

Guide ~ Source G (Plymouth colony court records)

Title of your primary source: **Plymouth colony court records**

Type of source & date: **court records, 1632-1655**

Author/creator: **court clerk**

What do you know about the creator of this source?

the court clerk wrote down what happened in the court

What information does this source give you about the living conditions of servants or what it was like to be an indentured servant in the colonies?

- **servant Thomas Brian ran away and was whipped as punishment when he was returned**
- **servant James Till stole corn and clothes from at least two different masters and was whipped, branded, and made to pay back the corn**
 - **these two rulings show how servants were punished, which was not different from how others were punished**
- **Susanna Latham was found guilty of mistreating her servant, John Walker, for not giving him enough food, payment or lodging, and for forcing him to work too hard**
 - **this shows how some servants were mistreated, but it also shows that servants were given some protection under the law**

Does this source present a **positive**, **negative**, or **neutral** view of indentured servitude?

Explain why?

- **encourage students to give their views of this and ask them to explain them/provide support**
- **positive—servants were protected by the law**
- **negative—servants were sometimes mistreated by their masters; also they might have stolen food because they were not given enough**