Edward & Eliza

A Story of Discovery

Edward Clouston (1787-1866) of Kingshouse,
West Mainland, Orkney, Scotland

and

Eliza Fox (1792/93-1836) of Williamsfield,
St Thomas in the Vale, Jamaica

Volume 1 of 3

Mary Mill

2016
You have set me to thinking about the differences between West Indian and American slavery. I can't recall any parallel to the relationship between Jamaican masters and their "housekeepers" in this country, where at best such relationships were furtive and cruelly one-sided – perhaps the best known example is that of Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings. I know of no instance in which the children were accepted into white society; on the contrary, there are many cases in which the children were not only kept in slavery but sold to other owners.

I suppose the controlling difference was not so much a matter of more or less generosity and virtue but the fact that West Indian slavery was thousands of miles removed from the home country, while American slavery was embedded within the white society to which owners and overseers belonged.

Thomas Philbrick to Mary Mill, 21 June 2005
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## Web Sources

As far as possible I have given a link to a website for a record referred to in the text, regardless of where I first looked at the record. I checked all web links in November 2016.
CHAPTER 1

FINDING ELIZA
www.angelfire.com/planet/submarines/uk-map-big.jpg – arrow points to the Orkney Islands
For as long as I can remember I have known that Clouston is an Orkney name and Cloustons are descended from the Vikings. I was the only one of Granny P’s thirteen grandchildren with fair hair, and I liked to think it was a sign of my Viking ancestry.

1949 or 1950 – Granny P with my sister Frances, me in the middle, and my brother Paul

Granny P, my maternal grandmother Marian Clouston Partridge, nee Thin, was the youngest child of Edward Clouston Thin (1852-1927), a Liverpool merchant and shipowner, and Annie Elizabeth Jane, nee Broomhall (1850-1929)

*Annie E J Thin’s Album Parterre* – Annie Elizabeth Jane and Edward Clouston Thin

In February 2001 I began going through Thin family memorabilia. My intention was to make a scrapbook about the lives of my Thin great grandparents. E C Thin was the eldest son of Robert Thin and Isabella, nee Clouston, the daughter of Edward Clouston of Kingshouse, Orkney – the Edward of my story.
Chapter 1. Finding Eliza

My second cousin Kyle Ap Simon (a great granddaughter of Annie and E C Thin) showed me her picture of Robert Thin – a watercolour (painted from a photo fourteen years after his death) signed Ferranti 1876 Liverpool

![Robert Thin's portrait](image1.jpg)

On the back, the late Michael Rose (a great grandson of Isabella and Robert Thin) wrote the names of six of Robert and Isabella’s children – their 7th and youngest child died young.

![Back of Robert Thin's portrait](image2.jpg)

Above – His Sister married (2nd) Edward Clouston, father of Isabella (familiarly known as Auntie Clou).

Auntie Clou, Robert Thin’s sister Julia Gordon McLaren, nee Thin, who married Edward Clouston, was Isabella’s step mother and her sister in law.
In Annie E J Thin’s *Album Parterre* there is a photo of Isabella: on the back is written ‘Mrs Robert Thin as a widow’.

And from Annie’s note of her mother in law’s death on 18 November 1884 aged 56, Isabella was born on 25 December 1827.

On 3 March 2001, after finding no mention of the name of Isabella’s mother and thinking that she might have been an Orcadian, Christopher (my husband) suggested looking on Orkney genealogical websites.
Neither of us had done any genealogical research, but he had heard of genealogical websites and, as I
could not then type or use a computer, he looked for me

A minute or two later, Christopher turned to me and asked – ‘Did you say that Captain Henry Clouston of
New Zealand was Isabella’s brother?’ I looked again at Annie’s note at the back of her Birthday Scripture
Text Book

On an Orkney website Christopher had found a message posted on 27 December 2000 by Merv Harold

I have been researching the Clouston Genealogy for the past 15 yrs, in that time I have completed the
history of my Branch called "THE FAMILY OF CAPTAIN HENRY CLOUSTON"(1822-1898) I have
also completed "REGISTRATION OF CLOUSTON" (BIRTH-DEATHS-MARRIAGES IN NEW
ZEALAND (1853-1990). Copies of both are in the KIRKWALL Library.
Merv Harold Clouston <Merv_c@zfree.co.nz>
Palmerston North, New Zealand - Wednesday, December 27, 2000 at 18:48:59 (EST)

I immediately drafted an email to Merv and Christopher sent it. Merv replied on 5 March – and from him
I first heard the name Eliza Fox – the Eliza of my story

Merv, who died in 2011, was a great grandson of Henry. He and his cousin Robin Clouston of Northern
Ireland, also a great grandson of Henry, had been researching their Clouston roots together since the
1980s. In 2001 I heard much about Edward and Eliza from Merv and Robin and it is entirely thanks to
them that I found Eliza.

In his 5 March email, Merv told me that Eliza Fox, a daughter of a Nottinghamshire lime burner and
publican, was the first wife of Edward Clouston and mother of Henry. At the end of his email Merv wrote

I would be very interested if you have a record of Isabella’s birth Mother. I have tried the Jamaica
archives without success.

Jamaica! – I had never heard of a family connection with Jamaica. However, soon after my second cousin
James Weymouth (a great grandchild of Annie and E C Thin) sent me a copy of E C Thin, an unpublished
memoir by E C Thin’s grandson, the late Boyce Cunning. In E C Thin I saw that Edward Clouston had
lived for a time in the West Indies ‘probably Jamaica’ and Isabella had been born there.

My sister Sarah suggested I wrote to Dr Trevor Hope, an historian who lives in Jamaica. They had met a
few years earlier on holiday in Europe. Trevor very kindly looked Edward Clouston up in K E Ingram’s
Sources of Jamaican History, 1655-1838 and saw that there were a few letters in the Guildhall Library, London, written by Edward from Jamaica.


If Eliza Fox was Edward Clouston’s first wife, I wondered why Merv had asked if I had a record of Isabella’s birth mother.

And it seemed strange that Edward, a landed gent from a long line of landed gents, had married a daughter of a lime-burner and publican in the days when it was the custom for people to marry within their own social class – and I wondered how Edward from the far north of Scotland had met a girl from the Midlands of England.

I asked Merv the reason for his ‘?’. He said that he did not think that Eliza Fox was Isabella’s mother. I wanted to know why. He suggested that Isabella’s marriage record might include the name of her mother. The General Registry Office for Scotland sent me a copy of Isabella and Robert Thin’s marriage record. It mentions Isabella’s father Edward Clouston but not her mother.

General Registry Office for Scotland – Extracts of entries in an Old Parochial Register – Parish of South Leith, County of Midlothian – 1849 – Thin and Clouston

Robert Thin, Merchant, Liverpool, residing at Litherland, Lancashire, and Isabella Clouston residing in No 7 Smith’s Place, Leith Walk, parish of South Leith; daughter of Mr Edward Clouston there, were three times proclaimed in order to marriage in the Parish Church of South Leith 15th July 1849 and were married at Leith Walk 17th July 1849 by the Revd Dr Glover of Greenside Parish Edinburgh.

I went on asking Merv why he doubted that Isabella was the daughter of Eliza Fox. Then, early in the morning on 24 March, I heard Christopher running upstairs laughing – you should be looking for your ancestors in Africa! He handed me a printout of an email just arrived from Merv – at the bottom

From Jamaica Archives 25 Oct 1988
1B/11/8/3 Vol. 1 fol. 320: Parish Register: Record of Baptism * * * of St Thomas in the Vale * * * in the year 1828 – No: 12; When Baptized: July 13; Colour: Quadroon Child’s Christian Name: Isabella Clouston

I hope I have answered all your queries

Isabella was a Quadroon – a quarter black African – I was utterly astonished!!

I was astonished – but I did not doubt that this was Isabella’s baptism record. Clouston is an unusual name and knowing that Isabella was born on 25 December 1827, it seemed very unlikely that there was more than one Isabella Clouston in Jamaica who was baptized around the time of Isabella’s birth, and as Isabella Clouston was her ‘Christian Name’ and there was no mention of either of her parents, it appeared that she was illegitimate.

I was like Alice in Wonderland. I thought in those days ‘a touch of the tar brush’ was taboo in white society and more often than not illegitimacy was hidden. Yet Isabella at the time of her marriage was living with her father, and he was recorded as her father.
Although Merv had been reluctant to tell me that Isabella was part black and illegitimate, none of us, the family of Isabella, were bothered, and for me the idea of African ancestors was exotic and far more interesting than the family of a Nottinghamshire lime burner and publican.

Going through Merv’s book I saw at the top of page 40

| HENRY CLOUSTON. (Capt.) |
| b. 16 Nov. 1822 Aberdeen. (As recorded with U.K. Merchant Navy Authorities) |

‘(P11)’ referred to page 11 on which Merv included details of the Fox family of Nottinghamshire. It appeared that ‘(Cert. 1588)’ referred to Henry’s death certificate, and I assumed that ‘Son of Edward Clouston & Eliza Fox’ was recorded on Henry’s death certificate.

Merv told me that Henry’s second daughter, Eliza Fox Clouston, was named after his mother, and I knew that in earlier times it was a custom for the first three sons and daughters to be named after grandparents and parents.

From Merv’s book – Henry’s first three daughters:

1. Melina Isabella Clouston – born 14 April 1857 – named Melina after her maternal grandmother and Isabella after her father’s sister

2. Eliza Fox Clouston – born 25 July 1861 – named after her paternal grandmother

3. Mary Maud Clouston – born 26 April 1865 – named after her mother

Isabella’s three daughters – they signed their names beside their birthdays in Annie E J Thin’s Birthday Scripture Text Book:

1. Julia Clouston Thin – born 22 May 1850 – named after her maternal step-grandmother (and father’s sister) Julia, wife of Edward Clouston

2. Marian Thin – born 6 April 1854 – named after her paternal grandmother

3. Ella Thin – born 27 December 1855 – Ella I thought was probably short for Isabella, and she was named after her mother

In March 2001, soon after Merv told me that Isabella was a ‘Quadroon’, he put me in touch with his cousin Robin in Northern Ireland, and as he was not on email, Merv gave me Robin’s telephone number.

Robin was full of stories about Cloustons. He said he ‘helped out’ at his local Mormon Family History Centre, had found many of Merv’s records, and Robin said that he did not agree with a number of things in Merv’s book. The most important information Robin gave me was:

- Henry on his 1845 Seaman’s Register Ticket, in the Public Record Office was ‘Man of Color’, but Merv did not want to tell his relations, and hoped Henry was just suntanned from living in the tropics.

- Merv’s Eliza Fox of Nottinghamshire was Elizabeth (not Eliza) Fox and Merv had no record of her other than her baptism record and had nothing to connect her with Edward or Henry.

Robin appeared to be convinced that Eliza Fox was the name of the mother of Henry. He told me that he believed that Eliza Fox was also the mother of Isabella, but who Eliza was he did not know.
Soon after, looking at a copy of E C Thin’s will, I saw that the full name of his sister Ella (Isabella’s third daughter) was Isabella Eliza Thin.

And the only reason I could see for Isabella Eliza Thin being given the name Eliza was because Eliza was the name of Isabella’s mother – and I was convinced that Eliza Fox must have been the mother of Isabella.

I did not wish to put Merv on the spot by telling him that Robin had told me Henry was a ‘Man of Color’, but it appears that Robin did. A little later Merv sent me a copy of Henry’s 1845 Seaman’s Register Ticket in the Public Record Office:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Register Ticket No. 24639 – Henry Clouston</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age when Ticketed: 23 – Can Write: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born at: Aberdeen – in the County of: [not filled in] 16 Nov 1822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capacity: Seaman – Height: 5 ft 6 ins – Hair: Black – Eyes: Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexion: Man of Color – Marks: None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First went to Sea as: Apprentice – in the Year: 1838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has served in the Royal Navy: No – Has been in the Foreign Service: No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When unemployed resides at: Shadwell [East End of London]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued at: London 8 May 1845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the same time as Merv sent me the copy of Henry’s Register Ticket, he sent me a copy of a photo of Henry in Nelson Provincial Museum, New Zealand. Merv wrote – ‘when one looks at the photo one has to wonder if there is some colour blood in him’

On page 11 of Merv’s book, in the section headed – The Fox and Wastney Connection in New Zealand – Merv gave details of the Fox family of Nottinghamshire, including Lucy Fox (a sister of Elizabeth) who had married Edmund Wastney and who had died in Nelson, New Zealand. Merv said that while he was doing research for his book, it was suggested in New Zealand that Eliza, Henry’s mother, was Lucy’s sister Elizabeth.
Henry’s gravestone (photo in Merv’s book) records that he died on 30 August 1898 aged 75. However in the Cyclopedia of New Zealand, Vol 5, published 1905 – Henry’s biography (copied to me by Merv) includes born in Edinburgh in 1820 and died on 12 August 1898

CAPTAIN HENRY CLOUSTON, sometime of Nelson... He was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1820, and died at Nelson on the 12th of August, 1898. His father owned and lived on a large sugar plantation, called the Mount St. Oliver Estate, in Jamaica...

In his book Merv included a copy of Henry’s Indenture of Apprenticeship, dated 8 November 1838 (original in the possession of Susan Clouston Cohu, a great granddaughter of Henry). On 8 November 1838, Henry was aged 15 (fitting with aged 75 at the time of his death and born on 16 November 1822) and he was a ‘native of Gloucester Terrace, Commercial Road’, in the East End of London. Henry was apprenticed, ‘of his Free Will and by the consent of his Father’, for four years to George Traill, also of Gloucester Terrace, to learn ‘the Art, Trade, or Business of a Mariner or Seaman’. The Indenture was signed, sealed and delivered in London by – Henry Clouston – Geo Traill – E Clouston.

Although at times I heard one story from Merv and at other times a different story from Robin, they both agreed that Edward was a bad lot, or as Merv put it – ‘a bit of a rogue’.

Robin and Merv both speculated that Edward and some other Cloustons were slave traders, and Merv wrote – ‘The more one looks into the Clouston history it becomes clear that many of them were in one way or another mixed up in the slave trade’. Neither Merv nor Robin could tell me of any evidence they had for their speculation.

Merv wrote – ‘I wonder if Edward was sent out to Jamaica as a Remittance man as he seems by all accounts to be off side with his father over a number of land disputes, also he gambled away a lot of money in Railway speculation’.

Boyce Cunning, in his memoir E C Thin, wrote that Edward ‘returned home with a fortune reckoned to be worth £30,000’, and he ‘invested his money in railway shares... one gathers that he soon lost heavily’.

Robin as well as Merv told me that Edward was embroiled in land disputes and had fallen out with his father. In his book, on page 12, headed – Land Claims; Edward Clouston – Merv included transcripts of six ‘Land Claims’. The first two start

(137) – Jan. 18. 1834. – Edward Clouston, lately residing in the Island of Jamaica, at present in - - - - - - Seized, Jan. 11 1834, – ...

(173) – Dec. 01. 1834. – Edward Clouston of Kingshouse, late of Jamaica, Seized, Oct. 14. 1834, – ...

Robin and Merv thought that these ‘Land Claims’ were records of Court Cases, and ‘Seized’ (in legal possession of) meant that Edward had seized (taken by force) various lands and buildings in Orkney from his father and other Cloustons. Merv’s transcripts were from copies of abbreviated records of Sasines in Orkney Library and Archives, but Sasines, Scottish property records, are records of transfers of land and buildings (similar to Land Registry records) – not records of Court Cases.

Merv told me that Edward left Jamaica in 1834 to fight court cases in Orkney and, as Eliza was too ill to travel, he had left her in a cottage hospital. Merv went on to write – ‘Re Elizabeth (Eliza) Fox & Edward Clouston: None of us to date have been able to come up with a marriage record. We can only conclude it
was a “Common Law Marriage”. My research into Eliza Fox’s death shows she was buried under her maiden name in Jamaica in 1836.

In St Thomas in the Vale parish burial register, on Mormon microfilm, Merv had found the burial of an Eliza Fox on 28 February 1836

| No. 4 – Name and Description: Eliza Fox – Age: 46 – Abode: Scholar’s Cot – When buried: Feb 28 – Where buried: Chapel Yard – By whom ceremony performed: Robert Steer, I. C. |

Was this the burial of Eliza Fox, the mother of Henry and Isabella?

From background reading, I saw that it was the custom in Jamaica for an unmarried white man to live with a non-white woman, a slave or free women – his ‘housekeeper’ – and I came to the conclusion that Edward met Eliza in Jamaica and she was his housekeeper.

Most of the time Robin left it up to Merv to send me copies of their information. Merv sent me a copy of a letter, dated 7 June 1988, from Alison Fraser, Archivist at Orkney Library and Archives, to Robin replying to his enquiry.

Dear Mr Clouston,

With reference to your letter of 3rd June concerning the date (s) and place (s) of the marriage of Edward Clouston of Kingshouse and Eliza Fox and the births of their children Henry and Isabella, I regret that I have no information here about these events. I can only assume that they took place furth of [sic] Orkney. The only references I can find to Edward Clouston is in J. Storer Clouston’s The Family of Clouston printed by the Orcadian office, Kirkwall in 1948, for private circulation only. Page 113: “beginning with the elder branch, descended from Rev. William Clouston, his eldest son Edward of Kingshouse resided for some time in Jamaica, made a fortune in the great railway boom and became for a space a really rich Clouston – a credit to the witch; and then lost it again and had to part even with his Orkney property. He left a son and a daughter, but as there seems some doubts about his marriage, it is safer to apologise in advance to any descendants in case I have been wrongly informed, and leave it at that.”

The Register of Deeds of Orkney Sheriff Court (ref. SC11/51/3) contains a disposition by the Revd William Clouston in favour of Edward Clouston and his other children: “I do hereby give, grant, alienate and dispone to and in favour of Edward Clouston, at present living in family with me and my assistant, and to my Daughters Anne Clouston at present living in family with me, Jane Clouston, otherwise Stewart, spouse of William Stewart Merchant in Leith and Margaret Clouston at present living in family with me, equally amongst them . . .” Dated 5 March 1831.

I am sorry that I cannot be more helpful. Perhaps Edward Clouston was married in Jamaica?

Yours Sincerely,

Alison Fraser

Merv sent me a copy of the letter, dated 23 October 1988, from Jamaica Archives to Robin in reply to his letter dated 18 July 1988.

Dear Mr. Clouston,

Thank you for your letter of 18th July, 1988, enquiring about Edward Clouston, which was forwarded to this department. The following information was found:
Chapter 1. Finding Eliza

Sources of Jamaican History 1655-1838 by K. E. Ingram (Inter Documentation Company Ag Zug, Switzerland 1976) p.766 mentions him.

The Jamaica Almanack 1832: Parish of St. Catherine, Proprietor; Edward Clouston; Slaves: 27; Stock: 6

1B/11/4
No.75 fol.74:
Edward Clouston’s Crop Account for 1833 total £533.15.9 ¼ St Thomas in the Vale
I William H. Clarke Attorney for Edward Clouston Esquire do swear that the above . . . of the said Edward Clouston Esquire from the 1st of January to the 31st of December 1833 . . . Sworn the 12 March 1834. Entd. 25 March 1834.”

1B/11/4
No.76 fol.136:
An account of all the Rents, profits, produce and proceeds of Negroes belonging to Edward Clouston Esqr. in St. Thomas in the Vale for the year ending 31st December 1834. An account of £204.13.7 ¼ Sworn by John Maghee on the 11th March 1835. Entd. 25th March 1834 [sic].

1B/11/4
No.80 fol.205:

1B/11/8/3
Vol.1 fol. 320:
Parish Register – Records of Baptism . . . of St. Thomas in the Vale . . . in the years 1827 & 1828 – 1828 – No: 12; When Baptized: July 13th; Colour: Quadroon; Child’s Christian Name: Isabella Clouston.”

Yours faithfully,
M Grey (Mrs), Acting Government Archivist

The mention of Edward Clouston in ‘Sources of Jamaican History 1655-1838’ by K. E. Ingram refers to the letters Trevor told me about (see above). Robin had been to the Guildhall Library and sent me copies of the letters – a few letters mainly to do with shipments of sugar written by Edward in St Thomas in the Vale between 7 July 1832 and 27 April 1833.

Merv copied me with a map he had downloaded from the web – Parishes in early 19th century Jamaica.
Merv sent me a table with mentions of Edward Clouston in Jamaica. He was uncertain of the source, but it appeared the table was compiled from information supplied to Robin by Jamaica Archives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PARISH in the East</th>
<th>DIVISION</th>
<th>PROPRIETOR</th>
<th>PROPERTY</th>
<th>SLAVES</th>
<th>STOCK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1822</td>
<td>St Thomas</td>
<td>Blue Mountain</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward</td>
<td>Orkneys</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>St George</td>
<td>Blue Mountain</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward, atty.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1825</td>
<td>St Thomas</td>
<td>Blue Mountain</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward</td>
<td>Orkneys</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>St George</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward, atty</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827</td>
<td>St Thomas</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1828</td>
<td>St Thomas</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward, rec.</td>
<td>Mount Concord</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>St Thomas</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1832</td>
<td>St Thomas</td>
<td>Clouston, Edward Ditto, rec</td>
<td>Retirement Mount Concord</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Edward Clouston and Henry Loundes, Trustee for estate of J. Gray</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Merv and Robin thought that Edward Clouston, atty (attorney), referred to a lawyer, and they told me that there were two Edward Cloustons in Jamaica – Edward of Kingshouse, our ancestor, and his first cousin Edward of Smoogro, a lawyer. They had however no evidence that Edward of Smoogro had anything to do with Jamaica. In Jamaica history books I saw that ‘attorney’ was the term used in Jamaica for an agent with power of attorney managing the affairs of an absentee proprietor.

Searching Jamaica parish registers on Mormon microfilm, Robin had found a few people, in addition to Isabella, with the last name Clouston, and he and Merv told me that they were Edward’s children and he had left them in Jamaica. Other than the name Clouston, Merv and Robin had nothing connecting these people with Edward.

From background reading I saw that sometimes slaves were named after their owners and I thought it was possible that some of Edward’s slaves were named Clouston.

Henry was not a name in Edward’s family before his son’s birth, and I wondered if Henry’s name had something to do with Eliza Fox. Robin told me that Henry Richard Vassal Fox, 3rd Baron Holland owned plantations in Jamaica through his wife. I was then living near Holland House in Kensington – the London home of the 3rd Baron Holland. Kensington Central Library told me the Fox family papers were in the British Library, and that they included a few Jamaica papers.

Merv and Robin had told me that over the years of their research they had found all there was to be found, and I thought searching for Eliza would be like looking for a needle in a hay stack – a waste of time – so I did not go to the British Library.

In autumn 2001 my first cousin Leila Evans (a great granddaughter of Annie and E C Thin) telephoned me. She had just heard Madge Dresser, an Atlantic Slavery scholar at the University of the West of England, talking on the radio about a mixed race man who was born in the West Indies in the time of slavery, who inherited money from his white father and had come to England. He bought an estate in Monmouthshire,
and had become one of the senior men of the county. Leila had met Madge sometime before through work and wanted to introduce me.

In November 2001 Leila took me to meet Madge at her house in Bristol. I went thinking that this would be little more than a social visit. I was wrong. Madge wanted to know all about my Edward and Eliza theories. She urged me look at Jamaica records in London, said I must look at the Fox family Jamaica papers in the British Library, and I must go to the Public Record Office at Kew and look at the Jamaica slave registers, which include the names of all slaves in Jamaica and their owners from 1817 to 1832.

I still thought that searching for Eliza would be a waste of time, but in January 2002 I decided to take a quick look at Jamaica records in London. On the first day I went to the Royal Geographical Society and looked at James Robertson’s 1804 Maps of the Three Counties of Jamaica. I had seen in one of the books I had read that these maps include names of sugar estates, and names of owners of other settlements. I hoped I might find a name of a property mentioned in Robin and Merv’s information from Jamaica Archives. I did not, but as the head of the map department encouraged me to get copies, and as photocopies were very inexpensive, I got copies of the whole set of Robertson’s maps.

The following day I went to the Guildhall Library to look at the letters in the Davison, Newman & Co collection, written by Edward from St Thomas in the Vale and copied to me by Robin. And sitting there holding Edward’s original letters made him a real person. After looking at Edward’s letters, I looked through all the papers in the collection. In accounts for Rose Hall Estate, St Thomas in the Vale, 1830 to 1831, I saw that Edward was attorney (agent with power of attorney) to the absentee proprietors of Rose Hall, and in a letter, dated 8 June 1833, from Henry Lowndes in Jamaica, I saw that Edward Clouston had ‘sailed’ from Jamaica on 15 May 1833.

After looking at the Davison, Newman and Co papers, I asked a librarian if she could suggest anything else I might look at. She brought me an 1838 House of Commons book listing compensation payments to slave owners following the emancipation of slaves in the British colonies on 1 August 1834. I turned to the St Thomas in the Vale list for uncontested claims.

My eye stopped at No. 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of Claim</th>
<th>Name of Party to whom the Payment is Awarded</th>
<th>No. of Slaves</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 Sept. 1835</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Eliza Fox</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>£20 11s 5d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And my eye stopped again at No. 298

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No. of Claim</th>
<th>Name of Party to whom the Payment is Awarded</th>
<th>No. of Slaves</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23 Nov. 1835</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>Edward Clouston</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>£448 3s 10d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next day I went back to the Guildhall Library and went through all the Jamaica lists. The lists include a few mentions of Fox, but only one Eliza Fox, and no Clouston other than Edward Clouston.

My excitement was mounting. I felt sure I would find Eliza Fox of St Thomas in the Vale, whoever she was, and Edward Clouston in the Jamaica slave registers – but, before I went to the Public Record Office I went to the British Library and looked at the Fox/3rd Baron Holland’s Jamaica papers. I found nothing linking Eliza Fox with the 3rd Baron Holland – and as his property was in the far west of Jamaica, and I had no mention of Edward Clouston there, I did not pursue my Eliza Fox/3rd Baron Holland theory.

The following day I went to the Public Record Office in Kew (now the National Archives). Four days later, on the evening of 15 January, I emailed Merv.
Chapter 1. Finding Eliza

Dear Merv

I went to the Public Record Office, Kew last Friday, Monday and today to look at the Jamaican slave records. There is much information there about Edward Clouston going back to the first Jamaican Slave Registers of 1817. I will write to you about this in more detail, but I wanted to let you know that I have found references to Eliza Fox – mulatto (half black) – slave on the estate of the Earl of Harewood in St Thomas in the Vale, and I cannot help feeling that this is the Eliza Fox we are looking for.

Best wishes
Mary

I was bursting with excitement. As well as finding Eliza Fox, I had also found her son Henry Clouston – and records connecting Eliza Fox with Edward Clouston.

As Robin was not on email and I wanted to tell him and Merv at the same time, I scrawled off a letter to them jointly on 16 January.

Dear Merv and Robin

I wanted to write to you both as soon as I could to let you know I have found Eliza Fox born in Jamaica and her son Henry Clouston – born in Jamaica.

Since coming back to London last week – I have been to the Guildhall Library – the Royal Geographical Society – for early 19th century Jamaica maps – the British Library and – most importantly on Friday, Monday this week and yesterday – to the Public Record Office, Kew – to look at the Jamaican slave records – in ‘T71’ – the PRO – Jamaican Slave Registers 1817-1832.

I will write it all out in detail with all references in full – but for the moment I have so much – it will take a little while to put it all together from my notes – but as I think you will be as astonished – and not a bit excited as I am – here is a brief summary – (sorry this has turned out rather long)

Side 2

I am so very grateful for all the information you have both supplied me with – without which I could never have made these discoveries.

I, from the records I have found, am in no doubt that Eliza Fox and Henry Clouston born in Jamaica are the ones we have been looking for.

Both Eliza Fox and Henry Clouston were born Jamaican slaves – this may not be such welcome news – but, because they were slaves and all slaves between 1817 and 1832 in Jamaica were registered it is possible to trace them in the slave registers – every three years from 1817 to 1832. The registers are organised parish by parish.

On Friday last week I started by looking at the St Thomas in the East register for 1817 – and immediately found Edward Clouston – owner – of 8 slaves – all Negroes (100% black) African (born in Africa) – not Creole (born in Jamaica) – 7 males and 1 female.

Their ‘original’ names are given – and in addition – ‘Christian’ names as well for 6 of the males

Side 3

The Christian names include an Edward Clouston, Tom Clouston, William Clouston and James Clouston – being black and born in Africa they would not of course have been our Edward Clouston’s sons.

Slaves had no ‘legal sire’ – as they were the property of the slave owner – and so had no legal surnames – but it was not uncommon for some to take the ‘surname’ of their original owners.

I found no Eliza Fox or Henry Clouston in the St Thomas in the E. slave registers – but I noticed the name George William Hamilton – a slave owner and estate attorney cropping up in records with Edward Clouston’s name – including one of E. Clouston’s slaves – Christian name – Allick Hamilton

On Monday I searched the Registers for St Thomas in the Vale – Edward Clouston’s name first appeared in the 1826 Register – owner of 3 slaves – (3 of his St Thomas in the E. slaves – transferred to St Thomas

Side 4

in the Vale). I also found numerous records of Edward Clouston – estate attorney to a number of estates – Mount Concord was ‘in Chancery’ and Edward Clouston was the receiver – also records of him as an executor in other estates – and numerous records of his signature (original documents) witnessing the signature of other estate owners – attorney’s – slave registers – including witnessing the signature of the Rector of St Thomas in the Vale – slave owner.

Also numerous records of William H. Clarke, Henry Lowndes and Robert Fairweather and G. W. Hamilton but found no Eliza Fox or Henry Clouston – except – in the 1832 register – St Thomas in the Vale – Eliza Fox – owner – 1 slave purchased – previously owning none – her X (mark) was witnessed by Edward Clouston – with his unmistakeable signature and he also wrote Eliza Fox’s name – his ‘Es’ being quite unmistakeable – and very different from any others.

Side 5

Yesterday I decided to go through the slave names of all slaves registered in St Thomas in the Vale in 1817 – (the subsequent registers only record changes – but 1817 registers give a complete list)

It seemed to me if Eliza Fox had no slaves before 1832 – it could mean before then, she was a slave herself.

There are over 600 pages in the 1817 St Thomas in the Vale register – larger than A3 size – and each page full of lists of slaves – names – colour – Age – African or Creole – Remarks

I decided to concentrate on looking for mulatto (½ black) slaves – on page 327 – I hit the jackpot –

- Eliza Fox – Mulatto – 24 – Creole – Bessy her mother
- Bessy – Negro – 48 – Creole – (no record of mother)
- Ann Balfour – Mulatto – 26 – Creole – Bessy her mother

(Bessy had other children – 2 boys and 2 girls – all Negroes)

On page 323 –

- William Burrows – Quadroon – 6 – Creole – Eliza Fox his mother
- Lewis Burrows – Quadroon – 4 – Creole – Eliza Fox his mother

These pages are among 10 pages of slaves

Side 6


From looking at the Index for Slave compensation – the Earl of Harewood’s St Thomas in the Vale Estate was called – Williamsfield – and is marked on the map (copy) I got from the Royal Geographical Society – 1804 – Robertson’s Maps.

‘Fox’ appears to have been a most unusual name in Jamaica – but, I could see nothing to connect Edward Clouston to Williamsfield.

1820 – Register – now George William Hamilton is given as one of the Agents to the Earl of Harewood – on page 184 –

- Edward Clouston – Quadroon – 1 – Creole – son of Eliza Fox.
Chapter 1. Finding Eliza

1823 – Register – page 153 –
- Little Henry – Quadroon – 0 – Creole – son of Eliza Fox.
- Edward Clouston – Quadroon – 4 – Creole – had died.

1826 – Register – (nothing new in connection with Eliza Fox)

Side 7
- Eliza Fox – Mulatto – 35 – Creole – (freed) By Manumission
- Henry Clouston – Mulatto – 5 – Creole – (freed) By Manumission

As only Little Henry was registered earlier it must be that Henry Clouston was his Christian name – and it would seem that Mulatto was put in by mistake – instead of Quadroon. No other slaves were released that year in the estate – nor any others there in earlier registers. Also it appears freeing slaves generally was not common – and was an expensive business for whoever bought the slaves’ freedom.

From background reading there was much concern at that time over the declining number of slaves – with no new ones being shipped from W. Africa – and a high rate of infant mortality among slaves – (and of course a high rate of mortality of all ages among slaves and free).

Edward Clouston witnessed the signature of G. W. Hamilton – attorney of the Earl of Harewood on the 1829 register.

I have found no new reference to Isabella Clouston. If Henry was 5 when he was freed – it would have been after his 5th birthday on 16 Nov. 1827 and before 16 Nov. 1828. If both he and Eliza were freed at the same time – which would seem likely – they must, it would appear, both have been freed between 16 Nov. 1827 and 25 Dec. 1827 – the date of Isabella’s birth.

A further record connecting Eliza Fox with Edward Clouston – in T71/917 – the index for ‘Claims for compensation - - - - ’ on page 36 – Edward Clouston – owner in fee – 21 slaves – Plantation or other Domicile of slaves – Scholar’s Cot, St Thomas in the Vale – no. of claim – 298 – and on p. 68 – Eliza Fox – owner in fee – 1 slave – plantation or other Domicile of slave – Scholar’s Cot – in the Parish of St Thomas in the Vale – no. of claim – 25. (The same address of course as the Burial record Merv found for Eliza Fox)

As yet I have not looked at the registers for St Catherine – or any of the other parishes other than the 3 above mentioned – and even with these – there are many references to Edward Clouston – yet to be looked at in more detail. However – it does not appear that Ed. C. himself owned any large plantation – but it is already clear that as an estate attorney etc – he had much to do with many plantations.

Side 8

I can find no Mount St. Oliver estate – but there is on the 1804 copy map I have a Mount Olive just south of Williamsfield in St Thomas in the Vale – but have found no reference – as yet – to Edward Clouston and Mount Olive – and from the slave registers he did not it appears own slaves on this estate.

It seems to me Edward Clouston made his money in Jamaica as an estate manager – agent – attorney etc – and from background reading a successful man such as this could make a lot of money.

It is still a mystery when and why Ed. C. went to Jamaica in the first place. I am going to try and find out if any papers exist for the Earl of Harewood’s Jamaica estates – (he also owned Nightingale Grove estate in St Dorothy) – which might give some clues – as well as clues about any connection he had with Williamsfield – accounts might show how much he paid for Eliza Fox and Henry Clouston to be freed.

(I forgot to mention Eliza Fox’s son Lewis Burrows died by 1820 – 28 June)

Unfortunately it is not possible to get
photocopies of pages from the registers – some at least can be scanned but this is considerably more expensive – but I will get a few – and am going again to the PRO tomorrow and will place an order – (the registers are in such a fragile state that they will not put them on a photocopier – they are considering investigating photographing them with a digital camera – but this will not be for some months yet).

I will certainly get a copy of Eliza Fox’s 1832 record of her purchase of 1 slave – it is the original document in the PRO – and touching the X she made is the closest I think I shall ever come to my gr. gr. gr. grandmother – although I have found no proof that she was Isabella’s mother – for me the entry in Annie E. J. Thin’s Birthday Book – recording Capt. Henry of New Zealand’s death – brother of Isabella ‘only one’ is as close to proof as we shall get.

Best Wishes,
Mary

On receiving my letter Robin immediately telephoned. I was out and he spoke to Christopher who told me that Robin was cock-a-hoop and said that Merv would have to rewrite page 11 of his book – the page on which he gave details of the Fox family of Nottinghamshire. Merv emailed me on 21 January – Subject: Eliza Fox

Dear Mary
It is clear you have. I congratulate you on your effort. I received letter of the 16 Jany 2002 this morning, it will take a bit of time to digest it all. I look forward to your summary of the facts. Robin has always said that Henry was coloured, but the red herring of the Clouston Wastney connection left doubts in my mind and needing proof one way or another. I know the euphoria you must have felt on your findings, I have felt the same many times during my research. It will look I will have to rewrite page 11 of my book. Thank you again for your painstaking research.
Maybe there is a book in it for you.
Regards
Merv Clouston

In May 2002 Merv sent me a copy of his updated page 11 – a brief and watered down version of my findings with no mention of colour or slaves. He said that he had told one of his relations that Henry was a ‘Man of Color’ and she very unhappy, and feared that the news of Eliza and Henry’s colour and that they were slaves would not go down well elsewhere in New Zealand. However, Merv also sent me a copy of a covering letter which he said he was sending with his updated page 11 to libraries where he had deposited copies of his book, and in the covering letter he included a little more detail.

In 2002 Susan Clouston Cohu (the great granddaughter of Henry who is in possession of Henry’s 1838 Indenture of Apprenticeship) told me that she had always known that Eliza Fox was the name of the mother of Henry and Isabella, but she knew nothing more about Eliza than that.

Susan sent me a copy of her ‘Clouston Genealogy’ compiled in New Zealand in 1919 or soon after – left side about half way down – eldest son of Rev William Clouston

Edward Clouston of Kingshouse
Born 1787. Died 1866 (Married [bracket unclosed]
Eliza Fox
Issue Henry, Isabella.

Before ending this chapter, I must mention Margie – Margie Mannering, a great granddaughter of Henry, who lived in New Zealand and was tragically killed in a road accident in 2014.

In 2001 Merv put me in touch with two of Henry’s descendants – Robin, and their second cousin Margie. Merv said that she had a photo of Edward and suggested I wrote to her. Margie replied telling me that she had no photo nor any picture of Edward (and as far as I know none have survived), but much to my surprise and delight she wrote:

Your great, great grandmother – Isabella – has been hanging in our living room for many years. It is with great pleasure it may find a nest in your home where it belongs. The handwriting on the back belonged to my aunt Theo Beaglehole – my father’s sister... I am so pleased Isabella will be in her own home.

And with her letter Margie enclosed her picture of Isabella – a beautiful hand coloured photographic print made in the 1850s. On the back is written – ‘Isabel Clouston – sister of Henry Clouston senr’ – sister of Captain Henry Clouston of New Zealand.

In January 2002, after finding Eliza and Henry, I wrote to Margie. She replied:

Your wonderful letter arrived and has been read and reread many times... thank you and thank you.

Margie went on to tell me she had given a copy of my letter to her cousin Mary:

She, like me, had to read and reread. “That explains it all” she said “Remember Aunt Addie” (I don’t, however) “We all thought it was some Spanish sailor who landed on the Orkney Islands who gave her that dark skin and hair!” We all feel so excited – it makes our line so real at last. And proud of Edward Clouston for his courage in nurturing those two children – and for marrying Julia... What a fabulous story it would make.
CHAPTER 2

WEST AFRICA

History of the British Transatlantic Slave Trade — Six Slave Trading Regions of West Africa — Cape Blanco to Cape Roxo, Senegambia, 1 of 6 — Cape Roxo to Cape Appollonia, Sierra Leone and Windward Coast, 2 of 6 — Cape Appollonia to the River Volta, Gold Coast, 3 of 6 — River Volta to River Lagos, Whidah country, 4 of 6 — River Lagos to Cape Lopez, Bight of Benin and Bight of Biafra, 5 of 6 — Cape Lopez to Loango St Paul, Congo and Angola, 6 of 6 — The Middle Passage
Eliza’s mother Bessy, aged 48 on 28 June 1817 (1817 Slave Register, St Thomas in the Vale) was born in Jamaica in 1768 or 1769. Before then her parents or remoter forbears were transported from West Africa to Jamaica.

The first Caribbean island settled by the English was Barbados in the 1620s. In 1655 English troops seized Jamaica from the Spanish, and the 1660s are said to have been the beginning of the English transatlantic slave trade on a large scale.

http://slaveryimages.org/search.html – Maps – The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, published 1999 – Map showing major areas of slaving activities and embarkation ports
Bryan Edwards in the House of Commons on 6 April 1797 outlined the history of the British Slave Trade.

Mr. Bryan Edwards said: – I rise to support the motion...

The government of England, in the early part of queen Elizabeth’s reign, encouraged and promoted the slave trade and the queen herself participated in its profits. In 1564 she sent a squadron of men of war to purchase slaves on the coast of Africa, and to convey them for sale to the Spanish West Indies. The commodore was sir John Hawkins, afterwards treasurer of the navy; and the ships were the Solomon, the Tiger, the Swallow, and the Jesus.
I have related these circumstances in our history, as introductory to the proof which I shall presently give, that, when in after-times the English nation had colonies of its own, the British government not merely encouraged, but absolutely forced, by every means in its power, the colonists to purchase African slaves (among other articles of supply) from the British merchants. James 1\textsuperscript{st}, in 1618, converted the slave trade into a monopoly, by granting an exclusive charter to sir Robert Rich and others. Thus arose the first African company. Another charter was granted in 1631, by Charles 1\textsuperscript{st} and in 1672 Charles 2\textsuperscript{nd}, granted a third. In this last charter the king’s own brother, the duke of York, was at the head of the subscribers, who were now dignified by the title of the Royal African Company; and if the House will permit me to read the instructions which those monarchs gave to their governors in the West Indies, gentlemen will be convinced that I have proved my assertion. The first document is dated in 1671. In that year, sir Thomas Lynch was appointed governor of Jamaica: and, among other articles, in his instructions from Charles 2\textsuperscript{nd}, I find the following: “You shall give all due encouragement to the trade which the Royal African Company trading unto Africa shall set on foot in our said island. You shall, as often as you have opportunity, send us an account of the number of planters, masters, servants, and slaves.” I should have observed, Sir, that nine years previous to this, soon after the Restoration, the king himself, in order to conciliate the good will of the troops in Jamaica, and to induce them to cultivate the country, had sent a supply of 300 negroes, as a royal donation, to be divided among the officers. James 2\textsuperscript{nd} followed the example of his brother. In the first year of his reign he issued the following instructions to sir Phillip Howard: “You are to give all possible encouragement and invitation to merchants and others, who shall bring trade unto our said island, or any way contribute to its advantage, and particularly to the African company. And as we are willing to recommend unto the said company that the said island may have a constant and sufficient supply of merchantable negroes at moderate rates, so you are to take care that payment be duly made in money or commodities within a competent time, according to agreement, &c.” The very same instructions \textit{verbatim} were issued October 7\textsuperscript{th}, 1689, by the glorious and immortal king William, who, not content with supplying our own colonies with African slaves, entered into a contract called the Assiento for supplying the Spaniards. And an act of the British parliament soon afterwards passed, which declares the slave trade “to be highly beneficial to this kingdom and to the plantations dependant thereon.” From this period the African trade became altogether a parliamentary concern: and the resolutions in support of it, on the Journals of this House, would fill a volume. From 1729 to 1788, sums of money were voted annually for maintaining the forts on the coast to the amount of 705,255l. 5s. 10d.

The British slave trade, according to Bryan Edwards, ‘attained to its highest pitch of prosperity a short time before the commencement of the late American War’ – the War of Independence, 1775-1783.

\url{https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=j1omAAAAMAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s -- The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies, by Bryan Edwards – 2 Vols, published 1793 – Vol II – page 53}

It appears to me, that the British slave trade had attained to its highest pitch of prosperity a short time before the commencement of the late American war. The following has been given to the public as an accurate account of the ships which sailed from England for the Coast in 1771, and of the number of slaves for the purchase and transportation of which they were sufficiently provided, and I believe its authenticity cannot be doubted; viz.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|}
\hline
To Senegambia & - & - 40 for 3,310 \\
Windward Coast & - & - 56 for 11,960 \\
Gold Coast & - & - 29 for 7,525 \\
Bight of Benin & - & - 63 for 23,301 \\
Angola & - & - 4 for 1,050 \\
\hline
Total & - & - 192 for 47,146 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}
http://slaveryimages.org/search.html – European Forts & Trading Posts in Africa – A Description of the coasts of North and South-Guinea, printed 1732, from John Bardot’s original manuscript – late 17th century – A View of Cabo Corso Castle – (Cape Coast Castle, Gold Coast)

www.wdl.org/en/item/2586/#q=Gambia&qla=en – Guinea Itself, as Well as the Greatest Portion of Nigrita or the Land of the Blacks, the One Called Ethiopia Inferior by Modern Geographers, the Other Southern Ethiopia, published 1743 – section
That part then of the African coast on the Atlantic ocean, with which the people of Europe have an intercourse, extends from Cape Blanco, in 21° N. latitude, to a Portuguese settlement called Loango St Paul's, in the kingdom of Angola, lat. 9° S. comprehending a line of coast of upwards of 1,300 English leagues, and consisting of various countries, inhabited by a great number of savage nations, differing widely from each other, in government, language, manners and superstitions.

The whole number of forts and factories established on the coast by the different powers of Europe, is I believe 40; of which 14 belong to the English, three to the French, 15 to the Dutch, four to the Portuguese, and four to the Danes.
Francis Moore in the early 18th century Factor to the Royal African Company of England, described the ‘Several Nations for the space of Six Hundred Miles up the River Gambia’.


British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, 1793

https://archive.org/details/travelsintoinlan00moor – Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa: containing a Description of the Several Nations for the space of Six Hundred Miles up the River Gambia... by Francis Moore, Factor several Years to the Royal African Company of England, published 1738 – page 19-21

The Mouth of the River Gambia... is form’d on the North Side by Barrah Point, and on the South by Banyon Point, about four Miles over... Barrah Point is in the Kingdom of Barrah, the King is by Race a Mundingo, and Tributary to him of Barsally. In this Country the Royal African Company of England have two Factories [trading posts], one at Gillyfree over-against James Fort; the other at Colar, which is up a River of the same Name, that empties itself through one Mouth into the Gambia, about eight Leagues above James Island...

To this King the Separate Traders generally pay Custom, which amounts to about One hundred and twenty Barrs, it being a Country of good Trade, especially when the Merchants come down with their Slaves, which happens according to the Numbers they bring, which are sometimes so large, that the Company’s Factories up the River are not able to purchase them all; and very often then they can sell them up the River, yet if they hear that there are a good many Ships in Barrah, they will bring their Slaves down to them, having found by Experience that by White Mens out-bidding one another, they have sometimes had very large Prices for their Slaves, whereas had they not been so eager to buy from, and out-bid one another, they might have bought the Slaves for half the Money they paid for them. – Unless the separate Traders pay their Custom here, the King will not allow them to have either Wood or Water in his Country; for which Reason only a pretty many Masters of Ships chuse to pay the King’s Custom, and yet do not stay to trade here, but proceed directly up the River...
Frances Moore – page 29-35

These different Kingdoms upon the Banks of the Gambia are inhabited by several Races of People, Mundingoes, Jolloiffs, Pholeys, Floops and Portuguese: The most numerous are call’d Mundingoes, as is likewise the Country where they inhabit: They are generally of a black Colour, and well set. When this Country was conquer’d by the Portuguese, which was about the Year 1420, some of that Nation settled in it, who have cohabited with the Mundingoes, till they are now very near as Black as they are.

On the North Side of the River Gambia, and from thence in-land, are a People call’d Jolloiffs, whose Country is vastly large, and extends even to the River Senegal. These People are much blacker, and much handsomer than the Mundingoes, for they have not the broad Noses and thick Lips peculiar to the Mundingoes and Floops. In short, all the Countries hereabout (and I have seen vast Numbers of People from each) cannot come up to the Jolloiffs for Blackness of Skin, and Beauty of Features.

In every Kingdom and Country on each Side of the River there are some People of a tawny Colour, call’d Pholeys, much like the Arabs; which Language they most of them speak, being to them as the Latin is in Europe, for it is taught in Schools, and their Law, the Alcoran, is in that Language. They are more generally learned in the Arabick, than the People of Europe are in Latin, for they can most of them speak it, tho’ they have a vulgar Tongue besides, call’d Pholey. They live in Hoards or Clans, build Towns, and are not subject to any Kings of the Country, tho’ they live in their Territories; for if they are ill-treated in one Nation, they break up their Towns, and remove to another. They have Chiefs of their own, who rule with so much Moderation, that every Act of Government seems rather an Act of the People than of one Man. This Form of Government goes on easily, because the People are of a good and quiet Disposition, and so well instructed in what is just and right, that a Man who does ill, is the Abomination of all, and none will support him against the Chief.

In these Countries the Natives are not avaricious of Lands; they desire no more than what they use; and as they do not plough with Horses or Cattle, they can use but very little, therefore the Kings are willing to give the Pholeys Leave to cultivate Lands, and live in their Countries. They plant near their Houses Tobacco, and all round their Towns they open for Cotton, which they fence in together; beyond that are their Corn-Fields, of which they raise the four Kinds usual all over this Country...

I have chose to mention their various Kinds of Grain, now that I am speaking of the Pholeys, because they are the greatest Planters in the Country, tho’ they are Strangers in it. They are very industrious and frugal, and raise much more Corn and Cotton than they consume, which they sell at reasonable Rates, and are very hospitable and kind to all; so that to have a Pholey Town in the Neighbourhood, is by the Natives reckon’d a Blessing... As their Humanity extends to all, they are doubly kind to People of their own Race, insomuch that if they know of one of them being made a Slave, all the Pholeys will redeem him...

They breed Cattle, and are very dextrous at managing them, so that the Mundingoes leave theirs to their Care; the whole Herd belonging to Towns feed all the Day in the Savannahs, and after the Crop is off, in the Rice-Grounds: They are watched by some Herdsmen, who prevent their going into the Corn, or running into the Woods. They have a Place near each Town for the Cattle, in the Middle of which they raise a Stage about eight Foot high from the Ground, and eight or ten Foot wide: To this is a Ladder, and over it a Roof of Thatch, with the Sides all open. They drive great Numbers of Stakes in Rings round the Stage, and every night they duly bring up the Cattle, who are so tame, and well accustom’d to it, that they come up with Ease...

They are great Huntsmen: They kill Lyons, Tygers, and other wild Beasts, and often go twenty or thirty in a Company to hunt Elephants, whose Teeth they sell, and whose Flesh they smook, dry and eat, keeping it several months together. The Elephants (as they say) generally to an hundred or two hundred in a Drove, and do great Mischief, not only to the small Trees, which they pull up by the Roots with their Trunks, likewise to the Corn...

They are almost the only People who make Butter, which they barter up the River for Salt. They are very particular in their Dress, and never wear any other than white Cotton Clothes, which they make themselves. They are always very clean, especially the Women, who keep their Houses very sweet, and which are built in a very regular Method, a good Way distant from each other, to avoid Fire, forming very good Streets and Passages, a thing which the Mundingoes do not regard. (I have given a Draught of a Pholey Town, with their Cotton and Cattle Ground, most of their Towns are upon the same Model.)...
On the South-side of this River, over against James Fort, is the Empire of Fonia, and but a little Way inland a Sort of People call’d Floops, who are in a manner wild: They border close to the Mundingoes, and are bitter Enemies to each other. Their Country is of vast Extent, but they have no King among them, each of their Towns being fortified with Sticks drove all round and filled up with Clay: They are independent of each other, and under the Government of no one Chief; notwithstanding which, they unite so firmly, that all the Force of the Mundingoes’ (tho’ so very numerous) cannot get the better of them.

The most general Language is Mundingoe, by which Name the Country and People are call’d: If you can speak that Language, you may travel from the River’s Mouth up to the Country of Joncoes (alias Merchants;) so call’d from their buying every Year a vast Number of Slaves there, and bringing them down to the lower Parts of this River to sell to the White People: Which Country, I believe, cannot by all Reports be less than six Weeks Journey from James Fort.
The next Language mostly us’d here is call’d Creole Portuguese, a bastard Sort of Portuguese, scarce understood in Lisbon... The _Arabick_ is spoken by the Pholeys, and by most of the Mahometans in the River, tho’ they are Mundingoes; but those who can write Arabick, are very strict at their Devotions three or four Times a Day, and are very sober and abstemious in their Way of Living, chusing rather to dye than drink strong Liquors, and rather fast than eat any thing which is not kill’d by one of their own Way of Thinking. They have great Veneration paid them by all the Mundingoes, insomuch that if any of them are ill, they apply to a Mahometan for Cure; but not by inward Potions, as any one would reasonably imagine, but they put so much Faith in them, that they desire them only to write a sort of a Note on a small Piece of Paper, for them to wear about them, imagining that as they have a Paper about them written by a Holy Man, no Ill can happen to them, or continue long with them: But the worst of it is, that they pay a great Price for these Papers; by which means the Mahometans, commonly called Busherines, are generally richer, and have greater Plenty of Things about them, than the Generality of Mundingoes. Amongst the Mundingoes there is a Cant Language, entirely unknown to the Women, being only spoken by the Men, and is seldom us’d by them in any Discourse than concerning a dreadful Bug Bear to the Women call’d Mumbo Jumbo, which what keeps the Women in awe: And tho’ they should chance to understand this Language, yet were the Men to know it, they would certainly murder them. Besides the foregoing Languages, there are also others which every Kingdom has peculiar to itself, such is that of the Floops, Banyoons, Jolloiffs, and Bumbrongs; the later of which are very distant from the River; in the Merchants Country. The chief Trade of the Country is Gold, Slaves, Elephants Teeth, and Bees-Wax. The Gold is of a very good Quality, and finer than the Sterling Gold... The Merchants who bring this and the other Inland Commodities, are Blacks of the Mundingo Race, and are call’d in Mundingo, Joncoes. They are very unwilling to tell much of the Inland Countries... The same Merchants bring down Elephants Teeth, and in some Years Slaves to the Amount of 2000, most of which they say are Prisoners taken in War: They buy them from the different Princes who take them; many of them are Bumbrongs and Petcharies, Nations who each of them have different Languages, and are brought from a vast Way inland. Their Way of bringing them is, tying them by the Neck with Leather-thongs, at about a Yard distance from each other, 30 or 40 in a String, having generally a Bundle of Corn, or an Elephant’s Tooth upon each of their Heads. In their Way from the Mountains they travel thro’ very great Woods, where they cannot for some Days get Water, so they carry in Skin-Bags enough to support them for that Time. I cannot be certain of the Number of Merchants who follow this Trade, but there may perhaps be about an Hundred, who go up into the Inland Country with the Goods, which they buy from the White Men, and with them purchasing in various Countries Gold, Slaves, and Elephants Teeth. They use Asses as well as Slaves in carrying their Goods, but no Camels nor Horses. Besides the Slaves which the Merchants bring down, there are many bought along the River. These are either taken in War, as the former are, or else Men condemn’d for Crimes, or else People stolen, which is very frequent. The Company’s Servants never buy any of the last, if they suspect it, without sending for the Alcade, or chief Men of the Place, and consulting with them about the Matter. Since this Slave-Trade has been us’d, all Punishments are chang’d into Slavery; there being an Advantage on such Condemnations, they strain for Crimes very hard, in order to get the Benefit of selling the Criminal. Not only for Murder, Theft and Adultery, are punish’d by selling the Criminal for a Slave, but every trifling Crime is punished in the same manner.

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Several of the Natives have many Slaves born in their Families: There is a whole Village near Brucoe of 200 People, who are all the Wives, Slaves, or Children of one Man. And tho’ in some Parts of Africa they sell their Slaves born in the Family, yet in the River Gambia they think it a very wicked thing; and I never heard of but one that ever sold a Family-Slave, except for such Crimes as would have made them to be sold had they been free. If there are many Family-Slaves, and one of them commits a Crime, the Master cannot sell him without the joint Consent of the rest; for if he does, they will all run away, and be protected by the next Kingdom, to which they fly. The Slaves sold in the River, besides those brought by the Merchants, may amount in a Year to about 1000, more or less, according to the Wars upon the River.
http://prints.rmg.co.uk/artist/27898/gabriel-bray – drawings by Gabriel Bray, Lieutenant, RN, made during his voyages to the coast of West Africa – mid 1770s – The Head Dress of the Jollifês, Gum Coast, Africa

The Gum Coast, named after the trade in Gum Arabic, was the coast of southern Mauritania and northern Senegal

like all other Pagans, they [Foulahs, or Pholeys] are very superstitious, and wear a great number of grigres, or charms, round their necks, arms and legs. They are inordinately fond of red cloth, which they make use of in covering those charms . . .
Explorer Mungo Park (1771-1806), on his first expedition to Africa, arrived from England at the mouth of the river Gambia in June 1795.

The natives of the countries bordering the Gambia, though distributed into a great many distinct governments, may I think, be divided into four great classes; the Feloops, the Jaloffs, the Foulahs, and the Mandingoes. Among all these nations, the religion of Mahomet has made, and continues to make, considerable progress; but, in most of them, the body of the people, both free and enslaved, persevere in maintaining the blind but harmless superstitions of their ancestors, and are called by the Mahomedans kafirs, or infidels.

Of the Feloops, I have little to add to what has been observed concerning them in the former Chapter. They are of a gloomy disposition, and are supposed never to forgive an injury . . . This fierce and unrelenting disposition is, however, counterbalanced by many good qualities: they display the utmost gratitude and affection towards their benefactors; and the fidelity with which they preserve whatever is intrusted to them is remarkable . . .

The Jaloffs (or Yaloffs) are an active, powerful, and warlike race, inhabiting great parts of that tract which lies between the river Senegal and the Mandingo States on the Gambia; yet they differ from the Mandingoes, not only in language, but likewise in complexion and features. The noses of the Jaloffs are not so much depressed, nor the lips so protuberant, as among the generality of Africans; and although their skin is of the deepest black, they are considered by the white traders, as the most sightly Negroes in this part of the Continent.

They are divided into several independent states or kingdoms; which are frequently at war either with their neighbours, or with each other. In their manners, superstitions, and government, however, they have a greater resemblance to the Mandingoes (of whom I shall presently speak) than to any other nation; but excel them in the manufacture of cotton cloth; spinning the wool to a finer thread, weaving it in a broader loom, and dyeing it a better colour.

Their language is said to be copious and significant . . .

The Foulahs (or Pholeys), such of them at least as reside near the Gambia, are chiefly of a tawny complexion, with soft silky hair, and pleasing features. They are much attached to a pastoral life, and have introduced themselves into all the kingdoms on the windward coast, as herdsmen and husbandmen, paying tribute to the sovereign of the country for the lands which they hold . . . I defer entering at large into their character, until a fitter occasion occurs, which will present itself when I come to Bondou.

The Mandingoes, of whom it remains to speak, constitute in truth, the bulk of the inhabitants in all those districts of Africa which I visited; and their language, with few exceptions, is universally understood, and very generally spoken, in that part of the continent . . .

They are called Mandingoes, I conceive, as having originally migrated from the interior state of Manding, of which some account will hereafter be given; but, contrary to the present constitution of their parent country, which is republican, it appeared to me that the government in all the Mandingo states, near the Gambia, is monarchical. The power of the sovereign is, however, by no means unlimited. In all affairs of importance, the king calls an assembly of the principal men, or elders, by whose councils he is directed, and without whose advice he can neither declare war, nor conclude peace.

In every considerable town there is a chief magistrate. . . . These courts are composed of the elders of the town (of free condition), and are termed palavers; and their proceedings are conducted in the open air with sufficient solemnity . . .

As the Negroes have no written language of their own, the general rule of decision is an appeal to ancient custom; but since the system of Mahomet has made great progress among them, the converts to that faith have gradually introduced, with the religious tenets, many of the civil institutions of the Prophet; and where the Koran is not found sufficiently explicit. Recourse is had to a commentary called All Sharra . . .

The Mandingoes, generally speaking, are of a mild, sociable, and obliging disposition. The men are commonly above the middle size, well shaped, strong, and capable of enduring great labour; the women are good-natured, sprightly and agreeable. The dress of both sexes is composed of cotton cloth, of their
own manufacture; that of the men is a loose frock, not unlike a surplice, with drawers which reach half way down the leg; and they wear sandals on their feet, and white cotton caps on their heads. The women’s dress consists of two pieces of cloth, each is about six feet long, and three broad; one of these they wrap round the waist, which hanging down to the ankles answers for a petticoat: the other is thrown negligently over the bosom and shoulders.

This account of their clothing is indeed nearly applicable to the natives of all the different countries in this part of Africa; a peculiar national mode is observable only in the head dresses of the women.

Thus, in the countries of the Gambia, the females wear a sort of bandage, which they call Jalla. It is a narrow stripe of cotton cloth, wrapped many times round, immediately over the forehead. In Bondou the head is encircled with strings of white beads, and a small plate of gold is worn in the middle of the forehead. In Kasson, the ladies decorate their heads in a very tasteful manner, with white sea-shells. In Kaarta and Ludamar, the women raise their hair to a great height by the addition of a pad (as ladies did formerly in Great Britain) which they decorate with a species of coral, brought from the Red sea by pilgrims returning from Mecca, and sold at a great price.

In the construction of their dwelling houses the Mandingoes also conform to the general practice of the African nations on this part of the continent, contenting themselves with small and incommodious hovels. A circular mud wall about four feet high, upon which is placed a conical roof, composed of the bamboo cane, and thatched with grass, forms alike the palace of the king, and the hovel of the slave. A hurdle of canes placed on upright stakes, about two feet from the ground, upon which is spread a mat or bullock’s hide, answers the purpose of a bed: a water jar, some earthen pots for dressing their food, a few wooden bowls and calabashes (a species of gourd, of which the Negroes make bowls and dishes), and one or two low stools, compose the rest.

As every man of free condition has a plurality of wives, it is found necessary (to prevent, I suppose, matrimonial disputes) that each of the ladies should be accommodated with a hut to herself; and all the huts belonging to the same family are surrounded by a fence, constructed of bamboo canes, split and formed into a sort of wicker-work.

In the account which I have thus given of the natives, the reader must bear in mind, that my observations apply chiefly to persons of free condition.

Mungo Park travelled 200 miles up the river Gambia to Pisania, and from there he travelled overland northeast. Four days after leaving Pisania, he reached a small village called Konjour.

_Mungo Park_ – page 38-40

... Here I purchased a fine sheep for some beads, and my Serawoolli attendants killed it with all the ceremonies prescribed by their religion: part of it was dressed for supper; after which a dispute arose between one of the Serawoolli Negroes and Johnson [a Mandingo], my interpreter, about the sheep’s horns. The former claimed the horns as his perquisite, for having acted the part of the butcher, and Johnson contested the claim. I settled the matter by giving a horn to each of them. This trifling incident is mentioned as introductory to what follows: for it appeared on inquiry that these horns were highly valued, as being easily convertible into portable sheaths, or cases, for containing and keeping secure certain charms or amulets called saphies, which the Negroes constantly wear about them. These saphies are prayers, or rather sentences, from the Koran, which the Mahomedan priests write on scraps of paper, and sell to the simple natives, who consider them to possess very extraordinary virtues. Some of the Negroes wear them to guard themselves against the bites of snakes or alligators; and on this occasion the saphie is commonly inclosed in a snake’s or alligator’s skin, and tied around the ankle. Others have recourse to them in time of war, to protect their persons against hostile weapons; but the common use to which these amulets are applied, is to prevent or cure bodily diseases; to preserve from hunger and thirst, and generally to conciliate the favour of superior powers under all the circumstances of life.*

*I believe that similar charms or amulets, under the names of domini, grigri, fetich, &c. &c. are common in all parts of Africa.

In this case, it is impossible not to admire the wonderful contagion of superstition; for, notwithstanding that the majority of the Negroes are Pagans, and absolutely reject the doctrines of Mahomet, I did not meet with a man, whether a Bushreen or Kafir, who was not fully persuaded of the powerful
efficacy of these amulets. The truth is, that all the natives of this part of Africa consider the art of writing as bordering on magic; and it is not in the doctrines of the Prophet, but in the arts of the magician, that their confidence is placed. It will hereafter be seen that I was myself lucky enough, in circumstance of distress, to turn the popular credulity in this respect to good account.

On the 7th I departed from Konjour ... and on the 8th about noon I arrived at Kolor, a considerable town; near the entrance into which I observed, hanging upon a tree, a sort of masquerade habit, made of the bark of trees, which I was told on inquiry belonged to MUMBO JUMBO. This is a strange bugbear, common to all the Mandingo towns, and much employed by the Pagan natives in keeping their women in subjection; for as the Kafirs are not restricted in the number of their wives, every one marries as many as he can conveniently maintain; and as it frequently happens that the ladies disagree among themselves, family quarrels sometimes rise to such a height, that the authority of the husband can no longer preserve peace in the household. In such cases, the interposition of Mumbo Jumbo is called in, and is always decisive.

This strange minister of justice (who is supposed to be either the husband himself, or some person instructed by him), disguised in the dress that has been mentioned, and armed with a rod of public authority, announces his coming (whenever his services are required) by loud and dismal screams in the woods near the town. He begins the pantomime at the approach of night; and as soon as it is dark, he enters the town, and proceeds to the Bentang (a sort of stage, erected in every town, answering the purpose of a town hall), at which all the inhabitants immediately assemble.

It may easily be supposed that this exhibition is not much relished by the women; for as the person in disguise is entirely unknown to them, every married female suspects that the visit may possibly be intended for herself; but they dare not refuse to appear when they are summoned; and the ceremony commences with songs and dances, which continue till midnight, about which time Mumbo fixes on the offender. This unfortunate victim being thereupon immediately seized, is stripped naked, tied to a post, and severely scourged with Mumbo’s rod, amidst the shouts and derision of the whole assembly; and it is remarkable, that the rest of the women are the loudest in their exclamations on this occasion against their unhappy sister. Daylight puts an end to this indecent and unmanly revel.
From the central situation of Bondou, between the Gambia and Senegal rivers, it is become a place of great resort, both for the Slatees [black merchants, who traded chiefly in slaves], who generally pass through it, in going from the coast to the interior countries; and for occasional traders, who frequently come hither from the inland countries, to purchase salt.

These different branches of commerce are conducted principally by Mandingoes and Serawoollies, who have settled in the country. These merchants likewise carry on a considerable trade with Gedumah, and other Moorish countries, bartering corn and blue cotton clothes for salt; which they again barter in Dentilla and other districts for iron, shea-butter [from the kernel of the Shea tree], and small quantities of gold dust. They likewise sell a variety of sweet smelling gums packed up in small bags, containing each about a pound. These gums, being thrown on hot embers, produce a very pleasant odour, and are used by the Mandingoes for perfuming their huts and clothes.

The customs, or duties on travellers, are very heavy; in almost every town an ass load pays a bar of European merchandize, and at Fatteconda, the residence of the king, one Indian bast, or musket, and six bottles of gunpowder, are exacted as the common tribute. By means of these duties, the King of Bondou is well supplied with arms and ammunition; a circumstance which makes him formidable to the neighbouring states.

The inhabitants differ in their complexions and national manners from the Mandingoes and Serawoollies, with whom they are frequently at war . . .

The Foulahs in general (as has been observed in a former Chapter) are of tawny complexion, with small features, and soft silky hair; next to the Mandingoes they are undoubtedly the most considerable of all the nations in this part of Africa. Their original country is said to be Fooladoo (which signifies the country of the Foulahs); but they possess at present many other kingdoms at a great distance from each other: their complexion, however, is not exactly the same in the different districts; in Bondou, and the other kingdoms which are situated in the vicinity of the Moorish territories, they are of a more yellow complexion than in the southern states.

The Foulahs of Bondou are naturally of a mild and gentle disposition, but the uncharitable maxims of the Koran has made them less hospitable to strangers, and more reserved in their behaviour than the Mandingoes. They evidently consider all the Negro natives as their inferiors; and when talking of different nations, always rank themselves among the white people.

Their government differs from that of the Mandingoes chiefly in this, that they are more immediately under the influence of the Mohomedan laws; for all the chief men (the king excepted) and a large majority of the inhabitants of Bondou, are Mussulmen, and the authority and laws of the Prophet, are every where looked upon as sacred and decisive. In the exercise of their faith, however, they are not very intolerant towards such of their countrymen as still retain their ancient superstitions. Religious persecution is not known among them, nor is it necessary; for the system of Mahomet is made to extend itself by means abundantly more efficacious. By establishing small schools in the different towns, where many of the Pagan as well as Mahomedan children are taught to read the Koran, and instructed in the tenets of the Prophet. The Mahomedan priests fix a bias on the minds, and form the character of their young disciples, which no accidents of life can ever afterwards remove or alter . . .

With the Mahomedan faith is also introduced the Arabic language, with which most of the Foulahs have a slight acquaintance . . .

The industry of the Foulahs, in the occupations of pasturage and agriculture, is every where remarkable. Even on the banks of the Gambia, the greater part of the corn is raised by them; and their herds and flocks are more numerous and in better condition than those of the Mandingoes; but in Bondou they are opulent in a high degree, and enjoy all the necessaries of life in the greatest profusion. They display great skill in the management of their cattle, making them extremely gentle by kindness and familiarity. On the approach of night, they are collected from the woods, and secured in folds called korrees, which are constructed in the neighbourhood of the different villages . . .

The cattle are milked in the mornings and evenings: the milk is excellent; but the quantity obtained from one cow is by no means so great as in Europe. The Foulahs use the milk chiefly as an article of diet, and that, not until it is quite sour. The cream which it affords is thick, and is converted into butter by stirring it violently in a large calabash. This butter, when melted over a gentle fire, and freed from impurities, is preserved in small earthenware pots, and forms a part of most of their dishes; it serves likewise to anoint their heads, and is bestowed very liberally on their faces and arms.
But although milk is plentiful, it is somewhat remarkable that the Foulahs, and indeed all the inhabitants of this part of Africa, are totally unacquainted with the art of making cheese . . .

Besides the cattle, which constitute the chief wealth of the Foulahs, they possess some excellent horses, the breed of which seems to be a mixture of the Arabian with the original African.

The kingdom of Kajaaga, in which I was now arrived, is called by the French, Gallam; but the name that I have adopted is universally used by the natives. This country is bounded on the south-east and south by Bambouk; on the west by the Bondou and Fouta Torra; and on the north by the river Senegal.
The air and climate are, I believe, more pure and salubrious than at any of the settlements towards the Coast . . .
The inhabitants are called Serawoollies, or (as the French write it) Seracolets. Their complexion is jet black: they are not to be distinguished in this respect from the Jaloffs.
The government is monarchical; and the regal authority from what I experienced of it, seems sufficiently formidable. The people themselves, however, complain of no oppression; and seemed all very anxious to support the king, in a contest he was going to enter into with the sovereign of Kasson. The Serawoollies are habitually a trading people; they formerly carried on a great commerce with the French, in gold and slaves, and still maintain some traffic in slaves with the British factories [trading stations] on the Gambia. They are reckoned tolerably fair and just in their dealings, but are indefatigable in the exertions to acquire wealth, and they derive considerable profits by the sale of salt, and cotton cloth, in distant countries. When a Serawoolli merchant returns home from a trading expedition, the neighbours immediately assemble to congratulate him upon his arrival. On these occasions the traveller displays his wealth and liberality, by making a few presents to his friends; but if he has been unsuccessful, his levee is soon over; and every one looks upon him as a man of no understanding, who could perform a long journey, and (as they express it) bring back nothing but the hair upon his head.

Mungo Park travelled on east hoping to reach Timbuktu, but at Silla he was forced to turn back. He made his way southwest to Kamalia in the kingdom of Kaarta.

Travels in Western Africa, 1818, 19, 20, and 21 – Kaartan Ceremonial Dress – Boxari the Kaartan Guide

On my arrival at Kamalia, I was conducted to the house of a Bushreen [a Muslim Mandingo] named Karfa Taura . . . He was collecting a coffle of slaves, with a view to selling them to the Europeans on the Gambia, as soon as the rains should be over . . . he intended to set out himself for Gambia as soon as the rivers were fordable, and the grass burnt; and advised me to stay and accompany him. He remarked, that
when a caravan of the natives could not travel through the country, it was idle for a single white man to attempt it . . .

In the beginning of December [1796], Karfa proposed to complete his purchase of slaves; and for this purpose, collected all the debts which were owing to him in his own country. And on the 19th, being accompanied by three Slatees, he departed for Kancaba, a large town on the banks of the Niger . . . and as Kancaba is much resorted to by merchants, it is always well supplied with slaves, which are sent thither up the Niger in canoes. When Karfa departed from Kamalia, he proposed to return in the course of a month; and during his absence I was left to the care of a good old Bushreen, who acted as schoolmaster to the young people of Kamalia.

After a drawing by Mungo Park – View of Kamalia

In all the laborious occupations [manufacturing iron, etc] above described, the master and his slaves work together, without any distinction of superiority. Hired servants, by which I mean persons of free condition, voluntarily working for pay, are unknown in Africa; and this observation naturally leads me to consider the condition of slaves, and the various means by which they are reduced to so miserable a state of servitude. This unfortunate class are found, I believe, in all parts of this extensive country, and constitute a considerable branch of commerce, with the states on the Mediterranean, as well as with the nations of Europe.

The slaves in Africa, I suppose, are nearly in the proportion of three to one to the freemen. They claim no reward for their services, except food and clothing; and are treated with kindness, or severity, according to the good or bad disposition of their masters. Custom, however, has established certain rules with regard to the treatment of slaves, which it is thought dishonourable to violate. Thus, the domestic slaves, or such as are born in a man’s own house, are treated with more lenity than those which are
beneath the uplifted spear of his opponent, he gives up at the same time his claim to liberty; and purchases
probably the origin, of slavery; for when one nation had take n from another, a greater number of captives
become a slave, by being taken in war. War, is of all others, the most productive source, and was
painful journey, than free men; and on their reaching the Coast, if no opportunity offers of selling them to
但他们不是最常被带到这样地方的; 大部分奴隶在内陆国家被抓获,并在海岸销售。他们经常被从一个交易者转到另一个交易者,直到他们失去重新回家的希望。
There are, indeed, regular markets, where slaves of this
description are bought and sold; and the value of a slave in the eye of an African purchaser, increases in
proportion to his distance from his native kingdom: for when slaves are only a few days journey from the
place of their nativity, they frequently effect their escape; but when one or more kingdoms intervene,
escape being more difficult, they are more readily reconciled to their situation. On this account, the
unhappy slave is frequently transferred from one dealer to another, until he has lost all hopes of returning
to his native kingdom. The slaves which are purchased by the Europeans on the Coast, are chiefly of this
description; a few of them are collected in the petty wars, hereafter to be described, which take place near
the Coast; but by far the greater number are brought down in large caravans from the inland countries, of
which many are unknown, even by name, to the Europeans. The slaves which are thus brought from the
interior, may be divided into two distinct classes; first, such as were slaves from their birth, having been
born of enslaved mothers; secondly, such as were born free, but who afterwards, by whatever means,
became slaves. Those of the first description are by far the most numerous; for prisoners taken in war (at
least such as are taken in open and declared war, when one kingdom avows hostilities against another) are
generally of this description. The comparatively small proportion of free people, to the enslaved,
throughout Africa, has already been noticed; and it must be observed, that men of free condition, have
many advantages over the slaves, even in war time. They are in general better armed, and well mounted;
and can either fight or escape, with some hopes of success; but the slaves, who have only their spears and
bows, and of whom great numbers are loaded with baggage, become an easy prey. Thus, when Mansong,
King of Bambarra, made war upon Kaarta (as I have related in a former Chapter), he took in one day nine
hundred prisoners, of which number not more than seventy were free men. This account I received from
Daman Jumma, who had thirty slaves at Kemmoo, all of whom were made prisoners by Mansong. Again,
when a freeman is taken prisoner, his friends will sometimes ransom him, by giving slaves in exchange;
but when a slave is taken, he has no hope of redemption. To these disadvantages, it is to be added, that the
Slates, who purchase slaves in the interior countries, and carry them down to the Coast for sale,
constantly prefer such as have been in that condition of life from their infancy, well knowing that these
have been accustomed to hunger and fatigue, and are better able to sustain the hardships of a long and
painful journey, than free men; and on their reaching the Coast, if no opportunity offers of selling them to
advantage, they can easily be made to maintain themselves by their labour; neither are they so apt to
attempt making their escape, as those who have once tasted the blessings of freedom.

Slaves of the second description, generally become such by one or other of the following causes, 1. Captivity. 2. Famine. 3. Insolvency. 4. Crimes. A freeman may, by established customs of Africa,
become a slave, by being taken in war. War, is of all others, the most productive source, and was
probably the origin, of slavery; for when one nation had taken from another, a greater number of captives
than could be exchanged on equal terms, it is natural to suppose that the conquerors, finding it
inconvenient to maintain their prisoners, would compel them to labour; at first, perhaps, only for their own
support; but afterwards to support their masters. Be it as it may, it is a known fact, that prisoners of war in
Africa, are the slaves of the conquerors; and when the weak or unsuccessful warrior, begs for mercy
beneath the uplifted spear of his opponent, he gives up at the same time his claim to liberty; and purchases
his life at the expence of his freedom.

In a country, divided into a thousand petty states, mostly independent and jealous of each other; where
every freeman is accustomed to arms, and fond of military achievements; where a youth who has practiced
the bow and spear from his infancy, longs for nothing so much as an opportunity to display his valour, it is
natural to imagine that wars frequently originate from very frivolous provocation. When one nation is more powerful than another, a pretext is seldom wanting for commencing hostilities. Thus the war between Kajaago and Kasson was occasioned by the detention of a fugitive slave; that between Bambarra and Kaarta by the loss of a few cattle. Other cases of the same nature perpetually occur, in which the folly or mad ambition of their princes, and the zeal of their religious enthusiasts, give full employment to the scythe of desolation.

The wars of Africa are of two kinds, which are distinguished by different appellations: that species which bears the greatest resemblance to our European contests, is denominated *killi*, a word signifying “to call out,” because such wars are openly avowed, and previously declared. Wars of this description in Africa, commonly terminate, however, in the course of a single campaign. A battle is fought; the vanquished seldom think of rallying again; the whole inhabitants become panic struck; and the conquerors have only to bind the slaves, and carry off their plunder and their victims. Such of the prisoners as, through age or infirmity, are unable to endure fatigue, or are found unfit for sale, are considered useless; and I have no doubt are frequently put to death. The same fate commonly awaits a chief, or any person who has taken a very distinguished part in the war. And here it may be observed that, notwithstanding this exterminating system, it is surprising to behold how soon an African town is rebuilt and repeopled. The circumstance arises probably from this; that their pitched battles are few; the weakest know their own situation, and seek safety in flight. When their country has been desolated, and their ruined towns and villages deserted by the enemy, such of the inhabitants as have escaped the *sword*, and the *chain*, generally return; for it seems to be the universal wish of mankind, to spend the evening of their days where they passed their infancy. The poor Negro feels this desire in its full force. To him, no water is sweet but what is drawn from his own well; and no tree has so cool and pleasant a shade as the *tabba* tree of his native village. When war compels him to abandon the delightful spot in which he first drew his breath, and seek safety in some other kingdom, his time is spent in talking about the country of his ancestors; and no sooner is peace restored than he turns his back upon the land of strangers, rebuilds with haste his fallen walls, and exults to see the smoke ascend from his native village.

The other species of African warfare, is distinguished by the appellation of *tegria*, “plundering or stealing.” It arises from a sort of hereditary feud, which the inhabitants of one nation or district bear towards another. No immediate cause of hostility is assigned, or notice of attack given; but the inhabitants of each, watch every opportunity to plunder and distress the objects of their animosity by predatory excursions. These are very common, particularly about the beginning of the dry season, when the labour of the harvest is over and provisions are plentiful. Schemes of vengeance are then meditated. The head man surveys the number and activity of his vassals, as they brandish their spears at festivals; and elated with his own importance, turns his whole thoughts towards revenging some depredation or insult, which either he or his ancestors may have received from a neighbouring state.

Wars of this description are generally conducted with great secrecy. A few resolute individuals, headed by some person of enterprise and courage, march quietly through the woods, surprising in the night some unprotected village, and carrying off the inhabitants and their effects, before their neighbours can come to their assistance. One morning, during my stay at Kamalia, we were all much alarmed by a party of this kind. The king of Fooladoo’s son, with five hundred horsemen, passed secretly through the woods, a little to the southward of Kamalia, and on the morning following, plundered three towns belonging to Madigai, a powerful chief in Jallonkadoo.

The success of this expedition encouraged the governor of Bangassi, a town in Fooladoo, to make a second inroad upon another part of the same country. Having assembled about two hundred people, he passed the river Kokoro in the night, and carried off a great number of prisoners. Several of the inhabitants who had escaped these attacks, were afterwards seized by the Mandingoes, as they wandered about in the woods, or concealed themselves in the glens and stronghold places in the mountains.

These plundering excursions, always produce speedy retaliation; and when large parties cannot be collected for this purpose, a few friends will combine together, and advance into the enemy’s country, with a view to plunder, or carry off the inhabitants. A single individual has been known to take his bow and quiver, and proceed in like manner. Such an attempt is doubtless in him an act of rashness; but when it is considered that, in one of these predatory wars, he has probably been deprived of his child or his nearest relation, his situation will rather call for pity than censure. The poor sufferer, urged on by the feelings of domestic or paternal attachment, and the ardour of revenge, conceals himself among the bushes, until some young or unarmed person passes by. He then, tiger-like, springs upon his prey; drags his victim into the thicket, and in the night carries him off as a slave.
When a Negro has, by means like these, once fallen into the hands of his enemies, he is either retained as the slave of the conqueror, or bartered into a distant kingdom; for an African, when he has once subdued his enemy, will seldom give him an opportunity of lifting up his hand against him at a future period. A conqueror commonly disposes of his captives according to rank which they held in their native kingdom. Such of the domestic slaves as appear to be of a mild disposition, and particularly the young women, are retained as his own slaves. Others that display marks of discontent, are either sold to the Slalettis, or put to death. War, therefore, is certainly the most general, and most productive source of slavery; and the desolations of war often (but not always) produce the second cause of slavery, famine; in which case a freeman becomes a slave, to avoid a greater calamity.

The third cause of slavery, is insolvency. Of all the offences (if insolvency may be so called), to which the laws of Africa have affixed the punishment of slavery, this is the most common. A Negro trader commonly contracts debts on some mercantile speculation, either from his neighbours, to purchase such articles as will sell to advantage in a distant market, or from the European traders on the Coast; payment to be made in a given time. In both cases, the situation of the adventurer is exactly the same. If he succeeds, he may secure an independency. If he is unsuccessful, his person and services are at the disposal of another; for in Africa, not only the effects of the insolvent, but even the insolvent himself, is sold to satisfy the lawful demands of his creditors.

The fourth cause above enumerated, is the commission of crimes, on which the laws of the country affix slavery as a punishment. In Africa, the only offences of this class, are murder, adultery, and witchcraft; and I am happy to say, that they did not appear to me to be common. In cases of murder, I was informed, that the nearest relation of the deceased had it in his power, after conviction, either to kill the offender with his own hand, or sell him into slavery. When adultery occurs, it is generally left to the option of the person injured, either to sell the culprit, or accept such ransom for him, as he many think equivalent to the injury he has sustained. By witchcraft, is meant pretended magic, by which the lives or healths of persons are affected: in other words, it is the administering of poison. No trial for this offence, however, came under my observation while I was in Africa; and I therefore suppose that the crime, and its punishment, occur but very seldom.

When a free man has become a slave by any one of the causes before mentioned, he generally continues so for life, and his children (if they were born of an enslaved mother) are brought up in the same state of servitude. There are however a few instances of slaves obtaining their freedom, and sometimes even with the consent of their masters; as by performing some singular piece of service, or by going to battle, and bringing home two slaves as a ransom; but the common way of regaining freedom is by escape, and when slaves have once set their minds to running away, they often succeed. Some of them will wait for years before an opportunity presents itself, and during that period shew no signs of discontent. In general, it may be remarked, that slaves who come from a hilly country, and have been accustomed to hunting and travel, are more apt to attempt escape, than such as are born in a flat country, and have been employed in cultivating land.

Such are the general outlines of that system of slavery which prevails in Africa; and it is evident, from its nature and extent, that it is a system of no modern date. It probably had its origin in the remote ages of antiquity, before the Mahomedans explored a path across the Desert. How far it is maintained and supported by the slave traffic, which, for two hundred years, the nations of Europe have carried on with the natives of the Coast, it is neither within my province, nor in my power, to explain. If my sentiments should be required concerning the effect which a discontinuance of that commerce would produce on the manners of the natives, I should have no hesitation in observing, that, in the present unenlightened state of their minds, my opinion is, the effect would neither be so extensive or beneficial as many wise and worthy persons fondly expect.

Mungo Park – page 318-321 – extracts

On the 24th of January [1797], Karfa returned to Kamalia with a number of people, and thirteen prime slaves which he had purchased. He likewise brought with him a young girl whom he had married at Kancaba, as his fourth wife, and had given her parents three prime slaves for her. She was kindly received at the door of the baloon by Karfa’s other wives, who conducted their new acquaintance and co-partner into one of the best huts, which they had caused to be swept and white washed, on purpose to receive her.
The slaves which Karfa had brought with him were all of them prisoners of war; they had been taken by the Bambarran army in the kingdoms of Wassela and Kaart a, and carried to Sego, where some of them had remained three years in irons. From Sego they were sent, in company with a number of captives, up the Niger in two large canoes, and offered for sale at Yamina, Bammakoo, and Kancaba; at which places the greater number of the captives were bartered for gold-dust, and the remainder sent forward to Kankaree.

Eleven of them confessed to me that they had been slaves from their infancy; but the other two refused to give any account of their former condition. They were all very inquisitive; but they viewed me at first with looks of horror, and repeatedly asked if my countrymen were cannibals. They were very desirous to know what became of slaves after they had crossed the salt water. I told them, that they were employed in cultivating the land; but they would not believe me; and one of them putting his hand upon the ground, said with great simplicity, “have you really got such ground as this, to set your feet upon?” A deeply rooted idea, that the whites purchased Negroes for the purpose of devouring them, or selling them to others, that they may be devoured hereafter, naturally makes them contemplate a journey towards the Coast with great terror; insomuch that the Slatees are forced to keep them constantly in irons, and watch them very closely, to prevent their escape. They are commonly secured, by putting the right leg of one, and the left of another, into the same pair of fetters. By supporting the fetters with a string, they can walk, though very slowly. Every four slaves are likewise fastened by the necks, with a strong rope of twisted thongs; and in the night an additional pair of fetters is put on their hands, and sometimes a light iron chain passed round their necks.

Such of them as evince marks of discontent, are secured in a different manner. A thick billet of wood is cut about three feet long, and a smooth notch being made upon one side of it, the ankle of the slave is bolted to the smooth part by means of a strong iron staple, one prong of which passes on each side of the ankle. All these fetters and bolts are made from native iron; in the present case they were put on by the blacksmith as soon as the slaves arrived from Kancaba, and were not taken off until the morning on which the coffle departed for Gambia.

In other respects, the treatment of the slaves during their stay at Kamalia, was far from being harsh or cruel. They were led out in their fetters, every morning, to the shade of the tamarind tree, where they were encouraged to play games of hazard and sing diverting songs, to keep up their spirits; for though some of them sustained the hardships of their situation with amazing fortitude, the greater part were very much dejected, and would sit all day in a sort of sullen melancholy, with their eyes fixed on the ground. In the evening, their irons were examined, and their hand fetters put on; after which they were conducted to two large huts, where they were guarded during the night by Kaarfa’s domestic slaves. But notwithstanding all this, about a week after their arrival, one of the slaves had the address to procure a small knife, with which he opened the rings of his fetters, cut the rope, and made his escape: more of them would probably have got off, had they assisted each other; but the slave no sooner found himself at liberty, than he refused to stop, and assist in breaking the chain which was fastened round the necks of his companions.

As all the Slatees and slaves belonging to the coffle were now assembled, either at Kamalia, or at some of the neighbouring villages, it might have been expected that we should have set out immediately for the Gambia; but though the day of our departure was frequently fixed, it was always found expedient to change it. Some of the people had not prepared their dry provisions; others had gone to visit their relations or collect some trifling debts; and, last of all, it was necessary to consult whether the day would be a lucky one. On account of one of these, or other such causes, our departure was put off, day after day, until the month of February was far advanced; after which the Slatees agreed to remain in the present quarters, until the fast moon was over [fast of Ramadan]. And here I may remark, that loss of time, is an object of no great importance in the eyes of a Negro. If he has any thing of consequence to perform, it is a matter of indifference to him whether he does it to-day or to-morrow, or a month or two hence; so long as he can spend the present moment with any degree of comfort, he gives himself very little concern about the future.

Mungo Park – page 323-324

April 19th. The long wished-for day of our departure was at length arrived; and the Slatees having taken the irons from their slaves, assembled them at the door of Karfa’s house, where the bundles were all tied up, and every one had his load assigned to him. The coffle, on its departure from Kamalia, consisted of twenty-seven slaves for sale, the property of Karfa and four other Slatees; but we were afterwards joined
by five at Maraboo, and three at Bala; making in all thirty-five slaves. The free men were fourteen in number, but most of them had one or two wives, and some domestic slaves; and the schoolmaster, who was now upon his return to Woradoo, the place of his nativity, took with him eight of his scholars; so that the number of free people and domestic slaves amounted to thirty-eight, and the whole amount of the coffle was seventy-three. Among the free men were six Jillakeas (singing men), whose musical talents were frequently exerted either to divert our fatigue, or obtain us a welcome from strangers . . .

Mungo Park’s account of his journey with the coffle from Kamalia to Pisania – see – pages 324 to 357 – https://archive.org/details/travelsininterio00park

http://www.miklianmaps.com/shop/delamarche-map-of-northern-africa-1813 – section – arrow points to Kamalia – arrow points to Pisania

Mungo Park – between Kamalia and Pisania – after a drawing by Mungo Park – View of a Bridge
From Cape Roxo (or Rouge) to Cape Appollonia, the European settlements, except a small English factory in the river Sierra Leone, are chiefly those of the Portuguese. – The Negroes obtained through their means, as well as from the English factory, are likewise called Mandingoes – I believe improperly; as many different languages are spoken on the coast between Senegal and Apollonia. This part of Africa is commonly called the Windward Coast.

http://collections.rmg.co.uk/archive/objects/510443.html – Capt Samuel Gamble’s Log of the slaver-ship Sandown, 1793-94 – bringing slaves for sale to the Europeans


http://collections.stanford.edu/images/bin/detail?cid=MOA0559&fn=1 – Africa, by C F Cruchley, published 1856 – section – Cape Roxo to Cape Appollonia
Chapter 2. West Africa

Thomas Winterbottom, physician to the Colony of Sierra Leone around 1800, described ‘the Native Africans in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone’.

... The Windward Coast receives its name from lying to the northward and westward of the other parts of the Slave Coast, from which quarters the wind blows during a greater part of the year. The line between Cape Mount, in lat. 6° 46′, or perhaps more accurately between Cape Mesurado, in 6° 13′, and Cape Palmas, is called the Grain or Malaguetta Coast; from the quantity of grains of paradise or Malguetta pepper procured there: it is also frequently called the Kroo Coast. The space from Cape Palmas to Cape Three Points in lat. 4° 40′ N. is called the Ivory Coast; and where it terminated the Gold Coast begins, which extends about 180 miles eastward.

The Windward Coast, as above described, is inhabited by several different nations. The Timmanees possess the south side of the river Sierra Leone, together with its branches of Port Logo (so called from running into the Logo country) and Rokelle, called by the Timmanees Robung-dakell or River of Scales. Thence they penetrate to a considerable distance inland, where they are subdivided into Timmanees, Logos, and Krangos; all of whom it is said, speak dialects of the same language. This nation formerly lived at a distance from the sea coast; but being of a warlike and active disposition, they forced themselves down the river Sierra Leone, among the Bulloms, who formerly possessed the whole region from the river Kissee to the Sherbo. Not contented with dispossessing the Bulloms of a part of Sierra Leone, they have in like manner forced themselves down the river Scarcies.

The Bulloms inhabit the country on the north side of the Sierra Leone river, called Bullom, which extends as far as the river Scarcies, from the banks of which, as has been said, the Timmanees have driven them. To the northward of the Scarcies the Bulloms chiefly occupy the sea coast, as far as the mouth of the river Kissee. They also inhabit to the southward of Sierra Leone the river Sherbro, the Bananas, the Plantains, and some other smaller islands. This once powerful nation formerly possessed the whole of the river Kissee, from which they were driven by a nation called Soosoos or Suzees. The Soosoos extend from the river Kissee beyond the Rio Pongas, nearly as far as the Rio Nunez, of which tract they dispossessed a nation called Bagoes, who were once the masters of the whole of the Rio Pongas, and the country between that river and the Rio Nunez, together with a considerable line of sea coast extending from the Rio Nunez southward as far as the river Dembia, nearly opposite to the Isles de Los. They still retain a few straggling villages scattered here and there among the Soosoos; but are chiefly confined to the sea coast and to the Isle de Los, upon the largest of which, called Támara, they have plantations and villages...

The Soosoos however have not remained in undisturbed possession of their usurpation. A few emigrants from a powerful nation, called Mandingos, settled themselves upon the banks of the Kissee, and have since become possessed of a considerable tract of country in its neighbourhood. The Mandingos are strict Mahommedans, very zealous in making converts, and have spread their religion with much success among the Soosoos, where it appears to be daily gaining ground. Europeans call every one of the coast who professes Mahommedanism, indiscriminately, Mandingo Man, or as the Pagan natives term it, Book Man. This is the same with the Maraboo or Marbut of travellers. The Bookmen are much respected by the illiterate natives, and are very frequently met with in the Bullom and Timannee villages, where they have great influence...

The Foola nation lives at a considerable distance from the sea, Teembo, the capital, being nearly in the latitude of 10° N.; they are strict Mahommedans, and are much employed in agriculture and the breeding of cattle.

Several different nations inhabit the coast southward of Sierra Leone, between Cape Mount and Cape Palmas; among the most remarkable of whom are the people of that part called the Kroo Coast, the inhabitants of which spend much of their time on the water, and live chiefly on fish and rice; they are remarkable for the robustness and fleshiness of their bodies, and also for their great agility.

Kroos, or Kroomen, are a very industrious people, and frequently engage themselves to European vessels upon the coast, continuing on board several months, and acting in the capacity of sailors and traders, in both which situations they shew much intelligence and activity. But notwithstanding their
utmost exertions none of them become rich. When any person returns home from his service of Europeans, he is obliged to make large presents to the old men of the town: when this has been neglected, or when it is suspected that a part of his wealth has been concealed, he is summoned by the old people to the Palaver-house, where a fire being made of green pepper-bushes, the culprit is suspended over it with his hands tied behind his back, until nearly suffocated with the smoke; a ceremony which never fails to extort a discovery of his treasure, and a compliance with all demands.

All these nations have languages peculiar to themselves, most of which are merely dialects of the same language, but essentially different, though confined in some cases to a small district. Even the Bulloms of Sierra Leone, and those of Sherbo, though constituting one nation differ in their mode of speaking; and this diversity, which is still greater in other instances, proves a great obstacle to the acquirement of a competent knowledge of the customs of the natives.

A View of Free-town, on the River Sierra Leone

Chapter 2. West Africa

http://collections.rmg.co.uk/archive(objects/510443.html – Capt Samuel Gamble’s Log of the slaver-ship Sandown, 1793-94 – Isles de Los on the Windward Coast – see below Sandown and Isles de Los

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, 1793 and 1794 – top left ship Sandown – top right slaves imported from Isles de Los

Thomas Winterbottom – Vol I – page 251-255

The unlettered but artful African, who, by the terrors of superstition, had gained an ascendancy over the minds of his countrymen, probably foresaw the additional influence which he would acquire by retaining in his own hands the care of their bodies also. Hence, the practice of medicine and the art of making greegres and fetiches, in other words amulets, to resist the effects of witchcraft, or the malicious attempts of evil spirits, is generally the province of the same person. So strongly is the notion of medicine
being a supernatural art imprinted on the minds of the people on the western coast of Africa, that they look upon every person who practices it as a witch, and are firmly persuaded that he can not only see and hold familiar conversation with evil spirits, whenever he pleases, but that he can give them a variety of commissions, which they never fail to execute. This notion is a source of great gain to the greegree makers, and of course they are at much pains to encourage it . . .

. . . To guard against its [witchcraft’s] so much dreaded effects, a variety of greegrees, fetiches, or amulets, are invented, which promise to the wearer perfect immunity from danger. These greegrees are as various in their forms as in the substance of which they are composed. The Timmanees and Bulloms are of opinion, that by possessing a part of the body of a person who has been successful in his undertakings, they will also inherit a portion of his good fortune; hence it was deemed necessary that the body of the late Mr. James Cleveland, of the Bananas, who had been a successful trader, and had raised himself to great power, should be buried in a secret manner, lest the natives should have converted it into greegrees. Those made by the Mahommedans consist of passages in the Koran, written upon paper in Arabic, sewed up in red leather, and neatly stamped on the outside. They are either of a square, triangular, round, or oblong form, and as there are greegrees against every possible danger, such as drowning, fire-arms, bites of snakes, wild beasts, sharks, &c. a person who is armed at all points with these charms appears almost sinking under the load. They are most frequently worn around the neck and arms; sometimes as a girdle round the waist, and even round the legs . . .

http://prints.rmg.co.uk/artist/27898/gabriel-bray – drawings by Gabriel Bray, Lieutenant, RN, made during his voyages to the coast of West Africa – mid 1770s – Head Dress of the Wappo Negro’s, Ivory Coast, Africa

The Kroomen of Sierra Leone
In all the Bullom and Timmanee towns greegrees are placed to prevent the incursion of evil spirits or witches. These consist of pieces of rag, like streamers, attached to the end of a long pole; or a small country axe fixed upon the trunk of a tree; or the bottom of a bottle; or an old pot placed upon the end of a stake: sometimes the greegee is a canon ball, or an old pewter dish laid upon the ground; but whatever it may consist of, it would give great offence to remove, or even touch it.

When any person of consequence falls sick, he is immediately removed from his own residence to another town at some distance, to be farther from the effects of the witchcraft which is supposed to have been practice upon him. If he does not soon recover in his new situation, a hut is built in the deepest recess of some impenetrable wood, whither he is carried, the place of his retreat only known to his confidential friends. The late king Naimbanna in his last illness was removed from his town, on the island of Robanna, to a small island a few miles distant. A semicircular piece of ground was cleared from the underwood, the larger trees being left standing; and the only avenue to it was defended by the most potent greegrees which could be procured...

When any person of consequence dies, whether from the effects of old age, or illness produced by some other natural cause, the whole is commonly attributed to witchcraft, and the friends of the deceased make strict enquiry to discover the witch. This is frequently pointed out to some of them in a dream, which is considered as sufficient testimony. But what will appear strange, if we do not take into account the dread of the red water ordeal, and the possibility of incantation having really been used with a view to injure the deceased, is, that the accused person frequently acknowledges the charge, and submits to his sentence without repining. During king Naimbanna’s illness I saw an old man confined in chains, accused of having bewitched the king.

A person killed by witchcraft is supposed to die from the effects of a poison secretly administered or infused into his system by the witch; or the latter is supposed to assume sometimes the form of an animal, as a cat, or a rat, which, during the night, sucks the person’s blood from a small but imperceptible wound, by which a lingering illness and death are produce; and sometimes the form of a snake, which by its bite causes instant death...

Greegrees are often placed in lugars or plantations to deter people from stealing, and a few old rags placed upon an orange tree will generally, though not always, secure the fruit as effectually as if guarded by the dragons of the Hesperides. When any person falls sick, if, at the distance of several months, he recollects having stolen fruit, &c or of having taken softly as they term it, he immediately supposes wangka has caught him, and to get cured he must go or send to the person whose property he had taken, and make to him whatever recompense he demands.
Drawings by Gabriel Bray, Lieutenant, RN – mid 1770s – Portraits of West African women

Cape Appollonia to the River Volta – Region 3 of 6

Drawings by Gabriel Bray, Lieutenant, RN – mid 1770s – A View of Fort Apolonia & the canoe landing the officer thro’ the Surf, March 1775


The Gold Coast extends from Cape Appollonia to the river Volta, comprehending a line of 100 leagues. The maritime country is divided into a number of petty states or principalities; seemingly independent of, and often at war with, each other; the chief of which are Axiom, Ante, Adom, Jabi, Comani, Fetu, Sabou, Fantyn (a rich and powerful people) Acron, and Agonna; some of which are said to maintain a republican, or more probably an aristocratical, form of government. Of the inland country we know but little more than that it consists of three extensive kingdoms, called Assiante (or Shantee) Akim, and Aquambou;
each of which supplies the maritime states with great numbers of slaves, which they sell to the Europeans.

In the British West Indies, most of the Negroes purchased on the Gold Coast, are known by the general appellation of Koromantees, from Koromantyn, one of the earliest of our factories on this part of the African coast, as hath already been observed, but which has now become an insignificant village, or factory, in possession of the Dutch. It is situated in the kingdom of Fantyn, two miles from the fort of Anamaboe. — I believe that the same, or different dialects of the same language, is spoken throughout all the Gold Coast countries.

https://archive.org/details/missionfromcapec00bowd – Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee... by T Edward Bowdich, Conductor, published 1819 – Map shewing the Discoveries & Improvements in the Geography of Western Africa resulting from the Mission to the Ashantee, 1817 – section – Cape Appollonia to Volta River – arrow points to Coomassie, capital of Ashantee – arrow points to Cape Coast Castle – immediately west of Annamaboe (or Anamaboe)

http://slaveryimages.org/search.html – A Description of the coasts of North and South-Guinea, printed 1732, from John Bardot’s original manuscript – late 17th century – Top – Fishing Cannoes of Mina 5 or 600 at a time – bottom – Negro’s cannoes carrying slaves on board of ships at Manfroe

The circumstances which distinguishes the Koramantyn, or Gold Coast, Negroes, from all others, are firmness both of body and mind; a ferociousness of disposition; but withal, activity, courage, and stubbornness, or what an ancient Roman would have deemed an elevation, of soul, which prompts them to enterprises of difficulty and danger; and enables them to meet death, in its most horrible shape, with fortitude or indifference. They sometimes take to labour with great promptitude and alacrity, and have undoubtedly been slaves in Africa: – I have interrogated great numbers on this subject, and although some of them asserted they were born free, who as it was afterwards proved by the testimony of their own relations, were actually sold as slaves by their masters, others frankly confessed to me that they had no claim to freedom in their own country, and were sold either to pay the debts, or to expiate the crimes, of their owners. On the other hand, the Gold Coast being inhabited by various different tribes which are engaged in perpetual warfare and hostility with each other, there cannot be a doubt that many of the captives taken in battle, and sold in the European settlements, were of free condition in their native country, and perhaps the owners of slaves themselves . . .

The courage, or unconcern, which the people of this country manifest at the approach of death, arises doubtless, in a great measure, from their national manners, wars, and superstitions, which are all, in the highest degree, savage and sanguinary. A power over the lives of his slaves is possessed, and exercised too, on very frivolous occasions, without compunction or scruple, by every master of slaves on the Gold Coast. Fathers have the like power over their children. In their wars they are bloody and cruel beyond
any nation that ever existed; for all such of their captives as they reserve not for slaves, they murder with circumstances of outrageous barbarity; cutting them across the face, and tearing away the under jaw, which they preserve as a trophy, leaving the miserable victims to perish in that condition. I have collected this account from themselves. They tell me likewise, that whenever a considerable man expires, several of his wives, and a great number of his slaves, are sacrificed at his funeral. This is done, say they, that he may be properly attended in the next world. This circumstance has been confirmed to me by every Gold Coast Negro that I have interrogated on the subject, and I have enquired of many. In a country where executions are so frequent, and human blood is spilt with so little remorse, death must necessarily have lost many of its terrors; and the natives in general, conscious they have no security even for the day that is passing over them, seem prepared for, and resigned to, the fate that probably awaits them . . .

They believe that *Accompong*, the God of the heavens, is the creator of all things; a Deity of infinite goodness; to whom however they never offer sacrifices, thinking it sufficient to adore him with praises and thanksgiving.

*Assarc* is the god of the earth; to him they offer the first fruits of the ground, and pour out libations of the liquors they drink to his honour.

*Ipboa* is the god of the sea; if the arrival of ships which trade upon their coast is delayed, they sacrifice an hog to depurate the wrath of Ipboa.

*Obboney* is a malicious deity, who pervades heaven, earth, and sea; he is the author of all evil, and when his displeasure is signified by the infliction of pestilential disorders, or otherwise, nothing will divert his anger but human sacrifices; which are selected from captives taken in war, or, if there be none present, then from their slaves.

Besides the above deities, every family has a peculiar tutelary saint, who is supposed to have been originally a human being like one of themselves, and the first founder of their family; upon the anniversary of whose burial, the whole number of his descendants assemble round his grave, and the oldest man, after offering up praises to Accompong, Assarc, Ipboa, and their tutelary deity, sacrifices a cock or goat, by cutting its throat, and shedding the blood upon the grave. Every head of an household of the family, next sacrifices a cock, or other animal, in like manner, and as soon as all those who are able to bring sacrifices have made their oblations, the animals which have been killed, are dressed, and a great festival follows.

Among their other superstitions also, must not be omitted their mode of administering an oath of secrecy or purgation. – Human blood, and earth taken from the grave of some near relation, are mixed with water, and given to the party to be sworn, who is compelled to drink the mixture, with a horrid imprecation, that it may cause the belly to burst, and the bones to rot, if the truth be not spoken. This test is frequently administered to their wives, on the suspicion of infidelity, and the resemblance which it bears to the trial of jealousy by the *bitter water* described in the book of Numbers (chap. V.) is a curious and striking circumstance.

*Drawings by Gabriel Bray, Lieutenant, RN – mid 1770s – The Fantyman Head Dress, Gold Coast, Africa*
Chapter 2. West Africa


Kingston, May 22, 1779.

**TO BE SOLD,**
On Thursday the 27th instant,
on board the Ship
**NANCY,**
Benjamin Hammond Commander,
from Amsterdam,
300 choice young Coronamores, Fantee, and Abissines.
**NEGROES,**
Sydebotham & Berry.

Kingston, May 27th, 1779.

**THE SALE OF**
Captain Hammond’s Cargo of
**GOLD COAST NEGROES,**
That was to have been opened this Day on board the Ship NANCY, is postponed to Monday the 31st Instant, on account of the present unfavourable Weather.

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, 1792, 1793, and 1794

Kingston, April 6, 1793.

**FOR SALE,**
On Monday the 15th inst.
246 Choice Young Windward and
**GOLD COAST NEGROES,**
Imported in the ship JANE, Capt. John Mill, from
**AFRICA.**
John & Richard Hinde.

Kingston, May 15, 1793.

**FOR SALE,**
On account of the Owners, and others concerned.
On Friday the 28th Instant,
273 Choice Young Windward and
**GOLD COAST NEGROES,**
Imported in the ship King Gary, Captain Joseph Col, from Cape Mount.
Aspinall & Hardy.

Kingston, Jan. 18, 1793.

**FOR SALE,**
Of Long’s Wharf, Clarendon Bay;
On Tuesday the 3rd Instant,
195 Choice Young Coronamores, Fantee,
and Abissines
**SLAVES,**
Imported in the brig Young Hero, Capt. John Clegg.
By: Lindo & Lake.

Kingston, Dec. 15, 1793.

**FOR SALE,**
On Thursday, the 3rd of January, 1793,
338 Choice Young Coronamores, Fantee,
and Abissines
**SLAVES,**
Imported in the ship Union, Capt. Thompson, from
Swamanz.
By: Lindo & Lake.
T Edward Bowdich, conductor of a British Mission to Ashantee, left Cape Coast Castle on 22 April 1817 and arrived at Coomassie, the capital of Ashantee, on 19 May.

We entered Coomassie at two o’clock, passing under a fetish, or sacrifice of a dead sheep, wrapped up in red silk, and suspended between two lofty poles. Upwards of 5000 people, the greater part warriors, met us with awful bursts of martial music, discordant only in its mixture; for horns, drums, rattles, and gong-gongs were all exerted with a zeal bordering on phrenzy, to subdue us by the first impression. The smoke which encircled us from the incessant discharge of musquetry, confined our glimpses to the foreground; and we were halted whilst the captains performed their Pyrrhic dance, in the centre of a circle formed by warriors; where a confusion of flags, English, Dutch, and Danish, were waved and flourished in all directions; the bearers plunging and springing from side to side, with a passion of enthusiasm only equalled by the captains, who followed them, discharging their shining blunderbusses so close, that the flags were now and then in a blaze; and emerging from the smoke with all the gesture and distortion of maniacs. Their followers kept up the firing around us in the rear. The dress of the captains (see drawing, No. 1.) was a war cap, with gilded rams horns projecting in front, the sides extended beyond all proportion by immense plumes of eagle feathers, and fastened under the chin with bands of cowries. Their vest was of red cloth, covered with fetishes and saphies (scraps of Moorish writing, as charms against evil) in gold and silver; against their bodies as they moved, intermixed with small brass bells, the horns and tails of animals, shells, and knives; long leopard tails hung down their backs, over a small bow covered with fetishes. They wore loose cotton trousers, with immense boots of dull red leather, coming half way up the thigh, and fastened by small chains to their cartouch or waist belt; these were also ornamented with bells, horse tails, strings of amulets, and innumerable shreds of leather; a small quiver of poisoned arrows hung from their right wrist, and they held a long iron chain between their teeth, with a scrap of Moorish writing affixed to the end of it. A small spear was in their left hands, covered with red cloth and silk tassels; their black countenances heightened the effect of this attire, and completed a figure scarcely human.

This exhibition continued for about half an hour, when we were allowed to proceed, encircled by the warriors, whose number with the crowds of people, made our movement as gradual as if it had taken place in Cheapside; the several streets branching off to the right presented long vistas crammed with people, and those on the left hand being on an acclivity, innumerable rows of heads rose one above the other: the large porches of the houses, like the fronts of stages in small theatres, were filled with the better sort of females and children, all impatient to behold white men for the first time; their exclamations were drowned by the
firing and music but their gestures were in character with the scene. When we reached the palace, about half a mile from this place where we entered, we were again halted, and an open file was made, through which the bearers were passed, to deposit the presents and baggage in the house assigned to us. Here we were gratified by observing several of the caboceers pass by with their trains, the novel splendour of which astonished us. The bands, principally composed of horns and flutes, trained to play in concerts, seemed to soothe our hearing into its natural tone again by their wild melodies; whilst the immense umbrellas, made to sink and rise from the jerking bearers, and the large fans waving around, refreshed us with small currents of air, under a burning sun, clouds of dust, and a density of atmosphere almost suffocating. We were then squeezed, at the same funeral pace, up a long street, to an open fronted house, where we were desired by a royal messenger to wait a further invitation from the king. Here our attention was forced from the astonishment of the crowd to a most inhuman spectacle, which was paraded before us for some minutes; it was a man whom they were tormenting previous to sacrifice; his hands were pinioned behind him, a knife was passed through his cheeks, to which his lips were noosed like the figure of 8; one ear was cut off and carried before him, the other hung to his head by a small bit of skin; there were several gashes in his back, and a knife was thrust under each shoulder blade; he was led with a cord passed through his nose, by men disfigured with immense caps of shaggy black skins, and drums beat before him; the feeling of this horrid barbarity excited must be imagined. We were soon released by permission to proceed to the king, and passed through a very broad street, about a quarter of a mile long, to the market place.

Plate 1 – Captain in his War Dress
The king’s messenger, with gold breast plates, made way for us, and we commenced our round, preceded by the canes and the English flag. We stopped to take the hand of every caboceer, which, as their household suites occupied several spaces in advance, delayed us long enough to distinguish some of the ornaments in the general blaze of splendour and ostentation.

The caboceers, as did their superior captains and attendants, wore Ashantee cloths, of extravagant price from the costly foreign silks which had been unravelled to weave them in all the varieties of colour, as well as pattern; they were of an incredible size and weight, and thrown over the shoulder exactly like the Roman toga; a small silk fillet generally encircled their temples, and massy gold necklaces, intricately wrought; suspended Moorish charms, dearly purchased, and enclosed in small square cases of gold, silver, and curious embroidery. Some wore necklaces reaching to the navel entirely of aggy beads; a band of gold and beads encircled the knee, from which several strings of the same depended; small circles of gold like guineas, rings, and casts of animals, were strung around their ankles; their sandals were of green, red, and delicate white leather; manilas, and rude lumps of rock gold, hung from their left wrists, which were so heavily laded as to be supported on the head of one of their handsomest boys. Gold and silver pipes, and canes dazzled the eye in every direction. Wolves and rams heads as large as life, cast in gold, were suspended from their gold handled swords, which were held around them in great numbers; the blades were shaped like round bills, and rusted in blood; the sheaths were of leopard skin, or the shell of a fish like shagreen. The large drums supported on the head of one man, and beaten by two others, were braced around the thigh bone of their enemies, and ornamented with their skulls. The kettle drums resting on the ground, were scraped with wet fingers, and covered with leopard skin. The wrists of the drummers were hung with bells and curiously shaped pieces of iron, which ginglyed loudly as they were beating. The smaller drums were suspended from the neck by scarves of red cloth; the horns (the teeth of young elephants) were ornamented at the mouth-piece with gold, and the jaw bones of human victims. The war caps of eagle feathers nodded in the rear, and large fans, of the wing feathers of the ostrich, played around the dignitaries; immediately behind their chairs (which were of black wood, almost covered by inlays of ivory and gold embossment) stood their handsomest youths, with corslets of leopard’s skin covered with gold cockle shells, and stuck full of small knives, sheathed in gold and silver, and the handles of the blue agate; cartouch boxes of elephant’s hide hung below, ornamented in the same manner; a large gold handled sword was fixed behind the left shoulder, and silk scarves and horse tails (generally white) streamed from the arms and waist cloth; their long Danish muskets had broad rims of gold at small distances, and the stocks were ornamented with shells. Finely grown girls stood behind the chairs of some, with silver basins. Their stools (of the most laborious carved work, and generally with two bells attached to them) were conspicuously placed on the heads of favourites; and crowds of small boys were seated around, flourishing elephants tails curiously mounted. The warriors sat on the ground close to these, and so thickly as not to admit of our passing without treading on their feet, to which they were perfectly indifferent; their caps were of the skin of the pangolin and leopard, the tails hanging down behind; their cartouch belts (composed of small gourds which hold the charges, and covered with leopard or pig’s skin) were embossed with red shells, and small brass bells thickly hung on them; on their hips and shoulders were clusters of knives; iron chains and collars dignified the most daring, who were prouder of them than gold; their muskets had rests affixed of leopard’s skin, and the locks a covering of the same; the sides of their faces were curiously painted in long white streaks, and their arms also striped, having the appearance of armour.

We were suddenly surprised by the sight of Moors, who afforded the first general diversity of dress; there were seventeen superiors, arrayed in lard cloaks of white satin, richly trimmed with spangled embroidery, their shirts and trowsers were of silk, and a very large turban of white muslin was studded with a border of different coloured stones: their attendants wore red caps and turbans, and long white shirts, which hung over their trowsers; those of the inferiors were of dark blue cloth: they slowly raised their eyes from the ground as we passed, and with a most malignant scowl.

A delay of some minutes whilst we severally approached to receive the king’s hand, afforded us a thorough view of him; his deportment first excited my attention; native dignity in princes we are pleased to call barbarous was a curious spectacle: his manner were majestic, yet courteous; and he did not allow surprise to beguile him for a moment of the composure of the monarch; he appeared to be about thirty-eight years of age, inclined to corpulence, and of a benevolent countenance; he wore a fillet of aggy beads.
round his temples, a necklace of gold cockspur shells strung by the largest ends, and over his shoulder a red silk cord, suspending three saphies cased in gold; his bracelets were the riches mixtures of beads and gold, and his fingers covered in rings; his cloth was of a dark green silk; a pointed diadem was elegantly painted in white on his forehead; also a pattern resembling an epaulette on each shoulder, and an ornament like a full blown rose, one leaf rising above another until it covered his whole breast; his knee-bands were of aggy beads, and his ankle strings of gold ornaments of the most delicate workmanship, small drums, sankos, stools, swords, gunds, and birds, clustered together; his sandals, of a soft white leather, were embossed across the instep band with small gold and silver cases of saphies; he was seated in a low chair, richly ornamented with gold; he wore a pair of gold castanets on his finger and thumb, which he clapped to enforce silence. The belts of the guards behind his chair, were cased in gold, and covered with small jaw bones of the same metal; the elephant tails, waving like a small cloud before him, were spangled with gold, and large plumes of feathers were flourished amid them. His eunuch presided over these attendants, wearing only one massy piece of gold about his neck: the royal stool, entirely encased in gold, was displayed under a splendid umbrella, with drums, sankos, horns, and various musical instruments, cased in gold, about the thickness of cartridge paper: large circles of gold hung by scarlet cloth from the swords of state, the sheaths as well as the handles of which were also cased; hatchets of the same intermixed with them: the breast of the Ocras, and various attendants, were adorned with large stars, stools, crescents, and gossamer wings of solid gold.

We pursued our course through this blazing circle, which afforded to the last a variety exceeding description and memory; so many splendid novelties diverting the fatigue, heat, and pressure we were labouring under; we were almost exhausted, however, by the time we reached the end; when, instead of being conducted to our residence, we were desired to seat ourselves under a tree at some distance, to receive the compliments of the whole in our turn.

The swell of their bands gradually strengthened on our ears, the peals of the warlike instruments bursting upon the short, but sweet responses of the flutes; the gaudy canopies seemed to dance in the distant view, and floated broadly as they were springing up and down in the foreground; flags and banners waved in the interval, and the chiefs were eminent in their crimson hammocks, amidst crowds of musquetry. They dismounted as they arrived within thirty yards of us; their principal captains preceded them with the gold handled swords, a body of soldiers followed with their arms reversed, then their bands and gold canes, pipes, and elephant tails. The chief, with a small body guard under his umbrella, was generally supported around the waist by the hands of his favourite slave, whilst captains holla’d, close in his ear, his warlike deeds and (strong) names, which were reiterated with the voices of Stentors by those before and behind; the large party of warriors brought up the rear. Old captains of secondary rank were carried on the shoulders of a strong slave; but a more interesting sight was presented in the minors, or young caboceers, many not more than five or six years of age, who overweighed by ornaments, were carried in the same manner, (under their canopies), encircled by all the pomp and parade of their predecessors. Amongst others, the grandson of Cheboo was pointed out, whom the king had generously placed on the stool of his perfidious enemy. A band of Fetish men, or priests, wheeled round and round as they passed us with surprising velocity. Manner was as various as ornament; some danced by with irresistible buffoonery, some with a gesture and carriage of defiance; one distinguished caboccer performed the war dance before us for some minutes, with a large spear, which grazed us at every bound he made; but the greater number passed us with order and dignity, some slipping one sandal, some both, some turning round after having taken each of us by the hand; the attendants of others knelt before them, throwing dust upon their heads; and the Moors, apparently, voucashed us a blessing. The king’s messengers who were posted near us, with their long hair hanging in twists like a thrum mop, used little ceremony in hurrying by this transient procession; yet it was nearly 8 o’clock before the king approached.

It was a beautiful star light night, and the torches which preceded him displayed the splendor of his regalia with a chastened lustre, and made the human trophies of the soldiers more awfully imposing. The skulls of three Banda caboceers, who had been his most obstinate enemies, adorned the largest drum: the vessels in which the boys dipped the torches were of gold. He stopped to enquire our names a second time, and to wish us good night; his address was mild and deliberate: he was followed by his aunts, sisters, and others of his family, with rows of fine gold chains around their necks. Numerous chiefs succeeded; and it was long before we were at liberty to retire. We agreed in estimating the number of warriors at 30,000.
We were conducted to a range of spacious, but ruinous buildings, which had belonged to the son of one of the former kings, and who had recently destroyed himself at a very advanced age, unable to endure the severity of disgrace: their forlorn and dreary aspect bespoke the fortune of their master...

*Edward Bowdich – page 274-275*

The Yam Custom is annual, just as the maturity of that vegetable which is planted in December, and not eaten until the conclusion of the custom, the early part of September. All the caboceers and captains, and the majority of the tributaries, are enjoined to attend, none being excused, but such as the Kings of Inta, and Dagwumba, (who send deputations of their principal caboceers,) and those who have been dispatched elsewhere on public business. If a chief or caboeeer has offended, or if his fidelity be suspected, he is seldom accused or punished until the Yam Custom, which they attend frequently unconscious, and always uncertain of what may be laid to their charge. The Yam Custom is like the Saturnalia; neither theft, intrigue, or assault are punishable during the continuance, but the grossest liberty prevails, and each sex abandons itself to its passions.

On Friday the 5th of September, the number, splendor, and variety of arrivals, thronging from the different paths, was as astonishing as entertaining; but there was an alloy in the gratification, for the principal caboceers sacrificed a slave at each quarter of the town, on their entrance.

In the afternoon of the Saturday, the King received all the caboceers and captains in the large area, where the Dankara canons are placed. The scene was marked with all the splendor of our own entrance, and many additional novelties. All the heads of the kings and caboceers whose kingdoms had been conquered, from Sai Tootoo to the present reign, with those of the chiefs who had been executed for subsequent revolts, were displayed by two parties of executioners, each upwards of a hundred, who passed in an impassioned dance, some with the most irresistible grimace, some with the most frightful gestures: they clashed their knives on the skulls, in which sprigs of thyme were inserted, to keep the spirits from troubling the King. I never felt so grateful for being born in a civilized country. Firing and drinking palm wine were the only divertissements to the ceremony of the caboceers presenting themselves to the King: they were announced, and passed all round the circle saluting every umbrella: their bands preceded; we reckoned about forty drums in that of the King of Dwabin. The effect of the splendour, the tumult, and the musquetry, was afterwards heightened by torch light. We left the ground at 10 o’clock; the umbrellas were crowded even in the distant streets, the town was covered like a large fair, the broken sounds of distant horns and drums filled up the momentary pauses of the firing which encircled us: the uproar continued until four in the morning, just before which the King retired. I have attempted a drawing, (No. 2.) it is by no means adequate, yet more than description could be.

*Plate 2 – The First Day of the Yam Custom*

*Below – Plate 2 in sections*
On the left side of the drawing is a group of captains dancing and firing, as described in our entré. Immediately above the encircling soldiery, is a young caboceer under his umbrella, borne on the shoulders of his chief slave; he salutes as he passes along, and is preceded and surrounded by boys (with elephant tails, feathers, &c.) and his captains, who, lifting their swords in the air, halloo out the deeds of his forefathers; his stool is born close to him, ornamented with a large brass bell. Above is the fanciful standard of a chief, who is preceded and followed by numerous attendants; he is supported round the waist by a confidential slave, and one wrist is so heavily laden with gold, that it is supported on the head of a small boy; with the other hand he is saluting a seated caboceer, sawing the air by a motion of the wrist. His umbrella is sprung up and down to increase the breeze, and large grass fans are also playing; his handsomest slave girl follows, bearing on her head a small red leather trunk, full of gold ornaments, and rich cloths; behind are soldiers and drummers, who throw their white-washed drums in the air, and catch them again, with much agility and grimace, as they walk along.
Boys are in the front, bearing elephant tails, fly flappers, &c. and his captains with uplifted swords, are hastening forward the musicians and soldiers. Amongst the latter is the stool, so stained with blood that it is thought decent to cover it with red silk. Behind the musicians is Odumato, coming round to join the procession in his state hammock lined with red taffeta, and smoking under his umbrella, at the top of which is a stuffed leopard. In the area below is an unfortunate victim, tortured in the manner described in the entré and two of the King’s messengers clearing the way for him. The King’s four linguists are seen next: two, Otee and Quancum, are seated in conversation under an umbrella; the chief, Adoosey, is swearing a royal messenger, (to fetch an absent caboccer,) by putting a gold handled sword between his teeth, whilst Agay delivers the charge, and exhorts him to be resolute. The criers, all deformed, and with monkey skinned caps, are seated in the front. Under the next umbrella is the royal stool, thickly cased in gold.
Gold pipes, fans of ostrich wing feathers, captains seated with gold swords, wolves heads and snakes as large as life of the same metal, depending from the handles, girls bearing silver bowls, body guards, &c. &c. are mingled together till we come to the King, seated in a chair of ebony and gold, and dressed much in the same way as described at the first interview. He is holding up his two fingers to receive the oath of the captain to the right, who, pointing to a distant country, vows to conquer it. On the right and left of the state umbrella are the flags of Great Britain, Holland, and Denmark. A group of painted figures are dancing up to the King, in the most extravagant attitudes, beating time with their long knives on the skulls stuck full of thyme. On the right of the King is the eunuch, who superintends the group of small boys, the children of the nobility, waving elephant tails, (spangled with gold,) feathers, &c.; behind him is the above mentioned captain and other chiefs dressed as in the left end of the drawing. Musicians, seated and standing, are playing on instruments cased or plated with gold. The officers of the Mission are next seen, their linguist in front, their soldiers, servants, and a flag behind, at the back of whom is placed the King's state hammock, under its own umbrella.
Chapter 2. West Africa

T Edward Bowdich – page 277-278

Adjoining the officers is old Quatchie Quofie and his followers; at the top of his umbrella is stuck a small wooden image, with a bunch of rusty hair on the head, intending to represent the famous Akim caboceer who was killed by him; vain of the action, he is seen according to his usual custom, dancing before and deriding his fallen enemy, whilst his captains bawl out the deed, and halloo their acclamations. The manner of drinking palm wine is exhibited in the next group, a boy kneels beneath with a second bowl to catch the droppings, (it being a great luxury to suffer the liquor to run over the beard,) whilst the horns flourish, and the captains halloo strong names. The Moors are easily distinguished by their caps, and preposterous turbans. One is blessing a Dagwumba caboceer, who is passing on horseback, (the animal covered with fetishes and bells,) escorted by his men in tunics, bearing lances, and his musicians with rude violins, distinct from the sanko. The back of the whole assembly is lined with royal soldiers, and the commoner ones are ranged in front, with here and there a captain and a group of musicians, who, some with an old cocked hat, some with a soldiers jacket, &c &c. afford a ludicrous appearance. This description will be rendered more illustrative of the drawing, by referring to that of our entré.
From the river Volta to the river Lagos, extends the Whidah country, (at present a province to the king of Dahomey, a great inland kingdom) by some geographers considered as part of the Gold Coast; by others denominated the Slave Coast proper. It begins with the small and barren state of Koto or Lampi, next to which is the kingdom of Adra, comprehending the subordinate maritime principalities of Great and Little Popo, or Papaw; from whence the Whidah Negroes are called generally, by the British traders, Papaws. The Whidah language, except as to the inhabitants of Koto, is peculiar and appropriate. The people of Koto speak a dialect of the Gold Coast, and there is a tribe of Whidah Negroes called Nagoes, who have a dialect which, though understood by the Papaws, differs from the Whidah language in many particulars.

I now proceed to the people of Whidah, or Fida. The Negroes of this country are called generally in the West Indies Papaws, and are unquestionably the most docile and best-disposed Slaves that are imported from any part of Africa. Without the fierce and savage manners of the Koromantyn Negroes, they are also happily exempt from the timid and desponding temper of the Eboes, who will presently be mentioned. The cheerful acquiescence with which these people apply to the labours of the field, and their constitutional aptitude for such employment, arise, without doubt, from the great attention paid to agriculture in their native country. Bosman speaks with rapture of the improved state of the soil, the numbers of villages, and the industry, riches, and obliging manners of the Natives. He observes, however, that they are much greater thieves than those of the Gold Coast, and very unlike them in another respect, namely, in the dread of pain, and the apprehension of death. “They are,” says he, “so very apprehensive of death, that they are unwilling to hear it mentioned, for fear that alone should hasten their end; and no man dares to speak of death in the presence of the king, or any great man, under the penalty of suffering it...
himself, as a punishment for his presumption.” He relates further, that they are addicted to gaming beyond any people in Africa. All these propensities, if I am rightly informed, are observable in the character of the Papaws in a state of slavery in the West Indies. That punishment which excites the Koromantyn to rebel, and drives the Ebo Negro to suicide, is received by the Papaws as the chastisement of legal authority, to which it is their duty to submit patiently. The case seems to be, that the generality of these people are in a state of absolute slavery in Africa, and, having been habituated to a life of labour, they submit to a change of situation with little reluctance.

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, 1794

William Bosman’s description of the Coast of Guinea was published in English in 1705.

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=jAY7AQAAMAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea: divided into the Gold, the Slave, and the Ivory Coasts, by William Bosman, originally written in Dutch – published in English 1705 – page 363-366

The first business of one of our Factors when comes to Fida, is to satisfie the Customs of the King and the great Men, which amount to about 100 Pounds in Guinea value, as the Goods must yield there. After which we have free Licence to Trade, which is published throughout the whole Land by the Cryer. But yet before we can deal with any Person, we are oblige d to buy the King’s whole stock of Slaves at a set price; which is commonly one third or one fourth higher than ordinary: After which we obtain free leave to deal with all his Subjects of what Rank so ever. But if there happen to be no stock of Slaves, the Factor must then resolve to run the Risque of trusting the Inhabitants with Goods to the value of one or two hundred Slaves; which Commodities they send into the In-land Country, in order to buy with them Slaves at all Markets, and that sometimes two hundred Miles deep in the Country: For you ought to be informed that Markets of Men are here kept in the same manner as those of beasts with us.

... most of the Slaves that are offered to us are Prisoners of War, which are sold by the Victors as their Booty.

When these Slaves come to Fida, they are put in Prison all together, and when we treat concerning buying them, they are all brought out together in a large Plain; where, by our Chirurgeons, whose Province it is, they are thoroughly examined, even to the smallest Member, and that naked too both Men and Women, without the least Distinction or Modesty. Those which are approved as good are set on one side; and the lame or faulty are set by as Invalides, which are here called Mackrons. These are such as are above five and thirty Years old, or are maimed in the Arms, Legs, Hands or Feet, have lost a Tooth, are grey-haired, or have Films over their Eyes; as well as all those which are affected with any Veneral Distemper, or with several other Diseases.

The Invalides and the Maimed being thrown out, as I have told you, the remainder are numbered, and it is entered who delivered them. In the mean while a burning Iron, with the Arms or Name of the Companies, lyes in the Fire; with which ours are marked on the Breast.

This done that we may distinguish them from the Slaves of the English, French or others; (which are also marked with their Mark) and to prevent the Negroes exchanging them for worse; at which they have a good Hand.

I doubt not that this Trade seems very barbarous to you, but since it is followed by meer necessity it must go on; but we yet take all possible care that they are not burned too hard, especially the Women, who are more tender than the Men.
We are seldom long detained in the buying of these Slaves, because their price is established, the Woman being one fourth or fifth part cheaper than the Men. The Disputes which we generally have with the Owners of these Slaves are, that we will not give them such Goods as they ask for them, especially the Boesies (as I have told you, the Money of this Country;) of which they are very fond, though we generally make a Division on this Head in order to make one sort of Goods help off another, because those Slaves which are paid for in Boesies cost the Company one half more than those bought with other Goods. The Price of a Slave is commonly – – – – – –

When we are agreed with the Owners of the Slaves, they are returned to their Prison; where from that time forwards they are kept at our charge, cost us two pence a day a Slave; which serves to subsist them, like our Criminals, on Bread and Water: So that to save Charges we send them on Board our Ships with the very first Opportunity; before which their Masters strip them of all they have on their Backs; so that they come Aboard stark-naked as well Women as Men: In which condition they are obliged to continue, if the Master of the Ship is not so Charitable (which he commonly is) as to bestow something on them to cover their Nakedness.

You would really wonder to see how these Slaves live on Board; for though their number sometimes amounts to six or seven Hundred, yet by the careful Management of our Masters of Ships, they are so regulated that it seems incredible: And in this particular our Nation exceeds all other Europeans; for as the French, Portuguese and English Slave-Ships, are always foul and stinking; on the contrary ours are for the most part clean and neat.

The Slaves are fed three times a Day with indifferent good Victuals, and much better than they eat in their own Country. Their Lodging-place is divided into two parts; one of which is appointed for the Men the other for the Woman; each Sex being kept a-part: Here they lye as close together as is possible for them to be crowded.

We are sometimes sufficiently plagued with a parcel of Slaves, which come from a far In-land Country, who very innocently persuade one another, that we buy them only to fatten and afterwards eat them as a Delicacy.

When we are so unhappy as to be pestered with many of this sort, they resolve and agree together (and bring over the rest of their Party) to run away from the Ship, kill the Europeans, and set the Vessel a-shore; by which means they design to free themselves from being our Food.

I have twice met with this Misfortune; and the first time proved very unlucky for me, I not in the least suspecting it; but the Up-roar was timely quashed by the Master of the Ship and myself, by causing the Abettor to be shot through the Head, after which all was quiet.

But the second time it fell heavier on another Ship, and that chiefly by the carelessness of the Master, who having fished up the Anchor of a departing English Ship, had laid it in the Hold where the Male Slaves were lodge; who, unknown to any of the Ships Crew, possessed themselves of a Hammer; with which, in a short time, they broke all their Fetters in pieces upon the Anchor: after this they came above Deck and fell upon our Men; some of whom they grievously wounded, and would certainly have mastered the Ship, if a French and English Ship had not very fortunately happened to lie by us; who perceiving by our firing a Distressed Gun, that something was in disorder on Board, immediately came to our assistance with Chalops and Men, and drove the Slaves under Deck: Notwithstanding which before all was appeased about twenty of them were killed.

The Portuguese have been more unlucky in this Particular than we; for in four Years time they lost four Ships in this manner.

Thus believing I have sufficiently digressed concerning the Slave Trade, I shall return to my Subject, which was the King of Fida.

Who, I am obliged to tell you, is feared and reverenced by his Subjects as a Demi-God. None of his Subjects, of what Degree so ever, as you have been already told, appears in his Presence otherwise than kneeling or prostrate on his Belly: When they go to salute him in the Morning, they prostrate themselves before the Door of his House, kiss the Earth three times successively, and clapping their Hands, whisper some Words tending to the Adoration of the King. This done, they crawl in on all Four, where they repeat the same Reverence.

In 1792, Joseph Frayer, a merchant about to leave for the west coast of Africa, was examined at the Bar of the House of Lords. In his examination he was asked about his visits to Abomy, the capital of Dahomy.
In what year was you first employed in the African trade? – About the year 1770, or 1771.

Were the voyages uniformly to the same part of the Coast, or to different parts of it? – To different parts of the coast, but mostly to the Gold Coast and to Whidah, the first parts of it; then three voyages to Bonny; then again to Whidah.

Are you well acquainted with the manner of purchasing Slaves? – Certainly I am, having been a number of voyages; and my conduct has always been approved of by my employers.

Having been employed upon the Coast to purchase Slaves, where, upon your leaving the Coast of Africa, did you carry them? – Mostly to Jamaica, the first part.

How far is Dahomy from the sea-coast? From the best calculation that I could make in the way we travelled, a hundred miles or upwards, I think.

Is Dahomy a state or kingdom, with a sovereign at the head of it? Most certainly it is; a very despotic kingdom too.

What is the capital of it? Abomy is the capital of it; there are four palaces, Abomy, Aguina, Kelmina, and Adowy.

Having spoken of the king making his customs, what is meant by that expression? The customs are to make human sacrifices, which are done in abundance in the most horrid manner.
In what way was you received upon your arrival at Abomy? When we came to the gates, there is a bridge that is thrown over an entrenchment into the place; our being there was announced to the king, and we were admitted; then we went on for some distance, about half a mile or a mile, till we came to a big tree, where we were desired to sit down; as the governor had been there before, they directed their civilities mostly to me, being a stranger; he went to the place allotted to him to live in, and I was ordered to sit down under the tree. The first that came to me were three or four eunuchs, I really cannot speak to the number, at least I was told they were eunuchs; they asked me how I came there? if I had met with any insults? and how I was? and enquiries of that kind. After telling them I was very well, another set of people came to me, which are called the king’s half-heads, from having one side of their heads shaved and the other quite bare; the ornaments they wore, at least they were pleased to call them ornaments, were human teeth strung in very great quantities over their shoulders, crossing at the breast. After saying something to me in the same manner, asking how I was and so forth – I forget to mention that the eunuchs brought water and spirits with them, of which they desired me to drink by way of refreshment. After the half-heads left me, then came the captain of the soldiers, accompanied by a very large number of soldiers; much the same ceremony passed between him and me as from the others. This over, they desired me to get into the hammock again; they carried me along, as they said to the king’s door, where they danced and capered round me, and fired their musquets loaded with powder, and very much overcharged, I thought, a circumstance not very agreeable. In our way to the king’s door, through the market-place, there were two human bodies hung by the heels; this shocked me very much indeed, and led me to inquire what was the cause of it; the reply the interpreter made to me was, they were there to take care of the market. Vultures were even fixed in the crutch of the poor creatures that were hung up, and were feeding upon the entrails, standing upon them as they were hanging; they had not been hung up there long before.

Were they hung up alive, or after they were dead? After they were dead, I apprehend; their private parts being cut away, which I was told was, that they should not give offence to the women in the market. . . . From the market-place I was carried directly to the king’s door: when I came to the king’s door, they ran with me very fast three times round a large tree, and at the king’s door all the grandees were sitting to receive me; after going the third time round, they got up from the skins, and other things they were sitting on, and welcomed me to the country. That ceremony over, I was then carried to the place allotted me to live in, the rabble and soldiers still dancing and capering around me. When I came to the house I was to reside in, I met with the governor; I there gave the captain of the soldiers, the principal eunuchs, and the principal half-heads, each a flask of brandy, which I understood it was the custom to do; when they had got the flask of brandy, the rabble dispersed. During the same day I saw a vast number of human heads in different places near the king’s house, and over great men’s doors, which the birds of prey were feeding on.

Describe the place in which the king’s resides? His house is walled in with a mud wall about fifteen-feet high; the distance, as near as I could compute it to be, was about two miles and three quarter, or three miles and a half; but it was that at least; on the top of the wall were human heads also stuck, I believe about nine or ten inches, or a foot, distant; I cannot say the distance, but they were very near.

Were these heads planted at equal, or nearly equal distance all round the circumference of the wall? Nearly round it; besides these there were a great number on the thatch, and other places about the king’s house and the king’s door.

Have you seen heads upon the walls surrounding other houses, as well as that in which the king’s resides? No; not on any house, only the king’s houses; there are other of the king’s houses that have some.

In passing through the town, did you or did you not observe several piles of human heads? I saw very large piles, and a great number of them.

In what manner, and owing to what cause did you understand the deaths of these several persons to have been? Those that were piled up in that manner, I was told by the natives, were such as had been sacrificed annually in memory of, and to serve their late king: they imagine that they are to serve their king after death.

Are you to be understood to say, that these were sacrifices made upon the occasion of the death of the late king? There is annually a sacrifice to the late king; but I shall speak of that: – The last time I was up
Chapter 2. West Africa

at Whidah, in a letter I wrote to a friend of mine on this voyage, giving an account of this country merely for amusement—

Did you understand from the natives that this was a common or an uncommon event? A very common event; annually.

Did you understand that human sacrifices were annually performed? Certainly; I understood it from everybody that spoke of it.

*The History of Dahomy* – Plate VI – Adahoonzou cuts off 127 heads to complete the ornament of his wall

*Examination of Joseph Frayer* – extracts continued

Did any thing further pass, that is material to relate, during the first time you was up at this place? Very material: After I had been up a little while, after two or three days, I was called to the king’s door, and went accordingly. After we went to the king’s door, we were desired to sit under a thatched shed, for the purpose, as I believed. The king being acquainted with our being there, desired us to come in the English governor was with me when I went to see the king; when we came into the king, he was attended by a few women, and his grandees were lying prostrate at his feet, kissing the ground, and throwing dirt over their heads, as a token of submission, as I suppose. The conversation we had was upon different trifling matters; asking me how I came into the country? how I liked it? and things of that sort; and we were dismissed. He reminded us of a present that is generally given him; which we told him we would prepare and bring to him the next time; in two or three days after that, we told him, that the present was ready, and we would wait upon him whenever he chose.

Did he express any concern to you, that you had not arrived sooner, so as to be present at these human sacrifices? After the first compliments were over, that was the first thing he said, that he was very sorry that I was not there at the time he made his sacrifices or customs. I told him I was very happy it so happened; for it was very contrary to the customs of White men.
You said the soldiers wore teeth as ornaments; did they wear any other ornaments of a peculiar sort? The drums of the soldiers were decorated with human skulls and jaw-bones; and which they told me were the human skulls and jaw-bones of generals which they had taken in war.

*The History of Dahomy – Plate I – The King of Dahomy’s Levee*

*Examination of Joseph Frayer – extracts continued*

Did any war happen in the country shortly after your return from Abomy to the fort upon the Coast? There did, which was the cause of my staying a very long time there; for we had no trade during the war at all. The war was between that king and one Port Agray.

Was the effect of this war to delay your stay in the country? It was really the case; there was no other reason given why we had no trade but the war.

From your experience of this particularly trade, are wars among the native powers beneficial or injurious to the trade in Slaves? Wherever I have been, wherever a war took place, it always was detrimental to trade, and very materially so.

Have you found more difficulty in procuring Slaves when there were wars than when there was peace? When there were wars, I said before, there was very great difficulty in procuring Slaves.

Whether this observation that you last made applies to Whidah only, or to all those parts of the Coast with which you are acquainted? Upon the Gold Coast and Whidah. At other places there have never been any wars while I have been there, that I know of.

From your knowledge of this trade, can it be the interest of the European traders to promote wars between the native powers? Far to the contrary, as far as my knowledge of the trade can lead me to judge.

Do you know what became of the prisoners made in the war of which you have spoken? In the war that happened at Whidah when I was there, we understood from the natives, and many who had been there, and whom I saw and conversed with, that they were mostly killed, and their heads ordered to be carried up to the king of Dahomy.
Have you, or have you not, in fact, seen heads carrying up in baskets for this purpose? I have, in great numbers, on men’s heads, two or three in a basket together, and I think in some four, which were very offensive indeed, though they were at a good distance from me.

Was you able, during the war, to complete your purchase of Slaves? Far to the contrary: I think I only bought seven Slaves during the war; during five months.

Was this, to the best of your knowledge, owing to the war? I was so informed by the natives.

In the same period of time, what number in time of peace should you expect to have purchased? I should have expected, in that time, to have purchased at least 500.

The History of Dahomy – Plate II – Armed Women with the King at their head going to War

Examination of Joseph Frayer – extracts continued

How did war prevent it? By reason that the trading men and all the great men were obliged to attend the war, instead of going to market for trade.

Having before said, that you was after this a second time at Abomy, I wish to ask you what happened upon the second occasion? It was in consequence of the badness of the trade that I was induced to take a second journey up to Dahomy; I was in hopes I should have had some influence with the king to have gone on with my trade.

At what time did you make this second journey? I cannot justly speak to the time; it might be about six or seven months after, or eight months, in all probability.

What happened upon this occasion? It was in the rainy season, and I got up with very great difficulty; one part of the road which they called the Bush, is dreadful indeed, very bad to get through; and I saw some human bodies lying there, their burthen had been too much for them, and they had lain down and died there from the inclemency of the weather. From the fatigue in going up, I had not been in Dahomy above three or four days before I was taken exceedingly ill, and obliged to be carried down again.

Was you afterwards there in the year 1790? I was, in 1790 or 1791.

Who were the persons that you went up with then? The second in command at the English fort went up with me; but there was at the same time a French governor, and English governor, the Portuguese governor, and a French captain.
Was this the time of what you have called Custom-making? It was so; it was a custom-making to the last king that died, which was about a year and a half before that time, which they call the Grand Custom-making.

*The History of Dahomy – Plate V – Last day of the Annual Custom for Watering the Graves of the King’s Ancestors*

Examination of Joseph Frayer – extracts continued

Did you see any persons, in their way to be sacrificed? A great number. State nearly about how many, as accurately as you can. I cannot speak exactly; I suppose I might see 150; I think more.

In what state were they at this time? They were carried on men’s shoulders, gagged; and they danced about with them round our house, in order to let us see them, though we desired that they would not do so.

From the number of heads which you yourself saw upon this occasion, how many do you conceive that number sacrificed to have been? There was a great number of sacrifices made daily for about a month, while I was there; but the latter sacrifice had been very great indeed, what they call their Grand Custom-day; and from the best calculations that the gentlemen who were with me could make, there were at least 500 heads cut off. The dead bodies frequently were carried past the place where we lived, or trailed along with a string tied to one of the legs of the headless body. We remonstrated against their bringing them that way; and at last the king ordered them not to come that way any more.

Were these, scenes of exultation or of depression to the persons concerned in them? They were dancing, singing, and laughing, as they went along with them.

Did they sacrifice men only, or men and women indiscriminately? Both sexes, but mostly men; and I think more old men than young.

Do you know, what description of persons they were who were sacrificed upon these occasions? I have reason to believe they were the Dahomians, the king’s subjects, because they make a kind of distinction between those taken in war, and those that are to be sacrificed for the king. Those sacrificed for the king are generally given by the principal head trader and head men, according to their
consequence; they give a number each of them to be sacrificed, and those heads are what are piled up, but the heads taken in war are generally stuck up round the walls.

Do you know what becomes of the blood shed upon those occasions? I was told by the natives that a great part of it was taken to mix with mud, in order to build a temple in memory of the late king; a Fetish-house, as they call it.

You being of course a seaman, having been many voyages to that country, must be aware that the eastern coast of Africa is bounded by water as well as the western; do you therefore know, that the Slave Trade is carried on, upon the eastern coast of Africa, as well as on the western, from whence all the European nations have hitherto supplied their West-India islands with Slaves? All the Slaves that I know of are conveyed from any port of Africa that I have been at, in shipping.

The Black traders come, by their own accounts, very great distances from the interior part of the country; have these Black traders ever informed you, that people on the eastern side of the African coast had bargained with them for Slaves, as they do upon the western coast? Do you know any thing of the eastern coast of Africa? I know nothing of the eastern coast.

Respecting these human sacrifices, whether they are the effect of religious superstition, or of despotic and arbitrary power? Partly both.

Has the king of the country you have been speaking of, a very large standing army? The whole country is his army whenever he pleases.

But has the king what we call a standing army, independent of the citizens at large? Always.

To what amount? It is impossible for me to speak to the amount; but it is very considerable indeed.

Who got the better in that war that you have mentioned? The king of Dahomy.

During the course of your acquaintance with the African coast, have you found greater difficulty in purchasing females than in purchasing males? In some parts of the coast more so than others.

But in general did you find more ease in purchasing male Slaves than in purchasing females? On the Gold-coast we find a greater difficulty in purchasing females; on the other parts we just take them as they come.

The History of Dahomy – Plate IV – Public Procession of the King’s Women &c
West of the river Lagos begins the great kingdom of Benin, the coast of which forms a gulf or bight, ending at Cape Lopez, wherein are situated the trading places (being so many villages on the banks of the several rivers) of Benin, Bonny, Old and new Callabar, Cameron and Gaboon.

The slaves purchased on this part of the coast, have the general denomination of **Eboes**; probably from Arebo, the name of a village, formerly a considerable town, on the river Benin. Some of them (a tribe, I believe, from the interior country) are likewise called **Mocoes**. In language they differ both from the Gold Coast Negroes and those of Whidah, and in some respects from each other; for from Whidah to Angola, the dialects vary at almost every trading river.

We now come to the Bight of Benin, comprehending an extent of coast of near 300 English leagues, of which the interior countries are unknown, even by name, to the people of Europe. All the negroes imported from these vast and unexplored regions, except a tribe which are distinguished by the name of **Mocoes**, are called in the West Indies **Eboes**; and in general they appear to be the lowest and most wretched of all the nations of Africa. In complexion they are much yellower than the Gold Coast and Whidah Negroes; but it is a sickly hue, and their eyes appear as if suffused with bile, even when they are in perfect health. I cannot help observing too, that the conformation of the face, in a great majority of them, very much resembles that of the baboon. I believe indeed there is, in most of the nations of Africa, a greater elongation of the lower jaw, than among the people of Europe; but this distinction I think is more visible among the Eboes, than in any other Africans. I mean not however to draw any conclusion of natural inferiority in these people to the rest of the human race, from a circumstance which perhaps is purely accidental, and no more to be considered as a proof of degradation, than the red hair and high cheek bones of the Natives of the North of Europe.

The great objection to the Eboes as slaves is their constitutional timidity, and despondence of mind; which are so great as to occasion them very frequently to seek, in a voluntary death, a refuge from their own melancholy reflections. They require therefore the gentlest and mildest treatment to reconcile them to their situation; but if their confidence be once obtained, they manifest as great fidelity, affection, and gratitude, as can be reasonably be expected from men in a state of slavery. The females of this nation are better labourers than the men, probably from having been more hardly treated in Africa.

The depression of spirits which these people seem to be under, on their first arrival in the West Indies, gives them an air of softness and submission, which forms a striking contrast to the frank and fearless temper of the Koromantyn Negroes. Nevertheless, the Eboes are in fact more truly savage than any nation of the Gold Coast; inasmuch as many tribes among them, especially the Moco tribe, have been, without doubt, accustomed to the shocking practice of feeding on human flesh. This circumstance I have had attested beyond the possibility of dispute, by an intelligent trust-worthy domestic of the Ebo nation, who acknowledged to me, though with evident shame, and reluctance (having lived many years among the Whites) that he had himself in his youth, frequently regaled on this horrid banquet: and his account received a shocking confirmation from a circumstance which occurred in the year 1770 in Antigua, where two Negroes of the same country, were tried for killing and devouring one of their fellow slaves in that island. They were purchased, a short time before, by a gentleman of the name of Christian, out of a ship from Old Calabar, and I am told were convicted on the clearest evidence.

Of the religious opinions and modes of worship of the Eboes, we know but little; except that, like the inhabitants of Whidah, they pay adoration to certain reptiles, of which the guana (a species of lizard) is in the highest estimation. They universally practice circumcision, “which with some other of their superstitions (says Puchas) may seem Mahometan, but are more likely to be ancient Ethnic rites; for many countries of Africa admit circumcision, and yet know not, or acknowledge not, Mohometism; but are either Christians, as the Cophiti, Abissinians, or Gentiles. They (the people of Benin) cut or raise the skin with three lines drawn to the navel, esteeming it necessary to salvation.
William Bosman described the City of Benin, the ‘Residence of the Great King of Benin’.


The Village of Benin, for it at present scarce deserves the Name of City, is the Residence of the Great King of Benin, whence the whole Land and River also borrows its Name. It is situated about ten Miles Landwards in from the Village of Agatton. The Neighbouring Country is flat, as is the Village itself, which is at least about four Miles large. The Streets are prodigious long and broad, in which continual Markets are kept, either of Kine, Cotton, Elephants Teeth, European Wares; or in short, whatever is to be come at in this Country. These Markets are kept in the Fore and Afternoon each Day.

Formerly this Village was very thick and close built, and in a manner overcharged with Inhabitants, which is yet visible from the Ruins of half remaining Houses; but at present the Houses stand like poor Mens Corn, widely distant from each other.

The houses are large and handsome, with Clay Walls; for here is not a Stone in the whole Country so big as a Man’s Fist. They are covered at the top with Reed, Straw or Leaves. The Architecture is passable, considering it in comparison with Negro Buildings, and is very like the Axim way of Building.

The Inhabitants of this Village are all Natives; for foreigners are not permitted to live here.

There are several very rich Men who live here, and attend continually at Court, not troubling themselves with either Trade or Agriculture, or anything else, but leaving all their Affairs to the Wives and Slaves, who go to all the circumjacent Villages to Trade in all sorts of Merchantizes, or otherwise serve for daily Wages, and are oblig’d to bring the greatest part of their Grain in Trade or Hire to their Masters.

All Male Slaves here are Foreigners; for the Natives cannot be sold for Slaves, but are all free, and alone bear the name of the King’s Slaves.

Nor is it allow’d to export any Male Slaves that are sold in this Country, for they must stay there: But Females may be dealt with at every one’s Pleasure.

I have already acquainted you with the Employment of the Great; but that of the ordinary Citizens is to loyster about whole Days, till they hear of any Ships being come into the River, upon which they go thither to trade with what Goods they have in Store: And if no Ships come, they send their Slaves to Rios Lagos, or other Places to buy Fish, of which they make a very profitable Trade further in-land.

The Handicrafts keep to their Work, without troubling themselves with the Court, or Trade. Others employ themselves in Agriculture, or some such thing, in order to get their Living.

The Streets being so long and wide as I have said, are by the Women kept very neat; for here as well as in Holland, every Woman cleans her own Door.

The Woman here are as much Slaves as in any Place in this Kingdom. They are oblig’d to keep the daily Markets, look after their House-keeping and Children, as well as their Kitchins, and Till the Ground: in short they have so much Employment, that they ought not to sit still; notwithstanding which, they dispatch it all very briskly, and with a great deal of Pleasure.

The King’s Court, which makes a principal part of the City, must not be forgotten. It is upon a very great Plain, about which are no Houses, and hath, besides its wide Extent, nothing rare. The first Place we come into, is, a very long Gallery, if it must have that Name, which is sustained by fifty eight strong Planks, about twelve Foot high, instead of Pillars; these are neither saw’d nor plain’d, but only hack’d out. As soon as we are past this Gallery we come to the Mud or Earthen Wall, which hath three Gates, at each Corner one, and another in the Middle, the last of which is adorn’d at the top with a wooden Turret, like a Chimney, about sixty or seventy Foot high. At the top of all is fixed a large Copper Snake, whose Head hangs downwards: This Serpent is very well cast or carved, and is the finest I have seen in Benin.

Entering one of these Gates we come into a Plain about a quarter of a Mile, almost square, and enclosed with a low Wall. Being come to the end of this Plain, we meet with such another Gallery as the first, except that it hath neither Wall nor Turret. Some time since this Gallery was half thrown down by Thunder, since which no Hand hath been laid to it to re-build it. This Gallery hath a Gate at each End; and passing thro’ one of them a third Gallery offers its self to view, differing from the former only in that the Planks upon which it rests are Humane Figures; but so wretchedly carved, that it is hardly possible to distinguish whether they are most like Men or Beasts; notwithstanding which, my Guides were able to
distinguish them into Merchants, Soldiers, Wild-Beast-Hunters, &c. Behind a white Carpet we are also shewn eleven Mens Heads cast in Copper, by much as good an Artist as the former Carver; and upon each of these is an Elephant’s Tooth, these being of the King’s Gods. Going thro’ a Gate of this Gallery we enter another great Plain and a fourth Gallery, beyond which is the King’s Dwelling-House. Here is another Snake, as upon the first Wall. In the first Apartment at the entrance of the Plain, is the King’s Audience-Chamber, where, in presence of his three Great Lords, I saw and spoke with him: He was sitting on an Ivory Couch under a Canopy of Indian Silk.
https://archive.org/details/nigerfloraorenum00hook – Niger Flora... collected by the late Dr Theodore Vogel, Botanist to the Voyage of the Expedition sent by her Britannic Majesty to the River Niger in 1841, under the command of Capt H D Trotter, R.N. – published 1849 – Delta of the Niger – Left Bank below Abôh – and – Village on left bank of the Delta

Captain Trotter, in command of the 1841 Expedition to the River Niger, sailed up stream through the Niger Delta and near the junction with the River Bonny arrived at Abôh where Obi, King of the Eboe (or Ibu), had his Palace. The expedition then continued on up the Niger.
The natives of Abôh comparatively tall for West Africans; well-made and muscular, but the hands and feet are large. The most prevalent colour of the skin is yellowish or brownish-black. The features are truly negro, the nose expanded, lips rather thick, and without that pleasing outline observed in some negroes. The forehead is broad and less retreating than in their more intelligent neighbours the Eggarahs, but the maxillary bones are more prognathous or protruding, and the facial angle consequently less favourable.

The national mark is triangular, tattooed on each temple in the males, while the softer sex have various starlike distinctions on the breast and abdomen. The women are large, and inclined to “embonpoint,” the effect probably of the fattening process they go through to arrive at the Ibu standard of female beauty . . .

The religious superstitions of Abôh are as various and degrading as at any place we visited, and the Fetiches, or idols, as numerous; every hut having one or more, as well as amulets, or charms, suspended from sticks in the quadrangular courts. Many of the idols had pots of water and food places near them.

The accompanying sketch is taken from a Ju-ju, presented to Doctor McWilliam by one of Obi’s sons. It is carved in hard brown wood, and represents the upper half of a human figure, emerging from a sort of basin; the arms are stretched by the side, and between them something like a trumpet. The features, though characteristic of the negro, are exaggerated.
One of the most horrible and extraordinary superstitions is that connected with the birth of twins; an occurrence looked upon as the greatest affliction that can happen to an Ibu woman. The little victims are no sooner born than one or both are taken away, placed in the neighbouring thicket in earthen pots or baskets, and left there to become food of hyenas or other wild beasts...

Another equally absurd, and scarcely less cruel superstition, is the sacrifice of such children as unfortunately cut the teeth first in the upper jaw. They believe it to indicate a wicked disposition, one hateful to the gods or Fetiches, and therefore a proper subject for immolation on the alters of their abominable worship.

At a little distance from Obi’s dwelling, and rather to the right, we came unexpectedly on a large earthen idol, placed in a thicket surrounded by high trees; this we believe to be the image to which most of their sacrifices are offered. Some persons who were near when we moved towards the direction of this spot, made earnest signs for us not to approach, exclaiming “Tshuku – Tshuku,” and just as we had obtained a look of the figure, one of the Ju-ju men, or priests, came up in a menacing manner, and would not allow us to remain, or further examine the neighbourhood. He appeared to be very much exasperated, and disposed to punish our temerity, which probably was only escaped by the presence of a good double-barrelled “Nock.” This jealous care of the idol, and the exclamation “Tshuku – Tshuku” would lead to the supposition that it is the visible representation of a mysterious being or deity, whom they consult as an oracle under the same name. His votaries believe him to exist far off in the bush; that he has the power of speaking and understanding all languages; is cognizant of everything that takes place in the world, and that he can punish evil doers. The priest whilst holding communion with Tshuku, is surrounded miraculously with water, and will perish instantly if he attempts to deceive. As all these absurd stories originate with the Ju-ju men, whose object is to mislead their too credulous dupes...

The creek off which the Expedition had anchored is low and swampy on its left bank, covered with long grass or reeds, among which the numerous trading canoes were moored...

The capital of Obi’s dominions called Abôh, is situated at the upper end of this creek, on the right bank...

The Abôh creek – Leading to King Obi’s Palace

Each family has one or more canoes wherewith to communicate with the other parts of the town during the rainy season. Some are so small that it is surprising how they contrive to make use of them. They have, in fact, no room for the legs, which are extended right and left over the gunwale, and serve to keep the balance.
... The huts are of a square form, mostly double, placed at right-angles, neatly built of mud, and roofed with a compact matting of dried palm-leaves, and a sort of reed or juncos, which grows in the marshes near the river; the floor is raised a foot and a half. The entrance is square, and serves for the three-fold purpose of door, window and chimney, when they have a fire inside. The thatch or roof overhangs, and is supported by little pillars, which, as well as the exterior of the house, is curiously streaked with red and yellow clay, in some cases tastefully arranged. Those of the richer persons, as judges, headmen and Fetiche priests, are larger and have many compartments, with a quadrangular court, where most of the household and cooking operations are carried on, amid the usual noise and laughter of African damsels, by whom they are conducted.

King Obi Osai’s residence is the largest in the town, and placed at some distance to the right of the spot where we landed, on rather higher ground than the others. It is an irregular building, but within presents a quadrangle or court, onto which each compartment opens. With so large a harem, composed of upwards of one hundred wives of all ages, from twelve to fifty, it was not to be wondered at that there was here an unusual amount of loquacity...

... All the favourite wives had armlets and anklets of ivory, large and weighty...

In another part of the town, the officers entered into a small court-yard, round which were several huts; in one of these they saw a boy with a ring round his neck, to which a chain was attached and fastened to the hut; it was sufficiently long to allow him to come outside. Two headless goats were lying near this hut, which they were informed Obi had just offered in sacrifice. It is to be hoped that the poor boy was not reserved for a similar purpose. There is too much reason to believe, however, that human sacrifices are here practiced in the most horrible manner... but it could not be ascertained that the number was great; they are mostly slaves, or persons convicted of great offences.

The people cultivate rice, Indian corn, cassava, bananas, oranges, cocos, ground-nuts, yams abundantly and of good quality, Pappaws, Guinea-peppers, &c... The people live apparently to a good age, for many were observed to be more than seventy years old. The number of domestic slaves is very large, in some towns being almost equal to the free inhabitants: they are well treated, and many of them become free. Those at Aboh are liberated when they build proper dwellings, but they continue to pay a tax of forty yams each season, and a small tithe of their goats, fowls, &c. By thus incorporating them with the free people, many are induced to “sit down” quietly who would otherwise try and escape...

Further up the Niger – The landing place at Iddah
The city of Iddah, the largest and most important town in the kingdom of Egggarah, is built on the summit of a cliff, which rises nearly two hundred feet above the river... There are, on a rough computation, about two thousand huts, with a probable population of eight to nine thousand. On all sides are plantations kept in nice order.

Iddah is divided into a great many villages or districts each under the governance of a chief, who is responsible to the Attàh [King of Iddah]. The palace of the latter is situated in the most secure place, being naturally protected towards the river by the abrupt and precipitous cliffs, while, on the other sides, are the surrounding villages, as well as an immediate thick mud wall, which encloses it perfectly. It is, moreover, guarded by a militia, armed with spears, a few muskets, and swords, some of them not unlike those of ancient Rome. In time of war these men have specially to defend the Attàh.

Nearly all the dwellings at Iddah are circular, the walls rise about six feet and are built of clay and small stones intermixed. The roof is conical, made of palm-leaves and a thick Cyperaceous plant, somewhat resembling that from which the Egyptian papyrus was manufactured. It is sometimes supported in the centre by a wood pillar, often rudely decorated with red and yellow clay. The overhanging edge of the roof protects from sun and rain the clay seats which surround the hut where the family usually sit, it rests on a number of posts, some curiously carved, and forms a low verandah. When there is a door, it is carved in an elaborate manner, with a rude sketch of an alligator or some other animal.

The most common manufacture is that of cotton cloths, practiced by a great number of females. In spinning, the primitive distaff is used... The thread is rough and uneven, but when carefully woven into narrow strips by a rude machine – very like the earliest of our hand-loom – it forms a strong and durable cloth, much dearer than the English cottons brought there, and of course only within reach of wealthy people. The dye-pits are very numerous all over the town, and are kept constantly more or less filled, as they believe the older the dye-liquid, the stronger the effect on the cloth. The tephrosia which is used for the blue, is moistened, made up into little balls, then dried, and thus exposed for sale; the red dye is probably a species of tesphesia or camwood, it is mostly powder.

The next most important occupation, is that of smith and armourer. They are said not to have any method of smelting iron, the ore of which is supplied from the coast, as also such few working tools as are possessed. Their native implements are rude, yet the swords, spear-heads, arrows, are well tempered and not badly finished.

The preparation of leather is another useful branch of industry... Sheep-skins and goat-skins are mostly turned to account this way, and when cut into stripes, are neatly plaited into bridles, necklaces, armlets, belts, whips, fly-fans and cushions; the hides of larger animals being tanned for the soles of the sandals worn by the richer persons.

Fishing is followed chiefly by the slaves – they use nets made of the twisted fibres of the plantain leaf.

It must be admitted, from all we saw, that the Egggarah people are industrious, and evidently more advanced in civilization than their neighbours, lower down the river. Their grounds are much better cultivated, manufactures more encouraged, and their social comforts increasing.

The whole of the religious power is confided to the Mallams or priests, who are all unlettered Mahommedans, but who have the advantage of travelling in other parts of Africa, where, in addition to a few sentences of the Koran, and an imperfect knowledge of the great Prophet’s doctrines, they have picked up a good idea of business, which they combine with the duties of their office.

They also monopolize the medical branch, in which they are as ignorant as their sacred one. Another of their most lucrative sources is the sale of amulets, or charms against the visitation of sickness and the agency of evil spirits; they are made up of any written paper which may come in their way, and usually enclosed in neatly plaited strips of leather to be suspended from the neck.

The greater proportion of the Iddah people are Pagans, though with a confused impression of Mahomedanism, which obtains more among the richer persons, who can afford to pay the Mallams for such limited instruction as they can convey orally. No public idols are allowed, yet most of them have little amulets, which hold much the same place in their estimation as the wooden Fetiches of the Ibus and other tribes.
They have all a clear notion of God as an Almighty Ruler and Divinity, than any negroes we had met with, and offer up their prayers direct to Him, but they believe in the intermediate agency of good and evil spirits, charms, and Mallam influence. They look forward to a heaven and hell, or places where good or wicked people are hereafter to inhabit; this is most likely derived from the extraordinary views their religious preceptors hold up to them of the Islam scale of rewards and punishments.

Human sacrifices always take place on the death of the King; on which occasion, one or more wives, and several eunuchs of his establishment, are killed, to accompany the great man in the new world he has entered upon. Every sovereign, on coming to the throne, does this also, to exemplify the control which his position gives him over the lives of his people. The natives do not regard the subject with horror or antipathy . . .

Polygamy is permitted, but the first wife is the principal, and arranges the affairs of the harem. The usual number of wives is three, but the Attâh has a much greater establishment. There are no restrictions on the women, as in most Mahomedan countries; all are allowed to be looked at, and to walk about with unveiled faces. The principal attendants about the Attâh’s residence are eunuchs: they are numerous, and are much confided in by their despotic master.

Court of the King of Iddah – below, Dyers and Blacksmiths
It seems the inhabitants of the bank [opposite Iddah] do not admit the authority of the Attàh of Iddah, and are frequently at war with his subjects. They are a tributary to the King of Benin, and supposing our errand was a hostile movement in behalf of his opponents, were quite ready to dispute the point “vi et armis”.

None of the Africans we had yet seen were so savage in look and manner. All were armed with rude knives, spears, bows, and quivers full of poisoned arrows, and their resolute independent expression, shewed they were prepared to use them.

The town of Wappa is about five miles from the river; the road thither is good and open. At the entrance to it, the party was obliged to halt near some lofty and spreading palms, until the chief, Egada Yaluelama, made his appearance.

His country seems to be populous, and he said to the interpreter, that their King Obah of Benin could raise 10,000 fighting men. This information, perhaps, was intended to be conveyed to their opposite neighbours, and was probably over-rated.

According to the account they gave of the King of Benin, he must be most remorseless in the observance of human sacrifices. Independently of the numbers immolated at special feasts, three are destroyed every day; one each morning, noon, and night. The great difficulty in such cases, is to arrive at the truth.

Snakes were numerous in the dry grass. These noxious reptiles are said to be very common all over this part of the country. They are much protected by the natives, who look on them as ‘Ju-ju,’ or sacred.

We then proceeded up the river. The scenery was beautiful in the extreme; the Kong mountains right ahead, and the banks on either side finely wooded. Passed Kiri market, and saw several canoes going down the river, with slaves and small horses. Kiri Island looked like a magnificent park, the grass, at a distance, resembled a well-cropped lawn, the tops being level, but the grass was a least ten feet high, growing in a deceitful swamp.
In 1831 brothers Richard and John Lander travelling down the Niger from Bussah (see map above) visited the island of Patāshie.

The Fetish at Patāshie


Patāshie, as we have said, is a large, rich island, unspeakably beautiful, and is embellished with various groves of palm and other noble trees... It abounds with horses, asses, bullocks, sheep, goats, poultry, &c., and produces abundance of corn and yams; in fact, the soil is so exceedingly fertile, and its inhabitants so industrious, that not an acre of ground in the whole island, it is said, is left without cultivation. Patāshie is tributary to Wowow, though it is inhabited solely by Nouffie people, who are considered honest, active, laborious, and wealthy...

Our hut has this day exhibited a scene of revelry and mirth more becoming a native inn than a private dwelling.

The chief of the island, accompanied by our four messengers from Boossà and Nouffie, our canoe-men, and several of his own people, all dressed “in their holyday best,” paid us a visit in the earlier part of the morning, and out of compliment, I fancy, remained with us till evening, with the exception of a short absence in the middle of the day; during all which time they were employed in swallowing palm-wine, which is procured in the island in great plenty, and in telling nonsensical stories. We were glad when they said it was time to depart, and having shaken hands with the ardour of drunkards, they took their leave, staggered out of the hut, and all went laughing away.

It is rather singular that though the chief is a sooty black, he has bright blue eyes. We received from him about noon a fine goat, and masses of pounded yam and meat stewed in palm-oil. These were brought in well-carved wooden dishes of huge dimensions; and we subsequently received a ewe sheep and similar dressed dishes from the chief of an island belonging to Nouffie, which lies abreast of this, and whom we have not yet seen.

Between eight and nine o’clock in the morning, horses were brought for us from the chief and his nephew, to take us to the water’s side, where the luggage had been previously conveyed. Here we waited...
a good while till canoes were brought from another part of the island, there being but one got ready at the time of our arrival. While we stood near the water’s edge, hundreds of people were collected there to look at us, and among them was a native pagan priest, who was dressed more fantastically than any merry-andrew in Christendom. His clothing was manufactured almost solely of fine soft grass. His head and shoulders and part of his body were hid underneath an enormous thing in shape like a roof of a hut, with a fringe and tassels of stained grass. A tobe, made also of grass, and excellently woven and of various colours, encircled his body, and reached as the knee; and the man wore likewise trousers of the same material, and plaited in a similar manner, but this was unstained, and the colour of dried grass; it was turned up at the ankles, though a deep fringe hung to the ground. He approached several individuals that were sitting on the turf, and stooping over them, the priest enveloped the upper part of their persons in his uncouth headdress; shook it over them, which produced a strange rustling noise; screamed in a most frightful and unearthly tone; and then rose to perform the same barbarous ceremony to others.

Continuing on down the Niger – page 45-46

We have seen to-day several large canoes, the bottom of which is made of a single tree, and built with planks to a considerable height. In many of them, sheds, or houses, as they are called, have been erected, which are thatched with straw, and in which fires are kindled, food prepared, and people sleep, and indeed live together. The roof is circular, and formed in much the same manner as the upper part of a covered wagon in England. These sheds are the most essential service to the natives, as, with their assistance, merchants are enabled to travel with some degree of comfort, with their wives and household, several days’ journey up and down the Niger, without being under the necessity of landing, except to purchase provisions, or whenever they feel inclined to do so. As the people have nothing that equals or answers to pitch, hemp, or tar, they use iron staples for the purpose of repairing it and keeping the planks together when a canoe becomes leaky, or any part of it, as it frequently happens, is split by exposure to the rays of the sun. We have seen an old canoe, which had undergone repairs several times, with no less than from eight to ten thousand of these staple driven into her sides and bottom.

Nouffie Canoe

Richard and John Lander – Vol II – page 233

The Eboe people have a savage appearance. The custom of marking their temples with indigo, in the shape of an arrow, is general among them, both with the males and the females. The women are generally
pretty, and wear the same sort of ivory rings round their legs and wrists, to which allusion has been previously made. They are extensive traders, and the supply the Brass people entirely with palm-oil, poultry, goats, and yams, &c. The Eboe people are famous for making large canoes, and all those of the different rivers, from Benin to Calebar, are those constructed by them...
Chapter 2. West Africa

After travelling back down the Niger, the 1841 Expedition to the Niger visited Fernando Po – the island between the Old Calabar River and the River Cameroons.


. . . The first impression on beholding the Edeeyah in his native woods is certainly anything but favourable, and makes one feel rather anxious to avoid communication. The face is cut and disfigured with transverse stripes, which, to come up with their standard of beauty, ought to be as much raised as possible, which is only attained by a tedious process in cicatrizing the wounds. The hair is done up into a number of knobs with red clay and palm-oil, or drawn down behind and plastered with an immense mass of earth, weighing four or five pounds, and secured with grass-thread. The body is painted, or rather daubed, rudely all over with yellow or red clay, so as often to give the most frightful and savage look. No European vesture or scanty cloth conceals their nakedness; perhaps a few dried leaves, some fibres of palm-branch, in front, offer an apology for more necessary coverings: but his ignorance of civilized requirements prevents his feeling any constraint in the presence of a white man. Most of them wear flat circular grass hats; others in shape not unlike a small bee-hive, and decorated with the feathers of the green parrot or magnificent blue plantain-eater, together with bones of snakes, monkeys, dogs, &c. &c.; but if a chief, a priest, or buyeh-rupi, the all-potent amulet of a goat’s head stands forth as the frontispiece. The flat hats are secured to the hair by a wooden skewer.

On meeting a stranger it is usual with them to advance with a sort of dancing motion, the long wooden spear raised on high, as if to be brought into immediate use, conveying anything but a comfortable feeling to the mind of the spectator, who cannot on a first occasion divest himself of the belief that the wild ballet is the precursor to a tragedy. No sooner, however, is the spear depressed, and the word “Bubi-friend,” pronounced in a gentle tone, than the barbarian offers his hand with looks truly expressive of the salutation, “I am your friend;” and a further acquaintance with the native character, their singular laws, and social system, removes all prejudice, and raises him high in estimation.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the disposition and character of this singular race . . . They are most generous and hospitable to strangers in their own rude way; and whenever we visited them, they proffered us a share of whatever food they were eating. Humane and kindly disposed to each other in their respective communities, both in sickness and in health; willing to assist each other in difficulties; brave, yet forbearing, and reluctant to spill the blood of even an enemy, their battles are not attended with cruelties, their religious rituals untainted by human blood; in this affording a notable difference over many
Africans, where man is made by his fellows the grand victim in conciliating the Juju or Fetiche. Murder is unknown among them.

Neither foreign or domestic slavery is tolerated; indeed, a spirit of freedom and independence is discernable in their looks. The Spaniards were driven off this island during the latter part of the last century, for endeavouring to entrap the people and carry on the slave-trade.

The females are here treated with greater consideration, and have less of the hard labour which is assigned to their sex throughout all other parts of the West Coast.

Edeeyay village, Northwest Bay, Fernando Po
Cape Lopez to Loango St Paul – Region 6 of 6


From Cape Lopez to the river Congo, distant 140 leagues, I believe the trade is chiefly engrossed by the Dutch and the French. To the southward of this river, very little trade is carried on by any Europeans except the Portuguese, who as hath been observed, have a large city at Loango St Paul’s, on the Coast of Angola, strongly fortified; from which place they have penetrated quite through the country to their settlements at, and south of, Mozambique upon the eastern coast of Africa, where they have caravans constantly going and returning, and by that means carry on an extensive and advantageous inland commerce.

Next in order to the Whidah Negroes, are those from Congo and Angola; whom I consider to have been originally the same people. I can say but little of them that is appropriate and particular; except that they are in general a slender slightly race, of a deep and glossy black (a tribe of the Congoes excepted, who very nearly resemble the Eboes) and I believe of a disposition naturally mild and docile. They appear to me to be fitter for domestic service than field-labour. They are said however to become expert mechanics; and, what is much to their honour, they are supposed to be more strictly honest than many other of the African tribes.

http://collections.stanford.edu/images/bin/detail?cid=MOA0188&fn=1 – cartographer John Tallis
(1815/6-1876) – published 1880 – Africa – section

In 1816 Captain J K Tuckey was the director of an expedition to explore the ’River Zaire, usually called the Congo’.
The state of society among the negro nations seems to be pretty nearly the same, and their moral character not very different; the people of Congo would appear, however, to be among the lowest of the negro tribes. The African black is by nature of a kindly, cheerful, and humane disposition... Contented with very humble fare, his happiness seems to consist in a total relaxation from all bodily exertion; excepting when animated by the sound of his rude native music calling him to dance, in which he is always ready to join with the greatest alacrity...

In Congo the cultivation of the land, and the search after food in the woods and on the plains, frequently the catching of fish, devolve wholly on the women; while the men either saunter about, or idle away the time in laying full length on the ground, or in stringing beads, or sleeping in their huts: if employed at all, it is in weaving little mats or caps, a kind of light work more appropriate to the other sex, or in strumming on some musical instrument.

Ignorance has always been accounted the prolific mother of superstition. Those of the negroes of the Congo would be mere subjects of ridicule, if they were harmless to society; which however is not the case. Every man has his fetiche, and some at least a dozen, being so many tutelary deities, against every imaginable evil that may befall them. The word in Portuguese, feitiço, and signifies a charm, witchcraft, magic, &c: and what is remarkable enough, it is in universal use among all the negro tribes of the Western Coast.

There is nothing so vile in nature, that does not serve for a negro’s fetiche; the horn, the hoof, the hair, the teeth, and the bones of all manner of quadrupeds; the feathers, beaks, claws, skulls, and bones of birds; the heads and skins of snakes; the shells and fins of fishes; pieces of old iron, copper, wood, seeds of plants, and sometimes a mixture of all, or most of them, strung together. In the choice of a fetiche, they consult certain persons whom they call fetiche-men, who may be considered to form a kind of priesthood, the members of which preside at the altar of superstition. As a specimen of these senseless appendages to
the dress, and the dwelling of every negro, the following represents one which the wearer considered as an infallible charm against poison; the materials are, an European padlock, in the iron of which they have contrived to bury a cowrie shell and various other matters, the bull of a bird, and the head of a snake; these are suspended from a rosary consisting of the beans of a species of *dolichos*, strung alternately with the seeds of some other plant.

![Image of a charm](image)

... they might even be useful when considered as a guard upon their actions; but their influence does not stop here; they are considered in one sense as a king of deity, to whom prayers are addressed for their assistance, and if afforded, thanksgivings are returned; for the honour of the fetiche also, abstinence is performed, and penalties inflicted...

[http://slaveryimages.org/search.html](http://slaveryimages.org/search.html) – Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi, Italian priest in northern Angola, 1654-57, and in Angola/Kingdom of Congo, 1672-77 – watercolours – Scenes of Magic. 1. Priest speaking to the lion, 2 Spell of the priest, 3 belt with sacred relics/objects, 4 Iron handles, 5 Two horned-shaped amulets filled with ointment

![Image of a priest and lion](image)
Left – in the foreground – ‘first king of Ndongo’ forging weapons and utensils

Queen and her entourage  
Queen Nzinga and her entourage
Giovanni Antonio Cavazzi – watercolours – ‘Queen Nzinga seated among her maidservants watches a drummer’

Louis de Grandpré, French Naval officer, was in the Congo in 1786 and 1787. Engravings in his book were made from his own observations while he was there.

http://slaveryimages.org/search.html – Voyage a la côte occidentale D’Afrique; Fait dans les années 1786 et 1787; Contenant la description des mœurs, usage, lois, gouvernement et commerce des État du Congo, fréquentés par les Europeens . . ., by L de Grandpré, Officier de la Marine Française, published 1801 – ‘Tati, surnommé Desponts, courtier de Malembe, venant de sa petite-terre, en hamac’
Chapter 2. West Africa

View of the Cabende mountain taken at noon, and Funeral of the ‘masouc’, Andris Poncouta, ‘macaye’

View of the Cabinde mountain taken from the North, and interment of the ‘masouc’, Andris Poncouta, ‘macaye’
African slave traders, he writes, go far into the interior to acquire slaves, yet they speak the same language “and only differ in their dialect or pronunciation. Slaves are brought to the coast in several ways: three or four will be conducted by around 20 traders. Five or six of these traders march in front . . . the others follow, and since the trail is very narrow . . . it is difficult to escape . . . for those who try to resist, they tightly tie the arms behind their backs with a rope . . . There are those who not only resist, but who are able to free themselves. For others who defend their freedom and fight the traders, the latter place a forked branch which opens exactly to the size of a neck so the head can’t pass through it. The forked branch is pieced with two holes so than an iron pin comes across the neck of the slave . . . so that the smallest movement is sufficient to stop him and even to strangle him . . .
On peut voir la représentation du sanga dans la planche ci-jointe; c’est une chanson de guerre, une imprécation, un défi, un signe de réjouissance. Mais, quel que soit le motif pour lequel ils l’emploient, le sanga est toujours accompagné d’une imprécation à l’ennemi présent ou supposé, ou au fétiche.

Il n’est pas facile de bien faire sanga; il faut être pour cela doué de beaucoup d’agilité . . .

‘Sanga’ – chanson de guerre
In the House of Commons on 2 April 1792, William Wilberforce described the ‘situation of the slaves on board ships’ – the Middle Passage.

...I must pass on to another, which originally struck my mind as being more horrid than all the rest, and which, I think, still retains its superiority; I mean the situation of the slaves on board ships, or what is commonly called the middle passage. I will spare the committee, however, the detail of all those perfections in cruelty which it exhibits: but two or three instances I must mention, because they are of recent date, and still more because they will tend to convince those who are inclined rather to regulate than abolish the slave trade, that so long as it is suffered to exist, the evils of the middle passage must exist also, though in respect of them, more than any other class, regulation might have been deemed effectual. We were told, I remember, in an early stage of our enquiry, that formerly, indeed, the negroes were but ill accommodated during their conveyance, and, perhaps, there was now and then a considerable mortality; but such had been the improvements of late years, that they were now quite comfortable and happy. Yet it was no longer ago than in the year 1788, that Mr. Isaac Wilson, whose intelligent and candid manner of giving evidence, could not but impress the committee with a high opinion of him, was doomed to witness scenes as deeply distressing as almost ever occurred in the annals of the slave trade. I will not condemn the committee to listen to the particulars of his dreadful tale, but for the present will content myself with pointing your attention to the mortality. His ship was a vessel of three hundred and seventy tons, and she had on board six hundred and two slaves, a number greater than we at present allow, but rather less, I think, than what was asserted by the slave merchants to be necessary in order to carry on their trade to any tolerable profit. Out of these six hundred and two she lost one hundred and fifty-five. I will mention the mortality also of three or four more vessels which were in company with her, and belonged to the same owner. One of them bought four hundred and fifty, and buried two hundred; another bought four hundred and sixty-six, and buried seventy-three; another bought five hundred and forty-six, and buried one hundred and fifty-eight; besides one hundred and fifty-five from his own ship, his number being six hundred and
two; and from the whole four after landing of their cargoes there died two hundred and twenty. He fell in
with another vessel which lost three hundred and sixty-two: the number she had bought was not specified.
To these actual deaths during and immediately after the voyage, add the subsequent loss in what is called
the seasoning, and consider that this loss would be greater than ordinary in cargoes landed in so sickly a
state. Why, sir, were such mortality general, it would, in a few months, depopulate the earth. We asked
the surgeon the causes of these excessive losses, particularly on board his own ship, where he had it in his
power to ascertain them. The substance of his reply was, that most of the slaves appeared to labour under
a fixed dejection and melancholy, interrupted now and then by lamentations and plaintive songs,
expressive of their concern for the loss of their relations and friends, and native country. So powerfully
did this operate, that many attempted various ways of destroying themselves; some endeavoured to drown
themselves, and three actually effected it; others obstinately refused to take sustenance, and when the whip
and other violent means were used to compel them to eat, they looked up in the face of the officer who
unwillingly executed this painful task, and said in their own language, “presently we shall be no more.”
Their state of mind produced a general languor and debility, which were increased, in many instances, by
an unconquerable abstinence from food, arising partly from sickness, partly, to use the language of slave
captains, from “sulkiness.” These causes naturally produced the dysentery; the contagion spread, numbers
were daily carried off, and the disorder, aided by so many powerful auxiliaries, resisted all the force of
medicine. And it is worth while to remark, that these grievous sufferings appear to have been in no degree
owing either to want of care on the part of the owner, or to any negligence or harshness of the captain.
When Mr. Wilson was questioned if the ship was well fitted; as well, says he, as most vessels are, and the
crew and slaves as well treated as in most ships; and he afterwards speaks of his captain in still stronger
terms, as being a man of tenderness and humanity.

The ship in which Mr. Claxton, the surgeon, sailed, since the regulation act, afforded a repetition of all
the same horrid circumstances I have before alluded to. Suicide, in various ways, was attempted and
effected, and the same barbarous expedients were resorted to, in order to compel them to continue an
existence too painful to be endured: the mortality also was as great. And yet, here also, it appears to have
been in no degree the fault of the captain, who is represented as having felt for the slaves in their wretched
situation. If such were the state of things under captains who had still feelings of their nature, what must it
be under those of a contrary description? It would be a curious speculation to consider what would be the
conduct towards his cargo of such a man as one of the six I lately spoke of. It would be curious to trace
such a one, in idea, through all the opportunities of the middle passage would afford him of displaying the
predominant features of his character.

Unhappily, sir, it is not left for us here to form our own conjectures! Of the conduct of one of them at
least, I have heard incidents which surpass all my imagination could have conceived. One of them I
would relate, if it were not almost too shocking for description; and yet I feel it my duty, in the situation in
which I stand, not to suffer myself to pay too much attention to what has been well called squeamishness
on the part of the committee. If it be too bad for me to recite, or for you to hear, it was not thought too bad
for one of those unhappy creatures to suffer, of whom I have this night the honour to be the advocate.
There was a poor girl on board, about fifteen years of age who had unfortunately contracted a disorder,
which produced effects that rendered her a peculiar object of commiseration. In this situation, being quite
naked, she bent down in a stooping posture, wishing out of modesty to conceal her infirmity: the captain
ordered her to walk upright, and when she could not, or would not obey, he hoisted her up, naked as she
was, by the wrists, with her feet a little distance from the deck; and whilst she there hung, a spectacle to
the whole crew, he flogged her with a whip with his own hands. He then hung her up in a similar way by
the wrists, with her feet a little distance from the deck; and whilst she there hung, a spectacle to
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the wrists, with her feet a little distance from the deck; and whilst she there hung, a spectacle to

two; and from the whole four after landing of their cargoes there died two hundred and twenty. He fell in
with another vessel which lost three hundred and sixty-two: the number she had bought was not specified.
To these actual deaths during and immediately after the voyage, add the subsequent loss in what is called
the seasoning, and consider that this loss would be greater than ordinary in cargoes landed in so sickly a
state. Why, sir, were such mortality general, it would, in a few months, depopulate the earth. We asked
the surgeon the causes of these excessive losses, particularly on board his own ship, where he had it in his
power to ascertain them. The substance of his reply was, that most of the slaves appeared to labour under
a fixed dejection and melancholy, interrupted now and then by lamentations and plaintive songs,
expressive of their concern for the loss of their relations and friends, and native country. So powerfully
did this operate, that many attempted various ways of destroying themselves; some endeavoured to drown
themselves, and three actually effected it; others obstinately refused to take sustenance, and when the whip
and other violent means were used to compel them to eat, they looked up in the face of the officer who
unwillingly executed this painful task, and said in their own language, “presently we shall be no more.”
Their state of mind produced a general languor and debility, which were increased, in many instances, by
an unconquerable abstinence from food, arising partly from sickness, partly, to use the language of slave
captains, from “sulkiness.” These causes naturally produced the dysentery; the contagion spread, numbers
were daily carried off, and the disorder, aided by so many powerful auxiliaries, resisted all the force of
medicine. And it is worth while to remark, that these grievous sufferings appear to have been in no degree
owing either to want of care on the part of the owner, or to any negligence or harshness of the captain.
When Mr. Wilson was questioned if the ship was well fitted; as well, says he, as most vessels are, and the
crew and slaves as well treated as in most ships; and he afterwards speaks of his captain in still stronger
terms, as being a man of tenderness and humanity.

The ship in which Mr. Claxton, the surgeon, sailed, since the regulation act, afforded a repetition of all
the same horrid circumstances I have before alluded to. Suicide, in various ways, was attempted and
effected, and the same barbarous expedients were resorted to, in order to compel them to continue an
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be under those of a contrary description? It would be a curious speculation to consider what would be the
conduct towards his cargo of such a man as one of the six I lately spoke of. It would be curious to trace
such a one, in idea, through all the opportunities of the middle passage would afford him of displaying the
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the wrists, with her feet a little distance from the deck; and whilst she there hung, a spectacle to

www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item106661.html – 1787 – Slave Ship Brooks

The Plan and Sections annexed exhibit a slave ship with the slaves stowed.* In order to give a
representation of the trade against which no complaint of exaggeration could be brought by those
concerned in it, the Brooks is here described, a ship well known in the trade, and the first mentioned in the
report delivered to the House of Commons last year by Captain Parrey, who was sent to Liverpool by Government to take the dimensions of the ships employed in the African slave trade from that port. These plans and sections are on a scale of the 8th of an inch to a foot.

*This is the usual manner of Placing the Slaves, but it varies according to the position of the ship, and the practice of different commanders.

DESCRIPTION OF A SLAVE SHIP.

http://prints.rmg.co.uk/artist/27898/gabriel-bray – drawings by Gabriel Bray, Lieutenant, RN, made during his voyages to the coast of West Africa – mid 1770s
Chapter 3

18th Century Jamaica

Over the years since discovering that I had Jamaican ancestors I have pieced together considerably more about the lives of Edward and Eliza and the world they lived in. I searched in UK libraries, on the web, and Christopher and I went to Jamaica four times – in March 2007, September 2008, November 2009, and November 2011. I wanted to see what I could find in Jamaica libraries and, above all, see where my ancestors lived.

Before starting my Edward and Eliza project, I knew next to nothing about Jamaica. But I knew my mother Dina and her elder sister Mollie spent a day in Jamaica in 1931. They left Liverpool in January 1931 on the Orduna, one of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company’s Royal Mail Ships. The Orduna sailed clockwise around South America stopping at various ports along the way, back east through the Panama Canal, and arrived at Kingston, Jamaica, on 8 March.

Mollie wrote in her diary – Sunday, 8 March 1931

Orders to be up by 6 A.M. as had to be medically examined before entering Kingston Jamaica – about 6.30 we passed Port Royal, legend tells it was once the richest and the wickedest place in devildom. It is situated on a long coral spit of land – very little remains today as most of it fell into the sea as the result of an earthquake. Went on shore just before 9 o’clock – got a car motored out of the town of Kingston through a marvellous valley, which entirely fulfilled my idea of a Tropical island, luxuriant vegetation but not of the sinister variety like Rio de Janeiro, we follow this river right over to Annotto Bay, northside of the island and then turned west along the north coast, a perfect day the Caribbean sea like the Mediterranean – on this side there are miles and miles of Cocoa nut and Banana plantations belonging to the United fruit Co. growing right down by the waters edge – had lunch at the Shore Park Hotel, lovely spot – rotten lunch (good beer) – saw some water falls which were as clear as crystal because of the lime or calcium in the water. This lime is from the Coral deposits which are to be found all over the island. Our return journey was through the so called Fern Gully where even in the heat of the day the atmosphere was cool – quantities of maiden hair ferns. We rose to a height of about 4000 ft – at a certain altitude the landscape was almost English rural with stone walls and herds of cattle and cows knee deep in pasture –
we passed Moneague where there is a good old fashioned hotel down through Bog Walk to Spanish Town, the one time capital – almost the entire population of the island is Black, black as soot.

Little did Mollie and Dina know that a hundred and more years earlier some of their ancestors were ‘black as soot’! – and they drove through the area where their black ancestors lived – the area between Moneague and Bog Walk – the old parish of St Thomas in the Vale

*Google Images (website/date accessed not noted)* – ‘Bog Walk 19 miles from Kingston’ – the road from Spanish Town through the Rio Cobre Gorge to Bog Walk

[Map of Jamaica showing the location of Bog Walk]

*www.freewebs.com/caribbeancelebs/jamaicanhistory.htm* – arrow points to Bog Walk
My photo, December 2009 – St Thomas in the Vale – sugar cane ‘in arrow’
J Stewart in his 1808 *Account of Jamaica* wrote ‘a stranger is instantly struck and delighted with the diversity of the landscape’.

On approaching the shores of Jamaica, if at a certain season of the year (from January to June), when the crops of sugar are getting in, the eye of a stranger is instantly struck and delighted with the diversity of the landscape. Here a dry stubble field in the midst of others covered with ripe sugar canes, or clothed with the verdure of luxuriant guinea-grass, finely shaded; there a wind-mill on the summit of a hill; in another place a cluster of buildings, or tuft of trees; and in the neighbourhood and extensive savannah, partly bare and partly covered with wild shrubbery and trees, with a stream of water rushing precipitately from the contiguous hills upon its level bosom; while the lofty cloud-capt mountains behind, crowned with deep woods, and covered with perpetual verdure, close the scene. Add to this, the novel appearance of the mangrove, with which the shores of this island are deeply fringed. Perhaps nothing is more delightfully rural than the fine extensive guinea-grass pastures here, shaded by the tall and elegant bread-nut, whose deep green foliage forms and enchanting contrast to the lighter verdure of the grass; or adorned by the fragrant pimento, whose leaves are still of a deeper green and finer polish than those of the bread-nut, and whose perfumes remind us of Arabia.

But it is in the interior of the country that the great and stupendous works of nature are chiefly to be seen. Here the barren and the fertile, the level and inaccessible, are mingled. In one place a fine valley, or glade, fertile and irrigated, stretching along the foot of craggy and desolate mountains, covered with immense rocks, slightly intermixed with a dry, arid, and unfruitful soil . . .
Know How road map of Jamaica – section – northeast St Catherine – arrow points to Williamsfield – the area that was once the Williamsfield sugar estate in St Thomas in the Vale.

In 1796 Eliza, her mother Bessy and family were slaves on Sandy Gut, the sugar plantation on the northwest side of Williamsfield.

Maps of the three Counties of Jamaica, by Thomas Craskell and James Simpson, published 1763 – County of Middlesex – Parish of St Thomas in the Vale – section – arrow points to Hunt – by 1765 known as Sandy Gut (or Gutt)
Edward Long in his 1774 *History of Jamaica* described St Thomas in the Vale.


This parish is bounded towards the North by St Anne, and St Mary; and on the West, by St John. It is watered by the Cobre; the D’Oro; the Rio Magno, formed by the conflux of the Tilboa and Indian rivers; and by several small rivulets which fall into them. The greater part of this parish is comprized within the vale called the Sixteen-mile-walk. This vale is about eleven miles in length by eight in width, and contains between fifty and sixty thousand square acres. It is situated Southerly, beneath the main ridge or chain of high mountains which traverse the island from East to West. It is also enclosed on all other sides with a circumvallation of high hills and mountains. It is neither flat nor swampy, but diversified throughout with gentle risings and slopes. The soil is fertile, for the most part a red coarse earth mixed with clay, or a dark mould upon a whitish marle. It is full of streams and rivulets, which unite with the larger streams; and these, meeting together near the chasm or opening betwixt the mountains on the South side of the vale, augment that noble river Cobre, which continues its course irregularly between rocky mountains and precipices, alternately a cascade or smooth water, as it happens to be more or less impeded, exhibiting for some miles a very romantic scene till it reaches the plain below. At that part of the vale where it first shapes its course towards Spanish Town, it enters between two yawning rocky hills, which appear as if they have been rifted on purpose to give it a passage. The vale is almost daily throughout the year overcast with a thick fog, which begins to rise slowly on the approach of evening, grows denser as the night advances, becomes gradually diffused into all the contiguous vales or inlets among the surrounding mountains, is heaviest about the dawn of day, and remains settled until the sun has warmed

*My photo, November 2009 – looking southeast across Sandy Gut towards Williamsfield*
and agitated the air; then it rises higher, expanding in the atmosphere; and between the hours of eight and nine in the forenoon it begins to flow away in two principal streams, the one Westward among the mountains on that side, the other Southward, following the course of the river. Early in the morning it is extremely thick; and, if viewed at this time from the summit of the mountains, it affords the most lively representation possible of a large lake, or little sea: the several vales and collateral inlets appear to be arms, harbours, bays, and creeks; the elevated spots, dispersed through it, and covered with trees, buildings, or cane-pieces, resemble small islands, which here and there uplift their diminutive heads above water, combining into view the most picturesque and delightful variety...

... Its [the fog’s] good effects consist in the copious dew which it sheds upon the trees and herbage, and which supports them in the driest weather in a flourishing state. Those long drouths therefore, which sometime happen in this island, so fatal to the estates in general, affect the plantations in this vale but very little; the fog supplying, in a great measure, the want of rains, or at least so far as to save the canes from perishing in the manner they do in other parts of the island.

The North-west part of this vale is called The Maggoti, a tract of savannah lying near the foot of Monte Diablo... The road leading from Sixteen-mile-walk to St Anne crosses this mountain, traversing the face of it, which is so steep, that few travellers venture to descend on horse-back...

The cavern at River-head in the North-West part of the vale extends near a quarter of a mile under a mountain, or perhaps more, it being impossible to explore the whole length, on account of the river Cobre, which occupies the inmost part of it, and, running for a considerable way, suddenly shoots through a hole in the rock on one side, and continues its current under ground for a considerable distance from the cave. That this river draws its origin from some large stream in the mountains, far beyond the cave, seems evident, by its rising or falling in exact proportion as the rains are heavy or otherwise in the mountains. After very heavy rains, the river is so swelled, that, unable to vent itself at the hole, the superfluous water disembogues through the mouth of the cavern...

The pass [the Rio Cobre Gorge] which admits a communication between Spanish Town and this vale ought not here to be unmentioned. After travelling about three miles from the town on a pretty level road, we come to a sugar-plantation, formerly called by the Spaniards Los Angelos, and now The Angels. Just beyond this begins the entrance to the pass. From hence to the opening into Sixteen-mile-walk, for the space of four miles and a half, is a continuation of precipice on both sides, divided only by the river, except a small elbow at the end of four miles, where a few acres of level ground at the foot of these ridges has admitted of a little sugar-work. The road cut into the side of the mountain falls by an easy descent to the bridge, and crossing the river is conducted along the remainder of the way not many feet above the surface of the water: it is therefore subject to be broken away in many places by the violence of floods; but this inconvenience is submitted to from the impracticability there appeared of carrying it higher through such immense masses of rock as form impediments the whole way. For a considerable length, the road is walled up; and, as it is so liable to damage, not only from inundations of the river, but the falling of large trees, rocks, and earth, from the impending crags and precipices under which it runs, the expense of repairing it is very great, and requires a standing body of workmen, who are employed the whole year to keep it in order. The height of the mountains on each side over-shadowing it morning and afternoon, the passage is extremely cool and agreeable; every turn of the road presenting the eye with new appearances of the river, the rocks, and woods; whilst it is confined to a narrow and rugged channel; at other times gliding smoothly and silently along, delights the traveller with an alternate variety. At the end of four miles, the mountain called Gibraltar opens to view a vast solid wall of rock of prodigious height, whose surface, apparently perpendicular, is nevertheless cloathed with trees and shrubs from the base to the summit; the tops of one row terminating where the roots of the next row begin, so as almost to seem growing one upon the other. After heavy rains a cataract spouts from the pinnacle of this stupendous mass, rendering it still more awful and romantic. The defile continues not far beyond this majestic object, though not widening till we enter at once the extensive and beautiful vale of Sixteen-mile-walk. The air of this vale was suspected formerly of producing the West-India colic or belly-ache; but, as that disorder does not seem at present to be particularly attached to the spot, some other cause must have made it endemic: perhaps the inhabitants at this time are less addicted to drinking new rum, and therefore less afflicted with it. The air of this parish is in general reputed to be healthy; and the habitations throughout the vale being for the most part built on rising ground, they are not subject to damps. This tract was among the first settled with sugar-plantations, and what it produces now of this commodity is of an excellent quality; but the land is thought to be much worn. The truth is, that some of the plantations here
were formed upon a gritty, red, and naturally sterile soil, which, for want of regular manure, and having lost by degrees its superficial coat of vegetable mould, became less and less productive, till the proprietors threw them up as unfit for the sugar-cane. But others, who have pursued better husbandry, still reap advantage from it in reasonable good crops. The air of the mountains is perfectly fine and healthful. Upon one of them, near the confines of St Catherine’s, is the governor’s polinck or provision ground, which has a small but neat villa upon it, and was purchased by the assembly, as an occasional retreat, during the hot months, for the commander in chief. The soil of these mountains is fertile; and they are chiefly appropriated to supply the estates in the vale with the different kinds of vegetable provisions, and lime and timber for repairing the works. This parish contained,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Negros.</th>
<th>Cattle.</th>
<th>Sugar-works</th>
<th>Hogheads</th>
<th>Other Settlements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In</td>
<td>1734</td>
<td>7568</td>
<td>4441</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>8475</td>
<td>4813</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1745</td>
<td>8239</td>
<td>4797</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1761</td>
<td>9057</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|    | 1768    | 8382    | 5782        | 41       | 3500             | 37

It appears from hence to have made little or no progress since the year 1740; and the increased number of cattle, amounting to 969, are probably the stock brought upon those runs, which after being in canes, have been converted into pastures.

Although I only know for certain that Bessy and her family were slaves on Sandy Gut in 1796, it seems likely that they were slaves belonging to Sandy Gut for a time before then and perhaps Bessy, aged 48 on 28 June 1817, was born there. I searched Sandy Gut records back to the 1760s. In 1765 (three or four years before Bessy’s birth) I found three conveyances of Sandy Gut which included the names of the slaves belonging to the estate.

In 1765 Samuel Smith of St Catherine sold Sandy Gut to John Brammer of St Catherine who then with his wife secured a loan from Samuel Smith on Sandy Gut.

**Jamaica Island Record Office – Old Series, Records of Contracts, Lib 211, Fol 102 – Entered in the Island Secretary’s Office 3 Sep 1765 – Indenture dated 18 July 1765 – made between Samuel Smith of St Catherine, Esq (1) – and John Brammer of St Catherine, Esq (2) – extracts/summary**

For £8,700 Jamaica currency Samuel Smith conveyed to John Brammer all that Plantation or Sugar Work in the parish of St Thomas in the Vale, known by the name of Sandy Gutt – containing exactly 488 acres – Butting and Bounding – North on land late of James Watson Esq being part of 200 acres sold by Hampson Nedham Esq deceased to Edwin Savage the elder since deceased – North West on land belonging to or in the possession of Francis Delap Esq – West on Land of the Hon William Wynter Esq and the said Francis Delap Esq – Southerly and South West on land of William Nedham Esq – South East on land (Williamsfield) belonging to Alexander and William Harvie Esqs – East and part South East on Rio de Ora – or howsoever else it may be butted Bounded or Described

And also all Houses, Outhouses, Mills, Mill Houses, Edifices, Erections and Buildings on the said Plantation or Sugar Work – and also all Coppers, Stills, Worms, Worm Tubbs, Sugar Potts, Plantation Untensils and Implements of Planting – and all Ways, Waters, Water Courses, Woods, Underwoods, Trees, Timber Trees, Feedings, Commons, Common of Pasture, Easements, Profits, Commodities, Priviledges, Advantages, Hereditaments and Appurtenances whatsoever belonging to the said Plantation or Sugar Work

And also all and every the Negro and other Slaves herein after mentioned being 46 in number (see below Indentures of Lease and Release)
And likewise all and every the 27 Negroes following (see below Indenture of Lease)

Together with 32 Mules and 22 Steers – And together with the future Issue, Offspring and Increase of all and every the said female Slaves and the Reversion and Reversions Remainder and Remainders Rents Issues and Profits etc, etc, etc

*Jamaica Island Record Office – Old Series, Records of Contracts, Lib 211, Fol 102 and Fol 103 – Entered in the Island Secretary’s Office 24 August 1765 – Indentures of Lease and Release by way of Mortgage, dated 19 July and 20 July 1765 – made between John Brammer of St Catherine Esq and wife Elizabeth (1) – and Samuel Smith of St Catherine Esq (2)*

Indenture of Lease, dated 19 July 1765 – extracts/summary

For 10s Jamaica currency paid by Samuel Smith – John Brammer and wife Elizabeth lease to Samuel Smith for one year, rent a grain of pimento seed – all that Plantation or Sugar Work in St Thomas in the Vale known by the name Sandy Gutt – containing by estimation 488 acres – etc, etc, etc – (see above)

And also all and every the Negro and other Slaves being 46 in number

Jemmy, Big-Quashey, Quaw, Quamine, Cambridge, Cudjoe, Robin, Hazard, Cromwell, Primus, Richard alias Murray, Hector, Lovy, Kingston, Port Royal, London, Nero, little Quashe, Jackey, little Philip, Hodge, Aubah and her four Children Queen, little Nelly, George and Lawkey, Juba, and her Child Rachael, Sally, Nancy, Sykey, Cloe, Rose, Catalina, Franky, and her two Children Veneber and Cuba, Violet, Maria and her Child Adam, Delia, Countess, Peggy, Prue, Judy, and Cynthia. Dick, Will, Caesar, Cato, Scotland, Philip, Billy, Johnny, Katy and her three Children London, Sukey and Good luck, long Cloe, Phibbe, Nelly and her Child Countess, Fanny, and her Child Betty, Marina, Sylvia, Celia, Grace and her Child August, Lucy, Dolly, Aucow, and Behaviour

Also all and every the 27 Negroes following

Dick, Will, Caesar, Cato, Scotland, Philip, Billy, Johnny, Katy and her three Children London, Sukey and Good luck, long Cloe, Phibbe, Nelly and her Child Countess, Fanny, and her Child Betty, Marina, Sylvia, Celia, Grace and her Child August, Lucy, Dolly, Aucow, and Behaviour

Likewise all and every the 100 Negro and other Slaves following

36 Men named Cromwell, Quamin, Oxford, Plato, Nago-Quashee, and Daniel (Sawyers) Macky and Congo-Cato (Drivers) Julius, Hannibal, Oliver, Congo-Qashee, Foster, Hercules, Mundingo-Stepney, Billy, Abraham, Darby, Fortune, Chambo-Cato, Cudjoe, Toney, Jacob, Congo-Jemmy, Adam, Cuffee (head Muleman) Quaco, little-Stepney, and Tom (Mulemen) Creole-Jemmy, and Ambo (Shingle hewers) Quashee (a Cook) Dick (a Mulatto and Doctor) Chelsea (a Wainman) Tom-Clift (a Ditto and waiting Man)

17 Women named Flora, Creole-Juba, Creole-Quasheba, Leah, Clarinda, little-Clara, and Jenny (Sempstresses and Washers) Old-Clara, Quashebah’s Cloe, Ebo-Juba, Grace, Flora’s Cloe, Molly, Mary, Julines, Rose, Whanica, Fanny, Phillis, Cretia, Coromante-Quasheba, Daphney, Cordelia, Ophelia, Clarica, Lucy, and Sarah

18 boys named Jack, Cromwell, Will, Quamin, Hector, Yaw, John-Tom, Shallo, Chester, Tom-Quash, Quashee, Cudjoe, Frederick, Martin, Bristol, Caesar (a Mulatto) Sancho, and Lagros

19 Girls named Nancy’s Moll, Hannah, Betty, Silvia, Amy, Hagar, Franky, Samfia, Bess (a Mulatto) Nancy’s Clarinda, Jenny, Mimba, Henrietta (a Mulatto) Quashheba, Bett alias Bell, Esther’s Jenny (a Mulatto) Patience, Esther’s Mercy, and Princess
Together with 32 Mules and 22 Steers – Together with the future Issue Offspring and Increase of the said female Slaves and the Reversion and Reversions Remainder and Remainders Rents Issues and profits of the said Plantation or Sugar Work etc, etc, etc

Indenture of Release, dated 20 July 1820 – extract/summary

John Brammer indebted to Samuel Smith in the Sum of £8,700 Jamaica currency

For the securing of the payment of the said Sum of £8,700 Jamaica currency together with the Interest thereon accruing – and for 10s Jamaica currency paid by Samuel Smith – John Brammer and wife Elizabeth convey to Samuel Smith – the Plantation or Sugar Work known as Sandy Gutt – containing by estimation 488 acres – etc, etc, etc – (see above) – and the 46 + 27 + 100 Slaves – (see above) – together with the 32 Mules and 22 Steers – together with the future Issue, Offspring and Increase of all the female Slaves and the Reversion and Reversions Remainder etc, etc, etc

Below – the 46 + 27 + 100 slaves named in the 20 July 1765 Indentures of Lease and Release
Creole = born in Jamaica – all who were born in Jamaica, slaves, free persons of colour, and white persons

Other Slaves = mixed race slaves – by Jamaica law, regardless of the status of the father, a Sambo, Mulatto, Quadroon or Mustee child of a slave mother was born a slave.

Negro = 100% black
Sambo = 75% black - 25% white
Mulatto = 50% black - 50% white
Quadroon = 25% black 75% white
Mustee or Mestee = 12.5% black - 87.5% white
Mustiphini = 6.25% black - 93.75% white

A Mustiphini was white by law, and if born to a slave mother he or she was free.

Some of the slaves named in the 1785 Indentures of Lease and Release by way of a Mortgage were named after the day of the week on which they were born.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negro’s day names</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday - - - - -</td>
<td>Cudjoe - - - - -</td>
<td>Juba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday - - - - -</td>
<td>Cubbenna - - - -</td>
<td>Beneba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday - - - -</td>
<td>Quaco - - - - -</td>
<td>Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday - - - -</td>
<td>Quaw - - - - - -</td>
<td>Abba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday - - - - -</td>
<td>Cuffee - - - -</td>
<td>Phibba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday - - - -</td>
<td>Quamin - - - -</td>
<td>Mimba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday - - - - -</td>
<td>Quashee - - - -</td>
<td>Quasheba</td>
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In the House of Commons on 6 April 1797, Bryan Edwards recalled attempts in the 1760s by Members of the Jamaica House of Assembly to ban the importation of slaves from the Gold Coast, and attempts in 1774 to limit the importation of slaves over the age of thirty.


. . . Having suffered from a rebellion [in 1760], of the Gold-coast negroes and conceiving that self-preservation was the first law of nature, they [members of the House of Assembly of Jamaica] ordered a bill to be brought into the House for prohibiting the farther importation of all slaves from Akin, Assiantee, and Fantee. The bill was read twice, and would have passed into a law, but the governor, taking the alarm, sent for the promoters of the bill, and convinced them that he could not, consistently with his instructions, give his consent to any such measure; and it was accordingly laid aside. In 1774, the subject was revived, and two different acts were passed by the house of assembly; by the first of which, a duty of forty shillings, in addition to the former duties, was laid upon every negro imported into that island. This not being thought sufficient to check the increasing importation, the colony took the alarm at too large an influx of aged negroes; and the assembly, in November, in the same year passed another law, imposing an additional tax of seven pounds more upon every negro imported who should have passed his thirtieth year. This act coming home for the royal confirmation, was petitioned against by the merchants of Liverpool and Bristol; and a reference being had to the board of trade, the board of trade reported against the
measure. His majesty, in council, rejected the act, in consequence of the report of the board of trade, although the agent of Jamaica presented a remonstrance against the report, stating, that “the large duties laid upon imported negroes above 30 years of age, by the act of November were laid by the house of assembly, not for the purpose of raising revenue upon the trade of Great Britain, but solely on the principle of self-preservation, and to put an end to that enormous importation, particularly of old negroes, which, at that time, endangered the existence of the colonies.” Sir, I had the honour, at the request of the Jamaica agent, of being heard before the lords’ commissioners for trade and plantations, in support of this bill. I urged, that slavery in its best state, if at all necessary, was a necessary evil; but that it fell with dreadful aggravation on the aged and infirm; on men who were torn from their country and connexions, when their habit of life was formed, and when all the ties which render life desirable had been strengthened by time; humanity, therefore, towards the poor captives, as well as the safety of the planters, called loudly for the confirmation of the measure. All these, and various other arguments, were urged in vain: “The bill,” said their lordships, “is intended to operate as a prohibition of the slave trade, to a certain extent; and we cannot allow the colonies to check, in any degree, a traffic so beneficial to the nation.”

http://www.digjamaica.com/parish_evolution – Jamaica Parishes, 1770-1813 – arrow points to St Thomas in the Vale (since 1866 northeast St Catherine)

Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica

RUN AWAY, from the Subscriber, on Sunday last, a NEGRO FELLOW, named CUDJOE, well known in KINGSTON.

He was last year harboured about eight Months by a Mulatto Woman, named LYDIA SMALL; but he is at her Place to do so in future.

Any person apprehending him, or giving information where he is harboured, will receive Twenty Pounds Five Shillings Reward, by applying to Mr. DENNIS KELLY in Kingston, or to LAURENCE MEIGHON.

RUN AWAY from the Subscriber, about the beginning of May last, a NEW NEGRO WENCH, named MARY, Of the Maudings Country.

She is short and thick; has a Scar on her left Arm; her Hair very short; her Eyes, and her Teeth have been filed.

Whosoever will bring her to the Subscriber, shall receive a PISTOLE REWARD; and if any person will give information by whom she is harboured or concealed, the informer, on conviction of the offender, shall have Ten PISTOLES (if a white person); any other colour (if free), Five PISTOLES; a Slave, Fifty SHILLINGS.

Per WILLIAM SNELL.

RUN AWAY the 50th of March last, a NEGRO FELLOW, Named JAMES, Of the Free Country, and marked ALT in one on the left Shoulder.

He is about a Man, and about five feet high, with his Country Mark in his Face, and the Spectacles. Whosoever apprehends, and brings him to the Subscriber, shall receive a PISTOLE REWARD; and be at his peril to harbour or conceal him, as they will be prosecuted to the utmost rigour of the law.

ABRAHAM LOPES TORRES.

RUN AWAY, From me about Three Months ago, a Negro Man SLAVE, named GLOSTER.

Aged between Thirty and Forty Years, marked on the right Shoulder A-I or A-H, with a Reart on the Top of the said Mark. He has a full Beard, large broad Lips, speaks thick and fast, is brown-legged, and has both Marks of a large Bear, not perfectly cured, on the lowest Part of his left Leg. He had on when he went away, a Pair of black Breeches and a Check Shirt.

He is supposed to be in the Day-time about the Land on Barbican-Pen near Rock-Fort, to cut Wood, and bring to Town in the Evening for Sale; but as he is a Cook, he may hire himself out as such, under the authority of a Forged Ticket, to work either on board a Ship (especially a Privateer) or on Shore.

A Reward of ONE PIStOLe shall be paid on his being apprehended and brought to me. And any Commander of a Vessel, or any Person whatsoever, shall, on Conviction of him, harbouring or the said Negro, be prosecuted to the utmost Rigour of the Law.

E. BOWES.

WANTED TO HIRE, A HANDY NEGRO or Mulatto Girl, whose chief Employment will be, to take Care of a Child. Enquire at the New Printing-Office.

May 8th.

RUN AWAY, from the Subscriber, about three weeks ago, a NEGRO BOY, named JACK, Of the Congu Country, about 15 or 16 years of age; and, being a Waiting-Boy since he came to the country, speaks tolerable good English.

He is supposed to be in the Provost-Marshal's Office in Spanish-town upon business, had there received some Papers of Consequence to bring with him, which he did not return to deliver; it is supposed, as he may have such papers about him, he may expect to pass unobserved on that account.

Two Pounds Fifteen Shillings Reward will be given for taking him up, and lodging him in any of the gaols in this island, giving notice thereof.

If harboured or concealed, any person giving information thereof, shall receive a Reward of Ten Pistolets, on Conviction of the Offender.

ANDREW BYRNE.

TO BE SOLD, for Cash or Bills of Exchange, Twenty young and able Field NEGROES, Issued in St. Mary's, and SIX CHILDREN.

Apply to CHARLES MONTGOMERY, Esq; in the said Parish.
Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica

**Kingston, August 6, 1779.**

**RUN AWAY from the Subscribers, A NEGRO BOY, named POMPEY:**

He speaks very little English, and is marked on one Shoulder 1 D. but scarcely perceivable. - Whoever apprehends the said Negro, and will either lodge him in Kingston Gaol, or bring him to our Store in Port Royal Streets, shall receive a PISTOLE Reward, from CLAYTON LITTLEHALL & CO.

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**Kingston, July 8, 1779.**

**WANTED TO HIRE, to work at an estate in St. Mary's, for any time not exceeding Six Months, six or more NEGRO CARPENTERS.**

Good encouragement will be given, on application to JOHN CASEY, Esq. St. Mary's, or to the Subscribers in this town.

THOMAS HIBBERT & Nephew.

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**Kingston, June 11th, 1779.**

**RUN AWAY from the Subscribers, About a Week ago, A NEGRO FELLOW, named CASTALIO,**

Marked on both Breasts, and on the Right Shoulder, W. B. - Whoever will bring him to me, shall receive a PISTOLE REWARD.

THOMAS CRASKELL, Eng.

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**Kingston, June 11th, 1779.**

**RUN AWAY**

**from the Subscribers, On St. Jago Estate, in this Parish,**

**A NEW NEGRO MAN,**

**of the Mungingo Country, without any Mark.**

Whoever proves him their Property, and pays Charges, shall have him, by applying to grandson of E. T. S. at his Estate.

Carpenters on Denleigh Estate, to said Parish.

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**Kingston, October 9, 1779.**

**RUN AWAY from the subscriber, the three following SLAVES, well known in the three towns, viz. BILLY, a CARPENTER, and CUDJO and TOM, Field Negroes,**

Whoever brings them to the subscriber in Kingston, or lodges them in goal, shall be well rewarded.

D. MORTON.
Many of the slaves in the advertisements are ‘marked’. In 1792 Lewis Cuthbert was asked at the Bar of the House of Lords about the branding of slaves.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=EL4NAAAAAQAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Minutes of the Evidence taken at the Bar of the House of Lords upon the Order made for taking into Consideration the present State of the Trade to Africa . . . – 1792 – Lewis Cuthbert’s Evidence – page 61-121 – extracts 97-100

It is generally a custom to brand all new Negroes as soon as purchased with the initials of the owners names; but I humbly conceive that this brand, so far from being a circumstance of cruelty, in many cases contributes very much to the benefit of the new Negroes, more particularly when they happen to wander from the plantations without a possibility of making themselves to be understood to say from whence they came; and the discovery where the Negroes belong to has very frequently been made by means of these marks, and they have in such cases been restored to their estates.

Are or are not the Slaves that are born in the island, marked or branded as well as those that are imported?

On some occasions, not generally; but on some occasions it is absolutely necessary; as where there are Negroes upon an estate, and the interest in it is reversionary. There may be a certain number of Negroes upon an estate, which after the death of the proprietor may be disposed of in a different manner from the other Negroes upon it; there it is necessary to distinguish, otherwise it would be difficult to know, by the loss of plantation books or otherwise, the Negroes that might belong to the separate interests; in that case a brand is necessary. A brand also is necessary, frequently, in cases of Slaves taken upon lease, and where the property continues vested in the lessor.

Of what nature is the brand, and how is it inflicted, and how is it applied?

The brand is made of silver, two letters, which are about the size of half an inch, and it is applied upon the right or left shoulder; a little oil is rubbed before the application, then the brand is heated with spirits of wine, and clapped instantly upon the shoulder, and drawn off; it makes a small impression, and a little scab; the effect of it seldom remains above four or five days.
Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica

Kingston, July 27, 1779.

RUN AWAY, About six weeks past,
The following Negroes, TOM BULL, a creole of Port Royal, a Fisherman; his master, Mr. John Bull, is said to be very fond of him, and he is valued at $500.

CATO, a New Negro, who is about six feet high, with a thick head, and very dark complexion, is wanted by his master, Mr. John Bull.

THOMAS, a Boy, about five years old, was last seen in the vicinity of the courthouse.

WANTED TO DISPOSE OF, a Negro, named LUCY, who is about six feet high, with a thick head, and very dark complexion, is wanted by his master, Mr. John Bull.

Kingston, May 22, 1779.

WANTED TO HIRE, two or three LIGHT NEGRO BOYS, to ride Puss between Kingston and Mayfield Hill, who understand the care of Horses, and are willing to be employed by any person.

Jabez, a Boy, about five feet high, with a thick head, and very dark complexion, is wanted by his master, Mr. John Bull.

Ran away about the 20th February last, from Prospect Park, in this Parish, a NEGRO MAN, named JOE, who is about five feet high, with a thick head, and very dark complexion, is wanted by his master, Mr. John Bull.

Ran away from the Subscriber, in September or October last, a New Negro, named SHARPER, who is about five feet high, with a thick head, and very dark complexion, is wanted by his master, Mr. John Bull.
My photos – National Gallery of Jamaica – by John Henry Schroeter – active 1796 – An East View of Petersfield Estate, St Thomas in the East

A North View of Petersfield Estate, St Thomas in the East
In 1790 William Beckford, who had for many years previously been a proprietor of estates in Jamaica, described life on a sugar plantation.


A sugar-plantation must necessarily have a variety of buildings; and hence at a distance it rather appears like a small town than a contemptible village, inasmuch as in the former are sometimes seen some structures of larger dimensions than others, whereas in the latter they are uniform in simplicity, and have no superior to boast.

The overseer’s house is commonly, if the situation of the land will permit it, upon an eminence, and overlooks his offices, the stock-houses, the hospital, the negro-houses, the cooper’s, wheelwright’s, carpenter’s, and blacksmith’s shops; and last of all, the works, which consist of the mill-house, curing-house, and the trash-houses, which are in number from two to four or five, according to the extent of the plantation, the resources of the materials and the size of the buildings.

In the offices are comprised a stable and a corn-house, a kitchen, a wash-house, a buttery, and a store; with pig-sties, a poultry-yard, a pigeon-house, and in short every convenience and domestic accommodation that indolence may expect, or luxury require; and all these are attended by negroes, not only sufficient for common wants, but who are absolutely idle from a want of occupation, and lethargic from a want of thought.

Of the public and private comforts of an overseer, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter.

The hospital for the reception of the sickly and weak, is distinguished, as before observed, by the appellation of the Hot-house; and of its conduct and abuses much may be said, much has been overlooked, and much, too much, I fear, has been inhumanly forgotten.

This building has a narrow piazza in front, at the end of which is a small apartment for the nurse or hot-house woman, in which are deposited the few medicines that are left upon a plantation, and the different and necessary utensils that sickness may require. In the body of the house is the hall or general dormitory for the weak and convalescent, at the same time that it literally serves as a kitchen, a parlour and all.

On each side of this apartment are two less roomy, in one of which are platforms for the invalids; and in the other (should there not be any in the hall, which is seldom without) is placed a set of stocks, in which the lame negroes are confined, that they may be prevented from rambling at night, and that they may consequently be always at hand to be overlooked and dressed; or in which the runaways are detained for example, or from which brought forth to work or punishment.

The better kind of negroes, when indisposed, are suffered to lie-up in their own houses, whither the doctor repairs to visit them; and as they commonly know, or watch, his time of coming, they take care to keep themselves in readiness to receive him; though, perhaps, the very moment that he shall have mounted his horse and turned his back, they go to work in their grounds [land on which slaves grow their own food], or set off upon a visit to some distant plantation.

William Beckford – Vol II – page 26-27

As the West-India Islands are so subject to hurricanes, and the sugar-works to fire, the first expence therefore cannot be said to be the last; for what may be completed to-day, as I have found to my vexation and loss, may be overturned to-morrow.

If the mill upon an estate be turned by water, and the stream that is to supply it be brought from any considerable distance, be conducted across hollow ways, or over arches, the expence and trouble will naturally increase with the length of work: a dam must be made, and flood-gates erected, to prevent the water running to waste: a stone gutter must be built for its reception; and this must likewise have a sluice to turn it off when it is not wanted to fall upon the wheel: a back-water trench must be dug, and troughs of different kinds made, and erected in proper situations, to convey a stream to the buildings, that serve the still-house, to wash the coppers, and to answer the various purposes of conveniency and cleanliness.

The mill-house is generally a square building, if the mill be turned by water, and an octagon, if worked by mules. The former is, for many reasons, more valuable; the execution is more regularly great; and the saving of the before mentioned animals is an object of the utmost consequence to a plantation.
Some of the villages of the negroes are built in straight lines, and some are confusedly huddled together; but those are infinitely the most picturesque that are surrounded, as many are (particularly those which have not been visited and destroyed by the late storms), by plantain, coco-nut trees, and shrubs. The houses consist of a hall in the middle, to which there are generally two doors, one opposite the other; and in the hall they cook their victuals, sit, chat, and smoke; nor do they hardly ever leave it without a fire. The sleeping-rooms have a communication with this general apartment; and are in number, according to the consequence of the inhabitant, either two, three, or four; one of which is sometimes floored, and sometimes adorned with a Venetian window. In the garden behind them is often another hut, which serves for buttery, store-house, stock-house, or a general repository: and, independently of these, they have pig-sties enclosed, and hogs in proportion to their credit and condition.

All kinds of ground provisions and corn are, as well as the plantain, successfully cultivated in the mountains; but as this is done by the negroes in their own grounds, and on those days which are given to them for this particular purpose, it does not enter into the mass of plantation-labour . . .

The corn will be ripe in about five months; the cocos may be despoiled of the excrescent roots, or fingers, in seven or eight; and the heads, in ten or twelve . . . what makes the coco particularly valuable, and the reason why it should be cultivated in preference to any other provisions of the country, is the
The yam is likewise a very fine vegetable, of which there are two kinds, both cultivated in the same manner, but gathered at different seasons.

The negro yam is rather bitter, and by no means so substantial as the other species, which is distinguished by the appellation of flower-yam, to denote its superiority.

Of the cassavi, there are two kinds, the bitter and the sweet. The first is poisonous; but when the juice is expressed, it becomes a very wholesome, but in its raw state a very insipid, food; but when toasted, it is more palatable . . .

The sweet cassavi is cultivated like the bitter, from cuttings of the branches; is not in the least deleterious, but is not held in the same estimation with the other. The roots only, of both kinds, are the parts eaten; and those of the bitter will remain uninjured in the land for many months, if not for years . . .

The Eboetoyer . . . an agreeable root, and in taste resembles the artichoke bottom.

The sweet potatoe is among the minor provisions of the country; and where the land is loose and favourable, its returns are very great . . .

The plantain-tree, in point of nutrition and use, is, in the line of provisions, the staple of the country; and is certainly one of the most valuable vegetables in the world. From its first plantation until it fructifies, is about nine or ten months . . .

I have known the plantain shoot forth, and fruit become full, according to the term adopted by the negroes, and which expresses the first state in which it is fit for use, in less than eleven, but I believe that the average time in which it attains it, will be found to be between fourteen and fifteen months.

If it be not gathered, or cut, when it shall arrive at its perfect growth, it will be seen by degrees to lose its vivid appearance, to turn from green to yellow, and at last to become quite ripe; in which state it is a delicious sweetmeat, and not unlike the banana in taste, and which tree it resembles in growth and appearance, the stem of the latter being only distinguished, independently of its fruit, by streaks and spots of black.

Of the fruit there are different sizes: those that are produced in the mountains are the largest, and are distinguished by the negroes under the appellation of horse plantains; the smaller kind is called the maiden plantain; and this grows in clusters like the banana, and is preferable, in point of taste, to those of larger dimensions.

When the outside of the husk is taken off, which when boiled makes excellent food for swine, the fruit appears to be of a whitish cast, and is, without any further preparation, either roasted, boiled, or beat-up into a kind of paste, which the white people, as well as the negroes, are accustomed to eat with pepper pot, under the vulgar name of tum-tum.

The manner in which the negroes occupy themselves in their grounds is rather an employment than a toil, particularly if the wood be felled, and the land be cleared: but if they have heavy timber to cut down, the labour will be much, and the danger will be great . . .

They generally make choice of such spots of land for their grounds as are encompassed by lofty mountains . . .

Some negroes will plant, and keep clean, a very large portion of land; some will have but little, and will but negligently attend to that; and others will not cultivate any at all, but will entirely depend upon the labours of the industrious, and destroy in proportion to their indolence.

They prepare their land, and put in their different crops on the Saturdays that are given them, and they bring home their provisions at night; and if their grounds be at a considerable distance from the plantation, as they often are to amount of five or seven miles, or more, the journey backwards and forwards makes this rather a day of labour and fatigue, than of enjoyment and rest; but if, on the contrary, they be within any tolerable reach, it may be said to partake of both.

On Sunday they carry their riches to market, for such the produce of a good ground to an industrious negro may with propriety be called; and if they have only this day in the week, as is commonly the case throughout the crop, they must go to the mountains early in the morning to search for provisions, that they may be in time to barter or to vend them at the well-known town, and to which they will repair, although it should be ten, or even a more considerable number of miles from the plantation; and it is astonishing what immense weights they will carry upon their heads at this extended distance, with what cheerfulness they
will undertake the length, and with what spirit and perseverance they will overcome the fatigue, of the journey.

An East View of Petersfield Estate, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica – detail

William Beckford – Vol I – page 47-48

The ground in the month of July, August, September, and October, having been previously invigorated where it was necessary, by flying pens (or moving folds), or by manure, (according to the nature of the situation, and the convenience of the carriage) deposited in the cane-holes which are prepared for the reception of the plant, a gang of negroes is set in, a day or two before, to cut as many canes from another piece (and the more contiguous, the more convenient will it be of course to transport them) as will employ the wains, mules, and husbandmen, for two or three days at least: for, as labour in the West-Indies is exorbitantly dear, the least loss of time is consequently felt; and every delay should, by care and foresight, be as much as possible avoided.

The cane hole is from three to four feet wide, seldom more than eight inches deep, although the banks that are raised from the earth that is excavated, gives them the appearance of more considerable depth. Two canes, or parts of canes, are laid in longitudinally, under the banks, one on each side, or two pretty close together in the centre of the hole; and behind these rows is generally planted corn: they are afterwards covered with a thin layer of earth; and in five or six days, if any rain shall fall, they will begin to shoot from the eyes; and in about four or five weeks they will require, and ought to have, their first weeding. Their future clearings will greatly depend upon the succession, or dereliction, of the seasons. The second time they are gone through, the bank is partly taken down; the third time, made level: and great care should be observed, that the trenches be kept open and clean; and whatever trash shall at that time happen to be upon them, should be gently removed, as a violent plucking will make them bleed, and in some measure check, their future vegetation.
Between one and two o’clock, the clouds begin to brew, the sky is obscured, and the heat increases in proportion to the obnebulation of the sun; the atmosphere is, for a time, peculiarly heavy; the thermometer rises from eighty to ninety degrees; the clouds are black, the day obscured, the winds asleep, and Nature still. A distant thunder breaks the silence; the lightning becomes frequent; the winds arise; the sea awakes; the woodlands murmur; and the canes, the plantains, and the palms, begin their plaintive whispers. The rain descends in spouts; the torrents roar among the mountains; the rivers swell; and their accumulations sweep through, and overflow, the plains. In this noisy conjunction and awful turmoil of the elements, the reflective mind is buried, for a time, in the silent contemplation of the scene; and affects to feel, at least, if not to be romantically absorbed in the anticipation of the sublime.

The thunder and the lightning, the wind and the rain, very seldom continue longer, in the seasons, than two or three hours in a day (although I have known them last, in the month of October, and without intermission, for three together); the sky, afterwards, by perceptible degrees, becomes serene, the atmosphere clear; and the nights are calm and settled.

These periodical descents of the deluge (for in Jamaica you can hardly call the rains by a milder name), and their consequent effects, introduce a great variety of magnificent and splendid masses in the clouds, which breaking before the thunder, and illuminated by the solar rays, which cause successive rainbows to glitter with the full reflex of their prismatic dyes . . .

About November, or so soon, in short, as the dry weather shall be set in, if the estate cannot spare a sufficiency of hands, a gang of hired negroes is engaged to fell as many acres of land as are necessary for a plantain walk, or for any other provisions of which it may stand in want, and which it would be prudent to enlarge every season, let the weather have been ever so favourable, and let the real abundance upon the ground be ever so great.
It is now time for the overseer to enquire how the coopers and the sawyers have been employed, in splitting staves and shingles in the bosom of the mountains; and to contrive a road of the most easy access and carriage, over which the negroes and the mules, and if possible the carts, may bring them out.

Having already described the particular appearance of the roads among the mountains, I shall consequently suppose that these necessary articles are deposited at the works, and that the sawyers have been likewise forward in their operations, and that the plantation is furnished with the heading for the hogsheads, with boards for the coolers, and with cogwood for the mills; and that the wheel-wrights have a sufficiency of every article that is necessary for the making and reparation of ploughs, of waggons, and of carts; that the bricks are ready for the hanging of the coppers and of stills, the mortar made, the attendants busy, and the masons have cleared away the rubbish, and that they have already begun their work; that the carpenters are likewise industriously employed where their labour is required, and that every thing is in a bustle; that the scene about the house is alive; that impatience and anxiety are imprinted upon every countenance; and that every exertion is made by men, women, and children, to prepare for that harvest which is to reward, if their master be humane and generous, their continued toil and perseverance; or, on the other hand, should the seasons be unfavourable, which is to deceive their labour, and to disappoint the sanguine and perhaps ill-founded expectations of the planter.

In December, the first ships are expected to arrive from England; and those who stand in need of fresh stores, and are in want of provisions, anticipate their appearance with no small impatience and anxiety.

http://collections.stanford.edu/images/bin/detail?cid=BLRRM_21967&fn=1 – Maps of the three Counties of Jamaica, by Thomas Craskell and James Simpson, published 1763 – County of Surry (later Surrey) – inset
The different wharfs are now a scene of bustle and confusion: the boats passing to and from the different shipping, the wains that are continually clattering along the roads, the noise of the cartmen, the cracking of their whips, and the strings of negroes that are seen passing and repassing upon a variety of avocations; and, last of all, the groups of white people whom curiosity, friendship, or trade, assemble together; afford an agreeable scene of tumult and variety, to which the hurry and confusion of the attending waggons and carts, with the disorder of the cattle, the drivers, and the boys, do not a little contribute.

The traveller is now buried, wherever he passes, in successive columns of dust; his ears are continually saluted with noise and uproar; and the air resounds, as at the wharfs, to the rumbling of carts, the creaking of wheels, and the thunder of the whip. The whole country appears to be alive; and the general activity and impatience seem to increase in proportion to the approach of the expected harvest; and which the farmer in England, and the peasant in all countries, naturally feel at the expectation of profit and abundance.

It is now that the overseer is anxious to collect the strength of the estate; that he sends out in search of the absent negroes, and is vigilant in bringing back to the plantation those that have absconded, or that have been long considered as runaways; and the pursuit of these will furnish some descriptions of mountain particulars, which I shall take the liberty to mention.

The negroes sent in this search are generally the most confidential people upon a plantation; and in this particular occupation, and patient pursuit, it is amazing the perseverance and sagacity which some of them have, by constant habit and perseverance, acquired.
One negro, and only armed perhaps with a cutlass or a spear, will range over the mountains, and continue perhaps his search for days, without any dread of those negroes who are idle from disposition, or thieves from principle; and who skulk amidst the shadows of the forest, erect their temporary huts, and kindle their fires, sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; and who, after a short absence from the estate, become suspicious and artful, and make use of every feint to circumvent the successful endeavours of the pursuers. They sometimes climb the most lofty mountains, and ascend the height of the tallest trees, from which they throw their eagle-sight upon the distant scenes below. They sometimes hide themselves behind rocks, or bury themselves for days in caverns, and only issue out like wild beasts at night, to outrage and to thieve. They erect a hut and make a fire one day, upon some particular elevation, and the next day they destroy the one and suppress the other; and thus they keep building and destroying until they flatter themselves that they have eluded any farther search.

They hang for a long time about the provision-grounds belonging to the estate; but so soon as they suspect that their depredations have been discovered, and that every exertion is made to bring them home, they retire further into the mountains, and sometimes lose themselves in the depths of the forest, or come out upon some plantation to which they are strangers.

They frequently hear the pursuer’s voice; and while they remain concealed above, amidst the foliage of the trees, they observe him pass with caution underneath, and try to trace their foot-steps by the turn of a leaf, or the almost invisible print of their feet; and it is astonishing to see with what patience and skill he will follow this daily chase, and how certain he is in general of success. If he once overtake the object of pursuit, resistance, as it would be unavailing, is seldom made; but when it is, it is often attended with danger, if not with death.

In his solitary progress through the mountains, if he be early in the morning, his ears are stunned by the incessant gabling of the crows, by the screaming of the parrots, or the soft and melancholy murmur of the doves . . .

Between Christmas and the actual commencement of the crop, the negroes are chiefly employed in what are called odd jobs, and are consequently much divided. Some are giving the last finish to the exterior parts of the cane-fields; some are cleaning the intervals; and some, the weakly ones in particular, are set to chop the pastures, which is commonly the last thing done on a plantation, excepting, perhaps, it be the putting in order and fencing in those places that may be subject to the trespass of the cattle, in either the mountains or the plains.

Every object about the plantation, but especially around the buildings, appears at this time of the year to be alive: and the beating of the coppers, the clanking of the iron, the driving of the cogs, the wedging of the gudgeons, the repetition of the hammers, and the hooping of the casks, are the cheerful precursors of the approaching of the crop.

I shall just observe, before I proceed any farther in my account of the crop, that although the negroes are at that season permitted to eat as many canes as they may choose, yet is this privilege denied them in the field before the actual commencement of the harvest.

They are allowed hot liquor from the coppers, but are not suffered to take (excepting now and then, as a particular indulgence, or in case of sickness and convalescence) any sugar from the coolers or the hogsheads.

They are sometimes given rum from the stills; but as new spirit is particularly unwholesome, nay, it would be better if some other liquor could be substituted in its place or such at least as having lost its fiery particles, may have been improved by care, and softened by age.
The labourers are now prepared for the expected harvest: they hold themselves in readiness in their respective houses to obey the lively summons; the shell [Conch shell] is heard with a shrill alarm to call them forth; it echoes among the hills, and resounds across the plains; it seems to swell with a cheerful blast, and to invite to profit and abundance. The overseer is anxious to give his orders to commence the crop; he is the first in the field: the driver [head slave of the gang] follows with his knotted stick, and his whip flung carelessly across his shoulder: the latter walks briskly to the place of labour; the negroes follow, and he shows them upon what part of the piece [cane field] to begin.

The tops of the canes are now in constant tremor; the yellow swarths are strewed upon the ground; and vigour and dispatch are observed in every body, and apparent in every hand.

The driver, with an authoritative voice, cautions them to cut the canes close, and not to waste too much of the top; to separate those that are tainted, and to discard those joints that have been injured by the rats: he keeps them in a regular string before him, and takes care to chequer the able with the weak, that the work may not be too light for the first, nor too heavy for the last. He intimidates some, and encourages others; and too often, perhaps, a tyrant in authority, he imposes upon the timid, and suffers the sturdy to escape.

Behind the cutters are observed the rows of canes that glow with a bright and golden yellow; the tyers proceed, and bind them up: the mules now traverse to collect or carry off their heavy loads; the cattle are spread over the lower parts of the hill, and feed upon the tops that are left behind, while the wains remain at bottom in quiet expectation of that freight which is to reward the master, by the labour of the oxen . . .

The common practice at the beginning of the crop, is to set-in all the able hands for one or two days previously to the putting about the mill, to cut as many canes as possible, that it may continue, when once set in motion, a large and regular weekly execution; which, if the estate be not well handed, and abundant in cattle, it will be found very difficult to do.
So soon as the canes are cut and tied, they are carried upon very hilly and steep estates, by mules; upon flat land and easy elevations, by wains: the burdens are deposited at the front of the mill-house, into which two or three weakly or new negroes convey them, and where they are placed upon a table, or frame, from which the feeders can with conveniency remove them, and afterwards insert between the canes of the mill, by which, and the revolution of the rollers, their juice is expressed.
http://jcb.lunaimaging.com/luna/servlet/allCollections – Art de Rafiner le Sucre by M Duhamel du Monceau, published 1764 – Sugar Boiling House
The liquor is conveyed through a wooden gutter, some of which are lined with lead, to the receiver in the boiling-house; and from thence, as before observed, into the clarifier, where it has its temper of lime: it is skimmed and cleaned; and when sufficiently purified, it is handed forward to another copper of a proportionable diminution of size, and so on to the smaller copper, and last of all to the teach, where the liquor begins to granulate; and from whence, when sufficiently boiled, it is discharged into the coolers, of which three, that are capable of holding as much sugar as will fill a hogshead each, that is to say, as much as will receive four or five times the contents of the teach, if it be of ninety gallons, are as many as will be found necessary upon any plantation that does not work more than a single side of coppers; if both sides be worked, the different utensils must be consequently doubled.

These coolers were formerly composed of copper; but they are now almost universally made of wood, and cedar is the best that can be applied to this purpose.

When the sugar is sufficiently cool and firm to admit removal, or potting, it is conveyed by basons [sic] of copper, or by pails, into the curing-house adjoining, where empty hogsheads are placed upon the ranges for its reception.

The skimmings, or the dirt and trash that rise to the surface of the coppers, are conducted to the still-house, where mixed with dunder, or the sediment of the stills, molasses, water, and oftentimes the juice of the tainted canes – it is, with these different ingredients, commixed and set, and then left in the cisterns to ferment.

When the fermentation has subsided, the liquor is racked off into the still; and when it descends in spirit, this first running is called low wines, and is deposited in a large butt constructed for this particular purpose; from whence it is again passed into another vessel of smaller dimensions; and at the next condensation and fall of the vapour, it comes out rum.

The crop of spirit will depend much upon the state of the canes, and the care with which those that have been tainted, shall have been selected: the general average is deemed to be one puncheon of rum for every two hogsheads of sugar; but that still-house, as I have before observed, and must again repeat, is unskilfully managed, or negligently attended, or there must be some particular property in the cane, or in the land upon which it has been cultivated, if it does not give a more considerable proportion.

As the boilers at the different coppers, when flush, or partially boiling, are obliged to be upon their feet to attend them at least twelve hours out of the four-and-twenty, if there be not a sufficient quantity of negroes upon the estate to make up three spells, and thus relieve them – it is said that they often suffer from the hardness of the stones, or the firmness of the ground, upon which they stand, and that hence disorders of the legs are frequently induced . . .

The common size of a sugar-hogshead is forty-two inches in height, and thirty-six across the head; and it is not an easy matter to make one of those dimensions, when well cured and quite full, to contain more than fifteen hundred weight of good sugar: if filled with that which is manufactured upon hilly and dry land, it will very seldom turn out so much. If therefore two hundred weight more be forced into the cask, already full, it is easy to conceive how much the hoops and the staves will be strained, and consequently how liable to be broken in the cartage to the wharf, or when screwed into the hold of a ship.

The cooperers are now busily employed in heading-up the hogsheads, making tight the puncheons, and rolling the casks. The waggoners and the carts are attending at the curing-house and the still-house, to receive their different loads: the first of which will in general carry four hogsheads, or five puncheons, and are drawn by ten oxen; the latter, two hogsheads, or three puncheons, and are worked by eight; for at the first carting-down of the produce, I suppose the roads to be good and even, the cattle strong, and the weather dry and pleasant.

You now hear the heavy waggons thundering along the roads, and behold the unwieldy oxen with a momentary exertion increase their pace upon the level land, or see their motion impelled by the following impulse down the gentle dissension of a hill, the chains rattling, the whips echoing, and the drivers shouting; the dust now rising and ascending in columns, and then like a mist dispersing in the air; while the horses, the herds, and the flocks, disturbed by the confusion of sound, and the approaching uproar, scud across the pastures, and then return and erect their heads, as, if in defiance of what so late alarmed
them; and again recline their necks and browse the scanty pasturage of the land, which appears as white with dust, or of a russet hue, occasioned by the continued dryness of the weather.

*William Beckford – Vol II – page 93-95*

When they arrive at the wharf, and the casks are either rolled into the stores or sheds, or into a convenient situation for the boats to receive them, the scene is various, lively, and amusing.

Here stand the patient oxen, and the wains are empty or unloading; here a heap of logwood, there a pile of boards; and on one side a mass of straws and shingles; while in the intermediate space between that and the sea is observed a confusion of hogsheads and puncheons rolling out from the different buildings, and by degrees encumbering the wharf, which, projecting into the water, appears to be a prominent feature of the general scenery: the spiral masts of the crafts on each side all rise or fall, according to the depression of the sea; while the boats become more and more stationary, in proportion to the completion of their loading; and these sail off with fresh breeze (the waves murmuring under and breaking around the keels) to the different vessels that expect them in the harbour, or stand off and on to receive the last trip of stores, or to wait for their passengers in the offing.

*William Beckford – Vol II – page 113-120*

While the wains are carrying down the produce to the barguadier, it may easily be imagined how many situations they must pass, that are beautiful from retirement, delightful from the lapse of rivers and the winding of the roads, magnificent from the mountains and the rocks, tremendous from the roaring of the torrents and the headlong fall of cataracts, or sublime from the extremities of distance, the washing of the surge, and the interminable confines of the ocean.

In some parts are observed temporary hovels for the logwood-chippers, whose axes are heard to resound from the depths of the wood, and who, divided into different groups, and traversing the glooms in various directions, present a scene of bustle and variety that would not disgrace a better description, nor be unworthy of the sketches of an artist.

Some are felling the heavy timber, and some with their bills are lopping the branches; while others, sitting upon the roots or stumps, are chipping off the bark, while their children are scrambling in little parties around them.

The huts that are erected for this purpose, are removed from place to place, according to the convenience of the labour; and wherever situated, have a very simple and rural appearance. On the sides of the roads are heaped-up the wood as fast as chipped, and where it lies in readiness for the waggons and carts, and with which they shall be loaded while the weather continues dry; for so soon as the rains set-in, from the frequency of their journeys to and from the wharfs, they are very soon cut up, and not only made distressingly heavy, but very often almost impassable.

So soon as all the produce shall be carted down, that is sufficiently cured, it becomes necessary to push on the remainder of the crop, while the weather continues favourable, and for fear that the canes should suffer from drought.

If the rains do not set in until the latter end of April, but the country be in the meantime refreshed by temporary showers, the harvest will, by that time, draw very near to conclusion; but if the seasons should begin about this period, it will be prudent to draw off the negroes to the supply of the old, or a plantation of new canes; which, if completed with expedition, and a few dry weeks should supervene, the process of sugar-making will soon be terminated; and the planter should think himself fortunate in having had so favourable a year.

If the crop shall be finished in April, and all the following month shall happen to be dry, very little produce shall then be left upon the ranges of the curing-house; and of course the cattle will be much relieved, when the rains shall be heavy and continual: and it is therefore of infinite consequence that the mill should be put about as early in the year as possible, that the heavy part of the harvest may be finished while the weather is dry and favourable, the produce carried down while the roads are good, and that the canes, as before observed, may have an early cleaning. It is certainly better to lose a little at the beginning of the crop, than to run the risk of losing much at the end: besides, that estate which is late in its operations one year, will be of consequence somewhat backward the next.

The process of sugar-making is certainly pleasing when the weather is favourable, and the canes are yielding well: and an estate that makes two hundred hogsheads of sugar, in favourable seasons, one year
with another, is boiling at the rate of fifteen hogsheads a week; and other properties, more or less, according to their contraction or extent; but when the contrary happens, no operation can be more dull and tedious.


When the oxen are creeping with a scarcely-perceptible motion through the deep and heavy intervals, or their necks are shaken and shoulders wrung by the irregular and distressing and slippery ruts; or when their progress is impeded by the immense stones which have been rolled in to pave those places that were uncommonly bad, and from which the rains have washed the mould, and the wheels so constantly removed then – when they labour under such disadvantages as these, at the risk of their limbs, if not their lives, a few paltry hogsheads of sugar will hardly make amends for their distress, or for the other losses that are the consequence of a late and tedious harvest.

At the setting-in of the rains, every thing about the works looks idle, cold, and cheerless: the negroes are indolent and uncomfortable; the mules droop, and the carts are very slow in the deposit of their burdens. Sometimes, perhaps, for a solitary load of canes to be seen at the mill: it often waits many hours together for a scanty supply: the coppers are not half full of liquor; and that perhaps is sobbing over a declining fire, or perhaps all but one or two are entirely empty; and the boilers lounging about, or fallen asleep. The sugar begins to give; the curing-house is wet and clammy; the mill-yard is full of trash and filth; and in short the face of Nature, and the works of man, seem to put on a melancholy change.

At this uncomfortable conclusion of the harvest, and amidst the pauses which the delay of canes so constantly occasions, there are impressions that awaken the mind to a particular craft of reflection, and in which, when contrasted with the lately regular and active scene, I have frequently indulged.

There is something extremely affecting, when there is but little water upon the wheel, in observing its revolving motion, and in attending to the melancholy murmur of the rills that gently fall from one bucket into another; while perhaps some poor afflicted mourner is heard, in one corner of the mill-house, pouring out her complaints in gentle sighs and falling tears, in sad responses to the lingering drops; and while she
rests upon her empty basket, and lives perhaps unfriended, unconnected, and unnoticed, upon the plantation, the thoughts of her distant country, her connexions, and her friends, at once rush upon her mind, and excite her thoughts into tempests, and increase to torrents the gushing of her tears; for, although insensibility appears to be the characteristic of an African negro, yet are there many who have their feelings as exquisitely alive to the melting impressions of tenderness and sorrow, as those who are distinguished by a better fortune, and have not to encounter the disgraceful persecution of power, or to bend the neck beneath the humiliating depression of bondage and despair.

When the mill is at work at night, there is something affecting in the songs of the women who feed it; and it appears somewhat singular, that all their tunes, if tunes they can be called, are of a plaintive craft. Sometimes you may hear one soft, complaining voice; and now a second and a third chime in; and presently, as if inspired by the solemn impressions of night, and by the gloomy objects that are supposed to dwell around, a full chorus is heard to swell upon the ear, and then to die away again to the first original tone.

The style of singing among the negroes is uniform: and this is confined to the women; for the men very seldom, excepting upon extraordinary occasions, are ever heard to join in chorus. One person begins first, and continues to sing alone; but at particular periods others join: there is not, indeed, much variety in their songs; but their intonation is not the less perfect than their time.

A moon-light night upon a plantation is remarkably beautiful, and causes every object to assume a solemn and a romantic appearance. The overseer’s house, with the open piazza in front, illuminated by the rays which play upon the walls, or dart through the doors and windows; the solemn and the spreading shades which are occasioned by the works; the reflection of the arches, over which the water is carried to the mill; an immense fig-tree, whose top is silvered with the playful light, whose branches receive and divide rays, and whose massy shadows extend for a considerable distance upon the ground, and among which a solitary steer perhaps, having broken from the pens, or strayed from the fattening pasture, is just perceived to shake his head, impatient of the mosquitoes that swarm around . . .

My photo, September 2008 – Mount Olive, St Thomas in the Vale – dusk

Returning to St Thomas in the Vale – from 1766 to 1779 Malcolm Laing was a Member for St Thomas in the Vale in the Jamaica House of Assembly – London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 15 Jan 1831, page 4-5.
Malcolm Laing (1718-1781) was an Orcadian, and one of a number of Orcadians who settled in Jamaica.


... He went to Jamaica and acquired there an immense fortune. His name is still remembered and held in respect in that colony ... 

Monument in memory of Malcolm Laing – Inscription:

Near this Marble lie interred the Remains of Malcolm Laing Esquire, who departed this Life the 1st of August, 1781, Aged 63 years.
Also the Remains of Eleanor his Wife the daughter of Mrs Mary Sharpe, who departed this Life the 29th of September 1747, Aged 35 Years.

This Monument is erected in gratitude to their Memory and as a lasting testimony of their Worth by John Jaques Esqr.

John Jaques was one of Malcolm Laing’s executors and one of his partners in the Kingston merchant firm, Laing, Jaques & Fisher. Among the people Malcolm Laing mentioned in his Will were his only surviving child Robert Laing, illegitimate son of his Jamaica ‘housekeeper’, and his brother Robert Laing of Kirkwall in Orkney, Scotland. He also asked his executors when disposing of his property to give ‘preference to such purchasers as my negroes shall chose’.

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/wills.htm – Malcolm Laing of Kingston, county of Surry, Jamaica – Will dated 14 October 1778 – includes:

... my executors hereafter named or any three of them to sell and dispose of all my houses lands and negroes for the most money they will bring giving the preference to such purchasers as my negroes shall chose for their masters and mistresses ...

https://archive.org/details/westindianbookpl00oliv_0 – West Indian Bookplate: being a first list of plates relating to those islands, by Vere Langford Oliver, published 1914 – page 52 – Malcolm Laing

441. “MALCOLM LAING, TRIN. COLL. CAMBRIDGE” Arms. (F., 17,417.)
Arms.—Argent, three piles in chief Azure.
Of Kingston, Receiver-Gen. of J. 1763, died 1781, aged 63. (Archer, 85.)

http://collections.stanford.edu/images/bin/detail?cid=BLRRM_21967&fn=1 – Maps of the three Counties of Jamaica, by Thomas Craskell and James Simpson, published 1763 – County of Surry (later Surrey) – inset
Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica


TO BE SOLD,

145 – TO BE SOLD.

A RUN OF LAND, in the Parish of St. Mary’s, 840 Acres of Wood Land, containing Ninety Acres, now in cultivation of NAHANerin, Esq., – The same Lease expires the 26th day of October next.

R. BENNETT, Clk. Vellary.

TO BE SOLD,

A RUN, in the Parish of St. Mary’s, patented in the year 1755, by Morrice Fett, near Gladsheath and bounding on its river: the re-assy of the land in the hands of Mr. John Jeffries, Esq., of St. Mary’s, who has possession of the said land under a long. Any application has been made to purchase, but the title could not be given, now little can, as any person may be informed, by applying to

YATE & SWANSBRECK

Surviving Copartners.

TO BE SOLD,

A COOPERPATHER of hewn timber, Yate & Co. being 150 years old, by the death of Mr. John Swansbreek, hence, all Parishes who have dealings with them, are required to apply to the said Thomas Yate, Esq. on Spring Valley, one of the furnishing cooperators, and those interested therein, are desired to pay the same to him, and the same to be sold to the highest bidder, and to be sold for the benefit of those Parishes who have no supplies, and to be sold for the benefit of

JAMES THOMSON, Surveyor Cooper.
Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica

Bryan Edwards in the House of Commons on 6 April 1797 referred to the introduction of ‘many humane and excellent provisions’ in the 1781 and later Jamaica Slave Laws.

... in the year 1781, [the House of Assembly] entered seriously on the revisal and amendment of the system or code of their slave laws, reducing and consolidating the whole into one act, and introducing many humane and excellent provisions for rendering the condition of the negroes much more secure and comfortable than formerly. These provisions have been enlarged and extended by subsequent laws: the last of which is the consolidated act of 1792 ... Being desirous, before I left Jamaica [1792/93], of ascertaining what effect this, and the other regulations, had produced in that island, I moved in the house of assembly for returns of all the trials of slaves, with the convictions and punishments had thereon, for five years preceding. It was known that the island contained upwards of 240,000 slaves: yet out of the whole number, it appeared that only 52 executions had taken place in all that time, or, at least, in four years and nine months – a proof of such lenity in the administration of criminal law, as I believe, is seldom equalled in the freest of nations of Europe!

Below – the 1788 Consolidated Slave Act of Jamaica

An Act to repeal and Act, intituled, “An Act to repeal several Acts and Clauses of Acts respecting Slaves, and for the better Order and Government of Slaves, and for other Purposes;” and also to repeal the several Acts and Clauses of Acts which were repealed by the Act intituled as aforesaid; and for consolidating and bringing into one Act the several Laws relating to Slaves, and for giving them further Protection and Security; for altering the Mode of Trial of Slaves charged with Capital Offences; and for other Purposes.

Clause 1 – Preambles – Clause 2-80 – Summaries

Note – below in Italic = information from the Clause to which a Summary refers

2. Proprietors or possessors of plantations, &c to allot a sufficient quantity of land for every Slave, and to be allowed sufficient time to work the same – Owners or possessors of plantations, &c to plant one acre for every four Slaves, in provisions, over and above the ground aforesaid, under the penalty of 50l.

3. Where lands are not fit for the above purposes, Slaves to be otherwise provided for.

4. Slaves not to be turned away by their owners, on account of age, sickness, &c – Such Slaves to be furnished with the necessaries of life, and not suffered to go about, and be burthensome to others, under the penalty of ten pounds.

5. Slaves to be decently clothed by their owners, &c once in every year.

6. Owners of Slaves to endeavour to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion.

7. Owners, &c at the time of giving in their Slaves, &c the justices and vestrymen, shall also give in an account of the quantity of land in ground provisions, over and above the Negro grounds, under the penalty of 50l – And also to give in an account of the clothing actually served to each Slave.

8. Slave taking up runaways, or such as my have committed thefts, &c or informing against persons harbouring them, to be rewarded.

9. The killing or apprehending of Slaves in actual rebellion, how to be rewarded.
10. Persons wilfully mutilating Slaves, to be fined and imprisoned – Mutilated Slaves, in certain cases, to be declared free – Justices and vestry-men to inquire into such mutilations, and prosecute the offenders, at the expense of the parish – Justices, & to commence suit against owners, &c of such Slaves, for recovery of the costs of such suits.

11. Justices of the peace, on information made that Slaves are mutilated and confined are to issue their warrants to bring such Slaves before them.


13. Persons wantonly or cruelly beating Slaves, or confining them without sufficient support, how punishable.

14. Owners, &c of Slaves restrained in punishment arbitrarily. That no Slave, on any plantation or settlement, or in any of the workhouses or gaols in this island, shall receive more than ten lashes at one time, and for one offence, unless the owner, attorney [etc], or overseer of such plantation or settlement having such slave in his care, or supervisor of such workhouse [slave prison], or such gaol, shall be present; and that no such owner, attorney [etc], or overseer, supervisor or gaol-keeper, shall on any account, punish a Slave with more than thirty-nine lashes at any one time, and for no offence, under the penalty of five pounds for every offence, to be recovered against the person directing or permitting such punishment.

15. Justices and vestry to provide for the support of disabled Negroes, &c by a tax – How to be disposed of.

16. No Slave to travel without a ticket – Penalty on owners, &c of Slaves, who shall neglect to give such ticket – Slaves travelling without a ticket, how punishable – Penalty on justices neglecting their duty herein.

17. Slaves to be allowed holidays at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide – Penalty on such as allow their Slaves any holiday other than those above directed.

18. Slaves to be allowed one day in every fortnight (exclusive of Sundays) to cultivate their own grounds. Except during crop time

19. Time allowed Slaves for breakfast, dinner, &c. Half an hour for breakfast, and two hours dinner – no Slaves shall be compelled to any manner of field work before the hour of five in the morning, or after the hour of seven at night, except during the time of crop.

20. Penalty on such as suffer unlawful assemblies of Slaves beating their military drums, or blow their horns or shells on their respective properties.

21. Officers, civil or military, to enter any plantation, &c to suppress unlawful assemblies of Slaves.

22. Overseers, &c who suffer such assemblies to be imprisoned – Proviso.

23. Slaves not to have in their custody firearms, &c – Proviso.

24. Slaves suffering violence to any White person, how punishable – Proviso. Upon due and proper proof, shall, upon conviction, be punished with death, or confinement to hard labour for life, or otherwise, as the court shall in their discretion think proper to inflict.

25. Punishment on Slaves harbouring Slaves. On conviction before two justices, suffer such punishment as the court shall think proper to inflict.

26. Slaves found at the distance of eight miles from the plantation, &c to which they belong, without a ticket, to be deemed runaway.

27. Persons apprehending runaway Slaves, how to be rewarded

28. How Slaves, apprehended as runaways, are to be disposed of Convey him, her, or them to their respective owner, employer or manager, or the work-house of such parish – in case there being no work-house, to the next gaol – Tickets given to Slaves, to be for no longer than a calendar month.

29. Penalty on owners, &c of Slaves, not giving in an account of their runaways to the custos, &c for not transmitting the same to the clerk, for not entering the same in a book to be kept for that purpose.

30. Owners, &c to give in an account of the births and deaths of Slaves annually.

31. Overseers, &c neglecting to give in as aforesaid, the owner to stop the penalty incurred thereby, out of his wages.

32. Surgeons on plantations, &c to give in to vestry an account of such Slaves as may die, expressing the nature and causes thereof – Overseers to be allowed 20s. for every Slave born on their settlement, and alive at the time of giving in.

33. Penalty on free Negroes, &c granting false tickets to Slaves.
34. White persons granting such tickets, how punishable.
35. Keepers of gaols, or workhouses to advertise the names &c of all runaways in their custody, weekly – and to detain such Slaves until they be paid their Fees – Gaolers or workhouse-keepers to attest, upon oath, the charges for mile-money, &c.
36. And to give daily, to every Slave confined, a sufficient quantity of provisions.
37. Runaway Slaves remaining in their gaols or workhouses twelve months, how to be disposed of.
38. Runaways dying in gaol within twelve months, the fees to be paid by the public.
39. Gaol-keepers not to hire out runaway or other Slaves committed to their custody.
40. Slaves run away six months, to be tried and punished at the discretion of two justices.
41. Slaves pretending to have supernatural powers; or convicted in the practice of obeah, how punishable. 
   Upon conviction – suffer death or such other punishment as the court shall think proper to direct.

Above – obeah – described by Bryan Edwards as ‘witchcraft and sorcery’ brought to Jamaica by African slaves.

42. Slaves administering poison to any one, although it may not have the effect to kill, to suffer death.
43. Slaves having in their custody large quantities of fresh meat, unknown to their owners, &c how punishable.
44. Slaves stealing horned cattle, how to be punished.
45. Slaves guilty of crimes, how to be tried.
46. Jurors to serve at Slave Courts, under the penalty of five pounds – Slaves to be respited until the pleasure of the commander in chief is known.
47. No less than three justices necessary to form a court for the trial of Slaves for capital offences.
48. Execution to be in a public part of the parish, and with due solemnity.
49. Slaves giving false evidence, how to be punished.
50. Penalty on free Negroes, & for suffering unlawful assemblies of Slaves at their houses, 7c.
51. Clerk of the peace to attend trials of Slaves, and record the proceedings.
52. Five days notice of the trial of Slaves to be given to their owners, &c.
53. Slaves given up for trial by the owner, &c and sentenced to die, to be valued by the justices, &c not exceed the sum of forty pounds for each Slave executed, or sentenced to hard labour during life.
54. And such valuations to be paid by the receiver-general.
55. Magistrates to issue warrants to apprehend Slaves returning from transportation.

Above – transportation – for more serious crimes which did not receive the death penalty slaves were sentenced to transportation. In the early 19th century it appears that most of the slaves who received this sentence were transported to Cuba and perhaps also in the 18th century.

56. Magistrates empowered to cause Slaves to be punished for inferior crimes, &c as to their judgment shall seem meet.
57. Workhouse-keepers to demand and take into their custody all runaways detained in gaols, on paying the gaol fees, &c.
58. Owners of Slaves sentenced to the workhouse, to be paid for their labour.
59. Magistrates are not to commit runaways to gaol, if a workhouse is in the parish.
60. Horses, mares, mules, asses, or geldings & the property of Slaves, to be taken up and sold at the most public place in the parish.
61. Penalty on owners, &c. of Slaves, permitting them to keep horses, &c on their plantations, &c.
62. Persons giving in an account of Slaves, &c to make oath, that none of which belongs to any Slave.
63. Slaves not allowed to purchase horses, &c – Penalty on persons selling or giving such stock to Slaves.
64. Penalty on owners, &c for concealing Slaves against whom warrants are issued.
65. Slaves attempting or conspiring to depart this island, or aiding or abetting others in so doing, how punishable. 
   Shall suffer death, or such punishment as the said court shall think proper to direct.
66. Penalty on free people [of colour] for assisting Slaves in going off the island.
67. Penalty on White persons for aiding or abetting Slaves to go off this island.
68. Persons offending to be proceeded against, although the principals be not convicted.
69. Overseers not to leave the estates under their care on Negro holidays.
70. Free people [of colour] to give in their names, and the manner they obtained freedom, to vestry, to be recorded – Free people to carry about them a certificate, and wear the badge of their freedom.

71. Free people, not attending the vestry as aforesaid, to shew their right to freedom, how punishable.

72. Expenses of searches for vouchers of freedom, to be paid by the parish.

73. Martial law not to prevent justices, &c doing their duty under the law.

74. Slaves not to be mutilated or maimed for any offence whatsoever.

75. Penalty on marshals and constables wilfully suffering Slaves to escape.

76. Slaves not to hunt with lances, guns, &c except in the company of their owners, &c.

77. Consignees, &c of Slaves, not to sell such on shipboard, but to provide a proper inclosure on shore – and to endeavour not to separate relations.

78. Slaves committing crimes previous to the passing of this act, shall be tried and punished as directed by the law then in force.

79. How penalties shall be recovered and disposed of.

80. Continuance of this act.

*British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica – 1780 and 1781 – images from advertisements for slaves for sale, for hire, and for run away slaves*
... when at any time, sudden or untimely death overtakes any of their [Negro] companions ... they never fail to impute it to the malicious contrivances and diabolical arts of some practitioners in Obeah, a term of African origin, signifying sorcery or witchcraft, the prevalence of which, among many of their countrymen, all the Negroes most firmly believe...

Having mentioned the practice of Obeah, the influence of which has so powerful an effect on the Negroes, as to bias, in a considerable degree, their general conduct, dispositions, and manners, I shall conclude the present chapter by presenting to my readers the following very curious account of this extraordinary superstition, and its effects: it was transmitted by the Agent of Jamaica to the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council, and by them subjoined to their report on the slave trade; and if I mistake not, the public are chiefly indebted for it to the diligent researches, and accurate pen, of Mr Long.

“The term Obeah, Obiah, or Obia (for it is variously written) we conceive to be the adjective, and Obe or Obi the noun substantive; and that by the words Obia-men or women, are meant those who practice Obi ...

... is become in Jamaica the general term to denote those Africans who in that island practice witchcraft or sorcery comprehending also the class of what are called Myal-men, or those who, by means of a narcotic potion, made with the juice of an herb (said to be the branched Calalue or species of Solanum) which occasions a trance or profound sleep of a certain duration, endeavour to convince the deluded spectators of their power to re-animate dead bodies.

As far as we are able to decide from our own experience and information when we lived in the island, and from the current testimony of all the Negroes we have ever conversed with on the subject, the professors of Obi are, and always were, natives of Africa, and none other; and they have brought the science with them from thence to Jamaica, where it is so universally practiced, that we believe there are few of the large estates possessing native Africans, which have not one or more of them. The oldest and most crafty are those who usually attract the greatest devotion and confidence; those whose hoary heads, and somewhat peculiarly harsh and forbidding in their aspect, together with some skill in plants of the medicinal and poisonous species, have qualified them for successful imposition upon the weak and credulous. The Negroes in general, whether Africans or Creoles, revere, consult, and fear them; to these oracles they resort, and with the most implicit faith, upon all occasions, whether for the cure of disorders, the obtaining revenge for injuries or insults, the conciliating of favour, the discovery and punishment of the thief or the adulterer, and the prediction of future events. The trade which these impostors carry on is extremely lucrative; they manufacture and sell their Obies adapted to different cases and at different prices. A veil of mystery is studiously thrown over their incantations, to which the midnight hours are allotted, and every precaution is taken to conceal them from the knowledge and discovery of the White people. The deluded Negroes, who thoroughly believe in their supernatural power, become the willing accomplices in this concealment, and the stoutest among them tremble at the very sight of the ragged bundle, the bottle or the egg-shells, which are stuck in the thatch or hung over the door of a hut, or upon the branch of a plantain tree, to deter marauders. In cases of poison, the natural effects of it are by the ignorant Negroes, ascribed entirely to the potent workings of Obi. The wiser Negroes hesitate to reveal their suspicions, through a dread of incurring the terrible vengeance which is fulminated by the Obeah professor from any other Negro upon his plantation; and so infatuated are the Blacks in general, that but few instances occur of their having assumed courage enough to impeach these miscreants. With minds so firmly prepossessed, they no sooner find Obi set for them near the door of their house, or in the path which leads to it, than they give themselves up for lost. When a Negro is robbed of a fowl or a hog, he applies directly to the Obeah man or woman; it is then made known among his fellow Blacks, that Obi is set for the thief; and as soon as the latter hears the dreadful news, his terrified imagination begins to work, no resource is left but in the superior skill of some more eminent Obeah-man of the neighbourhood, who may counteract the magical operations of the other; but if no one can be found of higher rank and ability, or if after gaining such an ally he should still fancy himself affected, he presently falls into a decline, under the incessant horror of impending calamities. The slightest painful sensation in the head, the bowels, or any other part, any casual loss or hurt, confirms his apprehensions, and he believes himself the devoted victim of an invisible and irresistible agency. Sleep, appetite, and cheerfulness, forsake him, his strength decays,
his disturbed imagination is haunted without respite, his features wear the settled gloom of despondency: dirt, or any other unwholesome substance, become his food, he contracts a morbid habit of body, and gradually sinks into the grave. A Negro, who is taken ill, enquires of the Obeah-man the cause of his sickness, whether it will prove mortal or not, and within what time he shall die or recover? The oracle generally ascribes the distemper to the malice of some particular person by name, and advises to set Obi for that person; but if no hopes are given of recovery, immediate despair takes place, which no medicine can remove, and death is the certain consequence. Those anomalous symptoms which originate from causes deeply rooted in the mind, such as the terrors of Obi, or from poisons, whose operation is slow and intricate, will baffle the skill of the ablest physician.

Considering the multitude of occasions which may provoke the Negroes to exercise the powers of Obi against each other, the astonishing influence of this superstition upon their minds, we cannot but attribute a very considerable portion of the annual mortality among the Negroes of Jamaica to this fascinating mischief.

The Obi is usually composed of a farrago of materials, most of which are enumerated in the Jamaica law*, viz Blood, feathers, parrot’s beaks, dog’s teeth, alligator’s teeth, broken bottles, grave-dirt, rum, and eggshells.”

* Passed 1760

Zachary Macaulay (1768-1838), one of the great campaigners for the abolition of slavery, was a planter in Jamaica from around 1784 to 1792.

What were you previous to the Year 1792? I had been some Time previous to the Year 1792 in the West Indies.

In what situation in the West Indies? In the Planting Line in Jamaica.

What were you previous to your going to Jamaica? I was at the Time of my going to Jamaica a mere Youth, of the Age of Sixteen, who had previously no fixed Employment.

What part of the Island of Jamaica did you reside in? Altogether on the South Side.
In what Situation did you reside in the Island of Jamaica? I resided in the Island of Jamaica in the different Situations of a Book-keeper and Overseer.

In whose Employ were you in the Island of Jamaica? I was in the Employ entirely of either Chief Justice Grant or Alexander Macleod.

How many Years were you in the Island of Jamaica? I was there a little more than Five Years, between Five and Six Years, nearer Six than Five.

What was your Motive for returning to this Country? I had, very soon after my Arrival in Jamaica, made it known to my Friends in this Country, my Dislike to my Situation there; and I frequently requested that Means might be taken by them for procuring me a Situation elsewhere.

Did you return for Occupation in Europe, or from ill Health? I returned from neither. I returned in consequence of an Invitation from my Friends in this Country to come home.

In what Year did you come home? In the Beginning of the Year 1792.

In 1797 in a ‘short autobiographical memoir’, Macaulay gave an account of his time in Jamaica.


The history of his early years will be best related by himself in a short autobiographical memoir which he wrote in Sierra Leone in 1797.

Soon after I reached the age of fourteen, I became in a great measure my own master, by being removed from the control of my father and mother, and placed in a merchant’s counting-house in Glasgow...

Towards the end of 1784 a circumstance happened which gave a temporary suspension to my career, and led to a few sober reflections. I then saw that the only way that remained to extricate myself from the labyrinth in which I was involved was going abroad. I made known my wishes to my father, and it was determined that I should try my fortunes in the East Indies.

Just as this determination had been taken, Sir Archibald Campbell, who was related to us, persuaded my father to alter it, and to suffer me to go out under his patronage to Jamaica...

At this time I had not yet reached the age of seventeen, and found myself landing at Jamaica, without money, or without a single friend to whom I could turn for assistance. The letters of recommendation to persons in high position, with which I had been provided by Sir Archibald Campbell, were entirely neglected...

My trials, however, were not of long duration. One or two private gentlemen to whom a friend of mine had written to introduce me, soon found me out, and showed me great kindness. Through their exertions I obtained the situation of under-manager or book-keeper on a sugar plantation.

Here I entered upon a new mode of life which waged war with all my tastes and feelings. My position was laborious, irksome, and degrading, to a degree of which I could have formed no previous conception, and which none can imagine fully who have not, like me, experienced the vexatious, capricious, tyrannical, and pitiless conduct of a Jamaica overseer. To this, however, I made it a point of honour to reconcile my mind. Indeed I saw there was no medium for me, under the circumstances, between doing so and starving.

While my health remained good, I therefore submitted with cheerfulness to all the severe toil and painful watchings which were required of me. What chiefly affected me at first was, that by my situation I was exposed not only to the sight, but also the practice of severities which made my blood run cold. My mind was at first feelingly alive to the miseries of the poor slaves, and I not only revolted from the thought of myself inflicting punishment upon them, but the very sight of punishment sickened me.

The die, however, was cast; there was no retreating. I should gladly indeed have returned to Europe, but I had not the means... As the only alternative, therefore, I resolved to get rid of my squeamishness as soon as I could, as a thing which was very inconvenient. And in this I had a success beyond my expectations.

At this time, that is in the year 1785, I find myself writing thus to a friend at home “... You would hardly know your friend, with whom you have spent so many hours in more peaceful and more pleasant
scenes, were you to view me in a field of canes, amidst perhaps a hundred of the sable race, cursing and bawling, while the noise of the whip resounding on their shoulders, and the cries of the poor wretches, would make you imagine that some unlucky accident had carried you to the doleful shades.”

This picture, shocking as it is, owes nothing to fancy; but my mind was now steeled, and though some months before this period, in writing to the same friend I had a heart to draw in very lively colours, and with pathetic touches which I really felt, the miseries of the negroes, yet now I was callous and indifferent, and could allude to them with a levity which sufficiently marked my depravity. I had indeed raised myself an imaginary standard of justice in my dealings with them, to which I thought it right to conform.

But the hour of retribution seemed to be at hand. Dangerous, and repeated, and long-continued attacks of illness brought me frequently to the borders of the grave...

When health returned my sufferings were soon forgotten; and better prospects opening upon me, and friends rising up daily showed a willingness to serve me as soon as I was master of my own business, I began to like my situation. “I even began to be wretch enough to think myself happy.”

My outward conduct indeed, for a West Indian planter, was sober and decorous, for I affected superiority to the grossly vulgar manners and practices which disgrace almost every rank of men in the West Indies, but my habits and dispositions were now fundamentally the same. In these I was quite assimilated to my neighbours, and this is a part of my life of which I scarce either like to speak or think. It was a period of most degrading servitude to the worst of masters.

While I was in this state of mind I received a letter from an uncle in London, containing an advantageous offer if I chose to return to England. After much hesitation and debate I resolved to accept the offer. I took my passage for London, and arrived there just after my twenty-first year.

My vanity, which the low situation to which I was reduced at times, it may be supposed, would have tended to mortify, was on the contrary increased. The state of information among my brother bookkeepers and overseers, and even among planters and merchants in Jamaica, is, generally speaking very low. I was among them a kind of prodigy, and I was referred to on disputed points as an oracle.

One thing, however, amidst the thick cloud of evils wherewith I was at this time enveloped I can now dwell upon with some degree of pleasure. I mean the boldness and fearlessness, and also the effect, with which I encountered the risks of the enmity likely to follow my pleading and assisting the cause of youth, oppressed by rigid overseers as I myself had been. With respect to my own sufferings I had been quite pliant, knowing the suspicions which always light on a man when pleading his own cause. But on behalf of others I could act more freely and with more effect.

For some of his time in Jamaica, Macaulay was a planter in St Thomas in the Vale – where, it was said, that he was forced to leave Hyde, an estate in the south of the parish, because he was ‘so fond of flogging’ slaves.

https://archive.org/details/maniacs00np – The Maniacs, or Fantasia of Bos Bibens; characteristics of some of the Fanatics, who are conspiring the ruin of their country At Home, by a West-Indian, published 1824 – page 42-43
At the time of Samuel Smith’s death in 1775 payments for the loan secured on Sandy Gut by John Brammer and wife Elizabeth were outstanding. In 1778 Samuel Smith’s Executors and other creditors began legal proceedings and Sandy Gut was in Chancery until 1788. On 8 September 1788, following the final decree of the High Court of Chancery, Sandy Gut was sold at public auction in Spanish Town to Samuel Smith the younger (son of Samuel Smith, died 1775), and was conveyed to him on 29 December 1788.

Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series – Lib 368, Fol 206 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 30 Jun 1798 – Indenture dated 29 December 1788 – conveyance of Sandy Gut to Samuel Smith the younger

Between – Abraham Aguilar of Kingston Merchant by his Attorney in Jamaica Emanuel Baruh Lousada of Kingston Esq, Isaac Gutteres of St Catherine Planter, Charles Russell of St Catherine Gentleman and John Rodon of St Catherine Gentleman, the Executors in Jamaica of Samuel Smith (the elder) late of St Catherine deceased (1) – Rebecca Mendes Gutteres Spinster surviving Administrator of Isaac Mendes Gutteres of St Catherine Planter deceased and the said Isaac Gutteres in his own right Creditors of John Brammer Esq the elder late of St Thomas in the Vale deceased (2) – Thomas Wynter of St Catherine Esq one of the Executors of John Brammer the younger deceased a Defendant in the Cause hereinafter mentioned and a Creditor under the Decree hereinafter stated (3) – George Brammer of St Thomas in the Vale Practitioner in Physic and Surgery the only surviving Acting Executor of John Brammer the elder deceased and also one of the residuary Devises in the Will of John Brammer the elder and also an Executor of John Brammer the younger deceased, Elizabeth Brammer Widow and Executrix of John Brammer the elder, Elizabeth Brammer Spinster, an infant, Surviving Daughter and residuary Devisee of John Brammer the younger by her Guardian George Brammer, Thomas Millward of St Catherine Esq who together with George Brammer and Thomas Wynter are the surviving Executors of John Brammer the younger (4) – and Samuel Smith (the younger) of St Catherine Esq (5)

Extracts/summary – omitting the lengthy history of the legal proceedings

By the 19 and 20 July 1765 Indentures of Lease and Release by way of Mortgage, John Brammer the elder and wife Elizabeth conveyed to Samuel Smith (the elder) – Sandy Gut – 488 acres – etc, etc, etc – with everything belonging to the estate – together with 46 + 27 + 100 slaves named in the Indentures – with their future Issue, Offspring and Increase of the Females of Slaves etc, etc

In obedience to the final decree of the Jamaica High Court of Chancery, Thomas Callum, one of the Masters in Chancery, set up for Sale at public Outcry on 8 September 1788, Sandy Gut Plantation or Sugar Work with the Lands, buildings and appurtenances thereto belonging together with all the Slaves, Stock and other the Premises mentioned and comprised in the Lease and Release by way of Mortgage with the then Issue, Offspring and Increase of the Females of the said Slaves or such of them as were living and not included in the Marriage Settlement in the Pleadings in the above recited Causes – Sandy Gut was sold to Samuel Smith (the younger), the best and highest bidder, for £5,000 Jamaica currency – but as £5,000 was not sufficient to pay off and discharge the Complainants – the Master in Chancery set up to Sale – all those several Slaves comprised in the Marriage Settlement named in the Lease and Release by way of Mortgage or such of them as were living with their increase and sold them to Samuel Smith, the best and highest bidder, for £2,850 Jamaica currency.
For £5,000 and £2,850 Jamaica currency paid by Samuel Smith to Thomas Callum, the said Master in Chancery and £806 19s 7d Jamaica currency paid by Samuel Smith for the balance due to Phillip Pinnock, Receiver for Sandy Gut appointed by the Court of Chancery – and for 10s Jamaica currency paid by Samuel Smith – to each of them Abraham Aguilar, Charles Russell, Isaac Gutteres and John Rodon Executors aforesaid, and to each of them George Brammer and Elizabeth Brammer the younger – they convey to Samuel Smith Sandy Gut Plantation or Sugar Work – containing by estimation 488 acres – etc, etc – including all the Slaves named in the 19 and 20 July 1796 Indentures of Mortgage or such of them as are now living, and the Issue, Offspring and Increase of the Females of the said Slaves born since the date of the said Indentures of Mortgage (number of slaves nor names of slaves – except such of the said Slaves wherein John Brammer the elder had only an Estate for life – and also the Mules, Cattle and Stock which were contained in the said Indenture likewise all other the Mules, Cattle and Stock Plantation Utensils and Stores – with the future Issue, Offspring and Increase of the Female Slaves etc, etc, etc

Note – the slaves, below, named in the 29 December 1788 conveyance to Samuel Smith (the younger), are the 46 + 27 + 100 slaves named in the 19 and 20 July 1765 Indentures of Lease and Release. As slaves born after 1765 were not named in the 1788 conveyance, it is not possible to know whether Bessy (born 1768-69) was one of the slaves conveyed in 1788 to Samuel Smith (the younger).
On 29 June 1789 Samuel Smith the younger’s mother, Elizabeth Ford, a free woman of colour, conveyed her half share of two parcels of land and 18 slaves to her son.

*Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series, Lib 369, Fol 127 – Indenture dated 29 June 1789 – Deed of Gift – between Elizabeth Ford of St Catherine, Spinster (1) – and Samuel Smith of St Catherine (2) – extracts/summary*

**Recitals**

By Indenture dated 7 August 1775 made between Charles Russell, Abraham Aguilar, Isaac Gutteres and John Rodon Executors of Samuel Smith deceased (1) – and Elizabeth Ford, Spinster, a free Woman (of colour) and Mary Cole, Spinster both of St Catherine – the Executors conveyed to Elizabeth Ford and Mary Cole a parcel of land in St Catherine, late in the possession of the said Samuel Smith, with all houses buildings etc thereunto belonging

By Indenture dated 1 September 1775 made between Lucy Ford of St Catherine, Spinster (1) – and Elizabeth Ford and Mary Cole (2) – Lucy Ford conveyed parcel of land in Spanish Town with all hereditaments etc thereunto belonging – one moiety to Elizabeth Ford and one moiety to Mary Cole

Elizabeth Ford is also possessed of 18 Negroe Male and Female Slaves and also divers quantities of household furniture silver plate and other family utensils

For the natural love and affection Elizabeth Ford hath for Samuel Smith her son and for the purpose of severing any such Joint Tenancy as aforesaid and for 10s Jamaica currency Elizabeth Ford conveys to her son Samuel Smith her moiety of that parcel of land in St Catherine – and her moiety of that parcel of land in Spanish Town – and also all those 18 Negroe Male and Female Slaves following

Tidy, Adam, Dick, William Blessett alias Blackwall, Jack Richard Sam, Tom Cole, Thomas, Joe, Portland, Robert, King, July, Billy, Lucinda, Present and Princess – with the future Issue, Offspring and Increase of the females – And also all the household furniture silver plate and other family utensils

In Trust and confidence that during her lifetime Samuel Smith, his heirs etc will permit her to enjoy the above and take the Rents etc thereof for her own benefit – and immediately after her decease to hold the same to the use of Samuel Smith, his heirs etc for ever

Elizabeth Ford (she made her mark X) – Witnesses – Thomas Balfour and John Tate

Samuel’s mother Elizabeth Ford was Samuel Smith the elder’s housekeeper for thirty years, and the mother of his five children – Samuel and four daughters.
On 18 December 1790 Samuel Smith the younger purchased 255 acres on the north side of Sandy Gut.


William Caldwell and wife Jesse owned sundry pieces of land in St Thomas in the Vale known as Mount Pleasant on the northern and eastern side of Sandy Gut – for £2,500 Jamaica currency, William Caldwell and Jesse conveyed 255 acres of their land to Samuel Smith.

Diagram annexed

Jamaica Ss – The above Diagram represents two hundred and fifty five Acres of Land Situate in St Thomas in the Vale bounding East on the Rio D Ora & on part of the same Land, North on David White & John Omely, South and part East on Sandy Gut Estate, and West on William Caldwell Esqr. – Surveyed December 1790 – Sheriff & Turnbull

On 25 June 1791 Samuel Smith the younger purchased a Negro slave named Bessy. It is however not possible to know whether Bessy purchased by Samuel Smith on 25 June 1791 was Eliza’s mother Bessy.
Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica

Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series, Lib 390, Fol 160 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 9 Jul 1791 – Deed Poll dated 25 June 1791 – summary

For £60 Jamaica currency John Goodhall of St Catherine, Gentleman, sold to Samuel Smith of St Catherine, Esq – a Certain Negro Woman Slave named Bessy together with her future Issue, offspring and Increase.

A new Consolidated Slave Act of Jamaica was passed on 2 March 1792.


Lewis Cuthbert in his Evidence at the Bar of the House of Lords in 1792 was asked about the treatment of slaves in Jamaica.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=EL4NAAAAQAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Minutes of the Evidence taken at the Bar of the House of Lords upon the Order made for taking into Consideration the present State of the Trade to Africa... – 1792 – Lewis Cuthbert’s evidence – page 61-121 – extracts

I went to Jamaica in the year 1760, under the patronage of Mr Dawkins, a very great proprietor in Jamaica; I was employed and appointed by him one of his attorneys for conducting his property in the year 1761; and the year 1763 I entered into a very large extensive commerce in a house in Kingston as a partner, which partnership continued till the year 1769. I then purchased a sugar estate. In the year 1772, I was obliged to come to England for ill health. I returned in the year 1774. A number of adverse circumstance and misfortunes obliged me to sell my estate, after having brought it forward very much. After this I was principally employed as an attorney for conducting the property of absentees in Jamaica. In the year 1777 I returned to England upon particular business, and went to Jamaica in the year 1778. In that year Mr Neville, the patentee of the provost marshal general’s office in Jamaica, was pleased to appoint me his deputy, to act and officiate in that office, which I entered upon in December 1779. In the year 1780 very ill health obliged me to return to England, and I put my brother into the office to execute it in my room. I continued in England until January 1788, and arrived in Jamaica in February of that year. I resumed the execution of the office, and continued to execute it until the 16th of September last, when ill health again obliged me to quit the island. During my last residence in Jamaica I was much engaged in planting concerns for gentlemen of this country who were so good to appoint me to take care of their property.

What number of Negroes had you under your care and direction at the time when you last quitted the island of Jamaica?

... to the best of my remembrance and recollection, I think the number was 2,300 or 2,400.

What is the ordinary quantity of labour which a Negro is required to perform as to hours?

That differs: certainly in crop time the Negroes have less rest than at other times; but in general, out of crop, upon many calculations that I have made with respect to this question, I think, that on an average of the year, Negroes do not labour ten hours in the twenty-four.

Is the labour, such as it is, the climate, and all other circumstances considered, what they are capable of performing?

In general they certainly are not required to do more than they are capable of performing. I myself never knew any instance of the contrary.

Having said, that they are called upon to perform more labour during the time of crop than at any other period, are they not in general more healthy during that time?

They certainly are; and I have often been very much surprised at it.

Is the land allotted to a Negro as much as he can cultivate, consistently with the other labour which it is incumbent upon him to perform?

On the generality of estates, they have just as much land given to them as they chuse.
Having stated that these lands will furnish them with a superfluity of provisions, what becomes of that superfluity?

They carry that superfluity to market, and sell it for money, and exchange it for articles; some for particular provisions which they are fond of; some for wearing apparel, and for a variety of other articles, such as they may fancy; and they all of them have more or less ready money, the produce of those provisions belonging to themselves.

Does the owner ever interfere with the Negro in the possession and enjoyment of the land which is allotted to him; or, on the contrary, is it not considered as inviolable by the owner?

I never knew one instance of a proprietor attempting to disturb a Negro in the possession of the ground allotted to him. It frequently has happened to be convenient for the proprietor to exchange the Negro grounds for the purpose of cultivating sugar on those lands; but when this is done, it is always with the consent of the Negroes themselves; new grounds are always prepared to be given them in exchange and the Negro must be satisfied before this exchange takes place. The new grounds have been prepared, and in actual bearing, when the change takes place; and I myself have, as a further inducement to Negroes, very frequently given them some money to content them when such changes have taken place; and I know that this the practice with respect to most of the estates that I was acquainted with in Jamaica.

*Jamaica Surveyed, by Barry W Higman, published 2001 – endpaper – detail*
Lewis Cuthbert’s evidence – page 61-121 – extracts continued

Having stated that Negroes, by the custom of the island, are capable of acquiring property; whether they are not in general suffered to enjoy it undisturbed during their lives, and to dispose of it according to their wills at their deaths?

They certainly are; and I never knew, nor ever heard of any instances to the contrary.

Do they frequently raise stock upon their different lands, which they sell to the owner of the estate, of which those lands are parcel?

They certainly do. – They raise hogs and small stock, which they frequently sell to the owners and their attornies; but in general they prefer selling to any body else, as they are exceedingly jealous that the proprietor or manager, or any of the White people, should inquire or know any thing at all about what property they are possessed of, particularly in money. I have known many Negroes possessed of cows and their followers, and have known them sell those very cows, and sometimes oxen, to their proprietors.

When I went first to Jamaica, and some years after, it was a common thing for Negroes to have horses, and I have known them sell some colts at pretty good prices; but a law was passed by the Legislature, to prevent Negro Slaves from having horses, because it was supposed, and with reason, that on those horses they went to considerable distances, and frequently were suspected of going upon those occasion on intentions of insurrection; and as they are in general exceedingly fond of wandering from their estates, it was thought proper to prevent their having horses, to keep them from going to great distances from their estates: but, when that law took place, such Negroes as had horses were permitted to sell them, and to appropriate what they sold for to their own use, without inquiry by the proprietor, or by any person concerned for him.

Having spoken to the food and labour of the Negro; in what manner is he, in general, clothed and lodged?

He is generally clothed, always indeed once a year: Osnaburghs and coarse blanketing, or baize, with caps and hats; handkerchiefs, and some other trifling matters of that kind, are dealt out to them every year: new Negroes are clothed oftener, and so are children; and, upon the whole, I think that, with respect to clothing, they are as well supplied as the climate renders necessary. With respect to lodging, they have houses which are, upon the whole, not uncomfortable; and these houses are either provided for them, built for them by the proprietor, or, as they are exceedingly fond of building their houses themselves, time is given to them to build them, and the materials generally brought upon the spot for that purpose.

In what manner are the new Negroes, in general, treated, upon their first coming upon the estates; and first as to the men?

The first thing is to clothe them: On their first coming to the estate they are lodged in the manager’s house, or in some comfortable place near it, and fed by the messes provided for them, by order of the manager, and under his own eye. After a little acquaintance with the estate, they generally are put under the care of some of the sensible Negroes upon the plantation, with whom they lodge, and ordinarily eat the provisions that are dealt out to them from the stores daily. The first work they are put to is always very light and easy; and, as soon as they can understand any thing of their situation, grounds are allotted to them; these grounds are formed and cleared for them; they are shewn by the other Negroes how to cultivate them, and they have seeds and plants of every kind of provisions given to them: very great attention is paid to them for many months after their coming to the estate, both as to food and every other circumstance, and so it continues until they are considered to be completely seasoned, and capable of taking care of themselves. With respect to the women, they generally are taken for wives by some of the Negroes upon the estate, who are always very glad to have them.

Is care taken in general to make their situation and condition comfortable as possible?

Certainly it is.

Having spoken to the condition of the new Negro when first imported, and to his work in the middle stage of life, what becomes of the superannuated Negro when he is no longer capable of work?

As soon as a Negro becomes weakly through age, he is employed upon very light work; they are very often put at gates of the different cane-pieces and of the different inclosures, as watchmen; during which some of them do little else than make baskets, and others of them catch rats, or do any other sort of light work that may be wanting on the estate; the same allowance of clothing, provision, and, in short, every thing else that is given to the active Negro is equally distributed to them; and, if they are fortunate enough to have children, these children are certainly encouraged to pay every attention to them, and they
frequently work their grounds for them. Upon the whole, a Negro in Jamaica that is past labour, upon a well-managed estate, is in a very comfortable situation.

But putting the case of a Negro absolutely incapable of labour, is not the master, by the law of Jamaica, bound equally to supply him with all the necessaries of life as if he was capable of labour?

The law requires it, but the interest of the proprietor requires it also; and were any Negro of that description to be deserted, or ill-treated, it would be the occasion of dispiriting the Negroes upon the estate generally.

To what cause do you impute the decrease [of slaves] of which you have been speaking?

First, to the inequality of the sexes, which is considerable on many estates. Next, to the dissolute manners and lives of the Negroes, particularly to the promiscuous intercourse, especially of the female at a very early period of life; and their disliking, while they have any attractions left, to make any lasting attachment with the Negro men, and often procuring abortions. This promiscuous intercourse never fails to be followed by dreadful venereal diseases, which make great havoc among the Negroes; I am convinced as much as any other cause whatever. A number of the infants born, die within the fourteenth day after birth, by the tetanus, or locked jaw: the children are subject to worms, much more I believe than in European countries; the yaws, a disease peculiar to Negroes, is the cause of death of a great number, more particularly of the new Negroes. The young Negro men are exceedingly fond of rambling out at night, instead of taking rest; and many fevers and other diseases are contracted and got at these rambles: these are the causes generally to which I attribute the great decrease of Negroes.

Can you state with any accuracy what is the inequality between the sexes?

I certainly cannot with accuracy; but I remember the calculation made by the Assembly of Jamaica was a proportion of 140,000 to 110,000: but I believe that calculation was rather hypothesis than anything certain.

Having specified the various causes of the great mortality of which you have spoken, whether in cases of diseases in general the Negroes are not treated with proper medical skill, and have administered to them what the state of sickness requires?

In that respect very great attention is given, and improvements have been, within my knowledge, made within these fifteen or twenty years, by which hospitals upon plantations are in general suited for the purposes of sick Negroes, in all respects not short of the conveniences of hospitals in any European countries; and I beg leave to mention one instance of a gentleman now in Jamaica, a Dr Naismith, who was many years a very eminent physician in Kingston, and who afterwards purchased a large sugar plantation. He built an hospital upon a plan of his own, which plan he communicated to all his neighbours in that part of the country: it has been universally followed. There is a medical man, a surgeon, appointed to attend every plantation, and on many estates there are resident surgeons; but upon all estates surgeons are required to visit twice or thrice a week, and oftener as occasion requires: there are proper persons placed in these hospitals to attend the sick Negroes, and different apartments for different diseases; animal food, and everything else that may be recommended by the doctor, is provided for them.

In what manner are the Negro women, during their pregnancy, treated by the owners of the estates to which they belong?

Whenever pregnancy becomes visible, the Negro woman is not then required to do so much work; and within two months of delivery they are required to do no more work of any kind than what is considered necessary for their health.

Is there any punishment inflicted upon Negro women in that state, except confinement; or did you ever know corporal punishment inflicted upon them?

I never knew an instance of corporal punishment inflicted upon a pregnant woman, nor to the best of my recollection at present, did I ever hear of any: it might have happened, but I cannot recollect having heard of an instance, I believe, though I don’t know it myself, that they are sometimes confined, to prevent their rambling, even after they are with child; but this I do not know, I have heard instances of it.

Having spoken to their treatment during pregnancy, what is their treatment after delivery?

On every estate there is an experienced midwife. Negro women in general are exceedingly unwilling to be removed from their own houses, to be delivered in hospitals or in any houses prepared for them; and they most generally are delivered at their own houses; the midwife and nurses occasionally attend: during the first month after their delivery they do no work, and with respect to what may be proper for them in
Chapter 3. 18th Century Jamaica

the way of medicine, or in the way of food, the midwife generally applies to the overseer, who directly orders it. But I have known instances, and indeed too many, I have heard instances too many, and I believe them, where the young Negro women have, through carelessness, been the cause of the deaths of their infants, and sometimes, I am sorry to say by design, to prevent their children being an incumbrance upon their pleasures or upon their profits in a certain way; but this is prevented, or has been prevented, at least so far as my knowledge has gone, as much as possible.

Whether the treatment of some of the diseases peculiar to the Negroes, is not better understood by themselves than by the Europeans?

There may be some; but in general, I think, as far as my experience enables me to judge, that much more harm than good has been done by Negro nurses prescribing and administering nostrums of their own; and I think it is always best, when they are ill of any complaint, to apply to the doctor; more particularly in venereal cases. Negro quacks have done infinite mischief.

In the case of lands that have been long settled, have they, in general, a sufficiency of labour in point of Negroes; or are they, what is called, under-handed?

I think, that more than nineteen-twentieths of all the sugar estates in Jamaica are at this moment very much under-handed; and a great proportion of the estates have hitherto been enabled to make the produce they have made by application of hired labour, in addition to the Negroes upon the different estates.

What do you mean by hired labour?

There are a number of people in Jamaica, who have gangs of Negroes employed in doing jobs, and which are hired out to assist the labour of estates.

You are understood to say, that at crop-time the Negroes were more healthy; to what is this to be ascribed? – Is it not to be ascribed to their having better nourishment at that time?

I ascribe it partly to the crop-time being always dry weather. I attribute it in great part to the quantity of cane liquor, which they have almost at their pleasure to use: they boil their plantains in it, they drink it, they eat the canes, and it is found to be exceedingly nourishing and very wholesome. With respect to the general common allowances of provisions from the estate, there is no difference in crop-time than at any other, except now and then dealing out perhaps a little more grog to them, as it is called, a mixture of rum and water.

Whether the Negroes born in the island, or those imported, are the most healthy, and whether those imported are not more subject to the yaws and to other distempers?

Creole Negroes certainly, in the aggregate, are more healthy than Negroes imported, but these are subject to the yaws equally as imported Negroes; for the yaws is a disease like the small-pox with us, which all Negroes, or at least all plantation Negroes, are liable to have once in their lives: therefore, in that respect, there is no difference, except this, that the yaws generally has less effects with young people than with grown people, and that a number of grown Negroes are imported from Africa who have not had the disease in their own country; and in Jamaica the mothers do all they can to get their children to have the yaws while they are young.

Are the markets generally held on Sundays for the surplus provisions that the Negroes raise?

They always are.

What is the average distance which the Negroes are obliged to go to attend those markets?

I cannot mention any average distance, they differ so very much; there are some that the distance is not half a mile, and there are others that the distance is twenty miles.

Did you ever know of any instances of Slaves laying up property sufficient to purchase their freedom?

I have.

Were those field Slaves?

I have known field Slaves purchase their freedom but very seldom; but I will beg leave to mention an instance that occurs to me. Lord Harewood has a property in Jamaica, and I had the honour of being his attorney. A Negro upon his estate of Williamstead [Williamsfield, St Thomas in the Vale], had a very valuable servant, a cattle man and a mule man, had a daughter, a very great favourite; he applied to Lord Harewood’s attorneys, to request that they would give freedom to this girl, and that he would replace her by a new Negro of the highest price that could be obtained. Lord Harewood’s attorneys had not the power to manumise Negroes; they wrote to his Lordship, and his Lordship immediately answered the letter with a power of attorney, not only to manumise the girl but to manumise the Slave also, if he desired it: the girl
was manumised, and the father did replace her by a very good and able Negro. Upon that occasion I spoke to the father, who was a very sensible Negro, a very sensible man, and a very excellent and well-disposed good man. I asked him, ‘why he did not ask for his own freedom; that he was grown old, and that I had not a doubt that he might have his freedom, if he chose it, for little or nothing.’ He told me, that he was exceedingly happy in his present situation; that if he had his freedom, he did not know but he might perhaps be obliged afterwards to quit the estate; that it might be very inconvenient for him, and be attended by considerable disadvantages; he thought himself infinitely happier in the situation he was in, and therefore thought fit so to remain; but with respect to his daughter, he said that he could contrive to give her a Negro or two of her own property, that should be the means of taking care of her when he died.

Williamsfield estate in St Thomas in the Vale was inherited by Lord Harewood, Edwin Lascelles (1713-1795), Baron Harewood, in the 1780s. Lewis Cuthbert and Alexander McLeod (one of Zachary Macaulay’s employers during his time in Jamaica – see above) were the Jamaica attorneys to Edwin, Lord Harewood.

Jamaica Surveyed, by Barry W Higman, published 2001 – page 113 – Williamsfield Estate, St Thomas in the Vale, the property of Lord Harewood, surveyed in 1790 by Frazer & Rainey – arrow points to the boundary between Sandy Gut and Williamsfield

Sandy Gut was merged with Williamsfield in the early 19th century. Before then the six children of Eliza’s mother Bessy (named in the Earl of Harewood’s 1817 St Thomas in the Vale registration of slaves) had been born. The two eldest were both children of white men – Ann (later baptised Ann Balfour), aged 26 on 28 June 1817, was born in 1790 or 1791, and Eliza (later baptised Eliza Fox), aged 24 on 28 June 1817, was born in 1792 or 1793.
Ann and Eliza’s Christian names are clues to the surnames of their fathers. In the time of slavery in Jamaica it was the custom for an illegitimate child, slave or free, who was the child of a white man, to be baptised with his/her father’s surname as a last Christian name. It is therefore likely that Balfour was the surname of Ann’s father, and Fox was the surname of Eliza’s.

Below – advertisement dated 26 February 1793 – the subscriber Thomas Fox, who appears to be the overseer of Sandy Gut, was perhaps the father of Eliza, and Thomas Balfoure of Spanish Town was perhaps the father of Ann.

New Negro men (slaves just arrived from Africa) were considered by Edward Long as ‘the most chargeable article attending these estates’.

On 22 December 1796 Samuel Smith mortgaged Sandy Gut (excluding the 255 acres conveyed to him in 1790 – see above) to London merchants Timperon, Litt and Harrison. Slaves named in the Indenture of Mortgage include Eliza’s mother Bessy – Bessy (Overseers House)
Although neither Ann nor Eliza was named, both of them as well as Bessy and her future offspring were among the slaves conveyed in mortgage on 22 December 1796 – see Chapter 8 – 1813 Indenture conveying Sandy Gut to Joseph Timperon.

**Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series, Lib 437, Fol 158 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 19 Jan 1797 – Indenture dated 22 December 1796 – Between Samuel Smith of St Thomas in the Vale, Esq (1) – and Joseph Timperon, William Prat Litt, and Jonathan Harrison, all of the City of London, Merchants and Copartners in the firm of Timperon, Litt and Harrison (2) – extracts/summary**

Samuel Smith by his Bond dated 22 December 1796 is bound unto Joseph Timperon, William Prat Litt and Jonathan Harrison in the Penal Sum of £11,508 17s 11 ½ d Sterling with condition there under written for payment of £5,754 8s 11 ¾ d on 31 January next ensuing the date of the Bond with Interest at the rate of £6 pound per cent per annum from the date of the Bond.

And Whereas Samuel Smith is possessed of the Plantation or Sugar Work known as Sandy Gut in St Thomas in the Vale – in order to secure the payment of the said Sum of Money made payable by the said Bond with Interest – Also to secure payment of all further Sum and Sums of Money whatsoever as Timperon, Litt and Harrison may hereafter lend on Account – Samuel Smith has agreed to convey Sandy Gut in Mortgage unto them.

For 10s Jamaica currency Samuel Smith conveys to Timperon, Litt, and Harrison, the Plantation or Sugar Work known as Sandy Gut containing by estimation 488 acres, butting and bounding now or lately North on Land now or late of James Watson Esq being part of 200 acres sold by Hampson Nedham Esq deceased to Edwin Savage the elder since deceased, North West on Land belonging to or in possession of Francis Delap Esq, West on Land of the Hon William Winter Esq and Francis Delap Esq, Southerly and South West on Land of William Nedham Esq, South East on Land belonging to Alexander and William Harvie Esqs, and part South East on Rio de Ora – or howsoever it may be butted, bounded and described – And all houses, Trash Houses and all other Edifices, Erections, and Buildings thereon – together with all Coppers, Boilers, Mills, Stills, Worms, Tubs, Vats, Cisterns and all other Utensils and Implements of planting or making Sugar and Rum – all ways Paths, passages Waters, Water courses, Wells and Wells of Water, Grazing, Feedings, Feeding places, Commons and Common pasture, Rivers, Rivulets, Streams, Dams, Dykes, Reservoirs, Cisterns, Trees, Woods, Under Woods, Timber trees, Fruit trees, Fishings, Fishing places, lights, Easements, Profits, Privileges, Commodities, Advantages, Emoluments, Hereditaments and Appurtenances whatsoever.

And also all those Negro or other Slaves (131 Slaves) named as follows:

Quashey, Stepney, George (Drivers), Sancho (a Cooper), Port Royal, and John, Tom (Boilers), Little Quashey, Little Quaco, Toney, Kingston, Jackey, Good luck, London, Adam, Nago Cato, Yaw (Field Negroes), Peter (a Wainman), Scotland, Cromwell (Field Negroes), Hodge (a Wainman), Frederick, Jemmy, Bristol, Phil, Silvester, Queen, Franky, Nago Silvia, Eamy, Judy, Countess, Little Chloe, Flora’s Chloe, Sally, Suky, Little Nelly, Betty, Phiba, Cuba, C Silvia (Field Negroes), Hannah (House Negro), Esther, Phiby, Abba, Charlotte, Agnes, Christian, Phillis, Juba, Mamba, Catalina, P Nancy, L Catalina, Offelia, Sykey (Field Negroes), P Nelly (Doctress), Clarissa, Cretia, Katey, Old Franky (Field Negroes), Old Quaco (Catleman), Fortune, Murry (Cow Boys), Jackey (Hogman), Apollo (Hog boy), old Celia (Gardener), Maria (Sickly), Peggy (Fowl House Woman), Old Julia Driveress, Old Whanica, August (Muleman), Maria, Old Rose, Grace (Old), Chester (a Cook), Little Lewis (a Cooper), Phillip (Field Negro), Little Charley, Bessy (Overseers House), Will, Ambo, Fortune, Plato, Nero, Old Leah, Sampshire (Watchman), Clarinda, Sylvia, Violet, Katey, Jenny, Abigail, Quasheba, Cuffie, Julious, Philander, Nancy, Little Juba (Field Small Gang), York, Dick, Mary, Leah, Yabba, Henry, Nancy, William, Elsey, Little Cordelia, Jimmy, Mulatto Charlotte, and Rosey (Children) Old Quashie, Old Julina, Chiltera, Martin, Hagar, C Nancy, Nago Johnny (Old), Ballantine (Hog boy), Solomon, Sampson, Johnny, David, Guy, Clara, Venus, Dolly, Mark, Luckey, and Prince.
With the future Issue offspring and Increase of all and every the Females of the said Slaves – And the reversion and reversions Remainder and Remainders Rents Issues and Profits of the said Plantation etc

The 10s Jamaica Currency was paid to Samuel Smith by George Harrison and John Hart, Jamaica Agents to Joseph Timperon, William Pratt Litt and Jonathan Harrison

Below – the 131 Negro or other Slaves named in the 22 December 1796 Indenture of Mortgage

‘Bessy (Overseers House)’ implies that Bessy was a domestic slave and as she was the only one with overseer’s house after her name, she was probably in charge of the domestic duties of the house.

The work of a domestic slave was considerably less arduous than those who laboured in the fields and the making of sugar and rum, which may account for Bessy having six children who survived childhood. Her third child Myrtilla, a Negro, aged 20 on 28 June 1817, was born in 1796 or 1797.
John Williamson, a medical doctor, arrived in Jamaica in August 1798 and for his first few years in the island lived in St Thomas in the Vale on Williamsfield estate. In his book he described the 1798 Negro Christmas holidays.

Christmas-day is allotted for the commencement of negro holidays, which continue three days; and these may be called the only period of unrestricted festivity they enjoy throughout the year.

An abundant supply of beef, and every other article, is then liberally dealt out to them by the estate. When they have enjoyed themselves, they parade round the place with music peculiar to their country, dressed in a gay and fantastic manner. Their familiarities with the whites at this season are permitted; and they, with the negro men and the fair nigresses, mix promiscuously in the dance. The great or overseer’s house is appropriated to this purpose, when the directors of the banquet choose to occupy it; and they imagine it the highest mark of disrespect and contempt to the overseer to avoid having the dance at his house.

The earnestness and violence with which dancing is carried on among the negroes, to what strikes an European as the most discordant performance, will surprise the stranger; it will even agitate feelings which are natural to all, and engender a desire in the inward soul, that such persons were more within the controul of civilized principles.

These three days of festivity and excess being over, the negroes return to their labours with every appearance of satisfaction; and, throughout the parish, I did not hear that an instance of riotous conduct occurred in a population of at least eleven thousand slaves!
In November 1799 there were 170 slaves on Sandy Gut. During the previous three years 15 slaves had been born, 22 had died, and none of the 170 slaves had been imported from Africa in the last three years.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=NL4NAAAAQAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Papers presented to the House of Commons on the 7th May 1804, respecting the Slave Trade; &c. &c. Ordered to be printed 8th June 1804 – Section G – Jamaica – page 47-50 – St Thomas in the Vale – extracts

Below – Sandy Gult = Sandy Gutt or Gut

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<th>Deaths in Three Years</th>
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The foregoing is an Account of the Slaves in the Parish of Saint Thomas in the Vale, with the Increase and Decrease for the last Three Years, as far as can be procured; many People having declined to give in the Account of the Increase and Decrease of their Slaves.

Wm Smith, C. V. of St Thomas in the Vale.

Geo Brommer, S. M., For St Thomas in the Vale.

Nov 14th, 1799.

Bessy’s fourth child Dolly, a Negro, aged 17 on 28 June 1817, was born in 1799 or 1800.
CHAPTER 4

ORKNEY

Edward’s grandson, my great grandfather Edward Clouston Thin, had a great love of Orkney and holidayed there throughout his life. His grandson Boyce Cunning wrote in his memoir *E C Thin*:

When he was fourteen in the year 1866 Edward [E C Thin] went to spend the summer in the Orkneys and this proved to be a great landmark in his life. He stayed with his great uncle, the Rev Charles Clouston, at Sandwick Manse near Kirkwall. This uncle was the parson . . . and the first man in that part to make weather charts. He then went on to stay with his cousins, the Traills, at Holland House, Papa Westray, who in addition had a town house at Kirkwall. This was a never to be forgotten time and all his life he remembered it. Trout fishing, rough shooting, riding over the islands on Shetland ponies, beating, visiting caves and other islands occupied that summer. In the course of it he developed a great love of the sea. After this he always dreamed of going back and possessing a pied-a-terre in the island of his ancestors.

For three or four summers in succession, probably starting around 1904 or 1905, he rented the isle of Rousay in the Orkneys. This was a period when his children were growing up and getting married; and he used to assemble them together with their husband or fiancés and later their children to fish and yacht in the district. Family albums show groups of them there. E C Thin at this time played with the idea of purchasing the island and settling there permanently . . .

E C Thin’s daughter Marian, my grandmother, used to talk about holidays in Orkney with her parents.

*In my possession – Marian’s Visitors’ Book – double page headed – ‘Summer 1908 – Rousay’*
Signatures include – Winifred B Clouston and her husband J (Joseph) Storer Clouston (1870-1944), novelist and the author of *The Family of Clouston*.

In summer 1908 my great grandparents E C Thin and Annie were among the guests at the ‘Presentation of the Freedom of Kirkwall’ to J Storer Clouston’s father Dr Thomas Clouston (knighted in 1911)

*Orkney Library and Archives – Orkney Herald, 2 September 1908 – Presentation of Freedom of Kirkwall to Dr Clouston – 27 August 1908 – extract*

... among those present being ... Mr and Mrs Storer Clouston, Smoogro, Orphir; Mr and Mrs H Clouston; Mr and Mrs Thin, Trumbland House ...

H Clouston = Harald Thomas Stewart Clouston – Dr Thomas Clouston’s elder son.

In addition to Cloustons, I knew from my grandmother and my mother that we were related to various Orcadian families, such as Traills and Stewarts, but when I began piecing together my Thin and Clouston ancestors in 2001, no one in my family remembered how we were related.

However, in 2001 many names began to fall into place – first with the help of Merv Clouston and his cousin Robin, and then in October when Christopher and I spent a week in Orkney.

We arrived at Stromness on 6 October on the morning ferry from Scrabster, west of Thurso on the north coast of the Scottish mainland, and left Stromness on 13 October on the overnight ferry to Aberdeen.
It is said that on average it rains once a day in Orkney and the days we were there were no exception, but the light was astonishing. In between the rain the skies were glorious, huge and brilliant blue, with fast moving clouds billowing across – white then turning black as the rain fell – and the sunsets were magnificent. The sea, the land and the lochs were covered with flocks of birds swooping down, rising up, swirling around and dropping down again. Much of the land is rolling countryside – green grass, beef cattle and sheep, and here and there fields of corn. The two towns, Kirkwall and Stromness are both small and there are few villages, but, everywhere we went the land was dotted with houses.

*My photo, October 2001 – West Mainland*

*Scottish Journey, by Edwin Muir, published 1935 – Orkney – extracts*

The Orkney Islands are such an interesting little community that they deserve a longer description than I have given to the places I stopped at in the Highlands; also I know them much better, having been brought up in them, and can speak of them with more confidence. They are far less spectacular than the
Western Highlands, and the tourist in search of the immediately picturesque will find little to repay him in
them... He will find a group of little islands, some quite flat, some hilly, all of them almost treeless, and
all remarkably well and efficiently cultivated. He will also find a population of small farmers and crofters,
naturally gentle and courteous in manners, but independent too, and almost all of them moderately
prosperous. If he goes there in the middle of June, the long light, which never fades at that time of the
year, but ebbs and ebbs until, before one can tell how, morning is there again, will charm and tease him;
he will lose his sleep for a few nights and be discontented during the day, and feel he is not quite in the
real world. If he has an eye for such things, he will be delighted by the spectacle of the quickly changing
skies and the clearness and brightness of all the colours. But he will not come to know much of the place
unless he lives there for quite a long time, habituating himself to be pleased with bareness and simplicity
in all things. Orkney is full of fine scenery, but that has to be looked for, and of historical interest, but that
requires acquaintance with a kind of history on which even experts are uncertain: the kind of history
which is popularly called prehistory. These islands are rich, for instance, in Pict houses and underground
chambers: standing in some places one can see a score of these little hummocks breaking the horizon-line.
There are also brochs, those curious circular keeps which still puzzle the most skilful archaeologists: a
very impressive one was being excavated last summer when I was there. In addition there are various
remains of the Viking occupation of Orkney, the golden period of Orkney history, when Kirkwall was the
capital of the Norse western empire. There is also a fine megalithic (or Druid, as it used to be called)
ring, and an ancient burial-chamber estimated to be something like four thousand years old, on whose
walls can still be seen the runes of a band of Vikings who broke into it, leaving news that they were on
their way to Jerusalem. There are innumerable signs, in other words, that these islands have been richly
populated for several thousands of years, and that one civilisation has followed another on them. Anyone
who stays for long in Orkney is consequently bound to turn into an amateur archaeologist... All these
things, the bareness of the landscape with its strong colours, the vivid evidence of a past but strange life,
the endlessly seductive contours of all these islands spread out in the sea (there are hills from which one
can see them all at the same time) give Orkney a deep fascination for those who know it...

... The great majority of its farms are small and of a size that can be easily cultivated by the farmer
and his family, without hiring outside labour... Most of these farms are owned by their occupiers. In
spite of their size, they are run on the most scientific modern lines; and this fact must be put to the credit
of the Orkney people, who are unusually intelligent and adaptable... At the same time the life of these
people on these farms is, in its main lines, what it was a hundred years ago. The farming community was
poor then and it is prosperous now; that is almost the sole difference. A great number of the farmers have
cars or motor-bicycles to go about on, it is true, and when the County Cattle Show, the great event of the
year, takes place, there are aeroplanes to bring people from the distant islands to Kirkwall, the chief town.
But these modern devices carry them to traditional events, to cattle-shows, markets, country dances and
feasts such as their grandfathers and great-grandfathers attended. If one visits a farm-house one might be
in an Orkney kitchen fifty years ago, except for the fact that food and drink are more plentiful. On these
farms the people work steadily but easily enough; the life is not one of drudgery. The farmers go to bed
late and get up late; one can drop into a house between ten and eleven at night and find the family sitting
round the fire or playing games; and the cows are milked late so that one need not get up early in the
morning to attend to them.

... by its isolation for centuries from the rest of Scotland and Great Britain, an isolation which has
enabled it to preserve its traditional ways of life, so that until to-day it has scarcely been touched by the
competitive spirit of Industrialism, and has remained largely co-operative; and by the fact that it has at the
same time been able to take advantage of scientific discoveries which are a specific product of
Industrialism... It has been saved by being just outside the circumference of the industrial world, near
enough to know about it, but too far off to be drawn into it.

During our stay in Orkney, Christopher and I visited many of the ancient sites as well as places connected
with my Thin and Clouston forbears.

We visited Skaill House in the parish of Sandwick, West Mainland, where in 1913 my great grandparents
were guests at ‘W. B. Stewart’s Luncheon party’.
In my possession – my great grandmother Annie E J Thin’s Scrapbook Album

Front row, third from left Annie – back row, far right, W B Stewart – next to him E C Thin
I knew that W B Stewart, William Balfour Stewart, lived in Birkenhead and one of his sons was a page boy at my grandmother Marian’s wedding. I also knew that W B Stewart was a son of Professor Balfour Stewart.

_Annie E J Thin’s Scrapbook Album_

Among letters handed down the family from my Thin great grandparents is a letter from Balfour’s wife Katie enclosing a wedding present from them to E C Thin.

_In The Family of Clouston_ I saw that Professor Balfour Stewart was a son of William Stewart and Jane, nee Clouston – Jane, the second sister of Edward (the Edward of my story).

In my great grandmother Annie Thin’s _Birthday Scripture Text Book_ there are a number of mentions of William Heddle Flett and his wife, but no mention of her name.

_In Stewart of Brugh, in Orkney Library and Archives_, I saw that Balfour’s sister, Isabella, William Stewart and Jane’s only daughter, married William Heddle Flett, a Liverpool merchant. I later discovered that W H Flett was in partnership with Robert Thin (E C Thin’s father) in the firm Robert Thin, Liverpool merchants.

I knew E C Thin was in partnership for thirty years with J C Sinclair in the firm Thin and Sinclair, Liverpool merchants, and when Christopher and I were in Orkney we discovered that J C Sinclair was Joseph Clouston Sinclair, a nephew of Dr Thomas Clouston and a first cousin of J Storer Clouston.

In 2001 Merv Clouston sent me a typed copy of a letter dated 15 April 1919, Smoogro House, Orphir, Orkney from J Storer Clouston to Balfour Stewart Clouston, Blenheim, New Zealand (Capt Henry of New Zealand’s second son) – extract

...I had always known that my father’s old friend or relation Mr Edward Clouston Thin of Liverpool was a grandson of that Edward...

‘That Edward’ was my great, great, great grandfather Edward – the Edward of my story
Edward’s father Rev William Clouston began his 1794 statistical account of Sandwick and Stromness with a brief outline of early Orkney history.


The Orkney islands were originally governed by their own kings, as we are informed by historians... These islands having been subdued by King Kenneth Macalpin, about the middle of the ninth century, continued from that period annexed to the Scottish throne, until the end of the eleventh century, when they were assigned by King Donald Bane to the King of Norway, to whom they were subject until the middle of the thirteenth century; when they were transferred by Magnus King of Norway to Alexander King of Scotland. But although these islands were thus ceded, the Norwegians still asserted their right to them, and often possessed them, until the year 1470, when James III of Scotland married Margaret, daughter to
the King of Denmark, with whom they again passed to the Crown of Scotland, in lieu of her dowry; and upon the birth of her son [James IV of Scotland] they were finally ceded; which was afterwards confirmed; when James VI of Scotland married Ann daughter of the King of Denmark. These islands having been so long and repeatedly in the possession of the Danes and Norwegians, many of the names of places and persons are derived from the Danish or Scandinavian language.

http://springtimeofnations.blogspot.co.uk/2014/04/scotlands-northern-isles-may-be.html – arrow points to Orkney Islands

Cloustons are descended from an 11th century Norwegian chieftain in the days when Orkney was ruled by Norway.


Lineage—Havard Gunnason, Chief Counsellor to Haakon, Earl of Orkney, ca. 1090, m. Bergidat who had theodal lands of Clouston for dowry, dau. of Raghnild, 4th dau. of Paul Thorfinson, Jarl of Orkney, by his wife, dau. of Haakon Ivarson, Jarl of the Uplands in Norway, 1054–64, by his wife, Raghnild, only dau. of Magnus I, “the Good,” King of Norway, 1036–47, and had issue,
Chapter 4. Orkney

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Clouston, the ancestral home of Cloustons, is a township in the parish of Stenness, a little to the northeast of Stromness on the southern shore of the Loch of Stenness.

Google Maps – arrow points to Clouston

Clouston, the ancestral home of Cloustons, is a township in the parish of Stenness, a little to the northeast of Stromness on the southern shore of the Loch of Stenness.

J Storer Clouston summarised the early days of the Cloustons of Clouston.

The Family of Clouston, by J Storer Clouston (1870-1944), first printed 1948, facsimile edition published by Dane Clouston, 2002 – page 1

... The Cloustons can make no claim to be a “historic house” within the range of the comparatively recent centuries to which popular interest attaches. In the far-off days when their pedigree appears in Munch’s Historie in company with the other great ones of the land, the land was Norway and her overseas dominions. In the 15th and 16th centuries, they led the contingent of Orkneymen who went abroad to serve in the Guards and Archer Companies of France, and one of their archer members was among the captains of the luckless Scottish host at Flodden [1513]. Thereafter, their sphere was confined to their native isles down to the last century and a half, when they followed the flag of the ever widening Empire...
Maeshowe, described above by Edwin Muir as ‘an ancient burial-chamber . . . on whose walls can still be seen the runes of a band of Vikings who broke into it, leaving news that they were on their way to Jerusalem’ is a little to the northeast of Clouston, close to the southeast tip of the Loch of Harray.


After excavations in the 1970s when structural evidence for a rebuilding of the bank encircling the mound was radiocarbon dated to the 9th century AD. It now seems possible that the tomb was re-used and its external appearance improved for the burial of a Viking chieftain, whose rich grave-goods were stolen three centuries later. ‘Hakon alone bore the treasure out of this mound’ records one of the inscriptions, while another insists ‘It is certain and true as I say, that the treasure has been moved from here. The treasure was taken away three nights before they broke into his mound’.

Archaeologist James Farrer first excavated the cairn in 1861. During the 1861 excavation an access shaft was driven down through the top of the mound. Once inside, however the archaeologists discovered that they were not the first to break into the tomb. Runic “graffiti” found on the inner walls confirmed the Orkneyinga Saga account that several groups of Norsemen had entered the tomb ... in the middle of the 12th century and recorded their presence on the ancient stone ... The 30 inscriptions found in Maeshowe, make it one of the largest, and most famous, collection of runes known in Europe. According to the Orkneyinga Saga, over 800 years previously, in the darkness of an Orkney winter, a group of Viking warriors had sought shelter from a terrible storm. Leading the men was Earl Harald, who, at Christmas, 1153, was making his way from Stromness to the parish of Firth. The Earl’s party took refuge in ... the mound they knew as Orkahaugr. While waiting for the storm to abate, they carved graffiti into the stone walls ... Another episode in the tomb is thought to have involved Earl Rognvald and his men. The crusaders’ graffiti, however, claims that they were the first to have broken into the chamber. With this in mind, it is likely that they must have entered the chamber prior to their crusade.

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**www.orkneyjar.com/history/maeshowe/ – Maeshowe – extracts**

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Notice of Runic Inscriptions discovered during recent Excavations in the Orkneys made by James Farrer, M.P. – printed for private circulation 1862 – Plate II. Interior View of Maeshowe (looking towards the entrance passage)
The tumulus is about 92 feet in diameter, 36 feet high, and about 300 feet in circumference at the base. It is surrounded by a trench 40 feet wide, and varying in depth from 4 to 8 feet. It has undoubtedly been entered at some remote period probably by the Northmen, who, as is well known, were not deterred by feelings either of religion or superstition, from opening and ransacking any place likely to repay them for their trouble. Whether they were the first to break into the building, or whether they found it in a state of comparative ruin, the natural result of great antiquity, can now only be a matter of conjecture. It is obvious that little respect has been paid to the dead, since the stones used for closing up the cells, in which it is supposed they were deposited, were found torn out and buried in the mass of ruins filling up the interior of the chamber to which these cells are attached.

After a few days’ labour the whole of the rubbish filling the chamber was removed, but long ere this was accomplished, the keen eye of Mr. Joseph Robertson discovered the first of the Runic inscriptions. They were high up on the walls of the building, smaller and less distinctly drawn than many that were afterwards discovered, but the important fact that the existence of Runic inscriptions in Orkney, where none had hitherto been found, was at once established.

... Many of them are no doubt to be attributed to the Crusaders, but there are others of probably far earlier date than the twelfth century, when... the Orkney Jarl, Ragnvald, about the year 1152-3, organized his naval expedition to the Holy Land. That the writings have been engraved at intervals during a long period of time – perhaps... during the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, or even later – is sufficiently obvious...

The monumental chambered tomb of Maeshowe is simply the finest Neolithic building in NW Europe. Built around 5,000 years ago, it is a masterpiece of Neolithic design and stonework construction, not least for it uses massive individual stones...

... The gently sloping [entrance] passage is carefully aligned so that at sunset during the three weeks before and after the shortest day (21 December) the light of the setting sun shines straight down the passage and illuminates the back of the central chamber. The sun’s rays align with a standing stone, the Barnhouse Stone, standing 800m SSW of Maeshowe.
www.flickr.com/photos/cullya-quoy/with/14912312189/ – Maeshowe – looking towards the Loch of Harray and Loch of Stenness

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scotlandhistory/earlypeople/maeshowe/ – looking back through the entrance passage

*My photo, October 2001 – Maeshowe – Christopher standing beside the opening of the entrance passage*
Moving on from the 12th century to the beginning of the 18th century and the birth of Edward’s grandfather Captain Edward Clouston (1704-1763): Captain Edward was the elder son of Thomas Clouston (1671-1753) of Stromness (third son of Nicol Clouston 17th of Clouston) and Marion, daughter of Hugh Mowat of Swinzie in the Isle of Hoy.

The two sons of Thomas Clouston and Marion Mowat, Edward, (b. 1704), and Robert, (b. 1709), both followed the sea, not in the Royal Navy, but in what was then the more profitable sister service, the mercantile marine. Sometimes a naval officer did actually make an exceedingly good thing out of prize money, so long as his country was at war, but such luck came the way of comparatively few. In the merchant navy, on the other hand, if a captain had the capital to own his own ship, or a substantial share of it, he combined the thrills of the sea (if he had that taste in his blood) and the command of a ship and crew, together with the profits of a merchant . . . And in the 18th century, with the danger of pirates and privateers ever present, where a merchant ship carried guns, and cutlasses were served at the sight of a suspicious sail, the conditions were still much like those in the 13th century, and there was little difference between the sea services of the crown and of commercial venture.

We can safely assume that it was the purse of Thomas Clouston which enabled his two sons to be in command of their own ships and already investing their profits in landed and house property well before his death. From 1744 to 1761 sasines are recorded in favour of Captains Edward and Robert (and there may be more, for the register was only examined down to 1765), whereby they both became substantial landowners, in addition to their various tenements in Stromness . . . Edward’s estate was considerably the larger of the two; it was in fact quite an extensive property, and included Kirkness in Sandwick which gave the designation “of Kirkness” to his eldest son John, and Kingshouse in Harray from which the designation “of Kingshouse” was given to his grandson Edward.

Kingshouse, the largest parcel of land Edward inherited, via his father Rev William, from Captain Edward was and continues to be a farm in the township of Corston in the parish of Harray, West Mainland.

My photo, October 2001 – looking south to Kingshouse,
Edward’s father Rev William was Captain Edward Clouston’s elder son by his second wife Christian, daughter of James Smith of Tormiston.

The Family of Clouston, by J Storer Clouston – page 104 – and – 105

Captain Edward married twice. His first wife (marriage 1729) was Marjorie daughter of William McKenlay of Warbister in Hoy . . .

Edward’s second wife was Christian, daughter of James Smith of Tormiston in Stenness, head of an old and interesting family . . . Their estate was not great, though it included Swannay and various other lands in West Mainland, but, in the case of one member at least, of a quite exceptional kind to find in Orkney. This was Charles Smith, nephew of Christian, artist, playwright and poet; pupil of Sir Joshua Reynolds; for a space Portrait Painter to the Great Mogul; and then setting up in London as a fashionable portrait painter, thanks to the influence of his uncle Caleb Whiteford, “the well known witty wine merchant,” . . . Smith’s extreme radical opinions, however, were too much for his sitters; nor had he any more luck with a play “dамned at Covent Garden” as he expressed it himself, while his poetry remains unknown save to the curious. Yet his name still lives as a capable artist, if his sitters stayed to the finish, and a rare and bright phenomenon to find in 18th century Orkney.

It was from this Smith marriage that all the later descendants of Edward originally sprang. Of the sons, two survived and flourished . . .
Rev William Clouston (1747-1832) and Robert Clouston (1753-1817) 1st of Smoogro, were the two sons of Captain Edward and Christian who survived. In 2004 a descendant of Captain Edward and Christian’s daughter Helen was searching for information to establish, or otherwise, that Helen was his ancestor.

For some time I have been trying to determine where two of my ancestors originated from. The people in question are Helena Clouston and Andrew Johnson. So far all children I have been able to trace were born in Memel (= Klaipeda, Lithuania):

1. Maria (Born: 2 December 1778, christening: 2 December 1779)
2. Helena (Born: 15 July 1781, christening: 20 July 1781)
4. Andrew (Born: 2 October 1785, christening: 3 October 1785)
5. Margaretha Florentine (Born: 18 June 1786, christening: 2 July 1786)

In the baptism register the first two children (1779 & 1781) it was stated that Andrew Johnson was a ship captain of the ship “Maria et Louisa” owned by Johann Simpson.

Huib had found on the IGI index – https://familysearch.org/

- Marriage: Andrew Johnson x Helline Clouston (12 FEB 1778 Stromness, Orkney, Scotland)
- Christening: Helen Clouston (21 OCT 1755 Stromness, Orkney, Scotland), Father: Edward Clouston, Mother: Christian Smith

My current problem is how do I prove that they are the same people. I would appreciate any suggestions that could help me on my way.
I thought I might be able to help Huib. I emailed him a copy of a rough family tree that had once belonged to my great grandfather E C Thin who wrote on it – ‘Capt Johnston, Viking Club, London’ (Viking Society for Northern Research) – section – far left – Helen Clouston B 1755 M Capt Johnston

Helen’s daughter Mary’s marriage to John Griffin proved to Huib that Helen was his ancestor. In his reply he told me that Helena and Andrew Johnson’s eldest daughter Maria married John Griffin, a Memel merchant, and their second daughter Helena married James Moir, partner with John Griffin in the Memel firm of Moir and Griffin.

Huib is descended from Helena and Andrew’s fourth daughter Margaretha Florentine and Hyeronimus Franciscus Seraph Rödlitch, a Major General in the Prussian Army, who were married in 1808 at Königsberg, the capital of East Prussia (now Kaliningrad in Russia). It appears that some of the family of Helen Johnston were living in ‘central Germany’ when Robert Clouston (Rev William’s fourth son) visited Germany in 1836.

https://archive.org/details/lettersfromgerm00clougoog – Letters from Germany and Belgium, by an Autumn Tourist (Robert Clouston), published 1839 – page 35 – Dresden, August 1836

For one coming from the far distant Ultima Thule [Orkney and Shetland], to discover as I did in central Germany a colony of near and previously unknown relatives – speaking another language, and scarcely understanding that of their fatherland – was a circumstance sufficiently singular, and was well calculated to lend a further interest to a foreign country, by endowing it with the agreeable associations of home, and the sympathies of kindred . . .

Returning to Helen Johnston’s brother Rev William Clouston (father of the Edward of my story) – he was born on 17 July 1747 (Obituary – Inverness Journal, 7 Sep 1832) and was educated at Edinburgh University (see below Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae – Vol VII).

Before being ordained Rev William spent time in London with his cousin Charles Smith of Tormiston.
Copy supplied by Merv Clouston – Orcadian Families – Clouston of Clouston, contributed by J Storer
Clouston – typed manuscript – 11 pages – no date – page 5-6 – Rev William Clouston – includes

... in his younger days had been in some of the best literary and artistic society in London in company with his cousin, Smith of Tormiston, the painter and playwright ...

On 8 August 1770 the Synod of Orkney agreed that the Presbytery of Cairston (which includes the parishes of Stromness and Sandwick) should take William Clouston on trial for the ministry, but two ministers of Kirkwall protested.

http://catalogue.nrscotland.gov.uk/nrsonlinecatalogue/search.aspx

Papers of the Scarth Family of Breckness – GD217/1199 – Copy of appeal by Mr John Yule and Mr George Douglas, ministers of Kirkwall, to General Assembly protesting against sentence of Synod of Orkney, 8 Aug 1770, agreeing that Presbytery of Cairston should take Mr William Clouston, student of divinity, on trial for ministry – Dated at Kirkwall – 13 Aug 1770

General Assembly Papers, Main Series – CH1/2/113 – date 1771 – ff.122-32 – Case of William Clouston in presbytery of Cairston, who assumed title of student of divinity though he had no recommendation or certificate from a professor of divinity

Despite the protest Rev William was licensed as a Minister in 1771, and in 1773 he was ordained to the united parishes of Cross and Burness in the Isle of Sanday.


William Clouston of Kingshouse, born 1774, son of Captain Edward C. of Kingshouse, Stromness, and Christian Smith of the Tormiston family, and grandson of Nicol C. of Clouston; educated at Univ. of Edinburgh; licen. in 1771; ord. to Cross and Burness 27th April 1773; pres. by Sir Thomas Dundas Bart . . . .

Writing in 1791, Rev William recalled Murdoch McKenzie suggesting that the Isle of Sanday’s irregular form ‘resembles a lobster’.


The extent of the isle of Sanday is 12 miles long, and varies in breadth from one mile, or less in some places, to two or three miles in others. Its form is very irregular; and, by reason of its several extended points and indented bays, resembles a lobster, as Mr Murdoch McKenzie says, who is a native of this country, and surveyed these islands 50 years ago . . .

Traditions. – Traditions respecting the incroachments of the sea are, 1st, That a shoal, 2 miles from shore, on the north side of the isle of Sanday, called Rinnabreck, was formerly land, and a field where they used to play at foot-ball; 2dly, That the Bay of Otterwick, (by some thought to be a corruption of Odens Wick, the Scandinavian diety), on the north side of the isle of Sanday, now of extent a league long, was formerly land, and that it was covered with trees. In support of this tradition, are shown what looks like the decayed roots of trees, along the shore, only to be seen at the lowest ebbs. How far this tradition is to be credited, is uncertain . . . Be this as it may, it is certain there are no trees in any of the Orkney islands at present.
In his Diary, Patrick Fea of Stove included a few brief mentions of Rev William.


1773 – January 27 – Such weather as the day before Att Arie got from Jas Shearer 14 Shillings for which ..?.. got from ..?.. returned to Rothiesholm Geo Dinnison M Shurie J [sic] Cloustane the Probationer bad wd at Night – SE

Sun 31 – A pretty good day Westove Mr Dinnison & Mr Cloustane wt to Sanda [or Sanday] the first forenoon others after Sermon

February, Sun 7 – A fine day all day Mr Cloustane in Burness kirk – S

9 – A very good day Wm Strang went to eda [or Eday] as did his Son in Law & Mr Cloustane about Noon Mr Dennison & his Wife came to Stove before Dinner Sent Iron Coals over to the Smidie in order to Work the Labg work next day – SE
Sun 14 – A very good dry day Mr Cloustane came from Eda & preached in Cross Kirk Mr Dennison …d – SSW

April 27 – A fine morning midday wind & Rain att Cross Kirk where Mr Cloustane was settled Din’d att Mirigar & returned to Stove wt Messrs Lesley & Pitcairne three pleughs faughing & 10 Horses mucking up the Clay Sheed – SW

1774 – December 28 – A hard gale of wd a few sheurs of Rain at N NW got a grate made for the Nth Roume & payed Robt Hay therefore 1Sh Mr Clouston att Stove all Night – NW

29 – A fine Winter day Mr Cloustone went home after Dinner some of my serv:ants in the Ware some Absent ..?.. ..?.. others not got 2 Cassies Malt ground upon the Milne of Wassater

Diary starts again January 1779

June, Sun 6 – A fine dry day Mr Cloustone in Stronsa [or Stronsay] declaring the Kirk Vacant by Mr Tylers Death – SE

July 14 – A fine dry day my Maz:s busie all day att the Kiln Niclo Scleater from Stronsa having Viewed the Shoars of Nth Strinzie wch by his survey will yield @ 42 or 43 Tons Kelp Mrs Stewart & Mrs Scollay & others came to Stove as did Messsrs Cloustane & Anderson

15 – Small Rain most of the forenoon both Parsons wt away the Mazons biging upon the Side Wall all forenoon afternoon heavy Rain so that the Mazons got nothing done to the Kiln – N

1780 – June, Sun 18 – A very good dry day heard Mr Cloustanes going to Stronsa but he did not

Pages from January 1781 to December 1793 are missing.

Rev William Clouston’s successor Rev William Grant, Minister of Cross and Burness from 1794 to 1848, wrote that the manse was ‘rather an old house’.


... The manse is rather an old house, but kept in good repair by the heritors. It is situated in Cross parish, and there is a glebe of about twenty acres, with garden and offices attached. The other glebe in Burness ...

Cross and Burness Manse was rebuilt in the second half of the 19th century – see – Marygarth Manse – www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/sc-54-sanday-marygarth-manse-with-ancillary-buildi

http://maps.nls.uk/view/74427851 – Ordnance Survey, 6 inches to mile, published 1882 – Orkney – Isle of Sandy – section – arrow points to the Manse
Topography. . . . A few of these islands are flat, and Sanday, is particularly low; so that, at the distance of some miles, the land seems to be sunk beneath the waves, and the more elevated houses appear like solitary pillars in the ocean . . .

The Cross Parish Church on the edge of Backaskail Bay is now a ruin.
The ruins of the disused Cross parish church and cemetery lie adjacent to the coast edge, to the east side of Backaskail Bay. The building, which measures some 21m in length by 7m in width, is thought to date to the late 17th or early 18th C. This church is said to have been built on the foundations of a pre-reformation chapel, dedicated to the Holy Cross. A 16th C account mentions an earlier cemetery with outsize skeletons’ being uncovered by erosion. Previous surveyors have noted the presence of midden deposits and drystone walling in the coastal section as indicative of an early settlement. It has been suggested that the site may be of prehistoric date and that the location is also a likely one for a high status Norse settlement. The coastal section is protected by a sea wall which has been recently renewed and no eroding deposits were noted on this visit. There is a mounded area which extends from the eastern side of the cemetery which may represent archaeological remains, covered beneath a thick layer of blown sand. The mound measures some 40m in diameter and stands up to 2m high. Earthworks, previously noted at the west side of the cemetery, have been tentatively identified as the remains of an early church enclosure or part of an earlier settlement. Ref.: RCAHMS (1946) #157; RCAHMS (1980) #174.

The Burness Parish Church, dedicated to St Columba, was demolished long ago – see [http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/3512/details/sanday+st+columba+s+church/](http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/en/site/3512/details/sanday+st+columba+s+church/)

**Google Earth** – top left Scar House and farm – arrow points to cemetery – the site of the old Burness Parish Church
In 1786, thirteen years after being ordained to the parishes of Cross and Burness, Rev William married Isabella Traill (1763-1827), eldest daughter of Thomas Traill, 5th Laird of Holland, Isle of Papa Westray.


British Library – New Statistical Account of Scotland, 1834-45 – County of Orkney – section – arrow points to Papa Westray
In Orkney numbers of places are named Holland = high land in Old Norse

*Orkney Farm-Names, by Hugh Marwick, published 1952* – page 45-47 – Papa Westray – extract

Holland: O.N. há (hó)-land, ‘high-land’. This was the ‘Laird’s house’ or manorplace of the island for about 250 years down to the latter part of the last century. The lairds were the Traills of Holland, the senior branch of the Orkney family of that name. The house occupies a dominating position on the ridge of the island.

Traills of Holland are descended from George Traill who came to Orkney from Blebo in Fifeshire in the 16th century with Robert Stewart, Earl of Orkney.


“George Traill, son of the Laird of Blebo in Fife, married, first, Jean Kennedy of Carmunks, a relative of the Earl’s Lady. He accompanied the Earl to Orkney; got a grant from the Earl of the lands of Quandale, in the Island of Rousay, and, as steward [sic] or factor, managed the affairs of the earldom. By Jean Kennedy he had one son, the first Thomas Traill of Holland . . .”

https://archive.org/details/agenealogicalac00unkngoog – *A Genealogical Account of the Traills of Orkney, with a Pedigree Table tracing their descent from the Traills of Blebo, in Fifeshire, by William Traill of Woodwick, M.D., published 1883* – Introduction, page xviii

. . . The numerals at the end of the names refer to the children; and correspond with subsequent numerals at the beginning of the names. If two or more numerals occur after a name, they refer to the children of two or more wives . . .

Page 25-34 – Traills of Holland – extracts

*George Traill, from Blebo in Fifeshire, m. Jean Kennedy.*

1. Thomas Traill of Holland m. circa 1632, Marian Craigie.

Thomas Traill, 5th of Holland married Anne, 4th daughter of Archibald Stewart of Brugh

14. Thomas Traill of Holland, m. 4th January, 1757, Anne, 4th daughter of Archibald Stewart of Brugh.

Children of Thomas Traill 5th of Holland and wife Anne – George Traill, 6th of Holland – and four daughters – arrow points to Isabel (Isabella) married 6 December 1786 Rev William Clouston

21. George Traill of Holland, b. 8th December, 1773; m. 6th January, 1820, Mary, second daughter of William Swan, Esq. of Ayre; made Burgess of Kirkwall, by order of Council, of date 1st December, 1808. 22.
Chapter 4. Orkney


Holland House... An intact traditional laird’s house of the early 19th century. The earlier block to the NW may date from as early as the mid 17th century. The estate was bought in 1637 by Thomas Traill, a soldier and a member of what became a large landholding family in Orkney. The main block of the house was built by George Traill (VI of Holland), who made a lot of money from the local kelp industry. He and his son, Thomas, rebuilt much of the adjacent farm...
In 1746, nine years before Thomas Traill 5th of Holland married Ann, daughter of Archibald Stewart, 4th of Brugh, his house Cleat on the Isle of Westray (southwest of Papa Westray) was burnt down by government troops following the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion. In his ‘Memorial’ Archibald 4th of Brugh refuted claims of being ‘accessory’ to the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion.

Mr Ross issues a warrant, June 14 to the bailies of Westray, Rousay, Sanday, and North Ronaldsay, commanding them to intimate to all the heads of families in these islands, convened for that purpose, a summons by Mr Moodie, requiring us to surrender ourselves prisoners to him by the 20th of that month, under the pain of being esteemed and treated as rebels, and having military execution done against our persons and estates.

Their [government troops] next march was to Cleat, a house belonging to me the said Archibald Stewart, which was also plundered and burnt, and particularly a cabinet with paper, which the captain caused strike open, took out such as he had a mind for, and carried away with him; the rest was consumed by the flames. One circumstance is remarkable, which demonstrates the inhumanity of these perpetrators, namely, that, when the house was on fire, a gentleman occasionally present, and commiserating the lady’s misfortunes, intreated the captain, that out of pity to her as his near kinswoman, and as a mother of 7 or 8 young children, would spare an out house that stood hard by, telling him, that if it were burnt she and her numerous family would be entirely destitute of any habitation; to which he answered, for that very reason, by God it must be burnt too! and which was done accordingly.

The captain convened the inhabitants on the estates belonging to me the said Archibald Stewart, denouncing fire and sword against all that should be absent; when convened, he caused the bailie ask a few of them some questions touching our behaviour since the beginning of the rebellion, particularly if we
had attempted to raise any men for the Pretender’s service, to which they answered in the negative; declaring that some of us in their hearing had made open profession of our allegiance and attachment to the present government, promising them our countenance, and which we gave them accordingly. The bailie moved that these questions and answers should be put in writing. But as these truths did not serve the captain’s purpose, he would not allow it to be done; and as a mark of his displeasure for such answers, caused seize every young man on the grounds belonging to us Archibald Stewart and William Balfour; Some (of these) during the confusion found means to escape; eight were committed prisoners to the tender, which occasioned their friends to make a prodigious outcry, who insisted, that if these men were to be examined, they should be so instantly, and forthwith discharged; to which they were answered, that they were to be carried to Kirkwall to be examined before the Sheriff, and when that was done they should be then at liberty.

... we no sooner returned to Kirkwall but we were committed to prison, from whence they thought it convenient to discharge us after two days confinement, upon being threatened with an act of damages. This was the last but very impotent effect of his malice. Here we must observe the reasons assigned for seizing us, as they are expressed in the warrant for that purpose: They say, that it appeared to them that Commodore Smith had granted a warrant to Captain Christopher Middleton for seizing us, as being accessory to the late rebellion, and for burning and destroying our houses, &c; that our houses were accordingly burnt, and that we had kept out of the way; and therefore, &c. – We wish that we had been possest of the commodore’s orders which Mr Ross and the magistrates say they had seen; for as we have a just title to reparation for our damages, we wish we had our redress against the commodore, who is sufficiently able to make restitution, – for as to the other offenders, their situations are such that we have no reason to hope that we can operate our relief from them.

While they were being pursued by government troops, Archibald and the other Orkney Lairds who were suspected of being Jacobite sympathisers hid in a cave, since then known as the ‘Gentlemen’s Cave’, on the west coast of Westray

My photo, October 2001 – Westray – from the cliff top above the ‘Gentlemen’s Cave’ looking southeast


About a mile or so beyond the Castle [Notland Castle], you come to that part of the cliff-line, in which “the Gentleman’s Ha” or Cave is situated. To reach it, you have to walk along a shelf of rock, which in one place has given way, for about a yard or so, a chasm over which you have to step at a height of eighty feet or so above the sea.

... In this cave, or caves, for there are said to be two at least, William Balfour, Stewart of Brugh, and other Jacobites, took refuge when “wanted” in 1746, occasionally shifting quarters to another cave at Rapness, at the other end of the island, which is easier of access, but, being on a grassy slope, requires care to prevent slipping in wet weather...

Archibald Stewart 4th of Brugh was descended from Robert Stewart, Earl of Orkney, an illegitimate son of James V of Scotland and a half brother of Mary Queen of Scots.

Orkney Library and Archives, Kirkwall – D29/5/8 – Stewart of Brugh, signed Wm Traill, dated 10 September 1927 – extracts

Stewart of Brugh

Robert Stewart Earl of Orkney (a natural son of King James V and Eupham daughter of Alexander Lord Alphinstone) had by Marjory Sandilands daughter of Sandilands, burgess of Wick, three illegitimate sons:—

Archibald Stewart 4th of Brugh married (marriage contract 16 October 1724) Isobel Balfour.

6. Archibald Stewart 4th of Brugh married (M.C. 16th October 1724) Isobel daughter and heiress of William Balfour of Pharey. By this marriage the Island of Pharey and the most of the Skelwick property passed into the hands of the Stewarts. For his adherence to the cause of the exiled Stewarts during the "45" his house of Cleat was burned down in June 1746 and he had to hide with others in the "Gentlemen's Cave" in Westray.

Archibald Stewart 4th of Brugh and Isobel, nee Balfour had ten children

1st daughter Margaret was the second wife of George Traill 4th of Holland

Arrow points to 4th daughter Ann who married Thomas Traill 5th of Holland (parents of Isabella, wife of Rev William)

7. James Stewart 5th of Brugh born 1730 married 1st 1752 Ann daughter of James Traill of Westove 2nd. Margaret Pollexfen daughter of Thomas Pollexfen of Saby and died without issue at Westray 16th April 1802 leaving the Estate to his nephew James son of his youngest brother Balfour Stewart of Burness.


7. Thomas Stewart. dead before 3rd April 1764.

7. Balfour Stewart of Burness married 1st. Margaret daughter of Revd. Mr. Drysdale (a church of England Clergyman) and 2nd (M.C. 4th April 1792) Margaret daughter of Thomas Lindsay, Merchant, Kirkwall

7. Margaret Stewart married (M.C. 22nd October 1743) George Traill of Holland. His second wife.

7. Marion Stewart married Thomas Traill of Westove (M.C. 4th December 1751)


7. Mary Stewart married 1st January 1797 Revd. James Izatt, Minister of Westray 1784 to his death 19th May 1805. She died 12th July 1821.

7. Isobel Stewart married Alex. Watt, Merchant, Kirkwall
My photo, October 2001 – Westray looking towards Papa Westray – far right – farm buildings, the site of Archibald of Brugh’s house Cleat – middle Cleat House built by James 5th of Brugh


Returning to Rev William and his future wife Isabella Traill –
Rev William proposed to Isabella in a letter that was passed down the family to their great grandson William Balfour Stewart. In 1908 he described Rev William’s proposal letter as a ‘letter of 12 pages’.

Copy supplied by Merv Clouston – Orkney Library and Archives– D23/16 – Letter dated 21 July 1908, 13 Caroline Place, Birkenhead, from William Balfour Stewart to J Storer Clouston – extract

... I have a copy of his proposal letter. I gave the original to Robt Clouston, in it he describes himself as a Poet, a Preacher, and a Letter Writer... I think that the character of Rev W Clouston is easily read in his proposal letter of 12 pages...

The original proposal letter along with various other Clouston family memorabilia were later passed down to Ranald Clouston (died 2002), a great grandson of Rev Charles Clouston, Rev William and Isabella’s youngest son – in the possession of the children of the late Ranald Clouston – Rev William’s proposal letter, undated, to Isabella Traill – page 1
Dear Miss,

The pleasure I enjoyed in your Company, for the happiest fortnight I ever spent in my life, calls forth every grateful Sentiment of my heart, to acknowledge my sense of your kind attention, and that of your amiable family; whose sweet & Benevolent dispositions will, I hope, ever secure their just & merited reward, the Esteem of the wise & good.

As I am inclined when I feel myself happy, rather to enjoy than express it, so in your sweet Society, I did not much speak my Sentiments in this matter, but I trust my behaviour assured you of this, & also of what it was impossible for me to conceal, since every look betrayed how much I loved you, & discovered this fond Secret of my Soul. The affections of my heart were kindled at the least glance from your beautiful Eyes, and mine in return, I presume, spoke my feelings more fully, than the most descriptive language. In such a situation as this, all pompous expressions are an insult to love: I should always judge of my Friends sincerity, & my Mistress’s Love, rather from their Behaviour than their professions. You will easily perceive that, by this, I mean to tell you, that the less I declared my love, the more I loved you. I was aware too, perhaps, that I ought not to declare myself, until I was well assured, that my affections were not Captivated by Personal Charms alone, as I believe, these could neither fully gain, or secure that permanent influence over my heart, which I would ever wish her to possess, who may of right claim it: for altho’ I feel the power of Eternal Beauty, yet I can say with Portia’s Lover [spoken by ‘Juba’ in Cato by Addison],

“ tis not a Set of features, or Complexion;
“ the tincture of a skin that I admire. –

I always thought your manners & expression indicated that sweetness of disposition, that good nature and tenderness of affection, which, to me indeed, appear always so charming, that I am ever led by them as by some natural impulse: & I found, from your Sentiment that my judgement was well founded. With what pleasure did I hear your read, in Logans poems, that Line which I have marked in Italicks in the 2d Stanza of mine: – what were the emotions of my soul, to hear you express it with such simplicity & ardour. I would have given then Twenty Guineas for your Picture then, with all that tenderness that graced every feature; & of the thousands of beautiful Pictures I have seen, to me this would have been the most lovely. I then thought Heaven had directed my Steps to your little isle, to shew me the woman of Personal Charms, pure affections, natural ease, & elegance. But you will say I flatter, for you once told me that I was good at Complimenting; & so I have been often told, and it is true; I can do so where my affections are not engaged, but these will not suffer me to express my Ingenuity, at the expense of my sincerity: when I saw you at Clett, I could, perhaps, have paid you a Compliment, but since that, I feel in my Breast a regard for you, far superior to such empty language: my heart is engaged, & my tongue could not utter any thing contrary to the truth of my feelings & Sentiment.

I have said enough to Convince you how much I love you: & there are few women to whom, altho’ I had equally loved them, I would have made such a full declaration of my Sentiments; but with you, I trust, I can lose nothing, by this open & generous Conduct, in letting you know how much I am in you power. I never was indeed so dependant upon others for happiness, as I now am on you and your Father. To you I must first look for your affections, & on these all my hopes depend. If your heart can lead you to direct these to me I would accept them with a due & grateful sense; but, if your feelings do not accord to this, however much the struggle may Cost me, I must yield up my pursuit and pretensions: for, indeed, I would not for the world, give my hand, but where, I thought, I had received the heart & affections in return for mine, which should ever accompany it. Could I have done otherwise, I might have been in possession of great wealth, as I have received advances of this kind, but my heart recoiled at the thought. – With regard to Character, I hope to stand fair in your Estimation. I am indeed beloved and respected in the world, as much, or more than I could wish; as it is difficult to support ones self, when the world the prejudiced in favour of their Character or abilities. My Fortune, tho’ a small one, is adequate to my moderate desires, and sufficient to live comfortably in this Country. My Person, tho’ not such as may give me fond hopes of you favour, yet I hope, is not disagreeable; & allow me to say, if I am not partial to myself, that I have been eyed with some degree of tender regard even by some of the amiable fair. – If your Judgement & affections shall declare in my favour, in these & other particulars; then, with your permission, after the manner of the world, I would propose my terms to your Father: & what an easy matter would this be for.
me, with most Fathers whom I know: I should have only to prescribe twice higher terms than I shall to
him, & it would be done should matters come thus far, I would only make Two or three Requisitions of
him, & these the most just, reasonable, & Expedient, entirely in his power, suitable to his circumstances,
and what humanity & duty to his family should dictate. It should neither be to dismember his Estate, or
prejudice the just Rights & Interests of his Son: for, altho’ my Circumstances are Competent for myself,
they are not such as may warrant me to overlook all prudential Consideration respecting those with whom
I might be connected: nor would you, or any one in the world, I hope, entertain a worse opinion of me, for
paying a due regard to these matters. I shall require of him to do little more than what he once did, and
they say has undone. In return for which, in so far as I should be concerned, if ever I should be related to
him, he should have the most ample & adequate conditions. – But these matters are foreign to the Subject
of Love, & as this is the first time I ever wrote in a Love strain, with serious views, I ought not perhaps to
have sullied my Epistle with any thing of the kind: but, upon recollection, I judge it fair that you know my
Sentiments in these matters. – If I should never form any connection with your family, it would, however,
give an agreeable Sensation to my feelings, to hear of their being secured in some little independency, the
very idea of which is so charming to the mind. – Thus, I have passes from Love to more serious matters,
and now to Poetry, which is the Sister of Love. I send you enclosed a few verses I composed to amuse
myself, as I could not bring my mind to any thing else, but either to think or write of you. They are just as
I first wrote them, as I would not mend one single thought, but let it stand just as it came from the heart. It
is, however I think, one of the best I ever wrote; & I would not even yield to Logan when I write of you,
altho’ at all other times I would: & I think too, that I can write verses, since by some Friends at London I
was esteemed a Poet & a Preacher. But I was never vain of my Poetry: It has however one merit that of
Sincerity. I now give you a fair opportunity to write me, & let me know what you think of my verses, &
whether you like me best as a Poet, a Preacher, or a letter writer: whether you like the Sentiments, or the
versification best; or what Stanza, or Line, you like most; or, if you do not choose that, say anything you
please, & it will be agreeable to me, were it only the common occurrences of your little Circle, & how Mr
G – goes on with his farm. I should like once more to see you & him at Cards. Your Cheerful humour
then, has, oft since, made me apply to you, what a French writer says of his mistress, “Si vous voulez, elle
pensera sensement, si vous voulez elle badinera comme les graces”. You learned French with Miss Ross I
believe, if not Miss Oliphant will explain this to you. – If you will not say you wish to see me, you can at
least tell me that your Mamma would be glad to see me; or, that your Grand Mamma wishes for me, to
take a hand at cards with her, & preach to her. When I asked you, at what time I should return, you good-
naturedly said that depended upon myself. Were that the Case I should soon revisit your Isle, but I am
restrained by the Consideration of Character and duty, both which I have hitherto regarded with a strict
eye; besides, as I possess the Love & best wishes of my People, something is due to them in return. Thus,
Love & Duty hold a contest in my Breast, & it is surely a severe situation, to be every day in sight of the
island, where she whom I most Love in the world resides, & yet cannot see her, without perhaps incurring
the imputation of Impropriety of Conduct. In March, however, I shall be entitled to an excursion of 2 or 3
weeks, but I know not how to pass off the time till then. I summon’d up resolution to bid you Farewell,
but, indeed, I know not well, by what means, to make this long absence tolerable. Time may, perhaps,
reconcile me to my former amusements of reading, writing, & shooting, with which I used to pass my
weeks, but I know not how to pass off the time till then. I summon’d up resolution to bid you Farewell,
but, indeed, I know not well, by what means, to make this long absence tolerable. Time may, perhaps,
reconcile me to my former amusements of reading, writing, & shooting, with which I used to pass my
days so pleasantly; but I have not the same relish for them in my present temper of mind. – You would
hear the Report of Miss Jeannies marriage with me. I was well pleased they had mistaken the matter so far,
as the mistake made me laugh, & kept me in Countenance. I wish, to Live to see her marriage, not
reported only, but realised with one worthy of her if happily he may be found.

Chapter 4. Orkney

You it now in your power to class me, either in the List of your Lovers or your friends, or both if
you please. You may be sure I aim at, & wish for the first, but that depends upon your affections; &
believe me when I say that my Regard for you is such, that I would not wish a violence to be done to those
tender affections, even to promote my own happiness; and the man who could write or think otherwise
must be a stranger to true Love. I would never solicit affections where it did not flow naturally because in
that case alone I could enjoy it; and this is my Creed in Love.

But however, I may succeed in my hopes with regard to your affections, I will never relinquish my
pretensions to an honourable place among your Friends, & as a friend I’m sure I could …………… your
sorrows, & increase your happiness; & it is not inconsistent with all I have said, to say that I would rejoice
to see you happy by a Connection with the man you loved, if he was worthy of it, but there are few men,
perhaps, in whom you will find even the most requisite things for such a union, & very few indeed, if all
internal qualifications of the mind, & external circumstances are duly weighed. – You toasted, I
remember, Mr A … as your Lad, in order as you said to make Mr G ….. jealous. In him indeed you would find all the good nature you could wish for, a desire to please, & he is capable of affection, and these are great matters; but, perhaps, something ………… allowing that his scanty Circumstances could admit the most distant idea of his settling in life, but I am persuaded he has at present no particular attachment. There is in your neighbourhood, one, with whom, I think you might be happy; provided your affections were reciprocal. He has knowledge, good nature, principle, & a just value for domestick enjoyment, & perhaps he once loved………………….. views, but I hope it may soon do so. By this you will see I am not jealous. No, I cannot. It is a mean & ignoble passion. But I don’t know how I have swell’d this letter beyond all bounds. I intended one sheet & now it is three. May Heaven increase your happiness in the same proportion? If you Love me, you will steal from Morpheus an hour to read it, as I do now to write it. But, ere I conclude, I must Request two things; first, that, if ever I said, or did in your presence, that could give you offence, you impute it to inadvertency ….. not to my will. Next that you keep my poem, & this ….., if you please, as a mark of my Regard, & should you …….. the arms of a happier man, it will be no dishonourable …. your merit, in having possess’d my Esteem: & if he ………

Isabella Traill, the eldest daughter of Thomas Traill, 5th of Holland and Ann, nee Stewart, married Rev William on 6 December 1786. Ten months later, on 7 October 1787, their eldest child, Edward (the Edward of my story) was born.

https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/advanced-search# – Church Registers – Births and Baptisms –
Orkney – parish of Westray and Papa Westray – Births – 1787 – October 7

During Rev William’s time as Minister of Cross and Burness, he and Isabella had another three children – Thomas born in 1790, William born in 1792 (died young), and Anne born in 1793.

In 1791 Rev William wrote his statistical account of the Isle of Sanday and the Isle of North Ronaldshay.


Soil. – The soil is almost everywhere mixed with sand, and in many places, is entirely sand; and, where this last is the case, it is not cultivated, unless there is plenty of sea-ware to manure it with. 80 Horse loads of sea-ware have been sometimes carried half a mile, to be laid on a piece of sandy ground, which produced but one boll of bear in return. The black earth mixed with sand, and clay mixed with sand, are the best soils. As a great quantity of corn must be paid in kind to the superior, or Lord Paramount of these islands, the farmers cannot afford to meliorate the soil, by fallowing or by green crops; and therefore it may be thought, that the soil is, in some degree, exhausted; for it is agreed, that this sea-ware does not better the soil beyond the present crop; and, by the accounts of former crops, it appears they were better; at the same time, it is indisputable that farming is now better understood. The soil cannot be called bad, since
it has produced bear and oats, in constant succession, past the memory of man, which an English or Lothian farmer would think incredible. The soil in the isle of North Ronaldshay is also sandy, but has a greater mixture of red clay.

Air. – The air is rather moist and raw, which, by obstructing the perspiration, often occasions colds. – The most prevailing distempers are colds, colics, cutaneous eruptions, scurvy complaints, and rheumatisms, which last the people generally call gout: All which probably proceed from cold and wet clothes. There are some instances of the scrofula, or King’s evil, and 2 or 3 persons afflicted with the white swelling. Fevers sometimes prevail; and, when they seize upon one person in a house, they often affect the whole family. Relapses are frequent, as they are not at pains to wash the bed-clothes when they are recovered . . .

Fish. – The fish caught are cod, ling, skate, holybut; – but the fish most generally caught, and the most useful, is a grey fish here called cuths, of the size of small haddock, and is the same with what on the south coast are called podley, only the cuth is of a larger size. The inhabitants eat them; and they produce oil for household use. No fish of any kind, or oil are exported to any foreign market; the people being employed in making kelp during the summer season, have not time for fishing . . . The foresaid fish are caught from the middle of summer, to the beginning of spring. The seal frequents these shores, but not in great number. The otter is sometimes, but rarely caught. A variety of sea plants are thrown ashore by storms. Sponges are found. – Not many shells or corals. Cockles are found in two places only, and in still water. – No Oysters. In the Isle of North Ronaldshay they catch seals in nets; but they alledge the light-house lately erected there frightens them from their coasts. The people there have been in use to eat the young and tender ones.

Manure. – The general manure of these islands is the sea-weed or ware, which is driven ashore in storms . . . In the West India islands where they use this sea-weed, or varech, (as it is called there), they suppose that the sugars therewith produced, are of inferior quality to those produced from other manures, so likewise the corns raised by it here, are of inferior quality to those raised by compost manures . . .

Kelp. – It is about 70 years since kelp was first made here . . . There is no island in the Orkneys of the same extent of sea coast, that produces equal quantity with the isle of Sanday. It generally produces one-fourth or one-fifth of the whole kelp made in all the Orkney islands; so that when 2500 tons are made in all the Orkneys, 500 or 600 tons of that is made in Sanday. Highland kelp is preferred at Liverpool; but at Newcastle, and on the east coast of England, the Orkney kelp is preferred, especially by the manufacturers of crown glass . . .

Tides and Shoals. – . . . It has been long an opinion that a light-house might be of service on the east coast of these islands; and the Trustees, by order form government, have at last erected one, two years ago [1789], on the north-east point of the isle of North Ronaldshay, of the height of 70 feet. By report of some Captains, they have already been benefited by it. Some are of opinion, it might have been of more service on the Start, or east point of Sanday. Time will show if it diminishes the number of wrecks; for in time past, these islands have been as fatal to shipping, as the isle of Providence, and others of the Bahama islands in the West Indian Archipelago.

Advantages and Disadvantages. – The advantages of these islands are, 1st, That they are dry and level, the roads are never obstructed, even by the greatest rains. 2dly, The isle of Sanday has two pretty good harbours, that of Kettletoft on the south side, and that of Otterwick on the north side. 3dly, As the shores are flat, with several indented bays, the sea ware is lodged at different places, which is convenient to the farmers. 4thly, As the shores shelve by a gentle descent, they produce more kelp than in many other places, and from this circumstance, too, the shores are more easily wrought. 5thly, As there are few high or craggy cliffs in these islands, the crop is not in such danger in harvest from the sea spray which is often hurtful on other parts of this country.

The disadvantages of these islands are as follows, 1st, Although there is a great portion of these islands in common or waste grounds, they have, through the scarcity of fuel, been mostly cut up, and consequently produce but very short heath, on which, indeed, the cattle are let out to pasture; but it yields but a scanty nourishment, and they must be fed with straw, until the grass comes up, which is not usually before June, as the fields are all open, and herding not in use until then. 2dly, There are no mosses in these islands from which to cut peats, so that the inhabitants are obliged to go over to the island of Eday, and cut them there, which occasions them great trouble and expense. Those few who can afford it partly use coals from Newcastle, which by reason of the duty are dear; and therefore they justly consider the duty as a great hardship, since it subjects the poor inhabitants of the extremity of the empire to the same expence in
this, as the rich inhabitants of the south, and to pay to government, while those of the rich counties of Lothian and Fife are exempted. 3dly. There are no ferrymen appointed, which is a great inconvenience in going to and from these and many other islands in the country. 4thly. There are no public or regular markets at which the farmers can sell the produce of their farms, or supply themselves with what they want to buy. 5thly. As almost all the proprietors reside elsewhere, the rents are all carried away to be spent out of these islands, and none of it returned either to labourers, or to the poor in acts of charity and benevolence, (except 8l. Sterling yearly from Mr Traill, sheriff-depute of Caithness) as would be the case if they were resident. 6thly. The weights are different from what is used in other parts of the kingdom and the standard of them not exactly ascertained, so that an equalization of weights and measures would be very acceptable to this country.

Language. – The only language spoke here is the English. The names of places, it is supposed, are mostly derived from the Norwegian or Teutonic . . .

Humanity to the ship-wrecked. – . . . in no place in this county have so many ship wrecks happened as on the coasts of these two islands . . . While the treatment of the unfortunate seamen wrecked on the coasts of Cornwall, and other parts of the kingdom, and even in many places of this county, makes us lament the depravity of human nature, and rouses our indignation, it is with pleasure we bear testimony to the conduct of people among whom these rapacious excesses have not been committed. It cannot be supposed but some of the poor people will pilfer wood, and some other small things, but seldom or never has any thing of value been taken away except in one or two instances. The proprietors or principal farmers on whose shores the vessels are wrecked, usually take charge, in assisting the captain and crew, with their servants, cottagers, carts, and horses, in saving what can be saved. Some of these farmers can raise and command 40 or 50 men from their grounds, with horses and carts sufficient to employ them; and, all these under the command of one man, can do a great deal; and, as they are also in fear of his displeasure, as well as the law, they are restrained from rapacious plundering, if they had the inclination . . . If a vessel is wrecked either in seed-time or harvest, it must be a great loss to the farmers to order all their labouring servants to the wrecked vessel; and therefore they charge sometimes pretty high for their trouble; and their accounts have been disputed in the Vice-Admiral’s court, but seldom modified or reduced. The proprietor of the isle of North Ronaldshay has been twice complimented with a silver vase, and other pieces of silver plate, bearing a grateful inscription, from the Danish West India Company, and others, for his fidelity and attention; and this besides ready payment of his charge . . .

Means proposed to meliorate the condition of the Poor. – As the scarcity of fuel is one of the most distressing things the poor feel, the taking off the duty of coal would tend to make their condition more comfortable, although even then they could not afford to buy a necessary quantity of it. 2dly. As their houses are generally bad, this might, in some measure, be remedied, if the proprietors would give long leases to the principal farmers, at a moderate rent, upon condition that their cottagers should be lodged in houses that are comfortable and warm, the expence of which might be settled between the proprietor and tenant, and each pay a share. 3dly. It would be for the advantage of the cottager to have an acre of inclosed ground adjoining to his house, for grass, cabbage, and turnip, which also the proprietor could make an article in the tack to the tacksman, and which the cottager might be bound to do upon receiving some assistance. 4thly. As it is, perhaps, one of the greatest hardships attending their lot, that after they have worn out their strength in hard labour, when old age arrives, they are often and generally destitute. As their children, if they have any, do indeed assist them; but when these have families of their own, it is but a scanty support they can give them, since they have enough to do to find the necessaries of life for their own families; and, as the funds for the poor in these islands, are not such as can afford them an adequate supply, if any plan could be devised, similar to that entered into by the benevolent and virtuous inhabitants of the Bermudas islands, for giving them assistance at a certain age, provided they had been industrious in their younger years, would be to the honour of the man who should promote such a plan. If the heritors were residing in these islands, they would see the wants of the poor and the aged, and relieve them . . .

Below – in the possession of the children of the late Ranald Clouston – Rev William’s manuscript for his statistical account of Cross and Burness, Lady Kirk, and North Ronaldshay – section from one of the pages
Chapter 4. Orkney
The third example I have of Rev William’s handwriting is the letter he wrote dated West Brough, 24 September 1793, to Mrs Ann Fea, Stove.


West Brough (or Westbrough) is northeast of the old Cross and Burness Manse.
Chapter 4. Orkney

Google Earth – Sanday – west coast – section

Rev William wrote in his Sandwick and Stromness statistical account that from the northern side of Hoy Sound ‘there is a view which has a good deal of the sublime in it’.

Name and Situation. – Stromness and Sandwick are names found in Sweden, Denmark, and Iceland. The first of these may derive its name from Strom, or Straum, and Ness; this last meaning an extended point of land, and Strom the strong tide off the point. The parish of Sandwick, as well as the parish of the same name in the Shetland isles, of a similar situation, may derive its name from Sand and Wick, as there
is a sandy bay on the west side of this parish, Wick signifying a bay or inlet of the sea. The centre of these parishes lies in latitude 58° 59'; on the west end of the isle of Pomona, or mainland...

**Figure and Extent.** – The parish of Sandwick is nearly circular, and indented on the east by the loch of Stenness. The scene which this parish presents to the eye is, that of arable ground, interspersed with grass grounds of a lively green, and here and there we meet with barren breaks, stony and exhausted, which have been stripped of their soil, either for fuel, or to enrich and manure these pleasant cultivated spots. The mosses [peat] having been exhausted, and most of the hills stripped of their verdure, it may be presumed this parish has been long inhabited.

The parish of Stromness is of an irregular figure. On the west side, fronting the Atlantic Ocean, is a chain of hills. It slopes towards the south; and all along the channel of Hoy Sound is a tract of fertile fields, agreeably interspersed with grass and arable grounds. From this part of the parish, there is a view which has a good deal of the sublime in it; the mountains of Hoy, and sometimes a cascade of water from these mountains; to the westward of which appear the hills of Strathnaver, and those as far as Faronthead and Cape Wrath. These, with the vast Atlantic Ocean, form a scene picturesque and sublime, which is heightened when the south-west wind blows strong, which leads directly from the Atlantic Ocean. It is this wind which blows with the greatest violence here, and makes the greatest sea. The poet Virgil’s description of this wind might well apply to this place...

**Sea Coasts.** – The whole west coast of these parishes, excepting the Sandy Bay in the parish of Sandwick, are bold and elevated, rising perpendicularly from 100 to 400 or 500 feet in height; which, together with the mountains of Hoy, make it easy to the mariner to distinguish this coast.

The mountains of Hoy are seen from Cape Wrath, which lies distant from Hoy 17 leagues... It [Stromness harbour] is well sheltered from the west and north winds, by a hill that rises above the village of Stromness, and stretches along the harbour on that side. There can be no sea in this harbour with the north-east winds, as it is landlocked on that side, and the violence of the sea, with southerly winds, is broken by Hoy and other islands, which fence it from the seas that lead from the Germanic Ocean into the Pentland Firth [between the Scottish mainland and Hoy]. It affords safe anchorage... Vessels of 1000 tons burden may anchor in it. A Ship of war of 40 guns has anchored here, and had sufficient depth of water. Although it is small, this is one of the safest harbours to be found along the north coast of Britain...

Very large vessels usually anchor in Cairston road, without the small island or holm, that bounds the harbour on the east side, where there is also very good anchorage, greater depth of water, and more space; but there is tide here, greater sea, and it lies more open and exposed...

*Google Satellite* – looking towards the Isle of Hoy – far right, farm buildings, formerly Brinnigarth Manse.
Population. – . . . There are at present (1794) in the village of Stromness 1344 souls . . .

The great disproportion of males to females in the village of Stromness, is occasioned by the young men going abroad to various parts of the world; to the Greenland fishery, to the coal-trade, Hudson’s Bay, and many are to be found in his Majesty’s navy.

Manufactures. – Coarse woollen cloths and stuffs are made for household-use, but in no great quantity. Linen is also made for wearing apparel. The principal manufactures carried on here, are knitting stockings, and spinning linen yarn. In the first of these they greatly excel, and from constant practice, make the stockings very smooth and glossy. Young girls of 10 or 12 years of age can knit well. A great part of these stockings is sold to sailors . . .

Fisheries. – the fish caught here are cod, ling, skate, holybut, haddocks, lobsters., &c . . .

Lobsters. – A couple of boats in the parish of Stromness are employed in catching lobsters, which are sold to the smacks, who carry them to London.

Seals. – It was usual for a sloop to go once a-year, about Martinmas, to the small isle or rock of Soulskerry, which lies W.N.W. about 10 leagues distant, and there kill seals, which resort to that rock in great numbers. The surge is so great around the rock, that it often happened they could not effect a landing; or, if the men were landed, they, and the seals, which they killed, could not be got off but with difficulty, and considerable risk. In November 1786, a sloop upon this adventure, from the village of Stromness, was driven by tempestuous weather to the North Faro Isles, and there wrecked with 22 men aboard, 3 of whom were saved, and 19 perished. Since that fatal accident, this perilous fishing has been abandoned.

Sillock Fishing. – The most beneficial, and generally most useful fishing, is that of the sillocks, a small grey fish, which are caught in great numbers, from September to March, in the harbour of Stromness, to which they usually resort for food and shelter. This is a fish of a sweet and pleasant taste, and yields a considerable quantity of oil. From 50 to 100 men and boys may be seen catching them in good weather, either with bait or fly, in boats, or along the quays, in the harbour of Stromness.

Village of Stromness. – . . . Since the independence of America, all hopes of the produce of the Southern States of North America passing this way are lost. The produce, however, of our settlements at Hudson’s Bay still pass this way.
Chapter 4. Orkney

Hudson’s Bay Company Ships. – Hudson’s Bay was discovered by Henry Hudson, in 1610. France, after disputing the right to it, finally ceded it to Britain, at the treaty of Utrecht. Since 1670, the trade to that country has been carried on by a Company, who have an exclusive charter... This Company fits out three ships, from 150 to 400 tons each, which carry out provisions, guns, powder, shot, hatchets, cloths, &c, to be exchanged with the Indians for beaver, and other furs. These vessels usually arrive at the harbour of Stromness about the first of June, where they stop for two or three weeks to take aboard men for their settlements. They engage usually from 60 to 100 men, natives of this country, to go to these settlements, every year. They have about 400 to 500 men in these settlements, of whom it is presumed three-fourths are Orkneese, as they find them more sober and tractable than the Irish, and they engage for lower wages than either the English or Irish...

The Company’s ships usually return to the harbour of Stromness about November, to land those men who choose to return home...

It has been said by a great writer, (Abbé Raynal), that the murmurs of the nation have been excited against this Company...

If the murmurs of the nation have been excited, because of the monopoly which this Company enjoys; so also, of late years, there have been great complaints in this country, both on account of the small wages given to the labourers, and the great number of them engaged, while the farmers are left without servants. The constant drain of men from this country to the Greenland and Iceland fisheries, the coal-trade, and his Majesty’s navy, together with 200 fencibles raised, has tended to foster their complaints, which are principally directed against the Hudson’s Bay Company, because they make a yearly demand, and at once, and therefore more perceptible. We cannot complain that our men are called away to fight our wars; this we can only regret...

In time past, when there was no such demand for men from other quarters, the number necessary for Hudson’s Bay might well have been spared from this country; and although it is no doubt better for a country to keep its natives at home, provided that they can be usefully employed, either in agriculture or manufactures, yet where there are no manufactures, or improvements in agriculture, thus to employ them, it is then better to hire them to those who can usefully employ them; and also better, that they go to hunt the harmless and civilized beaver, than, like the Swiss, to fight the wars of other nations for hire. As to these men being idle and useless to their own country when they return, it may be observed, that several of them are perhaps so before they go there, and that this often induces them to go.

Notwithstanding that those who are against this emigration, represent to those who go, 1st, The dangers to be encountered from mountains of ice in going there; 2dly, The severity of the climate, and the danger of being frost bit; 3rdly, The hazard of being cut off by the Indians; yet all this does not deter them from going. But even allowing that all these dangers are exaggerated, as they perhaps are, since few are frost bit except through their own inattention, or cut off by the Indians except when it is occasioned by their own imprudence; yet still their solitary situation there, might seem of itself sufficient to weigh against all the pecuniary advantages they can hope to reap in the Company’s service; since they are cut off from family and friends, and from all social intercourse but with the natives, where

“Lie the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song, Nor tenderness, they know; nor aught of life. Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without”

*Thomson’s Seasons, Winter, line 701.

Notwithstanding this, too, yet from a restlessness of disposition, a desire of change, and small as the wages are, yet as they are better than the farmers here can afford to give, the Company always procure a sufficient number of men to go to that bleak climate. For their success in procuring these men, they are perhaps indebted to their agent at the village of Stromness, who is a man well qualified for business, and attentive to the interests of the Company. This agent pays away yearly for the Company from L 2000 to L 3000 Sterling, which no doubt greatly tends to quicken the little trade of this place.

It was a custom for Orcadian men who went to Hudson’s Bay to bring or send their mixed race children back to Orkney – below – two examples of children born in Hudson’s Bay who were baptized by Rev William.
Chapter 4. Orkney


1813 – Feb 4th – Baptized at Stromness by Rev William Clouston – William, born in York Department, Hudson’s Bay Sept 12th 1794, natural son of James Tait and an Indian woman


Rev William’s Sandwick and Stromness Account – extracts continued

Some vessels from Newcastle, Whitby, and Hull, on the whale-fishery, for Straits St Davis and Greenland, stop some days at the harbour of Stromness, on their outward passage, to engage men. – A list of the number of vessels that have stopped at the harbour of Stromness for four years, is subjoined, as tending to give the justest idea of the importance of this safe harbour. This list is taken from the surveyor’s books.
From the above list it appears, that the average number of vessels which pass this way in a year, is 312¼. Before the peace in 1763, 450 or 500 vessels have passed this way in a year. The reason why the number passing now is not so great as formerly, is, that many now go through Pentland Frith [or Firth], who formerly used to pass by Stromness, as they have now become better acquainted with that frith. And as a light-house is now erected on the Pentland Skirries in that frith, it may be presumed that still a greater number will pass that way, and a less number by Stromness. It has been suggested, that for the safety of the trade passing by Stromness, it might be necessary to erect a fort at the entrance of the harbour, since the French privateers, in time of war, have entered Hoy Sound, and have been within two miles of the harbour. But from the above list it will appear, that the number of vessels passing this way is not great as has been supposed. A frigate stationed here, it is probable, would be of more essential service, both in defending the harbour, and in securing the coast.


Rev William’s Sandwich and Stromness Account – extracts continued

Church, Patron, Stipend. – There is a church in each of these parishes. The parish church of Stromness formerly stood a mile distant from where the village is situated; at present, the parish-church of Stromness
stands in the village of Stromness, the old parish-church is ruinous. The present church was built in 1717, and is not large enough to accommodate the people of the parish and village, as the inhabitants of the village have increased greatly since that time...

...The minister of these parishes formerly resided in the parish of Sandwick until the year 1780, when a new manse was built in the parish of Stromness, about a mile from the village.

Roads. – There are no made roads through these parishes but one of two miles in length, which leads from the village of Stromness towards the road that leads to the borough of Kirkwall. The roads through the parish of Sandwick are naturally good, as the ground is dry. The roads through the parish of Stromness are, for the most part, bad in winter, as the grounds are wet. In one or two places the roads are scarcely passable on horseback; and although the inhabitants of two or three parishes must pass by these bad roads, in carrying the produce of their farms to sale at the village of Stromness, yet it has never attempted to make these roads better; although this might be done at no great expense of labour.

Bridges. – There is only one bridge, and that in the parish of Stromness, at the entrance to the loch of Stenness, where it communicates with the sea. This bridge may be about 100 or 150 yards; it has no arches, but instead of these, logs of wood are laid across 3 or 4 openings, through which the sea passes. It is thought by some, that if the ground was cleared, a salmon-fishery might be here established.

Figured Stones. – ...On the east side of the parish of Sandwick, near the confines of the parish of Stenness, are to be seen the beds, from whence it is supposed the large standing stones, which compose the druidical temple erected in that parish, have been taken. This bed, from whence these stones have been taken, is about a mile and a half distant from the place where these stones were erected. They must have had, in ancient times, some method of moving large bodies, that has not probably been handed down to us.

Above – large standing stones = Ring of Brodgar and the Standing Stones of Stenness

Below – Rev George Barry’s description of the Ring of Brodgar and Standing Stones of Stenness.


The Mainland, towards the west, is intersected from south to north, to the distance of nearly five miles, by the loch of Stennis [Loch of Stenness and Loch of Harray], which, near the middle is almost divided into two, by the plains on each side stretching out, and nearly meeting each other. These plains are pleasantly situated in the bosom of the loch, and in the centre of an immense amphitheatre, in the area of which are the parishes of Stennis, Harra, and Birsa. Its limits are the hills of Orphir, Rendal, and Sandwick, and the majestic hills of Hoy, which toward the south, lye at a much greater distance, and bound the prospect. That on the west side of the Loch contains a circle sixty fathoms in diameter, formed by a ditch on the outside, twenty feet broad and twelve feet deep; and on the inside, by a range of standing stones, twelve or fourteen feet high, and four broad; several of them are fallen down, of others fragments remain, and of some only the holes in which they stood. The earth that has been taken from the ditch has been carried away, and very probably been made use of to form tumuli, or barrows, of considerable magnitude, which are ranked in pairs on the east and west side of this remarkable monument of antiquity.

The plain on the east border of the loch exhibits a semicircle, sixteen fathoms in diameter, formed not, like the circle, with a ditch, but by a mound of earth, and with stones in the inside, like the former in shape, though of much larger dimensions. Near the circle, there are standing stones that seem to be placed in no regular order that we can now discern; and as near the semicircle are others of the same description. In one of the latter is a round hole, not in the middle, but towards one of the edges, much worn, as if by the friction of a rope or chain, by which some animal had been bound. Toward the centre of the semicircle, too, is a very large broad stone now lying on the ground; but whether it stood formerly like those around it, or has not been raised and supported on pillars to serve a particular purpose, we shall not take upon us to determine.

Stones of Stenhouse – (Stones of Stenness)
These extraordinary monuments have, like almost all others of the same nature, been supposed to be Druidical; but with very little reason, since there is not the least shadow of evidence that that order of men was ever within these islands. Even the Celts, of whom they were the priests, and of whom they had the entire and absolute direction, never seem to have had any footing here, as demonstrable from the names of men and places, and the ancient language, as well as from the manners and customs of the people, being all of them Pictish, Gothic, or Danish.

Rev William’s Sandwick and Stromness Account – extracts continued

Means by which their Condition might be ameliorated – The condition of the farmers might be ameliorated by these means: 1st, To grant them long leases: 2dly, To repair their houses: 3rdly, That the proprietor inclose, at his own expense, one or two acres on each farm: 4thly, That the proprietor supply the farmer with grass-seeds for the first year to sow these two acres, and direct him in the management, and make it a nullity in his lease if he does not keep the like quantity of ground in sown grass, for a certain number of years, until he is sensible of the benefit of it: 5thly, That one-half the rent be converted to money: 6thly, That the roads be made good: 7thly, That the limestone be burnt, since, dear as the fuel is, it may be burnt to advantage.

As there is plenty of water, a tannery might be established near the village of Stromness. Some branch of manufacture might be established, wherein to employ the women to more advantage than knitting stockings.

As the genius of the people is turned to sea-affairs, it would be of great advantage if there were a few men of spirit and enterprize, and possessed of capital sufficient to carry on the herring-fishery, rope-making, sail-making, net-making. As there is a great resort of shipping, there would be a readier sale for some of these articles than at Cromarty, where some of these branches were carried on by the late Mr Ross of that place.
Comparative View of the State of these Parishes, in 1700 and 1794.

In 1700, there were only 5 houses with slated roofs, and a few scattered huts in the village of Stromness, the rent of all which might be about L.30.

In 1794, there are 130 houses with slated roofs, and in all 222 houses, which might rent at L.561.

In 1700, the ground on which to build a house might have been purchased for L.5.

In 1794, the same ground would cost L.30 or L.40.

In 1700, there were only 2 small sloops belonging to this village, of 30 tons each.

In 1794, there are 2 brigs, and 4 sloops, in all 500 tons.

In 1700, the whole exports and imports might be L.400.

In 1792, the whole exports and imports amount to L.6560.

In 1700, the use of tea was unknown, even in the families of gentlemen of the first landed property.

In 1792, 860 pounds of tea were imported, and tea is drunk by tradesmen and mechanics.

In 1700, gentlemen of landed property, and their families, were clothed in home manufactures.

In 1794, tradesmen and mechanics are clothed, for the most part in English cloth.

In 1700, the wives and daughters of gentlemen of landed property, spun and manufactured their own wearing apparel.

In 1794, the wives and daughters of tradesmen and mechanics dress in cotton and printed muslin.

In 1700, Orkney cheese, oat-cakes, and ale brewed without hops, were generally presented at christenings.

In 1794, English cheese, white bread, cinnamon waters, and wine, are presented at christenings.

In 1700, hops were not used in brewing ale.

In 1794, 15 cwt. hops were imported.

In 1700, a good cow was bought for 8s. or 10s.

In 1794, a good cow sells for L.2.

In 1700, the wages of a maid-servant was 5s. a-year,

In 1794, the wages of a maid-servant is 15s. or L.1 a-year.

In 1700, no dancing-school had ever been in these parishes.

In 1793, a dancing-master opened a school, obtained 40 or 50 scholars, and drew L.50 in four months.

https://archive.org/details/photographicview00stro – Photographic View Album: Orkney, published by John Rae, Stationer, Stromness, no date – Stromness from South-West

The monument to the Rev. William Clouston’s scholarship, industry and scientific passion for exact facts and plenty of them, which still survives to-day, is his two contributions to the “old” Statistical account, published in the 1790s, one dealing with his first parish of Cross and Burness and the other with Stromness and Sandwick. Together, they form the longest contribution to the Account written by any minister in Scotland. They are frankly not amusing; his was not that sort of mind; but they are packed with facts, figures, and solid information generally, while at every point where a prodigious memory (local tradition says he knew the Bible by heart!) and a vast knowledge of the classics suggested an appropriate quotation, Latin lines roll sonorously across the sober page. The whole contribution in fact forms a perfect example of how a learned and very serious and dignified divine of the 18th century considered that a gentleman and scholar should compose a dissertation on his parish and its concerns; without one frivolous phrase to disturb either the cultured Latinity or the stately march of serried facts.

Good tradition still relates (or did in my younger days) that his presence was imposing and his character of the highest. Curious evidence of this, and a strange sidelight on the times, is the fact that he told his son [Rev Charles Clouston] how by the end of a presbytery dinner he was not infrequently the only sober divine out of the company which had once sat and now reposed round the decanted table. Yet the hospitality of his manse was proverbial, and his old world courtesy so perfect that it brought about his death at last through his refusing to wear his hat when escorting a lady to his garden gate.

Above – Edward was born on 7 October (not 27 September) 1787 – see above. Accounts of Stromness and Sandwick, and of Cross and Burness = Old Statistical Accounts – not New

Below – Rev William’s youngest son Rev Dr Charles Clouston, Minister of Sandwick, 1832-1884


CHARLES CLOUSTON, born 15th Feb. 1800, son of William C., min. of Stromness and Sandwick; educated at Univ. of Edinburgh; L.R.C.S. [Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons] (1819); licen. by Presb. of Cairston 5th Sept. 1821; ord. assistant to his father 27th June 1826; pres. by Laurence, Lord Dundas, in Feb., and adm. (assistant and successor) 26th April 1832; LL.D. (St Andrews 1868); died 10th Nov. 1884 . . .

Charles was the only one of Rev William and Isabella’s four surviving sons who lived his life in Scotland. Thomas settled in Dublin, and Robert as well as Edward both went further afield to seek their fortune. Robert, when he was a young man, was a merchant in Sierra Leone and it appears that he went there through Robert Heddle of Melsetter, Isle of Hoy, Orkney.

http://www.edinburghgeolsoc.org/edingeologist/z_39_02.html – Matthew Forster Heddle and The Mineralogy of Scotland by Peter Dryburgh – The Heddles, the Moodies and Melsetter – extract

As a young man, Robert Heddle was paymaster to the Royal African Regiment of Foot in Senegal while his eldest brother John held their father's title, Heddle of Cletts and Ronaldsay. After John's death, Robert returned to Orkney in 1817 and inherited the title. He brought with him the considerable fortune of £90,000, a circumstance which suggests that being a regimental paymaster in those days afforded ample opportunities for personal enrichment. He married Henrietta Moodie and, possibly having some sympathy with the financial plight of her family, purchased Melsetter for £26,000. He later extended his estate by buying the island of Papa Stronsay.


British Library Newspapers – Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser, 3 Jan 1824

All persons indebted to Mr Stockdale are requested to settle their Accounts before the 25th day of February next; and all persons having Claims against him are requested to present them for immediate payment – R Clouston, Agent for W Stockdale.

3 Apr 1824

The Subscriber requests that all Persons indebted to him will immediately settle their Accounts, and all persons having claims against him will please present them for payment. Business will be carried on, as heretofore, at his premises in Water-street, under the firm of Stockdale and Clouston . . . – W Stockdale

10 Jun 1826

Notice – All persons indebted to the Firm of Stockdale and Clouston, or to the late William Stockdale, are hereby requested to pay the amount of their accounts into the hands of the subscriber without delay – R Clouston
Chapter 4. Orkney


Moving on to Orcadians in Jamaica. Although I only have circumstantial evidence, I believe that Edward went to Jamaica as a protégé of James Laing (1765/66-1827) of Jamaica, a nephew of Malcolm Laing of Jamaica (see Chapter 3). Malcolm Laing was the eldest son of James Laing, merchant in Eday, Orkney, by his second wife Rebecca, nee Scollay.


James Laing, Merchant in Eday – m. 2 - Rebecca Scollay daughter of Malcolm Scollay of Odness

  1st son – Malcolm Laing (1718-1781) of Jamaica

  3rd son – Robert Laing (1722-1803) of Strenzie (and Kirkwall) – m. Barbara Blaw – 18 children

    1st son – Malcolm Laing (1763-1818) of Papdale, Kirkwall, historian

    2nd son – Samuel Laing, d. before 1780 in Jamaica

    3rd son – James Laing (1765/66-1827) of Jamaica

    6th son – Thomas Laing, d. 1794 in Jamaica

    7th son – Robert Laing, d. 1794 in Jamaica

    9th son – Samuel Laing (1780-1868) of Papdale, Kirkwall

Rev William Blaw (d. 1734) of Westray – m. – Mary Traill dau. of George Traill 2nd of Holland, Isle of Papa Westray – children include

James Blaw of Kirkwall – m. – Barbara Donaldson – children include

  - James Blaw (1737-1801), Medical Doctor, in Jamaica (an executor of Malcolm Laing of Jamaica) retired back to Scotland – m. – Anna Traill daughter of Patrick Traill of Kirkwall (a Traill of Holland)

  - Thomas Blaw – in Jamaica (an executor of Malcolm Laing of Jamaica)

  - Barbara Blaw (1747-1817) – m. Robert Laing of Strenzie – see above

  - Marion Blaw (d. 1806) – m. – William Manson of Kirkwall – children include

    - William Manson (1744-1808) shipmaster of Kirkwall, traded with Jamaica

Two Scollay brothers, John (d. 1810) and Malcolm Scollay (d. 1815), near relations of Malcolm Laing of Jamaica, both went to Jamaica.

... Harry Nisbet, who married Anna Traill, daughter of George Traill of Holland, 1751...

Harry’s son, William, desired to go to Jamaica, and on the security of this house [house in Kirkwall] he borrowed from James Stewart, merchant in Kirkwall, a sum of £100 stg. Under this bond Nisbet sold his house to “John Scollay, of Kingston, in the County of Surry and Island of Jamaica.”

In 1810, Peter Scollay, weaver of Kirkwall, succeeded his elder brother in this property...

See Chapter 9 – John Scollay’s brothers, Malcolm Scollay in Jamaica and Peter Scollay of Kirkwall.

I found my first link between Orkney and Malcolm Laing of Jamaica in the catalogue for the FitzHerbert of Tissington West Indian papers.

Derbyshire Record Office – FitzHerbert of Tissington West Indian Papers – plantations of William Perin and (his son) William Philip Perrin – correspondence of the Jamaica attorneys – catalogue – extracts

http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/68800827-2c51-48ac-9d02-a8a4dec7ba5 – D239 M/E 16812-16813 – 1776, 1 February – Malcolm Laing [in Jamaica] to William Philip Perrin [in England]... has written to Perrin’s London merchants suggesting they procure herrings in Hamburg and enter them in Orkney and Shetland which would be cheaper than buying them in Ireland...

Malcolm Laing sent his only surviving child Robert Laing (his illegitimate son by his Jamaica ‘housekeeper’ – see Chapter 3), to England when he was a boy under the care of William Philip Perrin.

Two years after his father died in Jamaica in 1781, Robert was thinking of returning to Jamaica, but William Philip Perrin was advised that Robert would find that colour prejudice was more marked in Jamaica than in England – see – http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/8c2e2603-c14c-48ee-b8c9-cbb0e5488a70 – D239 M/E 16972-16973 – 1783, 24 April

Samuel Laing of Papdale (see above 9th son of Robert Laing and Barbara, nee Blaw) in his Autobiography wrote that his brother James Laing (3rd son of Robert Laing and Barbara, nee Blaw) went to Jamaica ‘at an early period to look after the affairs’ of their uncle Malcolm Laing.


... my brother James... He went to Jamaica at an early period to look after the affairs of our uncle Malcolm Laing. He became a partner in the house of Messrs. Jaques and Fisher who were the executors of Malcolm Laing's will... James returned occasionally for a visit to this country and he married in Orkney a Miss Hagart,40 daughter of Mr Hagart who was Factor on Lord Dundas’ estate... Mr Grant, now Minister of Cross Parish in Sanda [or Sanday], married another Miss Hagart.42

40 Mary Hagart, daughter of the late Mr Patrick Hagart who was Factor for the Dundas estates in Orkney from 1780 until 1792. James Laing and Miss Hagart married on 6 July 1793 at Kirkwall.

42 The Reverend William Grant married Isabella Hagart on 24 July 1791 in Kirkwall

James Laing’s sister in law Isabella, nee Hagart and Rev William Grant (Minister of Cross and Burness who succeeded Rev William Clouston) had three sons who went to Jamaica.

http://archive.org/stream/fastiecclesiu07scotuoft#page/n275/mode/2up – Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae: the Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation, by Huw Scott – Volume VII –
WILLIAM GRANT ... marr. (1) 18th July 1791, Isabella, daugh. of Patrick Haggart [sic], Crown Chamberlain of Orkney, and had issue —; Robert Laing, born 29th April 1794, died at St Anne’s, Jamaica, 17 July 1824; —; William, born 21st Dec. 1797, died in Jamaica, 1819; —; James, born 28th Aug. 1804, died of fever in Jamaica; —

Orkney Archives, Kirkwall — catalogue search for ‘Jamaica’ includes:


DOO2/13/19 – 1650-1842 — 10 August 1773 Letter from William Manson concerning debts due him by John Scollay in Jamaica...

DOO3/371 – 1740-1791 — 12 June 1766: John Mowat, Orkney hall, Jamaica, to his brother Hugh Mowat, merchant, Kirkwall — describes his plantation in Jamaica...

DOO3/385 – 1724-1782 — letters to Thomas Baikie of Burness. Includes ... 9 August 1761: George Gilchrist, Pell River, Hanover Parish, Jamaica...

DOO5/12/9/30 – 15 June 1784 — Letter from Thomas Baikie, Mountain Estate, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica, to Patrick Graeme...

DOO5/12/9/34 – 27 September 1784 — ... from James Steuart. Includes accompt of Thomas Baikie of Jamaica, grand-nephew and heir of deceased John Baikie, son of Mr Thomas Baikie of Burness, minister of the gospel at Kirkwall, to James Steuart, writer in Edinburgh

DOO5/12/9/39 – 1784 — Letter from Thomas Baikie, Dallas Castle Estate, Jamaica, to John Heddle, writer, Kirkwall...

Information from R P Fereday — Charles Ruddach (b. 1754), a son of Rev Alexander Ruddach, minister of Kirkwall, went to Jamaica where he was employed by Malcolm Laing

See — https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=rJceq0Qv89kC&source=gbs_navlinks_s — Sojourners in Sun: Scottish Migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740-1800, by Alan L Karras, published 1992

In 1787, the year Edward was born, the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was founded.

http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=15926&p=0 — Timeline of Events leading up to the Abolition of the [British] Slave Trade — extracts

1787 – Society for Abolition of the Slave Trade formed: Granville Sharp, William Wilberforce and Thomas Clarkson co founders of the London committee

1789 – Wilberforce made his first major speech on the subject of Abolition in the House of Commons

1790 – Gained approval for a Parliamentary Select Committee to consider the slave trade and examine the evidence

1791 – Wilberforce introduced the first Parliamentary Bill, which was defeated by 163 votes to 88. Majority against the abolition: 75
From then on Wilberforce introduced a motion in favour of abolition during every session of Parliament

1792 – Bill defeated by Parliament: First reading in the House of Commons saw 158 votes to 109. Majority against the abolition: 49. Adjourned until the following week

House of Commons then passed the Bill with 151 votes to 132. Majority for the abolition of the slave trade on 1 Jan 1796: 19. When this was sent to the House of Lords it was blocked stating that it was too late in the session to be considered

1793 – Bill defeated by Parliament

1793-1798 – Subject of slave trade continued to be debated in Parliament but the outbreak of war with France in 1793 prevented a more serious consideration

1799 – Slave Trade Regulation Act passed to reduce overcrowding on slave ships

1804 – Bill passed in House of Commons by June but was apparently too late in the parliamentary session for it to complete its passage through the House of Lords

1805 – Bill reintroduced, defeated on second reading. Blocked by House of Lords

1806 – Passing of the new Foreign Slave Trade Act, which banned British subjects from aiding or participating in the slave trade to the French colonies. This effectively prohibited 2/3 of the British Slave Trade

1807 – Feb – Lord Grenville introduced the Bill for the abolition of the slave trade into the House of Lords. Passed by 41 votes to 20. In the House of Commons it was carried by 283 votes to 16

1807 – 25 March – Bill received royal assent

Before 25 March 1807, the day the Bill for the Abolition of the British Slave Trade received Royal Assent, Edward had sailed for Jamaica.
CHAPTER 5

1800 to 1807

On 1 March 1800 Samuel Smith secured a second mortgage on Sandy Gut. This time he was lent money by Kingston merchants George Harrison and John Hart – the agents for London merchants Timperon, Litt and Harrison when they lent money to Samuel Smith in 1796 (see Chapter 3 – 22 December 1796).

Security for the 1 March 1800 mortgage included the 488 acres of Sandy Gut land mortgaged on 22 December 1796, plus the land on the north side of Sandy Gut – the land Samuel Smith purchased from William Caldwell and wife Jesse in 1790 (see Chapter 3 – 18 December 1790).

*My photo, March 2007 – Sandy Gut – from the site of the Great House looking north towards the land Samuel Smith purchased in 1790 from the Caldwells*

The 131 slaves named in the 22 December 1796 Indenture of Mortgage were part of the security for the March 1800 mortgage. Eliza’s mother Bessy was again listed – Bessy overseers house

None of Bessy’s children were named, but they as well as Bessy’s future children were all included in the March 1800 loan secured on Sandy Gut – see Chapter 8 – 1813 conveyance to Joseph Timperon.

*Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series, Lib 480, Fol 183 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 29 May 1800 – Indenture of Mortgage, dated 1 March 1800 – Between Samuel Smith of St Thomas in the Vale, Esq (1) – and George Harrison and John Hart, both of the parish of Kingston, Merchants (2) – extracts/summary*
Samuel Smith by his Bond dated 1 March 1800 bound unto George Harrison and John Hart in the Penal Sum of £7,200 Jamaica currency – with lawful interest at the rate of £6 % per annum from the date of the Bond – to secure the payment of the said sum of money with interest – also to secure payment of all and every such further and other sum or sums of money as George Harrison and John Hart or any or either of them shall or may at any time or times hereafter lend, advance, pay or become liable for to or on Account of Samuel Smith – he hath proposed and agreed with Harrison and Hart to convey unto them Sandy Gut in Mortgage

For 10s Jamaica currency Samuel Smith conveys to George Harrison and John Hart – the Plantation or Sugar Work known as Sandy Gut – containing by estimation 488 acres – etc, etc, etc – and all those 131 Negroes or other male and female Slaves upon and belonging to Sandy Gut – named as follows

Also all those parcels of land containing 250 acres [255 acres on 18 December 1790 – see Chapter 3] more or less – etc, etc, etc.

And also all those 19 Negro and other Slaves named as follows

with the future issue offspring and increase of all the females – And the reversion reversions remainder and remainders rents issues and profits of the said Plantation etc, etc, etc
Subject always nevertheless as to the said Plantation or Sugar Work called Sandy Gut and the said 131 several negro and other Slaves and also to the mules cattle and stock there upon and thereunto belonging – in a Indenture of Mortgage dated 22 December 1796 and made between the said Samuel Smith (1) and Joseph Timperon, William Peat Litt and Jonathan Harrison (2)

On 24 February 1802 General George Nugent, Governor of Jamaica 1801-06, visited New Hall sugar estate in the south of St Thomas in the Vale with his wife Maria.

Lady Nugent’s Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805, new and revised edition by Philip Wright, published 1966 – page 61-63

1802 – February 24th – Dress by candle-light, and set off, with an immense party and cavalcade, for the Walks [road from Spanish Town through the Rio Cobre Gorge], and New Hall (Mr Mitchell’s) four miles beyond Spanish-Town. We entered the Walks which is really the most romantic, beautiful, and picturesque road I ever saw or could imagine. The road winds along the side of a mountain, very narrow, and, excepting in a few places, excavated in the rock; only room for a carriage. There is a precipice on one side, and the rocky mountain hanging over your head as you pass on. At the bottom of the precipice is a clear, beautiful and rapid river, and, on the other side, another high mountain rises almost perpendicular, covered with trees and shrubs. In some places the road was really awfully beautiful; the height of the mountains, on each side, throwing a very dark shade, and entirely excluding the sun, and almost the light. Then the roar of the river beneath, which was quite sublime. In some places, large fragments of rock, which had rolled down the precipice with the trees and shrubs upon them, looked like islands. We were all in curricles, gigs, or kittareens, or I don’t know how we should have got on, the road was so narrow in many places.

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/carviews/index.html – Six Views in the Island of Jamaica, by L Belanger; engraved by Merigot, published 1800 – View of the Bridge across the Rio Cobre near Spanish Town – bridge known as the ‘Flat Bridge’ in the Rio Cobre Gorge leading to St Thomas in the Vale
About half way through the walk, which is six miles long, there is a most beautiful but tremendous bridge to pass, composed of logs and earth, without railing or defense of any sort. Just after you cross the bridge, the mountains take a different form. They are exactly perpendicular, with the trees growing as it were out of the rock, for you scarcely see a vestige of earth. The road then runs down close to the roaring river, winding most beautifully, and the rocks, & projecting at different intervals, that I almost fancied the horses’ heads would come against a rock, and we should find ourselves quite shut in.

Six Views in the Island of Jamaica, by L Belanger; engraved by Merigot, published 1800 – View of the Rio Cobre in the parish of St Thomas in the Vale

We arrived at Mr Mitchell’s before 9, and, after eating an abundant creole breakfast, set off for the sugar works. Sir J Duckworth, Mr Mitchell and myself, were in a carriage. General N and suite on horseback. – We then examined the whole process of sugar making, which is indeed very curious and entertaining. The mill is turned by water, and the cane, being put on one side, comes out in a moment on the other, quite like a dry pith, so rapidly is all the sweet juice expressed, passing between two cylinders, turning round contrary ways. You then see the juice running through a great gutter, which conveys it to the boiling-house. There are always four negroes stuffing in the canes, while others are employed continually in bringing great bundles of them. – Then after the juice is expressed, the pithy stuff, which is called trash, is conveyed to a place below the boiling-house, to keep the fire going constantly. In the boiling-house there are nine cauldrons; three of them merely simmer the sugar. This throws up all scum and useless particles to the top of the cauldron. The pure liquor then runs into the first boiling cauldron, and so is conveyed to another, till it granulates. After that, it is carried by a large gutter into a large trough, called a cooler, from whence the negroes take it in pails-full, and put it into the hogsheads, and so ends the process. Those casks, however, have holes bored at the bottom, and, being on stands, the coarsest part, called molasses, runs through, and is used in the distilling of the rum. Four negroes attend the mill; two put in the cane, one receives the dry cane, and throws it into the trash house, and there is always one attending to see that all is right and done well. At each cauldron in the boiling-house was a man, with a large skimmer upon a long pole, constantly stirring the sugar, and throwing it from one cauldron to another. The man at the last cauldron called continually to those below, attending the fire, to throw on more trash, &; for if the heat relaxes in the least, all the sugar in the cauldron is spoiled. Then there were
several negroes employed in putting the sugar into the hogsheads. I asked the overseer how often his people were relieved. He said every twelve hours; but how dreadful to think of their standing twelve hours over a boiling cauldron, and doing the same thing; and he owned to me that sometimes they did fall asleep, and get their poor fingers into the mill; and he shewed me a hatchet, that was always ready to sever the whole limb, as the only means of saving the poor sufferer’s life! I would not have a sugar Estate for the world!

After this we went into the distillery, but this I cannot so well describe; but it seems that the molasses and dirty part of the sugar ferments, and, after passing through fire and under water, in a long tube, it becomes a strong spirit. They have a sort of glass bead, by which they try the strength of the spirit, but I could not comprehend that part of it; and the smell of the dunder, as it is called, made me so sick, I could not stay to make a minute enquiry.

Returned to New Hall about 2 o’clock, drank the juice of a common orange and a Seville orange mixed, which is very refreshing, and then laid down to rest till dressing time. Find after all, that I have only half-an-hour, and therefore merely make a little change, and join the gentlemen at dinner. It is wonderful the attention that is paid me, and the care that is taken of me; all I say and do is perfection, for I am the only woman! Not well at dinner, and the loads of hot meats, &c were disgusting. Every man was on the alert to serve me; laugh it all off, and get into the carriage with great glee that is to carry us home to-night, upon a perilous journey back, through the beautiful Six Mile Walk . . .

The overseer of New Hall showed Maria Nugent a hatchet for severing a limb if someone’s fingers were trapped in the mill. Sometimes it was not just fingers that got trapped.


A Melancholy accident happened at Palmeto Grove estate, in St Mary’s, on Saturday last. A negro girl feeding the mill, anxious to prevent a band going between the rollers, tried to cut it with a knife, but her hand was unfortunately caught, and she was drawn through the mill, with the exception of one of her legs. An inquest was held, and the Jury returned a verdict of Accidental Death.

We are sorry to mention that an unfortunate accident happened at Brimmer Hall estate, in the parish of St Mary, on the 12th inst similar to that at Palmeto-Grove, in the same parish, a few weeks ago. A little negro girl, about 12 years of age, employed in cleaning the mill-bed, was carried through the water-mill and crushed to death. Both accidents happened from the turn side of the mill, and too late for the negroes employed in feeding to be of any assistance.

In her *Journal* Maria Nugent described the attentions of an old slave, Nurse Flora, during the birth of her baby George.


... The old black nurse brought a cargo of herbs, and wished to try various charms, to expedite the birth of the child, and told me so many stories of pinching and tying women to the bed-post, to hasten matters, that sometimes, in spite of my agony, I could not help laughing, and, at others, I was really in a fright, for fear she would try some of her experiments upon me. But the maids took all her herbs from her, and made her remove all the smoking apparatus she had prepared for my benefit.

The very night my dear baby was born, it was nearly devoured by the mosquitoes ... Poor nurse Hamilton suffered sadly from the heat, in keeping him under my curtain ... My English maids too, were so attentive, and took such care, that old nurse Flora should not pinch or suffocate me to death with her charms ...

On 14 March 1803, Maria Nugent left Spanish Town early in the morning, drove through the Rio Cobre Gorge and on through St Thomas in the Vale to Berkshire Hall, a sugar estate in the north of the parish.

Lady Nugent’s *Journal, new and revised edition by Philip Wright, published 1966* – page 150-152

1803 – March 14 – Up at three, and proceed first to the King’s House, to give my last directions, and to take the papers lying there for General N. Sir J Duckworth, nurse, Johnson, and baby, with me in the sociable. Mr Baker and the Admiral’s valet-de-chambre, in a curricle; white George (a German groom), with Mrs Clifford, in a kittleeen; Prince and Peggy in another; then, a white groom, and two black men on horseback before us early, to get all the wains laden with sugar casks out of the way, as they are dangerous to pass on the road, being drawn by oxen; and, lastly, two sumpter mules; forming in all a great cavalcade.
Nothing could be more prosperous than the first part of our journey, till we arrived at Rio Magno. Baby well and merry, and all of us in gay spirits. Just before we came to the river, we met the Speaker, and Mr Redwood, and Mr Blackburn, Members of the Assembly. They advised us to lose no time in fording the river, as the water was increasing very much, and, indeed, pouring down from the mountains, quite like a torrent. They kindly turned back with us, as not a moment should be lost, and they directed one of the black men to go before on horseback, as soon as possible, through the most shallow part of the river. They next ordered our sociable to follow, and the rest to proceed in the same line, as quietly as possible. The servant’s horse could not well stem the torrent, and it stopped. Ours began to plunge, and the traces were loosened on one side of the wheel horses. The roaring of the water, and the cry of the people. ‘Go on, go on’, made it a most terrific moment. The carriage began to move up and down; the maids wrung their hands; and poor Sir J Duckworth really turned black. I took the baby to myself, and sat upon the back of the carriage, with my feet upon the seat. All I could do was to call out for some one to take my precious child. Good Mr Blackburn (I shall never forget him) threw himself into the water, and, by the help of the several carriage wheels, got to the side of the sociable, and held the dear baby above the water with one hand, and making his way with the other, got his precious charge safe to the land. I watched him with my eyes till all was safe, and then I felt as if all the danger was over, though I saw poor Clifford dragged out of the stream half drowned. – Just as I turned to Sir John Duckworth, to say that now we had all our senses about us, and we could save ourselves, good Mr Blackburn plunged in again, and asked if I would trust myself with him. In an instant we were struggling with the stream, and I must have been a sad weight; but he kept my head above water, and we were soon safe with the dear baby. Sir John Duckworth mounted one of the carriage horses, behind my maid, and Kemble, I believe, behind the nurse; but the confusion was so great they themselves could hardly tell how they got out. It seems that poor Clifford threw herself into the water, and was saved by one of Mr Blackburn’s servants. The groom, &c &c were dragged out safe, about a hundred yards down the stream. The sun was pouring on our heads, and there was no shelter near, except an overseer’s half-finished house. A piece of cloth was hung up, as a screen for the maids and myself. Little George was not at all wet, but so full of fun, that he seemed to enjoy the scene altogether. We laid him on a mat, to kick about, while we washed ourselves with rum, to prevent cold, and the gentlemen did the same, in a sort of half finished veranda. Our spirituous bath put us all in a glow, and we were advised, each of us, to take half a glass of the same nectar; and after waiting for nearly two hours, it was said the water was rather low, and we again attempted to pass the Rio Magno. I was mounted on a horse, with four negroes as guides and supports, and got safe through. Darling George was close to me, on a negro’s head, and supported by several others. It was a most cruelly anxious sight altogether, and, when it was all safe over, my spirits forsook me, and I fainted. However, a shower of tears soon restored me, and we proceeded on to Berkshire Hall, where we found good Mr and Mrs Murphy had sent a chair, and several negroes, to Mr Vidal’s, to carry me and the child to the Hall, which is seven long miles, and chiefly on the edge of a precipice...
Below – Jamaica Crop Account Law – a law for preventing fraud and breaches of Trust


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<th>Amended by 25 Geo. 3. c. 10, and 33 Geo. 3. c. 21</th>
<th>13 GEO. II. CAP. 9.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Preamble.</td>
<td>An Act for preventing of Frauds and Breaches of Trust by Attornies or Agents of Persons absent from this Island, and by Trustees, Guardians, Executors and Administrators, acting for and on the Behalf of Minors and others; and by Mortgagees in Possession of Estates mortgaged, and Sequestrators appointed by Authority of the Court of Chancery.</td>
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WHEREAS several frauds and breeches of trust may be committed by attorneys, trustees, guardians, executors or administrators, mortgagees in possession, and sequestrators; therefore, for the preventing so great an evil, be it enacted, That all persons who are acting attorneys or agents for persons who have estates in, and are absent from, this island, and that all trustees, guardians, executors or administrators, acting for, and on behalf of, minors and others, and that all mortgagees, their heirs, executors, administrators or assigns, in possession, and that all sequestrators appointed by the authority of the court of Chancery, or any of them, having thereby the management, care and direction, and receipt and disposal of the rents, profits, produce and increase of any real estate whatsoever, viz. plantations, pens, land and pens of cattle, sugar-works or other settlements, messuages or tenements, and of any negro or other slaves, shall and do, and are hereby directed and required, yearly, from the 31st December, 1739, between the 31st December and the 25th March, in every year during the continuance of this act, to render and exhibit into the secretary’s office an account, upon oath, of all the produce of such realty.

3. and be it enacted, That the said oath or affirmation hereinbefore appointed to be taken, shall be administered by the judges of the said supreme court, or any of them, or by the chief judge* of any of the courts of Common Pleas for the several precincts of this island, and by no other magistrate; who are hereby directed to make a memorandum of such oath or affirmation being taken before them upon or under such account or accounts, in manner following, viz.

MEMORANDUM. – This day of personally appeared before me one of the judges, &c. A. B. of (or in whatever capacity such person shall act,) and upon the holy Evangelist made oath, (or, being of the people called Quakers, solemnly affirmed,) that the account above written or annexed is a true and just account of all the rents, profits, produce and proceeds of the plantation and premises (or whatever real estate it may be,) of under his care and direction, or
Secretary to enrol such accounts and memorandums.

Duration of the act. Made perpetual by 24 Geo. 2. c. 19; and amended by 33 Geo. 3. c. 21.

which he is in possession of; and that in such account is particularly set forth the quantity of sugar, rum, molasses, cotton, ginger, coffee, cocoa, pimento, or other produce, produced and made in the year and ending the 31st December last past, of, from or upon the said

And to sign and subscribe the same; and the person or person taking such oath or solemn affirmation are hereby required to subscribe their names to such memorandum; and if any person or persons shall, in a wilful and corrupt manner, falsely take such an oath or solemn affirmation, such person or persons shall suffer such punishment as in the case of wilful and corrupt perjury.

*Or by any assistant judge of any of the courts of Common Pleas in the island. 33 Geo. 3. c. 10.

4. And be it enacted, That the secretary for this island for the time being, or such person or persons as shall execute the office of the same, do enter and enrol all such accounts and memorandums as are hereinbefore directed to be made, rendered and exhibited into his office; and that, for the recording every such account, with the memorandum, he is hereby entitled to receive and take according to the rates now allowed for recording deeds, patents and other papers, and no more.

5. And be it enacted, That this present act shall continue in force for three years from the passing thereof, and from thence to the end of the then next session of assembly, and no longer.

James Robertson’s 1804 maps of Jamaica, compiled from surveys made in the 1790s, show one Mill, a Cattle Mill, on Sandy Gut.

By 25 March 1806 Samuel Smith had died.

At the time Samuel Smith made his Will in 1797 he was living in Spanish Town with his mother Elizabeth Ford, a free woman of colour, and his housekeeper Isabella Cole, also a free woman of colour.

I appoint my said Sisters Executrixes of this my last Will and Guardians of my Son and Daughter

Samuel Smith and his sisters Elizabeth, Grace, Lucy and Mary were the children of Samuel Smith the elder and his housekeeper Elizabeth Ford. Sarah Penyman was also a daughter of Elizabeth Ford but not a daughter of Samuel Smith the elder.

J Stewart in his book published in 1808 wrote that property in Jamaica was falling fast into the hands of people of colour.
... It is also to be considered, that the property of the country is falling fast into the hands of this description of people, in spite of the legal restraints under which the white parent lies, in bequeathing his property to his children of colour; two thousand pounds currency being the *ne plus ultra* allowed as a bequest to an individual of that class: this may be easily evaded by previous gifts, &c. The same attentions, the same education, is bestowed on children of colour, if the offspring of men of fortune, as if they were not an illegitimate race...

Page 199-201

Let us know take a view of the wealthy European (whether planter or merchant) whose abilities, diligence, and an application, good fortune, or other *nameless* means, have raised him to a proud state of independence and authority over others... If this personage be not a married man, he has, a companion, an over-grown black, or a Mulatto woman, who has perhaps brought into the world for him a numerous illegitimate progeny, and has obtained over him a complete ascendancy and sway. She is his friend, his adviser, and, in many things, his *directress*: she manages his household affairs, has the use of his equipage, and is the partner of his bed... His spurious issue he doats [sic] on with as parental fondness as if they were the offspring of a more virtuous and tender union; he lavishes on them abundance, he sends them to Europe, where they are liberally educated, and if the laws of the colony would permit him, he would, at his decease, bequeath the bulk of his fortune to them. This is the way in which nine-tenths of the male inhabitants of Jamaica live...

See – *https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Z3IAAAAYAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s* – Laws of Jamaica, 1760-92, published 1802 – page 23 – An act to prevent the inconveniences arising from exorbitant grants and devises, made by white persons to negroes, and the issue of negroes; and to restrain and limit such grants and devises – 19 December 1761.

Eliza and Edward did not meet until after 1816, but he was in Jamaica in January 1808 and had already been in the island for some time before then. The earliest mention I have of Edward in Jamaica is on 23 January 1808. He was then the overseer of Georgia sugar estate in St Thomas in the East, and being an overseer implies that Edward had been working as a junior planter learning the planting business for a while before 1808.

From arrival dates of young planters I have noted, it was the custom for them to arrive around their seventeenth birthdays or a year or two later. So Edward may have arrived around his seventeenth birthday on 7 October 1804, or in 1805 or 1806.

In Jamaica a junior planter was called a ‘book-keeper’.

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The white people employed upon a sugar-plantation, are, one overseer, two or three book-keepers, and a carpenter. Upon large plantations, there is sometimes a cooper or a mason, or both.

The situation of a book-keeper is the first step in the career of a planter. His first duty is to take charge of the stores belonging to the plantation, of which he keeps the keys; but of which he keeps no account, either in books or otherwise. Why he is called book-keeper is no easy thing to say...

J Stewart in his 1808 *Account of Jamaica* wrote – ‘one who never perhaps saw a book in his life may yet be an expert book-keeper’.

https://archive.org/details/anaccountjamaic00stewgoog – An Account of Jamaica and its Inhabitants, by a Gentleman long resident in the West Indies (J Stewart), published 1808 – page 132-133 – and 196-197

... before a young man, who follows the profession of a planter, arrives at the *dignity* of overseer, he has, as before observed, to pass through the probationary situation of a book-keeper, a wretched misplaced
appellation, as one who never perhaps saw a book in his life may yet be an expert book-keeper. As nine-tenths of the young men who come from Great Britain to Jamaica are placed in this line of life, it will be proper to enter more at large into the nature of this preliminary situation. Of all situations in the country this perhaps is the least enviable. A book-keeper is a sort of voluntary slave, who condemns himself for a term of years, on a paltry salary, seldom more than sufficient to support him decently in clothes, to a dull, despicable, and drudging life, in hopes he will one day become an overseer. This situation he attains in five, six, or seven years, just as he may have a friend or friends who will push him forward into it. He follows the negroes in a scorching sun by day, and at night, in crop time, is deprived of a material portion of his rest, by being obliged, in his turn (generally every other night), to sit up and watch in the boiling-house. ... In former times such characters as these [low uneducated men] were too common in the island, particularly in the planting profession; but times are now greatly altered here. New modes and improved ideas are fast gaining ground in the West Indies; and it is, at present, by no means unusual to see young men in the planting line, who have received the most respectable educations, and are of very genteel and reputable connections and parentage; who, if they have a friend, or friends, to take them by the hand, may do pretty well even in this line of life.

Various Orcadians went to Jamaica (see Chapter 4) and I believe that Edward went to Jamaica as a protégé of James Laing (1765/66-1827) – see Chapter 4. Samuel Laing, in his *Autobiography*, referred to his brother James leaving Orkney when he was young and occasionally visiting home, and perhaps on one of these visits he recruited Edward to go to Jamaica.


James was seldom in Britain during the time I was at home that I never had much acquaintance with him, and he had left home to go into the world before I could remember him. Mrs Laing came to England for the health and education of her children, and remained with them for some years about London and Bath, while her husband lived in Jamaica occasionally coming home to his family. Mrs Laing died in 1818, leaving two sons, Malcolm and John, and five daughters. Their father’s income is (it is stated at £20,000 a year).

In 1802, during a visit to Britain, James Laing stayed with his family in Orkney.


[http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/5c899345-77bc-40f0-be6b-30349304d442 – D239 M/E 17927-17928 – Letter, 3 March 1802 – William Sutherland to William Philp Perrin ... the new men sent by Mr. Laing from Scotland have arrived.]

[http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/18f291ac-ed2c-4611-ab20-36105ab9cdc – D239 M/E 12312 – Letter, 19 June 1802 – Thomas Bunnett, ironmonger, Borough, London, to William Philp Perrin at Rhayader, co. Radnor – Mr. Laing (Perrin’s Jamaican attorney) came to town from the Orkney Isles and has now returned there to be with his family.]

James Laing was one of the leading men in Jamaica. For a time he was a member of the Council of Jamaica, and Custos (senior magistrate) of Kingston. He was a partner in the firm, Jaques, Laing & Ewing, Kingston merchants, a proprietor of sugar estates and pens in the parishes of St Mary’s and St Ann’s (see Chapter 12), and an attorney to various absentee proprietors.
Before the first half of the 1820s I have no mention of Edward being employed by James Laing, but in late 1823 or early 1824 Edward registered a power of attorney from James Laing in the Island Secretary’s Office. To be given a power of attorney from such a man as James Laing was a feather in Edward’s cap and indicates that he was known to James Laing and trusted by him. So presumably they had known each other for some years before the early 1820s.

Francis Graham, an attorney with James Laing for a number of absentee proprietors, including William Philp Perrin (see above), was Edward’s employer in 1808 when he was the overseer of Georgia sugar estate in St Thomas in the East (see Chapter 6) – and I suspect that Edward, on his arrival in Jamaica or soon after, was introduced by James Laing to Francis Graham.

Francis Graham (1778-1820), arrived in Jamaica in 1797 and by 1815 he had become one of the largest planting attorneys in the island – see Chapter 8. He was the son of Alexander Graham of Drynie, British Consul at Fayal (or Fyall) in the Azores. Alexander Graham’s brother Charles Graham of Drynie (died 1806) was a partner in the London firm, Davidson & Graham, West India merchants who had numerous connections with Jamaica. Drynie is in the Black Isle, the peninsula north of Inverness, northeast Scotland.
Piecing together Francis Graham’s family I was much helped by Dr James/Jim Mackay of Resolis, Black Isle. I first contacted Jim in 2003 after seeing on the web that he was the author of The Poyntz Mystery – now archived – see – http://archive.is/gsNB

A number of men in Edward’s circle in Jamaica learnt the planting business under Francis Graham – including George William Hamilton, Henry Lowndes (see Chapter 1), and Michael Scott.

Michael Scott (1789-1835) a Glaswegian, was born on 30 October 1789, and matriculated at Glasgow University in 1801.


Michael Scott sailed for Jamaica in 1806 and for his first few years in the island he was a planter. Then in 1810 he joined a Kingston merchant house.


British Library – Biographical Annals of Jamaica by Frank Cundall, published 1904 – . . . Most residents in and many visitors to the West Indies have read ‘Tom Cringle’s Log’ and ‘Cruise of the Midge,’ the former contains unequalled studies of Jamaica life and character of the early years of the nineteenth century . . .

In Tom Cringle’s Log the narrator, the character Tom Cringle is Michael Scott in the guise of a young naval officer. The character Aaron Bang was modelled on George William Hamilton, Francis Graham’s right hand man, and the character Francis Fryall, ‘a great planting attorney’, was I believe modelled on Francis Graham. I also believe that Edward was the model for the character Mr Stornaway, ‘overseer of Mount Olive’ in St Thomas in the Vale – see Chapter 12.

Below is Tom Cringle’s account of arriving off the east end of Jamaica and sailing along the south coast to Port Royal. In Kingston Tom Cringle meets Francis Fryall who invites him to visit his pen, and here Tom Cringle meets Francis Fryall’s ‘head clerk or a sort of first lieutenant’, Aaron Bang

www.davidrumsey.com/maps3956.html – The British Islands in the West Indies, published 1835 – Jamaica – section – far left, Port Royal – far right, Morant Point, the east end of Jamaica
I went on deck with a heavy heart, and, on looking in the direction indicated, I beheld the towering Blue Mountain peak rising high above the horizon, even at the distance of fifty miles, with its outline clear and distinct against the splendid western sky, now gloriously illumined by the light of the set sun. We stood on under easy sail for the night, and next morning when the day broke, we were off the east end of the magnificent Island of Jamaica. The stupendous peak now appeared to rise close aboard of us, with a large solitary star sparkling on his forehead, and reared his forest-crowned summit high into the cold blue sky, impending over us in frowning magnificence, while the long dark range of the Blue Mountains, with their outlines hard and clear in the grey light, sloped away on each side of him as if they had been the Giant's shoulders. Great masses of white mist hung on their sides about half-way down, but all the valleys and coast as yet slept in the darkness. We could see that the land-wind was blowing strong in shore, from the darker colour of the water, and the speed with which the coasters, only distinguishable by their white sails, slid along; while astern of us, out at sea, yet within a cable's length, for we had scarcely shot beyond its influence, the prevailing trade-wind blew a smart breeze, coming up strong to a defined line, beyond which and between it and the influence of the land-wind, there was a belt of dull lead-coloured sea, about half a mile broad, with a long heavy ground-swell rolling, but smooth as glass, and without even a ripple on the surface, in the midst of which we presently lay dead becalmed.

The heavy dew was shaken in large drops out of the wet flapping sails, against which the reef points pattered like hail as the vessel rolled. The decks were wet and slippery, and our jackets saturated with moisture; but we enjoyed the luxury of cold to a degree that made the sea water when dashed about the decks, as they were being holystoned, appear absolutely warm. Presently all nature awoke in its freshness so suddenly, that it looked like a change of scene in a theatre. The sun, as yet set to us, rose to the huge peak, and glanced like lightning on his summit, making it gleam like a ruby; presently the clouds on his shaggy ribs rolled upwards, enveloping his head and shoulders, and were replaced by the thin blue mists which ascended from the valleys, forming a fleecy canopy, beneath which appeared hill and dale, woods and cultivated lands, where all had been undistinguishable a minute before, and gushing streams burst from the mountain sides like gouts of froth, marking their course in the level grounds by the vapours they sent up. Then breeze-mill towers burst into light, and cattle-mills, with their cone-shaped roofs, and overseers' houses, and water-mills, with the white spray falling from the wheels, and sugar-works, with long pennants of white smoke streaming from the boiling-house chimneys seaward in the morning wind. Immediately after, gangs of negroes were seen at work; loaded waggons, with enormous teams of fourteen to twenty oxen dragging them, rolled along the roads; long strings of mules loaded with canes were threading the fields; dragging vessels were seen to shove out from every cove; the morning song of the black fishermen was heard, while their tiny canoes, like black specks, started up suddenly on all sides of us, as if they had floated from the bottom of the sea; and the smiling scene burst at once, and as if by magic, on us, in all its coolness and beauty, under the cheering influence of the rapidly rising sun. We fired a gun, and made the signal for a pilot; upon which a canoe, with three negroes in it, shoved off from a small schooner lying to about a mile to leeward. They were soon alongside, when one of the three jumped on board. This was the pilot, a slave, as I knew; and I remember the time, when, in my innocence, I would have expected to see something very squalid and miserable, but there was nothing of the kind; for I never in my life saw a more spruce saltwater dandy, in a small way. He was well dressed, according to a seaman's notion-clean white trowsers, check shirt, with white lapels, neatly fastened at the throat with a black ribbon, smart straw hat; and altogether he carried an appearance of comfort— I was going to write independence—about him, that I was by no means prepared for. He moved about with a swaggering roll, grinning and laughing with the seamen.

“I say, blackie,” said Mr Douglas.

“John Lodge, massa, if you please, massa; blackie is not politeful sir;” whereupon he showed his white teeth again.

“Well, well, John Lodge, you are running us in too close surely;” and the remark seemed seasonable enough to a stranger, for the rocks on the bold shore were now within half pistol shot.

“Mind your eye,” shouted old Anson. “You will have us ashore you black rascal!”

“You, sir, what water have you here?” sung out Mr Splinter.
“Salt water, massa,” rapped out Lodge, fairly dumfounded by such a volley of questions. “You hab six fathom good here, massa; but suspecting he had gone too far – “I take de Tonnant, big ship a him is, close to dat reef, sir, you might have jump ashore, so you need not frighten for your leetle dish of a hooker; beside, massa, my character is at take, you know” – then another grin and bow.

There was no use in being angry with the poor fellow, so he was allowed to have his own way until we anchored in the evening at Port Royal.

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"Massa, no see Pam be Civil, sail like a witch, tack like a dolphin?"
“Don’t believe him, massa; Ballahoo is de boat dat can beat mm.”
“Dam lie dat, as I am a gentleman!” roared a ragged black vagabond.
“Come in de Monkey, massa; no flying fis can beat she.”
“Don’t boder de gentleman,” yelled a fourth, – “massa love de Stamp-and-go – no so, massa?” as he saw me make a step in the direction of his boat. “Oh yes – so get out of de way, you black rascals,” – the fellow was as black as a sloe himself-"make room for man-of-war buccra; him leetle just now, but will be admiral one day."

So saying, the fellow who had thus appropriated me, without more ado, levelled his head like a battering ram, and began to batter in breach all who stood in his way. He first ran a tilt against Pam be Civil, and shot him like a rocket into the sea; the Monkey fared no better; the Ballahoo had to swim for it;
and having thus opened a way by main force, I at length got safely moored in the stem sheets; but just as we were shoving off, Mr Callaloo, the clergyman of Port Royal, a tall yellow personage, begged for a passage, and was accordingly taken on board. As it was high water, my boatmen chose the five foot channel, as the boat channel near to Gallows Point is called, by which a long stretch would be saved, and we were cracking on cheerily, my mind full of my recent promotion, when, scur, scur, we stuck fast on the bank. Our black boatmen, being little encumbered with clothes, jumped overboard in a covey like so many wild-ducks, shouting, as they dropped into the water, "We must all get out, – we must all get out;" whereupon Mr Callaloo, a sort of Dominie Sampson in his way, promptly leaped overboard up to his waist in the water. The negroes were thunderstruck.

"Massa Parson Callaloo, you mad surely, you mad!"
"Children, I am not mad, but obedient – you said we must all get out?"
"To be sure, massa, and you no see we all did get out?"
"And did you not see that I got out too?" rejoined the parson, still in the water, and somewhat nettled.
"Oh, lud, massa! we no mean you – we meant poor nigger, not white man parson."
"You said all, children, and thereupon I leaped," pronouncing the last word in two syllables – "more correct in your grammar next time."

The worthy but eccentric old chap then scrambled on board again, amidst the suppressed laughter of the boatmen, and kept his seat, wet clothes and all, until we reached Kingston.

I confess that I did not promise myself much pleasure from my cruise ashore; somehow or other I had made up my mind to believe, that in Jamaica, putting aside the magnificence and natural beauty of the face of the country, there was little to interest me. I had pictured to myself the slaves – a miserable, squalid, half-fed, ill-clothed, over-worked race – and their masters, and the white inhabitants generally, as an unwholesome-looking crew of saffron-faced tyrants, who wore straw hats with umbrella brims, wide trousers, and calico jackets, living on pepper-pot and land-crabs, and drinking sangaree and smoking cigars the whole day; in a word, that all that Bryan Edwards and others had written regarding the civilization of the West Indies was a fable. But I was agreeably undeceived; for although I did meet with some extraordinary characters, and witnessed not a few rum scenes, yet, on the whole, I gratefully bear witness to the great hospitality of the country. In Kingston the society was exceedingly good, as good as, I can freely affirm, as I ever met with in any provincial town anywhere; and there prevailed a warmth of heart, and a kindliness both in the males and females of those families to which I had the good fortune to be introduced, that I never experienced out of Jamaica.

At the period I am describing, the island was in the hey-day of its prosperity, and the harbour of Kingston was full of shipping. I had never before seen so superb a mercantile haven; it is completely land-locked, and the whole navy of England might ride in it commodiously.

On the sea-face it is almost impregnable, for it would be little short of a miracle for an invading squadron to wind its way through the labyrinth of shoals and reefs lying off the mouth of it, amongst which the channels are so narrow and intricate that at three or four points the sinking of a sand barge would effectually block up all ingress; but, independently of this, the entrance at Port Royal is defended by very strong works – the guns ranging the whole way across – while, a little farther on, the attacking ships would be exposed to a cross fire from the heavy metal of the Apostle’s Battery; and, even assuming all these obstacles to be overcome, and the passage into the harbour forced, before they could pass the narrows, to get up to the anchorage at Kingston, they would be blown out of the water by a raking fire from the sixty piece of large cannon on Fort Augusta, which is so situated that they would have to turn to windward for at least half-an-hour, in a strait which, at the widest, would not allow them to reach beyond musket-shot of the walls. Fortunately, as yet Mr Canning had not called his New World into existence, and the whole of the trade of Terra Firma, from Porto Cavello down to Chagres, the greater part of the trade of the islands of Cuba and San Domingo, and even that of Lima and San Blas, and the other ports of the Pacific, carried on across the Isthmus of Darien, centred in Kingston, the usual supplies through Cadiz being stopped by the advance of the French in the Peninsular. The result of this princely traffic, more magnificent than that of Tyre, was a stream of gold and silver flowing into the Bank of England, to the extent of three millions of pounds sterling annually, in return for British manufactures; thus supplying the sinews of war to the government at home, and, besides the advantage of so large a mart, employing an immense amount of British tonnage, and many thousand seamen; and in numberless ways opening up new outlets to British enterprise and capital. Alas! Alas! Where is all this now? The echo of the empty stores might answer “where!”
On arriving at Kingston, my first object was to seek out Mr.* * *, the admiral’s agent, and one of the most extensive merchants in the place, in order to deliver some letters to him, and get his advice as to my future proceedings. Mr. Callaloo undertook to be my pilot... Every thing appeared to be thriving, and as we passed along, the hot sandy streets were crowded with drays conveying goods from wharves to the stores, and from the stores to the Spanish Posadas. The merchants of the place, active, sharp-looking men, were seen grouped under the piazzas in earnest conversation with their Spanish customers, or perched on top of the bales and boxes just landed, waiting to hook the gingham-coated, Moorish-looking Dons, as they came with cigars in their mouths, and a train of negro servants following them with fire buckets on their heads, filled with *peso fuertes*. The appearance of the town itself was novel and pleasing; the houses, chiefly of two stories, looked as if they had been built of cards, most of them being surrounded with piazzas from ten to fourteen feet wide, gayly painted green and white, and formed by the roofs projecting beyond the brick walls or shells of the houses. On the ground-floor these piazzas are open, and in the lower part of the town, where the houses are built contiguous to each other, they form a covered way, affording a most grateful shelter from the sun, on each side of the streets, which last are unpaved, and more like dry river-courses than thoroughfares in a Christian town. On the floor above, the balconies are shut in with a sort of moveable blinds, called “jalousies,” like large-bladed Venetian blinds, fixed in frames, with here and there a glazed sash to admit light in bad weather when the blinds are closed. In the upper part of the town the effect is very beautiful, every house standing detached from its neighbour, in its little garden filled with vines, fruit-trees, stately palms, and cocoa-nut trees, with a court of negro houses and offices behind, and a patriarchal-looking draw-well in the centre, generally overshadowed by a magnificent wild tamarind. When I arrived at the great merchant’s place of business, I was shown into a lofty cool room, with a range of desks along the walls, where a dozen clerks were quill-driving. In the centre sat my man, a small sallow, yet perfectly gentlemanlike personage.
he [the great merchant] gave me a very kind invitation to stay some days with him, and drove me home in his ketureen, a sort of open sedan chair with the front and sides knocked out, and mounted on a gig body. Before dinner we were lounging about the piazza, and looking down into the street, when a negro funeral came past, preceded by a squad of drunken black vagabonds, singing and playing gumbies, or African drums, made out of hollow trees, about six feet long, with skins braced over them, each carried by one man, while another beats it with his open hands. The coffin was borne along on the heads of two negroes – a negro carries everything on his head, from a bale of goods to a wine-glass or tea-cup. It is a practice for the bearers, when they come near the house of any one against whom they have a grudge, to pretend that the coffin will not pass by, and in the present case, when they came opposite to where we stood, they began to wheel round and round, and to stagger under the load, while the choristers shouted at the top of their lungs.

“We beg you, shipmate, for come along – do, broder, come away;” then another reel. “What, you no wantee go in a hole, eh? You hab grudge ’gainst somebody ’f life here, eh?” – another devil of a lurch – “Massa * * *’ housekeeper, eh? Ah, it must be!” – A tremendous stagger – “Oh, Massa * * *, dollar for drink; something to hold play” negro wake, “in Spring-path,” the negro burying-ground; “Bediacko say him won’t pass ’less you give it.” And here they began to spin round and round more violently than before; but at the instant a drove of bullocks coming along, they got entangled amongst them, and down went body and bearers and all, the coffin bursting in the fall, rolling over and over in the sand amongst the feet of the cattle. It was immediately caught up, however, bundled into the coffin again, and away they staggered, drumming and singing as loudly as before.

The party at dinner was a large one; everything in good style, wines superb, turtles, &c., magnificent, and the company exceedingly companionable. A Mr. Francis Fyall, (a great planting attorney, that is, an agent for a number of proprietors of estates, who preferred living in England, and paying a commission to him for managing in Jamaica, to facing the climate themselves,) to whom I had an introduction, rather
posed me, by asking me, during dinner, if I would take anything in the long way with him, which he explained by saying he would be glad to take a glass of small beer with me. This, after a deluge of Madeira, champagne, and all manner of light wines, was rather trying; but I kept my countenance as well as I could. One thing I remember struck me as remarkable; just as we were rising to go to the drawing-room, a cloud of winged ants burst in upon us through the open windows, and had it not been for the glass shades would have extinguished the candles; but when they had once settled on the tables, they deliberately wriggled themselves free of their wings, as one would cast off a great-coat, and crept away in their simple and more humble capacity of creeping things.

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Next day, Mr. Fyall, who, I afterwards learned, was a most estimable man in substantials, although somewhat eccentric in small matters, called and invited me to accompany him on a cruise among some of the estates under his management. This was the very thing I desired, and three days afterwards I left my kind friends in Kingston, and set forth on my visit to Mr. Fyall, who lived about seven miles from town.

The morning was fine as usual, although about noon the clouds, thin and fleecy and transparent at first, but gradually settling down more dense and heavy, began to congregate on the summit of the Liguanea Mountains, which rise about four miles distant, to a height of near 5000 feet, in rear of the town. It thundered too a little now and then in the same direction, but this was an every-day occurrence in Jamaica at this season, and as I had only seven miles to go, off I started in a gig of mine host’s, with my portmanteau well secured under a tarpawlin, in defiance of all threatening appearances, crowding sail, and urging the noble roan that had me in tow close upon thirteen knots. I had not gone above three miles, however when the sky in a moment changed from the intense glare of a tropical noon-tide to the deepest gloom, as if a bad angel had suddenly overshadowed us, and interposed his dark wings between us and the blessed sun; indeed, so instantaneous was the effect, that it reminded me of the withdrawing of the footlights in a theatre. The road now wound round the base of a precipitous spur from the Liguanea Mountains, which, instead of melting onto level country by gradual decreasing undulations, shot boldly out nearly a mile from the main range, and so abruptly that it seemed mortised into the plain, like a rugged promontory running into a frozen lake. On looking up along the ridge of this prong, I saw the lowering mass of black clouds gradually spread out, and detach themselves from the summits of the loftier mountains, to which they had clung the whole morning, and begin to roll slowly down the hill, seeming to touch the tree tops, while along their lower edges hung a fringe of dark vapour, or rather shreds of cloud in rapid motion, that shifted about, and shot out and shortened like streamers.

As yet there was no lightning nor rain, and in the expectation of escaping the shower, as the wind was with me, I made more sail, pushing the horse into a gallop, to the great discomposure of the negro who sat beside me.

“Massa, you can’t escape, you are galloping into it; don’t massa hear de sound of de rain coming along against de wind, and smell de earthy smell of him like one new-made grave?”

“The sound of the rain.” In another clime, long, long ago, I had often read at my old mother’s knee, “And Elizjah said unto Ahab, there is a sound of abundance of rain, prepare thy chariot and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not; and it came to pass, in the meanwhile, that the heaven was dark with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.”

I looked, and so it was, for in an instant a white sheet of the heaviest rain I had ever seen (if rain it might be called, for it was more like a water-spout) fell from the lower edge of the black cloud, with a strong rushing noise, that increased as it approached to a loud roar like that of a waterfall. As it came along, it seemed to devour the rocks and trees, for they disappeared behind the watery screen the instant it reached them. We saw it a-head of us for more than a mile coming along the road, preceded by a black line from the moistening of the white dust, right in the wind’s eye, and with such an even front, that I verily believe it was descending in bucketsful on my horse’s head, while as yet not one drop had reached me. At this moment the adjutant-general of the forces, Colonel F-----, of the Coldstream Guards, in his tandem, drawn by two sprightly blood bays, with his servant, a light boy, mounted Creole fashion on the leader, was coming up in my wake at a spot where the road sank into a hollow, and was traversed by a watercourse already running knee deep, although dry as a bone but the minute before.
I was now drenched to the skin, the water pouring out in cascades from both sides of the vehicle, when just as I reached the top of the opposite bank, there was a flash of lightning so vivid, accompanied by an explosion so loud and tremendous, that my horse, trembling from stem to stern, stood dead still; the dusky youth by my side jumped out, and buried his snout in the mud, like a porker in Spain nuzzling for acorns, and I felt more queerish than I would willingly have confessed to. I could have knelt and prayed. The noise of the thunder was a sharp ear-piercing crash, as if the whole vault of heaven had been made of glass, and had been shivered at a blow by the hand of the Almighty.

It was, I am sure, twenty seconds before the usual roar and rumbling reverberation of the report from the hills, and among the clouds, was heard.

I drove on, and arrived just in time to dress for dinner, but I did not learn till the next day, that the flash which paralyzed me, had struck dead the Colonel’s servant and leading horse, as he ascended the bank of the ravine, by this time so much swollen, that the body of the lad was washed off the road into the neighbouring gully, where it was found, when the waters subsided, entirely covered with sand.

I found the party congregated in the piazza around Mr Fyall, who was passing his jokes, without much regard to the feelings of his guests, and exhibiting as great a disregard of the common civilities and courtesies of life as can well be imagined. One of the party was a little red-face gentleman, Peregrine Whiffle, Esquire, by name, who, in Jamaica parlance, was designated an extraordinary master in Chancery; the overseer of the pen, or breeding farm, in the great house as it is called, or mansion-house of which Mr Fyall resided, and a merry, laughing, intelligent, round, red-face man, with a sort of Duncan Knockdunder nose, through the wide nostrils of which you could see a cable’s length into his head; he was either Fyall’s head clerk, or a sort of first lieutenant; these personages and myself composed the party. The dinner itself was excellent, although rather of the rough and round order; the wines and food intrinsically good...
Mr Fyall’s pen was modelled on Farm pen in St Catherine, the headquarters of Francis Graham’s planting business from 1805 to 1819.

*Jamaica Surveyed, by Barry W Higman, published 2001 – Figure 7.11 – Part of a general plan of the area around Salt Pond, St Catherine, 1837/8, by Edward McGeachy – section – arrow points to The Farm Pen – on the road from Kingston to Spanish Town.*

[Image: Map of St Catherine showing Farm Pen and its location on the road from Kingston to Spanish Town.]

The wine circulated freely, and by and by by Fyall indulged in some remarkable stories of his youth, for he was the only speaker, which I found some difficulty in swallowing, until at length, on one thumper being tabled, involving an impossibility, and utterly indigestible, I involuntarily exclaimed, “by Jupiter!”

“You want any ting, massa?” promptly chimed in the black servant at my elbow, a diminutive kilned old negro.

“No,” said I, rather caught.

“Oh, me tink you call for Jupiter.”

I looked in the baboon's face – “Why, if I did; what then?”

“Only me Jupiter, at massa service, dat all.”

“You are, eh, no great shakes of a Thunderer; and who is that tall square man standing behind your master's chair?”

“Daddy Cupid, massa.”

“And the old woman who is carrying away the dishes in the piazza?”

“Mammy Weenus.”

“Daddy Cupid, and Mammy Weenus – Shade of Homer!” Jupiter, to my surprise, shrunk from my side, as if he had received a blow, and the next moment I could hear him communing with Venus in the piazza.

“For true, dat leetle man-of-war buccra must be Obeah man: how de debil him come to sabe dat it was stable-boy Homer who broke de candle shade on massa right hand, dat one wid de piece broken out of de edge?” and here he pointed towards it with his chin – a negro always points with his chin.

I had never slept on shore out of Kingston before; the night season in the country in dear old England, we all know, is usually one of the deepest stillness – here it was any thing but still; – as the evening closed in, there arose a loud humming noise, a compound of the buzzing, and chirping, and whistling, and croaking of numberless reptiles and insects, on the earth, in the air, and in the water. I was awakened out of my first sleep by it, not that the sound was disagreeable, but it was unusual; and every now and then a beetle, the size of your thumb, would bang in through the open window, cruise round the room with a noise like a humming-top, and then dance a quadrille with half-a-dozen bats; while the fire-flies glanced like sparks, spangling the folds of the muslin curtains of the bed. The croak of the tree-toad, too, a genteel reptile, with all the usual loveable properties of his species, about the size of the crown of your hat, sounded from the neighbouring swamp, like some one snoring in the piazza, blending harmoniously with the nasal concert got up by Jupiter, and some other heathen deities, who were sleeping there almost naked, excepting the head, which every negro swathes during the night with as much flannel and as many handkerchiefs as he can command. By the way, they all slept on their faces . . .

Next morning we started at daylight, cracking along at the rate of twelve knots an hour in a sort of gig, with one horse in the shafts, and another hooked on a-breast of him to a sort of studdingsail-boom, or outrigger, and followed by three mounted servants, each with a led horse and two sumpter mules.

In the evening we arrived at an estate under Mr Fyall's management, having passed a party of maroons immediately before. I never saw finer men – tall, strapping fellows, dressed exactly as they should be and the climate requires; wide duck trowsers, over these a loose shirt, of duck also, gathered at the waist by a broad leathern belt, through which, on one side, their short cutlass is stuck, while on the other hangs a leathern pouch for ball, and a loose thong across one shoulder, supports, on the opposite hip, a large powder-horn and haversack. This, with a straw hat, and a short gun in their hand, with a sling to be used on a march, completes their equipment-in better keeping with the climate, than the padded coats, heavy caps, tight cross-belts, and ponderous muskets of our regulars.

Maroons were originally African slaves who fled to the mountainous interior of Jamaica when Cromwell’s troops seized the island from the Spanish in 1655.

As we drove up to the door, the overseer began to bawl, “Boys, boys!” and kept blowing a dog-call. All servants in the country in the West Indies, be they as old as Methuselah, are called boys. In the present instance, half-a-dozen black fellows forthwith appeared, to take our luggage, and attend on “massa” in other respects. The great man was as austere to the poor overseer, as if he had been guilty of some misdemeanour, and after a few short, crabbed words, desired him to get supper, “do you hear?”

The meal consisted of plantation fare – salted fish, plantains and yams, and a piece of goat mutton. Another “observe,” – a South Down mutton, after sojourning a year or two here, does not become a goat exactly, but he changes his heavy warm fleece, and wears long hair; and his progeny after him, if bred on the hot plains, never assume the wool again. Mr Fyall and I sat down, and then in walked four mutes, stout young fellows, not over-well dressed, and with faces burnt to the colour of brick-dust. They were the bookkeepers, so called because they never see a book, their province being to attend the negroes in the field, and to superintend the manufacture of sugar and rum in the boiling and distilling-houses.

Meanwhile in Britain agitation for the abolition of the slave trade continued – and, at last, a Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, introduced to Parliament in January 1807, was passed by both Houses of Parliament in February, and received Royal Assent on 25 March 1807.

The Act came into force on 1 May 1807. From then on it was illegal for a vessel to sail for slaves from any port within the British dominions, and after 1 March 1808 it was illegal for any slave to be landed in the British colonies.
In the view of William Williamson, medical doctor in Jamaica, slaves were better off in the West Indies than they were in Africa.

Abolition of the African slave trade bill being at length effected, on which event, various uncomfortable opinions were broached in that country, and many individuals suffered. But if a great public end is to be answered by it, they must yield, as generally happens on such change. It seems to be still doubtful whether such a measure is humane, when the circumstances of Africans are sifted to the bottom; for the imported African was carried from a country, where he lived in a barbarous state, to become a labourer, a more civilized being, and earn a proportion of the profits of that labour himself. At his own home, he was probably doomed to become the victim of war; he lived in a perpetual state of uncertainty as to life and property. In the West Indies, his condition was immensely improved.

I am aware that, on the score of local advantages to negroes already in Jamaica, the cause of humanity will be promoted. When humane and interested motives are joined together, it is for human nature to admit that the former will be more fully and universally performed to negroes. Such must be additionally the case when no further supplies can be got from the African coast. Those who had the barbarity to contemplate on these supplies, at the expense of negroes already in possession, working them severely, clothing and feeding them imperfectly, will now find it their policy to take good care of negroes for selfish reasons.

For some time after I went to Jamaica [1798], it was customary, on a few properties, not to encourage the rearing of children, on account of the loss of labour incurred by the mother’s confinement, and the time afterwards required in raising the infant. It is manifest that these rendered the rising race very costly; but a more vigorous set of labourers than the Africans generally become, was brought forward in the course of time.

Proprietors and attorneys will now increase their exertions to protect negroes. On every property, inducements will be held out to encourage the propagation of children; which would be materially promoted by introducing marriage among them.

The language used in both Houses of Parliament is calculated to do a great deal of mischief. Liberty only befits a people capable of appreciating its enjoyments: The most dreadful horrors, and the greatest injury to negroes themselves, would follow such doctrines in Jamaica.

On 28 March 1807, three days after the Abolition of the British Slave Trade Act received Royal Assent, William Wilberforce put forward plans to form an ‘African Institution’.

The general objects of the Institution are expressed in the following Resolutions adopted at the first meeting of this Society on the 14th of April, 1807, viz.

1. That this Meeting is deeply impressed with a sense of the enormous wrongs which the natives of Africa have suffered in their intercourse with Europe; and from a desire to repair those wrongs, as well as from general feelings of benevolence, is anxious to adopt measures as are best calculated to promote their civilization and happiness.

2. That the approaching cessation of the Slave Trade hitherto carried on by Great Britain, America, and Denmark, will, in a considerable degree, remove the barrier which has so long obstructed the natural course of social improvement in Africa; and that the way will be thereby opened for introducing the comforts and arts of a more civilized state of society.

3. That the happiest effects may be reasonably anticipated from diffusing useful knowledge, and exciting industry among the inhabitants of Africa, and from obtaining and circulating throughout this Country more ample and authentic information concerning the agricultural and commercial faculties of that vast Continent; and that through the judicious prosecution of these benevolent endeavours, we may ultimately look forward to the establishment, in the room of that traffic, by which Africa has been so long
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degraded, of a legitimate and far more extended commerce, beneficial alike to the natives of Africa and to the manufacturers of Great Britain and Ireland.

4. That the present period is eminently fitted for prosecuting these benevolent designs; since the suspension, during the war, of that large share of the Slave Trade, which has commonly been carried on by France, Spain, and Holland, will, when combined with the effect of the Abolition Laws of Great Britain, America and Denmark, produce nearly the entire cessation of that traffic along a line of coast extending between two and three thousand miles in length, and thereby afford a peculiarly favourable opportunity for giving a new direction to the industry and commerce of Africa.

5. That for these purposes a Society be immediately formed, to be called

THE AFRICAN INSTITUTION

In the novel Marly the character Marly and a friend arrived in Jamaica from Scotland soon after the British Slave Trade was abolished. Marly is sent to work as a book-keeper on Water Melon Valley sugar estate.
On Mr. Marly's arrival at Water Melon Valley Buckra house, ( overseer's house), Mr. Samuels introduced him to his brother book-keeper, Mr. Langbey, and to Mr. Wright, the estate's carpenter. Supper being then on the table, they sat down, the overseer having previously given directions to put the apartment allotted for Marly into some order. The meal, which consisted of herrings and plantains, was passed nearly in total silence, and when over, Mr. Langbey was desired to show the new book-keeper his room. This he did, at the same time, he, with the carpenter, warmly welcomed the new-comer to the estate, both saying, that there was not a finer nor a better property than the present, notwithstanding the employ was not esteemed a very good one, as the attorney had but few properties under his charge. They also spoke favourably of the overseer, though at times, they said, he was rather of a distant turn, with the white people under him.

After chatting with them for an hour or so, Marly was left to himself. His first action was to examine his room, which was a few yards separate from the Buckra house, but under the same roof, with the rooms of the first bookkeeper and the carpenter. It was formed of wood, was one story in height, standing upon short posts, and could bodily be removed from the place it occupied, if so desired. The apartment might be about eight or nine feet square, with a single window without glass, which latter article was supplied by what is called in the country, a Jealasie window, being something in the nature of a Venetian blind, the same moving up and down. This lattice window was of such coarse construction, that it had an exact resemblance to the article which fills up the open spaces in the walls of a corn store. The furniture consisted of a table and a chair, with a posted bed, decorated with hangings of a striped coarse cotton cloth, and on the table stood a wash-hand bason, with a jug full of water. The ornaments on the walls, were a soldier's musket, with bayonet, belts and cartouch box, and the drawer in the table, held between forty and fifty ball cartridges, to supply the musket, if necessary, in terms of the law, regarding the ammunition in a book-keeper's apartment. But every thing was extremely clean and Marly feeling fatigued, he turned into bed; but what his mattress was stuffed with, puzzled him to tell, though next day, on enquiry, he learned that it contained plantain leaves. He soon fell asleep, while thinking if these were the privations he had heard talked of so often, he thought he was not such a petit maitre, as to be unable to weather them.

Next morning, with the first dawn of day, he awakened, and made his appearance before the overseer, at the moment the latter had left his bed-room. The overseer seemed pleased at observing his punctuality, telling him, that as crop time would be over in about three or four weeks, he would ask him to perform no more duty, than that of attending the boiling house alternately with Mr. Langbey, whose chief occupation was in the still house. He added, “I myself will look after the cutting of the canes, and the other out-of-door work, and furnish you with every instruction in my power, by which means, I hope, in a very short time to make you a good planter.”

After giving instructions to a couple of negro drivers, he desired his boy Cyrus, to take his mule to the boiling house, to which, on foot, he accompanied Marly, mentioning to him on the path, some of the qualities of the negroes, who would belong to the new book-keeper's spell. “The fireman Titus,” said he, “is a very lazy fellow, who frequently falls asleep and forgets the fire. Hamlet, who relieves him, is nearly as bad. The sugar boilers are tolerably attentive, especially the head men, Quashie and Cesar. Cataline and Tom are far from being bad fellows, and it is long since I have found fault with Eneas and Rodney. But notwithstanding, keep a good look out, and take care that they do not give liquor out of any of the teaches or boilers, except the second one. Beware of Brutus, the sugar carrier, for he is a damnable thief; but so timid, that if you watch his motions, he will not venture to steal. Plato takes spell after him, and he is not much better than Brutus; but from your own observations, you will soon know the characters of those who will be immediately under your charge. I trust, however, that your attention will be such, that you will put it out of the power of any of them, to carry sugar from the curing house to Calibash estate. I am extremely anxious on this head, for the attorney has been making complaints, that large quantities of sugar from this property, has found its way to that estate during this season; and although I am dubious of belief in the justness of the complaints, still, I wish to allay all suspicions of our being inattentive. And as a stranger, allow me to advise you to adopt the opinion generally entertained by the white inhabitants of this country, which, though somewhat illiberal, is pretty true in fact; “that whenever you see a black face, you see a thief.”
By this time, they had entered the boiling house. Langbey was keeping spell, or in other words, had charge of the negroes employed in preparing the sugar, from the juice of the sugar cane. The overseer had no sooner entered, than the former retired to the Still house, to take his spell in that place, by attending to the distillation of the Rum. Mr. Samuels then pointed out to Marly, the duties which were required from him, at the same time explaining the mode of manufacturing and curing the sugar, and shortly afterwards left the house.


Marly – page 34-48 – continued

Marly, being left alone among the negroes, carefully examined the premises, and the process by which the now absolutely necessary article of sugar, in all civilized countries, was prepared. While doing so, he was greeted by every one of the negroes in the house, with “Happy to see him Massa, and him hopes that Massa will lib long on Water Melon Valley.” Such a salutation was reiterated again and again, commencing with Cudjoe, who had charge of the filling and emptying of the receivers, in which the juice of the cane flowed, on being expressed in the mill, – afterwards by Rodney, by Cataline, and by Quashie, till it terminated with a similar compliment from Brutus, who emptied the coolers and carried the sugar from thence into the curing house, where it was deposited in the hogsheads. Nay, even Titus left his fire, to state how happy he was at seeing Massa on Water Melon Valley.

Before the day was passed, he was completely sick of acknowledging bows and curtsies, and hearing the same cuckoo song of, “Happy to see him Massa, and him hopes that Massa will lib long on Water Melon Valley.” It was repeated nearly two hundred times, and he believes that not a single Negro, whether male or female, upon the property, except those who were watchmen, but called to see and compliment their new book-keeper. It was repetition with a vengeance, and put all the patience of his good nature to a severe test; but on reflecting for a moment, that each of these people though slaves, naturally attached some consideration to himself or herself, he felt he would be acting ungratefully, if he did not acknowledge each greeting, in as cordial a manner as the compliment was tendered to him, even though repeated as a parrot would have done.
At intervals, during the day, he had fully explored every nook and corner of the boiling house. He found there was a chair and a table for his convenience, with a mattress to sleep on during the night, and a rug to cover him. He knew he was a book-keeper, but although every place had undergone a narrow scrutiny, he could not find the vestige of a book of any description; nay, there was not even so much as pen and ink in the whole house. He was puzzling himself with thinking what kind of books, or what kind of entries he should have to make, when he observed Brutus, on the completion of emptying a cooler, reach his hand over the table, to a board, a few inches square, regularly drilled with small holes, from one of which he withdrew a peg, and placed it in a hole, one degree farther removed. This act of his at once explained the mystery to Marly, who saw, that this board was the book, which he was to keep, that the peg was the pen, and the number of holes passed through by the peg, in the course of twenty-four hours, was the numeration of the coolers, and which again, was the quantity of sugar made in a day. This mode of book-keeping, it must be confessed, was far from being complex, and in consequence no study was requisite.

Throughout the day, the overseer did not forget him, for he received for breakfast, a jug of coffee, a couple of herrings, and the same number of plantains. Dinner in like manner was sent, consisting of soup, roast beef, yams, and plantains, with a jug full of grog, and, for supper, a plate of what remained after dinner, with a plantain or two. He had scarcely finished his evening meal, when the overseer entered, who having examined the proceedings of the day, and counted the number of holes the peg had passed through, he desired Marly to lock the door after him and put the key in his pocket. He also cautioned him in an especial manner, to lay his mattress over the gutter through which the water used in cleaning the receivers ran out of the house, as through it sugar was often conveyed, and when he felt drowsy, he might lay himself on the mattress and sleep a little in that situation. Marly accordingly did lock the door, caused the mattress to be laid over the water run, and after taking a few turns up and down the boiling house, he thought everything was snug, and that he might without any bad consequence ensuing, seek a little repose.

*Drawings made in Antigua during a residence of three years, by William Clark, published 1823 – Exterior of a Boiling House*
He laid himself down, but although he felt himself considerably fatigued, he could not sleep. The almost incessant cries of the boilermen for more fire, or up and down with the cooler, bawled in a stentorian voice through a long bamboo tube to the fireman, was enough of itself to prevent sleep to one unaccustomed to such sounds. But these sounds were not the only ones which tended to “murder sleep,” for to them fell to be added, the squalling of near a dozen of girls and boys, who were seated on the shafts of the gin, forcing on the mules that turned the mill. These drivers partly for their own amusement, and partly to increase the speed of the beasts, joined in a general chorus, which, according to their natural ideas of melody, they kept up at the height of their voices, and though it was then rather grating to Marly's ear, it pleased themselves, and what was of more consequence, it pleased the mules, and made them perform more work than whipping in all probability would have done. From this, a hint may be derived by those who ground their notions on the old saying of stubborn as a mule, to try singing to the animals, when they find that neither the whip nor spur will force them on, and if they are fond of merry music, like the present ones, any thing will answer for music, for there could not be said to be either rhyme, reason, or melody, in what the negroes roared to them.

Sleep for Marly there was none, and accordingly he forsake his pillow, and watched the proceedings of the people. In this manner he was killing time, during which, however, he was noting in his memory every thing which was passing forwards. When thus employing himself, a slave boy named Plato, who was emptying a cooler, thinking him earnestly engaged at a distance from the water run, he secretly 'filled a calibash with sugar, and was lifting the mattress to thrust it out, when Marly turned round and saw him. The new book-keeper felt indignant that the negroes should attempt to play upon the faith of his inexperience, and hurrying towards Plato, caught him with the calibash in his hands, which contained between three and four pounds weight of sugar. Seized in the act, he made no apology, but begged hard for pardon, praying that Massa would not tell the Busha, (the Overseer,) and upon his promising better behaviour for the future, he was forgiven by Marly. This act of clemency, seemed to have a bad effect, for next morning, when the night spell had been relieved, and Brutus was at his post, towards whom Marly had been specially put on his guard, for he, unlike his ancient virtuous namesake, was a great thief, a negro girl, along with some others entered the boiling house, to get some liquor from the coppers. Marly kept a sharp eye after them, though at the time engaged weighing out some lime to put into a receiver, he observed Brutus returning from the curing house, evidently concealing something which he handed to a negro girl. The book-keeper instantly went up to her, and asked what she had under her petticoat. She declared she had nothing, and Marly feeling delicate to search a female, even though a black one, she was endeavouring to hedge off, when one of the negro boilermen, who had not the same scruples, came and took from her a calibash full of sugar. On calling her a thief, she felt indignant though caught in the very act, exclaiming, that “him no tief from Massa, him take from Massa.” But on Marly's learning that she was Molly, the wife of Brutus, he told them he would inform the Busha, and let him do what he pleased with them. They begged however so hard for forgiveness, and promised so positively they would not try the like again, that the book-keeper, who was naturally of a tender disposition, and who had often heard of the very severe punishments which were inflicted on negroes, though he had never seen any, reluctantly consented, being very much irritated at at this second attempt to impose on him. He at the same time told the whole who were present, the very first offender who should afterwards be discovered, would be punished.

Marly now imperceptibly began to lose his former favourable opinion of the Negroes being a much calumniated race, and to resort to the one formed by persons daily conversant in their management, and which he had been advised to adopt, that when he saw a black face, he saw a thief. It must be confessed he had some cause for drawing such an inference, notwithstanding the alleviating circumstance pleaded by Mrs Brutus, that “him no tief from Massa, him take from Massa,” meaning the proprietor; and therefore, as she was his property, she formed part of himself, argal, what was his was hers; argal, she could not steal from him without stealing from herself, though she might take from him part of the conjunct property in communion between them, which however, in her opinion did not amount to theft; but was only her share of the common goods belonging to them. This reasoning was rather fine spun, but coming from a negro, it proves, that the race is well adapted to metaphysical studies, and that in the course of time, when they are better instructed than at present, some wire drawn cobweb theory on metaphysics, may be expected from some black man, to illuminate and instruct mankind, and to convince the world, that a negro has as much, and as well assorted brains, as any man whose face is white.
Chapter 5. 1800 to 1807

... He found that superintending the making of sugar depended less on theoretical than practical study, and as a practical student he could not make any distinction between taking and stealing. He had another reason for withdrawing his favourable opinion of the blacks, arising from the fact, that in the two instances of theft, numbers saw the act committed, without showing any concern, or offering to prevent it; but it is probable, they thought there was no harm in the theft, or rather, that Plato and Brutus were doing no more than what they themselves would have done, had the same opportunity occurred to them. Liquor, or rather sirup, was furnished to them after every spell, if they chose to ask for it; but with that they were not satisfied, all their endeavours, as it was so said and appeared, being towards the mode of obtaining sugar, or in other words, in contriving to steal it, for they had no allowance of that article. They might naturally enough think, therefore, that as they performed the whole work in making it, they had some right to a part, and as this seemingly equitable claim was refused to them, it was only justice on their part to steal as much as they could, and in that manner receive their share. If they did not argue in this way, it was in this way they acted, and actions are a better proof of opinion than words.

The day following was spent like the preceding one in watching the negroes, and in adjusting the peg, according as the coolers were emptied, till six o’clock came, when Marly was relieved for the night by the head book-keeper, whose turn it now was, to keep spell in the boiling-house during the night.

While taking supper in the Buckra house with the overseer and the carpenter, Marly was surprised at the overseer mentioning the occurrences of the theft, the intelligence having been communicated to him by one of the house wenches. He said it was misplaced leniency, to overlook the thefts of such fellows as Brutus and Plato, but since you have promised to do so, I will say nothing about. I am glad, however, you have been so vigilant, and I trust you will continue so, for vigilance only will prevent stealing by those under you, the best of whom are thieves.

This night, as the carpenter afterwards remarked, the overseer was a little talkative, and having got a box of segars that forenoon from the town, he invited the carpenter and Marly into the piazza, after supper, to try them and drink a glass of grog with him. He began by addressing himself to Marly, with saying, "I spoke to you yesterday about the Calibash estate, but as I then did not explain myself I will do so now. Calibash estate is by far the largest in the island, though it cannot with propriety be said to have any express owners. I rather think every sugar proprietor is somewhat concerned in it. But be this as it may, it is from this estate the great part of the white people in the towns and the free browns and blacks supply themselves with the essential article of sugar. It derives its name, I believe, chiefly owing to no coopered casks being used, the substitute for which are calibashes, procured from the calibash tree, of which there are no scarcity, and in which the sugar is not only carried out of the estate, but conveyed to market and sold, according to the apparent size of the calibash, no weights or measures being used by the proprietors of this large estate. Another peculiarity attached to this estate, is, that the crop is almost uniformly disposed of on Sunday, no other day in the week being so suitable to the owners. To make a long story short, Calibash estate comprehends the whole island of Jamaica, each sugar plantation furnishing a little, some more and some less, according to circumstances. But it differs very materially in regard to good crops being produced from it, with that of good crops from any single estate, for when a good crop is produced from a single estate, praise is bestowed and promotion ensured to the planters; but if it is only supposed that at any time a good crop is taken off for Calibash estate, the planters, in place of promotion, must go and seek their bread elsewhere. Calibash estate, therefore, is furnished from the sugar purloined by the negroes from the various plantations on which they live, and from the extent of the population which they supply, the quantity stolen in a year must be immense. It seems, however, altogether impossible to put an entire stop to this nefarious traffic, for Calibash estate will always be supplied. But, where the white people are continually on the alert, they in a great measure are enabled to save their own sugar from being embezzled."

After having smoked some few segars and drank some grog, the party retired to their respective apartments for the night, to resume again the same monotonous routine of life when day appeared.

Daylight next morning found Marly at his post, and day after day passed over in the same manner, with the exception of no farther thefts being detected, till Sunday, which was a day of rest.

For the first two or three days, the new book-keeper could scarcely observe any difference in the faces of the negroes, to enable him to distinguish them in the same manner as he could have done white people; but before the week terminated, the variety in the distinction of black features, were becoming so perceptible, that he was able to recognize a great many of them. He could not help remarking, that almost every one seemed to be in good flesh, with smooth skins and healthy countenances, though they were now near the termination of the most toilsome round of their yearly work. The sirup, with which they were
abundantly supplied, was said to be the cause of their good appearance. Apparently, as to them, it was of a very nutritious quality, whereas sweets in Britain, are often thought prejudicial to health, but such seemed to have a contrary effect on the negroes. But what most surprised him, was, that they were almost universally supplied with an excellent set of ivory in their mouths, although, according to our established notions, their teeth ought to have been bad, to support the opinion that sugar is destructive to them. No such consequence, however, followed from the great quantity of sirup which they used, during the one half of the year or thereby, for their teeth were superlatively fine. It follows, therefore, that if sugar has the effect of destroying teeth, it is only those of white people, it having the humanity to spare those of the blacks whose labour produces it.
Sunday being a day of idleness, Marly had an opportunity of viewing the estate, little of which he had seen from his close confinement. The Buckra-house was pleasantly situated on an eminence, which commanded a beautiful prospect of hill and dale for miles around. The works, and the trash houses, were in an excellent state, and the stone fences enclosing the cane fields were in good repair. Numbers of the cane plots which had been cut early in the season, were assuming a luxuriant appearance, and the pasture grounds abounded with numerous fruit trees common to tropical climates. It was altogether a delightful estate...
Marly – page 34-48 – continued

From the novelty of the vegetation, he enjoyed his solitary rambles, although he would have wished for some person, to have explained to him the names and natures of the different vegetable productions, which came under his observation. But this could not be, for the overseer, the first book-keeper, and the carpenter, were subscribers to a raffle of a fowling piece, which was to be shot for that day, and Marly, not having yet procured a horse, he in consequence could not accompany them; no disgrace being considered so great in the island, as that of a white man being seen walking on foot when away from his home. No person does it, but such as have forfeited their character and situation, and who, in consequence, are styled walking buckras, a name, synonymous to beggar, coupled with that of vagabond.

Marly, to obviate this difficulty, empowered the overseer to purchase a good one for him, for which he would pay him ready cash, (his vanity prompting him,) to be equally well mounted with any of the overseers, and superior to most of book-keepers.

At night the party came home, neither of them having the fortune to be the lucky shot, consequently, the fowling piece did not grace their return; and after some trifling discussion on the subject of the shooting, the party sought repose.

Next morning, the routine of boiling sugar recommenced, but nothing worthy of remark occurred, till the afternoon of a day, some three weeks afterwards, when the making of sugar for that year was finished, or as it is termed, crop over. Immediately afterwards, the negroes assembled in and around the boiling house, dancing and roaring for joy, to the sound of the gumba, at the completion of this species of labour. This favourite instrument of music, the gumba, consists of a square box, with a piece of sheep's skin on each end, and though only beat with a single stick, and incapable of marking any tune, yet the negroes seemed delighted with it, and danced in the true African fashions, as if elegance consisted in violent exertions, at the same time, singing as loud as their lungs would permit. Though it was truly rude, it pleased them, while it lasted; but they ceased on being told that salt fish would be served out, along with a small allowance of sugar and santa, (a kind of shrub,) to the pickininy mothers. All were on the alert, in an instant the gumba ceased, and each looked forward for their allowance; – an allowance which to them
comes only twice a year. After all had got this quota, the negro men seemed somewhat dissatisfied, and on asking them what more they wanted, they entreated to have some rum. Samuels, being averse to see them complaining, gave them, and those females who had got none of the santa and sugar, an allowance of rum, with which they retired to the negro huts, happy as any people that ever breathed.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816*

Piazza & Stairs at 4 Paths 2 Negro children at work
As customary in the country at crop over, a number of the neighbouring overseers, with some of the surgeons and other white people upon the estates, were this day invited to dinner, which was to be followed by a ball. The invitation, as a matter of course, was accepted, and after partaking of a sumptuous feast, with an over-abundance of punch, till the evening was set in, at which time, Apollo, the house-boy, was dispatched to the negro houses, to tell Sammy, and Ajax, and Cudjoe, and Scipio, to come to the Buckra house, and bring their fiddles with them. These four were the best fiddlers upon the estate, and they proved themselves tolerable musicians. They had been expecting that their services would be required, for they were already dressed for the occasion, and accompanied Apollo to the house. This was the signal which the negresses were impatiently awaiting, for all the finery which they possessed, had been put into requisition, and was actually on their backs. They knew there could be no ball without them. They required no special invitation to attend, for all came as fast as they were able, and before the party at the dinner table arose, the hall was nearly filled with black belles, for only four brown beauties graced the plantation. They were attended and followed by a number of the negro men, the sable fops of the estate, in their gala dresses, of which a white neckcloth forms a prominent part.

When the fiddles struck up the whites left the table, and on choosing their sable partners, the reels commenced. The ladies, nothing loth, never rejected a partner because he had previously danced with others. All Buckras who offered, came alike to them, and all were apparently equally well received. Marly was therefore at no loss for partners, when he wished to engage in the dance, although from the floor being rather much crowded, he could not help thinking, that the toes of the damsels were in some danger from the shoes of the Buckras; for with the exception of them, shoes were dispensed with. But it so seldom happened that any heavy Buckra foot trod on their naked toes, that the cause of alarm was disregarded, and they seemed to enjoy the passing moments with as much glee as their Massas. And it may be remarked by the way, that none of that prudery was exhibited by them, which so often marks similar assemblies among their fair sisters in this country, each lady being only eager to get into the dance, apparently equally pleased with each partner who offered.
With occasional intermissions, to allow their own black countrymen to display their prowess in dancing, the scene continued, till supper called the Buckras from the hall, leaving the floor to themselves. After supper however, the whites resumed their place in the room, when country dances commenced, in which the negro girls performed their part extremely well. They were very fond of the amusement, and among them there were numbers pretty well dressed, with pleasing countenances, resembling more in features the European than the African, and with the exception of their jet black hue, they would have been accounted tolerably handsome in any country.

While this scene of mirth was going on, the negresses were abundantly supplied with Santa, and their sable brethren did not fail in helping themselves to rum and water. And after continuing the dance to an early hour in the morning, during which, however, none of the Buckras reaped much advantage or pleasure from the conversation of their mistresses, although they had Venus, Diana, Cloe, Daphne, little Juno, and others of the famed names of antiquity in the company, the party broke up, when all departed, if not happy, at least well pleased, and thus the black ball terminated.

Next morning, before day broke, the firing or smacking of the driver's whip awakened Marly, when he started from his pillow. Having, overnight, partially received his instructions in the new branch of his duties, he instantly proceeded to the fold, in which the cattle were penned during the night. He counted them as they were driven out, to the number of about one hundred and eighty oxen and mules, and then trudged to the field, where he arrived at the same time with the most early of the negroes. The gang, to which he belonged, consisted of between fifty and sixty, with a driver named Hampden, called the second gang, while in the first there were between eighty and ninety. On calling the roll, Marly found his people had turned out well for the first morning, and he felt pleased that no fault in consequence could be found with them. – After remaining for two hours seeing them at work, he left the field for breakfast, and having received it, he went to the hot-house or hospital. From the medicine shop therein he made up the prescriptions which had been written by the surgeon who had charge of the health of the estate, at the time when he made his morning's visit. This done, he saw Rambler, the negro doctor, administer them, but fortunately there were only two or three on the sick list, and these cases were of trifling importance.

*William Berryman's Jamaica drawings 1808-1816*
Leaving the hot-house, he was accosted by the negro woman who had charge of the poultry, for an allowance of Indian corn for her feathered tribe, and after having satisfied her, he put the key of the corn loft in his pocket, and went to attend the negroes.

On going to the field, the cooks of the gang followed him with breakfast for the people; and, on their arrival, the driver fired his whip as a signal for work to stop, — a signal which was instantly obeyed. Their breakfast could scarcely be said to be sumptuous, for the most of them had only a few boiled plantains, with a herring, while others had only a piece of yam, with a little lime juice and vegetable pepper sauce. During the half hour allowed for this repast, Marly had no employment, but, at the expiry of the stated period, he gave the hint to the driver, who again fired his whip, and the negroes took their places in line. They were employed cleaning a cane plot, that is, hoeing up the weeds, stripping off the under leaves or field trash, and softening the earth and refuse or field trash at the roots of the plants.

Though the soil consisted of rather a tough mould, the labour bestowed by the negroes was only trifling. They were no way forced in the work, and they applied very little strength indeed. The whip was sometimes fired behind them to keep them in line, but seldom did any require to be touched with it; nay, so far from such being the case, the driver was almost the whole time engaged in chatting and laughing with them who were at work. They were apparently in high spirits, keeping up a continued chorus, in which all engaged, and not a face was to be seen which was not clothed in smiles. This mode of working continued till shell-blow at half-past one by the sun dial, and the moment it was heard, work ceased; everyone making the best of their way home — an example which Marly was not slow in following. As some may not understand the meaning of shell-blow, it may be proper to mention, that it is a continued blast from a large conch shell, cut on one end for the purpose. It furnishes a shrill lasting sound, which is heard at a considerable distance, and it is the signal in general use to warn the negroes of the dinner hour, though a bell is used on some few estates for the same purpose. During the course of the day Marly's modesty frequently caused him to blush, from the negroes of both sexes drawling out to him, in the true creole drawl, - “Massa, massa, may him go a bush, massa; may him go a bush, massa!”

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings, 1808-1816 – Digging Corn holes*
Marly – page 49-58 – continued

Marly reached the buckra-house about the same time with the first book-keeper, when they found the carpenter waiting, to go and have a glass of grog along with them in the buckra-hall. This refreshment they had some need of, more especially the book-keepers, who had remained in the field under the sun for such a length of time. It quenched their thirst, and partly revived their spirits after the great perspiration they had suffered. Fatigued with this new mode of life, Marly entered his room, to wash and put on fresh clothes, but observing on the table a small book with a scrap of paper on it, he took it up, and, to his amazement, found written on it – “Keep the rat-book, and see that Homer brings in six rats each day, and, when they are brought in, have the tails cut from them. If he fails to do so report. – Give him his hat full of corn every day, and, after it is grinded, see it boiled and the dogs eat it.”

Jaded and fatigued, from his exposure to the scorching rays to which he was not yet inured, he felt restless and irritated, and the salvo contained in this new order was not pouring balm of Gilead into his wound. It added fuel to his irritation, and he could not help thinking himself degraded by this new employment. – “Truly this cannot be borne,” exclaimed he; “a man bred at the university of Edinburgh, and intended for the Scottish bar, found only qualified to keep a rat-book, – to see the tails cut from rats, and to watch the feeding of dogs. Had my revered grandfather been alive, what would have been his feelings, could he have known that his darling child, whom he imagined would one day be qualified to fill with reputation and respect, a seat on the Scottish bench, was only entrusted with the keeping of a rat-book, and the feeding of dogs?” His reflections had not proceeded farther, when the identical Homer made his appearance, accompanied with eight or ten canine companions. His countenance had not the dignified aspect shown in the busts of his immortal namesake of old, for it was that of an ill-made African negro of the Congo nation, much marked on the face with country scars. He, however, presented six rats, and the bodies being disencumbered of their tails, he asked for the dogs’ corn. Marly did not know well how to act, but, like a soldier, he involuntarily marched to the corn loft, gave him his hat full, telling him to grind it and have it boiled before he went to dinner. Homer having promised, he returned to his apartment, half regretting that he had become a book-keeper.

Having made an entry of this very important transaction, he prepared for dinner, previous to which Homer came to him with the prepared mess for the dogs, which Marly saw delivered and speedily devoured by them. During the time the dogs were consuming their allowance Homer was busily engaged in selling his rats to the best advantage, to some negroes who made the purchase in specie – his day’s work yielding him an eighth part of a dollar extra of his allowance. Though Marly had previously heard that the negroes, like the ancient Romans, did eat these ugly vermin, he was sceptical on the point, but seeing it confirmed by positive proof, he could not help thinking he had got into a land of savages, in place of among a much-injured and grievously oppressed race – injured and oppressed for no other reason but because Providence, in the wise dispensation of its power, had conferred on them a dark hue. – He, however, asked a negro girl who had bought part of the game, why she came to eat rats? – She exclaimed, “Dey good nyamn for him neger, massa! Him, Sir Charles Price, good nyamn for him neger, massa! Him good as hims hens pickeniny, massa!”

At this time Marly was told dinner waited, when he entered the buckra-house. Shortly after the cloth was removed, he mentioned what he had seen, and enquired if rats were in general eaten by the negroes. Being informed that they were, the overseer remarked, that he could “perceive no reason why rats should not be good eating, though, from our education, we may entertain a disgust of them. Rats in towns are filthy feeding animals, but those fed in cane plots live upon the sugar plant, the most cleanly of all kinds of food; and why then they should not form good eating, I cannot conjecture. But as I never tried a mess of them, I am not a proper judge, and I only once saw a white man commence eating a roasted one, (he was a Frenchman) then I fell sick, and had to retire. The Frenchman afterwards declared it was excellent, and that it equalled, if it did not excel, a fine fed tender chicken, or an excellent young rabbit. The negroes, however, who have none of these prejudices of our education to overcome, are very partial to rats, and have denominated them Sir Charles Price, thereby commemorating an event, that otherwise might have descended into oblivion, as I do not at present recollect to have seen it observed in any of the authors who have written respecting this island. Sir Charles Price, it appears, was a great man in the country, at an early period, after our taking it from the Spaniards. In his time, there was a small species of rat, which proved very destructive to the canes, and which was also thought to be very prolific; in addition to which, field mice were very numerous and pretty destructive. This Sir Charles Price had been told that there was a large sized rat on the Mosquito Shore, which was an enemy to every other species of rat, as well as to
mice, and though equally destructive as the small one, was said to be less prolific. As a choice of two evils, we are directed to choose the lesser; therefore, to get rid of the mice and small rats which then pestered the colonists, he sent to the Mosquito shore, and had a number of the large ones imported. It answered the expectation in one respect, for it cleared the country, as it is generally supposed, of the small rats, and thinned the field mice; but it has proved equally prolific with those it has exterminated. And should you continue for any length of time a planter, you will have occasion too often to observe the immense devastation in the cane plots, caused by this destructive and widely disseminated race.”

During the afternoon, and the early part of the night, a dreadful thunder-storm raged, accompanied with a continued torrent of rain, or more correctly speaking, of a descending sheet of water, which prevented work of any description; and in consequence, to the negroes it was an afternoon of idleness – work in such weather never being required from them.

William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – Nairn Castle

Marly – page 49-58 – continued

The first book-keeper, with the carpenter, having retired to look after some of their own concerns, the overseer desired Marly to wait, as he had some instructions to give. He accordingly did wait, when the former said, that “it was his department to look after the hothouse or hospital – to keep the keys during the night, and give them to Rambler, the negro doctor, in the morning. The negro boy, Cato, who has been amiss for these some days, during which he has been lurking about the estate, was caught this forenoon, by two of the people, while engaged robbing one of the negro houses. He is locked in the bilboes, of which Rambler has the key, and when you close the house for the night, see that his feet are firm, for he often contrives to make his escape. He is one of the pests on this property, and he, along with one or two others, give more trouble than the whole. I have been on this estate upwards of ten years, and previous to my arrival, I was informed of his character, which was then equally bad with what it is now, though at this time, he must be upwards of forty years of age. I have tried what severity could do, and I have also tried the effect of lenient measures; – he has often been flogged; and he has often been sent to the workhouse, and wrought in irons for three months at a time, while he has been more often forgiven;
but still, neither severity nor leniency have induced him to alter his conduct. He has also several times
been nearly murdered by the negroes themselves, when caught pillaging from them; but to him nothing
will be a warning – he will neither work, nor will he run into the bush. For his reiterated deeds of theft, in
most civilized countries, he would long ere now have lost his life; – and as the people are continually
complaining of his depredations, if he does not escape before Monday, I will send him to the workhouse,
with instructions, to give him thirty-nine lashes well laid in, and detain him for three months, during which
period, he will cause no trouble to us, besides, he will then be out of harm’s way.”

He proceeded. “As we grow only a certain quantity of Indian corn, be sparing of it, and give
Cleopatra, for the poultry each day, only her basket full of it unshelled. When you come from the field at
night, go and see Columbus put the cattle into the penn; keep tally of their number, but you will be put to
little trouble in this respect, for Columbus is very attentive. Afterwards see that Bonaparte has brought
the sheep and hogs to their pens, and that their number is correct, when you will also give him a basket full
of corn, which see the hogs eat, otherwise, some of it will be stolen. At the same time, take notice that
Venus, with the pickeniny gang, brings enough of oranges for the pigs. When these are not in season, bid
her bring weeds; but the Seville orange is so plentiful upon the estate, that it is probable the sweet orange
will be ripe before the bitter is expended, then order her to bring them. And when you have done this, shut
the hothouse, taking always care when any are in the stocks, that the lock is fast, for it is rather out of
repair.” And with these varied instructions, Marly left the buckra house.

With irritated feelings, at having entered upon such a humiliating employment, he sought his own
apartment, regardless of the pelting of the rain, the vivid flashes of lightning, or the tremendous peals of
thunder sounding in his ears. His pride, or his vanity, was wounded, at being appointed to keep a rat book,
to see dogs fed, and hogs fed, and what was equal to all the other degradations, turnkey, and master-at-
arms to a negro prison. When he viewed his former life, associating with dashing beaux, and gallanting
the fair belles of Edinburgh, contrasted with his present occupation, it appeared to him as if he had fallen
from the highest grade in society, into the lowest and the most contemptible. And in such a humour he
stepped into the room of his neighbour, the head book-keeper, to enquire whether he had filled such
offices.

The book-keeper was taken rather unawares, and a half-blush overcast his countenance, at being caught
by the stranger in familiar chat with a negro girl. Marly made an excuse, but the other interrupting him,
said, there was no occasion, for this was only Diana, his sable wife, and on her retiring, Langbey told him
that he had a fine girl in his eye, who would answer him well. “No objections,” added he, “will I hear, for
I know what you will say. It is the same with us all when we first come to the island; but after a little
experience, we uniformly fall into the same track, and follow the common custom. Besides, it is of real
advantage; for, in the event of your being sick, your girl will be the most attentive of nurses, far more so
than what can be expected from strangers. Be you advised, and follow the manners of the country, of
which you will never repent, and you know the maxim, that when in Rome, we should do as the Pope
does.” Marly, notwithstanding, was not to be drummed into such a practice, however universal, by
arguments, and his aversion to the black colour had not yet subsided so far as to induce him to make
choice of any one of the negresses whom he had yet seen. But not wishing to argue on such a subject at
this time, especially, as he had come upon another errand, he evaded the proposal with – “I’ll think of it.”

He then mentioned the employments the overseer had desired him to perform, when Langbey
answered, “Every planter, at his commencement, must go through the same routine, and this routine being
common, nobody bestows a thought on it. At the beginning, almost every one thinks more on the subject
than it merits; but when you know the character of the negroes better, you will see the propriety of
minutely observing every thing whatever which is entrusted to them. A strict eye keeps them honest,
whereas a lax one would not.”

As the day was fast drawing to a close, Marly thought it was time he should proceed to the cattle pen;
but the first book-keeper said, that “the overseer did not require such attendance on a wet night, though the
most of overseers did not dispense with it.” He added, “it would answer for the night, if he gave corn for
the pigs, and shut up the hothouse.” Marly, in consequence, did not go to the cattle pen; but he supplied
Bonaparte with corn, and after seeing it mostly consumed by the porkers under his charge, he went and
saw that Cato was fast in the bilboes – locked the door, took the keys to his room, and thus finished his
first field day.

Next morning, at the first appearance of light, Marly was at the cattle pen, and saw the whole cattle
driven out, after which he returned home, having previously to leaving his room, given the keys of the hot-
house to Rambler. This being negro day, or the day allotted to the negroes to work for themselves, there
was no work done upon the estate. It was nearly an idle day to Marly, for he had no other duties to perform, than supplying medicines to the sick, corn to the poultry, corn to the dogs, and corn to the hogs, to see that all the large cattle were driven into their pens at night, to see that none of the sheep nor hogs were amiss, and to see that the dogs and hogs were not cheated of their allotted share of corn. And this day of idleness was concluded, with seeing Cato fast in the bilboes, the door locked, and the keys deposited in his chamber.

At breakfast, Mr Samuels remarked that a neighbouring overseer would be on the estate in the course of the forenoon, with a fine horse, which he wished to part with, but not under £70. Marly said, that if the animal was worth the money, and pleased him, he would not stand upon the sum, and accordingly, sometime before dinner, the horse was brought. It seemed a fine looking animal, and Samuels having spoken in its favour, in which he was echoed by several overseers who were present, Marly bought it; after which, he found he was better mounted than any of the white people upon the estate. Many would say, there was little prudence shown in thus sporting with a considerable part of his funds, for the sake of show, seeing, that his year's salary would not amount to so much: but Marly, like most young men, was vain, and vanity must be paid for.

William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings, 1808-1816 – detail – a young planter

At the beginning of the 19th century Sandy Gut was one of many failing sugar estates.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=lzBbAAAAQAAJ&dq=%22Distillation+of+Sugar+and+Molasses%22&source=gbnavlinks_s – Report from the House of Commons’ Committee on the Distillation of Sugar and Molasses... 1808 – page 3-4 – extract

It appears from accounts laid before Your Committee, that the price of Sugar has greatly diminished since the year 1799; the average price of 1800, was 65s. per cwt.; the average of 1807, was 34s., per cwt.
both exclusive of Duty. In consequence of that depreciation, and of the increased expense attendant on the cultivation of the article, the situation of the Sugar Planter has been rapidly declining, till at length the value of the produce is, on an average, barely equal to the Charges of production, leaving no rent for the land, and no interest for the capital employed upon it.

It appears that the obstacles opposed to the exportation of colonial produce, added to its forced accumulation in the market from the Conquered Colonies, have been the principal causes of its depreciation. While the Planter has remained subject to a monopoly in favour of British produce and navigation, his exclusive possession of the home market has been interfered with; and, while the British Consumption has been increasing, the efforts he has made to meet it have turned entirely to his own disadvantage.

It appears that the Planter cannot so withdraw his capital, diminish the extent, or change the object of his cultivation, as to procure for himself any adequate relief; and, without Legislative intervention, there is no prospect of his being extricated from his distress. Annuitants dependant on West India property for their provision, have, in many instances, been totally deprived of their income.

The increased price of all the usual articles of supply, added to the depreciation of Colonial produce, has deprived a great proportion of the Owners of the resources wherewith to furnish the accustomed stores of food and clothing for the negroes, and of duly providing for their superintendence; and, if relief be not speedily applied, these stores must be actually diminished or withheld, whereby much painful privation will be suffered by the negroes, and discontent, if not commotion among them, may be seriously apprehended. In the Report of the Committee of the Assembly of Jamaica, it is stated, that there are one hundred and fifteen Sugar Estates respecting which suits are depending on the Court of Chancery; from which and from other evidence, it appears that Foreclosures of Securities on Property are become unusually frequent in that Island, which will deprive many Owners of their estates for sums quite disproportioned to their value. Another effect from this cause will be, much individual distress to the negroes, who, in consequence of such Foreclosures, will in many instances be separated from their families.

John Blackburn (see above Lady Nugent’s Journal) was examined by the Committee in April 1807.

Page 280-283 – Extract of Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee appointed in the last Session of Parliament – John Blackburn’s evidence, page 280-283 – extracts

HOW many years have you resided in Jamaica? – It is thirty-five years since I went to Jamaica; I resided there thirty-two years.

Are you acquainted with various Sugar and other Plantations in that island? – I am

Have you had any such Plantations under your care and management? – Several.

What number? – About thirty.

What are the different descriptions of property invested in the cultivation of Sugar, Coffee, and Cotton? – Land, buildings, Negroes, cattle, mules, machinery, tools, and utensils of almost every description.

Which side of the Island were you on? – I have been on all sides; latterly on the south-east.

In all ordinary cases, must the converting of a Sugar Plantation to any other object of cultivation be attended with a great and ruinous sacrifices of property on the part of the Proprietor? – Undoubtedly.

Explain to the Committee how that sacrifice is incurred? – The works and buildings of all kinds are totally lost; the land becomes of very little value, as it can only be used for pasture-ground, producing a scanty supply of very bad grass; generally, indeed, it runs into foxtail and other sour grasses, but in ninety-nine cases in a hundred a conversion is impracticable, and a total abandonment is the only alternative. In this case new land must be purchased; houses must be built both for the White people and for the Negroes, and works must be erected anew. The Negroes, too, must be fed at an enormous expence, till the provisions of their own raising are ripe. Their removal is attended not only with great loss to their Masters, but with very great loss and serious hardship to themselves, and consequently produces much dissatisfaction; they are torn from their houses, their provision-grounds, their gardens, and orchards, (which they consider as much their own property as their Master does his Estate.) Their local habits and attachments are destroyed; their domestic comforts are lost to them, and cannot be replaced for years. When arrived at the new Estate, they experience all the inconveniencies which generally attend settlers; houses must be erected, and new ground broken up for their future provisions, and this at a time when the situation of the Master calls for a more than ordinary portion of their labour; and till their own provision
be raised, it may well be supposed when every article of food comes direct out of the pocket of the Master, their allowance, even under the most liberal management, will not be so ample as in usual cases, even admitting, what will seldom happen under such circumstances, that the Master possesses the means of supplying them amply. After all this, no return can be expected from the new Plantation sooner than four years, should Coffee be planted, and I know nothing else that can be cultivated except upon a very small scale, with any probability of success. Such difficulties can only be encountered by those who have money or very good credit; but unfortunately, the holders of such Estates as have become unprofitable, and which ought, in prudence, to have been early abandoned, have lingered on in hopes of better times, and, from the extreme reluctance of making the sacrifice which inevitably attends an abandonment, till their credit as well as property is gone, and the abandonment, instead of being voluntary, is enforced by Creditors. Of what little value Sugar Estates become, when deprived of their Negroes and Stock, can, I think, be best explained by two or three instances in point. There were two Estates in my own immediate neighbourhood, one belonging to the heirs of a person of the name of Sinclair, and the other to the heirs of Forster March. The Negroes and Cattle upon those Estates were taken hold of by the Creditors, and the lands were sold by writ of extent. To the best of my recollection, the lands upon Sinclair's Estate were valued by the jury, and sold to the Creditors at 13s. 4d. currency an acre, the works included; and upon March’s Estate, I think it was twenty-five shillings currency per acre for the land, including the works. There is an instance also which relates to myself; I think in the year 1790, I purchased an Estate from Bourdieu and Challot, of this town, which they, as Creditors, had been obliged to take, for which I paid £2,500 sterling, and I believe the works and utensils upon it could not have cost less than £10,000 besides all the land, about 900 or 1,000 acres: possibly those Estates I have mentioned might have cost the proprietor, with the buildings upon them, twenty or fifty and twenty thousand pounds currency, and they were sold at the prices I have spoken of, after they were deprived of their Negroes and cattle.

Explain to the committee why the converting of a Sugar Plantation to any other object of cultivation will be attended with a great and ruinous sacrifice on the part of the proprietor? – Lands that have been long under Cane cultivation are so exhausted, that they are rendered very unfit for any other cultivation; and Sugar Works, with some few exceptions, are situate in a soil and climate where no other cultivation can be profitably carried on. The conversion of Lands which have been under Cane cultivation to other purposes would not, in my opinion, be in general practicable: the land is unfit, and the works would be entirely lost. Such properties can only be converted into bad Pens, which, even at the present price of cattle, would be ruinous; but the multiplication of pens, and decay of Sugar Works, would increase the number of cattle, and diminish the demand for them, and make the ruin tenfold.

Would those works which have been erected upon a Sugar Plantation be of little or no use on a Coffee or Cotton Plantation? – The works that are fit for making of Sugar, if they could be moved to a place where Coffee would grow, might be, with some alteration, converted to tolerably good Coffee works; but Coffee will not grow upon old Sugar Estates, and the works must consequently be useless.

Can those Estates, which have been generally used as a Sugar Plantation advantageously, be made use of for Coffee or Cotton? – They cannot. The Planter must continue to make Sugar, or submit to an abandonment; he has no other alternative: in the first case he will probably be ruined; but in the latter, if he has no other property, he inevitably must.

May there not be Estates, which have not been worn out by the making of Sugar? – They, of course, will continue to make Sugar. Some Estates, from the quality of their Sugar, and others from the comparatively small expence they are wrought at, owing to favourable local circumstances, are still in some degree profitable, and will become more so as their less fortunate neighbours are ruined, which must, if there is no favourable alteration, soon be the case with numbers.

Are those lands which have been made use of for the purpose of growing Sugar, suitable for grass? – Grass will grow upon them, but very bad grass; it will not pay for the fencing, and putting and keeping them in order.

Could they be applied to Piemento? – Piemento grows wild, it is never cultivated; and besides fifteen or twenty years would elapse, before it would come to any thing.

What is the value of buildings and machinery on a Sugar Plantation, taking the lowest and highest, with which you are acquainted? – I should suppose, from three or four thousand pounds sterling, to twenty or five and twenty thousand pounds.
What are the values of these Estates to which you apply those sums? – Very uncertain, it does not follow that the best Estates have the most expensive works; there are circumstances which attend the carrying of water, frequently to a great distance, which make a difference in the expense.

What number of hogsheads will those Estates you speak of make? – The greatest crop I ever knew an Estate make, with one set of works, was a thousand and thirty odd hogsheads, of about 18 cwt on an average as they are shipped; 15 to 16 cwt. here; but Estates in general make from one to 300 hogsheads.

Have the contingent expences of Sugar Estates incurred within the Island, say for taxes, White men’s salaries, hired labour, fresh provisions, cattle, mules, and lumber, been progressively increasing within the last twenty years? – They certainly have increased very much.

Can you speak as to the necessity of having an intercourse from the West India colonies directly with the United States of America, for several articles necessary for the use and maintenance of the Sugar plantations? – I can only speak as a matter of opinion; I believe it to be essentially necessary.

Can you, from your own experience, and equally as a matter of opinion, say whether such a supply as is necessary for the use of the Sugar plantations can be had from the British North American colonies? – I believe they could not supply us; I have understood that the British colonies of North America have been obliged to apply to the American States for some of the articles we require.

Are there not many Estates in Jamaica which, from their soil, exposure, or situation, must make Sugar of a quality always below the average quality of the Island, and therefore must, in the present circumstances of the market, be under peculiar depression? – Undoubtedly.

Can those Estates by any change of manufacture, in your opinion, make a Muscovado Sugar materially different from what they do at present? – I should imagine not; the quality of the Sugar depends more on the soil than on any other circumstance.
Can the Sugar Planter change the cultivation of his lands to Coffee and Cotton, when the price of Sugar is low, and thereby profit by better prices being given for such articles? – I conceive it impossible. I think you stated, in two instances that came within your own knowledge, yesterday, of Sugar plantations having been what is called thrown up, and the land sold; that in one of those, the land was worth 13s. 4d, and the other 25s per acre; what would those lands have been worth, or what would they have been valued for in a state of cultivation for Sugar canes, in your opinion? – They have been again made Sugar works by the people that purchased them, and I should suppose at this moment the cane lands, with the canes upon them, would value at £70 an acre; and if by any accident they should be deprived of their Negroes, as they were before, the lands would be of no more value than they were when formerly bought.

You stated yesterday, that within the last twenty years there has been a very great advance in the price of all articles that were necessary for the maintenance of a Sugar Plantation, some double, others treble, and upwards? – Yes.

Do you happen to know what the actual net proceeds to the proprietor of a hogshead of Sugar was twenty years ago in the English market, and what it now is? – I do not; one hogshead nets three times as much as another; I should imagine that 15 years ago a hogshead of Sugar netted twice as much as it does at present.

When you stated yesterday, in answer to a Question concerning the difficulty of converting Sugar Estates into cultivation, that you conceived it could not be done without great disadvantage, because there would be a necessity for removing the Negroes, did you mean to state, that Negroes cannot be removed from one situation to another without great disadvantage and loss? – I meant to state, that Negroes cannot be removed from one situation to another without great disadvantage and loss; and I also meant to state, that the works these Negroes removed from would become altogether useless, and the lands they removed from of very little value: the Negroes have provision grounds, and houses, and gardens round each house, and plenty of fruit trees, and they have, at some little distance, other lands, which they cultivate for the maintenance of themselves and families; they have gardens round their houses, which are planted with fruit-trees and vegetables of various kinds; every house has a garden round it, of a quarter or half an acre or more; they are attached to the spot, and they are attached to the graves of their forefathers; their houses are, in a great measure, of their own building, and may be worth twenty, twenty-five, or thirty pounds each. I wish also to state, that in the infancy of a Plantation, the Negro provision-grounds are near their houses, which again are close to the works; that in the extension of the Plantation, it becomes necessary to cultivate in canes the Negro provision-grounds, and give them others at some farther distance, and in doing so, it is a matter of great delicacy, and to be done with much leisure and caution; you must give them other grounds of better quality, and well stocked with provisions fit for use, and pay them money to get their consent to make the exchange. You must particularly take care, by bribery or otherwise, to get the sanction of the head people, or your slaves would probably get discontented, and careless of their own property and of yours, and very ruinous consequences must ensue when so partial a movement as this requires so much precaution. You will judge of the consequences of a removal of many miles into a new country and a new climate.

The common course of Sugar cultivation furnishes a proportion of manure every year? – A very considerable quantity.

Does it produce a greater proportion than the cultivation of Cotton? – Neither Cotton nor Coffee produce any manure at all.

Do you know, from your general acquaintance with the Island of Jamaica, particularly, that there has been of late years a very general distress among the Planters? – I imagine there has been a very general distress within these last two or three years; many Estates not only do not pay the contingencies, and return no interest for the capital vested in them, but even bring a man in debt, from his making his Sugar at a greater price than he sells it for.

You said many Estates must make Sugar within the average quality of the Island, what do you conceive the superabundance of low Sugar in the market at present is owing to? – I should imagine the glut of low Sugar is increased by the great importation from the Dutch Colonies.

It is not, in any degree, occasioned by the growth of a particular cane in the West India Islands? – I do not think it is; it is perhaps increased by the extravagant price Sugar bore some few years ago, which caused an increase in the cultivation; all the best land was in cultivation before, and the high price induced people to take in lands not so well calculated for the production of good Sugar. The new cane has undoubtedly added to the quantity of Sugar made, but it has made no alteration in the quality. I mean
lands which made good Sugars under the old cane, make, where all circumstances are equal, as good Sugar under the new cane; the good and the bad qualities still bear the same proportion to each other; but the additional lands which have been taken into cultivation upon old Plantations make inferior sugar, the best lands having been previously occupied.

Though there might be a loss in the course of the first few years in making a conversion to Cotton and Coffee, by and by might not the Cotton and Coffee Plantation, converted in that manner, make a very good return for the present, and ample amends for the previous losses? – I think not; it would be total ruin to the Planter, in the first instance, who made the change; what might happen in the course of time to the person who bought his Negroes from him, or from his creditors at half price, I cannot say; for sold they must be, if he had not other funds and other means than what arose out of his Plantation.

Wallens and New Works in St Thomas in the Vale, John Blackburn’s two sugar estates, are still commercially cultivated but now oranges as well as sugar are grown.

*My photo, March 2007 – driving south through Wallens to New Works*

John Blackburn (1756-1840), son of Peter Blackburn and Helen, nee Cross, was born in Glasgow.


John Blackburn, merchant in Glasgow, was the son of William Blackburn, who married Margaret Murdoch in 1682. (3) William Blackburn was a merchant in Glasgow, and in the list of the “great company” which “arose undertaking to trade to Virginia, Carriby Islands, Barbadoes, New England, St. Christophers, Monserat, and other colonies in America,” . . .

(3) The Blackburns have been long connected with Glasgow . . .

John Blackburn of Househill, son of William Blackburn and Margaret Murdoch, married Marion Cathcart, and had three sons, viz.: –
I. Andrew, who married Margaret, daughter of Provost Aiton of Glasgow; their eldest daughter married John Wedderburn, and had four children – 1, Andrew Wedderburn Colvile . . .

II. Peter, who married Helen Cross, sister of William Cross of Parkhouse, and John Cross, ancestor of Auchintoshan, and had three daughters . . . and one son, John, who made a fortune in Jamaica, and purchased the estate of Killearn in Stirlingshire. He married Rebecca Leslie Gillies, daughter of the Rev. Colin Gillies of Paisley . . .

III. Hugh . . .

Note – Andrew Wedderburn Colvile (who took the last name Colvile), John Blackburn’s cousin, was a partner in the firm John Wedderburn & Co, London West India merchants.

John Blackburn left Jamaica and retired back to Britain in 1805.

Jamaica National Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica – Sat, 23 Feb 1805, page Sup 11 – Secretary’s Office – Names of Persons intending to leave the Island – 18 Feb – John Blackburn, St Catherine.

In the years leading up to his departure, John Blackburn lived on Farm pen in St Catherine.

Jamaica National Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica – Sat, 24 Sep 1803, page Sup 9

Farm, St Catherine, Dec 8, 1803.

All persons to whom the Estate of James ..uls, Carpenter, late of St Thomas in the Vale, or of William Rule, planter, . . . indebted, will please to render their Demands at the Store of Messrs Bogle, Jopp, & Co . . . John Blackburn, Exor

Farm was the largest of three pens owned by Robert Smith, 1st Baron Carrington. Lord Carrington, an absentee proprietor, was a friend and first cousin of William Wilberforce.

See – https://archive.org/details/historyofbanking00east s – The History of a Banking House (Smith, Payne and Smiths), by Harry Tucker Easton, published 1903

On 22 December 1798 Lord Carrington gave a seven year lease of an undivided moiety of his three pens to John Blackburn and entered into co-partnership with him for the management of the pens – Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series Lib 538, Fol 189 – Indenture, 8 February 1805, Lord Carrington and wife to Samuel Smith – recitals

In 1803 Francis Graham was living on Wallens, and on 1 June 1805 Lord Carrington leased an undivided moiety of his three pens to Francis Graham and entered into partnership with him for the management of the pens. By 24 September 1805 Francis Graham was living on Farm pen.

Jamaica National Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 10 Sep 1803, page 4

Wallens, St Thomas in the Vale, August 24, 1803.

All Persons indebted to the Estate of Thomas Keater, late of this parish, deceased, are requested to make payment to the subscriber; and all those who have Demands against the above Estate will please to send a state of them, to

Francis Graham, Acting Exor.

Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series, Lib 533, Fol 201 – Indenture of Lease, dated 1 June 1805 – summary – Robert Lord Carrington of England by his Attorney William Mitchell of St Catherine, Esq (1) and Francis Graham of St Thomas in the Vale, Esq (2) – Lord Carrington
leased to Francis Graham a moiety undivided in Farm Pen, Cow Park Pen, and Halfway Tree pen, all in the parish of St Catherine, with the slaves belonging to the pens.

Lib 533, Fol 205 – Articles of Agreement and Copartnership, dated 1 June 1805 – summary – Robert Lord Carrington of Great Britain by his Attorney William Mitchell of St Catherine, Esq (1) and Francis Graham of St Thomas in the Vale, Esq (2) – for the term of the lease of Farm, Cow Park, and Halfway Tree pens – the 3 pens to be carried on for the mutual benefit of Lord Carrington and Francis Graham – in Jamaica under the sole management of Francis Graham – all concerns relating to the 3 pens in Great Britain, and supplies from Great Britain and Ireland for the use of the 3 pens, under the sole management of Lord Carrington.

Jamaica National Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 5 Oct 1805, page Sup 11

Sept 24, 1805.

Wanted a Tradesman who is a Wheelwright and House Carpenter that can be well recommended as a sober, industrious, good Workman. For particulars please apply to the subscriber at the Farm, St Catherine.

Francis Graham

Francis Graham owned one sugar estate, Tulloch (or Tulloch Castle), a large estate in St Thomas in the Vale which was surveyed at his and Robert William Harris’ request in 1804, and conveyed to Francis Graham on 15 May 1807.

Jamaica National Library – Maps & Plans – A Plan of Tulloch Castle Estate, St Thos in the Vale, belonging to the Revd Dr George Chandler and Henry Davidson Esqr, Surveyed at the request of Robt Wm Harris and Fras Graham Esqrs in September 1804 by R Fok


For £35,000 + £35,000 current money of Jamaica – George Chandler owner of one moiety and Henry Davidson owner of the other moiety of Tulloch Estate, St Thomas in the Vale, and Tulloch Penn, St Catherine, convey to Francis Graham (in trust) – All that Plantation or Sugar Work called Tulloch Estate with the lands and hereditaments thereto belonging or appertaining, in St Thomas in the Vale, containing by estimation according to a late Survey 1,387 acres, 3 roods and 11 perches more or less – slaves etc – also all that penn or parcel of land in St Catherine called Tulloch Penn of whatever Number of acres of Land the Same may be – slaves, etc

Purchase money to paid in yearly instalments – first instalment 2 x £3,500 on 31 August next – remaining purchase money to carry interest after the rate of 6% per annum – to be secured by the Bond of Francis Graham – to be further secured by the Joint and Several promissory Notes of Robert Bogle, Junior, Andrew Bogle and George Moir all of the City of Kingston, Merchants carrying on business under the firm of Bogle and Moir – and to be further secured, etc. etc etc – Robert William Harris, John Gardener Millward and Nathaniel Marston to hold Tulloch Estate and Pen in trust until the purchase money is fully paid. List of the Slaves conveyed, signed in Jamaica by Rev George Chandler and Henry Davidson’s attorney, to be annexed to the Indenture, or recorded separately in the Island Secretary’s Office.

Lib 573, Fol 41 – Executed in Jamaica, 18 April 1808 – Rev George Chandler & al (1) and Francis Graham (2) – List of 341 Negroes and other Slaves upon Tulloch Plantation and Tulloch Pen – signed by Robert William Harris the attorney in Jamaica of Rev George Chandler and Henry Davidson.
Rev George Chandler (formerly George Gascoyne) was the nephew and residuary devisee of Sarah Chandler who was the residuary devisee of her late husband George Chandler.


George Chandler was a partner with Duncan Davidson in the firm Chandler and Davidson, London West India merchants. Following George Chandler’s death, Duncan’s son Henry Davidson (died 1827) was in partnership with Francis Graham’s uncle Charles Graham (died 1806) of Drynie in the firm Davidson and Graham, London West India merchants. The Davidsons were of Tulloch Castle near Dingwall in northeast Scotland, a few miles northwest of Drynie in the Black Isle.


After Charles Graham died in 1806, Henry Davidson went into partnership with Aeneas Barkly in the firm Davidson, Barkly & Co, London West India merchants. The firm continued after Henry Davidson’s death in 1827, and in the early 1830s Edward was an attorney to Aeneas Barkly – see Chapter 20.

*My photo, March 2007 – Tulloch, St Thomas in the Vale – from the site of the old sugar works looking northwest towards fields of sugar cane*
http://maps.nls.uk/jamaica/index.html – James Robertson’s 1804 maps of the Three Counties of Jamaica – County of Middlesex – Parish of St Thomas in the Vale – section – arrows point to Wallens and New Works – Burtons, south of New Works, was purchased by John Blackburn and added to New Works – arrow points to Tulloch

In the next two chapters I follow Edward, and then return to Eliza in Chapter 8.
CHAPTER 6

EDWARD 1808 to 1810

On 23 January 1808 (the earliest mention I have of Edward in Jamaica) Edward was the overseer of Georgia sugar estate in the parish of St Thomas in the East.

http://www.digjamaica.com/parish_evolution – Jamaica Parishes, 1770-1813 – section – **arrow** points to St Thomas in the East (now part of the parish of St Thomas)

http://maps.nls.uk/jamaica/index.html – James Robertson’s Maps of the Three Counties of Jamaica, published 1804 – County of Surry (or Surrey) – Parish of St Thomas in the East – section, southwest – bottom right, Morant Bay – **arrow** points to Georgia – at the western end of the Blue Mountain Valley
In 1823 the Blue Mountain Valley reminded Cynric R Williams of the valley of Domo D’Ossola – the valley in the Alps on the Italian side of the Simplon.

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=HZBUAAAACAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – A Tour through the island of Jamaica, from the Western to the Eastern End, in the year 1823, by Cynric R Williams, published 1826 – page 263

...the Blue Mountain valley; a scene that reminded me frequently of the valley of Domo d’Ossola, on the south side of the Simplon. Morant River flows through it, receiving a number of tributary streams, all of which turn sugar mills, more or less. The country is very beautiful, green and fresh looking...

As the overseer of Georgia, Edward was employed by Francis Graham (see Chapter 5) who was the attorney to Mrs Rose Milles of Pishobury (or Pishiobury) in Hertfordshire and her daughter Rose. Mrs Rose Milles (1757-1835), a ‘great heiress’, was the sole heir and only child of Edward Gardiner (died 1779) of Pishobury.


“...His [Rev Dr Milles’] son is just married to a great heiress, the daughter of Edward Gardener [sic] of Pishiobury in Hertfordshire... This lady was to have been married to the eldest son of Sir John Cotton, who, through an inherent hauteur and pride, has let her slip out of his hands.”...
Jeremiah Milles (1751-1797) and Rose were married in London in 1780.


Jeremiah Milles died in London in May 1797.


At his house in Harley-street, in his 47th year, after a very severe and tedious illness, Jeremiah Milles, esq of Pishobury, Herts, F.A.S. [Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries] eldest son of the late Dean of Exeter, by Edith his wife, third daughter of the most Rev. John Potter, late Archbishop of Canterbury...

Jeremiah and Rose’s eldest daughter, Rose, married Rowland Alston in London in May 1810.


At Mary-la-bonne Church, by Rev Edward Conyers, Rowland, son of Thomas Altston, Esq. of Odell Castle, Bedfordshire, to Rose, daughter and heiress of the late Jeremiah Milles, Esq., and of Rose Milles, of Pishobury, in the county of Hertford.
Volume I and II of Georgia letter-books (three volumes in the Jamaica National Library) were Francis Graham’s Georgia letter-books. I did not look at these letter-books until visiting Jamaica in November 2009, but I already knew that Edward was for a time the overseer. At the beginning of 2009 Dr Trevor Hope (see Chapter I) very kindly looked at the letter-books for me, and he discovered that Edward was the overseer.

Francis Graham took ‘charge’ of Georgia in October 1805, and in his letter dated 20 October 1805 he described the estate.


... I have taken charge of that Estate, and I now communicate to you the situation I found it in. There is 38 Acres of Plant Canes for Crop 1806, and about 64 Acres of first & second Ratoons, twenty Acres of which are overstands of last Crop. I have examined the above Canes and am sorry to inform you that they are in very bad order, and that there has only been a provision of 16 Acres of fall plant made for Crop 1807 in the place of 45 or 50 Acres and that owing to the Jobbers [hired slaves] not being engaged that it will not be in my power to make any addition for the fall, as Jobbers cannot be had. I found 99 Negroes belonging to the Estate, 12 belonging to Charles Bennett, out of which only 2 can do any work – 10 belonging to Mr Bennett which are very fine Negroes, a Carpenter hired from a Miss Gordon in Kingston, I think that with the assistance of the exchanged land from Coley, a few new Negroes & the Cane holes jobbed, that the Estate is capable of producing 200 Hhds P year. – The Works are in great want of shingles which should be had as soon as possible, as the Timbers in them are as fine as any in the Country. – I think that 1000£ would put the Works in perfect order to take off 200 Hhds P year. – I would advise about 800 Acres of the out lands being sold & the exchange with Coley being confirmed, as these lands can never be of use to the Estate, they will give a fund for improvements, and the land from Coley new Cane pieces. – The Stock are in very bad order & the pastures are grown up in ruinate [scrub].
To change West India Currency into Sterling multiply by 5 and divide by 7
Sterling into Currency multiply by 7 and divide by 5

For many years before Francis Graham took charge of Georgia the estate was in Chancery. On 28 June 1806 Thomas Milles of Lincolns Inn, London (Mrs Rose Milles’ brother in law), wrote to Francis Graham giving him an outline of the huge costs incurred by his sister in law during the time Georgia was in Chancery and their ‘wish to part with it’.

Sir

I have been favoured with a Copy of a Letter from you to Mr Grant, and which I will answer as satisfactorily as I can and I hope intelligibly to yourself.

I am too sensible from all that has passed during the receivership of Mr Mitchell and from a regular attention to the management of the Estate produce &c under him, that you must find difficulties & defects, but I did flatter myself from the report of Mr Blackburn [John Blackburn – see Chapter 5] confirmed by yourself, that the Estate would be productive and under the influence and skill of your Management continue and perhaps Encrease in being so. – Your letter to a degree damps these hopes and I feel it absolutely necessary to apprize you of the situation in which Mrs Milles now holds this Estate, that we may appear quite justified in our earnest wish to part with it, and to secure something in return for the Monies actually out of pocket, besides the original Debt, Interest and for the Anxiety & trouble which we have suffered from a Suit of such long Continuance.

All that was saved from Mr Mitchell’s Receivership & lodged in this Country has been Expended in the Suit and paid over. – Besides 5000£ Sterling which has been Cost out of pocket 2000£ of which will be paid in August.

So that we now hold an Estate worth £20,000 Sterling upon which we may fairly Estimate that we are Creditors for 5000£. If the Estate requires more monies to be laid out to make it productive, that Sum whatever it is, must be added to this Debt – and instead of receiving any value, we shall probably hardly receive the Interest of this Sum. – But if the Estates are sold, the Slaves, Stock, &c sold, whatever may be the result, will be so much in pocket, after the satisfaction of the debt above supposed, and that will be the only return for the demand now Existing, & settled by the Court of Chancery to the Amount of near 27,000£ Sterling – which is nearly the Amount of Mrs Milles’s legal Demand against this Estate. – From this view of it you will readily collect how far short of the demand, even the most beneficial prospect of Sale can afford to Mrs Milles, But if the returns are now small, and will decrease so as to require an additional Sum to be advanced to keep the Estate in Work, you will also collect, how absurd it would be for Mrs Milles to continue such an Estate she living in this Country, and having no other Concern in Jamaica than the Georgia Estate. – A Sale therefore is at all Events desirable not to say necessary. – The next wish of Course is to have as much paid down as can be done; and that the Securities for the remainder should be British and in this Country.

The Price is certainly to be, and must be governed by these Considerations But not so Entirely, as to render a Sale at a very great Loss as to value, necessary.

The outlying, and other parts of the Estate which form no part of the Cultivate or Sugar produce, may at all Events be disposed off – And distance as to time of payment is not of so much Consideration to Mrs Milles as Certainty of payment & Solvency in the Securities given to Ensure it.

I certainly felt much pleased that any Neighbour of the Estate should wish to purchase it, because it might be more valuable to such a person, than to another, who would entirely look to Georgia as an Establishment, & come to it, as such – But in the last Note sent to me and received by a former packet Mr Rodon have only mentioned names, without any description of the Circumstances, Solvency or otherwise of Mr S. and the Securities proposed.

I never would permit Mrs Milles to change the Character of Owner of the Estate for Mortgagee, Except it was for a small remainder of the Sum to be paid or as a Collateral Security for such portion of the price – Because the worst that can happen would be to have the price of the Slaves & Stock leaving the Estate to fetch what it might – And I can have no doubt but for the Slaves & Stock Monies might be paid here; and
the best Securities in the Country given for them – I do not perceive that it would be so, as to the price of Estate and Lands without Slaves or Stock.

Any Communications from you will be gratefully acknowledged because I wish to know the real state of things and not to be misled myself, nor to mislead Mrs Milles in an Object which has already caused her a long & tedious Course of Anxiety and much Expense and trouble. – Mrs Milles sold some years ago a Gang of Negroes for 17,000 or 14,000£ I forget which – Mr Sharpe was the Purchaser and the Monies which were to be paid in 3 years in England were actually paid within one year and a half in London.

I do not mean that we can be sure of so good a Purchaser as Mr Sharpe was. – I was aware of the defect of Canes but I really had no idea of the diminuition of the produce to 60 hogsheads.

I wrote by the last Pacquet about the supplies sent out to Mr Mitchell as Receiver of the Georgia Estate. He can have no right to detain them or to demand any profit or Commission upon them – They were sent out upon the Credit & for the benefit of the Estate, and are attached as such to the Estate, whether in his hands, or in yours for Mrs Milles – for Mr Mitchell was Receiver & Agent for Mrs Milles and not for himself and he has been paid accordingly. – As to the Negroes of Webbs – I have no doubt but in that, as in every other Circumstance, you will Act for the Interest of Mrs Milles, and under the peculiar Circumstances of the Case, with due attention to the Main Object of enabling her at last to replace the Monies she has Expended, and are actually out of her pocket, and to get what she can of the Demand, which has been so long withheld from her by legal Delay & extraordinary Events.


... By 1793 the British Post Office was using ten packet boats to serve the West Indies, five of them on the direct route to Jamaica. The Jamaica packet sailed from Falmouth on the first Wednesday of each month. It called at Barbados but immediately sailed on to Jamaica and returned to Falmouth by the Bahamas (Crooked Island) ...

... These boats took about 42 days from England to Jamaica via Barbados, and 47 days to return to England via the Windward Passage ...


The Georgia crop account for the year 1806 was sworn by Thomas Barker, the overseer, on 28 January 1807 – Jamaica Archives – Records of Crop Accounts, Lib 36, Fol 160
After 28 January 1807 and by 23 January 1808 Edward took over from Thomas Barker as the overseer of Georgia. I continue with Francis Graham’s letters following Edward’s twentieth birthday on 7 October 1807.


We have continued seasonable since my last letter which has improved the Old Canes on the strong Lands but those on old and light Lands will do very little next Crop.

We are about finishing our fall plantation for Crop 1809 and the part of it that is planted has come up well. – From ten to twenty Negroes, we could feed on the Estate with very little extra expense and they would be of great service to the property. – A larger number would not answer at present, as we should be obliged to go to the Kingston Market to feed them for about twelve months. – They would be a kind of property that would increase the value of the Estate in a Year or two a few hundred Pounds more than the First cost besides their Labour.

The season for gathering and curing Tamarinds is about March, April, & May, and at that season I will forward those Mrs Milles wants sent home and the Puncheon of Pine Apple Rum you mention . . .

**Letter, dated Farm 20 November 1807, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles**

Dear Sir

The above is copy of my last letter, since which I have only to add that we continue seasonable.

Having nothing more deserving your notice to say at present. – I remain D Sir –

**Letter, dated Farm 10 December 1807, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles**

. . . We have had no rain since my last which is wanted to assist the young Canes and make the Plants that have not come out of the ground Spring. – A Mr Reed of St Thomas in the East has offered me two prime Slaves for a brown girl and a son of his (twelve months old) by the same girl which for the reasons I shall give you I will accept of. – The two negroes that I will receive will be able people and capable of doing field work, which will be of some service as we are so weak handed. – The two people I am exchanging have never done any work – The Girl is nearly white & can only be made to do something about the Overseers house. The Child being only twelve months old is not worth more than £20 – and if he should grow up he will be so near white that will not be of use to the property – these kind of people are far from being desirable on a Sugar Estate And I hope that you will approve of my Conduct in this business.

We will be about [making sugar] early in January and I hope that the Crop will turn out better than I at One time expected Owing to the dry Weather the Canes are of such mixture of ages that I can make no guess what they will do . . .

**Above – Mr Reed = James Reid, overseer of Coley sugar estate – Jamaica Archives, Records of Crop Accounts – Coley Estate – the brown girl, James Reid’s ‘housekeeper’, was a Quadroon – see Chapter 17.**

Coley crop account for the year 1804 was sworn by James Laing (see Chapter 5), ‘formerly attorney’ in March 1805 – Records of Crop Accounts – Coley Estate

Coley sugar works were on the northeast side of Georgia at the junction of the road to Georgia with the road to Trinity Ville – see map below.

Georgia, described by Francis Graham as a ‘hilly estate’, is in the hills at the far north western end of the Blue Mountain Valley. Sugar is still grown in the Blue Mountain Valley but no sugar has been grown on
Georgia for a long time. The area is now mostly overgrown with a few scattered plots of cultivated ground and Georgia itself is a small settlement.

*Know How road map of Jamaica* – Parish of St Thomas – section – arrow points to the junction of the road to Georgia with the road to Trinity Ville

On 23 January 1808 Edward, the overseer of Georgia, swore the Georgia crop account for the year 1807.
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

My photos – Jamaica Archives – Records of Crop Accounts – Lib 37, Fol 113 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 15 Mar 1808 – Georgia Estate, St Thomas in the East, crop account for year 1807 – sworn by Edward Clouston, Overseer, before John Stewart

[Handwritten text]
Dear Sir

The above is Copy of my last Letter since which I have not received any letter from you which may be owing to the November Packet having been taken to Windward of Barbadoes. – We have had a few Showers since my last, which have enabled us to Supply the young Canes and plant as fast as we can get Tops from the Sugar Cane.

The Slaves have been very Sickly since Xmas with an infectious disorder that has gone all over the Island and at One time we had nearly all the Negroes on Georgia sick, and some of them very ill but thank God we have not lost any and they are now all well, Some properties round Georgia have lost from Ten to Twenty Slaves since New Years Day. Our only loss has been that of Labour – We have only been about a few Days. The Sugar is good but the yielding is very bad. – I write by this Packet for insurance on 30 Hhds to go by the Fleet that is to Sail from here on the 30th April

Your Puncheon of Rum will not be ready to go by that fleet as the Pines [Pineapples] are not in Season – I have the pleasure to remain – Dr Sir yours oblg Sert Fras Graham

N. B. Mr Stewarts £1000 for his second instalment of the Land purchased from Georgia is now due and I expect to receive it in a few days but the Premium is so high 17 ½ P Cnt that I am at a loss wither or not to Remit.

Herewith you will please to receive Copy of my last Letter, since which I have received your Letter of the 30th December. – I observe what you say on the proceeds of Georgia – it was not in my power to make my First Crop Larger as I did not find the Canes on the Property at the time I received it from Mr Mitchell and the 11 Hhds of that Crop left behind were made so late in the Year, in Consequence of the Canes not being fit to Cut that they were bad and we had no Shipping to Ship them home, which induced [me] to try them at the Kingston Market, but their quality would not Answer.

I Shipped 68 Hhds of 1807 Crop, Prince George 30 Hhds, Lively 10 Hhds and Tulloch Castle 28 Hhds. – These Sugars were Superior in quality to any I have observed sold by Mr Mitchell from the estate, but the present prices are not so favourable, for which I am very sorry, but it is not in my power to remedy that...
part of the Concern. – With the Number of Slaves that we have on Georgia at present, it will not be in my power to exceed one Year with the other 120 Hhds, and the Cane holes must be dug for them. – I have this last Year been obliged to Shingle the works to save them from compleat ruin, and to enable us to make the produce in them. – This has been attended with some expence but it Could not be avoided as long as the place was to continue making Sugar. – For next Crop there will be some Cattle & Mules wanted as the Stock now on the place are in general so Old that if they are not assisted a considerable decrease will be the Consequence Ten Mules & Six Steers will be necessary and that number will Cost £640. – I shall not purchase them without your Consent but it is my Duty to inform you of what will be necessary, to carry on the Estate, and of what the Consequences will be if that assistance is not granted. The price of New Negroes is so generally known that it did not occur to me that you would require information on that Subject. New Negroes have sold in 1807 from 90£ to 115£ at present they are at 120£ and in a few weeks there will be none at market. – Seasoned Negroes may be then purchased (able people) at 130£ or 140£ each.

I am not acquainted with the quality of Pine Rum as it is very uncommon thing here but I have desired people I am informed understand making it to put up a Puncheon of the best for you & I hope it will give satisfaction. – We have 40 Hhds of Sugar made at Georgia of a very good quality which I have engaged in the Ship Monarch Capt Kent to go with the April Fleet. – Our yielding is very bad and I fear that the Crop will fall off. – Georgia Account is made up and will be forwarded to you by One of the Ships that are to run about the 15th of this Month. – Mr Stewarts second instalment is ready but I do not consider it prudent to send it home at the Loss of 17½ or 20 P Ct premium (which is the current one at present) without your orders as it will reduce the Sum so Considerably.

It is not in my power to do better, Estates cannot be conducted without considerable Island Contingencies and if the Sugar sent home don’t pay for the English supplies it is not my fault and I wish the remedy was in my hands. – I have the pleasure to remain Your obedient Sert    Fras Graham

Above – Ships that are to run – runners – merchant vessels sailing singly or with one or two others, without a Naval escort.

Letter, dated Farm 12 March 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Herewith you will please to receive Georgia Account for 1807 which I hope you will find Correct – I remain D Sir   Your Obligd Servt

Letter, dated Farm 16 April 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

Herewith you will please to receive Copies of my 2 last letters since which I have not recd any letter from you. – We have had very heavy weather since I wrote you last, which has prevented us from going on with the Crop as fast as I could wish, at the same time the weather has been very much in favor of the Canes for next Crop. – The oldest inhabitants not recollecting such fine seasons at this time of the Year.

We have 65 Hhds of Sugar made of which 40 are Shipped on the Monarch Capt Kent to go with the First fleet. – I shall now send a few Hhds to go with the Kingston market to assist the Rum Crop in paying the Contingencies to the 31 Decr next. – The Premium on Bills continue at 20 P Ct which agreeable to what I wrote you last Prevents me from sending you the Amount of Mr Stewarts second instalment. I have the pleasure to remain &c –

Letter, dated Farm 14 May 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

On the other side you will please to receive Copy of my last letter, & I have now to acknowledge your letter of the first of March. – The weather has been very dry at Georgia till a few days ago that the May seasons set in they will be of great service to the next Crop but against the present one, as the main Roller of the Cattle Mill broke a few days after I wrote you last & we have not been able to put a new one up yet and having only Water for the Water Mill 2 Hours in the day our Crop is not as forward as I could wish. – As it is we have 70 Hhds of Sugar made of a very good quality of which 40 Hhds have been shipped on
the Monarch for London and 25 Hhds have been sent to Kingston to be sold there to meet with the Rum Crop the Island Contingencies

The Carpenters are at present working on the New Roller, and I expect to have it up in a few days when we will go on with the Crop and by next Packet I shall inform you what Sugar I shall be able to Ship from Georgia by the June Fleet.

By the Account I sent you home a short time ago you will see that the produce taken to assist the Rum Crop in 1807 has not been sufficient to meet the Island expenses, and I am sorry that you will be disappointed in your expectation in Credit from that Sugar. – There is still a chance of your being in Credit should the Sugar shipped home 21 Hhds reduced to 19 bring more than they are Credited. – On the Contrary they may increase the balance against the Estate. – Mr Reid has given me Two very fine Slaves for the Girl & Child. I wrote you about . . . before I received your Sanction to make the Exchange the Girl had a second Child & Mr R. has engaged to give me a third Slave for it. I shall now give him a Title for the Girl and the two Children.

I observe what you say regarding Mr Stewart’s money. – I have before wrote you that the Money was ready tho I have not taken it up, as it is on Interest and as the Premium by this Packet has got to 22½ P Cent under which I could not get a Bill it remains until I can get it sent home on more favourable terms, concluding that you would rather wait a little as the Money is at interest than pay so extravagant a Premium. I have the pleasure to remain &c –

Above – Cattle Mill and Water Mill – on James Robertson’s 1804 map only one mill, a Cattle Mill, is marked on Georgia.

*James Robertson’s Maps of the Three Counties of Jamaica, published 1804 – County of Surry (or Surrey) – Parish of St Thomas in the East – section – bottom right, Morant Bay – arrow points to Georgia – at the far end of the Blue Mountain Valley*
Dr Sir

The above is Copy of my last letter since which I have had the pleasure of receiving your letter of the 16th of April.

The May seasons did not Continue long but we have had Showers since to assist vegetation. – We have now got the Mill at work but not without considerable trouble and expence in bringing out of the woods the Main Roller & hiring Carpenters to put the Mill in Order. – I have shipped on the Caesar Captain Fowler 15 Hhds of Sugar being all that we had cured. This Ship will go with the June fleet – Had the Mill not given way in the Middle of Crop all the produce would have gone home in the June Fleet.

I was not sure that I should not be able to ship more than 30 Hhds by the April fleet at the same time I had a Prospect of shipping 40. – Writing you as the Proprietor it was not my wish to lead you to expect more than I was sure I could Ship, but writing your Factors it was my duty to desire them to Cover all the Produce that a fleet put off as that was from April to May might enable me to send away over & above what I promised.

This is the Cause that in February I wrote you that I would ship 30 Hhds by the April fleet and to Messrs Long 40 Hhds which were shipped, & if it had only been 30 Hhds the expence of Extra insurance would have been a trifle.

With regard to Accounts they have been sent you as early in the year as it is possible to make up Sugar Estate Accounts after the first of Jany and on enquiry you will find that Georgia Accs have been transmitted fully as soon as accounts of that nature are.

The Exchange on bills has for many years been settled at 40 P Ct but the premium varies according to times, & it is the high premium that has induced me not to send home Mr Stewarts second instalment – it is now at 20 P Ct for large sums and 22½ for small Ones. I have no prospect that the premium will fall this Year and we have no public papers in this country or any mode of applying that money that I can recommend to you – the Money is at interest and it will remain so until I have your Order to send it home be the premium what it will – Yr &c –

My photos, November 2011 – on the road to Georgia – near the junction with the road to Trinity Ville – looking southeast
Sir

On the other side you will please to receive Copy of my last Letter since which, I have received your Letter of the 4th May, in answer to which I must inform you that the cause of Georgia not having been more productive to the Proprietor is in a great measure owing to the want of Slaves Stock and Machinery to Cultivate the Estate in proper time and take off the Crops as well handed Estates do. – I am obliged even to make the small quantity of produce that we do, to employ hired Labour to dig the Lands to assist in Cultivating the Canes & taking the Crop off, from this arises my being obliged to dispose of part of the Sugar Crop in the Island, was the Estate well handed I could pay the Island Contingencies with the Rum as some other Estates do – but even that Article for the last 2 Years has done nothing, as it has in general sold from only 2/10 to 3/.

The present Lands in Cane Cultivation cannot be made anything else of but pasture – that pasture will require as many Negroes as there is now on the property to Cultivate without hired Labour.

The present Stock would be sold when fat to the Butcher, and the few Mules to the planter, but their value or more must return to the pasture in breeding Cattle, for pasture without Stock will make no returns and after all, it would be but a poor place Capable of very little return, & that not for some time.

Most of the Woodlands of Georgia would grow Coffee. – The present Slaves might settle a small Coffee plantation but the Sugar Estate would not be carried on. The Stock when Sold would assist in buildings as the Sugar ones would not answer for Coffee; and a return would be got 4 Years after planting.

Nothing can be done with the Property, if the Negro Stock are Sold, & as long as the present Prices of Produce Continue no property that is obliged to be partly Cultivated by hired labour can give the Proprietor any thing. – It is not my wish to extend the Cultivation of the Estate and if it was it is not in my power. – The numbers of Stock we have now on the Property are capable of taking the Crop off in 8 or 9 Months, which other Estates do in 4 or 5 & gain the advantage of doing other work and of making dung with their Stock while we are as it were at an Anchor – but it is not so much on this account that I informed you some Cattle would be necessary, it was on Account of saving the Capital which if not assisted will die – in our hands much sooner than they will otherwise do, especially the Mules which are a dead Stock. – It is seldom that less than 6 Steers or 6 Mules are purchased for Sugar Estates, and if they are they can be of no use to the property, their power is not felt & it is so much money thrown away.

I considered that the Expence of Shingling the works last Year which we could not do without would be as much as the Estate could afford, and that this Year it might be assisted with a few Stock. – I shall not
purchase any Stock for some time as they will only be wanted for next Crop, and if I then can do without them you may depend that I will not incur the Expence.

We have made 82 Hhds of Sugar which have been disposed of as follows: 40 Hhds Shipped in the Monarch – 15 Hhds Shipped on the Caesar 25 Hhds sold in Kingston to assist the Rum Crop to pay the Contingencies to 31st December next & 2 Hhds on the Estate. — We have a piece of plant Canes of 13 Acres to Cut which has not been done as we wish to save the tips for the next fall plant.

I find that the Premium on bills home come down from 20 P Ct to 18 P Ct and I am now informed that I may expect in a Packet or two, to purchase Bills at 12½ & 15 P Cent Premium – as soon as this is the Case I will forward Mr Stewarts money – we have had some rains since I wrote you last and the Slaves are healthy –

My photo, November 2011 – road to Georgia – near the junction with the road to Trinity Ville – looking northwest

In Francis Graham’s 29 July 1808 letter, below, he referred to — Davidson, Graham & Co – Henry Davidson who was co-partner with Francis Graham’s uncle Charles Graham (died 1806) – John Blackburn – and Messrs Wedderburns, a London West India merchant firm. John Blackburn’s cousin Andrew Wedderburn (see Chapter 5) was a partner in Messrs Wedderburns.

Georgia letter-book, Vol I – Letter, dated Farm 29 July 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

Herewith you will receive Copy of my last letter since which I have received your two Letters of the 19th May & 3 June which I shall Answer as Correctly as I am able.

You acknowledge that my Letter of the 24th April informs you that I shall be obliged to sell Sugar to meet with the Rum Crop the Contingencies of Georgia, as I had no Orders from you to draw. — I received no Answer to this part of my Letter either by your desiring me, that when the Rum Crop did not meet the Contingencies, that I was to Ship to Messrs Longs all the Sugar, and draw for what Money might be wanted, or to sell the Sugar in the Islands, as far as it might be necessary, & only to draw in Case the Sugar would not Sell. — You will see by the Account I sent you that notwithstanding my having disposed of 39 Hhds of Sugar & 56 Puncheons of Rum that the Estate was in my Debt on the 31 December which shows I did not dispose of to much Produce. — The 21 Hhds of Sugar reduced to 19 Shipped on the
William & Columbus are part of the above 39 Hhds and were Shipped as they could not be Sold in the Island and not Consigned to Messrs Long’s as I had no Orders for their Value, which I did on the People they were Consigned to at the Estimated value, that you see them Credited in my Account. – The Sales of these Sugars have not come out, when they do the Estate will have Credit with me if they Nett more than the Estimated Credit, if on the Contrary it will be Debited.

Having been in the Country since the Packet arrived, I am not prepared to send you Copies of the Vouchers which you shall have by the next Packet and if necessary an Affidavit as to the justness of the Charges. – The Charge of Freight from Morant Bay to Kingston of Sugar, & from Kingston to Morant Bay of Shingles is agreeable to the Laws of the Island for regulating the Water Carriage from Kingston to the Out Ports & from Out Ports to Kingston. – You will see in the Debit of my 1807 Acct a Charge of £28 half Freight of 28 Hhds brought from Morant Bay to Kingston to be shipped on the Tullock Castle as there was no Ship for London at Morant Bay. – The owner of that Ship Messrs Davidson Graham & Co can show you that the Ship paid the other half of the Freight that being the Custom in War time. – The contents of your Letters show me very clear that the Gentlemen whom you consider very conversant in Jamaica transactions are very deficient & it would give me much satisfaction if you was to put my Acct before Messrs Longs if they have time to examine them by other Accts that they must have or before the Messrs Hibberts Messrs Davidson Graham & Co Mr John Blackburn, Henry Wildman or the Messrs Wedderburns these Gentlemen I know have knowledge of the Island and I think would give you an opinion that would make it unnecessary for us to Correspond on the separate Charges of the Annual Amounts.

The Charge for Cooperage is a very just One. The 39 Hhds of Sugar landed at Kingston for Sale had the Heads taken out & the Sugar dug up that Purchasers might see the produce that is sometimes done to a Lot of Sugars three or four different days and never less than Once to Sugars that are sold in Kingston these Sugars are as often Head up New pieces of heading wanting some Hoops & Nails, to do this a Cooper is employed & his Charges is a proper One, as it would not answer to bring a Cooper 40 Miles from the Estate to remain in town to show the produce & what is more he would not know how to do it. In the Charge of Cooperage in that Acct Cooperage of 56 Puncheons of Rum is included. – The Law of the Island obliges every Land holder to pay Tax for all the Land he possesses either in or out of Cultivation. – There is no Breeding Cattle Sheep or timber (that can be got at) on the Estate if there was & Sales had been made you cannot doubt that the Estate would have Credit for the Sales.

I have wrote you the quantity of Cattle that would be necessary to carry on the Estate, as to breeding Cattle none can be put on that property at Present as there is only Grass for the working Stock & to make pastures for breeders it must be done by hired Labour as the Slaves now on the Property are not even Capable of the present Cultivation.

The Monies arising from the Sale of the Land to Mr Stewart you know are Currency & it is you that is to decide whether it is best for you to get that money home at the Charge of from 12½ to 17½ PCt Premium or to invest it here & receive so much more Sugar at home. – The interest Acct is a very regular Account with people in my line & the Balance is not deserving the making out the Account at Large, it will be done for your satisfaction. – The list of the Negroes & Stock will be sent with the other papers you require.

I cannot Barter Rum to advantage at Morant Bay for Supplies, or can I pay Accounts with it the same is the Case in Kingston, & the Gentlemen that recommended Bartering Rum in the South Side of the Island know nothing of the business, all provisions are purchased with Cash & some of the Lumber in consequence of the Cash being paid down is got from £5 to 6 P tn Cheaper. – The Sugar & Rum are Sold for what the Merchant names Cash which is three Months Credit and sometimes the money is not got when due, I had no money in my hands belonging to Georgia to pay Mr Mitchell’s English balance & I had no Order to draw, owing to this Bill of Lading went with the Bill – The £91 16 1 paid for the hire of Webbs Negroes up to the time that I objected continuing them at the hire of 92£ a Year will be explained to you by a Copy of the Voucher.

We have been very seasonable since I wrote to you last & nothing having occurred at Georgia deserving your Notice, I have only to add that for the want of a Ship at Morant Bay for London by the July fleet & no Drogers going down from that part to Kingston, that your Puncheon of Pine Rum is left behind which will be forwarded by the first Ship –

Above – Drogers (or Drogers) – vessels carrying cargo around the coast
Letter, dated Farm 30 July 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

I have just been able to get your Puncheon of Pine Rum Shipped on the Ship Kingston Capt B..t.. for London to go with the July fleet Bill of Lading is forwarded by the Ship Enclosed you will be pleased to receive List of Supplies for Georgia for the Year 1809

My photo, November 2011 – road to Georgia – distant hills – the southwest boundary of the old estate

Georgia letter-book, Vol I – Letter, dated Farm 9 September 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dear Sir

Herewith you will please to receive Copies of my two last letters since which I have not received any Letter from you. – We continue very seasonable and the Canes promise a good Crop. – The slaves are healthy & the Stock are in working Order. – We are at present making Sugar, which is much better than I expected at this time of the Year. And we are planting the fall plant for Crop 1810 from the Tops of the Sugar Cane. Your Money continues at interest (as the Premium on Bills is 17½ Pct) until you desire that it shall be sent home be the Premium what it will be or that I shall use it for the Contingencies of the Property and Ship home the produce that would be sold in the Country to meet that Sum.

Herewith you will find a Copy of the Account I sent you some time ago for the year 1807 made out by the Vouchers and the interest to the different Sums – I remain D Sir – Fras Graham

In 1808 Thomas Milles was increasingly critical of Francis Graham’s management and in two letters written in July and August 1808 Thomas Milles’ displeasure boiled over.

Letter, dated Lincolns Inn 16 July 1808, from Thomas Milles to Francis Graham

Dr Sir

You will Collect from the Letter written to you, our Determination that no Sugars should upon any Account be shipped or Consigned to any house but that of Messrs Long’s in London and really it appears singular that under the arrangements made of the reserve for Contingences and Shipping for other places.
so that in no possibility can Mrs Milles derive any Profit whatever from an Estate producing 100 Hogsheads of Sugar as the Contingences are stated to have Engrossed besides the Rum, which is usually Considered as an Equivalent to the Contingencies – 18 Hhds sold at Kingston & 21 reduced to 19 sent Elsewhere – making in the whole 37 Hogsheads – to be added to the Rum & to produce a balancing Result to the Estate.  

I must Express a sanguine hope that the Contents of my letter, will be duly Considered and the particular Observations answered. 

As to Mr Stewarts Money, it had better continue at Interest there, than pay so Enormous a Premium for a Bill.  

I shall be able to write more fully by the September Mail, as you have not stated what is to be the Shipment in June – And out of the 70 Hogsheads made, you have reserved 25 shipping only 40 – which at an Average of £15 Nett would give to Mrs Milles £600 – not enough to satisfy the Stores &c from Messrs Long’s & his Orders. – This will never do – and from the Quality of the Sugar, and the Circumstances of the Estate, very well known to some persons here – the Result does appear most Extraordinary – Your ….. T M

Letter, dated Lincoln’s Inn 4 August 1808, from Thomas Milles to Francis Graham

Mr Graham

I have not received any letter from you (since my last). I find that 40 Hhds are arrived by the Monarch with Notice to Mr Long of more by the June fleet. – You have not as yet instructed Mr Long of the numbers of Hhds – or when they are to come

I really feel much concerned that I should have been oblidged to notice the sending 21 Hhds reduced to 19 to other Places than Messrs Longs – but it was wholly unauthorized as well as unexpected – & the Result as you say, may be, that the produce may be far short of your Estimate upon which you charge the Commission and no Vouchers on Account from either Place have been forwarded to me altho’ we are now arrived at the Month of August 1808.

I shall hope you will transmit to me a correct statement of what Beasts &c you think necessary and advantageous to the Estate for it is remarkable that such an Estate of such produce as this is should afford so small a Result of profit – and therefore it is most incumbent on us all who are concerned for it, to see and provide how it may be administered to greater Advantage. – I have suggested many hints upon the Expenses Charges &c to which I refer you & upon which I have no doubt, you will give the Earliest Explanation . . . 

In reply Francis Graham ended his 14 October 1808 letter – ‘it may be better for all Parties that you should name some Person in my place’.

Letter, dated Farm 14 October 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Sir

On the other side you will find Copy of my last letter, the Packet arrived a few days ago & by her I received your letters of the 16 July – 4 August & Duplicate of your letter of the 2nd June.

Your letter of the 16 July only requires that I should say something on the Conclusion of it, the other part being Answered by my former letters. – You conclude your letter as follows – “from the quality of the Sugars and the Circumstances of the Estate very well known to some persons here the Result does appear most Extraordinary” – What you mean to Convey by that part of your letter, I cannot Comprehend. I flatter myself that you don’t entertain an Idea that Georgia has not been as productive as the nature of the powers attached to it would allow – that I have managed the Estate with the greatest economy possible, and that my Accounts are just – As it is in my Power to prove what my Accounts are, I shall put them with the Vouchers before two Masters in Chancery who understand the usage of the Island fully as well as the gentlemen that has given you their sentiments at home, and I shall abide by their Report.  

I have not received the Sales of the Sugars that I sent home, as soon as I do, they shall be forwarded to you. – I wrote you some time ago what Beasts would be necessary to meet the present power of the Slaves on Georgia, and preserve the Stock on hand to which I beg to refer you. – I observe what you say as to Mr Stewarts money. – I have 10 Hhds of Sugar made on the Estate which I have been prevented from sending to the Wharf in consequence of the very Heavy weather we have had for some time, having made the
Roads impassable – we are to have no Fleet till 1809 – but as we have some Ships in Kingston that intend to run home next month I shall ship them on One of them. – I have no Orders to Ship on Runners, but I consider that it is for the interest of the Concern to send the Sugar home now, in the place of March or April next.

From the Correspondence that has existed between us for some Months I find it very unpleasant to represent you here & it may be better for all Parties that you should name some Person in my place

I remain &c – F Graham

Francis Graham received a reply to his 14 October letter in the early part of 1809 – see below.

*Letter, dated Farm 16 November 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles*

Sir

On the other side you will please to receive Copy of my last letter since which I have not received any letters from you.

We have continued seasonable and the Cultivation at Georgia is as forward as the nature of the power could possibly allow. – I have not been able to ship the 10 Hogsheads of Sugar.

The lowest Premium on Bills by this Packet I understand is 20 Pct – Having nothing more deserving your notice to add at Present – I remain &c &c

*Letter, dated Farm 9 December 1808, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles*

The above is Copy of my last letter since which I have received Mr Bartlett’s letters of the 8th Decr [September] and 5th October. – As I have not received the Sales of 19 Hhds of Sugar shipped to Liverpool & Dublin and Mr Bartletts letters show some Anxiety for the Knowledge of the Persons they were shipped to I take the liberty of enclosing the Bills of Lading . . .

For the year 1808, Edward was paid £172 12s. 1d. – salary plus expenses – see below 31 July 1810 letter, Thomas Milles to Francis Graham

*My photo, November 2011 – Georgia – looking southwest*

On 24 January 1809 Edward swore the Georgia crop account for the year 1808.
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810


<table>
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<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
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<td>13 232 1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>25 333 30 352 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2 227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remaining at the plantation</td>
<td>1 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36 650 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Above – Delivered Blue Mountain Estate for a puncheon of Pine Rum sent from thence to T Mills (Thomas Milles).

Francis Graham and James Laing were joint attorneys to William Philip Perrin (see Chapter 5) absentee owner of Blue Mountain Estate in the Blue Mountain Valley

Below – Georgia crop account for the year 1808 continued
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

My photo, November 2011 – Georgia – looking north towards the Blue Mountains
Sir

On the other side you will please to receive Copy of my last Letter since which we have been seasonable at Georgia & the Mill has been about. – You can make insurance by the First Fleet on the Ship Monarch from Morant Bay for 60 Hhds of Sugar including 10 Hhds of last Crop. – The Sugars are good and the yielding is not bad. – The supplies for the Estate have arrived on the Ship Monarch and are now landing. – I expect to be able to sell 200 Acres of the Wood Lands in a short time on the Old Terms. I have sold Two hundred Pounds worth of Timber since I wrote you last. – Your Accounts are now making up & will be forwarded by the first running ship: the Premium on bills by this Packet is 15 Pct – I am Sir &c –

After writing on 11 February 1809, Francis Graham received two letters from Thomas Milles. In both letters he mentions Francis Graham’s 14 October letter (see above). In the first letter, dated 21 December 1808, Thomas Milles’ wrote – ‘I meant no offence, much less any imputation on your management . . . I am most highly gratified in Your management’.

Dear Sir

I am favoured with yours of the 14th October in which you notify shipping 10 Hhds on board a running Ship in November, which I much approve, and orders are given to Insure according to your instructions which Mr Long has received. I am also much gratified in hearing the good report of the Progress in the Estate as to the Crop to come, and as the Sugars have risen in price here, I hope our concern will bear a far more flattering appearance & promise. I am much concerned indeed at the impression which my letters & the correspondence between us seems to have made upon you, & I am much pleased with the candour with which you express that feeling, as it gives me an opportunity of fully explaining myself which will I trust prove highly satisfactory to yourself. I had been so long & so much harassed by the expence, delay, & anxiety of the Suit, by the enormous charges of the Law, by the very wretched management as it appeared to me of the late Receiver, that I confess, I never could think of the Estate with ease of mind or pleasure, until you came to manage it. – Since that time the total failure in the price of Sugar here, the anxiety of my Sister & Niece whose Estate it is, to sell, or to have done with it, have frequently induced me to write despondently & feel alarmed at the load which still oppresses the concern. – Money also was to be advanced to satisfy the Balance due, & the 3000£ produced by the Sale of the Land would hardly cover the monies advanced, whilst the Income failed, and the Contingencies not only exhausted the Rum but 39 Hhds of Sugar out of the Number made upon it. I will therefore request you to impute those letters to my anxiety to be informed if possible so as to judge & to correspond sensibly with you & that motive led me to converse with those Persons who were upon the Spot, and whose answers, I most fairly and fully reported to you – I meant no offence, much less any imputation upon your management or conduct & believe me, I shall feel the most sensible mortification, should I fail in convincing you that I am most highly gratified in Your management of the concern & expressed myself so to your friend Mr Cuthbert (whom I met at Lord Braybrookes) and how much oblidged I felt for your candid, full and satisfactory manner of answering my questions & doubts which arose naturally from the state of ignorance . . . as to the detail of managing such concerns. I assured him of the confidence which we all place in you and the obligation we owed to Mr Blackburn for his having recommended to us so able a man. – We are in hopes of seeing Mr Cuthbert . . . on his return from Norfolk, to London. I think it best for you to apply the 1000£ and interest to the objects which may call for monies in the Island, and so to enable yourself to transmit more Sugar to this country. The next instalment will be payable in April, as to the Liverpool and Dublin business, could I know the names of the Firm to which the Sugars were consigned, I should be able to satisfy myself of the net Produce by . . . of friends resident in those places.
I have been for three weeks travelling to different Places and have had no opportunity of seeing your Accounts, to which you allude, and my Clerk has received. I trust also you will …… my corresponding as I have of late done by my Clerk because being in Ireland and on Journeys would not encrease the hazard or expense of Postage, and I had not the letters before me to read. The last is so far my case at present, but ……. I had no motive or intention to reprove or accuse, I can venture to write upon that subject with confidence and I hope with satisfaction to you. Mr Cuthbert seemed to think that Mules might be Purchased at a cheaper rate since the communication with the Spaniards, & if so, as the duration of that is uncertain Perhaps it would be right for you to take the earliest & best advantage of it.

I will desire you to accept from Mrs Milles her family & myself for yourself & all yours the best wishes of the Season & for your prosperity – Your …. Faithfully

P. S. The hundred Acres having been sold to Mr Stewart the Tax should only be charged at Twelve Thousand.

Above – Mr Cuthbert – George Cuthbert (son of Lewis Cuthbert – see Chapter 4) was joint attorney with Francis Graham to the Earl of Harewood – see Chapter 8.

Letter, dated 1809 (late January or early February) Thomas Milles to Francis Graham

Dr Sir

You will (I hope) have received my letter of the 21st December in which I stated to you the Motives which had operated upon my Mind with respect to the Management & results of the produce of Georgia Plantation – And I trust in so doing I have given to you perfect satisfaction as to the suspicions you seemed to entertain of my former Letters. – It was in the Course of business for me to consult with Persons conversant with the Management of Estates because my own Knowledge afforded me little information, and as your reports from time to time were merely as to Produce Consignments &c Until the Statement of the Contingencies was Presented I could not be supplied with means to consider of, or to discuss the result of the Produce & Profits of the Georgia Estate. Upon general Principles that the Rum was to supply the Contingencies, I naturally felt some surprise at the application of a third at least of the Produce of Sugars to make up the Amount and then a Balance resulting against the Estate of 161£ or some such sum. – The Consignment to Dublin & Liverpool opened (as appears) a new Account and not capable of liquidation for some time. – Upon my accidental tour to Ireland I found it impossible to trace the Consignment, and you have Enabled me by the Bill of Lading to do it.

The result of that Enquiry has been that Mr Lindsay knows nothing of you, or of the Estate, but has received the Sugars from another Quarter or Agent, and his Account is with them & not with you or with Mrs Milles, & of course he declines giving any result or statement of Account to me, with whom or with you he is not at all acquainted.

If this is so, it appears to me that the Sugar was sold to the Consignor in Jamaica, and should be carried to account as a Sale of Sugars as between you and him, and as between you and Mrs Milles in the same manner as the Sale of Sugars within a few days of the Consignment is stated in your Account This would make a very short and easy account – and no possible confusion as to the Produce of the Sugars in the hands of the Dublin Consignee, who had nothing to do with your Account or with the Account between you and Mrs Milles.

This is the view in which this transaction Presents itself to me, Perhaps Erroneously, and I apprehend the same circumstances govern the Liverpool Consignment.–

I suppose you will have forwarded the Acct for the Year 1808 and I shall give it every possible attention. – I am happy to acquaint you that the Prohibition of Distillation from Corn is likely to continue and the Statute of the last Year to be Continued to its full Extent as to both Countries England and Ireland.

The price of the Sugars will of Course continue and will encourage the Planter in his Industry and the Owner in his fair hopes of receiving some return from the Labour & Ex pense of his Cultivation – Your &c

On 14 April 1809, in reply to Thomas Milles’ 21 December 1808 and early 1809 letters above, Francis Graham wrote – ‘I shall drop what is past with a sincere wish that I may continue to merit your good wishes & approbation’.
**Letter, dated Farm 14 April 1809, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles**

Dr Sir

On the other side you will please to receive Copies of my two last letters since which I have had the pleasure of receiving your two Letters one of the 21 Decr & the other without date which I suppose to be of late in January or early in Febry. – We have been without any rains since I wrote you last until a few days ago which has injured the young Canes & will oblige us to supply them. The Old Canes have suffered & the Sprouts from the Ratoons have not sprung so well as I could wish, but the present rains have come in time to save them. – We have now made 90 Hhds Sugar and the Crop will be something better than 100 Hhds. I have shipped on the Monarch 52 Hhds of New Sugar. – The 10 Hhds old Sugar that I wrote you I wanted to Ship last year but was disappointed in Shipping have been at the Wharf ever since & have been repacked to 8 Hhds which makes the Shipment on that above Ship 60 Hhds. –

I have engaged on the Ship Caesar 10 Hhds that Ship is to run from here about the 15 May & I have wrote Mr Long respecting insurance. – The Fleet will go from the Island on the 10th May. Shipping are very scarce but I have no doubt that I shall be able to ship the rest of the Crop in the Second fleet. – I think that the Sugars are better this year than they have been and I hope they may prove so at home. – We shall make what is Considered a good Rum Crop & as that Article has been at 5' it will go a long way in the Contingencies of this year. – At present it is down to 4/6 but even that is a good price. – Since I wrote you I have sold a Mr Logan the Representative of one of Henry Davidsons estates of the House of Davidsons Graham & Co of London Two hundred acres of the useless Land at £10 P Acre – one third payd down and the rest in two instalments of One & Two years. A few days ago I received a letter from Mr Logan wishing to know what deduction I would make if he payd the whole sum down in a Bill of Exchange at the present Exchange & Premium both of which amount to 55 P Ct 40 for the One & 15 for the other. – My Answer to him was that as the present premium was so high that I could only discount the interest from the principal of the two instalments – to this I have had no Answer but the business will be settled either in one way or the other. – I have at the same time sold Mr Grant 130 Acres of the same Lands on the terms of £10 P Acre. One third down & the rest in one & two years – Both these sales are made to good people of which there can be no doubt and I shall have Securities. – The prices as times go are good and the terms are favourable & I hope the above transactions will meet with your approbation. – Nothing could give me more Satisfaction than to find by your last letters that you was satisfyed with my management of your Concerns & that my Conduct had given you no cause of displeasure, and here I shall drop what is past with a sincere wish that I may continue to merit your good wishes & approbation requesting at the same time that you will in every instance that you may be at a loss to call for an explanation –

I shall apply the 1000£ to the use of the estate and ship all the Sugars. – The Rum Crop with the above sum I hope will meet every thing to the 31st Decr next. – The next instalment is at interest & will be sent home as soon as Premium falls or sooner if you desire it – am I to do the same with the Monies for the Lands now sold or send them home at any Premium. – I think that as considerable Remittances have been made from this Country in produce this year that Bills will be low about Augt & Sept when the planters want money to pay their annual Accounts. – Mules notwithstanding the Spanish peace have been Scarce, as soon as I can find them reasonable I will purchase a few. –

The Taxes for the Land shall be examined and rectified in last years account. – It was owing to my neglect that the Tamarinds were not sent as they were made & when I received your letter I found them on the Estate. I have given Orders for fresh ones to be made & I shall be more carefull in future. – I am very sorry for the neglect in the direction of my letter & care shall be taken hereafter on that subject. – My Accounts for last Year are made up & will be forwarded by the first opportunity. When you are otherwise engaged I shall be happy to receive ….. or any other person that you may direct to do this ….  

Above – useless land – sold Mr Grant 130 Acres of the same Lands – later in April the 130 acres was amended to 109 and then to 139 acres – see below.

Mr Grant – Lewis Grant of Holliday Hill, a plantation on the northwest side of Georgia – sold 10 of the 139 acres to Edward and 20 to James Reid
National Library of Jamaica – Maps and Plans – ST. T. 445 – Plan headed – Lewis Grant to James Reid, dated 13 April 1809 – 20 acres of land, St Thomas in the East – below the 20 acres – Part of the Same Land (10 acres) Surveyed for Mr Clouston

Jamaica ss

The above diagram represents 20 ac: part of one hundred & 39 acres of Land. Sold to Lewis Grant Esq by the Atty of Georgia Estate, in the Parish of Saint Thomas ye East. Intended to be conveyed by the said Lewis Grant Esq to Mr James Reid, butting and bounding Easterly on Georgia Estate, Westerly on Cowards ridge next Windsor Castle Estate, Southerly on part of the Same Land Sold Mr Edward Clouston, and North on the remaining part of the Same Land – Surveyed by desire of L Grant Esq 13 April 1809 – Vera Copia – Rodney S P Hodgson

Note – the plan, above, was found for me in late 2008 by Marsha Hall, a student of Professor Verene Shepherd, University of the West Indies at Mona, Jamaica. As Marsha was busy with her own studies, she had little time to do any searching for me, but the plan led me on to suspect that Edward might have had some connection with Georgia – and then Trevor (see above) looked at the Georgia letter-books for me.

In September 1812, after Lewis Grant had paid the three instalments for the 139 acres of Georgia land, he conveyed the 20 acres to James Reid, and the 10 acres to Edward Clouston – see Chapter 7.
Dr Sir

Herewith you will please to receive Georgia Acct for 1808 which I hope you will find correct. – I have requested Mr Neufville a Passenger in the Packet to take this under his care & to forward it as soon as he arrives in England – I have the pleasure &c &c

Letters, dated Farm 28 April 1809, two letters from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dear Sir

The above is Copy of my last Letter & I have now to acknowledge your Letter of the 1st March. We have had rains since my last Accounts to you. I have not been able to make any more engagements for Shipping of the produce as we have no Ships for London at Morant Bay that are not fully engaged. – The Consignments of Sugar to Dublin you will observe by the bill of Lading was made on Acct and risk of Georgia Estate. The Sugars were Consigned by my Factors in Kingston to their Correspondent in Dublin owing to Our having received Accounts here that that Market at that period was better than the English Markets. – People in my Situation are oblidged to have Factors in Kingston to transact a certain part of their business & nothing is more Common than those Factors advancing money on Produce which they Ship to their Correspondents at home & allow a certain sum P Hhds or Puncheon to carry on the business of the Estate till the account sales are received when the property either Debited or Credited. – You will see by the accounts that an Estimate value is Credited the estate for those Sugars. – I shall now make the business short by enclosing an Order for the Account Sales to be delivered you at home. – Mr Cuthbert is arrived here & I have had some Conversation with him respecting what you mention in your Letters of him. – Owing to the general want of Shipping there is no demand for Rum in Our Markets at present. – The Land sold a few days ago to Lewis Grant only amounts to 109 acres. I shall receive in a few days the one third value of it at £10 P Acre. The Land sold Mr Logan for Mr Davidson is 200 Acres at £10 from which I have deducted the interest of the 2 last Instalments & I am to receive the Money in a day or two which will be 1880£ Currency. I shall put this & Grants Money at Interest as soon as I receive it & I expect your Orders what I am to do with it & Stewarts . . .

Dr Sir

The above is Copy As the Packet that was to have sailed on the 15th inst is postponed I take the opportunity of the Ship Caesar to write to you as I shall be in the Country at the Sailing of the Packet We have continued seasonable, but I have not been able to find any room for London at Morant Bay, & I fear that I shall have to Drogge the Sugars to Kingston – for some Ship there by the June fleet. – We will finish Crop before I write you again & then I shall inform you what we shall ship & in what Ships. The Surveyor had made his Diagram of the Land Sold to Mr Grant only 109 acres but on examining his field Notes he had made a mistake of 30 Acres and the Land sold is 139 Acres & I have received £463. 6. 8 being the one third of the Value – I have not Purchased any Mules as they are high and we shall be able to do without them until Sept or October when they must be got so as to be seasoned before Crop. – I have nothing more deserving your Notice to say at present & am &c &c &c

Letter, dated Farm 10 June 1809, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

Since writing you on the 12th May by the Ship Caesar, I have received your letter of the 1st April. – We have finished Crop at Georgia & made 103 Hhds of Sugar, since writing to you last, I requested of Mr Long by the running ship Comet & Willerby to Consult you for insurance on 20 Hhds of Georgia Sugar that I have engaged room for on the Ship Neva Capt Watson to sail with the June Fleet. – We are seasonable at Georgia & the slaves are healthy. – The Stock in consequence of many of them being very old & but few to do the work of the plantation are not in the good condition that I could wish them but as they will have a rest now they will I hope be in good order. – I am sorry for the account you give me of the Puncheon of Pine Rum I sent you, it is not in my Power to say if the Rum was of a good quality when shipped as I have never tasted of Rum of that Kind and I had some difficulty in finding an Old Woman on one of Mr Perrins estates, that I was informed understood
how to make that Kind of Pine Rum here. The Rum was proof Rum from Georgia but owing to the quantity of hot water (being an ingredient necessary to make Pine rum) & the room that the Pines must have taken in the Puncheon, it could not be expected that the Rum would be shipped as Proof rum or that it would sell in the market as such or as Rum of good flavour for it must have had a very different taste from common Rum & not very unlikely a taste that common Purchasers or the Agents that received it are much accustomed to. – Respecting the Cask I assure you that it was a very good one when it went from here this is a fact within my Knowledge & if it did not get home in good Order, it must have been abused on board of Ship, or what is more likely the Officers or the crew of the ship were better acquainted with the taste of Pine Rum than those that have made the Report of its quality at home – in this transaction I acted for the best & I have no person here that I can call on for redress & if I had it would not be granted as the article arrived according to the quality ordered and of the best that it was in my power to get made. I am very much disappointed in this business as I considered that you ordered the Rum for your own use & it would be satisfactory to me if you would order a sample of it for your own inspection. –

All the Monies due for the sale of Lands have been received but in placing the last sums at interest they would not be received unless I gave a Notice of three Months Previous to drawing for them which I have agreed to sooner than that the money should lay here idle. – Premium of bills is at, for bills of any doubt 12½ Pct for what is considered the best drawers 15 Pct. Mules continue very high & Cattle have taken a considerable rise. – I hope that you will approve of the quality of Georgia Sugars this year good as I think they have been better than customary. – Herewith you will please to receive a receipt for two Kegs of Tamarinds shipped on the Ship Comet for your name & direction is written on a Card to each of the Kegs.

Above – Old Woman on one of Mr Perrins estates – William Philp Perrin’s Blue Mountain estate

James Robertson’s 1804 Maps of the Thee Counties of Jamaica – St Thomas in the East – section – top left, Georgia – arrow points to Blue Mountain estate – left of Blue Mountain estate – Petersfield estate – (see Chapter 3 – East View of Petersfield and North View of Petersfield)

Georgia letter-book, Vol I – Letter, dated Farm 10 August 1809, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dear Sir

Business in a distant part of the Island Prevented me from writing you by the last Packet which I hope you will excuse. – I have now to acknowledge your letters of the 2nd & 31st of May for which I am much obliged to you.
We are seasonable at Georgia & the preparations for the fall plant are going on to my satisfaction, I am very sorry that the Captn of the Neva shut your 20 Hhds sugar out, he did the same to other sugars that I had to ship on him & to other Shippers. We have not a single Ship Loading in the South side of the Island for London and God Knows if we will be able to get the rest of the Crop away from here before the first Fleet in 1810... indeed if we dont pay higher freight for our goods I fear that we will be deserted by the Ship Owners. – I have now 41 Hhds of your Sugar on the Wharf it is true that it is in a Store, but after being there so long the Casks must be repacked & the number of hogsheads diminished. Mules & Cattle continue high in price which has prevented from purchasing a few.

From your letter of the 2 May I expected to have received positive orders from you in your next Letter as to what I was to do with your Monies here at Interest, in this I have been disappointed as your letter of the 31st May only mentions on that Subject that Premium on Bills might be low in August & September agreeable to what I wrote you. – The premium by this Packet is from 12½ to 10 Pct & I have no doubt that it will be about the same by the Septr Packet. I hope by that Packet, I shall receive directions from you what I am to do, that is what Premium I am to give. I am anxious to get your Money out of this Country; and agreeable to former years Premiums rise after Septr.

I am sorry to inform you that we have no demand for Rum owing to the want of Ships to take it away & the few Puncheons that are made use of about the towns are only bringing 3/9 P Gallon. – We expected that the Americans would have taken a very considerable quantity of the Article from us but they will not even give the above price in exchange for their Commodities which are not as reasonable as we might expect from the large quantities imported in Consequence of our not Knowing if the affairs between America & England are Settled. – I return you my best thanks for the very pleasing & satisfactory information you give me of Mrs Milles your Niece & yourself being satisfied with my Conduct & I beg that you will be so Oblidging as to return my most grateful thanks to the Ladies. – I have nothing new or deserving your consideration to inform you of in return for your very obliging account of the Prospects of the price of our produce & the affairs of the Continent. – Georgia Slaves are healthy & the Stock tho’ not in high Order are in general in as good a Condition as their very Old Age will allow or can be expected, & I fear that if we dont sell a few old Steers every Year that they will die on our hands which will be a total loss, whereas if they are sold the little we get for them will go so far as assisting to purchase young Ones – I am &c.

Letter, dated Farm 8 September 1809, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

On the other side you will Please to receive Copy of my last letter. I have now to acknowledge your letter of the 8th July. – Since I wrote you last we have been rather dry at Georgia which has been rather against the young Canes. – I am very sorry to inform you that on the 2nd instant we had Georgia Trash house full of Trash burnt down owing as we all think to some Negro going to thief Trash to make use of in the negroe houses, and was carelessly smoking a pipe. – The house was new and had cost about £50 of the Estate negroe labour to build it. – The loss of the house is not great but we shall feel the want of the Trash in Crop time. – The Slaves were very active and all the rest of the buildings were preserved. – I find that Georgia buildings are decaying very fast – The wooden Gutter that Conveys the water to the Mill is completely rotten. – As we have timbers of our Own, I have engaged a pair of Sawyers at £60 P Year to get the timber, that is required, & when it is got the Estates People will be able to make the Gutter.

The mason work of the Dam that contains the water for the Mill is in very bad Order as we now loose nearly one half of the water. – This will require some mason Labour & it must be hired as we have no Masons belonging to the Estate. – The Rum Still is in so bad a condition that it cannot be mended & we must take off the next Rum Crop with the Low Wine Still which will be against the quantity made, and as it must take more time there will be a considerable loss in the Sweets. – A Rum Still of about 400 Gallons must be got, & as a new One from home would be very expensive I think that you should Order me to Purchase a Second hand One in the Island which I think my be got for little more than the Value of Old Copper. The Old Still should be cut up & sent home which will sell as old Copper for something. – The low Wine Still must be hung new before next Crop, as it has not got nearly to the ground.

On looking Over the plats & Patents of Georgia Lands I find that we have been correct in paying Taxes for 1500 Acres of Land after deducting the 300 Acres Sold Mr Stewart as the Property contained 1800 Acres as follows – 1000 Acres patented by Henry Coward 600 Acres patented by Thomas Tisdale & 200 Acres part of 300 Acres formerly patented by Samuel Smith afterwards taken up under the Quit Rent Law.
by Robt Grant and divided between him and Georgia the Proportion allotted to the latter having since been found to contain 200 acres. – Your Stock are growing so Old that if some assistance is not given before Crop I fear that there will be a considerable loss. – Six of the Old and worthless Mules that have done no work for some time have died this year, & five of the Old Steers. – I have drawn Off from the rest of the Stock Six Steers & 3 Cows to be sold which are of no use to the Estate – and if they are worked we will loose them. – I hope you will see the necessity of purchasing 10 Steers and 10 Mules: which at the present prices will Cost about £600 Currency. Sugar Plantations cannot afford these heavy Contingencies at present but they cannot be carried on without them – I am sorry that you dont understand my accounts or rather that they are not so made out as to prevent you trouble. If you will examine my account to the 31st Decr 1807 you will find that the Crop of that year was 107 Hhds of Sugar which are accounted in that account, & that I Shipped that year exclusive of the above 13 Hhds reduced to 11 of Crop 1806 agreeable to the above I had no Sugar of Crop 1807 to ship in 1808 as stated ……… Hhds of the 85 Shipped in 1808 were of Crop 1807. By my account for 1808 you will see that the Crop was 89 Hhds of Sugar reduced to 85 Hhds & are accounted for in that account with this difference that the 9 Hhds On the Monarch were Shipped in May 1809 and reduced to 8 Hhds.

If the Crop was small my Correspondence with you respecting it must have long ago informed you of the cause, & I must here add that whatever your expectations as to quantity of produce may be I assure it cannot be much increased with the Present means. – Business is not so regularly done in the Country as it is at home, & sometimes it is not in our power to get accounts regularly rendered. – The Charge of £50 for Survey in 1806 is Correct & in the first place to be paid by you as the employer of the Surveyor. – Mr Stewart has settled the One half of the Charge which will appear in your next Account – with his last payment Respecting the repairs, I wrote you a long time ago. – The charges are customary & if they had not been done you would not have now works to take off the Crop with – I assure you that very little has been done, & very much is wanted. – The Surveyors charges are agreeable to Law and it was necessary to have the work done to protect your property from the Trespasses of your neighbours. – By the next Packet I will forward you an Account of increase and decrease of Slaves & Stock from the time I got charge of Georgia. – Taxes & Drs bills were paid by Georgia for Webbs Negroes during the time they were hired to the Estate. – The Parish, Poll, & Road Taxes vary according to the wants of the Island & Parish, and the difference in the Stock for which the Poll Taxes are not Charged arises from Working Stock being exempted, from that Charge and only breeding Stock being subject to it.

As you have not sufficiency of Slaves to dig Cane holes & make Lime we are oblidged to employ jobbers and without the Cane holes you cannot get Canes and without Lime, I could not put up your Curing house walls which had fallen down. As the sales for the Sugars sent to Dublin & Liverpool have now come to hand the exact proceeds will appear in your next Account. – I observe what you say respecting the balance that is to go to the Credit of Georgia out of 1808 Transactions. – I have no doubt that on your going over the account a second time that you will find it more favourable. It is true that no Stock has been purchased, but the property, that is, the Works have been put into some Condition to take off the Crops & at the Prices that West India Produce has been at for some years made from an Old wore out Estate, without Negroes, Stock, Works or any thing also in proposition to make 100 Hhds P Year. – I am surprised that the property is not much more in your debt than you show by that Statement. – If you will give yourself the trouble to enquire round you, you will find that the very best appointed Properties in this Country have not for the last five years given the Proprietors Common interest. – The principle of the interest Account is my paying money for you where I have none of yours in my hands, & my giving you interest the day I receive any belonging to you no Account is better understood in London than an interest Account, & if you get interest for any Monies I receive on your Account, you surely must pay me the same from the date, I pay any thing on your Account.

I have engaged 20 Hhds of Georgia Sugar on the Ship Ann Captn Fryer to go from here in about three Weeks, She is to run home. – Herewith you Will please to Receive Wolfe & Cohens Bill at 90 Days on Hymen Cohen & Co of London for £1000 Stg for which I paid a Premium of 12½ Pct. – I would have forwarded the £1500 you mentioned but the People that had the money at interest requiring Notice of two or three months, did not find it convenient to pay at present a larger sum & have declined paying any more interest after the next Packet when I will send home the £500 Stg – I am &c –
Dear Sir

The above is Copy of my last letter since which I have received your Letters of the 18th July 2nd & 15 August. Having wrote you fully respecting the Pine Rum I have only to add on that I am very sorry that the transaction has ended so unfavourably.

The Size of your Hhds must be all One, as there is but one Sett of Truss Hoops on the Plantation & I cannot help thinking that they are as large now as they ever were, but some Sugar will both give & weigh lighter than others, & taking into consideration the bad road you have to the Wharf the Casks being small is not against the Stock & the Produce. – Interest on the £1075 18 11 should have been Credited from 9th May to 31 December 1808 if the Money had been in the Factors or my hands, but it was at interest to 31 Decr & in your next Account which will credit all the monies that I have received & have been at interest you will find the Credit that you have missed on that Sum. – The timbers were Credited as soon as the money was received for them.

In my last Letter, I wrote you respecting the Shipment of your Crops & have now only to add, so as to explain the business more to you that By the Monarch I shipped this Year 60 Hhds of Sugar 52 Hhds of Crop 1809 & 9 hhds reduced to 8 Hhds of Crop 1808 being the 9 Hhds you make mention of – The 10 Hhds Sugar by the Caesar are of Crop 1809. – I observe what you say respecting bills and your order shall be complyed with.

Account of increase & decrease of Slaves & Stock will be sent herewith. – In going over my account I cannot see how the mistake of £4 – in the statement of the produce arises as the Copy of my Acct make it £4166 18 and not £4162 18. – Your letter of the 15th August makes a mention of the Purchase of Stock & your regretting my not having taken advantage with the £1000 – to purchase when they were low. By my own account you will see that the £1000 – would have gone a very short way in the Purchase of Stock, & from what I recollect of your Letters, I dont think I was ever Ordered to Purchase Stock whenever I thought Proper. In my last letter I informed you what number of Stock will be required to take off an average Crop of the last Four & the sum they might Cost. – I shall now purchase them at as low a Price as they can be got as you say I may make use of part of the monies that will be left after the £1400 STg is sent you. – In my last Letter I wrote respecting the situation in which your monies that were at interest stood, & by your Letter of the 16 Augst I am sorry to find that I have so bad use of them, as to put them at
interest without your Orders. – I have had no occasion to borrow Money, & if I had it is not a transaction on which a Commission would be charged. – The Premium on bills by this Packet I understand will be 15 Pct. – This I shall know better when I purchase your £400 Stg. Mr Bartletts two letters of the 2nd & 15 August are before me. – I still think that 200 Hhds P Year may be made on Georgia as there is Land to do that, but to accomplish that Object, you must encrease the Power of Slaves & Stock very considerably, without which I assure you that being your Representative here your Crops will not be increased.

You mention the purchase of Stock & Negroes with the Monies that will be left in my hands no doubt thinking that, that would give you a Power to enlarge your Crops, but the sum is too small to have any weight in making an encrease of Produce on an Old Estate labouring under every want but Land and Timber.

The seasons have been very fine since I wrote you last, and we are forward with our little fall plant. – The Slaves are healthy, but the Stock are not in good order in consequence of their being Old & too few to do the work of the estate. – I have engaged on the Ship Phoenix Captn Taylor to run from here in Novr 21 Hhds of Georgia Sugar these 21 Hhds are part of 41 of last Crop left at the Wharf, for want of shipping & have been disposed of as follows – 20 Hhds Shipped on the Ann to repack them 3½ hhds 15 Hhds now shipped on the Phoenix to repack them 2½ Hhds making the 41 Hhds. – We have made 4 Hogsheads of Sugar since Crop from some Canes that we Cut to get Plants from but the Roads are so bad at present that they cannot be brought to the Wharf. – Herewith you will receive Acct of increase & Decrease of Slaves & Stock from Jany 1806 to 10th August 1809.

Dear Sir

I have now Purchased Bogles & Cos bill on Baring Brothers & Co for £400 Stg at 12½ Pct Premium which I enclose, you will receive the second of Wolf & Cohens bill by last Packet for £1000 Stg. – I enclose an account of the Monies you have had at interest by which you will see that there is a balance in my hands of £1409 3 11 Currency – I remain &c F G –

My photo, November 2011 – Georgia

Letters, dated Farm 15 and 23 December 1809, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

Herewith you have Copies of my two last letters since which I have not received any letter from you. – The weather has been very bad since the middle of Novr which has prevented us from having the Usual quantity of Work done. We are now preparing to put the Mill about which will be done early next Month.
– since writing you I have purchased 10 Steers & 10 Mules for Georgia at £35 Each payable the 25<sup>th</sup> July next without Interest. –

The Slaves are Healthy & the old Stock in much the same situation I last described them in. – I enclose Copies of Bill of Lading by the Phoenix & Bogle second Bill for 400 £ Stg on Baring Brothers & Co. – I have nothing more to add at Present deserving your Notice

Dr Sir

After writing you by this Packet it was postponed for a week. – The October Packet has just arrived & brought me your Letter of 2<sup>nd</sup> Octr which I cannot answer by this Packet as the Mail is just making up but it shall be done by the First Opportunity –

For the year 1809, Edward was paid £183 16s 0½d, salary plus expenses – see below 31 March 1810.

On 4 January 1810 Edward swore the Georgia crop account for the year 1809.

My photos – Jamaica Archives – Records of Crop Accounts – Lib 40, Fol 155 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 14 Mar 1810 – Georgia Estate, St Thomas in the East, crop account for year 1809 – sworn on 4 January 1810 by Edward Clouston, Overseer, before Peter Robinson – arrow points to – Sold E Clouston 2 Barrels Sugar

Below – Georgia crop account for year 1808 continued
Dr Sir

Herewith you will receive Copies of my two last Letters since which I have nothing deserving your notice to inform you of. – Your Letter of 2nd Octr has in general been answered in my Former Letters. I am at present anxious to go to Windward & shall be at Georgia in two or three days which obliges me to write you so early by this Packet as I shall not be in the way when it sails, but I expect to return before the 15th. . . I hope to be able to inform you respecting the new Sugar making at Georgia. I hope Mr Long has engaged room in the Ship he is sending out the Supplies by as the Monarch the Ship that brought them for the last three Years accomodated us – and that Ship will not be here for the First Fleet. – I observed what you say respecting the consent of the Planters together & not one person to introduce a higher freight but unfortunately the price has not been left to the planters & the Ship Monarch is just about sailing from Morant Bay at 11/ PCwt your sugars in her trip went home at 9/6. – No sugar has gone from the Island since November last under 10/ PCwt –

Letter, dated 13 January 1810, Farm, from E. Sword to Thomas Milles

Sir

As Mr Graham is not returned from the Country I beg to prefix Copy of his last letter. – When he returns he will inform with respect to the Crop &c at Georgia – having nothing to say except that 4 Hhds of Georgia Sugar of Crop 1809 is shipped on the Monarch, Kent to run home on the 15 inst & that I have advised B Long Esqr of it & to consult you on Insurance –
Above – E Sword – Edward Sword – at the time of his death in 1821 he owed money to Edward Clouston – see Chapter 12.

**Letter, dated Farm 8 February 1810, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles**

Dr Sir

Since writing you last I have received your letter of 2\(^{nd}\) Decr – A temporary Trash house has been put up without any hired Labour & we have now got into trash. The Wooden Gutter has been nearly made New with only the expence of the hire of two Sawyers for a few months.

The Water Dam has had a temporary repair which I fancy will cost from £20 to 30£ – and may stand for a few years. – Nothing effectually can be done to it, as the foundation is gone. – We will be able to take off the Rum Crop with the Low Wine Still and you can send out one of 400 Gallons to be hung before the next Crop – It should be here at the latest by next October. – The Old Still will be Cut up and sent home as Old Copper or sold in the Country if a good price can be got for it. – My reason for wishing to purchase a second hand Still, was that New Stills are the most expensive thing we can import for an Estate. – I informed you that I had purchased Stock and have now to mention that I sold Six Steers and two Cows to John McPherson for £96 their Condition & years being such that I considered that their full Value. – The weather since I wrote you last has been seasonable, but it is with real concern that I have to inform you that the Negroes on Georgia have been so sickly that we have been Obliged to Stop the Mill for the want of people to carry on the Work and we have lost one Old Man and a Middle aged Woman. – The disorder has abated but we still have three or four doubtfull Cases in the hospital. – The parish has been in general affected since Xmas with this Influenza and all the Estates have lost more or less Negroes. – It is a disorder of that kind that there is no knowing when it has left a gang of Negroes and Death is so sudden that sometimes the unfortunate object has no chance of Medical advice. – We have now got the Mill about & I have 20 Hhds of Sugar Made.

The Estate accounts for the last year are now making up & by the next packet I shall be able to inform you what preparation will be necessary to be made for the Contingencies payable 25 July next. – The fleet has not arrived and we are now in want of some of the Supplies to Keep the Mill about –

**Letter, dated Farm 8 March 1810, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles**

Dear Sir

Since writing you last of which the above is a Copy, I have received your letters of the 20\(^{th}\) & 28\(^{th}\) Decr and third of January. – I did not mention a Still Worm, as I could make the present one Answer and a New One is very expensive, but as you are sending a New one out One of the two will be sold for Solder & I think you will loose nothing by the transaction. – A Worm has nothing to do with a Still, for it will either answer for One of 1000 Gallons or One of 200 Gallons. Everything in that respect depends on the quantity of Water the distiller has to keep his worms Cool. – the Old Copper shall be Cut up and sent home agreeable to your directions. –

New Sugar shipped after being made four or Six [weeks] require no repacking, but when they remain in the Island for four or Six Months, we in general take One hogshead in Ten to repack them. – The Sugars of some Estates dont take quite so much but that of the greatest number of Estates takes more, on enquiry you will find this Correct.

The weather has been dry since I wrote you last which is against the Stock and the young fall plants. I am happy to inform you that we have lost no Negroes since my last letter, but they have continued Sickly & one still so, at the same time I must say that I don’t consider any of them in danger. The Influenza is now spread all over the Island and some of the Estates have suffered very seriously. – In Consequence of the great Number of Sick negroes we have had The Mill is going on but slowly & we have only 50 Hhds of Sugar made. The yielding is not so good as I could wish, but I see that we are dong fully as well as any of our Neighbours who will fall off very considerably from their last Crops. – I expect that the Ship Prince George that brought out the supplies will take home 40 Hogsheads of Sugar and the Ship Friends 20 Hhds. – These two Ships are to Sail in the first fleet which will go from the Island about the first of May – I will write Mr Long on the Subject of Insurance. – Your Accounts for last year are made up and the Balance in favour of the Estate is about £1400 Currency. The amount will be forwarded by the first proper Conveyance –
On 31 March 1810 Edward was paid his salary, £160, plus expenses for the year 1809

*Georgia Estate, St Thomas in the East, letter-book Vol II* – Francis Graham’s Georgia Estate Account for the year 1810 – includes

March 31 – To Paid – Edward Clouston his Account – 1 January to 31 January 1809 – Salary as Overseer £160 – plus expenses £23 16s 0 ½d – total – £183 16s 0½d

On 31 March 1810 Edward ‘collected’ his 1809 salary plus expenses – presumably he collected the payment from the Farm – see below 28 August 1810 letter. Farm, on the road from Kingston to Spanish Town, was a little west of Ferry.

Near Ferry looking to Spanish Town

Georgia letter-book, Vol I – Letters, dated Farm 1 and 26 April 1810, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dear Sir

Herewith you will please to receive my Account with Georgia Estate for 1809 with Accounts of Increase and Decrease of Slaves & Stock & Copy of Crop Account Sworn to all which I hope you will find Correct –

Farm 26 April 1810

Dear Sir

Herewith you will please to receive Copies of my two last letters since which I have received your letter of 31 January. – The weather has been dry and our young plant has suffered in consequence of it.

The Negroes are now healthy but the Stock are not in good Condition Owing to the want of grass occasioned by the dry weather. – Herewith you will find bills of Lading for 20 Hhds of Sugar on the Ship Friends and 30 Hogsheads of Do [ditto] on the Ship Prince George, the Capttn would not take the other 10 Hhds. We have now made 80 Hhds of Sugar, and I expect that the Crop will be from 100 to 110 Hhds. I fear that shipping will be scarce after this and I don’t know when I shall be able to Ship the rest of the Crop. You must excuse me for the short Letter as I am just recovering out of a fit of Sickness –

On 17 May 1810, Edward was sold 220 lbs of Georgia Sugar – see below Georgia crop account for the year 1810

Letter, dated Farm 18 May 1810, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dr Sir

Since writing you last of which the above is a Copy, I have received your letter of the 5th March for which I am much obliged to you. – I am happy to inform you that the Seasons set in about the 10th of this
Month & continue very Mild. They were much wanted as both the Old & young Canes were suffering and we were entirely out of grass for the Stock which we will soon have in abundance and I trust that if the seasons continue that the young Canes will recover. – We have 98 Hhds of Sugar made & I have now at the Wharf 40 of them in Order that the Capts of Ships may have no excuse, if I can engage them by saying that they were not ready & that they were obliged to take in others. – These people at present are riding so high a horse owning to the scarcity of Shipping that there is no doing any thing with them. – The Ship Merlin is not yet arrived at Port Morant & when that is the Case, I fear that the Capt will not take Sugars from Georgia as they will be out put port Sugars for him, unless I pay for carrying them from Port Morant Bay to Port Morant. – I have enclosed the Duplicates of the Bills of Lading for 50 hhds of Sugar by the Prince George & Friends to Mr Long & I now enclose Capt Baylys receipt for a Keg of Tamarinds shipped on his ship from Georgia for you. – I notice what you say respecting the purchase of Stock & I have only to add on that Subject that they were purchased at a time that few Planters are in the Market and consequently when there was no great demand. The price was the price of the times & the period of payment was long in consequence of my having made a large purchase by which as your Money is at interest you will save so much. – The Negroes are at present healthy & I hope that as the Crop is nearly done & we will soon have grass that the Stock will shortly get into good Condition. – I have Ordered all the old Copper to be cut up that I may ship it as soon as I can find a vessel that will take it

Know How road map of Jamaica – Parish of St Thomas – section – arrow points to Georgia – bottom right – Morant Bay and Port Morant
Dr Sir

On the other side you will please to receive Copy of the last letter I wrote you, & I have now to acknowledge your letter of the 4th April. Since the 27th of last Month we have had almost constant rain which has swelled the Rivers to a greater height that they have ever been known. – All the Roads are carried away & all description of Cultivation is very much injured by the Water having washed the plants out of the Lands, and in some places the Lands having slided down the hills. – Since the commencement of this weather, I have only been able to get information on the 7th instant from Georgia as the rivers has not been passable since. – At that period All the Caine pieces had suffered more or less, and the road to the Wharf was carried away. – As the river has been higher since, I fear that more damage has been done, of this I cannot inform you until they are passable. We have 103 Hhds of Sugar made and two or three to make yet which the bad weather has prevented us from taking off. – The Ship [blank] arrived at Port Morant and Landed the Still there – The Capt'n would not bring it to Morant Bay or would he take any of your Sugars tho’ I offered to put them a Long Side of the Ship. – Shipping continues to be scarce, and I have not been able to Ship any of your Sugars since the Shipment on the Friends. – As soon as I can get the Still brought to Morant Bay I shall inform you of it will Answer of which I have no doubt at present, as I sent the Overseer to examine it and his report is that it is a good Still. – For your Satisfaction, I enclose Copy of the Crop Acct for last Year which was sworn to by the Overseer. There is no doubt of the 15 Hhds having been Shipped in good [? order] on the Phoenix, as I have the Wharfingers Acct of it on Oath and the receipt of the Mate of the Ship. – They would never have received two Hhds Sugar in bad order and so particular are they that not a Cask will they receive without being repacked, as the Ship may get as much freight for the room taken up by the Hhds as possible. – The Sugars wanting in the two Hhds
have either been Stolen or washed out. – You many rest assured of my Care & attention to the Negroes & that nothing will be left undone to make them as easy & comfortable as the nature of their Situation will allow. A natural encrease would give me great satisfaction, but it is not a common thing with Old Gangs. I hope to be able to give you an Account of the Situation Georgia soon & remain – Your Oblig Ser Frans Graham

My photos, September 2008 – Blue Mountain Valley
Dear Sir

The above is Copy of my last letter. A few days after the date of my letter we got mild weather and we are now seasonable – the injury done by the heavy weather is not so great as was represented to me and the Canes promise as well as I could wish, for the quantity we are able to cultivate. – The Negroes after the bad weather have not been healthy, but we have none that are in danger except an Invalid that cannot last long. –

I have shipped on the Ship Haywood at Morant Bay to run home 53 Hhds Sugar & I have wrote Mr Long to consult you as to Insurance. –

Having been unwell for a few days you must excuse me for this short Letter –

Letter, dated Farm 18 August 1810, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles

Dear Sir

Since writing you last of which the above is a Copy, I have received your letter of the 6 June. – We have continued very seasonable, but I am sorry to say that the Negroes have been and still are very sickly and that besides the Invalid that I wrote you about in my last who died a few days after, that we have lost a weakly young Negroe. The Negroes having continued Sickly so long has prevented me from being as forward with the preparations for the fall Plant of Crop 1812 as I could wish & if they do not get healthy soon it will be necessary to bring the Cultivation up by hired Labour. The Stock are in good order, and the Canes for next Crop a promising appearance have nothing more deserving your Notice inform you at present & remain &c –

Below – Mr Bartlett (Thomas Milles’ clerk) refers to seeing no mention of the Overseer Mr Clouston’s Bill or Salary for 1809 in Francis Graham’s Estate Account for the year 1809.

Letter, dated 6 July 1810, from Mr Bartlett to Francis Graham – extract

Dear Sir

As I have business in the Country that will prevent my return before the time of the present Packet is to Sail at, I take an early opportunity of acknowledging your letter of the 6th of July – since I wrote you last on the 18th instant of which you have Copy herewith the Negroes have not been so sickly but we have had a strong gale that has done much injury to the Negroe provisions which at this time is very unfortunate as Flour is at £20 P Barrel and if the Negroes should want the consequence will be serious to the Owners. I am on my way to Georgia and as soon as I return I shall write you fully. – I have looked into the Georgia account respecting the Overseers Salary which if it is not charged is Owing to his not having called for it until this Year – the Weather continues favourable for the Cultivation of Canes & I have the pleasure to remain Dr Sir &c Frans Graham

Letter, dated Farm 6 October 1810, from E Sword to Thomas Milles

Sir

Mr Graham received your favour of the 31st July and am sorry to say that he is prevented from answering it in Consequence of a severe fever from which I am happy to Observe he is just recovering
I beg leave to prefix Copy of Mr Grahams last letter of the 28 August and to say they are seasonable at Georgia, but I am sorry that the Negroes are still sickly respecting which Mr Graham will write you by the first opportunity. I am Sir &c –

*My photos, November 2009* – site of Coley estate sugar works (at the junction of the road to Georgia with the road to Trinity Ville) – top, old overseer’s house – bottom, old book-keepers’ house
Below – Thomas Milles refers to the Overseer ‘Coulson’ (Clouston) being paid £172 12s 1d (salary plus expenses) for the year 1808, but no mention of payment to him for 1809 in Francis Graham’s Account for the year 1809.

Letter, dated Farm 24 November 1810, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles – includes – ‘The Overseers Salary for 1809 was not drawn by him until 1810’

Dr Sir

Having been unwell for some time, I am only now able to acknowledge your letters of the 31st July and 5th September. – For the last two Months we have had hardly a day without heavy rain and at times for two or three days constant which has made the Negroes very sickly, & otherwise prevented the usual quantity of work from being done, and we have had three floods during that time, some of the hilly land have slid down with the Old Canes on them and parts of the young fall plants have been washed out of the ground, and carried away by the torrents. – Other parts of the Cane pieces have suffered by being covered with sand and all kind of rubbish, but still we have not so much for next Crop, as we have done in Labour for Crop 1812. And by being unfortunate with the Negroes of whom no less than 8 have died this year of uncurable disorders. None of them were able people but still they did a little, and tho’ the decrease may not be of much consequence to the Estate it would have been much pleasant to me if it had not taken place. – The Negroes are still sickly but at present not in danger. The Mortality on the neighbouring Estates exceeds any thing I have known in the Country. – We have had two children born this year We are now finishing the Plant and replanting the parts that have been injured by the floods and as soon as that is finished we shall prepare to get the Mill about for the New Crop which I trust will exceed the last. – I have wrote Mr Long informing him that Captn Bayley was not correct as the 40 Hogsheads of Sugar were ready and he at one time promised me to take them. The Overseers Salary for 1809 was not drawn by him until 1810 – and as my Account is made up to 31 December 1809, it could not be included nor do I think it proper for me to introduce Charges against the Estate in my Account that I have not paid. – Wilkinsons Salary was encreased in Consequence of his being made head book-keeper and going into the Still House. Wilkinson was removed and Aris put in his place – Tracy left the Estate when Wilkinsons Salary was raised. – The Caesar, Ann & Phoenix loaded in Kingston and submitted to paying half freight from Morant Bay as freight was scarce in Kingston – when that is not the Case in War time the Shipper is obliged to pay all the Freight, and if there is no Ships to take the produce at Morant Bay it is better to pay the full Druggorage or freight than that the Sugars should remain in the Country. – When the Ship takes in the Sugar at Morant Bay no freight is paid, and in peaceable times when shipping are not scarce the Ship takes the produce from Morant Bay in their own Boats and no freight is paid. £6 18 0 was freight paid here for Irish provisions ordered from Cork by Mr Long Irish freight are in general paid in this Island.

The Haywood is a well known Ship and one of the finest that comes to the Country – No ship can be a runner without being a Letter of Marque. Mr Long knows this well consequently I had no occasion to say that the ship was Armed. Having nothing more of consequence to say at present I have the pleasure to remain &c –

Above – runner – Letter of Marque (Privateer) – vessel licensed by a government to attack and seize enemy shipping

Below – advertisement – ‘runner’ sailing from Jamaica for London

**British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 22 Jun 1811, page Sup 9**

May 4, 1811.

For London, loading at Salt-River, and intended to sail about the first of June, singly or in company with any vessels going at the time, the fast-sailing coppered ship Charles, Edward Bedford, Master, Mounting ten 12-pounders, and will have men answerable. For freight or passage apply to the Master on board, or to Bogles & Co.
Dr Sir

Since writing you last of which the above is Copy I have not had the pleasure of receiving any letter from you. We have now had some fine weather which has enabled me to put the Estate in good order, and to prepare to go about early in January. – I am happy to say that the Negroes are now healthy. Since writing you last, I have had a second attack of fever of which I am not yet entirely Clear, and on that Account you must excuse this short letter – I have the pleasure &c Fras Graham

On 31 December 1810 there were 96 slaves belonging to Georgia – 36 Males and 60 Females. In the year 1810 three slaves were born, eight died, and one was transported for Obeah

Georgia letter-book, Vol I – Increase and Decrease of Negroes on Georgia Estate from 1 Jan to 31 Dec 1810 – bottom right, slave tried for Obeah and transported – (see Chapter 3 – Obeah)

My photo, November 2011 – Morant River – a little west of Seaforth, north of Morant Bay
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

Georgia letter-book, Vol II – Francis Graham’s Georgia Estate Account for the Year 1810 – page 1 of 6 – arrow points to Edward Clouston’s Account for year 1809
Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 1 of 6 – continued

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 2 of 6
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

July 10. To paid John Penn, attache account for 10 shares £5 each 10 shares at £5 700
24. To paid Messrs. Macfarlane for 1 barrel of flour 5
Wharfage £5 Freight & Batery 16

Aug 3. To paid George Watson for 3 bales wool £25 8 6 11
Wharfage 5s Freight & Stoop 2d

To paid Peter Munro attache account for the following
-

\[ \text{Estimating main roller cage for water mill} \quad 35 \]
\[ \text{Winding main roller top judge} \quad 168 \]

April. Taking the Southern wheel of Catte Mill, main roller setting in new bearings & setting same in the top and bottom flomachers

May 30. Taking the Southern wheel off of the main roller putting new bearings and iron plates before the shaft

Taking out the Judge of the Water Mill, main roller taking of the spur wheel & the setting being cut during the head of the roller putting in theJudge's bearing and working the same

To paid Mr. Melgate attache account for Medical attend
on 102 slaves to 31st Dec last £81 each 346

24. To paid Taylor V. Sayer C.C. taxes this year
- 2d cunt on 1031 shares at £
- Parish tax on 100 slaves at £13 50 shares at £ 10 6 3
- Road tax on 100 shares at £5 3z shares at £ 14 7 6
- Subscriptions 1809, June quarter 10d, July, August 30d each 5 0 10
Francis Graham's Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 2 of 6 – continued

Sept. quarter 2 White 100 slaves of Stock — 3.12.6
Dec. quarter 2 White 100 slaves 16 slaves — 4.14.8
March quarter 2 White 100 slaves 95 slaves — 12.8.1 30 16 1
28 13 9
Discount W. F. Coke Sept. 9. 10
8 12 11 79 19 106
25 To paid Mr. Fulhams for 10 barrels Sherd.@ 55/
27 10.
Shingles 1/4 w. 1st Bath Party $3.15
4 7 6 31 17 6
Conrad forward $16 06 16 3

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 3 of 6

Aug. 29. To paid Thomas Legan Jr. attt's Acct for Blacksmith work
1. 6 8
Aftersmith work done on the Estate fist
10
Joint. Draying down the lead on the Copper
1. 10
Dil. a patch on the lead
2. 15.
Dr. 2 cracks on the lead of Copper @ 76
2. 2
Dr. 2 joints at 5/ and held at 9 on end of Cutters
1. 2 6
Dr. 11 cracks at 76 on water Mill gutter
1. 7 6
Dr. 3 joints at 76 8 cracks at 76 on White Mill gutter
1. 2 6
Dr. 2 joints at 29 1 on low warm Indain
2
Dr. 3 half joints at 19 8 held at 8 on it
2. 5
Dr. 1 joint 13/ 1 hole of on liquer pump
1
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

321

6 lute 12th Aug 3 men at 1/4 1/4.8

June. Making two bolt holes 1/4.8

April. 2 washers 4/6.8 3 joints at 24/8 large plates c. 10/6 10/6.

in top of low iron axam leading 1/2sf at each 5/12 3/5.

6/10 a long joint on rim of 2nd Track

Leading and bolting paddle between 2nd and 3rd Track 1/5.

Bolting 2 holes in the head 2/6.4 board of stick 1/56 3/152.6 3/156.

May. Bolt 2 bolts 1/2 sf 1/6 boring 4 men at 1/6 1/6.

1 main edge leaf 30th 1/6 altering shops 1/14.

2 John Shaw 26th 3/9 making 5 units 1/9.

June remaining work John Shaw 18/6 c. Estimated 18.

Oct. Reparing a plunger clamp 2 clamps broke a large wing staple.

5/12 repairing 3 cattle boxes 21st 1/9.

Dec. Setting & welding a cart axle 1/5.

To John Logan 1895 attended account 1895.

John. Bolting a joint on lever

Bolting two holes on dumber 3/9.

Bolting two holes on mill SD 3/9 bolting hole in lever.

1/6.

Bolting two holes on head of copper.

Reparing a fighting bar 1/5. March 1/5.


Bolting 2 bolts 1/2.

1 plate 3/9 20 bars for main wheel 1/4 1/6 3/156 3/156.
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 3 of 6 – continued

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 4 of 6
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lading ex America Lumpy Otten ½ ca Patty 1808, 19th bird ½</td>
<td>15.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shot Lading ex America, 3 empty Shot</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lading ex Dutch 6 barrels of beef York, 3 barrels of beef Yorkshire</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 barrels butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lading ex schooner Lancy 10 barrels of shad</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. Lading ex Cape, Cape 2 1/2s fathom 1 barrel flour</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lading ex Cape, Patty 10 empty cases</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nor. Lading ex 6 pieces Leather 10 1/3d fish 3/4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. Lading ex 1/3d M.O. Stores 250的房子 boarding</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lading ex 10 empty Amanda</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving Strong, weighing 100000 571/4 White Sugar</td>
<td>32.14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 bushels of Sugar</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lading ex 1/3d Sugar, North Ends, 1/3d Sugar 2 hebus</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. Lading ex 1/3d Sugar 2 hebus</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38 1/4 dimes for three in building brick 2, 75/100</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 dimes for one in dittes - 2 dimes - 2 dimes - 2 dimes - 2 dimes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid John Powers for 1st marine's paint &amp; pot</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2½ barrels Mercury 22 1/2d note and 2½d note per bottle</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To paid George Watson for 1 sheet milled lead 10. 11. 13</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whalejaw 1/3d stuff &amp; Jos. Williams 30</td>
<td>118.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To paid James Jones for 21/2d stuff 100 orb 30 1/2d 5</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whalejaw 1/3d stuff &amp; Johnson 21/2n 30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 13 To paid the Watson for a sheet of lead 525 orb 3/4</td>
<td>32.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 6. Edward 1808 to 1810

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 4 of 6 – continued

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 5 of 6
for Mill house floor water gutters and indoor water running
fix two boards, splitting thickness for the roof making gutters
to the Mill & storehouse 9 ft 2 3/4 per week
125 10 4

net value of 33 acres 10 days work cutting down trees after turning the
stock, and 100 yards of setting out in a new stone house framing &
setting the two side rails making the new block beams
setting main roller 10 3/4 per piece restoring the center wheel,
making a new trough over it balancing the wheel 10 3/4 per wheel
10 16 8

for getting out one set of canvas at half price
50
for getting out half a set canvas 16 feet at half price
28 10
for better boards for making siding $10 6 3/4 per piece
52 10

52 10 3 1/2 15

for four Williamsons 96 for five A P Stites 21 6 3
116 10 14

2200 ft c. slates & making a $25
for 10 18 14

for 10 3 4

for fenders of iron for doors, frames and shutters at different
places for mounting hay cliff & horseage for stopping a horse
17 2

for providing Chambers' 18 account for a musical instrument for a
petition on behalf of certain persons at their Hospital in Harp
10 13 4

earned forward £ 3

Francis Graham’s Georgia Account for year 1810 – page 6 of 6
By 9 January 1811, Thomas H Landell had replaced Edward as the overseer of Georgia. In Francis Graham’s 1810 Georgia Estate Account (his only Estate Account in the Georgia letter-books) there is no payment to Edward for his salary or expenses for 1810. It therefore appears that Thomas H Landell took over in late 1810 or at the beginning of January 1811.

Jamaica Archives (microfilm printout) – Records of Crop Accounts – Lib 42, Fol 191 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 25 Mar 1811 – Georgia Estate, St Thomas in the East, crop account for year 1810 – sworn on 9 January 1811 by Thomas H Landell, Overseer, before Peter Robinson
Arrow points to May 17 – Edward Clouston – 1 (? Barrel) Sugar = 220 lbs – see above Georgia letter-book Vol I – Crop Account for 1810

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb 26th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>1 lb</td>
<td>20c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 1st</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>2 lbs</td>
<td>40c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>3 lbs</td>
<td>60c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>4 lbs</td>
<td>80c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>5 lbs</td>
<td>100c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jun 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>6 lbs</td>
<td>120c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jul 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>7 lbs</td>
<td>140c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>8 lbs</td>
<td>160c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>9 lbs</td>
<td>180c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 15th</td>
<td>Tobacco</td>
<td>10 lbs</td>
<td>200c</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Below – Georgia crop account for year 1810 continued
My photo, November 2011 – looking southwest towards Georgia – Edward’s 10 acres, sold to him in 1809 and conveyed to him in 2012 (see Chapter 7) were on the far distant ridge.
Chapter 7

Edward 1811 to 1815

For some years after Edward left Georgia little is known about his life. In 1812 he was living in St Thomas in the East and in 1811 he was living either in this parish or St David’s, the parish to the west of St Thomas in the East.


St David’s and St Thomas in the East were the two parishes in the Precinct of St Thomas in the East.

On 18 September 1811 Edward was one of the Jurors summoned to attend the St Thomas in the East and St David’s Courts of Quarter Sessions and Common Pleas at Morant Bay Court House, St Thomas in the East, on the first Tuesday in October.

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 21 Sep 1811, page PS 24 – Sept. 18, 1811

Morant Bay Court House was where the Morant Bay Rebellion began in 1865 – see – https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morant_Bay_rebellion
In September 1811 war with the United States was ‘almost certain’.

Private accounts from America speak of a war as almost certain. A letter of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} inst from a mercantile house says – “How long our intercourse with the British will continue seems doubtful. Most people believe a war at hand, and indeed present appearances warrant such a conclusion.” Another letter of the same date mentions, “Things look alarming, and I find that the present opinion of a war will operate against shipments being made to the British Colonies.”

The United States was a neutral country in the Napoleonic Wars. However US trade suffered due to Napoleon’s ‘Continental System’ and Britain’s ‘Orders in Council’.

Continental System, in the Napoleonic wars, the blockade designed by Napoleon to paralyze Great Britain through the destruction of British commerce. The decrees of Berlin (November 21, 1806) and Milan (December 17, 1807) proclaimed a blockade: neutrals and French allies were not to trade with the British . . .

England responded to the Continental System with Orders in Council that subjected France and all countries in alliance with Napoleon to a counter-blockade . . .

In St Thomas in the East in November 1811 the sugar planters were ‘on the verge of ruin’, and the coffee planters were ‘threatened with total ruin’.

At a Meeting of the Freeholders and other inhabitants of St Thomas in the East, held at Morant-Bay, on the 12\textsuperscript{th} day of November, 1811, to take into consideration the distressed situation of the parish. Robert Logan, Esq in the Chair: It was resolved,
1. That the Coffee-Planters are threatened with total ruin, by the exclusion of their produce from the continent of Europe, and by the introduction of the same article into Britain from St Domingo and other places.

2. That the Sugar-Planters are also on the verge of ruin, from similar causes, and from the most oppressive duties that were ever know in any age or nation, amounting frequently to more than four times the net proceeds of their produce.

3. That the idea of the duties falling only on the consumer is delusive; for although, when there is a scarcity at market, the prices are thereby enhanced to the consumer, yet when the market is glutted, they must fall entirely on the Planter, and at all times lessen his profit.

4. That our readiness to contribute our share to the support of Government has been fully evinced by our patient acquiescence under accumulating duties, and even by paying the Troops, while we had the ability to pay, for that protection which Government was otherwise bound to afford us.

5. That our Representatives be instructed to use all their influence to prevent pay from being voted to the Troops any longer, from a conviction of our total inability to bear the expense, and at a time when the greatest part of our property goes into the hands of Government.

6. That the Landholders of Great-Britain had not been duly impressed with the nature of our situation, when, with unprecedented cruelty, they suffered the corn of our enemies to be purchased for the distilleries, in preference to the sugar of their fellow-subjects.

7. That unless some measures are speedily devised, by the wisdom of the Assembly, for the relief of the Coffee-Planters, they will be utterly unable to pay the taxes, or even to furnish clothing and provisions for their negroes, some of them already having been compelled to sell negroes and stock, at very reduced prices, in order to supply themselves with the necessaries of life, which they can no longer obtain from the Merchant on credit.

8. That this Meeting considers it a particular hardship on the Coffee-Planter to be obliged to pay taxes on his working stock while the Sugar-Planter is exempt from them.

9. That the most plausible mode that has yet been suggested to us, for the relief of the Coffee-Planters, is that their produce should be deposited in stores, and that Island Certificates should be issued, to a certain amount, to be paid with interest, when the coffee can be sold.

10. That whereas the present crops will certainly overstock the British markets with sugar, it would be a wise measure to encourage the conversion of sugar of inferior quality into rum, which might be deposited in stores for at least three years, and Island Certificates issued upon it in the same manner as for coffee; by these means not only the pressure on the British market would be lightened, but a circulating medium would be established in the island, and a much more wholesome and valuable spirit brought to the market.

11. That however proper it may have been formerly to confine colonial produce to the British market, it appears to us to be highly impolitic at present, as it compels the American States to supply themselves with those articles from the Spanish continent and islands, which they would have taken from us and disposed of at markets, from which the British are at present excluded; and since the fertility of the Spanish colonies is much greater than ours, and a spirit of industry is rising among them, which has of late greatly extended the importation of slaves from Africa to their settlements, it is to be feared that they soon will be able to undersell us at every market.

12. That no adequate relief can be expected by the Sugar-Planters, unless a commutation of the present ruinous duties, for reasonable ad valorem duties, can be obtained, by strong representation of our distresses to the Prince Regent and British Parliament.

13. That the Chairman do sign these resolutions; and that a copy of them be sent to the Honourable Simon Taylor and Peter Robertson, Esq and that they be also published in the Gazettes of Kingston and Spanish Town for one month.

Robert Logan, Chairman.

Resolved, That our Thanks be given to Robert Logan, Esq for having called this Meeting.

Most of the coffee grown in St Thomas in the East was and still is grown on the slopes of the Blue Mountains. Blue Mountain Coffee has the well deserved reputation of being the finest coffee in the world.
My photo, November 2011 – from Lime Tree Farm – a coffee farm southwest of Blue Mountain Peak – looking east towards the coast

Know How road map of Jamaica – St Thomas – section – top left, Blue Mountain Peak
Crabs abound in the eastern part of Jamaica at all seasons, but are considered to be best in the months, the names of which contain the letter R, April, &c. They are most plentiful in May, the season at which they deposit their eggs, or ‘run,’ as the negroes express it, and when the earth is literally covered with them. At this season it is impossible to keep them out of the houses, or even out of the bed-rooms, where, at one time scratching with their large claws, and at another rattling across the floor, they make a noise that would not astonish and alarm a stranger. Occasionally they will lodge themselves very snugly in a boot, and if a person puts in his foot upon them inadvertently, he has quick intimation of the intruder, by a grasp of his nippers. For a few weeks in this season, they may be gathered in any quantities, and the negroes sometimes hurt themselves by making too free use of them. Even the hogs catch them, although not always with impunity, as a crab sometimes gets hold of one of them by the snout, from which he is not easily disengaged; and the terrified animal runs about squeaking in great distress.

At other seasons, and when more valuable, they are caught by torch light at night, and put into covered baskets. Crowds of negroes from the neighbouring plantations pass my house every evening, with their torches and baskets, going to a crab wood on the other side, and return before midnight fully laden. Their baskets will contain about 40 crabs, and the regular price is a five penny piece, our smallest coin, equal to about 3½d. sterling, for five or six crabs. At this rate a negro will make 2s. 6d. currency in an evening; and the more improvident, who will not cultivate provision grounds, depend in some measure upon catching crabs, and selling them to others. A hundred plantains usually sold at five shillings, will purchase from sixty to seventy crabs; and two of these, eaten with plantains or yams, make an excellent meal. I have seen upwards of a hundred negroes pass my house in an evening, and return with their baskets on their heads, not only full of crabs, but with quantities of them fastened by the claws on the tops of the baskets. I make but a moderate computation when I suppose, they must have had at the very least, three thousand crabs. Almost every negro family has an old flour barrel pierced with holes, in which their crabs are kept. They are fed with plantain skins, &c; and taken out and thrown into the pot as wanted.

There are a great variety of crabs in Jamaica of which two only are eaten. The black is the finest, and has ever been esteemed one of the greatest delicacies in the West Indies, not excepting even the turtle. These live in the mountain forests, on stony grounds; and feed on the fallen dry leaves of the trees. The white crab, as it is called (although rather a purple than white) used principally by the negroes, but by the white people also, is larger and more resembles in taste the lobster of this country. These are amphibious and are found in the low lands, principally in the woods, where, as I have already said, they are caught at night with torches. But they are numerous also in the cultivated fields, and in some of the low lying estates, frequently do considerable injury to the planters in dry weather, when vegetation is slow, by nipping off the blade of the young canes and corn as it shoots through the ground. In situations of this kind, the negroes have a somewhat singular method of catching them; they know from the appearance of a crab-hole if there be a crab in it, and dig down with a hoe through the soft loam, till they come to water (about eighteen inches or two feet); and then close the hole firmly with a handful of dry grass. In this manner a negro will shut up two or three dozen of holes in a morning. About four hours after, he returns, and his prisoners being by this time ‘drunkened’ (half drowned), they tumble out along with the plug of grass and are caught.

In the year 1811, there was a very extraordinary production of black crabs in the eastern part of Jamaica. In the month of June or July of that year, I forget which, the whole district of Manchioneal (where the great chain of the Blue Mountains, extending from west to east through the centre of the island, terminates on the east coast) was covered with countless millions of these creatures swarming from the sea to the mountains. Of this singular phenomenon, I was myself an eye-witness, having had an occasion to travel through that district at the time. On ascending Quahill, from the vale of the Plantain-garden River, the road appeared of a reddish colour, as if strewed with brick-dust. I dismounted from my horse to examine the cause of so unusual an appearance, and was not a little astonished to find that it was owing to myriads of young black crabs, about the size of the nail of a man’s finger, crossing the road and moving at a pretty quick pace direct for the mountains. I was concerned to think of the destruction I was causing in
travelling through such a body of useful creatures, as I fancied that every time my horse put down a foot, it was the loss of at least ten lives. I road along the coast a distance of about fifteen miles, and found it nearly the same the whole way, only that in some places they were even more numerous, and in others less so. Returning the following day, I found the road still covered with them the same as the day before.

‘How have they been produced in such numbers? or, where are they come from?’ were questions everybody asked, and no one could answer. It is well known that the crabs deposit their eggs once a year, and in the month of May: but, except on this occasion, though living on the coast, I never saw a dozen of young crabs together, and here were millions covering the earth for miles along a large extent of sea-coast.

No unusual number of old crabs had been observed that season; and it is worthy of remark, that this prodigious multitude of young ones were moving from a rock-bound shore formed by inaccessible cliffs, the abode of sea-birds, and against which the waves of the sea are constantly dashed by the trade winds blowing directly upon them. That the old crabs should be able to deposit their eggs in such a part of the coast (if that, as would appear is the habit of the animal) is not a little extraordinary. No person in Jamaica, so far as I know or have heard, ever saw such a sight or any thing of the kind, but on that occasion; and I have understood, that since 1811, black crabs have been abundant farther into the interior of the island than they were ever known before.


Michael Scott (see Chapter 5) described a bedroom encounter with a land crab.


Next night I was awakened out of my sleep by a peculiar sort of tap, tap, on the floor, as if a cat with walnut shells had been moving about the room. The feline race, in all its varieties, is my detestation, so I slipped out of bed to expel the intruder; but the instant my toe touched the ground, it was seized as if by a smith’s forceps. I drew it into bed, but the annoyance followed it; and in an agony of alarm and pain, I thrust my had down, when my thumb was instantly manacled to the other suffering member. I now lost my wits altogether, and roared murder, which brought a servant with a light, and there I was, thumb and toe, in the clinch of a land-crab.

On 18 June 1812, the United States declared war on Britain – the War of 1812 – (June 1812 to January 1815).
Chapter 7. Edward 1811 to 1815


... The United States declared war in 1812 for several reasons, including trade restrictions brought about by Britain's continuing war with France, the impressments of American merchant sailors into the Royal Navy, British support of American Indian tribes against American expansion, outrage over insults to national honour after humiliations on the high seas, and possible American interest in annexing Canada.

The war was fought in three principal theatres. Firstly, at sea, warships and privateers of each side attacked the other's merchant ships, while the British blockaded the Atlantic coast of the United States and mounted large-scale raids in the later stages of the war. Secondly, both land and naval battles were fought on the American-Canadian frontier, which ran along the Great Lakes, the Saint Lawrence River and the northern end of Lake Champlain. Thirdly, the American South and Gulf Coast also saw major land battles ...


... the calamities of the planter were aggravated by the declaration of war by the United States – the first object of which was to intercept the convoys from Jamaica ... The planters are now deprived not only of their market for a considerable portion of their produce, but even of the means of keeping what they had: for no substitute could be found for the white oak of America, wherewith to form the casks necessary to contain their rum; while the annual loss in that article alone was ruinous, and discouraging in the extreme ...

Just over a month after the United States declared war on Britain, Francis Graham sailed from Port Royal for London.

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 18 July 1812, page PS 19 – Sailed from Port Royal – includes

16 July – Ship John, Popplewell, for London – Passengers Sailed – In the John: Francis Graham ...

Francis Graham left George William Hamilton (see Chapter 5) in charge of Georgia.


Sir

I beg leave to hand you a Copy of Mr Grahams last letter to you Under the 12th inst. Since then I am happy to inform you his health has been such as to endure him to try a Winter in England – As he does not mean to be more than a few Months absent, he has left the Management of Georgia Under my directions and which I hope will meet your Sanction ...

In September 1812 Edward was living in St Thomas in the East. By early September 1812 Lewis Grant had completed payments for the 139 acres of Georgia land sold to him in 1809 (see Chapter 6) and had named the land Nigg. Then on 5 September 1812 Lewis Grant conveyed to Edward the 10 acres sold to him in 1809 and conveyed to James Reid the 20 acres sold to him in 1809.

Jamaica Island Record Office – Records of Contracts, Old Series, Lib 635, Fol 194 and 195 – Entered Island Secretary’s Office 9 Apr 1814 – two Indentures dated 5 September 1812 – summaries

For £200 Jamaica currency Lewis Grant of St Thomas in the East, planter, conveys to James Reid of St Thomas in the East, planter, 20 acres of Nigg plantation in St Thomas in the East
Jamaica ss

Hereby are represented twenty acres of Land part of Nigg plantation in the parish of St Thomas in the East butting and bounding as above described and is the diagram to which the annexed deed refers. Copied from a survey by P H Keefe in 1809 – by Fras Ramsay

For £100 Jamaica currency Lewis Grant of St Thomas in the East, planter, conveys to Edward Clouston of St Thomas in the East, planter, 10 acres of Nigg plantation in St Thomas in the East – Plan annexed – section

Jamaica ss

Hereby are represented ten acres of Land part of Nigg plantation in the parish of St Thomas in the East butting and bounding as above described and is the diagram to which the annexed deed refers. Copied from a survey by P H Keefe in 1809 – by Fras Ramsay
Lewis Grant (1766-1822) died at Holiday Hill (see map above) in April 1822.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=xHz8pVCiIAC&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Blackwood’s Magazine, July - December 1822 – page 129 – Deaths 1822

April 21 – At Holiday Hill Estate, Jamaica, Lewis Grant, Esq. son of the late Rev. Patrick Grant, minister of Nigg.


Nigg, in northeast Scotland, is on the north side of Cromarty Firth – see below – map of the Black Isle
Google Earth – top right, Trinity Ville on the Negro River – arrows – left points to Cowards Ridge – right points to Georgia

http://www.fiddleweekend.co.uk/ – Black Isle – top right, Nigg
My photo, November 2009 – from the site of Coley sugar works (on the north side of the junction of the road to Trinity Ville with the road to Georgia – see Know How road map above) looking southwest towards Cowards Ridge – the western boundary of Nigg plantation – see Plan above

November 2011 – Georgia looking towards Cowards Ridge

By September 1812 American privateers were plundering and capturing vessels in the Caribbean.
On the 15th inst. about 30 leagues to the Eastward of Point-Morant, the Spanish sloop Isabella, which arrived on Thursday from St Jago de Cuba, was boarded by an American privateer schooner, of one gun and 35 men, which plundered the crew of several articles.

The schooner Sir Eyre Coote, Hewitt, which sailed from Port-Royal on the 1st inst. for St Jago de Cuba, was captured about five o’clock in the morning of the 4th, by the American privateer schooner Wasp, of Baltimore, mounting one six-pounder, and 40 men, a remarkable fast sailer, commanded by one James Taylor, having, as her consort, the schooner Comet, Capt. Lafont, of five guns and 70 men, likewise fitted out at Baltimore. The Wasp, after reaching the Sir Eyre Coote, and not finding any cargo of value, gave her up to Capt. Hewitt, and she reached her destination on the 6th.

The above privateers had, the day preceding, made prize of the schooner Minorca, ----------, also from this port to St Jago de Cuba, and ordered her to New Orleans.

The schooner Rover, Harvey, arrived at St Jago de Cuba on the 5th inst. from this port she was nearly captured by the Wasp and Comet, which chased her for several hours, and ran close after her into the harbour of St Jago, but as they were in the act of hoisting out boats to board the Rover, the guns of the Moro were opened upon them, and they made off with the greatest celerity.

Accounts from St Jago de Cuba state that the schooner Mary, Campbell, from Gonaives bound to this port, with cotton, was captured about 16 days ago by an American privateer schooner, of six guns, and afterwards burnt. She had some days previous also captured a British brig, commanded by a Captain Harris, veryvaluably laden, from Malta, and bound to the Havanna, which was also burnt. Captain Harris and his crew, seven in number, were put into a boat, and had reached Cuba in safety.

An American privateer ship of 24 guns, and 150 men, is stated to be cruising on the Indian Coast [Spanish Main], no doubt for the purpose of intercepting our traders in that direction.

Extract from a letter from a Gentleman in Portland [Jamaica] to his Correspondent in this City, dated the 12th inst.

“At three P.M. two American privateers appeared off the North-East End, and captured a schooner that was apparently beating up for Kingston; they are now triumphantly standing away for the offing, under the thirteen stripes, at the main-peek of the privateer, which is Virginia pilot-boat built, white bottom, black quarter cloths, and has about 30 men; the other a small black sloop, about 20 tons burthen, and seems to have been a capture, and is now fitted out as a consort.”

Extract from another letter from the same Gentleman, dated the 14th inst.

“The privateers still appear off the North East End, close in shore, and it is now ascertained that the schooner captured was the Dawson, Lapear, belonging to Robert Mein, Esq. with rum, sugar, and coffee, from Port Antonio bound to Kingston. The sloop which acts as a consort is a prize; she was the Isabella, the property of Mr Hamilton, of Morant-Bay.”

Port Antonio, Sept 15.

On Saturday morning, about eight o’clock, the schooner Dawson, Capt Lapear, belonging to Robert Mein, Esq. of this place, sailed from hence, deeply laden with sugar, rum, and coffee, bound to Kingston. At about two o’clock P M same day, she was captured within two miles of the shore, to windward of the port, by a light sloop filled with armed men, from a pilot-boat schooner privateer then in company, and which sloop had been previously taken that day; on the same evening the three vessels made sail and stood away to the Northward. – Next morning, however, the schooner and sloop were discovered to windward about four or five miles from port, and shortly after the sea breeze had set in, the sloop was seen to make sail and to come before the wind, obviously directing her course for this anchorage, which she reached about two o’clock, P M on Saturday. By the people whom the privateer liberated, and which landed, from the sloop, we learn that she is an American, with a Commission regularly granted, and is commanded by a man named Taylor, having only 18 or 20 men, remaining out of an original crew of 70 at the time of her sailing, the remainder having been put on board six prizes taken during her cruise, one of which, it is currently reported, is the ship Simon Taylor, Meek.

On Sunday noon, the privateer stood away with a fresh breeze, at E. S. E. to the Northward and Eastward, since then we are informed she has taken her station off the North-East End; could they have
procured the means of pilotage, it is said it was their intention to make a dash at the ship Susan, now lying in the harbour, and nearly half laden. Had they had the temerity to make the attempt, no doubt can be entertained of the warm reception they would have experienced from the spirited and active defence which Captain Morgan and his ship’s company would have made. From annoyance of these privateers, it becomes exceedingly dangerous to send a single boat out for the conveyance of produce to the shipping, as they approach our shores and the mouth of our very harbours with unparalleled audacity, receiving every assistance from St Jago de Cuba to facilitate their purpose.


The American Schooner bore down on the Pylades Sloop of war, mistaking her, but on receiving a shot made sail & escaped hoisting a white flage at her fore ‘Catch me who can’ G.H

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 26 Sep 1812, page PS 18 – extracts

About two o’clock on Sunday, off the White Horses, the Liberty fell in with the sloop Planter, Macnamara, (belonging to Messrs Walker and Biggar of this city), from Port-Morant to this port, with ten sailor negroes on board, and the schooner General Brereton, Thompson, (the property of Messrs Alex Hamilton, of Morant-Bay, and Francis Elliot of this city), from this port bound to Morant-Bay, which vessels had been captured two hours previous by two American privateers, one a large two-top sail schooner, and the other a schooner with a flying topsail. The marauders took the crews and everything of value from the vessels, and cut away the mast of the sloop Planter, and were about to scuttle both of them, when the Liberty hove in sight, upon which they let them go adrift, and made off. The Liberty then took the Planter in tow.

The Spanish schooner Nevis, Corales, belonging to Barocoa, and sloop Lord Forbes, of Port-Antonio, are also stated to have been captured on Sunday, off Yallahs, by these two privateers; but a man of war heaving in sight while they were attempting to scuttle them, the privateers made off when they pursued their respective destinations.

We are sorry to state that a pilot canoe, with four valuable negroes, the property of Mr Robert McEwan, was captured by the above privateers, on Saturday afternoon, off the East end.

The Liberty we understand had taken several prizes while to windward, among them a barque.
By the Sally we learn that a Spanish schooner, from the Main bound to Curacao, was captured about a fortnight ago off that island, by a privateer schooner of three guns and 60 men, under French colours, which, after plundering the schooner of what specie [money] she had on board, and some stores, allowed her to depart.

On the East end the Spanish schooner Maria, which arrived on Tuesday from Porto Rico was boarded by the two American privateers which had captured the schooner General Brereton and sloop Planter. Their names prove to be the Comet and Mary-Ann, and they put on board of her the masters of the above two vessels, and likewise of the sloop Isabella, which they had also captured and scuttled. The last mentioned vessel was twice made a prize of; the first time she was given up, and proceeded to Buff Bay, where she landed some staves, which she was carrying round, and took on board thirty tiers of coffee, with which she was proceeding for this port, when the enemy fell in around her a second time, took possession of her, and scuttled her.

The Commanders of the Comet and Mary-Ann privateers said, when they took out the sailor negroes from the dragging vessels which they captured, that they wanted them to assist in working their vessels, in consequence of their crews being reduced by a number of men having been put on board of prizes, and stated that it was not their intention to carry them to America. They also said that they meant to destroy such captures as had not on board dry goods and money.

The above privateers parted company with the Wasp, another American privateer, on Sunday last; the latter proceeded to leeward, and the two former stood over for the coast of Cuba, for the avowed purpose of intercepting the schooners Rover, Harvey, and Sir Eyre Coote, Hewitt, which they knew were ready to proceed from St Jago to this port. The Comet mounts one long nine-pounder, on a pivot, and two 12 pounders, and has now on board about 70 men. The Mary-Ann one six pounder, which she took out of the brig from Malta, which she had captured, and has on board about 50 men. The Wasp mounts three guns, and has 70 men.

Capt. La Font, of the Comet, stated to the masters of the droggers, that he had boarded, off St Jago, on the 16th inst. the schooner Betsy, in 16 days from New-York, and obtained the perusal of some American papers, which contained accounts of Commodore Rogers’ squadron having fallen in with the June homeward-bound fleet from this island, and captured about 70 sail, with a brig of war, which was in company, and that 40 of them had arrived in different ports, and the remainder had been destroyed. The frigate which conveyed them is said to have had a narrow escape. We sincerely hope that the above reports will prove incorrect, and indeed we are inclined to believe that the whole is a fabrication, as the privateer Poor Sailor, lately made prize of the Garland, left Savanna on the 22nd ult. at which time it was not known there, and the Cyane frigate was off Charleston on the 8th ult. and had no information of such a circumstance.

Cumberland Harbour, in Cuba, appears to be the principal rendezvous for the American privateers. No less than nine of them including some prizes, were very lately in there.

It is said that there are no less than 25 privateers cruising in the Passages, and among them a brig, called Drummond, which mounts 16 guns, and has 150 men on board. The Captain of the Comet is a Frenchman, as is also Sicard, the Captain of the Mary-Ann. They are indifferently armed, and there are frequent quarrels between the crews and the commanders, the latter wishing the cruise at an end. No order of subordination is preserved on board of them.

A ship standing in from the Southward for this port is said to have been captured in the early part of this week, and there is every reason to fear that she is the Helen, from Cartagena, as she been looked for some days past, and is considered a missing vessel.

At the meeting of the Merchants and others concerned in the coasting trade of this island held at the Court-House yesterday, a resolution was passed relative to its present unprotected state, pointing out the number of vessels recently captured, and respectfully soliciting Vice-Admiral Stirling to grant protection to the coast as soon as he shall have it in his power; and a Committee was appointed to wait upon him with the same, which they accordingly did; when the Admiral was pleased to assure them, that he should do every thing in his power to protect the commerce of this island; that two cruisers were already stationed on the coasts, and that other vessels of war were momentarily expected in port, when they should be placed upon the same service; that the squadron should be employed to the best possible advantage; and that he would be ready to adopt any measures calculated for the protection of the island.
La Confiance schooner, of 12 guns, which has been hired temporarily for the use of his Majesty’s service, and manned with 70 seamen, sailed early this morning, under the command of Lieut. William, on a cruise for the protection of the coasting trade of the island.

We understand that the Poor Sailor privateer, during her cruise, captured, in the Gulph, a ship which sailed from this port about the beginning of August, and sent her for Charleston.

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 3 Oct 1812, page PS 19

Morant-Bay, Sept 29.

The privateers have not yet left this quarter. They are occasionally seen a great way off lying to off and on, often altering their course from east to west. We learn, from the Captain of one of the draggers lately captured, that some of the people on board kindly inquired after some Gentlemen here, who probably shewed them great civility some time ago – we should not be surprised were they to land and plunder (probably burn) our houses in return. They well know the little resistance we can make. The Fort which has some good guns on it, is not upon the establishment, although the Custom-House is here. That at Port-Morant is so, and has the advantage of two men being attached to it, for the purpose, no doubt, of working the guns. Should these two men beat off any vessel, they will undoubtedly merit great credit, as they have not had a grain of powder for a length of time.

Falmouth [Jamaica], Sept 30.

On Friday last an American privateer made her appearance on this coast, a little to leeward of Duncan’s, and after taking possession of one of our trading plantain canoes, they took out a white man and four negroes and then cut her adrift. On Sunday she passed by to leeward under easy sail, and when abreast of Little-River, she hove to with her head to the northward. The marauder appeared to be a long low Virginia built pilot-boat, schooner rigged, with one carriage gun, some swivels, a number of sweeps, and may have 40 or 50 men; the very kind of vessel adapted to annoy our coasting trade. Fortunately the sloop Kingston, Robertson, from Montego-Bay, had got in here a few hours before the privateer made her appearance.

Another marauder, a sloop, supposed to be a consort to the schooner, was seen to the leeward on Sunday, and fired at from Rose-Hall estate.

It is certainly remarkable, but within the observation of every one in this quarter, living near or on the sea-side, that since our actual knowledge of the American Declaration of War, now full two months, no King’s vessel has been noticed to be on this coast, or we believe on the northside

On 12 October 1812 Jamaica was hit by a hurricane.

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 17 Oct 1812, page PS 17

During the greater part of Monday there was a considerable fall of rain, with a heavy swell from the Southward, and strong indications of an approaching storm. Between the hours of six and seven of that evening the wind began to blow with great violence, and about midnight had increased to a perfect hurricane, the sea at the same time being dreadfully agitated, passing over the different wharves, and sweeping everything in its overwhelming course. The weather continued in this boisterous state until eight o’clock next morning, when the fury of the wind considerably abated, and copious torrents of rain fell during the remainder of the day. Many out-houses, fences, &c. were blown down in this city on Monday night, great damage done to many of the wharves, and many vessels in the harbour sunk, bilged, and driven ashore: few of them, indeed escaped without damage. On Tuesday evening the weather again became boisterous, and the wind blew violently during that night. On Wednesday, about noon, it ceased, and there were only a few light showers during the latter part of that day.

The wharves which have suffered are those of . . .

Two houses and several fences were blown down in the town of Port-Royal during the gales, and the sea ran so high as to carry away all the turtle-crawles, when about eighty turtles escaped.

The road between Spanish-Town and this city was impassable until yesterday, the water having risen to a height of four feet . . .

The Rio-Cobre was so much swollen that the water reached the top of the arch of the iron bridge, being four feet higher than it has ever been known to rise.
A month later, on Wednesday 11 November, Jamaica was shaken by an earthquake. During the earthquake the walls of the dwelling house on Farm pen were ‘considerably rent’.

British Library – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 14 Nov 1812, page PS 17 – extracts

On Wednesday morning, at twenty minutes past two o’clock, a smart shock of an Earthquake was felt in this city and neighbourhood, and at ten minutes before six three most alarming and tremendous concussions immediately succeeded each other, accompanied by a most dreadful rumbling noise and crash, and continuing for upwards of thirty seconds. There can be little doubt that so awful a visitation of the Divine Providence has not been experienced in this island since the ever-memorable Earthquake by which the town of Port-Royal was destroyed in the year 1602, and we have the utmost cause of gratitude to the Almighty for its cessation at the precise moment of time that it did, for had the latter of these shocks continued a few seconds more, or had there been any further recurrence of them, we have every reason to fear, from the serious extent of the injury sustained by almost every building in this place, that they could not have any longer withstood its effects, and that we might have had a repetition of the direful scenes with which the inhabitants of the Caraccas were afflicted on the fatal 26th of March last... As we have not room in this paper to give a detailed account of the mischief which has been occasioned here by this convulsion of Nature, we shall only select a few instances where buildings have suffered very materially.

The Earthquake was sensibly felt by the vessels which arrived on Wednesday, and the sea appeared visibly agitated.

The Barracks at Up-Park Camp suffered severely... in St Andrew...
At Port-Royal the centre of the south west wall of the Naval Hospital was rent, and the western gable end cracked and started out three or four inches...
The Earthquake was sensibly felt in Port-Royal mountains...
The Earthquake was also severely felt in Spanish-Town...
In Scotland on 24 February 1813 Francis Graham married his second cousin Jamima Charlotte Graham at Edinburgh Castle.

British Library – Inverness Journal and Northern Advertiser, Friday, 5 Mar 1813, page 3 – Marriages

At Edinburgh Castle, Francis Graham of Jamaica, to Jemima [sic] Charlotte, third daughter of Lieutenant Colonel Graham, of the Scots Brigade

See – https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/advanced-search# – Church Registers

Jamima Charlotte’s father Lieutenant Colonel Colin Dundas Graham died at Cromarty House in the Black Isle on 7 July 1828.


July 7. At Cromarty-house Col. Colin Dundas Graham, K.W. Lieut. Governor of St. Mawes. He was appointed Captain in the Scotch brigade in 1798, Major brevet 1802, and Lt. Col. 1809. He was formerly Fort-Major of Edinburgh; and was honoured with the knighthood of the third class of Wilhelm of the Netherlands, for his services while commanding the Scots brigade in the service of that country.

In 1813 war in Europe was going well for Britain and her allies, but the trade of the British West India islands was suffering from lack of protection by the Royal Navy.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 13 Mar 1813, page PS 18 – extracts

Extract of a letter from Gibraltar, dated January 22 to a Gentleman in this City.

“Our business here has been tolerably good for some time past, but we anticipate something very great from the reverses suffered by the French army in the North; and we have a current report here that the French troops in Spain are already on their march towards France. If so, great business will be done here next summer. Lord Wellington was in Cadiz lately, and left it on the 10th inst to join his army, which has already advanced to commence an active campaign...”

A writer in the Times London Print, under the signature of Mercator, makes the following observations:

“The attention of the commercial part of the public has unfortunately of late been much attracted to the unprotected state of our trade in the West Indies. The American privateers have carried their depredations on our commerce in those seas to such an extent, that insurance from Jamaica to England, and from Halifax to the West-Indies, is 30 per cent. This state of affairs, so detrimental to the country at large, but to commercial men in particular, is in my opinion to be attributed to two causes; first, to Government not having a larger force in those seas; and secondly, the appointment, the unprecedented appointment of the Admiral of Halifax [Nova Scotia] to be ‘Commander in Chief on the American, West India, and Jamaica Stations.”

“It is truth beyond contradiction, that on 20th of November there were on the Windward Island station, only one line of battle ship (and that ordered to Bermuda), and one frigate (the Tribune); and the brigs and sloops very few in number; so that by accounts, which may be relied on, it appears there were three American privateers to one British cruiser of any description...”

In mid March 1813 Francis Graham was on his way back to Jamaica.

... Mr Graham I suppose is by this time at sea on his return to this Island ... We are here still much annoyed by American privateers but I trust from the exertions of Sir J B Warren we shall soon again have the seas cleared of this Gentry ...

Francis Graham arrived back in Jamaica in the week ending 19 June 1813, bringing with him his bride Jamima Charlotte – and her eldest sister Margaret Graham and their eldest brother Colin Graham

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 19 Jun 1813, page Sup 9 – Arrived at Port Royal since our last

... June – Ship Earl of Lonsdale, Campbell, from London, Portsmouth, and Barbados

Passengers Arrived: In the Earl of Lonsdale: Francis Graham, Esq, Mrs Graham, Miss Graham, and Master Graham ...

At the end of 1813 Jamaica continued to be ‘much annoyed by American privateers’.

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 18 Dec 1813 – page PS 19

Montego-Bay, Dec 11.

The Americans boast (and with too much reason) that with their trifling Navy they have caused greater losses to Britain than she has hitherto inflicted on them. This island has experienced in an eminent degree the evils resulting from the exertions of America not being met by corresponding energy. It certainly must appear strange that a Power, possessing a thousand public ships, should leave the coasts of one of her most valuable dependencies in the Western World exposed to the depredations of even a paltry privateer. Yet such is the fact. The privateer Saucy Jack, of 13 guns and 120 men, had made a circuit of the island, capturing and plundering almost every vessel which has attempted to navigate from one port or another.

After 5 September 1812, when Edward was described as a planter of St Thomas in the East (see above – 10 acres conveyed to Edward), and by 17 December 1813, he moved from the far southeast of Jamaica to the far southwest – to the parish of Westmorland (or Westmoreland).

http://www.digjamaica.com/parish_evolution – Jamaica Parishes, 1770-1813 – arrow points to Westmoreland
And on 17 December 1813 Edward gave notice of his intention of leaving Jamaica.


Before leaving Jamaica people were required by Jamaica law to ‘have a ticket under the hand of the governor’, and their names ‘put up twenty-one days previously in the secretary’s office’.


... Before persons leave the island, they must have a ticket under the hand of the governor, and their names must be put up twenty-one days previously in the secretary’s office, and oath made by some respectable person that the party has gone by that name for a year, or as long as in the island, affidavit to be filed in secretary’s office, and if he neglects his duty, or otherwise grants a ticket, he is under the penalty of satisfying all the creditors. – If a caveat be entered against the name, the secretary may grant a ticket, on good security being lodged, in a bond to the king in double the amount of debt sworn to; but he must require the party entering into security to justify on oath to the amount of penalty. Secretary not liable to debts unless caveat entered. – 45 Geo. 3, c. 24.

After 17 December 1813 I have no mention of Edward until he arrived back in Jamaica in 1816. As he returned from London, it is, I think, safe to assume that when he left the island in 1814 he was heading for Britain.

In early 1814 great events were happening in Europe. On 29 March 1814 Paris surrendered to the Allies, on 10 April Napoleon abdicated and was exiled to the island of Elba. At last it seemed that the long years of war with the French were over.

While Edward was in Britain, I imagine he visited his family in Orkney.

In 1814 Lieutenant Edward Chappell, R.N. sailed from the Thames estuary on 30 May and arrived at Stromness on 14 June.

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=u0wCTb_KbFgC&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Narrative of a Voyage to Hudson’s Bay in His Majesty’s Ship Rosamond... by Lieut Edward Chappell, RN, published 1817 – page 12-18 – extracts

[1814] JUNE 14th. – In the morning, passed Pentland Frith, in which the tide is like a whirlpool; and, after having run by Long-Hope Harbour, we anchored at Stromness, in the Island of Pomona [Mainland], the principal of the Orkneys; immediately opposite to which is the Isle of Hoy, having on it a remarkable high mountain, in shape very like the rock of Gibraltar. Immediately on our arrival, the two Hudson’s-Bay ships fired seven guns each, to give notice to the inhabitants of their arrival. The visits of the Northwest men, as the Hudson’s-Bay ships are denominated, creates a sort of annual mart, or fair, in the Orkneys; as it is from hence that they derive all the necessary supplies of poultry, beef, vegetables, and even men, to fit them for so long a voyage; – consequently, the Orkney people listen with anxiety for this salute of cannon, which announces the arrival of the N. W. ships; as almost every person in the island is, in some way or other, interested in their coming.

JUNE 15th. – We were employed in watering the ship; and found it difficult to procure a sufficient quantity, owing to a great drought which had lately prevailed.

The town of STROMNESS is an irregular assemblage of dirty huts, with here and there a decent house. There is scarcely any thing deserving the name of a street in the place, although it is said to contain a population of two thousand souls. A few years ago it did not contain above one third of that number. The harbour is small, but very secure; it is defended from the sea by an island called The Holmes; and there is a good roadstead outside the island called the Back of the Holmes. Firewood cannot be procured in the Orkneys, where there are no trees; but Newcastle coal is always cheap... The quantities of grouse, partridge, plover, snipe, &c. in the Orkneys, is astonishing: neither foxes nor hares are to be found; but rabbits are very numerous. There are some spots of good land in the valleys; but in such bad state of cultivation, from idleness and want of manure, that at least five weeds are produced to one blade of corn. Wheat is not grown in any of the islands; the produce consisting, principally, in barley and oats. But the chief export of the Orkneys is kelp, ashes obtained by the burning of sea-weed*, with which all the shores abound: this proves a most valuable acquisition to those gentlemen whose estates border on the sea... The number of tame geese reared in these islands is really surprising: they wander about the barren hills in flocks, like sheep; and the owners give themselves little or no trouble about them, until they are wanted for sale, or for their own consumption.

*The Fucus Vesiculosus of Linnaeus, or Bladder Fucus; called also Sea Oak, and Sea Wrack. The alkaline salt obtained from these ashes is the common carbonate of soda.

JUNE 16th. – I accompanied some of the officers on a shooting party. This circumstance is merely mentioned to introduce a description of the farm-houses; as we visited many of them during our excursion. The delineation of one will answer for all: and surely there never was a scene better fitted for the pencil of a Morland! In one corner stood a calf; in another a sheep and its lambkin; in the next, walled in with loose stones, a piece of sail-cloth served as a bed for the family; and in the fourth corner, as also the sides and roof of the building, were garnished with decayed farming implements. The centre of the habitation was occupied by a turf fire, before which some eaten cakes were roasting; and, in the middle of the roof, a large square hole was cut to allow the smoke to escape. By the side of the fire, in a large and remarkably...
high rush chair, sat an old woman, with a spinning-wheel before her, endeavouring to still the cries of a very dirty infant that lay in her lap. There was also another apartment to the hut, for the accommodation of the cows, of which they had a considerable number. The two rooms were not even divided by a door from each other, and the bare earth was the only flooring of either.

During this day we were still employed in getting water on board, although it is rather difficult to be procured.

*My photos, October 2001 – arriving at Stromness from the Scottish mainland – looking south across Hoy Sound to the Isle of Graemsay and the hills of Hoy – bottom – looking north to Stromness*
Sir George Steuart Mackenzie stopped at Stromness on his way to Iceland in April 1810, and was invited by Rev William Clouston to ‘pass an evening at the manse’ – the manse of Brinnigarth, a little to the west of Stromness.

The town of Stromness... The houses, of which some are very good, are crowded together in the utmost confusion. What is called the street, is a long, narrow, dirty lane, badly paved with flag-stones. It is so narrow in some places that it seems impossible for two wheel-barrows to pass each other. In walking along, it is not unusual to be stopped by the operation of slaughtering a pig, a sheep, or a calf, in the street, which is never cleaned but by heavy rain. The inn is very comfortable, and we had no cause to complain of what was provided for us. There is often a scarcity of wheaten bread, arising from the uncertainty and irregularity of the supply of flour...

We were invited by the Reverend Mr Clouston, the minister of Stromness, to pass an evening at the manse, and were hospitably and agreeably entertained. Before and after tea, brandy, and some excellent cinnamon water manufactured by Mrs Clouston, were handed around.

The state of agriculture in the neighbourhood of Stromness is most wretched; the cottages are filthy; and the inhabitants are very indolent. The black cattle, sheep, and horses, are miserable looking creatures; and the implements of husbandry are of the rudest construction, especially the plough. It seems that the people of Orkney are extremely averse to any innovations on their old practices, and exceedingly jealous of strangers...

In 1814 Edward’s father Rev William Clouston was building a new parish church in Stromness.
Chapter 7. Edward 1811 to 1815

Ecclesiastical State. – The parish church is situate in the town... It was erected in the year 1814. It is in a tolerable state of repair; but, being much exposed to violent storms, the roof almost every year requires repair. It has accommodation for 1200...

Rev William in his Statistical Account of Stromness, published 1794, wrote – The present church... is not large enough to accommodate the people of the parish and village, as the inhabitants of the village have increased greatly since that time (see Chapter 4).

Parish Church, Stromness (built 1814)

Photographic View Album: Orkney, published by John Rae, Stationer, Stromness, no date – Stromness from North – detail – arrow points to the parish church built in 1814
On 29 June 1814 HMS Rosamond sailed from Stromness.
JUNE 18th. – During the whole of the time that we remained at Orkney after this day, we were busily employed in getting all kinds of necessaries on board.

JUNE 29th. – We sailed from Orkney, at 8 a.m. with the two Hudson’s-Bay ships, and the Moravian Missionary brig, in company . . .

The Moravian (United Brethren) Missionary brig was on her way to the Moravian’s mission in Labrador.

Rev William was one of two Orcadians who were ‘especially remembered’ for their attachment to the Moravian’s mission.


Among the departed friends of the Society in the Orkneys, two deserve to be especially remembered. The one, the Rev. Mr. Clouston, the parish minister of Stromness, a truly faithful servant of Christ, whose affection for his Moravian Brethren, and interest in the Mission in Labrador, continued unimpaired till his decease. The other, Mr. David Ramsey, of Kirkwall, a tradesman of moderate means, but of a large heart and liberal hand . . .


These cottages are generally built with stones and clay, or stones and sods, and covered almost every year with a little fresh straw, very ill applied. Such buildings have often the thatch secured by stones suspended to ropes of straw, and hanging on or over the eves of the buildings, which eves are usually
supplied with broad flags or slates, resting on the side walls, to carry off the rain water as it drops from the straw thatch. Buildings of this description can cost little but the expense of labour and roofing, which altogether does not exceed £7 to £9 sterling. It is rather unaccountable that the inhabitants of Orkney, Zetland, and the counties of Caithness and Sutherland, and even of Ross and Inverness-shire, with the Hebrides in general, should apply the straw they use for thatch for their houses so ill as they do. The houses and internal accommodation of the Orcadian peasantry seem, however, superior to those of the same ranks in some of the northern districts of the Mainland of Scotland . . .

As nothing adds more to the comfort and happiness of the lower ranks, than good household accommodation, and as a greater part of the winter season must be spent within doors in Orkney, than in any other part of Scotland, Shetland excepted, it is desirable that attention should be paid to the erection of cottages in convenient, sheltered situations . . .

Laborers or Cottagers. – This is a pretty numerous class in Orkney, chiefly owing to the great demand for kelp burners in the summer months. It is difficult, however, to speak concerning the amount of wages in sterling money, as they are often paid in kind, and with different articles, the value of which cannot be easily computed . . .

Hours of work. – During spring and summer, the hours of labour are from six in the morning to six in the evening, allowing the usual interval in the middle of the day for dinner; but in harvest, the hours of working are from four in the morning to ten in the evening; the interval of rest being when the people are getting their victuals, or at finishing each land or ridge. It must not be supposed, however, that they are employed in the fields during the above hours, their work there being only from light to light; but the men work in the barns at thrashing, or making straw ropes, by lamp light, while the women spin or knit stockings in the house. Even in winter the corns are generally thrashed in Orkney by lamp light, a practice very common through Scotland in former times, though now laid aside in all the improved districts.

But if the hours of labour be long, the number of meals given to farm-servants are many. In the island of Rousay they eat five times a day at all seasons. At six a.m. they have boiled milk and meal, or boiled milk with bread; at nine, a.m. porridge of oatmeal and milk; for dinner, potatoes and fish, with bread, or broth made of meal and potatoes, with butter or suet; about eight p.m. cabbage and potatoes, chopped up with suet or butter, and oatmeal. It has been already stated, that the customs of Orkney differ materially from those of any other part of Scotland; but in no respect is the difference more apparent than in the maintenance of farm-servants.

My photos, October 2001 – Isle of Rousay – looking south to West Mainland
In summer 1814 Walter Scott, as a guest of the Commissioners for the Northern Light House Service, went on a voyage round the coast of Scotland. The Lighthouse yacht sailed from Leith, the port of Edinburgh, north up the east coast and then to Shetland – back south to the Fair Isle, and on south to Orkney. The yacht arrived at Kirkwall on 12 August.


12th August, 1814. – With a good breeze and calm sea we weighed at two in the morning, and worked by short tacks up to Kirkwall bay, and find ourselves in that fine basin upon rising in the morning. The town looks well from the sea, but it is chiefly indebted to the huge cathedral that rises out of the centre. Upon landing we find it but a poor dirty place, especially towards the harbour. Farther up the town are seen some decent old-fashioned houses, and the Sheriff’s interest secures us good lodgings. Marchie goes
Chapter 7. Edward 1811 to 1815

to hunt for a pointer. The morning which was rainy, clears up pleasantly, and Hamilton, Erskine, Duff, and I walk to Malcolm Laing’s, who has a pleasant house [Papdale House] about half a-mile from the town. Our old acquaintance, though an invalid, received us kindly; he looks very poorly, and cannot walk without assistance, but seems to retain all the quick, earnest, and vivacious intelligence of his character, and manner.

Walter Scott’s ‘old acquaintance’ Malcolm Laing was Malcolm Laing of Papdale (1762-1818), the eldest brother of James Laing of Jamaica (see Chapters 4, 5 and 6).

Walter Scott, 12 August 1814 – continued

After this visit the antiquities of the place, viz.: the Bishop’s palace, the Earl of Orkney’s castle, and the cathedral, all situated within a stonecast of each other. The two former are ruinous. The most prominent part of the ruins of the Bishop’s palace is a large round tower, similar to that of Bothwell in architecture, but not equal to it in size... The building is said to have been of great antiquity, but was certainly in a great measure re-edified in the sixteenth century. Fronting this castle or palace of the Bishop, and about a gun-shot distant, is that of the Earl of Orkney. The Earl’s palace was built by Patrick Stewart, Earl of Orkney, the same who erected that of Scalloway, in Shetland. It is an elegant structure, partaking at once of the character of a palace and castle...

We visit the cathedral, dedicated to St Magnus, which greeted the sheriff’s approach with a merry peal. Like that of Glasgow, this church has escaped the blind fury of Reformation. It was founded in 1136, by Ronald, Earl of Orkney, nephew of the Saint. It is of a great size, being 260 feet long, or thereabout, and supported by twenty-eight Saxon pillars, of good workmanship. The Steeple (once a very high spire) rises upon four pillars of great strength, which occupy each angle of the nave. Being destroyed by lightening, it was rebuilt upon a low and curtailed plan. The appearance of the building is rather massive and gloomy than elegant, and many of the exterior ornaments, carvings around the door-ways, etc, have been injured by time. We entered the cathedral, the whole of which is kept locked, swept, and in good order, although
only the eastern end is used for divine worship. There are many tombstones on the floor and elsewhere, some, doubtless, of high antiquity . . .

J G Lockhart’s note – I understand the late Mr Gilbert Laing Meason [died 1832 – another brother of James Laing of Jamaica] left the interest of L.1000 to keep up this cathedral.

Samuel Laing – 1804 – Kirkwall from the West – detail

There are in the street facing the cathedral the ruins of a much more ancient castle; a proper feudal fortress belonging to the Earls of Orkney, but called the King’s Castle. It appears to have been very strong, being situated near the harbour, and having, as appears from the fragments, very massive walls.

We dine at the inn, and drink the Prince Regent’s health, being that of the day – Mr Baikie of Tankerness dines with us.

13th August, 1814. – A bad morning, but clears up. No letters from Edinburgh. The country about Kirkwall is flat, and tolerably cultivated. We see oxen generally wrought in the small country carts, though they have a race of ponies, like those of Shetland, but larger. Marchie goes to shoot on a hill called Whiteford, which slopes away about two or three miles from Kirkwall. The grouse is abundant, for the gentleman who chaperons Marchie killed thirteen brace and a half, with a snipe. There are no partridges nor hares. The soil of Orkney is better, and its air more genial than Shetland; but it is far less interesting, and possesses none of the wild and peculiar character of the more northern archipelago. All vegetables grow here freely in the gardens, and there are one or two attempts at trees where they are sheltered by walls. How ill they succeed may be conjectured from our bringing a quantity of brushwood, commissioned by Malcolm Laing from Aberbrothock, to be sticks for his pease. This trash we brought two hundred miles. I have little to add, except that the Orkney people have some odd superstitions about a stone on which they take oaths to Odin. Lovers often perform this ceremony in pledge of mutual faith, and are said to account it a sacred engagement. It is agreed that we go on board after dinner, and sail with the next tide... On board at ten o’clock, after a little bustle in expediting our domestics, washerwomen, etc.

14th August, 1814. – Sail about four, and in rounding the main land of Orkney, called Pomona, encounter a very heavy sea; about ten o’clock, get into the Sound of Holm or Ham, a fine smooth current meandering-away between two low green islands, which have little to characterise them. On the right of the Sound is the mainland, and a deep bay called Scalpa Flow indents it up to within two miles of Kirkwall... Getting out of the Sound of Holm, we stand into the harbour or roadstead of Widewall, where we find seven or eight foreign vessels bound for Ireland, and a sloop belonging to the lighthouse service. These roadsteads are common all through the Orkneys and afford excellent shelter for small vessels...

15th August, 1814. – Fine morning; we get again into the Pentland Frith...

... We creep slowly up Hoy Sound, working under the Pomona shore; but there is no hope of reaching Stromness till we have the assistance of the evening tide. The channel now seems like a Highland loch; not the least ripple on the waves. The passage is narrowed, and (to the eye) blocked up by the interposition of the green and apparently fertile isle of Graemsay, the property of Lord Armadale. Hoy looks yet grander, from comparing its black and steep mountains with this verdant isle. To add to the beauty of the Sound, it is rendered lively by the successive appearance of seven or eight whaling vessels from the Davies’ Straits; large strong ships, which pass successively, with all their sails set, enjoying the little wind that is. Many of these vessels display the garland; that is, a wreath of ribbons which the young fellows on board have got from their sweethearts, or come by otherwise, and which hangs between the foremast and mainmast, surmounted sometimes by a small model of the vessel. This garland is hung up upon the 1st May, and remains till they come into port. I believe we shall dodge here till the tides makes about nine, and then get into Stromness; no boatman or sailor in Orkney thinks of the wind in comparison of the tides and currents. We must not complain, though the night gets rainy, and the Hill of Hoy is now completed invested with vapour and mist...

16th August, 1814. – Get into Stromness Bay, and anchor before the party are up. A most decided rain all night. The bay is formed by a deep indentation in the mainland, or Pomona; on one side of which stands Stromness – a fishing village and harbour of call for the Davies’ Straits whalers, as Lerwick is for the Greenlanders. Betwixt the vessels we met yesterday, seven or eight which passed us this morning, and several others still lying in the bay, we have seen between twenty or thirty of these large ships in this remote place. The opposite side of Stromness bay is protected by Hoy, and Graemsay lies between them; so that the bay seems quite land-locked, and the contrast between the mountains of Hoy, the soft verdure of Graemsay, and the swelling hill of Orphir, on the mainland, has a beautiful effect. The day clears up, and Mr. Rae, Lord Armadale’s factor, comes off from his house, called Clestrom, upon the shore opposite Stromness, to breakfast with us. We go ashore with him. His farm is well cultivated, and he has procured an excellent breed of horses from Lanarkshire, of which country he is a native; strong hardy Galloways, fit
for labour or hacks. By this we profited, as Mr. Rae mounted us all, and we set off to visit the Standing Stones of Stenhouse or Stennis.

At the upper end of the bay, about half way between Clestrum and Stromness, there extends a loch of considerable size, of fresh water, but communicating with the sea by apertures left in a long bridge or causeway which divides them. After riding about two miles along this lake, we open another called the Loch of Harray, of about the same dimensions, and communicating with the lower lake, as the former does with the sea, by a stream, over which is constructed a causeway, with openings to suffer the flow and reflux of the water, as both lakes are affected by the tide. Upon the tongues of land which, approaching each other, divide the lakes of Stennis and Harray, are situated the Standing Stones. The isthmus on the eastern side exhibits a semicircle of immensely large upright pillars of unhewn stone, surrounded by a mound of earth. As the mound is discontinued, it does not seem that the circle was ever completed. The flat or open part of the semicircle looks up a plain, where, at a distance, is seen a large tumulus. The highest of these stones may be about sixteen or seventeen feet, and I think there are none so low as twelve feet. At irregular distances are pointed out other unhewn pillars of the same kind. One, a little to the westward, is perforated with a round hole, perhaps to bind a victim; or rather, I conjecture, for the purpose of solemnly attesting the deity, which the Scandinavians did by passing their head through a ring, – vide Eyrbigga Saga. Several barrows are scattered around this strange monument. Upon the opposite isthmus is a complete circle, of ninety-five paces in diameter, surrounded by standing stones, less in size than the others, being only from ten or twelve to fourteen feet in height, and four in breadth. A deep trench is drawn around this circle on the outside of the pillars, and four tumuli, or mounds of earth, are regularly placed, two on each side.

Stonehenge excels these monuments, but I fancy they are otherwise unparalleled in Britain. The idea that such circles were exclusively Druidical is now justly exploded. The northern nations all used such erections to mark their places of meeting, whether for religious purposes or civil policy; and there is
repeated mention of them in the Sagas. See the Eyrbiggia Saga, for the establishment of the Helga-fels, or holy mount, where the people held their Comitia, and where sacrifices were offered to Thor and Woden. About the centre of the semicircle is a broad flat stone, probably once the altar on which human victims were sacrificed. – Mr. Rae seems to think the common people have no tradition of the purpose of these stones, but probably he has not inquired particularly. He admits they look upon them with superstitious reverence; and it is evident that those which have fallen down (about half the original number) have been wasted by time, and not demolished. The materials of these monuments lay near, for the shores and bottom of the lake are of the same kind of rock. How they were raised, transported, and placed upright, is a puzzling question. In our ride back, noticed a round entrenchment, or tumulus, called the Hollow of Tongue.

Off Stromness, 17th August 1814. – Went on shore after breakfast ... Stromness is a little dirty straggling town, which cannot be traversed by a cart, or even by a horse, for there are stairs up and down, even in the principal streets. We paraded its whole length like turkeys in a string, I suppose to satisfy ourselves that there was a worse town in the Orkneys than the metropolis, Kirkwall. We clomb [sic] by steep and dirty lanes, an eminence rising above the town, and commanding a fine view. An old hag lives in a wretched cabin on this height, and subsists by selling winds. Each captain of a merchantman, between jest and earnest, gives the old woman sixpence, and she boils her kettle to procure a favourable gale. She was a miserable figure; upwards of ninety, she told us, and dried up like a mummy. A sort of clay-coloured cloak, folded over her head, corresponded in colour to her corpse-like complexion. Fine light-blue eyes, and nose and chin that almost met, and a ghastly expression of cunning, gave her quite the effect of Hecate. She told us she remembered Gow the pirate, who was born near the House of Clestrom, and afterwards commenced buccanier. He came to his native country about 1725, with a snow which he commanded, carried off two women from one of the islands, and committed other enormities. At length, while he was dining in a house in the island of Eda, the islanders, headed by Malcolm Laing’s grandfather, made him prisoner, and sent him to London, where he was hanged. While at Stromness, he made love to a Miss Gordon, who pledged her faith to him by shaking hands, an engagement which, in her idea, could not be dissolved without her going to London to seek back again her ‘faith and troth,’ by shaking hands with him again after execution. We left our Pythoness, who assured us there was nothing evil in the intercession she was to make for us, but that we were only to have a fair wind through the benefit of her prayers. She repeated a sort of rigmarole which I suppose she had ready for such occasions, and seemed greatly delighted and surprised with the amount of our donation, as every body gave her a trifle, our faithful Captain Wilson making the regular offering on behalf of the ship. So much for buying a wind. Bessy Millie’s habitation is airy enough for Æolus himself, but if she is a special favourite with that divinity, he has a strange choice. In her house I remarked a quern, or hand-mill. – A cairn, a little higher, commands a beautiful view of the bay, with its various entrances and islets ...
... On board at half-past three, and find Bessy Millie a woman of her word, for the expected breeze has sprung up, if it but lasts us till we double Cape Wrath. Weigh anchor (I hope) to bid farewell to Orkney.

The land in Orkney is, generally speaking, excellent, and what is not fitted for the plough, is admirably adapted for pasture. But the cultivation is very bad, and the mode of using these extensive commons, where they tear up, without remorse, the turf of the finest pasture, in order to make fuel, is absolutely execrable. The practice has already peeled and exhausted much fine land, and must in the end ruin the country entirely. In other respects, their mode of cultivation is to manure for barley and oats, and then manure again, and this without the least idea of fallow or green crops. Mr Rae thinks that his example – and he farms very well – has had no effect upon the natives, except in the article of potatoes, which they now cultivate a little more, but crops of turnips are unknown. For this slovenly labour the Orcadians, like the Shetland men, plead the occupation of fishing, which is wholly neglected by them, except that about this time of year all the people turn out for the dogfish; the liver of which affords oil, and the bodies are a food as much valued here by the lower classes as it is contemned in Zetland [Shetland]. We saw nineteen boats out at this work. But cod, tusk, ling, haddocks, etc, which abound round these isles, are totally neglected. Their inferiority in husbandry is therefore to be ascribed to the prejudices of the people, who are all peasants of the lowest order ...

Six o’Clock. – Our breeze has carried us through the Mouth of Hoy, and so into the Atlantic. The north-western face of the island forms a ledge of high perpendicular cliffs ... Enough of memoranda for the present. We have hitherto kept our course pretty well; and a King’s ship about eighteen guns or so, two miles upon our lea-boom, has shortened sail, apparently to take us under her wing, which may not be altogether unnecessary in the latitude of Cape Wrath, where several vessels have been taken by Yankee-Doodle ...

My photo, October 2001 – West Mainland – looking south
When Walter Scott’s novel *The Pirate* (set in Shetland and Orkney) was first published in 1822, it was by the author of ‘*Waverley, Kenilworth, &c*’ whose identity was not then known.


... The publication of the *Pirate* satisfied the natives of Orkney as to the real authorship of the *Waverley Novels*. It was remarked by those who accompanied Sir Walter Scott, in his excursions in these islands [in summer 1814], that the vivid descriptions which the work contains, were confined to those scenes which he visited...

By 1831 Walter Scott had acknowledged that he was the author of the *Waverley Novels*.


... I saw much in the wild islands of the Orkneys and Zetland, which I judged might be made in the highest degree interesting, should these isles ever become the scene of a narrative of fictitious events. I learned the history of Gow the pirate from an old sibyl... whose principal subsistence was by a trade in favourable winds, which she sold to mariners at Stromness. Nothing could be more interesting than the kindness and hospitality of the gentlemen of Zetland, which was to me the more affecting, as several of them had been friends and correspondents of my father.

I was induced to go a generation or two farther back, to find materials from which I might trace the features of the old Norwegian Udaller, the Scottish gentry having in general occupied the place of that primitive race, and their language and peculiarities of manner having entirely disappeared...
Cloustones believed that Walter Scott ‘took the characters of Mina and Brenda’, the heroines of The Pirate, from Rev William’s daughters Jane and Anne.

Stewart, Balfour (1828-1887), physicist and meteorologist, born at Edinburgh on 1 Nov 1828, was a son of William Stewart, a tea merchant of Leith, and his wife Jane, daughter of Rev William Clouston. William Stewart belonged to the Stewarts of Brough [or Brugh], Orkney, who at one time owned the Fair Isle and other land. This property was subsequently left by a cousin of Balfour Stewart to charities and formed ‘the Stewart Endowment’ of which Sir Walter Scott was a trustee. According to family tradition, Scott took the characters of Minna and Brenda in the ‘Pirate’ from Jane Clouston and her sister.

Above – cousin of Balfour Stewart = James Stewart (1811-1858) 7th of Brugh. James Stewart 6th of Brugh was a half brother of Professor Balfour Stewart’s father William Stewart. Walter Scott in his diary on 26 November 1826 mentioned James Stewart (7th) of Brugh.

In the mid 19th century it was suggested that the character Magnus Troil in The Pirate was taken from an Orkney Traill, and his house, Brugh-Westra in Shetland, was taken from Cleat House, Archibald Stewart of Brugh’s house on the Isle of Westray, Orkney – see Chapter 4.

Robert Stewart Clouston (Rev Charles Clouston’s youngest son) believed that his grandfather Rev William was the model for the character Claud Halcro in The Pirate.

Orkney Library and Archives – letter, dated ? early 1900s (date cropped from copy supplied by Merv Clouston) from Robert Stewart Clouston to J Storer Clouston (author of The Family of Clouston – see Chapter 4) – R S Clouston, referring to Rev William, wrote – ‘I believe myself that he must have suggested to Scott the character of Claud Halcro’.

Claud Halcro, a kindly old man but a bit of a bore, enjoys reciting his own verses and talking about the time he spent in London in his youth. Rev William, in his proposal letter to his future wife Isabella wrote – ‘I send you enclosed a few verses I composed to amuse myself... by some Friends at London I was esteemed a Poet & a Preacher’ – see Chapter 4.

Robert Stewart Clouston in his letter, above, to J Storer Clouston described how his father Rev Charles Clouston (aged 14 in 1814) ‘as a boy’ caught a wounded whale in Stromness harbour.
Perhaps the most astonishingly original thing he [Rev Charles Clouston] did was to catch a wounded whale with a boat’s painter. This is not a tall yarn – it is absolutely true. It was as a boy, when a shoal of whales came into Stromness harbour. No end of boats were out with harpoons etc, and boats were careering all over the harbour that had ‘got fast.’ Muskets were also being used, and my father and some other lads saw a wounded whale floating on top of the water. They stole up behind, and my father making a running noose in the rope, slipped it – of course at considerable risk – over the whales tail, and in another moment they were also tearing over the water. “How on earth did you get fast?” someone yelled at them. “Oh! just tied a rope round her tail,” which of course nobody believed till the whale, wounded, suddenly vomited a lot of blood and lay dead on the surface. It was, however, the boys’ whale by the regulations of the sport, and my father’s share came to over £1 which was a very welcome addition to his pocket money.

The story of Rev Charles Clouston catching a whale in Stromness harbour reminds me of the story in Walter Scott’s *The Pirate* of a whale stranded in the shallows being lassoed by a rope around its tail.

... there was a long period to be filled up before dinner; for the most protracted breakfast cannot well last above an hour; and it was feared that Claud Halcro meditated the occupation of the vacant morning with a formidable recitation of his own verses, besides telling, at its full length, the whole history of his introduction to glorious John Dryden. But fortune relieved the guests of Burgh-Westra from the threatened infliction, by sending them means of amusement peculiarly suited to their tastes and habits.
Most of the guests were using their toothpicks, some were beginning to talk of what was to be done next, when, with haste in his step, fire in his eyes, and a harpoon in his hand, Eric Scrambester came to announce to the company, that there was a whale on shore, or nearly so, at the throat of the voe! Then you might have seen such a joyous, boisterous, and universal bustle, as only the love of sport, so deeply implanted in our nature, can possibly inspire . . .

The multifarious stores of Burgh-Westra were rummaged hastily for all sorts of arms, which could be used on such an occasion. Harpoons, swords, pikes, and halberds, fell to the lot of some; others contented themselves with hay-forks, spits, and what ever else could be found, that was long and sharp. Thus hastily equipped, one division, under the command of Captain Cleveland, hastened to man the boats which lay in the little haven, while the rest of the party hurried by land to the scene of action.

The situation in which the enemy’s ill fate had placed him was particularly favourable to the enterprise of the islanders. A tide of unusual height had carried the animal over a large bar of sand, into the voe or creek in which he was now lying. So soon as he found the water ebbing, he became sensible of his danger, and had made desperate efforts to get over the shallow water, where the waves broke on the bar; but hitherto he had rather injured rather than mended his condition, having got himself partly aground, and lying therefore particularly exposed to the meditated attack. At this moment the enemy came down upon him. The front ranks consisted of the young and hardy,

As the boats had to double a little headland, ere they opened the mouth of the voe, those who came by land to the shores of the inlet, had time to make the necessary reconnaissances upon the force and situation of the enemy, on whom they were about to commence a simultaneous attack by land and sea.

This duty, the stout-hearted and experienced general, for so the Udaller [Manus Troil of Burgh-Westra] might be termed, would entrust to no eyes but his own; and, indeed, his external appearance, and his sage conduct, rendered him alike qualified for the command which he enjoyed. His gold-laced hat was exchanged for a bearskin cap, his suit of blue broadcloth, with its scarlet lining, and loops, and frogs of bullion, had given place to a red flannel jacket, with buttons of black horn, over which he wore a seal-skin shirt curiously seamed and plaited on the bosom, such as are used by the Esquimaux, and sometimes by the Greenland whale-fishers. Sea-boots of a formidable size completed his dress, and in his hand he held a large whaling-knife, which he brandished, as if impatient to employ it in the operation of flinching the huge animal which lay before them, – that is, the act of separating its flesh from its bones. Upon closer examination, however, he was obliged to confess, that the sport to which he had conducted his friends, however much it corresponded with the magnificent scale of his hospitality, was likely to be attended with its own peculiar dangers and difficulties.

The animal, upwards of sixty feet in length, was lying perfectly still, in a deep part of the voe into which it had weltered, and where it seemed to await the return of the tide, of which it was probably assured by instinct. A council of experience harpooners was instantly called, and it was agreed that an effort should be made to noose the tail of this torpid leviathan, by casting a cable around it, to be made fast by anchors to the shore, and thus to secure against his escape, in case the tide should make before they were able to despatch him. Three boats were destined to this delicate piece of service, one of which the Udaller himself proposed to command, while Cleveland and Mertoun were to direct the two others. This being decided, they sat down on the strand, waiting with impatience until the naval part of the force should arrive in the voe . . .

The three boats destined for this perilous service, now approached the dark mass, which lay like an islet in the deepest part of the voe, and suffered them to approach without showing any sign of animation. Silently, and with such precaution as the extreme delicacy of the operation required, the intrepid adventurers, after the failure of their first attempt, and the expenditure of considerable time, succeeded in casting the cable around the body of the torpid monster, and carrying the ends of it ashore, when an hundred hands were instantly employed in securing them. But ere this was accomplished the tide began to make fast, and the Udaller informed his assistants, that either the fish must be killed, or at least greatly wounded, ere the depth of water on the bar was sufficient to float him; or that he was not unlikely to escape from their joint prowess.

“Wherefore,” said he, “we must set to work, and the factor shall have the honour to make the first throw.”

The valiant Triptolemus caught the word; and it is necessary to say that the patience of the whale, in suffering himself to be noosed without resistance, had abated his terrors, and very much lowered the
creature in his opinion. He protested the fish had no more wit, and scarcely more activity, than a black snail; and, influenced by this undue contempt of adversary, he waited neither for a further signal, nor a better weapon, nor a more suitable position, but, rising in his energy, hurled his grasp with all his force against the unfortunate monster. The boats had not yet retreated from him to the distance necessary to insure safety, when this injudicious commencement of the war took place.


Magnus Troil, who had only jested with the factor, and had reserved the launching the first spear against the whale to some more skilful hand, had just time to exclaim, “Mind yourselves, lads, or we are all swamped!” when the monster, roused at once from inactivity by the blow of the factor’s missile, blew, with a noise resembling the explosion of a steam-engine, a huge shower of water into the air, and at the same time began to lash the waves with his tail in every direction. The boat in which Magnus presided received the shower of brine which the animal spouted aloft; and the adventurous Triptolemus, who had a full share of the immersion, was so much astonished and terrified by the consequences of his own valorous deed, that he tumbled backwards amongst the feet of the people, who, too busy to attend to him, were
actively engaged in getting the boat into shoal water, out of the whale’s reach. Here he lay for some minutes, trampled on by the feet of the boatmen, until they lay on their oars to bale, when the Udaller ordered them to pull to shore, and land this spare hand, who had commenced the fishing so inauspiciously.

While this was doing, the other boats had also pulled off to safer distance, and now, from these as well as from the shore, the unfortunate native of the deep was overwhelmed by all kinds of missiles, – harpoons and spears flew against him on all sides – guns were fired, and each various means of annoyance plied which could excite him to exhaust his strength in useless rage. When the animal found that he was locked in by shallows on all sides, and became sensible, at the same time, of the strain of the cable on his body, the convulsive efforts which he made to escape, accompanied with sounds resembling deep and loud groans, would have moved the compassion of all but a practiced whale-fisher. The repeated showers which he spouted into the air began now to be mingled with blood, and the waves which surrounded him assumed the same crimson appearance. Meantime the attempts of the assailants were redoubled; but Mordaunt Mertoun and Cleveland, in particular, exerted themselves to the uttermost, contending who should display most courage in approaching the monster, so tremendous in its agonies, and should inflict the most deep and deadly wounds upon its huge bulk.

The contest seemed at last pretty well over; for although the animal continued from time to time to make frantic exertions for liberty, yet its strength appeared so much exhausted, that, even with the assistance of the tide, which had now risen considerably, it was thought it could scarcely extricate itself. Magnus Troil gave the signal to venture nearer to the whale, calling out at the same time, “Close in, lads, he is not half so mad now – The Factor may look for a winter’s oil for the two lamps at Harfa – Pull close in, lads.”

Ere his orders could be obeyed, the other two boats had anticipated his purpose; and Mordaunt Mertoun, eager to distinguish himself above Cleveland, had, with the whole strength he possessed, plunged a half-spike into the body of the animal. But the leviathan, like a nation whose resources appear totally exhausted by previous losses and calamities, collected his whole remaining force for an effort, which proved at once desperate and successful. The wound, last received, had probably reached through his external defences of blubber, and attained some very sensitive part of the system; for he roared aloud, as he sent to the sky a mingled sheet of brine and blood, and snapping the strong cable like a twig, overset Mertoun’s boat with a blow of his tail, shot himself, by a mighty effort, over the bar, upon which the tide had now risen considerably, and made out to sea, carrying with him a whole grove of the implements which had been planted in his body, and leaving behind him, on the waters, a dark red trace of his course.

“There goes to sea your cruse of oil, Master Yellowley,” said Magnus, “and you must consume mutton suet, or go to bed in the dark.”

“Operam et oleum periddi,” muttered Triptolemus; “but if they catch me whale-fishing again, I will consent that the fish shall swallow me as he did Jonah.”

John Franklin, on his way to the Arctic in 1819, arrived at Stromness on 4 June.

Robert Hood, midshipman with Franklin, wrote in his Journal that during the time they were at Stromness they lived in a house that was ‘fortunately in the neighbourhood of the manse, which was occupied by Mr. Clouston’.


... on the 4th of June [1819] we were enabled to cast anchor at Stromness, in Mainland, the principal of the Orkney Islands. Having procured a house situated on a little eminence near Hoy Sound, we landed the instruments and books, and took up our residence there during our stay. We were fortunately in the neighbourhood of the manse, which was occupied by Mr. Clouston, the minister of Stromness. This venerable and hospitable man had received the visits of almost every northern discoverer since the time of Cook, and he conferred that honourable title upon us in advance, by the kindness of his reception.
Robert Hood – June 1819 – View of Stromness


John Franklin in his Narrative wrote that during their stay at Stromness in 1819, he and his party ‘experienced almost daily’ Rev William and family’s ‘kind hospitality and polite attention’.
Mr. Geddes, the agent of the Hudson’s Company at this place, undertook to communicate my wish for volunteer boatmen to the different parishes, by a notice on the church-door, which he said was the surest and most direct channel for the conveyance of information to the lower classes in these islands, as they invariably attend divine service there every Sunday. He informed me that the kind of men we were in want of would be difficult to procure, on account of the very increased demand for boatmen for the herring fishery, which has recently been established on the shores of these islands: that last year sixty boats and four hundred men only were employed in this service, whereas now there were three hundred boats and twelve hundred men engaged: and that owing to this unexpected addition to the fishery, he had been unable to provide the number of persons required for the service of the Hudson’s Bay Company...

Next to a supply of boatmen, our attention was directed towards the procuring of a house conveniently situated for trying the instruments, and examining the rates of the chronometers. Mr. Geddes kindly offered one of his, which, though in an unfinished state, was readily accepted, being well situated for our purposes, as it was placed on an eminence, had a southern aspect, and was at a sufficient distance from the town to secure us from frequent interruptions. Another advantage was its proximity to the Manse, the residence of the Rev. Mr. Clouston, the worthy and highly respected minister of Stromness: whose kind hospitality and polite attention of his family, the party experienced almost daily during their stay.

... Mr. Back and Mr. Hood took views and sketches of the surrounding scenery, which is very picturesque in many parts, and wants only the addition of trees to make it beautiful. The hills present the bold character of rugged sterility, whilst the valleys, at this season, are clothed with luxuriant verdure.

*My photos, October 2001 – West Mainland – looking northeast towards the Isle of Rousay*
John Franklin in his *Narrative* (above) was told by Mr Geddes – ‘the kind of men we were in want of would be difficult to procure, on account of the very increased demand for boatmen for the herring fishery, which has recently been established on the shores of these islands’.

[http://orkneyarchive.blogspot.co.uk/2012/11/tk1561-stromness-harbour-have-new-item.html](http://orkneyarchive.blogspot.co.uk/2012/11/tk1561-stromness-harbour-have-new-item.html) – T.K. – no date – Fishing Boats Returning, Stromness
The Orkney Herring Fishery was established by Samuel Laing, the youngest brother of James Laing of Jamaica. In 1816 Samuel was in financial difficulties and James suggested – ‘the supplying of his estates in Jamaica with herrings’.


... year after year I found my means diminishing until at last I went up to London to consult my brother James what I should do. He was then living in splendour like all West Indians. He suggested the supplying of his estates in Jamaica with herrings. This was the origin of the Herring Fishery in Orkney. He introduced me to a mercantile house, Messrs. Thomas Spenser & Co, who could obtain orders for shipping herrings to a great amount from a West India House of great eminence, Messrs. Baring, provided the herrings could be obtained cheap enough and of good quality. I proceeded to Orkney, collected coopers and materials, and prepared for curing herrings on an extensive scale.

While I was engaged in the last and desperate attempt to secure some source of income, an event took place of which I have taken notice before, the death of Mr. Jaques of Jamaica, and the alteration of his Will from leaving his property to my father’s children, according to the copy of memorandum of it sent home some years before by my brother James, to leaving all his property to my brother James and his family. In consequence of this alteration, my brother Malcolm made his Will in my favour.

I went however, but with a lighter heart, to carry into effect the Fishing Scheme. There were no boats at that time in the North Isles. I brought down six boats with their crews from Fifeshire; gave them a bounty of eighty pounds sterling each boat fish or no fish, but if they caught any fish the value of them at the rate of sixteen shillings per cran was to be deducted from this bounty or advance. No herrings had ever been caught in the North Isles although a few had been caught and cured in the South Isles of Orkney. I fixed on Papa Sound in Stronsay for my Station for the following reasons; the harbour is good, safe, and of the easiest access to the sea of any in Orkney, as in ten minutes a boat is out at sea free from the tides and currents which are found among the Islands; the place at which the curing could be carried on belonged to my brother Malcolm, and at that time the opposite Island of Papa Stronsay belonged to my brother Gilbert. There was also an empty storehouse which served for the Company and was no slight inducement as it saved the expense of building. As I knew nothing of the business of making barrels or curing herrings, it may be supposed I had much to do. Now that I do know something of the business, and have seen the proceedings of many other curers both on a small scale and a great scale, I have the gratification to know that no great error in the economy of the undertaking was committed.

The uncertainty of finding herrings at all was the only circumstance that savoured of imprudence in the expense incurred. After the arrival of the Cellar Dyke boats at Papa Sound they went out to sea; morning after morning they returned empty. The few Orkney people who had been induced to fit out boats were in despair. I arose every morning between three and four o’clock, and sat on the beach to await the return of the boats from the fishing ground. My reflections at having led Messrs. Spenser & Co into so great an outlay of money were not comfortable.

One fine July morning, I think the 10th July 1816, I was sitting on the rocks in the grey morning watching the return of the boats. They appeared through the glass different from usual. I could not understand it. It never occurred to me that they were loaded. Loaded they were with herrings of the finest quality. The fishing that season was great, and from the high price of fish, sixteen shillings per cran, it was most profitable to the fishermen. The next season there were 400 boats fitted out in Orkney. The fishing was again favourable and the price high. The Orkney Herring Fishery was established. For some years the House of Spencer & Co took all the fish, repacked them and shipped off to the West Indies.

It appears to have answered them not from the direct profit on the fish but from the indirect profit of the home freight of the vessels...

... The yearly value of fish caught in Orkney is greater now than the yearly value of all its other produce. The Herring Fishery has diffused comfort, intelligence, independence, and enterprise among the lower classes. It has saved the small tenantry from being displaced, as they must have been on the failure of Kelp, to make way for larger and more profitable tenantry, for they are now able without Kelp making to pay high rents. It has raised them many degrees above their former almost slavish condition under tacksman [leaseholder, especially a tenant who sublets]. I can honestly take to myself the credit of having introduced the branch of industry, this great and unmixed good, into Orkney.
Kirbister Farm Museum, Orkney

In Robert Stewart Clouston’s picture, above, the high backed chair on the right is an ‘Orkney chair’ – a chair with the back made of straw.

http://www.potterwrightandwebb.co.uk/wood-2/the-orkney-chair – an Orkney chair

HMS Rosamond, on her return from her 1814 voyage to Hudson’s Bay, arrived at Stromness on 19 October 2014.

We remained at the Orkneys nineteen days before the other Hudson’s-Bay ship arrived from thence [Hudson’s Bay]. . .

A few straggling remarks, made during our stay at the Orkneys, will conclude this Journal.

Entering Stromness Harbour, by the Hoy Passage, the view on either hand is extremely awful and sublime. Hoy Head is a tremendous height; and it appears doubly so from a ship sailing near to it, as the western side of this craggy mountain is nearly perpendicular; so much so, indeed, that it obtained the appellation of Hoy Walls. At a particular part of this awful cliff, an immense rent has torn a large fragment from the wall; and this huge disjointed mass is now washed, on all sides, by the most terrific breakers. It stands however erect, repelling all their shocks; and it has assumed so completely the human form, as to be styled the Old Man of Hoy. This gigantic figure may be about five hundred feet high.

If the lowness of the eastern shore gives it a less grand appearance, yet the ledges of sunken rocks, on which many a gallant vessel has perished, together with the horrid breakers roaring mountain high above them, do not fail to inspire a spectator with equal awe and terror.
Chapter 7. Edward 1811 to 1815

The Snook, Hoy

The Old Man of Hoy
Near the Berry-head, Hoy – looking south across Pentland Firth to the Scottish mainland

Following the surrender of the French and abdication of Napoleon in 1814, British servicemen were freed up for the war with the United States. On 24 August 1814 British forces captured Washington and set fire to many public buildings, including the White House.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat 8 Oct 1814, page PS 17

The schooner Caridad, which arrived here on Sunday from St Jago de Cuba, brought Philadelphia papers to the 30th August, which had been received by an arrival at that port few days previous to her departure. The important intelligence, given in this day’s publication, is copied from there.

The city of Washington, the seat of the American Government, had been captured by an army which is stated to have amounted to 6000 men, under the command of Major-General …., when the American force was completely put to flight, and discomfited at every point. – President Madison had been with the army, but he retired from the scene of action immediately a retreat was ordered, and met his Lady at George-Town, she having left the city only half an hour before he did; he afterwards with the Secretary of State, and their families, proceeded to Virginia; the other Officers of Government retired to Frederick-Town, where the Government was to be formed. The President’s house, the capitol, and most of the public buildings, were burnt. The greatest disorder prevailed among the American troops, and it would appear that their Commissariat department was in a wretched state, as they were in want of food and every article necessary for troops, who ought to have been prepared, in every respect, from being on their own territory, to repel an invading army.

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat 12 Nov 1814, page PS 17

The following is an extract of a letter from Quebec, dated the 18th September last:

For my own part I entertain very little hopes of a peace taking place, as some sanguine people seem to calculate – the die is now completely cast, and the late depredations on the southern territory, the destruction of Washington, &c leave a sting in the tail which will require all the energy of England to blunt. And unfortunately I have to announce to you another calamity, that of the complete annihilation of
our flotilla on Lake Champlain, and the subsequent retreat of ten to twelve thousand veteran troops before
an handful of ragged militia at Plattsburgh, within the state of New York, Wellington’s heroes, to our
shame be it repeated, but not with them lays the blame. The navy calls out loudly that they were sacrificed
by the inactivity, or rather want of co-operation, of the Army under the personal command of the General
in Chief, in attacking land batteries and gun-boats, which completely occasioned the defeat of our fleet, as
they had the enemy

The Dispatches from the American Plenipotentiaries, deputed to negociate a peace with Great-Britain,
had arrived in the John Adam’s, and reached the city of Washington, and were communicated to Congress
on the 10th ult, by the President, the insertion of the whole of which we regret that our limits will not allow
this week. The demands of Great-Britain are represented to be most insolent to the United States. After
they were read in the House of Representatives, Mr Hanson made a motion that ten thousand copies of the
Documents be printed, and expressed his opinion that the people would be united in repelling such
insolent pretensions, and support a vigorous prosecution of the war, which motion was agreed to without a
division.

In November 1814 a British ‘Expedition’ was assembling in the West Indies – Royal Gazette,
Kingston, Jamaica, week ending Sat, 19 Nov 1814, page PS 23

Bridge Town (Barbados), 7 Nov 1814

The Expedition. – On Friday last arrived at this port in 48 days from Plymout (having taken a route,
for secrecy, different from that usually followed by vessels from Europe,) his Majesty’s ships Bedford,
Norge, Alceste, Bucephalus, Belle Poule, Dover, Hydra, Fox, Gordon (a store-ship), and Norfolk (a
transporter), with 2300 troops, and military stores . . .

. . . at this place they take on board about 1200 troops, and then proceed to collect those at Martinique,
Guadeloupe, St Thomas’ s, and Santo Cruz; comprising in total about 6000 men. They then proceed direct
to Jamaica, and take in ammunition and stores for their final destination.

. . . this is only the van of a grand expedition which must ere this have left England . . . it develops an
extensive and magnificent system of operations, highly credible and consistent with the grandeur of the
British Empire . . . their destination is undoubtedly for New-Orleans, the capital of Louisiana; and it is but
fair to conjecture that it is the purpose of our Ministers to extend the line of military operations along up
the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, till they meet and communicate with our forces contiguous to Lakes
Michigan, Erie, and Ontario, in Upper Canada; and thus completely encircle the United States.

The Americans, having never opened their narrow minds to a measure of such magnitude, have left
New-Orleans and the country above in a condition almost entirely defenceless. The greatest obstacle will
be, in our opinion, the navigation of the Mississippi.

A battle was fought at New Orleans on 23 and 24 December 1814 without victory for either side.

Meanwhile in Belgium on 24 December a peace treaty, the Treaty of Ghent, was signed by
representatives of Britain and the United States. But, before news reached the other side of the
Atlantic, another battle was fought – the 8 January 1815 Battle of New Orleans – and the British were
soundly defeated.

Below – a letter from an American who was at the 8 January 1815 Battle of New Orleans.

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat 11 April 1815, page 1-2 – American News – extract

New-Orleans, Jan 9.

Dear Father,

I take my pen to communicate to you a most brilliant event which took place on the 8th inst. The
British attacked our breast-work at day-light in the morning, at two points, and were repulsed with the loss
of 1500 killed, wounded and prisoners. Our loss I have taken great pains to ascertain, and, from the best
account, does not exceed five killed, and ten wounded. The enemy made a most desperate charge – they
came in solid columns – one in the centre and the other on the right of our battery – each man had a
bundle of brush of sugar-cane on his shoulder, for the purpose of filling up our ditch; they were so warmly
met, that they were thrown into confusion and retreated, and formed, and returned a third time to the
charge; they succeeded in getting possession of the bastion, with three pieces of cannon in it; but they
were soon dislodged, and the most of them taken prisoners. So intent were they on getting over our
works, that they pulled off their shoes for the purpose of climbing it. There were a number of officers of
distinction killed, and it has been ascertained that their Commanding General was mortally wounded. In a
pocket of one of the officers who was killed was found a journal, in which is mentioned, that on the night
of the 23rd they lost 225 killed, and an immense number wounded; and on the 28th they lost 15 officers
killed, and mentions only that they had an immense number of privates killed; the estimate of yesterdays
battle from head-quarters 800 killed, and 600 prisoners, including wounded (which is the largest number)
and 100 for wounded carried off by them; I think the estimation is not too large.

The sight was a terrible one: To see a field covered with dead and wounded, lying in heaps; the field
was completely red; it was a very pleasing sight to see how kind our men were to the wounded; would
take them up on their backs and carry them to the hospital. Now I must commence with the worst part
of the story; they crossed a force over the river, and drove General Morgan from his battery, and got
complete possession of it and burnt a great deal of property on the coast; he had nothing but creoles of the
country, they would not stand. If there had been some Kentuckians there, I think the enemy would have
seen a more severe day than they have seen since the commencement of the war. They have since
retreated to this side of the river, and our forces have again complete possession.

I know not what scheme they will try next! I think they are at their wits end!
Wilkins arrived here on the 7th inst but did not get ready for the battle.

Alexander C Henderson.

Benson J Lossing, published 1868 – page 1047 – Bird’s-Eye View of the Battle of New Orleans,
January 8, 1815. – from a sketch by Latour, Jackson’s Chief Engineer

On 4 February 1815 a ‘silly report of France having declared war on England’ had arrived in Jamaica

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat 4 Feb 1815, page
PS 20 – Curacoa, Jan 27.

By an arrival from St Bartholomew’s we received accounts of the detention of a French merchant ship,
from Havre-de-Grace, bound to Martinique or Guadaloupe, by an English privateer, said to have been
causcd by the silly report of France having declared war against England. The ship on her arrival at
Antigua, was immediately released, and the Captain of the privateer sentenced to pay damages to the
amount of 200 L sterling, besides suffering imprisonment.
But, on 28 February 1815 Napoleon escaped from Elba and two days later landed in France. He rallied the French around him and entered Paris triumphantly on 20 March – and so began his ‘Hundred Days rule’.

_Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 6 May 1815, page PS 17_

Return of Bonaparte to Paris, and Departure of Louis XVIII from that city.
This most astonishing intelligence, for which we were so totally unprepared was made known here on Thursday by the arrival of the ship George from Falmouth . . .

The news of the Ratification of the Treaty of Peace with America was received in England with much satisfaction . . . On the other hand, the dismal account of the failure of our expedition against New-Orleans, which had also reached England, created much surprise and dissatisfaction; the deaths of Major-Generals Packenham and Gibbs were particularly lamented.

On 20 June 1815 news of the victory at Waterloo arrived in London.

_Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 5 Aug 1815, page PS 17_

Glorious Victory gained by the British and Prussian Forces, commanded by those Immortal Heroes, Wellington and Blucher, over the French Army, headed by Bonaparte in Person. – Subsequent Abdication of the Throne by Bonaparte in behalf of his Son, Napoleon II and a Provisional Government established in France.

. . . we learn that the first intimation of this happy event reached that city [London] on the 20th of that month [June], and on the following night, about twelve o’clock, a chaise and four, ornamented with French flags, and two French eagles pointed out of the windows on each side, drove rapidly along the Kent road, and across Westminster-bridge, up Parliament-street and Whitehall. It was instantly recognized by the passengers as the bearer of the anxiously expected dispatches from the Duke of Wellington. The news, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, spread with wonderful rapidity, and excited an extraordinary sensation . . .

Chapter 7. Edward 1811 to 1815

Subscriptions to the Waterloo Fund at Edinburgh include – Parishes of Stromness and Sandwick, per Reverend Mr Clouston - £11 12s 9½d – British Library Newspapers online – Caledonian Mercury, 6 Nov 1815.

Now, at last, there was peace in Europe, but peace in Europe did not bring prosperity to the British West Indies. Many plantations were heavily in debt, and it was said by historian Richard Pares, that after Waterloo with the price of sugar falling for good – ‘many West India estates proved to be worth less than the amount of their mortgages’.


... Soon afterward [American War of Independence 1776-1783] there followed another round of French wars, in which the French colonies lost their independence for the time being, and the British sugar colonies enjoyed high prices qualified by high costs. After Waterloo the high costs remained and the high prices disappeared: they came down, in fact, to the prices of the 1760s. It was this which finished, for the time being, the British West India sugar industry as a paying concern, and brought nearly all the plantations into the hands of the merchants at home...

The factor at home seems to have enjoyed one advantage which positively encouraged him to lend money to the planters. At some time before the end of the eighteenth century, the courts in England appear to have ruled that a factor who had effects of the planters in his hands could pay himself what they owed him without their special order, but could not pay a debt to anybody else without it. Thus, so long as the sugars continued to reach the factor’s hands, they afforded him not only commission, but a security, and he was the only person who could safely lend money to the planters without a special bond or mortgage deed. No doubt this explains why the factors allowed the planters to run up such enormous debts on account-current: one correspondent owed the house of Lascelles as much as £14,000, without provoking a murmur.
While the sugar industry flourished, these liberties could be allowed. But, when prices took a prolonged downward turn, the factors began to be nervous and to demand better security. In my book on the Pinneys I have described the different kinds of security so fully that I will only touch very lightly on the matter here. From debts on account-current most planters sank, first into debts upon bond or other specialty, then into debts established by judgement of court (which, however, need not be enforced for years on end if the planter behaved himself), and lastly into mortgages. Nearly every debt, I conjecture, started as a debt on account-current and ended as a mortgage.

Even a mortgage deed was only good so long as the real value of the plantation covered it. While the sugar industry flourished, a mortgage might be a fairly safe investment at an unusually high rate of interest. But, whenever the price of sugar fell for a long period, the security of the mortgage began to be doubtful. In the end, when the price fell for good after Waterloo, many West India estates proved to be worth less than the amount of their mortgages. Second and third mortgages disappeared into thin air and even the holders of first mortgages lost a part of their money. Some tried to save themselves by foreclosing on the mortgages, buying the planters’ equities of redemption, and taking over the estates for themselves. Others tried to find a new debtor with a better head for business than the old; others again hung on to the old debtors. It did not matter greatly which of these courses they took, for the plain truth was that the sugar industry could no longer bear the financial structure which had been raised upon it. In the end, therefore, many of the sugar plantations became the property of the factors.


Eleven months after the Battle of Waterloo, Edward was onboard a vessel sailing from London for Jamaica.
Chapter 8

Eliza 1808 to 1815

In 1808 or at the beginning of 1809 William Trist the overseer of Sandy Gut (see Chapter 5) was replaced by Robert Cruickshank.

In August 1808, a little over a year after the Abolition of the British Slave Trade law came into force, Jamaica proprietor Gilbert Farquhar Mathison returned to the island after an absence of thirteen years. In his book published in 1811, he wrote – ‘there are certain bad consequences, of considerable magnitude and importance, resulting from the abolition of the slave-trade, which it is perfectly impossible for the planter to prevent, and which probably never entered into the calculation of the advocates of that measure’.

The improved condition of the plantation Negroes is obvious to the most ordinary observer. No man who has resided many years in Jamaica can fail to see it; nor is any man hardy enough to deny that the previous discussions in Parliament, and the final abolition of the slave-trade by law, have actually
accomplished, to a certain extent, one of the important objects intended by the first movers of that question.

The first great benefit resulting to the Negroes is exemption from excessive labour (by which I mean every degree of labour beyond the fair exertion of the natural powers of man), and a consequent relaxation of the hard system of compulsion by which excessive labour was produced.

The seasoning of newly-imported Negroes (as it was called) was nothing less than the trial of their constitutions by hard labour, under the disadvantages, in some cases, of insufficient food and new habits of life, and, not unfrequently, of great dejection of mind. Many, of course, perished miserably; many were left in a state even worse than that of death, a prey to disease, decrepitude, and wretchedness; while none but persons of robust constitutions could entirely escape from the severity of this ordeal.

The immediate effect of the abolition has been to deprive every man of the power of committing such abuses: while the more gradual effect of the previous discussions has been to introduce a system of great comparative mildness in the treatment of the old-established Negroes.

The abolition law, by stopping the usual mart for labourers, has created the necessity of attention to the duty of keeping up the stock of Negroes by breeding, which had never hitherto been sufficiently attended to. Under the old system it was a cheaper plan to buy, and one attended with quicker returns than to breed labourers. Avarice is now in fetters; for there is no longer any alternative than that of attention to the system of breeding, or total ruin. The effect arising from this necessity is very striking. The care of Negroes, the causes of increase and decrease, &c. &c. are becoming the subject of common conversation among a description of persons who used only to think of the speediest methods of obtaining labourers. The preservation of lives is become a most imperious duty; and overseers are already beginning to discover that there is a degree of merit to be obtained in the management of a plantation beyond the ordinary routine of making large crops of rum and sugar; but the progress of this discovery is slow and very partial, and by no means does (nor can be expected to) keep pace with the pressing necessity of an immediate revolution in the system of the planter.

I do not wish to inquire too closely into the motives of the conduct of any man. Humanity, no doubt, actuates many individuals; humanity, united to a belief that our true interests are best promoted by a faithful discharge of the moral duties of life, influences many more; but it is self-love, bare self-love, that actuates the mass of mankind in this and every other quarter of the world; and it is from the unbiassed exercise of this principle that I expect to see a system of management introduced into our West India islands that shall at once secure the ease and comfort of the Negroes, and the true and substantial interests of the planter.

Upon this principle much good has been already done, and a great deal more may reasonably be expected, which I shall make it my duty to point out before I close these observations. But there are certain bad consequences, of considerable magnitude and importance, resulting from the abolition of the slave-trade, which it is perfectly impossible for the planter to prevent, and which probably never entered into the calculation of the advocates of that measure.

It is well known that in Jamaica there are few estates that are entirely free of debt. Upon most estates, therefore, there is a contrariety of interests: namely, the interest of the planter, and the interest of the mortgagee; which interests will clash more or less, according to the magnitude of the debt, and the productiveness of the estate.

The interest of the planter requires that his capital in land, in buildings, in Negroes, in cattle, should be carefully preserved and kept together, even at great annual expense, and considerable diminution of his annual crops. His land, separately taken, is no longer of any value.

The interest of the mortgagee (if he should happen also to be the factor, which in these concerns he almost always is) requires that large crops should be made, in order that he may draw large commissions upon the sale of them; or, in cases where the depreciation in the value of land occasions a failure in his security, or the commission derivable from the sale of crops is no longer sufficient to cover the risk attendant on a loan, that he should call in his money without loss of time. Accordingly, he either takes possession of the estate as mortgagee, or prevails on the planter to employ his agents, whose business and duty it thus becomes to make the largest possible crops, by the wear and tear of every part of the capital, and destruction of the Negroes; or else files a bill in Chancery to foreclose his mortgage, brings the Negroes and other personal effects to a sale (these being the only saleable part of the estate), receives the mortgage-money; and as to the planter, who, in the first case, can no longer buy labourers to supply the waste, nor, in the latter case, find a purchaser for his land and buildings, reduces him to a state of ruin, or want and desperation.
But the ruin and despair of the planter are the least mischievous part of this mischievous transaction. The Negroes are sold in lots, families are torn asunder, a complete dispersion takes place, and all the horrors of the African trade are again repeated.

Cases such as these must, from the nature of things, be happening daily, as well as a variety of similar cases, arising from the common combination of accumulation of debt and depreciation of property. The evil effects of them, in many points of view, are great, and lie much beyond the limits of common calculation; and while they afford the planter a ground of claim for compensation from the British Parliament, call aloud for the interposition of some high authority to regulate or prevent them.

Certainly, under present circumstances, the humane interference of Parliament in putting a stop to the atrocious methods of obtaining Negroes on the coast of Africa, has undesignedly served, in a partial manner, to accumulate new miseries on large bodies of the same description of people, who may have long been established comfortably in our West India islands.

There are only two ways in which it appears to me that an adequate remedy could be applied.

1st, By an act of the Colonial Assembly, declaring all Negroes belonging to plantations to be *adscripti gleba* except for the purposes of enfranchisement; or, 2dly, By a course of decisions in the Courts of Appeal in England, founded on the broad basis of general utility, by which such violent and injurious proceedings may be prevented altogether, or subjected to humane and seasonable regulations.

*In England, during the early ages, it was considered as the mark of an improved condition in slaves to be attached to the soil...*

One immediate effect of the abolition of the slave-trade has been a most astonishing diminution in the number of slaves throughout the island.

By returns to the Colonial Assembly in December last, it appears that the number of Negroes charged with poll-tax

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>- - 323,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>- - 313,483</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leaving a deficit of no less than 10,031! a most frightful instance of depopulation, which will probably be handled by the Assembly as a proof of the impolicy and injustice of the law for abolishing the slave-trade, while by the advocates of that measure it will be considered as affording a clear demonstration of gross mismanagement on the part of the planters; and of the wisdom, as well as moral necessity, of completely subverting a system under which the propagation of the human race had been most curiously kept out of its natural and regular course.

Let the cause of this depopulation be what it may, it is very demonstrable, that the loss of numbers will occasion a great diminution in the productiveness of sugar plantations, even in cases where labour is economized by the use of the plough and other valuable implements of agriculture.

1st, Hilly estates, and those abounding in rocks, where the excessive declivity of the land, or the ruggedness of the surface, forbids the use of the plough, and where every sort of field-labour must be done by men, without the assistance of cattle, will unavoidably suffer by the deprivation of numbers.

2nd, Supposing the depopulation to be actually checked, and a commencement made at a given moment in the progress of population, according to the general laws of nature, there will necessarily be a wide interval between the birth of infants and the period of maturity of labour; during which interval, that is to say, during a space of fifteen or sixteen years, at least, the efficient strength or the stock of labourers, both in point of numbers and power, will, according to the regular course of nature become gradually diminished.

On all sugar plantations, even where the plough and the horse-hoe might be used to advantage, there are certain parts of plantation duty, which, as I conceive, can only be performed by hands; such as the business of cutting canes, of tying them up in bundles; of cutting cane-tops, of tying these up in bundles; of loading carts, and conveying the bundles of canes *seriatim* to the mill. No machinery can serve these purposes; they can only be accomplished by a multiplicity of persons working in detail, and with a considerable degree of bodily exertion.

It is with a view chiefly to these duties that the word *strength* is emphatically used by planters; according to the degrees of which their lands are made productive, or left in an unproductive state on all plantations; and it is in the contemplation of the gradual or sudden failure of this strength, so necessary to the keeping up his estate to a proper state of productiveness, that the planter is to discover the mischievous
effects of the abolition of the slave-trade; nor can any be entirely exempt from them, but such as, under the
influence of a suitable degree of sagacity and careful management, began at an early period to increase or
keep up the strength by breeding.

Probably this effect did not enter into the contemplation of the movers, or the advocates, of the bill for
abolishing the slave-trade.

But whatever may have been the accuracy and extent of the calculations made by them, it is impossible
to look back to the discussions that engaged the attention of Parliament, for a long course of years, on this
subject, without a mixed emotion of admiration and astonishment – admiration of the manly feeling,
genuine good sense, fair temperate argument, conclusive reasoning, and animated eloquence, that were
displayed on these occasions by the advocates of the abolition (and not surpassed in the most brilliant
periods of Grecian and Roman eloquence); and of astonishment at their activity and determined
perseverance for years, that amount to a fourth part of the age of man, in the labour of accomplishing a
bold, decisive measure, which had no smaller object than that of establishing the god-like attributes of
justice and mercy on the ruins of an edifice, which had too long been the sanctuary of fraud, violence,
murder, and vice, in a thousand shapes.

It would by no means be an act of inconsistency in the same set of enlightened gentlemen to step
forward to assist the planter, by their influence and patronage, in all seasons of difficulty and
embarrassment; for the interest of the planter and the slave is now identified in many important
circumstances; and perhaps they might perceive, that, by thus promoting the interest of the planter, they
promote, in an indirect manner, the cause of humanity and virtue.

In 1810 or early 1811 Robert Cruikshank was replaced by Edward Mt. Burrowes (or Burrows) as the
overseer of Sandy Gut and he swore the crop accounts for the years 1810, 1811 and 1812.
Chapter 8. Eliza 1808 to 1815


Eliza’s eldest child William (later baptised William Burrowes), a Quadroon, was born in 1810 or 1811, and her second child Lewis (later baptised Lewis Burrowes), also a Quadroon, was born in 1812 or 1813. As William and Lewis both had white fathers and as they were both baptised with the last Christian name Burrowes, it seems likely that they were sons of Edward Mt. Burrowes.

Searching for Edward Mt. Burrowes I found an Edward M Burrowes, and Edward Marchant Burrowes, and an Edward Mt. Burrowes.

Jamaica Archives – Records of Crop Account – Orange River Estate, St Mary

 Lib 51, Fol 26 – crop account for year 1816 – sworn on 5 March 1817 by Edward M Burrowes
 Lib 52, Fol 35 – crop account for year 1817 – sworn on 24 February 1818 by Edward M Burrowes
 Lib 53, Fol 79 – crop account for year 1818 – sworn on 17 March 1819 by Edward M Burrowes

Jamaica Slave Registers – http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/db.aspx?dbid=1129

1817 St Thomas in the Vale Slave Register – page 657 – Edward M Burrowes as attorney to Frances M Brown – 1 Slave

 Page 658 – Edward Marchant Burrowes as agent to Pink Elizabeth Burrowes, trustee for Frances Maria Brown – 11 Slaves

 Page 659 – Edward M Burrowes as owner – 5 slaves (3 Negro, 2 Sambo)

 Page 663 – Edward M Burrowes as attorney to Robert Brown – 1 Slave

 Page 664 – Edward M Burrowes as trustee to Mrs Frances M Brown – 7 Slaves

1817 St Mary’s Slave Register – page 374-376 – Edward Mt. Burrowes as agent to Mrs P E Burrowes – 34 Slaves


The Edward M Burrowes, owner of 36 slaves in 1817 (above), died after March 1821 and by March 1822.

1821 Jamaica Almanacs – Vestry Givings-In 1st Quarter 1820 – St Thomas in the Vale – Burrowes, Edward – 31 Slaves

1822 Jamaica Almanac – Vestry Givings-In 1st Quarter 1821 – St Thomas in the Vale – Burrowes, Edward M – Villa – 30 Slaves – 4 Stock

St Mary’s – Burrowes, Mrs P E – Rock Spring – 34 Slaves

1823 Jamaica Almanac – Vestry Givings-In 1st Quarter 1822 – St Thomas in the Vale – Burrowes, Edward M, estate of, Villa – 3 Slaves

St Mary’s – Burrowes, P E – Rock Spring – 37 Slaves

Above – Rock Spring in the parish of St Mary close to the northeast border of St Thomas in the Vale was a plantation owned by ‘Burrows’.

http://maps.nls.uk/jamaica/index.html – James Robertson’s Map of the County of Middlesex, published 1804 – section – northeast St Thomas in the Vale and west St Mary’s – arrows – top points to ‘Burrows’ (Rock Spring) – bottom points to Sandy Gut (misnamed Sandy Gully)
An Edward Marchant Burrowes, who died on ‘10th January 1812’, was buried at Rock Spring.

Woodside: Pear Tree Grove P.O, by Erna Brodber, published 2004 – page 10

... A 1912 search of a field across the road and across the stream facing the Seventh Day Church of God ... at Rock Spring unearthed a tomb with the following dedication:

In memory of Edward Marchant Burrowes who died the 10th of January 1812 aged 31. This excellent young man has left few to trouble him. One superior, the remembrance of his extreme worth will ever be treasured in the heart of his surviving sister. In gratitude for his never-ending kindness is offered this slight tribute to his beloved and bereaved memory.

If Edward Marchant Burrowes died on 10 January 1812, he could not have been Edward Mt. Burrowes, the overseer of Sandy Gut, who swore the crop account for the year 1812 on 1 February 1813. I am however wondering if a mistake was made transcribing the inscription on the Rock Spring tomb, and Edward Marchant Burrowes died on 19 January 1822.

London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 2 Feb 1822, PS page 19

Died – At Rock Spring, in St Mary’s, on the 19 ult after a few days illness, Edward M Burrowes, Esq., a young Gentleman, whose excellent worth endeared him to a numerous circle of friends and acquaintances, and by whom his early fate is most sincerely and justly regretted.

My photo, March 2007 – north of Sandy Gut

In 1813 Sandy Gut was finally out of Chancery. On 20 May 1813 Hugh Maclean (or McLean), one of the Master’s of the Jamaica Court of Chancery, pronounced the Final Decree in the Cause Timperon & al vs. Attorney General & al.
On 22 November 1813, at Cross Keys Tavern, Sandy Gut was sold to George Kinghorn of Kingston (acting as a middle man for Joseph Timperon), and by the end of December 1813 the estate was conveyed to George Kinghorn in trust for the benefit of Joseph Timperon.

Between – Samuel Smith of St Catherine, an Infant under the age of 21, by Isabella Cole of St Catherine, a free person of Colour, his Guardian appointed by the High Court of Chancery, William Duncan of St Ann, a free person of Colour, and his wife Elizabeth Foord, late Elizabeth Foord Smith, Spinster, and Mary Smith of the UK, Spinster by her Attorney Joseph Green of St Mary, Esq which said Samuel Smith and Elizabeth Foord Duncan are devisees for life, and the said Mary Smith is surviving devisee in remainder named in the Will of Samuel Smith, late of St Thomas in the Vale Esquire deceased, and which said Elizabeth Foord Duncan is also a legatee of and named in the said Will (1) – said Isabella Cole, an annuitant named in said Will of Samuel Smith, deceased (2) – Joseph Timperon of the City of London, Merchant by his Attorney the Hon John Shand of St Catherine, Esquire, and William Peat Litt of England, Merchant, by his Attorney John Crossman of Kingston, Esquire (3) – and the Hon George Kinghorn of Kingston, Esq (4)

For £10,000 Jamaica currency paid by George Kinghorn to H Maclean, Master in the Court of Chancery – and also for 10s Jamaica currency paid by Gorge Kinghorn to each of them, Samuel Smith, William Duncan and wife Elizabeth Foord, Mary Smith, Isabella Cole, Joseph Timperon and William Peat Litt – Sandy Gut, with the slaves mentioned in the 22 December 1796 Indenture of Mortgage (see Chapter 3) and the 1 March 1800 Indenture of Mortgage (see Chapter 4) with the increase of all the female slaves, were conveyed to George Kinghorn

Schedule A annexed to the 1813 Conveyance – list of 108 Slaves – and Stock – 37 Steers, 26 Mules, 1 Cow and 1 Calf – below – list of Slaves – arrows point to Bessy and her family
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>30 January</th>
<th>&quot;Bella&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 January</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 January</td>
<td>&quot;Bella&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8. Eliza 1808 to 1815

In age order – Bessy, her six children, and Eliza’s son William Burrowes

No. 104 – Bessy
No. 106 – Anne
No. 107 – Eliza
No. 60 – Myrtilla
No. 85 – Dolly
No. 79 – Lawrence
No. 95 – Jamaica
No. 103 – Wm Burrowes

Although there is no mention of Eliza’s son Lewis he was named in the 3 July 1815 list of Sandy Gut slaves – see below.

In 1813 or early 1814 Edward Mt Burrowes was replaced by Peter McKenzie as the overseer of Sandy Gut – Jamaica Archives – Records of Crop Accounts, Lib 46, Fol 268 – Sandy Gut Estate, St Thomas in the Vale – crop account for the year 1813 sworn on 10 March 1814 by Peter McKenzie before William Hewitt.

On 4 January 1815 Sandy Gut was advertised for Sale with ‘109 Negroes of the best description’.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 7 Jan 1815, page 11
On 9 March 1815 the Sandy Gut crop account for the year 1814 was sworn by Jamaica Cairncross, Overseer, before Hector Mackay – *Jamaica Archives, Records of Crop Accounts, Lib 47, Fol 122*

In March 1815 there were 120 slaves and 63 stock belonging to Timperon and Co on Sandy Gut –
*www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Samples/Almanacs.htm – 1816 Jamaica Almanac – first quarter 1815 Giving-In to Vestry.*

In 1815 Sandy Gut was sold to Edward Lascelles, the 1st Earl of Harewood, for £16,035 3s 4d Jamaica currency – see below 3 July 1815 conveyance.

Edward Lascelles (1739/40-1820) was created Baron Harewood in 1796 and Earl of Harewood in 1812.

Edward Lascelles, first Earl of Harewood. He was born in Barbados, in the year 1739-40; was elected M.P. for the borough of North Allerton, in 1761, 1768, and 1790; and, having succeeded to the large family estates, on the death of his cousin, Edwin, Lord Harewood, in 1795, he was, on the 18th of June 1796, elevated to the peerage by the title of Baron Harewood, of Harewood Castle, in the county of York. On the 7th of September, 1812, he was advanced to the dignities of Earl of Harewood, and Viscount Lascelles . . .

The conveyance of Sandy Gut to the Earl of Harewood was executed in Jamaica. His attorney Francis Graham (Edward’s employer during the time he was overseer of Georgia – see Chapter 6) acted on behalf of the Earl.

Recitals – Indenture of 4 parts made in 1813 between Samuel Smith of St Catherine, Jamaica, under twenty one years of age, by Isabella Cole of the same place a free person of colour his guardian appointed by the High Court of Chancery of Jamaica, William Duncan of St Ann, a free person of colour, and Elizabeth Foord, his wife, (then late Elizabeth Foord Smith, spinster), and Mary Smith of the UK, spinster, by her attorney Joseph Green of St Mary, Jamaica – Samuel Smith and Elizabeth Foord Duncan were devisees for life and Mary Smith was surviving devisee in remainder named in the last Will of deceased Samuel Smith late of St Thomas in the Vale – Elizabeth Foord Duncan also a legatee under the Will of Samuel Smith of the 1\textsuperscript{st} part – Isabella Cole (then an annuitant under the Will of Samuel Smith deceased) of the 2\textsuperscript{nd} part – Joseph Timperon by his attorney John Shand, and William Peat Litt, merchant, of the UK, by his attorney John Crossman of Kingston, Jamaica, of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} part – George Kinghorn of Kingston, Jamaica, of the 4\textsuperscript{th} part – Suit instituted and then lately depending in the Court of Chancery, Jamaica, entitled ‘Timperon & al vs. Attorney General & al, and the several proceedings therein had – in obedience to the final decree made in the Cause – for and in consideration of £10,000 current money of Jamaica – expressed to be paid by George Kinghorn to Hugh Maclean, one of the Masters of the Jamaica Court of Chancery for the premises sold under the decree – also in consideration of the sum of 10s Jamaica currency, to each of them, Samuel Smith, William Duncan and Elizabeth Foord, his wife, Mary Smith through her attorney, Isabella Cole – Joseph Timperon, and William Peat Litt, through their respective attorneys – according to their respective estates, rights, and interest in the premises granted released and conveyed unto George Kinghorn, his heirs and assigns – all the plantation or sugar work in the parish of St Thomas in the Vale known as Sandy Gut – containing 488 acres more or less – also parcels of land in St Thomas in the Vale containing together 255 acres more or less – together with all buildings and appurtenances thereon and therunto belonging – and also those Negro or other slaves whose names were particularly mentioned in a Schedule to the said Indenture annexed marked with the letter A, being the several Slaves named mentioned and comprised as well in the Indenture of the 22 December 1796 – and also as in the Indenture of 1 March 1800 in the pleadings in the cause mentioned – and also the 19 Negro or other Slaves mentioned and Comprised in the said last mentioned Indenture, or the survivors of the said slaves – and the issue and increase of the females thereof born since the date and execution of the said Indentures respectively and the future issue offspring and increase of the females of the said slaves – and also all the mules, cattle, and stock mentioned in the said Schedule to the said Indenture annexed, and upon and belonging to the said Plantation lands and premises – and all and singular other lands, tenements, buildings, slaves, and hereditaments, cattle, stock and premises whatsoever comprised and included in the said two Indentures or either of them with the appurtenances – to hold unto and to the use of George Kinghorn his heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns for ever according to the nature and quality of the said premises respectively and the future issue offspring and increase of the females of the said slaves – and also all the mules, cattle, and stock mentioned in the said Schedule to the said Indenture annexed, and upon and belonging to the said Plantation lands and premises – and all and singular other lands, tenements, buildings, slaves, and hereditaments, cattle, stock and premises whatsoever comprised and included in the said two Indentures or either of them with the appurtenances – to hold unto and to the use of George Kinghorn his heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns for ever according to the nature and quality of the said premises respectively – The £10,000 current money of Jamaica, the consideration money, above, was not the proper money of George Kinghorn but was the proper money of Joseph Timperon – the conveyance was made to George Kinghorn in trust for the benefit of Joseph Timperon – with the intent that George Kinghorn might execute a title to the said premises to such person or persons as might offer to become the purchaser – to be approved of by Joseph Timperon or by his attorney John Shand – and whereas Edward, Lord Harewood, through his attorney sometime since proposed to John Shand, attorney of Joseph Timperon, to become the purchaser of the Sandy Gut plantation or sugar work, and of the pieces or parcels of land containing 255 acres and of the several Negro, or other slaves, cattle, stock and premises sold under the said Decree and conveyed to the said George Kinghorn, party hereto, by the said recited Indenture, at or for the price or Sum of £16,035 - 3s - 4d Jamaica currency, and one half of the sugar and rum to be made from the canes now in cultivation on the said plantation – And Whereas the said Proposal was acceded to by John Shand on the part of Joseph Timperon – and the same hath since been approved of by Joseph Timperon himself – and he hath by his attorney John Shand requested George Kinghorn to execute these presents which he hath consented to do

For 10s Jamaica currency to George Kinghorn and £16,035 3s 4d Jamaica currency to Joseph Timperon – Sandy Gut was conveyed to Edward, Lord Harewood.

Below – Schedule A annexed to the 3 July 1815 Indenture Tripartite – list of 110 Slaves and Stock – \textbf{arrows} points to Bessy and her six children and three grandchildren
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<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Fathers</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Smith</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>England</td>
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**Chapter 8. Eliza 1808 to 1815**
Slaves on the Schedule annexed to the 3 July 1815 Indenture were listed in age order. Below – Bessy, her six children, and Eliza’s sons William and Lewis, and Anne’s daughter Bess.

| No. 34 – Bess (Bessy) | No. 48 – Mulatto Anne |
| No. 49 – Mulatto Eliza | No. 56 – Matilla |
| No. 78 – Dolly | No. 91 – Lawrence |
| No. 95 – Jamaica | No. 103 – Quan (Quadroon) William |
| No. 104 – Sambo Bess | No. 106 – Quan (Quadroon) Lewis |

Most of the Lascelles/Harewood West India papers were kept in the City of London and were destroyed during the Second World War Blitz. The surviving West India papers are those that were kept at Harewood House in Yorkshire. When I started my search these papers were held by West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS) in Leeds. In 2005 the Lascelles West India papers were moved to the Borthwick Institute at the University of York, and West India Deeds were returned to Harewood House.

Scans of some of the Harewood West India papers formerly on the Moving Here website have been archived – see – [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/adv_search/](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/adv_search/) – advanced search – Lascelles West Indies – results from specific website – movinghere.org.uk.

Please note – searching the National Archives web archive is time consuming and I have not checked to see that all the records I refer to, formerly on the Moving Here website, have been archived.

The Earl of Harewood paid for Sandy Gut in four instalments.

Francis Graham was appointed a Jamaica attorney to Edward Lascelles, 1st Earl of Harewood, in 1805.


1798-1802 – Lewis Cuthbert (c.1737-1802) and (his son) George Cuthbert (c.1770-1835)
1803 – George Cuthbert
1804 – George Cuthbert and John Blackburn (retired back to Britain in 1805 – see Chapter 5)
1805-1820 – George Cuthbert and Francis Graham


http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx – c.1800 – looking south from Harewood Place towards Hanover Square and St George’s Church – on the left – Harewood House, the Earl of Harewood’s London house on the corner of Harewood Place and Hanover Square
Small writing below the plan – Jamaica, ss

This diagram is delineated in order to ascertain the quantity and boundaries of Sandy-Gut estate in the parish of Saint Thomas in the Vale, now the property of Lord Harewood, which within marked lines and established fences we find to contain seven hundred and twenty-eight acres and two roods. Surveyed at the desire of Francis Graham esquire, in September 1815 – signed Weightman & Gordon
Below the Plan

The above Scheme represents sundry tracts of land in the parish of St Thomas in ye Vale laid down in order to ascertain the bounds and quantity of Williamsfield Estate containing within the lines circumscribed with green [faded to brown] 2426 Acres which comprehends the present possession. The lines of sale Nedham to Harvie for 2700 acres are circumscribed with red lines [top right diagonal line] – Performed in June 1790 by – Frazer and Rainey Survs.
In Jamaica the Earl of Harewood owned two sugar estates, Nightingale Grove in the parish of St Dorothy and Williamsfield in St Thomas in the Vale (there was more than one Williamsfield estate in Jamaica), and Williamsfield pen in St Catherine.

In 1815 the African Institution (founded in April 1807 – see Chapter 5) believed that slaves were being illicitly imported into the British colonies, and to curb this importation the African Institution called for the registration of slaves in the British colonies.

The general object of this plan is to obtain a public record of the names and descriptions of all person lawfully held in slavery in each respective island. For this purpose, it is obviously necessary, in the first place, that full and accurate returns should be made of the existing stock of Slaves . . .
But the individuals composing this unfortunate class will be progressively changed, by deaths, by births, by enfranchisements, and by importation from other British colonies (if that practice be still permitted). It is necessary therefore that the original registry should be periodically corrected and enlarged, by new returns of all such changes as have taken place since the last preceding registration.

Annual returns have been thought not too frequent for this purpose. It is, therefore, required that within a limited time after a given day in each year, new returns shall be made specifying all subsequent changes . . .

To these ends every owner of slaves in the colony is required, on pain of the loss of his property in them, to make his return of them upon oath, in a prescribed form, and with a variety of specifications, such as best calculated to prevent any future incertitude as their identity. Their sexes, names, ages, statures, and other corporeal distinctions, are to be set forth, truly and carefully, in schedules annexed to the returns . . .

The danger of fraudulent alterations and interpolations in the registry, and of the destruction or mutilation of the registry itself, by fire or other means, wilful or accidental, is guarded against by a special provision, which, in other important respects also, is essential to the plan. Exact duplicates are to be made of the books of the original registry, and full abstracts are to be formed of the subsequent annual returns: and both are to be transmitted, promptly and carefully, to his Majesty’s principal Secretary of State for the colonial department in England, in whose office they are to remain; and the entries in these are to be continued by the periodical corrections and additions which the abstracts from time to time supply.

The books, and duplicates, and abstracts, are all to be certified in the most solemn manner by the Registrar, and verified by his oath before the Governor; whose hand and seal of office are further to authenticate these important records.

William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – Fishpot of split Bamboo – in foreground – at Brailsfords

On 13 June 1815 William Wilberforce ‘moved to bring in a bill’ (the Registry Bill) ‘for the better prevention of the illicit importation of slaves into the British colonies’.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 5 Aug 1815, page 5

In the House of Commons, on the 13th June, Mr Wilberforce moved for leave to bring in a bill for better preventing the illicit importation of slaves into the British colonies; and we observe that the bill was received, read the first time, and ordered to be printed and lie over until next session of Parliament for the
perusal of the Members. The Hon Gentleman, in his introductory speech, grounded his principal reason for the bill on a most unfounded presumption that slaves were still imported into the British colonies from Africa, in which he stated he was strongly confirmed by the well-known fact that slaves had not increased in value since the abolition took place! Instead of being increased in value, we can inform the Hon Gentleman they have considerably diminished, not because an illicit Slave-Trade is carried on, but by the effects of the abolition in reducing the value of all West-India property, by the heavy duties continually increasing on our produce, and by the unjustifiable proceedings of several associations in England, whose incendiary practices undermine the character, and destroy the credit, of these much vilified colonies and prevent every enterprise or undertaking that might be for their benefit – associations brought together on the most mistaken principles; who, to effect their purposes, set all truth at defiance, who make reports only to deceive, and who publish pamphlets only to mislead; both containing the most gross misrepresentations, and the most stupid and unfounded assertions; not, we fear, through ignorance, but from a studied system of villainy and hypocrisy. The very pamphlet which was circulated among the Members of the House of Commons, as introductory to Mr W’s motion for the present bill, and as calculated to influence the minds of uninformed Members, in the form of a report from the African Association, is a tissue of falsehood from beginning to end, which the meanest negro that walks our streets could contradict. This report must have been written and circulated with the knowledge of Mr Wilberforce, and he must have been acquainted with the studied lies it contains. We cannot use a milder expression towards it. In the vulgarity of its intention, it can only be compared to the villainies discovered in Sierra Leone by the late Chief Justice Thorpe, which are as little creditable, in some respects, to the conduct of Mr Wilberforce as his present motion, or his support of this lying report as its precursor. He knew well that the cause he assigns however that Mr W’s assertions in the House of Commons were altogether uncontradicted, and, to our astonishment, he was most coldly and feebly opposed, not even called upon to furnish a single proof of the clandestine trade on which he professedly grounded the application for his bill! – To remedy an evil, however, which never existed, he proposed “That a register should be prepared of all the slaves in the different colonies, which register should contain the name and description of every slave, and the title by which each was claimed – that a copy of such register should be sent to this country (England), and preserved here, and that any fraud committed upon this regulation should subject the offender to severe punishment.” We are ignorant whether or not this measure has met the sanction of Government, but as it seems to interfere with the internal Legislation of these colonies in a considerable degree, it naturally called forth the following strong resolutions from the West-India Body:

At a general meeting of West-India Planters and Merchants, convened by public advertisement, and held at the city of London Tavern, the 13th day of June, 1815:

Resolved. That this meeting has seen that notice has been given in the House of Commons of a bill to prevent the illicit exportation of slaves into the West-India colonies.

That this notice has been simultaneous with the extensive circulation amongst the Members of Parliament of a printed pamphlet, purporting to be a report of the African Institution; which report expressly recommends the expediency and necessity of assuming by the Legislature of the mother-country a direct control, independently of the Colonial Legislatures, over the internal regulations of the colonies.

That such a bill to such effect would be destructive of the constitutional rights and interests of the Colonial Legislatures, and aim a deadly blow at the whole tenure of West-India property.

That an innovation, so arbitrary, so pregnant with future dissensions betwixt this country and her colonies (whose attachment and loyalty are not called in question), unfounded, too as far as yet appears on any proofs of the alleged illicit commerce, which this meeting confidently believes does not exist, will be opposed by this Body with every effort of zeal, industry, and perseverance, which can be constitutionally and legally exerted.

That the Standing Committee be instructed to be watchful of the impending proceeding, and, by itself and its Sub-Committee, to omit no lawful and constitutional means of averting the many calamities to the mother-country, and the ruin to the colonies, with which the interference in question is pregnant.

That the above Resolutions be immediately communicated to his Majesty’s Principal Ministers by the Chairman, accompanied by such Gentlemen as he may select for that purpose.
... On the 5th of July the Registry Bill was introduced by Mr. Wilberforce, and read a first time. It had for some time been determined to carry it no further till another session. West Indian hostility was rising mightily against it, and further efforts would at this moment have been premature and dangerous. “I am assured,” he tells Mr. [Zachary] Macaulay, “that they are mustering all their forces and all their natural allies against us, with the most assiduous diligence and systematic array. The Bristol merchants are joining the general body of our opponents. Remember that we were challenged to prove in a committee the truth of our allegations, that slave are smuggled, and also that the abuses we charge do really exist. Do consider about getting evidence from the West Indies. If we could get the leading particulars of our allegations concerning the state of slaves established by positive testimony, the effect depend on it would be considerable”...
that the amelioration has been regular and progressive, and he attributes the same to the overseers and white people of the present day being a better informed race of men in general, of humane dispositions, and attending to the instructions given them by their employers, as to the comfort of the slaves, more strictly than was done in former days: The disposition of the slaves, and their progressive civilized state, having had for years no new negroes brought among them, has tended much to their being more comfortable than was formerly the case.

Q...

A. Examinant saith, for some years past he has observed that the slaves have shewn a contented and quiet disposition, and a very considerable number of those under his care have at their own request been made Christians; that in every application of the kind, he has forwarded their wishes; he does not know of one instance that the aggrieved slave has not been protected by the laws, and justice done them; with regards to the comforts of life, the well-disposed industrious slave has more comforts about him than thousands and thousands of cultivators of land that he knew in Europe; that the class of slaves examinant has mentioned he has known at all times perfectly satisfied, having only a certain duty to perform, which they understand and do with ease to themselves; very little more rests on their minds, having no pay-day to think of, or family to provide for in case of death; that is left for the master to do, who provides land and habitations without rent, medicines, doctors’ bills, taxes, nourishment, hospital, fish, and all other kinds of provisions, when necessary, clothing and every other necessary of life.

Q...

A. Examinant saith that the estates and other properties under his care have been cultivated by the slaves that were on them at the time of the abolition of the slave trade, their offspring, and by purchases of seasoned slaves, the titles to which were made clear to him by the records in the secretary’s office and other undoubted vouchers, shewing from their dates that they, except the offspring of some of them, were inhabitants of this island previous to the abolition of the slave trade. Examinant saith, in 1813, when in England, he was offered a large gang of slaves to be delivered in this island from the island of Exuma, but on his arrival here he did not see clearly that the abolition laws admitted of that importation; consequently he declined the purchase, and the negroes were not brought to this island; this is the only transaction with regard to importing slaves that he has had since the abolition law. Examinant declares, that he does not know that a single negro has been brought to this island as a slave, and here sold, since the abolition law; he likewise declares that such a wish or intention has never been in his mind, and that the different persons he has and now represents never even hinted to him the carrying on their properties by illicit importations or unlawful purchases, either by word of mouth or in writing.

Q...

A. Examinant saith that since the abolition of the slave trade he has at different times purchased a large number of slaves; some have been removed to properties near their old residence, and others to distant parts; the plan he has adopted to render slaves comfortable on removal, has been to have good established grounds and houses to put them in possession of; but as this cannot be done at all times, in consequence of slaves being offered for sale early after directions are received for making purchases, he in this case, if the slaves are not to be removed to a distant part from their grounds, bargains with the seller, that the slaves shall retain them for about twelve months, which, with the assistance of country provisions, cornmeal, flour, rice, and fish, purchased for them, makes an abundant supply till the new grounds, made on the plantation they are removed to, come into full bearing: when grounds and houses are not made previous to a purchase, examinant requires no labour from the slaves until they, assisted by other slaves, make grounds and houses, and in this last case they have an abundant supply of food served out to them; that at this moment he is feeding upwards of ninety negroes recently purchased for his own estate, and allows to the grown people one and a half quarts or rice per day, and extra allowance of fish, with benefit of such pulses and vegetables as the plantation affords.

Q...

A. Examinant saith that on his own property and such others as are under his care, according to the best of his judgement, he considers uncommon indulgence necessary for the rearing of children: he has, after consulting the proprietors, all of whom sanctioned his wishes, adopted the following plan: as soon as a woman informs her overseer that she is pregnant, no more work is required of her till she is delivered, and her child twelve or fifteen months old, or as circumstances may be as to the age the child fit to wean at: two duties he has imposed on the pregnant and the mothers of children; the former are to shew themselves once a day, that the overseer may see that they are at home, and the latter are to shew their children once a day clean, and well taken care of; at this time they receive from the store such nourishment
as is necessary for them besides their mother’s milk, such as flour, rice, and sugar. On some estates he has paid upwards of three hundred pounds a-year in hired labour, to make up the time lost by the indulgence above mentioned; and examinant is happy to say, that only in a very few cases, in different years, he has seen the above plan fail of producing more children than was before done; those children, owing to not being during the day exposed to the sun and rain, and the mothers having nothing to do but to take care of them, are much healthier subjects than in common; the mother’s health and constitution are at the same time improved: that he has a woman on Tulloch estate, who has not done any work for the last seven years, for, before her child is fit to wean, she is again pregnant; she is now the mother of a large family, and as able a woman as any in the island: Examinant is confident, that if the above plan were in general use, the increase and decrease of the slaves in this island would, in proportion to numbers, exceed the increase of the United Kingdom of Great Britain; and is of opinion, that such a plan as he has above mentioned is very likely to be generally adopted in this island, when the advantages of it are known.

Fras Graham

December 19, 1815.

The further examination of Francis Graham, esquire, before the said committee.

Q...?

A. Examinant saith he has stated, in his former evidence before the committee, that he had under his care about thirteen thousand slaves, and he has this year imported and purchased in the island three thousand two hundred and thirty-five barrels of herrings, shad, and pilchards; he has likewise purchased two hundred and ninety-three hogshead of codfish, averaging about nine hundred weight each, which he considers equal to one thousand three hundred and eighteen barrels of herrings, making altogether four thousand five hundred and fifty-one barrels of herrings, being thirty-five barrels for every one hundred negroes under his care; he has likewise purchased two hundred and seventy barrels of salted pork from Ireland for the use of the negroes, and that he has never made less allowance than at the rate of thirty-five barrels for every one hundred negroes for the last seven years, when fish could be purchased; that last year he purchased pork in part as a substitute for fish, but this year he made the purchase of two hundred and seventy barrels, as he thought it would be more agreeable to the negroes for their Christmas allowance.

Fras Graham.

William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – detail
Robert William Harris (see Chapter 5) of Hopewell plantation in St Thomas in the Vale was another of the men examined by the Jamaica House of Assembly Committee.

Page 83-86 – 23 November 1815 – Robert William Harris’ Examination – extract

A. Examinant saith that the situation of the slaves employed in the cultivation of the plantations was very different when he became acquainted with the country [upwards of thirty years ago] to what it is at present. In respect to food and the means of obtaining it, the slaves have more time given them now to work in their grounds, and the weakly and sickly people are better sustained and attended to in every respect; the allowances of all sorts of food and clothing have been increased, and the slaves are more encouraged, by the present laws and practice of the country, to raise small stock; in some parishes the magistrates and vestry have established well-regulated and convenient markets, which are placed under the superintendence of discreet and reputable men, who are sworn as constables for that purpose and liberally paid for their trouble; in St Thomas in the Vale, we pay our market constable £100 per annum. These institutions afford the negroes greater facility in disposing of their small stock and provisions, and buying what they want. As to the hours of labour, when examinant came to the island, the slaves were turned out full an hour before day, and kept out as long after dark; their breakfast was always cooked for them, and they were allowed half an hour to eat it, and two hours to go home to their dinner; as the length of the days on an average through the year in this climate, including the twilight, is about twelve hours and a half, so the slaves then worked twelve hours in the twenty four; at present the same time is allowed for breakfast and dinner, but the slaves, as far as examinant sees, are only required to work in the field in daylight, and consequently they work only ten hours in the twenty-four, and not near so hard as formerly. In respect to punishment, amelioration made its first stand there; as far as has come within the examinant’s observation, the punishments of the present day hold no measure with those of former times, and are mild and gentle, both in their nature and extent, when compared with military punishments. The manners, habits, and condition of the slaves have been greatly ameliorated since he came to the island; and generally speaking, the improvement has been regular and progressive, and he considers it is to be attributed to the operation of several concurrent causes – in the first place, to the legal enactments and the moral influence of the consolidated slave law; secondly, to the increased humanity and benevolence of the proprietors, which led them to employ and get out people of better education, better principles, and better connections, for the planting line, than were formerly employed in it; thirdly, to the consequent disposition of all those in power to treat the slaves with greater lenity, encouraging them to be christened, and giving the head negroes more confidence; fourthly, to their being relieved from oppressive duties they were formerly subjected to, over and above the ordinary labours of agriculture and manufacture; fifthly, the progress of improvement not having been interrupted or retarded by the accession of new savages since the abolition of the African trade, civilization will no doubt advance by quicker and more permanent steps.

Page 1-41 – John Shand’s Report from the Committee, presented to the House of Assembly on 20 December 1815 – extracts

Mr Shand, from the committee appointed to take into consideration the copy of a bill... presented a report, which was received and read.

Mr Speaker,

Your committee, appointed to take into consideration the copy of a bill, which appears to have been introduced into the House of Commons of Great Britain, and printed by its order, entitled, “A bill for effectually preventing the unlawful importation of slaves, and the holding free persons in slavery, in the British colonies:”...

... The bill, however, proceeds, as if all these allegation had been proved, to enact that all the slaves within the colony shall be registered in a form prescribed.

That a register shall be appointed, with deputies, and assisted by special commissioners and clerks; that the former shall be paid by a tax or fees on the proprietors of negroes, and that the latter shall be remunerated by an assessment, to be ordered by the governor, lieutenant-governor, or commander in chief.

The proprietor is to take an office copy of the return, for which he is to pay the register.
The returns are to be made on oath by the proprietor, or his representative, and to be delivered in person to the register, or his deputies. It does not appear whether these deputies are to swarm all over the country, or if the proprietor must come from the most distant part of the island to the office of the register. This seems necessary in respect of the triennial returns, as they are to be compared with the former registration. The tax, therefore, would be a trifle compared with the loss and expense to the proprietor of an estate, called from the extremity of the island to deliver his return at the office of the register.

Although the return be made upon oath, hedged by pains and penalties, if the register be not satisfied, he can compel the party to answer interrogatories upon oath; and, finally, if the explanations be not satisfactory, the officer is not obliged to receive the return tendered under the pains of perjury, but he is endowed with the tremendous power of rejecting or refusing to register the return, the effect of which is disclosed by the act to be the same as if a return had been omitted altogether to be made, and the immediate consequence to the party would be the manumission of all his slaves.

It is true he has an appeal to the governor, and finally, to the king in council, so that, after a lapse of a few years, it may be decreed that the return tendered was correct, and could not with a safe conscience be made otherwise.

Your committee considers it unnecessary to enter further into the rigorous enactments, oppressive burthens, and unconstitutional inquisitions, imposed by the proposed law.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – detail*

*John Shand’s Report – extracts continued*

Your committee presume that they have completely disproved the allegations, that an illicit and clandestine importation of slaves has taken place into this colony.

The next allegation, that negroes, mulattoes, and mestees, lawfully entitled to their freedom, are held in slavery, seems to assume that we must prove a negative; whereas, in all fairness and common justice, those who charge a large body of people with delinquency may be called upon to make out the
affirmative, before the legislature shall be resorted to for unusual and coercive statutes, penalties, and 
forfeitures, to remove an evil which has not been proved to exist.

Your committee solemnly affirm that such practices have no existence in this island to any extent. We 
do not say, that solitary instances of injustice have not taken place here, as in all other societies, composed 
of imperfect human beings; but we do mean to aver, that when such injustice has occurred, it has met the 
marked indignation of the community. Vestries, as public bodies and individuals, have come forward to 
assist the party claiming the right to be free; and in no such case have such parties found difficulties in 
asserting and establishing their freedom.

There are laws to protect negroes, mulattoes, and mestees, in the enjoyment of their freedom, and to 
assist them in its recovery, adequate to those important objects. Such laws are fairly and impartially 
administered; and if these positions be established, your committee presume that on the ground alleged, 
the enactment of the registry bill cannot be necessary or expedient.

In the case of manumissions, in which, by the words of the act 15\textsuperscript{th} Geo. III. Chap.18, no slave can be 
made free, until the person who manumizes him shall have first given security to the churchwardens of the 
parish for the payment of the annual sum of £5 to the slave manumized during his life, a liberal 
construction has been given to the act to effect its real intention, without making it operate as a restraint 
upon manumission; and, upon this principle, it has been deemed sufficient to satisfy the law, that the bond, 
required by the act, should be given at any time, and by any person, subsequent to the manumission, to the 
churchwardens of the parish.

The churchwardens do not expect the party, executing the manumission, to enter into the bond; but any 
responsible person, of whatever class or colour (being free), is accepted as the bondsman.

The only object of the law was to prevent ill-disposed persons from evading the duty imposed upon 
them, of supporting the old, infirm, and helpless slaves, by manumizing them, and, on pretence of being 
free, removing them from the estates, and withdrawing the allowances of clothing and sustenance.

This has been completely accomplished, and, in the whole extent of the island, you do not behold an 
infirm and vagrant slave begging on the streets.

The repeal of this salutary law would be highly injurious to the slaves, and transfer the responsibility of 
supporting them, when past labour, to the parishes.

\textit{William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – details}

\textit{John Shand’s Report – extracts continued}
There are no laws, existing in this country, adverse to manumissions. Even the stamp-duty, which, in
common with other instruments, had been imposed on the deed, has been repealed. If the legislature of
Grenada, or any other colony, have thought proper to make regulations of an opposite nature, they
possibly can assign good reasons for their conduct; but we must repeat that it is unfair to insinuate, that the
same spirit pervades our laws, and to punish the proprietors of more than one half the slaves in the British
colonies, settled in Jamaica, because in some of the smaller islands a different system yet prevails.

We have laws which enable the magistrates to take up rogues and vagabonds, whether white or black;
and, when the latter are apprehended, they are sent to the workhouses. As ninety-nine in a hundred of
those apprehended are fugitive slaves, notice is given of the detention by public advertisement, in place by
private correspondence. It is very common for slaves in such a situation to say that they are free.

When the hundredth case occurs, there is no difficulty thrown in the way of the party detained, who, it
must be recollected, is in the first instance a delinquent wandering about. If a male, he must be enrolled in
the militia, and a letter from his commanding officer immediately procures a release. If a woman, or a
stranger, the testimony of any person of character, that he has known the party reputed free, accomplishes
the same object.

If the claim of freedom is disputed by an alleged master, the writ of *hominem replegiando* must be
served on the keeper of the workhouse; the plaintiff is then set at liberty; and the master must establish his
right, as we have before stated.

The only remaining ground disclosed by the bill is, that by reason of the intercourse between the
different colonies, and the frequent passage and removal of slaves from one British colony to another, and
the frequent transfer of property in slaves within the said colonies by sale, mortgage, and otherwise, made
by and to persons resident within the United Kingdom, the necessary provisions and regulations for the
purposes aforesaid cannot be fully and effectually made by the separate interior legislatures of the said
colonies respectively, but only by the authority of Parliament. The “purposes aforesaid” are “the
preventing illicit importation of slaves, and holding in slavery negroes, mulattoes, and mestees, entitled to
their freedom.”

We have proved that an illicit importation of slaves has no existence.

Your committee has discussed the validity of all the allegations, stated in the bill, which has been
referred to them, as the grounds for enacting it into a law.

The preamble further says, that there are other reasons why Parliament should adopt the measures
proposed.

It is understood that other reasons are to be found in a publication, purporting to be a report of the
African Institution, assigning reasons for establishing a registry of slaves in the British colonies – a
production which we learn has been circulated with great industry, and is apparently intended to inflame
the passions, and mislead the judgement, of persons who are about entering on the discussion of a
question, in its nature sufficiently calculated to impress the imagination, irritate the feelings, and warp the
understanding.

We may venture to pronounce this to be the subject, if ever there was one, requiring the judges to
divest themselves of popular prejudice, to shut their ears to the clamour of bigoted zeal, to guard against
the bastard virtue of modern sentiment, and the more doubtful merit of laying up treasures for themselves
in the next world by sacrificing the property of others in this.

As might be expected, the reporter sets out with asserting, that slavery in the West India colonies is the
most extreme and abject that ever degraded and cursed mankind.

He then asserts, that those who supported an abolition of the slave-trade never denied that they
meditated a general emancipation of the slaves; on the contrary, he affirms that they scrupled not to avow
that they then looked forward to a future extermination of slavery in the colonies, but, in their mental
reservations, they did not mean to accomplish the object by an insurrection and massacre, nor even
precipitately by positive laws.

After these preliminary observations, he assumes, as the basis of his whole reasoning, that a supply of
slaves by illicit commerce, and in contravention of all the laws which have yet passed, actually take place:
That it is carried on to so great an extent as to form the basis on which the sugar-plantations are
cultivated, to the exclusion of all attention to the preservation of the present labourers, or encouragement
of their increase by breeding:
That the proprietors of West India estates are adventurers, the sport of fortune, who neglect the suggestions of prudence, are unacquainted with self-denial, and have not the inducements of other landholders to make present sacrifices for future improvement of their estates;

That sugar-planting is a lottery, a game more influenced by chance than prudence; that, trusting to the desperate hazard of a good crop to retrieve his fortune, or procrastinate his ruin, the planter pays no attention to the preservation or increase of his negroes, when the first involves present outlay, or the last requires patient care, and the sacrifice of immediate gain, with only the distant prospect of an uncertain return.

From these assertions without proof, and assumptions against fact, he deduces as a corollary, that the plantations are so conducted, that oppression universally prevails; that the children and their mothers share the general lot; and that no care is bestowed on keeping up the numbers by natural means; nay, that in place of favouring the breeding system, it is discouraged by laws, as well as discountenanced in practice.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – details*

*John Shand’s Report – extracts continued*
Let us contrast the conduct of these modern reformers with their own cases. Seven years had hardly elapsed since the importation of slaves into the West Indies had ceased. The savages, with which they had been overstocked, by the avarice of the British traders, during the last period of the intercourse, were of a description much inferior to those who had formerly been received, and were barbarous beyond the usual ferocity of Africans.

... There are members of this committee, who recollect the prejudices and difficulties of the older planters in the discussions which preceded that great change, which inflicted the punishment of death on a white person who deprived a negro of life. All other cruel and most severe punishments were abolished by the consolidated slave law, which passed in 1784. That law, which at first was only enacted for a limited time, has now no duration clause...

Your committee do not think that many offenders against the slave law escape justice for want of proof. All free coloured people can give legal evidence. There are several white persons on most plantations; a considerable number on many; amongst them are discontented servants, changing their residence on the slightest umbrage, and who would be glad of an opportunity of informing against their overseer. Nothing could recommend them more to the proprietor or manager than to disclose the oppression of the slaves, who are disposed not to be silent when they suffer injury. It seems hardly possible that the law can be violated by any other white person than the overseer, the owner of the estate, or his representative, and they would have no great chance of escaping detection.

We shall now notice the positive testimony, contained in the examinations of Mr Mountague, Mr Graham, Mr Green, Mr Richards, Mr William Shand, Mr Harris, Mr Murray, and Mr Stewart. The knowledge of some of these gentlemen extends beyond the period when we have stated effective amelioration commenced... They have witnessed the progressive changes, and with intimate knowledge of every part of the island, and a very large proportion of slaves under their immediate care, they state, upon their oaths, in the face of that community where they support the highest characters for honour and integrity, that the slaves do enjoy the actual protection of the laws passed for their security, and know that they have a right of appeal to them: That, although by the consolidated slave law the master may call for fourteen hours’ labour in the field, deducting one-half hour for breakfast and two hours for dinner, leaving of course eleven hours and a half for work, yet in practice the time for labour in summer is one, and in winter two hours, less than might be exacted by law, so that the labourer only works on an average ten hours daily, and has fourteen for meals, relaxation, and rest.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – detail*

*John Shand’s Report – extracts continued*
The clothing given is abundant for the wants of the climate. It is to be understood that the clothes, distributed by the master, are of a plain, substantial kind, such as are worn when at labour; but every negro, with the exception of a few idle and disorderly persons, from which that class of mankind is not exempt, has better clothes, which are worn on holidays and festivals; and the appearance of the population of all old settled estates, dressed in their best apparel, would on such an occasion excite the astonishment of a zealous abolitionist, who might fancy himself transported into the court of an African prince, when he found dancing, revelling, humour, and mimickry, in place of stripes, groans, and misery, which his heated imagination had anticipated. Every candid European acknowledges how much, and how agreeably, he is disappointed by the first appearance of the negro population, not merely in hours of festivity, but at plantation labour, and when conducting their own affairs in the public markets.

The old and those past labour have the same allowances from their masters as are given to the young and the vigorous, and there exists amongst the negroes a very amiable disposition to assist their aged parents and relations.

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The food, regularly distributed by the master, consists principally of pickled and salted fish, which are not merely reckoned palatable by the negroes, but are acknowledged by count Rumford, and known by all persons who have given attention to the subsistence of mankind, to be well calculated for seasoning, and rendering both salutary and nourishing, the soups and mucilaginous and farinaceous dishes, which form the principal food of the negroes.

Your committee do not think it necessary to take notice of all the calumnies invented or circulated by the African Institution, and the zealots who seem to think that any means, however nefarious, may be adopted to accomplish an object, which they perhaps think laudable; but when characters, reputed above such practices, resort to them for the express purpose of rendering the inhabitants of this country odious, and put their names to publications intended to produce popular clamour, we consider it our duty to point out the misrepresentations.

It has been the policy of Great Britain to clog the importation from the United States by duties, and finally to prohibit it, except in British ships. If, from the circumstances, from war, or a partial failure in the fisheries, the supply be less than the demand, this cannot be imputed as a crime to the planter. The effect is the same as a famine or scanty crop of grain in Europe. A less quantity occasions the same expence, with this marked difference that no part of the cost falls on the slaves, as it does on the European labourer. The whole is defrayed by the master. If fish cannot be procured, he is obliged to purchase salted pork from Ireland, which your committee avers has been done to a great extent by its own members, as well as by other planters, in the course of the last two years, when the war with the United States diminished the usual importation.

Your committee return from what many not be regarded as an irrelevant digression on this very important subject of the subsistence of the negroes.

By those who are acquainted only with the scanty returns of a day’s labour to a peasant in Europe from his garden, it is alleged that one day in fourteen must be quite unequal to raise food for a family.

We are prepared to show the contrary, even supposing that the negro shall not labour on the Sunday out of crop. Let it not be supposed that, because the master is by law permitted to call for labour on Saturday during crop it is always done: On the contrary, several Saturdays in succession are given the negroes by all considerate proprietors and managers before the crop commences, and after it terminates, to keep up the cultivation of their grounds; and, if that be found insufficient, the whole body of effective labourers are employed for many days together in the provision-grounds, that there may be no deficiency of food; so that the slaves have in fact what is equal to one day in fourteen throughout the year, independent of Sundays.

When we state that this is more than sufficient to procure subsistence, we prefer bringing other evidence than the planters of the country on the productive effects of labour in the soil and climate within the tropics.

The grounds of the negroes are not cultivated in a continuous field, but they have the privilege of selecting spots on the banks of rivulets, and opening new ground wherever they chose throughout all the wood-lands of the plantation. This is very injurious to the master, but it is the custom of the country, and universally practiced by the slaves.
The plantains form part of the food of the negroes. The objection to their being entirely relied on is, that the tree is easily destroyed by hurricanes or storms. The planters, therefore, encourage the cultivation of the coco; the kind preferred is the San Blas, or white coco, *coccus acaule maximum*, or *foliis cordato sagittatis*. It is nearly as productive as the plantains. The first crop is reaped in about ten months, and afterwards others are gathered every three or four months with little or no labour, but drawing up the earth over the fibres from whence the ripe roots are taken.

In lands more worn out, the yam (or *dioscorea alata*) is cultivated, and gives great returns. In the low and drier regions, the manioc and sweet potato, of various kinds, some of them coming into perfection in six or eight weeks, contribute to the subsistence of the negroes; but, as the returns are less than from the provisions of the mountain districts, the master cultivates large fields of Guinea-corn. This is kept in granaries for years, and an allowance regularly served out to the negroes, in due proportion to the effects of the drought on their own grounds, which in favourable seasons are very productive.

The plan, stated by Mr William Shand, of providing a good meal daily for all the children, is becoming general, and is a distribution of food of the best description, relieving those who have large families, and does not encourage the idle, which all, who have reflected on the subject, know to be the effect of an indiscriminate distribution of food.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816*
Independent of their grounds, they all raise in their gardens, with incredible facility, ochro, callalues, and vegetables of the most nourishing kinds. Their houses in many places are surrounded with groves of orange and other fruit trees, which descend to their families, and the production is sold for very considerable sums. In all situations they raise corn for poultry and hogs, which the master never interferes with, unless it is to buy at a higher rate than could be obtained after carrying them to market. By sales of these the negroes purchase not merely other food which they prefer, but good clothes. Those who are avaricious, particularly the Eboe tribe, accumulate considerable sums. The most decided advantage, however, which the negroes have over the European labourer, is the care taken of them in sickness. There is no plantation where a hospital is not provided; of late years on an extensive scale, and under good regulations in respect of cleanliness and ventilation. A regular practitioner attends, the master supplying not only medicines, but the comforts required for persons in such situation. Wine, rice, flour, sugar, and animal food, are provided, and it is an invariable rule, if a well-disposed negro present himself at the hospital, never to repulse him, although both the doctor and overseer be satisfied he is not labouring under any sickness, but wishes a day’s rest and relaxation.

That there are causes which prevent a natural increase here, and which do not exist in Europe, cannot be doubted. Although some of them be well known and admitted, your committee have thought it expedient to take the examinations of doctor Quier, doctor William Sells, and doctor Charles Mackglasham, gentlemen of considerable practice and experience in different parts of the island.

Their testimony supports the fact, that a considerable portion of the negro portion born are carried off before the ninth day by tetanus, a disease rarely occurring in infants in the temperate latitudes. The loathsome disease called yaws destroys great numbers of all ages, especially adults in the prime of life.

There are diseases which occur at certain periods, and occasionally assume a more unfavourable type.
Of that description are the measles and whooping cough. Both have visited every part of the island during the last two years, and occasioned considerable mortality amongst the children.

Another disease has been yet more fatal. It has been called by the medical gentlemen influenza; but none of them appear to have discovered any certain method of cure or alleviation.

In the same period there were two years of scarcity, approaching to famine; and many lives were lost from the effects of green and unwholesome food. The table supports this position very strongly. During the four months following the abolition, when the number of deaths ought to have been greatest, the mortality was only at the rate of 979 annually in a population of 321,869.

In the year ending 30 March, 1813, the deaths were 2488, and in 1814, 2039. This was the period of the scarcity. In 1815 they were again diminished to 1571.

The principal cause, however, which prevents the population from exhibiting what would be a natural appearance, is the disproportion of the sexes. By actual enumeration it was found, and it is stated in a report on the minutes of this house, that the Africans brought to this country were in the proportion of two-fifths females and three-fifths males.

The evil was considerably augmented by the native men being richer than those newly arrived, and taking a larger proportion of the women, whilst the creole females rarely cohabit with men from Africa, until they had been a considerable time in the country, and acquired some property.

Seven years have been by no means sufficient to bring the sexes to a state of equality; and until that be effected, the number of deaths must be to that of births in an unnatural proportion.

This evil produces another; a greater degree of promiscuous intercourse and more difficulty in correcting it by rewards or punishments. It is unnecessary to state how unfavourable this condition of society is to a natural increase. The young women are adverse to any restraint on their pleasures and profits, and often have recourse to means of procuring abortions, until they become unable to carry children for the full period of gestation. The principal male negroes are equally disinclined to allow their masters to interfere with their connections. From previous habits, it cannot with any propriety be made an object of punishment, and rewards have hitherto failed to produce any considerable effect.

The lands cultivated for coffee in Jamaica are of a description unknown to the agriculturalist of Europe, and in a very different state from the fields yielding sugar-cane within the tropics.

By the system of modern husbandry, lands yielding the cereal gramina in Europe do not wear out, but may continue for centuries to produce the same quantity of food. To the sugar-cane a similar system has been applied, and although with less complete success from there being no succession or rotation of crops, yet when the fields are level, and manure can be carried out at a moderate expense, or they are sufficiently extensive to admit of throwing out a portion of the land to rest, the cultivation may be continued for a long period, with only diminished profit, but exempt from absolute loss.

The condition of the cultivator of coffee is less fortunate. The plantations have been established chiefly upon steep ridges, intersected by deep ravines, in many cases without much level ground on the estate as necessary for the works, until it has been made by art at considerable expense. The soil is of a loose texture, of no great depth, and often on an understratum of sterile clay or gravel. Many of the settlers began with small capitals, and the quantity of land they could purchase was in proportion.

For a few years the trees yielded abundantly. The system adopted required keeping the fields free from weeds and grass; every shower carried off some of the finer particles, and the torrents, which fall for months in every year, gradually swept away the productive soil, leaving the roots of the trees without the means of nourishment. No care on the part of the planter could have prevented these inevitable consequences from the nature of the exposure, soil, and climate.

The fields once productive, have gradually been abandoned, and are altogether unfit for cultivation; they do not even throw up, nor can they made be made to yield, a grass fit for rearing cattle.

Fortunately the decay has been, and will continue to be, progressive, and the labourers may be gradually absorbed in the population of the districts which can still be cultivated without loss, and principally on the sugar-estates, most of which are deficient in strength, if this natural remedy for a great calamity be not obstructed by injudicious statutes, enacted at the instance of those who, contemning the rights of their fellow-subjects, wish also to strive against the laws of nature and the dispensation of Providence, which compel the inhabitants of this island to seek new settlements for themselves and their
negroes, in despite of that fond attachment which even white colonists feel for their property and homes, but which sentiment our detractors seem to think is only experienced by Africans.

The positive evidence supports a conclusion which must necessarily follow the detail that we have given. Attaching the labourer to such a soil would, in the plain language of the witnesses, ruin the master and starve the slave.

But is this removal of the negro an evil so formidable as to call for a remedy of the desperate description suggested?

It is apparent, that being transplanted from a sterile to a productive soil, from a place where labour can procure no return to one where new or good lands give an exuberant harvest, can be in itself no calamity.

Abstracted from declamation about the bones of ancestors, and the attractions of early associations what is it that we consider endears home? The presence of our wives, children, relations, friends. When the population is removed to a different estate, do they experience greater privations, do they undergo as many hardships as the free citizens of the United States encounter, when they desert the worn-out fields of New England, and seek more productive establishments on the banks of the Ohio or the Missouri?

The first object of every master is to make the new settlements more comfortable than the former abodes, and the consequences are inevitable, that the people are satisfied, and never dreamed of the hardships, so freely portrayed by the lively imaginations of their European friends.

The rights of property in Great Britain and Ireland and in Jamaica seem to be regulated by different laws, and to have no common principle.

In the highlands of Scotland a thousand tenants may be told by their landlord, whose name they bear, who have the same blood they fancy in their veins, whose ancestors have freely shed theirs to preserve the estate for the ungrateful chief-tain, that he means to bring half a dozen shepherds with their flocks to occupy the whole domain, because he finds the superior profits will enable him to live in luxury in the capital, in place of exercising hospitality in the halls of his father.

His agent may perhaps add, the wilds of America are open to them, and a pleasure equal to that of the middle passage from Africa, in a crowded and dirty vessel, with scanty food and little water.

Such has been the practice to hundreds and thousands, compelled to leave their abodes in Scotland and Ireland.

Your committee has heard of no proposal by the African Institution, or from the whole body of Methodists, for securing these unfortunate people in the occupation of their farms, to which their attachment has become proverbial.

No plan of this kind has been brought into Parliament. Any member, suggesting the measure would have been silenced with declamation against agrarian laws, and in favour of the rights of property, which allow the Englishman to do what he pleases with his estate, for no other reason but because it is his.

One view of the subject remains to be considered, which is little regarded in Great Britain, but is perhaps of more immediate importance than all the others.

It is the effect which the agitation of the question has produced, and is continuing to work on the minds of the slaves. The evidence has stated that they exhibited every appearance of a contented happy people. Such was the universal condition only a few years ago.

But since the discussion of this unfortunate bill commenced, an idea has gone abroad, and is becoming general, amongst the slaves, that a law has been promulgated by the king, declaring them free. Of Parliaments or political rights they can form no notion. They observe the whole country in a ferment, meetings in every parish, and hear of declarations against proceedings in the parent state. Coupled with the rumours, that they have been made, or are immediately to be made, free, they are satisfied that their masters are incensed and inflamed against this measure; but that they are to be supported by the king and the people in the white man’s country, and have none to fear but the free inhabitants in the island.

Affidavits are now in the possession of your committee, stating the declarations of the young and violent, that if their freedom be not declared after Christmas, they must fight with the white man for it; and the most alarming information has been received of growing insubordination, and a general belief that they are to be emancipated by orders sent to the governor.

If the emancipation, so long denied by the advocates of Abolition, but now proclaimed to have been their object, shall be countenanced in Parliament, the slaves will accomplish the measure without aid from their friends in England. Of gradual emancipation, of a new state to arise out of progressive civilization, when it shall become the interest of the master to employ free labourers; of emancipation, not to be precipitated by legal enactments, they can and do understand nothing. It is the language conveying to
them no ideas, and altogether unintelligible. But that Parliament has announced the plan of making them free, and means to accomplish it by measures which their masters disapprove, they can clearly comprehend. They will not be long in accomplishing the object by a way which they better understand; by fighting the white men, by attempting a general massacre, and ensuring a complete desolation and destruction of property.

If they [slaves] were told it [the registration of slaves] was to prevent smuggling slaves, which they knew never existed; to guard against holding persons entitled to freedom in slavery, a practice no less imaginary; they would laugh at the tale as a gross attempt to impose on their understanding. And who could blame their disbelief?

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – details*

*John Shand’s report – extracts continued*

Your committee being of opinion that the time has now arrived, when the sale of slaves on writ of *venditioni exponas* might be prohibited without injustice to creditors, we beg leave to recommend that measure to the house. If adopted, care must of course be taken that no infractions of existing securities or contracts shall take place.

We would also recommend that all purchasing of slaves, by middle men or with a view to resale, should be prohibited, and that they shall pass directly from the lands from whence they may be removed to those on which they are to be settled.

These measures would nearly remove all the hardships which at present exist from negroes not being attached to the soil.

Your committee think that it would be expedient to enlarge the powers of the justices and vestry as a council of protection, and put under their care the cases of all slaves who had just grounds of complaint against their master for an infringement of the law.

Although the contrary be alleged, it is well known here that this body is composed of honourable men, who are willing to listen to such complaints, and hold in disrespect all those who give room for them.
One of the most palpable acts of injustice towards the colonists is laying hold of the few exceptions to the general rule—men who exist in every country, who prefer the gratification of their passions to the performance of their duty.

Their acts are blazoned forth as proving crimes and cruelty to be in common practice of all masters towards slaves; whereas these men are held in as great detestation by their neighbours, and the community in which they live, as they are by the most violent declaimers against their conduct, who, not content with reprobating the individual, endeavour, against all fair reasoning, to implicate the whole colony.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816 – details*

*John Shand’s report – extracts continued*

The subject of religion, and the best method of introducing genuine Christianity [to the slaves], in the mild and beneficent spirit of its founder, is of so great importance that the committee decline going deep into it at present; but recommend that early in the next session a committee may be appointed, for the special purpose of discussing and considering the most eligible manner of diffusing religious information amongst that class of society.

The assembly has always been against communicating to them the dark and dangerous fanaticism of the Methodist, which, grafted on the African superstitions, and the general temperament of negroes in a state of bondage, has produced, and must continue to produce, the most fatal consequences, equally inimical to their well-being and comfort in this world, and to the practice of those virtues which we are led to believe ensure happiness in the next.

But the representatives of the people have not displayed any of that aversion, with which they have been charged, to encourage the propagation of Christianity in the form which they thought likely to be beneficial.

The Moravians have been received, and for half a century have had a mission of a bishop and two or three teachers in the parishes of Westmorland and St Elizabeth; but the good effects, said to have resulted from the labours of the brethren in Antigua, have not appeared in Jamaica, where the slaves who have been under their care do not appear superior to their pagan neighbours.
In the year 1779 an act passed the legislature of this island, imposing it as a duty on the rector of every parish, to set apart a portion of time on each Sunday for instructing such slaves as were willing to become Christians. Considerable numbers have profited from these instructions. In most cases the masters encourage, none oppose, the wishes of the slaves to attend.

In the year 1814 a bill passed through the house of assembly to give a legal establishment to the church of Scotland in this island.

It was thought that the simplicity of the form of worship was well adapted to the condition of the slaves; that the moderate remuneration, with which the pastors are satisfied, could be easily raised; and that an increased number of places of worship would remove the complaint of the churches on the present establishment not affording sufficient accommodation.

Although the Acts of Union seem to give the inhabitants who profess the Presbyterian religion a claim to an establishment in the colonies, this bill was rejected by the honourable council.

It shews, however, that the representatives of the people have always been desirous to encourage the introduction of pastors, whose education gave security for the nature of their doctrines which they were to inculcate.

They continue of that disposition, although equally satisfied, as in former times, that to communicate the lights of Christianity through Methodism would have consequences the most fatal to the temporal comforts of the slaves, and the safety of the community.

The Methodist (or Wesleyan) mission to Jamaica began following the visit of Dr Thomas Coke in 1789.


In January 1789, Dr. Coke visited Jamaica, and was received by a number of the inhabitants, some of them persons of property, with extraordinary kindness, a circumstance which induced him to form high hopes of it as a field for missionary labour. Mr. Hammet, after labouring sometime in other islands, came to Kingston; but scarcely had he commenced his labours, when the spirit of opposition began to rage . . .

In June 1807, the Common Council [of Kingston], under pretence of zeal for the purity of religion, passed an act by which any person not duly authorized by the laws of Jamaica and Great Britain, who should presume to preach or teach, or offer up public prayers, or sing psalms in any meeting of negroes or people of colour, within the city or parish, should if a free person, suffer punishment by a fine not exceeding L.100, or imprisonment in the common gaol or workhouse, for any period not exceeding three months; and, if a slave, by imprisonment and hard labour for a space not exceeding six months, or by whipping not exceeding thirty-nine lashes, or both; that a similar punishment should be inflicted on every person who permitted such an illegal meeting in his house or premises; and that even in a licensed place of worship, there should be no public worship earlier than six in the morning, or later than sunset in the evening, under a like penalty.

. . . Such were the methods adopted “for preventing the profanation of religious rites, and false worshipping of God.” It is not unworthy of notice, that the French and Spanish priests, who either had chapels, or wished to erect them, were permitted to worship God agreeably to the dictates of their consciences, while those who were not only Protestants, but the natural born subjects of Britain, laboured exclusively under the interdiction.

It was reported by the advocates of this measure, that “the meetings of the slaves and others, were held at unseasonable hours; that people could not pass through the streets without being annoyed with singing and praying; that the orderly inhabitants could not rest in their beds without being disturbed, as the new religionists were engaged in these exercises all night; and that there was nothing but singing and praying through all Kingston.” Whatever may be thought of the other charges, the last of them was unquestionably erroneous; for rioting, dancing, billiards, theatrical amusements, and every species of dissipation abounded in that town . . .

It must, however, be acknowledged, that these allegations were not entirely without foundation. Among the Methodists, and others who made a profession of religion, there were some whose zeal was
greater than their knowledge, and hurried them into extravagancies, which the more sober-minded viewed with unaffected sorrow . . .

Several months elapsed after the passing of this law, before any of the Methodists fell under its iniquitous lash; but, at length, the missionaries in Kingston, by a piece of indiscretion which can admit of no apology, brought the weight of its vengeance on their head . . .

The law of the Corporation of Kingston was necessarily confined in its operation to the precincts of that parish; but, in the meanwhile, the Assembly of the island, under the pretence of exciting the proprietors of negroes to instruct them in the principles of religion, passed an act, ordaining that the instruction of slaves should be confined to the doctrines of the church of England; that no missionary should presume to teach them, or receive them into their houses or assemblies, under the penalty of L20 for every slave proved to have been present; and if the offender refused payment, he should be committed to the county gaol until the fine was discharged.

By this means a complete stop was put to the labours of the Methodists in Jamaica. Prohibited as they were from admitting slaves into their assemblies; they still wished to preach to people of free condition; but all their applications for a license, were refused in the most pointed manner . . .

The Assembly knowing that such a measure would be disapproved of by his Majesty, resorted to the trick of ingrafting it upon an act to continue the general system of the slave laws, which had been consolidated into a temporary act that was then about to expire . . . but the Board of Trade found a way to frustrate this shameful artifice, by advising his Majesty to disallow both the act in question, and the act of repeal, which had never expressly received the royal sanction, though it had been several years in force. The general slaves laws, therefore, were by this means still established, and only the persecuting clauses of this new bill disannulled.

But as the legislature of Jamaica, by this stratagem of delaying to transmit the act for the royal sanction, while it had its operation in the island under that of the governor, had, for more than a year, suspended the meetings of the negroes for public worship, his Majesty, to prevent the repetition of such shameful proceedings in that or any of the other islands, issued a general order to the governors in the West Indies, commanding them, that they should, on no pretence whatever, give their assent to any law relative to religion, until they had first transmitted a draught of the bill to England, and had received his Majesty’s approbation of it, unless in the body of the act a clause was inserted suspending its operation, until the pleasure of his Majesty should be known respecting it.

Enraged at this new disappointment, the Assembly of Jamaica came to various resolutions on the state of the island, in which they declared, that the prohibition of passing laws on the subject of religion was a violent infringement of the constitution of the colony; that until it was withdrawn, it was the duty of the house to exercise their privilege of withholding supplies; and that after a certain period, until this grievance was redressed, no money should be granted or raised within the island for the support of the military establishment. In consequence of these violent proceedings, the Duke of Manchester, the governor, immediately dissolved the Assembly.

In November 1810, the Assembly not discouraged by the decision of the government at home, passed a new act on the subject of religion, and introduced into it such regulations relative to the licensing of preachers and places of worship, as plainly shewed that it was their design to prevent the instruction of the negroes by those who alone were willing to teach them. This law, indeed, was to continue in force only for twelve months; but this very circumstance, which might seem trivial, displayed the artfulness of the Assembly, being no doubt intended to elude his Majesty’s disallowance of the bill, as by the time that could be notified, the law would have expired. How the governor, in direct opposition to an express command from his Majesty, should have given his assent to such a bill, it is not easy to explain.

By these means, all preaching was for sometime at an end; but as the restrictions did not extend to private assemblies, Mr. Wiggins, the missionary, employed himself in meeting classes, in administering the Lord’s Supper, and the discharge of other ministerial duties. After the expiration of the last act of Assembly, he ventured to preach in Kingston; but, as the law of the Corporation of that town was still in force, he did not escape the vigilance of his enemies. Next day he was summoned before the magistrates, and was sentenced to one month’s imprisonment in the common gaol . . .

In December 1815, Mr. John Shipman began to preach again in Kingston, after the chapel had been shut, with one short interval, for upwards of eight years. After several unsuccessful applications, he had, to the astonishment and the joy of the friends of religion, obtained permission to take the oaths to government, and a license to preach the gospel . . . Others of the missionaries afterwards obtained similar licenses . . .
For some years before December 1815 Methodist missionary Mr Wiggins was ‘in the habit of visiting a small society in St Thomas in the Vale’.
It must not be supposed that though the state of the Mission was most distressing, the work of God was standing still. Mr. Wiggins had been in the habit of visiting a small society in St Thomas in the Vale, which had been formed a few years before; and as he was allowed to preach, the members increased both in grace and number . . .

The little society in St Thomas in the Vale continued to be visited as frequently as possible. In that parish, which belonged to the same precinct as Spanish Town, there never had been any serious opposition; and in the absence of the missionaries, their place was supplied by two local preachers in the neighbourhood, who were allowed to officiate with very little interruption. Here also the number of hearers rapidly increased, and a more suitable place of worship became indispensably necessary. For this purpose two of the free members offered a choice of two different plots of ground, suitable for the site of a chapel and dwelling-house. The spot which Mr. Wiggins selected was exceedingly beautiful, and in a fine climate. It was named Grateful Hill; and the work was immediately commenced with all possible diligence.

The Methodist chapel at Grateful Hill was in the far east of St Thomas in the Vale in the Above Rocks district close to the border with the parish of St Andrew – see Chapter 13.

In the December 1815 Report from the Committee, above, John Shand referred to the 1814 Jamaica Bill to give a legal establishment to the Church of Scotland in the island being rejected by the Council of Jamaica. A Presbyterian petition was presented to the House of Assembly on 3 November 1814.

A petition of sundry persons of the Presbyterian persuasion presented, setting forth,

That a great number of the inhabitants of Kingston, and of the island in general, have been brought up in the Presbyterian form of worship, and have long regretted that no Establishment has taken place in this colony, to afford them the opportunity of offering their Prayer and Thanksgivings to the Almighty agreeably to the rites in which they have been educated:

That, deeply impressed with the necessity for such an Establishment, the petitioners have contributed to raise a sum for the creation of a Place of Worship in the City of Kingston for such as are of the Presbyterian persuasion, and to endow a Minister for the same:

That such Establishment may become permanent, and be duly protected, the petitioners are anxious to obtain the countenance of the Legislature, for carrying into effect an object which they confidently trust will prove of general benefit:

That it is the intention, as soon as the funds will permit, to connect with the Establishment a Seminary for the education of youth, under the guidance of the Minister:

That the petitioners are advised it is requisite to have an Act of the Legislature for the appointment of Trustees for the management of the temporal concerns of the Establishment, and to empower them to purchase and hold real property, and to receive the donations and bequests which such as are disposed may be willing to grant.

And praying the interposition of the House.

The above petition referred to Committee.

On 10 November 1814 John Shand and Francis Graham were two of twenty five men who were ‘nominated as being fit persons for Trustees’ to the Presbyterian Institution of Kingston.
On Monday a meeting of the subscribers to the Presbyterian Chapel took place at the Court-House in this city. Robert Henry, Esq in the Chair, when a petition to the Hon House of Assembly, praying pecuniary aid thereto, was read, which was agreed to, and immediately signed by those present. The draft of a bill for forming a permanent Presbyterian Establishment (to be submitted to the Committee of the Hon House of Assembly, appointed to bring in a bill agreeably to the prayer of a petition already presented for that purpose), was read to the meeting, and several alterations and additions suggested therein. The following Gentlemen were then nominated as being fit persons for Trustees to the institution, which was suggested should be entitled “The Presbyterian Institution of Kingston:”

The Hon John Shand, the Hon Charles Grant, Alex Grant, Andrew Bogle, Robert Henry, John Dick, David Finlayson, Francis Graham, Samuel Walker, Wm Crosbie, James Simpson, Wm Middleton, Ewing Ritchie, Robert B Muirhead, John Miller, Gilbert Vance, Joseph Green, Robert Smith, Robert McClelland, Maxwell Hyslop, Wm Hoseason, Colin McLarty, George Condie, David Brown, and Andrew Lunan, Esqrs.

Five months earlier, on 4 June 1814, Thomas Milles wrote to Francis Graham saying that he had received a letter from Kingston requesting his sister in law, Mrs Rose Milles, to become a subscriber to the Presbyterian Institution.


P.S. I have received a letter from Kingston (signed S. R. Dallas) requesting Mrs Milles to become a Subscriber to a Society called the Presbyterian Institution – if you are acquainted with any of the Subscribers or know any particulars of the Society (it being the first time I have heard of it) have the goodness to let me know for Mrs Milles information. – I need not add that we are of the Established Church . . .

Letter, dated Kingston 12 March 1814, from S. G. Dallas to Thomas Milles

Sir
The Sub-Committee appointed to conduct the correspondence of the Presbyterian Institution in this City impressed with the idea that you take an interest in every thing that will promote the welfare of the Inhabitants of this Island have requested me to address you on the subject of the Institution.

The object which they have in view is to effect the establishment upon such a scale as will render it beneficial to the Island in General. And they therefore hope that they will have the aid of you and your friends in promoting the design, that sufficient funds may be procured to meet the intention.

I subjoin a List of these Gentlemen to whom at the request of the Sub-Committee I have written soliciting them to open subscriptions for this purpose and your support will be considered as an essential obligation.

Be pleased to address your communications on this subject to me as Secretary to the Presbyterian Institution and to accept the assurance of my being with great respect

Sir &c

(Signed) S. G. Dallas – Secretary

Letter, dated Farm 10 September 1814, from Francis Graham to Thomas Milles – extract

... There was no Presbyterian Institution here and of late a sum of £9000 Currency has been raised for that purpose. – The directors have addressed all the absent proprietors for assistance. – I have paid £100 and if Mrs Milles will assist so laudable an undertaking in this part of the world it will be thankfully accepted and the name will be entered in the Records of the Institution...

Letter, dated Lincolns Inn 6 December 1814, from Mr Bartlett to Francis Graham – extract

In the absence of Mr Milles from Town, I have received his directions ... With respect to the Presbyterian Institution I am instructed to return you Mr Milles thanks for your report thereon, and to inform you, that Mrs Milles will settle with the Gentlemen composing the Committee in London as to what she may think proper to subscribe ...
At the beginning of February 1815 the Jamaica Royal Gazette published a report, dated 9 September 1814, from the Edinburgh Star.

The Edinburgh Star of the 9th September last contains the following paragraph on the subject of the erection of a Presbyterian chapel in this city:

“It has long been an object of desire to the inhabitants of the city of Kingston in Jamaica, to have a Presbyterian place of worship erected there; and an attempt to that effect made upwards of twenty years ago failed. Within these few months, the same object has been brought forward, and with a degree of spirit which promises success. All classes and denominations have contributed to it; and notwithstanding the contradictory paragraphs, which have lately appeared in the papers of this country on the subject, there appears little reason to doubt the completion of the design. Our readers will find in this publication the whole proceedings on the subject transmitted to us by the Committee, whereby it will be seen, that 8000 l. currency have already been subscribed, and upwards of 6000 l. paid. Our later communications inform us, that a house has been purchased for the Minister, and ground for erecting the place of worship. The funds, however, are not deemed adequate for the whole of their plan; and it is the wish of the Committee, in submitting their proceedings to their fellow-countrymen, that they may be induced to come forward, and give some assistance to so laudable an undertaking.”

In 1822 Edward was a subscriber to the Presbyterian Institution of Kingston – see Chapter 12.
CHAPTER 9

1816 to 1817

Matthew Gregory Lewis, an absentee proprietor visiting Jamaica in 1816, described the early morning mist in St Thomas in the Vale.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=Ub4NAAAAQAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Journal of a West India Proprietor, kept during his residence in the island of Jamaica, by the late Matthew Gregory Lewis, published 1834 – page 166-167 – 7 February 1816 – extract

We were to return by the North Road, and set out [from Spanish Town] at six in the morning... nothing can be imagined at once more sublime and more beautiful than the scenery. Our road lay along the banks of the Rio Cobre, which runs up to Spanish Town, where its floods frequently commit dreadful ravages. Large masses of rock intercept its current at small intervals, which, as well as its shallowness, render it unnavigable. The cliffs and trees are of the most gigantic size, and the road goes so near the brink of a tremendous precipice, that we were obliged always to send a servant forwards to warn any other carriage of our approach, in order that it might stay in some broader part while we passed it. A bridge had been attempted to be built over the river, but a storm had demolished it before completion, and nothing was now left standing but a single enormous arch... I was extremely delighted with the first ten miles of this stage: unluckily, a mist then arose, so thick, that it was utterly impossible to guess at the surrounding scenery; and the morning was so cold, that I was glad to wrap myself up in my cloak as closely as if it had been travelling in an English December.

My photo, December 2009 – St Thomas in the Vale – early morning mist – Mount Olive, the old estate on the southwest side of Williamsfield

In March 1816 in St Thomas in the Vale the Earl of Harewood owned a total of 331 slaves.

The overseer of Sandy Gut, James Cairncross, swore the Sandy Gut crop account for the year 1815 on 20 March 1816 – *Jamaica Archives – Records of Crop Accounts, Lib 48, Fol 219.*

In April 1816 people in Jamaica were waiting for news of discussions in Parliament on the subject of the Registry Bill.

*British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 13 April 1816, page PS 17*

Every inhabitant of this colony must now be looking forward with anxiety to the approaching discussions in Parliament on the subject of the Registry Bill, although we own, on our part, we feel very little doubt as to their issue, for we cannot but persuade ourselves that every unprejudiced Member of both Houses, when he shall have read the able and luminous Report of our Assembly, drawn up by Mr Shand [December 1815], will candidly espouse our cause, and give us that decided majority that will secure us a complete triumph over the nefarious designs of Messrs Wilberforce, Stephen, and Macaulay, and their worthy coadjutors in their work of infamy...

Above, John Shand’s Report (see Chapter 8) included – ‘since the discussion of this unfortunate bill commenced, an idea has gone abroad, and is becoming general, amongst the slaves, that a law has been promulgated by the king, declaring them free’.

Then, on 14 April 1816, a slave revolt broke out in Barbados which was blamed on – ‘ill-disposed persons, who have been endeavouring to induce a belief that the Slaves were actually made free, but that the manumissions were improperly withheld from them’.

*British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 18 May 1816, page Sup 9-10*

We feel particular gratification in having it in our power to inform our readers that the extent of the mischief supposed to have been committed at Barbados by the insurgent negroes has been greatly exaggerated.

It now appears, by a letter from Sir James Leith to his Grace the Governor, dated the 26th ult that a partial revolt took place on the night of the 14th ult in the parishes of St Philip, Christchurch, St John and St George, and some of the negroes set fire to the cane-pieces on a few estates. They were attacked and defeated on the evening of the 15th, and never afterwards made any stand against a regular force. There were 383 prisoners in confinement, and Sir James Leith’s only remaining object was directed to the discovery of the ringleaders and instigators of the insurrection, which has been attended with ruinous effects to a few persons, but the greatest part of the island had suffered no injury.

The following Proclamation was issued by his Excellency Sir James Leith, on the 28th day of April, 1816; and we rejoice to learn that it has been attended with the happiest effects on the deluded slaves.

Barbados.

By his Excellency Sir James Leith...

An Address. To the Slave Population of the Island of Barbados.

It appearing that the late insurrection of the Slaves, in the parishes of St Phillip, St George, Christchurch, and St John, was principally caused by the misrepresentation and instigation of ill-disposed persons, who have been endeavouring to induce a belief that the Slaves were actually made free, but that the manumissions were improperly withheld from them, I think it my duty, at once, to remove all
misconception on a subject of so great importance for the tranquillity of this colony, and for the well being of the Slaves themselves.

I do not mean to enter into the origin and nature of Slavery, farther than to prevent you from erroneously supposing that bondage is your particular or exclusive lot.

Slavery is not the institution of any particular colour, age, or country; it has ever existed, and still exists among white as well as black men, in every quarter of the earth. That the blacks of Africa have countenanced Slavery, and with the whites, have been its joint authors in the West-Indies, is a fact personally known to all of you who come from Africa under the compulsive transfer of your persons by your own countrymen, by whom you were held in bondage in your native land, and were disposed of as slaves. That our humane and equitable Sovereign, and the British nation disapprove of the traffic in Slaves from Africa is known to all, as well as that it has consequently been prohibited by the law, and has long ceased.

It is equally a fact, that the black people of Africa still continue Slavery, not only among themselves, but that they daily barter their fellows, of every age and sex, to any person who chooses to buy them; while Great-Britain alone exerts her power to prevent an increase of Slavery, and to render those, who are now unavoidably in that state, every practicable service which benevolence suggests. But the most wise and just men – the most humane and zealous advocates of the Abolition of the Slave-Trade, who possess practical knowledge, and the most sincere friends of those who are actually in Slavery, have considered their emancipation (except in particular cases, as a reward of fidelity and good conduct) to be morally impracticable; whether such a measure should regard the good order of the community at large, or the well being of the generality of the Slaves themselves.

What would be the fate of the old, the infirm, the sick, the helpless children, and a large proportion of your body, who have been brought up to depend entirely upon your Masters for your subsistence, and from that circumstance, as well as from the want of knowledge as artificers, and in other respects, would be little able to provide for your wants, of a rash measure of general emancipation were at once to throw the mass of the Slave Population into a new state of society, under the flattering but fallacious name of freedom, in reality, however, presenting the only the dangers of general disorder, and producing (except to a few) the miseries of confusion and want, leading to the commission of crimes, and to the absolute subversion of public order and tranquillity? After contemplating such danger to the community, it is not necessary to go into the origin and nature of Slavery, in order to decide on the impracticability of its Abolition where it actually exists, excepting by a wise and unremitting system of amelioration, by which it will gradually produce its own reformation. By such means alone, and not by the attempt of a rash and destructive convulsion, has Slavery imperceptibly, safely, and happily changed...

David Finlay, a planter in Jamaica, blamed the Barbados slave revolt on ‘the evil machinations of Macaulay & Co in England’.

https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/254898 – Stirling of Ardoch and Grahams of Airth Family Letters – transcribed and edited by Sarah Harrison, 2016 – page 302-303 – letter, 10 May 1816, from David Finlay, Ardoch, St Ann’s, Jamaica, to Thomas Stirling of Airth Castle (Scotland) – extract

I have not as yet been able to get two suitable Gentlemen to meet here for the purpose of Valuing the Penn, negroes & Stock... My Valuation is about £10,000 Stg or £14,000 Currency – but from the Poverty of the Freehold, a purchaser would be very difficult to meet with in these times – particularly since the late alarms Peoples Minds have experienced in consequence of Mr Wilberforces proposed Registry Bill a most absurd, dangerous, and as far as regards this Island unnecessary innovation. - It is somewhat Singular that the leading Member of the African institution, and the real and active Instigator of this iniquitous Bill - & Wilberforce's Friend & Coadjutor – Mr Zachary Macaulay, was once an Overseer in this Island, and I his Bookkeeper. He was a plausible, well educated, Sensible Fellow – but as complete a Hypocrite, Jesuit, & as cruel a Tyrant on negroes as ever perhaps came to this Island: insomuch that he was executed [unclear] by his Brother Overseers – and dismissed by his Worthy & respectable Employer Mr Alexander Macleod of Muiravonside for no other cause than his Wanton Severity, & its consequent ruin to the Estate. This man's conduct in England at present make much noise here, and our papers teem with abuse of him and Mr Macleod, with whom I dare say you are acquainted, will readily corroborate my Statement Should you enquire of Him. - We have just received accts of a Rebellion of the Slaves, and
every body here much alarmed Sending away their Property – all owing to the evil machinations of Macaulay & Co in England – Lord Castlreagh's eyes I trust will now be sufficiently opened on this Subject – . . .

Above – Alexander Macleod of Muiravonside (near Edinburgh) – formerly of Spanish Town

See – https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=FuRbAAAAQAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – An Account of the Emancipation of the Slaves of Unity Valley Pen, in Jamaica, by David Barclay, published 1801 – page 5 – Alexander MacLeod, Muiravon

In the late 18th century Alexander Macleod was a Jamaica attorney to Edwin Lascelles, Lord Harewood, and after to his heir Edward Lascelles, Lord Harewood, later the 1st Earl of Harewood.


David Finlay, above, referred to Zachary Macaulay being dismissed from an estate. It appears that the estate was Hyde in St Thomas in the Vale – see Chapter 3 – https://archive.org/details/maniacs00np – The Maniacs, or Fantasia of Bos Bibens – page 42-43

In August 1816 the editor of the Jamaica Royal Gazette referred to Zachary Macaulay as a ‘savage book-keeper (universally detested while he was here)’ and referred to James Stephen as a ‘disappointed Barrister of the Windward Islands, who never visited us’.


We have been in the habit so often of late of seeing the West-India Legislature and Communities abused in print, by the appellation of “Slave-Drivers,” and other equally disgusting epithets, that we feel happy to have it in our power to lay before are readers the following testimony, given at a distance of ten years from his departure among us, of a Governor [General George Nugent], who had more than ample means in his power of appreciating the character of the inhabitants of this colony, than a savage book-keeper (universally detested while he was here) . . . or a disappointed Barrister of the Windward Islands, who never visited us . . .

In the House of Commons on 19 June 1816 William Wilberforce said – ‘some persons have even gone the length of charging upon the supporters of the Registry Bill the insurrection’ in Barbados.


. . . news of a dangerous insurrection in Barbadoes, armed the West Indians with new weapons of assault. “If in such a world as this,” he writes to Mr. Babington [7 June] “we were not to expect to be calumniated, it would seem beyond what one should be prepared for, to find our West Indian opponents charging us with the effects of their own presumption and folly. From the very earliest Abolition efforts they kept clamouring, ‘It is emancipation you mean, you mean to make our slaves free;’ we all the time denying it. At length – wonderful that not before – the slaves themselves begin to believe it, and to take measures for securing the privilege; in short the artillery they had loaded so high against us, burst among themselves, and they impute to us the loading and pointing of it.”

The same charge he fixed publicly upon his opponents, in proposing to the House the motion on which he had decided . . . [9 June] “. . . The House will be no less astonished than myself when I say that some persons have even gone the length of charging upon the supporters of the Registry Bill the insurrection of which intelligence has so lately been received . . . Nor have they confined their assertions to this House or
this country, but they have actually printed and published in the West Indies that the design of the friends of Abolition was to make all slaves instantly free…”

“At least we have gained some experience in the contest to which we have been exposed; and the same weapons are now employed against us that were used in our former battles, though they may have been a little furished up to give them a new appearance. The grand arguments against us are derived from what are called Methodism and fanaticism. What gentlemen mean by that term I am not very well aware, and I may doubt perhaps if they themselves know…”

William Wilberforce (born 1759) was introduced to Methodism following his father’s death in 1768.


… The death of his father in the summer of 1768 transferred him to the care of his uncle… he was sent to live with him at Wimbledon… His aunt was a great admirer of Whitefield’s preachings, and kept up a friendly connexion with the early methodists…

“How eventful a life,” he says in looking back to this period in his thirty-eighth year, “has mine been, and how visibly I can trace the hand of God leading by ways which I knew not! I think I have never before remarked, that my mother’s taking me from my uncle’s when about twelve or thirteen and then completely a methodist, has probably been the means of my being connected with political men and becoming useful in life. If I had staid with my uncle I should probably have been a bigoted despised methodist…

Methodist Missionaries in Barbados were accused of inciting slaves to revolt.

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ZEBfAAAAcAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – A Defence of the Wesleyan Methodist Mission in the West Indies…, by Richard Watson, one of the Secretaries to the Committee for the Management of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions, published 1817 – page 10-11

… Alarm produced by the insurrection of the slaves in Barbadoes, has encouraged the enemies of missions to attempt to bring the missionary system into discredit, by falsely charging that catastrophe upon Methodist Missionaries. That refuted, they have charged it upon the Registry Bill, and the African Institution; and, as the Methodist Missionaries have been gratuitously, but as they will think, not dishonourably, assumed to be in some way connected with the African Institution, and to be the agents of its views, the ill temper which the agitation of the Registry Bill question has excited in the colonies, and many persons interested in them at home, has expressed itself in the most illiberal and unfounded charges upon men, who, wholly unconnected with politics, and pursuing the “noiseless tenor of their way,” in the instruction of the negroes, for the most part never heard of that measure, till it was held up to public execration in the West Indies. Again, the almost forgotten charges of seditious preaching, and nocturnal assemblies, and attempts to excite the slaves to insurrection, have been received with corroborated positiveness… A charge is delivered to the Grand Jury at the General Court of Quarter Sessions, held at Titchfield, Jamaica, in July, to impress upon the gentlemen of the Jury the necessity of guarding, both in their public and private capacity, against itinerating missionaries, “who may be contemptible hypocrites, who may be ill-disposed.”

Before news of the Barbados slave revolt reached Britain, Edward was on board the brig Orion, a West India merchantman, sailing from London to Jamaica.
Brig = two-masted square rigged vessel   Ship = three-masted square rigged vessel

The West India Docks, downstream from the Tower of London, was where West India merchantmen loaded and unloaded their cargo.
Passengers embarked at Gravesend near the mouth of the Thames.
The brig Orion, with Edward onboard, sailed from Gravesend for Jamaica on 21 May 1816.

Six months earlier Matthew Gregory Lewis (see above 17 February 1816) described his voyage from Gravesend to Jamaica on the ship Sir Godfrey Webster.

1815. **November 8 (Wednesday.)** I left London, and reached Gravesend at nine in the morning, having been taught to expect our sailing in a few hours. But although the vessel left the Docks on Saturday, she did not reach this place till three o’clock on Thursday, the 9th. The captain now tells me, that we may expect to sail certainly in the afternoon of to-morrow, the 10th. I expect the ship’s cabin to gain greatly by my two day’s residence at the "***** ****," which nothing can exceed for noise, dirt, and dullness... nowhere else did I see the sky look so dingy, and the river so dirty; to be sure, the place has all the advantages of an English November to assist it in those particulars. Just now, too, a carriage passed my windows, conveying on board a cargo of passengers, who seemed severely afflicted at the thoughts of leaving their dear native land! The pigs squeaked, the ducks quacked, and the fowls screamed... And after them (more affecting than all) came a wheelbarrow, with a solitary porker tied in a basket, with his
head hanging over on one side, and his legs sticking out on the other, who neither grunted or moved, nor gave any signs of life...

**November 10.** At four o’clock in the afternoon, I embarked on board the ‘Sir Godfrey Webster’, Captain Boyes. On approaching the vessel, we heard the loudest of all possible shrieks proceeding from a boat lying near her: and who should be the complainant, but my former acquaintance, the despairing pig. He had discovered his voice to protest against entering the ship: I had already declared against climbing up the accommodation ladder; the pig had precisely the very same objection. So a soi-disant chair, being a broken bucket, was let down for us, and the pig and myself entered the vessel by the same conveyance; only the pig had the precedence, and was hoisted up first. The ship proceeded three miles, and then the darkness obliged us to come to an anchor: There are only two other cabin passengers, a Mr J------- and a Mr S------; the latter is a planter in the ‘May-Day Mountains’. Jamaica: he wonders, considering how much benefit Great Britain derives from the West Indies, that government is not careful to build more churches in them, and is of opinion, that ‘hedicating the negroes is the only way to make them appy; indeed, in his humble hopinion, hedicating his hall in hall!’

**November 11.** We sailed at six o’clock, passed through “Nob’s Hole,” the ‘Girdler’s Hole,” and “the Pan” (all very dangerous sands, and particularly the last, where at times we had only one foot of water below us), by half past four, and at five came to anchor in the Queen’s Channel. Never having seen any thing of the kind before, I was wonderfully pleased with the manoeuvring of several large ships, which passed us: their motions seemed to be affected with as much ease and dexterity as if they had been crane-necked carriages; and the effect as they pursued each other’s tracks and windings was perfectly beautiful.

**November 12.** (Sunday). The wind was contrary, and we had to beat up the whole way; we did not reach the Downs till past four o’clock, and, as there above sixty vessels arrived before us, we had some difficulty in finding a berth. At length we anchored in the Lower Roads, about four miles off Deal. We can see very clearly the double lights in the vessel moored off the Goodwin sands... The “Sir Godfrey Webster” is a vessel of 600 tons, and was formerly in the East India service. I have a very clean cabin, a place for my books, and everything is much more comfortable than I expected; the wind, however, is completely west, the worst that we could have, and we must not even expect a change till the full moon... .

**November 15.** The wind altered sufficiently to allow us to escape the Downs; and at dusk we were off Beachy Head...

**November 16.** Off the Isle of Wight.

**November 17.** Off the St. Alban’s Head. Sick to death! My temples throbbing, my head burning, my limbs freezing, my mouth all fever, my stomach all nausea, my mind all disgust.

http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/126706.html – 1805 – Merchant Brig off Falmouth

*M G Lewis – extracts continued*

**November 18.** Off the Lizard, the last point of England.
The Orion passed the Lizard on 30 May 1816 – [image]

- arrow points to Lizard Point – the most southerly tip of England

M G Lewis continued

November 19. (Sunday.) – At one this morning, a violent gust of wind came on; and, at the rate of ten miles an hour, carried us through the Chops of the Channel, formed by the Scilly Rocks and the Ushant. But I thought that, the advance was dearly purchased by the terrible night which the storm made us pass. The wind roaring, the waves dashing against the stern, till at last they beat in the quarter gallery; the ship, too, rolling from side to side, as if every moment she were going to roll over and over! Mr. J--------- was heaved off one of the sofas, and rolled along, till he was stopped by the table. He then took his seat upon the floor, as the more secure position; and, half an hour afterwards, another heave chucked him back again upon the sofa. The captain snuffed out one of the candles, and both being tied to the table, could not relight it with the other: so the steward came to do it; when a sudden heel of the ship made him extinguish the second candle, tumbled him on the sofa on which I was lying, and made the candle which he had brought with him fly out of the candlestick, through a cabin window at his elbow; and thus we were all left in the dark. Then the intolerable noise! the cracking of bulkheads! the sawing of ropes! the screeching of the tiller! the trampling of the sailors! the clattering of crockery! Every thing above deck and below deck, all in motion at once! Chairs, writing-desks, books, boxes, bundles, fire-irons and fenders, flying to one end of the room; and the next moment (as if they had made a mistake) flying back again to the other with the same hurry and confusion! . . . Our fowls and ducks are screaming and quacking their last by dozens; and by Tuesday morning, it is supposed that we shall not have an animal alive in the ship, except the black terrier – and my friend the squeaking pig, whose vocal powers are still audible . . .

We are now tossing about in the Bay of Biscay: I shall remember it as long as I live . . .

http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections(objects/154229.html – Rev Thomas Streatfeild – 1820
**MG Lewis – extracts continued**

**NOVEMBER 21.** The weather continues intolerable. Boisterous waves running mountains high, with no wind, or a foul one. Dead calms by day, which prevent our making progress; and violent storms by night, which prevent our getting any sleep . . .

**NOVEMBER 25.** Letters were sent to England by a small vessel bound for Plymouth, and laden with oranges from St Michael’s, one of the Azores.

**DECEMBER 3.** The wind during the last two days has been more favourable; and at nine this morning we were in the latitude of Madeira.

**DECEMBER 7.** Yesterday we had the satisfaction of falling in with the trade wind, and now we are proceeding both rapidly and steadily. The change of climate is very perceptible; and the deep and beautiful blue which colours the sea is a certain intimation of our approach to the tropic. A few flying fish have made their appearance; and the spears are getting in order for the reception of their constant attendant, the dolphin [dolphin fish]. These spears have ropes affixed to them, and at the end of pole are five barbs, at the other a heavy ball of lead: then, when the fish is speared, the striker lets the staff fall, on which down goes the lead into the sea, and up goes the dolphin into the air, who is in the utmost astonishment to find itself all of a sudden turned into a flying fish; so determines to cultivate the art of flying for the future, and promises itself a great many airings. The dolphin and the flying fish are beautifully coloured, and both are very good food, particularly the latter, which move in shoals like the herring, and will not take the bait . . . The dolphin is seldom above three feet long; the immense strength which exerts in his struggles for liberty occasions the necessity of catching him in the way before described.

**DECEMBER 8.** At three o’clock this afternoon we entered the tropic of Cancer; and if our wind continues tolerably favourable, we may expect to see Antigua on Sunday se’night. On crossing the line, it was formerly usual for ships to receive a visit from an old gentleman and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Cancer . . .
DECEMBER 11. A dead centipes [sic] was found on the deck, supposed to have made its way on board, during the last voyage, among the logwood. This is not the only species of disagreeable passengers, who are in the habit of introducing themselves into homeward bound vessels without leave. While sleeping on deck last year, the Captain felt something run across his face; and, supposing it to be a cockroach, he brushed off a scorpion; but not without first biting him on the cheek: the pain for about four hours was excessive; but although he did no more than wash the wound with spirits, he was perfectly well again in a couple of days.

Above — Logwood = tree from which a red-purple dye is extracted

https://archive.org/details/gri_000033125010705800 — Through Jamaica with a Kodak, by Alfred Leader, published 1907 — top, Centipede, 4 3/8 in — bottom left, Cockroach, 3 ½ in from tip to tip of wings — bottom right, Scorpions, 3 5/8 in and 2 ½ in
DECEMBER 12. Since we entered the tropic, the rains have been incessant, and most violent; but the wind was brisk and favourable, and we proceeded rapidly. Now we have lost the trade-wind, and move so slowly, that it might almost be called standing still. On the other hand, the weather is perfectly delicious; the ship makes but little way, but she moves steadily: the sun is brilliant; the sky cloudless; the sea calm, and so smooth that it looks like one extended sheet of blue glass; an awning is stretched over the deck; although there is not wind enough to move the canvas, there is sufficient to keep the air cool, and thus, even during the day, the weather is very pleasant; but the nights are quite heavenly, and so bright, that at ten o’clock yesterday evening little Jem Parsons (the cabin boy), and his friend the black terrier, came on deck, and sat themselves down on a gun-carriage, to read by the light of the moon...

Rev Thomas Streatfield – 1820

DECEMBER 13. We caught a dolphin [dolphin fish], but not with a spear: he gorged a line which was fastened to the stern, and baited with salt pork; but being a very large and strong fish, his efforts to escape so powerful, that it was feared that he would break the line, and a grainse (as the dolphin-spear is technically called) was thrown at him: he was struck, and three of the prongs were buried in his side; yet, with a violent effort, he forced them out again, and threw the lance up into the air. I am not much used to take pleasure in the sight of animal suffering; but if Pythagoras himself had been present, and “of opinion that the soul of his grandma might haply inhabit” this dolphin, I think he must still have admired the force and agility displayed in his endeavours to escape. Imagination can picture nothing more beautiful than the colours of this fish: while covered by the waves he was entirely green; and as the water gave him a case transparent crystal, he really looked like a solid piece of emerald; when he sprang into the air, or swam fatigued upon the surface, his fins alone preserved their green, and the rest of his body appeared to be of the brightest yellow, his scales shining like gold wherever they caught the sun; while the blood which, as long as he remained in the sea, continued to spout in great quantities, forced its way upwards through the water, like a wreath of crimson smoke, and then disappeared itself in separate globules among the spray. From the great loss of blood, his colours soon became paler; but when he was at length safely landed on deck, and beating himself to death against the flooring, agony renewed all the lustre of his tints: his fins were still green and his body golden, except his back, which was olive, shot with bright deep blue; his head and belly became silvery, and the spots with the latter were mottled changed, with incessant rapidity, from deep olive to the most beautiful azure. Gradually his brilliant tints disappeared: they were succeeded by one uniform shade of slate-colour; and when he was quite dead, he exhibited nothing but dirty brown and dull dead white. As soon as all was over with him, the first thing done was to convert one of his fins into the resemblance of a flying fish, for the purpose of decoying other dolphins; and the second, to order some of the present gentleman to be got ready for dinner. He measured above four feet and a half.
DECEMBER 14. At noon to-day, we found ourselves in the latitude of Jamaica. We were promised the sight of Antigua on Sunday next, but that is now quite out of the question. We made but eight miles in the whole of yesterday; and as Jamaica is still at the distance of eighteen hundred miles, at this rate of proceeding we may expect to reach it about eight months hence. The sky this evening presented us with quite a new phenomenon, a rose-coloured moon: she is to be at her full to-morrow; and this afternoon, about half past four, she rose like a disk of silver, perfectly white and colourless; but, as she was exactly opposite to the sun at the time of his setting, the reflection of his rays spread a kind of pale blush over her orb, which produced an effect as beautiful as singular. Indeed, the size and inconceivable brilliance of the sun, the clearness of the atmosphere, which had assumed a faint greenish hue, and was entirely without a cloud, the smoothness of the ocean, and the aforesaid rose-coloured moon, altogether rendered the sunset the most magical in effect that I ever beheld; and it was with great reluctance that I was called away from admiring it, to ascertain whether the merits of our new acquaintance, the dolphin, extended any further than his skin. Part of him, which was boiled for yesterday’s dinner, was rather coarse and dry, and might have been mistaken for indifferent haddock. But his having been steeped in brine, and then broiled with a good deal of pepper and salt, had improved him wonderfully; and to-day I thought him as good as any other fish.
December 15. Our wind is like Lady Townley’s separate allowance: ‘that little has been made less’; or, rather, it has dwindled away to nothing. We are so absolutely becalmed... Great numbers of porpoises were playing about to-day, and tumbling under the ship’s very nose. When in their gambols they allow themselves to be seen above the surface, they are a dirty blackish brown, and as ugly as heart can wish; but in the waves they acquire a fine sea-green cast, and their spouting up water in the sunbeams is extremely ornamental.

December 16. What little wind there is blows so perversely, that we have been obliged to alter our course; and instead of Antigua, we are now told that the Summer Islands (Shakespeare’s “still vexed Bermoothes”) are the first land that we must expect to see.

I am greatly disappointed at finding a scarcity of monsters; I had flattered myself, that as soon as we entered the Atlantic Ocean, or at least the tropic, we should have seen whole shoals of sharks, whales, and dolphins wandering about as plenty as sheep upon the South Downs: instead of which, a brace of dolphins, and a few flying fish and porpoises, are the only inhabitants of the ocean who have taken the trouble of paying us the common civility of a visit. However, I am promised, that as soon as we approach the islands, I shall have as many sharks as heart can wish.

December 20. The weather is so excessively close and sultry... In point of heat there is no difference between the days and nights; or if there is any, it is that the nights are rather the hottest of the two. The lightening is incessant, and it does not show itself in forks or flashes, but in wide sheets of mild blue light, which spread themselves at once over sky and sea; and, for the moment which they last, make all the objects around as distinct as in daylight. The moon now does not rise till near ten o’clock and during her absence the size and brilliancy of the stars are admirable. In England they always seemed to me (to borrow a phrase of Shakespeare’s, which, in truth, is not worth borrowing,) to “peep through the blanket of dark”, but here the heavens appear to be studded with them on the outside, as if they were chased with many jewels: it is really Milton’s “firmament of living sapphires”; and what with the lightening, the stars, and the quantity of floating lights which just gleamed round the ship every moment, and then were gone again, to-night the sky had an effect so beautiful, that when at length the moon thought proper to show her red drunken face, I thought that we did much better without her.

The above mentioned floating lights are a kind of sea-meteors, which, as I am told, are produced by the concussion of the waves, while eddying in whirlpools round the rudder; but still I saw them rise sometimes at so great a distance from the ship...

Our captain is quite out of patience with the tortoise pace of our progress...

December 24. (Sunday.) At length we have crawled into the Caribbean Sea. I was told that we were not to expect to see land to-day; but on shipboard our not seeing a thing to-day by no means implies that we shall not see it before to-morrow; for the nautical day is supposed to conclude at noon, when the solar observation is taken; and, therefore, the making land to-day, or not, very often depends upon our making it before twelve o’clock, or after it. This was the case in the present instance; for noon was scarcely passed when we saw Deseada (a small island totally unprovided with water, and whose only produce consists in a little cotton), Guadaloupe, and Marie Galante, thought the latter was at so great a distance as to be scarcely visible. At sunset Antigua was in sight.

December 25. The sun rose upon Montserrat and Nevis, with the Rodondo rock between them, “apricis nation gratissima mergis,” – for it is perpetually covered with innumerable flocks of gulls, boobies, pelicans, and other sea birds. Then came St Christopher’s and St Eustatia; and in the course of the afternoon we passed over the Aves bank, a collection of sand, rock and mud, extending about two hundred miles, and terminated at each end by a small island: one of them inhabited by a few fishermen, the other only by sea birds. Of all the Atlantic isles the soil of St Christopher’s is by some supposed to be the richest, the land frequently producing three hogsheads an acre. I rather think that this was the first island discovered by Columbus, and that it took its name from his patron-saint. Montserrat is so rocky, and the roads so steep and difficult, that the sugar is obliged to be brought down in bags upon the backs of mules, and not put into casks, till its arrival on the sea shore.

The weather is now quite delicious; there is just wind enough to send us forward and keep the air cool: the sun is brilliant without being overpowering; the swell of the waves is scarcely perceptible; and the ship moves along steadily, that the deck affords almost as firm a footing as if we were walking on land...
During the night we passed Santa Cruz, an island which, from the perfection to which its cultivation has been carried, is called “the Garden of the West Indies”.

**DECEMBER 28.** Having left Porto Rico behind us, at noon to-day we passed the insulated rock of Alcavella, lying about six miles from St Domingo, which is now in sight. As this part of the Caribbean is much infested by pirates from Caraccas, all our muskets have been put in repair, and to-day the guns were loaded, of which we mount eight; but as one of them, during the last voyage, went overboard in a gale of wind, its place has been supplied by a *Quaker*, i.e. a sham gun of wood, so called, I suppose, because it would not fight if it were called upon. These pirate-vessels are small schooners, armed with a single twenty-four pounder, which moves upon a swivel, and their crew is composed of negroes and outlaws of all nations, their numbers generally running from one hundred to one hundred and fifty men. To-day, for the first time, I saw some flying fish: we have also been visited by several men-of-war birds and tropic birds; the latter is a species of gull, perfectly white, and distinguished by a single very long feather in its tail: its nautical name is “the boatswain”.

As we sail along, the air is absolutely loaded with “Sabean odours from the spicy shores” of St Domingo, which we are still coasting at sunset.

**DECEMBER 30.** At day-break Jamaica was in sight, or rather it would have been in sight, only that we could not see it. The weather was so gloomy, and the wind and rain were so violent, that we might have said to the Captain, as one of the two Punches who went into the ark is reported to have said to the patriarch, during the deluge, “Hazy weather, Master Noah.” . . .

. . . However, about noon the weather cleared up, and allowed us to verify, with our own eyes, that we had reached “the Land of Springs”, without having been invited by any Piccaroon vessel to “walk the plank” instead of the deck; which is the compliment very generally paid by those gentry, after they have taken the trouble of laying a plank over the side of a captured ship, in order that the passengers and the crew may walk overboard without any inconvenience.

We arrived at the east end of the island, passed Pedro Point and Starvegut Bay, and arrived before Black River Bay (our destined harbour) soon after two o’clock . . .

1816 – January 2. The St. Elizabeth, which sailed from England at the same time with our vessel, was attacked by a pirate from Carthagina, near the rocks of Alcavella, who attempted three times to board her, though he was at length beaten off; so that our Piccaroon preparations were by no means taken without foundation.

[http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/112818.html – I T Brand – c.1830 – A Brig taking in sail](http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/112818.html)
The brig Orion arrived at Port Royal on 6 July 1816.

My photo, November 2009 – late afternoon – arriving at Kingston Airport – in the foreground, Port Royal.
Sat, 29 Jun (misdated should be Sat, 6 Jul) 1816, Page PS 20 – in the Orion – ‘Mr. Edw. Clouston’

Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 13 Jul 1816, page PS 19 – Shipping Intelligence includes

The Orion, whose arrival was mentioned in our last, spoke on her passage to an American brig, from Surinam to Boston, and a ship from Philadelphia to Leghorn as well.

Below – advertisement for Books and Stationery, and for Saddlery, imported in the Brig Orion.


Kingston, July 15, 1816.

Received by the Brig Orion, from London, and for sale at his Majesty’s Printing Office, the following Books, viz

Helen Maria Williams’ Present State of France
Paris, during the interesting month of July, 1815, by W D Fellows
Walter Scott’s Field of Waterloo, a Poem
Syntax’s Life of Napoleon with 30 engravings
Lord Byron’s Poems
Baretti’s Spanish and English Dictionary
Reece’s Catalogue of Drugs.

Also the following Articles in the Stationery Line, which will be disposed of reasonably for Cash, or short Credit.

An assortment of the best Writing Papers
Cartridges, Tea and Blottings ditto
Red and Black Ink-Powders and Sealing-Wax
India Rubbers
Black Lead Pencils
Slate and Slate Pencil
Japan Ink, Quills, Pens, and Wafers
Round and flat Rulers. Hones
Portable Inkstands. Glass Fountain, ditto
Spare Glasses for Loggerheads
Sand and Pounce Boxes
Message and Visiting Cards
Blank Engraved Funeral ditto
Parchment. Bunches Red Tape
Carricatures, &c, &c

Alex Aikman, Jun.

Merchants’ Account-Books ruled and bound to any pattern, with neatness and dispatch and upon very moderate terms.

*Sat, 27 Jul 1816, page 6*

Kingston, July 20, 1816.

Received by the Brig Orion, from London, and for Sale by the Subscriber, at his Shop in Church-Street, opposite Mr Mingay, Coachmaker, the following assortment of Saddlery, consisting of

- Harness, Bridle, and Skirt Leather
- Basils, assorted. White Spring Girth Webb
- Serge. Chaise Collars
- Saddle Trees. Chaise ditto
- Sets elegant Plated Furniture for Carriage Harnesses
- Sets ditto for Gig ditto
- Plated Harnesses Buckles, assorted
- Ditto Bridle ditto ditto
- Fashionable Plated Bridle Bitts, with Bradoon and Curbs
- And other Articles in the Saddlery Line

John Burke.

The Saddlery Business, in all its branches, continued as usual on satisfactory terms.

Following Edward’s return to Jamaica I have no mention of where in the island he was living until 1818.

On 6 July 1816, the day he arrived at Port Royal, the Jamaica Royal Gazette published an article headed ‘Missionary’ from the Colonial Journal, published in April 1816.

We copy from the Colonial Journal... Under the head Missionary we find the following:

Whether the duty of religious instruction should be undertaken in the West-India Islands by the ministers of the Church of England, or by missionary preachers is a question, says a colonial writer, which admits of an easy solution, and might be best answered by revert to the old worn out arguments in favour of the Established National Church, which happily for the interests of humanity, have long been set at rest. But there is one consideration, which must have a powerful influence on the minds of the Colonial Assemblies, and that is a consideration of the duty of self-preservation as it regards both their lives and property.

Every Minister of the Established Church is a known acknowledged character; his moral principles, his religious doctrines, his qualification in every sense as a teacher of the Gospel, either are or may be known by the Bishop within whose jurisdiction the West-India Islands lie. On the contrary who is to define the character or qualifications of a missionary or itinerant preacher? He may or may not be a most benevolent personage with the spirit of true charity diffused throughout his life and preachings; he may or may not be a most contemptible hypocrite of the lowest class, with benevolence on his lips, and the blackest passions predominant in his heart; he may or may not be a visionary enthusiast, and, with the best intentions, though without common sense, ready to set fire, by his dangerous experiments, to the combustible materials collected in the corner of the world.

There cannot be a better or more powerful instrument than Christianity, in the hands of judicious reflecting Ministers, for promoting the work of civilization wherever it may be required. Neither can there be a more mischievous instrument in the hands of designing demagogues, who under the mask of extraordinary sanctity, may mean to disseminate the most poisonous political opinions. In this country such mischiefs find an easy antidote in the good sense and positive intellectual condition of the mass of the people, but in the West-India Islands, where the mass of the black population still continues in a state of the grossest ignorance, who can calculate the evil influence which may be obtained over their minds by the art and ingenuity of hypocritical incendiaries?

The necessity of discouraging undefined and indefinable itinerant preachers has been fully appreciated, both in theory and from experience, by some of the Colonial Assemblies, and they have very properly attempted to discourage them by legislative enactments. These Assemblies are of opinion that the Bishop of London, and not the Missionary Preacher, is the regular, and safe, and effectual channel for promoting Christian knowledge; and they trust, no doubt that the same energy, which has been roused in this kingdom, will soon extend itself for the dissemination of true Church of England doctrines and discipline among the slaves of the West-India Islands.

A list of Missionary Preachers in this island is also given, as follows:

- United Brethren – 1754
  - John Lang, Samuel Gurender, John Backer, Thomas Ward, James Light
- Wesleyan-Methodists – 1789
  - John Wiggins, John Shipman, John Burgar, William White
- Baptist Society
  - Moses Baker, John Rowe*
  - Destined for the West-Indies – Lee Compeer*

* The death of Mr. Rowe is recorded in our Obituary of this day. Mr. Lee Compeer has obtained permission to preach here.

Above – dates refer to the year the missions to Jamaica were founded. John Rowe, the first Baptist missionary sent by the UK Baptist Missionary Society to Jamaica, arrived in 1814.
Moses Baker was one of a number of black Baptist preachers who came to Jamaica from America.

Chapter 9. 1816 to 1817

I. Commencement of the work by Black Men from America. – How remarkable the manner in which the Baptist mission in Jamaica was begun! Christian missionaries from England were not the first to commence the work. When John Rowe landed in 1814, George Liele, and George Lewis, and George Gibbs, and Moses Baker – men of your own colour, and your own descent – black men, who had received the gospel in America – had already been engaged in preaching it...

Rev George Wilson Bridges wrote that many ‘ignorant and itinerant preachers’ arrived from England.

The want of employment in the fields or manufactures of England, sent crowds of ignorant and itinerant preachers to these shores, where they found, or expected to find, a rich harvest, or a glorious martyrdom in a cause which, though not prepared to die in, they knew would raise them in repute at home. The pulpit, that safe and sacred organ of sedition, resounded with the ambiguous tenets, or at least the words, of freedom and equality; and the public discontent might be inflamed by the promise of a glorious deliverance from bondage which the slave would rather apply to his temporal, than his spiritual condition. The Church of England opened wide her doors; but the pagan Africans, who under the tuition of these people, had submitted, though with some reluctance, to believe that their unbelieving fathers were in hell, were astonished and exasperated to find that they themselves were going thither, if their enlightened masters went to heaven. They were led to believe that one religion was for the owners, another for the labourers of the soil, but one only was the true faith; and their passions were inflamed by the prospect that they should soon change places with their masters in another world. This confused doctrine not only checked and retarded the operation of Christianity, but infused deadly poison in the cup of salvation...

In the face of industrial revolution, traditional home workers were threatened by new machines and industrial practices. In Nottingham, in March 1811, organised machine breaking began – associated with Ned Ludd. Despite government attempt to limit spread, the machine breaking soon broke out across the Midlands and north of England. Mills and property were attacked and, occasionally, people were killed. In 1813, seventeen Luddites were executed in York and this caused the movement to diminish. The last significant Luddite attack took place at a Loughborough lace factory in February 1817.

An increase in taxation on imported wheat and grain had been imposed to help recoup the costs of funding the Napoleonic Wars, 1803-1815. This created a climate of social unrest because even basic commodities, like cereals and bread, became heavily over-priced. This was particularly hard-felt by those returning from the Battle of Waterloo (1815) who had no prospects of employment.

We regret to observe by the London Papers that the spirit of riot and discontent in many parts of England is still very prevalent and manifesting itself in some populous districts in very turbulent assemblages.
We lament to say that alarming tumults have arisen in Monmouthshire. On Sunday Lord Sidmouth was sent for while at Church, in consequence of an express informing him that the colliers and miners at the iron works of Merthyr Tydvil had risen on their employers, and that most serious riots were apprehended. A Council was forthwith held, orders sent to the War Office, and mail-coaches towards the west detained two hours to carry dispatches for the troops to march. A letter from Merthyr says, “I have been six days endeavouring to check the progress of the rioters, who are in open revolt against their employers, to the number of above 15,000. They have stopped all the furnaces above 60 in all. But the Military are expected here to-night, and in a few hours there will be sad work.”

We hope the apprehensions of our correspondent will not be realized, and that there will be no blood shed. The Sheriff and Magistrates of the county had resolved that no compromise should take place. The employers had proposed to the workmen to reduce their wages to 1s per day, instead of dismissing a part of them.

The lamentable thing is that this diminution of wages comes on the workmen on account of the failure of the harvest. The average price of wheat in Monmouthshire was 100s qd. The average takes in the lowest and most damaged corn, so that the wheat fit for bread was probably more than .. per quarter!


In Jamaica by 1816 many estates ‘had been thrown up for want of hands to cultivate them’.

Throughout the island many estates, formerly very flourishing and productive, have been thrown up for want of hands to cultivate them, and are now suffered to lie waste: four are in this situation in my own immediate neighbourhood. Finding their complement of negroes decrease, and having no means of recruiting them, proprietors of two estates have in numerous instances found themselves obliged to give up one of them, and draw off the negroes for the purpose of properly cultivating the other.
The Earl of Harewood purchased Sandy Gut for the slaves, not for the land. Neither of his estates in Jamaica, Williamsfield and Nightingale Grove, had enough slaves to cultivate them without hired labour.

On 16 August 1816 Francis Graham wrote to John Wood Nelson (the Earl of Harewood’s London agent) – ‘On making the purchase of Sandy Gut Negroes it was intended that a few of them should be settled on the Grove. – They have objected to remove to that part of the Country & as it may not agree with them & they are pleased with the present situation I dont wish to enforce the removal without your orders’.


Dear Sir,

On the other side you will find copies of my two last letters. It is now some time since I had the pleasure of receiving the pleasure of your favors. – I have much pleasure in informing you that we continue very seasonable which has had great effect on the Canes that suffered during the dry weather. At present the Canes promise decent Crops & if we are not visited by storms I am satisfied that they will do well. – We are at present preparing at Williamsfield the lands for Crop 1818 & at the Grove for Guinea Corn. – The Negroes are in general healthy, but in consequence of the storm of Oct & the long want of rain till May their provisions were nearly destroyed & it is only now that the Grounds promise abundance. – To prevent them making use of improper food I have been assisting them from the Kingston Market with flour & an extra quantity of fish. – The latter being salt is found to have a good effect with unthinking Negroes that will make use of provisions before they are ripe. The stock I am glad to say are in good order. – We shall have a few to sell from the Grove which as usual will about pay for the same number of young ones. At Williamsfield we have 18 head for sale & it will be necessary to purchase about 20 for work & a young Bull. Nothing as yet has been done about the water at the Grove as there has been no Court. – By this Packet I have drawn along with Mr Cuthbert on your house for £3600 Sterling amount of Island Contingencies now due & partly paid. – The sum is large but the rum crops were small & the feeding of Negroes as well as lumber for the buildings have increased Contingencies as well as our drafts this unfortunate year for the Planters. – The price of rum here has been low & your prices for our produce are not in proportion to what we have suffered & the quantity that will be secured at your Markets. – I hope his Lordship will allow us to put some breeding Stock on the lands of Sandy Gutt that they may make him some return in time for the purchase – After I wrote you last Capt Campbell of the O…. got very unwell & was not able to sail in the ship – A Mr Allan took charge of the Ship & the papers I mentioned were put under his care as well as a Turtle 110 lbs for Lord Harewood. – On making the purchase of Sandy Gut Negroes it was intended that a few of them should be settled on the Grove. – They have objected to remove to that part of the Country & as it may not agree with them & they are pleased with the present situation I dont wish to enforce the removal without your orders. – My former letters informed you that a few Negroes were much wanted at the Grove & the accounts will show that we are obliged to hire Negroes to assist in taking off the Crop – I have only to add that I am Dear Sir Your obliged Srvt

Above – Turtle for Lord Harewood – William Beckford in his 1790 Account of Jamaica described how turtles were shipped to England.


It is well known that turtles will not only live for a very considerable length of time without food and water, but even out of the last element; and those that I purchased at the Grand Caymanas, in my voyage from Jamaica to England, increased very considerably in weight, notwithstanding they were not given any sustenance during the passage.

We had many of these animals, and of different sizes, on board; some of which, for want of casks, were laid upon their backs, and continued in this posture upon deck for many days; and although some of them were bruised, yet they very soon recovered after they were removed into the puncheons, although two or three, from their superior dimensions, could with difficulty turn around in their places of confinement.
They were taken out of their casks every morning; their eyes were rubbed, and fresh water was started into the puncheons, by which they seemed to be immediately revived; and it was easy to observe, that they daily acquired, not only health, but spirits.

If they remain for any time floating upon the surface of the water, it is a sure sign that they are not well; so, on the contrary, when they keep at the bottom of the cask, it is a symptom that they are in perfect health.

I think I could perceive a difference in their breathing when they were in the water, and when they were out of their well-known element; for when they came upon the surface to blow, there seemed to be a real pleasure in the natural inspiration; but when they lay upon their backs they were used to bring out such heartfelt sighs as were really affection, at the same time that their eyes were literally suffused with tears. It was melancholy to look at them, and at the same time to be conscious of the destination: and well indeed, might the poor creatures sigh and weep; and much may luxury be despised and execrated for entailing such a length of suffering, and causing to die a kind of living death, this much-enduring and (for itself unfortunately) delicious animal.

... No man, I should hope, could kill a turtle without pain, or behold its long-continued convulsions in the pangs of death, without sacrificing his appetite to his humanity.

The excessive cold upon the banks of Newfoundland will sometimes kill a great number of them in a single night; and if fresh water be imprudently given to them in the River, it will be often found to be equally destructive.

Of turtles, the best are supposed to be those which are caught in the neighbourhood of Jamaica: they are not so large as those that the fishermen bring off for sale from Port Antonio in the island of Cuba, but their fat and flesh are reckoned more rich and delicate.

Those that weigh from eighty to one hundred and fifty pounds, are generally preferred; but under three hundred weight they have seldom eggs, which are particularly delicious: nor can their difference if sexes, as I have been assured by the turtlers with whom I have conversed, be, under a particular age, with certainty distinguished; a circumstance, if a fact, that is well worthy the investigation of the naturalist!

That they will live and thrive in fresh water, is undeniable. I have kept several in ponds in England, and one in particular for many weeks. If it did not feed upon the small fry, with which it was stocked, it was certainly used to chase them; but I am disposed to think that they frequently served it at last as food.

The hawk’s-bill turtle is large and coarse: its meat is not only dry, but very strong and unsavoury: its scales are more valuable than those of the green turtle, and afford, among the Caymanas, and elsewhere, a species of trade.

The land turtle of Jamaica are among the principal delicacies of the Island; and there are but few people who have resided there long, who do not give them a decided preference. They are excessively fat, and when the large females are often full of eggs; and when they are in perfection, it is difficult to conceive more rich and nutritive.
Francis Graham in his 6 September 1816 letter to John Wood Nelson referred to the Earl of Harewood’s loss at Barbados during the April 1816 slave revolt.

Dear Sir

Herewith you will be pleased to receive copy of my letter by the last Packet. I received your favor of the 5th June after that Packet had sailed owing I believe to its being directed to the Atty’s of the Earl of Harewood. – We have left instructions at the post office for the delivery of your letters as addressed but it has been of little use I believe owing to the change of clerks. – We are not so seasonable as we were but the canes are not suffering and we are able to get on with the plant for Crop 1818. – Our greatest want of rain at present is for the Corn at the Grove. – The Williamsfield Negroes have been troubled with sores and Bowel complaints but are now recovering tho not without the loss of a child – The Grove Negroes are very healthy. – The Stock on both Estates are in good order & have abundance of grass at present. – The action regarding the Grove water will not come before the Court till Oct when I hope his Lordships rights as to the water flowing through the Grove will be confirmed. – I am very sorry that the turtle by the Phoenix died & hope that those since shipped will arrive in good order. – The amount you give of Lord Harewood’s loss at Barbadoes is most distressing and I conclude His Lordship must have been one of the greatest sufferers. – Thank God we do not perceive at present any thing improper in the conduct of our Negroes. – I have only to add at present that I am very respectfully –

Dear Sir

Your much obliged …. Fras Graham

Below – the Earl of Harewood’s losses at Barbados

Lord Harewood, Thicket – Some furniture, &c. destroyed: several cane-fields burnt, many negroes killed and executed and 20 odd now absent

Lord Harewood, Mount – Every building demolished, a great quantity of canes burnt, much rum and sugar thrown about the yard, and a great many slaves (many of them ringleaders of the plot) killed and executed.

Before Edward sailed for Jamaica in May 1816, his friend Captain Malcolm Gray gave him a power of attorney. In a letter, dated 10 July 1817, Captain Malcolm Gray referred to a letter he had received from Edward dated 26 November 1816.

Sir,

I have now before me a letter from you, dated Clarendon Jamaica 5th July 1815 to John Mowat Esquire, wherein you mention that my late uncle Mr Malcolm Scollay left a Will in my favor for the Real and Personal property he was possessed of at the time of his decease. “I likewise find you requested Mr J Mowat to find me out, and inform me of the said Will, and to send out a Power of Attorney to dispose of two Negroes the property of the deceased, as it would give you pleasure to comply with the late Mr M Scollay’s Will.”

Sometime afterwards On my being informed of the circumstances Mr Edward Clouston a friend of mine leaving the country for Jamaica to whom I gave a power of attorney to act conjointly with you on my behalf informs me by his letter of date 26 Nov 1816 that you now say that the Will is not legal only having
the signature of one Witness, which circumstance surprised me you did not mention in your statement to Mr Mowat, if that had been the case Mr Peter Scollay the deceased’s brother would have immediately taken the necessary steps to have recovered it, but as the Will was in my favor he entirely left it to me to get it arranged with you –

As the Brother and Sister of the late Mr Malcolm Scollay are but in middling circumstances the little property would be very acceptable to them, and which had I obtained should have been appropriated to them .... long ere now.

Mr Edward Clouston mentions in his letter to me that he cannot come to any settlement with you, for reasons best known to yourself, which rather surprise me, from your the good intensions expressed in your letter to Mr Mowat ---- I have now therefore to request you will have the goodness to settle it with as little delay possible without delay Mr E Clouston, and to create as little trouble & expense as possible as from the statements I have received from Mr E Clouston of the late Mr Malcolm Scollay’s property heaping up unnecessary expences which run away with the Capital.

In expectation of your compliance with my request wishing you health and Happiness

I remain    Sir, Yours Truly          M G

Mr Alexander McRae

Captain Malcolm Gray’s nephews Malcolm Scollay, a planter (died Jamaica 1815), his elder brother John Scollay (died Jamaica 1810), and younger brother Peter Scollay of Kirkwall, Orkney, were closely related to James Laing of Jamaica – see Chapter 4.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 11 Jun 1814, page Sup 12-16

Jurors for our Sovereign Lord the King – June Grand Court 1814, October Grand Court 1814, and February Grand Court 1815 – Parish of Clarendon – includes – Malcolm Scollay, planter

Sat, 11 Feb 1815, page PS 20 – Died

At Mullet Hall estate, in Clarendon, on the 30th ult, Mr Malcolm Scollay, an old and respectable inhabitant.

William Berryman’s Jamaica drawing 1808-1816 – at Mullet Hall, Clarendon

Later I return to Malcolm Scollay and his brother Peter Scollay – see Chapter 11.
In 1816 more money was needed to complete the Presbyterian Chapel in Kingston.

On 16 December 1816, in an acrimonious debate in the House of Assembly on a Presbyterian petition, Mr Barrett, in reply to Mr Lunan, said – ‘The Hon Gentleman had said that by the act of Union the religion of the Presbyterians was established by Law – In Scotland, it was, but in England and in her Colonies, they were as much dissenters as any other sect – This country, Sir, is Jamaica, not Scotland – It is an English, not a Scotch Colony’.

In the debate, Mr Kinkead expressed his surprise at the resolution now offered to the Committee; he wondered how the Hon Mover had succeeded so far as to get it into the Committee on the State of the Island. The petition for this grant should have been rejected on the first reading. – He would read the vote of the last assembly, in the year 1814, which granted to the sect of Presbyterians 5000l. for the purpose of completing their Chapel. He could not but remark on the confidence and bad faith of that sect, who ventured a second time before the House, for another sum to complete a building they had before declared 5000l. would complete. But he more strongly objected to the aid demanded on a broad and general principle. He had seen the building in its unfinished state, and had rather it remained so than foster the pride of its founders, by giving away to them the money of his constituents. The ambition of the sect was to be seen in the magnitude of its Kirk; the same feeling, that induced it to leave so far behind the Episcopalian Church in splendour and endowments, would equally urge them forwards, till it rivalled and finally exceeded its neighbour in the number of its votaries. We were in fact encouraging a rival, that would prove an active enemy to our Church, as by law established, and might at no distant period threaten its utter dissolution. In all the countries that he had seen, heard, or read of, where an established religion was acknowledged it became the policy of the Governments to protect and maintain it, in surpassing magnificence and dignity; however they might tolerate dissenters (and that Presbyterians were dissenters could not be denied), they never permitted them to attach a splendour to their doctrine which could throw a shade over the favoured religion, nor did the sectarians ever insult the Established Church by assuming such splendour. Here, however, they had raised an edifice in the immediate neighbourhood of the Episcopal Church, which looked more like a Temple of Jupiter than the tolerated meeting-house of modest dissenting Christians. It is promised us, by the advocates of the grant, that the Kirk will banish irreligion and immorality quite out of Kingston and almost from the island – the Methodists, the Anabaptists, the Moravians, and all other sectarians, are to be completely subdued, and their followers to be made good Presbyterians. He was not prepared to admit that even if the establishment of the Kirk had this effect, any advantage would accrue from it. – He would not acknowledge that all the sectarians, Presbyterians deserved particular encouragement. In his eye, and in the eye of the law, all .......... of Episcopacy were dissenters, and as such had no claim for public support. The Church of Kingston was unquestionably far too small for the population of that city, but was that a reason for the measure proposed? It was indeed a good reason for building another Church, and a good excuse for dissenters raising Chapels for their own form of worship, with their own funds, an excuse also to thoughtless persons for forsaking the religion of their parents and their country, but it was indeed idle and wicked to maintain that one evil should be corrected by a greater, and that the funds, which might be legitimately applied to enlarge the means and the influence of the English Church, should instead thereof, be devoted to a rival worship, to the shame and degradation of our own. Could the Hon Mover of the resolution before the Committee state any gift of the Imperial Parliament to the immense and powerful body of dissenters in England, that would bear him out in his present application? That body was satisfied to support the religion by law established; if persons thought proper to dissent from the religion of the State, they did it at their own charges; they were tolerated, but not nursed into importance at the public expense. But it is said that the late Assembly granted a large sum to the Presbyterian Chapel; he thought it reflected no honour on that House, and the precedent was rather a danger to be avoided, than an example to be followed. Mr B could not look with any degree of
satisfaction on the establishment of this sect in the very heart of the community; their form of worship had been founded in blood, and the overthrow of the fine arts. Under the denomination of Covenanters, they had massacred thousands of their countrymen; they had demolished cathedrals and palaces, and vented their bigoted rage on senseless pictures and statues. The sacred name of religion was blasphemed—under that name they perpetrated numberless crimes—and although their cruelties had long passed over, their intolerance had not yet given place to a more Christian feeling. In many parts of Scotland the arm of the law was necessary to protect the exercise of other forms of worship; the sour Presbyterian looked with jealousy and hatred on all sects but his own. He trusted the Committee would not consent to so unconstitutional an application of the public money.

Mr. Stewart of Trelawny supported the object of the motion in a speech of very considerable length and ability, in which he maintained that the measure was perfectly constitutional, to prove which, he instanced the establishment by Government of a Roman Catholic College at Maynooth, in Ireland, for the instruction and education of the Roman Catholic youth—a religion which was much further removed from the Episcopalian than the Presbyterian... He drew a comparison between the Scotch Clergy and those of the higher orders of the Episcopalian, much to the credit of the former, who were men of exemplary moral character and conduct, discharging the important duties of their avocations with zeal, ability, and a persevering diligence rarely to be met with, contented with a very moderate stipend, barely sufficient to procure the common necessaries of life; while the latter were wallowing in wealth and every luxury, totally unconcerned about the spiritual affairs of the people. He then took a view of the moral, religious, and peaceable demeanour of the Scotch, in which they surpassed every other country in the world; and they were people too, who were generally superior to others in education, intellect, and general knowledge. He also adverted to the conduct and respectability of those in this island, who formed so great a proportion of the population, and more particularly in Kingston. He animadverted on the observations of the Hon. Member for St James, remarking that the circumstances which took place in Scotland under John Knox, at so remote a period of our history, were quite inapplicable to the present times. And the character of John Knox, as a reformer, was in the highest estimation; he attributed the superior intelligence and improvement of the Scotch in a great measure to his early efforts... The Hon. Gentleman continued, there was no danger, as had been insinuated, to be apprehended from the Presbyterians having a proper place of worship established in this island for the exercise of their religion; but, on the contrary, the very reverse was to be expected—he saw much good that would result from their laudable example in the diffusion of religious knowledge and moral instruction, not only to Kingston, but to every part of the island. He sincerely hoped that the money would be granted, but wished an addition made to the resolution, that it should not be paid till the building was completed, and therefore offered a resolution to that effect by way of an amendment.

Mr. Lunan observed that he should not trouble the Committee with any comparison between the religions of England and Scotland, or question whether the Episcopacy or the Presbyterian should have the preference; but of the efficacy of the latter, he could easily judge by the superior morals and superior information of the lower class of people in Scotland. The number of Presbyterians in this island was very great, more especially in Kingston, where the majority of the white population were of the persuasion. They, surely, were as much entitled as the people of England to worship their God in their own way, and agreeable to rites they had been accustomed to. It was to be regretted they had so long been deprived of the means of doing so. It ought to be remembered, that this large and most respectable body of people had, for a long series of years, largely contributed, not only to the building and support of the Kingston Church, but of every Church throughout the island; they had done so cheerfully: And was it not too much for them to look for some small return from the public in assisting the present laudable endeavour? They had themselves expended on the object a very large sum, and the House, in its wisdom and liberality, had granted them 5000l. in the session of 1814, but which was found to be inadequate to the completion of the building, and he therefore hoped the present application would meet with success. If it did not, the money already laid out would be thrown away, and the fabric fall into ruin. But it would not, as had been stated, be a monument of Presbyterian ambition and folly, but a lasting memento of their earnest desire to establish a place of worship, and a proof that, after exerting their utmost means, this House had allowed so noble a design to be lost from an ill-timed parsimony. He hoped such a reproach would never be deserved, and that the money applied for would be freely granted, for the purpose of finishing a work that would be not only a great benefit, but an ornament and credit to the island.

Mr. Barrett had a very few observations to make in answer to the Honourable Members for Trelawny and St. Catherine... The Hon. Gentleman from Trelawny had said that the Kingston Church was so
confined, as to have caused “unpleasant bickerings” between the white and coloured population, who had struggled for room. Here the mask had fallen, the design was now apparent. That immense building was then not intended only to accommodate those who were already Presbyterians, but its vacant pews were to be the lures to new converts; these dissenters held their views open to receive the vast numbers, who were yet ignorant of revealed religion, or had not adopted the worship of any particular denomination of Christians. Shall we encourage this ambitious Kirk with large gifts of public money, at a time when we are pledged to extend the blessings of Christianity to our ignorant slaves, and when we may hope that conversion will be rapid and general? Or shall we, by a constitutional liberality to our own Church, enable it to receive in its bosom the new converts to our faith? It is unjust to give the Kirk of Scotland the advantage at so critical a period. Mr B thought there was no ground for the apprehension entertained by the Hon Gentleman from St Catherine’s, that if the grant was not assented to, the building would remain unfinished, to the disgrace of the country’s liberality. If there was any ground for apprehending that it would remain a monument of folly, which name he agreed with an Hon Friend would be most appropriate, it would only be disgraceful to the body of men, who had so warmly urged the necessity of the building. We had been told of the vast numbers of Presbyterians in Kingston; we had been told that they were so devoted to their doctrines that they had collected 11,000/ among themselves. These people were declared to be numerous, and they were known to be rich. He, Mr B could place but little confidence in their sincerity, if they left their labours unfinished for the trifling consideration of 3500/.

Mr Minto said. – Mr Chairman, it was my intention to have given a silent vote in favour of the resolution, but I feel myself obliged to rise in consequence of the amendment proposed by the Hon Gentleman from Trelawny: His resolution goes to the establishment of two co-equal Churches, which appears to me unconstitutional and contrary to all true policy. But I am for the original motion, because I am a friend to toleration. It is not merely that I was brought up in the Church of England that I prefer its doctrines, but it is upon a full and mature consideration that I prefer it to the Scottish Church or any other under the Christian dispensation. It unites with the essential truths of religion that grace and dignity, which is absolutely necessary to maintain a degree of respect and veneration in the human mind. The nakedness of the Scottish Church is against its general utility. If I had been in the House when the resolution was first proposed, I should certainly have opposed so large a building, and would have recommended a Meeting House for the Presbyterians of moderate size, and sufficient number of Chapels of Ease of the Established Church, for the accommodation of so great population as that of Kingston. As it is, the building is so large that if this House do not contribute it will never be finished, and be a monument of folly to the country – rather than that I must agree to the money, if any Member will move a smaller sum, I will vote for the smaller sum. As for any danger entertained to the Church from so large and over grown establishment, I fear them not. Sir, it is the native purity and inherent excellence of the English Church that still defies all such danger; I would rather court the competition, that in the comparison, it may evince its greater worthiness. I again remind the House of the consequences that would attend the carrying of the amendment, that it would go to the raising up of two co-equal established Churches. I might indeed agree to the amendment, were it to propose that the building should be bought in, to be placed under the established Church, which would be a very desirable object, and it would then be in the power of the Presbyterians to build a Meeting-House of a more moderate and consistent size.

Mr Pownall could not consent to give a silent vote on this occasion, for he did think the measure before the House was as unconstitutional and unreasonable as any that was ever entertained within its walls. He was not prejudiced against, nor an enemy to, the Presbyterians, or to any sect, and he thought that free toleration should be allowed, so that every one might worship the Almighty according to his own faith. But when he saw the present application, and recurred to the conduct of the Presbyterians in Kingston, he was almost ready to think the time of the Knoxites was returned – when the solemn league and covenant was entered into for undermining and overturning Episcopacy at the time of the reformation. What surer way was there in Kingston for doing this than by limiting the size of the Church, so that it would not contain one-fourth of those desirous of going to it, and enabling the Presbyterians to build a place of worship that would accommodate four times as many persons. The Presbyterian Church now building was not merely for persons of that persuasion, but it must be obvious their object was to convert all the people of free condition and slaves to their own faith, and thereby keep down the established religion. Let Gentlemen look at the size of the Church for the established religion in Kingston, and say, when they considered that parish to contain 50,000 inhabitants probably, when they saw it would not accommodate so many as the Methodist Chapel, when it would not contain more than double the number that could assemble in the Roman Catholic Chapel, nor more than the Jewish Synagogues, if it was not a disgrace to
Kingston and the island at large. If the Presbyterians were so numerous as to be three-fourths of all those who came from Europe as now stated, and so wealthy as it was known they were in Kingston, they could well afford to finish the building at their expense, especially when he considered the unconstitutional aid which they had already received from this House. If their claim was founded on the proportion of taxes that seck paid, the Roman Catholics, the Methodists, the Anabaptists, and Jews, had similar ground for such assistance. The Presbyterian religion was by law established in Scotland, but not in Jamaica, where it was merely tolerated. He would now beg the Committee to recur to the conduct of the people of Kingston some years ago, when they would find out the origin of the Presbyterian Church now building to be founded in an aversion to the established Church: — Several years ago the clamour was so great in Kingston, from the insufficient size of the Church, that the Corporate Body made an application to the House for an Act to enable them to build a Chapel of Ease which met with the readiest attention; and he could never forget what took place in the Committee when the blank for the Curate's salary was to be filled up: The subject happened to be so little interesting, that Gentlemen had, as was too often the case, fallen into groups talking on other subjects, when a Gentleman, attentive to what was doing at the table, startled at the proposal of 300l. per annum. He justly remarked if the Curate was to subsist like other people, and keep house, have a horse and chaise, which he could not do without, it was farcical to think of such a sum; even some other assistance was wanted, which, although talked about, the bill did not provide for; and with a feeling that did honour to the House, the blank was filled up at about 1000l. which, considering that he was not to have any fees, was little enough, but the Gentlemen of Kingston thought differently, and allowed the bill to drop between the House and the Council. In Kingston the Assembly was blamed for this failure, and the people were amused, first with a talk of another application, then of having the city and parish divided into two livings and a Church built, and lastly of enlarging the present Church; but while all this was passing in the air, the Presbyterians were coalescing to build their Church, and coming to this House for assistance. Now, he would ask, was the House prepared to meet similar applications to the present from Spanish-Town, Savanna-la-Mar, Montego-Bay, and other places? — Had not the Presbyterians at those places an equal claim to the persons of that persuasion in Kingston?

Mr Lunan again rose and stated, that he should not have troubled the Committee a second time, but on account of expressions used by more than one Gentleman in calling the Presbyterians sectaries or dissenters. They are no more sectaries or dissenters, Sir, than those are who belong to the English Church. Had these Gentlemen read the articles of the Union they would have seen that the religion of Scotland was as much recognized by the Constitution as that of England, and they could not be compared to Roman Catholics, Methodists, and Jews, as they had been. They were entitled to sit in Parliament, and to hold the highest office in the State; they had often held these offices with honour to themselves, and with advantage to the nation. It was insinuated they were not Protestants; if he understood the meaning of the word as a protest against the Church of Rome, they are better Protestants than in England, where a number of Romish ceremonies had been retained, of which the Presbyterians had entirely divested themselves. He was astonished that Gentlemen would make use of such terms as they had towards so highly respectable a body. In alluding to the amendment offered by Mr Stewart, he hoped the money would be granted without any condition; shackled as it would be by such an amendment, no tradesmen would be induced to work, when the time of payment was so vague and uncertain, and the building could not proceed unless the grant was made without any restriction.

Mr Barrett rose in explanation — He was sorry that the Hon Gentleman from St Catherine thought him so ignorant as to have said that Presbyterians were not Protestants. — He could not have drawn such a distinction. The Hon Gentleman had said that by the act of Union the religion of the Presbyterians was established by Law — In Scotland, it was, but in England and in her Colonies, they were as much dissenters as any other sect — This country, Sir, is Jamaica, not Scotland — It is an English, not a Scotch Colony.

Mr Finlayson spoke in favour of the motion; and Mr Scarlett against it, the latter observing that there had been a house purchased for the Presbyterian Clergyman, which might be considered an unnecessary extravagance, while the Rector of Kingston had none provided for him, but had an allowance in lieu thereof.

Mr Stewart (of Trelawny) could not see the drift of the Hon Gentleman’s reasoning, for surely he argued against himself — for he said the Rector had no house, but had an annual grant to provide himself with one, which amounted to the same thing. He should support the motion of the Hon Member for Kingston, if he would add the words to the 3500l. “and no more.”

Mr Pownal, in answer to an Hon Member, would say that there was a wide difference between enabling the Presbyterians to purchase a house for their Minister worth 2000l. out of the public treasury,
and the parish of Kingston giving their Rector 250l. to 300l. *per annum* for the hire of a house . . . He must repeat that he was not an enemy to the Presbyterians; he wished that every one should be allowed to worship God after the dictates of his own heart, but he considered it the duty of this House to protect and support the Established Church in preference to any dissenting religion.

Mr Scarlett objected to the vote, as the House had never given any grants towards other religious establishments, and considered it unconstitutional. The Roman Catholic Chapel had been built at an expense of 7000l. by subscription, and they did not come to this house for assistance.

Mr Stewart (of St Andrew’s) said that the house and land were bought together – they were not to be disposed of separately.

Some further discussion took place, after which the House divided, when the motion, with the amendment of “and no more” was carried


Three days after the House of Assembly debate on the Presbyterian petition, the Jamaica Curate Bill was passed to provide Curates to assist the Rectors in propagating the Gospel amongst the slaves and in educating them in the Christian religion.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ai9bAAAQAAJ&sourcel=snavlinks_s – Miscellaneous Papers . . .

. Slaves in the Colonies – Session 27 January - 10 June 1818, Vol XVII – page 51-52 – An Act for providing Curates for the several Parishes of this Island, and for promoting Religious Instruction amongst the Slaves. 19 December 1816 – 7 Clauses and summary of each Clause – Clause 1

Whereas from the extent of many of the parishes of this Island, and the numbers of inhabitants therein, religious instruction cannot be extended to all, under the present ecclesiastical establishment of this Island: And whereas it is right and proper that religious instruction should be given to the slaves in this Island,
and for that purpose it is necessary to increase the number of officiating clergymen; May it therefore
please Your Majesty, that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the Governor, Council and Assembly of
this Island, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That from and after the passing of this
Act, and as soon as conveniently may be, the rectors of the several parishes in this Island shall be assisted
in propagating the Gospel amongst the slaves of this Island, and in educating them in the Christian
religion, by curates to be appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, or persons executing for the
time being the functions of Governor, may seem best calculated to promote the purposes of this Act:
Provided always, that the persons so to be appointed, shall at the time of their respective appointments, be
possessed of due testimonials that they are qualified according to the canons of the Church of England, by
having taken deacon or priest’s orders; and which testimonials shall be recorded in the office of the
secretary of this Island: And provided always, that the number of curates so to be appointed, shall not
exceed the number of beneficed ministers established in this Island.

Clauses 2 to 7 – summaries

2. – Salary to be allowed the curates
3. – and the duty which they and the rectors are to perform
4. – The rectors or curates to appoint two days, exclusive of Sundays and holidays, for the religious
   instruction of the negroes on estates.
5. – Vestries to appoint proper places for the performance of divine service by the curates.
6. – Receiver general not to pay the sums allowed the rectors without a certificate of the duties required
   by this Act, being performed by them.
7. – Fees of 2s. 6d. for the baptism, &c. of slaves.


James Stephen wrote that the December 1816 Jamaica Curate Act was ‘one of the good effects of the
Register controversy’.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ObYNAAAAAQM&source=gbs_navlinks_s – Slavery of the British
West India Colonies Delineated... by James Stephen, Vol I published 1824 – page 212-214

Jamaica has twenty-one parishes, and we learn from the Governor's late returns, that each parish has a
rector. The salaries are obviously much too small to afford a curate; but this defect has been supplied by
an act of December, 1816, (one of the good effects of the Register controversy,) so far as to enable the
governor to appoint curates, not exceeding the number of benefices, with salaries not exceeding 300l.
currency, to be paid out of the insular treasury. It is not said that the curates shall hold their appointments
for life; and their salaries are not to be paid without certificates that the duties are actually performed.
Supposing that proper persons can be found for these curacies, (a large supposition when the climate and the expense of subsistence in that country to Europeans in a respectable sphere of life is considered, and that they have residences to provide for themselves), the case will certainly be much improved; and we shall then have forty-two clergymen in an island one hundred and fifty miles long, and forty on a medium broad; which, supposing them equally dispersed, would be one in each district of near one hundred and forty-three square miles.

It will be seen at once, what a mockery it would be to represent this scanty establishment as offering to the slaves in general, amounting by the last printed returns, those of 1812, to about 320,000, the benefit of public worship and instruction. But a very small part of them could ever go to church, even were the whole sabbath their own for devotional uses; whereas it will hereafter be shewn that they are obliged to spend it, or great part of it in working for their own subsistence. It is true that much of the island, Mr. Edwards supposes above one half of it, is quite unsettled: but this will not improve our estimate: because the cultivated and uncultivated parts are intermixed; and the whole circumference is in some degree settled and peopled. On the other hand, the country is so mountainous, that the same writer supposes the superfcies of the island to exceed the base by one-sixteenth part, and the difficulty of intercourse between various places must, by this cause, be obviously increased. I am credibly informed, that there are well-peopled parts of the island from which the road to the nearest church would measure fifty miles. In the ordinary occupations of European gentlemen in that climate, though commonly limited to a short distance from their residence, a wheeled carriage, or a saddle-horse at least, is a necessary of life; but a whole stud would be necessary for the poor curates in such cases, in order to visit, as they are required by the new act to do, all the estates in their respective parishes in rotation; a heavy charge certainly, upon their very moderate stipends.

After stating such facts, it can hardly be necessary to say more of the utter inadequacy of the public means of religious instruction in Jamaica, even supposing all the curates to be found. Taking the whole population of all colours to be 400,000, it would give about 19,000 to each parish, and 9,500 to each clergyman. The rector or curate who should attempt to discharge fully his pastoral duties to such a body of parishioners, of whom so large a part are to be reclaimed from pagan ignorance by his own unassisted efforts, would stand in need of miraculous powers. That his individual attentions must be paid by daily journeys of twenty, or even fifty miles, under a vertical sun, is but a part of the difficulty.

*William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings, 1808-1816 – About 2 miles West of Spanish Town, Blue and Liguanea Mountains*
Clause 2 of the updated Jamaica Slave Law, passed on 19 December 1816, required – ‘all owners, proprietors, and possessors, or, in their absence, the managers or overseers, of slaves, shall, as much as in them lies, endeavour the instruction of slaves in the principles of the Christian religion, whereby to facilitate their conversion, and shall do their utmost endeavours to fit them for baptism, and, as soon as conveniently can be, cause to be baptized all such as they can make sensible of a duty to God, and the Christian faith, which ceremony the clergymen of the respective parishes are to perform when required’.

http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=qHpIAAAAYAAJ&source=gbs_navlinks_s – The Laws of Jamaica... 1810 to 1816 – Vol VI, published 1817 – page 495-533 – Cap. XXV – An Act for the subsistence, clothing, and the better regulation and government of Slaves; for preventing the improper transfer of slaves; and for other purposes – 19 December 1816 – 108 Clauses and summary of each Clause – below – summaries

1. – Preamble – 50 Geo. III. Cap. 16 repealed.
2. – Slaves to be religiously instructed, and such baptized as can be made sensible of a duty to God and of the Christian faith.
3. – No Shop to be kept open during divine service.
4. – Slaves to be allowed one day in every fortnight, besides Sundays, except during crop, under penalty of 20l. Proviso (so as the number of days may be at least 26)
5. – Slaves to be exempted from labour on Sundays during crop, and no mills to be worked between seven o’clock on Saturday night and five o’clock on Monday morning, under the penalty of 20l.
6. – Negro-grounds to be inspected every month. Where are not proper lands, each slave is to have provision equal to 3s. 4d. per week.
7. – Proper clothing to be given to slaves annually, under penalty of 100l.
8. – Yearly accounts to be given in of the provision made for, and clothing delivered to slaves, under penalty of 100l.
9. – Account of births and deaths of slaves to be given in yearly under penalty of 50l.
10. – If neglect in giving in accounts proceed from overseers or managers, owners to deduct the penalty from their wages.
11. – Overseers to be paid 3l. for every slave born on plantations, to be divided between the mothers, midwives, and nurses; and which is to be deducted from the taxes of the proprietor.
12. – Females who have six children living, whether their own or adopted, are to be exempted from hard labour, and their owners from taxes for them; proof being given that the mother, or adoptive mother, and children are living.
13. – Possessors of slaves not to turn them away on account of infirmity, but keep them on their properties, and provide for them, under penalty of 20l. Wandering slaves may be taken up and sent to the workhouse, to be supported till possessor summoned and matter inquired into. If possessor found guilty and refuse to pay penalty, workhouse fees, &c. he is to be sent to gaol till he pay.
14. – Justices and vestries to lay taxes for support of disabled negroes, who are to be passed to the parishes where their former owners resided; as are those free poor who have been manumised. Vestries to make regulations for their accommodation.
15. – In the case of manumised persons becoming burthensome to any parish, such parish may have recourse to the security bond entered into under 15. Geo. III. cap. 18.
16. – Property of owners liable for support of deserted slaves, though not in the parish they become burthensome to.
17. – Disabled slaves, the property of insolvent debtors, in custody of provost-marshal, may be removed by order of two magistrates to the parish where their owner resided.
18. – Such order being recorded in clerk of peace’s office, provost-marshal and his deputies indemnified in acting under it.
19. – If negroes afflicted with contagious diseases are allowed to leave the property, and travel about the country, the owner, &c. permitting the same, to forfeit 20l. for each.
20. – Field slaves are to have half an hour for breakfast and two hours for dinner, and not to work before five nor after seven, except during crop, under penalty of 50l.
21. – Slaves to be allowed usual holidays; but they are not to have two successive days. If persons allow them more holidays at those seasons, they forfeit 5l.
22. – Slaves taking up runaways, or discovering their being harboured, are to be rewarded at discretion of a magistrate.
23. – If they kill or take rebels, they are also to be rewarded.
24. – Persons wilfully killing slaves to suffer death. Blood not corrupted there by.
25. – Persons mutilating slaves or consenting thereto, may be fined 100l. and imprisoned twelve months, besides being liable to an action of damages. Court may, in atrocious cases, manumit mutilated slaves, and order the penalty to be paid to vestry, who are to allow each slave 10l. per annum. Slaves complaining to a magistrate may be sent to the workhouse, to be supported and attended till meeting of vestry, who are hereby created a council of protection, and are to inquire into such mutilations, and prosecute offenders. Owners may be sued for costs. Workhouse keeper to produce mutilated slaves at first vestry, under penalty of 20l.
26. – Justices being informed that slaves are mutilated or confined without support, are to issue their warrants in order that they may be brought before them.
27. – No slave to have more than ten lashes at a time for one offence unless the owner, &c; or supervisor, &c. be present; nor more than thirty nine on any account in one day, under penalty.
28. – Complaints of slaves being improperly punished to be inquired into summarily by two magistrates, and, where they are found groundless, complainants to be punished.
29. – Penalties on persons putting weights or chains on slaves, or iron collars, other than hereby designated.
30. – No slave to travel (unless to market) without a ticket, under penalty of 40s. on the owner, &c., if he cannot prove he gave a ticket, or that the slave went without his consent. If Justices do not inflict this penalty, they forfeit 5l.
31. – Tickets to be only for one month.
32. – Free people granting tickets to slaves of others to be punished as the court shall direct.
33. – White people doing so to be also punished at discretion of the court.
34. – Penalty of 50l. for not endeavouring to suppress unlawful assemblies of slaves. Information must be given within fourteen days.
35. – Civil and military officers to suppress such assemblies.
36. – Overseers, &c. who suffer such assemblies, to be imprisoned six months, if information given in fourteen days. Slaves may have diversions on the properties they belong to, if no drums, &c. are used; but they must be over by ten at night.
37. – Negro burials to be over by sunset, or owner, &c. forfeits 50l. Burials in towns, &c. must also be over before sunset.
38. – Penalty on persons permitting unlawful assemblages of slaves at their houses or settlements, if complained of in fourteen days.
39. – Owners, &c. of slaves knowingly permitting them to keep horses, &c. to forfeit 30l. for each offence.
40. – When stock given in, oath to be made that none of the horses, &c. belong to any slave, under penalty of 30l. for neglect or refusal. Any person discovering horses, &c. belonging to slaves must send them to the pound. How they are to be disposed of (to be advertised and sold. Net proceeds to be divided between the sender in of the stock and the poor.)
41. – Properties of persons manumising slaves subjected to the annual sum allowed by law for their support. Slaves to be manumised by will not exempted from any debt against the estate of the testator. Legal instruments in writing for the disposal of goods, &c. sufficient in the manumission of slaves.
42. – Persons travelling about the country for the purpose of trafficking in slaves to be taken up and carried, with the slaves, before a justice, who is to proceed against them as herein directed. (On due proof such slaves to be sold, one moiety of sale to the poor the other to the informer.)
43. – The oath of the informer sufficient.
44. – Sales of slaves made as aforesaid to be null and void, and the slaves forfeited. Justices on information, to issue warrants to take up slaves so sold, to sell them, and manner of applying the money.
45. – Proceedings under this act cannot be removed into the supreme or other courts.
46. – Slaves concerned in rebellions, or committing murder, or other felony, to suffer death, transportation, &c.
47. – If slaves offer violence to white or free people, court to order punishment, unless sufficient reason shewn.
48. – How slaves possessing fire-arms (or other arms without knowledge of their owner, &c.) are to be punished.
49. – Slaves pretending to supernatural power may be sentenced to death, &c.
50. – Punishment on slaves preaching or teaching as Anabaptists, or otherwise, without permission.
51. – Nightly meetings of slaves unlawful, and free people attending them how punishable. If offender be a slave, he or she is to be punished as slave court may direct.
52. – Slaves preparing or giving poison, though death does not ensue, are to suffer death.
53. – Punishment on slaves having poisonous drugs, pounded glass, &c. in their possession.
54. – Slaves found at any meeting, formed for administering unlawful oaths, &c. are to be punished as court shall direct;
55. – As are white or free people present at such meetings.
56. – Persons having knowledge of such unlawful meetings, and not giving information thereof, to be punished at discretion of court.
57. – Slaves stealing horned cattle, sheep, horses, &c. may be condemned to death.
58. – If slaves have in their possession twenty pounds of meat, unaccounted for, they are to be whipped, not exceeding thirty nine lashes; and if above twenty pounds, justices to assign punishment not affecting life.
59. – Punishment of slaves for injuring horned cattle, horses, &c;
60. – Also on those wantonly cutting and chopping any other slave.
61. – Punishment on slaves clearing their grounds by fire (if injury arise). Overseers, &c. having knowledge that any fire has been made for such purpose, and not doing their utmost to extinguish it, to be fined at the discretion of two justices.
62. – Slaves absent five days, or found eight miles from home, without tickets, to be deemed runaways.
63. – Slaves, who shall run away for a longer period than six months, to be punished as the court shall direct.
64. – Punishment on those who continue absent for a shorter period than six months (and those who are incorrigible runaways).
65. – Slaves, harbouring runaways to be adjudged by a slave-court (punishment not extending to life).
66. – Owner to pay 10s. and mile-money for each runaway taken up. Proviso. This act not to alter rewards to maroons.
67. – Slaves in confinement to have sufficient provisions, under penalty of 10l. Rations for them (also clothing).
68. – On a negro or other person detained as runaway slaves, alleging themselves to be free, custos to summon a special sessions, to investigate the truth thereof. Proviso
69. – Runaways to be committed to workhouse only.
70. – Slaves attempting to depart this island, or assisting others in such attempts, may be sentenced to death.
71. – No slaves detained as above, to be sold until such investigation takes place.
72. – Public notice to be given by supervisors, &c. of replevins, &c. brought against them for slaves in the workhouse. If any person give notice to supervisors, &c. of an intention to defend such actions, supervisors must detain in custody the slaves in dispute under penalty.
73. – Runaways to be committed to workhouse only.
74. – Slaves attempting to depart this island, or assisting others in such attempts, may be sentenced to death.
75. – Free people of colour assisting slaves in going off are to be transported, and suffer death if they return.
76. – If white people so do, they forfeit 300l., for each, and may be imprisoned a year.
77. – Accessories may be proceeded against though principals are not convicted.
78. – If slaves, not authorised, travel with dogs, &c. or hunt with instruments of death, punishment may be awarded by two justices.
79. – On complaint of felonies, burglaries, &c. by slaves, justice to issue a warrant. Slaves to be evidence against each other. Justices to call in two other justices who must attend or each forfeit 20l. and they are to summon a jury, from which particular persons are excepted (owner of slave or slaves so complained of, or attorney &c, overseer or book-keeper &c). Jurors not attending to forfeit 5l. Twelve persons to compose jury. If slaves convicted, justices may give sentence of death, transportation, &c. Justices may suspend execution for thirty days, if they see cause, and must do it on application of the jury, except in cases of rebellion, when they may order immediate execution. When business of quarter-sessions ended, justices to form themselves into a slave court, for the purposes of gaol delivery. Not less than three justices to constitute a court for trial of slaves in certain cases. Slaves detained under commitment for six months, and no indictment preferred against them, to be discharged by proclamation. Where slaves are indicted for murder, if malice pre-pense do not appear, verdict of manslaughter may be returned.

80. – Jurors summoned for quarter sessions must serve in slave-courts, under penalty of 5l.

81. – Penalty of 10l. on persons warned to attend trials, and neglecting to do so.

82. – Jurors, witnesses, &c. under this act, protected in their persons, and slaves from being levied on.

83. – Records to be kept by clerk of the peace, who must attend trials, and record proceedings in thirty days, under penalty of 20l. Deputy marshals must warn jurors and attend at such trials, under penalty of 50l.

84. – Punishment on slaves for giving false evidence.

85. – If slaves, against whom warrants are issued, are concealed by owners, &c. they forfeit 100l.

86. – Six days’ notice of trial to be given to owners, &c. of slaves.

87. – How such notices are to be served where owners reside in a different parish to that in which their slaves may have committed offences, and are to be tried.

88. – Executions must be public and solemn.

89. – Slaves sentenced to be executed or transported to be valued by the jury.

90. – Provost marshal must execute orders of slave-courts as soon as possible under penalty of 200l.

91. – Valuation of slaves sentenced to death, &c. under this act, to be paid by receiver-general.

92. – Purchasers of slaves sentenced to transportation to give bond in 500l. penalty to transport them within thirty days. Bond to be lodged in clerk of peace’s office.

93. – Purchasers to make oath that slaves shall be transported, and that they shall not be re-landed.

94. – No slaves to be delivered until bond taken and oath made, under penalty.

95. – Such slaves going at large may be apprehended by any person, and on due proof re-sold.

96. – If slaves return from transportation (for murder, rebellion, rebellious conspiracy, obeah, arson) they are to suffer death.

97. – Masters of vessels, wilfully bringing back transported slaves, to forfeit 300l. for each, and suffer imprisonment at the discretion of the court.

98. – Slaves sentenced to confinement in workhouse for two years, escaping, may be ordered fifty lashes, and re-committed;

99. – And those sentenced for life escaping, may be transported.

100. – If marshal, constable, &c. suffer them to escape, they forfeit 50l. and may be sued for their value.

101. – Fees of slaves discharged by proclamation to be paid by the public, proof being given that they were properly maintained.

102. – Gaol-keepers not to work out slaves sent to them for confinement, under penalty of 50l.

103. – Two justices may inquire into inferior crimes, giving notice to owners, &c. of slaves, and order punishment.

104. – Clerks of peace to attend such summary trials, under penalty of 50l. for which they are to be paid 1/6s. 3d. Fee to Constables.

105. – Justices to enforce this act as well during martial law as at other times.

106. – Recovery and application of penalties not before disposed of. Proceedings to be commenced within twelve months.

107. – Offences committed under former act may be heard, tried, &c. as if it were still in force.

108. – And be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That this act shall commence, continue, and be in force, from the thirty-first day of December of the present year.
In 1816 Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies, sent instructions to the several Governors of the British West India island ‘to make the proper communications to the assemblies, and to persuade them to adopt such measures as were best calculated to accomplish the object in view’ – the registration of slaves.


Despite all the opposition to the Registry Bill, in Jamaica on 19 December 1816 the Slave Population Bill was passed – the Jamaica Act for the Registration of Slaves.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica – Sat, 4 Jan 1817, page Sup 11

House of Assembly, Thursday, Dec 19, 1816.

Ordered, That the Secretary of the Island do cause the first, second, third, fourth, and twelfth clauses of the Slave Population Act, and the forms of Schedules annexed thereto, to be published for one month in the Royal, St Jago, and the Cornwall Gazettes, and in the Cornwall Chronicle.

By the House,

E Smith, Clerk to the Assembly.

Whereas the Legislature of this island is anxious to shew, by every means in its power, the most sincere disposition to guard against any possible infringement of the laws for abolishing the Slave-Trade, for the evasion of which the return of peace may be thought to afford facilities: And whereas a more particular return of slaves in this island than has hitherto been required by the laws heretofore passed for that purpose, and an enrolment thereof, may be advantageous: We, your Majesty’s dutiful and loyal subjects, the Assembly of this your Majesty’s island of Jamaica, so most humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted: Be it therefore enacted by the Governor, council, and Assembly of this your Majesty’s island, and it is hereby enacted and ordained by the authority of the same. That all and every person and persons, who shall be present in this island on the twenty-eighth day of June next, after the passing of this act, and
shall then be in the possession of any slave or slaves within the same, whether as owner, mortgagee, trustee, guardian, executor, administrator, sequestrator, committee, receiver, assignee, lessee, attorney, agent, or otherwise howsoever, do and shall, on or before the twenty-eighth day of September then next, render in to the Clerk of the Vestry of the parish, where such slave or slaves, so possessed as aforesaid, shall be considered to be most permanently settled, worked, or employed, a true and perfect list or return in writing, or true or perfect returns in writing, of all and every slave and slaves so possessed by him, her, or them, and so settled, worked, or employed within such parish as aforesaid; each and every of which lists or returns shall specify, in the first place, the name or names of the possessor or possessors as aforesaid of the several slaves in such list or return contained, and the character or capacity in which he, she, or they so possess the same, whether as owner or otherwise, as hereinbefore mentioned; and in all cases where such possession shall not be as owner, then also the name or names of the person or persons for whom, or for whose estates or interests, such slaves are so possessed, and in words at length the total number of male slaves, and the total number of female slaves, contained in every such list or return; and shall further specify, in distinct columns, according to the form in the schedule marked A, hereunto annexed, the following particulars, beginning with the list of males, and distinguishing them from the females; that is to say, in the first of the said columns, and which shall be entitled “Names”, shall be inserted the name of each slave by which he or she has been usually called and known; in the second of the said columns, and which shall be entitled “Colour,” the colour of such slave, that is, whether negro, sambo, mulatto, quadroon, or mestee; in the third of the said columns, and which shall be entitled “Age,” the age, or reputed age, of such slave, according to the best of the knowledge or belief of the party who shall make attestation on oath to the truth of such list or return, as hereinafter mentioned. In the fourth of the said columns, and which shall be entitled “African or Creole,” it shall be shewn whether such slave is an African or creole, according to the best of the knowledge or belief of the party making attestation on oath to the truth of such list or return, as hereinafter mentioned; and in the fifth of the said columns, and which shall be entitled “Remarks,” it shall be shewn, opposite to the name of each, and every slave, if the mother be returned in the same list or return: And in all cases where any slave or slaves shall, at any time within three years next preceding the said twenty-eighth day of June in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, have run away from the possession of the party or parties making such return as aforesaid, or from the person or persons whom, or whose estate, they in any manner represent as aforesaid, to the best of the knowledge and belief of the party making attestation on oath to the truth of such list or return, as hereinafter mentioned, and still continue a runaway on the said twenty-eighth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, then shall be stated the name and description of every such runaway slave as aforesaid, in like manner as of the other slaves to be included in such list or return; and opposite to the name of every such runaway who shall then have been absent, and of every slave who may be a runaway for the space of three months or upwards then next preceding, shall be inserted, in the said column entitled “Remarks,” the word “Runaway.”

II. Provided always, and it is hereby enacted, That no persons in possession, as tenant or tenants by parol only, of any slave or slaves, on the said twenty-eighth day of June, shall be bound to make such return of the same, unless the person or persons, from whom such slave or slaves are rented or hired, shall then be an absentee, and unrepresented in this island by attorney or agent authorised to receive the rent, in which cases the tenant or tenants shall be bound to make such return, but otherwise the person or persons hiring out such slave or slaves, his or their attorney or agent authorized to receive the rent, shall be bound to make such return: And, in order to avoid as much as possible all irregularities or mistakes in making such lists or returns, a sufficient number of printed forms, according to the schedule A hereto annexed, shall be lodged in due time before the said twenty-eighth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, with the several Clerks of the Vestries throughout this island, and shall be delivered to all persons applying for the same at a price not exceeding five pence for each sheet, and which printed forms the Receiver-General is hereby authorized and required to provide at the expense of this island: And the said Clerks of the Vestries are authorized and required not to receive any returns of slaves, unless the same, or the last sheet of each and every such lists or returns, when such list or return shall consist of more than one sheet, shall be made upon one of such printed forms, and each preceding sheet shall contain the same number of columns, and be headed in same manner as such printed sheet.

III. And it be further enacted by the authority aforesaid. That the said several lists or returns of slaves, as hereinbefore required, shall, before they are rendered to the several Clerks of the Vestry, be verified by the oath (or, where the party is a quaker, by the solemn affirmation) of the person or one of the persons (if there be more than one), making such return; and such oath or affirmation shall be made in writing, and
I, A B do swear (or, if a Quaker solemnly affirm) that the above list and return, consisting of (here insert the number of sheets) sheets is a true, perfect, and complete list and return, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in every particular therein mentioned, of all and every slave and slaves possessed by me (here insert the name of any joint possessor), as (owner, mortgagee, &c as the case may be, and as owner, add the name of the person for whom, or for whose estate or interest, such possession is held), considered as most permanently settled, worked, or employed, in the parish of

on the twenty-eighth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventeen, without fraud, deceit, or evasion: So help me God:

Which oath, or affirmation, shall be made before any Judge of the Supreme or either of the Assize-Courts of this island, or any Justice of the Peace for the parish for which the return is intended, and such Judges and Justices respectively are hereby authorized to administer the same.

IV. And be it further enacted, That all and every person and persons, who shall be present in this island on the twenty-eighth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and twenty, and in every third succeeding year and shall then be in possession of any slave or slaves within the same, whether as owner, mortgagee, trustee, guardian, executor, administrator, sequestrator, committee, receiver, assignee, lessee, attorney, agent, or otherwise howsoever, do and shall, on or before the twenty-eighth day of September then next ensuing, render in to the Clerk of the Vestry of the parish where such slave, or slaves are possessed shall be considered to be most permanently settled, worked, or employed, a true and perfect list or return in writing . . .

My photo, September 2008 – from Sandy Gut looking southeast across Williamsfield

The Sandy Gut and Williamsfield crop accounts for the year 1816 were both sworn by Geo M Andrews (George Miller Andrews) on 10 February 1817.
Chapter 9. 1816 to 1817

The Sandy Gut crop account for 1816 was the last of the Sandy Gut crop accounts. By 1817 the estate had been merged with Williamsfield. Below – abstracts of accounts for the year 1816 prepared by the Earl of Harewood’s London agents.


West Indies – Total . . . – Deduct – includes the Earl of Harewood’s second payment to Joseph Timperon for an Estate in Jamaica = Sandy Gut

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds of 193 Hhds &amp; 20 Tierces of Sugar</td>
<td>4876 - 6 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deduct Insurance Stores Supertare Commission Postage &amp; Stamps</td>
<td>1125 - 10 - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of this year’s expenses including Cattle</td>
<td>3750 - 15 - 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proceeds of 80 Puns of Rum &amp; 10 Head of Cattle Sold</td>
<td>1927 - 4 - 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2995 - 17 - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>754 - 18 - 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On 8 February 1817 the Clerk of the St Thomas in the Vale Vestry, James Seton Lane, gave notice of the quantity of Clothing to be supplied each year to the slaves in the parish.

St Thomas’ in the Vale, Feb 8, 1817.

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this Vestry, that the Clothing, to be supplied the Slaves upon the respective Plantations, in this Parish, or by those possessing Slaves; either in their own right, or that of others, shall consist of a quantity which shall not average less than seven yards of Oznaburgh, three yards of Pennistones, a Hat, Cap, and Handkerchief, with Thread and Needles, to each and every slave, or other Clothing equal in value and service thereto: And which shall be given in upon Oath, upon the 28th day of December in each year, or within twenty days after.

James S Lane, Clk. Vest.

William Berryman’s Jamaica drawings 1808-1816
In St Thomas in the Vale in March 1817 the Earl of Harewood owned a total of 330 slaves.

On 5 June 1817 the Rector of St Thomas in the Vale, Rev W G Burton wrote that since he had been appointed Rector of St Thomas in the Vale in September 1816 he had baptised 835 slaves.

Sir,  
In obedience to his Grace the Governor’s command, conveyed to me by your letter of 25th ult. I beg leave to submit to you the following statement, for his Grace’s information.

The number of slaves of all description baptised by me, (since my presentation to this benefice in September last,) is 835; such a number may appear very great as it may be supposed that all these could not, within so short a period, be duly prepared to receive this solemn rite. It is therefore allowed, that most of the candidates were indeed extremely ignorant, as well as the vows required, as of the benefits received in that sacrament. It being however a notion prevalent amongst the slaves, that they may not come to church unless baptised, (that day excepted on which they present themselves for baptism,) I have been induced, after suitable admonitions, and always by the approbation of their masters, to admit them into the christian church.

No fees for the baptism of slaves have either been demanded or received by me since my residence here. The masters, or their attorneys, have in every instance come forward to pay them.

Inasmuch as there are not to my knowledge any dissenting chapels, or meeting houses, or preachers of a different persuasion within this parish, all those slaves who are baptised may in some sense be termed members of the Established Church. The church is always well attended by slaves and free people of colour, hence we may conclude, that many who reside at a great distance from it, will be induced to join Divine worship, when chapels or buildings for that purpose shall be erected in different parts of the parish.

His Grace may be assured, that it will ever be my study so to discharge the sacred duties of my profession, that the piety of our excellent church may not be sullied by my ministry: and although in the course of it I may fall under censure, yet I trust that my faithful and sincere endeavours to promote the cause of religion will shield me from the reproach of sloth or indifference.
At the end of July 1817 the Jamaica Royal Gazette advised its readers that the Registration of Slaves ‘should be as accurate as possible’ and ‘in the Name column, where the parties have been baptized the former, as well as the Christian name should be inserted, as useful in tracing titles’. 

Edward registered his slaves who had been baptized with their Christian names and with their ‘original’ names – names given on arrival in Jamaica. On 28 June 1817 Edward owned 8 slaves all of whom were African (born in Africa) and all were domiciled in St Thomas in the East.

A Return of Slaves in the parish of St Thomas in the East in the possession of Edward Clouston as the proprietor or owner on the 28th day of June in the year of our Lord 1817.

<table>
<thead>
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--- Females ---

- Dorothy Negro 32 African

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Males: 7 Seven
Female: 1 One
Total: 8 Eight

I Edward Clouston do swear that the above list and return consisting of one sheet is a true, perfect and complete list and return to the best of my knowledge and belief in every particular therein mentioned of all and every Slave and Slaves possessed by me as proprietor considered as most permanently settled worked or employed in the parish of St Thomas in the East on the 28th day of June one thousand eight hundred and seventeen without fraud, deceit or evasion – So help me God.

Signed E. Clouston

Sworn before me this eighth day of September, 1817
Signed Maurice West

In the Jamaica Island Record Office I searched Records of Contracts but found no record of when any of Edward’s 8 slaves were conveyed to him. Although there is no mention of where in St Thomas in the East Edward’s slaves were domiciled in 1817, from 1821s records (see Chapter 12) they were domiciled on ‘Orkneys’, the 10 acres conveyed to Edward by Lewis Grant in 1812 (see Chapter 7).

My photos, November 2009 – near Georgia – Negro River – on the far bank, washing spread out to dry

In the 1817 slave registers, in addition to Edward’s slaves who had been baptized with the last name Clouston, I found one slave registered with the name Clouston.
Unlike Edward’s slaves, the Earl of Harewood’s slaves were registered either with their ‘original’ names, or, if they had been baptized, with their Christian names = two or more European names ending with a surname.

A Return of Slaves in the Parish of St Thomas in the Vale in the possession of George Cuthbert and Francis Graham as Attorneys to the Right Honourable Edward Lascelles Earl of Harewood on the 28th Day of June in the Year of our Lord 1817.

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- **Names**: Names of the individuals
- **Colour**: Ethnicity of the individuals (Negro or African, Creole)
- **Age**: Age of the individuals
- **African or Creole**: Ethnicity designation
- **Remarks**: Additional information about the individual
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### Image: Elizabeth Milligan

- **Names:** Elizabeth Milligan
- **Colour:** Mulatto
- **Age:** 4
- **African or Creole:** Creole
- **Remarks:** Ann Balfour her Mother

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- **Names:** Elizabeth Milligan
- **Colour:** Mulatto
- **Age:** 4
- **African or Creole:** Creole
- **Remarks:** Ann Balfour her Mother

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- **Names:** Elizabeth Milligan
- **Colour:** Mulatto
- **Age:** 4
- **African or Creole:** Creole
- **Remarks:** Ann Balfour her Mother
Chapter 9. 1816 to 1817

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In London in 1832 James Simpson, formerly a Kingston merchant, told the House of Commons Select Committee on the Extinction of Slavery that the Triennial Returns of Slaves would show when slave ‘baptisms became general’.

5421. What is the nature of your connection with the island of Jamaica? – I am connected with a commercial house in the island, and when there, I was representative of several noblemen and gentlemen absentees, proprietors of plantations in the island.

5422. How long have resided in Jamaica – Twenty-four years, with the intermission of a few months.

Where they generally Christians at that time? – I am unable to state that they were generally Christians; I should be afraid to say that 14 years ago [1818] they were so; but the Returns will show, from the time that the negroes began to take surnames, their baptisms became general, and Christianity may then be supposed to have been generally introduced according to the extent of the names.

In the novel *Marly* slaves on an estate wished to be baptized and the attorney for the estate gave his consent.


The negroes, on being informed that they were to be baptized, were quite elated and in high spirits as the idea of becoming Christians like the buckras, and by the time the parson came upon the estate, Christian names and surnames, were fixed for each of the people. In general, they took the surname of the proprietor, attorney, or those of the white people on the property, in place of their former African or heathen appellations; their first names, however, being the ones in common use as those they were more familiar with; their new or Christian ones, being reserved as a resource for uncommon occasions, if such should ever happen. Many days did not elapse, before the clergyman sent notice of the time when he would attend, and the negroes were desired to attire themselves in their best apparel, and to be in all readiness on the appointed day. Accordingly, when the parson made his appearance, the people were assembled and placed in rows, when the clergyman made them members of the Christian church, after admonishing them to be good, and to beware not to steal, .. also some other matters... The ceremony was performed in the courts of a short time, in the presence of the white people on the estate, and a large party of overseers from the adjoining properties. After dinner, to which the clergyman waited, a negro ball succeeded, which finished the day...

Below – slaves baptized in Jamaica by the Rectors and Curates in 1815, 1816, and in 1817 up to the 1st day of November.

*British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 13 Dec 1817, page PS 22-23*

The following is the Return of the Number of Slaves baptized in the different parishes of this island, for three years preceding the 1st day of November, in the present year, distinguishing the numbers baptized in each of those years, and which was sent down to the House in his Grace the Governor’s fourth Message of the 2nd inst.

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Chapter 9. 1816 to 1817

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No Returns have been received for St Dorothy, Manchester, or Portland; and that for St Thomas in the Vale only embraces the present year.

From the Triennial Returns of Slaves there were a total of 345,252 slaves in Jamaica on 28 June 1817.

British Library & London National Archives – Royal Gazette, Kingston, Jamaica, Sat, 28 Feb 1818, page PS 17

A report in the Jamaica Royal Gazette commenting on the ‘excess in the Registry Returns of three parishes of this island, viz Kingston, St Mary, and St Thomas in the Vale, over those under the Poll Tax Law’ was later reported in newspapers in England.

We have seen in the Traveller, and London and St James’s Chronicles, the following observations on a paragraph inserted in this paper, of the 1st November last, relative to the excess in the Registry Returns of three parishes of this island, viz Kingston, St Mary, and St Thomas in the Vale, over those under the Poll Tax Law:

“It will be seen by an extract from the Jamaica Papers, inserted in another column, that the number of Slaves registered in three parishes, under the new law, exceeded that of the previous Poll Returns by 11,588. Thus the British Parliament will learn, though by a melancholy kind of proof, how necessary those discussions were, which induced the Colonial Assembly to call, by their own authority, for some new mode of enrolment, such as would otherwise have been required by a superior Legislature. A ‘great apparent increase is confessed in the Slave Population.’ The House of Assembly has directed, that lists be formed of the persons who had before omitted to return their Slaves. This is well; but, when their purpose is stated to be, ‘that a satisfactory refutation may be given to any calumnies, that may be invented in consequence of the great apparent increase of the Slave Population,’ we really are unable to perceive their meaning. – They surely do not intend to say, that the proof of a fact refutes the assertion of its existence; and yet as surely the fact, asserted by the friends of humanity in England, is proved by the new Returns in Jamaica. Perhaps, the Assembly hope that the possessors of these Slaves can shew them to have been...
born in the island since the Abolition. Evidence to that fact they are then bound to collect and make known, since they talk of calumnies.”

The Kingston Chronicle of this morning contains the following remarks made by its Editor on the foregoing article, to which we willingly give a place, being entirely in unison with our own sentiments on the subject: –

“The writer of the above assumes that the insidious and calumnious charge of ‘the friends of humanity’ (as they are pleased to style themselves), of the inhabitants of this island having clandestinely introduced Slaves into it from Africa, is proven; whereas the contrary is the case, for the excess under the Registry Act over those of the usual Tax-Rolls was clearly and distinctly accounted for in the Report presented to the House of Assembly in the last Session by the Committee appointed to take into consideration the State of the Colony: The Tax-Rolls never did, and never confessed, to contain an accurate account of all Slaves in this island; they merely embraced those, by whom taxes were actually and bone fide paid; and it is a well known and indubitable fact, that there were many persons possessed of Slaves, who were in circumstances so indigent as to be exempted from taxation; where were others likewise in situations so obscure as to be unknown; and it is from these two classes alone that the excess in the Returns under the Registry Act has arisen. In short the case is simply this, that under the Registry Bill, every Owner was compelled to return his Slave, or not only to submit to have him freed, but to a heavy penalty besides; whereas, under the former givings in, Owners, in omitting to make their returns, only subjected themselves, if discovered, to an over-assessment. We hope the Editor of the St James’s Chronicle will have the liberality and justice to insert the Report of the House of Assembly above alluded to. Not a single negro has been imported into this island from Africa since the Abolition – no man in his senses would attempt such a traffic, for negroes so introduced could not be retained as slaves – they would be freer in Jamaica than the Editor of the St James’s Chronicle is even within the purlieus of St James’s.”

My photos, September 2008 – Williamsfield – Norman slicing open a coconut for us to scoop out the jelly