

Part 3 The employed men

Chapter 2 Biographies and biographical notes of overseers, boiling house watches and some managers, 1685-1807

This chapter introduces some of the men who oversaw the work of the enslaved people – mostly overseers and boiling house watches but also a few of the early managers about whom little is known. The lives of most of these men could only be sketched very thinly, partly because they did not remain on the plantation for long and partly because their occupations did not require them to write and therefore leave documentary evidence.

The men are listed in chronological order. The more fulsome biographies of the managers who served from 1734 to 1807 are in the following chapter.

Mr Stanilife

Mr Stanilife was the first manager known to have worked on one of the plantations that later made up Mountravers. He came from England with a recommendation from William Freeman: 'I doubt not but you will finde Stanilife that I sent over a carefull, honest man to manidge our plant. or anything elce you may have occation to imply him about.' The new man had no experience; Robert Helme, who had managed the plantation so far, was to instruct him 'well in the plantation affaires'.¹ Mr Stanilife started work on Proctor's in 1685, probably in about April or May.

Freeman had sent Stanilife so that Robert Helme could return to England, to settle in the country. Helme, like Freeman before him, was to become an absentee owner and Stanilife his manager. However, Helme died some time in 1685 – possibly even before he could train the new recruit. It is not known what happened to Mr Stanilife.²

Mr Wesbury

While Azariah Pinney lived in Charlestown and the Charlots were in New England, Mr Wesbury started work on their plantation on 18 June 1696. It is likely that he was a Creole and that his first name was either Henry or Robert.³

A month before Mr Wesbury started work on Charlot's, Azariah Pinney had compiled a plantation inventory which showed that there were nineteen enslaved people; another two whom Mr Wesbury

¹ Hancock, David (ed) *The Letters* p393 William Freeman to Robert Helme, 5 March 1684/5

² It is possible that Mr Stanilife's name was mis-read or mis-spelt for Standcliffe. He may have followed a relative: James Standcliffe was a passenger bound for Nevis on the ship *Nevis Merchant*, which in 1680 sailed from Bristol for Nevis, Montserrat and Virginia (<http://englishamerica.home.att.net/spls/> Source: Hotton's Lists pp171-72).

³ Several people called Wesbury were in Nevis before and after the manager of Charlot's: In 1649, Richard Westberry witnessed James Hewett's will, in which his daughter Sarah Westberry was left 1,000 lbs of tobacco (Pers. comm., Brian Littlewood, 10 October 2003, quoting from *Caribbeana* 'Abstracts of Nevis Wills in the PCC') and Henry Westbury lived on the island in the 1670s. In early 1708 Robert Westbury was recorded as an inhabitant; in his household were three white males and a white female but no slaves (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 pp27-35 and pp173-79).

brought with him were a welcome addition, and they were rented to the estate at a rate of a thousand pounds of sugar a year.

Azariah Pinney gave Mr Wesbury a detailed contract and, as Mr Wesbury and his family lived on the plantation, this included several clauses concerning domestic arrangements. The contract allowed him to keep livestock but he was restricted to one breeding sow and her piglets until they were fit for sale; a cow and a mare 'with the calf till fit to be killed and the colt fit to be weaned', and, as long as the animals were confined within a pen, his wife could raise ducks, turkeys and hens. She could also make full use of the garden. For the poultry corn was to be planted among the canes, with Pinney reserving part of the crop for himself. However, it was clearly stated that none of the plantation people were to work in the garden or to assist with the wife's poultry, and Pinney quite specifically ordered that none of the poultry's corn was to be sold, nor any of the other provisions 'wasted, given or sold'. The rewards 'for managing and ordering the plantation and doing all things fit for an overseer to do' was 'to have one negro girl in the house to dress victuals etc', three barrels of beef a year by way of salt provisions and a salary of five thousand pounds of sugar. Additional benefits were provisions which Wesbury was to grow for the house and the plantation folk, as well as half the produce from the coney warren. These were heaped-up banks of earth in which rabbits burrowed; the animals were valued for their meat and skins and presumably also for their droppings. In medieval England, tenants rented coney warrens and for Mr Wesbury getting half their produce would have been a welcome perk. Azariah Pinney retained the right to the other half.

The agreement Pinney drew up included a clause that each party was to give one month's notice in case of a difference between them, or in case 'any thing else extraordinary should happen'. Soon the 'extraordinary' did, indeed, happen. Pinney charged Mr Wesbury for losses, and after managing the plantation for less than five months, he left Charlot's on Friday, 13 November 1696.⁴ According to the contract, he was 'to depart with his family off the plantation but to leave everything in good order'.

Some time after May 1696 and before September 1797 two people died, John and Namino. They may have been the losses Azariah Pinney had claimed from Mr Wesbury but they could have died any time after he left and before Thomas Copping started work.

Thomas Crosse

Four days after Mr Wesbury's departure, on Tuesday evening, 17 November 1696, 'Old Thomas Crosse' took 'possession of the within inventory except (1 knife, 1 spoone etc)'. Again, his salary was set at five thousand pounds of sugar a year plus plantation provisions but 'without other priviledges'.⁵

Crosse was in post for only three weeks when one of the enslaved men, Cuffee, died. He had suffered a 'broken belly'. This was at the beginning of December. Shortly afterwards another man died; Tamberlaine and Mall (or Moll) had poisoned Caesar, and in mid-January an old horse died. Pinney may have threatened him with having to make good the losses, or he was, indeed, 'being sick' and incapable of managing the plantation – for whatever reason, after only two months in service, on Saturday, 30 January 1697, Thomas Crosse left the plantation.⁶

It is not known whether he was in any way related to later members of the Crosse family in Nevis.⁷

⁴ PP, WI Box A: Typed transcript filed under 1697

⁵ PP, WI Box A: Typed transcript filed under 1697

⁶ PP, WI Box A: Typed transcript filed under 1697

⁷ Eighteenth century members of the Crosse family in Nevis were, for instance, Andrew Moore Crosse and his brother Captain Thomas Bickham Crosse (ECSCRN, CR 1835-1838 f171).

‘My Negro Tom’

After Thomas Crosse left, on 2 February 1697 Azariah Pinney's Negro Tom took over managing the plantation. From the following day until the 14th another man, Nero, 'went to help in the grinding'.

The Negro Tom probably worked until Thomas Copping started.

Thomas Copping

It is likely that Thomas Copping was a Creole or a long-term resident and his name a variant of Coppin or Choppin.⁸ Robert Choppin was among the early settlers who had served under Sir Thomas Warner. A Chancery case against a Choppin by a later owner of the estate, John Frederick Pinney, at least suggests an involvement with that family.⁹

Thomas Copping started work as 'overseer' (manager) on Charlots on 13 September 1697. His first task that day was to compile an inventory. He listed three bulls, two cows, one bull calf and eight sheep. Three horses and a mare had died that year and some more animals had been bought. Among the equipment were five coppers, two old copper coolers, three old skimmers, two old ladles and a new one, a still head and worm.¹⁰ Of the eighteen people he recorded, five men, eight women and three girls had been on the plantation for at least eighteen months. Some, no doubt, were still undergoing their 'seasoning', as did those people who had been purchased during the previous year and a half. One of the girls in that group, Jenny, died six days after Copping started work.

It is not known when Thomas Copping left.

Pigg

Only one entry referred to him and it appears that he only worked for about three weeks: on 25 November 1700 Azariah Pinney 'Paid Pigg overseer 250 lbs of sugar'.¹¹ It is possible, though, that he did not work on Charlots but on Proctor's or Mountain.

A manager on the Mountain plantation: Christoph or Christopher Wattis

He may have been a Creole and the son of George Wattis, who had lived in Nevis in the 1670s. In his household were two children; one of these could have been the young Christoph.¹²

Christoph Wattis started work on 3 June 1701 as an overseer (manager) on Mountain plantation in St John Figtree parish. He is included here because he not only worked the land at Mountain but also, with about a dozen people from Mountain, planted canes and provisions at Proctor's. Mrs Margaret Dewitt had recently rented Proctor's, and both Proctor's and Mountain were then in the hands of Azariah Pinney as Mary Travers's attorney.

⁸ Thomas Copping may have been related to Nicholas Coppin, who in 1677/8 lived in a small household, or Captain Robert Choppin, a company leader, whose domestic set-up included nine white men, woman and children and 14 Negroes (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 p79).

⁹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 4 pp82-3 and UKNA, CO 186/6: 9 December 1772

¹⁰ PP, WI Box A: 'A List of Goods ...'

¹¹ PP, WI Box A

¹² Possibly the same George Wattis moved to St Kitts: A 63-year-old man of that name appeared in the St Kitts census taken in January 1707/8. He was not well off, he lived in a household that had no slaves. These Wattises may have been related to people called Waters and also Watters: the merchant William Waters of Bristol and Nevis had in his will of 1690 left a slave to Azariah Pinney's neighbour Eleanor Murphy (PP, WI Box A), and Samuel Waters lived in Nevis in the early 1700s (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 St Kitts Census and Nevis Census).

While at the Mountain estate Wattis and his wife were to live in the 'two roomes adjoining to the stable', the governor of the island, meanwhile, rented Mary Travers's main house at Mountain and lived in great comfort. He had at his disposal eight rooms, a large closet, a porch, a kitchen and a steward room.¹³

Mrs Travers's instructions for Wattis were brief and clear:

I do not allow any corn to be planted nor any hogs to be kept except two hogs for your profit and no more at once. Neither do I allow cassava to be planted nor any horses or negroes to be employed but upon my own interest and you must manage this plantation and as much as possible you can of Proctors. When you prepare for grinding acquaint Mr Pinney with it & give him an account of every weeks work. None of my negroes to be tied up and whipped unless Mr Pinney be first acquainted with the fault & the runaways to be chained.¹⁴

The instruction forbidding the planting of food crops in between the canes was contrary to what Azariah Pinney had allowed his manager on Charlot's while the restriction on animals Wattis could keep was similar to conditions of service issued to other managers. What made this agreement so very different was a contractual obligation to keep the attorney apprised of the work in progress and to inform the attorney prior to punishing anyone. This resulted not only in a cooling-off period but also meant closer consideration as to whether the misdemeanour warranted tying up and whipping. For his work, Wattis was allowed '36 pounds current money of this island and two barrels beef and 50 lbs coddfish and Indian provision for himself and wife per annum'.¹⁵ Pinney oversaw that Mrs Travers's instructions were followed.¹⁶

In terms of the sugar works, on Mountain were a boiling house with four coppers, two copper coolers, about four dozen wooden sugar pots, a case mill and a still. There were relatively few animals, six horses, four cattle and a colt,¹⁷ but Richard Pares noted that the Mountain plantation with eight men, 14 women and 15 children had more labour than most others.¹⁸ However, included in this count of 37 were twelve people who originally had been on Proctor's.

Within two years of Wattis starting, 14 of the people had died. They were replaced by three women and five children.

It is not known when Christoph Wattis and his wife left Mrs Travers's services.

James Sedan

Between March and August 1702 James Sedan was overseer on Charlot's. Not unusually, he was illiterate; on the receipt for his pay, calculated at N£5¹⁹ a year, he made his mark.²⁰ Nothing is known about him.

¹³ PP, WI Box A (Courtesy of David Hancock)

¹⁴ PN p20, quoting PP, Racedown XII, Plantation Management, Miscellaneous, 'Instructions to my Overseer Christopher Wattis'

¹⁵ PP, WI Box A; also notes courtesy of David Hancock

¹⁶ PN p20(a)

¹⁷ PP, WI Box A, and PN p20

¹⁸ PN p21

¹⁹ N£ means Nevis currency

²⁰ PP, WI Box A

The 'white boy Croker', an indentured servant

The white boy Croker may well have been related to Elizabeth Croker, who, with Thomas Houghton, at that time had land to the west of Charlot's.²¹

Croker probably started work on Charlot's at the beginning of February 1704. An entry in the plantation account states that he was purchased for N£12.²² Given his value, he almost certainly was one of the white Protestant men aged between sixteen and fifty years bought by the island's Treasury and then sold to planters to the tune of N£12 each. These men, otherwise surplus to requirement, were intended to fulfil the quota of one white servant 'to every twenty negroes' which the Legislature had set.²³ This was in response to the declining numbers of white servants who came to Nevis during the second half of the seventeenth century.²⁴ Nevis was competing with other colonies that were being settled but lost out because it had little unoccupied land that could be offered to these indentured servants once their contracted time had expired. Worried about the ever-present threat of insurrection and invasion, the Legislature had tried to increase the proportion of white men who could be employed to defend the plantations and the island. Almost certainly the men traded by the Treasury were the poor and their children – which parent would have willingly sold his son into bondage?

When he arrived on Charlot's, Croker was supplied with 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ yards of Ozinburgh's and an amount of thread and, no doubt, one of the plantation women then had to sew this cloth into shirts and trousers. The cost of the material (N£1:10:1 $\frac{1}{2}$)²⁵ was entered into the accounts. Issuing each servant with 'three suits of canvas' was one of the conditions of employment but there is no evidence in the accounts that Azariah Pinney also equipped Croker with 'sufficient' hats and shoes, as required by law. Pinney may, of course, have supplied the boy with his own cast-offs.

His being purchased and the money accounted for his clothing were the only references to the 'white boy Croker'.



N£12 would seem a reasonable sum to pay for a young, unskilled man; it represented the equivalent of about a year's wages. When some years earlier Pinney's business partner Richard Meriweather had engaged a carpenter from London, he paid him £15 a year to start off with and £20 a year in the final two years.²⁶ However, this man, John Cooper, received wages while men like Croker did not. Croker's position was similar to the white people who, mostly in the seventeenth century, came to the plantations as indentured labourers - poor people from economically depressed areas. Just as planters preferred their workers to originate from certain regions in Africa, one English landowner

²¹ PP, WI Box B

²² PP, WI Box A

²³ 'Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part III Act No 48 of 1701

²⁴ The figures that are available relate to the white servants who left from Bristol but Watts believed that the destinations of indentees who sailed from other English ports of emigration would have been similar. During the period 1654 to 1686, a total of 4,393 servants left from the port of Bristol for Barbados, Nevis and Jamaica. A further 133 people went elsewhere in the West Indies. Between 1654 and 1659 most were shipped to Barbados (1,405) and only 43 to Nevis. In the decade 1660 to 1669 the numbers destined for the two main islands almost levelled out, with 948 going to Barbados and 811 to Nevis and a further 21 to Jamaica, while in the following decade the trend was reversed: 252 sailed to Barbados and 379 to Nevis. A further 90 servants went to Jamaica. However, in the period from 1680 to 1686 Jamaica received the largest number (357), overtaking both Barbados (73) and Nevis (14). By 1670 to 1679 more than double the number of servants went to the North American rather than to the West Indian colonies. According to Watts, after 1669 indentees probably chose the mainland colonies in preference to the British Caribbean because unsettled land was readily available there (David Watts *The West Indies* p361 Table 8.5 and p360). An added ingredient may have been that white servants expected to live longer in the more temperate North American colonies where the cultivation of crops such as tobacco, rice and indigo was physically less demanding than sugar.

²⁵ PP, WI Box A

²⁶ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile Box' 2

expressed his preference for bonded servants to come from certain parts of the British Isles; he considered Scotchmen and Welshmen the best and the Irish the worst.²⁷ Because not enough people volunteered, the colonies were seen as a useful destination for convicted prisoners and those sentenced to transportation were welcome in the colonies. Indeed, in 1697, not long before Croker started work, fifty women convicts had been sent to the Leeward Islands to redress the male/female imbalance among the whites.²⁸ Political and criminal transportees provided one source of labour; those expelled for their religious beliefs another. When in the 1660s Quakers were shipped from England to Nevis, those too poor to pay their fare were indentured for seven years.²⁹

The labour shortage produced a new, thriving business: kidnapping people. Christopher Jeaffreson described how in the early 1680s the demand for white workers was such that people were stolen off the streets and spirited away to the colonies. Several eminent men were involved in this people-trafficking racket. The authorities did try to control the trade, but their aim was not to prevent people being sent to the colonies, they only sought to prevent abuses, such as abducting under-age children, or anyone already bonded to masters. One of the kidnappers, a slop-seller, was fined a hefty £500 for his involvement but the result of the clamp-down was that white servants were even harder to come by.³⁰ Once in the West Indies, they were 'ranged in a line like new negroes, for the planters to pick and choose'. The hundreds of men who became available for shipment after the Monmouth rebellion provided a timely boost to the colonies' labour markets, as did the disastrous Scottish effort of gaining a foothold in Central America. When the starving Scotsmen of the Darien venture abandoned their Panamanian settlement in 1700, they offered themselves to Caribbean planters only too eager to bind them into contract. The last known Scotsman was put up for sale as late as 1805.³¹

White people also came to the West Indies voluntarily, particularly those with skills. They were paid their passage and their keep, and in return committed themselves to periods of servitude of between three to seven or more years. Their decision to accept stringent indentures was not borne from a complete freedom of choice; as Frederick Cooper wrote, it was based on a 'mixture of impoverishment, administrative pressure, false promises, and real hopes.'³² These people hoped to work for themselves once free, perhaps even to own land and become an independent farmer. In the meantime they, too, were commodities and could be given away or sold, nor were they allowed to marry or have children without their masters' permission. Women who gave birth to unauthorised children were punished for their transgression: their period of indenture was extended by a year to make up for the loss of labour during pregnancy and for the cost of bringing up the child.³³

If indentured servants worked the land, the conditions they endured were not much better than those suffered by the enslaved people alongside whom they worked although, as Cooper pointed out, volunteer indentured servants did at least have the freedom to choose whether or not to leave their home country, and if they were skilled in trades, their employers valued them for their expertise. Youngsters like the 'white boy Croker', however, would hardly have had a choice in the matter, nor those who were kidnapped off the streets and shipped abroad. Men like Azariah Pinney and other convicts, however, would have welcomed the court's decision to bind them to masters. Transportation was preferable to the gallows.

On their way to the West Indies, women on board ship, no doubt, endured sexual exploitation similar to that suffered by enslaved African women during their Middle Passage, and certainly male convicts

²⁷ Burns, Sir Alan *History of the British West Indies* p217, citing Higham *The Development ...* p169

²⁸ Oldham, Wilfrid *Britain's Convicts to the Colonies* p55, citing Basil Sollers 'Maryland History Magazine' Vol 2 p23

²⁹ Burns, Sir Alan *History of the British West Indies* p285, citing Acts, Privy Council, Vol 1 No 651

³⁰ Jeaffreson, John Cordy (ed) *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century* Vol 1 p298 and pp318-19

³¹ Fry, Michael *The Scottish Empire* pp74-5

³² Cooper, Frederick 'African Workers and Imperial Designs' in Philip D Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds) *Black Experience and the Empire* p290

³³ Olwig, Karen Fog *Global Culture, Island Identity* p36 fn6, citing Abbot Emerson Smith *Colonists in Bondage. White Servitude and Convict Labor in America 1607-1776* The University of North Carolina Press 1947 pp270-74

sold into bondage in the colonies were physically constrained during their Atlantic crossing. One trader who had arranged the transport of convicts from England to St Kitts complained that the deal did not include the supply of shackles. He had to have them made especially but then found that he could make money from selling them in the island -³⁴ almost certainly for use as shackles. The same piece of iron that had fettered a white man would, in due course, restrain a black person. There were other similarities between enslaved Africans and British prisoners sold into bondage. Just as there were 'refuse slaves', among the shiploads of convicts there were men of little commercial value. In terms of profit it was thought that the strong, skilled men would balance out the dross: the 'lusty fellows, especially such as have good trades, will make amends for the refuse.'³⁵ Once sold to the plantations, the infirm would die as quickly as the newly-arrived Africans. They succumbed to disease or overwork or both.

Whites, like the blacks, also resisted their bondage by running away. One such runner was known to have been a man called Jacob Watkins alias Morgan. Formerly a seaman, he managed to make his way back to England.³⁶ If whites fought for their freedom the same way enslaved people did, so were they punished in similar ways. Following an insurrection by white indentured servants in the 1650s in Barbados, newly introduced legislation prescribed that any servant who deliberately set light to a cane field received forty lashes, was branded on the forehead with an 'R' and indentured to the owner of the burnt property for another seven years.³⁷ Seeing that white servants in their bondage had common cause with enslaved people and fearing a combined uprising, planters used the oldest method of controlling people - divide-and-rule – and as early as 1675 the Nevis Government passed a law prohibiting white men from keeping the company of enslaved people.³⁸ But unlike enslaved blacks, white servants, if abused by their employers, could turn to magistrates for protection,³⁹ and by law they were treated more leniently: in Nevis the punishment for a white manservant striking his master was to be 'moderate correction - so it doth not extend to breaking of bones, or dismembering', while for the same offence an enslaved person was to get up to 39 lashes in the market place, on his or her bare back. This public display of power was designed to intimidate and was followed by further punishment: five days in prison on bread and water. The owner bore the cost of the incarceration and of the rations.⁴⁰ For the '12 Pound men', as men like the 'white boy Croker' were known, the Nevis Legislature also laid down minimum clothing provisions; for enslaved people in Nevis this was not done for another hundred years. Unsurprisingly, planters complained that maintaining a white servant cost as much as keeping five black people yet the white servant did only half the work of one black person.⁴¹

But planters did not value the whites for their productivity: they needed a sufficient number of white men to call on at times of trouble. In order to keep them, and to keep them on their side, they had to 'privilege the servant, who was becoming a protector rather than a producer of property'.⁴² While earlier legislation had simply encouraged the importation of white servants,⁴³ the Nevis Legislature proceeded to regulate their conditions of service and also to promise a bounty at the end of their indenture – but no land: those who were bound for four years or more were induced to remain in the

³⁴ Jeaffreson, John Cordy (ed) *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century* Vol 2 p187

³⁵ Jeaffreson, John Cordy (ed) *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century* Vol 2 p125

³⁶ Jeaffreson, John Cordy (ed) *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century* Vol 2 p235, p249, and p126

³⁷ Watts, David *Patterns of Development* p201, citing Hall 1764

³⁸ Pers. comm., Brian Littlewood, 4 March 2004, citing an extract from CSP 1675-1676 No 570

³⁹ Christopher Jeaffreson advised his white servant John Holcroft to have recourse to a magistrate if he continued to be mistreated by the manager. Holcroft had written to Jeaffreson and informed him of the manager's abuses and Jeaffreson then used Holcroft as an informer by asking him to 'watch Ensign Thorn closely' for any fraudulent behaviour (JC Jeaffreson (ed) *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century* Vol 2 p71 Christopher Jeaffreson, London, to John Holcroft 12 September 1683).

⁴⁰ 'Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part III

In the Danish West Indies, in 1733 the Governor issued a mandate which prescribed even harsher punishment for any 'negro who raised a hand' against a white man. He had to be pinched three times with a hot iron, and whether he should be hanged or merely lose a hand was left to the discretion of the accuser (Westergaard, Waldemar *The Danish West Indies* p167).

⁴¹ Bridenbaugh, C and R Bridenbaugh *No Peace Beyond the Line* p301

⁴² Linebaugh, Peter and Marcus Rediker *The Many-Headed Hydra* p375 fn90

⁴³ CSP 1675-1676 No 570

island after completing their contracted time by promises of 400 pounds muscavado sugar, or the equivalent in money.⁴⁴ Not many would have qualified. It has been estimated that perhaps as many as half of all the whites in the sixteen to twenty years age group died before the end of their contracted time.⁴⁵

The efforts to entice white servants proved largely unsuccessful. As David Galenson stated, 'By the close of the seventeenth century there were few white servants in the West Indies; indentured servitude survived into the eighteenth century only as a marginal supplier of skilled craftsmen.'⁴⁶ Although the Nevis Legislature repeatedly concerned itself with the subject, the quota system gradually fell into disuse.⁴⁷

James Wignall

Almost certainly this man was a Creole. The name is also spelt Wignoll, Whignalt and Wignal, and first occurred in Nevis in the census of 1677/8 when the 'old widow Wignoll' and John Wignoll lived in the island – most likely a mother and her son. In his household were three white men, a white woman and a white child. This child was mentioned in Philip Lee's will of about 1689/90 as being his godchild – almost certainly this was John Wignall junior who became a stonemason. Before she left Nevis, Mary Travers asked him to prepare headstones for her grave and informed Azariah Pinney that 'John Wignall hath cut several stones in order to raise two tombs for me; one in the garden and the other in the church yard.'⁴⁸ By 1707/8 John Wignall (junior) owned 24 people, and in his household were three white females and two white males. James Wignall may have been the second male but this could also have been Isaac Wignall, an Assembly member, coroner⁴⁹ and planter, who, years later, was in debt to John Pinney.⁵⁰

The overseer James Wignall probably left in July 1719. He then received from John Pinney two years' wages of £40.⁵¹

James Wignall became a Justice of the Peace but failed to perform his duties adequately and the Speaker of the Assembly asked that he be removed from office.⁵²

James Browne and his son Joseph

James Browne started work as manager in 1734; Joseph took over briefly. Their biographies are in Chapter 3.

⁴⁴ Press of T Howe *Laws of Nevis 1680-1773*

⁴⁵ Bridenbaugh, C and R Bridenbaugh *No Peace beyond the Line* p123

⁴⁶ Galenson, David W *Traders, Planters, and Slaves* p11

⁴⁷ For instance, the Legislature debated the importation of whites in September 1717 (UKNA, CO 155/5) and in January 1734 (CO 186/2). In October 1767 and in May 1772 the issue was raised again but, reflecting the difficulty of attracting white men to the island, the desired ratio was cut to one white man for every fifty slaves (CO 186/6).

⁴⁸ PP, WI Box A: Mary Travers to Azariah Pinney, 31 May 1701

⁴⁹ UKNA, CO 155/6: 22 July 1723; CO 186/3: 6 May 1742; ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f32

⁵⁰ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 1722-1732

The name Wignall also appears in St Kitts: A 26-year-old William Wignall was registered in the St Kitts census of 1707/8 (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 St Kitts Census), and John Wignal was buried in October 1757 in St Kitts (RHL, Register of St Thomas, Middle Island, St Christopher 1729-1823).

⁵¹ PP, WI Box B: John Pinney's account with James Wignall

⁵² UKNA, CO 186/1: 25 January 1725/6

Thomas Wenham

Thomas Wenham's life on Mountravers, like James Browne's, is only a blurred picture. Too few records have come to light and few details could be established. He appears not to have owned a plantation, but his female descendants played important roles as inheritors and purchasers of plantation properties. They serve as a good example of how ownership of estates changed. Thomas Wenham's story ends in the 1920s with his great-great-granddaughters in England owning three plantations in Nevis.



According to Richard Pares, Thomas Wenham was sent from England. It is likely that he originated from the region north of London - Bedfordshire or Cambridgeshire - where his family name appears in clusters. Pares stated that Tom Wenham came to Nevis in the 1750s but, described as a 'servant', he turned up in an account of John Frederick Pinney's as early as 1746.⁵³ Around that time the father of the then manager, James Browne, seems to have left Nevis, and it is likely that Wenham was sent by John Frederick Pinney so that Browne, during his father's absence, could devote himself to the Browne family's plantation in the parish of St James Windward. Wenham would have started off as an overseer until he was sufficiently skilled to be left in charge of Mountravers.

Tom Wenham first came to attention when his management was found wanting. Browne used to keep John Frederick Pinney informed with regular inventories of 'mules, negroes, cattle, and stock' but Wenham failed in this duty.⁵⁴ He did not advise Pinney of impending shipments of sugar, either,⁵⁵ and the sugars he sent to England were of poor quality. Noting the marked decline, Pinney wanted Browne to get the boiler from neighbouring Jesup's estate to instruct his own boilers in how to improve production.⁵⁶ The criticism levelled at him shows Wenham as either very inexperienced, unable to motivate the boilers sufficiently to want to produce good sugars, or just negligent and idle. The topic of idleness certainly came up in correspondence between Pinney and Browne. Wenham was planning to get married and Browne, on his behalf, asked Pinney's permission for him to remain on Mountravers. In his reply, Pinney expressed his fear that Tom Wenham might slide into idle habits. Possibly alerted by Browne to Wenham's lack of effort (or just venting his own prejudices against Creoles), Pinney made it clear that Wenham was to apply himself with industry to the plantation work and not neglect the estate 'by laziness and lying in bed mornings and afternoons (too much of the Creole practice) or by visiting and being visited.'⁵⁷

As soon as he had received his employer's permission, on 24 October 1756 Thomas Wenham married the widow Martha Sanders.⁵⁸ She was a Leeward Island Creole and a member of the Williams family - early settlers in Nevis who were also present in Antigua. Her cousin Elizabeth, for instance, had been baptised in Antigua⁵⁹ but had moved to Nevis where she had married a planter. Martha Wenham may have been familiar with Mountravers through her previous husband, Francis Sanders; in the 1720s he may have acted as Mary Pinney's attorney.⁶⁰ Sanders had died four years

⁵³ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile Box' 1722-1732 George Jones' a/c

⁵⁴ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney, Bath, to Browne, Nevis, 27 October 1755

⁵⁵ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to James Browne, 1755

⁵⁶ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to Browne, 9 August 1756

⁵⁷ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to Browne, Nevis, 9 August 1756; also R Pares *A West India Fortune* p58

⁵⁸ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 p159

⁵⁹ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p90

⁶⁰ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile Box' 2: Francis Sanders's a/c

If Mary Pinney did in fact go to England, she may have returned to Nevis as early as 1727, the year her daughter Christiana appears to have died. However, there is also evidence to suggest that Mary Pinney remained in Nevis: in an undated entry which appears between the period 10 November 1722 and 1 January 1723, 'Madam Mary Pinney' purchased 486 gallons of molasses from John Kitt, the manager of Jennings & Ball Range plantation (Ryland Stapleton MSS Bundle 5.1: Sir William Stapleton's plantation accounts, 1722). Having rented out Mountain to the Governor, she could have lived on Proctor's,

earlier,⁶¹ and from that marriage Martha had two children: a son, John Williams Sanders, and a daughter, Elizabeth Sanders. In her teens Wenham's stepdaughter Elizabeth began working as a housekeeper for Martha's uncle Thomas Williams who lived at Saddle Hill.⁶²

When Tom Wenham got married, John Frederick Pinney took the opportunity to clarify his conditions of service. It is not known what Wenham was allowed by way of a salary; it is only known what he was not allowed. His employer did not want him to 'keep more than one sheep or goat and two hogs, not to plant any corn, grain, fruit or salad between the canes, nor to keep more than four of the plantation's negroes as his household servants.'⁶³ It was, by then, recognised that additional plants sapped nutrients from the soil and no one was ever again granted the privilege of using the cane fields as their private allotment.

Although John Frederick Pinney also raised the matter of unreasonable expenditure, it was Wenham's failure to fulfil the basic requirement – to produce a lot of good quality sugar – that eventually caused his dismissal.⁶⁴ The report he compiled of the condition of Choppin's Estate may have been his last piece of work before he left his post.⁶⁵ But he remained in touch with James Browne; it appears that the men got along well. Certainly, when William Coker came to Nevis, Thomas Wenham stood by his former master and did not allow the new man to draw him into confessing that Browne had misappropriated mules and horses from the plantation. Pares stated that Wenham may have been sent to the West Indies because Pinney perhaps 'saw the need of fresh blood, or at least a spy on his manager' and, because of his refusal to implicate Browne, Pares considered Wenham 'a useless spy'.⁶⁶ But the man had to live in the island, and by defending Browne he was preserving his own position in the small community of whites. Coker did not seem to have taken Wenham's evasive answers amiss and appears to have recalled and briefly employed him. Thomas Wenham left the estate in 1764.⁶⁷

By then Tom Wenham had become a planter in his own right. He had acquired a plantation in Antigua, probably through his wife, and he was renting Budgeon's plantation in the parish of St John Figtree. Marriage to Martha had provided Wenham with a ready-made network of useful business contacts - in particular her uncle Thomas Williams. Tom Wenham had let him have part of his Antiguan plantation, rent-free, and in turn, his wife's uncle had generously underwritten the renting of the Nevis estate.⁶⁸ It was in an arrangement that suited both men.

Tom Wenham had also started a family, and by 1766 his wife had given birth to two sons, Thomas and Francis, and to three daughters, Martha, Margaret, and Mary. Some of his children would have been born on Mountravers.

In 1766 Martha Wenham's uncle Thomas Williams died. The ring John Pretor Pinney (JPP) sent for Tom Wenham from England the following year⁶⁹ no doubt was a mourning ring, bought in memory of his wife's uncle. Thomas Williams certainly was a man the family would have wanted to honour and remember because when he died, his considerable wealth was spread mostly among members of Martha's family, thereby setting them up with property.

Charlot's or in Charlestown. She may have remained in Nevis while sending her daughter to school in England. On 6 May 1727 she paid Peter Heuie £24 'for drawing her daughter's picture' plus a frame. This, most likely, was intended as a keepsake when Christiana left Nevis (Cat 4 Misc Vols and Item, Bound Vol of Misc MSS 1672-1806).

⁶¹ ECSCRN, CR 1763-1764 ff15-9

⁶² Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 pp159-60

⁶³ Pares, Richard A *West India Fortune* p59

⁶⁴ Pares, Richard A *West India Fortune* pp58-9

⁶⁵ PP, LB 3: at the back

⁶⁶ Pares, Richard A *West India Fortune* p58 and p346 fn10

⁶⁷ PP, WI Box D: Wm Coker, to JPP, 26 March 1764

⁶⁸ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 pp159-60

⁶⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP to William Coker, 24 September 1767

Wenham's step-son, John Williams Sanders, as the oldest male heir in the second generation of the family, profited the most. He was left a plantation in St Thomas Lowland, Woodland, as well as about fifty acres of land (which Williams had purchased from James Tobin) and a small piece of land in Charlestown. Tom Wenham himself benefited handsomely: in exchange for writing off the rents on the Antiguan estate, his wife's uncle remitted the money owed for the bond on Budgeon's (N£1,000 with interest) and also left him a piece of land in Charlestown in or near Bristol Street. The land had once belonged to William Woolward, a distant relative (he was the brother-in-law of Martha's cousin Elizabeth). Some years earlier Thomas Wenham had joined Uncle Williams in lending money to Woolward, who had secured the loan with the property, and now Tom Wenham enjoyed the good fortune when it fell to him. It only measured about 63 square feet but a small square room stood on it⁷⁰ and land could always be rented out or sold. .

In his will, Uncle Williams left his clothes to Tom Wenham but no money to Wenham's wife. Instead, she was to have the use of two people for life: the black woman Kate and her son Cudgoe. The Wenhams' five young children were bequeathed N£200 each. Elizabeth Sanders, Tom Wenham's step-daughter who had been Uncle Williams's housekeeper, got furniture from the house at Saddle Hill, the use of an enslaved woman for life (Peggy) and the promise of £1,000 at the age of 21. However, the will stated that, if Elizabeth married a certain man before she reached the age of 21 she was to receive less money.⁷¹

The man in question was Roger Pemberton, and Elizabeth promptly married him on 1 January 1767.⁷² Around that time Elizabeth's brother, Wenham's step-son John Williams Sanders, also got married – to yet another Elizabeth – and Tom and Martha Wenham's last child was born, Anne. She was baptised in 1768. While the Wenhams became parents again, they also became grandparents and the generations got jumbled. This was typical of so many families where the women married young and the partners were widowed early. Elizabeth and Roger Pemberton were blessed with eight children: Martha (born in 1768), Margaret alias Peggy (born in 1769), Elizabeth and Frances alias Fanny (baptised in 1772), Mary alias Polly (baptised in 1773), Ann alias Nancy (baptised in 1775), William Sanders (born in 1778) and Roger (born in 1781).⁷³ Wenham's step-son and his wife, John and Elizabeth Sanders, had only one surviving son, Francis (Frank) Williams Sanders. He was born in 1769.⁷⁴

Tom Wenham's step-son John Williams Sanders and his wife were in debt. Preparing to leave Nevis to seek their fortune elsewhere, they raised money and took out several mortgages on property in St Thomas Lowland and sold their Woodland plantation to their brother-in-law, Roger Pemberton.⁷⁵ JPP was well-informed of their plans: 'Sanders has sold his estate to Roger Pemberton for £6,200 stlg; he is now collecting the scattered remains of a broken fortune to purchase a farm in America

⁷⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1763-1764 ff15-9 and CR 1771-1773 f302

⁷¹ As was so often the case, the personal slaves were shared out among friends and family and thereby removed from their familiar environment. The 'negro man Cato' Thomas Williams left in his will to Tom Wenham's cousin-by-marriage, Fanny Woolward, and several slaves to his wife's cousin, Elizabeth Herbert. In addition, Thomas Williams asked that seven people were to be freed: the mulatto woman Sarah Williams and her daughter Patty Williams, the man Pern, the woman Rose and her child Cotteen, and Anne and Nanny. The different provisions Williams made for these, and other individuals, show the range of favours an owner could bestow. Patty Williams and Pern were to be paid N£15 a year for life, while Pern was also to get a hundred pounds of muscavado sugar a year for life and land 'of between three and four acres'. On this Williams's executors were to build a house for Pern and he, in turn, was to allow Rose, Cotteen, Ann and Nanny to build themselves houses on the land. The child Cotteen was to be paid an annuity of N£5 until she reached the age of 21 and Wenham's step-daughter Elizabeth Sanders was to take her under her care until that time. Thomas Williams also made provisions for three other people who were not freed: Margarite was never to work in the field while her husband, Scipio, was to get annual allowances of two barrels of pork, a hundred pounds of muscavado sugar and a barrel of molasses. Another man, Fun, was allowed a hundred pounds of muscavado sugar (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 6 pp159-160). Often relatives end up squabbling over the provisions a deceased person had made for them, and it is possible that the different benefits Thomas Williams bestowed on his people would also have caused discontent.

⁷² Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1 pp306-07

⁷³ NHCS, GE/P2 Pemberton family tree, and VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1 p338

⁷⁴ Rigg, JM, revised Joanne Potier 'Francis Williams Sanders (1769-1831)' in *Oxford DNB*

⁷⁵ BULSC, DM 792/2-6

where he is immediately going with his wife, child and six negroes.⁷⁶ Five of these, almost certainly, were those whom Sanders assigned in trust to JPP at the beginning of August 1771: Picam, Fido, Phibba, George and one whose name is not legible. Mrs Elizabeth Sanders was to have the use of them during her lifetime, after her death they were to go to their son Frank and his heirs.⁷⁷ It is likely that the family and their people settled in or around Philadelphia. In the following year, leaving his wife and son behind, John Williams Sanders returned to Nevis and, by sheer coincidence, sailed on the same ship that JPP and his wife took when they broke off their Pennsylvanian honeymoon following the hurricane that had so devastated Nevis. Sanders told the Pinneys the purpose of his trip: he was 'in expectation of getting his Uncle Herbert to settle on him an annual allowance from the Saddle Hill estate.'⁷⁸ 'Uncle Herbert' was the President of Nevis, John Richardson Herbert, and one of the executors appointed by Uncle Williams. He was also the husband, and then widower, of Martha Wenham's cousin Elizabeth. In her early thirties, Elizabeth had died in 1769.⁷⁹ During John Sanders's visit to Nevis he and his sister manumitted four people who had once belonged to Uncle Williams: Sarah and her children Martha, Thomas and Elizabeth. They all bore the surname Williams,⁸⁰ and their first names were those that recur in the Williams family.

In 1772 JPP got involved in the Wenham family's business when Roger Pemberton leased John Sanders's Woodland plantation to him, and it seems fitting that the witnesses to this transaction were Tom Wenham and John Browne, the son of the former Mountravers manager.⁸¹ Tom Wenham was then still renting Budgeon's estate. It had been badly hit in the awful hurricane of August 1772. The boiling house and also some outbuildings had been destroyed and Wenham appears to have invested in a new boiling house.⁸² Either the lease on Budgeon's expired or Wenham relinquished it some time before 1778, and at that point JPP got involved in this estate's affairs, too, when he acted as joint attorney, with James Tobin, for the owner, John Smith Budgeon. Once again, Thomas Wenham's handling of an estate was judged inadequate. JPP found Budgeon's 'in great disorder, having been for many years past, ill-managed'. With almost immediate effect, JPP appointed John Galpine as manager.⁸³ It is not known what Tom Wenham did after he left Budgeon's, except that he held the office of customs waiter at Indian Castle.⁸⁴ His son Thomas, in his mid-teens, followed him into the planting business and became overseer on Broadbelt's estate where he worked in 1780 and 1781.⁸⁵

Tom Wenham was in debt, and in 1781 he ended up in 'the custody of the Marshall for debts which he [was] utterly unable to pay'. In all, he owed over £4,800 to 36 different people – ships captains, grocers, a doctor, merchants and planters. His possessions amounted to a total of £136, of which the horse at £30 was the single most valuable item. Most of his furniture was either old or broken, as were many of the household goods.⁸⁶ There were no enslaved people among his belongings.

Eight people who had belonged to the Wenhams had already been sold the year before at public auction. They were bought by the company of Pinney & Tobin but instead of taking them into its possession, the House⁸⁷ assigned these eight to Mrs Martha Wenham for life: ?Videlicot, Katto, Kate,

⁷⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP to William Coker, 26 July 1771

⁷⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1769-1771 f442 (Courtesy of WA Pinney); also PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis No 7

⁷⁸ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Bridgwater, Grenada, 29 December 1772

⁷⁹ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p90

⁸⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1771-1773 f270

⁸¹ ECSCRN, CR 1771-1773 f427; also Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783 f17

⁸² Anon *An Account of the Late Dreadful Hurricane*

⁸³ PP, LB 4: JPP to John Smith Budgeon, 31 July 1778

⁸⁴ Court of King's Bench and Common Pleas, 1767-1769 Unnumbered 'The Humble Petition of Thomas Wenham...'

⁸⁵ PP, WI Box E: James Brodbelt's Estate Current a/c

⁸⁶ Court of King's Bench and Common Pleas, 1767-1769 Unnumbered 'The Humble Petition of Thomas Wenham...'

Thomas Wenham was also among the many people who were indebted to the Bristol owners of the ship *Nevis Planter*; in his case a fairly hefty S£75 had remained unpaid (BRO, 39654 (2)).

⁸⁷ The House is the Pinney merchant house which, over time, was made up of several different partners.

Sadle Hill (sic), Cudjoe, John, Sarey and Sabella.⁸⁸ As an acknowledgment that they remained the firm's rightful property, Tom Wenham had to pay a token sum of N1s6d.⁸⁹

Shortly afterwards Thomas Wenham bought a female called Eve from John Richardson Herbert for Anne, his youngest daughter. JPP financed this purchase. As part-payment Wenham supplied equipment - two side rolls - worth almost N£20.⁹⁰ This was typical of many of the deals JPP made: one transaction was linked to another. Around the same time JPP agreed to buy an enslaved person for Mountravers from a widow called Mrs Bertrand and this was, no doubt, connected as well, because in later years JPP was engaged in an ongoing dispute over several people with the children of Thomas Wenham, and this Mrs Bertrand was, in fact, Thomas Wenham's oldest daughter, Martha. In March 1775⁹¹ Martha Williams Wenham had married the widowed Deputy to Collector of Customs, John Bertrand,⁹² had given birth to a son called John, and was widowed by 1781.⁹³ At the age of four months, her son John was baptised some time in the 1770s at the church at St Thomas Lowland.⁹⁴ The couple appears to have lived in that parish, although later the widow was described as of Kingston, Surrey, and Jamaica.⁹⁵ Her husband may only have owned property in that island although during her widowhood Mrs Bertrand certainly spent some time in Jamaica.⁹⁶

Tom Wenham's step-daughter Elizabeth (who had married Roger Pemberton) died in January 1783, having given birth to eight children in 14 years,⁹⁷ while Martha's son from her first marriage, John Williams Sanders, returned from America to Nevis. He was back in the planting business.⁹⁸ His son attended school in England.⁹⁹ Tom Wenham's wife Martha, meanwhile, had under her care one of the young girls owned by JPP's brother-in-law, Dr Thomas Pym Weekes. Nancy Steward was 'at school' at Mrs Wenham's,¹⁰⁰ and Martha Wenham would have taught her skills such as sewing and other domestic crafts.

JPP was getting nervous about Thomas Wenham's children repaying the loan for eleven people. He asked Coker that, if 'the Wenham children' did not comply with conditions of payment, then Coker should 'take all the slaves home to the estate'. These were different people than those JPP had previously assigned to Thomas Wenham and his wife. The eleven individuals concerned were Eve (whom Wenham had bought for his daughter Anne with JPP's help), Phibba, Dumb Patty and her son Dick, Nanno and her daughter May, Billey, Philley, Lulloo, Kitico, and Cynthia. In February 1781 Thomas Wenham's debt to JPP had stood at N£406, but interest and currency fluctuations soon pushed the total sum outstanding to N£536.¹⁰¹ Presumably by way of settling this debt, John Williams Sanders assigned several individuals to JPP and William Coker. With the express condition that they must not be used by her husband to settle debts, they remained in possession of Sanders's mother and his half-sisters Margaret (who retained Hannah and two of her children, Margo and Tom

⁸⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 f271

⁸⁹ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f159; also AB 30

⁹⁰ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f5

⁹¹ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

John Bertrand and his previous wife, Elizabeth, had had a son whom they called William Senhouse. This was also the name of the Surveyor General. Perhaps he was the godfather, or it was with an eye to promotion, because it was through William Senhouse's commission that the Comptroller of Customs was appointed (CO 186/7). John and Elizabeth Bertrand son died, aged eight months, and was buried in 1773 (VL Oliver *Monumental Inscriptions* p103). There is no record of Elizabeth Bertrand's burial.

⁹² UKNA, CO 186/7: 2 July 1772

⁹³ ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 f262; also PP, AB 26 f181 John Richardson Herbert's a/c

⁹⁴ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p103

⁹⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 f262; also PP, AB 26 f181 John Richardson Herbert's a/c

⁹⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 f263

⁹⁷ Elizabeth's husband, Roger Pemberton, was alive in 1803 but it is not known when he died (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1 pp306-07).

⁹⁸ Minchinton, W *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* p128, quoting LB 17: Circular from Pinney & Tobin, 26 October 1784

⁹⁹ PP, LB 5: JPP to Thomas Wenham, Nevis, 21 February 1784

¹⁰⁰ PP, AB 27 f43

¹⁰¹ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis; AB 26 Children of Thomas Wenham a/c and John Richardson Herbert's a/c; AB 30 Children of Thomas Wenham a/c and DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f5

Molasses), Martha (who retained Kitty), and Mary (who had the 'negro man' Jem Peter). Sanders's wife Elizabeth was assigned a man called Cudjoe,¹⁰² but no mention was made of Sanders's half-sister Anne, the Wenhams' youngest daughter. It is very likely that she had died. Certainly the Wenhams lost one of their sons, Thomas Wenham junior. He was buried on 7 January 1788 in St John Figtree.¹⁰³ Apart from Billy, a 'negro man' who was worth N£126:13:4, he had possessed few belongings: a mare (N£15:10:0), a very old cow (N£3:10:0), a trunk with clothes (N£0:5:0), an old desk (N£3:9:0) and a bedstead (N£2:1:0).¹⁰⁴

Their daughter Martha had been widowed already and in due course Margaret was widowed, too. She had married a Mr Galpine who may, possibly, have been the manager on Budgeon's, John Galpine, or it may have been another planter, Francis Galpine.¹⁰⁵ In 1787 Margaret's husband died 'on his passage home'.¹⁰⁶ The Galpines had a son, Francis John, who had been baptised the year before,¹⁰⁷ and Mrs Galpine was left to raise the child on her own. Margaret Galpine did not re-marry. Thomas Wenham's other widowed daughter, Martha Bertrand, however, did marry again. Her second husband was a Mr Wolfe. In due course the couple had children, of whom only one survived to adulthood: Edward Thomas Wolfe.

Thomas Wenham probably arrived in Nevis poor, and he died poor. He appears to have been a mediocre planter, and his story is a reminder that not all plantation managers made a success of it. He did hold on to some land in Charlestown but the only other possession of substance was his riding horse. Wenham's lack of material success may have had something to do with not him not having been very resilient, of having suffered poor mental health. Certainly the will he made suggests that he was under a lot of stress shortly before his death. His wife appears to have fallen ill not long before, and disputes with his daughters over her care would have contributed to his psychological state. It is also possible that he suffered from an ongoing condition.

Tom Wenham was 'very sick' and close to death when on 31 May 1792 he made his will. To witness it, he called on Joe Stanley, the manager of Morning Star and Pembroke estates in St John Figtree, and Thomas Clifton, who had worked as mason and overseer on the Whitehall estate.¹⁰⁸ As executor he appointed President John Richardson Herbert, his wife's cousin-by-marriage.¹⁰⁹ Wenham's will was unusual and warrants quoting in full:

As I have nothing to give my children they must accept my blessings. As I have frequently seen after the death of a husband many inconveniences arise in families consarning (sic) what little might be left and to hinder any such disputes happening in mine I do hereby give unto my dear and loving wife Martha Wenham whatever estate I may die possessed of either real or personal of what kind or nature whatever and my riding mare.

As I have reason to think that my two eldest daughters will not live with their mother when I am no more I do request it as a particular favour of my dear daughter Mary Williams Wenham never to quit or leave her mother as long as she lives nor to sleep out of the chamber from her by night as her late distress of mind occasions her to be taken in her sleep at times in a very alarming manner and if there should be no one neare (sic) to shake and awake her she may get into a fit.

As I have been always afraid of being buried alive it is my will and desire that my body is not put into the earth until it purges.

¹⁰² ECSCRN, CR 1788-1789 ff200-02

¹⁰³ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 f32

¹⁰⁴ ECSCRN Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff24-25 and ff73-4

¹⁰⁵ Minchinton, W *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* p128, quoting LB 17: Circular from Pinney & Tobin, 26 October 1784

¹⁰⁶ PP, LB 8: JPP to WB Weekes, 3 September 1787

¹⁰⁷ PP, Box T-1

¹⁰⁸ Stapleton Cotton MSS 13 (ii), (iii) and 16 (iv)

¹⁰⁹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff184-86

His wish for his body to be left until it decomposed was not heeded. On the contrary, whereas usually burials took place the day after someone died, Thomas Wenham was buried in St John Figtree on the day he expired.¹¹⁰

Martha Wenham made her will a year after she had lost her husband. John Williams Sanders, her son from her first marriage, was also dead by then.¹¹¹ Knowing of her husband's debts, in his will he had bequeathed her one of his saddle horses 'for her own and separate use and not to be subject and liable to any of the debts or contracts of her husband Thomas Wenham.'¹¹² Her other son, Francis, whom she had with Thomas Wenham, probably was alive. He appears to have gone to sea - by about 1790 he had become captain of the ship *Elizabeth* -¹¹³ and may have settled in London where he married in 1788.¹¹⁴ He had children by the time Martha Wenham made her will in 1793. To witness the document, she called on her niece Peggy Pemberton and two others, Ann Nolan and John Dasent Smith, and appointed her daughter Mary as her executrix.

Martha Wenham granted freedom to her black woman Phibba and Phibba's mulatto child Mary Elizabeth Williams. The land in Charlestown she left to her three daughters, Mrs Martha Williams Wolfe, Mrs Margaret Galpine and Miss Mary Williams Wenham. It appears that they had all contributed to the upkeep of the riding mare which had once belonged to her son John, and she left the horse jointly to her three daughters. Her husband's will had suggested that the family circumstances were not harmonious and Mrs Wenham's will supports this: fearing that her two married daughters might refuse to continue to contribute to its maintenance, she directed that her unmarried daughter should sell the mare '(if she thought proper)'. Some of the proceeds of the sale were to go to the children of her son Francis. Of 'sound mind', Martha Wenham made her will on 8 April 1793.¹¹⁵ Usually people made their wills shortly before they died, or before embarking on a long journey, but, given her state of health, it is very unlikely that she ever left Nevis again. Martha Wenham lived for another two and a half years and was buried on 2 December 1795 in St John Figtree.¹¹⁶

The remaining Wenham children

Mercifully, her mother's death released Mary Williams Wenham from the obligation placed upon her by her father, and she was free to marry. Within three years of her mother dying she had become the wife of John Smith, a 'gentleman'. But, just like her sisters, she quickly found herself widowed. She was only married for about two years when John died, some time soon after April 1800. Mrs Mary Smith was then in her early thirties. From her brief marriage she had two daughters, Martha Williams Smith and Mary Susannah Wolfe Smith.¹¹⁷

From her mother Mrs Mary Smith had inherited land in Charlestown, jointly with her sisters Martha Williams Wolfe and Margaret Galpine.¹¹⁸ Mary Smith probably had sold her share to one of her nephews, the planter Edward Thomas Wolfe, and then leased the property from him. Her sister, the mother of Edward Thomas Wolfe, Mrs Martha Williams Wolfe, died in November 1812. She had also lost her second husband and, as the only surviving child, her son Edward Thomas Wolfe, after her death, petitioned for her effects. Mrs Martha Williams Wolfe had owned eight people who were worth

¹¹⁰ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 f33 and f32

¹¹¹ John Williams Sanders died some time before 10 June 1795 (ECSCRN, CR 1797-1799 f466).

¹¹² ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 f138

¹¹³ PP, AB 39

¹¹⁴ On 1 November 1788 Francis Wenham of Nevis married Anne Williams 'of this parish' by licence at St George's, Hanover Square, Middlesex (London) (http://archive.org/stream/registerbookmar01bargoog/registerbookmar01bargoog_djvu.txt)

¹¹⁵ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff257-59

¹¹⁶ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of parish register St John Figtree

¹¹⁷ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

¹¹⁸ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff257-59

N£706; the rest of her possession amounted to N£165.¹¹⁹ As was often the case, the human property proved the most valuable assets.

Living in her nephew Edward Thomas Wolfe's 'tenement' in Charlestown¹²⁰ with her two daughters, the widow Mrs Mary Smith also owned a considerable number of people. Having not long before sold a mulatto man, Tom Jones, to Revd Daniel Gatewood Davis,¹²¹ in 1817 she registered eleven Creoles. Among the people she owned were a relatively large number of mulattoes and some of these may have belonged to, or have been fathered by, her husband: Suckey (aged 40 years), Betsey (aged 24 years), Mary Ann (22), William (21), Frank (13), and William (aged 8 months). She also had five black people: Eve (who had belonged to her sister Anne and was then 38 years old), Edward (aged 22), Sue (21), Betty (20), and John (16). In the following five years two of the children born to her women died young, while one of the young mulattos, William, absconded. She then manumitted Betsey 'for her service'¹²² and inherited three individuals, Nancy, Pockery and Tommy, from her great-cousin Mrs Martha Hamilton.¹²³ An 18-year-old sambo called Nancy, one of the people left to her, died shortly afterwards.

By 1828 Mrs Mary Smith could look back on a decade during which her women had given birth to eleven children, mostly sambos and mestees. When other owners had lost much larger proportions of their people, Mrs Mary Smith recorded only a total of three deaths.¹²⁴ Generally the deaths tended to outweigh the births and the position of Mrs Smith's people suggests that she and they had not suffered the same hardships that other citizens had to endure during the terrible 1820s. She herself, however, did not survive the decade. Aged 63, Mary Williams Smith died on 21 September 1829. Like her parents before her, she was buried in the cemetery at St John Figtree.¹²⁵

Mrs Smith had died intestate and on the day after she died, her daughters Martha Williams Smith and Mary Susanna Smith petitioned for her effects. Three men appraised her possessions; one of them was her nephew Francis John Galpine. They valued her household goods and furniture at N£200 and her people at N£1,130: Frank was worth N£200; Mary Ann and Sue N£150 each; John and William N£100 each; Betty and James N£75 each; Ann, Rositta, and Susannah N£50 each; Eve, Lucretia, Andrew and Stephen N£30 each; and Sukey N£10.¹²⁶ Her people appear to have been split between her daughters Martha and Mary.¹²⁷

¹¹⁹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 ff252-56

¹²⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol 1 f282

¹²¹ ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 f593

¹²² Although listed as a mulatto in 1817, when Betsey was manumitted, she was described as a 'mestee'. This is a further example of how unreliable these colour distinctions were (ECSCRN, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 ff395-96).

¹²³ The daughter of John Richardson and Elizabeth Herbert, Martha Williams Herbert had married Andrew Hamilton. He had died in 1808; she died in 1819 (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke). The slaves were from her 'Clarke's or Montpelier and Stapleton's estate' (UKNA, T 71/365).

Martha Williams Hamilton provided for several of her female relatives. Her will is a good illustration of how woman passed on property to one another. For widows and spinsters who had no income the bequest of an annuity or an enslaved person who could be hired out for profit could be a lifeline. Martha Williams Hamilton left to Mary Williams Smith N£40 and an annuity of S£100, as well as 'two stout Negro men and a Negro woman', and to Margaret Galpine N£40 and an annuity of S£100. Mary Smith's daughters Martha Williams Smith and Mary Susanna Wolfe Smith were left N£40 each and annuities of S£1,000. Mary Smith and her daughters were also to share, with Edward Thomas Wolfe and George Bucke, three pipes of Madeira wine from Martha Williams Hamilton's bay store (ECSCRN, Wills 1819-1830 f24). This could be sold at profit.

¹²⁴ In 1822 Mary Williams Smith registered the births of five children who were all born between November 1818 and September 1821. Three of them were mestees - Ann Teresa, Hester and James - and one a sambo, Andrew, and one a black girl, Susannah. In 1825 Mary Smith registered two more births - Lucretia, a black girl, and Walter, a sambo - and in 1828 another four births. The children Andrew and Hester died before 1822, Nancy, the girl given to Mrs Smith by Mrs Martha Hamilton, died on 12 October 1824 (UKNA, T 71/364-367).

¹²⁵ Oliver VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p94

¹²⁶ NCH, Book of Wills 1819-1830 ff398-402

¹²⁷ In 1831, Martha Williams Smith registered seven people who had previously belonged to her mother: Suckey, Frank, Betty, Pockery, Susanna (born on 15 November 1819), Lucretia (born on 1 November 1822), and Andrew, aged two years and four months. She also registered the birth of Stephen, who was just one month old. Martha Williams Smith held jointly with her sister two other individuals who had belonged to their mother, Sue and Walter, a sambo born in August 1823.

Mary Smith's death left Mrs Margaret Galpine as the only surviving daughter of Thomas and Martha Wenham. In March 1836 Mrs Galpine's son was at 19 Edgware Road in London¹²⁸ but it is not known whether she also stayed there, or when she died. She, too, had been in debt and assigned part of her slave compensation money to the company of John Frederick Pinney, Charles Pinney & Robert E Case.¹²⁹

It is also not known what happened to Thomas and Martha Wenham's son Francis, or to his children.

Later generations

Thomas Wenham's grandson Francis Williams Sanders (the only surviving son of Wenham's step-son John Williams Sanders and his wife Elizabeth) went to school in England. When JPP saw him there, he judged Frank Sanders a 'promising youth',¹³⁰ and the young man did, indeed, live up to this judgment. After being admitted to Lincoln's Inn in 1787, he began his legal training and spent some years under pupillage to the Nevis-born John Stanley, a Member of Parliament for Hastings and Attorney-General, later Governor, of the Leeward Islands.¹³¹ Undoubtedly, Frank Sanders had gained his position with Stanley through the smooth functioning of the Nevis network. Having established his legal career, some time before 1795 Frank Sanders married a woman called Anne, and together they sold to JPP some of the land Sanders had inherited from his father, who, in turn, had inherited it in 1766 from his great-uncle Thomas Williams. Selling these fifty acres called Tobin's in the parish of St Thomas Lowland¹³² probably was his last involvement with property in Nevis; in later years Frank Sanders certainly did not register any enslaved people.

Francis Williams Sanders remained in London where he followed a career in the legal field. A 'certificated conveyancer', he was called to the Bar in 1802. In the late 1820s he became a member of a law commission and made his name as a legal writer. An early piece of work, a treatise on conveyance matters, reached its fifth edition in 1844 and became, according to his biographer, 'a standard work in its field'. Francis Williams Sanders died in May 1831, shortly after his wife, at his house at 5 Upper Montagu Street in Russell Square, London.¹³³

Of Frank Sanders's cousins, the eight Pemberton children (Elizabeth's sons and daughters with Roger Pemberton), it is not known what happened to three of the children, William, Elizabeth and Roger. One daughter, Ann, died as a two-year-old in 1777 but the others made it into adulthood: Martha died in her late thirties in 1806, Frances in her sixties in 1835,¹³⁴ and Mary probably died some time after 1835¹³⁵ when she would have been at least in her sixties. These three daughters appear to have remained unmarried. Peggy, the Pembertons' oldest surviving daughter who had witnessed the will of her aunt Martha Wenham, was the only one to marry and have children. In 1796 Peggy Pemberton became the wife of the planter George Hobson.¹³⁶ She lived until at least 1832. She was then in her early sixties and, following the death of her husband, seems to have fallen on hard times; the Legislature freed her from having to pay two years' taxes.¹³⁷ Her husband had died in 1817 at the age of 45.¹³⁸

In 1831, the estate of Mrs Mary Williams Smith also registered eighteen people (males and females in equal numbers). No births were recorded but two deaths: Edward, aged 22 in 1817, had died, and Joseph, one of the children born between 1825 and 1828. Mary William Smith's daughters administered her estate (UKNA, T 71/368).

¹²⁸ PP, LB 66: P & C to FJ Galpine, 9 March 1836

¹²⁹ PP, Dom Box R-6: Compensation file and HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlvi: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08

¹³⁰ PP, LB 5: JPP to Thomas Wenham, Nevis, 21 February 1784

¹³¹ Rigg, JM, revised by Joanne Potier 'Francis Williams Sanders (1769-1831)' *Oxford DNB*

¹³² ECSCRN, CR 1794-1797 f466

¹³³ The full title of the treatise written by Francis Williams Sanders was 'An essay on uses and trusts, and on the nature and operation of conveyances at common law, and those which derive their effect from the Statute of Uses' (*Oxford DNB*).

¹³⁴ NHCS, GE/P2 Pemberton family tree and VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1 p338

¹³⁵ UKNA, T 71/1039

¹³⁶ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1 pp306-07

¹³⁷ UKNA, CO 186/14: 1 March 1832

¹³⁸ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 f42

Peggy and George Hobson had at least six children, three boys and three girls. Their son Charles was alive until at least 1822, their son Webbe died in September 1829 at the age of 30,¹³⁹ while George, the oldest, was elected to the post of Sergeant at Arms.¹⁴⁰ By 1836 he had moved to Trinidad.¹⁴¹ When he was a very young child, he had been given a boy called Billy Aaron by his grandmother's half-sister, Mary Williams Wenham,¹⁴² and later jointly owned one person with his sisters Fanny Louisa and Mary Ann (also Anna). Elizabeth (also Eliza) Margaret, the third Hobson daughter, owned the most people and was compensated for six. In total, the Hobson children received £192 compensation for 14 people.¹⁴³

Two of the daughters probably earned their living as teachers; in 1841 Eliza and Anna Hobson received teacher's salaries.¹⁴⁴



So far, all these people were the descendants of Thomas Wenham's step-children, his wife's children from her first marriage. His own children with Martha had produced two surviving grandsons (Margaret Galpine's son Francis John, and Martha Bertrand/Wolfe's son Edward Thomas), as well as two granddaughters: Mary Smith's daughters Martha and Mary. The other grandchildren, Francis Wenham's two sons Francis Herbert Wenham and Thomas Wenham, had between them 15 children – among them Francis Herbert Wenham's son of the same name who became a marine engineer. He and a colleague invented the wind tunnel and Wenham is credited with furthering the development of microscopes.¹⁴⁵

Margaret Galpine's son Francis John in 1815 married Caroline Rawlins,¹⁴⁶ a planter's daughter.¹⁴⁷ The couple appears not to have had any children. Francis John Galpine became the Captain and Master Gunner at Fort Charles, a member of the Legislature and Secretary of the Council,¹⁴⁸ served as a Justice of the Peace and Clerk to the Magistrates¹⁴⁹ and acted as one of Mrs P's attorneys.¹⁵⁰ Bankrupt by 1826, the House of Pinney, Ames & Co was his largest creditor.¹⁵¹ To clear some of his debt, he, like his mother, assigned part of his slave compensation money to the company of Charles Pinney & Robert E Case in Bristol.¹⁵² In 1836, just when the Slave Compensation Commission in London was deliberating over claims from the colonies, Galpine was staying in London¹⁵³ but he returned to Nevis where he briefly served as Quarter Master in the militia.¹⁵⁴ Francis John Galpine died in late 1838.¹⁵⁵

¹³⁹ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁴⁰ UKNA, CO 187/3 Blue Book Nevis 1821

¹⁴¹ UKNA, T 71/1039

¹⁴² ECSCRN, CR 1797-1799 ff224-25

¹⁴³ PP, Dom Box R-6: Compensation file, and HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08

¹⁴⁴ UKNA, CO 186/16

¹⁴⁵ I am grateful to Derek Wenham for information about Francis Wenham's children, in particular Francis Herbert Wenham.

See also <https://www.aerosociety.com/news/the-royal-aeronautical-society-part-1-the-early-years/> and

John North (ed) *Mid-Nineteenth Century Scientists* Pergamon Press 1969 p116 and pp127-28 and

Tom Crouch *The Bishop's Boys – A Life of Wilbur and Orville Wright* WW Norton & Co 2003 p149 and p247

¹⁴⁶ PP, Box T-1

¹⁴⁷ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 5 p97

¹⁴⁸ UKNA, CO 186/13 July 1826 and 1828 Accounts

¹⁴⁹ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p301

¹⁵⁰ PP, LB 48 f127; also LB 52: Undated draft appointment

¹⁵¹ PP, LB 60: FJ Galpine, Nevis, to PA & Co, 15 April 1826

¹⁵² PP, Dom Box R-6: Compensation file, and HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08

¹⁵³ PP, LB 66: P & C to FJ Galpine, 9 March 1836

¹⁵⁴ UKNA, CO 187/10 Blue Book Nevis 1836

¹⁵⁵ PP, LB 67: P & C to Job Ede, Clayfield Lodge, Southampton, 11 January 1839

Edward Thomas Wolfe, the only surviving son of the twice-married Martha Williams Wenham/Bertrand/Wolfe, married a woman called Jane. They had several children. Their son Edward died in July 1821¹⁵⁶ but was then 'replaced', it appears, by another son called Edward Thomas. Most likely the Wolfes also had three daughters: Jane, who was baptised in 1817 and probably died either in 1817 or in 1825,¹⁵⁷ Mary, who died in 1835¹⁵⁸ and Martha who died in 1838.¹⁵⁹

In the 1820s the name of Thomas Wenham's son-in-law Edward Thomas Wolfe became known across the Atlantic. It stood for lechery and cruelty to enslaved people.

Wolfe, who had once served as a juror in one of the cases against Edward Huggins senior,¹⁶⁰ in 1827 was on trial himself. He stood accused of the maltreatment of a woman called Harriet Samson alias Harriet Knight. A mulatto domestic, she had dodged his persistent sexual advances and refused 'to let him have her'. Wolfe punished her by ordering her to go out into the field. She went but refused to pick up a hoe. He ordered her to be whipped. In front of all the other fieldworkers, several women hoisted up her clothes for whipping but she struggled and managed to prevent 'to be exposed in this manner to the negro men'. Wolfe then bared her shoulders and one of the men gave her a dozen lashes on the shoulders. Wolfe was put on trial for cruelly mistreating her 'by whipping and beating her without any reasonable cause whatever'. He was bound over. Harriet's brave refusal to work in the field, however, made her guilty 'of gross insolence and disobedience' and, as it was feared that her conduct would incite others, she was punished with a further 48 hours in the public jail. She had already been confined for five days and undergone 'two severe flogging, one of 12, and the other of 18 lashes'.¹⁶¹

This terrible incident took place in the parish of St John Figtree. From 1828 onwards Wolfe was on Zetland plantation in St George's Gingerland, an estate that was worked with about eighty people.

To the very end Edward Thomas Wolfe remained a diehard defender of slavery. A member of the Assembly since at least 1826,¹⁶² shortly before slavery was abolished it was he who proposed the motion to have minuted the Legislature's 'solemn protest against the Bill for the Abolition of Slavery'.¹⁶³ Having made this final declaration of one man's right to own another, Edward Thomas Wolfe would, however, have been only too happy to receive his share of the slave compensation fund. But his hopes were dashed. For their 19 personal slaves Mrs Jane Wolfe received S£322 in compensation¹⁶⁴ but for the 81 plantation people then on Zetland he received nothing. Having applied as owner-in-fee his claim went to litigation¹⁶⁵ and he lost the case. Other parties had prior call to the money and he had forego close to S£1,400.¹⁶⁶ It is not known when Edward Thomas or his wife Jane died but the Zetland estate, together with neighbouring Bush Hill, later belonged to Wolfe's cousin

¹⁵⁶ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

¹⁵⁷ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)

¹⁵⁸ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁵⁹ Edward Thomas Wolfe's eldest daughter Martha Hamilton, the wife of the Hon James Daniell, President, died in 1838 at Mount Pleasant, Nevis (UCL database <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/claim/view/25101>, quoting *The Times*, 5 November 1838 p7).

¹⁶⁰ BUL, mf XVII.33 Parliamentary Papers, Nevis: Slavery

¹⁶¹ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p313 and pp320-22

¹⁶² UKNA, CO 186/13

¹⁶³ UKNA, CO 186/14: 12 December 1833

¹⁶⁴ UKNA, T 71/1038

¹⁶⁵ UKNA, T 71/1458

¹⁶⁶ Edward Thomas Wolfe had registered 84 people for Zetland but between 1 January and 1 August 1834, when the claim was made, four died and one had been born. The total therefore stood at 81 (UKNA, T 71/1038). The compensation for claim No 37 for 81 people on Zetland was split and awarded to Catherine Fox and Charlotte Neale (£1,225) and to Anne Latham (£172) (PP, Dom Box R-6: Compensation File; HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08).

The counter claim for slave compensation by Catherine Fox and Charlotte Neale (they had claimed with another woman) related to a loan made in 1774 by William Norris, who appears to have been a relation of theirs (UKNA, T 71/1236). Several of the counter claims were for debts that went back fifty or more years.

For some unexplained reason, in October 1844 Miss Ann D Nisbet sold a sixth of an acre 'of Zetland and Clarke's Estate' to a man called Caesar Herbert (ECSCRN, CR 1838-1847 f542).

Mary Susannah Wolfe Smith and her second husband.¹⁶⁷ To unravel this story, one has to go back to Mrs Mary Williams Smith - Thomas Wenham's daughter who had been charged by him with remaining single so that she could care for her mother.



After a long period of widowhood, Mrs Mary Williams Smith died in September 1829 and just over a year later, on 9 December 1830, her daughter Mary Susannah Wolfe Smith got married. Her husband, the Suffolk-born Henry Wilkinson Baker¹⁶⁸ was a plantation manager or overseer¹⁶⁹ and until 1829 had worked on the North Wales plantation in the parish of St John Figtree. He also set himself up as a merchant. One of ten children, in his teens he had come to Nevis to join his uncles George and Walter Lewis Bucke who had settled in the island. Mary Smith's wedding to Henry Wilkinson Baker took place a day after his 26th birthday. The couple had one daughter, Martha Hamilton Baker, but after just three years of marriage Mrs Baker lost her husband. He was ill for a few days and died on 17 December 1833 'at 20 minutes past 11 at night'.¹⁷⁰ Henry Wilkinson Baker was buried in the churchyard in St John Figtree and is remembered in a memorial on the south wall of the nave.¹⁷¹

In his will, he left all his property to his wife,¹⁷² and in 1834, as his administratrix, she registered six individuals but claimed compensation for a total of ten. Some of these people had belonged to her mother. One other person, Walter, she claimed as the joint owner with her sister Martha Williams Smith,¹⁷³ and her sister also applied separately for compensation for eight people.¹⁷⁴ The widowed Mrs Baker received her compensation, £176, while her sister's compensation of £135 was paid to Walter Lewis Bucke - ¹⁷⁵ the uncle of Mrs Baker's dead husband Henry. Bucke had also signed her sister's claim form.¹⁷⁶

The compensation money was paid to Walter Lewis Bucke because he had married Martha Williams Smith. She was in her mid-thirties but her husband, a widower, was considerably older; when he arrived in Nevis in 1802 as a young man she was still a toddler. Just as his nephew Henry Wilkinson Baker (as well as two other nephews) had followed him to Nevis,¹⁷⁷ Walter Lewis Bucke had followed

¹⁶⁷ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f474

¹⁶⁸ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)

¹⁶⁹ ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol 1 f219

¹⁷⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1847-1858 ff166-72, and RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁷¹ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p94

¹⁷² ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1830-1837 f167

¹⁷³ UKNA, T 71/1039

¹⁷⁴ PP, Dom Box R-6: *St Christopher Gazette and Caribbean Courier* No 1031 Basseterre 20 February 1835

¹⁷⁵ HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08

¹⁷⁶ Walter Lewis Bucke married Martha Williams Smith on 16 April 1834 (UKNA, T 71/1039).

¹⁷⁷ Henry Wilkinson Baker's brothers Samuel Barnes Baker and Edwin Walter Baker also came to Nevis. Samuel and Edwin appear to have arrived together in May 1817, while Henry arrived in December 1818 (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)). Samuel was about 15 years old when he came to Nevis. In 1825 both he and his brother Henry Wilkinson Baker, contributed to the Nevis Branch of 'the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negroe Slaves in the British West India Islands' (Anon *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negroe Slaves ...*).

Samuel Barnes Baker had a 'natural coloured son', George Bucke Baker, with a woman called Eliza Abbott but, like his brother Henry, Samuel died young. Aged 27, in November 1829 he succumbed to a 'malignant fever' (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke).

His son George Bucke Baker was left £200 in his great-uncle George Bucke's will. This was intended for his education and to learn a trade. He became a blacksmith, in January 1848 married a woman called Ann Eliza Browne (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965 No 299). According to a descendent of the Baker brothers, they had six children ('St. Kitts and Nevis Baptisms, 1716-1881' via Find My Past). I am very grateful to Terry S Baker for this and other genealogical information.

The other nephew who came to Nevis, Edwin Walter Baker, in 1830 also married a Browne, Martha (MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)). The couple had at least two children, Sarah Ann and Mary Bethia. The girls were baptised in July 1836 and August 1837 when the family lived in Charlestown (St Paul's Baptisms 1835-1873 Numbers 24 and 70). Edwin Walter Baker then worked as a

a relative, his brother George, from their home in Suffolk. Their mother had died in 1784 at the of 40, their father a year later, and two years on Walter Lewis Bucke's brother George had left Suffolk.¹⁷⁸ George Bucke had risen to hold several influential posts in Nevis. The appointment to at least one of these he owed to the fact that there were few men eligible to take the position; he was appointed as Magistrate during a period of 'deficiency in magistrates'.¹⁷⁹ He also became Master and Examiner of Chancery,¹⁸⁰ served as a member of the Assembly¹⁸¹ and as a churchwarden of St John Figtree.¹⁸² He acted as attorney to many absentees and executor of many wills. In his sixties, George Bucke died in May 1833 following a fall from his chaise.¹⁸³

George appears to have been unmarried but Walter Lewis Bucke had married a woman called Lucretia and, having just lost his brother, within less than two years Walter Lewis Bucke's wife died. They had been married for over twenty years but the couple had no surviving children; their only child, their three-year-old daughter Sarah Ann, had died in 1815. However, Walter Lewis Bucke had brought into his marriage with Lucretia a 'natural son', the then two-year-old Edwin Alexander Bucke. In October 1834 Edwin had got married, the following January Bucke's wife had died and, after being widowed for just three months, on 16 April 1835 Walter Lewis Bucke's wedding to Martha Williams Smith had taken place.¹⁸⁴ She was the last of Thomas Wenham's grandchildren to get married.

The newlyweds, most likely, lived on the Morning Star plantation. Walter Lewis Bucke had lived there since April 1831. Ever since his arrival in 1802 he had moved from one plantation to another. Sometimes he lived as well as worked on them, at other times he only lived there. His diary is a dizzying account of his movements. He had been on Cox Heath in St John Figtree, left for Mr Bowrin's, went to Mrs Hutton's Eden estate in St James Windward, was there from April 1808 until November 1817. His son Edwin was born during that time, he got married to Lucretia and their daughter was born and died. In November 1817, when Eden was sold, he moved to Colhoun's in St Thomas Lowland, then worked on the old Pinney estate, Clay Ghut in St George's Gingerland and lived at Hamilton's in St Paul's until he went to England for a visit. He was abroad from June 1820 until May 1821 and in August 1822 moved to Bush Hill. A year later he left to live on Saddle Hill and 'took charge' of the estate. On Saddle Hill he had an accident that resulted in his leg being amputated (he recorded in his diary: '9 May 1823 My leg broke. 21 May Amputated, 24 September 1823 Made my appearance in Town.'). He left Saddle Hill in August 1826, started at Hard Times in October 1827, moved to Dasent's in March 1831 and a month later to Morning Star.¹⁸⁵ Most of these estates had been owned by John Richardson Herbert and Richardson's widowed daughter Martha Williams Hamilton and her former husband, Andrew Hamilton. Bucke had worked in every parish but his final relocation came in October 1836 when he and his wife moved to Bush Hill in St John Figtree. He had been briefly on the estate in the 1820s when it was owned by George Clarke Forbes, and Walter Bucke's brother George had been the executor to George Clarke Forbes and attorney for the

manager or overseer. The only other details that are known about him is that Edwin, as well as his brother Henry Wilkinson Baker, were left £200 each in their uncle George Bucke's will (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1830-1837 f81) and that several times he was called upon to serve as a juror (Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f32, f306 and f346 and Kings/Queen's Bench and Common Pleas 1831-1844).

A third Baker/Browne marriage took place in 1853. One witness at the wedding of George Bucke Baker and Ann Eliza Brown had been Esther Browne; she got married to a man called Alfred Baker (St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965 No 315). Alfred Baker was a half brother of George Bucke Baker, his mother having been Sarah Crook. He was baptised on 4 September 1829 at St Paul (pers. comm. Terry S Baker, quoting 'St. Kitts and Nevis Baptisms, 1716-1881' via Find My Past).

¹⁷⁸ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁷⁹ UKNA, CO 186/11: 7 November 1818

¹⁸⁰ UKNA, CO 187/3 Blue Book Nevis 1821

¹⁸¹ UKNA, CO 186/14: 13 June 1833

¹⁸² PP, Dom Box C2-8: George Bucke and J Brazier to Charles Pinney, 31 July 1822

¹⁸³ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁸⁴ According to the letter authorising Walter Lewis Bucke to claim compensation on her behalf, Martha Williams Smith married him on 16 April 1834 but that must have been a mistake because his first wife did not die until January 1835 (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke).

¹⁸⁵ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)

widowed Mrs Jane Forbes.¹⁸⁶ Bush Hill was then owned by the widowed Mrs Jane Forbes and her sister-in-law, Christiana Morton Herbert, who, in fact, was a distant relative of Walter Lewis Bucke's wife Martha.¹⁸⁷

When the Buckes moved to Bush Hill, the remnants of the destruction caused by a hurricane the previous year may still have been visible. The works as well as many buildings in the island had been blown down.¹⁸⁸

On 8 December 1836 the couple's son Walter Henry was born, 'on a Thursday at 5 in the morning', and baptised a month later. Mrs Martha Bucke's cousins Francis John Galpine and Edward Thomas Wolfe were the boy's Godfathers and Mrs Mary Baker his Godmother. Mrs Wolfe stood in for her because Mrs Martha Bucke's sister, at that point, probably was in England.

A year after their son was born, Walter Lewis Bucke bought Bush Hill from the owners, Mrs Jane Forbes and Christiana Morton Herbert. It appears that this was the first estate he purchased, and it is likely that the purchase became possible because his wife had brought money into their marriage. In addition, estates were relatively cheap to come by; after the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815 land prices had collapsed in value in Nevis and elsewhere in the Caribbean. Bucke paid N£3,000 for the estate which came with 67 apprentice labourers and 27 horned cattle, a pony, a mule and three asses.¹⁸⁹

Walter Lewis Bucke added to his portfolio of properties by acquiring two plantations: Zetland estate, which straddled the parishes of St John Figtree and St George's Gingerland, and, jointly with Thomas Slater, neighbouring Richmond Lodge. This plantation had belonged to Thomas Artherton, a former Mountravers employee. It is possible that Bucke was purchasing these two properties for his sons, but Edwin Alexander Bucke, his illegitimate son, died some time before April 1846. His son's death may have prompted the sale of Richmond Lodge, which Bucke and Slater sold to a man called John Richards. Once again, business was kept within the family. The transaction was not only witnessed by Edward Thomas Wolfe junior, the son of Mrs Bucke's cousin,¹⁹⁰ but the purchaser of Richmond Lodge was Mr and Mrs Bucke's brother-in-law. Some time before 1844 the widowed Mrs Mary Susannah Baker had gone to England, had returned - probably in March 1844, when Bucke noted 'Mary came on shore' - and in August 1845 had married again. Her husband was this John Richards. Part of Bucke's Zetland estate, Brown's, had been worked by Richards.¹⁹¹

Walter Lewis Bucke went on a visit to England, probably without his wife because he noted that 'Wattley and self went home' - after four decades in the West Indies he still considered England his home. He probably travelled to visit his sister Berthia, Henry Wilkinson Baker's mother, who may then have been ill. She died in April 1847, a month after Bucke arrived back in Nevis. In due course, the Buckes sent their son Walter Henry to England for his education. Aged 14, he was at a school in Norwich in the county of Norfolk,¹⁹² within travelling distance of the Buckes and the Bakers, his aunts and uncles and his many cousins in Suffolk.

It is not known when Mrs Martha Williams Bucke died, or the exact date of her husband's death but Walter Lewis Bucke was widowed already when his will was entered in January 1858. Both he and his wife were buried in the cemetery in St John Figtree.

¹⁸⁶ UKNA, PROB 11/1727 Will of George Clarke Forbes

¹⁸⁷ The nephew of John Richardson Herbert, Magnus Morton, had married Christiana Forbes, the sister of George Clarke Forbes. On John Richardson's Herbert's death, Morton changed his name to Herbert.

¹⁸⁸ RHL, MSS W Ind. S. 24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁸⁹ ECSCRN, CR 1835-1838 ff270-71

¹⁹⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1847-1858 ff166-72

¹⁹¹ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke

¹⁹² Census for the parish of St John DE Sepulchre, Norwich, Norfolk 1851

Walter Lewis Bucke provided his servant Betsey Nisbet with a legacy and made small bequests to his nieces and to the daughters of his illegitimate son Edwin Alexander. Bush Hill and Zetland plantations descended to his sister-in-law Mary Susannah Smith/Baker/Richards and her husband John Richards.¹⁹³ The Richards then held three plantations: Bush Hill, Zetland and Richmond Lodge. John and Mary Susannah Richards died some time before 1871 and on their deaths Bush Hill, which almost certainly had been entailed to Bucke's son, went to Walter Lewis and Martha Williams Bucke's son, Walter Henry Bucke.

A very detailed survey by the Royal Navy ship HMS *Thunder* shows that in 1848 Bush Hill and its adjoining estate, Dogwood, both had windmills. By 1871 they were still wind-powered¹⁹⁴ but some time afterwards a Fletcher steam engine was installed.¹⁹⁵ This would have been a relatively late development as steam had arrived in Nevis during slavery days, in 1818. Severe financial constraints may have curtailed developing the estate, but it also possible that the windmill on Bush Hill functioned sufficiently well not to warrant erecting expensive, imported machinery. Perhaps other factors could have contributed. Walter Lewis Bucke may have delayed introducing steam machinery after travelling back from England on a steamship, the *Clide*. It would have brought home to him that operating the steam engine required not only a regular supply of water, which Bush Hill had, but also an abundant supply of imported coal and a workforce skilled at running and maintaining the machinery.

Walter Henry Bucke became an active member of his community and was appointed, or elected, to several posts: Coroner, Member of the Assembly, Commissioner of Roads, and Vestryman for the parishes of St John Figtree, St George's Gingerland and St Paul's.¹⁹⁶ At some stage he married a woman called Susan. All that is known about her is that she was three years older than him and that she died in April 1905 at the age of 71. Walter Henry Bucke died in December 1917, a week after his 81st birthday. It appears that the couple had no children - at least no surviving children - and there was no one else in Nevis to whom he wanted to leave his household goods and furniture. These were to be sold. The silver plate and other portable valuables, presumably, went to Walter Henry Bucke's godson, Revd Henry Rawle Collins. A schoolmaster and clergyman who lived in England, Revd Collins was one of the executors. He and the other executor, Charles Cadet Chittick of Nevis, were to sell Bush Hill and Zetland, either by public auction or private contract. To carry out the sale, Revd Collins appointed a planter in Nevis, William Slater Maynard of Cane Garden Estate.¹⁹⁷ In January 1919 two women bought Bush Hill and Zetland estates. They were Revd Collins's sisters, Eleanor Linda and Zoe Clara Collins. Unmarried and in their forties, the new proprietors lived in England.



Walter Henry Bucke, Thomas Wenham's grandson, was not the only survivor from his generation of Wenham descendants. His cousin Martha Hamilton Baker, the daughter from Mrs Mary Richard's first marriage to Henry Baker, had also survived to adulthood.¹⁹⁸ Born in 1833 or 1834, Martha Hamilton Baker married a clergyman. Her husband, the Revd John Mackecknie Collins, was the son of another clergyman, a rector who lived in Montserrat.¹⁹⁹ John Mackecknie Collins had enjoyed a sound West Indian education, having attended Codrington College in Barbados and, following family tradition, had entered the Church. By the mid-1860s he worked in Charlestown, where his duties included weekly

¹⁹³ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f474

¹⁹⁴ Iles, JAB *An Account Descriptive of the Island of Nevis* List of sugar plantations

¹⁹⁵ Small, David 'Early Steam Engines in the Caribbean'

¹⁹⁶ UKNA, CO 187/34, CO 187/35 and CO 187/40 Blue Books Nevis 1860, 1861 and 1866

¹⁹⁷ ECSCRN, CR 17 f109

¹⁹⁸ Martha Hamilton Baker's middle name is significant because it shows the close ties between the descendants of Thomas Wenham and his wife Martha, and the family of Martha Wenham's niece, Martha Williams Hamilton nee Herbert (the daughter of Martha Wenham's cousin Elizabeth and her husband John Richardson Herbert).

¹⁹⁹ Revd John Mackecknie Collins was the son of Revd John Cox Collins, Rector of St Anthony, Montserrat (Oliver VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p87). Walter Lewis Bucke had known Revd John Cox Collins; he had noted in his diary the marriage in 1829 of Collins to a 'Miss M Keeknie' (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)).

visits to the jail to deliver prayers and lectures to the inmates. He also became a member of the Asylum Committee and the Legislative Council. In 1873 John Mackechnie Collins took on the post of Rector of St John Figtree and soon after added the duties of Rector of St George's Gingerland.²⁰⁰ By then he was married to Martha Hamilton Baker. She had inherited Richmond Lodge estate from her stepfather and her mother, Mr and Mrs John Richards.

Revd Collins and his wife Martha had eight children: John Henry Hamilton Collins (born and died 1862), Mary Hamilton (baptised 1866), Susan (died aged one 1869), Samuel Lescot (baptised in 1869), Eleanor Linda (born and baptised 1870, died 1943), John (born 1872, died 1943), Henry (Harry) Rawle (born 1870, died 1958), Zoe Clara (born 1875/6, died between 1921 and 1943).²⁰¹ In the 1880s, Revd John Mackechnie Collins probably spent just over a year on leave to England and in mid-July 1890²⁰² left Nevis with his Creole family to settle in England. The Collinses moved to Peterborough in Northamptonshire.²⁰³ Their son Harry was to become a clergyman and he went to St Catharine's College, Cambridge, to prepare himself for ordination.²⁰⁴

When they left Nevis, the Collinses had rented out their Richmond Lodge estate,²⁰⁵ leaving Mrs Collins's cousin Walter Henry Bucke to oversee the lease. By the time Bucke died, Mrs Collins had also been widowed and had moved with her two daughters from Peterborough to Cambridge. After her cousin's death, Mrs Collins and in due course also her daughters Eleanor Linda and Zoe Clara appointed a man in Nevis, Charles Cadet Chittick, as their agent, steward and attorney.²⁰⁶ It appears that their last tenant had not kept up his payments, and the women instructed Chittick to collect money owed, give notice to quit, take possession of Richmond Lodge and to rent out the plantation.²⁰⁷ By 1919 Mrs Martha Hamilton Collins had also died, and Richmond Lodge was in the hands of her daughters Eleanor Linda Collins and Zoe Clara Collins.²⁰⁸ At that point the Collins sisters purchased the estates that had belonged to their mother's cousin Walter Henry Bucke, neighbouring Bush Hill and Zetland. Their brother Harry had instructed William Slater Maynard as attorney, and from Maynard they bought both plantations. They paid about the same as the estates had cost eighty years earlier, £3,700,²⁰⁹ but of course there were no longer any workers attached to the sale as had been the case before Emancipation. Having acquired the estates, their attorney immediately rented out both. The profits were exported to England; Bush Hill was to bring the sisters a small annual income of S£160 and Zetland of S£100.²¹⁰

By buying the properties that had belonged to the great-grandson of Tom Wenham, Walter Henry Bucke, the great-great-granddaughters of Tom Wenham, the Collins sisters, had combined the estates that had once belonged to Tom Wenham's granddaughters.



In the 1970s a man called Thomas James Wenham senior was remembered as one of the most outstanding teachers in Nevis, and people in the island knew the Wenhams 'for their dignity of

²⁰⁰ UKNA, CO 187/39 and CO 187/40 Blue Books Nevis 1865 and 1866; VL Oliver *Monumental Inscriptions* p87 and *Caribbeana* Vol 2 p371 and Vol 3 pp217-18 Notes sent by Revd LB Thomas

²⁰¹ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1835-1873 Numbers 1287, 1479 and 1559; John Venn and JA Venn (comp) *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, citing School Masters Directory 1932-3, Crockford 1939. I am grateful to Terry S Baker for additional information, mostly from 'Saint Kitts and Nevis, Civil Registration, births & deaths, 1859-1932'

²⁰² RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke: 14 July 1890

²⁰³ <http://www.ancestry.com> Library Edition: NA RG 12/1227 1891 Census

²⁰⁴ Venn, John and JA Venn (comp) *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, citing School Masters Directory 1932-3, Crockford 1939

²⁰⁵ ECSCRN, CR 13 ff245-50 and CR 15 f389

²⁰⁶ ECSCRN, CR 17 f57

²⁰⁷ ECSCRN, CR 17 f185

²⁰⁸ ECSCRN, LTRB 3 f48

²⁰⁹ ECSCRN, CR 17 f161

²¹⁰ ECSCRN, CR 17 f197 and f213

manner, striking personalities and physical stature. Many of them presented an impressive picture with chests forward and military strides, commanding the admiration of many who knew them.’²¹¹



John Macdonald “Le Scot”

One unverified source states that in 1749 a man known as John Macdonald ‘Le Scot’ worked on a Pinney plantation in Nevis.

John Macdonald was born in about 1705²¹² in Kinlochmoidart in the Highlands of Scotland. He was a supporter of Prince Charles Edward Stuart (‘Bonnie Prince Charlie’) and in 1745 and 1746 fought on the side of the ‘Young Pretender’. Born in exile in Italy, Bonnie Prince Charlie had arrived in Scotland with a few followers, intent on re-claiming the British throne for the House of Stuart.²¹³ He had the support of several Highland clans who joined his army - among them John Macdonald. Led by Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Scottish Highland army managed to move as far south as Derby but, owing to lack of popular support in England, had to retreat back to Scotland. In April 1746, at Culloden Moor, five thousand ill-equipped, starving and demoralised Highlanders met nine thousand British soldiers. The Highlanders were crushed in a battle that lasted less than an hour. A thousand men on their side had died, another thousand were hunted down and killed afterwards. Several of the Jacobite leaders were executed and many of the fighters fled the country. John Macdonald spent some time in hiding and then fled to France, where he joined a French merchant vessel. He sailed to the West Indies and settled in Nevis where, in 1749, he was said to have worked on a Pinney plantation. This may well have been Mountravers but his presence there cannot be confirmed because of a lack of documents.

John Macdonald died in 1794. Known as John Macdonald ‘Le Scot’, his name became shortened to Lescot and, after a few generations, anglicised to Lescott. Today, descendants of his bearing this name are said to live in Nevis and in St Kitts.²¹⁴

Henry Jefford

Henry Jefford, a distiller, left Mountravers about a month after William Coker and Thomas Arthurton arrived in Nevis. He was paid almost N£20 wages ‘in full’ to 13th [?June] 1761.²¹⁵ Thomas Arthurton took over Jefford’s duties.

He probably was not a Creole; no references to other Jefford family members have been found.

²¹¹ NHCS, Byron, E *More Nevis Families*

²¹² <http://www.genealogy.com/genealogy/users/l/e/s/Raymond-allan-Lescott/index.html>

²¹³ Prince Charles Edward Stuart’s grandfather, the Catholic King James II, had been de-throned in 1688 to make way for Protestants, William of Orange and his wife Mary. During William’s reign Parliament had passed an Act that excluded Roman Catholics from the throne, and when the British royal house ran out of Protestant successors, succession had passed to the German House of Hanover, with George I assuming the throne in 1714. In 1727 he was succeeded by George II. His son, William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, led the British army in the Battle of Culloden against the Scottish Jacobites. They were so called after the Latin name for King James II, *Jacobus*.

²¹⁴ <http://www.genealogy.com/genealogy/users/l/e/s/Raymond-allan-Lescott/index.html>; <http://www.lescott.com/> and pers. comm., Raymond Allan Lescott, 6 May 2008

Whether those people with the name Lescott are, indeed, descendants of John ‘Le Scot’ could not be verified. So far the only reference to the name Lescott being present in Nevis has come from Revd Collins’s son Samuel whose middle name was Lescott. In 1783 Walter Nisbet had manumitted a mulatto woman called Ann Lyscott (ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 f391 and Book of Wills 1837-1864 f294) but her name could have been mis-heard for Lyttcott – the name of an earlier slaveholder, Richard Lyttcott (PP, Dom Box P: General’s Tax Notebook 1755).

²¹⁵ PP, WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney

William Vaughan

William Vaughan worked in the boiling house and as overseer and was on Mountravers when Coker and Arthurton arrived. Most likely he was a Creole and came from a family that had lived in Nevis since the seventeenth century.²¹⁶

William Vaughan was a married man and probably in his fifties when he worked on Mountravers; he had married his wife, Frances Sanders, in June 1734.²¹⁷ He probably had two brothers, Robert and John, whose children were baptised in the 1730s.²¹⁸ The families tended to live in the parish of St George's Gingerland and owned relatively few people.²¹⁹ It appears that in the eighteenth century they mostly engaged in trades, or if they were in the planting business, they were overseers and managers rather than plantation owners.

Although called an overseer, William Vaughan's rate of pay of N£4 a month suggests that he worked as a boiling house watch. He received his last two and a half months wages on 23 January 1764²²⁰ and left the plantation. It is not known what he did until 1776, when JPP purchased from him a young girl, Frankey Vaughan.²²¹ Two years later William Vaughan and his wife were both dead.

Their worldly possessions were few, mostly old and worn. Mrs Vaughan had died intestate and for the purpose of establishing the value of her estate, the couple's goods and chattels were appraised by three men: Thomas Wenham, who had previously worked on Mountravers, the planter Francis Galpine, and Roger Pemberton, the husband of Wenham's step-daughter Elizabeth. The most valuable effects among Mrs Vaughan's property were two females: Kitty and her daughter, Fanny, appraised at N£100. The rest amounted to exactly a quarter, N£25:

some wearing apparel	N£6:12:0
one pair sleeve buttons, set in gold	N£1:13:0
a parcel of old earrings, necklace, etc	N£1:13:0
a pair of gold bobbs for a ring	N£1:8:8
a pair of silver shoe buckles	N£1
two old writing desks	N£4:19:0
one small bed, bolster and pillow	N£1:10:0
three old trunks and an old chair	N8s3d
an old tea table	N1s6d
some old books	N£1:4:9
5 irons, an iron pott, and tea kettle	N£1:10:0
5 silver tea spoons and tongues	N£1:4:9
some old plates, glasses, tea cups and saucers	N£1
a yellow tureen and dish	N16s6d
some old bottles and pots	N3s
some old knives, lantern (sic) and funnel	N3s ²²²

²¹⁶ For instance, in Robert Vaughan's household in the 1670s were seven white and seven enslaved people. The same, or another, Robert Vaughan was also listed as an inhabitant in 1707/8 (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 p74 and pp173-79).

²¹⁷ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St George's Parish Register

²¹⁸ John and Prudence Vaughan had three children (John, Robert and Bridget) who were baptised in 1730, 1732 and 1740. Robert and Mary Vaughan's daughters Sarah and Elizabeth were baptised in 1730; all of them in St George's Gingerland (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St George's Parish Register). In the 1780s the shoemaker John Vaughan, probably William Vaughan's nephew, petitioned and was granted executorship for his sister Bridget Vaughan's estate (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1763-1787 f549).

²¹⁹ Although three Vaughans – John, Robert and William – lived in Nevis, none made available labourers for the work on Saddle Hill in the mid- to late 1730s (UKNA, CO 186/2). Twenty years later a Mrs Vaughan, with William Brooks, held twelve enslaved people and John Vaughan's three were 'written off' (PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755).

²²⁰ PP, WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney, and Misc Vols 3 AB 3

²²¹ PP, AB 21 Plantation a/c 1776; also AB 20 Plantation a/c

²²² ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1763-1787 f459

It is not known what happened to the woman Kitty but her daughter may well have been the Fanny Vaughan who in 1817 worked on William Lawrence's estate in St John Figtree called the Farm. She was said to have been 40 years old. An eight-year-old black boy, Billy Vaughan, may well have been her son.²²³

Frankey Vaughan, whom JPP had bought for Mountravers from William Vaughan, was alive in 1834.

William Coker

William Coker arrived in May 1761 with Thomas Arthurton. He managed Mountravers until JPP came to Nevis in December 1764 and later worked for him again. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3.

Thomas Arthurton

When Thomas Arthurton arrived from England with William Coker in May 1761, he was not to know that almost a century later one of his sons was going to be involved, albeit ingloriously, in founding one of the independent villages that were then emerging in Nevis. Thomas Arthurton's story and that of his brother John, as well as that of their nephew John, demonstrate how these white men started families which consisted entirely of free and enslaved people. Their sons and daughters, in turn, had their own enslaved people with whom they had children; they gave people as presents, sold some and freed others. The first generation of Arthurton children inherited their fathers' wealth as well as their debts; many were literate and earned their living as writing clerks and skilled tradespeople; one, who became a member of the Nevis Assembly, ran his father's plantation. Thomas and John Arthurton senior and junior founded families that in many ways were typical of the mixed-race families that were emerging before the abolition of slavery, and it is therefore worthwhile to open up Thomas Arthurton's story and explore his wider family as well.



Thomas Arthurton came from a Norfolk family. He was named after his father; his mother was Elizabeth Clark who had married Thomas Arthurton senior in October 1738 in East Tuddenham. Thomas Arthurton was baptised in October 1741 in the same parish, two years later, also in October, his brother John.²²⁴ His father may then already have been the landlord of the Coach and Horses alehouse in East Tuddenham – a village about nine miles (14.5 km) west of the Cathedral city Norwich.²²⁵ Arthurton grew up in a rural environment but his birthplace was close enough to a major town for him to be exposed to urban life. In his days Norwich was a centre for the textile industry.

²²³ UKNA, T 71/364

²²⁴ Baptisms in Mitford & Launditch District, East Tuddenham Register No 37553, and marriage by licence on 1 October 1738 between Elizabeth Clark and Thomas Attherton (sic), from the database of Norfolk Transcripts by Geoffrey HB Leake, pers. comm., 1 September 2006; also <http://www.doun.org/transcriptions/documents.php> Bishop's Transcripts, Mitford & Launditch District, East Tuddenham Marriages and Baptisms, Doc Ref LDS Microfilm #1526812.

It is apparent from Geoffrey Leake's extensive database that the spelling of the name Arthurton was not consistent but, according to Leake, 'Arthurton' was the original local formalised spelling. The name was to be found almost exclusively in a group of villages to the west or north-west of Norwich. See also http://www.leake.dsl.pipex.com/Family/Leake_Side/Atterton/Archive/archive.html.

The IGI for the county of Norfolk lists several Thomas and John Arthurton born in, for instance, Weston, Honingham (eight miles north-west of Norwich), as well as Colton, East Tuddenham, Shipdham, and Mattishall (Marriages of Elizabeth, James, John, Sarah, Anne Arthurton). These villages are all within a few miles of Ringland.

²²⁵ Thomas Arthurton senior certainly was the landlord of the 'Coach and Horses' in November 1780, when several highwaymen, who belonged to a large smuggling party, 'behaved in the most riotous and daring manner, bought gunpowder, charged and fired their pistol, abused and greatly terrified the landlord and landlady, Mr and Mrs Atherton (sic)'

It is apparent that white plantation workers and specialist craftsmen came to the West Indies through personal connections, and while John Frederick Pinney knew the West Country man William Coker, Thomas Arthurton's link with Nevis was Edward Jesup. After returning from Nevis, Jesup and his wife Eleanor²²⁶ had in the late 1740s²²⁷ lived in Ringland in Norfolk, and had then moved across the border to Essex, to a country estate, Writtle Park. Most likely Jesup knew the Arthurton family from his time in Ringland; East Tuddenham lies but a few miles to the south-east. He may even have employed Thomas and, finding him an honest and reliable chap, recommended the young man to John Frederick Pinney.²²⁸ Jesup, described variously as 'a somewhat turbulent politician'²²⁹ and 'A Man of Strict Honour and Probity',²³⁰ settled into rural life as a gentleman farmer on his large, rented estate,²³¹ made forays to London and Bath²³² and took an active interest in Pinney's affairs in Nevis. Always ready to dispense advice, Jesup would have happily assisted Pinney with staffing matters.

Under Coker's management, on 13 May 1761²³³ Thomas Arthurton started work as overseer on Mountravers. He did this job for a year and although he still partly worked as overseer, he took on the job of distiller. Later he also became responsible for the animals. Thomas Arthurton was paid N£32 plus N£32 for board in the first year,²³⁴ N£70 in the second²³⁵ and N£80 in the third.²³⁶ This might suggest his was a three-year indenture with a rising rate of pay but originally he had only signed up for a year.²³⁷

In the 1760s he worked with three distillers: Old Harry, Cato and London. All three men were wanting in energy; they were old, infirm or considered lazy. These men may have taught young Arthurton the art of distilling but it is possible that he already knew how to make alcohol – after all, his father was, or became, the landlord of an alehouse.

JPP, with his servant Tom Peaden, arrived in December 1764 and took over from Coker, who in the following year sailed to England to attend to family matters. Coker was back on the plantation to temporarily replace JPP as manager when he went on a business trip to England in 1767. Since 1766 and for a few months after JPP's return the workforce was split between JPP's two estates; John Hay Richens, JPP's friend from England who had arrived in Nevis in the meantime, oversaw the property at Gingerland. Arthurton remained on Mountravers with two of the distillers, Old Harry and Cato. The third, London, had died by then.

On Mountravers was also Phibba, a woman in her early twenties, and it is likely that she was the mother of Arthurton's daughter Betsey. The girl was born in September 1768. JPP later recollected that the girl's brother, born in 1775, was Phibba's and Thomas Arthurton's son. Thomas Arthurton did not name his daughter; it was JPP who 'conditionally' called her Betsey after her white grandmother,

(<http://listsearches.roostweb.com/th/read/ENG-EAST-ANGLIA/2004-08/1092273303> 'Snippets from the *Norfolk Chronicle*'). It may be no coincidence that Mrs Elizabeth Arthurton died the following year.

²²⁶ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1

²²⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123, and SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/5/1

²²⁸ According to Pares, Jesup went out to Nevis about the same time as Coker and Arthurton, and John Frederick Pinney asked him to look over his estate (*A West India Fortune* pp59-60). There is no evidence for this; throughout the 1760s Jesup was writing from England. As a back-up to Coker, John Frederick Pinney appointed Eneas Shaw his attorney (ECSCRN, CR 1757-1762 ff377-78).

²²⁹ Pares, R *A West India Fortune* pp59-60

²³⁰ Memorial tablet in Bath Abbey, on the left hand-side from main door

²³¹ PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic

²³² For instance, PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic: Edward Jesup, London, to JPP, 26 March 1764, and SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/14/1: Aeneas Shaw, Nevis, to Edward Jessup at W Ede's, Coal Harbour, Thames Street, London, 15 May 1765

²³³ PP, Misc Vols 3 AB 3

²³⁴ PP, WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney

²³⁵ PP, AB 15 William Coker's a/c; also WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney

²³⁶ PP, Misc Vols 3 AB 3

²³⁷ PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

Tom Arthurton's mother Elizabeth. It appears that Arthurton was happy with JPP's choice of name because throughout her life his daughter was known as Betsey.

In April 1767 Thomas Arthurton paid Captain John Beach N£13:4:0 'for a runaway'.²³⁸ Almost exactly a year earlier John Hay Richens had paid the same sum, also to Captain Beach, also 'for a runaway'.²³⁹ The entry in the account book gives no indication what this actually meant but the amount was far too high for a reward; N£13 was closer to the price of a passage. Was Beach returning stowaways who had made it to England and charging their owners for their transport? Or were these payments for people who had sought refuge aboard Beach's ship, were discovered and not returned to their rightful owners but sold off cheaply to Arthurton and Richens? One way or another, the reference does appear to suggest that by 1767 Arthurton had become a slaveholder.

In 1770 there were no horses on the plantation and Arthurton organised the buying of some. Drawing on his farming experience in East Anglia, Arthurton asked his father to purchase three Suffolk horses, who, with their hardwearing, round feet could be used shod or unshod. They made excellent draft animals. East Anglian farmers employed them to till the heavy soil. Bred only in East Anglia, they were strong, resilient, docile and long-living.²⁴⁰ Suffolk horses were a dependable breed and Arthurton may have been aware that they had already proven themselves in tropical conditions.²⁴¹ They seldom came up for sale but Thomas Arthurton trusted that his father, as the local publican, knew people who could assist in the purchase. He specified that he wanted the animals 'young etc but just properly broke into the cart.'²⁴²

He may already have planned to go to England the following year and to bring the animals back with him (it was not unusual for plantation employees to look after livestock on their passage to the West Indies),²⁴³ and in mid-June 1771 Arthurton left for a brief visit to England.²⁴⁴ He had been away from home for ten years and, with the crop being short that year, it was a good time to go.²⁴⁵ For his 'sea store' on board Captain Maynard's *London Merchant* Arthurton took two small hogs he bought from Mrs Coker²⁴⁶ who had left for England just before him. Arthurton only intended his visit to be brief; JPP noted his assurance that he would 'return to me here the latter end of December or beginning of January next at farthest.' True to his word, Arthurton was back by the end of December.²⁴⁷

In the summer of 1772 JPP was getting married and planning a honeymoon abroad. Coker had returned to England and, with his friend gone, someone experienced was needed to manage the plantation. But JPP did not employ Arthurton. Instead, he appointed his 'particular friend' John Browne,²⁴⁸ an experienced planter who, with his brother, had an estate in Nevis.²⁴⁹ Browne took over managing Mountravers from the beginning of August,²⁵⁰ with Arthurton working under him and Tom Peaden assisting as the 'under-overseer'.²⁵¹ Within a month of the Pinneys leaving for their American honeymoon a dreadful hurricane struck the island and these men had to deal with the immediate aftermath. On Mountravers people were homeless, animals had died, the canes were injured and the crops in the provisions grounds spoilt. Many buildings had suffered: the large boiling house was 'thrown down',²⁵² the still house and also several of JPP's houses in town were demolished. On his

²³⁸ PP, AB 18 Thomas Arthurton's a/c

²³⁹ PP, AB 18 JH Richens's a/c

²⁴⁰ <http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/horses/Suffolk/>

²⁴¹ Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan, MSS 2: Truman Neave & Co, London, to Ellis Yonge, Acton, 9 July 1766

²⁴² PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, 17 May 1770

²⁴³ Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan, MSS 2: Walter Nisbet, Nevis, to Dean Shipley, 28 April 1794

²⁴⁴ PP, AB 20 Plantation a/c

²⁴⁵ PP, LB 3: JPP to Messrs Wm Reeve, 7 February 1771

²⁴⁶ PP, AB 20 Memo

²⁴⁷ PP, AB 20 Memo

²⁴⁸ PP, LB 3: JPP to Reeve, Son & Hill, c March 1770

²⁴⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP to Reeve, Son & Hill, c March 1770

²⁵⁰ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Lucas, 8 July 1772

²⁵¹ PP, AB 20

²⁵² PP, WI Box D: JPP, 29 March 1773

own plantation, John Browne had lost two boiling houses and the dwelling house.²⁵³ The whole island was threatened with famine²⁵⁴ but, luckily for everyone on Mountravers, when news of the disaster reached JPP in Philadelphia, he consigned a schooner with bread and flour which alleviated the worst need.²⁵⁵ In addition to housing the homeless and finding food for everyone, Browne, Arthurton and Tom Peaden had to keep the plantation going until JPP returned. They increased security by purchasing '4 strong locks for the boiling house door'²⁵⁶ and probably set to work the masons Tom Jones and Bettiscombe to begin repairing the lower works.

It appears that Arthurton's efforts were not sufficient for JPP to appoint him as manager the next time he travelled to England. Instead, JPP asked his cousin Joseph Gill and his father-in-law to act on his behalf.²⁵⁷ During JPP's absence abroad, Arthurton fathered his second child; James was born in April 1775. (If he fathered other children on Mountravers, there is no evidence for this.) James's sister Betsey had been conceived while JPP was away on his first business trip to England – suggesting that JPP may not have approved of a white man's liaison with one of his plantation women.

Just before he departed for England, JPP bought three whips from Arthurton.²⁵⁸ Whips were used on people and animals, and it is not apparent for whom these were intended, or why Arthurton was selling them. Part of the explanation may be that he traded on behalf of his brother John, who, by then, had set himself up as a merchant.²⁵⁹ John had been in Nevis probably since the mid-1770s, following out Thomas's nephew John, who had almost certainly come to Nevis in about 1763. When Coker, in his role as Jesup's attorney, was casting around for someone to work on Jesup's Estate, Arthurton had told him that he knew of a 'very sober diligent young fellow in Norfolk' who wanted to go to the West Indies and Coker had gladly passed on this recommendation.²⁶⁰ At the age of about 14, Thomas Arthurton's nephew John Arthurton came to Nevis at his uncle's suggestion.

Young John Arthurton first briefly worked on neighbouring Jesup's, and after an interlude with Walter Nisbet, returned there in about May 1765 to replace the manager, Benjamin Leggett, who had died of a fever. Eneas Shaw, another attorney of Jesup's, sent John Arthurton to do the job 'for a while' but then Leggett's nephew John Buck was to take over. Although he considered John, or, as he called him, Jack Arthurton, 'an honest, good natured, industrious lad', Shaw thought that he 'had to be taken in hand'. When he had lived with Walter Nisbet, he had been 'allowed too great a lease' and Jack Arthurton was also 'rather too young to be trusted to his own keeping.' Leggett's nephew John Buck had apparently previously worked on Jesup's, and Shaw regarded him 'a good lad' but insufficiently prepared for the job; his uncle had never given him much authority over the plantation people. Shaw hoped that Buck could, under direction, carry on the work of the estate until Jesup told everyone what to do. John Buck, however, also died before the year was out.²⁶¹ JPP, in the meantime, had offered William Coker as a replacement for Leggett but Edward Jesup was committed to trying the young man already settled on the estate. Having put his faith into John Buck,²⁶² it is likely that, following Buck's death, Jack Arthurton was asked to work on Jesup's again. During his time in Nevis Edward Jesup had overseen the second largest unit in Nevis with 248 people,²⁶³ and in 1767, long after he

²⁵³ Anon *An Account of the Late Dreadful Hurricane*

²⁵⁴ UKNA, CO 186/6: 5 September 1772

²⁵⁵ PP, LB 3: JPP to Simon Pretor, 29 March 1773

²⁵⁶ PP, LB 3: 10 October 1772

²⁵⁷ PP, LB 3: JPP to Wm Coker, 23 July 1774

²⁵⁸ PP, AB 20 f138 Plantation a/c

²⁵⁹ BRO, 39654 (2)

²⁶⁰ PP, WI Box D: Wm Coker, Nevis, to JF Pinney, 24 July 1762

²⁶¹ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/14/1: Eneas Shaw to Edward Jesup at W Ede, London, 15 May 1765. See also D/MW 35/14/3 and D/MW 35/14/4: Robert Buck to Jesup, 20 December 1765.

²⁶² PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic: Edward Jesup to JPP, 7 July 1765

²⁶³ There appears to have been also a tie-up between Tobias Wall and Henry Wallwin as well as Thomas Wallwin, from whom Jesup rented in June 1759 three people: Artherton, Sukey and Lukey.

In April 1746 Henry Wallwin had 120 people in his possession - they were recorded as having belonged to Tobias Wall – while Thomas Wallwin had 36 (both were in St Thomas parish); Jesup then had 112 (ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123). All these

had left the island (he then had 143 people of his own), Jesup was renting additional land with a view to erecting a still and then lease the entire estate to Eneas Shaw. Well disposed towards Jack Arthurton, Shaw may have kept him on into the late 1760s or early 1770s. However, this relatively inexperienced young man would have had his work cut out with the people on the estate. Shaw judged Jesup's people 'a headstrong licentious gang'.²⁶⁴

While working on Jesup's, the young Jack Arthurton either lived at the lower works in the 'overseers room', or at the upper works in the three-roomed 'overseers house'.²⁶⁵ It was not only bigger but, being higher, also healthier and commanded a good view over the estate. It served as the manager's accommodation.

In 1774 Jack Arthurton travelled to England,²⁶⁶ where he met up with JPP in London. He borrowed twenty guineas from him²⁶⁷ and it appears that he tried to tap him for more money but that JPP was reluctant to oblige.²⁶⁸ Before mid-November Jack Arthurton left London again on the *Harlequin*²⁶⁹ and may well have brought with him goods for trading. Although only 22 years old, he had become a merchant and was already sufficiently established to be asked to act as another man's attorney.²⁷⁰ By then the other John Arthurton, Thomas's brother, was also in Nevis. John senior may have owned or leased a plantation,²⁷¹ but it is also possible that he immediately set himself up as a merchant. He bought plantation produce such as sugar and rum and sold, among other goods, beans and tallow.²⁷² In addition to his merchant business, young Jack Arthurton acquired a hundred-acre plantation in St John Figtree.²⁷³

In January 1777 Thomas Arthurton's daughter Betsey, then aged eight, started her training as a seamstress and not long after, at the beginning of April, Arthurton quit his job.²⁷⁴ In the sixteen years he had been employed on Mountravers, three of the four distillers he had worked with in the 1760s had died, and the last, Cato, the 'lazy' one, was going to be incapable of work in a few years' time. At some point Ducks Jemmy, a field hand, got promoted to distiller. When Arthurton left, the crop was miserable²⁷⁵ and that year not much rum would have been made.

Immediately after leaving Mountravers, Thomas Arthurton, together with his brother John, served as jurors in a Court case against John Huggins.²⁷⁶ The Arthurton brothers then appeared to have jointly set themselves up in business, or may be Thomas worked for John. Together they borrowed money from JPP, N£200.²⁷⁷ At the same time John senior was also conducting business with John junior.

combined add up to 268. With losses over a nine-year-period, these may well have been the 248 for whom Edward Jesup paid tax in 1755 (PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755). Copies of leases from 1759 for 39 people and 45 acres, and three people and 20 acres are in SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/13, 35/11/2, D/MW 35/11/1 and D/MW 35/11/2. – In addition, since 1746 Jesup was also leasing land from Christian Helme (D87/2/11) and 'Mr Latoufonere's' (sic) little plantation with the works and 25 Negroes (PP, Dom Cat 2 Summary: Edward Jesup to JF Pinney, 26 September 1761).

²⁶⁴ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/17: Lease Miss Elizabeth Helme and others to Edward Jesup and D/MW 35/14/1

²⁶⁵ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/18: Edward Jesup's Estate Inventory with Valuations

²⁶⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP, Dorchester, to John Arthurton, 10 October 1774

²⁶⁷ PP, LB 3: JPP, Woodcuts, to Mills & Swanston, London, 4 October 1774

²⁶⁸ PP, LB 3: JPP, Frome near Dorchester, to John Arthurton, 10 October 1774

²⁶⁹ 'Emigrants to Nevis 1639 to 1776 inclusive' extracted from Peter Coldham's *Book of Emigrants* (Courtesy of Brian Littlewood).

²⁷⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1776-1777 f592

²⁷¹ Once he had set himself up in business in Bristol, JPP wrote a circular letter to 25 gentlemen in Nevis, among them John Arthurton senior. He invited his old planter friends to consign their sugars to a particular ship, the *Tobin*, under Captain Crosse (W Minchinton *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* p128, quoting LB 17: Circular from Pinney & Tobin, 26 October 1784).

²⁷² Stapleton Cotton MSS 16 (iia), 16 (iv) and 15 (v): Items accounted for on 16 June 1779, 10 and 13 June 1780, 20 July 1780 and 16 June 1781

²⁷³ ECSCRN, CR 1785-1787 ff104-11

²⁷⁴ PP, AB 20 Plantation a/c

²⁷⁵ PP, LB 4: JPP, Nevis, to Wm Reeve, 3 May 1777

²⁷⁶ ECSCRN, King's Bench and Common Pleas Cause List 1776-1779

²⁷⁷ PP, Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783: Bond dated 8 September 1778

Having lent money to one Jacob Mann, they acquired from Mann a woman, Sarah,²⁷⁸ and when they had cash flow problems, John senior and junior jointly took people to Court for debt.²⁷⁹ Together they hired from Mountravers the masons Oroonoko, Caesar and Tom Jones, but they also transacted business individually; John junior bought from JPP two individuals, Betty and her son Jack Scoles²⁸⁰ and hired another, William. John junior also borrowed more money from JPP.²⁸¹ When years later he still owed N£12 interest, exasperatedly JPP scribbled in the ledger: 'I therefore pay this sum in my own money to close all accounts forever with this man.'²⁸² 'This man' was branching out in business: in 1785 he bought one of Horatio Nelson's prizes, the *Fair View*, for £300.²⁸³ Owning a vessel meant that he could transport the goods in which he traded - and thereby become independent of ship owners and captains - and he could make money by taking on additional cargo. He had control over the routes, as well as the crew.

Just before the Pinneys were leaving to settle in England, Thomas Arthurton negotiated over the purchase of Betsey and James. He offered N£200 - the equivalent of two years' wages - in exchange for an absolute sale. However, the children were entailed and, until JPP's oldest son came off age, JPP could not issue a bill of sale. Arthurton made a down payment of N£180, for which he took out a bond from JPP with the proviso that, until 'an indefeasible title' could be given, he was to pay the additional N£20 with interest at eight per cent.²⁸⁴

In August 1785 Thomas Arthurton was called back to assist on Mountravers. Before JPP left for England, he had installed Joseph Gill as manager but within two years Gill had slid into drink and depression, and 'for many months' was incapable of managing the estate. JPP's attorney John Taylor asked Thomas Arthurton to instruct a new man, a young Welshman called James Williams, in his job of overseer but it appears that Arthurton was not considered for the manager's post. He only remained on Mountravers until William Coker, once more, had arrived back from England to manage the plantation. Coker started work on 18 January 1786 and Arthurton was paid off with N£33 'for his troubles'.²⁸⁵

Coker had sailed abroad the *Resolution*, and one of his fellow passengers had been Tom Arthurton's brother John.²⁸⁶ A married man now, he had been on a short visit to England and had returned to Nevis while his wife Joan, or Jane, who may have been a Creole, stayed on.²⁸⁷ During their visit to England, Mr and Mrs Arthurton had at first been the guests of one of the captains who regularly plied the Nevis route, Thomas Curtin Chivers. They remained with him at Stepney Causeway in London while 'for a few weeks' JPP searched for lodgings for them in the fashionable areas of Bristol, in Clifton or the [Hot] Wells.²⁸⁸ He could not accommodate them in his house in Park Street because he had already put up several people from Nevis - Revd Jones's wife, her daughter Sally and their temporary maidservant, Kate Coker - but once he got these three lodged elsewhere, the Arthurtons came to stay with the Pinneys.²⁸⁹ Then the couple went their separate ways. John returned to Nevis with the Cokers on Captain Chivers's ship and Mrs Arthurton rented a house in Bristol. She either

²⁷⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1778-1783 f25

²⁷⁹ ECSCRN, King's Bench and Common Pleas Cause List 1776-1779

²⁸⁰ PP, AB 26 McGill's a/c; also John Arthurton's a/c

²⁸¹ PP, AB 17: 30 May 1781

²⁸² PP, AB 43 John Arthurton junior & Co Merchant a/c

²⁸³ The *Fair View* was condemned in the Nevis Court of Admiralty on 8 June 1785 and bought by John Arthurton two months later. The account, dated Nevis 8 August 1785, states that the cargo consisted of white oak staves and corn. Both were sold to Richard Herbert. The sale realised £900 from which were deducted £123 costs (the Judge, the advocate and proctor, the printer Mr Low (sic) at St Kitts 'for advertising and printing handbills' etc). From the prize money, half (£388) went to Horatio Nelson, the officers and crew of the *Boreas*, one eighth to Admiral Hughes (£97) and three eighths to the King (£291) (G Lawson (ed) *Letters from Nelson* pp66-7, citing BL, Add. MS 34903).

²⁸⁴ PP, Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783; AB 26 Plantation a/c and f209 Thomas Arthurton's a/c; also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f138 and AB 30 Thomas Arthurton's a/c

²⁸⁵ PP, AB 35; also AB 30 Joseph Gill's a/c and Thomas Arthurton's a/c

²⁸⁶ PP, LB 7: JPP to Wm Coker, Woodcuts, 15 November 1785

²⁸⁷ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff270-72; CR 1789-1790 f424, and PP, AB 2: Joseph Gill's account of Racedown Lodge

²⁸⁸ PP, LB 37: JPP to John Arthurton, 28 July 1785

²⁸⁹ PP, LB 7: JPP to WB Weekes, 29 August 1785

lived in Park Street or somewhere nearby, but Bristol did not suit her, and in March 1786 JPP reported to John Arthurton that

... we have lately lost the pleasure of Mrs A's company as a neighbour. She found living alone so very melancholy and uncomfortable during the winter that she has given up her house and is gone to London for some months having given up her furniture in any empty room at Mr Claxton's. Should she return here again she is determined to go into lodgings with some agreeable family. In all probability she will let you fully into her future schemes and intentions in any of which you may be satisfied she will experience every assistance in our power.²⁹⁰

To cheer herself up, a few weeks later John's wife went to Paris but 'Madame Arthurton' was back in England by October 1787.²⁹¹ John probably met up with his wife in Bristol when two years later he once more visited JPP. Arthurton also attended to business in London.²⁹² Again, he returned to Nevis and she remained in England. She did what ladies of leisure did: she toured the country and called on friends.²⁹³ Mrs Arthurton seems to have hooked up with another woman, 'a Lady from Lyme', and in July 1794 these two travelled to JPP's country residence, Racedown, and 'paid the House a visit'.²⁹⁴ At Racedown Joseph Gill was managing JPP's brick-making business,²⁹⁵ getting increasingly grumpy and dissolute.

While his wife remained in England, John Arthurton fathered several children with black or mulatto women. With an enslaved black woman on Jesup's he had two sons, John and James; with a mulatto woman called Joan (Saunders) Peterson he had a daughter, Elizabeth,²⁹⁶ and with another mulatto woman called Charlotte he had another son, Charles, and another daughter, also called Elizabeth.²⁹⁷ These last two children, the mustees Charles and Elizabeth, were born probably in the 1780s. Although John Arthurton senior was in one document described as a planter,²⁹⁸ he continued trading in Nevis as a merchant and became joint-owner of a vessel. He and Thomas had followed their nephew's example and had bought a ship.

The brothers John and Thomas Arthurton acquired the sloop *Betsey*. A 68-and-a-half-ton vessel, she had been built in Bermuda in 1788. She had two decks, one mast and measured a substantial 49'10" (15.2m) in length and 19'1" (5.8m) in breadth. The brothers did not keep the *Betsey* for long. In November 1793 they sold her to Dr Thomas Pym Weekes,²⁹⁹ who was then managing Mountravers. After Dr Weekes left Nevis, John Arthurton senior had ongoing dealings with Mountravers³⁰⁰ but may have fallen out with the Pinneys, or with Mrs P at least, after her brother died. One woman in Nevis, and possibly other people, too, very much blamed John Arthurton for hastening Thomas Pym

²⁹⁰ Minchinton, WE *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* pp129-30, quoting P & T to John Arthurton senior, Nevis, 30 March 1786

Mrs Arthurton probably was at Robert Claxton's house in Park Street. He certainly lived there in 1794. When Mrs Arthurton stayed in Bristol, she had the company of Claxton's young wife. The couple had not been married long. Mrs Claxton was from a St Kitts planter family, Rachel Mardenborough (1769-January 1841). Robert Claxton was the brother of Butler Claxton who left his North Wales and Williams's estates to his only son and heir of the same name (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 6 p42).

²⁹¹ PP, LB 7: JPP to Madame Arthurton, Paris, 26 June 1786, and LB 37: JPP to Mrs Arthurton at Mr Charles Randall, Huntingdon, 20 October 1787

²⁹² ECSCRN, CR 1789-1790 f424 and CR 1788-1789 f204

²⁹³ PP, LB 37: JPP to Mrs Arthurton at Mr Carters, Cheltenham, 16 January 1789

²⁹⁴ PP, AB 2: Joseph Gill's account of Racedown Lodge

²⁹⁵ PP, AB 3 John Pinney of Blackdown a/c

²⁹⁶ It is likely that Joan was also the mother of Alexander Baillie's mulatto daughter Ann Baillie, who was baptised in 1758 (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825). In her will of 1810, Ann Baillie described Elizabeth, the daughter of Joan Peterson/Saunders, as her sister.

²⁹⁷ Charlotte may have been listed as a girl on Jesup's in 1767. Valued at £25, she was then perhaps about eight years old.

²⁹⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1792-1794 f3

²⁹⁹ ECSCRN, CR 1794-1797 ff143-45

³⁰⁰ PP, AB 47 John Arthurton senior Merchant a/c

John Arthurton also had business dealing with Eneas Shaw (WE Minchinton *The Trade of Bristol* pp129-30) and presumably it was John rather than Thomas Arthurton who went into partnership with John Richardson (PP, LB 37: JPP to Messrs Arthurton & Richardson, 1 May 1789).

Weekes's death by arresting him for debt on the very day Weekes was setting off for Martinique to recover his health. No doubt echoing Dr Weekes's words, this woman asked, 'why did they not have patience with him?' After all, the doctor had great hopes of making a fortune in Martinique³⁰¹ but John Arthurton, like others, probably had heard all these promises before and had been strung along once too often. Given this history it is somewhat ironic then that a loaf of sugar for the mourners at Thomas Pym Weekes's funeral was supplied by the company of John Arthurton senior & Co.³⁰²

John junior probably died some time before 1796, the year John senior made another trip to England. Before travelling, he made his will.³⁰³ His wife was still in England and had no intention of returning to Nevis, and when he made his will, he acknowledged this by stipulating that her inheritance was to be paid in London, twice a year. She was to get S£30 and an annuity of N£200, payable on the late Richard Hick's estate in St James Windward. He also left an annuity of S£40 to the mulatto woman Charlotte (Charles's and Elizabeth's mother) and saw to it that their children would be equipped to earn a living. To Charles he left S£2,000 which was to be invested at eight per cent interest to cover his education and maintenance until he reached the age of 15. The boy was to be 'placed out to some trade in England' of his own choosing, and at the end of this training, he was to get the capital sum of S£2,000. To his daughter Elizabeth he left half that sum for her education and maintenance in England or in Scotland. She was to be paid the money up to the age of 14. After that, she was then to be 'put out as an apprentice to some business which she may chuse', or one that the executor found suitable. At the end of her apprenticeship, she was to receive the S£1,000. His (and Joan Peterson's) mustee daughter, the other Elizabeth, did not fare so well: she was to get only N£50. He also left S£50 and N£33 respectively to two mulatto men, his sons, both the property of Messrs Ede and Shaw: John and James. John Arthurton's 'particular friend' Sholto Archbald was to have S£200 and the remainder was intended for Thomas, his brother.³⁰⁴ Judging by the bequests he made, John senior had done well during the time he had lived in Nevis, although, common with many wills, the disposable capital may well have been over-estimated and ready cash may not have been available when it came to disbursing the bequests. John Arthurton senior died some time before 1800.

Charged with winding up his brother's affairs, Thomas Arthurton must have struggled to try and fulfil all the promises and pay all the legacies, and, no doubt, he would have welcomed some money coming his way. As overseer for two decades or more Thomas Arthurton had not acquired much wealth, and if he had been in business with his brother, he had been operating at a precarious time when many planters suffered from large debts. However, even in the 1780s Arthurton did have sufficient capital to be able to grant a loan: he lent N£160 to the free black man Joseph Batterton. As security for the loan he took the woman Catto and her young daughter Rainer, together with Batterton's seine and canoo.³⁰⁵ Catto had been mortgaged by William Burt Weekes to JPP, who had sold her to Batterton. A few years later Batterton owed money to JPP, and, with Batterton having been short of cash, it is likely that Thomas Arthurton had to claim the mother, her daughter and the fishing gear.³⁰⁶ With his brother John he had also lent money to the shopkeeper Daniel Levy and his wife Judy.³⁰⁷

Soon after JPP had landed in England in 1783 he informed Thomas Arthurton that the family had enjoyed 'an excellent passage',³⁰⁸ but after that the two men appear not have corresponded although, of course, they would have met in Nevis during JPP's visits in 1790 and 1794. Now that he had

³⁰¹ PP, Dom Box S4

³⁰² PP, AB 54 TP Weekes's a/c; also AB 47 Cash a/c and TP Weekes's a/c

³⁰³ PP, LB 12: JPP to John Arthurton at Latham & Sons, Merchants, London, 21 November 1796

³⁰⁴ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff270-72

In the will of John Arthurton senior the wording 'my own brothers ...' suggests that John and Thomas may have been half-brothers but this is not borne out in the baptismal records that are available.

³⁰⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1788-1789 f72

³⁰⁶ If Thomas Arthurton did claim Catto and her daughter Rainer, he registered neither of them on Richmond Lodge in 1817 (UKNA, T 71/364).

³⁰⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1792-1794 f3

³⁰⁸ PP, LB 5: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, 2 September 1783

inherited some of his brother's wealth and JPP's son John Frederick was off age, there was nothing to stop Arthurton from finalising ownership of his Mountravers-born children, and in 1799 he requested the absolute bill of sale. JPP asked his manager, James Williams, for the name of James Arthurton's mother 'which I believe was Phibba and the names of the children'. On John Frederick Pinney's behalf, JPP also requested the remaining N£20 with interest at eight per cent payable from July 1783 and, 'As Mr Arthurton is in possession of so ample a fortune, I flatter myself, he will not think the demand of my son unreasonable.'³⁰⁹ If he wanted full ownership of his children, Thomas Arthurton could do nothing but pay the remaining money.

Around the time Thomas Arthurton had originally negotiated purchasing Betsey and James, another mulatto son of his was born, William, and over the years he had two more boys: John (later John Fraser)³¹⁰ and Thomas junior. He probably purchased Thomas's mother, Patty Reid, in the mid-1790s after her owner, the merchant James Reid, had died. Martha Reid, presumably Patty's daughter, appears to have been freed already.³¹¹ His Mountravers-born daughter Betsey was, by then, a mother herself. She had three children: Ann, Robert and John. However, she died – still unfree – some time between 1799 and 1803. Her death may have finally prompted Thomas Arthurton to start freeing his other offspring and their mothers, as well as his grandchildren: he manumitted Patty Reid and her son Thomas, Joan and her son John (Fraser), his son William and, nearly twenty years after he had started buying him, his Mountravers-born son James. A day after freeing James, Thomas Arthurton also freed his three grandchildren, Betsey's daughter Ann (Nancy) and her sons Robert and John. Arthurton chose Samuel Bennett, who had been overseer on Mountravers, to witness the event. Thomas Arthurton then bought from the widow Elizabeth Martin one of his mistresses, the woman Elsey, and manumitted her on 11 January 1803.³¹² He may have had more children with Elsey but nothing is known about them.

Another member of his wider family was freed that year, the mulatto man John Arthurton. The son of John Arthurton senior, this mulatto man was the father of Thomas Arthurton's granddaughter, Betsey's daughter Ann, and it is likely that he was also the father of Betsey's sons Robert and John – the boys Thomas Arthurton had freed a couple of days before John was freed. John had been on Jesup's, which, since Edward Jesup's death, was in the hands of Jesup's brother-in-law and 'esteemed friend' John Ede,³¹³ and it was John Ede who agreed that this John Arthurton could be freed. The mulatto man's freedom, however, came at a price: in his stead Frank, a black man worth S£80, was to take his place. Thomas Arthurton as executor finalised the deal in February 1803.³¹⁴ Having inherited S£50 from his father, John Arthurton, a stonemason, engaged in business as soon as he was freed from his enslavement. This was typical of the enterprise in the family.

In 1807, the Pinneys once more called on Thomas Arthurton's services. Armed with John Frederick Pinney's power of attorney,³¹⁵ early in August 1807 he and James Tobin took over formal possession of Mountravers from the manager, Joe Stanley, and appointed Samuel Bennett on a short-term contract.³¹⁶ Although not long ago JPP had considered Arthurton as attorney,³¹⁷ others had then been

³⁰⁹ PP, LB 15: JPP to James Williams, 29 October 1799

³¹⁰ John Fraser Arthurton added his middle name to distinguish himself from the other men called John Arthurton (the freed stonemason and Betsey Arthurton's son). There is no apparent connection between the Frasers, who were mostly associated with St Kitts, and the Arthurtons, and it is likely that John Fraser Arthurton chose his name from 'the small plot of land at Brown Hill known as Fraser's land'. Walter Lewis Bucke, then living on the neighbouring Bush Hill estate, recorded that this property was in the 1820s 'owned by Mr Arthurton (coloured) inherited from his father' (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (c) 'Nevis, Leeward Island, West Indies').

³¹¹ PP, AB 39 Merchant at Nevis a/c; also AB 48 Estate of John Stanley and James Reid dec'd a/c

³¹² ECSCRN, CR 1801-1803 ff526-27; ff527-28; ff482-83; CR 1803-1805 ff1-2; ff2-3; ff13-4

³¹³ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/19/1

³¹⁴ ECSCRN, CR 1801-1803 f521

³¹⁵ PP, LB 41 Unnumbered, undated page

³¹⁶ PP, LB 21: James Tobin, Nevis, to JPP, Bristol, 8 August 1807

³¹⁷ PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, Nevis, 12 February 1805

appointed instead.³¹⁸ But JPP did ask him to act on his behalf and find housing for the reserved group and for two favoured people, Black Polly and Billey Jones.³¹⁹

In 1807 Arthurton was engaged to appraise John Browne junior's effects, together with Samuel Bennett and Dr Henry Cassin,³²⁰ but generally few people called on him to act for them as attorney, executor, or guardian for their children. He also did not hold public office or get elected to the Assembly. Arthurton appears to have operated on the margins of white society. Appointments to public posts depended on patronage and influence, something he may not have had, and he may not have passed the property qualification which would have enabled him to stand for election. His social background - the son of an alehouse-keeper - would also have worked against him. His only recorded public appearance was in 1810, when he gave evidence for the Crown in the trial against Edward Huggins. At that time he probably worked on a plantation, possibly Jesup's old estate, which was then in the hands of the Ede family. He may, however, have been thinking about acquiring his own property because he wanted to know from JPP who was responsible for paying for the conveyance of an estate.³²¹

Financially he was in no position to go ahead with buying an estate. He was not even able to continue to pay for his son's education. He had sent Thomas, whom he had freed some years earlier, to England where he had been under the care of a man called Jacob Sturge but, unable to keep him there, young Thomas had to return to Nevis.³²² During his time in England JPP looked after him, and he also made sure that the boy got back safely to Nevis. Knowing that his father was short of money, JPP tried to find a captain who would let him work his passage but no one was willing to offer him a free berth and young Thomas had to travel as a steerage passenger. JPP also arranged for his sea stores but the tea and sugar he had ordered to sustain the traveller on his journey arrived too late and Thomas sailed off on the *Edward* without these supplies. When he landed, his father had to pay 20 Guineas for his fare. Young Thomas arrived back home in the summer of 1810.³²³ It may have been his trips across the Atlantic that made him want to go to sea; by 1817 the young man had become a mariner.³²⁴

In 1817 Thomas Arthurton acquired a plantation in St John Figtree parish. By all accounts this was his first, and he purchased it at a time when sugar prices fell and profits dropped. After the war with France had ended, a general depression had followed.³²⁵ Arthurton bought his 145 acres at a precarious time.

The land he purchased was part of a larger property which had previously belonged to John Browne of St Kitts. The man was in debt to the London merchants Thomas Daniel & Sons. In order to finance the acquisition, which included 85 enslaved people,³²⁶ Arthurton had to borrow money. Two planters, Thomas John Cottle and Samuel Lawrence, stood surety for him so that he could raise the funds from another London firm, Bond, Pearse (also Pearce) and Child. Arthurton agreed to pay S£4,000 plus interest at four per cent, payable from 1 May 1817 in ten equal instalments. He already was well settled on the estate when at the beginning of December the merchant Daniel Wane and the barrister-at-law Pemberton Hobson witnessed the transfer.³²⁷

³¹⁸ PP, LB 41: Copy of document dated 7 July 1808

³¹⁹ PP, LB 23: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, 28 August 1809

³²⁰ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 f72

³²¹ PP, LB 23: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, 16 May 1810

³²² PP, LB 23: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, Nevis, 28 April 1810, and 16 May 1810

³²³ PP, LB 23: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, Nevis, 5, 9 and 31 July 1810

³²⁴ Thomas Arthurton, the mariner, in July 1817 was a witness when Mary Watters of Tortola gave her niece Frances Levy a present of two enslaved people (ECSCRN, CR 1817-1819 Vol 2 f14).

³²⁵ Craton, Michael Craton *Sinews of Empire* London 1974 p374 fn51; R Pares *A West India Fortune* pp199-200 and pp250-51 and JR Ward *British West Indian Slavery* pp43-5 and p48 Table 3

³²⁶ UKNA, T 71/364

³²⁷ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f352 and f448, and CR 1817-1819 Vol 2 ff66-8

The plantation Thomas Arthurton bought was 'commonly called Salt Pond Gutt and Long Point' but he called it Richmond Lodge (the name Salt Pond Gut Estate did, however, survive into the twentieth century).³²⁸ From his house he could see the sugar works below and he had pleasant, open views overlooking the southern end of the island, with the sea in the distance. The surrounding plantations were of various sizes and leased, or owned, by very different people, whose estates varied greatly in character, as did their slave populations.

To the southwest lay George Clarke Forbes' Bush Hill. This was worked with nearly one hundred people. Given that the direct slave trade had been abolished ten years earlier, it was most unusual that about a third of its workforce were Africans, including several children under the age of ten. All those Africans were enslaved but, unusually, Forbes also employed 29 Africans who were not enslaved but indentured - so-called 'prize negroes'. He had brought these people from Tortola in 1814.

After Britain withdrew from the slave trade, they had been enslaved in Africa. The ships that had carried them to the Caribbean had been intercepted by British patrols and, rather than return them to their homeland, they had been passed to the Collector in Tortola. On behalf of the British government, and as their legal guardian, the Collector was supposed to apprentice them to employers who were to teach them a marketable trade so that they became independent and self-supporting in the West Indies. The Collector could grant indentures lasting up to 14 years, and Forbes made full use of this free labour and contracted the Africans for the maximum term. He was meant to treat them not as enslaved workers but as apprentices, but on Bush Hill the conditions they lived under and the punishments they received were not much different to those experienced by Forbes's plantation people.³²⁹

Some years later an enquiry by British government officials was to find that Forbes's indentures were imperfect and that all Africans had been 'neglected'. Mrs Forbes claimed that she had been unaware of the clause which stated apprentices should not become fieldworkers but the investigators concluded that 'As Mr Forbes is a lawyer of no little pretensions, any plea of ignorance, as to the terms of the indenture, could not come well from him.' They found that Forbes had only intended 'to augment the number of his field gang at little expense' and that he had failed to assume full responsibility for the Africans' physical well-being and their moral education.³³⁰ The fact that George Clarke Forbes had taken 27 of his apprentices to the St John Figtree church to be baptised *en masse*³³¹ did not convince the panel.

Arthurton's neighbour Forbes had previously represented the parish of St John Figtree in the Legislature.³³² He came from an urbane, well-connected family. His father had been an 'old acquaintance' of Prince William's but during the prince's stay in Nevis thirty years earlier he had almost caused a diplomatic row when he appears to have engineered a private get-together with the royal visitor and some other gentlemen while excluding President Herbert. The young prince, who had given away President Herbert's niece at her wedding to Horatio Nelson, managed to soothe John

³²⁸ ECSCRN, CR 17 f185

In naming his estate Richmond Lodge Thomas Arthurton could have paid homage to the royal hunting lodge in the grounds of Richmond Palace in London – the owners of the neighbouring Bush Hill plantation may have inspired him; they had transferred the name of their previous estate, Bush Hill near Edmonton in north London – but he could also have alluded to a Freemason's lodge: North America's oldest purpose-built Masonic Hall was that in Richmond, Virginia (<http://richmondthenandnow.com/Newspaper-Articles/Oldest-Masonic-Lodge.html>).

³²⁹ Since acquiring his apprentices, three of Forbes's people died. They were Moco or Mocho, Onacabo (who was known as Judith), and Maria, and before the end of 1817 another man died, Onkseki (aka Tom).

³³⁰ HoCPP 1826-1827 Vol xxii 'Reports by Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Slaves in HM Colonies under Acts Abolishing Slave Trade, St Christopher, Nevis and Tortola' Chadwyck-Healey mf 29.176-177

³³¹ The parish register for St John Figtree recorded on 27 January 1822 'The following Negro Apprentices of GC Forbes Esq baptised viz: Davy, Nicola, Bob, Dick, Somerset, George, Peter, ?genny, Jemmy, Mingo, ?Isaac, Goodluck, Arrah, Stephen, Andrew, Jemmy (males), Betsey, Sally, Jane, Lettice, Jenny, Eccomo, Peggy, Christiana, Amba, Quama, Nancy (females)' (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825).

³³² UKNA, CO 186/10: 2 March 1815

Richardson Herbert's ruffled feathers but the Nelsons were none too impressed by 'Mr F'. Suggesting that Mr and Mrs Forbes were escaping creditors, Mrs Nelson later reported to her husband that the Forbeses, who had gone back to England where they lived grandly and beyond their means, were 'going to the West Indies in a very great hurry ...'.³³³ Their son carried on in a similar fashion. He ordered a fancy gig from England, one 'painted patent yellow and the lining grey', adorned with a crest.³³⁴ In Bath, where the Forbeses lived when they were not in Nevis,³³⁵ this modish vehicle would have impressed; in Nevis, an island with a few rough roads, it must have been an object of ridicule.

Bordering Arthurton's land on the other side was Pembroke Estate.³³⁶ With its 21 people it was the smallest of the surrounding properties. It was leased by Matthew Wallace but just as Forbes had other property (he owned a farm in Essex),³³⁷ Wallace also possessed property in St Kitts. For some years Wallace had held a public post; he had served as Captain Gunner of the Battery at Saddle Hill.³³⁸ However, Arthurton and Wallace were not neighbours for long. Wallace died just when Thomas Arthurton bought Richmond Lodge. He left behind his black mistress Lucy and their ten mulatto children, one of whom, John, was to continue as overseer until the lease on Pembroke expired.³³⁹ With his black mistress and his mixed-race family, Matthew Wallace's family arrangements were similar to Thomas Arthurton's.

To the north and east of Richmond Lodge lay Budgeon's, which another former Mountravers employee, Thomas Wenham, had leased in the 1760s.³⁴⁰ Later it was rumoured that Robert Claxton was buying Budgeon's and the adjoining North Wales estate³⁴¹ but during Thomas Arthurton's time Robert Claxton's cousin Butler Claxton was working North Wales. Arthurton knew Butler Claxton's father from his Mountravers days; William Coker and also JPP had employed him as a clerk.³⁴² Claxton senior had died in the intervening years, and Claxton junior had inherited some of his father's properties in Charlestown³⁴³ and the 140-acre³⁴⁴ plantation in St John Figtree. North Wales had the largest number of people (125) of the surrounding properties.³⁴⁵

North Wales was in a fair state but the one next to it, Hulburds, had become run-down and ramshackle. The works were falling to pieces, the thatched house, built of old timber, and the offices lay in ruins. Hulburds belonged to John Colhoun Mills, but a member of the Claxton family had occupied the plantation as a tenant.³⁴⁶ Hulburds had 44 people, about half the number who lived on Richmond Lodge, and while Forbes's Bush Hill stood out from many other Nevis estates because of the large number of Africans, it is noticeable that none worked on Hulburds, only Creoles.

Four Africans lived on Richmond Lodge. They represented less than five per cent of the total slave population on the estate – a proportion well below the island's average. Put another way: on Richmond Lodge about one person in twenty was African, while island-wide the ratio was one in

³³³ Naish, GPB (ed) *Nelson's letters* pp44-5 Nelson to Mrs Nisbet, 23 February 1787; pp47-8 Nelson to Mrs Nisbet, 28 February 1787, and pp264-65 Mrs Nelson to husband, 17 December 1794

³³⁴ PP, LB 58: GC Forbes, Nevis to PA & Co, 1 August 1825

³³⁵ Until 1820 George Clarke Forbes was in Nevis, in June 1821 in Bath, from July 1822 until April 1824 in Nevis, in July 1824 and July 1825 in Bath, in August 1825 back in Nevis for a very brief visit: He left Bath again in November 1825, arrived in Nevis January 1826, was in Nevis in June 1826.

³³⁶ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f474

³³⁷ PP, Dom Box C2-13: RE Case to Charles Pinney, Nevis, 7 June 1828

³³⁸ UKNA, CO 186/10: 18 July 1814

³³⁹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 ff327-31

Matthew Wallace left N£300 to each of his mulatto children and N£100 to Lucy Wallace, their mother, as well as land and other items. From his possessions it is apparent that Wallace was not a very wealthy man.

³⁴⁰ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 pp159-60

³⁴¹ PP, WI Box O-3 Book 1: Charles Pinney, Nevis, to RE Case, 19 June 1828

³⁴² PP, AB 20 Butler Claxton's a/c

³⁴³ ECSCRN, CR 1810-1814 ff1-9 and CR 1835-8183 f12

³⁴⁴ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 p41

³⁴⁵ UKNA, T 71/364

³⁴⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1810-1814 f159; UKNA, T 71/365-367, and HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlvi: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08

seven. But Thomas Arthurton's estate was strikingly different from many others in that it contained a very high number of mixed-race people. In 1817 Thomas Arthurton recorded 39 males and 46 females – 85 in total - and one in four these were mixed-race: six mulattoes (two children and four adults) and 17 sambos - the children of a black and a mulatto parent. The ages of the sambos ranged from three to thirty. As time went by, a higher proportion of sambos was born; after 1817 a quarter of all children born on Richmond Lodge were sambos. None of the children were identified as mestees. It is possible that the term sambo was used loosely to describe any mixed-race child, but the fact that two of these sambos were bought by their father, the mulatto William Arthurton, may possibly suggest that it was Thomas Arthurton's mulatto sons who were fathering children with black women on the plantation. Whether a deliberate policy of increasing the slave population lay behind this or just a brutal abuse of power is, of course, impossible to tell.³⁴⁷ It is clear, though, that in five years the numbers increased to 88 because the number of children born outweighed the ten people who died. Thomas Arthurton also purchased one person from Matthew Wallace's estate, but in the longer term Richmond Lodge was among those estates that maintained its numbers without additional purchases.

In 1817, several members of the Arthurton family also registered their privately-held people. Joan, the mother of Thomas's son John Fraser who had been freed in 1803, owned the most. She had twelve, among them three Africans (Edward, Friday and Thomas). Of the twelve, four died over the next seventeen years (Phibba, David, Alexander and Thomas). Others she sold (Fanny to Mary Jones), transferred (William to her son John Fraser), gave away (Edward to John Fraser's son), or manumitted (Friday in 1819 and James Nisbett shortly before slavery was abolished).³⁴⁸ In 1834, one of Joan Arthurton's men, William Washington, a 30-year-old mestize, was recorded as having been seized by customs. What lay behind this incident is not known except that there were other family connections with the Washington people: In 1815 Joan Arthurton had freed three females, among them Mary Washington, a mixed-race girl,³⁴⁹ and another Arthurton woman, Elizabeth, owned a mustee girl called Sally Washington whom she freed.³⁵⁰

Some of Joan Arthurton's people were baptised: Edward, one of the Africans; Grace, a sambo woman, and Grace's sons David and Jonathan.³⁵¹ When baptised in February 1822 in St John Figtree church, Grace, although in 1817 registered by Mrs Arthurton, was in the parish register described as 'belonging to Thomas Arthurton senior'. Actual ownership was less important than perceived ownership, and Grace may well have worked at Richmond Lodge while her mistress lived in Charlestown.

Other members of the family also lived in Charlestown. In 1812 Thomas Arthurton had bought from JPP a house where, among others, his son James and his nephew Charles (John's son) lived.³⁵² Charles, a writing clerk,³⁵³ also registered people in 1817 - nine for himself and another seven as executor for his half-sister Elizabeth (John Arthurton senior's mustee daughter with Joan

³⁴⁷ The evidence as to who fathered the sambos is inconclusive. While the two 30-year-old mulatto women Betsey and Suckey may have been the mothers of the eight sambo children aged 16 or under, the two men (Barthplane, aged 80, and Billy, aged 53) may have been the fathers of the nine people aged between 21 and 30. Another possibility is that other mulattoes who were the parents of the 17 sambos may have been alive before the 1817 register was completed but had died in the meantime.

³⁴⁸ UKNA, T 71/364 and T 71/365, and ECSCRN, CR 1831-1835 f189

³⁴⁹ Late in 1815 the mixed-race girl Mary Washington, was manumitted by Joan Arthurton. William (probably mistaken for Walter) Bucke, William Slater and Finlay Nicholson, three magistrates, certified that she 'was not likely to become chargeable to the public'. Joan Arthurton also freed the woman Judy and her child Joan. The witness was John Fraser Arthurton (ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff270-73).

³⁵⁰ Sally Washington was the only person Elizabeth Arthurton registered in 1817 and 1822. In December 1825 Sally Washington was freed by Elizabeth, who by then had become Mrs Bradley, but in the following slave register her manumission was not recorded. 'The free person of colour' Sally Washington subsequently appeared in the parish registers: her son James Washington was baptised in September 1826 and she married William Weekes in March 1832. The owner's consent was not required; she was free (NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 201 and St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842).

³⁵¹ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 Numbers 382 and 383

³⁵² PP, LB 23: JPP to Thos Arthurton, Nevis, 24 June 1812

³⁵³ ECSCRN, CR 1835-1838 f12

Peterson).³⁵⁴ Charles acted as joint executor with a planter called Samuel Sturge, and in her will Elizabeth Arthurton had left money for Charles's son Charles (who was her godson) and Samuel Sturge's son Samuel. Charles's sister Elizabeth and his wife (confusingly also called Elizabeth) were to share her furniture, and her seven people were to get a 'common suit of mourning' out of the estate. His half-sister Elizabeth had had a half-sister called Ann Baillie from whom she had inherited a house in Charlestown.³⁵⁵ It is not known what happened to that property after Elizabeth's death but in 1810 Charles had lived in Ann Baillie's house before he moved to one of JPP's properties where his cousin James lived – the Mountravers-born mulatto. This shows how members of the wider Arthurton family supported each other; they left property to their relatives, shared accommodation and lent money when it was needed.

Charles Arthurton, the writing clerk, may well have followed his father's wishes and gone to England for his education. Certainly he acquired, or was able to raise, sufficient capital to purchase a plantation. Almost certainly because his wife came from St Kitts he purchased a property in that island: Johnson's, which lay in the parish of Capisterre. He bought the estate from another free man from Nevis, Josiah Webbe Archbald (the son of Lydia Murray and Dr Sholto Archbald). Johnson's was a small property. In 1817 it had a slave population of 68 but its number was increasing; five years later it stood at 77. The increase came about because the number of children born exceeded the number of people who died. As at Richmond Lodge, it is striking that many of the new-born on Johnson's were mixed-race: ten out of 13.

The 1822 slave register for Johnson's was signed by Humphrey Ottley,³⁵⁶ a free man who may have been managing the estate on Arthurton's behalf. This man, no doubt, was related to Elizabeth Ottley, Charles Arthurton's wife and the mother of his son Charles (who appears to have been the first-born) and of his two other children: George and Georgiana.³⁵⁷ But Elizabeth Ottley had to bring up their children on her own; Charles Arthurton died some time between 1822 and 1825. He probably was in his forties.

What happened to Charles Arthurton's sister, Elizabeth? She, too, had been left money by their father for her education and training but there is no apparent evidence that she ever went abroad, or that she acquired any property. In 1817 Elizabeth had only one young woman, the 15-year-old Sally Washington. She manumitted her in December 1825 on payment of N£80.³⁵⁸ By then Elizabeth Arthurton had been married and widowed; in October 1823 she married a free man, James Bradley³⁵⁹ who died the following February.³⁶⁰ Almost certainly Elizabeth's husband was related to John Bradley to whom Elizabeth's sister-in-law, the widowed Elizabeth Ottley, mortgaged five of her deceased husband's people: Susy, a 45-year-old African woman; Sophy, a 25-year-old St Kitts mulatto; Thomas, a nine-year-old black boy who had been born in Nevis; and two young infants, Arthur and

³⁵⁴ As executor for Elizabeth Arthurton, in 1817 Charles Arthurton registered seven people: an African woman, Harriet (aged 35), her children Charles (aged 8) and Shurey alias Amarilla (aged 6); Bess (aged 40) her children Joseph and Mary (aged 8); and a 17-year-old girl, Sally. - Elizabeth had inherited N£50 from her father and it is likely that she put this money towards buying a slave: soon after John Arthurton died, she had paid N£98 for the 'new negro girl called Zoe alias Harriet'. She had bought Harriet, who may have spoken French, from John Peterson & Co of St Pierre in Martinique (ECSCRN, CR 1799-1801 f167). - The woman Bess and the girl Sally she had inherited from her half-sister Ann Baillie, who had died around 1811 (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 ff200-03). - Under Elizabeth's will of 1816, these three (Harriet, Bess and Sally) were to be hired out for two years and then to be given their freedom. Harriett's son Charles was to be freed and apprenticed to a trade when he was 12 years old, and Bess's children Joseph and Mary were to be given their freedom for N£45 (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 f312).

Before any of this happened, her half-brother Charles who was her executor, died, and her other executor, Samuel Sturge, took over and sold Harriet's daughter Shurey alias Amarilla to the writing clerk Edward Jones (UKNA, T 71/364). He then freed Shurey in June 1820 and took security for her maintenance (ECSCRN, CR 1819-1823 ff471-73).

³⁵⁵ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 ff200-03

³⁵⁶ UKNA, T 71/254

³⁵⁷ UKNA, T 71/258

³⁵⁸ UKNA, T 71/1543 Bundle 7; also ECSCRN, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f464

³⁵⁹ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b) and ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1830-1837 f224

³⁶⁰ NHCS, St Paul's Burials, 1825-1837

Jacob.³⁶¹ After Charles Arthurton died, Bradley transferred these five individuals to Elizabeth Ottley's sons Charles and George and purchased two of Charles Arthurton's people from Nevis: Emma and Her daughter Georgiana already had in her possession four of her father's people; he had sold them to Grace Osborn of St Kitts who had then transferred them to Georgiana. In 1828 Elizabeth Ottley registered all her children's people on their behalf but three years later Charles Arthurton junior was old enough to complete the registers himself.³⁶²

Charles Arthurton senior died between 1822 and 1825, and during that period Johnson's estate went into receivership. Like his uncle Thomas Arthurton, Charles had entered the plantation business too late.



In 1817, when Thomas Arthurton acquired Richmond Lodge, he was eighty years old. He had lived in Nevis for 56 years and had fathered at least six children who had produced at least half a dozen grandchildren. He was still very fit, so much so that at the beginning of 1820 he offered to ride with Charles Pinney over Ede's rented lands (previously Jesup's) on the other side of the island, in the parish of St Thomas Lowland.³⁶³ In November that year, however, having become 'aged and infirm', he made his will. He had been in the process of acquiring some land in Charlestown from John Frederick Pinney, and in his will he asked that the purchase be completed and that the property be bought for £50. It was to go to two of his granddaughters, Amelia and Eliza. They were the daughters of his son James, who, as a child, had lived on Mountravers. James Arthurton had died not long before Thomas Arthurton made his will. Other property which old Arthurton owned in Charlestown, a house and land and another house or shop, he left to his mistress Joan Arthurton, and a house inhabited by one of his daughters, Martha Reid, he left to the occupant. His plantation he left in trust to two people: to his friend Samuel Sturge and his 'natural or reputed son' John Fraser Arthurton. In the event of Samuel Sturge's death, the plantation and land was for the use of Thomas Arthurton's common-law wife Joan Arthurton and his four children, Martha Reid, William Arthurton, John Fraser Arthurton and Thomas Arthurton junior. The same five people were also to get an annual sum of £30 each, and he bequeathed a plantation slave to his mistress Joan and to each of his six grandchildren: to James's children (Eliza, Amelia, and George) and John's children (Fanny, Joan and Charles). Rather touchingly, he matched the gender and probably the ages of these gifts to their recipients;³⁶⁴ for the girls he left girls aged 13, 11 and 8, for Charles a boy aged 11 and for Joan Arthurton,³⁶⁵ then in her late forties, a 38-year-old mulatto woman, Suckey. While these were passed on to their new owners, the girl Sarah, left for George, was not handed over.³⁶⁶

In 1822, a year of draught with a 'sickly' autumn, Thomas Arthurton's health was failing. As the Pinney firm put it: 'His property is small and must in due course descend to his coloured family'.³⁶⁷ And within less than years it did: Thomas Arthurton died on 22 February 1824. He was 86 years old. Although the church of St John Figtree was much closer to his plantation, he was buried at St Thomas Lowland.³⁶⁸ His death was followed six weeks later by that of 'Lady Arthurton' but the identity of this woman could not be established.³⁶⁹

³⁶¹ UKNA, T 71/255, T 71/256 and T 71/258

³⁶² UKNA, T 71/258 f158, T 71/259 f162, T 71/260 f187

For their enslaved people, Charles, George and Georgiana Arthurton received £112 compensation and Elizabeth Ottley another £37 (UKNA, T 71/259 and St Christopher Uncontested Claims – List A: Claims Numbers 308-311).

³⁶³ PP, Dom Box C1-6: Thomas Arthurton senior to Charles Pinney, Nevis, 4 January 1820

³⁶⁴ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1819-1830 ff218-27 and CR 1838-1847 f512

³⁶⁵ UKNA, T 71/364-6

³⁶⁶ Another grandchild of Thomas Arthurton's, Mary, the sambo daughter of his son John 'by a negro woman', had died within a fortnight of being baptised on 16 November 1818 (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825).

³⁶⁷ PP, LB 57: PA & Co to Mills & Galpine, Nevis, 20 November 1822

³⁶⁸ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p103

³⁶⁹ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)

With the soil still fresh on his father's grave, on 11 May 1824 John Fraser Arthurton got married. His wife almost certainly was white: Jane Maria Lyons, a daughter of the Revd Samuel Lyons. She was one of five children who were all of 'full blood': she and her three sisters, Alicia (also Eliza) Catherine Lyons, Caroline Amelia Lyons and Mary Harman Lyons and their brother, William Lyons.³⁷⁰ In the 1830s he became Secretary of the Office of Compensation in Nevis, thereby linking John Fraser Arthurton's wider family to the administrative machinery set up by the British Government to distribute the slave compensation fund.³⁷¹

Jane Maria Lyons' father had previously been rector at St Thomas Lowland and also at Antigua and was about to return to St Thomas Lowland church,³⁷² but it was not Revd Lyons who 'solemnized' their marriage. Instead, they called on William Henry Rawlins, a controversial clergyman from St Kitts. Some years earlier he had been convicted for the manslaughter of a slave.³⁷³ The fact that the wedding took place at sea, on board the sloop *Lady Jane*,³⁷⁴ may further suggest that the couple entered their union against her family's wishes.

John Fraser Arthurton's wife brought into their marriage ten people, most likely the last the Lyons family owned in Nevis; the family also had an estate in Antigua. The Reverend had manumitted one female, Margaret,³⁷⁵ and sold another, Betsey Jones.³⁷⁶ John Fraser Arthurton possessed few personal slaves of his own. Of the two he had bought, he sold one, Fanny, an African woman,³⁷⁷ and gave the other, the Creole Polly, to his daughter Joan. He was in the process of strengthening his workforce by changing its composition: he sold two of his wife's females, Kitty and Penny, together with a seven-months-old baby, Betsey,³⁷⁸ and bought a male, Mingo, instead.³⁷⁹

When entrusted with the joint-inheritance, Samuel Sturge was around forty years old. He probably managed a plantation in St Thomas Lowland, John Taylor's Tower Hill estate; the other inheritor, his son John Fraser Arthurton, was also an experienced planter. He may have gained experience working on the Hamilton estate.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁰ NCH, Boof of Wills 1819-1830 ff315-17

Presumably all five siblings were daughters of Revd Lyons and his wife Alicia Harman, daughter of William Wickham Harman of Murray's (VL Oliver *History of Antigua* Vol 2 pp214-17).

³⁷¹ UKNA, T 71/1616: Office of Auxiliary Commissioners, Nevis, to London 18 April 1837

The post William Lyons held in the 1830s probably was part-time; in June 1830 he was identified as an overseer when he was a juror in the case against the manager of the Stapleton Estate (NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p309). In 1828 he had been a 'student of medicine' in Philadelphia (NCH, Boof of Wills 1819-1830 ff315-17).

A family tree of Revd Samuel Lyons did not include his daughter Jane Maria, perhaps providing further evidence that the family did not approve of her marriage. However, this did not affect what probably was her dowry. In the slave register her father stated that he transferred the people to John Fraser Arthurton 'in right to his marriage to my daughter Jane Maria' (<http://lyonsfamily.treeguide.com> and UKNA, T 71/366)

³⁷² Samuel Lyons, the son of John Lyons of Tetworth in Huntingdonshire, was born about 1766/7 and studied at St Edmunds Hall, Oxford (Joseph Foster (ed) *Alumni Oxonienses 1715-1886*). In 1802 to 1803 he was Rector at Antigua (VL Oliver *Monumental Inscriptions* p103) and in 1804 inducted to two livings in Nevis (Miscellaneous Papers Vol XVII p209 Samuel Lyons to His Excellency Thomas Probyn, 10 July 1817). He probably lived in Nevis from then on; in 1810 he was supposed to have been within hearing at the Huggins flogging in the market square. He certainly was in Nevis in 1812 and in 1814 when he attended Council Meetings (UKNA, CO 186/9: 23 January 1812 and CO 186/10: 14 Jan 1814).

³⁷³ HoCPP 1818 Vol xvii 'Papers Relating to the Treatment of Slaves in the Colonies' Chadwyck-Healey mf 19.86 pp1-91

³⁷⁴ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p103

³⁷⁵ In 1817, Revd Lyons registered the nine people settled on his daughter but not Betsey Jones, whom he sold to Martha Archbald (UKNA, T 71/364). Revd Samuel Lyons had bought the mestee Margaret in July 1819 from the planter George Saunders Vaughan of St Kitts for N£30. He manumitted her soon after (ECSCRN, CR 1817-1819 ff466-67).

³⁷⁶ Betsey Jones was manumitted on 1 March 1820 by Martha Archbald (ECSCRN, CR 1819-1823 ff32-3).

³⁷⁷ Fanny, whom John Fraser Arthurton had bought from Charles and Henrietta Abbott, was sold to Thomas Webbe and Jack Horse (UKNA, T 71/365). It is likely that he was the same Thomas Webbe who later married John Fraser Arthurton's niece Amelia Arthurton.

³⁷⁸ UKNA, T 71/367

³⁷⁹ John Fraser Arthurton bought Mingo from Robert Claxton, attorney of Protheroe and Savage, trustees of Butler Thomson Claxton (UKNA, T 71/368). He purchased Mingo on 20 May 1828 for N£129 (ECSCRN, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f626). However, he either did not pay for Mingo, or what appeared to have been a sale was in fact a mortgage because Mingo was later manumitted by Protheroe & Savage (ECSCRN, CR 1831-1835 ff174-75).

³⁸⁰ Under the scheme whereby the Legislature reimbursed owners for their slaves who had been executed for crimes, in 1821 John Arthurton was paid part of the compensation for 'a negro man named Tom', who had belonged to Hamilton's estate. Tom

A month after John Fraser Arthurton married Jane Maria Lyons, a woman who had previously belonged to Revd Lyons, Clementina Lyons, married a man belonging to Arthurton, James.³⁸¹ James (also called Jimmy) was an African man in his mid-thirties and the only person owned by William Arthurton, one of Thomas Arthurton's sons.³⁸² Born in the early 1780s and manumitted by his father in 1803, William Arthurton was a carpenter who lived in Charlestown in one of his father's properties.³⁸³ After his father's death, William bought from his father's estate three people - his mistress and their children. William Arthurton freed them in November 1825:³⁸⁴ the 23-year-old black woman Elsey and her sambo children Susanna, aged six, and William, aged five. His son William junior had been baptised in July 1822 in the church nearest Richmond Lodge, St John Figtree,³⁸⁵ but Elsey Arthurton's next child, Joseph, was baptised in the church in Charlestown, in July 1827. Joseph may not have been William's son; Elsey Arthurton was the only parent listed in the parish register.³⁸⁶ By then the couple may well have separated: when two years later William Arthurton fell ill, he was looked after by Friday, almost certainly the African woman freed by Joan Arthurton senior in 1819.³⁸⁷ William's brother John Fraser Arthurton had so far failed to put a 'proper arrangement' in place for what was due to him from Richmond Lodge, and, grateful for Friday's care, in his will William Arthurton left her N£100. The remainder of his belongings and whatever was due to him from his father's estate he wanted to go to John Arthurton, the retailer. (This John Arthurton is understood to have been his nephew, the man who later called himself John Cooke Arthurton.)³⁸⁸ William Arthurton died at the age of 45 and was buried on 17 May 1829.³⁸⁹

In his will William Arthurton had stipulated that his African man Jimmy (who had got married in 1824) was to assist in the care of his two children, William and Susanna, who were then both minors. (To Elsey's other child, Joseph, who had been baptised in Charlestown, William Arthurton left nothing.) When William and Susanna reached the age of 21, Jimmy was to be freed,³⁹⁰ but, for the time being, brother and sister registered Jimmy as their slave.³⁹¹ Jimmy's wife Clementina, meanwhile, was sold with six other people who had formerly belonged to Revd Lyons. It appears that they were intended to work on a neighbouring estate, North Wales. Clementina and the others were bought by two free mixed-race stonemasons, James Dore and James Powell,³⁹² around the same time these men were acquiring North Wales.³⁹³ (Butler Claxton had left the estate - insolvent and after a spell in prison for debt.)³⁹⁴ Dore, a man in his late thirties,³⁹⁵ was about to get married³⁹⁶ and was setting himself up in the plantation business. George Clarke Forbes from the Bush Hill estate thought him 'a very good man'³⁹⁷ but Dore and Powell were struggling to succeed.³⁹⁸ Soon Dore owed money and had to

had been hanged (UKNA, T 71/366) and John Arthurton had received N£100 while the remainder went to the Lathams, the London owners of the plantation (UKNA, CO 186/12: 27 February 1821). This arrangement suggests that Tom had belonged to John Arthurton but was under mortgage to the Lathams.

³⁸¹ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

³⁸² UKNA, T 71/364

³⁸³ Thomas Arthurton left the 'house or shop' in Charlestown occupied by William Arthurton to his long-term partner, the free woman Joan Arthurton. She also inherited the house and land occupied by William Keepe (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1819-1830 ff218-27), the Deputy Provost Marshal and later Director of Police.

³⁸⁴ UKNA, T 71/367

³⁸⁵ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

³⁸⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 234

³⁸⁷ UKNA, T 71/365

³⁸⁸ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1819-1830 f379

³⁸⁹ NHCS, St Thomas Burial 1827-1957 No 18

³⁹⁰ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1819-1830 f379

³⁹¹ John Arthurton signed the children's 1831 register: Jimmy was said to have been acquired 'by gift from William Arthurton dec'd'. Jimmy was alive in 1834 (UKNA, T 71/368 and 369).

³⁹² On 28 August 1830 John F Arthurton sold to James Dore four people for N£360 (UKNA, T 71/1543 Bundle 7). These were George (a man), Clementine, Rose (a woman) and the girl Sally (ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 ff295-96). James Dore and James Powell also bought James, Richard and William (UKNA, T 71/368).

³⁹³ ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol2 ff304-09 and CR 1835-1838 f117

³⁹⁴ UKNA, CO 186/12: 6 July 1822

³⁹⁵ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 711

³⁹⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

³⁹⁷ PP, LB 56: GC Forbes, Nevis, to PA & Co, 14 December 1822

mortgage his people,³⁹⁹ and it is very likely that Jimmy's wife changed owners once more. Jimmy was not freed. As William Arthurton's executor, John Arthurton (the retailer) included Jimmy in his claim for compensation.⁴⁰⁰ Jimmy died, aged 48, and on 17 February 1837 was buried as James Arthurton.⁴⁰¹ John Fraser Arthurton sold two more of his wife's people, Frankey and Statia. One went to the free mixed-race man James Hanley in Gingerland, the other to the free black woman Maria Vaughan who lived in St Thomas Lowland.⁴⁰² Within ten years John Fraser had sold all but one of his wife's people. Previously owned by her clergyman father, Revd Lyons, they probably were mostly domestics rather than field workers. Arthurton needed productive field hands but he also needed all the money he could get. Soon after his father had died, he had to pay off a debt of over N£2,400 to William Bowrin – a debt that went back to 1804 for which his father, together with Dr Sholto Archbald, had been jointly responsible.⁴⁰³ He may also have had to take on some responsibility towards his in-laws after his wife's father was in November 1827 lost at sea, in the brig *Underhill*,⁴⁰⁴ and when his joint-inheritor Samuel Sturge died in the following summer,⁴⁰⁵ the responsibility for making the plantation a successful enterprise fell entirely onto him. There were legacies to disburse⁴⁰⁶ and more debts to settle. Although at least in credit with the Pinney firm,⁴⁰⁷ he owed money on the purchase of the estate. In addition, he was indebted to Joan Arthurton for £2,624, while another relative, James Arthurton, was waiting to be repaid money that John Fraser had borrowed in 1824. In addition, the court had imposed a hefty fine.⁴⁰⁸ Although in debt himself, John Fraser lent some money to his brother-in-law, William Lyons,⁴⁰⁹ and it may have been this borrowing within the family and this supporting each other in times of need that kept the Arthurtons from asking the Legislature for assistance. It is striking that during this period of considerable hardship none of the wider family applied for poor relief.

But then, to add to his woes, just a few months after Samuel Sturge's death, John Fraser faced a major setback: two men from Huggins's Indian Castle set fire and burnt down the boiling house at Richmond Lodge. These were unsettling times and, keen to catch those responsible so that an example could be made of them, the Legislature offered a reward of N£100. The culprits, John Williams and Cuffe, had gone underground, as had three other men: William Bowrin's Monday, accused of trying to poison the family of Mr Howe, and Red William and Joe Macey. The latter two had been sentenced to death but absconded as soon as their shackles were removed. Six months later they were still 'at large in the island to the terror and injury of its inhabitants'.⁴¹⁰

Losing the boiling house not only meant that John Fraser was unable to process his next crop but the reconstruction cost money. And having a large family was expensive. He had at least three illegitimate children, and not long after he got married he had become the father of probably his first

³⁹⁸ James Powell in his will made bequests to his six children but he left North Wales to Walter Maynard, who presumably was financing, or part-financing, the venture (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f252; also CR 1835-1838 ff117-20 and ff490-92)

³⁹⁹ ECSCRN, CR 1831-1835 f249

Dore assigned seven of the people for whom he claimed compensation to Charles Pinney and claimed for four with his wife and her sister (UKNA, T71/1038 Claims Number 152 and 186).

⁴⁰⁰ John Arthurton's claim was for four individuals whom he held in his own right, for one whom he held jointly with Ann Arthurton, and one he claimed for as William Arthurton's executor (UKNA, T 71/1038, Claim No 175). Subsequently his claim was disputed. In an effort to recover money still owed by Thomas Arthurton senior, the London merchants John Nelson Bond and Henry Pearse laid claim to John Arthurton's compensation money (UKNA, T 71/1237: Counter Claims) but their claim was rejected and on 18 July 1836 John Arthurton was paid S£129 compensation for six people.

⁴⁰¹ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 744

⁴⁰² UKNA, T 71/368

Statia's new mistress, the free black woman Maria Vaughan, was baptised in February 1830 (NHCS, St Thomas Baptisms 1827-1873 No 172). Statia later had a daughter called Anna Maria, who was baptised in May 1838. Statia Arthurton then was a house servant, as was her daughter's father, Atherton Baughan (mis-transcribed; should read Vaughan). He was described as of Bradwick, St Thomas Lowland (Transcripts of Baptisms St Thomas Lowland 1831-1873 No 542).

⁴⁰³ ECSCRN, CR 1819-1823 vol 2 ff515-16

⁴⁰⁴ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p103

⁴⁰⁵ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 10

⁴⁰⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1838-1847 f512

⁴⁰⁷ PP, LB 59: PA & Co to John F Arthurton, 1 June 1825

⁴⁰⁸ UKNA, CO 186/12: 30 May 1825

⁴⁰⁹ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f207

⁴¹⁰ UKNA, CO 186/13: 26 December 1828 and 26 June 1829

legitimate child, Samuel Lyons Arthurton. John Fraser's mother Joan presented the boy with his own slave, Edward,⁴¹¹ and John Fraser's mother was also the guardian when his under-age daughter Joan got married. John Fraser had given her one of his own people, Polly, and she also owned Grace (left to her in Thomas Arthurton's will) and Grace's child, the baby Sarah Bell.⁴¹² On marriage, these three became her husband's property. The ceremony took place on 4 August 1831 in the Rectory House and John Fraser Arthurton was of the witnesses.⁴¹³ Joan and her husband Robert Reap, a mariner like his father of the same name, lived in Charlestown. There their sons Wellington and William were baptised on 4 March 1835 and on 24 October 1836, and on 28 July 1838 their daughter Frances.⁴¹⁴ They had another daughter, Sophia, but it is not known when she was baptised.⁴¹⁵

In July 1825 Samuel Lyons, John Fraser Arthurton's own son, had been baptised.⁴¹⁶ John Fraser Arthurton chose to send him to Codrington College in Barbados,⁴¹⁷ which had been set up for the education of white boys.⁴¹⁸ The mixed-race Arthurtons were fast becoming part of the establishment.

Members of the family also benefited from the British government's slave compensation pay-outs. In order to assess slaveholders' right to compensation, their people were categorised and valued by two appraisers, Samuel Woodley Wattlely and Walter Maynard. At Richmond Lodge they found 75 people.

Richmond Lodge: Categories of enslaved people, 1 August 1834

Compensation category	Male	Female
Head people	3	0
Trades people	3	0
Field labourers	15	17
Inferior field labourers	0	3
Head people on wharfs, shipping, etc.	5	0
Inferior people on wharves, shipping	5	5
Head domestic servants	2	3
Inferior domestic servants	2	1
Children under 6 years of age	6	3
Aged, diseased, or otherwise ineffective	0	2
Total	41	34

⁴¹¹ Edward was an African and aged 37 registered by Joan Arthurton in 1817. He was baptised in January 1824 (NHCS, St Paul's' Baptisms 1824-1835 No 3). It is likely that he was buried as Edward Arthurton, aged 'about 60', in November 1852. His age was under-estimated by some years (St Paul's Burials 1844-1965).

⁴¹² UKNA, T 71/369

⁴¹³ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁴¹⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 and St Paul's Baptismal Records 1835-1873

⁴¹⁵ NCH, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f203

⁴¹⁶ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

⁴¹⁷ Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p103

⁴¹⁸ Thompson, VB *The Making of the African Diaspora* p236, citing JH Bennett jr *Bondsmen and Bishops: Slavery and Apprenticeship on the Codrington Plantation of Barbados, 1710-1838* Berkeley, California 1958 pp5-10, also p1

419

Arthurton's plantation people were valued at a total of £3,372; his four personal servants at £192. When it came to the actual compensation pay-outs, John Fraser Arthurton, like other proprietors, received only forty per cent of the actual value: £1,345 for the Richmond Lodge people and £76 for his personal servants.⁴²⁰

Under his management (in terms of births and deaths) the slave population had remained almost stable and none of the children born had died⁴²¹ but he had lost a dozen people through other means. Half of these his father had gifted to family members, while one woman, Cisly, had bought herself and her two sambo children Kitsey and Ramus, and he had sold another mother and her two children to his brother William.⁴²² When the apprenticeship period started, despite having fewer very old people, overall the workforce on Richmond Lodge was increasing in age as can be seen from the following table.

Richmond Lodge: Distribution of age groups, 1817

Age group	Number of enslaved people
0-19	32
20-39	35
40-59	10
60+	7
Total	84

423

Other Arthurton family members also received slave compensation: young Joan's husband Robert Reap was awarded just over £40 for the couple's three individuals,⁴²⁴ Mrs Joan Arthurton senior received almost £120 for her seven, including Suckey whom Thomas Arthurton had bequeathed to her. Of the other five people he had willed to his then under-age grandchildren, Eliza appears not to have claimed for Betty while Fanny and Amelia's girls Sue and Friday both had had a child each.⁴²⁵

⁴¹⁹ UKNA, T 71/751

⁴²⁰ There were inconsistencies in every Richmond Lodge return: Edward (No 25), who was recorded as 'dead' in 1822, had not been listed in 1817 and from 1822, therefore, the names did not always match the numbering. Cuffee was also recorded as 'dead' twice. Although the different compensation categories of males and females added up to 85 people, according to one source, John Fraser Arthurton was paid compensation for 75, according to another source, he was paid compensation for 76 enslaved people (PP, WI Box R-6: Compensation file). The last figure given in the 1834 annual return was incorrect; the actual number was 74 (T 71/369).

One young man, Siah, was forfeited to the Crown by sentence of the Court of Admiralty (UKNA, T71/1038).

John Fraser Arthurton was also involved in five litigated claims: claim No 13 for 106; No 15 for 162, No 16 for 32, No 17 for 112, and No 18 for 148 enslaved people (HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08 and pp314-15: Nevis Litigated Claims).

⁴²¹ Two babies, Jack and Mattlane, had died under his father's management and one girl, Silvia, who was born during his father's time, died in 1833 but all children born when John Fraser Arthurton was manager lived until 1834.

⁴²² According to the slave register, Elsey was sold to William Pemberton. This may have been a mistake, but it is more likely that William Pemberton advanced William Arthurton the money for this purchase (UKNA, T 71/366).

⁴²³ UKNA, T 71/364

⁴²⁴ In later life Robert Reap junior held a good position in Nevis society. In addition to the slave compensation money he had received he inherited £45 when his father died in 1843 (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f203). Reap was able to satisfy the property qualification for voting and for standing in elections, and in 1860 he served as a vestryman for his local parish, St Paul's (UKNA, CO 187/34 Blue Book Nevis 1860).

⁴²⁵ In 1828, Elizabeth Branch, as trustee, registered the slaves for the infants Amelia Arthurton and Eliza Arthurton. Elizabeth Branch was the widow of the millwright Francis Branch (ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 f195).

By then of full age, Fanny and Amelia were paid S£24 each for the mothers and their children.⁴²⁶ Charles, who had been left the mulatto George by Thomas Arthurton, had only ever possessed that one person and his father had left George in his will to Mary Bennett, most likely a free mixed-race woman.⁴²⁷ Thomas's Arthurton daughter Martha Reid, who lived in Charlestown, did not receive any compensation; she had sold one young woman and manumitted another.⁴²⁸ George Arthurton (the son of James Arthurton who had formerly belonged to Mountravers), was awarded S£44 compensation. A merchant's clerk who lived in Charlestown, he had got married⁴²⁹ just before slavery was abolished and, consequently, had acquired his wife's three people.⁴³⁰ The couple had four children, all of whom were baptised in St Paul's church: Charles James, Laurence George, Elizabeth and Mary (who was named after his wife). Two of the children died young: Charles James and Elizabeth Bradley Arthurton.⁴³¹

It is noticeable that most of Thomas Arthurton's grandchildren married in church. George Arthurton had married his wife Mary Laurence in St Paul's church and his sister Amelia's wedding to Thomas Webbe also took place there.⁴³² Their ceremony was witnessed by Robert Reap junior (their cousin Joan Arthurton's husband) and William Browne, a planter and parish clerk.⁴³³ On the same day these two men also witnessed the wedding of another woman with the surname Arthurton, Frances, who married a man called John Benders. Most likely this was the mustee Fanny, who had once been registered by George's father as a slave and who probably was his daughter – George's and Amelia's half-sister. Two years earlier, in 1836, their cousin Fanny Brander Arthurton (John Fraser Arthurton's daughter), had also got married in St Paul's church. Her husband, William Tobin Claxton,⁴³⁴ a writing clerk, served in the Nevis militia - as did his father-in-law, John Fraser Arthurton. By 1839 Claxton held the post of Notary Public.⁴³⁵

Both George and John Fraser Arthurton took an active part in public life in the island; they were among 74 people who signed a petition in support of Edward Huggins junior being allowed a seat on the Council.⁴³⁶ Twenty year earlier Huggins, then a Magistrate, had witnessed his father's public flogging of the Mountravers people without intervening. On orders of the Prince Regent, Huggins's

When the daughter of Fanny Arthurton's Sue was baptised in September 1829, she was said to belong to Miss Joan Arthurton of Charlestown. The father of Susanna Arthurton's daughter Delia was George Ritching.

Amelia Arthurton registered Friday's son Samuel in 1834 as aged one year and seven months old (UKNA, T 71/369). Friday then had another child; her 'illegitimate' daughter Eliza was baptised in August 1835 (NHCS, Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 Numbers 448 and 785).

⁴²⁶ HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08 and pp314-15: Nevis Litigated Claims
Ann, George, Joan, Fanny Brander and Amelia Arthurton claimed compensation for 24 people in total (claims numbers 174-179). In addition, John claimed for six (claim 175), which was a litigated claim with Ann. In 1817, members of the family who then registered people owned 28 between them. John Fraser's claim for Richmond Lodge (No 12) was a separate claim.

⁴²⁷ Listed after Ann Bennett (who lived next to Ann Arthurton in Charlestown), Mary Bennett received compensation for five people (HoCAaP 1837-1838 Vol xlviii: Chadwyk-Healey mf 41.389 pp107-08).

⁴²⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol 1 f325; also UKNA, T 71/368

Martha Reid (also spelt Reid) was buried on 3 March 1867. She was 91 years old and had lived in Charlestown (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957).

⁴²⁹ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁴³⁰ PP, Dom Box R-6: Compensation file

⁴³¹ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1835-1873 Numbers 17, 69 and 193 and St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 706 and St Paul's Burials 1837-1841 No 9

⁴³² NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁴³³ UKNA, CO 187/10 Blue Book Nevis 1836, and NHCS, Transcripts of Baptisms St Thomas Lowland 1831-1873 No 690

⁴³⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

Fanny Brander Arthurton was awarded her compensation on 16 February 1836 in her maiden name. Her middle name Brander may have been linked to two men by the name of Brander: James Brander, a police officer (UKNA, CO 186/12: 1 June 1822), and John Brander who in July 1822 swore an affidavit which suggests that he had been in Nevis since at least 1817 (HoCPP 1826-1827 Vol xxii 'Reports by Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Slaves in HM Colonies under Acts Abolishing Slave Trade, St Christopher, Nevis and Tortola' Chadwyk-Healey mf 29.176-177: 'The Return and Report' by TH Bowles and JPP Gannon, Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Captured Africans, concerning 28 people taken from Tortola by GC Forbes).

⁴³⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1835-1838 f49, UKNA, CO 187/10 and CO 187/13 Blue Books Nevis 1836 and 1839

⁴³⁶ UKNA, CO 239/29 and CO 239/30

commission had been withdrawn “in the most public and disgraceful manner possible”,⁴³⁷ the Council had censured him and he had to relinquish his seat until these 74 inhabitants lobbied for his rehabilitation. John Fraser Artherton's interest in the case was personal: his father-in-law, the Revd Samuel Lyons, had also been within hearing of the floggings and he also had not tried to intercede. George and John Fraser Artherton were not the only free mixed-race men to support Edward Huggins junior,⁴³⁸ and while John Fraser may not have been the first free mixed-race man to be elected to the Assembly, in January 1836 he certainly was among the early mixed-race members. He could stand for election because he was a freeholder and fulfilled the property qualification. He represented his local parish, St John Figtree.⁴³⁹ By then both he and his nephew George had already acted as jurors in court cases,⁴⁴⁰ and John Fraser Artherton had joined the Nevis militia. He served as a lieutenant in the cavalry.⁴⁴¹ The superior post he held is noteworthy, but more noteworthy is the fact that he had joined the cavalry. He was not a foot soldier but trained to fight on horseback. Planters and their managers used to ride horses and now a free man had acquired the same right. Sitting astride a horse he was able to – literally – look down upon the lower, poorer sections of society. The horse he rode would have been his own property.

Over the next few years John Fraser Artherton lost several more members of his extended family who, like him, had started their lives enslaved: his nephew William died in January 1839 at the age of 27;⁴⁴² his 67-year-old mother in February 1841,⁴⁴³ and his nephew George was buried, aged 35, in May 1846.⁴⁴⁴ John Fraser's mother Joan Artherton, like his father, was interred in St Thomas Lowland, as was a 58-year-old Thomas Artherton, who died two months after George. It is likely that this was John Fraser's seafaring brother who had once attended school in England.⁴⁴⁵

In 1836 John Fraser Artherton had to defend a Court case brought by another relative, one James Artherton. He owed him N\$142:6:3 which he had borrowed 12 years earlier. This court case was only the first of several that John Fraser either initiated or defended over the coming years. In 1837 his mother had taken him to Court for the N£2,624 she was owed from Thomas Artherton's inheritance; in August 1840, just months before she died, his mother won her case and judgment was made against John Fraser. The planter Laurence Haddock Prentis also put in a claim while John Fraser, in turn, demanded money that Laurence Prentis owed him. In addition he called in debts from Roger De Grasse, a blacksmith, and Edwin Burke, a store maker. Getting back the N£350 that he had lent his brother-in-law, William Lyons, in 1828 proved tricky; William died in January 1838, leaving few possessions,⁴⁴⁶ and his administratrix Caroline Amelia Lyons was slow in paying up but finally did, in 1840. Later that year John Fraser won a case brought by Laurence Nicholson for a debt of N£200,⁴⁴⁷

⁴³⁷ Hamilton College, Beinecke Collection, *Connecticut Journal* 2 January 1812, quoting *London Statesman* 21 September 1811 (Courtesy of Vincent K Hubbard)

⁴³⁸ Another free man who supported Edward Huggins's rehabilitation as a magistrate was, for instance, John Williamson Huggins, the husband of Judith Scarborough (NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842).

⁴³⁹ UKNA, CO 187/10 and CO 187/15 Blue Books Nevis 1836 and 1841

By 1852 the majority of assembly men were black or mixed-race (Karen Fog Olwig *Global Culture, Island Identity* p100, quoting SOAS, Methodist Missionary Society Archives, Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (London) Archive West Indies, CA Correspondence, Antigua, 1833-1890 mf 1068: 13 March 1852).

By the 1830s free men also served as judge, lawyers and jurors (Rachel Frances Levy (ed) *The Life and Adventures of John Levy* p58).

⁴⁴⁰ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f 32, f170, f234 and f327 and Queen's Bench and Common Pleas 1831-1844

⁴⁴¹ UKNA, CO 187/10 and 15 Blue Books Nevis 1836 and 1841

⁴⁴² NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1837-1841 No 76

⁴⁴³ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 260

⁴⁴⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 464

⁴⁴⁵ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 Unnumbered

There was at least one other man called Thomas Artherton. On Jessup's lived a cooper who, with his wife Nancy, had a son called James (b January 1845; baptised May 1845) (Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873). It is likely that he was the 'yellow' man called Tom who, aged 30, had in 1817 been registered as living on Jessup's estate (UKNA, T 71/364). He may well have gone to live in Jessop's Village. There a man called Thomas Artherton who was said to have been aged 91 years old died in January 1869 (St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 1386).

⁴⁴⁶ William Lyons's possession amounted to just over N£100; his sisters would have had to raise the rest of the money to repay the loan (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 ff21-5).

⁴⁴⁷ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f82 and f153; King's/Queen's Bench and Common Pleas 1822-1841 f130; Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f139; f211; f140; f212 and f329; f207 and f304; ?f470

which must have irked the legally-trained Nicholson: an attorney at law, one-time Deputy Provost Marshal and Registrar of Slaves, Nicholson was also an Assistant Justice of Her Majesty's Court Queen's Bench and Common Pleas.⁴⁴⁸

Except for the money he owed his mother, the other sums John Fraser Arthurton either defended or recovered were relatively small and did not amount to the £2,400 he still owed to the London firm Bond, Pearse and Child.⁴⁴⁹ As a consequence of his debt to them, in the 1840s John Fraser Arthurton lost his father's estate. Although one document described Thomas Arthurton's land as belonging to his sisters-in-law, the spinsters Mary Lyons and Caroline Lyons,⁴⁵⁰ it appears to have been auctioned; another document suggests that for 'Richmond Lodge or Salt Pond Gut Estate' the Provost Marshal⁴⁵¹ Stedman Akers Rawlins received a loan of S£500 from Her Majesty's Government under an Act of the Island and that Rawlins owned the land a year or so before he died in 1850.⁴⁵² Rawlins sold it to the planter Walter Lewis Bucke and to Thomas Slater, the Colonial Secretary,⁴⁵³ who then sold it to John Richards.⁴⁵⁴ Bucke had, in the late 1830s, also acquired neighbouring Bush Hill. This he bequeathed, with Zetland plantation, to John Richards and his wife Mary Susanna, to whom Bucke was related.⁴⁵⁵ When Richmond Lodge and Bush Hill came into their possession, Richards and his wife may have been worked the estates as one. In an effort to improve and mechanise sugar production, some time after the early 1870s the owners installed a Fletcher steam engine of the horizontal type on Richmond Lodge.⁴⁵⁶

John Fraser almost certainly was the 'JF' Arthurton who drew up the leases for settlers on Pollards Land, part of the old Jesup's plantation. Among them were four Arthurtons and many individuals with surnames associated with plantations in this part of St Thomas Lowland, illustrating that people tended to settle quite close to the estates on which they had previously worked: Browne, Clerk (presumably Clarke), Huggins, Jessup, Jones, Lawrence, Sanders, Scarborough, Wilkes, and Williams. Two men, Daniel Martin and John Wallace, had married, or were the sons of, former Pinney people.⁴⁵⁷ In 1848 they bought small plots of land from Pollard's Estate through the owner's agent, Hastings Charles Huggins. John Fraser Arthurton's acquaintance with this man may have been through property that he or another John Arthurton owned near a different plot of land that Mr HC Huggins was also selling.⁴⁵⁸ Arthurton had no apparent legal training and, unsurprisingly, the leases he drew up were flawed, or outright useless, and in 1863 the villagers who had settled on Pollard's Land appealed to the former owner for justice. The 'mechanics' and labourers penned a letter to George Pollard in England and explained the difficulties they faced: 37 of them had paid £10 each for a half-acre plot, but they had actually got less land than they had paid for. A few had been given leases but the leases neither agreed with the land in their possession nor with the money paid and, most importantly, Huggins had not handed over all the money, and the settlers were 'in much distress hearing Mr Pollard [had] not received this money'.⁴⁵⁹ They tried to challenge Huggins before he left Nevis but he refused to see them, and the villagers appealed to Mr Pollard for support.⁴⁶⁰ Huggins was a controversial character: in his youth he had been in prison for wounding another man but had been acquitted, questions had

⁴⁴⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol 2 f381, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f726; UKNA, CO 186/13 Accounts 1828 and SRO/I, Maynard Papers, HA 178-1/49 and 1/50

⁴⁴⁹ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f352 and f448

⁴⁵⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1847-1858 f118 and f125

⁴⁵¹ ECSCRN, CR 1838-1847 f541

⁴⁵² Tomb in the churchyard, St George's Church, Gingerland

⁴⁵³ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1835-1873

⁴⁵⁴ ECSCRN, CR 1847-1858 ff166-72

⁴⁵⁵ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f474

In August 1837 Walter Lewis Bucke had bought Bush Hill from George Clarke Forbes's widow Jane Forbes and Christiana Herbert Morton for N£3,000, with 67 apprentice labourers attached, and 27 horned cattle, one pony, one mule and three asses (ECSCRN, CR 1835-1838 ff270-71). Walter Lewis Bucke's grave is in the churchyard of St John Figtree.

⁴⁵⁶ In 1871 Richmond Lodge was still worked with an animal mill (JAB Isles *An Account*).

⁴⁵⁷ DHC, D87/2 Pollard MSS: Letter from Nevis to AH Limmington, London, 26 March 1863

⁴⁵⁸ PP, Dom Box E4: PT Huggins to Charles Pinney, 9 June 1855

⁴⁵⁹ DHC, D87/2 Pollard MSS: Complaint to George Pollard, London, 23 February 1863

⁴⁶⁰ DHC, D87/2 Pollard MSS: Letter from Nevis to AH Limmington, London, 26 March 1863

been raised about his appointment as a Justice of the Peace ⁴⁶¹ and he was embroiled in another shady land deal; Peter Thomas Huggins accused him of selling land that he claimed belonged to him. Peter Thomas Huggins thought Hastings Huggins 'one of the biggest villains to be found'⁴⁶² and, somewhat ironically, it was this man who edited six volumes of *The Laws of Nevis from 1681 to 1861*.⁴⁶³

The villagers on Pollard's Land held firm and 'threatened to resist any attempt of any person to eject them'.⁴⁶⁴ Surrounding their settlement was land that Peter Thomas Huggins sold to labourers in 1857 and this, and Pollard's Land, became what today is known as Jessup village.

In later life members of the Assembly elected John Fraser Arthurton to the post of Sergeant at Arms. In addition to ceremonial duties, he was responsible for keeping order in the lower chamber, and for keeping it secure. This guaranteed him an annual income of £26, and he earned another £24 when, in 1864, he was also appointed the Sanitary Officer.⁴⁶⁵ But he held that post only until the following year and, as this was the last record of him, it is likely that he died in 1865 or soon after.

His son, Thomas Arthurton's grandson Samuel Lyons Arthurton, had moved to Canada. There he was ordained ⁴⁶⁶ and worked as a clergyman ⁴⁶⁷ and a teacher. He was alive in 1861.⁴⁶⁸



⁴⁶¹ In 1837 Hastings Charles Huggins was accused of wounding the Police Constable Edward Griffin and imprisoned. He was acquitted (UKNA, CO 187/10 Blue Book Nevis 1836, and ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f98).

Huggins was one of the early free mixed-race men who held influential posts and public office. A merchant (Queen's Bench and Common Pleas 1822-1841), he also acted as the Coroner and Notary Public. Aged only about 22 or 23, in November 1841 he was elected to the Assembly, representing St Paul's, and almost immediately became a Justice of the Peace. He was appointed by Ralph Brush Cleghorn, the President Administering the Government and a mixed-race man himself. In an unusual move (having 'put aside delicate feelings'), members of the Nevis Council objected to Huggins's appointment. They appealed to Cleghorn, arguing that the position had regard to the private character, the education and station in society, as well as the age and property of the post holder. As far as Huggins's schooling went, the Council members were 'not sure what opportunities he could have had of acquiring a liberal education' and they questioned his place in society, his youth and his apparent lack of property - in a recent case he had pleaded his minority in defence to an action of debt. Cleghorn defended his appointment by saying that Huggins had served as Coroner and Notary Public and was a member of the Assembly. He appeared, therefore, of good character and at a time when there was a shortage of Justices of the Peace, appointing Huggins was a perfectly reasonable step. Cleghorn died shortly afterwards (Cox, Edward L 'Forum: Free People of Colour in the Caribbean' in *Slavery & Abolition* April 2007 Vol 28 No 1). His successor, Laurence Graeme, took up the case and replied to the Council that they had assumed powers they did not possess and spelt out their true motivation: 'the real and main objection to the appointment of Mr Huggins is not that he is disqualified for the appointment by want of education or inferiority of character or abilities, but that being a man of colored origin he is thought to be unworthy of any mark of the favors of Government by those who claim themselves an exclusive superiority in the local society.' Graeme added that these prejudices were unacceptable in the present day (CO 186/16: 4 November 1841, 3 December 1841, 26 February 1842, and 26 April 1842).

Despite this attempt at hindering Huggins's progress, his public career flourished. By the late 1850s he enjoyed three salaried positions: he served as Deputy Post Master (with earnings of £60 a year from revenue collected); as Coroner (salary £12 a year) and Secretary to the Loans Commission (£20 a year). In addition he held posts, some of which were honorary, others attracted fees. Over the years, he was Notary Public, Law Commissioner, Queen's Counsel, Speaker of the Assembly, Justice of the Peace, Member of the Board of Health, Vestryman and also Churchwarden of St Paul's, and a member of the Asylum Committee. One of the men who stood surety for him was none other than John [Fraser] Arthurton (UKNA, CO 187/32, CO 187/33, CO 187/34 and CO 187/35 Blue Books Nevis 1858, 1859, 1860 and 1861).

Huggins moved to Demerara (British Guiana) where he became a Stipendiary Magistrate. On 27 March 1883, on the eve of his departure for England, Hastings Charles Huggins died suddenly. A month later his death in George Town was reported in *The Times*: he was 'respected and esteemed by all who knew him, and deeply mourned by his bereaved family' (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nvvgbs/VitalRecords/DeathsHtoL.pdf>).

⁴⁶² PP, Dom Box E4: PT Huggins to Charles Pinney, 9 June 1855

⁴⁶³ *Laws of Nevis from 1681 to 1861* were published in London in 1862.

⁴⁶⁴ DHC, D87/2 Pollard MSS: Letter from Nevis to AH Limmington, London, 26 March 1863

⁴⁶⁵ UKNA, CO 187/33-9 Blue Books Nevis 1859-65

⁴⁶⁶ <http://static.torontopubliclibrary.ca/da/pdfs/37131055288922d.pdf> 'A sermon preached in St Paul's Cathedral on Thursday, the 7th May 1846 at the 145th Meeting of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts' (Website visited 4 July 2016)

⁴⁶⁷ Graham, M Audrey *150 Years at St John's, York Mills* General Publishing Co Ltd, Toronto 1966 p126 on <https://archive.org/>

⁴⁶⁸ <http://www.halinet.on.ca/localhistory/> 1861 Census on 'Halton Local Historical Databases' published by the Halton Information Network (Website visited 4 July 2016)

By 1871, Richmond Lodge, Thomas Arthurton's plantation, had a new proprietor. It belonged to the rector of St Paul's and St George's Gingerland, Revd John Mackechnie Collins.⁴⁶⁹ His wife, Martha Hamilton Collins nee Baker, had acquired it from her mother and her stepfather, John Richards.

The Collinses had five children, but Mary and Samuel, the two oldest, appear to have died young. In 1890 the family moved to England. The West Indian sugar industry was in crisis. Prices had dropped because European manufacturers were flooding the market with beet sugar.

The Collinses put Mrs Collins's cousin, Walter Henry Bucke, in charge of renting out the estate. The first tenant was Edmund John Ellis,⁴⁷⁰ and from September 1909 onwards it was let at N£50 a year to Emmanuel Milton Williams. By then Richmond Lodge had grown by about 25 acres. Included in the three-year-lease were all the works buildings, the plantation implements, livestock (cattle, an ox, a bull and a pony) and the dwelling house, as well as outhouses, cottages, sheds, stables, yard gardens and pasture land. The stable and carriage house were in a very poor state of repair but the dwelling house, the cistern, the kitchen and the servants' room were in good order except that the ceiling had become worm-eaten and the roof over the kitchen and servants room required patching. Since Thomas Arthurton's days access to water had been improved in the island; there now was a public mains supply and water was piped to the house, the cistern, the trough and the boiling house. The outhouses were in a decent state, too, as were the mill room, the engine room, the boiling house and the curing room. The double-gear engine and mill with steam pipes was complete and in good order.⁴⁷¹

The Collinses moved to Peterborough in Northamptonshire where they lived in the Old Grammar School House, and for some time their daughter Zoe Clara lived in Kingston Entire in Cambridgeshire.⁴⁷² Their son Harry was, like his father and his grandfather, intended for the church and studied at St Catharine's College, Cambridge.⁴⁷³ Harry was the godson of Mrs Collins's cousin, Walter Henry Bucke. By the time Bucke died in December 1917,⁴⁷⁴ Mrs Collins had also lost her husband and had moved with her two daughters to Cambridge, to 132 Cherryhinton Road. The widow Mrs Martha Hamilton Collins was then the proprietor of Richmond Lodge and in May 1918 she appointed Charles Cadet Chittick of Bellevue as her agent, steward and attorney.⁴⁷⁵ But Mrs Martha Hamilton Collins died soon after. She had left Richmond Lodge to her unmarried daughters Eleanor Linda Collins and Zoe Clara Collins, who duly confirmed the appointment of Charles Chittick as their attorney. It appears that the tenant had defaulted in his payments. The Miss Collins charged their attorney with giving him notice to quit, collecting monies due, taking possession of the plantation and renting it out again.⁴⁷⁶ In January 1919 the sisters Eleanor Linda Collins and Zoe Clara Collins became the registered proprietors of 'Richmond Lodge or Salt Pond Gut Estate under the will of Martha Hamilton Collins'.

Richmond Lodge was still bounded by the same properties that had existed in Thomas Arthurton's days: to the north and east lay Budgeon's Estate, to the west North Wales and Pembroke Lands, and to the south Bush Hill.⁴⁷⁷ Its owner, Walter Henry Bucke, had stipulated that after his death Bush Hill should be sold, together with his other estate, Zetland, and, acting as his godfather's executor, Revd Henry (Harry) Rawle Collins put the two properties up for sale. His sister purchased both. Their attorney quickly found tenants. Edmond Tucker Puncheon, who may have already managed the

⁴⁶⁹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2 p371 and Vol 3 pp215-18 Notes sent by Revd Dr LB Thomas

⁴⁷⁰ ECSCRN, CR 13 ff245-50

⁴⁷¹ ECSCRN, CR 15 f389

⁴⁷² <http://www.ancestry.com> Library Edition: NA RG 12/1227 1891 Census and 1901 Census

⁴⁷³ Venn, John and JA Venn *Alumni Cantabrigienses*, citing School Masters Directory 1932-3, Crockford 1939

⁴⁷⁴ Memorial tablet in St John Figtree church

⁴⁷⁵ ECSCRN, CR 17 f57

⁴⁷⁶ ECSCRN, CR 17 f185

⁴⁷⁷ ECSCRN, LTRB 3 f48

estate, rented Bush Hill and the planter York Wilkin of Clay Ghut Estate took on Zetland. Letting those two plantations would secure the sisters an income of S£260 a year.⁴⁷⁸

On a 1920 map of Nevis Richmond Lodge, as well as the neighbouring Bush Hill, was shown as 'inhabited houses or estate works in use'.⁴⁷⁹ Ninety years on and remnants of Thomas Artherton's old estate could still be seen. Covered by bush but still visible were the remains of the works and the steam engine, especially the gearing, complete with flywheel. The piston had gone, and other pieces such as rollers and riveted clarifiers could be found in the surrounding bush and downhill, in the villagers' gardens. It is likely that the clarifier lying beside the track was one of the three that were mentioned in the 1909 lease as holding 300 gallons each. In 2008 the ruin of Artherton's plantation house further up the hill was almost hidden by trees but was still standing and, although the wood of the upper storey had rotted away long ago, the stone foundation and remaining steps revealed a modestly-sized family home. By 2016 the ruin had made way for a new building.

Richard Gurley

For about a year and a half from 1 February 1764, Richard Gurley was employed in the boiling house and as an overseer. He was a young man in his early twenties (born on 12 February 1743 and baptised six months later).⁴⁸⁰ The Gurleys appear to have been a small family in Nevis: the only reference to another Gurley found so far is to a William Gurley, whose 'base son' was baptised in 1751.⁴⁸¹

Like William Vaughan, the overseer before him, Richard Gurley also lived in St George's Gingerland. Eight months after he started work, Coker increased his salary from N£48 a year to N£50.⁴⁸² JPP arrived in December 1764 and Richard Gurley left his employment in June the following year.

Thomas, Tom or Tommy Peaden

Almost certainly he was the son of Thomas Peaden and his wife Margaret Winter, a couple who had got married at Thorncombe in Devon on 18 April 1750.⁴⁸³ Tom Peaden had an older sister, Sarah, who was baptised a few months after his parents' wedding, while another sister, Ann, died in October 1753 - probably while his mother was pregnant with Tom. He was baptised on 27 December 1756, together with his sister Ann. In common with contemporary practice, she 'replaced' the older girl who had died previously.⁴⁸⁴ Tom Peaden had two more sisters: Rebecca (baptised in March 1758) and Fanny (baptised in September 1765). A brother, John (baptised in 1760), also died in infancy.⁴⁸⁵

⁴⁷⁸ ECSCRN, CR 17 f197 and f213

⁴⁷⁹ Burdon, Major JA *The Presidency of St Kitts and Nevis*

⁴⁸⁰ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St George's Parish Register and Vol 3 pp352-54

Originally it was thought that Richard Gurley's father could also have been the man working at Mountravers. Married in 1740, he would perhaps have been in his forties or early fifties. However, Richard Gurley senior had probably died by 1758, certainly by October 1761 when Gemima (also Jemima) Gurley described herself as a widow. Richard Gurley junior's mother (born Jemima Faucett) had previously been married to William Isles. I am grateful to Michael E Newton for these updates. See also <http://discoveringhamilton.com/jemima-faucett-part-3/> Posted 4 September 2018

⁴⁸¹ William Gurley's son William Emra was baptised in May 1751 (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 and VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1).

It is possible that Gurley had evolved from the name Gurling which was found on Nevis in the seventeenth century: William Gurling bought one person from the *Allepine* in December 1674 (UKNA, T 70/936) and Roger Gurling was listed in the 1677/8 census (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3).

⁴⁸² PP, AB 18 Richard Gurley's a/c

⁴⁸³ DHC, Transcripts of Thorncombe Marriages 1552/3-1850

Thorncombe used to be in Devon but in 1843 became part of the county of Dorset.

⁴⁸⁴ Confusingly, another Anne, also said to have been the daughter of Thomas Peaden, was baptised in July 1756, a few months before Thomas and his sister Ann were baptised. It is very likely that this was a daughter of his paternal grandfather who was also called Thomas. The name Ann or Anne was probably repeated in the family because this was the name of Tom

Thorncombe is an agricultural community and it is likely that Tom Peaden's father was employed as a seasonal labourer, or perhaps as a tradesman's assistant. The Peadens were hard-up and occasionally had to have recourse to parish poor relief. This welfare fund was raised from the more affluent members of the community; John Frederick Pinney, for instance, gave 9s a month; a man confusingly also called John Pinney and known as the 'Blackdown Pinney' paid 7 ½s and the vicar of Thorncombe, Revd Samuel Hood, put in 5s6d a month. No one capable of paying could opt out of contributing; they were fined. Two unpaid Overseers of the Poor were responsible for distributing the money to the unemployed and the sick in the parish. Sometimes the Peadens received cash to meet particular needs, such as 4s for shoes or £1 for medicine, but mostly the amounts were not itemised.⁴⁸⁶

Ever since poor relief came into existence in the late sixteenth century, people who claimed from it had been stigmatised as idle, and in order to get the children of the poor into the habit of industry and to teach them skills that would support them in later life, parishes apprenticed them to employers. Boys were often occupied in the agricultural sector and girls in domestic service. Many children suffered abuse and exploitation at the hands of their employers and, unsurprisingly, many apprentices escaped their masters. Newspapers regularly carried adverts for the recovery of these runaways.⁴⁸⁷ However, the organised bondage was still preferable to the fate that awaited some children of parents unable to support them. They were sold privately to professional beggars, or to brothels.⁴⁸⁸

On 18 June 1762, when Thomas Peaden was about eight years old, this 'poor child of the parish' was apprenticed to John Frederick Pinney 'for and in respect of Halscombe (sic) Estate'. Four men took this decision: the Churchwardens Barnard Gapper and Richard Bragg and the Overseers of the Poor Amos Barns and Robert Bridle.⁴⁸⁹ The parish also bore the cost of drawing up of the legal contract, 3s3d.⁴⁹⁰

As paupers neither Tom Peaden nor his parents had any choice as to what kind of work he would have to do, or, indeed, where he would be sent. If parents objected to the forced relocation of their

Peaden's paternal grandmother. Ann Peaden, the wife of Thomas (almost certainly Tom Peaden's grandfather) died in January 1757, and Thomas Peaden, the grandfather, in 1762 (DHC, Catalogue of Thorncombe Parish: Transcripts).

Later another Thomas Peaden moved to Thorncombe. He sought to apply for poor relief and was examined in August 1776 at Thorncombe in order to establish his entitlement. He testified that he had heard that he has was born in the parish of Thorncombe and lived there with his mother until he was eight years old and that he was bound by the parish to Thomas ?Corpe. He lived with his master until he was 19 and a half years old and then moved to Bettiscombe parish. He left his master without consent and had worked elsewhere before going to sea (DHC, PE/BDW/OV 3/4/56 mf MIC/R/1369 Overseers of the Poor/Settlement and Removal Papers; Settlement Examination).

⁴⁸⁵ DHC, MIC/R/706 Baptismal Records and Burials, 1741-1754, Thorncombe

⁴⁸⁶ DHC, PC/THO/3/2 and PC/THO/3/3 Overseers of the Poor Accounts

⁴⁸⁷ The *Felix Farley Bristol Journal* of Saturday, 19 March 1757, carried two advertisements next to each other, each for a runaway. One was for John Vowles, apprentice to the peruke-maker Lazarus Thomas of Camarthen, and the other for a 'Negro lad about 18 years of age, near five feet two inches high, answers to the name of Starling, and blows the French horn well'. His master Ralph Cook offered a reward of one Guinea while Lazarus Thomas threatened any merchants or ship's captains, who paid John Vowles wages, with legal action. The same paper, on a different page, carried an advert for a 'Negro lad' who had run away from Captain Edward Bouchier at Keynsham near Bristol. The reward for 'any person giving intelligence' concerning Cato's whereabouts was to receive a Guinea as well, plus 'all reasonable charges'.

⁴⁸⁸ Murray, *Venetia High Society* p275. See also Bridget Hill *Women, Work And Sexual Politics In Eighteenth-Century England* Chapter 6 about the background to parish apprenticeships.

⁴⁸⁹ Until the sixteenth century, the church cared for poor people but each parish became responsible for its own paupers when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries and convents and closed the alms houses and charity hospitals which used to be run by monks and nuns.

As a result of a growing awareness of social issues, in the second half of the eighteenth century the British middle class began to get involved in ameliorating the conditions of the poor and founded organisations and institutions which they financed from voluntary contributions. These concerned citizens set up establishment such as 'The Asylum for Poor, Friendless, Deserted Girls under Twelve Years of Age'; closely linked to improving the material conditions of the poor was the aim to improve their moral standards (Suzanne J Stark *Female Tars* p39 and Michael Reed *The Georgian Triumph* p39).

Of 9,727 poor children received during a period of eleven years, 4,600 were returned to their parents, 2,042 died, and 2,794 were apprenticed from the age of six upwards (Report on 'Parish Poor Children' by the House of Commons Committee, published in the *Journal of the House of Commons* in 1778 and reprinted in 1803).

⁴⁹⁰ DHC, PC/THO/3/3 Overseers of the Poor Accounts, 1757-1787

children they would be denied poor relief. Some years later several boys from Thorncombe ended up in Newfoundland after the parish had apprenticed them to cod fishermen. One of the boys was Elias Peadon - most likely a relative of Tom's.⁴⁹¹ The decision where the children were to work rested with the Churchwardens and Overseers. Apprentices were farmed out by rotation or drawn by lots, and to be excused the responsibility of taking on a poor child the potential employer had to pay a fine. For his part, John Frederick Pinney bound himself to 'teach and instruct said apprentice in husbandry' and to provide Tom Peaden with 'sufficient meat, drink and apparel, lodging, washing and all other things necessary and fit for an apprentice'.⁴⁹²

Tom Peaden went to work on Harlescombe farm. About a mile from Thorncombe, it lies in a little valley adjoining John Frederick Pinney's country residence, Pillmarsh or Pylemarsh (later re-named Racedown). He could walk home to see his family and friends but otherwise had to rely on the company of the people who lived on the farm.

Within a few months of starting work on the farm his master died. Although JPP did not want to keep any servants,⁴⁹³ he took on Tom's 'indenture of apprenticeship in husbandry' and the 22-year-old became his new master. The transfer cost £2, and JPP made a note that on 11 March 1763 'Thomas Peden came prentice to me from Harlescombe Estate' and 'Now he is ab.t 9 years old'. The boy was indentured to JPP until the age of 24.⁴⁹⁴

It is likely that at this stage Tom Peaden already knew he was going to accompany his new employer to the West Indies because on the same day JPP took over Tom's apprenticeship he wrote a letter to his manager in Nevis, William Coker, preparing him for his visit to the West Indies at the end of the year.⁴⁹⁵ JPP, who had only just completed his own apprenticeship with a warehouseman,⁴⁹⁶ then lived at Pillmarsh but the house was large and in order to save money, he and 'his boy' moved to Dorchester where he took two rooms with board.⁴⁹⁷ As it turned out, they did not depart at the end of 1763 but remained in England for almost another year. JPP's appointment as Sheriff for the County of Dorset at the beginning of 1764 detained him until after the Summer Assizes had been held,⁴⁹⁸ but he was determined to be in Nevis in time for the crop and wanted to sail on one of the earliest West India-bound merchant vessels.⁴⁹⁹ Leaving Tom Peaden in Dorchester, on 25 September JPP travelled on ahead to London and arranged their passage with the merchant house Coleman & Lucas.⁵⁰⁰

On 3 October Tom Peaden finally departed by 'waggon' to join JPP in London.⁵⁰¹ It appears that he travelled alone. JPP's friend Harry Pouncy had paid his fare of 14 shillings and on the day he left, had bought him two pairs of shoes for 5 shillings.⁵⁰² The last few weeks had been very busy. From a Dorchester supplier JPP had ordered some cloth for the people on Mountravers,⁵⁰³ all of his china, bed linen and his 897 books had to be packed, ready to be stored at Mr Pouncy's and also at Mr Warry's in Chard, and in the turmoil and final rush some of Tom Peaden's clothes for Nevis had not been got ready. After Tom left, Pouncy bought him another two pairs of shoes, five pairs of stockings

⁴⁹¹ Farley, Ron *Thorncombe Life, Memories and the History of the Parish* p40 and p41

Usually children were apprenticed between the ages of seven and 14; Elias Peaden probably was about 15 years old when he was apprenticed (DHC, Catalogue of Thorncombe Parish: Transcripts).

⁴⁹² PP, Dom Box U; also Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Summary

⁴⁹³ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Lucas, 10 May 1763

⁴⁹⁴ PP, AB 6; also Cat 4 Misc Volumes and Items 16 June 1763 to 2 May 1785, P13 Pinney Private Letter and Account Book, 1763 marker, inner page

⁴⁹⁵ PP, LB 3: JPP, Pillmarsh, to William Coker, 11 March 1763

⁴⁹⁶ Pares, R *A West India Fortune* p63

⁴⁹⁷ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Lucas, 10 May 1763

⁴⁹⁸ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Lucas, 5 March 1764

⁴⁹⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Lucas, 7 July 1764

⁵⁰⁰ PP, LB 3 f60

⁵⁰¹ PP, AB 15: 3 October 1764

⁵⁰² It appears that JPP also had a servant called Benjamin who stayed in Dorchester for three weeks (PP, DM 1822/5).

⁵⁰³ PP, LB 3: JPP to William Channing, Dorchester, 15 April 1766

and six shirts and sent these on to London.⁵⁰⁴ Ten days later, on 13 October, Tom Peaden stepped aboard the ship which was to carry him to the West Indies. At 300 tons, the *London Merchant* was a relatively big, comfortable vessel.⁵⁰⁵

Tom's first introduction to the exotic was the regular stop-over *en route* to the West Indies: Madeira. With its pleasant tropical climate, large forests and abundant vegetation, the island off the Moroccan coast would have been a completely new experience for the boy and, as slavery was then still legal (it was abolished in Madeira in 1773), he would have had his first encounter with enslaved people from sub-Saharan Africa.⁵⁰⁶ In Madeira he would also have seen his first sugar plantations and vineyards. While the *London Merchant* was loading and unloading, taking on fresh water and getting ready for the next leg of the journey, JPP took the opportunity to see a surgeon about a cut in his gum, caused by a clumsily extracted tooth.

Tom Peaden and his master stepped ashore at Nevis on Saturday, 22 December.⁵⁰⁷ Nothing could have prepared this ten-year-old for all the new sights and experiences he encountered. Crowds of people - black and white - eagerly awaited the arrival of the vessel. They were there to meet passengers, collect packets and parcels, newspapers, magazines, or they just gathered for the sheer excitement of it all. Tom had seen black people before – on his stop-over in Madeira, also in London and when planters with their servants visited the West Country - but now he was to live among them. And now he was in the minority. For each white face there were eight black faces. He must have thought it strange that fewer than two hundred white boys lived in the whole island⁵⁰⁸ although on Mountravers were some black boys who were about his age – among them Little Essex, Little London, Little Kersey, and, disabled since infancy, Tom Punch.

For a young boy from quiet, rural Devon, the first few months, no doubt, were exciting and also bewildering. Everything was different: the food, the climate, the smells and the sounds. He had much to explore and much to learn, least of all how to relate to the enslaved people on the plantation. For instance, soon after he arrived someone asked him for sugar and rum from the plantation stores and he handed these over without asking JPP's permission. JPP scolded and threatened to punish him but also excused Tom's behaviour because he realised that the boy had been put in a difficult situation:

In short when I seriously reflected & consider the insinuations ye negroes make use of, I cannot wonder at it, for he was really afraid to deny them. It is really different for grown people to scope (sic) with 'em on their first arrival, for they make a merit of robing (sic) their master, whenever opportunity offers. When a person just arrives from England they say among themselves, He saltwater Buckro he-no serve ye yet, i.e. he is a person unacquainted with our tricks, & we will impose upon him as much as we can.

According to JPP, Tom learnt his lesson: upon "reprimanding him severely & threatening to punish him in a judicial manner it has had a good effect and he has now turned a good boy."⁵⁰⁹ JPP's recollection of this event may have reflected his own fears; Tom's action can also be interpreted quite differently: as a bonded servant himself, he recognised the enslaved people's plight and the least he could do was to treat his comrades to some of their master's produce. Without Tom's own account, it cannot be known what actually motivated him but it seems that the boy adapted quickly. Just a couple

⁵⁰⁴ PP, Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Summary: H Pouncy, Dorchester, to JPP, 3 October 1764

⁵⁰⁵ UKNA, T1/512/232 and T 1/512/240 Vessels Inward and Outbound 1 October 1774-1 April 1775

⁵⁰⁶ Pereira, Cliff 'Madeira Research' in *BASA Newsletter* No 47 (February 2007) p5

⁵⁰⁷ PP, LB 3: JPP to Edward Jessup, Writtle Park, 10 January 1765

⁵⁰⁸ On 18 June 1770, the ratio between black and white people in Nevis stood at almost eight to one (UKNA, CO 186/7). In 1755, there had been 178 white boys in Nevis (S Lambert (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 70 pp275-277).

⁵⁰⁹ PN 218, quoting John Frederick Pinney; also LB 3: JPP to Mrs Williams, 3 April 1766

Buckrao or buckara, meaning white man, possibly stems from *bockorau*, an African word, which later meant buccaneer (Carl Bridenbaugh and Roberta Bridenbaugh *No Peace Beyond the Line* p118 fn30, citing *South Carolina Gazette* 23 April 1727).

of months after they had arrived in Nevis JPP could report that 'Tom is very well pleased with the negroes and seems quite settled and enjoys a good state of health.'⁵¹⁰ But a year on Dr John Boddie had to be called to treat him for an unspecified complaint.⁵¹¹

Presumably Tom Peaden lived somewhere in the house or in the stables, but it is not clear what work he did when he first came to Nevis. Presumably during the early days he, too, had to undergo a seasoning period, doing light work around the house or in the yard, and when he was ready for more demanding tasks, assisting in the field and the boiling house. In July 1765 JPP bought the young boy Pero who became his manservant, and in August 1767 boarded Pero out for training but gentlemen did not travel without a servant to attend to them, and in May 1767 JPP took Tom Peaden on his first trip back to England. As sea voyages were thought to restore poor health, an added reason may have been Tom's illness the year before.

JPP and Tom Peaden left Nevis at the end of May and after three days in St Kitts sailed from there on Captain Thomas Maynard's *London Merchant*. They arrived at Dover after a forty-day crossing. JPP had much to do and their time in England involved a good deal of travelling. After staying in London, they went to Blandford, Dorchester and Bristol, where JPP ordered a large wagon and a cart for his Gingerland estate. They visited William Coker's family at Woodcutts in Dorset and learnt of the death of Coker's brother, the Revd John Rogers Coker, and the marriages of his sisters Honeyfield and Betsey.⁵¹² When they visited Dorchester Tom Peaden may have been able to make a detour to Axminster where he had friends or relatives. Having stayed in England since July, JPP and Tom Peaden left London at the end of November and returned on the *London Merchant* from Gravesend, via Antigua, which they sighted on 8 January 1768.⁵¹³ They had 'a very good passage and arrived [in Nevis] the fortieth day from London'.⁵¹⁴

Tom Peaden came back with new clothes, which had been made for him by JPP's tailor, William Green, and his shirts had been mended when he was in Dorchester,⁵¹⁵ but not long after returning from England, the new clothes were 'now so little that he can scarce get them on.' Around fourteen years old, he had grown almost to JPP's size, and when JPP ordered for him 'a light fustian frock – two con. strip'd linen waistcoats and one pair leather breeches milled ram', he instructed William Green to 'make them very near as large as mine'.⁵¹⁶

After returning from England, for two years Tom Peaden bought rum from the plantation and presumably sold it at a profit. Aged about 14, he was the youngest person to buy rum.⁵¹⁷ When he was 17 years old, he started working on the plantation as 'under-overseer' but he did not get paid any money. Instead, JPP allocated N£50, his 'supposed' wages for a year.⁵¹⁸ Tom Peaden briefly worked under John Browne who managed Mountravers when JPP and his young wife went on their honeymoon in 1772 and, until JPP returned, the men had to deal with the aftermath of the hurricane which hit Nevis in August. Possibly during his master's absence Tom had started a relationship with Bridget, a black girl a year or so younger than him. Their son James Peaden was born in October 1773.

In the following year Tom Peaden sailed to England once more, accompanying JPP on another business trip. One of their fellow passengers was their neighbour Eneas Shaw, who for some years

⁵¹⁰ PP, LB 3: JPP to Harry Pouncy, 2 March 1765

⁵¹¹ PP, AB 18 Dr John Boddie's a/c

⁵¹² PP, LB 3: JPP, Dorchester, to William Coker, Nevis, 27 July 1767

⁵¹³ PP, AB 17

⁵¹⁴ PP, LB 3: JPP, Nevis, to John Hayne, 12 April 1768

⁵¹⁵ PP, AB 16 Harry Pouncy's a/c

⁵¹⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP, Nevis, to Wm Green, England, 26 July 1768

⁵¹⁷ PP, AB 17: 1768 and 1769

⁵¹⁸ PP, AB 20 Plantation a/c

had been shuttling between Nevis and London.⁵¹⁹ They left Nevis on 26 July on Captain Thomas Guillaume's ship, the *Aurora*⁵²⁰ and arrived in the Downs off Deal after six weeks. First they stayed in London, where, among others, JPP met Captain Watt from whom he heard the good news that more camels were to be shipped to Nevis,⁵²¹ and Thomas Arthurton's nephew John, who borrowed some money from him.⁵²² Mr Shaw's son provided lodgings for the travellers at his chambers in the [Middle or Inner] Temple but when they left, Tom Peaden forgot to pack presents intended for Mrs Warry, the wife of JPP's lawyer and friend George Warry in Chard. Instead, Eneas Shaw took the gifts to Mrs Jesup at Writtle Park 'and made her a compliment of two pots of sweetmeats and several bottles of West India pickles.' Mrs Jesup was well pleased but JPP was displeased at having to confess Tom Peaden's blunder to Warry.⁵²³ No doubt, his master punished him the way masters then punished their apprentices: with physical and verbal abuse.

JPP had a busy schedule: after London he went to see the Cokers at Woodcutts, then on to Frome near Dorchester where he caught up with his stepfather's family⁵²⁴ and to Sherborne to visit his uncle Simon Pretor. In Bristol he remained for about six days and did business with, among others, Peter Eaton, from whom he received a present of two baskets of 'Hot-well Water'. These were sent to London,⁵²⁵ where JPP and Tom Peaden stayed from about mid-November until they returned to Woodcutts the following month. They visited the Cokers for a few days and left on the morning of 23 December,⁵²⁶ spent Boxing Day in Portsmouth and two days later joined the *London Merchant* at Spithead. Having got aboard at eleven o'clock in the morning, they sailed off at two in the afternoon.

Again, there were other passengers they knew: the London merchant Sherland Swanston and his wife, the Nevis planter William Tucket and the 'two Miss Herberts and Miss Woolward' who had travelled from London. Almost certainly these were President Herbert's daughter Martha Williams Herbert, his sister Sarah (or Sally, as JPP called her) and the young Fanny Woolward. Each of these passengers would have brought with them a servant, and Tom Peaden would have kept company with them throughout the journey until, after 'an agreeable passage of 47 days', they landed at Nevis.⁵²⁷ The news that Edward Herbert had recently been in prison for debt had caught up with them in London but they now learnt that Michael, a young man from Mountravers, had in the meantime been stolen off the island, and that Mrs P had been delivered of a second son, Azariah.

Having returned from his six months abroad, Tom Peaden carried on working as an under-overseer but also performed some public work, such as overseeing a building project, for which he earned over £16.⁵²⁸ The money was most welcome because Bridget had just given birth to their second child. The girl was called Sally Peaden, named after his elder sister Sarah. Around this time, back home in Thorncombe, his father briefly resumed claiming poor relief. The last cash had been doled out in 1766, and it is possible that over the past decade Tom Peaden had supported his family in England with money he had earned in Nevis. In the following year, in 1777, a Mary Peaden received the last payment of poor relief made to any of the Peadens in Thorncombe. The two shillings she got show just how poor the family was: Mary Peaden received the money to redeem a bed she had pawned.⁵²⁹

⁵¹⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP, London, to George Warry, 17 November 1774

⁵²⁰ PP, AB 21 Expense a/c

⁵²¹ PP, LB 3: JPP to Wm Burt Weekes, 12 September 1774

⁵²² PP, LB 3: JPP, Woodcutts, to Mills & Swanston, 4 October 1774

⁵²³ PP, LB 3: JPP, London, to George Warry, 17 November 1774

⁵²⁴ PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

⁵²⁵ PP, LB 3: JPP to George Warry, 27 October 1774, and JPP, London, to Peter Eaton, 10 December 1774

⁵²⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP, London, to George Warry, 17 November 1774, JPP, Woodcutts, to Joshua Fisher & Sons, 22 December 1774, and JPP to Mills & Swanston, 22 December 1774

⁵²⁷ PP, LB 3: LB 3: Memo at Portsmouth, 24 December 1774, LB 3: JPP to George Warry, 12 April 1775, and pers. comm., Brian Littlewood, 15 December 2003, quoting *The Complete Book of Emigrants, 1607-1776*

⁵²⁸ UKNA, CO 186/7 Appropriations of the Money raised for the year 1775

⁵²⁹ DHC, PC/THO/3/2 and PC/THO/3/3 Overseers of the Poor Accounts

It is likely that Thomas Peaden's father died in 1792, his mother ten years later, his sister Rebecca in 1813 – she was in her mid-fifties – and, in her sixties, his sister Fanny in 1829 (DHC, Catalogue of Thorncombe Parish: Transcripts).

The overseer and distiller Thomas Arthurton left Mountravers in April 1777, and Tom Peaden was promoted to overseer and a new man, John Pearce, became the boiling house watch during the next crop season. It is likely that Tom Peaden then lived in the overseer's house at Sharloes, possibly even with Bridget and their children. Some time in 1778 his indenture must have expired and he could expect to be paid a salary. With the money earned from selling sugar and rum he was doing well, and in March 1778 JPP recorded a payment of three Guineas for a 'loket for Bridget'.⁵³⁰ Later in the year Tom received N£1:4:9 from Mary Keep for some goods or services⁵³¹ and on 1 August 1778 his first salary.⁵³²

Presumably at that point JPP handed him his copy of the indenture, which had been made sixteen years earlier in Thorncombe. Under the terms of the indenture, Tom Peaden had been entitled to clothes, and over the years, his master - himself a careful dresser - had provided a reasonable number of garments for him - JPP's hand-me-downs, as well as clothes that were ordered from England. His master had bought him stockings in Nevis,⁵³³ and had ordered for him from England a long blue cloak of coarse cloth,⁵³⁴ a black hat with a deep crown,⁵³⁵ three ready-made striped linen waistcoats,⁵³⁶ as well as twelve yards of material for waistcoats,⁵³⁷ and, on average, two pairs of shoes a year.⁵³⁸ One consignment of six pairs of shoes sent from England did not fit well; they were 'too narrow over the toes'.⁵³⁹ In June 1778 JPP sent his last order for Tom's clothes: six pairs of plain strong shoes, one pair of black boots for wet weather, four pairs of brown thread and two pairs of cotton stockings, a hat, six handkerchiefs of three different sorts, two yards of brown Russia sheeting [a linen twill, also used for tents], seven yards of German Cord, six yards of white Jeans and one pair of black stocking 'buckle with triming' (sic).⁵⁴⁰ But having just ordered for him from England six pairs of shoes and a hat, Tom Peaden purchased in Nevis another three pairs and a hat as well as a blue cloth cloak. At just over N£1, the hat cost double to the one that JPP had ordered for him but two months later Tom bought another hat, costing a staggering N£2. At N£5 the cloak was expensive, too,⁵⁴¹ particularly as his wages were only N£33 a year.⁵⁴² It seems that that the young man enjoyed dressing well.

Not long after he received his first wages, Tom Peaden jumped over a wall and burst a blood vessel.⁵⁴³ He may have been ill already; the year before doctors Archbald & Williamson had attended to him and they did so again.⁵⁴⁴ John Pearce, the boiling house watch, was recalled and took over Tom's work while he rested. But his health was declining. It did not improve and the doctors recommended he should leave the West Indies. JPP booked him a passage on one of the vessels which was going to sail with the convoy (French ships were seen lurking around the islands again) and wrote a letter to George Warry, his lawyer friend in Chard. Explaining that Tom intended to live chiefly with his friends or relatives in Axminster, JPP went on to say that 'it is possible he may want a little cash to support himself occasionally and to pay his expenses out; I therefore desire you will supply him with what may be necessary, and charge it to my account.'⁵⁴⁵

⁵³⁰ PP, AB 20 Gill & Nisbet's a/c

⁵³¹ PP, AB 26 f81 Mary Keep's a/c

⁵³² PP, AB 26 Tom Peaden's a/c; also AB 21 Plantation a/c

⁵³³ PP, AB 20 Robert McGill's a/c

⁵³⁴ PP, LB 4: JPP, Nevis, to Wm Green, 14 June 1777

⁵³⁵ PP, LB 4: JPP to Nathaniel Martin, 14 June 1777

⁵³⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP to Wm Greene June, added to 24 July 1771

⁵³⁷ PP, LB 4: JPP to Nathaniel Martin, 14 June 1777

⁵³⁸ Over a period of 14 years, JPP paid for 29 pairs of shoes for Tom Peaden (PP, AB 16: 5 August 1766; AB 21 f51 Expense a/c; LB 4: JPP to Nathaniel Martin 13 July 1775 and LB 4: JPP, Nevis, to Nathaniel Martin, 13 and 18 June 1778).

⁵³⁹ PP, LB 4: JPP to Nathaniel Martin, 13 July 1775

⁵⁴⁰ PP, LB 4: JPP, Nevis, to Nathaniel Martin, 13 and 18 June 1778

⁵⁴¹ PP, AB 26 Tom Peaden's a/c

⁵⁴² PP, AB 26 Tom Peaden's a/c and AB 21 Plantation a/c

⁵⁴³ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to George Warry, 10 June 1779

⁵⁴⁴ PP, AB 26 Archbald & Williamson's a/c and Thomas Peaden's a/c

⁵⁴⁵ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to George Warry, 10 June 1779

The convoy had assembled and was ready to leave, and the day before Tom was due to sail, JPP sat down and wrote a second letter to Warry. He explained that, at Tom Peaden's 'earnest request', he had issued a Bill of Exchange for S£65:9:0, drawn on Warry in Tom's favour.⁵⁴⁶ JPP also wrote a letter to his uncle in Sherborne, asking him to give 'Tommy' on his behalf '5 Guineas as compliment' when he delivered the box of wine and a mortgage document he had entrusted to his servant.⁵⁴⁷ His old master wished him well and that he may 'receive great benefit from the voyage'. He hoped he would return.⁵⁴⁸

Almost fifteen years ago Tom Peaden had arrived on the *London Merchant* and he left Nevis on the *London Merchant*. During his time in the West Indies he had been back to England twice, he had recovered from illnesses, worked for his keep and fathered two children. His son was almost six years old now and his daughter had had her third birthday four days before he left. But he did not survive the journey back to England. JPP later added a memo in the account book: Tuesday, 15 June 1779 'This day Thos. Peaden embarked for England who died on his passage'.⁵⁴⁹

In an inexcusable act of mean-spiritedness JPP did not pay for Tom Peaden's final voyage home. Instead, he asked George Warry to find out who was administering his former servant's estate so that the Captain could apply to this person for the fare of ten Guineas that was owed.⁵⁵⁰ Admittedly, Tom Peaden's friends or relatives in Axminster would still have received the remaining money, about S£55, which would have represented a substantial windfall to people who, no doubt, were poor and surviving on meagre incomes. But in this case JPP failed to show any charity, especially as Tom Peaden died so soon after completing his apprenticeship and did not have much opportunity to earn an income - and had JPP not saved himself the five Guineas 'compliment', which his uncle was to give Tom in Sherborne? JPP had also saved some additional money by not paying customs duties that were due because Captain William Davis, the master of the *London Merchant*, had on this voyage taken presents of 'sweetmeats on shore without carrying them to the Custom House'.⁵⁵¹ In his accounts (and therefore in his mind), JPP could easily have offset Tom Peaden's passage money from these savings. Captain Davis, however, may have decided to recover the fare without involving Tom's relatives in Axminster; it appears that the Captain sold the box of wine instead of giving it to Simon Pretor.⁵⁵² No doubt, this was the last time JPP would have called on Davis to smuggle anything for him.

After Toms' death, perhaps somewhat guiltily JPP bore Tom Peaden's family in mind when he sent presents to Nevis: Bridget got a wrapper, and Tom's grandson, the mestize Thomas Peaden, a coat.⁵⁵³ The coat, however, arrived two years after the child had died.

John Hay Richens, also Jack Richens

Baptised on 7 November 1740 in Ramsbury near Marlborough in Wiltshire, John Hay Richens was the fourth of Richard and Elizabeth Richens's seven children. His siblings Mary, Elizabeth, Richard, William, Jane, and Thomas were born over a twenty-year period between 1733 and 1753.⁵⁵⁴ His

⁵⁴⁶ PP, AB 26 Thomas Peaden's a/c; also LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to George Warry, 14 June 1779
In 1791, after George Warry had died, JPP finally settled Thomas Peaden's account and paid S£65:9:0 to Warry's administrator (LB 19 Memo/diary section).

⁵⁴⁷ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to Simon Pretor, 14 June 1779

⁵⁴⁸ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to George Warry, 10 June 1779

⁵⁴⁹ PP, AB 26 Thomas Peaden's a/c

⁵⁵⁰ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to George Warry, 1 August 1780

⁵⁵¹ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to Beach & Plummer, 12 June 1779

⁵⁵² PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to Simon Pretor, Sherborne, 18 November 1779

⁵⁵³ PP, LB 14: John Pinney, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 12 November 1798

⁵⁵⁴ John Hay Richens owes his middle name to his mother whose surname it was. I am grateful to Alan Richens for this additional information (pers. comm., 30 June 2020).

grandfather was described in a document of 1725 as a gentleman of Ramsbury Park;⁵⁵⁵ and his family later lived at Knowle (Knowle Farm) near Ramsbury.⁵⁵⁶ John Hay Richens had an older brother, Richard, who would inherit their father's property and, rather than farm elsewhere locally, perhaps out of a sense of adventure he moved to London to earn a living. John Hay Richens served an apprenticeship as a clerk, and it almost certainly was in London that he met and became friends with JPP. The earliest reference to him, of JPP lending him money on 7 December 1762, foretold their later relationship.⁵⁵⁷

After JPP inherited his John Frederick Pinney's estates, he left London for the West Country but the two men kept in touch and in 1763 John Hay Richens heard of JPP's plans to leave for Nevis. Another apprentice was also departing to the West Indies⁵⁵⁸ and Richens, although 'happily settled' in London, was considering accompanying JPP to Nevis. He was 'glad to hear of any opportunity' that might suit him⁵⁵⁹ but as JPP's departure was held up by his appointment as Sheriff, Richens remained in London and carried on working for a Mr Balby. He appeared to have been contented with his employer because a mutual friend of theirs⁵⁶⁰ wrote that Jack Richens gave Mr Balby 'a most excellent character', in fact as long as he lived, he could 'neither wish nor desire to be better off as a servant'.⁵⁶¹ Although clearly enjoying his job in London and doing well, Richens decided to leave England. Full of confidence and in 'no doubt' of 'doing equal if not superior' in the West Indies,⁵⁶² some time before August 1765 Richens arrived in Nevis.⁵⁶³

John Hay Richens and JPP were of the same age. They came from similar backgrounds and when they were apprentices in London, they had been equals. They moved in the same circles and had friends in common. They had even embarked on a speculative venture together, investing in 'ships' bottoms'.⁵⁶⁴ But now their relationship changed. JPP became his employer and Richens became his plantation overseer. He did not start work straight away but presumably learnt the rudiments of plantership under JPP's guidance on Mountravers. Up to that point, JPP had to rent out his Gingerland estate because he did not have a sufficiently large workforce that he could split between Mountravers and Gingerland,⁵⁶⁵ but JPP was keen to get this neglected property organised 'as fast as possible'.⁵⁶⁶ Once he had bought forty 'Creoles and other Negroes',⁵⁶⁷ he divided them between Mountravers and Gingerland, and together with established Mountravers people they started cultivating his 'unsettled lands'. JPP had earmarked Coker to take over managing this estate but Coker had left for a lengthy stay in England at about the same time as John Hay Richens had arrived from England, thereby creating an opening for JPP's old friend from London. A farmer's son and a clerk by training - his handwriting was very neat but his punctuation, even by eighteenth century

Richard and Elizabeth Richens' other children were baptised in Ramsbury as follows: Mary on 12 June 1733, Elizabeth on 26 September 1734, Richard on 10 November 1736, William on 24 December 1742, Jane on 11 May 1745, and Thomas on 26 December 1753.

⁵⁵⁵ In 1725 a Jane Richens, who would have been John Hay Richens's aunt, married Edward Smith. In her marriage settlement she was described as of Newbury and the daughter of Robert Richens dec'd, yeoman of Newbury, late of Ramsbury Park. Jane Richens had sufficient education to sign the document (BROR, D/EWn T1: Indenture dated 18 September 1725).

⁵⁵⁶ In 1795 William Richens, one of John Hay Richens's younger brothers, was at Little Bedwyn, south of Ramsbury (<http://www.ancestors.doc.co.uk/Wiltshire.htm>). He may have lived at the same 495-acre Knowle Farm in Little Bedwyn, at which a certain Osmond Richens lived in 1881. His nephew Richard Richens (born in the early 1860s) was then Osmond Richens's farm pupil (<http://archiver.rootsweb.com/th/read/BERKSHIRE/2001-05/0990734816>, quoting UKNA, RG 11/1274 f78 and f22).

Knowle Farm in Little Bedwyn was the same as 'Knowle, near Ramsbury' which JPP mentioned as the place of residence of John Hay Richens's father (PP, LB 4: JPP to Simon Pretor, 3 November 1777) (Alan Richens, pers. comm., 30 June 2020).

⁵⁵⁷ JPP lent John Hay Richens the sum of £6:6:0, repayable within two months (PP, AB 15).

⁵⁵⁸ PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic: JH Richens, London, to JPP, 22 and 29 January 1763

⁵⁵⁹ PP, Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Summary: John Hay Richens, London, to JPP, 17 September 1763

⁵⁶⁰ PP, Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Summary: JH Richens to JPP, 22 January 1763

⁵⁶¹ PP, Cat 3 Dom Box 1763-1793: Samuel Nicholls to JPP, 26 April 1764

⁵⁶² PP, Cat 3 Dom Box 1763-1793: John Hay Richens, London, to JPP, 28 April 1764

⁵⁶³ PP, Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Summary: Samuel Nicholls, London, to JPP, 29 September 1765

⁵⁶⁴ PP, Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Summary: JH Richens, London, to JPP, 18 March 1765

⁵⁶⁵ PP, LB 3: JPP, Nevis, to George Warry, 6 June 1765

⁵⁶⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP to Coleman and Lucas, 25 July 1766

⁵⁶⁷ PP, LB 3: JPP to Wm Coker, 3 April 1766

standards, shaky – on 1 May 1766 John Hay Richens took on managing the Gingerland estate. His pay was N£70 in the first year and jumped to N£100 in the following.⁵⁶⁸ Shortly before starting work, Richens may have bought a person from Captain Beach. On 3 April 1766 he paid Captain John Beach N£13:4:0 'for a runaway'.⁵⁶⁹

Richens lived in a new wooden house⁵⁷⁰ which had recently been moved over to one of the works. JPP had bought four new coppers and a *lignum vitae* mill frame⁵⁷¹ for building a new sugar works⁵⁷² and the boundary walls had been improved.⁵⁷³ Now the 'negro houses' were being built to accommodate about sixty people.⁵⁷⁴ After a few weeks more workers arrived; JPP purchased twenty Gold Coast people who were split equally between the two estates. Richens had to integrate these new arrivals with the recently purchased Ebboes and those people who had lived on Mountravers for many years. Uprooted from their familiar surroundings and separated from their community, they, no doubt, moved to Gingerland under duress. At least mothers and their young children appear to have been kept together.

By mid-August the land was still being cleansed,⁵⁷⁵ and much would have been demanded of everyone but in particular of the young Africans. They were still adapting to the new environment and getting used to the rigours of plantation work, and to build up their strength, JPP purchased rice, which was usually reserved for sick people, and laid in supplies of herrings, beef and flour.⁵⁷⁶ To inspire *esprit de corps* – as Richard Pares suggested – JPP kitted them out in clothes made from new blue baize while the Mountravers people sported green.⁵⁷⁷ Everyone had complained about the material JPP had bought in Dorchester before he left England – it was too flimsy – and had asked him to buy the old sort of material again. He obliged.⁵⁷⁸

Apart from settling in the new people and getting them to work efficiently and with industry, Richens also had to break in new mules.⁵⁷⁹ Some of these came from Edward Jesup's estate in Essex. A girl, Lena, looked after the sheep and lambs, but a man was employed for the larger animals. In July 1766 James Bowrin started work as stock keeper to tend to the cattle and mules, but within a year some of the animals had died already. To make up the losses, three horses were shipped from England, and to make it easier to carry canes to the mills, JPP bought a cart and 'a large pair of trucks with 4 low wheels'.⁵⁸⁰

In May 1767, Richens had 65 people on Gingerland but of these fewer than half, only 24 people, were adults.⁵⁸¹ In order to cope with the more difficult conditions, JPP had allocated him the healthiest and the most competent field hands. All the adult field hands were those who had been judged 'good', or 'good and able', apart from five who were old and infirm, 'able but lazy' or plain 'indifferent' (Old Primus, Paenda, Sheba, Dover and Andrew). However, while the field hands on Gingerland could outperform those on Mountravers, the skilled people were of inferior quality: the driver, Creole Jemmy, was an old man and infirm, the boiler Mingo 'much ruptured' and the cooper Lewy was infirm. Those who held the same posts on Mountravers were generally in better shape and younger.

⁵⁶⁸ PP, AB 18 JH Richens' a/c and AB 15 Gingerland a/c

⁵⁶⁹ PP, AB 18 JH Richens' a/c

⁵⁷⁰ In May 1762 John Bowrin, a carpenter, was paid by John Frederick Pinney for building a house at Gingerland (Stapleton Cotton MSS 13 (iii) and PP, WI Box D).

⁵⁷¹ PP, AB 15 Gingerland a/c

⁵⁷² PP, LB 3: JPP to William Coker, April 1766, and JPP to Revd Hinton, 30 May 1766

⁵⁷³ PP, AB 20: 17 April 1765

⁵⁷⁴ PP, LB 3: JPP to Coleman and Lucas, 25 July 1766

⁵⁷⁵ PP, LB 3: JPP to William Coker, 15 August 1766

⁵⁷⁶ PP, AB 15 Gingerland a/c

⁵⁷⁷ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p131, and PP, AB 15 Gingerland a/c

⁵⁷⁸ PP, LB 3: JPP to William Channing, Dorchester, 15 April 1766

⁵⁷⁹ PP, AB 15 Gingerland a/c

⁵⁸⁰ PP, LB 3: JPP to John Richens, 24 September 1767

⁵⁸¹ In May 1767, out of 65 people at Gingerland 13 were men, 11 women, 21 boys, 15 girls, 2 boy children and three girl children.

While JPP was in England, Richens worked under William Coker's direction. He had to get the land cleared and the new canes planted, as well as oversee further building work. Richens employed Benjamin Lees, a carpenter and millwright, and William Brooks, a mason, to erect a second boiling house and millworks⁵⁸² but Brooks did not finish the job,⁵⁸³ and when JPP came back from England, he was enraged at 'the neglect of the work people'. He had to find an alternative for grinding the canes and luckily a friend lent his works but the Gingerland crop promised to be short.⁵⁸⁴

Although the work regime was gruelling and people had been separated from friends and family, Richens did not appear to have had particular problems with discipline. Andrew, an 'indifferent' field hand, ran away twice,⁵⁸⁵ but there is no evidence that Morote, previously labelled as 'a runaway', absented herself again while she worked under Richens. Hannibal, a known runner who had been a cattle keeper on Gingerland when previously the land had been rented out, remained under JPP's watchful eye on Mountravers.

There was sickness on the Gingerland plantation. The nurse, Old Rose, and Dr John Benton attended to the patients but while Dr Benton was called in when needed,⁵⁸⁶ on Mountravers Dr Boddie was employed on an annual basis. This was considered a better system because the doctor would call regularly, and the owner was not tempted to save money by failing to summon medical assistance. Undoubtedly other factors came into play - the work was harder on Gingerland, and people were torn away from their familiar surroundings and support - but the figures reveal a shocking disparity: in fourteen months, between 1 May 1767 and 10 July 1768, on Gingerland three out of 65 perished, while on Mountravers, during the same time span, two out over 120 people died (an African girl and a recently-born infant). The three who died on Gingerland were all young Africans: Sally, whom Coker had bought in 1762, and Little Peter and Cuffee, whom JPP had bought. Cuffee, no older than seventeen, hanged himself – a particularly disturbing death which foreshadowed the boiler Mingo's murder of a girl, Little Agree, and Mingo hanging himself. Mingo and Little Agree were also on Gingerland during Richens's managership.

On 30 August 1768 John Hay Richens left JPP's employment,⁵⁸⁷ the workforce moved back to Mountravers and the Gingerland plantation was rented out again.

When he managed the plantation, Richens would have had two women allocated to carry out domestic chores. One of these probably was the Ebbo girl Judy whom JPP had bought a few months before she was moved to Gingerland. Said to have been twelve years old, Judy worked on the Gingerland estates and after returning to Mountravers, she gave birth to Richens's child. Their daughter was called Molly, or Mary, after his eldest sister. In November 1769 he started buying Judy and the baby, and in April the following year the sale was completed. He paid the equivalent of a year's wages, N£100.⁵⁸⁸

In 1771 and 1772 Richens spent nearly another N£260 on several people. He bought five from William Coker (Sally and Blandford, and Kitty and her child) and from JPP (Congo Will). He needed them because by then he was renting his own plantation⁵⁸⁹ from Robert Frith.⁵⁹⁰ The land had apparently been planted with another crop which Richens tried to replace with sugar. According to JPP, it was unsuitable for canes.

⁵⁸² PP, AB 20 f25

⁵⁸³ PP, LB 3: JPP to John Richens, 24 September 1767

⁵⁸⁴ PP, LB 3: JPP, Nevis, to John Hayne, 12 April 1768

⁵⁸⁵ PP, AB 17 Nevis a/c

⁵⁸⁶ PP, AB 18 William Coker's a/c

⁵⁸⁷ PP, AB 18 John Hay Richens's a/c

⁵⁸⁸ PP, AB 20 f40 John Hay Richens' a/c

⁵⁸⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP to Thomas Lucas, 30 April 1772

⁵⁹⁰ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1763-1787 ff295-96

Richens worked very hard to make a success of it. He acquired more people and, to support his friend, for a while JPP also lent him one, the tailor Tom Thraske.⁵⁹¹ But the plantation was doing badly and his creditors began demanding their money back. Afraid that the plantation had to be sold at Marshal's Sale, he borrowed money from JPP; first, in June 1775, N£1,200 and then another N£150.⁵⁹² For the loans he gave as security three males and seventeen females: Simon, Range, Blandford, Betty, Violet, Lettice, Peggy, Sophia, Kitty, Patty, Charlotte, Sally, Bessey, Fanny, Nanny, Frankey, Quasheba, and Little Betty. In this collateral he even included Judy and her child.⁵⁹³ Richens tried everything but expenses exceeded the value of the produce and he had to give up the estate. He had drawn £200 on his father and JPP charged him four per cent interest - less than the usual rate - but Richens could not repay the money, and two years on, in 1777, JPP was obliged to write to Richens's father. He did not press him for the sum of money advanced but asked him to at least repay the interest. JPP was understanding of Richens's situation; his friend was a victim of 'ill success' rather than extravagance, laziness, or neglect. Ever the cautious businessman, JPP, however, also judged that Richens had been trying to improve his fortunes too quickly. He had failed to weigh up the expenses of a sugar estate and had taken on a property in a poor location. It was 'subject to dry weather'.⁵⁹⁴

It is not clear what Richens did after he gave up the estate. Everyone in the island would have known of his ill judgment and of his failure in holding on to the property. Getting a job as manager may have been difficult, and to a man who had run his own affairs working as a monthly paid boiling house watch would have been less than appealing, if not humiliating. Whether out of pity or need, JPP employed him once again, and during the 1780 crop season Richens worked on Woodland under the manager, John Fisher,⁵⁹⁵ as a boiling house watch. To complete his fall in income and status, he began selling off his people. The day he left his temporary employment, on 30 June, he received N£16 from Edward Brazier 'for the difference of price between Peggy and Kitty'.⁵⁹⁶ By April 1782 Richens still had three people,⁵⁹⁷ and in January 1783 he hired Miah from JPP for a few months, and then Othello and Bess Powell for three years.⁵⁹⁸ Sheba Jones was also hired to him but while he had to pay taxes on the others, Sheba was responsible for paying her own.

Richens was called upon to act as a witness when Mrs P's grandmother, Mary Weekes, made over a slave to one of her daughters,⁵⁹⁹ and again when JPP rented out land to a tenant.⁶⁰⁰ It was as if his friend wanted to confirm to him that he was still part of his business affairs, and that he could still be trusted.

So far Richens had not been able to repay the money he owed JPP and, not long before the Pinneys were leaving for England, Richens had to ask him to renew the bond for N£150.⁶⁰¹ Unable to meet the cost of hiring Othello and Bess Powell, their hire had to be included in a new bond which was for just

⁵⁹¹ PP, AB 21 Expense a/c

⁵⁹² ECSCRN, CR 1773-1775 f386, and PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis f20

⁵⁹³ Some of the names are quite common but the clustering suggests that out of the twenty mortgaged people, nine probably came from Jesup's estate. They were on a slave inventory dated 23 July 1767 and four of them may also have been listed in an earlier inventory of 17 June 1748 (in brackets are their 1767 values): a man, Simon (£90); four women called Betty Gundo (£80), Fanny (£75), Violet (£70), and Peggy (£25, diseased); two girls, Lettice (£50) and Charlotte (£25), and an infant, Quasheba (£7). Another woman, mortgaged by Richens as Frankey, may have been Creole Frankey (£60), Congo Frankey (£60), or Mandingo Frankey (£55).

The four who may well have lived on Jesup's in 1748 were Fanny and her daughter Lettice, Peggy and one of the woman called Frankey (SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/18).

⁵⁹⁴ PP, LB 4: JPP to Richard Richens at 'Knowle near Ramsbury', 3 November 1777

⁵⁹⁵ PP, AB 26 John Hay Richens's a/c and Woodland a/c

⁵⁹⁶ PP, AB 26 f40 John Hay Richens's a/c

⁵⁹⁷ PP, AB 26 John Hay Richens's a/c

⁵⁹⁸ PP, AB 30 Negro Hire a/c

⁵⁹⁹ ECSCRN, CR 1773-1774 f445

⁶⁰⁰ PP, AB 30 Ann Foot's a/c

⁶⁰¹ PP, Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783: JH Richens Bond dated 13 May 1783

over N£200.⁶⁰² JPP was not pushing him to pay back the loan – he had instructed Gill ‘not to distress’ him - but Richens did not want to be indebted to his old friend any longer, and shortly after borrowing the money, by way of repayment he handed over three females: Peggy, Bessey and Quasheba.⁶⁰³ Together, they were worth N£200. They probably were the last three he possessed. Judy, his mistress, appears to have died by then but his daughter Molly was still alive. He manumitted her in 1786.⁶⁰⁴

By then he was in debt, in poor health and an alcoholic. JPP, who would have known of Richens’s purchase of over 40 gallons of rum from the plantation,⁶⁰⁵ attributed his bad leg to his ‘bad habit of body occasioned by [his] free use of rum’ and wished him a speedy recovery. Richens must have been stung by his friend’s lecture to ‘conquer that passion’⁶⁰⁶ because he could see that JPP had it all: a wife, children, and a profitable and expanding business. His pride must have been hurt further when JPP offered him free accommodation at Woodland, together with free pasture for his stock and the free use of a stock keeper. Forced to submit to JPP’s charity, he accepted the offer.⁶⁰⁷

Among the items kept at Woodland was a firelock,⁶⁰⁸ and not long after Richens moved to Woodland, he used it and shot and wounded JPP’s stock keeper, Hector. Judging by JPP’s response, Hector was to blame; he asked Coker to sell ‘that wicked fellow’.⁶⁰⁹ But Coker did not sell him - thereby perhaps indicating that the incident was Richens’s fault. Richens had injured the man and he would have been responsible for the medical bills, but he still owed JPP money⁶¹⁰ and, knowing that his friend was unable to pay, JPP instructed that the doctors’ charges should come out of the plantation account.⁶¹¹

Within six months of moving into the house at Woodland, John Hay Richens was dead. He died some time before the end of 1787. JPP, who had spent a considerable amount of money supporting him, was saddened at losing his friend but was also ‘glad to hear poor Richens [was] relieved from a great deal of suffering’.⁶¹²

James Bowrin

The son of John Bowrin and his wife Elizabeth, James Bowrin was baptised on 20 May 1737 in St George’s Gingerland. He had at least one brother, William, who was baptised in 1743.⁶¹³ They may have been first-generation Creoles; the references to their baptisms are the earliest found so far of any Bowrin activity in Nevis.

James Bowrin’s father was a carpenter. The family owned few people; in the 1750s they had two who were beyond labour.⁶¹⁴ They may have been the people the Bowrins later manumitted: James⁶¹⁵ and John George Watters.⁶¹⁶

⁶⁰² PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f168: Bond dated 4 April 1785

⁶⁰³ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to John Hay Richens, 4 May 1787; also ECSCRN, CR 1785-1787 ff258-60

⁶⁰⁴ According to the official record, John Hay Richens freed his daughter Mary on 10 April 1776 but the witness, Daniel Dasent, did not confirm her manumission until 30 January 1786 (ECSCRN, CR 1785-1787 ff181-82).

⁶⁰⁵ PP, AB 26 Rum a/c

⁶⁰⁶ PP, LB 6: JPP to John Hay Richens, 3 February 1786

⁶⁰⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to William Coker, 4 May 1787

⁶⁰⁸ PP, Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783 ff55-8 Inventory ‘at Woodland-house’

⁶⁰⁹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Coker, Nevis, 24 October 1787

⁶¹⁰ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to John Hay Richens, 4 May 1787

⁶¹¹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Coker, Nevis, 24 October 1787, and AB 36 Archbald & Williamson a/c

⁶¹² PP, LB 9: JPP to William Coker, 9 February 1788

⁶¹³ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St George’s Parish Register

⁶¹⁴ PP, Dom Box P: General’s Tax Notebook 1755

⁶¹⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1778-1783 f6

⁶¹⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1790-1792 f562

James Bowrin began work as a stock keeper on the Gingerland estate in July 1766. It is possible that his father had recommended him for the job; some years earlier he had repaired a store⁶¹⁷ and built a house on the Gingerland estate.⁶¹⁸ In charge of the animals, James Bowrin, who was aged around thirty, earned only N£20 a year - the lowest salary paid to any of white plantation employees. Given that his father had a trade which he could have passed on to his son, it is possible that James Bowrin suffered from ill health and that his physical, or mental, condition did not allow him to work as a carpenter.

Under John Hay Richens's management, Bowrin worked with many of the newly arrived Africans, for instance Hector - later a stock keeper on Mountravers and at Woodland - and Tom Maynard, who, during his time at Gingerland, was gored in the breast by a cow. JPP wanted to employ another overseer on Gingerland but did not consider Bowrin suitable material for the post and, instead, asked Coker, who was then in England, to try and recruit a 'young fellow'.⁶¹⁹

James Bowrin left after two years (when JPP concentrated his workforce at Mountravers)⁶²⁰ and then completely disappeared from view. His younger brother William, however, figured prominently in Nevis. He owned and part-owned shipping vessels and married into a planter family, the Butlers.⁶²¹ He became a planter in St Thomas Lowland.⁶²²

It may have been James and William Bowrin's relative George Vaughan who later worked as a boiling house watch on Mountravers.

John Pearce

John Pearce who worked on Mountravers in 1778 and 1779 but nothing is known about him. Most likely he was not a Creole; the name was most uncommon in Nevis.

Although recorded in the accounts as an overseer, his rate of pay, N£5 a month, suggests that he was a boiling house watch. John Pearce started at the beginning of February, worked until mid-July, was paid five and a half months wages and left. Six weeks later, probably after Tom Peaden's accident, he was recalled and worked from the beginning of September for another three months. John Pearce received his salary as overseer on 1 December 1778 and then, until the end of June 1779, he was engaged as a watch at Fort Pinney. After this he left and did not return.⁶²³

George Frost

He began work in mid-February before the overseer, John Andrews, arrived from England and left at the end of June 1780, before John Andrews returned to England.⁶²⁴

⁶¹⁷ PP, AB 15 William Coker's a/c

⁶¹⁸ PP, WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney

⁶¹⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP to William Coker, 15 August 1766

⁶²⁰ PP, AB 18: July 1767 and 1 July 1768

⁶²¹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2

⁶²² PP, AB 57 William Bowrin Planter a/c

In about April 1813 William Bowrin bought Colhoun's estate viz Windmill, Basseterre Lowland and Paradise (ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff532-50). According to the memorial tablet in St Paul's church, William Bowrin died in December 1816, aged 70 years. His age was estimated; he would have been at least three years older (see also John Titford 'Settlers of the Old Empire ...' in *Family Tree Magazine* (November 1999) p61, citing *Caribbeana* Vol 2).

⁶²³ PP, AB 26 f90 John Pearce's a/c

⁶²⁴ PP, AB 26 f110: 1 July 1780

Until 1781, there were two men in Nevis called George Frost, uncle and nephew. The uncle was then in his late forties while his nephew was about sixteen years old. The man hired to watch the boiling house at Mountravers may have been either. The Frosts lived in the parish of St John Figtree.

The older George Frost almost certainly was a descendent of John Frost who appears to have come to Nevis with his family some time after 1708. George Frost's father was also called George, his mother, Mary, almost certainly was the daughter of a Jewish man, Solomon Israel, and his non-Jewish wife, Catherine.⁶²⁵ The marriages of mother and daughter are examples of the integration of members of the Jewish community into the non-Jewish community in Nevis; personal choice overrode religious concerns.

George Frost's mother, Mary Israel, was still in her teens when she got married in 1730.⁶²⁶ Apart from George, who was baptised in St John Figtree church in 1748, Mary and her husband had at least another five surviving children who were baptised between 1733 and 1759: John, Joseph, Benjamin Bartlett, Sarah, and Ann, but most likely also Solomon and William Bennet. William Bennett Frost proclaimed his Jewish heritage when he gave one of his children his mother's maiden name, Israel, as a middle name.⁶²⁷

The family owned few enslaved people. For the work on the Saddle Hill defences which were carried out in the 1730s, his grandfather and his father made some of them available but those people his father possessed in the mid-1750s were 'written off' – they were too old or too ill to work.⁶²⁸

George Frost's mother Mary died in 1760 and his father two years later, followed soon after by his twelve-year-old brother Joseph.⁶²⁹ His father and brother may have been victims during the small pox outbreak.

George's eldest brother, John, married a cousin, Mary, in February 1764. Their first child, George, was baptised on 31 May 1764 in St John Figtree, and it may have been this son, the nephew of the elder George Frost, who worked on Mountravers between mid-February and the end of June 1780. Most of young George Frost's siblings died in infancy.⁶³⁰

At the age of 48, George Frost died on 7 May 1781 and was buried in St John Figtree⁶³¹ but it is not known what happened to his young nephew, the other George Frost.

⁶²⁵ Terrell, M *The Jewish Community* p147

⁶²⁶ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1 p146

⁶²⁷ George Frost married Mary Israel on 22 December 1730 in St John Figtree. Their son John was baptised in 1733, Elizabeth was baptised and buried in 1737, George was baptised in 1748, Joseph in 1749, Benjamin Bartlett in 1754, Sarah in 1757, and Ann in 1759. Another girl, Elizabeth, died in 1737, the year she was born, and one unnamed child of George Frost's was buried in 1750 (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1 ,p324-8). It is not known when Solomon and William Bennet were baptised. Solomon Frost was buried at the age of 36 in September 1773 (*Caribbeana* Vol 3 pp213-15).

William Bennet(t) Frost, the brother of the elder or the uncle of the younger George Frost, worked as a mason on Mountravers and Woodland in 1778 (PP, AB 26 William Bennett Frost's a/c). In 1775 he married Catherine Roper; their daughter Ann Israel Frost was baptised in October 1788 (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 2 pp323-26). William Bennett Frost died at the age of 80 in September 1815 (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b)).

⁶²⁸ UKNA, CO 186/2; PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755, and ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123

⁶²⁹ Mary Frost, the wife of George Frost, was buried, aged 43, on 26 June 1760 in St John Figtree. She would have been about thirteen years old when she married George Frost on 22 December 1730. Aged 54, George Frost was buried on 27 January 1762 in St John Figtree (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1 pp324-28). George Frost was listed among the 'Letters of Administration and Effects' (UKNA, CO 186/6: 9 December 1772).

⁶³⁰ According to the St John Figtree Parish Register, George Frost's brother John was born in November 1766, baptised the following year and died at the age of twelve months. His sister Mary may have been baptised in 1769; she died in 1771, the year Sarah was baptised. Another sister and a twelve-months-old infant were buried in 1766 and 1767 (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825, and VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1).

⁶³¹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 pp213-15

John Andrews

Intended to replace Tom Peaden, John Andrews was recruited by Joseph Gill during his visit to England and almost certainly came from the West Country. As early as August 1778, after Tom Peaden's accident, JPP had asked Gill 'to procure for me a lad that can write well at 10 or 12 years old as an apprentice',⁶³² but it had taken over a year to secure a suitable candidate. It is not known whether John Andrews was as a boy or a young man.

During his voyage to the West Indies Andrews made friends with some people and, after landing at Nevis in mid-March 1780, he and his shipmates celebrated their arrival in town. He had money in his pocket; before he had left England, Gill had advanced him N£10⁶³³ but, 'not naturally dedicated to drinking', he got so inebriated that he was 'almost incapable of riding home'. The 'debauch ... brought on a slight feverish complaint and an inflammation in one of his testicles'.

JPP 'permitted him to continue unemployed until his health [was] fully restored'. He did recover but, 'somewhat indisposed ever since his arrival',⁶³⁴ John Andrews was just 'not equal to his board'. He was not robust enough to withstand the work, the climate and the conditions and, only four months after he had arrived, on 7 July embarked on the return journey back to England. He received his wages in full, and JPP calculated that by engaging him he had lost a total of S£36/N£60:16:0.⁶³⁵

For his passage John Andrews bought from the plantation sugar and twelve gallons of rum. He sailed home on Captain Henry Webb's *Merlin*.⁶³⁶ Among its crew were two men from Nevis, Pompey Carlton and James Mills - almost certainly regular 'sailor negroes'. They worked on the Bristol/Nevis route for over a year.⁶³⁷

It is not known what happened to John Andrews after he returned to England.

Samuel Bennett

He started work as overseer on Mountravers on 10 August 1781⁶³⁸ and more or less continuously worked on the plantation until August 1784. Nothing is known about his origin except that he had an illegitimate brother called William who appears to have lived in London.⁶³⁹ Although the surname occurs in the records from time to time,⁶⁴⁰ almost certainly he came to Nevis from England.

Living in the overseer's house at Sharloe's, Bennett was close to the beach and close to the main island road and in a vulnerable position in case the enemy invaded the island. Since the beginning of 1781, Britain had been at war with the Netherlands,⁶⁴¹ and then also France. Military action in the surrounding islands resulted in Admiral George Rodney's capture of St Eustatius and the French taking Montserrat - ⁶⁴² the island to the south-east of Nevis. War had come close. Bennett fortified

⁶³² PP, LB 4 : Memo to Gill 24 August 1778

⁶³³ PP, AB 26 John Andrews' a/c

⁶³⁴ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to Simon Pretor, 30 March 1780

⁶³⁵ PP, AB 26 John Andrews a/c

⁶³⁶ For his passage John Andrews paid N£16:6:0, for the sugar N£2:1:7 and for the rum N£2:2:0 (PP, AB 26 John Andrews a/c).

⁶³⁷ SMV, Ships' Muster Rolls 1771-1783

⁶³⁸ PP, AB 26 Sam Bennett's a/c

⁶³⁹ UKNA, PROB 31/1096/140

⁶⁴⁰ John Bennett lived in Nevis in 1707/8 (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 1707/8 Census), George Bennett paid tax on four enslaved people in 1755 (PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755). Jenny Bennett was in 1762 was one of the tenants of JPP's Houses in Town (PP, AB 15 William Coker's a/c); and Mrs Bennett died on 8 February 1788 of 'decline' (*Caribbeana* Vol 3 (Cayon Diary)).

⁶⁴¹ Goslinga, Cornelius Ch *A Short History of the Netherland Antilles and Surinam* p101

⁶⁴² Deerr, Noel *The History of Sugar* Vol I p152

himself with 110 gallons of rum⁶⁴³ and JPP, who had readied Fort Pinney for war with a new signal flag,⁶⁴⁴ equipped him with a flintlock.⁶⁴⁵

War came to Nevis five months after Bennett started work on Mountravers. The French laid siege and famine followed the island's surrender.⁶⁴⁶ The plantation had only just recovered from the effects of the hurricane of October 1780, which had damaged several pieces of canes on Mountravers,⁶⁴⁷ and motivating people to get on with the work must have been difficult in these circumstances. Bennett worked with John Keep, who watched the boiling house during the crop season, and he executed his duties to JPP's satisfaction. His employer rewarded him not only with a gratuity of N£25 but from the beginning of February 1783 also increased his salary from N£80 to N£100 a year. This was the first time an overseer was paid at such high a rate on Mountravers⁶⁴⁸ and an unusually steep increase.⁶⁴⁹ A month later Bennett stopped work but after a four-months break was re-employed on 5 July, the day JPP and his family left Nevis.⁶⁵⁰ Bennett may have taken sick leave because as soon as JPP was back in England, he wrote to Joseph Gill, his manager, that he had an 'inclination ...to send out a man as an overseer, to have succeeded Bennett in case he left you, as I am apprehensive his health will not permit him to remain long in the W. Indies.'⁶⁵¹ Bennett worked on Mountravers for another year, until August 1784, and then did not leave on account of ill health but because Gill sacked him.⁶⁵² According to Gill, Bennett had behaved cruelly towards the workers and had made unjust demands against the plantation. JPP approved of Gill's resolute action.⁶⁵³

It is not known what Samuel Bennett did after he left Mountravers, nor when he married his wife, Sarah, or when he acquired his first enslaved person. Although later described as a merchant, he may have gone into the shipping or ferrying business: on JPP's second visit to Nevis he paid Bennett for passage to and from St Kitts for himself and Pero.⁶⁵⁴ Alternatively, Bennett may have honed his skills as overseer and risen to become a manager on another Nevis plantation, possibly John Taylor's,⁶⁵⁵ because when Samuel Bennett re-appeared on Mountravers in August 1807, James Tobin - John Frederick Pinney's joint-attorney who dealt with the sale of the plantation - appointed him as temporary manager.⁶⁵⁶ While the letter which informed JPP of this appointment was making its way to England, JPP thought of another man, Charles Ellery. The husband of William Coker's niece Betsey Dredge, he had earlier been in some 'violent proceeding' that JPP found 'so reprehensible' that he had dropped the idea of engaging him.⁶⁵⁷ (JPP's mood-swing against Ellery may have had something to do with Mr Ellery's young cocoa nut trees encroaching on JPP's land,⁶⁵⁸ and Ellery owing JPP money.)⁶⁵⁹ Ellery then went to manage a plantation in Montserrat⁶⁶⁰ but had returned to Nevis where he worked for Nisbet and, after leaving Nisbet's, had lived with Miss Weekes at the

⁶⁴³ PP, AB 26 Rum a/c and Samuel Bennett's a/c

⁶⁴⁴ On 14 July 1781 JPP paid N£7:10:0 for half the cost of a flag for Fort Pinney (PP, AB 27).

⁶⁴⁵ PP, Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783 ff55-8

⁶⁴⁶ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p98

⁶⁴⁷ PP, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to Harry Pouncy, 25 July 1781

According to Joyce Gordon, the draught, which followed the 1780 hurricane, caused the failure of the entire crop but JPP did not report this in his letters. If the rest of the island did not fare well, Mountravers appears to have been untouched (*Nevis - Queen of the Caribees* p25).

⁶⁴⁸ PP, AB 26 Samuel Bennett's a/c

⁶⁴⁹ Around the same time Bennett's salary was increased from N£80 to N£10, on Lady Stapleton's Windward Estate the overseer Jeremiah Clifton enjoyed a pay rise of N£10 to N£90 a year (Stapleton Cotton MSS 15 (v)).

⁶⁵⁰ PP, AB 30 Samuel Bennett's a/c

⁶⁵¹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 27 August 1783

⁶⁵² PP, LB 19: Plantation to Sundry a/c and AB 30 Samuel Bennett's a/c

⁶⁵³ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 28 December 1784

⁶⁵⁴ PP, LB 11: JPP, at Sea, to James Williams, Nevis, 9 August 1794

⁶⁵⁵ PP, AB 45

⁶⁵⁶ PP, LB 21: James Tobin, Nevis, to JPP, Bristol, 8 August 1807

⁶⁵⁷ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 22 December 1791

⁶⁵⁸ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 16 January 1792

⁶⁵⁹ GA, D15171/F845: Elizabeth Ellery, Montserrat, to Revd WY Coker, 30 July 1792

⁶⁶⁰ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 10 March 1793

Cedar Trees.⁶⁶¹ JPP was prepared to try him out but Charles Ellery returned to England before JPP's letter with the suggestion to employ him had reached Nevis.⁶⁶²

Tobin's agreement with Bennett was 'by the month' but Bennett was only prepared to accept the post on condition that he continued as permanent manager at a salary of N£300 a year. It would have been reasonable to expect that, after Gill had sacked this man for cruelty towards his plantation people, JPP would not countenance employing him again but he did not express any qualms about his methods and was only concerned with the remuneration his former servant demanded. JPP was surprised that Mr Bennett 'in times like the present' should require an increase of salary and considered his request not only greedy but also premature. He had not proven himself yet, or, as JPP put it: 'It was time enough to have mentioned it after experiencing the good effect of his superior talents.'⁶⁶³ Bennett was duly appointed and remained in position until at least the following year.⁶⁶⁴ The older people who remembered him from twenty years earlier must have reacted to his appointment with dismay and disbelief. After the Hugginses took over, they did not retain Bennett's services.

Having earlier witnessed Thomas Arthurton manumitting his three grandchildren, the sons and daughters of a Mountravers slave,⁶⁶⁵ Bennett was then in demand as an appraiser and executor of wills. In November 1807 he, with Thomas Arthurton and Dr Henry Richards Cassin, assessed the effects of the planter John Browne junior,⁶⁶⁶ and a year later acted as executor for Dr John Williamson. The doctor, who had lived near the Cedar Trees,⁶⁶⁷ had gone to Scotland to recover his health but had died there and Bennett attended to his several bequests. On Williamson's behalf he freed the mulatto man Benjamin Frost, who had gone to Scotland with John Williamson and cared for him until his death,⁶⁶⁸ paid out the money the doctor had left to the free mulatto woman Catherine Murphy and each of her six children and handed over to her Williamson's furniture and people.⁶⁶⁹

In 1810 Samuel Bennett was one of the witnesses for the Crown in the case following Edward Huggins's flogging of the Mountravers people and, surprisingly for a man whom JPP had accused of cruelty, Bennett stated that he 'never saw such correction in all his life'.⁶⁷⁰ Perhaps, with increasing maturity, he had changed his ways but his statement may have been prompted by feeling bitter towards Edward Huggins for not employing him.

Samuel Bennett died suddenly, on 5 May 1813. He had not made a will and his widow had to apply for the administration of his effects. Bennett possessed eleven people, and although one, the leprous boy Mickey, was not worth anything, the appraised value of the other ten amounted to just over N£1,200. Bennett had owned seven males and four females: two 'old' people, Jack (N£20) and Badja (N£66); three skilled men, the carpenters James Weekes (N£250), John Blyden (N£200) and Abel Blyden (N£200); a mulatto woman, Betty Blyden (N£150), and her baby son William Phipps (N£50); and three 'aged' people, Billy Baily (N£80), Mimba Baily (N£100) and the African woman Polly Tobago (N£100). The former plantation manager's other worldly goods - his furniture - were worth less than N£60.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶¹ PP, LB 22: JPP to James Tobin, 4 September 1807

⁶⁶² PP, LB 22: JPP to James Tobin, Nevis, 19 November 1807

⁶⁶³ PP, LB 22: JPP to James Tobin, Nevis, 19 November 1807

⁶⁶⁴ PP, LB 22: JPP to Thomas Arthurton, Nevis, 6 July 1808

⁶⁶⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1801-1803 ff506-07 and ff527-28

⁶⁶⁶ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 f72

⁶⁶⁷ Terrell, Michelle M *The Historical Archaeology of a Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Jewish Community*, citing ECSCRN, CR 1801-1803 f178

⁶⁶⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1808-1810 ff137-39

⁶⁶⁹ The wording in John Williamson's will suggests that the mestees Mary and Elizabeth were Williamson's children while John, Sophia, Sarah and Charles were not (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 f465).

⁶⁷⁰ PN Box 1 ps194 A-L, taken from CO 152/96

⁶⁷¹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 f262

These were Samuel Bennett's possessions in Nevis, but his widow apparently did not know that in England her husband had invested almost £200. At 3 per cent interest, over the years its value had risen to close to £300 and it was Samuel Bennett's illegitimate brother William Bennett who claimed this money. He stated that he was the 'only next of kin'. His signature, written in a rough hand, suggests that he had a minimum of education.⁶⁷²

Not long after she lost her husband, Mrs Sarah Bennett sold for N£200 what must have been a recently acquired person, the black woman Elsey, to the free mulatto woman⁶⁷³ Ann Huggins,⁶⁷⁴ and she sold one of the carpenters, Abel Blyden, to Thomas Slaider, a planter and Magistrate. She may also have sold others, or they died; by 1817 she had only five people left: the 23-year-old carpenter James Weekes; Mimba, then aged 44; Polly Tobago, then aged 50; the 45-year-old Betty Blyden and Betty's six-year-old son William.⁶⁷⁵

In March 1823 Sarah Bennett manumitted Betty/Elizabeth Blyden (who was born in St Eustatius)⁶⁷⁶ and also Betty's young son William Phipps, but two years later lost an important source of income when James Weekes, her carpenter, died.⁶⁷⁷ The most valuable of all her husband's people, he had a much sought-after skill and could be hired out at the highest rate. It is very likely that Mimba and Polly Tobago also died; Mrs Bennett did not complete any more slave registers.

She fell on hard times and in August 1827 was awarded a dollar a week as an 'indigent widow'. Then, in November 1829, it was decided that the money should be discontinued but at the beginning of July 1832 the decision was reversed once more. Mrs Bennett again received pauper's support of N5s3d a week.⁶⁷⁸ She died the following year. Aged 74, Sarah Bennett was buried on 17 May 1833 in St Paul's church in Charlestown.⁶⁷⁹

John Keep(e)

Not to be confused with John Keepe, the white mason, this man was mixed-race and the son of the free mulatto woman Mary Coker. His grandmother, Rachel Coker, had in 1764 left a tenement with six acres of land in St Thomas Lowland to his mother and his aunts Mary Keep and Sarah Coker, and an adjoining plot of land and people to his uncles Charles Keep and John Coker. These Cokers were not related to JPP's manager William Coker but were a separate branch of the family that had existed in Nevis since the 1670s. They were connected with the family of John Keepe, the white mason who trained Almond, did building work on Mountravers and hired the plantation masons.

John Keep worked on Mountravers as a boiling house watch and was first employed from 12 February 1782, a month after Nevis had surrendered to the French and at a time of famine. Under JPP's management and with Samuel Bennett as overseer, he worked for five months,⁶⁸⁰ was hired again the following year from 3 February⁶⁸¹ and then from 3 January 1785 for seven months.⁶⁸² Joseph Gill was then managing the plantation. John Keep left the day the newly arrived overseer, James Williams, started his job, but when William Coker took over managing Mountravers at the

⁶⁷² UKNA, PROB 31/1096/140

⁶⁷³ ECSCRN, CR 1805-1808 and CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f21

⁶⁷⁴ ECSCRN, CR 1810-1814 f605

⁶⁷⁵ UKNA, T 71/364

⁶⁷⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f13

⁶⁷⁷ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 92

⁶⁷⁸ UKNA, CO 186/13: 25 August 1827 and 29 November 1829; also CO 186/14: 2 July 1832

⁶⁷⁹ NHCS, St Pauls' Burials 1825-1837

⁶⁸⁰ PP, AB 26: 12 July 1782

⁶⁸¹ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f104

⁶⁸² PP, AB 31 Plantation a/c

beginning of 1786, John Keep was briefly employed again and then watched the boiling house for the last time for six weeks from 5 February 1787. His pay remained at N£5 a month.⁶⁸³

In 1796 his aunt Mary Keep left land and a house to one of his uncles, which, after his death, was to go to John Keep. It is likely that some time before 1808 John Keep inherited this land and that he mortgaged it to the Pinneys who put it in trust for the orphaned sons of Thomas Pym Weekes.⁶⁸⁴ It is not known when John Keep died.

Joseph Gill

Joseph Gill started work as manager in July 1783. He was in post until December 1785. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3.

James Williams

James Williams started work as overseer in Joseph Gill's time and in May 1794 became manager. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3.

William Coker

William Coker took over from Joseph Gill and worked as manager until 1790. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3.

John Frederick, or Jack, Coker

The manager William Coker's younger son, John Frederick Coker was born in Nevis on 16 August and baptised on 28 December 1770 by Revd John Clerkson⁶⁸⁵ but only lived in the island until his mother returned to England the following year. His father had already gone back to the family's home at Woodcutts in Dorset.

While his parents returned to Nevis in 1785, John Frederick remained in England for another two years. Under JPP's guidance, he received a gentleman's education. In January 1786 he entered Mr James' Academy at Stoke Bishop in Bristol⁶⁸⁶ and a year later was removed to Monsieur Planiers French School.⁶⁸⁷ He even learnt to dance⁶⁸⁸ but attended the French School only for a few months. While his older brother William Young Coker was destined for the church, at one stage it was thought that John Frederick would enter the legal profession, but plans changed when his father wanted him to come out to the West Indies. His father hoped JPP would employ him as overseer but JPP, who always spoke warmly of John Frederick – or, as he called him, Jack - considered this young man unsuitable for such a tough job. JPP wrote to William Coker: 'I do not think the overseer birth at my estate will suit him, for whoever is in that capacity must live and sleep at Sharloes and go through all the drudgery of that situation.' He advised that the management of a small estate would suit him better.⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸³ PP, AB 36 Plantation a/c

⁶⁸⁴ PP, LB 68: P & C to PT Huggins, Nevis, 1 February 1847

⁶⁸⁵ DHC, D66/9 Copy of Register, and PP, AB 18 f42 Wm Coker's a/c

⁶⁸⁶ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 23 January 1786, and 4 February 1786

⁶⁸⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, 16 January 1787

⁶⁸⁸ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 4 May 1787

⁶⁸⁹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 October 1787

Aged seventeen, John Frederick Coker travelled to Nevis. He and his cousin Thomas Pym Weekes sailed on Charles Maies's ship, the *Nevis*. They left Lamplighters Hall near Bristol on the evening of 13 November 1787⁶⁹⁰ with at least one other passenger from Nevis, Webbe Hobson.⁶⁹¹

James Williams was then employed as overseer on Mountravers but, as soon as he came to Nevis, his father took on John Frederick to oversee the work in the boiling house.⁶⁹² He did this job for four months and may have returned to England in 1788 or 1789. In January 1790 Mrs P arrived from England with her maid, Fanny Coker, and at the end of April JPP landed with his servant, Pero Jones. JPP was aghast at the way the plantation had been managed. He found that not much sugar had been produced, and when he studied the accounts, among other things he discovered that John Frederick had been engaged as a boiling house watch. JPP considered this an unnecessary expense but his father justified employing him by saying that 'he got him [John Frederick] to go down in the evening to help Mr Williams, in order to save the expense of an overseer to the Estate, as the crop was so short.'⁶⁹³ However, John Frederick's father was flannelling: the salary John Frederick received was, of course, exactly the amount paid to an assistant overseer. Outraged by the way John Frederick's father had run Mountravers, JPP removed him and installed John Frederick's cousin, Thomas Pym Weekes, instead. JPP instructed his old manager to leave the estate, taking with him his and all the family's animals, including John Frederick's. Towards the end of July 1790 the Cokers went to live in Charlestown,⁶⁹⁴ but Thomas Pym Weekes did employ his cousin once more as a seasonal boiling house watch.⁶⁹⁵

John Frederick Coker returned to England but as soon as he arrived, he was on his way back again. He was ill. In line with current thinking that sea air was curative, in the spring of 1791 he returned to the West Indies. He was in very poor state. JPP told an acquaintance that 'Jack Coker is aboard the *Nevis* to try whether the sea air will benefit his health - it is expected he cannot live long.'⁶⁹⁶ John Frederick returned to Nevis and, as predicted, died soon after his arrival.⁶⁹⁷ Aged twenty, he was buried in the St Paul's churchyard.

His parents returned to England and Captain Charles Maies, on whose ship John Frederick had last travelled, was asked to arrange having a wall built for a tombstone and for the tombstone to be laid. John Frederick's brother, Revd William Young Coker, reimbursed Maies with N£10 for 'finding lime, tarras, negroe-labour, etc'.⁶⁹⁸ No doubt, masons from Mountravers were sent to Charlestown to carry out this work.

Dr Thomas Pym Weekes

Dr Thomas Pym Weekes replaced William Coker and was manager from August 1790 until May 1794. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3.

⁶⁹⁰ PP, LB 6: JPP to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 24 October 1787; also AB 33 f29 Captain Charles Maies a/c

⁶⁹¹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 27 October 1787

⁶⁹² PP, AB 35 Plantation a/c

⁶⁹³ PP, AB 39 Wm Coker's a/c

⁶⁹⁴ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 27 July 1790

⁶⁹⁵ PP, AB 39 Cash a/c and AB 39 William Coker's account

⁶⁹⁶ PP, LB 10: JPP to John Patterson, Bath, 21 March 1791

⁶⁹⁷ PP, Dom Box S1: Wm Coker to TP Weekes, 4 June 1791

⁶⁹⁸ PP, AB 40: 12 February 1793

Nathaniel Clifton

Almost certainly Nathaniel Clifton was a Creole. At least two men of the same name had lived in the island: one had a son who was also called Nathaniel and who was baptised in 1719. The father died in 1722/3.⁶⁹⁹ The son owned five enslaved individuals in 1755⁷⁰⁰ and when he died around 1770, left everything to his sister, Frances Lawrence.⁷⁰¹ He may have been an uncle of this Nathaniel, who certainly had other relatives in the island; Cliftons had lived in the parishes of St James and St George continuously since the seventeenth century.⁷⁰² They tended to be skilled tradesmen or overseers rather than planters and their womenfolk married skilled tradesmen and overseers.⁷⁰³ The first known family member, Christian Clifton, in the 1670s owned one man, and successive generations of the family held few people – except for one in the 1730s, John Clifton.⁷⁰⁴ In the mid-1750s three members who were believed to have been related to each other had eleven between them.

Nathaniel Clifton, like Thomas and Benjamin Clifton⁷⁰⁵ before him, was a mason by trade and first worked on Mountravers as a mason. He was in partnership with a relative of his, Charles, who almost certainly was a man in his thirties.⁷⁰⁶ After the 1772 hurricane, Nathaniel and Charles Clifton hired two of JPP's masons, Bettiscombe and Tom Jones. Charles worked with them on hanging the coppers and repairing the chimney; Nathaniel oversaw the reconstruction of the masonry work at the lower works, Sharloes. Nathaniel Clifton hired Bettiscombe and Tom Jones for about six months⁷⁰⁷ and may also have had in his team one of his own people, a man called Pompey. Nathaniel Clifton owned at least six people; they were later sold to James Smith,⁷⁰⁸ who had just bought from JPP part of Mrs Pinney's Fountain Plantation.⁷⁰⁹

Possibly because business was slack, or because he was past the physically demanding job of a mason, in 1791 Nathaniel Clifton worked as a boiling house watch on Mountravers. Under Thomas Pym Weekes's managership he started at the beginning of February and was employed for just over three months.⁷¹⁰ During that time he spent almost two months' wages on 45 gallons of rum.⁷¹¹ This may have been an investment rather than for private consumption; he could sell the alcohol at a profit.

After he left, Nathaniel Clifton had contact with the family of other Mountravers employees; he witnessed the will of Mary Keep, a relative of the boiling house watches John Coker and John Keep,⁷¹² but it is not known what happened to him in later life.

⁶⁹⁹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2

⁷⁰⁰ PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755

⁷⁰¹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1763-1787 f278

⁷⁰² For instance, Christian Clifton listed in 1677/8 two white men, one white woman, eight white children, and one 'negro man' (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 p74 List of Nevis Inhabitants).

⁷⁰³ For instance, Charles Clifton's brothers Jeremiah and Thomas Clifton were overseers on Windward Estate and Whitehall Estate (Stapleton Cotton MSS 16 and 16 (iv)). Joseph Clifton managed the Mills's estate in Nevis (MLD, Mills Papers, 2006.178/7, Vol 1: John Mills junior to Joseph Mills, 16 March 1770). Among the woman in the Clifton family was Mary who married the overseer Edward Green in 1723; another Mary Clifton married the constable John Fyfield in 1733; and Frances and Ann Clifton married carpenters: James Huggins in 1742 and Oliver Huggins in 1777 (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vols 2 and 3).

⁷⁰⁴ For the work at Saddle Hill, John Clifton made available 161 'negro work days' in 1735, which suggests that he had a considerable number of enslaved people at his disposal (UKNA, CO 186/2).

⁷⁰⁵ In the late 1740s the mason Thomas Clifton did building work at Whitehall and erected a limekiln at the Windmill Estate (Stapleton Cotton MSS 13 (ii) and (iii)). The mason Benjamin Clifton married the spinster Margaret Thraske in November 1721 in St George's (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 2).

⁷⁰⁶ Charles, the son of the mason Benjamin Clifton and his wife Margaret, had been baptised in November 1739, together with three brothers and a sister (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St George's Parish Register).

⁷⁰⁷ PP, AB 21 Plantation a/c; AB 20 Nathaniel Clifton's a/c; also AB 20 Plantation a/c

⁷⁰⁸ Referring to an indenture dated 12 June 1772, Nathaniel Clifton junior, mason, sold six people to James Smith for whom he received NE213: Pompey, Lucy, Pegg, Domingo, Frankey and Lettey. The witnesses were John Brown and Patrick Sutherland (ECSCRN, CR 1776-1778 f88).

⁷⁰⁹ PP, AB 20 James Smith's a/c; also ECSCRN, CR 1775-1776 f287

⁷¹⁰ PP, AB 39 Nathaniel Clifton a/c

⁷¹¹ PP, AB 39 1791 Rum a/c

⁷¹² ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff223-24

William Price

In the 1740s and 1750s a man called John Price had lived in Nevis; William Price may have been related to him.⁷¹³ But while the name did not commonly occur in Nevis it is, however, common in Wales, and quite possibly he came to Nevis through James Williams, the man from Chepstow who then was the overseer on Mountravers.

In 1792 and 1793 the manager, Thomas Pym Weekes, employed William Price as 'overseer during crop time'. Both years he worked for five months, one year starting at the middle and the other at the beginning of February. His pay of N£5 a month was the same as that of a boiling house watch and his duties, presumably, were the same.⁷¹⁴ While Price was busy in the boiling house at Sharloes, the mason John Keepe and a team of Mountravers masons worked outside on the horse millround and also inside the boiling house, turning the arch across the gangway. In April 1793 they finished these jobs.

William Price left at the beginning of June and in August James Williams, the overseer, sailed off to England. During Williams's absence, Price may, possibly, have moved into the overseer's house at Sharloes because JPP requested that a white man should live there.

While Williams was in England, the mason John Keepe died⁷¹⁵ and, having witnessed Keepe's will, William Price, no doubt, attended his funeral in early December in St John Figtree church.⁷¹⁶ The following January Thomas Pym Weekes engaged William Price again as a boiling house watch. He worked for four and half months,⁷¹⁷ during which time JPP and his son arrived with Pero Jones from England. Their fellow passengers were James Williams, who returned from visiting his family in Chepstow, and John Smith, a new overseer and distiller. Thomas Pym Weekes left his post as manager and JPP replaced him with James Williams.

During the 1795 crop James Williams also engaged William Price as a boiling house watch but he worked for less than a month, with his last wages being accounted for on 1 May.⁷¹⁸

Some time in 1795 William Price died. He was buried in St John Figtree. His exact date of death is not known.⁷¹⁹ It is possible that he lost his life while still employed as a boiling house watch on Mountravers.

John Smith

This man came from Britain as JPP's indentured servant. Unusually, John Smith had an industrial background. He had previously worked in the 'glass manufactory of Lucas Chance Homer and Coathupe in the parish of Nailsea'.⁷²⁰

Nailsea lies about nine miles (14.5 km) south-east of Bristol. A small town now, in Smith's time it was a village with about 2,000 inhabitants.⁷²¹ Most inhabitants earned their living from agriculture but others were employed in glass-making and related its industry, coal mining.

⁷¹³ ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123; PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755, and UKNA, CO 186/6: 9 December 1772

⁷¹⁴ PP, AB 39 Wm Price's a/c

⁷¹⁵ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St John Figtree Parish Register

⁷¹⁶ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff190-91

⁷¹⁷ PP, AB 39; also AB 50 Plantation a/c

⁷¹⁸ PP, AB 47 William Price Overseer a/c

⁷¹⁹ NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

⁷²⁰ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis f107: Memorandum 8 May 1794

⁷²¹ Pullan, JN *The Care of the Poor in Nailsea* p5

The glass industry had only recently got underway in Nailsea. In 1788 a man called John Robert Lucas had set up a new works on a six-acre site to the east of the village. The son of a Bristol bottle glass manufacturer, Lucas was a modern industrial entrepreneur who already owned, leased, or had shares in several businesses in and near Bristol. He had also become a partner in a colliery which supplied the coal for his adjacent glassworks. Large amounts of coal were required to achieve the very high temperatures that would melt the basic ingredients for glassmaking: silica (sand), alkali (soda or potash) and lime.

The two tall cones of the new Nailsea Glass Works were visible for miles across the surrounding heathland. Mostly brick-built, each cone contained a furnace; during John Smith's time bottles were made in one and window glass in the other. A number of outbuildings associated with glass-making clustered around the cones and there were offices, storehouses for the different raw materials, carpenters' workshops, stables for the horses and shelter for the carts that took the glass to Bristol. Some of the glass was exported. For example, in the first two months of 1790 alone, 50,000 mostly empty bottles and 200 sides of window glass left Lucas's works for Ireland, North America and Jamaica.⁷²² The bottles that were shipped abroad could have been produced in Nailsea, or in Lucas's other works in Bristol or in Stanton Wick (a village a few miles south of Bristol).

Once the glass was ready, it had to be blown and moulded immediately which meant that glassworkers had to be on call day and night. As the works lay some distance from the village, Lucas erected a row of cottages on his site and also provided his employees with a pub. The Glasshouse Inn became the meeting place for the skilled men who had formed the Nailsea Glassworkers Guild.⁷²³

While establishing his new enterprise at Nailsea, Lucas encountered problems. He needed skilled labour and hired seven men who were under contract to a Bristol glass company but 'seducing' these 'covenant servants' away from their employer landed him in court and a fine of £100. Having got over a very public trial, a year later, in 1790, a fire burnt part of the roof of the newly-built glasshouse. At the Stanton Wick Bottle Manufactory, meanwhile, three young apprentices absconded. Lucas advertised the descriptions of the runaways and offered a reward of £2:2:0 for their return. Then the Nailsea miners went on strike,⁷²⁴ temporarily cutting off his supply of coal. By 1793 Lucas was short of money. Needing fresh finance, he took as partners his brothers-in-law William Chance and Edward Homer - successful hardware merchants from Birmingham - and a man called William Coathupe,⁷²⁵ who was said to have started as a boy in Lucas's counting house. With a third man, Coathupe and Lucas had for some years already been partners in the Stanton Wick business.

At his Nailsea works Lucas employed a number of skilled and unskilled people. Unlike agricultural workers who, depending on the seasons, performed a range of tasks, the glasshouse men were the new breed of industrial employees who carried out single processes, day in and day out, regardless of the time of year. Some were unskilled, such as the labourers who carried the raw materials to the 'metal mixers crew'. These were men responsible for preparing the ingredients for melting. Then there were teams in charge of the furnaces: keeping them supplied with coal and maintaining the right temperatures. The highly-skilled, highly-paid glass blowers were assisted by a range of specialists: the 'pilers', 'assistant pilers', 'skimmers', 'gatherers' and 'flashers'. They handled the glass at various stages and finished it. Lucas's Nailsea Glass Works was a self-contained enterprise and employed men with associated trades who maintained the structures and who prepared the finished products for transport: masons who repaired the cones and the other buildings, carpenters who built wooden crates, packers who filled the crates with glass and protective straw, and hauliers who moved the crates by horse and cart to Bristol.

⁷²² Vincent, Keith *Nailsea Glass* p9

⁷²³ Vincent, Keith *Nailsea Glass* p14

⁷²⁴ Smith, Andrew F *The Nailsea Glassworks* Part 4 p5; Margaret Thomas *The Nailsea Glassworks* p31 and p12; Keith Vincent *Nailsea Glass* p13 and Peter Wright (comp) *Nailsea, A Handbook of Dates & Events*

⁷²⁵ <http://www.search.revolutionaryplayers.org.uk/content/files/51/50/328.txt>

There is no indication what kind of work John Smith did at the Nailsea manufactory. Described as a 'servant', he could have been a skilled man and, given that he appears to have been literate, he could have been a clerk who kept the books. Whatever his job may have been, apparently he was a competent, trustworthy man.

In line with contemporary practise, Lucas usually contracted his employees for seven years, and it is almost certain that, when JPP hired Smith, his indenture had expired. This would have meant that Smith had started his apprenticeship in 1786 – two years before Lucas began establishing his Nailsea works. Smith would therefore have worked for Lucas elsewhere, either in Bristol or in Stanton Wick. There is no indication as to his age but in the 1860s boys as young as 11 years were among the Nailsea workforce. They did 12-hour shifts, four days one week and four nights the next, working nine hours each day on Saturdays and Mondays. Because furnaces had to be kept going continuously, glassworkers were also called out on Sundays, and in Smith's days this would have applied to the child labourers, too.

It appears that John Smith was not a local man (no record of his baptism has been found in the Nailsea parish register), and he would have lived in one of the cottages near the works. They were dirty and overcrowded. Aspects of the glassworkers' environment have been well documented by the sisters Hannah and Martha More - Evangelical Christians, educators and social reformers who took a particular interest in 'the glasshouse people'. Their perceptions coloured by a genteel middle-class upbringing, the women were shocked by the conditions which the Nailsea workers endured and surprised that the inhabitants were receptive to their message. Martha More recounted the sisters' first visit in 1792 when they

... entered nineteen houses in a row (little hovels) containing in all, near two hundred people ... Both sexes and all ages herding together, voluptuous beyond belief. ... The wages high, the eating and drinking luxurious – the body scarcely covered, but fed with dainties of a shameful description. The high buildings of the glasshouses ranged before the doors of these cottages – the great furnaces roaring – the swearing, eating, and drinking of these half-dressed, black-looking beings gave it a most infernal and horrible appearance. One, if not two, joints of the finest meat were roasting in each of these little hot kitchens, pots of ale standing about, and plenty of early delicate-looking vegetables ... We were in our usual luck respecting personal civility which we received even from the worst of these creatures, some welcoming us to 'Botany Bay', others to 'Little Hell' as they themselves shockingly called it. We talked to them a great deal, and indeed they all listened, and some with great, and I may add, delighted attention.

After another visit a year later Martha More wrote:

From the cottages which exhibited the usual scene of filth, feasting and gross ignorance, we proceeded to enter the very glass-houses amidst black Cyclopean figures, and flaming horrible fires. However, we were again agreeably surprised as well as affected, for everyone of these dismal looking beings laid down their tools, and immediately surrounded us speaking in the civilest (sic) terms, calling all the great boys out of their black holes, and using really persuasive language, to induce to listen to us, and do what we wished ...⁷²⁶

⁷²⁶ Thomas, Margaret *The Nailsea Glassworks* p9, p2, pp34-5 and p12-3 and Andrew F Smith *The Nailsea Glassworks* p27 Appendix 2 and pp11-2, reproduced from Martha More's *Mendip Annals, or a Narrative of Charitable Labors of Hannah and Martha More in their Neighbourhood* in HE Dommett 'Nailsea and the Glass-works' in *Bristol Industrial Society Journal* No 18 (1985).

Hannah and Martha More and their three sisters ran a boarding school in Park Street in Bristol, just round the corner from where the Pinneys lived (*Sketchley's Bristol Directory* 1775). From the 1780s onwards Hannah More was actively involved in the abolition movement but today is best known as a prolific writer, 'a bluestocking dramatist' and for her philanthropic educational work. See also SJ Skedd 'Hannah More (1745-1833)' *Oxford DNB* and Madge Dresser *Slavery Obscured*

The sisters saw Nailsea as a place 'abounding in sin and wickedness, the usual consequences of glass-houses and mines'.⁷²⁷ To counter the immorality of the industrial workforce, the ignorance of the agricultural community and the illiteracy among both, Hannah More established the first Sunday School in the village. Pupils were taught to read but not to write; Miss More believed that this would encourage discontent among the poor. Echoes of this view were later heard in the West Indies when planters feared that literacy among their enslaved populations would lead to revolts.

Today, local historians believe that the sisters judged the villagers more harshly than they deserved;⁷²⁸ their overcrowded housing was, after all, what their employer provided for them and, living so close to the works and the colliery, it was difficult to keep anything clean. Although uneducated and somewhat rough, glassworkers generally were law-abiding and sober folk. They did not make much use of the Sunday School - their seven-day work schedule kept them away - but they were among the founders of a chapel which the Wesleyan Methodists built near Nailsea in 1792. They proved themselves committed worshippers who thought nothing of walking to Bristol to receive the Lord's Supper – the nearest place where it was administered.⁷²⁹

It was this environment and way of life that John Smith left to go to the West Indies. Apparently there was full employment in the glass industry, the workers were comparatively well paid⁷³⁰ and Smith could have looked forward to a job for life, but in 1793 he decided to pack it all in. There is no suggestion that he was sacked – JPP would hardly have hired a man who had lost his job through negligence or misdemeanour – but Smith departed shortly after Lucas took on new partners and after one of them, Edward Homer, moved from Birmingham to Nailsea. Perhaps Homer introduced a tougher work regime from which Smith sought to escape. His leaving may have been prompted by any number of motives but he may have been encouraged to go to Nevis by, for instance, Revd William Young Coker, the son of one of the managers on Mountravers. Revd Coker had served as a curate in nearby Backwell, lived not far from Nailsea and would have known the Anglican rector of Wraxall under whose auspices the church in Nailsea fell. Smith could also have been put in touch with JPP by James Williams, whose father had a glazier's business, but - given that he had a business in Bristol - the introduction could equally well have come through the owner of the glassworks, Mr Lucas.⁷³¹ It is certain, though, that John Smith would have been recruited by word of mouth and that JPP would have sought a reference from his former employer.

With a promise of a job in the West Indies and his passage paid by his new employer, in December 1793 John Smith left England. He sailed in the company of JPP and his eldest son, John Frederick,

⁷²⁷ Bowen, Trevor (comp) *A Place Set Apart* p5

⁷²⁸ The supposed depravity of the Nailsea miners and glassworkers is not reflected in the accounts of the overseers of the poor. There was some crime in the area - Nailsea had its own whipping post – and there was some poverty in the village but it appears that this did not increase with the establishment of the glassworks. Judging by the pay-outs made by the overseer of the poor, over a period of a hundred years the proportion of disbursements had roughly kept in line with the increase in the population. The population had increased nearly seven-fold from about 300 in the seventeenth century to 2,000 at the beginning of the nineteenth century while disbursements to the poor had increased only at a slightly higher rate: from 40 before 1700 to over 300 in 1800 (Pullan, JM *The Care of the Poor in Nailsea* p19 and p27).

Private individuals as well as companies paid into the parish fund from which the disbursements were made. The glass houses first appeared in the ratings lists in 1793 but some years later the company of Lucas, Chance, Homer and Coathupe appealed against the amount of poor rate they were supposed to contribute – presumably arguing that they provided employment, brought trade to the area and that their workers were unlikely to claim poor relief (Andrew F Smith *The Nailsea Glassworks* p5, p10 and p7). It is also possible that the company operated some kind of welfare scheme.

⁷²⁹ Thomas, Margaret *The Nailsea Glassworks* p44 and Trevor Bowen (comp) *A Place Set Apart* p6

⁷³⁰ Thomas, Margaret *The Nailsea Glassworks* p35

⁷³¹ Madge Dresser lists an 'R[obert?] Lucas', a glass manufacturer, as a member of the Bristol Anti-Abolitionist Committee (*Slavery Obscured* p149 Table 9). According to Margaret Thomas who has extensively researched the Nailsea glassworks and the Lucas family, Robert Lucas died in the 1770s and John Robert Lucas was the only surviving son of Robert Lucas's twelve children (Margaret Thomas *The Nailsea Glassworks* p2).

Elsewhere, in connection with the glassworks, John Robert Lucas was also known as Robert Lucas (JM Pullan *The Care of the Poor in Nailsea* p6), and it is, therefore, almost certain that [R] Lucas was in fact John Robert Lucas and that he would have known personally fellow Committee members JPP and James Tobin. He could have introduced John Smith to JPP and given him a reference.

and Pero Jones, JPP's black manservant originally from Nevis. On board was also James Williams, returning from a visit to his family in Wales. He was going to be Smith's boss. Their journey on Captain Maises's ship should have taken no more than about six weeks but Britain was at war with France and before they could leave Ireland and cross the Atlantic they had to wait for a convoy to assemble. They were delayed for over three months. While idling time away around Cork, the men would have got to know each other well.

Smith's first view of the West Indies was the island of Barbados which the travellers reached on 3 May. Two days later they were at Martinique, where they briefly stopped off and Smith, no doubt, was as impressed as young John Frederick Pinney by the island's modern and European appearance.⁷³² On 8 May they finally reached Nevis,⁷³³ an altogether smaller and less cosmopolitan place.

On the day they landed, Thomas Pym Weekes left Mountravers, JPP appointed James Williams as manager and made an agreement with John Smith: he, 'being desirous of learning the art and mystery of a planter and distiller,' was engaged as overseer and distiller. His salary was set at N£70 in the first year, rising to N£80 in years two and three. He was provided with rent-free accommodation but while the cottage in Nailsea may have been overcrowded, the overseer's house at Sharloes was no better. Situated in a low-lying area, it was small and in a poor state of repair. However, while in England he may not have been able to afford a servant, he was now allowed 'one old negro woman to cook for him and wash his clothes'. And he had additional benefits in kind: for his personal consumption he could take as much rum and muscovado sugar as he wanted. Smith bought a barrel of flour from the plantation but did not purchase any additional rum. The 43 gallons that were put aside for the overseer's use were sufficient.⁷³⁴ He could not make any extra money by trading in rum: a new instruction from JPP forbade its retailing on the plantation. Nor was he allowed to keep any sheep, goats or hogs. His fresh meat would be supplied by the manager whenever he killed a sheep.⁷³⁵

Some time after his arrival Smith fell ill but recovered. Williams informed their employer who, in turn, wanted to know whether Smith attended 'to his business regularly and methodically' and whether he kept good accounts. JPP added a personal note by asking Williams to 'Tell Smith I am glad to hear he has got over his seasoning.'⁷³⁶ JPP clearly liked the man and, pleased with his progress, increased his salary by N£20 to N£100.⁷³⁷ Some of his salary Smith spent on hiring Tom Tross, a young tailor.⁷³⁸

During his first year on Mountravers John Smith worked with William Price, the boiling house watch, and again briefly in 1795 until William Nicholson replaced Price. It was during the time John Smith was overseer that a speaking trumpet was bought. As far as is known this was the only one purchased. His voice may not have carried enough to be heard across the field but perhaps he knew the instrument from his days in the Nailsea Glass Works.⁷³⁹

In the autumn of 1795 Smith became sick again and when JPP learnt of his illness, he asked Williams to give him two dozen bottles of recuperative porter. This was an unusual gesture because overseers normally did not qualify for such presents. His employer, sorry to hear that Smith 'enjoyed so poor a state of health', asked that his habitation be made as 'comfortable and healthy as possible'. JPP put Williams in charge of either adding to his present abode or to build him a new house 'in the best and

⁷³² PP, Cat 3 Dom Box 1763-1793: JF Pinney, Oxford, to Azariah Pinney, Cobham, 3 November 1794

⁷³³ PP, AB 41 f7 Memorandum

⁷³⁴ PP, AB 39 Plantation a/c and AB 50 Rum a/c

⁷³⁵ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis f106: Memo and Postscript to Memo

⁷³⁶ PP, LB 11: JPP to James Williams, 6 April 1795

⁷³⁷ PP, LB 11: JPP to James Williams, 1 August 1795

⁷³⁸ PP, AB 52 John Smith's a/c

⁷³⁹ PP, AB 47 Cash a/c

most airy situation near the Sharloe work'.⁷⁴⁰ JPP clearly wanted to hold on to his overseer by improving the man's living conditions.

Ever since he had come back from his visit to Nevis in 1794, JPP had earmarked Smith for promotion.⁷⁴¹ Two years on his plans for the former glasshouse worker came to fruition: Smith was to replace a useless manager called George Hobson on an estate mortgaged to JPP. As soon as he received JPP's instructions, his attorney, John Taylor, sacked Hobson⁷⁴² and on 20 April 1796 Smith started his new job on Symonds/Mount Sion in Gingerland parish.⁷⁴³ He was to work under Williams's general direction. For John Smith, Hobson's dismissal presented an excellent opportunity. After undergoing a relatively brief period of training, he was put in charge of a plantation.

The estate Smith was managing had come into JPP's possession two years earlier.⁷⁴⁴ It consisted of several pieces of land which were worked together.⁷⁴⁵ George Hobson had failed miserably: he had lost a great many mules and cattle, presided over an 'astonishing decrease of negroes',⁷⁴⁶ encountered discipline problems among his workforce⁷⁴⁷ and had failed to check the overseer's conduct: rumour had it that the man had 'supplied himself with flour when he gave out the allowance'.⁷⁴⁸ JPP hoped that John Smith would put a stop to all that and make the Symonds/Mount Sion Estate 'more productive than it ever has been'. So that Smith could 'exercise his judgment' unhindered, JPP asked that the present overseer, Peter Canning, be removed and placed under Williams at Mountravers.⁷⁴⁹

But the omens were not good: the estate was short-handed (the workforce was old and 18 people who had been freed from work in the previous year had not yet been replaced),⁷⁵⁰ it did not have a windmill and there were not enough mules – in short, it needed substantial investment.⁷⁵¹ For someone as inexperienced as Smith this was a tough assignment indeed but Williams could soon report to JPP that, under his direction, the new man had made a good start.⁷⁵²

John Smith had no chance to prove himself. He only remained in his new post for three months. On 15 July he 'received an unexpected order from [JPP's] attorney John Taylor Esq to quit the estate immediately and deliver it up to John Rawlins'.⁷⁵³ John Rawlins had acquired the estate along with the attendant debts and instantly re-instated George Hobson.⁷⁵⁴ Although the losses on Symonds/Mount Sion during Hobson's administration had been 'alarming' and 'sufficient cause to try some other person', JPP felt he had no right to interfere in the appointment. As far as he was concerned he was willing to invest in the estate – he had already bought ironware for a windmill and shipped it to the West Indies – but he was pessimistic as to the plantation's future. He believed that, as long as Hobson was in charge, things would not improve: 'for the negroes are dissatisfied and will not do their duty'. JPP knew from experience that in the end success or failure depended on the willingness of the workers.⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁴⁰ PP, LB 11: JPP to James Williams, 29 January 1796

⁷⁴¹ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 29 November 1794

⁷⁴² PP, LB 11: JPP to James Williams, 2 February 1796, and JPP to John Taylor, 2 February 1796

⁷⁴³ According to John Taylor, 1796 John Smith was told on 15 July to leave the estate, but his last salary was accounted for on 19 April 1796 (PP, AB 45 and AB 50 Plantation a/c; AB 39: 1 May 1795; AB 47 Cash a/c and Jn Smith's a/c; AB 52 John Smith's a/c; also LB 11: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 1 August 1795).

⁷⁴⁴ PP, LB 11: JPP to James Tobin, 27 May 1794, and ECSCRN, CR 1781-1783 f36

⁷⁴⁵ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis, Bundle I

⁷⁴⁶ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 7 September 1796

⁷⁴⁷ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 5 December 1794

⁷⁴⁸ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 29 November 1794

⁷⁴⁹ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 6 February 1796

⁷⁵⁰ PP, LB 11: JPP to George Hobson, Nevis, 10 November 1795

⁷⁵¹ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 7 September 1796

⁷⁵² PP, LB 12: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 5 November 1796

⁷⁵³ PP, AB 47 Symonds Estate a/c Memo

⁷⁵⁴ PP, AB 41 Estate John Symonds a/c and LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 5 and 7 October 1796; also LB 12: JPP to John Taylor, 15 November 1796, and 23 April 1797

⁷⁵⁵ PP, LB 12: JPP to John Taylor, 16 January 1797

Three days after he was told to leave, John Smith handed over Symonds/Mount Sion. He did not return to Mountravers. His place had been taken; in the meantime Williams had promoted the boiling house watch to the post of overseer. Given that his health had not been good and that he had to leave his post in rather unpleasant circumstances, it is possible that John Smith returned to England.⁷⁵⁶

William Nicholson

William Nicholson, a Creole, was born in 1778/9. He was first engaged as a boiling house watch when he was about 17 years old. In 1795, either after William Price fell ill or died, he was temporarily employed for just over three weeks, towards the end of the crop season. In the following year he was recalled and began attending the boiling house from January 1796 onwards. James Williams, the manager, as well as JPP's attorney John Taylor appear to have been satisfied with his performance; Nicholson was the first boiling house watch who received a pay rise of about a third, from N£5 to N£6:12:0 a month. Having proven himself as a boiling house watch, Nicholson was appointed as overseer after John Smith had been moved to manage the Symonds/Mount Sion estate over in Gingerland, and from May 1796 onwards Nicholson received overseers' pay. Straight away, JPP's attorney put him on N£100 a year.⁷⁵⁷

William Nicholson now had an all-year-round job but then, in spring 1797, a new overseer arrived from England. JPP had engaged the man to replace John Smith. It appears that his attorney and his manager in Nevis had not kept JPP abreast of the developments in Nevis. Nicholson lost his job and received his last pay on 23 April 1797 and left the plantation. Perhaps he was not unhappy to leave; later, when Williams recorded the birth of Nicholson's child with Hetty, he wrote: 'Hetty having a boy, got by Sir Wm Nicholson'.⁷⁵⁸ Williams's mocking 'Sir' suggests a scratchy relationship between the manager from Wales and the Creole overseer.

Four years after he left Mountravers William Nicholson had another son with Hetty, a black woman who then worked in the field. Born in July 1802, the boy was called Siah, after Nicholson's brother Josiah. This was the last child they had together. Hetty then went on to have four more children with a Mountravers slave, the mulatto Frank Fisher. They were both reserved by JPP as his own and, after Mountravers was sold, Hetty, Frank Fisher and their children were to be rented to Clarke's Estate. At this point William Nicholson's brother Josiah stepped in and substituted William Nicholson's sons for two Creole girls, Phibba and Glory. The girls were put to work in the field on Clarke's Estate, while Billey and Siah presumably went to live with their father. It is not known where William Nicholson worked after he departed from Mountravers but it is likely that his brother Josiah employed him on his plantation in the parish of St James Windward. William Nicholson's brother, Josiah, first rented Shaw's Estate with another member of the family, Finlay Nicholson,⁷⁵⁹ and later owned it.⁷⁶⁰ Josiah also had property in Charlestown, which he held with a free mulatto woman, Ann Huggins,⁷⁶¹ and he had at least one illegitimate child: Ann, his daughter with Betty Socco.

In May 1814 a woman and four children came into William Nicholson's possession: the woman Molly and her daughter Mary, and the mulatto children Joe (Joseph), William and Nancy. They had

⁷⁵⁶ There are no more references to John Smith in the account books. If he remained in Nevis it is just possible that in 1810 he worked as a groom for one of Peter Thomas Huggins's brothers. He was mentioned as having rescued 'a negro' who had been threatened by a crowd because they thought that he was an informer (UKNA, CO 152/96: JW Tobin, Nevis, to Governor Hugh Elliot, 7 September 1810).

⁷⁵⁷ PP, AB 47 Wm Nicholson (occasional) Overseer at Plantation a/c; also AB 54 Plantation a/c

⁷⁵⁸ PP, 1173/4 Plantation Diary

⁷⁵⁹ ECSCRN, CR 1810-1814 f485

Josiah Nicholson rented for one year with Finlay Nicholson land in St James from Mrs Pinney [presumably her 40 acres in St James Windward].

⁷⁶⁰ UKNA, T 71/364

⁷⁶¹ ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff55-7

belonged to the planter ⁷⁶² Christopher Wilkinson. He had died recently without making a will and, as he left 'no kindreds' in Nevis, William Nicholson applied for the executorship.⁷⁶³ Three of the individuals, the mulattoes, almost certainly were Nicholson's children. He freed them on 28 February 1815 – they all carried the surname of their previous owner, Wilkinson – together with his and Hetty's boys, William Nicholson and Josiah Nicholson. As his witness he chose the free mixed-race man and customs clerk John Frederick Bertrand.⁷⁶⁴ If the woman Molly, whom Nicholson also acquired from Christopher Wilkinson's estate, was the mother of the Wilkinson mulattoes, Nicholson did not free her, or her daughter Mary. He sold Mary for N£80 to Grace McKennan, a free woman of colour. This was just before Christmas 1816⁷⁶⁵ and although he may have still owned Mary's mother, Molly, in 1817 he did not register her or any other people. He only signed for three individuals who belonged to a free mixed-race planter, Isaac Malzac.⁷⁶⁶ Meanwhile, William Nicholson's brother Josiah registered sixty-nine people on Shaw's Estate, including those he owned privately.⁷⁶⁷ However, between 1817 and 1820, he and Finlay Nicholson sold the forty-acre estate,⁷⁶⁸ possibly because he was ill already. In his will Josiah appointed William as one of the executors and provided for his widow, for his sister, Sarah, for his illegitimate daughter, Ann (her mother, Betty Socco, had died), and for William. Josiah Nicholson died in 1820.⁷⁶⁹

In 1817 William Nicholson had been a member of the jury in the case against Edward Huggins and had found for the defence⁷⁷⁰ but, unlike his nephews Laurence and William Thomas Nicholson who were later elected to the Assembly,⁷⁷¹ he did not hold political or public posts. It is likely that he ended up managing but not owning a plantation. His known activities were small-scale. In the 1820s he bought three quarters of an acre of land from James Parris, which he assigned to his widowed sister-in-law, Margaret,⁷⁷² and from the free woman Jane Smith he purchased a mulatto woman called Maryann.⁷⁷³ He also lent money to Edward Frith, but Frith died in 1826⁷⁷⁴ and it is unlikely that the money was ever repaid.

A William Nicholson was mentioned in the diary of Walter Lewis Bucke, a man who was about the same age as William Nicholson. A one-time overseer who had risen to become a manager, Bucke served with Nicholson's mixed-race son Josiah in the infantry division of the Nevis militia. In his diary Bucke noted that William Nicholson had become an overseer on Jones estate.⁷⁷⁵ William Nicholson may still have been working on Jones's when a year later a piece of cane was set alight there. A reward was offered for the arsonists.⁷⁷⁶

William Nicholson was in his early fifties when he got married. On 18 May 1832 the wedding took place 'in the dwelling house of William Nicholson', which presumably stood on the plot of land that he

⁷⁶² ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff233-36

⁷⁶³ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1805-1818 f277

⁷⁶⁴ ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff151-53

⁷⁶⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff719-20

⁷⁶⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 and St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965

The name Malzac was also spelt Mulzack, Mullzack, Muzack, and Milzack.

⁷⁶⁷ UKNA, T 71/364 and T 71/365 f172

⁷⁶⁸ The new owner, James Laurence, promptly mortgaged the 40-acre plantation in St James Windward to Butler Thompson Claxton. This was, in fact, the estate that had belonged to JPP and his wife and then to William Nixon and afterwards to Finlay and Josiah Nicholson before it became James Laurence's. From the description and the accompanying papers it seems to have been part of Shaw's estate which came into the possession of William Weare ca 1834. The focus of Shaw's estate seems to have been a plantation once owned by Jane Mereweather and afterwards by Eneas Shaw and his wife Mary (BCRL, Jefferies Collection, Vol 13, Papers concerning William Weare and Shaws Estate).

⁷⁶⁹ PP, Cat 1 Box 1820-1822 Unnumbered item: Copy of Josiah Nicholson's will

⁷⁷⁰ BUL, mf XVII.33 Parliamentary Papers, Nevis: Slavery

⁷⁷¹ Although in his will William Nicholson called Laurence and William Thomas Nicholson his nephews, it is more likely that they were his great-nephews.

⁷⁷² ECSCRN, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f15 and f23

⁷⁷³ William Nicholson bought Maryann for N£130 on 5 April 1823 from Jane Smith (ECSCRN, CR 1823-1829 vol 2 f87; also UKNA, T 71/1543 Bundle 7).

⁷⁷⁴ UKNA, T 71/367

⁷⁷⁵ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (a) Diary of WL Bucke: 10 April 1835

⁷⁷⁶ UKNA, CO 187/9 Blue Book Nevis 1835

had bought earlier. His bride, Elizabeth Lynch, signed the register with a mark, as did their witness, a woman called Nanny Pinder.⁷⁷⁷ Judging by her name, this witness may have been a free woman but nothing is known about her, Nicholson's wife, or what happened to his three mulatto children, the Wilkinsons. One of his sons with Hetty, Billey Nicholson, had been trained as a stonemason and had sufficient money to buy a step-brother of his from Peter Thomas Huggins and to free him. Nicholson's other son with Hetty, Josiah, had become a successful businessman and a member of the Assembly but he died young in 1841.

In 1836 William Nicholson received compensation for one person, while one of his nephews, William Thomas Nicholson, who had become a medical doctor, was compensated for twelve. Apart from owning the Long Point Estate,⁷⁷⁸ his nephew traded as a merchant with William Nicholson's mixed-race son Josiah as his co-partner⁷⁷⁹ and owned land in Charlestown. In 1838, while his nephew was in Tobago, William Nicholson acted as his attorney, renting out his property in Charlestown. The tenant, the free carpenter John Thompson, remained in the property⁷⁸⁰ after Dr Nicholson returned to Nevis.⁷⁸¹

It is likely that towards the end of his life William Nicholson suffered from ill health. He made his will in August 1844, leaving to his wife Elizabeth \$500, as well as his house and land in Charlestown. To several others he left cash: to his nieces Ann, Georgiana and Almeria Nicholson and his nephews Laurence and William Thomas Nicholson.⁷⁸²

Aged sixty-six, William Nicholson died on 18 September 1845 and was buried a day later. A slate ledger in the north-west corner of St Paul's churchyard marked the grave: 'Here Rest the Remains of William Nicholson Esq'.⁷⁸³

John Beer

Described as a yeoman, he was a respectable, rural commoner who probably owned some land. He may have been a farmer. John Beer came from Tincleton in Dorset, a small parish about five miles east of Dorchester. Tincleton's population in the late 1840s stood at 187.

John Beer had a reference from Mr Estridge of Dorchester,⁷⁸⁴ who may have been a member of a St Kitts planter family. Estridge's testimonial was straightforward and promised that Beer would be up to the job: 'He is a very tall man but stout & well made – seemingly of a good disposition.'⁷⁸⁵ Estridge's was as good a recommendation as any, and JPP bound his new overseer and distiller for three years. In his first year Beer was to receive N£80 (of which JPP advanced him in England N£9:9:0),⁷⁸⁶ rising to N£90 in his second and third year. As he was 'a total stranger to the way & customs of the West Indies', the manager, James Williams, was to 'give him food for the first three months as an

⁷⁷⁷ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁷⁷⁸ PP, Dom Box R-6: Compensation file

⁷⁷⁹ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1836-1843 f209, f210, and f211

⁷⁸⁰ UKNA, CO 186/16; ECSCRN, CR 1838-1847 f90 and f664

⁷⁸¹ By 1839 Dr William T Nicholson was back in Nevis when he was elected as an Assembly member for St Paul's (UKNA, CO 186/16: 19 September 1839)

⁷⁸² ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 ff246-49

⁷⁸³ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 437 and Oliver, VL *Monumental Inscriptions* p80

After William Nicholson died, his widow may have become 'keeper at the asylum', or matron (UKNA, CO 187/33 and CO 187/34 Blue Books Nevis 1859 and 1860). However, given that Mrs Nicholson would have been elderly, this could also have been a former slave, Betsey, who had belonged to Mrs Margaret Nicholson (T 71/366 and T 71/368).

⁷⁸⁴ Mr Estridge, who gave John Beer's reference, may have married John Taylor's eldest daughter, Ann, in 1801 (PP, LB 16: JPP to JB Dunbar, 30 May 1801. See also LB 12: JPP to John Taylor, 24 November 1796). The Estridges also owned estates in St Kitts (BROR, D/EM Z16: An Account of Sugars and D/EX 292E1: Ledger of the Hill Estate of John Estridge dec'd).

⁷⁸⁵ PP, LB 12: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 31 January 1797

⁷⁸⁶ PP, AB 47 John Frederick Pinney's a/c

encouragement for his good conduct'. Beer was also allowed 'an old negro woman cook' and a washer.⁷⁸⁷

John Beer started his new job on 26 April 1797, just after William Nicholson left. For the first few months he worked with a local man, Dominic Alvarez, who was employed to watch the boiling house. But by mid-June Beer's health had declined and he was required to wear a waistcoat 'next to his skin'. It was made of the skin of swans which had feathers still attached to it. JPP had asked that whatever the estate could not furnish was to be bought,⁷⁸⁸ and the cost for Beer's swanskin waistcoat was charged to the plantation account.⁷⁸⁹

From mid-July onwards John Beer had to pay his board out of his own pocket. He gave Williams three months' money, N£15, in advance.⁷⁹⁰ Everything went agreeably from then on and Williams reported this to JPP. Their employer was pleased that the new man 'behaved so well'⁷⁹¹ but once the next crop's sugars started arriving in Bristol, JPP had cause for complaint. They were the 'worst from the island' and 'inferior to any lot of this or the London market'. JPP chiefly held the plantation workers responsible; he believed that 'There must be something systematically wrong' in the way they made them, and he wanted Williams to investigate. But the overseer was also blamed, and JPP told Williams that he was 'afraid that the inactivity and want of attention in John Beer has been in some degree the cause of it.' JPP believed that the overseer's 'dreadful health' impeded his work but at the root of Beer's negligence lay his attachment to rum. He had become another victim.

JPP suggested Beer returned to England. Although he knew Beer was sickly, he proposed that the man earned himself free passage on Maies's ship, the *Nevis*. All he had to do was to enter 'himself as a landsman and occasionally pull the ropes on deck'. Williams was to supply him with fresh provisions and Captain Maies with a beer barrel of rum in lieu of Beer's fare.⁷⁹² JPP dispatched four pairs of shoes for him,⁷⁹³ promised to send a new overseer,⁷⁹⁴ and a month later had already found a replacement, John Cheyney. He sent Cheyney to Nevis but Beer stayed on at Mountravers. Maybe he felt he had been treated unjustly. After all, Moses Levy, a local man, had also worked on Mountravers during the crop season - perhaps he was more to blame than Beer for making inferior quality sugars? In any case, Beer was sticking out his three-year indenture. This left Williams frustrated and confused. Cheyney was doing well and could take his place but John Beer did not leave until finally, on 26 April 1800, Williams noted: 'This day his three years expired. 2/3rds of the time he was rendered useless and burthensome (sic) to the Estate by sickness and drunkenness.'⁷⁹⁵ John Beer did not purchase any rum in addition to his free allowances; his drunkenness was induced by the rum the plantation provided for him. As the distiller, he was, of course, at the very source of what had contributed to his failure.

John Beer did not seek to earn a free passage. Instead, he stumped up about three months' worth of wages and sailed home as a passenger on the *King David*.⁷⁹⁶ On board Captain Shilstone's ship was produce from the estate, put there by James Williams. JPP approved of the limes but found that the coconuts had been gathered too young.

⁷⁸⁷ PP, LB 12: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 31 January 1797; Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: Indenture dated 31 January 1797; also AB 47 Plantation a/c and John Frederick Pinney's a/c

⁷⁸⁸ PP, LB 12: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 31 January 1797

⁷⁸⁹ PP, AB 47 Plantation a/c

⁷⁹⁰ PP, AB 47 James Williams' a/c

⁷⁹¹ PP, LB 12: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 10 November 1797

⁷⁹² PP, LB 14: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 14 October 1798

⁷⁹³ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f389; also AB 32 f389

⁷⁹⁴ PP, LB 14: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 14 October 1798

⁷⁹⁵ PP, AB 47 John Beer's a/c

⁷⁹⁶ PP, AB 47 *King David* a/c

Beer then applied to JPP for his passage home 'as a matter of favour', but JPP, 'not thinking his conduct on the estate praise worthy', refused reimbursing him.⁷⁹⁷ It is not known what happened to John Beer after he arrived in Bristol.

Dominic (Dominick) Alvarez

He was a Creole and a member of a family that had been in Nevis since before 1720. Originally Portuguese, the Alvarezes were associated with the Jewish community in Nevis but were not practitioners of Judaism.⁷⁹⁸ An 'alien-born' relative, Jacob Alvarez, was naturalised in 1745;⁷⁹⁹ and after the death of his first (possibly Jewish) wife Rebecca, he later married Henrietta Browne, the mother of William Burt Weekes's second wife, Mary Browne.⁸⁰⁰ Other members of the Alvarez family also married into Christian families.⁸⁰¹

In 1790 JPP was approached by 'one of the Alvarez' wanting 'to rent some land in Town behind Mr Tobin's store', which JPP jointly held with Mr Parris. Thomas Pym Weekes was to enquire about the property, taking care that there was 'no encroachment' on any of JPP's 'land in Town or elsewhere'.⁸⁰² It was not until 1795 that Dominic Alvarez moved in and started paying rent.⁸⁰³

At the beginning of March 1797 Dominic Alvarez began work on Mountravers as a boiling house watch and was paid, like William Nicholson before him, N£6:12:0 a month. He was employed for four and a half months until the end of crop.⁸⁰⁴ John Beer, the new overseer sent from England, started work towards the end of April and, no doubt, James Williams, the manager, called on Alvarez to assist in inducting the newcomer.

Dominic Alvarez left towards the end of July and did not work on Mountravers again. In the following year he witnessed a document with the gentleman⁸⁰⁵ John King Fyfield,⁸⁰⁶ who later also became a tenant of JPP's, and by June 1801 he had vacated JPP's land in Charlestown.⁸⁰⁷ It appears that by then Dominic Alvarez had his own property in St Paul's parish, which he, together with Fanny Alvarez (who could have been a sister or his wife), sold to Frederick and John Huggins.⁸⁰⁸ This Bill of Sale is the last reference to him. Nothing more is known about Dominic Alvarez, except that he had also worked as a sexton.

Sextons were voted annually by the Vestry at Easter,⁸⁰⁹ which means that he must have been of sufficiently good standing in the community to be chosen by the vestrymen. The post came with a salary. In the 1850s the sexton at St Thomas Lowland earned almost S£9 a year (worth £1,100 in 2016) and in addition collected fees. At Mulatto Peter's funeral in 1800 the sexton was paid N9s. In fact it may have been Dominic Alvarez who then acted as the sexton; he certainly was one of the sextons, with Roger Wallwin, when Thomas Pym Weekes was buried in 1796.⁸¹⁰

Grave-digging has never been popular employment and taking this job suggests that Dominic Alvarez was earning money wherever he could and that he belonged to the class of poor urban whites. This is

⁷⁹⁷ PP, LB 16: JPP, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 25 November 1800

⁷⁹⁸ Terrell, Michelle M, *The Jewish Community* p147

⁷⁹⁹ UKNA, CO 186/3: 13 November 1745

⁸⁰⁰ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1 p326

⁸⁰¹ Terrell, Michelle M, *The Jewish Community* p148

⁸⁰² PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, Nevis, 27 September 1790

⁸⁰³ PP, AB 52 Houses in Town a/c; also AB 47 Dominick Alvarez's a/c

⁸⁰⁴ PP, AB 47 Dominick Alvarez's a/c

⁸⁰⁵ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 f366

⁸⁰⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1797-1799 ff144-47

⁸⁰⁷ PP, AB 57 Houses in Town a/c and AB 47 Wm W Maillard's a/c

⁸⁰⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1805-1808 ff9-10, ff402-07 and f408-10

⁸⁰⁹ UKNA, CO 187/9 Blue Book Nevis 1835

⁸¹⁰ PP, AB 47 Cash a/c and TP Weekes's a/c

also demonstrated by the fates of other members of the wider Alvarez family. Joseph Alvarez, for instance, was a matrosse at Fort Charles. As long as Britain was at war, he had at least a regular income, N£6 a month, but once peace was declared in 1814, four of the six matrosses were discharged for lack of duties and only hired when necessary.⁸¹¹ Two other members of the family, the spinsters Elizabeth and Rebecca Alvarez, were by the mid-1820s 'in a forlorn and destitute condition'. Between them, at one time they had owned one 18-year-old woman, Henrietta,⁸¹² and the women also owned 'a little land in Charlestown with a wooden tenement thereon', but their house was decaying and they sought financial assistance from the Legislature. This was granted,⁸¹³ discontinued three years later⁸¹⁴ and, owing to their 'very great and severe distress', re-instated the following year, 1830.⁸¹⁵ Elizabeth Alvarez appears to have died within the next two years; in 1832 only Rebecca Alvarez was still being paid a small pauper's allowance.⁸¹⁶ Another member of the family, Felix Alvarez, also fell on hard times. He had bought land in Charlestown from a free black man, the stonemason Joseph Alvarez,⁸¹⁷ and, with Mary Alvarez, had in 1817 owned four individuals but by 1830 Felix Alvarez had become destitute and was in receipt of a dollar a week poor relief.⁸¹⁸

In the 1750s one member of the family, Jacob Alvarez, had owned twenty people;⁸¹⁹ after slavery was abolished, no member of the Alvarez family received any slave compensation.

Moses Levy

His name suggests a Jewish origin and it is very likely that he was a relative of Daniel Levy, a Jewish shopkeeper,⁸²⁰ with whom he was in business. Either man could have been the father of the free people Frances Levy, Daniel Levy (born in the late 1780s) and Judith Levy, the daughter of Molly Richens, who was born in 1792/3.

Before Moses Levy worked on Mountravers, he – like many other men – held several jobs. Together with Daniel Levy he hired out horses⁸²¹ and laid on at least one public entertainment. Social functions were popular in the eighteenth century and in the West Indies often organised by mulatto women.⁸²² During his second visit to Nevis JPP attended one of Levy's dinners and his son a ball. Such amusements did not come cheap and would have been beyond the means of poorer folk; the cost of the Pinneys' subscriptions came to N£3:6:0⁸²³ - equivalent to the monthly hire rate of a good mason.

Moses Levy also served as the master of a sloop. In March 1797 he took 32 people on the *Mary Ann* from St Kitts to Nevis. Almost certainly these were Africans who had arrived on a slaver at St Kitts. By the time the *Mary Ann* repeated the voyage in May 1799, she was under the command of a different captain.⁸²⁴

⁸¹¹ UKNA, CO 186/10: 18 August 1814

⁸¹² Henrietta, the name of their slave, was also the name of Jacob Alvarez's second wife. She was buried on 31 August 1786 (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 f31A; also PP, LB 6: JPP to John Patterson, Nevis, 9 February 1787).

⁸¹³ UKNA, CO 186/13: 18 September 1826

⁸¹⁴ UKNA, CO 186/13: 29 November 1829

⁸¹⁵ UKNA, CO 186/14: 22 July 1830

⁸¹⁶ UKNA, CO 186/14: 2 July 1832

⁸¹⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff775-79

⁸¹⁸ UKNA, CO 186/14: 7 June 1830

⁸¹⁹ PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755

⁸²⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1792-1794

⁸²¹ PP, AB 48 Estate of John Stanley

⁸²² Naish, GPB *Nelson's letters* pp40-1 Nelson to Mrs Nisbet, 1 January 1787, and UKNA, CO 186/9: 25 September 1810, 12 June 1811 and 16 August 1811

⁸²³ PP, AB 50 Cash a/c

⁸²⁴ 'Papers presented to the House of Commons, 7 May 1804, respecting the slave-trade &c,&c' p101 'An Account of New Negroes imported into the Island of Nevis, from 5 January 1797 to 5 January 1800' (Courtesy of Brian Littlewood)

Moses Levy started work on Mountravers on 5 January 1798. The new overseer, John Beer, was suffering from ill health and as Assistant Overseer Moses Levy probably had to take on additional duties. His pay at N£8:5:0 a month was considerably higher than that of a boiling house watch⁸²⁵ but the sugars produced in the season in which he was employed were very low-grade, and JPP complained about the decline in quality.

On 12 June crop was in full swing and everybody on the plantation was busy:

27 Great gang including driver, cutting and tying canes for grinding
8 with 8 mules carrying canes to mill, tops for cattle, and sometimes wora
22 small gang with Pompey's weeding [gang] and supplying in Cotton Tree piece
21 employed in the work

A day later, Moses Levy received his wages. Crop was not over for another two weeks, and it is likely that he was sacked. Almost certainly this was because he 'wantonly shot' the goat that belonged to the cooper John French, who was working on Mountravers. For his loss, Levy later paid him N18s compensation.⁸²⁶

The 42 gallons of rum that Moses Levy purchased from the plantation during the time he worked there may have been sold at another public entertainment,⁸²⁷ but it is not known what happened to him after he left Mountravers.⁸²⁸

John Cheyney

As 'a lad of 18 or 19', he left Bristol on the Nevis in November 1798.⁸²⁹ Possibly a Bristol man, but more likely from Dorset,⁸³⁰ he may already have been employed by the Pinneys before he was engaged as overseer. Before he sailed, earlier in the year, in March, John Frederick Pinney had advanced him S£13:1:0/N£23:9:9 1/2⁸³¹ and JPP also gave him cash, another £4:4:0.⁸³² John Cheyney's wages were fixed at S£15 for his first year and S£20 for his second and third.⁸³³ His rate of pay was below that of a boiling house watch and suggests that he was initially employed as a stock keeper.

Not long after he arrived, he bought from Black Polly several yards of sheeting⁸³⁴ and from the local merchant half a dozen pairs of stockings.⁸³⁵ These he wore with baize pantaloons and an Osnaburgh jacket.⁸³⁶ By the summer he was well settled and gave the manager 'satisfaction'.⁸³⁷ John Beer was still contracted to work as overseer but produced poor quality sugar, and JPP already thought of replacing him with Cheyney. As the overseer was mostly either sick or drunk, John Cheyney would have had to take on many of Beer's duties and cover for him until Beer left Nevis in April 1800.

⁸²⁵ PP, AB 47 Moses Levy Asst Overseer a/c

⁸²⁶ PP, AB 47 f114 Cash a/c; also AB 57 f138 Moses Levy's a/c

⁸²⁷ PP, AB 47 Moses Levy Asst Overseer a/c

⁸²⁸ A 38-year-old Moses Levy from Charlestown was buried on 9 May 1830 (NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837). He had belonged to the mariner Daniel Levy who had registered Moses in 1817 as a 25-year-old Sambo (UKNA, T71/364).

⁸²⁹ PP, AB 32 f330

⁸³⁰ Various Cheyneys lived in Dorset, e.g. in Chidlock and Puncknowle (DHC, Catalogue of Personal Names CA-CL) but the name also occurred in Bristol: in 1775, a 'Cheney' whose first name was not given, had lived at 1 Terrell-Street (*Sketchley's Bristol Directory 1775*).

⁸³¹ PP, AB 47 John Frederick Pinney's a/c

⁸³² PP, AB 32 f330

⁸³³ PP, LB 14: JPP, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 12 November 1798

⁸³⁴ PP, AB 47 Cash a/c

⁸³⁵ PP, AB 47 William Lawrence Merchants' a/c

⁸³⁶ PP, LB 19: JPP to Henry Williams, 25 October 1804

⁸³⁷ PP, LB 15: JPP, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 29 October 1799

In addition to his work on the plantation, John Cheyney acted as 'Constable of the Parish of St Thomas'. One of his duties was to ensure that everyone sent a proportion of their workforce for public works projects. In February 1800 he summoned 'the inhabitants to send two per cent of all their slaves to Black Rock Fort' and in May he called upon the inhabitants to present 'a list of their slaves at Lowland Church'. He gave owners two days' notice to compile lists of their taxable people and to dispatch their workers to partake in the project at Black Rock Fort. For each call-up he received N£1:16:0 and another N£1:4:9 for attending three 'General Reviews' – possibly briefing meetings.⁸³⁸ The money he earned from these activities paid for a month's board. At N£4:3:4, Williams charged him slightly less than Beer.⁸³⁹

For the first two crop seasons John Cheyney watched the boiling house until, in 1801, James Williams engaged a local man, George Vaughan. That year the manager's brother Henry arrived from England,⁸⁴⁰ and John Cheyney gave up boarding with Williams. He became self-sufficient and split the purchase of a barrel of beef with George Vaughan⁸⁴¹ and, for the first time, bought rum from the plantation. In 1801 he had 36 gallons⁸⁴² and in the following year another 65, as well as 295 pounds of sugar.⁸⁴³ Like Thomas Peaden before him, he probably earned extra income from trading in small quantities of rum and sugar. This he would have had to do elsewhere; JPP's instruction from 1794 not to sell rum on the plantation presumably still stood.

John Cheyney may briefly have been ill; in May 1801 he paid N6s1 1/2d to a man who understood medicinal plants, the driver Wiltshire.⁸⁴⁴ In the same year Cheyney bought a pair of shoes from the mulatto James Scarborough⁸⁴⁵ and then, through James Williams, ordered another six pairs to be sent from Bristol. But by the time these arrived,⁸⁴⁶ Cheyney had quit his job. He left at the end of March 1803. Shortly before leaving Mountravers, he had witnessed James Williams's will with John Coker, the boiling house watch.⁸⁴⁷

His leaving almost certainly had to do with Henry Williams being appointed as manager. With Henry Williams taking over, the opportunity to advance his career to manager was gone. In addition, Cheyney may, possibly, also have not been on good terms with the new man. When Henry Williams eventually informed JPP of Cheyney's departure, he did not explain why the overseer had left - thereby perhaps withholding unpalatable information from their employer. JPP asked Henry Williams for the reason and promised to send another young man.⁸⁴⁸

After leaving Mountravers, Cheyney may have briefly tried an altogether different venture, setting himself up in some kind of clothing business. For about six months he hired from Mountravers the tailor Tom Tross alias Tom Thraske.⁸⁴⁹

Cheyney remained in Nevis. This news was passed on by JPP's attorney, John Colhoun Mills. Not having heard from Henry Williams about Cheyney's reason for leaving, JPP wanted to know from Mills 'how he has conducted himself and what character he bears', promising that he was 'very glad to serve him'.⁸⁵⁰ When Cheyney wrote to JPP, asking for a position on Colhoun's, JPP happily obliged.

⁸³⁸ PP, 1173/4 Plantation Diary: General Review 22 December 1799, 4 June 1800 and 22 December 1800

⁸³⁹ PP, AB 47 James Williams' a/c and Plantation a/c; also AB 52 James Williams' a/c with John Frederick Pinney

⁸⁴⁰ PP, LB 16: JPP to James Williams, 26 August 1801

⁸⁴¹ PP, AB 52 James Williams' a/c

⁸⁴² PP, AB 47 Rum a/c

⁸⁴³ PP, AB 57 James Williams' and John Cheyney's a/c

⁸⁴⁴ PP, AB 47 John Cheyney's a/c

⁸⁴⁵ PP, AB 47 John Cheyney's a/c

⁸⁴⁶ PP, LB 42: TP & T to James Williams, 3 February 1803

⁸⁴⁷ PP, AB 57 John Cheyney's a/c

⁸⁴⁸ PP, LB 18: JPP to Henry Williams, Nevis, 15 December 1803

⁸⁴⁹ The hire of Tom Thraske came to N£12:3:0 (PP, AB 57).

⁸⁵⁰ PP, LB 18: JPP to JC Mills, Nevis, 26 April 1804

The young man was to earn N£200 a year in the first year, with rises in the second and third years.⁸⁵¹ This represented a good salary; a decade earlier James Williams had started on N£50 less.

On 11 August 1804 John Cheyney is known to have witnessed a Bill of Sale⁸⁵² and around that time he presumably started work as manager on Colhoun's. Variouslly described as made up of three estates - Windmill, Basseterre Lowland and Paradise - the property was mortgaged to JPP and the firm of Pinney & Tobin. The history of the Pinney involvement with Colhoun's went back to 1792 when William McDowall Colhoun and James Tobin took out a loan for £2,700 from JPP.⁸⁵³ In a letter to JPP, in 1802 James Williams had described William McDowall Colhoun's estate 'where his mansion house and set of works are situated'. Williams knew that a good mill had been erected three years earlier and that the plantation had a good boiling house with two sets of coppers, a still house linked to the boiling house, and two stills. Together with neighbouring Paradise estate, Williams estimated that it would make 120 hogsheads but believed there was great room for improvement. The walls, the pens, the hospital and other outbuildings were in very bad order but if the walls were repaired, the crops manured and the estate properly worked, Williams reckoned that it could make more than 120 hogsheads because the lands were 'some of the best in the island'. It is not known who managed the plantation at that time except that the manager was a relation of Mr Taylor of St Kitts. The estate had 125 people and sufficient stock and Williams, who found it a 'very reasonable' property, thought that Colhoun's would probably sell for S£20,000.⁸⁵⁴ In 1813 Colhoun's was sold for £25,000 to William Bowrin but by then Cheyney probably did not work there anymore.⁸⁵⁵

In 1856, when there was 'No prospect of a crop for next year for want of rain in some parts,' and, according to Peter Thomas Huggins, the local inhabitants were getting 'worse and worse', Colhoun's works were burnt down.⁸⁵⁶ Until 2006 the windmill tower could be seen from the main island road just south of the village of Cotton Ground. It was surrounded by pasture, cropped short by grazing animals. Today a house stands in the grounds, and a mosaic of a windmill on the wall surrounding the property is the only reminder of its past as a sugar estate.

George Vaughan

Almost certainly he was a Creole and related to William Vaughan who had earlier worked on Mountravers and may also have been related to another Pinney employee, the stock keeper James Bowrin. It is likely that he was the George Vaughan whose daughter Elizabeth was baptised in St John Figtree church some time after 1775⁸⁵⁷ and who in the early 1780s worked on James Broadbelt's Estate. There he served as overseer from 1780 until 1782, together with Thomas Wenham's son.⁸⁵⁸

George Vaughan worked as a boiling house watch from the beginning of February 1801 until the beginning of June. He earned N£8 a month, N5s a month less than Moses Levy had been paid three years earlier.⁸⁵⁹ While working on the plantation, he bought just over sixty gallons of rum.⁸⁶⁰

It is likely that he was the man who was murdered. In connection with the Huggins trial following the flogging in the marketplace, it emerged that George Vaughan, an overseer of an estate, was

⁸⁵¹ PP, LB 18: JPP to JC Mills, Nevis, 27 July 1804

⁸⁵² ECSCRN, CR 1803-1805 ff291-93

⁸⁵³ PP, Dom Box P and Q: Bond dated 18 July 1792

⁸⁵⁴ PP, Dom Box P: James Williams, Nevis, to JPP or to JF Pinney, 25 May 1802

⁸⁵⁵ In about April 1813 Wm Bowrin bought Colhoun's estate which consisted of Windmill, Basseterre Lowland and Paradise (PP, WI Box 1820-1822).

⁸⁵⁶ PP, Dom Box E4: PT Huggins to Charles Pinney, 28 September 1856

⁸⁵⁷ The entry in the St John Figtree parish register is illegible.

⁸⁵⁸ PP, WI Box E: James Broadbelt's Estate Currency a/c

⁸⁵⁹ PP, AB 59 George Vaughan Overseer a/c; also AB 47 f112 Plantation a/c and George Vaughan's a/c

⁸⁶⁰ PP, AB 47 Rum a/c

murdered by poison. Before 1 August 1811 five enslaved people were suspected and held⁸⁶¹ but it appears that none of these were the culprits and two weeks later the Legislature offered a reward of N£100.⁸⁶² It is not known whether the murderer or murderers were apprehended.⁸⁶³

John Coker

Like his nephew John Keep before him, John Coker was employed as a boiling house watch. He was not related to William Coker, the previous manager. In fact no connection has been found between the Nevis Cokers and those from Dorset.

John Coker was a Creole. His mother, Rachel Coker, had died in 1764. She had probably been married twice, first to a Mr Keep and then to a man who was also called John Coker. He had owned people from as early as 1735,⁸⁶⁴ had sixteen in the mid-1740s⁸⁶⁵ and the same number ten years later,⁸⁶⁶ but probably died before Rachel Coker. On her death, Rachel Coker willed land and people to John Coker (junior) and his brother Charles Keep, and another small plot to his sisters Mary Keep, Mary Coker and Sarah Coker.⁸⁶⁷ His sister Mary Coker was a free mulatto and probably his father's child with an enslaved woman but John Coker and his other siblings appear to have been white.

Before John Coker worked on Mountravers, he already knew James Williams. They were joint executors for Coker's sister Mary Keep. Coker may have lived in the house that he had inherited from her; the property adjoined John Latoysonere Scarborough's and, as soon as it became his, Coker mortgaged it to Scarborough.⁸⁶⁸ He had also inherited from his sister four people: the women Sally and Sukey, Sukey's son Richard and the boy Pompey. Under the terms of her will, his sister had given away as presents two other individuals and freed the woman Frankey and a mulatto boy, Johnny. His sister had asked that Coker should apprentice Johnny to become a carpenter.⁸⁶⁹

John Coker watched the boiling house during the 1802 and 1803 crop seasons. In the first year he bought a pair of shoes, as well as just over 30 gallons of rum⁸⁷⁰ but he did not buy any in the following year. In March 1803 he and the overseer John Cheyney witnessed James Williams's will shortly before the manager died.⁸⁷¹ Williams's brother Henry took over the management, and immediately there was a visible improvement. When James was in charge, crop dragged on and Coker was engaged for just over seven months; when Henry took over, he tightened up the proceedings and

⁸⁶¹ UKNA, CO 152/98 Extracts from Letters from (JW Tobin) of Nevis, 1 August 1811

⁸⁶² UKNA, CO 186/9: 17 August 1811

⁸⁶³ Confusingly, later on there were three other men called George Vaughan: one had the middle name Sanders and was an 'Esq' rather than a 'Mr', one was illiterate, and another was an adult slave. Although described as a planter 'of St Kitts' (ECSCRN, CR 1817-1819 Vol 2 f466), George Sanders Vaughan did have a Nevis connection through his son Robert John who was baptised in the island in August 1814 (NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825), and he may in fact have been the same George Vaughan who manumitted the woman Maria (CR 1814-1817 ff227-29).

Another George Vaughan was the nephew of John Bowrin. He registered two individuals (one by gift from his uncle John Bowrin), and by 1828 owned seven. He was illiterate and made his mark. When his 23-year-old man, James, was buried in March 1830, George Vaughan was said to have lived 'near Brownings' [mis-spelt for Bowrin's?] in St Thomas Lowland (St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 24).

One of these men may have been a churchwarden or similar; he witnessed several marriages of enslaved and free people. In June 1841 George Vaughan from St Thomas Lowland, was buried, aged 57 (St Paul's Burials 1844-1965).

While this may have been the slave-owning planter, it could equally well have been the former slave 'of Lowland Parish', who was baptised as an adult on 4 April 1830, with two other adults, Nancy Vaughan and Scipio Vaughan (St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 184). This Scipio Vaughan was involved in a Court case against one of the George Vaughans: On 22 July 1830 the Legislature decided 'to retain Counsel' in the case of Scipio (UKNA, CO 186/14) but it is not known to which George Vaughan this referred.

⁸⁶⁴ UKNA, CO 186/2

⁸⁶⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123

⁸⁶⁶ PP, Dom Box P

⁸⁶⁷ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1763-1787 ff168-69

⁸⁶⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1794-1797 f558

⁸⁶⁹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff223-24

⁸⁷⁰ PP, AB 57 John Coker Overseer on the Estate of JF Pinney a/c

⁸⁷¹ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 ff428-29

crop took only five and a half months. Having been paid N£5 a month – the standard rate since the 1770s, in the second year Coker's pay went up to N£8 a month ⁸⁷² and this presumably became the going rate for men watching the boiling house.

John Coker did not return to work on Mountravers. It is likely that he died within the next five years, ⁸⁷³ and that the land he had inherited from his sister Mary Keep, according to her will, went to his nephew John Keep. He had worked on Mountravers in the 1780s.

Henry Williams

Henry Williams was manager from April 1803 until about May 1805. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3, 'The glazier's sons, James and Henry Williams'.

John Hill

Nothing is known about this man except that he was in Nevis before he was employed on Mountravers. He visited the plantation in the autumn of 1799, when either he, or the overseer John Beer, noted in the plantation diary: 'August the 28 Day of the Month Primus stole from Mr John Hill a Ham 1 ½ [illegible] Pound and Half and Not [illegible] the Negroes is Dam Boyes'.⁸⁷⁴

After the overseer John Cheyney left in March 1803, some time later that year John Hill worked for four months on Mountravers. As overseer he was paid at an annual rate of N£100.⁸⁷⁵ Perhaps the theft in 1799 was indicative of his relationship with the workers on the estate. He was not employed again.

William Powell

In late 1803 William Powell briefly worked on Mountravers as overseer. Almost certainly he was a Creole and the mulatto son of Joseph Powell senior of St James Windward and Polly Powell. His father, a blacksmith and small-time planter, had manumitted him in April 1779, together with his brothers Jenkin and James and his sister Elizabeth.⁸⁷⁶ His mother was freed ten years later.⁸⁷⁷ Not long before William Powell started work on Mountravers his father had died. William and each of his three siblings had inherited from him N£500 and houses and land in Charlestown. His mother had

⁸⁷² PP, AB 57 John Coker Overseer on the Estate of JF Pinney a/c

⁸⁷³ ECSCRN, CR 1805-1808 ff363-70

⁸⁷⁴ PP, 1173/4 Plantation Diary

⁸⁷⁵ PP, AB 57 John Hill's a/c and Plantation a/c

⁸⁷⁶ On 16 March 1775 the 'gent' Joseph Powell manumitted his mulatto boys James and Billy. The witnesses were Daniel Martin, Oliver Huggins and William Bowrin (ECSCRN, CR 1773-1775 f242 and f243). However, two other transactions almost certainly were related to this: on 6 August 1776 Joseph Powell manumitted the mulatto girl, Betsey, 'for the Naturell (sic) Love and Affection I have and bear' (CR 1776-1777), and on 5 April 1779 another manumission was sworn in which Joseph Powell manumitted his three mulatto boys James, William and Jenkin and the mulatto girl Elizabeth (CR 1778-1783 f169). It is very likely that the earlier manumissions were not valid because he did not have title to the children and that Joseph Powell had to repeat the process and then included another child, Jenkin, who, presumably had been born in the meantime.

⁸⁷⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1788-1789 f534

William Powell's father, Joseph Powell, the son of Thomas Powell, was baptised on 14 June 1741 in St James Windward. Joseph Powell's known siblings were Francis (baptised in 1740), Josiah (baptised in April 1743) and Frances (baptised in October 1744) but it is likely that Job Powell, the carpenter and millwright, was another brother of his (VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1). Joseph Powell's father, the Revd Thomas Powell (Stapleton Cotton MSS 13 (vi), and PP, Dom Box P) died between 1754 and 1772 (UKNA, CO 186/6: 9 December 1772).

The family had been in Nevis since the early days: In 1677/8 Thomas Powell listed in his household two white men, one white woman, four white children, and seven negroes: three men, three women and a child (*Caribbeana* Vol 3 p74 List of Nevis Inhabitants).

been left the enslaved man 'Coy or Koy' and a legacy of N£400. The plantation and its stock, however, went to William's cousin Thomas Powell.⁸⁷⁸

In the 1780s, William's father had worked on Mountravers as a blacksmith, fitting clogs on Hannibal, but there were also other family connections with the plantation: the carpenter and millwright Job Powell, probably William's uncle, had first hired the woman Bess Powell from JPP and then bought and freed her, and William Powell's brother-in-law, the carpenter John Hendrickson, had hired Mountravers people for work on a new horse mill at Sharloes. Recently John Hendrickson had also hired Jack, Primus and Frank Saunders to carry out repairs on some of JPP's houses in Charlestown.

Henry Williams, who was then managing Mountravers, employed William Powell as an overseer. He was the first mulatto overseer on the plantation. His engagement, however, did not last long. He only worked for 22 days, from 9 to 31 December 1803. Henry William's urge to have an overseer on the estate during the volatile Christmas holidays was probably reflected in the wages: William Powell was paid at an annual rate of N£110,⁸⁷⁹ N£10 more than Hill's pay. Most likely, Powell's appointment was always meant to have been temporary; a new overseer was on his way from Bristol.

It is not known what happened to William Powell in the intervening years but by 1817 he had become the manager of Kades Bay plantation in St Thomas Lowland. He signed the register for this estate which belonged to the heirs of Walter Nisbet. Listed were 55 people, 29 men and 26 women. All of them were black and a high proportion was African: two out of five (island-wide the figure was one in seven). One of the African men was a 40-year-old called Denmark. His name was crossed out in the register and William Powell's entered into the margin, as if he might have purchased him. However, in his own register William Powell declared that he owned only one man, a 25-year-old black Creole called Jemmy (whom William Powell had named, no doubt, after his own brother).⁸⁸⁰

Kades Bay was worked with a relatively young labour force. Half the people were between the ages of 20 and 39; a quarter were over 40 but no one was older than 58. This should have augured well but in the following five years a third of the people died. Proportionately hardest hit were the young children, followed by the over forties. Men and women, Africans and Creoles died in almost equal numbers. The rate of attrition on Kades Bay plantation was even higher than that on Clarke's Estate where, in the same period, nearly a quarter perished. Losing a third of its slave population was a set-back from which the plantation did not recover until slavery was abolished.⁸⁸¹ But the high rate of mortality suggests an outbreak of disease rather than just parsimony or neglect. This argument may be strengthened by the fact that William Powell also died in the same period. He was buried on 28 December 1817.⁸⁸² He was at least in his early forties.

William Powell's next slave register was completed by a woman, his executrix Elizabeth Lynch. Their relationship is not known. (She later married another former Mountravers employee, William Nicholson.) Miss Lynch recorded that Powell's man Jemmy had been sold in June 1819 to Edward Jones. She made her mark by way of signature.⁸⁸³

⁸⁷⁸ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 f295

⁸⁷⁹ PP, AB 57 Wm Powell's a/c

⁸⁸⁰ UKNA, T 71/364

⁸⁸¹ In 1817 William Powell registered 29 men and 26 women for Kades Bay. John Cooke, who may have been the attorney, in 1822 recorded that four children had been born but that nineteen people had died. By 1825 Plummer & Wilson were in possession of the plantation, and John Cooke noted the deaths of four and the births of two infants. In 1828 Thomas Marr signed for 33 people; seven having died, and one having been born in the intervening three years. The only period when there was an increase in numbers was between 1828 and 1831 when John Daniell confirmed that two people had died and three children had been born. However, by 1834 the trend was reversed again: John Daniell listed two births, two deaths and two further deductions without stating whether these were sales or manumissions. By then the slave population on the Kades Bay plantation was reduced to 31. The owners were Messrs Paul & Edwards (UKNA, T 71/364-369). The losses on this estate, where four in ten people died between 1817 and 1834, were among the worst on the island.

⁸⁸² RHL, MSS. W. Ind. S.24 (b)

⁸⁸³ UKNA, T 71/364 and T 71/365

Jemmy's new owner was a free mestee who lived in Charlestown. Edward Jones was about two years younger than Jemmy and may already have been married to Elizabeth, a shopkeeper. Freed in the 1790s, Edward Jones was well established and his employment as a writing clerk put him among the emerging free mixed-race elite.⁸⁸⁴ He attended church and contributed generously to 'the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negroe Slaves in the British West India Islands',⁸⁸⁵ and when the couple's daughter was born, they had her baptised in the church.⁸⁸⁶ In 1819, the year Jemmy joined his new owner, Jones already had three Creoles in his possession: a 25-year-old black woman, Betsey, and two children aged seven and five years, Louisa and George. Louisa was black, George a sambo. If the definition was used loosely, he may have been Edward Jones's son. A year later the household was joined by another black girl; Jones purchased the six-year-old Shurey from the executors of Elizabeth Artherton (a niece of Thomas Artherton, previously a distiller on Mountravers).⁸⁸⁷ Edward Jones manumitted 'Sheurey (sic) alias Amarilla' the following year.⁸⁸⁸

'James or Jemmy' was with the Joneses for four years until, in July 1823, he was sold to an unknown buyer from Trinidad.⁸⁸⁹

Having been sold away from a plantation environment to an urban household may have saved Jemmy from an early death but, equally, William Powell's early death had caused his involuntary, permanent displacement. Had he remained with the Joneses he would have ended up with a new owner anyway: Edward Jones died in 1826 and his wife in 1833.⁸⁹⁰



As the first mulatto known to have been overseer on Mountravers, William Powell and also his family are of particular interest.

William Powell was literate, as was his brother Jenkin Powell. He became a clerk and also owned some people.⁸⁹¹ In fact it was his brother's 'negro man' Peter who in 1812 was murdered by Edward Huggins junior.⁸⁹²

William's sister, Elizabeth, married John Hendrickson, a free carpenter, and they, too, were literate and owned people. His other brother, the mulatto James Powell, left 'for England' in 1800. He may have gone to Wales where relatives of the family lived,⁸⁹³ but probably returned to Nevis, worked as a stonemason and was involved with the free stonemason James Dore in purchasing an estate in St John Figtree, North Wales. When he made his will in the late 1830s, James Powell had seven children: Thomas, Edward, John, David, Eliza, Sally and Ann (she was, by then, married).⁸⁹⁴

When William Powell's father died, he left his plantation in St James Windward to Thomas, a white nephew, rather than to any of his mixed-race sons (who were then in their early twenties). This cousin

⁸⁸⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 135; UKNA, CO 186/13: 19 October 1826; ECSCRN, CR 1803-1805 f5

⁸⁸⁵ Anon *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negroe Slaves ...*

⁸⁸⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 63

⁸⁸⁷ UKNA, T 71/365

⁸⁸⁸ ECSCRN, CR 1819-1823 ff471-73

⁸⁸⁹ UKNA, T 71/366

⁸⁹⁰ RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.24 (b) and NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 506

⁸⁹¹ UKNA, T 71/364-369

⁸⁹² An inquest established that Jenkin Powell's man Peter was shot and killed 'between 2am and 3am on 31 October 1812'. Edward Huggins junior was found guilty of manslaughter and fined N£250. Governor Hugh Elliott's commented that the punishment was more lenient than the crime deserved, but Elliott also believed that the verdict was impartial (UKNA, CO 152/100).

⁸⁹³ Job Powell's nephew, another James Powell (junior), lived in Monmouthshire (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1787-1805 f357 and ff313-14).

⁸⁹⁴ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f252

of William's, Thomas Powell, registered 41 people for 'Powell's' plantation in 1817 but in the following years became destitute. He manumitted one person, Robert, and in 1821 sold two: Anne to Thomas Halliday and Diney to William Powell's sister, Elizabeth Hendrickson. By 1825 the estate was in the hands of Protheroe & Savage as trustees for a member of the Claxton family. Thomas Powell and his wife Mary were without means of support. 'Worn down', unable to work and deprived of their estate, the couple applied to the Legislature for financial support. It was stressed that their misfortune had 'not arisen from a lavish expenditure of their means in better days but [was] solely to be attributed to the general depression of Colonial Interest which has born with peculiar hardship on properties of a limited extent.' They were granted N£10 straight away and N£60 a year, payable monthly. Either before or shortly after Thomas Powell's death, in November 1829 the Council decided to disallow the money paid to him but in June 1830, due to 'the extreme' poverty of the widow Mrs Powell, the Legislature granted her a dollar a week poor relief.⁸⁹⁵

The mixed-race members of the Powell family were educated and entrepreneurial and it is befitting that by 1840 Powell's Estate had a school. It was attended by fifty boys and forty girls and was funded without government support by the Ladies Negro Education Society.⁸⁹⁶

William Thomas Williams

William Thomas Williams, 'a young man', was sent to Nevis as replacement for the overseer John Cheyney.⁸⁹⁷ His name suggests a Welsh origin but no evidence has been found that would link him to the Williams brothers from Chepstow.

He was said to have come from St James Parish in Bristol. If he was, indeed, born and raised in that parish, he could have been one of a number of boys called William Williams who were baptised in that parish in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Without further details it is impossible to trace him.

He left Bristol in mid-December 1803 on Captain Shilstone's ship, the *King David*.⁸⁹⁸ Crop started in January and the manager Henry Williams, no doubt, eagerly awaited his arrival. Articled for three years, William Thomas Williams was employed as overseer and distiller. His first year's salary was set at N£80. In addition he was allowed an old woman cook and a washer,⁸⁹⁹ entitled to fresh meat and encouraged to keep a she-goat tied up. This was a new development; previously JPP had not wanted his overseers to keep small livestock. A new development was also the direction to the manager that whenever William Thomas Williams became sickly, he was to 'let him occasionally sleep at the [Great] House or in Woodland-house.'⁹⁰⁰ JPP was aware that the overseer's accommodation at Sharloes was in an unhealthy, noisy and smelly location and that spending some time in the upper houses would benefit his employees.

The new overseer wore baize pantaloons and Osnaburgh jackets. Cheyney before him had sported the same attire, but somehow William Thomas Williams could not carry it off and he became the subject of ridicule among the plantation workers. When JPP heard this, he was saddened that people no longer appreciated the old ways and reminisced: 'I remember during the time I was in the island, the first gentlemen did not consider themselves disgraced by wearing Osnaburgh jackets on the

⁸⁹⁵ UKNA, CO 186/12: 18 August 1825; CO 186/13: 29 November 1829, and CO 186/14: 7 June 1830

⁸⁹⁶ NHCS, Blue Book Nevis 1840 'Education'

⁸⁹⁷ It has not been possible to trace William Thomas Williams; in the mid-1770s about sixty people called Williams lived in Bristol (*Sketchley's Bristol Directory*). The man JPP employed may have been related to David Williams, whom JPP had employed in Bristol as his coachman (PP, LB 19: Memo 3 October 1791), or to his managers, the Williams brothers from Chepstow, but there is no evidence to substantiate this.

⁸⁹⁸ PP, LB 43 and LB 19: overseer [William Thomas] Williams who went out in the *King David*

⁸⁹⁹ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 Notebook; also Misc Vols 6 List of Deeds and Papers, 1783 f113: Articles of Agreement and LB 18: JPP to Henry Williams, Nevis, 15 December 1803

⁹⁰⁰ PP, LB 18: JPP to Henry Williams, Nevis, 15 December 1803

estate.⁹⁰¹ To him, this was another sign that life in Nevis had changed for the worse. The new overseer probably asked for replacement clothes; certainly the House was shipping sundry items for him from Bristol.

William Thomas Williams, too, turned out 'a drunken fellow'. He fell ill 'and in consequence of his irregularity he died of a fever and short illness'.⁹⁰² The articles sent from Bristol did not reach him; he died some time in the autumn of 1804. He had survived in Nevis for no more than about eight months. News of his death reached JPP just after he had dispatched the items which had been ordered for the overseer. JPP had put them aboard the *Nevis* which was on her way already. However, still lying in Kingroad was the *Pilgrim*, about to sail to Nevis. Aboard were John Frederick Pinney and his wife. JPP managed to get a message to his son regarding the items 'intended for the use of your late overseer WT Williams'. He advised him that, once he had caught up with the articles in Nevis, he should dispose of them 'to the best advantage on account of your estate'.⁹⁰³

David Jones

After a frustrating search JPP sent Jones from England to replace the overseer William Thomas Williams. This new man was not his first choice and a last-minute appointment; a month before Jones set sail JPP was still trying to recruit.⁹⁰⁴ In his effort to find someone JPP had enlisted the help of a contact in Somerset. He had asked him to 'Give Farmer Sansom half a Guinea and tell him that my offer to his son to send him out to West India is only in case he likes it - if he don't wish for him to go, it will not displease me - and I shall bring him up as a footman in my family'.⁹⁰⁵ Farmer Sansom's son chose to remain in England. 'A very quiet civil man', he became JPP's coachman or similar.⁹⁰⁶ It is likely that Sansom advanced to the post of butler and remained with JPP until his death.⁹⁰⁷

David Jones, a friend of the manager Henry Williams, probably was, like Williams, in his forties, and he may well have come from Chepstow in Wales, or from the surrounding area. He was married but nothing is known about his wife.

David Jones bore 'an excellent character' and JPP engaged him on the same terms as the previous overseer. Jones was allowed two servants from the plantation plus fresh meat but his wages were fixed at N£100 a year for three years,⁹⁰⁸ and as long as his wife stayed behind, she was paid 40s a month. This arrangement was similar to that made with the Liverpool man, Daniel Dangerfield, who in the 1830s came to Nevis to work on steam engines.⁹⁰⁹

JPP advanced David Jones S£8,⁹¹⁰ and on Saturday morning, 16 February 1805 the new overseer embarked on the *Rachel* in Kingroad.⁹¹¹ He would have been rowed out to Kingroad, an area of deep water in the river Severn where ships lay at anchor until the tide changed and they could either set off downstream or, heading towards Bristol, enter the river Avon.

⁹⁰¹ PP, LB 19: JPP to Henry Williams, 25 October 1804

⁹⁰² PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, ship *Pilgrim*, Cork Harbour, 17 November 1804

⁹⁰³ PP, LB 43: T & P to JF Pinney, 23 November 1804

⁹⁰⁴ PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, Nevis, 8 January 1805

⁹⁰⁵ PP, LB 19: JPP to James Johnston, Newnham, nr Crewkerne, Somerset, 11 December 1804

⁹⁰⁶ PP, LB 20: JPP to Revd H Parsons at Goathurst nr Bridgwater, 1 December 1805

⁹⁰⁷ Sansom was also described as 'Butler to John Pinney Esq' when he witnessed a settlement of John Pinney's monies and effects, dated 30 September 1817 (PP, WI Box G).

⁹⁰⁸ PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, Nevis, 20 February 1805

The usual number of servants single men on Mountravers were allowed appears to have been two. James Browne had a woman and a houseboy. On Mesopotamia in Jamaica 'No fewer than ten houseboys, maid servants, and cooks' waited on the (presumably unmarried) manager as well as the overseers (Richard Dunn *A Tale of Two Plantations* p52).

⁹⁰⁹ PP, LB 66: P & C to PT Huggins, 1 January 1836

⁹¹⁰ PP, Dom Box P: Estate of JF Pinney, account current with Tobin & Pinney, 1 May 1804–1 May 1805

⁹¹¹ PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, Nevis, 20 February 1805

'A private verbal agreement' between JPP and Jones had sealed the deal but legally John Frederick Pinney was his employer and the agreement had to be formalised. JPP urged his son, who was then in Nevis, to get the new man to sign the contract immediately. To smooth the relationship and as a special favour, JPP advised John Frederick to treat him to some of his own supplies of tripe and potatoes that had been sent to Nevis. JPP was prepared to be generous because he wanted someone trustworthy who could keep an eye on the manager, Henry Williams, and possibly replace him. David Jones wrote 'a good hand', was 'accustomed to book-keeping' and his presence would place JPP and his son 'in an independent situation in regard to Williams'. JPP quite clearly set up the new man in a divide and rule situation and foresaw the problems that might arise between the manager and the overseer: 'Williams I apprehend will not be pleased at the difference you will be obliged to show Mr Jones, in order to regulate and settle your account and he may endeavour to poison his friend and set him against his situation.'⁹¹² However, Henry Williams hardly had time to set his friend against the Pinneys: not long after Jones arrived, John Frederick sacked Williams and engaged Joe Stanley as manager.

Although David Jones settled down well and his conduct was praiseworthy, the first few months on the plantation must have been miserable for him. After his friend left his job he had to work with a new manager, and then, a few months later, his friend died. Jones's wife was still in Britain; the wooden overseer's house at Sharloes was too small for both of them. It was badly in need of repair, if not of rebuilding. Apparently James Williams had not done the improvements JPP had requested when John Smith was overseer. It was clear to David Jones that his wife could not come and join him as long as his dwelling was in such a grim state and he wrote to JPP, complaining about his living conditions. In his letter he may well have added a word or two about the management on the plantation - after all, he was expected to keep his employer informed. He could report that, at least, things were going well with his and Joe Stanley's work. By the end of the year, the field labourers were 'getting into pretty good order'; they went about their work without complaining and hardly ever tried to sham sickness.⁹¹³ It seems that the plantation people had accepted all the staff changes and had settled down.

Early in 1806 David Jones received JPP's reply to his letter of complaint. His employer 'was concerned to receive from him so dismal a picture of his residence at Sharloes' and, although Mountravers was going to be sold soon, JPP was willing to spend money on improving the overseer's house. If there was lumber, he wanted another building of the same size to be added 'to the windward of it' but thought it might be best if the masons on the estate erected the lower part of the new building with lime and stone.⁹¹⁴ As there are no account books for this period, it is not known whether this work was carried out.

Joe Stanley handed over the running of the plantation in August 1807. David Jones's three-year indenture would have expired seven or eight months later but if he was still on Mountravers, there is no record of the new owners having employed him.

Joseph Webbe (Joe) Stanley

The last manager under the Pinneys, Joe Stanley worked from May 1805 until August 1807. His biography is in Part 3, Chapter 3.

⁹¹² PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, Nevis, 15 and 20 February 1805

⁹¹³ PP, Dom Box P: JW Stanley to JF Pinney, 27 December 1805

⁹¹⁴ PP, LB 20: JPP to Joseph Webbe Stanley, Nevis, 5 December 1805

To read other chapters, please copy this link and paste it into your search engine:
<https://seis.bristol.ac.uk/~emceee/mountraversplantationcommunity.html>

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