RECONSTRUCTING THE BLACK PAST : BLACKS IN BRITAIN,

CIRCA 1780 TO 1830

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A B S T R A C T

This study aims to reconstruct the black past in Britain during the period 1780 to 1830. This area has witnessed an upsurge in historical interest from the 1970s onwards. However, significant developments have been impaired by the lack of direct black testimony and the paucity of information in general. Thus, scholarship has concentrated on a triumvirate of black literary figures and on the abolition of slavery. New dimensions and departures have been achieved by the work of Duffield, Lorimer and Braidwood; nevertheless, there remain identifiable areas in which our knowledge is deficient. One of the most important areas is that of black numbers which relies heavily on contemporary conjecture; and closely associated with this topic are sex ratios and age structure, which indicate the actual composition of the black presence. Both black demography and economic survival (including crime) in white society, have received only cursory attention, and this is also true of the black family and community. Furthermore, there is a lack of historical documentation relating to Liverpool's defence of the slave trade in the face of mounting abolitionist pressure. Both the defence of and the attack upon slavery generated contradictory stereotypes of black people which will be explored in detail together with literary and artistic images.

The reconstruction of the black past in Britain identifies complexities that were previously obscured. Important distinctions between the free and enslaved are discernible especially in the occupations of servant and sailor. Within the latter category the recruitment and treatment of Lascars (Eastern seamen) occupies an integral position in the thesis. A step towards quantifying the black presence has been taken by the adoption of a statistical approach which heralds the move away from contemporary conjecture. Occupational structures of black men and women have been analysed; so too, has black involvement with the criminal process as indicted, victims, and witnesses to crime. Comparisons with white occupations and patterns of crime have been undertaken and similarities observed. From criminal records and parish registers the age and sex structure of the black population is characterised as being dominated by young males. The British black family and community in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries prove to be no longer invisible. A black family was possible through black male relationships with both black and white females; an interracial community supported by black and white networks is posited, and the myth of the literary figures as black leaders has been exploded. Liverpool's defence of the slave trade generated stereotypical images of black people, even more damaging than the romanticizing of blacks by abolitionists. It is hoped that the sources incorporated in the study, and the innovative methodological approach to the history of black people in Britain in our period has contributed to knowledge in this area. By adopting a "history from below " approach, attention has finally been diverted away from an elitist group of articulate black men towards an analysis of "rank and file" black men and women, and will assist those in search of black roots. The issues of abolition and the legality of slavery have also been supplanted by the history of the black working class in Britain in the period 1780 to 1830.

C O N T E N T S

P R E F A C E

Over the last twenty years research into the history of black people in Britain has witnessed significant developments. The dedication of two conferences, the "International Conference on the History of Black People in Britain" (1981) and the "Conference on the History of Black People in London" (1984), represents a partial reflection of the growth of interest in this ethnic minority. As in any area of nascent historical importance, initial inquiry addresses itself to the more readily accessible sources of information, enabling an identification of important debates, and providing the context for later in-depth studies. This has particular relevance to the period (1780-1830) with which this study is concerned, as the Abolitionist movement focused attention on black people, and was responsible for the generation of extensive primary evidence. As a result, earlier publications on the history of blacks in Britain tend to concentrate on the Abolitionist movement, the contentious issues that surround the legality of slavery, and on a group of three exceptional black literary figures. Hence, Equiano, Sancho and Cugoano are frequently cited as the "leaders" of London's black community in the late eighteenth century, whilst the majority of the black people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries remain in anonymity. The overall intention of this study, then, is to reconstruct the character and composition of this black population.

A "reconstruction" of the black population of England in the era of the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery in British colonies makes necessary a rigorous search for new or little-used source materials.

Numerous contributions to the study of blacks in this era have been made in recent years, but all have been hampered by the severe limitations of available demographic evidence. Great care is also needed in counteracting limitations of data relating to family and community patterns and information about techniques of economic and psychological survival in a white "host" society overtly influenced by the ethos of slavery.

Scholarly deductions of black numbers has hitherto relied heavily on unscientific contemporary conjectures in which the element of alarm created by increasing black numbers is clearly discernible. Amongst those who have pioneered more scientific studies of the size of Liverpool and London's black populations are Paul Laxton and Stephen Braidwood. Both have displayed the potential of parish registers as bases for the estimation of black numbers and for the analysis of black demographic patterns in our period.[1] The emergence of new methodology and the application of more rigorous techniques questions A.J.Barker's assumption that "it seems unlikely that research will ever produce an accurate assessement of the numbers of Negroes in Britain before 1800".[2] Parish registers, then, mostly from London's East End and Liverpool, together with criminal records, provide invaluable evidence for our inquiry, offering guidance not only on numbers, but also yielding indications of sex ratios, age structure, and family and marriage patterns.

The highly transient nature of certain segments of the black presence, particularly the seafaring group that tended to concentrate around the three seaports dominating the trade of the period (London, Liverpool, and Bristol), is an important factor previously neglected in estimates of the size of the black population. Among these transient

groups are Lascars, seamen from the East. The termination of the
Navigation Acts and of the East India Company's trading monopoly resulted
in the employment of increasing numbers of Indian and East Indian seamen.
Information concerning the recruitment, treatment and payment of these
seafarers has been quarried from the India Office Library Records.
The remaining sources that inform this study include criminal records,
parish registers, contemporary London and Liverpool newspapers and
journals, Parliamentary Papers, and the records of Liverpool merchants
involved in the slave trade. The latter group of records specifically
demonstrate an important aspect of the black presence as together with
newspapers they demonstrate the extent to which the port vehemently
defended the slave trade in the period 1787 to 1807. The pro-slavery
arguments generated contribute to the conflicting nature of the myths and
stereotypes that surrounded black people during this complex abolitionist
era. Thus, images of blacks generated through the literary and artistic
medium form crucial components of this thesis.

Criminal records represent a major and virtually untapped source
relating to the study of blacks in our period. By offering physical
descriptions of those involved in various capacities with the legal
process (and by specifically referring to colour), such records are
invaluable. Among other things they provide crucial demographic data and
essential information on occupational groupings. Black economic survival
and association with the law are recurrent themes that will be addressed
throughout this study. The Old Bailey Sessions Papers and the Newgate
Calendars, together with the Police Gazette, refer to crime in London and
reveal that black involvement in this activity appears to have been no
greater, on a per capita basis, than that of their white counterparts.

Evidence on the transportation of criminals in general, and black criminals specifically, will also be used.[3]

This reconstruction of the lives of the "rank and file" black population in Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries aims to venture beyond existing research by the adoption of a "history from below approach". It should be noted that in the present study the term "Negro" (rather than black) is frequently employed. This useage is deliberate in order to keep in touch with the language of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. When I use the modern term "black" I employ it sometimes to refer exclusively to Afro-Caribbeans, but "black" is also used in much of the thesis to refer more broadly to Afro-Caribbeans and Asians.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

L I S T   O F   T A B L E S

L I S T   O F   F I G U R E S

C H A P T E R   O N E

T H E   H I S T O R I O G R A P H Y   O F   B L A C K

P E O P L E   I N   B R I T A I N

c i r c a   1 7 8 0 - 1 8 3 0

Although black people have sustained a continuous presence in Britain for at least four centuries, they remain almost invisible in historical writing. This is partly a reflection of the ephemerality of evidence, but also serves to indicate the economic and legal position of black people during this period. Hence, the history of black people in Britain tended to remain marginal to the historiographical mainstream until the 1970s when it attracted inter-disciplinary scholarship and generated quite a substantial literature. The historical study of blacks in Britain remains indebted to several factors for its apparently rapid progress. Amongst these are to be included the prominence of the African continent in world affairs, a development which from the 1950s stimulated an expansion of research into African history, and also the flowering of Afro-American and Caribbean studies. The influence of Edward Thompson's The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth, 1963), cannot be over-estimated in redirecting historical research in general towards the path of neglected peoples; and to this should be added the role of those blacks in Britain who initiated a search for their own roots and culture.

The study of the history of black people in Britain remains then in its relative infancy; however continuing research enables constant reassessments and reappraisals of this ethnic minority to be attempted. As outlined in the preface, many of the studies on blacks in our period

concentrate on a small group of relatively eminent black literary figures. This present survey adopts a much wider focus in seeking to reconstruct some part of the histories of the mass of the rank-and-file blacks in the period associated with the abolitionist controversy and prior to the termination of slavery in the British colonies. The half century spanning 1780 to 1830 is characterised by limited perceptions portraying a tantalising diversity of popular steroetypes of blacks. Yet little is known about black numbers, occupations, family and community and the strategies of economic and psychological survival. The overall purpose of this thesis is to fill in some of these gaps in our knowledge, and by concentrating on working class blacks, it aims to redress the historical balance which focuses on the "leaders" of the black community.

It is possible to argue that the mass of both the black and the poor white population underwent similar experiences at this time, and that cohesion along class, rather than colour lines might be discernible. It could further be posited that the few blacks patronised by the upper and middle white classes had little in common with the majority of their black brothers and sisters. The intention of this introductory chapter is firstly, to survey available historical studies of British black people as defined by our chronological boundaries and secondly, to direct attention towards the limitations, but also the considerable potential, of the main groups of primary sources that inform this study.

I

The historiography on the black presence displays a tendency towards diversity, resulting in an accentuation of themes according to the particular discipline of the researcher involved. Hence there remains a tendency for some authors to concentrate on race or racism; others insert the history of black people in Britain into a broader conceptual framework, emphasising the symbiotic relationship between blacks and the wider host white society, whilst some focus on those individual blacks who achieved both prominence and upward social mobility. Until recently much of the scholarship has sufferred from the erroneous assumption that slavery in Britain ended with the Mansfield Judgement in 1772. However, Folarin Shyllon's seminal work in 1974 established categorically that British slavery continued well beyond the 1770s.[1]

A decisive stage in the development of British scholarship originated in 1948, the date of the publication of Negroes in Britain written by Kenneth Little. Previously, apart from Dorothy George, only fleeting reference was made to black people in the historical literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; thus, the written history of blacks in Britain remained characterised by its sparsity.[2] M.D.George distinguished black people weaving them into the framework of London Life in the Eighteenth Century.[3] Her contribution is both pioneering and substantial, but overall has a tendency towards generalisation. In the section entitled "London's Immigrants and Emigrants", George briefly discusses the black presence within the wider context of racial tensions such as Jew-baiting and fights between the Irish and English.

However the work of Little remains primarily a study of race relations; his sociological investigations focused on an examination of the social interactions and reactions resulting from the presence of coloured people in Britain, choosing as a specific example, a coloured community in the dockland of Cardiff.[4]

Although this survey is primarily concerned with the twentieth century, his analysis of the historical and cultural context of race relations in Britain has serious implications for the past. In seeking the origins of race relations, Little examines the seventeenth century. Hence, Chapter Seven of his study relating to the Negro in Britain, which spans the seventeenth century to the time of publication, is pertinent to this study in particular, and crucial to the historiography in general. So too is Chapter Eight, which traces changes in attitudes towards race throughout the period from "tolerance" to prejudice. His work then encompasses the gamut of controversial themes which dominate the history of black people in Britain. Prominent amongst these topics are black numbers, which most historians assume to have increased in the eighteenth century and decreased in the nineteenth, the actual date of black arrival in Britain and the legality of slavery. The Sierra Leone Expedition of 1786-1787 (which forms the basis of the following chapter in establishing the baseline for the minimum number of blacks in London at this time) receives some discussion by Little, but more importantly he examines attitudes towards race.

Little's local study set in the larger historical context represents both extensive and intensive research; however, the main

focus remains on the modern era. The overall aims of his publication was to

> plead for scientific attention to be given to the study
> of race relations (or group relations) if the generic
> term be preferred, in its own right.[5]

Michael Banton, a student of Kenneth Little, has also published widely on the subject of race relations. Again, his focus has been primarily concentrated on the twentieth century, but there is some reference in his works The Coloured Quarter and "The Changing Position of the Negro in Britain", to the nineteenth century context.[6] In the discussion of studies which consider the extent to which a "black community" existed in our period, it is proposed to return to these two authors.

Race relations and attitudes towards race in the Victorian period are focal points of reference to the work of Douglas Lorimer and Christine Bolt. Studies such as these document, in detail, the rise of an indigeneous racial ideology linked to overseas imperial expansion and the emergence of a Victorian middle class dominated by the ethos of racial exclusiveness at home. Bolt indicates that in the eighty years or so that followed the era of abolition, the period directly concerned with this chapter, strong racial prejudices existed amongst the British bourgeoisie. She denotes contemporary ambivalence towards the terminology itself, so

> although Victorians agreed upon the importance of racial
> theories and conflicts, there was a vagueness as to the
> exact meaning of the word 'race' which brought ... a

dangerous confusion between biological and cultural

concepts. Nor was racism a much more precise term.[7]

Bolt further comments on the differing stereotypes of Indians and Negroes, a theme which deserves exploration in Chapter Three of this thesis.

Lorimer, however cautions against simple conceptualisations of racial attitudes in Colour, Class and the Victorians, and although the substantial body of his research concentrates on the era following 1830, it possesses relevance for the present study. The development of racism is traced with clarity in his chapter entitled "Racial Discrimination in England: the Black Experience 1600-1900". He suggests that racial attitudes may derive direct inspiration from more immediate social circumstances than was previously imagined; thus any examination of racial attitudes is characterised by complexities. Divergent reactions to colour are apparent towards the end of the eighteenth century, ranging from hostility, as portrayed by Edward Long's overt biological racism, to sympathetic attitudes. Lorimer suggests that the changes that occurred were not so much the product of actual English behaviour towards blacks as the product of more abstract notions of the social status of blacks in Britain (a status which diminished with the onset of the process of industrialisation). Thus, his analysis of attitudes towards race delineates the mid-nineteenth century for apparent changes, but until this time, he posits that

> blacks in England never constituted a threat to any other
>
> interest or group, nor did they present a convenient
>
> scapegoat for the failures and frustations of society.[8]

Lorimer, Shyllon, and Michael Biddiss concur that racism was well
established prior to Britain's participation in the "Scramble for
Africa". Biddiss emphasises that imperial ambition, as an explaination
for the genesis of British racism, is not feasible.(9) Furthermore,
Lorimer stresses that

> the mid-Victorians, looking outward through ethnocentric
> spectacles, often perceived race relations abroad in the
> light of class relations at home. Blacks became
> identified with labouring tasks and the lower social
> orders and in the process respectable people extended
> conventional attitudes towards their social inferiors in
> England to all Negroes. This identification of blacks
> with inferior status was, in large part, the result of
> the historical experience of slavery.(10)

In "Bibles, Banjoes and Bones: Images of the Negro in the Popular
Culture of Victorian England", he argues that the mid-nineteenth century
"nigger minstrel" shows reinforced rather than caused the growth of
racial conceit.(11)

With regard to the history of the black presence in contemporary
art and literature, one of David Dabydeen's contributions is embodied in
Hogarth's Blacks (1985). Hogarth's major theme, the social satire of
the upper echelons of society during the eighteenth century
incorporates black people. Dabydeen indicates their positive use by
Hogarth in more than two dozen of his works "to show up the dead quality
of doughty white".(12) Dabydeen's observations represent an
indispensable contribution to the growing body of British studies on the

black presence, and through the medium of art, one critic notes how he "appears to have attempted to bridge the academic and the popular by providing a book that is accessible for the general reader".[13] Hogarth's Blacks represents the extension of a short article published by Dabydeen entitled "Hogarth - The Savage and the Civilized" in History Today (Volume 31, 1981). Attitudes towards blacks, discernible through the literature of the period, have also received attention in a work edited by Dabydeen entitled The Black Presence in English Literature.[14]

Although the study of attitudes towards blacks in particular, and towards race in general, remains inter-disciplinary, the preoccupation with prominent individuals is particularly evident in historical scholarship. One such example is Paul Edwards whose publications revolve around an elite group; therefore, his approach could possibly be equated with writing a "history from above". In his studies, Equiano, Sancho and Cuguoano are upheld as the educated leaders of the so-called "black community". Their atypicality in comparison with the majority of black people, who remained both illiterate and in abject poverty, has failed to be noted by Edwards. This tendency is also apparent in the publications of James Walvin, a collaborator of Edwards in his writings on "Africans in Britain " and in Black Personalities in the Era of the Slave Trade, which resulted in a propensity to argue beyond the evidence in advocating a black community led by this small elite triumvirate.[15]

Black personalities have also received attention from Folarin Shyllon in his earlier work Black Slaves in Britain and later in Black People in Britain.[16] These two publications indicate extensive research into newspapers, periodicals, letter books and Granville

Sharp's papers. The latter source enabled him to make a significant
contribution to the historiography in dispelling the myth that the
Mansfield Judgement freed all slaves in England, as we have previously
noted. Whilst emphasising the need to rewrite black history from a black
perspective, his analysis offers a new dimension to the history of
blacks in Britain. Despite Walvin's accusation that Shyllon displays a
"penchant for literary histrionics", the latter provides fresh insight
into the legal aspects of slavery culminating in the Somerset Case.[17]
Black People in Britain discusses those beyond the boundaries of slavery
including Gronniosaw, Phyllis Wheatley, Ira Aldridge, Sancho, Equiano
and Cugoano, who all achieved upward social mobility through the fields
of entertainment and literature. However, criticism can be levied at
Shyllon's interpretation of the Elizabethan Act of 1596 and the Sierra
Leone Expedition of 1786-87, which he argues were based on white racist
impulses. With reference to the Sierra Leone Expedition, he states that

> in 1786 and 1787 a concerted attempt was made by the
> British govermnent and Britain's liberal establishment
> to rid Britain of her black population and make Britain
> a white man's country.[18]

Similarily, he credits the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor,
formed in London in the January of 1786, with chauvanistic motives:

> soon, however, the Committee decided that the best way to
> relieve the Black Poor permanently was to deport them and
> rid Britain of this nuisance. The Government agreed. [19]

Shyllon can be further criticised for his failure to admit that of
his estimated black population of 10,000, less than 400 actually were to

embark on this expedition, so the alleged deportation process itself remained strictly limited in practice.[20] His interpretation of the claims made by those black Loyalists who supported Britain in the American War of Independence adheres to Mary Beth Norton's suggestion, that in comparison to their white counterparts in London, black Loyalists received unfavourable treatment.[21] Shyllon emphasises the repetitiveness with which black claimants were told that "he ought to think himself fortunate in being in a country where he can never again be reduced to a state of slavery".[22] The economic, legal and social deprivation endured by black people in Britain tends to be reiterated throughout his works.[23] Overall though, Shyllon's contribution to black history is outstanding, not only with regard to its reinterpretation from a black perspective, but also on the question of the legality of slavery and the identification of black personalities.

However, to recapitulate, it should be emphasised that the present study concerns itself directly with the anonymous mass of the black populous and not the relatively more prominent individuals of the era; hence the purpose of Chapter Seven will be to address itself to the problematic area of the black community and family. Within the limitations set by the evidence available, it is proposed to explore the extent to which blacks tended toward isolation or became involved with the black or multi-racial communities. This topic of the British black community in the age of abolition has attracted little scholarly research, and as yet, preliminary investigations have failed to reach definite conclusions. One major source of conflict inevitably results from the definition of the term "community". For example, Little offers the opinion that a community is characterised

> by a common background of experience - the experience of
> its members in living together and sharing a common
> social life, but not necessarily by a common background
> of interest.[24]

Dorothy George had earlier dismissed the idea of a black community, claiming that

> Negroes in London were immigrants of a class apart and
> their position must have been strangely friendless and
> anomolous. They did not live in colonies with their
> countrymen. Some brought to England had run away from or
> been deserted by masters. Others came from the West
> Indies as stowaways or refugees to seek freedom. [25]

Banton argues in a similar vein to George in positing that blacks in Britain failed to form compact communities, instead tendencies towards assimilation into the wider host community were more apparent.[26]

James Walvin (a prolific author of black British history, whose contributions include The Black Presence (1971), Black and White (1973), Passage to Britain (1984) and numerous articles), comments on the validity of the concept of a black community in our period. He establishes the black community firmly within the wider framework of the relationship between black and white. In The Black Presence, Walvin comments that

> a full and convincing examination of the history of the
> black community and of English racial attitudes have
> never been published. Original primary material tends to
> be fragmented and dispersed while historical analyses

have so far been detailed, but limited in scope, and do
not illustrate the continuity of the relationship between
the Negro and English society.[27]

The major themes developed throughout his writings include white fears
of miscegenation and possible threats to white employment in a
metropolis characterised by seasonal and cyclical unemployment. However,
his perception of the black community is derived mainly fron extracts of
the works of Wilberforce, Trollope and Carlyle, which remain
unconvincing as the latter two were racists. Nevertheless, The Black
Presence, and to an extent Black and White, ambitiously attempt to
locate black history in the broader framework of white society.

Furthermore, Walvin employs the term "community" in two distinct
ways; firstly "to distinguish all those individuals distinguished from
white society by their blackness, no matter how widely separated they
might be", and, secondly,

in the more specific sense of a tightly knit social
organisation, restricted in location and possessing a
distinct demographic and social structure... peculiar
to itself.[28]

The black family and black women were identified by Walvin as potential
areas of research at the "Conference on the History of Black People in
Britain". Despite the paucity of documented evidence, an emphasis was
placed on the need for knowledge relating to the daily lives of black
people. Walvin noted the historian's total disregard for immigrant and
minority groups until the 1970s, partly as a function of
compartmentalising history by the professionals involved. Thus, Walvin

warns of the dangers in minimising black history and experience in the development of British society.

In attempting to establish the nature of the community life experienced by blacks in our period, the question of the size of this population is of considerable importance. Dorothy George adjudged the black presence to be between 14,000 to 15,000 at the time of the Mansfield Judgement in 1772 , noting that "their great number in the eighteenth century has been little commented upon".[29] The literature on black history appears to be dogged by the controversy surrounding black numbers which will be discussed more fully in the following chapter. But with little basis of solid evidence, several commentators have assumed that the black population increased in the eighteenth century, peaking at the time of the influx of American Loyalists, and began to decrease in the nineteenth century. In the chapter entitled "Disintegration: Black Society in the Nineteenth Century" in <u>Black and White</u>, Walvin argues that the 1832 Census Act enforcing the compulsory registration of Africans on £100 bond, coupled with the decline in the fortunes of West Indian planters, resulted in this decline in black numbers. He maintains that

> the combined process of absorption and decline in
>
> immigration rapidly proved to be the effective solvents
>
> of English black society. Demographically, Negroes,
>
> ceased to be significant in England by mid nineteenth
>
> century.[30]

Firstly, regarding the numbers of blacks in London in 1786, the date of the Sierra Leone Expedition, Stephen Braidwood comments that the

contemporary estimate of 15,000 is excessive. This conclusion is based on research, albeit limited, into parish registers, and supports Shelby McCloy's assessment that in France during the eighteenth century the maximum number of blacks was between 4,000 and 5,000.[31]

Only passing reference need be made to Scobie's Black Britannia (1972); his work is marred by inaccuracies and some of his judgements appear tendentious. For example, he estimated that between 45,000 and 50,000 blacks resided in Britain towards the end of the eighteenth century. Of these, he states that "hundreds, nay thousands, became penniless and roamed the streets, begging, stealing, and turning more and more to crime ".[32] However, no supportive evidence for the statistics specifically, or in respect of his wider comments on black people in Britain in general, is offered. Scobie is one of numerous historians who labours under the false assumption that slavery in England terminated in 1772.

The controversial themes of numbers, community, and occupations have received attention from Peter Fryer in Staying Power. Published fairly recently, in 1984, this work represents one of the most impressive general approaches to black British history and spans the entire black experience in Britain from Roman times to the present day. Staying Power is indicative of the upsurge in interest in the history of non-white ethnic minorities, the earlier sections of the book are extremely pertinent to the present analysis, but the later chapters are beyond the chronological boundaries of this study. Significantly, these earlier chapters have been hailed by some critics as revolutionary; however, Ray Alok states that "as it approaches the present day, not

only does it become selective...but, unfortunately it also becomes uncritical and unoriginal".[33] Alok notes that Fryer traces

the history of racism and black resistance to it,

through the earlier period of racial prejudices, to the

rise of racism as an ideology and finally to the

emergence of state racism.[34]

However,in his attitudes towards race, Fryer fails to display the caution advocated by Lorimer. Fryer, then, explodes the myth of white history by revealing the extent to which Asians, Africans, and their descendants have shaped events in Britain in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He emulates Walvin and Edwards in concentrating on famous black personalities of the period under discussion in great depth, claiming that they challenged racism as "blacks having a public life could hardly help doing so".[35] The above-mentioned themes have also been pursued by Ron Ramdin in The Making of the Black Working Class, whose overall context is concerned with the black working class and struggle for survival.[36]

Black occupations formed an important component of Staying Power and was the basis of Fryer's paper presented at the "International Conference on the History of Black People in Britain",and entitled "Black Performers and Musicians in Britain before 1800". His research in this area, which traces the origins of black performers and musicians to 1672 and to London's "kitchen musicians", has rescued a group of black people who would otherwise have remained in anonymity. From the mid-eighteenth century onwards black bandsmen were a salient feature of British regiments, procuring for themselves a special position within a privileged sub-culture of an alien society. Fryer's work will be dealt

with in greater detail in Chapter Four, which examines black survival in white society.

One of the most outstanding contributions to the study of black occupations in the period remains J.J.Hecht's <u>Continental and Colonial Servants in Eighteenth Century England</u> (1954), a book in which an entire chapter is devoted to Negro and Indian servants, and despite the date of publication, its contents are yet to be surpassed. The domestic service sector remained the largest employer of both the white and black populations in the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Some of these servants are readily identifiable in the literature; reference is frequently made to Francis Barber and Julius Soubise for instance, but the majority engaged in this occupation are unknown. Continuing in the theme of black servants, Tessa Hoskins has detailed the complex hierarchical structure of servants, amplifying the earlier descriptions made by Charles Dickens.[37]

The historiography focusing on black occupations has been further broadened by P.D. Fraser to include soldiers, following his investigations into War Office Records. His Conference paper "Nineteenth Century Blacks in Britain: War Office Records as a Source" contrasts the century or so of British black history after 1833 with the relative richness of material in the preceding period. In order partially to remedy this gap in our knowledge of the post-1833 era, Fraser examined War Office records relating to British West India regiments. Soldiers' discharge documents yield evidence on names, dates of birth, ages, the ability to sign name, the date of recruitment, and service and campaigns. More importantly, the source provides physical details of height, complexion, colour of hair and eyes and complexion; character

and conduct are revealed together with descriptions of trades followed and the intended place of residence following discharge. Therefore, by outlining the scope and nature of the War Office Records, Fraser identifies the potential for recovering a group of black people who would have remained in obscurity.

Black beggars form the topic of much historical discussion, yet only one piece of work relates specifically to this group, namely J.T.Smith's Vagabondia. However, all commentators on black beggars focus their attention on those who achieved notoriety, so although much has been written about Charles McGee, Joseph Johnson, and Billy Waters, little has been discovered about the majority of black people who were forced to beg in order to survive. Amongst this category of beggars should be included Lascars awaiting their return passage to India. Black seamen during the eighteenth century have not formed the subject of any detailed study, but Conrad Dixon's "Lascars: The Forgotten Seamen" and fairly recently, Rozina Visram's Ayahs, Lascars and Princes, directly refer to this group of seamen whose increasing numbers caused contemporary alarm in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Lascars are to be dealt with in detail in Chapter Six as these Asians formed an integral component of the broadly defined black population in our period.

The alternative to begging, in the absence of philanthropic charities and state intervention, was crime, and black involvement with the criminal process forms another important theme of this thesis as revealed in Chapter Five. Black beggars and criminals were placed by Dorothy George within the general context of London life. Black beggars, she suggested, received favourable treatment, and she noted the

appearance of black criminals before the Old Bailey judges on charges of theft. However, she completely overlooked black transportation to the Antipodes; in fact six black transportees are identifiable from John Cobley's The Crimes of the First Fleet Convicts.[38] Ian Duffield, as noted in the preface, is at present pioneering research in the field of black transportees to Australia and Tasmania. The publication of "Alexander Harris's 'The Emigrant Family' and Afro-Blacks in Colonial Australia" indicates in-depth investigation into Australian indent records that identify many hundreds of blacks sentenced in England, the West Indies, and Mauritius.[39] Duffield's "Billy Blue, A Legend of Early Australia", focuses on one such convict, thus his work is responsible for dispelling the myth of a "white Australia".[40] Within the period under discussion, another important, recent article of Duffield's is "From Slave Colonies to Penal Colonies: The West Indian Convict Transportees to Australia", whose title is self-explanatory, and is referred to in greater detail in the chapter on black crime.[41]

Duffield, Lorimer and Braidwood force a reappraisal of the role played by black people in commanding their own destinies. Duffield's 1981 Conference paper "The Dilemma of Pan-Africanism for Blacks in Britain 1750-1960" goes beyond a discussion of the black experience in terms of misery and oppression, and instead emphasises black achievement under adversity. The origins of the major political tradition of Pan-Africanism in the twentieth century are traced to the gestation period of the eighteenth century. He focuses attention on the dilemma for Pan-Africanism which arises from tensions between their duty towards fellow blacks in Britain and towards emancipating blacks overseas. This trait originated from Equiano and is discernible throughout black history up

to, and including, the twentieth century. Duffield's paper then, identifies those beyond the periodisation of this thesis, thus Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, John Richard Archer, and Duse Mohamed Ali are accorded prominence. He examines their contribution to the overall development of Pan-Africanism, a tradition in which London became the pivotal point for British, African and American nationals alike.

Black achievement is further emphasised by Lorimer's "Black Slaves and English Liberty: A Re-examination of Racial Slavery in England" which specifically attributes a role to black slaves that results directly in their own emancipation.[42] Thus, the focus is shifted away from the legality of slavery and towards a social history of black 'slave-servants' in eighteenth century England. Lorimer minimises the abolitionist victory in suggesting that slavery in England ended at some time between 1760 and 1790 as a consequence of resistance by slaves themselves. His theory is innovative and possesses undoubted attractions, but in asserting that black slaves demanded to be treated as free domestic servants, he argues beyond the evidence (even though slave runaways were significant, and may, to a certain degree, have contributed towards their ultimate emancipation).

Continuing in this vein, Stephen Braidwood in "Initiatives and Organisation of the Black Poor 1786-87", asserts that earlier historians, condescending in their interpretations, tend

> to misrepresent the masses and the constituent 'ordinary
> men' (and women)....by grossly underrating the
> commonplace human capacity to maintain communal
> stability, achieve family advance, and provide for
> healthy individual adjustment to the necessary

circumstances of the time. In sum, it scorns the ability

of the masses to take rational initiatives and organise

betterment.[43]

This analysis of London's black poor and the scheme to relocate some of

their numbers in Sierra Leone draws especially upon the records of the

Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor and on parish registers.

Braidwood cogently argues that in demanding weapons, choosing their own

destination, and the victory achieved in gaining the instruments as

proof of freedom, those blacks involved in the Sierra Leone Scheme ran

contrary to the stereotypical image portrayed by the black poor as "mere

passive recipients of charity". Instead, their aspirations were revealed

as "the ambitions of their own future".[44] This assertive aspect of the

black personality, together with the images evoked by Liverpool's

defence of the slave trade following the abolitionist attack, receives

further attention in Chapter Three.

Having identified the major themes encompassing the history of

black people in Britain in this period and having appraised the authors

from a diversity of disciplines, it is now intended to discuss the

Liverpool and London primary sources that inform this study.

II

The main classifications of primary evidence utilised in this

inquiry have briefly been outlined in the preface, and it is proposed in

this section to offer a more detailed account that also identifies the

strengths and weaknesses of the sources involved. Beyond a doubt the two

most important bodies of evidence are parish registers and criminal records, and their inclusion in a wide range of chapters relating to numbers, occupations, family and community and of course, black involvement with the criminal process, becomes necessarily repetitive. London and particularly, Liverpool newspapers of the period are used extensively in the study, the latter have relevance to black images, whilst both are vital to the chapter on black occupations. British Parliamentary Papers yield information on a number of themes including Mendicity Reports and Lascar seamen, and on Lascars evidence is also provided in the records of the India Office. Census returns for the early eighteenth century are crucial for the estimation of black and white population ratios.[45] Last, but not least, the records of Liverpool slave traders also present images of black people in Britain in the abolitionist period.[46] In combination, the above-mentioned record groups enable a large number of working class black people to be identified and assumptions can, therefore, be made on various aspects of their lives during the period 1780 to 1830.

As stated above, the two major record groups informing this thesis are parish registers and criminal records, and a discussion of their varying strengths and weaknesses now ensues. Firstly, parish registers record births, deaths and marriages, the former yields demographic data not only on black numbers, sex ratios and ages, but also on occupations and the place of black residence. However, in employing this primary source, it should be cautioned that accuracy depended upon individual priests. A further apparent weakness lies in the fact that baptisms are not a true indication of the actual live birth rate. This is particularly valid for the black population, as the average age of black

baptism is found to be in the early twenties. It should also be emphasised that not all blacks in Britain underwent a baptisimal ceremony. Another apparent failing is that some parish records are incomplete, and of greater significance perhaps priests may have failed to record that the person being baptised or buried was black.

The advantages of employing this body of primary evidence are however considerable, and the gains involved outweigh any disadvantages. Ten parish registers, nine from London's East End and one from the North West of London, together with seven from Liverpool's merchant areas form a key resource.[47] The records used in this study cover the period 1780 to 1812. In 1812 a change in their format is discernible. From this date, registers underwent standardisation and colour ceases to be distinguished. Information quarried from this record group allows us to venture beyond contemporary estimates of black numbers. When coupled with statistical extracts from the census returns for London in respect of the years 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, parish registers and more importantly criminal records, enable an assessment of the size of London's black population to be attempted. This innovative approach towards black numbers builds upon Paul Laxton's brief note on Liverpool parish registers and Stephen Braidwood's limited, pioneering sample of London parishes, previously outlined in the first section of this chapter.

Secondly, the most important group of criminal records embodied in this work are the indictments brought before the Commissioners of Peace, Oyer, and Terminer, and records of Goal Delivery found in the Old Bailey Sessions Papers. These records indicate, either directly or indirectly, the colour of those brought before the Court so that their potential for

our purposes, is apparent. A fifty percent sample of these Papers has been completed for the period 1780 to 1830. However, the black presence has been under-estimated as the courts did not always specify colour. This inconsistency in the Old Bailey records has been emphasised by Duffield's research into black transportees.[48] The Newgate Calendars spanning the period 1791 to 1810, represent a major source of information, display similar strengths and failings.[49] The identification of black people in the Calendars is facilitated by physical descriptions, but in the period following 1810 the records experienced a change in format which neglected to include colour.

One of the problems experienced in employing criminal records lies in the interpretation of statistics which may not be indicative of the true level of criminal activity. Victims often displayed reluctance in the prosecution of crime, and in the almost complete absence of the forces of law and order, it may be assumed that much crime went undetected. Yet, despite their vulnerability due to errors in interpretation, the above-mentioned records of crime yield invaluable information on blacks in London during the period 1780 to 1830. They enable a statistical assessment of black numbers to be made and offer information on sex ratios, ages, occupations, places of origin and enable comparisons to be made on the types of crime committed. Thus, glimpses are afforded into the everyday lives of those blacks brought before the courts as victim, witness or criminal. Chapter Five indicates the extent to which black crime conformed to patterns of white crime in the type of crime committed, the ages of offenders and in the types of occupations pursued.

Contemporary Liverpool and London newspapers, especially the

former, represent an important body of information, pertinent to black images, numbers, occupations and crime, and therefore, merit synthesis in the relevant chapters. Through the media of the press, Liverpool defended the slave trade producing contrary stereotypical images of blacks in Britain in the abolitionist era. Hence, Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser was intensively studied for the thirty year period covering 1787 to 1807, and for the sample years of 1756-57, 1766-67, 1776-1777, and 1780. The Liverpool General Advertiser (later known as Gore's Directory) was examined for the five-year period dating from 1765 to 1769 for evidence of runaways and slave advertisements, and for the later years of 1787 to 1789 for pro-slavery arguments. The Liverpool Chronicle was also researched from 1757 to 1759, 1767 to 1768, and for the years 1787 to 1789. A further sampling of Liverpool newspapers was initiated for the period commencing with the abolition of the slave trade 1807, to the ending of slavery in the colonies in 1833, seeking evidence on slave sales or runaway advertisements. Information on slaves was quarried prior to 1807, but unfortunately, neither the Liverpool Mercury (1811-1813) nor Billinge's Liverpool Advertiser (1818-1822) made reference to slaves or slave/free status in Britain after 1807.[50]

Of the London newspapers and periodicals sampled, the most informative remains the Police Gazette (or Hue and Cry).[51] Amongst the newspapers that provided information relevant to this topic are the Globe, the Morning Chronicle, the London Chronicle, and Cobbett's Evening Post.[52] The London Gazette, intensively sampled for the five years of 1760, 1765, 1770, 1775, and 1780, yielded negligible results.[53] Overall, an appraisal of this body of records indicates that, despite the tediousness of newspaper research, some details on

slave sales, runaways, prize fighters and criminals are to be found.

The last group of primary records to be discussed are British Parliamentary Papers which are of relevance to the Chapters devoted to Lascars and black occupations. The Parliamentary Commission's <u>Report on Lascars and Other Asiatic Seamen</u> (1814-1815), <u>Parliamentary Papers relating to East India Affairs</u> (1816), the Parliamentary <u>Report on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis</u> (1814-1815), and India Office Library Records provide fresh insight into this group of Eastern seamen and enable us to venture beyond the works of Dixon and Visram.[54]

This section has examined the primary sources that form the basis of the thesis, emphasising both their innovation and shortcomings for the historiography of black people in Britain. The major themes encompassing this topic and the overall aims have been identified, which now require refocusing. Duffield has stated that

> in the world of learning, it was long assumed that black
>
> people had no history worth studying, either in Africa,
>
> or in various parts of the world containing communities
>
> of black African descent.[56]

Until fairly recently, apart from literary figures, black people remained the invisible men and women in British history; the purpose of this work is to make them more visible by demonstrating their possession of a history in Britain. It is proposed to explore various strands of that history; hence black family and community will be reappraised, images of blacks that were in a state of constant fluctuation will be analysed within the context of the period, strategies of survival in a white host society will be explored. Black involvement with the criminal

process forms the basis of an article which I have already published in
Immigrants and Minorities (1988), but this theme necessitates extension
in a later chapter.[56] The most controversial black theme relates to
their numbers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and
it is now proposed to address this issue.

CHAPTER TWO
THE BLACK NUMBERS CONUNDRUM:
A STEP TOWARDS QUANTIFICATION

The number of black people in England during the period 1780 to 1830 remains a conundrum due to the absence of relevant data. Census statistics for the period are unreliable and the lack of any overall uniform policy for recording race, marginalises blacks. Regarding gross numbers then, the absence of some of the most significant tools of analysis and insufficient information on black geographical and temporal distribution poses problems. Therefore, scholarship has been forced to rely upon the observations and impressions of contemporaries, which inevitably contain some degree of bias and accounts for the diversity in the estimation of black numbers. Anthony Barker's singular lack of optimism has already been referred to in the preface. Consequently, the task of assessing to any degree of accuracy, the size of the black presence, which consisted of those of Afro, Afro-American, West Indian, Indian, and East Indian origin, appears to be formidable.

The complexity of the issue is further compounded by the composition of the presence which remained in a constant state of flux and was susceptible to change throughout the period. Furthermore, the sources that inform this chapter reveal that the black demographic profile remained both young and overwhelmingly male in its composition and structure. Imbalanced sex ratios had severe repercussions for the black family, which will be dealt with in greater detail in a subsequent chapter, but it proved impossible for all black men to form stable relationships with black women. Hence the black population remained

incapable of reproduction through endogamous natural mechanisms and miscegenation appeared inevitable. The alternative to natural equilibrium or increase in the black population was immigration, but in assessing the balance between immigration and emigration rates, and in isolating demographic trends, difficulties are encountered. Historians assume that the black population increased following the influx of black American Loyalists in 1784, and subsequently experienced a decrease in the nineteeth century.[1]

The purpose of this chapter is, firstly, to examine contemporary estimates of black numbers and their subsequent adoption in the secondary sources. Secondly, it is proposed to challenge these traditional interpretations by offering a more accurate assessment of black numbers. A data-based approach will be adopted which incorporates statistics extracted from criminal records and parish registers. Initially, within this section a minimum baseline of the numbers of blacks in our period will be established, calculated from contemporaneous events and records which include the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, the Sierra Leone expedition, and Parliamentary Papers on Lascars. Finally, this minimum figure for London's blacks will be extended to include indications of black numbers from criminal and baptisimal records; London's Census returns during this period will enable black and white demographic comparisons to be attempted. From the above-mentioned evidence it becomes possible to estimate, to a greater degree of accuracy than previously, the size of London's black population in the period 1780 to 1830.

I

As previously noted, the absence of reliable data, relating to gross black numbers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, has forced scholarship to rely on contemporary conjectures which are characterised by their disparity. Speculative totals vary from between ten and forty thousand in number, and range from the conservative estimate to wild exaggeration, depending upon the degree of bias involved. Distortion of black numbers were the result, perhaps, of racist fears of miscegenation or of threats to white employment. Contemporary evidence reveals the congruity of black people in the major ports connected with West Indian trade from the early eighteenth century. In 1723 the _Daily Journal_ referred to London's black population thus;

> 'tis said there is a great number of Blacks come daily
>
> into this city,so that 'tis thought in a short time, if
>
> they be not suppress'd the city will swarm with them.[2]

Clearly then, contemporaries were alarmed at the rate of black expansion , especially in the metropolis where newspapers reported its size as being in the region of between twenty and thirty thousand. The _Gentleman's Magazine_ estimated that there were near twenty thousand "Negroe servants" in London in 1764, whilst the _Morning Chronicle_ in the following year adjudged there to be thirty thousand in the entire kingdom. [3]

The Mansfield Judgement of 1772 allegedly liberated fifteen thousand black slaves, but the alarm created by this prospect failed to be justified·[4] This figure of fifteen thousand was repeated in a tract

published in 1773 by the West Indian agent for Barbados, Samuel Estwick.
Whilst judgement was still pending in the Somerset Case he noted the
frequency and magnitude of their appearance,

> there are already fifteen thousand Negroes in England
>
> and scarce is there a street in London that does not
>
> give many examples of that. [5]

Another defender of slavery, James Tobin, quoted an identical number for
the same year. [6] An increase in numbers is cited for the following
year of 1774 which coincides with the arrival of black Loyalists of the
American War of Independence. By 1788, Gilbert Francklyn estimated the
size of the black population to be over forty thousand in number.[7]
Fluctuations in contemporary judgements on the size of the black
presence are apparent, and there is also a tendency towards disparity,
depending upon whether the area under discussion is confined to London
or extended to include the whole of the country at that time. More
importantly, no distinction is made between the slave and free black
within that population, as the contemporary sources referred to
estimates of blacks, of whom an unknown proportion was not claimed as
property. Furthermore, little information is proffered on the number of
masterless blacks or on age or sex ratios.

The more recent scholarship that addresses itself to black British
history perpetuates errors by the inclusion of the above-mentioned
contemporary assessments of black numbers. Therefore, historians
frequently cite a figure of between fourteen and twenty thousand black
people in Britain in our period. However, some are prepared to break new
ground and forward their own opinions on this conundrum. Shyllon, for

ample, argues that

> after weighing all the factors carefully; it seems that
> the black population in Britain throughout the eighteenth
> century at any given time could not have exceeded ten
> thousand. [8]

Seymour Drescher is in agreement with Shyllon's estimate based on the official figure of black movement out of Jamaica around the time of the Somerset case, but this figure of ten thousand is applicable to "slaves" only, whilst the "Somerset" figure of fifteen thousand included both slaves and free blacks.[9]

In his chapter entitled "Border Skirmish: Neither Wages nor the Whip", Drescher contends that blacks in Britain represented between 0.09 and 0.2 per cent of the total population in Britain in 1771, the lower percentage being based on an assumption that the black presence was 10,000, the higher on the 14,000 at the Somerset hearing. In comparison blacks appeared "more visible" in the colonies, in Rhode Island, Drescher estimates them to have comprised 5.1 per cent of the population in 1780 and black percentages were higher in the Southern colonies.[10] He further maintains that this difference in numbers "was reflected by a difference in social classification. Everywhere in the New World colonial slaves were clearly a separate order".[11] Unfortunately, it proves difficult to distinguish the numbers of slaves and free black men (Chapter Four demonstrates the problems that arise within the servant class in the identification of tasks performed by these two groups). More importantly, we do not know if, or indeed when, a "market" developed for blacks in Britain.

George Rudé refers to the increase in the size of the black
presence post-1783, as a result of immigration from the Southern states
of America and the West Indies, stating that "these groups may have
accounted for ten thousand, or more of the [population of the] capital
in the last quarter of the century".[12] Others, such as Scobie, emulate
Francklyn's estimate and favour a much larger black presence estimated
at between forty and fifty thousand, but as previously noted in Chapter
One, Scobie provides no evidence to support such numbers.[13]

It is apparent from the above discussion that few were stimulated
to estimate the numbers of blacks in Britain, and certainly no British
official sought to make a census of either blacks or slaves, prior to or
during the abolitionist period. Having outlined the contemporary
assessments of the size of the black presence in both London and Britain
and their incorporation in secondary sources, it is now proposed to
offer an alternative and innovative approach to this problem based on an
estimate of minimum numbers.

II

It has been noted in the first section that as evidence remains
elusive very few historians are prepared to depart from the rough
estimates of the black population of the period. Recently more erudite
interpretations have been attempted involving the use of parish
records. Nine London parish registers for the period 1783-1787 formed
the basis of Braidwood's analysis of those who comprised the Sierra
Leone expedition. These years coincided with the arrival of loyal black
Americans in the metropolis, and Braidwood revealed that 168 of those

baptised during the years 1783-1787 were listed as black. Even in the parishes most densely populated by blacks, especially St. George's in the East, the seventy one black baptisms accounted for only three per cent of all baptisms registered. This leads Braidwood to conclude that "blacks made up a very small part of the [London] population".[14] The spatial distribution of his blacks displayed a concentration in the East end of London, 144 being baptised in these parishes. Furthermore, Braidwood is of the opinion that the figure cited with most frequency in the sources, that of fifteen thousand black people in London in the 1780's, "seems much exaggerated and the true number may well have been less than half".[15]

Pioneering work of a slightly similar nature has been undertaken by Paul Laxton using Liverpool parish records of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. His approach entails a computer data-based comparison of black and white ratios in parish burial and baptismal registers. For example, he noted fifteen black entries for the parish of St. John's Toxteth, in the nine year period spanning 1767 to 1775, which he calculated to represent 0.14 per cent of the total burials for the whole of Liverpool, or 0.5 per cent of the 3,000 burials in St. John's for the nine years sampled. This data resulted in Laxton's suggestion that in Liverpool at the beginning of the eighteenth century,

> it seems unlikely that there were more than 500 - 600
>
> Blacks in Liverpool <u>circa</u> 1700 and much more likely that
>
> the <u>maximum</u> was nearer 200.[16]

His study of baptismal records for six parishes in Liverpool identifies twenty six blacks from their descriptions as such, or through

inference. Laxton's overall results enable the following conjectures on black demography to be made,

> if blacks numbered 500 in 1801 and if they were almost entirely males aged 13 and over they would represent about 1.5 to 2.0 per cent of the adult male population of Liverpool. (17)

His general approach in estimating the size of Liverpool's black population will be replicated in a later section of this chapter. Similar techniques and differing sources of data will be applied to the assessment of the size of London's black population.

Before a general estimate for the black population is offered it is crucial that a baseline for the minimum numbers of black people in London in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century be established. It is now proposed to concentrate exclusively on those available contemporary reports which document Afro-blacks and Lascars. Foremost amongst those contemporary events generating evidence of black numbers are the claims made by the black Loyalists of the American War of Independence (1784), the formation of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor (1786), and the subsequent proposals which culminated in the Sierra Leone expedition towards the end of that year. The latter two events were initially the inspiration of public philanthropic zeal, but all were eventually drawn within the parameters of governmental control. Norton and Braidwood's academic coverage of these events provide us with useful clues towards a preliminary minimum total for blacks in the 1780s.

Norton, in a study already briefly mentioned, enumerated those

blacks who sought assistance from the British government, either in the form of temporary relief as a pension or for reimbursement for property lost in America as a direct result of their loyalty to the British Crown. Of the forty-seven black Loyalists who applied formally for both types of assistance, Norton cites Peter Anderson as being more fortunate than the rest of his fellow blacks in his award of £10.[18] With reference to the numbers of black Loyalists, she asserts that

> Anderson was not alone; there were hundreds more like him on the streets of London. In addition to the many black Loyalists from America, the metropolis had attracted East Indians and Africans, most of whom had served as sailors on vessels trading to those areas. [19]

Unfortunately, Norton labours under the misapprehension that

> further contributing to the black population of the city were former slaves freed as a result of the famous Somerset case in 1772. [20]

However, this does not present an impediment to the overall accuracy of her estimates of the categories of blacks who claimed compensation, comprised the Sierra Leone expedition, or those applying to the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor.

Regarding the above-mentioned groups of Loyalists and emigrants that have aroused recent historical interest, it should be emphasised that their numbers would be representative of only a small proportion of London's black population in the period 1784 to 1787; therefore, their overall significance for our purposes, is debatable. The majority of blacks would have remained either in the state of slavery or masterless,

and as such divorced from the above events. Undoubtedly, some of those in poverty were forced to rely on the voluntary sector for charitable assistance or to resort to the existing Poor Law authorities in the metropolis. In relation to the Poor Law of the period, this black population was incongruous as it proved impossible to return its members to the parish of settlement. The increasing number of black paupers resulted in public concern that culminated in the establishment of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor in January 1786. This Committee was originally established out of concern for the plight of Lascars, only intervening in cases of acute distress, and providing both monetary support and medical attention. A hospital was established in Warren Street and was supervised by Dr. Hilton Docker, whose reports on the medical condition of Lascars will be referred to in Chapter Seven. As numbers of those seeking assistance outran the Committee's financial resources (within the space of three months), the Treasury had no alternative but to assume responsibility for the payment of subsistence allowances (of six pence per day) to the indigent black population. State intervention on this scale in social problems, albeit limited, ran contrary to the classical economic principles of the era.

Norton's study of the Committee's accounts for the months of April and May 1786 reveals that,

> although only seventy five appeared on that first day to
> apply for funds, within a month the clerk reported that
> he was daily paying more than 320 allowances.[21]

Smeathman's proposal for the emigration of London's black poor to Sierra Leone had proved readily acceptable to the Lords of the Treasury and by

the February of the following year Braidwood was able to identify 960 black people in receipt of this daily allowance, which had by this time, become dependent upon the signing of an emigration agreement.[22] Some discrepancies are apparent in a comparison of Norton's and Braidwood's figures of those who actually sailed, which is due to the assimilation of different sets of data into their research. For example, Norton concludes that "a total of 459 persons sailed from Portsmouth, of whom 112 were white"; therefore, 347 blacks embarked on the expedition.[23] Braidwood revises this figure slightly so that "of the 960 who received allowances, 350 were aboard ships in February".[24] However, it appears from the sources studied by Braidwood and Norton, that only a minority of the black population were associated with this scheme at any one time.

Both of the these historians estimate the numbers of blacks in 1786-1787. Braidwood's assumption that fewer than 7,500 black people lived in London has been referred to previously. Norton's consultation of the Treasury Records enabled an identification of 1,114 blacks at the time of the Sierra Leone expedition to be made. She argues that "by mid-1786, there were at the very minimum approximately 1,200 blacks living in the city".[25] Thus, her study offers an insight into the size of the black population in the metropolis and establishes a minimum baseline of 1,200 for our purposes.

Apart from the important question of numbers, Braidwood examines the origins of those he identified in his parish register sample which reinforces Norton's statement that "America was the chief supplier of black migrants" to Sierra Leone.[26] Eighty-three of the one-hundred and-sixty-eight blacks extracted from his group of parish records had

their origins specified. More than half of the eighty-three were born in America (especially Virginia and Carolina), twenty-six came from the West Indies, six were British-born and a few were African-born. Whilst it might have proved true that the majority of blacks who sailed with the Sierra Leone expedition were of American descent, it appears, however, that American-born blacks represented a minority of London's total black population during this period. The accuracy of this assumption is suggested by further research into parish and criminal records for the periods ante and post-Sierra Leone. Forty of the fifty-two blacks identified in the ten London parishes sampled for the years 1780 to 1786 had unspecified origins. Within this group only four were identified as American-born, two originated in Africa and a further two were born in India. Blacks recorded in parish registers do not often seem to appear as American born. Perhaps an American bias occurred in Braidwood's sample because he was able to start (from the Sierra Leone expedition's records) with a list of individuals known to be black; the parish registers to which they were traced might not have specified their colour.

The unrepresentativeness of Americans is reinforced by an examination of criminal records of the Old Bailey in which eleven blacks are identifiable in the years 1785-87. Again, the majority of this total displayed unspecified origins, two were described as Lascar and one was West Indian-born. Similarities in this trend are discernible in the post-Sierra Leone era where an examination of the same source for the years 1787 to 1789 indicated that twelve of the sixteen blacks had unknown origins, only one was American-born, one West Indian , and two more were born in East India. Two important conclusions can be drawn

from this material. Firstly, London's black population in the late eighteenth century appears to have been sufficiently large that the loyalist American arrivals failed greatly to affect its numbers. Secondly, and similarly, the proportion of Americans on the Sierra Leone expedition seems to have been far higher than that in London's black population as a whole.

To recapitulate, the Treasury records and parish registers that informed Norton's and Braidwood's studies disclose that the minimum number of black people present in London in the mid-1780s was between a base figure of 1,200 and possible upper maximum of 7,500. The lower number related to Norton's work and the upper number corresponds to Braidwood's conclusions. Norton's figures have been incorporated in this study as the Treasury lists represent a solid basis of evidence. Thus, several important features are apparent at this juncture, firstly, black saliency is under-represented in this range of estimates, as it excludes those enslaved, the free black population totally unconnected with these contemporary events, and also the transient element of Negro sailors and Lascars.

Secondly, typical of any pattern of male emigration, the majority of those on board the three vessels bound for Sierra Leone were young, adult males; thus a skewed sample might have been drawn from the black population which failed to represent its true composition. Thirdly, if a high proportion of the black population had been involved in the Sierra Leone expedition a decrease in black involvement in crime may be anticipated in the post-Sierra Leone era. Criminal evidence displays the contrary to have occurred as black involvement in crime became greater in the years 1787-1789. Finally, if those blacks that comprised the

Sierra Leone expedition were representative of only a small proportion of London blacks, then on a national basis their significance further diminished. However, the most important overall conclusion to be drawn from this section is that there was a minimum number of several thousand Afro- black people in London towards the end of the eighteenth century. This figure excludes those of Asian descent who will be referred to later, and a further unknown element of this population equation includes mendicants, to whom our attention will now be addressed.

Gross numbers of beggars, whether black or white, failed to be recorded until 1818 and the formation of an ex-officio committee entitled the Society for the Suppression of Mendicity. Its prime function was to counteract professional begging in London, whilst providing aid to those cases it deemed genuine. With reference to black numbers, Shyllon and Ramdin are amongst the few who have realised the significance of this Society's Annual Reports (from 1819 onwards) for black history. Shyllon states that "a section was devoted to the case histories of persons they had assisted....[which] give a good cross-section of the black population".[27] Whilst according to Ramdin, amongst the indigent black population, begging had reached such a scale that an estimated 400 per annum appeared in these Annual Reports.[28] If we assume that only a fraction of London's total black population were classified as beggars, then this lends credence to the notion that the Sierra Leone expedition failed to rid the capital of more than a small proportion of its black numbers. Furthermore, this also provides us with additional information in calculating the size of this black presence for the period following 1819.

To return to the transient variable of black demographic study,

Lascars form an important but fluctuating component. Although there appears to be diversity in estimates of the size of this group, evidence of a more accurate nature is available in the India Office Library Records as demonstrated by Table 2.1. As stated earlier, the presence of this group of seamen prompted the reaction of private charity in the formation of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor as early as 1786. Their saliency in contemporary British society has been little referred to, and few of their numbers have been annotated in parish registers and criminal records of the 1780s. However, in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century they formed an expanding element within the black ethnic minority. Their numbers fluctuated according to the economic demand for their labour, but nevertheless, they remained a constant factor that merit consideration. It should be emphasised that of the 214 black baptisms recorded in the parish register sample that encompassed the years 1780 to 1812, four or 1.9 per cent originated from the East Indies.

Of the 132 identified in the criminal records whose origins are specified, Lascar appearance was slightly greater than other blacks of African, American or West Indian descent. Twenty-five (18.9 per cent) of those blacks conspicuous in the records sampled, appeared to be of Indian or East Indian origin, in comparison with twenty-three (17.5 per cent) West Indians and eighteen (13.6 per cent) Americans. [29] The above figures reveal that approximately fifty per cent had an undisclosed place of birth and their unrepresentativeness must therefore, be taken into account in any analysis. Two further points to be taken into consideration are that firstly, Lascars, in experiencing

TABLE 2.1

SOME EXPENSES INCURRED BY THE EAST INDIA COMPANY FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF LASCARS AND CHINESE BROUGHT TO ENGLAND,   1803-1813.

YEAR	LASCAR NUMBERS
1803	224
1804	471
1805	603
1806	538
1807	1278
1808	1110
1809	965
1810	1403
1811	929
1812	1193
1813	1316

SOURCE   India Office Library Records , L/MAR/C/902, Volume II.

poverty, may have resorted to crime to a degree greater than their fellow blacks. Secondly, in direct relation to the first point, Lascars being relative "newcomers", accessibility to the established black networks of mutual support and strategies of survival might have proved difficult.

III

Having established a minimum number of 1,200 black people in London as a result of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor and the Sierra Leone expedition, and assuming this to represent no more than a quarter of the total population when slaves, Lascars and others are included, then the following conclusion may be drawn. At least 5,000 black people must have been located in London at any one point in time during the late eighteenth century; and this figure could be increased if applied to the nation as a whole (and with particular reference to Liverpool and Bristol through their connections with the slave trade). If additional variables of Asian servants and descendants of slaves were incorporated into this black numbers equation then the figures demand upward revision.

The following sections that concentrate on the size of the black presence through criminal records and parish registers verify this trend. These above-mentioned record groups allow us to comfirm that the black population of our period is likely to have been several times the minimum population baseline of some 1,200. In the case of the former the estimates will be for London as a whole, whilst parish registers produce

TABLE 2.2

NUMBERS OF BLACK AND WHITE INDICTMENTS RECORDED IN THE OLD BAILEY
SESSIONS PAPERS, 1785 -1830.

PERIOD	BLACK INDICTMENTS	%	WHITE INDICTMENTS	%	TOTAL INDICTMENTS
1785-1789	23	0.5	4,189	99.5	4,212
1795-1799	7	0.2	2,987	99.8	2,994
1805-1809	8	0.2	3,518	99.8	3,526
1815-1819	16	0.2	7,136	99.8	7,152
1825-1829	3	0.0	10,432	100.0	10,435
TOTAL	57	0.2	28,262	99.8	28,319

SOURCE   Old Bailey Sessions Papers. Guildhall, London, for the years
1785,86,87,88,89,95,96,97,98,99,1805,6,7,8,9,15,16,17,18,19,25,26,27,28,
29.

data that provide evidence of considerable local concentrations of blacks. Such local concentrations will, in later chapters help to form the basis on which references about black networks and community can be made. It should be stressed that the overall results obtained from this research must remain speculative, due in part to the inherent problems encountered in the nature of the sources themselves, and to the innovative methodology employed for this purpose. However tentative the findings may appear, they represent one step away from contemporary conjecture and towards quantification.

Table 2.2 draws upon the Old Bailey Sessions Papers for the period 1785 to 1830 and indicates that an overall total of 0.2 per cent of those brought before the court were identifiable as black. The white indictments in this table represent an over-count, since this total includes an unknown number of blacks whose colour failed to be specified in the records. If the key to black numbers lies in the ratio of black to white then the actual size of London's white population has now to be established. For the period 1801 onwards British demographic history possesses an invaluable tool of analysis in the form of census returns, and those in respect of the metropolis for the decennial years of 1801, 1811, 1821, and 1831, have been incorporated in this study. The population of the metropolis displayed a distinctive upward trend during this thirty-year period, as revealed by Table 2.3. Unfortunately, little is known of the mechanism whereby this increase occurred, but it may be assumed that immigration into the capital played an important role. E.A.Wrigley estimates that the total numbers of those inhabiting the capital increased from 675,000 in the mid-eighteenth century to a figure

approaching 900,000 at the commencement of the nineteenth century, which is supported by the statistics embodied in the first census of 1801.[30]

The Old Bailey Sessions Papers have enabled black and white criminal participation rates to be established (see Table 2.2). The census returns for the nineteenth century, details of which appear in Table 2.3, together with the afore-mentioned estimates of Wrigley for eighteenth-century London allow a profile of total population to be calculated. From these two sets of information it is now proposed to quantify the black population on both a local and national level, and the method employed is statistically demonstrated in Table 2.4.

Given that blacks represented 0.5 per cent of those indicted for criminal activities in the period 1785-1789, and taking this figure as a proportion of the total London population (estimated according to Wrigley at 780,000) then it becomes possible to calculate that 4,290 blacks were present in London at this time. These blacks are very largely exclusive of those who consented to settle in Sierra Leone, and furthermore, presumably do not include numbers of slaves, (slave masters would not have wanted such property to be executed or transported). Table 2.4 incorporates estimates of black numbers which displays fluctuations over time within the periods specified, but suggests a decline in the period 1825-1829 (and this will form a subsequent topic of discussion).

It should be stressed that the purpose of this data is not to achieve direct, decisive estimates of blacks but to seek indications of numbers to supplement the minimum baseline established in the previous

TABLE 2.3

CENSUS RETURNS FOR THE METROPOLIS FOR THE YEARS 1801, 1811, 1821 AND 1831

SIX CENSUS AREAS	YEARS			
	1801	1811	1821	1831
London Within the Walls City	75,171	55,484	56,174	57,695
London Without the Walls City	81,688	65,425	56,174	67,878
Southwark - Borough	67,448	72,119	85,905	91,501
Westminster - City	158,210	162,085	182,085	202,080
Parishes Within the Bills of Mortality	364,526	498,719	616,628	761,348
Adjacent Parishes Not Without the Bill	117,802	155,714	215,642	293,567
TOTALS FOR THE METROPOLIS	864,845	1,009,546	1,225,694	1,474,069

SOURCE British Parliamentary Papers, Population I (1831), reproduced in I.U.P. (Shannon, 1968), held at the Sydney Jones Library, Liverpool.

TABLE 2.4

ESTIMATE OF LONDON'S BLACK POPULATION USING CRIME RECORDS AND CENSUS
RETURNS FOR THE PERIOD 1785 TO 1832.

YEARS	PERCENTAGE BLACK POPULATION ACCORDING TO TABLE 2.2	TOTAL POPULATION OF LONDON TABLE 2.3	BLACK ESTIMATE
1785-89	0.55	780,000	4,290
1795-99	0.23	850,000	1,955
1805-09	0.23	1,000,000	2,300
1815-19	0.22	1,200,000	2,640
1825-29	0.03	1,400,000	420

SOURCE Old Bailey Sessions Papers and Census Returns, op cit.

section. Furthermore, Table 2.4 results in the identification of two factors which may have tended to exaggerate black numbers. Firstly, the black population in London displayed a demographic profile that was dominated by young males, and as such may have proved more crime-orientated in its composition. Secondly, a greater propensity towards criminality may be discernible as the majority of the black population would have existed in a state of poverty, with most being subjected to the vagaries of seasonal and cyclical unemployment and also to discrimination embodied in the 1731 Corporation of London's restriction on Negro apprenticeship. [31] To counter-balance the possibility of over-representation of blacks in criminal records and their subsequent inclusion in total population figures the following arguments can be forwarded in support of their under-representation.

It must be borne in mind that slaves would have been excluded from the judicial system and as such fail to appear in the Old Bailey Sessions Papers. Their apparent invisibility is due to their legal and economic positions, their status being defined as property, any misdemeanours would have been dealt with privately. A further consideration is that masters would not have desired the loss of their services for petty crimes. Secondly, the Old Bailey court was only one of many involved in the dispensation of justice, therefore the results for London could be subjected to geographical restrictions. Finally, and most importantly, there is a strong possibility that a large element of black criminals fail to be identified in the records since not all blacks appearing before the courts were officially described by colour. The extent of this under-reporting could possibly be revealed at a

future date through Ian Duffield's pioneering research in this area utilising Australian indent records. However, at present, his "From Slave Colonies to Penal Colonies" incorporates a British sample of transportees which is important for our purposes in that it not only displays black criminal distribution patterns, but also the spatial differentiation of the black population in general.[32]

The apparent sharp decline in black numbers in the period 1825-1829 indicates a statistical anomaly as an increase is indicated between the periods 1805-1809 and 1815-1819. An argument that could be forwarded for this decline is that foreign born are more likely to be identified than local born, therefore, a high percentage of those with unspecified origins may have originated from the latter group of blacks. This tends to stress the importance of those born locally and could have further implications for natural increase which will be dealt with more fully in a later chapter. This decline in black criminals is not indicative of their overall saliency as there was an increase in black transiency during this later period, especially Lascars, synonymous with the cessation of the East India Company's monopoly of trade in this area and a relaxation of the Navigation Acts.

While some individuals may have been transient, the black-white ratio indicates typical patterns at a particular time, thus a statistical balance is achieved between the arrival and departure of transients. Transients then are representative of a typical number of blacks present at any one time. Crime records, then, serve to emphasise that a very substantial black presence was not restricted to the period of the Sierra Leone expedition. It is difficult to balance factors which

tend to underestimate blacks (under-recording, omission of slaves etc.) and those which tend to overestimate, but a figure persistently to at least 5,000 seems highly likely.

The baptismal records of tne London parish registers are significant in demonstrating local concentrations of black people, and in yielding evidence relating to numbers, ages and sex ratios, enabling comparisons to be made with the white host community. Black and white baptismal records add a further dimension in gaining insights into black numbers in London. This evidence is important not so much in evaluating the overall numbers, but in the discovery of levels of black concentration in those areas of London sampled.

Some general cautionary comments should first be made about the use of baptismal records. Misgivings concerning their value in the late eighteenth century, specifically in regard to their under-representation of the population, have been frequently voiced.[33] Baptismal rates not only fail to correspond with the actual birth rate at this time, but also neglect the increasing incidence of Non-Conformity that was characteristic of the period. The latter would have been of great relevance to the black population, being overtly influenced by dissenting West Indian missionaries (as outlined in an earlier section, the majority of blacks whose origins were specified, were known to be West Indian born). For the population in general, Peter Laslett stresses that

> it is easy to see how the spread of the Baptist religion,
> illegitimacy, still births, neo natal deaths and private
> baptisms could lead to forty per cent under-

representation which was demonstrated in the nineteenth century. [34]

It would appear that under-representation is only one of the problems to be encountered by those involved in the extraction of data from this primary source. Difficulties of a more practical nature are experienced due to the poor physical condition of some of the registers examined, for example, St. John's at Hackney, and also as a result of the limited quality of the information recorded for posterity by the individual priest concerned. Despite these reservations, parish registers enable valuable evidence on black numbers to be gained for the period preceding 1811. Table 2.5 summarises the results of my research into ten London parish registers and emphasises that black baptism appears to have been male-dominated (78.6 per cent being male). Furthermore, of the 159 baptisms enumerated, only two related to infants; thus unlike white baptism, black baptism occurred with greater frequency amongst the adult male population. Black baptism appeared to be more selective than white, as it involved a conscious decision either on the part of those baptised or their masters. As such black baptism was possibly more representative of a lower proportion of the relevant sub-population than would have been the case for white people.

The number of white baptisms for selected years extracted from the parish register data establishes an average rate of black to white baptisms. Table 2.6 estimates this to be in the ratio of one per cent black. [35] This black propensity to baptism fluctuated over time and has been tabulated on an annual basis to display a marked upswing during the years 1783 to 1786, prior to the Sierra Leone expedition, and again

TABLE 2.5

SUMMARY OF BLACK BAPTISMS IN THE LONDON SAMPLE OF PARISH REGISTERS

1780 TO 1812

PARISH	NUMBER OF MALE BAPTISMS	NUMBER OF FEMALE BAPTISMS	TOTAL BLACK BAPTISMS
St. Paul's, Deptford	16	1	17
St. Nicholas's, Deptford	8		8
St. Anne's, Limehouse	13	2	15
All Saint's, Poplar	1		1
St. John at Hackney	1		1
St. George's in the East	35	6	41
St. Marylebone	32	25	57
St. Katherine's by the Tower	14		14
Holy Trinity, Minories	4		4
St. Stephen Wallbrook	1		1
TOTAL	125	34	159

SOURCE   Parish Registers, selected parishes,1780-1812, Guildhall Library and Greater London Records Office.

TABLE 2.6

SUMMARY OF BLACK AND WHITE BAPTISMS IN LONDON PARISH REGISTER SAMPLE

1783 TO 1812

PARISH	TOTAL NUMBER OF BLACK BAPTISMS	TOTAL NUMBER OF WHITE BAPTISMS
St. Paul's, Deptford	17	1,873
St. Nicholas's,Deptford	8	1,186
St. Anne's, Limehouse	15	1,268
All Saint's, Poplar	1	88
St. John at Hackney	1	115
St. George's in the East	7	781
St. Marylebone	40	4,335
St. Katherine's by the Tower	14	671
Holy Trinity, Minories	4	24
St. Stephen Wallbrook	1	15
TOTAL	108	10,356
TOTAL percentage of Baptisms	1.0	99.0

SOURCE Parish Registers of selected parishes 1783-1812, Guildhall Library and the Greater London Records Office, London.

during the period 1796 to 1797 as demonstrated in Table 2.7.

To be more specific in estimating local concentrations of black numbers, it is possible in four of the ten parishes studied, to determine the actual ratio of black to white baptisms for the year 1801. Assuming the constancy of this ratio, it can be applied to the 1801 census returns for the individual parishes concerned, and allows for a

more mathematical assessment of black numbers to be attempted. From the information contained in Table 2.8, it can be demonstrated that the black population displayed diversity according to the particular parish,

a greater density being discernible for example,in Holy Trinity than in St. Marylebone, due to the small number of white baptisms. But overall it appears that black baptismal rates displayed an average of 2.2 per cent of total baptisms in the parishes studied and 2.1 per cent of the total population according to the particular parish census returns for 1801.

Such a pattern suggests that in the four parishes sampled the percentage of the population which was black might not have been very high except in the above-mentioned case of Holy Trinity, Minories, which was possibly 18 per cent black, and might have been in the range of one to three per cent in the remaining three parishes. For the four parishes taken together black-white ratio would suggest (even if no allowance is made for the unusually low baptismal rate for blacks) a local

Table 2.7 -65-

Annual Summary of Black Baptisms 1780-1811

Year	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	Total
1780						2					2
81						2					2
82						3					3
83	2	3	3		1	5					14
84	7		7	2		1		1			12
85	1		2			1		1			5
86	5					2	7				14
87			1			5					6
88		1	1			2					4
89						3					3
1790	1					5					6
91						5					5
92		1				2					3
93		1							1		2
94		1				3					4
95							2				2
96	1	1	1			5	1				9
97					4	6					10
98						1	1				2
99					4	1					5
1800							6				6
01			2	2		1	2	2			9
02			2				3	1			6
03						2	3				5
04						1	1				2
05			1			1		1			3
06						1	3				4
07									1		1
08							5				5
09							1				1
1810						1	2	2			4
Total	17	8	14	4	1	57	41	15	1	1	159

(For Key To Parishes See Over)

Table 2.7 (cont'd.)

Source

Key To Parishes

a)   St. Pauls, Depford

b)   St. Nicholas, Deptford

c)   St. Katherines by the Tower

d)   Holy Trinity, Minories

e)   St. Stephen, Wallbrook

f)   St. Marylebone

g)   St. George in the East

h)   St. Annes, Limehouse

i)   All Saints poplar

j)   St. John at Hackney

TABLE 2.8

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF BLACK PEOPLE IN LONDON PARISHES IN 1801

PARISH	NUMBERS OF BLACK BAPTISMS	NUMBERS OF WHITE BAPTISMS	PERCENTAGE OF BLACK BAPTISMS	TOTAL POPULATION IN PARISH IN 1801	ESTIMATED SIZE OF BLACK POPULATION
St.Katherine's by the Tower	2	56	3.6%	2,652	95
Holy Trinity, Minories	2	11	18.2%	644	117
St. Marylebone	1	105	1.0%	21,170	212
St. Anne's Limehouse	2	54	3.7%	4,687	173
TOTAL	9	226		29,144	597

SOURCE British Parliamentary Papers Census Returns, Population I.Vol.5, p.13 (1831); Vol.4 768 (1801-2) p.429 in I.U.P. (1968). Parish Registers for St. Katherine's and Holy Trinity, held at Guildhall, St.Anne's and Marylebone at GLRO.

population in these parishes of at least some 600 blacks in 1801. If the black population was baptised at a rate of between 2.1 and 2.2 per cent, and this figure was applied to the census for the whole of the metropolis (see Table 2.3), this would result in a black population of roughly 18,000 in 1801. Such a figure would, however, be of little use, firstly because blacks were not evenly distributed over London parishes, and secondly because parish records very probably undercount the black presence. It appears that parish registers form no reliable basis for a London-wide estimate, they do however, as we have noted, suggest significant local concentrations of blacks in our period.

To refocus on this problem of the black numbers conundrum and achieve a step towards quantification, it is now proposed to draw together the various strands of data that have informed this study and reach some overall conclusions. Through contemporary events, such as the Sierra Leone expedition, the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, and the claims of black American loyalists, it has been possible to establish a minimum black presence of at least some 5,000 in the later decades of the eighteenth century.

Whole segments of the black population have however, remained numerically marginalised as no direct evidence exists, for example, on slave numbers. Only a handful of slaves, such as Nolleken's female servant, Bronze, are traceable through wills of their owners in which they have received manumission and / or legacies. Thus, slaves remain an unknown element in the black demographic equation. In combination then, the evidence presented suggests that the black population of London was at least 5,000 during our period (and might have been nearly twice that level). Table 2.9 displays the significance of black temporal

Table 2.9
Direct Evidence On Blacks Appearing In Particular Record Groups

Year	Parish Registers	Criminal Records	Newspapers	Sierra Leone	Lascars	Totals
780	2					2
81	2					2
82	3					3
83	14		1			15
84	12					12
85	5	4	2			11
86	14	9		(b)1144		1167
87	6	(a)12				18
88	4	6				10
89	3	2				5
90	6					6
91	5	3				8
92	3	5				8
93	2	10				12
94	4	2				6
95	2	4				6
96	9	4				13
97	10	2				12
98	2	3				5
99	5	2				7
1800	6	3				9
01	9	4				13
02	6	16				22
03	5				224	229
04	2				471	473
05	3	1			603	607
06	4				538	542
07	1	2			1278	1281
08	5	8		(c)	1110	1123
09	1	2			965	968
10	4				1403	1407
11					929	929
12		1			1193	1194
13		1			1336	1337
14		1		(d)	2500	2501
15		12		(e)	1100	1112
16		5				5
17		1				
18		2	1			3
19		1	1			2
20						
21					110	110
22		1		(f)	138	139
23		1			266	267
24		1				1
25		1				1
26		1				1
27		5				5
28			3			3
29						
30						
Totals	159	138	8	1,144	14,164	15,613

(For Key See Over)

TABLE 2.9 (continued)

Key to Sources

a) includes 6 identified from Cobley's 1st Convict Fleet

b) M.B.Norton's estimate

c) Table 2.1

d) D.M.George's estimate

e) 1814-15 Committee on Lascars

f) See Table 6.1

distribution, whilst on a national level blacks were spatially distributed throughout the country as a whole and, therefore, this national figure would also merit an upward revision of black numbers to around possibly 10,000.

This black population underwent constant change in both its size and composition during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Historians argue that black numbers declined in the nineteenth century, but it may be possible that following the termination of slavery in the British colonies, contemporary attention proved negligible, and therefore, blacks became invisible to the ethnocentric eye. The onset of industrialisation and urbanisation resulted in the increasing isolation of blacks, therefore there was less contact between the wealthy, literate Englishman and blacks. Thus fewer commentaries on blacks appeared and their alleged decline in numbers may possibly have been in an abstract rather than physical sense. It is now proposed to shift attention from contemporary evidence of black numbers that fluctuated according to particular bias, and concentrate on the myths surrounding blacks in Britain and the images that they generated.

C H A P T E R   T H R E E

M Y T H S   A N D   S T E R E O T Y P E S :   A   S T U D Y

I N   C H A N G I N G   B L A C K   I M A G E S

Images of black people were subjected to change over time, and towards the closing decades of the eighteenth century in particular, a degree of ambivalence becomes discernible. This, perhaps, can be attributed partially to the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade and to the defensive reaction which that campaign provoked. Those who attacked slavery tended to produce an overtly patronising image of the black man more readily identifiable as the "Noble Savage"; those who defended the institution vociferously, most notably the Parliamentary West Indian lobby and the Liverpool slave traders, portrayed an even more prejudicial black steroetype. Thus, the late eighteenth century denotes a period of flux in ideas, of complexities, and counter-currents during which time it became possible for contradictory images of black people to be sustained simultaneously. Despite these apparent contradictions in the white "host" community, similarities are apparent as both the apologists and opponents of slavery produced damaging, sentimental images of black people in Britain.

It is, therefore, proposed firstly, to trace the temporal changes that occurred in images of blacks through the evidence of travel accounts and the important issue surrounding the legality of slave-holding in Britain. Secondly, since the defence of the slave trade has attracted far less historical attention than the attack upon it, it is intended to focus specifically on Liverpool's defence of the slave trade during the years 1788 and 1789, and to examine the various arguments

that formed the basis of that defence. Thirdly, contemporary artistic and literary images will be explored in search of black stereotypes; fourthly, both primary and secondary sources will be investigated for further evidence of racial prejudice in our period. Finally, in this chapter comparisons will be made between the experiences of the Negro and Indian in order to assess if the white "host" community displayed selective prejudice.

It should be noted here that this study employs a loose definition of racism and does not enter into the debate about "scientific" and other definitions of racism. It is sometimes argued by academics that "scientific racism" does not appear before the mid-nineteenth century. However, some of the eighteenth century writers who are referred to in this study (like Edward Long) fit into a definition of scientific racism. Throughout this thesis, race is broadly defined as a classification or category of a group. Thus racial prejudice is used to refer to negative attitudes in relation to that group or category. Racial discrimination is employed to refer to the expression of racial prejudice in practical actions, and racism is therefore, used loosely to cover both attitudes and practices.

I

Myths surrounding the "dark continent" remained pervasive throughout England in the later eighteenth century, their persistence, despite geographical explorations, such as those undertaken by Mungo Park, formed the foundation of popular opinion. However, some of these myths have endured, unchallenged, into the twentieth century. Shyllon

notes their longevity thus,

> for too long British historians (who should know better)
> have used too much imagination and too little sympathy
> when writing about Africa, Africans and people of African
> ancestry. [1]

Such preconceptions about alien races were discernible in white society, but in differing degrees, depending upon the shade of colour of a stranger's skin. The darkest of stranger's, therefore, tended to encounter greater aversion and distrust as

> sudden or limited contact between different nations or
> ethnic groups leads to all kinds of popular beliefs
> springing from ignorance, fear and the need to explain
> physical and cultural differences. [2]

The overall object of this section will be to examine how these various images of black people arising from the emotions of fear, ignorance, and an over-riding awareness of physical differences, were to be reinforced by the legality of slavery in England. Colonial influences were to dominate the whole issue of slavery in the metropolis, and this rudimentary image of blacks was founded upon their legal and economic status in this period.

Undoubtedly, earlier black images tended to be dominated by ethnic curiosity through direct contact in the mid-sixteenth century. Physically, the powerful impact of the Negro complexion is discernible in contemporary references which abound with descriptions such as "moor", "blackamoor" and "Ethiope". The Elizabethan legislation of 1596 referred to "divers blackamoores".[3] Thus, the African presence presented a new phenomenon during the Elizabethan era, arousing both

curiosity and speculation. Blackness began to play a decisive role in the formulation of ethnocentric attitudes as earlier myths were apparently reinforced and endorsed.

Xenophobic accounts had already provided the classical convincing web of fabrication which was later to nurture racist ideology. Thus, for a long period the African was, according to Walvin, to remain in "a cocoon of rumour and speculation". [4] Late eighteenth century geographical explorations of the continent, such as the afore-mentioned Mungo Park's journey in search of the source of the Niger, failed to dissipate the seminal image of the African as a barbarous and lascivious savage. Explorers like Park, merely served to reinforce the existing popular myths by the presentation of eye-witness confirmation, and this vacuum of ignorance continued to be filled by fantasy. Thus, long before the Negro was to become a New World slave he occupied a dubious position on the fringes of English knowledge.

Fear and ignorance culminated in the necessity for explanations of physical and cultural differences between the two races. The concept of blackness was assailed with meaning as black became synonomous with evil and sin. White and black represented the polar extremes of purity and filthiness, chastity and carnality; ultimately even biblical justification was to be sought. Negroid features became assimilated to animal primates, as blatant racists, the most polemic being Edward Long, expressed their abhorrence of the physical appearance of the African.

However, perhaps the most potent of all the images of blacks, evoked during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has been overtly influenced by the institution of slavery. During this period ethnocentric generalisations were to be inextricably interwoven with

notions of the cultural, mental, and spiritual inferiority of the African, serving to alleviate the English conscience about enslavement. Therefore, it is possible to support Fryer's argument that "English racism was born of greed".[5] As a result the African tended to be deemed a sub-human species in order to legitimate kidnapping, selling and branding. The black slave was purported to be the property of his master, and as the expansion of the institution became apparent, it would have proved difficult not to equate blackness with slavery. To concede humanity to the African would have destroyed his economic role; hence, certain African myths were given credence by English merchant capitalists trafficking in black slaves.

The rapid development of chattel slavery from the late sixteenth century onwards posed a problem for white British society as the legality of the institution was progressively called into question. This black de-humanisation process had been characteristic of plantation slavery and was later entrenched in metropolitan society, attaining validity in the legal process with the Butts versus Penny Judgement of 1677, which ruled that Negroes as infidels could be purchased and sold. Gelly versus Cleeve reinforced the above judgement in pronouncing blacks to be a sub-human species.

Thus commenced the conflict between the powerful defence of property rights on the one hand, and on the other, that of human rights. The crucial issue revolved around the Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 that prevented arbitrary arrest and improper extradition (Granville Sharp referred to Clause 12 of this Act in order to obtain the release of Somerset). The development of the legal see-saw that ensued is discernible from 1706 onwards, in which the British law courts were to

witness debates concerned specifically with the status of blacks in Britain. Legally, during the eighteenth century black people remained in a precarious position. The above-mentioned ambiguity is reflected within the judicial process itself as Lord Justice Holt's decision that " no man can have property right in another" was to be later contradicted by the York-Talbot judgement. The latter stipulated that

> a slave coming from the West Indies to Britain or
>
> Ireland, with or without his master, does not become
>
> free, and that his master's property, or right in him,
>
> is not thereby determined, or varied, that baptism doth
>
> not bestow freedom on him.

Later, Hardwick declared the Negro to be "as much property as any other thing". This sub-human image was perpetuated, resulting in Shyllon's comment that blacks being "the merest of chattel,[were] obliged to wear collars like dogs, freely and shamelessly bought and sold". (6) As late as 1785 black people continued to be regarded and indeed, treated as property, this being confirmed by the case of Jones versus Schnell which ruled that ship owners be compensated for the loss of Negroes killed, or who died as a result of wounds inflicted during a mutiny of the crew at sea. The same ruling also deemed that there was to be no compensation forthcoming for those Negroes who had leapt overboard. Incidents of blacks being forced aboard outward-bound ships are well-documented in the historiography, Shyllon particularly cites the case of Grace Jones with regard to the illegality of her ingress and egress from the British Isles as late as 1823. (7)

From the 1760s onwards, the laws relating to slaves in Britain were to be systematically challenged by Granville Sharp, the celebrated

abolitionist, culminating in the Mansfield Judgement of 1772. Regarding popular anti-slavery, however, Drescher argues that "the Somerset Case was a skirmish, not a battle".[8] Both sets of lawyers tended to emphasise the distinction between the formal sanctions of colonial slavery and the lack of statutory support in the metropolitan country. Therefore, if historical revisionists underplay the significance of Mansfield's decision, they accurately portray the continuity of slave owner's behaviour well into the nineteenth century. Furthermore Drescher posits that the Somerset Case was " the harbinger, not the origins of British abolition". [9]

Under Sharp's influence, assisted by John Wesley, Thomas Clarkson, and William Wilberforce, the campaign for the abolition of slavery gained momentum. In seeking to endow black people with human status abolitionists forwarded an image of the "Noble Savage", which presented the black as a simple child of nature. The most renowned visual interpretation of this romanticism is embodied in Wedgwood's plaque of a kneeling Negro, bearing the inscription "Am I Not a Man and A Brother". However, historians have focused attention on the attack on slavery, resulting in a neglect of the defence of the slave trade. Therefore, it is now intended to redress this imbalance in the literature, by an examination of the response to the abolitionist campaign which evoked contemporary, contradictory black images.

II

The defence of the slave trade remained in the capable hands of the West India lobby in London and those Liverpool merchants who traded in

this human cargo. In order to "justify" their actions slavery's defenders portrayed the Negro as stupid, indolent, and promiscuous. Ultimately, Edward Long contributed a new thrust to existing beliefs by maintaining that a close relationship existed between Africans and the animal kingdom, most notably, the orang-utan. His racist outpourings embodied in the History of Jamaica (London, 1774), include comments such as "all the people on the globe have some good as well as ill qualities except the Africans", and blacks "degenerated into a brutish, ignorant, idle, crafty, treacherous, bloody, thievish, mistrustful and superstitious people".(10) With reference to their sexual mores, Long infers that Africans were "libidinous and shameless as monkeys and baboons", having "no moral sensations; no taste but for women".(11)

Francis Williams, a Jamaican-born Negro, patronised and educated by the Duke of Montague, proved problematical to this prevalent image of black stupidity. Long counteracted this dilemma by the invention and emphasis of flaws in Williams' personality, particularly in regard to his perceived haughtiness and contemptuous attitude towards his fellow blacks. Long, Estwick and Thicknesse proved all to be guilty of antipathy towards black people in Britain in their attempts to vindicate the legality of slavery in a metropolitan society. This stereotypical image of blacks prompted by the defenders of slavery ran contrary to the abolitionist stereotype. However, historians have addressed little attention to the propaganda that emanated from those who championed slavery. The basis of that defence will now be considered with reference, in particular, to the images that were elicited.

As the slave trade became subjected to attack in the late eighteenth century, the identification of themes are possible through

the medium of the contemporary press. Newspapers studied include Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser, Gore's General Directory, and the Liverpool Chronicle, which present detailed, but profoundly misleading images of black people. Several proved innovative, whilst others gave credence to the more established images reflecting an underlying ignorance. An intensification in the abolitionist attack resulted in a defence based on both racist and mercantilst issues. David Noel notes the tendency for pro-slavery arguments to become intensly racist when attacked and when defenders seek a self-justifying ideology.[12] This issue is amplified upon in the following chapter, but for our present purposes it should be noted that Liverpool merchants became heavily committed to slavery's defence, to such an extent that their delegates were to be maintained by them at Westminster.

Liverpool initially, remained unaware of the mounting abolitionist pressure that posed a threat to its commerce, until the alarm was sounded from London by a leading Liverpool merchant. Following an interview with Pitt, John Tarleton wrote

> that so far from the African trade being founded in
>
> blood, and a series of fraud, violence and oppression
>
> on the coast of Africa, that we should be able to prove
>
> the reverse of our opponent's position. [13]

Tarleton remained in situ to lead the pro-slavery delegation whose prime objective was to demonstrate that enslavement, inter-tribal and internecine warfare were endemic in Africa, so that in the enslavement of blacks traders displayed humanity towards this "sub-human" species.

Tarleton's letter reveals that the defence of the slave trade was to be predominantly economic, although the trade, despite Williams's

revisionism, was to a great extent couched in humanitarian language, and demanded both economic and moral justification. Mercantilist fears were expressed in terms of loss of investment and fears of unemployment for both shipping and mariners. The extent to which trade in general, and the slave trade in particular, was an exogeneous force in generating industrial capitalism in this classical industrial revolution period, is yet to be explored in the following chapter. Therefore, perhaps the slave trading interest did not display over-reaction when "Impartial" commented,

> the Maritime power and strength of this country depends
>
> on two circumstances, the excellence of its ships and
>
> the expertise of its seamen....In truth, trade or
>
> manufacture carried on by this country will be more or
>
> less injured by an abolition of the slave trade. (14)

Fears concerning international competition were expressed, particularly in relation to France, as Liverpool merchants became anxious that the French would procure their portion of the trade. Chauvinistic motives mingled with apprehension about foreign competition and Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser reported thus,

> this trade so highly beneficial... and important to the
>
> state...has lately been condemned in principle and
>
> practice...at a time when a neighbouring nation, our
>
> rival in commerce...is lavishing unprecedented bounties
>
> to extend its African trade. (15)

There is a deliberately overt economic defence of the trade via both horizontal and vertical linkages, as not only would abolition surrender the trade in Africans to the French, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese, but

result in the trade of foreign imports to the West Indies. Britain would then be forced into a position whereby commodities and raw materials such as wood,cotton, sugar and cocoa, would have to be purchased from these foreign powers, thus upsetting the equilibrium of existing trade based on primary produce in return for manufactured goods. "A Friend to Old England" wrote in Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser, February 1788, concerning the possible dependibility of Britain on other nations for certain aspects of commerce,

> If England refuses to supply her islands with slaves then
> the planters must apply for them to other powers such as
> France and Co, who will be glad to furnish them. This
> intercourse will cause your planters to purchase the
> manufactures of France for the supplies of their estates
> ...the stores will be filled with French goods.

Britain, it was said had more to lose than just commerce; she might possibly lose the West Indies as well. Encouragement to foreigners was viewed as economic suicide. "Take Time" stated in 1793 that,

> the islands will put themselves under the power and
> government of that nation which will supply them with
> with slaves, and that Power will compel them to send all
> their produce home to Europe in French vessels...which
> will cause a great increase of French and Co,trade and
> shipping and be a great nursery to their seamen, in
> proportion as England's trade, shipping and seamen will
> decrease by losing the islands.[16]

The above two extracts reveal the extent to which Liverpool slave traders felt threatened by the French; whether that threat was imagined

or real is a debatable issue.

Ironically though, underlying this defence from a mercantilist standpoint, was the argument that the slave trade did not involve the export of British bullion but manufactured goods. There was also apparently a determination by the Liverpool merchants to break the East India Company's monopoly of trade in the East. Therefore, not only did Liverpool traders believe that free trade with the East would benefit them, but the trade from London to the East was actually maintained by these hugh exports of bullion.[17] William Roscoe was elected to Parliament in 1806, not primarily as an abolitionist, but in order to secure free trade with the East, and was subsequently chastised for his support of the Abolition Bill in 1807.[18] As J.R.Harris suggested, "Liverpool's excessive reliance on the African trade was probably because the oceans in the Far East were barred to her". [19] Liverpool then presented a powerful economic defence of the trade, reinforced later by racist ideology.

A common theme of justification, and criticism of abolitionist literature is the lack of first-hand knowledge. A comment in Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser on 11 January 1788 reported that, "opinions [of humanitarians] are founded on erroneous principles, and they do not possess a competent knowledge of the subject, to supply the smallest remedy". Specifically the anti-slave trade faction were supposedly ignorant of the role played by slavery in the system of natural justice in Africa. Moreover, African laws sanctioned by the custom of tradition were said to subject the crimes of theft, murder, adultery and witchcraft, to the punishment of slavery. The above-mentioned dispensation of justice was a theme frequently referred to by

slavery's defenders, but it would be impossible to estimate the numbers of Africans whose sentences were commuted once they had acquired an economic value. The contemporary press reported

> Africa is inhabited by small independent tribes who are
>
> frequently at war with one another. The greater part of
>
> the Negroes sold for slaves to the West Indies are
>
> prisoners taken in their war, who would otherwise be put
>
> to death or devoured by barbarous conquerors. [20]

This image of the African as primitive and savage made it possible both to rationalise slavery and institutionalise racism; widespread warfare and cultural decay was presumed to be indicative of inherent African inferiority. Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser provided numerous examples of these racist themes.[21] Another argument forwarded related to the European unsuitability to perform plantation tasks on the one hand, and the African suitability on the other. This particular approach produced an outpouring in the literature, the most concise of which appears to be that of "Impartial" who stated that,

> All this attention paid to abolition and blacks is
>
> ridiculous. Although Negroes do not work as hard as the
>
> labouring whites, they live in a climate more suited to
>
> their anatomy. For one thing the soft spongy hair of the
>
> Negro does not transmit heat so readily as the hard close
>
> hair of the Europeans, so the latter suffer from
>
> afflictions of the head.[22]

Many other letters appeared in a similar vein, emphasis being laid on the colour of the skin or the mental adaptability of slaves to the more menial tasks. Defenders of slavery not only stressed the economic

viability of Negro labour, but also the perceived benefits that accrued to the slave in his removal from Africa to the West Indies. The author of the "Emancipation of the Negro" argued that

> the cruelties of their masters and hardships and
> sufferings have been magnified beyond reason by the
> wild quixation of imagination which reaches round the
> globe. (23)

Contemporaries were, therefore, of the opinion that the condition of the Negro improved through enslavement. "Agricola" stated that "while they are the property of the master, he is bound to keep them clothed and clean and give them a sufficiency of wholesome food".(24)

Economic rationale and the African's ultimate welfare were only a few of the themes adopted by those who defended the institution of slavery. Religious justification proved to be an interesting development in the thought process of Liverpool's traders which resulted in the appearance of the following:

> the origin of slavery may be of doubt, but both sacred
> and profane history concur in allowing it to have been
> practised, even from the earliest account of time. (25)

This historical precedent merged with religion and one such vindication appears thus,

> the practise of slavery is established by divine, as well
> as human laws, and by the sanction of both the Old
> Testament and the New. Moses prescribed regulations for
> bonds men and women. (26)

This biblical theme was also pervasive in slavery's defence. Perhaps indicative of the urgency Liverpool merchant' felt was the commissioning

by the Liverpool Corporation of a Spanish Jesuit, Hormasa, to write on the licitness of the slave trade. More widely known as the Reverend Raymond Harris, Hormasa attempted a supposedly unbiased evaluation of the biblical concept of slavery.[27] He used the virtuous examples of Abraham, Joseph, Jacob and Abram, to stress the transcendental justification of trade in human flesh.[28] Some of the numerous examples of endorsed enslavement in the bible include those of Abraham who dealt in slaves and Abram's wife, Sara who gave him her maid to breed with, but of those examples cited, none can be seen as directly responsive to profit motivation.[29] The final exculpation though reinforces the superficiality of Harris's argument that, "the moment a person becomes the lawful master of a slave, he becomes responsible to God for the use of that authority".[30] The article understandably provoked criticism, most notably from Dr. James Currie, and the debate was maintained with Harris's assertion that his critics were now "in actual enjoyment of places and emolument, the principal source and foundation of which is that very Traffic, against which they so vehemently declaim".[31]

It is difficult to assess the extent to which these beliefs were given credence outside Liverpool, as despite this defence the slave trade was ultimately abolished in 1807. Historians tend to focus on abolition, referring specifically to the works of Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson, whose visit to the port will be discussed in greater detail in the chapter on black survival. According to Roger Anstey, this humanitarian sympathy performed a vital role in the abolition of slavery.[32] Conversely, Eric Williams posits economic reasons for the termination of slavery, emphasising that changes in the international trading pattern were becoming progressively incompatible with slavery.

(33) However, economic arguments lie beyond the scope of this thesis (as they fail to produce the stereotypical black image that forms the topic of this chapter), unlike the campaign for abolition which elicited contradictory images of the Negro to those forwarded by the apologists.

The late eighteenth century then, produced conflicting black images, as the Negro appeared to be simultaneously de-humanised and re-humanised by those directly involved in the debate. The idealised creation of the "Noble Savage" presented the black as an "innocent child of nature", malleable to white Christian influence. It could be argued that the abolitionists and romantics presented an image equally as damaging as Stanley Elkins's "Sambo" stereotype prevalent in the North American slave system. Images portraying docility and passivity deprived black people of any form of personality, whilst the more blatant racists endowed the Negro with the characteristics of craftiness, thievishness and lasciviousness. Thus, the attack upon and the defence of the slave trade provoked black images during our period, but, as the next section will show, influential images were also produced by contemporary artists and writers.

III

Contemporary books, advertisements, newspapers, travel accounts and the campaign for abolition all combined to produce a cumulative image of blacks that belonged more clearly to myth than reality. Artistic and literary images from the seventeenth century onwards will be examined in isolation in this section.

Artistic images of black people in Britain mostly consisted of two

forms, portraits and cartoons. Of the former portraits of landed families and the aristocracy offer glimpses of black servants tucked away in a corner of a family sitting. Even individual paintings of blacks proved not uncommon as those of Sancho, Equiano and Francis Barber bear witness. Paintings compared black and white on a visual level, highlighting the "inferiority" of the black. Dabydeen states that "the black existed merely to reflect upon the superiority of the white". (34)

Whilst these paintings by white artists revealed the isolation and humiliation of the Negro, the English print portrayed his active participation in the sub-culture of the lower classes. Negroes proved to be a favourite topic of graphic cartoonists; alleged abilities and inabilities being frequently reduced to a grotesque shape. Caricaturists perpetuated the mythologising of the black and exaggerated those stereotypical images already in existence in the eighteenth century. "Black sexuality", for example, was prevalent in William Humphrey's print of "High Life Below Stairs", a sketch in which the white maid responds warmly to the affections of the black butler. Blacks were similarily depicted sharing in the lower class experiences characterised by vulgarity and violence, as exemplified by prints of both black and white prostitutes. Black assimilation into white society has been remarked upon by Dabydeen thus,

> it is not surprising that black people figure in hundreds
> of seventeenth and eighteenth century English paintings
> and prints. Judging from their widespread presence in
> English art, it can be said that they had become very
> much a part of English society. (35)

Prints of black people abounded, ranging according to taste from the "Hottentot Venus" to the black beggar Billy Waters. Even Dickens was to comment upon the frequency with which caricaturists drew their black subjects remarking "in how many illustrations of social life do not these [Negro] worthies appear ?"(36) Hogarth incorporated black people in more than two dozen of his works in order to evoke satire. Again, Dabydeen comments on this subject,

> it can be said whenever he is present, the black in
>
> Hogarth is seldom a mere background figure as he is in
>
> so many pieces of eighteenth century English art. (37)

In some of his pictures, for example, Beggar's Opera and Pharoah's Daughter, the black becomes the focal point of the work; thus Hogarth appears to reverse the conventional role of black and white. In his juxtapositioning of black and white, Hogarth may be expressing sympathy for the black lower classes or utilising them in order to make criticisms of white society. This is typical of the ambivalence displayed towards black people during the period under discussion. Following Hogarth however, caricaturists of blacks tended towards a more overt form of racism, especially as the abolitionist campaign gained momentum.

Not only were blacks depicted in paintings and cartoons of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth centuries, but also in the literary sources. Advertisements and literature of the period acknowledged the presence of blacks, reinforcing stereotypical images. One example of black participation in advertisements for consumer goods appeared in the Morning Chronicle of 5 November 1794. The black servant, Scipio, is involved in a dialogue with a merchant and the overall

intention is to promote Packwood's new Razor Strop. Scipio constantly
refers to the good news that he has for the "Massa" in the ensuing
dialogue,

> M. What razor are you shaving me with, Scipio, that makes
>
> such a difference? or is it the advantage of hot
>
> water?
>
> S. I have no hot water, Massa; dis is an old razor you
>
> trow away...I have stropp'd it on de Butler's new
>
> Razor Strop, he bought dis morning....
>
> M. I shall reward you, Scipio, for your attention and
>
> fidelity.
>
> S. A,Massa, if I am continued in your service, dat will
>
> be ample reward for Scipio bring good news to you of
>
> of Packwood's new invention dat will move tings with a
>
> touch.[38]

This docile, servile image of the black servant is perpetuated via the
medium of advertisement, whilst a more romantic image is portrayed in
some of the poetry of the era.

Africa and her indigenous population were to become the objects of
wild, romantic imagination discernible in the contemporary poetry of
Blake, Wordsworth and Cowper. Through the poetic medium, the Negro is
depicted as an object for socialization and education, and this idyllic
image pervaded well into the nineteenth century. Dabydeen, however is
sceptical of such poets, arguing that they

> were merely being perfunctory in their anti-slavery
>
> productions - their triteness and laboured sentiments of
>
> their expression betray an absence of deep personal

involvement. (39)

Apart from advertisements and poetry there appeared an abundance of philanthropic tracts relating to black people. Few, however, were to have the impact of Thomas Clarkson's On the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species published in 1786, which focused public attention on the issue of slavery. Clarkson forwarded an image of the African within the context of African society, unaffected by the distortion of enslavement in the 'peculiar institution' of the New World. Hence a contradictory image was presented to that of the caricaturists who deemed the Negro to be a sub-human link in the chain of being positioned between whites and the animal kingdom.

The creation of black stereotypes through the various mediums of art, poetry and literature has been addressed, and now attention is to be diverted to the musical black image of the period. "All black" hops were not an uncommon occurence in the eighteenth century and neither, it appears, were mixed-race hops. A contemporary, Pierce Egan noted one occasion when a group of blacks, Lascars, coal-heavers and dustmen "all jigged together". (40) Blacks were to be found across the entire musical spectrum, ranging from street buskers, for example, Billy Waters, black musicians and bandsmen in the army, through to classical performers, of which George Bridgewater is perhaps the most famous. The first two categories of buskers and army musicians will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter Four together with East Indian tom-tom players and Street Negro Serenaders, who all served to reinforce the black musical image.

Henry Mayhew, later in the century referred to the numerous varieties of buskers to be encountered in the metropolis. But after the

1840s, face blackening for pecuniary gain became common, as whites began their impersonations of Moors and other people of dark skin. Therefore, in the history of British street entertainment, blacks were to be found prior to the advent of full blown "Negro Minstrelry" or the "Ethiopian Serenading" typical of the 1840s. The Negro melodist and black regimental drummer were tolerated by the public, unlike other foreigners of Germanic or Italian origin. It could be argued that the Negro Serenaders became as much an occupational stereotype as the domestic servant (whether free or enslaved). Rehin stresses that

> racial prejudice does not have to be postulated as a
> cause or effect of the popularity of black faced buskers,
> nor was street minstrelry in Britain so simply or
> directly a reinforcement of derogatory attitudes and
> images. (41)

Nevertheless, some form of racial prejudice may have been encountered by these black musicians, and it is intended within the following section to examine the various forms that racism displayed during the period under discussion.

IV

It has previously been suggested that racist theories drew inspiration from unreliable travel accounts and from West Indian plantocratic literature infused with paranoia, the most effective polemicist, as we have previously noted, being Edward Long. However, this conceptualisation of racial attitudes appears for too simplistic, and as Lorimer cautions

> English opinion about the nature and proper status of the
> African was divided, no simple generalised description
> can encompass the variety of racial attitudes prevalent
> at that time....English attitudes towards blacks...did
> not display a rigid continuity. [42]

There appears to be a division amongst historians on this issue of prejudice towards black people in Britain. For instance, Little posits that

> the main impression gained is that there was little or no
> colour prejudice in England, at least until the beginning
> and perhaps well on into the nineteenth century.[43]

Shyllon forwards an alternative argument by asserting that racism was apparent in Britain from the beginning of black settlement, a sentiment echoed by Visram in that "the alien population of Britain was tolerated but racial prejudice abounded".[44] Racism may have crystallised in eighteenth century Britain as a plantocratic ideology, but Lorimer adds perspective to the issue thus;

> to prove that racism against blacks existed in
> eighteenth century England....one would require evidence
> that blacks were treated as a group, and treated in a
> different fashion from whites....a closer examination of
> the situation of blacks reveals that the white host
> community did not treat them as a uniform group, and that
> the experience of individual blacks was often comparable
> to that of individual whites.[45]

Divergent attitudes towards blacks can be perceived as no definite patterns of behaviour were established. Paul Cuffee, for instance, a

black American sea captain was shown respect by slave traders on his visit to Liverpool in 1811. It became apparent that

> some racially prejudiced individuals undoubtedly existed,
> but on the whole, no clear pattern of institutionalised
> or socially sanctioned discrimination was in evidence.
> (46)

Outside of the plantocratic and Liverpool slave trading circles it is difficult to discern the extent of racist beliefs. A general impression gained is one of mixed antipathy and sympathy in an era that witnessed a decline in the paternalistic ethos as society was becoming more individualistic. Sancho commented that he was much gazed upon but not much abused; frequent insults may have been a common black experience. Privately, many Englishmen may have held a xenophobic aversion to those of a dark complexion, assuming themselves superior to other races. As Lorimer notes "not even the most ardent abolitionists were free from these feelings of aversion", and cites the visit to London of Henri Christophe's widow who encountered prejudice by some members of the Clapham Sect, most notably, Wilberforce. (47)

The contemporary press also displayed some racist overtones, even antipathy, in certain instances such as the reports concerning William Cuffay and John Hogan. Cuffay, a black Chartist, proved an easy target for the press being an outsider, black, and physically deformed. Several white men were far more dangerous than Cuffay but were never brought to trial and were ignored by reporters. Gossman argues that the press was "persistent in reminding its readers that Cuffay was a Negro" and although an important figure in London's Chartist movement "he was not a leader, nor a concocter of conspiracies that the middle class press made

him over to be ".[48] Similarily, John Hogan, found guilty of the murder of Ann Hunt for two bundles of clothing was given extensive press coverage. Shyllon states that

> let murder be black or the violator of womanhood have a
>
> drop of Negro blood and the righteousness of the
>
> indignation sweeps the world. [49]

The above comment is further strengthened by DuBois who posits that "it was blackness that was condemned and not the crime". [50]

However,the attitudes displayed by the contemporary press may have proved atypical: attitudes would have depended upon changing social circumstances. Some evidence suggests that the lower classes displayed sympathy towards black runaways, but still antipathy towards William Wells, a black victim of robbery was revealed through the Old Bailey Sessions Papers. He recounted his experience to the courts,

> Ann Davies jumped out at me and asked the girl if she
>
> was not ashamed of herself to be in bed with a man of
>
> colour [the witness was a Creole]....then they said let
>
> us throw the black b___r out of the window. [51]

Evidently not all white women shared the same fascination for black men, despite Long's rantings about black male sexuality.

Ambivalence was also displayed towards black witnesses in courts; criminal records, that form the basis of Chapter Five, identify the frequency with which blacks were questioned as to whether they were Christians. In the secondary sources, Andrew Bogle, a black witness in the Tichborne Claimant case, demonstrated the precarious situation in which black people found themselves. The judge pronounced Bogle to be "a very fine specimen of the Negro race".[52] The prosecution, on the other

hand, questioned his honesty couched in racist terms,

> Did you ever see a better specimen of what I called
>
> feigned simplicity than old Bogle presented?...I cannot
>
> forget that there are some portions of the Negro race
>
> that are not proverbial for truth and certainly old Bogle
>
> is not very likely, to my mind, to dissipate any
>
> unfavourable impression that at present exists against
>
> them. [53]

This overt form of racism appeared on other occasions, as previously mentioned, Norton stresses that black claimants of the American War of Independence were discriminated against by Treasury officials.[54]

A further instance of racial discrimination has been identified by Shyllon who views the Sierra Leone expedition as the deportation of London's black poor,

> when blacks outlive their usefulness they become
>
> expendable commodities even to the Liberal establishment.
>
> The story of the Black Poor told here gives the message
>
> loud and clear that the 'pride of the race' which urges
>
> the wholesale expulsion of black people from Britain
>
> today will fail. [55]

The limited extent of this alleged "deportation" process has also been mentioned earlier in the thesis, but Shyllon is insistent that the black poor were regarded as a nuisance by the government.[56] Braidwood contradicts this notion in suggesting that the government were motivated by humanitarian principles, stemming from abolitionist agitation and out of gratitude to the black loyalists, and furthermore, he notes that, "no solid evidence exists that the Committee for the Relief of the Black

Poor or the government wanted to preserve the purity of the bloodstream". [57] It was the black poor, themselves, who through their own organisation and initiative, initially suggested a scheme for the creation of a settlement overseas.

V

Within the first section of this chapter it has been suggested that the Negro, throughout the eighteenth century, increasingly came to be associated with slavery, arousing, simultaneously, both hostility and antipathy within the white host society. However, in such a racially structured society, natives of the Indian sub-continent and East Indies tended to be placed higher in the hierarchy than those of African, Caribbean or Afro-American descent. The white community proved to be less xenophobic about Indians, whose presence may have posed less of a threat due to the biblical explaination of racial divisions via Noah's sons who spread the white, black and brown races.

Moreover, there did not appear to be an Indian image equivalent to the Negro "Sambo" or "Quashee". Bolt has argued that the

> question of colour was initially important in determining
> British attitudes but never in the same way with regard
> to India as it was to Africa because large sections of
> the Indian population measured up to European standards
> of beauty. [58]

Indians outwardly appeared to imbibe more readily than the Negro the English language, culture and educational system. More importantly the Indian supposedly displayed gratitude, albeit disguised under

obsequiousness, to a greater degree than his Negro counterpart. This served to explain his acceptability by white society and also to accentuate the savagery of the heathen, barbarous black African, as created by slavery's defenders. The "Quashee" stereotypical image was reinforced by black uprisings in the Caribbean in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (note Henri Christophe's overthrow in Haiti and the subsequent visit to England of his wife and daughters).

It appears therefore, that whilst being "inferior," the brown race was not as "inferior" as the black race to white eyes. It must be reiterated that the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor was originally founded to assist Lascars, and a study of these seamen forms the basis of a later chapter. Lorimer, it should be noted, disputes the notion of white distinctions between the Negro and the Indian. He posits that

> to members of respectable classes anyone with a dark skin
> was classed as 'black', his origin could be African,
> Arab, East Indian or Chinese. Brown and black races were
> inferior to the white.[59]

No generalisations on white attitudes towards the black and brown races can be attempted; historians seem to display as much conflict of opinion as the society of the period involved in this debate.

Finally, the precariousness of the black population in Britain in the late eighteenth century cannot be ignored. Stereotypical images remained in a constant state of flux originating from the very earliest contact between the races, into the period of social darwinism and beyond. Such cross-currents gained saliency through the debate over the legality of slavery, its abolition, and via the artistic and literary

medium. The existence of such a vigorous slave trade until 1807 emphasises the very awkward position of blacks in this period. However, black people, whether free or enslaved, had to earn their living and it is now proposed to examine strategies of economic survival.

C H A P T E R   F O U R

S E R V A N T , S A I L O R , S O L D I E R , T A I L O R , B E G G A R M A N : B L A C K S U R V I V A L I N W H I T E S O C I E T Y

Because of the limited availability of information relating to black occupations, historians tend to perceive the black population as comprising of an undifferentiated "Black Poor". Fragmentary comments discernible on rank and file blacks refer overwhelmingly to the occupation of servant. Apart from this fixation with the servant group in both contemporary and secondary evidence, special attention is devoted to a few blacks who achieved upward social mobility and entered the employment market as shop-keeper or Commissary for the Black Poor, and some historians have commented on the maritime, military and other occupations pursued by black people.[1]

The broad aims of this thesis include an attempt to understand how the black population supported itself and survived economically in a white society. Strategies of survival were essential particularly in London's unstable economic environment, where employment prospects for the unskilled were limited, and tended to be casual in nature; and availability was dependent upon seasonal and cyclical variations. Because of the Corporation of London's restrictions of 1731 forbidding the apprenticeship of black men, few entered skilled employment; hence they remained a distinctive element in the sub-culture of London's urban poor.[2] However, not all blacks belonged to the lowest social order of society as a modest number are identifiable within a "black labour aristocracy" that consisted of skilled workers, entertainers and boxers.

In considering patterns of black employment and subsistence, this chapter will first examine the status division between slave and black servant, and will comment on the possibility of a "transitional period" in which, as Lorimer asserts, slaves were motivated to change their status to free domestic servants.[3] Later sections of the chapter involve a discussion of evidence relating to the experience of servants, and an attempt at a broad statistical review of black occupations. Black involvement in the occupations of soldier, sailor, crossing sweeper, and those who professionally begged in order to subsist will also be given attention.

I

Within this first section it is proposed to examine two important issues that have been addressed by Lorimer in "Black Slaves and English Liberty: A Re-examination of Racial Slavery in England".[4] The questions posed then concern the proportion of the black population that was enslaved as opposed to free; and the length of time that slavery actually persisted in Britain (given that Shyllon has exploded the myth that the Mansfield Judgement freed all slaves in 1772).

Lorimer's publication concerning the legal, social and economic status of slaves has aroused recent, academic interest; the crux of his argument rests upon the assumption that black slaves in England found themselves in an intermediate position between West Indian chattel slavery and English domestic servitude. By the mid-eighteenth century slaves were not only supposedly demanding remuneration for services rendered, but were also insisting that improvements in their treatment be made on a par with free domestic white servants. Furthermore, Lorimer

posits that if masters failed to conform to English conventional treatment of servants, then blacks simply "voted with their feet" in a self-emancipation of flight from their owners. He asserts that by running away, black slave-servants contributed to their own emancipation, in a period pre-dating agitation by abolitionists and the termination of the slave trade and slavery itself. This "transitional period", Lorimer dates between 1760 and 1790; but the chronological boundary has undergone revision by Peter Fryer, and extended to include 1740-1790.[5] Drescher's conclusion, in dating the virtual disappearance of slaves in England in the mid-1790s, tends to be in agreement with Fryer.[6]

However Drescher argues that,

> this reflects a historiographical frame of reference
>
> which assumes there were only two major potential
>
> variables in aboliton, the courts and the blacks.[7]

Therefore, it appears that the two major problems remain unresolved; how did this form of self-emancipation abolish slavery in England, and why by the mid-1790s? It should be emphasised that prior to the 1790s, flight from masters had been a ubiquitous occurrence for generations, not only in England but also in America and France,"without producing a corresponding "withering away" of the estate".[8] Furthermore, Drescher offers an alternative explaination for the ending of slavery in that "there had been a haemorrhage of the able-bodied from wageless servitude, dating from well before the 1740s". For this group the Mansfield decision accelerated the process and he states that there may have been "a "take-off" into wage service". [9]

Lorimer then, has presented a problematic thesis for several

reasons, the most important being the lack of direct, supporting evidence. This results in a dependency on unreliable contemporary accounts and on cases concerned with the legal aspect of slavery. Secondly, the status of the slave-servant is difficult to establish from records relating to this period (the following section reveals the problems encountered in distinguishing the free from enslaved in the servant category). Thirdly, as previously noted, slave flight was not a feature peculiar to this period spanning 1740-1790; it was apparent in England from the end of the seventeenth century as documented in the contemporary press. Finally, secondary sources relevant to this "transitional period" incorrectly assume that the Somerset Case freed all black slaves in 1772. One example of this mis-conception is quoted below, as E. Lascelles comments on those emancipated after 1772;

> most of the slaves remained with their former masters
> as paid servants, but some hundreds took themselves off
> and prepared to live as free men. (10)

Thus, direct and indirect evidence, on the status of blacks in England is inconclusive. Lorimer's assertion will now be appraised on the basis of research into contemporary newspapers and parish registers for the period under discussion. This involves the extension of chronological and spatial boundaries, as newspapers from London and Liverpool have been sampled from the late seventeenth century to the period ante-dating abolition.

For the purpose of this study, an analysis of four classifications of advertisements has been undertaken, which denote black slave or free status according to the category in which they appear. For example," Hue and Cry" (or Run Away), and "For Sale" advertisements, imply slave

status; whilst "Black Servants Wanted", and "Blacks Seeking Employment",
infer free blacks, but as later examples demonstrate, this may be an
over-simplification.[11] The newspapers sampled for the early nineteenth
century, Liverpool Mercury (1811-1813) and Billinge's Liverpool
Advertiser (1818-22), failed to identify black people in any of the
above-mentioned classifications. Thus, it may be concluded that slaves
had disappeared from these categories by the early years of the
nineteenth century.

Of the earlier newspapers sampled, thirty-five "Hue and Cry"
advertisements published the elopement of black male slaves, employed as
servants in the period 1665 to 1795 (twelve being the property of sea
captains). Twenty-four "For Sale" advertisements emphasised the skills
of those awaiting sale in the period 1709 to 1792. Both of these types
of advertisements displayed a distinct preference for young, black
males, which reinforces the dominance of this group in the black
population; and also represents a continuous theme throughout this
thesis. Blacks seeking employment and advertisements for black people
fail to appear with the same frequency as the other two categories (see
Appendix II). Only three within the former category and two within the
latter were identified from the newspapers sampled in the overall period
spanning the years 1665 to 1795. The majority of those seeking
employment were of Indian origin; The Daily Advertiser in 1775, for
example, published the following,

> anybody going to the East Indies, having occasion for a
> maid servant may be advantageously supplied with one who
> is lately come from there; she is a slave girl.[12]

This advertisement was obviously inserted in the newspaper by an owner;

hence, the anomalous position some blacks found themselves to be in during this period. The following advertisement in the Liverpool Chronicle proved interesting;

> WANTED. A Negro lad, Native of Ebo from 15 to 17 years
>
> old, who has had the small-pox, an is of a healthy
>
> constitution.[13]

The proposed purchaser remained inflexible in his requirements, as the advertisement was repeated in the subsequent seven editions. Such repetitions in newspapers proved uncommon.

The above examples demonstrate the difficulties that are to be encountered in Lorimer's thesis, as those perceived to be free, did in fact hold slave status; and some black servants might have been emancipated. Further anomalies occur with his periodisation, in that slaves status is recognisable as late as 1797 in Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser, in which the following appeared;

> the slave was bought at Guadeloupe from a famous French
>
> barber, with whom he learned the Trade.
>
> N.B. He understands the care of horses. [14]

In 1792, the Bristol Journal noted the sale of a servant girl "for £80 colonial money".[15] The above are beyond Lorimer's temporal boundary for "transition"; but even within his chronology, slave advertisements are discernible. The same newspaper in 1756 published the results of an auction in which "three young men slaves were sold".[16]

Perhaps status was not an issue during the "transitional period", as contemporary newspapers tended to avoid any direct reference to the term, by the inclusion of the word "Negro" in both "For Sale" and "Run Away" advetisements. A typical example of the above appeared in

Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser, "ran away from Dent, in Yorkshire, on
Monday the 28th August last, [1758] Thomas Anson, a Negro man".[17]. Of
the advertisements studied, there is one exception that specifies slave
status. Appearing as late as 1780, the Liverpool press reported;

> Ran away on the 18th of April last from Prescot, a black
>
> man slave George Germain Foney. Aged 20 years, about 5
>
> feet 7 inches, rather handsome.[18]

This example appears supportive of Lorimer's hypothesis for a
"transitional period" predating the abolitonist movement. On another
level, it is difficult to conceive how one black man taking flight in
Prescot, could have expedited the ending of slavery on a national level.
However, Shyllon does note that "protest among black slaves in Britain
took almost exclusively the individual form of flight".[19]

With reference to the periodisation of this "transition", only six
of the "Hue and Cry" advertisements conformed chronologically to this
period. If extended to 1790 to include Fryer's parameter (1740-1790),
then only a further six examples are discernible. Drescher estimated the
ratios of advertisements for "places wanted" by blacks to runaways in
London's Gazeteer to be 10:7 from January to December 1772. By March to
June of 1775, the ratio was 5:1, and for the first six months of each
year in the years 1787 and 1788, the ratios, he calculated to be 8:0 and
6:0 respectively. [20] However, slave escape does not appear to be a
characteristic peculiar only to the "transitional period", but instead a
case can be made for a continuation of an ongoing process amongst
slaves. This process was apparent beyond Drescher, Fryer, and Lorimer's
time boundaries, as in 1803, J.M.Philippo, a Baptist missionary
befriended an escaped Negro, Robert Smith. Smith could not produce his

"free papers" and was in danger of resale prior to his escape. Thus, ambiguity occurs in Lorimer's argument, and the paucity of clear evidence results in the failure to reach positive conclusions.

This is further demonstrated by research into parish registers of the period. Confusion prevails as black servants, in the absence of information to the contrary, still held slave status after 1790. For example, the parish records of St. George's, Everton, indicate the baptisms of several black servants, but additional information appears to suggest that they were owned by masters as late as 1818. Therefore, slave status is denoted in the following examples; "Antonio Samuel Wylie, born in Mozambique, carried to Brazil as a slave, servant to John Wylie"; "Charles, an African Negro bought at Buenos Ayres, brought to England", and "Samuel Barnes, born a slave in the island of Antigua, Gentleman's servant".[21] This dilemma of slave-servant status poses distinct problems in determining a chronology for the ending of slavery, and, furthermore, any evidence is prone to ambiguity of interpretation. The baptism of Wylie can be indicative of slave status, as he adopted his master's surname (a common feature of slavery), or he may have been emancipated before his arrival in England. Although slave status is therefore implied at some point in time, such as "born a slave", there is no evidence to suggest that this is still the case. The status of black people in Britain was perhaps susceptible to change over time, and as such, the division is not as clear as Lorimer, Fryer and Drescher suggest.

Primary source material proves to be of limited value in either proving or disproving Lorimer's theory; instead it accentuates problems, and identifies complexities in the issue. The legal process further

serves to illustrate the precarious position of blacks in England. Catterall notes in the case of the King versus the Inhabitants of Thames Ditton, which ruled aginst a black woman, Charlotte Howe, that

> Her being black or a slave is no objection, the statute
> requires a hiring; there is none, and therefore, the case
> is not within the statute.[22]

Similarily, the case of Alfred versus The Marquis of Fitzjames, tried on 3 May 1799, involved the plaintiff's wages. Alfred, the son of slaves on the Duchess's estate on Martinique, proved unsuccessful in the court on the grounds that

> there was no contract for any hiring of wages; but a
> witness said that the Marquis had been heard to promise
> to pay him wages....the Plaintiff had no title to
> recover, as there was no original contract of service for
> wages. [23]

The anomaly of this situation may explain why many domestics failed to escape, even in Britain's porous environment. Servitude, even without pecuniary reward, did provide a welfare exchange against the precariousness of employment on the free market. Unless brutally abused, like Somerset, blacks hesitated to escape. This was especially so in view of the fact that the common law failed to recognise black claims for wages (as the previous two examples show), as did the poor law (since settlement could not be established). Free blacks and runaway slaves failed to be cushioned by the safety net of poor relief, and the law consistently ruled that blacks brought to England were not hired servants, and were therefore, not entitled to wages.

Despite his misinterpretation of the Somerset case, Scobie argues

in a similar vein,

> to begin with dispossessed slave owners were still
> fuming over Lord Mansfield's ruling. They were not
> prepared to pay wages to blacks whom they continued
> to regard as their rightful property, and as such
> were not entitled to payment for their labour.[24]

But Lorimer admits that

> the evidence for the conditions of servitude of either
> slave-servants or free black domestics remains scanty,
> and at best generalizations must rely upon the
> impressionistic observations of contemporaries. It would
> appear that virtually all slaves in England worked as
> servants.[25]

This ambiguity in the status of blacks servants poses problems and will
be dealt with in the following section. Lorimer's argument for a
"transition" in slave status, although interesting, is founded upon
contemporary conjecture. As late as the 1820s, black people in England
were subjected to sale. Hannah Kilham, for the purpose of her research
into African linguistics, encountered no difficulty in purchasing two
Gambian sailors from the dockyards of London.[26]

Further difficulties occur with Lorimer's thesis in that blacks in
West Indian servitude would neither have expected, nor received
renumeration. Therefore, on transference to England, there would be no
income expectation, and this was endorsed by the legal process that
demanded evidence of a hiring. Thus, the whole issue of slave-servant
appears to be contentious, being more complex than Lorimer, Fryer, and
Drescher concede. Unfortunately, there is no direct black testimony that

would enable a reconstruction of the lives of slave-servants in the period (and which would allow separation between the slave and free servant categories and which would reveal ratios of the two components). Lorimer argues that little is known of how blacks perceived the question of wages.[27] Furthermore, without this relevant documentation, Walvin states that it becomes impossible to "analyse the blurred line which separated the black slave from the black servant".[28]

However, the black servant, whatever his status, appeared to survive in white society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in England. This occupational group is to be the focus of attention in the following section.

II

Servants, whether black or white, formed the largest occupational grouping in the period under discussion; and the historical interest generated in this sub-section of black servants forms the basis of the ensuing discussion. As demonstrated earlier in the chapter, distinction between the enslaved and the free servant proves difficult due to the similarities in the tasks performed. On this topic, Walvin states,

> there is a category of English black slave which defies
> simple analysis for it consisted of blacks whose status
> was invisibly transmitted. It is easy to note those
> slaves who ran away and those who were freed. More
> difficult to calculate are those who never challenged
> their enslaved status, but who lived as faithful but none
> the less enslaved domestics.[29]

Furthermore, the free black servant remained in a precarious position and the possibility of enslavement posed a permanent threat; even Equiano rediscovered his bondage.[30] In certain instances, status is clearly defined; the servants of Dr. Johnson and the Duchess of Queensbury belonged within the category of free blacks. The lives of Francis Barber and Julius Soubise have been well-documented, whilst the majority of black servant's lives remain unrecorded.[31] The numbers within this occupation increased as it became fashionable amongst the nobility and "quality" of England to possess a black or oriental servant.

Until the work of J.J.Hecht, the domestic servant class had received only cursory comments from historians.[32] More recently, the integration of blacks into most categories of the domestic servant hierarchy has been noted by Tessa Hoskins.[33] In the nineteenth century Dickens had been aware of this apparent differentiation within the hierarchy of black servants;

> the Negro coachman, a very portly person, with powder
>
> over his curly pate; the Negro footman in a brilliant
>
> livery, stately of port and stalwart of body; if
>
> somewhat unshapely as to his nether limbs.[34]

Servants of East Indian origin form an integral component of Rozina Visram's Ayahs, Lascars and Princes (London, 1986).

Apart from those free black servants who have dominated the history of black people in Britain in our period, very few left testimony of their existence. As a result, only fragmentary glimpses of black servants can be discerned in white evidence - usually in the forms of wills, diaries, and contemporary accounts. For example, Peter Linebaugh

has discovered that two Afro-American servants, Benjamin Bowsey and John Glover, were the leaders in the delivery of Newgate prison in 1780.[35] Paul Hair identified another two Negro servants who formed part of an expedition to Bulama on the West African coast.[36] A further two black servants were recognised by Cobley on board the first fleet of convicts bound for the Antipodes in 1787. [37] The court appearance of Andrew Bogle, in the case subsequently documented as the "Tichborne Claimant", has already been documented in Chapter Three.[38]

A certain proportion of black servants were apparently not the property of their employers; therefore, there was a possibility that a black slave could achieve freedom either legally or illegally. The incidence of escape has been discussed in depth in the previous section; manumission, however, proved a more uncommon occurrence. Certain black servants were granted bequests in master's wills; Sancho and Barber have been frequently cited in this connection.[39] However, some instances of bequests and manumission are not as well documented. For example, Elizabeth Rosina Clements (otherwise known as "Bronze") inherited a legacy of sixteen guineas from her master, Joseph Nollekens.[40] Mary Prince left direct testimony of her experiences as both an enslaved and free black woman in early nineteenth century England.[41]

The search for hidden layers of this black "servant presence" (whether free or enslaved) has been extended to criminal records, which yielded information on seventeen males and three females who were described as servant. Some examples from the Old Bailey Sessions Papers and Newgate Calendars include John Marlbone whose slave status is clearly discernible; his master stated that "I purchased him in America and made him a confidential servant".[42] The status of others is not as

well defined; representative of this category are "Richard Johnson (A Black). American Gentleman's Servant", and "George Johnson. A mulatto born in Virginia. Servant".[43] Twenty-one black people were identified in the parish registers sampled; for instance, "William Clark, [appears as] servant to Captain Clark. 19 years [old]".[44] The adoption of the surname of a master could prove indicative of slave status, as it infers property right in the black. Both of these record groups then, reveal the extent to which many black people, either free or enslaved, lived, albeit uneventfully, as domestic servants in London during our period.

Furthermore, it could be posited that London's slave presence was concentrated mainly in the West End, whilst the free black element that comprised of runaways, sailors, and beggars, tended to be located in the dockland area of the East End. Research into the above-mentioned primary sources, together with contemporary newspapers, prove this assumption to be an over-simplification. However, it should be noted that the incorporation of selected parishes might have skewed the results. Addresses were traced for forty black people, plotted on Map 4.1. A further two have been omitted from the study as their specified addresses of Noro Street, and Lower Street, failed to be located in the London street guides for the period 1695 to 1826.

As anticipated, particularly in view of the area sampled, the map displays a distinct concentration of blacks in London's East End. As demonstrated in Map 4.2, the most densely populated parishes appeared around Deptford. The blacks plotted may have been unrepresentative of the black population as a whole, as the majority of black addresses failed to be recorded in the records. Thus, only tentative conclusions may be drawn from this sample. The problem of status also recurs,

MAP 4.1

LOCATION OF FORTY BLACK PEOPLE IN LONDON FROM PARISH REGISTERS AND CRIMINAL RECORDS DURING THE SEVENTEENTH, EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES.

MILE END

WHITECHAPEL

WAPPING

ROTHERHITHE

HOXTON

CHEAPSIDE

SOUTHWARK

CLERKENWELL

KENNINGTON

TOTTENHAM COURT

SOHO

ST JAMES'S PARK

MARYLEBONE

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

HYDE PARK

TOTHILL FIELDS

Based ...

MORDEN AND LEA c 1183

STRYPE 1720

FADEN 1785
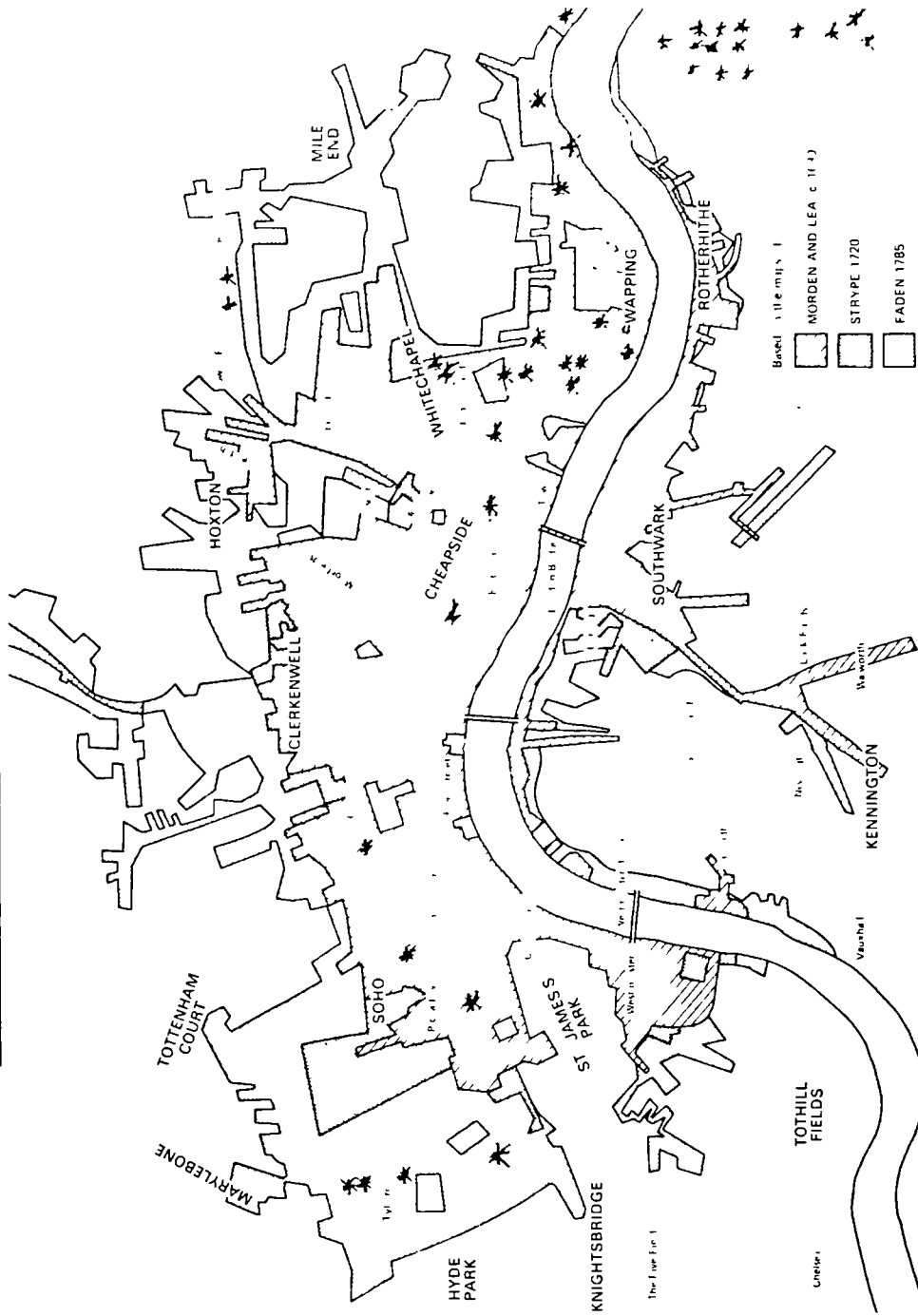
SOURCES AND NOTES

* Indicates location of black people.

Map Source: G.Rude Hanoverian England 1714-1808 (London, 1971)

Sources for Black People: i) Parish Registers . St. Nicholas's, Deptford; St. Paul's, Deptford.(1719-1796)
ii) Criminal Records. Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1780-1830.
iii) Newspapers. London Gazette, 1685, 1688, 1690; Morning Chronicle 1795.

MAP 4.2

BLACK PEOPLE IN DEPTFORD 1685-1830

G R E E N W I C H

Deptford Creek
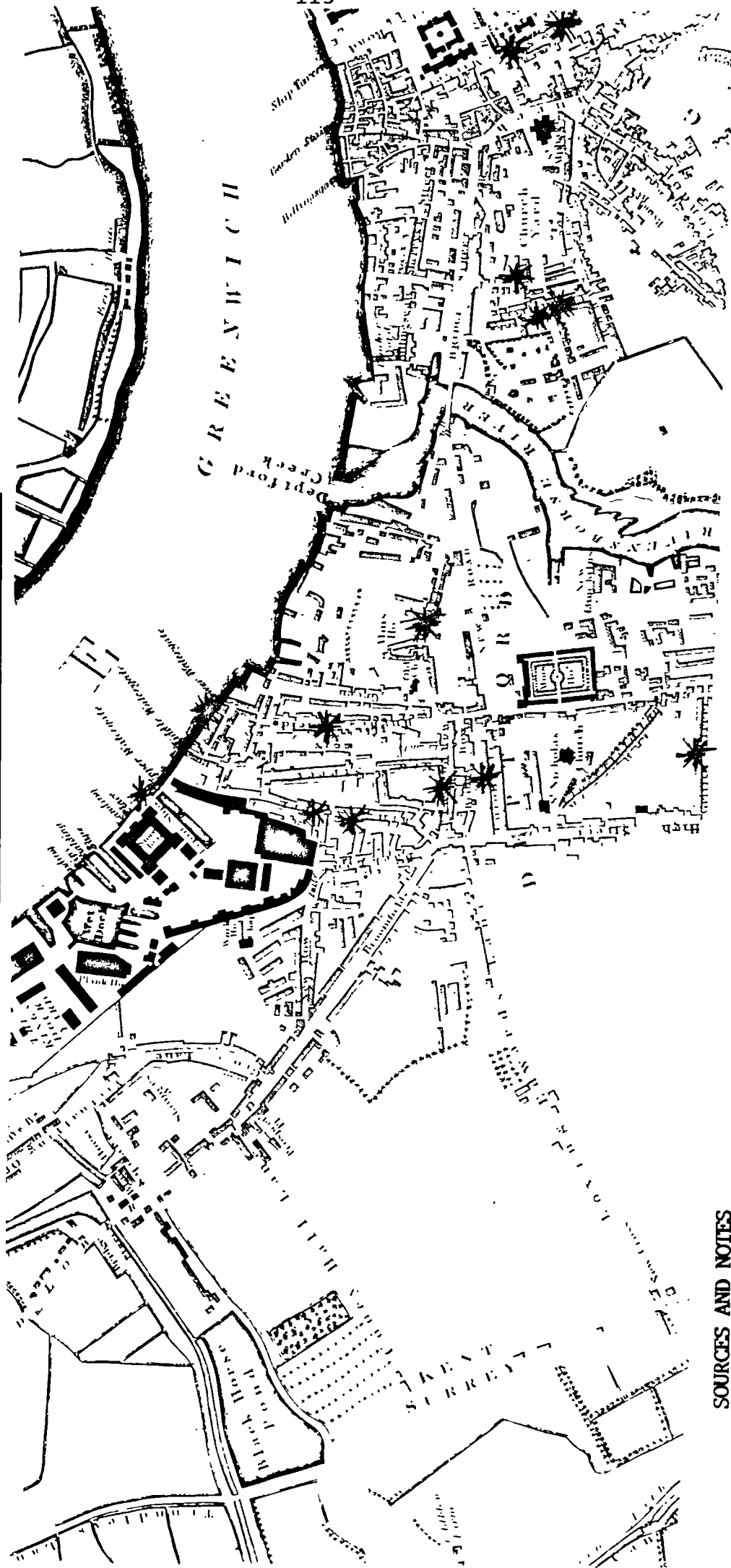
SOURCES AND NOTES
* Indicates location of Black People.
Map Source: C.& J.Greenwood's Survey of London 1824-1826 . Geography Department, Liverpool University.
Sources for Black People: Parish Registers. St. Nicholas's, Deptford; St. Paul's, Deptford.

which is further compounded by location. There is a possibility that free black servants were employed in the West End. The Old Bailey Sessions Papers refer to three black servants whose place of residence was the West End of London. Charles Darby stated that "I am a servant in Billeter Square" [45]; Tipoo Sahib swore that "I live in Greta George Street, Westminster, and am a servant to Lord Macdonald", [46] whilst George Jackson said that "I am a servant to Josiah Jackson at No.21, Baker Street, Portman Square". [47] The first two examples may have been free blacks, but as the latter was identified by his master's surname, slave status is implied.

Of the above-mentioned three servants, two appeared in court as witnesses and one was a victim. There is little, if any evidence, to suggest that masters prosecuted their slave-servants; hence all three might have held slave status. As noted previously in the study, masters' property rights in their slaves usually placed any punishment for crime outside the judicial process. This whole occupational area of slave and servant proves difficult to penetrate; research tends to identify further complexities rather than reach conclusions. The entire servant issue is further compounded by the evidence of a black servant residing in the East End, whereas most servants, it might be supposed, would have been located in the wealthier West End of the city. A black witness appearing before the Old Bailey stated that "I am a servant to Mr. Argyll in Narrow Street, Limehouse". [48] The extension of black servant keeping (or in this case slave-owning) to the East End is reinforced by the parish register sample. The only direct evidence of slave status in the parish records is to be found in the registers of St. Nicholas', Deptford, where we find "Thomas, an Indian boy belonging to Mr. Currey

in Lower Street".[49] Thus, this evidence tends to weaken the assumption that only the free members of the black population were situated in the East End of the metropolis.

III

Having paid particular attention to servants and having reviewed the slave-servant debate, a broad statistical overview of black (essentially free black) occupations will be developed. For this purpose, an extensive range of primary sources has been sampled. Comparisons between black and white in named occupations have, whenever possible, been attempted. A pattern of far higher black than white concentration as seamen and servants emerges clearly, as does a marked underrepresentation of blacks as tradesmen and craftsmen.

Criminal records provide limited, but valuable information on occupations (as demonstrated by the category of servant). Dealing mainly with young males, this category of records produces skewed results (a tendency which applies not only for the period under discussion, but for all periods). J.M.Beattie has noted the male propensity for criminality thus:

> it is a common observation that in the modern world crime is an overwhelmingly male activity. The records of the court in Surrey and Sussex suggest this was no the less case in early modern England.[50]

This group of criminal records specified the occupations of sixty-four blacks, which represented 48.5 per cent of the sample. The remaining sixty-eight blacks, or 51.5 per cent, failed to have their occupations

recorded by the courts or were unemployed.

Table 4.1 represents the occupations of a complete sample of white males and females brought before the judges at Newgate in the year 1802. Comparisons are made with black indictments recorded in the Old Bailey Sessions Papers and the Newgate Calendars for the sample years of the period 1785-1830. Tabulation involved a great deal of simplification of detailed occupational descriptions. Table 4.1 permits the following conclusions to be drawn.

Firstly, the white occupational sample revealed a multiplicity of occupations, simplified by categorising them as craftsmen/tradesmen and professionals. This category of professionals includes a diversity of occupations from surgeon, chemist, and apothecary, to attorney and stock-broker. Amongst those included in the "other" occupational group were a pot boy and a Chelsea pensioner. Secondly, the white occupations included a greater element within the "unknown" classssification (70.2 per cent of white occupations were recorded as opposed to 51.5 per cent of black occupations).

Thirdly, the table indicates a significant racial difference in that a higher proportion of black men were employed as seamen and servants than their white counterparts. 26.0 per cent of black men were discernible in the occupational category of seaman, whilst only 3.6 per cent appear as seamen. Similarily, black servants formed 14.3 per cent of those brought before the courts in comparison with 0.2 per cent white servants. Fourthly, it is significant that no blacks were apparent within the professional or clerical classification. Only 0.8 per cent of black males were employed as tradesmen or craftsmen, whilst in this category white males represented 28.7 per cent. Apart from the unknown

TABLE 4.1

COMPARISON BETWEEN BLACKS AND WHITES EMPLOYED IN NAMED OCCUPATIONS, 1785-1830

OCCUPATION	WHITE MALES	%	BLACK MALES	%	WHITE FEMALES	%	BLACK FEMALES	%	TOTAL WHITE NOS.	%	TOTAL BLACK NOS.	%
SEAMEN	57	3.6	31	26.0					57	2.9	31	23.5
SERVANT	3	0.2	17	14.3	16	4.2	3	23.1	19	1.0	20	15.2
LABOURERS	2	0.1	5	4.2					2	0.1	5	3.8
SOLDIERS	18	1.1	2	1.7					18	0.9	2	1.5
TRADESMEN/												
CRAFTSMEN	456	28.7	1	0.8	3	0.8			459	23.3	1	0.7
CLERKS	14	0.9							14	0.7		
PROFESSIONS	11	0.7			2	0.5			13	0.6		
OTHERS	2	0.1	4	3.4	3	0.8	1	7.7	5	0.3	5	3.8
UNKNOWN	1,028	64.6	59	49.6	356	93.7	9	69.2	1,384	70.2	68	51.5
TOTALS	1,591		119		380		13		1,971		132	

SOURCE White Sample:Newgate Calendars.HO 26/8(1802); Black Sample: Newgate Calendars 1791-1812,HO 26/1-12, OB/SP 1785-1830

element, the majority of whites were delineated within this occupation,so that the contrast with blacks appears pronounced (but not surprising in view of the restrictive employment legislation of 1731).

Fifthly, the male tendency to remain unskilled is also hinted at in the small sample of black females. Three out of four black females whose jobs were specified were described as servants; whereas, for whites, the proportion appeared lower in the craft, trade and professional categories. The table, therefore, indicates that the vast majority of black people were unskilled; amongst those whose trade was specified, appeared a tailor and a musician in the Guards. Though crime records tend to concentrate on the working class, differences between observed black and white patterns suggest that the opportunity for upward social mobility was severely limited for black people in Britain.

Parish registers from London and Liverpool were then analysed for further evidence of black occupation. Of the 206 blacks identified in this record group only thirty-two (or 15.3 per cent) had specified occupations. Only tentative conclusions may, therefore, be drawn. However, the sample identified twenty servants and nine sailors, so although parish records provide only limited occupational information, it remains important for our purposes in that it enables a comparison to be made with criminal records. Both sources demonstrate that most blacks recorded were employed either in the occupation of servant or sailor. Table 4.2 indicates that a total of forty-one servants and forty seamen are to be found in the records that inform this study. Servants and sailors formed the highest proportion of those whose occupations were known. Of the thirty-two blacks identified in the parish records,

TABLE 4.2

OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF BLACK PEOPLE

FROM PARISH REGISTERS AND CRIMINAL RECORDS

1780-1830.

SOURCE	SERVANTS	SEAMEN	OTHERS	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
Parish Registers	21	9	2	174	206
Criminal Records	20	31	13	68	132
TOTAL	41	40	15	242	338

SOURCES Parish Registers: (London), St. Paul's Deptford, St. Nicholas's Deptford, St.Anne's Limehouse, All Saints Poplar,St. John at Hackney, St. Marylebone, St. George's in the east, Holy Trinity, St. Katherine's By the Tower, St. Stephen Walbrook. (Liverpool), St. George's Everton, St. Nicholas's City, St. John, St. Peter, St. James, St. Thomas Toxteth. Criminal Records: (London) Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1785-1830,Newgate Calendars 1791-1812 (as in Table 5.1).

twenty-one (10.2 per cent) appeared to be servants, and nine (4.4 per cent) were engaged as sailors. The criminal records displayed a reverse occupational trend in that thirty-one black men (23.5 per cent) were sailors, and twenty (15.1 per cent) were described as servants. Hence, the parish registers may reflect a section of the black population more settled in nature, whilst the criminal records reveal the more transient black maritime element. The possibility of distortion of the statistics due to the large proportion of unknown occupations is a factor to be taken into consideration.

The final record group considered in this black occupational survey are British Parliamentary Papers; the Report on the Poor Law (1816), the Report on the Workhouses (1813-1814), the Return of Persons Committed under the Vagrancy Act (1822),and the Return of Persons charged with Acts of Vagrancy in the Metropolis (1825).[51] However, the above-mentioned failed to distinguish black people, but the 1814-1815 and 1816 Reports on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis provide details of black beggars in London, a group that caused increasing alarm from the late eighteenth century through to the earlier decades of the nineteenth century.[52]

Despite the limitations of the above evidence (in that most blacks' and indeed white's occupations were unrecorded), important data is provided on black survival in white society. Table 4.2 illustrates the composition of the black population, in that the more stable component of the black presence was the servant category, while the fluctuating element comprised of those employed in the maritime occupations. Further research into parish registers, criminal records, and newspapers might eliminate some of the unknown occupationial categories, which might

ultimately produce different results. Similarily, a more extensive sampling of white occupations might prove invaluable for comparative analysis.

This second section has analysed primary material for evidence of black occupations', the two most important groups have proved to be the servant and the sailor. Attention will now be diverted towards the sailor and the soldier.

IV

Having tried to establish the broad statistical pattern of black occupations, and having examined one key category in detail (that of servant) the next section will develop evidence on another key group (seaman), and will also present evidence on blacks in the British Army. Although Indian seamen formed an increasingly important and distinctive part of the black presence, for the purposes of this chapter this group need only be mentioned as the basis of comparison with other black seamen.

On the differences between Afro-blacks and Lascars, Lorimer noted that

> in their living conditions and treatment in Britain,
> these blacks [Negroes] fared no worse than foreign
> European sailors, and probably as well as English seamen.
> The seafaring population in the nineteenth century had a
> hard existence at best....The Lascar seamen separated by
> language and religion as well as by race, experienced the
> worst conditions of isolation and neglect of any alien

community in Victorian England. Left stranded in

London..., some were found dead in the streets of the

metropolis, killed by disease, starvation, and exposure.

The experience of black sailors offers no parallel. [53]

These patterns are further emphasised by Hepple, who notes that "the

Negro seaman born in the West Indian colonies is said to be as much a

British seaman as a white man could be". [54] The legal embodiment of

the black-Lascar distinction was found in an amendment to the Navigation

Act of 1823 (4 Geo. 4c, 80), which stated explicitly that Lascars and

other Asiatic seamen were not to be regarded as British sailors.

However, being a British sailor proved disadvantageous to the Negro,

rendering him an easy prey for the press gang. Hutchinson notes that

despite the laws forbidding the impressment of foreigners;

the Negro was never reckoned to be an alien, looked

upon as a proprietary subject of the Crown, having no

one in particular to speak up for or defend him, he

shared the same fate as the free-born white man. [55]

Blacks served in the Royal Navy and the army, and both services

actively recruited, not to say compelled, liberated slaves in West

Africa to sign on for lengthy terms of service.(War Office Discharge

records have been investigated in relation to soldiers, and will be

referred to later). [56] Black sailors of West Indian, African, American,

and East Indian origin became so well known in English ports that when

the men of African origin were required for labour, Englishmen sought

them in dockyards.

Black seamen are also documented in both criminal records and

parish registers (see Table 4.2). Crime records include the examples of

"Richard Blakeman. Aged 27. 5ft.7. Dark Hair. Dark Eyes. An American Black. A Sailor. Stealing Beef (Mr. Calloway's)"; and "Amee, a Lascar" was indicted for "stealing a roll of flannel".[57] Parish records yielded the following: "Edward Edwards. A Mariner; Born on Barbados; baptised on July 14, 1811; and "Ann Molineux, daughter of Thomas Wilson, a Black Mariner by Mary Ann", baptised on November 30, 1804.[58]

The baptism of black seafarers was not an uncommon occurrence in the riverside parishes. The Orthodox Gentleman's Magazine reported of Dr. Mayo, a Stepney clergyman;

> he was particularly kind to the Negroes and
>
> uninstructured men of colour, who, employed generally
>
> on board of ship, occasionally resided in his parish
>
> which is full of seafaring people. I suppose no clergyman
>
> in England ever baptized so many black men and mulatto,
>
> nor did he at any time baptize them without much
>
> preparation.[59]

Being a transient group, not all black seamen would have appeared in parish registers, and this underrepresentation would have been further emphasised by any marked tendency towards Non-Conformity or by a greater propensity of non-baptism than whites. Although seamen are recorded in greater numbers in the criminal records, some degree of underrepresentation may have been present there also.

Until the work of Little and Banton, which concentrated primarily on sociological surveys of the black seafaring communities of Cardiff and Stepney, black seamen had been historically neglected.[60] Cursory reference to this group had been made by Sala in 1872,

> Black Jack, very woolly-headed,and very grindered,

> cooking, fiddling, and singing, as it seems the nature of
> Black Jack to cook, fiddle and sing, where the union-jack
> flies. Nigger Jack is well-treated; English sailors do
> not disdain to drink with him, work with him and sing
> with him.[61]

The black sailor has, therefore, been included in the wider discussions of the black presence,[62] and in the works of K. Hutchinson, N.A.M. Rodger, and C. Lloyd which relate specifically to seamen.[63]

Black sailors, especially black cooks, were frequently employed on merchantmen and warships. Fryer identified a cook (John Robinson) on a warship; but Mayhew had earlier referred to Edward Albert, who had the misfortune to have had his legs amputated as a result of an accident aboard a warship.[64] Ramdin notes that Equiano was a steward on a ship in which John Annis "a clever black man" was the cook.[65] One of the eight "Corporals" selected for the Sierra Leone expedition was John Lemon, who according to Visram was both a cook and a hairdresser.[66] In the present state of research it is impossible to establish the numbers of black sailors from naval records, nor is it possible from the above glimpses to identify them as free or enslaved. Unlike Lascars, black sailors were not usually distinguished in records in any way. One exception appears to be the Victory Muster Book of 1805, which informs us that;

> the ship's company were from every country in the British
> Isles and there is a scattering of foreigners. There is
> 23 giving America as their birthplace, some of whom must
> have been Negroes...Two give Africa as a birthplace. [67]

Black seafarers faced the double threat of impressment, and if free, the

danger of enslavement or re-enslavement, especially if captured as a prize of war. Dimmock Charlton and William Houston left testimonies of the latter experience. Houston a free-born British subject (Gibraltar was his place of birth) settled in Liverpool in 1823 and went to sea as a steward earning $25 per month . On arrival in America, the captain sold him into slavery; and he was to remain in bondage under several owners until the British government paid $500 for his release in 1852. Charlton, a free black stevedore on board a slave ship captured by the British from Spain in 1811, was erroneously assumed to be part of the cargo. His subsequent re-capture occurred when his British ship was taken by an American schooner. After being the property of several owners (including a Frenchman), he eventually purchased his freedom.[68] As previously noted, Hannah Kilham purchased two black slave-sailors; therefore, as with the servant category, unless overtly expressed, it was impossible to distinguish between the free and enslaved black sailor.[69]

Thomas Clarkson, the abolitionist, provides the more unusual evidence of a black woman at sea: he stated that "she belongs to the owners of it, [the ship] and was to be interpretess to the slaves who should be purchased".[70] Clarkson's investigations into the death of Peter Green, the black steward on board the Alfred, at Bonny in 1786, revealed the extent of the ill-treatment of black sailors serving on slaving vessels. Clarkson reported on one such sailor, John Dean,

> that for a trifling circumstance, for which he [John
> Dean] was in no-wise to blame, the captain had fastened
> him with his belly to the deck, and in this situation, he
> poured hot pitch upon his back, and made incisions in it

with hot tongs.[71]

Our evidence suggests that black sailors were not uncommon around English ports in this period; some like the "Kru" seamen of the African coast had a heritage of seafaring. Therefore, it is not surprising that this tradition was maintained in the ports where demand for mariners outstripped supply. Many blacks would have been recruited overseas to supplement crew numbers, and many would have subsequently been laid off in England. Most would have been employed amongst the lower ranks of the ship's company, as either steward, cook, deck-hand or cabin-boy; thus Paul Cuffey proved extraordinary in being a captain (of his own ship), and a man of property. His visits to London and Liverpool in 1811 merited the notice of the contemporary press. The Liverpool Mercury boasted;

> This Day is Published...A Memoir of Captain Paul Cuffee
>
> a man of colour...written especially for, and originally
>
> printed in the Liverpool Mercury. [72]

Born in Massachussetts, Cuffey exemplifies a successful black sailor who owned his own fleet of vessels, and as such proves atypical of the black maritime fraternity. Black seamen who visited English ports formed a constant, but fluctuating presence, most of which is doomed to anonymity.

As far as black soldiers are concerned, those who have attracted most historical attention are perhaps those who served in the American War of Independence in support of the British. Their reward at the cessation of hostilities was emancipation, with many migrating to England to be counted amongst "London's Black Poor" (see Chapter Two). These black soldiers were entrusted with the more menial tasks, but

Norton and Fryer identify some that were skilled. [73]

Primary source evidence on this occupational group is scanty; criminal records yield only two examples outlined as follows. Firstly, Thomas Bowling, a victim of theft stated his occupation to be " a captain of the Black Army in the West Indies"; and secondly, John Johnson was described as a "musician in the Guards". [74] This latter group of bandsmen has attracted some historical research. Paine and Fryer stress the importance of black kettle-drummers, trumpeters, tambourinists, and "jingling johnnies" in the various British regiments of the period. [75] Black kettle-drummers appeared on the muster rolls of the Third The King's Own Hussars and in the First Life Guards. Evidently, the Fourth The Queen's Own Hussars had achieved a certain degree of notoriety in the later half of the eighteenth century,

> owing to the escapades and consequent court martial of
> several of its Negro trumpeters and drummers. The
> regiment, however, seemed loath to part with the coloured
> element in its musicians. [76]

Barnes further indicates the extent to which this fashion had permeated army circles,

> coloured bandsmen, one or two of whom had been employed
> in nearly every regimental band were then dying out, and
> those in the Grenadier Guards were some of the last
> survivors. [77]

These coloured bandsmen proved to be objects of curiosity; "some of the Negroes in the Life Guards were chosen specifically for their immense height". [78] Fryer described a drummer in the 29th Foot Regiment in 1797 as being, "a handsome man, 6 feet 4 inches tall". [79]

Apart from the above-mentioned bandsmen, the British army employed black men in less conspicuous occupations. Reference has already been made to Fraser's study of War Office records which identifies those black soldiers who served in the British West India regiments.[80] My own research into War Office Discharge Papers yielded information on 198 black people recruited in Africa and the West Indies for the West Indian regiments, most of whom appeared to be labourers prior to their recruitment. [81] However, these discharge papers lie beyond the scope of this study, as they denote blacks purchased and employed by the British army in the West Indies, specifically to support the plantocracy.

It appears that black soldiers and sailors formed an important group within the black presence. Those employed in the occupation of sailor tend to be better documented than their military counterparts, unless the discussion is broadened to include those serving in the West Indies. Therefore, black servant and sailor, whether free or enslaved, were the chief occupations enabling black people to survive in a white society. However, there are difficulties involved in attempting quantitative comparisons, and the complexity of the issue is further compounded by an overall lack of information on status within these occupations. Therefore, it would prove impossible to draw definite comparisons, both within and between these groups of black workers, on the ratios of free to enslaved. The survival strategies of other blacks will now be discussed, ranging from the skilled black workers to those who were forced to beg at the other end of the black social spectrum.

V

Black people in Britain during this period found themselves in economic competition, not only with the indigenous white population, but with other groups of immigrants. Thus, both as black slave or free, they tended to be located at the bottom of the labour hierarchy either performing menial tasks in domestic servitude, the army or at sea. Most free blacks would have been unable to accumulate capital for upward social mobility (apart from those bequeathed legacies) away from the menial wage groups; and many seemed to have lived "hand-to mouth" existences. A few proved successful in the field of entertainment, or the arts and escape from the "black poverty trap". This section will examine strategies of survival adopted by the black population, which ranged occupationally from beggars and mendicants to boxers, musicians, and craftsmen.

As stated previously, primary source evidence on occupations, other than servants, remains obscure. Only a scattering of information exists on how black people, other than servant, soldier, and sailor, were employed. Newspapers of the period provide an insight into two fights involving black pugilists. The <u>Globe</u> in 1805 reported that "a fight between Holmes and Rickman, the Black took place".[82] The same newspaper described how,

> a very hard contested pitch battle was fought yesterday
> on the first heath, near Hounslow, between a pugilist of
> some note in the West, known by the name of Black
> Jemmy.[83]

Although not explicitly expressed in the newspapers, black pugilists

were rewarded financially by "purse money", which enabled them to survive economically. Several of these pugilists have been noted by Fryer and Shyllon, including the afore-mentioned Jemmy Robinson.[84] Boxing was one of the few limited avenues of social mobility available to black people in the period 1780 to 1830. Apart from the famous boxers such as Bill Richmond and Tom Molineaux, little is known of the fate of the majority of others who engaged in this activity in order to earn a living.

For most black people in Britain, poverty was to remain a constant, if not, cyclical factor, as they were unable to break away from the social bonds constraining them. Blacks competed for employment in London's economic environment, where a "reserve army of unskilled labour" was already in existence; hence, many resorted to begging.

Parliamentary Papers and newspapers refer to several blacks who were forced to beg in order to survive in a white host community. For example, in a Report from the Committee on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis (1815), the Chief Clerk was asked by the magistrates;

> (Q). Have you many foreignors? (A). We have now and then one or two who came.
>
> (Q). In the case of Africans, are there any means of taking care of them? (A). I know of none; the only way in which we can dispense of them is to fix them on the parish.[85]

Evidently then, some blacks were assisted by the parish poor rates in London. Some comment on such relief occurred when the Clerk to the Lord Mayor reported on a black who caused problems:

> we had a Black man who was very troublesome, who had been

> clothed several times; he once drew a knife upon an
>
> officer who desired him to get away; they searched his
>
> pockets, and found three or four shillings in pence and
>
> half pence.[86]

This particular black person was in receipt of outdoor relief from the authorities, and was simultaneously begging to support his income. The 1815 Committee yields evidence on a further two black mendicants as reported by the Watchousekeeper of St.Giles's, at St. George's, Bloomsbury; the keeper noted that one black beggar spent fifty shillings a week on his board.[87] If accurately reported, this was an unusual occurrence, as most beggars would not have received such vast amounts of money.

A familiar figure with The Stranger's Friend Society was a Negro beggar,

> who about two years since, used to stand by Messrs
>
> Elliott and Robinson's Tea-Warehouse, near Finsbury
>
> Square, who has returned to the West Indies with a
>
> fortune, it was supposed of about 1,500 L. obtained
>
> by this mode of life.[88]

The veracity of this statement is open to question as the sum involved might have been wildly exaggerated by the Society.

Newspapers, too, provide some information on this apparently large, but unquantifiable, group of black people. The Hue and Cry Police Gazette published the following, with reference to their numbers:

> at the Middlesex Sessions on the 4th.instant, Joseph
>
> Johnson, aged 22, better known as the 'New King of the
>
> Beggars' was presented by the Society for the Suppression

of Mendicity as an incorrigible rogue and vagabond.[89]

This same Joseph Johnson was a beggar of some repute who has been subsequently, historically well-documented, especially as he sported a model of the ship The Nelson on his head, and sang sea-shanties to obtain money. The reputed "King of the Beggars", Billy Waters, busked outside the Adelphi Theatre in the Strand; and was believed to have amassed a considerable fortune.[90] Another supposedly wealthy beggar was Charles McGee, who reputedly left hundreds of pounds to the daughter of Alderman Waithman.[91] For a few, begging may have provided more than the means of subsistence, but since tales of rich beggars could serve to ease consciences and justify not giving to the poor, one must remain sceptical about such "Beggar Kings".

By the end of the eighteenth century black people, were noted in the occupation of crossing-sweeper. This involved the removal of dust from a section of a London street, prior to the crossing of a lady or gentleman; and for performing this task, sweepers were given money. Certain London sites were apparently more profitable than others resulting in intense competition. According to Scobie "hundreds [of blacks] became crossing sweepers" by the end of the eighteenth century. [92] W.Lewis noted the increase in this group thus, "a new breed of public servant has appeared, the crossing sweeper".[93] As late as the mid-nineteenth century, Henry Mayhew discovered a Negro crossing-sweeper in London.[94]

Some blacks swept crossings, some busked, some earned a living by knitting night-caps and socks, and others made garden-nets.[95] As noted earlier, black serenaders appeared to have been well patronised, but they were soon overwhelmed by whites disguising themselves as blacks.

Those unemployed and unable to gain entry into the above-mentioned occupations were forced to beg or steal in order to exist. By the nineteenth century the Black Poor no longer attracted the special notice of their eighteenth century counterparts that had resulted in the formation of Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor. This failure to be recorded in the annals of history has been rather simplistically described by Shyllon, who suggests that after 1807 the abolition of the slave trade and the ending of slavery in 1834, "the Black Poor were now lumped together with the English poor, the Irish poor, the Greek poor and the Chinese poor."[96]

The Society for the Suppression of Mendicity has already been referred to in Chapter Two, but their annual reports contain a good cross-section of this category of blacks and document their experiences. The following are examples of such reports;

> W.J. a native of Jamaica, had been apprehended by the
> Society's officer, and being committed to the house of
> correction for seven days was ordered by the magistrate
> to be passed to the parish where he was found begging. In
> a few days he was again found on the streets, and inquiry
> having been made, it was ascertained that the overseer
> refused to take him into the workhouse.[97]

Also,

> E.C; alias J.E; alias J.J; an African, came from thence
> ten years previously; he had been on board a merchantman,
> and paid off two months before;he said he was unable to
> procure another berth, was with his wife compelled to
> beg. [98]

Attempts to suppress metropolitan mendicity were made by the Society, but London's black beggars could readily defy the embryonic forces of law and order. Mendicity posed a constant problem for the ill-organised authorities of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries , prior to the introduction of the 1829 Metropolitan Police Act. With little alternative to begging existing for many of the poor, the law on mendicity probably had little deterrent value.

Exceptions to the pattern of extreme black poverty, enslavement, and subsistence-pay occupations, would have been the skilled, those who formed the "black labour aristocracy". Amongst this group is to found the black Chartist William Cuffay, a tailor by trade, and a cabinet-maker, William Davidson, who was hanged for conspiracy, the trial being reported in the Hue and Cry Police Gazette.[99] Others in this category are black lodging-house keepers and publicans who bear witness to the possibility of black upward social mobility (equivalent to the Chinese self-employed in late nineteenth century Liverpool).[100] Some blacks did manage to save and invest money; one black coal-merchant, Cesar Picton, managed to amass a fortune. Based on a legacy left from a former employer, he set himself up in business in Kingston on Thames in 1788 and his estate included several houses and some land.[101] Sancho provides a further example of a shop-keeper financed by a legacy from a former patron. In order to survive, however, those in trade were forced to compete with better-financed operations in the wider host society. The majority of blacks in trade simply sold their wares on the London streets; hence the appearance of a wide variety of hawkers which has been extensively detailed by Dabydeen.[102]

Finally, for the purposes of this study, it has been assumed that

women, both free and enslaved, were employed in the various categories of maids and cooks. There is a paucity of primary source information relating to black female occupations. Of the criminal records consulted, reference is made to only four females (three servants and one washergirl). Also secondary sources provide little evidence of black female employment, "Bronze" being an exceptional case whose comic antics have been described by J.T.Smith.[103] Several instances of ill-treatment of black female servants occur. Mary Hylas was separated from her husband Thomas; and Mary Prince is a unique example of a black woman who documented her experiences as a slave and free black.[104] Rodney, the black interpretess interviewed by Thomas Clarkson, proved to be the indirect cause of a ship's steward being beaten to death. Although she was technically a slave, Rodney was an unusual black woman occupationally.[105] Despite Visram's study, little is known of Ayahs (Eastern nursemaids), who came to England in temporary or permanent capacities with returning masters and mistresses.[106]

Apparently, there is little evidence to support Fryer's assumption that "many black women were forced into prostitution as the only alternative to starvation".[107] Due to imbalanced sex ratios amongst the black population, and hence fewer numbers of black females, it is difficult to estimate the numbers of those who sold their bodies in order to earn a living. Some, however, did achieve a degree of recognition, as the "Hottentot Venus" bears witness; but most who followed this occupation were to remain in anonymity.

This chapter has surveyed the survival strategies of black people in Britain from 1780 to 1830, and has shown the largest occupational groupings to be servants and sailors. A statistical survey suggests

that, proportionately, these occupations were much more important for black males than for whites. Servants provided the stable component of the black presence, whilst sailors represented the transient element (although some did settle permanently in the dockland areas). The problems in differentiating between the free and enslaved within these occupations has been emphasised in the first three sections of the chapter. Of the free element, unknown numbers unable to enter into employment resorted to begging; others turned to crime, and black involvement with the legal process will now form the basis of the discussion in the ensuing chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

THIEF, VICTIM, WITNESS, TRANSPORTEE : THE BLACK PRESENCE THROUGH CRIMINAL RECORDS

This chapter by concentrating on blacks as criminals, Antipodean transportees, victims of and witnesses to crime, offers information on a broad stratum of eighteenth and nineteenth century society hitherto neglected by historians. There is no intention to criminalise black people; on the contrary, the overall results of the survey suggest that black crime (despite the transient nature of a sector of the black population) conformed to patterns discernible in the white "host" society, displaying broadly similar age, sex, and occupational structures amongst black and white criminals and transportees.

Similarily, by focusing on the wider issue of black involvement with the legal process, it contrasts with scholarly preoccupation with slavery and its position in the English law. Mansfield's Judgement of 1772, by creating the myth that it ended slavery, merely added confusion to the question of legality. All the case settled was that slaves could not be removed from England aginst their will. Following the work of Edward Fiddes, Shyllon, as previously noted, emphasises that "myths die hard and the myth that Lord Mansfield freed all black slaves in England in 1772 continues to ride high".[1] However, the legal aspect of slavery has been discussed in Chapters One and Three. In the present chapter, it is proposed, firstly, to discuss in brief the sources that inform the study. Secondly, the general pattern of criminal offences and the sex-ratio and age composition of black criminals will be considered.

Thirdly, punishment, including transportation will be discussed, and lastly, attention will be given to victims and witnesses, and the attitudes of the courts will be examined for evidence of prejudice or discrimination.

I

As outlined in detail, in Chapter One, the Old Bailey Session Papers form an important component of this work. These records have been described by Rude as the "richest source for case studies of criminals and victims in the country".[2] Dorothy George had also noted the appearance of Negroes at the Old Bailey.[3] The papers indicate directly or indirectly the involvement of blacks; examples of the former category appear in the indictments of "John Darby (A Negro)", and "Amee, a Lascar".[4] More frequently they are mentioned indirectly; for instance when Sarah Burman stole from Thomas Coffee, she stated in her defence that "this black man was there".[5] Thus in this group of records we find black people referred to as either "blacks", "creoles", "mulattoes", "Lascars", or as "men or women of colour".

Only those cases that actually specify colour have been incorporated in this analysis. It would be possible to hazard a guess that John Baptist, for example, was a black man, but such individuals have been omitted.[6] However, the study includes those names associated with black people, such as Scipio Africanus, Tippo Sahib, Sack Mahomet and Nowardin. [7] Criminal records lead to an under-estimation of black numbers, as many were not directly identifiable in the records. One possible exception appears in the case of "Peter, a black man", who was

indicted on two occasions for "burlariously and feloniously breaking and entering" dwelling houses in 1785 and 1786.[8] As there is no evidence to suggest that this is the same person, both cases have merited inclusion in the survey.

The Old Bailey sample included complete surveys for the five year periods 1785-1790, 1795-1800, 1805-1810, 1815-1820, and 1825-1830; and then to these findings were added the results of the random sample for 1811-1834 which justified this research. The records identified eighty-five black people involved with the criminal process as accused, victim, and witness; seventy-seven were male and eight were female. Twenty-six, 30.6 per cent,of this group originated from the East; the remaining fifty-nine (69.4 per cent) were of African, West Indian, or Afro-American descent. Further investigation into these records would, in all probability, reveal numbers of blacks now lying in obscurity.

The other criminal record group outlined in Chapter One was the Newgate Calendars which, unlike the Old Bailey, only identifies blacks indicted for criminal offences. Newgate Prison in the Old Bailey, London's principal goal, remained under the control of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen; and prisoners awaiting trial at the London and Middlesex courts were held in this place of detention. Examples of those blacks identified in this record group include "Silas Hickson. Aged 30. 5ft 4ins. a Black born in America. Found Not Guilty of stealing a handkerchief"; and "John Johnson. Aged 38. 5ft 7ins. a Black. Woolly Hair, Black Eyes. American. A Musician in the Guards. Found Not Guilty of stealing a pair of breeches".[9] The Calendars identified a total of forty-seven black people (forty-two males and five females) in the period 1791 to 1810, none of whom appeared in the Old Bailey sample,

although several can be traced in the Middlesex courts. Of those forty-seven blacks indicted for crime at Newgate, only one black man was identified as coming from the East Indies. One black was clearly locally-born; the court described him thus "James Ratcliffe. Aged 25. 5ft 7ins. Black hair, hazel eyes. Born at Limehouse. A Black Lighterman".[10] The origin of others, whether local or abroad, is not recorded.

These two key sources, the Old Bailey Sessions Papers and the Newgate Calendars, together yielded a total of 132 black people involved with London's criminal process as accused, victim, and witness during the period 1780 to 1830 (see Appendix I). Table 5.1 demonstrates that within the above categories, 119 were male as compared to thirteen female. Another source utilised in this connection is newspapers, which have been intensively explored by Shyllon, but prove to yield only a scattering of evidence.[11] Shyllon's findings may be supplemented by the following examples. The Morning Chronicle of 14 January 1803 reported that "a Negro boy was then called who said that in the end of December he saw all the four prisoners at Minis's lodgings in Denmark Street".[12] Samples from the Police Gazette for the periods 1818-1820 and 1828 provide information on criminally active blacks, describing them as "mulatto" or "men of colour".[13] Further research into eighteenth and nineteenth century private manuscripts might also prove rewarding.

Before presenting an analysis of our principal record groups, it should be reiterated that the interpretation of criminal statistics requires caution. The true level of crime is under-represented in the records. J.M.Beattie emphasises that:

TABLE 5.1

AN ANALYSIS OF BLACK PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE CRIMINAL PROCESS.
1780-1830

CATEGORY	NUMBERS OF MALES	NUMBERS OF FEMALES	TOTAL
Criminal	93	11	104
Victim	14	1	15
Witness	7	1	8
Others	5		5
TOTALS	119	13	132

SOURCE Newgate Calendars. HO 26/1-16. P.R.O. Kew.

Old Bailey Sessions Papers. 1785-1830. Gulidhall, London.

court cases, then as now, do not provide a record of
crime of all the acts that could be charged. Many
offences are not detected; many of those detected are for
a large number of reasons not prosecuted by the victim or
are not sent to trial by an examining magistrate, some
do not reach court because witnesses die. [14]

Thus, it would appear that the administration of justice depended upon
the willingness of the witness to prosecute, and there is no indication
that those victims of black crime or black victims of crime were any
more or less willing to prosecute. Under-reporting of crime in this
period was apparent and reflected the large number of capital offences
for crimes against property. Much crime was undetected in London in this
period prior to the introduction of the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829.
For these reasons, therefore, the unknown element in crime is thought to
be large at this time.

Despite this underlying need for caution, valuable evidence has
been quarried from this source. Of particular importance is information
on types of crimes committed, numbers of criminals, their ages, sex-
ratios, origins and occupations, which offer glimpses into the everyday
lives of lower class black people. Comparisons between black and white
patterns of crime and punishment can be made; this is further reinforced
by reference to the Irish, another ethnic minority, discernible in white
society in this period. These topics form the basis of discussion in the
following sections.

II

Recently, the study of crime has become of major interest to historians. Douglas Hay, for example, regards the procedures employed for cases of serious crime, as a "ruling class conspiracy" against the lower orders of society. [15] This theory has been challenged by Peter King, John Langbein, John Brewer, and John Styles, who argue that " the entire legal fabric, from prosecution to punishment, was shot through with discretion". [16] This interesting topic of crime as a "conspiracy" issue is beyond the scope of this thesis, whilst crime, as a form of protest reflecting community values is of much greater concern. Genovese noted that,

> nineteenth century young criminals in the slums of
> English cities developed their own variation of the
> theme [of social crime] by distinguishing between petty
> theft, which they defined as taking and grand larceny,
> which they acknowledged to be stealing. [17]

Having given fleeting consideration to the social context of eighteenth and nineteenth century crime, the general pattern of offences, the sex ratio, and age composition of black criminals will now be analysed.

Between 1780 and 1830 housebreaking and grand larceny represented more than seventy per cent of the total crimes committed. [18] Black crime tended to conform to this pattern; sixty-four of the ninety-three black male indictments (70.8 per cent) were connected with these two offences. [19] A further analysis of this sample revealed that of Indians indicted sixty per cent was for the crime of theft. A sub-sample of another minority group, the Irish, produced a similar pattern. The

majority of Irish males were indicted for the crime of theft in one form or another.[20] Interestingly, there is no evidence of black crime relating to their own culture; for example, the scarifying of childrens' faces, polygamy, or the practice of vodoo rituals (although the sources reveal numerous instances of whites, including the Irish, committing bigamy).

Amongst those cases that the courts appeared to treat with leniency includes that of Servo, an Indian servant, who stole five silver spoons from his master, Captain John Gray Duncan. Evidently though, his master was required to return him to India, under a bond. Servo's ship being due to sail, he was merely fined one shilling and discharged.[21] This leniency is questionable when one considers the the implications of the Parliamentary Report on Lascars which will be expanded upon in the following chapter. Several cases had less fortunate endings; several instances of death whilst being held in custody pending trial were discovered in the sample, including Peter Bristow, accused of stealing twenty-two cotton sheets, and William Thomas who stole sugar.[22] Highway robbers also featured in the records; Richard White, a Creole (later to become a Tasmanian landowner), and Thomas Laudell. Abdullah, a Malayan, and Saccher, Goss, Sayhead, and Savou (Lascars) were found guilty of manslaughter. Other Lascars, Johnny (a serang), and Sider Cann, were accused of conspiring to charge another man with the murder of Butler John; and two Africans, Joe and Cudjoe, were indicted for murder on the high seas (the demise of Joe, whilst in custody, was later recorded in the Newgate Calendars).[23] Having examined the offences for which most blacks were indicted, comparisons with their white

counterparts will now be drawn; both the involvement of females, and later, ages and occupations of those indicted warrant discussion.

III

Historians of eighteenth century crime concur that crime was an overwhelmingly male activity. Indeed, as we have noted earlier, this is true not only of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but for all periods. Beattie posits that males were responsible for over eighty per cent of all crime during this period, and the present study suggests that the black population conformed to a similar pattern.[24] Table 5.1 indicated that of a total of 132 blacks involved with the legal process, either as accused, victim or witness, only thirteen (roughly between ten and eleven per cent) were female. The remaining 119 (or 89.4 per cent) were black males. Table 5.2 specifies only those accused of crime in the Newgate Calendars and the Old Bailey Sessions Papers. Again, a similar trend is discernible; of the 104 black people accused of crime, in both sets of criminal records, ninety-three (89.4 per cent) were male as opposed to only eleven (10.6 per cent) female. The sub-sample of Indians displayed sightly smaller percentages of female involvement in crime; Indian females represented only 7.7 per cent of the total Indian crime figures. Overall, the male-female ratio in black crime in this period seems to be similar (being over eighty per cent) to that of whites, and was overwhelmingly male.[25]

Given the widespread assumption that London's black population was predominantly male, and given the male dominance of white crime, skewed sex ratios are not surprising. What is perhaps surprising is that black

TABLE 5.2

A COMPARISON OF BLACK MALES AND FEMALES ACCUSED OF CRIME

1780-1830

RECORDS	NUMBER OF MALES	%	NUMBER OF FEMALES	%	TOTAL
Newgate Calendars	42	89.4	5	10.6	47
Old Bailey Sessions Papers	51	89.5	6	10.5	57
TOTALS	93	(89.4)	11	(10.6)	104

SOURCE Newgate Calendars, 1791-1810

Old Bailey Sessions Papers, 1780-1830.

crime was not more sharply male dominated than was white. The fact that over ten per cent of blacks involved in the criminal process were female suggests that we should be cautious in assuming an overwhelmingly male dominance in the black population as a whole.

Both Beattie and King further suggest that female crime was less serious in its nature than male crime.[26] Beattie posits that "for women, even more than for men, it was theft and related offences that most often brought them into trouble with the law".[27] The majority of black females in this study were indeed involved in some form of theft, most being indicted for picking pockets and for theft from dwelling houses or shops. Of those eleven females accused of crime in the Newgate Calendars and the Old Bailey sample (including the two Indian females), all were indicted for theft, whether it be of watches, jewellery, clothing, money or handkerchieves. Amongst those accused of shop-lifting appeared Sarah Lyons, found guilty of stealing four handkerchieves, valued at five shillings.[28] Susannah had stolen two yards of muslin, value thirty-nine shillings, and Mary Goring had taken a silk handkerchief.[29]

Thus, the nature of crimes committed by females seems to be related to their physique, and so females were prominent amongst pick-pockets. Black examples of these female "Artful Dodgers" include Elizabeth Mandeville, who worked as one of a pair with Ann Grace (a white woman) to steal three half guineas and six shillings from John Pidduck. Grace extracted the money whilst Mandeville pinned the victim down.[30] This example also highlights the phenomenon of females operating in couples in order to thieve money or valuables from male victims; one attracted attention whilst the other perpetrated the felony. Female acumen or

sexual attraction, therefore, compensated for lack of physical strength. Beattie has also noted this occurrence of females operating in pairs.[31]

The sample of black women referred to Ann Barton who, in conjunction with a white woman, Ann Lewis, stole a metal watch, value forty shillings; one chain, value one shilling; and two camelion seals set in gold, value two shillings. The afore-mentioned items were the property of John Gibbons.[32] These indictments further demonstrate the co-operation that existed between black and white females involved in criminal undertakings, and also illustrates that black (like white) female crime tended to be less open, less direct and less violent than male crime.

IV

Criminal records, moreover, provide some indication of the ages of those involved in illegal activities. But as King has emphasised, there was a tendency for those accused to be ignorant of their ages, to distort or approximate them, or for younger prisoners to avoid giving their age as twenty-one. Also the court and the prisoner alike rounded, either up or down, the ages of older prisoners.[33] Yet a check by King on John Cobley's first convict fleet in 1787 reveals that the majority of prisoners appeared consistent in their statements made to different officials regarding their ages.[34] King's analysis of the Home Circuit for the period 1782 to 1787 points to the youthfulness of offenders. Nearly half of those accused of property crimes were aged between eighteen and twenty-six years old, peaking between nineteen and twenty-

two years. The dominance of this group appeared out of proportion to their rise in the population as a whole.[35] Graph 5.2 reveals that for King's white criminals, the age group twenty to twenty-four years was the most important; the next largest age group being twenty-five to twenty-nine (see Appendix I).

For blacks (1780-1830) this trend is apparently reversed, as the majority of blacks indicted for crime tended to fall in the twenty-five to twenty-nine age band, closely followed by the twenty to twenty-four year olds (see Graph 5.1). My own sample of white criminals taken from the Old Bailey Sessions Papers appears in Graph 5.3, but similarities and differences are discernible. The majority, as with King's sample , fell within the age band twenty to twenty-four. However the next largest group of white criminals are to be found, unexpectedly, within the thirty to thirty-four age band, and not as anticipated in the lower twenty-five to twenty-nine age bracket.

Different parts of the country might have displayed differing criminal age patterns according to the composition of the population. The Old Bailey might have dealt with criminals in the higher age brackets. A sub-sample of Irish from the Newgate Calendars which specified their origin, does conform to the pattern of the black sample, as Graph 6.4 illustrates. Marginally, the majority of criminals conform within the twenty-five to twenty-nine age group, followed by those within the twenty to twenty-four age band. Indicted blacks and Irish, then, were slightly older, in the majority, than King's Home Circuit criminals, whilst the Old Bailey sample of white criminals displayed age characteristics different to all of the other groups of criminals.

Evidence relating to the ages of the accused blacks could suggest

Graph 5.1

AGES OF BLACK CRIMINALS 1780 1830
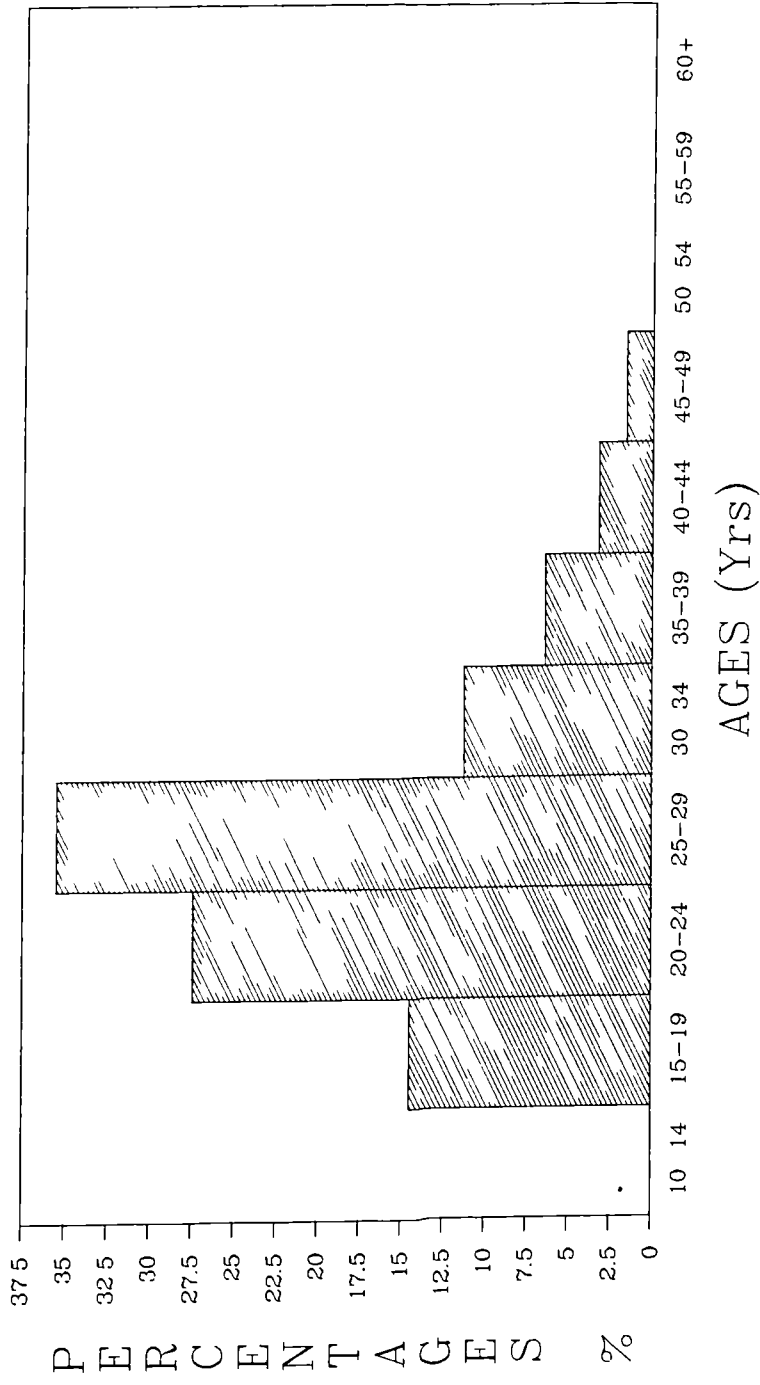
Graph 5.2
AGES OF WHITE CRIMINALS
HOME CIRCUIT 1782-1787

AGES (Yrs)
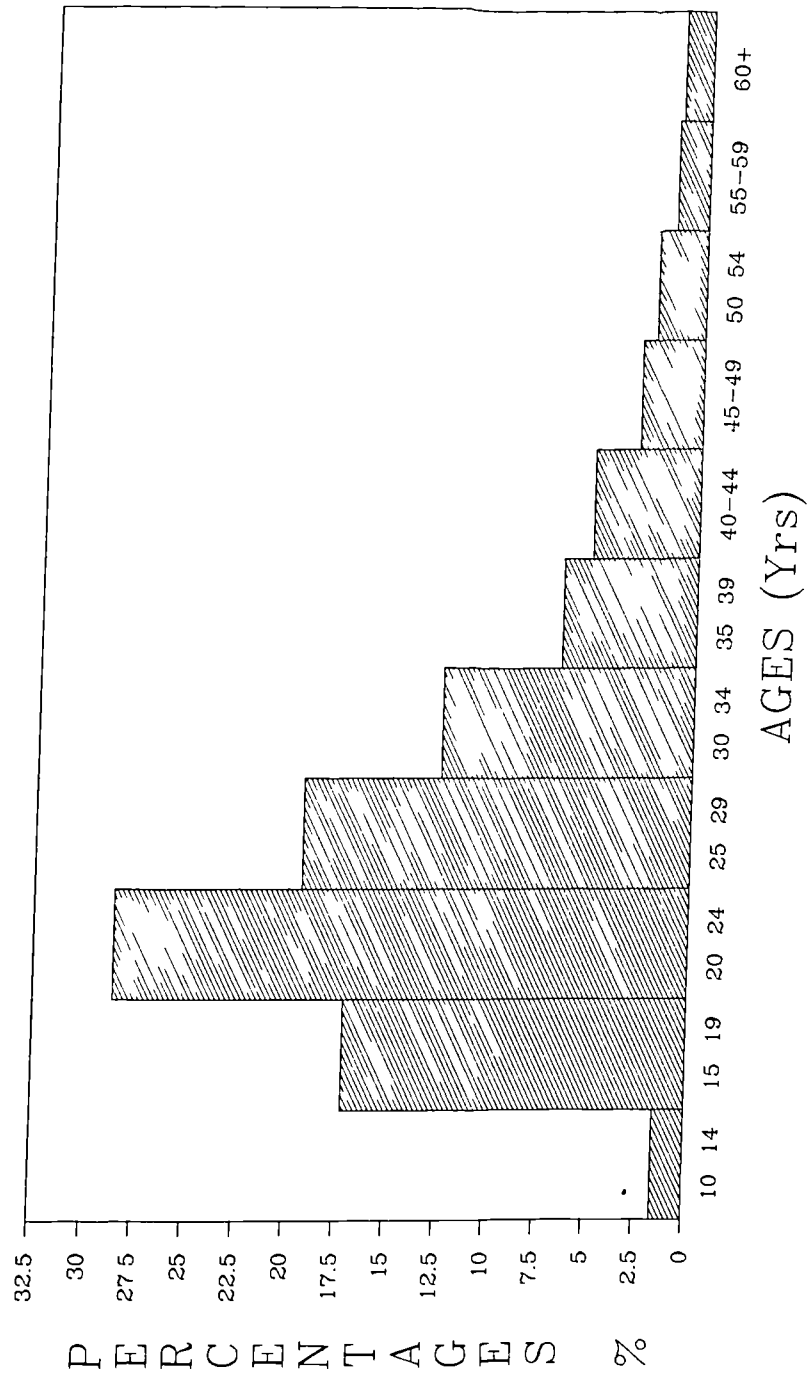
Graph 5.3

AGES OF WHITE CRIMINALS, OLD BAILEY 1808
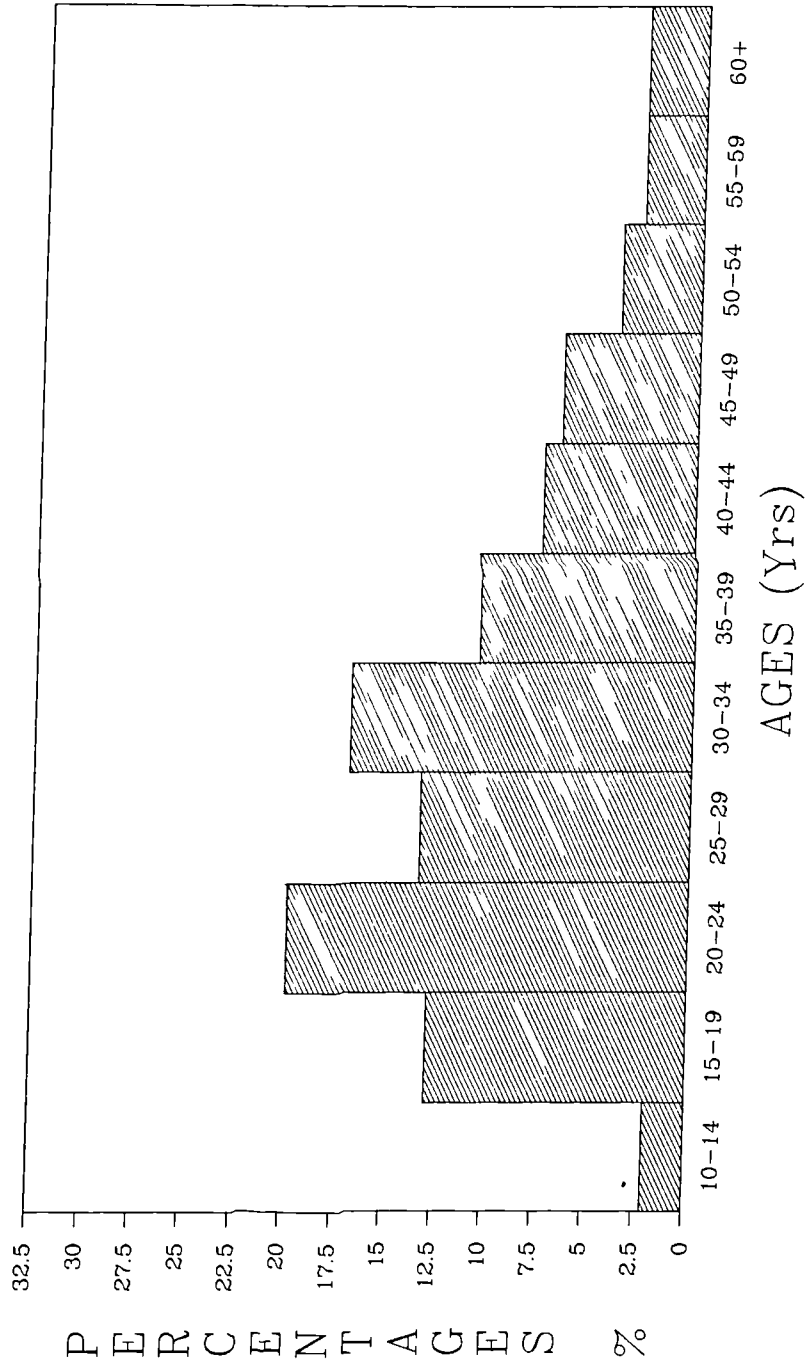
SOURCE :—
Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1808

Graph 5.4

AGES OF IRISH CRIMINALS 1793—1802
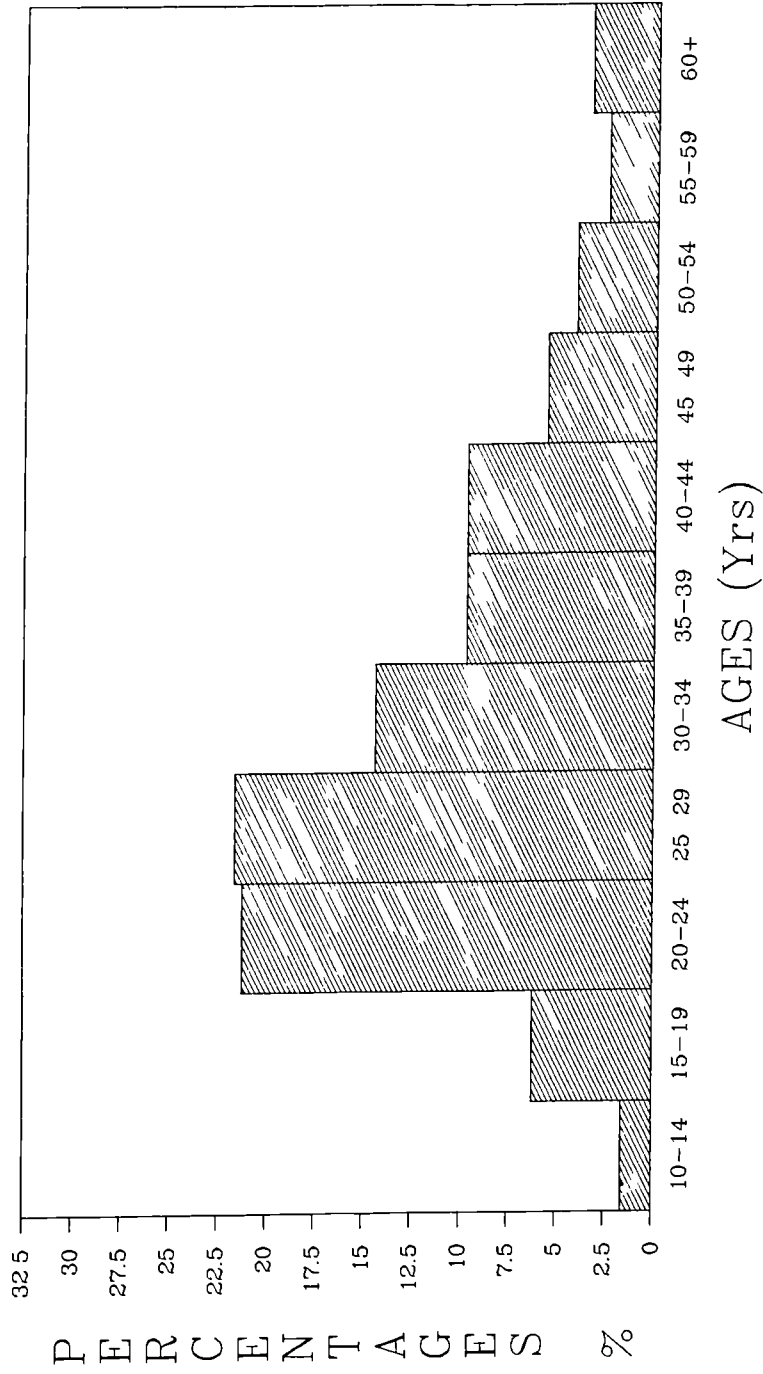
SOURCE :—
Newgate Calendars 1793—1802
Ho 26/2.3   Ho 26/8

that the black population as a whole, being supplemented by the arrival of adult seamen, emancipated loyalists, and servants from abroad, might have been, on average, older than the criminal white population. But before reaching firm conclusions on the ages of the black and white criminals discussed, it should be noted that the Old Bailey sample contained a considerable element of criminals whose ages were unknown, which might have resulted in distortion of the age bands. Having compared the ages of black and white criminals, it is now proposed to consider sentencing patterns, especially transportation.

V

The transportation of both black and white criminals occupies an important place in this study. Until recently historians have remained unaware that black people were transported to Australia and Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land). In fact, Cobley identified six black men on board the first convict fleet bound for the Antipodes.[36] In this section the numbers of black people transported, their crimes, ages and occupations will be considered.

L.L.Robson's The Convict Settlers of Australia can be held primarily responsible for the stimulation of research into convicts transported to Botany Bay, Van Diemens's Land, and Western Australia; and much attention has been paid to this white criminal population.[37] Duffield has stressed that "no continent has been less suspected of having an Afro-black presence than Australia".[38] He argues that blacks formed only a tiny minority of the total numbers of convicts, and that segregation within the convict system itself failed to exist, both

during and after the sentence period.[39] However, Duffield only identifies those of Afro-black descent, thereby omitting the East Indian and Indian element. Perhaps an upward revision of Duffield's figure of between 500-600 blacks, is therefore justifiable, by the inclusion of Sheik Brom, Sadi, Susannah, and John Hogan, amongst others of Eastern origin.[40] Furthermore, not all of Duffield's transportees were sentenced in British courts; many being convicted and sentenced in the West Indies, Cape Colony, St. Helena, and Mauritius.[41] However, although the importance of Duffield's research cannot be over-emphasised, only convicts sentenced in British courts are of direct interest to this study.

On the nature of the crimes committed by these convicts, P. Coldham states that

> lest it be thought that only the most vicious criminal
> elements were being disposed of in this way, it is
> salutary to recall that by far the most regular crime for
> which a sentence of transportation was imposed was for
> the theft of a handkerchief.[42]

Throughout the period, most transportees had committed some form of theft; this is verified by both the black and white transportees sentenced from Newgate.[43] Eleven black offenders were found to have been transported in the Newgate Calendars in the period 1791-1810; all being convicted of theft. The Old Bailey sample recorded twenty black transportees, of whom seven had been found guilty of the theft of goods; a further four stole watches, three money, two cotton, another meat, one stole a box, one was found guilty of highway robbery, and the last was convicted for breaking and entering.

Most of the black transportees who inform this study were in receipt of seven year sentences. Of the thirty-one blacks whose crimes were punished by transportation, twenty-four were sentenced to seven years' penal servitude, whilst the remaining seven received life sentences. This black sentencing pattern reinforces Ian Donnachie's Scottish study, as ten per cent of his sample of 383 convicts were sentenced to penal servitude for life, thirty per cent received sentences of more than ten years, whilst the remaining sixty per cent were punished by seven years transportation.[44]

Regarding the ages of those transported, Robson's study, based on a sample of one in twenty English and Irish convicts for the entire period of transportation from 1787 to 1868, reveals that the average age was 25.9 years. [45] Donnachie's research on Scottish transportees concludes that the average age was approximately twenty-five years.[46] An analysis of those black convicts whose ages were revealed in the criminal records indicates that the leading age group was those aged between fifteen and nineteen years, followed by those in the age band twenty to twenty-four and twenty-five to twenty-nine (see Graph 5.5). However, forty-eight per cent of those blacks transported appeared in the broad age group of twenty to twenty-nine, whereas only thirty-two per cent were aged between fifteen and nineteen. Graph 5.6 represents a sample of white convicts sentenced at the Old Bailey in 1808, twenty-three per cent of convicts appear in the age band twenty to twenty-four, and seventeen per cent fall within the age band thirty to thirty-four. A different pattern again emerges from the Irish sample of Newgate transportees. Graph 5.7 indicates that the majority (twenty-three per cent) of Irish convicts were aged between twenty-five and twenty-nine,

Graph 5.5

AGES OF BLACK TRANSPORTEES 1780 – 1830
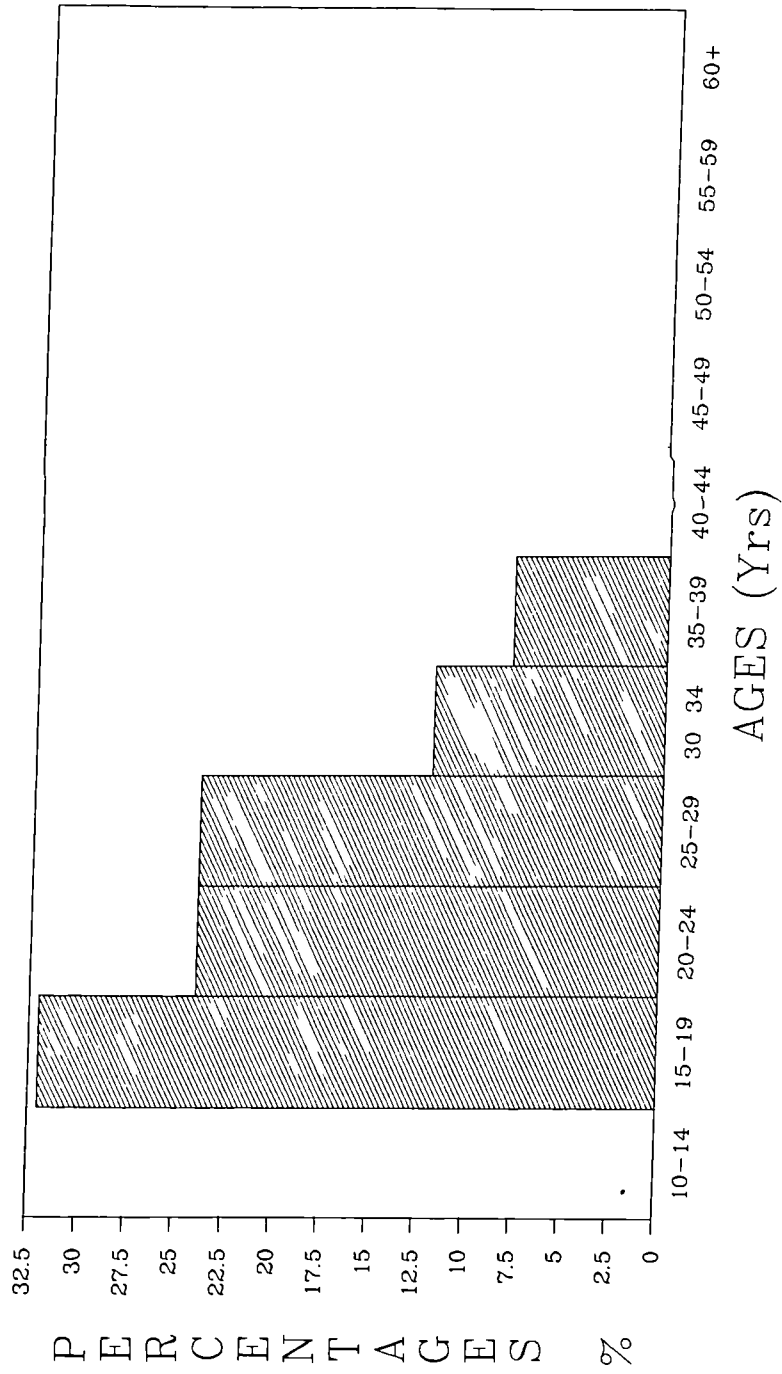
Graph 5.6

AGES OF WHITE TRANSPORTEES 1808
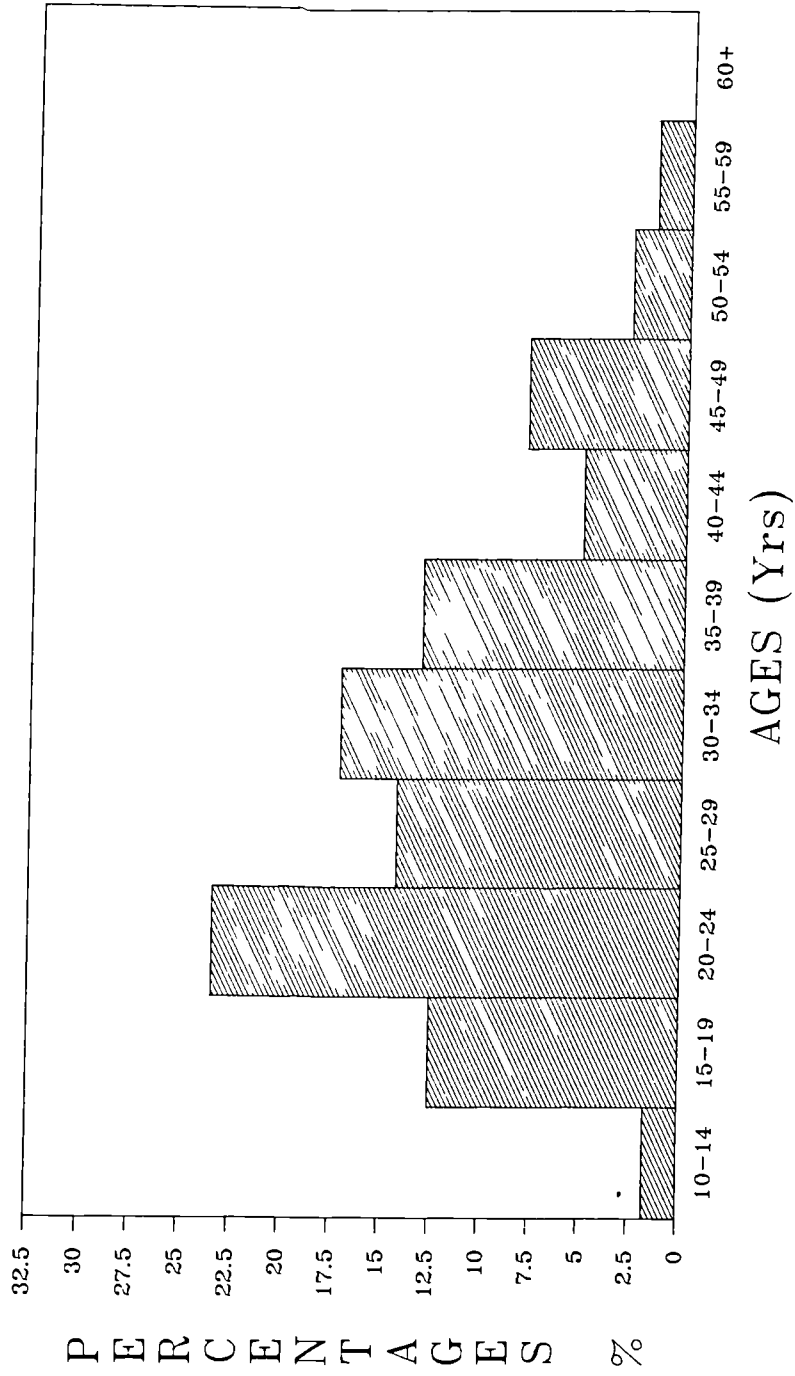
SOURCE :—
Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1808

Graph 5.7

AGES OF IRISH TRANSPORTEES 1793–1802

AGES (Yrs)
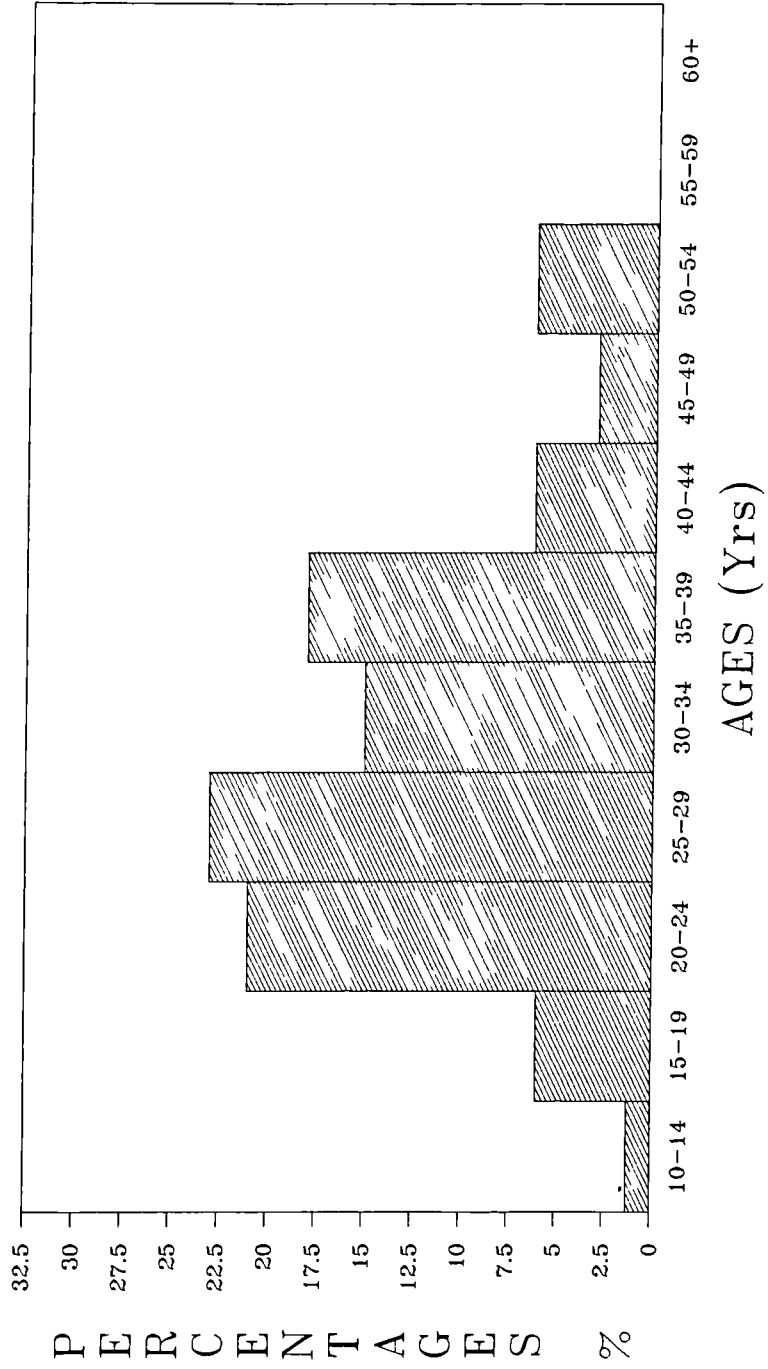
SOURCE :–
Newgate Calendars 1793–1808
Ho 26/2.3   Ho 26/8

followed by twenty-one per cent in the age band twenty to twenty-four (see Appendix I for figures).

Thus, some of the research supports King's suggestion that criminals below the age of nineteen and over the age of thirty were dealt with more leniently by the courts.[47] However, it appears that analysis of some other convicts's ages questions King's hypothesis, and supports my own tentative suggestion that sentencing patterns differed according to the group studied and also the area in which sentencing occurred. This is perhaps confirmed to some extent by Graph 5.6 which displays a higher percentage of black criminals below the age of nineteen being sentenced to transportation. Those aged over thirty appear to have been dealt with less severely by the courts, in accordance with King's findings for white convicts.

Moreover, the average age of black transportation, being 24.9 years, conforms to Donnachie's Scottish sample, and is also marginally more youthful than Robson's convicts. The sample of black females transported was too small to yield significant information on age, and their small numbers had repercussions for family and community life in Australia. As Duffield emphasises " with so few Afro-black women being transported, the chances of a black man finding an Afro-black wife were, to say the least, remote".[48] With sex ratios of five to one females, white criminals experienced similar problems as their black facsimilies.

The occupational structure of those transported to the Antipodes indicates that the majority of English, Scottish, and Irish originated from the lower classes, and furthermore, most were employed as servants or labourers. Donnachie's study reveals that two-thirds of the Scottish transportees had been employed as transport workers or as men of the

sea.[49] This occupational tendency is reinforced by A.Shaw who argues that "of the perpetrators who were transported, more than the national proportions were...transport workers or personal servants.[50] Regardless of the ethnic origin of those transported, the majority of convict occupations remain unrecorded. Of the twenty-nine black male and two females transportees identified; four were servants, two labourers, one a mariner, and there also appeared a tailor and a person described as a seller of matches.

Duffield in "From Slave Colonies to Penal Colonies : The West Indian Convict Transportees to Australia" identified the occupations of fifty-two black people sentenced in English courts. Seventeen proved to be seamen, fifteen were servants, thirteen were tradesmen, three were described as labourers, the occupation of one was unspecified, and of the remaining three, one was a musician, one a stowaway, and one was a messenger to a board of general offices.[51] This conforms to my)ccupational analysis in the previous chapter and reinforces the .mportance of the servant and seaman categories. Cobley's six black :ransportees included two servants, one of which, John Caesar, appeared in Duffield's records.[52] This same John Caesar and Thomas Orford, both :onvicted of breaking and entering, became Australia's first bushrangers. Of the remainder, John Moseley perpetrated fraud and John Williams, John Martin, and John Coffin had all committed various forms of theft.[53] The above-mentioned offences proved to be not unusual, and serve to demonstrate that black transportees did not resort to special types of crime. Cobley's work further demonstrates that the Afro-black presence was discernible from the beginnings of transportation, a system

that persisted beyond the end of the slave trade and the ending of slavery in the colonies.

VI

As well as cataloguing cases of blacks as accused and criminals, the Newgate Calendars and the Old Bailey Sessions Papers record black people as victims of and witnesses to crime. Victims in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were subjected to types of crimes that were committed in London society in general. Theft, assault, and robbery proved to be the most common forms of crime perpetrated on both black and white alike. The experiences of Lascars, as victims of crime, also conformed to the above-mentioned patterns, and amongst this group fleeting reference should be made to Sawney Clough and Henry Rose.[54]

A previous section has noted the frequent occurrence of robbery involving women who worked in pairs; black victims of such crimes included, Domingo Charles, the said victim of Ann Duff and Mary Norton; and William Wells, who was assaulted by Mary Mason and Ann Davies; whilst Thomas Coffee proved the unsuspecting victim of Sarah Burman.[55] The sample also identifies two black victims of the more serious crime of murder. The first case involved John Walker, the victim of a white woman with whom he was co-habiting; and the second instance involved a Lascar, Immambacchus.[56] The incidence of one black man assaulting another was a little more unusual; Jacob Morris being indicted for the assault of Joseph Uxbridge, a seafaring man. A witness to the crime

stated that:

> I was standing at my own door, I saw two coloured men
>
> the prisoner and the prosecutor, coming along the street.
>
> I saw the prisoner knock the prosecutor down.[57]

Black females, too, were victims of white crime. Pamela Clarke, for example, had a box of clothing stolen by a white man.[58] It appears then, that black victims of crime were as prepared to prosecute as white victims. King posits that

> clearly the machinery of the law was widely regarded by
>
> labouring men as an appropriate way of dealing with a
>
> broad spectrum of property offenders.[59]

As anticipated, black witnesses, when summoned to give evidence, appeared mostly in crimes of theft, but a more unusual case involved William Dandridge, who was a witness to the murder of another black man, Joseph Walker.[60] Matolo, a Lascar, gave evidence in a case concerning the theft of property from a serang (boatswain), by another Lascar, Nowardin.[61] If it proved necessary, an interpreter, was engaged to translate for black witnesses; this pattern conformed to normal patterns of court interrogation of foreign witnesses. When David Brockford was accused of theft, a witness, Frederich Wichscherr, stated through an interpreter, "I am a native of the East Indies....I saw the prisoner take a five pound note".[62]

Dolby Jackson gave crucial evidence against two white women who had stolen a watch, a crime, which resulted in their ultimate transportation. His statement has been recorded in the Old Bailey Papers as follows:

> I am a shoeblack, I was sitting in the Black Dog; those

two men came in and called for a pint of beer, they both drank once; he [the victim] fell asleep; those two women came in and finished the pint of beer the men had called for. One of them sat down and the other leaned over him, Charlotte Brown put his head in her lap, and the other unbuttoned his flap and took out his watch.[63]

Black females are also discernible in this category of prosecution witnesses. Mary Howell's evidence led to the transportation of Elizabeth Wilmot who had stolen two guineas.[64]

In some criminal cases black people performed other important roles within the legal process. A black man, Lewis, for instance (although he did not actually appear in court), aided in the arrest of a white man, one Andrew Tiffen, suspected of breaking and entering.[65] An unidentified "man of colour" fetched the watchman, as described in the case of an assault on Alexander Kandall.[66] Other black men or mulattoes were implicated in crimes but never brought to trial. An example is Edward Hatton, indicted for stealing clothes, who blamed a black man for giving him the clothes to sell. John Shields, an officer reporting to the court, stated that "I found the prisoner at Ratcliff Highway....I asked how he got them [the clothes]; he said a black man named Peter gave them to him to sell".[67] Instances such as that outlined above could suggest that blacks were being used by whites as scapegoats by white criminals, but the number of examples is far too few to enable any firm conclusions to be reached.

VII

Apart from the provision of evidence on black occupations and demographic structure, criminal records furnish some hints about the attitudes of the courts and white authority towards blacks in Britain. The process of swearing in of witnesses and attitudes towards sentencing will be investigated in this section for indications of prejudice.

The courts did not appear to have a consistent policy in the swearing in process of black witnesses to crime in this period 1780-1830. Blacks were treated in much the same manner as minors who were too young to understand the nature of an oath. Comparisons can be drawn from the following instances of the swearing in of witnesses. One thirteen year old white girl, Sarah Kendall was asked:

> What will become of you if you tell me stories?
>
> When I die I shall go to hell.
>
> Do you know if you swear false that you will go to hell too?
>
> Yes. (68)

Similar overtones are apparent in the swearing in of a black man, Henry Daniel;

> Are you a Christian?
>
> I hope so.
>
> Do you profess the Christian religion?
>
> Yes. I do.
>
> You have been baptised have you?
>
> Yes I have. (69)

This pattern reoccurs in other instances where George Johnson, a black

man, was questioned; "Are you a Christian? Yes. Have you ever been baptised? Yes".[70] Also Rodgers refers to the court martial of two white sailors for sodomy aboard the ship Nore in which a black seaman was the principal prosecution witness. After establishing that the black seaman was a Christian, (Commodore Keppel was his godfather), his evidence resulted in the conviction and execution of the accused.[71] However, the hanging of two white sailors on the evidence of a black may illustrate the Navy's liberal outlook on the question of colour.

Within the courts a certain degree of ambivalence was nevertheless displayed in accepting the veracity of black evidence. Some black witnesses like Henry Daniel faced a rigorous investigation regarding their eligibility to present evidence in the court; others were accepted on the basis of a standard oath. In short, the courts and the instance cited from the Naval courts, on this evidence, could not be accused of consistent antipathy towards black witnesses to crime.

Hostile attitudes towards black witnesses could possibly have been sublimated; it is in the sentencing of those guilty that antipathy would have been more readily detected. White legal autonomy, through sentencing patterns could have reflected popular fears of miscegenation, unemployment, and increasing numbers of black people. Therefore, for our purposes black sentencing patterns have been analysed and compared with a small sub-section of Irish criminals, as the Irish constituted the largest immigrant group of the period; and also with Peter King's white sentencing patterns on the Home Circuit, for evidence of prejudice towards black people. Here, the key is not control of blacks per se, but control of the "dangerous classes" in general, of which the black

TABLE 5.3

BLACK PATTERNS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT 1780–1830

CRIME   **SENTENCES**

Type of Crime	Number and % Accused	Number Acquitted	Number Transported	Whipped/ Goaled/ Fined	Died in Custody	Executed	Death Sentence Commuted	Other	Total
Theft	81 (77.9)	27	25	13	1		8	7	81
Murder/ Manslaughter	7 (0.7)			5	1			1	7
Highway Robbery	5 (4.8)	3	1		1				5
Assault/ Robbery	2 (1.9)	1						1	2
Other	9 (8.7)	3	2	2			1	1	9
TOTALS	104	34	28	20	3		9	10	104
%		32.7	26.9	19.2	2.9		8.7	9.6	

SOURCE   Newgate Calendars 1791–1810   (47 black people indicted for crime)
         Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1780–1830   (57 black people indicted for crime)

TABLE 5.4

IRISH PATTERNS OF CRIME AND PUNISHMENT 1793 AND 1802

CRIME **SENTENCES**

Type of Crime	Number and % Accused	Number Acquitted	Number Transported	Whipped/ Goaled/ Fined	Died in Custody	Executed	Death Sentence Commuted	Other	Total
Theft	209 (65.1)	89	42	64	1		8	5	209
Murder Manslaughter	4 (1.2)	2				2			4
Highway Robbery	9 (2.8)	4					5		9
Assault/ Robbery	20 (6.2)	10		4			6		20
Other	79 (24.7)	33	1	30		2	6	7	79
TOTAL	321	138	43	98	1	4	25	12	321
%		43.0	13.4	30.5	0.3	1.3	7.8	3.7	

SOURCE Newgate Calendars HO 26/ 2-3 1793
HO 26/ 8 1802

population formed only a small part.

Table 5.3 denotes the major categories of crime of which black people were accused. It reveals that of the 104 black males and females brought before the judicial system during the period, the rates of acquittal represented roughly one-third of the court's decisions. Thirty-four blacks (32.7 per cent) of those charged were proved not guilty or discharged by proclomation. This conforms to King's study in which 33.6 per cent of the total numbers of whites accused of crime on the Home Circuit were acquitted.[72] Table 5.4 represents the Irish sub-sample, and is significant in that 138 of the 321 Irish accused of crimewere acquitted. This Irish acquittal rate of 43.0 per cent was evidently much higher than either the black rate of acquittal or that of the general acquittal rate of criminals on the Home Circuit.

Furthermore, smaller percentages of Irish were transported. 13.4 per cent of Irish found to be guilty were transported in comparison with 26.9 per cent of their black counterparts. Higher percentages of Irish, on the other hand, were punished by whipping, fines or goal sentences. The court's sentencing pattern fails to display uniformity if a comparison is made of Irish and black criminals, which might indicate that a degree of bias was involved. Unfortunately, due to a lack of firm evidence, only assumptions may be made that prejudice appeared inherent in sentencing patterns.

Of the fifty-four black people found guilty of theft, twenty-five were transported (a 46.3 per cent transportation rate); in contrast only forty-two of the 120 Irish found guilty of theft were transported, which represents a transportation rate of 35.0 per cent. A somewhat higher transportation rate is, therefore, found for blacks, which again might

be indicative of prejudice. Such factors as the age of the accused, or character references might have been in operation in both black and white sentencing patterns. King noted that a "solid policy of harsh sentences was pursued against those in their twenties".[73] The black sample might have consisted of greater numbers in this age band than the Irish. Significant differences in sentencing patterns are apparent in this sample of blacks and Irish. Obviously, the attitudes of white authority towards black people as witnesses to crime, and in their sentencing of criminals is open to wide interpretation.

The evidence presented in this chapter does not suggest that the black population in eighteenth and nineteenth century London was crime-ridden, but it shows that the pattern of offences was similar to that of white offenders. This conclusion supports Shyllon's suggestion that "though there was certainly crime among blacks, there is no evidence to suggest that it exceeded (or was even in pari passu with) that of the whites".[74] Rather it suggests a pattern of poor people's crime, and poor people's punishment. There is no conclusive evidence to suggest that the court's treatment of black criminals displayed any prejudice, but some reservations must be made, given the differences that are discernible in the sentencing patterns of the blacks and the Irish. Overall, Irish acquittal rates appeared higher than black, greater leniency was displayed in the rates of transportation, and in other types of punishment given to the Irish, certainly for the offence of theft which was the crime most frequently dealt with by the courts.

The Old Bailey Sessions Papers and the Newgate Calendars have proved to be a key source in informing this chapter, and indeed the entire study. More research on a wider range of record groups might draw

out the full significance of black criminal records. But for the present information has been provided on black ages, sex ratios, numbers, and occupations, especially indicating the importance of the servant and sailor group which also proved valuable in the transportation section of this chapter. It is now proposed to divert attention to a specific group of Eastern sailors who formed a significant element of the black presence in the period 1780 to 1830.

C H A P T E R   S I X

L A S C A R S   :   E A S T E R N   S E A M E N   I N   L O N D O N

Amongst those of Eastern origin, Lascars have been commonplace visitors to Western seaports for the past two centuries, the Danes being the first nation to crew Europe-bound ships with these seamen. From the late eighteenth century onwards Lascars became a numerically significant element within the black presence in Britain, but they have received only cursory attention from historians. John Salter (in 1873) referred to this sub-group of seamen in The Asiatics in England [1], and earlier, R.M.Hughes in 1855 dealt with legislation relating specifically to these sailors.[2] The legislation of 1814 tackled the system of bonding and compelled owners and masters of vessels to feed, clothe, and shelter Lascars whilst awaiting a homeward-bound ship. By 1823 the East India Company bore the onus for their repatriation.

There has been a persistent tendency in the scholarship to concentrate on the Lascars' distressed circumstances; particularly with reference to the Committee for the Relief if the Black Poor. Shyllon, for example, notes that "although most of the Black Poor were Africans, a sizeable number were Indians, chiefly Lascars!"[3] This trend was perpetuated to some extent by Dixon, who has concentrated exclusively on this group of "forgotten seamen", and was continued recently, in Visram's more general approach to Eastern visitors.[4] Yet, despite these publications no account of their everyday lives exists. It is the intention of this chapter then, to broaden our knowledge of Lascars, who

formed both a distinctive component of London's poor population, and a separate group from other black seamen.

Although Lascars were free men, unlike their Negro counterparts whose status proved difficult to define (as we have emphasised in Chapter Four), their earning capacity was consistently undermined by the Indian system of recruitment which was riddled with bribery and corruption. Within the following sections, it is proposed to discuss the origins and definitions of the term Lascar, and to outline those primary sources which provide information on this group. Their numbers will form the basis of discussion, and comparisons will be made between Lascar and other black and European patterns of recruitment and treatment. Finally, it is intended to offer glimpses into the everyday lives of Lascars during the period 1780 to 1830.

I

The term "Lascar" (defined as Eastern seamen) originated from the Persian **khalasi**, a sailor, and **kara**, the Tamil word for a worker; thus **khalasi kara** was transformed into **lasikari** or **lascar** transcribed into English. The word originally came into common usage to denote an Indian seaman, but according to Salter, by the mid-nineteenth century, the term included "Burmese, Bengali, Malay, Chinese, Siamese, and Surati".[5] During our period, it was calculated that of those Lascars employed in the British merchant service,

> 60 per cent [were] natives of India, 20 per cent Malays
> or Natives of the Straits of Malacca, Java and ...10 per
> cent [were] the Natives of China, and 10 per cent [were]

Natives of East Africa and Arabia.[6]

Thus, it would appear that the term Lascar was applicable to a broad spectrum of nationalities. Having discussed the origins and applicability of the term, attention will now be focused on the primary evidence that forms the basis of this research.

Foremost amongst these sources have been the India Office Library Records which yielded detailed information on numbers, treatment, and the health of Lascars whilst in London.[7] British Parliamentary Papers comprise an important body of material, and the 1814-15 Report to the Parliamentary Commission on Lascars and Other Asiatic Seamen, [8] Parliamentary Papers relating to East India Affairs(1816), [9] and the Parliamentary Report on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis (1814-15), have also been used in this study.[10] Finally, criminal records and parish registers afford momentary insights into the lives of Lascars.[11] It is now intended to explore some of these sources that provide evidence on the numbers of these sailors who were brought to England on board ships that either belonged to, or were contracted by, the East India Company.

II

Official statistics relating to Lascar numbers have been tabulated in Table 2.1, which serves to indicate the size of this Eastern black presence. This provides a sharp contrast with their African, Afro-American, or West Indian maritime counterparts, whose numbers during the period 1780 to 1830 are far less easily quantified due to the overall lack of relevant data. It is assumed that prior to 1780, Lascars did not

serve in the ships of the East India Company in large numbers, as Section 7 of the 1660 Navigation Acts stipulated that the master, and at least seventy-five per cent of the crew of British registered ships which imported goods from Asia, had to be British. The extent to which this Act was actually enforced must remain the subject of conjecture, especially in view of the increasing numbers of stranded Lascars in London. Despite successive government attempts to forbid the employment of Lascars on ships sailing West of the Cape of Good Hope, their presence caused contemporary alarm.

These regulations would have been relaxed as Eastern seamen became required to "bridge the gap" in times of warfare, when British crews of the East India Company's freighted ships were subjected to heavy impressment.[12] The abolition of the slave trade in 1807, and the pre-emptive agitation by Liverpool traders amongst others, for the freeing of the Indian trades from monopolistic control proved a determining factor which enabled the laws to be ignored. From the early nineteenth century, India and the East Indies became increasingly important as exporters of cotton and sugar. Therefore, a greater supply of labour was required for the shipment of this produce, resulting in the recruitment of increasing numbers of Lascars. Moreover, according to the London maintenance records of Lascars, the employment of these seamen increased six-fold during the Napoleonic Wars.[13]

George estimated Lascar numbers in 1814 to be more than 2,500, when a further increase was anticipated; but she also pointed to the high rate of Lascar mortality which resulted in a subsequent Parliamentary Report.[14] This Report from the Committee on Lascars and Other Asiatic Seamen (1814-15), challenged this estimate of 2,500. The Committee had

visited the Barracks housing these seamen during their sojourn in London, and their subsequent unfavourable report stated that;

> a small number only was in the barracks at the time at which your Committee visited them, but they understood that there were periods of the year, when not less than 1,000 or 1,100 persons were received into them; a number which your Committee observe, exceeds the utmost calculations of the number for which they are intended.[15]

The Report criticised the lack of facilities, which were further exacerbated by increasing numbers, and expressed concern over mounting expenditure;

> Some years ago the number of Asiatic seamen appears to have been so small, and the expenditure on account of them so trifling, that a contract with an individual seemed not an inconvenient mode of providing for them; but their number, and increased expenditure attached to them, has gradually grown to such a magnitude, that your Committee are of the opinion that the time is now arrived when a regular establishment under the immediate authority and inspection of the East India Company should be formed.[16]

According to Visram, the number of Lascars employed in British ships depended upon;

> not only the number of the ships and the growth of British trade with the East, but also on the availability of the Lascar sailors themselves. In a good agricultural

year the numbers of those working on ships fell. [17]

The prospect of alternative employment becomes even more significant in comparing Lascars with other seamen. Lascars were essentially agriculturists, whose plots of land remained under cultivation whilst they earned income from sea-faring activities; thus many had economic prospects of dual-employment. This resulted in a tendency for Lascars to return to their country of origin, preferring not to reside permanently in England, although there is some evidence to suggest a minority did settle. Other black crews of Afro-American, West Indian, or African descent, were occupied as full-time sailors, and not as part-seafarers / part-agriculturists.

The extent to which the Navigation Laws had been relaxed is illustrated in Table 6.1, which demonstrates that Lascar numbers proved greater than British crews on specified ships sailing from the East Indies during the years 1821 to 1823. Lascars represented 84.8 per cent of the crews on board seven ships sailing from the East in this period. This trend continued as more ships were built in India, and after 1840, steam-powered liners completed the voyage between India and England within a year. [18] Therefore, by the mid-nineteenth century, Hughes argues that,

> at the very lowest computation from 10 to 12,000 Lascars
> [were] employed in the British merchant service in the
> East India, China, and the Australian trade; and about
> half that number [were] annually brought to the United
> Kingdom. [19]

At the outbreak of the First World War, according to Dixon, Lascars represented 17.5 per cent of all of those employed on British registered

TABLE 6.1

SHIPS FROM THE EAST INDIES

1821-1823.

DATE OF ARRIVAL IN LONDON	SHIP	BRITISH CREW	LASCARS	PORT LEFT
31.12.1821	Fort William	45	110	Calcutta
26. 6.1822	Milford	4	72	Bombay
24. 7.1822	Partridge	2	66	Bombay
25. 1 1823	Charles Forbes	3	107	Bombay
8. 4.1823	Lord Casltereagh	4	86	Bombay
17. 5.1823	Cambrian	17	38	Bombay
20. 5.1823	Upton Castle	16	30	Bombay

TOTAL		91 (15.2%)	509 (84.8%)	

SOURCE   Extract of Report to the House of Commons on East India Shipping. (1821-23) L/ PARL/ 491.vessels.

vessels.[20] The paucity of adequate data relating to numbers of Negro seamen has been noted in Chapter Four; however, it may be assumed that due to the afore-mentioned factors, Lascars formed an increasingly significant component of the black maritime fraternity throughout the nineteenth century. The implications of this presence have been ignored by those historians who regard this period as one in which black numbers declined.[21] With reference to the size of this Lascar population in London, the Reverend James Pegg stated that,

> it is not possible to speak with any precision. It varies according to the circumstances affecting the supply of British seamen in our Eastern territories. [22]

Accurate conclusions regarding Lascar representation in London's total population during 1780-1830 prove difficult. In this instance, research into parish registers proved unrewarding as reference to only one Lascar burial was found.[23] The absence of these seamen in baptismal records should fail to surprise as most would have been of the Hindu or Muslim religions. Chapter Two estimated the total number of blacks in the late eighteenth century to be 10,000. The Record of Expenses for the Maintenance of Lascars outlined in Table 2.1, indicates that a minimum of 224 Lascars were abroad in the metropolis in 1803, therefore, this transient group would have comprised an estimated 2.4 per cent of the black presence. This percentage figure displayed fluctuations over time, and perhaps by 1830 the Lascar percentage was quite substantial. Estimates of the proportion of Lascars to total black population must, though, remain tentative. It is, however, possible to distinguish between methods of recruitment and treatment of Lascars and

other black seamen of African, Afro-American, American, and West Indian origin.

III

As members of the British empire, Negro seamen of West Indian origin (and until independence in the 1780's, North American too) whether free or enslaved, were regarded as British. The Navigation Acts therefore, did not restrict them from service on British ships. But under legislation of 1823 (4 Geo 4 c 80) Lascars were clearly restr ted in service on such ships. It was not until the repeal of this Act in 1849, that Lascars were presumed to be British seamen for most purposes. The legislation of 1802 (42 Geo 3 c 61) had deemed that Lascars were not to be employed on vessels sailing west of the Cape of Good Hope; the extent to which this legislation was relaxed is evident in the increased numbers of these seamen. By 1814 the bonding of Eastern seamen was in operation following reports referred to earlier in the chapter. Lascars, then, experienced the worst conditions of any aliens in this country, being stranded in ports pending their return voyage. Their situation was beyond their control, and was the result of an imbalanced trade with the East, that demanded payment in bullion rather than with British exports (this produced resentment amongst the Liverpool merchants, amongst others, who became subsequently dedicated to breaking the monopoly of this trade). The Lascar sojourn in English ports proved lengthy, because of the exogenous influence of trade with the East, which was further compounded by the legal stipulation for British crews on India-bound ships.

Lascars tended to be regarded as inferior to European seamen. A Select Committee on the East India Company reported that;

> two Lascars may be considered equal to one European; in a cold climate the Lascar becomes of no value. Two Lascars can keep watch more easily than one European, and do many small jobs; there is not much work on board a ship that requires great strength. The conditions of the Indian ship without European officers is as slovenly, dirty and ill-managed as possible.[24]

Yet, despite these supposed imperfections, their recruitment continued in ever-increasing numbers during the nineteenth century. Lascars proved to be a cheap, elastic supply of labour; their renumeration was much lower than European or Negro seamen, so that,

> had an individual received all of his monthly pay it would have amounted to between a sixth and a seventh of the European rates. [25]

Also the cost of victualling a Lascar crew was fifty per cent less than that of a British crew, being six pence per head per day, as opposed to twelve pence a day.

Apart from the differences in pay and costs of victualling, further distinctions become apparent. Negro seamen were full-time sailors employed as cooks, stewards or deck-hands; unlike their Indian maritime counterparts who were primarily agriculturists, forced into seafaring activities to supplement income in periods of bad harvest. However, the Lascar possessed one advantage over other black men; he remained free from both enslavement and impressment, threats under which the Negro, as a British subject, continuously laboured.

An essential contrast between Lascars and other seamen was the Lascar's method of recruitment and treatment on land and at sea. Negro and European sailors were engaged individually (or impressed individually), and at the end of a voyage received all of their pay, excluding subsidies and including bounties; whereas the Lascar was recruited through a "middle man" who retained a percentage of the seaman's wages. This system of recruiting Lascars revolved around the key figure of a **ghat serang,** whose position was prominent in the Indian shipping world, being a "combination of money lender, labour recruiter, and lodging house keeper".[26]

Within such a system, corruption was rife. The **ghat serang** was in turn, bribed by a **serang** (the equivalent of a boatswain who was in charge of Lascars whilst at sea and on terra firma) for obtaining their billets, according to the size of the ship. Lascars, themselves bribed the **serangs** with both a proportion of the advance received for signing a contract with the East India Company, and with part of their subsequent wages. A letter from the Bengal Superintendent of Police in 1793 noted that

> Lascars seldom receive half of the impress which is paid
> for them by the Captains and sometimes much less. The
> people who are security for these Lascars [serangs]
> ....are seized and confined by the Ghat Serangs and
> obliged to make the whole of the impress for a
> Lascar.[27]

Despite various attempts to abandon this system, the Eastern method of recruitment, riddled with bribery, proved to be too entrenched; even Warren Hastings in 1783 was forced into an accommodation with the **ghat**

serangs, who monopolised the supply of labour. Subsequent complaints regarding the suitability of these Lascars as seafarers were ignored, as were those levied against the **ghat serangs** for failure to provide the required quotas of seamen.[28] As late as the First World War, Lascars remained victims of this corrupt system of recruitment.

Other than the bribes that were deducted from Lascar's wages, Lascars experienced different diets from their European or Afro-black maritime equivalents. Not for them was the diet of "pork and peas / beef and duff" pattern, common in ships crewed by Europeans. Specific instructions regarding their diet were issued by the East India Company, despite the smaller victualling allowance allocated.[29] The 1814-15 Committee Report on Lacars and Other Asiatic Seamen stipulated their non-food needs. Each Lascar was to be provided with a bed, pillow, two jackets and trousers, shoes and two woollen caps.[30] Therefore, after 1815, whilst at sea, Lascars fared better than other black seamen, certainly with regard to their clothing needs. Religion tended not to be a factor taken into consideration in task allocation on British-manned vessels, but Lascar crews proved an exception to this rule. Muslims appeared to be appointed to less menial tasks than Hindus, who usually remained on the deck of the ship.

Unlike other seamen of European, Afro-American or West Indian descent, Lascars remained ignorant of the English language. Therefore, they encountered communication difficulties on their arrival in British ports. They remained stranded in an alien environment for a long period of time, until an Indian-bound ship returned them home. As early as 1782 a complaint had been sent by the East India Company to Fort St. George, India, regarding several Lascars who had landed in London from Denmark,

and were forced to apply to the Company for assistance.[32]

Historians have commented upon the plight of those Lascars in London referring specifically to the assistance given by white philanthropists. Yet few noted that Lascars were forced to sell bedding and clothing in order to survive; others resorted to begging and crime, and some fell victim to the British climate. George estimated Lascar deaths to be "one hundred and forty per annum".[33] Despite the frequency of exhortations, the East India Company repeatedly refused to accept responsibility for the repatriation of these Eastern seamen. The 1814 legislation, by placing the onus, through a bonding system, on the master or owner of the ship, did little to alleviate the situation. Prior to the passage of this Act, the East India Company had made arrangements for Lascars to be lodged in East London's Kingsland Road and at Shoreditch, at a cost of ten shillings and six pence per week.[34] Furthermore, a medical officer, Hilton Docker, was appointed. In a letter to the Shipping Committee of the East India Company, he stated that,

> the natives of India who came to this country are mostly
> of bad constitutions. Numbers are landed from these ships
> where they have been ill a great part of the voyage....
> Those who are landed healthy are of course exposed to the
> same danger of climate and season; and in addition almost
> all of them give way to every excess in drinking,
> debauchery and contract to a violent degree those
> diseases (particularly venereal) which such liberties
> are calculated to produce.[35]

Hilton Docker's report on the unhealthy condition of Lascars detail

the health of crews on their arrival in 1814.[36] The worst incident outlined in the records relates to the ship <u>Wellington</u> which had sailed from Bombay with seventy-one Lascars ; several had died on the passage, and sixteen were taken to hospital on arrival at Gravesend. The resident surgeon reported the sick to be;

> afflicted with berry berry or scorbatic disorders
> peculiar to Lascars...three of them have died since
> arrival in the Downs and two or three others are beyond
> all human aid. Had the ships met with ten days longer
> detention and bad weather in the Channel, I am of the
> opinion that more than half of the crew would have been
> incapable of duty from that disease.[37]

Those on board the <u>Barracuda</u>, which left Bengal with ninety-six Lascars and two Chinese apparently fared better. Four Lascars died on the voyage, one drowned, six deserted, and only five were admitted to hospital on arrival in England.[38] In 1802, the Committee of Shipping considered a complaint regarding the feeding of the crew of the ship <u>Perseverance</u> whilst in port. Evidently, Hilton Docker had found Lascars to be "absolutely starving".[39] The committee cited figures from the Bengal Board of Trade concerning the deaths of Lascars in 1801. Of 287 native seamen sailing from Bengal in 1801 on board the ships <u>Cavera</u>, <u>Gabriel</u>, and <u>Calcutta</u>, eighty-four had died on the outward passage, ten died on the return voyage, twenty-two deserted, and twenty-nine were discharged in the United Kingdom. Therefore, only 142 (less than fifty per cent) actually returned home.[40]

These figures appear not extraordinary. According to the Surgeon's Report to the Committee on Shipping 26 May 1802, seventy-three Lascars

were on the sick list of the ships Union, Ganges, Perseverance, and the County of Sutherland during the period March to May 1801. Twenty-two Lascars died, thirty-four recovered and seventeen remained in sick quarters.[41] In 1814, similar mortality rates were apparent amongst those on board the ship Wellington, where four had died from a total crew of seventy-one, and the ship Indian, which reported four Lascar deaths from a crew list of eighty-five. A further four deaths were recorded on the Barrosa.[42] Accounts of Lascar mortality rates are also to be found in Parliamentary Papers of 1816, which indicate that during the period 1 May 1813 to 30 April 1814, ninety-six Lascars and thirty-one Chinese died in the Company hospital or in the Company barracks.[43]

Thus, Lascar crews suffered high rates of mortality. Unfortunately, due to the lack of information on other black sailors, no comparisons of these rates can be attempted. All black sailors were subjected to ill-treatment from white superiors (the evidence of Thomas Clarkson in Chapter Five demonstrated the existence of cruelties perpetrated by whites in authority); but Lascars also suffered from the tyranny of the serang on land and at sea. An example of the former, concerned the ship Union which sailed from Bengal in 1802 with a crew of seventy-four Lascars. Twenty-eight were dead on arrival in England and the serang complained that the chief mate had "flogged and beat the men in a most cruel manner under the Captain's orders."[44] Lascars were evidently berthed in the fo'c'sle and "several of the men died in consequence of severe treatment and having nowhere to sleep". [45] The serang further stated that;

> the chief mate took some of the men by the hair of their
> heads, pulled them down, beat their heads against the

deck and jumped upon them while down, that one died three days after being so ill-treated.[46]

Thomas Clarkson, however noted that some **serangs** were as culpable of such cruelties. In a letter to Reverend John Charlesworth in 1842, he wrote of an incident that had occurred previously in 1822;

> When I was in London, about twenty years ago and at Mr. Alein's house, he and I heard of the cruel treatment of these poor Lascars when we determined that we would, both of us visit their quarters and judge for ourselves. [47]

An English-speaking Lascar informed Clarkson that they were ill-fed and badly treated by a superior Lascar who frequently whipped them. Inside the barracks Clarkson found,

> two or three large cupboards of the height of sentry boxes, but not open, but having a door to them and with locks on them. We asked what they contained; the Lascar (superior Lascar) would not tell us. We demanded that they should be opened when out came a living Lascar; a second was opened and another Lascar came out.[48]

These Lascars, as a punishment for bad behaviour and quarrelling, had been incarcerated in the boxes by the **serang.**

Dr. Hilton Docker was only too well aware of the ill-treatment of Lascars by the **serangs,** and reported on a case in which the delinquent had been tied to the pump and flogged.[49] Flogging was apparently the normal punishment inflicted for those "selling their own clothes, thieving, or some offence aginst one of their own class".[50] Although the motives may have been applauded, the punishment was far too severe. Docker commented,

the only law is the serangs and without that....the

neighbouring inhabitants will feel the ill consequences

of these men sometimes near 1600 in number being without

prompt control.[51]

Clothing and bedding which had been issued by the East India

Company were often sold. The Parliamentary Commission on Lascars of

1814-15 Report from the Committee on Lascars and Other Asiatic Seamen

notes the propensity of Lascars to sell artcles supplied to them by the

Company.[52] Hilton Docker described his pursuit of a Lascar into a

shop, culminating in threats to prosecute the shop-keeper.[53] Evidently

the shop-keeper was not deterred from buying articles of clothing and

bedding from Lascars, as Docker's assistant detected him buying a pair

of shoes. [54] Lascars, too, persisted in this deceit. Docker complained

that,

every artifice is practised to deceive me. They have

presented themselves in almost a literal state of nudity

when searches have been made, abundant clothes have been

found.[55]

Lascars, then attempted to "work the system", under the conditions of

the 1814 Act they had to be clothed and maintained by the owners of the

ships that brought them to England. The sale of such clothing and

bedding was a mechanism for obtaining money. Other black or European

sailors did not have the same claims on those who shipped them to

England.

The essence of the differences that existed between Lascars and

other black seamen is outlined in a report from Hilton Docker to the

East India Company on 14 December 1814. This report was mainly concerned

with the death of two West Indian or African seamen, of whom, one had died due to the inclemency of the weather. Of the other seaman, John Dennis; Docker stated,

> still he was very different from a Lascar, he was a
> native of Mozambique in Africa; was shipped in the
> Minerva as an able seaman, and as such was paid and
> victualled at the full rate, the same as if he had
> been an Englishman....Till now it was never thought
> that an African seaman like Dennis, of which description
> there are hundreds in the navy and merchant service, had
> any [more] claims upon the Company [East India] for
> support in this country than any other distressed
> foreignor or Englishman who may have serves in one of the
> Company's ships.[56]

Thus, usually only Lascars had claims on the East India Company, therefore, John Dennis posed an acute problem, being a black African (paid at a different rate to Lascars), on board an East India Company ship.

IV

Criminal records and Parliamentary Papers, in particular the Report on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis (1814-15), have been incorporated in this survey of "forgotten seamen" in order to broaden our knowledge of this group and to record something of their everyday lives in England. Criminal records have been extensively detailed in the previous chapter, and for the purpose of this chapter only those cases

that identify Lascars will be specifically referenced. The Newgate Calendars failed to distinguish any Lascars amongst those blacks that appeared before the court in the period 1791-1810; indeed, of those of Eastern origin, only one East Indian valet was recognised. The Old Bailey Sessions Papers identified eighty-five black people of whom twenty-five originated in India and the East Indies. Thus, through the criminal records, it appears that those of Eastern origin comprised 19.7 per cent of the total black presence whose origins were identifiable; whilst those of Afro-American, West Indian descent(together with the unknown element), 106 in all, formed 80.3 per cent. Some of the group whose places of birth were unspecified, might, of course, have contained Lascars.

Within this Eastern group of accused, victim and witness, fifteen were described as Lascars. Eight were indicted for crime, five proved to be victims, and two appeared before the Old Bailey as witnesses. The Lascar, Sawney Clough, was the victim of assault and robbery. A witness stated that "A Lascar had been robbed". [57] Jacob George, a native of Calcutta was assaulted at the Guards Barracks, "a place where Indian foreign seamen live".[58] The presence of two other Lascars have already been referred to previously in Chapter Six; Henry Rose being a victim, and Servo, the servant who stole from his master Captain John Duncan Gray. Under normal circumstances, Servo's crime would have resulted in a capital charge, but the Court was possibly influenced by the bonding system of 1814, and the forfeiture of the bond by the Captain, had Servo failed to leave the country.[59] A more unusual case of theft involved Lascars as criminal, victim and witness; the victim being the serang. Nowardin was accused of the theft of;

sixteen pairs of trousers, value 32s, sixteen shirts

value 32s, two brass pots, value 4s, one hundred and

forty pounds weight of spice, value 10s, and a 5l. bank

note, the property of Mahomet Casmet

Mahomet Casmet. I am a boatswain. Q. Did you lose your

property? - A. Yes, on the 27th of January, from the East

India Company barracks. ....Matolo. The prisoner came

into the room, he asked for the serang's boy.[60]

The case of the three Lascars; Sacchar, Glosse and Savau, accused of the murder of Immambacchus has already been referred to in the previous chapter.

Overall, of those cases relating to Lascars in the Old Bailey sample, three were indicted for murder, three for the more common crime of theft, and two for conspiracy. Johnny and Sider Cann appeared at the Old Bailey, indicted for conspiring to charge Thomas Dixon Finney with the murder of Butler John (another Lascar). The captain, in his evidence, stated that "the prisoner Johnny was a Lascar. He was a serang, the boatswain; he is the man that employed the whole of the ship's crew and pays them".[61] The sentencing of those Lascars found guilty of crime appeared to be no more or no less severe in comparison to their white or Negro counterparts. Only one transportee, Nowardin, was to be found. He was convicted of theft and transported for a seven year period. However, those found guilty of manslaughter and conspiracy received severe punisnment, being fined one shilling and confined to houses of correction for one or two years.

While a few Lascars resorted to theft, many more probably turned to begging in order to try to survive in a white, metropolitan society. One

instance of a Lascar who reportedly became wealthy through begging, is frequently referred to by historians, and appears in the Report on the State of Mendicity in the Metropolis 1814-1815. The watchousekeeper of St.Giles's and St. George's, Bloomsbury, reported that:

> There is a little black man who has frequently been
>
> brought into the watchouse for begging. I have seen him
>
> have a bag with silver and another bag with copper;....
>
> and I have been told at the public house, he would spend
>
> fifty shillings a week for his board; he would spit his
>
> own goose ar his own duck and live very well...
>
> Is this a Lascar? Yes.
>
> Is he addicted to spirits? Yes, he would drink himself a
>
> pint of spirits off at a time, and a number of other
>
> Lascars I have seen who live by begging. [62]

We have already noted, with reference to other blacks, that caution must be exercised in interpreting reports of "Beggar Kings".

Clashes between Lascars and others were sometimes known to occur. Scobie noted a battle between Lascars and black beggars towards the end of the eighteenth century, and this disturbance was not unique.[63] Banton similarily refers to a pitched battle involving Lascars and Chinese in 1808, in which several hundred participated.[64] This fight allegedly occurred on the Ratcliff Highway, in London's East End, and the causes of this fracas remain unknown. In November 1785, five Lascars brought a court action against an East Indian ship's managing-owner for the balance of their wages. Thus, Lascars in this example, were not afraid to use the machinery of the law in order to obtain their rightful remuneration.[65]

In conclusion, during the period 1780 to 1830 increasing numbers of both East and West Indians were employed in the British maritime services. This chapter has concentrated on the East Indian group of seamen, whose numbers formed an increasingly significant component within the black presence from the early nineteenth century. This black population consisted of people "as diverse and different as Africans, Indians, West Indians and Arabs".[66] In the maritime fraternity then, the noble African was distinct from the noble Indian. This survey has attempted to deepen our knowledge on the treatment of this group and to form a comparative basis for Lascars and other black seamen. All were characterised by their transiency in London's black population, which had repercussions for the viability of black family and community - issues which are to be appraised in the following chapter.

C H A P T E R   S E V E N
I N   S E A R C H   O F   T H E   I N V I S I B L E   :
B L A C K   F A M I L Y   A N D   C O M M U N I T Y

The upsurge of interest of the history of black people in Britain is, partly as I have noted earlier, the result of a search for black roots. Although British West Indian slave families of the early nineteenth century have formed the subject of important recent research, the British black family of a similar period has still been little discussed.[1] Our knowledge of black marriage and mating patterns of these years remains limited; yet from a demographic position (because of the sex imbalance discussed below), it would have been impossible for all black men to form stable relationships with women of their own colour. Furthermore, no convincing examination of the early black community exists, and there is a lack of accurate information that would enable an assessment of immigration and settlement. In arguing for an all-black community in London from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, and in attributing the leadership of this community to several black literary figures, Walvin, Fryer and Shyllon (among others), argue beyond the evidence. They also impose upon those individuals, as leaders, a status which they do not deserve.[2]

The above assumptions regarding the black family and community must, therefore, be the subject of revision. Defenders of slavery and racists such as Edward Long pointed to the absence of a pattern of family and community among blacks and the latter stressed the African's "cultural inability" to form stable monogamous relationships. Black sexual mores were frequently emphasised in this connection. George and

Banton have similarily pointed to the inability of blacks in London to form familial ties (either nuclear or extended), or community groupings, due to environmental and sociological circumstances.[3] Recently, this trend has been reinforced by Duffield, who refers to the sexual imbalance in black transportees which prevented the formation of black community in Australia and had restrictive repercussions for the all-black family.[4] Conversely, other scholars, like Walvin, Shyllon, and Fryer argue for the existence of a British black community in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, under the leadership of the literary triumvirate of Equiano, Sancho and Cugoano.

The historiographical trend of the British slave family and community displays similarities with the scholarship on North American slavery. Three distinct stages are discernible in both schools of thought; firstly, Ulrich B. Phillips (writing in 1918) argued along similar racist lines to Long and rejected the existence of an American slave family and community.[5] Secondly, in the 1950s Kenneth Stampp and Stanley Elkins denied the viability of the slave family and community; in their cases, however, this was not based on racist assumptions, but on the grounds that the harshness of the "peculiar institution" itself was not conducive to such sociological groupings. Due to external factors the weakness of the slave family was emphasised by these authors, as slaves were controlled by their masters and family separations often proved inevitable.[6] Finally, from the 1960s onwards, there has been an upsurge in interest in the American historiography, which has resulted in a revision of the viability of the slave family and community. Amongst these North American historians concerned with the resurrection of the black family and community are Herbert Gutman,

Lawrence Levine, and John Blassingame.[7] The above argue that despite adversity and oppression, a strong slave family and community existed in North America, and evidence is forwarded for kinship patterns, both real and fictive. They argue that the existence of monogamy in the black family and extended kinship patterns enabled slaves to come to terms with the worst ravages of slavery. Therefore, black resilience and adaptability is stressed, especially among first generation slaves who found themselves entrenched "between two cultures". This final stage corresponds with a search for black roots in the British historiographical mainstream in the late 1960s and 1970s, by scholars such as Walvin and Shyllon, and more recently, Fryer.

For the purposes of this chapter, evidence for British black family and community has been sought in parish registers, which yielded information on both sex ratios and ages. Such evidence suggests the dominance in the black population of young males (typical of most immigration patterns as demonstrated by American studies of ethnic minorities). This pattern has been reinforced by "Hue and Cry" and "For Sale" advertisements in the contemporary press. Criminal records indicate instances of miscegenation, a phenomenon which spread alarm amongst certain sections of white society.

Welded together these sources form the basis for a reappraisal of the existence of a British black family in our period. The British black community together with its leaders will also be examined, but caution is indicated as historians eager to trace the roots for the free black presence may have retrospectively imposed an all-black community on the population of the mid-eighteenth century. Walvin and Shyllon fail to take account of black involvement with the wider host society through

relationships with white women, white fellow workers, and with those whites who shared the experience of poverty. Thus, by focusing on the all-black community, historians have overlooked the existence of black networks. Furthermore, with regard to the so-called "leaders" of the community, it will be posited that the few literate blacks shared interests which had more in common with the white middle class than with the rest of their fellow blacks.

Within this chapter, it is proposed, firstly to identify the imbalance that existed in black sex ratios, which affected the viability of black family and community, and to ascertain the average age of black males and females. Secondly, the black family will be considered with reference to the role played by white women in the "Saints versus Prostitute " theory which surrounds those white women aboard the Sierra Leone expedition. Comparisons will be made between the formation of black families in our period and family formation among other ethnic minorites, particularly the Chinese and Lascar groups. Here the discussion will be widened to include the limitations of Chinese families in America in a later period. Thirdly, it will be argued that an all-black community has been historically exaggerated, diverting attention away from the role played by blacks in wider white society. Finally, the validity of the leaders of the black community will be questioned.

I

A continuous theme throughout this thesis has been that in the late
eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries young males formed the
substantial majority of the black population. Walvin has tentatively
estimated that this young group of males comprised two-thirds of the
black population.[8] Braidwood, however, from a sample of parish
registers, argues that the black population in the period prior to the
Sierra Leone expedition displayed sex ratios of five males to one
female.[9] To assess the accuracy of both these assumptions, parish
registers and criminal records, together with newspapers, have been
analysed for evidence relating to the imbalance between the sexes and
for the youthfulness of males.

Contemporary newspapers referred to in Chapter Four of this study,
indicate the male dominance of the black population through Hue and Cry
and For Sale advertisements. Thirty-five black males had escaped from
their owners; a typical example being the following which appeared in
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser of 1766,

> Ran Away from Captain John Chilcott, of Bristol, the 4th
> instant, a Negro man named James Smith, about 25 years
> of age, well set, speaks good English, is about 5 feet
> 8 inches high, a smooth face and good even teeth.[10]

It may be implied that young males without the stabilising influence and
responsibility of a family were daring enough to escape from servitude
into the wider host society. However, most runaway advertisements would
refer to this group of young males, and this was typical of the pattern
of North American plantation slavery. Herbert Aptheker in American Negro

<u>Slave Revolts</u> (New York, 1943) and Raymond and Alice Bauer in "Day to Day Resistance to Slavery", note the frequency with which slaves absconded.[11] The sample of "For Sale" advertisements also indicates imbalanced sex ratios. Of the thirty-three slaves offerred for sale in the twenty advertisements, only six (18.2 per cent) were female, the remaining twenty-seven (81.8 per cent) were male (see Appendix II).

Criminal records further substantiate the imbalance in the black population. The overwhelming majority of blacks involved with the criminal process were male (see Chapter Five. Table 5.1); but male dominance is applicable in any criminal activity. Furthermore, black sex ratios in crime were not much higher than white, being eighty-nine per cent as opposed to eighty per cent. This poses the question that if the black sex ratios were so imbalanced then why were the patterns of crime relatively similar? Thus, perhaps we should assume a black male surplus, but not of Braidwood's proportions.

The final record group providing evidence of sex ratios is baptismal records in parish registers. The problems of under-representation in this source has been referred to previously. Nevertheless, of those 159 black people identified in the period 1780 to 1811, 125 (83.6 per cent) were male as opposed to thirty-four (16.4 per cent) female. It appears that black baptism displayed sex ratios of roughly four males to one female. This is in sharp contrast to white male/female baptismal rates (as outlined in Table 7.1) which displays balanced baptismal rates of 50.6 per cent male baptisms. However, parish registers display only localised results which may not be typical of both the black and white populations as a whole. The black female group

TABLE 7.1

A COMPARISON OF WHITE MALE AND FEMALE BAPTISMS

1784, 1786, 1788, 1792

PARISH	YEAR	NUMBER OF MALES BAPTISED	NUMBER OF FEMALES BAPTISED	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
St. Paul's Deptford	1784	159	152	7	307
St. Paul's Deptford	1786	152	146	9	318
St.Nicholas's Deptford	1788	110	98		208
S. Nicholas's Deptford	1792	101	96		197
TOTAL		522 (50.6%)	492 (47.8%)	16(1.6%)	1030

SOURCE St.Paul's Deptford, St.Nicholas's Deptford. G.L.R.O. London.

in particular might have also been under-represented in this group of records. Having examined evidence on sex ratios that noted the dominance of males in the black population in London during our period, we can draw tentative conclusions about a male-dominated population. It is now proposed to consider the average age of the black population.

Those newspapers which yielded information on sex ratios also provide evidence of black average age. The average age of the thirty-five males who appeared in "Hue and Cry" advertisements was calculated to be 19.6 years in comparison with the average age of 14.4 years of those twenty-seven males who were advertised for sale. Those who absconded appeared to be older than those being sold, or those whose labour was in demand. Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser published the following advertisement in 1756;

> WANTED IMMEDIATELY. A Negro Boy. He must be of deep
>
> black complexion, and a lively Humane disposition,
>
> with good features and not above 13, nor under 11 years
>
> of age.[12]

Selectivity should, however, be expected in these particular advertisements. The very young and the elderly would not have been in great demand in the existing labour market in London and Liverpool. Therefore, the above advertisement for an eleven year old black proves interesting. A further point to be noted is that, as in North American slavery, children under the age of eight, would in all probability, not have been sold without their parents.

It might be anticipated that criminal records would also tend to display selectivity towards the young adult male. According to Graph 5.1, the majority of black males involved with the legal process are to

be found within the age band twenty-to-twenty-nine years, having an average age of 25.7 years. The most significant of all of the record groups that refer to the ages of blacks are parish registers. Apart from the problems of under-representation, coupled with high proportions of unknown ages which produces skewed results, they reveal that blacks tended to be baptised at a much later age than their white counterparts.

Regarding the average age of the 115 black male baptisms identified in the registers whose ages were known, this has been calculated to be 23.4 years. Therefore, my London parish register sample of black males displays a marginally lower average age than Braidwood's, which he estimated to be twenty-five years.[13] Table 7.2 demonstrates that the majority (fifty-three per cent) of male black baptisms occurred in the age group twenty to twenty-nine, as did the average age of black criminals. Table 7.3 relates to black female baptisms, which represented a smaller proportion of the total than their male counterparts. These tables indicate significant differences between the age at baptism of the sexes. The majority of females, thirteen or 38.2 per cent, tended to be baptised under the age of nineteen; ten (29.4 per cent) were in the age band thirty-to-thirty-nine, and a further eight (23.6 per cent) fell within the age band twenty-to-twenty-nine. Most London males baptised tended to be in this grouping whilst the Liverpol parish register sample displayed an average age of black male baptism of 20.1 years, thereby reinforcing the London pattern.

The above-mentioned sources indicate, overall, the importance of young, black males in the black population of the period, accounting for more than eighty per cent of the black presence. However, it would be too simplistic to conclude that sex ratios were four males to one

TABLE 7.2

AVERAGE AGE OF BLACK MALE BAPTISM

1780-1812

AGE BAND (YEARS)	NUMBERS	%
0-19	30	26.1
20-29	61	53.0
30-39	15	13.0
40-49	8	7.0
50-59	1	0.9
TOTAL	115	

SOURCE St. Paul's, Deptford, St. Nicholas's, Deptford, St. Anne's

Limehouse, All Saint's , Poplar, St. John At Hackney, St.

George's in the East, G.L.R.O., London. Holy Trinity, Minories,

St. Katherine's By the Tower, St. Stephen Walbrook, Guildhall.

TABLE 7.3

AVERAGE AGE OF BLACK FEMALE BAPTISM

1780-1812

AGE BAND (YEARS)	NUMBERS	%
0-19	13	38.2
20-29	8	23.6
30-39	10	29.4
40-49		
50-59	2	5.9
60-69	1	2.9
TOTAL	34	

SOURCE St, Paul's, Deptford, St. Nicholas's, Deptford, St.Anne's, Limehouse, St. John at Hackney, All Saint's, Poplar, St. Marylebone, St. George's in the East, G.L.R.O. Holy Trinity, Minories, St. Stephen Walbrook, St. Katherine's By the Tower, Guildhall.

female, given the problems encountered in the nature of the evidence utilised in the study. Also average age calculations are susceptible to inaccuracies due to the element whose ages remain unknown, and the tendency towards selectivity in the records. It seems to be reasonable, however, to assume a young adult bias in our male population and an overall imbalance of sex ratios. The black family will now be discussed.

II

Historians have paid little attention to the British black family, neglect being the result of a paucity of information on this topic. Yet there is some evidence to suggest that the black family existed as black males formed relationships with black and white women in our period. Given that sexual imbalance existed in the black population, informal, casual or common-law relationships would probably have developed between black and white. This is verified by the splenetic Negrophobic outbursts of contemporaries such as Long, but according to Lorimer such outbursts were unrepresentative of attitudes towards blacks. He notes that,

> these racially mixed couples faced some but not
>
> widespread opposition from their masters and fellow
>
> domestics. In the mid-eighteenth century, a strict bar
>
> existed not against the marriage of blacks and whites,
>
> but against the miscegenous unions of Irish Catholics
>
> and English Protestants. Among the poor of London a fair
>
> measure of racial toleration seems to have existed. The
>
> London mob, whose habitual xenophobia was summed up in
>
> the chant, "No Popes, no Jews, no Wooden Shoes",

befriended black fugitives.[14]

It is impossible to ascertain the extent to which all-black unions occurred, or whether they occurred with greater frequency amongst the free than the enslaved. The extent of miscegenation is also difficult to assess; if limited, then some parallels with other transient ethnic minorities, such as the Chinese or Lascars may be suggested. It is now intended to examine primary and secondary sources which may indicate the extent to which both marriage and miscegenation occurred amongst the black population, and to draw comparisons with other transient male-dominated minorities of the period.

There are few recorded instances of black males marrying white females. Shyllon refers to an early example of such a union in <u>Black People in Britain</u>;

> In 1578 George Best reported, 'I my self have seene an
> Ethiopian as blacke as cole brought into England, who
> taking a faire English woman to wife, begat a sonne in
> all respects as blacke as the father.[15]

Francis Barber, Equiano, Gronniosaw and Jack Ystumillyn are well-documented examples of inter-racial marriages. Examples of white men marrying black females are rarer, but Shyllon's study of the abolitionist, James Ramsay refers to his marriage to a West Indian Creole, Rebecca Akers.[16] References to all-black marriages also remain restricted to Sancho and his West Indian wife who produced six children; and Thomas and Mary Hylas, Barbados-born slaves brought to England.[17] The couple married and although Thomas was manumitted, Mary was re-sold into West Indian slavery by her master. Granville Sharp's intervention resulted in the Court ordering that Mary be returned on the next ship

bound for England.

Later in the nineteenth century, Mayhew's social investigations into London's poor identified a marriage between a Negro crossing-sweeper (who had lost both of his legs), and " a pleasant looking half caste". The crossing-sweeper related;

> I am married: my wife is the same colour as me, but an
>
> English woman. I have been married two years. I married
>
> her from where she belongs in Leeds. [18]

Norton, also noted instances of marriage between two black partners; Richard Weaver, a free-born Philadelphian had arrived in England in 1779, and by 1783 possessed a wife and two children.[19] Amongst those black settlers bound for Sierra Leone, she further identified sixty-one families, forty-four of which were inter-racial.[20] Therefore, limited evidence of all black marriage exists, but its extent beyond the above documentation, must remain the subject of conjecture.

References to black marriage remain scanty in primary evidence; parish registers also fail to add to our knowledge as marriage registers do not identify the colour of the parties involved. It could be that so fundamental an institution as legal marriage was in general disuse amongst both the black and white lower classes. Common law relationships might have proved the norm as marriage licences may have been beyond the means of most. Baptismal records reveal only two instances where the parents of black infants were in inter-racial unions. These cases were "William Wallis, son of a Negro named Pollydore and Ann Wallis"; and "William Spry, son of William Spry by Elizabeth. Born 17th June 1808, A Child of Colour".[21]

Apart from the sparsity of documented evidence on black marriages

and families, the interpretation of the term family poses problems for eighteenth and nineteenth century historians. The definition of family might be restricted to a "nuclear" family model of father, mother and children or might involve an "extended" family which includes other relations. However, it may be argued that amongst black slaves in England a "fictive" kinship might well have developed unperceived by masters. This was a feature of North American slavery referred to by Gutman, and was a protective mechanism against forced separations of families. Slaves sold into unfamiliar plantations would have adopted children or have been adopted by fictive "aunties and uncles".[22] A similar cultural pattern might have transposed itself into slavery in England, especially amongst those in domestic servitude and even extended to those free blacks who congregated in London's East End. These assumptions must remain tentative as no corroborating evidence of slave or free black testimony is in existence.

The potential for a viable black family might ultimately have depended upon black male involvement with white females, either in temporary or permanent relationships, and in legal and non-legal unions. Miscegenation, forms an important theme that has been alluded to throughout this thesis. Frequent reference is made in both contemporary satire and literature to the popularity of the black male with lower class white females, and this is similarily emphasised in secondary sources. Tobin remarked that "frequently such a mate was the only possible choice; for the numerical preponderance of male over female Negroes was considerable".[23] Hecht, possibly reflecting little more than contemporary gossip about miscegenation claimed that

> the women of the lower classes appear to have entertained

a strong partiality for Negro men. Negro men seem to have been no less attracted to English girls.[24]

In this respect, Edwards refered to the pursuit of Francis Barber by a Lincolnshire hay-maker, and also to Black Jack of Ystumyllin's reputation as a "Don Juan".[25] However, as the scandal concerning the Duchess of Queensbury and Julius Soubise confirms that white female interest in black males was not restricted to the lower classes.[26]

Apparently, servants were not the only occupational group that attracted white women; black sailors were also pursued. H. Melville noted in 1828,

> three or four times I encountered our black steward
> dressed very handsomely, and walking arm in arm with a
> good looking Englishwoman....Owing to the friendly
> reception extended to them and the unwarranted immunities
> they enjoy in Liverpool, the black cooks and stewards of
> American ships are much attracted to the place.[27]

Amongst the primary sources yielding evidence of miscegenation, the Old Bailey Sessions Papers prove informative; two instances of inter-racial cohabitation are cited. Firstly, Ann Thompson, a white woman was indicted for the murder of a black man, Joseph Walker. A witness, Matthew Anthony, stated that "I know the prisoner [Ann Thompson], they lived together [Ann Thompson and Joseph Walker] at No.9, and I lived at No.10".[28] The second case involved the murder of Imambacchus, a Lascar (already referred to in the previous two chapters), in which a witness, Sarah Williams, admitted that she had cohabited with the deceased for about four or five weeks.[29] Another two instances of black male and white female relationships appear in the records; one notes a marriage

between a black West Indian army captain and a white woman, whilst the other case fails to determine the nature of the relationship, as a black man William Wells was found in bed with a white woman, Elizabeth Howard.[30]

The historical controversy referred to as the "Saints versus Prostitutes" theory provides evidence on miscegenation. The controversy was founded upon the correspondence of Mrs. Falconbridge, who visited Sierra Leone after London's black poor had settled in the area in 1787. To recapitulate on the Sierra Leone expedition, Norton had identified 459 emigrants of whom 112 were white, "most [of the whites] being married to black men....Among the black settlers were 61 clearly identifiable families...,and 44 of these were intrerracial".[31] By 1791 this band of settlers were depleted in numbers, and in a letter dated 13 May 1791 Mrs. Falconbridge wrote:

> among the outcasts were seven of our own countrywomen, decrepid with disease, and so disfigured with filth and dirt, that I should never have supposed they were born white.[32]

Following a conversation with one of the women, she further reported that,

> the women were mostly of that description of persons who work the streets of London, and support themselves by the earnings of prostitution; that men were employed to collect and conduct them to Wapping, where they were intoxicated with liquor, then inveigled on board of ship and married to Black men, whom they had never seen before, she really did not remember a syllable of what

happened over night, and when informed, was obliged to enquire who was her husband? [33]

Subsequently the role of these females has been the subject of historical examination. Lascelles, George, and Sheila Patterson accept the "prostitute" version forwarded by Mrs. Falconbridge.[34] Others such as Braidwood, Fyfe, and Richard West question the validity of this theory and comment that the removal of such a small number of prostitutes (between sixty and seventy), would have produced little impact on the problem of prostitution in London.[35] As noted previously, Norton tends towards the "Saints" theory, referring to the preponderance of interracial marriages and to the fact that 25 of the 69 white women either themselves signed the emigration agreement or were already listed as passengers in November 1786. By February 1787 "several had given birth to mulatto children - hardly the sign of recently-formed liaisons."[36] The Sierra Leone-bound ships were delayed before departure in 1787 for a long period of time in the Thames; therefore, ample opportunity was available for the white women to disembark.

Interracial unions are also documented in records of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, one such example being that of John Provey (formerly a slave of a Carolinaian lawyer), emancipated through service to the British army. He and his wife, Ann, and his daughter, Louisa, all received sixpence per day from the Committee funds in anticipation of their emigration to Sierra Leone.[37] Whatever interpretation is placed on the role of these white women, historically, the debate surrounding the "Saints versus Prostitutes" remains at an "impasse". However, more credence should be attached to Mary Beth Norton's hypothesis based on the statistical evidence of Treasury lists,

rather than on the speculative conjectures of Mrs Falconbridge, who was apparently more concerned with the level of prostitution in London than in assisting the white women concerned. At the present state of historical research, it appears that the "Saints" theory has the advantage.

The extent of miscegenation might have been exaggerated by alarmist contemporaries. The "rapid increase of a dark and contaminated breed", feared by one racist contemporary, might have greatly been overstated.[38] Within an influential section of English society, miscegenation was seen as a threat; Edward Long described it as "a venomous and dangerous ulcer that threatens to disperse its malignancy far and wide".[39] But while such comments tell us something about white fears and white racism, it tells us little about black-white families.

It would not have proved difficult for a black man to have formed a stable relationship with a white woman and rear a family. Shyllon noted the report in the World of 17 July 1787, in which Thomas Smith, a black man, and his common law English wife escaped the hangman's noose by a jury that convicted them of a non-capital offence.[40] Obviously, the black family would have proved more viable amongst the settled black population, as links could have been forged with white women and the wider white society in general. However, comparisons with other immigrant minorities, such as Lascars and Chinese, can usefully be drawn for evidence of the existence of families amongst these groups in England, and some comment on the viability of family amongst male-dominated Chinese immigrants who were employed in the United States of America might be of value.

The possibility of the black family has formed the subject of

discussion in the preceding section, and it has been noted that the black population in England comprised of two elements; the permanent settlers and the sojourners. Amongst the permanent group of blacks an unknown proportion would have been enslaved; therefore, their settlement was enforced. There remained little possibility of their return to families in America, Africa, or the West Indies, and as property they would not have received, nor expected, renumeration for their services. They were unable to remit any income to their homeland, unlike Lascars or Chinese. A further number of blacks in Britain, in our period, would have belonged to the "non-enforced" settler group. Being free, they chose to settle in Britain and failed to remit money abroad. Within both of these sub-groups of permanent settlers the black family was possible through relationships with either black females, although this was limited due to the imbalanced sex ratios, or with white females. The remaining component of the black population was the transient group of sailors, or sojourners, whose presence fluctuated according to patterns of trade. This group assimilated into the dockside communities whilst in residence, and into the wider host society through relationships with white women; some settled permanently and produced black families.

Lascars can also be categorised in this group of transients, but certain distinctions between these seamen and other black seamen are identifiable. Most Lascars were sojourners; as noted in the previous chapter they were part-time agriculturists / part-time seamen whose prime concern was to return to their homes with income earned from sea-faring activities. Their residence in England was enforced, due to the imbalance in trade with the East, and as such was beyond their control. Despite the zeal of certain missionaries, they apparently did not choose

to imbibe the English culture or language. Assimilation into the wider "host" society proved difficult as they were quartered in barracks for the duration of their sojourn. Visram and Jones note that the absence of Indian or East Indian females would have resulted in the formation of liaisons with white women. Such relationships were to be sanctioned informally by "living over the brush", this institution was commented upon by Sheik Hamed. Guests at the "mock ceremony"

> get some gin and some beer, a fiddle, and a broom; we
>
> drank the gin and beer, and jumped over the broom, sang
>
> and played the fiddle, and I was married. [41]

However, most had families in their homeland, and their main objective was to return to them.

Like the Lascars, the Chinese who came to England in our period (and in the late nineteenth century) were mostly male, tended to be sojourners by nature, and remitted money to their families at home. It is worth noting, however, that unlike Lascars, some Chinese in both nineteenth century England and America tended to conform to the pattern of "middlemen minorities", performing an economic role occupying intermediate rather than low-status positions. Edna Bonacich posits that "middlemen minorities" are,

> immigrants who do not plan to settle permanently. In
>
> contrast, other ethnic minorities include indigenous
>
> peoples of colonized territories, and immigrants who are
>
> forced to sever ties with a homeland (e.g. Blacks in the
>
> new world). [42]

In both England and America resident "middlemen" Chinese concentrated on trade and commerce, preferred liquidity, and therefore, tended to

operate laundries and restaurants in the dockland areas (in London and Liverpool, for example). The Chinese, according to this theory, practised thrift and suffered short-term deprivation in order to hasten their return to the homeland and family, this being referred to by Bonacich as "future time orientation".[43]

According to some American evidence the Chinese tended to resist out-marriage and Stanford Lyman notes the shortage of Chinese females in America meant that "for the bulk of Chinese immigrants,the establishment of a family in America was impossible".[44] The American Chinese, however, came not as seamen, but as miners in remote areas and as migrant labourers. Their experience of rather extreme isolation in the nineteenth century America is unlikely to have been replicated by Chinese, Lascars, and blacks in the densely populated turn-of-the-century London.

Having compared the black population to other ethnic minorities in England, and discussed the limitations of the evidence; it seems that the black family was possible during our period, partly through relationships between black men and white women. Those historians who suggest that a decrease in the black presence occurred as a result of assimilation in the nineteenth century, do not fully consider the possibilities of black family. Yet marriage and family were essential for the establishment and persistence of community which forms the topic of the following section.

III

No full and convincing examination of the history of the black community has ever been published. As we noted at the start of this chapter, the range of possible arguments relating to the black community appears broad. Some commentators have argued that there was in existence an all-black community; others including George and Banton denied the viability of an all-black community.[45] However, any discussion of this topic involves a definition of the term "community", which poses problems due to the abundance of sociological interpretations. Community then, as a sociological concept, is difficult to define. Therefore, no definition is attempted within this study. Even so, various writers utilise this concept in varying ways in referring to a black community.

If the concept of a black community is questionable, then networks consisting of inter-connected groups or systems should be explored in connection with a "mixed race" community. Susan Benson supports this view as the evidence "suggests, however, that they did form a close-knit social network, united by their common oppression in slavery and the adversity of their positions once free".[46] There are indications that black people supported each other in London of the period. Shyllon cites the example of a black hairdresser-cum-lodging house keeper who employed fellow blacks.[47] This same black philanthropist also found employment for a white woman, which tends to reinforce the view that co-operation existed between black and white (already noted in Chapter Five where black and white females became partners in crime). The Sierra Leone expedition also testifies to the existence of such networks; the numbers in receipt of the sixpence daily

allowance increased dramatically, information probably being disseminated via word of mouth.

The existence of multi-racial networks, supporting a mixed community has been posited. Certainly, black networks were in existence; Philip Thicknesse emphasised in 1788 that "London abounds with an incredible number of black men who have clubs to support those who are out of place".[48] The extent of these clubs is open to conjecture; they might have been exaggerated to appease white consciences about poor blacks. Further evidence of supportive networks is indicated by the assistance given to two black men committed to the Bridewell for begging; the prisoners were visited by "upwards of three hundred of their countrymen".[49] The Somerset Case attracted a huge gathering of blacks, suggesting, therefore, that information was spread through networks. Blacks became involved politically and socially with white society through working class networks, thus interests appeared along class rather than colour lines. William Cuffay became deeply involved with the Chartist movement; Willian Davidson participated in the Cato Street conspiracy, and several others were among the Gordon rioters.

Black and white were both oppressed in England; thus class solidarity through a racially-mixed community supported by wider black and white networks is probable. Dabydeen argues along similar lines,

> blacks were assimilated into lower white society to a
> considerable degree, finding pleasure, companionship,
> and a degree of protection amongst the ranks of the
> common people.[50]

An interesting case in point can be made with regard to black runaway slaves; masters not only had to face other free blacks but the "London

mob" in order to rescue their property. This seems to indicate to Shyllon that "the same harmony which existed between black and white servants also occurred in the general body of poor blacks and whites".[51] Further up the social scale, Sancho counted amongst his friends Sterne and Garrick; thus, links were forged between black and white at both ends of the social spectrum.

It should be noted that Negroes were not the only immigrant group to establish networks. The early Asian community, although migratory forged some lines of communication. Ayahs, or travelling nannies, who accompanied families returning from the East, sought lodgings in London whilst awaiting a berth home. Visram refers to the existence of a sophisticated network equivalent to a "modern-day employment agency".[52] Lascars were herded together in barracks, as previously noted, thus the dissemination of information was facilitated. Lyman noted that nineteenth century American Chinese formed close networks or secret societies, but less is known about the Chinese in England in our period.[53]

Therefore, it has been argued that the black family was viable through black male relationships with black and, perhaps more importantly, white females. Similarily, because of this wider black involvement with white society, and through familial groupings, a racially mixed community was in existence as opposed to an all-black community. The mixed community would have been serviced by both black and white networks of communication. Information was disseminated, social events, both all-black and interracial were in evidence, and black servants congregated in masters' homes. The extent and frequency of these events remain unknown.

Some similarities may be observed with immigrants to the United
States of America. According to Kraut,

> whether they belonged to a society or not, immigrants
> found a corner to meet and share news. They gathered
> information in taverns, coffee houses, shops, and in each
> others houses to wrestle with the problems of life in
> America.[54]

Old and new experiences were shared and institutions developed, and were
modified as the need arose. Most immigrant groups, including the Negro
in Britain, once free, tended to provide mutual aid societies. However
links with the wider white society proved to be important, and this is
discernible in the case of the black writers of the period who have been
accorded the role of "leaders" of the black community. It is to this
literary circle that attention will now finally be diverted.

IV

Speculation surrounds the role of the black leaders of the
community in England in the period 1780-1830. The testimonies of
Equiano, Sancho, and Cugoano were exceptional, and in some ways they
were misleading. Their experiences proved different from the mass of
black people who failed to leave evidence of their existence, yet this
elite, literary triumvirate has become the focus of historical
attention. Scholarship has imposed upon it, retrospectively, traits that
it may not have possessed. By endowing it with the leadership of the

black community, erroneous assumptions have been made, firstly, about the nature of the leadership itself, and, secondly, about the whole concept of a black community. These so called "leaders" all possessed a common characteristic in that they were patronised by middle and upper class whites through the endownments of annuities and bequests. This group, unlike the majority of blacks were self-employed and had attained upward social mobility. It is proposed briefly to examine the lives of Sancho, Equiano, and Cugoano, and to suggest that they were, in part, divorced from the black community and in many respects more involved with the white community.

The lives of the above triumvirate have been documented by Edwards, Shyllon, and Walvin. [55] Walvin discerned strands of continuity in that "Sancho's successor, Olaudah Equiano (or Gustavus Vasa) continued the written campaign to which Sancho's letters made such an important contribution".[56] However, no evidence of this campaign exists. Throughout his letters Sancho displayed strong attachments to middle class values. A privileged black, patronised by the Duke and Duchess of Montagu, he was eventually to own a grocery business in Westminster. Amongst his friends and patrons in the aristocracy and literary circles were poets and playwrights, and Sancho himself wrote two plays and poetry. His most celebrated work was a collection of letters edited posthumously by Dr. Joseph Jekyll. He was not only accomplished in the literary field; he studied music and published A Theory of Music. Gainsborough painted his portrait and Sancho was visited by Nollekens, the sculptor, and by John Thomas Smith, the author of Vagabondia and Nollekens and His Times. Sancho was appalled by the slave trade, although he had no direct experience of West Indian slavery. Edwards

states that, despite occasional hints of tensions and ironies in his letters, they "point clearly to his almost complete assimilation into eighteenth century English society".[57] Sancho, however, continuously emphasised his blackness, in one letter referring to himself as "a poor blacky grocer".[58] Some sense of responsibility towards other blacks is apparent in one of his letters which contained an appeal for the employment of a fellow black, and he used his influence and contacts to assist Julius Soubise in India, following a scandal with the Duchess of Queensbury.[59]

Sancho expressed his self-awareness in apologetic, complaisant terminology, clothing himself in a cloak of meekness to win immunity which society would allow an unthreatening outsider. Given this self-debasement, it is impossible to envisage him in the role of leader of the black community; he conformed more to Elkins's American "Sambo" stereotype in a British situation.[60] On the other hand he may have been "playing a fool to catch wise", a persistent theme in, for example, American slave stories where tactics of survival are central.[61] This cunning and unscrupulous "trickster" prevails over his more powerful opponents and represents the antithesis to "Sambo". Sancho was also concerned with gaining acceptance into British literary circles and his acquaintances all belonged within this group. Although he was known to assist his more privileged fellow blacks, his activities in general, fail to endow him with leadership of London's black community.

Shyllon identifies Ottobah Cugoano as another leader of the black community.[62] His Thoughts and Sentiments, written in 1787, outlined plans for the abolition of the slave trade and for the emancipation of slaves. Cugoano, together with William Black, a corporal of the Black

Poor in the Sierra Leone expedition, reported the kidnapping of a black slave, Henry Demane, to Granville Sharp. Sharp set in motion the legal process which ultimately secured Demane's freedom, and he was to become one of the Sierra Leone expedition. Although Cugoano condemned the slave trade and assisted another black by preventing his resale into West Indian slavery, there is no supporting evidence for the argument that he led an all-black community. Some historians have equated literacy with leadership, and although Thoughts and Sentiments may have expressed Cugoano's feelings, it is difficult to ascertain the typicality of his views amongst other black people during this period.

Attention must now focus on the most famous of the literary trio, on Equiano, or Gustavus Vasa, as he is sometimes known. Like Sancho, Equiano was sent to school by his mistress whilst in England. As Walvin states "it seems odd at first sight that the few literate Blacks frequently owed their literacy to their masters".[63] Black literacy was instrumental in helping a few individuals achieve upward social mobility, Sancho and Equiano being the cases in point. This is further reinforced by Gossman who notes that,

> few blacks were educated; exceptions were Equiano,
> Sancho, and Cugoano but even their contributions were
> only achieved with the help of whites.[64]

Gossman further states that "works published under their name were suspect".[65] Yet Paul Edwards is prepared to validate Equiano's writings, even though he doubts the authenticity of Cugoano's Thoughts and Sentiments.[66] A fervent campaigner for abolition, Equiano influenced Granville Sharp in the affair of the slave ship Zong in 1783. He enjoyed a great deal of contact with white society on a level of

equality; yet it is debatable if he ever acted consciously on behalf of the black community or spear-headed this community.

During the period 1786-87, Equiano was appointed Commissary for Stores to the Sierra Leone expedition, being well known amongst white humanitarians. He raised a series of objections regarding the treatment of the Black Poor whilst on board the ships and complained that Irwin had misled the settlers. Fryer elaborates on the subsequent events as Irwin, in turn, accused Equiano of being turbulent and seditious.[67] His dismissal from this post brought home to him the isolation experienced by other black people not in his favoured position. His Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vasa, the African, written by Himself, highlighted the range of occupations he had pursued as sailor, domestic servant, and Commissary for the Black Poor.[68] Therefore, he was capable of speaking with more authority than Sancho or Cugoano, and he travelled the country waging an anti-slavery campaign. Equiano's work appeared seven years after the posthumous publication of Sancho's letters. According to Walvin, Sancho's writing had "fed the same appetite for evidence of black attainment".[69]

Possibly Equiano was better equipped with literary skills than the other famous black personalities mentioned above, and his book was published at a time when the abolitionist campaign was at its zenith. The extent of Equiano's contact with black networks in this period remains questionable. He was known to have spoken out about injustices to blacks, an action which resulted in the loss of his appointment as Commissary for Stores. Equiano's awareness of the plight of the enslaved black people is demonstrated by his involvement with the abolitionists. Whilst his writings might have reflected the sentiments of London's

black population, he was not their spokesman. The title of leader of the black community has been imposed retrospectively by historians who wish to deny the passivity of the black presence (even though wider non-passive attitudes might be hidden by scarcity of records).

Thus, the experiences of these black literary figures isolated them from the majority of the black working class. However, their education enabled them to articulate their feelings and attitudes towards enslavement, even though their very literacy would have set them apart from other blacks. This tendency towards separation was further reinforced by their relationships and liaisons with prominent white literary and humanitarian figures. It is suggested, then, that these articulate black men did not lead the black community; indeed the very concept of an all-black community has been challenged and revised. These literary figures, through their education and the assistance from white patrons, formed a sub-group distinct from their fellow blacks. Although their works were to some extent representative of black working class people, they, themselves, could not have been classified as such. Sancho was a self-employed grocer, an entrepreneur, whilst Equiano held a responsible government position. It could be argued that they formed part of a "black labour aristocracy", bought off by white patrons and isolated from the lower class by virtue of both education and paternalism.

Having sought to revise some notions concerning the black family, community, and its leaders, having argued that the black family was possible due partly to its involvement with the wider white society, and having suggested that an interracial community existed in conjunction with both black and white networks, the major themes of this thesis have

been outlined. Attention has now finally been diverted away from the privileged segment of the black population by the adoption of "a history from below " approach towards the history of black working class in Britain in the period 1780 to 1830.

C H A P T E R E I G H T

N E W D E P A R T U R E S A N D D I M E N S I O N S

From the sixteenth century onwards black people have been inextricably woven into the structure of British society, both as free and slave. Little attention has been accorded to this minority and it is only in the last twenty years that historical neglect has been partly redressed. New departures in the historiography have resulted in the dispelling of the myth surrounding the Mansfield Judgement, new surveys have been given by Walvin, Fryer and Ramdin, and new dimensions have been added, including research by Duffield into black transportees. This study has aimed to continue the trend of rediscovering the black British past by concentrating on black people during the period 1780 to 1830. On occasions this chronological boundary has been loosely interpreted in order further to develop themes and debates.

Research into black history, especially during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, presents the historian with difficulties, the major problem being lack of evidence. Therefore, any new study of black history is forced to weave threads of disparate information from diverse sources into the fabric of knowledge. Hence, some sources such as criminal records, parish registers, and newspapers, have been both intensively and extensively utilised in this survey. The first two of these record groups provide invaluable information on age, sex ratios, origins, occupations, types of crimes committed, and enable a significant departure to be made in attempting to quantify aspects of the black presence in Britain. Slave traders' papers and other sources have helped to document attitudes to blacks in our period.

This study has attempted to draw out the distinctions between the slave and free segments of the black presence, the changing and complex composition of the black population (being divided into the permanent and sojourning sections, and being composed of Asian as well as Afro-blacks). The positions of several historians have been challenged. For example, Walvin's assertion that,

> Negroes lived in black enclaves, which were, at once a
> haven from the hostile host society and a source of
> friction within those elements in a society which
> resented their presence. [1]

Some doubt has been shed upon the position of the "leaders" of the black community, and the black family and community has formed the subject of revision. The study demonstrates that further research is required on the black family and black women, much neglected topics which might perhaps (as with certain other issues) be partly illuminated by work on probate records and private papers of slave owners.

The complexities of certain issues have been raised. Occupations of black people have been explored within the context of economic survival, and attention has been paid to the transient element of seafarers, including Lascars. It is hoped that this study has followed in the vein of Braidwood and Lorimer who credit blacks with having some control over their own destinies, for example, in demanding arms for their expedition to Sierra Leone. The Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor demonstrates that black people were capable of "working the system" (979 were in receipt of relief of daily allowances, yet fewer than 300 actually sailed to Sierra Leone), and were not typical of the "Sambo" stereotype portrayed by Elkins in his Slavery (Chicago, 1976).

However, there is overall very little black testimony in existence (Mary Prince proves the exception); hence, the lives and experiences of the mass of the black population remains undocumented. In the future, wills and private papers might reveal evidence on those in service in households. This study then, has departed from the lives of the black articulate literary circle and has concentrated on "rank and file" black men and women. Research into the history of black people in Britain is in its infancy, yet much progress has recently been made. It is hoped that this study, by attempting to address some issues and in identifying further debates, contributes in some degree to our knowledge of the black presence.

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3. I.Duffield, "Alexander Harris's "The Emigrant Family" and Afro-Blacks in Colonial Australia", in D.Dabydeen (ed.), The Black Presence in English Literature (Manchester, 1985), pp.68-95.

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<u>Liverpool Parish Registers</u> include, St. George's ,Everton, 283/GEV/2/1-2 , held at the LRO (Liverpool). For information on the six further parishes see P.Laxton, "Blacks in Eighteenth Century Liverpool".

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4. J.Walvin, <u>Black</u>, p.7.

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5. OB/SP 1795 Case 139, p. 340; OB/SP 1826-27 Case 1826, p.710.

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9. NC HO 26/1 Case 61, p.20; NC HO 26/5 Case 20, p.45.

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12. Morning Chronicle, 14 Jan.1803.

13. Police Gazette, 6 May 1828. William Harris is described as a

    "mulatto". Also Police Gazette, 6 May 1828, records "obtained by

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17. E.Genovese, Roll, Jordan, Roll (London, 1975),p.612.

18. P.King, "Decision Makers", p.34.

19. 60.2 per cent of the sample were accused of the theft of money or

goods, 8.6 per cent were accused of breaking and entering.

20. The sub-sample involved an examination of the Newgate Calendars

(NC), for the years 1793 and 1802, which indicated that 65.1

per cent of Irish males were accused of theft, 6.2 per cent of

assault/robbery, 2.8 per cent of highway robbery. Thus, theft of

some form accounted for 74.1 per cent of Irish crimes committed.

21. OB/SP 1815-16 Case 237, p.144.

22. OB/SP 1786-87 Case 31, p.65 for p.Bristow; NC HO 26/3 p.133 for

W.Thomas.

23. NC HO 26/3 p.58.

24. J.M.Beattie, "The Criminality of Women in Eighteenth Century

England", Journal of Social History, 8 (1974-75), p.80.

25. Ibid. See also J.Walvin, Black, p.52.

26. J.M.Beattie, "The Criminality",p.91; P.King, "Decision Making",

p.35, suggest that more female crime was committed in urban

settings.

27. J.M.Beattie, "The Criminality", p.82.

28. OB/SP 1788 Case 375, p.537.

29. OB/SP 1795 Case 375, pp.986-8; OB/SP 1798-9 Case 4, p.9.

30. OB/SP 1807-8 Case 312 p.220.

31. J.Beattie, "The Criminality", p.94. Beattie notes that "Women

frequently worked in pairs, for example one distracting the attention of the shopkeeper while the other lifted something; others contrived several pockets in their clothes".

32. OB/SP 1786-7 Case 765, p.1030.

33. P.King, "Decision Making",p.35.

34. Ibid., p.35.

35. Ibid., p.36.

36. J.Cobley, The Crimes,p.46 John Caesar; p.56 John Coffin; p.182 John Martin; p.192 John Moseley; p.203 Thomas Orford; p.291 John Williams.

37. L.L.Robson, The Convict Settlers of Australia (Melbourne, 1971) See C. Bateson, The Convict Ships 1787-1865 (Glasgow, 1959), Bateson argues that Australia served as the "dumping ground" for the surplus criminal popualiton ofEngland and Ireland.

38. I.Duffield, "Alexander Harris's", p.70.

39. Ibid., p.78.

40. OB/SP Sheik Brom, 1824 Case 679, p.247-8; John Hogan, 1785-6 Case 44, p.66; Sadi, 1786-7 Case 600, p.826; Susannah, 1795 Case 375, p.986

41. I.Duffield, "From Slave Colonies", p 25.

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44. I.Donnachie, "Scottish Criminals and Transportation to Australia

1786-1852", <u>Scottish Economic and Social History</u>, 4 (1984),p.23

45. L.Robson, <u>The Convict Settlers</u>, p.9.

46. I.Donnachie, "Scottish Criminals",pp. 25-26.

47. P.King, "Decision Making",p.35. King argues that milder punishments were accorded to those aged under twenty years. More severe punishments were given to those aged twenty to thirty years . This age group was thought to be less attached and less committed to a steady place in society. The age of transported blacks was then different from indicted blacks generally.

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49. I.Donnachie, "Scottish Criminals",pp. 28-29.

50. A.G.L.Shaw, <u>Convicts and the Colonies</u> (London, 1966),p.152.

51. I.Duffield, "From Slave Colonies",pp. 33-41.

52. J.Cobley, <u>The Crimes</u>, pp.46 and 56.

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54. OB/SP 1785 Case 813, p.1067; 1826-27 Case 1826, p.710.

55. OB/SP 1785 Case 139, p.240; 1804-5 Case 614, pp. 537-8; 1798 Case 361, pp.395-6.

56. OB/SP 1807-8 Case 395, pp. 280-3.

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60. OB/SP 1807-8 Case 100, pp. 81-4.

61. OB/SP 1814-15 Case 284, p.150.

62. OB/SP 1826-27 Case 2166, p.827.

63. OB/SP 1807-8 Case 127, pp.109-110.

64. OB/SP 1795 Case 189, pp.472-4.

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66. OB/SP 1824-25 Case 1443, pp.559-61.

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48. C.Dover, <u>Hell in the Sunshine</u>, p.159.

49. J.J.Hecht, <u>Continental</u>, p.48.

50. D.Dabydeen, <u>Hogarth's</u>, p.35.

51. F.Shyllon, <u>Black People,</u> p.102.

52. R.Visram, <u>Ayahs</u>, p.33.

53. On the Chinese in America see S.Lyman, <u>The Asian</u> , p.68; on the Chinese in England see for example Maria L.Wong, <u>Chinese Liverpudlians</u> (Liverpool, 1989).

54. A.Kraut, <u>The Huddled Masses : The Immigrant in American Society</u> (New York, 1982),p.133.

55. P.Edwards (ed.),Equiano's Travels; J.Walvin, Black and White, p.89;
    and F.Shyllon, Black People, Chapters 11 and 19.

56. J.Walvin, Black and White, p.89.

57. P.Edwards (ed.), Equiano's Travels, p.xv.

58. Ibid., p.231.

59. Ibid., Letter XXV.

60. S.Elkins, Slavery, p.82. The "Sambo" stereotype is docile,
    irresponsible, lazy, loyal, and humble.

61. See for example L.Levine, " Slave Songs and Slave Conciousness",
    in A.Weinstein and F.Gatell (eds.), American Negro Slavery (New
    York, 1979), p.153.

62. F.Shyllon. Black People, p.173.

63. J.Walvin, Black and White p.63.

64. W.Gossman, "William Cuffay", p.56.

65. Ibid., p.57.

66. O. Cugoano, Thoughts and Sentiments in P.Edwards (ed.),(London,
    1969), pp. viii-ix.

67. P.Fryer, Staying Power, p.112.

68. O.Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano
    or Gustavus Vasa, the African, written by Himself (London.1789).

69. J.Walvin, Black and White, p.94.

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER EIGHT

1. J.Walvin, <u>Black and White</u>, p.217.

A P P E N D I X   I

BLACK PEOPLE INVOLVED WITH THE CRIMINAL PROCESS

1780-1835

SOURCE	DATES	NUMBER OF MALES	NUMBER OF FEMALES
Newgate Calendars	1791-1812	42	5
Old Bailey Sessions Papers Random Sample	1811-1834	6	
	1785-1790	24	3
	1795-1800	8	3
	1805-1810	12	1
	1815-1820	20	1
	1825-1830	7	
TOTALS		119	13

SOURCE Newgate Calendars HO 26/1-1; Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1780-1830

AGE BANDS OF CRIMINAL GROUPS REPRESENTED IN GRAPHS 6.1 TO 6.7

AGES OF BLACK CRIMINALS 1780-1830 IN GRAPH 6.1

AGE BAND	NUMBERS	%
10-14		
15-19	9	14.5
20-24	17	27.4
25-29	22	35.5
30-34	7	11.3
35-39	4	6.5
40-44	2	3.2
45-49	1	1.6
TOTAL	62	

SOURCE Newgate Calendars and Old Bailey Sessions Papers

AGES OF WHITE CRIMINALS FROM HOME CIRCUIT 1782-87 IN GRAPH 6.2
_____

AGE BAND	NUMBERS	%
10-14		1.6
15-19		17.2
20-24		28.6
25-29		19.4
30-34		12.6
35-39		6.7
40-44		5.3
45-49		3.1
50-54		2.4
55-59		1.6
60+		1.4
TOTAL		100.00

SOURCE P.King, "Decision Makers and Decision Making in the English
        Criminal Law 1750-1800", Historical Journal, 2 (1984),
        p.36.

AGES OF WHITE CRIMINALS FROM THE OLD BAILEY SESSIONS PAPERS IN GRAPH 6.3

AGE BAND	NUMBERS	%
10-14	12	2.1
15-19	75	12.9
20-24	116	19.9
25-29	78	13.4
30-34	99	17.1
35-39	62	10.6
40-44	44	7.6
45-49	39	6.7
50-54	23	3.9
55-59	17	2.9
60+	17	2.9
TOTAL	582	100.0

SOURCE Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1808. Sample size of whites indicted was 886.

AGES OF IRISH CRIMINALS IN 1793 AND 1802 IN GRAPH 6.4

AGE BAND	NUMBERS	%
10-14	5	1.6
15-19	20	6.2
20-24	68	21.2
25-29	69	21.6
30-34	46	14.4
35-39	31	9.7
40-44	31	9.7
45-49	18	5.6
50-54	3	4.1
55-59	8	2.5
60+	11	3.4
TOTAL	320	100.0

SOURCE Newgate Calendars HO 26/2-3 (1793) and HO 26/8 (1802) which identified 320 Irish indicted for crime.

AGES OF BLACK TRANSPORTEES 1780-1830 IN GRAPH 6.5

AGE BAND	NUMBERS OF MALES	NUMBERS OF FEMALES	TOTAL	%
10-14				
15-19	6	2	8	32.0
20-24	6		6	24.0
25-29	6		6	24.0
30-34	3		3	12.0
35-39	2		2	8.0
40-44				
45-49				
50-54				
55-59				
60+				
TOTAL	23	2	25	100.0

SOURCE Sample of 25 black transportees whose ages were known from the Old Bailey Sessions Papers 1780-1830 and the Newgate Calendars 1791-1810.

AGES OF WHITE TRANSPORTEES 1808 IN GRAPH 6.6

AGE BAND	NUMBERS OF MALES	NUMBERS OF FEMALES	TOTAL	%
10-14	3		3	1.7
15-19	15	7	22	12.6
20-24	25	16	41	23.4
25-29	15	10	25	14.3
30-34	25	5	30	17.2
35-39	18	5	23	13.1
40-44	7	2	9	5.1
45-49	13	1	14	8.0
50-54	3	2	5	2.9
55-59	3		3	1.7
60+				
TOTAL	127	48	175	100.0

SOURCE Old Bailey Sessions Papers (1808), Sample of 175 white transportees whose ages were known.

AGES OF IRISH TRANSPORTEES IN GRAPH 6.7 IN 1793 AND 1808

AGE BAND	NUMBERS OF MALES	NUMBERS OF FEMALES	TOTAL	%
10-14		1	1	1.5
15-19	3	1	4	6.1
20-24	9	5	14	21.2
25-29	14	1	15	22.7
30-34	9	1	10	15.1
35-39	9	3	12	18.2
40-44	3	1	4	6.1
45-49	2		2	3.0
50-54	4		4	6.1
55-59				
60+				
TOTAL	53	13	66	100.0

SOURCE Newgate Calendars HO 26/2-3 (1793) and HO 26/8 (1808) which identified 66 Irish transported.

A P P E N D I X   I I

ANALYSIS OF "RUN AWAY" ADVERTISEMENTS 1659-1795

YEAR ABSCONDED	AGE OF MALE
1659	9
1665	12
1677	18
1685	15
1685	15
1688	13
1689	30
1689	Unknown
1690	22
1690	Unknown
1691	19
1694	17/18
1696	Unknown
1696	24
1696	30
1696	Unknown
1696	15
1707	18
1713	24
1713	20
1720	20
1728	Unknown
1737	Unknown
1746	Unknown
1748	Unknown
1757	25
1757	Unknown
1758	20
1758	Unknown
1759	Unknown
1769	Unknown
1770	24
1772	Unknown
1780	20
1795	Unknown

SOURCES Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser, Liverpool.
Daily Journal; London Chronicle; London Gazette; Gazeteer;
Bristol Journal; Morning Chronicle, and Mercurius Politicus,
London. Thirty-five advertisements including twelve who ran
away from Captains and rewards were offered in fourteen of the
advertisements.

ANALSIS OF "FOR SALE ADVERTISEMENTS" 1709-1792

SOURCE	YEAR	BLACKS ADVERTISED
Tatler	11 Feb.1709	Black Boy aged 12
Daily Journal	1728	Black Boy aged 16
Daily Journal	1728	Black Boy aged 11
London Advertiser	1756	Black Boy aged 14
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	20 Aug.1756	3 Young Men Slaves
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	24 Jun.1757	Negro man aged 20
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	24 Jun,1757	Negro Boy aged 12
Public Ledger	1761	Negro Girl aged 15
Gentleman's Magazine	1763	Negro Boy
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	20 Aug.1766	Negro Girl aged 8
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	12 Sep.1766	11 Negroes
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	23 Jan.1767	Negro Man aged 22
Public Ledger	1761	Negro Girl aged 15
Liverpool Chronicle	15 Dec.1768	Negro Boy aged 11 or 12
Bristol Journal	1768	Negro slave aged 17
Gazeteer	18 Apr.1769	Black Boy
Public Advertiser	1769	Black Girl aged 11
Lichfield Advertiser	1771	Negro Boy aged 10 or 11
Stamford Mercury	1771	Negro Boy
Daily Advertiser	1 Feb.1775	Slave Girl
Bristol Journal	1792	Black Servant Girl

SOURCES Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser, J.J.Hecht, Continental and Colonial Servants: F.Shyllon, Black Slaves in Britain; R.Visram, Ayahs, Lascars and Princes, and J. Latimer, The Annals of Bristol.

TWO ADVERTISEMENTS FOR BLACK PEOPLE

SOURCE	DATE	SPECIFICATION
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	20 Aug.1756	Negro Boy aged between 11 and 13
Liverpool Chronicle	10 Dec. 1767	Negro lad aged between 17 and 17

THREE ADVERTISEMENTS OF BLACKS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT

SOURCE	DATE	SPECIFICATION
Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser	23 Jan. 1767	Barber, useful with horses
Morning Chronicle	1 Apr. 1795	East Indian nanny seeking passage home
Daily Advertiser	1 Feb. 1775	East Indian female servant seeking passage home

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