

# Masters & Servants - the Slave Trade in Haringey

## Slave Owners

Slave owners lived in Tottenham and Hornsey. Ships' captains, home from their journeys, could be seen walking in the streets with their 'Black' in attendance. Many were just passing through. Others were here to stay. Local church records are the only rare commemorations of those Africans who died here. Some have no name. They are marked as the captain's property. *'1733 Captain Lissles black from Highgate'*



SIR THO<sup>S</sup> ROE.



The keeping of African servants and pages was fashionable amongst wealthy and noble families. Sir Thomas Rowe's family were prosperous merchants who owned estates in Muswell Hill. They had two African servants in their household during the 1690s. They were named Henry and William.

In Tottenham during the 1670s, Henry Hare, the 2nd Lord Coleraine of Bruce Castle, owned an African servant boy.

The painting shows the young boy dressed in rich and luxurious clothing.

He wears a silver collar around his neck indicating his enslaved status. Was he treated well? Was he only considered to be an amusement for Lord Coleraine's children?

## 'Boy' For Sale

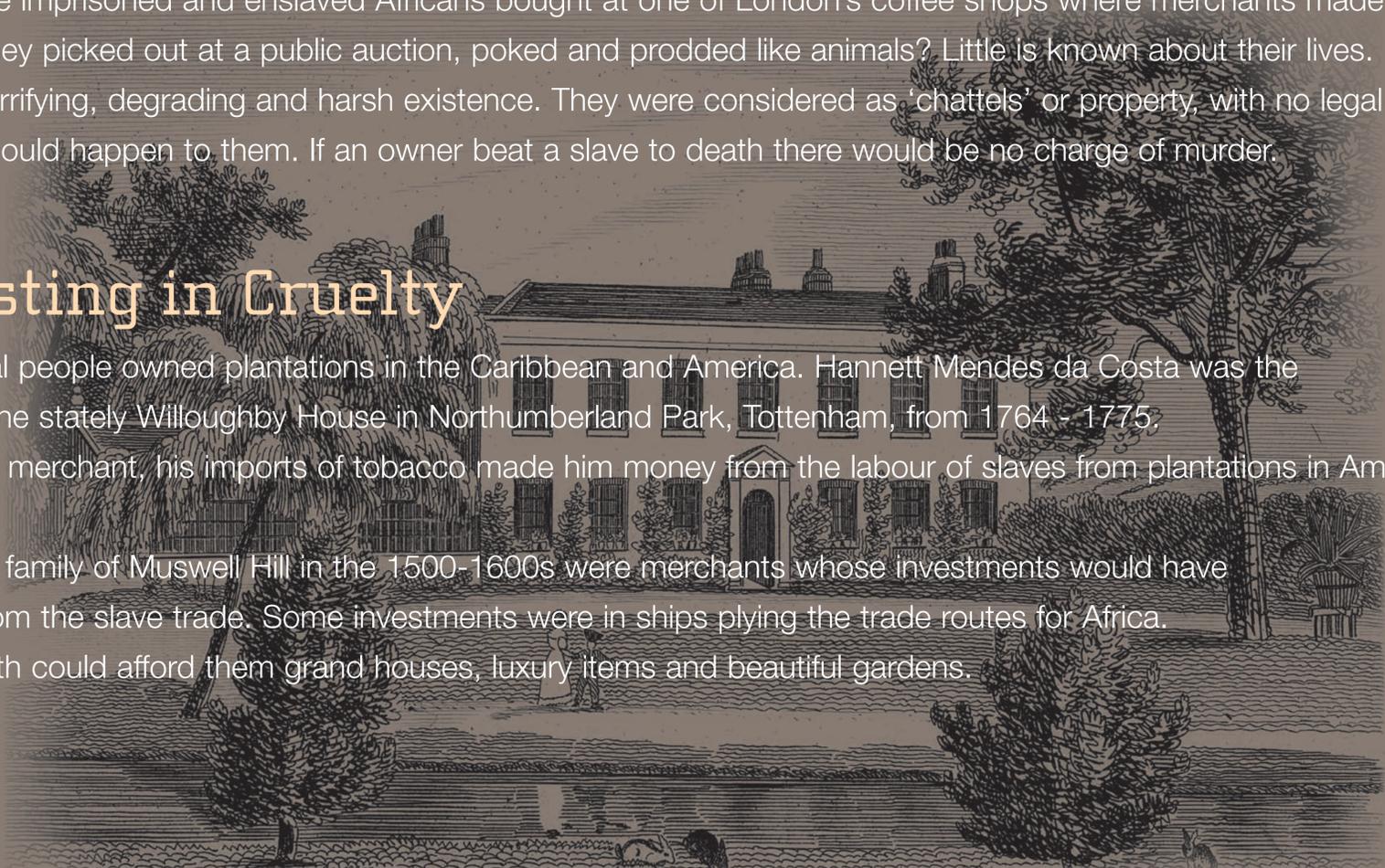
Were these imprisoned and enslaved Africans bought at one of London's coffee shops where merchants made deals? Or were they picked out at a public auction, poked and prodded like animals? Little is known about their lives. It was a terrifying, degrading and harsh existence. They were considered as 'chattels' or property, with no legal rights. Anything could happen to them. If an owner beat a slave to death there would be no charge of murder.

## Investing in Cruelty

Some local people owned plantations in the Caribbean and America. Hannett Mendes da Costa was the owner of the stately Willoughby House in Northumberland Park, Tottenham, from 1764 - 1775.

A tobacco merchant, his imports of tobacco made him money from the labour of slaves from plantations in America.

The Rowe family of Muswell Hill in the 1500-1600s were merchants whose investments would have profited from the slave trade. Some investments were in ships plying the trade routes for Africa. Their wealth could afford them grand houses, luxury items and beautiful gardens.



Engraved from an Original Drawing for the Supplement to Robinson's History & Antiquities of Tottenham, Middx.

WILLOUGHBY HOUSE, TOTTENHAM, MIDDX.