

The Voyage of the Hare

Instructions: You and your group will use the documents below to trace the route of a slave ship. Look at the documents, and read their transcriptions (they have been transcribed with modern spelling and punctuation to make them easier to read). You may need an atlas to complete this exercise. On the map, do the following:

1. Mark the location from which the ship left the United States. Indicate who was the owner of the ship.
2. Mark the location on the map from which the captain of the ship wrote his letter to the owners. Indicate the name of the captain.
3. Mark the location on the map where the slaves were sold. Indicate how many were sold, and who the selling agent was.

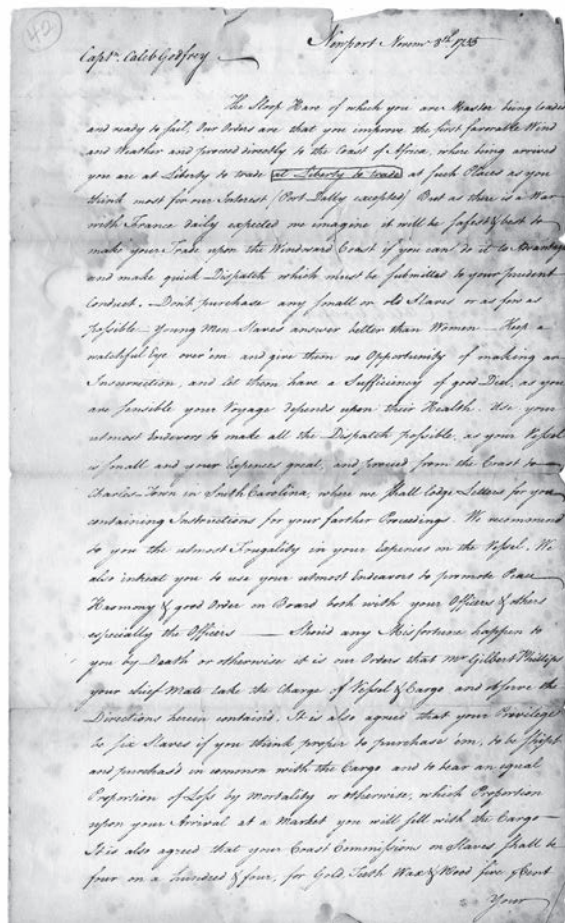
The Vernons' letter of instructions to Captain Godfrey

Newport, November 8th, 1755

Captn. Caleb Godfrey—

The Sloop Hare of which you are Master being loaded and ready to sail, Our Orders are that you improve the first favorable Wind and Weather and proceed directly to the Coast of Africa, where being arrived you are at Liberty to trade at such Places as you think most for our Interest.... Don't purchase any small or old Slaves or as far as possible—Young Men Slaves answer better than Women—Keep a watchful Eye over 'em and give them no Opportunity of making an Insurrection, and let them have a Sufficiency of good Diet, as you are Sensible your Voyage depends upon their Health. Use your utmost Endeavors to make all the Dispatch possible, as your Vessel is small and your Expenses great, and proceed from the Coast to—Charleston in South Carolina, where we shall lodge Letters for you containing Instructions for your farther Proceedings. We recommend to you the utmost Frugality in your Expenses on the Vessel. We also entreat you to use your utmost Endeavors to promote Peace—Harmony and good Order on Board both with your Officers and others, especially the Officers.... Don't omit writing us by all Opportunities we wish you Health and a prosperous Voyage who are your Friends,

Sam. & Wm Vernon

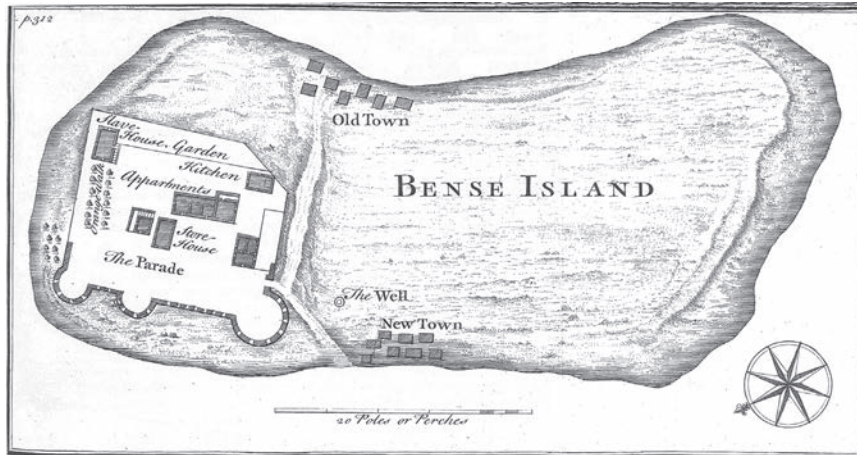


This is the first page of the Vernons' letter.

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NOTE: This resource is excerpted from *A Forgotten History: The Slave Trade and Slavery in New England*. The full text is available from the Choices Program, Watson Institute, Brown University.

— www.choices.edu—



Courtesy of The John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.

Plan of "Bense Island"

Now called Bunce Island, this island housed a slave fortress owned by the British. It is in the country of Sierra Leone. It was one of the stops the *Hare* made on her journey. This drawing was originally published in 1726.

Captain Godfrey's letter to the Vernons, Sierra Leone April 8, 1756

Serelion, April 8th, 1756

Gentlemen

I have now Eighty Slaves aboard and Expect to Sail for Carolina tomorrow. My Vessel is in Good order, Clean, tallow'd down to the Keel. I have turned your Confidant, my Chief mate, out of his office and made Lion Martindal my Chief mate. Capt. Clark is here and Designs to leeward all at present.

From your
Humble Servant,
Caleb Godfrey

