

Document #1728-07-10-01 – Biron is Punished for Seeking Freedom

K4BL Abstract: An enslaved African man, Biron of the Bambara nation, is interrogated by the Superior Council for having run away from his enslaver and for resisting his recapture. This record highlights not only the violence of the French system of slavery, but also the limited rights afforded to enslaved people as well as the legal apparatus to enforce that enslavement while it was being developed in Louisiana.

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LHC Card:

#328

Year 1728

July 10

LHC Abstract: Interrogation by Sr. Bruslé of Biron, negro slave fugitive, belonging to Soubagne [*sic*].

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LHQ - n/a

Names: Black - (Soubaigne), Biron; Samba, Bambara Christian

Names: White - Soubaigne, M.; Soubagne, M.; Soubaigne, Jean; Bruslé, Antoine; Périer, Étienne; La Chaise, Jacques de; Delachaise, Jacques; Fleuriau, François; Rossard, Michèl

Names: Native - n/a

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Transcription (French, diplomatic)	Translation (English, modern)
<p>[feuille 1 recto] [digital 2]</p> <p>[Marginalia:] 10 Juillet 1728</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Interrogatoire dunègre Biron</p> <p style="text-align: center;">—</p> <p>[Corps:]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">N.^o 328</p> <p>Lan mil Sept Cent Vingt huit Le dix^e jour dejuilles Deux heures deRelevee ParDevan nous antoine Bruslé ConseillerauConseil Superieur dela Province delaLouisianne et___ alaReq^{te} duprocurer general duRoy demd et accusateur aeté amené augreffè densa___ personne par quatre fusiliers deGarde Le nomme Biron <i>negre</i> accusé a leffetdestre Interogé auql aeté proceede ainsy quelensuite et attendu qlneparle pas francaise Luy avon^{de} Nommé doffice Lenommé Samba <i>Negre</i> Bambara Chretein Leql apres Serment par luy faites denouse Raporter fidellement Les Reponces du dit Biron sur les demandes quenousluy ferons Interrogé deson nom, domicile, etquelest___ son aitre etsonagé adit senommer Biron <i>negre</i> Bambara et por restleS^r Soubannie</p>	<p>[page # 1] [digital 2]</p> <p>[Marginal note:] July 10, 1728</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Interrogation of the <i>nègre</i>, Biron</p> <p style="text-align: center;">—</p> <p>[Body:]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No. 328</p> <p>[In] the year one thousand seven hundred twenty- eight [on] the tenth day of July [at] two o'clock in the afternoon, before us, Antoine Bruslé, advisor to the Superior Council of the Province of Louisiana, and at the request of the Attorney General of the King, plaintiff and accuser, were brought to the notary in person by four riflemen of the guard. The named <i>nègre</i>, Biron, the accused, for the purpose of being interrogated as to what has been carried out, and given that he does not speak French, he has appointed <i>ex officio</i> the named <i>nègre</i>, Samba, Bambara Christian, afterwhich [an] oath [was] taken by him to report faithfully to us the responses [given by] the said Biron upon the requests we will make of him.</p>

Interroge pourquoy jlafait Maronz Souvent
 Lynterprette nouse aRaporté qldit quelest____
 quequoy ql Travaille aCeqlly estordonné
 sonmaitre nelaisse pasque deEt fut____
 souvent fouettes
 Interrogé aquel dessin Ilsestjetté Sur le
 fusil de son maitre Lors ql leur Ramener____
 danssamaison
 Lyntrepette nouss aRaporté qldit quil____
 neestsaisy dufusil parceql Craignoit____
 quesonmaitre netirast surluy etqueces____
 netoitpas dansLedessin desenservir____
 Contresonmaitre etquen sesaisist dufusil
 il etoit casse [Signé:] Bruslé

[f. 1 verso] [dig.3]

Lecture faite aLynterprette dupresente
 Interrog^n Leql Layant Rapporté audit
 Biron nous aRaporté ql adit quil
 ContientVerite qly apusiste etneSavent
 Signer nyluy nylautre de ce ynterpelle
 sur lord^ee

[Signé:] Brusle [Rubrica, Bruslé]

[Signé] Rossard Greffier

[When] asked of his name, address, and who is
 his master and his age,
 he said his name, Biron, Bambara *nègre*, and for
 the rest was *Sieur* Soubaigne.
 [When] asked why he often ran away,
 the interpreter reported to us that he said it is
 that he does whatever work that he is ordered to do
 [but] his master does not let him and he is
 often whipped.
 [When] asked to why he threw himself at the
 gun of his master when he brought him back
 to his house,
 the interpreter reported to us that he said that he
 grabbed the gun because he feared
 that his master was going to shoot his gun at him
 and that
 it was not in [his] plan to use it
 against his master, and when he grabbed the gun
 it was broken. [Signed:] Bruslé

[p. # 2] [dig.3]

Reading made to the interpreter of the present
 interrogation who, having reported it to the said
 Biron, reported to us that he said that it
 contains the truth that there is. And not knowing
 how to sign, neither him nor the other one, of this
 questioning,
 [accordingly] under the law.

[Signed:] [Antoine] Bruslé [Rubric, Bruslé]

[Signed:] [Michèl] Rossard, Notary

Du 17 juillet 1728

Le Conseil ony lesCon^eil du proc general du
Roy declare Led Biron Negre accuse
etCommandu de
Maronnage pour Reparation de quoy sera fouetté
par Lexecuteur de la haute juystice au pied de
La potence avis a luy de plus lavenir de plus
faire le Maron soubien plus grande peines

[Signé:] Perrier

[Signé:] Delachaise

[Signé:] Brusle [Rubrica, Bruslé]

[Marginalia]: Jerequiers pour Leroy que le^d
Biron Soit fouette aupied De
lechelle etrenvoyé
aSonmaitre avec deffenses De
recidiver sous peine depunition
corperelleala
nle orleans le dix sept juillet mil
sept cent vingt huit

[Signé:] Fleuriau

On July 17, 1728

The Council of the Attorney General of the
King declares the said Biron *nègre* accused and
arrested for
Marronage for reparation of which [he] will be
whipped
by the Executioner of the High Justice at the foot
of the gallows, [giving] notice to him that [any]
future acts of
going maroon [will] incur greater penalties.

[Signed:] [Étienne] Pérrier

[Signed:] [Jacques] Delachaise

[Signed:] [Antoine] Bruslé [Rubric, Bruslé]

[Marginal note]: I require [on behalf of] the King
that the said Biron be whipped at
the foot of the ladder and sent
back
to his master with the prohibition
to reoffend under penalty of
corporal punishment. At
New Orleans [on] the
seventeenth of July, one thousand
seven hundred and twenty-eighty

[Signed:] [François] Fleuriau