

**Betty**  
*People of London Town, Maryland*<sup>1</sup>

Betty appears only once in the historical record and was discovered by the historian Mechelle Kerns. When her enslaver, London Towner Zachariah Maccubbin, died in 1754, all his possessions were inspected, given a value, and recorded in a probate inventory. Enslaved people counted as possessions, and so were also recorded. Betty is written down as a “cooper” (barrel maker) and valued at £20.<sup>2</sup>

Cooperage was an important part of the Chesapeake economy. Large barrels called hogsheads were necessary for shipping the all-important cash crop of tobacco to Britain. As Kerns wrote in her paper *Trade in Colonial Anne Arundel County: The Tobacco Port of London Town*:

Wood and wood products were exported from Anne Arundel County in large quantities. The sugar colonies needed barrels of all sizes, especially casks and hogsheads, to process, store, and export their products...One common wood product exported from Maryland was “staves and heading,” the prefabricated tops, bottoms, and staves of barrels.<sup>3</sup>

Betty is the only named cooper of London Town yet discovered.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Kerns, Mechelle, *London Town: The Life of a Colonial Town*, unpublished master’s thesis, UMBC: 1999, pages 317-319.

<sup>3</sup> Kerns, Mechelle, “Trade in Colonial Anne Arundel County: The Tobacco Port of London Town,” *Maryland Historical Magazine*, Vol. 98, No. 3, Fall 2003, page 330.