Louis Braban dit Lamie*, a Canadian, charged with murder, about five feet ten inches high, brown complexion, and dark brown hair; had on a blue Capot and Trousers, canadian shoes, a check silk hankerchief and a round hat, and is stout and well made. Also *John Hitlenger*, a soldier in the second battalion of the Sixtieth Regiment, a German, charged with robbery; he is about five feet four inches high and twenty eight years of age, fair complexion and light brown hair; had on a short blanket coat, a grebe waistcoat and white breeches with buttons of the 60th Regiment, grey worsted stockings and english shoes. Also *Jacob Simpson*, a Negro, indicted for petty larceny; he is about five feet two inches high and about twenty years of age, had on a green jacket and old brown trousers.
> JACOB KUHN, Goaler.

The notice goes on to warn all of "His Majesty's subjects" from harbouring the escaped fugitives and inform *Gazette* readers that an eight dollar reward plus reasonable expenses is offered for each escapee. This fugitive notice is particularly significant because it further troubles the notion of national belonging through its description of the escaped Canadian as having a "brown complexion".

It is intriguing that he has brown skin but is still described as "Canadian". This illustrates how fixed notions of race were in the context of colonial Canada. Rather than undermining the idea of the mutually exclusive positioning of blackness and Canadianness, the fact that this man is both Canadian *and* brown actually validates it. From a purely visual standpoint, 'mulattos' too have brown skin;[43] however, they are still grouped with 'Negroes' and seen as non-Canadian. It is not just complexion here but a very clear conception of *race* that is operating. Even if Lamie is a dark skinned Caucasian, he is still racially white enough to be considered Canadian. He is still a descendent of civilized Europeans, not savage Africans. Similarly, even the lightest-skinned black person could never be Canadian, but always first and foremost mulatto or Negro, burdened with the weight of a thousand colonial associations.

These associations represent a point of convergence of various different discourses; they also represent a point of commonality between all North American fugitive slave notices. However, as the next section will demonstrate, there are some distinct dimensions in the way slavery was practiced in Canada and the U.S. which carry over into how fugitives are represented. In order to set the context for the analysis in this section, I will first map the literature on slave ads in order to situate my own research in relation to that which has already been conducted. I have found no comprehensive analysis of slave ads in Canada, although a number of Canadian scholars utilize the ads of *The Montreal Gazette* and other colonial papers in their invaluable historical and sociological analyses

[43] As indeed do most of those considered "black", most of whom actually have a very dark brown complexion.

and historical narratives (Mackey F 2004; Elgersman 1999; Winks 1997). However, a good deal of research on slave advertisements has been conducted in the United States, where colonial slave ads are prevalent.

Most analyses of U.S. slave ads tend to focus on slave notices from a more historical and documentary approach than the project I undertake, which is more grounded in textual analysis. However, they nonetheless provide an invaluable resource for studying Montreal slave notices. Freddie L. Parker's book (editor), *Stealing a Little Freedom: Advertisements for Slave Runaways in North Carolina, 1791-1840* (1994) features 2,145 advertisements for over 2,600 fugitive slaves from nearly eighty different newspapers. Parker provides little analysis but faithfully reproduces and meticulously indexes this massive body of runaway slave notices. Of course, the sheer scale of his project renders any close textual analysis virtually impossible. Here again the much smaller scale of slavery in Montreal takes on added significance, in this case by facilitating the possibility of a manageable in-depth analysis of slave ads. However, although Parker himself does not engage in such analysis, through his meticulous compiling, he is undertaking the Herculean task of making these ads accessible to other scholars. Because he has done the painstaking work of transcribing and compiling these ads, I am able to engage in textual analysis of the materials he makes available and conduct a comparative analysis of Montreal slave ads and the advertisements

Smith and Wojtowicz's *Blacks Who Stole Themselves: Advertisements for Runaways in the Pennsylvania Gazette* (1989) also limits analysis of slave ads to its brief introduction, devoting the rest of the volume to reprinting the ads. The introduction is comprised in large part by summary of the interesting aspects of

the slave ads, for instance, the fact that slave markings and clothing were often detailed in great depth. Smith and Wojtowicz also engage in quantitative analysis of the fugitive ads. The book provides a useful history of slavery in the South as well as a table which provides a breakdown of runaway slave ads not only by sex, age and region of escape but also for the categories of birthplace, physical traits and items stolen. Their tales detail the occurrence of mentions of such physical markings as whip scars, brands, smallpox scars, and "African marks". The analysis is largely of the documentary possibilities for recuperating the historical conditions of slave life, rather than close discursive analysis. As with Parker's project, this serves as an excellent foil for a comparison of the different ways that black and white escapees are represented both within the United States and also between the U.S. and Montreal.

An even more exhaustive project than either Parker's or Smith and Wojtowicz's is undertaken by Lathan A. Windley (1999). Windley's comprehensive collection of slave ads from colonial papers fills a massive four volumes, each devoted to slave ads collected in a different group of U.S. states. It is stated in the preface that "[t]he author made no attempt to analyze or interpret the advertisements. It is left to the reader to interpret these advertisements as raw materials of history, to decide what meaning they contain...". This is precisely what the next section aims to do.

Significance of Marking in U.S. Fugitive Slave Notices

A comparison between slave ads of the United States and Montreal reveals a huge disparity in the way slaves are described in fugitive notices. U.S. notices are far longer and more detailed that those of *The Montreal Gazette*. Daniel Meaders makes similar observations in his comparison of U.S. fugitive ads to those from England:

> More creative, more detailed, more passionate, larger and more numerous than English ones, the American fugitive advertisements came in all sizes, the standard being three by six inches, numbering from a ten word sentence to a three hundred word paragraph and listing both the master's and the fugitive's names as well as the fugitive's physical description, residence, religion, occupation, musical instrument played, whip marks, branding scars, complexion, personality traits, number of known children and relatives, possible weapons carried, past offenses, and probable destination. (1993: 10)

One important piece of information that a comparison between slave ads in *The Montreal Gazette* and colonial newspapers in the United States yields is the different ways in which runaway slaves were thought of and marked. The idea of marking is particularly important and complex, as slaves could be marked literally as well as figuratively. As discussed in the previous chapter, slaves were marked by the colour of their skin. Marked in the sense of what Franz Fanon terms the "corporeal epidermal schema", that is, marked with a burdensome and painful series of colonial associations of blackness with barbarism, savagery, cannibalism and so forth (1967). Though Fanon wrote about it one hundred years after the abolition of slavery, this web of unfavourable associations converges on representation of the black body in the colonial imagination, the legacy of which Fanon laments in *Black Skin, White Masks.*

Black skin is a complex site as it marks the body both literally and figuratively. Figuratively in the sense Fanon speaks of and I attempted to speak of in previous sections through analysis of how these figurative associations are embedded in both the appearance of the slave's skin and also in the language used to speak and think about it. But slaves' skin is literally marked in two distinct ways. Firstly, it is marked in that it has colour and substance; it can be visually apprehended by the eye in a very concrete way—even if the idea of race itself is wholly abstract and arbitrary—that is, skin *looks* black or brown. Secondly, as Franklin and Schweninger (1999) point out, it is sometimes marked in the literal sense of physical marks of experience which leave a lasting trace on the skin of slaves. For instance, the sting of a whip can leave a permanent scar, which marks the body with the physical trace of the experience.[44]

A comparison of the runaway slave notices of Montreal and the United States reveals that slaves were often more explicitly marked in both senses in U.S. notices. Franklin and Schweninger's analysis of fugitive slave notices reveals that U.S. ads often contained far greater detail in descriptions of slaves' skin colour than *Montreal Gazette* notices. Their research suggests that general descriptions of complexions such as those found in *The Gazette* were less common in newspapers of the colonial United States. In describing their method for assessing complexion, they write, "[a]lthough at times, the precise color of the runaway was not stated and 'negro wench' or 'negro fellow' could describe a person of mixed origin, 70 percent of the runaways in the early period [1790-1816] were either black or their skin was so dark...that readers would assume they were." (1999:

[44] This trope is illustrated by the famous image of a slave displaying his whip marks (Figure 12)

214)[45] Although they do not state here that a minority of slaves were described in such minimal terms, the fact that Franklin and Schweninger use the expression "at times" makes it clear that a significant number of slaves were *not* described this way. Instead, many slaves were described in far greater detail than in *The Montreal Gazette* where the descriptions "Negro wench" for women and "Negro" for men are the norm.

Franklin and Schweninger go on to discuss the great variety in the way "mixed blood" slaves in Southern states were described in fugitive slave notices.

> In South Carolina between 1822 and 1831, [runaway slaves] were described as yellow, brown, mustee (brown), mulatto, pale yellow, "of a rather yellow cast," Sambo (dark) and red[46]. In Virginia during the early and late periods [1790-1816 and 1838-1860], they were described as tawny, nearly black, brown, mulatto, reddish, yellowish, dark yellow, bright yellow, 'tolerable light,' 'dark mulatto,' and as having 'a lighter complexion' than was 'common among negroes.' Others were a 'little light completed' or 'tolerably bright complected,' 'more of a bright mulatto than otherwise,' and of a 'dark ginger color.' A Richmond owner said his carriage driver was of a 'dark copper complexion,' and other Virginia masters said their slaves were 'light copper or mulatto,' 'pumpkin color,' or 'light bacon color.' (1999:215) [47]

This exhaustive seeming list indicates a clear distinction in the way escaped slaves are represented in colonial newspapers of the Southern states and Montreal. One shortcoming of an attempt to draw comparisons is the fact that Franklin and

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[45] Although the authors maintain here that those described only as "negro" could be of "mixed origin", it should be noted that as in my project they consider the slaves described as such to be black for the purpose of analysis (214). This makes sense particularly in light of the dictionary definitions which clearly define "negro" in terms of blackness.

[46] The word "Sambo", here used to describe a particular colour, later came to denote the archetype of "the loyal, docile, cheerful, grinning slave" (Meaders 1993:7). This was undoubtedly as a result of the portrayal of the character Sambo in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Harriet Beecher Stowe's famous antislavery work.

[47] Detailed citations regarding the newspaper sources of these descriptions is provided by the authors. In addition to the bizarre likening of slaves' skin colour to that of pumpkins or bacon, of particular interest is the term "bright". This expression for lighter complexions remained in popular use in the U.S. after slavery was abolished, as evidenced by its use in literature of the 1960s and 1970s discussed by Patricia Hill Collins (1990: 80-1). Like wench, "bright" is a highly laden term, since it connotes not only superior intelligence but is also the opposite of "dark" which connotes evil, foul, sinister, and also unenlightened (as in "dark ages"), morbid (as in "dark comedy"), and obscurity or inscrutability (as in "the dark continent" of Africa).

Schweninger do not clearly indicate the frequency with which such descriptions appear, so it is difficult to determine whether they are standard or exceptional. However, it nonetheless makes the complete *absence* of such specific descriptions in *The Montreal Gazette* noteworthy. There could be any number of reasons for this huge disparity in the level of detail between slave ads of the American South and Montreal. I can only speculate as to the reason such descriptions are more prevalent in the United States; however, it seems safe to assume that the scale and structural differences between the two slave systems account in large part for this variance.

There are a number of factors I believe account for the incongruity of the portrayals of escaped slaves between the two nations. Firstly and most obviously, plantation slavery in the United States was far larger in scale than domestic slavery in Montreal; consequently, it is possible that there was genuinely more variation in the complexions of slaves. Generations of procreation both within the slave population and through "miscegenation" undoubtedly yielded a very diverse range of physical attributes such as complexion among U.S. slaves. This is borne out by Franklin and Schweninger's accounts of escaped slaves who could pass "either 'for a free fellow, or perhaps a white man'" or were "three-fourths white and '[showed] the negro blood but very little'" (1999: 215). Although offspring were born of interracial unions in Montreal, none of the escaped slaves notices describe slaves as being any lighter-skinned than "mulatto", and certainly no concern is expressed than any escaped slave is so light as to potentially allude capture. So this category of slave either did not exist or was so rare as to be completely absent from any mention in *The Gazette*.

Not only were there far fewer slaves in Montreal, but the absence of the large scale cultivation of a mono-crop also meant that slaves were confined primarily to the home and so were presumably physically isolated from one another as well. Few Montreal families owned large numbers of slaves (Winks 1990). In fact, some slaves in Canada have spoken of suffering feelings of loneliness and isolation from other enslaved blacks, in large part because of their physical separation (Elgersman 1999). In addition to the lack of physical proximity between slaves, far less emphasis was placed on exploiting the reproductive capability of female slaves under Montreal's system of domestic slavery than in the plantation systems of the American South and Caribbean (Elgersman 1999).

Another important outcome of the different scale and structure of Canadian and U.S. slavery revolves around hierarchies in the division of labour. I would argue that the necessary diversity of tasks and size of the slave population under plantation systems created a greater impetus for the emergence of hierarchies among slaves—on the basis of complexion, gender, and division of labour—while the smaller scale of Montreal slavery made the emergence of such hierarchies virtually impossible. Because few Montreal families owned any large number of black slaves, there could be little competition for the favour of their owners. Similarly, because in Montreal all black slaves were luxury commodities (Nelson 1998), it was prestigious to own them regardless of the specific qualities of their complexion. While some lighter-skinned blacks and those in domestic roles held superior status among slaves in the United States and Caribbean, because all 'Negro slaves' were rare in Montreal, any disparity in treatment on the

basis of skin colour was likely a non-issue. Similarly, because virtually all black slaves in Montreal were made to perform domestic tasks, there was little chance of antagonism between slaves working in the house and the field.

These fundamental differences in the organization and scale of slave systems in Canada and the U.S. go a long way to explaining why the complexions of slaves might have been represented so differently in runaway slave ads. When the slave population is both large and diverse in origin, more complex systems of categorization are required for managing it. Whereas in Montreal, runaway slave notices appeared very infrequently in *The Gazette*, in the American South and other large plantation-based economies, the disciplining of human commodities became almost a science.[48] The viability of the U.S. economic system relied on methods for the retrieval, discipline and punishment of slaves. Complex systems of differentiating slaves was of paramount importance when the inability to do so could mean the possibility of great financial loss with regard to both the particular slaves who escaped successfully and also through the failure to deter other potential escapees.

This idea of financial loss and the second type of marking merge within a discourse of deterrence. Moreover, it is another crucial site of distinction between Canadian and U.S. slavery and also brings me to back to the examination of the ways in which slaves are marked. I have already discussed how slaves are more explicitly marked in U.S. runaway slave notices through the discursive

[48] For instance, as is illustrated by the method of slave-making preached by Willie Lynch in "The Origin and Development of a Social Being Called 'The Negro'" a speech delivered to the slave-holders of Virginia in 1712, which Frederick Douglass has referred to as a "scientific and psychological blue print for the perpetuation of the mental condition that allowed slavery to flourish".

construction of distinctions in complexion. However, analysis of these notices also indicates that they were more *physically* marked as well. The use of branding, whipping and other forms of corporal punishment were very prevalent in Southern slavery, and the fugitive slave notices clearly reflect this.

As Franklin and Schweninger note, "[s]laves had scars on their backs, shoulders, arms, legs, sides and faces 'occasioned by the whip'. Neither the young nor old were spared. Fourteen-year-old Mary, who had a 'quick and lively air,' had two marks on her cheek inflicted with 'a cow hide'." (1999: 217) This is a significant difference between runaway slave notices of *The Montreal Gazette* and colonial papers of the United States. Not a single fugitive notice in the *Gazette* makes any mention of physical marks of mistreatment on the escaped slaves. On the contrary, my survey of the vast number of slave notices presented by Freddie L. Parker suggests that such signs of punishment or deterrence were not uncommon in U.S. runaway slave notices. In fact, a closer reading of the notices Parker presents reveals that many slave masters went far beyond whipping when punishing and attempting to deter potential escapees. Not only did they brand slaves—again, a practice completely absent in *Gazette* notices—but in some cases actually requested that the slaves be killed, mutilated, and their heads returned.

A June 16, 1810 fugitive slave notice from the *True Republican and Newbern Weekly Advertiser* reads as follows:

> **Fifty Dollars Reward.**
> RAN AWAY from the Subscriber, on the 28th ult. A Negro man named
> SAMPSON,
> he is about 5 feet. 4 or 5 inches high, of dark complexion, is branded on the left cheek with R. and on the right T. and has no toes on his right foot. As the said Negro has been legally outlawed, the above reward will be given for his head.,

> or Five Dollars if he is delivered to the Subscriber alive, or secured in any jail within this state.
>
> ROBERT FRANKLIN.[49]

There are many notable aspects of this advertisement, which give a sense of how Sampson was treated by his master. There is a good deal of evidence attesting to his owner's cruelty. Firstly, Sampson has been branded, a humiliating and excruciating experience—particularly on such sensitive skin as the face—and a process that both permanently scars the victim and also makes it more difficult to hide in the event of escape. Secondly, the fact that he is missing all the toes of one foot suggests further mistreatment.

Although the notice does not indicate the cause of the disfigured foot, it seems likely that it was a punishment inflicted on the slave. While it is plausible that some accident could amputate one or more toes, it seems unlikely that it would sever all the toes on one foot, while presumably leaving the rest of the foot intact; this seems far too deliberate to attribute to an accident. Moreover, it would fit within the spectrum of disciplinary practices common in plantation systems. Some slave owners in the Caribbean would sever the Achilles tendon of recaptured slaves in order to make it difficult for them to escape. Cutting off a slave's toes might have a similar effect as it would compromise a slaves' ability to balance when fleeing.

But even more notable is the size of the reward of the request for poor Sampson's head. While the majority of rewards listed in Parker's volume for the return of a single runaway slave range from five to twenty five dollars, fifty dollars is a very high sum for the return of a slave. The fact that a far more

[49] (Parker 1994: 543 no.1319)

modest reward of five dollars is offered for the return of Sampson alive—a mere *tenth* of the amount offered for the return of his severed head—clearly indicates that the slave owner is out for blood. It is obvious that he is very deliberately offering an added incentive for killing Sampson and mutilating his body, a grotesque job the tenfold reward seems meant to render more appealing.

Even those slave owners that exhibit somewhat less vitriolic loathing for their slaves seem to share what is at very least cruel indifference for their well-being. An August 23, 1817 notice in the *Carolina Federal Republican* reads:

> *100 Dollars Reward*
>
> **RAN AWAY** from the Subscriber living in Jones County, N.C. on the 16th inst. a mulatto man generally known by the name of yellow BILL; about forty years of age, six feet high, stout and well made, and has a small scar over one of his eyebrows, he is a very artful and ingenious fellow, an excellent cooper and a tolerable house carpenter—I have no do[u]bt but the fellow hath obtained in Indenture or a free pass, by which means he intends to pass as a free man, and try to get out of the State.—I will give an addition of TEN DOLLARS to the above reward to any person apprehending said fellow to procure his free pass, so that I can recognize the hand writing.
>
> I will give the above reward of ONE HUNDRED DOLD[L]ARS for him if delivered in any Jail in this State, so that I get him, and all reasonable charges paid; or the same sum if killed and his head delivered to me, as said fellow is legally out lawed.
>
> All persons are forewarned from harboring, employing or carrying him out of the State, under penalty of the law.[50]
>
> Enoch Foy.

Although this ad refrains from offering an additional incentive for the slaying of the slave, it nevertheless does nothing to protect Bill from brutal murder.

These runaway slave notices represent a third way in which the body of the black slave is marked. In addition to being visibly marked by skin colour and literally marked by scars of wounds, it is also symbolically marked as a suffering body (Figure 13). The trope of slave suffering was a common device in abolitionist literature, where descriptions of the cruel treatment inflicted on slaves

[50] (Parker 1994:531 no. 1291)

was used to mobilize public sentiment in favour of the abolitionist cause. Such representations were bound up in religious appeals and the framing of black slaves as martyrs (Woods 2000), for instance, as illustrated in the famous seal of the British Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, *Am I not a Man and a Brother?* In this image, a kneeling loincloth-clad black slave stretches up his chained and clasped hands in appeal to the heavens—and perhaps even more importantly to those potential white saviors for whose consumption this image was created (Figure 14). The Middle Passage across the Atlantic is another site which is analogous with the suffering of slaves.

Although slaves were undoubtedly oppressed and brutalized under the institution of slavery, the representation of black bodies as necessarily suffering bodies is problematic in two main ways. Firstly, it fails to acknowledge the agency of slaves and account for their many courageous acts of resistance and subversion, instead positioning them only as helpless victims. Secondly, by attempting to represent the experience of suffering, it profanes the real experience of those who truly suffered tremendously. As Marcus Wood maintains, images of slavery are problematic because their subject matter is unrepresentable; "for each slave, the experience was unrepeatable, irreducible and unreproducible: all human suffering exists beyond the vulgarity of the simulacrum" (2000: 8). It is certainly true that both artistic or literary representations of slavery fail to capture the real, visceral, embodied experience of being owned, used or tortured by another human being, as does the straightforward text of slave notices. Nevertheless, runaway notices both represent the agency of slaves and constitute important evidence of their treatment.

"Liberty or Death": Haiti, Nationalism & Newsworthiness

Before I move on to draw any final conclusions, I feel it is imperative to address a glaring exception to the general rule of slaves' confinement to the classified section of *The Gazette*. Perhaps it is more accurate to discuss the exclusion of Montreal slaves in particular from the regular news sections, as slaves in other colonies are occasionally mentioned in international news pieces, as will be shown. This fact further complicates the issues of newsworthiness and national belonging I addressed in chapters one and three respectively. This complicating factor is an 1804 article entitled "LIBERTY OR DEATH", which concerns the Haitian Revolution (Figure 15). The significance of this event should not be underestimated, nor should the appearance of this article in *The Gazette*; "Haiti's independence set the terms of debate for nearly a century of anti-slavery struggle and shaped international relations in the Caribbean for decades to come." (Sheller 2000: 71) It is this article that prompted me to include the "almost" in my claim on page two that "[s]laves are represented almost exclusively in the classified section". This issue is relevant to a discussion of national identity as it further illustrates the constructivity of the myth of Canadian tolerance, in this case in relation to Haiti rather than the United States. Moreover, it further reveals the workings of the role of economic and political power in the creation of representations in *The Gazette*.

As its title "LIBERTY OR DEATH" suggests, the article represents the Revolution in strikingly laudatory terms. It dramatically frames the struggle of Haitian slaves, from the initial military convocation "for the purpose of taking the

necessary measures for establishing the happiness of the country" to the "resolution to render the country independent, and to secure to it the enjoyment of a liberty consecrated by the blood of the people of this island". It goes on to describe the swearing of an oath to "renounce France for ever, to die rather than live under its domination, and to combat with the last breath for independence". The article even reprints the new Republic's official proclamation of independence, entitled "*IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE OF HAYTI*".

This lengthy and detailed article is certainly an exception to the brevity and generality with which slaves are usually represented in *The Gazette*. It is also exceptional in that it portrays slavery in a wildly different light. If *The Gazette* takes the position that the French are brutal oppressors who should be renounced and fought with slaves' dying breaths, what does that say about Montreal's own prominent slave-owning families? As an August 1945 retrospective column maintained, many of Montreal's "most distinguished" citizens owned black slaves (Figure 17). So how could *The Gazette* take such as stance without offending powerful Montreal elites, such as the prominent James McGill, founder of McGill University, and one of the slave owners named in the retrospective?

The very fact that this article appeared in *The Gazette* is exceptional, as "Haiti's radical break with the French colonial system was a unique rejection of the power of whites, sugar planters and colonial rule; it fundamentally changed the entire basis of the Atlantic slave-economy and the European state-system." (Sheller 2000: 73) Its 'Liberty or Death' stance is completely antithetical to the usual portrayal of slaves, and even potentially subversive. However, such an isolated reading leaves out some crucial points. Firstly, it ignores the antagonism

between France and Britain, particularly in relation to issues of Quebec and Haiti. Secondly, it fails to recognize the fundamental differences—both actual and symbolic—between Haiti and Montreal.

Because *The Gazette* may pose as merely a neutral venue for arts and information, it is sometimes easy to miss the intricate and subtle workings of power behind its pages. However, it is essential to be aware that the former French colony of New France was forced to surrender to the British in 1760, leaving a lasting sense of resentment among many French-Canadians. Some French-Canadian elites may have felt this sting particularly acutely, having been forced to relinquish a good deal of their power to the new class of British elite. Similarly, some British elites may have resented the fact that wealthy French-Canadians had been able to keep their slaves as a condition of their capitulation, and they almost certainly resented the French presence in Haiti, since the British themselves had failed in their own attempted occupation from 1793-1798 (Geggus 1982). So although the Haitian Revolution was violently anti-colonial and anti-white, British settlers in Montreal might nevertheless have harboured glee at France's crushing defeat—and subsequent portrayal in *The Gazette* as uncivilized oppressors—couching it in their ostensible joy for the newfound freedom of the Haitian slaves.

This lies counter to both the overall colonial reception of Haitian independence, and also to usual *Gazette* portrayal of blacks in the Caribbean. The reaction of the colonial world to the founding of the world's first revolutionary 'Black Republic' was overwhelmingly negative and characterized by vehement racism. Haiti was shunned from diplomatic participation and not officially

recognized by the British or United States as a legitimate republic, even in 1823 when they acknowledged the new Central and South American republics (Sheller 2000). As Mimi Sheller explains, "[g]ripped by a fear of contagious slave uprising, Europeans articulated their claims to 'whiteness' and 'civility' in contradistinction to Haitian 'barbarism' through a set of stories that can be collectively referred to as the 'Haytian Fear'." (2000: 71) One French foreign minister even wrote, "the existence of a Negro people in arms, occupying a country it has soiled by the most criminal of acts, is a horrible spectacle for all white nations" (Sheller 2000: 73).

The *Gazette* coverage of blacks in the Caribbean usually reinforced this conception of blacks as inherently savage. As an August 17, 1795 piece wrote of black participation following a failed French attack, "The French have been completely frustrated in their attack upon Dominica—140 have been taken prisoners, and a great number killed. Several made their escape in the woods, but are daily brought in by the Negroes, who have behaved remarkably well on the occasion." The fact that the blacks are described as having "behaved remarkably well" clearly reveals the usual expectation to be one of uncontrollable black savagery. Conversely, the Haiti article speaks highly of the character of black revolutionary leaders. Of John James Dessalines, proclaimed Governor-General of Haiti for life, it reads "Dessalines is a black man, of great moderation; and in many particulars not unlike the unfortunate Touissant [L'Ouverture]. His conduct has been regulated by good faith; and he is said to wish particularly for the friendship of the government of he United States." This portrayal of black moderation is virtually unheard of in *Gazette* representations of blackness. It is

surprising that *The Gazette* ran such an atypical piece, but perhaps British-French antagonism trumped even racist characterization of Haiti and blacks in general.

British descended Montrealers who held anti-French sentiments may also have reveled in the irony of the fact that the Haitian Revolution took much of its inspiration from the French Revolution. Conversely, even French elites may have been able to reconcile imperial allegiances with *The Gazette's* coverage of the Revolution because of the clear affinity with their own revolutionary past. In any case, because Montreal was a British colony at this time, it cannot be ignored that very powerful nationalist interests would have played a role in shaping the presentation and reception of this news of rebellion. It was likely also influenced by abolitionist sentiments in Britain. The effect of shifting political relationships upon the portrayal of international events concerning the Caribbean colonies and slavery is very significant.

This is perhaps best illustrated by two *Gazette* articles which appear within a decade of each other and present completely antithetical depictions of the character of the French and their behaviour in the colonies. A December 14, 1795 article praises the character and conduct of the French colonizers in Haiti (then known as Saint Domingue). The article reads,

> The plantations were for the most part enclosed with live hedges, straight and well dressed: the dwelling and manufactory houses were generally well built and laid out with great taste[;] every inhabitant possessed a private hospital to cure its sick negroes, who were parentally dealt with; the roads were excellent—and from the general hospitality and cheerfulness of its former inhabitants, take it all in all, was one of the most enviable ports on earth.
>
> Such was the French part of St. Domingo in 1789—But, alas, it is no more—The destructive ravages of an unrelenting insurrection, and frightful massacres and conflagrations, have laid [to] waste all those beautiful settlements, reduced the buildings, to ashes, and laid low in dust, scattered in exile, its wretched inhabitants. Nevertheless, with wise management, and such regulations as are to be calculated for the nature of the climate and population,

> it may yet regain its ancient splendor, perhaps redoubled by the Spanish acquisition.

This lamenting of the loss of "ancient splendour" due to the "unrelenting insurrection" and "frightful massacre" is a far cry from the presentation of revolution in the 1804 "LIBERTY OR DEATH" article, where such methods are presented as a necessary means to the glorious end of the "enjoyment of a liberty consecrated by the blood of the people of this island". Similarly, the reverential praise of French cheerfulness and benevolent paternal care of their 'sick negroes' belies the vehement anti-French sentiment and graphic descriptions of French racism expressed less than a decade later in another 1804 article, this one concerning a suspected planned attack by the French and subsequent capturing of a British vessel in Nassau, New Providence:

> After the Hazard was taken, the French murdered all the blacks on board in cold blood, in a most savage manner—two of those unhappy wretches were kept for some time, and cut and mangled in a most shocking manner, for the amusement and to gratify the bloody disposition of the French. If the French were to land, what could our unhappy blacks expect, but an universal massacre; such is the hatred the French bear towards people of color and negroes, that they have sunk thousands of negro women and children in ships & drowned them; others they have put to death with the most exquisite tortures. If they suspect a person to have a drop of black blood, they will have no mercy.

It is quite instructive that the poor wretches – objects of pity – are the French in the first instance and the 'negroes' in the next. This discrepant portrayal of both French colonizers and the insurgent slaves illustrates the clear contingency of *Gazette* representations upon power structures and political relationships. The fact that in 1804 the French and British are fighting one another in the Napoleonic Wars explains in large part why the newspaper takes the stance that a revolution deposing French authority is just, particularly since this symbolic claim need not be followed up with any official recognition or

political support of Haiti on the part of Britain. In fact, the British themselves were quick to quelch revolution when it occurred in their colonies. As an April 4, 1796 letter in *The Gazette* assuaged its readers,

> You may rest assured that every attention will be paid to Jamaica, in the disposition to be made of his Majesty's forces, as well with regard to their immediate and relative situations and effects. I cannot omit this opportunity of expressing the high sense I entertain of the manly and spirited conduct of the Militia of Jamaica against the Maroon Insurgents, which exclusive of the advantages to be derived of them, cannot fail of producing the most salutary effects.

Not only are the anti-insurgency efforts of 'his Majesty's forces' not condemned as oppressive, as are similar French undertakings, they are openly praised. Power relations ensure that no descriptions of any mistreatment of the maroons at the hands of the British appear. Instead, armed conflict is described almost like a polo match, as lively and sportsmanlike. Readers are granted only vaguely reassuring glimpses of British conduct and are left to guess at what potential brutality "manly and spirited conduct" might actually entail within the context of war.

These relationships clearly played a very significant role in the portrayal of international events; however, there also likely existed some tension between imperial allegiances and the need to construct a sense of membership in the imagined community called Canada. Consequently, another mitigating factor in *The Gazette*'s portrayal of this event is the fact that both material and symbolic distinctions existed between Haiti and Montreal. I should note here I do not mean to collapse the categories of French and British descended Montrealers, since I previously endeavored to explore the significance of these distinctions. Rather, I aim to elucidate the tension between competing nationalisms, and discuss how the

myth of Canadian benevolence is a nationalist sentiment paradoxically constructed both against and within competing discourses of national belonging.

Following from the myth of tolerance, the perceived superiority of Canadians would have allowed for the identification with the glorious sentiments of freedom and liberty because actual revolution constituted no real threat to Montreal slave-owners. Arguably the most important distinction between Haiti and Montreal is the fact that black slaves in Haiti greatly outnumbered their white oppressors. This numerical advantage played a role of inestimable significance to the success of the Revolution. In Montreal, on the other hand, slaves comprised a numerically insignificant proportion of the population. Moreover, while slaves in Haiti worked in very close proximity with one another, which provided the opportunity to share grievances and organize opposition, slaves in Montreal were relatively isolated.

In addition to the prominence of British elites and their antagonistic relationship to the French, the Haiti article is explained by the fact that there was no chance of a similarly successful revolt occurring in Montreal. Consequently, the article could appear prominently with 'legitimate' news because the socio-political condition of slaves in Montreal was such that this news could not act as a catalyst for truly radical social change. It is easy for Montrealers to laud the subversive actions of the oppressed on another continent when they are framed in glorious dramatic narrative, but could yield no real consequences at home. Montreal slave owners could quite legitimately feel immune to the sort of insurrection that occurred in Haiti.

In addition to the material differences between the institutions of slavery in the two nations, a number of symbolic distinctions might have further reinforced such a belief. While it is difficult to imagine that referring to French slave owners as oppressive would not be perceived as a slight to slave owners everywhere, in actuality Montreal slave owners appear to have conceived of themselves in complete opposition to the ostensibly more brutal slave owners elsewhere. As the 1945 retrospective claims, "as under the French regime[,] Negro, slavery under the British rule was without many of the harsher features that characterized it in other places." Through creating and invoking the powerful myth of Canadian moral superiority, Montreal slave-owners could conceive of themselves as more benevolent than oppressors in the rest of the world.

While is true that many barbaric forms of discipline such as breaking slaves on the rack or tying them to horses to be dragged to death were practiced in Haiti but seem to have been absent in Montreal, it is erroneous to attribute this to the kindness of Montreal slave owners. As the horrific treatment of Marie-Joseph Angélique illustrates, Montrealers were not above employing cruel forms of punishment and torture when legitimate threats existed. A more accurate explanation than a theory of inherent Canadian benevolence is the fact that there were few genuine threats. With such a small and isolated slave population, the need for systematic mechanisms of control and intimidation like those employed in plantation systems would have been greatly diminished. But the reality had little to do with the belief. While it was largely structural differences that accounted for any supposedly superior treatment of slaves, the phenomenon could easily be ascribed to a greater measure of moral virtue.

CONCLUSION

"All Our Yesterdays" and All Our Tomorrows: Revisiting the Myth of Canadian Tolerance

In conclusion, I would like to revisit one of the most prevalent issues I discuss and also to explain its contemporary relevance. The national myth of Canadian tolerance is a continuous theme throughout this project. Here I would like to further show how within the Canadian context, 'tolerance' is relative, and racism poses as banal. I introduced this idea in chapter one, with the discussion of *The Gazette* as a seemingly neutral venue, but one in which power relations and insidious racism resulted in the exclusion of Montreal slaves from the news section of the paper and their relegation to the classified section. I posited then debunked the myth of the neutrality of classified ads and went on to show how hidden power relations were embedded even in the founding proposal of *The Gazette*.

In chapter two, I illustrated the myriad colonial assumptions about blackness underlying seemingly banal language such as "negro", "wench" and "mulatto" in sale notices for Montreal slaves. I went on to further excavate the significance of race through a comparison of runaway slaves notices with those for escaped white criminals. I also attempted to complicate the site of runaway slave notices as a form of discourse that both criminalizes black slaves and also makes visible their agency as subjects. Both these discussions were carried into the final chapter with the discussion of slave agency in *The Gazette* portrayal of slave revolt, and the analysis of runaway slave notices. I continued the

comparison between escaped slave and criminal notices here, exploring the construction of an imaginary of Canadian national identity through the mutually exclusive positioning of blackness and Canadianness. And in my final section on the coverage of the Haitian Revolution and other slave uprisings, I attempted to dispel the myth of Canadian tolerance, demonstrating instead the contingency of representations of both black slaves and the French on their potential political usefulness.

One of the most important pieces of evidence the analysis of representations of national belonging and the coverage of Haiti and other Caribbean colonies can yield is an awareness of just how malleable the so-called "Sacred Image of Truth" of Fleury Mesplet's *Gazette* founding proposal can be. I discussed this with respect to the antithetical portrayal of the conduct of the French in the colonies, but this is not an isolated nineteenth century phenomenon. Its contemporary relevance is clearly illustrated in the *Gazette* retrospective "All Our Yesterdays" which I referred to briefly in previous sections. This regular weekly column provides twentieth century historiographical accounts of events in the city's past.

In August 1945, the column ran a two-part series, "Negro Slavery in Montreal", providing accounts of Montreal slavery under both the French and British regimes (Figures 16-17). Both articles go to great length to assure readers of the benevolence of Montreal slave-owners, Francophone and Anglophone alike. Part one, on slavery under the French, features the section-heading "*Not Unkind*". This section follows a section which details the cruel treatment of Marie-Joseph Angélique, claiming "[y]et the severity of this sentence does not indicate that the

Negro slaves under the French regime were subject to cruelty", and going on to explain that all convicts, regardless of race, were treated harshly in punishment for their crimes. The article continues, "[t]he evidence, on the contrary would indicate that the condition of [black] slaves was not hard. The heavier labour in most cases was performed by the 'panis', and negroes being something of a luxury, were mostly servants, in the households of their owners."

It is interesting that the 'kindness' with which black slaves were treated and the 'ease' of their condition is explained relative to the harsher use of pani slaves. While this article frames its narrative in a largely apologistic tone, it clearly holds many of the same racist assumptions as those that flourished in 1785. Why else is the enslaved condition of blacks in Montreal compared to that of another 'inferior' race? Why is the conditition of both oppressed groups not compared to the condition of free whites? Clearly the comparison of the enslaved to the free is most valid for evaluating the condition of enslavement, but again it is this infernal relativism in asessing how oppressed groups are treated—the very stuff of the myth of tolerance—that inundates the article. The fundamental fact of the ownership of people of colour by white Montreal elites is nearly obliterated by the placating descriptions of flimsy kindnesses.

I say "flimsy kindnesses" because after it asserts that "the condition of slaves was not hard", the article goes on to cite as evidence the fact that "the Roman Catholic Church used its influence to mitigate their condition, and especially to secure for them admission to the church and its sacraments". Again, it is not acknowledged that religion itself has historically been deployed in nation-building projects, both as part of the initial justification for such endeavors and

also as a means of exercising further control over the lives of colonized peoples. Similarly, while it acknowledges that both missionaries and the nuns of the Notre Dame congregation themselves owned slaves, it does not recognize this as a contradiction with the claims of church benevolence. Without acknowledging the role of the church in perpetuating slaves' subjugation, the article goes on to explain how the church advocated respecting slave marriages and allowed slaves to be "buried in the consecrated ground of the 'Cimetiere des Pauvres'"—the cemetery normally reserved for (white) paupers—positioning this as proof of its inherent goodness towards the oppressed.

In addition to this ostensible benevolence of both the church and Montreal masters, the article explains, some slaves were also permitted to learn skilled trades or eventually emancipated in repayment for their years of loyal service. The article ends with the transition to British rule,[51] concluding with final evidence of the French Regime's consideration for their slaves:

> It was, therefore, to protect and perpetuate Negro slavery as a social institution of long and respectable standing, that the Marquis de Vaudreuil, in negotiating the surrender of Montreal with Gen. Jeffery Amherst, took care to include among the articles of capitulation that 'Negros and panis of both sexes shall remain in their quality of slaves in the possession of the French or Canadians to whom they belong; they shall be at liberty to keep them in the colony or sell them....'

This language of protecting and perpetuating "Negro slavery as a social institution of long and respectable standing" seems quite surprising in 1945. Clearly, the institution of slavery is recognized as unjust, as evidenced by the constant need to reassert the kindness of Montreal slave owners; however, its legitimacy as a

[51] See Figure 17. I will avoid going through this article in details, as it is very similar to the first, featuring the title "Not Uncompassionate" and details how the British too allowed slaves to participate in church life.

practice is not contested in the least. In fact, the second article even lists with apparent pride the prominent Montreal elites who owned slaves, stating "[e]ven early in the British regime, many of the most distinguished of the new English-speaking citizens had negro slaves in their households."

Although some sections of this article quote historical documents such as the capitulation agreement, other sections I have reproduced here were actually written in 1945, a historical moment where the claim that people were simply products of their time and didn't know any better is even more insulting and audacious than one hundred and fifty years earlier. Perhaps the writer of the article wishes to avoid speaking ill of the 'founding fathers' of the city and for this reason chooses to couch the recognition of the unethical nature of such a blatant system of oppression in the old rationale of civilizing missions and paternal care. In any event, this shameless and uncritical twentieth century legitimation of slavery in Montreal begs the question, what does this say about more contemporary attitudes towards racial inequality and racial violence in Canada? The same pages of *The Gazette* successfully help to provide an answer.

Just to the right of the second part of the ambiguous special on slavery in Montreal—half apologistic, half laudatory—is a racist political cartoon concerning the War in the Pacific (Figure 17). The cartoon shows a stereotypical drawing of a buck-toothed, 'slanty-eyed' and insensibly grinning caricature with 'mongoloid' features playing tennis against a white opponent. In the first frame entitled "Pearl Harbour", after serving past his bewildered opponent who protests "hey! I wasn't ready!", the presumably Japanese tennis player exclaims "I won the Pacific Championship yes please!". In the second frame entitled "Return

Service", his presumably American opponent whacks the ball (labeled "air attack") so hard it shoots through the Japanese player's racquet, smashing into the side of his face so hard it blackens his eyes, causes stars to fly up around him, and apparently knocks out a tooth.[52] This cartoonish depiction of racial violence is mirrored even more dramatically in part one (Figure 16). This article similarly portrays the War as a game. This time, the three white men—representing the Army, the Navy and the Air Force—are clobbering the Japanese caricature while playing a carnival game, a ball toss at the man's face, under the banner reading "Hit the Nip". As the title suggests, this represents the fact that the racialized violence of the War in the Pacific is "No Longer a Sideshow" to the War in Europe.

These two cartoons, particularly in juxtaposition with the articles, which at least present an apologistic façade, are very significant as they reveal an attitude of contemporaneous racism in Canada. The War in the Pacific admittedly involved racist stereotypes on the part of both parties; similarly, World War II depictions of Germans presented them as demonic and inhuman despite their whiteness. However, a key issue which had little to do with actual combat is the internment of Japanese-Canadians in Canada during the War. Out of a total of 23,149 Canadians of Japanese ancestry in December of 1941, 20,881 had been forcibly 'relocated' to internment camps by the end of the following year (Adachi: 234).

[52] This is somewhat unclear since, although the tooth is noticeably missing in the second frame, it is difficult to discern whether or not it is present in the first frame.

As Ken Adachi explains in *The Enemy That Never Was: A History of the Japanese Canadians*, traditional Japanese cultural norms emphasized duty and obligation as well as the values of conformity and obedience (1991). Similarly, in a cruel irony, "Nisei [Canadian born people of Japanese ancestry] tended to espouse a common view: they wished to prove they were 'Canadian' by cooperating fully with the authorities" (226). So this cartoon ran in *The Gazette* while over twenty thousand people were languishing in internment camps for no crime other than being of Japanese descent. The acceptability of both Japanese internment and the cartoons' racist depictions of anti-Japanese violence illustrates the strength of the myth of tolerance. There is no perceived connection between the discussion of black slavery in Montreal and the adjacent cartoon depicting Anti-Japanese racial violence, while the state-sanctioned violence of internment is taking place concurrently.

While past injustices can be smoothed over through charitable historiographies, when the racialized 'others' of a given historical moment ostensibly threaten the values of freedom and tolerance that Canada stands for, the threat must be neutralized—even if this involves completely violating the constitutional rights of Canadian citizens without grounds. This illustrates just how relative the values of freedom and liberty actually are, as do the retrospective articles themselves. These articles sometimes invoke the language of rights and liberty, however, they do so in a highly problematic way. Instead of associating freedom with an absence of bondage, both articles frame liberty solely in terms of the liberty to own property without state infringement on such ownership. They speak of the colonial right to enslave indigenous populations and the liberty to

maintain ownership of slaves and sell them at will. For all the discussion of rights and liberty, the rights and freedoms of oppressed peoples is a non-issue. Rather than recognizing the denial of liberty such a system constitutes, it is only the liberty of the Western subject—elite, male, and white—that matters, because he has always been the subject of liberal tradition. Neo-liberalism has expanded this definition of subjecthood, occasionally to include people of colour if they are elite enough and willing to tow the party line, but far more often to include corporate power.

This brings us into the present, and face to face with the powerful machinations of liberal ideology I discussed in chapter one. We can see how even in the twentieth century, social hierarchies remain intact, and are (re)produced in *The Gazette*. Similarly, we can observe how this asymmetry and inaccessibility is obfuscated, not only by the seemingly neutral and pragmatic formal distinctions in layout, but also by the use of creative language to appeal to higher principles. We hear this same language today to describe neo-liberal economic policies, which invariably result in the subjugation of people of colour around the world. Part of how those of us in the West justify such infringements is on the basis that people would be even worse off without us exploiting their labour. We can admit that many of the jobs we provide are dangerous and low-paying, but rationalize "at least those people are employed. A low paying job is better than no job at all."

Just as the compelling language of liberty, justice, and freedom render apparent contradictions conciliatory, a similar vocabulary of truth, integrity and public accessibility was invoked by *The Gazette's* founder to justify his own self-serving motives, by referring to the "Sacred Image of Truth". And what is

perhaps most frightening is that such justifications prove just as successful today. Mainstream news outlets allow for this lack of accountability—whether the "we didn't know any better back then" rhetoric of the 1945 article, the "don't shoot the messenger" excuse of simply providing a service, or the "I'm just the publisher" appeal to neutral formalism.

These tendencies are extremely dangerous. They permit embedded social hierarchies to remain hidden and thereby go unchallenged, all the while espousing grand rhetoric of their value as democratic public forums. Moreover, they allow the brutal past of Canadian nation-building to remain hidden. What is required to begin to move beyond this to becoming the nation Canada purports to be is a coming to terms with this history. It is only through recognizing past injustices that we can understand their ongoing legacy and begin to challenge neo-colonial and neo-imperial systems of domination. As Maureen Elgersman explains,

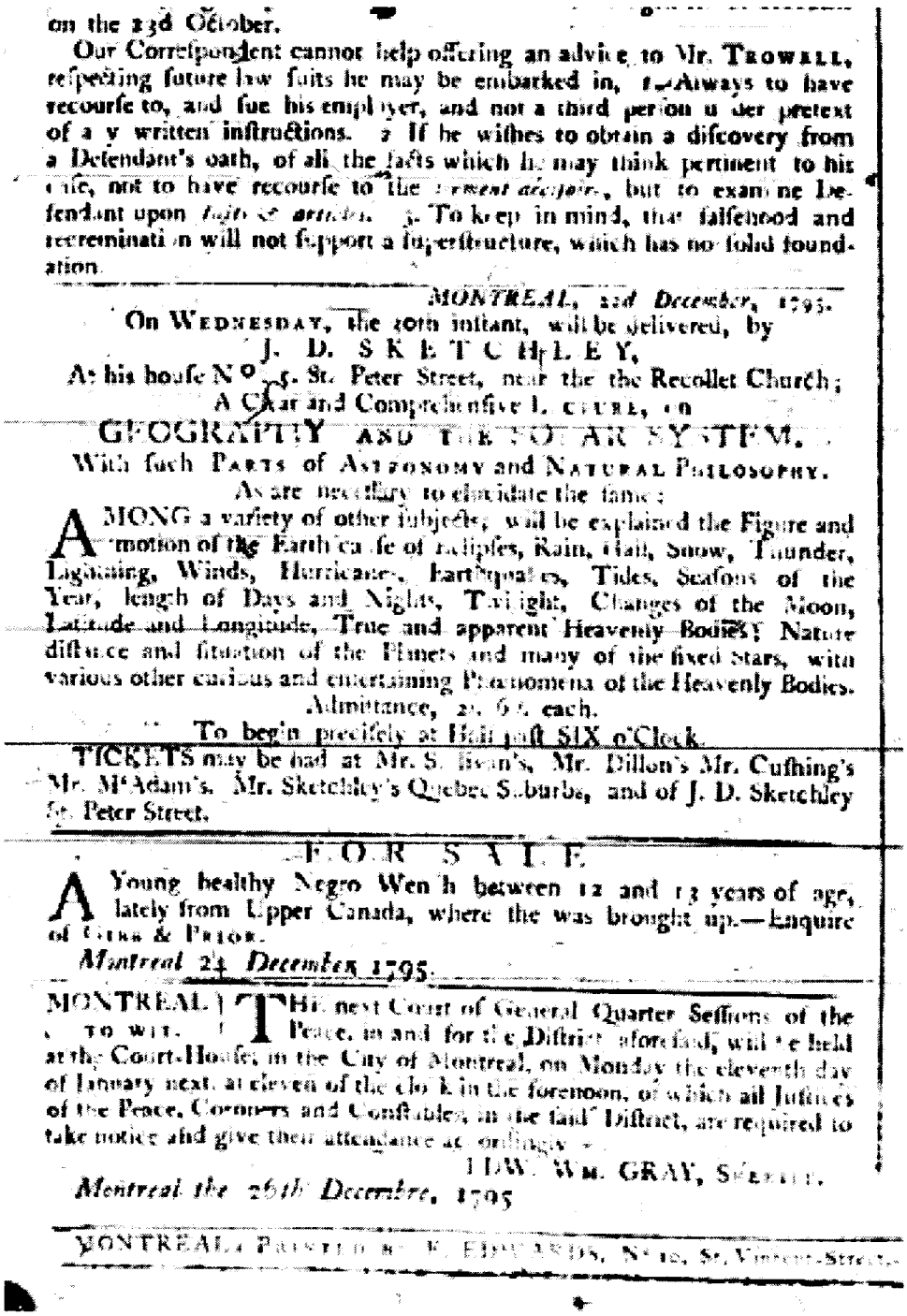
> Admitting slavery as a Canadian institution is a significant political statement that forces a reconciliation of the post-emancipation history of Black status in Canada as one that is anchored in and informed by the sanctioning of slavery in that country. European colonialism and the 'attendant collective mindset' that made blackness a badge of slavery and relegated Blacks to inferior status continued to inform the proper place of people of color as domestics, railway porters, and custodians after slavery. The norm continues today as Black women are read as hypersexual exotics, and Black men are read as criminals. This means that contemporary problems are not modern aberrations, but, rather, form part of a continuum of racial privilege. It is not an evil that has penetrated the Canadian border from outside and tainted its culture; Canada has its own history of subjugation with its own investments, privileged rewards, and protections to reconcile. (Elgersman 1999:4)

I hope this project will contribute to revealing the asymmetry of 'democratic' forums, the racist and sexist biases of 'neutral' forums, and the insidious relativism of the so-called truth. As the "All Our Yesterdays" articles illustrates, it is far easier to recognize injustices of the past than those of the present. I can only hope that my project will bring us closer not only to a national

and official recognition of the role slavery has played in creating the nation we call Canada today, but also towards an end to the framing injustices within a rationale of kindness and the beginning of taking collective ownership for the brutal reality of what building this nation has really entailed.

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1 – Sale Ad for a Young Black Female Slave
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
December 28, 1795



on the 23d October.

Our Correfpondent cannot help offering an advice to Mr. TROWELL, refpecting future law fuits he may be embarked in, 1ſt—Always to have recourſe to, and ſue his employer, and not a third perſon under pretext of any written inſtructions. 2 If he wiſhes to obtain a diſcovery from a Defendant's oath, of all the facts which he may think pertinent to his cauſe, not to have recourſe to the *present decision*, but to examine Defendant upon *faits & articles*. 3. To keep in mind, that falſehood and recreminati n will not ſupport a ſuperſtructure, which has no ſolid foundation.

MONTREAL, 22d December, 1795.

On WEDNESDAY, the 20th inſtant, will be delivered, by

J. D. SKETCHLEY,

At his houſe No 5. St. Peter Street, near the the Recollet Church;

A Clear and Comprehenſive LECTURE, on

GEOGRAPHY AND THE SOLAR SYSTEM,

With ſuch PARTS of ASTRONOMY and NATURAL PHILOSOPHY,

As are neceſſary to elucidate the ſame;

AMONG a variety of other ſubjects, will be explained the Figure and motion of the Earth cauſe of eclipſes, Rain, Hail, Snow, Thunder, Lightning, Winds, Hurricanes, Earthquakes, Tides, Seaſons of the Year, length of Days and Nights, Twilight, Changes of the Moon, Latitude and Longitude, True and apparent Heavenly Bodies; Nature diſtance and ſituation of the Planets and many of the fixed Stars, with various other curious and entertaining Phænomena of the Heavenly Bodies.

Admittance, 2s. 6d. each.

To begin preciſely at Half paſt SIX o'Clock.

TICKETS may be had at Mr. S. Swan's, Mr. Dillon's Mr. Cuſhing's Mr. M'Adam's, Mr. Sketchley's Quebec Suburbs, and of J. D. Sketchley St. Peter Street.

FOR SALE

A Young healthy Negro Wench between 12 and 13 years of age, lately from Upper Canada, where the was brought up.—Enquire of GRAY & PRIOR.

Montreal 24 December 1795.

MONTREAL } TO WIT. } THE next Court of General Quarter Seſſions of the Peace, in and for the Diſtrict aforeſaid, will be held at the Court-Houſe, in the City of Montreal, on Monday the eleventh day of January next, at eleven of the clock in the forenoon, of which all Juſtices of the Peace, Coroners and Conſtables, in the ſaid Diſtrict, are required to take notice and give their attendance accordingly.

By Order, WM. GRAY, SHERIFF.

Montreal the 26th December, 1795

MONTREAL: PRINTED BY E. EDWARDS, No. 10, St. Vincent-Street.

Figure 2 – Proposal for the Establishment of a Bilingual *Gazette*
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
August 25, 1785

PROPOSAL

For the Eſtabliſhment of a new Gazette, Engleſh and Frenchſh, under the Title of *the MONTREAL GAZETTE*;

Printed by F. MESPLET.

THERE is ſcarce a Dominion in Europe that has not it's Gazette, why ſhould not this extenſive Country have it's own. The periodical Paper of 1778 had already place, the Subſcriptions would have been much more numerous the year following, without the cataſtrophe which it is uſleſs to mention. The ſame zeal for the common weal exiſtes, and the Tranquility which this Province enjoys gives a freſh Encouragement: it ſeemed to me, and the Public will perceive that nobody can render himſelf more truly ſerviceable than in undertaking a work ſo labourious from which there may reſult neceſſary Advantages.

I have ſucceeded to intereſt the Citizens in the laſt, The circumſtance being more favorable, the correſpondance open from all Parts, ſhall procure materials quite deſſerent and in greater quantity; literary News ſhall have a place, thoſe from the Continent of America and Europe which I propoſe to endeaver to receive once a month, will render the ſheet intereſting, and nothing will be ſpared to accompliſh this laſt Object.

It muſt be allowed from the extent of the Enterprize, it may be taxed with raſhneſſ, for who would not tremble the moment he is to appear before the Public, a Judge always formidable: therefore I feel the neceſſity of imploring it's Indulgence, and beg it will make allowance for the Purety of my Intentions, and the Endeavors I ſhall make to put it in Execution.

In all that ſhall be inſerted in this Gazette I ſhall inviolably obſerve to have the Sacred Image of Truth in view, and not fall into Licentiouſneſs. I ſhall endeavour to render the ſtile plain and correct, but likewiſe, my Readers will obſerve we do not write ſo well on the ſides of the River St. Laurence, as they do on the Banks of the Seine.

Notwithſtanding the difficulty of finding Tranſlators, I intend to give the Gazette in French and Engliſh. If it is conſidered the Expence it requires for the Impreſſion in both Languages, the Beauty of the Paper, and of the Character, the Exactneſs of the Correction which requires much more Attention in this Country where Orthography is not yet well known, if I ſay, it is conſidered the Application this Enterprize requires of the Printer, the Public will be convinced that nothing has been neglected to render myſelf worthy of their favour, and that the Subſcription is moderate.

This firſt ſtep is to Sound the Taſte of the Public, and not to expoſe myſelf to conſiderable loſſes if there were not a ſufficient number of Subſcriptions to bear the Expences, and indemnify me for my Pains.

The firſt Gazette will appear Thurſdy the 25th Inſtant.

The price of the Subſcription, for the whole Year, ſhall be Three Spainiſh Dollars, *of which one half ſhall be paid in Signing.*

PROSPECTUS

Pour l'Etabliſſement d'une nouvelle Gazette en Anglois & en François, ſous le Titre de *GAZETTE DE MONTREAL*.

Imprimée par F. MESPLET.

IL y a peu d'Etats en Europe qui n'ayent leur Gazette, pourquoi ce Pays n'auroit-il pas la ſienne. Le Papier Périodique de 1778 avoit déjà pris, les Souſcriptions euſſent été beaucoup plus nombreuſes l'année ſuivante, ſans une cataſtrophe dont il eſt inutile de parler. Le même zele pour le bien public exiſte, & la tranquillité dont cette Province jouit donne un nouvel encouragement: il m'a ſemblé, & le Public ſentira qu'on ne peut ſe rendre plus véritablement utile qu'en ſe chargeant d'un travail auſſi pénible dont il peut réſulter des avantages eſſentiels.

On avoit réuſſi à intéreſſer les Citoyens dans la derniere. La circonſtance eſt plus favorable, les correſpondances ouvertes de toutes parts procureront des matériaux bien différens & en plus grande quantité; les nouvelles Littéraires y trouveront une place, celles du continent de l'Amérique & de l'Europe que l'on ſe propoſe de faire en ſorte de recevoir chaque mois, rendront la Feuille intéreſſante, & rien ne ſera épargné pour remplir ce dernier objet.

Il faut convenir de l'étendue de l'entrepriſe, elle pourroit même être taxée de témérité; car qui ne tremble-roit pas au moment de paroître devant le Public, Juge toujours redoutable: auſſi je ſens la néceſſité d'implorer ſon indulgence, & le prie de me tenir compte de la pureté de mon intention, & des efforts que je ferai pour la remplir.

Dans tout ce qui ſera inſeré dans cette Gazette, j'obſerverai inviolablement d'avoir toujours préſente l'image auguſte de la vérité, & de ne pas tomber dans la licence. Je ferai mes efforts pour rendre le ſtyle ſimple & correct; mais auſſi, mes Lecteurs obſerveront qu'on n'écrit pas auſſi bien ſur les bords du fleuve St. Laurent que ſur les rives de la Seine.

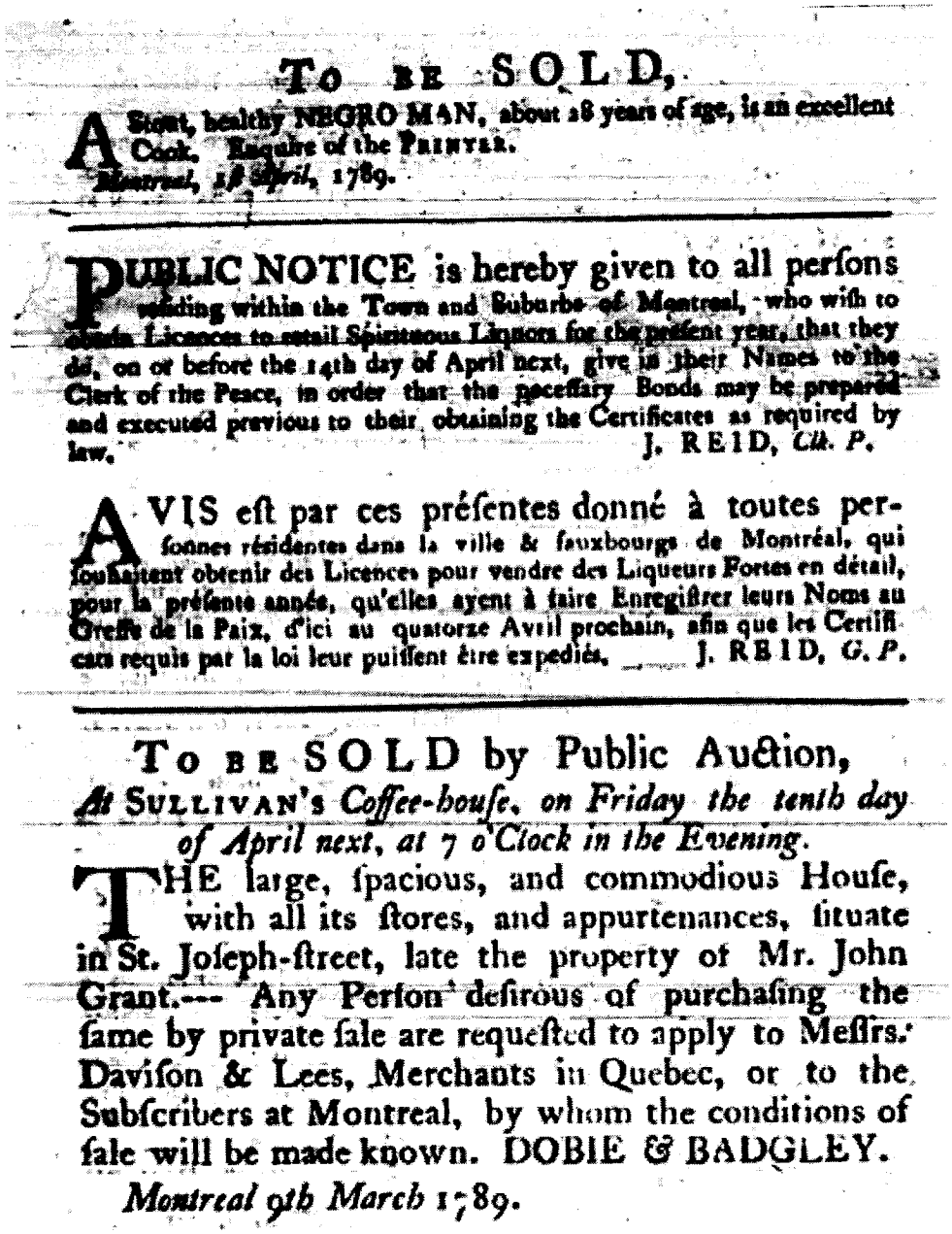
Malgré la difficulté de trouver des Traducteurs, je me propoſe de donner la Gazette en François & en Anglois. Si l'on conſidere les frais qu'exige l'impreſſion dans ces deux langues, la beauté du papier, du caractere, l'exactitude de la correction qui demande beaucoup plus d'attention dans ce pays ci où l'Orographe n'eſt pas encore bien connue; ſi dis-je, l'on conſidere les ſoins que cette entrepriſe exige de l'Imprimeur, le Public ſera convaincu qu'il n'aura rien négligé pour ſe rendre digne de ſa bienveillance, & que la Souſcription eſt médiocre.

Cette premiere démarche eſt pour preſſentir le goût du Public, & ne pas m'expoſer à des pertes conſidérables ſi les Souſcriptions n'étoient pas en un nombre ſuffiſant pour fournir aux frais, & me dédommager de mes travaux.

La premiere Gazette paroîtra Jeudi, le 25 du courant.

Le prix de la Souſcription, pour l'Année entiere, ſera de Trois Piaſtres Eſpagnoles, *dont on payera la moitié en ſouſcrivant.*

Figure 3 – Sale Ad for a Black Male Slave, age 28
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
April 2, 1789



TO BE SOLD,

A Stout, healthy NEGRO MAN, about 28 years of age, is an excellent Cook. Enquire of the PRINTER.

Montreal, 1st April, 1789.

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given to all perſons reſiding within the Town and Suburbs of Montreal, who wiſh to obtain Licences to retail Spirituous Liquors for the preſent year, that they do, on or before the 14th day of April next, give in their Names to the Clerk of the Peace, in order that the neceſſary Bonds may be prepared and executed previous to their obtaining the Certificates as required by law. J. REID, *Cl. P.*

AVIS eſt par ces préſentes donné à toutes perſonnes réſidentes dans la ville & fauxbourgs de Montréal, qui ſouhaitent obtenir des Licences pour vendre des Liqueurs Fortes en détail, pour la préſente année, qu'elles ayent à faire Enregiſtrer leurs Noms au Greffe de la Paix, d'ici au quatorze Avril prochain, afin que les Certificats requis par la loi leur puiſſent être expediés. J. REID, *G. P.*

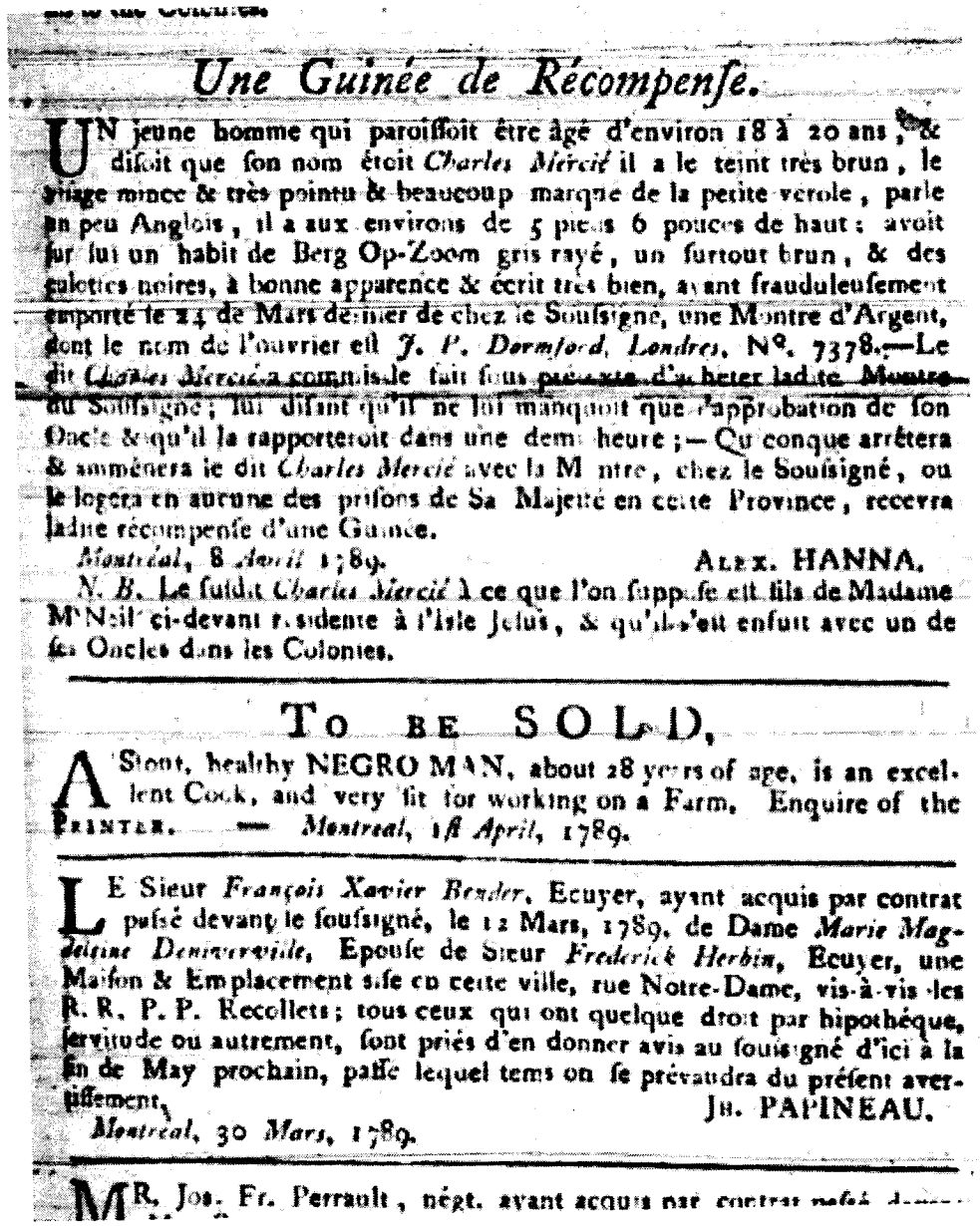
TO BE SOLD by Public Auction,

At SULLIVAN'S *Coffee-houſe, on Friday the tenth day of April next, at 7 o'Clock in the Evening.*

THE large, ſpacious, and commodious Houſe, with all its ſtores, and appurtenances, ſituate in St. Joſeph-ſtreet, late the property of Mr. John Grant.--- Any Perſon deſirous of purchaſing the ſame by private ſale are requeſted to apply to Meſſrs. Daviſon & Lees, Merchants in Quebec, or to the Subſcribers at Montreal, by whom the conditions of ſale will be made known. DOBIE & BADGLEY.

Montreal 9th March 1789.

Figure 4 – Modified Sale Ad for a Black Male Slave, age 28
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
April 9, 1789



Une Guinée de Récompenſe.

UN jeune homme qui paroiſſoit être âgé d'environ 18 à 20 ans, & diſoit que ſon nom étoit *Charles Mercié* il a le teint très brun, le viſage mince & très pointu & beaucoup marqué de la petite verole, parle un peu Anglois, il a aux environs de 5 pieds 6 pouces de haut; avoit ſur lui un habit de Berg Op-Zoom gris rayé, un ſurtout brun, & des culottes noires, à bonne apparence & écrit très bien, ayant frauduleuſement emporté le 24 de Mars dernier de chez le Souſsigné, une Montre d'Argent, dont le nom de l'ouvrier eſt *J. P. Dormſord, Londres*, N°. 7378.—Le dit *Charles Mercié* a commis le fait ſous prétexte d'y heter ladite Montre du Souſsigné; lui diſant qu'il ne lui manquoit que l'approbation de ſon Oncle & qu'il la rapporteroit dans une demi heure;—Quiconque arrêtera & amènera le dit *Charles Mercié* avec la Montre, chez le Souſsigné, ou le logera en aucune des priſons de Sa Majeſté en cette Province, recevra ladite récompenſe d'une Guinée.

Montréal, 8 *Avril* 1789. ALEX. HANNA.

N. B. Le ſuſdit *Charles Mercié* à ce que l'on ſuppoſe eſt fils de Madame M'Neil ci-devant réſidente à l'Iſle Jeſus, & qu'il s'eſt enfuit avec un de ſes Oncles dans les Colonies.

TO BE SOLD,

A Stout, healthy NEGRO MAN, about 28 years of age, is an excellent Cook, and very fit for working on a Farm. Enquire of the PRINTER. — *Montreal*, 1*ſt April*, 1789.

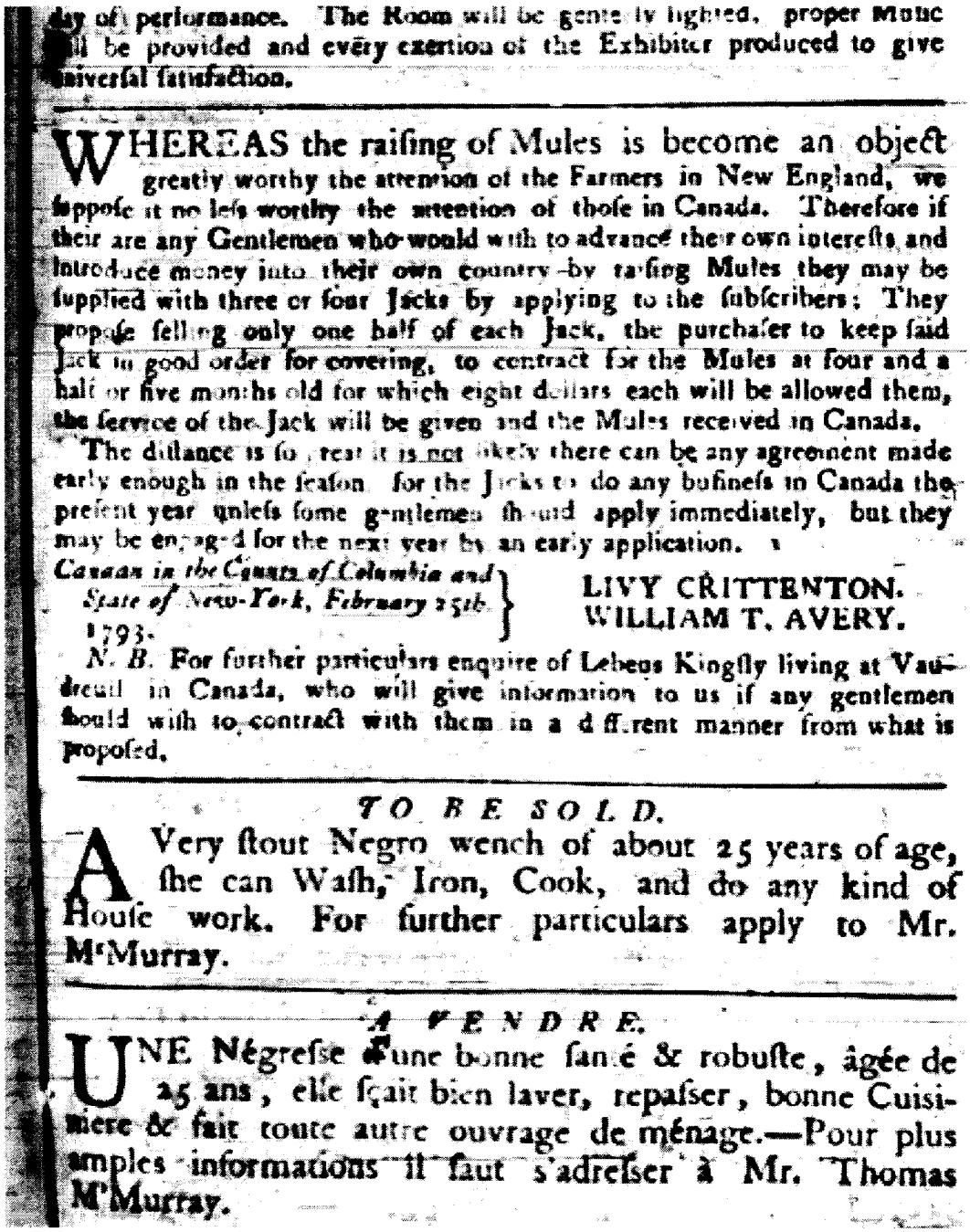
LE Sieur *François Xavier Bender*, Ecuyer, ayant acquis par contrat paſſé devant le ſouſsigné, le 12 Mars, 1789, de Dame *Marie Magdeleine Deniſerville*, Epouſe de Sieur *Frederick Herbin*, Ecuyer, une Maiſon & Emplacement ſiſe en cette ville, rue Notre-Dame, vis-à-vis les R. R. P. P. Recollets; tous ceux qui ont quelque droit par hipothéque, ſervitude ou autrement, ſont priés d'en donner avis au ſouſsigné d'ici à la fin de May prochain, paſſe lequel tems on ſe prévaudra du préſent averiſſement,

JH. PAPINEAU.

Montreal, 30 *Mars*, 1789.

MR. Jos. Fr. Perrault, négt. ayant acquis par contrat paſſé devant

Figure 5 – Sale Ad for a Black Female Slaves, age 25
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
March 21, 1793



day of performance. The Room will be genteelly lighted, proper Music will be provided and every exertion of the Exhibiter produced to give universal ſatisfaction.

WHEREAS the raiſing of Mules is become an object greatly worthy the attention of the Farmers in New England, we ſuppoſe it no leſs worthy the attention of thoſe in Canada. Therefore if their are any Gentlemen who would with to advance their own intereſts and introduce money into their own country by raiſing Mules they may be ſupplied with three or four Jacks by applying to the ſubſcribers; They propoſe felling only one half of each Jack, the purchaſer to keep ſaid Jack in good order for covering, to contract for the Mules at four and a half or five months old for which eight dollars each will be allowed them, the ſervice of the Jack will be given and the Mules received in Canada.

The diſtance is ſo great it is not likely there can be any agreement made early enough in the ſeaſon for the Jacks to do any buſineſs in Canada the preſent year unleſs ſome gentlemen ſhould apply immediately, but they may be engaged for the next year by an early application.

Canaan in the County of Columbia and State of New-York, February 25th 1793. } LIVY CRITTENTON. WILLIAM T. AVERY.

N. B. For further particulars enquire of Lebeus Kingſly living at Vaudreuil in Canada, who will give information to us if any gentlemen ſhould with to contract with them in a different manner from what is propoſed.

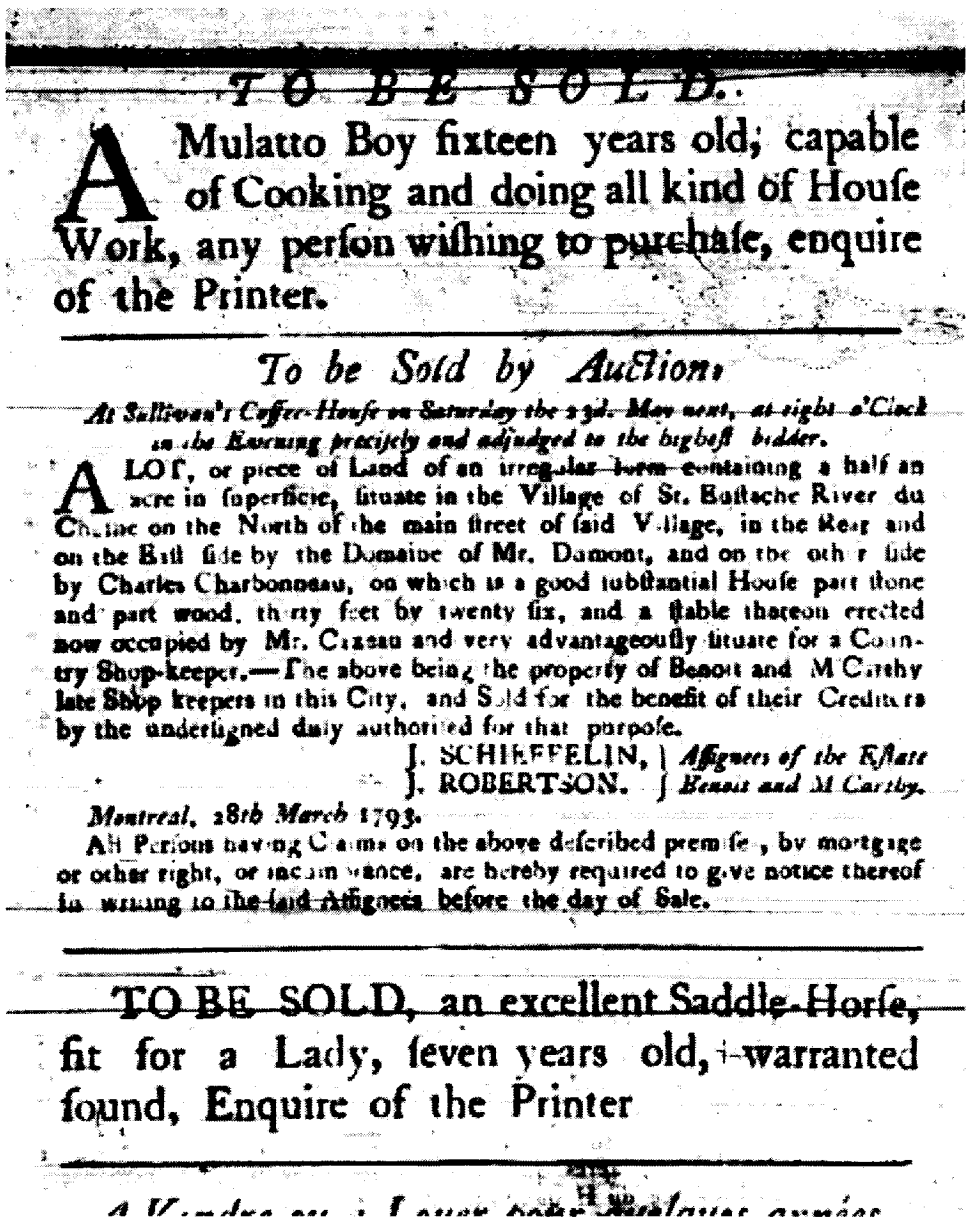
TO BE SOLD.

A Very ſtout Negro wench of about 25 years of age, ſhe can Waſh, Iron, Cook, and do any kind of Houſe work. For further particulars apply to Mr. M'Murray.

A VENDRE.

UNE Négreſe d'une bonne ſanté & robuſte, âgée de 25 ans, elle ſçait bien laver, repaſser, bonne Cuiſiniere & fait toute autre ouvrage de ménage.—Pour plus amples informations il faut s'adreſſer à Mr. Thomas M'Murray.

Figure 6 – Sale Ad for Sixteen Year Old Mulatto Slave
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
May 16, 1793



TO BE SOLD.

A Mulatto Boy fixteen years old, capable of Cooking and doing all kind of Houſe Work, any perſon wiſhing to purchaſe, enquire of the Printer.

To be Sold by Auction,

At Sullivan's Coffee-Houſe on Saturday the 23d. May next, at eight o'Clock in the Morning precisely and adjudged to the higheſt bidder.

A LOT, or piece of Land of an irregular form containing a half an acre in ſuperficie, ſituate in the Village of St. Baſtache River du Chene on the North of the main ſtreet of ſaid Village, in the Rear and on the Eaſt ſide by the Domaine of Mr. Damont, and on the other ſide by Charles Charbonneau, on which is a good ſubſtantial Houſe part ſtone and part wood, thirty feet by twenty ſix, and a ſtable thereon erected now occupied by Mr. Cazeau and very advantageouſly ſituate for a Country Shop-keeper.—The above being the property of Benoit and M'Carthy late Shop keepers in this City, and Sold for the benefit of their Creditors by the undernamed duly authorized for that purpoſe.

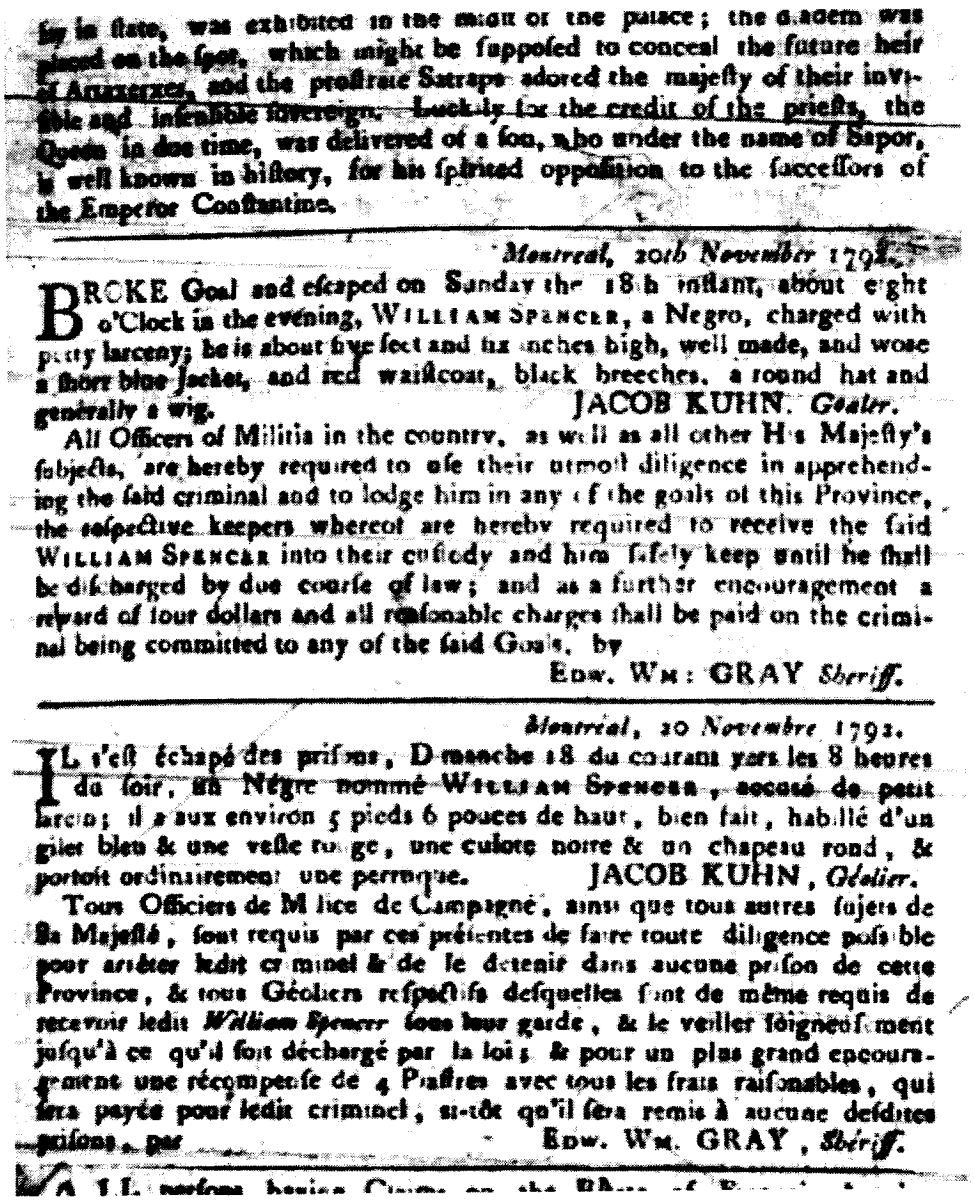
J. SCHIEFFELIN, } *Aſſignees of the Eſtate*
J. ROBERTSON. } *Benoit and M'Carthy.*

Montreal, 28th March 1793.

All Perſons having Claims on the above deſcribed premiſes, by mortgage or other right, or incumbrance, are hereby required to give notice thereof in writing to the ſaid Aſſignees before the day of Sale.

TO BE SOLD, an excellent Saddle-Horſe, fit for a Lady, ſeven years old, warranted ſound, Enquire of the Printer

Figure 7 – Escape Notice for William Spencer
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
November 22, 1792



lay in ſtate, was exhibited in the midſt of the palace; the dragon was placed on the ſpot, which might be ſuppoſed to conceal the future heir of Artaxerxes, and the proſtrate Satraps adored the majeſty of their invi-ſible and infallible ſovereign. Luckily for the credit of the prieſts, the Queen in due time, was delivered of a ſon, who under the name of Sapor, is well known in hiſtory, for his ſpirited oppoſition to the ſucceſſors of the Emperor Conſtantine.

Montreal, 20th November 1792.

BROKE Goal and eſcaped on Sunday the 18th inſtant, about eight o'Clock in the evening, WILLIAM SPENCER, a Negro, charged with petty larceny; he is about five feet and ſix inches high, well made, and wore a ſhort blue jacket, and red waiſtcoat, black breeches, a round hat and generally a wig. JACOB KUHN. *Goaler.*

All Officers of Militia in the country, as well as all other His Majeſty's ſubjects, are hereby required to uſe their utmoſt diligence in apprehending the ſaid criminal and to lodge him in any of the goals of this Province, the reſpective keepers whereof are hereby required to receive the ſaid WILLIAM SPENCER into their cuſtody and him ſafely keep until he ſhall be diſcharged by due courſe of law; and as a further encouragement a reward of four dollars and all reaſonable charges ſhall be paid on the criminal being committed to any of the ſaid Goals, by

EDW. WM: GRAY *Sheriff.*

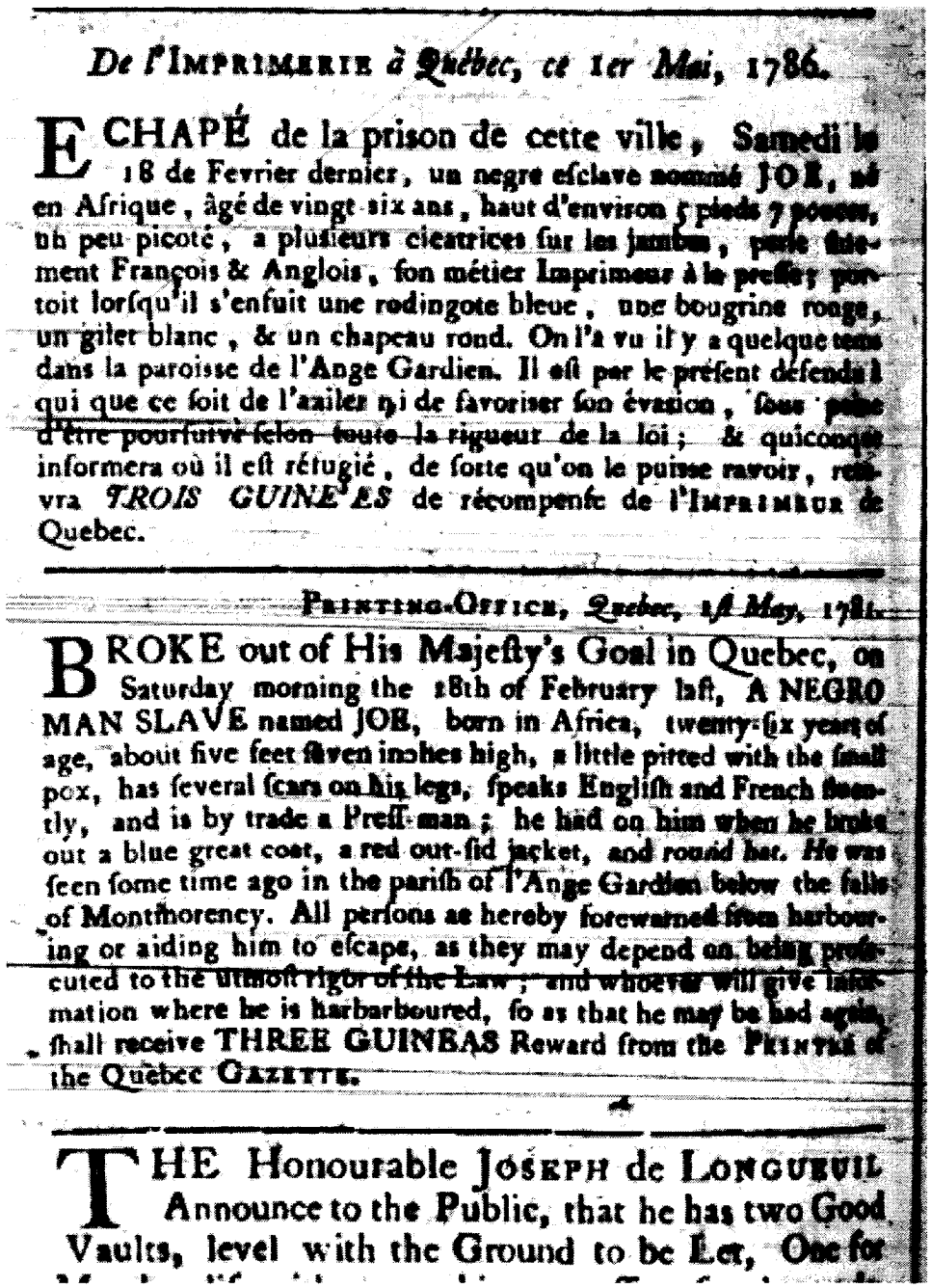
Montréal, 20 Novembre 1792.

IL s'eſt échapé des priſons, Dimanche 18 du courant vers les 8 heures du ſoir, un Nègre nommé WILLIAM SPENCER, accusé de petit larcin; il a aux environ 5 pieds 6 pouces de haut, bien fait, habillé d'un gilet bleu & une veſte rouge, une culote noire & un chapeau rond, & portoit ordinairement une perruque. JACOB KUHN, *Géolier.*

Tous Officiers de Milice de Campagne, ainsi que tous autres ſujets de Sa Majeſté, ſont requis par ces préſentes de faire toute diligence poſsible pour arrêter ledit criminel & de le détenir dans aucune priſon de cette Province, & tous Géoliers reſpectifs deſquelles ſont de même requis de recevoir ledit *William Spencer* ſous leur garde, & le veiller ſoigneuſement juſqu'à ce qu'il ſoit déchargé par la loi; & pour un plus grand encouragement une récompenſe de 4 Piaſtres avec tous les frais raiſonables, qui ſera payée pour ledit criminel, ſi-tôt qu'il ſera remis à aucune deſdites priſons, par

EDW. WM. GRAY, *Sheriff.*

Figure 8 – Escape Notice for a Black Male Slave Named Joe
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
May 11, 1786



*De l'*IMPRIMERIE *à Québec, ce 1er Mai,* 1786.

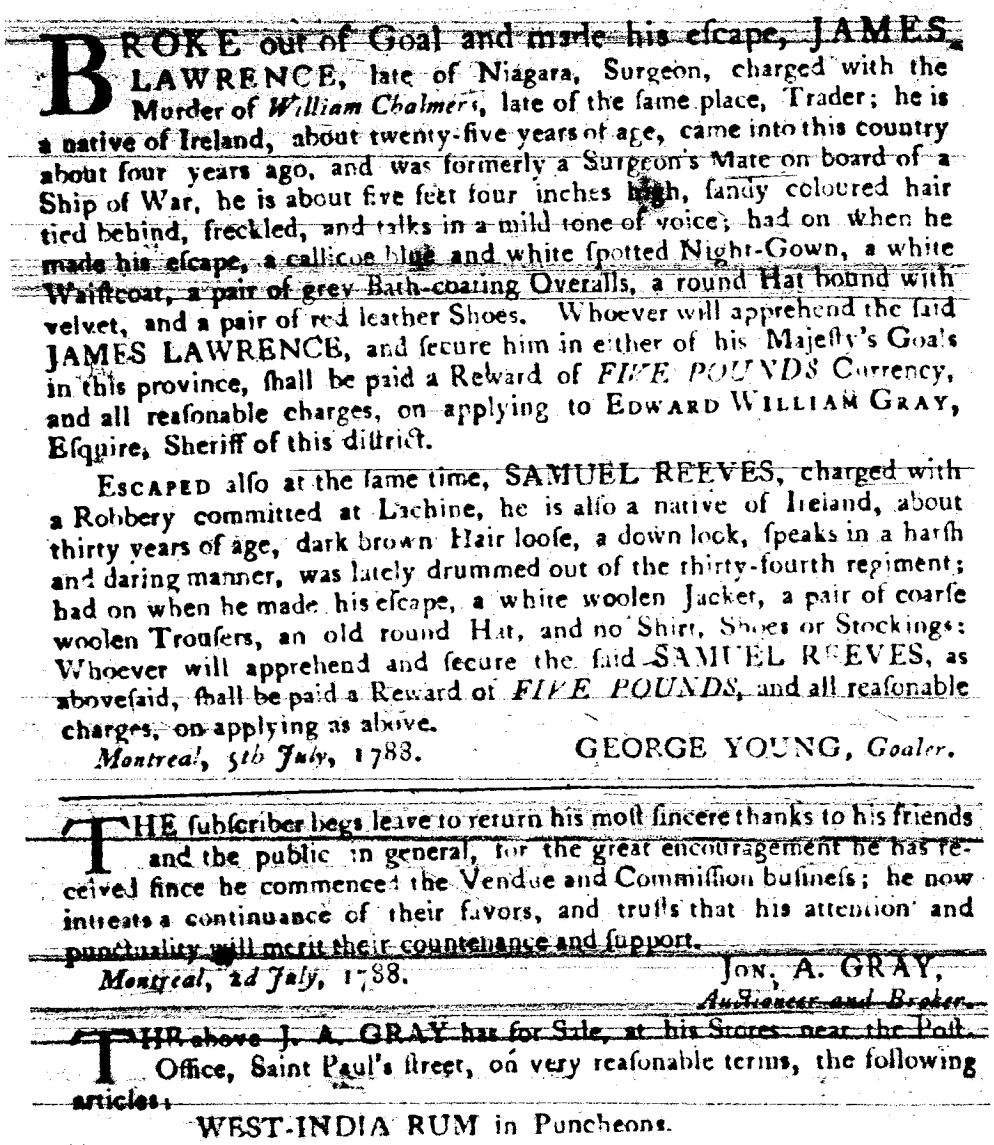
ECHAPÉ de la prison de cette ville, Samedi le 18 de Fevrier dernier, un negre eſclave nommé JOE, né en Afrique, âgé de vingt ſix ans, haut d'environ 5 pieds 7 pouces, un peu picoté, a pluſieurs cicatrices ſur les jambes, parle ſtatement François & Anglois, ſon métier Imprimeur à la preſſe; portoit lorſqu'il s'enfuit une redingote bleue, une bougrine rouge, un gilet blanc, & un chapeau rond. On l'a vu il y a quelque tems dans la paroiſſe de l'Ange Gardien. Il eſt par le préſent défendu à qui que ce ſoit de l'aider ni de favoriſer ſon évaſion, ſous peine d'être pourſuivi ſelon toute la rigueur de la loi; & quiconque informera où il eſt rétugié, de ſorte qu'on le puiſſe ravoir, recevra *TROIS GUINÉES* de récompenſe de l'IMPRIMEUR de Quebec.

PRINTING-OFFICE, *Quebec, 1ſt May,* 1786.

BROKE out of His Majeſty's Goal in Quebec, on Saturday morning the 18th of February laſt, A NEGRO MAN SLAVE named JOE, born in Africa, twenty-ſix years of age, about five feet ſeven inches high, a little pitted with the ſmall pox, has ſeveral ſcars on his legs, ſpeaks Engliſh and French fluently, and is by trade a Preſſ-man; he had on him when he broke out a blue great coat, a red out-ſid jacket, and *round hat. He* was ſeen ſome time ago in the pariſh of l'Ange Gardien below the falls of Montmorency. All perſons are hereby forewarned from harbouring or aiding him to eſcape, as they may depend on being proſecuted to the utmoſt rigor of the Law; and whoever will give information where he is harbarboured, ſo as that he may be had again, ſhall receive THREE GUINEAS Reward from the PRINTER of the Quebec GAZETTE.

THE Honourable JOSEPH de LONGUEUIL Announce to the Public, that he has two Good Vaults, level with the Ground to be Let, One for

Figure 9 – Escape Notice for James Lawrence, a White Criminal
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
July 10, 1788



BROKE out of Goal and made his eſcape, JAMES LAWRENCE, late of Niagara, Surgeon, charged with the Murder of *William Chalmers*, late of the ſame place, Trader; he is a native of Ireland, about twenty-five years of age, came into this country about four years ago, and was formerly a Surgeon's Mate on board of a Ship of War, he is about five feet four inches high, ſandy coloured hair tied behind, freckled, and talks in a mild tone of voice; had on when he made his eſcape, a callicoe blue and white ſpotted Night-Gown, a white Waiſtcoat, a pair of grey Bath-coating Overalls, a round Hat bound with velvet, and a pair of red leather Shoes. Whoever will apprehend the ſaid JAMES LAWRENCE, and ſecure him in either of his Majeſty's Goal's in this province, ſhall be paid a Reward of *FIVE POUNDS* Currency, and all reaſonable charges, on applying to EDWARD WILLIAM GRAY, Eſquire, Sheriff of this diſtrict.

ESCAPED alſo at the ſame time, SAMUEL REEVES, charged with a Robbery committed at Lachine, he is alſo a native of Ireland, about thirty years of age, dark brown Hair looſe, a down look, ſpeaks in a harſh and daring manner, was lately drummed out of the thirty-fourth repiment; had on when he made his eſcape, a white woolen Jacket, a pair of coarſe woolen Trouſers, an old round Hat, and no Shirt, Shoes or Stockings: Whoever will apprehend and ſecure the ſaid SAMUEL REEVES, as aboveſaid, ſhall be paid a Reward of *FIVE POUNDS*, and all reaſonable charges, on applying as above.

Montreal, 5th July, 1788. GEORGE YOUNG, *Goaler.*

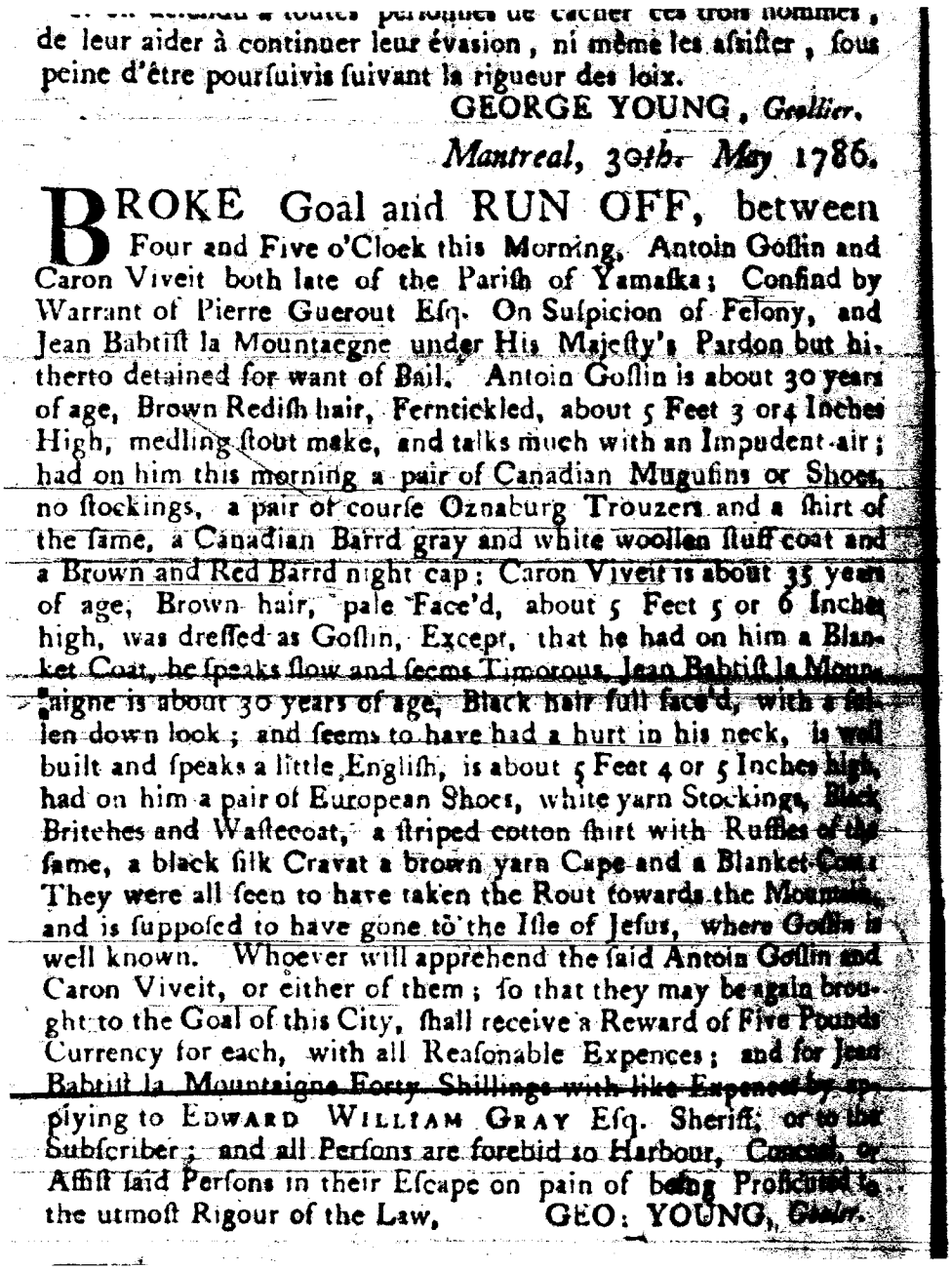
THE ſubſcriber begs leave to return his moſt ſincere thanks to his friends and the public in general, for the great encouragement he has received ſince he commenced the Vendue and Commiſſion buſineſs; he now intreats a continuance of their favors, and truſts that his attention and punctuality will merit their countenance and ſupport.

Montreal, 2d July, 1788. JON. A. GRAY,
Auctioneer and Broker.

THE above J. A. GRAY has for Sale, at his Stores near the Poſt Office, Saint Paul's ſtreet, on very reaſonable terms, the following articles:

WEST-INDIA RUM in Puncheons.

Figure 10 – Escape Notice for Two White Criminals
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
June 22, 1786



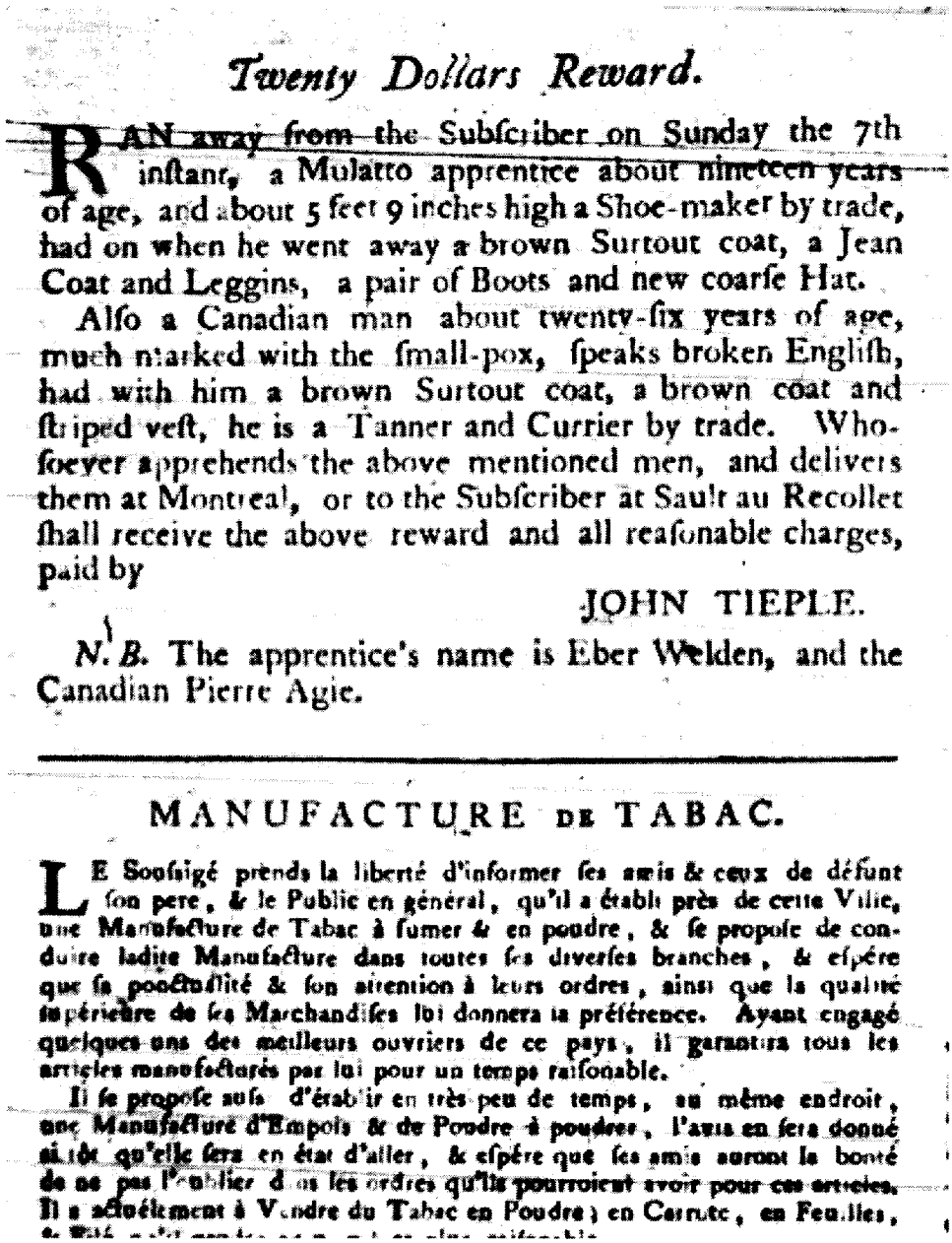
de leur aider à continuer leur évasion, ni même les aſſiſter, ſous peine d'être pourſuivis ſuivant la rigueur des loix.

GEORGE YOUNG, *Greffier.*

Mantreal, 30th. May 1786.

BROKE Goal and RUN OFF, between Four and Five o'Clock this Morning, Antoin Goſlin and Caron Viveit both late of the Pariſh of Yamaſka; Confind by Warrant of Pierre Guerout Eſq. On Suſpicion of Felony, and Jean Babtiſt la Mountaegne under His Majeſty's Pardon but hitherto detained for want of Bail. Antoin Goſlin is about 30 years of age, Brown Rediſh hair, Ferntickled, about 5 Feet 3 or 4 Inches High, medling ſtout make, and talks much with an Impudent air; had on him this morning a pair of Canadian Muguſins or Shoes, no ſtockings, a pair of courſe Oznaburg Trouzers and a ſhirt of the ſame, a Canadian Barrd gray and white woollen ſtuff coat and a Brown and Red Barrd night cap; Caron Viveit is about 35 years of age, Brown hair, pale Face'd, about 5 Feet 5 or 6 Inches high, was dreſſed as Goſlin, Excepr, that he had on him a Blanket Coat, he ſpeaks ſlow and ſeems Timorous, Jean Babtiſt la Mountaigne is about 30 years of age, Black hair full face'd, with a fallen down look; and ſeems to have had a hurt in his neck, is well built and ſpeaks a little Engliſh, is about 5 Feet 4 or 5 Inches high, had on him a pair of European Shoes, white yarn Stockings, Black Britches and Waſtecoat, a ſtriped cotton ſhirt with Ruffles of the ſame, a black ſilk Cravat a brown yarn Cape and a Blanket Coat. They were all ſeen to have taken the Rout towards the Mountain, and is ſuppoſed to have gone to the Iſle of Jeſus, where Goſlin is well known. Whoever will apprehend the ſaid Antoin Goſlin and Caron Viveit, or either of them; ſo that they may be again brought to the Goal of this City, ſhall receive a Reward of Five Pounds Currency for each, with all Reaſonable Expences; and for Jean Babtiſt la Mountaigne Forty Shillings with like Expences by applying to EDWARD WILLIAM GRAY Eſq. Sheriff, or to the Subſcriber; and all Perſons are forebid to Harbour, Conceal, or Aſſiſt ſaid Perſons in their Eſcape on pain of being Proſecuted to the utmoſt Rigour of the Law, GEO: YOUNG, *Greffier.*

Figure 11 – Escape Notice for a Nineteen Year Old Mulatto Apprentice
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
October 11, 1792



Twenty Dollars Reward.

RAN away from the Subſcriber on Sunday the 7th inſtant, a Mulatto apprentice about nineteen years of age, and about 5 feet 9 inches high a Shoe-maker by trade, had on when he went away a brown Surtout coat, a Jean Coat and Leggins, a pair of Boots and new coarſe Hat.

Alſo a Canadian man about twenty-ſix years of age, much marked with the ſmall-pox, ſpeaks broken Engliſh, had with him a brown Surtout coat, a brown coat and ſtriped veſt, he is a Tanner and Currier by trade. Whoſoever apprehends the above mentioned men, and delivers them at Montreal, or to the Subſcriber at Sault au Recollet ſhall receive the above reward and all reaſonable charges, paid by

JOHN TIEPLE.

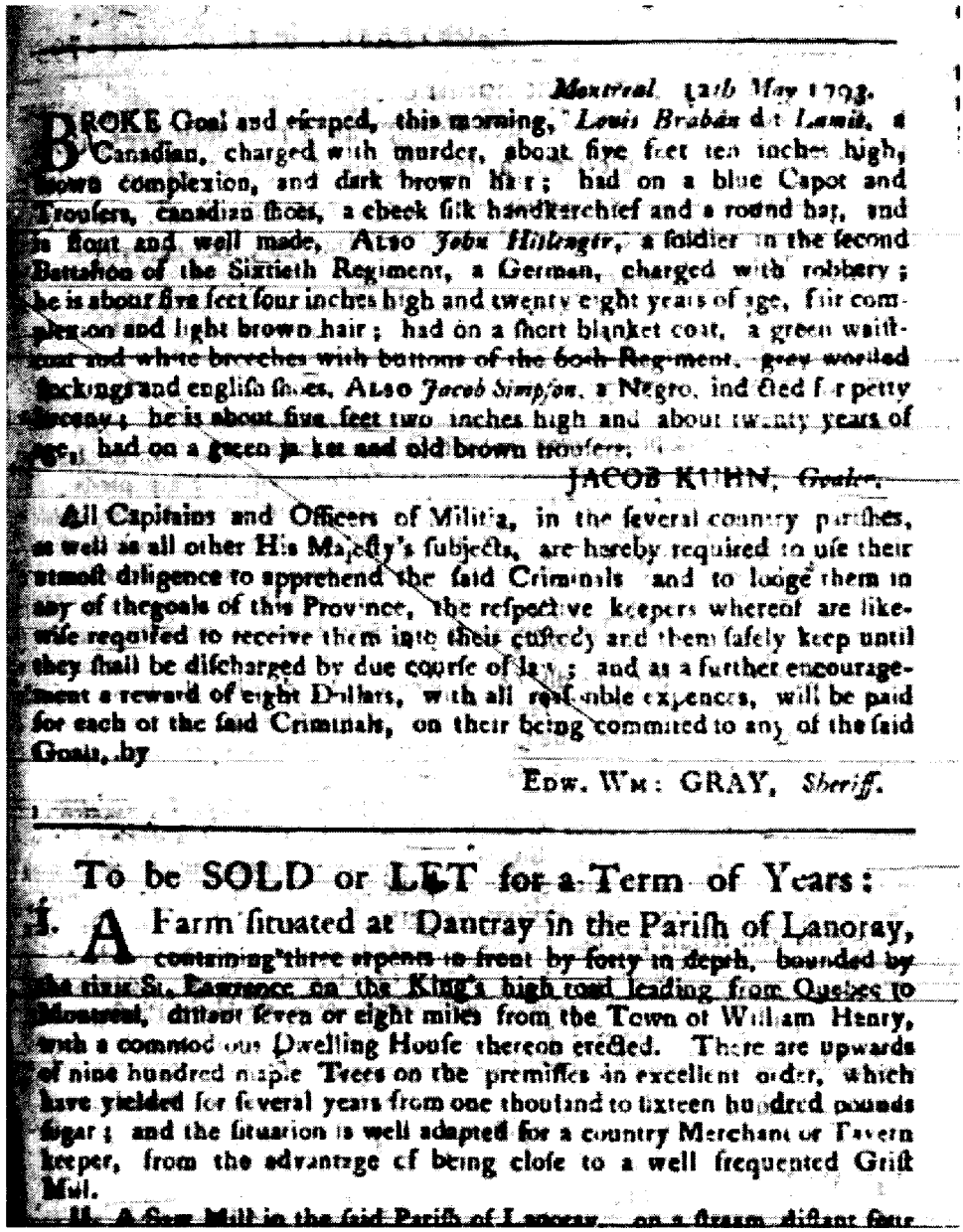
N. B. The apprentice's name is Eber Welden, and the Canadian Pierre Agie.

MANUFACTURE DE TABAC.

LE Souſigé prends la liberté d'informer ſes amis & ceux de défunt ſon pere, & le Public en général, qu'il a établi près de cette Ville, une Manufacture de Tabac à fumer & en poudre, & ſe propoſe de conduire ladite Manufacture dans toutes ſes diverſes branches, & eſpére que ſa ponctualité & ſon attention à leurs ordres, ainſi que la qualité ſupérieure de ſes Marchandiſes lui donnera la préférence. Ayant engagé quelques uns des meilleurs ouvriers de ce pays, il garantira tous les articles manufacturés par lui pour un temps raiſonable.

Il ſe propoſe auſſi d'établir en très peu de temps, au même endroit, une Manufacture d'Empois & de Poudre à poudrer, l'avis en ſera donné aussitôt qu'elle ſera en état d'aller, & eſpére que ſes amis auront la bonté de ne pas l'oublier dans les ordres qu'ils pourroient avoir pour ces articles. Il a actuellement à Vendre du Tabac en Poudre, en Carotte, en Feuilles,

Figure 12 – Escape Notice for a 'Canadian', a Soldier, and a 'Negro'
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
May 16, 1793



Montreal, 14th May 1793.

BROKE Goal and escaped, this morning, *Louis Brabin* dit *Lamik*, a Canadian, charged with murder, about five feet ten inches high, brown complexion, and dark brown hair; had on a blue Capot and Trousers, canadian shoes, a check silk handkerchief and a round hat, and is stout and well made. Also *John Hillenger*, a soldier in the second Battalion of the Sixtieth Regiment, a German, charged with robbery; he is about five feet four inches high and twenty eight years of age, fair complexion and light brown hair; had on a short blanket coat, a green waistcoat and white breeches with buttons of the 60th Regiment, grey worsted stockings and english shoes. Also *Jacob Simpson*, a Negro, indicted for petty larceny; he is about five feet two inches high and about twenty years of age; had on a green jacket and old brown trousers.

JACOB KUHN, *Goaler.*

All Capitains and Officers of Militia, in the several country parishes, as well as all other His Majesty's subjects, are hereby required to use their utmost diligence to apprehend the said Criminals and to lodge them in any of the goals of this Province, the respective keepers whereof are likewise required to receive them into their custody and them safely keep until they shall be discharged by due course of law; and as a further encouragement a reward of eight Dollars, with all reasonable expences, will be paid for each of the said Criminals, on their being commited to any of the said Goals, by

EDW. WM: GRAY, *Sheriff.*

To be SOLD or LET for a Term of Years:

I. A Farm situated at Dautray in the Parish of Lanoray, containing three arpents in front by forty in depth, bounded by the river St. Lawrence on the King's high road leading from Quebec to Montreal, distant seven or eight miles from the Town of William Henry, with a commodious Dwelling House thereon erected. There are upwards of nine hundred maple Trees on the premisses in excellent order, which have yielded for several years from one thousand to sixteen hundred pounds sugar; and the situation is well adapted for a country Merchant or Tavern keeper, from the advantage of being close to a well frequented Grist Mill.

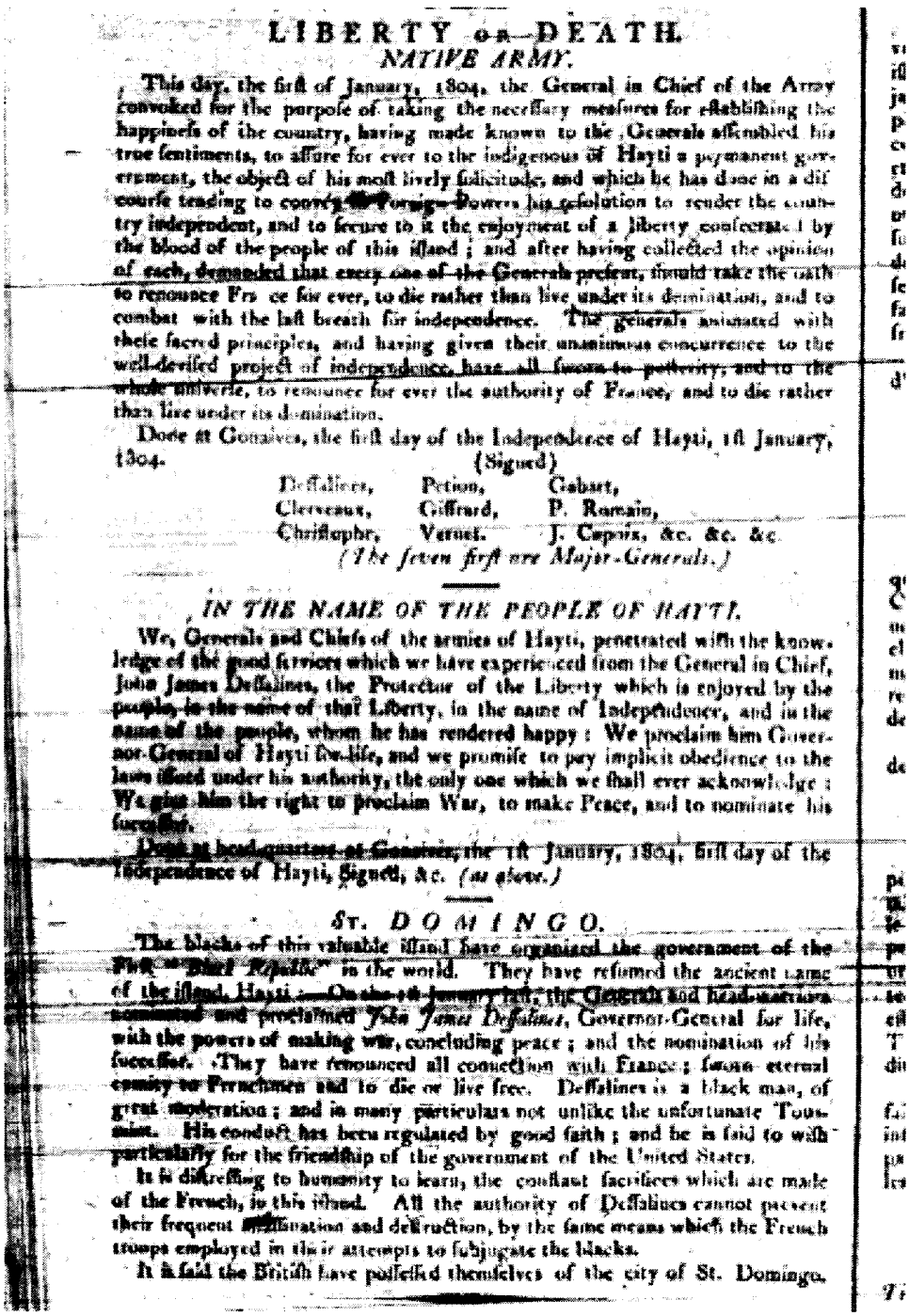
II. A Saw Mill in the said Parish of Lanoray, on a stream distant four

Figure 13 – *Gordon,* 1863
Smithsonian, Washington, DC
Black and White Photograph

Figure 14 – "*Am I not a Man and a Brother*", 1860
The American Museum in Britain, Bath
Poster

The American Museum in Britain, Bath, 2003

Figure 15 – "Liberty or Death" Article on the Haitian Revolution
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
April 30, 1804



LIBERTY OR DEATH.

NATIVE ARMY.

This day, the first of January, 1804, the General in Chief of the Army convoked for the purpose of taking the necessary measures for establishing the happiness of the country, having made known to the Generals assembled his true sentiments, to assure for ever to the indigenous of Hayti a permanent government, the object of his most lively solicitude, and which he has done in a discourse tending to convey to Foreign Powers his resolution to render the country independent, and to secure to it the enjoyment of a liberty consecrated by the blood of the people of this island; and after having collected the opinion of each, demanded that every one of the Generals present, should take the oath to renounce France for ever, to die rather than live under its domination, and to combat with the last breath for independence. The generals animated with their sacred principles, and having given their unanimous concurrence to the well-devised project of independence, have all sworn to posterity, and to the whole universe, to renounce for ever the authority of France, and to die rather than live under its domination.

Done at Gonaives, the first day of the Independence of Hayti, 1st January, 1804. (Signed)

Dessalines,	Petion,	Gabart,
Clervaux,	Giffrard,	P. Romain,
Christophe,	Vernet.	J. Capois, &c. &c. &c.

(The seven first are Major-Generals.)

IN THE NAME OF THE PEOPLE OF HAYTI.

We, Generals and Chiefs of the armies of Hayti, penetrated with the knowledge of the good services which we have experienced from the General in Chief, John James Dessalines, the Protector of the Liberty which is enjoyed by the people, in the name of that Liberty, in the name of Independence, and in the name of the people, whom he has rendered happy: We proclaim him Governor-General of Hayti for life, and we promise to pay implicit obedience to the laws issued under his authority, the only one which we shall ever acknowledge: We give him the right to proclaim War, to make Peace, and to nominate his successor.

Done at head-quarters at Gonaives, the 1st January, 1804, first day of the Independence of Hayti, Signed, &c. *(as above.)*

ST. DOMINGO.

The blacks of this valuable island have organized the government of the First Black Republic in the world. They have resumed the ancient name of the island, Hayti. On the 28th January last, the Generals and Headmasters assembled and proclaimed *John James Dessalines*, Governor-General for life, with the powers of making war, concluding peace; and the nomination of his successor. They have renounced all connection with France; sworn eternal enmity to Frenchmen and to die or live free. Dessalines is a black man, of great moderation; and in many particulars not unlike the unfortunate Toussaint. His conduct has been regulated by good faith; and he is said to wish particularly for the friendship of the government of the United States.

It is distressing to humanity to learn, the constant sacrifices which are made of the French, in this island. All the authority of Dessalines cannot prevent their frequent assassination and destruction, by the same means which the French troops employed in their attempts to subjugate the blacks.

It is said the British have possessed themselves of the city of St. Domingo.

Figure 16 – "All Our Yesterdays" Pt.1; "Hit the Nip" Cartoon
Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm
August 6, 1945

GAZETTE, MONTREAL, MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 1945. VOL. CLXXIV. No. 187

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

By EDGAR ANDREW COLLARD

NEGRO SLAVERY IN MONTREAL

This is the first of two articles dealing with the history of Negro slavery in Montreal. The second article, which will appear in this column next Monday, will deal with Negro slavery in this city during the British Regime.

A Right of Property

When the French authorities surrendered Montreal in 1760, they endeavoured to secure recognition by the British of as many as possible of their existing property rights. A curious interest belongs to the article in the capitulation document by which the right of slave owners to retain their human property was sought and granted.

...

hand. At the main door of the parish church in Place d'Armes she was made to kneel, declare her guilt and beg the King's pardon. She was then led to a post erected before the church, at which her hand was cut off. She was then placed in the same waggon and taken to place of public execution and hanged.

◆ ◆ ◆

Not Unkind

...

Love and Marriage

...

An Institution

...

NO LONGER A SIDESHOW

Collapse of British Liberalism

By DR. H. L. STEWART,
Professor of Philosophy, Dalhousie University

...

WHY A RIVER?
(Chicago Tribune)

One reason for a river
(I learned this at its brink)
Is catching sunset's overflow
And rocking clouds of pink.

Another rippling reason
Starts when a motorboat
Sets tremulous reflections
A-lapping as they float.

The sweetest silver reason
I found among the reeds—
A tiny crescent wishing-moon
Caught playing truant deeds!

ESTHER LLOYD HAGG.

No Casualties

(Kingston Whig-Standard)

It was wonderful news that the ...

Figure 17 – "All Our Yesterdays" Pt.2; "No Longer a Sideshow" Cartoon Montreal Gazette, Reproduction from Microfilm August 13, 1945

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

By EDGAR ANDREW COLLARD

NEGRO SLAVERY IN MONTREAL.

This is the second of two articles on the history of Negro slavery in Montreal. Last Monday's article dealt with Negro slavery in Montreal under the French Regime. Today's article traces its gradual decline and extinction under British Rule.

Old Order Unchanged

When the Marquis de Vaudreuil surrendered Montreal to Gen. Jeffery Amherst in 1760, he obtained from Amherst his acceptance, as one of the articles of capitulation, of the right of slave owners to retain possession of their human property. In coming to this agreement Gen. Amherst was not recognizing any novel situation; for in the British colonies of North America slavery was a social institution of long standing. Moreover, soon after the conquest of Canada had been completed, the British Government sent instructions to Governor Murray to promote the establishment of "plantations" in Canada, similar to those in the colonies to the south, and to encourage the importation of slaves.

Early in the British Regime many of the most distinguished of the new English-speaking citizens had Negro slaves in their households. A Negro, named Benjamin, belonged to Hon. Thomas Gage, who became military governor of Montreal after the capitulation and who was to be governor of Boston at the outbreak of the American Revolution. A Negro, named Charles, belonged to Rev. David Chabrand Delisle, who in 1766 became minister to the Church of England congregation in Montreal which is represented today by the congregation of Christ Church Cathedral.

Among the wealthy merchants who held slaves was Hon. James McGill, founder of McGill University. He bought a slave in Montreal on September 23, 1788 from James Cavalhe, a merchant in the St. Lawrence Suburbs. In the deed of sale Cavalhe declared that "for . . . the sum of Fifty Six Pounds lawful money of the Province aforesaid to him in hand paid by James McGill of Montreal, Esquire . . . to have bargained, sold, released and confirmed to the said James McGill a Negro woman named Sarah about the age of 25 years. To Have and To Hold the said Negro Woman named Sarah unto the said James McGill, his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns forever."

◆ ◆ ◆

Human Property

In the British, as in the French Regime, the slaves in Montreal were not only Negroes but the captured Indians known as "panis." On September 5, 1785, for instance, Charlotte, a "panise" aged 18 years, was sold by Dame Marie Joseph Deguire, widow of Jean Etienne Waden, to Jacob Scheiffelin, auctioneer, for the sum of 21 louis. Charlotte had been bought in Upper Canada by the late Mr. Waden in 1778. She was considered a particularly desirable slave as she had had the measles and the smallpox, and had never had scrofula.

Clearly the slaves in Montreal were considered in all commercial transactions as "property," to be evaluated and traded like any other possession. Sometimes they changed hands not for money but by barter. So it was on April 3, 1780, when Oliver Hastings sold to Chevalier Charles Boucher de la Bruyere, of Boucherville, a Negro boy named Antoine, aged eight and a half years. Antoine was exchanged for 90 minots of wheat.

Slaves could be used as security in negotiating a loan. On November 22, 1797, George Westphall, a former lieutenant of the 6th Regiment, admitted a debt of 20 louis to Richard Dillon, proprietor of The Herald, and, as security, he delivered to Dillon a mulatto slave named Lady, aged 26 years. She was to be a servant in Dillon's household until Westphall had paid the capital and interest of the loan.

One of the disadvantages of slaves as property was that they could take to their legs and run away. When Fleury Mesplet launched The Gazette in June 1778 he stated in his "Address of the Printer to the Public," that one of the services his paper would perform would be that of "giving notice to the public at any time of . . . slaves deserted from their masters." The Gazette had reached only its fourth issue when the first of these notices appeared. "Ran away on the 14th inst.," it read, "a slave belonging to the widow Dufy Desauniers, aged about 25 years, dressed in striped calico, of medium height, and tolerable stoutness. Whoever will bring her back, will receive a reward of six dollars, and will be repaid any costs that may be proved to have been incurred in finding her."

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Not Uncompassionate

But as under the French Regime Negro slavery under the British rule was without many of the harsher features that characterized it in other places. As the slave owners of New France had often brought their slaves into the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, so did the later British owners bring them into communion with the Protestant religion. The parish records of Christ Church, like those of Notre Dame, record the baptisms of slaves and their marriages. Benjamin, the slave belonging to Governor Gage, was duly baptised on May 11, 1762, probably by Rev. John Ogilvie who was the first minister of the Anglican congregation and chaplain to the forces. On January 22, 1788, York Thomas and Margaret McCloud, both Negroes, were married by leave of their respective owners, and on January 20, 1785 Francis and Jenny, "both slaves to Colonel Campbell," had been married at their owner's request.

Sometimes slaves were emancipated by their owners in appreciation of their faithful service. On September 13, 1796 John Shuter promised his slave Jack, a native of St. Domingo, that he would emancipate him in six years, if he proved to be faithful. Finally on November 2, 1802, John Shuter declared that Jack had performed his duties in a devoted spirit and that his liberty had been granted. On May 25, 1797 Dame Marie Tessier, widow of Antoine Janisse, not only freed her slave, Marie Antoine de Pade, in recognition of her services, but gave her a trousseau as well.

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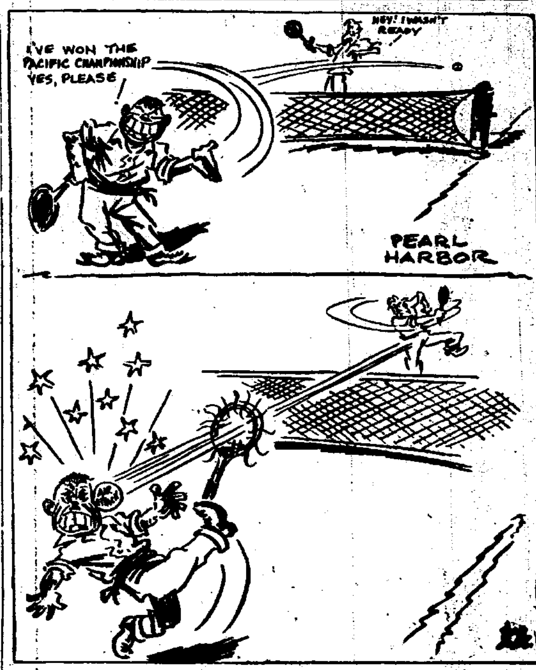
Coming of Freedom

But as the British Regime advanced, public feeling against slavery gradually increased. In 1792, during the first session of the first Canadian Legislature, a member named Panet introduced a measure for the abolition of slavery, but it failed to become law. About the year 1799 the notary, Joseph Papineau, member for Montreal, presented to the Legislature a petition from the citizens of Montreal asking that slavery be abolished, but no action was taken. Abolitionist bills were introduced into the Lower Canadian Legislature in 1801 and 1803, but both were both rejected.

Though slavery in Montreal did not come to an end through legislative action, it was practically ended by the action of the courts. In 1798 Sir James Monk, chief justice of the Court of King's Bench, Montreal, in releasing a runaway slave, declared that in his opinion slavery no longer had any existence in Lower Canada. Monk's judgment was confirmed in Montreal in 1803 by William Osgood, chief justice of Lower Canada, who declared that slavery was incompatible with Canadian law. The growing fear that the claims of slave owners were no longer certain of being upheld in the courts of the province produced a serious depreciation in the value of slaves and even rendered their sale difficult. It is said that the last sale of a slave in Montreal took place in 1797.

The legislative abolition of slavery came in the year 1833. In that year the British Parliament had passed a law making slavery illegal throughout the Empire, and an identical act was passed in the Lower Canadian Legislature a few months later.

As far as Montreal is concerned, it is very doubtful whether this act was anything more than a formality. For by the year 1833 probably no slaves remained in Montreal to be liberated.



RETURN SERVICE

QUESTION TO THE STRONG FRIEND.

(New York Times.)

I remember how you rode on the full wagon,
The slope of your shoulders,
The wire of your hair
Through the checked shirt.
No one was tougher or bolder
In the rocky meadow
To grip the bull's stare
With acorn's hands or break the black furrow.
If anyone had to be hurt,
You didn't mind being hurt,
Whether it was against the jolt of rock
Or the saw's tear.

I wonder now, how does your brute strength fare
Out on the wide plain
Of this world's raving,
Where the pain is not mostly of the flesh
But of the blinded self, the spirit
Thirsting for air.
I wonder if you feel it,
Or find it worth saving.
I wonder about you
Out in the battle somewhere,
In the shock of tangibles,
In war's grinding groin and mesh—now.
What do you have to fight with
In the death struggle, the big show?
Good friend, who was all body
And the body's courage,
Do you have the resource
For that other, stronger blow?

GEORGE ABBE.

Prison Reforms

(Vancouver Daily Province)

War usually leaves an aftermath of lawlessness. It is part of the price to be paid. Evidences are

Great Britain's New Deal

By DR. H. L. STEWART,
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The new British Government has, obviously, a brain trust, chief director of which is Prof. Harold Laski, known in Montreal 30 years ago while on the staff of McGill University. Prof. Laski issued a statement very soon after the result of the election had been announced which provides, perhaps, the best key yet available to the domestic policies Great Britain must expect. It was stated therein that "the common man" would come to his own, that there would be a New Deal, and that first among social measures to be enacted would be the nationalization of the Bank of England.

The Roosevelt touch, is it not? At least, there is here a plain suggestion of Roosevelt projects. Who is this "common man" of Prof. Laski's thought? Who but the "forgotten man" whose hardships were a frequent theme in manifestoes from Washington a dozen years ago? If he is at length coming to his own, he must have been persistently forgotten. And, lest there should be a chance to miss the resemblance, the very name, New Deal, is borrowed.

One's recollection goes back to Prof. Laski's eager championship of the late American president, even in those more audacious novelties which many another admirer shrank from justifying—especially in his policy of adjusting the Supreme Court of the United States ("packing" it, his opponents said) so that by degrees there would be a majority on the bench to construe the American Constitution in a sense favorable to the Roosevelt policies. To select a man for so great a judicial office, not just on the ground of his legal eminence and personal of man who had been too much remembered. In what I here write I am by no means implying either praise or blame for what F. D. Roosevelt did and for what Clement Attlee apparently designs to do. My immediate purpose is to explain meaning, not to adjudicate on value.

The method, so similar in the two cases, is of extraordinary interest. It is a route shorter and easier than legislation that the Attlee policy, like the Roosevelt policy, for altering the proportions of riches and poverty will pursue. Exercise of presidential power in regard to the gold content of the dollar was what the Economic Brain Trust in the Washington case advised: Mr. Roosevelt took the advice, and the result duly came about. Nationalizing the Bank of England is the method recommended by the like trust now in London, since it will place the government in direct control of currency and credit. Establish that, and the proportions of wealth may be profoundly altered at a cabinet's pleasure, with no obtrusive legislation to make public what is afoot. As in the United States, the result will show itself in time, and indeed quite soon, if the appropriate measures are taken, certain classes becoming aware of a new comfort, certain other classes—if I may use an expressive slang phrase—"not knowing what hit them" but painfully conscious that they have been hit.

Is not this a manifest reason for the sudden large offering of Bank of England shares on the market? Certain people, thinking they knew what to expect in the way of being "hit" after Prof. Laski's statement, were in haste to arrange that

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