Table 2. *Mean numbers of servants and slaves owned by householders who owned any of the respective type of labor, by total estate value, lower Western Shore, Maryland, 1658–1705*

Total estate value	1658–9	1660–9	1670–9	1680–9	1690–9	1700–5
£0–19.9						
Servants				1	1.5	
Slaves					1	1
£20–39.9						
Servants		1	2	1.1	1.1	1.2
Slaves		1	1			
£40–59.9						
Servants		1.5	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3
Slaves				1	1.3	1
£60–99.9						
Servants		1.9	2	1.5	1.4	3.2
Slaves		1	1.5	2.4	1.5	1.9
£100–149.9						
Servants	2	2.9	2.5	1.8	1.8	2.1
Slaves		1	1.7	1.8	2.3	2.6
£150+						
Servants	2	4.6	3.6	4.6	2.7	3.7
Slaves		4.3	3.5	5.7	5.9	8.2

Source: See Table 1.

shows that the ratio of estates with slaves to those with servants was positively related to the level of wealth for decedents in four countries on Maryland's lower Western Shore during the second half of the seventeenth century. Table 2 further shows that the average number of slaves held by those decedents who had any also rose with wealth.

Table 3 presents another view of this evidence on labor holdings that further underscores the difference in the behavior of poorer and wealthier planters. This tabulation includes the estates only of those decedents who held at least three servants or one slave, and therefore effectively eliminates the question of whether a planter could afford to own a slave: ==Virtually all those included in the table had in fact invested an amount in bound labor that was sufficient to buy at least one slave.==[50] Table 3 shows that during the 1660s, planters worth less

[50] See the price ratios for servants and slaves in Menard, "From Servants to Slaves," p. 372; also Paul G. E. Clemens, *The Atlantic Economy and Colonial Maryland's Eastern Shore: From Tobacco to Grain* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1980), p. 62. I am grateful to Russell Menard for providing me with abstracts of the probate inventories on which Tables 1–4 are based.

Table 3. *Ratios of servants to slaves on selected estates, by total estate value, lower Western Shore, Maryland, 1660–1705*

Total estate value	1660–9		1670–9		1680–9		1690–9		1700–5	
	n	Ratio	n	Ratio	n	Ratio	n	Ratio	n	Ratio
£0–100	8	10.5	12	3.4	11	2.3	12	0.4	9	1.8
101–200	20	14.2	28	9.5	20	2.3	21	0.6	27	1.2
201–400	9	1.9	29	2.1	22	1.5	25	0.7	29	0.8
401–1,000	2	2.8	10	2.1	15	1.7	21	0.3	16	0.5
1,000+	2	1.4	3	0.5	7	1.0	6	0.2	10	0.3

Note: Estates were included in this tabulation only if they contained at least three indentured servants or at least one slave. The ratios were calculated as the total number of servants held by decedents in a given wealth category divided by the total number of slaves held by those decedents.
The entries under *n* for each decade refer to the number of estates tabulated.
Source: See Table 1.

==than £200 owned more than 10 times as many servants as slaves, whereas for those worth more than £200 this ratio was less than 3.== The difference declined during the 1670s but remained sizable, as the ratio of servants to slaves was over 9 for planters worth £100–200 and again under 3 for those worth more than £200. As slaveholding became more common in the 1680s the difference became smaller, as planters worth less than £200 held just over twice as many servants as slaves, compared with ratios below 2 for those worth more than £200. In the 1690s, planters in all wealth categories held fewer servants than slaves, and the ratio of servants to slaves remained higher for poorer than wealthier planters only because the latter had both increased their slave holdings and reduced their servant holdings over time.

==The evidence of Table 3 therefore makes it clear that even when consideration is restricted to those planters capable of owning slaves, during the early stages of the growth of slavery in the Chesapeake poorer planters held slaves in much smaller numbers relative to servants than did their wealthier counterparts.== This difference in behavior, which was very marked during the 1660s, declined steadily in the decades that followed; although it had not disappeared completely by the 1690s, that it had become so much smaller by then suggests that for the most part its causes must have been transitory.

Beyond the observation that less wealthy planters could not afford slaves, there has been little detailed inquiry as to ==why it was the wealthiest planters who substituted slaves for servants earlier== than