

Pompey

*People of London Town, Maryland**

Pompey, like many enslaved Africans during the colonial period, is only vaguely known through indirect references. He was in the South River/London Town, Maryland area between at least 26 April 1709 and 30 August 1716. During that time he was a slave for Edward Rumney, Sr. Because Rumney was involved with ferrying people over the South River while also providing lodgings, food, and drink around that time, there is a good chance that Pompey helped operate the ferry and did manual labor in and around Rumney's ordinary. Additionally, Pompey could have helped Rumney with building and/or repairing small boats since Rumney was a shipwright. There are no records telling us where Pompey originated from, when he was purchased by Rumney, or when he died or passed out of Rumney's ownership.

The April 1709 reference is found in a mortgage for £113 between Edward Rumney, Sr. and Charles Carroll. As security for the mortgage, Rumney and his wife Elinor, used the land the Rumneys currently owned, "two Negro men the one called C— the other Pompey, aged about twenty four," two ferry boats, some livestock, and two feather beds.¹

The August 1716 reference is found in a court case between Edward Rumney, Sr. and the Lord Baltimore against Stephen West, Sr. This case came about because on 30 August 1716 West either purchased or sold (it is unclear) a "Broad Weeding Hoe of the value of three shillings and Six pence current money of this province and also for one narrow felling ax of the value of two shillings and ha'pence..." from or to Pompey. Because West did not get Rumney's permission beforehand to conduct a transaction with his slave (as required by a 1715 Maryland law), West was found guilty, fined 2000 pounds of tobacco, and ordered to pay Rumney 1691 pounds of tobacco for court costs.²

* As the research into colonial London Town's inhabitants is an ongoing process, the caveat is offered that additional information may be found at any time and that a correction of information might also occur at any time.

¹ Maryland State Archives, *Anne Arundel County Land Records*, Liber PK, Folio 44-47; recorded on 27 June 1709

² MSA, *Anne Arundel County Court Judgment Record*, November Court 1717, Liber RC, Folio 109-111