



DOCUMENT A: 1712 Court Records Transcription

*There are numerous trial records relating to the New York slave revolt of 1712, consisting of the Minutes of the Court of Quarter Sessions, which had jurisdiction over serious offenses. The court met four times a year, and the revolt coincided with a quarterly meeting. Thus no special session was called. What follows are excerpts of the court records pertaining to Sarah, who was convicted at trial. They are provided to give the reader a feel for the proceedings. After, certain segments are more carefully examined to highlight specific points about silencing in history's production. It is important to note that Sarah's case is isolated where possible and in **red print**. On the day she was arraigned, for example, several other enslaved people were also arraigned.*

Note: Empty brackets reflect words that could not be made out. Brackets with notes in them make it easier to follow the chronology of the proceedings.

[Sarah was arraigned on April 17th, 1712 in the Court of Quarter sessions.]

Dom Regina vs. Sara[sp] a negro woman slave of Stophel Pels

“The grand jurors having brought a bill against the defendants for the murder of Augustus Grafft upon motion of the attorney General order that they be immediately brought to bar and arraigned.”

[Later the same day]

Dom Regina v. Sarah a negro woman slave of Stophel Pels

The grand jurors having brought a bill against the defendants for the murder of Augustus Grafft upon motion of the attorney General order that they be immediately brought to bar and arraigned.

[Again, later that same day]

Dom Regina v. Sara[sp] a negro woman slave of Stophel Pels

The defendant being brought to the bar and arraigned pro se. [i.e. she is representing herself] ordered she be tried immediately and there upon the jury being charged and sworn say upon their oath that the defendant Sara is guilty of the murder whereof she stands indicted of that she had no goods or chattels etc: order she be recommitted.

[Note that Sarah is arraigned, tried, and found guilty on the same day. The order of execution follows on April 20th]

Dom Regina v.Sara the slave of Stophel Pels

The said defendants being brought to the bar and having nothing to say for themselves why suffer death should not [] against them [] to the verdict formally found against them it is therefor considered by the court that they be carried from hence to the place from whence they came and from thence to the place of execution and there to be hanged by the necks until they are dead.

[After a number of slaves had been dispensed with, that is arraigned, tried, and sentenced, the court reporter would enter a detailed memorandum, which was very distinct from the reporter's other cursory statements. What follows is the memorandum for Sarah and the others tried at the same time]

MEMORANDUM at a court held for the trial of negro and indian slaves of the city hall of the city of NY on Wednesday the sixteenth day of April [referring to the first day of trials] in the eleventh year of the reign of our Lady Anne by the grace of god queen of Great Britain France Ireland defender of the faith [justices names] justices of the peace of the said city and county by [] of an act of general assembly of the province of NY made in the seventh year of the reign of our lady the Queen aforesaid[cites the 1708 law discussed above] entitled an act for preventing the conspiracy of slaves by the oath of twelve jurors it is presented that Toby a negro man slave belonging to John Cure Mars a negro man slave belonging to Jacob Regnier Ceaser a negro man slave belonging to Peter Morin Rodrigo a negro man slave belonging to Robert Darkins Titus a negro man slave belonging to Richard Ray Ben a negro man slave belonging to the widow Schuyler Quashi a negro man slave belonging to Joseph Latham Jurorico a negro man slave belonging to Rodrigo Pacheco Tom a negro man slave belonging to David Lyell Lily a negro woman slave belonging to John Crook Coffee a negro man slave belonging to William Walton Dick a negro man slave belonging to Thomas Stoutenburgh Quaco a negro man slave belonging to Walter Thong Tom a negro man slave belonging to [owners name] **Sara a negro woman slave belonging to Stophel Pels** rope maker Amba a negro woman slave belonging to Adolph Philips the seventh day of April in the eleventh year of the reign of our sovereign lady Anne by the grace of God Queen of Great Britain France Ireland defender of the faith etc at the east ward of the city of NY with force and arms of their malice aforethought in and upon one Augustus Grassett in the peace of god and of our said lady the queen

[missing sentence]

and that the said negro man slave of John Cure called Toby with a certain instrument called dagger of the value of six pence which he the said Toby had then and there in his hands of him the said Augustus Grasset in the neck voluntarily traytrously and feloniously and of his malice aforethought then and there did strike and with that stroke did give to the said Augustus Grasset did give one certain mortal wound of the breadth of 2 inches and depth of 3 inches of which certain mortal wound the aforesaid Augustus Grasset then and there instantly and immmeadeatly died and so the jurors aforesaid say that the aforesaid Toby a negro man slave of John Cure Mars a negro man slave of Jacob Regnier Ceaser a negro man slave of Peter Morin Rodrigo a negro man slave of Robert Darkins Titus a negro man slave of Richard Ray Ben a negro man slave of the widow Schuyler Quashi a negro man slave of Joseph Latham Jurorico a negro man slave of Rodrigo Pacheco Tom a negro man slave of David Lyell Lily a negro woman slave of John Crook Coffee a negro man slave of William Walton Dick a negro man slave of Thomas Stoutenburgh Quaco a negro man slave of Walter Thong Tom a negro man slave of Thomas [last name?]

Sara a negro woman slave of Stophel Pels rope maker and Amba a negro woman slave of Adolph Philips the seventh day of April in the year aforesaid at the east ward of the city of NY aforesaid of their malice aforethought voluntarily tryatrously(sp) and feloniously the aforesaid Augustus Grasset in manner and form aforesaid did kill and murder against the peace of our said lady the Queen her crown and dignity etc before the [] aforesaid held at the city hall of the city of NY aforesaid came the said Toby the slave of John Cure Mars the slave of Jacob Regnier Caesar the slave of Peter Morin Rodrigo the slave of Robert Darkins Titus the salve of Richard Ray Ben the salve of widow Schuyler Quashi the slave of Joseph Latham Jurorico the slave of Rodrigo Pacheco Tom the slave of David Lyell Lily the slave of John Crook Coffee the slave of Walter Thong Dick the slave of Tobias Stoutenburgh Quaco the slave of Walter Thong Sara the slave of Stophel Pels and Amba the Slave Adolph Philips in their propia persons under custody of the sherif of the city of NY to whose custody the same Toby, Mars, Ceaser, Rodrigo, Titus, Ben, Quashi, Jurorico, Tom, Lily, Coffee, Dick, Quaco, Sara, and Amba by [] of the prisoners afore were committed being brought to the bar and instantly being severally asked of the prisoners on there above charged how they would [] thereof acquitted severally say that they are not thereof guilty nor either of them [] whereof guilty and thereof of good or evil they put themselves upon the county therefore [] there came before the justices aforesaid jury whereof immediately then and there between our said lady the queen and the said Toby Mars Ceaser Rodrigo Titus Ben Quashi Jurorico Tom Lily Coffee Dick Quaco Sara and Amba and who [] etc to recognize etc because as [] etc the same day as given to the aforesaid Toby Mars Caesar Rodrigo Titus Ben Quashi Jurorico Tom Lily Coffee Dick Quaco Sara and Amba under custody of the sherif of the city and county of NY in the meanwhile to be safely kept etc at which day before the justices aforesaid in the court aforesaid held in the city hall of the city of NY aforesaid came the aforesaid Toby Mars Ceaser Rodrigo Titus Ben Quashi Jurorico Tom Lily Coffee Dick Quaco Sara and Amba

in their propia persons under custody of the sherif aforesaid to whom the were committed in the jurors aforesaid by the sherif of the city and county aforesaid in this behalf

[] and exacted likewise came who to speak the truth upon the premises being elected tried and sworn say upon their oath that Toby the negro man slave of John Cure Caesar the negro man slave of Peter Morin Titus the negro man slave of Richard Ray Tom the negro man slave of David Lyell Coffee the negro man slave of William Walton Quaco the negro ,man slave of Walter Thong Sara the negro woman slave of Stophel Pels and every of them of the murder aforesaid upon [] above in form aforesaid charged are guilty in manner and form as in the above indictment against them is supposed and that they nor any of them have any goods or chattels lands or tenements to their knowledge and the jurors aforesaid further upon their oath do say that the aforesaid Mars negro man slave of Jacob Regner Rodrigo the negro man slave of Robert Darkins Ben the negro man slave of the widow Schuyler Quashi the negro man slave of Joseph Latham Jurorico the negro man slave of Rodrigo Pacheco Lily the negro woman slave of John Crook Dick the negro man slave of Tobias Stoutenburgh and Amba the negro woman slave of Adolph Philips are not guilty of the murder aforesaid upon them above in form aforesaid charged nor are either or any of them guilty in manner or form as in the above indictment against them is supposed and therefore the said Toby Ceaser Titus Tom Coffee Quaco and Sara were severally asked if they or any of them had any thing to say for themselves why the court [] to judgement and execution against them upon these premises ought not to proceed who say nothing but as before they have said upon which being [] and all and singular the premises by the court has understood it is considered by the court that the aforesaid Toby the negro man slave of John Cure Caesar the negro man slave of Peter Morin Titus the negro man slave of Richard Ray Tom the negro man slave of David Lyell Coffee the negro man slave of William Walton Quaco the negro man slave of Walter Thong and Sara the negro woman slave of Stophel Pels and every of them be hanged by the neck until they be dead and it is commanded the sherif of the city and county of NY that the execution of the said Toby Ceaser Titus Tom Coffee Quaco and Sara be made without delay upon his peril etc and it is further considered by the court that the aforesaid Mars the negro man slave of Jacob Regnier Rodrigo the negro man slave of Robert Darkins Ben the negro man slave of the widow Schuyler Quashi the negro man slave of Joseph Latham Jurorico the negro man slave of Rodrigo Pacheco Lily the negro woman slave of John Crook Dick the negro man slave of Tobias Stoutenburgh and Amba the negro woman slave of Adolph Philips in every of them as to the [] aforesaid may go thereof acquitted etc.

Source: Charles Daly, *Historical Sketch of the Judicial Tribunals of New York from 1623 to 1846*, (New York: John American Printer, 1855), 32, 221, 223, 234- 239.