

Thomas Barrel

*People of London Town, Maryland**

“Ordered that Thomas Barrel otherwise called ‘my Lord’ who rowed in South River Ferry Boat be levy free for the future and that he be allowed three hundred and twenty pounds of tobacco for his support until next November Court he having fitts and unable to work.”¹

All that is known about Thomas Barrel comes from the June 1754 citation above. From that citation we learn that Thomas Barrel was involved with the South River Ferry (probably the public one) and that since he appeared before the court for himself, he was a free individual. However, his involvement with the ferry means that though free, he was a hired hand by Thomas Lusby (at that point the public ferry keeper). As a hired hand, he may or may not have been in the Lusby household. Additionally, the citation infers that he had been involved with the ferry for at least a little while because he had gained a locally known nickname. As a ferryman he was required to be at the ferry usually from sun-up to sun-down to attend to travelers that would use the ferry. His illness (the ‘fitts’) must have been bad enough to not only convince the court to be ‘levy free’ (meaning he would not have to pay county taxes in the future) but also be county-supported for the next few months. There does not seem to be a reference to him later in the court records which makes learning his fate challenging.

* 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 Court Judgment Record*, June Court 1754, Folio 860.