“REFORM IS BECOME OUR ENEMY:” ANGLO-JAMAICAN PLANTERS AND BRITISH IDENTITIES, 1765-1786

by

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For Mom, Dad, and Madison. We made it.

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Abstract

This is a case study of the imperial identity an elite resident planter in late-eighteenth century Jamaica named Simon Taylor from 1765 to 1786. By analyzing sections of Simon Taylor's correspondence with his business partner and close friend Chaloner Arcedeckne, this thesis uses empirical, quantitative evidence in order to analyze Simon Taylor's sense of identity, the expectations placed upon him as an imperial subject and his role as a citizen of the British Empire. This thesis argues that Simon Taylor's British imperial identity came into conflict with his burgeoning creole identity. Simon Taylor, born in Jamaica, was compelled to highlight to Chaloner the ways that he had not devolved into a backwater colonial, but rather had maintained his British imperial identity despite what many of his British contemporaries saw as the potentially subversive cultural influence of African slaves and freed blacks.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The disgruntled elite planter Simon Taylor swept sweat from his brow late one June in 1781. It was another sweltering night in Jamaica. Taylor dipped his quill in ink, and pondered over the letter he had written to his business partner, Chaloner Arcedeckne. “Reform is . . . become our Enemy” wrote Taylor: “things are Strangely altered indeed from what they used to be formerly, the words were England could never do but with her Colonies.” Leaning back in his chair, Taylor surveyed Kingston’s buildings and open courtyards. Forums, columns, and tall buildings lined the symmetrical city streets. Had it not been for the excessive heat, one might have assumed the city to be an English port town. Taylor went back to his writing: the colonie s “were [once] looked upon like [England’s] main support,” he wrote, but Taylor assumed they were no longer.[1] The war with the nascent United States had taken hold of the British Empire’s attention, but Taylor considered that there were other, graver, matters at hand: “If we are the most favoured Subjects,” Taylor considered, “God help the rest, for we have neither protection nor nothing else.”[2] The protection afforded by not just imperial military might but also by imperial trade appeared a failure. Taylor was anxious to highlight the degree that he was a full British citizen to his British business associates, but was keenly aware of the difficulty in maintaining this identity in Jamaica.

By 1781, Taylor’s interpersonal, local, and imperial worlds were changing. Not only did Taylor assume the empire have “men sufficient” to fight the Dutch, Spanish, French, and Americans, but imperial trade, the basis of the Britain’s empire, was failing.

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[1] Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers 3A/1781/1, Cambridge University Library and the Center for Commonwealth Studies. Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 June 1781. All subsequent references to Simon Taylor’s letters will be done by date only, with the exception of references in new chapters. Many thanks to Professor Justin Roberts at Dalhousie University for PDF versions of the original Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers.

[2] *Ibid.*

The empire was in upheaval, and Taylor's position in the empire had come into conflict with the world he once knew. The Ceded Islands of Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines "have now been found to have ruined every person that has been concerned with them."[3] For Taylor, it appeared as though British imperial policy had shifted dramatically and in his opinion, negatively. While in 1773 Taylor had been positive that the empire was "not likely to have a war soon," by 1781 Taylor was nervous about the lack of provisions on the island, unsure that "we have naval stores amongst us to support the war against" France, Spain, the United States, and the Netherlands.[4] These naval stores not only were insufficient to support any foreseeable naval campaign, but also were required to bring goods and provisions into the island colony. Without them, Taylor would struggle in his business relationships: payments would be late, correspondence would lag, and Taylor's capital investments and personal relationships would falter. Taylor's reputation on the island would take a hit as he would struggle to retain good business ethics amongst his fellow planters.

Jamaica was essentially the center of the West Indian theater of the American Revolution and Taylor was keen to use rhetorical devices to suggest that the island was ripe for collapse. In a period of tension where Britain's allies were few, it was important to Taylor that he showcase his support to the British Crown by any means necessary, he increasingly struggled with what it meant to be a British citizen in a slave society. Though Taylor remained loyal to the empire, he was unsure of his role in the empire as a creole planter, citizen, and loyalist of a vast, multiethnic and multinational empire.

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[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 17 September 1773 ed. Betty Wood, "The Letters of Simon Taylor of Jamaica to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 1765-1775" in *Travel, Trade, and Power in the Atlantic, 1765-1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); April 8th, 1781.

Between the late 1740s and the 1770s, Jamaica was, for historian Trevor Burnard, a "powerhouse" for the British imperial economy.[5] One commenter at the end of the Imperial Crisis suggested that "the sugar colonies add . . . above three millions a year to the wealth of Britain; the rice colonies near a million, and the tobacco ones almost as much."[6] On average, resident Jamaican whites were 36.6 times as wealthy as a white male in the American colonies, and 52.3 times as wealthy as a white subject in Great Britain by the mid-eighteenth century.[7] Sugar prices and output values were inversely related: as imports into Britain rose, supply exceeded demand and the price of sugar fell.[8] Between 1768 and 1772, the whole of the British West Indies exported £350, 700 of white sugar to Great Britain, and £424, 200 to North America.[9] By 1770, the British West Indies manufactured about 132, 000 metric tons of muscovado (partially refined) sugar.[10] The amount of rum produced from this muscovado was high as well: around 315 liters of rum per ton of sugar.[11] Though the island was hampered financially because of the lack of continued trade with the British American colonies during and after the American War, Jamaica would experience another period of sustained growth from the 1780s onward.[12] By the time of the future Lieutenant Governor's wife Lady Nugent's arrival in 1801, the island colony had returned to its former place at the economic forefront for Britain's expanding empire. In the late eighteenth century, white

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[5] *Ibid*., 13.

[6] Arthur Young, "An Inquiry into the Situation of the Kingdom on the Conclusion of the Late Treaty," *Annals of Agriculture and Other Useful Arts, vol. 1* (1784), 13. Quoted in John J. McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 145.

[7] Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World,* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 15. These whites were, of course, males.

[8] John J. McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America, 1607-1789*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 159.

[9] *Ibid.*, 160.

[10] *Ibid.,* 165.

[11] *Ibid.* According to McCusker and Menard, this amount of molasses was a considerable amount over previous periods.

[12] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire,* 15.

resident planters living in Jamaica and their counterparts living on other British West Indian islands acquired one fifth of all imports from the rest of the empire, and exported over forty percent of their sugar to Britain.[13] Historian Christer Petley rightly argues that Jamaica was “a crucial nodal point in the networks of trade, slavery, and empire” which ultimately helped to allow the British Empire to finance its multiple wars and expeditions throughout the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth century.[14] These factors made Jamaica a potentially dangerous but economically beneficial place to live for eighteenth-century whites.

Jamaica, the fifth largest island in the West Indies, lies 145 kilometers to the south of Cuba, and over 1600 kilometers to the west of the remainder of Great Britain’s imperial possessions in the West Indies (Figure1). The island has a diverse amount of fauna and flora, with high mountains, swamps, and plains. Jamaica was not ideal for farming certain crops because of the extreme heat and varied landscape, but its great size and soil composition allowed for sugar planting on a massive scale.[15] The colony was conquered by the British from the Spanish (known to the Spanish as the island of Santiago) in 1655 under the direction of Sir William Penn and General Robert Venables, who were under orders to conquer Spanish territory in the West Indies as a part of Oliver Cromwell’s Western Design. After a period of economic stagnation in the early eighteenth century, Jamaica became the richest colony by far in the British Empire in the middle of that century. While the island certainly had a vibrant and varied landscape, and could make a white person very wealthy, the sugar producing colony was a place where, according to white resident planters, “the complaints . . . are, in fact, so rapid and

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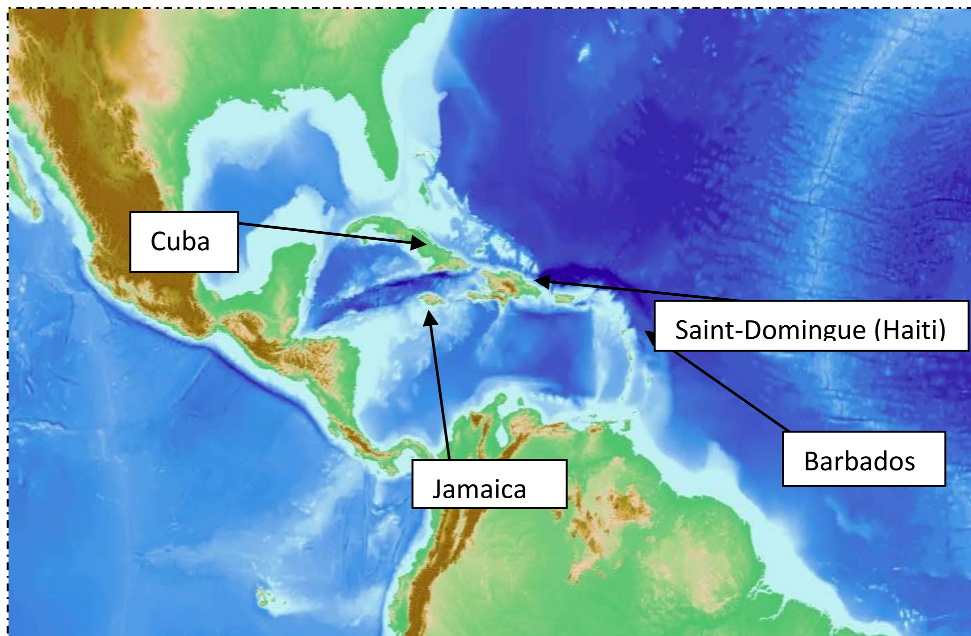
[13] Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica*, 2.
[14] Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica,* 2.
[15] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire*, 14.

mysterious, that one cannot feel a moment's security."[16] These "complaints," of course, were far worse for slaves who worked long, backbreaking hours often in intense heat with few breaks. Slaves were beaten and their bodies were broken, much to the indifference of most whites on the island. While for much of the last twenty-five years of the eighteenth century Britons began to take issue with slavery, the institution had a long and tradition within the British Empire.

Figure 1. Map of the West Indies



Island Colonies

Jamaica was the largest possession that the British maintained in the West Indies but it was also the most isolated. This became increasingly apparent as the West Indies developed into a major theatre of the American war. Styled by contemporaries as the "Imperial Crisis," many of the geopolitical gains made by the Seven Years War

[16] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801-1805* ed. Philip Wright and Verene Shepherd, (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2002), 20.

appeared in jeopardy by the late 1760s and early 1770s.[17] Jamaicans, at the center of Anglo-West Indian trade in the latter half of the eighteenth century, became embroiled in a global war against former adversaries France, Spain, and the Netherlands; Great Britain found itself largely without allies or military support.[18] While the Hessian mercenaries, recruited from the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel made up more than a third of the King's troops in America, they were increasingly used as guards, sentries, and garrison troops.[19] The war stretched the British forces across the globe to a breaking point. The sprawling colonies of the global British Empire scrambled to acquire what support they could from the bankrupt London.[20] Isolated in the West Indies's Greater Antilles, Jamaica was surrounded by the major Spanish islands of Cuba and Hispaniola (modern Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Jamaica's location, over 1931 kilometers

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[17] I use "Imperial Crisis" here largely because it removes the centrality of North America to the increasing problems that colonists across the empire struggled with. There were issues of taxation, representation, and military garrisons across the British Atlantic World, not just in the Thirteen Colonies.

[18] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, November 26th, 1781. Simon Taylor hoped that Britain might find allies with Russia and the Holy Roman Empire, but to little avail. For more on the geopolitical situation of the British Empire in the wake of the Seven Years War until the end of the American Revolution, see Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: the Seven Years' War and the fate of empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000); Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution, and the Fate of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013); George Otto Trevelyan, *The American Revolution* (New York, Longman, Greens & Co., 1917); Robert Middlekauff, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1982).

[19] For more on the Hessian troops that fought in America, see Jean-Pierre Wilhelmy, *Soldiers for Sale: German "Mercenaries" with the British in Canada during the American Revolution* (Montreal, QC: Baraka Books, 2011); Charles W. Ingrao, *The Hessian Mercenary State: Ideas, Institutions and Reform under Frederick II, 1760-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) paints a largely different historiographical story of the Hessians and Frederick II's relationship to the Enlightenment.

[20] P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (Longman: New York, 1993), 75; P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: 1688-2000, Second Edition* (London: Longman, 2002), 79-80. The British Empire, bankrupt from the Seven Years, would attempt to raise taxes in Britain and look for sources of revenue elsewhere in the world. Though these authors would later re-assess their take on British imperial economic expansion in their later book, they argue the national debt was still higher than it had ever been: some £133 million by 1763, as opposed to £78 million in 1748. By 1783 it would be £245 million. The high taxes Taylor complained of were an attempt by Pitt's government to curb national debt. Fred Anderson in *The War That Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Penguin, 2005), 243 estimates the debt to be much higher in 1763, around £146 million. Anderson suggests in *Crucible of War: The Seven Years War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766* (New York: Knopf, 2000), 481 that the constant pressures of rebuilding the Prussian army after its costly blunders "year after year" cost the British Treasury twenty million pounds annually.

(1200 miles) from Barbados, and over 756 kilometers (470 miles) from the nearest British possession, the Bahamas, made inter-colonial travel difficult. Jamaica was consistently restricted from trade with other colonies in British North America and in the Lesser Antilles by pirates, privateers, and marauding enemy warships.[21] Frequent West Indian storms, particularly between July and October, only compounded the time it took to travel to a friendly colony.[22] Though, during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, Jamaica appeared to be a hideaway from hurricanes, the major hurricanes in 1712, 1722, 1726, 1744 and 1751 dissolved that myth.[23] Defense from the elements and from foreign powers became a difficult task for British policymakers during Britain's several imperial wars during the eighteenth century.

Even Taylor had to admit that Jamaica "most belongs to people who are resident in England & merchants who have borrowed money lend on Jamaica Properties."[24] People that went to Jamaica were often frightened by the high mortality rates amongst whites. New white arrivals in Jamaica were met with taunting songs from female slaves about the whites' (likely) deaths to disease: One traveler to Jamaica in 1807 recalled women singing a similar song to him as he arrived in a canoe:

New come buckra,
He get sick,
He tak fever,
He be die;
He be die.[25]

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[21] David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 207. The Lesser Antilles comprises the chain of small islands far to the east of Jamaica.
[22] Matthew Mulcahy, *Hurricanes and Society in the British Greater West Indian, 1624-1783* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 48-49.
[23] *Ibid.*, 18.
[24] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 11 June 1782.
[25] *Ibid.*, 1. Found in Robert Renny, *A History of Jamaica* (London, 1807), 241, quoted in Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, 1.

For new "buckra," or masters (or demons, in the West African usage, the word was interchangeable), Jamaica was a graveyard for not just new Europeans, but also locals whose families had lived on the island for decades.[26] Birth rates of whites were abysmal throughout the period after English colonization. Only 16 marriages of 132 married couples had more than two children survive after ten years, and after 1691 almost 40 percent of marriages were childless.[27] These numbers, of course, were even more catastrophic for slaves. Lady Maria Nugent remarked that she was "disgusted" at the "common custom" of joking about the death of another on the island: the pervasiveness of death in Jamaica forced Nugent to comment lack of Jamaican civility and etiquette.[28] Historian Vincent Brown has shown that planters were consciously aware of the spiritual identity of slaves by "harness[ing] the affective power of the dead" as a means to "transmute legal mastery into sacred authority."[29] This sacred authority was well-known to many slaves. Death was for many in Jamaica a means to harness power, but also a factor in the ways whites understood their place in their island slave society.

Slavery and Britishness

The British government may have felt that the defense of the West Indies was a major war goal from 1775-1783, but most of the West Indian territorial gains made by the British during the Treaty of Paris in 1763 were lost to French troops during the Imperial Crisis.[30] Dominica fell in 1778, St. Vincent and Grenada in 1779, Tobago in 1781, and

[26] *Ibid.*, 3.
[27] Trevor Burnard, "A Failed Settler Society: Marriage and Demographic Failure in Early Jamaica" 69. Of course, these numbers included a small number of wealthy whites that Taylor was a part of.
[28] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801-1805* ed. Philip Wright and Verene Shepherd, (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2002), 45.
[29] Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden,* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2008), 131.
[30] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: British Leadership, the American Revolution and the Fate of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 294; Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1961), 472. For troop estimates in the West Indian, see Edward E. Curtis *The Organization of the British Army in the American Revolution* (New Haven, 1926), 2-3; Jack M. Sosin, *Agents and Merchants:*

finally St. Kitts, Montserrat and Nevis in 1782.[31] Despite these imperial setbacks, several Jamaicans believed their island was worth saving: Jamaica possessed some of the British Empire's wealthiest subjects by far, and the cash crops that resident planters and their slaves produced were important to the empire's survival. The wealth generated from the sugar trade, however, was not repaid in kind to the military defense of the island. Though historian Andrew O'Shaughnessy argues that critical military resources which could have been used in North America had been sent to the West Indies, it appears as though these resources had little effect on the overall success of Britain's West Indian defense strategy.[32] For many resident planters, the British Empire had left its wealthiest and most prosperous subjects at the mercy of their enemies. For many Anglo-Jamaicans, however, the enemy was not necessarily a European one. African slaves, shipped in the millions across the Atlantic, were a potentially subversive force that many Anglo-Jamaicans thought would corrupt their minds, bodies, and behaviours.

Though Jamaica was primarily a colony of exploitation, where slave labor was used prodigiously in a violent system of coercion, the relationship that white colonists had to the imperial center was also one of both colonizers and colonized.[33] Jamaica was a slave society in which the black-white disparity was approximately 15:1 by the 1780s.[34]

British Colonial Policy and the Origins of the American Revolution, 1763-1775 (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1965). The only unit of regulars stationed in Jamaica by 1776 was the 1st Battalion of the 60th (Royal American) Foot. One unit of regulars consisted of about 477 men. Units that arrived later in the war include 79th Royal Liverpool Volunteers (1779), 88th Foot (1779), 85th Foot of Westminster Volunteers (1780), 92nd, 93rd and 94th Foot (1780). Only one regiment of foot was raised in Jamaica, the 99th Jamaican Foot in 1780, and was disbanded in 1783. George Rodney was only given a 50-gun ship and some frigates to defend Jamaica in 1774.

[31] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 294.

[32] *Ibid*.

[33] Jack P. Greene, "Reformulating Englishness: Cultural Adaptation and Provinciality in the Construction of Corporate Identity in Colonial British America" ed. Jack P. Greene, *Creating the British Atlantic: Essays on Transplantation, Adaptation, and Continuity,* 23. Greene questions whether the enslaved populations of the various English (and later British) colonies could fit into the category of the "colonized," especially in the wake of active resistance to cultural, military, and economic subjugation.

[34] Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica,* 2; Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica,* 152; Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire,* 16. Petley suggests that the slave population of the island by the 1790s was some 250, 000, while Brathwaite suggests there were 229, 000 slaves by

Jamaican whites were colonizers to the slaves but they were also second-rate citizens to those in Britain: as colonists, they struggled to attain high social status back in England and were incessantly teased as a group of *nouveau-riches* by the landed gentry. The maintenance of resident planters' colonial rights was a key in their power negotiations of power with London. Without English-style institutions in Jamaica, it appeared a likely scenario that the island's culture would be corrupted by the negative influence of slaves. The same slaves who were, of course, so crucial to the economic production of the island. As the abolitionist movement gained strength in the 1770s, 1780s, and 1790s, resident planters were seen as morally and economically backward: an anomaly to the values of freedom in the eighteenth-century Britons' psyche. Despite this, even within the British Isles, free blacks were consistently scrutinized in the 1760s for fears of miscegenation and competition for work.[35] Whites, despite their potential disdain for slavery as an antithesis to British imperial culture, were afraid of the potentially subversive power that blacks held over whites. The 1772 *Somerset* case perhaps best exemplifies the ways that slavery and British imperial identity were intertwined. After an enslaved man, James Somerset, was forcibly removed from Britain in order to be re-sold in Jamaica, it became clear that slavery was not supported by English common law.[36] The institution's position in British colonies, however, remained largely ambiguous.

1785. Burnard suggests that the enslaved population of Jamaica in the eighteenth century remained at about 75 to 80 percent of the total population. Barry W. Higman suggests in *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807-1837* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 47-61 that a very miniscule amount of slaves (112) were held by other blacks (the Maroons) in 1807. By 1800, Higman has effectively shown the total population of slaves by 1800 to be 328, 000.

[35] Sir John Fielding, *Extracts from Such of the Penal Laws as Relate to the Peace and Good Order of the Metropolis* (London, 1768), 144. Found in Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 33.

[36] George van Cleve, "'Somerset's Case' and its Antecedents in Imperial Perspective" *Law and History Review* 24 (2006), 601. More recent research has shown, however, that many slaves remained in England after the *Somerset* case.

Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan have aptly noted that imperial culture, pushed outward from the empire's center and southeastern England, did not manifest itself in the same ways across the empire's peripheries.[37] Local influences played havoc on resident planters' identities as they attempted to maintain British cultural norms, especially in the 1770s. American patriots were thought of as hypocrites by sympathizers of the war because of their reliance of slaves despite their advocacy for freedom.[38] Others more supportive of the American cause countered with their own hypocrisy: while Americans did own slaves, many higher-ranking British officials had made their fortunes from one of the largest slave system on earth.[39] In the midst of the war in 1777, Britain's parliament was only willing to discuss the improvement of the slave trade by improving conditions for slaves and whites while aiming to lower death rates largely because the conflict had driven the importance of the trade to new levels. The "decline of our commerce with every other quarter of the globe" forced the British government to continue its use of slave labour despite cries from metropolitans critical or supportive of the ongoing war effort.[40] The fact that one's private property might be governed by another party outside of oneself likely smacked of tyranny to many resident planters. Long a staple of British imperial identity, the ability to own, acquire, and generate income from one's private property was at last challenged by abolitionists. These property rights were critical to the maintenance of British traditional rights and

[37] Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, "Introduction" *Strangers in the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* eds. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 1.
[38] Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 119.
[39] Ibid., 119-120.
[40] *Ibid*., 121. Found in *Cobbett's Parliamentary History, vol. 19*, col. 209 (May 28th, 1777). Drescher also notes that at this time, the British slave trade had fallen significantly to about half of its original prewar value.

freedoms. Property, of course, that for many in the late-eighteenth century, had a potentially negative influence on one's British sensibilities.

Resistance and Historiography

In suggesting that slaves held coercive cultural power over whites, this thesis does not lend to the argument that black slaves participated in a covert resistance movement against whites.[41] While the resistance narrative purported by African-American scholars in the 1960s and 1970s allowed for the racist conceptualization of slavery as a benevolent institution to dissipate, it is no longer as useful in the twenty-first century.[42] Scholars in the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s grappled with this tension and attempted to understand more realistically how slaves lived. In an important contribution to this historiographical phenomenon, historian Sidney Mintz in the 1990s argued that only "a tiny fraction of daily life consisted of open resistance. Instead most of life then, like life now, was spent living."[43] Historian Justin Roberts in 2013 has rightly suggested that slavery and its study has been "fetishized" as a subject, and has been "cast as abberant."[44] Roberts argues that if historians continue to point to slavery as the "absolute denial of freedom," historians will continue to look for ways slaves resisted whites rather than studying the ways that slaves actually lived.[45] Historians Linda Colley and Kenan Malik have both suggested that while issues of race were used to legitimize empire, the

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[41] For modern historians who have continued to emphasize African resistance and cultural survival see Eric Taylor Roberts, *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (New Orleans: Louisiana State University Press, 2006); James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003).
[42] For examples of older literature on slavery, see Ulrich Bonnel Phillips, *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime* (New York: D. Appleton & Company, 1952 [1918]; H. J. Eckenrode, "Negroes in Richmond in 1864," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 46 (1938), 193-200. Walter Jekyll, *Jamaican Song and Story* (London: D. Nutt, 1907).
[43] Sidney Mintz, "Slave Life on West Indian Sugar Plantations: Some Unanswered Questions," in Stephen Palmie, ed., *Slave Cultures and Cultures of Slavery* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 13.
[44] Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment* 3.
[45] *Ibid.*

British were not “witchdoctors”: they could not simply conjure up empire through racial politics.[46] Racialized language (by twenty-first century standards) was not a prerequisite for dominion over slaves or indigenous peoples: imperial power and loyalty to it went beyond simple dichotomies of white and black. Racialized attitudes did not “summon up” world-wide empire, nor do they give historians any sort of complete explanation for dominion over other groups of people.[47]

In order to combat the fetishization and politicization of slavery’s study, historians need to do two things. Firstly, historians need to use the same critical lens for evidence produced by from resident planters as they do testimony from slaves. While most evidence related to slaves is through documents by resident and absentee planters, the ways which historians use this evidence should be redressed. Secondly, the relationships that whites had with their slaves was not the sole factor in identity creation for Anglo-Jamaicans. Whether Jamaican whites were discussing creolization or not, clearly something was going on for eighteenth-century Britons to fear that Jamaica and the West Indies at large was the “suburbs of Hell.”[48] Despite recent evidence from historians such as Justin Roberts which suggests that West Indian resident planters were close in contact with European cultural and intellectual modes of the eighteenth century like racialized science, planting technologies, ideas about nationhood, and concepts of the family unit, some prominent resident planters, such as Simon Taylor, were also drawn equally to their Jamaican home.[49] It is clear that many resident planters desired simply to return to England, but for a small minority Jamaica was to be their

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[46] Linda Colley, “What is Imperial History Now?” in *What is History Now?* ed. David Cannadine (New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 144; Kenan Malik, *The Meaning of Race: Race, History and Culture in Western Society* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 1996), 231-232.
[47] Linda Colley, “What is Imperial History Now?” 144.
[48] George Whitefield’s phrase, quoted in William Jones, *The Diary of Rev’d Willam Jones, 1771-1821* ed. O.F. Christie, (London, 1929), 245.
[49] Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment, 1750-1807*, 25; See also McCusker and Menard, *Economy of British America,* 160.

permanent home. Unsurprisingly, the differences in Jamaica's social makeup, the climate, and the prevailing scientific ideas about the relationship that an environment had on bodies made the island colony a concern for Britons that lived in the British Isles and even those in Jamaica. Resident planters such as Simon Taylor, Jamaican patriots such as Edward Long, and middling slave overseers such as Thomas Thistlewood, struggled to reconcile their British identity to this developing creole identity through their proximity to blacks. Though they were largely unconcerned with slave revolt, other issues that surrounded the effects that blacks had on white society, the environment's difference from Britain's, and the prevalence of death (particularly amongst whites) due to what was believed to be caused by unnatural climates and intemperate lifestyles on the island played havoc on those displaced Britons' identities as imperial citizens.[50] It became crucial that these white Jamaicans retain their imperial identities, lest they be compared to their enslaved African neighbours.

Culturally, imperial subjects from England often wrote of how Anglo-Jamaicans were barely worth the effort necessary to save them from external threats: resident planters were debauched subjects. Jamaican natural histories, written by visitors to the island, or those who had recently left, consistently described how men were "bewitch'd or charm'd" by Jamaica's climate, making them more apt to die early deaths.[51] Though these sorts of notions were particular to the early eighteenth century, the idea that people could be influenced by the local climate continued throughout the period. The degeneracy of resident planters on the island, for these commenters, stunted the

[50] Seymour Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 96-97. Drescher is keen to note that the revolution in Saint-Domingue (now Haiti) in 1791 silenced any idea that slave revolt was impossible since slaves had beaten three major imperial powers but he neglects to mention that disease likely killed off more soldiers than actual fighting with the former slaves.
[51] Hans Sloane, *A Voyage to the Islands of Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers, and Jamaica, with the Natural History of the Herbs and Trees, Four-Footed Beats, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, etc. of the Last of the Those Islands vol. 1* (London, 1707-1725), xxxi.

island's social economic and, especially, moral progress; progress was the guiding principle of the Enlightenment.[52] Even the planter-historian Edward Long, a longtime resident in Jamaica, maintained that the climate made "the warmest friends . . . into implacable enemies" because it inflamed the tempers and passions of moderate men.[53] The climate itself was hostile not just for English colonization, but other traditional facets of English society like burial traditions, food consumption, and even the maintenance of human life. "The Air," wrote one writer in the early eighteenth century, "being so hot and brisk as to corrupt and spoil Meat in four hours after 'tis kill'd, no wonder if a diseased Body must be soon buried. They usually bury twelve hours after death at all times of the day and night."[54] It was clear to several Britons throughout the late eighteenth century that as slave ships frequented Jamaican shores in increased numbers, that Jamaica had become aberrant. The colony was unlike its North American cousins and the resident planter's mannerisms could hardly be described as "English."

Sugar Tycoons

One planter in particular, the white Anglo-Jamaican Simon Taylor, was reluctant to discuss the effect that the island's climate or landscape had on his sense of imperial identity. Simon Taylor was born in Jamaica in 1740 to Martha and Patrick Taylor. Taylor was of Scottish descent and was the eldest of five children. His father had come from Borrowfield, in Forfashire, Scotland and had grown into a relatively substantial

[52] Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 6. Driven by Baconian empiricism and Newtonian universalism, "progress" meant that society might achieve a utopian dimension through it. As Roberts shows, however, this "utopian" society differed depending on who was writing.

[53] Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, or General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of that Island: With Reflections on its Situations, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws and Governmant.* New Edition, Vol. 1, Frank Cass & Co. Limited, 1970 (First edition 1774), 25.

[54] Hans Sloane, *A Voyage to the Islands*, vol. 1, xlviii.

businessman in Jamaica.[55] Taylor largely found personal success from his investments and attributed his success to his and his father's business dealings along with God, but in practical terms his primary means of income was his attorneyship to Chaloner Arcedeckne.[56] Chaloner Arcedeckne (1743-1809) was a Jamaican landowner and British MP who was also, like Taylor, educated at Eton. Arcedeckne also studied at Christ Church, Oxford. Though Arcedeckne was born in Jamaica, he lived the majority of his life in Suffolk.[57] Arcedeckne, as an absentee landowner, required attorneys like Simon Taylor to run his plantations in his absence.

An attorney was a plantation manager who managed an absentee planter's capital. He was the resident planters' legal representative in the island.[58] Attorneys were those directly responsible for the plantation's overall affairs while the planter (usually an absentee owner) was in London or another major imperial center. While overseers saw day-to-day affairs of plantations and keep track of slaves and work, attorneys were required to spend a considerable amount of time on each plantation and dealt with fiscal and legal affairs. An attorney had a number of freemen and slaves who served under him. Jamaican attorneys were legal representatives of their superiors and were thus required to learn English legal systems, and were expected to do so until the island achieved independence in 1962.[59] Attorneys' roles in Jamaica had occasionally overlapped with those of solicitors, who were in place to aid attorneys because they were consistently under a considerable amount of scrutiny in the Jamaican court

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[55] Richard Sheridan, "Simon Taylor, Sugar Tycoon of Jamaica, 1740-1813" *Agricultural History* 4 (1971), 286. Sheridan also discussed Scottish and Irish colonists and resident planters in Jamaica and the West Indies in *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1961), 368-370.
[56] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, January 30th, 1782.
[57] Barry Higman, *Plantation Jamaica, 1750-1850: Capital and Control in a Colonial Economy* (Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago: University of the West Indies Press, 2005), 168.
[58] *Ibid.,* 37-39.
[59] Ibid., 39.

system.[60] Unlike many of the Jamaican plantocracy, Simon Taylor only went to England to get an education and returned to Jamaica, where he lived most of his life. He never married, but he did father a number of illegitimate children with his enslaved mistress whom he hid from the upper echelons of Jamaican society.[61]

Historians do not know why Taylor chose to remain in Jamaica, despite his economic station that allowed him to leave. It may have been that he was too nervous to return to England with a black mistress, or that he wanted to stay close to his illegitimate children. He may have felt some sense of duty to Arcedeckne as not only his friend, but also wished to honour their business arrangement. He may have also felt that, as a creole, he had better opportunities for social promotion amongst creoles like himself.

Regardless of why Taylor chose to stay, he presents an interesting anomaly to Chister Petley's, Trevor Burnard's and Andrew O'Shaughnessy's presentations of the "society of sojourners:" a society where the primary motivation of income generation was to return to England.[62] Burnard in particular argues that because of the severe lack of whites, overwhelming presence of blacks, a lack of traditional marriages between whites

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[60] Ibid; Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the West Indies, 1623-1775* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 59. Richard Sheridan identified that resident planters' agents that were not only used in the West Indies, but in the eighteenth century, agents of resident planters were sent to England to look after affairs in Parliament. Sir Lewis Namier, in his 1961 study *England in the Age of the American Revolution, 2nd Edition* (London: MacMillan Press, 1961), 234-5 argued that "real" Jamaicans, or those "who were born in the West Indies, had spent there part of their lives, had been members of a West Indian Assembly or Council, or had held office in one of the islands," accounted for some thirty members of Parliament from 1730-1775. Simon Taylor certainly fits into Namier's assessment of who qualified as a "real" Jamaican: someone who actively participated in the public welfare of not just the island, but the empire as a whole.

[61] Daniel Livesay, "Extended Families: Mixed-Race Children and Scottish Experience, 1770-1820" *International Journal of Scottish Literature* 4 (2008): 1-2.

[62] For more on Jamaica as a "society of sojourners," see Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: Colonial Society and Culture during the Era of Abolition* (London, Pickering & Chatto, 2009); Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Trevor Burnard, "A Failed Settler Society: Marriage and Demographic Failure in Early Jamaica" *Journal of Social History* 28 (1994), 63-82; Andrew J. O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: the American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

and demographic failings in colonization efforts, Jamaica became nothing more than "a bizarre imitation of British society."[63] Taylor's desire to remain on the island and become a key player in island society raises questions about the totality of who made up these "sojourners" and just how "bizarre" resident planters felt their society was relative to home. According to historian Andrew O'Shaughnessy, these absentees made up around 80 percent of resident planters in Jamaica by 1800, and this number had been steadily rising through the preceding century.[64]

While it is apparent that many resident planters desired to return to England, resident planters such as Taylor chose to remain. While it may have appeared "bizarre" to commenters from the imperial center, for many resident planters such as Taylor there was little overt concern about remaining in the island. Resident planters attempted to retain their slim connections to the imperial center by reasserting their rights as British citizens to their connections back in England. Anglo-Jamaican whites were adamant that they were citizens, rather than subjects. While citizens had full legal rights before the law, subjects could include citizens but also people on the cultural margins of the empire. These subjects were linked, directly and indirectly, to southern English culture and language but could create their own systems.[65]

In Jamaica, English citizenship was dictated primarily by whiteness.[66] Loyalty to the empire, and what resident planters felt the community of empire meant to them, was

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[63] Trevor Burnard, "A Failed Settler Society: Marriage and Demographic Failure in Early Jamaica" 63-82.
[64] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided*, 5.
[65] Philip D. Morgan and Bernard Bailyn, "Introduction" in *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 1.
[66] For more on imperial citizenship in a disparate empire, see Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003); Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550-1800* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the "Improvement" of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000); T. H. Breen, "An 'Empire of Goods': The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776" *Journal of British Studies* 25 (1986): 467-499; Christine Daniels and Michael V.

critical to their multifaceted identities. Resident planters such as Simon Taylor found inclusive arguments and identities that connected West Indian residents to the empire while commentators from abroad consistently marginalized and exoticized people in the West Indian world. Conscious of these efforts to marginalize or even exclude them, resident West Indian resident planters were keen to hold on to whatever shreds of Britishness they could acquire and retain. Re-assertions of British citizenship took many forms: violence towards blacks, participation in the economic system of free enterprise, support for the English-style institutions available on the island, adherence to English laws and participation in British cosmopolitanism were some of the ways which Anglo-Jamaican resident planters attempted to retain their British identity despite their fears of creolization.

Figure 2, A group portrait of Simon Taylor (far left) and his brother's family by Daniel Gardner (1750-1805) Daniel Gardner, *Group Portrait of Sir John Taylor, 1st Bt. F.R.S*

Kennedy, eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas 1500-1820* (London: Routledge, 2002).

Multiple Identities

Though Taylor styled himself a planter and attorney, it is important to remember that historical figures often maintained multiple identities. Taylor was at once a planter, attorney, businessman, gentleman, British citizen, Creole Jamaican and slave holder.[67] He was a lieutenant-governor in the Jamaican militia, and participated in Jamaican politics as a member of the Assembly and a friend and business partner to Jamaican-born Chaloner Arcedeckne.[68] Taylor served as a member of the Jamaican Assembly for Kingston from 1763-1781, for St. Thomas-in-the-East from 1781-1810, and held the title of Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas (a position that Arcedeckne also held for a time).[69] Taylor held a global and multilateral perspective on the British Empire. The "planter class" might be a term frequently used by modern historians, but as historians Daniel Vickers and Vince Walsh remind us, class (as a historical concept) needs to be entirely "a lived experience" and must be "lived for a lifetime."[70] Taylor, as an extension, struggled to fit in within a particular class of individuals. His wealth was restrictive in many ways. It would have been difficult if not impossible to liquidate his assets and turn his wealth into cash. Even if Taylor did leave, he would have struggled to succeed in England or even Scotland, since many of his relationships and partnerships in Jamaica

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[67] Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), xvi. Creole here is taken from Brathwaite's definition, which was the definition used at the time of this study. Creole refers to those who were "born in, native to, committed to the area of living, and was used in relation to both whites and blacks."

[68] T. R. Clayton, "Sophistry, Security, and Socio-Political Structures in the American Revolution: or, Why Jamaica did not Rebel" *The Historical Journal* 29 (1986): 324. Chaloner Arcedeckne was born in Jamaica in 1743 or 1744. He was the son of Andrew Arcedeckne and Elizabeth Kersey. He was educated at Eton College between 1753 and 1759. He visited Jamaica once in the early 1760s, but lived out his life in Suffolk, England. He was a Member of Parliament for Wallingford in 1784, and Westbury between 1784 and 1786.

[69] Richard Sheridan, "Simon Taylor, Sugar Tycoon of Jamaica, 1740-1813," 286.

[70] Daniel Vickers and Vince Walsh, *Young Men and the Sea: Yankee Seafarers in the Age of Sail* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2005), 127.

would be meaningless. Since Taylor was so ingrained into Jamaican life through ways beyond his personal wealth, it makes little sense to style him purely as a planter.

While resident planters were highly concerned with the maintenance of the status quo with blacks, many required the support of poorer whites on the island to maintain their dominance in island politics. In addition, resident planters, as this thesis will show, were not simply part of one social sphere, but participated explicitly in many different modes of what some historians might style a 'class.' A 'class' of resident planters is an imperfect way of styling politically, economically, intellectually and socially active characters in the West Indies who interacted with the world outside their plantations in different ways.[71] Resident planters were active outside their immediate island world in not simply an economic sense.[72] While it is clear that planters were distrustful of the lower orders of white society, it had less to do with their lack of material wealth and more to do with poorer whites' interactions with blacks.

In this thesis, I use identity as a means of comprehending the ways that Taylor appreciated his Britshness and relation to eighteenth-century national characteristics. Understanding his relationship to the empire and to island society is critical to the process of removing the historical dichotomy of early modern political and economic thinking, and to comprehending the multiple roles and ideologies capitalists possessed, especially in times of war and ideological upheaval. This allows historians to access not just how individual West Indian resident planters on the forefront of imperial economic

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[71] Annabel Brett, "What is Intellectual History Now?" in *What is History Now?* ed. David Carradine (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 115. Intellectual history, suggests Brett, is not simply the abstract analyses of historical figures reading 'high' texts, but rather the study of how people chose to represent themselves and their worlds relative to themselves and those they interacted with. Closely connected to, but not dependent on, cultural history, intellectual history is not 'above' human action, but rather how it guides human action.

[72] Taylor was at once an attorney and also a planter, which gave him the unique position of participating in both the Jamaican plantocracy and amongst certain lower sorts of whites.

development understood their world, but also how the British Atlantic economic system was tied up in other, more ideological elements . There was no divide between economic and ideological thinking, but rather the two were inseparable. Imperial culture, like imperial economy, was not a static entity which spread from the imperial center, but rather it was shaped by local circumstances and circulated through the Atlantic.

West Indian resident planters were often connected to a disparate and multilateral British Atlantic world through businesses, families, loyalties, and ideas. Despite this, resident planters retained their own localized culture based on internal circumstances.[73] These circumstances, such as local geography and economy, population demographics, climate, and relationships to enslaved and indigenous peoples all played a role in the way which British imperial culture was shaped in individual colonies.[74] The West Indian inhabitant, often painted by historians as culturally homogenous, cannot be viewed as such. Each island had varying amounts of whites and blacks, vibrant internal economies and different relationships to the home government.[75] The inhabitants of these islands never saw themselves as participating in a pan-West Indian (white) identity, but rather partook in a universal defense of their rights through their discussions with their superiors in London as colonists in the British Atlantic community, as this thesis will explore. Resident planters like Simon Taylor

[73] Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: Colonial Society and Culture during the Era of Abolition* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), 11. Petley shows that women could also participate in planting, but were largely excluded from participating in the economy, and could not vote, sit on juries, or hold public office. Despite the lack of enfranchisement, they had an interest to maintain slavery in Jamaica.
[74] Jack P. Greene, "Reformulating Englishness: Cultural Adaptation and Provinciality in the Construction of Corporate Identity in Colonial British America" ed. Jack P. Greene, *Creating the British Atlantic: Essays on Transplantation, Adaptation, and Continuity* (Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press, 2013), 28.
[75] Verene A. Shepherd, *Livestock, Sugar and Slavery: Contested Terrain in Colonial Jamaica* (Kingston: Ian Randle Pubishers, 2009), xxix. Shepherd's book showcases how local customs and politics created a landscape of "contested terrain" in Jamaica between whites, blacks, and maroons. The book, however, focuses on the contest of land between sugar planters and livestock farmers and their "antagonistic," if not "symbiotic" relationship. These localized studies are important in order to differentiate between the West Indian isles perceived cultural homogeneity.

articulated his thoughts on rights through economic benefit: it was the colonists' right to own, acquire, and improve their property.

Evidence

The primary mode of evidence used in this project is the correspondence between Simon Taylor and Chaloner Arcedeckne between 1765 and 1786 from the Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers. In all, there were 112 letters of varying lengths that I used to analyze how Simon Taylor presented himself to his business partner in London and how he conceptualized his place amongst his peers, his social inferiors and the empire he was a part of. While a major weakness of these letters as evidence is that Taylor's correspondence was primarily business-related and was likely an idealized persona that Taylor hoped to convey to his partner, Taylor was keen to note the geo-political and social events that pertained to the island, and ultimately showed the connections that business enterprise had to several aspects of social, political, and cultural practice in Jamaica. These letters were only one side of a conversation between two elites: I did not have Arcedeckne's correspondence which could be used to analyze how Taylor responded to Arcedeckne's questions or concerns. Despite these shortcomings, it was not difficult to discern what Taylor replied to. It was very likely that Taylor replied to each paragraph in turn, and rarely neglected to answer any questions Arcedeckne had about plantation life. The letters lack a distinct window into Taylor's personal life (Taylor did not write how he felt emotionally about issues unrelated to business affairs) though upon careful examination several excerpts of Taylor's letters highlighted his determination to hold onto British cultural norms of the late-eighteenth century, especially in the wake of the Imperial Crisis.

Other resident planters and contemporary Jamaican historians that will be mentioned in this thesis, such as Bryan Edwards, William Beckford, Edward Long, and

John Stewart, were acutely aware of the imperial community that they participated in.[76] They wrote extensively about Jamaica's place within the empire and about how the island's society, climate and geography shaped traditional British culture. While these resident planters were not complete contemporaries of one another, they did share similar views on the manner that the imperial government should participate in colonial affairs. They differed in their approach to their black neighbors and slaves, though they did assume that the influence of blacks was negative in relation to their British identities. In addition, the wife of the to-be governor of Jamaica, Lady Maria Nugent, will be a recurring character in this thesis. She visited Jamaica from 1801-1804 with her husband and wrote an extensive journal about her stay.

Though Taylor's letters could potentially be seen as a way to understand the economic realities of elite Jamaican resident planters, business correspondence can also be used as a means to understand cultural history. Simon Taylor's life was dictated primarily by the sugar industry. When the Jamaican Governor's wife visited one of Taylor's estates at Holland Plantation in 1801, Taylor was keen to show her the "sugar works."[77] Even the slang that Taylor used was related to sugar production.[78] Since sugar and business was so integral to social life in Jamaica, these letters were an important resource in connecting Taylor's cultural world to the central economic themes that histories of the Caribbean often have.

This thesis will explore Taylor's letters and use them as a window into the world of the Jamaican planter. Three mid-1770s and early 1780s identities (imperial, creole and his status on the island) will be explored in particular. I will discuss the interaction

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[76] Stewart came later, near the end of the long eighteenth century, but was still relevant because he hearkened to similar colonial rights that other resident planters had discussed earlier in the century.
[77] Lady Maria Nugent, *The Diary of Lady Nugent*, 69.
[78] *Ibid.,* 71.

between those identities and how they influenced each other—at times reinforcing and at times challenging each other. Overall, Taylor was upset with the changing relationship that London had to its colonial peripheries throughout the Imperial Crisis. I conclude in this thesis that Simon Taylor attempted to retain his British citizenship contrary to what imperial commentators, scientists, and social critics suggested about West-Indian resident planters. Ultimately, Taylor tried to be more British than the British themselves: a loyalist during the imperial crisis, a self-styled gentleman, and reluctant creole, Taylor wanted desperately to be seen as a citizen of imperial Britain, rather than a Jamaican creole and slave owner. Simon Taylor's wide-ranging personas and identities allow historians to ask a variety of questions about the West Indian world and about how resident planters understood their connections to the Empire during the Imperial Crisis and beyond. This thesis will show how loyalty to empire and fear of cultural subversion were not divorced from the economic realities of the sugar trade and slavery but were tied intricately to them. Compounded by the looming issues around the presence of Africans, identity and whiteness came to be an important attribute to guard closely. Slaves, like the oxen, machinery, and the sugar canes themselves were simply part of the landscape, but played a more important role than simply as capital. Though Taylor may be atypical in the extreme nature of his personal wealth, his ability to connect to the British imperial world on a global level was not.[79] Many colonists had vast networks that spanned across Britain's oceanic empire. A middling merchant in Kingston might have a cousin in Boston or an aunt in Norfolk who kept each other informed with various goings-on around them.

[79] Richard Sheridan, "Simon Taylor, Sugar Tycoon of Jamaica" 292-293. Sheridan estimates that Taylor's personal wealth amounted to £401, 778 based on all the personalty and realty under Taylor's control.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. The divisions reflect the different facets of identity that Taylor clung to: imperial, creole, and interpersonal. These three sections will identify the ways which resident planters conceptualized their world. By using Simon Taylor as a window onto this world, it allows historians to comprehend further the ways that resident planters rationalized their British imperial identity in a world that was decidedly not British. Whiteness dictated Britishness more in Jamaica and the West Indies at large than in North America, and whiteness was asserted in different ways in Jamaica. Race and identity became intertwined in Jamaica, and this thesis explores how Taylor understood those intertwined concepts.

CHAPTER TWO: IMPERIAL IDENTITIES AND COLONIAL PERIPHERIES

On March 30th, 1783, a relieved Simon Taylor wrote a letter to Chaloner Arcedeckne: the final peace treaty with France had been signed, and Taylor was pleased with the news. "God grant we may never more have a War" he wrote, with some reprieve: "the last has been the most destructive that has for some ages happened to Britain."[80] In the same letter, Taylor had enclosed the preliminaries of the peace talks. Taylor suggested that "peace was absolutely necessary for [British subjects]" and that the Peace of Paris had "saved this Island."[81] Taylor was adamant that the war with France and Spain had almost brought total financial ruin to the island's inhabitants. The island had been saved from not just foreign invasion but also from what Taylor assumed were likely hyperbolic fears of economic enslavement from the imperial center.[82] Taylor, who had a vested interest in the war's outcome, had complained for several years about the way the conflict was fought. The success or failure of the conflict would have dictated the ways in which Taylor financed his business dealings. A potentially unsuccessful war may have cost Taylor money in sugar duties, limited his options to buy and maintain slaves, or removed his rights as a British citizen should a foreign power invade. These rights were the same that Taylor wanted removed from American Rebels. Taylor had initially supported action against the American "dogs" in 1774; he wrote to Arcedeckne that though he wished matters in America "were settled," he was unsure about "how it [would be] possible to settle them" given "what the Americans have done[,] Britain cannot give up the Point [as] it would only be making [the Americans] more arrogant than they are at present."[83] Taylor was also frustrated with the American colonists'

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[80] Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers 3A/1783/13, Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 30 March 1783.
[81] *Ibid*.
[82] For more on the effects of war on West Indian plantations, see Justin Roberts, "Uncertain Business: A Case Study o Barbadian Plantation Management, 1770-93" *Slavery and Abolition* 32 (2011): 247-261.
[83] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 19 November 1774.

insistence on smuggling, rather than honest trade with their countrymen in Jamaica and maintained they deserved to be punished for their illegitimate actions:

> ". . . whatever the Gloss the Americans and their writers may put on it are that Several Revenue acts passed in the present reign are so many checks to their Smuggling trade with Holland Hamburgh France & the French Islands and it is a specious argument that they have laid hold of their not being represented."[84]

It appeared to Taylor as though the American case for independence was flimsy at best, given their inability to conform to British imperial economic regulations. Taylor consistently wrote to Arcedeckne about the importance of maintaining strong economic ethics in his business ventures. By the mid-eighteenth century, the notion of ethics was no longer, as historian Marvin B. Becker suggests, "anchored" in the Classical notions of virtue: prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude and benveolence.[85] Becker argues that "civil courage," or the ability to be learned and factual in all one's affairs, was now a "most heroic quality."[86] As a plantation attorney Taylor had a vested interest in English law and its implementation not as a barrister, but as a legal representative of the plantation itself. In 1774, Taylor engaged in a lengthy property trial with another of Arcedeckne's attorneys, Cussans, over a "small piece of land" where there was an important mill that was technically part of Amity Hall, one of Arcedeckne's plantations.[87] Taylor maintained that those British subjects who were unable to participate legally in the British Atlantic community should not be represented in Parliament, since they were

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[84] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 5 June 1775; C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (New York: Longman, 1989), 91. Despite Taylor's aversion to the unlawfulness of illicit trade that ran contrary to the Navigation Acts, many West Indian resident planters engaged in such trade with the much closer Spanish, French, and Dutch merchants. Likely aware of these problems, Taylor likely was incensed by the British government's inability to provide a viable alternative to illegal trade.
[85] Marvin B. Becker, *The Emergence of Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century: A Privileged Moment in the History of England, Scotland, and France* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994), 6.
[86] *Ibid.*
[87] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 23 April 1774.

breaking English law.[88] Ultimately, English common law was perceived as natural because of its perceived ancientness: anything that was not borne of English (or British) minds was dangerous.[89] As far as the British were concerned, they were a sovereign people who had always governed themselves.[90] Ultimately, Taylor was concerned that his North American cousins were behaving poorly as British citizens. For Taylor, the imperial economic system that cemented Britain's empire was an important piece of his identification to the rest of the empire. It was important that he highlight this point to Arcedeckne in his several letters.

This chapter will argue that Simon Taylor's imperial identity hinged on his participation in the British Atlantic economic system. This system allowed him to maintain personal property, something that Taylor equated with personal and constitutional freedom. In a slave society like Jamaica's, it was important for Taylor to highlight to Arcedeckne that he was not an economic slave to the imperial system. Taylor assumed that the imperial government would neglect to interfere in his own personal financial affairs, which kept him a free individual. When Taylor complained to Arcedeckne that Prime Minister Lord North's ministry had taken steps to ruin his business ventures, Taylor was slighted. When it appeared as though the British imperial government might take this ability away, Taylor's loyalties to the British Empire began to whither. Resident planters' loyalties ultimately hinged upon more than simply (often non-

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[88] Historian C.A. Bayly in has given an alternate explanation and has argued that many resident planters were in favor of the American War in order to destroy the much more productive French sugar plantations, but Taylor did not revel in the possibility of French sugar disruption. Evidence from Taylor's correspondence suggests that perhaps more was at play than merely material interest see Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (London: Longman, 1989), 92.
[89] J.G.A Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 340-1. Anthony Pagden writes that natural rights were one of the building blocks of empire and that every wartime state needed to hearken to natural law in order to legitimize their actions in "The Struggle for Legitimacy and the Image of Empire to c.1700" ed. Nicholas Canny, *The Oxford History of the British Empire vol.1: The Origins of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 37.
[90] *Ibid*.

existent) military protection but also upon various factors that included traditional rights and liberties of colonial Britons, religious connotations for property, and imperial free trade. This chapter will begin by tracing the ways which British identity operated across the Atlantic World and how Taylor conceptualized his place in the empire. The chapter will then discuss the means by which Taylor understood his relationship to the imperial government and how modern theories of political economy influenced his position on why, ultimately, he maintained he was cheated by the British government and his English rights had been infringed upon and why Taylor ultimately remained loyal to what he saw as an unfair imperial order. This was an order that he maintained was systematically destroying his rights as a colonist, capitalist, and British citizen. This chapter will explore Taylor's ironic fears of enslavement because he assumed that the British government had removed his right to generate income. White imperial subjects were not meant to be enslaved (in a constitutional sense) by other whites, and this worried Taylor. How and why Taylor was compelled to remain a part of a collapsing imperial community requires examination by historians in order to understand not just why Jamaica decided to remain loyal to the empire during the American Revolution, but also to gain a more nuanced perspective into the nebulous nature of loyalism. In Taylor's letters to Chaloner Arcedeckne, he suggested that property and citizenship were intertwined: his loyalty to empire was based on his ability to maintain and aggrandize his personal properties.

“Protestant, Commercial, Maritime, and Free”

Taylor was unenthusiastic about warfare, given the economic instability that befell the island colony, but he was even less pleased with the Americans' broken bonds with Britain. Their imperial identities had failed, since they were unable to conform to imperial economic regulations. This chapter will now show how Taylor conceptualized

his imperial identity, what that entailed, and how local circumstances influenced his mode of thinking about identity in a nationalistic sense.

Especially after 1760, the British Atlantic world was connected by a particular character, or "Britishness" that could be emphasized in different ways across the Atlantic. Taylor maintained that by breaking this character he might distance himself, socially and culturally, from the precedent set in the imperial center; breaking these norms would mean he did not deserve English rights.[91] Even in an isolated colony like Jamaica, Taylor had situated himself in an increasingly connected British imperial Atlantic. Taylor "hoped to God" that his and Arcedeckne's families should "live & die under the British Government & enjoy the happiness of Peace & Tranquility again," which leaves the degree(s) of Taylor's loyalism and the nature of West Indian loyalty during the American Revolution as historical problems deserving of investigation.[92] For Taylor, the British Empire presented a perfect system of free enterprise which allowed him, through the production and improvement of his land, to be a free, British subject. Free trade allowed British politicians in London to co-ordinate policy with its colonial possessions while not explicitly dominating its lands politically.[93] When Prime Minister Lord North's policies around sugar duties became too high, Taylor maintained that his traditional rights of economic freedom were infringed upon and that he was thus enslaved by these policies.[94] While supportive of his traditional liberties, Taylor was

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[91] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, 9.
[92] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 May 1782.
[93] For more on imperial free trade in the eighteenth century, see James Livesay, "Free Trade and Empire in the Anglo-Irish Commercial Propositions of 1785" *Journal of British Studies* 52 (2013): 103-127.
[94] For more on British imperial citizenship and English rights, see Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York, Knopf, 1989); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Kathleen Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003); H.V.

frustrated with their implementations in Jamaica and implied that a return to the older system of colonial rule was imperative.

These rights were tied into the mainstays of British imperial identity in the early modern period. Historian David Armitage has described the central assets of British identity as "Protestant, Commercial, Maritime, and Free." These were categories for British English rights to fall under throughout the empire.[95] These English rights were often malleable enough to suit a particular location. For example, colonial liberties, especially the rights of colonists to enjoy British freedom and to accumulate property, were often taken as an implicit reality by Jamaican elite planters such as Edward Long, Brian Edwards and even the resident Simon Taylor. Taylor was largely concerned with the implicit freedoms he received as a British citizen to own and accumulate private property, along with the ability to be economically independent of the metropolitan government. As the abolition movement gained strength in the 1780s and 1790s, freedom to own property and political freedom before the law became a serious issue for resident planters.[96] Initially, abolitionists only posed a threat to resident planters' supply, not their right to own slaves. Resident planters' desires to retain what they perceived to be ancient rights to property clashed with abolitionists' wishes to end the trade of whom they maintained were not slaves, but British subjects.

Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke, and John Reid, *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Oceanic Worlds, c. 1550-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975). Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

[95] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000), 126.

[96] Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 1-15.

The often contradictory and complex interactions between British rights were debated by parliament and ordinary British citizens. Despite the many different cultures, locales, and ways of life that the British imperial polity touched and influenced, imperial citizens, (and sometimes, but not always, subjects) styled themselves as Englishmen, whatever their ethnic origins, and as such expected the same rights and liberties as other Englishmen.[97] Despite these cultural ties to the British Atlantic community, Taylor was a good example of what historian Christer Petley has termed a "recalcitrant empire loyalist."[98] Loyal to the empire in practice and in theory, Taylor was oftentimes frustrated with colonial policy. Taylor wrote on several occasions of how Lord North's policies would bring the island to financial ruin, but with the resident planters effectively paying for British imperial conflicts, Taylor's concern stretched beyond his own immediate fortune to the fortune of his home amidst the British Empire. Other resident planters, stretching back to the seventeenth century, had voiced their concerns about the government's meddling in their affairs.[99] Taylor argued that he was in fact more British than the British: by paying for the empire's defense and holding onto its imperial possessions abroad, he was doing his part to maintain not just British identity in the colonies but also defend them, in his own way, from enemies within and without.

Taylor maintained that his duty was to the empire and that "every man who has a property in a Country to contribute his little assistance towards the Public Welfare."[100]

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[97] J.G.A. Pocock, "Empire, state, and confederation: The War of American Independence as a crisis in multiple monarchy," In *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 150.
[98] Christer Petley, "'Devoted Islands' and 'that madman Wilberforce'" *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 39 (2011): 395.
[99] For planter relations to the imperial center in the seventeenth century, see Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1623-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); Jenny Shaw, *Everyday Life in the Early English Caribbean*: *Irish, Africans and the Construction of Difference* (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2013); Philip D. Curtain, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex: Essays in Atlantic History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[100] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 27 September, 1781.

Other planters in the 1770s such as the absentee Edward Long warned that when Jamaican whites voted in their respective assemblies, modeled on the British parliamentary system, they consider the "great principle, the public good."[101] A January, 1754 petition to the King headed by Admiral Charles Knowles of Jamaica attempted to dislodge the plantocratic members of the Assembly because they were "Constant Contemners and Opposers" of government, while merchants were the government's "hearty Friends" and had a "constant reliance on government."[102] This petition was only allowed to blossom because Knowles was able to join a team of former political rivals into an "Association" who followed him only because "he appear[ed] to [them] to have at Heart the public Service."[103] Though the petition failed from a lack of signatures, the fact that these members of the Assembly attempted to act in a way which would be beneficial to not just themselves, but for the empire at large, suggests that many elite Jamaicans maintained that they had a duty to the common good of the empire. Of course, what some might have conceptualized as a positive for the empire was not for others. The resident planters that made up a large part of the Jamaican assembly were not representative of the island as a whole, and Knowles maintained that merchants would be a more virtuous counterbalance to the plantocracy. Taylor, as a student of English law who belonged to both the plantocracy and merchant elite, likely maintained that the

[101] Edward Long, *The history of Jamaica; or, General survey of the antient and modern state of that island: with reflections on its situations, settlements, inhabitants, climate, products, commerce, laws, and government* (New Edition, Vol. 1, Frank Cass & Co. Limited, 1970 (First edition 1774), original printed in London, printed for T. Lowndes, in Fleet-Street), 122.
[102] Charles Knowles to the Earl of Holderness, February 5th, 1754; Charles Knowles to the Earl of Newcastle, January 29th, 1754. As quoted in Jack P. Greene, "'Of Liberty and the Colonies': A Case Study of Constitutional Conflict in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British American Empire" ed. Jack Greene *Creating the British Atlantic: Essays on Transplantation, Adaptation, and Continuity* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 140-207.
[103] Governor Edward Trelawny to Charles Knowles, October 23rd, 25th, 26th, November 2nd, December 9th, 1751. As quoted in Jack P. Greene, "'Of Liberty and the Colonies': A Case Study of Constitutional Conflict in the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British American Empire" ed. Jack Greene *Creating the British Atlantic: Essays on Transplantation, Adaptation, and Continuity* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), 140-207.

concerns of both groups were of some equal importance in Britain's parliament in order to fulfill a more complete sense of public opinion. These issues of the "public welfare" or the "public good" continued to concern writers after the eighteenth century in Jamaica. Jamaican elite John Stewart explained in his 1808 book *An Account of Jamaica and Its Inhabitants by a Gentleman* how public opinion, or "the general sense of the country," often "sided with the representatives [of the Assembly]," or the lower house of representatives, in issues settled by Jamaica's political elite.[104]

Taylor also expressed concerns about the inability of the Jamaican assembly to acquire taxes in order to increase government revenue, and he wrote that the Assembly would "get advices from Britain" on how to proceed with the dilemma.[105] Long also echoed this desire to keep close ties with Britain, despite his staunch views on the importance of colonists' rights. In 1774, Long wrote in his *The History of Jamaica* that:

> "Nothing is more repugnant to such a degeneracy of the human mind, than to encourage a high, a liberal, and independent spirit: and for this reason the resident planters, or owners of the slaves, in our colonies, cannot be too steddily supported in the possession of British freedom, to the fullest extent that our constitution will bear."[106]

Long insisted that many resident planters were too rebellious against their superiors in Britain (superior by virtue of living in Great Britain proper) largely because of their proximity to blacks (free or otherwise).[107] For Long, freedom was essential to resident planters and must be entrenched in West Indian political thought.

The preservation of political and economic freedom in Britain's imperial system was crucial to preserve imperial identity in the face of what many in the last quarter of

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[104] John Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica and Its Inhabitants by a Gentleman, Long Resident in the West Indies*, (London, 1808), 56.
[105] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 March, 1765.
[106] Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica,* 4.
[107] *Ibid*., 20-27.

the eighteenth century assumed was the repugnant lifestyle of slave owners in the West Indies. Despite Edward Long's distaste for resident planters based on their lack of Britishness perpetuated by their "distance from the mother country," many resident planters maintained that the British colonial system was mutually socioconomically supportive.[108] What Long might have considered rebellious or slanderous opinion of the British imperial center, Taylor might have assumed to be a reassertion of his natural rights as a servant of the empire. In the mutually supportive imperial system, Jamaica received the protective umbrella of the Royal Navy and British Army and the benefits that came with English liberties, while Great Britain would benefit from the economic boom that came from the British West Indies' sugar production, at first in Barbados in the 1640s and then from the Golden Age of sugar production in Jamaica from the 1740s onward.[109] Simon Taylor's worldview was one of a cohesive empire where each interdependent segment of the empire was mutually beneficial to the others. Taylor was not simply interested in the "Welfare" of Jamaica, but also the "Welfare" of Britain, both of his island homes.[110]

Imperial Loyalties

Though Taylor lived in a disparate island colony, he still believed that he had the full rights of an Englishman despite his Jamaican origins. These rights included his economic freedom from the imperial center, which allowed him to own and generate property of his own. Taylor's imperial community was, at least in theory, a mutually

[108] *Ibid*., 20.
[109] Christer Petley, "'Devoted Island' and 'that Madman Wilberforce': British Proslavery Patriotism During the Age of Abolition" 39 *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* (2011), 397.
[110] Barry Higman, *Plantation Jamaica, 1750-1850: Capital and Control in a Colonial Economy* (Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago: University of the West Indies Press, 2005), 20-21. Higman argues that these resident planters were wealthy enough to adopt a "trans-national British-Atlantic culture," where they simply were removed British citizens. If they struggled to return to Britain, they assumed that it would simply take more than one generation to arrive back in Britain.

beneficial one: where the empire would protect Taylor from foreign invasion, Taylor could pay imperial taxes and duties to help pay for this protection. Taylor's loyalties became strained in the face of what he assumed was a removal of his English rights. When the British government raised sugar duties, Taylor likened his treatment to slavery and the government's behavior to French popery. These were constitutionally similar in the eyes of many Britons, and were to be avoided at all costs.

Taylor, though born in Jamaica, often referred to the colony as either "home" or "this Island."[111] He referred to both Jamaica and Great Britain interchangeably as home through the course of the American War, but largely referred to Great Britain as his "home".[112] In the surviving correspondence throughout the wartime years (12th February 1781 – 22nd November, 1783), Taylor mentioned "home" 51 different times in his 41 letters, referring to "home" as Jamaica only five times even though he was born there and resided there. These references to home in Taylor's letters highlighted that despite the fact that Jamaica was his birthplace, the polity of Great Britain was his true home.[113] Taylor often implied in his letters that Jamaica was simply a part of a porous trans-Atlantic Empire. Though the empire might have been centered in Great Britain, culturally, any place that was British territory was considered very much a part of the empire. As such, Taylor's property was his, but under the protection of the British government; he did not owe anything specifically to the Jamaican government aside from his participation in the political and economic system (which would have been subsidiaries of British cultural influence anyway). These duties were a constant cause of annoyance

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[111] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 16 April, 1770; 5 June, 1775.
[112] Christer Petley, "'Home' and 'This Country': Britishness and Creole Identity in the letters of a transatlantic slaveholder" 6 (2009) *Atlantic Studies,* 52.
[113] David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London merchants and the integration of the Atlantic community, 1735-1785* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 4. Hancock has noted that statistical data can sometimes be problematic because it can sometimes reveal information "so general" that it can be sometimes "little connected" to the people to which it pertains.

for Taylor; not because he had to pay duties, but rather because the duties were becoming excessively high in his opinion. It was a matter of degree and not an objection to the principle of paying duties in support of an imperial economic system. The duty put on sugar in 1775 of four and a half percent was such that Taylor maintained Lord North's tax might be ruinous to Jamaica: resident planters would "be absolutely ruined by such a tax first from the low price of our produce last year and then by the Excessive great quantities of Negroes . . . and the number of Bills which have come back protested."[114] The number of slave voyages that entered Jamaica would have been quite high, as well. From 1775 to 1779, a whopping 226 slave ships crossed the middle passage heading to Jamaica, while from 1781 to 1785 there were only 123 en route to the island.[115] The slaves that disembarked from the voyages from 1781 to 1785 numbered 51, 150 while from 1776 to 1780 they numbered a much smaller 36, 781. What Taylor conceived of as economic malpractice by the British imperial government would have likely been an idea shared by many Britons.[116] High duties on sugar and the increased numbers of slaves would limit the abilities of resident planters to draw a profit from the shipping, loading, and unloading costs of the sugar they were meant to sell. These profits, as chapter three will show, were important not just to Taylor's physical wealth, but also the way he interacted with other resident elites in Jamaica.

Law, order, and economic ethics were paramount to the government's maintenance of Taylor's English rights. In 1781, Taylor was pleased to note that in a court trial between rum companies and rum merchants in London "the fraud of the former ha[d] been detected."[117] In a commercial society like the eighteenth-century

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[114] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 5 June 1775.
[115] Voyages Database, 2009. *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*. www.slavevoyages.org (accessed 7/1/2014).
[116] Voyages Database, 2009. *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*. www.slavevoyages.org (accessed 11/2/2014).
[117] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 27 September 1781.

British Empire, virtue (in an almost Roman sense, where masculinity, valor, and strong personal character were perceived as positives) and commerce were often intertwined.[118] Through the maintenance of virtuous behavior, resident planters might be able to maintain full British citizenship as they saw fit; virtuousness came from defending the empire in all its facets: militarily, economically, and politically, again, much like the Roman model. Historian Jack Greene notes that the main components of what Simon Taylor would have assumed to be "British"- that is, the belief that being a Briton imparted a love of liberty, Protestantism, commercialism and pride in the armed forces, (especially the Royal Navy) - were not absent, but instead were emphasized in different ways in Jamaica.[119] By defending the empire's institutions through commerce, military might, and adherence to its cultural norms, Taylor's home would remain virtuous and firmly within a British sphere of imperial influence in the face of culturally subversive forces such as the American Patriots and Catholic influence.

During the American war, Taylor asserted the sugar duties were excessively high, and it appeared as though the British government was largely inept and held the white citizens of Jamaica in bondage. Frustrated, Taylor likened these high duties not just to slavery, but assumed that, since duties were getting higher, it appeared as though the British government was attempting to "drive [the resident planters] into Rebellion [so the government might] Confiscate our Estates."[120] This emphasis on the language of slavery in the face of alleged tyranny mirrored the language of Patriots in North America

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[118] J.G.A. Pocock, "Virtues, Rights and Manners: A Model for Historians of Political Thought" in *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 50.
[119] Jack P. Greene, "Empire and Identity" in *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. II: The Eighteenth Century,* ed. P.J Marshall (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 229. J.G.A. Pocock also asserts in *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition,* 426 that "land, trade and credit as sources not merely of public wealth, but of political stability and virtue."
[120] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 June 1781.

and radicals in Britain, but Taylor's fears of despotism likely grew more from assertions of colonial rights that came from England, Scotland, Ireland, and other West Indian islands rather than specifically those from North America.[121]

The West Indies, though often lumped together as a geographic and cultural unit by contemporary and modern historians, were not homogenous intellectually or culturally. Despite the various West Indian islands' similarities to one another, oftentimes differing factors affected the ways that the disparate islands dealt with ideas that circulated around the British Atlantic. Ideas from Revolutionary America made their way to Jamaica by way of traders and merchants that moved to the island from New England and Carolina.[122] Taylor's complaint about slavery was that slavery, of any kind, was unjust when it was extended to whites, particularly Britons; it violated the rights of the freeborn Englishmen. Taylor never mentioned in his correspondence a slave's name, nor did he discuss their personal reactions to circumstances on his various estates.[123] He never discussed whippings, beatings, or punishments, nor did he ever mention his several children or his mistress to Arcedeckne. Taylor treated his slaves just as he would any of his property, animate or inanimate: their upkeep was important, but his relationship to them did not end there.[124] As chapter two will explain further in depth, in his correspondence, Taylor appeared more concerned with the possibility of his own enslavement to his government. Britons, as a white and free people, could not be enslaved by legal means.[125] Taylor, in this case, obviously meant enslavement in a

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[121] Lauren Benton, "The British Atlantic in global context", in David Armitage and M. J. Braddick, eds, *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2002), 288-9.
[122] C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian*, 91.
[123] Justin Roberts, "The 'Better Sort' and the 'Poorer Sort'" 461-462 Roberts identifies that whites' interactions with the overall slave population was largely done through intermediaries: resident planters brought their hierarchical understanding of the Atlantic World into their plantations, and transferred this worldview to their estate management.
[124] The next chapter will discuss this phenomenon more at length.
[125] "Address of the Assembly of Barbados to Oliver Cromwell," September 1653, as quoted in David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 15-16. The

metaphorical sense. He did not want to rely on the imperial center which would have limited the freedom that his wealth ensured.

Property and Profits

Taylor, frustrated with the British government's unwillingness to conform to what he assumed was proper English behavior in an economic sense, complained to Chaloner Arcedeckne that resident planters would be ruined by the imperial center. This chapter will now examine how Taylor assumed poor economic and military management by London was a threat to his personal property, a key part of his imperial citizenship, and how hostile forces (from within and without the colony) were still not as great a threat as losing his British identity.

Despite Taylor's constant complaints of Britain's misdoings, isolated colonies like Jamaica proved more difficult to defend culturally and militarily. Historian Andrew O'Shaughnessy argues that the British government was largely incapable of adequately defending the West Indies militarily because of the increasing global scope of the war and the lack of imports from America and trade with Great Britain caused plantation profits to drop significantly.[126] Despite these setbacks to their economic station, resident planters largely disapproved of the Patriots' cause.[127] O'Shaughnessy suggests that white resident planters required the British army to defend resident planters from black

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English had been discussing the legal ramifications of enslaving whites since the English Civil War. As the West Indian Islands made their switch from indentured and native labour to African labour, the Barbadian assembly claimed "Englishmen of as clear and pure extract as any (and should) enjoy . . . liberty and freedome equal with the rest of our countrymen . . ."

[126] O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided*, 160.

[127] *Ibid*., 60; Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America*, 14, 294. O'Shaughnessy suggests that the British government had a strong interest in the West Indian's defense, but was "stretched too thin" in its attempts to be defend its gains in 1763. O'Shaughnessy estimates that roughly 1000 men in the West Indian were fit for active duty, compared to roughly 8 000 French troops in the West Indian theatre. O'Shaughnessy also suggests that the West Indian theatre drained resources from the war on the American mainland, which forced the British to fight with smaller numbers than it had used in the war's opening year.

insurrections and foreign invasion. Given the large racial disparity in Jamaica, arming slaves in order to defend the colony would have been truly a frightening prospect.[128] While historians Christopher Brown and Philip D. Morgan have shown that many resident planters armed their slaves as watchmen, historian Justin Roberts has shown that armed slaves used as watchmen in Barbados on Turner's Hall plantation worked largely in isolation over long hours. Slaves could, and did, murder plantation overseers that they particularly disliked, resident planters were more apt to give out more provisions to these slaves in order to guarantee loyalty.[129] Other slaves that were "with office" or "officers" were often used as an intermediaries between whites, overseers, and the enslaved population and could quickly fall into or out of favor, which was meant to keep influential and elite slaves from revolting.[130]

For Taylor, the imperial culture he had come to rely on so firmly had changed for the worst by the 1780s. It appeared to Taylor that the Royal Navy and the British Army were largely idle and useless in defending Britain's largest and arguably most important colony in the West Indies. The Navy, long the defender of British imperial liberties abroad, had at last opened itself up to criticism on the American mainland as well as in Simon Taylor's world.[131] According to Taylor, Admiral George Rodney, stationed at Kingston, was content to sit at his plantation in the mountains, "digging potatoes and planting Cabbages" while "the Vessells that ought to protect the [sugar] Trade lying rotting and having their Bottoms eat out at Port Royal for want of having them down and

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[128] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided*, 50. O'Shaughnessy suggests that the resident planters were largely unwilling to develop a regional strategy with the British government, and relied on British troops only when they were absolutely necessary.
[129] Justin Roberts, "The 'Better Sort' and the 'Poorer Sort': Wealth Inequalities, Family Formation, and the Economy of Energy on British West Indian Sugar Plantations, 1750-1850" *Slavery and Abolition* 3 (2014), 459. For more on armed slaves, see editors Christopher Leslie Brown and Philip D. Morgan, *Arming Slaves: From Classical Times to the Modern Age* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
[130] *Ibid.,* 461.
[131] Sarah Kinkel, "The King's Pirates? Naval Enforcement and Imperial Authority, 1740-76" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 71 (2014), 4.

the whole Squadron going home but one line of Battle Ships."[132] Taylor wanted action: the French, he believed, were massing for an invasion of Jamaica, yet His Majesty's forces remained passive. Taylor maintained that British politicians, particularly Lord North, were unwilling to support the resident planters who effectively gave large amounts of their profits to the wartime government through duties paid on sugar imports: so high that Taylor commented that his properties did not "on average make £5 on their Capitals".[133]

Before 1750, resident planters had produced annual outputs of around fifty thousand pounds and around seventy-five thousand pounds annually by 1775.[134] Given the importance of tea and sugar's domestic consumption in Britain, sugar's supply to the imperial became, for historian Sidney Mintz, a "political, as well as an economic" matter.[135] Frustrated by parliament's lack of support for their West Indian possessions and resident planters' financial commitment to the war, Taylor surmised that resident planters in Jamaica had been repaid little in their continued loyalty.

Other loyalists maintained that they had been betrayed in the wake of the Peace of Paris. Article V of the treaty removed the possibility of recompensation for property lost to the Patriots, and loyalists in East Florida were furious that their land would be ceded to Spain.[136] Despite the plight of loyalists in North America, Taylor assumed as well that the other British possessions in the West Indies were suffering much less under economic pressures, and the government was "letting those Islands who would not so

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[132] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 June, 1781.
[133] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 11 June, 1782.
[134] Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slaves,* 202.
[135] Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985) 116; Noel Deerr, *The History of Sugar vol. 1* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1949) gives much lower output of sugar plantations in Jamaica, estimating by 1775 slaves had only produced 47, 690 pounds of sugar which steadily fell in 1776 and 1777, the lowest output (25,800 pounds) since 1762. Deerr estimates that sugar did not reach pre-war production values until 1788.
[136] Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: America Loyalists in the Revolutionary World,* 85.

much as carry up the Guns & Shells to defend themselves, have all their Supplies £200 stg. Cheaper."[137] It appeared to Taylor that Jamaican resident planters, in particular, were suffering for their past financial successes.[138] For Taylor, Jamaican resident planters were very much alone in the defense of their island; the British government appeared largely unwilling to grant any extra forces to the defense of the island. The small, localized conflict between Boston radicals had exploded into a conflict Taylor likely never thought plausible.

Despite the explosiveness of the American conflict, Taylor never once mentioned in his letters the dangers of arming his or his neighbours' slaves, which suggests a number of different possibilities. While Taylor likely did not want to alarm Arcedeckne that his slaves might have been plotting an uprising, Taylor perhaps assumed that slaves, if treated properly, would be less likely to revolt. He was unlikely to buy slaves who had a history of violence, made evident in a letter to Arcedeckne in 1771 when he "did not think it prudent" to buy slaves who had murdered the captain of a Guineaman and had been sold in Kingston.[139] A more likely reality was that Taylor was disconnected from his slaves and their interactions with overseers. Though he owned some 2,138 slaves by the time of his death and managed thousands more for absentee resident planters, he was more apt to interact with his white overseers and other merchants than his personal slaves.[140] While he certainly had several attendants, maids, and household labourers who were made up of enslaved individuals, they were simply a part of the

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[137] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, June 22, 1782.

[138] Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 2006), 20-24. Hilton suggests that the eighteenth and early nineteenth century financial system in the British Empire was "marked by failure as much as by prosperity. The national income (at current prices) faced its lowest growth during the American Revolution (112.21 million pounds to 118.29 million from 1779-1782, compared to 153.92 million to 232.48 million from 1791-1799) which likely forced the resident planters to pay more in terms of duties.

[139] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 18 May 1771.

[140] Richard B. Sheridan, "Simon Taylor: Sugar Tycoon of Jamaica, 1740-1813" 4 *Agricultural History*, (1971), 289.

background. Taylor was said to have drawn a large Scottish contingent to his plantations, and the way that the Scottish clan system operated on the island was not just a factor in his success, as historian Richard Sheridan has noted, but also kept his interactions largely amongst whites.[141]

Taylor's concerns largely surrounded the consequences of whites dealing with other whites, rather than the consequences of interactions with black slaves. Despite this, Taylor was concerned with a different sort of slavery: his own economic enslavement. That said, Taylor merely conceptualized his economic enslavement and the plight of Africans as rhetorically similar but still different causes entirely.[142] When John Locke wrote in his *First Treatise of Government* in 1689 that "Slavery is so vile and miserable an Estate of Man, and so directly opposite to the generous Temper and Courage of our Nation; that 'tis hardly to be conceived that an *Englishman*, much less a *Gentleman*, should plead for 't" he referred to English constitutional theory and not to the all-too-familiar realities for enslaved Africans.[143]

And yet, for all of Taylor's concerns with enslavement by the imperial center, Taylor remained a loyal British subject. Despite Taylor's tendency to write hyperbolic passages on current affairs in his letters to Chaloner Arcedeckne, he wrote this way specifically because of his loyalty to the British Atlantic system. Taylor, all too aware of the consequences of enslavement to not simply foreign powers, but to those who might be seen as religious enemies (such as the French), who, like the British government, might put them into "Egyptian Bondage" which held some pretense of racial

[141] *Ibid*.
[142] While O'Shaughessy describes this in the Caribbean context, there is a sizeable body of literature about similar issues amongst North American patriots. For more, see: Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1967); J.G.A Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
[143] John Locke, *Two Treatises of Civil Government* (London, 1924 [1689]), 1.

undertones.[144] The form of economic slavery that the British government had apparently forced upon resident planters was simply too brutal: hence Taylor's use of "Egyptian." These types of complaints are known amongst modern historians as the 'groans of the plantations,' but this implies that resident planters were simply whining and their complaints were unfounded.[145] Historian J.R. Ward has noted that the average plantation profits in Jamaica from sugar had fallen to 3 percent during the war years of 1776-1782 whereas they had been as high as 8.9 percent from 1763 to 1775.[146] These low profits, coupled with high duties, might very well have appeared as though the government had chosen to drive resident planters to rebel. Despite Taylor's complaints about the inability of the British government to allow him and his fellow resident planters to maximize profits under high duties and excises, Taylor never once wrote of taking arms against the Crown. He did not slander the King or Britain's Parliament. Financial motivation was not the sole reason why resident planters decided to remain loyal and simultaneously critical of the war.[147] Financial safety was a key matter in resident planters' minds, but within that came a deeper loyalty to a system of free enterprise that loyalty to the British Empire seemed to guarantee. Taylor was frustrated with the war with America, because it was being waged poorly; it forced the government to raise duties on sugar to an unjust level, which undermined the economic freedom that was the

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[144] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 28 August, 1781.
[145] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 160.
[146] J.R. Ward, "The Profitability of Sugar Planting in the British West Indies, 1650-1834," 31 *Economic History Review* (1978), 207-209. Roberts in "Uncertain Business" has found that the impact of the war on the Barbadian economy was actually far less damaging.
[147] It may seem implausible that resident planters in the British West Indies could even have hoped to match the military forces of Britain with rebellion, but many resident planters were relatively calm over the Stamp Act with the exception of one Mr. Robert Graham, who wrote in September 1765 to Chaloner Arcedeckne "Can you imagine that people who had an independent situation, are numerous, and not without daring and enterprising genius's will tamely submit to the hard grip of ministerial oppression." Graham concluded that despite this, "we must submit." Robert Graham to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 20 September 1765, Jamaican Estate Papers, Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers, Cambridge University Library. Cited in T. R. Clayton, "Sophistry, Security, and Socio-Political Structures in the American Revolution: or, Why Jamaica did not Rebel" *The Historical Journal* 29 (1986): 324.

right of freeborn Englishmen. Taylor did not use the rhetoric of the patriots in the American Revolution or discuss Natural Rights or Radical Republicanism. Taylor expressed concern and frustration through rhetorical devices dealing with the rights of colonists. These grievances stemmed from two factors: a lack of financial protection and military support. Despite significant earlier victories in continental America, with only 7,536 British regulars fit for duty in America by December 1776, it seemed unlikely that the British could even afford to send minor detachments to defend Jamaica.[148] Edward Long stipulated that there were only "two or three companies of regulars" on the island, with "five or six [companies] of horse and foot militia, and a medley of Christians, Jews, Pagans, Negroes and Mulattoes."[149] This was hardly enough to mount a stalwart defense of Jamaica. Taylor, apparently more afraid of a French invasion than a slave uprising, if we take his letters as evidence, wanted British regulars to be deployed to Jamaica (Taylor stipulated that 10, 000 "effective soldiers" ought to be sufficient to defend the colonists and their assets against foreign invasion). Unfortunately for him, he was consistently frustrated by the inactivity and ineffectiveness of the Royal Navy to secure safe trade routes for Jamaican goods sent to Britain and colonies elsewhere.[150] Taylor wrote that in 1781 the British had a "large fleet last year [that] did nothing in the

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[148] Edward E. Curtis, *The Organization of the British Army in the American Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1926), 2; Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America,* 14, 96. Since July of 1776, General Howe had captured 4, 500 prisoners, four of which were generals in the Continental Army, 235 pieces of artillery, 24, 000 shells, 17, 000 cannonballs and around 2, 800 infantry muskets. Despite these colossal victories, after 1778 the British had to fight a losing war in America with fewer men and a smaller navy than it had deployed in 1776.

[149] Edward Long, *History of Jamaica, vol. 2*, 18.

[150] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 29 October 1782. For more on warfare in the West Indian during the American Revolution, see Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: Britain, the American Revolution, and the Fate of Empire,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013); Edward S. Corwin, "French Objectives in the American Revolution." 21 *American Historical Review* (1915): 33-61; Neville A. T. Hall, "Governors and Generals: The Relationship of Civil and Military Commands in Barbados, 1783-1815" 10 *West Indian Studies* (1971): 93-112; Reginald Hargreaves, *The Bloodybacks: The British Servicemen in North America and the Caribbean, 1655-1783* (London: Hart-Davis, 1968); J.R. McNeil, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater West Indian, 1620-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

world & we have an Admiral here that does as little."[151] It was really only after George Rodney's victory as the Battle of the Saintes (1781) that Taylor wrote with some relief from what he assumed was the inevitable invasion of Jamaica by the French.[152] Taylor wrote to Arcedeckne that "[Jamaican planters] should have been in a dreadful situation had it not been for Rodneys victory" and hoped that "the very Providential victory" would "give a turn to the war."[153]

Local Distrust

This chapter has shown how imperial fumbles in economic policy frustrated Taylor because of his adherence to what he perceived as immutable English rights across the empire. Loyalism to the empire should be repaid in kind, and Taylor was annoyed at the possibility that Lord North's government would be largely unable to defend Taylor's fiscal or landed capital. This brief section will touch on how Taylor's opinions were not solely his: many other resident planters and elites were disappointed with the manner which the British government had treated their personal property during the American War and afterwards.

Taylor trusted in the military and government, but was often disappointed in its leaders. Taylor was not alone in his distaste for imperial leadership during the American War. Images such as *Count De Grasse Taking a Peep in the West Indies* (1779), produced by Thomas Colley and *The Botching Taylor Cutting his Cloth to Cover a Button* (1779) highlighted this sentiment (Figures 3 and 4). The gaunt French admiral,

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[151] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 April 8, 1781.
[152] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 19 March, 1782; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, May 8th, 1782; Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *The Men Who Lost America: Britain, The American Revolution and the Fate of the Empire*, 293-4. Rodney was in charge of the naval dock at Port Royal from 1771-1774. In May of 1782, he engaged a French fleet commanded by Luc Urbain de Bouexic, thus ending a French attempt to capture Barbados, forcing de Bouexic to retreat to France. Despite the victory, the British forces were severely thinned with the escalation of the war into a global one. Rodney effectively became the only commander with his reputation more or less intact.
[153] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 May 1782.

who would be later defeated by George Rodney at the Battle of the Saintes, surveys British possessions in the first image. This was meant to make a mockery of Britain's traditional naval superiority, something that O'Shaughnessy argues was a major grievance for West Indian resident planters.[154] The lack of military support for the island likely skewed Taylor's views of the empire as mutually supportive. In the second image, Lord North is seen cutting up pieces of not just pieces of legislature important to imperial identity such as the Magna Carta and the Bill of Rights, but also petitions sent to London by Jamaicans. For its viewers, the image suggests that the government was largely unwilling to listen to its servants and, for Taylor, likely increased his sentiments that the government was attempting to enslave him, rather than support the Atlantic community that Taylor conceptualized. Like the Revolutionaries in America, Taylor was threatened by the conspiratorial nature of the government's attitude towards his individual liberties. Taylor's fears of enslavement largely stemmed from this view of the British government. Historian Bernard Bailyn has effectively charted how pamphlet literature shaped how American patriots conceptualized the revolution.[155] The literature that Taylor likely read most often in Jamaica, newspapers, spoke to this threat of conspiracy in government in a similar fashion to what Bailyn described.[156] Though Taylor never mentioned reading specifically, he mentioned on 18 occasions news as "heard," which suggests that though he may not have read the news, he likely would have heard someone read the news or heard a rumour about it from someone on his travels to Kingston or Spanish Town.

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[154] O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided*, 168.

[155] Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution, Enlarged Edition*, (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992). Pamplets, Bailyn argued, were perfect for Revolutionaries in North America because of their conciseness and ability to reach "immediate and rapidly shifting targets."

[156] Bailyn describes that the patriots in North America tended to believe that they fAced "a deliberate conspiracy to destroy the balance of the constitution and eliminate their freedom" and it was "universally shared by sympathizers of the American cause." Bailyn goes on to suggest that these sentiments were even present in England. He cites Burke's *Thoughts of the Present Discontents* (1770) and Burke's fears that "Parliament was on the brink of falling 'under the control of an unscrupulous gang of would-be despots' who would destroy the constitution was 'widely believed.'"Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins*, 144-145.

Information was less readily available than it is today, and news was likely a combination of hearsay and rumor as much as actual fact.

Figure 3, Thomas Colley, *Count De Grasse Taking a Peep in the West Indies* (1779)[157]

[157] Oftentimes French figures were portrayed as overly-skinny and shrewd-looking. For more on caricatures of French figures in wartime, see Linday Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*; Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). For a more theoretical take on caricatures in a nationalist sense, see eds. Manfred Beller and Joseph Leerssen, *Imagology: The Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters, a Critical Study* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007).

Figure 4, *The Botching Taylor Cutting his Cloth to Cover a Button* (1779)[158]

Newspapers in Kingston often carried a tone similar to what Taylor described in his letters. In a 1779 edition of the *Jamaica Mercury and Kingston Weekly Advertiser*, an article about the ongoing war in America from a session in Parliament described a minister in charge of the American department who had yet to bring victory to the

[158] James Tomlinson, *The Botching Taylor Cutting his Cloth to Cover a Button* (London, 1779). This political cartoon showcases Lord North summarily dismantling the Empire and its traditional rights from George III's "cloth." On the floor reads the Magna Carta, Bill of Rights, West Indies, along with the Petition of Jamaica from 1774

British.[159] If the minister was left to continue with "the American department, no success could attend his Majesty's arms in North America" mainly because "every general who had received orders of that minister had been disgusted" with how poor his commands were.[160] The paper reported that, while most subjects appeared to be outwardly supportive of the government in London, "the love of our country is evidently sacrificed to the thrift official emoluments; while the minority even torture invention to clog the wheels of government, and depress the spirit of the people."[161] For Taylor and the planter elites that read the paper based out of Kingston, it appeared evident that members of parliament were unlikely to give those who supported the war effort in full any aid while they attempted to line their pockets with the duties resident planters paid to support their king.[162] Another article printed by the *Mercury* reported that Mr. Jenkinson, on the Parliamentary Committee of Supply had told the House of Commons that the "whole amount [of soldiers, seamen, and marines] to 300, 000 men, a larger military power than any kingdom in Europe had ever kept in modern times, except in the flourishing period of the reign of Louis XIV."[163] Mr. Jenkinson's report concluded in the article that "with this force . . . Great-Britain would be able to maintain the empire of the sea, to accomplish the object of the American War, and to make France repent her prefident conduct

[159] The *Jamaica Mercury*, which would be later titled the *Royal Gazette*, was begun by a gentleman named Alexander Aikman, who married South Carolina refugee Louisa Wells, her own crossing of the Atlantic in a slave ship in retreat from the loss of South Carolina. Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles*, 245-6. Jamaica was the preferred destination of exiles from North America, largely because of its development and potential for riches.

[160] "European Intelligence," The Jamaica Mercury and Kingston Weekly Advertiser, May 1st, 1779, 9.

[161] *Ibid*. Emoluments means personal gain and profits.

[162] Frank Cundall, *A History of Printing in Jamaica from 1717 to 1834* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Jamaica, 1934), 16-17.

[163] "House of Commons," *The Jamaica Mercury and Kingston Weekly Advertiser,* May 1st, 1779, 8; Colley's numbers of available troops vastly differ. She suggests that there may have only been less than 36 000 available for active duty at the Revolutionary War. By 1780, this number would jump to 100 000 men, but the war's geographic scope allowed for "less than 30 percent" of these troops to be dispatched to the fledgling United States. Linda Colley *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600-1850* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2002), 208-209.

towards this country,"[164] which suggested to Taylor that the Empire would come to defend its naval trade with the largest military force the world had ever seen. Dissatisfied, the blame fell squarely on the shoulders of the ministers.[165] The *Mercury* had a history of printing pieces related to the wellbeing of the island and its participation in West Indian and British affairs with titles such as "Observations of the Dysentery of the West Indies . . ." (1780), "A Brief History of the Late Expedition Against Fort San Juan . . ." (1781), "A Short Dissertation on the Jamaica Bath Waters" (1784) which discussed certain waters which were purported to have healing capabilities, and a "Catalogue of plants exotic and indigenous in the Botanical Garden" (1792) which discussed several plants that had recently been introduced into the Jamaican landscape.[166] Taylor, likely cognizant of this reality whether he read newspapers or not, shared the views of the paper's readers.

Taylor's worries about the inactivity of the military were also likely supported by newspapers like the *Mercury* that was prone to printing material that highlighted the importance of Jamaica in West Indian contexts. These newspapers were not simply heralds of news from abroad, but also connected the members of Britain's displaced subjects in Jamaica to their homeland. The *Jamaica Mercury* contained not just advertisements and editorials, but mostly reports from the House of Commons and global affairs. Stories from the previous week featured the capture of a French privateer, who the editor preferred "to take the liberty to remind [the captain] that a *little, thieving, predatory war,* is a disgrace to a generous nation."[167] These sorts of papers connected Taylor to the world around him, and reinforced his ideas about Loyalism.

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[164] Here "prefident" means overconfident.
[165] Frank Cundall, *A History of Printing in Jamaica from 1717 to 1834* (Kingston, Jamaica: Institute of Jamaica, 1934), 16-17.
[166] *Ibid.*
[167] "House of Commons," *The Jamaica Mercury and Kingston Weekly Advertiser,* May 1, 1779, 7.

Other loyalists were adamant that despite defeat in the American War, some victory might be achieved with full government support. John Cruden, a former commissioner of sequestered estates from South Carolina who relocated to the Bahamas, was keen to pursue a project of conquest should the United States collapse, a commonly held belief at the time.[168] Lord North and General Cornwallis took his proposals seriously, and hoped that Britain might "bring the Americans back again" should the British move to acquire territory outside the Thirteen Colonies.[169] Though the proposal failed, the trust that ordinary British subjects held in the military was strong, even after the catastrophic defeat in 1781 at Yorktown. Though Taylor never mentioned other peers' discussions of loyalty to the empire directly, they did aid Taylor to recognize that he was very much a part of the British imperial system.

Paradigms

While this chapter has thus far explored the ways that Simon Taylor and other resident planters understood their place in the imperial system and what they assumed Britain's economic system of exchange would do for him, it has yet to discuss where Taylor retrieved these ideas. This section in this chapter will explore this phenomenon. It will show that Taylor's modes of thinking were predominately drawn from thinkers such as Adam Smith who promoted notions of what modern scholars might recognize as a system of free trade and the primacy of private property. In addition, this section will explore why Taylor believed that private property was so critical to his imperial identity outside of property's immediate economic role. This section will address property's

[168] Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World,* 216.
[169] John Cruden to Reverend William Cruden, May 16th, 1785, as quoted in Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World,* 216.

status within a Protestant lens, and how Taylor's fears of slavery (discussed above) played a part in this conceptualization of property.

Adam Smith's model of political economy (1775) would likely have been attractive to Taylor, particularly the 'invisible hand' which allowed economies to grow on their own without the government.[170] Taylor, like many Britons, was an advocate of free enterprise, which in turn placed him on a similar theoretical plane to Smith.[171] Smith understood that men needed government to perpetuate the "laws of justice," but suggested that once government was taken away "natural liberty establishes itself of its own accord."[172] Smith, was an advocate of the system of justice, and maintained that a man should be "perfectly free to pursue his own interest his own way, and to bring both his industry and capital into competition with those of any other man."[173] Taylor, however, seemed unlikely to support this notion. The tenuous hold the resident planters had on the island in the face of slave revolt and foreign invasion required governmental fiscal and military intervention, whether Taylor wanted the former or not.

Adam Smith's desire to specialize labour was also taken up by plantation manual writers and managers, which suggests that Smith's ideas about the division of labour, economic growth and classical economic theory had circulated amongst the plantocracy.[174] In addition, Smith advocated for the circular nature of a British Atlantic community that Taylor wrote of in his letters. Smith wrote that economic balance must be maintained between the sugar islands and the imperial center lest Whitehall pay out

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[170] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, vol. 2* ed. R.H. Campbell & A.S. Skinner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976),
[171] Donald Winch, *Adam Smith's Politics: An Essay in Historiographic Revision* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1978), 14-15.
[172] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, vol. 2* ed. R.H.), 687.
[173] *Ibid*.
[174] Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment,* 145. Roberts notes that despite the desire to specialize labour, oftentimes work logs showed slave gangs worked interdependently, particularly during sugar harvests.

large sums of money to the resident planters.[175] By the end of the eighteenth century, minimal government intervention into economic affairs would become the norm until the abolitionist movement came in full swing in the late 1780s, but for the time being, it was not.[176] Taylor maintained that government was necessary for protection, but what was more important was governmental maintenance of the right to acquire, and ameliorate property such as land and slaves.[177] To ameliorate one's property within the context of the Plantation Americas meant to improve it to generate more wealth from it but also to minimize the risks of investment and to develop self-sufficiency.[178]

Integration and improvement of property was very important to merchants in the eighteenth century; for the associates in David Hancock's sweeping study *Citizens of the World*, it was what was "driving these men's lives."[179] Those with property were not meant to be satisfied with the status quo, and were encouraged to drive civilization forward into a utopian model of the future.[180] Such was the value of property and the potential improvement of that land in the West Indian that sugar canes and the land the canes were on were valued separately, which suggests that the ability to plant sugar was not enough to warrant high land prices.[181] The quality of the sugar that could be grown was also taken into account, which brought the valuation of land much higher.

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[175] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, vol. 1*), 85.
[176] J.M Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People?*, 21.
[177] *Ibid*., Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 27 September, 1781; 26 November 1781; January 30th, 1782; May 8th, 1782; October 29th, 1782.
[178] For more on property and amelioration in the eighteenth century, see Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Englightenment*.
[179] David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London merchants and the integration of the Atlantic community, 1735-1785* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 15-16.
[180] *Ibid*. Hancock writes that the major characteristics of the merchants in his study, "improvement and integration" came from the global world they found themselves in, something Taylor likely maintained as well in the growing (and, by 1783, shrinking) Atlantic community.
[181] William Beckford, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica, vol. 1* (London, 1790), 31.

According to Adam Smith, once government became directly involved in the amelioration and improvement of the economy, it became contrary to the public good. By 1781, Taylor was even afraid to pay for any more slaves, or to “risque any part” of his capital because of the scarcity of provisions for slaves, a consequence of the lack of British naval protection and the increased price on supplies. Despite this, he maintained that he was compelled to because “our Foes are so potent.”[182] Again, Taylor maintained that he was compelled to participate in an economic system that he agreed with, but that he was disappointed in its implementation in the colonies. According to Smith, the economy was meant to grow on its own, and government intervention would only serve to put its growth in peril.[183]

Taylor’s assumptions about the role of government mirrored those of Smith’s: government was meant to defend the nation from foreign powers, protect “every member of society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it” and build works which would benefit the whole of society.[184] Taylor’s consistent frustration with Lord North’s taxation policies and distaste for the American’s smuggling practices speak to his subscription to the basic tenets of Smith’s political economy. While Smith maintained that every subject of the state “ought to contribute towards the support of the government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective means” he assured that taxes on luxuries and land “generally in a manner that is very convenient for him.”[185] Though Taylor and Smith went to different schools, Eton and the University of Glasgow and had different levels of education, it is likely that they both benefitted from a classical education because of the eighteenth-century British norms for school children in logic,

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[182] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 28 August 1781.
[183] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations vol. II* eds. R.H. Campbell and A.S. Skinner, 687.
[184] *Ibid*., 687-688.
[185] *Ibid.,* 825-826.

morals, mathematics, history, government and geography. This led to a group of elites who lacked the practical knowledge in order to govern a plantation.[186] This might be how Taylor came to participate in these ideas after he returned to Jamaica from England to study, though he never mentioned any major political philosophers of the age in his letters to Arcedeckne. Though it is not clear if Taylor read Smith or had met him when he was in Britain, Taylor certainly appeared to be at least aware of Smith's scholarship.

Taylor was not alone in his schooling; over fifty students from Jamaica studied at the prestigious Eton, double the amount from North America.[187] This suggests that Taylor might not have been exceptional amongst the plantocracy in his thinking about empire. The ideological similarities between Taylor and Smith highlight how Taylor might have subscribed to not just certain types of Enlightenment thought. Taylor participated not just in the Plantation Enlightenment: the transference of Enlightenment doctrines of the division of labour onto plantations to get the most output from slaves and the Financial Revolution: the radical transformation of the English fiscal system to an impersonal, credit-based economy, but also in the changing ways that imperial citizens conceptualized their place within the empire.[188] If Taylor could participate in an Enlightenment discourse on natural rights of property, at least implicitly, he likely would have been frustrated with the government's unwillingness to support him financially, or lower duties in order to foster his (and thus the state's) economic growth. Taylor was unwilling to revolt because it was unlawful to, but he made reference to his home

[186] Helen M. Jewell, *Education in Early Modern England* (London: MacMillan Press, Ltd., 1998), 57-58.
[187] Barry Higman, *Plantation Jamaica,* 23.
[188] For more on the Plantation Enlightenment, or the transference of Enlightenment ideals into the sugar plantation setting, see Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); for more on the Financial Revolution, see Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011).

treating him criminally by economically enslaving him. Property and free trade were key to Taylor's active participation in the British Empire.

Taylor's ideological adherence to British modes of thinking in terms of the economy also had religious dimensions. This chapter has discussed at length the importance of the British economic system in Taylor's multifaceted loyalties. It will now discuss the ways which Taylor conceptualized the importance of property in an imperial perspective. In Taylor's letters, property was associated with religious terminology. When Taylor discussed a failing property or business, it was "going to the Devill."[189] Taylor also wrote that he had inherited property "through the industry of [his] Father & myself & Blessing of God."[190] Property ownership, key to proslavery rhetoric and Taylor's conceptions of empire, had taken on an important religious dimension. His letters, largely devoid of religious sentiment other than in discussions of economic issues, highlight the importance of the religious connotations which property had. For Taylor, property was an inalienable right which came with other "natural" rights to eighteenth-century British life.

The Holy Spirit also played a role in the Jamaica's finances. In the 30 times that Taylor mentioned God specifically in his letters to Chaloner Arcedeckne, Taylor suggested that God had a distant understanding of the business dealings of mortals 17 times. Only "God kn[ew]" the ultimate fate of certain business failings.[191] When Taylor sent to England the bills for ten hogsheads of sugar Much like Taylor and Smith's ideal British government, who allowed their citizens to succeed and fail at their own leisure, Taylor's Anglican God allowed resident planters to succeed and fail without much intervention. There were exceptions, though. In 1773, Taylor assured Arcedeckne that

[189] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 27 September 1781.
[190] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 May 1782.
[191] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 March 1765.

the "heaviest rains that have been ever known in these parts" would "affect the Crop exceedingly." "God knows" Taylor wrote disparagingly, "if we shall any of us make Sugar next year."[192] What made Taylor's description of the unnatural rain of particular note was that the canes were "as black as soot."[193] "A Sort of Soot [that] comes off them when you touch [the canes]," Taylor wrote.[194] Taylor "[had] it in a most terrible manner at Holland, which hurts me much, both in the goodness & yielding of the Sugars."[195] This soot did not have religious connotations to it, nor was it likely that he blamed God for the soot as some sort of divine providence. The soot, however, was detrimental to his sugar production.

Regardless of the origins of the mysterious black soot, Taylor understood that it had an adverse effect on the production of Sugar, something he attributed to "goodness." To produce something had morally positive social qualities: he became closer to what was expected of him as an Anglican citizen of the British Empire. The black soot metaphorically took away some of the divine production of wares that would be sent to England. The rights to property were understood as a relationship between God and His chosen people: prosperity was a sign of good fortune sent by God. God would protect his good citizens, Taylor assumed. Providence existed, though it was up to God's people to take it for themselves.[196]

While Britons did not assume they had a 'right' to God, God was part of the natural world and, like property, had an aspect of timelessness. This God was an

[192] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 25 January 1773.
[193] *Ibid.*
[194] *Ibid.*
[195] *Ibid.*
[196] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 19 March 1782; 8 April 1781. Taylor also mentioned Providence in relation to foreign military invasion, where he hoped that Britain's enemies might "quarrel amongst themselves" but it would only be "some unforeseen act of Providence" that might save Jamaica from invasion.

Anglican God who had chosen the British as an elect people, wherever they might be in the empire.[197] Taylor suggested that he was specially chosen by God to inherit property and invoked the aspiration that he himself might be a part of an elect community of Britons who would fight enemies of the empire across the globe. Eighteenth-century British imperial identity revolved around an interchange of anti-French sentiment and the praise of an Anglican God; Britons thought that their right to own property went against French popery and absolutism. The freedom to own property and acquire more property, it was assumed, was different in France where absolutist monarchies might intervene and appropriate one's own personal affairs. The threat of popery was consistent across the British imperial world, even after the Hanoverian victory in the final Jacobite revolt of 1745 removed the threat of Catholicism overthrowing the Protestant succession within the British Isles.[198] Though there were sparse outcroppings of Catholics and Jews in Jamaica, Britons were largely averse to Catholics because of global events that consistently pitted Catholics against Protestants.[199] Elite planter-historian Edward Long was firm in his support for Protestant supremacy in his *History* when he wrote about the Catholics in Jamaica before the Glorious Revolution. The Catholics, he wrote, had an "implacable zeal of bigotry, [and] harassed incessantly the Protestants, Jews, and everyone who did not openly avow the doctrines."[200] By owning property, Taylor reasserted not just his British identity and loyalty to that imperial system, but loyalty to what he maintained was the true religion.

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[197] Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, "The trials of the chosen peoples: recent interpretations of Protestantism and National Identity in Britain and Ireland" eds. Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, c.1650-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 26. For more on religious identity amongst Britons, see Carla Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).
[198] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, 31.
[199] Carla Pestana, *Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 121.
[200] Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, vol. 1*, 173.

Just as property ownership was key to British identity and loyalist mentalities, so too was the concept of progress. If “moral and economic progress were [considered] compatible” in Enlightenment discourses which not only allowed resident planters to work their slaves harder in order to maximize profits (and maximize their virtue as well), but it also showcased how wealth generation might be indicative of this moral and economic progress. To support both types of progress was to support loyalty to the crown because of the connection between wealth and state consolidation. By generating revenue for the state, and oneself, one might implicitly aid the state’s growth. Taylor’s aversion to becoming a French subject came not only with the implicit concerns of slavery to Catholic masters. This was worrisome for Taylor because the French, who were perceived as an unfree people following the Catholic antichrist, were able to push him out of business.[201] If the British government was unwilling to intervene on Taylor’s behalf in order to halt the progress of Catholic approaches into English rights to own and generate capital, then white slavery was surely forthcoming. In 1775, the Bishop of Worcester gave a sermon which highlighted the widely held assumption that “the doctrines of popery incline us to the obedience of slaves,” the assumption of which likely had particular relevance in Jamaica. The population of blacks had grown to encompass around 94 percent of the island’s total by 1774.[202] Even the Catholics that lived within the confines of the Empire were not given the full rights of British citizens under the law, particularly in Ireland and Acadia.[203]

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[201] For more on anti-French sentiment and British imperial identity in the eighteenth century, see: Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003).
[202] Brownlow North, *Sermon* (1775), 27; Trevor Burnard, “A Failed Settler Society: Marriage and Demographic Failure in Early Jamaica” 28 *The Journal of Social History* (1994), 64.
[203] Robert Hole, *Pulpits, politics and public order in England, 1760-1832* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 38; Nicholas Canny, “The Marginal Kingdom: Ireland as a Problem in the First British Empire,” Bernard Bailyn and Philip Morgan, eds. *Strangers within the Realm*, 37-38.

This is not to say that Taylor was a particularly pious individual in the battle between Catholics and Protestants. He never recorded his church attendance, if he attended at all. According to several visitors to the West Indian, churchgoing was not something that the plantocracy did often in the West Indies; they were not a pious bunch. While O'Shaughnessy has noted that the Church of England remained largely unchallenged in its supremacy throughout the British West Indies, the Church as a direct link to Britain might be overstated.[204] The Church of England was most certainly unchallenged insofar as there were few others that had another faith to profess.[205] Lady Maria Nugent, the wife of the incumbent Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica wrote in her diary during her visit to Jamaica from 1801-1805 that she was appalled at the lack of churchgoers on the island which linked them to an improper morality. It was clear to her that her close associates had little interest in praising God. She found that many of the resident planters she interacted with often maintained that organized religion was a "farce" and that "not one professed to have the least religion."[206] Though Nugent did not specify who fit into this group, it is highly likely that Taylor fit.

Though it is possible that Taylor changed over the course of his life, given the large amount of contemporary and modern literature on resident planters' largely atheist tendencies, it seems unlikely. Despite this lack of active support for the Church of England, Taylor was not an atheist, or a Deist. Like many of his imperial compatriots,

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[204] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided,* 29-30.
[205] Allan D. Meyers, in his article titled "Ethnic Distinctions and Wealth among Colonial Jamaican Merchants, 1685-1716," 22 *Social Science History* (1998) 47-81 has argued that there was a fair number of Sephardic Jews on the island, but the majority of the island's inhabitants were British Catholics. Meyers has pointed out that Sephardism actually "provided much of the impetus for expansion of sugar plantations into the islands" despite its dismissal in much of the historiography.
[206] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801-1805* ed. Philip Wright and Verene Shepherd, (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2002), 73.

Taylor maintained that he was subject to God's concern.[207] Despite Taylor's lack of church attendance, it could be argued that it was impossible for anyone in the eighteenth century to be an atheist because of its criminal status.[208] Historian David Wooten has argued that even though people may not have attended church, they still certainly believed in the demonic and angelic forces that governed the world and held less dogmatic belief in organized religion.[209]

Even though Taylor did not attend church, the Protestant mentality was, for historian Linda Colley, "so ingrained" in British imperial culture that it did not matter if Taylor went to church or not.[210] What Armitage described as the "Protestant, commercial, maritime and free" British imperial characteristics were so interconnected for Taylor's sense of his own "Britishness" that the loss of one meant a challenge to the others and a threat to the imperial system as a whole.[211] Taylor, who was Scottish, likely subscribed to Presbyterianism and, if the sermon preached by the professor of Divinity at Marischal College in Aberdeen in 1776 was any indication of Presbyterianism's relationship to the imperial state, it was one of subservience. The sermon preached loyalty to the state but allowed for a minimal degree of revolt if necessary.[212] Eighteenth-century Scots showed a desire to conform, if not begrudgingly at times, to their southern neighbours. Historian Eric Richards has noted that this sense of urgency in "a catching-

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[207] Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, "The trials of the chosen peoples: recent interpretations of Protestantism and national identity in Britain and Ireland" in *Protestantism and National Identity*, eds. Tony Claydon and Ian McBride (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), 27.
[208] The final trial by jury for atheism took place in England in 1840 after a man from Sheffield "delivered a lecture on Socialism (or, as it has been more appropriately termed, Devilism)." See also: Michael Hunter, "The Problem of 'Atheism' in Early Modern England" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 35 (1985): 135-157.
[209] David Wooten, "Unbelief in Early Modern Europe" *History Workshop* 20 (1985) 83.
[210] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation,* 31.
[211] David Armitage, *The Ideological Origins of the British Empire*, 173.
[212] George Campbell, *The Nature, Extent and Importance of the Duty of Allegiance* (Aberdeen, 1777).

up ideology of imitation" became particularly apparent in the Scot's primary export to the British Empire: themselves.[213]

Though Taylor was born in Jamaica, he alluded to his Scottish heritage only once in his letters. He professed that he wished London would "give Ireland what she wants as well as Scotland;" Taylor was confused why a "Sett of Subjects [were] to be less than Another."[214] His Scottish heritage took a back seat to what he conceptualized as a largely egalitarian system of commerce and English rights within a British community, but given the actions of the British heads of state, Taylor was again disappointed. The infamous petition that the Jamaican Assembly sent to Britain in 1774 summarily described the Empire as such a community:

> "our fellow subjects in *Great Britain*, and consequently their Representatives, the House of Commons, have not a right . . . to legislate for the Colonies, and that your Petitioners land the Colonists are not, nor ought to be, bound by any other laws than such as they have assented to, and are not disallowed by your majesty."[215]

By the petition, the British Government traditionally would not be able to legislate (or tax) the peoples in Jamaica without their direct representation in Parliament. Though the resident planters did have a lobby in Great Britain known as the "West India Lobby" or the "West India Interest," in theory, they often were more representative of the areas of England where they were voted in.[216] In the West Indian Assemblies themselves, members often showed their loyalty to the imperial state by donating vast amounts of

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[213] Eric Richards, "Scotland and the Atlantic Empire" Bernard Bailyn and Philip Morgan, *Strangers within the Realm*, 84-85.
[214] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, January 16th, 1783.
[215] *Humble Petition and Memorial of the Assembly of Jamaica,* (New York: Jamaica Assembly, 1774).
[216] Andrew O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided,* 15-17. O'Shaugnessy notes that the West India Lobby had four main components that O'Shaughnessy describes: island agents in London, London merchants trading with the West Indies, absentee West Indian resident planters that lived in Britain and MPs with connections to the West Indies either directly or indirectly. O'Shaughnessy quotes Benjamin Franklin who said that the West Indian Lobby was so powerful they "vastly outweigh us of the Northern Colonies in Britain."

money to defense spending, which, given the economic pressures of the conflict, were significant.[217] Resident planters, isolated in Jamaica because of the navy's reluctance to engage the numerically superior enemy forces, relied on the goods that they sold to power the fiscal-military state and support them in turn.

Taylor expected increased support for the defense of properties that he considered not just his, but which belonged to the empire as a whole. Taylor, fed up with his perceived mistreatment by the British government, wrote to Arcedeckne that "I myself am actually determined never to give myself one hours trouble to defend the Country; for it signifies nothing to me whose Slave I am."[218] Taylor and his resident planters had "laid out five hundred Thousand Pounds in the different Martial Laws to defend ourselves and *English* Properties from being under another dominion."[219] This is made more interesting by the fact that Taylor had Scottish heritage.[220] Many Scots, eager to secure better opportunities for themselves outside the highlands and lowlands, secured their place amongst the British elite by conforming to English cultural modes.[221] Taylor's apparent fierce desire to defend Jamaica came from not just a desire to maintain his own 'holy' property, but Taylor continued that the loss of Jamaica would spell the ruin of the empire. Jamaica generated the most funds for the British Empire from the end of the War of Austrian Succession to the outbreak of the American Crisis and, though the island's economy suffered because of the war with the American colonists, historian

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[217] *Ibid.,* 185.
[218] , Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, June 22nd, 1782.
[219] *Ibid*. (emphasis mine)
[220] Linda Colley, *Britons*, 117-121. Despite the mutual distrust and distaste for one another over centuries of invasion and insurgency, the English and Scots by the 1760s and 1770s were entering a period of increased alignment, despite the fears of radicals like John Wilkes.
[221] *Ibid.*

Trevor Burnard has concluded that Jamaican whites were among some of the richest subjects of the British Empire.[222]

This isolation led Edward Long, Maria Nugent, and the elite planter Bryan Edwards (along with several modern historians) to comment on the cultural failures of Jamaica. Trevor Burnard styled the island as a "Failed Settler Society," in the island colony's formative years in the early-eighteenth century, but perhaps this assertion needs to be re-examined for the late-eighteenth century. Jamaican-born resident planters like Taylor remained very much attached to the notions of a British imperial community that was mutually supportive of all its components. In terms of a functioning society in Jamaica, many resident planters like Taylor maintained that their society was an Atlantic one. Though many historians such as C.A. Bayly, Christer Petley, Kamau Brathwaite and Michael Craton have suggested that a creole identity began to form amongst the resident planters, Taylor was reluctant to identify himself as a part of the island's creole culture.[223] Taylor's reluctance to discuss the ongoing process of creolization in the islands perhaps highlights the ways which Taylor might have been nervous to show his loyalties to the island he was born in. Could Taylor at once be a Jamaican and an imperial British citizen? The following chapter will explore this possibility.

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[222] Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 14; Richard Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: an Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775*.

[223] C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (New York: Longman, 1989); Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009); Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and his Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Michael Craton, *Sinews of Empire: A Short History of British Slavery* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974); Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971)

CHAPTER THREE: CREOLES, BODIES, AND SOCIAL STATUS

In 1771, elite Anglo-Jamaican planter Simon Taylor asked his London business associate Chaloner Arcedeckne, the owner of the plantation for which Taylor was the local legal representative, if he could be granted a lease on some of Arcedeckne's family's' land "in case of the deaths of your Mother & Archer."[224] Their land would be "of [no] Use to any one" since Arcedeckne had no heirs on the island.[225] These sorts of issues: a lack of discernable heirs on the island, was a pervasive issue for merchants such as Simon Taylor and Chaloner Arcedeckne. It was difficult for resident whites to secure even basic services, because the businessmen they interacted with kept dying. In 1771, Simon Taylor attempted to get a consultation "of the Lawyers occasion'd by the death of Tom Gordon" but "was prevented by the death of Tom Bullock on which his Brother immediately set out for this town."[226] The already fragile white society made life in Jamaica incredibly difficult in the late 1770s and early 1780s. Author John Stewart in 1808 warned of the amount of alcohol on the island, and suggested it was particularly dangerous in such a hot climate. "Indeed it is to be presumed," Stewart wrote, "that intemperance and irregularity [in alcohol consumption] destroy many more constitutions than any thing inimical in the climate; they are the fruitful sources of much of the sickness here, and consign many an infatuated wretch to an untimely grave."[227] The climate was hardly conducive to life, and it affected the constitutions of not just white Anglo-Jamaicans, but the ways that they conceptualized their place in the world. Death on the island, due to what early modern Britons perceived to be an unnatural climate,

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[224] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 13 April 1771., ed. Betty Wood, "The Letters of Simon Taylor of Jamaica to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 1765-1775" in *Travel, Trade, and Power in the Atlantic, 1765-1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[225] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 13 April 1771.
[226] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 4 September 1771.
[227] John Stewart, *Account of Jamaica and Its Inhabitants by a Gentleman, Long Resident in the West Indies* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees & Orme, 1808), 27.

shaped the ways that visitors understood island society, but also the ways that locals constructed their identities to not just one another but to Britons abroad.

This chapter will show Simon Taylor's creole identity and the tensions between this and his imperial identity. This chapter will, through the ways which whites understood the creolization process in Jamaica through Simon Taylor, argue that Simon Taylor and planters like Taylor attempted to negate the effects of creolization by suggesting that they were indeed naturalized British citizens, rather than the stereotyped West Indian barbarians that many Britons in the Northern American colonies and British citizens in the imperial center saw them as. This process affected the ways that planters such as Simon Taylor conceptualized their place within Jamaican and British imperial society at large. Taylor, a reluctant creole, used traditional British slaveholder methods of violence and coercion to keep what he assumed was the potentially subversive cultural influence of blacks away, while he simultaneously presented himself as an upstanding gentleman who could and had resisted the lifestyles of those he held in bondage.

Taylor wanted Arcedeckne to understand that Taylor could be a competent white British citizen abroad, something that many Britons in the late eighteenth century struggled to believe. While Taylor attempted to maintain a positive relationship to the cultural norms of the imperial center, his modes of accomplishing this would have been to his detriment: heightened humanitarian sentiment that stemmed from Enlightenment thought and scientific practices condemned Taylor's attempts as barbaric: the fault of living in close proximity to slaves and the poor climate. Planters like Taylor struggled to reconcile their imperial identities to their burgeoning Creole identities: a conflict occurred between the prescriptive identity that they were meant to maintain as imperial citizens and the realities of living in a slave society. This chapter will show that many Britons

believed that hot climates and intemperate lifestyles affected those who lived in the West Indies. Along with the influence of slavery, West Indian white persons were affected in a negative way. According to eighteenth-century scientific thought, hot climates and intemperate lifestyle made Britons live erratically, which only served to further distance planters such as Taylor from what many felt to be the essential nature of British citizens abroad.

This conflict between identities was increasingly apparent amongst elite whites. Elite whites, afraid of the high probability of meeting an untimely end, had been fleeing Jamaica in droves for decades in an attempt to remove themselves from the unsightly Jamaican social sphere.[228] Those who owned land in Jamaica and lived abroad were known as absentee owners, or simply absentees. Anxious to return to the more temperate climes of England, Scotland, and Ireland, planters formed small social communities in cities and towns where their goods left port such as Kingston and Port Royal. Taylor, conscious of the demographic reality, speculated on who was actually in charge of the colony with so many leaving.[229]

Absenteeism was also prevalent amongst clergymen, military officers, and patent officeholders.[230] Though it is unclear why Taylor chose to remain on the island when he had the means to leave, he was not the only white person that chose to make Jamaica

[228] Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), 4. While absenteeism was quite rare in the Leeward Islands of Antigua, St. Kitts, Montserrat, and Nevis, in the 1730s, absentees owned half the land in St. Kitt's by 1745. Tobago, one of the Windward Islands ceded to Britain in 1763, only had twenty resident planters out of a total of seventy-seven proprietors. In Grenada, absentee estates were worth over one million pounds in 1778.
[229] Edward Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971), 47-54. Members of the political elite of the island were not allowed to leave after 1755 since absentee membership went "contrary to the public good." Many members of the Assembly were expelled after lengthy absences; two members were expelled in 1773 and 1774 for not appearing, while thirteen lost their seats for not returning to the island.
[230] *Ibid.*

his home. Some 24, 000 middling and poor whites also chose (or were compelled to, from lack of funds) to stay in the midst of the slaves in Jamaica.[231] These whites, while certainly in the minority, require study in order for historians to understand more thoroughly how slave society affected Anglo-Jamaicans' relationship to the empire. According to historian Edward Brathwaite, the number of middling and poorer whites who stayed in Jamaica was growing by the end of the eighteenth century. In 1787, there were 270 rum dealers in Kingston, and between 1770 and 1780 some £8, 000 was paid by these owners for liquor licenses, most of it this sum from Kingston.[232] If many rich whites decided to leave for the more temperate climates (and stable societies) of Britain, how was life different for those that stayed? If Anglo-Jamaican whites were, as many historians have noted, afraid of slave revolt, the climate, the possibility of foreign invasion, and even economic ruin, then why was there a pull to live with some permanence on the island?[233] In the late 1770s and early 1780s, a period of extreme imperial crisis, how did resident Jamaican whites fit into the local community? For many whites, the realities of plantation life, the demographics of the island, and the ways that eighteenth-century Anglo-Jamaicans conceptualized their bodies dictated that a degenerative process would occur amongst whites and slaves.

Creoles

For eighteenth-century Anglo-Jamaicans, the term "creole" was used in the same manner it was used in Spanish America: someone born into the island, acculturated and acclimatized to the island and committed to living there for a lengthy period of time. The creolization process, something which eighteenth-century whites never discussed nor

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[231] Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica*, 135.
[232] *Ibid.,* 137.
[233] These historians notably include Gordon K. Lewis, *Main Currents in West Indian Thought: The Historical Evolution of West Indian Society in its Ideological Aspects, 1492-1900* (1983), Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided* (2000); Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire* (2004).

alluded to, is a modern historical idea transplanted to slave societies to show how local customs affected citizens of disparate cultures. While many colonists noted the importance of "seasoning," or the process of adjusting one's body to the new West Indian climate and immunizing one's body to its diseases, the process of creolization was believed to be more a cultural change than a physical one.[234] "Creoles" were discussed as a set group of individuals, but the process by which they were creolized was not a phenomenon that interested contemporary whites. Taylor maintained that creole slaves, or those who had survived the rough birthing practices for slaves in Jamaica, were "very little risque" since "the Yaws [a skin disorder] . . . does not make half the impression on them as it does on grown people."[235]

While "creole" was used to refer to both slaves and whites, this chapter is focused largely on white creoles such as Taylor.[236] If Taylor had concerns about matters of creolization, he did not voice them explicitly. In his letters to Chaloner Arcedeckne, Taylor's main objectives were the description of plantation output and the affairs of Taylor's business partners and rivals. That said, these concerns were important for Taylor's creole sensibilities. By discussing Arcedeckne's plantations, Taylor could focus on his relationship with one of his few connections to the Empire's center in the British Isles. Since visitors to the island noted the many ways in which island society differed from North American colonies or the British Isles, Taylor's lack of voice on the matter is striking. For the importance that creolized slaves played in his purchasing patterns, Taylor was reluctant to discuss matters pertaining to white creoles. Taylor never noted whether a white person was born in Jamaica or in Britain, and never stipulated whether

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[234] Joyce E. Chaplain, *An Anxious Pursuit: Agricultural Innovation & Modernity in the Lower South, 1730-1815* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 92-110. Chaplain argues that in South Carolina planters often discussed the weather as hardening constitutions. While the weather might be fatal at a colonists' first visit, their bodies would adapt and they would become tougher by extension.
[235] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 12 March 1774.
[236] Edward Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica*, xv-xvi.

Arcedeckne should marry someone from Jamaica or Britain. It was apparent that, for Taylor, Britons were Britons regardless of where they were from. He did, however, hold certain institutions from the imperial center in higher regard. During a lengthy trial with another attorney, Taylor would wait on advice from "the English lawyers on the [land] titles" in order to "examine Elizabeth Walter."[237]

While Taylor's silence on the issue of creolization may have been a case of who he was corresponding with, the creolization process was very much underway in Taylor's life. While Britain would pay "£40 000 to the sufferers of this island" because of a drought, Anglo-Jamaican planters would often have to remind their benefactors in England of the laws of Jamaica by sending copies of it back home.[238] The laws of Jamaica, something that planters in England should have maintained in order to effectuate sensible business, was often forgotten. Taylor, much to his disappointment, was conscious that his colonial status likely accorded him second-rate status in England, was compelled to remind Arcedeckne of the local laws where he owned several plantations.

Taylor's fears of the influence the environment and black bodies had on his person were intertwined, given Taylor's desire to retain his imperial identity which was intricately tied to the Enlightenment, the economy, and most importantly in the Jamaican context, whiteness. Taylor had been educated in England, and had experienced both worlds, and chose Jamaica for its financial possibilities. Fiscal gain, however, only lent itself in part to Taylor's overall identity. White Jamaican creoles' sense of imperium remained, it was emphasized in different ways in Jamaica. Naturally, the high ratio of

[237] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 12 March 1774.
[238] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 April 1781; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 June 1781; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 16 May 1782; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 18 May 1782; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 16 January 1783.

slaves to whites played a role in the creolization process, but eighteenth-century imperial citizens conceptualized their sense of identity in different ways than simply their immediate social sphere. Many modern historians have noted that Jamaica was a slave society and they have discussed how the three "classes" of individuals on the island interacted (white, free black, and slave).[239] Despite these fears, Simon Taylor often regretted the behavior of other whites in his employ or who were his social equals: while whites may have been united against, blacks, they certainly were united in their distaste for one another.[240]

Blacks

Taylor was largely reluctant to discuss creolization: it displaced him from the English community in which he wanted to belong. . Taylor never mentioned his black mistress to Arcedeckne, despite his urges for Arcedeckne to marry himself. Taylor was a self-proclaimed bachelor and never appeared to desire the company of women, though modern historians (and some of Taylor's contemporaries) know of the many children he fathered through a black mistress.[241] Despite Taylor's attempts to showcase to Arcedeckne that British identity was alive and well in Jamaica, the realities on the ground

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[239] Barry Higman, "The Invention of Slave Society" ed. Brian L. Moore, B.W. Higman, Carl Campbell and Patrick Bryan *Slavery, Freedom and Gender* (Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago: University of the West Indies Press, 2003), 57-75; Verene A. Shepherd, *Livestock, Sugar and Slavery: Contested Terrain in Colonial Jamaica* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2009), xxx-xxxii; Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire,* 74. According to Barry Higman, the concept of discussing a "slave society" in a historiographical context stems from the United States in 1854 in an opposing role to "free society." Its now neutral analytic form in historical discussions originates from 1959. I use "class" in quotation marks, largely because I believe that class as a concept in the eighteenth century Anglo-Jamaican world is an oversimplification of the lived experiences of freed blacks, slaves, and whites. There were poorer whites and richer ones, and society was much more divisive than those three "classes" or categories of peoples would have readers believe. Races and classes in the Jamaican context were overlapping categories and identities to all British subjects and citizens. While historian Verene A. Shepherd has noted that white society could be divisive in an economic sense, historian Trevor Burnard has rightly pointed to the mutual support that whites, regardless of their economic status, had in their fear of blacks.

[240] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 30 January 1782.

[241] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801 to1805*, ed. Philip Wright and Betty Wood, (Mona, Jamaica: University of the West Indies), 69.

were much different. Jamaican society, as much as it attempted to replicate the English model, largely struggled because of the presence of a large number of African slaves African slaves influenced the ways that Simon Taylor and planters like him struggled to reconcile their British identity to their creole one.

Moral and scientific discourse that surrounded plantations and island life allowed for modern Enlightenment science to play a major role in planters' Creolization process, but slaves and freed blacks were the premiere cause of British identity's morphing in the area.[242] As whites violently oppressed black slaves, they also attempted to distance themselves from their cultural influence. As early as the 1760s many Britons had agreed that slavery was incompatible with paradigms of progress that, for historian David Brion Davis, stemmed from the "cognoscenti" of Paris, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Birmingham, Philadelphia, Boston, and London.[243] For many Anglo-Jamaican planters, however, this issue took different dimensions. Planters attempted to highlight to their cousins in Britain that material and social progress could be achieved by what they saw as more humane treatment of their slaves. Planters who showcased their civility thought they could work within the parameters of slavery in order to maintain what the first chapter has shown was a very important British Atlantic economic system. Rather than completely abolish the slave trade, which would "undercut the very economic and moral forces on which the progress of Africa and the colonies depended," planters could use slavery to their advantage in a non-economic capacity.[244]

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[242] David Buisseret, "Charles Boucher of Jamaica and the Establishment of the Greenwich Longitude" *Imago Mundi* 62 (2010), 239-247; Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic, 1750-1807.* J. Robertson, "Eighteenth-Century Jamaica's Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism" *History* 99 (2014): 607-631.
[243] David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 154.
[244] *Ibid.,* 160.

Anglo-Jamaican whites were generally less than sympathetic in their attitudes towards blacks as opposed to slavery as an institution. Planter-historian Edward Long was adamant that blacks were "very far inferior to our idea of a perfect human being, unless he is endowed with the faculties of reason and perception."[245] Blacks were wild creatures, argued Long, who "t[ore] meat with their talons, and chuck[ed] it by handfuls down their throats with all the voracity of wild beasts."[246] Slaves were "void of genius" and "almost incapable of making any progress in civility or science."[247] To be uncivilized, in the minds of white Britons, was decidedly non-British, and certainly not white.

Whites and slaves interacted on a daily basis, but slaves' relationships to their masters were more complex than a free-unfree dichotomy. Though the slave regime in Jamaica was brutal and unforgiving, blacks and whites interacted in ways which went beyond slaves' roles as capital and as tools. Middling slave overseer and self-styled gentleman Thomas Thistlewood learned many different remedies from and had sexual relations with his slaves, including a long-term relationship with one, Phibbah.[248] Even white women in general had very little say about who they married, and once married were technically the property of their husbands.[249]

Like the rest of Taylor's capital, the maintenance of his "people" was critical to the wellbeing of his plantations. These slaves were an investment to be maintained with proper care. Inoculations, slave plots of land, houses, hot houses (slave hospitals) were

[245] Long, vol. II, 369.
[246] *Ibid.*
[247] *Ibid.* 353.
[248] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire*, 3-5.
[249] For more on women and wives as property, see Renee Hirschon, *Women and Property – Women as Property* (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Julie Hardwick, Sarah M.S. Pearsall and Karen Wulf, "Introduction: Centering Families in Atlantic Histories" 70 *The William and Mary Quarterly* (2013): 205-224.

all mentioned in Taylor's letters as necessary to keep slaves alive.[250] For new visitors and fresh-faced colonists, they could be incredibly subversive; a colossal force that had the potential to usurp white power.[251] Whites such as Taylor, Long, and the elite planter Bryan Edwards who had remained on the island for decades, however, were more privy to the realities of the island by virtue of exposure to it for so long. Crevecoeur, a French immigrant and naturalized American citizen who lived in New York during the 1770s, was appalled at white Jamaican society, but made no mention of slave revolt. Though the more southerly climate had allowed for vast and beneficial cultivation, the weather had "implanted sentiments which overbalance every misery and supply the place of every want."[252] It was not the slaves to be feared, but rather the fragility of the colony. Historian Max Edelson has done a good job of identifying the ways that ideas and fears of slaves and slavery were often mutually reinforced by the climate itself.[253] Many British colonists feared that so long as there were wild frontier areas that could be exploited by wild beasts (which included slaves), the "virtuous work" of building ordered civilization must continue.[254] The fragility of the colony was not simply one based around the physical dominance of whites, however. Whites feared the culturally and morally corrupting influence of slaves, perhaps just as much as rebellions. Planters (and even some visitors) recognized slavery as a societal norm in the region, fears of white death

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[250] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 23 July 1770; 13 April 1771; 5 May 1771; 1 June 1781; 26 June 1781. Hot houses, to be sure, were hardly beneficial to slaves' constitutions. Slaves would be restrained and sit and sweat in sauna-like buildings for hours and days.

[251] For more on slave revolt in the British West Indies, see editors Stanley Engerman, Seymour Drescher, Robert L. Paquette, *Slavery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Gelien Matthews, *West Indian Slave Revolts and the British Abolitionist Movement* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2006); David Brion Davis, *Inhuman Bondage: The Rise and Fall of Slavery in the New World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006);

[252] J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, *Letters of An American Farmer and Sketches of 18th-Century America* ed. Albert E. Stone (New York, Yale University Press, 1981), 174.

[253] S. Max Edelson, "The Nature of Slavery: Environmental Disorder and Slave Agency in Colonial South Carolina," in *Cultures and Identities in Colonial British America* eds. Robert Olwell and Alan Tully (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 2006), 21-44.

[254] *Ibid.,* 23.

were more prevalent amongst planters and natural historians than blacks overtaking whites as the superior class on the island. The climate, low birth rates, and small families worried planters: the whiteness of Jamaica was always fragile.

Despite these fragilities of white society, Taylor often used rhetorical devices to suggest to Arcedeckne that he was a civilized gentleman, and that he had not been swayed by the subversive culture of blacks. It was the lower order of white society, who interacted frequently with blacks, who were barbaric. Taylor implored Arcedeckne that "it is ruin to buy Negroes to have them immediately killed & worked to death to aggrandize an Overseer's name by saying he made such & such a Crop for a year or two & then for the Estate to fall off & the real strength gone to the Devil."[255] Taylor, as an attorney and plantation manager rarely had personal interactions with his slaves, but was conscious of the certain limitations of their abilities. In 1775, Taylor was inclined to mention to Arcedeckne that despite "the great deal of Jobbing work" done on one of his estates, in order to produce more sugar cane Arcedeckne would require "more Cattle more Negroes etc" which would be unfeasible financially for the both of them that year.[256] Taylor suggested that Arcedeckne spend more money in order to potentially alleviate the strain that would surely come from forcing the slaves to potentially die from exhaustion. Taylor did, however, allow Arcedeckne a rare moment of unbridled fear in his writing as he highlighted his own civility, while simultaneously denigrating another white's. In 1775, Taylor's estate was temporarily invaded by another of Arcedeckne's attorneys, Cussans, "with 150 Armed Negroes" where Taylor had to "restrain[] my Negroes from destroying both himself and his Negroes."[257] This spectacular scene had Cussans (whom Taylor had complained to Arcedeckne about for a number of years) trespass on Taylor's

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[255] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 November 1781.
[256] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 9 December 1775.
[257] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 31 January 1775.

Holland Estate in order to exact a sum of “three or four thousand pounds” that Cussans wrongly believed to be his since Taylor had successfully defended a “Mr. Kennion” in court.[258] Taylor was positive that had he gone “into the Canes” as Cussans had asked, he “should in all probability have been murdered.”[259] Though the truth of the scene is debatable; Taylor’s fears that he could be overpowered by a group of blacks led by a white man appear a reality. Taylor, though obviously inflamed by the scenario, was keen to note that by “restraining” his slaves, he showed civility and a lack of the creole aggression that he implied was a trait of Cussans who committed “outrages” on his estate.[260] If slaves were meant to be wild creatures that needed to be restrained, then Cussans had clearly adopted African’s’ ways.

It is important to remember that Taylor’s apparent unwillingness to use force against other slaves and to keep his own slaves alive was far from a humanitarian statement, but a statement about retaining long-range profits. Extreme forms of violence could be curtailed through eighteenth-century concepts of what contemporaries styled natural rights, but ultimately planters could gain a large profit through the labor of others. Through this labour, and closer supervision of blacks, it might be possible to keep them alive, but also physically and emotionally broken. Broken and beaten slaves would be less likely to revolt, and would keep the racial power imbalance stable. These modes of slave owning allowed planters to pose as good citizens: colonists like Taylor could show to his superiors like Arcedeckne that he was part of a growing discussion on the natural rights of man. Taylor did not want to show to his business partner that the potentially subversive influence of Africans had made him barbaric. Taylor wanted to highlight that

[258] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 31 January 1775.
[259] *Ibid.*
[260] *Ibid.*

he was an Enlightened British citizen who was fully capable of maintaining British identity.

Others were more sarcastic and less sympathetic to planters' desires to show that they were civilized individuals, but still expressed a lack of concern towards the obvious violence that took place in a slave society. A soldier in the 67th Regiment of Foot, Abraham James, had an 1803 drawing titled "Martial Law in Jamaica" which showed largely incompetent whites interacting with blacks who were more apt to defend their plantations rather than the island itself (figure 5). The creoles themselves in the images are largely overweight and content to pretend rather than do any of the real fighting: a common stereotype of white West Indian planters of the time.[261] One of the poorer white soldiers who is "practising his manoeuvres" is holding his musket upside-down. The Forlorn Hope, or the force sent ahead of a main advance to assault a difficult position, is seen not in grim determination, but holding food and kettles. Clearly, James was reluctant to grant any military merit to the creole or black soldiers, who all appear disinterested in the defense of the island. As the last chapter has shown, military defense of the empire was a critical component of imperial identity. James was keen to note that the creoles on the island were lazy and incompetent: often a stereotype attributed to African slaves. The blacks especially are depicted in a manner where they seem less frightening and more lazy and passive. Ultimately, James' goal in this piece was to depict whites as not true Britons: they had no drive to defend the empire, they were lazy and uncivilized, and were content to let their slaves do their labour for them.

[261] An English planter visiting his plantation in Barbados in 1771 noted that ""the Gentlemen who for their looks are here like the English being most of them Corpulent what this arises from I cannot however to Say." "Rough Diary of Sir William Fitzherbert (1st Baronet) Visiting Barbados," D239 M/E, E20772A, Fitzherbert Papers, Derbyshire Record Office.

Figure 5, Abraham James, *Martial Law in Jamaica* (1803).

Simon Taylor never made reference to slave revolt, and was in fact concerned more with black-on-black violence than the potential for slaves to make war on whites.[262] By uniting against blacks, whites assumed that the creolization that was taking place could not harm their tenuous grasp on citizenship. Taylor maintained that the older slaves on the plantation would "destroy" the other slaves and make "them their slaves" on a new plantation without some form of protection.[263] Taylor argued that the older slaves on the plantations might use what modern psychologists describe as collective narcissism in attempts to showcase superiority to groups of new slaves.[264] The older slaves, in an attempt to assert their dominance on plantation societies might use violence to show their superiority over new slaves.

Despite Taylor's arguments to Arcedeckne that slaves might use groups to beat or even kill one another for social superiority, other planters were not so that slaves could actively engage in such a thought process. Edward Long stipulated that slaves were "void of genius" and "no moral sensations; no taste but for women; gormondizing and drinking excess; no wish but to be idle."[265] Blacks, by virtue of simply existing in close proximity to whites, would transfer their uncivilized ways to white bodies. By clinging to Enlightenment ideals of humanitarianism and civilization, resident planters could justify their actions to themselves and those in Britain. Despite this, Jamaica was increasingly the antithesis to the ideal British colony in the eighteenth century: whites fraternized with slaves and made Anglo-Jamaicans a people to be regarded with

[262] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 11 June 1782.
[263] *Ibid.;* Justin Roberts, "'Better sort' and 'Poorer Sort': Wealth Inequalities, Family Formation and the Economy of Energy on British West Indian Sugar Plantations, 1750-1800," Slavery & Abolition, 35.4 (December, 2014): 458-473.
[264] Golec de Zavala, A,Cichocka, A., Eidelson, R., & Jayawickreme, N, "Collective narcissism and its social consequences" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 97 (2009): 1074-1096.
[265] Edward Long, *History, vol. II*, 353.

suspicion and quite often derision.[266] As Trevor Burnard has suggested, even though planters attempted to showcase that Jamaican landscape had increasingly began to resemble England, the English countryside was ultimately a place made up largely of whites; Jamaica was not.[267] This lack of whiteness was enough to convince many thinkers that the Jamaican colonists had become less British.

Bodies

Despite planters' consistent claims that they were civilized British citizens, several commentators were unwilling to grant planters a place within the intelligentsia of Britain's empire. This chapter will now show how planters, visitors, and natural scientists from Britain and elsewhere understood the West Indies and Jamaica in particular as a colonial backwater. While planters like Edward Long and John Stewart attempted to showcase that the climate in Jamaica was actually ideal for British citizens to retain their imperial identities, it became an increasingly indefensible position.

As early as the sixteenth century, medical science dictated that excessively warm temperatures threw off the body's natural state of harmony.[268] The eighteenth-century body was a malleable and weak entity: the local social environment, weather, and climate could all affect a body's composition and demeanour.[269] A person's body and wellbeing was largely in their own hands: as historian Roy Porter has suggested, curative medicine was largely nonexistent. It was up to the patient to heal themselves, rather than the doctors who could simply diagnose, rather than cure.[270] In the West

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[266] For more on the West Indian colonies as an imperial backwater, see Christopher P. Iannini, *Fatal Revolutions: Natural History, West Indian Slavery, and the Routes of American Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Pres, 2012).
[267] Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire*, 18.
[268] Karen Ordahl Kupperman, "Fear of Hot Climates in the Anglo-American Colonial Experience" 41 *The William and Mary Quarterly* (1984), 213.
[269] Roy Porter, *Disease, Medicine and Society in England, 1550-1860* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: MacMillan Education, 1987), 23.
[270] *Ibid*., 26.

Indies, particularly on the sugar islands like Jamaica and Barbados, vast deforestation, rat infestations, fuel shortages, and soil erosion allowed for dangerous diseases such as yellow fever to flourish because mosquitos had more areas to spawn. Until as late as the early nineteenth century, however, the role of this disease was largely ignored and sickness was attributed to excessive behavior, particularly a high alcohol intake.[271]

This view had taken root with several writers of natural histories, especially Sir Hans Sloane. Sloane's travels to Jamaica and other islands in the 1720s gave him the impression that the climate was causing cultural degeneracy amongst whites.[272] This model of ecological thinking was based on a humoural theory of the human body, which suggested that excessive heat might corrupt English minds, bodies, and behaviors.[273] Though this view gained strength amongst British thinkers as the century wore on, perpetuated by famous naturalists like George-Louis Leclerc, Compte de Buffon, many planters opted to defend their island compatriots and suggested the climate was beneficial to their imperial identity.[274]

Buffon opted to argue that the New World was degenerating European sensibilities. Buffon suggested that the "the animals of the New World were originally the same with those of the Old, from which they derived their existence" but after separation "by immense seas, or impassible land," the animals would "in the progress of time, suffer

[271] J.R. McNeill, *Mosquito Empires: Ecology and War in the Greater Caribbean, 1620-1914* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 35.
[272] Christopher P. Iannini, *Fatal Revolutions: Natural History, West Indian Slavery, and the Routes of American Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Pres, 2012), 48.
[273] *Ibid.*
[274] *Ibid.*, 226-7. For more on early modern views on health and the body, see Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004); Roy Porter, *Madness, a Brief History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Lynn Hunt, *Eroticism and the Body Politic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

all the effects of a climate that had become new degenerate, &c."[275] Buffon was keen to note that "these circumstances should not prevent [the animals] from being now regarded as different species of animals," but nature, being in a "perpetual state of fluctuation" allowed for humanity (as part of the animal kingdom) "to discover her former condition, and what future appearances she may possibly assume."[276]

As a result of this less fertile landscape, whites and blacks were less fertile by extension.[277] Peoples' health was inextricably tied to the landscape that surrounded them, and their constitutions were connected to character.[278] Edward Long in his third volume of *History of Jamaica* was adamant that though the "fixed air" in Jamaica was unhealthy to persons inhaling it "constantly abiding there at all hours, and more especially during the night," it was actually "one of the greatest antiseptics in nature" if it was "received into the lungs and bowels in considerable quantity."[279] John Stewart, a planter and self-styled gentleman, writing in 1808, defensively suggested that the climate was enough to generate "premature genius" amongst the children born in the island, even more than those "born in colder climes."[280] Stewart eloquently suggested that, "like its native fruits, genius soon ripens here . . . [if this is true], it does not often follow that [genius] matures with the same facility to intellectual perfection [as Europeans]."[281] Indeed, the air itself was a critical component for the development of a healthy body.

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[275] Georges-Louis Leclerc, Compte de Buffon, "Natural History, Gender in Particular" in *Foundations of Biogeograhy: Classic Papers with Commentaries* eds. Mark V. Lomolino, Dov F. Sax & James H. Brown (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 17.
[276] *Ibid.*
[277] Christopher P. Iannini, *Fatal Revolutions,* 48.
[278] Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004), 230. Porter highlighted how novelist Tobias Smollett in his 1771 novel *Humphrey Clinker* connected that "bodily disease and disorder fuel[ed] weakness of character and bad behavior." One's constitution, should it fall to decay, would not react positively to medicines Porter suggested. Doctors were thus "auxiliaries" in the attempt to live a healthy lifestyle.
[279] Edward Long, *History of Jamaica, vol. III,* ii-iii.
[280] John Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica and its Inhabitants by a Gentleman, Long Resident in the West Indies* (London, 1808), 166.
[281] *Ibid.*

Noxious fumes (or miasmas) and poor air circulation had been blamed for sickness and disease.[282] John Stewart reported in his *Account* that killing a "carrion crow" warranted a fine of five pounds since the crows destroyed "those nuisances which might otherwise fill the air with pestilential vapours."[283]

For many in the eighteenth century, living in hardy climates suggested a healthier lifestyle. While metropolitan Britons (and a few North Americans) critiqued planters for their pampered lifestyle, Long and Stewart maintained that their constitution had been hardened by the landscape. The air made them industrious, and thus healthier.[284] Many planters who styled themselves as natural historians assumed that they were keenly aware of the soil's composition, its relationship to the seasons, and the health of their bodies and those of their slaves. Knowledge was thus paramount to the island's (and thus, the empire's) economic success. Simon Taylor was adamant that new plough technology would "ease [Arcedeckne's] negroes," which would make their workdays less physically intensive.[285] While the plough was hardly new technology by the 1770s, Taylor maintained that by aiding the bodies of his slaves, they might generate more profits for whites. Technology and science made it easier for planters to push their slaves to work longer hours; whites felt that they were doing a great service to their slaves.[286]

Visitors

Simon Taylor and other planters attempted to highlight their civility to others from the imperial center. Though planters largely failed in this effort, they demonstrated some

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[282] Carlo M. Cipolla, *Miasmas and Disease: Public Health and the Environment in the pre-industrial Age,* Trans. Elizabeth Potter (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 4-5; Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason*, 49-51. Though Porter's section does not touch on miasmas, it is important to note the importance that the body's balance had to the outside environment and the air which changed and challenged a body's natural balance.
[283] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica and its Inhabitants by a Gentleman*, 180.
[284] Roy Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004), 231-232.
[285] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 29 October 1782.
[286] Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment,,* 1.

knowledge of late-eighteenth century scientific thought. This following segment will discuss the ways that visitors to Jamaica were appalled at the ways that Anglo-Jamaican whites behaved, despite the efforts of planters to highlight their civility to other Britons.

Despite the best efforts of Jamaican planters to suggest that they were unaffected by the climate and slaves, British commentators remained largely unconvinced. Lady Nugent and her husband, John, who visited the island from 1801-1805 were disgusted with the behavior of whites on the island (including that of Simon Taylor, whom she met, though her concerns with Taylor were minor). Taylor was "very anxious for [Nugent] to dismiss" a "little mulatto child" that was very obviously Taylor's progeny.[287] Taylor's sexual antics had granted him "a numerous family some almost on every one of his estates."[288] Nugent appeared to be more interested in reforming blacks on the island through her own religious practices. By teaching blacks about an Anglican God, they might be able to influence the whites around them. Jamaican whites were simply not doing enough to be British. One description that Nugent provided of a Creole overseer on the Hope plantation was hardly complimentary: "vulgar. . . on half-pay" and "clumsy, ill made and dirty" with a "dingy, sallow-brown complexion, and only two yellow discoloured tusks, by way of teeth."[289] For Nugent, this comment was as much about class as it was race. Lower class whites, by spending increased time amongst freed and enslaved blacks were the closest to what many upper-class whites perceived as the wild and lethargic behavior of blacks. In Jamaica, class and race often intersected and intertwined. Nugent took this attitude towards white overseers from many abolitionist writers of the day.[290] The "dingy, sallow-brown complexion" suggests that lower-class

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[287] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal*, 68.
[288] *Ibid.*
[289] *Ibid.* 29.
[290] For more on eighteenth- and early-nineteeth-century accounts of British West Indian overseers, see Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University

whites, those who were closest to blacks, had already succumbed to black culture, while creole elites such as Taylor were spared such critiques. In 1782, Taylor hired a new overseer who had "lived the Life of a Dog" amongst slaves and was happy at the "Change" of conditions.[291] These descriptions suggested that the influence of slaves on those most intimately involved with them, the Creoles, was becoming endemic. Even Edward Long was concerned that the Creoles, who:

> "descended from British ancestors, they are stamped with these characteristic deviations. Climate, perhaps, has some share in producing the variety of feature which we behold among the different societies of mankind, scattered over the globe: so that, were an Englishman and woman to remove to China, and there abide, it may be questioned, whether their descendants, in the course of a few generations, constantly residing there, would not acquire somewhat of a the Chinese cast of countenance and person?"[292]

As such, Maria Nugent was very uncomfortable in her new Jamaican environment.[293] Though the people living in Jamaica were meant to be part of a cohesive empire, Maria Nugent struggled to reconcile the collectiveness of the British Empire as she understood it: to be one community with shared values, where her slaves were influencing the abilities of the Creoles to behave as full British citizens.

Lady Nugent's fears of creolization amongst her compatriots was made evident when she first met Taylor, who had used a term she had never heard before: "go home and cool coppers."[294] Though she initially assumed the saying had to do with Taylor's

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Press, 2009), 205-241; David Turley, *The Culture of English Antislavery, 1780-1860* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 118-121.

[291] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 May 1782.

[292] Edward Long, *History, vol. II,* 262.

[293] *Ibid.*, 18, 19. In Roy Porter's *Flesh in the Age of Reason* (W.W. Norton & Company: New York and London, 2003), Porter discusses how eighteenth century peoples were constantly surrounded by death (213) and the fear of being exposed to temperature extremes that could be potentially fatal. He argued that all the humours had to work together in synch, or else the results could be sickness and, in some cases, death (230). Alcoholism and sex fit into this category as well, suggesting that Lady Nugent's concerns over death went beyond being afraid of tangible diseases, but also vices by living amongst the island's Creole populace.

[294] *Ibid.,* 71.

participation in the sugar industry and was an allusion to boiling pots in sugar boiling houses, it actually referred to in this case abstemious behavior after a large feast.[295] It appeared to Nugent that the sugar industry had permeated the entirety of the social scene in Jamaica, but the reality of black integration into white society went further than she expected. At a party, Nugent noted the language disparity between herself and some of the other ladies. Lady Nugent wrote that the Creole language, which "was not confined to the negroes" was spoken by many of the ladies who she interacted with that had not been educated in England.[296] Civility and language were often intertwined: civility was meant to equate to what Lawrence E. Klein terms "social agreeableness."[297] With one's language, one might "make other People have better Opinion [sic] of us and themselves."[298] The Creole tongue was, for Lady Nugent, something of a bastardization of the English language: Creoles' speech had been influenced by remaining in close proximity to the slaves. She described the English that Creole ladies used as "an indolent drawing out of their words, that is very tiresome if not disgusting," going on to attempt to enunciate the actual Creole accent, which she described as: "*Yes ma-am, him rail-ly too fra-ish"* in response to the weather's peculiar coolness that evening.[299] Visitor J. B. Moreton commented that the speech of white women was different: "Tank you sir, *wid* all my *haut*" or "Do, momma, get me some mauby [mobby, a drink], *mine* head no '*tand* good."[300] By interacting with slaves, the Creoles were losing a key aspect of their

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[295] *Ibid.*
[296] *Ibid.*, 98.
[297] Lawrence E. Klein, "Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century" *The Historical Journal* 45 (2002), 874.
[298] Abel Boyer, *The English Theophrastus* (London, 1702), 104. Cited in Lawrence E. Klein, "Politeness and the Interpretation of the British Eighteenth Century" *The Historical Journal* 45 (2002), 874.
[299] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal of her residence in Jamaica from 1801-1805*, 98.
[300] J. B. Moreton, *Manners and Customs in the West India Islands* (London, 1790), 116, 131. Quoted in Philip D. Morgan, "British Encounters with Africans and African-Americans, circa 1600-1780" in *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* eds. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 204.

Britishness: the English language.[301] Historian Philip Morgan has noted that English, while officially the language of Jamaica, had been influenced by the influx of the various African dialects into plantation society.

A visitor to the North American colonies was disappointed in planters' interaction with their slaves, for "when young [children] they suffer them too much to prowl amongst the young Negroes, which insensibly causes them to imbibe their Manners and broken Speech."[302] Bryan Edwards maintained that many slaves were able to "convey much strong meaning in a narrow compass" and could use "figurative expressions" and "pointed sentences."[303] Simon Taylor's correspondence never gave any sense of the language used by locals in Jamaica, but the tone of his letters had clearly been shaped by the violent environment around him. After a white person had wronged Taylor, he would often write sarcastically that he was surprised they were not "dangling in a Garter" or "be one day or another hanged."[304] Especially after 1763, though many different peoples that had been incorporated into the British Empire through conquest or by treaty called for citizenship, historian Kathleen Wilson has highlighted that, for many, British imperial identity was not elastic enough to incorporate those who were different.[305] The English language was for native-speakers only; any other form was a bastardization and should be suppressed.

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[301] Kathleen Wilson, "The Island Race: Captain Cook, Protestant evangelicalism and the construction of English national identity, 1760-1800" in Tony Claydon and Ian McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity: Britain and Ireland, c.1650-1850* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), 270.
[302] Allen Walker Read, "British Recognition of American Speech in the Eighteenth Century," *Dialect Notes,* VI (1933), 329. Cited in Philip D. Morgan, "British Encounters with Africans and African-Americans, circa 1600-1780" in *Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* eds. Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 205.
[303] Bryan Edwards, *History, Civil and Commercial* vol. II, 101.
[304] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 2 July 1774; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 December 1773.
[305] Wilson, "The island race" in Claydon and McBride, *Protestantism and National Identity*, 270.

Compared to other colonial societies such as North America, Jamaica was falling behind in terms of proportion of white citizens. Jamaica, by 1703, had a population of 7 000 whites and this increased to 20 000 by 1774; historian Trevor Burnard estimates that this was a sluggish pace of growth given that the Chesapeake's population increased nine times in the century following 1660.[306] Jamaica's population also paled in comparison to the southern mainland colonies. The growth of Jamaica's white population seems slow by comparison, since in the southern English colonies increased from a population of 21 000 to almost 120 000 from 1710 until 1760.[307] In St. Andrew's parish, which includes Kingston, between 1679 and 1744 there was a total of 1 250 births and 3 338 deaths, and only 826 marriages. This leaves a growth rate of only 37 percent over the course of 65 years. While these numbers likely do not account for the possibility of children born out of wedlock or extra-familial relationships which almost certainly happened between whites and blacks, the reality was that whites were easily the visible minority on the island and remained so throughout the long eighteenth century. If the climate was killing Anglo-Jamaicans and destroying their essential British character, then the lack of whites and the lack of Britishness among those who remained created a sham of British imperial culture. Burnard also notes that this lack of whiteness on the island accentuated the lack of settler culture.[308] If Lady Nugent's somewhat idealistic white trans-Atlantic community was to become a reality, it would have to actually survive in Jamaica, which would prove incredibly difficult. In the 1770s, whites

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[306] Trevor Burnard, "A Failed Settler Society: Marriage and Demographic Failure in Early Jamaica" *The Journal of Social History* 28 (1994), 64.
[307] Ibid. The amount of slaves in Jamaica, though consistently reinforced with fresh ones from Africa, never reached the reproduction rates of North American colonies like Virginia. The number of slaves there was self-reproducing by the mid-eighteenth century, and the number of slaves doubled from 1755-1782. Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic*, 17; Richard S. Dunn, "After Tobacco: The Slave Labour Pattern in the Early Nineteenth Century," in Kenneth Morgan and John J. McCusker, eds. *The Early Modern Atlantic Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 344-363; Philip Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 61, 85.
[308] Trevor Burnard, "A Failed Settler Society," 67.

could expect to survive for around twelve and a half years after arriving in the island, and infants born in Jamaica rarely lived past ten.[309]

Taylor was overwhelmingly concerned with Arcedeckne's own marriage prospects, and spent 1770 to 1774 pestering him about it, anxious for Arcedeckne to "get Heirs."[310] Heirs would preserve Arcedeckne's property and keep Taylor employed, but it also allowed for whites to remain tied to the island. Heirs, Taylor reminded Arcedeckne, would "putt an end to any insinuations or expectations whatsoever to your disadvantage" and give Arcedeckne's "mother the highest pleasure" since she was "very weak and feeble" by 1774.[311] When Nugent's own child was born in 1802, Taylor and a friend, one Mr. Mitchell, implored her to "attach" her son to the island, as they themselves were.[312] Though Nugent decides not to describe in detail what this meant, it implied that Nugent's son might become a creole: another white body in a large sea of black faces. The lack of white women on the island forced the marriage rate to plummet after 1718 to less than two per year in St. Andrew's parish in a population of 515 whites (in 1730). This was out of a total population of 7 800 whites and blacks.[313] While it is evident that fewer and fewer men married, many took up what would have been understood to be non-traditional marriages. Black mistresses and concubines were the norm for many white men. Taylor had his own black mistress and chose never to marry, further complicating Taylor's relationship to his immediate world. Though Taylor's mistress did not have a choice in the matter, Taylor was clearly influenced by her proximity. Simon Taylor may have been unconcerned with the amount of time spent interacting in a social and professional capacity with whites, especially after the break

[309] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire,* 17.
[310] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 25 February 1770.
[311] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 19 November 1774.
[312] Lady Maria Nugent, *The Journal of Lady Nugent*, 126.
[313] Burnard, "A Failed Settler Society" 67, 65.

with North American trade: “we can do tolerable well without America” Taylor wrote to Arcedeckne in 1775.[314] One of the few interactions that Taylor had with whites outside of his immediate social circle was with the merchants that brought him “provisions,” of which the trade with North America was critical.[315] Though Taylor vented his frustrations with the lack of fiscal gain from these imports, (of which staves and hoops made from white oak in North America were critical to the building of hogsheads, this only further isolated Jamaican whites in their island world.[316]

Anglo-Jamaicans

Late-eighteenth-century scientific thought, the number of slaves on the island, and the inhumane slaveholding practices of the planters had proved to visitors that planters were simply degenerates. Despite the isolation between Britain and Jamaica, there was still interplay between planters’ British identities and their creole ones. The problem that slavery and private property posed to planters like Simon Taylor mirrored his identity crisis. While he believed he was right to own slaves as property, it was difficult to reconcile this with the civilized model of eighteenth-century humanitarianism to which Britons in the imperial center aspired

Central to this argument, of course, are the ways which creole whites interacted with their slaves. Bryan Edwards, a planter-historian, commented in his history of the West Indian islands that “in countries where slavery is established, the leading principle on which the government is supported is fear: or a sense of that absolute coercive

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[314] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 5 June 1775.

[315] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 30 January 1782. Wharfage, or charging to use a wharf, increasingly became a point of contention between Taylor and other whites as they either refused to pay, or used Taylor’s wharf without his permission.

[316] Hogsheads were barrels which held around one thousand pounds, though by 1750 the average size and weight of the hogshead was increasing. For more on productivity and shipping between Jamaica and Britain, see Christopher J. French, “Productivity in the Atlantic Shipping Industry: A Quantitative Study” *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 17 (1987): 613-638, particularly 635-637.

necessity which, leaving no choice of action, supersedes all questions of right."[317] Whites in Jamaica rarely exerted enough physical force to terrorize the enslaved population; they used other means to control the enslaved. Simon Taylor, who was aware of his natural rights as a British citizen (as the previous chapter has shown) was very likely aware of his own role in determining the rights of others. Property and a degree of autonomy, two of the critical facets of these rights for Taylor, were two of the customary privileges he was willing to give to his slaves. Taylor was willing to grant slaves their own houses, and even though there would be a loss of time by it, he "apprehend[ed] by their being happy and contented [the time] will be soon made up."[318] Time, for planters, was a key issue. Historian Justin Roberts has highlighted the importance of regimented workdays and order in his study of plantations and Enlightenment thought.[319]

Simon Taylor was willing to concede that his slaves, as well, should not work more than was necessary. Longer work days meant slaves would be tired; they needed rest in order to increase plantation output. "Indeed it is a sort of miracle to conceive what they have done this year" wrote Taylor in 1770: "it is impossible to keep the Estate up at it."[320] The slaves, Taylor wrote, "have not had above six hours rest out of 24" and coupled with a "lack of provisions," Taylor felt it necessary to hire slaves in order to plant sugar.[321] "I assure you," Taylor concluded, "it is an utter impossibility without murdering the Negroes to keep [the Estate] up without."[322] While this very well could have been hyperbole inclined to showcase perceived civility, this seems unlikely. Why would Taylor lie to Arcedeckne about something related to business? If Taylor's entire relationship

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[317] Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies, vol. 3* (London, 1801), 36.
[318] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 25 February 1770.
[319] Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment*, 26-79.
[320] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedecke, 23 July 1770.
[321] *Ibid.*
[322] *Ibid.*

with Arcedeckne was based entirely around business, Taylor's knowledge of slave work was critical to the plantation upkeep. By keeping track of the hours which slaves had worked, Taylor was able to make sure he wasn't infringing on the customary privileges of his slaves and could highlight to Arcedeckne that accusations of uncivilized behavior were false. In perhaps more realistic sense, however, Taylor simply was not killing his slaves. By showcasing his perceived ability to be a civilized master to Arcedeckne, Taylor highlighted his own ability to be a part of historian Wim Klooster's "web of rights." Though it is obvious that Taylor's humanitarian overtones held a much darker meaning: keeping track of slaves' workdays allowed him to also regiment slaves' lives and make them work harder over longer periods of time. The violent undertones connect Taylor to creolization in the eyes of metropolitans who increasingly saw violence as contrary to civilization.[323] The violence that planters continually pressured their slaves with brought them closer to their slaves. While metropolitan Britons saw planters as creolized and estranged from British modes of civilization, planters struggled to drive a cultural wedge between themselves and their slaves.

Taylor was aware that he had a duty to maintain his slaves as his property. In a highly ordered society like the eighteenth-century British Atlantic, Taylor's property was his to maintain, but they were also living creatures. Taylor did not necessarily care about the slave's natural rights, but told Arcedeckne that the "poor wretches" whose "hearts have been broke" required care under his supervision, much like it was the King's job to maintain rule (if not somewhat benevolent rule) over his citizens and subjects.[324] The king's rule in Jamaica, espoused by the governor, was meant to showcase the king's

[323] Christer Petley, "Rethinking the Fall of the Planter Class" *Atlantic Studies* 9 (2012), 2-3.
[324] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 11 June 1782. For more on paternalism amongst slaveholders, see Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*; Genovese, *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969); Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts and the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979).

authority across the empire.[325] Planters in Jamaica operated in a patriarchal and highly regimented and ordered society. As the head of their household and owner of property, they had a duty to protect what they owned. Much like the king was "*pater familias* of the nation," Taylor was the patriarch of his dominion, but needed to be paternal in his rule.[326] As English culture attempted to permeate through Jamaica, patriarchal planters felt obligated to take care of their property and "human creatures:" slaves.[327]

Planters, poor whites, freed blacks, and slaves all operated within a web of customary privileges which were negotiated by each group. Taylor was "determined there should be another sort of Care taken of [the slaves] than has ever been done before" since older slaves were apt to "destroy" newer ones and "[make] them their slaves."[328] Taylor, aware of his English rights to freedom and wealth acquisition, was more than content to provide patriarchal protection to slaves and grant them capital of their own. Planters such as Taylor who understood the customary privileges of their slaves became trapped in this web. Planters worried that providing too many concessions would dilute the main part of British citizenship on the island: whiteness. Especially after 1763 with the inclusion of freed blacks, French Catholics, First Nations groups and East Indian peoples into the empire, the difference between subjecthood and citizenship in the Empire became increasingly apparent. Anglo-Jamaicans required

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[325] Ken MacMillan, *Britain's Oceanic Empire: Atlantic and Indian Ocean Worlds, c. 1550-1850* eds. H.V. Bowen, Elizabeth Mancke, and John G. Reid (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012) "Imperial constitutions in the British Atlantic," 79. McMillan argues that the king "was claiming sovereignty not merely over the land which the colonists inhabited, but also over the bodies and welfare of its subjects, which transcended physical geography and travelled with Britons wherever they went. This insured that colonial governors and assistants, no matter how wide their legal mandate, did not govern arbitrarily, injudiciously, or in a manner contrary to human or Christian reason, and that the colonists, when their rights were so infringed, could gain legal remedy through the crown in England."

[326] Jerrilyn Greene Marston, *King and Congress: The Transfer of Political Legitimacy, 1774-1776* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), 24. Quoted in Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1992), 11-12.

[327] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 May 1782.

[328] *Ibid.*

interaction with blacks on a deeper level than simply that of a capitalist-capital relationship, and as such citizenship in Jamaica was dictated overtly by whiteness, but since late-eighteenth-century bodies were much more malleable, race could be changed much more readily.[329]

Taylor's whiteness became a struggle not just amongst his fellow citizens in Jamaica and was also constrained by his relationship to British citizens in Southeastern England. White travelers to the island did not see whites in a similar light. Given the local climate and the proximity to blacks, Creoles were decidedly un-British. Whiteness, then, came at a premium in Jamaica. The violence used against blacks was used in part to reassert the divide between blacks and whites on the island, but it was never enough to stop interactions between the two groups.[330]

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[329] For more on this idea, see Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

[330] For more on cultural interactions between slaves, freed blacks, and whites in Jamaica, see: Edward Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1971); Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009); Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden* (Cambride, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008).

CHAPTER FOUR: "HONOR BOUND": PLANTER STATUS AND IDENTITY

Simon Taylor was a temperamental elite planter who liked to have things his own way. A man incredibly loyal to his friends, Taylor despised dishonesty, and "cut-throat[s]" who would "slander[] behind [his] back."[1] Reputation amongst planters was important to business relations, but Taylor was convinced that several whites in Jamaica were people of poor character and were of pernicious repute. Several letters to his business associate Chaloner Arcedeckne were often riddled with complaints about his fellow whites in Jamaica.[2] One of Taylor's main causes of frustration from 1773 to 1774 was the trial between him and his "antagonist": another attorney named Cussans (alluded to briefly in chapter one).[3] Taylor was livid that Cussans had attempted to "stop the Course of that water which has turned [Arcedeckne's] Mills" for "so many [years] and when [Arcedeckne] had recovered the land before him."[4] Cussans wanted to tax Arcedeckne "a pepper Corn" every year "for [his] life" in order to use the water.[5] Cussans was apparently "very impatient" to get the issue to trial, since water was critical to what historian Sidney Mintz has termed the "synthesis of factory and field": technologically sophisticated machines that used water (or other forms of natural energy) to produce sugar.[6] Without water, Arcedeckne's plantation would be severely hindered in its sugar, molasses, and rum production. While other planters might pursue business dealings "with due honor," Taylor was disappointed that Cussans had tarnished what Taylor assumed was his otherwise sterling reputation on the island.[7] The issue with Cussans

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[1] Vanneck-Arcedeckne Papers 3A/1782/3 Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 30 January 1782.
[2] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 31 January 1775, ed. Betty Wood, "The Letters of Simon Taylor of Jamaica to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 1765-1775" in *Travel, Trade, and Power in the Atlantic, 1765-1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[3] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 12 March 1774.
[4] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 17 September 1773.
[5] *Ibid.*
[6] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 December 1773; Sidney Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), 46-52.
[7] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 1 December 1782.

and the water mill died down after a few months, but the persistent Cussans "revive[d]" the dispute and sent it to court. Taylor, ever the pessimist, led Arcedeckne to believe that the situation looked dire because Cussans was "extreamly fond of law," in spite of "Child[ish]" behavior, since he "cr[ied] because he has not every thing his own way and [he] thinks every body should give up their property to him because he fancies it to be his."[8]

Taylor, by the trial's eventual arrival, was confident he had an ace in the hole. Despite his earlier misgivings, Taylor was pleased to report that to Arcedeckne that "your Surveyor . . . is in possession of bordering and being part of Edward Stantons plott which piece of land Phillips claims under a Title from Mr. Phillip Pinnock and Coll. Swarton" that was "patented by them and half of said land being warranted" by Pinnock when "he sold the half of the Estate to Philips."[9] "It seems," Taylor continued, "Pinnock is Cussans chief Evidence."[10] Taylor thought he might be able to secure an "Ejectment" in court to show "that Pinnock is an interested Person and not an Impartial Evidence."[11] An "interested Person" could not give impartial evidence in a trial, since they might have something to gain from an outcome. Taylor also assured Arcedeckne that another piece of key evidence, a Dr. Gregory, who Taylor assumed had "pushed [Cussans] on in this matter," was an interested party in the case because if Arcedeckne lost the case, the water would turn Dr. Gregory's mill first upriver.[12] Ultimately, the case was dropped because after two of the witnesses were sworn in, one of the jurors fell ill and had to be removed from court. A gleeful Taylor wrote that Cussans "was so very angry that he mentioned that he believed the Man was bribed to fall sick."[13] In addition, Taylor noted

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[8] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 10 April, 1774; 31 January 1775.
[9] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 23 April 1774.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 10 April 1774; 23 April 1774.
[13] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 2 July 1774.

that Cussans' frustration was "exceeding great" after the latter had gotten a friend of his, Winde, to sit as an assistant judge.[14] In his description of Cussans, Taylor made sure to highlight Cussans' uncivilized behaviour. Acting less like a gentleman and more like a petulant child, Taylor implied that Cussans could have hardly won the case since he lacked dignity: Cussans' reputation on the island would be sorely strained after his behaviour throughout the incident with the water. Taylor concluded from the trial that:

> ". . . a man certainly has a right to defend himself when attacked and if he is so eager and earnest to get what he imagines his property could be but affect that would think that other people has just as great a reguard for what they conceive to be theirs and will defend as obstinately as they are attackt."[15]

Taylor's personal honour had been saved, but only just. Cussans would remain a thorn in the pair's side until 1783 when he took ill.[16]

The case eventually took a back seat to the changing political and economic climate of the British Atlantic world, with resident planters' traditional economic role in the British Empire in question, but Taylor's concerns about whites did not. This economic world was dominated not just by British imperial interactions with colonists, but also colonists' interactions with one another. These interactions were at the heart of the community formed by elite white Jamaican resident planters. As historian David Hancock has suggested, contextual forces allow historians to understand a greater world around the subjects whom historians study, but only to a certain point.[17] Interpersonal relations in Jamaica, while affected by larger socio-political events of empire, were also

[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 16 January 1783. Cussans, though "ailed," had irritated Taylor by disputing the value of the land which was owed in a deed.
[17] David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 5; The William and Mary Quarterly vol. 70, no. 2 (April 2013) has a roundtable discussion titled "Centering Families in Atlantic History" for more on familial relationships in the Spanish, French, Black, and British Atlantics.

interconnected to these events as they controlled the lives of individuals. Simon Taylor's immediate world dictated how he presented himself in his letters to Arcedeckne, and as such assumed the role of a moral compass amongst a population that was widely regarded as morally corrupt in the eyes of several elite Britons in the imperial center as the eighteenth century ground to a close.[18]

Taylor could use his physical capital as a means to showcase how his virtuous behavior transformed itself into material wealth. Moral capital and physical capital were often intertwined in the eighteenth century, and the maintenance of this moral capital was important not just for burgeoning nation-states but also individuals.[19] An individual's moral capital was shown through his physical capital: a person of good character (it was assumed) would be a wealthy individual. As chapter one has shown, Taylor's participation in the free economic system of the British Empire was one of the key facets of not just his loyalism to the British state, but was one of his major concerns as the British state began to treat him, as he perceived it, like a slave. This chapter explores this phenomenon of moral capital translating into virtue through Taylor. This chapter will

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[18] Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: Colonial Society and Culture During the Era of Abolition* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), 8; Michael Rozbicki, *The Complete Colonial Gentleman: Cultural Legitimacy in Plantation America* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 76-126; See also: S. E. Yeh, "'A Sink of All Filthiness': Gender, Family, and Identity in the British Atlantic, 1688-1763," *Historian,* 68 (2006), 66-88; J. P. Greene, "Liberty, Slavery and the Transformation of British Identity in the Eighteenth-Century West Indies," *Slavery and Abolition,* 21 (2000), 1-31.

[19] There is already a sizeable literature on moral capital amongst individuals and states in the eighteenth century, notably J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, vols. 1-6* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999-(forthcoming) 2015); Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006). In particular, moral capital through the abolition of the slave trade was a feature of antislavery historiography right up until the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with texts such as John R. Seeley's *The Expansion of England* (1883), ed. John Gross (London, 1971); British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, *Sixty Years against Slavery: A Brief Record of the Work and Aims of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1839-1899; with an Article on the Abolition of the Legal Status of Slavery by Joseph F. Alexander* (London, 1900); see also James Walvin, "Freedom and Slavery and the Shaping of Victorian Britain," *Slavery and Abolition*, 15 (1994), 246-259.

argue that Taylor's consistent discussions of honour (or lack of it) amongst his fellow elite whites meant that he prized British imperial ideals of reputation in his dealings with other whites. Through this, Taylor styled himself not as an Anglo-Jamaican elite but as a member of a shrinking number of virtuous and civilized British citizens in Jamaica. Taylor and several other elite planters, such as the planter-historian Edward Long and others like Bryan Edwards assumed that uncivilized behaviour amongst resident planters meant that they had too much interaction with their slaves and were thus un-British. Reputation allowed planters to dictate that they were virtuous individuals and devoid of what several whites assumed was negative African influence.

Ultimately, reputation was the means by which factors such as honour and virtue, along with moral and social capital, were intertwined on the island. Elite Anglo-Jamaicans used material culture as another means of connecting themselves to British imperial modes of socialization. The social capital gained from business dealings with reputable individuals was used for transactions and could be exchanged in social settings as a means of gaining knowledge. Elite resident planters, through the means by which they spent their wealth and interacted with one another, attempted to recreate British elite society and attempted to outdo one another in virtuousness. While many historians such as Christer Petley, Christopher Brown, Seymour Drescher, Trevor Burnard, and Andrew O'Shaughnessy have noted the cohesiveness of white society in relation to blacks or even interactions amongst poorer whites or relationships that resident planters had to British society at large, interactions amongst elites, specifically with regards to not just physical capital but its ties to reputation in Jamaica, has inexplicably been understudied.[20] Historiographical trends tend to focus on the

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[20] Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: Colonial Society and Culture during the Era of Abolition* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009); Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The*

antagonistic relationships that blacks had to whites and vice-versa.[21] In a plantation system largely dominated by slavery, this is understandable.

In an age where information was often scarce, relationships between resident planters became much more critical: ideas about planting, slave maintenance, crop rotation, and modern science and technology (in its broadest definition)[22] would have been diffused amongst resident planters not just by books but through conversations, letters, and public places such as markets and coffee houses. Slave-owner and overseer Thomas Thistlewood visited William Beckford in 1775 and was invited to "Look[] over many Folio Volumes of excellent plates of the Ruins of Rome" and in 1778 visited planter Florentius Vassall where they discussed trade, botany, and politics.[23] Anglo-Jamaicans participated in elite discourses of classical learning, something Simon Taylor learned at length in his time at Eton. Taylor's business dealings with Arcedeckne's mother and aunt were usually done in person, where they discussed bills, slaves, and the economic welfare of their estates.[24] The ways in which Taylor spent his fortune and how he and his contemporaries viewed displays of wealth through material culture (particularly within homes) is critical to a more complex understanding of the elite

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American Revolution and the British Caribbean (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Trevor Burnard, "Powerless Masters: The Curious Decline of Jamaican Sugar Planters in the Foundational Period of British Abolitionism" *Slavery and Abolition* 32 (2011): 185-198; Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antslavery* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

[21] Verene A. Shepherd, *Livestock, Sugar, and Slavery: Contested Terrain in Colonial Jamaica* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publshers, 2009) offers a break in this historiographical trend by exploring the ways which competition between sugar resident planters and pen (farm) owners bred discontent between elite and middling whites in Jamaica

[22] Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic, 1750-1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 37-38. Other methods of power on plantations (outside of the obvious physical labour of slaves) were cattle or wind. Technological innovations in power do not necessarily mean machinery, and resident planters developed new ways to access manpower in more efficient ways.

[23] Diary of Thomas Thistlewood, 11 June 1775, Monson 31; 14 February 1778 quoted in: Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire,* 62.

[24] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 23 July 1770; 5 May 1771; 1 May 1773; 26 June 1781;

persons in slave societies.[25] Planters, much like travelling Atlantic merchants, worked largely in isolation, but moved "along parallel lines": they had comparable experiences despite living in disparate places in the British Empire, resident and absentee elite planters were constantly on the move.[26] While merchants, absentees, and resident planters may have not always had direct face-to-face contact, their friendships, partnerships, and economic connections kept them tied to one another intellectually, socially, and commercially. As resident planters attempted to become more self-sufficient, cut costs, and alleviate risks on their capital (including slaves), they required forums to discuss abolitionist pressures, economic practices, and their duty to slaves.[27]

Friendships, material culture, and interpersonal relations in the Atlantic are important for identity studies because they allow (in this thesis) for a three-tiered analysis of how Simon Taylor and other similar resident planters conceptualized their sense of place in the empire, in Jamaica, and amongst each other. Comparatively poorer, Thomas Thistlewood, a middling white overseer and then planter, provides some useful comparative dimensions for Taylor's interpersonal interactions because of his unusual interest in higher education, but this chapter relies on sources from North American colonies in order to contextualize Taylor's interpersonal relations as an elite.[28] As with the rest of this thesis, sections from other planter-historians such as Edward

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[25] Christer Petley, "Plantations and Homes: The Material Culture of the Early Nineteenth-Century Jamaican Elite," *Slavery and Abolition* 35 (2014), 438.
[26] David Hancock, *Citizens of the World,* 11. Christer Petley notes in "Plantations and Homes: The Material Culture of the Early Nineteenth-Century Jamaican Elite," 443 that most resident planters lived Kingston, but had several homes spread around the island where they would conduct their business. Simon Taylor had several estates, but preferred to live on the outskirts of Kingston, rather than in the city itself or on their plantations. Petley suggests that homes on plantations themselves, though styled 'Great Houses' were not, in fact, meant for permanent residence and argues that, especially by the nineteenth century, these homes served more utilitarian functions.
[27] Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic, 1750-1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 279-281.
[28] Matthew Parker, *The Sugar Barons: Family, Corruption, Empire and War in the West Indies* (New York: Walker Company, 2011), 271.

Long, Bryan Edwards, and John Stewart will be used as comparisons to Taylor's writings. First, this chapter will outline the manner by which Taylor established himself as a viable gentleman on the island, followed by an analysis of the relations that Taylor maintained.

Cultures of Reputation

Reputation was the driving factor behind elite resident planters' interpersonal interactions. Reputation, tied with moral and social capital, along with systems of honour, allowed elites such as Simon Taylor attempt to replicate British imperial social customs in Jamaica. Sociability, particularly one's ability to be a virtuous and civilized individual, in a cash-poor society like late-eighteenth-century Jamaica's was important for business deals. This section will show how social capital and honour operated in Jamaica, and it will show how non-fiscal capital aided in planters in relationships with one another.

This honour culture was based around eighteenth-century concerns with civility and gentility.[29] Taylor was much obliged to Arcedeckne in 1775 for his partner's attention to his "Honor, Character, and Reputation" in furthering their business contract.[30] Much like resident planters in what would become the southern United States, social and moral capital was critical to inter-planter relations. Simon Taylor was highly critical of resident planters who lacked significant amounts of moral capital with which to conduct serious business relations. Simon Taylor maintained that resident planters who disputed Arcedeckne's land after the trial with Cussans should be "Honor bound to discover any

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[29] For general overviews of civility and gentility in the eighteenth-century, see: Lorena Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Rhys Isaac, *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom: Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia Plantation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia: 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982); Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); J.G.A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
[30] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 31 January 1775.

defects he may find in any of your Titles."[31] Moral and social capital was intimately tied to the life of gentlemen across the British Atlantic world. Upon the creation of the new American republic, many new congressmen (who styled themselves as gentlemen no matter their background) became embroiled in debates that often led to slanderous remarks on their honour. A man's station (and quite possibly his life, if a duel was to be fought) was often at risk when one's reputation was on the line.[32] Kelly, a man who had sold jobbing gangs out to Simon Taylor, and had consistently put his own welfare "preferable to [Arcedeckne's]" had written a letter that was meant to "injure [Taylor] in [Arcedeckne's] Esteem and Friendship" despite the two partners "hav[ing] been his two best friends."[33] Kelly would ultimately be "a Sorry Dog indeed" after his slave-jobbing business took a considerable hit later in 1782.[34]

In late-eighteenth-century Jamaica, reputation and the retention of moral capital was critical to business relationships. In a largely cash-poor society, it fell to credit as a means to finance not just sugar plantations but also purchases themselves.[35] It was not uncommon for resident planters to finance their debts through massive payments of credit. In the absence of physical coins, these payments often were substituted as hogsheads of sugar, molasses, or rum.[36] In 1774, Simon Taylor had yet to make a payment on his own personal estate, Holland, "owing to the Blast and being in Young

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[31] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 19 March 1773.
[32] Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2002), 28-29. Many scholars, notably sociologist Orlando Patterson and historian Steven Hahn have noted that Wyatt-Brown's conclusions, while compelling, are ultimately too nebulous to describe what *exactly* honour culture was, especially since Wyatt-Brown neglects almost entirely the ways slavery interacted with honour culture. For their reviews of Wyatt-Brown's work, see Orlando Patterson, "The Code of Honour in the Old South" *Reviews in American History* 12 (1984), 24-30; Steven Hahn, "Honor and Patriarchy in the Old South" *American Quarterly* 36 (1984), 145-153.
[33] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 May 1782; 11 June 1782.
[34] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 29 October, 1782.
[35] Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Rock Dundo Heights, Barbados: Caribbean Universities Press, 1974), 266-274.
[36] *Ibid.*

Canes but it is at the same time very good land."[37] Social and moral credit, different than fiscal credit, could be used as a means to add leverage to business deals where physical coin could differ between British, French, and Spanish currencies along with the high rate of physical capital's depreciation on the island.[38] Payments in sugar, rum, and molasses were not uncommon, and these payments had to be backed by one's honourable character, lest the individual be cheated.[39] Since physical coins were often used as what historian Carl Wennerlind describes as "a pledge for a higher value than the silver embodied in it," paper money, or a written note by a "reputable" source (backed by some other means: land, money, or goods) was often considered of equal value to coin, other means of payment was required.[40] By extension, one's honour could be used as a form of currency, with the expectation that one might pay them back in some form. Simon Taylor was keen to note in several letters to Arcedeckne that he had made "no doubt of the Bills I drew on you muting due honor" and that Arcedeckne had promised him Amity Hall Pen by paying "attention to [his] Honor."[41]

Honour and social capital, it seemed, was important enough that it was meted out to those who were financially stable and of some merit and ability, but also could be of reputable character on the island. Those who dealt with private finances were ideally men with honour. The man ordered to deal with Arcedeckne's mother's estate, in the event of her death, was a "Mr. Allen a Lawyer & Man of Honour & Integrity."[42] In addition, the man tasked with providing Arcedeckne with one of Taylor's many "pacquets" of letters was "a Very Particular Friend Mr. Harrison" who was "an Old School Fellow" who

[37] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 19 November, 1774.
[38] Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775*, 266-274; Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, vol. II*, 36.
[39] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 12 February 1781; 8 April 1781;
[40] Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720,* 84-85.
[41] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 June 1781; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne 31 January 1775.
[42] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 25 January 1773.

Arcedeckne should "honour" as he was "kind enough to take in Charge your book of Titles to your Land which he has promised me to deliver. . ."[43] These few instances of honourable men in Jamaica were critical to Taylor and Arcedeckne's business dealings on the island. Without them, it is likely Taylor would have struggled to find whites to trust with his credit, or to conduct meaningful business dealings with.

Honour was tied not necessarily to one's station, but one's ability to be virtuous, just, and ultimately one's ability to be an example of appropriate and desirable behavior. Taylor, who perceived himself as a virtuous individual, felt capable and comfortable using his station on the island to find work for poorer whites who came to him for help. His honourable reputation and virtuous personality would justify his influence in society. One "young man Mr. Lawrence" had "begged" Taylor to get him a job aboard a warship.[44] While Taylor's fellow whites may have lacked honour, Taylor was confident he could be an honourable figure. With Mr. Lawrence, Taylor used his own social capital as a means to further a man's career. These networks of patronage became increasingly important as the eighteenth century wore on. Men looking for work in Jamaica would often bring a letter of recommendation from a patron in Britain. These letters were critical to acquire openings in Jamaica's complex system of social credit.[45]

While Taylor never mentioned threatening one's honour in person or challenging another person to a duel explicitly, it was clear that relations amongst whites were dictated largely by social capital. Taylor did mention honour several times in his dealings with other whites: since there was a lack of physical coin on the island, Anglo-Jamaicans relied on other means to pay one another and gain social capital that could be used as

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[43] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 18 May 1782.
[44] *Ibid.* Unfortunately, Mr. Lawrence died "some Small time afterwards . . . in an Engagement."
[45] Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 43.

leverage in business negotiations.[46] Taylor was adamant that Arcedeckne "allways had been complaining of poverty" even though Arcedeckne was able to afford payments of £8,714 on a jobbing gang in 1774: a vast sum for a jobbing gang.[47] By the 1770s and 1780s the conception of credit as a staple in the financial system had been a part of the British financial system for centuries.[48] Credit and the moral economy became intertwined in Jamaica as whites were required to trust one another with credit and honour, and as an extension, these interpersonal relationships gained value through this trust. Individual demonstrations of trust, (or breaking of this trust) became wrapped up in the moral economy.[49]

Social Credit and a Civilized Empire

Credit, long part of the British Imperial financial system by the 1770s and 1780s, was an important way for planter-merchants to not simply acquire more property but also was a way that planters could increase their influence amongst elite members of Jamaican society. This section will show the ways that systems of reputation tied the plantocracy to British imperial modes of civility. This civility, ultimately, allowed planters such as Simon Taylor to remain connected not just to his island home, but remain tied (at least, overtly) to Britain. Civility was shown through one's ability to maintain and own

[46] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica*, 41-43. Stewart noted that resident planters used lengthy court battles as a means to come up with the means to pay back their creditors by selling their goods or paying in sugar, molasses, and rum. Agreements between resident planters were often so complex that court proceedings were the only way by which creditors might accomplish any sort of repayment.
[47] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 December 1773; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 12 March 1774.
[48] For overviews on systems of credit in the early eighteenth century, see Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2011); John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York: Knopf, 1989); Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England* (London, Palgrave, 1998); J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975).
[49] Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation* (London: Palgrave, 1998), 6-7.

significant amounts of private property, which not only highlighted one's personal virtue but also divided elites from the 'barbaric' lower sorts of whites and enslaved blacks.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the British Empire had gone through a drastic increase in population but for many contemporaries, a dramatic decrease in the 'civilized' population of that Empire. .[50] By 1770-1771, England was home to some 6.5 000 000 people, North America held over 2 000 000 inhabitants, and the British West Indies had some 479 000 people (mostly slaves). This was up from some five and a half million people in England, one million in North America, and 330 thousand in the West Indies in 1750.[51] The spread of wealth, many writers felt, was to blame for an increased effeminacy and a shortness of life, an easy assertion to make for observers amongst the fast-living resident planters of Jamaica. The essayist Reverend John Brown suggested that large amounts of wealth "begets Avarice, gross Luxury, or effeminate refinement among the higher Ranks, together with general Loss of Principle."[52] The historian Edward Gibbon, writing in the late 1770s, argued that the failures of the imperial center to hold onto its peripheries contributed to the moral, and thus economic, decay of both.[53] Taylor, in one of the richest colonies in the British Empire, surely would have noticed a similar number of fellow citizens who adopted characteristics similar to "a Set of Miscreants," "Rascale[s]" and men who were "not worth a Bitt."[54] Planter-historian Edward Long was adamant that a small minority of the governors of the island had any

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[50] Vincent Brown, *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012) 162.
[51] Jacob M. Price, "The Imperial Economy, 1700-1776" *The Oxford History of the British Empire, vol. II: The Eighteenth Century* ed. P. J. Marshall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 100; E. A. Wrigley and R. S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1981), 208-209; John J. McCusker and Russell Menard, *The Economy of British America*, 54.
[52] Rev. John Brown, *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (London, 1757). Quoted in Brown, *The Reaper's Garden*, 162.
[53] J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Vol. III: The First Decline and Fall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 12.
[54] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 11 June 1782; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 11 June 1782; Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 9 January 1773.

sense of "honour, justice, and magnamity."[55] Jamaca's Privy Council, too, had "styled [itself] 'Honourable'" despite siding with several less-than-reputable governors on most issues.[56] By 1808, John Stewart's *Account of Jamaica* lamented on the lack of honour presented by public dignitaries. "Where . . . is the country," Stewart asked, "where *preferment*, or honour, or whatever else we may call it, is not bought and sold?"[57]

Despite these worries about austerity and honour in Britain' West Indian colonies, it is clear that Simon Taylor lived a very lavish lifestyle. Within this lifestyle, however, it fell to Taylor and other resident planters to convince the people around them that they were indeed virtuous individuals. The apparent low population of virtuous individuals, not just in Britain but within the empire at large, made the situation for Taylor dire. Virtue, as the abolitionist cause gained power in the 1780s and 1790s, and especially in the wake of ultimate defeat in 1783 to France, Spain, the Netherlands and the Americans, caused many to question the virtue of empire.[58] Edward Gibbon, in his grand *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* published sporadically from 1776 to 1788-9, was keen to find parallels between the moral decay of the Roman Empire through not simply its decadence, but also a prehistory to Enlightenment civilization.[59] Gibbon's preoccupancy with barbarism and its ultimate triumph in the ancient world highlighted to its readers that

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[55] Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, or General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of that Island: With Reflections on its Situations, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws and Government.* New Edition, Vol. 1, Frank Cass & Co. Limited, 1970 (1774), 4.
[56] *Ibid.* 171.
[57] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica,* 39.
[58] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 145. Colley notes, however, that several scholars have argued that after 1783, London put forth several pieces of legislation meant to solidify London's weight in imperial spheres. The India Act of 1784, the Canada Act of 1791 and the Act of Union with Ireland in 1800 were of particular weight in promoting empire in the wake of its potentially disastrous effects on international virtue. See also: Frederick Madden and David Fieldhouse (eds), *Imperial Reconstruction, 1763-1840: The Evolution of Alternative Systems of Colonial Government; Select Documents on the Constitutional History of The British Empire and Commonwealth, vol. 1* (London: Greenwood, 1987), 1.
[59] Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion, Vol. III,* 10-11.

the barbaric and uncivilized world had died with the end of the Roman Empire.[60] Late-eighteenth century Britons were meant to live in a period of enlightened civilization that spread from southern Britain: anything uncivilized should be discarded and removed.

Taylor, like many planters, assumed that he was surrounded by barbaric, if not lethargic, slaves. As the previous chapter has shown, poorer whites were often engaged in a similar discourse as blacks: by virtue of their proximity to blacks, the lower orders of white society became less civilized. Elite whites wrote of their poorer neighbours who might live in "vile hovels and disgraceful sheds" rather than the houses with "sash windows with venetian blinds."[61] These whites lacked honour and were closer to Gibbon's barbarians than Britons: they "vend liquors" and "give rise to many disorderly and indecent scenes" in everyday life: one wealthy man suggested that "this evil ought to be rectified if possible."[62] Edward Long was dismayed at the reality of public spaces and of the people who frequented them. Courts especially were rougher areas to be, where "White persons, [both debtors and malefactors] who have committed no other offence than that of insolvency" should have to rub shoulders "with the most bestial and profligate wretches of the Negro race."[63] If elite whites were required to be in public in some areas of "twelve whites to one hundred Negroes," then it is likely that they felt necessary to showcase their ability to distinguish themselves from the common rabble: of not just blacks, but also against poorer whites.[64]

Elite resident planters distinguished themselves from the lower orders of society not just through their attitudes towards poor whites and blacks but primarily through their property. The competitiveness of white elite culture was highlighted by John Stewart in

[60] *Ibid.*
[61] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica*, 14.
[62] *Ibid.*
[63] Long, *The History of Jamaica*, 14.
[64] *Ibid.* 15.

1808. When discussing the manner in which travelers to the island might recount their visit, Stewart suggested that:

> "a tourist could say of the opulent individuals here would be, that one kept a better stud of horses than another, or had a larger retinue of servants; that hospitality and profusion marked the table of one, and a variety of excellent wines that of another; that one had a better, larger, and more commodious house than his neighbours . . . In short, it is in an European country, made celebrated by the interesting history of ages, and whose face is enlivened and diversied by the embellishments of modern taste, and vestiges of ancient magnificence, that the curious and enlightened traveller receives ample gratification. In Jamaica he will be disappointed if he looks for these."[65]

While Stewart was ultimately disappointed with the (marginal) taste that resident planters had in their choice of furniture, he certainly noticed the competitiveness of whites as they jockeyed amongst one another for the prestige of having the best possible residence. Taylor himself never mentioned the state of his or of other's homes, but was keen to note the manner in which resident planters, attorneys, and businesspeople managed their estates. One attorney, French, was to be "indited" for "assault" on some surveyors after a woman, Mrs. Gale, had attempted "to run a parcel of Lines" around one of Arcedeckne's plantations.[66] Taylor was adamant that he would defend French, "as he acted in defence of property with Care of which he was entrusted."[67] Though Taylor acted quickly and without Arcedeckne's explicit permission, he maintained that should evidence be brought against "the Surveyor for running [lines] without notice" on property that did not belong to his employer, legal action needed to be taken.[68] Property should be defended: to let it fall lightly by the wayside meant a lack of masculine ability to defend it properly: citizens who possessed property were autonomous, and, as J. G. A. Pocock has shown, autonomy allowed males to "develop virtue. . .as an actor within the

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[65] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica*, 120-121.
[66] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 10 May 1770.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*

political, social and natural realm or order."[69] In a British Atlantic world where effeminacy was perceived as a negative trait for a landowner, masculine virtue was a prized characteristic for a man of repute to have. This masculine virtue was based around one's ability to be self-sufficient, learned, and protective of one's own property.

Material Culture and Civility

Private property connected elite Anglo-Jamaicans to the British Empire because it showcased one's personal virtue. This section will show how elite resident planters used their material culture as a means to overtly show their virtue. Their reputation aided elites to purchase these sorts of goods. In particular, this section will analyze planters' homes and show how virtuous behavior translated into physical wealth. This physical wealth distanced planters from blacks and the lower orders of white society, thus connecting them closer to their desired British imperial identity.

Outside of their interactions with resident planters, residences and property of resident planters became critical to their notions of civility, personal values, and the connections between moral and physical capital.[70] Resident planters, often described as lavish in their displays of wealth, were required to be luxurious as a means of not simply highlighting their personal wealth, but their ability to be virtuous citizens to one another.[71]

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[69] J. G. A. Pocock, *Virtue, Commerce, and History: Essays on Political Thought and History, Chiefly in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 103.
[70] Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 34.
[71] J.R. Ward, 'The British West Indies in the Age of Abolition, 1748–1815', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: The Eighteenth Century*, ed. P.J. Marshall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 432. On the extent of white colonial wealth, see Trevor Burnard, '"Prodigious Riches": The Wealth of Jamaica Before the American Revolution', *Economic History Review* 54, no. 3 (2001): 506–24. On plantation management and the creation of 'West India fortunes', see Richard Pares, *A West-India Fortune* (New York: Longmans, 1950); Simon D. Smith, *Slavery, Family and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); David Beck Ryden, *West Indian Slavery and British Abolition, 1783–1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic, 1750–1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Historian Rhys Isaac has noted that by the beginning of the eighteenth century the status, scale, and symmetry of resident planters' homes in Virginia were declarations of "elaborately contrived social relationships."[72] These homes and estates, obviously built on the backs of multitudes of enslaved labourers, highlight the degrees by which resident planters wished to distance themselves from the brutality of the world around them. After the final victory over Napoleon in 1815, resident planters would suggest that they were far-removed from the brutality of slavery, and that it was the overseers who were required to reform, not the resident planters. Historian Christer Petley has noted that Taylor's personal wealth: slaves, livestock, plantation equipment, furniture, and other household items had been valued at some £150, 000; well above the average West Indian white.[73] While over two thirds of white colonists in early nineteenth-century Jamaica owned slaves, Taylor owned a whopping 2248 slaves that were valued at £128,550.[74]

Resident planters across the Atlantic World attempted to highlight their civility and honour while simultaneously jockeying for power amongst other resident planters through their material possessions. A surplus of land, trade, and credit, of which Taylor had plenty, meant not simply stability of his own financial station, but that of the island itself (and, by extension, the empire).[75] Jamaican resident planters used their homes as a critical statement of their wealth, much like their Virginian cousins. Resident planters were inclined to build their homes in a similar fashion to that of a three-part, symmetrical structure which highlighted the primacy of social order: the planter was the head of his household and his immediate world (fig 6, 7).[76] Taylor's house at Prospect Pen in the

[72] *Ibid.*, 35-36. For more on planter material culture in the United States, see Maurie Dee McInnis, *The Politics of Taste in Antebellum Charleston* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).
[73] Petley, "Plantations and Homes," 441.
[74] *Ibid.* 442.
[75] *Ibid.* 426.
[76] Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia*, 38-39; Petley, "Plantations and Homes", 443.

countryside four miles outside of Kingston, the long (but no longer) residence of Jamaica's prime ministers, held a plethora of various goods which highlights the lavish luxury that he lived in for many years. Both figures six and seven highlight the manner in which resident planters' homes were part of a system of reinforcement: their construction suggests that the owners were central to the social order. Large central structures, particularly in figure six, surrounded by large terraces and turrets on the flanks, promotes the centrality of the main building. These homes were veritable castles in the vast, open, Jamaican landscape. Much like Virginian resident planters who attempted to replicate English country estates in the Virginian countryside, homes and property, in the absence of physical coin, allowed degrees of both paternalism and patriarchy to be a great organizing principle of social order.[77] Lady Nugent, in 1802, was amazed at the home of a planter named Mr. Mitchell, who was "immensely rich."[78] His house, she described, was "truly Creole": the home contained many "galleries, piazzas, porticoes [a porch with colonnades leading to a doorway], &c.[79] Edward Long suggested that homes in Jamaica should be based on "the Eastern manner," which "allows sufficient range for a great variety of apartments."[80] These apartments allowed for a more "cool and pleasant" feeling, whereas in the piazzas "many families spend "the greater part of their time."[81]

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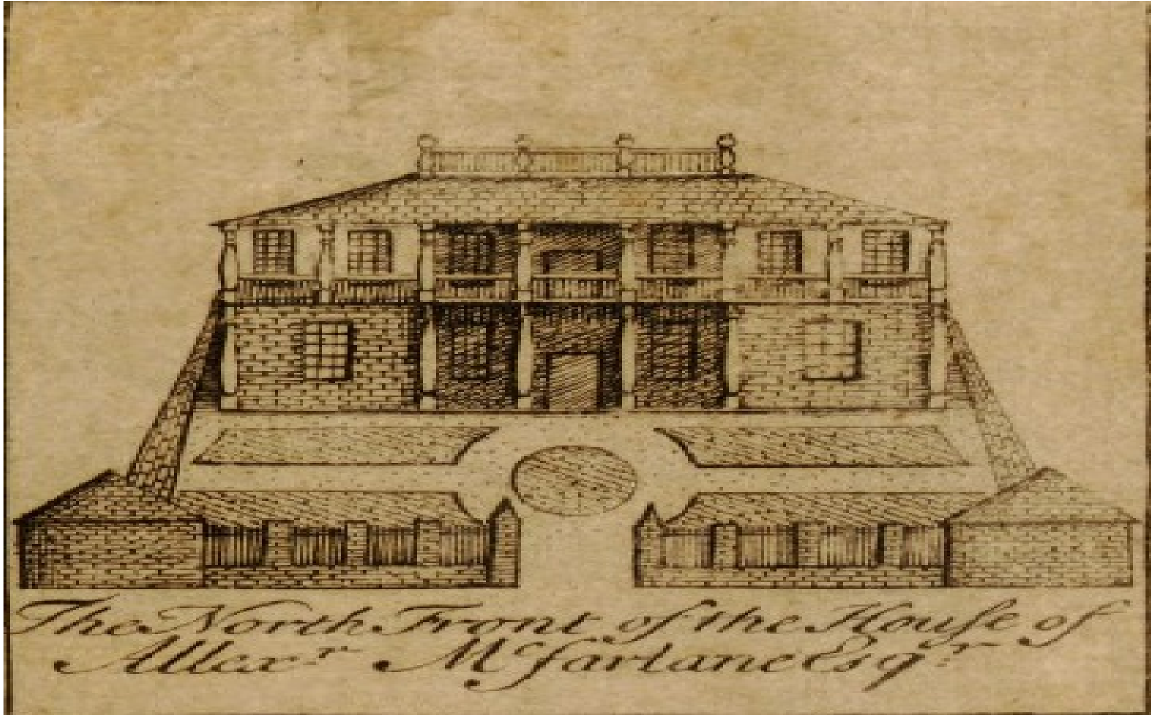
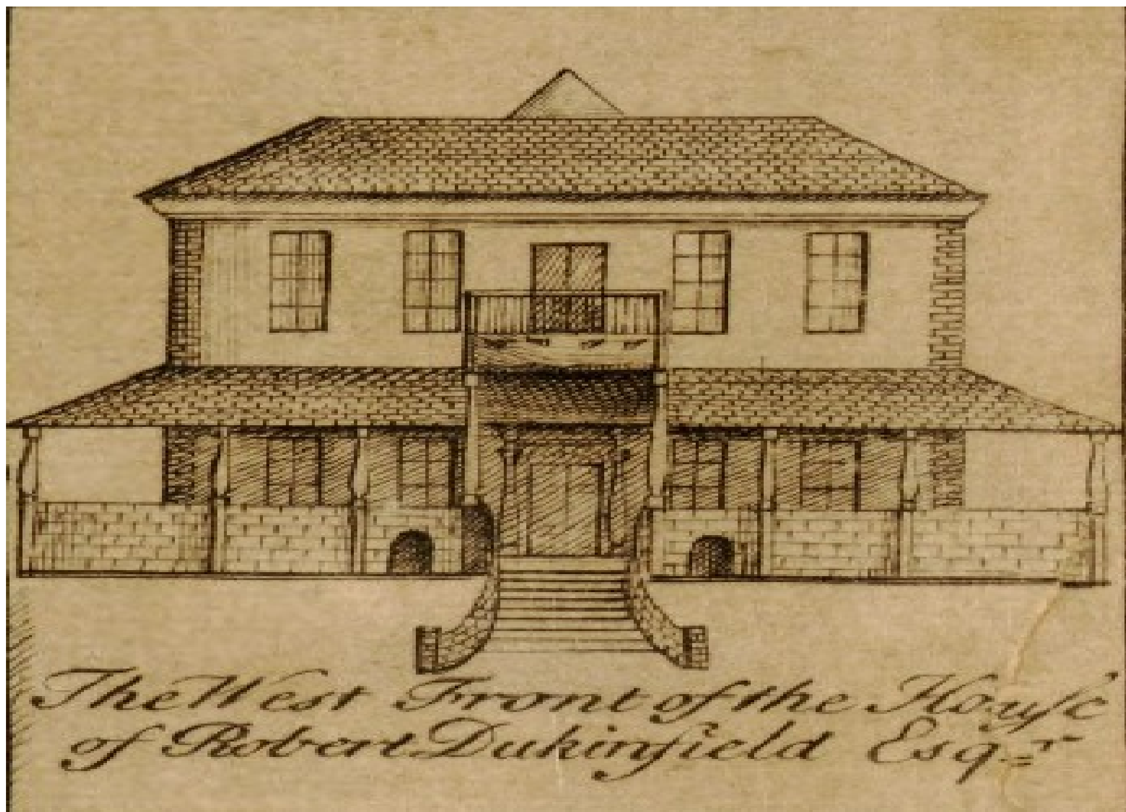
[77] Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia,* 42.
[78] Nugent, *The Journal of Lady Nugent*, 56.
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] Long, *History of Jamaica, vol. II,* 19.
[81] *Ibid.* 21.

Figure 6 & 7: Michael Hay, *Plan of Kingston* (Kingston? 1745?) Both images are of elite resident planters' homes: *The North Front of the House of Alexander Mcfarlane, Esq.* and *The West Front of the House of Robert Duckingfield, Esq.*





Historian Christer Petley has written a comprehensive study of Simon Taylor's household effects in his Lysson's Estate at Prospect Pen, where he has noted the extravagance with which Taylor lived. Taylor's silverware alone was valued at £70, and his china crockery was valued at £10.[82] Taylor's seven mahogany beds, two mahogany tables, two dozen chairs, two large mirrors, a mahogany escritoire (secretary desk), four liquor cases, and a sofa all were valued together at £300.[83] These were not small sums of money. In 1782, the value of a typical field slave on the York plantation in Jamaica was worth some £80 or £90.[84] By midcentury, a typical white servant might earn some £200 per year.[85] Taylor's mahogany furniture is of note, especially of the connotations which mahogany had in British Atlantic contexts.[86] Historian Jennifer Anderson's analysis of the *Costs of Luxury* describes Jamaica's wood as something that "deeply influenced how people conceived and evaluated mahogany" but could not sustain its consistently high levels of production and excellence and faltered on "commercial extinction."[87] The £300 Taylor spent on his furnishing was worth half what was a 160 acre farm in 1798.[88]

Homes were places that were physical extensions of the self: should Taylor's home fall into disrepair, he would be unable to participate in many of the social functions of society. Typically, these homes were made "in three divisions: the centre room is a hall," where at each end was "a bed chamber; the back part, usually a shed, is divided in

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[82] Nugent, *The Journal of Lady Nugent,* 444.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] Gale-Morant Papers, 3c-3. "A List of Negroes on York Plantation the property of William Gale . . . taken the 9th day of May, 1782." Exeter University Library.
[85] Diary of Thomas Thistlewood, 31 July, 1751. Quoted in Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire*, 6.
[86] Jennifer L. Anderson, *Mahogany: The Costs of Luxury in Early America* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012), 65-88. Jamaican mahogany was the "gold standard" in wood right up until 1763. Before 1748, Jamaica produced some 92.5 percent of all West Indian mahogany. Even after the Seven Years War, when production fell to around 78 percent, Jamaica still produced the majority of England's mahogany until the 1770s.
[87] *Ibid.* 65.
[88] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire,* 40.

the same manner."[89] These different sections of the house were, as Edward Long described, "communicat[ing]" with one another, suggesting that while the sections of buildings served different purposes, they "communicated" together as part of a whole structure centered on the head of the building, much like the head of the family.[90] It was within these large arenas of communication, elegance, and competition where Jamaicans could perform their primary social function: the performance of hospitality.

The mahogany tables that resident planters ate at were critical to these performances. Dinner and meals, which were often attended by large numbers of individuals in Jamaica as in the southern British colonies, was a premier event in the lives of resident planters. These meals, taking place in the open air of the main building of resident planters' homes, had excessive amounts of food. One breakfast might include fish, cold veal, fruits, cakes, tarts, and wine.[91] Not only did these meals present an opportunity to showcase one's lavish lifestyle, but it also allowed for a degree of lax formality in the often rigid formalities of eighteenth-century societies.[92] Lady Nugent's diary was full of encounters with large dinner, breakfast, and lunch parties that were quite frequent. Between the 24th of August and the 28th November in 1801, Lady Nugent had 15 parties that varied from "large" to "immense" at the Lieutenant-Governor (her families' home).[93] These gatherings, much like the one pictured in Figure 8, were opportunities to discuss polite topics. In Figure 8, the table lies in the center of the image, which symbolized its centrality to relationships at these dinner parties. These situations, unlike the satirical image presented by Alexander James in Figure 8: with whites' feet on the table, lounging in a very impolite manner (certainly behavior beneath

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[89] Long, *History of Jamaica, vol. II*, 21.
[90] *Ibid.*
[91] Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal*, 79.
[92] Isaac, *Transformations of Virginia*, 75.
[93] Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal*, 17-41.

their station), were moderately informal, but only when one was surrounded by their peers.[94] Largely, these sorts of gatherings were important forums where topics of discussion might range from ongoing geopolitical issues, business, sugar planting, slaves, and somewhat infrequently, religion.

Figure 8, *Segar Smoking Society of Jamaica!* (From a print by William Holland after a drawing by A. James. Institute of Jamaica Collection)

[94] Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia,* 75-77.

One key function of hospitality was its extension to other whites. While historian Rhys Isaac has noted that it was almost a "compulsion" for Virginian resident planters, Simon Taylor rarely recorded the outcomes or frequencies of social gatherings. Taylor's letters, however, were fraught with business encounters between him and other whites at either his home or theirs. Edward Long maintained that the Creoles of Jamaica were "firm and sincere friends" whose tables "covered with plenty of good cheer" and who's "hospitality was unlimited."[95] In 1801, Lady Nugent visited Simon Taylor's Horldey Estate, where the guests at dinner gorged themselves on an incredibly large meal of capon, beef, ham, crabs (their meat and eggs), vegetables, turtle, mutton, beef, turkey, goose, ducks, chickens, sweets and fruits.[96] John Stewart in 1808 wrote that Creoles were "open, generous, and unsuspecting in their natures, and hospitable even to excess."[97] Comments on Creoles' civility and generosity were not all positive, however: Creoles were "too much addicted to expensive living, costly entertainments, dress, and equipage."[98] Creoles were also by "no means the most exemplary in their moral conduct" since these were men

> "whose minds are debased, and whose taste and appetites are vitiated, by habitual low gratifications and despicable indulgencies; who, after having entered into the conjugal state, behave in a manner degrading to themselves, and calculated to wound the tenderst feelings of their faithful unoffending wives. It is by no means unusual for such men to entertain openly their *harams* of sable and tawny."[99]

Whether Taylor was concerned with these criticisms or not, he maintained an important relationship with Arcedeckne's mother and aunt; he reported to Arcedeckne how well they fared. While meetings with Arcedeckne's relations were typically business oriented,

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[95] Long, *The History of Jamaica, vol. II*, 263.
[96] Nugent, *The Journal of Lady Nugent,* 70.
[97] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica,* 152-154.
[98] Long, *The History of Jamaica, vol. II,* 265-266.
[99] Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica,* 154.

it was unlikely that their meetings were solely about business. The necessity of Taylor's reports to Arcedeckne of how his relations were in Jamaica speaks to Taylor's attempts to maintain a stronger interaction between the two. So too, was his relationship to Arcedeckne's mother and aunt. Between 1770 and 1783 Taylor saw Arcedeckne's aunt at least 35 times to discuss business.[100] Arcedeckne's mother, who died sometime between 1775 and 1781, required Taylor to visit with his Aunt relatively often to discuss the estate and the affairs of others in their social circles. Taylor was disappointed to admit to Arcedeckne that Kelsall's behavior had been quite poor "on [his] Mother's death" which he likely would have discussed at some length with Arcedeckne's surviving relative.[101]

It was through these modes of discussion: within homes and amongst each other, that resident planters across the British Atlantic world began to exercise a heightened awareness of a sense of self.[102] By distancing themselves from poorer whites and integrating themselves with other elites in large-scale gatherings they were able to identify solely as one sort. These venues were open for entry by certain poorer whites like Thomas Thistlewood, who had strived to position himself as an intellectual and gentleman. The great halls, open buildings, and focus on ceremonial space allowed not only a reinforcement of traditional British masculine values, but also allowed for increased individual space.[103] Simon Taylor's letters highlight that, while he knew several of Jamaica's wealthier and influential inhabitants, he spent much of his time on his own

[100] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 16 April, 1770; 10 May 1770; 23 July, 1770; 14 September 1770; 20 October 1770; 26 March 1771; 13 April 1771; 5 May 1771; 18 May 1771; 24 July 1771; 3 December 1771; 9 January 1773; 25 January 1773; 25 March 1773; 1 May 1773; 17 September 1773; 8 December 1773; 12 March 1774; 10 April 1774; 2 July 1774; 27 March 1775; 17 April 1775; 24 July 1775; 11 September 1775; 9 December 1775; 12 February 1781; 8 April 1781; 1 June 1781; 26 June 1781; 27 September 1781; 19 March 1782; 8 May 1782; 11 June 1782; 29 October 1782; 16 January 1783.
[101] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 8 April 1781.
[102] Isaac, *Transformation of Virginia,* 74-75.
[103] *Ibid.* 75.

travelling to his many estates or with his mistress in Kingston. When Arcedeckne asked Taylor if he knew of a "Gentleman Captain Aberdeen," that suggested the resident planters in Jamaica had sued for peace against America, Taylor replied that he "really d[id] not know" the man, nor did he know the company he kept.[104] Taylor was comfortable asserting he knew "hardly a man who wishes for peace" though he "may have heard people say they wished for the same prices in peace as they get & that may have led him" to believe the resident planters desired an end to hostilities.[105] Taylor's writings suggest that while he may have exaggerated the number of individuals he actually knew well enough to know their opinions on "high" topics such as war and geopolitics of the day, one might assume that, given the relatively small population of elite males on the island, Taylor did indeed know the opinions of several resident planters. Resident planters used open settings within their homes "and many apartments" as a means to communicate with whites across the island.

Ultimately, while whites attempted to retain a cohesive identity in Jamaica, they only were able to do so in the context of their homes. While white planters attempted to live in English cultural havens the great irony for their social norms was that these veritable palaces were populated and worked by slaves; English white servants were replaced by black ones from Africa. Planters attempted to be only faintly aware of the violence and suffering they caused on a daily basis and could remain blissfully unaware of the brutality of their world while hearkening to their civility when critiqued of their lack of it.[106]

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[104] Simon Taylor to Chaloner Arcedeckne, 26 November 1781.
[105] *Ibid.*
[106] Of course, not all resident planters could afford to distance themselves from their chattel. Middling planters like Thomas Thistlewood interacted with his slaves almost daily, and meted out punishments to his slaves himself.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

The intellectual history of resident Caribbean planters has often been overlooked by contemporaries and by historians because of the brutal slaveholding systems these men orchestrated but historians should seek to comprehend the world of resident planters as a means to understanding more deeply the the formation of social order in slave societies. Resident planters, and Simon Taylor in particular, were corrupt, brutal and morally reprehensible characters. They exploited millions of children, women, and men for their own personal gain and for the benefit of an empire that largely neglected the importance of blacks for almost three centuries. The British imperial project was largely built on the backs of Africans, much to blacks' cultural, physical, and psychological detriment. Nevertheless, it is important to try to understand how these planters understood and justified their roles in slave systems and in European empires more broadly

It is ultimately up to historians to sift through the motivations of resident planters to understand their world in more complex ways rather than simply condemning them without a deeper examination. It has only been in the last thirty years or so that historians have begun to understand the world that slaveholders made in ways that have not heavily politicized them.[107] Slavery, for many in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was completely compatible with not just economic growth and technology but also social wellbeing, as this thesis has shown. The presence of slavery gave elite planters, such as Simon Taylor, a way to attempt to further connect themselves to an often-disparate global empire. Slavery in late-eighteenth century colonial Jamaica allowed planters such as Simon Taylor to prize whiteness, and reject

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[107] David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), xiv.

potentially subversive elements of that society such as poorer whites and, in particular, slaves. Britishness in Jamaica became equated with whiteness, but not simply any white would do. Whiteness became synonymous with not just skin colour, but also virtue, civility, and other notions of imperial culture such as masculine, Protestant (and in some ways ancient Roman) ideals of an Enlightened citizen-soldier.

Because of these realities, planters were very much a part of Enlightenment discourses on labour relations, economic planning, and maintained that they were buttressing the status-quo of the empire. Simon Taylor tried his utmost to show to Chaloner Arcedeckne that he was very much a part of an imperial system that should be mutually supportive of all its members. In his letters, Taylor constructed a persona and highlighted what he wanted to be knows as his humanitarian characteristics: he claimed would not work his slaves to death, he claimed he was a person of good character and he suggested he could be relied upon to make fair, rational, and unbiased decisions that would benefit the business partnership. Taylor's correspondence showed to Arcedeckne that the subversive cultural norms of Africans (freed or otherwise) did not influence his behaviour. Imperial citizens should not stoop so low as to fraternize or engage with blacks in a manner that went beyond the supposed capitalist-capital relationship.

Obviously, this was not the case. While Taylor continually highlighted to Arcedeckne that he was indeed a true imperial citizen that lived abroad, the realities on the ground rarely appeared that way. Several planters attempted to live in tiny British cultural havens that felt like recreations of countryside cottages and manors that dotted the British countryside, the presence of an overwhelming number of blacks could not be ignored. Visitors to Jamaica such as Lady Nugent at the turn of the nineteenth century were appalled at the behaviour of lower-class whites who interacted with blacks, and were surprised when Taylor's mixed-race children showed themselves to her. It was

apparent to her, despite the protests of several planters through their respective treatises and histories, that planters were not the British citizens that they claimed to be.

While Simon Taylor was a man who expected much of his fellow whites, he still subscribed to imperial modes of conceptualizing his sense of place in the British Atlantic world. Taylor was an Atlantic figure: as one of the wealthiest subjects in the British Empire, he could afford to care about his imperial and creole identities. These identities shaped the ways in which Taylor wrote and represented himself to his business partner Arcedeckne, how he conceptualized his role as a planter during the Imperial Crisis, and the ways in which Creolization played a part in his desire to retain these imperial modes of identity. While Taylor is not a placeholder for imperial citizens across the empire, he is representative of the most elite and resident planter class in Jamaica: wealthy, white, Anglo-Jamaicans who desired to live out their lives on an island far from Britain amidst a plantation system that had provided them a considerable fortune on the backs of millions of enslaved individuals.

These slaves were the most significant factor in the process of creolization in Jamaica. Eighteenth-century science maintained that social and physical geography changed the ways in which a person behaved and lived. Taylor, conscious of these elite modes of thinking through his many discussions with other resident planters and his attendance of some of the empire's best schools, highlight his knowledge and fears of the creolization process. It was clear to Taylor that in order to maintain his tenuous whiteness in a world where the majority of people were those who eighteenth-century Britons traditionally held in disdain: Spaniards, blacks, Natives, and the French-- he needed to cling to any pieces of imperial identity that he could. Of course, the main one which he could never really lose was the colour of his skin, though even that was tenuous given the malleability of one's physiology. The environment and one's proximity

to those that were different could influence one's cultural identity. In the late-eighteenth century, race was not entirely fixed in biology: Taylor needed to distance himself from blacks in order to fully avoid the creolization process. Of course, Taylor's letters to Arcedeckne belie an important reality: Taylor was still very much a creole citizen despite his desire to highlight the inverse to Arcedeckne. Taylor willingly took a black mistress and used slang creole terms amongst his acquaintances and peers, but neglected to discuss these matters with Arcedeckne. Visitors to the island noticed the manners in which Taylor and many of his planter brethren had attempted to hold onto their whiteness through participation in metropolitan modes of discussion, intellectualism, industrialization, and socialization, but were keen to note that elites such as Taylor still were very much privy to social realities in Jamaica.

These modes of interpersonal relations were the primary way in which Simon Taylor attempted to hold onto his imperial identity. By continually conversing with whites and holding onto material culture which tied him to Britain, he could jockey amongst other whites for honour and virtuousness. Open spaces, wide piazzas, and large homes allowed elite whites to showcase their abilities to be virtuous individuals. These open forums facilitated discussions and allowed for resident planters to participate in the multitude of Enlightenment and 'high' topics that were circulating throughout the British Atlantic world. War, slavery, economics, meteorology, religion, and most importantly, business, connected often disparate and isolated individuals to an empire that was so important to their survival. These discussions reinforced the means by which resident planters such as Taylor were connected to Britain culturally and intellectually. In the face of impending influence from blacks, these sorts of discussions were important for whites such as Taylor who feared the cultural power that blacks could potentially hold over

whites. Ultimately, these two forms of identity kept Taylor aware of the larger scope of the imperial crisis that had shook the British Empire in the 1760s, 1770s, and 1780s.

Taylor, ever aware of the economic threat posed by not just the new United States, but also the Spanish, French, and Dutch Atlantic Empires, relied on military support from the British in order to defend the plantation complexes that had given the British the capability to wage war on a massive, global scale. The lack of military campaigning in the West Indies worried Taylor: if Jamaica fell as the Ceded Islands had, the results would be potentially disastrous for anyone with a vested interest in West Indian affairs. Taylor assumed that by participating in the British Atlantic economic system, he was a free white man in a plantation system that was decidedly unfree. Taylor's familiarity with slavery allowed him to use a similar language to discuss his distaste for Britain's economic policy. Taylor was supportive of the ways that Britain gave him "traditional rights and freedoms:" an ability to generate, accumulate, and improve his property, but the ways in which British policymakers had removed this made Taylor reluctant to support the imperial project in the West Indian. Taylor, one of the wealthiest subjects in the British Empire throughout the eighteenth century certainly had no cause for complaint. But English rights, in a period where imperial citizenship was in a state of flux, were more important to Taylor than his own personal wealth since the two were so intricately tied together. Without English rights, Taylor's fortune would wither and die. High tariffs, shipping costs, and low prices of sugar would ruin Taylor's growing sugar empire in Jamaica. Taylor thought of the empire as a community, meant to be mutually supportive from the centers to the peripheries of empire. The undesirable ways which imperial economic policy had grown had put the future of Taylor's business in a bind.

Simon Taylor was a conflicted individual: between his British and creole identities, Taylor presented himself as an imperial citizen to Chaloner Arcedeckne while

hearkening to his creole identity amongst other elite whites. Despite his efforts to highlight his British imperial identity to other whites, it was clear to visitors on the island that Taylor was Anglo-Jamaican rather than British. While resident planters were certainly brutal, manipulative, and aggressive individuals that ruined lives on a grand scale, this thesis is an attempt to rationalize and understand the ways which resident planters lived their lives. Resident planters had intellectual capabilities that they used to justify slavery, their economic well-being, and their distaste for things that were decidedly non-British. Historians must now analyze critically the ways that planters understood their role in the British Atlantic system. Other facets such as class-based fears and influence from non-British extra-nationals such as Jews, Spaniards, and French citizens could be a topic for other historians to explore in further studies. It is now up to historians to look more critically at the manner which resident planters constructed their worlds.

These worlds that planters lived in were rarely static: planters and their plantations rarely existed purely for the goal of money-making. Planters had ideas and goals that shaped the ways that their business partnerships worked. Identity allowed planters to gain ideas about the ways that they should live their lives. The multifaceted identities of Simon Taylor created an interesting paradox for historians: as Taylor attempted to highlight his British citizenship to not just Arcedeckne but other planters in Jamaica, others from the imperial center noticed the ironies of his efforts. Taylor might have been the premiere British citizen in the eyes of Arcedeckne, but given the demographic realities of late-eighteenth-century Jamaica, it seemed unlikely that Taylor was the person he said he was. Identity, much like the bodies and physiology of eighteenth-century peoples, were malleable and could be shaped and influenced easily. Taylor’s efforts to ignore black influence on his life may have put his mind at ease in

some ways, but it was clear to many that this was simply not the reality. Simon Taylor was a man of intense personal conflict as the nature of British imperial identity shifted: the social makeup of eighteenth-century Jamaica only exacerbated it.

This thesis is ultimately a new way to look at the history of identity in the British Empire at the end of the Imperial Crisis. Linda Colley's sweeping study *Britons*, though published in 1992, has still many unresolved issues in the historical profession. This thesis offers a counterpoint to Colley's work. It re-frames and complicates identity as something that was much more malleable than perhaps Colley is willing to grant. Identity for Taylor was something that was not monolithic: while he portrayed himself in a particular light to Chaloner Arcedeckne, he seemed uncomfortable but oddly at ease with the creole lifestyle that many visitors noted. It is important for historians to ask difficult questions about their subjects, and to be prepared to expect answers that they were not anticipating. The mind of a slaveholder, so often reprehensible and alien to the modern scholar, is not an easy world for an historian to enter. Simon Taylor's correspondence with Chaloner Arcedeckne allows historians to glimpse into the mind of one of a white slave owner. Given the political weight that is often associated with slavery, historians can often come into these sorts of projects with assumptions and preformed answers about the worldview of slaveholders. Nevertheless the study of the world of men such as Simon Taylor is of particular importance to scholars of the Atlantic World and as historians we must try to examine and understand their mental worlds and do so as objectively as possible Studies of identity are slippery to begin with: it can be difficult for historians to find evidence as clear as Simon Taylor's. He was a rare example of an attorney and planter that openly discussed the socio-economic situation of the British Empire in the 1760s, 1770s, and 1780s. His identity, though clearly important to him, became a problem as British intellectuals and social commentators began to note

the ways that the empire had become more heterogeneous than it had been in recent decades.

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