



## DOCUMENT 1

30 July 1824

To  
His Excellency, Lord Chamberlain von Bardenfleth  
Admiral, Governor-General, Knight of the Order of Dannebrog

I hereby take the liberty of submitting to Your Excellency: A summary of police examination N 41/1824 of the female slaves Peggy and Maria, the former belonging to the Negro Isaac, and the latter to Mrs. Heegaard of this town.

During the above-mentioned examination it was established that the aforesaid Negresses on various occasions by means of a false key have opened the desk belonging to the witness Frederik Christian Billenstein in his bedchamber, and that they have stolen several gold coins. With that money they have separately bought dresses, scarves, and other female articles, which articles, as far as possible, have been procured for the case and, being appraised, have been given to Billenstein.

Further relevant information, other than what has been established by this court, it will not be possible to obtain, as far as I can see, and as following up on the case through a proper court will mean expenses for the public coffers, I humbly suggest to Your Excellency, in view of the outlined circumstances, that the two aforementioned female slaves be punished in the Fish Market with 50 or 60 lashes each, and that they be sentenced to 2 or 4 months of forced labor.

Christiansted Police Department, July 30, 1824  
Humbly  
A. J. Andreson



## DOCUMENT 2

Andreas J. Andreson, Royally appointed Town Clerk and acting Police Clerk in Christiansted Jurisdiction on St. Croix in America hereby proclaims that: On July 22, 1824, at 12 o'clock noon Christiansted Police Court was in session in the public court house of this place, nr. 10 King St., supervised by the undersigned as acting Police Chief and Police Clerk, and the presence of Police Sergeant Sohne and Police Officer Serina.

Upon which occasion there was a new examination, nr. 41/1824: Police investigation against the Negresses Peggy and Maria.

The Police Chief observed that on the 14th of this month the witness Billenstein had notified the police that on several occasions he had found money missing from his desk, all in all an estimated \$200, and that he suspected his house slave, the Negress Maria, belonging to Mrs. Heegaard, and a friend of Maria, the Negress Peggy, who often visit each other, of having gained access to the money by means of a false key; and as it has been learned by the court that the two Negresses at various places in the town have bought and paid for quite a few dresses and other articles, an examination has been held by the police, and the explanations of the involved have been entered into the police report, which report is submitted in writing.

The submitted report reads like this:

Transcript of Christiansted Jurisdiction Police Report July 14, 1824  
Maria, Negress belonging to Mrs. Heegaard  
Peggy, Negress belonging to the Negro Isaac

[Both] Arrested suspected of the thefts, and because of information obtained, the following persons were called and submitted the explanations as stated by their names.

The Sambo woman, Johanna, belonging to F. C.<sup>1</sup> Lydia Heyliger, explains on being asked that she knows the two Negresses Peggy and Maria very well – Last week the aforementioned Maria bought from the witness two madras scarves at \$1 10c, material for a dress at \$2, a scarf at 10 reales, two of the same at 5 reales. – The Negro girl Peggy likewise bought from the witness a dress for \$1 and 12 reales, 3 madras scarves at \$1 10 cent each, 2 scarves at 5 reales each, and one of the same at 4 reales. These articles the abovementioned persons bought from the witness over two days and paid for together, Maria with a \$7 gold piece<sup>2</sup> and Peggy with a \$5 gold piece.

Next appeared the Negress Catharina belonging to Mr. Albert Andersen, and she explains on being questioned that the Negro girl Maria, belonging to Mrs. Heegaard, some time last month bought from the witness a madras scarf for \$1.75, and the Negro girl Peggy bought two of the same at the same price. –Peggy paid for it all with a \$7 piece and was given change. Last Monday Maria also bought a scarf for 10 reales, which, however, she received on credit and still owes for.

The free Negress Maria Petersen appeared next. She explains on being questioned that the Negro girl Peggy last Saturday bought from her 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  yards of ribbon for 10 reales and paid the witness with a \$2 doubloon and received change. On Monday Peggy also bought from the witness 1 yard of lace for 9 reales and a scarf for 5 reales and paid the witness with change - Maria, however, did not buy anything from the witness.

The Negro girl Bett belonging to Mrs. De Windt appeared next. She explains on being questioned that Peggy and Maria, the Negro girls in question, last Sunday a week ago bought from her 2 scarves for 6 reales each. Peggy gave the witness a \$4 doubloon and the witness gave her change.

Next appeared the Mulatto girl Juliane, belonging to Mr. Corvinus. She explains on being questioned that about a month ago the Negro girl Maria bought from her a muslin dress for \$2 and paid the witness with a 5 rix-dollar note, and received change – last Saturday Maria also bought from the witness material for two dresses and a madras scarf, but she still owes for those articles. About a month ago the Negro girl Peggy also bought from the witness muslin for two dresses and paid her with a 5 rix-dollar note and the rest in change. Last Saturday she again bought a dress from the witness, and last Monday one (?) blue-checked material, but still has not paid the witness.

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout the text the initials F. C. stand for Free Colored person

<sup>2</sup> The Danish text says: Johannes stykke

July 15

The Negress Isabella, belonging to F. C. Elizabeth Yard, appeared before the court. She explains on being questioned that last week and the week before she sold to the Negro girl Peggy the following articles: 2 madras scarves at \$1  $\frac{3}{4}$ , 7 scarves at 4 reales, 9 yards of linen at \$ $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  yards of fine muslin at 11 reales, 1 scarf at \$ $\frac{1}{2}$ , and yesterday 10 reales worth of biscuits. She has also during the same period sold to the Negro girl Maria, belonging to Mrs. Heegaard, 8  $\frac{3}{4}$  yards of linen at 7 reales, two madras scarves at \$1  $\frac{3}{4}$ , 4 aprons at 4 reales and also yesterday 5 reales worth of biscuits. Peggy has paid the witness for them both, once with a \$5 piece and the second time with a \$7 piece and a 5 rix-dollar note, but both Peggy and Maria owe her for a pair of earrings.

After having been sent for, the Mulatto woman Carolina, belonging to F. C. Dorothea Gordon, appeared before the court. She explains on being questioned that she has sold to the Negro girl Maria, belonging to Mrs. Heegaard, the following articles: 4 madras scarves at \$1  $\frac{1}{4}$ , 2 scarves at 5 reales and 7 strings of pearls of 5 pieces, for which articles the witness has received payment, once with a \$7 piece and once with a 5 rix-dollar note, and returned change. The witness has also last week sold to the Negro girl Peggy 2 madras scarves at \$1  $\frac{1}{4}$ , and this week 5 spoons at 2 reales, and nine strings of pearls at 3 reales. For these articles Peggy has paid the witness once with a \$8 piece and once with a 5 rix-dollar note, and has received change.

After having been sent for, Mrs. Ellen Rayn appeared before the court. She explained on being questioned that last Tuesday afternoon between 5 and 6 the Negro girl Peggy jumped from Mr. Billenstein's yard into the yard where the witness lives, pretending that she had run into trouble and was afraid of being beaten. Shortly after the Mulatto girl Eliza, belonging to F. C. Frederikka Corvinus, carried a large bundle through the window, and later the aforementioned Eliza also brought a small bundle and a box - the witness saw that Peggy gave the Negress Catharina, belonging to Mrs. Schabell, some lace and some muslin, but the witness does not know if Catharina kept or returned the articles immediately - Peggy then left the witness's house with the big bundle and the box, and later the same evening the Mulatto woman Jenny, belonging to Mrs. Coakley, came for the rest.

July 16

Being summoned, the Mulatto girl Eliza, belonging to F. C. Frederikka Corvinus, appeared for questioning. On being questioned she confirms the previous witness' explanation as far as she herself is concerned, adding that the aforementioned bundles and the box Peggy had given to her and asked her to take them to Mrs. Rayn's house. Subsequently the witness met Peggy in the street with the big bundle and a small box, and on her request she brought it to the Negro girl Isabella, belonging to F. C. Elizabeth Yard, but the latter did not want to receive the bundle or the box, so the witness gave it back to Peggy. The Negress Nancy, belonging to Mrs. Heegaard, has later told the witness that Peggy brought the articles mentioned, but that Lucy, who belongs to Mr. Stridiron and who is Peggy's mother, together with Peggy, at her request, had picked up the articles.

Next appeared before the court the Negress Lucy, belonging to Mr. Stridiron. She admits to the above, namely that she picked up a bundle and a box from the Negress Nancy's house yesterday morning and brought it to her own house, but she adds that Peggy soon after came to her and took the articles and removed them, but the witness does not know to where –

Next appeared on being summoned the Sambo girl Maria, belonging to F. C. Harriet Dyer. She explains, on being questioned, that last Sunday she sold to the Negro girl Peggy a gold ring, and received a \$8 piece. The witness has sold nothing else to Peggy and nothing to Maria.

July 17

On being summoned the Sambo girl Jenny, belonging to Mrs. Coakley appeared. She admits that last Tuesday evening at Peggy's request she picked up from Mrs. Rayn's house a bundle of clothes, but she maintains that she handed over the bundle to free girl Louisa to give it to Peggy. The witness adds, on being questioned, that last week the Negro girl Peggy bought from her an apron for 5 reales and a pair of silk stockings, and Maria also bought an apron for 5 reales, and the witness was paid in reales.

Next appeared the free Negress Louisa Elizabeth Williams. She admits to having received from the Sambo girl Jenny a bundle of clothes, but says that she has handed it over to the Mulatto girl Eliza, belonging to F. C. Corvinus, so that she could give it to Peggy.-

Next appeared the Negro James Harrison, who, on being asked, explains that some days ago the Negress Lucy, belonging to Mr. Stridiron, called upon the witness asking him to make her a bed for \$10, and when the witness said that he had no money to buy materials for, the aforementioned Lucy gave him a \$5 piece. –

The Negress Lucy, who is Peggy's mother, was called again. She confirms she previous witness's explanation, but adds that the aforementioned bed was for her daughter Peggy, who has given her the aforementioned \$5 piece and told her that Mr. Billenstein had given it to her and promised her the rest for the bed. The witness now admits that her daughter has given her a scarf, but denies having received anything else.

July 19

Next appeared the free Negress Emilie. She explains on being questioned that last Monday she sold to the Negro girl Peggy 12 yards of blue denim for \$4 and 10 reales, and 3 yards of cambric for \$1 and 14 reales. Peggy paid with a \$8 piece, and was returned \$1 and 7 reales in change. The Negro girl Maria has not, however, bought anything from the witness.

Next appeared the Negress Carolina belonging to De Solas. She explains on being questioned that last week she sold to the Negro girl Maria two madras scarves at \$1 and 5 yards of cambric

at 5 reales. For this the witness received one \$8 piece and returned \$4 and 5 reales in change.  
The Negro girl Peggy has bought absolutely nothing from the witness.

The transcript is certified by

A. J. Andreason

Submitted in Christiansted Police Court, July 22, 1824 in case nr. 41/

A. J. Andreason

The Police Chief considered it appropriate, at Billenstein's request, to have the procured articles appraised by the merchants Salomon de Leon and J. L. Maduro and handed over to him – Billenstein – and a list of the articles, as drawn up by the police, was submitted.

The list reads like this:

List of the articles which have been in the Negro girl Peggy's possession.

4 string of pearls..... Ps [Pieces of Eight].....	1. 4. 3.
1 Chemise.....	1.
1 piece twill.....	2. 4. 0.
3 silver plated spoons .....	0. 2. 3.
1 blue material, 12 yards .....	7. 4. 0
1 pair of silk stockings.....	2.
1 string of granite pearls.....	0. 4.
1 pair of shoes.....	0. 6.
3 colored scarves, one of which is madras .....	2. 4.
1 red checkered material for a dress.....	2. 2. 0.
1 string of amber pearls.....	1. 4.
1 pair of earrings .....	0. 4.
1 pair of shoes.....	0. 6. 2.
4 white cambric scarves .....	1. 4. 0.
1 piece white material for a dress.....	1. 4. 3.
1 old white woman's dress .....	1. 4. 3
1 new do..... do.....	2.
1 Chemise.....	1. 0. 0.
1 floral scarf .....	2. 0. 0.
1 sirhac3 material for a dress.....	2. 0. 0.
4 madras scarves .....	6. 2. 0.
1 do ..... do .....	1. 4. 3.
3 single do .....	1. 4. 0
2 pair of shoes.....	2. 4. 0.
1 piece checked material for a apron.....	0. 2. 0.
1 ½ do muslin for a dress .....	0. 4. 0.
1 gold ring .....	6. 2. 0.
1 piece twill .....	1. 4. 3.



1 do white material for a dress .....	2. 2. 0.
1 do checkered material for a scarf .....	0. 4. 0.
1 cardboard box containing.....	0. 1. 0.
8 strings of blue pearls and some do .....	0. 4. 0.
1 do granite pearls .....	0. 6. 2.
2 bundles of black do .....	0. 4. 0.
2 small tin boxes.....	0. 1. 0.
1 blue dress (from wash).....	0. 4. 0.
1 do ..... do (from wash) .....	0. 4. 0.
3 single scarves from wash .....	0. 6. 0.
1 apron (from wash).....	0. 1. 0.
Some material for a bed .....	3. 0. 0.
[TOTAL]	68. 4. 1.

The above-mentioned articles have today been appraised by the undersigned to the best of our judgment and their value determined accordingly.

Christiansted, July 19, 1824.

S. Deleon

J. L. Maduro

Also submitted \$20, which at Mr. Billenstein's request was given to Police Officer Serina.

The above articles have been received and signed for

F. C. Billenstein

Submitted at Christiansted Police Court on July 22, 1824 in case nr. 41/1824

A. J. Andreson

List of the articles in the Negro girl Maria's possession

1 pair of silk stockings.....	2. 0. 0.
1 black silk scarf.....	1. 0. 0.
1 white handkerchief .....	0. 2. 0.
1 piece blue twill material for a dress .....	3. 0. 0.
1 do checkered do for do .....	2. 4. 0.
1 do knitted do for do .....	2. 4. 0.
1 do twill.....	1. 4. 0.
4 white muslin scarves .....	2. 0. 0.
14 different colored scarves (out of which 9 madras)	16. 4. 3
some sticks of blue pearls with gold hair.....	1. 0. 0.
1 pair of gold earrings with stones .....	1. 4. 3.
1 ribbon.....	0. 2. 0.
1 chemise and 1 piece of material for do...	3. 1. 0.
2 suitcases and one bigger do .....	5. 1. 0.
4 white pillow cases.....	2. 0. 0.
1 woman's dress....	1. 0. 0.

2 aprons .....	0. 4. 0.
2 small pillowcases .....	0. 2. 0.
2 madras scarves .....	3. 0. 0.
2 single do .....	1. 0. 0.
1 checkered apron .....	0. 2. 0.
2 yards of white cord .....	0. 1. 0.
1 do of lace .....	1. 4. 3.
3 strings of white pearls .....	3. 0.
1 do of white corals.....	1. 0. 0.
2 woman's dresses .....	10. 7. 0.
1 pairs of shoes with buckles.....	1. 4. 3.
[TOTAL]	69. 0. 3.

The above-mentioned articles have today been appraised by the undersigned to the best of our judgment and their value determined accordingly.

Christiansted, July 19, 1824.

S. Deleon

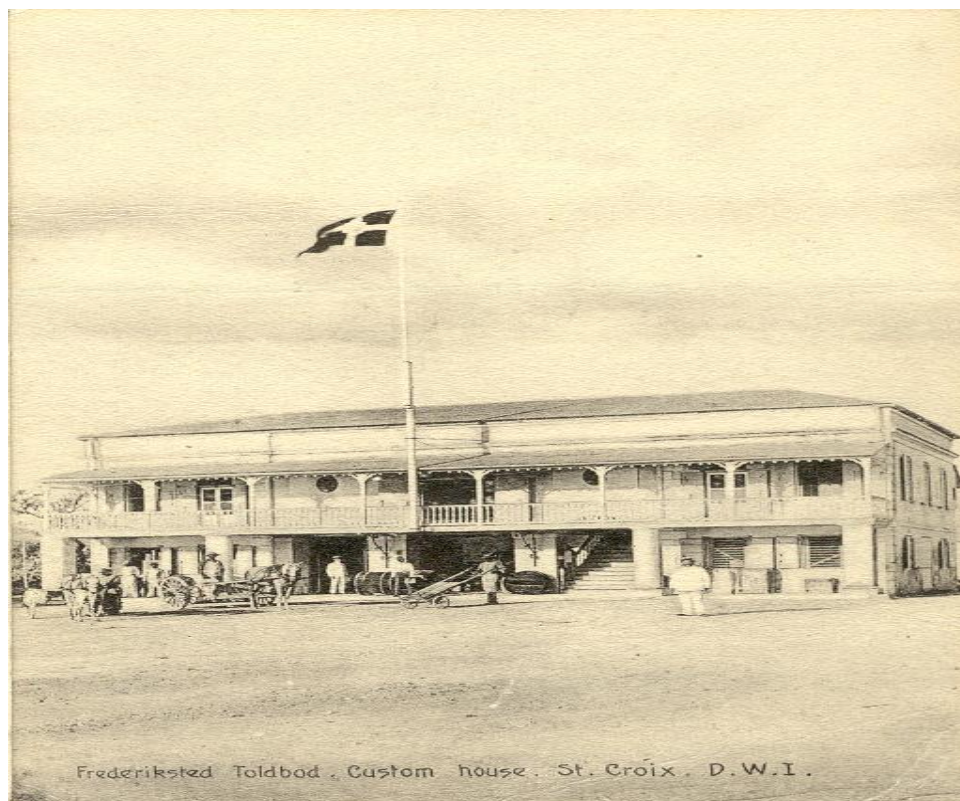
J. L. Maduro

The above articles have been received and signed for

F. C. Billenstein

Submitted at Christiansted Police Court on July 22, 1824 in case nr. 41/1824

A. J. Andreson





Now the Negro girl Peggy appeared unshackled before the court. She belongs to the Negro Isaac, was born here, does not know her age, but is believed to be between 14 and 18 years of age, and is Anglican. She was confronted with the testimonies of the witnesses, whereupon she gave the following explanation: that the Negro girl Maria, belonging to Mrs. Heegaard, must be the one who has opened Mr. Billenstein's desk and removed the stolen money, as on several occasions she has given the witness gold coins to hide for her, telling her that she has received them from Mr. Peter Hennemann, with whom she is staying. Out of the money which Maria thus gave her, she has bought the articles which have been produced, adding to this two yards of velvet ribbons a blue muslin for a dress, two tin spoons, 4 madras scarves, two small presenting trays, a pair of gold earrings, a pair of imitation ditto, and three yards of cord, which have been stolen from her, presumably by the free Negress Louise Elizabeth Williams, at whose house these and other articles were kept. As for the key in her possession, the witness explains that Maria the day before she was arrested gave it to her to hide together with three pieces of gold, out of which she kept one gold piece, whereas the other two are those which have been produced here.

The witness firmly denies having been present when Maria opened the desk in question and removed the money, and claims she does not know anything about it, adding that the witness has never entered the house, as Mr. Billenstein has promised her a beating if she ever did. The witness declares, on being questioned further, that she has only kept for her mother Lucy, belonging to Mr. H. Stridiron, a scarf and a \$5 piece, which Lucy had paid to James Harrison to buy material for a bed. She was returned to custody.

Maria appeared before the court unshackled. She belongs to Mrs. Heegaard, was born here, does not know her age, but is believed to be between 17 and 18 years old, and is Anglican. She firmly denies Peggy's testimony about her, and explains that it is the Negro girl Peggy who twice in the presence of the witness has opened Mr. Billenstein's desk and removed money, out of which Peggy has only given the witness \$8. Peggy has opened the desk with the produced key, which was now shown to the witness. The first time that this happened was about 14 weeks ago, and

the last time the day before the witness was arrested. Now the witness changed her explanation and said that, in fact, Peggy has opened the desk in question three times in her presence and removed money, the first time 4 gold pieces, the second time 3, and the last time 2 gold pieces. The witness adds that Peggy on entering Mr. Billenstein's house found the key in question and thus took possession of it. – The witness was confronted with the impossibility of her statement, but could not be brought to change or modify her explanation.

She was returned to custody.

The free Negress Louisa Elizabeth Williams appeared unshackled before the court. She was confronted with the Negress Peggy's testimony, but stands by her explanation in the police report, namely that she gave the clothes given to her by the Sambo girl Jenny to the Mulatto girl Eliza, belonging to Frederikka Corvinus, and firmly denies having taken anything from the bundle in question. Nor has she received anything as a gift for storing the clothes in question.

The Negress Lucy, belonging to Mr. H. Stridiron, appeared unshackled before the court. She firmly adhered to the explanation given by her in the police report.

Next the Negro girl Peggy reappeared unshackled before the court. On being questioned further, she admits that she did not believe Maria's explanation to her when on a number of occasions she gave her money pretending that she had been given it by Peter Hennemann, but assumed that Maria had obtained it unlawfully, as she knew full well that Hennemann could not afford to give so much money to women.

The Negro girl Maria reappeared unshackled before the court. She now declared, on being questioned further, that all the money for which she has bought the articles produced in this court she has received from Peggy. Next the arrestees Peggy and Maria were confronted with the discrepancies of their explanations, but they both stuck to their previous explanations. Both are returned to custody and the examination postponed.

Certified by  
A. J. Andreson



On July 23, 1824, at three o'clock in the afternoon, Christiansted Police Court was in session in the public courthouse at nr. 10 King Street, supervised by the undersigned as acting Police Chief and in the presence of Police Sergeant Sohne and Police Officer Serina, where was continued THE EXAMINATION Nr. 41/1824 Police investigation against the Negresses Peggy and Maria

The Negress Peggy again appeared unshackled before the court, and on being questioned denies having had any knowledge of the produced key, or of how Maria came into possession of it, and

the witness maintains that she did not get it until the day before she was arrested, as previously explained, and the witness explains that this happened in private, and that no one has been present on the occasions when she received money from Maria. The witness says that she has not told anyone anything about where she had the money from, other than Juliane, belonging to Corvinus and Isabella, belonging to Miss Yard, from whom she ...? Bought<sup>4</sup> and whom she told that Maria had given her the money with which she paid them, and when they asked her where Maria had the money from, she answered that Maria had told her that she got it from Hennemann. – Returned to custody.

The Negress Maria appeared again unshackled. On being questioned she now admits that she had the produced key in her possession 8 days before she was arrested, as previously explained, and the witness says that Peggy had given it to her, but the witness admits that she herself, without Peggy being present, has opened Billenstein's desk and removed from it the first time 4 gold pieces, and the last time 2 of the same. Of the 4 gold pieces the witness gave Peggy two, and of the [next] two she gave her one, on both occasions in the afternoon when Billenstein was not at home and there was no one else in the bedchamber where the desk was. But the day before the witness and Peggy were arrested, Peggy came to her and asked her for the key, and on that occasion Peggy opened the desk and removed 3 gold pieces, keeping one for herself and giving two to the witness.

The witness explains that this was the only time, as far as she knows, that Peggy had been at the desk. The witness now explains that it was the witness who found the produced key in Billenstein's house some time ago in an old desk which was unlocked and had some papers etc. etc., in it. She immediately tried the key in the keyhole of the desk in the bedchamber and discovered that it fit. However, she did not on that occasion turn the key or open the desk, although she discovered that the key fit, but put it on a shelf where it lay for some time before the witness, as explained, used it.- The witness had, however, told Peggy where the key was and that she had discovered that it fit the desk, but the witness says that on that occasion no money was taken. The witness does not know if Peggy, while the key was on the shelf as explained, has used it and taken money.

The Negress Peggy appeared again unshackled and was confronted with Maria's explanation as given to this report, but she denies everything. Maria insists on her former statement. Both again returned to custody – and the examination was adjourned.

Certified by A. J. Andreson

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<sup>4</sup> The Danish text makes no sense here.

On July 26, 1824, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon Christiansted Police Court was in session in the public courthouse at nr. 10 King Street, supervised by the undersigned as acting Police Chief and

Police Clerk and in the presence of Police Sergeant Sohne and Police Officer Serina, where is continued THE EXAMINATION Nr. 41/1824 Police investigation against the Negresses Peggy and Maria, slaves.

The arrestee Peggy appeared unshackled. On again being questioned about her presumed access to Billenstein's desk, the witness admits that on the day before she was arrested, she helped Maria bring some bed clothes from the yard into the bedchamber, where the witness explains that she had asked Maria for the key to the desk, which she then gave the witness, and with which she opened the desk and removed 3 pieces, of which she gave Maria one, and the three others she claims are those that she has delivered to the police station. – She explains that when opening the lid of the desk, she found a small door in the middle of the desk, and on opening this, which was unlocked, she found a small drawer where there were a good deal of gold pieces, out of which she took the three at the back. It was Maria who showed her the place where the money was after the witness had opened the lid of the desk. The witness denies having been at the desk on other occasions, and [denies] having taken more than the above-mentioned three gold pieces.

Frederik Christian Billenstein, witness for the prosecution, appeared. He had been given the key procured during the examination, and having tried the key in his desk, he declares that he has found that it will open the desk from which the money had been stolen, albeit with some difficulty.- The witness believes that he should know the key in question, but is not certain of it, and he adds that by trying he has found that the key does not open any of the witness's other hiding places. The witness explains that neither he nor any of his servants have ever caught Peggy or Maria at his desk, from which, however, he has found money missing on several occasions, - he is not certain how often, maybe 3 or 4 times. Nor can the witness state how much money he has been robbed of or when, except for the last time, that is to say the day before the aforesaid Negresses were arrested when he was missing 8 gold pieces, but if these were taken on that day or over two days, the witness is unable to say. The total amount of money which he believes he has been robbed of, amounts to \$200. However, the witness cannot determine it more closely, as the money stolen from his desk was \$5, \$7 and \$8 pieces. The witness could explain nothing further relating to the case and was dismissed.

Whereupon it was decided to send the case as described above to the Governor-General.

Certified by

A. J. Andreson

That the above is in accordance with the court report of Christiansted Police Jurisdiction and the submitted documents, is confirmed by hand and seal.

**DOCUMENT 3.**

The Negresses Peggy and Maria are to be punished with 60 lashes each at the justice post and subsequently to be returned to their owners.

The G[overnment] H[ouse], July 30, 1824  
B[ardenfleth]