

PART 2

The enslaved people

Chapter 2

The absentee and his plantation, 1734 – 1761

'I hope it is unnecessary to recommend to you a mild (not cruel) treatment of my Negroes, or more especially so at the time of their sickness, a merciful Man is so, even to his Beast. How much more then is it incumbent upon us to exercise it upon those poor Creatures, who only want the Light of Revelation and Learning to be upon a Level with us.'

John Frederick Pinney, 1762¹

For almost three decades Mountravers existed under absentee ownership. The first part of this chapter outlines the life of the owner, how he influenced events on his estate and what life was like in Nevis for the enslaved people. Relatively few documents are available for this phase, but 146 men, women and children were known to have lived on Mountravers in 1734 and, as far as possible, their stories are told in the second part of this chapter.



John Frederick Pinney was born in Nevis in 1719. He spent the first few years of his life in the island but grew up in England. After his mother died, he continued his education at school in Cambridge and then went to university there.² A kinswoman on his mother's side, Miss Christian Helme,³ looked after him, and during the holidays he stayed with his other Helme relatives in Gillingham in Dorset. A 'christened negro', **?Cutar**, attended to him. Almost certainly this was an enslaved man from Nevis.⁴

John Frederick was under age when his mother died but even if he had been old enough, he had no intention of living in Nevis. Although in his case other factors came into play, he followed a pattern common among third generation West India planters: the first generation, too poor to return home, sent their sons for their education to Britain to equip them for plantership. The sons returned and managed their inherited estates, while their sons, the third generation, chose to remain in Britain. To familiarise themselves with their inheritance, they often served a three-year apprenticeship in the West Indies and then left their overseas business in the hands of attorneys and managers.⁵ Occasionally these absentee planters inspected their properties. John Frederick Pinney did so as well; he visited Nevis twice but otherwise spent his adult life in England.

Young John Frederick's guardian and the trustee of his mother's will, Jeremiah Browne, installed a manager to run the Nevis properties. On 7 March 1734 a relative of Browne's, the 24-year-old James

¹ PP, LB 3: Instructions by John Frederick Pinney to Aeneas Shaw and William Coker, undated but 1762

² PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

³ PP, Misc Vols 36 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks Vol 1

⁴ PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

⁵ Craton, M *Sinews of Empire* p201

Browne, started work.⁶ Six months later, when James Browne compiled his first inventory, 146 enslaved people lived on the plantation. One woman, **Susanna**, had died recently. Browne duly noted her death in a separate column.

Susanna and the others who had lived in Nevis during the previous decade had survived a succession of droughts and cold winters.⁷ People had to exist on very little food. The bad weather had affected plantation-grown food crops, and imported provisions had been in short supply. Planters in British colonies faced increased competition from French and Dutch planters, which made it more difficult to shift their sugars⁸ and pushed up the prices for North American commodities. The cost of living was high in Nevis; necessities could be double as expensive as those purchased in England.⁹

In the 1720s, during these famine years, a larger number of people than usual was likely to have died from hunger and disease and, no doubt, they were replaced with newly shipped-in Africans. But anyone wishing to buy people had to go to St Kitts. In Nevis the last slaver, the *Malmsbury* (sic), arrived from Africa in 1729 and then none landed for another six years.¹⁰ It has been said that in the 1720s planters in Nevis did not have sufficient collateral for loans to finance the buying of enslaved people¹¹ but, judging by the population figures, it appears that at least early on and again later in that decade planters were able to make new purchases: between 1722 and 1724 the enslaved population increased from nearly 5,300 to 6,000, dropped to 5,650 in 1729 and then rose again to 6,330 in 1734.¹² Given the food shortages and the unfavourable living conditions, it is unlikely that the population increased through births.

Island-wide, in the early 1730s blacks outnumbered whites by about five to one.¹³ When large groups of black people gathered in one place, this always frightened the whites and, because enslaved people had a few days off during the Christmas season, planters felt particularly vulnerable during this period. All plantation people could then move about freely and meet up with others. Lady Nugent recorded in her diary how in Jamaica everyone celebrated their Christmas breaks joyously and energetically so that 'the whole town and house bore the appearance of a masquerade'. The days passed with 'nothing but singing, dancing, and noise,' with 'bonjoes, drums, and tom-toms, going all night, and dancing and singing and madness, all the morning'. By the 27th the revellers were 'all really so drunk' they could hardly move.¹⁴ In Nevis, everyone would have partied just as noisily and energetically.

Surrounded by excited crowds, planters suspected that conspiracy was in the air, and a few days before Christmas 1735 the Nevis authorities instructed guards to prevent the sort of 'disorder that may happen by negroes assembling themselves together in their great numbers.' Their fears may not have been entirely unfounded; by mid-January news of an intended rebellion in Antigua had spread to Nevis 'and not knowing how near the like evil may be our own doors', the authorities increased their vigilance.¹⁵ To begin with, the Legislature passed another 'Act for the good Government of Negroes and Other Slaves in this

⁶ PP, Misc Vols 36 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks Vol 1, and VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 1 pp363-65; see also James Brown's biography in Part 3

⁷ Stapleton Cotton MSS 20: James Milliken, St Kitts, to Lady Frances Stapleton, 28 February 1725/6

⁸ Watts, David *The West Indies* p315

⁹ Burns, Sir Alan *History of the British West Indies* p459, citing CSP 1724-1725 No 516 and CSP 1728-1729 No 24

¹⁰ Seven ships landed in Nevis in the years 1722 to 1729, none in the period 1730 to 1735 (Eltis, David *et al* (eds) *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade CD-ROM*).

¹¹ Ward, JR *British West Indian Slavery* p12

¹² UKNA, CO 155/6 and S Lambert (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 70 pp275-77; also in CSP 1734-1735

¹³ In 1729, the ratio was one white person to every 4.36 slaves; by 1745 the ratio increased to one white person to every 5.58 slaves. These figures are based on 1,296 whites and 5,648 slaves and 1,166 whites and 6,511 slaves respectively (Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p22, citing FW Pitman *The Development of the British West Indies* New Haven 1917 p381).

¹⁴ Cundall, Frank (ed) *Lady Nugent's Journal* p65, p66 and p279

¹⁵ UKNA, CO 186/2: 22 December 1735 and 12 January 1735/6

Island'.¹⁶ This mostly focused on people's Sunday activities: selling goods and produce and enjoying a day free from endless, back-breaking toil and constant supervision. In the preamble to the Act the Legislature claimed that murders, fights and quarrels were 'frequent' on the 'Sabbath Day' when it was 'common practice for negroes to meet in great companies' to engage in 'feasting, drinking and gaming'. It was said that people from St Kitts frequently joined them; they arrived in 'barklogs, boats, and canoes' which they landed in private bays. The visitors came to have a good time, to 'feast and corouse'. It was also claimed that these guests assisted people from Nevis in their getaways, 'carrying them away clandestinely', and that they helped to shift stolen goods. The Legislature threatened anyone caught spiriting away people or booty with having their boats burnt and - unless the St Kitts crowd came with a 'credible white man' - with being severely punished: up to forty lashes in the public market place and then jail. People were to remain imprisoned until their masters retrieved them. If owners did not claim them within three months and pay a fine of N£6,¹⁷ the prisoners would be sold at auction.¹⁸ These people would not have been popular choices. Every planter knew them as convicted recalcitrants.

As it turned out, the Christmas celebrations passed off without disruptions but not all was well: the 'blast' hit sugar production. On some plantations the vermin, combined with the dry weather, destroyed virtually all the canes, and Mountravers, presumably, suffered similar losses. All over the island, the 1736 harvest was very poor,¹⁹ and then, early in 1737, some time before March, the smallpox broke out. To protect Nevis from windborne 'contagious distempers' brought by 'vessels having plague and smallpox', the quarantine law was tightened: instead of lying in Musekito Bay at the northern end,²⁰ ships were to anchor further out, one mile to the west of the island.²¹ Later in the year more misfortune befell people in Nevis when a hurricane raged through the Leeward Islands;²² blight led to vegetation withering and dying and, unable to forage, animals starved to death.²³ By 1738 the smallpox was still not under control and remained 'very thick in the island'.²⁴ The quarantine restrictions had come too late. The Legislature took steps to isolate all infected plantation people and rented William Weekes's house, which was turned into a hospital, or 'pest house'. Dr Thomas Stewart, appointed at a salary of N£12 a month, was assisted by a white and two black nurses.²⁵ These, no doubt, he chose from among his own people and no one would have had the right to refuse.²⁶

During this smallpox outbreak the number of enslaved people declined from 6,866 by about one hundred,²⁷ and some whites sought healthier conditions elsewhere and emigrated.²⁸ The shortage of

¹⁶ Goveia, EV *Slave Society* p172, citing CO 185/2

¹⁷ N£ means Nevis currency, as opposed to pound sterling

¹⁸ 'Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part III (1789); also UKNA, CO 185/4 Nevis Acts passed 13 June 1737

¹⁹ Ryland Stapleton MSS 6.3: Reference List for Plantation Plan 1736

²⁰ Mosquito Bay is now known as Oualie.

²¹ UKNA, CO 186/2: 29 March and 1 April 1737; also CO 153/16

²² Deerr, Noel *The History of Sugar* Vol 1 p30

²³ Iles, AJB *An Account Descriptive of the Island of Nevis*

²⁴ Ryland Stapleton MSS 4.7: Edward Lloyd to Sir Wm Stapleton, 7 October 1738

²⁵ UKNA, CO 186/3: 22 June to 22 December 1739 in 1739 a/c

While Weekes's house became the 'pest house', he appears to have also had a stake in a tavern which Weekes appears to have run with the Deputy Provost Marshall, Robert Thompson. On 20 February 1739 they applied for part of their tavern licence money to be remitted. The smallpox remained in Nevis until at least May 1739 (Ryland Stapleton MSS 4.2: Thomas Butler senior, London, to Sir Wm Stapleton, 19 May 1739). Thompson's house doubled up as a tavern and the venue for the Council and Assembly, as well as the Courts of Law (Zacek, Natalie *Settler Society in the Leeward Islands* p210

²⁶ Dr Thomas Stewart owned enslaved people; he, too, had made people available for the work on Saddle Hill (UKNA, CO 186/2). If the nurses had children, their offspring may well have ended up on Mountravers: Dr Stewart's daughter Anne later married William Weekes's son William Burt Weekes, who, after Anne's death, became John Pretor Pinney's father-in-law and mortgaged some of the Stewart people to him.

²⁷ In 1736/7 there were 6,866 enslaved people in the island (UKNA, CO 186/2), by 1739 this figure was reduced to 6,763 (CO 186/3).

²⁸ Iles, AJB *An Account Descriptive of the Island of Nevis*

white men affected the workings of the Council; there were not enough members to form a quorum.²⁹ Just then John Frederick Pinney arrived in Nevis.³⁰ He had completed university and, having come of age, wanted to inspect and review his overseas properties. He did not intend to remain for long, but, as was his right and as was done by other absentees who temporarily stayed in the island, in November 1739 he took up his seat in the Assembly.³¹ Welcomed as someone who boosted numbers, his attendance, however, was irregular.³² Pinney also served as a churchwarden³³ but being a leading member of his community did not stop him from neglecting his public duties: he failed to send a sufficient supply of his plantation workers to assist with building the new defences at Saddle Hill. When work began in 1735, for ten weeks from the end of April Mountravers had supplied 223 'Negro work days', and then, during crop time, for three months from mid-December, about the same number. However, work was ongoing and in 1741 the authorities found that John Frederick Pinney's contribution of workers had fallen short by 36 days.³⁴

The Legislature could call on owners to supply a proportion of their dutiable people, and the number of labourers sent to assist in public works projects therefore generally reflected the size of the plantation from which they came. For this particular development, the Saddle Hill defences, the largest contribution was just over 300 'Negro work days'. Private owners also supplied their people; the smallest contribution was two work days. One man could not provide any labourers at all; his people had been 'carried off the island' - ³⁵ having either been stolen or taken away by his creditors. An additional burden for the enslaved workers, particularly during crop time, and an additional burden also for the slaveholders, the Legislature regularly requested labourers for civic and military projects. Some years before John Frederick Pinney came to Nevis, the Commander of Forts and Fortifications had called for a detachment to clear Fort Charles and to open the ghut-side trench around the fort and, not long before Pinney arrived, a group of workers had also mended the roads and breastworks along the western coast from Charles Fort to 'Mrs Pineys (sic) Pond' and from there to Cades Bay.³⁶ Mountravers people would have laboured on those schemes. In addition they would have carried out the structural improvements and the construction work which Pinney initiated on the plantation, including the building of a house.³⁷ In mid-1741 he could report that 'I shall have finished all my buildings and affairs this year' and planned to return to England in twelve months' time. In the meantime he remained busy: he granted a mortgage to Henry Richards for N£450, taking nine people as security,³⁸ went to America to sort out some land that his grandfather had bought

²⁹ CSP 1738 No 482

³⁰ On 4 July 1741 he wrote that he had been in the West Indies for two and a half years. He may have stayed in Antigua before arriving (PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes).

³¹ UKNA, CO 186/3: 19 November 1739

³² Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p54

³³ 'Journal, June 1748 Vol 56' in *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations* Vol 8 (January 1742-December 1749)

³⁴ UKNA, CO 186/3: 28 May 1741

It was as if the six years of work on the Saddle Hill defences had sapped all energy and resources. In 1741 the Legislature found that it was unable to supply the fortification and asked the British Government for help (Acts of Privy Council 1720-1745 No 515).

³⁵ The estate of Mary Pinney dec'd supplied 211 'Negro work days' for three months from mid-December 1735 onwards. The most 'Negro work days' were contributed by the estates of Mary Pinney's estate was among those who supplied over 200 work days, together with the estates of Sir Wm Stapleton (206 and 205), Tobias Wall (210), Catherine Emra (217), Daniel Smith (219), Michael Smith (223), John Browne of Fig Tree (240), and that of Tim Tyrrell (306) (UKNA, CO 186/2). Judging by these contributions, this would have put Mountravers among the nine estates in Nevis with the largest number of slaves.

³⁶ UKNA, CO 186/2: 25 February 1732 and 22 December 1737

³⁷ PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

It is likely that John Frederick Pinney in fact built a house during his second visit. An account by George Jones dated May 1748 to September 1749 includes the cost of boards 'to make doors for the hall', wages for a carpenter 'for making doors', and N6s for 'Negroes to bring shingles off the bay' and N1s6d for them 'to carry boards' (WI Box C). The reference to the building material being landed at the bay makes it likely that they were for a house at Mountravers.

³⁸ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2 and ECSCRN, CR 1728-1740 f451

there³⁹ and travelled to Antigua. He was to take possession of property on behalf of Thomas Helme, one of his relatives from Gillingham.⁴⁰

John Frederick Pinney experienced at first hand the hardships of life in Nevis. After months without rain, crops were poor and provisions again in short supply. Wearily he wrote that the island was in 'so deplorable a condition that it was with much difficulty we could keep ourselves and slaves from starving ... nothing but desolation and famine ...' It is not known whether any of the Mountravers people did starve to death; it appears that 'gentle and moderate rains' started just in time so that everything began 'to have a more agreeable prospect ...'⁴¹ The weather improved but Pinney was getting bored in Nevis. A keen sportsman and fond of dancing the rigadon, there was not much to keep him occupied: 'The West Indies is a place barren of news & the little it enjoys is brought from England.'⁴² For him two and a half years in the West Indies was enough, and in 1742⁴³ he gave power of attorney to James Browne and to Edward Jesup (also spelt Jessup or Jessop) and returned to England.⁴⁴ He may have taken with him one of the Mountravers people; someone called Blackey later appears to have been at Bettiscombe,⁴⁵ the house in rural Dorset in which his father's cousin Azariah Pinney lived.⁴⁶

During John Frederick's absence abroad, one of his father's aunts, Hester Pinney, had died. A businesswoman of some note (she had put up the money that enabled her brother Azariah, the Monmouth rebel, to buy his freedom), she had died in her early nineties. Hester had left John Frederick £500.⁴⁷ A smaller sum went to another young relative, Martha Clarke,⁴⁸ one of the granddaughters of Hester's sister Mary,⁴⁹ but Alicia, Mary's other granddaughter and Martha Clarke's sister, got nothing.

³⁹ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney, Nevis, to Azariah Pinney, 2 May 1741

⁴⁰ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 5 p42

This Thomas Helme, a butcher, probably was the son of Thomas Helme, the brother and heir-at-law of Robert Helme who had been involved with William Freeman in Proctor's. Thomas Helme junior was baptised on 6 June 1675 (*Caribbeana* Vol 5 p40 Helme family tree) and in 1722 offered land for sale to John Frederick Pinney's mother Mary Pinney (PN 17). Most likely this was land that had come to him through his aunt Christian Helme/Chapman/Broom who died c. 1720.

In 1731, Christian Brome's nephew Thomas Helme was granted Letter of Administration of her estate and John Frederick Pinney's trip to Antigua probably had something to do with settling this property. It was not uncommon for planters to hold property in several neighbouring islands.

An entry in Anna Maria Pinney Notebook mentioned 'Pinney's Pasture' in Antigua but the location and extent of the property are not known (PP, Misc Vols 41 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks Vol 6). Anna Maria Pinney commented that 'John Frederick Pinney looked after the land in Antigua, not knowing whether he or Miss Christian was Thomas Helme's heir at law' (Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes).

⁴¹ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney, Nevis to Azariah Pinney, 2 May 1741

⁴² PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes: JF Pinney, Nevis, to Azariah Pinney, 4 July 1741

⁴³ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* pp53-4

⁴⁴ PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

⁴⁵ PP, WI Box L: JF Pinney, Antigua, to Azariah Pinney, Bettiscombe, 9 May 1749

⁴⁶ This Azariah Pinney is not to be confused with the Monmouth Rebel who died in 1720. Azariah Pinney (c1708-1760) of Bettiscombe married Jane Paul of Blackdown on 3 April 1746. Aged 40, she died on 27 May 1755 and was buried at Wayford in the chancel on 5 June (PP, DM 1841/7). The couple had no children.

⁴⁷ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 p114

Hester Pinney, Azariah Pinney's sister, who had put up the money to buy his freedom after the failed Monmouth Rebellion, died on 19 February 1740 at Bromley Street, Holborn, and was buried in Monken Hadley Church. She had inherited the manor of Monken Hadley and also other property from the lawyer George Booth (1654-1726), whose mistress she had been. Since the mid-1710s she had worked as his paid secretary. She lived in lodgings until 1724 and then lived with him for two years until his death. Unmarried, Hester Pinney died a wealthy woman (Sharpe, Pamela 'Pinney, Hester (1658-1740) in *Oxford DNB*).

⁴⁸ Alicia Clarke's sister Martha was the eldest daughter. She moved with her widowed mother to Stockton-on-Tees where Martha married twice (PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes): first Revd William Harland, then Revd William Dawson of Northallerton (DM 1841/6).

⁴⁹ Revd John Pinney's daughter Mary Pinney (b 1648) married in 1675 William (or possibly John) Clarke of Halstock. The couple had three children before Mary Clarke died in 1697: Joseph (died unmarried in 1724), William (died unmarried in 1733) and John Clarke, an attorney in London. John Clarke married Martha Gom (usually Gomm), the only surviving child of Alderman James Gom of St Dunstan's (?London) and of Alice J Gom (died in 1714). One of their daughters was Alicia Clarke. John Clarke was buried in May 1730; Martha Gom died in 1752 (PP, DM 1841/6).

According to some sources, Alicia Clarke was the daughter of Azariah's sister Mary Pinney and John Clarke but this scenario appears to have skipped a generation and does not fit in with other descriptions of Alicia Clarke and her family.

Alicia Clarke had scandalised the family by eloping with and marrying Michael Pretor, a young man the family considered beneath her station.⁵⁰ When John Frederick returned from Nevis, Alicia and Michael Pretor's first son, Azariah, was about four years old and their second, John, nearly two. Born during his absence abroad, two decades later this boy, John Pretor, was to become the heir of John Frederick Pinney's properties in Nevis and the West Country. (Later on in this study he will be referred to as JPP.) On his homecoming, John Frederick first stayed at Bettiscombe with his father's cousin, Azariah Pinney,⁵¹ but then moved to a livelier place with more society.⁵² In 1747 John Frederick entered politics and began an undistinguished career as Member of Parliament for the Dorset constituency of Bridport. At that time Britain was still at war with Spain and France and although Nevis was not a theatre for any of the battles, at one stage it was reported that the island was to be invaded and, with the 1706 French attack firmly lodged in people's memory, they prepared and stocked up on gunpowder and barrels of meat 'to carry to the mountain'.⁵³ The inhabitants were spared an invasion and finally, after nine years of hostilities, in the autumn of 1748 peace was declared.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, in Europe it had been discovered that a certain type of beet contained sugar,⁵⁵ and although this discovery would not affect the West Indian sugar market until the following century, the discovery, nevertheless, was the first step towards independent European production.

Soon after peace was secured, John Frederick Pinney set off on his second and what turned out to be his last sojourn to Nevis. Although he later often spoke of making another trip, he never did. His voyage was long and difficult. Just before Christmas 1748 he set off from Deal in Kent on Captain Maynard's ship, the *Nevis Planter*, but on account of bad weather the vessel had to take shelter at Falmouth⁵⁶ and instead of the passage lasting the usual six to eight weeks, it took fourteen. The late arrival curtailed his visit and John Frederick remained for just over two months. He also stopped off at Antigua again.⁵⁷

⁵⁰ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p63

⁵¹ PP, DM 1841/7

⁵² PP, Misc Vols 36 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks Vol 1

As his will described him as 'of Bettiscombe', it is usually assumed that he lived there all his life but there is no evidence of this. Azariah Pinney diligently recorded his visits, for instance: 'My cousin Pinney came here June 10th went to Bath with me 16th came from there 23rd and went to Handley 28th 1755' (DM 1841/7).

⁵³ Stapleton Cotton MSS 3(i): Nevis 1745 Account

⁵⁴ UKNA, CO 186/3

In the autumn of 1739 Britain declared war on Spain, largely as a result of a pickled ear presented to Parliament the year before. It had once belonged to a captain Robert Jenkins, who in 1731 was sailing back from Jamaica to London, when a Spanish coast guard sloop off the Cuban coast intercepted his ship. They were looking for evidence of privateering. They found none, tortured Jenkins and sliced off one of his ears, telling him to take it to his king as a warning. Seven years on, a faction in Parliament bent on waging war against Spain invited him to display his severed ear. The mistreatment of British seamen by the Spanish who were interfering in the slave trade was only one of the facets behind starting this war which became known as the 'War of Jenkins's Ear' and was mainly fought in the Americas. Started unenthusiastically, it fizzled out in 1742/3 for lack of sufficient troops fit enough to fight. Neither side made territorial gains. Britain then got involved in the War of the Austrian Succession, which had begun in Europe in 1740, and fought against Spain and France in defence of Austria. The Anglo-Spanish dispute over Georgia's borders, started in the mid-1730s by a Spanish surprise attack on Savannah, had been part of the rationale behind the 'War of Jenkins' Ear'. In 1748 the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle concluded the War of the Austrian Succession.

⁵⁵ In 1747, a famous chemist of his time, Andreas Sigismund Marggraf, discovered that beets contained sugar. His pupil and successor Franz Carl Achard produced the first sugar made from beet in 1798 in Berlin, and three years later, with the support of Friedrich Wilhelm III, the first sugar beet factory was established in Cunern in Silesia. It produced its first sugar in March 1802. The war with France encouraged the beginnings of European beet sugar production (http://www.dumjahn.de/zucker/museum_02.html).

The first trials with beet sugar came at a time when there was great interest in scientific experiments and exploration of natural phenomena. In Britain the search for alternative methods of making sugar led to the suggestion that it might be extracted from 'Guir-natt, or Guinea-corn' (*The Annual Register* 1765 pp154-55).

⁵⁶ PP, DM 1841/7

On his return journey, Captain Thomas Maynard took on board sugar, for instance twenty hogsheads from Lady Frances Stapleton's plantation, Russell's Rest (Stapleton Cotton MSS 13 (v): 31 May 1749).

⁵⁷ PP, DM 1841/7, and WI Box L: JF Pinney, Antigua, to Azariah Pinney, 9 May 1749

Since his last stay, Nevis had suffered another hurricane⁵⁸ and some more work had been carried out on Mountravers. Assisted by men from the plantation, the masons William Brooks and George Jones had built a stable, an animal pen and two ovens⁵⁹ and, on inspecting his estates, Pinney found that generally everything was 'in tolerable order except as to loss of negroes'.⁶⁰ He did not detail how many people had perished, or why the losses had occurred but, faced with a shortage of workers, he would have invested in new people. It is very likely that he bought several Africans from the *Earl of Radnor*, a slaver which in 1749 landed fresh captives at Nevis. It appears that one of these newcomers arrived with a head injury; an unnamed person received treatment 'for a severe wound through the cranium'. Judging by the cost of the treatment, N£3:10:0, the injury was substantial.⁶¹

James Browne had in 1746 registered a total of 154 men, women and children. Of these, four were 'absent'; presumably they had absconded rather than been temporarily moved to Pinney's small plantation in the parish of St John Figtree. The other people consisted of 62 'dutyable' and 88 'non-dutyable' individuals. (Half of those noted as 'runaways' fell into each category.)⁶² Owners were responsible for paying taxes on anyone who was capable of work, and the very high number of non-taxable people indicates that in the mid-1740s over half of the plantation population was made up of people too old, too young or too sick to perform useful employment. John Frederick Pinney's 154 people accounted for almost a tenth of the total enslaved population registered in St Thomas Lowland.⁶³ In the mid-1750s he was still the largest slaveholder in that parish although, by then, the total number had dropped by ten to 144.⁶⁴ The Mountravers population was, in fact, back to its 1739 level.⁶⁵

The late 1740s saw yet more severe droughts that destroyed island-grown provisions, and in the autumn of 1751 another hurricane struck.⁶⁶ Pinney received news that, besides damaging £1,000 worth of canes and 29 hogsheads of sugar, the gale had demolished two boiling houses and the plantation hospital.⁶⁷ This reference to the wrecked hospital is the earliest mention of one on Mountravers, and in all probability Pinney had it built in the wake of rising public consciousness about health care provisions. In Britain much progress had been made in this respect in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, ever since the Quaker philanthropist John Bellers had called for the setting up of hospitals for teaching and research and for providing medical care to the sick poor. Five years later, in 1719, the first such institution, the Westminster Hospital, had been founded in London and was in 1726 followed by the University of Edinburgh establishing its Medical Faculty.⁶⁸ It is likely that Pinney was inspired by these developments and during his first visit to Nevis, during the smallpox outbreak, had set up the plantation hospital so that anyone infected could be segregated and treated while remaining under plantation control. The

⁵⁸ Deerr, Noel *The History of Sugar* Vol 1 p30

⁵⁹ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box: Account dated 15 August 1746

⁶⁰ PP, WI Box L: JF Pinney, Antigua, to Azariah Pinney, 9 May 1749

⁶¹ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

Although it appears that by then Mountravers had become Pinney's main venture, the person treated for the head injury may have been on the Gingerland estate, Cressey's. James Dasent who administered the treatment, appears to have lived in Gingerland parish and later became a member of the Assembly for St George's Gingerland (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 Transcript of St George's Parish Register and UKNA, CO 155/8).

⁶² ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f129

⁶³ On 24 April 1746, John Frederick Pinney's slaves make up 9.5 per cent of the total number in St Thomas Lowland of 1,628 (ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123). The enslaved population in that parish was then at the same level as it had been at the beginning of 1740, when it had stood at 1,632 (UKNA, CO 186/3).

⁶⁴ PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755 Estate of John Penny

In the mid-1740s John Frederick Pinney owned 2.4 % of the total enslaved population in the island, in the mid-1750s this had dropped to 1.7% because in those ten years the total number of slaves in Nevis had increased from 6,511 to 8,430.

⁶⁵ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p83

⁶⁶ Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan MSS 2: Walter Nisbet to Ellis Yonge, 5 April 1766

⁶⁷ PP, Dom Cat 1 Summary: JF Pinney to Azariah Pinney, 28 January 1752

⁶⁸ John Bellers, a cloth merchant and political economist, published his essay *Towards the Improvement of Physic* in 1714.

Advocating a comprehensive national health service, he pre-dated the mid-eighteenth-century infirmary movement (Hitchcock, Tom 'John Bellers (1654-1725)' in *Oxford DNB*).

establishment of a sick house on Mountravers preceded that on Russel's Rest, one of the Stapleton plantations in Nevis. There it was not until the mid-1760s that the manager raised the idea of building a sick house.⁶⁹

On returning from his second visit to Nevis, John Frederick Pinney followed a busy schedule and one that was quite typical for an eighteenth-century gentleman traveller: he landed at Dover, went from there to London and then briefly rested at Bath, the fashionable spa town, where 'cousin' Azariah Pinney and his wife Jane were taking the waters. They journeyed together to Bettiscombe and John Frederick remained there for a couple of weeks before leaving again for London. In 1754 he and Azariah took another short vacation at Bath,⁷⁰ and over Christmas he had staying with him William Browne, one of the sons of his plantation manager. The boy was at school in England and visited John Frederick during his holidays.⁷¹ Entertaining other planter's children during their school vacations and acting as their guardians was a responsibility that was shared by all members of the extended West India network - even if they were single men.

After a very expensive election campaign (paid for by his sponsor) in 1754 John Frederick Pinney retained his seat as MP for his Bridport constituency.⁷² It has been said that, although he has been classed as a Tory, he gave 'no indication of his political alignment' and that he appeared 'remarkably detached'. This view of him is confirmed by a letter he wrote to Azariah. Seemingly naïve and disconnected from political reality he reported from London that "'We have had very fine debates upon several things and at each Mr Pitt has spoken like an angel.'"⁷³ If he was a lukewarm and indifferent politician, as a planter he was nevertheless just the sort of man who would take part in political life; in Parliament he, along with the other West India proprietors and merchants, could quietly advance his, and their, concerns. The strong and extensive commercial and social network inhabited by people with West India interests is well chronicled by one of Pinney's contemporaries, John Baker, a Solicitor General of the Leeward Islands. The two men had many acquaintances in common.⁷⁴ Serving in Parliament with Pinney were other men with Nevis or St Kitts backgrounds; among them Thomas Budgeon, Samuel Greathead, and the agent for Nevis, Samuel Martin. Later more people associated with Nevis entered the House of Commons. William Matthew Burt, for instance, and William Woodley,⁷⁵ a relative of Edward

⁶⁹ Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan MSS 2: Walter Nisbet to Ellis Yonge, 5 April 1766

⁷⁰ PP, DM 1841/7

⁷¹ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney, Handley, to James Browne, Nevis, 20 December 1754

⁷² Sedgwick, Romney *The House of Commons 1715-1754* Vol 2

⁷³ Namier, Sir Lewis *The House of Commons 1754-1790* Vol 3, quoting JF Pinney to Azariah Pinney, 11 December 1755

⁷⁴ John Baker's diary reads like a gossipy *Who's Who* of St Kitts and Nevis society. Baker, for instance, recorded dining with John Stanley (p185) and supping, gambling and sitting up with Edward Jesup until dawn (pp134-35). Baker was in the West Indies from 1740 until 1757 when he returned to live in England. He visited St Kitts from January 1766 until August 1767 (Yorke, PC (ed) *The Diary of John Baker*).

⁷⁵ Thomas Budgeon of West Newdegate, Surrey was the fifth son and eventually heir of Edward Budgeon of West Newdegate and Elizabeth, daughter of James Ede of Cudworth, Surrey. Having succeeded his brother in March 1731, Thomas Budgeon married before 1741 Penelope, the daughter of Daniel Smith, Governor of Nevis. They had one son and one daughter. Described as a 'country gentleman, he was Member of Parliament for Surrey for ten years from 1751. Thomas Budgeon died in 1772.

Samuel Greathead (c 1710-1765) of Guy's Cliffe near Warwick was the first surviving son of John and Frances Greathead of St Mary Cayon, St Kitts. He served as MP for Coventry from 1747 until 1761 (Namier, Sir Lewis *The House of Commons 1754-1790*).

Samuel Martin (1693-1776) was the oldest son and heir of Major Samuel Martin who came to Antigua before 1680. After his father's death at the hands of his slaves, Samuel was sent to live with relatives in Northern Ireland. Aged 15, he entered Cambridge University. He was Speaker of the Assembly from 1753 to 1763. He 'lost two wives & sixteen children out of twenty-one'. The owner of Greencastle Plantation in Antigua, Martin published *An Essay Upon Plantership* which became very popular (Sheridan, RB 'The Rise of a Colonial Gentry: A Case Study of Antigua, 1730-1775' in *The Economic History Review* New Series Vol 13 No 3 (1961) p352). Samuel Martin served as agent for Nevis from 1744 until 1750 and for Montserrat from 1742 until 1749. He was a very sluggish correspondent and the Legislature wanted him to resign (as agents were appointed without time limit, Martin could not be discharged). This led to the introduction of an Act in 1751, which included the right of dismissal by the Legislature (Penson, Lillian M *The Colonial Agents of the British West Indies*, citing UKNA, CO 186/3: 27 June 1749 and CO 324/60 pp61-2 1 April 1751, p172). Between 1754 and 1761 Samuel Martin served as MP for Camelford Borough in Cornwall.

Parsons, whose return to England Pinney had mentioned during his first visit to Nevis.⁷⁶ In the mid-1740s William Woodley had visited Azariah Pinney at Bettiscombe⁷⁷ and then spent a fortnight with John Frederick.⁷⁸ Another man with whom John Frederick was on very friendly terms was his neighbour from Nevis, Edward Jesup. He returned to live at Ringland in Norfolk⁷⁹ and was then letting some of his land to William Woodley⁸⁰ while, at the same time, renting Christian Helme's old plantation, which, 25 years earlier, John Frederick Pinney's mother had leased.⁸¹ This tightly-woven planter web was at its thickest across southern England but spread into the northern parts of the country and into Scotland.

In Nevis, meanwhile, James Browne managed Mountravers plantation and attended to John Frederick Pinney's business. The estate in the parish of St George's Gingerland, which Pinney's mother had acquired from the widow Cressey, appears to have been cultivated only intermittently. During the 1730s and 1740s the Mountravers people worked it and in the 1750s it was briefly rented out. Cultivating the Gingerland estate was harder than Mountravers since conditions in this part of the island were much drier. The south-east gets much less rainfall and is more wind-swept so that a good deal of moisture is

William Matthew Burt was MP for Great Marlow in 1761 and served as Governor of the Leeward Islands between 1776 and 1781 (Burns, Sir Alan *History of the British West Indies* p508).

William Woodley (1728-1793) was MP for Great Bedwyn between 1761 and 1766 and for Marlborough between 1780 and 1784, and Governor of the Leeward Islands between 1766 and 1771 and 1791 to 1793 (Namier, Sir Lewis and John Brooke (eds) *The House of Commons 1754-1790*).

Richard Sheridan has identified seventy members of the House of Commons who were West Indians: 27 of these had links to Jamaica, 11 to St Kitts, ten each to Antigua and Barbados, four to Nevis, three to Montserrat, two to Grenada and one each to Dominica, St Vincent and Tobago (O'Shaughnessy, Andrew J 'The Formation of a Commercial Lobby: The West India Interest, British Colonial Policy and the American Revolution' in *The Historical Journal* Vol 40 No 1 (1997) p73 fn18, citing Richard Sheridan *Sugar and Slaves* p60). See also BW Higman 'The West India Interest in Parliament, 1807-1823' in *Historical Studies* Vol 13 (October 1967) pp1-19

⁷⁶ PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes

⁷⁷ PP, AB 4

⁷⁸ It is not quite clear which William Woodley visited the Pinneys. In the 1740s there were three men called William Woodley, and all were related to Edward Parson by marriage. Parson's wife was Mary Woodley (1719-1804). One William Woodley (1704-1760) was Edward Parson's brother-in-law; this William Woodley's son of the same name (1728-1793) married Frances Payne (1738-1813), the daughter of a St Kitts planter and became an MP in 1761. The third, Edward Parson's cousin William Woodley (1721-1807), the son of John Woodley (1678-1750) and Mary Bassett of Boston (1684-1722), married his uncle William Woodley's (1676-1739) granddaughter Lucretia Newth (1722-1750) (Lake, Hazel *Sugar Planters in Little Parndon*).

John Frederick Pinney may have travelled with any of the three men: he later corresponded with John, the brother of the first William Woodley; the second, then seventeen years old, in due course became an MP, while the third William Woodley was closest in age to John Frederick Pinney. However, he was already married and may have remained in St Kitts.

⁷⁹ On 19 June 1745 Edward Jesup was present at an Assembly meeting, representing the parish of St James Windward (UKNA, CO 186/3). By June 1748 he was described as 'of Ringland, Norfolk' (8 June 1748; 'Journal, June 1748 Vol 56' in *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations* Vol 8 (January 1742-December 1749)).

According to one source, he went to the West Indies in 1737 and remained there until 1745. In 1739 he became a member of the St Kitts Council but later also served as a member of the Assembly in Nevis. Accused of being a Roman Catholic, he was suspended from the St Kitts Council. A hearing established that he had been brought up as a Catholic but that he no longer practised the faith. John Frederick Pinney gave evidence in his support: he knew him 'intimately', having served with him in the Assembly and as a churchwarden. While they were churchwardens, they had 'made it a rule to go constantly to church'. Pinney claimed 'that no one bore a better character than Mr Jessop, and that he never heard of his being a Roman Catholic'. For full details of the case against him, see 'Journal, June 1748 Vol 56' in *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations* Vol 8 (January 1742-December 1749) pp291-323.

The accusation that Jesup subscribed to the Catholic faith went to the heart of the political debate in Nevis. In the 1750s the island's anti-Catholics robustly resisted the introduction of an Act which removed some of the disadvantages Roman Catholics faced, and proceedings in the Assembly became 'irregular and violent' (UKNA, CO 186/2). There was even some rioting. Nevis was the only island that opposed the new legislation (Burns, Sir Alan *History of the British West Indies* p498, citing *Journal* 1750-1753 p369, p410 and p439 October 1752).

⁸⁰ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/7: Edward and Eleanor Jesup to William Woodley, 24 March 1752

Jesup had business dealings with both Thomas Budgeon and William Woodley: he leased and later bought Smith's land in St Thomas Lowland from Thomas Budgeon, which he then leased to William Woodley (SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/5/1 and D/MW 35/7).

⁸¹ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/10

lost through evaporation. Browne could not spare anyone from Mountravers and the tenant, Nicholas Hendrickson, had to use his own labourers.⁸² After his lease expired, sugar production on Cressey's seems to have stopped altogether.⁸³ Pinney had also acquired land bordering Cressey's from the Choppins family⁸⁴ and was planning to equip it with a boiling house if Browne could find a tenant,⁸⁵ but Choppins', like Cressey's, was not worked again for some years.⁸⁶

Under Browne's management, many different overseers would have been employed but only one is known, the 'assistant manager'⁸⁷ Thomas Wenham. Sent out from England, he lived and worked on the plantation probably from the mid-1740s.⁸⁸ He appears to have started off as overseer and became manager some time in the 1750s, with Browne taking on the role of attorney. In the beginning, Thomas Wenham and the plantation workers produced good sugars. As time went by, the quality deteriorated and Pinney's approval turned to annoyance. But it was not just the quality of the sugars that irked Pinney: Wenham was too generous when giving out allowances of corn⁸⁹ and too slack in advising him of impending shipments. Pinney needed to know what was being sent so that he could insure the cargo - if he so chose. Crotchety and suffering from gout, he shot off a letter to James Browne ('Dear friend'):

I wish to God you would order Tom Wenham to let me know when you intend to ship me any sugars or anything else for I never know anything about my sugars till I hear of their arrival or after they are lost and tho indeed I seldom insure I would choose to have it in my power if I please.⁹⁰

When Thomas Wenham considered getting married, Pinney approved of him continuing on the plantation, provided he was attentive to his work and did not neglect the estate 'by laziness and lying in bed mornings and afternoons (too much the Creole practice) or by visiting or being visited.'⁹¹ Having vented his spleen against Creoles, he allowed four people from the plantation as servants for Wenham and his

⁸² Nicholas Hendrickson rented the property in Gingerland for three years from 1752; in 1755 he paid tax on 34 slaves (PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755).

⁸³ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p56

⁸⁴ Eighteenth century West India property transactions can be almost impenetrable and are often difficult to disentangle. Pares's extensive description of how John Frederick Pinney acquired Choppin's serves as an excellent example of the manoeuvres and is worth quoting in full: Pinney 'lent £1,250 at 8% interest to John and Frances Choppin who possessed three parcels of land in Gingerland amounting to 150 acres and paid off a loan on their behalf of nearly £900 which they had borrowed from a Mrs Butler [according to Pares's footnote, she may have been a sugar factor in London in the 1720s]. In return, he received a mortgage in 1749 on the Choppins' land and fortified his claim by getting Mrs Butler to assign to him her rights under a court judgment which she had obtained against the Choppins and was holding over their heads, also a bond from Robert Choppin (perhaps the father of John). Some time later he bought for another £500 the claim of John Choppin's mother to her dower, or one-third of the income of the estate during the widowhood. (This culmination of different kinds of security is very characteristic of West-India transactions in land.) After eight years, £1,050 out of the £1,250 still remained due; interest arrears amounted to £758 besides interest charged on the money paid to Mrs Butler. In all, the Choppins owed John Frederick, by his account, £2,873 sterling, which was probably as much as the land was worth. Finally he got a decree in chancery for foreclosing the mortgage. Thus John Frederick, by a purely financial transaction, had considerably increased his holdings on the south side of Nevis. The Choppins' land seems to have been divided into two groups, of which the upper one adjoined the smaller property, which he already possessed at Cressey's, or Clay Ghut, and could be worked with it. During these transactions, he did his best to round off his estates in this part of the island, exchanging thirty acres of Choppins' land with a neighbour for a like quantity, so as to save stone walls, and buying a small parcel of land from one Huggins.' (A *West India Fortune* pp55-6)

⁸⁵ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to ?Browne, 9 August 1756

⁸⁶ At Choppins, no sugar was planted between 1753 and 1759 (Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p56).

⁸⁷ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p58

⁸⁸ According to Pares, John Frederick Pinney sent Thomas Wenham out some time in the fifties (A *West India Fortune* p58) but a reference to 'your serv't Thos. Wenham' in George Jones's account dated 15 August 1746 suggests that Wenham had been on the plantation much earlier (PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box). Pares appears to have based Wenham's arrival date on a letter from John Frederick Pinney in which he complained about the state of his sugars since Wilson left; he wanted his boilers told off (PP, LB 1: JF Pinney, Bath, to ?Browne, 27 October 1755). Wilson was either a boiler-slave, or a white boiling house watch.

⁸⁹ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p58 and PP, LB 1: JF Pinney, Bath, to ?Wenham, Nevis, 27 October 1755

⁹⁰ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to James Browne, [no day or month] 1755

⁹¹ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p58

family.⁹² But the arrangement did not last for long. After repeatedly reproaching him for his 'inactivity among the boilers', Pinney then threatened Wenham with dismissal and warned that 'unless I see and find an alteration in my sugars and in [your] conduct in that affair we must part.' There was no improvement and soon afterwards Pinney did part with him.⁹³ For a while James Browne took over again until he handed over to one of his sons, Joseph. This man, although island-born, was 'but little skilled in plantation business' and not only quickly lost six people and four steers⁹⁴ but also produced very little sugar.⁹⁵ But in one particular year, 1759, Browne was not alone in struggling with poor crops; every planter in Nevis suffered after a hurricane in the previous year had damaged the young plants.⁹⁶

In the latter half of the 1750s John Frederick Pinney built himself his own country residence, Pylmarsh (also Pillmarsh), situated less than two kilometres from Bettiscombe, but apparently he did not live there for long. At some stage he moved in with 'cousin' Azariah Pinney.⁹⁷ Azariah's wife had died a few years earlier and the childless widower and the bachelor seemed to have lived harmoniously, enjoying a close friendship until Azariah's death in 1760.⁹⁸ John Frederick inherited his estates.⁹⁹

Having served for fourteen years as a Member of Parliament, Pinney decided not to stand again for political office.¹⁰⁰ In the autumn of 1761, the year of the general election, he was well enough to ride about on horseback¹⁰¹ but increasingly the gout and gravel got to him. Attended by few servants,¹⁰² he lived quietly in the country and occasionally ventured to London.¹⁰³ He invited visitors to Bettiscombe, for instance the Helmes from Gillingham and an old acquaintance from Dorset, Revd John Coker.¹⁰⁴ One of the clergyman's sons, William, had recently gone out to Nevis to investigate the rumours that had so perturbed Pinney: that the Browne family were abusing his trust and mismanaging his properties. He accused them of leaving him as good as destitute - despite having at their disposal three good boiling houses, 140 people and a sufficient number of animals they produced little sugar. Pinney sang a tune familiar to generations of absentee West India proprietors: the exploitation they suffered at the hands of

⁹² PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to Browne, undated

⁹³ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p59

⁹⁴ PP, WI Box 3: Wm Coker to JF Pinney, 28 July 1761, sending his first list of 'Negroes, Mules & Cattle'.

⁹⁵ Pares stated that Browne 'had only 27 acres planted (66 had been planted the year before), and nearly all of it was 'poisoned with the vermin' (*A West India Fortune* p61). Blaming Browne for the vermin is rather unfair as this was the beginning of an island-wide infestation.

⁹⁶ PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic: Coleman & Lucas, London, to JF Pinney, 9 August 1759

⁹⁷ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p55

⁹⁸ Azariah Pinney died on 21 May 1760. He was in his 53rd year (PP, DM 1841/7).

⁹⁹ According to one document, the dying Azariah Pinney had second thoughts about his bequests and 'Mr George Warry, the lawyer from Chard, was sent for to remake the will but it was too late. Azariah Pinney died before his arrival.' The re-writing of the will appears to have concerned Bettiscombe, which John Frederick Pinney intended to purchase (PP, Misc Vols 36 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks). Bettiscombe was 'held by John Frederick Pinney under George Browne by lease for life'. On 11 August 1762, for instance, he signed a receipt for £20, three years rent for tenements in Bettiscombe. The purchase did not materialise; a feud with the landowner, George Browne, got in the way. Having complained that the house and other buildings at Bettiscombe were all 'very much out of repair', John Frederick Pinney stubbornly quarrelled over a tree that had been felled illegally. Browne took him to court and Pinney lost the case (Cat 3 Dom Box 1763-1793: 'JF Pinney to John Russell, 1 May 1761 and Receipt from John Russell to John Frederick Pinney').

According to Pares, the house at Bettiscombe appears to have dated from the last quarter of the seventeenth century. John Pinney, the preacher, lived there, then his son and grandson and was at Pares's time one of the homes of the Pinneys. Azariah Pinney left Bettiscombe to John Frederick Pinney. JPP gave Bettiscombe and Harlescombe as security for a mortgage of £1,000 to George Warry and paid off the debt with the plantation surpluses gained between 1769 and 1778 (*A West India Fortune* p4, p55, pp80-1 and p87).

¹⁰⁰ Namier, Sir Lewis *The House of Commons 1754-1790* Vol 3

¹⁰¹ PP, Dom Cat 2 Summary: John Pretor (Pinney), London, to John Frederick Pinney, 13 October 1761

¹⁰² John Frederick Pinney suffered the usual turnover of staff. Dorothy Hembury, for instance, started work in December 1760 but left in March the following year. That month he employed a new groom, John Harris, who fell ill and died very soon afterwards (PP, AB 6). After Azariah Pinney's death John Frederick had taken over one servant, Betty Churchill, but she got married and presumably left his service. Her husband, a penniless soldier who had been abroad for seven years, appears to have been in the clothing business (LB 3: JPP to William Coker, 22 November 1763).

¹⁰³ PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic: Edward Jesup, Writtle Park, to JF Pinney, 24 July 1761

¹⁰⁴ PP, LB 3: JF Pinney to William Coker, Nevis, 19 November 1761

the men to whom they entrusted their overseas possessions. An added ingredient in Pinney's case was that he and James Browne were of the same class. He believed that a man lower down the social scale would have applied himself with more honesty and industry. In addition, Pinney distinguished between Europeans and island-born men, and while denying his own Creole birth and passing himself off as an Englishman, he warned a correspondent: 'From hence learn to be ware (sic) of a gentleman manager. Fancy the gentlemen Creoles think that the Europeans like Russia bears can live upon the sucking of their paws ...'¹⁰⁵

John Frederick Pinney charged the man who had been dispatched to Nevis, William Coker, with sorting out the Mountravers plantation in St Thomas Lowland and also Cressey's and Choppin's lands on the other side of the island. These Gingerland properties had been unprofitable for some time and Pinney, torn between renting out the land, settling it himself and selling it, discussed the options with Edward Jesup. His former neighbour from Nevis was proof just how useful the West India network was. He counselled Pinney on what to do with Cressey's and Choppin's and also recommended to him a new, reliable overseer and another man who could replace the old attorney in Nevis. Jesup understood what kind of qualities were required and thought that 'No better person could be fixed upon to join Mr Coker there than his good friend Aeneas Shaw.'¹⁰⁶

As well as keeping track of his West Indian interests, John Frederick Pinney had to attend to his relatives and their domestic affairs. In his role as Azariah's executor he was responsible for disbursing the money his great aunt Hester Pinney had left. One of the recipients was Jane Phelps, a kinswoman in Bristol.¹⁰⁷ Another kinswoman, the wayward Alicia Clarke, who had eloped with Michael Pretor, had died in the late 1750s. Mrs Pretor had outlived her husband and also her first-born son, but before his death, her husband had appointed Azariah Pinney as guardian,¹⁰⁸ and John Frederick, who had lost his own father when he was a baby, took on the responsibility of guiding Alicia's surviving son, John, through his late teens and into early adulthood. As John Pretor was not yet of age, John Frederick Pinney managed the property that John's mother had left to her son.¹⁰⁹ John Frederick appears to have told him that he planned to make him his heir and his charge rewarded him with effusive letters. John Pretor's gratitude was unrestrained:

If my poor capacity and weakness of mind is not able to express words enough to so worthy a patron I hope your goodness will forgive me ... I will ever up to my deathbed acknowledge the favour you have been pleased to confer upon me ¹¹⁰

and

¹⁰⁵ PP, Cat 3 Dom Box 1756-1762: 'Copy of Note sent to Mr Daniel at Beaminster'

¹⁰⁶ PP, WI Cat 3 Index III.ii Domestic: Edward Jesup to JF Pinney, 24 July 1761

¹⁰⁷ In January 1762 his 'most affectionate kinswoman' Jane Phelps wrote from Bristol to John Frederick Pinney about not having received her quarter's payment. In her mind she was expecting the fruits of her aunt's lace-making business, but she was actually paid out of slave-produced income: At the end of March she received £7:10:0 from James Laroche, on John Frederick Pinney's behalf. The money came directly out of sugar profits from Nevis (PP, Cat 3 Dom Box 1756-1762). This case illustrates the way in which almost every citizen of Bristol, if not of Britain, was enmeshed in some way in the slave trade or in plantation slavery. Jane Phelps's payment also shows that, as so often, there were connections between apparently unconnected events: James Laroche, a prominent Bristol slave trader, in 1767 financed a slaving voyage of the *Juba*, and of the cargo from the *Juba*'s previous journey, nine slaves, most likely, had been bought at St Kitts for Mountravers. Clearly, it was not these nine people who produced John Frederick Pinney's very profits that paid Jane Phelps - the links here are removed in time and are also not entirely triangular, but they do illustrate the interconnectedness of the West India/Africa trades and of the people involved - even if, like Jane Phelps, they were at the very margins of the whole business and did not consider themselves implicated.

¹⁰⁸ Azariah Pinney was appointed guardian with Henry Holt Henley (PP, Misc Vols 48 Misc Notes). Henry Holt Henley, a Member of Parliament, died in May 1748.

¹⁰⁹ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p63

¹¹⁰ PP, LB 2: JPP to JF Pinney, 1 January 1761

Your generous free and untainted heart flows over with goodness and deliciously feeds me with its warmth and lays me under the greatest obligation ... I think myself highly honour'd to be under the care and direction of so worthy a gentleman.¹¹¹

Even by eighteenth century standards of polite discourse, the young man went beyond what was necessary to convey his appreciation but if the grovelling made John Frederick squirm, it did not stop him from appointing John Pretor his principal heir.

Still only in his early forties, John Frederick Pinney died on 11 November 1762.¹¹² He was buried in the Chancel at Wayford in the parish of Crewkerne in Somerset.¹¹³



'Inventory of the Negroes etc on the Estate of Mrs Mary Pinney Deceased'

Back to Nevis in 1734. After the estate descended from his mother to John Frederick, on 14 September James Browne junior compiled for the new owner an 'Inventory of the Negroes etc on the Estate of Mrs Mary Pinney Deceased'. In order not to miss off anyone, he could have asked a trusted headman to supply the names, or he lined up everybody in the yard - males and females separately. Browne recorded 'The Negroes found on the Estate at my Entrance' in a fluent hand, in neat columns, punctuating each entry with a decisive full stop. He noted down 63 males, 59 females and a group of 20 'Broom' people of both genders. These were probably kept separate because they were subject to a Chancery suit.¹¹⁴ Four children he listed as 'Born since my entrance thereon' and one woman, Susanna, as 'dead'.¹¹⁵

The 146 people Browne recorded represented a little over two per cent of Nevis's total slave population. Six years earlier Mary Pinney had owned only 112 men, women and children, and it is a testament to her good business sense that she had been able to increase the number.

Unfortunately the origin of most of the people cannot be established. Several documents suggest that many were not freshly landed Africans but that they had already lived in the island before they came to Mountravers, and that some were purchased outright from their owners, while others fell due in mortgages. A few people can be identified; they had survived until 1734 while others, like those three unnamed individuals whom John Frederick Pinney's father had bought in 1720 from Esther Pinheira, may, or may not, have been alive by the time Browne began managing the plantation.¹¹⁶ The same is true of four men and three women who in 1723 were awarded to Pinney's mother in a judgment against William Scarborough.¹¹⁷ There certainly had been others who in 1734 no longer lived on Mountravers: **Rolie**, mentioned in an account as having received some medical treatment, and **Addo**, who had been administered a bolus.¹¹⁸

¹¹¹ PP, LB 2: JPP to JF Pinney, 14 April 1761

¹¹² Pares, R *A West India Fortune* p55 and PP, Cat II.1755- Dom III.ii – Index

¹¹³ PP, AB 16 John Frederick Pinney a/c

¹¹⁴ PP, DM 1841/7

In total, including the Broom people, there were 75 males and 70 females and two of unknown gender: Orange and Cancoo.

¹¹⁵ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box

¹¹⁶ PP, WI Box B

¹¹⁷ PP, WI Box C: 'Judgment by Mary Pinney against William Scarborough, 26 November 1723'

¹¹⁸ Dr Latoysonere treated people on Mountravers during Mary Pinney's time (PP, Misc Vols 41 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks Vol 6).

A proportion of the people who in 1734 lived on Mountravers would have originally belonged to Lady Bawden's plantation before Mary Pinney's father-in-law and Richard Meriweather divided it. Unfortunately it cannot be established who the Bawden people were and how many of the fifty allocated to Azariah Pinney in 1718 did survive, at least, until 1734.

Naming enslaved people

One indication that people were likely to have had different pre-owners may be the fact that several individuals shared the same names. For instance, there were five Cubbennas and five Sarahs, four Toms and four Jibbah/Gibbahs, and several more names appeared twice or three times. However, particularly if there was an age gap, sharing names may also be an indication that sons were named after their male and daughters after their female relatives. In total nine male and 14 female names were repeated at least twice. If these were indeed children named after their kin, this could possibly point towards a greater descent of names among females. That names were handed down the generations is certainly evident from the Broom people where one mother, daughter and granddaughter all carried the same name.

Most of the people recorded by Browne had names that were in common usage in Britain. The list reads quite differently from the earlier ones drawn up on Proctor's and Charlot's, which contained many more that were unusual or foreign-sounding - although not necessarily African - names, such as Cedree, Codell, Stocka, Arra, Mullucca, etc. Not only did the spelling become less haphazard as the eighteenth century progressed but by 1734 the majority of people had Anglo-European names. About half of these were shortened pet forms, such as Jack instead of John, and Kitty instead of Catherine. Some may, possibly, have been anglicised versions of African names. In total, less than a third were recognisably African.

The origin of those people with African names is unclear. They may have been plantation-born or Africans bought directly from the slaving ships. Equally, they could have been acquired, already named, from other owners in Nevis or neighbouring islands. It is noticeable that in contrast to two other West Indian plantations, Worthy Park in Jamaica and the Codrington estate in Barbados, the number of people on Mountravers with African names was relatively low: on Worthy Park in 1730 about double the number had African compared to English names,¹¹⁹ while on the Codrington estate in 1741 it was about one and a half times as many.¹²⁰ Although the samples are too small to be truly representative, the lower occurrence of African names could be taken as an indication of an earlier and speedier creolisation on Mountravers than was happening on some other Caribbean plantations, such as Worthy Park and the Codrington estate.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ On Worthy Park, 62 per cent of the enslaved people had recognisably African names (Craton, M *Sinews of Empire* p216). This was very high when compared to other Jamaican estates. They were much more in line with Mountravers. Analysis of inventories taken in 1732 in Jamaica has shown that out of a total of 3,239 slaves 855 (26.4 per cent) had African names (Burnard, Trevor 'Slave Naming Patterns: Onomastics and the Taxonomy of Race in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Vol 31 No 3 (Winter 2001) p331).

¹²⁰ Codrington plantation, which was owned by the United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London, was unusual in that slaves were baptised much earlier than on other estates, and the calculation relates to a particular group of people - those who underwent baptism. In 1741, 71 out of 202 were baptised, and of those 71, nearly half (45%) had names which were 'readily identifiable as African ... even though most, if not all, of the baptized slaves were Creoles'. For Jamaica Michael Craton has concluded that conversion to Christianity probably influenced the Anglicisation of slave names' (Handler, Jerome S and JoAnn Jacoby 'Slave Names and Naming in Barbados' in *William and Mary Quarterly* p708 fn64 and p709, citing M Craton *Searching for the Invisible Man* pp157-58).

¹²¹ In this account names provide clues and are only ever used as broad pointers. A systematic analysis would require an in-depth linguistic and ethnographic study beyond the scope of this research.

Several people on Mountravers bore the names of towns and counties in England. This applied to eight males¹²² but only one female, Cundal (later spelt Kendall). On other estates in Nevis place names were the exclusive domain of males. This, and the fact that the spelling changed from Cundal to Kendall may suggest that this woman was originally not intended to have been named after the small town in northern England. Her name may have been connected with Governor James Kendall¹²³ but may also have had a different, possibly African, origin which was later lost.¹²⁴ It has to be remembered that giving people place names would not have been as insulting as it appears today because there is also an African tradition of using these, as well as special events, or aspects of people's personality.¹²⁵ Elsewhere in the Caribbean names such as 'Love, Braveboy, Patient, Hopeful, Poorman, Fairplay, Hardtime, and Badluck' were in use¹²⁶ but on Mountravers, and indeed in Nevis, this type of name appeared only rarely.

When bestowing place names, those who named enslaved people opted for particular locations to which they were connected (certainly John Pretor Pinney later continued this tradition). They generally chose places in the southern parts of England. Northern cities and counties, as well as Welsh (Pembroke), Scottish (Glasgow, Aberdeen) and Irish (Limerick), were far less common - not only on Mountravers but in Nevis generally. This was a reflection of the sort of links the white inhabitants had with the different parts of the British Isles. Some of the place names, however, may also have been those of military and political leaders who were particularly admired, or detested, such as the dukes and earls of York, Essex, and Pembroke. One of the earls of Essex, for instance, led the Parliamentarian army during the English Civil War at the first major engagement during that war and planters with particular allegiances may have wanted to remember his name.

Some of the names on Mountravers were borrowed from Greek mythology or Roman history. Relatively few of these classical names occurred - eight in 1734¹²⁷ and later at any one time no more than a dozen - while in St Croix a planter found that *most* names were 'heathen, such as Catto, Diana, and Jupiter.'¹²⁸ Although he may have exaggerated, this man certainly found it worth mentioning. In England, the commonest of the classical names, Pompey, was by the 1750s said to have been virtually synonymous with a black servant.¹²⁹

Much has been written about what motivated owners to give classical names to their people: that they were to inspire them to emulate their namesakes, or to remind them how far removed they were from their greatness,¹³⁰ or that it was a way of showing off one's classical learning and that it was readily copied by

¹²² The men were named after five southern English towns and counties (Bristol, Cambridge, Dorset, London, Wiltshire), one northern English town (York), one Irish (Limerick), and one man was called Nevis.

¹²³ Yorke, PC (ed) *The Diary of John Baker* p164 and p206 and Sir Alan Burns *History of the British West Indies* p395

¹²⁴ In his analysis of Jamaican slave lists, Trevor Burnard also found that no females were named after a place ('Slave Naming Patterns' p336).

¹²⁵ Handler, Jerome S and JoAnn Jacoby 'Slave Names and Naming in Barbados, 1650-1830' pp689-91 and p708, citing Akinnaso *Yoruba Traditional Names*; Bascoom *Yoruba of Southwestern Nigeria*, 55-6; Forde *Yoruba-Speaking Peoples*, 27; Herskovits *Myth of the Negro Past*, 191; Jones *German Sources*, 88; Mbiti *African Religions*, 154; Thornton *Central African Names and African-American Naming Patterns*; 727-8; 741; Uchendu *Igbo of Southeast Nigeria*, 60; cf. Baird and Twining *Names and Naming in the Sea Islands* (no page).

¹²⁶ Burnard, Trevor 'Slave Naming Patterns' p336, citing M Craton *Searching for the Invisible Man* p157 and Handler and Jacoby 'Slaves Names and Naming in Barbados' p691

¹²⁷ Those with classical names were Achilles, Mercury, Primus, Scipio, Cato, Hannible, Venus and Sappho

¹²⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p13

¹²⁹ Fryer, Peter *Staying Power* p24

¹³⁰ In his article 'Looking for Caesar', Anthony Adolph wrote that black people were given classical names 'either (positively) to inspire them to emulate their great namesakes or (negatively) to remind them how far removed from such greatness they themselves were' (*BASA Newsletter* No 37 (Sept 2003) p6). However, given that black people generally would neither have been familiar with Roman gods and politicians or Greek mythology, the choice of names says more about the people who selected them. Vincent Carretta's argument in his notes to Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* is similar but more convincing: 'Slaves were often given ironically inappropriate names of powerful historical figures like Caesar and Pompey to emphasize their subjugation to their masters' will' (*The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings/Olaudah Equiano* p252).

those less educated, or those not educated at all.¹³¹ However, at that time many ships, too, were named after classical figures – Mercury, Hector, Hercules -¹³² and herein may lay the pointer to a slightly different interpretation. First of all, some Africans may have been named after the ship which had transported them to the Caribbean, and secondly, giving one's enslaved person the name of a Greek god or a Roman emperor may simply have been an expression of the contemporary obsession with all things classical. Between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries a new cultural movement, the Renaissance, had revived and developed an admiration for certain elements of classical Greek and Roman thought and material culture, and the advent of plantation slavery, therefore, occurred at a time when the cultured classes very much admired the greatness of Greek and Roman civilisations. This found its expression primarily in architecture but also in literature and the visual arts, and naming one's human possessions according to these ideals would just have been another means of partaking in this rich, cultured and modern world. Both Greek and Roman civilisations had not questioned slavery – to the contrary, in both cultures slaves were integral members of society – and it is unsurprising that slaveholders identified with the classical worlds.

Classical names were revived in contemporary literature, and it is therefore likely that the names were not taken directly from their original sources, such as the Greek tragedies, but passed into circulation through popular arts. Characters like Achilles and Cato, for instance, reached wide audiences through Shakespeare's plays *Troilus and Cressida* and *Julius Caesar*. Joseph Addison's tragedy *Cato*, produced in 1713 (and performed in St Kitts in the 1750s),¹³³ reinforced in popular memory the names of the Roman republican Cato and of the dictator Caesar - another very common name for enslaved men. Many more – and not just classical - names can be traced back to Shakespeare's plays. On Mountravers there certainly is evidence that the title characters of two popular works of fiction inspired the naming of several people: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko* and Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*. In the seventeenth century the names of some individuals who had lived on Proctor's and Charlot's appear to have been derived directly from literature (Tamberlaine, and probably Phillada and Ppendar), and at this point in time, in 1734, another person may have been named after a popular fictional character: Tom Punch.

The transferred use of British place names and the naming after classical and literary figures must be seen as evidence that purchased individuals were given names by their owners and the plantation managers. This is confirmed by a writer from the Danish West Indies who observed that 'Usually, a newly acquired slave is given a new name by his master.'¹³⁴ Evidence from St Kitts and from Jamaica supports this,¹³⁵ as does evidence from the time of John Pretor Pinney's ownership. It shows that he, then the resident owner, not only named the Africans he purchased but, in the early days, also some of the plantation-born children. One of his managers named his own slave-born children, and white fathers may generally have chosen their own offspring's names. The Young Squire Christopher Jeaffreson, for instance, appears to have done so when, on his way back to England, he wrote to his manager 'If Nanny's child be living, let it be called Valet ...'¹³⁶ Nanny may well have been expecting his child. On Mountravers, John Pretor Pinney (JPP) only 'provisionally named' the daughter of a white plantation employee, giving the father the option to rename her.

¹³¹ Reed, Michael *The Georgian Triumph* p189

¹³² Common classical names used for ships were *Mercury* and *Diana* (they made 57 voyages each), *Hector* (45 voyages), *Cato* (20), *Hercules* (12), *Baccus* (11), *Scipio/Scipion* (10), *Achilles* (9), *Pallas* (8), *Pompey* (7), and *Caesar* (4 voyages). Mercury, the Roman god of trade and merchants, seems particularly apt.

In the context of Royal Navy's ships with classical names, Kathleen Chater pointed out that to call a ship by 'a name regarded as derisory would be unthinkable now and even more so in the eighteenth century' – particularly as among the white population in Britain classical names could also be found (*Untold Histories* pp184-85).

¹³³ Yorke, Philip Chesney (ed) *The Diary of John Baker* p85

¹³⁴ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p71

¹³⁵ Harvard Stapleton MSS: Memo by Sir Wm Stapleton, July 1731, and Trevor Burnard 'Slave Naming Patterns' pp328-29

¹³⁶ Jeaffreson, John Cordy (ed) *A Young Squire* Vol 1 p286 Christopher Jeaffreson to Ensign Thorn, 30 August 1682

From another original source comes the notion that naming a newly purchased person was a privilege. One absentee planter wrote to his attorney in Nevis that he wished 'to have the liberty' to name two of the African children his attorney was about to buy for that man's plantation. He wanted a boy called John Wilkes and a girl Mrs Maccauly. It was 'a whim' he begged 'to be indulged in.' His request seems odd; after all, he was the owner, the children were to live on his plantation and he could call them whatever he wanted – even if the names he chose were ridiculous, or demeaning.¹³⁷ But implied in his request may be the notion that, as an absentee, he no longer had an automatic right to name his people. This was now done by those on the spot and, in the politest possible way, this owner asked for his right to be returned to him. Naming enslaved people may, therefore, also have been a favour that an owner could bestow on others. Planters' friends and other family members, and perhaps also enslaved people, consequently had a share in naming newcomers. It was a dispensation which slaveholders could grant, and this raises the possibility that trusted individuals may have been rewarded with the honour of choosing names for newcomers. The survival of plantation slavery relied on coercion through the granting of a range of small favours, and this was one favour masters and mistresses could grant easily. It did not cost them anything and they did not lose anything. Herein may also lie the answer as to why names frequently recurred in plantation communities: enslaved people chose to name newcomers after elders and other well-respected people, regardless of practicality or convenience. However, managers themselves also appear to have bestowed the same names several times over: to avoid confusion, one absentee asked that his manager refrained from giving any newly-born or bought children 'the names of such as are already on the plantation.'¹³⁸

Another factor to consider is that there may have been differences between the elite - the domestics and the skilled people – and the majority, the field workers. In the Danish West Indies one writer stated that some of the domestics named their children in a ceremony beside a river or a well.¹³⁹ Here the parents evidently had the power to choose and, as can be seen from the later chapters, to some extent this appears to have been the case on Mountravers, too. And those parents chose mostly non-African names. Giving their children English names may have endowed them with a certain prestige, a way of showing that they, too, were part of the successful, powerful, white world. This even extended to radical individuals who fought their enslavement, such as Qvau alias Sam Hector, one of the leaders of the 1759 rebellion in St Croix.¹⁴⁰ Today, for many descendants of enslaved Africans it is an unpalatable thought that some of their ancestors may have aspired to actively partake in this awful construct, plantation slavery, but as the

¹³⁷ Thoms, DW *West India Merchants and Planters* Letter 458 John Mills Junior, London, to JR Herbert, nd 1769 Both John Wilkes (1725-1792) and Mrs Catherine Macauly (1731-1791) were notorious figures. He was a radical politician who in 1763 faced parliamentary charges of libel and blasphemy for criticising a speech by George III and for publishing *An Essay on Woman*. Wilkes went to France, failed to return for trial but came back in 1768. Convicted on old charges, he was imprisoned for several months. It is likely that when John Mills wrote the letter, John Wilkes had just been expelled from Parliament for the second time. He left prison in late 1769 and campaigned for political reform. Working- and middle-class people hailed him as a defender of free speech.

Earlier, in March 1758, John Wilkes had used his influence at the Admiralty to procure the release of Dr Johnson's black servant who was serving in the Navy. Two versions exist as to how he got there, that he had been press-ganged (Thomas, Peter DG 'John Wilkes' (1725-1797) in *Oxford DNB*), or that he had ran away to sea but then regretted having done so (Hibbert, Christopher *George III, a Personal History* pp117-18).

'Wayward, headstrong' in her youth, Mrs Macauly published the first volume of her *History of England* in 1763 and thereby became first British woman historian at a time when women of her class were confined to home and family. Rank and station in life were then considered part of the accepted social order and divinely ordained, but she believed in the equality of man. A leveller' or republican, she was seen as radical, and by naming the children after her and the controversial John Wilkes, John Mills was having a joke at the expense of those he wanted named thus.

¹³⁸ Harvard Stapleton MSS: Memo by Sir Wm Stapleton, July 1731

¹³⁹ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p13

¹⁴⁰ The Judge who presided over the trial of Qvau alias Sam Hector stated that the man was literate, possessed 'a good deal of native ability' and "'higher sentiments" than are ordinarily found in a negro', as well as 'an ambition that led him – as he has himself said and other negroes in the plot testified – to be ashamed to associate with others of his own color.' (Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p55)

acquiring of enslaved people by freed men and women shows, it was the case that some did. If looked at another way, it meant that they were ambitious and dynamic achievers who strove to move beyond their enslavement. They sought to construct for themselves a new, modern world view which could include shunning African names.

In African cultures names carry great meaning. They can have mystical powers and strengthen or weaken a person's body and mind. This view survived on the plantations. For instance Gregory Lewis recorded how his people requested new names for their children who had ill-omened names, and Thomas Thistlewood noted how sick people acquired additional names: friends and relatives bestowed on them totally hideous names in the hope that God Almighty would be deterred "from taking them, as they have such an ugly name."¹⁴¹ It was, therefore, possible for people to have several names throughout their lifetime. Another way to acquire a new name was to be given one by a new owner, as happened to Olaudah Equiano. Altogether he held four different names and, in his own words, at first, he rejected the one assigned to him by a new master. Re-naming a person against their will is a means of exerting one's power but West Indian slaveholders were not alone in this: employers in eighteenth century France, for instance, also changed their servants' names.¹⁴² Not everyone accepted this imposition. When Equiano was to be called Gustavus Vassa, after a Swedish king, he tried to regain control by not responding to the new name. The issue became a power struggle:

I at that time began to understand him a little, and refused to be called so, and told him as well as I could that I would be called Jacob; but he said I should not, and still called me Gustavus; and when I refused to answer to my name, which I at first did, it gained me many a cuff; so at length I submitted, and by which I have been known ever since.¹⁴³

In 1734, none of the names in use on Mountravers were overtly derogatory. Reading the list, the African names are reminders where people came from, while the diminutives convey a sense of friendliness, even cosiness, and the smattering of classical names injects an element of sophistication. One historian has argued that planters stripped people of their African identity by giving them 'ludicrous and demeaning classical names';¹⁴⁴ a nineteenth century writer believed that colonists giving people 'ridiculous names' was 'one of the numberless modes of expressing the habitual contempt with which they regard the negro race.'¹⁴⁵ One could add that calling adults by pet names expressed a non-existent and belittling familiarity. But these are only minor points. The main issue is that, as long as people were involuntarily re-named and they accepted their new monikers, then they lost one aspect of their identity. Neither the processes

¹⁴¹ Burnard, Trevor 'Slave Naming Patterns' p330 and p329

¹⁴² Hill, Bridget *Servants - English Domesticity in the Eighteenth Century* p112

¹⁴³ *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings/Olaudah Equiano* p64 and p252 fn129

Gustav Vasa, a Swedish nobleman, led his people in a revolt against Danish rule and as Gustav I Vasa went on to govern liberated Sweden until his death in 1560. In Britain, his name became synonymous with political freedom through the play by the Irish author Henry Brooke, *Gustavus Vasa, The Deliverer of his Country*. Recognised as 'transparently anti-Walpole', in 1738 the government of Sir Robert Walpole prohibited it from being staged. However, the play reached a wide British audience when it was subsequently published in 1739 and republished in 1761, 1778, 1796 and 1797. Having been staged in Dublin in 1742 under the title *The Patriot*, it was finally staged in London in 1805. Undoubtedly, Brooke's Gustavus Vasa was the inspiration for Olaudah Equiano's new master choosing the name of Gustavus Vassa.

Initially Equiano rejected the name Gustavus Vassa, but when it lay in his power to change his slave-given name, he did not do so. Throughout his life he retained the name Gustavus Vassa – publicly and privately. By retaining the name, he was aligning himself with the sentiments expressed in Brooke's play. Brooke's title hero had been a freedom fighter, just like he was fighting for the freedom of his people, the enslaved Africans. He probably recognised a kindred spirit in Gustav Vasa.

Although the name Olaudah Equiano only ever appeared once, on the title page to his *Interesting Narrative*, today he is generally known by that name, and it has therefore been used in this book.

¹⁴⁴ Bush, Barbara *Slave Women in Caribbean Society 1650-1838* p52

¹⁴⁵ Salih, Sara (ed) *The History of Mary Prince* Penguin, London 2000 p20, quoted in Dominique, Lyndon Jansen (ed) *The Woman of Colour* Broadview Editions 2008 p34

by which this happened, nor the names they acquired, are important. The mere fact that they *were* re-named was intended to remove part of their self. Any name that was imposed on them was a means of exerting control over them. Masters had assumed the right to re-name people and if they, indeed, rewarded favoured individuals by passing this right to them, then they, too, became implicated in the process. It became another instrument with which whites could divide and rule.

None of this, of course, precludes the possibility that among family and friends entirely different names were used. Thistlewood, for instance, stated several times that he named his people but elsewhere, in his inventories, he also recorded their “country names”. Among them were three people who had been named Coobah, Maria, and Pompey but they were actually called Molia, Owaria and Abusse.¹⁴⁶ In addition, everyone may, of course, have had private names. People probably were known by a variety of family pet names, or the kind of witty, subversive and generally good-humoured nicknames that are common in the Caribbean and in the Caribbean diaspora. Having these private names satisfied people’s desire for individuality and placed them outside the system of slavery; they could retreat into a sphere only friends and family could access. It would have been one freedom they could easily and lastingly wrest from their masters. By choosing names for themselves, enslaved people could actively reclaim their identity and thereby re-establish themselves as whole human beings.

To sum up, the question as to who exactly named the enslaved people on Mountravers cannot be settled conclusively because it is possible that owners transferred to others their assumed right to name their people. It is clear, though, that the overwhelming majority of the imported Africans were re-named. Plantation-born children may have been named by managers, other enslaved people, possibly even their own parents or relatives but enslaved people would also have used their own names and created names by which they became known. In addition to an official name, each individual may well have held one or more private names.¹⁴⁷



Inventory of ‘Mrs Mary Pinney Deceased’ ... continued

Having listed the people, in a separate row James Browne recorded the equipment he found on Mountravers. This did not amount to much: a horse cart, two saddles, two still worms, five copper coolers, five skimmers, a pair of still heads, three canoes, a sledge, a set of hammers, an old shovel, a pair of old wheels, and five pieces of cranks. Finally he added the animals: one horse, eighteen mules, twelve horned cattle, and ninety sheep.¹⁴⁸ This small number of animals highlights one of the differences between plantations in Nevis and in Jamaica. There, the raising of animals was on a much bigger scale. Worthy Park, for instance, was inhabited by only about one and a half times as many people as there were Mountravers but had almost fifteen times as many cattle and five times as many mules, as well as ‘numerous hogs and sheep’ and 17 horses compared to the one ‘old milling horse’ that trudged around Mountravers.¹⁴⁹ Jamaican estates were larger and the distances greater, and while animals were more

¹⁴⁶ Burnard, Trevor ‘Slave Naming Patterns’ p329

¹⁴⁷ A correspondent of a Caribbean discussion group contributed a very interesting point which underpins the argument that people would have had more than one name. John Weiss, who is researching the Merikens of the Company Villages in Trinidad (<http://www.mcnishandweiss.co.uk/history/colonialmarines.html>), has stated that ‘there are historical accounts of a belief in Trinidad that someone who knows your true name is able to do you harm’. He cited the example of a family in which all members of the older generation have baptismal names and also second names. These second names are not nicknames; in fact they are no shorter and no less formal than the baptismal names. According to Weiss, the notion that knowing a person’s name can result in hurt is not confined to Africa but is found in many cultures around the world (Subject: Names in Trinidad, contribution to the caribbean-studies@jiscmail.ac.uk discussion group by John Weiss, 20 June 2009, and subsequent correspondence).

¹⁴⁸ PP, WI ‘Damaged or Fragile’ Box 2

¹⁴⁹ Craton, M *Searching for the Invisible Man* p14

efficient burden carriers than humans - thereby sparing people from having to move back-breaking loads - maintaining a large number of animals brought other advantages. The animals produced more manure for fertilising the crops, and raising and looking after them afforded the young and those in broken health relatively light and independent work. And in times of food shortages animals could be killed for food.

Of the adults on Browne's list, Molly lived the longest. She died between 1794 and 1801 while one of the children, the baby Lucy, survived until well into the next century. By the time her life ended in December 1822, she had served under countless managers and overseers and had even outlived some of the owners.

The next inventory on record was taken in July 1761. In the intervening years adults like Old Harry and Mary, who were then still usefully employed, would each have completed around 100,000 hours of unpaid plantation labour.

Notes on the biographies

The ages of these people were estimated, based on their position on the 1734 list, cross-referenced with ages roughly estimated from mortgages or bills of sale and purchase prices, or values. For a fuller explanation, please see 'The Resources and the Processes' in Appendix 1.

The names are as they appeared on the 1734 list, followed by additional versions from other documents.

Several people of the same name did not have additional names to distinguish them from one another, except for those with the prefix 'Old'. It is suggested that these were generally parents or grandparents of plantation-born children of the same name. While many relationships can only be speculated on, at least one father and son were known to have been distinguished from one another by the prefixes 'Great' and 'Little', and three generations of women by 'Old' and 'Little'.

It is assumed that most of those who were not listed in 1761 had died, although some, of course, may have managed to escape while a few may have been sold into exile. This cannot be verified because so far no account books or slave lists for the period 1734 to 1761 have been found.

During the period 1 May 1766 to 10 July 1768 some of the plantation folk were moved to the Gingerland estates to work there and only those who were transferred are identified. The others remained on Mountravers.

When it is stated that a woman had a certain number of children, this in fact means that she was known to have had this number of children because they survived and were included in the next slave inventory. It does not take into account any additional, unrecorded children who died before the next list was compiled.

Continuous lines in the family trees indicate relationships that are confirmed by documentary evidence, broken lines where there is very strong circumstantial evidence that cannot be corroborated by the records, and dotted lines where relationships are speculated on, using a process of deduction, or drawing on evidence from other sources.

Information gathered from the slave lists in the Pinney Papers is not referenced. The lists and other material that has been used can be found in the bibliography, as well as the abbreviations for the sources.

The biographies follow the same order as the slave inventories.

BIOGRAPHIES

1 Dick was born probably in the 1670s and the oldest man on the plantation. He died before July 1761.

2 Andrew. As a young man, Andrew may have been bought for Mary Helme's Mountain Plantation some time between June 1701 and September 1703. At that time people from the Mountain estate also worked on Proctor's, which Azariah Pinney was renting from Mary Helme, and, along with other Proctor people, Andrew may have been treated by a medical man called William Semple. On 27 December 1703 Semple noted that he had fluxed Andrew and also cured an ulcer in his leg. For his services Semple charged N£3:10:0 (worth about S£450 in 2016).¹⁵⁰

Another Andrew, a boy born about 1743/4, perhaps was the son or grandson of this man.

Andrew died before July 1761.

3 Apung's name suggests a Gold Coast origin: Opong, or Opon, is a Fanti and Twi personal name,¹⁵¹ and among the Ga people who inhabit the area around Accra, Abong it is a name for a third child born after twins.¹⁵²

Said to have been 'very old', Apung died on 8 October 1764. He may well have been in his late eighties or nineties.

4 Bristol, also Bristoll, was probably born in the 1670s.

The city, after whom he was named, was for some time the most important English slaving port. In Nevis, many males bore the name Bristol (but not Liverpool, to which Bristol lost its leading position), and Bristol Street in Charlestown reminded everyone of the island's close connections with the city. Today, the name occurs as a family name in St Kitts.

Given that this man had such a common name, it is difficult to trace him. He may have been purchased for Charlot's; a man called Bristol arrived on Charlot's some time after October 1701 and in February

¹⁵⁰ PP, WI Box A: Will Semple's Medical Account 1703/4

¹⁵¹ Pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999

¹⁵² Stewart, Julia *1001 African Names* p157

1705 was treated for a putrid ulcer.¹⁵³ Equally well he could also have lived on Lady Bawden's plantation until Meriweather and Pinney divided up its inhabitants. Another possibility is that Bristol had formerly belonged to either Captain John Isaacs, or to Major William Child. If Captain Isaacs was his previous owner, then Bristol was mortgaged by him as an adult, together with Cuggah (No 18). If his previous owner was indeed Major Child, then he was mortgaged with nine others, either by the major, or by his widow.

Formerly a neighbour of William Freeman's,¹⁵⁴ Major Child had been shot dead by the French during the 1706 invasion.¹⁵⁵ In the following year, his widow was in possession of 25 people¹⁵⁶ and ten of these, a mixture of men, women, boys and girls, were given to Azariah Pinney as security for a mortgage. Times were hard in the years after the French invasion and Elizabeth Child fell behind with repaying the loan. In August 1711 Pinney took her to court and judgment was passed against Major Child's widow and children. They owed nearly N£200. However, the people who had been given as security did not come into Pinney's possession until February 1714. They were Bristoll, Jemmey, Engla, black Betty, Bess, Nanney, Christmas, Bass, Cuffee and Hannah.¹⁵⁷ By September 1734, of this group Hannah (No 79) and possibly Nanny (No 87), were still on Mountravers, and it seems reasonable to assume that the others had died in the intervening years. Bristol died before July 1761.

5 Old Quaw was perhaps born in the 1670s or 1680s. He died before July 1761.

6 Sluby was perhaps born in the 1670s or 1680s. He died before July 1761.

7 Clash was perhaps born in the 1670s or 1680s. He died before July 1761.

8 Achilles was perhaps born in the 1680s. He was one of only four people with classical names who lived on Mountravers in 1734.

Achilles died before July 1761.

9 Peter, also Peeter, was probably born in the 1680s and bought for Charlot's some time between October 1701 and November 1703. It may have been him who was treated by William Semple on 9 November 1703. Healing 'sundry sores in Peeters Legs' cost N£1:16:0.¹⁵⁸

Peter died before July 1761.

¹⁵³ PP, WI Box B: Medical Expense a/c December 1704-May 1706

¹⁵⁴ ECSCRN, CR 1707-1728 c. f61

¹⁵⁵ NHCS, MG 2.6 Mrs Stanley's Account of the French Invasion dated 16 April 1706

¹⁵⁶ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 pp173-79

¹⁵⁷ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2, and WI Box B, filed under 1715

¹⁵⁸ PP, WI Box A, filed under 1704: Will Semple's Medical Account

10 Quashey may have been born in the 1680s. He died before July 1761. It is possible that Quashee (b c. 1743/4) was his son.

His name suggests that he may have originated from the Gold Coast, where Kwasi, or Quarshie, is the name for a boy born on a Sunday.¹⁵⁹ However, as Trevor Burnard stated: 'An African name *per se* is not an indicator of whether a slave was African or Creole.'¹⁶⁰

11 Harry, later Old Harry. His grandson may have been Little Harry (No 237). The boy died in 1765 at the age of three years.

Although 'Old Harry' was 'very old' and 'infirm', in the 1760s he still worked as a distiller. He also bought, and most likely re-sold, the product of his own labour: six jugs of rum in 1764,¹⁶¹ 20 in the second half of 1765 and double that amount in the following twelve months. Having purchased 27 jugs of rum in 1768, his last consignment of seven jugs was accounted for on 8 January 1769. Each jug cost him N10s3d, which was about equal to the price of a pig.¹⁶² Running his own enterprise would have given him not only an independent income but also a sense of responsibility and perhaps even satisfaction. He may well have been in business with Old Broom's Sarah.¹⁶³

As a distiller Old Harry held an important job. It was said that 'The distillery on an estate, is an object of great consequence.'¹⁶⁴ But rum was only a by-product. The distillers used the molasses which had drained from the resting hogsheads, the skimmings from boiling the cane juice, and even rotten cane juice. Nonetheless, rum formed an important part of the income because if the rum was sold in the island, a plantation could defray its local expenses from the proceeds.

Harry bought rum from the plantation and also supplied JPP with various provisions. On 13 December 1765 he sold 'corn for sick negroes' worth N3s9d, on 25 June 1766 fish worth N1s6d and on 3 August 1766 N7s worth of pork.¹⁶⁵ In 1766 JPP seems to have bought from him several animals which he intended to give to Dorinda (No 271), and also reimbursed and rewarded Harry for some unspecified services. JPP recorded this in the account as 'paid him N9s, gave him N1s6d'.¹⁶⁶

At first, there were three distillers on Mountravers but one of them, London (No 32), died. The other, Cato (No 56), was still fit enough to also work in the field.

Old Harry died on 18 October 1770. He probably was in his eighties.

12 Quomina, born perhaps in the 1690s, died before July 1761.

The name, given to a boy born on a Saturday, suggests he might have been an enslaved man from the Gold Coast. Quomina (b c ?1734-40) could have been his son.

¹⁵⁹ The name has various spellings: it is Kwasi among Ashanti and Akim, Kwesi in Fanti, and Quashie in Jamaica (Hart, Richard *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* Vol 2 Table 1 p11 and Muñoz, Sharon *The Afro-American Griot Speaks* p34), and also Quarshie among the Ewe and Ga (Pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999).

¹⁶⁰ Burnard, Trevor 'Slave Naming Patterns' p331

¹⁶¹ PP, AB 18 William Coker's a/c 1764

¹⁶² PP, AB 17 Cash a/c

¹⁶³ PP, AB 18 1764 William Coker's a/c

¹⁶⁴ Caines, Clement *Letters on the Cultivation of the Otaheite Cane* p110

¹⁶⁵ PP, AB 17 Cash a/c

¹⁶⁶ PP, AB 17: 15 January 1766 and 21 September 1766

13 Long Will may have been born in the 1690s. It is possible that Azariah Pinney acquired him in April 1712 at a Marshall's Sale in a judgment for a debt against Peter Bowdon 'in right of his wife Tena'. Ten others were included: two boys, Tom Jericco and Oronoqua, and Celia, Pawpa Mary, Madam, Nanney, Long John, Toby, Paul, and Susanah. None of the others survived until 1734.

Three of these ten (Toby, Paul, and Susanah) were in 1712 worth N£170. They had previously belonged to a woman called Anne White. She had died and Mrs Bowdon was acting as her executrix. But Mrs Bowdon was in debt, and Mr Wignall, the Deputy Provost Marshall, issued a writ of execution. He seized her people and imprisoned them for a fortnight. They were then sold at auction to Azariah Pinney.

The cost of keeping the people in jail, N1s3d per day, fell to the buyer, as well as other accompanying expenses. The sums were considerable: three executions, three publications and the imprisonment came to N£9:12:6; delivering possession of the prisoners cost N11s and the Marshall's Bill of Sale another N£2:10:0. Three men duly witnessed the document: Isaac Lobatto, William Peterson and John Peterson.¹⁶⁷

Long Will died before July 1761.

14 Ibinny, perhaps born in the 1690s, died before July 1761.

15 Johney, later Johnno and Old Johnny. Although said to have been 'old', in the mid-1760s he was still in post as a cattle keeper. On some plantations it was the sick and frail, or the old who looked after livestock¹⁶⁸ but Johnno may have worked with animals since childhood. Sylvester Hovey, who toured the West Indies in the 1830s, noted that children watched over cattle and drove mules,¹⁶⁹ and on Mountravers, too, 'pasture boys' minded cattle and a ten-year-old took care of the calves. On Mesopotamia in Jamaica those who began as cattle boys or hog herders generally continued into adult life as stock keepers. Jobs that involved working with animals tended to be reserved for plantation-born people;¹⁷⁰ stock keepers were responsible for expensive and vital assets: animals powered the grinding mills, pulled carts, produced manure and, once they lost their strength, ended up as meat on the table.

Pasture was scarce and cattle needed to be contained. Two methods were used. Either the animals were staked, their dung collected, and then moved elsewhere, or they were held in pens, 'made with rails and posts strong enough to enclose horned cattle'. The Nevis Legislature claimed that fixing pens and moving them saved labour and was favoured in the island, while in St Kitts staking was more common. Either way, twice a day cattle had to be given additional fodder. During crop they got 'sliced cane-tops' and throughout the year grass collected by all the children and adults: 'each negro threw a turn of grass at noon, and another at night.'¹⁷¹ Mountravers people also collected 'sea-side vines' for the cattle as this

¹⁶⁷ PP, WI Box B: 'Marshall Bill of Sale'

The fact that Isaac Lobatto, a Jewish merchant, was chosen to witness the Bill of Sale demonstrates that members of the Jewish community were relatively integrated into Nevis society (Terrell, Michelle M *The Jewish Community of Early Colonial Nevis* p59, citing KBCP 1715-1723 f198).

¹⁶⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p77 and BW Higman *Slave Populations in the British Caribbean* p334

¹⁶⁹ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p187

¹⁷⁰ Dunn, Richard S "Dreadful Idlers" in the Cane Fields: The Slave Labor Pattern on a Jamaican Sugar Estate, 1762-1831' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Vol 17 No 4 Caribbean Slavery and British Capitalism (Spring 1987) p804

¹⁷¹ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 p272 and pp252-53; EV Goveia *Slave Society* p118; NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p296; also Clement Caines *Letters on the Cultivation of the Otaheite Cane* p124

apparently increased their dung. To create rich manure, every Saturday members of the small gang had to dig up the soil in the pens and cover this with layers of mould, gravel and fresh cane trash.¹⁷²

In 1734 Mountravers was worked with twelve horned cattle but over the next three decades Johnno saw the herd increase to almost fifty animals: four bulls, twelve steers, twelve cows, four heifers, and seven bull and seven heifer calves. For a couple of years he shared his work with Cambridge, a young African (No 241). The boy may have cared for the calves while Johnno was in charge of the adult animals. Their work would have involved identifying diseased or injured cattle and treating them for common ailments such as foot rot and parasites, among them worms and ticks. This meant stock keepers had to know about various veterinary procedures, as well as remedies and medicinal plants and how to administer them effectively.

By the late 1760s Johnno could not work as a cattle keeper any more but Cambridge did not succeed him. He had died in 1765.

In 1770 JPP bought a fishing canoe for the plantation. This would have been intended for Johnno and others who could still make themselves useful by catching fish and turtles. In November 1773 JPP paid 'Old Johnny for hooks'¹⁷³ and most likely these were fishing hooks. Making fishing lines and nets and fish pots or traps were among the many skills from which enslaved people earned extra money¹⁷⁴ and seafood provided additional sustenance, especially during lean periods.

It is likely that Johnno died soon after selling these hooks, between November 1773 and July 1774. He was in his seventies or early eighties.

16 Attaw was perhaps born in the 1690s. He died before July 1761.

17 Dee was perhaps born in the 1690s. He died before July 1761.

18 Cuggah may have been born in the 1690s. The Akan name Kojo, or Kujo, given to a boy born on a Monday,¹⁷⁵ is usually spelt Cudjoe, or Cojo, but Browne wrote it phonetically.

With 14 others, Cuggah may have been mortgaged by Captain John Isaacs to Azariah Pinney. Captain Isaacs, probably a near neighbour from Pinney's early days in Nevis, died in the year of the French invasion, some time between March and the beginning of June 1706,¹⁷⁶ leaving his widow with a certain amount of debt. Among the people to whom Captain Isaacs owed money was Azariah Pinney.

Mrs Jane Isaacs must have had some standing in the community. She witnessed a will,¹⁷⁷ which women rarely did, and she managed a sizeable household. Just after the French invasion she had in her

¹⁷² Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p113

¹⁷³ PP, AB 17

¹⁷⁴ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* pp10-1

¹⁷⁵ Stewart, Julia *1001 African Names* p147 and Richard Hart *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* Vol 2 Table 1 p11

¹⁷⁶ SCRO, Moberly & Wharton Papers D/MW 35/3/1; VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 5 pp299-310 and PP, WI Box B: 'Receipt Capt John Isaacs and 5 June 1706 Jane Isaacks (sic), widow of Capt John Isaacks dec'd'

¹⁷⁷ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 5 p94

possession 14 black males and 17 black females.¹⁷⁸ These, most likely, included the 15 people her husband had mortgaged.

The French invasion prompted Pinney to leave the island but it was already understood that these 15 people would come into Pinney's possession. Before he departed, Captain Isaacs' widow assured him that the 'sd. 15 slaves together w.th other Bonds ... doe now really belong to him.' Two of the 15 were old and Mrs Isaacs promised Pinney that during his stay in England she would look after them with her own 'untill the expected trouble from the French do overpass.'¹⁷⁹ Pinney did return to Nevis after a couple of years and, acting as Captain Isaacs' administrator, was soon called before the Court with regard to Isaac's debts.¹⁸⁰

Some time after April 1710 the boy Cudjoe and the 14 other mortgaged people came into Azariah Pinney's possession: three men (Nero, Bristoll, Jack), seven women (Hannah, Leah, Susanna, Kitta, Cato, Clearee, and ?Sherode), another boy, Mingoe, and probably three girls, one of whom was called Mary.¹⁸¹ Cuggah, and possibly Bristol (No 4), were the only people from this group who survived until 1734.

Mrs Jane Isaacs, meanwhile, had managed to build up the numbers again so that by 1734 she was in possession of 29 people.¹⁸²

Cuggah died before July 1761.

19 Cubbena, also Cobenah, was perhaps born in the 1690s. His is another often-occurring Akan name, given to a boy born on a Tuesday.¹⁸³

It is likely that he was a man previously owned by Alexander Squair and that Squair had bought him and his sister Katey (No 92) some time after 1707/8¹⁸⁴ and before the end of 1717.

On 15 January 1718 Cobenah, Katey and her daughters Jenney and Betty, were sold to Azariah Pinney for £180.¹⁸⁵ Cobenah's sister, but not his nieces, survived until 1734.

Cubbena died before July 1761.

¹⁷⁸ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 pp173-79

¹⁷⁹ PP, WI Box B, and R Pares *A West India Fortune* p48

Pares stated that Azariah Pinney went to England after the French invasion of 1706 and arranged for Mrs Isaacs to look after 15 of his slaves during his stay there. Inspection of the original documents has revealed that the 15 people referred to had actually been mortgaged by Captain John Isaacs to Pinney and had only recently come into Pinney's possession.

¹⁸⁰ PP, WI Box B: Document dated 14 July 1710

¹⁸¹ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box: 'Inventory of Captain John Isaacs estate'

¹⁸² UKNA, CO 186/2: 27 May 1734 and 30 May 1734

In 1734 Mrs Isaacs stood accused of trying to avoid paying a local tax on her enslaved people. It was said that she had not declared everyone she owned. On investigation it turned out that two people in her possession actually belonged to another man, and she narrowly escaped a fine of double the tax.

¹⁸³ The name is also spelt Kwabena, Kobina, and Kwamina (Muñoz, S *The Afro-American Griot Speaks* and Hart, Richard *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* Vol 2 Table 1 p11, also pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999). The usual English spelling is Cubbena or Cubbenah

¹⁸⁴ Listed as Alexander Squire, in 1707/8 he did not have any household members (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 pp173-79).

¹⁸⁵ PP, WI Box B: Bill of Sale Alexander Squair dated 15 January 1718

20 Governor, perhaps born in the 1690s, died before July 1761. His name may have been connected with Mary Pinney's Governor's Estate (Mountain), or the governors who had lived there in the 1720s. He may also have been a watchman; in the twentieth century cane watches were also known as governors in Nevis.¹⁸⁶

21 Cunnial Jack, perhaps born in the 1690s, may have been the man Jack who, with Quaco, Betty and Nevis, had previously belonged to Richard Abbott and Thomas Washington. They were levied on by Azariah Pinney in March 1712/3.¹⁸⁷

Richard Abbott, then nearly 50 years old, was a man of some importance; he had been appointed Brigadier-General of the Leeward Islands. Having served as an Assembly member for St Thomas Lowland, he had connections with that parish,¹⁸⁸ while the merchant Thomas Washington and Azariah Pinney had friends in common, were neighbours and were both connected with the Ling family.¹⁸⁹ The fact that Richard Abbott and Thomas Washington owned Jack, Quaco, Betty and Nevis jointly suggests that they may have previously been used to settle a joint debt, and, given the financial entanglements between William Ling and Thomas Washington, it is possible that they in fact were originally owned by Ling before he died in 1705.¹⁹⁰

'Cunnial' may possibly have been a corruption of cunning, or, more likely, of Kendall. Thomas Washington's brother Simon lived in Kendall in Westmoreland.¹⁹¹

Cunnial Jack died before July 1761.

22 Santee was perhaps born in the 1690s. Santee's Kitty, born probably around 1740, may have been his daughter and Little Santee, born in the late 1750s, may have been his son, or grandson.

Santee, also spelt Santy, was a fairly common name in Nevis and may have its origin in the word 'Asante', the people of northern Ghana, or possibly Sande, where among the Ewe it means 'agile, brisk'. Alternatively, the Vai and the Hausa have Sandi as a personal name.¹⁹²

It is likely Santee died close to July 1761 and that he was one of the six people said to have perished during Joseph Browne's management.

¹⁸⁶ Hanley, Lornette 'I remember when ... Interview with Robert Griffin of Butlers Village' in NHCS *Newsletter* No 39 (November 1995) p10

¹⁸⁷ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

¹⁸⁸ Richard Abbott was first elected to the Assembly in 1688 and sworn for the Council in 1696. Abbott was appointed Brigadier-General of the Leeward Islands in 1711/2 and later became President. In 1715 he was about 50 years old (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2 p357).

¹⁸⁹ According to William Ling's will of 1705, Thomas Washington lived with him and was to continue Ling's estate. In 1709 Anne Ling left him £50 in her will (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1), and in Samuel Browne's will of August 1712, Thomas Washington and Azariah Pinney were appointed jointly as overseers (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 pp6-16). Documents in the Pinney Papers further connect William Ling and Thomas Washington with Azariah Pinney (PP, WI Box B).

¹⁹⁰ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2 pp310-13: List of Wills relating to Nevis

¹⁹¹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 1 p10

¹⁹² The Hausa constitute one of Africa's largest ethnic groups. They live mainly in northern Nigeria, southern Niger, and Benin. Today Hausa is spoken by 85 per cent of the people in Niger.

23 Robin, later Old Robin, may have originally lived on Charlot's. There, between February 1705 and May 1706, someone called 'Rabin' was attended by the doctor.¹⁹³ 'Rabin' is a very Somerset-way of pronouncing his name.

Little Robin (b c 1740) may well have been his son, or his grandson.

By the early 1760s Old Robin's health had become frail and he, together with Great Fido, worked 'at the Mountain garden'. Mountain or Governor's, the other, smaller Pinney plantation in the parish of St John Figtree, housed several of the old people who were employed in light work such as gardening, or looking after recently arrived Africans.

Old Robin kept poultry. Soon after JPP arrived in Nevis, Old Robin sold him four chickens, and a month later this was followed by a cock and then by two more chickens. The chickens cost N1s6d each, the cock more than double, N3s9d.¹⁹⁴ It is likely JPP was building up his own little flock of poultry, although the cockerel could also have been a fighting bird. Cockfights were a popular amusement among the enslaved,¹⁹⁵ as well as working class people in England,¹⁹⁶ and in Old Robin's time were social occasions attended by ladies and gentlemen. A few decades later, however, the educated viewed cockfights as outmoded and cruel.¹⁹⁷

Old Robin was freed from work in January 1765 and died on 28 October 1766. He probably was in his seventies.

24 Kersey, later Old Kersey. Although 'very old' and 'infirm', in the 1760s he was one of four boilers and, as Paul's, Castile's and Mingo's senior, Kersey may have been the head boiler. Supervised by the assistant overseer, also called the boiling house watch, the head boiler's job was to oversee the sugar-making process: adding the right amount of lime, ensuring the skimmers ladled off sufficient scum and making sure the fires underneath the cauldrons were kept ablaze and at just the right temperature. Deciding when the sugar reached the exact point at which it crystallised was of utmost importance. JPP thought the best method of determining that was to take a droplet of hot syrup and extend it between thumb and forefinger until it formed a thin thread.¹⁹⁸ This was a painful procedure and not used by everyone. The Antiguan planter guru Samuel Martin advocated the 'eye art' as the best method of 'striking' but admitted that he himself never acquired the 'critical exactness'.¹⁹⁹ Sugar-making was a process that required skill and experience but a pro-slavery apologist, belittling the talents required of boilers, wrote that their 'only job is to pour, remove the scum and provide the correct temperature for boiling the juice, which is not difficult at all ...'²⁰⁰ He did not mention that men had to wield heavy ladles in the steamy heat of the boiling house, nor the pain caused when hot droplets splattered onto naked skin,

¹⁹³ PP, WI Box B: Medical Expense a/c December 1704-May 1706

¹⁹⁴ PP, AB 17 Nevis a/c: 6 and 31 January 1765 and 10 May 1765

¹⁹⁵ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p169

¹⁹⁶ Rule, John *Albion's People* pp158-60 and Latimers *Annals* Vol 2 p27

¹⁹⁷ JPP accounted for N£1:13:0 which he received of James Tobin as 'half the expense of tax for the Ladies at the cockfight' (PP, AB 26 Expense a/c). By the early 1800s Methodist missionaries in Nevis thought that cock-fighting had all but disappeared (Horsford, John Revd *A Voice from the West Indies* p299) but it remained a popular pastime until the late 1820s when 'respectable whites' in the West Indies distanced themselves from it (Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p169). Public opinion had shifted. In the eighteenth-century enlightened thinkers had developed the idea that humans and animals were fundamentally the same creatures, which had turned an increasingly educated populace against entertainments such as animal-baiting and animal-fighting. In Britain, concerns over animal welfare led in 1824 to the forming of the Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals (Porter, Roy *Enlightenment* p349 and Michael Reed *The Georgian Triumph* p195).

¹⁹⁸ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 January 1784

¹⁹⁹ Gaspar, David Barry *Bondsmen and Rebels* p104

²⁰⁰ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p130

nor the punishment they received if batches were spoilt because the temperature was too high, or the syrup had been left to boil for too long. If the boilers tried striking too early, the liquor never condensed; if they delayed for too long, it set into a mass of brown concrete which would not separate and the molasses would not drain from it. Planters constantly complained about inferior sugars, and head boilers were under continuous pressure to improve quality and production. In fact, some years past, John Frederick Pinney had grumbled about his poor sugars; he wanted experts from a neighbouring estate to give his men remedial lessons in the art of sugar-making,²⁰¹ and it is likely that Jessup's boilers Mingo Ned and Cuffee were called upon to pass on their expertise.²⁰² Those who had mastered the art of making good sugar may well have taken pride in their work – particularly if their skills were recognised and they were called upon to instruct others.

Kersey was not the only 'infirm' boiler; Mingo was also not able-bodied. Around the same time, a similar pattern existed on Lady Stapleton's estate. There, two of the six boilers were of 'declining' health.²⁰³

Once JPP gave Old Kersey N8s3d – perhaps as a reward for making a particularly good batch of sugar – and at another time lent him N2s3d.²⁰⁴ This loan suggests that Kersey managed to earn money from other activities and was somehow in a position to repay. The amount he borrowed from JPP was about equal to the price of a chicken.

In May 1766 Old Kersey remained on Mountravers, as did Castile and Paul, while Mingo was temporarily moved with others to the Gingerland estate. Most likely, Old Kersey died between July 1774 and July 1783. He was in his seventies, or very early eighties. Little Kersey (b c 1753) may well have been his grandson, or possibly his son.

25 Charles was perhaps born in the 1690s. He died before July 1761.

26 Old George may have been born in the 1690s and bought for Charlot's between October 1701 and early 1705: a doctor treated Gorgo [mis-spelt for George?] some time between February 1705 and May 1706.²⁰⁵

The baby George (b c 1734) may have been his son. Both he and Old George died before July 1761.

27 London, later Old London, was born perhaps in the late 1690s. He probably was on Charlot's in 1703/4, where, as a child, he had medical treatment.²⁰⁶

The boy London (b 1753) may have been his son, or grandson.

Old London died some time before July 1761.

²⁰¹ PP, LB 1: JF Pinney to Browne?, Nevis, 9 August 1756

²⁰² SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/18

²⁰³ Stapleton Cotton MSS 14: A Schedule and Appraisalment of the Negroes, 7 July 1766

²⁰⁴ PP, AB 17 Nevis a/c 20 May 1767 and 15 September 1765

²⁰⁵ PP, WI Box B: Medical Expense a/c December 1704-May 1706

²⁰⁶ PP, WI Box A

28 Nevis was probably born around 1700 and one of four people previously owned by Richard Abbott and Thomas Washington. During the twenty years these four would have been on Mountravers, it is likely that one, Quaco, had died, but that three had survived: Jack (No 21), Bettey (No 86) and this man, Nevis.

Nevis died before July 1761, as did Jack and Bettey.

29 Dorset was perhaps born at the turn of the century. He was a mason and the only man whose job was specified in the slave list. This underlined the important position he held.

Trained masons were expensive assets. They were among the slave elite. Their jobs were demanding but could also be fulfilling. Masons had talent and skills. They had to possess good spatial awareness to be able to follow design instructions. Equally, they had to be able to plan structures themselves and execute them with whatever materials they had at their disposal. If they laid coarse, irregular field stones, these had to be chosen carefully so that they fitted well; if they laid cut stones or bricks, they needed to make close and even mortar joints. Masons had to be strong to mix the mortar and to hew, sort, load and lay the stones. Occasionally they had help from assistants – the only workers to be afforded such privilege – and these assistants had to be managed and their work overseen. Evidence of the masons' craft was everywhere, and most of their work was very visible and enduring. They erected the buildings on the plantations and the island's public structures - churches, boundary walls, bridges, and forts - and each time a hurricane damaged or destroyed any of these, teams of masons were called upon to patch, repair and re-build. The edifices they created bore testament to their skills. They produced what others admired. They could be proud of their craft. In addition to enjoying a varied and relatively independent work regime, this would have given masons a sense of importance and self-worth.

In 1746 a white mason, William Brooks, was called in to do some work and, although Brookes had enslaved workers of his own,²⁰⁷ he hired someone from Mountravers to assist him. This may well have been Dorset. Two ovens were built.²⁰⁸ These almost certainly were for domestic use.

Skilled enslaved coopers had worked on the old Proctor's plantation in the seventeenth century but the mention of the mason Dorset is the first reference to an enslaved mason on Mountravers. It shows how a skilled black workforce emerged. Gradually, throughout the century, these men replaced white indentured specialists. In the early days on Mountravers, boys generally were apprenticed to white men but as the pool of skilled men grew, after the 1770s it was mostly plantation masons who passed on their craft to others. However, that was after Dorset's time. He died some time before July 1761.

30 Tom Punch was perhaps born around 1700.

The name Tom Punch also appears on other estates in Nevis,²⁰⁹ and unless it was a pun on 'rum punch', it is likely that the name originated from a fictional character. Originally called Punchinello in the *commedia dell'arte* in Italy, 'Punch' came to England during the seventeenth century. A hook-nosed, hunch-backed buffoon with a squeaky, high-pitched voice, he acquired a wife - at first called Joan, then Judy - and throughout Britain 'Punch and Judy' puppet shows became a very popular entertainment for

²⁰⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1741-1749 f123, and PP, AB 20

²⁰⁸ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box

²⁰⁹ For instance, a Tom Punch was on Jessup's Estate (SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/4: List of Negroes belonging to the Estate of Edward Jesup Esq taken this 17th June 1748).

adults and later for children. It is possible that someone may have been called Punch because of their physical characteristics, such as a misaligned back, or an unusually piercing voice.

Tom Punch may have had a son or grandson of the same name (b c 1753-5).

Tom Punch died before July 1761.

31 Mercury may have been born around the turn of the century. He came to Mountravers in March 1727/8 with five other people. He had previously lived on Mrs Cressey's 120-acre plantation Claygutt in St George's Gingerland, on the other side of the island near Saddle Hill.²¹⁰

In May 1719 Mrs Margaret Cressey took out a mortgage for N£860 from Azariah Pinney and secured this with land, horses and three men, three woman, three boys and two or three girls.²¹¹ Having been widowed²¹² and being unable to run the plantation on her own, Mrs Cressey had rented it to Azariah Pinney for a year.

Mrs Cressey failed to repay the loan and some years after Azariah Pinney's death, in March 1727/8, Mary Pinney foreclosed. She got possession of a piece of land known as 'Margaret Cressey's plantation'. At the same time Mrs Cressey gave up possession of six people. Three of these were included in the original mortgage – Cuffee (No 43), London (No 32), Belinda (No 97) – with a further three added: Mercury, Sam (No 48) and ?Indemora. Mrs Cressey's people who had survived since 1719 when she took out the mortgage and who were not transferred, presumably stayed at Claygutt, where Margaret Cressey rented the house 'with a one-acre pen about the house' for one year at a peppercorn rent.²¹³ Of the six transferred to Mary Pinney, all but ?Indemora were alive in 1734.

Mercury died before July 1761.

32 London was perhaps born between about 1705 and 1710. He was one of three boys mortgaged in 1719 by Margaret Cressey and came to Mountravers in March 1727/8, with Mercury (No 31), Sam (No 48), Cuffee (No 43), Belinda (No 97) and ?Indemora. In December 1753 he probably had a son, Little London.

By 1761, only two of Mrs Cressey's mortgaged individuals were still alive: Cuffee, who was freed from all labour soon after, and London. He had become a distiller but worked in the field as well. There were two other distillers: Harry, who was old and infirm, and Cato (No 56), who also shared his time between fieldwork and rum-making. This was a common pattern among distillers who would otherwise have been under-employed.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile Box'

²¹¹ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile Box'

²¹² Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2 pp266-72

²¹³ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 3

Pares wrote that 'Eight years later Mary Pinney foreclosed, and the fee-simple of this plantation passed into the hands of the Pinneys' (*A West India Fortune* p52) but it appears that only part of Claygut - 'Margaret Cressey's plantation' - went to the Pinneys. An inscription at the windmill at Clay Ghut - 'The Hon JR Herbert Esq 1785' – points towards Herbert's ownership of the other part (Gjissrug, Frederick C *The Windmills of Nevis*). In 1817 Herbert's daughter, Martha Williams Hamilton, registered 164 people for Clay Ghut (UKNA, T 71/364).

²¹⁴ Higman, BW *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean* p171

While the sugar boilers' work was highly skilled, distilling rum was relatively straightforward.²¹⁵ The simpler processes involved in rum-making may explain why on Lady Stapleton's plantation no one in particular was set aside for this job but it is surprising then, that in 1783 on Mountravers the head distiller, Ducks Jemmy, was among the highest valued men. In addition to making rum, distillers were responsible for cutting the bush they used for the fire under the still.²¹⁶

London was trusted sufficiently to be able to borrow some money from JPP (three shillings in October 1765),²¹⁷ but he and the other distillers on Mountravers certainly would not have been granted the privileges described by a missionary. He claimed that in the Danish West Indies rum distillers and other skilled men not only enjoyed better living conditions and extra days off but were even 'allowed as much time for rest and relaxation as free craftsmen [were] accustomed to have.'²¹⁸

Although he was considered 'good & able' and there was no indication of ill health, London died between October 1765 and May 1767. He was at least in his mid-50s.

33 Tom Pinney, born perhaps between 1705 and 1710, died before 1761.

34 Primus, later Old Primus. 'Good but old', in the 1760s he was a field hand and between 1766 and 1768 worked on the Gingerland estates. He may, possibly, have been related to Dorinda.

Primus died, probably in his mid-sixties to late seventies, between July 1774 and July 1783.

35 Limerick was born perhaps about 1705 to 1710. He died before July 1761. His name alludes to the relatively few Irish connections in Nevis.

36 Dempey was born perhaps about 1705 to 1710. He died before July 1761.

37 Ben was a field hand. Between July 1761 and June 1762 something happened that caused him to become 'dismembered' - he had either suffered an accident that caused the loss of a limb, or he been legally mutilated when, as a punishment for running away or for capital crimes, enslaved people could have parts of their body amputated.²¹⁹ Despite his severe injury he was still fit enough to be employed as a cane watch.

It has been said that watchmen were elderly or infirm,²²⁰ but on Mountravers one out of five watches in 1765 was not. Elsewhere, on the Stapleton estate, in 1778 two out of five were healthy men in their thirties and early forties. Having at least one or two fit men stand guard may have been a reflection of the

²¹⁵ Higman, BW *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean* p172

²¹⁶ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p301

²¹⁷ PP, AB 17 Cash a/c

²¹⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p76

²¹⁹ 'Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part III (1789)

Similar laws allowing court-ordered amputations existed in other colonies. See, for instance, Anthony S Parent *Foul Means* pp124-25 and p158

²²⁰ Dunn, Richard S "Dreadful Idlers" p803 and GF Tyson and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p77 and p141

increased risks at times of unrest and food shortages when frail old men might not have been fast or strong enough to tackle intruders.

As a cane watch it was Ben's duty to stop animals roaming into the fields, prevent anyone breaking or burning canes 'from mischievous motives', and to make sure that no deserters hid among the tall cane stalks. Watches patrolled the estate boundaries, guarded the allowance stores and other 'valuable effects' on the plantation and protected provision grounds against thieves.²²¹ This included the control of monkeys, who, it was said, were 'very good livers' and knew 'a ripe pine to a day'; they could 'pick, pack and carry away all the eatable fruit in the garden at one visit.'²²² Watches also had to protect the livestock from being slaughtered for their meat, and they had to prevent runaways from burgling houses. At night they had to stop people running away.²²³

To keep themselves occupied, watches engaged in crafts and wove baskets and ropes, cut pegs, and they set traps and went after rats and other vermin.²²⁴ Rats were a problem on plantations. In the 1820s they were so plentiful that one manager in Nevis kept a record of his attempts to control them and over a six-months-period noted a 'decrease' of 85 rats.²²⁵ Home-made rat poison was used,²²⁶ and occasionally extra help was ordered from England: 'two couple of ferrets, and a good terrier or two.'²²⁷ In addition to rat-catching terriers, watches may also have kept guard dogs. Their presence might explain injuries from bites, such as the one sustained by Synthe, a woman on Mr Mills's plantation. She was 'bit in the leg by London Browns dog.'²²⁸

In contrast to those watches who patrolled and safeguarded the fields, the men who were employed seasonally to 'watch the boiling house' had supervisory rather than watchman's duties. On Mountravers they tended to be island-born whites, elderly tradesmen or young men starting their plantation careers.

Ben was in a position of trust in which he had to make many decisions about rights and wrongs, about how much leeway he gave people and what he reported to the manager. If he carried out his duties diligently, he could earn extra privileges and rewards. If he allowed others too much slack and too many favours, punishment was never far off. Like drivers, watches occupied a middle ground that they had to negotiate carefully to avoid the risk of being ostracised by their community. Watches had temporary shelters in the area that they guarded, and for most of the time they were physically removed from the slave village and, as they had to work day and night, all year round, they could not partake in the usual social activities that would have reinforced their ties with their friends and neighbours. It is possible that some men who had previously lived as ordinary, well integrated members of their community, through their jobs spent their final years in conflict with that community. In the twentieth century, cane watchmen in Nevis were called 'Governors or Rulers',²²⁹ reflecting their position of power within their community, as well as their distance to that community.

²²¹ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 p261

²²² Coleridge, Henry Nelson *Six Months in the West Indies* p184

²²³ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p8

²²⁴ Pitman, Frank Wesley 'Slavery on British West Indies Plantations in the Eighteenth Century' in *The Journal of Negro History* Vol 11 No 4 (October 1926) p597, citing Richard Roughley *Planters Guide* 1823 p87, pp113-16

²²⁵ Stapleton Cotton MSS 31: Increase and Decrease of Negroes and Quick Stock, 1 January to 1 July 1825

²²⁶ JPP sent Joseph Gill a recipe for making rat poison and detailed instructions on how to use it (PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 30 October 1783).

²²⁷ PP, LB 60: JC Mills, Nevis, to PA & Co, 2 December 1826

²²⁸ MLD, Mills Papers, 2006.178/10, Vol 4 (22 May 1776)

²²⁹ Hanley, Lornette 'I remember when ... Interview with Robert Griffin of Butlers Village' in NHCS *Newsletter* No 39 (November 1995) p10

Although he was 'dismembered', Ben still had to work. He was not manumitted and died between June 1772 and July 1774. He probably was in his sixties.

38 Jack. By 1761, Jack was judged to have been 'very old' but still appears to have been employed in some capacity. However, within a year he became 'almost useless' and the following year declined so much that he had become completely 'useless'.

Jack was manumitted in January 1765. Having been freed from work, he lived for about eight months and died on 12 August 1765. He probably was in his sixties.

39 Fitto, later Great Fido. Almost certainly his son was Little Fido (b c 1744/5).

Described as 'good but old', in the 1760s Great Fido first worked as a 'Mountain Gardner' and when others were moved to the Gingerland estate, father and son both worked on Mountravers. Little Fido was a cooper, or barrel-maker.

Like Old Robin, who also worked at the Mountain estate, Fido sold produce to JPP. He provided him with N£1 worth of fruit, two fowls, four chickens, 'a little pig', and peas. JPP sometimes seemed to have handed over the money in instalments.²³⁰ Fido, no doubt, raised the animals and grew the fruit and peas on his own plot because anything he produced in the 'Mountain garden' would have automatically belonged to the Great House and JPP would not have paid for it.

Great Fido may also have had an allotment high up in the mountain. In the early 1760s John Frederick Pinney stopped the practice of growing foodstuffs on the estate but the plantation folk, in addition to plots around their houses, would have had some land in which to grow provisions. It is not known how big these allotments were and whether, as in Jamaica, they were inherited by members of the family, along with the houses and any personal belongings.²³¹ Gregory Lewis claimed that this led to an unequal distribution of houses and land: 'The negroes were in the practise of bequeathing their houses and grounds by which means some of them were become (sic) owners of several houses and numerous gardens in the village, while others with large families were either inadequately provided for, or not provided for at all.'²³² In St Croix, too, enslaved people passed on their allotments but they were not permitted to transfer them out of their own family.²³³

Fido was still fit enough to do some fishing, and in October 1766 he sold a relatively large quantity of fish to JPP, worth N3s.²³⁴ These may have been fish caught in the sea but could also have been millet and mudfish that could be had from the ponds.²³⁵

By July 1783 'Old Fido' was manumitted. He died some time before July 1794. He was at least in his seventies, may be in his eighties.

²³⁰ PP, AB 17: 2 and 10 January and 30 March 1765

²³¹ Bush, Barbara *Slave Women in Caribbean Society* p93

²³² Lewis, MG *Journal of a Residence Among the Negroes in the West Indies* p183

²³³ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p161

²³⁴ PP, AB 17: 27 October 1766

²³⁵ Smith, Revd William A *Natural History of Nevis* pp185-222

40 Tom, later Long Tom. In the 1760s, Long Tom worked in the field. He was 'good but old'. For some reason he injured another slave, one who belonged to Mrs Mary Hayton. The positive assessment of him makes it more likely that the wound he was said to have caused was the result of an accident rather than a fight. Judging by the costly treatment, N£6, the injury Mrs Hayton's man had sustained, was substantial.²³⁶ The plantation bore the medical fees because once it was established who was responsible for causing damage or loss, it was up to one slaveholder to reimburse the other.

Some time between January 1765 and May 1767 Long Tom fell victim to an accident. He was 'killed by a buttress pits falling on him'. He probably was in his mid-fifties.

41 Cambridge was born perhaps around 1710. He died before July 1761.

42 Cuggah was born perhaps around 1710. He died before July 1761.

43 Cuffee may have been born about 1710 to 1715. His is the Akan name given to a boy born on a Friday.²³⁷

It is likely he was one of the three boys ('Coffee') included in the original 1719 mortgage by Mrs Cressey and handed over in 1727/8 to Mary Pinney with Belinda (No 97), Mercury (No 31) and several others.

By 1761 Cuffee was 'with one leg'. He had lost the other through illness or accident, or by way of punishment. To make life easier for him and enable him to function as a worker, William Coker bought a wooden leg for him. It cost N15s²³⁸ and was made in the island. If it had been ordered from England, the requirements would have had to be stated precisely; when the planter George Webbe asked for a wooden leg for one of his workers, he failed to specify whether the leg was cut off above or below the knee and thereby delayed its dispatch.²³⁹

Losing a leg did not necessarily mean being freed from work; in Berbice several people who had lost a leg continued to work in the field,²⁴⁰ but Cuffee was 'old and useless', and a couple of months after being issued his prosthesis, he was manumitted.

Cuffee probably died between January 1769 and 25 July 1774. He was at least in his fifties but may have been in his sixties.

44 Cubenna was perhaps born about 1710 to 1715. He died before July 1761.

²³⁶ PP, AB 15 Wm Coker's a/c; WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney '1762', also Misc Vols 3 AB 3

²³⁷ Muñoz, S *The Afro-American Griot Speaks* p32 and Richard Hart *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* Vol 2 Table 1 p11
In Jamaica the name is also spelt Kofi. Cufee, or Coffee

²³⁸ PP, AB 18 William Coker's a/c; also AB 15 Wm Coker's a/c

²³⁹ PP, LB 38: P&T to George Webbe junior, Blanstone's Hotel, Falmouth, 15 October 1792

²⁴⁰ Higman, BW *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean* p293

45 Old Man. Already called Old Man in his youth, he either, as a boy, had the features or manners of an elderly person, or he may have been named after one of the Shakespeare's characters. In Macbeth Old Man was the messenger of important news.

In the early 1760s Old Man worked in the field and was judged 'good and able'. He kept some animals; in July 1765 he sold a fowl to JPP.²⁴¹ In the seventeenth century poultry-keeping clearly was seen as a women's job - it was enshrined in overseer Wesbury's contract that his wife was to raise ducks, turkeys and hens – and, as Barbara Bush wrote, 'Only women looked after children and chickens'.²⁴² But, over time, on Mountravers the gender roles may have got blurred. While sixteen women sold chickens, fowls and turkeys, half a dozen men also did so. It is possible these men sold their wives' animals but equally, they may well have kept flocks of their own.

Old Man died on 11 November 1765, probably aged about 45 to 50.

46 Quow may have been born about 1715 to 1720. He died before July 1761.

47 Phillip, later Old Phillip. In the 1760s he was a field hand and described as 'indifferent'.

By July 1783 Old Phillip was freed from work. He died some time before 1794. When he died, he probably was in his early sixties to late seventies. Little Philip (b 1773) may have been his grandson.

48 Sam was perhaps born about 1715 to 1720 and almost certainly was one of the additional individuals handed over to Mary Pinney by Mrs Cressey in 1727/8.

Sam died before July 1761.

49 Cushew was probably born around 1715 to 1720. He died before July 1761.

50 Peter. Born probably between 1715 and 1720, it is likely that he had a daughter, Peter's Flora (b 1759-61) who also remained on Mountravers when other people temporarily worked on the Gingerland estate.

When he was not yet 50 years old, Peter was a 'Watch in the Pond'. The 'pond piece' was one of the named cane fields into which Mountravers was divided. At its top end ran the road, and on the other side it was bordered by the sea. Frank, who later guarded it, had a watch house there.

Peter was 'good but old'. Those people said to have been 'good' or 'able' were JPP's main suppliers of produce, and in 1765 JPP lent him some money and bought N3s9d worth of pork from Peter. (At the usual price of N9d per pounds, this equalled seven pounds of meat.)²⁴³ Peter also received N3s 'for finding butter';²⁴⁴ presumably he succeeded in doing so.

²⁴¹ PP, AB 17 Nevis a/c 17 July 1765

²⁴² Bush, Barbara *Slave Women in Caribbean Society* p37

²⁴³ PP, AB 17: 30 August 1765

²⁴⁴ PP, AB 17: 25 March 1765

Peter died between July 1774 and July 1783. He was in his mid-fifties to late sixties.

JPP's entry in the account book that Peter was given money 'for finding butter' raises the possibility that some people might have earned extra money from making butter and cheese. It appears that in Nevis there was small-scale dairy activity; Revd Smith wrote in the 1740s that 'we make a little butter which is not extraordinarily good, and our new cheese is far worse'. Smith did not specify who actually manufactured these products.²⁴⁵

Making butter is time-consuming but requires few implements: a milk pan, some muslin, a ladle, and a simple wooden churn with a plunger. However, otherwise conditions were not ideal; for the cream to separate from the milk it has to be cool, otherwise it does not rise. The cream, which is the basis for the butter, gets agitated in the churn until it reaches the right consistency. Once churned, the butter may have been heated to separate the water from the fat; this clarified butter keeps longer than the unheated product.

The enslaved people were unlikely to have used the dairy products themselves. In their analysis of enslaved people's diets, Kiple and King wrote that people in Africa generally consume little milk and other dairy products,²⁴⁶ and a visitor to St Croix observed that enslaved people did not milk their goats nor did they keep cows.²⁴⁷ A St Kitts planter, however, claimed that stock keepers drank or stole milk - as did dishonest managers who used it for making 'fresh butter'.²⁴⁸ A trade in dairy products may have centred on those Africans for whom milk forms a major part of their diet, such as the cattle-herding Fulani.²⁴⁹

According to a law of 1739, 'fresh butter' was among the produce that enslaved people in Nevis could sell without a ticket from their master.²⁵⁰ The law specified that it was 'fresh butter', distinguishing it from the salted variety, which planters shipped in firkins from Europe.²⁵¹ The imported butter was for the planters' own, or their managers' use, and if enslaved people sold this, it would almost certainly have been stolen from their masters. However, if they were, as suggested, making butter, this then raises the question: where did Peter get the milk from? Certainly among JPP's people there is no evidence that any of them owned cows; they are only recorded as having kept sheep and goats. Of course, sheep or goats milk could have been used but a more likely source would have been the plantation cattle. As milk was 'not a favourite article of their food'²⁵² enslaved people did not compete for it but those few who did consume dairy products and who were deserving of favour may have been allowed to milk the cows.²⁵³ As Peter was said to have been 'good', he may have been granted this privilege. 'Finding butter' may, literally, have meant going out in search of butter, or it could have meant that he was selling butter he had made

²⁴⁵ Smith, Revd William *A Natural History of Nevis* p221

²⁴⁶ Kiple, KF and VH King *Another Dimension* p8 and pp80-1

²⁴⁷ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p163

²⁴⁸ Caines, Clement *Letters on the Cultivation of the Otaheite Cane* p126 and p189

²⁴⁹ The Fulani are spread along the savanna belt from Senegambia in the west to parts of the Central African Republic in the east. Most live in Nigeria, Mali, Guinea, Cameroun and Niger. Pastoral Fulani do not live on dairy products alone, they also exchange surpluses for cereal foods (Stenning, Derrick J 'The Pastoral Fulani of Northern Nigeria' p363 and p365 in *Peoples of Africa* Chapter 10).

²⁵⁰ Lambert S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 Summary of legislation in force in different islands.

More details are in the 'Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part III (1789)

²⁵¹ The imported butter came from Ireland - JPP ordered from a company in Cork (PP, LB 37: JPP to Marcus Lynch, Cork, 24 October 1788) - but also from Bermuda. According to Revd Smith this was superior and more expensive (Smith, Revd William *A Natural History of Nevis* p221).

²⁵² Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p163

²⁵³ It is possible that free people owned herds but in the 1730s their numbers must have been quite small, and it is likely that they would have sold their 'fresh butter' themselves. If whites owned the cattle, the legislation would have protected them in the same way the planters were protected against their people selling fresh butter.

himself. In 1790 JPP also bought butter from Mulatto Polly (No 378) but, as she was also selling imported goods, hers may have come from Europe.

51 Quow may have been born about 1715 to 1720. He died before July 1761.

52 Ned, later Old Ned, appears to have been known as Colhoun's Ned as well.²⁵⁴ He was a field hand and another 'good and able' man who borrowed money from JPP. Both he and Billey (No 58) borrowed N5s3d on the same day, 26 August 1775.²⁵⁵

Old Ned had healing powers and JPP employed him to restore the health of a young man. In April and October 1777 Old Ned received two payments of N16s6d each 'for curing London' and 'for his care of London'.²⁵⁶ The arrangement seemed regular and ongoing, and in 1778 Ned was paid a final N16s6d 'for curing London'.²⁵⁷ London was healed; after this he had no recorded medical attention for many years. Old Ned died between 1778 and July 1783. He probably was in his late fifties to late sixties.

Female nurses undoubtedly played a vital part in tending the sick and, as Barbara Bush wrote, female healers were very important in slave society,²⁵⁸ but enslaved men also performed in a sphere usually associated with women. Male health worker may have been more common than so far acknowledged. Occasionally these men were called in because they had specialist skills: 'a Negro Doctor' was paid N12s9d 'for curing sores', Brodtbelt's negro All-Man was paid N8s3d 'for curing Billey's foot' and Billy from the neighbouring Ward's estate was paid the same amount to treat Penny.²⁵⁹ The earliest known reference of someone from another estate treating Mountravers people is from around 1730: ?Rolie received a dressing for 'a cutt in the head by Mr Woodley's Pompey'.²⁶⁰ On another estate, Russells Rest, Mr Pemberton's 'negro doctor' was paid a substantial amount, almost N£2, for the care of two women.²⁶¹ On Mountravers, apart from Ned, at least two other men are known to have been involved in health care: Wiltshire knew about medicinal plants and Frank Fisher proved himself 'a valuable slave for sick people'.

53 Scipio was born perhaps around 1720. Scipio was a common name for enslaved people and commemorated two Roman North African generals, Scipio Africanus the Elder and the Younger.

Scipio died before July 1761.

54 Samson was born perhaps around 1720. He may have been a particularly strong man and named after the biblical character said to have killed a lioness with his bare hands.

Scipio, Samson and Cubbena died before July 1761.

²⁵⁴ The earliest known Calhoun (Colhoun) was William Calhoun, 'a bonny Scot', the able assistant of Christopher Jeaffreson. In the 1670s he was a member of the Assembly (Bridenbaugh, C and R Bridenbaugh *No Peace Beyond the Line* p320).

²⁵⁵ PP, AB 17 Cash a/c

²⁵⁶ PP, AB 17: 26 April 1777, also AB 21 Plantation a/c 1777 and AB 17 Nevis a/c

²⁵⁷ PP, AB 21 Plantation a/c 1778

²⁵⁸ Bush, Barbara *Slave Women in Caribbean Society* p155

²⁵⁹ PP, AB 21 Plantation a/c, AB 17 and AB 26 Plantation a/c 1779

²⁶⁰ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2: Account of Mary Pinney's dec'd 1728-1731

²⁶¹ Stapleton Cotton MSS 3(i): Nevis Account 1745

55 **Cubbena** was born perhaps around 1720. He died before July 1761.

56 **Cato** was in the mid-1760s one of four distillers. Considered 'lazy', he, like London (No 32), worked as a distiller during crop time and in the field during the rest of the year. He worked on Mountravers with Old Harry, one of the other distillers. It is likely that after Old Harry died more responsibility would have fallen on Cato and for a while he may even have been head distiller until a young man, Ducks Jemmy, was appointed to that post.

By July 1783 Cato was manumitted. He died before July 1794 and probably was in his early sixties to mid-seventies.

57 **Corey** may have been born between 1720 and 1725 and probably was somehow connected with the Corey family: Michael Corey lived in Nevis at the turn of the century,²⁶² the boy Jack Corry was on Proctor's in 1680/1 and a girl called Mary Cory on Mary Travers's Mountain estate.²⁶³ Corey died before July 1761.

58 **Billey, also Billy**, went on the run in September 1761. Almost a year later, in June 1762, Coker still included him when he compiled a slave inventory. Billy was expected to return, or be caught. Indeed, on 11 November 1762 Coker paid a reward of N£3:6:0 for 'catching Billy who had been run away 14 months'.²⁶⁴

Billey may have been hiding out in Nevis, perhaps with other escapees. At the time there certainly lived two young runaway men on the mountain. They were aged 18 and 19 and had survived for a year and a half by raiding enslaved people's provision grounds, the 'negro's plantations'. For a while they had been joined by two young sailors from England, Peter Henly and his friend Thomas Giggers. After arriving in Nevis, Henly and Giggers had jumped ship with seven others, hidden themselves but were captured by the crew. They were all held in the 'principal tavern', to be returned to their ship. But the tavern was not a secure place and Peter Henly and Thomas Giggers managed to escape again. About three kilometres out of town, they fled up the mountain where they happened to meet two men who had escaped their

²⁶² BRO, Nevis Box Item 37941 (17) Fragments only

²⁶³ PP, Box O-5, courtesy of David Hancock

At a time of uncertain spelling and perhaps distorted by a thick West Country drawl, it is also possible that the names Corey or Cary were interchangeable. Various Carys were associated with Nevis. One of Mary Travers's [step] daughters, Anne Cary, was possibly married to, or otherwise related to, the merchant Richard Cary, the agent for Antigua and Nevis (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3, citing *History of Antigua* Vol 3 p302 and Lillian M Penson *The Colonial Agents of the British West Indies* Appendix II and p126). Richard Cary, a merchant in London, held money from the Nevis resident Philip Brome; Shershaw Cary wrote from London to Azariah Pinney, asking him to look over his plantation (Pares, R *A West India Fortune* p20), and the merchant John Cary of Bristol was appointed executor in William Davies's will. William Davies was then living with William Ling, a neighbour of Azariah Pinney's (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 5 p300).

²⁶⁴ PP, AB 15 Wm Coker Manager in Nevis a/c; also WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney '1762'

It may be significant that Billey took off about the same time when, following Tacky's Revolt in Jamaica, enslaved people rebelled in several Caribbean islands. In Nevis, too, 'a conspiracy' was said to have been 'discovered amongst the Negroes, for massacring the Whites.' Apparently the uprising was planned because people were sick and starving. This information comes from Thomas Southey who quoted as his source the *Annual Register* for 1761. There are no further details in *The Annual Register*; in fact Southey had taken his text almost word for word from that publication (Southey, Thomas RN *Chronological History of the West Indies* Vol 2 p343 and *The Annual Register 1761* p160).

Southey's claim has been quoted by various writers (Linebaugh, Peter and Marcus Rediker *The Many-Headed Hydra* pp221-22 and p224 and Noel Deerr *History of Sugar* Vol 2 Chapter xx p322) but so far no independent evidence of any insurrection has been found. If there was one, Coker did not report on it and there is no mention in the Calendar of State Papers, or the Journals of Trade and Plantations. Unfortunately, in the UK National Archives there are no minutes which cover the relevant period.

enslavement. Relieved that the sailors did not want to hand them in, the young fugitives led them to their hideout. From Linebaugh and Rediker comes evidence that generally sailors were sympathetic to the plight of the oppressed; on board ship they engaged 'in collective struggles for food, pay, work, and discipline ... [and] brought to the ports a militant attitude toward arbitrary and excessive authority, an empathy for the troubles of others, and a willingness to co-operate for the sake of self-defense.'²⁶⁵ Recognising that seafarers and enslaved people had a common cause, Henly and Giggers remained with their hosts for six days, and then they, but not their fellow fugitives, made for the town and gave themselves up at Fort Charles. They were told that a reward of four guineas each had been offered for their capture but, incredibly, the master gunner called them 'good fellows' and let them go. Thomas Giggers enlisted on a merchantman, and Peter Henly sailed on a 64-gun man-of-war, the *Pembroke*, from St Kitts via Martinique and Barbados to Jamaica, then 'to the Havannah' and back to England.²⁶⁶ The Captain gunner who had praised the men's independent spirit was none other than JPP's father-in-law-to-be, William Burt Weekes.²⁶⁷

It is plausible that Billey was hiding out in Nevis, but he and three other men who were on the run at the same time (Portsmouth, Ephraim and Rhadnor) may also have gone underground in St Kitts: on 8 October 1762, a month before Coker paid the reward for Billey's capture, he accounted for N£2, 'for a vessel to go to St Kitts about negroes and my own expenses there'.²⁶⁸ St Kitts, with its salt ponds and mountains, had better hiding places than Nevis. Revd Smith described how he, with a small group of white men and six negroes, 'well armed with pistols, cutlasses to defend us in case of need against run-away slaves,' had come across a hut on Mount Misery where they had found tracks 'undoubtedly belonging to some run-away negroes.' The maroons were well-encamped and well-supplied; Revd Smith and his posse also spotted the marks of 'cloven-hooved beasts'.²⁶⁹

While Peter Henly and Thomas Giggers managed to leave Nevis unscathed, Billey, no doubt, was severely punished for his long absence. It is possible that he sustained injuries; three years after he was forcibly returned, at the relatively young age of perhaps forty Billey was not strong enough to work in the field in any more. Instead he became a mule keeper. This job had many advantages. Not only was he spared the tough, monotonous labour in the cane fields, but he could acquire and apply skills and work relatively independently.²⁷⁰ Mule keepers had more opportunity to abscond, and as Billey was already noted down as a 'runaway', it seems surprising that he should have been given that job. Was this an attempt by JPP to try and tame Billey by giving him a little bit of freedom? Did JPP also use psychology when he lent Billey money?²⁷¹ Normally JPP lent money to 'good' and 'able' people and, by doing so, portrayed himself as a benign master who rewarded deserving individuals with his trust, while at the same time re-enforcing their dependence on him. These loans to Billey were out of character but may have been an attempt to establish a bond between master and servant and to build a relationship based on trust.

²⁶⁵ Linebaugh, Peter and Marcus Rediker *The Many-Headed Hydra* p214

It is evident from the journal of Aaron Thomas, a seafarer, that ships' crews had much contact with the local populations. However, not everyone was sympathetic to their plight. Thomas noted one incident in Antigua when a 'black fellow' informed on two sailor deserters who were eating dinner at his mother's house (*Aaron Thomas's Journal* p244).

²⁶⁶ Henly, Peter *The Life of Peter Henly* pp17-9

²⁶⁷ PP, Misc Vols 44 Anna Maria Pinney's Notebooks Vol 9, LB 5: JPP, Nevis, to Simon Pretor, 19 September 1782

²⁶⁸ PP, AB 15 Wm Coker Manager in Nevis a/c

²⁶⁹ Smith, Revd William *A Natural History of Nevis* pp35-6

The term maroon refers to runaways who hid and supported themselves for long periods in isolated areas.

²⁷⁰ Higman, *BW Slave Populations of the British Caribbean* p174

²⁷¹ JPP lent Billey N1s101/2d on 11 November 1765 and another N5s3d on 26 August 1775 (PP, AB 17).

When others were moved to the Gingerland estate, Billey remained on Mountravers. There he was treated in 1768 by a man from another estate, Brodbelt's All-Man. For curing Billey's foot, All-Man received N8s3d 'in part'; the rest, presumably, he got paid in sugar, rum, or other plantation produce.²⁷² Some years later, in October 1785, Billey was injured and the doctor had to be called in to deal with his dislocated shoulder. At N£6:12:0 it was a costly and no doubt painful procedure. When valued two years earlier, he had been appraised at N£66 and such a severe injury would have reduced his value even further.

Three years later Billey sustained another injury. Again, the doctor was called. He dressed Billey's head, administered the all-purpose cure of bleeding him, and prescribed a box of liniment. Coker paid the doctor's bill on 30 June 1788.²⁷³

Billey survived this treatment and lived at least until the beginning of the following year but he died some time before the end of December 1790. He probably was in his sixties.

One can only speculate on the cause of his injuries. They happened when William Coker managed the plantation once more, and it is possible he punished Billey so brutally that he injured him. But Billey may have been involved in fights, or a mule or one of the camels had kicked him. It is likely that, as the mule keepers, Billey and Portsmouth (No 153) were also responsible for the two camels that were then on Mountravers.²⁷⁴

59 York was perhaps born around 1725. He may have been the son of a man of the same name, acquired in 1716 from Thomas Washington.²⁷⁵

York died before July 1761.

60 Cubbenna was perhaps born around 1725. He died before July 1761.

61 Hannible probably was born perhaps around 1725 and named after the general renowned for his tactical genius.²⁷⁶

Some time in 1728 Hannible was sick and by way of treatment was bled.²⁷⁷ There is no indication from what he might have suffered as the practice of bloodletting was an all-purpose remedy for a variety of ailments ranging from asthma to sciatica.

It is likely that Little Hannibal (b c. 1750-53) was his son and that Hannible died not long before July 1761. He probably was one of the six people who died during Joseph Browne's management.²⁷⁸

²⁷² PP, AB 17: 31 January 1768

All-Man, most likely, belonged to John Brodbelt and may have come all the way from the parish of St John Figtree. There John Brodbelt paid his poll tax (PP, Dom Box P: General's Tax Notebook 1755), and in 1767 he was re-elected for that parish (UKNA, CO 186/6).

²⁷³ PP, AB 31 Archbald & Williamson's a/c

²⁷⁴ PP, AB 35

²⁷⁵ PP, WI Box B: Bill of Sale 17 November 1716

²⁷⁶ The question as to whether Hannibal, the general, was black and of African origin remains unresolved; the core of his army certainly was African.

²⁷⁷ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

²⁷⁸ In 1761 Little Hannibal was still known as Little Hannibal, which makes it likely that Hannible had died not long before then.

62 Paul was born perhaps in the late 1720s. In the mid-1760s he worked in the field and during crop time as a 'boiler'. His boiling house colleagues were Old Kersey, Castile and Mingo. Paul was judged as 'good and able'.

Not long after the new manager, William Coker, arrived in May 1761, and possibly during the time a conspiracy was supposed to have happened, Paul was involved in an incident that caused the death of Tom Bossue, the cooper. Paul had committed a capital offence which had to be investigated by two magistrates. To convict, it needed no less than two pieces of positive evidence.²⁷⁹ This constraint went back to a law passed in 1717 and originally applied to the trial of runaways who had committed 'felonies and other capital crimes' and whose punishment was likely to result in legal mutilation – the hacking off of limbs - or the death sentence. It was decided that in those cases the evidence of two or more enslaved individuals should 'be taken and deemed good and sufficient',²⁸⁰ but over time admissible evidence extended to all capital crimes involving all enslaved people, not just runaways. The slaveholders were responsible for funding the investigation, and on 22 July 1761 Coker accounted for N£1:18:0, 'for examining three witnesses vouching Pauls killing Tom Bosue'.²⁸¹ These three people's verdict was that he had stabbed Tom Bossue accidentally.

In this instance, a man had died. Had Tom Bossue survived the event, there would not have been any investigation and no witnesses would have had their say. Had a white man killed Tom Bossue, evidence from an enslaved person would not have been admissible at all. The abolitionist Wilberforce pointed out that 'In England, the labourer and his employer are equal in the eye of the law: here the law affords the slave no protection, unless a white man gives testimony in his favour.' He called this 'their degradation by law',²⁸² something which enslaved people suffered until the late 1820s when, finally and grudgingly, their evidence was deemed admissible in all cases. The system of slavery relied on white people's absolute, unquestioned power over enslaved people, and planters in Jamaica thought their fellow planter Gregory Lewis subversive for accepting eye-witness accounts by four of his people against a white book-keeper's denial of striking an African.²⁸³ Whites all over the Caribbean would have been appalled and horrified to hear how in a British Navy Court Martial the testimony of a black seaman resulted in the death by hanging of two white men. The black man was the principal prosecution witness and the trial for sodomy rested largely on his evidence. This Court Martial happened in the same year, 1761,²⁸⁴ when it took *three* enslaved witnesses to confirm that Paul's killing of Tom Bossue was accidental and illustrates the Navy's relatively liberal outlook on the question of colour.

During 1766 to 1768 Paul remained on Mountravers, with the sugar boilers Old Kersey (No 24), Castile (162) and Mingo (148). By 1783 these three men had died, and Paul worked with a new team of sugar boilers. One of them, the plantation-born London (No 215), was at N£130 worth the same as Paul. The third man, Warrington, an African in his late thirties, was valued N£20 more.

In the autumn of 1789 Paul fell ill. On 14 September he was visited by Dr Thomas Pym Weekes and six days later was given '8 oz scorb[utic] mixture'. By February 1790 he was not better. Mrs P was then in Nevis and it may have been at her request that doctors Archbald and Williamson were called in for further

²⁷⁹ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 pp356-62

²⁸⁰ Huggins, HC (ed) *Laws of Nevis 1680-1773*

²⁸¹ PP, WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney '1762'

²⁸² Wilberforce, William *An Appeal to the Religion, Justice, and Humanity* Part II p26 and Part I p11

²⁸³ Lewis, MG *Journal of a Residence* p99 and p112

²⁸⁴ Anon 'More on Blacks in the Royal Navy' in *BASA Newsletter* No 26 (January 2000) pp8-9, citing NAM Rodger *The Wooden Wall* pp159-61

treatment. Paul received a dose of 'strong mer[curic?] ointment' which cost N16s6d.²⁸⁵ It is likely that his health continued to decline and that he finally succumbed to an ongoing illness. Paul died between 1 January 1791 and November 1793.²⁸⁶ He probably was in his sixties.

63 Pawpaw, or Pappaw, was probably born after 1730. His name suggests that he was from the Pawpaws (also Popos, or Poppas)²⁸⁷ from the southern part of today's Benin. Said to have been industrious workers who submitted to discipline, Pawpaws were particularly popular.²⁸⁸

On 31 May 1762 William Coker accounted for a warrant against Pappaw (N6s), for 'the Constable serving ditto' (N3s), and for 'the Constable correcting said negroe' (N3s).²⁸⁹ There are no details as to why or how Pappaw was punished, or who the Constable was. It would have been a white man because at that time free people of colour were still 'denied the privilege ... of acting in any office of public trust, even so low as that of a constable.'²⁹⁰ This did not change until the 1820s.

Whatever Pappaw's offence was, he was considered an 'able' field hand, and JPP showed his trust by lending him N3s.²⁹¹

Between 1766 and 1768 Pappaw worked on the Gingerland estate. On 1 September 1768 all the others returned to Mountravers, but Pappaw stayed on. He was hired with the lower part of the plantation to Dr Benton.²⁹² Dr John Benton had practised as a physician in Nevis since 1763²⁹³ and had been the plantation doctor when John Hay Richens was managing the Gingerland estate. Dr Benton probably returned to England in 1769²⁹⁴ and may have remained there until July 1773.²⁹⁵ According to Pares, Benton was in arrears with JPP and ended having to sell some of his people and mules. He either died, or he was evicted from Lower Gingerland.²⁹⁶

After Dr Benton's departure, Pappaw had to get used to new masters. Two men in their early thirties, James and Edward Huggins, jointly rented the Lower Gingerland property.²⁹⁷ Edward Huggins, a man from a poor family,²⁹⁸ had been overseer on President John Richardson Herbert's estates until 1783,²⁹⁹ then acquired Coram's from Pinney & Tobin, with 26 people³⁰⁰ and in April 1789 purchased more lands. It was said that this was bought 'with his wife's handsome fortune.'³⁰¹ While James Huggins went to live in

²⁸⁵ PP, AB 30 TP Weekes a/c; DM Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f34 'TP Weekes Doctor of Physic in Charlestown' a/c, and AB 43 Archbald & Williamson's a/c

²⁸⁶ PP, Misc Vols 12 Leeward Islands Calendar

²⁸⁷ Gaspar, David Barry *Bondsmen and Rebels* p90

²⁸⁸ Angier, FR, SC Gordon, DG Hall and M Reckord *The Making of the West Indies* p74; also Bryan Edwards *The History of Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies of the West Indies* Stockdale, London Vol 2 pp88-90

²⁸⁹ PP, WI Box D: Accounts referring to the Estate of JF Pinney '1762'

²⁹⁰ Irwin, Graham W *Africans Abroad* p357, citing Bryan Edwards *The History* Vol 2 pp18-31

²⁹¹ PP, AB 17: 11 November 1765

²⁹² PP, AB 16 f17 Gingerland Plantation a/c and Dr Benton's a/c

²⁹³ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 5 p321; also UKNA, CO 186/7: 27 October 1768

²⁹⁴ Thoms, DW *West India Merchants and Planters*, citing Letter 460

²⁹⁵ On 8 July 1773 Dr Benton witnessed an assignment of land, with William Coker (ECSCRN, CR 1773-1774 f77). Earlier in the year Coker certainly was in England; in April 1773 he witnessed a marriage (DHC, Sixpenny Handley, Marriages 1754-1837).

²⁹⁶ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p82

²⁹⁷ In a fine example of eighteenth-century marketing, in October 1784 Pinney & Tobin wrote a circular letter to 25 Nevis gentlemen - among them James & Edward Huggins [mis-spelt Higgins in Minchinton] - inviting them to use the ship *Tobin/Captain Crosse* for transporting their produce (PP, LB 17, reproduced in W Minchinton *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* p128). It is not known whether the Hugginses were then already renting the Gingerland plantation. They certainly leased it from 1787 until 1789. According to Pares, JPP granted James Huggins a continuation of the lease and in the early 1790s James and Edward Huggins bought the Gingerland property for SE2,850 (AB 30 J & E Huggins' a/c and R Pares *A West India Fortune* p82).

²⁹⁸ Cottle, TJ *A Plain Statement*

²⁹⁹ NHCS, C1a13 Genealogical Notes on the Huggins Family

³⁰⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 f127

³⁰¹ Cottle, TJ *A Plain Statement*

St Vincent and there raised a large family,³⁰² Edward Huggins was laying the foundations for his considerable land holdings which many years later were to include Mountravers itself.

While working for Edward and James Huggins, some time before the end of May 1792 Pappaw died.³⁰³ He was aged at least around 50, at the most 62 years old.

64 Phillis, probably the oldest women on the plantation, was perhaps born in the 1670s. It is likely she was bought for Mary Travers's Mountain plantation between June 1701 and September 1703, together with the boy Taffie and the girls Bornebough and Sarah. At that time there were 25 people on the Mountain plantation: two men, seven women, seven boys and nine girls.

It is possible that Phillis was one of the women who founded families on Mountravers. Around 1735 a girl of the same name was born, and she, in turn, had a daughter who was also called Phillis.

Phillis died before July 1761.

65 Onylippo was perhaps born in the 1670s. She died before July 1761.

66 Great Affey was perhaps born in the 1670s and may have come from the Gold Coast region. There Afi, Afay, or Afua but also Effe (Efe, for Efuah) and Efia is the name given to a girl born on a Friday.³⁰⁴

Little Affey (No 84), born probably in the 1690s, may have been her daughter; her name later changed to Great Affey.

Great Affey died before July 1761.

67 Shabah was perhaps born in the 1670s. Little Shabbah (b c. 1745/6) may have been her granddaughter.

The name was not uncommon in Nevis and may have its origin West Africa where the word Saba (sah-bah) has different meanings in different regions.³⁰⁵

Shabah died before July 1761.

68 Banibah was perhaps born in the 1670s. Benneba (b c. 1758-61) may have been her granddaughter.

³⁰² NHCS, C1a13 Genealogical Notes on the Huggins Family

³⁰³ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, 22 July 1792; also JPP to James Huggins, 23 July 1792

³⁰⁴ Muñoz, S *The Afro-American Griot Speaks* p63 and pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999

³⁰⁵ The name Saba has different meanings. Among the Yorubba, it means 'to be accustomed to, or to incubate'; among the Bini of Southern Nigeria 'to be able'; among the Bambari 'dangerous, three, or to strike'; among the Wolof 'an honest person'; and among the Tshiluba of the Democratic Republic of the Congo 'to play; to ferment'. In the Kongo Saba means 'a temporary house, a hut' (Muñoz, S *The Afro-American Griot Speaks* p104).

Banibah is an unusual spelling of Beneba or Benneba. This name has its origin in the Akan language, where it is given to a girl born on Tuesday. Alternative versions are Abena (among the Ashanti and Akim), or Araba (among the Fanti).³⁰⁶

Banibah died before July 1761.

69 **Jibbah** was perhaps born in the 1670s. Her daughter may have been Gibbah (No 108), her granddaughter perhaps Little Gibbah (No 122).

Jibbah died before July 1761.

70 **Fibbah** was perhaps born in the 1670s. She died before July 1761.

71 **Aggree**, perhaps born in the 1670s, died before July 1761. Her name, too, is of Gold Coast, or Ghanaian, origin.³⁰⁷

72 **Old Lucy** was perhaps born in the 1670s. Lucy (b c 1734) may have been her daughter.

Old Lucy died before July 1761.

73 **Dendo** was perhaps born in the 1670s. The girl Dendo (b c 1715-20) may have been her daughter.

Dendo and also the girl Dendo died before July 1761.

74 **Old Sue** was probably born in the 1670s.

It is possible that she had once belonged to a surveyor called Ebenezer Kyrkland. When he died some time before 1696, he had left his wife Ann(e) a number of enslaved people. Among them were two women, Sue and Rose; the man Portsmouth; the boys Quashee, Bounda and Codando; the girls Juggy and Madam, and Will, 'a suckling'.³⁰⁸ Ann Kyrkland married again but within a few years her second husband, William Ling, also died.³⁰⁹

Ann Ling mortgaged her first husband's people to Richard Abbott of Nevis and two men from New England: Ralph Tonkin, a sailor, and Benjamin Thompson, a saddler. Mrs Ling died in 1710 and, not having cleared the loan, willed her possessions to these men. They, in turn, in 1718 mortgaged her nine individuals for N£548 to Azariah Pinney and James Milliken of St Kitts.³¹⁰ They may all have ended up in

³⁰⁶ Hart, Richard *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* Vol 2 Table 1 p11

³⁰⁷ Pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999

³⁰⁸ PP, WI Box A: Report dated 14 Aug 1696 and WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 3: Indenture dated 14 February 1718

³⁰⁹ BRO, 40583/1 Will of William Ling

³¹⁰ Ann(e) Ling's husband William, together with Thomas Washington, had been in debt to a New York merchant, Stephen Delancey. Six months before the indenture for N£548 was signed, Delancey had appointed Azariah Pinney as his attorney and charged him with recovering the men's debts, and it is likely that the indenture between Abbott, Tonkin and Thompson on the one

Pinney's and Milliken's possession and been shared out, with the two women, Sue and Rose (No 102), going to Pinney.

Sue (No 113), who was born about 1720, may have been Old Sue's granddaughter.

Old Sue died before July 1761.

75 Abbah was perhaps born in the 1680s. The girl Abba (b c 1745-8) may have been her granddaughter.

Abbah's name suggests that she may have come from the Gold Coast. There, among the Akan people, girls born on a Thursday are called Aba (also Abba or Yabba).³¹¹

Abbah died before July 1761.

76 Spencer was perhaps born in the 1680s. She died before July 1761.

77 Cubbah was perhaps born in the 1680s. She died before July 1761.

78 Minnah was perhaps born in the 1680s or 1690s. Her name suggests she may have been from the Mina, one of the people groups in present-day Togo, but she could also have been a so-called 'Mina negro', shipped from Elmina on the Gold Coast.³¹²

Minnah died before July 1761.

79 Hannah, later Old Hannah, may well have come from Major Child's estate with nine others: Bristol, Jemmy, Engla, black Betty, Bess, Nanney, Christmas, Bass, and Cuffee. They had been given as security for a loan and in 1714 had come into Azariah Pinney's possession.³¹³ By 1734 Bristol (No 4) and Nanny (No 87) may have been alive but only Hannah survived until the 1760s. By then she was 'old & a cripple'. She was freed from work in January 1765.

Old Hannah died between January 1765 and December 1768. She probably was in her seventies or eighties.

80 Venus was perhaps born in the early 1690s. She died before July 1761.

hand and Azariah Pinney and James Milliken on the other, was connected with the Ling/Washington debts (PP, WI Box B: Power of Attorney, 27 April 1717). William Ling, who had property in Nevis and New York (BRO, 40583/1), died in 1705 in Bristol; Ann ling (Lyng) in 1710 (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2 p311).

³¹¹ Pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999, and CL Ellefson *The Melting Pot Book* p72

³¹² Portuguese slave traders established their first fort on the African mainland at Elmina, which was so called because they were expecting to find and mine gold (Thompson, VB *The making of the African Diaspora* p81).

³¹³ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

81 Sarah was perhaps born in the early 1690s. She may have lived on Charlot's and been treated on 19 September 1703 by Will Semple with medication (phebol?) which cost N3s. Around that time he also treated her for an ulcer on her leg.³¹⁴ The girl Sarah (No 115), born about 1715, may have been her daughter.

Sarah died before July 1761.

82 Dillah was perhaps born in the 1690s. She died before July 1761.

83 Old Frank. Like Old London and Old George, who were also perhaps only about 40 years old, she was in 1734 already called Old Frank.

Old Frank died before July 1761.

84 Little Affey, later Great Affey, was probably born in the 1690s. It is possible she was the daughter of Great Affey (No 66), and she may have been the mother of the baby Gretaw (No 124), who was born in 1734. In the early 1700s a woman called Gritta had lived on Charlot's and this child may have been named after her.³¹⁵

By the 1760s Little Affey was known as Great Affey. She was 'old' and, for a couple of years in the early 1760s, she was stationed 'at the Mountain'. This was the Mountain plantation (also called Governor's) in the parish of St John Figtree. In the early 1760s Mountain was the last staging post for the aged, particularly women, and it is very likely that this was where they began the task of seasoning the newly arrived Africans.

Seasoning was the process whereby Africans fresh from the Guinea ships 'learned the ropes of their new life'.³¹⁶ They would begin to acclimatise to their new surroundings and to new diseases, learn to communicate with people from diverse cultures and get accustomed to the life of forced labour. Not without reason, the seasoning period was also described as 'breaking in' new arrivals.³¹⁷ Getting them adjusted to the work was one task; a Moravian missionary's slant on seasoning was that Africans had to acquire qualities they were lacking owing to their upbringing. A Guinea-born negro

... is a person whose faculty of reasoning has not at all been developed and who is also lacking in physical dexterity because he has grown up in his homeland in ignorance and inactivity. He must, therefore, be instructed like a child and introduced to work only gradually. A prudent master will turn him over shortly after his purchase to a couple of his old negroes whose proper conduct has earned his trust. They take care of him just as a parent looks after his child, introducing him to the work, helping him develop and plant the piece the piece of land from which he must support himself in the future, and supplying him with the necessary provisions until he is able to grow them on his own planting ground. For his part, he respects them as he would his own parents,

³¹⁴ PP, WI Box A under 1704: Will Semple's Medical Account

³¹⁵ PP, WI Box A under 1704: Will Semple's Medical Account

³¹⁶ Gaspar, David Barry 'Slave Importation, Runaways, and Compensation in Antigua 1720-1729', citing Robert Robertson *A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London*, J Wilford, London 1730 in Joseph E Inikori and Stanley L Engerman (eds) *The Atlantic Slave Trade* p312

Seasoning applied to white people, too, but presumably in the sense of overcoming illness, such as diarrhoea or a fever. JPP, too, experienced 'what they call a seasoning' but soon recovered (PP, LB 3: JPP to Harry Pouncy, 2 March 1765).

³¹⁷ Stapleton Cotton MSS 20: Ellis Younge, Acton, to Alexander Douglas, St Kitts, 29 July 1766

addresses them accordingly, and assists them in the meantime on their own little planting ground. At the same time, he learns the Creole language, and until he has learned it, many of his minor mistakes are overlooked.³¹⁸

Two planters, Bryan Edwards in Jamaica and Sir William Young in St Vincent, found that far from seeing them as an additional burden, the settled people welcomed the company and assistance provided by the newcomers and 'declared that they could support them without difficulty.' Bryan Edwards observed that many

proposed each of them to adopt one of their country-folks in the room of the children they had lost by death, or had been deprived of in Africa ... others because they wished, like the patriarchs of old, to see their sons take to themselves wives from their own nation and kindred; and all of them, I presume, because, among other considerations, they expected to revive and retrace in the conversation of their new visitors, the remembrance and ideas of past pleasures and scenes of their youth. ... The strangers too were best pleased with this arrangement, and afterwards considered themselves as the adopted children of those by whom they were thus protected.³¹⁹

According to a missionary who visited the West Indies in the 1760s, in the three Danish islands of St John, St Thomas and St Croix 'and elsewhere as well', people from the Congo took into their household newly arrived people from the Congo and baptised them in a special ceremony which sometimes was attended by several godparents. These foster parents were called 'baptismal father or mother' and, together with the godparents, were responsible for their 'children' until they died.³²⁰ It is very likely that, as a result of this artificially created kinship and with their own chain of kinship snapped, the adopted sons and daughters honoured these caring elders by naming their own children after them.

There is no record of placing children on Mountravers with adults from their own region on a long-term basis. One old woman on Mountravers was singled out by John Frederick Pinney as particularly suitable for seasoning children, but when he recommended to Coker that Old Mary looked after newly-arrived African children, he took no account of the children's origin.³²¹

Old Mary was at that time at the Mountain estate, as was Great Affey, and these two would have shared the responsibility of guiding the children through their first few years in Nevis. The women would have mourned Bridport's death in November 1763, and Cambridge's two years later, followed not long after by Chester's and Sally's. No doubt people who were in charge of seasoning would sometimes have been blamed or held responsible if newcomers died in their care.

Great Affey was manumitted in January 1765. It is likely that she then lived with her daughter Gretaw; she received money from JPP to put up a house. In 1767 Gretaw's daughter Affey was born.

Great Affey died between January 1769 and July 1783. She was at least in her seventies. Of the ten African children Coker had bought and who were 'seasoned by her, only Cooper Glasgow and Betty outlived her.

³¹⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p71

³¹⁹ Mathison, William Law *British Slavery and its Abolition* p72, citing Bryan Edwards *History* Vol 2 p154 and M Craton *Sinews of Empire* p212, citing Bryan Edwards *History* (1801 ed) Vol 2 p155

³²⁰ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p96

³²¹ PP, LB 3: JF Pinney to Coker, 15 October 1762

85 Old Yanica was perhaps born in the 1690s. The name may originate in Ghana where Yankey serves as a Fanti personal name,³²² or in Nigeria where Yekini (yay-Kee-nee) is a Yoruba surname.³²³ Jannica was an alternative spelling found elsewhere in Nevis.³²⁴ The girl Yanneky born in the 1740s may have been her granddaughter. Old Yanica died before July 1761.

86 Betty, or Bettey, may have been born in the 1690s. She probably was acquired after 1706 when two girls called Betty (aged 7 and 17) had been stolen from Charlot's. She may have been the woman Azariah Pinney claimed in March 1712/3 from Richard Abbott and Thomas Washington, together with the men Quaco and Jack, and the boy Nevis.³²⁵ Betty would have known a man called Yorke, who had also been owned by Thomas Washington before he came into Azariah Pinney's possession.³²⁶

Yorke, as well as Quaco, the fourth person levied on by Pinney, were dead by 1734, while the boy Nevis (No 28) and possibly Jack (No 21) were alive. However, they, like Betty, died before July 1761.

87 Nanny, or Nanney, was perhaps born in the 1690s. It is possible she was one of the ten people acquired by Azariah Pinney in 1714 from Major William Child's widow Elizabeth.³²⁷ When Azariah Pinney had granted the mortgage, Nanny was a young woman - older than Hannah (No 79) - but by 1734 they may have looked of similar age.

Nanny died before July 1761.

88 Jane was perhaps born in the 1690s. She died before July 1761.

89 Myrtilla was perhaps born in the 1690s. She died before July 1761.

90 Jemah was perhaps born in the 1690s. She died before July 1761.

91 Tittibah was perhaps born in the 1690s. She died before July 1761. Tuttabaw (b c. 1754/5) may have been her granddaughter.

Tittibah's name is one of the most intriguing on Mountravers. It is possible she was named after Tituba, one of the women who in 1692 stood trial on charges of witchcraft in Salem, Massachusetts. This woman, Tituba, a domestic slave, was believed by some to have been a Carib Indian girl who was brought from Barbados to North America by a Revd Samuel Parris. Accused of having bewitched his daughter, Tituba was the first woman to confess, and it is generally accepted that, while she was acquitted, 200 people may have been killed because of her confession.

³²² Pers. comm., Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999

³²³ Stewart, Julia *1001 African Names*

³²⁴ PP, AB 1790 John Stanley's Estate: Undated 'List of Negroes'

³²⁵ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

³²⁶ PP, WI Box B: Bill of Sale 17 November 1716

³²⁷ PP, WI Box B, filed under 1715

At the Salem witch trial the name was spelt in many different ways. Some have traced the origin of the name to the Yoruba of Nigeria but this has been disputed.³²⁸ If Tituba was a Carib and her name of Carib origin, this raises the possibility that the woman on Mountravers may also have been of Carib origin. In Nevis, some enslaved Caribs were working on plantations as late as 1700 but they did not survive much beyond that.³²⁹ Today, the head of a Carib on the national flag of St Kitts and Nevis is a reminder of these early inhabitants.

92 Katey was perhaps in the early 1690s and probably came to the plantation in early 1718, having been acquired from her previous owner, Alexander Squair. Azariah Pinney bought from him a female called Katey with her two children, Jenney and Betty, and Katey's brother, Cobenah (No 19).³³⁰ Betty probably died before 1734 and Jenney some time between 1728 and September 1734; in 1728 Jenney had 'Linnament for her neck'.³³¹ This was possibly to treat the very illness that killed her.

Katey died before July 1761, as did Cobenah.

93 Molly, Great Molly, and Old Molly. She was perhaps born in the 1690s. Although her name was very common, it is possible she had lived on Charlot's for many years; on 8 October 1703 a doctor attended to a woman called Molly.³³²

The field hand Bander Leged Moll (b c 1734-40) may have been her daughter.

By the mid-1760s, Great Molly was considered 'old'. She worked in the small gang. According to a physician who for many years had lived in Nevis and St Kitts, Dr Robert Thomas, in the small or second gangs were older children and adults 'of weekly condition', or those with 'trivial chronical complaints'. Certainly on Mountravers several old and infirm women worked in the small gang, as well as one man and several healthy children.

Dr Thomas claimed that small gangs did the weeding and 'other light work',³³³ but on Mountravers it was the third, or weeding gang, which carried out the easier tasks. His description, therefore, is deceptive and shows that plantations were organised differently. On Mountravers small gangs also holed the ground for potatoes and other provision crops (but not canes); planted and hoed canes; brought dung to the fields and spread it; carried canes to, and cane trash from, the mill. Of course, compared to the back-breaking toil the first gang had to do, the work of the small gang was less demanding but 'light work' it was not: bundles were heavy, cane leaves sharp and readily cut the skin, and on rainy days manure dripped through the dung baskets people carried on their heads.

By the time Molly was buying rum from the plantation, she probably did not work in the field any more. For about two years she might have run a shebeen, possibly with two other women, Kate Coker and Dorinda. The first reference to Molly buying rum was a payment of N£1:6:3 that JPP received in November 1777

³²⁸ <http://homepage.mac.com/macdomeeu/lu/tituba.pdf>

Tituba first appeared in literature in 1831 in Charles W Upham's *Lectures on Witchcraft*. In the 1950s Arthur Miller used the witch trials as an allegory for the McCarthy era. In his play *The Crucible*, which was performed as *The Witches of Salem*, Tituba is a 'negro slave' (Parker, Peter (ed) *The Readers Companion*).

³²⁹ Hubbard, Vincent K *Swords, Ships and Sugar* p24

³³⁰ PP, WI Box B

³³¹ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

³³² PP, WI Box A: Will Semple's Account

³³³ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 pp252-66

for five gallons of rum. A month later she bought more, one jug and five gallons. During 1778 Dorinda carried on buying rum but that year Molly did not buy any more until September, and then she continued buying rum for another year.³³⁴

She probably stopped trading in alcohol because she was getting increasingly frail; by July 1783 Old Molly was freed from work. Eleven years later, she still lived on Mountravers, as were several other women who had been manumitted with her: Old Yabba, Congo Flora, Old Phibba and Tyty. When JPP wrote to his manager after his second visit to Nevis, he warned that some recently manumitted women should 'remain in the negro-houses whilst the field gangs are at work.' He suspected that they, and also Old Molly, would steal and he wanted one of the watchmen to keep an eye on them.³³⁵

Old Molly died between August 1794 and December 1801, as did Bander Leged Moll. Old Molly was at least in her early nineties old but may well have been older.

94 **Gibbah** was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

95 **Sappho** was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

96 **Sarah** was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

97 **Belinda** was perhaps born about 1700. Almost certainly she was mortgaged in 1719 by the widow Margaret Cressey to Azariah Pinney, together with several other people. These were two other women (Sarah and Mendippa), three men (Jemmy, Lincoln, Nero), three boys (London, Coffee, Jason) and two or three girls (Affroa and two others).

In March 1727/8 Belinda came into Mary Pinney's possession, along with Coffee/Cuffee (No 43), London (No 32), Mercury (No 31), Sam (No 48) and ?Indemora. By 1734?Indemora had died but all the others were alive.

Belinda died before July 1761.

98 **Judith** was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

99 **Omar** was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

100 **Sarah** was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

³³⁴ Old Molly paid for her first batch of 6 jugs and 25 gallons on 30 September 1778. This was followed by 2 jugs 6 gallons in October 1778. In that month Molly, Kate and Dorinda bought 7 jugs and 30 gallons of rum between them, for a total of N£4:10:0, and in November 1778 12 jugs and 22 ½ gallons at N3s for a total of N£3:7:6. Molly bought more rum each month, up to April 1779, and one more batch in August 1779 but none during September and October 1779 when only Dorinda and Kate Coker were buying rum from JPP (PP, AB 17).

³³⁵ PP, LB 11: JPP, off Tortola, to James Williams, Nevis, 31 July 1794

101 Cundal, also Kendall, born perhaps about 1700, was in the 1760s described as ‘good but very old’. She was still working as ‘the old nurse’. Several other females could have performed such a job but the manager had chosen her for this task. She may have only recently been appointed, like those women fieldworkers on Mesopotamia in Jamaica, who only took on health care duties late in life once they had become semi-invalids.³³⁶ In Antigua, too, Luffman found that plantation hospitals were ‘attended by those unfit for employment or the superannuated’.³³⁷ But some women became the official health care workers because they knew how to treat illnesses with medicinal plants. In the Danish West Indies it was said that ‘Often an old negro woman who has some knowledge of the power of various leaves and roots is placed in the position of a physician’,³³⁸ and on Mountravers one woman who knew how to prepare and administer these natural remedies was Patty (No 194), the plantation midwife. Other women were chosen because they were dependable. A doctor in Nevis singled out a domestic as ‘a confidential servant about the house’ and judging ‘her character a good one’, he ‘was induced to put her in the sick-house as a nurse’.³³⁹ Kendall may, therefore, have been chosen because her disposition as a ‘good’ worker meant she could be trusted.

Being a nurse carried with it great responsibility and provided women with opportunities for exercising a certain amount of power and judgment. And power and judgment could be abused and misused, as the case of the domestic-turned-nurse showed: one of her two assistants later accused her of pilfering food intended for the sick and of sending sick people to back to work, without the manager’s orders to do so.³⁴⁰

The hospital on Mountravers was destroyed in a hurricane in the early 1750s and it is possible that, when JPP gave Kendall N£3 to put up her house, her home was intended to double up as a kind of sick room.³⁴¹ This may have been in addition to the hospital/lying-in room that appears to have existed close to the Great House until its functions were separated in the 1780s.

A few months after JPP gave Kendall money for the house, he lent her N1s6d,³⁴² no doubt confident that she was able to repay him. Especially if they had specialist skills, nurses were called upon to treat people on other plantations and so acquired some income. On Morning Star/Pembroke a woman from outside the plantation, Old Molly Hanley, earned a respectable £1:13:0 for curing a patient of the yaws.³⁴³ This ability to earn money through their skills placed nurses and midwives in a privileged position, and, writing about Jamaican estates, Michael Craton ranked nurses on Worthy Park among the ‘lower elite’, along with domestics and craftsmen and just below ‘heads and drivers’.³⁴⁴ Richard Dunn, however, positioned them among ‘marginal workers’. On Mesopotamia nurses became responsible for health care late in life, once they had become semi-invalids.³⁴⁵ On Mountravers, this may have applied in the early days but was not true later on in the eighteenth century.

Kendall was one of two nurses and while between 1766 and 1768 she remained on Mountravers; Rose, the other, was moved to the Gingerland estate. Generally, each large plantation had its own health workers: usually female nurses or midwives, less often male healers, or doctors. There were no legal

³³⁶ Dunn, Richard S “*Dreadful Idlers*” pp803-04 fn

³³⁷ Luffman, John A *Brief Account of the Island of Antigua* Letter XXII 15 September 1787

³³⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p87

³³⁹ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p297, p300 and pp293-95

³⁴⁰ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p297, p300 and pp293-95

³⁴¹ PP, AB 17: 20 June 1765

In 1781, on one of the Stapleton plantations two field hands, Bath and Hannah, had a house built for N£1:3:0, less than half the amount JPP gave Kendall in 1785 (Stapleton Cotton MSS 15 (v): 1781 Accounts, and January 1778 Slave List).

³⁴² PP, AB 17: 2 February 1766

³⁴³ PP, WI Box O-1, 1784

³⁴⁴ Craton, M *Searching for the Invisible Man* p141

³⁴⁵ Dunn, Richard S “*Dreadful Idlers*” pp803-04 fn

requirements to provide any of these and no set ratios. While on Stapleton Plantation in Nevis a nurse, herself 'troubled with fits', together with a healthy man, administered to 260 enslaved people,³⁴⁶ on Sion Hill in St Croix there was one woman 'attending old and sick,' one sick nurse and one midwife for just over two hundred.³⁴⁷ On another St Croix estate, Peters Rest, the ratio was a staggering seven nurses for 162 plantation people,³⁴⁸ but in addition to sick nurses these must have included wet and infant nurses.

Not all ill people went to the sick house. Sometimes relatives tended patients in their own home, in 'a more consoling ambience'. On a plantation in St Croix those who were gravely ill had permission 'to call to their bedside any one of their relatives', who were then excused from work.³⁴⁹ This practice may have applied to other plantations as well.

Nurses administered medicines. This might include weighing out of the ingredients 'such as the doctor ordered' and making up the concoctions,³⁵⁰ but equally well the compounds could be delivered ready-made. On an Antigua estate the nurse received her instructions from the manager, who, in turn, had got them from the doctor's messengers who had brought the medicine in little packets, one for each patient. As the nurse was illiterate, she had to remember for whom these were intended, and she did this by placing a packet between each of her fingers.³⁵¹

Sick nurses also dressed sores but probably did not bleed patients – on Mountravers enslaved men did this. During the smallpox outbreak in 1762, infected people were to be removed to a pest house provided for the purpose, and the Council of Nevis had decided to fine anyone harbouring 'Negroes and other slaves'³⁵² but, several months after this decision was taken, on Mountravers Kendall was doling out 'bread and fish etc for 6 negroes in the smallpox'. One of Kendall's duties would have been to prevent her patients from leaving the plantation. In total, at least twelve people caught the smallpox and one of her patients, a young Creole girl called Ducks Jenny, died.³⁵³

Nurses cared for 'young and old as well as sick and disabled slaves'.³⁵⁴ Their duties not only exposed them to the risk of catching contagious diseases such as smallpox or yaws, but nurses were also drawn into the whole punishment process. They cooked food for people confined in stocks and sick houses, and they bathed and dressed the wounds of those who had undergone floggings.³⁵⁵ Always at the sharp end of having to deal with the wounds caused by beatings, there is no direct evidence as to how Kendall and others dealt with their patients', and their own, emotional pressures. Some insight, however, comes from the testimony of Lujer, a nurse on the Stapleton estate. Lujer described how she had tried to ease one man's suffering. Eneas had been beaten and put in the stocks. He was in pain and blood ran out his mouth. She gave him 'calomel and jalap', felt his pulse, dressed his foot and tried to make him comfortable. Then, 'on Saturday night, seeing he would die, I set up with him ...'³⁵⁶ Lujer's account speaks of care and concern for Eneas and Kendall, too, must have sat with many of her patients, waiting for their lives to end. In the eight years before she was manumitted, more than thirty people died from illnesses and accidents.

³⁴⁶ Stapleton Cotton Manuscripts 16 iii D

³⁴⁷ PP, Dom Box T5-2: From a translation of an original appraisalment of Peter's Rest, Sion Hill and Catherine's Rest

³⁴⁸ PP, Dom Box L-1

³⁴⁹ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p147

³⁵⁰ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton pp293-95

³⁵¹ Higman, BW *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean* p266, citing The Burke Library, Hamilton, and Kirkland Colleges, Clinton, New York, Johnson MSS: 'Reports Relating to Mr Gordon's Estates in the West Indies', 1824, pt 2 p7

³⁵² UKNA, CO 186/4: 24 April 1762

³⁵³ PN 218, citing JPP LB 1765-1778 f10: JF Pinney to Coker, 15 October 1762

³⁵⁴ Higman, BW *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean* p178

³⁵⁵ HoCPP 1818 Vol xvii pp1-91 'Papers Relating to the Treatment of Slaves in the Colonies', Chadwyck-Healey mf 19.86 Eugene Moriarty's evidence 16 October 1817

³⁵⁶ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p300

By January 1769 Kendall was 'useless' but she was still able to earn some money from making and selling castor oil. When in March 1769 she sold two bottles to JPP, she earned N9s.³⁵⁷

If the castor oil plants then grew as abundantly around the Great House at Mountravers as they do nowadays, collecting the raw materials would have been an easy task for Kendall and, although the exact process she employed is not known, she and the other women would have prepared the oil by a very simple method. It did not require elaborate equipment but was, nevertheless, a skilful procedure. First of all the women had to pick the ripe, deeply-grooved, prickled fruit capsules, then shell the seeds out of their dense, oily tissue and crush these between rollers. They would gather the crushed mash in a coarse cloth and press it until the oil oozed out. While taking care not to use too much heat, the oil then had to be boiled up with water to purify it from its gluey substances and, once the impurities had separated into a scum, the liquid could be strained and then be left in the sun for bleaching. The result was a thick fluid of slight odour and an exceedingly nauseous and repulsive taste.

Castor oil was much in demand as a purgative but also had other medicinal applications. It could be used, for instance, for illuminating and lubricating and as a raw material for making soaps and fly-paper. The seeds of the castor oil plant contain a toxic matter that renders them poisonous – as few as three large seeds could kill a man – and buying bottles of castor oil was an act of faith. JPP always asked his to be supplied by well-integrated women he could trust.

Kendall died some time after March 1769 and before July 1783. She was in her seventies or eighties.

102 Rose, later Old Rose. It is likely that, as a girl in her teens, she belonged to the group of nine people who, in 1718, came into Azariah Pinney's possession from Robert Abbott, Ralph Tonkin and Benjamin Thompson. The group consisted of one man, Portsmouth, two women, Rose and Sue, and six children, some of whom may have been hers, or Sue's: the boys Quashee, Bounda and Codando, the girls Juggy and Madam, and Will, 'a suckling'.³⁵⁸ By 1734 the group had shrunk to two survivors: Old Sue (No 74) and Rose.

Around 1744, Rose gave birth to a daughter, Rose's Jenny, who in 1763, almost certainly, had a son called Foe. By that time Rose had become a nurse. She was described as 'good but very old'. Between 1766 and 1768 she, with her daughter and grandson, were moved to the Gingerland estates while the other nurse, Old Kendall (No 101), remained on Mountravers.

Duties between nurses and midwives overlapped; in fact after Kendall and Rose died the plantation employed no more nurses, only midwives.

Working as a midwife gave Old Rose an opportunity to earn some extra money; in February 1771 Joseph Gill paid her N£1:13:0 for delivering two of Morgan's women.³⁵⁹ Gill had been managing Robert Morgan's small estate,³⁶⁰ and undoubtedly these two women gave birth to his children. Gill probably chose her to assist with the births because there was no resident midwife on Morgan's estate. For each birth, Old Rose received half the amount paid to the midwife Agnes Adams a few years later but the cash she received was nevertheless a substantial amount. It was equal to what a captain had to pay for hiring a

³⁵⁷ PP, AB 17: 16 March 1769

³⁵⁸ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 3: Indenture dated 14 February 1718

³⁵⁹ PP, AB 20 Joseph Gill's a/c

³⁶⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1769-1771 f418

man to work on his ship for eleven days.³⁶¹ The money would have bought four turkeys, a box of laxative pills, or 11 blue and white china plates. She could also have spent it on a 'Negro hat' (N3s). The payment for Old Rose's work has only become known because it showed up in Joseph Gill's account but she may well have regularly earned money from delivering children on other plantations. Some of her income may have been in the form of produce or goods rather than cash.

In addition to her nursing duties Old Rose was also called upon to run errands. She was trusted with a large sum of money. In October 1771 she delivered to Mrs (John Pretor) Pinney's aunt Ann Weekes N£17:3:0 for 'lining and white Ozenbrig'.³⁶²

Old Rose died between July 1774 and July 1783. She probably was at least in her early seventies but may have been in her eighties.

103 Hetty was perhaps born about 1700. Hetty (b c 1734-43) may have been her daughter.

Hetty died before July 1761.

104 Damsel was perhaps born about 1700. She died before July 1761.

105 Mary was perhaps born about 1700. The name was so common that it is impossible to trace this woman but, given that she was listed immediately before Frankey, she may have been the girl Mary Cory on Mary Travers's Mountain estate in 1701 (?Marylong in 1703).³⁶³

Mary died before July 1761.

106 Frankey, perhaps born about 1700, may have been on Mary Travers's Mountain plantation first as Franke, later as Franckie. She and Mary (No 105) had arrived on Mountain before June 1701 and probably were either bought together, or they were recently born on the plantation.

Frankey died before July 1761.

107 Kitty was perhaps born about 1700 to 1705. She died before July 1761.

108 Gibbah, also Great Gibbah. Her mother may have been Jibbah (No 69), and she may have had a daughter called Little Gibbah (No 122) who was born about 1730.

Said to have been 'old & useless', Gibbah died between 23 July 1761 and 6 June 1762. She probably was in her late fifties, or early sixties.

³⁶¹ PP, AB 26 Jane Weekes's a/c

³⁶² PP, AB 20 Ann Weekes' a/c

³⁶³ PP, WI Box A; also notes courtesy of David Hancock

109 Kitty was perhaps born about 1705. She died before July 1761.

110 Celia was perhaps born between about 1705 and 1710. Described as 'very infirm' in 1763, two years later, she was in semi-retirement 'at the Mountain', taking over from Great Affey and Old Mary. However, while these two old women were manumitted in January 1765, Celia was not - despite her poor physical condition. There was still work she could do.

JPP must have chosen her as someone who could be trusted to assist with settling in the many new arrivals, and Celia's first group of children were nine 'Ebboes'. They came to the plantation in January 1765, and over the next three years she had to deal with over fifty newcomers. Great Affey, Old Mary and others must have assisted her with this.

In February 1766 Celia bought two jugs of rum from the plantation.³⁶⁴ While Old Harry, who also purchased rum at this time, probably re-sold his, this quantity is too small to have been for a commercial enterprise.

She became 'useless' some time between January 1769 and June 1772, and it is likely that Celia died, in her sixties, between June 1772 and July 1774.

111 Fibbah, later Dung Belly Fibba. She was perhaps born around 1710. Her name suggests she might have been from present-day Togo, where among the Ewe, Fiba or Afiba is the name given to girls born on a Friday.³⁶⁵ The nickname, which was added later, implies that she may have had an intestinal disease; it may have given her bad breath or made her flatulent. Nowadays it appears insensitive, even cruel, to emphasise Fibbah's weakness, but her nickname was no different from other contemporary nicknames such as Hop-along for a one-legged man, or Shorty for a particularly tall man. Adding the nickname may have been initiated by other enslaved people.

Despite being 'old and indifferent', by the mid-1760s Fibba was still fit enough to work in the 'small gang'. However, she was of advanced age and probably not worth much, and some time after 10 July 1768 she was 'given to Mr Coker'.

When JPP gave Fibba to the Cokers, William Coker was in England and his wife lived at Fort Charles. There it was so 'very sickly' that 'Mrs Coker was obliged to leave the fort in the winter'³⁶⁶ and, presumably taking her servants with her, went to live at Captain Browne's house.³⁶⁷ Fibba's new mistress was pregnant with her second son, John Frederick, and Fibba may have been alive when the boy was born in August 1770. However, it is known that Fibba died some time after January 1769, and probably by the time Mrs Coker returned to England at the end of April 1771, Fibba was dead already. She was about 60 years old.

112 Katey, perhaps born around 1715, died before July 1761.

³⁶⁴ PP, AB 17: 17 February 1766

³⁶⁵ Muñoz, S *The Afro-American Griot Speaks* p77

³⁶⁶ PP, LB 3: JPP to Wm Coker, 24 July 1769

³⁶⁷ PP, LB 3: JPP, Nevis, to Wm Coker, 28 April 1771

113 Sue was perhaps born around 1720. Her mother, or possibly her aunt, may have been Old Sue (No 74), a woman who died before 1761.

Probably in her early forties, Sue died between July 1761 and June 1762.

114 Sarah, also Little Sarah, then Congo Sarah. Probably born around 1720, she was later called Congo Sarah to distinguish her from the girl Little Sarah (No 233).

She worked in the small gang. Congo Sarah was 'good but infirm'; she suffered from a prolapsed uterus. For this she had treatment in February 1765, at a cost of N£1:2:6.³⁶⁸ She was one of two women with a 'falling womb', and probably Diana, who treated the other, Princess (No 196), also treated Congo Sarah.

It is likely that Diana would have known how to carry out vaginal examinations,³⁶⁹ but she could have made her diagnosis from Congo Sarah's symptoms. The 'falling womb' would have made Congo Sarah feel heavy and full in the vaginal area, she had backache, found walking difficult and was unable to control urination. Given that her cure cost three times as much as Princess's, her condition appears to have been much worse. She may have suffered from total prolapse: the entire uterus would have protruded, rather like a tumour - a frightening and very painful condition. Kiple and King wrote that many cases of prolapsed uterus were due to 'the habit of forcing the patient to stand erect right after delivery and shaking her until she delivered the placenta',³⁷⁰ and it is quite likely that Congo Sarah, too, had been subjected to such treatment when giving birth. However, there may have been other causes: the muscles and ligaments that normally hold the uterus in place may have become stretched or slack from difficult or multiple childbirths; she may have had a tumour, or suffered from chronic coughing or constipation. Constant heavy lifting could also have caused Congo Sarah's 'fallen womb', but the actual cause cannot be identified. It is possible that Diana managed to heal both her and Princess; for the time being the women carried on working and had no further treatment.

Three years after her treatment, on 27 September 1768 Congo Sarah died of an apparently unconnected illness, the 'flux'. She probably was in her early fifties.

115 Dendo was perhaps born around 1720. Her mother may have been Dendo (No 73). Both women died before July 1761.

116 Arabella, or Arrabella, born perhaps around 1725 and a 'good and able' field hand, in 1765 worked in the field as a member of the small gang. Two years later she was on the Gingerland estate. It is possible her daughter was Little Agree, born in September 1764. On 9 March 1769 Mingo killed the girl. Perhaps the deaths were linked: Arrabella died a few months later, on 18 November 1769. She probably was in her mid-forties.

117 Fibbah, Great Fibba, later Old Phibba. Little Phibba (No 212), who was born around 1745, may have been her daughter. Both were on Mountravers between 1766 and 1768. Now called Great Fibba

³⁶⁸ PP, AB 18 Wm Coker's a/c

³⁶⁹ Forbes, J Graham MD 'Native Methods of Treatment in West Africa: With Notes on the Tropical Diseases Most Prevalent among the Inhabitants of the Gold Coast Colony' in *Journal of the Royal African Society* Vol 3 No 12 (July 1904) p378

³⁷⁰ Kiple & King *Another Dimension* p171

and deemed 'good', she worked at first in the great, then in the small gang. Little Phibba was in the great gang.

Great Phibba owned at least one pig, and in June 1766 she sold JPP 8 and a half pounds of pork, for N6s4 ½d.³⁷¹ In England, rich people at that time dismissed pork as working-class food³⁷² but it appears that JPP consumed it regularly. He bought hogs, pigs or pork from over thirty Mountravers people and once from a man from another plantation. Men and women alike sold the animals, in roughly equal proportion. Pigs were useful animals to keep. They required minimum maintenance and could be fed on wild plants, refuse, as well as the 'stuffing' from the sugar mill.³⁷³

In 1777 Phibba was ill and, at a cost of N10s6d, doctors Archbald & Williamson treated her with 'blisters and a phial of drops'.³⁷⁴ This illness may have contributed to her being manumitted by July 1783.

If Little Phibba was, indeed, her daughter, then Old Phibba was a grandmother and a great-grandmother. Her granddaughter died young but her grandson was freed in 1803 by his father, together with three of Old Phibba's great-grandchildren.

She may well have been alive then because, after she was set free from work, she lived on the plantation for many years. Old Phibba died after January 1802 and probably before December 1806. She was in her late seventies or in her eighties.

118 Tity, also Tyty and Old Tyty. Probably aged only about 45, Tyty was in 1765 described as 'old'. She may have looked older because she suffered from poor health. She was 'infirm'. However, despite her condition she still worked in the 'field or small gang'.

Tyty was manumitted by July 1783 and, like other 'old, useless and maimed' individuals, she continued to live on the estate.

Although she had been freed from work and was of no commercial value, in the early 1800s, when the plantation and its inhabitants were sold, Old Tyty was among those who were transferred to the new owner. It is likely that she had become so frail that she was unable to live alone and look after herself. However, an added reason for selling her may have been a new piece of legislation which required owners to lodge £300 with the Treasury if they wanted to manumit people who were unable to support themselves. One way or another, by remaining on Mountravers this ensured that in her old age Tyty continued to live with her kith and kin, and to receive food and clothing allowances.

Given that she was then in her eighties and in poor health, it is most likely that Tyty was one of the nine people who were said to have died within six months of the Hugginses taking over the running of Mountravers in August 1809.³⁷⁵

119 Juggy was perhaps born between about 1720 and 1725. She died before July 1761.

³⁷¹ PP, AB 17: 25 June 1766

³⁷² Murray, Venetia *High Society* p191

³⁷³ Hanley, Lornette 'I remember when ... Interview with Robert Griffin of Butlers Village' in *NHCS Newsletter* No 39 (November 1995) p11

³⁷⁴ PP, AB 26 Plantation a/c

³⁷⁵ PN194, also Box 1 A-L: JW Tobin to Gov Elliott, 7 September 1810 unpublished letter

120 Bessy, or Bess. By the early 1760s, when she probably was in her early to mid-thirties, Bess was 'lame & blind', and soon became 'lame & useless'. By then she may have had a young daughter, Little Bess (No 232).

It is difficult to speculate what caused Bess's infirmities. Accidents or illnesses may well have led to her broken health but it is also likely that she was subjected to physical abuse. In the introduction to one woman's life story it was suggested that her 'near-blindness in later life might well have been caused' by 'persistent head-punching by her mistress', ³⁷⁶ and as Bess was also lame, it is possible that she, too, had been mistreated. Gregory Lewis recounted the terrible effects of his manager's brutal handling of two women. Kicked in the womb, one woman became disabled and another woman's child was crippled for life. Lewis, ever the wit, joked 'and thus, as my two estates are at the two extremities of the island, I am entitled to say that "white book-keepers kick black women in the belly *from one end of Jamaica to the other.*"'³⁷⁷

For Bess, her added lameness put an end to her working life, whereas Gloster, who, like her, was blind, was still 'useful in crop'. Bess was manumitted in January 1765. She died within the next three years, between January 1765 and the end of December 1768. She was perhaps in her late thirties or early forties.

121 Moro was probably born around 1730. Her name may have been a shortened version of Morote, which then was a fairly common name in Nevis. On both Jesup's and Lady Stapleton's plantations, for instance, were women called Morote and Maroti. These versions may have been alternative spellings of Mawaté, which among the Bassari of Togo is a name given to fourth-born child. ³⁷⁸

Although Moro would have been a very young mother, the girl Morote (No 209), born around 1743/4, may have been her daughter.

Moro died before July 1761.

122 Gibbah, also Little Gibba. It is likely her mother was one of the women of the same name (No 94 or No 108), one of whom died between 1734, the other, Great Gibba, between 1761 and 1762.

By the time Little Gibba was in her thirties, she had become 'lame and useless'. She was manumitted in January 1765.

Little Gibba died between January 1769 and July 1783. She was at least in her late thirties, at the most in her mid-fifties.



³⁷⁶ Ferguson, Moira (ed) *The History of Mary Prince* p5

³⁷⁷ Lewis, MG *Journal of a Residence* p174

³⁷⁸ Stewart, Julia *1001 African Names* p152

On the inventory, James Browne listed four children as 'Born since my entrance thereon' [i.e. on Mountravers]. They were born between 7 March and 14 September 1734.

123 Lucy, later Old Lucy. Her mother may have been Old Lucy (No 72), who had died by 1761.

In July 1763 Lucy gave birth to a daughter, Cuba, and just over two years later, in December 1765, she had twins, the girls Omah and Sue. Old Rose was the resident plantation midwife but because Lucy was expecting twins, another helper was called in to assist: Diana, probably a free woman who worked as a midwife, a nurse and a healer. She also treated Princess for a fallen womb, and later tended Hector and Warrington. For delivering Lucy, Diana received payment of N15s.³⁷⁹

Lucy, like all the women on the plantation, had to balance what was required of her as a worker and as a mother, but with a young daughter and the twins the task would have been even more demanding than usual. JPP recognised that she was not up to the heavy labour of clearing the land on the Gingerland plantation, and between 1766 and 1768 Lucy and her children remained on Mountravers.

Ten years on, in March 1778, when she was in her forties, she had one more girl, Little Bridget.³⁸⁰ She, like Cuba, was yellow cast; the twins were black. Lucy herself was black.

While pregnant with Little Bridget, in September 1777 Lucy sold a hog to JPP, for N4s1d, and in August 1780 another, much bigger one, which was worth four times as much.³⁸¹

When JPP left Nevis for England in 1783, he appraised all his people and judged Lucy worth N£70. This was relatively high for a female field hand aged nearly fifty; the other women valued at that amount were in their late teens. But Lucy was very strong. Judged 'good & able' as a young woman, in her early sixties she still worked in the field and certainly carried on working until her mid-sixties. But by then she had retired from fieldwork and did odd jobs around the plantation. For instance, she and two men in their forties, London and Scandall, 'attended masons'. They assisted William Fisher, Almond and Oroonoko.³⁸² Given her age, it is likely that she did the less taxing chores, such as fetching water and food for the men, but women were known to have lifted heavy loads. A visitor to St Croix observed that 'the burdenbearers for the masons are all women, who carry the mortar, and bring stones from the wharf; they are decently dressed, straight as arrows, and go through their daily labor sedately and orderly, in this hot sun ...'³⁸³

Lucy had three grandchildren. Her daughter Cuba had lost her first child, her second died young but her next two survived - Felix (b 1801) and Lucy (b 1806) – and Lucy's daughter Omah had a son, Goliah (b 1788). When the plantation was sold, Lucy, then known as Old Lucy, and her family remained on Mountravers - except for one of her twin daughters, Sue. She was among the people JPP reserved for himself when Mountravers was sold. They were kept separate from the people sold with the plantation and were hired to Clarke's Estate.

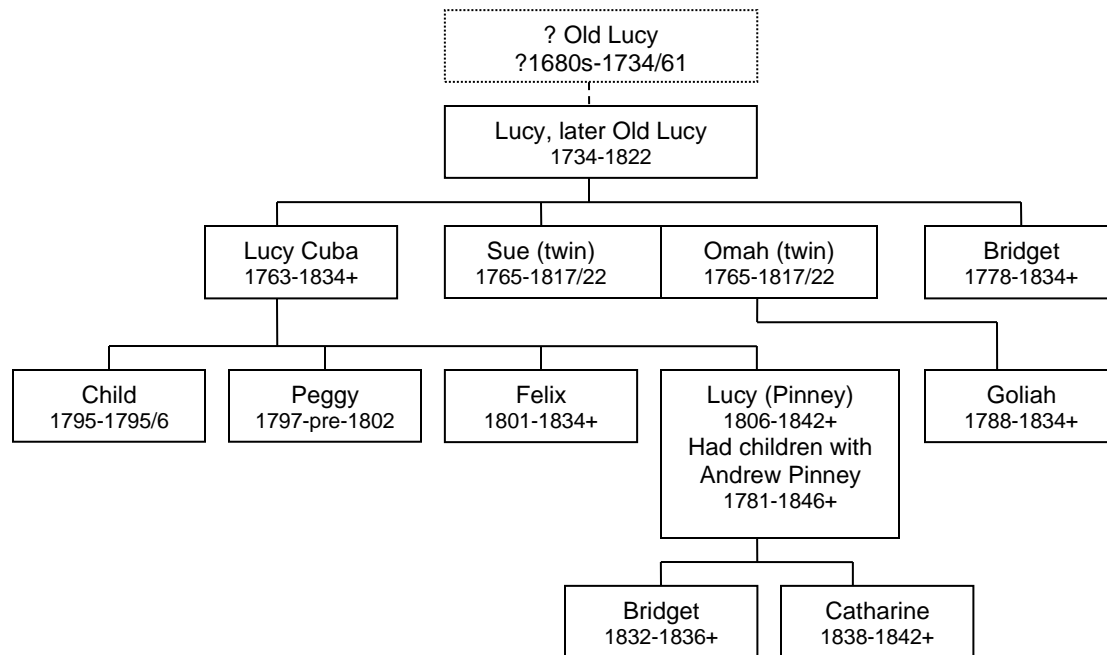
³⁷⁹ PP, AB 17: 9 February 1766

³⁸⁰ PP, AB 26

³⁸¹ PP, AB 17: 9 September 1777 and 31 August 1780

³⁸² PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary

³⁸³ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p199



In 1817 Old Lucy's 'reputed age' was 'about 90', an over-estimate of seven years. Some time between 1817 and the beginning of 1822 both her twin daughters Omah and Sue died, and Old Lucy died soon after, on 18 December 1822. She was 88 years old.

Of the 136 people registered by Browne in 1734, she had survived the longest. She had lived under six different owners, had buried two of her daughters and at least two grandchildren. She left behind two more daughters and three grandchildren who lived until at least August 1834.

Lucy may well have had many relatives on Mountravers. She may have had siblings; she, her daughters and her granddaughter may also have had more children who could not be identified, and her grandsons Goliah and Felix were likely to have fathered children. Given that Lucy gave birth to twins and that multiple births tend to recur in families, it is possible that a set of twins born in 1816 were part of her wider family. One boy, Valentine, died at the beginning of the year in which Lucy died; the other, Orson, was alive on 1 August 1834.

124 Gretaw's mother may have been Little, later Great, Affey (No 84), who was manumitted in 1765. It is likely that Great Affey came to live with her in June 1765 when JPP gave Gretaw N£3 'to put up her house'.³⁸⁴ She soon settled down and by November was able to sell him a small fowl, from which she earned N2s3d.³⁸⁵

In March 1767, at the age of 33, she had a daughter who was known as Gretaw's Affey.

³⁸⁴ PP, AB 17: 17 June 1765

³⁸⁵ PP, AB 17: November 1765

In the early 1760s Gretaw was a 'good & able' field hand but over the next two decades her health deteriorated to such an extent that at N£33 she was valued the lowest of all women. Her value was about the same as that of a five-year-old girl (No 434), and her own daughter was worth almost double.

But Gretaw was not freed from work and for some years she may have continued as a member of the second gang. Gretaw died in 1788. She was about 54 years old.

125 **Peggy** was 'good & able' and in the mid-1760s worked in the great gang.

When she was in her early thirties, Peggy had a child.³⁸⁶ Almost certainly this was Toa alias Peggy, born in December 1763. When Toa was five years old, Peggy gave birth again. Miah was born just before Christmas 1768. Shortly after giving birth, on 2 January 1769, Peggy died in childbed.

126 **George** died before July 1761. George's father may have been Old George (No 26).



On the right-hand side of his slave inventory, James Browne drew a separate column and entered the names of twenty men, women and children. These were people who had originally belonged to Phillip Brome (also Broom and Broome) and his wife Christian.

As a young man, Brome had left Somerset for Nevis where he had done well for himself. He became Collector of Liquor Duties and an agent of the Royal African Company,³⁸⁷ and in his forties had married the widowed Mrs Christian Chapman née Helme. She was the sister of William and Robert Helme - the men who in the seventeenth century had acquired Proctor's, part of the early Mountravers plantation. Phillip Brome died in Nevis in December 1705³⁸⁸ and, aged 52, was buried in St Thomas Lowland cemetery. His broken gravestone can still be found near the church.

Brome had provided generously for his widow. He settled £3,000 on her and willed her furniture and plate that had been 'left with Mrs Mary Helme of London.' He also bequeathed her six negroes - most likely his domestic staff: Sarah, Cooba, Dorset and Cojo, Mary and Long Peter.³⁸⁹ Brome may have acquired one of the men in February 1674; he had then bought an unnamed boy from the slaver *James*, a vessel that had come from New Calabar.³⁹⁰

In March 1706 the French invaded Nevis. They destroyed many buildings in Charlestown and surrounding areas, looted what they could and took with them 3,000 enslaved people. The widowed Mrs Brome, who had buried her husband just three months earlier, suffered heavy losses. In the parish of St Paul's the French destroyed her storehouses, a counting house and a cooper's shop and stole three people, and in the parish of St Thomas Lowland another five. Long Peter and the others would have

³⁸⁶ PP, AB 14 f30; also AB 15 William Coker's a/c

³⁸⁷ UKNA, T 70/13 f56 and VL Oliver *Caribbeana* Vol 3 List of Nevis inhabitants 1677/8 and Vol 2 p357

³⁸⁸ Christian Helme, the daughter of Robert Helme of Gillingham and Mary Chard, was born in February 1657. She married Aaron Chapman after 1686 and before 1690 (PP, WI Box A: 'Bill of Christian Chapman'). Aaron Chapman died in March 1693 (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 5 Helme Pedigree).

³⁸⁹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 2 p357; also PP, 'Damaged or Fragile' Box: Administration of Goods

³⁹⁰ UKNA, T 70/936 and David Eltis *et al* (eds) *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade CD-ROM Voyage* No 9699

known all of them: the 22-year-old house Muniko, her eight-year-old daughter Kitta, and three young men: Bussabo, aged 22, and Matho and Coke, both aged around 30. The French also destroyed her house in St Thomas Lowland. A substantial building with a pigeon house attached, it was valued at £800 (about £175,000 in 2016).³⁹¹

Mrs Christian Brome remained in Nevis and rebuilt her enterprises. She owned a considerable number of people and among her property was a 48-acre plantation above Old Road in St Thomas Lowland. She did not re-marry and died, in her sixties, towards the end of 1720.³⁹² After her death, members of her second's husband's family brought a lawsuit in the Nevis Chancery against her relatives in Dorset; Mrs Brome had died intestate.³⁹³ But twenty of her sixty people had come into Mary Pinney's possession, and from June 1727 onwards, Mary Pinney (John Frederick Pinney's mother and Christian Brome's niece) leased widow Brome's 48-acre plantation in St Thomas Lowland.³⁹⁴ Mary Pinney died in 1734, around the time the lease was due to expire. Because of the court case brought by Phillip Brome's family, the manager on Mountravers kept the twenty-strong Brome group separate.

As the agent for the Royal African Company, Phillip Brome had been able to take his pick and choose for himself the strongest and healthiest individuals. And so, fifteen years after he died, the six people he had left to his wife were all alive. Almost thirty years later, in 1734, four were alive and five of their children, and by 1761, two - Old Mary and Cooba (Cubbah or Cuba) - and three of the children: Jemmy, (Little) Shebah and (Little) Sarah.

The six people he had left to his wife were in 1720 worth altogether £269, their six children another £113.³⁹⁵ After 1720 another six children were born. Of these, three lived until at least 1734 but died before 1761, one died in 1765 and two after being freed from work in 1783. Old Yabba lived the longest. She died between 1794 and 1801.

127 Dorset Cash was probably born in the 1690s. He and Cuggah (No 128) were in 1720 described as 'now a man', suggesting they had only recently reached adulthood. In 1720 Dorset was worth £52.

He acquired his second name in the following years; he may have been related to the boy Jack Cash, who was on Mary Travers's Mountain plantation at the turn of the century.

Dorset Cash died before July 1761.

128 Cuggah was probably born in the 1690s. When valued in 1720, he, like Dorset, was worth £52.

Cuggah died before July 1761.

129 Little Jack, later Jack. It is likely that he was born around 1710. Little Jack's mother was Old Sarah, his sister Little Sarah (No 135). In 1720 Little Jack was worth £20, only £5 less than his mother.

³⁹¹ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box: 'Nevis Accompt of losses Sustained by Christian Brome in ye Parish of Saint Paules and Saint Thomas March 1705/6'. Elsewhere, only five enslaved people were mentioned (PN 21 (a)).

³⁹² PP, WI Box B

³⁹³ PP, DM 1841/7

³⁹⁴ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box and PN 17

³⁹⁵ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box

Her low value - almost half that of other women - suggests she was ill already. His mother died between 1720 and 1734.

Jack may have had a son, Little Jack (No 218), who was born in July 1755.

Jack died before July 1761.

130 Charge. It is likely he died in the early 1740s, perhaps in his thirties or forties.

131 Wiltshire may have been born just before 1700. He was 'purchased by ye said Christian Brome since her husband Phillip Brome's death', probably some time soon after December 1705. He may have been bought with Tom (No 132); both may have been acquired to replace the five people lost during the French invasion.

In 1720 Wiltshire was valued at £35.

Coker wrote in 1761 that 'Six negroes have also died during Mr Browne's management among whom was old Wiltshire, who tho far advanced in years, was a real loss to the estate.'³⁹⁶ Coker would have meant Mr Browne junior who managed Mountravers before Coker arrived in Nevis. This suggests that Wiltshire had died fairly recently. Little Wiltshire (b c. 1760), who later became a driver, may have been the son or grandson of 'old Wiltshire', and the Little Wiltshire (b 1820) may well have been related to him, too.

132 Tom may have been born around 1700. Like Wiltshire (No 131), he was 'purchased by ye said Christian Brome since her husband Phillip Brome's death'. In 1720 Tom was worth £30, £5 less than Wiltshire.³⁹⁷

Tom died before July 1761.

133 Jemmy, or Jemmey, later Creole Jemmy, was probably born in Nevis around 1707. He was Mary's (No 138) oldest child; his sisters were Little Shebah (No 139) and Nanny (No 140). The girls were about two or three and eight years his junior. In 1720 he was valued at £25.

It is likely that between 1728 and 1731 he had medication; Mary Pinney's estate paid N2s for a 'Bolus' for Jemmy.³⁹⁸

He probably had a son, Little Jemmy, who was born between 1745 and 1750.

In the 1760s Jemmy was known as Creole Jemmy, to distinguish him from Jemmy Richards and Great and Little Minah Jemmy. He was one of two 'infirm' drivers, leading the second gang. On 5 February 1766 JPP gave him N3s9d 'for Gingerland',³⁹⁹ and between 1766 and 1768 Creole Jemmy worked on the Gingerland estate, while the other driver, Jemmy Richards, remained on Mountravers.

³⁹⁶ PP, WI Box D: Wm Coker to JF Pinney, 23 July 1761

³⁹⁷ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box

³⁹⁸ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2

³⁹⁹ PP, AB 17 Nevis a/c

His sister Nanny had died between 1734 and 1761 and by January 1769 Jemmy had also lost his mother and his son, who, for a number of years, had suffered from 'King's Evil'. He did not survive his family for long. Creole Jemmy died, probably in his sixties, between January 1769 and June 1772.

134 Mando George almost certainly was an African man and from the Mende people of south-eastern Sierra Leone and western Liberia. Mandu, a port in Sierra Leone, may be a further link to his origin. He, Pappaw and probably Minnah, were the only people whose African origin was evident from their names.

Mando George died before July 1761.

135 Little Sarah, Brooms Sarah and later Old Broom's Sarah. She was born in Nevis, probably about 1711. In 1720 Little Sarah was worth £18.

Her mother was Old Sarah, a woman who had been left in Phillip Brome's will. She died between 1720 and 1734, and her brother Little Jack (No 129) between 1734 and 1761.

Between 1735 and 1745 Brooms Sarah had two daughters: Broom Sarah's Kitty (No 190) and Little Brooms Sarah (No 205). Her younger daughter may have had a daughter in 1771, Amelia. She certainly had a son, Little Nero, who was born in 1777.

By 1761 Broom's Sarah was said to have been 'old & useless', two years later 'old and a cripple'. She was manumitted in January 1765.

After she was freed from plantation work, Broom's Sarah earned some money by selling rum. For just over a year she bought rum from the plantation, which, no doubt, she sold at a profit. For a while she may have been in partnership with Old Harry. In 1765 and 1766 she bought a total of 20 jugs of rum on her own account, the last in February 1766.⁴⁰⁰

Old Broom's Sarah died after January 1769 and before May 1777.⁴⁰¹ She was in her late fifties to mid-sixties.

136 Cubbah, Cuba, also Broom's Cuba, was probably born in the mid to late 1690s. Her name, of Akan origin, is that for a girl born on a Wednesday.⁴⁰²

When she was still in her teens, she had a daughter, Kitty. In 1720 Cubbah was valued at £45, her daughter at £20, the same as Little Jack and Little Sheba. Kitty died some time before 1734.

It is possible Cubbah tried to run away. In the late 1720s she was bitten in two places by John Peterson's dogs and the doctor was called to dress her leg. Another woman was also 'bitt in several places, by Jacob

⁴⁰⁰ PP, AB 18 Wm Coker's 1764 a/c; also AB 17: 27 July 1765 and 19 August 1765

The price of a jug of rum varied from N10s6d to N12s (PP, AB 17).

⁴⁰¹ When her daughter was delivered of a child in May 1777, she was known as Broom's Sarah.

⁴⁰² Pers. comm., Revd Agyenim Boateng, 25 May 1999

Alternative spellings are Akuba, or Akua, or Ekua (Hart, Richard *Slaves who Abolished Slavery* Vol 2 Table 1 p11).

Lewis's dogs'.⁴⁰³ These injuries may suggest that they had tried to escape and had been hunted with dogs.

It is possible that the lameness she suffered from in later life was called by the dog bites. In 1761, then described as Broom's Cuba, she was said to have been 'very old & lame'. She did not do much work any more. Indeed, two years on, and she had become 'useless'. She was freed from work in January 1765.

Broom's Cuba died shortly after being freed. She died on 12 April 1765. She probably was around seventy years old. Of the people manumitted in January 1765, she was the first to die.

137 Shebah, later Great Sheba, was perhaps born between 1700 and 1705. In 1761 she was judged 'old and useless', and two years later as 'very old and useless'.

Great Sheba was manumitted in January 1765 and died a few months later, on 16 October 1765.

The fact that both Great Sheba and Broom's Cuba (No 136) died so soon after being manumitted, suggests that they had been made to work for too long. However, it was not in Coker's power to decide when to retire workers; he had to wait for JPP to arrive.

138 Mary, later Old Mary. Probably born about 1690 and an African woman, she was one of six people left in Phillip Brome's will.

Mary's children were 'borne since Phillip Broome's death': Jemmy (No 133) in about 1707, Little Shebah (No 139) about 1709/10, and Nanny (No 140) around 1715. In 1720, Mary was valued at £45; her children's total value came to £55.

Between 1734 and 1761 her daughter Nanny died and it is likely that Mary became a grandmother when her son had a boy, Little Jemmy (b 1745-50).

By 1762, then known as Old Mary, she was described as 'useless at the Mountain' and a year later as 'old and useless'. She was at the Mountain estate in the parish of St John Figtree with another woman, Great Affey (No 84), but when John Frederick Pinney wrote to Coker about seasoning a group of freshly imported Africans, he singled out Old Mary. She was particularly trusted. In earlier years she may have been a domestic. This is strengthened by the fact that, when Pinney remarked that Old Mary 'may take a couple under her care',⁴⁰⁴ he remembered a woman he had last met over a decade ago. His knowledge of her may have been based on her having kept house for him during his visits to Nevis.

In January 1765 Old Mary was manumitted. At the most, she lived for another four years; she died some time before the end of December 1768. She probably was in her mid to late seventies. Little Jemmy also died during that time.

⁴⁰³ PP, WI 'Damaged or Fragile' Box 2 : Account for 1727-1731

⁴⁰⁴ PP, LB 3: JF Pinney to Coker, 15 October 1762

Old Mary was also one of the few individuals Pares mentioned by name (Pares, *R A West India Fortune* p19).

139 Shebah, later Little Sheba and Old Sheeba. She was born in Nevis about 1709/10 and Mary's (No 138) daughter. She had a younger sister, Nanny (No 140), and an older brother, Jemmy (No 133). In January 1720 she was valued at £20.

Between 1734 and 1761 her sister Nanny died, her brother Jemmy became a driver and probably had a son, Little Jemmy (b 1745-50).

On 2 December 1764 the manager William Coker paid someone N£1:17:6 for catching Sheba.⁴⁰⁵ This was an extraordinarily high sum, considering her age (she was in her fifties) and that two years earlier he had paid only N£1:10:4 for catching Portsmouth, 'who had been run away a great while'. Perhaps Coker offered such a high reward because he was expecting his master to arrive soon and wanted to be sure none of the people were missing: JPP landed in Nevis less than three weeks after Sheba was caught.

With her transgression still fresh in Coker's mind, it is surprising, therefore, that when JPP compiled his first slave inventory on 16 January 1765, he noted that Little Sheba was 'good but old'. He had overlooked her disobedience, or he had accepted her reasons for absenting herself. After all, planters reluctantly tolerated a certain level of absenteeism among their people.

A field hand of advancing years, between 1766 and 1768 she worked on the Gingerland estate.

By July 1783 Old Sheeba was manumitted. She died between July 1783 and July 1794.

140 Nanny was probably born around 1715. She was Mary's daughter and had an older brother, Jemmy, and an older sister, Little Sheba. Aged about five, Nanny was valued at £10.

She may have been an aunt. Her brother probably had a son, Little Jemmy, who was born between 1745 and 1750. However, Nanny may not have lived to see him being born; she died some time before July 1761.



These six individuals were born between 1720 and 1734. The mothers may have been Little Sarah, Cubbah, (Little) Shebah, Mary, Shebah or Nanny (Numbers 135 to 140).

141 Cubbenna died before July 1761.

The boy Cubbenna (b c. 1758-60) may have been his son but could have been the son of one of the other Cubbenah's.

142 Mimbo, or Mimba. Not yet 40 years old, she worked in the small gang and was described as 'very bad, good for nothing'.

Mimba died on 19 September 1765. She was, at the most, in her mid-forties.

⁴⁰⁵ PP, AB 18 Wm Coker's a/c 1764

143 Yabba, later Old Yabba. She was a field hand in 1761 and assessed as 'good and able'. She was manumitted by 1783 and lived on Mountravers for at least another eleven years. Aged between about sixty and eighty years, Old Yabba died between August 1794 and December 1801.

144 Orange died before July 1761.

145 Cancoo died before July 1761.

146 Guy. Described as 'indifferent', in the 1760s he worked in the field.

In April 1782 he assisted the mason Tom Jones (No 347). A man much younger than Guy, Tom Jones, had hired himself from JPP, and the arrangement included the hire of Guy. His job was to cut firestones, which appears to have been local volcanic material. It tended to be worked into squares and was used in the construction of buildings and chimneys.

JPP set the rate at which Tom Jones was to pay Guy: 'a bit for every firestone 12 inches square when finished or a joe for a sett of firestone i.e. 120 stones in the ruff (sic)'.⁴⁰⁶ A bit was a small coin worth pennies but a joe was equivalent to about 35 shillings (worth about £270 in 2016).⁴⁰⁷ This represented a substantial income at a time when, for instance, a common soldier might earn 30 shillings a month.⁴⁰⁸

Not long after Guy was employed to do this heavy labouring job he was freed from work. He died some time between July 1783 and July 1794. He was at least in his late forties, at the most in his mid-seventies.

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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⁴⁰⁶ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1775-1778 f58

⁴⁰⁷ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p351

⁴⁰⁸ Stark, Suzanne J *Female Tars* p172 fn22