

PART 2

The enslaved people

Chapter 5

Under absentee ownership again (1783-1794)

*'I would not wish to have my people pressed
- it is a steady persevering disposition that
gets thro' the labour of the estate.'*

John Pretor Pinney (JPP), October 1790 ¹

For two decades a resident proprietor had directed all aspects of plantation management and now another quarter of a century of absentee ownership began.

Three managers worked on Mountravers during the years 1783 to 1794. With each new appointment people had to adapt to a different regime. While the white personnel changed, during this period the plantation population stabilised. Only six new people were purchased or acquired through mortgages falling due, even fewer were sold (five), and they were sold to be freed by their new owners. Significantly, under all three managers the number of children who were born was marginally greater than the number of people who died.

Of the 54 children born during this period, a third survived until slavery was abolished. They were the living links between the era of slavery and the post-Emancipation years. Many were baptised, attended church or chapel, and their children were the first generation to attend school. The majority were no longer buried on plantation land but in church cemeteries.

Politically the period was marked by the end of the American War of Independence, the upheavals of the French Revolution, the beginning of the French Revolutionary Wars and, in Britain, an increased awareness of the trade in enslaved Africans and a campaign to end it. The bloody uprising in St Domingue (Haiti) shocked whites on both sides of the Atlantic and gave hope to thousands of enslaved plantation workers.



After arriving back in England, John Pretor Pinney (JPP) was surprised by the fervent hostility towards planters. Some individuals had always been opposed to the trade in enslaved Africans and to plantation slavery, but this new national mood was on a different scale and significant enough for JPP to mention it to his friend in Nevis, James Tobin:

The people here seem devoted to our destruction – they entertain the most horrid ideas of our cruelties - it now pervades all ranks of people - they think slavery ought not to be permitted in any part of the British dominions. It is incompatible with the spirit of our constitution.²

¹ PN 222, quoting LB 7: JPP to TP Weekes, 31 October 1790

Since JPP's last visit to Britain the public's perception had shifted. In 1778 a court in Edinburgh had declared slavery illegal in Scotland,³ and just a few months earlier a shocking case had been heard in court in London: in order to preserve supplies, the captain of a slaver had thrown overboard 132 healthy Africans. He had then tried to claim the insurance money for his cargo - the men, women and children he had killed. The insurers took the case to court, not as a murder trial but as an insurance dispute. Publicised by the abolitionist Grenville Sharp,⁴ the *Zong* tragedy stirred people's conscience. The British public could no longer claim innocence of the 'Africa trade' and the horrendous conditions the captives had to endure, and so this outrageous story, this human tragedy, at least had one positive effect: in Britain the case against the captain of the *Zong* strengthened the campaign to abolish the trade in Africans.

In 1784 James Tobin joined JPP in Bristol and the two men began a new business venture. They followed the example of other planters who, after leaving the West Indies, had set themselves up as merchants.⁵ The house of Pinney & Tobin supplied the plantations and shipped the plantation produce to England, trading mostly with the West Indies but also with North America.⁶ It was a lucrative market although, during the American War of Independence, trade with America had all but ceased and after the war had to be re-established. For a British company it was a good time to go into shipping because under Navigation Acts American corn and timber could only be carried in British or British colonial vessels, and in October 1785 the house of Pinney & Tobin joined with the Bristol/Nevis firm of Protheroe & Claxton in chartering a vessel, the *Betsey*, for a single voyage to Nevis.⁷ Soon the House seized the opportunity, branched out and ordered the construction of their first ship, the *Nevis*. Their second ship, the *Edward*, was built in conjunction with Protheroe & Claxton.⁸

In addition to running his merchant and shipping operations, JPP followed events on the estates that had been mortgaged to him, and he tried to keep abreast of developments on Mountravers. However, his correspondence with his manager Joseph Gill turned out to be one-sided. Gill failed to write and did not inform him of plantation matters.

The Gill period, 1 August 1783 to 31 December 1785

Among the detailed instructions JPP had left for his manager was the request to treat his plantation people with 'humanity tempered with justice', and it was up to Gill to find and follow a path that satisfied

² PP, LB 5: JPP to James Tobin, 30 October 1783

³ Fry, Michael *The Scottish Empire* p xxii

⁴ Linebaugh, Peter and Marcus Rediker *The Many-Headed Hydra* p242

⁵ For instance, William Manning moved from St Kitts to London where he set up as a West India merchant (Sheridan, Richard B 'The West India Sugar Crisis and British Slave Emancipation, 1830-1833' in *The Journal of Economic History* Vol 21 No 4 (December 1961) pp539-51).

⁶ The company in which John Pretor Pinney was a leading partner began as Pinney & Tobin. In 1789 Azariah Pinney joined the firm, and the firm was renamed Tobin & Pinney. In 1796 James Tobin's son Henry Hope Tobin joined and the company traded as Tobin, Pinney & Tobin. By 1803 both Azariah Pinney and Henry Tobin had died and a new firm had been established, with James Tobin, John Frederick Pinney and Pretor Pinney as partners, called Tobin & Pinney. Pretor's incapacity for business soon became apparent and Charles Pinney was brought in, but until Charles came of age John Pinney had to do his work for him. In 1806 the company dissolved and a new firm was founded, that of John & John Frederick Pinney. This was dissolved in 1811 and was succeeded by a new company, Pinney & Ames. The partners were John Frederick and Charles Pinney and their brother-in-law Jeremiah Ames. Very soon after John Pinney died, John Frederick Pinney retired and a new firm was established, Pinney, Ames & Co, with Charles Pinney, Jeremiah Ames and Robert Edward Case as partners. Although Ames died in 1820, the name of the company remained in use until the company was dissolved in 1831. Charles Pinney and Robert Edward Case set up a new firm, Pinney & Case. Robert Case died in 1844, and in 1850 the company wrote its last letter (Pares, R *A West India Fortune* pp173-74 and Kenneth Morgan 'Bristol West India Merchants in the Eighteenth Century' in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 6th Series Vol 3 (1993) pp185-208).

⁷ Minchinton, W (ed) *The Trade of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* p131

⁸ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to William Coker, 6 December 1786, and LB 37: P & T to Edward Huggins, Nevis, 28 September 1787

his employer while making the workers under him do the work. Enslaved and unpaid, people were liable to slacking – even under JPP during his long residence on Mountravers they had ‘taken every advantage and sculked (sic) in their houses, under pretence of sickness, to avoid their work.’⁹ Gill had to find a balance between making sure that people were working to capacity while allowing them sufficient time to recover from illnesses and to work their gardens and allotments. It was up to Gill to establish his authority but, as soon as JPP’s ship had disappeared over the horizon, Gill was envagled, bullied, or cajoled by Mulatto Polly to allow her to employ another Mountravers worker for her own benefit. This was done without JPP’s approval and the first mis-judgment on Gill’s part.

Realising that Gill would need assistance in establishing good working relationships with people, not long after he arrived in England JPP sent to Nevis some items of clothing. Gill was to give these out as encouragement to drivers and as presents to the mixed-race people.¹⁰ JPP also dispatched his first order to Nevis. He asked for lemons, shaddoes and sweet oranges and a whole array of produce, and it was Gill’s task to organise the women to make them: prepare the sweetmeats, boil the pineapple jam and the guava jelly, preserve the ginger and pickle the peppers. Everything had to be done just so; the Pinneys, for instance, did not like the flavour of their peppers spoiled by papaw flowers.¹¹ Gill needed people who were reliable and, because no complaints came from Bristol, it appears that he employed the right workers who carried out the orders satisfactorily.

But judging by the sugar he shipped to England Gill did not manage to establish sound working relationships with the very people who were essential to the whole enterprise: his sugar boilers London, Paul and Warrington. The most important part of a manager’s job was to make good-quality sugars, but in this Gill failed from the beginning. His sugar was consistently bad, ‘very brown indeed’¹² and, as JPP kept telling him, the bad sugar sold to a bad market: ‘The difference in price between good and bad sugar is astonishing - Mr Vaughan assures me that he sold St Kitts sugar as low as 33s 7d, and some as high as 57s - a monstrous disproportion!’¹³ Gill received reminders from JPP how to test the moment at which sugar reached the point of ‘striking’ (it formed a thin thread if stretched between thumb and forefinger)¹⁴ and to pay attention to clean skimming and to strict cleanliness in the boiling house in general. The whole project was on a grand scale and careful oversight was important. To give an idea of the size of the operation: at the lower part of the plantation, at Sharloes, the heap of spent, ground cane was ten feet deep and measured 60 feet by 30 feet.¹⁵

Gill’s sugars sold to a dull sugar market. Poor crops would normally have pushed up prices but sugars smuggled from the French islands had ‘overstocked the markets’. This glut greatly reduced the price and planters predicted that bad sugars would ‘do little more than pay their expenses’,¹⁶ particularly as, during the American War of Independence, costs for plantation stores had risen greatly.¹⁷ One direct result of the low sugar prices and the high running costs was JPP’s urgent demand for strict economy - ‘more necessary than ever on a sugar plantation’. Cutbacks could be made on medical bills:

Avoid as much as possible the calling in of a doctor for the negroes, they are so exorbitant in their charges, it is impossible for an estate to support it. Simple, good nursing and kitchen physic are

⁹ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 July 1783

¹⁰ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 11 December 1783

¹¹ PP, LB 5: JPP, Stratford, to Joseph Gill, 5 January 1784

¹² PP, LB 7: JPP to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 1 October 1784

¹³ PP, LB 5: JPP to John Patterson, Nevis, 12 February 1784

¹⁴ PP, LB 5: JPP, Stratford, to Joseph Gill, 5 January 1784

¹⁵ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 July 1783

¹⁶ Stapleton Cotton MSS 9: Richard Neave, London, to Catherine Stapleton, 22 October 1783, and MSS 18: Walter Nisbet, London, to Catherine Stapleton, 12 November 1783

¹⁷ Ward, JR *British West Indian Slavery* p40

the only requisites to recover sick negroes: I was very successful in my practice and have no doubt but you will be equally so - at all events, rest assured, I shall be completely satisfied, whatever may be the consequence...¹⁸

The consequence was that at least two people died (Constant and Ritta Maillard) because Gill did not administer the appropriate treatment. Having encouraged his manager to save money, JPP could do nothing but be understanding of Gill's failure.¹⁹ Gill lacked experience in homemade remedies and, having just spent over N£13²⁰ on 'medicines in a box compleat (sic) to cure a venereal',²¹ Gill had to ask JPP's advice on how to treat the persistent cases of venereal disease which were giving people so much trouble. He received a reassuring and practical reply: 'a recipe for old standing complaints of that kind' could be found in the plantation books, and if Gill patiently oversaw the nurse giving the patients the drink 'therein prescribed regularly for a considerable time', this would in due course eradicate the disease. Wiltshire was to collect the ingredients, Patty to make a concoction and Gill to oversee the dispensing of the mixture.

In addition to buying some remedies and preparing others locally, Gill received an assortment of medicines from England. He also had instructions for setting up a new plantation hospital - 'the chamber next the store' was to be kept 'solely for lying-in women'.²² Birthing rooms, or lying-in rooms, were established so that women could give birth in clean surroundings and be kept under surveillance – one such room survives at the Old Manor Hotel in Gingerland parish²³ – but facilities for birthing mothers were not universal in Nevis or, for that matter, in Britain. One village in Somerset, East Reach, did not get its lying-in room until the beginning of the nineteenth century.²⁴ On Mountravers there had been a lying-in room when JPP lived on the estate,²⁵ and a hospital had existed on the plantation even in the previous owner's time, but JPP wanted the hospital moved. Planters' interest in women as 'breeders' only really came to the fore in the late 1780s and the 1790s when it looked as if the trade in enslaved Africans was going to be abolished. While it appears that JPP was ahead of his time in understanding women's child-bearing potential and their ability to replenish his workforce cheaply and indefinitely, his idea to separate the hospital from the lying-in room was not solely based on medical or social reasons. An added reason for not wanting 'to have a chamber so near the house to be made a general hospital' was that he feared people's carelessness with fire. (The lying-in room was lit with cheap 'dipt' candles from England.)²⁶ He wanted Gill to get the carpenters to 'fit up a room in the old boiling house in the yard, for the reception of sick negroes'.²⁷ The hospital also acted as the plantation jail and, being a certain distance from the house but still close to it, the inmates could all be under the manager's watchful eyes: mothers and their babies, patients and prisoners.

Also in the yard were the provision stores. They used to be at Sharloes but JPP had asked Gill to move them up to the house.²⁸ One reason was that the lower works were pestered with rats. JPP sent Gill the recipe for an arsenic-based rat poison with directions on its use in order 'to destroy the whole'. Another reason for storing the provisions close to the house was that they were within the manager's sight.

¹⁸ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 30 October 1783

¹⁹ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 January 1784, and LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 30 March 1784

²⁰ N£ means Nevis currency

²¹ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790

²² PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, 30 October 1784

²³ Gordon, Joyce *Nevis* p19

²⁴ The lying-in room in East Reach, Taunton, was established so that women could give birth in cleaner conditions than prevailed in their own homes (Bush, Robin A *Taunton Diary* p18).

²⁵ Underneath the lying-in room at Mountravers was a cellar which appears to have been used as a storage space; Pero reminded JPP that some items had been put in there for safekeeping (PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, 26 September 1786).

²⁶ PP, LB 12: JPP, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 10 November 1797

²⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, 30 October 1784

²⁸ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 July 1783

Pilfering of provisions was an ongoing concern, and JPP advised Gill to get the overseer to keep track of consumption by keeping regular weekly accounts. He knew from his own experience that this 'often leads to a discovery of thefts'²⁹ but apart from three lambs that were stolen out of a pen³⁰ during Gill's time as manager he recorded no other thefts.

The American War of Independence doubled the cost for provisions³¹ and, particularly when sugar prices were low, it made sense to increase the internal food supply. In the 1770s JPP had started a new planting regime and he asked Gill to continue this by setting aside 'A piece of potatoes and other provisions, of about 10 or 12 acres to be planted annually for the negroes.' He gave instructions which land could be used, including 'any piece at Woodland not appropriated'. The produce was 'to be reaped in the months of November or December',³² before crop started. Once crop was under way, people could get nourishment from sucking cane and eating fresh molasses. JPP made it clear that the plantation must not risk running short of food and asked Gill to purchase flour at St Kitts 'to provide against the worst' and to lay in sufficient stores for the winter.³³

In an island so dependent on provisions from abroad, at times of scarcity the non-arrival of one shipload of corn could make all the difference;³⁴ it could quickly tip the balance from people having sufficient food to people going hungry to people starving. To ensure his message got through JPP repeated his request not to 'forget to plant a piece of potatoes'.³⁵ Elsewhere in the Caribbean the French were also paying attention to independent food production; they were in the process of revising their Code Noir. Since 1685 planters in the French colonies had to work to a legal framework that was meant to guarantee minimum standards of food and clothing and, after amendments, a revised Code was enacted in 1784 and 1786. In order to supplement but not to replace food rations, in Martinique, for instance, all adults were to be guaranteed a small plot of land that they could cultivate on their own account.³⁶ Such guarantees did not exist in Nevis.

Part of the manager's job was to ensure the wellbeing of all the animals on the plantation and to employ them as efficiently as possible. Compared to two decades earlier, during Gill's time the estate was better stocked. There were fewer mules but JPP had quickly dispatched from England another four³⁷ to add to the 21 that were on Mountravers when Gill took over. Except for the sheep and the goats, they all had rather cosy names but there was no sentimentality about the way they were being treated. Since their care was rudimentary, animals died in great numbers and livestock had to be replenished regularly.

²⁹ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 11 February 1784

³⁰ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f137

³¹ Watts, Arthur P *Nevis and St Christopher's 1782-1784* p41

³² PP, P19 Private Letterbook 1783: JPP to Joseph McGill (sic), undated, probably 1783

³³ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 30 March 1784

³⁴ Minchinton *The Trade of Bristol* p129, citing Pinney & Tobin to David Ross, Portsmouth, Virginia, 19 February 1785

³⁵ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 25 February 1785

³⁶ Tomich, Dale 'Une Petite Guinée: Provision Ground and Plantation in Martinique, 1830-1848' in Ira Berlin and Philip D Morgan (eds) *The Slaves' Economy - Independent Production by Slaves in the Americas* pp71-2

³⁷ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 11 December 1783

During the years 1783 to 1787 a total of 111 mules were imported to Nevis: 18 in 1783, 30 in 1784, 4 in 1785, 6 in 1786, and 53 in 1787 ('Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part IV (1789): Appendix 6 Export of British manufactured goods to West India islands January 1783-January 1788).

Livestock on Mountravers, July 1763 (May 1767) and July 1783

	July 1763	July 1783
Cows	12	18
Steers	12	16
Calves	14 (7 bulls and 7 heifers)	8 (6 bulls and 2 heifers)
Bulls	4	7
Heifers	4	3
Mules	28	21
Asses	0	5
Horses	0	3
Camels	0	2
Goats	0 (July 1763 and May 1767)	4 (2 ewes and 2 rams)
Sheep	71 (May 1767) ◀▶ ▼ ▶▶ Of these, 49 were at Mountravers: 20 ewes, 1 ram, 10 wethers, 9 ewe lambs, 9 ram lambs Another 22 were at Gingerland: 12 ewes, 1 ram, 5 wethers, 4 lambs	71 plus 10 sheep and 1 lamb for fattening ◀▶ ▼ ▶▶ Of these, 31 were at Sharloes: 20 ewes, 4 rams, 1 wether, 4 ewe lambs, 2 ram lambs The other 40 were in the yard: 32 ewes; 4 rams, 2 ewe lambs, 2 ram lambs
Total	145	169

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Gill also had to make sure that the plantation structures were being maintained: the sugar works, the animal shelters, the houses for the watchmen,³⁹ the roads, walls and waterways. Out of crop he kept

³⁸ PP, LB 3: 'A list of Cattle belonging to me, Pinney'; AB 15: Inventory of May 1767 and AB 27: 'A List of Horned Cattle in Nevis, on the estate of John Pinney Esq. Taken July the 1st 1783'

people busy with mending, fixing, building, demolishing and re-building. Before he left for England, JPP had employed a mason to work on one of the boiling houses,⁴⁰ and from Bristol he sent iron bars 'for the addition to Sharloes works'.⁴¹ Also at Sharloes Gill was to improve shelter for the animals by adding another pen to adjoin 'the remaining part of the pen'. Gill, for his part, had decided 'to build strong buttresses against the banks in the gut (sic) where the water usually breaks over the sea-side pieces of land', and JPP added a request for the ghut to be widened and contained by a new wall with deep foundations.⁴² Elsewhere on the plantation, high up at Woodland, Gill oversaw the work of a mill being erected and the fitting of 'a main roll to the roller'. For this he employed a tried-and-tested free mulatto, Thomas Tyrell, who had previously carried out millwork on Mountravers.⁴³ Also on the upper part of the estate two areas had to be cleaned: the pasture under Woodland and the area 'where the negro-houses lately stood'. Having sold most of the newly acquired Woodland people, they had moved their houses over to Brazier's plantation and the land could be used more profitably.⁴⁴ These were major projects that would have involved many hands, but there were also small jobs that needed doing for which Gill had to set aside a few suitable individuals. For instance, after Mrs P's grandmother died, a tombstone was sent from Bristol, and it would have fallen on Gill to organise a few workmen to haul it from the ship and get the masons to fix it on the grave.

In supervising the people Joseph Gill was assisted by two men who had also worked for JPP: the boiling house watch John Keep, a coloured man, and the overseer Samuel Bennett. He had been on Mountravers since the early 1780s. To enforce discipline JPP almost certainly had flogged people but not used necklocks or clogs on them. These Bennett and Gill began using.⁴⁵ Gill had JPP's authority to flog the pasture boys if they did not follow instructions - for instance where to graze stock -⁴⁶ but Bennett transgressed what JPP had set as an acceptable standard. Bennett treated the people brutally. He also asked for an increase in his salary or improved conditions, and in August 1784 Joseph Gill sacked Sam Bennett. JPP approved: 'Your conduct towards Bennett for his cruelty to the negroes and for preferring so unjust a demand against my estate, pleases me.'⁴⁷ But Bennett's leaving meant that Gill had to assert his authority, and as soon as he had got rid of his overseer, Gill struggled to keep control. No doubt as an example to others, he sold 'two runaway good for nothing negroes', George Wells and Natt, and started to fetter people with clogs.⁴⁸ Gill also bought three necklocks,⁴⁹ but he did not pay out any cash rewards for catching runners. This may mean that people did no more than an acceptable amount of 'night walking' and of taking unauthorised time off, but it is also possible that, instead of paying cash rewards, Gill chose to reward hunters with rum or other indulgences.

As part of the move to economise, Gill was under strict instruction not to hire carpenters or other tradesmen.⁵⁰ He kept not only to this diktat but managed to hire out surplus workers. Most people were on short-term assignments but others, like Bess Powell and Othello, worked elsewhere for long periods. In total, in one half-year period in 1784 the combined hire income came to over N£140 but in 1785

³⁹ There may also have been some sort of shelter for field workers, similar to the 'slight house' which was built 'in every piece of ground' on the Stapleton estate. There these buildings were erected so that in the winter the naked field hands could shelter after the ship carrying new clothes had not arrived (Stapleton MSS 4.5: Joseph Herbert to Lady Stapleton, 7 April 1725).

⁴⁰ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Journal 1780-1790 f105

⁴¹ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 January 1784

⁴² PP, LB 6: JPP to Joseph Gill, 28 December 1784

⁴³ PP, AB 26 Thomas Tyrell a free Mulatto a/c; also AB 31 Thomas Tyrell a/c

⁴⁴ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 July 1783

⁴⁵ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f141 and f142; also AB 30 Richard Nisbet's a/c

⁴⁶ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 July 1783

⁴⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 28 December 1784

⁴⁸ PP, AB 31 f21 Smith & Dasent's a/c

⁴⁹ PP, AB 30; also AB 35 1784 Plantation a/c

⁵⁰ PP, LB 5: JPP to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 30 October 1783

dropped to nearly £180 for the whole year.⁵¹ Gill may have found it harder to get hold of temporary employers because there was a decline in demand, but it is more likely that he let things slide and made little attempt to hire out surplus people. He certainly had problems with the paperwork JPP required him to keep. When he took up his post, he had failed to familiarise himself with the content of the plantation books⁵² and his accounting was sloppy. When asked to contribute to a subscription to reward sailors from the frigate *Champion* who had put out a fire at Dr Archbald's, Gill simply took £3:6:0 in cash and charged it to the Negro Hire account.⁵³ JPP would never have done this, but JPP did not find out until much later. This was because Gill failed to send him the account books.⁵⁴ Gill also failed to keep his employer sufficiently informed of events on the plantation and in Nevis in general.⁵⁵

In January 1785 Joseph Gill was still fit enough to be invited to appraise Richard Oliver's Estate, together with his neighbours Messrs Parris and Ward,⁵⁶ but then, throughout the year, he deteriorated to the point where he became incapable of managing the estate. A man of fragile mental health, his already considerable rum consumption increased to such an extent that he became unable to cope with the demands of the job. He may have reached breaking point when he received news from Bristol that JPP was about to travel to Nevis, accompanied by Mrs P who was 'determined to take a trip'. This message arrived in the spring⁵⁷ and no doubt word of the impending visit spread quickly. Black Polly's daughter Fanny Coker, who worked for the Pinneys in Bristol, surely would have passed on the news to her family in Nevis. Black Polly may well have begun to prepare presents for Fanny, such as sweetmeats, while others would have planned the petitions they were going to present to their master and mistress. But the visit did not happen, and the overseer, whom JPP had promised to send from England, did not appear, either.

Fortunately Gill had assistance from James Williams who assumed some of the manager's responsibilities. Gill had taken JPP's request to economise seriously and in 1784 he had not called in any doctors but as soon as James Williams got to work, he sent Mulatto Peter to St Kitts for more medicines⁵⁸ and called in the doctors. They pulled several people's teeth. JPP's attorney, John Taylor, also got involved and arranged for the former Mountravers employee Thomas Arthurton to fully instruct James Williams in managing the estate. In the last week of August Williams took over officially.⁵⁹ For the time

⁵¹ PP, AB 35 Negro Hire a/c

⁵² PP, LB 5: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, 30 March 1784

⁵³ PP, AB 31: 6 March 1784

⁵⁴ PP, LB 6: JPP to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 25 September 1784

⁵⁵ As evidence of Gill's slackness Pares accused him of having forgotten to mention to JPP a hurricane (Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p142) but in his following letter JPP in effect apologised to Gill for having told him off for not writing about the hurricane. It had not been necessary to mention it because it did no material damage to the estate (PP, LB 6: JPP to Joseph Gill, 16 December 1785). However, even if the hurricane did no damage at Mountravers, knowing about a hurricane in Nevis might have informed JPP about the state of the crop that could be expected in the rest of the island, and therefore how a shortage of sugar from Nevis might affect the market in Bristol.

⁵⁶ ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1763-1787 ff618-29 (Richard Oliver's Will ff613-14)

⁵⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 9 February 1785

⁵⁸ PP, AB 30 Plantation a/c; also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f182

Although Mulatto Peter spent only N8s3d on medicines, at the 1786 exchange rate of 1.75 this represented almost 3 per cent of all 'Imported Apothecary Ware into Nevis'. The figures collected for the period 1783 to 1787 appear very low and may suggest that other plantations spent much less on health care than was spent for people on Mountravers.

Medical supplies were also available in Nevis but during the years 1783 to 1787 St Kitts was importing five times as much as Nevis: in total £798 worth of apothecary wares were imported into St Kitts and £161 into Nevis (£24 in 1783; £14 in 1784; £8 in 1785; £65 in 1786; £50 in 1787) ('Report of the Lords of the Committee of Council appointed for the Consideration of all Matters relating to Trade in Foreign Plantations' Part IV (1789): Appendix 6 Export of British manufactured goods to West India islands 5 January 1783-5 January 1788). This was a reflection of more ships calling at St Kitts and not of the relative size of the populations: 20,435 blacks and 2,280 whites and free coloureds in St Kitts compared to 8,420 blacks and 1,514 whites in Nevis (1787 figures in S Lambert (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 70 pp275-77).

⁵⁹ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f178 Memo

being Gill remained on the plantation but at the end of 1785 he left Mountravers to live in Charlestown. His time as manager was at an end.



Joseph Gill had worked on Mountravers for 883 days. He had presided over a relatively stable plantation population. Although JPP was still interested in occasionally purchasing for the estate new 'Creole negro boys or girls' (but only if they were 'healthy and of a very good family'),⁶⁰ Gill did not purchase any. The only changes in personnel happened when he sold two men he deemed unmanageable and when three mortgaged women joined the workforce (Peggy, Quasheba and Bessy Richens).

Gill's very restrained health care expenditure did not appear to have made any difference to the birth rates. During the time he worked on Mountravers 12 children were born: one after JPP left in 1783, (Phoebe/Pheebe), six in 1784 (Polly Neal, Cubenna, Frank Fisher, Rose, Dick, Flora's Peter) and five in 1785 (Lissy, Jenetta Scarborough, Mimba, Little Lewey, Little London). These 12 births outweighed the five deaths which occurred during Gill's managership, and it appears that with better care at least two people (Constant and Ritta Maillard) would have been saved. Of the other three who died, Susannah had twice been treated with medication but Quaw and Prue had not. They died without having been treated by a white doctor. They could have died from accidents or disease and Gill may well have been treated them, or they may have received medicines from plantation doctors within the community – the evidence is very inconclusive.

In terms of maintaining a stable plantation population, Gill had been relatively successful. During his time on Mountravers, on average one person had died every 177 days and a child had been born every 74 days.⁶¹

William Coker's second episode, 18 January 1786 to 31 July 1790

William Coker arrived in Nevis with JPP's joint power of attorney. He shared this with John Arthurton senior, the younger brother of Thomas Arthurton (the man with whom Coker had first come to Nevis in the 1760s). To what extent the two men worked together is unclear as JPP addressed most of his correspondence to Coker.

To begin with, after he had familiarised himself again with the plantation and its people, Coker had to catch up on work that Gill was supposed to have done but that had been left. For instance, he had to finish building the lime and stone animal pen, erect another one and complete the work on one of the mill rounds at Sharloes. (At Sharloes were two mills, an upper and a lower one.)⁶² The iron bars that had been

⁶⁰ PP, AB 27 f17: JPP to Joseph McGill (sic), July 1783; also Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Joseph Gill, 5 July 1783

⁶¹ In addition to the Mountravers people, another three died who are not included in this calculation: Bessy Steward, Harry London and Penny. They had come into JPP's possession through mortgages falling due but Bessy Steward and Harry London may not have lived on Mountravers – they were hired out during all the time Gill was at Mountravers - while Penny had suffered from consumption even in JPP's time.

During JPP's managership a child had been born every 110.83 days. However, that figure is misleading as it does not take account of those children who had been born but who had died before he compiled the 1783 list. Because there was no complete inventory of people for a 14-year-period, JPP's figures are less accurate than Gill's where two lists were completed within a two-year-period.

⁶² PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to William Coker, 30 October 1785, and AB 35 Edward Brazier's a/c

shipped from Bristol should have been in place at the works, and JPP repeated the instruction for them 'to be fixed above the receiver against the mill-round at Sharloes'.⁶³ In addition, JPP set Coker the tasks of building stone buttresses by the banks to protect the seaside cane pieces. High up, at Woodland, he was to re-site the works nearer to the house and the house itself was to be demolished, except for the two best rooms. These were for the manager when the Pinneys came to Nevis so that they could stay in the Great House. At the middle section of the plantation, by the Great House and separate from it, Coker was asked to build a counting house 'to preserve papers etc from fire and wind'. There already was an office inside the Great House, and this new project was low on the list of priorities. JPP wanted the building erected when the masons were 'most at leisure'.⁶⁴ Four years on, what Coker sometimes called the 'new writing room' was completed with the purchase of 'a very good strong lock with 2 keys' and a turned 'lignum vitae ball with mouldings for the roof'. With these in place, the building was finally finished and served as a good example of the masons' workmanship. It shows that these men could follow instructions and produce fine buildings of different designs. The counting house was fitted out with a deal writing desk which was bought locally⁶⁵ and with equipment sent from England: 'folio post paper, ink powder, red and black, wafers and wax, quills, [and] a penknife'.⁶⁶

After Coker was in post for a few months he faced a breakdown in discipline. With harsh measures he attempted to restore order:

5 October 1786	Coker purchased one large clog	N11s6d
19 December 1786	Coker purchased a clog and had it fitted	N8s3d
	The blacksmith repaired a clog	N3s
2 February 1787	Mulatto Charles was fitted with two clogs	N6s
	Coker purchased a large clog	N8s
	The blacksmith fitted it	N3s
	One clog was taken off and put on another person	N4s6d ⁶⁷

⁶³ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, 26 September 1786

⁶⁴ PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: 'A rough inventory, July 1783' and JPP to William Coker, 30 October 1785

As can be seen from the ruins that are left, the work was carried out according to JPP's instructions: '... Mr Coker will please to amuse himself in giving direction how to build a compting-house adjoining or near the platform before the dwelling house, 12 feet square in the clear, with an arched stone roof, turret fashion, to preserve papers etc from fire and wind. - The two iron bar windows on the estate to be fixed therein, for the admission of air, and to prevent any person, when the door is locked, from getting in. The door to face the end of the platform - one window opposite the door and the other to the westward, no window to the eastward. The masons to cut the stones all of one size, that the building may look ornamental.' At least one planter admired the design and copied it; a similar counting house can be found in Nevis at the Golden Rock Hotel, with a date stone of 1801.

Judging by JPP's instructions, it was up to Coker to complete the construction to his own design. It appears that there was no building at Coker's own estate in Dorset, Woodcutts, which could have served as a model. So far the author has found two examples in the West Country of about the same size and of a very similar design. One is at Over Court in Bisley, Gloucestershire, which according to Pevsner has an eighteenth-century gazebo 'with segment - headed windows, architraves, imposts and keystones and a moulded coved eaves cornice' (*Gloucestershire - The Cotswolds* p114). The other is at Church Farm, Lovington in Somerset, which is described in Pevsner's *South and West Somerset* as a 'two storeyed summer house'. Books about garden design published in Britain at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries by the likes of Thomas Overton, John Plaw and JB Papworth contain designs of summer houses and gazebos but it seems unlikely that Coker was reading garden design books.

Intriguingly, buildings of an almost identical design to that at Mountravers are common in the Charente region of France, between Cognac and Saintes and in the chateaux of the Medoc on the South bank of the Gironde. More heavily decorated, they tend to be set in garden walls or part of a courtyard wall and vary in length between about nine and twelve feet. They are so common that one may speculate that the idea of these elegantly-shaped buildings was taken to the French islands in the West Indies and from there to Nevis.

⁶⁵ PP, AB 36 Plantation a/c and AB 30 Plantation a/c

⁶⁶ PP, AB 43: Invoice for goods to be sent from England

⁶⁷ PP, AB 36 Smith & Dasent's a/c

31 October 1787	Coker purchased three negro neck locks	N8s3d ⁶⁸
7 November 1787	Joe was caught and brought back. The high reward suggests a long absence	N16s6d ⁶⁹
15 May 1788	Nero had a clog taken off	N3s ⁷⁰
14 August 1788	Another reward for Joe's capture	N4s1 1/2d ⁷¹
9 December 1788	Hannibal was fitted with a clog	N10s
23 December 1788	The clog was taken off one leg and put on the other	N3s ⁷²
15 January 1789	Four clogs were removed from three people	N12s ⁷³
11 February 1789	Violet had a clog taken off	N3s ⁷⁴
16 August 1789	Tom Maynard was caught after an absence of five months	N12s 4 1/2d ⁷⁵
6 September 1789	A reward for Nero's capture	N4s3d ⁷⁶
25 September 1789	Coker purchased two clogs with two loop rivets. A chain was spliced onto them and Mulatto Charles fitted with the contraption	N£1:4:9 ⁷⁷
1 March 1790	A reward for George Vaughan's capture	N4s6d ⁷⁸

Further evidence that people were resisting the new regime may have been the 'steer half-fat which had its leg broke'.⁷⁹ Maiming or killing animals were acts of sabotage that deprived the owner of his property while at the same time eliminating a vital tool in the sugar-making process. In addition, the dead animals provided meat, hides and possibly other useable materials, such as bones and horns, to which enslaved people might otherwise not have had access. Brutal and unnecessary as such acts of violence appear today, the use of animals as a weapon was not confined to the West Indies. In Britain, too, discontented farm workers stole or killed livestock 'as an act of protest or vengeance' against the animals' owners.⁸⁰ The incident with the steer happened at about the same time as a member of the royal family stayed in the island. Prince William Henry, one of the king's sons, 'honoured Nevis with a week's visit'.⁸¹ He was to give away in marriage the widow Frances Herbert Nisbet to one of the captains in the Royal Navy, Horatio Nelson.⁸² To entertain their royal visitor, the island had set aside a colossal sum, £800 (worth about £72,000 in 2016).⁸³ Inhabitants laid on horse races and cock fights and a splendid ball which seventy ladies attended.⁸⁴ It is easy to imagine how all the women jostled for the prince's attention and all the men tried to impress the royal visitor. On this small island his presence was a very special occasion

⁶⁸ PP, AB 30 Plantation a/c; also AB 35 Richard Nisbet's a/c

⁶⁹ PP, AB 30 Plantation a/c; also AB 36 Plantation a/c

⁷⁰ PP, AB 30 Joseph Powell's a/c; also AB 35 Joseph Powell's a/c

⁷¹ PP, AB 35 Plantation a/c

⁷² PP, AB 35 f22 Joseph Powell's a/c

⁷³ PP, AB 30; also AB 33 f115 Joseph Powell's a/c and AB 35 Joseph Powell's a/c

⁷⁴ PP, AB 35 f22 Joseph Powell's a/c

⁷⁵ PP, AB 30 Nevis Cash a/c; also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f45 Cash a/c and f48 Plantation a/c

⁷⁶ PP, AB 40; also AB 30 Nevis Cash a/c

⁷⁷ PP, AB 30 Plantation a/c; also AB 33 f136; also AB 39 Scarborough & Jones, Blacksmith's a/c

⁷⁸ PP, AB 30; also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f58 1790 Plantation a/c

⁷⁹ PP, AB 36 Plantation a/c

⁸⁰ Rule, John *Albion's People* p236, citing Douglas Hay 'War, dearth and theft in the eighteenth century' in *Past and Present* Vol 9 (1982) p129

⁸¹ PP, LB 8: JPP to WB Weekes, 29 April 1787

⁸² NHCS, St John Figtree Births, Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 and Sheila Hardy *Frances, Lady Nelson* p53 and pp58-9

⁸³ PP, LB 8: JPP to WB Weekes, 29 April 1787

⁸⁴ The royal visit was a major event in Nevis's social calendar and word reached Bristol of the party. JPP could report that Prince William Henry had danced with the bride, as well as with Mrs Walter Nisbet, Mrs Richardson, and Miss Parris (PP, LB 8: JPP to WB Weekes, 29 April 1787).

indeed. Even the plantation workers got their share of the prince's attention. It was reported that he 'frequently' talked to them but among the wider slave population the visit by the 'Grande Bocrah'⁸⁵ may have been viewed from a different perspective and remembered for different reasons. In a coup that probably sprang from bravado rather than hunger, 'a remarkable fat beef reserved for the entertainment of his Highness was a few nights before his arrival killed by some runaway negroes, a sad disappointment'.⁸⁶ A sad disappointment for some, a painful experience for the stock keeper charged with looking after the animal but, no doubt, a source of much merriment for others. Snatching the centrepiece for the royal banquet was such a very public, cheeky victory.

Those charged with looking after the animals were mostly Africans, and when JPP's old friend John Hay Richens moved to Woodland in the summer of 1787, Coker chose one of them, Hector, to work for him. JPP let Richens stay rent-free - 'I really pity that poor fellow' -⁸⁷ but Richens did not remain JPP's guest for long. Before the year was out, he had drunk himself to death. It was up to Coker to wrap up Richens's affairs but he soon became busy with his own family matters: his son John Frederick arrived in Nevis with Coker's nephew, Thomas Pym Weekes.⁸⁸ Coker had briefly engaged as a boiling house watch a coloured Creole, John Keep, and he then employed his son. This must have seemed like a good solution but JPP had not sanctioned the arrangement and it was later held against Coker. Employing the young man was an unnecessary expense; Coker's overseer James Williams, who had served under Gill, was supposed to have watched the sugar-making in the boiling house at all times. This would have meant working day and night. On top of this Williams kept the accounts for Coker. Now in his sixties, he was not well. He wrote with a trembling hand and may have had a stroke, or he suffered from an illness such as Parkinson's Disease.

There are signs that Coker was not always as efficient as his employer wished. For instance, he appeared to have been slow in acting on JPP's call for the mixed-race boys to be apprenticed, and JPP had to repeat his request that it was 'high time to place out the mulatto boys to trades.' JPP wished to have a sufficient number of carpenters, masons and coopers because 'You cannot have too many, they will always bring good hire.'⁸⁹ Eventually Coker complied and chose a number of young people from different backgrounds. The plantation-born mulattoes Billey Jones and James Peaden became coopers and carpenters, while a purchased Creole, Mulatto Peter, was taught to draw teeth. Coker also apprenticed two boys to a mason. They were both black Creoles. With one of them, the Mountravers-born Phillip, he made a bad choice because Phillip ran away from his master, John Keepe, but Almond, who had come to JPP by way of an auction, obediently completed his training. From the girls Coker chose the plantation-born mulatto girl Sally Peaden to be trained as a seamstress.

In the 1770s JPP had begun lending money to people in Nevis, taking their land and people as security. One of the properties that had come into his possession was Symond's/Mount Sion, and the three new women (Peggy, Quasheba and Bessy Richens), who had come into JPP's possession during Gill's time, were to be hired to Symond's, along with any others whom Coker could spare.⁹⁰ Coker probably did not send anyone to Symond's – he did not account for any hire income from that estate – and as JPP's attorney he appears to have made other decisions regarding Symond's which JPP later criticised. But Coker managed to find a variety of employers to whom he hired surplus workers: planters like Walter Nisbet, merchants like John Arthurton and Robert McGill, tradesmen like Morgan Hearne and John

⁸⁵ Oliver, VL *Antigua* Vol 1 p cxxx

⁸⁶ PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to WB Weekes, 29 April 1787

⁸⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to William Coker, 4 May 1787

⁸⁸ PP, AB 33 f29 Capt Charles Maies a/c

⁸⁹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 October 1787

⁹⁰ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 30 January 1787

Handcock, as well as a free French fisherman, Modeste Lapula. Three women were out on long-term hire contracts: Bess to Job Powell, Philley to James Carroll, and Peggy – with Othello – to John Hay Richens, while several of Thomas Pym Weekes's people, who were mortgaged to JPP, were on a long-term assignment at Fort Charles. Coker found employment for many other people away from the plantation: Glasgow, Glasgow Wells, Philley, Leah Weekes, Jack, Tom Thraske, Primus, John Wilks and Harlescombe. On their return, they all brought back with them outside influences. Being hired out gave people opportunities to experience different environments, learn new skills, meet old friends and make new ones. But there were disadvantages, too: their temporary employers were likely to give them the hardest work and they may have been subject to uncontrolled abuse. The women who were hired out on a long-term basis may in fact have been forced to serve as live-in mistresses. Others, however, may have been in genuine relationships and hired by their partners so that they could be together. This apparently happened to one of the women, Sarah Fisher, in the early 1800s.

Gill had been supplied with four new mules and Coker was sent another six.⁹¹ Having already given up some cane land for feeding his people, JPP also wanted land set aside for the 'poor mules'. They were to have about eight or ten acres of pasture.⁹² It is difficult to determine whether JPP wanted the mules treated well out of business-centred self-interest, or whether he was carried along on a wave of enlightened thinking. The eighteenth century was, after all, the Age of Enlightenment which brought with it progress in science and technology, instilled in people respect for humanity and changed their moral values. No longer did mankind search for answers in the Bible but in nature, which led to nature being investigated in new ways. Butterfly and beetle-collecting became popular, and in an effort to get to the core of a being, the new scientists practised vivisection and undertook exciting but often rather gruesome experiments. The view emerged that humans and animals were basically the same. This led to a change in attitude towards animals. One writer, for instance, condemned 'the prevailing rage of dog-killing' as man's ungrateful response to a faithful creature, and he appealed to his fellow humans' better nature.⁹³ The Age of Enlightenment was also the era in which concern for social welfare emerged and, with it, a zeal for social reform, and animals were included in this. As Roy Porter wrote: 'Along with children, slaves, noble savages, orphans, the blind, deaf and dumb, and fallen women, animals became objects of sympathy.' It is no coincidence that the campaign to abolish slavery ran almost parallel with that of improving animal welfare. Those who fought on behalf of animals first founded The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1824 and in 1835 succeeded in getting The Cruelty to Animals Act passed. This outlawed some cruel animal 'sports' but bull-baiting continued into the 1840s and cock-fighting until end of the century and beyond.⁹⁴

As JPP's attorney, Coker had to collect rent for the houses in Charlestown from the various tenants: Abraham Alvarez and Frances Frith, the cooper and vintner James Carroll and the free coloureds Tom Walker and Penny Weekes⁹⁵ - people who lived in the house where 'Old Mr [Azariah?] Pinney carried on his business'.⁹⁶ An altogether more unpleasant a task was to collect money that was owed on loans. Coker, for instance, had to deal with the mortgage JPP had given to Thomas Wenham. Money was to be collected from Wenham's children, and if they did not comply with the conditions of payment (which included paying the difference in currency fluctuations), Coker was under instruction to take all the

⁹¹ PP, AB 30 Plantation a/c

⁹² PP, LB 8: JPP to Wm Coker, 8 August 1788

⁹³ *The Annual Register* 1760 p209

⁹⁴ Porter, Roy *Enlightenment* p349 and p195

In a throw-back to pre-Enlightenment days, illicit dog fighting has been revived in Nevis and has, once again, become a wide-spread practice.

⁹⁵ PP, AB 36 Houses in Town a/c

⁹⁶ PP, LB 19: JPP to JF Pinney, ship *Pilgrim*, Cork Harbour, 17 November 1804

enslaved people into possession.⁹⁷ But in the past Coker had worked with Tom Wenham, and in a small community of whites it was not advisable to make enemies. Coker may have been somewhat slow in collecting the money, because at the beginning of 1789 close to N£100 was still outstanding on the Wenham mortgage.⁹⁸ The House knew how friendships could get in the way of business; after all, both partners, JPP and James Tobin, had a 'long personal intimacy with most of the inhabitants of Nevis' and realised that 'to refuse a fav'r [favour] is often to lose a friend.'⁹⁹

'The dread of total abolition'

The founding in 1788 of the African Association, which stated its aim as supporting the exploration of Africa,¹⁰⁰ coincided with moves to stop the trade in human beings from that continent. Across Britain people united under the banner of the recently formed Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade. In Bristol, a city which in the 1730s and early 1740s had briefly enjoyed the status as the leading British slaving port with, on average, about one slaver a week sailing for Africa, concerned citizens met 'to petition Parliament to annihilate the African trade' (this was 'carried without a division'),¹⁰¹ and William Pitt raised the issue in the House of Commons. In Bristol opponents to abolition were sufficiently alarmed to counter with an organisation of their own. They shifted the focus away from Africa and set up the West India Society - a committee of planters, merchants, traders, manufacturers and ship-owners with interests in Africa and/or the West Indies. Their purpose was to defend the trade 'on which the welfare of the West India islands and the commerce and revenue of the Kingdom so essentially depend[ed].' They held their first meeting in April 1789. JPP and his partner James Tobin attended.¹⁰² Many of the Society's members were to become intimately connected with the Pinney and Tobin families: among them Evan Baillie, the father of JPP's son-in-law Peter Baillie who later married Elizabeth Pinney, and Henry and Robert Bush who had a family connection with the Tobins (a Robert Bush married James Tobin's daughter Frances). In addition there were members of the Protheroe, Claxton and Daniel families whose firms did business with Nevis and St Kitts in conjunction with the Pinneys. Indeed one member of the Claxton family, Christopher, became the master of one of the Pinney-owned ships.

The year 1788 also saw the introduction by Sir William Dolben of a Bill to regulate the slave trade. Dolben's proposals passed Parliament, and for the first time British vessels had to limit the number of enslaved Africans they could carry. Linking this to the predominant issue – the ending of the transatlantic slave trade – the house of Pinney & Tobin prophesied that 'African merchants would be more than ever tempted to overcrowd their ships at a time the dread of a total abolition was hanging over them.'¹⁰³ The House viewed the Dolben Act 'as an omen of a general abolition' and feared that any restrictions would render plantations uneconomic.¹⁰⁴ To counter the abolition movement they argued that it was absolutely 'necessary to make a determined opposition',¹⁰⁵ but this was not easy for the pro-West India lobby. The political climate was such that the topic had become 'so unpopular that gentlemen' preferred not 'to give their real sentiments in public.'¹⁰⁶

This may have been true of JPP, but one man who did not shy away from making his views known was his business partner, James Tobin. For some years he had been engaged in a very public spat- 'a small

⁹⁷ PP, Misc 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis: JPP to Wm Coker, 30 October 1785

⁹⁸ PP, AB 30 Children of Thomas Wenham's a/c

⁹⁹ PP, LB 37: P & T to George Webbe Daniel, Nevis, 10 February 1789

¹⁰⁰ Hallett, Robin (ed) *The Records of the African Association*

¹⁰¹ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to Ulysses Lynch, St Kitts, 29 January 1788

¹⁰² Latimer, John *Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* pp476-77

¹⁰³ PP, LB 37: P & T to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 24 May 1788

¹⁰⁴ PP, LB 37: P & T to George Webbe junior, Batchelors Hall, Nevis, 3 July 1788

¹⁰⁵ PP, LB 37: P & T to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 11 February 1788

¹⁰⁶ PP, LB 37: P & T to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 24 May 1788

performance' - ¹⁰⁷ with an abolitionist clergyman, Revd James Ramsay. What makes their exchange especially interesting is that Ramsay – unlike Wilberforce - had direct, personal experience of plantation slavery. For close to two decades, from 1762 onwards, he had worked as a surgeon in St Kitts¹⁰⁸ and married into a very prominent local planter family.¹⁰⁹ His brother-in-law was a 'Guinea factor' which gave him first-hand access to the workings of slave sales and plantation slavery.¹¹⁰ In his approach to slavery Ramsay was ahead of some of his fellow abolitionists; as early as 1778 he had submitted to senior English clergy an outline for 'a plan for the education and gradual emancipation of slaves in the West Indies.'¹¹¹ Unsurprisingly, his views had made Ramsay intensely unpopular in St Kitts, and in 1781 hostility from planters forced his retreat to England.¹¹² Ramsay did not let the matter rest there, and in his new post as vicar of Teston in Kent followed up his earlier ideas by publishing an *Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies*.¹¹³ To this a number of people had written anonymous replies but, according to Shyllon, it was James Tobin who had 'spearheaded the West India interest onslaught on Ramsay'.¹¹⁴

Tobin's first salvo had been published as '*Cursory Remarks upon the Reverend Mr Ramsay's Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of the African Slaves in the Sugar Colonies, by a Friend to the West-India Colonies and their Inhabitants*'. Ramsay's response had been immediate,¹¹⁵ and for the following four years the two men carried on a very public exchange of views. It only ended with the death in 1789 of

¹⁰⁷ PP, LB 37: P & T to Ulysses Lynch, St Kitts, 23 April 1788

¹⁰⁸ Shyllon, Fçlarin *James Ramsay The Unknown Abolitionist* p125, p35, p46, p56 and p126

¹⁰⁹ Educated at King's College, Aberdeen, James Ramsay had worked as a surgeon in the Navy before taking Holy Orders (Croswon, Sheila in *BASA Newsletter* No 38 (January 2004) p11). He married Rebecca Akers, the only daughter of Aretas Akers and his wife Jean Douglas, on 23 June 1763 - not long after arriving in the West Indies (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 4 pp98-104 and SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/8a).

¹¹⁰ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 pp141-42

¹¹¹ Brown, Christopher L 'From Slaves to Subjects: Envisioning an Empire without Slavery 1772-1834' in Philip D Morgan and Sean Hawkins (eds) *Black Experience and the Empire* pp110-40. Brown noted that Ramsay may have hated the American rebels even more than he hated slavery; central to his argument was that Parliament should take control of the islands away from the island assemblies.

Ramsay's submission of 1778 to the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury is catalogued as 'Memorial on the Conversion of Slaves in the Sugar Colonies by James Ramsay' London Lambeth Palace, Fulham Papers XX, f80; copy to the Bishop of London in Lambeth Palace Library, SPG Papers, XV11, ff221-23.

¹¹² Shyllon, Fçlarin *James Ramsay The Unknown Abolitionist* p126

¹¹³ Croswon, Sheila in *BASA Newsletter* No 38 (January 2004) p71

¹¹⁴ Shyllon, Fçlarin *James Ramsay The Unknown Abolitionist* p59

¹¹⁵ James Tobin's reply to Ramsay, his *Cursory Remarks upon the Reverend Mr Ramsay's Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of the African Slaves in the Sugar Colonies, by a Friend to the West-India Colonies and their Inhabitants*, was published in London and Bristol in 1785; James Ramsay's *A Reply to Personal Invectives and Objections contained in Two Answers published by Certain Anonymous Persons, To An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves* was published in London in the same year. Ramsay's volume had, as the title suggests, been written in reply to two anonymous attacks on him, neither of which was by Tobin. However, in the foreword to *A Reply* Ramsay stated that after he had written this, 'another anonymous adversary stepped forward with his Cursory remarks calling himself a friend to, and pretending to have been an inhabitant of, the West Indian colonies' (Ramsay, J *A Reply* ppviii-ix). Thereafter the pamphlets were produced in the following sequence: *A Reply to Personal Invectives and Objections contained in Two Answers published by Certain Anonymous Persons, To An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves* (James Ramsay, London 1785); *A Short Rejoinder to the Reverend Mr Ramsay's Reply: with a word or two on some other publications of the same tendency* (James Tobin, Salisbury 1787); *A Letter to James Tobin, Esq; Late Member of His Majesty's Council in the Island of Nevis* (James Ramsay, London 1787); *A Farewell address to the Reverend Mr James Ramsay* (James Tobin, London 1788); and finally *Objections to the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (James Ramsay, London 1788) which also dealt with other attacks on him. Tobin's *Cursory Remarks* and Ramsay's *A Reply, Letter from Capt JS Smith and Objections* can be found in the microfilmed 'Anti-Slavery Collection, 18th-19th Centuries' (Anti-Slavery Tracts, Reel 1, London, World Microfilm Publications, from the Collection of the Library of the Society of Friends 1978). A manuscript by Ramsay that is concerned mainly with the abolition of slavery can be found in RHL, MSS Brit.Emp.

Describing Revd James Ramsay as 'the original and very violent mover in this business', after Ramsay's death the House sought to discredit him by suggesting that he acted from suspicious motives. It was felt that his temper was 'much too warm and his disposition too irritable' and one of the partners wrote, patronisingly, that 'if he was truly sincere in his professions ... even his adversaries must pity him.' It was noted, with some surprise, that Revd Ramsay had left behind some supporters, notably Thomas Clarkson - 'absurd enough, to write a book purposely to prove the impolicy of the slave trade' (PP, LB 38: Tobin & Pinney to Monsieur Texler, Bergerac, France, 28 December 1789).

Tobin's 'reverend and virulent antagonist'.¹¹⁶ Apart from debating the rights and wrongs of plantation slavery, their dispute had, at times, become very personal. Tobin had accused Ramsay of being motivated by 'private pique and resentment, encouraged by the flattering hope of patronage, or spurred on by the ardent desire of popularity', and he attacked Ramsay for not manumitting his people and for selling them to individuals Ramsay later described as 'a set of illiberal tyrants'.¹¹⁷ Ramsay, in turn, accused Tobin of 'being a hireling, only bribed to furbish up the contradictory absurdities of the St Christopher gentlemen'. He parried Tobin's attack on his motives by accusing Tobin of championing the planters' cause so that he could advance his business as a sugar factor.¹¹⁸ With both sides printing their arguments and with the press reviewing their publications, this very public debate was also heard across the Atlantic. JPP supplied William Coker with a copy of 'Parson Ramsay's essay'¹¹⁹ and sent Tobin's reply to a St Kitts correspondent,¹²⁰ while the local paper printed some of Ramsay's correspondence. This, in turn, made its way back to Britain where it circulated among the West India set.¹²¹

Ramsay was not the only former St Kitts resident in favour of abolition. A surgeon, Thomas Cochrane, who had worked in the island for 14 years, had provided the abolitionist Thomas Clarkson with information which had then been published by the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade.¹²² In due course Cochrane's views were countered in a pro-slavery tract written by Jesse Foot, the doctor who had worked in Nevis and who had challenged JPP to a duel. Dr Foot contributed to the debate *A Defence of the Planters in the West Indies; comprised in four Arguments on comparative Humanity, on comparative Slavery, on the African Slave Trade, and on the Condition of Negroes in the West Indies*. In his introduction Foot spoke of planters being 'tossed about in the turbulent ocean of prejudice' and claimed that the planters could win the debate. It was merely a matter of educating the British public. His tract was pro-slavery propaganda at its most basic level ('the sun always shines' in the West Indies) but so appealed to the Society of Planters and Merchants that it ordered 500 copies for distribution among members of the British Parliament.¹²³

Another man who tried to educate the public was Richard Nisbet from Nevis. An ameliorationist, he entered the debate with a grandly titled pamphlet which he dedicated to Revd James Ramsay: *The Capacity of Negroes for the Religious and Moral Improvements Considered: With Cursory Hints to Proprietors and to Government for the Immediate Melioration of the Condition of the Slaves in the Sugar Colonies*. Some of the points Nisbet made in this pamphlet had first been published in the *St Christopher Gazette* but pro-slavery forces had since then prevented him from continuing to air his views in that paper. Nisbet attacked the system of slavery as being 'highly arbitrary and oppressive and void of every moral relation between master and slave' and suggested that Africans had higher moral sensibilities, derived from behaviour learnt prior to their enslavement, than Creoles who were inured to the system from birth. But rather than demand the enslaved people's immediate freedom, Nisbet argued for them to

¹¹⁶ PP, LB 37: P & T to Ulysses Lynch, St Kitts, 23 April 1788

¹¹⁷ Tobin, James *Cursory Remarks* pp2-6

¹¹⁸ Ramsay, James *A Reply* ppviii-ix and pp79-80

¹¹⁹ PP, LB 6: JPP to William Coker, 11 January 1787

¹²⁰ PP, LB 37: P & T to Ulysses Lynch, St Kitts, 23 April 1788

¹²¹ PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to JB Dunbar, 2 June 1789

¹²² Cochrane, Thomas MD 'Answers to the Fifth Table' pp141-76

It is very likely that it was this Dr Cochrane whose watercolour sketch of the Battle of Frigate Bay is to be found in the collection of Lord Hood in Bridport: 'Sketch of the action made by Doctor Cochrane for Nicholas Pocock' (Cordingly, David *Nicholas Pocock 1740-1821* p64). Pocock probably then used this for *Lord Hood's Action with De Grasse* which appeared in the *Naval Chronicle* (William Burney *Naval Chronicle* Vol 13 1805 pp282-83). A subsequent engraving by Medland (from a drawing by Pocock) simply called *St Kitts* is today sold in souvenir shops in Nevis and St Kitts.

¹²³ The first edition of Jesse Foot's pro-slavery tract *A Defence of the Planters in the West Indies; comprised in four arguments on comparative humanity, on comparative slavery, on the African Slave Trade, and on the condition of Negroes in the West Indies* was published by J Debrett in London some time before 1792 when the second edition appeared (<http://www.books.ai>).

have rights: the right to own property, the freedom from arbitrary theft of their earned profits, the right to a fixed proportion of free time, and the right to a fair trial. Richard Nisbet wrote:

That there is a system of slavery established in our sugar colonies in itself highly arbitrary and oppressive and void of every moral relation between master and slave, is a fact which cannot be disputed by its warmest and hardest apologists.¹²⁴

Meanwhile, agitation by the abolitionists and their supporters had resulted in the Privy Council appointing a committee to enquire into the African slave trade and West Indian plantation slavery in general. Among others, the Nevis agent Charles Spooner appeared at their hearings and gave extensive evidence.¹²⁵ The Committee produced a 900-page report which was laid before both the House of Commons and the House of Lords on the same day in April 1789 but when Wilberforce opened his campaign in Parliament in the following month, his parliamentary opponents hit on the idea of effectively delaying the process by claiming that Privy Council evidence was not adequate for the House of Lords. Members resolved to hold their own hearings and appointed a Select Committee to take evidence. JPP claimed that he could not testify to this Committee because he had made himself 'an ineligible witness' by signing two petitions in support of the slave trade. With this he excused himself to Charles Spooner but put forward his business partner James Tobin as a spokesman.¹²⁶ Having rehearsed his arguments with Revd Ramsay, Tobin was perfectly placed to represent the partnership of Pinney & Tobin in the enquiry.

Tobin had to respond to specific questions the panel raised. Members wanted to know about all aspects of the lives of enslaved people: their material and housing conditions, the medical care they received, the punishments that was meted out, their legal status, their right to own property and so on. Tobin's replies, like that of other West India planters, painted a picture of contented, well-fed people who lived in reasonably healthy and spacious conditions, had all the medical care they needed, were protected by the law and treated mildly because, 'if the slave was sensible' and did his work with 'alacrity', he was 'in no danger of correction or any other punishment.' And it was not all hard graft but there was also 'mirth, festivity, music and dancing'. Tobin maintained that the trade was necessary and argued that the plantation economy had to be based on slavery because free men would not work on the estates, or, if they did, their wages would make plantations unsustainable. He stated that a programme to encourage reproduction would not keep pace with the numbers required and put the blame on the enslaved people themselves, mostly on the 'premature and promiscuous intercourse between the sexes'. He added to this a long list of other causes:

¹²⁴ Nisbet, Richard *The Capacity of Negroes for Religious and Moral Improvement* p59

One planter's contribution to the debate was the proposal to restrict the age of imports, and he suggested taking only children from Africa: boys under 4'10" (1.47 m) in height and girls who had not yet given birth. His argument was that 30-year-old men were as likely to rebel as 20-year-old men and that boys were, therefore, preferable. As to the girls, this man argued that women in Africa were 'in the most deplorable and abject state of slavery it is possible to conceive' and that in the West Indies their conditions improved 'to the highest degree'. He claimed that out of gratefulness female Africans always took 'the labour with great cheerfulness and alacrity' (RHL, MSS W.Ind. S.8 f237 'Slave Trade').

¹²⁵ Charles Spooner's evidence of February and March 1788 to the Board of Trade enquiry into the slave trade is reproduced in Frank Wesley Pitman's article 'Slavery on British West Indies Plantations in the Eighteenth Century' in *The Journal of Negro History* Vol 11 No 4 (October 1926) pp584-668. Pitman commented that 'As we thus read Charles Spooner's answers in the inquiry, we seem to be listening to a benevolent rural aristocrat of the revolutionary period in English agriculture actuated by scientific methods and principles not least of which was the new spirit of humanitarianism in the treatment of his labouring people.' A plantation owner himself, from the planters' point of view Charles Spooner was well-placed to give evidence; he was also agent for St Kitts and Montserrat and a member of the subcommittee established in 1788 by the West India Planters and Merchants' Standing Committee to fight the abolition of the slave trade (Penson, Lillian M *The Colonial Agents of the British West Indies* Appendix II).

¹²⁶ PP, LB 8: JPP, Gt Ormond Street, London, to Charles Spooner, London, 28 May 1789

... the great variety of venereal complaints which both sexes are liable to
 ... the custom among the young female negroes of procuring abortions, for the purpose of preserving their persons as long as they are able
 ... the many chronic disorders the female negroes are subject to, in consequence of their irregularities, such as obstructions, fluor albus, and disorders of the womb
 ... the custom of negro women suckling their children a great length of time
 ... the premature debility which the men subject themselves to by an immoderate use of spiritous liquors
 ... the little care too many of the negro women are apt to take of their children and
 ... the many disorders which negro children are peculiarly subject, such as fluxes, worms, and the fevers ...

Tobin, like other slavery apologists, argued that the material life of enslaved people in the West Indies was better than that of the labouring poor in England or Ireland since they were given all they needed: free housing, food, clothing and medical care. He did, however, concede that in theory freedom was preferable to slavery.¹²⁷ The arguments Tobin put forward were essentially those promoted right across the pro-slavery lobby. They were only packaged differently.

As part of the whole process of public enquiries, the British government requested information by way of a questionnaire from each of the colonies about their populations, their laws, and the conditions in which the enslaved people lived and worked. Compared to other colonies' more fully argued responses, the Nevis Legislature gave half-hearted and lazy replies - the evidence supplied by Nevis amounted to seven pages, Antigua's to 30 and Jamaica's to 32.¹²⁸ Only the answers given by the almost monosyllabic Governor of the cotton-growing Bahamas were shorter, but at least the preparations for the parliamentary enquiries had spurred the Bahamas, as well as, for instance, Grenada, into passing new, last-minute legislation. As the laws of Nevis stood, almost all were punitive, and Nevis did not even attempt to catch up and introduce any laws which would protect enslaved people. Dominica, by contrast, produced among its evidence three pages of legislation; two and a half of which were protective and intended to safeguard enslaved people's rights. Nevis's submission appeared conservative, on the defensive and out of touch. While the firm of Pinney & Tobin was unimpressed by their representatives in the British Parliament,¹²⁹ they were 'truly concerned to hear of the dilatoriness of the Legislature of our little island, in matters of such consequence as the slave trade.'¹³⁰ From Bristol it looked as if the gentlemen in Nevis were not pulling their weight in the fight 'to oppose the abolition business.'¹³¹

The Parliamentary enquiry clearly was something the Legislature resented and did not want to be troubled with. However, the answers it grudgingly provided, for instance on the population, provide a good snapshot of Nevis in the late 1780s. The total number of people living in the island was estimated at close to 9,950, of whom 120 were free coloureds and blacks; just over 1,500 were whites and 8,300 enslaved.¹³² Of these, fewer than half (4,000 people) were said to have been employed in sugar

¹²⁷ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 pp260-87

In 1792 James Tobin published one final pamphlet in which he defended the high price of sugar and called for garrisons in the West Indies to protect planters against the possibility of slave rebellion (Small, David 'James Tobin (1736/7-1817)' in *Oxford DNB*).

¹²⁸ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vols 67 and 71

¹²⁹ PP, LB 37: P & T to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 24 May 1788

¹³⁰ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to Revd Wm Jones, 1 February 1789

¹³¹ In contrast to the members of the Nevis Legislature, who reacted tardily to the slave trade issue, the London merchants were very active in their opposition. JPP was impressed (PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to James Tobin, 27 March 1789).

¹³² Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 70 pp275-77 and EV Goveia *Slave Society* p96, citing HoCAaP Vol XXVI (1789), No 646a, pt IV, suppl No 2 to account No 15 and part III answers to queries from legislatures from Nevis and Montserrat.

production, about a thousand in menial offices and 500 in fishing, trades and other occupations. A third, 2,800 people, were said to have been too young, too old, or too infirm to be fit for labour.¹³³ On Mountravers, this applied to about a fifth.

In terms of the numbers of enslaved people in the island, those living on Mountravers represented exactly one fortieth of the total. The same ratio applied to the size of the plantation as well as the plantation's production; Richard Pares has estimated that JPP's share of the cultivated land of the island represented about one fortieth, which was 'roughly the same proportion as that of his annual crop to the total output of the island'.¹³⁴

Among the whites, males in Nevis outnumbered females by three to two,¹³⁵ but among the enslaved and the free populations the figures were reversed: for every four enslaved males there were five enslaved females and for every four free males, there were nine free females.¹³⁶ On Mountravers, the gender ratio was exactly equal; in 1790 102 males and 102 females lived on the plantation. (Not included are the superannuated folk who were still alive after having been freed from work in 1783.)

Allowances under Coker

As yet Nevis had no legislation in place that laid down minimum clothing allowances, but in their evidence to the Parliamentary enquiry the Nevis Legislature claimed that, according to 'general custom', enslaved people were usually given clothes once a year (on some plantations more often): men a woollen jacket, a shirt and a pair of trousers and, commonly, a cap; women a petticoat and a linen jacket, or a petticoat and a wrapper. Children, it was said, got allowances in proportion.¹³⁷ James Tobin, too, stated that 'on most estates' people got sufficient woollen cloth 'or bays' for a watchcoat or a blanket, and enough 'ozenbrigs or German linen' for a waistcoat and breeches for men and a jacket and a petticoat for women. On some estates people also received hats. However, Tobin claimed that according to African customs clothing was an encumbrance and that 'slaves' passion is more for ornamental than useful covering and founded in vanity alone ... All a negro really seems to want is a warm covering for the night.'¹³⁸ To Revd Ramsay and others, these sort of claims were pure 'effrontery'. Ramsay asserted that planters did not supply their people with enough warm clothes¹³⁹ and Dr Cochrane, too, stated that 'in general' clothing was 'very poor'.¹⁴⁰ On Mountravers the clothing allowances appear to have fallen short of what the Legislature claimed was given by way of allowances. For instance, caps, which would protect people from the rain and the sun, were not issued every year and not to everyone. They were given only to selected individuals - JPP had occasionally ordered worsted and Dutch caps, two or three dozen at a time -¹⁴¹ and Coker asked for ten or twelve dozen Dutch caps because he thought these 'would be very serviceable to

The pro-slavery campaigner Alexander Barclay stated, wrongly, that in 1788 there were 1,200 free people in Nevis (Barclay, Alexander *A Practical View of the Present State of Slavery* Introduction p xxiv).

¹³³ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 1789 Evidence by the Legislature of Nevis, also FWN Bayley *Four Years' Residence in the West Indies* p683

¹³⁴ Pares, R *A West India Fortune* p103

¹³⁵ Goveia, EV *Slave Society* p216 fn4, citing House of Commons Papers (1789) No 646a, pt III Replies from Montserrat and Nevis, and No 646 (5-10)

¹³⁶ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 Evidence by the Legislature of Nevis; also R Pares *A West India Fortune* p354 fn36

¹³⁷ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 pp356-63

¹³⁸ Tobin, James *Cursory Remarks* pp61-3

Osnaburgh (Oznabrig, Ozenbriggs) was a coarse grey linen originally from the region of Osnabrück in northern Germany, and baize (or bays), also called 'plains', was a coarse woollen cloth.

¹³⁹ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 p458

¹⁴⁰ Cochrane, Thomas MD 'Answers to the Fifth Table' pp141-76

¹⁴¹ PP, AB 18 Hunter & Ross a/c and LB 4: JPP to Wm Manning, 18 June 1778

the negroes in the field.' JPP did allow this order¹⁴² and later insisted that caps were issued only every three or four years and not annually.¹⁴³

Generally all the people on Mountravers were issued with 'scotch Oznabrigs' and blue baize.¹⁴⁴ At one stage JPP bought wider and better quality materials and wanted Coker's opinion whether they were worth the additional expense. He had, however, not increased the quantity, as requested by Coker, because the 'crop was so very short'. If there was a shortfall, JPP directed that 'at all events the tradesmen and field negroes ought to receive their usual quantity, and if there should be a deficiency, the house people can best afford to have their quantity lessened.'¹⁴⁵ Not only did their clothes last longer because they did less physical work, but in the past domestics also used to receive a double quantity of Oznabrigs and baize.¹⁴⁶ JPP abolished the custom in 1787. While sending extra 'linen to give the house people',¹⁴⁷ he argued that he did not want to disadvantage those who made the most important contribution to the plantation - 'Field negroes are the sinews of an estate -'¹⁴⁸ and this seems a plausible and laudable explanation. However, later in the year it became clear that buying clothes had generally become more expensive because the raw material, wool, was dear and difficult to obtain.¹⁴⁹ Ending the additional allowance of baize for domestics may in fact have been a cost-cutting exercise rather than a matter of principle.

In addition to their clothing allowances, favoured workers, mostly the domestics, also received presents.¹⁵⁰ The women were sent handkerchiefs, Mulatto Peter had coats. While some chosen individuals received extras, none of the domestics, however, were ever presented with luxury materials, such as those worn by the house servants who worked for the Governor in Jamaica. His domestic staff sported 'very clean and white' muslin,¹⁵¹ and the difference in material may have marked the difference between an ordinary planter's and a superior household such as a Governor's.

In addition to receiving plantation allowances people may well have bought imported cloth with which they made garments, and they certainly would have used whatever natural materials were available. Dried plantain leaves, for instance, could be plaited to make sunshades or supports for carrying headloads,¹⁵² leather could be made into belts, bags and shoes, and to fashion decorative and other items there were shells, turtle shells, coconut husks, feathers, stones, bones, fish bones, coral and dried seeds. Some of the adornments may well have been ritual rather than ornamental. From North American plantation sites archaeologists have recovered pierced coins which they have interpreted as having been worn by enslaved people to ward off spirits and illnesses.¹⁵³

¹⁴² PP, AB 36 William Coker's Invoice

Coker ordered between 'ten or twelve dozen' caps which was sufficient for between over half to two thirds of the total enslaved population then on Mountravers.

¹⁴³ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 October 1791

¹⁴⁴ PP, AB 36 William Coker's Invoice

¹⁴⁵ PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 February 1789

¹⁴⁶ PP, AB 36 William Coker's Invoice

¹⁴⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP to William Coker, 16 January 1787

¹⁴⁸ PN220, microfilm Vol I, citing LB 6 f206 JPP to Wm Coker, 16 January 1787

¹⁴⁹ The House wrote that they had been unable to 'procure the superior kind you order'd' but that they would send the Negro clothing Huggins had ordered on the next ship (PP, LB 37: P & T to Edward Huggins, Nevis, 20 October 1787). Huggins's order for 'the superior kind' of cloth may have been designed to impress the House; after Dr Benton died or was evicted from JPP's Gingerland estate, the plantation came into the hands of James and Edward Huggins, first as tenants, then as purchasers. They rented it from 1 March 1787 and seem to have bought it in the 1790s for S£2,850 (PP, AB 30 James & Edward Huggins's a/c and Pares, R A *West India Fortune* pp81-2).

¹⁵⁰ PP, LB 6: JPP to William Coker, 16 January 1787

¹⁵¹ Cundall, Frank (ed) *Lady Nugent's Journal* p55

¹⁵² Okihio, Gary Y (ed) *In Resistance* p124

¹⁵³ <http://www.southalabama.edu/archaeology/dog-river-plantation-slavery.html>

According to the evidence given by the Legislature of Nevis to the House of Commons Enquiry, plantation workers were given allowances of flour, beans, rice, oatmeal, Indian corn (maize) or Guinea corn (millet), together with six salted herrings, or equivalent salt provisions. There were seasonal differences. In crop time, the dry goods amounted to between four and six pints a week and anyone could take as much 'raw cane liquor' as they wanted. Out of crop, the dry goods were said to have increased to eight or nine pints. In addition, it was claimed that generally people got a ship's biscuit for breakfast, two pints of boiled cane juice and some toddy.¹⁵⁴ Children's allowances were in proportion and started as soon as they were weaned. According to one source, the rations were distributed to the heads of family once a week, at 12 noon or 7 o'clock in the evening.¹⁵⁵ Evidence from 1790 suggests that on Mountravers (and, no doubt, also on other plantations) allowances were given out at greater intervals and less regularly, making planning not only more difficult but also reinforcing people's dependence and boosting the manager's power.

Allowances consisted of basic foodstuffs and JPP, always on the lookout for the most economical deal, was delighted when American corn was in plentiful supply. He praised it as 'the best and cheapest food you can give.'¹⁵⁶ Luxury items such as imported hams and tongues would only have been known by the domestics who cooked and served these to the managers.

The Legislature had put forward optimum, average amounts. Some allowances were only ever distributed seasonally and allocations depended, among other factors, on where the estate was situated. If it was close to the sea the salted fish rations might have been reduced, and if it had no mountainous terrain or other marginal land in which to grow provisions, the allowances in dry goods might have been increased.¹⁵⁷ On Mountravers the food allowances also varied under different managers. When Coker became manager, at his request¹⁵⁸ the herrings which were shipped from England increased from 30 to 35 barrels, although from 1789 onwards this was again reduced to 30 barrels. On the basis of 35 barrels, every individual on Mountravers aged nine years and upwards would have had 202 herrings a year, or, on average, close to four a week; on the basis of 30 barrels they would have got about 173 herrings a year, or three and a third a week.¹⁵⁹ But herrings came in different sizes, as is evident from the JPP's

¹⁵⁴ Toddy in this context would have been hot water with rum rather than the palm wine popular in Africa.

Other witnesses to the Parliamentary Slave Trade Enquiry stated different amounts of rations. Alexander Douglas, for instance, said that enslaved people were given six to eight herrings, while on some estates the 'smallest allowance' consisted of five to eight. His people were also issued with six to eight pints of flour, beans or Indian corn, and a basket of yams which he grew on the estate. Robert Thomas gave evidence that people got seven to nine herrings and an equal number of pints of dry goods but, where estates had no mountain land for growing provisions, out of crop they gave out as much as 11 pints and an equal number of herrings. James Tobin, in his public correspondence with Revd Ramsay, wrote that rations amounted from five to eight herrings a week out of crop, four to six in crop, and, like the Nevis Legislature, he settled on an annual average of six herrings a week. According to Tobin, dry goods amounted to, on average, six pints per person per week, and on his estate people were also provided with a regular breakfast served in the field of 'a biscuit and a proportion of molasses and water, which in wet and rainy weather was qualified with rum.' He considered the allowances in detail and concluded that they compared favourably with what a European labourer would buy from his pay (Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 p295, p298, p255 and p277; Tobin, James *Cursorory Remarks* pp58-60).

¹⁵⁵ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 p276 and p253

¹⁵⁶ PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, 26 January 1788

¹⁵⁷ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 p295 and p263

¹⁵⁸ PP, LB 6: JPP to William Coker, 13 November 1786

¹⁵⁹ The calculation is based on the December 1787 list which contained 209 individuals. Of these, 48 children who were born from 1779 onwards have been deducted, and 12 adults have been added (the number of superannuated people assumed to have been alive at the end of 1787), making a total of 173. As the population fluctuated the calculations can only be approximate. It has been assumed that children aged eight years or under did not get herrings, as was the case on Clarke's Estate in the 1820s (PP, Dom Box T3: List II).

A further complication in arriving at exact amounts is that the number of herrings per barrel would have varied. The calculation here is based on 32-gallon barrels 'well filled', each containing a thousand fish (PP, LB 37: P & T to Messrs Latham & Pulsford 23 November 1786). The calculation is further skewed because some provisions were sold. In 1789, for instance, Coker sold one barrel of herrings to John Keepe (AB 39 Plantation a/c).

correspondence with Coker. When he considered sending local West Country herrings, as opposed to Scottish or Irish, JPP stated that they would be shipped 'in barrels of 32 gallons well filled, so as to contain about 1000 fish' [November 1786].¹⁶⁰ The size of the fish would have determined how many fitted into a barrel. Herrings caught locally, the Bristol 'Channel herrings', were 'not quite as large, or as fat, as those from Scotland (sic)'; consequently there were 'from 100 to 200 more fish in a barrel'.¹⁶¹ Translated into weight, this could amount to as much as an additional 50 pounds of herrings per barrel.¹⁶² The quality of the fish also varied. Scottish and Irish herrings were superior to those caught in the Bristol Channel but, keen to earn their two and a half per cent commission, the House desperately tried to convince their customers that the Bristol Channel herrings were just as good. They did admit that local fish 'may not feel quite so thick to the touch' as Scottish or Irish herrings but claimed that 'if you look at them against the light, you will easily be convinced that they are in reality thicker besides looking so much better'.¹⁶³ The House also advertised the local fish as preserved with the 'best foreign salt',¹⁶⁴ yet despite all this positive spin, one year those sent from Bristol turned out 'very bad and rotten'. Coker reported back that the Bristol fish did 'not keep anything like the Scotch herrings'.¹⁶⁵ Presumably the fault lay with not enough salt having been used to preserve the fish for their long journey to the West Indies and for being kept in a hot climate. It was not until the late 1790s that the herrings industry was obliged to apply uniform standards: barrels were to be made of oak, elm or similar wood and contain 32 gallons of fish, with gutted and ungutted fish being packed in separate containers. Fish destined for export overseas had to be preserved in almost 200 pounds of salt but for home or European consumption about half the salt was sufficient.¹⁶⁶ At about the same time, the government imposed a tax on salt and fixed the price of salt.¹⁶⁷

Under Gill, Williams had recorded that 173 gallons rum were 'put up and used for the negroes',¹⁶⁸ but when this increased to 250 gallons, JPP queried the amount with Coker: 'I presume that it is an error, as I only used to keep a hogshead of 63 gallons, and about 200 gallons molasses, to make toddy and beverage during holing time and bad days in the winter'.¹⁶⁹ Under JPP, the rum allowance had amounted to about 3.4 pints (1.9 litres) per adult per year, the molasses to just over a pint (half a litre) per person per year. Gill's rum allowances came to 9.3 pints (5.3 litres) per adult per year while Coker's was a more generous 14.5 pints (8.2 litres).¹⁷⁰

In addition, for part of the year people had rations of grain – JPP had instructed Coker to reserve barley 'for the negroes in the dead time of the year'¹⁷¹ and another time he sent 'some flour for the dead of the year'.¹⁷² During periods of shortages JPP had always found potatoes 'very beneficial to the poor negroes' and, at a time when sugar prices were low, he reminded Coker to grow these.¹⁷³ That was in 1787, the year in which Coker started varying the planting regime by growing canes in a twelve-acre parcel of land

¹⁶⁰ PP, LB 37: P & T to Messrs Latham & Pulsford, 23 November 1786

¹⁶¹ PP, LB 37: P & T to Samuel Cary & Isaac Horsford, Grenada, 25 November 1787

¹⁶² PP, LB 37: P & T to Jn Arthurton, 30 August 1788

¹⁶³ PP, LB 37: P & T to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 25 January 1788

¹⁶⁴ PP, LB 37: P & T to Messrs B & T Boddington, 24 January 1789

¹⁶⁵ PP, AB 36 William Coker's Invoice

¹⁶⁶ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Common Sessional Papers* Vol 122 Enquiry into the British Herring Fishery 1798-1799

¹⁶⁷ Latimer, John *The Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* Vol 2 p529

¹⁶⁸ PP, AB 31 f20 Rum a/c

¹⁶⁹ PP, LB 6: JPP to W Coker, 20 February 1787

In some years, JPP issued as much as 250 gallons of molasses (AB 26 Rum a/c).

¹⁷⁰ The calculation for JPP's rum and molasses allowances and Gill's rum allowance are based on the 1783 figures for the number of adults on Mountravers (134 adults plus 15 superannuated people) and the total number of people (210, which includes all the superannuated men and women). To calculate Coker's rum allowance, the total number of adults who lived on the plantation in 1787 was used (66 men and 60 women, plus an assumed number of 12 superannuated people). If older children (those classed as 'boys' and 'girls') received a rum ration, this was not taken into account.

¹⁷¹ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 23 January 1786

¹⁷² PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, 26 January 1788

¹⁷³ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 October 1787

called Cruft's. It was part of Woodland¹⁷⁴ and lay to the south of Dungeon Gut¹⁷⁵ and, since coming into JPP's possession, had been used to grow staples for the plantation people.¹⁷⁶

JPP's concern about growing potatoes and laying provisions in store paid off. When war with France seemed, once again, imminent, the export of grain from Britain was prohibited - 'even to the colonies'.¹⁷⁷ The colonies had to become more self-reliant.

Work on Mountravers continued

Responding to 'The present alarming crisis respecting the African trade', JPP had become jittery about future prospects for the plantation economy and had asked Coker not to issue any more contracts.¹⁷⁸ He clearly gauged public opinion wrongly when he subsequently stated that 'much of the spirit of enthusiasm [for abolition] seems to have evaporated',¹⁷⁹ but it meant that he recovered his equilibrium sufficiently to charge Coker with a new building project. He wanted to have 'the work at Woodland put into complete order' and supplied from Bristol a large copper of 160 gallons and ten large hogsheads of building lime and asked that his masons be set to work as soon as possible.¹⁸⁰ JPP required a 'proper work at Woodland' because near the work were 'two pieces of land which [were] kindly and [would] make upwards of two casks per acre.'¹⁸¹ JPP approved of Coker's design of 'turning the still house loft into a cooling and curing room, and to put a new roof over the coppers and gangway, so the building when finished will be in the form of an L.' JPP wanted the building to be substantial and the sides built with lime and stone and advised: 'Always use as little wood in the mountainous situations as you possibly can.'¹⁸² Under Coker's guidance, other building and maintenance work had already been carried out, such as the construction of a new cellar at the house¹⁸³ and the repair of the camel crooks.¹⁸⁴

When William Coker first came to Nevis in the 1760s, he had improved on his predecessor's sugar production, and when Coker replaced Joseph Gill, he was once more expected to get the quality back on track. Just about the same time as Coker had resumed working on Mountravers, the demand for sugar increased owing to a reduction in the duty on tea,¹⁸⁵ and JPP was pleased that Coker's sugars were indeed 'superior' to those shipped by Gill.¹⁸⁶ But then everything conspired against Coker making good sugars. First 'that destructive worm the borer' got into estates in Nevis.¹⁸⁷ An insect that perforated the cane and then totally destroyed it had plagued the Windward Islands, had 'made a gradual progress through the Windward Islands, from Barbados down', and while initially it had looked as if Nevis might be spared, the pest did take hold of the island.¹⁸⁸ The borer attacked recently planted, or recently ratooned

¹⁷⁴ According to an indenture of April 1749, Walter Rossington of Nevis sold for £100 a parcel of land in St Thomas Lowland that had previously belonged to James Cruft. He was dead when Rossington sold it to Jacob William Sanders. It measured 'by estimation twelve acres' and was bounded to the north by lands of the spinster Elizabeth Rolt, to the east by lands late of the planter Thomas Sanders, and to the south and west by Mountravers. A dwelling house came with the land (BULSC, DM 792). After Jacob Williams Sanders died, the land was left in the will of his uncle Thomas Williams to John Williams Sanders, the nephew of Jacob Williams Sanders and the son of Francis and Martha Sanders (Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 6 pp159-60). When JPP acquired Woodland via Joseph Gill from John Williams Sanders, Cruft's was included (ECSCRN, CR 1783-1785 ff90-1).

¹⁷⁵ PP, LB 24: JPP to John Henry Clarke, 13 February 1815

¹⁷⁶ Pares, R A *West India Fortune* p106 and p127

¹⁷⁷ PP, LB 38: T & P to Edward Huggins, 18 January 1790

¹⁷⁸ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to Wm Coker, 9 February 1788

¹⁷⁹ PP, LB 37: P & T to Ulysses Lynch, 23 April 1788

¹⁸⁰ PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, 8 February 1789

¹⁸¹ PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, 17 September 1789

¹⁸² PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, 15 October 1789

¹⁸³ PP, AB 36 Claxton & Brookes a/c

¹⁸⁴ PP, AB 30 f115

¹⁸⁵ Ward, JR *British West Indian Slavery 1750-1834* p43

¹⁸⁶ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 October 1787

¹⁸⁷ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to John Patterson, 9 February 1787

¹⁸⁸ Stapleton Cotton MSS 23: Robert Thomson, St Kitts, to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 6 May 1787, 16 July 1787, 29 August 1787 and

canes, and 'within short time could lay waste to entire properties'.¹⁸⁹ In 1787 the borer and heavy rain caused damage to the crops,¹⁹⁰ in 1788 the weather was dry but the borer halved crops,¹⁹¹ and while it looked as if the insect was 'quitting the island', it only moved 'from Windward and Gingerland to Town and Figtree'.¹⁹² News of a 'pretty steady' market in May 1789¹⁹³ was followed by a 'truly deplorable' account of the new crop¹⁹⁴ when the latter part of the year was marred by 'a very severe draught'.¹⁹⁵

An alternative crop?

When the borer got into the canes, some planters in Nevis tried to grow a different crop, cotton. This had long been cultivated in the island on a small scale - indeed the growing of cotton by enslaved people had been an issue that had exercised the Legislature at least since the 1730s when it was alleged that they frequently stole cotton from their masters and mixed it with their own. To prevent this from happening, the Legislature simply prohibited enslaved people from growing it.¹⁹⁶ In the 1750s this ban had been relaxed and people had been allowed to raise cotton for their own use, under some restrictions,¹⁹⁷ but in the next decade this concession had been overturned.¹⁹⁸ In the 1770s the law had been enforced with renewed vigour and cotton fields guarded against theft so that anyone stealing cotton from a plantation could end up being pumped 'full of small shot' – as happened to one man from Mr Mill's Estate.¹⁹⁹ Enforcing the prohibition apparently caused so much anger that people set fire to buildings and cane fields, prompting Governor Burt to seek to extend legislation so that the arsonists could be put to death.²⁰⁰ By the 1780s the law preventing plantation folk from growing cotton had again fallen into disuse. It was not necessary anymore because by then white people only cultivated 'very little cotton'.²⁰¹ However, when the borer caused devastation among the sugar cane, some planters briefly revived cotton-growing as an alternative. On the Stapleton plantation and on his own estate Walter Nisbet experimented with raising it in the poorer pieces of land,²⁰² and James Huggins and Edward Brazier were among the first to buy up and send bales of cotton to Bristol for the House to sell. Edward Huggins followed suit, with just one small bale.²⁰³ Each bale would have weighed in the region of three and four hundredweight each.²⁰⁴ The House was not impressed by the quality of James Huggins's produce: 'The cotton which comes from Nevis and is generally purchased from the negroes in small quantities is but indifferent, being generally unequal, and some parts dirty.'²⁰⁵ Writing to Edward Brazier, they made the same point and advised him on some improvements:

17 December 1787; MSS 18: Walter Nisbet, Nevis, to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 28 July 1787; Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan MSS 2: Robert Thompson to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 8 May 1788, MSS 18: Walter Nisbet to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 23 May 1788, MSS 2: Robert Thompson to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 14 October 1788; Stapleton Cotton MSS 23: Robert Thompson to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 21 April 1789, MSS 17: George Webbe Daniel, Nevis, to Mrs Catherine Stapleton, 23 August 1789; and Bangor Bodrhyddan MSS: 3243 Walter Nisbet, Grafton Street, to the Revd the Dean of St Asaph, 19 September (1789)

¹⁸⁹ Watts, David *The West Indies* p433

¹⁹⁰ Handlist of *The Stapleton-Cotton Manuscripts*, Box 2/9 and Box 2/17

¹⁹¹ PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to Mrs Dunbar, 4 April 1788, and LB 37: P & T to Edward Huggins, Nevis, 10 April 1788

¹⁹² PP, LB 37: P & T to John Arthurton, Nevis, 30 August 1788

¹⁹³ PP, LB 8: JPP to James Tobin, 25 May 1789

¹⁹⁴ PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to WB Weekes, Aberdeen, 5 November 1789

¹⁹⁵ Bangor Bodrhyddan MSS 3246: Walter Nisbet, Nevis, to [probably Revd Shipley], 22 January 1790

¹⁹⁶ UKNA, CO 185/4: 12 March 1738 and 27 March 1739; also S Lambert (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 p475.

More details in '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)

¹⁹⁷ UKNA, CO 186/2: 7 December 1753

¹⁹⁸ UKNA, CO 186/6: 24 April 1766, 10 May 1766, 11 November 1774; also EV Goveia *Slave Society* pp164-65, citing CO 162/34

Burt to Board of Trade, 13 June 1778

¹⁹⁹ MLD, Mills Papers, 2006.178/10, Vol 4 (17 November 1776)

²⁰⁰ Goveia, EV *Slave Society* pp164-65, citing CO 162/34 Burt to Board of Trade, 13 June 1778

²⁰¹ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 69 Evidence by the Legislature of Nevis

²⁰² Stapleton-Cotton MSS 18: Walter Nisbet, Nevis, to Mrs Stapleton, 23 May 1788

²⁰³ PP, LB 37: P & T to Ed Huggins, 10 February 1789

²⁰⁴ Anon *Authentic History of the English West Indies* p28

²⁰⁵ PP, LB 37: P & T to James Huggins, Nevis, 27 September 1787

The cotton from Nevis being generally purchased from negroes turns out dirty and full of seeds, if you could employ people to clean it properly after it is purchased we think you would find your end in it. - It should also be mixed together before it is packed being put into the bag as it bought some parcels are much better than others.²⁰⁶

The cotton, which was shipped to England, most likely, would have been surplus to requirement in the island. Given that some cotton was grown in Nevis, it is reasonable to assume that there would have been a small-scale industry with people spinning the cotton into thread. One observer stated that in the West Indies the raw material was spun 'by a rock and a spindle', and that it was 'exceeding fine' and 'knit into stockings by the negro girls.'²⁰⁷ Others could have woven the thread on looms into strips and sewn these strips together to make garments and items such as bedcovers. In St Croix, too, enslaved people were not allowed to grow their own cotton but this did not stop them from stealing some which the women secretly spun, using hand-held spindles. It was said that in St Croix the ginners, those people who cleaned cotton for the planters, were also able to manufacture the cotton spinning wheels.²⁰⁸ Enslaved Africans had brought with them these skills of making the equipment and of using it. Today, the division of labour differs in their respective homelands; for instance among the Yoruba the women tend to do the spinning, dyeing and weaving, whereas among the Kpelle in Liberia the women spin the home-grown cotton into yarn while the men do the weaving. They produce strips of coarse, durable cloth about six inches wide;²⁰⁹ the Yoruba women make cloth that is twenty inches wide. It is very likely that the divisions of labour between men and women, as well as the techniques, have remained unchanged over the past two centuries and had travelled from Africa to the West Indies.

According to Barry Higman, 'there is no documentary, ethnohistoric archaeological evidence to suggest that it [textile weaving] was practiced in the Caribbean during slavery or after emancipation', and by way of explanation he cited a lack of time or creative energy. He stated that, instead, people's artistry might have gone into sewing.²¹⁰ Unfortunately, most items associated with weaving do not leave archaeological traces, and although documentary evidence only points towards cotton having been spun into threads and stockings having been knitted, it would, however, seem likely that, as cotton was grown in Nevis, the associated industries might also have been practised: making spindles and looms, producing yarn and weaving this into articles of clothing. These activities would have represented another source of income for enslaved people and for the white middlemen (and women) who acted as agents and sold the surplus of raw cotton to England.

Planters in Nevis gave up the cotton-growing experiment but small quantities continued to be grown and shipped abroad. However, by the early 1790s cotton had become 'a very dead commodity for some time past'.²¹¹ Many years later, when James Tobin and his wife Elizabeth were in Nevis, Mrs Tobin and her former maid, Priscilla Gould, sent bales of cotton for sale in England.²¹² Those who worked the cotton, the English weavers, were forced to work for 16 hours day to earn no more than a subsistence wage,²¹³ and in theory at least, the cloth they produced could have made its way back to the West Indies and given out as allowances on the plantations.

²⁰⁶ PP, LB 37: P & T to Edw Brazier, Nevis, 6 October 1787

²⁰⁷ Anon *Authentic History of the English West Indies* p28

²⁰⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* pp10-1

²⁰⁹ Gibbs, James L jr (ed) *Peoples of Africa* p558 and p205

²¹⁰ Higman, BW *Montpelier, Jamaica* p230

²¹¹ PP, LB 38: P & T to Archbald T Washington, 10 September 1792

²¹² PP, LB 45: J & JFP to James Tobin, Nevis, 20 July 1809, 17 August 1809, and 26 July 1809

²¹³ Rule, John *Albion's People* p106

JPP's first visit to Nevis

On Mountravers five people suffered from the crabobas or cocobays, a disease akin to leprosy (Hansen's Disease),²¹⁴ and Coker called in a 'French doctor' to cure these patients. Other than that, doctors Archbald & Williamson tended to only a few illnesses and infirmities: Ben's broken arm, Jemmy Oliver's fever, Hector's gunshot wound, Tallihoe's chest complaint. Tallihoe died, as did two men in their prime, Cubbena and Kersey, who succumbed to consumption. The last treatment doctors Archbald & Williamson provided was an operation to remove a large, encysted tumour from Warrington's face, and after that Coker engaged his nephew, Dr Thomas Pym Weekes. Not long out of medical school, Dr Weekes prescribed mercuried lotion²¹⁵ and flux powders, treated Paul with a scorbutic mixture, gave Billey Keefe and Philley's child a 'cathartic' (a purgative for cleaning the bowels), cured Affey and Leah of an 'old obstinate venereal complaint', for which he charged a huge sum N£14:12:6.²¹⁶ Dr Weekes introduced a new electricity-producing machine which he used on Ebbo Frank and Little Frank, treated George for a venereal illness, dressed Billy's head with bandages, gave Dick strengthening powders and Ducks Jemmy soothing mixtures and pills to reduce his flatulence, then sent him for a change of air to the country and eventually operated on him. He could not save him, nor George, Billy, and Dick – they all died. It may have been the fear that too many people were dying under Coker's care that made JPP get a copy of Foster's *Physical Observations* bound.²¹⁷

JPP was planning to take this medical self-help book with him to the West Indies. Mrs P was homesick and not well and wanted to go Nevis to recover her health, and JPP, too, had been poorly. As early as 1785 he and his wife had planned to come to Nevis, even asking Gill to get the house ready for them,²¹⁸ and it was time to see how his affairs in Nevis had progressed without him - particularly as news reached him that Coker was not following his instructions.²¹⁹ First, however, he had to deliver his son Azariah to Germany for training there. JPP also travelled to France and would have experienced at first hand the turmoil of the French Revolution - the unrest and disorder in the provinces, the clamour of the mob in Paris for food and recognition. To slaveholders like JPP the ideals of *Liberté, Égalité et Fraternité* enshrined in the new French constitution would have been a preposterous, worrying notion. If these ideas spread from the French mainland to the French colonies in the West Indies, they might inflame the enslaved people there, and their revolutionary sentiments, in turn, might spill over into the British colonies.

Having put off the trip several times, JPP finally sailed to Nevis in the spring of 1790. He took with him his manservant Pero Jones; Mrs P and her maid Fanny Coker having left several weeks before him. During his visit JPP was busy with a variety of small jobs. For instance, he resolved the issue of Phillip's apprenticeship fee with the mason John Keepe - Coker had noted that it was 'to be settled when Mr Pinney comes out as Phillip is a runaway' -²²⁰ and he saw to it that John Hay Richens's daughter Molly was paid the money her father had left her in his will. JPP agreed to sell to his neighbour John Latoysonere Scarborough his and Mulatto Polly's three children and took from Scarborough the first instalment; he was to pay the rest later. JPP also acquired from Samuel Alvarez a canoe with four oars and two sails,²²¹ bought 50 yards deep sea line,²²² a new seine net and invested in a seine house.²²³ A canoe and some fishing tackle was money well spent. One of the old men could be usefully employed to

²¹⁴ Sheridan, RB *Doctors and Slaves* p82

²¹⁵ PP, AB 30 TP Weekes a/c; also DM 1173 1789-1794 Nevis Ledger f34

²¹⁶ PP, AB 35 1784 Plantation a/c; also AB 30 TP Weekes's a/c

²¹⁷ PP, AB 41 Cash a/c

²¹⁸ PP, LB 6: JPP, Bristol, to Joseph Gill, Nevis, 9 February 1785

²¹⁹ PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to John Hayne, 4 January 1789

²²⁰ PP, AB 30; also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f49

²²¹ PP, AB 43 and 39 Cash Nevis a/c

²²² PP AB 35 and AB 45

²²³ PP, AB 39 Plantation a/c

go fishing and people had fresh, nourishing food while, at the same time, having a boat saved the expense of hiring vessels for the crossing to St Kitts.²²⁴ JPP also chased up old debts, among them N£2:9:6 for six bushels of salt that Gill had lent to the neighbouring estate in 1784,²²⁵ and he enquired about money owed from the Legislature. These were the expenses he had incurred on official business while negotiating the Capitulation in January 1782, but the Legislature did not re-imburse him and, piqued, JPP finally wrote off some of the money.²²⁶

But more worrying for him was the state of the plantation. In the autumn of 1789 news had reached Bristol that prospects for the next crop were bleak.²²⁷ The borer was still attacking the cane and heavy, damaging rain was followed by severe draught. Finally, by the summer of 1790 the borer was causing visibly less damage in Nevis,²²⁸ but a new scourge was making its way through the islands. Planters in Montserrat and Antigua had found it difficult to eradicate a virulent plant called nut grass and to prevent its spread in Nevis, the Legislature introduced quarantine restrictions for animals from islands where it had taken hold.²²⁹ In addition to these local hindrances JPP was worried about global competition; for the first time he mentioned feeling threatened by sugar imports from India. Its colour was greatly superior and it cost less to produce.²³⁰ Of more immediate concern, however, was the modest income from the plantation; in May 1790 he reckoned that the 'clear profit from the plantation' amounted to only S£366:14:9. He put this down to the shortness of the crop and to Coker's bad management.²³¹ Coker had not only varied his planting instructions, but had bought supplies in the island instead of ordering them more cheaply from England, and he had incurred unnecessary costs by employing his son as a boiling house watch.²³² As JPP's attorney, so it seems, Coker had also mis-handled the affairs of one of the mortgaged estates, Symonds, and JPP may have been dissatisfied with the way Coker had treated the workers. A small group of the same five people had been absenting themselves several times and Coker had punished them all severely: Nero, Mulatto Charles, Violet, Joe and Hannibal. He had used necklocks and clogs – Mulatto Charles had been fettered for many months – and several valuable people had died. JPP later talked about the 'miserable situation' of his people and the 'backwardness' of his estate that he discovered on this visit,²³³ and he felt that altogether his old friend had failed him. On 1 August 1790 William Coker was removed from his post as manager and replaced by Dr Thomas Pym Weekes, JPP's brother-in-law and Coker's nephew.

Having put a new man in place, the Pinneys and their servants left Nevis. Almost certainly at the behest of one of their former domestics, Mulatto Polly, they took with them to England her ten-year-old daughter Christianna Jacques. The girl was to start a new life in England.

All the travellers would have had an unhappy journey. JPP later wrote: 'On my departure my mind was so harassed and perplexed ... from the necessity of removing an old friend (who, I suppose, is now, my enemy as well as my brother-in-law's) ...'²³⁴

²²⁴ PP, AB 47 JPP's a/c

²²⁵ PP, AB 39 John Pinney's a/c

²²⁶ PP, AB 39 Publick of Nevis a/c

²²⁷ PP, LB 8: JPP, Bristol, to WB Weekes, Aberdeen, 5 November 1789

²²⁸ Handlist of *The Stapleton-Cotton Manuscripts*, Box 2/9 and Box 2/17; Bangor Bodrhyddan MSS 3246: Walter Nisbet to ?Rev Shipley, 22 January 1790, and MSS 3247: George Webbe Daniells [probably to Revd Shipley], 22 July 1790

²²⁹ The Act to prevent the spread of nutgrass was introduced in February 1790 (Goveia, *EV Slave Society* p115 fn5).

²³⁰ McInnes, *CM Bristol: A Gateway of Empire* p322, citing PP, LB 38 f319

²³¹ PP, AB 42 Plantation a/c Memo

²³² Pares, *Richard A West India Fortune* p143

²³³ PN222, citing LB 7: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 January 1791

²³⁴ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to Miss A Weekes, 31 October 1790

As it turned out, the profit from the last crop Coker harvested amounted to £2,194. In a memo JPP reminded himself that 'The clear profit this year is larger than it would have been – owing to my being on the spot the latter end of the crop.' He explained his success by having increased the number of people in the small gang²³⁵ but did not explain where the extra workers came from: whether he drafted in those whom Coker had considered too young, too old or too sick to work, or whether he had shortened the great gang and perhaps also hauled in his tradesmen. When in the following year he calculated that he had a clear profit of only £538:8:7, he told his account book: 'Thank God this is the last crop put in by my late miserable manager William Coker or rather, by my late Mis-manager.'



William Coker had worked on Mountravers for 1,652 days. When he started, there were 195 people on the plantation; when he left, over 200.²³⁶ He had bought one boy, the Creole George Vaughan, while four had been sold: one woman, Bess Powell, had been sold to the man who had hired her, and three of Mulatto Polly's children had been sold to their father. One other daughter of hers, Christianna Jacques, the Pinneys took with them to England. The increase came about solely from the number of children born.

William Coker had recorded the births of 25 children. Just over half of these were the children of women JPP had purchased; the others were the offspring of entailed women. Seven children were born in 1786 (Fanny Coker, Betsey Dredge, William Coker, Clarissa, Franky Neal, Blandford, Mary-Ann), eight in 1787 (Barbai's Flora, Hercules, Jenny, Paul Scarborough, John-Frederick, Little Molly, Little Polly, Tom Bossu), six in 1788 (Tom Chapman, Dorinda, Honeyfield, Goliah, John Fisher, Joe Neal), but then only one in 1789 (Betsey Scarborough) and three in the first half of 1790 (Woodcots, Jack Coker, and Forbes).²³⁷ Of the six children born in 1788 three were the sons of women who were hired out. They probably were born away from the plantation.

The 25 births outweighed the 14 deaths that occurred on Mountravers (one other man, Pappaw, died at Gingerland while being rented out with that estate). Of these 14, only three were female. Four people are known to have died in 1787 and 1788: the boy Jemmy Oliver, the woman Gretaw and two men who died from consumption, Cubbena and Kersey. Another six adult men had been treated by the doctors and, as they were not recorded in the inventory that was drawn up at the end of 1790 (which included five months of Thomas Pym Weekes's managership), it can be assumed that they had died as well (in brackets are the dates these men received their last treatment): Caesar Scoles, who had undergone extensive treatment during Gill's time (December 1785), Tallihoe (February 1787), George (1788), Billy (June 1788), Dick (August 1789) and Ducks Jemmy (March 1790). Four more people dropped off the lists without receiving medical attention: the 16-year-old Mary and an African man in his thirties, Vulcan, and two children: the baby Hercules and Lissy, a little girl born during Gill's last days on the plantation.

Of the 25 children who were born during Coker's managership, all but three survived beyond the age of ten, and nine lived at least until slavery was abolished.

²³⁵ PP, AB 42 Plantation a/c

²³⁶ On the list of December 1785 there had been 195 individuals. Pappaw, who was on Gingerland, was not listed then. Coker had paid tax on 206 people in April and in July 1789 and in April and June 1790. On the list dated 31 December 1790 were 204 people. [195+25 = 220-14=206-Christianna Jacques=205 – Jenny = 204] Jenny was not on the 1790 list but by July 1794 she was listed as being manumitted and living on JPP's estate.

²³⁷ Of the 25 children born during Coker's managership, seven were conceived in May, towards the end of crop, and born in January, while the others were spread out over the year: one was born in February, three in March, one in May, two in June, three in July, two in September, three in October, two in November, and one in December. The high number of children born in January who survived may have been due to the fact that in the early stages of pregnancy the women did not have to work as hard as during crop time – and therefore did not suffer as many miscarriages as women who became pregnant during crop time.

Overall, proportionately more children were born under Coker than under Gill but, equally, under Coker more people died. While under Gill a child had been born, on average, every 74 days, Coker improved on this by about ten per cent and one child was born every 66 days. However, while under Gill one person had died, on average, every 177 days, under Coker this increased to one person having died every 118 days. The rate at which people died was, therefore, about a third worse under Coker than under Gill (it must be remembered, though, that included in this calculation are the first five months of Dr Weekes's managership).

Coker was manager during a relatively healthy time. As far as is known, apart from a 'putrid fever' (typhus fever) which occurred during 1786 and killed many black and white inhabitants,²³⁸ there were otherwise no major outbreaks of smallpox or other epidemics. No hurricanes destroyed food crops, either, although Coker did appropriate Cruft's for growing sugar, thereby leaving less land for growing provisions.

Given the available evidence, tentative conclusions may be that Coker, like Gill, called for medical help too late and, given that most of the people who died were male adults, that he worked men too hard.

The Thomas Pym Weekes years, 1 August 1790 to 8 May 1794

William Coker, a man in his sixties, was replaced by Dr Thomas Pym Weekes, a man in his mid-twenties. Coker, a landowner and part-time shopkeeper, was replaced by a doctor not long out of medical school - an old man with experience in running a plantation was replaced by a young man without experience. Both men were JPP's relatives: one an uncle-by-marriage, the other a brother-in-law.

JPP had only very reluctantly agreed to employ his wife's half-brother. He did not think him fit to do the job but after his wife's persistent intervention he had succumbed. While Gill and Coker had been on N£200 a year, JPP fixed Dr Weekes's salary at N£150. This reflected the young man's inexperience. And while managers normally would have been allowed a number of servants, JPP probably did not allocate him any plantation people. Thomas Pym Weekes had his own. They belonged to his family but were mortgaged to JPP.²³⁹ Although JPP warned him not to charge separately for his 'professional care' of the plantation people - this was supposed to have been included in the manager's salary -²⁴⁰ in due course Dr Weekes did just that and charged an extra N£40 for medical attendance throughout the year. 'Inoculating 44 negroes for the small pox' netted him another fee of N£33.²⁴¹

After the experience with Coker, JPP instructed Dr Weekes in how he wanted his manager to treat his workers: 'I would not wish to have my people pressed - it is a steady persevering disposition that gets thro' the labour of the estate.'²⁴² In all likelihood JPP told him to go easy on physical punishment and Weekes appears not to have used clogs in the same way as Coker had done. After Violet had one removed in December,²⁴³ there is no further record of anyone having clogs fitted although later Weekes did get one repaired. In at least one instance he used demotion to fieldwork as a form of punishment.

²³⁸ Lambert, S (ed) *House of Commons Sessional Papers* Vol 71 p256 Dr Robert Thomas's evidence

²³⁹ PP, AB 27 TP Weekes's a/c

In 1781 Thomas Pym Weekes had nine people reserved for his own use: Penny, who had consumption, Bessy Steward, Mary, Nancy, Jack, Billey, William, Charles, and Tom. They had belonged to his family and had been mortgaged to JPP.

²⁴⁰ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 27 July 1790

²⁴¹ PP, AB 39 TP Weekes's a/c

²⁴² PP, LB 7: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 January 1791

²⁴³ PP, AB 35

Dr Weekes certainly had to deal with a number of deserters. Four of the people who had persistently absented themselves during Coker's time (Mulatto Charles, Joe, George Vaughan and Violet) continued to do so but were returned, and two others, Patch and Tom Maynard, were gone for long periods: Patch was concealed on John Taylor's plantation for about six months and Tom Maynard went missing for almost four months. One of Weekes's own men, Jack Stewart, also escaped but was taken up in St Kitts and brought back to Mountravers. In all, Weekes paid out eight rewards for 'catching runaways'. Coker's payments had amounted to between N4s 1 1/2d and N16s6d; Weekes's ranged from a modest N2s 1 1/2d to a generous N£1:13:0.

Except for Weekes fining Mulatto Charles for running away, there are no records of him punishing Joe, Violet, Nero and Hannibal - the other people who had given Coker trouble – and although Weekes had permission to sell Mulatto Charles, he chose not to, nor did he sell his own man, the disruptive Jack Stewart. The people managed by him may have felt that he was trying to improve their situation. For instance, for holing, the heaviest work on a plantation, he did not use youngsters under the age of 15 (this earned JPP's approval),²⁴⁴ and he appears to have cut down on the arduous, daily chore of picking mounds of fresh grass for the animals. Instead, he fed the mules oilcakes. These he bought locally. When JPP found out about the oilcakes, he responded immediately and asked Weekes stop buying them because JPP did not like the idea of 'continually creating new wants'.²⁴⁵ Weekes then bought extra oats in Nevis and when JPP found out about him buying these for the 'poor mules', this also earned JPP's disapproval: '4 hhds of oats sent from England are all that I allow for my estate.'²⁴⁶ Feeding the animals oats, like oilcakes, spoilt them: 'It is doing the mules an injury to give them oats for if you should happen to be out, they feel the want of them materially so, you had better give them none, but feed any that may be low, with fine picked grass and a sufficient quantity.'²⁴⁷ So it was back to everyone having to return from their lunch breaks with heaps of grass, and of young children and old people being sent out to gather fodder for the mules, and if they brought back too small a bundle, they could expect to be punished. The daily task of picking grass for the animals was an unpopular occupation, particularly as plantation workers could earn cash by selling bundles to townsfolk as fodder for their livestock. With cane tops and grass picked from the roadside people could 'raise a comfortable addition to their own subsistence.'²⁴⁸

Allowances under Dr Weekes

During his medical training in Scotland Dr Weekes would have been exposed to the new ethos behind medical care which combined humanitarian with economic considerations: the well-being of a population depended no longer just on good health care provisions but, in order to be healthy, people needed to enjoy a reasonable standard of material welfare: shelter, food and clothing. Almost certainly with that in mind Dr Weekes sought to increase the allowances and doled out the food 'in a wide mouth calabash instead of a quart pot.' When JPP realised that this was happening he warned him: 'take care you do not exceed what you intend'.²⁴⁹ While Weekes increased the amounts he gave out, he did not, however, increase the order for food from Britain. Instead, he made up for any shortfall with local purchases.

Coker, too, had bought a substantial amount of corn locally and in one year an additional 14 barrels of flour. When he had next ordered food from Bristol, he asked for five barrels of beef, 35 barrels of herrings,

²⁴⁴ Pares, Richard *A West India Fortune* p125

²⁴⁵ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 October 1791

²⁴⁶ PP, AB 39 Hamilton Mills & Co a/c

²⁴⁷ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 10 November 1792

²⁴⁸ Cochrane, Thomas MD 'Answers to the Fifth Table' pp141-76

²⁴⁹ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 January 1791

20 puncheons of flour, five hogsheads of oats, two of bread, and five each of split beans and grey peas. Dr Weekes ordered the same, except that he replaced the beef with pork, asked for only 30 barrels of herrings and replaced the 10 hogsheads of beans and peas with two hogsheads of barley and one of barley meal. It appears that Weekes not only tried to increase the amounts but also vary people's diet.

When, at the end of one season he had six barrel of herrings left, he augmented this with another 24 barrels, bringing the total up to 30,²⁵⁰ but in the following year increased the order to 35 barrels.²⁵¹ JPP obliged and sent what was requested.²⁵² Not only flour but also bread was dispatched from England, and at the end of the summer of 1792 Weekes received ten puncheons of flour and a large hogshead of bread.²⁵³ Another load of flour arrived by the *Nevis* in early 1793. But flour had become expensive and Weekes was told not to 'depend upon any supply of provisions from hence' and to buy provisions in the autumn when they were cheapest, 'reserving a puncheon of flour for a dead time.'²⁵⁴ JPP had always been careful to hold back some food and continually advised his managers to do the same. Equally, he asked that they hold on to a little spare Osnaburgh, the material for clothing, 'to supply any extraordinary occasion'.²⁵⁵ If an item ran out, it may not be available for sale in the island and the next supply ship could be some months away.

During his first few months in office Dr Weeks recorded the amounts of food he distributed. He gave out the allowances irregularly – thereby asserting his position of power while underlining people's dependence. Receiving erratic supplies made planning and house-keeping more difficult for everyone; few would have had sufficient reserves.²⁵⁶

Distribution of flour, herrings and bread on Mountravers, August to December 1790

Month	Day	Flour (puncheons)	Day	Herrings (barrels)	Date	Bread (hhds)
August 1790	Monday, 2 nd	1	<i>Monday, 2nd</i>	½		None
	Thursday, 12 th	1	<i>Thursday, 5th</i>	1		
	Friday, 20 th	1	<i>Thursday, 12th</i>	1		
			<i>Friday, 20th</i>	1		
				<i>Tuesday, 31st</i>	1	
September 1790	Thursday, 2 nd	1	Tuesday, 7 th	1	Tuesday, 12 th	1
	Monday, 13 th	1	<i>Monday, 13th</i>	1		

²⁵⁰ PP, AB 40 30 January 1792

²⁵¹ PP, AB 43 At the back

²⁵² PP, AB 40 12 February 1793

²⁵³ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 9 June 1792

²⁵⁴ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 10 November 1792

²⁵⁵ PP, LB 9: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 February 1789

²⁵⁶ An equally irregular pattern of giving out allowances occurred during James Williams's time as manager. In one week he noted the allowances in the Plantation Diary:

Saturday, 2 November 1799	Corn ['meal' crossed out] and herrings
Monday, 4 November	[Flour and shads, crossed out]
Tuesday, 5 November	Flour and shads
Thursday, 7 November	Corn meal and herrings
Friday, 8 November	110 gallons rum

There was one more entry, for Thursday, 21 November of cornmeal and herrings.

Month	Day	Flour (puncheons)	Day	Herrings (barrels)	Date	Bread (hhds)
	Friday, 24 th	1	Thursday, 23 rd Thursday, 30 th	1 1		
October 1790	Monday, 4 th Tuesday, 12 th Tuesday, 19 th	1 1 1	Thursday, 7 th Thursday, 14 th Thursday, 21 st Saturday, 23 rd	1 1 1 1	<i>Tuesday, 12th</i>	1
November 1790	Thursday, 4 th	1	Saturday, 6 th Saturday, 13 th Saturday, 20 th Saturday, 27 th	1 1 1 1		None
December 1790	Monday, 6 th Tuesday, 21 st Saturday, 25 th Friday, 31 st	1 1 2 1	Saturday, 4 th Tuesday, 14 th <i>Tuesday, 21st</i> <i>Friday, 31st</i>	1 1 1 1	<u>Saturday, 4th</u>	1

(Dates in italics: flour was distributed on the same day; underlined date: herrings were given out on the same day.)

During a period of five months Weekes doled out 15 puncheons of flour, 20 ½ barrels of herrings and three hogsheads of bread. In addition, on Thursday, 16th December, when nothing else was distributed, he gave rice to sick people, and on Saturday, 25th, when flour was issued, shared out four barrels of pork.

Whereas flour, herrings and bread were distributed irregularly, between August and December 1790 corn was given out every week. However, it is not clear from Weekes's account on which day he distributed it. The increase in corn towards the end of the year reflects the relative dearth of food crops at that time of year. JPP was concerned that sufficient supplies were bought for the whole winter so that everyone received a 'proper quantity of provisions at all times'.²⁵⁷

Distribution of bushels of corn on Mountravers, August to December 1790

Month	Date	Bushels of corn distributed	Bushels of corn distributed per calendar month
August 1790	Sunday 1 st to Sunday, 8 th Sunday 8 th to Sunday, 15 th Sunday 15 st to Sunday, 22 nd Sunday 22 nd to Sunday, 29 th	10 11 7 12	40

²⁵⁷ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 October 1791

September 1790	Saturday, 28 th August to Saturday, 4 th Saturday, 4 th to Saturday, 11 th Saturday, 11 th to Saturday, 18 th Saturday, 18 th to Saturday, 25 th	12 ½ 12 9 ½ 10	35
October 1790	Saturday, 25 th September to Saturday, 2 nd Saturday, 2 nd to Saturday, 9 th Saturday, 9 th to Saturday, 16 th Saturday, 16 th to Saturday, 23 rd Saturday, 23 rd to Saturday, 30 th	10 ½ 12 12 11 ½ 18	64
November 1790	Saturday, 30 th October to Saturday, 6 th Saturday, 6 th to Saturday, 13 th Saturday, 13 th to Saturday, 20 th Saturday, 20 th to Saturday, 27 th	15 18 23 24 ½	80 ½
December 1790	Saturday, 27 th November to Saturday, 4 th Saturday, 4 th to Saturday, 11 th Saturday, 11 th to Saturday, 18 th Saturday, 18 th to Saturday, 25 th Saturday, 25 th to Saturday, 1 st January 1791	24 24 21 15 9 ½	93 ½

Over a five-months-period Dr Weekes gave out a total of 313 bushels of corn. At the end of the year he was left with over 7 ½ bushels, as well as one puncheon of flour and two barrels of herrings. Another 11 bushels of corn had been wasted and 16 ½ bushels of corn fed to the plantation horses, camels and mules and to James Williams's stock. Dr Weekes sold one barrel of herrings to John Keepe²⁵⁸ and in the following year some corn and peas but did not part with any of the plantation food in the year after that.²⁵⁹ It looked as if Britain was going to be at war with France once more and it was best to hold on to what was stored in the allowance house.

Dr Weekes distributed allowances for almost 22 weeks, compared to periods of 12 to 16 weeks in which JPP had issued food during the years 1776 to 1778. Those were starvation years and JPP had distributed a minimum of food, about half the rations that Thomas Pym Weekes issued during August to December 1790. Translated into weekly rations, Weekes gave out just over 5 pints (2.4 litres) of corn for adults and 2 ½ pints (1.2 litres) of corn for children under the age of eight or nine; close to 5 pints of flour for adults and half that for the young children, as well as almost six herrings for adults and none for young children plus an indeterminate amount of bread for adults and children.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ PP, AB 43, also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790

²⁵⁹ PP, AB 39 Plantation a/c

²⁶⁰ This calculation is based on the December 1790 list which contained 203 people, of whom about 162 would have been entitled to full rations and 36 to half rations. One other adult, Bander Legged Moll, had by then been given to Mrs Thraske and has been excluded from the calculation as were five other people (Leah, John Wilks, Tom McGill, Tom Punch, and Tom Thraske) who were on long-term hire. Included in the calculation are five manumitted adults who would have received allowances. Among the children the very young who were still being breast-fed would not have been entitled to any rations. This applied to at least five children.

The entitlement to full rations and to herrings was assumed to have started once children reached the age of about eight years (all the children born after January 1782), as was the case on Clarke's Estate in the 1820s.

In addition to giving out imported food, Weekes continued the custom of distributing plantation produce such as rum and molasses. In 1790 he 'Expended on the plantation during the fall of the year 101 gallons' of rum, which in the following two years rose slightly to 110 gallons and 115 gallons.²⁶¹ If distributed in the autumn over a ten-week period, 101 gallons would have translated to a weekly allowance of about half a pint (quarter a litre) per person (adults and the older children).²⁶² By 1794 the rum set aside for the plantation workers was reduced to 70 gallons, which was close to what JPP used to allow (63 gallons). Of the molasses produced, 250 gallons were 'reserved for the negroes'.²⁶³

While some of the plantation products were distributed by way of allowances, a small section of the plantation land was also given over to growing food. Weekes was reminded by his brother-in-law to 'Plant potatoes in regular succession and any other kind of negro provision you may think advisable, to help out *occasionally*'. [February 1793]²⁶⁴ These other food crops would have consisted of starchy tubers: yams, eddoes (taro, dasheen or cocoyam) and a plant that grew in poor soil, cassava. Yam and eddoo roots could be easily cooked - boiled or roasted in the fire – and eddoo and cassava leaves were a useful vegetable. The cassava root required some preparation: it was peeled and grated, the juice extracted and the pulp dried into flour (*farine* or *farinha*), which was made into flat cakes called cassava bread. Another food that required preparation was maize. On some plantations enslaved people themselves pounded this 'raw Indian corn' with a pestle and mortar,²⁶⁵ but on Mountravers there was a cornmill ²⁶⁶ and presumably it would have been the task of one of the old or disabled folk to mill the imported corn into flour. On the Stapleton plantation people had access to a communal oven ²⁶⁷ but it is not known whether there was one on Mountravers.

Starchy foods and salted herrings, and pork or beef at Christmas – the diet appears monotonous but it was said that enslaved people prepared their meals by adding 'many vegetables' and that their food was 'strongly seasoned with Spanish or red pepper'.²⁶⁸ They would have had fresh produce from the sea and the ponds, as well as their yard gardens and their own patches of land. In their gardens and allotments they could work independently and decide what to grow and how to grow it. But many workers were too tired after a day's strenuous labour and others were not willing to put in the effort, and JPP advised that those 'so idle and lazy as to neglect their provision grounds' should have their names minuted and, when the others were labouring for their own benefit, they should be made to work in the field. He was convinced that 'This would prove a material spur to industry.' As to the piece of land called Crufts, their provision ground, he assured Weekes that if they continued 'to make a good use of it' this would 'not be taken from them again.'²⁶⁹

On Saturday afternoons Weekes allowed people time off to cultivate their allotments but JPP asked him not to do so too regularly: '... I mean in giving them every Saturday afternoon, you should occasionally

As a memo in one of the account books shows, even in JPP's days the measuring of dry goods presented problems. Here a puncheon of flour was taken to have been equivalent to 20 bushels of corn, because, as JPP wrote, 'when Mr Pinney was in Nevis a puncheon of flour was considered equal, by some persons, to 20 bushels corn at 18 bushels per puncheon' (PP, AB 54 Plantation a/c).

²⁶¹ PP, AB 43 f34 Rum a/c; also AB 39 Rum a/c

²⁶² It is not known at what age rum allowances started to be given out. The calculation is based on 140 people (115 adults plus 25 older children).

²⁶³ PP, AB 43 f34 Rum a/c; also AB 39 Rum a/c

²⁶⁴ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 1 February 1793

²⁶⁵ Ferguson, Moira (ed) *The History of Mary Prince* p62

²⁶⁶ PP, AB 39 John Huggins's a/c

²⁶⁷ NHCS, RG 12.10 Indictment of Manager on Stapleton p295

²⁶⁸ Tyson, GF and AR Highfield (eds) *The Kamina Folk* p132 and p134

On the Stapleton plantation on at least one occasion enslaved people were also issued with salt from the St Kitts salt pans (Stapleton Cotton MSS, 16 (i): 1777/8 Accounts), but on Mountravers there are no records of such allowances. It may well be that the salted provisions and the brine in which they arrived were sufficient or were thought sufficient.

²⁶⁹ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 January 1791

vary the day and when it is dry weather you may defer it several weeks altogether ...' JPP wanted him to make sure 'not to grant particular favours so frequent as to give them an opportunity to look on it as a matter of right'.²⁷⁰ He feared that what he considered a concession would in due course be claimed as a regular entitlement. Again, the unpredictable nature of time allowed for gardening made planning more difficult and emphasised people's dependent status while it confirmed the manager's power to influence yet another aspect of people's lives.

Building projects

Dr Weekes was trying to improve working conditions on the plantation. In trying to make it easier for children to do the weeding, he bought the first children's hoes from a local supplier,²⁷¹ complained about the 'very bad' quality of coopers' and carpenters' tools sent from Bristol and ordered a large selection of tools.²⁷² JPP reduced some of the requested quantities and, for instance, allowed only three wheelbarrows instead of six. The reason for this is unclear. Either he thought the order too extravagant, or he wanted his people to work less efficiently and thereby be kept busy (too busy and too tired to reflect on their lives and plot rebellion), or he knew from experience that they did not like using wheelbarrows. A contemporary observer claimed that "'Slaves even resisted the use of wheelbarrows as devices for hauling manure, preferring the traditional wicker baskets which they carried on their heads.'"²⁷³ But rather than employ the wheelbarrows for ferrying manure from the pens to the fields, Weekes probably intended them to be used for hauling building materials. He was busy with various projects on the plantation, mostly down at Sharloes and up at Woodland. Many of these ventures he initiated himself but from his employer he also received some very precise instructions. JPP, for instance, asked him to raise the shed roof at Sharloes for crop time and to make the arch to support the side of the old roof 'wide enough to leave the whole gangway before the coppers open to your sight at one point of view'. Weekes was also instructed to build a new windmill, ensuring that Mr Brazier, the millwright, would fulfil the contract at the agreed price.²⁷⁴ The new job required stones to be cut, and 'to blow rocks for the windmill', he got to work with several pounds of gunpowder.²⁷⁵ Soon the odd explosion would be heard and the sound of chiselling and hammering as people shaped stones into squares and rectangles. But JPP was still wavering and in fact wanted to upgrade the animal mills with new kind of rollers. He had heard of a cattle mill at St Kitts that used Garnett's patent rollers and these, it was claimed, performed as well as a windmill.²⁷⁶ Provided they were kept clean and the parts replaced as necessary, Garnett's rollers required less force and made turning the mill much easier.²⁷⁷ But JPP did not know how far work had progressed and his instructions to Weekes provided for all eventualities. If the windmill was completed he instructed that the top should be covered to prevent weather damage. If building the windmill was in progress, all work was to stop, Weekes was to sell the lime and the two cattle mills on the estate were to be put in order immediately.²⁷⁸ Without waiting to find out how far work had advanced, JPP sent out a mill with Garnett's rollers and gave

²⁷⁰ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 January 1791

On the Stapleton plantation workers were also given time off on Saturdays to 'cultivate their own grounds' (Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan, MSS 2: Robert Thomson to Revd Shipley, 21 July 1794).

²⁷¹ PP, AB 47 Cash a/c and Andrew Hamilton Merchant a/c

²⁷² PP, AB 43 At the back

²⁷³ Green, William A *British Slave Emancipation* p52, quoting Wentworth *Sketch Book II* pp68-9 and Hovey *Letters from the West Indies* p66

²⁷⁴ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 27 September 1790

²⁷⁵ PP, AB 43 f110

²⁷⁶ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 20 July 1791

²⁷⁷ Owen Ward wrote that 'A system had been devised for carriage wheels, incorporating small conical roller bearings into which the rotating ends of the horizontal carriage axles were set'; that the Pinneys extolled their virtues over subsequent years and that 'some 118 mills of this type were supplied by them over the next twenty-four years'. However, Ward suggested that the extra cost of their additional engineering led to the decline of Garnett's rollers, particularly when mills were converting to steam (Ward, Owen *The Vertical Three-Roller Sugar Mill* March 1987; source supplied by Hugh Torrens). Given the enthusiasm with which JPP advocated the new kind of rollers he may well have regretted having had the windmill built.

²⁷⁸ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 20 July 1791

instructions to fit these at Sharloes.²⁷⁹ However, Weekes and his friend John Taylor managed to persuade JPP that it was right to complete the new windmill.²⁸⁰

Everyone made quick progress. On 25 July 1791 – five days after JPP had come up in Bristol with the idea of upgrading his animal mills - the foundation had been laid for the windmill at Sharloes. By the end of the year the floor and the bed of the windmill were completed. In all, the masons had laid more than 1,200 perches of stones. In the ‘little’ boiling house at Sharloes masons had worked on walls and windows (the blacksmith John Huggins made bars to fit the windows), hung coppers and a still and built a chimney. For the boiling house at Woodland Huggins also forged new window frames. In the following year more work was carried out, at Sharloes on the horse millround and on the roof of one of the boiling houses, while up at Woodland masons laid walls and steps and built the foundation walls for a new cistern.²⁸¹

While putting up new buildings workers also carried out repairs. Gudgeons broke and stocks and points had to be mended and the windmill was twice cogged. Some of the work was so urgent that Dr Weekes employed people on Sundays. One Sunday nine people were paid two shillings each for driving out a broken gudgeon, on another Sunday a couple of people earned three shillings each for bringing water from the pond near the sea to the worm tub, and Glasgow Wells got N4s 1 ½d for a day’s work, ‘repairing the windmill points’. In addition to carrying out repairs on Sundays Dr Weekes also employed people on Sundays just to get the work done. Several men earned over N£17 for underpinning Woodland house and for making four steps, and over N£5 for other work at Woodland and on the windmill at Sharloes. Usually skilled men had the opportunity to earn extra money on Sundays but on at least one occasion the unskilled people who attended to the masons and carpenters on Sundays were also paid for their contribution.²⁸² However, usually major building projects were carried out during slack times of the year to keep people occupied but it seems that Dr Weekes was keen to give people the opportunity to earn some money while driving his building projects forward.

The skilled men who did the work were Africans (Oroonoko and Bettiscombe) and Creoles (Tom Jones and James Peaden). Trained as masons and carpenters, they were hired to contractors whom Dr Weekes had engaged. Some of these outside tradesmen brought with them their own enslaved men and the Mountravers people would have worked alongside them, forging new friendships, sharing skills as well as news. In addition, Dr Weekes hired his own mason to the plantation, which clearly represented a conflict of interest and something which his employer later held against him. Meanwhile, some of the Mountravers people who were not needed were hired out; Harlescombe and Primus, for instance, to the neighbouring planter, John Latoysonere Scarborough, and Billey Jones to a ship, the *Nevis*.

When Dr Weekes sent his first account books to Bristol, JPP was horrified by the ‘most extravagant’ expenses. Among them were the iron bars which John Huggins had supplied. They should have been ordered from England, and JPP warned him not to employ any more white tradesmen. (He expressed a common complaint that ironwork bought locally was more expensive than if shipped from England and white tradesmen were ‘always extravagant’.)²⁸³ Having already told his manager to put on hold the work on one of the boiling houses, Weekes was instructed to either get the plantation people to finish the cistern, or, better still, to suspend work on the cistern until the eldest Pinney son came to Nevis. Weekes

²⁷⁹ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 18 August 1791

²⁸⁰ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 12 November 1791

²⁸¹ PP, AB 39: 27 September 1791 and 12 December 1791; AB 39 f44, f122, f117, f94 and DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1789-1794 f129

²⁸² PP, AB 39 f102, f110, f112, f143 and DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1789-1794 f122 and f99

²⁸³ Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan MSS 2: John Robinson, Roseau, Dominica, to Lady Catherine Stapleton, 23 March 1774

was censured for making unauthorised decisions and reminded to always ask for permission before embarking on new projects.²⁸⁴

It is likely that building work would have ceased anyway because around the same time Dr Weekes received these instructions his wife died and he lost his drive and energy. In quick succession, the young Isabella Weekes had given birth to two boys and in late 1792 she probably died giving birth to a third child.²⁸⁵ Thomas Pym Weekes, left alone with his sons, was distraught. He slumped into depression and probably at this stage formed the plan to leave Mountravers. He wanted to give up his job, go to some other island and practice medicine.

Dr Weekes's sugar and the sugar market

When he had started work on Mountravers, the sugar Weekes shipped to England had been of inferior quality. Perhaps this was due to his inexperience in handling the boilers and the distraction caused by his building projects. He was under pressure not just to produce good quality sugar but also to make a lot. JPP had confided in him that his finances had become 'exceedingly' distressed from the 'enormous' expense of building and furnishing his houses in Bristol and at Racedown, adding: 'I must request therefore that you will do your utmost to make me as large a remittance as possible.'²⁸⁶ This appeal came when sugar prices were going up 'from various unforeseen causes'. News of any kind of disaster invariably revived flagging sugar markets - indeed, the House once wrote that if 'The sugar market does not get up; we sadly want the report of a war, a hurricane, or something to give it a lift!' - and while at the end of January 1791 a hundredweight of the lowest grade, brown sugar, had sold for between 61s to 64s and 'good' quality from between 70s to 78s, by October the same grades fetched between 72s and 74s, and between 79s and 84s.²⁸⁷ This was after news of a large-scale slave rebellion in St Domingue had reached England. The bloody uprising in this French colony began in August 1791 and stopped production in the most prolific of the Caribbean sugar islands. Although this allowed other colonies to increase their output,²⁸⁸ JPP was shocked and appalled to hear of the deaths of so many whites and feared that the insurgence would spread. Plantations would become worthless. He lamented the misfortunes of his class: 'Gentlemen who possess West India property were never in so critical a situation, they are truly to be pitied. The demagogues for the abolition of the slave trade have lost all feeling and are rejoicing at the event.'²⁸⁹

JPP felt that the institution of slavery and the trade in enslaved people were being attacked from outside and from within: in Britain by the abolitionists and their followers and in the West Indies by people rebelling. News of the rebellion in St Domingue reached Britain just when the country was experiencing a sugar boycott in which 'many classes of people' partook. Abolitionists had called on the ordinary citizens of the country to abstain from using slave-produced sugar, or, as JPP phrased it, 'the demagogues of

²⁸⁴ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 20 July 1791, and 9 June 1792, and LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 18 September 1792

²⁸⁵ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 1 February 1793

²⁸⁶ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to TP Weekes, 5 March 1791

²⁸⁷ PP, LB 38: T & P to CA Chabert, St Croix, 29 January 1791, and T & P to JB Chabert, St Croix, 24 October 1791

²⁸⁸ Ward, JR *British West Indian Slavery* p43

²⁸⁹ PP, LB 10: JPP to William Burt Weekes, 28 October 1791

As news of the revolt in St Domingue reached Britain, the country was experiencing its own upheaval. In Birmingham a mob attacked a group of Christians, the Unitarians, for their radical views, which resulted in serious riots (Reed, Michael *The Georgian Triumph* p197). The pro-slavery apologist Jesse Foot drew parallels between the different oppressed groups (the rebelling slaves in St Domingue and the rioting people in Birmingham), and commented that, unlike the slaves, the people in Birmingham had 'noone to defend them'. In an effort to boost his argument that enslaved Africans led an idyllic, carefree life ('His toil is so light that he feels it not - his freedom is so indifferent to him that he will not buy it'), rather disingenuously and unconvincingly Foot championed the cause of other oppressed people: soldiers in the army, the Russian serfs, the Catholics in Britain, as well as the Cornish miners and the colliers in Durham (Foot, Jesse The Elder *A Defence of the Planters in the West Indies* p34, p42, p35 fn, p38 and p41).

abolition' were 'preaching up' the boycott 'as the most effective way to destroy the slave trade'.²⁹⁰ The campaign had been launched by William Fox, a leading Baptist activist, with a tract entitled *An Address to the People of Great Britain on the Utility of Refraining from the Use of West India Sugar and Rum*.²⁹¹ The pamphlet deemed sugar an illegal produce, based on the stance that 'neither the slave nor the slave-dealer nor the planter, can have any moral right to the person of him they stile (sic) their slave, to his labour, or to the produce of it.' The writer appealed to the modern sensibilities of his fellow citizens: 'But we, in an enlightened age, have greatly surpassed, in brutality and injustice, the most ignorant and barbarous ages ...'²⁹² The boycott appealed particularly to women who wanted to play an active part in the abolition movement and who saw this collective action as an ideal political strategy. Meanwhile, in every corner of the country, countless citizens signed petitions in support of ending the trade in human beings.²⁹³

The rising in St Domingue had stimulated the sugar market²⁹⁴ and for JPP this was an added incentive to call for better manufacture. He urged Weekes to keep the works clean and advised him on ways of improving the curing process.²⁹⁵ The quality improved immediately and Weekes sent 'good sugar'. His employer was satisfied.²⁹⁶ Remittances for the years 1791 to 1795 averaged 75 hogsheads,²⁹⁷ and whereas Coker's last year (1789/90) had yielded a deficit of £3, surpluses under Weekes swung from £1,000 in 1790/91 to a mere £11 in 1791/92, gathered momentum again and reached £1,032 in 1792/93 and then dropped to £465 in 1793/94. The smaller profit that season may well have been due to Weekes sending little sugar because he was struggling to come to terms with his wife's death. This was unfortunate for JPP because following the uprising in St Domingue the market had boomed, then in 1792 it had fallen and risen 'in a fluctuating state'²⁹⁸ and was just then doing well again. War had broken out with France which meant that all sugars rose by six or seven shillings.²⁹⁹ Although that year there was much sugar on the market, which normally would have suppressed prices, this was counterbalanced by a large demand from continental Europe.³⁰⁰

In 1791 the Parliamentary campaign to end the slave trade experienced a setback when Wilberforce's first abolition bill failed but in the following year a speech by Prime Minister William Pitt stirred the House of Commons to vote for a gradual abolition. At the end of April 1792 JPP transmitted the news to Nevis: 'After much altercation, and most vehement speechifying, the abolition of the slave trade is it seems to take place on the first of January 1796.' He added that the Lords were to decide 'but from the complexion of the popular opinion, we apprehend the die is cast.'³⁰¹ The House of Lords, however, delayed its decision. It called for further evidence and set up a committee of enquiry. In June 1793 JPP could report with some satisfaction that 'The slave-trade business in the House of Lords is again part-off - 'till next

²⁹⁰ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to John Taylor, Nevis, 24 October 1791

²⁹¹ Midgley, Clare *Women Against Slavery* p35

²⁹² Anon *An address to the people of Great Britain on the Utility of Refraining from the Use of West India Sugar and Rum*

²⁹³ Support for the pro-abolition lobby was strongest in the English urban, industrial towns but rural populations, too, attended meetings, joined the sugar boycott and signed petitions. An example of correspondence concerning a petition for the abolition of the slave trade can be found in Cornwall RO, DC LOOE 87: William Buller to Thomas Bond, 7 March 1792. In Scotland the case of an enslaved man taking his owner to court (Knight v Wedderburn) had in the 1770s caused a great deal of publicity and after he won his case and slavery, in effect was not recognised in Scots law, there was a lot of popular support for abolishing the slave trade. Compared to England and Scotland, Wales, mostly rural and sparsely populated, contributed relatively little to the movement but also produced outspoken opponents such as Morgan John Rhys (Chris Evans *Slave Wales* pp83-91).

²⁹⁴ Ward, JR *British West Indian Slavery 1750-1834* p43

²⁹⁵ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, 24 October 1791

²⁹⁶ PP, LB 38: T & P to TP Weekes, Nevis, 4 July 1792, and LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 12 September 1793

²⁹⁷ Pares, Richard *A West India Fortune* pp144-45

²⁹⁸ PP, LB 11: JPP to John Taylor, Nevis, 22 July 1792

²⁹⁹ Pares, Richard *A West India Fortune* p196

³⁰⁰ UKNA, E 140/10/13: Plummer and Barham, London, to Thomas Cottle, Nevis, 15 December 1793

³⁰¹ PP, LB 38: T & P to Revd Wm Jones, 26 April 1792, PS 29 April 1792

sessions'.³⁰² By then the country was at war with France and, while fighting the enemy, it would have seemed unpatriotic to call for Britain to lose a vital component of its economy. And so, after the House of Lords rejected the bill to abolish the slave trade, the parliamentary campaign came to a halt. When the British began using enslaved people in their Caribbean army, this created a new demand; the war with France, in effect, contributed to delaying the abolition of the slave trade. For the enslaved people in the French colonies, however, the French Revolution led to the – albeit temporary - abolition of slavery. This was announced officially in February 1794. The civil commissioner in St Domingue, though, had been one step ahead: in that colony he had already freed the enslaved people several months earlier.³⁰³ While the struggle in St Domingue continued for another decade, in the other French colonies slavery was restored soon after Napoleon seized power in 1796.

Thomas Pym Weekes was manager during a period of great political upheavals but from the documents available there is no evidence that any of the international affairs affected people on Mountravers. Life went on pretty much as it always had. The war with France became commonplace; people lived with the threat of naval action in such a way that it became part of daily life. The war even became the subject of a bet between Weekes and his friend Magnus Morton. They hatched a wager which was typical of the sort of everyday gambling that went on. In his journal Weekes made a note of this: '31 July 1793 No French privateer in St Bartholomew at 6 o'clock this day says Dr Weekes the contrary is Mr Morton's opinion a turtle for 12 the consequence.'³⁰⁴ Who won that particular bet is not known but certainly soon everyone could watch French privateers 'picking up' British ships among the islands.³⁰⁵

Work on Mountravers continued

Managers had changed on Mountravers yet there was some continuity in that the overseer remained the same; Weekes worked with James Williams, who had served under Gill and also under Coker. Although JPP had objected to Coker employing a boiling house watch, Weekes engaged first the mason Nathaniel Clifton to assist during the crop, and then William Price as overseer during crop time and as a boiling house watch. After the 1793 harvest James Williams left for a visit to Britain, and while he was away, presumably William Price was installed in the house at Sharloes because Weekes received JPP's instruction not to 'let the lower work remain without the residence of a white man, in the room of Williams, until he returns.'³⁰⁶

Because Dr Weekes treated any patients on Mountravers himself – JPP supplied him with 'medicines of the best kind' -³⁰⁷ during his time as manager there is no record of the treatment particular individuals received. It is known, however, that syphilis and other venereal diseases continued to prove an ongoing concern which prompted JPP to send him 'Foot's Treatise on the Origin, Theory and Cure of Lues Venerea'.³⁰⁸ In addition Weekes would have had to deal with the effects of an 'epidemical fever of a highly malignant kind' which was sweeping through the Caribbean islands. It was said that it had been carried by a ship sailing from Sierra Leone to Grenada and that from there it had been carried all over the West Indies and as far as north as Philadelphia. This 'fatal fever was spreading fast in Nevis as well as St Kitts' and it is likely that some people on Mountravers would have succumbed to it, too. The disease made 'dreadful havock', particularly in the army and the navy.³⁰⁹

³⁰² PP, LB 39: T & P to John Taylor, Nevis, 17 June 1793

³⁰³ Buckley, RN *The British Army* p186 and p185

³⁰⁴ PP, Misc Vols 12 Leeward Islands Calendar 1793

³⁰⁵ PP, LB 39: T & P to George Webbe, 12 October 1793

³⁰⁶ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, Nevis, 2 October 1793

³⁰⁷ PP, LB 9: JPP, Bristol, to TP Weekes, 28 January 1788

³⁰⁸ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, 10 March 1793

³⁰⁹ PP, LB 39: T & P to JS Budgeon, Twickenham, 26 October 1793, and Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan MSS 2: Robert Thomson to

At the beginning of August 1792 a 'great storm' swept through the Lesser Antilles, destroying crops in St Kitts³¹⁰ and killing at least four people. They drowned in surf.³¹¹ Between St Kitts and St Eustatius a Spanish brig sunk, with only two survivors,³¹² and while Captain Clarke of the *Boddington* rode out 'a heavy gale of wind, or rather a kind of hurricane',³¹³ off Nevis Captain Chivers lost his vessel, the *Sarah and Ann*.³¹⁴ The passengers would have perished, too, had it not been for a man called Harper and three or four enslaved men, who came to their rescue. Harper had watched from the shore how the cable broke and how the ship was driven on the first point. With distress guns firing continuously, Harper, determined 'to use every exertion to preserve the lives of the people abroad', got a boat ready and found some 'excellent negro swimmers' to go with him. 'The surf was running tremendously high' and their boat 'overset five times' but the men rescued the passengers, the Nevis planter George Webbe and his wife, and brought them ashore. Two sailors from the *Sarah and Ann* died in this episode but the passengers were 'saved by the uncommon exertion of Harper and three or four negroes'. The grateful 'Mr Webbe Junior made Harper a compliment of 100 Guineas' and it can only be hoped that Harper shared his reward with the other brave men.³¹⁵

Probably as a result of the hurricane, 'provisions and refreshments' became 'scarce and dear' in Nevis,³¹⁶ but a year on the situation worsened and 'the plantations in the West Indies [were] in the utmost distress for the want of their provision stores'.³¹⁷ Not only was there an embargo on shipping flour and grain from Britain aboard vessels that sailed without a convoy³¹⁸ but another severe hurricane hit Nevis in August 1793. It had begun with 'a brisk gale of wind'³¹⁹ which turned into 'a very heavy gale' that brought 'considerable damage' to the whole of Nevis. Seafarers lost their lives when British and American merchantmen and local sloops and schooners were stranded around the islands or lost out at sea. Weeks of incessant rain followed.³²⁰

Revd William D Shipley, 17 December 1793

³¹⁰ Burns, Sir Alan *History of the British West Indies* p758

³¹¹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3 (Cayon Diary)

³¹² <http://www.candoo.com/genresources/hurricane>

³¹³ PP, LB 38: T & P to Wm Colhoun, 7 September 1792

³¹⁴ The insurance company questioned the sinking of the *Sarah and Ann* and wanted a statement from Captain Chivers 'that the loss of his ship actually took place before 12 o'clock at night on the 1st of August'. The case went to trial but by the time it was heard, Thomas Curtin Chivers had died (UKNA, E 140/10/13: Plummer and Barham, London, to Thomas Cottle, Nevis, 7 October 1792, 7 November 1792, 17 November 1792, and 26 April 1794).

³¹⁵ PP, LB 10: JPP, Sherbourne, to Wm Coker, Woodcutts, 5 October 1792

³¹⁶ UKHO, Remark Book 39 (AC1): Remarks by HMS Sloop *Fairy*, Francis Laforey Commander, anchored Charlestown Road 27 February 1793 - 1 March 1793

³¹⁷ PP, LB 11: JPP, Cove of Cork, to Simon Pretor, 5 March 1794

³¹⁸ PP, LB 39: T & P to John Taylor, Nevis, 22 March 1794

³¹⁹ PP, Pinney Misc Vols 12, Leeward Islands Calendar: 8 August 1793

³²⁰ Aberystwyth Bodrhyddan MSS 2: Frances Daniell to the Revd the Dean of Asaph 7 September 1793 and R F Marx *Shipwrecks in the Americas* p267

It has been suggested that the *African Queen* went down in the 1793 hurricane with three hundred enslaved people on board but so far, no corroborating evidence has been found (eg Evans, JAH 'Nathaniel Wells of Piercefield and St Kitts: From Slave to Sheriff' in *Monmouthshire Antiquarian* p96). The *Worcester Gazette*, published in Massachusetts, reported on 10 October 1793 that an unnamed Guinea vessel with 300 slaved had 'overset', with the loss of all aboard except for 16 of her crew while the *Universal Magazine* Vol XVIII (1793) claimed that the *African Queen*, 'which was loaded at Nevis' [ie with plantation produce], foundered. This account, too, stated that some of her crew were saved and supports Frances Daniell's claim that the vessel came to grief after loading at Nevis. Enslaved people certainly did lose their lives in the hurricane; on 5 October 1793 the London *Times* reported the loss of a vessel off Tortola, in which 28 of 42 enslaved people had perished (Courtesy of Brian Littlewood and Vincent K Hubbard).

JPP's second visit to Nevis

By late November 1793 JPP believed that the fever was 'much abated in its virulence'³²¹ and, hoping that it would soon cease altogether, just before Christmas he, his son John Frederick and his servant Pero Jones departed for Nevis. First they sailed to Ireland.³²² On board ship were also James Williams, who was returning from his visit home, and a new overseer, John Smith. John Frederick came off age while they were waiting at Cork for a convoy to assemble and, after staying in Ireland for three months, they could finally set sail. On 8 May 1794 JPP landed at Nevis for his second – and last – visit.³²³ Thomas Pym Weekes was free to quit his job on the day his employer arrived. James Williams took over as manager and shortly afterwards Dr Weekes left for Martinique.

During his visit to Nevis JPP finally managed to sell his small estate in St John Figtree called Mountain or Governor. In 1775 James Brodbelt had agreed to buy it for S£4,200 but Brodbelt had died later in the year. It was then managed by Brodbelt's executor, John Stanley, who could not agree on a price for Brodbelt's heirs, and JPP had reclaimed the plantation from Stanley and leased it to Edward Brazier. The estate consisted of 40 acres of very good cane land, an old dwelling house, a good kitchen and steward room, an arched water cistern, a good boiling house with four coppers, a lime and stone mill round and a mill, mule shade, horse stable and other outbuildings.³²⁴ JPP sold Mountain with 55 people to Edward Brazier, and some of those people who had originally come from Woodland may have been among the early converts to Methodism. Two years after arriving in the Eastern Caribbean, in 1789 the Methodists had established a mission in Nevis and Mr Brazier was among the planters who encouraged them to spread their message. He had invited Revd William Hammett to preach on his plantation.³²⁵ By 1793 close to 400 black and 'mixed people' had converted to Methodism in Nevis,³²⁶ and recruitment progressed so well that in the following year plans were made for enlarging the Methodist Chapel in Charlestown.³²⁷ It was claimed that through their presence in St Kitts Methodists had achieved 'a very great reformation' in that island: there were 'much fewer robberies in the towns, and less rioting in the streets.'³²⁸ While some recognised that the spread of Christian beliefs among the plantation workers could be used as a means of social control and thereby bring advantages, to others it was a dangerous notion indeed that God valued all His creatures equally. It is very likely that JPP, too, was suspicious of the missionaries. After all, he believed that the Almighty had sanctioned the ownership of one by another: 'But surely God ordain'd 'em for ye use & benefit of us: otherwise his Divine Will would have been made manifest by some particular sign or token.'³²⁹

On 29 July 1794 JPP bought a man, Prince, on his own rather than the plantation's account, and on the following day he, his son and Pero sailed back to England.³³⁰



On the day the visitors departed from Nevis James Williams compiled his first inventory of all the plantation people. He listed 106 adults and 97 children, 203 in total - exactly the same number Dr Weekes had registered in December 1790. But Williams noted down another ten adults. Five of these

³²¹ PP, LB 12: JPP, Bristol, to Richard Pew, Shaftesbury, 28 November 1793

³²² PP, LB 39: T & P to Sam Whitty, Sherbourne, 24 December 1793

³²³ PP, AB 41 f7 1789 Cash a/c

³²⁴ PP, AB 18 ff51-6

³²⁵ Coke, Thomas Dr *A History of the West Indies* p11

³²⁶ Goveia, EV *Slave Society* pp291-94

³²⁷ Anon *Kindling of the Flame* p51

³²⁸ Cochrane, Thomas MD 'Answers to the Fifth Table' pp141-76

³²⁹ PP, LB 3: JPP to Harry Pouncy, 2 March 1765

³³⁰ PP, AB 41 1789 Cash a/c

were people whom JPP freed from work during his last visit (Rose's Jenny, Abba, Benneba, Bettiscombe and Old Yankey), and the other five were old women who had survived since being freed from work in 1783 (Molly, Tyty, Phibba, Yabba and Congo Flora). Ten more people who had been freed from work at the same time were not listed, and it is assumed that they had all died in the intervening years: four women (Sheba, Hetty, Princess and Kate) and six men: Fido, Scipio, Cato, Phillip, Rhadnor, and Guy.

One additional woman, Bander Leg'd Moll, had many years ago been given away - she was living away from the plantation with Mrs Thraske – and the girl, whom the Pinneys had taken to Bristol in 1790, Christianna Jacques, was still living in England.

Included in Williams's inventory were five males who had not been listed in December 1790. One of them was the man whom JPP had bought on the day before he left Nevis, and the others had been mortgaged to JPP, two by Robert McGill and two by Thomas Pym Weekes: the men Hector McGill and Tom McGill and the boys Jack Steward and Billy Steward. The McGill people had been in JPP's possession before but the Steward boys only became his in 1790.

As the plantation population stood at July 1794, the genders were balanced equally: excluding the manumitted people, 102 males and 101 females lived on Mountravers.

17 children had been born during Dr Weekes's managership. Whereas under Coker slightly more women who had been purchased or fallen due in mortgages had given birth, under Thomas Pym Weekes this was reversed and only seven children were born to purchased but ten to entailed women.

The births were spread fairly evenly over the years Weekes was manager. In the autumn of 1790 three children were born (Boll, Tom Peaden and Clarke); five in 1791 (Little Mickey, Domingo, Jhontong's Hetty, Prince and the overseer's son, Lewis Williams); three in 1792 (George Scarborough, Hannah's Diana and Bessy's Joe); four in 1793 (Polly Herbert, Nanno, Phille's Kate and Little Phibba), and two in the first few months of 1794 (Kate London and Mary Fog). At least another three women were pregnant, and their children were born later in the year, during James Williams's managership.

Dr Weekes was manager for 1,374 days, and the 17 births which occurred during this time mean that, on average, one child was born every 81 days. Compared to Gill's and Coker's records (74 days and 66 days), Dr Weekes' was about ten per cent worse than Gill's and over 20 per cent worse than Coker's. Given that he was a trained physician, this figure is surprising.

The 25 children who had been born under Coker had a relatively good start in life: nine made it to the abolition of slavery and beyond. Another nine died between 1817 and 1834, three after the plantation was sold to Huggins and before 1817, one child died in the early 1800s, two during Dr Weekes's managership and only one while Coker was manager.³³¹ However, although only born a few years apart, a higher proportion of children born under Weekes than under Coker lived longer. Eight out of the 17 children born (47 per cent, compared to 36 per cent of those children born during Coker's time) lived beyond the abolition of slavery and fewer people died during the period 1817 to 1834 (23.5 per cent compared to 36 per cent). Except for two children who died aged five years or under, all the others lived at least to their mid-teens. The samples are too small to draw firm conclusions but the figures could indicate that during Weekes's managership children had a healthier start in life by receiving more or better nourishment, and

³³¹ The newly-born children could be tracked fairly closely; Coker produced lists at the end of 1787 and at the end of 1788, and these could be compared to lists from the end of 1785 and the end of 1790.

that early exposure to yellow fever, which was then claiming many lives, may have made them more resilient to this and other diseases.

On the inventory he had compiled in December 1790 Dr Weekes had only noted one person as having died, the seven-months-old Jack Coker. However, another 16 people were not listed from July 1794 onwards. One man, Mulatto Charles, whom Dr Weekes had permission to sell, probably managed to run away before he could be sold but it is assumed that the other 15 had died during the period of Weekes's management: Boll, John Fisher, Lewey and Little Lewey, Paul, Pillmarsh, Little Robin, Tom Jones, Frances, Maria and her daughter Mimba, Polly Herbert, Pheenia, Nobody and Shabba.

Of those who died four were children under the age of ten years (Boll, John Fisher, Little Lewey and Mimba), two were teenagers (Little Robin and Frances), four were adult men (Lewey, Pillmarsh, Paul and Tom Jones) and five adult women (Shabba, Maria, Polly Herbert, Nobody and Pheenia). Paul may well have been ill already; he had been treated by doctors Archbald & Williamson just before Weekes became manager. One woman, Maria, died in the same period as her daughter Mimba and, like some of the others, mother and daughter may well have fallen victim to the fever which was then causing so many deaths in the Caribbean.

Assuming that Mulatto Charles did indeed manage to free himself, this would have meant that, on average, one person had died every 86 days, while one child had been born every 81 days. While the births just about outweighed the deaths during Dr Weekes's managership, overall his record was, however, worse than Coker's and Gill's. In Coker's time one person had died every 118 days and one child had been born every 66 days; in Gill's time, on average, one person had died every 177 days and a child had been born every 74 days. It has to be remembered, however, that Dr Weekes's management fell into a period in which a major outbreak of yellow fever killed thousands across the Caribbean.

JPP's final thoughts on his brother-in-law's management:

The enormous expenses and injudicious conduct of my present manager Doctor Thomas Pym Weekes, cannot be submitted any longer. He is too bad! My losses under him has been very great, one crop in four! ... I have been truly unfortunate in the appointment of my two last managers, W.C. and T.P.W. My estate under their management has netted considerably less than it did before the American war, when sugars were low and the estate not near so well stocked.³³²



³³² Pares, Richard *A West India Fortune* p145

BIOGRAPHIES

502 Phoebe, also Pheebe and Pheba. She was black and born on Thursday, 30 October 1783. Her mother was a purchased woman, most likely Ritta Maillard (No 338), who died a month after Phoebe's birth.

Phoebe was delivered of a child in 1802, and this, almost certainly, was Ritta Maillard, born in October and named after Phoebe's mother.³³³ Three years later, in November 1805, Phoebe's daughter Florah was born. Both Ritta Maillard and Florah were black.

Ritta Maillard died between 1817 and 1822 but may, possibly, have had a daughter in 1819, John Tongue. However, that girl could also have been Phoebe's child, or that of several other black women.

Phoebe died between 1 January 1831 and 31 December 1833. She was in her late forties, aged fifty at the most.

503 Little Cubbenna, later Cubbenna, was black, born on Tuesday, 29 March 1784, and Black Polly's (No 261) fourth child. Given his name, it is possible that his father was the entailed man Cubbenna (No 221). A 'standing watch' responsible for the yard, he died of consumption in 1787 or 1788.

By the time Little Cubbenna was born, his eldest sister, Frances Coker (b 1767), had left Nevis to work for the Pinneys in Bristol. She and his brother Billey Jones (b 1773) were mulattoes and almost certainly the children of William Coker and JPP. Their colour determined their work: while Billey Jones underwent an apprenticeship as a cooper, Little Cubbenna and two other sisters, the black girls Hetty (b 1781) and Little Molly (b 1787), became field hands. Aged nine and a half, he worked in the field and was the second youngest child to do so. He remained a field labourer throughout his life. His mother wanted his sister Little Molly trained as a seamstress but JPP did not allow this and she, too, remained a field hand. His sister Hetty later became a domestic.

Reserved by JPP with his mother and his siblings, Cubbenna, Hetty and Little Molly were hired to Clarke's Estate and briefly to Mr Mills's plantation. Meanwhile, his mother and his brother Billey Jones were allowed to live in Charlestown. Cubbenna was appraised at S£90 in 1808, two years later this rose to S£110. On one list³³⁴ he was described as a 'very good field negro' but someone had second thoughts about his supposedly superior abilities and crossed out 'very'.

Cubbenna lived on Clarke's Estate where in 1827 his daughter Peggy Penney was born.³³⁵ Celinda Bailey, the child's mother, was a black woman originally from the estate of Oliver's and Stewart's. She was about Cubbenna's age.³³⁶ When Celinda was pregnant with their daughter she, like Cubbenna and the other adults, was only entitled to the usual adult allowance: six pints piled and three herrings, and four yards of each of bamboo and brown cloth.

³³³ PP, LB 19: 6 November 1802

³³⁴ PP, LB 21 f14

³³⁵ The girl was listed as Peggy Penney in 1828, aged one. She was one of five one-year-old children not 'given up to the possession of Charles Pinney'.

³³⁶ The children were listed underneath Celinda, Sally and Cubbenna.

On the Clarke's lists Celinda was described as aged 32 in 1817 and aged 35 in 1828.

Both Cubbenna and Celinda worked in the number one field gang. This consisted of around forty men and women. A quarter of these were people JPP had originally reserved for himself. The fact that they worked in the first gang may suggest that they were strong and could withstand the hardest work on the plantation but, equally, they could have been allocated to the first gang because they did not belong to the plantation and were, therefore, more dispensable.

Celinda already had three children: Bell (also Bella and Isabella), George Bucke³³⁷ and Rebecca. The father of at least one of the children (George) was another man, the cook Charles Burkley (possibly Bailey). When Cubbenna's daughter Peggy was born, Celinda's three children were about fifteen, thirteen and four years old.³³⁸ It is likely that Celinda's mother also lived with the family. Sally (also called Sally Minna), an infirm woman in her sixties, was in 1817 among the 27 people identified as African-born, but when slavery was abolished, she was the only African-born person left on Clarke's. Mostly in their fifties and sixties, over a dozen Africans died on Clarke's Estate during the starvation years; others were transferred to the adjoining Belmont Estate.

In 1820 Cubbenna lost his two eldest siblings, the mulattoes Billey Jones and Frances Coker. In her will his sister left him £10. Billey Jones's widow, together with her four youngest children, was sold to two free coloured women, the Miss Smith. Almost certainly this sale was set in motion during Charles Pinney's visit to Nevis in 1820, as well as the exchange of Cubbenna's sister Molly for another woman her age. Molly then moved to Scarborough's Estate where she lived with John Gould, a carter, and their two sons Michael and James. On Clarke's lived many of Cubbenna's relatives: Billey Jones's and Patty Fisher's two eldest children, Cubbenna's nephew William and his niece Fanny Jones, as well as his sister Hetty, who then worked in the house, and his brother-in-law, Frank Fisher, and their children John, Edward, Sally and Joseph. In all, Cubbenna was uncle to fifteen nephews and nieces and had fathered at least one child. However, he did not see this child grow up. Not long after his daughter Peggy Penney was born, Cubbenna died. Aged 43, he was buried on 2 January 1828 in the cemetery of the church in St Thomas Lowland.³³⁹ His mother, Black Polly, was still alive when he died.

A month after his death, Celinda's daughter Rebecca was baptised in the same church, and later in the year, on 3 August 1828, her daughter Peggy with Cubbenna was baptised in the Methodist Chapel. It was noted 'father dead',³⁴⁰ and Celinda, no doubt, was following Cubbenna's wishes; most of his family members were members of the Methodist congregation.

Celinda and Peggy Penney were alive on 1 August 1834 but mother and daughter cannot be traced further. Celinda's other children, Peggy's half-brothers and –sisters, however, have left some traces: Celinda's daughter Bell had an 'illegitimate daughter', Sarah, who was baptised in August 1833,³⁴¹ and it is very likely that Bell moved to Pollards Village and was buried as Isabella Clarke on 19 May 1872. Her age, 65 years, appears estimated; she was in her early sixties.³⁴²

³³⁷ Although in 1828 registered as black, in 1817 both Bell and George were noted as sambos. George Buck's surname may have been a shortened version of his father's, Burkley, but it may have been a nickname: Buck(e) was also a colour distinction used in Guyana for an Amerindian (Thompson, VB *The making of the African Diaspora* p416).

³³⁸ The ages of Celinda's children are derived from the 1817 list. They were not consistent with those noted in 1828 (UKNA, T 71/364 and T 71/367).

³³⁹ On Clarke's Estate Cubbenna was in 1817 listed as thirty years old (i.e. dob 1786/7), and 35 in 1828 (i.e. dob 1792/3). When he was buried in the same year, his age was estimated at forty years (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 6).

³⁴⁰ Rebecca from Clarke's Estate was baptised on 10 February 1828. Her mother's name was mis-heard and entered into the register as Sander (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 86). Cubbenna's name was mis-heard or mis-transcribed as Arbenna (NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 222).

³⁴¹ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 386

Sarah's date of birth on the 1831 Clarke's list was given as 1828 but it is very likely that a mistake was made and that she was confused with Frances Jones's daughter Sarah Ann.

³⁴² NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 1081

Celinda's son George Bucke was baptised as an adult in September 1843.³⁴³ He married a black woman called Procelle, or Procella. She was also from Clarke's Estate.³⁴⁴ The couple remained living on Clarke's until they did. About four years older than Priscilla, George Bucke was buried on 1 January 1870. He must have been very tall; it was noted that 'the coffin was too short and the body in part was outside'. The ceremony was performed by the schoolmaster, W Lawrence, as the rector, Thomas Owen, was 'unavoidably absent'.³⁴⁵ Priscilla Buck was buried on 7 August 1873.³⁴⁶

504 Frank Fisher, a mulatto, was born on Monday, 29 March 1784.³⁴⁷ The third child of Sarah Fisher (No 488) and John Fisher, he had seven siblings. Two of these were also the Woodland manager John Fisher's children - the mulattos Tom (b 1781), Patty (b 1783) and John (b 1788) – while most likely the other four were Siah Parris's children: the sambos or mestees Domingo (b 1791), Josiah (b 1795), Mary (b 1797), and James (b 1799). Frank's father died when he was five years old and his brother John not long afterwards. He, his mother and his remaining siblings were among the groups of people JPP reserved for himself.

His mother was a domestic servant and Frank Fisher, too, started off his working life as a domestic. He may have been small or not very strong because he did not follow a trade as suggested by JPP. When Frank was already twenty years old, JPP wanted 'Frank Fisher and any other young sensible boys' apprenticed, 'one or two to a mason and one to a blacksmith',³⁴⁸ but Frank Fisher was taught different skills. Ever since Mulatto Peter had died in 1800, there had been no one on the estate able to bleed the sick and to draw teeth, and it appears that after JPP repeated his request for someone to be trained,³⁴⁹ Joe Stanley, the then manager, obliged. By the time Frank Fisher, together with most of his family, was hired to Clarke's Estate, JPP could commend him as one who 'bleeds and draw (sic) teeth'. Not only was he 'a valuable slave for sick people' but generally 'a very valuable and useful person'. Originally appraised at £100 - £10 less than his brother Tom Fisher who was a cooper - three years on, Frank caught up with Tom and at £150 each both men were the two most highly valued of all the people hired to Clarke's. Both were mulattoes, and both were in their twenties, and it is interesting to note that an enslaved man with medical skills was so highly regarded and as highly priced as a tradesman.

In his testimonial JPP appears to have forgotten an incident in which Frank Fisher was accused of having, in effect, handled stolen goods. He had a waistcoat made from material appropriated from Mrs Stanley, the manager's wife. His defence was that he had bought the item from the girl who sold Mrs Stanley's wares but Mr Stanley thought this 'very unlikely, as he had always come to Mrs. S. to purchase whatever he wanted knowing that he would get it as cheap, if not cheaper from her than the girl had liberty to sel (sic) it.'³⁵⁰ A couple of women were implicated in this, too, but were acquitted of theft. One of them was the field hand Hetty, the black daughter of an African woman. When the incident with the material happened, Hetty was pregnant with their first child. Their son John was born in March 1806. Hetty, who was three years his senior, already had two sons with a white overseer.

³⁴³ NHCS, Transcript of Nevis Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873

³⁴⁴ UKNA, T 71/365

³⁴⁵ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1965 No 1035

³⁴⁶ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 1147

³⁴⁷ In 1817, on the Clarke's slave registration list, both Frank and his brother Tom Fisher were described as 32-year-old mulattos (i.e. dob 1785). This was clearly wrong; Frank was born in 1784 and Tom in 1781.

³⁴⁸ PP, LB 19: JPP to Henry Williams, 25 October 1804

³⁴⁹ PP, LB 20: JPP to JW Stanley, Nevis, 5 December 1805

³⁵⁰ PP, Dom Box P: JW Stanley to John Frederick Pinney, 27 December 1805

Frank Fisher's high value was also not affected by his involvement in the events that culminated in the 1810 marketplace flogging when Edward Huggins senior ordered the flogging of a number of people from Mountravers. Although he worked on Clarke's Estate, Frank Fisher was singled out by one of the witnesses John Dasent Smith, as 'one of the turbulent negroes of the estate'. He reported that John Henry Clarke, during his time on Mountravers, had been obliged to punish Frank Fisher for insolence. Living on neighbouring Scarborough's, Smith had talked to him; Frank had once told him of his ambitions and his frustrations, saying 'what ... was [he] to do if he was always working for his master'?³⁵¹ His own aspirations thwarted by enslavement, his protest may have been fuelled by anger over the position of his brother James. The boy had been inserted, by mistake, into the list of those people given up with the plantation to Huggins and had to suffer not only the uncertainty over ownership but also the new, unforgiving regime under the Hugginses. His wife's work situation may have added to Frank Fisher's resentment: generally a domestic by trade, Hetty was at times put to work in the field and actually hired to Clarke's as a field hand.

Between September 1813 and June 1814 Frank Fisher and his family worked on Mr Mills's estate and then settled back into life on Clarke's. Despite his 'turbulent' temper, Frank Fisher held a superior position among the domestics. He may have been a headman but it could also have been his medical skills that entitled him to more generous rations. He received double the number of pints piled - twelve instead of the usual six - and four herrings instead of three, as well as '12 yds brown shirt etc.' rather than the usual four. In the 1820s Hetty once again worked in the house.

Frank Fisher and Hetty had three more children: Edward, born in 1807/8, Sally, born between 1812 and 1814, and Joseph, born in 1818/9. All the children carried his surname. Hetty's eldest boys, Billey and Josiah Nicholson had, in the meantime, been exchanged for two girls who were put to work on Clarke's Estate in their stead. On Clarke's were also Frank's mother who now worked as a midwife, his brothers Tom and Josiah (both coopers), his sister Mary, also a domestic servant, and his sister Domingo, the only member of his family who remained a field hand throughout her life. His sister Patty, meanwhile, lived in Charlestown with her cooper husband Billey Jones and their children, except for Frank Fisher's nephew and niece William and Fanny who were also rented to Clarke's. Billey Jones, his brother-in-law, died in 1820 and Frank's sister Patty later moved to St Thomas Lowland. Eight years on another brother-in-law died, Cubbenna, and then, in 1829, Frank's youngest child, his son Joseph.

In 1832 Frank Fisher's stepson William Nicholson, who had been manumitted and became a stonemason, paid for Frank's oldest son, John, to be freed. John Fisher remained on Clarke's Estate.

Aged nearly 50, Frank Fisher was alive on 1 August 1834, as was Hetty.

505 **Dick** was born on Thursday, 8 April 1784, to an entailed woman.

When he was twelve, he was ill. The doctor visited him, on the next day gave him four 'nerv. boluses'³⁵² but a day later Dick died, on 26 November 1796.

His was the fourth death on the plantation that autumn. On 20 October, the five-year-old Tom Peaden died after extensive treatment, on 1 November Nero, an adult, and four days later the 16-year-old Jemmy

³⁵¹ UKNA, CO 152/96 John Dasent Smith's evidence and *Fifth Report of the Directors of the African Institution Read at the Annual General Meeting on the 27th of March 1811*

³⁵² PP, AB 47 Archbald and Williamson's (& Hope's) a/c

Jones, again after treatment. This cluster may be a coincidence but in the Caribbean 14,000 troops died that year from fever ³⁵³ and it is possible these people, too, succumbed to it.

506 Little Polly, later Polly Neal, was 'black of a yellow cast' and born on Monday, 2 August 1784,³⁵⁴ to a purchased woman. Her father, almost certainly, was Peter Neale, mostly known as Mulatto Peter (No 357). He died in 1800, aged about 40. Her mother may well have been Phillely, who had several children with the surname Neal. Little Polly's half-brothers and half-sisters almost certainly were Billey Keefe (b 1782), Joe Neal (b October 1788), Mickey (b 1791), Kate Neal (b November 1793), Hetty (b 1798), and Franky Neal (b 1786) or Frances Neale (b 1796).

When Little Polly was born, there already were four women and girls called Polly on the plantation. This may well be evidence that some people could choose their children's names. After all, Joseph Gill, the manager, was articulate and had a way with words; he would hardly have been quite so unimaginative as to repeat that name yet again. If Little Polly's parents were Mulatto Peter and Phillely, they were domestics and people of some standing and may have been given the privilege of naming their children. In addition, when Little Polly was born Phillely was working away from the plantation and on hire to James Carroll.

Little Polly became a field hand. At the age of 16 she worked in Pompey's small gang.³⁵⁵

Polly Neal died on 8 July 1824, a month before she would have turned forty.

507 Flora's Peter (later Peter Cooper) was 'black of a yellow cast' and born on Sunday, 8 August 1784.³⁵⁶ His mother was the field labourer Peter's Flora (No 231) and his sibling John Frederick (b 1787), Phibba (b 1793) and Charles (b 1801) and most likely also Quakey (b 1777) and Azariah (b 1798). When he was still in his teens his mother died and also his younger brother Charles.

In 1817 he was, for the first time, called Peter Cooper. It is likely that he had acquired his father's family name - there were several people called Cooper in Nevis ³⁵⁷ and that his surname did not originate from his own occupation. Certainly as a 14-year-old Peter worked in the field, in the small gang,³⁵⁸ and when his own children were baptised, he was employed as a field hand. His daughters Nancy Jackson and Eliza were 'yellow cast' and 'black of a yellow cast' and baptised on 19 April 1829. Their mother was Yanneky Pinney (No 436). She already had children who were in their twenties.

Quakey, who probably was his brother, had died between 1817 and 1822, and a few months after his daughters' baptism Peter Cooper died, on 4 November 1829. He was aged 45. A week later Yanneky's 23-year-old son Billey Pallas also died, and it is likely that the deaths of these men were linked.

508 Rose was born on Thursday, 2 December 1784, to a purchased woman. She was not a field worker. In her twenties to early thirties, she died between August 1807 and December 1816.

³⁵³ Marshall, PJ (ed) *The Oxford History of the British Empire* p190

³⁵⁴ In 1817 Polly Neal's date of birth was wrongly given as 8 May 1787 (UKNA, T 71/364).

³⁵⁵ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

³⁵⁶ Flora's Peter's date of birth was erroneously stated as 18 August 1784 (UKNA, T 71/364).

³⁵⁷ For instance, Thomas Cooper landed in Nevis on 25 May 1764 (SCRO: Southampton Council/Corporation Records: Quarter Sessions Records, SC9/4/630); and George Cooper was Captain of the ship *Rachel* around 1803 (PP, LB 43).

³⁵⁸ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover



On 1 March and 19 May 1785 JPP acquired from John Hay Richens three 'negro female slaves' to the value of N£200. Peggy Richens was worth N£50, Bessy N£80 and Quasheba N£70.³⁵⁹ Together with another 17 people, they had been security for a loan of N£1,200 that went back to June 1775,³⁶⁰ when Richens was struggling to make his rented estate work. Later these people became subject to a new loan, which Richens was unable to repay and so he gave them up by way of repayment. Their transfer to JPP was documented by a Bill of Sale, which cost N12s to prove and which the then overseer James Williams witnessed.³⁶¹ Out of the twenty people Richens had mortgaged, only these three came into JPP's possession; they were Richens's personal possessions.³⁶² Some others may have ended up on Edward Brazier's estate.³⁶³ After May 1787 JPP allowed his old friend to stay at Woodland but by the end of that year Richens was dead. Sooner or later these three would have had a new owner.

Of the twenty individuals Richens mortgaged to JPP, nearly half may have previously lived on Jesup's, including Peggy, from as early as 1748, and Quasheba. In 1767 Peggy was 'diseased' and worth only £25, and the infant Quasheba £7.³⁶⁴ Peggy may have been Quasheba's and Bessy's mother.

509 Peggy Richens, later Old Peggy Richens, was perhaps born about 1730. Soon after JPP acquired her, she was rented to her previous owner. Her hire for almost a year amounted to N£7:16:8, the same as Othello's for a shorter period, just over nine months.³⁶⁵ Their time with Richens came to an end in December 1786. JPP then suggested to his manager, William Coker, that 'If you and Mr Symonds approve it, let the three negroes bought of Mr Richens, and any other you can spare, be hired to Mr Symond's Estate in my possession.'³⁶⁶ In the late 1770s John Symond had mortgaged his property, which lay on the border of St George's Gingerland and St John Figtree, to JPP³⁶⁷ who wanted to improve them. However, it appears that Coker did not let go of any of the workers and that Peggy, Bessy and Quasheba remained on Mountravers, where in 1793 Peggy Richens was in Jack's gang – the second gang that did the lighter work. By the late 1790s she probably did not work in the field any more.

If Peggy Richens was Bessy's and Quasheba's mother, she had six surviving grandchildren. By the time the last, Quasheba's daughter Kitty, was born in 1807/8, she may have died already: Old Peggy Richens died some time between August 1807 and December 1816. She was at least in her mid-seventies, at the most in her mid-eighties.

510 Bessy (or Bessey) Richens (dob c 1768/9) may have been coloured. She was a field worker and in the early 1790s worked in Jack's gang – the second gang.

³⁵⁹ PP, AB 31; also AB 30 f55 Nevis Plantation a/c; also DM 1173 Nevis Ledger 1780-1790 f172

³⁶⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1773-1775 f386

³⁶¹ Two different dates were given for this transaction - 27 February 1786 (ECSCRN, CR 1785-1787 f343) and 11 September 1786 (PP, AB 30 Plantation a/c), and these dates also differed from the date given in the slave lists.

³⁶² PP, AB 26 JH Richens's a/c

³⁶³ An entry in an account suggests that in June 1780 Edward Brazier paid N£16 which was 'for the difference of price between Peggy and Kitty' (PP, AB 26 f40 John Hay Richens' a/c).

³⁶⁴ SCRO, Moberley and Wharton Collection, D/MW 35/4 and D/MW 35/18

³⁶⁵ PP, AB 30 Negro Hire a/c

³⁶⁶ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 30 January 1787

³⁶⁷ PP, Cat 4 Add Pinney Materials DM 1173 Dom Box 4 1880-1894, Vol of Deeds, Bonds etc pp3-5

Bessy Richens had three children: Jenny (b January 1787), Joe (b December 1792) and Mussey (b April 1795).³⁶⁸ The girls were 'black of a yellow cast' and it is likely that Joe was, too. Bessy Richens was 'with child' once more but miscarried and on Saturday, 4 August 1798, was 'put to bed with a dead born child'.³⁶⁹ She died almost a year later, on 23 or 24 June 1799.³⁷⁰ She was aged around thirty.

511 and 512 Quasheba, also Richen's Quasheba (dob c 1764-1766),³⁷¹ and her youngest daughter Kitty, later Kitty Clarke and Kitty Wallace.

Richen's Quasheba had three surviving daughters, Nanny (b February 1795), Sally (b May 1800) and Kitty, who was born between 2 August 1807 and 24 April 1808.³⁷² She may have had a child in 1793 when she worked in the second gang, and she may have been pregnant at least twice more: Richen's Quasheba was also said to have been pregnant in July 1798 but she either miscarried or this child died before it was three years old,³⁷³ and JPP referred to a child of hers that was 'supposed to be delivered' on or before the 7th March 1811.³⁷⁴ Richen's Quasheba and her daughters were black.

JPP originally reserved her eldest daughter Nanny but not Richen's Quasheba and the two younger girls, yet changed his mind in 1807, gave up Nanny for sale with Woodland and reserved Richen's Quasheba, Sally and Kitty for hire to Clarke's Estate. Nanny was one of three girls born in early 1795 whom JPP had reserved without their mothers. The most plausible explanation is that they were the offspring that had resulted from the second, all-male trip to Nevis, which JPP made in 1794 with his son John Frederick and his manservant Pero.

Richen's Quasheba was a field hand and a strong woman; she worked in Wiltshire's first gang and in her mid-forties was still a 'field negro'. The effect of the abolition of the slave trade can clearly be seen in the way her value increased: aged about 42 to 44, in April 1808 she was appraised at S£85; two years later this rose to S£90. Children, too, were prized more highly. Aged nine months at the most, her daughter Kitty was valued at S£15,³⁷⁵ two years later, in May 1810, this rose to S£20, and by February 1811 she was worth S£25. Quarter of a century earlier, these would have been the values of black girls about

³⁶⁸ PP, Dom Box K1: Mortgage John Frederick Pinney to JPP, 31 October 1795

³⁶⁹ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary

³⁷⁰ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary

³⁷¹ In 1817 on Clarke's, Richen's Quasheba was said to have been 43 (i.e. dob 1773/4) but her value in 1785 was that of a girl in her late teens; seven to ten-year-olds were worth N£50, 12-year-olds N£60 to N£66. She was also listed as a woman in 1788 but, unless she had already given birth by then, it is very likely that she was a few years older.

³⁷² In August 1807 Joe Stanley gave up the estate and almost certainly then the list taken 31 December 1806 was updated and the last birth - in April 1807 - entered. On 25 April 1808 Kitty was said to have been valued.

³⁷³ In the plantation diary it was noted on Tuesday, 17 July 1798 that four women were 'with child': Johntong, Richen's Quasheba, Bessy Richens and Young Yanneky. The other three women had identifiable children but there was none for Quasheba and no indication from the plantation diary or the 1801 list when she might have given birth.

³⁷⁴ PP, LB 24: JPP to JH Clarke, 11 July 1814

³⁷⁵ Kitty's value of S£15 in April 1808 was consistent with that of two boys, valued at S£18, who were also born between 1807 and 1808 (Hetty's Edward and Frankey Vaughan's second son Fido).

double as old as she was.³⁷⁶ Kitty may even have been small for her age; in 1817 her age was underestimated by up to three years.³⁷⁷

While hired to Clarke's, Sally was then described as her 'eldest daughter' - as if Nanny did not exist - and, corresponding with his attorney, JPP mentioned as Richen's Quasheba's second daughter a girl called Patty. Unsure whether this was another child of hers, he wrote: 'I have no one by the name Kitty so it is probable that Patty is now called Kitty.'³⁷⁸ This may have been an instance of different names being used, but her youngest daughter certainly was commonly listed as Kitty. While Kitty, Sally and Nanny as well as Patty were names that frequently occurred in Nevis, they also happened to have been the names of the people with whom Richen's Quasheba had been mortgaged as a child. They may, possibly, have been relatives of hers - aunts perhaps, or cousins.

While she was on Clarke's Estate, the name of her former owner was dropped. Called Quasheba, she died on Clarke's between 1817 and 1822. She was in her early to late fifties.

Kitty was then, at the most, in her mid-teens. When she was nineteen, she worked in the Number One Gang on Clarke's. Her sister Sally was a domestic. In the 1820s neither women were considered Pinney-owned anymore; it appears that their places had been allocated to the grandchildren of two of the matriarchs, Sarah Fisher and Black Polly.

In her mid-teens, around 1824, Kitty had her first child. The father was the carpenter John Wallace (also Wallis and Wallert), a black man who also worked on Clarke's.³⁷⁹ Their son John was baptised on 25 January 1829,³⁸⁰ and a year later, on 29 March 1830, their daughter Betsey was born. Having just given birth, Kitty had to deal with the death of her sister Sally. She was buried the next day, on 30 March. More deaths followed: in October that year, her sister Nanny died and then in June 1832 her daughter Betsey. She had been baptised on 21 August 1831 in the Methodist chapel³⁸¹ but was buried on 25 June 1832 in the cemetery at St Thomas Lowland church.³⁸² The girl was two years and three months old. It is likely that, following the deaths of both of her sisters, Kitty took on caring for her nephew John, Sally's child. The boy was about eleven years old when his mother died.

John Wallace had fathered another child with another woman on the estate, Nanno. She was about Kitty's age and also black and, like Kitty, worked as a field hand in the Number One gang. Nanno Clarke's son James Maillard was born about a month before Kitty Clarke and John Wallace buried their daughter Betsey.³⁸³ However, on 3 April 1833 John and Kitty had another daughter, whom they also called Betsey.

³⁷⁶ The biggest difference was when Kitty was very young. Aged nine months at the most, she was valued at S£15/N£24. The closest 1783 appraisal was that of Jibba, who was two years and eleven months old, about four times as old as Kitty, and yet valued at N£2 less, N£22.

In May 1810, Kitty was, at the most, two years and nine months old and valued at S£20/N£32 (at an exchange rate of 1.6). In 1783, there was no direct equivalent of her appraised sum but Little Yanneky, aged four years and five months, was valued at N£30; Little Bridget, aged five years and four months, at N£33.

In February 1811, Kitty was, at the most, three years and six months old and valued at S£25/N£40. In 1783, Paenda, aged six years and five months, was also valued at N£40.

³⁷⁷ UKNA, T 71/364

³⁷⁸ PP, LB 24: JPP to Samuel Laurence, 8 March 1814

³⁷⁹ This John Wallace is not to be confused with the planter Matthew Wallace's brother of the same name, nor with Matthew Wallace's mulatto son John.

³⁸⁰ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 Unnumbered

³⁸¹ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 Unnumbered

³⁸² NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 57

³⁸³ James Maillard was born on 29 May 1832 (UKNA, T 71/369) and baptised on 25 December 1834 (NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835). He probably was Nanno's second child; in about 1827 she had been listed as pregnant (PP, Dom Box T3). Nanno was black and born about 1805/6 (T 71/364).

Nanno Clarke, still an apprentice labourer on Clarke's, married on 21 October 1835 the bachelor John Walters (St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965) He probably was a free man who had registered one female in 1817 (T 71/364).

With this child Kitty Clarke and John Wallace were not taking any chances and, when the girl was just over six weeks old, they had Betsey baptised on 19 May 1833.³⁸⁴ John Wallace's son with Nanno was not baptised until December 1834. In 1840 he may have had another child on Clarke's Estate, Thomas Wallace.³⁸⁵

Kitty must have got married because at the next child's baptism she was said to have been the wife of John Wallace. However, no record of their marriage in an Anglican church has yet been found, and the Methodist ministers, who baptised their children, could not perform marriages until 1841.³⁸⁶ The couple's daughter Frances Victoria was born on 13 March 1838 and baptised four months later, just before Emancipation. This child was followed by a son, William (born 13 February 1843), by a daughter, Sarah Jane (born 2 November 1845), named after Kitty's dead sister Sally, and by another son, Joseph Benjamin (born 19 April 1848). All the children were baptised in the Methodist chapel.³⁸⁷ It is noticeable how the parents chose non-African, non-classical, non-geographical names for their children. They had come to see these as too closely associated with enslavement and therefore discarded them in favour of European-style names. This was typical of parents at that time - not just in Nevis but also elsewhere in the Caribbean.³⁸⁸

Between 1845 and 1848 the family moved to Lowlands and from there to Pollard's Land. They were among the early settlers who faced legal obstacles in establishing their new settlement. The villagers had to struggle for their rights because they were dealing with a dodgy agent, Hastings Charles Huggins. Representing the unsuspecting owner in England, he not only issued faulty leases (drawn up by a man who apparently had no legal training) but also did not hand over to the owner all the money the villagers had paid him. Nearly forty people had entrusted him with £10 each for their plots on Pollard's Land, had built houses on them but then found out that the leases Huggins gave them were flawed. Huggins was leaving the island and when they wanted to see him to discuss the matter, he refused their request and they had to appeal to the owner in England for justice.³⁸⁹ Pollard Land, together with other tracts of land, later became Jesupp's Village.

Unless Kitty died and her husband re-married, it must have been their son John who was a carpenter in Pollard's Village, where he lived with his wife, Jane. They had at least two daughters: Anne Amelia, who was baptised on 20 April 1859, and Catherine, who was baptised on 16 May 1862.³⁹⁰ Unthinkable during slavery days, in March 1865 John J Wallace served as a jury member.³⁹¹

It is not known when Kitty Wallace died but her husband John Wallace was buried, aged 63, on 26 December 1871. He had remained living on Pollard's Land.³⁹²

513 Jenetta Scarborough, also Jennett and Jane Scarborough, was born on Thursday, 19 June 1785, to a purchased woman. A mestize, she was one of Mulatto Polly's children. She had five sisters

³⁸⁴ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 952. Kitty was wrongly transcribed as Hitty.

³⁸⁵ Thomas Wallace/Walles remained on Clarke's Estate and died, aged twenty, in 1860 (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957).

³⁸⁶ ECSCRN, CR 1838-1847 f328

³⁸⁷ John and Kitty Wallace's children were baptised on 23 April 1843, 15 February 1846 and 18 June 1848 (NHCS, Transcript of Nevis Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873)

³⁸⁸ 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) p341, pp342-43 and p346

³⁸⁹ DHC, Pollard MSS, D87/2: Letter from Nevis to AH Limmington, London, 26 Mach 1863

³⁹⁰ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873

³⁹¹ ECSCRN, Nevis Court Records 1859-1874 Unnumbered

³⁹² NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 1070

and a brother: Christianna Jacques (b 1780), John Paul Scarborough (b 1787), Betsey (b 1789), Peggy (b 1794), Nancy Seymour alias Margaret Ann (b 1796) and Mary (b 1798). The father of Jenetta and all her younger siblings was the white planter John Latoysonere Scarborough, while her oldest sister's was another white man.

In July 1790, during a visit by JPP and his wife, the five-year-old Jenetta, together with her brother Paul and her sister Betsey, were sold to their father,³⁹³ while the Pinneys took Jenetta's ten-year-old sister Christianna Jacques to England. Some years later, in 1797, Mrs P pushed for Jenetta's mother to be manumitted, as well as her two youngest siblings, Peggy and Nancy. These two girls had been born after the older children had been sold to their father. When the children were freed, their manumission document stated the date of purchase, 23 July 1790, as the day they had been manumitted.³⁹⁴ Peggy died not long after being freed.

In the early 1800s Jenetta probably was in business with her mother; Francis John Galpine took both of them to Court for a debt of over N£260.³⁹⁵ By 1817 her mother owned several people, and the first person Jenetta was known to have acquired was a young black woman, Present. She bought Present from her mother between 1822 and 1825. All the children born to her mother's women underwent baptism and so did the children of Jenetta's woman: Present Scarborough's young son Thomas and her daughter Mary were baptised in March 1827 and in September 1828.³⁹⁶ The baptisms of Present's children were followed by her wedding. In March 1830 she married another slave, the black man Adam Moore from Ward's estate. But she was not married for long when her husband died.³⁹⁷ He, too, may well have fallen victim to the cholera pandemic that was sweeping through the Caribbean. Present's daughter Mary appears to have died as well because another daughter of hers was also called Mary. She was baptised in July 1832. However, whereas her other two children had undergone baptism in the Anglican church in St Paul's parish, Mary was baptised in the Methodist church.³⁹⁸ This may have been the wish of Present's deceased husband.

In April 1833 the widowed Present Moore married again. Her second husband was also a slave, Parker Smith. He was said to have belonged to a Miss Smith.³⁹⁹ The witnesses at their wedding were the school teacher Robert Hurman (he was called upon to witness many marriages) and a free man, Francis Warner.⁴⁰⁰ He was the husband of Christiana Scarborough, a former slave of Jenetta's sister Elizabeth who had been freed. Some time after Present's second wedding and before slavery was abolished Jenetta also freed Present.⁴⁰¹

³⁹³ PP, AB 30 f158; also AB 43 John L Scarborough's a/c

³⁹⁴ ECSCRN, CR 1794-1797 f620

³⁹⁵ ECSCRN, King's Bench and Common Pleas Cause List 1805-1813

³⁹⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 221 and No 362

³⁹⁷ Present Scarborough's husband Adam Moore was first registered as a 12-year-old in 1817 as Adam (No 7). 27 Jan 1832 Adam Moore was buried, aged 27 (NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 446). His death was recorded in the 1834 register for Ward's Estate (UKNA, T 71/364 and T 71/369).

³⁹⁸ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 885

³⁹⁹ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

A witness at their wedding was William Smith, who later that year, on 3 August 1830, also witnessed the marriage of Christiana Scarborough to Francis Warner (St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842).

⁴⁰⁰ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁴⁰¹ UKNA, T 71/369

Jenetta Scarborough's slave registers are confusing. In 1825 she registered only Present while her mother registered Present's son Thomas; in 1828 there was 'no change' and in 1831 she registered the birth of Mary, a three-year-old sambo. She claimed to have had a total of one male and three females (Present and her son Thomas and either her daughter Mary plus one other, or Present and Thomas plus two others). In 1834 she registered one addition, No. 4, but did not state a name. Present was recorded as manumitted, and Jenetta's mother made her mark underneath Jenetta's register for a total of three individuals. However, if the sambo girl Mary was still under the age of six, she would have been automatically free. Presumably the muddle was sorted out and Jenetta Scarborough claimed compensation for only two individuals. The registers and the claim for Jenetta Scarborough (Jane or Jennett) are not to be confused with those of Jane Maria Scarborough (claims numbers 207 and 209).

When Present married for the second time, her owner, Jenetta Scarborough, was not in Nevis. At the age of 47 she had gone to North America. Sailing on the brig *Gold Hunter*, she had travelled in the company of two fellow passengers: Eve Powell, a 30-year-old servant from Nevis, and Roderick McFarlane, a 22-year-old planter from Britain. They arrived in New Haven in Connecticut on 25 March 1833.⁴⁰²

Several people from Nevis already lived in New Haven or arrived later: various members of the Huggins family, James Hanley⁴⁰³ and also Walter Maynard, and it was for Walter Maynard and his family that Jenetta's fellow passenger Eve Powell was going to work. She was contracted to them for a period of 14 years.⁴⁰⁴ Walter Maynard was married to Ann Scarborough, one of Jenetta's white half-sisters.

Jenetta, also described as a servant, probably did not work for the Maynards but had found employment with someone else. She may have gone to America to earn money; in 1831 she had again been taken to Court for debt. She was among several people who owed money to Robert Ferrier, a merchant. She was indebted to him for £75⁴⁰⁵ and, no doubt, very much looked forward to receiving her slave of the compensation pay-out. While she was abroad, Jenetta was paid £40 for two people – presumably Present's children Thomas and Mary.

Throughout the 1830s Walter Maynard lived in New Haven,⁴⁰⁶ and one of his wife's sisters, Judith Scarborough, also came to America. By 1837 Judith was in Hamden in New Haven, Connecticut.⁴⁰⁷ Both Ann and Judith were Jenetta's half-sisters, but in 1834 Margaret Ann, one of her full sisters, also visited America.⁴⁰⁸

It is not known whether Jenetta Scarborough and her sister Margaret Ann returned to Nevis.

514 Little London, later London, was black and born on Friday, 24 June 1785. His grandmother was an entailed woman; his mother the field hand Barbai (No 344). Little London's father may have been the sugar boiler London. Little London had three younger sisters and a brother: Flora (b 1787), Kate (b 1794), Betsey (b 1797), and Adam (b 1806).

⁴⁰² <http://istg.rootsweb.com/v2/1800v2/goldhunter18330325.html>, citing National Archives and Records Administration, Film M575, Reel 5

⁴⁰³ UKNA, T 71/1038

⁴⁰⁴ Eve Powell's indenture with Walter Maynard was in the name of Eve Maynard. Her contract had started on 1 January 1833. The document laid down her conditions of employment; it stated that she had to obey her employer and his family's 'lawful commands' and that she had to 'demean (sic) and behave herself diligently carefully soberly and quietly towards him and them ... day and night'. She was to 'demean herself as an honest sober careful and industrious servant ought to do'. Her employer was to provide 'good and sufficient victuals and drink and washing and lodging and yearly pay of £5 currency for 14 years... [Maynard to] pay the charge of her journey to Port and passage and maintenance in such ship to the port of Newhaven...' Eve Maynard, a free black woman, made her mark, which was witnessed by the clergyman Joseph Herbert Pemberton. Walter Maynard was represented by his attorney James Maynard, and the indenture was sworn on 7 December 1832 before the Hon George Webbe, Chief Justice of HM Court of Kings Bench and Common Pleas (SRO/I, Maynard Papers, HA 178-1/47: Indenture as a Covenant Servant for 14 years).

The indenture of Eve Powell/Maynard may have been connected to the stonemasons James Powell and James Dore buying the North Wales estate (ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol 2 ff304-09). It appears that Walter Maynard lent James Powell money for this and that Powell did not pay him back, because in his will Powell left North Wales to Walter Maynard (Book of Wills 1837-1864 f252).

⁴⁰⁵ ECSCRN, King's Bench and Common Pleas

⁴⁰⁶ PP, LB 66: P & C to Barnard Dimsdale, Bankers, London, 23 October, 30 November, 1 December, 2 December, 8 December, 15 December 1835, and 27 January 1836, and Josiah Nicholson, 1 March 1836, and AB 69. Also Dom Box R-6: Compensation file

⁴⁰⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1838-1847 ff106-11

⁴⁰⁸ UKNA, T 71/1039

Some time before 1834 Judith Scarborough had travelled to England with two of her people, thereby freeing them, and she returned to live in England. In 1841 she lived with her sister Ann, her brother-in-law Walter Maynard, their daughter Ann and a woman servant in Rockstowe House near Dursley in Gloucestershire (UK 1841 Census).

Aged 12, he worked in the field, in Pompey's gang.⁴⁰⁹ It did the lightest work on the plantation and in due course Little London would have moved up to the great gang.

His mother and his sister Flora died between 1807 and 1816, and the man who may well have been his father, London, in 1816/7. It is likely that it fell on Little London to look after his younger siblings.

Little London died on 22 September 1823, aged 38.

515 Little Lewey was born on Friday, 23 September 1785. His mother was Nelly (No 234), probably a domestic. It is possible that his father was the cooper Lewy (No 166). Little Lewey had an older sister, Jibba (b 1783), and a younger brother, Tom-Bossu (b November 1787).

Lewey died between January 1791 and July 1794. He was between five and eight years old.

516 Mimba was born on Thursday, 10 November 1785. Her mother was Maria (No 318), one of the Gold Coast people JPP had bought in the 1760s. Mimba had an elder sister, Little Harriett (b 1782).

Mimba and also her mother died between 1 January 1791 and 29 July 1794. She was between five and eight years old.

517 Lissy was born on Monday, 19 December 1785. Her mother was Ann (No 483), a woman who had come from Woodland when JPP had acquired the estate a few years before Lissy was born. Lissy's elder siblings Johnny (b c 1771/2), Jenetta (b c 1774/5) and Little Violet (b c 1777/8) were all born on Woodland. She also had a younger, Mountravers-born sister, Dorinda (b 1788).

Lissy died between 1 January 1789 and 31 December 1790. At the most, she was aged five.



These children were born after William Coker started work as manager:

518 Fanny Coker was black and born on Saturday, 21 January 1786, to an entailed woman. She was the first child born after William Coker arrived and was named after his wife.

The child's younger brother may have been Jack Coker (b 1790). He died, aged seven months.

Fanny Coker was a field hand and, aged 11, worked in the small gang led by Pompey.⁴¹⁰

In April 1807 she gave birth to a son, Bunda, and may well have had other children but the next known child was born after a very long gap: William Birrell or Daniel was born in July 1824 and baptised in August 1830.⁴¹¹

In her late forties, Fanny Coker was alive on 1 August 1834, as were her sons Bunda and William.

⁴⁰⁹ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴¹⁰ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴¹¹ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 215

519 Betsey Dredge was 'black of a yellow cast' and born on Wednesday, 25 January 1786,⁴¹² to an entailed woman. She was named after William Coker's niece who had arrived from England a week before Betsey was born.⁴¹³

She was a field worker. Aged 12, she worked in Pompey's gang.⁴¹⁴

She may have had a daughter, Cinderella, who was born in February 1826. However, equally well several other coloured women could have been the girl's mother.

Betsey Dredge died on 4 April 1828 at the age of 42.

520 Franky, later Frankey Neal. She was yellow cast and born on Wednesday, 22 February 1786. Her mother was a purchased woman. It is likely that this was Philley (No 376) and her father Mulatto Peter (No 357), purchased by JPP as a boy. He almost certainly had several children with the domestic Philley: Joe Neal (b 1788), Mickey (b 1791), Kate Neal (b 1793) and Polly Neal (b 1784). The girl Frances Neal (b 1796) probably was his, too. Mulatto Peter, who worked in the house, in later life became an alcoholic. He died in January 1800 aged 40. But Philley had another two children with different men: a son, Billy Keefe (b 1782), and a daughter called Hetty (b December 1798). They, too, would have been Franky's half-siblings.

Aged 11, almost 12, Franky worked in the field, in Pompey's gang.⁴¹⁵

Frankey Neal died between 15 July 1817 and 8 February 1822. She was in her early to mid-thirties.

521 William Coker was black and born on Thursday, 23 March 1786, to a purchased woman. He may have been the half-brother of Fanny Coker (b 1786) and Jack Coker (b 1790), both children of entailed women.

Aged just over seven and a half years old, William Coker was the youngest child working in the field at that time. In the late 1790s he was in Pompey's gang.⁴¹⁶

He was one of the individuals severely flogged by Huggins in 1810.⁴¹⁷

William Coker died on 10 January 1828 at the age of 41.

522 Mary-Ann, or Mariann and Mary Ann Penny. She was 'yellow cast' and born on Saturday, 25 March 1786, to a purchased woman. She was a field hand and aged eleven, almost twelve, worked in Pompey's gang.⁴¹⁸

⁴¹² Betsey Dredge's date of birth was in 1817 erroneously given as 25 January 1781 (UKNA, T 71/364).

⁴¹³ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 16 January 1787; also AB 35 (18 January 1787)

⁴¹⁴ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴¹⁵ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴¹⁶ PP, DM 1773/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴¹⁷ UKNA, CO 152/96 John Burke's evidence

⁴¹⁸ PP, DM 1773/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

Mary-Ann probably temporarily worked on Clarke's Estate and was baptised on 15 August 1830.⁴¹⁹ Four years later she was back on Mountravers and, as Mary Ann Penny, married Charles Clifton, an enslaved man from Clifton Estate. The wedding took place shortly before slavery was abolished, on 23 June 1834, and both had to have the consent of their masters. Their witnesses were two men who witnessed many other weddings: the clerk William Browne and George Vaughan,⁴²⁰ the sexton at St Thomas Lowland.⁴²¹

Mary-Ann was alive on 1 August 1834. She was then in her late forties.

523 Clarissa was born on Wednesday, 6 September 1786, to an entailed woman.

She died between August 1807 and December 1816. She was between twenty and thirty years old.

524 Blandford was born on Wednesday, 6 September 1786, to a purchased woman. His father may have been William Coker's man of the same name. John Hay Richens had bought him from Coker in 1771.⁴²²

Blandford was a labourer and at the age of almost twelve, was getting used to field work in Pompey's gang.⁴²³

He died between August 1807 and December 1816. He was between twenty and thirty years old.

525 George Vaughan (b c 1776/7)⁴²⁴ was black and purchased for S£30/N£52:10 on Saturday, 25 November 1786, from George Vaughan. When JPP spotted this transaction in the accounts, he approved of Coker's choice: 'I observe you have a young negro boy from George Vaughan for S£30 which meets with my approbation.' He encouraged Coker to buy more 'boys and girls of good character.'⁴²⁵

George Vaughan became a field worker. In his teens he still worked in Tom's gang, which did the lightest tasks on the plantation but he was absent for much of the time. He persistently ran away – not something JPP had in mind when he spoke of a 'good character'. The first of five recorded absences was at a time when Mrs P visited Nevis; on 23 March 1790 Coker accounted for a payment of N4s6d 'for bringing home George Vaughan'. During Thomas Pym Weekes's managership the rewards for 'catching George Vaughan' (paid on 26 May 1791 and on 14 March 1794)⁴²⁶ were at N2s 1 1/2d comparatively low and suggest brief absences. Illness appears to have temporarily halted his expeditions; in November 1796 doctors attended to George Vaughan for three days with six 'Feb[rifugal] boluses' daily, as well as two

⁴¹⁹ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 210

The woman baptised on that day was an adult; the Maryanne on Clarke's was then only 18. Henrietta Clarke had an adult woman Mary Anne - her daughter Sophia was baptised on 6 February 1825 – but she would have lived in Charlestown rather than on Clarke's (St Paul's' Baptisms 1824-1835 No 75). Indeed, Mary Ann Clarke from Charlestown was buried on 20 March 1837, aged 60 (NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 755).

⁴²⁰ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965 No 2027

⁴²¹ UKNA, CO 187/5 Blue Book Nevis 1831

⁴²² PP, AB 18 William Coker's a/c

⁴²³ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴²⁴ George Vaughan was listed as a boy in 1788, a man in 1797 (the first general list). He was described as a 'negro boy' when Coker bought him. His price was the 1783 value for boys aged about 9.

⁴²⁵ PP, LB 6: JPP to Wm Coker, Nevis, 10 October 1787

⁴²⁶ PP, AB 43 1790 Plantation a/c and AB 39 Cash a/c; DM 1173 Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f91 and f138; also AB 39 f132 Cash a/c and AB 50 Cash a/c

doses of 'Stom.c mixture'. The fever-reducing medication and its high cost, N£5:14:0, suggests that he was very sick.⁴²⁷

A couple of years later George Vaughan took off again and from mid-February 1798 was gone for almost a month. At the same time some other men had left the plantation. Hunters were sent out to look for them. George Vaughan was found and returned to Mountravers on 13 March. On the following day the manager James Williams accounted for a payment of N9s for George Vaughan's capture.⁴²⁸ Whatever punishment Williams meted out, it did not deter the young man for long, and at the beginning of the following year he escaped once more but, after an absence of five weeks and two days, on Friday, 8 February, he was 'brought home by two strange negroes'. They, too, were rewarded with N9s.⁴²⁹

George Vaughan's previous owner, at one time, had been an overseer on the old Mountain Estate (Governor's)⁴³⁰ and for about five months in 1801 he worked as an overseer on Mountravers, as a boiling house watch.⁴³¹ He may have been the same overseer George Vaughan who was poisoned in 1811. The Legislature put up a reward of N£100 and five people suspected of the crime were captured and imprisoned.⁴³²

George Vaughan, the Mountravers slave, was sold into exile. It is very likely that he left Nevis at the same time as a Mountravers-born man, Tom Penny (in whose gang he had previously worked). They were both of similar age and Tom Penny (No 383), too, was known to have been a runner. He had been among the people Edward Huggins had subjected to a public flogging in the market place in Charlestown. Tom Penny was sold to Trinidad in the summer of 1811, and two years later was settled on a small sugar plantation in southern Trinidad, Bachelors Hall. That was also where George Vaughan ended up.

Tom Penny's age had been under-estimated and George Vaughan, too, was said to have been younger than he was. His age was misjudged by perhaps as much as nine years - did the men look more youthful, or, when selling them, had Huggins misled the buyer? At 5' (1.52m) George Vaughan was of very small stature. This may have been linked to his having been 'lame in the right leg', which, in turn, may explain why he had become a carter rather than an ordinary labourer.⁴³³ Tom Penny was the driver on Bachelors Hall.

Although George Vaughan and also Tom Penny have only been traced with certainty to 1822, it appears that both remained on Bachelors Hall until 1834. During that time they worked for several different owners and with a number of new people – Creoles from different islands and also Africans.

After Emancipation George Vaughan may, possibly, have returned to Nevis; a man called George Vaughan was buried in Charlestown on 23 June 1841. He was said to have been 57 years old and had last lived in St Thomas Lowland.⁴³⁴ However, not only was this man too young by about seven years, at least two other men called George Vaughan then lived in Nevis: one was baptised while enslaved⁴³⁵ and

⁴²⁷ PP, AB 47 Archbald and Williamson's (& Hope's) a/c

⁴²⁸ PP, AB 47 f114 Cash a/c

⁴²⁹ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary and AB 47 f108 Plantation a/c and f114 Cash a/c

⁴³⁰ PP, WI Box E

⁴³¹ PP, AB 47 f112 Plantation a/c

⁴³² UKNA, CO 186/9: 17 August 1811 and CO152/98: Extracts of Letters from (JW Tobin) of Nevis, 1 August 1811

⁴³³ Ancestry.com edition T 71/501, T 71/508 and T 71/511

⁴³⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 238

⁴³⁵ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 184

the other had been the sexton at St Thomas Lowland church.⁴³⁶ Shortly after Emancipation, one of these men received a pauper's allowance from the island's Treasury.⁴³⁷

526 John Frederick was black and born on Saturday, 6 January 1787, to an entailed woman, Peter's Flora. He had an older and younger brother and a sister, Peter (b 1784), Phibba (b 1793) and Charles (b 1801). Almost certainly Quakey (b 1777) and Azariah (b 1798) were also his brothers.

Aged 11, he and his mother, pregnant with Azariah, worked in Pompey's second gang, while Quakey was in the first gang.⁴³⁸ His brother Charles died as a young child and his mother when John Frederick was 16 years old. Quakey and Peter also died before John Frederick.

An uncle to several nieces and nephews, John Frederick was alive on 1 August 1834. He was then aged 47.

527 Paul Scarborough, also John Scarborough and John Paul Scarborough. A mestize, he was born on Friday, 12 January 1787, to a purchased woman. His mother was Mulatto Polly and he had six sisters: Christianna Jacques (b 1780), Jennetta (b 1785), Betsey (b 1789), Peggy (b 1794), Nancy Seymour alias Margaret Ann (b 1796) and Mary (b 1798). His oldest sister, Christianna, was the child of another white man while Paul and his other sisters were the children of the planter John Latoysonere Scarborough. Paul may have been named after his paternal grandfather – a Paull (sic) Scarborough had been buried in 1743.⁴³⁹

In 1790 JPP and his wife visited Nevis and during this visit the then three-year-old Paul and two of his sisters, Jennetta and Betsey, were sold to their father, while the Pinneys took their sister Christianna Jacques with them to England. There she was trained as a seamstress while Paul, his mother and his sisters were all manumitted.⁴⁴⁰ However, about a year after being freed, Peggy died at the age of four.

John Paul Scarborough disappeared from the records until July 1817 when he witnessed one of his white step-sisters, Judith Scarborough, manumitting two of her people.⁴⁴¹ In 1825 John Paul Scarborough registered his own people for the first time: Badger, an African woman who was in her early forties, and Job, a black Creole child, who was about three years old.⁴⁴² They may have been a mother and her son. John Paul Scarborough bought both of them at a Marshall's Sale. He was at least their third owner. Just two years earlier they had been sold for N£143 to William Hanley, also at a Marshall's Sale.⁴⁴³ John Paul Scarborough did not acquire any more people.

In January 1825 his youngest sister, Mary, got married and, together with John W[ebbe] Browne, John Paul acted as a witness at her wedding. Both men signed the register.⁴⁴⁴ Mary and her husband soon had a daughter, Mary Elizabeth, and his sister Betsey also gave birth to a daughter, Jane Maria.

⁴³⁶ UKNA, CO 187/5 Blue Book Nevis 1831

⁴³⁷ UKNA, CO 187/13 Blue Book Nevis 1839

⁴³⁸ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴³⁹ Oliver, VL *Caribbeana* Vol 3

⁴⁴⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1794-1797 f620

⁴⁴¹ Judith Scarborough manumitted Nancy and her son William Matthew (ECSCRN, CR 1817-1819 Vol 2 f14).

⁴⁴² UKNA, T 71/366

⁴⁴³ UKNA, T 71/1543 Bundle 7

⁴⁴⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

Having witnessed his half-sister Judith manumitting two of her people, early in 1831 he signed her slave register. She probably was in England then.

A few months later he died. John Paul Scarborough from Charlestown was buried on 31 July 1831. He was 44 years old. In the parish register his exact age was recorded.⁴⁴⁵

His mother inherited his two people and received close to N£40 compensation for them.

528 Jenny was 'black of a yellow cast', born on Friday, 12 January 1787, and Bessy Richens's (No 510) oldest child. She had a brother, Joe (b 1792), and a sister, Mussey (b 1795). In 1799 their mother died, having miscarried the year before. Jenny was twelve years old and a lot of the responsibility for caring for her younger siblings would have fallen on her. It is likely that the woman who probably was their grandmother, Peggy Richens, then looked after the children. She and also Joe died between 1807 and 1816.

Jenny had three nephews and nieces: Mussey's children James, Abram and Catherine. Mussey lived on Scarborough's in 1834 and Jenny was also alive in August 1834. She was then aged 47.

She could have been the woman Jenny from the asylum who was buried on 10 June 1851 in St Paul's. Her age was not known; it is very likely that this person was a victim of the cholera epidemic.⁴⁴⁶

529 Hannah's Polly was black and born on Sunday, 11 March 1787. Her mother, Hannah (No 341), was a purchased African woman and a field worker. Aged almost eleven, Hannah's Polly was the youngest girl in Pompey's gang.⁴⁴⁷ Her younger sister Dianna (b 1792) presumably later also worked in the field. Aged thirty, she died in November 1823; their mother in February 1826.

Hannah's Polly died on 18 January 1829 aged 41.

530 Little Molly, later Molly, Mary, and Molly Pinney and 531 and 532 Mary (or Molly) Nugent (later Molly Pinney) and her daughter **Mary Mason (later Mary Pinney)**. The youngest of Black Polly's (No 261) children, Little Molly was born on Saturday, 5 May 1787. She had two older brothers and two older sisters: Frances Coker (b 1767), William Jones (b 1773), Hetty (b 1781) and Cubbenna (b 1784). The two oldest siblings were mulattoes and both almost certainly the children of William Coker and JPP; the two younger ones were black, like Little Molly. It is possible that the 'standing watch' Cubenna (No 221) was their and Little Molly's father. He died not long after she was born.

Aged about twelve, Little Molly worked in the second gang,⁴⁴⁸ but her mother, a seamstress, had ambitions for her future. Black Polly wanted Molly to be trained as a seamstress, and she turned to the manager, James Williams, for help. He referred her request to JPP who quashed Black Polly's aspiration. JPP replied to Williams: 'As to her daughter Molly's going to school to learn needle work, I materially object to, having too many of that description already - a good field negro is much more valuable to the

⁴⁴⁵ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 415

⁴⁴⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 769

⁴⁴⁷ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴⁴⁸ PP, DM 1773/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

Estate.⁴⁴⁹ Black Polly could instruct her daughter in the basics of needlework herself – and she probably did – but without JPP's approval Molly was condemned to remain a field labourer. Her colour had determined her fate. One of Molly's mulatto siblings became a domestic servant and another worked as a cooper.

Molly was among the individuals JPP reserved for himself, along with her mother, brothers and sister Hetty, her nephews - Hetty's boys Billey and Siah - and her brother Billey Jones and his children. While her mother and her brother Billey and his family could live away from the plantation, in Charlestown, from March 1808 Little Molly, with Hetty and Cubbenna, was hired to work on Clarke's, and briefly on Mr Mills's, estate. As a 'good field negro' Molly was valued at S£70 but two years later, in April 1810, this rose to S£100. In 1817 Molly was on Clarke's Estate⁴⁵⁰ but at some time before the mid-1820s she was swapped for another woman about her age, who then became a Pinney-reserved slave. Most likely this exchange happened during Charles Pinney's first visit to Nevis in 1819/20. The woman Molly was exchanged for was Mary, or Molly, Nugent.⁴⁵¹

As a girl, Mary Nugent had once belonged to The Ladies at the Cedar Trees. Owned by Mrs Pinney's aunt Ann Weekes, Mary Nugent was left in Ann Weekes's will to her sister Jane Weekes. After Jane's death in 1812, Mary Nugent was to go to one of Dr Thomas Pym Weekes's sons, with the proviso that she and another man were 'not to be suffered to be taken off the island.' After Jane Weekes died, Mary belonged to one of the sons of Dr Thomas Pym Weekes (Jane Weekes's great-nephews), William Burt Weekes. His brother, Thomas Pym Weekes, owned a woman called Kitty and her three sons Billey, Monesses and Almond, but they were all acquired by JPP to off-set debts against the Weekeses.⁴⁵² Ann Weekes had originally stipulated that, once her great-nephews came of age, her people could choose their new owners, and in the spirit of Ann Weekes's bequest, JPP allowed Kitty to choose her new owner.⁴⁵³ It is not known whom Kitty and her sons Monesses and Almond picked as their new owners, only that Kitty's son Billey opted to remain in Charlestown with the free coloured customs clerk John Frederick Bertrand.

Mary Nugent, however, ended up on Clarke's Estate, with her six-year-old sambo daughter Mary Mason. Whether she actually chose this plantation, or whether she had belonged to someone else who then sold her to Clarke's is not known but by the mid-1820s she and her daughter had become Pinney-reserved people. Because they were surplus to the number of reserved individuals hired to Clarke's Estate, Mary Nugent's two sons born on Clarke's Estate, Alfred (b 1821/2) and William (b 1826/7), were, however, owned by the Clarkes family.⁴⁵⁴ The boys' father was John Jessup,⁴⁵⁵ who, like Mary Nugent and her daughter Mary Mason, worked in the field. Mary Nugent was in the Number 1, her daughter in the Number 2 gang.

In the island-wide slave registration in 1828 only Mary Nugent's daughter Mary Mason was registered but not Mary Nugent, or Black Polly's daughter Molly. Without detailed plantation records for the period it is impossible to tell exactly what happened, particularly as Charles Pinney was then on his second visit to

⁴⁴⁹ PP, LB 14: JPP, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 12 November 1798

⁴⁵⁰ Molly was in 1817 listed as No 142, Mary, aged 32 (UKNA, T 71/364).

⁴⁵¹ In 1817, she was listed on Clarke's as Molly Nugent, black, aged 28 (dob 1788/9). In 1812, she was said to have been 24 (PP, LB 23: JPP to S Pemberton, 19 October 1812).

⁴⁵² PP, LB 23: JPP to Joseph Roberts, 9 October 1812, with a copy of a letter sent to TP Weekes, Bengal

⁴⁵³ PP, LB 23: JPP to Samuel Pemberton and Francis John Galpine, 19 October 1812

⁴⁵⁴ According to the slave register, Alfred was aged three in 1825 and aged 5 in 1828. In 1828 William was listed as Billy, aged one.

In 1825, a two-year-old black girl called Mary Nugent was listed as an addition (UKNA, T 71/366 and T 71/367) but this was not Mary Nugent's child: the girl was in an internal Clarke's inventory listed underneath a woman called Sarey (PP, Dom Box T3).

⁴⁵⁵ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835

Nevis and made many arrangements that were not documented. It appears, however, that Mary Nugent was still on Clarke's Estate until at least January 1829. She was then called, or she called herself, Molly Pinney, taking account of her status as a Pinney-owned slave. This Molly Pinney was baptised on 11 September 1828, and her sons Alfred and William the following year, on 25 January.⁴⁵⁶

In 1833 the other Mary, Black Polly's daughter Molly, was then also said to have been resident on 'Pinney's Estate'. After being swapped for Mary Nugent, it appears that she went to work on neighbouring Scarborough's Estate, taking with her, Mickey, or Michael (b 1818/9).⁴⁵⁷ He was her son with John Gould (also Gold), a black carter on Scarborough's about six years her senior.⁴⁵⁸ On 17 November 1826 their second son, James, was born and both boys were baptised together on 21 April 1833.⁴⁵⁹ By then the boys' father was married to a woman from Parris's, Hannah Parris,⁴⁶⁰ with whom he may have had two grown-up sons already - Michael's and James's half-brothers Johnny Gould (b 1804/5) and Billy Gould (b 1806/7).⁴⁶¹

It is not known what happened to Little Molly (Molly Pinney), or to her son Michael. Her son James may have worked on Clarke's Estate until his death. It is likely that he was buried on 6 June 1855 as James Penny. Although he was then aged 28, he was said to have been 22.⁴⁶² Perhaps the date of his baptism was taken as his birthdate?

As to the rest of her family, Little Molly's brother Billey Jones had died in 1820, and also her sister Frances Coker, in England. Her sister had left her £10 but whereas the money left to her mother and her sister Hetty was recorded as having been paid, Molly's was not. Again, this may have had something to do with Charles Pinney being in Nevis and striking a deal to release Molly from Clarke's. Her other brother, the field hand Cubbenna, died on Clarke's Estate in 1828, but her sister Hetty lived to see the end of slavery. Molly's mother, Black Polly, lived at least until the early 1820s but it is not known exactly when she died. This may, possibly, have been as late as 1846, or perhaps even 1873.

The woman who took Molly (Pinney's) place on Clarke's - Mary Nugent (alias Molly Pinney) - also disappeared from view. Two of her children, however, can probably be traced into the 1840s, Mary Mason and Alfred. Given that Mary Mason was a Pinney-reserved slave, it is very likely that Mary Mason,

⁴⁵⁶ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 Numbers 241, 548 and 549

⁴⁵⁷ He was registered in 1822 as a three-year-old sambo and appeared on the general 182? list but not the allowance 182? list, presumably because he was on Scarborough's. Six years on, in 1828, he was said to have been black and his age was given as 12 but that, presumably, was just a guess because he was not on Clarke's.

⁴⁵⁸ On Scarborough's, he was registered in 1817 as Johney Gold, aged 36, and baptised as Johnny Gold from Scarborough's on 9 March 1828 (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873).

⁴⁵⁹ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 Numbers 928 and 929

James was registered on Scarborough's Estate. On Clarke's there was no James, Jemmy or Jimmy born during the 1820s. – He did not need to be registered on Clarke's because Mary Nugent and her issue and increase took over Molly's role as a reserved slave.

Michael, although in his teens when he was baptised, was judged 'about nine years' old. Like the physical development of so many other children who were born or grew up during the dreadful 1820s, his was severely impaired while his brother had developed normally. At 'about seven years', James's age was estimated correctly. Confusingly, Molly's name was also given as Molly Pinney but, quite clearly, she was not the same woman as the Molly Pinney whose sons Alfred and Billey were baptised in 1829. Both parents were said to have lived on 'Pinney's'.

⁴⁶⁰ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965

John Gould married Hannah Parris on 3 April 1832. Both were the property of PTH and made their marks. The witnesses were Mary Hicks Griffin and George Vaughan. Hannah was in 1817 registered on Parris's as a black woman aged 29. She was alive in August 1834 (UKNA, T 71/364-9).

⁴⁶¹ Michael and James's half-brother Johnny Gould died between 1831 and 1834 (UKNA, T 71/369).

Michael and James may also have had a half-sister, Mary, who was black and listed on Parris's as a six years old in 1817 (T 71/364): On 18 July 1840 Mary Gould married Stephen Drew (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965). She was then about 29 and her husband 36. Stephen Drew from Parris's was buried on 22 September 1842 in NHCS, St Paul's, aged 38 (St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 289).

⁴⁶² St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 626

like her mother, called herself or was called Pinney and that in her mid-twenties she had a daughter called Fanny. The girl was baptised on 1 May 1836 at the age of three months. The child's father was the labourer Joseph Scarborough.⁴⁶³ A black man also known as Joe, he was about twelve years older than Mary and worked on Scarborough's Estate.⁴⁶⁴ Mary Pinney had another daughter with a man who was about nine or ten years older than her and married. Born on 4 December 1843, Mary Pinney's and Santy Pinney's daughter Frankey was baptised before the end of the year.⁴⁶⁵

Mary Nugent's son Alfred, who had been owned by the Clarkes family and when their estate was sold, by Peter Thomas Huggins, was known as Alfred Clarke. He moved off the plantation to somewhere else in St Thomas Lowland. He died young. Alfred Clarke was aged twenty when was buried on 30 June 1843.⁴⁶⁶ It is not known what happened to Mary Nugent's third child, her son William.

533 Hercules was born on Sunday, 1 July 1787, to a purchased woman. His mother was Myrtilia (No 293), an Ebbo.

Hercules died between January 1789 and December 1790. He was two and a half years old at the most.

534 Barbai's Flora, later Flora or Florah, was born on Friday, 27 July 1787. She was the field worker Barbai's (No 344) second child and had an older and a younger brother, Little London (b 1785) and Adam (b 1806) and two younger sisters, Kate (b 1794) and Betsey (b 1797). She was the grandchild of an entailed woman.

She may have had a child some time before 1806.⁴⁶⁷

Flora, and also her mother, died between August 1807 and December 1816. Flora was between 19 and 29 years old.

535 Tom Bossu was black and born on Friday, 16 November 1787. His mother, Nelly (No 234), was plantation-born and probably a domestic. His father may possibly have been the cooper Lewy (No 166), who died between 1791 and 1794. His uncle may have been another cooper, Tom Bossu (No 167).

Tom had an elder brother, Lewey (b 1785), who died when Tom was still a young child, and he had an elder sister, Jibba (b 1783). Her son Toby, Tom's nephew, died in 1816/17, and Tom's mother died soon after.

Tom Bossu died on 19 December 1830 at the age of 43.

He may, possibly, have had a son: in 1812 Walter Maynard gave his daughter Ann four enslaved individuals, among them a 'black boy' called Tom Bossoo.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶³ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873 Unnumbered

⁴⁶⁴ UKNA, T 71/364

⁴⁶⁵ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873 No 175

Santy was mis-transcribed as 'lanty'.

⁴⁶⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 330

⁴⁶⁷ Aged 19, Flora was listed as a woman and Clarissa, for instance, who was a year older than her, as a girl.

⁴⁶⁸ The Deed of Gift recording the transfer of Tom Bossoo was a rare occasion in which he and others were described as 'black' rather than 'negro' (ECSCRN, CR 1810-1814 ff576-77).

536 Goliah was black and born on Thursday, 3 July 1788. His mother, the field hand Omah (No 274), was a twin. He was the grandchild of an entailed woman, Lucy (No 123).

Aged about ten, he worked in Pompey's small gang,⁴⁶⁹ his mother in the great gang. His aunts Sue, Cuba and Bridget were also field labourers, and probably also his cousins Felix and Lucy. His cousin Lucy certainly had two children with a field worker.

His mother, one of his aunts and his maternal grandmother died between 1817 and 1822 but Goliah was alive on 1 August 1834, aged 45, as were two of his aunts and his cousins Felix and Lucy.

537 John Fisher, a mulatto, was born on Thursday, 23 October 1788, and Sarah Fisher's (No 488) fourth and last child with John Fisher, the white overseer on Woodland. John's older siblings were Tom Fisher (b 1781), Patty Fisher (b 1783) and Frank Fisher (b 1784).

His mother was on hire to his father probably until his father died in July 1789⁴⁷⁰ and then returned to live on Mountravers. John may still have been alive when his half-sister Domingo was born in April 1791 and when his mother was pregnant again in 1793 but he died some time between 1 January 1791 and 30 July 1794. He was at least two years old and at the most five.

538 Little Joe, later Joe Neal, possibly also Joe Huggins. He was 'black of a yellow cast' and born on Thursday, 23 October 1788. His mother was Philley (No 376), his father almost certainly Mulatto Peter (No 357). His siblings were Billy Keefe (b 1782), Mickey (b 1791), Kate Neal (b 1793), and Hetty Nelson (b 1798). The girls Polly Neal (b 1784), Franky Neal (b 1786) and Frances Neal (b 1796) probably were also his sisters or half-sisters.

Mulatto Peter died in January 1800, his elder brother Billy Keefe between 1807 and 1816, his mother in 1816/7, his younger brother Mickey between 1817 and 1822 and Polly Neal in 1824.

Joe, as Joe Huggins, may have had a child with a Sophia Huggins; the child was baptised on 28 May 1825 just as 'Huggins'.⁴⁷¹ Joe Neal died four months after the ceremony, on 13 September 1825. He was almost 37 years old.

The child recorded as 'Huggins' may in fact have been called John - after his father - and may have had twin daughters, one of whom had the same name as his mother: John and Kitsey Neale's twin daughters Eliza Sophia and Eleanor Mary were born on 27 October 1843 and baptised on 2 May 1844. This John Neale was a cooper in Charlestown.⁴⁷²

539 Tom Chapman was yellow cast and, like John Fisher and Little Joe, born on Thursday, 23 October 1788. His mother was a purchased woman. Almost certainly he was born during the time his mother was employed away from the plantation, and it is likely that this was Leah Weekes (No 353) and

⁴⁶⁹ PP, DM 1773/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴⁷⁰ NHCS, St John Figtree Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825 f32

⁴⁷¹ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835

⁴⁷² NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873

that she had hired herself to James Chapman junior. Married in 1775,⁴⁷³ James Chapman later worked on John Stanley's Estate.⁴⁷⁴

As a nine-year-old, Tom Chapman was one of five stock keepers, responsible for the calves on the estate.⁴⁷⁵ There were eleven – according to a manager 'the finest ever seen upon the Estate' - and another eight on their way. Two African men in their forties, Warry and Hector, minded the cattle while another African, Weymouth, probably looked after the sheep and a 25-year-old Creole, Range, took care of the mules.

As he grew older, Tom Chapman probably was moved to work in the fields. JPP was concerned that strong boys were tending the animals when there were 'many old people on the estate and several with permanent complaints', who, although 'incapable of doing hard labour can take care of mules, etc.'⁴⁷⁶

In his mid-forties, on 1 August 1834 Tom Chapman was alive.

540 Dorinda was black and born on Monday, 10 November 1788, to a purchased woman. She was the fifth and youngest child of Ann (No 483), a woman who had come from Woodland with her children Johnny, Jenetta and Violet. Their sister Lissy was born on Mountravers in 1785 and died when Dorinda was still a toddler. Ann, their mother, died in 1802/3.

In 1806, when Dorinda was 18d, she was listed among the women (the 20-year-old Clarissa was still recorded as a girl), and it is likely that this was because Dorinda had by then given birth to a child.

Dorinda died on 3 December 1826, aged 38.

She could have had children – perhaps John Tong, a black girl born in October 1819, or Cinderella, a yellow cast girl born in February 1826. They were baptised as orphans in 1832.

541 Honeyfield, later Mary Honeyfield and Molly Honey Field. She was black and born on Sunday, 21 December 1788. Her mother was a purchased woman, Sarah Nolan (No 398); her brothers probably Quashee Nolan (b 1780) and Peter Nolan (b 1783).

Honeyfield was ten when Quashee was very ill and their mother died. Crippled, he later worked with horses, had a son – Honeyfield's nephew – and was baptised. It is possible she was also baptised, as Molly, on 21 April 1832.⁴⁷⁷

Mary Honeyfield was alive on 1 August 1834.

542 Betsey, later Elizabeth Scarborough, was born on Thursday, 1 January 1789, to a purchased woman.⁴⁷⁸ A mestize, she was one of Mulatto Polly's (No 378) children. She had five sisters and a

⁴⁷³ NHCS, St John Figtree Baptisms, Marriages, Burials 1729-1825

⁴⁷⁴ PP, AB 53 Estate of John Stanley

⁴⁷⁵ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁴⁷⁶ PP, WI Box O Misc, Instructions dated 20 May 1805

⁴⁷⁷ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 932

⁴⁷⁸ JPP accounted for tax being paid for two of Mulatto Polly's children and herself until 31 December 1788, then for three children, from 1 January 1789 (PP, AB 30 f158; also AB 43 John L Scarborough's a/c).

brother: Christianna Jacques (b 1780), Jenetta (b 1785), John Paul (b 1787), Peggy (b 1794), Nancy Seymour alias Margaret Ann (b 1796) and Mary (b 1798). Her oldest sister was the child of another white man while Elizabeth and her siblings were the children of the planter John Latoysonere Scarborough. Elizabeth may have been named after Mr Scarborough's wife or his daughter.

In July 1790, when JPP and his wife visited Nevis, he sold Betsey, together with her sister Jenetta and her brother Paul, to their father,⁴⁷⁹ who manumitted them,⁴⁸⁰ and later also their mother and her two youngest siblings, Peggy and Nancy. Peggy died not long after being freed.

Their mother already possessed several people but among Mulatto Polly's children Elizabeth was the first to purchase her own. On 1 July 1819 she bought two from one of her white half-sisters, Hester Scarborough: the 32-year-old black woman Harriett and a 7-year-old mulatto child, Jane. Although not recorded as dead or manumitted, Jane appears to have died some time before 1822. After changing owner, Harriett had straight away given birth to a coloured boy called William and then to a black girl called Beatrice (also Attrice and Attrace). Henrietta, another black girl, may also have been hers but she could also have been the daughter of Christiana, a girl who had belonged to Elizabeth Scarborough's mother. Elizabeth Scarborough sold Henrietta to her sister Margaret Ann Scarborough and, having acquired Harriett, she then sold Harriett's son William (as William Westerman). Variousy described as a sambo and a mulatto, William may have been the son of the white man – perhaps the jail keeper Horner Jennings. He bought William⁴⁸¹ who remained Jennings's only slave. The boy would have had a bleak life. Just around the time he was sold, William's new master was sacked from his post; Jennings's addiction to 'strong liquor' had got the better of him.⁴⁸² Later he was reduced to claim a pauper's allowance.⁴⁸³ Aged 61, Horner Jennings died in November 1834.⁴⁸⁴ Thomas Horner Jennings, presumably his son, in 1828 registered William Westerman and claimed compensation for him.⁴⁸⁵

Some time before 1825 Elizabeth Scarborough had given birth to a daughter called Jane Maria. The girl was baptised on 14 March 1828 in Charlestown.⁴⁸⁶ Elizabeth presented her with two females, the woman Harriett and her daughter Beatrice, but not long after Jane Maria's baptism had taken place, Beatrice died. She was 'about three years' old.⁴⁸⁷

In 1817 Elizabeth Scarborough's mother had owned six people and Elizabeth bought one of these, the black girl Christiana.⁴⁸⁸ Although Elizabeth Scarborough in 1825 duly recorded that she had bought Christiana, she never documented that she then gave her by deed of gift to someone called Charles Pinney Firsden Smith. Having signed his register in 1828 for this one slave, it was also Elizabeth Scarborough, and not Charles Pinney Firsden Smith, who manumitted Christiana in April 1830. She appeared before three Justices of the Peace: Job Ede, Edward L Howe and Francis John Galpine.

⁴⁷⁹ PP, AB 30 f158; also AB 43 John L Scarborough's a/c

⁴⁸⁰ ECSCRN, CR 1794-1797 f620

⁴⁸¹ UKNA, T 71/366 and T 71/367

⁴⁸² UKNA, CO 186/12: 12 October 1824

⁴⁸³ UKNA, CO 186/12: 9 December 1824, CO 186/13: 29 November 1829, CO 186/14: 28 March 1832, 2 July 1832, and 20 August 1833

⁴⁸⁴ NHCS, St Paul's Burials, 1825-1837 No 604

⁴⁸⁵ UKNA, T 71/1039 No 269

Thomas Horner Jennings, a jeweller, had at least three children with his wife Margaret. Some time after they were baptised in 1835 and 1837 (NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms, 1824-1835 and St Paul's Baptisms 1835-1873 No 75 and 76) he went to England. He died in London in 1841. His widow Margaret survived him (ECSCRN, Book of Wills 1837-1864 f124).

⁴⁸⁶ NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 323

⁴⁸⁷ When Beatrice was baptised on 18 January 1826 she was identified as the daughter of Harriett, a women belonging to Elizabeth Scarborough, but when she was buried on 30 June 1828, she was said to have belonged to Elizabeth Scarborough's mother, Polly Pinney (NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 142 and St Paul's Burials 1828-37 No 242). This suggests that Elizabeth and her people may have lived with Elizabeth's mother.

⁴⁸⁸ UKNA, T 71/366

According to one source she freed the young woman on payment of N£65, according to another on payment of N£75. The money was put up by Francis Warner.⁴⁸⁹ He was Christiana's husband-to-be, and the couple married later in the year. At the wedding one of the witnesses was William Smith, the other Horner Jennings (the man to whom Elizabeth Scarborough had sold the boy William).⁴⁹⁰ Jennings appears to have been involved with the wider Scarborough family - not only did he witness this marriage but he also acted as a witness when the free coloured woman Judith Scarborough (the daughter of John Latoysonere Scarborough's mulatto son James) got married.⁴⁹¹

In July 1831 Elizabeth Scarborough's brother John Paul died. He may have been among the many cholera victims.

The last reference to Elizabeth Scarborough was in the records for slave compensation. She signed the certificates for her daughter and also for her sister Margaret Ann, who was then in America. She completed the documents on 31 October 1834. On 16 February 1836 the London merchant Ann Latham wrote a letter, requesting that Jane Maria's compensation be paid to Elizabeth's married sister, Mary Trimmingham, as she had become the child's guardian. Elizabeth Scarborough had died in the meantime.⁴⁹² She was either 45 or 46 years old.

543 Woodcots (Woodcutts) was born on Friday, 15 January 1790, to an entailed woman, a fortnight after Mrs Pinney and her maidservant Fanny Coker arrived in Nevis.

The boy's father may, possibly, have been a man who had lived on Woodland plantation called Woodcotts (sic), but, if this man was not his father, then the manager William Coker named the boy after his estate in Dorset.

Woodcots died between January 1802 and May 1803. He was at least 11 and at the most 13 years old.

544 Jack Coker was born on Tuesday, 15 June 1790, to an entailed woman. He was born during JPP's visit to Nevis.

William Coker was manager from January 1786 until the end of July 1790 and by the time he left, several Mountravers people had Coker family names: There was a Betsey Dredge (b 1786), named after his sister and his niece; a Honeyfield (b 1788), named after another sister; a William Coker (b 1786) who was the son of a purchased woman, and a black Fanny Coker (b 1786), who may have been Jack Coker's sister (she, too, was a child of an entailed woman). Blandford (b 1786) and Woodcutts (b 1790) were named after places associated with Coker.

Jack Coker died on 26 January 1791, aged 7 months.

⁴⁸⁹ UKNA, T 71/1543 Bundle 7 No 2, and ECSCRN, CR 1829-1830 Vol 2 ff275-57

Charles Pinney Firsden Smith's slave register for 1831 stated that Christina was manumitted in 1830 but it was not recorded that this was actually done by her previous owner, Elizabeth Scarborough (T 71/368).

Charles Smith registered one addition: Nicholas, a black Antigua Creole aged 10, whom he acquired 'by will of the late Sarah Beazer'. By the time it came to claiming slave compensation, Charles Pinney Firsden Smith had died. This was confirmed in a letter from Latham & Hodge of London, dated 16 February 1836, and his compensation claim was completed by his attorney Angelica Smith. She also received the money for his one person (T 71/369, T 71/1038 and PP, Dom Box R-6; Compensation file).

⁴⁹⁰ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁴⁹¹ NHCS, St Paul's Marriages 1826-1842

⁴⁹² UKNA, T 71/1039

His namesake, William Coker's son John (Jack), was in Nevis during the time this Jack Coker was born.⁴⁹³ As a seventeen-year-old he came to Nevis in 1787 and was temporarily employed as a boiling house watch. Having returned to England, he died in Nevis a few months after this boy Jack Coker.

545 Forbes, also Dr Forbes, later Forbes Pinney. He was black and born on Tuesday, 29 June 1790. His mother was an entailed woman. It is quite likely that JPP, who was visiting Nevis when the boy was born, named him after George Forbes. In the first list the child was registered as Dr Forbes. He was the last child born during Coker's managership.

In his early forties Forbes Pinney was a sugar boiler and lived on Ward's Estate. There he had child with a black woman, Rose Ward, who was a couple of years younger than him. Their daughter Isabella was baptised on 21 April 1833.⁴⁹⁴

Although he was said to have been resident on Ward's, Peter Thomas Huggins did not register him as sold to that estate. His living on the neighbouring plantation may have been a casual arrangement although he certainly remained on Ward's Estate until his death. Said to have been aged 55 (he was 54), Forbes Pinney was buried in St Paul's on 25 December 1844.⁴⁹⁵

Und the new manager, Dr Thomas Pym Weekes

The following two individuals had previously been owned by JPP's father-in-law, William Burt Weekes. Together with a large group of other individuals, they had been given as security for several mortgages. Jack Steward had been included in a mortgage of April 1777 to which Billy was added after he was born. With seven others, in 1785 they were reserved by JPP for Thomas Pym Weekes.

Almost certainly Jack and Billey were the sons of Bessy Steward and the brothers of the black girl Nancy. Their mother would originally have belonged to William Burt Weekes's second wife, Ann Stewart.

Nancy was born, most likely, in about 1773/4; Jack Steward in 1774/5 and Billey Steward in 1778. In 1781 Jack and Billey were valued at N£40 and N£25 respectively. Together with three others (Mary, William and Charloe), Bessy Steward and her three children were hired to William Burt Weekes's successor at Fort Charles, Dr Bates Williams Peterson. Although the children grew up in a military establishment and therefore a very male environment, other children also lived at the fort – Dr Peterson's and those of the matrosses.

In 1784 Bessy Steward, the boys' mother, died and while others remained hired to Dr Peterson,⁴⁹⁶ Jack and Billey went to live with Thomas Pym Weekes's aunts, The Ladies at the Cedar Trees. Their sister Nancy was with them as well.

On 20 July 1790 another Weekes mortgage fell due and it appears that at that stage Jack and Billey left the Cedar Trees and became Mountravers plantation people. Their acquisition was accounted for as '...

⁴⁹³ PP, LB 6: JPP to Edward Brazier, Nevis, 24 October 1787; also AB 33 f29 Capt Charles Maies

⁴⁹⁴ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 910

⁴⁹⁵ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 386

⁴⁹⁶ PP, AB 30 TP Weekes's a/c

the absolute purchase of two negro Boys - Jack Steward and Billey Steward S£100'.⁴⁹⁷ Their arrival at Mountravers coincided with Thomas Pym Weekes's start as manager of the plantation.

546 Jack Steward, also Stuart and Stewart, was straightaway hired to William Coker and his wife, together with a woman from Mountravers, Sheba Jones. Coker had just been sacked from his post as manager and had to leave the plantation, and with his wife moved to Thomas Pym Weekes's house in town. Jack Steward and Nancy Jones remained with the Cokers until August 1791 when they left for England.⁴⁹⁸

A year or so later Jack Steward managed to get passage to Tortola. He had somehow persuaded Capt Moore to take him there. When this became known in Bristol, Azariah Pinney wrote to a man he knew in Tortola, a Mr Lachland, and asked him to send Jack back to Nevis. Another man got involved, Mr Bauer, who informed JPP that he had received Jack, would pay his expenses and forward him to another Mr Lachland at St Kitts.⁴⁹⁹ In July 1793 Jack Steward was returned to Mountravers. The cost 'for discovering and taking Jack Steward to St Kitts' came to N£1:13:0.⁵⁰⁰ JPP, angry at Capt Moore's 'unjustifiable conduct in taking with him Jack Steward', wanted Weekes to recover the money from Capt Moore. If Moore refused, he was to prosecute him 'for taking the negro off the island'. JPP believed that the mate and other members of the crew could prove the fact but JPP warned Thomas Pym Weekes to take care to secure sufficient evidence before he commenced a suit. It appears that the money was never recovered from Capt Moore.

JPP gave permission to sell Jack if Weekes thought it 'advisable',⁵⁰¹ but Weekes did not sell him. Instead, Jack Steward was put in the field.⁵⁰² That Weekes did not sell him is unsurprising - given that Jack Steward had previously belonged to his family - but it may also have been the case that Nancy, Jack's sister, had interceded on his behalf. She may, possibly, have been Dr Weekes's mistress. Certainly when in 1794 he left Mountravers for Martinique, he took with him Nancy and her two mulatto daughters, Betsey and Penny, as well as two other boys with whom Jack and his brother would have grown up.

Under the new manager, James Williams, Jack Steward ran away again at least twice more. On one occasion a canoe was used to search ships, suggesting that he was suspected of again trying to leave the island. On the same day that James Williams accounted for N17s3d for hiring the canoe - Sunday, 3 July 1796 - a man from John Stanley's Estate 'went away with the fleet',⁵⁰³ and it is likely that Jack Steward, too, had tried to get to England. However, while Benton, a man in his mid to late twenties, did get away, Jack Steward did not. James Williams reported Jack Steward's attempted escapes. JPP replied by return of post:

By the conduct of Jack Steward in attempting to leave the island three several times it evidently appears that he is determined to accomplish and the first favourable opportunity; it is therefore my son's wish to sell him as soon as you can get a purchaser that will give a reasonable (sic) good price for him (as he is a valuable negro) and take him off the island.⁵⁰⁴

⁴⁹⁷ PP, AB 39 TP Weekes's a/c

⁴⁹⁸ PP, LB 9: JPP to TP Weekes, Nevis, 27 September 1790, and DM 1173 Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f85 Negro Hire a/c; also AB 39

⁴⁹⁹ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, Nevis, 21 August 1793

⁵⁰⁰ PP, AB 39 Cash a/c

⁵⁰¹ PP, LB 11: JPP to TP Weekes, Nevis, 21 August 1793

⁵⁰² PP, Misc Vols 12 Leeward Island Calendar

⁵⁰³ PP, AB 48 John Stanley's Estate

⁵⁰⁴ PP, LB 12: JPP to James Williams, 15 November 1796

Although he had his employer's permission, Williams did not sell him immediately. Perhaps he gave him another chance. However, a year later Jack was 'sent to Jamaica'. On 7 September 1797 Captain Quincey Shepherd took him away on the *Commerce* and sold him in Jamaica to a Thomas Bowen. After 'deducting expenses of sale etc' the sum of N£44:7:6 was left by way of profit.⁵⁰⁵

JPP approved: 'I have received the acknowledgment of Capt Shipherd for Jack Stewart - you did very right in sending him off the island as in all probability he would have accomplished his design to the bad example of the other negroes.'⁵⁰⁶

547 Billey, or Billy, Stewart, also Stuart and Stewart, became a field worker. Aged about 20 he was still in the small gang.⁵⁰⁷ It is likely that this was because he was ill; on 25 October 1798 he had four sweat-inducing pills, 'diaph[oretic] boluses'. They cost N£1.⁵⁰⁸

In 1817 his age was estimated because he was not born on the plantation and therefore there was no original record of his birth date. He was said to have been 'about 30' but was in fact about ten years older.

Billy Stewart was alive on 1 August 1834, aged about 56 years.

It is possible but not very likely that he was baptised on 3 December 1842 as William Stewart. He would then have lived on Clarke's Estate.⁵⁰⁹ It is more likely that this was a man of the same name who for many years had lived on Clarke's Estate. He, too, was black and about three years older than this Billy Stewart.

548 Boll was born on Friday, 8 October 1790, to an entailed woman.

She died before the end of December 1793. Boll was less than three years old.

Boll's name may indicate that she was the daughter of an African. Bol (*boh!*) is a surname among the Dinka in Southern Sudan, and also given by the Dinka and the Nuer of Southern Sudan to the first (male) child born after twins. The female equivalent is Nyabol, Nyibol or Nibol,⁵¹⁰ but this may have been shortened to Boll.

549 Thomas Peaden, or Tom, was a mestize and born on Saturday, 4 December 1790. His father, almost certainly, was the mulatto James Peaden.

Over a seven-week period the child underwent very extensive treatment:

27 August 1796	12 diuretic powders	N36s
	A phial liniment (sic)	N6s

⁵⁰⁵ PP, DM 1173 Nevis Ledger (Mt Sion) 1789-1794 f335

⁵⁰⁶ PP, LB 14: JPP to James Williams, Nevis, 10 January 1798

⁵⁰⁷ PP, DM 1173/4 Plantation Diary Front cover

⁵⁰⁸ PP, AB 47 Archbald and Williamson's (& Hope's) a/c

⁵⁰⁹ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873

⁵¹⁰ Stewart, Julia *1001 African Names* p156 and p172

1 September	6 specific boluses	N30s
	two purges	N12s
	and a linament	N6s
4 September	A visit	N20s
8 September	Scarifying the feet	N12s
	powders rep.d	N36s
12 September	A visit	N20s
	15 apot. corr.t electuary	N20s
20 September	a visit from Gingerland	N33s
22 September	6 diuretic powders	N18s
6 October	A phial diur. mixture	N12s
	12 corr.t powders	N36s
16 October	A visit	N20s
	4 stom.boluses	N20s ⁵¹¹

Tom Peaden endured a lot of suffering. He had to take diuretic powders meant to draw water from the body, was made to vomit and had his feet cut to make them bleed. 'Scarifying the feet' was thought to reduce blood pressure and involved pressing a small hand-held instrument with blades fitted to one side onto the skin to bring on the bleeding.

The bill for his treatment came to almost N£17 - the most expensive treatment of anyone on the plantation – but despite the cost and the prolonged medical intervention Tom Peaden died four days after the last doctor's visit, on 20 October 1796. He was five years old.

Two years later JPP sent out a coat for the boy, most likely a cast-off from his six-year-old son Charles.⁵¹² He was not aware that Tom Peaden had died because James Williams had not noted the decreases on his second slave list. However, the coat would have come in handy for Williams's seven-year-old son Lewis.

550 Clarke was born on Saturday, 25 December 1790, to an entailed woman.

He died between August 1807 and December 1816. He was in his mid-teens to mid-twenties.

551 Little Mickey, later Mickey, Mick and Mike. He was yellow cast and born on Wednesday, 2 March 1791. His mother was Philley (No 376),⁵¹³ and it is very likely that Mulatto Peter (No 357) was his father. His siblings were Billy Keefe (b 1782), Joe Neal (b 1788), Kate Neal (b 1793), and Hetty Nelson (b 1798). He may have had three more sisters and half-sisters: Polly Neal (b 1784), Franky Neale (b 1786) and Frances Neal (b 1796).

His mother and Mulatto Peter were domestics although Philley also worked in the field at times, as did his elder brother, Billy Keefe. His mother probably became a domestic again when the Williams brothers were managing the estate. Mick certainly was 'a little boy in the house' during the time Joe Stanley

⁵¹¹ PP, AB 47 Archbald and Williamson's (& Hope's) a/c

⁵¹² PP, LB 14: JPP, Bristol, to James Williams, Nevis, 12 November 1798

⁵¹³ PP, Dom Box P: JW Stanley to JF Pinney, 27 December 1805

managed Mountravers.⁵¹⁴ That a 14-year-old would be called a 'little boy' seems insulting but perhaps he was very small for his age.

Mulatto Peter died in January 1800, Mickey's elder brother Billy Keefe between 1807 and 1816, his mother in 1816/7 and Mike between July 1817 and February 1822. He was at least 26, at the most thirty years old.

552 Prince was black and born on Saturday, 24 September 1791, to an entailed woman. He became a blacksmith.⁵¹⁵

Prince was alive on 1 August 1834.

553, 554 and 555 Domingo, later probably **Domingo Williamson or Domingo Bailey**, and her children **Azariah** and **Patty**. A sambo born on Monday, 4 April 1791, she was Sarah Fisher's (No 488) fifth child and, most likely, the daughter of Siah Parris – a mulatto domestic servant who worked on neighbouring Parris's Estate. JPP reserved for himself her mother, a domestic and later a midwife, together with Domingo and her brothers and sisters, the mulattoes Tom (b 1781), Patty (b 1783), Frank (b 1784), and John (b 1788) and the mesitze or sambos Josiah (b 1795), Mary (b 1797) and James (b 1799). James was sold by mistake to Huggins, along with the plantation, while from March 1808 Domingo and the rest of her family were hired to Clarke's Estate and briefly also to Mr Mills's.

Aged 17, Domingo was appraised at S£75, two years later this had risen by a third to S£100. Her brothers Frank's and Tom's values had increased even more sharply than hers while Domingo's had grown more than her mother's or other siblings' who possessed skills. This may well have been due to the fact that at the second appraisal Domingo was pregnant – now that the slave trade had been abolished, females, particularly field hands, were more valuable, and Domingo was 'a good field negro'. Of Sarah Fisher's children, she was the only one who was not trained in a trade.

Although a sambo, as a field hand her choice of partners was more restricted than that of a coloured domestic, and the father of her children almost certainly was a black man; her children Azariah (b 1810)⁵¹⁶ and Patty (b 1818 or 1819)⁵¹⁷ were black. By the mid-1820s both were part of the group of reserved Pinney people, replacing others who had died in the meantime.⁵¹⁸

Her daughter was, presumably, named after Domingo's elder sister Patty who was living with the cooper Billey Jones and their children in Charlestown. Although originally Patty and her children were not rented to Clarke's, two of her children, William and Fanny Jones, came to work on Clarke's; he as a cooper, she as a domestic. Domingo's younger sister Mary also worked in the house, as did her brother Frank, while Tom and Josiah were coopers and their mother Sarah Fisher a midwife. Only Domingo still worked in the

⁵¹⁴ PP, Dom Box P: JW Stanley to JF Pinney, 27 December 1805

⁵¹⁵ ECSCRN, CR 1814-1817 ff761-74

⁵¹⁶ Domingo's son Azariah was not included in the 1811 list of JPP's reserved people although it appears that he should have been: 'In the list sent me by Mr S Laurence I find the names of two children vizt. Azariah, the son of Domingo, valued at S£32 and Sally the daughter of Hetty, valued at S£20 - of these children their mothers must have been delivered before the 7th March 1811, as they were visibly with child the beginning of the year 1810.' (PP, LB 24: JPP to JH Clarke, 11 July 1814; also LB 24: JPP to Sam Laurence, 8 March 1814)

⁵¹⁷ For some reason Patty was not recorded in 1822 among the children born between 1817 and 1822. However, in an internal list produced at Clarke's Estate in the mid-1820s she was noted as being 'reserved' and she appeared on the 1828 Clarke's list (PP, Dom Box T3, and UKNA, T 71/365 and 367).

⁵¹⁸ Azariah and Patty replaced Old Sue, Frank Saunders, Richen's Quasheba, Fido, or Kitty.

field, in the Number 1 Gang, while her son Azariah, then in his mid-teens, was in the Number 2 Gang and her seven-year-old daughter Patty in the 'sheepmeatgang'. Mother and son were entitled to the usual adult allowance of six pints piled and three herrings; Patty got three pints piled and three herrings. Domingo had the women's allowance of cloth, five yards of bamboo and five yards of brown, while her son had four and Patty probably two yards of each material.

On 27 January 1828 Patty was baptised⁵¹⁹ and Domingo in the following month, on 24 February.⁵²⁰ She, or the child's father, chose St Thomas Lowland church; most other members of her family were baptised, married or buried in the church in Charlestown, St Paul's.⁵²¹ Her brother Tom Fisher was buried there when he died in May 1832.

Nothing more is known about Domingo's children Azariah and Patty. In their mid-twenties and mid-teens, both were alive in August 1834, as was Domingo's mother, Sarah Fisher, and her brother Frank Fisher. Her brother James probably died in 1840, while her sister Mary was alive in 1841 and lived with her family in Charlestown. Her brother Josiah also moved to Charlestown where he died in 1857.

It is very likely that Domingo married and left Clarke's Estate. She may have moved to Cotton Ground and was then buried as Domingo Bailey on 21 January 1856. Domingo was then 64, this woman's age was estimated at 60. Equally well she may have moved to Charlestown, where she could have been buried as Domingo Williamson on 14 May 1862. She was 71 years old; this woman's age was given as 72 years.⁵²²

556 Johntong's Hetty, later Hetty and Hetty Salmon.⁵²³ The first known child of Johntong, she was 'yellow cast' and born on Monday, 29 August 1791. Her mother was pregnant twice more – the children died young – and it is likely that she then had two boys, the twins James and Charles Peaden. Their father, the mulatto James Peaden (No 388), may also have been Hetty's father. The son of a black woman, Bridget (No 225) and JPP's white servant Tom Peaden, James Peaden was a carpenter. In 1800, a few months after the twins were born and when Hetty was nine years old, James Peaden was ill-treated by the manager, James Williams, and he escaped off the island. Many years later the twins also freed themselves and left Nevis. By then Hetty's mother had died.

Hetty Salmon died on 16 December 1823, aged 32. She may well have died in childbirth.

557 Lewis Williams, a mulatto, was born on Tuesday, 15 November 1791, to a purchased woman. He was the eldest child of Jenetta (No 485) and James Williams. When he was born, his father was overseer but became the manager before Lewis's brother Henry Williams (b 1796) was born. The boys had a sister, Nancy Williams (b 1798). Their father died when Lewis was 11 years old and left N£50 for each of them but they probably never received the money; after his death JPP charged over N£1,200 against Williams's account - money he considered their father had squandered.

⁵¹⁹ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 63

⁵²⁰ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 92

⁵²¹ Siah Parris, there the father of Domingo and some of her siblings, had been buried there in 1812; her niece Anne (sister Mary's daughter) was baptised and later buried there, as were her nephews Joseph (her brother Frank's son with Hetty), Charles and Frederick Jones (her sister Patty's sons with Billey Jones). Her brother James chose the same church for his baptism and marriage and her sister Mary for her marriage.

⁵²² NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 and St Paul's Burials 1844-1965 No 1218

⁵²³ When Mountravers was sold, Hetty was wrongly listed above Philley's Hetty as Hetty Nelson. In 1816 she was recorded simply as Hetty and in 1817 as Hetty Salmon. Her date of birth was erroneously given as 29 August 1781 instead of 29 August 1791 (UKNA, T 71/364).

Although at one point JPP wanted his manager to sell Lewis and his siblings, to punish their mother, the boys were, after all, sold to Huggins. Their sister Nancy, however, was among JPP's reserved people. In 1821 she was sold to and then freed by a free black woman. Two years later his brother Henry absconded, aged 27, and Lewis must have considered freeing himself, too. It may have been his relationship with Kitsey Greathead that kept him on the plantation; in May 1826 she had a son called Henry Williams. Almost certainly this boy was Lewis's child. She had two more sons before she married the father of her third son. Her middle boy, John Greathead (No 737), may also have been Lewis Williams's.

His sister acquired people for whom she received compensation and may then have worked again on Peter Thomas Huggins's plantation. Their mother was alive in August 1834.

Lewis Williams remained on 'Penney Estate' until his death. Said to have been 57 years old (he was 54), he was buried on 3 March 1846 in St Thomas Lowland.⁵²⁴

558 George Scarborough was a mestize and born on Sunday, 18 September 1792. His mother probably was Sally Peaden (No 422); his sister Mary Scarborough (b 1803).

Aged 41, George Scarborough was alive on 1 August 1834.

It is possible that he was the George who was baptised on 25 October 1835. He was a carter on Pinney's.⁵²⁵ A man called George Scarborough then married Dinnah Clarke on 17 April 1838 but, as this man would have been in his mid-forties, it is more likely that it was George from Scarborough's plantation, who got married. He was in his mid-thirties. Bride and groom were apprentice labourers but Dinnah, although she had the surname Clarke, had not lived on Clarke's Estate. Both made their marks, while their witness, William Sampson, signed the register.⁵²⁶

In later life this, or the other George Scarborough, acquired property in St Thomas Lowland; in the 1850s one of his neighbours was Azariah Pinney (No 591).⁵²⁷

559 Hannah's Diana was black and born on Friday, 7 December 1792. Her mother was an African woman from the Windward Coast, Hannah (No 341). Diana's sister Polly (b 1787) was, like their mother, a field labourer and Diana probably also worked in the field.

Hannah's Diana died on 3 November 1823. She was thirty years old. Given her age, she may well have died in childbirth.

560 Bessy's Joe was born on Sunday, 16 December 1792. His mother was the field worker Bessy Richens (No 510). He had an elder and a younger sister, Jenny (b 1787) and Mussey (b 1795). It is likely that Joe, like his sisters, was 'black of yellow cast'.

⁵²⁴ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 387

⁵²⁵ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873 Unnumbered

⁵²⁶ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965

⁵²⁷ ECSCRN, CR 1847-1858 ff506-07

When he was six and a half years old, their mother died and he may also have been ill but recovered. It is likely that Peggy Richens, the woman who probably was the children's grandmother, then looked after Joe and his sisters.

Joe died between August 1807 and December 1816. He was at least in his mid-teens, at the most in his mid-twenties.

561 Polly Herbert, later also Polly Pinney. She was black and born on Thursday, 29 August 1793. Her mother was a purchased woman, the field hand Pereen (No 407). In the 1770s she had been bought at auction, together with several other people who had previously belonged to Edward Herbert – among them a woman called Polly Herbert (No 404). Almost certainly she was this child's grandmother. She died around the time this child was born.

Polly Herbert had a younger sister, Sally (b 1806), while Phoebe (b 1802), most likely, was another sister of hers and Jemmy (b 1800) a brother. In addition, if the first Polly Herbert had been her grandmother, she would have had an uncle called Billy Herbert, who was a gang leader, and another called Almond, a mason. Both men died before 1822.

Polly Herbert probably had a daughter, Susanna, who was born in April 1815, and a son called Samuel (b October 1824). Samuel's father was Jack, a field slave, but the children almost certainly had different fathers: Samuel was baptised in the Methodist Chapel in May 1825,⁵²⁸ Susanna in the church at St Thomas Lowland in March 1828,⁵²⁹ and on 24 October 1830 Polly Pinney herself was baptised, also in St Thomas Lowland church.⁵³⁰ The baptism of her son Samuel is the earliest baptism of any of the Mountravers people on record.

Polly Herbert died after January 1831 and before January 1834.⁵³¹ She was between 37 and 40 years old.⁵³² James Pinney, Samuel's father, remained on Mountravers and was buried on 7 November 1840 at the age of 45.⁵³³

562 Nanno, later Nanno Pinney, was black and born on Saturday, 2 November 1793, to a purchased woman. Her mother may have been the Ebbo woman Myrtilia (No 293), or the Creoles Leah (No 480) or Patty (No 432). Myrtilia died a couple of years after Nanno's birth, Leah in 1823 and only Patty was alive in 1834.

Nanno's son Wiltshire was born on 5 December 1820. The boy's father was Edward. He was also black and, born between 1796 and 1801, a few years younger than Nanno.⁵³⁴ Edward lived on Clarke's, having previously been on Oliver's/Stewart's Estate. In the mid-1820s he worked in the great gang but was also employed as a 'boiler occasionally, driver and watchman, and foreman'. However, his health seems to have deteriorated quickly and his main duty became that of a watchman.

⁵²⁸ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 4

⁵²⁹ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873

⁵³⁰ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 No 229

⁵³¹ UKNA, T 71/369

⁵³² During that time Polly Herbert's free namesake also died. Mary Herbert was buried in November 1832, aged 32 (NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1825-1837 No 486).

⁵³³ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957

⁵³⁴ UKNA, T 71/364 and 367

When Edward was baptised on 12 October 1828, his name was recorded as Edward Clarke,⁵³⁵ but when their son Wiltshire was baptised in April 1834, his name was noted as Ned Pinney and their son's either mis-heard, or mis-recorded as Shire.⁵³⁶ Both father and son were baptised in the Methodist Chapel in Charlestown.

Four months after Wiltshire's baptism, on 23 August 1834 Nanno married an apprentice labourer from Scarborough's Estate, Glasgow. He was a watchman⁵³⁷ and a couple of years older than her. Nanno's husband already had an eleven-year-old child with an older woman from Mountravers, Catherine Pinney (No 448).

It is not known when Nanno died.

563 Philley's Kate, later Katy or Kate Neal, was yellow cast and was born on Monday, 11 November 1793, to a purchased woman. Her mother, Philley (No 376), was a domestic and, at times, a field worker. Her father almost certainly was the domestic Mulatto Peter (No 357). She had three brothers and a sister: Billy Keefe (b 1782), Joe Neal (b 1788), Mickey (b 1791) and Hetty (b 1798). Another three girls were her sisters or half-sisters: Polly Neal (b 1784), Franky Neal (b 1786) and Frances Neal (b 1796).

Mulatto Peter died in January 1800, her brothers Billy Keefe and Mickey between 1807 and 1822, her mother in 1816/7 and Polly Neal in 1824. Joe died in 1825 after he had a child with a woman called Sophia Huggins. Kate Neal was also an aunt to her sister (or half-sister) Frances Neal's daughter Clarah who was born in 1819. This girl, her mother and the 40-year-old Kate Neal were alive on 1 August 1834.

564 Little Phibba, later Phibba Pinney, Phibba Sanders or Saunders. She was black and born on Thursday, 14 November 1793, to an entailed woman, Peter's Flora (No 231). Quakey (b 1777) and Azariah (b 1798) almost certainly were her brothers; as were Peter (b 1784), John Frederick (b 1787) and Charles (b 1801). Phibba was nine years old when her mother died. Charles also died around that time.

She was one of three Phibbas who were mixed up in the handover to Huggins: she and Old Phibba (No 212) belonged to the estate, and Phibba (No 628) to JPP. Straightening out their ownership caused a lengthy correspondence between JPP and Huggins.

Phibba had six children: An unnamed son, then Phido (b February 1820), George Sanders (b March 1824), Ritta Clarke (December 1830), Nick Sanders (September 1833), and an unnamed child that was baptised in 1838. They were Clarke Scarbro's children. He was a black Creole from Scarborough's Estate and about a year older than Phibba.⁵³⁸ He was a mason.

In April 1833, while she was four months pregnant with Nick, their older children were baptised. All were judged younger than their actual age: her daughter Phido was said to have 'about ten years' but was thirteen, George 'about eight years' but was nine and Ritta one when she was two years old. When Nick

⁵³⁵ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 358

⁵³⁶ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 No 1017

⁵³⁷ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Marriages 1828-1965

Glasgow's name was recorded as Glater and Nanno as Nanny. He was described as 'a watch' when his and Catherine Pinney's son William was baptised in 1835 (NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873).

⁵³⁸ UKNA, T 71/364

was baptised in November, he was already six and a half weeks old but his age was recorded as five. This pattern was very common. For instance a boy called Samuel from Clarke's Estate was baptised in December 1834 when he was about fourteen but his age at baptism was estimated at nine.⁵³⁹ These examples illustrate that the children born and raised during the difficult 1820s were smaller and developed more slowly, and also that parents did not keep track of their children's actual ages.

When the children's father was baptised, on 17 May 1835, his name was entered as Saunders rather than Scarbro.⁵⁴⁰ After slavery ended, had Clarke taken on a new family name – that of a previous owner perhaps - rather than that of the plantation from where he came? Or did he take on the name Sanders because he then worked on Clarke's Estate and would have ended up being called Clarke? However, both George and Nick were recorded with the surname 'Sanders' in the Mountravers plantation records and it is more likely that the answer lay on Phibba's side. There may possibly have been a connection with five people assigned in trust to JPP by John Williams Sanders: Picam, Fido, Phibba, George and one other [illegible].⁵⁴¹ It may be significant also that two of Phibba's children were called Phido and George – names that occurred among the Sanders people. They never came into Pinney's possession but remained with John Williams Sanders's wife Elizabeth and were intended to go to their son and heir Francis Williams Sanders. Meanwhile, whereas Phibba's daughter Phido had no second name, her daughter Ritta's was 'Clarke', which was the girl's father's first name. Among the Mountravers people at least one other instance occurred of a child bearing its father's first name as a middle name (Edwin George Smith).

By the time the couple's next child was baptised, on 13 May 1838, Phibba was known as Phibba Saunders.⁵⁴² She was in her mid-forties.

The couple remained on the plantation until Phibba's husband died. In his early sixties, Clarke Sanders was buried on 29 August 1855.⁵⁴³ Some time after his death, the widow moved to Haynes Village. Phibba Sanders was buried on 11 June 1873. She was aged 79; her age was given as 80.⁵⁴⁴

565 Barbai's Kate, Kate and Katey London, was born on Saturday, 1 February 1794. Her mother was the field worker Barbai (No 344); her father may, possibly, have been the sugar boiler London. She was Barbai's middle child and had an older and a younger sister, Flora (b 1787) and Betsey (b 1797), and an older and a younger brother, London (b 1785) and Adam (b 1806). London and Adam were black; Betsey, like Kate, was also yellow cast.

Her mother and her sister Flora died between 1807 and 1816, before Kate's first child was born in July 1817: Jane Brown, a yellow cast girl. Her next child, most likely, was James or Innes, born in April 1820, followed by Thomas, or Tom Brown, in May 1823. The older children were yellow cast, Thomas black. This might indicate that they had different fathers but, given that both Jane and Thomas held the same surname when they were baptised together in March 1828,⁵⁴⁵ it is likely that they had the same father. This may well have been Frank Brown. He was the father of Simon, a child born on Clarke's Estate in

⁵³⁹ UKNA, T 71/365 and 367 and NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835 Unnumbered

⁵⁴⁰ NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873 Unnumbered

⁵⁴¹ ECSCRN, CR 1769-1771 f442; also PP, Misc Vols 7 1783-1794 List of Deeds and Papers at Nevis No 7, August 1771

⁵⁴² NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1835-1873 Unnumbered

⁵⁴³ Clarke Sanders from Pinney's was said to have been aged 61, which meant he was born in 1793 or 1794 (NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 631). This was close to the age given in the 1817 slave register, which recorded him as having been born in 1791 or 1792.

⁵⁴⁴ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Burials 1827-1957 No 1144

⁵⁴⁵ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 Numbers 108 and 111

1826.⁵⁴⁶ Frank Brown may also have fathered two girls born in 1826: Betty Brown on Clarke's and Ann Browne on Mountravers.

In the 1820s Katey London lost three more members of her family: in September 1823 her brother London, in May 1825 her five-year-old son James/Innes, and in July 1829 her sister Betsey. Kate was alive on 1 August 1834, aged 40. She and her younger brother Adam were the only two of Barbai's five children who survived until slavery was abolished.

566 Mary Fog, also Forbes and Flogg, possibly also Mary Huggins. She was 'black of yellow cast' and born on Saturday, 1 March 1794, to an entailed woman.

She had two children: her daughter Nelly was born in April 1815 and her son David Smith in January 1818. Both children were black. They were baptised together in March 1828 whereas she was not baptised until 24 October 1830. When these baptisms were recorded, her unusual family name was misheard twice: once she was recorded as Mary Forbes and another time as Mary Flogg.⁵⁴⁷

Mary Fog and her children were alive on 1 August 1834.

It is possible that she lived in Main Street, Charlestown, and was buried on 10 January 1879 as Mary Huggins. She was two months short of turning 85, and this Mary Huggins was said to have been 85 years old.⁵⁴⁸

To read other chapters, please copy this link and paste it into your search engine:
<https://seis.bristol.ac.uk/~emceee/mountraversplantationcommunity.html>

February 2024

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⁵⁴⁶ Frank Brown and Bella Clarke's 7-year-old son Simon was baptised on 25 December 1834. They were on Pinney's (NHCS, Methodist Baptismal Records 1825-1835). Simon was listed as black, aged 2, in 1828 (UKNA, T 71/367).

⁵⁴⁷ NHCS, St Thomas Lowland Baptisms 1827-1873 Numbers 109, 110 and 228

⁵⁴⁸ NHCS, St Paul's Burials 1844-1954 No 2027

However, there was also Mary Huggins, a free person of colour who lived in Charlestown and was of similar age to Mary Fog. That woman's son Edward had been baptised in March 1825 (NHCS, St Paul's Baptisms 1824-1835 No 82).