



1988

# The Evolution of Jamaican Architecture 1494 to 1838

Patricia Elaine Green  
*University of Pennsylvania*

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# The Evolution of Jamaican Architecture 1494 to 1838

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THE EVOLUTION OF JAMAICAN ARCHITECTURE  
1494 TO 1838

Patricia Elaine Green

A THESIS

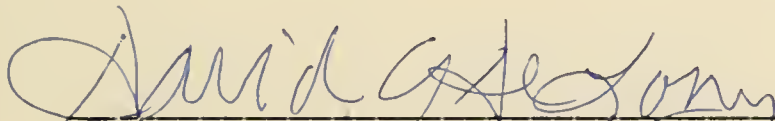
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The Graduate Program in Historic Preservation

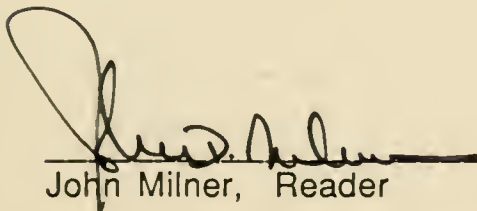
Presented to the faculties of the University of Pennsylvania in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

1988



David G. De Long, Advisor and Graduate Group Chairman



John Milner, Reader

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## PREFACE

The history of Jamaican buildings has been presented under a number of different disciplines, and whether these be architecture, archaeology, anthropology, folk-life, or geography, there is consensus that these buildings are worthy of interpretation and preservation. I recognize that in order to effectively undertake any work to preserve the architectural heritage on the island, an architectural interpretation of this history of building is essential. In this thesis I am trying to offer a directional approach to understanding Jamaican buildings, and to establish this approach within an architectural framework.

My research on the evolution of architecture in Jamaica has indicated four major patterns of development which coincide with the socio-economic and political situation, and are influenced by climatic factors. I shall list them here without further elaboration, indicating the time periods within which they roughly fall: first, from the time of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1494 until 1838, the effective date of Emancipation; second, 1838 until 1907; third, from 1907 to 1951; last, from 1951 to the present date, which is largely reflected in the current architectural practice on the island. Presenting my findings is a task far beyond the scope of any thesis, so I intend briefly to offer here the principles for recognizing the architecture of the first stage of the evolution. In so doing, I hope to develop a framework for future elaboration of the first segment, and also for the entire pattern of development.



Where possible, I have tried to use the comparative method where possible in elaborating on architectural design preferences, so as to explain why certain designs were chosen over others. Colbeck Castle which is discussed under chapter two, appears as an enigma in the wider context of Georgian plantation mansions discussed under chapter three. The historical descriptions of travellers of the period have proved invaluable, and as I uncover more material I find that the pieces are systematically fitting together. In writing this thesis, I feel that I had sufficient evidence to suggest that a "style" of architecture had developed by the beginning of the nineteenth century, and this is discussed under chapter five. Lastly, I also devised a method of interpretation which I hope will serve as a way of understanding the common landscape of Jamaica, and in particular how the Jamaica-Georgian, as discussed in chapter five, is to be seen in it. As this is an on-going study, there will inevitably be elaboration or amendment of some portions of this work.

It is important for the reader to be aware that certain terms which were in common usage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are considered pejorative today. I have tried to avoid such terms, however this is always not possible, and on the occasions when they appear outside of quotations, they have inverted commas. These include 'Negro', 'natives' and so forth. In using the term "Jamaica-Georgian" as the name for the emergent style discussed under chapter five, I am building on work begun earlier, mainly by the late architects Tom Concannon and Bill Hodges.

I wish to thank the owners of the properties, as well as the entire staff of the Institute of Jamaica, the National Library of Jamaica, Government Archives, and the Public Records Office in Jamaica for the material they have allowed me to handle and photograph. I should add that writing this thesis





outside of Jamaica has had its anxious moments in my attempts to substantiate some piece of information which I know exists. I have however, been very fortunate in finding sufficient material including illustrations here in the United States to allow me to undertake this thesis, and for this I wish to thank here the librarians, curators and staff of the following institutions; Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Free Library of Philadelphia; Library Company of Philadelphia; Library of Congress, Washington; Universities: Drexel, Philadelphia; Howard, Washington; Temple, Philadelphia including the Charles Blockson Memorial Library; and the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

All would not have been possible without the help and support of my family, Marguerite Curtin at the Jamaica National Heritage Trust, relatives and friends too numerous to mention, and my adviser Dr. David De Long.

Pat Green

April, 1988



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## INTRODUCTION

### WITH THE ARRIVAL OF COLUMBUS

The Caribbean island of Jamaica was one of the stops made by Christopher Columbus on his second voyage to the New World. On May 5, 1494,<sup>1</sup> he first stopped at the place now called Discovery Bay in the parish of St. Ann on the north coast. Columbus returned to Jamaica in 1503, and after one of his caravels<sup>2</sup> was shipwrecked in the vicinity of his first visit, he landed and spent a year there. Some of the Columbus Letters to Queen Isabel and King Ferdinand of Spain which are to be found in collections, were written from Jamaica.<sup>3</sup> The island fell under the protection of the Spanish crown, and on the death of Columbus, passed as proprietary rights to his family until 1655, when Jamaica was captured by the English in an expedition led by General Robert Venables and General William Penn.<sup>4</sup> The island (Fig. 1) thereafter became established as an English colony, and remained so until the nation gained its Independence in 1962.

Jamaica immediately became an important colony from the start of European settlement on the island. The first Spanish capital of Jamaica was the town of Sevilla Nueva on the north coast, which gained notoriety from the time of its founding around 1509.<sup>5</sup> This site proved uninhabitable, and was abandoned. The capital was relocated inland to St. Jago de la Vega around 1534. Spanish Town, as it is currently called, served as the capital of Jamaica





until 1872, and is still inhabited today. When the Spaniards realized that there was no gold or precious metals worthy of their attention, they established plantations across the island. These supplied food, produce, livestock and raw materials to Spanish settlements on the other islands where they were operating mines, and also on occasions to Spain. Chief among the export items were indigo and cotton. The Spaniards introduced sugar to the island and its cultivation became one of the major activities of the planters.

The Spanish settlements were serviced by the Arawak Indians, the aboriginal people <sup>6</sup> of Jamaica whom Columbus had encountered when he first landed. The Arawaks were enslaved by the settlers, and forced to work on the plantations as well as to continue to grow the staple food for domestic consumption. It was the Spanish practice to annex their settlements to an Indian village in order to maintain direct control of the Indians. The new site for the capital, Spanish Town, had been placed adjacent to the area believed to be the largest Arawak settlement on the island. <sup>7</sup> By 1611, the Indian population which had numbered about sixty thousand<sup>8</sup> at the time of the early Spanish settlements, had been reduced to approximately seventy-four.<sup>9</sup> Many Arawaks died from imported diseases brought by the colonists, or the cruel conditions inflicted on them under Spanish slavery. Others committed suicide to escape the harsh treatment.

Spain initiated the transportation of the peoples of Africa as slaves to the West Indies by decree of the King on September 3, 1501.<sup>10</sup> The Africans were brought into the colonies to take the place of the Indians as slave labour.<sup>11</sup> The mortality rate among the Africans was as high as that of the Indians, but their numbers were maintained and increased by continued importation from Africa.<sup>12</sup> The practice of slavery and the importation of Africans were



maintained by the English when they captured the island from the Spaniards. The African slave trading lasted until 1807 when it was abolished by Britain. In 1834, the British declared Emancipation, after which the Chinese and Indians were brought into the country to work as indentured labourers. The settlements and buildings of these later arrivals will not be included here, as their appearance falls outside the time frame of this thesis.

Jamaica became the English stronghold in the Caribbean. Immediately on its capture from the Spaniards, the English enacted incentives to encourage settlement on the island.<sup>13</sup> Jamaica was viewed as an attractive prospect to some of the planters on the other islands because it was the largest of the English possessions in the Caribbean. Some relocated and took out larger land patents<sup>14</sup> than they had previously been able to do. Large plantations and estates (Fig. 2) were quickly laid out.

The English continued to use Spanish Town as the administrative capital of Jamaica. The town of Port Royal became famous as the headquarters of the buccaneers who plundered the ships on the seas under the British flag, and took refuge in the town which was developed around the island's natural deep-water harbour on the south coast. By the 1670s, Port Royal was labeled one of the wickedest and wealthiest cities in the New World,<sup>15</sup> and assumed the role of the mercantile capital of the island. In 1692 an earthquake devastated the island, causing at least half of the town of Port Royal to sink into the sea.

This event prompted the layout of the town of Kingston on the other side of the harbour. The mercantile centre was eventually transferred to Kingston after 1702, the year in which a fire destroyed the newly re-built town of



Port Royal.<sup>16</sup> By 1872, the capital of Jamaica was officially transferred to Kingston, and this city continues to operate as such.

Jamaica is situated along in one of the earthquake belts of the world, the fault line which extends across Mexico and into the Caribbean. There have been a number of major earthquakes recorded under this period of study. In addition, the island is subject to numerous tropical storms which occasionally develop into hurricanes. These destructive forces of nature have resulted in much damage to the agrarian economy of the island, and loss of life and property. Legislation shows that certain dates were enacted to be perpetual days of mourning in commemoration of some of these events.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore the wars which were taking place between the European nations within the Caribbean also had serious effects on the economy, and life in general on the island.<sup>18</sup>

The island is situated at about 18° North of the Equator, in the belt of the Tropic of Cancer. It has an area of approximately 44,000 square miles, extending to about 144 miles at its longest point, by about 44 miles at its widest. A mountain range creates a central spine across the island rising at its highest point to about 7,402 feet at the Blue Mountain peak near the eastern edge.

Average temperatures on the island range from the high to the low eighties in degrees Fahrenheit all year round, with a percentage humidity in the eighties. The physical oppression which would result from living in such humidities is lessened by the constant movement of the North-East Trade winds, and breezes generated by convection currents between the land and sea mass which also help to moderate the temperatures, most times bringing with it afternoon showers. Whereas earthquakes are unpredictable, there is a



predictable hurricane season between August and October, during which the region is on hurricane alert. Jamaica is large enough to develop a certain amount of regionalism, brought about by the micro-climates within certain pockets in the northern areas or the southern. On the other hand, it is small enough that any major weather pattern would affect the entire island. When an earthquake or hurricane strikes, the entire island is affected.

The island's geology constitutes a limestone base, within which are deep pockets of alluvial clay soils. An average annual rainfall of about eighty inches helps to make the land very lush, and the high fertility of the soil makes it ideally suited to agriculture. Limestone has always supplied the necessary material for lime and masonry construction on the island. The word "Jamaica" is of Arawak derivation, from the words for "land of wood and water". This adds testimony to the number of rivers that traverse the island especially at the time of the arrival of Columbus when there was a plentiful stock of forest with trees suitable for construction and furniture making. These particular factors were packaged as some of the favourable conditions to encourage European settlement.<sup>19</sup>

The early inhabitants of the island, the Arawak Indians, settled mainly in the interior of the island along the banks of the rivers. These were the same group of Indians to be found in Jamaica, Hispanola, and the other islands of the Greater Antilles. When Columbus first encountered these people he described their dwellings as sometimes of, "a large size, constructed in the shape of a tent, and each collection of them appeared like a camp, without any order of streets, but scattered here and there; the interiors were found very clean and neat, well furnished and set in order; they were all built of fine palm branches."<sup>20</sup> The dwellings of the chief, or cacique, possessed an area for





large gatherings. This dwelling was no doubt elaborate. In the journal of the first voyage of Columbus, it is chronicled that a visit was made to an Arawak village, and that Columbus was conducted to an harbour near the chief's house, where the party was attended by more than a thousand Indians.<sup>21</sup>

I must add here that it is often stated on the island that the Arawaks lived in circular huts, however I have not been able to verify this with primary documentation. I suspect that this has come about from the illustrations of these dwellings which were done at least a century after the arrival of Columbus, and by that time most of the Indians had been killed. Bartolomé de Las Casas, a member of the Dominican Order, had emphasized that he was the only one qualified to write about the Indians as he had lived among them since 1500, and witnessed the destruction of the society, whereas those who were writing, had not. It is possible that the same had occurred with the illustrations depicting settlement and housing.

The Africans who were imported as Spanish slaves into the island lived away from the Spaniards in separate villages.<sup>22</sup> They were forced to be self-sufficient, in addition to undertaking the major tasks of construction and agriculture required of them by the Spaniards. By the seventeenth century however, two distinct groups of Africans are recorded, those who were free, "negros libres, or horros," and those enslaved, "esclavos".<sup>23</sup> With the arrival of the English, the Spaniards set their slaves free and then fled the country.

Those slaves took refuge in the mountains, and established settlements in the interior. The group came to be called "Maroons". Many of the local skirmishes which required contingents of British soldiers to be constantly stationed on the island were carried out by this group who continued to wage wars against the British throughout and until the eighteenth century.<sup>24</sup>



The numbers Maroons were increased by runaway slaves who would flee into the interior to join them. Peace treaties were eventually signed between the Maroons and the British thus allowing the Maroons the right to establish their own forms of self-government within the island.

Hans Sloane, the naturalist and physician who published his description of the natural history of Jamaica around 1702, and who collected about eight hundred plant species on the island with which he helped to establish the British Museum, commented on the fruit -trees left by the Spaniards. I suspect that when he wrote the following, referring to Africans who "submitted peaceably", he was no doubt describing the group of freed persons under the Spanish occupation. I believe that the following extract raises a number of issues: whether there were still Indians on the island who had survived beyond the English conquest ; whether there were there free Africans and Indians with plantations operating within the society from the outset of the English settlement on the island; and finally, how much of the local knowledge of Jamaican traditions, and of particular interest here construction techniques, <sup>25</sup> did the Indians pass on to the Africans and vice versa.

...They (Spaniards) had brought many Fruit-Trees from the Main-Continent (Africa), where they are Masters, and suffer no other Europeans to come; which throve wonderfully, and now grow as it were sponte: These they made use of for Food; Physic, etc. And were forc'd to leave with their Habitations, to the English, and the skill of using them remain'd with the Blacks and Indians, many of whom came, upon a proclamation that they should be Free, submitted peaceably and lived with the English after the Spaniards had destroyed it. There were among these, several which made



small plantations of their own wherein they took care to preserve and propagate such vegetables as grew in their own countries, to use as they saw occasion:<sup>26</sup>

As stated earlier, the Spaniards had settled within close proximity to the Arawak villages. However in order to maintain vigilance of the seas they also developed a number of coastal towns. By 1501, the crown had begun to make decrees about settlement in the Americas.<sup>27</sup> Of importance is the decree settlers should not live outside of the towns or the "villas"<sup>28</sup> which were founded. The Spaniards however, were allowed to have on their plantations a hut or small house in which to stop over when they visited.<sup>29</sup> Spanish town-planning and construction were also governed by ordinance of the King.<sup>30</sup> After the lots were assigned in the town, each settler was required to set up his tent on his lot if he had one, and those who owned none were "to build huts of such materials as are available, wherever they can be collected".<sup>31</sup> I suspect that in this way throughout the period of Spanish occupation, there was the transferral of construction technology taking place between Arawaks and Africans and Spaniards.

Although the Jamaican Spanish villas were established prior to the 1538 ordinance, and the Columbus family had established and operated Jamaica avoiding much legislation from the crown,<sup>32</sup> it is likely that tents were used by new settlers until houses were erected in the villas of New Seville and later at St Jago de la Vega. Furthermore, when permanent buildings began, they were made from local materials and varied in construction from very rudimentary framed mud buildings to more elaborate brick structures.<sup>33</sup> It appears that stone was used mainly for the religious buildings.



Sloane also mentions the wooden houses of the Spaniards at Port Royal,<sup>34</sup> indicating that these had survived almost fifty years after the Spaniards were forced to flee the island. In his history book published in 1774, Long described how cool the Spanish buildings were, and that they survived the earthquakes up to the time of his writing. He wrote that they were "excellently well contrived to answer these different purposes; with the further merit, that the materials of which they are built were cautiously prepared in such a manner as to become extremely durable".<sup>35</sup>

It is not evident today exactly which structures dating back to the Spanish period of construction on the island are still intact. Archaeological excavations at the site of New Seville and the Old Kings House in Spanish Town, areas of known Spanish occupation, have unearthed foundations and remains of parts of Spanish buildings. It is suspected however that some of the older buildings in Spanish Town may be Spanish in origin with English alterations as Long had stated,<sup>36</sup> and this is yet to be verified on the island. For the purposes of this exercise in defining the evolution of the Jamaican architecture, until there is more precise evidence of Spanish domestic architecture, then the Spanish influence as a stylistic mode will have to be excluded from this thesis.

One significant piece of documentary given by Long on the Spanish buildings in Jamaica is that "the English in general have copied the iconography of the Spanish houses with great uniformity".<sup>37</sup> It should be noted that this was only one of the types of Spanish construction (Fig. 3) which Long had recorded, showing a rectangular unit divided into three with the centre room being used as a hall and bed-chambers at each end, to which the English added to make them "more roomy and commodious".<sup>38</sup>





This plan reflected the fundamental type of most of the domestic buildings across the island. This is not to say however, that the Spaniards have contributed the plan to the island's architectural heritage. What is noteworthy here is how this basic plan appeared in documentation for the houses found across the social and ethnic divisions including the structures erected in a predominantly English design mode. As the buildings of the European designs were generally built of more permanent materials, and have been more widely documented, this thesis will focus on the buildings in this group found in the towns and rural areas across the island.

It is to be remembered however, that as settlement increased and people became more familiar with the land and climate, they began to rearrange their settlement patterns and modify their building designs in accordance with the environmental factors. It is in the evidence of the different groups of people from very diverse backgrounds encapsulated in the Jamaican environment and evolving a "Jamaican" culture over time, which has helped to generate this study of how the architecture evolved alongside this culture.

Because of the historical development of Jamaica, any examination of its architecture would have to be carried out within its historic socio-economic and political framework as touched on above. Furthermore, the geographic situation and climatic conditions are issues which should also be considered. In the chapters below, I hope to show how one type of construction may have had an impact on another in the formulation of an appropriate cultural architectural product.



Fig. 1 Map of Jamaica.  
 source: Nugent, Journal.



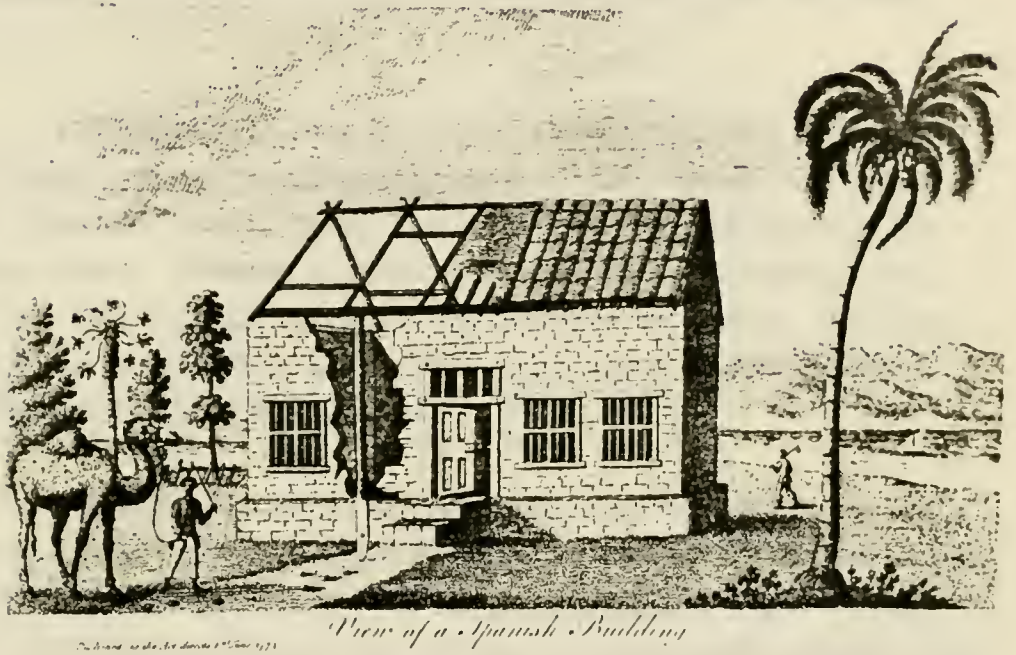


Fig. 2 Detail of 1684 map of Jamaica.  
source: Dunn, Sugar and slaves.





Fig. 3 1770 lithograph, 'View of a Spanish Building'.  
source: Long, History of Jamaica.







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1. The first contact is not certain, but Columbus did record that the island was the most beautiful of all he had seen. He then proceeded to another point on the north coast, *Puerto Bueno*, now called Rio Bueno, and landed on May 6th. See Francisco Morales Padron, Jamaica Española (Sevilla : Publicaciones de la Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1952), p. 5.

2. Described as the historic term for a kind of light ship in the The Pocket Oxford Dictionary of current English by F.G.Fowler and H.W.Fowler, (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972). This is the usual reference given to the Columbus vessels. There is currently an archaeological expedition taking place on the north coast of Jamaica to find and raise the caravel. It is hoped that this will be completed by 1992 to form a part of the the quincentenary celebrations of the Columbus voyages.

3. The Columbus letters included that giving his explanations of the voyages to Queen Isabel and King Ferdinand, as well as his pleads for rights due to him by the crown. See Padron, Jamaica Española, pp. 15-6; also Eric Williams, Documents of West Indian History, from the Spanish discovery to the British conquest of Jamaica. Vol. I, 1492-1655 (Trinidad: PNM Publishing Co., Ltd., 1963), pp. 10-2.

4. The Generals captured the island under the rule of Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protectorate of England. Penn was the father of the William Penn who became proprietor of Pennsylvania, U.S.A. The favour which was owed to the son stemmed from obligations of King Charles, then ruler of England to General Penn.



5. Rev. George Wilson Bridges, Annals of Jamaica. (London, 1828), p. 160, gives a florid description of the city formerly called Sevilla d'oro.
6. The Arawak Indians are generally referred to as the Aborigines of Jamaica. The wider definition of *Aboriginal* "indigenous, existing in a land at dawn of history or arrival of colonists; ...Aborigines: aboriginal inhabitants" applies here, as taken from The Pocket Oxford Dictionary.
7. Archaeological excavations on the island have unearthed much from Arawak middens, that is rubbish pits, in the locality. There are on-going digs and the site of the Arawak Museum is located just outside of Spanish Town.
8. Bryan Edwards, the history, civil and commercial, of the British West Indies with a continuum to the present time (London: T. Miller, 1819; reprint, AMS Press, Inc.: New York, 1966), 1:2, 1 p. 169.
9. Padron, Jamaica Española, pp. 60-1, the population was recorded by a visitor in 1611 as having a total of 1,510 comprising: 558 slaves (esclavos), whom Padron supposed to have been Africans; 523 Spaniards and Portugueses (españoles); 173 children (niños); 107 Blacks (negros); 75 visitors (forasteros); and 74 Indians (indios).
10. Eric Williams, From Columbus to Castro, the history of the Caribbean 1492-1969 (London: André Deutsch, 1970), p. 41.
11. Williams, Documents of West Indian History, pp. 142-3.



12. Padron, Jamaica Española, p. 55, & 268. The Spanish crown did not allow the importation of Africans on a large scale. At first there were 5,000 Africans to serve the colonies and 700 were sent to Jamaica, and this number was kept constant with additional supplies.

13. Williams, Documents of West Indian History, pp. 290-1, Proclamation of Oliver Cromwell, Protector of England, 1655.

14. After the surveyor had divided up the island for distribution, "Patents" or land grants were distributed "of public right and justice" by the ruling head of England, not only to the persons involved in the expedition, but also to "divers persons, merchants, and others heretofore conversant in plantations, and the trade of the like nature", *ibid.* See also James A. Williamson, Caribbee Islands under the Proprietary Patents (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), pp. 38-47 which dealt with the British practise on the islands settled earlier.

The practice of granting land patents continued during the period of colonization to encourage settlement. Patentees (grantees) were required to enter into deed agreement, and take possession of the land within a specific time period. An Act for registering Deeds and Patents on the island was instituted in 1681, 33 Charles II. c.12. See Hon. C. Ribton Curran, Statutes and Laws of the island of Jamaica: revised ed., Vol. 1. Charles II to William IV. A.D. 1681 to 1836, (Jamaica: Government Printing Establishment, 1889).

15. "The town of Port Royal, being as it were the Store House or treasury of the West Indies, is always like a continual Mart or Fair, where all sorts of choice Merchandises are daily imported, not only to furnish the Island, but vast quantities are thence again transported to supply the Spaniards, Indians, and other Nations, who in exchange return us bars and cakes of Gold,



wedges and pigs of Silver, . . ." account of Francis Hanson, 1682, from first printed edition of "Laws of Jamaica"; Frank Cundall, Historic Jamaica, (London: for the Institute of Jamaica, 1915; reprint, New York and London: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1971), p. 51.

Bridges, Annals of Jamaica, p. 271, wrote that "the stream of wealth had saturated the island; and its inhabitants were now enabled to maintain its government without the pecuniary assistance of the parent state".

16. Wilma Williams, "Early Kingston", Jamaica Journal 5:2-3 (Jun., Sep., 1971): pp. 3-8.

17. Edwards (1966), History of the West Indies, 1:2,3 pp. 232-6, legislature enacted to make the following days a perpetual anniversary fast in commemoration of, earthquake of 1692 on June 7th., hurricanes of 1712 and 1722 both occurring August 28th. In the eighth decade of the eighteenth century, Jamaica experienced five major hurricanes in 1780, 1781, 1784, 1785, and 1786. I believe that the architectural response over the years has been an attempt to more firmly address such climatic issues. These disasters of the 1780s no doubt served to set the fourth current under discussion, in motion as discussed in chapter five.

18. Maria Nugent, Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805, ed. Philip Wright (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1966) p. 225, wrote on Mar., 31st, 1805, during a French attack "Not a creature have I seen since the morning, but have walked in the piazza the whole day, with a glass in my hand, looking continually to the sea for the enemy. Nothing has been heard but the scaling guns in the different forts and ships in the harbour..."





19. See Edward Long, History of Jamaica, or a general survey of the antient [sic.] and modern state of that island (London: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1970 reprint of London: T. Lowndes, 1774) Vol. 3.

20. Columbus described the buildings of the Arawak as being similar on all the islands he had visited. They had been "tent like" made of wooden posts driven directly into the ground and plaited with thin wooden strips to form a wattle, and covered with the leaves of the cocoanut palm. Christopher Columbus, Personal narrative of the first voyage of Columbus to America, from a manuscript recently discovered in Spain, transl. by Samuel Kettell (Boston, 1827).

21. Ibid., p. 123.

22. Williams, Documents of West Indian History, p. 145.

23. Padron, Jamaica Española, p. 273. See also footnote 9 above.

24. Peace agreement signed March 1st, 1738. See Edwards (1966), History of the West Indies, p. 532.

25. Ann Hodges, "Jamaican Traditional Building Materials and Techniques 1: Thatch" Jamaica Journal 20:1 (Feb., - Ap., 1987) pp. 2-9 suggests an Arawak, African link in the Jamaican thatching as opposed to a British connection.

26. Hans Sloane, Sir Bart. A Voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nevis, St. Christopher and Jamaica, with the natural history of the herbs etc. (London: 1702-25) 1:B.



27. Ordinance of the King of Spain, July 3, 1573 included, "The chosen site shall be on an elevation; healthful; with means of fortification; fertile and plenty of land for farming and pasturage; fuel and timber; fresh water, a native population, commodiousness; etc.", See Williams, Documents of West Indian History, ordinance 111, p. 193.

28. The Spanish community became designated a "villa" and the Indian settlements, "pueblos". The villa had control over surrounding territory was the general observed rule across Spanish America. See Carl Ortwin Sauer, The Early Spanish Main. (California: University of California Press, 1966), p. 151. This pattern no doubt operated in Jamaica.

29. Sauer, *ibid.*

30. As an example, ordinance number 116 read, "In cold climates the street shall be wide; in hot climates narrow; however, for purposes of defence, and where horses are kept, the streets had better be wide"...see Williams, Documents of West Indian History, p. 194.

31. Ordinance no. 128, *ibid.*, p. 195.

32. They were allowed this because the island did not possess gold. See Sauer, The Early Spanish Main, p. 180.

33. Visitors to the island in the sixteenth century mentioned the houses in Spanish Town, "un pueblo llamase la villa de la vega " as being made of wood on account of the earthquakes and hurricanes, Padron, Jamaica Española, p. 413.



Another referred to the beautiful form of wooden houses, adding that there were also houses made of, "barro y texa", I can find no exact translation for *texa* but I suspect that it no doubt referred to some sort of rubble such as stones or even broken bricks. A popular construction technique used in Jamaica called 'Spanish-walling' utilizes field stones, usually limestone, packed tightly between a wooden frame. This may be the reference to texa. It is held together with a mud, barro, and lime mortar mix then rendered on both sides with a lime mortar finish. The description continued that the principal buildings were made of brick, also that the church was a beautifully decorated piece of architecture made of stone. Padron *ibid.*, p. 425.

34. Sloane, A voyage to the islands, p. 625 in Michael Pawson and David Buisseret, Port Royal, Jamaica (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

35. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 p. 19.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Ibid.*, p.21.



## CHAPTER 1

### THE START OF THE JAMAICAN ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

The major surviving examples of the Jamaican architectural heritage stem from the period of the English take-over of the island, with the majority of these buildings dating from the eighteenth century. There are believed to be a few buildings surviving from the seventeenth century, though those dates need to be properly verified and one such building, Colbeck Castle, will be discussed under chapter two below. A general catalogue of the architecture may suggest that they be divided into three periods in accordance with a chronological dating: seventeenth-, eighteenth- and nineteenth- century. I wish to suggest however, that any architectural grouping of these buildings is too complex for simple chronological division, and so this should be avoided.

The Spanish buildings which the English found when they landed in 1655 were mainly destroyed in the conquest, however a few were kept and modified for English use.<sup>1</sup> Because of the difficulty in precisely identifying any Spanish structures, the buildings will all be classified under one of the English design modes listed below. Furthermore, the buildings of the other sectors of the society will be discussed together with the colonization process, with emphasis on how changes were brought. Up until 1838, the period within which this evolution will be traced, there appeared four main architectural





currents in which a particular design mode evolved and predominated on the island:

Early English ,	1655 -1720
Georgian ,	1720s-1760
Transitional ,	1760s-1790
Jamaican .	1790s-1838

These may be defined as evolving within the time periods shown. However, there are buildings which reflect one of the design modes, but were erected outside of the time- frame which I have established above; for example, Marlborough Great House which will be discussed below, was built about 1795 in the Georgian mode.

If the chronological method is followed, then this would suggest that Marlborough is of the Transitional mode which it is not. In colonial Jamaica, the "Georgian" design carried with it particular associations which were desired by certain sectors of the society, but these were not necessarily indicative of the dynamics of the wider architectural current. It is important to note that this situation will frequently occur, and should serve to emphasize the shortcomings of chronology. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the architectural heritage of Jamaica is very closely linked with its socio-economic development and so should often relate back to it.

By 1791, the Jamaican society had evolved into four distinct social classes in the following order of importance: "1. European Whites; 2. Creole or Native Whites; 3. Creoles of mixed blood and free Native Blacks; and 4. Negroes in a state of slavery".<sup>2</sup> The population figures up to the close of the eighteenth century as shown in Appendix 2, reveal the increase in the number of persons on the island from about 6,000 in 1658 to 300,000 by 1791, and



under the system of plantation slavery, a population ratio increase from 2:1 whites to blacks in the seventeenth century to 10 :1 by the end of the eighteenth century.

The architectural historian John Summerson gave the following description of the British society between 1570-1630 in his book on the architecture in Britain.<sup>3</sup> I have two reasons for quoting this in full: first, it sets the stage for understanding the prevailing British scene when Jamaica became a colony in the seventeenth century; and second, it reveals the very slight distinctions between the dwellings from one class to the next, except of course those of the very wealthy. I have placed in brackets what I believe to be the Jamaican equivalent to the British social distinctions:

"...The old manorial system, with its villeins and serfs tied to the soil, had given place to a broader and more fluid rural society. At the top of it were the great and increasing landowners [sugar planters]; below them came a middle class consisting partly of small gentry [creole or 'native' Whites], partly of tradesmen, partly of yeomen [both these for the Creoles of mixed blood and free 'native' Blacks]; below them again were the husbandmen and labourers [Negroes in slavery].

It was that middle class, recruited partly from the families of gentle stock, partly from the old villeinage, and partly from the mercantile element in the towns, which gave to rural England of the period much of its most characteristic architecture. That architecture includes the manor-houses of gentlefolk who by prudent management had rendered their estates profitable in the changing conditions of the period. It includes also the farm-houses of the yeomanry - a yeoman being definable as any small farmer (whether lease-holder, copy-holder, or tenant-at-will) holding property of substantial value. And, thirdly, the houses of men who had made money in trade and invested it in the land as the only stable form of wealth, a form, moreover,



conferring a certain status on the owner and preparing the way for social advancement in the next generation.

Between the larger types of buildings built by these different sorts of people there is no fundamental difference. The wealthier yeomen were better of than most gentry and built houses indistinguishable from small manor-houses. The less prosperous yeomen naturally built smaller houses and among these certain types emerged which one naturally classes as 'yeoman' types. But it would be rash to connect distinct types of house with particular social categories, for all categories required much the same sort of accommodation, the only differences being those of wealth and, thus, of the amount of accommodation involved..."

Although these social definitions by Summerson reflected the practice operating in the period after the 'old manorial system', it would apply for the Jamaican context only in the very late eighteenth century coinciding with the development of the different social classes on the island as listed above. Furthermore, the patterns would apply only in relation to construction. It is to be remembered that the system of master and slaves, equivalent to the 'villeins and serfs' was still in place in Jamaica during the period under discussion in this thesis, and operating in a very repressive and brutal manner. Often there was no mobility allowed across or even within the colour barriers. As soon as the Blacks had accumulated certain amount of wealth or property, the Whites would siege these for themselves. Such reports predominated during the period of slavery on the island, especially after an event like a hurricane or earthquake which had left the houses of the Blacks still intact. Furthermore, the habits and behaviour of some of the wealthy Europeans left much to be desired, and this was commented on by many of the visitors to the island.



The members of the upper class of European whites would have desired to follow the more 'formal' traditions of design and building practised in the Mother country (Fig. 4) so as to distinguish themselves from others on the island.<sup>4</sup> Descriptions of British architectural practice of the period under discussion in this thesis would fall under the following modes of practice defined by Summerson in his book Architecture in Britain as: Inigo Jones and his times (1610-1660), Wren and the Baroque (1660-1710), the Palladian phase (1710-1750), and Neo-classicism and the Picturesque (1750-1830).<sup>5</sup> How the Jamaican divisions relate to these will be developed under the different chapters below. Immediately there begin to emerge two general groups of building: the 'formal' approach which resulted in the erection of buildings made of more durable material; the 'folk' tradition at the other end of the scale using less durable materials.

The 'formal' tradition therefore may be defined as the building practices of the more wealthy members of society, carrying with it not only economic, but also class distinctions. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, formal buildings would no doubt have been erected by both racial groups on the island as the economic and social status began to change. Formal buildings also had another component in their design --a direct link with the high styles of European architectural fashions. The buildings of the 'folk' tradition were erected by those at the lower economic scale in the society. Here too the folk buildings belonged to both racial groups. In examining the evolution of Jamaican architecture, it will be seen how these two traditions came together to form a Jamaican mode with a distinctive character.

There is also another aspect of the architecture which should be defined, that is the difference between the 'public' buildings and the 'private'





buildings. The public structures were erected by those governing the island, mainly the wealthy landowners. It therefore follows that the public structures would be designed in the formal mode (Fig. 5), especially in the contemporary high-style. For these reasons, it will be necessary to separate the 'public' buildings which would consistently be erected in the formal traditions from the 'private' ones which would follow either the formal or the folk. By so doing it would be easier to establish how the traditions evolved, and the significance as the groups are juxtaposed.

The buildings erected on the island fell within the full typological spectrum, in both public and private construction. For example, public buildings included those in the domestic typology, such as the residence of the governor, Kings House which will be discussed under chapter three, and private buildings with the industrial grouping of sugar-works building. This thesis will focus primarily on the buildings in the domestic typology because it is in this grouping that the evolution can better be traced.

Generally there was a combination of both brick and stone buildings in the formal tradition. Stone generally appeared in the utilitarian structures of the sugar plantations. Brick was the popular choice of material for civic and domestic buildings, although there are some examples of stone structures. In the early period, some bricks were brought in from Britain as ballast in the ships on their outward journey from England, but most were made on the island.<sup>6</sup> Timber was the popular choice for folk buildings and this was often used as framing which was then packed and plastered with a mud-lime mortar. Roof cover on the formal buildings was generally wooden shingles, mainly imported from North America in the early periods. The folk buildings were mostly covered with thatch, but some had wooden shingles, in these cases made from local



timber. Windows on the formal buildings were usually fitted with glazing; the folk buildings had wooden slats.

As the architecture evolved, these different materials and building elements were integrated, and with stylistic embellishments, a local flavour eventually emerged. This will be elaborated on in the chapters below. I shall begin each chapter with a brief overview of the architecture before elaborating on the stylistic patterns using examples of what I believe to be some of the better products in each of the traditions I have defined above. I will first show a 'public' example, followed by a 'private' example, and two versions of the private example will be given to show the same theme for the buildings in the urban<sup>7</sup> and the rural<sup>8</sup> context. I have decided to elaborate on the buildings in both the urban and rural setting because they display distinct variations of the same theme.



Fig. 4 ca., 1808 drawing of Longville, by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.

Fig. 5 1770 lithograph of Spanish Town Square.  
source: Long, History of Jamaica.



*A View of the Wings House and Public Offices at - St. Jago de la Vega  
Published in the - Hist. Account of the - 1770*



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1. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3,7 p.2 Footnote carried that there were about nine hundred houses spared from destruction.
  2. Edwards, History of the West Indies, 2:4,1 p.2.
  3. John Summerson, Architecture in Britain 1530 to 1830 (England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1958) pp.55.
  4. "There are some peculiarities in the habits of life of the White Inhabitants, which cannot fail to catch the eye of an European newly arrived; one of which is the contrast between the general plenty and magnificence of their tables (at least in Jamaica) and the meanest of their houses and apartments; . . . and all this in a hovel not superior to an English barn) Edwards, History of the West Indies, 2:4,1 pp.9-10 footnote.
  5. Summerson, Architecture in Britain, pp.vii-viii.
  6. It is usually argued that the bricks were mostly imported, but I have examined the city maps of the eighteenth century and found that these had brick yards on there outskirts.
  7. The Jamaican urban structures ranged from the large, "as a country manor-house" to the small 'unit-house' "essentially of the town: the house with a narrow frontage to the street, rooms back and front on each floor and a long court or garden at the rear". Summerson, Architecture in Britain, p.51.  
Both types varied in accordance with the wealth of the owner who may have bought one or more lots which sometimes was combined to erect one building. Most of the buildings were placed in a continuous row especially in the commercial core. The detached dwellings were found on the outer lots of





the town plan and the eighteen century buildings had brick walls enclosing the yards.

8. Rural dwellings were detached and placed within gardens.



## CHAPTER 2

### THE EARLY ENGLISH MODE IN JAMAICA 1655 -1720

The period of the Early English mode in Jamaica should be divided into two phases, the first up to 1692, when the earthquake occurred on the island, and the second after 1692. During this second phase, two events took place which are of importance. One was the disastrous fire of 1702 in Port Royal, and the other was the hurricane of 1712 which devastated the island. It is this latter event which set in motion the rebuilding across the island which allowed the introduction of the architecture of the second current.

During the first phase, private building across the island began to increase by the 1660s. Some construction was carried out in the settlements in the interior, but a large number of persons lived in the towns, the largest number being found in Port Royal. It was common for the wealthy planters to have a town-house not only in the capital of Spanish Town, but also in Port Royal.<sup>1</sup>

While it is true that there still remain entire buildings on the ocean floor of the Port Royal coast as a result of the 1692 earthquake,<sup>2</sup> the archaeological research of the town has largely been focused on individual objects, with reliance on documents to supply the architectural descriptions of this phase. Pawson and Buisseret who researched the early deeds in the



Jamaican Archives published some of the descriptions of the Port Royal buildings between 1660-1692 and noted that by the 1670s most of the plots had been purchased and buildings were erected on them.<sup>3</sup> Rent in Port Royal was as high as in Cheapside, the business hub of London.<sup>4</sup> In the second phase, after the colonists recognized that the resilient stick-and-thatch houses of the Africans were able to withstand the earthquake, Port Royal was rebuilt in wood.<sup>5</sup> By 1702, after fire swept through the town and razed it, the citizens decided to relocate to the other side of the harbour, to the recently-established town of Kingston,<sup>6</sup> and make it the new mercantile centre. They erected brick buildings in this new town (Fig. 6).

Not all the immediate post-1692 construction was done in wood. The historian Edward Long has left a description of a chapel which was erected "just after the earthquake of 1692, in a religious panic".<sup>7</sup> This chapel was sited near the governor's house on the south side of the Spanish Town Square where the court-house is presently located. Long described it as built "much in the style of the common-halls belonging to the inns of court in London: the walls are crowned with battlements; and on the centre of the roof is a cupola and clock".<sup>8</sup> The description of this chapel referred to some of the design elements used by the English Renaissance architects, and could possibly have followed after the Baroque design influence of the British architect, Sir Christopher Wren.<sup>9</sup> By the middle of the eighteenth century when Long was writing, it is interesting to note that the building was no longer used as a chapel, but had been converted into an arsenal of small arms, chiefly for the "free Negroes and Mulattoes".<sup>10</sup>

The associations of state and church on the island<sup>11</sup> meant that the religious buildings belonging to the Church of England would have been



erected by those in power, and hence are designated to the category of 'public' buildings on the island. As earlier stated, the public buildings would have followed the high style of British architecture. In the Early English mode of design in Jamaica, the works of architects Inigo Jones<sup>12</sup> and Christopher Wren, the most influential innovators of seventeenth-century design for the nobility in Britain, would have been a major reference for public works on the island. An office similar to that of the Surveyor-General's in Britain, and I believe originating out of it, was that of the 'Island Engineer' who took responsibility for the public works on the island. The Island Engineer of this period was Christian Lilly, who is credited with the design for the city of Kingston, and the fortifications at Port Royal.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that this 1692 chapel at Spanish Town had been designed by Lilly.

The Early English mode on the island spanned the reigns of James I: 1603-1625; Charles I:1625-49; the Commonwealth under Cromwell:1649-60 when Jamaica became an English colony; Charles II:1660-85; James II:1685-8; William and Mary:1689-1702; and Queen Anne: 1702-14.<sup>14</sup> This means that the stylistic influence on the first phase of the Jamaican scene would be primarily Jacobean,<sup>15</sup> the stylistic term applied to the designs of the period of the reign of James I. In general, the buildings should belong to the vernacular movement of the craftsmen which pre-dated the architects in Britain, continuing in importance during and beyond their practice.

The Jacobean, mainly a product of domestic building, is characterized by the applied motifs of classical decorative elements emanating from the wider European Renaissance movement. To this was added other stylistic treatments such as flared gable ends, 'Dutch roofs', and 'strap-work' of interlacing bands forming a sort of fretwork which was applied to walls and





ceilings as a part of the contribution of the Flemish craftsmen. The Italian *grottesche*,<sup>16</sup> decorative fantasies, was also used in conjunction with the strap-work. The method of bricklaying with alternate headers and stretchers, termed Flemish bond, came about through these influences. In addition, Summerson suggested that the plan of the houses was also a part of the evolution of a Jacobean style, the most popular ones being the rectangular 'U', and particularly the 'H-plan'.<sup>17</sup>

One of the many architectural publications of that period which had made a substantial impact on the English Renaissance movement was by the Italian architect, Sebastiano Serlio:<sup>18</sup> Tutte l'opere d'architettura et prospetiva (Venice, 1566). From Serlio the Classical interpretations of the architectural orders with geometric proportion was introduced into Jacobean work. The result was that the Jacobean designs become more symmetrical with Classical proportions and details unlike the more irregular interpretations of the Elizabethan.

Furthermore, the Serlio influence as practised on continental Europe, was brought to Britain by the immigrant craftsmen, and in a publication by John Shute, The First and Chief Groundes of Architecture, in 1563. Shute's visit to Italy gave him first-hand knowledge and access to the work of Serlio which he incorporated into his book, including the Serlio H-plan. I shall discuss this plan later when I deal with Colbeck Castle below. In these ways, the Classical ideas of the Renaissance had spread across Britain, and eventually to Jamaica.

Inigo Jones had visited Italy in 1601, and had become familiar with not only the treatise of Serlio, but also that of Andrea Palladio: I quattro Libri dell' Architettura (Venice, 1570), and visited the ancient monuments. On his return, he gave to England the first true interpretations of the Classical



language of the Italian Renaissance. The next major innovator was Sir Christopher Wren, who gained his knowledge mainly from French sources, adding Baroque to the British soil.

Alongside these academic contributions of classicizing styles by Jones and Wren, there was also the interpretation by the craftsmen, which evolved a vernacular expression which Summerson has termed "Artisan Mannerism".<sup>19</sup> This had its major impact between 1615 and 1675. The movement was a very important part of the stylistic contributions to British architecture, especially during the rebuilding of the city of London after the great fire of 1666.<sup>20</sup> Some of the characteristics included window frames in larger rectangular openings; omission of stone or brick mullions; pilasters with cartouches a third of the way up their shafts; the broken pediment; increased use of brick with moulded brick cornices. A significant aspect was the "Holborn gable", a new practice, with curved sides and flat tops carrying pediments.<sup>21</sup> The style also adopted the regularity of symmetrical ordering of the house.

I believe that the very early phase of building on the island owes more to the popular influence of the craftsmen than to the influence of Jones and Wren which dominated the upper levels of British society. Early colonists would have brought to Jamaica these artisan traditions, especially through the English practical building publications of the period. These books may have included Wotton (1624), Primatt (1667), and especially after the 1692 earthquake and the rebuilding in wood, Moxon (1683) and Wotton (1686).<sup>22</sup> With regard to the second phase of the Jamaican scene, I would suggest that this is more related to the higher styles of the English Renaissance movement, with slight reference to Jones and Wren, as this would be the natural progression into the Georgian discussed under chapter three.



This English Renaissance combination of the Jacobean, Artisan Mannerism, and Baroque elements of British design was brought to Jamaica, and set the pattern for the building designs of the European mode to follow, carrying over into the Georgian reign of the eighteenth century. This complex weave of European influence set the pattern for the building of the colonists.

The example of public building chosen here to exemplify this period is the St. Jago de la Vega Church, currently called the Spanish Town Cathedral. The design is weighted towards the English Baroque. I believe that the urban building examples which would typify the best of the dwellings of the early colonists, were mainly erected in the town of Port Royal, and these would have craftsman traditions. For the rural example, Colbeck Castle, the plantation stone mansion from a remote section of the parish of St. Catherine, provides an interesting example of the manorial high style mode.

### **Public Building**

The Church of St. Jago de la Vega or Spanish Town Cathedral, St. Catherine

Spanish Town Cathedral, (Figs. 7 & 8) situated in the capital, was the most important place of worship on the island. The services held there were attended by the Governor and the leading personalities on the island, some of whom remain buried there.<sup>23</sup> The Cathedral survives today from the 1714 church which was erected after the 1712 hurricane destroyed the previous church building, which the English had erected soon after the 1655 conquest. The English had pulled down the Spanish Red Cross church to erect this earlier building.<sup>24</sup> The present church has had four major renovations, in



1853, 1899, 1901, and 1908.<sup>25</sup> At the turn of the eighteenth century therefore, this church "an elegant building of brick"<sup>26</sup> would qualify as one of the notable examples of a public building of the 'Early-English' period in Jamaica.

Early illustrations of the building in the eighteenth century have survived. The Wickstead painting of the Cathedral which was done after 1773, and the illustration in the London newspaper of 1786, show that the church combined a mixture of Gothic and Renaissance details. The current structure with its many additions displays a fair amount of architectural harmony which commends its original design as being capable of stylistic evolution.

Long provided a detailed description of the building. It was laid out in a cruciform plan with a gable roof which terminated at a parapet. There are four aisles, and the main aisle, mainly paved with marble, measures one hundred and twenty-nine feet in length and twenty-nine feet in breadth. There is a gallery at the west end which is supported by Doric columns. At the time of his writing, Long noted that there was no tower, and that, "the congregation is summoned by a small bell hung in a wooden frame, which is erected in the church-yard".<sup>27</sup> The pulpit, pews, and wainscoting were of cedar and mahogany. The governor had a raised pew with a canopy over. Long described the altar-piece as "handsome, and adorned with carved work; and the decalogue in gilt letters," and that the ceiling was "neatly coved, and graced with two magnificent chandeliers of gilt brass," also that the walls were "hung with several monuments of marble, plain but well executed".<sup>28</sup> It is not clear if these were all part of the 1714 building. Long did note however, that around 1762 the church had received "a thorough repair".<sup>29</sup>





There is a transitional quality to the building which may be detected in the way it looks back to the period of Gothic church-building with its pointed arch windows. The tracery may have been an alteration done at the time of the repairs Long mentioned. The building is very much in the Classical expression of contemporary London building. The voussoirs of the rounded arched entrances, as well as the quoins, are dressed with brickwork placed against the Flemish bond in the craftsman tradition, and suggests Baroque design influences. The pilasters not only add rhythm to the facade but also provide a vertical ordering of the whole. In the manner of the Classical tradition, the pilasters have also helped to order the elevations into base, shaft, and entablature. The lines of the entablature provide the horizontal at the gable ends which give the appearance of a pediment. Spanish Town Cathedral is described by Long in 1774 as, "at present yields to none in the island for a becoming neatness".<sup>30</sup> It undoubtedly served to influence eighteenth-century construction in the towns.

### **Private Building: Urban**

#### Town house, Port Royal

The English conquest of the island took place eleven years before the great fire of London in 1666, and the rebuilding of that city in masonry. At the time of the fire, the early settlers began to establish the town of Port Royal in Jamaica, replacing many of the earlier wooden buildings of the Spaniards with brick buildings in the fashions of London. The town of Port Royal (Fig. 9) developed along the palisades at the southern tip of the island, with lots laid



out on an average of thirty feet square, and continuous rows of buildings, some erected as high as three storeys with cellar and attic.<sup>31</sup> By the 1670s, most of the plats had been purchased and buildings were erected on them. In the 1680s, it was recorded that the rents in Port Royal were as high as those in Cheapside, the business hub of London.<sup>32</sup> Because of the many disasters which have occurred, the examination of the building construction in this period must largely be confined to the evidence surviving in documents such as deeds and correspondence.

Robert Snead (or Sneed) "late of the city of London, architect" acquired property in 1684 in Port Royal, and the deed transaction with its building specifications offers an invaluable account of the construction practice for these urban dwellings.<sup>33</sup> The contents of this transaction which is given in Pawson and Buisseret is to be found in Appendix 3 at the end of this thesis. Pawson and Buisseret carried out studies on the deeds in the Jamaica Archives, and have compiled the information so as to present an idea of the character of the people and the town. The description of the building will incorporate some of this contextual information.

The deed to Snead required that he build substantial houses, however Port Royal had possessed a variety of buildings, with anything from one room, to sometimes seven.<sup>34</sup> The lots were usually laid out with a yard at the back containing " 'cook-room', usually a small brick-structure incorporating a hearth, perhaps an oven, and a chimney for the preparation of meals".<sup>35</sup> The latrine, or " 'house of office' . . . a small wooden structure mounted on sills which totally covered the pit --a hole measuring some three feet by four feet and about four feet deep"<sup>36</sup> was also an essential part of the dwelling. Sometimes a "shade", an outside lean-to offering protection from the sun, was



erected in the yard, and it is noted as a popular feature in the deeds of the 1660s and early 1670s, disappearing as the land and even the yards became extensively sub-divided.<sup>37</sup> Snead was required to include the cook-house and the "house of offices".

The two-storey brick building, with shingle-covered gable roof and garret, was to be placed on a stone foundation "two and a half feet thick, and one foot above the surface and superficies above the ground", and carried up to the water table of the building, by two and a half bricks with ground floor walls two bricks thick to the first floor, "which is to be ten feet in the cheare and carried with a brick and one half cheare upp to ye gable ends".<sup>38</sup> The specifications provided for a balcony fronting to the sea, "of eight feet long and three and a half feet in the cheare".<sup>39</sup> Protection was offered to the balcony by the "good large cornishes, and the shingles bored, primed and laid, and a sufficient penthouse" which stretched the whole length of the house.<sup>40</sup>

A variety of Jamaican timber was specified for the framing members of the roof, door-cases ("the front to be seven and a half and six inches, the lower door cases to be five feet wide in the cheare and nine feet high with a proporconable [sic.] light in each door"), and windows.<sup>41</sup> The placement and dimensions of the windows were left to the builder, and specified as being "suitable and proportionable to the building", but there were to be "Lutherian lights in the garrett" whose windows were required to be sealed, and those to the "balconyes [were to be] well leaded".<sup>42</sup> Timber-work was specified to be properly finished and painted. It was to be planed, "well tenanted and primed with substantial and lasting prime".<sup>43</sup>

An impression of how the buildings at Port Royal may have looked, may be gleaned from the restoration at Elfreth's Alley in Philadelphia (Fig. 10).



Because of the historical links between Jamaica and that of the city of Philadelphia in the very early periods of both settlements, it is likely that the methods of construction of the early dwellings of both would be similar.<sup>44</sup> Elfreth's Alley is reputed to be the oldest surviving residential street in the United States of America, its first building having been constructed some time after 1713, some twenty-nine years after Snead took out his deed in Port Royal.<sup>45</sup> The Alley was home to merchants and artisans, British colonists began to settle Philadelphia soon after it was established by charter to William Penn in 1681. A balcony is not a part of any of the Elfreth's Alley facades, but the cornice, garret windows and door-cases would probably meet the specifications of Snead's deed. It should be remembered however that the dwellings at Port Royal would not have had interior fireplaces.

### **Private Building: Rural**

#### Colbeck Castle, St. Catherine

This building (Figs. 11 & 12) is of major architectural significance to Jamaica because it is one of the earliest examples of a plantation mansion built after 1655, reflecting the high style of Jacobean country-mansion architecture. The selected design, lay-out and construction methods exhibit one of the earliest attempts to respond to local conditions in all respects: socio-economic, political, and climatic. Over the years, the structure has had conferred upon it a number of architectural and historical accounts: that the design was influenced by a need for defence; that the building may never have been completed; that the building may never have been lived in; that a section of the building was





destroyed by fire.<sup>46</sup> The ownership, date and method of construction remain a mystery in historical circles on the island, although it has been agreed that it should be credited to Colonel John Colbeck, and so is called Colbeck Castle.

It stands as a ruin on the landscape, but there still remains sufficient evidence of building and surrounds to solicit analysis and interpretation. Its importance is unanimously accepted, particularly because for many years it enjoyed the reputation of being the largest structure of its kind on the island. The date of the building may be placed some time after 1670, and quite possibly before 1682, the date of Colbeck's death.<sup>47</sup>

Colbeck was one of the soldiers who landed in Jamaica with Penn and Venables in 1655, and he distinguished himself on the island not only with his military exploits but also politically. He served as the local representative in the House of Assembly, and was Speaker between 1672-3. His tenure as Speaker was followed by that of Samuel Long, from whom the historian Edward Long was descended. The name Colbeck ceased to appear on the island after his death. Colbeck lies buried at the Spanish Town Cathedral. His epitaph reads,

"HERE LYETH YE BODY OF COLLNEL JOHN COLBECK OF COLBECK  
IN ST. DOROTHYES WHO WAS BORN YE 30 MAY 1630 AND CAME  
WITH YE ARMY THAT CONQUERED THIS ISLAND YE 10TH DAY OF  
MAY 1655 WHERE HAVEING DISCHARGED SEVERAL HONBLE  
OFFICES BOTH CIVIL AND MILITARY WITH GREAT APPLAUSE HE  
DEPARTED THIS LIFE YE 22<sup>d</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY 1682.<sup>48</sup>

Colbeck Castle is situated on relatively flat land. The mansion was built up so as to elevate it above the terrain, and it is encircled by a perimeter wall which is set out about 114 feet on all sides. There is a building at each



corner of this wall. Cundall has given the buildings an area of sixty square feet, which seems much less than the existing remains. Constructed with Jamaican white limestone, the ashlar work of the mansion is decorated with brick quoins, and the brick trim around the openings is laid in such a manner that the bricks run directly into the stone courses.

Standing two storeys high, the rectangular building measures about 114 feet wide and 90 feet deep. Four projecting three-storey towers, one at each corner, stand at a height of about 90 feet. These towers are connected by brick arcades trimmed with horizontal bands of limestone, paired into five-bay and three-bay arcades. The windows on the first floor have larger openings than those on the ground floor, with the third-floor windows of the tower having the smallest openings. There are also some circular windows on the ground floor, and it is recorded in Cundall that the door and window lintels were of "bully-wood".<sup>49</sup> He also saw evidence of plaster on the inside walls of some of the rooms.

The scale and regularity of the Colbeck Castle design suggest that one person had overall responsibility for its execution. Colbeck, a military man, may have engaged the services of the Island Engineer Lilly. It is also likely that Colbeck, whose military training may have included engineering, may have been the designer. If the castle was designed as a house for a military man, then this might explain the heavy appearance of the building, and its similarity in massiveness to military installations on the island.

It is necessary to understand some aspects of Jacobean life in order to begin appreciate the relevance of the Colbeck Castle design to the development of Jamaican architecture. First, the layout follows the 'H-plan' discussed earlier, which is prototypical of the seventeenth-century mansions of



the prominent landowners in Britain. The design for Colbeck Castle could have been lifted directly from Serlio's book on architecture, and archaeological excavation may confirm that Serlio's invention after the palace of Poggio Real (Figs. 13 & 14) would fit Colbeck Castle, including the three-bay and five-bay arcades connecting the towers. Serlio's commentary on this summer palace outside Naples, Italy, is transcribed in Appendix 4 to show that it would have commended itself to the military minds of these early settlers.<sup>50</sup>

On examining the examples of British mansions which adopted this H-plan, at Wollaton Hall (1580-5), Nottinghamshire, the Salae became the Hall; and at Bramshill House (1605-12), Hampshire, the Loge became the Terrace.<sup>51</sup> The H-plan served as a model for other influential Renaissance architects such as Palladio, and therefore influenced the Palladian movement in Britain.<sup>52</sup> Considering this, it should not be surprising that Colbeck, an officer, land-owner and statesman, no doubt familiar with established British tastes, would have desired a mansion which reflected those tastes, and may well have erected Colbeck in the seventeenth century.

Serlio left the proportioning of the building to the wisdom of the workman: "the measure thereof I set not down unto you, onley, because I will show you the invention: for a workeman may imagine of what greatnesse he will have a Chamber, being all of one greatnesse; and then from those Chambers he may imagine all the measures of the rest of the building".<sup>53</sup> He did state however, that the Palace of Poggio Real was "right foure square".<sup>54</sup> He did not include an interior light well in his design: "in this place I make you no place for light within, for that it is a place in the countrey, being not cumbred on the sides", as the town houses usually are.<sup>55</sup> He felt that sufficient light would be obtained from the galleries, and alluded to the climatic controls of the



design, stating that "the Hall and the Chambers will always be cold, by reason the Sunne cannot come unto them. These places will be very pleasant at noontime".<sup>56</sup> So the design would further commend itself as responding to the island's tropical climate. It should be noted that Serlio's elevation of the two-storey core, in combination with three-storey towers is also carried out at Colbeck Castle. The Castle did not follow "after the Corinthiamaner";<sup>57</sup> nevertheless, it adopted the symmetry and austerity of the Classical tradition, which placed the more important rooms with larger openings on the first floor, in the Italian tradition of the piano nobile.

Mark Girouard has enlivened our understanding of the interior arrangement of the Early Renaissance mansions, and in particular the associations between hall, chambers, and gallery, in his social and architectural history of life in the English country house. Understanding how these work in relation to one another may provide some insight into how the rooms at Colbeck Castle may have been used. Girouard pointed out that the Early Renaissance households were based on a hierarchy of gentlemen, yeoman and grooms, with very few women in them, and each section of the house served to maintain these distinctions.<sup>58</sup> On the ground floor of the house were the parlours, which were used as informal sitting-rooms and eating-rooms in country houses, and was the area frequently used by the servants. On the first floor was the hall or great chamber, which was mainly used for eating; it was the most important and best-decorated place in the house.

By the sixteenth century, withdrawing chambers used for retiring after meals or for private dining were attached to the hall. A gallery, which probably originated as a protected walkway between rooms, was also located off the





hall. Sometimes roofed but open on one side, or sometimes completely enclosed, the gallery served many purposes. Early ones had little furniture, later ones held portraits. Galleries became supplements to the great chamber which was used for masques, games and music, until eventually, "to have great chamber, withdrawing chamber, best bed chamber and gallery *en suite* on the first floor was the commonest Elizabethan and Jacobean recipe for magnificence", wrote Girouard.<sup>59</sup> The galleries at Colbeck Castle may have been enclosed to provide a screen from the elements.

Summerson describes this house design without the inner courts as "outward-looking".<sup>60</sup> He says that by the end of Elizabeth's reign, the siting of the house and the immediate surroundings took on importance ("The builders of Wollaton and Hardwick chose sites of extreme prominence for their houses"), continuing that "these assertive monuments made no compromise with nature and sought no protection".<sup>61</sup> Colbeck Castle follows closely the British design mode, in being prominently placed for show, and possibly without regard to security.<sup>62</sup> The perimeter wall no doubt was designed to follow in the tradition with an ornamental gateway, and forecourt on the entrance side. Summerson suggested that the wall surrounded the house as "a vestige of the courtyard plan", adding that "on another side was usually an orchard and on another a formal garden set with flowers and herbs".<sup>63</sup> Serlio alluded to garden beauty in his narrative of the palace of Poggio Real.<sup>64</sup>

The buildings in this perimeter wall may have been used as garden houses, such as those at Montacute House (finished 1599) in Somerset, or as lodges such as at Aston Hall in Warwickshire.<sup>65</sup> The drawing of the plan of the gardens and plantation of Drumlanrig Castle in Scotland (Fig. 15) appeared in Vitruvius Britannicus.<sup>66</sup> It is to be noted that the axial arrangement of the



Drumlanrig plantation, with orchards and woodlands in long vistas relating to the house as shown, is an eighteenth-century invention. I have introduced this drawing here to give a visual suggestion of the garden layout within the perimeter walls of Colbeck Castle, as well as an elevation of the perimeter wall with corner buildings. A garden plan with squares, sharing four paths leading to a little square in the centre, in which was placed a statue or fountain was described by Summerson as the favourite plan for the Jacobean gardens: "the courtyard and the gardens bore a strict relation to the house but fell short of participating in a single organic plan for the whole terrain".<sup>67</sup>

Understanding these linkages and associations of the early construction on the island to Britain may help to unravel the significance of Colbeck Castle in architectural development on the island. Furthermore, this early plantation mansion introduced the use of first floor galleries,<sup>68</sup> which became an important aspect of the buildings on the island in the eighteenth century, and this will be elaborated on in the rest of this thesis.



Fig. 6 Detail of Plan of Kingston ca., 1738.  
 source: Williams (1971), "Old Kigston".

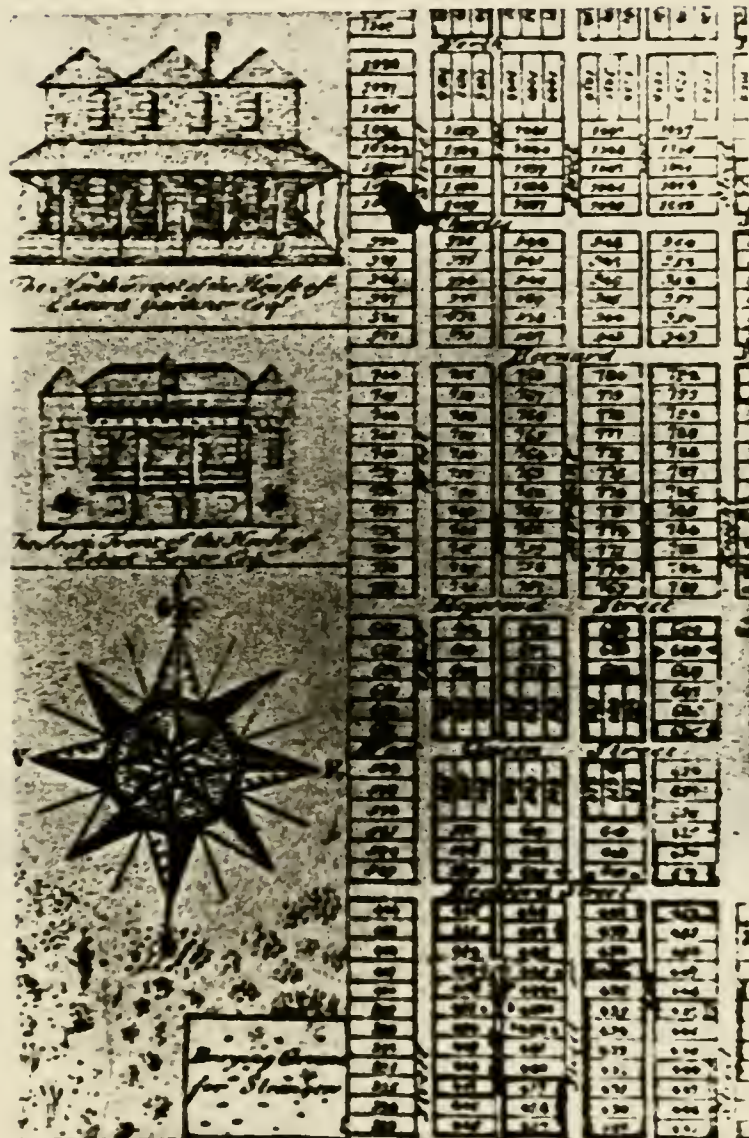




Fig. 7 ca., 1770s painting of north west view of church of  
St Jago de la Vega, Spanish Town, by Philip Wickstead.  
source: Nugent, Journal.

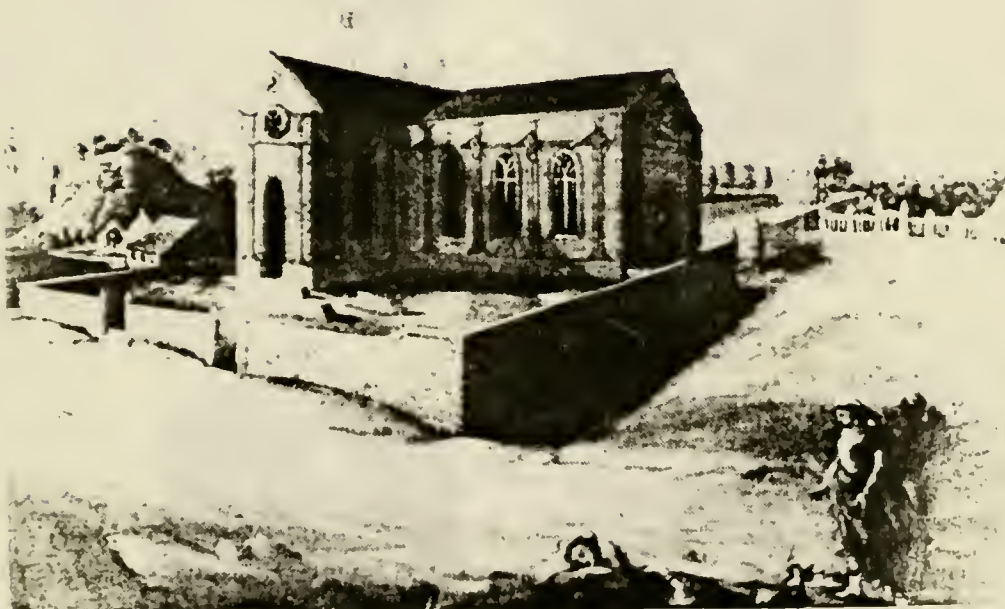






Fig. 8 East view of St. Jago de la Vega Church, Spanish Town from Gentleman's Magazine, (1786).  
source: Library of Congress.

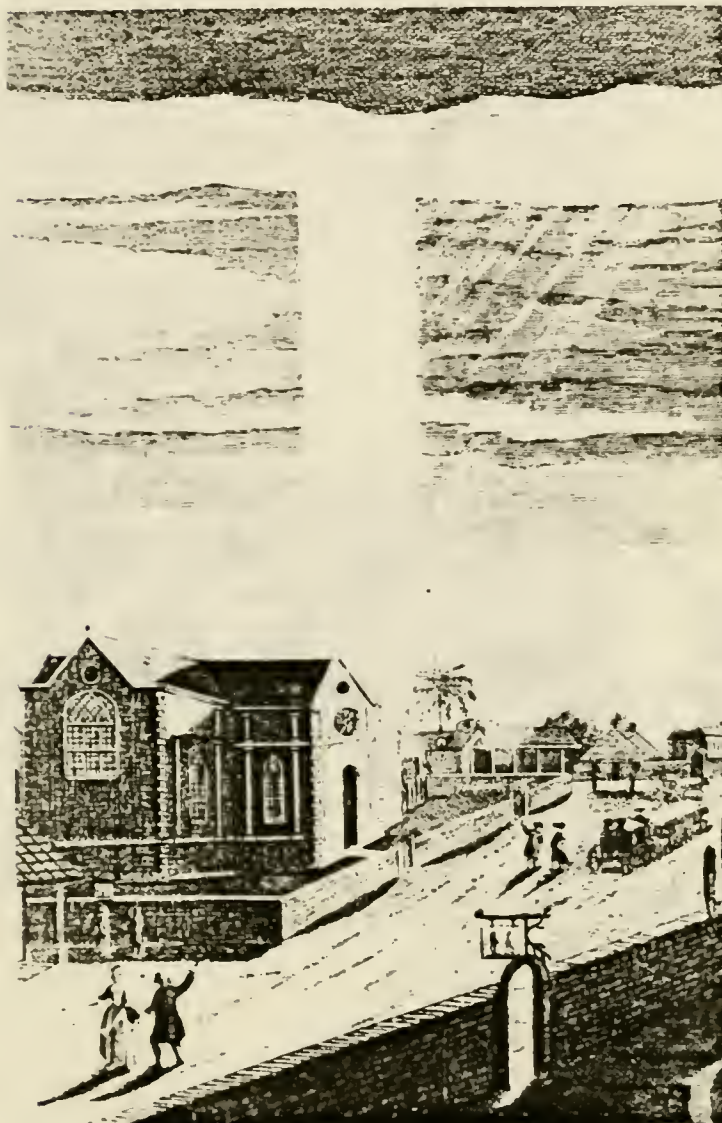




Fig. 9 Detail of 1683 draught of Port Royal.  
source: Library of Congress.

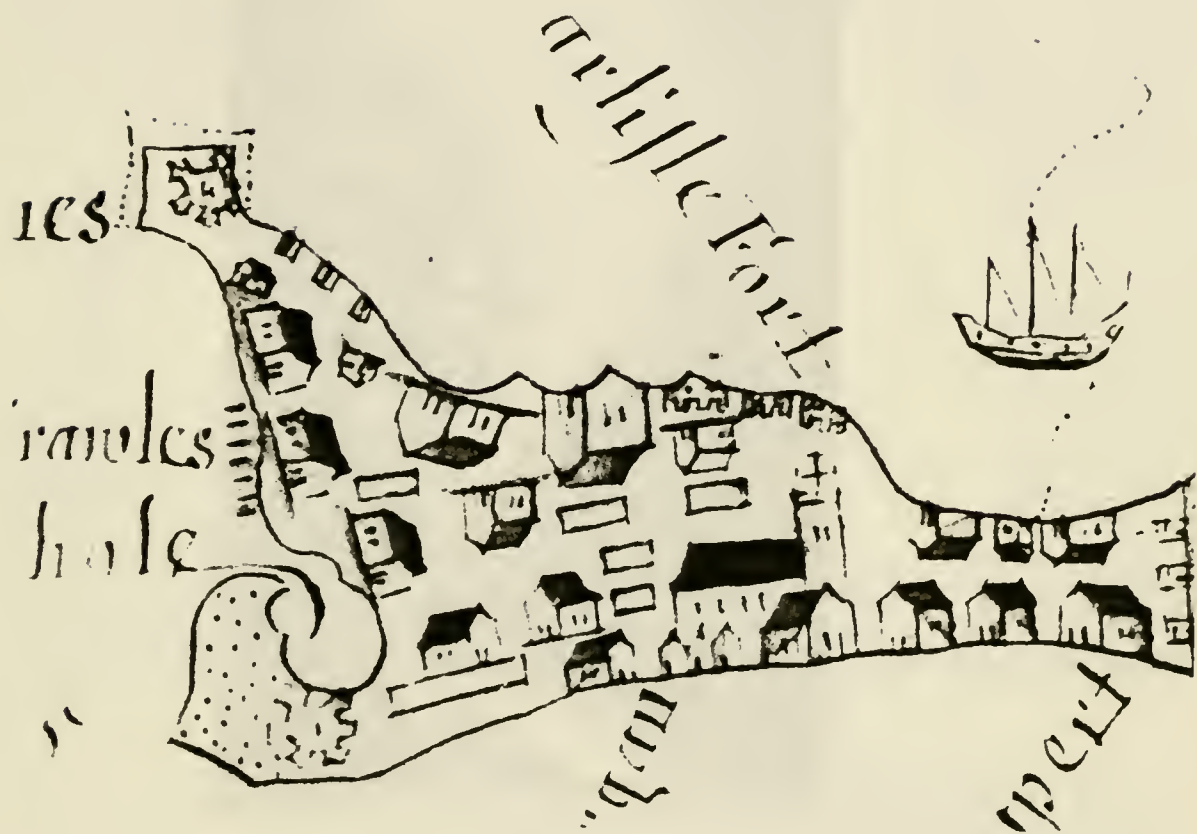




Fig. 10 ca., 1980s picture postcard view of Elfreth's Alley, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



*Elfreth's Alley*

*Philadelphia, Pa.*



Fig. 11 Colbeck Castle, St. Catherine.  
source: Pat Green.

Fig. 12 Aerial view of Colbeck Castle, St. Catherine.  
Source: Buisseret, Historic Architecture of the Caribbean.







Fig. 13 Serlio's invention after the plan of Poggio Real.  
source: Serlio, *Five Books of Architecture*.

Fig. 14 Serlio's invention after the elevation of Poggio Real.  
source: Serlio, *Five Books of Architecture*.

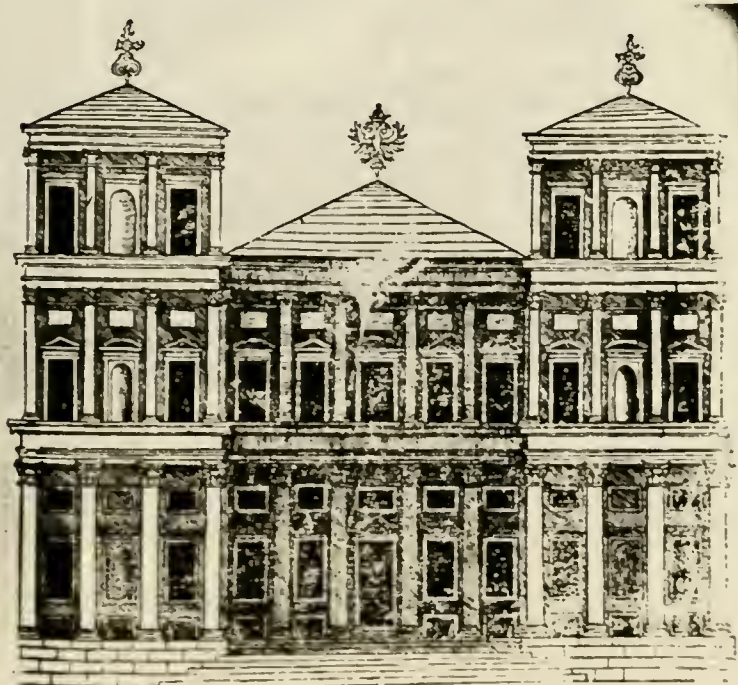
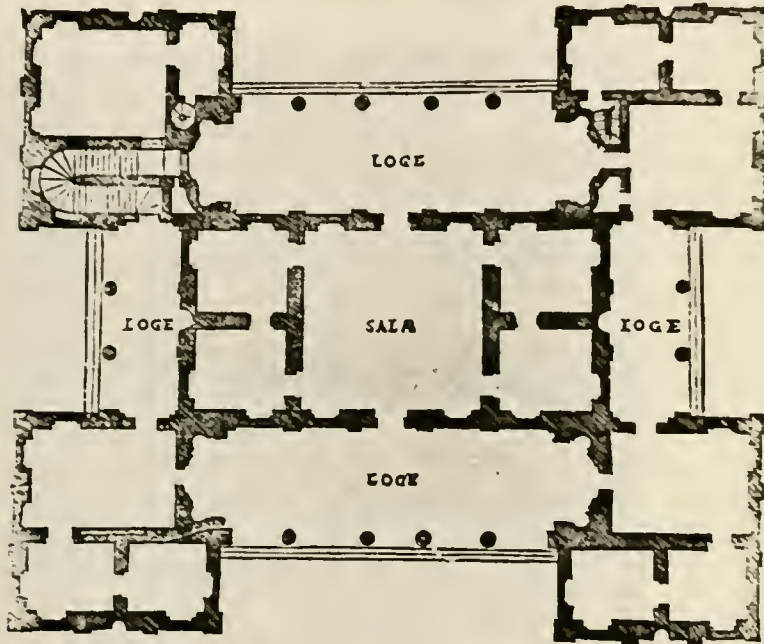
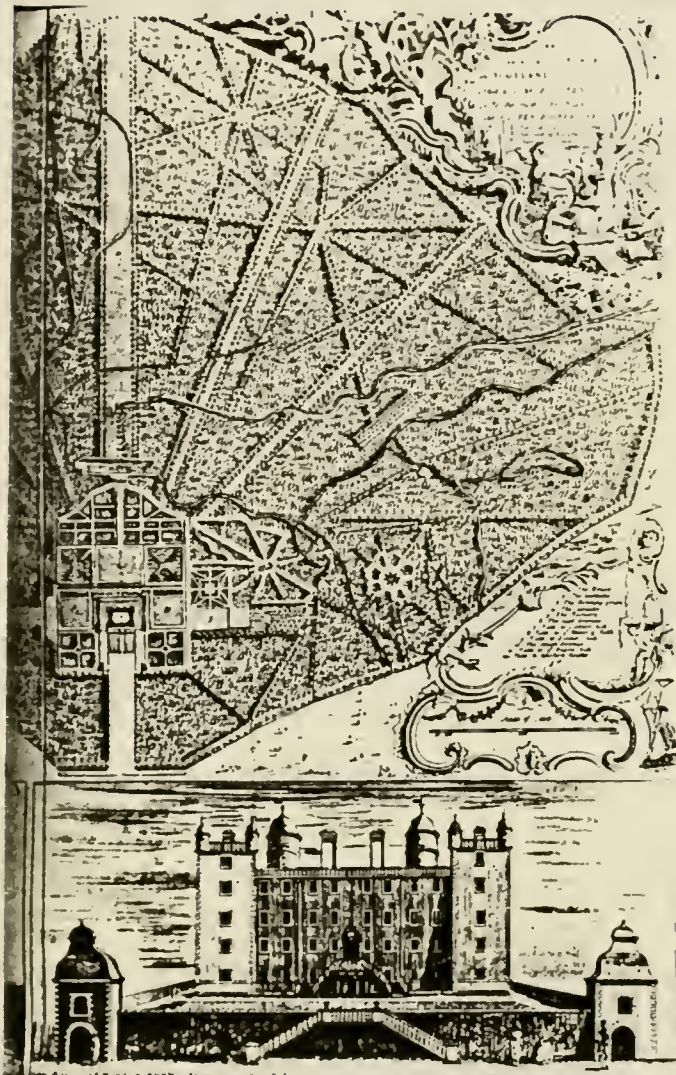




Fig. 15 18th century drawing for garden of Drumlanrig (1675-89),  
Scotland.  
source: Campbell, Vitruvius Britannicus.





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1. Richard Dunn, Sugar and Slaves: the rise of the Planter class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 ( Virginia: The University of North Carolina Press), p. 183.
  2. In 1780 the submerged houses were plainly discernible, recorded in about 1824 as being under four to six fathoms of water. Cundall, Historic Jamaica, pp. 78-9. Today these are fast deteriorating.
  3. Pawson and Buisseret, Port Royal, p. 81.
  4. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves, p. 184.
  5. Ibid., p. 186.
  6. Because Kingston was a mercantile centre, it attracted a number of settlers and the number of lots increased from 809 to 1,422 with buildings on 467 of these. Clarke, Kingston, p. 9.
  7. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3:7 p. 6.
  8. Ibid.
  9. Sir Christopher Wren assumed the position of Surveyor-General to the Crown after the great fire of London in 1666 during the Restoration of King Charles to the throne. He held this position until 1692. Wren, credited with the innovation of the English Baroque, was responsible for policy and implementation of the rebuilding of the city of London, and designed churches during this period. Summerson believed that these churches constitute some of



the most fertile examples of Wren's work. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 121.

10. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3:7 p. 6.

11. The island was divided into parishes, each of which were administered by a vestry. Each vestry consisted of twelve elected men, including two church-wardens, local magistrates, the parochial rector, and the *custos rotulorum* as chairman. Until 1799 when a local Ecclesiastical Commission was set up, the Church of England in Jamaica fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London, who had authority to appoint rectors to the parishes. Each rector sat *ex-officio* on the vestry of his parish and was maintained out of the parish taxes until 1797, when the Assembly assumed responsibility for the salaries of the rectors. See Edward Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica: 1770-1820 (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 20-4.

Long recorded that the building was erected in two years "at the parochial expence". Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3:7 p. 5.

12. Inigo Jones was also Surveyor-General of the King's work, 1615-24 when civil war broke out in England. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 68.

13. Cundall, Historic Jamaica, p. 48.

14. British architectural modes have also been defined as "Early Renaissance" to cover the period of the reign of Elizabeth (558-1603, termed "Elizabethan") and (1603-25, termed "Jacobean") the reign of James I. There is also a "Late Renaissance" defined for the period of reign of the Stuart Kings (1625-1702). In this system, "Georgian" begins with Queen Anne and includes the four Kings George following her. See Banister Fletcher, A





History of Architecture, revised by J.C.Palmes, (London, The Athlone Press: 1975), pp. 977-994.

These chronological stylistic divisions based on the monarchy in Britain can sometimes be misleading, and so the method of referring to design innovators of the period as defined by Summerson will be used in this thesis when relating Jamaican modes to contemporary British practice.

15. Summerson states that 'Elizabethan' style has no very solid existence, but 'Jacobean' style has. "In Elizabethan architecture the native architecture tended to borrow its ornaments from foreign books; in Jacobean architecture it took the infection of a foreign style which rapidly coloured the whole country's building output". He attributed this to the arrival in Britain of Flemish and other foreign craftsmen who brought to Britain the craft of the architectural features previously obtained through books. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, pp. 40-2.

16. Ibid., p. 21.

17. Ibid., p. 48.

18. Serlio posthumously influenced English architecture more than any other single man. There were a number of editions of of Serlio's treatises by the most important edition to the English movement was probably the 1566 edition containing Books 1-6. Ibid., p. 21.

English versions of the works contributed to their wider accessibility appearing in 1608, and 1611 as "The Five Books on Architecture".

19. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 89. Joiners, carpenters, masons, and bricklayers are among those workers whom he credits with the emergence of "Artisan Mannerism" in the Jacobean period.

20. Idem, Georgian London (London: MIT Press, 1978), p. 69.



21. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, pp. 91-3.

22. Ibid., p. 96.

Although referring to the later Georgian period, Dan Cruickshank and Peter Wyld in London, the art of Georgian Building (London: The Architectural Press Ltd., 1977) include a bibliographical listing of the English editions of practical handbooks.

23. At least one hundred and forty four monumental inscriptions are to be found in and around the Cathedral, some dating from the seventeenth century, for example, Catherine, wife of Sir Charles Lyttleton (January 1662). See Cundall, Historic Jamaica, p. 93.

See also, J.H. Lawrence-Archer, Monumental Inscriptions of the British West Indies (London: Chatto and Windus, 1875), p. 19-73.

24. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3,7 p. 3.

25. See Cundall, Historic Jamaica, pp. 89-95, He adds that the church was furnished with "an exceeding fine organ, which cost 440/. sterling, and was set up in the year 1755". Long, *ibid.*, p. 5.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.



31. Port Royal was the merchant and seafaring capital and its houses were built to accommodate the variety of activities taking place in the town. The dwelling-houses of the merchants had shops warehouses attached. Pawson and Buisseret list the 1676 inventory of Captain Thomas Mathews, merchant whose Goods and Chattels were valued at over Two Thousand pounds sterling. In the chapter entitled "Everyday Life", on page 107, it is noted that Mathews had a more substantial property fronting on High Street 27 feet wide stretching southward to the sea some 74 feet. The inventory transcribed on pages 186-193, also listed "Garrett" (attic), and "Sellar" (basement), as well as "Counting House", and "Warehouse". Pawson and Buisseret, Port Royal, p. 186-193.

32. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves, p. 184.

33. Pawson and Buisseret, Port Royal, p. 88.

34. Ibid., p. 106.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid., p. 88.

39. "Cheare" could possible be the term for a plate attached to the masonry. The Oxford English said that the word is an archaic form of 'chair'.

40. Ibid., p. 88.

41. Ibid., p. 89.



42. Ibid., p. 88.

43. Ibid., pp. 88-9.

44. Some of the Quaker residents of Port Royal were personal friends of William Penn and family members of prominent Philadelphians, such as the Norris family, who had built the "Slate-roof House" reputed to have been the first brick building in Philadelphia. Correspondence discuss the purchase of Goods and property. Events of the 1692 earthquake, and the 1702 fire in Port Royal are recounted in letters to Philadelphians from friends and family members who had survived. Samuel Powel, a mayor of Philadelphia, also had family connections with Jamaica. Philadelphia was one of the popular trading partners of Jamaica until about the middle of the 1770s, when the American War of Independence began.

See the manuscript collections at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia: "Norris Paper"; "Powel"; "Johnson".

45. Janice Hirsch, "Elfreth's Alley: A residential street where people have lived in harmony since 1713" (Philadelphia: Elfreth's Alley Assoc., publication, n.d.).

46. Olive Senior, A-Z of Jamaican Heritage (Jamaica: Heinemann Educational Books (Caribbean) Ltd., 1983), pp. 42-3. Also Cundall, Historic Jamaica, pp. 131-3; and David Buisseret, Historic Architecture of the Caribbean (Jamaica: Heinemann Educational Books (Caribbean) Ltd., 1980), pp. 14 -15.

47. In Cundall, Historic Jamaica, p. 133, it is recorded that the survey of Jamaica sent to England by the governor, Modyford, in 1670 lists under St. Katherine's parish "John Colebeck (812 acres); Capt. Colebeck and inhabitants (1340 acres). The third Assembly papers of February 1, 1671-72





list "Major John Colebeck for Bowers". Bowers was the name of the district where Colebeck Castle is situated.

48. Lawrence-Archer, Monumental Inscriptions, p. 40. St. Dorothy was one of the parishes in the county of Cornwall which became annexed to St. Catherine.

49. Cundall, Historic Jamaica, p. 131, discussion of Colbeck Castle windows. "Bully-wood" is no doubt colloquial for the Jamaican hardwood from the "bullet-wood" tree. This wood is said to be so hard when cured that a bullet cannot penetrate it, and it is one of the most popular woods for structural work in traditional construction on the island.

50. The English had continued to battle with the Maroons, the freed slaves of the Spaniards. There are accounts of Colbeck's leading troops against them. In these early days the residents lived amidst internal warfare as well as with the constant threat of invasions by other European nations operating in the Caribbean.

The following is the section of Serlio's commentary which may have proved attractive to Colbeck: "there is a place called Poggio Real, which King Alphonsus caused to be made for his pleasure, in that time (then most fortunate) when Italy was in peace, and now unfortunate, by reason of the discords therein. This Palace hath a very faire situation, and is well devided for Roomes, for that in each corner thereof might bee lodged a strong company of men: in the middle there are five great Chambers, besides the Roome under the ground, together with some secret Chambers".

It is possible that there are secret passages at the Castle, alluded to by Cundall, which he described as vaulted dungeons. I doubt however, that there were ulterior motives other than providing covered access to the buildings in the perimeter wall.

51. Fletcher, History of Architecture, p. 994.



52. John Thorpe had reproduced a number of designs in which Palladian planning was adapted on the lines of the central great chamber above which the owner would have dined in splendour, servants at same time below. The central great hall, was combined with Jacobean or late Elizabethan details, there are a number of similar houses by unidentified designers still in existence. Mark Girouard, Life in the English Country House (England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1978), pp.120-1.

John Thorpe (1565-1655), is described in the Penguin dictionary of architecture as: an unimportant clerk in the Office of the Office of Works and later a successful land surveyor who was not, as sometimes thought, the architect of Wollaton, Audley End, and other great Elizabethan and Jacobean houses.

53. Sebastiano Serlio, The Five Books of Architecture: an unabridged Reprint of the English edition of 1611 (New York: Dover Publications Inc.), 3:4 f. 71.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid., f. 72.

56. Ibid.

57. Ibid.

58. Girouard, Life in the English Country House. pp. 83-8.

59. Ibid., p.102, also Summerson (1958), Architecture of Britain, pp. 49-50.

60. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 50.



61. Ibid.

62. Jamaican plantation houses of the eighteenth century were usually erected on the most prominent aspect of the property. This was due in part to the fact that such areas were unsuitable for sugar cultivation.

63. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 50.

64. "I will not speake of the most beautiful Gardens, filled with all kinds of flowers, with divers compartments of the Orchards and Trees of all kinds of Fruits, with great abundance of all kinds of fish-ponds and fishes, of places and cages of divers Birds both great and small, of fayre stables, filled with all sorts of Horses; and many other fayre things" Serlio, The Five Books of Architecture, 3:4 f. 71.

65. See Fletcher, History of Architecture, p. 994 for plans of Montacute House and Aston Hall.

Mark Girouard, Life in the English Country House, p. 109, mentions the importance of the lodge houses to the mansions, that they were meant to be as handsome as possible to house important guests such as judges, privy counsel or officers staying over. Colbeck may have entertained such personalities at his country residence.

66. Colen Campbell, Vitruvius Britannicus, or the British Architect, eds. J. Badeslade and J. Rocque, 1739 (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1967, reissued in one volume ), BR, Pl. 45-46.

67. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 50.

68. Ibid., p. 49, suggested that the long gallery was a peculiarly English feature.



## CHAPTER 3

### INTRODUCTION OF THE GEORGIAN MODE: 1720 - 1760

"Georgian" has generally been used to describe designs which used Classical motifs based on the interpretations of the Italian architect Andrea Palladio, among others. Because it emerged and flourished in Britain during the reigns of George I (1724-27), George II (1727-60), George III (1760-1820), and George IV (1820-30), it has been generally called by that name.<sup>1</sup> In this presentation, I shall use the term 'Georgian' specifically to represent the mode of Classical buildings erected in Jamaica predominantly during the period 1720 to 1760. This interpretation was largely unmodulated in public building, but in the private building a more Jamaican interpretation began to evolve, from about the middle of the eighteenth century, which shall be dealt with in the later chapters of this thesis. The later years of the Georgian reigns, up to 1830, on the island witnessed other developments, however I shall also apply the term 'Georgian' to structures built after 1760, but still followed the Classical mode.

Within the general Georgian period, a more specific "Neo-Palladian"<sup>2</sup> phase can be identified. Summerson places this phase between 1710-1750. Neo-Palladian standards were steeped in academic principles which attempted





to define taste, hoping eventually to replace the highly individualistic vernacular interpretations of Classicism.<sup>3</sup>

Neo-Palladianism is typified by a "great blockish mansion" sparingly adorned with architectural elements from a very limited vocabulary, designed around a symmetrical arrangement of rooms and openings.<sup>4</sup> As the "Palladian house", an abstraction based on the works of Palladio and Inigo Jones by the architect Colen Campbell, it was published in the first volume of Vitruvius Britannicus in 1715.<sup>5</sup> This was one of the first major publications defining Neo-Palladianism. The publication contains a number of drawings of designs for some houses of the British nobility which reflected the work of Palladio and Jones.<sup>6</sup> Subsequent volumes include designs by other influential figures in the definition of this taste, notably Richard Boyle, the Earl of Burlington. A second major publication of influence in this phase, was the English translation of Palladio's treatise.<sup>7</sup>

The Georgian mode of building first appeared in Jamaica some time after 1712, in the re-building which followed the hurricane. The major significance of this mode is its identification with the Mother Country which requires that special consideration should be given to the period of its practice on the island. The Island Engineers who were responsible for the designs of the Jamaican public buildings, would have brought with them the academic trend in English architectural practice. The sugar planters and more wealthy persons on the island would also have constructed their houses in this trend, but at the lower levels, a more expressive interpretation would have been practised. Practical-handbook publications of the period helped to spread the Classical traditions. Some of the more popular ones include the series by



William Halfpenny (1725), and Batty Langley (1727). Other works include Abraham Swan, and significantly, that by James Gibbs (1728)<sup>8</sup>

Brick was the common material of Georgian houses, with stone used for public building. The Georgian usually exhibits a principal facade which is intended to receive primary attention. On these grand fronts of the Georgian, the giant column is a feature spanning two floors. Keystones emphasize the facades and quoins visually strengthen the building corners. The ground floor is sometimes rusticated; termed "the rustic" by Girouard, it was fitted with the service rooms and kitchen.<sup>9</sup> The upper floors were smooth as a contrast, and the first floor is usually the piano nobile,<sup>10</sup> that is, the floor on which the principal rooms are located, the floor of taste.<sup>11</sup> Windows on this floor, were often designed larger than the others to emphasize the importance of the rooms behind. The principal rooms of the more palatial structures are sometimes double-height and have balustraded verandahs as a feature of the piano nobile.

Georgian had both an urban and a rural form. The staircase in the town-houses is usually found in vestibules; in villas and country houses they are a large and noble feature of the hall.<sup>12</sup> The town-house, on a long lot with narrow frontage, built in a continuous row, is called a "terrace-house".<sup>13</sup> It is essentially a product of London after the 1666 fire. The parapet-roof and sash-window with recessed frames were statutory requirements which became characteristic features.<sup>14</sup> The villa, a suburban house found in the immediate outlying areas of the town, differs only in scale from the great mansions, and generally follows the villa designs of Palladio, with projecting wings attached.<sup>15</sup> The Georgian villa or mansion emphasized in a new concept of garden and landscape, featuring as an object to be seen in the landscape, as opposed to



the previous Classical interpretations where house and perimeter walls defined the garden.<sup>16</sup>

The facades are usually divided by regularly-spaced openings with centrally-placed doorways. The primary facade is often made given prominence by the addition of a portico, with a regular arrangement of columns in one of the orders of architecture supporting a pediment above. The portico not only provides covered protection for the main entrance, but has implications best expressed by Girouard's comment that "there was something irresistibly attractive not only about the symmetry of its planning but about the way of the function of the great chamber as a room of state could be expressed externally by facing it with a splendid and stately portico - or at least a pediment, with the arms of the owner prominently carved in its tympanum".<sup>17</sup> The main entrance was sometimes leads into the rustic, but most often is into the hall behind the portico by way of an external flight of steps built in front of the rustic and terminating at the portico.<sup>18</sup>

In Jamaica, the Doric order is commonly used on the portico. Kings House, the public building discussed below, used Portland- stone imported from England for the columns; however, the majority of columns used in Jamaica at that time were timber, cedar being the most popular choice. The floor levels are usually elevated. The example of a private building in the urban setting below is Altenheim House, which is more like a small villa in the town. The ground floor is the principal floor and is elevated above the street level, with the main entrance under a portico; however, it is more usual for the principal floor to be placed a half- or full-storey height above ground level in the urban context. The main entrance either leads directly to the street or to a garden. Marlborough House is a private example of the Georgian in the rural



context. This follows more closely the idea of the villa, and has wings which extend the main house. Georgian windows in Jamaica were glazed, double-hung sash, generally with six-upon-six lights, although early ones appear to have been fitted with shutters.

## **Public Building**

### Kings House, Spanish Town

Thomas Craskell was Island Engineer responsible for executing the design for Kings House (Fig. 16) when in the 1760s the Assembly put in place nearly £30,000 for its building and furnishing.<sup>19</sup> Kings House was erected on the west side of Spanish Town Square, on the site of the old Spanish Hall of Audience, and completed around 1762.<sup>20</sup> Before this building was built, the governor, official representative of the ruling monarch, had been obliged to live in any available house he desired. The building was therefore conceived to accommodate the monarch if such a visit were to occur on the island.<sup>21</sup>

Kings House was destroyed by fire in 1925. The facade along the Square has been restored to maintain that edge. In this case as earlier, descriptions of the building have been supplied by the historic documentation of the time. Here too, I am much indebted to historian Edward Long who in the 1770s stated that "it is now thought to be the noblest and best edifice of the kind, either in North America, or any of the British colonies in the West-Indies".<sup>22</sup>

Long's publication carried an illustration of Kings House as well as the House of Assembly, both of which were erected around the same time. A





copy of this is shown as figure 5 in chapter two above. The latter building will be discussed below under chapter four.<sup>23</sup> A late eighteenth-century painting by Philip Wickstead of the hall at Kings House (Fig. 17) gives an idea of the decorative motifs on the interior.<sup>24</sup> These attest that the building was a noble example of Georgian architecture in existence on the island by the middle of the eighteenth century.

The facade of the two-storey building extends two hundred feet along the Square, and the remains are about two hundred and fifty feet deep. It was a brick building with Flemish bond decorated with glazed headers. The building was raised four feet above the ground on a limestone base and trimmed with stone quoins. The design was typically Classical in its proportions and symmetry; laid out with two courts created by a central spine running perpendicular to its principal facade. The ancillary buildings were separated from the main building by garden courtyards. The principal elevation is emphasized by a slight projection in the tradition of the H-plan.

Long wrote in 1774 that "the cornices, key-stones, pediments, copings, and quoins, are of a beautiful free-stone, dug out of the Hope River course, in St. Andrew's parish".<sup>25</sup> Because the building was meant to relate directly to the Square, the principal rooms were placed at ground floor level, and possessed the larger windows. The windows were trimmed with raised-stone flat lintels, as well as projecting stone sills fitted with glazed double-hung sash-windows. Illustrations by Adolphe Duperley in the nineteenth century show shutters attached to the windows on the ground floor.

Along the central axis of the principal facade is placed a fifteen feet wide entrance portico paved with white marble, and supported by six Portland stone columns in the Ionic order. These are mirrored by pilasters against the



brick facade in an interesting arrangement of paired columns at the sides.<sup>26</sup> Rectangular niches are centrally placed under this portico, with arched doorways on both sides of them. These arches are trimmed with raised-stone keystones and glazed fanlights below. The portico, which ran the full height of the two-storey building, is crowned with a pediment. Initially, dentils decorated the full frontage of the facade. A parapet screened the hip roof. It should be noted that in keeping with the highest tradition of Georgian, the coat of arms is placed in the centre of the pediment shown in the 1774 publication. Long felt that the pediment was "properly ornamented with the imperial arms of Great Britain, in carved work well-executed".<sup>27</sup>

A similar arrangement of paired columns, pediment, dentils, and coat of arms appeared in the design for a palace, plate 39, 40 of volume two in the 1724 London publication of William Kent's Designs of Inigo Jones, "consisting of plans and elevations for Publick and Private Buildings", and it is likely that this may have inspired the design for Kings House (Fig. 18). The Corinthian order would not have been used in the Jamaican context because the building was not a "place for pleasure".<sup>28</sup>

Long wrote that the two principal entrances off the portico lead "into the body of the house; the one opens into a lobby, or anti-chamber; the other, into the great saloon, or the hall of audience, which is well proportioned, the dimensions being about seventy-three by thirty feet, and the height about thirty-two: from the ceiling, which is coved, hang two brass gilt lustres. A screen, of seven large Doric pillars, divides the saloon from an upper and lower gallery of communication, which range the whole length on the West side; and the upper one is secured with an elegant entrelas of figured iron work. The East or opposite side of the saloon is finished with Doric pilasters; upon each of which



are brass girandoles double-gilt; and between each pilaster, under the windows of the Attic story, are placed, on gilt brackets, the busts of several ancient and modern philosophers and poets, large as life; which being in bronze, the darkness of their complexion naturally suggests the idea of so many Negroe Caboceros, exalted to this honourable distinction for some peculiar services rendered to the country".<sup>29</sup>

This hall was referred to as the "Egyptian Hall" by Maria Nugent, wife of the governor to Jamaica who resided at Kings House between 1801-1805, in the journal of her residence on the island.<sup>30</sup> Kings House undoubtedly set the tone for some of the other residences on the island, and in particular, the mansions of the planters who chose to epitomize the palatial splendour of the Georgian during these prosperous sugar years which continued until the close of the eighteenth century.

### **Private Building: Urban**

#### Altenheim House, Spanish Town

Situated a block away from Kings House is Altenheim House (Fig. 19) which offers one of the best-preserved examples of what I believe to be a very early Georgian building in the urban context on the island. The two-storey brick building is laid in Flemish bond decorated with glazed headers, similarly to Kings House. The building is set back from the street behind a garden gate and wall, and is fully detached. The outbuildings at the rear of the compound are still standing. The property is in need of much historical research as no dates have been given for its construction, but the scale and detailing of the



building, indicate that it may be contemporary with Kings House (1762) or even earlier.

It is fascinating to note that the Spanish Town Court House, finished around 1819 and razed by fire in 1986, bears a very close resemblance to Altenheim House (Figs. 20 & 21). This suggests some connection between the two buildings. Initially, the court house was to be erected in stone but this proved too expensive, so brick was used. The court-house, the last of the four government monuments to be erected around the Square, replaced the 1692 chapel which was discussed in chapter two, and repeated the cupola and clock on its principal facade. I believe that designs of other buildings may have served to inspire other structures in and around the Square. If the date of construction of Altenheim House had been around the middle of the eighteenth century, then its construction technique may have inspired that of the court-house building. Alternatively, it may have been built about the same time as the court-house in the early nineteenth century.

The ground level of Altenheim House is above street level, and the principal floor is the ground floor. The floor plan is rectangular. The principal facade is symmetrically divided into a width of five windows. The larger windows are on the ground floor to suggest that the more important rooms are located there. The openings on the ground floor are "French windows", and these are divided into sections of louvres, glazing, and fixed timber panels. These windows may initially have been fully paneled to match those on the northern elevation and the front door. The front door does not have a fanlight above.

The use of French windows here suggest that there might have been a coved cornice or some type of shed protection around these openings, or that





the original double-hung sash- windows were converted into French windows. The latter appears more probable, when seen in relation to the centrally-placed single-storey portico. This protects the main entrance door, and contains four wooden columns in the Doric order supporting pediment with dentils.

The workmanship on this building is of fine quality, as demonstrated in the brickwork of the string courses at ground and parapet levels. Behind the parapet is a shallow-pitched hip roof which is currently covered with corrugated galvanized sheeting, however this initially would have been shingles. The timber detailing also displays particularly good carpentry, which is also to be found on the interior of the house. Following the description of the three-room plan extended in the same format at the rear, I am even tempted to suggest that this building has Spanish origins. The main entry opens into a hall with wainscoted arch behind which is the staircase. Altenheim House still has the drip-stone set in a niche for filtering drinking water.<sup>31</sup>

Altenheim House holds within and without an uncluttered image of Georgian building on the island, reflected in the scale of the house, and the use of brick on house and garden wall. Its position on the edge of the Square suggests that it would have served as a prototype for other such construction. Over the years, as other Georgian buildings were modified by the addition of a shed for cooling and protecting the principal openings, this building appears to have been spared.

What did get added in the attempt to protect the openings from direct sunlight penetration, are the projecting louvred boxes termed "coolers".<sup>32</sup> These are placed on the windows at the first floor level. The coolers at Altenheim House appear to have been designed in the Classical tradition, suggested by the incorporating a pediment. They are some of the best



examples that I have seen which respect the ideas of the Georgian. The application of coolers to the Georgian represent very early attempts to add a vernacular vocabulary to the Georgian on the island.

### **Private Building:Rural**

#### Marlborough House, Westmoreland

This single-storey house (Fig. 22) in the country is dated about 1795,<sup>33</sup> and serves to demonstrate that Georgian continued throughout the eighteenth century, even after Jamaican architecture had evolved a vernacular expression. Marlborough is a special case as it is a single-storey building with a centrally-placed portico flanked on both sides by single-storey wing buildings which are not shown in this photograph,<sup>34</sup> and reminiscent of villas in the Palladian tradition. The building easily falls within this definition applied by historian John Summerson when he wrote on the Architecture of Britain, that "in the fifties, however, there are signs that these huge fabrics are losing their appeal and by 1760 they have manifestly lost it...being superseded --by the villa".<sup>35</sup> The smaller versions of the Great Houses began to appear in Jamaica around the turn of the century as sugar production went into decline.

Although the principal facade shows a single storey, the structure is sited on a slope and the rear has another storey below. This lower level is rusticated, and not as finished as the front, which suggests that this lower part was utilitarian. The front is elevated about four feet from the ground, and sits on a limestone foundation. Marlborough's wall is stuccoed, with stone quoins at all the corners. All of the buildings, including the timber wings, are currently



painted in a shade of pink with white columns and white timber trim. The building has a rectangular plan, with a symmetrical set of openings on the principal and side facades, which extend to a width of five windows. The windows are glazed, double-hung sashes fitted with louvred shutters. The main entrance doors are the raised-panel type, with fanlights above in a more delicate design than those at Kings House. The same type of fanlight is found above the doors in the centre of the wing buildings. A fluted timber architrave crowned by a raised keystone surrounds these doors.

The most prominent feature of the house is the centrally-placed portico with four columns in the Tuscan order supporting a pediment. In like manner to Kings House, the columns are mirrored with pilasters against the wall of the building. The centre pilasters frame the doorway. The steps leading from the sides of the portico could have lead to a linkway connecting the wings. The wing buildings both have gable roofs, but that of the main structure is a shallow hip behind a parapet.

Some of the rooms are fitted with grand fireplaces and mantels, installed in the romantic notions of the Mother country, as these fireplaces are non-functional. Marlborough is an important expression of the more romantic examples into which the Palladian developed as academic principles were carried over into a more spirited interpretation which Summerson called the second phase of Neo-classicism.<sup>36</sup>



Fig. 16 Kings House (ca., 1762), Spanish Town.  
source: Pat Green.







Fig. 17 ca., 1770s painting of the Great Saloon at Kings House  
by Philip Wickstead.  
source: Nugent, Journal.



THE GREAT SALOON, AT KING'S HOUSE  
From an oil painting by Philip Wickstead



Fig. 18 H. Flitcroft's drawing of the principal facade  
for a palace design by Inigo Jones.  
source: Kent, Designs of Inigo Jones.

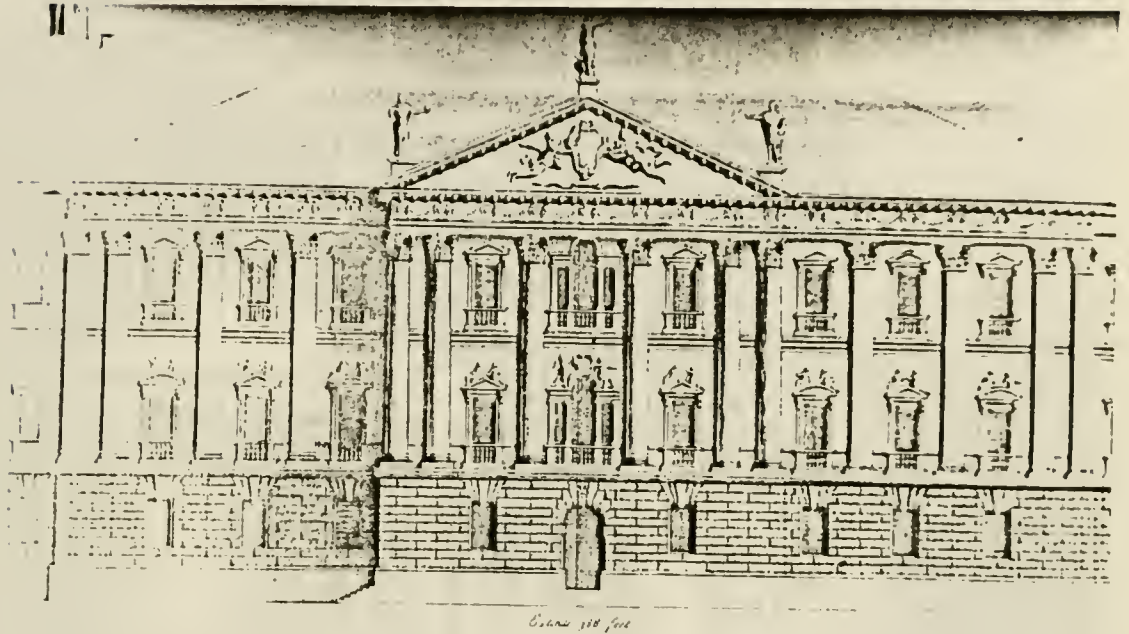




Fig. 19 Altenheim House, Spanish Town; east view,  
principal facade.  
source: Pat Green.

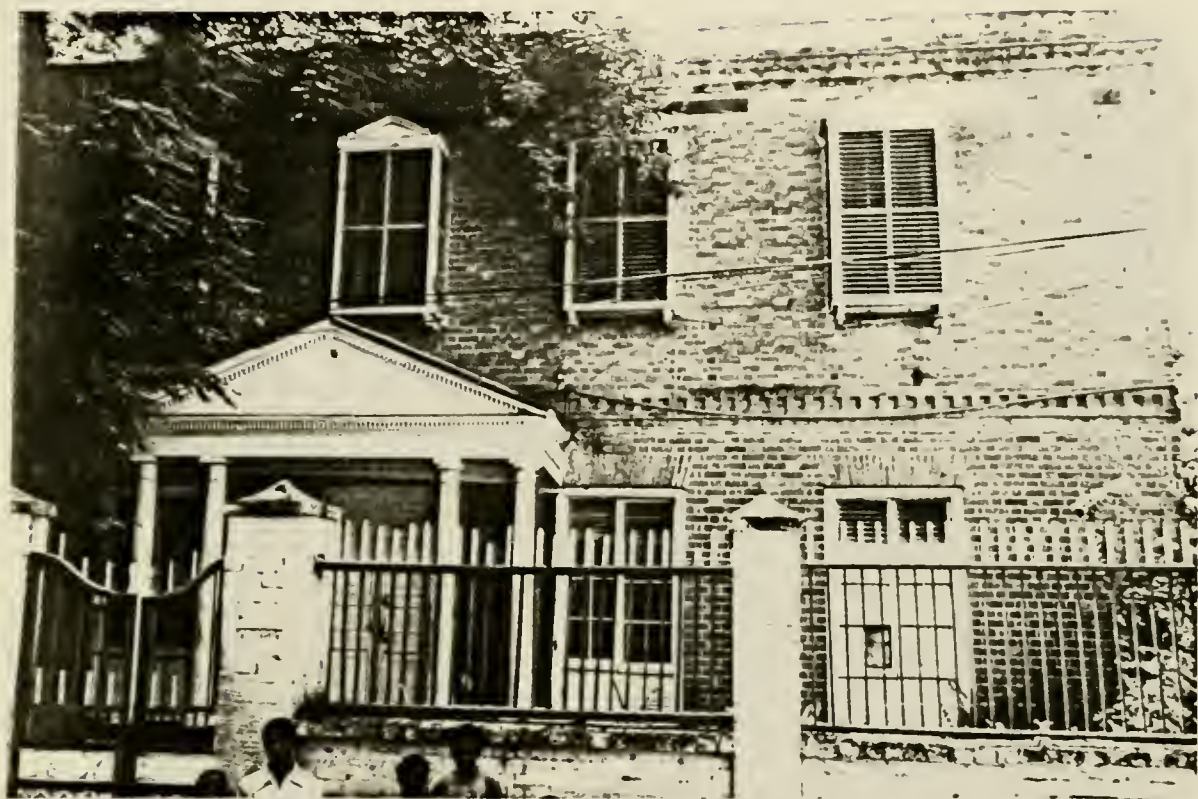




Fig. 20 Altenheim House, Spanish Town; north facade.  
source: Pat Green.







Fig. 21 Spanish Town court-house, west elevation  
before fire in 1986.  
(Situating directly opposite Altenheim House photographed  
from same position as Fig. 20 above).  
source: Pat Green.

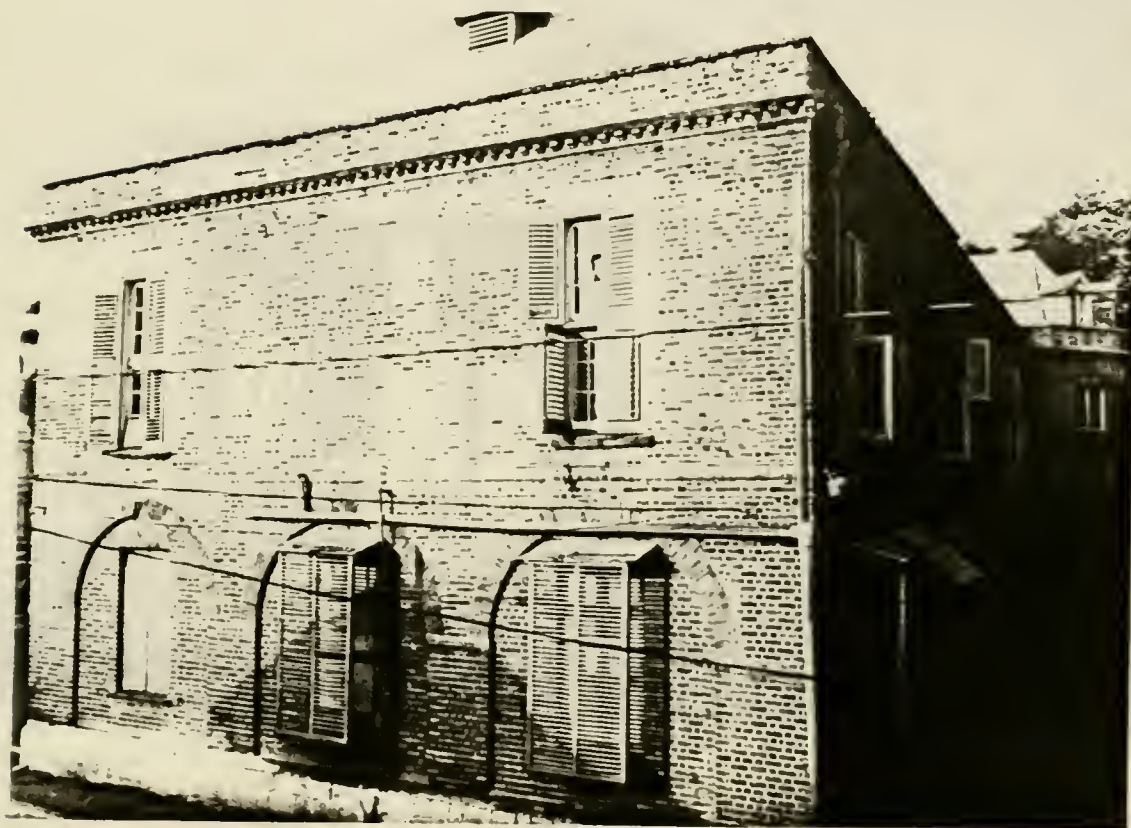




Fig. 22 Marlborough Great House (ca., 1795),  
Westmoreland; principal facade.  
source: Pat Green.





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1. Fletcher, A History of Architecture, p. 977, defined the Georgian to include Queen Anne and the four kings George from 1702-1830.

See also footnote 14 in Chapter two above.

2. This was the phase of English architecture when, under the influence of a small group of architects and amateurs, "Rules of Taste" were defined, standards were based on certain architects, and certain authors were widely endorsed, resulting in a whole new output of English building which became labeled "Palladian". Summerson, Architecture in Britain, p. 187.

3. The Venetian architect and ardent follower of Palladio, Giacomo Leoni, designed Queensbury House (c.1721) which "...provided the prototype English Palladian house and gradually the highly individual approach to classicism practised by English architects and builders in which the vernacular and new classicism were synthesized naturally, was replaced by the authoritarian dogma of Palladio". Cruickshank and Wyld, London: the Art of Georgian Building, p. 3.

4. Summerson, Architecture in Britain, p. 196.

5. Ibid., p. 208.

6. Ibid., p. 188.

7. Two books were first translated by Nicholas Dubois, and plates drawn by the Venetian Giacomo Leoni, and the publication was spread over several years. Ibid., p. 188.

The first complete translation of Palladio's "Four books of Architecture" was published by Leoni in 1715 with subsequent reprinting. Isaac Ware later



completed a more accurate translation and reproduction of the plates which was published in 1738, and was a rarity. See, Isaac Ware, Andrea Palladio, The Four Books of Architecture introduced by Adolf K. Placzek, (New York: Dover Books Inc., 1965), p. vi.

8. It is unlikely that the American publications had any major impact on Jamaican buildings, because the first of these appeared in 1798, a reprint of Swan.

9. Girouard, Life in the English Country House, p. 160.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., p. 162, also Cruickshank and Wyld, London: the Art of Georgian Building, p. 3.

12. Girouard, Life in the English Country House, p. 136.

13. Summerson, Georgian London, pp. 68-9.

14. Ibid.

15. Summerson, Architecture in Britain, p. 191, also idem, (1969) p. 222.

16. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, pp. 197-8.

17. Girouard, Life in the English Country House, p. 122.

18. Ibid., p. 160.

19. Cundall, Historic Jamaica, p. 117.





20. Nugent, Journal, p. 11 footnote.

21. The official residence of the governor was relocated to Kingston when it became the capital in 1872, and continued to be called "Kings House", in spite there being a Queen as the ruler of the Commonwealth. When any member of the royal family is in attendance on the island, they are housed at Kings House. The most recent visit was that of Queen Elizabeth II and her husband in 1983.

22. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3,7 p. 7.

23. Cundall, Historic Jamaica, pp. 117-8, attributed the criticism by M.G. (Monk) Lewis in the nineteenth century to Kings House. This appears to be incorrect, as Lewis mentioned "Government House" and wrote of weathering "stucco", which in both statements would apply to the House of Assembly (to be discussed under chapter four below), and not Kings House.

24. Nugent, Journal, p. 13. In the footnote Philip Wright stated that plate 5 (from a print by William Holland after a drawing by A. James), was a caricature of a grand Jamaica ball, and showed that the hall at Kings House is misleading as a record of the interior, because the columns and arrangement of the space are very different from the Wickstead painting in figure 17. I believe that this latter should serve as the more accurate document.

25. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3,7 p. 7.

26. *Ibid.*, "supported by twelve columns of Portland-stone", the pilasters here being termed "columns".

27. *Ibid.* By the nineteenth century, the coat of arms was not shown on the Duperley print of Kings House.



28. Serlio, Books of Architecture, f. 72, on his "invention" after Poggio Real.
29. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3,7 p. 7. It should be noted also that in William Kent, Designs of Inigo Jones (London, 1724; reprint, England: Gregg Press Ltd., 1967), pls. 37,38. Description states, "the Hall hath two Rows of Pillars of the Doric Order, which support the Great Room over it".
30. Cundall, Historic Jamaica, pp. 117-8.
31. The drip-stone is hewn out of a single piece of limestone and water is filtered through it. The water is then collected below and kept cool in a clay jar for drinking. Sloane, A voyage to the islands, pp. x-xi.
32. I am not sure how the term originated, but these are mainly found in Spanish Town, and are a special feature there. The windows which were not protected by piazzas (this will be discussed under chapter four below), had "coolers" added to them. I suspect that they came into use about the turn of the eighteenth century as the various climatic devises for cooling were introduced into construction on the island.
33. Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 128.
34. The house at Marlborough has two wing buildings but these are not physically attached to the main house. I am not sure if they were attached at one time. These wings have timber cladding and rest on a stone foundation. I believe that they are original to the main house because of the design of the doors and fan-light above, which are carried through on the house.
35. Summerson (1969), Architecture in Britain, pp. 222-3.
36. Idem (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 258.



## CHAPTER 4

### THE EMERGENCE OF A TRANSITIONAL MODE: 1760 -1790

In the preceding chapters, I have tried to show how different influences of British architecture were transported to the island by the upper economic stratum of Jamaican society. This chapter will continue to focus on that sector in examining how the Georgian developed a local interpretation. I have termed this period the transitional mode, because the architectural output during this time was passing through a development phase.

The main core of Georgian masonry building continued to be constructed in accordance with aspects of the Classical tradition such as the symmetrical arrangement of openings on the facades. In the transitional mode, this arrangement becomes transformed by the addition of shading devices, which in the more rudimentary stages were sheds. These later attained the status of 'galleries and piazzas' by the middle of the eighteenth century. I shall elaborate on these terms below. This transition therefore, may be viewed as the most important current in local architectural development, as it signified a revolutionary statement, be it conscious or unconscious, of the emergence of a Jamaican architectural identity.

A wider examination of the evolution of the Jamaican cultural process was presented by Brathwaite who looked at the period between 1770 and



1820 and termed it the period of creolization.<sup>1</sup> The development of the transitional mode should most probably be credited to the merchants. Brathwaite identified the merchants (as distinct from shopkeepers and retailers) as generally belonging to the upper stratum of Whites on the island.<sup>2</sup> It was a general practice for a merchant who acquired enough capital, to invest it into additional property away from the town centres, and to establish estates on these.<sup>3</sup> Their position as more permanent residents would lead us to expect that they would maintain the status quo integrated with a strong sense of nationalism, and they were wealthy enough to afford the luxury of elaborate construction to achieve it.

Historian Edward Long's descriptions of the Jamaican scene have helped to give needed clarity to this period. As a result of his writings, I have been able to make architectural inferences on the state of the transitional mode and also its time frame. I believe that the most significant event precipitating a close to the transitional, and the beginning of the next current, was the destruction of property after the hurricanes of the 1780s which called for rebuilding. The planters were then facing economic hardship brought about by the outbreak of the American war of Independence, which caused isolation of the island, as Jamaica had lost one of its major trading partners and political allies.<sup>4</sup> The Abolition movement for an end to the slave trade was another factor which influenced change. Long's work is significant as it was published in 1774, virtually on the eve of these events of change and so encapsulated this transitional period.

Edward Long<sup>5</sup> was the fourth son of Samuel Long, direct descendant of that Samuel Long who was an officer in the English expedition which captured the island from the Spaniards. The Longs owned large





holdings on the island. Edward was well-connected in English society through both of his parents. As he takes the reader across the island with his descriptions of people, places and events, interspersed with population and trade figures, Long gives an invaluable array of architectural descriptions, although coloured with his own prejudices. Long wrote that, in the parish of St. Andrew, "its chief ornament is a very magnificent house, erected here a few years since by Mr. Pinnock; which may vie, in the elegant design, and excellent workmanship, with many of the best country-seats in England".<sup>6</sup> The phrasing of this suggested that the house may have been designed in the Georgian manner as discussed in chapter three above.

I suppose that Mr. Pinnock's house was made of brick with stone trim; wrote Long, "the stone used about this fabrick was brought from the Hope river-course:<sup>7</sup> it is far more beautiful than the Portland, and of a courser and finer grain. The mahogany-work and ornaments within have been justly admired for their singular beauty, being, as I am informed, selected at great expence".<sup>8</sup> It is likely that Mr. Pinnock was a merchant, as the development of the parish of St. Andrew was brought about by this group purchasing property there. Long noted that the parish had "a number of little grass-penns, with good houses on them, are dispersed about the neighbourhood, chiefly the properties of merchants in Kingston, who occasionally retire to them from the hurry of business".<sup>9</sup>

The term "modern" was attached to some of Long's descriptions of buildings. This would suggest structures which were different from those previously erected on the island. Long seemed to have applied the term to specific cases, almost by way of expressing a building of taste, possibly belonging to a person whom he might have considered to be a member of the



higher order of society, and who should be afforded the title of "gentleman." Long applied the term, 'good houses' when he referred to the houses of the Kingston merchants on the 'little grass-penns', however, Mr. Pinnock had a 'very magnificent house'.

According to Long, a 'modern' house began to appear about the middle of the eighteenth century. He wrote that, "it is but of late that the planters have paid much attention to elegance in their habitations: their general rule was, to build what they call a *make-shift*; so that it was not unusual to see a plantation adorned with a very expensive set of works, of brick or stone, well executed; and the owner residing in a miserable, thatched hovel, hastily put together with wattles and plaister, damp, unwholesome, and infested with every species of vermin".<sup>10</sup> He continued, "but the houses in general, as well in the country-parts as the towns, have been greatly improved within these last twenty years".<sup>11</sup> This would put the date at 1755 from the publication of his book.

The middle of the eighteenth century therefore, would signify the start of a conscious effort by the settlers to erect on a wider scale, formal buildings on the island. This is confirmed by Long who wrote that the buildings were "constructed in so magnificent a style, and of such durable materials, as to shew that they were not intended for a mere temporary residence".<sup>12</sup> A distinction should be made here between planters and merchants. Long had made reference to planters; some of this group were absentees, that is did not live permanently on the island. The merchants however, who populated the towns, especially Kingston, invariably had permanent residence on the island, and would have had a longer tradition of more durable buildings.



The buildings in Kingston were considered by Long to be much superior to those of Spanish Town. He wrote, "the houses are mostly of brick, raised two to three stories, conveniently disposed, and in general well furnished; their roofs are all shingled; the fronts of most of them are shaded with a piazza below, and a covered gallery above".<sup>13</sup> Long began to attach the term "modern" to some of the buildings he described. The earliest use appeared in The History of Jamaica to describe a house under the section on Spanish Town, and I have underlined it below for emphasis. Long wrote, "the White Cross [one of the Spanish churches] stood at the Northern extremity, at a small distance from the river, on a very agreeable spot, which is now occupied with a handsome modern-built house. On digging the foundations for this house several large pieces of wrought stone were turned up. They appeared to be of the white lime-stone, or species of shell-marble, so common in the neighbouring hills, and to have been the lintels of doors or windows belonging to the old church".<sup>14</sup>

At the time that Jamaican buildings were going through a transition around the middle of the eighteenth century, Britain was moving into a period of architecture termed by Summerson as "Neo-classicism".<sup>15</sup> He used the term to describe a new spirit which altered the balance of European man's attitude to the past and therefore to the present and future, for which he defined three emerging concepts: the archaeological, the eclectic, and the modernist.<sup>16</sup> I shall again quote in full Summerson, to give his analysis of Neo-classicism which he also felt overlapped or faded into "romanticism":

"...European man, instead of looking back on his past as a single continuous cultural stream, unhappily broken by the medieval collapse of classical values, begins to see it in distinct compartments - the world



of antiquity, the medieval world, and the world of the Renaissance. With the springing into relief of these separate entities belonging to the past, three new concepts automatically emerge. First, the concept of art through archaeology, that is, of the enrichment of the present by persistent inquiry into the nature of the past (as opposed to the acceptance of a traditional theory of antiquity). Second, a wider concept of eclecticism, of the power to chose between styles or to combine elements from different styles. Third, by analogy, the concept of a modern style, a style uniquely characteristic of the present.. ".<sup>17</sup>

I believe that the above statement remains valid in the Jamaican context, particularly the second and third concepts. Jamaican architecture which evolved out of this period reflected eclecticism, albeit around the Georgian mode, and anticipated the modern. In the Jamaican context, the 'native' Europeans looked to each other and their immediate environment for an interpretation of that eclecticism which was added to their notion of a past as they continued to borrow from Europe. The use of 'eclecticism' here would therefore be synonymous with 'creolization'. This eclecticism was the ingredient which anticipated the 'future', the 'modern'. By the time Edward Long was putting together his history of Jamaica, he was aware at the time that there was a 'modern', and he wrote about it. One of Long's main aims in putting forward his treatise was to show that the island was attractive for European settlement, including that the climate of Jamaica was suited to the European if he practiced the appropriate habits in dress, eating, exercising and building housing.

As I examine the spectrum of comments which Long has left, I feel that the modern house which he described in the Jamaican environment was one which responded favourably to alleviating the effects of the climate. Long





observed that one of the climatic responses of the window conversions on the Spanish houses, were "almost totally exploded, and sashes more generally in use: to which are added jealousy-shutters, or Venetian blinds, which admit the air freely, and exclude the sun-shine".<sup>18</sup> Here Long has introduced another component of this transitional mode: the 'jealousy-shutter' , or 'Venetian blinds' which acted as a shading device and were part of the fenestration.

It was no doubt architecturally permissible to borrow and incorporate elements from as many sources as possible so as to achieve climatic alleviation. Long felt that the roof shingles, "(or slips of wood half an inch thick, formed like slates)"<sup>19</sup> were unsuitable. Imported from the North American continent, they were "not only very subject to be split in nailing, and so create leaks, but are not solid enough to exclude the sun's impression, nor lie so compact as to prevent a spray from being driven in by the wind in heavy showers".<sup>20</sup> He felt that the buildings should be covered with clay tiles like the Spanish houses which had survived up to the time of his writing because he had "found by experience, that these old Spanish houses are much cooler than our modern ones"<sup>21</sup>. He chided, "that the English, in neglecting these useful models, and establishing no manufacture of tiles, but erecting lofty houses after the models in the mother-country, and importing an immense quantity of North American shingles every year for covering new roof, and repairing old ones, consult neither their personal security, (here Long was referring to fires) their convenience, their health, nor the saving of a most unnecessary expence".<sup>22</sup>

Long had offered a number of critical analyses for improving building on the island, especially with regard to suitability. One of Long's discourses dealing with the aspect of siting is given in Appendix 5. This discourse revealed



another component which Long no doubt thought should be part of a modern house, that they "should be fixed on airy, dry and elevated, spots, raised some feet above the surface of the earth, floored and constructed either of timber and plaister, or brick, but never (if possible to avoid it) of stone; which is a very improper material in this climate for dwelling-houses, on account of the damp and chill which it strikes in rainy weather; but, whenever it is unavoidably used for such buildings, the effects may be rendered less pernicious, by surrounding them with a shed or piazza, or lining the walls with boards, or lath and plaister, set off to such a distance as to let the air circulate between".<sup>23</sup> I have emphasized the 'shed or piazza' above because it is an issue which I shall be elaborating on below.

It is clear that by the 1770s, Long no doubt expressed a desire for a more local approach to building on the island, in that he would prefer houses to adapt to the Jamaican environment, rather than to follow closely the British models. Long carried this further by proposing that the walls of the houses should be structurally built to accommodate a tile roof at a later date, "the builders, therefore of new houses, or works, should consider this, and make their walls of a due thickness to sustain such an additional weight hereafter".<sup>24</sup>

The 'piazza' had evolved from the shed, (Fig. 23) as an addition to the main structure of the house. Long wrote that the Spanish houses in Spanish Town had no piazzas originally, but the English who occupied them "made these additions, in order to render them more cool and pleasant".<sup>25</sup> He ascribed the term 'shed' to some of these early piazzas in Spanish Town contending that they gave "some inconvenience in another respect; for, the streets being laid out, some of thirty, and others not exceeding forty, feet in



breadth, these sheds incroach so far on each side, that the midway is too narrow, and liable to obstruct carriages".<sup>26</sup>

In the case of the Spanish Town houses which were single-storey buildings, it is important to note that the piazza referred to the addition on this single floor, of which Long remarked, "great alterations have, however, been made by the English inhabitants; and several of these old houses have received very considerable additions, which make them more roomy and commodious. In the piazzas many families may be said to live the greater part of their time; the shade and refreshing breeze inviting them to employ most hours there, that are not devoted to eating, drinking, and sleeping: nor can there be a more agreeable indulgence enjoyed by the master of the house, than to sit in an elbow-chair, with his feet resting against one of the piazza-columns; in this attitude he converses, smoakes his pipe, or quaffs his tea, in all the luxury of indolence".<sup>27</sup>

In other words, the use of the term 'piazza' has been generally used to describe the shed enclosing the main core on the principal floor of the house (Fig. 24). The principal floor may be directly on the ground, raised off the ground and ascended by steps, or at a full-storey height above ground in the Georgian tradition.

These distinctions in the placing of the piazza are important because in later descriptions of the houses by other travellers, the term 'piazza' is more generally applied and interchangeable with the gallery, and Long's usage are also in need of further elaboration.<sup>28</sup> Edward Long's reference to the gallery as above the piazza describes the buildings of the merchants, which had shops on the ground floor and residences above, on one or sometimes two storeys above the street level. The piazza at the street level therefore is different, in this



instance referring to a sidewalk area at street level in front of a shop, which is shaded by a projecting gallery above, and supported by columns or arches sometimes forming an arcade. This was a space open to the elements, a common mode of building in towns across the island.

I suggest that for clarity, the term "shop-piazza" should more properly be applied the street piazza of the public realm which is open to the elements. Furthermore, the term "shop-piazza" has entered the vernacular and is used today to describe these spaces of shaded sidewalk on the commercial streets. That which belongs to the more private realm, relating to family and home and fully enclosed, should simply be termed "piazza". This would mean that in the commercial buildings, the term "gallery" should be used to describe that private area over the shop-piazza. In the non-commercial, "piazza" should be used for the enclosed verandah on the principal floor. If there is another floor above this which has a piazza, then that piazza should be termed a "gallery".<sup>29</sup>

It should also be noted, that in the rural context the lower storey is used for domestic purposes. It is where the servants do chores and where they sleep at nights if they are allowed to sleep at the master's house; it may alternatively be used for storage of animals or goods.<sup>30</sup> The changes in layout of the house during this transitional period are as important as the changes to the facades. Long observed that the English had added a 'shed' to the back of the Spanish houses in Spanish Town, which is divided into three as is the house, "and communicates with the front, or principal hall, by an arch, which in some houses is wainscoted with mahogany, in others covered only with plaister".<sup>31</sup> He added that these houses were "small and rather inconvenient for a family, especially when it consists of six or seven persons".<sup>32</sup> The kitchen





and "other offices",<sup>33</sup> as termed by Long, were detached on "almost every dwelling house on the island" to which he further remarked, "though different from the practice in England, is a very judicious arrangement for this climate, where the fumes and smook of the kitchen, and the stench of other necessary offices, would be intolerable in too near a neighbourhood".<sup>34</sup>

In the parish of Clarendon Long gave the description of a mansion belonging to "Mr. F\_\_\_n, formerly chief-justice of the island; a native, and one whose talents are so extraordinary, that it is almost impossible for the most impartial pen to do justice to them".<sup>35</sup> The rural setting for this gentleman's (old) house is mentioned as, "delightfully placed upon a small rising, in the centre of a little vale: at no great distance from it are two craggy rocks, which peep over the summits of two hills, and resemble the ruins of antique castles".<sup>36</sup> Long continued that "immediately below it lies a little garden, filled with orange, cacao, and other trees, for use and pleasure".<sup>37</sup> These observations were most important because the way of placing buildings in the landscape no doubt had helped to advance the transition of the buildings as they evolved into a more picturesque design mode.

Another important point here is that Mr. F\_\_\_n was a 'native' of European descent. As Long puts it, "in this island alone, he has attained, by observation, reading, conversation, and the natural *acumen* of his genius, a more comprehensive and accurate knowledge of places, persons and things, in Great-Britain, Europe, and even throughout the known world, than most other gentlemen, who have had opportunities of being personally acquainted with them, or of obtaining the most intelligent accounts of them".<sup>38</sup>

In the following description of the mansion of Mr. F\_\_\_n, Edward Long summed up what I believe to be the essence of the "modern -house", the



house in transition from the Georgian to a local interpretation responsive to the Jamaican environment:

"...At about one hundred paces distance from this mansion is another of modern and more elegant construction. It consists of one very large and spacious room, upwards of fifty feet in length, about twenty feet wide, and twelve high. This is entered by a door-way at the north end, under a portico of about twelve or fifteen feet square, supported by columns of the Tuscan order; and at the south end there is a gallery, out of which the eye, over-looking a small garden, is carried along an avenue between two gently-rising woods, that have a solemn silent grandeur. Adjoining to the principal room are smaller apartments, one of which is a library furnished with a collection of the best authors. The old habitation, though less elevated, nevertheless commands a richer and more extensive prospect, comprehending the finest part of Clarendon, and of the neighbouring parishes. The beauties of nature that are displayed here are innumerable. In one place is seen a long, wavy surface, adorned with the lively verdure of canes, interspersed with wind-mills and other buildings. In another are behold several charming lawns of pasture-land, dotted with cattle and sheep, and watered with rivulets. In a third are Negro villages, where (far from poverty and discontent) peace and plenty hold their reign; a crested ridge of fertile hills, which separates this parish from those contiguous on the North and East, distantly terminates the landscape...<sup>39</sup>

The building examples shown below have been selected to give what I believe are some of the different stages of the transitional mode. Beginning with the public example, the House of Assembly in Spanish Town built between 1756-1774, the influence of the Georgian dominates with subtle transitional aspects needing very careful interpretation. The private building in the urban context is also taken from Spanish Town, not only because Long



gave much attention to those early buildings, but also because this example on Kings Street is still in existence today, and has often been termed to be in the "Jamaican Georgian" by a number of persons including myself.<sup>40</sup> This building is a good example of the 'shed' attachment of the piazza to the core of the Georgian building, with two separate roofs. The private building in the rural setting is the Moneague Tavern which shows the piazza and core building as a single entity under one roof.

## **Public Building**

### The House of Assembly, Spanish Town

One of the most significant buildings in the development of Jamaican architecture is the House of Assembly (Fig. 25) in Spanish Town which brings into focus the type of building expressing a transitional mode on the island. The building has survived, and has been in continuous occupation as government offices, since its construction which began about 1756. It was still under construction up to the 1770s when Edward Long was writing his history of the island.

Its appearance has been criticized from as early as the eighteenth century by historian Edward Long who termed it a "colossal building", and remarked that "this huge pile of brick and mortar is rudely raised into two stories".<sup>41</sup> I believe that these criticisms are no doubt leveled at the structure because as a government monument on the official town square of the island, and located directly opposite from the governor's palace, the building should



have more closely followed in the pure principles and proportions of Georgian tradition.

Instead, the design of the House of Assembly attempts to integrate the classicizing elements with responses to the Jamaican climate. It is to be noted that the centrally-placed pedimented verandah at the first floor level has Doric columns which are spaced without regard to the precedent of the Palladian tradition. These are atop a massive brick arcade along the full width of the ground floor. Further, the Doric columns appear too slender in proportion to the arcade. They support a pediment which is encircled at the cornice with exaggerated modillions, all below a steeper pitch on the hip roof, which appears as too dominant a feature on the composition, and is not finished behind a parapet as tradition dictates. The whole becomes reminiscent of a product of the vernacular expression, rather than that of a public monument of British officialdom. Some of these deviations however, resulted in a building which began to address some of the issues of the Jamaican climate.

The building is a two-storey brick structure laid in Flemish bond. Like Kings House, it is decorated with occasional glazed headers, and displays good quality workmanship. The ends of the principal facade project in like manner to the Kings House on the opposite side of the Square. The first floor pediment of the principal facade has already been mentioned, and this was emphasized by the centrally projecting bay area supported by three arches below. On the ground floor the whole is connected by the arcade, and on the first floor, the open gallery over the arcade connects the wings with balustrades. The quoins and some of the arches with flared voussoirs are formed by raised bricks. The use of raised bricks is repeated along the piers of





the arcade to create a ribbing effect. This has no doubt added to the sense of heaviness of the structure.

The openings are symmetrically placed on the facade, and are glazed double-hung sash windows, with raised panel shutters attached. Some have flat lintels, others have curved lintels. There is a Palladian-window in the centre of the rear facade. There were also other attempts to create ornamentation on the facades. The windows and doorways on the ground floor of the building are adorned with exaggerated keystones and quoin surrounds, to resemble what has been termed a "Gibbs surround". These additions were executed in wood, and appear to have been added as a later attempt at classicizing the building.

The first floor columns and balustrades on this building were executed in timber. These have been finished in "sand-dash"<sup>42</sup> to protect them from weathering. It is likely that this technique was applied from the outset of the construction, because of the North American timber used which distressed Long because it did not weather well in Jamaica. Furthermore, the sand-dash must have been on the building in 1819 because Monk Lewis, who was on the island to take up the plantation he had inherited, passed through Spanish Town and wrote about the House of Assembly, calling the sand-dash, "stucco".<sup>43</sup>

Contemporaneous with the commercial buildings in the towns, the House of Assembly incorporated some aspects of private design work on the island, such as the shop-piazza concept. Although the proportions may have been outrageous to the academic tradition, the concept fell in line with the recommendations by Palladio for designing with climatic considerations, "portico's, (here Palladio referred to the shop-piazza as defined earlier) such as



the ancients used, ought to be made round the (sic.) piazze (Spanish Town Square), as broad as their columns are high; the use of which is to avoid the rain, snow, and every injury of the air and sun."<sup>44</sup>

The House of Assembly was the administrative seat of the island where the representatives met to decide matters of state. Court sessions were also held in the building. Palladio had termed such buildings "the Basilica's of our times".<sup>45</sup> He described them as being different from the ancients, in that, "the ancient ones were upon, or even with the ground, and ours are raised upon arches, in which are shops for divers arts, and the merchandises of the city."<sup>46</sup> The spaces under the arcade in the Assembly building were rented as offices to persons having business with the House and court was located on the upper storey.<sup>47</sup> In these respects therefore, I believe that the building had transformed Palladian concepts to suit the Jamaican context.

Long wrote of the roof that it originally had a cupola in the middle, "which gave an appearance of lightness and variety to the view", <sup>48</sup> and that its removal made the front seem too heavy.<sup>49</sup> However its steep pitch was another area where the building attempted to respond to the weather both on the outside and in. The ceilings were designed by Long as, "lofty and vaulted, except the part of it immediately over the seats; this is boarded and flat, in order to render the debates more distinct and audible."<sup>50</sup> This loftiness helped with the dissipation of heat inside the building, and the steep pitch allowed adequate run-off of water, all suggesting an attempt to respond to the Jamaican climate.



## **Private Building: Urban**

### The Jamal Building, Spanish Town

Situated on the street which runs in front of Kings House on the northern boundary of the Square, this two-storey brick building (Figs. 26 & 27) possesses a width of nine windows on its principal facade. The immediate response to the building is that it typifies the Jamaican Georgian mode, which will be elaborated on in chapter five below. However, on closer examination, it should fall within the category of the buildings in a transitional mode.

The building follows all the traditions of an urban Georgian house as described for Altenheim House. This building is larger in scale and falls in the typology of urban structures located directly on and opening onto the street. In this case the building has two elevations to the street as it is located on a corner. The side elevation is composed of four sets of windows on which coolers are placed to protect these openings. The Jamal building is enclosed by a brick garden wall, and the out-buildings at the rear of the house are just visible from the street.

In such an urban context, it is typical for the principal rooms to be located on the first floor, and here there is a staircase from the street which leads directly to the hall above. From this street entrance there does not appear to be direct access to the ground floor rooms. The ground floor rooms are entered from the central staircase to the back. It is probable that this arrangement always existed. The roof line reveals that the timber piazza was a later addition. I am not aware of a date of construction, but as this follows so closely the buildings described by Long as well as Altenheim House, I believe



that it was built about the middle of the eighteenth century, and that the piazza was added on or about the time of Long' writing in the 1770s.

From the austerity attained from the Georgian tradition of symmetry and simplicity, I am inclined to believe that this formal building may have belonged to a government official. Today it is owned by the Government, which suggests that it may always have been, and it could have been designed by the Island Engineer. The steep pitch of the piazza roof carried down to the ring beam which also forms the lintel, becomes the cornice for the whole and is reminiscent of the construction of the African framed houses on the island. The piazza was designed with a paneled lower half up to the dado level, with jalousies above this. The arrangement of the horizontal bands of the jalousies is symmetrically broken by double-hung glazed sash-windows. The engaged columns on the ground floor are the rounded versions of the Doric, and on the upper levels are flattened versions resembling pilasters. The ground floor tended to be more public receiving persons off the street, and I would add that this almost likens it to the shop-piazza. This lower piazza is currently infilled with a lattice between the columns, thus separating from the public realm. I believe that such a lattice screening device was used from the introduction of the piazzas on the building.

### **Private Building: Rural**

#### **Moneague Tavern, St. Ann**

The date of construction of the Moneague Tavern (Fig. 28) is yet to be established, but the austerity of Georgian tradition strongly suggests that it was





most likely completed in the eighteenth century, and possibly in the 1780s, because of the localizing elements of the transitional mode. Almost reminiscent of the House of Assembly building, with its ground floor arcade and piazza space above, it carries particular significance because it is shown on a Duperley (Fig. 29) print done about 1844, and the building still stands today with almost minimal alterations to its facade since then. Of interest are the outbuildings shown on the nineteenth-century print. They are still in position today on the site. The building is fully detached and is located along the major route linking the north and south coasts of the island, which means that it was, and still remains today, a very visible structure.

Some of the structural developments of the transitional mode may be noted here. I suspect that originally the building may have been a single-storey stone structure with the typical three-room plan, to which the arcade was added, possibly as an early verandah. The evidence for this is the asymmetrical arrangement of the windows on the ground floor. Some of these windows appear to be earlier as they are casement windows. The sash typifies the later Georgian influence. The upper floors as well as the back portion were no doubt added at a later date, and at the same time the whole may have been improved by integrating the masonry core with the timber piazza under one roof.

These distinctions become important to illustrate that the transition evolved over time and out of the basic three-room core typical to domestic buildings for all economic groups. The end of the transition is suggested as the roof becomes a unifying element of the whole. The very steep hip roof shown here is almost equilateral, allowing for ample run-off of rain water and stability during hurricanes. There is almost no overhang to the roof thus preventing roof eddies and lift in storms.



Georgian principles are followed on the piazza: the symmetrical arrangement of the five-window bays; the engaged Doric columns; and the principal floor on the first floor following in the tradition of the piano nobile, with steps<sup>51</sup> leading directly to it from the garden. It is to be noted that the Duperley print does not show a portico over the entrance.

The piazza is symmetrically arranged with alternating jalousies and glazed sash-windows above the lower dado level of fixed timber panels all above the regular colonnade under the piazza, which followed the symmetry of the bay divisions. This is the vocabulary which the principal facades with piazzas were to use across the island. Combined with the roof, the whole effect becomes strongly suggestive of the Classical tradition, and in many cases the piazzas were decorated with dentils and modillions of the architectural order. The end product of this local classicism will be discussed in the following chapter.



Fig. 23 ca., 1808 drawing of country cottage, by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.

Fig. 24 ca., 1825 lithograph of Bryan's Castle (ca., 1793),  
Trelawny, by J. Hakewill.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.





Fig. 25 "House of Assembly" building (ca., 1756-1774).  
source: Pat Green.







Fig. 26 Jamal Building, Spanish Town, principal facade.  
source: Pat Green.

Fig. 27 Jamal Building, Spanish Town, corner view.  
source: Buisseret, Historic Architecture.





Fig. 28 ca., 1844 daguerreotype of Moneague Tavern, St. Ann,  
by A. Duperley.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.





Fig. 29 Moneague Tavern, St. Ann.  
source: Pat Green.





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1. Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, pp. xiii-xvi.
  2. Ibid., p. 111.
  3. See, Marguerite Curtin, Thomas Hibbert of Hibbert House Research paper for the Jamaica National Heritage Trust, Kingston, Jamaica, 1984. Thomas Hibbert, merchant in Kingston, built Hibbert House around 1755 on Duke Street in Kingston. By 1760 he had acquired a sugar-estate in St Mary and built a great house on that property. His Kingston house, currently being used as the offices for the Jamaica National Heritage Trust, was one of the houses in a wager between four Kingston merchants about who could build the most magnificent structure.
  4. Ibid., p. 92.
  5. Ibid., p. 73.
  6. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,8 p. 124.
  7. The Hope River is situated north of Kingston and St. Andrew its source is somewhere in the Blue Mountains and it currently provides the major water supply for the city.
  8. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,8 p. 124.
  9. Ibid.
  10. Ibid., 2:2,7 p. 22.





11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. Ibid., 2:2,8 p. 103.

14. Ibid., 2:2,7 p. 3.

15. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 235.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 p. 22.

19. Ibid., p. 20.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid., 2:3,6 p. 515.

24. Ibid., 2:2:7 p. 22.

25. Ibid., p. 21.

26. Ibid.



27. Ibid.

28. The Oxford English Dictionary also offers a multiple number of meanings, so I find it necessary to clarify the meaning of "piazza" in the Jamaican context.

29. William Beckford, A Descriptive Account of the island of Jamaica (London: T&J Egerton, 1790), vol. 2 p. 15, in describing the overseer house, says "some have more rooms, and some have less". He gave the following description as typical in the part of the island he had lived in: "[the overseer] residence consists, in general, of a front and back piazza, of a hall in the centre, and of a bed-chamber at one end, and two other smaller apartments that are taken from the pent-house of the gallery behind". Because Beckford later described a view "from an elevated piazza" of a planter's house ( p. 19), this would suggest that his use of the term "gallery" and "piazza" were interchangeable.

The piazza was not only applied to residences. Beckford (p. 17) in describing the plantation hospital, says "this building has a narrow piazza in front, at the end of which is a small apartment for the nurse or hot-house woman...".

30. Nugent , Journal, p. 81, "I could not help laughing, as we entered the hall at Seville, to see a dozen black heads popped up, for the Negroes in the Creole houses sleep always on the floors, in the passages, galleries, &c.,".

31. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 p. 21.

32. Ibid.

33. The term "Offices" also appeared in Beckford, A Descriptive Account, vol. 2, p. 15. In reference to the overseer's accommodation, I



believe that the term extended beyond the use as a privy or a general ablutions block. Beckford wrote, "in the offices are composed a stable and a corn-house, a kitchen, a wash-house, a buttery, and a store; with pig-sties, a poultry-yard, a pigeon-house, and in short every convenience and domestic accommodation that indolence may expect, or luxury require; and all these are attended by Negroes".

34. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 p. 21.

35. Ibid., 2:2,7 p. 64.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid., pp. 64-5.

40. See T.A.L. Concannon, Our Architectural Heritage: houses of the 18th and 19th century with special reference to Spanish Town. (Jamaica: printed pull-out, n.d.).

41. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 p. 9.

42. Sand-dash technique is still currently practised on the island, and I have noticed that only certain builders can do this work, as it requires a special 'throw'. It involves the addition of sand, usually sea sand, to the wet paint so as to weather-proof the wood and to prevent insect attack. The sand is thrown (dashed) on to the building from a distance. The appearance of the crystalline nature of the sea sand makes an attractive glistening finish. When well done, the wood sometimes resembles stone.



43. House of Assembly in Spn. Twn.: It should be noted that adverse opinions about the design of the structure were still strong in the nineteenth century. Lewis Journal of a West India Proprietor, p. 135.

44. Ware, Andrea Palladio , 3:16 p. 72.

45. Ibid., 3:20 p. 76.

46. Ibid.

47. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 p. 9.

48. Ibid., p. 10

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. I have noticed that only in the parish of St. Ann, there are numerous examples of this single sided flight of steps to the garden. This helps to suggest the regionalism of the vernacular.





## CHAPTER 5

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF "JAMAICA-GEORGIAN" 1790-1838

Henry-Russell Hitchcock in his book on nineteenth and twentieth centuries architecture highlighted a stylistic revolution of the middle of the eighteenth century. He suggested that its impact was felt from about 1750-90, and applied the term, "Romantic Classicism" .<sup>1</sup> As he examined the movement in the context of the New World, he defined two levels of stylistic expression emanating from the work of the upper professional level carried out by foreign-born, or foreign-trained architects, and that at a lower vernacular level undertaken by pupils and emulators, stating that this latter level tended to be more conspicuous, "in America than in Europe because it includes a much greater proportion of building production than in older countries where so many structures of earlier periods remain extant".<sup>2</sup>

From the examples cited in Hitchcock, he seemed to imply that Romantic Classicism in America is essentially a nineteenth-century product . I would argue that in Jamaica, Romantic Classicism was essentially the product of the eighteenth-century, and that by the turn of the century, the conspicuous results of the 'lower vernacular level'<sup>3</sup> had transformed Jamaican architecture into a picturesque expression. The local modifications to Georgian designs which were mainly to be seen on the dwelling-houses during the transitional



period have generally been termed "Jamaican Georgian".<sup>4</sup> At times, the application of Jamaican Georgian is arbitrarily extended far beyond Georgian buildings to cover later designs with eclectic profusions of balconies, verandahs, jalousies, and fretwork which typified the buildings of not only Jamaica, but also the wider Caribbean region in the latter half of the nineteenth-century.<sup>5</sup>

I feel that such a term requires that it be specific to a period of the island's history, as it evolved out of a peculiar situation involving not only the tropical climate of Jamaica, but also its socio-economic and political environment, which will be elaborated on below. Although there were similarities between this style of building and others on some of the other Caribbean islands,<sup>6</sup> I suggest that there was a uniqueness of the Jamaican scene which allowed a peculiar expression to evolve and flourish, particularly within the time-frame I have outlined here.

By the start of the nineteenth century, Jamaican architecture (Fig. 30) had extended beyond romanticism into picturesque.<sup>7</sup> Picturesque classicism in Jamaica is what I have termed here, "Jamaica-Georgian".<sup>8</sup> By the close of the eighteenth century, the local modifications had become institutionalized,<sup>9</sup> which suggest that a "style" had emerged. By the middle of the nineteenth century, both the folk and the formal traditions were utilizing the same language on their buildings, and it is this repetition of the elements across the buildings, evoking a local flavour, which was viewed as a 'vernacular' expression.<sup>10</sup> The Jamaica-Georgian is therefore, the earliest expression of a Jamaican vernacular.

In the eighth decade of the eighteenth century, Jamaica experienced five major hurricanes, and it was the repair and rebuilding which followed these



events which brought about the institutionalization of the style, which lasted until about 1838, the effective date the Emancipation of slaves in Jamaica. This style was expressed by: a steeper roof pitch, integrated piazzas, and raised ground floor levels, all fully incorporated into the overall design of these buildings on the island. No longer did the localizing elements appear to be tacked-on to a Georgian core. I suggest here that the term "Jamaica-Georgian" should only be used within a specific context to describe a "style" of building, and other buildings similar to it should be described as variations of this, or belonging to a mode reminiscent of it.

There were a number of factors which helped to differentiate the development of the Jamaican scene from that of the other Caribbean islands, and in particular within the British West Indies. Some of these will be mentioned here. First, it was the largest of the British West Indian islands with a higher population figure.<sup>11</sup> second, along with that of the island of Barbados<sup>12</sup> which had been settled by the British prior to their coming to Jamaica, the Jamaican economy was almost totally dependent on sugar cultivation and manufacturing by the eighteenth century. To make sugar economically viable, its production was established around plentiful and cheap labour. The importation of Africans as slaves provided such labour.<sup>13</sup> Large profits were made and more elaborate buildings were erected to reflect this. Third, the amount of fertile land in Jamaica allowed for a greater number of large scale cultivations while still accommodating smaller estates and 'polincks'.<sup>14</sup> It was therefore possible to apportion lands to the Jamaican slaves to erect dwellings, whereas on the smaller islands this was not always made possible. For example, in Barbados, where the 'chattel house' evolved for the servants who were forced to carry their houses from one estate to another every time they



were relocated.<sup>15</sup> An abundance of materials for masonry construction and timber for a variety of work were readily available to all sectors of society on the island for construction purposes.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the other islands were suffering reduced crop yields from overworked soils as well as an inability to pick up their economy after severe hurricanes, whereas Jamaican estates were able to recover and new estates and construction continued to be established.<sup>16</sup> A number of settlers relocated to Jamaica from the other islands, as well as war refugees.<sup>17</sup> Finally, the strong mercantile presence on the island, especially in the city of Kingston, helped to develop a more cosmopolitan environment.<sup>18</sup> I believe that these factors all combined to place Jamaican development within its own framework, setting it apart from the other islands of the Caribbean. It could also be argued that there evolved a special quality within the Jamaican "creolization"<sup>19</sup> process which would no doubt account for the variety and richness<sup>20</sup> of the Jamaica-Georgian.

Jamaica-Georgian should only be used to describe buildings which possess Georgian design elements in harmonic combination with local (i.e. Jamaican) building influences. Jamaica-Georgian should also be applied to those Jamaican buildings which possess the quality of being strongly reminiscent of eighteenth-century architectural fashions of Europe in proportion, symmetry, and classicizing motifs, but are so distinctly local that they would sit uncomfortably outside of the local setting.<sup>21</sup> The local flavour of Jamaican buildings was remarked upon by many nineteenth-century visitors to the island.<sup>22</sup>

The style is characterized by a steeply pitched hip roof which is carried down to the wall plate with virtually no overhang. Sometimes this roof is





pyramidal, with a three-in-one slope or steeper. It should be remembered that in the transitional mode, those windows which were left exposed were protected by coolers. In the style of the Jamaica-Georgian the piazza is used to fully protect all openings while providing an outdoor space indoors. The whole building, piazza and inner rooms, is covered under one roof. The piazzas are symmetrically divided by engaged columns into bays around a central entrance door on the principal facade, and this door is sometimes protected by a pedimented portico. As earlier discussed, the columns are usually a flattened version of the Doric order which resemble pilasters applied to the facade.

The overall effect is that of a rectangular, almost square building with facades having a series of horizontal bands consisting of: open base level, solid dado level, semi-solid fenestration level, and solid roof level. This composition does tend to make the building appear foreshortened, but is somewhat relieved by the verticality of the columns in combination with the principal floor being elevated. Single-storey buildings (Fig. 31) are raised at least three to four feet, and two-storey ones are placed on a masonry platform, which in the more elaborate cases are arcaded. The area surrounded by the piazza is the principal floor, to which access is gained by centrally-placed exterior steps on the principal facade which lead from the garden directly to the piazza. These steps are often elaborate with double winders and arcades supporting the risers, and are fitted with iron balustrades.<sup>23</sup> In the more elegant examples the steps terminate under a portico which protect the entry. The back steps on the double-storey buildings lead from the piazza to the covered base area underneath. This base area (Figs. 32 & 33) generally serves as utilitarian space.



An English visitor to the island gave the following description of a rural mansion, which could serve as a general layout of any typical mansion of the early nineteenth century Jamaica-Georgian houses;

"...The mansion consists of an entrance hall, with sleeping chambers on each side; and this hall leads to a piazza about fifty or sixty feet long, which forms the northern facade of the house. At one end of the piazza is likewise a chamber, and at the other end a dining apartment or hall, where we are accustomed to take our meals. The Piazza is about fifteen feet wide, furnished with a few chairs made of cherry-tree wood, a spy-glass, a backgammon board, and chessmen. The furniture of the dining-room is much of the same character, except a set of tables, a sideboard, and a dozen chairs, all of mahogany, and the entrance-hall contains a couple of sofas. The sleeping-rooms are furnished in the same simple manner; a bedstead, with a mattress and a pair of sheets, covered solely with a lawn net to keep off the musquitos, a chest of drawers, and two or three chairs, from the contents of each apartment. There is a narrow piazza on the south side of the house, too hot to inhabit an hour after sun-rise, and the offices are all detached. Nature here requires but shelter from the sun and the rain. In many houses the rooms are not ceiled, and all is on the ground floor, which is generally built, as in this case, on stone buttresses; so that if the piazza happens to have chinks, you see the pigs that you hear grunt in their perambulations beneath, when they break parole."<sup>24</sup>

It should be noted that here is recorded another distinction from the buildings in the transitional mode, in that there was a piazza not only at the front, but also at the back of the house. The double piazza dominated as an alternative to one piazza which wrapped the entire structure as illustrated in figure 30 above. Another point of importance in this description, is that the length of the house is oriented with the piazzas along the north-south axis. In the Jamaican climatic belt, this orientation would allow the least amount of sun penetration through the openings into the living zones.<sup>25</sup>

The timber used on the piazzas was often painted, and the popular colours were white with green jalousies. The white paint was generally applied in the sand-dash technique described earlier, and this is what no doubt gave the appearance of a "Yellow stone-colour".<sup>26</sup> Interior fixtures of many of the



Jamaica-Georgian buildings would have continued in the classical tradition of wainscoting after one of the architectural orders, with the more expensive ones being done in mahogany.

The Jamaica-Georgian style seems to have evolved primarily within the domestic architectural typology on the island, because such private building traditions would tend to tolerate these adaptations. This would explain why there were very few public examples of this style, as they would have been more or less obliged to follow the stricter rules of the formal construction tradition. As the style was to be found across the island, it varied in scale from the larger two-storey mansions to smaller single-storey dwellings. The configuration remained the same both in plan and facade treatment. Whereas the mansions would have facade division into widths from five to nine bays, the smaller houses often possessed simple three bay divisions (Fig. 34).

It should be remembered that the persons who were constructing on the island were of either European or African descent. This presentation has focused on the architectural development of the European practice of the wealthier members of the Jamaican society, which has earlier been defined as the "formal" tradition using examples from some of the larger buildings on the island. However at the other level in the period under examination in this thesis are the small-scale structures, earlier defined as built in the "folk" tradition. Both types of buildings were being constructed at the same time on the island. While it is possible to trace almost precisely when changes occurred within the formal tradition, which utilized more permanent materials for construction, it is less obvious to pin-point the changes over time for those of the folk tradition.

This is not to say however, that changes did not occur, nor that it cannot be recorded within the folk tradition, because what in effect was



happening on the island was that both types of traditions were evolving at the same time, and in this evolutionary process, a fusion of ideas was taking place, culminating in the creolization process, and it is this development which set the stage for the evolution of the Jamaica-Georgian. To understand the Jamaica-Georgian therefore, requires an examination of the role the Africans played in construction on the island, as well as the construction practices of this group concurrent with that of the European.

In Appendix 4 is a commentary by Edward Long which reflect some of the socio-economic and political concerns of the period. With an average population ratio of ten Africans to one European throughout the eighteenth century, the European settlers were uncomfortable, and instituted laws in an effort to reduce it. Edward Long had also put forward a town-planning scheme in his history book with recommendations for its implementation to encourage white settlements in the interior.<sup>27</sup> Because of this ratio, there was increased military personnel for local in addition to foreign protection, and so fines were imposed for non-compliance with the law. Long stated that the fines were not sufficient to cause it to be effectively enforced, so that by the 1770s, the planters, "therefore hire only an overseer and distiller, and sometimes only an overseer, supplying all the other departments on their estate with Negroes".<sup>28</sup>

By 1791, it becomes clear that a greater number of Africans were taking charge not only of their own buildings on the island, but also of the construction sector. There are three important factors which should be highlighted: first, from the earliest days of slavery, the slaves were responsible for erecting their own dwellings;<sup>29</sup> second, not all of the people of African descent had lived in thatched cottages with earth floors;<sup>30</sup> last, as has been





pointed out earlier, some of the very rudimentary dwellings belonged to persons of European descent.<sup>31</sup>

Since about 1720, wrote historian Edward Long, there was a marked decrease in the number of European servants operating as artificers on the island.<sup>32</sup> These positions became filled by Africans imported into the island as slaves.<sup>33</sup> The Africans were often hired out, and a portion of the money they earned was paid to their masters.<sup>34</sup> If we take into consideration that African craftsmen were actively engaged in construction, it may be seen how buildings would result in a cultural mix of technology and design ideas.<sup>35</sup>

The stylistic modifications which culminated with the Jamaica-Georgian could therefore not have come about without African influences. Furthermore, with the increase in the numbers of Free-persons, buildings by people of African descent would far outweigh that of the European. Throughout the period of slavery, legislation was put in place in an attempt to regulate the income of the non-whites,<sup>36</sup> as well as the settlements they established.<sup>37</sup> A diversity of descriptions were given for the "Negro" house, from the most rudimentary ones belonging to the poorest group of the field slaves,<sup>38</sup> to more elaborate ones in accordance with income.<sup>39</sup>

One of the features of African buildings was the incorporation of a verandah, or porch. The verandah was the covered area in front of the house which was formed by the extension of the roof, and supported by posts (Fig. 35). This was usually not enclosed, and extended the full length of the house. The drawing of the Maroon settlement (Fig. 36) suggests that many of the houses had a hipped roof which extended to incorporate a verandah, and the posts of this verandah helped to support the roof. The article describing African building practices in *Columbian Magazine*, was no doubt referring to the



verandah when 'piazza' (sic.) was used in the description, "the largest posts with forks are used for the middle and end supporters of the house; the shorter serve for the piazza posts, frame of the house, and flooring joists; the ends of the pieces which are to be sunk in the earth, being by many builders first burnt to prevent the wood from rotting." <sup>40</sup>

In addition, the observed performance of the steep pitched roof during the hurricanes and the resilience of the wood-framed construction of the Africans during the earthquakes,<sup>41</sup> no doubt led to the general adoption of the steep-pitched roof, as well as the incorporation of the piazza under it. Furthermore, the structural integration of the connections between the roof framing members with that of the framed piazza undoubtedly helped to give some measure of resilience, and so generated wide-scale acceptance.

In the transferral of traditions, the piazza, functioning as the indoor-outdoor space,<sup>42</sup> was enclosed with the jalousie windows which remains as a feature on the houses of the Africans (Fig. 37), and this was combined with the glazed sash window which featured on the European buildings. Of interest is that as the jalousie was incorporated into Georgian, so too the glazed sash window was incorporated into African dwellings by the early part of the nineteenth century (Fig. 38).

By way of contrast, I wish to show some of the few public buildings which did take on some of the transitional character, namely steep-pitch roof and piazza as adjuncts to the Georgian. Examples of such buildings were the barracks. It should be remembered that as accommodation for the military personnel, barrack buildings could cross over into the domestic typology.

One of the earliest illustrated example of barracks (Fig. 39) is that at Kingston which was erected around.1793. <sup>43</sup> Edward Long writing in 1774



described the buildings in Kingston as being much superior to those in the capital city of Spanish Town, <sup>44</sup> and he said that the 'Parade' in Kingston, which is the popular name of the square at the northern extreme of the 1692 town-plan, was laid out with the parish church on the south of this square, and "on the North-West of it are barracks of brick for the troops quartered here". <sup>45</sup> He described it as, "a well-designed and convenient lodgement for two hundred men and their officers. The front which contains apartments for the officers, makes a good appearance". <sup>46</sup> Whether Long was describing the building shown in figure 39, is not evident, but on closer examination of the building in the print, it appears that the projecting wings may have been a later addition, and it is possible that when this occurred, the piazza and portico were incorporated. The building is no longer standing. When this image is examined with the 1816 designs of Fort Nugent barracks at Up Park Camp (Figs. 40 & 41), it appears that a design mode for barracks buildings had evolved with a piazza on only one facade; clearly a part of the transitional mode, and reminiscent of the Jamaica-Georgian style.

Whereas the Kingston barracks adopted a more tropical, or Caribbean appearance, directly opposite on the northeastern section of the Parade was Kingston's Theatre Royal, built around 1800 within the same period as the barracks, but which could have sat comfortably outside of Jamaica in its stricter adherence to the Georgian design principles (Fig. 42) without regard to climate socio-economic considerations, two key aspects of the development of the Jamaican architectural style.

The theatre was rebuilt around 1900 with a more ornate facade reflecting the influence of the regency mode of English Classicism (Fig. 43). After the 1907 earthquake which leveled most of the buildings on the island,



especially those in Kingston including the theatre, it was re-built around 1911. This latest structure is designed in an eclectic version of the Victorian classicizing mode (Fig. 44). In all these designs for the Kingston theatre, it seems that a more international design was chosen, in order to project the public image.

It can be seen that a mere chronology over time would not be a sufficient to identify the Jamaica-Georgian if it was built within this period under discussion. I have tried to show here that there are many factors which should come together for it to be so, including whether the building falls within the public or private image. The following chapter will attempt to elaborate on the Jamaica-Georgian, especially on how it appeared within the setting of the common landscape.





Fig. 30. ca., 1840s lithograph of a "Country Residence (near Kingston)", by J.B.Kidd.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.

Fig. 31 Seville Great House, St. Ann.  
source: Buisseret, Historic Architecture of the Caribbean.

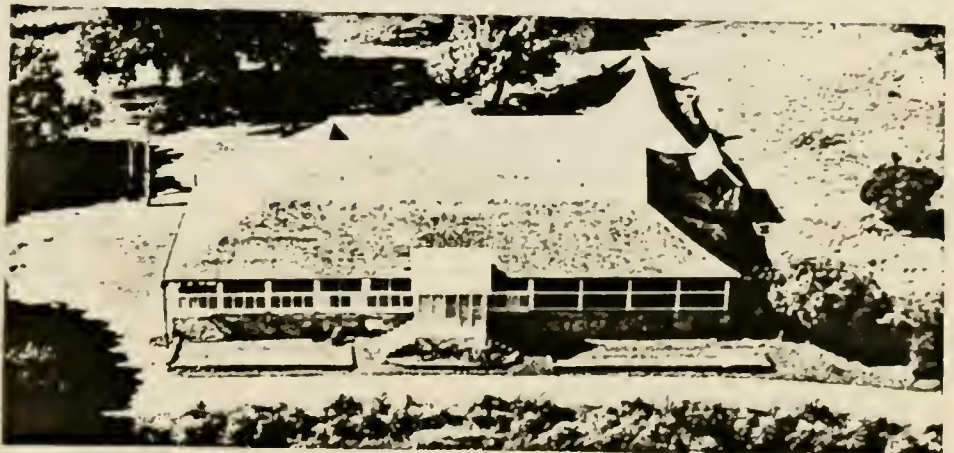




Fig. 32 Detail to show washing under piazza.

Fig. 33 Needlework under piazza.

Two ca., 1808 drawings of activities under piazzas, by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.



*Piazza & Staircase  
4. Part of reproduction in  
at work*



Fig. 34 House in Spanish Town.  
source: Pat Green.





Fig. 35 Detail of ca., 1808 drawing of a sugar estate,  
by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.

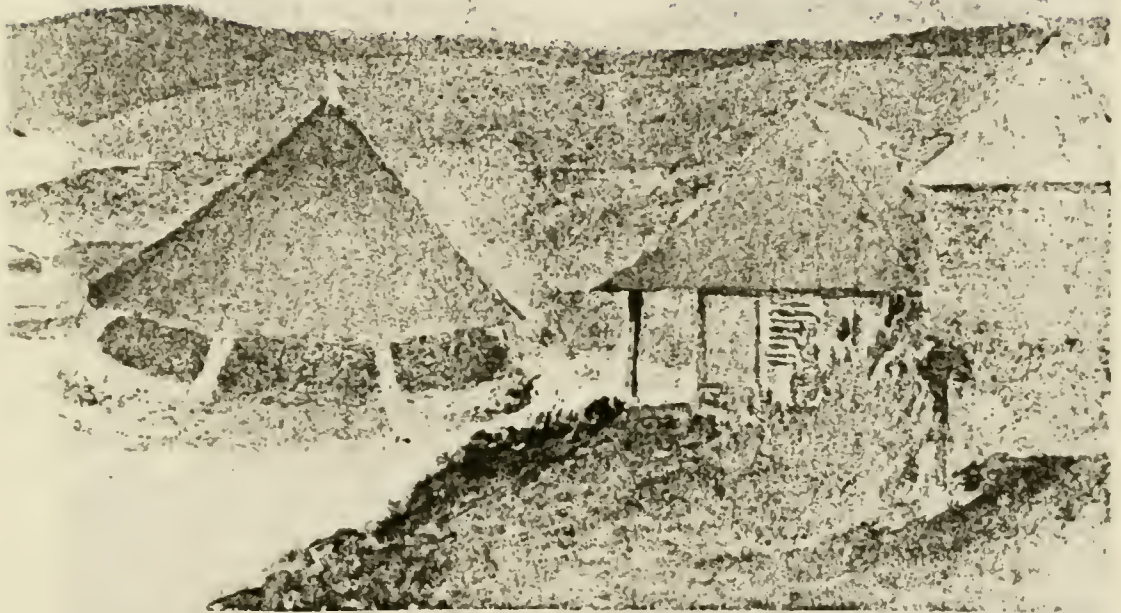






Fig. 36 Detail of 1800 lithograph "Trelawney Town, the Chief Residence of the Maroons".  
source: Edwards (1801), History of the West Indies.

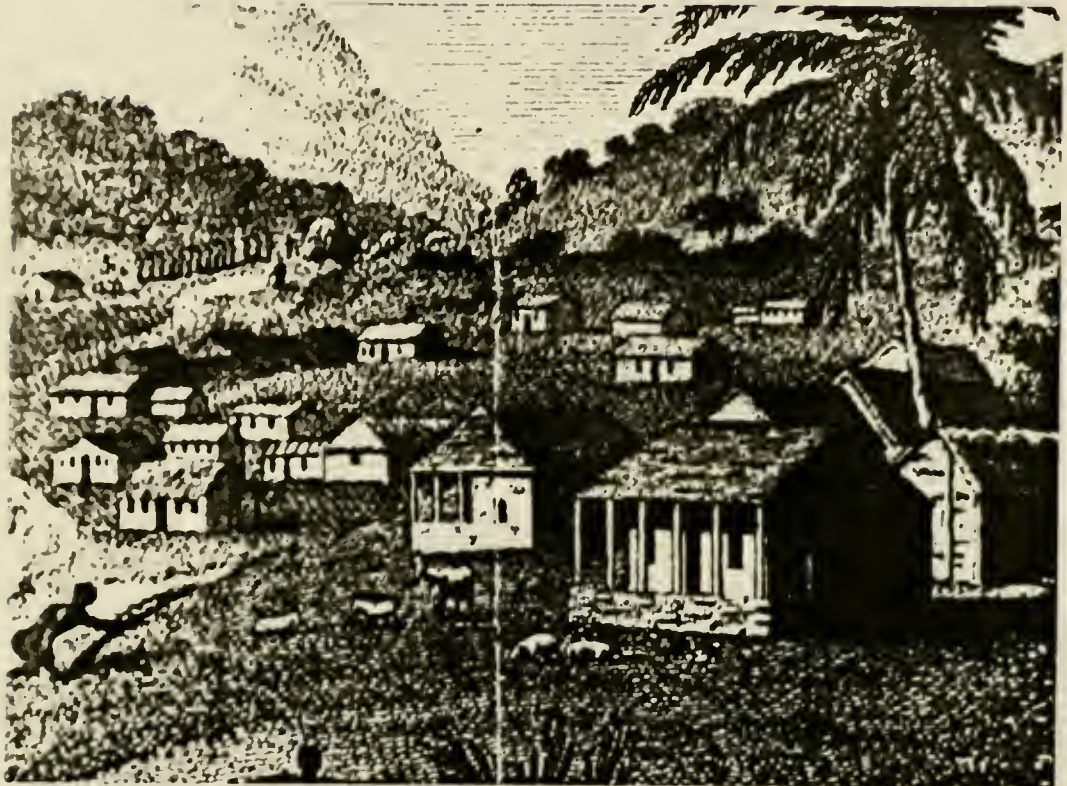




Fig. 37 ca., 1808 drawing of cottage, by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.

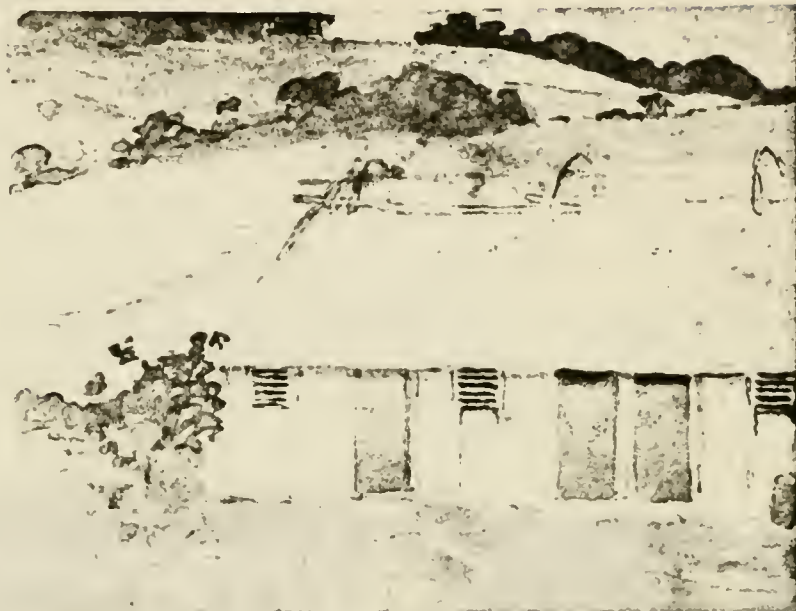


Fig. 38 Cottage near Frome, Westmoreland.  
source: Pat Green.





Fig. 39 ca., 1840s daguerreotype of Kingston Barracks,  
by A. Duperley.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.





Fig. 40 Officers' barracks.  
 Fig. 41 Soldiers' barracks.

Detail of ca., 1816 designs for barracks at Up Park Camp.  
 source: Library of Congress.

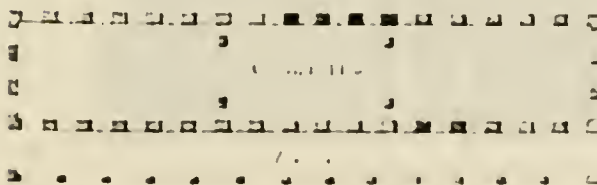
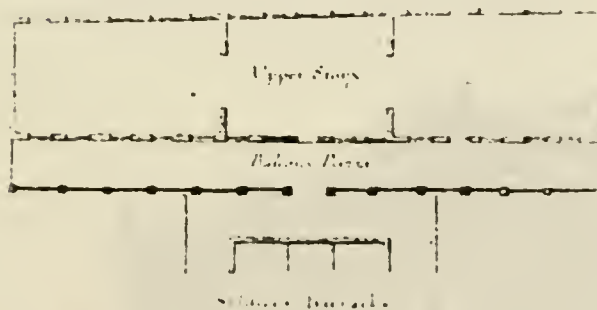
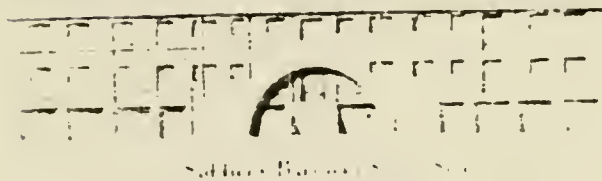
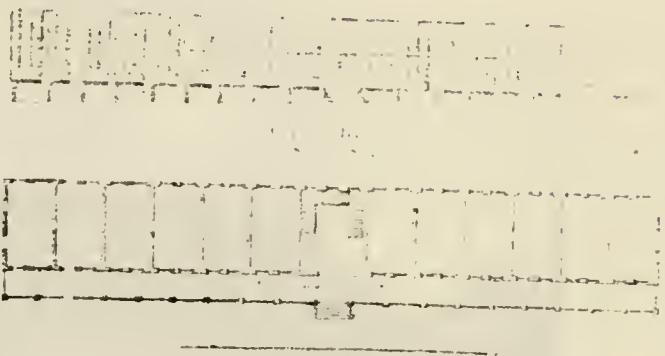






Fig. 42 Building pulled down ca., 1900.

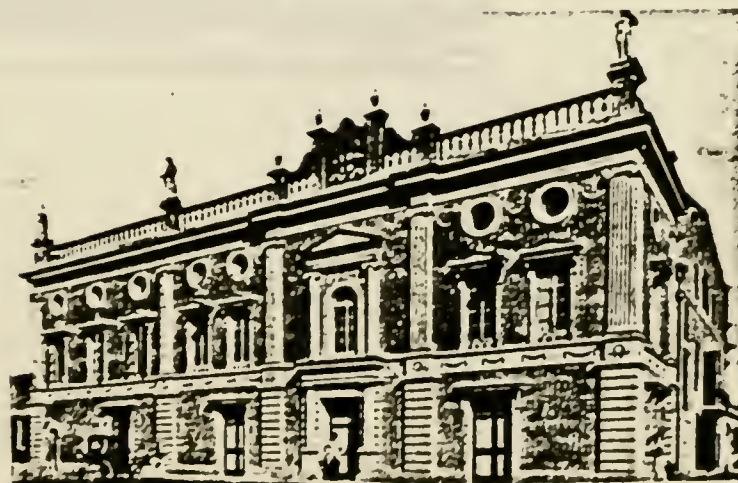
Fig. 43 Building destroyed by 1907 earthquake.

Theatre Royal, Kingston. Views of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century buildings.

source: Wright, Revels in Jamaica.



THEATRE ROYAL AT KINGSTON, AS IT STOOD ON THE PARADE FOR A CENTURY UNTIL PULLED DOWN IN 1900



THEATRE ROYAL, DESTROYED BY THE 1907 EARTHQUAKE



Fig. 44 Theatre Royal re-built and named Ward Theatre, Kingston.  
source: Wright, Revels in Jamaica.



WARD THEATRE, KINGSTON, JAMAICA. PHOTOGRAPH BY J. H. WRIGHT.



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1. Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Architecture: Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (U.S.A.: Penguin Books Ltd., 1985), p. 13.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

3. This thesis has not dealt with the builder of any of the structures, a task which begs for study.

It should be noted that the design features of many of these "anonymous" structures display a fine sense of proportion and rhythm which suggest that Jamaica may also have had its local architects.

Summerson makes mention of James Dawkins (1722-57), "son of a Jamaican merchant of great wealth", who financed and helped to conceive of the expedition of Robert Wood to Syria. Summerson also implied that Dawkins helped finance the Athens expedition of James Stuart and Nicholas Revett. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain, p. 239.

4. It is not evident how the term came about, however it may be credited to the late architect T.A.L. Concannon, who began working on a preservation programme for the historic buildings of Jamaica after his arrival from Britain following the 1951 hurricane Charlie, the last major natural disaster to devastate the island. In a six-page printed handout (not dated), entitled, "Our Architectural Heritage: houses of the 18th and 19th century with special reference to Spanish Town", Concannon wrote, "The Jamaican vernacular, which has been called 'Jamaican Georgian', evolved from massive structures typified by Colbeck Castle and Stokes Hall, with their thick stone walls set solidly upon the ground, fortified (as at Stokes Hall) to resist attack, into a lighter and more graceful brick or brick and timber building, usually on two floors with a verandah on the front, sometimes carried around the sides. Roofs



are shingled, and ingeniously contrived in ground plan to present attractive elevational patterns."

5. In the Post-Emancipation period following 1838, Jamaican buildings developed with open verandahs and very ornate fretwork along the barge boards at roof level, and over the door transoms, etc. Very early buildings followed the proportions and symmetry of the Jamaica-Georgian; later ones became more expressive, especially in the immediate period of rebuilding following the devastation of the 1907 earthquake. I have termed these buildings the "modern vernacular", in order to distinguish them from those of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. See Pat Green, "The development of a Jamaican Architectural Style 1907-1951", Jamaica Journal, 18:3, (Aug. - Oct., 1985), p. 2.

6. Dunn, Sugar and Slaves , p. 299.

7. Picturesque took precedence in all architecture from the end of the eighteenth century and continued throughout the period under discussion. Summerson (1958), Architecture in Britain , p. 275.

8. It should be noted that Concannon used the term 'Jamaican Georgian'. However, because I intend to extend this idea into a more specific framework, I have changed 'Jamaican' to "Jamaica", and added an hyphen. Hereafter the term "Jamaica-Georgian" will be used.

9. Maria Nugent, Journal, p. 26. Lady Nugent, wife of the Governor of Jamaica between 1801-1805, visited Clifton on September 28, 1801, and





wrote in her journal that "its form is the usual one, of one story with a piazza, &c."

In February 1802, she wrote of Mr. Mitchell's Bushy Park that "his house is truly Creole. The wood-work mahogany - galleries, piazzas, porticoes, &c." (p. 56). The house at Hopewell, (p. 76), was described in March, 1802 as, "a good one, quite new, and everything neat about it", including that "this house is perfectly in the creole style". At Seville, also a "creole house" Maria Nugent reinforced that a 'creole' or local derivative of the house, in other words, a 'Jamaican' house, had evolved when she again wrote in March 1802, that, "West India houses are so thin, that one hears every word" (p. 80).

Lewis, Journal of a West India Planter, p. 77. By January 1816, wrote that, "the houses here are generally built and arranged according to one and that same model."

10. Angus Whiteford Acworth, wrote in "Colonial Research Studies #2", Buildings of Architectural interest in the British West Indies (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1951), p. 5, that, "Jamaican architecture is particularly interesting since from Georgian beginnings it developed on distinct lines of its own, so that by 1864 there was to all intents and purposes a Jamaican style, a "vernacular," which though largely forgotten in the past hundred years is still recognizable in contemporary buildings of which the designers have looked at home (Jamaica) rather than abroad for inspiration.

11 . See Appendix 2.

12 . Dunn, Sugar and Slaves, p. 48, "the Barbadians were the first Englishmen to take up sugar making in a big way".



13 . "A white servant's services for ten years amounted to the price of a Negro slave." wrote Williams, From Columbus to Castro , p. 104. He also stated that as the sugar industry became more of an undertaking for the white capitalist, it continued to rest more and more upon black labour.

Williams also suggested (p. 109), that sugar excluded the white labourer from Caribbean agriculture, and that the British and French islands with disproportionate population ratios differed from the other European colonies not monopolized by sugar. For example, Spanish Cuba in 1768 averaged 109,415 Whites to 72, 000 slaves to 22,740 Free-Negroes.

14. Polincks were the main provision grounds of the slaves where they cultivated their crops. These were required by law from as early as 1678. See Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p.133.

See also Edwards , History of the West Indies, 2:4,5 pp. 160-163. They sold their produce as well as bartered for goods and services. In these ways they acquired some personal income, which was reflected in construction. In addition, these lands yielded the materials needed for house building.

15 . Some of these smaller islands were in the possession of a few families, Barbuda was privately owned by the Codrington family in 1791. See Edwards, *ibid.*, 1:3,4 p.514. Also Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 67, and Williams, From Columbus to Castro, p. 102.

16. Edwards, History of the West Indies, 1:2,5 p. 284 also pp. 312-3, for increase in Jamaican estates.



17 . Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 88-9.

18 . Ibid., p. 117.

19 . Ibid., p. xvi, "'Creole society' therefore is the result of a complex situation where a colonial polity reacts, as a whole, to external metropolitan pressures, and at the same time to internal adjustments made necessary by the juxtaposition of master and slave, elite and labourer, in a culturally heterogeneous relationship." He added that Jamaica is an example of a *mulatto* creole society where both groups, European and African, are cultural strangers.

20 . Some of the other buildings of the Caribbean are illustrated in Acworth, Buildings of Architectural interest; Jack Berthelot / Martine Gaumé, Kaz Antiyé: Jan Moun Karété. Caribbean popular dwelling. (Guadeloupe: Éditions Perspectives Créoles, 1982); David Buisseret, Historic architecture of the Caribbean; Pamela Gosner, Caribbean Georgian. the great and small houses of the West Indies. (Washington: Three Continents Press, 1982); Susan Slesin et. al., Caribbean Style. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985); Jashina Alexandra Tarr, A Collaborative Caribbean Preservation Strategy. (Washington: Partners for Livable Spaces, 1982).

21 . When she first arrived on the island in September 1801, Maria Nugent, (see Journal, p. 25) recorded the Jamaican setting as she viewed it from Clifton: "the buildings are like Chinese pavilions, and have a most picturesque effect. . . The plain, from the Liguanea mountains, covered with sugar estates, pennis, negro settlements, &c. and then the city of Kingston,



the town of Port Royal, all so mixed with trees of different sorts, and all so new to an European eye, that it seemed like a paradise;"

22 . Bernard Martin Senior, Jamaica, as it was, as it is, and as it may be, (London: T.Hurst, 1835; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), p. 21: "The town of Black River is (like all others in Jamaica) almost entirely built of wood; the houses being in general two stories high, having shops, called "stores" , and piazzas below, and the dwelling house above. To a stranger, the roofs appear uncommonly neat, being covered with cedar, bullet tree, or broad leaf shingles, all of which soon assume a bluish cast, from the operation of the sun and heavy rains; thereby resembling the finest slates."

23 . See Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 124. The description by Gosse writing in 1844-45 referred to a house which had been constructed by the 1830s.

24 . C.R. Williams, Jamaica: a tour (London, 1827), p. 314-5.

25 . On the north and south wall, in latitudes such as those where Jamaica is situated, 18°N., the altitude of the sun is higher, and so the angle of incidence with the wall is large, which causes very little sun penetration. It is usually recommended that openings should be placed on the north and south elevations.

26 . Senior, Jamaica, p. 21. He no doubt was confusing this with the sand-dashing technique using white paint which would have been used to finish the wooden buildings. He wrote, "For their jalousies and Venetian blinds,





green is invariably adopted, which, contrasted with the yellow stone-colour the exterior of the house represents...".

27 . Long, History of Jamaica, 1:2,2 p. 420-3.

28 . *ibid.*, p. 381.

29 . *ibid.*, 2:4,5 p. 163.

30 . C.R.Williams in , Jamaica , p. 100, described a "Negro house" in 1824, "the house is about forty feet long and almost eighteen wide, built of boards and covered with fan-palms, divided into five apartments, of which the principal is eighteen feet square. This is the hall; the other apartments lead from it; three serving for sleeping rooms, and the fourth for a sort of pantry. There is a door at each end of this hall through which the smoke escapes when it is necessary to boil the pot; at no other time is there occasion for fire".

31. In "Excerpts from the Columbian Magazine, or Monthly Miscellany for April, 1797" by an anonymous writer on the "Characteristic Traits of the Creolian and African Negroes in the Island, etc., etc.," . . . , transcribed by Douglas Armstrong in "The 'Old Village' at Drax Hall Plantation: an archaeological examination of an Afro-Jamaican settlement", (Ph.D. diss., University of California 1983), p. 359: "the floors are, frequently, in white persons houses, and almost always among the Negroes, no other that (sic) the native soil."

32 . Long, History of Jamaica, 1:2,2 p. 381.



33. " WANTED TO HIRE, to work at an estate in ST. MARY's, for any time not exceeding six months, six or more NEGRO CARPENTERS. Good encouragement will be given, on application to JOHN COSENS, Esq. St. Mary's, or to the Subscribers in this town" (signed, Thomas Hibbert & Nephew) Advertisement in Royal Gazette, Kingston, 8 July, 1779; in Pat Green, "'Small settlers' houses in Chapelton: Microcosm of the Jamaican Vernacular" Jamaica Journal , 17:3 (Aug., - Oct., 1984) pp. 39-45.

34 . Ibid., 2:3,5 p. 486.

35 . Armstrong, "Drax Hall", p. 357, "The artificers being principally Negroes, and their work, even when for their employers, little different from their own, a description of one building will serve with trifling variation for that of the masters and the servants".

36 . In 1751 an Act was passed to "prevent the Inconveniences arising from Exorbitant Grants. . . made by white persons to Negroes, . . . and to limit such grants". F.R. Augier and Shirley C. Gordon, Sources of West Indian History. (London: Longman, Green and Co. Ltd., 1967), p. 18.

37 . St. Jago de la Vega, Jamaica. The Laws of Jamaica, A. D. 1768, George III. c.4, an Act to allow for the removal of houses covered with thatch, &c. See also December 19,1770, Act I, 3-4, "An Act for the remedying the Inconveniences which may arise from the Number of Negro Huts and Houses, built in and about the Towns of Saint Jago de la Vega, Port Royal and Kingston."



38 . Edwards, History of the West Indies, 2:4,5 p. 164, "In general, a cottage for one Negro and his wife, is from fifteen to twenty feet in length, and divided into two apartments."

39 . Ibid., p. 165, "This account of their accommodation, however, is confined to the lowest among the field-negroes: tradesman and domestics are in general vastly better lodged and provided. Many of these have larger houses with boarded floors, and are accommodated (at their own expence it is true) with very decent furniture".

40 . Armstrong, "Drax Hall", p. 357-8.

41 . I have studied some of the photographs of the different methods of construction which survived the the 1907 earthquake, and so am able to make this conclusion.

Furthermore, Joseph Norris, a Quaker resident on the island at the time of the 1692 earthquake in Port Royal, wrote to Richard Hawkins in Philadelphia, dated 20th - 4th., mo. 1692. that, "we (Friends) are now scattered and those that have family are full of care, lodging in any small huts in the Fields - we got very good lodgings in Carts covered with Sheets and Blankets for several days, but now we have hired a Negro Cabbin (sic.), which does very well...". Taken from the Norris Papers, at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. (H.S.P.).

42 . Lady Nugent, in her Journal, p. 98, 114, & 125 etc., wrote that she took frequent exercise with her family on the piazza at Government Pen.



43 . Date is given in Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 127. The description given in Long appears to fit this building, which suggests that it may have been erected prior to 1774.

44 . Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,8 p. 103.

45 . Ibid.

46 . Ibid., p. 107.





## CONCLUSION

### THE "JAMAICA-GEORGIAN" IN THE COMMON LANDSCAPE

Examination of the Jamaican common landscape of the nineteenth century would reveal that the the Jamaica-Georgian style has been expressed in a variety of ways while still maintaining the cohesion of a style.

Distinctions of the Jamaica-Georgian reflect two basic concerns: structure, and function. Two structural variants occur at the roof level yet both provide continuous cover of the whole including the piazza. Two versions appear to recur. I shall term here the single-pitch version as the 'end-bearing' type and the double pitch version as the 'core-bearing' type. On the other hand, the use concerns suggest a difference in locality, whether it appears in towns or villages, and so I have applied the terms 'urban-domestic' and 'rural-domestic'. There is another variation of the Jamaica-Georgian which I shall simply mention here, that is the 'commercial' version.

The 'end-bearing' version (see figure 30) displays a continuous single pitch where the roof is supported fully by the outer bearing walls including that of the piazza, and I believe that this version represents the end of the evolution. The other 'core-bearing' version possesses a double pitch (Fig. 45), where the walls of a central masonry core support the roof which is cantilevered outward on all sides at another angle, different from that over the core. This latter version would suggest either a very early core around which



the piazza was wrapped, which I suspect is the case with the Spanish Town examples, or that the construction followed a more archaic construction method.

In the previous chapter where I introduced the Jamaica-Georgian, I used a rural-domestic as the epitome of the style. The urban-domestic however, is to be found in the narrow restricted sites which exist in some towns often resulting in continuous rows of buildings (Fig. 46). In this case, the piazza would not be able to fully wrap the building, and instead, is to be found in all respects adhering to the principles of the style on the principal facade. At times the piazza is also repeated at the rear. The commercial version represents those which have a shop or store below and dwelling above.

By the close of the eighteenth century, there were four distinct components which came together to create the common landscape in Jamaica which I shall term here 'urbanscape', 'plantationscape', 'estatescape', and 'villagescape'. I also believe that their appearance on the landscape followed this order with the plantationscape and estatescape being more or less simultaneous. I shall attempt to highlight below how the different versions of Jamaica-Georgian appeared within common landscape.

The urbanscape is used here to describe the ordering of buildings around a formal plan, which includes a square around which the public buildings were located. A grid was the pattern chosen for Spanish Town (established around 1534),<sup>1</sup> and this town plan continued to be used by the British after they captured the island: at Port Royal (1655)<sup>2</sup> where attempts were made to order the ribbon development which came about along the sea front of the tiny palisades strip,<sup>3</sup> at Kingston (1634) where a grid was laid out to relocate the mercantile centre to the other side of the harbour after the



earthquake, <sup>4</sup> at Falmouth (1791) on the north side of the island.<sup>5</sup> These are some of the very early urbanscapes which still have their original centres intact today, except for Port Royal which lies buried on the seabed.

Close examination of many prints showing the urbanscape of Kingston in the mid-nineteenth century (Figs. 47 & 48), reveals a number of interesting variations in the design treatment of the piazzas as well as dormer windows in the roof. These however, have not altered the style in any way but I believe have helped to reinforce its power, in that it can accommodate stylistic expression and still maintain its integrity. Most of the Kingston buildings shown here were all replaced around 1910 by reinforced concrete ones after the devastation of the 1907 earthquake (Fig. 49) which was followed by fires.

In the urban setting therefore, as long as the roof was constructed to fully integrate the piazza giving that wholeness to the design, then there can be no doubt that the building was a part of the style. The examples shown here all help to create the street edge, however it is also possible to find urban examples of the Jamaica-Georgian set back from the street and behind a garden wall. The buildings were generally elevated above the unpaved streets, and were ascended by steps which came directly off the street. Many of these buildings possessed cellars below.<sup>6</sup>

The first two examples situated on the left of figure 47 showing Kings Street, offer fine examples of the commercial type, with the shop-piazza and gallery above. The gallery is used here to describe the piazza of the dwelling above the shops. It projected over the street pavement, providing the shaded walkway and entrance to shops below. The third building adjacent to it is no doubt the Kingston court-house. This print is entitled "election day in front of the court-house". If this is so, then it would be an excellent example of the



Jamaica-Georgian in use on a public building displaying all the ichonography of the style.

Plantations under English rule of the island were legislated in 1662,<sup>7</sup> and the term refers here to the landscape of the sugar estates. It is important that this distinction be made because the acreage on such a property ranged from three hundred to three thousand, with a 900-acre<sup>8</sup> one being considered an average sized property (Fig. 50). Sugar production carried with it certain basic concomitants. The clustering of buildings on the plantation landscape could be likened to an English manorial village centred around the Great House<sup>9</sup> which was located on the most prominent position of the property. The planter's house overlooked the other buildings which included sugar-works buildings (boiler house, still house, trash house), as well as the dwellings of the administrative personnel, servants,<sup>10</sup> and slaves sometimes numbering over two hundred.

Outside of the urban setting the Jamaica-Georgian style would follow very closely the model laid down in the previous chapter, with the variations of a north and south piazza as well as one wrapping the entire building. It is my suspicion here that the north and south piazza variation may have come about for two reasons, the first being financial, and the second being an attempt to emulate the urban-domestic.

The plantations suggest an interesting social arrangement. Most of the wealthier planters would have desired to construct dwellings in the strict Georgian design style<sup>11</sup> as discussed in chapter three above so the plantationscape, would at a glance begin to break down the social order through its architectural configurations. It should have been possible to discern what type of planter owned a particular plantation. An absentee proprietor, that





is, one not resident on the island, might not have built a Great House on his property, and if this was built, then it would no doubt have been a Georgian building. A new arrivee would have erected a building in the Georgian style, whereas, those proprietors who were either born on the island or who had been resident over a long period may have erected a Jamaica-Georgian building. Outside of this latter group of 'native', or creole proprietors, the Jamaica-Georgian buildings on the plantationscape would have been the dwellings of those hired to administer the plantation (Fig. 51).<sup>12</sup> The Hakewill painting of the bookkeeper's dwelling showed that it belonged to the Jamaica-Georgian style, and all the others in the picture are reminiscent of the style.

The estates however, were those properties (Fig. 52) which belonged to the "small settlers".<sup>13</sup> An estate for these settlers was legally defined as not exceeding five hundred acres.<sup>14</sup> These estates were granted to the poorer whites to encourage settlement of the interior. The crops which were cultivated included coffee and pimento.<sup>15</sup> Some had grass pens and reared livestock, carried out lumbering, and so on. The landscape of these would therefore differ from sugar-plantations because such activities required little else beside the estate house and a few outbuildings. Estates usually had fewer slaves so there would also be fewer 'Negro' houses to create the clustering typical to sugar plantations. A common feature of these estates, be they coffee, (Fig. 53) cocoa, pimento or ginger, is the barbecue, a large paved drying area close to the house on which berries are left in the sun to dry.

Estatescapes were very much in the mode of the Jamaica-Georgian. It is to be noted here that 'mode' as opposed to style is used to reflect those buildings which were eclectic variations of the style (Figs. 54 &55). Whereas the wealthy merchants in the urbanscape could afford to elaborate and



classically embellish their structures, and no doubt accomplish this as a complete design and construction process under an individual qualified to do so, the poorer farmers on the estates were probably forced to erect their dwellings over an extended period, or by making periodic modifications to existing fabric. In so doing some of the prerequisites of the style, such as symmetry and proportion, have become lost, and therefore can only be considered as a Jamaica-Georgian mode.

When I speak of villagescape I embark on a topic of immense interest yet I am not aware of any studies on the subject. Villagescape (Fig. 56) is used here to describe the less formal arrangement of towns which seem to have sprung up along the arterial routes traversing the island. I suspect that these originated as market centres<sup>16</sup>, and increased in importance as the Africans congregated at them on Sundays, their legal day of rest from servitude, to buy, sell, and exchange goods and produce.<sup>17</sup> The usual setting includes a large tree which provides shade for market activities, and also provides some sort of ordering of the villagescape, as it was not uncommon to find the buildings clustered around these trees to form a 'square'.<sup>18</sup> A tavern is also a common feature of this cluster. The Jamaica-Georgian building in this villagescape of Old Harbour is identified as a tavern, and it illustrates the structural roof variant of core-bearing type discussed above.

This last aspect of the common landscape could therefore be attributed to those persons of African descent. I suspect that this landscape was developed by the freed persons, and or the artificers, including those in slavery who possessed a certain amount of mobility. Here the square would have been a centre for plying trades. The Berryman water-colour of Old Harbour shown here, illustrates a number of buildings. with some features of



the African ones discussed under chapter five, and certainly similar to some shown in the maroon settlements (see figure 36).

The common landscape holds a clue to many of the questions, and possible answers on the evolution of the Jamaican architectural form, which I have tried to introduce here as it evolved over the eighteenth, and into the nineteenth century. I have attempted to put forward a framework for analysis on which the study of Jamaican architecture can be expanded. I hope that this will lead to a rationalization of the evolutionary process up until Emancipation, and that this framework will set the pattern for study of buildings which followed.



Fig. 45 Detail of ca., 1808 drawing of Old Harbour showing tavern,  
by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.

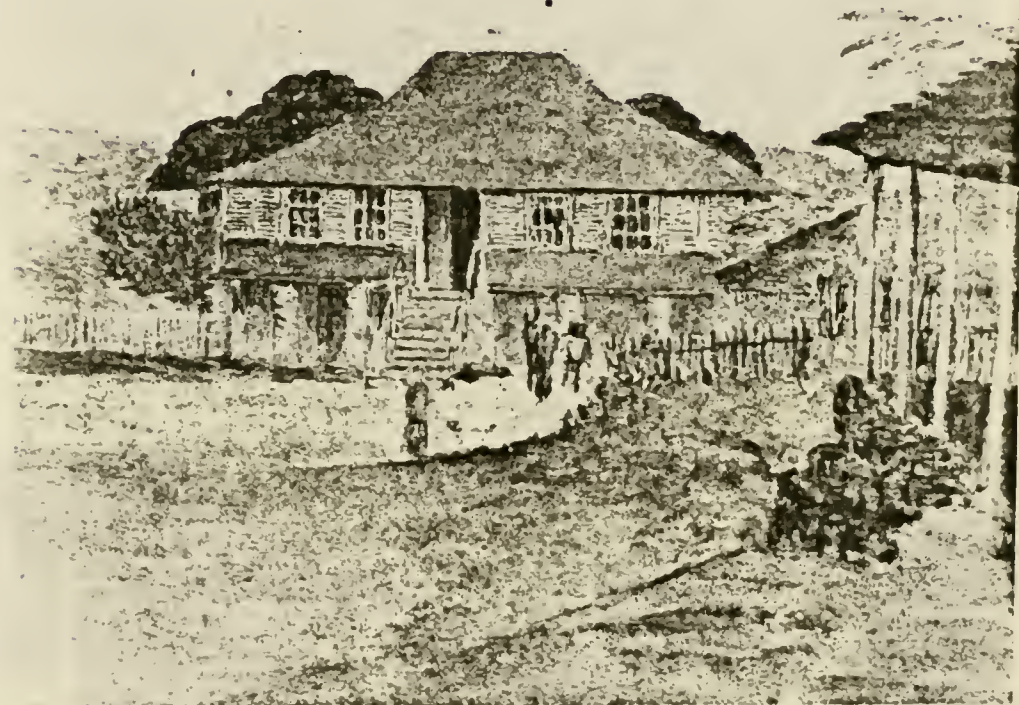






Fig. 46 ca., 1838 lithograph of Kingston looking north, by J.B.Kidd.  
source: Clarke, Kingston Jamaica.

Fig. 47 ca., 1840s daguerreotype of court-house  
taken on election day in Kingston, by A. Duperley.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.

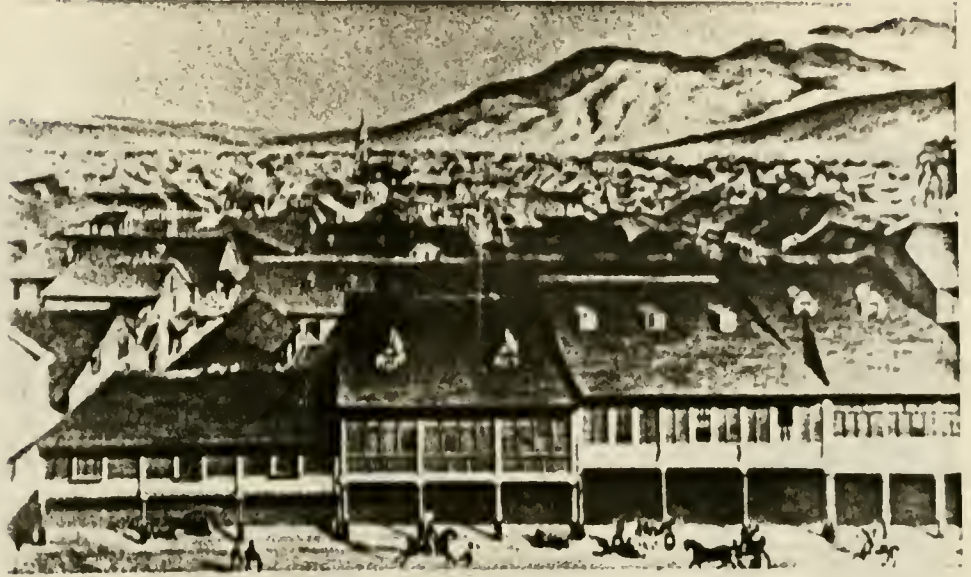




Fig. 48 ca., 1840s daguerreotype of Church Street, Kingston,  
by A. Duperley.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.





Fig. 49 Photograph of 1907 earthquake damage in Kingston.  
source: Library of Congress.





Fig. 50 ca., 1825 lithograph of Montpelier plantation, Hanover,  
by J. Hakewill.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.







Fig. 51 ca., 1825 lithograph of Holland plantation, St. Thomas,  
by J. Hakewill.  
source: National Library of Jamaica.



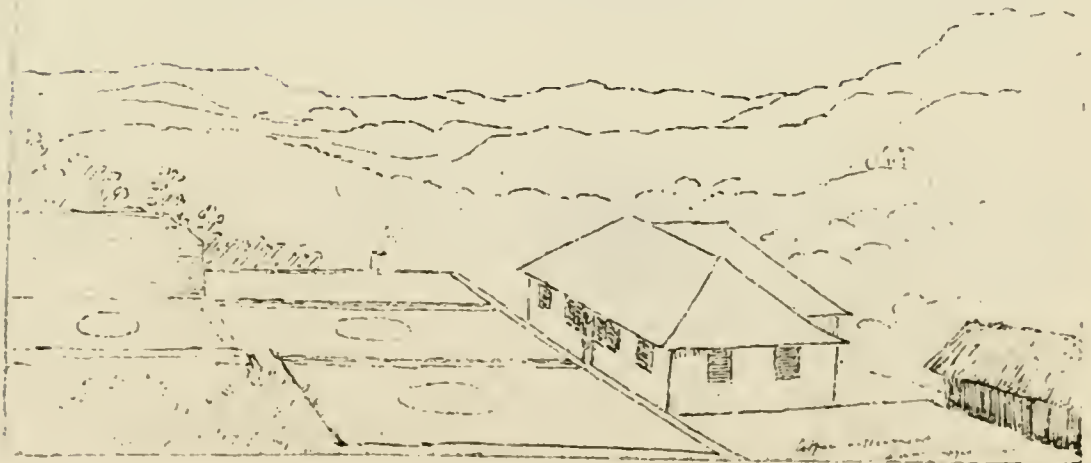


Fig. 52 ca., 1825 lithograph of Cardiff Hall Estate,  
St. Ann, by J. Hakewill.

source: National Library of Jamaica.

Fig. 53 ca., 1808 drawing of Duns Logie Green coffee settlement,  
by W. Berryman.

source: Library of Congress.



*Coffee settlement Duns Logie Green*



- Fig. 54 Asymmetrical eight bay house in the country.  
Fig. 55 Asymmetrical four bay house in the country.

Two ca., 1808 drawings of houses in the countryside,  
by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.

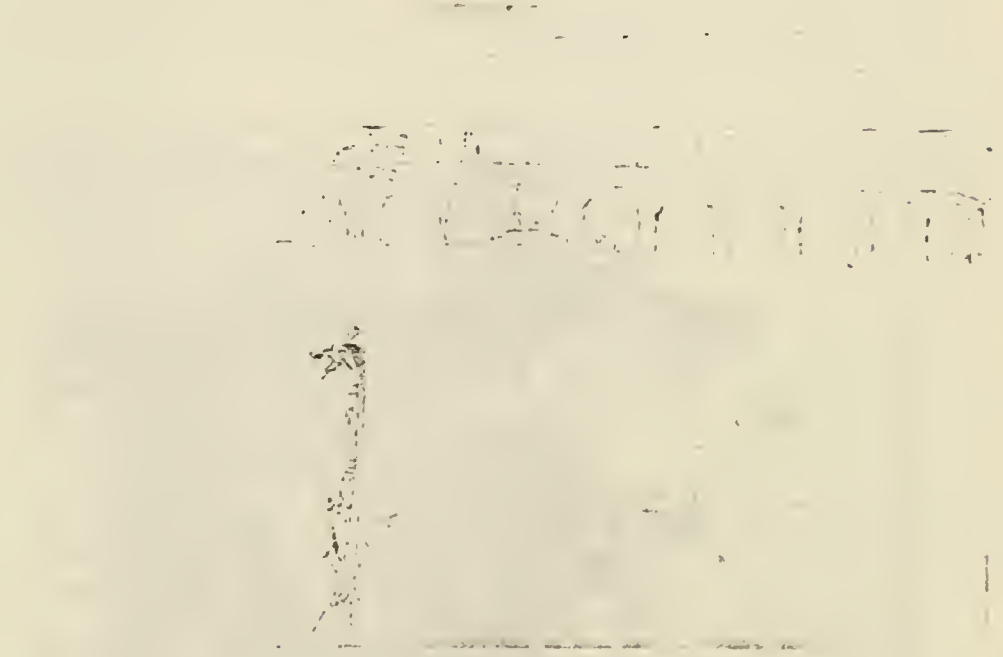




Fig. 56 ca., 1808 drawing of Old Harbour village, by W. Berryman.  
source: Library of Congress.







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1. See Augier and Gordon, Sources, p. 32. In precis of letter to the King of Spain, 1534 I have not encountered a primary reference for this date. Of the period A.D.1538-1543 when the Spanish occupied Jamaica. See Bridges, The Annals of Jamaica, p. 168: "... and a square was laid out in the Spanish-American fashion, which has ever since remained. The seat of government was soon after transferred thither, and a nucleus was thus formed...".
  2. Pawson and Buisseret, Port Royal, p. 5.
  3. Ibid., p. 81-7.
  4. See Clarke, Kingston, p. 8-9; also, Williams, "Early Kingston", p. 3-9.
  5. Georgian Society of Jamaica, Falmouth. (Kingston, Jamaica 1972).
  6. See Curtin, "Hibbert house". The building was set back from the street behind a garden wall and possessed a cellar below.
  7. Augier and Gordon, Sources, p. 34.
  8. Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 131.
  9. The term 'great house' is much abused in Jamaica, and currently is being applied to any large dwelling built before, say the 1950s. I have argued that it should only be used to describe the house of the proprietor on a



sugar plantation, and that "Estate House" should be used for the houses on the other settlements.

For a methodology see Pat Green, "When should a great house be a 'Great House'?", paper presented as part of the session on "Methods" at the Social History Workshop, Dept., of History, the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, Jamaica, Nov., 5-6, 1985.

10. Under the system of slavery, servants were either Whites, Blacks or Mulattoes, and these persons were obliged to work; slaves were forced to work.

11. "This house is a very good one, every thing neat about it, and it commands a view of a very beautiful country. The estate is just now worth clear £18,000 per annum. It is wonderful the immense sums of money realized by sugar in this country, and yet the estates are in debt", wrote Lady Nugent about her visit to Hopewell sugar plantation. It is interesting to note that she did not describe the house as being "creole". Nugent, Journal, pp. 77-8.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 69, "Soon after breakfast we went to another estate of Mr. Taylor's, a few miles from Golden Grove, called Holland, . . . The house is a good one, but the situation is low and damp, and I should think not healthy."

Mr. Simon Taylor was reputed to have been the wealthiest man on the island, and owned several properties. He resided on the Liguanea plains outside Kingston. This house has been extensively retrofitted, and currently serves as the official residence of the Prime Minister. The house where Lady Nugent stayed at Holland may have been the overseer's dwelling. It was common for those planters who could afford it, to have their property painted. I suspect that in this case, Taylor had his staff houses done to attract personnel.

13. "The most numerous and important group of 'other' whites in Jamaica, were the smallholders and pen-keepers". Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society, p. 146.



He argued that they were important because they helped to diversify the economy, preventing sugar from becoming a mono-crop.

14. Ibid.

15. Augier and Gordon, Sources, p. 62. Coffee is a crop which white small settlers can manage, "the poorer sort of people, whose stocks and plantations are small, cannot carry on the same (sugar)...".

16. Many of these have developed into market towns which became linked by the railway at the close of the nineteenth century in the post-Emancipation period to facilitate the increasing group of "freeholders".

Freeholders is the term used to define this new group of farmers: "a large increase has taken place from 1838 to 1840 in the number of proprietors of small freeholds in the several rural parishes" Ibid., p. 214.

This group continued to increase well into the twentieth century, and to market their produce in these traditional ways. It should be noted that these activities helped to establish two new building types on the island, the railway and market buildings. The water-colour from around 1807 of Old Harbour, shown in figure 55, is a very good example, because this village has developed into a 'market town' with major importance in the network, and continues to be serviced by the railway today.

17. Long, History of Jamaica, 2:3,5 p. 491-2.

18. I have observed that the term 'square' is common in the language today across Jamaica; even within the bigger towns, certain sections are referred to as the 'square'. In the very small villages, generally termed "districts" in the deeper rural areas, this 'square' may consist of sometimes only three buildings stretched along the roadside, one of which is always the grocery shop of the district with the shopkeeper living above. The Chinese who began entering Jamaica in the post-Emancipation period as indentured



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labourers, soon assumed the role of shopkeepers across the island, and many of these shops are still owned and run by this ethnic group. A bar is usually also found in this 'square'.





## APPENDIX 1

### HOUSE PLANS: SPANISH, ENGLISH, AFRICAN

#### Description of Spanish House by Long (1774):

...The Spaniards had to guard against the sudden concussion of earthquakes, the impetuosity of hurricanes, the drift of the heavy periodical rains, and the heat of the sun. We find their houses excellently well contrived to answer these different purposes; with the further merit, that the materials of which they are built were cautiously prepared in such a manner as to become extremely durable. A certain number of posts of the hardest timber, generally *lignum vitae*, braziletto, or fustick, of about eighteen feet in length, and six to eight inches diameter, being first well-seasoned and hardened in smoak, were fixed at proper distances to the depth of two or three feet in the ground; then a wall of brick, inclosing these posts, was carried up with very strong mortar to the plate, which was pinned with wooden spikes to the top of the posts. The main rafters were small, but, being of the like hard wood, and perfectly well-seasoned, were sufficiently strong: these were likewise pinned upon each other, and at their angle of inflection at top formed a crutch, to receive the ridge-pole. The smaller rafters were the lesser ebony trees, stript of their bark, hardened in smoak, notched at bottom, and being placed at the distance of about eighteen inches from each other, were pinned to the plate. Athwart these



small rafters, a stratum of the wild cane (*arundo Indica Bambu Species*), previously smoked, was tied on by way of wattling, with straps made of the bark of the mahoe or mangrove trees. Upon these wattles, some mortar was laid, to the thickness of about four inches; and the whole covered with large pantiles, well bedded in. The thickness of these roofs, from the outward shell or tile-covering, to the ceiling within, was about eight or ten inches. A canopy of so solid a texture was certainly well contrived to shelter the inhabitants from the disagreeable effects of a vertical sun...

...Their [Spaniards] houses had no piazzas originally: the English made these additions, in order to render them more cool and pleasant. But they have been attended with some inconvenience in another respect; for, the streets being laid out, some of thirty, and others not exceeding forty, feet in breadth, these sheds incroach so far on each side, that the midway is too narrow, and liable to obstruct carriages...

...They are, for the most part, disposed in three divisions: the centre room is a hall, communicating at each end with a bed-chamber; the back part, usually a shed, is divided in the same manner, and communicates with the front, or principal hall, by an arch, which in some houses is wainscoted with mahogany, in others covered only with plaister...

...The windows of the Spanish houses were generally made with little turned pillars, placed upright, and shutters on the inside...

Extract from: Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 pp. 19-22.



### Description of English House by Long (1774):

...The English in general have copied the ichnography of the Spanish houses with great uniformity. They are for the most part, disposed in three divisions: the centre room is a hall, communicating at each end with a bed-chamber; the back part, usually a shed, is divided in the same manner, and communicates with the front, or principal hall, by an arch, which in some houses is wainscoted with mahogany, in others covered only with plaister. They are small and rather inconvenient for a family, especially when it consists of six or seven persons. Great alterations have, however, been made by the English inhabitants; and several of these old houses have received very considerable additions, which make them more roomy and commodious. In the piazzas many families may be said to live the greater part of their time; the shade and refreshing breeze inviting them to employ most hours there, that are not devoted to eating, drinking, and sleeping: nor can there be a more agreeable indulgence enjoyed by the master of the house, than to sit in an elbow-chair, with his feet resting against one of the piazza-columns; in this attitude he converses, smoakes his pipe, or quaffs his tea, in all the luxury of indolence. Almost every dwelling house on the island is detached from the kitchen and other offices; which, though different from the practice in England, is a very judicious arrangement for this climate, where the fumes and smoak of the kitchen, and the stench of other necessary offices, would be intolerable in too near a neighbourhood. But few of the inhabitants are curious in the decorations



of their apartments: the hall are seldom adorned with any thing better than a large pier-glass or two, a few prints, or maps: the greatest expence is bestowed upon the arch of the principal hall, which is generally of mahogany, and in some houses well-executed. They have for the most part fluted pilasters, supporting a regular entablature, ornamented with modillions, dentils, &c. But it is more frequent to behold all the orders of architecture confusedly jumbled together. The windows of the Spanish houses were generally made with little turned pillars, placed upright, and shutters on the inside. However convenient these might have been for the constant admission of air, they are at present almost totally exploded, and sashes more generally in use: to which are added jealousy-shutters, or Venetian blinds, which admit the air freely, and exclude the sun-shine. It is of late that the planters have paid much attention to the elegance in their habitations: their general rule was, to build what they called a make-shift; so that it was not unusual to see a plantation adorned with a very expensive set of works, of brick or stone, well-executed; and the owner residing in a miserable, thatched hovel, hastily put together with wattles and plaister, damp, unwholesome, and infested with every species of vermin. .But the houses in general, as well in the country-parts as the towns, have been greatly improved within these last twenty years. [c1755] The furniture of some of them is so extremely costly; and others constructed in so magnificent a style, and in such durable materials, as to shew that they were not intended for a mere temporary residence...

Extract from: Long, History of Jamaica, 2:2,7 pp. 21-2.





### Description of English House by C. R. Williams (1827):

...The house of the old gentleman stands on an elevation, perhaps a hundred and fifty feet above the sea, backed by everlasting woods and wildernesses, commanding a most enchanting view of the two harbours of Port Antonia, part of the town, Tichfield, and a grand expanse of the ocean to the north. The mansion consists of an entrance hall, with sleeping chambers on each side; and this hall leads to a piazza about fifty or sixty feet long, which forms the northern facade of the house. At one end of the piazza is likewise a chamber, and at the other end a dining apartment or hall, where we are accustomed to take our meals. The Piazza is about fifteen feet wide, furnished with a few chairs made of cherry-tree wood, a spy-glass, a backgammon board, and chessmen. The furniture of the dining-room is much of the same character, except a set of tables, a sideboard, and a dozen chairs, all of mahogany, and the entrance-hall contains a couple of sofas. The sleeping-rooms are furnished in the same simple manner; a bedstead, with a mattress and a pair of sheets, covered solely with a lawn net to keep off the musquitos, a chest of drawers, and two or three chairs, from the contents of each apartment. There is a narrow piazza on the south side of the house, too hot to inhabit an hour after sun-rise, and the offices are all detached. Nature here requires but shelter from the sun and the rain. In many houses the rooms are not ceiled, and all is on the ground floor, which is generally built, as in this case, on stone buttresses; so that if the piazza happens to have chinks, you see the pigs that you hear grunt in their perambulations beneath, when they break parole...



...After breakfast of strong coffee, having a rank taste of oil from being too new, roasted plantains, and excellent cocos, lubricated with salt butter, my old friend takes a ride to inspect his negroes at work, or to hear the news at the Bay, as the town is called. [*Dragon Bay?*] He indulges in a nap (a siesta) sometimes from one to two, and promenades or plays a game of chess in the piazza till three, when dinner is announced; and then another promenade or ride till dusk fills up our day. He goes to bed at eight o'clock, and rises at five...

...At nights the females retire to their own houses or to those of their parents, no accommodations being thought of for servants; the men seek the abode of their wives, and the waiting-boys lie on the floor in the hall, or at their master's doors...

Extract from: C.R. Williams, Jamaica: A Tour, (London, 1827) pp. 314-17.

### Description of English House by Gosse (1844-5):

...A flight of stone steps, with iron balustrades, on which run beautiful twining or creeping plants ..., leads the visitor up to the front door, and he is immediately ushered into a spacious hall, of the form of a cross, extending the whole length and breadth of the house. This large hall is characteristic of all Jamaica houses; it forms the principal sitting room; and, from its shape, admits the cooling breeze to sweep through it, whenever there is a breath of fresh air. The two square areas formed by one side of the cross are filled by bedrooms;



but with these exceptions the whole of the sides and ends of the hall are either occupied by windows, or open, and furnished with jalousies, a broad sort of transverse Venetian blinds, which freely admit the air while they exclude the glare of light. This large and cool apartment is furnished with sofas, ottoman, tables, chairs, etc., not differing from ours; but there is no fireplaces, nor any carpet. Instead of the latter the floor is made of the most beautiful of the native woods, in the selection of which much taste is displayed, as also in the arrangement, so that the various colours of the wood may harmonize or contrast well with each other. Mahogany, green-heart, bread nut, and blood-heart are among the trees whose timber is employed for floors. Great hardness is an indispensable requisite in the wood used, and capability of receiving a high polish, which is given and maintained with great labour. Scarcely anything surprises an European more than to tread on floors so beautifully polished as the finest tables of our drawing rooms...

Extract from: Phillip H. Gosse, A Naturalist's Sojourn in Jamaica [1844-5] (London, 1851) pp. 156-7; quoted in Edward Brathwaite, The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica 1770-1820 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978) pp. 124-6.

#### Description of "Negro-House" by Edwards (1819):

...The cottages of the Negroes usually compose a small village, the situation of which, for the sake of convenience and water, is commonly near the buildings in which the manufacture of sugar is conducted. They are seldom placed with much regard to order; but, being always intermingled with fruit-tress,



particularly the banana, the avocado-pear, and the orange (the Negroes' own planting and property) they sometimes exhibit a pleasing and picturesque appearance, To affirm that they are very tolerable habitations, according to the idea which an untraveled Englishman would probably form the word, were an insult to the reader; but it may honestly be said , that, allowing for the difference of climate, they far excel the cabins of the Scotch and Irish peasants, as described by Mr. Young, and other travellers. They are such, at least, as are commensurate to the desires and necessities of their inhabitants, who build them according to their own fancy both in size and shape, the master allowing the timber, and frequently permitting the estate's carpenters to assist in the building. In general, the cottage for one Negro and his wife, is from fifteen to twenty feet in length, and divided into two apartments. It is composed of hard posts driven into the ground, and interlaced with wattles and plaister, the height from the ground to the plate being barely sufficient to admit the owner to walk in upright. The floor is of natural earth, which is commonly dry enough, and the roof thatched with palm-thatch, or the leaves of the cocoa-nut tree; an admirable covering, forming a lasting and impenetrable shelter both against the sun and the rain. ...Their cookery is conducted in the open air, and fire-wood being always at hand, they have not only a sufficiency for that purpose, but also for a fire within doors during the night, without which a negro cannot sleep with comfort. It is made in the middle of one of the rooms, and the smoke makes it way through the door or the thatch. This account of the accommodation, however, is confined to the lowest among the field-negroes: tradesmen and domestics are in general vastly better lodged and provided. Many of these have larger houses with boarded floors, and are accommodated (at their own expence it is true) with very decent furniture:-a few have even good beds, linen





sheets, and musquito nets, and display a shelf or two of plates and dished of queen's or Staffordshire ware...

Extract from: Bryan Edwards, The History, Civil and Commercial, of the West Indies, (London: T. Miller, 1819; reprint, New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1966) 2:4,5 pp. 163-5.

### Description of "Negro-House" by Barclay (1826):

...The most common size of the negro houses is 28 feet long by 14 broad. Posts of hard wood about 9 feet long or 7 feet above ground, are placed at the distance of two feet from one another, and the space between is closely wattled up and plastered. The roof is covered by the long mountain-thatch, palmeto-thatch, or dried guinea-grass, either of which is more durable than the straw thatch used in this country. Cane tops are also used for this purpose, but are not so lasting. To throw off the rain the thatch is brought down a considerable distance over the wall, which in consequence look low, and the roof high. The house is divided into three, and sometimes four apartments. The room in the middle occupying the whole breadth of the house, has a door on each side, to admit a circulation of air. This is the sitting apartment, and here the poorer classes make fire and cook their victuals; the more wealthy have a separate kitchen at a little distance. The smaller houses have the sitting room in one end, and two sleeping apartments in the other...



...Behind the house is the garden, filled with plantains, ochres, and other vegetables, which are produced at all seasons. It abounds also with cocoa-nut and calabash trees. A good cocoa-nut will be a meal to a man, and boiled among the sugar (which the negroes frequently do), would be feast to an epicure. It contains also about a pint of delicious juice, called, 'cocoa-nut milk;' the leaves which are thick and twelve or fifteen feet long, are shed occasionally all the year round, and not only make excellent fuel, but are sometimes used for thatch. The nut also yields oil for lamps, and the shell is made into cups. Thus one tree offers meat, drink, fuel, thatch, oil for lamps, and cups to drink out of! No wonder it is so great a favourite that every negro village looks at a distance like a cocoa-nut grove. Nor are these the only uses of this singularly beautiful native of the tropics; for, besides that the fibry part of it is in the East Indies manufactured into ropes and clothing, the cultivation of it is attended with yet another advantage: from its great height, and perhaps in some degree from the pointed form of the leaves, it is very liable to be struck by lightning, and affords near a house the same protection as metallic conductor...

...The calabash tree produces a large fruit, not edible, but nevertheless valuable, as the skin of it is a hard and solid substance, like the shell of a nut, and when scooped out, answers the purpose of holding water, or cut across the middle, makes two cups or dishes. Every negro has his calabash, and many have them carved with figures like those which are tattooed on the skins of the Africans. They are used to carry out their breakfast to them when at work in the field; and from their lightness and strength, are preferred for this purpose to almost any other kind of dish. Tin pans however, are sometimes used. In the garden too, and commonly under the shade of the



low outbranching calabash tree, are the graves of the family, covered with brick tombs...

...Every family has a hogsty: poultry houses are not wanted; the chickens are carefully gathered at night, and hung up in baskets, to preserve them from the rats. The fowls lodge at all seasons in the trees about the houses. The premises belonging to each family are commonly surrounded with a fence; their provision grounds are generally at some distance...

Extract from: Alexander Barclay, A Practical View of the Present State of Slavery in the West Indies, (London, 1826) pp. 303-10; quoted in Roger Abrahams and John F. Szwed and others, eds., After Africa: Extracts from British Travel Accounts and Journals of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries concerning the Slaves, their Manners, and Customs in the British West Indies (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983) pp. 345-7.



## APPENDIX 2

### 17TH & 18TH CENTURY POPULATION FIGURES

Year	Whites	Negroes	Ratio	Total
1658	4,500	1,400	3W: 1B	5,900
1673	8,564	9,504	1W: 1B	18,068
(Seamen & Privateers:800W+800B)				
-----				
1734	7,644	86,546	1W:11B	94,190
1739	10,080	99,239	1W:10B	109,319
(white servants:3,360)				
1746	10,000	112,428	1W:11B	122,428
1768	17,949	166,914	1W: 9B	184,863
(white servants:5,983)				

#### BREAK-DOWN OF POPULATION AROUND 1770:

- 17,000 - Settled and resident White inhabitants.
- 500 - Transient and unsettled Whites.
- 3,000 - Soldiers and seamen resident.

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20,500

- 2,000 - Annuitants and proprietors non-residents.

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22,500

- 500 - Maroon Negroes in the free towns.
- 3,700 - Free Blacks and Mulattoes.
- 1,700 - Mulattoes slaves.

---

28,400

165,214 - Black servants

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Total: 193,614 From Long, History of Jamaica, 1:2,2 pp. 375-81.





By 1791, of the total population on the island which numbered about 291,400, there were about 250,000 Africans under slavery. The remaining figure was apportioned as follows: 1,400 Maroons; 10,000 "Freed Negroes and people of colour"; and 30,000 White. When these figures are compared with those of the

Extract from: Edwards, History of the West Indies, 1:2,5 p. 284.



## APPENDIX 3

### EARLY ENGLISH: HOUSES IN PORT ROYAL.

...Westward again lay the plot owned first by Captain John Shaw, and then by Richard Pepys (41). This site is a good example of the rising value of harbourside properties, for while Pepys sold it for £22 in August 1667 to Hender Molesworth, the later sold it in May 1672 for £55 to Benjamin Whitcombe, after whose death it was sold by his creditors in August 1680 for £250 to Edward Yeomans, and even his figure did not include the 'Shoal water for a wharf', which Yeomans bought the following year for £15.<sup>3</sup> Incidentally, the lowness of this price surely attests that the land had not then been reclaimed...

...The same Edward Yeomans also acquired the northern part of the plot immediately to the west of here, which he subsequently let to Robert Snead (or Sneed) 'late of the city of London, architect,' for a term of thirteen years from 14 August 1684.<sup>4</sup>

The deed referring to this transaction contains one of the most illuminating references to the style of building in Port Royal at this time. Snead, "at his own proper cost", was required to 'build three or four substantial houses,

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<sup>3</sup>Island Record Office, Spanish Town, Jamaica (I.R.O), Deeds, respectively liber IV, p. 280, liber IV, p.278, and liber XI, p. 141

<sup>4</sup>I.R.O. Deeds, liber XV, p. 159.



fronting to the harbour, each to have a cookroom and a house of office, with a balcony to each house fronting to the sea northward, of eight feet long and three and a half feet in the cheare'.<sup>5</sup> There follows a detailed description:

...The foundations of all the buildings to bee of stone, two and a half feet thick, and one foot above the surface and superficies above the ground, and 22 feet southward, and from the stone building thence to be built upp to the water-table two and a half bricks, and from there to the first floor two bricks thick, which is to be ten feet in the cheare and carried with a brick and one half cheare upp to ye gable ends, and that the carpentry work and scantlings of timber and other necessaryes bee as followeth; viz...

...The door-cases in the front to be seven and a half and six inches, the lower door cases to be five feet wide in the cheare and nine feet high with a proporconable [*proportionable?*] light in each door, and that the gerders of the first floor shall be twelve inches and thirteen, and that the principal rafters shall be of no less than nine inches and six at the bottom and six inches square at the top. The purloines to be six and eight inches, wall-plates the same, and that the beams of the upper floor shall be ten and nine inches, the joists four and three inches at fourteen inches distance, and for the roof that it bee framed and the rafters and joists all well tenanted and primed with substantial and lasting prime...

...The gerders and beams planed and moulded, the joists also planed on both sides, and that the . . . bee framed and painted in all the length of the front, with good large cornishes, and the shingles bored, primed and laid, and a

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<sup>5</sup>In the cheare' appears to mean 'board'; 'purloines' (or better 'purlins') are roof-beams and 'cornishes' are cornices.



sufficient penthouse even with the balcony the whole length of the house, and that all and every of the necessary timber for the building be of some or of one of the following: mahogany, cedar, bullett tree, yellow saunders, black-hearted fiddle-wood, base terre, lignum vitae, fustick, manchioniel or logwood and no other, the roof only excepted, in which it may be lawful to use Spanish elm, the timber and windows shall be suitable and proportionable to the buildings, with Lutherian lights in the garretts, and windows shall be painted, the garretts sealed, and the balconyes well leaded...

...From about 1679 onwards, it seems to have become the general practice when new buildings were planned to specify the following foundations for outer load-bearing walls:

*Single-storey buildings:* two bricks thick to the water-table and then one-and-a-half bricks thick to the wall plates

*Two- or more storey buildings:* two and a half bricks thick to the water-table (or sometimes stone in place of brick), and then two bricks thick to the first floor...

...These specifications seem to have applied not only to buildings by the harbourside, but also to those in the rest of the town; they might help future archaeological investigators to determine with considerable accuracy the pre-earthquake water-table level...

Extract from: Michael Pawson and David Buisseret, "The Topography of Port Royal 1660-1692", chap., 7, in Port Royal, Jamaica (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) pp. 88-9.





## APPENDIX 4

### SEBASTIANO SERLIO'S INVENTION AFTER POGGIO REAL

"Of Antiquitie" The Third Booke The Fourth Chapter. Fol. 71

...Among other Cities of Italy, Naples is called, La Gentile, and that not only in respect of the Great Barons, Lords, Earles, Dukes, and great numbers of Gentlemen therein, but also, because it is so well furnished with stately homes and Palaces, as any other part of Italy. And among other pleasant places that are without the citie, there is a place called Poggio Real, which King Alphonsus caused to be made for his pleasure, in that time (then most fortunate) when Italy was in peace, and now unfortunate, by reason of the discords therein. This Palace hath a very faire scituation, and is well devided for Roomes, for that in each corner thereof might bee lodged a strong company of men: in the middle there are five great Chambers, besides the Roome under the ground, together with some secret Chambers. The form of this faire building in the ground, as also, the building that standeth upright, is here set down in the next leafe: the measure thereof I set not down unto you, onley, because I will show you the invention: for a workeman may imagine of what greatnesse he will have a Chamber, being all of one greatnesse; and then from those Chambers he may imagine all the measures of the rest of the



building: which building the Noble King held for his pleasure, because men accustomed to dwell in the Countrey in the Summertime. The Court of this Palace is compassed with double Galleries: and in the middlemost place, marked E. men go downe a payre of Stayres into a fayre eating place, in which place, the King and his Lords held to banquet and eate at pleasure; in which place he caused certayne secret places to bee opened, whereby in the twinkling of an eye, the place was full of water, so that they sate all in water: likewise at this Kings pleasure, all ye water boyded out of the roome againe, but there wanted no shifts of clothes to put on, nor yet rich and costly beds for them to tople in, that would rest themselves. O voluptuous Italians, how are you impoverished by your discords! I will not speake of the most beautiful Gardens, filled with all kinds of flowers, with divers compartments of the Orchards and Trees of all kinds of Fruits, with great abundance of all kinds of fish-ponds and fishes, of places and cages of divers Birds both great and small, of fayre stables, filled with all sorts of Horses; and many other fayre things, which I will not speake of, for that Marcus Antonius Michell, a Gentleman of that Towne, very learned in Architecture, hath seene it, and hath written of it at large in a Latine Epistle, which he sent to a friend of his. But to turne againe to the parts of the said Palace, which is right foure square, it is within, Galleried round about, one above the other: in the foure Corners, within the thickness of the walls, stand the winding stayres to goe up into the building. The foure Galleries without, marked B. are not there, but for the commoditie and beautifying of the house, they would stand well there.

In this figure hereunder, I have shewed the Orthographie both within and without: the part marked A. showeth the part without: the part marked B. representeth the Galleries within: the part C. sheweth the ruines within. I have



not set downe the covering or rooffe of this house: for according to my opinion, I would have playstered such a building, that it might onley be held for a walking place, to behold the countrey about...

"Of Antiquitie"      The Third Booke      The Fourth Chapter. Fol. 72

...Considering the fayre Building of Poggio Real, I have thought good to set down such an other here in this place; but in other forme for appertements, and peradventure with more ease, for that the places are all of one greatness, which is not so good a forme: but it is necessary that the first would be greater than the second. In this place I make you no place for light within, for that it is a place in the countrey, being not cumbred on the sides; it hath light enough on all the foure corners: but some men may say, that the Hall with the foure Chambers, because they have no light but through the Galleries, are darke, for it is no perfect cover: to which I answere, that the house being made to be ?fled? in the time of great heat, having no place in the middle, the Hall and the Chambers will always be cold, by reason the Sunne cannot come unto them. These places will be very pleasant at noontime, for that the said places have not so great lights as the other dwellings; yet have they so much light as they need: such like may be seene in Bolonia, which are made in this manner with Galleries, and daily inhabited. This building is so disposed, that the corner places being of great thicnesse, the rest shall be strong enough, yea, although the walls have no great thicnesse, in regard they are all ?counterforts? one to the other, yet shall they be of sufficient strength. I will not speake of the measures, for that this being proportioned, the skillful workman



may imagine (according to his pleasure that caused it to be built) first the greatness of the roome, then divide it into so many feet or other measures, thereby to measure all the rest of the building, as the situation of the place may beare it. Then this building, above all things, shall be placed, that the Sunne may rise upon one of the corners, and so shine upon all the sides thereof: for if it stands with one side to the East, and the other to the West, then it will follow, that the ?\_\_ly? side shall never enjoy the Sunne-shine upon it, which were rumaticke and unwholesome.

Men may build in divers and sundry sorts upon the ground aforesayd: but for that this is a place of pleasure, I thought good, for the ?\_\_auenette? thereof, to make it after the Corinthiamaner. I will not trouble my selfe to speake of the measures nor weights; for in my fourth Booke, in the Order of Corinthia, O2. you shall find a Tree tile, which, together with the judgement of a wise workman, will serve to set down this measure. And, for that in this Facie there is no shortening at all, whereby you may know the Galleries, the flat and closed places eache from other; therefore I will set downe the two highest sides at each end: you must conceive it to have flat Pillars from beneath upwards; that part betweene both, which is lower, you must suppose hath two Galleries, one above the other, the Columnes whereof would be round: the same is to be understood to be both behind, and on both sides. Men may also make above the Galleries, a Terrace or Pavement, to defend the raine, the Gallery being made with a Lean-to, or Raile out of the Cornices of the first order of the Figures aforesayd: and so also the Hall in the middle, together with the 4. Chambers of a second story, would have more light. For 2. causes I have made the small windows above the great, in the first story. The I. is, if you would make the windowes so low, that a man sitting, may easily see out of them, then (if you





would make the windowes no higher than the doore) there would bee too much space betweene the windowes and the rooffe of the house, which would greatly darken the house: and otherwyse the windowes bring much more light into the Hall. The 2. is, that the Chambers by the Hall need not bee of such height, but you may make ?hanging?? Chambers therein, whereto those windows will serve. I might speake of many other things, which I referre to the judgment of the workman...

Extract from: Serlio, The Five Books of Architecture: an unabridged reprint of the English edition of 1611 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1982).



## APPENDIX 5

### A CLIMATIC APPROACH TO BUILDING: TREATISE BY LONG (1774)

...Those whom fortune has blest with abundance, should be studious to preserve the lives of their dependents, whose poverty perhaps is their greatest crime. The cruelty of exposing the lives of men to sickness and death, by restricting them to dwell in hovels, and on unhealthy spots, needs only to be pointed out, in order to be relieved. The natural generosity, and benevolent disposition, of the planters will immediately lead them to administer the certain remedy, although it may be attended at first with some extraordinary expence to them. The habitations of their white servants should be fixed on airy, dry and elevated, spots, raised some feet above the surface of the earth, floored and constructed either of timber and plaister, or brick, but never (if possible to avoid it) of stone; which is a very improper material in this climate for dwelling-houses, on account of the damp and chill which it strikes in rainy weather; but, whenever it is unavoidably used for such buildings, the effects may be rendered less pernicious, by surrounding them with a shed or piazza, or lining the walls with boards, or lath and plaister, set off to such a distance as to let the air circulate between.

The like precautions must be used in the establishment of white families, if the spirit should ever revive of introducing and settling them in the island. The place allotted for their habitation should be stony, gravely, or at



least dry, open to the wind, and remote from the annoyance of vapourish swamps, or stagnant waters.

It may happen, that many persons, from the urgent nature of their employment and circumstances, may be obliged to remain in unhealthy situations; in this case they must use the best means in their power to guard themselves from the local mischiefs to which they may be occasionally exposed. Such persons must sleep in the highest apartments of their house, whose doors and windows ought to be so contrived as not to front or to open towards a damp soil or marsh. At those seasons of the year when swampy exhalations are most to be dreaded, as after heavy rains, and great heats succeeding, fires made in the evening, and early in the morning, with *lignum vitae*, *cascarilla*, candlewood, and other resinous woods, or substances, would be very serviceable. ...for correcting putrid air, and checking contagion.

In many parts among the mountains I have known houses upon elevated spots not unhealthy, though surrounded with woods. The greater coolness of the air, in such places, and their distance from any stagnant water, or fetid ooze, may contribute to their salubrity; the clearing away such woods, which screen the lower situations, and increase their sultriness, by excluding the free air from them, will render them more habitable, but perhaps not add much to the healthiness of the former; for the reasons why the mountain woods are less injurious than the close thickets of the low lands, is, that the trees stand further asunder, so as to give a freer passage of the winds and vapours; and consists for the most part, of the aromatic kinds, which serve to correct any noxious exhalations, with their fragrancy and perfume...

Extract from: Long, The History of Jamaica, 2:3,6 pp. 514-5.



## APPENDIX 6

### COMMENTARY ON THE 18TH CENTURY DEFICIENCY-LAW IN JAMAICA

The following commentary on the "Deficiency-law" is given below as it encapsulates some of the socio-economic and political factors which prevailed in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. This cannot be viewed outside of the population figures which are also shown below, because it was the ratio of Europeans to Africans on the island which brought about this law.

The vernacular transitions of Jamaican building which began to make an impact after the middle of the eighteenth century, and discussed in chapter four, were able to come about as a result of the:

- population ratio of about 10 Africans to 1 European;
- decrease in the use of European servants since 1720;
- increased cost of imported goods;
- local resources available;
- ineffectiveness of violations of this law, and
- use of African tradesman on the estates.

...The deficiency-law required a certain number of hired or indentured white servants to be kept, in proportion to a certain number of Negroes; and most usually it has been regulated after the following manner:





One to every thirty slaves.

One to every hundred and fifty head of cattle.

One to every tavern or retail shop.

A like proportion for every boat, wherry, and canoe; and three-fourths of the crews on board of droguers or coasting-vessels are directed to be white men: and, in failure of compiling with this ordinance, certain penalties are imposed on the delinquents, according to their respective class; which penalties are fluctuating, as this is an annual law; so that they are greater or less, according to the pleasure of the Assembly for the time being. Thus, for example, the penalty on not keeping one such white servant to every thirty slave has been, in one year, 13*l.* for each deficiency; in the next year, 6*l.* 10*s.* in the next, 26*l.* and so on; which uncertainty has been one means of defeating the original design of the law. By an act passed in 1703, the proportion of white servants was rated so largely, that the owner of three hundred Negroes was obliged to maintain fourteen, besides one to every sixty head of cattle, &c. According to this proportion, if it now substituted, we should have upwards of ten thousand, to counter-balance the Negroes. When the deficiency-law was in force as an act of policy and population, and not, as it is now, a mere annual money-bill, every plantation was well-stocked with white servants, consisting chiefly of artificers; so that, in the year 1720, no less than twenty were employed upon an estate, which now has only four; and, as the prevailing fashion seems at present, I doubt that there may be several found in the island that do not maintain more than two. The planters urge, that the contingencies of a sugar-work were, some years ago, much smaller than they now are; that the wages and maintenance of a white servant are very considerable; but that, by taxes, duties, and other means, every contingent



supply and necessary required for their estates, and imported from Britain, North America, and Ireland, have risen to an amazing excess; that the price of Negroes has extravagantly got up; for that twenty years ago a Negroe might have been bought for 25*l.* who would now sell for 60*l.* at least, which is equal to 140*l.* per cent advance; that the article of rum, not being able to withstand the French brandies, and British distilled spirits so largely consumed and being charged with every exorbitant duties, has now become a drug at the British market, and frequently brings the planter in debt; lastly, that the extensive cultivation of the sugar-cane, as well in the British as in the Foreign colonies, and which is still increasing, cannot fail of making sugar itself every year less profitable to the growers. . . . considering, at the same time, that, whatever disadvantages they may labour under from high duties, dearness of Negroes, and European or North-American supplies, are equally, if not more oppressive on their competitors in the smaller islands, who are in want of numberless resources which the more extensive island of Jamaica furnishes?

When the deficiency law imposes only a penalty of 13*l.* or at most 26*l.* for every default of not keeping up the allotment of white servants required, the major part of the planters judge it a great saving to pay the penalty, rather than distribute 40*l.* or 50*l.* for the wages and maintenance of every servant; and therefore hire only an overseer and distiller, and sometimes only an overseer, supplying all the other departments on their estate with Negroes...

Extract from: Long, History of Jamaica, 1:2,2 pp. 381-2.



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