

TRANSCRIPTION

To the Right Honorable Sir William Berkeley Knight Governor & Captain General
Of Virginia with the Honorable Council of State

The petition of Phillip Gowen a Negro... That your petitioner being a servant to Mrs. Amy Beazley late of James City County Widow deceased the said Mrs. Beazley made her last will and testament in writing under the hand & seal, bearing the date the 9th. day of April 1664...

...the then name of Negro Boy Phillip, should serve her Cousin Mr. Humphrey Stafford, the term of Eight years... then should Enjoy his freedom & be paid three barrels of Corn & a suit of Clothes...

Soon after the making of which will, the said Mrs. Beazley departed this life, and your petitioner did continue & abide with the said Mr. Stafford... and then the said Mr. Stafford sold the remainder of your petitioner time, to one Mr. Charles Lucas...

But the said Mr. Lucas... did not at the expiration of the said Eight years, discharge your petitioner from his service, but compelled him to serve three years longer then the time set by the said Mrs. Beazley's will...

...compelled your petitioner to set his hand to a writing, which the said Mr. Lucas now said, is an Indenture for twenty years, and forced your petitioner to acknowledge the same in the County court of Warwick.

...the said Mr. Lucas always unjustly pretending that your petitioner was to serve him three years longer, by an order of the Court is untrue...

Your petitioner therefore most humbly pray your honor to order that the said writing so forced from him be made void; and that the said Mr. Lucas make him satisfaction for the said three years service above his time and pay him Corn & Clothes with the costs of Suit:

Excerpted and translated from the Undated petition of Phillip Gowen to Governor Sir William Berkeley, ca. 1675. Colonial Papers, folder 19, no. 2, Record Group 1, Library of Virginia.