FASHIONING SOCIETY IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH JAMAICA

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White women who inhabited the West Indies in the eighteenth century fascinated the metropole. In popular prints, novels, and serial publications, these women appeared to stray from "proper" British societal norms. Inhabiting a space dominated by a tropical climate and the presence of a large enslaved African population opened white women to censure. Almost from the moment of colonial encounter, they were perceived not as proper British women but as an imperial "other," inhabiting a middle space between the ideal woman and the supposed indigenous "savage." Furthermore, white women seemed to be lacking the sensibility prized in eighteenth-century England. However, the correspondence that survives from white women in Jamaica reveals the language of sensibility. "Creolized" in this imperial landscape, sensibility extended beyond written words to the material objects exchanged during their tenure on these sugar plantations. Although many women who lived in the Caribbean island of Jamaica might have fit the model, extant writings from Ann Brodbelt, Sarah Dwarris, Margaret and Mary Cowper, Lady Maria Nugent, and Ann Appleton Storrow, show a longing to remain connected with metropolitan society and their loved ones separated by the Atlantic. This sensibility and awareness of metropolitan material culture masked a lack of empathy towards subordinates, and opened the white women these islands to censure, particularly during the era of the British abolitionist movement. Novels and popular publications portrayed white women in the Caribbean as prone to overconsumption, but these women seem to prize items not for their inherent value. They treasured items most when they came from beloved connections. This colonial interchange forged and preserved bonds with loved ones and comforted the women in the West Indies during their residence in these sugar plantation islands. This dissertation seeks to

complicate the stereotype of insensibility and overconsumption that characterized the perception of white women who inhabited the British West Indies in the long eighteenth century.

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INTRODUCTION

The experiences of white women in colonial Jamaica and their consumption of material goods and culture tell us much about the imperial lives of women who inhabited this colonial space. Although scholars of European colonization have recently begun to focus on the Atlantic colonies, we still do not know much about the construction of the colonial family, which remains one of the last frontiers of imperial studies. Scholars are now applying postcolonial and transnational theoretical approaches, with many re-examining identity creation through trans-regional methods.[1] Although historians do consider gender and sexuality, few have analyzed the experience of women by looking at the consumption of material culture in the West Indies.[2]

Throughout the eighteenth century, novels, satirical prints, and other popular publications portrayed white women living in the West Indies as over-consumers of material goods while being insensitive to European metropolitan mores. These women were perceived as having abandoned proper British womanhood and as having become an imperial "other," inhabiting a middle space between the ideal proper British woman and the indigenous "savage." Many women who lived in Jamaica may well have fit that model of insensibility and overconsumption. Yet letters and other writings by Ann Brodbelt, Ann Appleton Storrow, Margaret and Mary Cowper, Sarah Dwarris, Lady Maria Nugent, and Mary Ricketts show their conscious desire to

[1] For recent works on empire see Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002). Stoler's book contributes to the field of imperial studies by bringing together gender, colonialism, and race, framing her work around the "intimate." Stoler suggests that the regulation of sexual contact and social stratification assisted the colonizers in creating a "colonial racism." Although Stoler focuses primarily upon Dutch Indochina, her framework has broad implications for colonial studies. See also Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995); and *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke Us, 2006).

[2] Kathleen Wilson has provided a valuable framework for my study. Wilson's works include: *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003); "Empire, Gender, and Modernity in the Eighteenth Century" in *Oxford History of the British Empire: Gender and Empire,* ed. Philippa Levine (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004); Wilson, *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); "Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century British Frontiers" *American Historical Review* 116 (December 2011): 1294-1322.

remain connected with their loved ones across the Atlantic.[3] Moreover, their correspondence uses the language of sensibility. Eighteenth-century sensibility involved a heightened emotional receptivity through external stimulations. Although this sensibility was limited in this imperial landscape, it extended to the material objects they received. Through the exchange of both news concerning fashion and material items, these women forged new relationships and solidified previous ties. Lockets of hair, pieces of cloth, embroidery samplers, and fashionable attire constituted more than just sentimental mementos. They represented loved ones back home, across the Atlantic. Far from being mindless over-consumers, the women who had moved to Jamaica prized many of the objects they accumulated not for their inherent material value but because of where they came from and who had sent them. Moreover, these women used the items they had received to create a common language by which they could identify themselves as members of the colonial elite. Material goods were instrumental in solidifying these bonds during the late eighteenth century.

In the last thirty years, new scholarship on the British Empire has regenerated this once stagnant field of British history.[4] J. G. A. Pocock challenged historians to re-examine the field of

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[3] For more information on Ann Brodbelt, see Chapter 3, "The Brodbelts of Jamaica," and Geraldine Nutt Mozley and the Institute of Jamaica, *Letters to Jane from Jamaica, 1788-1796* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by the West India Committee, 1938). An analysis of the Cowper Family is in Chapter 4: "Loyalists of Jamaica: The Cowper and Storrow Families." Their correspondence can be found at the Georgia Historical Society and the Southern Historical Collection housed at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For more information about Ann Appleton Storrow, see Chapter 4. A larger discussion of Sarah Dwarris can be found in Chapter 5: "Lively Colours & Shewy": Middling and Poorer Families in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica," and *Dwarris of Jamaica* (Typescript), Archives and Special Collections, Otto Richter Library, University of Miami. Lady Maria Nugent's journal provides and excellent glimpse at life and culture in Jamaica during the turn of the nineteenth century. See Chapter 6: "Self Fashioning and Material Goods: The Case of Lady Maria Nugent," and Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago: Reprinted from a Journal Kept by Maria, Lady Nugent, from 1801 to 1815,* ed. Frank Cundall (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by A. & C. Black, 1907). The correspondence of Mary Ricketts is housed at the British Library and the William Salt Library in Stafford, England.

[4] Early publications concerning the British Empire include Gerald Berkeley Hertz, *British Imperialism in the Eighteenth Century* (London: A. Constable, 1908); C. H. Firth, '"The British Empire,'" *Scottish Historical Review* 15 (1918): 185-189; James Truslow Adams, "On the Term 'British Empire,'" *American Historical Review* 27 (1922), 485-489; Ernest Barker, *The Ideas and Ideals of the British Empire* (Cambridge [Eng.]: The University

British history to include overseas empire. Current studies are characterized by their inventive approaches to the field.[5] Pocock assisted in removing the insular focus of British history so that the field expanded to include the vast reaches of the imperial grasp. Following Pocock, many scholars, including Lawrence Stone, C.A. Bayly, and Bernard Bailyn joined the ranks of imperial historians.[6] Furthermore, scholars Catherine Hall, Linda Colley, and Kathleen Wilson have reframed many of the issues of British history to analyze the various locations in the British Empire and to ask new questions regarding the existing field. Their contributions have led to research that interrogates the rhetoric of empire and traces the roots of the discourse surrounding the Victorian British Empire to its formation in the seventeenth century. Postcolonial studies informs these debates and results in innovative and challenging works that add to the existing discourse on empire.[7]

With decolonization in the twentieth century, postcolonial studies emerged along with other cross-disciplinary analyses such as gender and cultural studies. Concentrating on knowledge creation through power organization, these fields of inquiry influenced each other and resulted in a shift regarding perceptions and analysis of colonial entities. Postcolonial theory

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Press, 1951); Kenneth R.Andrews, *Trade, Plunder, and Settlement: Maritime Enterprise and the Genesis of the British Empire, 1480-1630* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[5] J. G. A. Pocock, "British history: a plea for a new subject," *New Zealand Journal of History* 8 (1974): 3-21; "The Limits and Divisions of British History: in Search of the Unknown Subject," *American Historical Review* 87 (Apr. 1982): 311–36; "The New British History in Atlantic Perspective: an Antipodean Commentary," *American Historical Review* 104 (Apr. 1999), 490–500; "The Field Enlarged: an Introduction," 47–57, and "The Politics of the New British History," 289–300, in *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[6] See Lawrence Stone, *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815* (London: Routledge, 1994); C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004); *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Bernard Bailyn, and Philip D. Morgan, *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

[7] Dane Kennedy's recent historiographical essay points to the ongoing issues present in both the United States and the United Kingdom as they assess their postcolonial past and the imperial present. The controversies surrounding imperial history and current events do not seem likely to decrease in the near future. See Dane Kennedy, "The Imperial History Wars," *Journal of British Studies* 54 (January 2015): 5-22.

started as a movement to challenge the dominance of a western, Eurocentric model. Beginning with author Frantz Fanon, others, including Edward Said, joined the debate to add to the scope and breadth of these studies.[8] Building upon postcolonial studies, the "New Imperial History" approach develops previous imperial studies by examining not only colonial officials, but the "movers and shakers" of empire: the men and women who fought, settled, worked, or were transported or colonized. This "New Imperial History" has left us with a fresh conceptual framework for emerging scholars to build their own studies. This approach employs a multidisciplinary scope for its analysis. The goal of these histories is not solely to replace the existing narrative but to reconfigure and reevaluate previously-held notions and beliefs. The three themes that the New Imperial History attempts to uncover include "the impact of empire on British social and cultures practices and identities; the transoceanic networks of everyday life[;]…and the role of representation in enabling, mystifying, or contesting British imperial power."[9] Scholars employing the New Imperial History investigate history "from below," gender studies, and inquiries involving the "colonized." This collection of work not only considers the colonial history of these entities but the post-colonial present. The "tensions" that occurred in colonial societies still have relevance to the creation of identities for post-colonial individuals.

Particularly for British Studies, these trends in scholarship have allowed historians to reassess the globality of eighteenth-century British imperial history. After the failure of the First British Empire following the independence of the rebellious North American colonies, the Second British Empire rose in importance, and remained the focus for scholarly works in British history. This emphasis dominated British history until quite recently, when many works that

[8] Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1965); Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

[9] Kathleen Wilson, "Introduction: histories, empires, modernities," in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 18-19.

center on the importance of the First British Empire were published, including studies on Ireland, Scotland, North America, and the West Indies. These works delve into the roots of imperial governance, the lives of inhabitants, and the ultimate demise of the first colonial system. In Imperial Studies, the eighteenth century is often ignored as some murky grey area between the early modern and modern period. Yet, scholars have pointed out that this period is not solely transitional. As Wilson writes, "The histories of the interpenetrations of British imperial strategies of rule and technologies of gender, racial, and national differentiation within the nation and empire" are key issues in the eighteenth-century imperial experience.[10] Throughout this period, colonists embarking on these voyages would themselves become objects of scrutiny due to the perceptions, described in travel narratives and other print media, of their alterations in behavior, speech, and dress. Identity-creation in the British imperial world was still in flux during the eighteenth century, and this instability provides an interesting prospect for imperial studies to better understand the lives of individuals inhabiting colonial spaces.

The investigation of identity creation and the First British Empire benefitted from the innovative work of Linda Colley.[11] In *Captives*, Colley reconfigures the British Empire through her analysis of captivity narratives written between 1650-1800.[12] Colley's greatest contribution is

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[10] As Catherine Hall has noted, "metropole" refers to the "Mother country." In this case, I refer to England. See *Civilizing Subjects*: *Colony and Metropole in the English Imagination, 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 22.

[11] Linda Colley has contributed to the field of British studies with several important works including *Britons, Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992). In this work, Colley traces the origins of the idea of a "British" identity to the eighteenth century and posits that this identity was created due to the anti-French, anti-Catholic notions present in these disparate nations, tenuously joined together with the 1707 Act of Union. Although this thesis has come under question in recent publications, Colley's work remains a standard in British studies.

[12] According to Colley, "This book, then, combines the large-scale, panoramic and global, with the small-scale, the individual, and the particular. At one level, it is a macro-narrative of some of the constraints and crises that Britain confronted during the quarter millennium that made it the world's foremost power, and what followed from these both as regards its own peoples, and for other peoples. At another level, this book is an exploration of micro-narratives produced by just some of the very many English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish men and women who got caught and caught out because of this power's amalgam of incessant extroversion and aggression, and frequent and

her emphasis on the construction of discourses surrounding the metropolitan view of the British Empire. *Captives* demonstrates that the realization of the Empire on which the "sun never set" was, at times, tenuous at best. Colley argues that a scholar of empire must consider these players of the British world in their own contexts, and not fall victim to the rhetoric deployed by those at the top of the imperial ladder. According to Colley, the British Empire was created through "small stories of small people."[13]

Other histories addressing the cultural ramifications of the First British Empire include studies by Jack P. Greene, who applied an Atlantic World approach to Colonial American studies.[14] With this attention to the larger Atlantic in the eighteenth century, the Caribbean colonial islands received greater notice. The study of the West Indies began with monographs dedicated to sugar plantations.[15] Early works investigating the Caribbean in relation to the British Empire include Richard S. Dunn's *Sugar and Slaves*, which takes into account the establishment of the sugar plantation islands.[16] Dunn argues that these colonies were important to the success

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intrinsic vulnerability" (Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600-1850* (New York: Anchor Books, 2004), 17.

[13] Colley, 375.

[14] Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 168. For other Greene publications see: *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Politics of the British Empire and the United States 1607-1788* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1986). See also P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion, 1688-1914* (London: Longman, 1993); P. J. Marshall, "Empire and Authority in the Later Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 15 (1987), 105-22; "Imperial Britain," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 23 (1995), 379-394; "Britain and the World in the Eighteenth Century: I, Reshaping the Empire," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 8 (1998), 1-18.

[15] See Frank Wesley Pitman, *The Development of the British West Indies: 1700-1763*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917); Lowell Joseph Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean 1763-1833: A Study in Social and Economic History* (New York; London: The Century Co, 1928); Richard Pares, *A West India Fortune* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1950); Pares, *War and Trade in the West Indies, 1739-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936); James Anthony Froude, *The English in the West Indies; Or The Bow of Ulysses* (New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969).

[16] Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies: 1624- 1713* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, VA, by the University of North Carolina Press, 1972). For more general histories of the economics of the West Indies see Richard S. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies: 1623-1775* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974).

of the British Empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Barry Higman and Trevor Burnard have investigated eighteenth-century sugar plantations in order to situate these colonies within the wider Atlantic Empire.[17] Burnard argues that slavery made the Britons brutal, indolent, and prideful. Metropolitan observers combined the detriments associated with slavery with the effects of a tropical climate to make a truly debilitating atmosphere.[18] Burnard also proposes that settlement did not entrench in the West Indies since the colonists failed "to transform Jamaica into a settled, improved, and civilized society. An 'improved' society was, by definition, an English society."[19] The luxurious lives of the white creoles also contributed to this perceived failure in establishing a viable colony.

Recent scholarship attempts to give a more detailed account of the lives of the individuals in the West Indies, as well as to place them in the larger discourse of the Atlantic World. These works also begin to recover the role of gender, race, and identity in the imperial experience. Kamau Brathwaite's study regarding creolization and identity in the eighteenth century remains the standard in the field.[20] Brathwaite's *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica: 1770-*

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[17] Trevor G. Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 14. See also, Burnard, *Creole Gentlemen: The Maryland Elite, 1691-1776* (New York: Routledge, 2002). For other works employing an Atlantic approach to imperial studies see, Sarah Pearsall, ""The Late Flagrant Instance of Depravity in My Family": The Story of an Anglo-Jamaican Cuckold," *William and Mary Quarterly* 3 (2003): 549-582. For further information concerning the British Atlantic, see, T. A. Milford, *The Gardiners of Massachusetts* (Lebanon, NH: University of New Hampshire Press, 2005); B. W. Higman, *Plantation Jamaica, 1750-1850: Capital and Control in a Colonial Economy* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2005); Simon D. Smith, *Slavery, Family and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648–1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[18] Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire*, 20.

[19] Ibid., 17-18.

[20] Europeans who inhabited the West Indies underwent the process of cross culturalization that instilled in them a new social identity. William Green, in his discussion of creolization, states that it '"involved the identification of people, whatever their place or origin of racial composition, with the island societies in which they lived'" (William A. Green, "The Creolization of Caribbean History: The Emancipation Era and a Critique of Dialectical Analysis," in *Caribbean Freedom: Economy and Society from Emancipation to the Present* ed. Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd (Kingston, Jamaica: Randle, 1993), 28.) Creole denotes the blending of cultures and does not necessarily indicate the place of birth, yet those born in the West Indies were certainly considered creole as well.

1820 posits that a "creole" culture emerged from the blending of the language, people, food, and clothing from British, West Africa, and the wider Atlantic World. Regarding creolization:

> The people, mainly from Britain and West Africa, who settled, lived, worked and were born in Jamaica, contributed to the formation of a society which developed, or was developing, its own distinctive character or culture which, in so far as it was neither purely British nor West African, is called 'creole'; that this 'creole culture' was part of a wider New World or American culture complex, itself the result of European settlement and exploitation of a new environment; and that Jamaican development (like that of the Caribbean generally), was significantly affected by realignments within this complex caused by the two major upheavals in the area during the period of this study: the American and what may be described as the 'Humanitarian' Revolutions.[21]

Brathwaite discusses the issues of the society and questions the reasons why the settlements were not successful colonies. This work is unique because it shows that the colonists did create a "creole" identity in the West Indies.

Scholars have also increasingly considered the importance of gender in the British Empire and its role in identity creation in the Atlantic World. Historians Lucille Mair, Barbara Bush, Hilary Beckles, and Verene Shepherd have introduced an innovative approach to Caribbean history as they have begun to consider the role of gender in the West Indies. According to Beckles, the historiography of sex and gender during the period of Caribbean slavery began with a focus on black and mixed-race women, and attention has shifted only recently to the lives of white women.[22] Mair affirms, in her acclaimed dissertation on women in

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[21] Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), xiii.

[22] Hilary McD. Beckles, "Sex and Gender in the Historiography of Caribbean Slavery" in *Engendering History,* ed. Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey (London: James Currey Publishers; Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1995), 128. Other works by Beckles include *A History of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement to Nation-State* (Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989). For general works on the British West Indies see, Michael Craton and James Walvin, *Jamaican Plantation; The History of Worthy Park 1670-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970); Cyril Hamshere, *The British in the Caribbean* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1972); Elizabeth Mancke and Carole Shammas. *The Creation of the British Atlantic World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005). Works that include women in the British West Indies include: Lucille Mathurin Mair, *A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica 1655-1844* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2006); Verene A. Shepherd, ed. *Women in Caribbean History: The British-Colonised Territories* (Kingston: I. Randle, 1999); Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (London: Heinemann Publishers, 1990); Linda L. Stutrz, "The 'Dimduke' and the Duchess of

Jamaica, that the "black woman produced, the brown woman served, and the white woman consumed."[23] While this thesis has characterized much of the study of women in the British West Indies, many scholars are reexamining this claim, citing new documents and interpretations. Recent studies have shown, for example, that many white women owned small businesses, or, in Eliza Fenwick's case, ran a school for the creole white girls.[24] Increasingly, historians are recognizing that Mair's proposal is far too simple to describe the complexities of life for women in the British West Indies. For example, Wilson demonstrates that imperial expansion caused Britons to question firmly held notions concerning gender through her study concerning the origins of British masculinity and shifting ideas of women in reference to empire.[25] In this examination, she joins with distinguished individuals such as Catherine Hall, Phillipa Levine, and Antoinette Burton.[26] Throughout the seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, metropolitan English women were often depicted in literature as "depraved;" however, when encountering imperial "others," these women were conversely perceived as culturally superior in comparison to the indigenous individuals. Complicating this dynamic, British women inhabiting colonial spaces were also subject to scrutiny based on perceived "transcultured" attributes.

Chandos: Gender and Power in Jamaican Plantation Management –A Case Study or, A Different Story of 'A Man [and his wife] from a Place Called Hope,"' *Interamerican* 29 (1999): 1-15.

[23] Hilary McD. Beckles, "White Women and Slavery in the Caribbean," *History Workshop* 36 (Autumn 1993): 66. Terms for the offspring of black slaves and white men include "brown," "coloured," and "mulatto." The offspring of a mulatto and a white was called a "quadroon" or "coloured" as well. See also Beckles, "White Women and a West India Fortune: Gender and Wealth During Slavery," in *The White Minority in the Caribbean,* edited by Howard Johnson; Karl Watson, 1-16 (Kingston: Ian Randle; Oxford: James Currey; Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1998).

[24] For a recent article challenging this thesis, see Christine Walker, "Pursuing Her Profits: Women in Jamaica, Atlantic Slavery and a Globalising Market, 1700-60," *Gender & History* 26 (2014): 476-518,

[25] Kathleen Wilson, "Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century British Frontiers." *American Historical Review* 116 (2011): 1294-322

[26] See also Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990); Philippa Levine, "Sexuality and Empire" in *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose. *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World (*Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Antoinette Burton, *Empire in Question: Reading, Writing, and Teaching British Imperialism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

Wilson points out that European "white women were at a premium" in colonial locations such as the West Indies, where "law and custom worked to put them on a pedestal that emphasized the cultural distinctions of 'race' as it endowed planter society with respectability."[27] Wilson describes how black women were perceived as having "voracious sexuality, physicality, and cultural and moral primitiveness" in contrast to the white women's fragility.[28] Creole women were seen as "gauche, simpering, indolent, sluttish, vain," lacking the "purity" of European women, and subject to the influence of the black slaves.[29] Wilson provides an excellent framework for gender in British imperial locations such as the Caribbean to begin to fully understand the lived experience of colonial inhabitants.[30]

Although colonial scholarship has benefitted from multiple studies of women and gender in the British Atlantic World, few scholars have analyzed the role of material culture in the imperial context.[31] Material culture in colonial America has received attention, from authors such as Greene demonstrating the colonial connections of material goods between colonial

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[27] Wilson, *The Island Race,* 154. See also: *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[28] Wilson, 155.

[29] Ibid.

[30] For gender and sexuality in the British West Indies, see Brooke N. Newman "Gender and Sexuality and the Formation of Racial Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Anglo-Caribbean World," *Gender and History* 22 (November 2010): 585-602. Newman examines both the creation of a gendered identity in the British Atlantic, along with the ideas of "whiteness" in the Caribbean islands. This article notes the "growing association of British West Indian whites with physical and moral degeneration rather than with Britishness. Far from cultivating the Anglicisation of the Atlantic world, white Creoles, both male and female, appeared to be growing more barbarous, tawny and Africanised by the day" (598).

[31] For consumption in the wider Atlantic World, see T. H. Breen, '"Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century" *Past and Present* 119 (1988): 73-104; Breen, "An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America, 1690-1776," in *Colonial America: Essays in Politics and Social Development*, edited by Murrin and Greenberg Katz (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993); John Styles and Amanda Vickery, *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830* (London: Yale Center for British Art; Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2006); For works particularly in Colonial Virginia, see also Lois Green Carr, and Lorena S. Walsh, "Changing Lifestyles and Consumer Behavior in the Colonial Chesapeake," in *"Of Consuming Interests:" the Style of Life in the Eighteenth Century* edited by Ronald Hoffman and Peter J. Albert Cary Carson (Charlottesville: Published for the United States Capitol Historical Society by the University Press of Virginia, 1994); Michal Rozbicki*, The Complete Colonial Gentleman: Cultural Legitimacy in Plantation America* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1998).

Chesapeake and the British Empire, similar studies of the colonial West Indies are rare.[32] Maya Jasanoff's *Edge of Empire,* which canvasses the lives of art collectors in British imperial India, offers important methodological precedents for my study of the British West Indies.[33]

With all the thought-provoking works recently published by many scholars, the need for further research on women, material culture, and empire is apparent. Many imperial historians, excepting Jasanoff, do not incorporate art historical methodology in their works. Thus, in order to better understand the significance of objects in imperial locations, interdisciplinary methods are necessary to perform a fresh examination of women in colonial Jamaica. Many postcolonial theorists concentrate on literature and written sources for uncovering the experiences of colonial inhabitants. As Kariann Yokota contends, "[p]ostcolonial scholarship draws attention to the importance of cultural aspects of the colonial experience and their political, social, and economic implications."[34] She argues that material culture studies can benefit from the groundwork laid by postcolonial theorists, recognizing "that the objects people produced, consumed, and traded are valid sources of primary evidence, reflective and constitutive of historical actors' values, beliefs,

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[32] One exception is Greene's, *Pursuits of Happiness.* Additionally, a recent issue of *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* investigates material culture in the British Atlantic world during the era of slavery, demonstrating the necessity for further study concerning this subject. From this issue see especially, Stephan Lenik & Christer Petley, "The Material Cultures of Slavery and Abolition in the British Caribbean," *Slavery & Abolition* 35 (2014): 389-398 and Christer Petly, "Plantations and Homes: The Material Culture of the Early Nineteenth-Century Jamaican Elite," *Slavery and Abolition* 35 (2014): 437-457. In this article, Petly examines the material lives of Jamaican planters Simon Taylor and John Cunningham. Another work that considers material culture in British Jamaica is Douglas F. Mann's "Becoming Creole: Material Life and Society in Eighteenth-Century Kingston Jamaica," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Georgia, 2005. This dissertation examines probate inventories, letters, and diaries to uncover the material world of eighteenth-century Kingston. While centering his studying on the urban mercantile center of Jamaica, Mann also reveals the lives of women who inhabited this city. My study seeks to expand upon Petly's article by concentrating on the aspect of women's consumption patterns. I also intend to engage with Mann's work, both complimenting and diverging from his Kingston-centric focus.

[33] Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Conquest and Collecting in the East, 1750-1850* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006). See also Jasanoff, "Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning," *Past and Present* 184 (2004): 109-35; and *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

[34] Kariann Yokota, "Postcolonialism and Material Culture in the Early United States," *William and Mary Quarterly* 64 (2007): 265.

and identities."[35] Historians can utilize non-textual sources such as images and material objects. As Yokota claims, these sources "can offer unique, alternative perspectives on colonialism and its aftermath in ways that postcolonial scholars themselves have not fully recognized thus far. The circulation of objects…across the Atlantic…deserves more attention as a nexus for the formation of nation identity and a theater for the performances of cultural ambivalence."[36] While Yokota proposes the utilization of this framework for the colonial United States, a natural extension would include a West Indian perspective as well.

Multiple lenses are required to more clearly see the breadth of women's lived experiences in the late eighteenth-century British Atlantic World. The material lives of women cannot be fully understood without understanding the upheaval women faced when transplanted from their former lives into this imperial scene. As notions of the un-Britishness concerning the colonial inhabitants in the West Indies grew, it seems that they strove to "prove" their Britishness through conspicuous consumption of British-made goods and participation in genteel traditions such as fabulous country feasts. However "barbarous" these colonists might have appeared in metropolitan literature and visual representations, it seems they attempted to ally themselves with their British counterparts by emulating their dress, material possessions, and decorative objects.

Additionally, developments in the British cult of sensibility reached colonial Jamaica and influenced the writings of women, their relation to the goods they shared between their loved ones across the Atlantic, and how they self-fashioned their own identity while using these goods.[37] One way that eighteenth-century women fashioned their identity was through engaging

[35] Yokota, 266.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Pearsall argues that sensibility permeated Jamaica in the mid to late eighteenth century. She cites West Indian-plantation owner John Tharp's knowledge at the turn of the nineteenth century concerning Matthew Lewis's

with the literary trope of sensibility.[38] Difficult to define even in the eighteenth century, "sensibility" and "sentimentality" were often used interchangeably to refer to the tender feelings aroused through novels, witnessing the suffering of others, people and animals, and the possession of a beloved object.[39] The writings of eighteenth-century women contain highly sentimentalized language concerning the material goods exchanged between them and their correspondents in America. Although "sensibility" encompasses a physiological component, in this instance it is best seen as the celebration of heightened emotions, which could manifest in the shedding of tears.

The debate surrounding the cult of sensibility was highly gendered in arguments dealing with the merits and downfalls of this movement. Eighteenth-century observers viewed the uterus as the site for sensibility, rendering women particularly susceptible to the extremes in this phenomenon.[40] According to David J. Denby, the "feminization of sensibility—in the sense that women were both represented in and consumed sentimental texts—certainly contributed to a growing split at the end of the eighteenth century between two worlds, one male, public, and political, and the other female, intimate, and domestic."[41] Although men of sensibility appeared in literary depictions, and men also appropriated the language of sensibility in their letters, this

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The Monk as an indicator of the permeation of sensibility in plantation Jamaica. See Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 232.

[38] For sensibility in the eighteenth century, see Janet Todd, *Sensibility: An Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1986); John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1996); Brycchan Carey, *British Abolitionism and the Rhetoric of Sensibility Writing, Sentiment, and Slavery, 1760-1807* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005).

[39] For animals and eighteenth-century sensibility, see Aaron Garrett, Richard Dean, Humphrey Primatt, John Oswald, and Thomas Young, *Animal Rights and Souls in the Eighteenth Century* (Bristol, England: Thoemmes Press, 2000); Rob Boddice, *A History of Attitudes and Behaviours Toward Animals in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain: Anthropocentrism and the Emergence of Animals* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2008); Tobias Menley, *The Animal Claim: Sensibility and the Creaturely Voice* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

[40] David J. Denby, "Sensibility," in *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment* (Oxford University Press, 2002) http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195104301.001.0001/acref-9780195104301-e-660.

[41] Ibid.

movement seemed particularly directed at women. The popular arguments among Enlightenment thinkers concerning sensibility seemed to concentrate on the fragility and emotional susceptibility of women. Feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft critiqued this construction of sensibility at the end of the eighteenth century.

Nonetheless, sensibility provided women with an outlet to vent their feelings. As the concept was borrowed from contemporary print culture, sensibility encouraged eighteenth-century individuals to sense their feelings and heighten their emotional response to the world around them.[42] According to Roy Porter, during the eighteenth century, women "were taught no longer to sit in silent submission but to feel. In fashioning the sensitive soul, material culture, print media and prosperity" provided new opportunities for engaging with sensibility.[43] Eighteenth-century literary works that invoked sensibility included Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), Lawrence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1767), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie: or the New Heloise* (1767).[44] This phenomenon was not confined to Great Britain and France, as can be best seen in the popularity of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). As Samuel Johnson described, "[s]ensibility, or that frame of Mind, by which we have a quick and intimate feeling of every Object, the perception or contemplation of which is productive either of Pleasure or of Pain…The happy effects of this Quality; in the intellectual and moral World, are…exemplified

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[42] Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility,* xix.

[43] Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 281.

[44] For sensibility and the novel, see R. F. Brissenden, *Virtue in Distress: Studies in the Novel of Sentiment from Richardson to Sade* (London: Macmillan, 1974); Ann Jessie Van Sant, *Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel: The Senses in Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender, and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Mary Seidman Trouille, *Sexual Politics in the Enlightenment Women Writers Read Rousseau* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Ildiko Csengei, *Sympathy, Sensibility and the Literature of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

in the Character of a female Friend."[45] When feelings outweighed rational responses, sensibility could manifest into sentimentality. Sterne popularized the term "sentimental," or, "emotion-full," which proliferated in novels and popular serial publications.[46] The young woman of sensibility had to harness her emotional responses and limit sentimental outbursts to stave off accusations of a nervous disorder.[47]

Figure 1.1: John Raphael Smith, "Maria," 1774, Mezzotint on paper, Courtesy of the British Museum, 1981, U.590.

Relatives and loved ones could incite these feelings of sensibility through separation and estrangement. According to Sarah Pearsall, "sentimentalizing families was one way of coping

[45] Samuel Johnson, "Sensibility; a poem. Written in the year 1773," [London?], [1774?] *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, Gale. 9 Jan. 2015.

[46] See Figure 1.1 for a print depicting sentimentality in eighteenth-century England. A "Miss Carter" chose to be depicted engrossed in a novel as the character Maria from Lawrence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey Through France and Italy.* The choice to be depicted in the guise of a character from a sentimental novel demonstrates the popularity of both the works and the cultural appropriation for women in the eighteenth century. See http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1613759&partId=1&searchText=John+Raphael+Smith,+%25u201cMaria,%25u201d&page=1.

[47] Erin Wilson, "The End of Sensibility: The Nervous Body in the Early Nineteenth Century," *Literature and Medicine* 30 (2012): 280.

with the dislocations of the eighteenth century."[48] Pearsall's examination of families in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world demonstrates that sentimentality regarding families was one aspect of letter writing. She contends that mention of "loving attachments" in such correspondence was due to these letter writers' "seemingly imperiled status as a result of the many and frequent dislocations of an Atlantic world."[49] These long distances could be crossed through frequent letter writing that included sentimental language, which, although conventional for correspondence in the late eighteenth century, was heightened through Atlantic separations. Young women writing letters appropriated the form and language of the cult of sensibility, engaging with the world around them using these familiar methods.

[48] Pearsall, *Atlantic Families,* 7. See also Pearsall's "'Citizens of the World': Men, Women, and Country in the Age of Revolution," in *Old World, New World America and Europe in the Age of Jefferson*, edited by Leonard Sadosky (J. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

[49] Pearsall, *Atlantic Families,* 9.

To the Editor of the COLUMBIAN MAGAZINE.

SIR,

While you are amusing the public with engravings of various kinds, suppose you give the following *Circle of the social and benevolent Affections, in their usual Gradation and with their respective Names*, a place in your MAGAZINE.

From A. B.

Figure 1.2: "Circle of the Social and Benevolent Affections," in *Columbian Magazine* (3 February 1789), 109.

Not only did these women use sentimental language when describing their relations but also in reference to the goods exchanged between them and their loved ones across the Atlantic. As Lynn Festa argues in her recent publication concerning sentimentality in the British and French imperial worlds: "[t]he sentimental community upholds a common identity, not by forging bonds directly between seemingly like individuals, but by creating a shared relationship to a common but excluded object about which the community has feelings."[50] Therefore, these Atlantic communities sentimentalized objects not based on their material value, but for the "feelings" associated with them. These items were more than just mere clothing or decorative

[50] Lynn Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Britain and France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 4.

objects; they were concrete reminders of the person who acquired the goods for them. Recent studies of eighteenth-century families emphasize the aspects of sensibility that concern the relations between family members.[51] Although many current works have concentrated on the rise of sensibility and sentimentality in the broader eighteenth-century world, few have noted the role that material objects played in heightening this phenomenon.

Sensibility was also portrayed in printed images, which visualized the phenomenon already prevalent in novels, pamphlets, and letters. As seen in a depiction entitled "Circle of the Social and Benevolent Affections," from the *Columbian Magazine* in 1789, the "self" and self-love are encapsulated in the center of the depicted circle.[52] This shows a heart, labeled "self," surrounded by concentric circles, the first inscribed with "family." According to this depiction, self love "reflected" family. Sensibility began first with the self and one's family. The next geometric level included "public spirit" in the town. In this depiction, those nearest to you deserved your emotional attention. Very highly developed sentiments extended beyond family, friends, and neighbors, to include "patriotism." The next ring portrayed other Christians who did not practice the same way. "Nations of the Same Color" followed "Imperfect Christianity." The outermost circle was labeled "The Whole World." Those who did not practice the same religion, or possess one's own skin color, did not merit the same sentiment as did one's family and "township."

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[51] For the eighteenth-century family see: Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977); Naomi Tadmont, "The Concept of the Household-Family in Eighteenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 151 (1996): 111-40; Tadmont, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth-Century England: Household, Kinship, and Patronage* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2006).

[52] "Circle of the Social and Benevolent Affections," in *Columbian Magazine* (3 February 1789), 109. See Figure 1.2 for this image. For sensibility in the neighboring United States of America, see Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 104. The *Columbian Magazine* was a popular variety journal that circulated in Anglo-North America. Printed in Philadelphia, *The Columbian Magazine* became *Universal asylum & Columbian magazine* in 1791.

This correlates to the perception of sensibility present in the West Indies. As measured against this hierarchical structure, the white women in Jamaica did not have a high level of sensibility. Although their correspondence demonstrates their caring for their family and friends, they did not indicate caring for those whose skin color differed from themselves. As part of the British Empire, the goals of many white women in the West Indies was to participate in whatever colonial social life that was available and to appear to be a loving spouse and caring parent. However, many of their spouses preferred the company of black slave women, leaving these white women to participate in the British Empire in the only way they knew how. Many white women purchased or received fashions from London, and displayed British-made decorative objects to the admiration, and possible envy, of their creole compatriots.[53] These objects were not merely material goods, but indicators of their connection to the metropole.

This dissertation seeks to illuminate the lives of white women in the eighteenth-century British Atlantic World. By examining correspondences, diaries, journals, wills, and literary depictions, I will analyze both the perceptions and lived experiences of women who inhabited multiple spaces of empire. Chapter 1 will present an overview of women's lives in eighteenth-century Jamaica. I will then in Chapter 2 look at literary representations of Jamaica and sentimental novels concerning this "exotic" location. In order to compare the actual experiences of women to the depictions in novels, the next chapters will investigate various families who lived in Jamaica during the long eighteenth century.[54] The Brodbelt family will serve as my first familial study in Chapter 3. Although often separated by oceans, with family members in England, Scotland, Jamaica, and France, the Brodbelts remained close through letters and the

[53] See T. H. Breen, "The Meaning of Likeness: Portrait-Painting in an Eighteenth-Century Consumer Society," in Ellen G. Miles, ed., *The Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993): 37-59.

[54] By long eighteenth century, I mean 1688-1815, leaning more towards the latter years of the eighteenth century.

exchange of fashionable attire and material objects. In Chapter 4, I will examine the Cowper and Storrow families, who shared experiences as Loyalist families who relocated to Jamaica following the American War for Independence. The interchange of material goods and letters allowed these women to remain connected to the family and friends left behind in the newly-formed United States of America. I contend that elites and non-elites shared concerns for material possessions, and that sentimental longings for separated family members are evident. The writings of Sarah Dwarris in Chapter 5 will provide evidence concerning a non-elite perspective in the West Indies. The hazards of transit, far distances from family, and monetary shortages often rendered the consumption of material goods an unfulfilled desire. Even so, writings by Isabella King with her son indicate how a separated family remained close through the exchange of letters and tokens across the Atlantic. The desires, frustrations, and struggles of the middling and poorer families will be highlighted in Chapter 5.

The chapters on the Brodbelt, Dwarris, Cowper, and Storrow families will illuminate how these individuals used letters and material goods to retain familial connections in the late eighteenth century. In Chapter 6, I follow the continuation of this process into the early nineteenth century with Lady Maria Nugent and her experience in Jamaica. Chapter 6 will show how the wife of Governor Nugent wrote of her exchange of material goods not only to forge networks with distinguished familial members in England, but also to solidify political connections. The Peace of Amiens provided a motivation for Lady Nugent's exchanges with Pauline Bonaparte Leclerc. Additionally, Chapter 6 will consider the ways Nugent donned fashion from metropolitan centers in Europe to craft her identity as a member of the British imperial elite. She obtained and displayed British material objects to demonstrate her status as the first lady of Jamaica.

In conclusion, I will gauge the dissonance between the sentimental language regarding familial and friendship bonds to loved ones across the Atlantic, the endearment of goods that represented those loved ones, and the lack of sympathy towards the large slave population who populated the same colonial landscape that these white women inhabited. Women like Mary Ricketts loathed her sojourns to Jamaica, and dispatched sentimental letters to her family in England. However, sensibility extended only so far in this sugar plantation island. Although effusions of love and desire for friends and family permeated the correspondence of these individuals, the suffering of a large group of people did not seem to trouble these colonial inhabitants.

Recent studies on the British Empire have demonstrated the need for analysis of both the metropolitan center and the peripheries of empire. Although the rhetoric of the "great" British Empire seems to view solely on nineteenth-century successes, study of early failures is needed to understand the machinations of this later empire and to see how it learned from its early mistakes. Women's imperial experience included separation from loved ones and material possessions, and the desire to remain connected to the motherland. Therefore, in order to better comprehend the lives of these subjects, the things that were important to them must be examined. Furthermore, the need exists for archival research to explore the stories of the "small people" of the empire. This study seeks to flesh out the experience for a few women in the Caribbean island of Jamaica during the long eighteenth century to challenge the notion that these women were careless of family and only sought to satisfy their need for consumption. Rather, the objects they most treasured came from beloved individuals and became sentimentalized through this imperial experience.

CHAPTER 1

WOMEN IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY JAMAICA

Although women who found themselves in a new Jamaican landscape sought to emulate the mores of the metropole by embracing cultural elements of England; they always seemed to fall short of the English ideal. Since the British West Indies were part of a perceived New World exoticism, they retained a certain kind of "otherness" in contrast with "city on a hill" of the North American colonies.[1] This "otherness," perpetuated through satirical prints, travelogues, and popular publications, dominated metropolitan views of the women inhabiting these islands. Portrayed as voracious over-consumers who were ignorant of metropolitan mores, white women appeared to diverge from the genteel culture perceived to be present in Great Britain. This "exoticism" generated many negative stereotypes for white women who inhabited these sugar plantation islands. Debates concerning "Englishness" in colonial spaces resulted from the perceived variance from metropolitan norms.

According to travel narratives and literary representations, almost immediately after British women arrived in the tropical islands, their formerly proper conduct would deviate into insatiable lust, overconsumption, and cruel behavior towards subordinates. Travel narratives noted shifts in behavior and even biological progressions, which resulted in a new cultural identity for these colonists. Referring to such women as "creole," travel authors and other observers noted their differences from "British" standards.[2] Although these colonial inhabitants attempted to create a colonial identity, "seeking metropolitan acceptance as useful subjects of an extended British world," by the eighteenth century they were still not fully accepted as British

[1] Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 130.

[2] "Creole" refers to the blending of cultures and does not imply a racial designation. Those born in Jamaica were creole, but one could become "creole" through an extended stay in Jamaica. See my Introduction for more information concerning creolization.

subjects.[3] Metropolitan observers marginalized them, due to their contact with slavery and the hot climate.[4] These eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinkers believed that climate had a direct bearing on behavior, with tropical weather causing oversexualized tendencies.[5] As Felicity Nussbaum has explained, "torrid, temperate, and frigid zones of the globe were formative in imagining that a sexualized woman of empire was distinct from domestic English womanhood."[6] Therefore their behavior was perceived to transform the once respectable British citizens into the sinister "other," rendering them subject to a new identity, that of a creole West Indian. This chapter seeks to uncover the metropolitan perceptions of the West Indies from travel narratives and published satirical prints. These sources created a negative perception of women who resided in these tropical islands and their tendency towards overconsumption.

Many scholarly works are now reconstructing the lives of women in the Colonial United States with fascinating and influential results; however, the experiences of women in the West Indies are still underrepresented in colonial women's studies.[7] Even as scholars such as Natalie

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[3] Christer Petley, "'Home' and 'this Country': Britishness and Creole Identity in the Letters of a Transatlantic Slaveholder," *Atlantic Studies* 6 (2009): 43.

[4] Many eighteenth-century authors, including the French philosophe Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, and the Scottish philosopher David Hume, agreed on the insalubrious nature of extreme climates. William Falconer, an eighteenth-century British physician, noted in his *Remarks on the Influence of Climate* (London: Printed for C. Dilly, 1781) the negative effects of climate on behaviors. Lascivious behavior was almost expected in this sultry island, and the heat affected behavior and relation to their sensibility. Other travel narratives agreed with Long's conclusion. In the publication by C.S. Sonnini, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* (London: Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1799), Sonnini posited that in sultry tropical locations, "Severity of climate blunts sensibility, and but too often hardens the heart" (48). Therefore the contact with the climate left the inhabitants of Jamaica less sensitive to metropolitan mores, including sensibility. Additionally, with their hearts "hardened" they would be less sympathetic to the sufferings surrounding them in this harsh landscape.

[5] Eric Thomas Jennings, *Curing the Colonizers: Hydrotherapy, Climatology, and French Colonial Spas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 9. Jennings also illuminates how eighteenth-century authors believed that "[c]limate did more than affect the humours and sexuality. It was thought to lie at the very origin of behavioral and cultural differences–themselves grossly distorted to legitimize European dominance" (9). For more on the perceptions concerning climate and how it affected behavior, see Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000).

[6] Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 1995), 7.

[7] Early works that consider women in the Colonial United States include Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980); Linda K.

Zacek and Lucille Mair have begun to uncover the experiences of women in the eighteenth-century colonial West Indies, further investigation is needed to understand the lived experiences of these women more fully, particularly in the latter part of the long eighteenth century.[8] As historian Sarah Yeh demonstrates, during this era of instability, with slave uprisings and imperial wars, the metropolitan viewers saw the West Indies as "a realm of loose morals, broken families, and genders turned upside down."[9] Identities were more "multilayered and fluid," than they would become in the nineteenth-century British Empire; the eighteenth century was a period of greater flux.[10] Particularly after the loss of the North American colonies following the American War for Independence, the West Indies did not appear to be a stable site.

Luxury Debate and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century England

In the eighteenth century, a family with a strong patriarchal head, docile wife, and inquisitive yet well-behaved children represented the ideal British structure both at home and overseas.[11] However, the unusual family arrangements found in the colonies did not fit in to the

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Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 1980); Laurel Ulrich, *Good Wives: Image and Reality in the Lives of Women in Northern New England, 1650-1750* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991); Cornelia Hughes Dayton, *Women Before the Bar: Gender, Law, and Society in Connecticut, 1639-1789*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995; Norton, *Founding Mothers & Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1996); Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, 1996). Scholarly works that focus on women in the British West Indies include: Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (London: Heinemann Publishers, 1990); Hilary McD. Beckles, "Sex and Gender in the Historiography of Caribbean Slavery" in *Engendering History* ed. Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton and Barbara Bailey (London: James Currey Publishers; Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 1995); Verene A Shepherd, ed. *Women in Caribbean History: The British-Colonised Territories* (Kingston: I. Randle, 1999); Lucille Mathurin Mair, *A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica 1655-1844* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2006).

[8] Natalie A. Zacek. "Searching for the Invisible Woman: The Evolution of White Women's Experience in Britain's West Indian Colonies," *History Compass* 7 (2009): 329-41.

[9] Sarah E. Yeh, "'Sink of All Filthiness': Gender, Family and Identity in British Atlantic, 1688-1763," *The Historian* 68 (March 2006): 67.

[10] Yeh, 67.

[11] Karen Harvey, *The Little Republic: Masculinity and Domestic Authority in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

metropolitan-created value system.[12] Although the colonists attempted to create similar family life in the Caribbean islands, the lack of respectable women for marriage often made this an uphill battle. Jamaica dominated metropolitan observers' imagination of the Caribbean because of its sugar crops and the wealth and profits from that industry, which fascinated British minds.[13] The fortunes from the sugar plantations filled the minds of metropolitan observers, and colonial commodities sweetened food and beverages in British homes, ranging from the elite to middling as the century wore on.[14] Jamaica as a land of unimaginable prosperity demonstrated the possibilities of imperial expansion and trade for the British Empire, and its commodities found a welcome place in the appetites of metropolitan consumers.

Not surprisingly, not all British inhabitants welcomed the planters who returned to England after attaining their fortunes. The absentee planters returned to England armed with wealth; however, they inhabited a socially ambiguous position. The members of the West Indian plantocracy did not occupy a space in the traditional hierarchy of wealth in Great Britain.[15] Furthermore, their ostentatious displays of wealth rendered them subject to scrutiny in the metropole.[16] According to historian Lowell Ragatz, residents of London complained about the

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[12] This "value system" also faced contestation in metropolitan England. See Ingrid H. Tague, *Women of Quality: Accepting and Contesting Ideals of Femininity in England, 1690-1760* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2002); Kathleen M. Oliver, *Samuel Richardson, Dress, and Discourse* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire [England]: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[13] For general works on Colonial West Indies, see Introduction, n. 21.

[14] Troy Bickham, "Eating the Empire: Intersections of Food, Cookery and Imperialism in Eighteenth-Century Britain," *Past and Present* 198 (2008): 71-109.

[15] "Plantocracy" can also be termed "slavocracy." For more on this term and its deployments see, Mark James Steel, "Power, Prejudice and Profit: the World View of the Jamaican Slaveowning Elite, 1788-1834," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Liverpool, 1988).

[16] According to James Raven: "New ambitions provoked new hostilities," in *Judging New Wealth: Popular Publishing and Responses to Commerce in England, 1750-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 221. However, Raven proposes that West Indian fortunes were becoming less of a threat to the established wealth of Great Britain by the mid eighteenth century. New East India Company fortunes replaced that of the West Indian planters as sources of anxiety for unwanted attention.

congestion due to the absentee planters' numerous carriages during social gatherings.[17] Absentees conspicuously displayed their material wealth. For example, when arriving back in England after attaining his fortune in the Caribbean, one Nathaniel Phillips spent lavishly, purchasing all the accouterments of a landed British gentleman, and documenting his material acquisitions in his journal.[18] Another, possibly apocryphal, story emerged from this period that encapsulates the general opinion concerning absentee planters in England. The repetition of these accounts demonstrates that whether or not these stories were true, they still influenced the perceptions of West Indians in the metropole. Trelawny Wentworth's 1834 *A West India Sketch Book* recounted a report of King George III in Weymouth with William Pitt the Younger. On their journey, an "opulent Jamaica proprietor appeared there with the most splendid equipage, with out-riders, and livery that bespoke the rank of royalty." George III responded to this flamboyant display: "'Sugar, sugar, eh? – all *that* sugar!" He then reportedly turned to Pitt and inquired '"how are the duties, eh Pitt, how are the duties?"'[19] This anecdote demonstrates both the perception of the wealthy and spendthrift West Indian planter, and indicates the power of the West India lobby in crafting favorable trading conditions to ensure the prosperity of the planter class.[20] Although West Indian fortunes were becoming more accepted in the mid to late

[17] Lowell Ragatz, "Absentee Landlordism in the British Caribbean, 1750-1833," *Agricultural History* 5 (1931): 10-11. Ragatz discovered this story in the West India Committee Archives.

[18] Clare Taylor, "The Journal of an Absentee Proprietor, Nathaniel Phillips of Slebech," *Journal of Caribbean History* 18 (1984): 67-82.

[19] Trelawney Wentworth, *A West India Sketchbook* (London: Whittaker & Co., 1834), II: n. 70.

[20] The West India Lobby worked to ensure a generous balance for the West Indies and to advocate for the slave trade. Other West Indians also held offices, including William Beckford, who held the municipal office of lord mayor of London twice. According to *The Oxford Companion of Sugar and Sweets*, the "West India interest set new standards for political pressure tactics. They were organized, focused, and capitalized. They intermarried and allied themselves with the influential landed and mercantile interests" in *The Oxford Companion to Sugar and Sweets*, edited by Darra Goldstein et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 545. See also Eric Eustace Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1961); Keith McClelland, "Redefining the West India Interest: Politics and the Legacies of Slave-Ownership," in *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership: Colonial Slavery and the Formation of Victorian Britain*, edited by Catherine Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Slavery and the Politics of Place. Representing the Colonial Caribbean, 1770*-1833 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy's *An Empire Divided: The American*

eighteenth century, Horace Walpole still negatively remarked on the success of West Indian fortunes, and those from the East India Company in parliamentary elections: "West Indians, conquerors, nabobs and admirals attack every borough."[21] James Raven proposes that English observers gradually accepted West Indian fortunes, distinguishing them from those from the East India Company, since the income from the Caribbean derived from landed interests, which historically was in line with traditional sources of wealth in England.[22] Although the fortunes from the West Indies might have been slightly less odious than those from the East India Company, the planters from the Caribbean still faced contempt in the metropole.

The wealth that the West Indian planters received from their plantations in this outpost of empire, combined with the growth of a middle class in England, undermined the traditional social structure rooted in aristocratic values.[23] With the expansion of global trade, a new class of individuals emerged with wealth and aspirations to participate in this consumer revolution.[24] This polite and commercial group of individuals possessed both money and desire to purchase items from the commercial revolution occurring in Great Britain throughout the eighteenth century. Members of the Caribbean plantocracy desired to participate in elite society through the acquisition of luxury goods, which caused anxiety in eighteenth-century England.

Although they were not the only group who were censured for their consumption habits, the absentee planters seemed to characterize the societal concerns surrounding the acquisition of

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Revolution and the British Caribbean (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000) posits that one of the reasons the Caribbean islands to remained loyal to the British cause during the crisis that led to the American War for Independence was due to the West India Lobby's success in gaining their aims.

[21] Horace Walpole to Sir Horace Mann 3 March 1761, W. S. Lewis, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence* (New Haven, Conn., 1937-83), Electronic Version, http://www.library.yale.edu/walpole/collections/digital_collection_corr.html#bd. See also Raven, 222.

[22] Raven, 231.

[23] See especially Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); Paul Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[24] See John Brewer and Roy Porter, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

luxury goods.[25] Bernard Mandeville's *Fable of the Bees* characterized the luxury debate that loomed in print culture, with Mandeville advocating that these "private vices" of luxurious spending could be beneficial to the country.[26] England during this period of Enlightenment seemed to be at a loss regarding this new class of individuals who desired material goods, but did not have a traditional background to assert their right in this mercantile society. Although the plantocracy was a small percentage of the overall population participating in commerce and purchasing luxury goods, their perceived ostentation and means of deriving income gave them a larger share of criticism than the less conspicuous consumers. Many early-modern European states had sumptuary laws in place in order to curtail the spending of the lower classes on fashionable attire; however, the difficulty of enforcing these laws caused most restrictions in England to fall into disuse throughout the seventeenth century.[27] Although sumptuary laws were no longer enforced, the anxiety concerning luxury spending continued.[28] With an increase in options throughout the eighteenth century "commercial revolution," sartorial choices grew as well.[29] With the greater availability of goods, the choices signified degrees of taste and the

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[25] Women seemed particularly prone to criticism for consumption and spending during the consumer revolution. See also Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760* (London: Routledge, 1996); Marcia R. Pointon, *Strategies for Showing: Women, Possession, and Representation in English Visual Culture, 1665-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Jan De Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behavior and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[26] For more on the luxury debate, see Christopher Berry, "The Eighteenth-Century Debate," in *The Idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[27] Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires and Delectable Goods* (Houndmills, Balsingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave, 2003), 8. See also Negley Harte, "State Control of Dress and Social Change in Pre-industrial England," in D. C. Coleman and A. H. John, *Trade, Government, and Economy in Pre-industrial England* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1976), 132-165.

[28] James A. Harris, *The Oxford Handbook of British Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 586.

[29] Recent publications that examine fashion in England include Christopher Breward, Becky Conekin, and Caroline Cox, *The Englishness of English Dress* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002); Aileen Ribeiro, *The Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750 to 1820* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe, 1715-1789* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002). For work on fashion in Colonial America, see Kate Haulman, *The Politics of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Karin Calvert, "The Function of Fashion in Eighteenth-Century

ability to craft a fashionable ensemble. In newly-burgeoning colonial ventures, this debate seemed to represent the experience for these "upstarts" who had the money and desire to purchase commodities.

From the beginning of the colonial ventures in the Caribbean, women faced difficulties concerning the creation of a stable life. For the West Indian island of Jamaica, the commencement of this colonial endeavor did not necessarily indicate future commercial success. As part of a mission gone awry to capture Hispaniola, the English managed to wrest Jamaica from the hands of the Spanish.[30] Initially, like many colonial ventures, women did not immediately reside in the West Indies, and the lack of women worried the English leaders, including Oliver Cromwell. After the capture of Jamaica in 1655, Cromwell addressed the need for women. Without respectable women to marry, many believed that colonization would not entrench in these plantation islands. Cromwell suggested that the army "collect" one thousand young girls from Ireland for "breeding purposes." His proposal to Secretary Thurloe on September 1655 declared: "[C]oncerning the younge women, although we must use force in taking them up, yet it being so much for their own good and likely to be of soe great advantage to the publique…."[31] Thankfully, the Irish plan did not materialize, but this shows the lengths to which British officials considered going to ensure that white women crossed the Atlantic. Over time, white women slowly moved to the West Indies with their families and spouses, lessening

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America," in *Of Consuming Interests*; Linda Baumgarten, *What Clothes Reveal: The Language of Clothing in Colonial and Federal America: The Colonial Williamsburg Collection* (Williamsburg, Va.: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in association with Yale University Press, New Haven, 2002).

[30] Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: The Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 20.

[31] John Thurloe, *A Collection of State Papers of John Thurloe, Containing Authentic Memorial of the English Affairs from the Year 1638, to the Restoration of King Charles II* (London: Printed for the Executor of F. Gyles, 1742), 4: 23-24, qtd. in Mair, 20.

the gender gap.[32] By the mid eighteenth century, white plantation society was firmly rooted in the West Indies, and by the late eighteenth century, a creole society emerged in colonial Jamaica.[33] This creole society would base its lifestyle on metropolitan mores and societal customs, but would not be able to create a replica of the motherland in this peripheral locale. Rather, a hybrid, or creole society emerged. Scorned by British observers, the attempts of the colonial settlers at social emulation did not find metropolitan success.

Creole women, far from the watchful eyes of the mother country, did not seem to conform to ideas regarding feminine behavior as they were portrayed in both publications and societal expectations. In the sultry climate and through contact with slaves, these women's lifestyles differed from typical British standards.[34] Metropolitan observers believed that climate affected behavior, with the tropical weather rendering women more lascivious. Furthermore, many authors writing on feminine conduct in England were beginning to focus more on modesty. A new "ideology of national purity" was established in the eighteenth century, which created a discourse positioning the British women in opposition to the savage women inhabiting the colonial territories.[35] The colonial women who inhabited the West Indies fell in this middle group: neither British nor savage. British women in eighteenth-century writings were expected to be naturally chaste and modest. Those who did not live up to these principles of domesticity

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[32] According to Richard S. Dunn, in 1661, 2,458 men resided in Jamaica, and 454 women. By 1673, the population grew to 4,050 men and 2,006 women. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, 155.

[33] For creolization, see Trevor Burnard, *Creole Gentlemen: The Maryland Elite, 1691-1776* (New York; London: Routledge, 2002); Christer Petley, "'Home' and 'This Country': Britishness and Creole Identity in the Letters of a Transatlantic Slaveholder," *Atlantic Studies* 6 (2009): 43-61; Douglas F. Mann, "Becoming Creole: Material Life and Society in Eighteenth-Century Kingston, Jamaica," Ph.D. Diss., University of Georgia, 2005; David Lambert, *White Creole Culture, Politics, and Identity During the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

[34] See Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, *Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993) for a greater discussion about the cultural interchange between African slaves and the white plantation owners.

[35] Tague, *Women of Quality,* 30.

were, according to literary scholar Ingrid Tague, “unnatural, even monstrous.”[36] Also, the writers constructed an ideal woman, who created order in the home. Proper English women occupied the apex of the domestic sphere, as gentle consumers of goods that would create a perfect household.[37] These women practiced domestic propriety and were faithful stewards of their homes and finances. Gaining respectability through careful consumption and through arranging her domestic affairs, these women represented the ideal eighteenth-century wife and mother.[38] While creating order in their homes, they stood in opposition to the stories from the West Indies, where husbands lived in open infidelity with their black slaves; colonial wives appeared to be domestic failures. Since there was not an apparent “order” in their domestic sphere, the creole women did not fit into the “ideal woman” category. Since they did not live up to the categorized levels of virtue, they were open to ridicule and placed within the “rhetoric of trivial, even immoral,” and presumed to be concerned with “luxury and idleness,” which was a powerful criticism for eighteenth-century authors.[39] Therefore, women who inhabited the West Indies faced criticism as domestic failures for their inability to keep their husbands from sexually desiring their female subordinates, and were ridiculed for their apparent obsession with luxury. These same opinions characterized these women’s overconsumption of food present in the West Indies. The travel writings and caricatures portray women in the West Indies being overindulgent in relation to food, material goods, and fashion.

British women inhabiting the West Indies often censured their colonial compatriots. Mary Jervis Ricketts, wife of William Henry Ricketts, often wrote to her mother concerning society in

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[36] Tague., 44.

[37] Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 5. Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1998).

[38] Juliana Mansvelt, *Geographies of Consumption* (London: SAGE, 2005), 128.

[39] Tague, 161.

eighteenth-century Jamaica. She loathed life in the tropics and longed to return to England. In one letter she censured her husband's creole relatives. Mary particularly detested one woman whom she described in detail. In a 1760 letter, Mary wrote that "that wretch I call mother here" could "have no conception of her wickedness." She further explained:

> Because you never knew her fellow, I wish you to be [acquainted] with all particulars[.] [Y]ou would shudder with Horror at the Relation, however, is a great comfort that the poor gentleman has discovered her practices, as he never consults her in his affairs, nor has she now any influence in the disposition of his fortune, to other things he appears Blind, not knowing how to remedy the Evil without Proceeding to extremitys had he not a very Large fortune he cou'd not support her extravagance. She steals from him as much provision of every kind, & wearing apparel… at the same time she wou'd refuse me a Little Pepper or a yd of Tape, her usage of us is intolerable…[40]

Mary painted a picture of her husband's relative as exhibiting the depravities that seemed to characterize the creole women.

Furthermore, stories of white women owning slaves crossed the Atlantic to both shock and titillate the British audience. Mary Elbridge and Mary Travers, two slave owners in the West Indies, shed light on the experience of European women participating in this culture. In this "masculine" business, Mary Elbridge turned her husband's estate from decay into a profitable enterprise within a few years.[41] Mary Travers and Sarah Smith also participated in slave ownership in their own right.[42] Like many plantation owners, they were absentees who did not reside in Jamaica. One slave owner, Anna Eliza Elletson, inherited her husband's estate after his

[40] Mary Ricketts to "Dear Madam," 4 November 1760, 49/90/44/2, William Salt Library, Stafford. It appears that the "wretch I call Mother" was Mary Ricketts's father-in-law's wife.

[41] Yeh, 80. Papers regarding Mary Elbridge are housed in the Woolnough Family Papers at the Bristol Record Office. This correspondence between Elbridge and her deceased husband's family in Bristol displays her desire to retain the profitability of the familial land while residing in Jamaica. Elbridge did not shy away from participating in this plantation culture after her husband's death.

[42] Bill Book of Sarah Smith, National Library of Jamaica. These letters written from her agent in Jamaica tell of her ginger plantation and the management of her estate in Jamaica. Other collections concerning Smith include, Sarah Smith Papers, Staffordshire Record Office, Staffordshire, England. This collection shows how Smith participated in the transatlantic slave economy from her residence in Stafford. Through a network of agents and advisors, Smith carried on managing her plantation from abroad. Mary Travers wrote to Azariah Pinney seeking advice regarding her plantation efforts in the Caribbean islands of Antigua and Nevis. The letters are housed in the Pinney Papers at the University of Bristol.

death and relied on administrators in Jamaica for the supervision of the Hope Plantation.[43] Living as absentee owners in England, these women relied on overseers and corresponded with their agents in Jamaica in order to ensure the management of their estates. The women who owned slaves and resided in Jamaica offended European observers through their lack of metropolitan social propriety. Stories of women purchasing slaves themselves crossed all lines of social norms, because to do so would require the women to examine the genitals of their future slaves in the markets before finalizing their purchases.[44] Negative perceptions about women who lived in the West Indies intensified due to the combination of subjugation, overt sexuality, and an inversion of gender and social roles for proper British women. The British "genteel" did not approve of this gender inversion, especially since these female slave owners gained a reputation for meting out the harshest punishments, oftentimes themselves, which contradicted the new trend of sensibility in Britain.[45]

Perceptions of Women in the West Indies in Travel Literature

Men who visited these islands and published their adventures in the popular travel histories codified perceptions of women in the West Indies in publications. Travelogues provided one type of publication in which Europeans could read about the nature of these colonial women. For the most part, these travel narratives confirmed their suspicions about the effects of these

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[43] Hope-Elletson Papers, Huntington Library. Following the death of her husband, Anna Eliza Elletson wrote to the administrators telling them of his demise and her interest in the continuation of the estate under her management. For more on Elletson and Jamaica, see Linda L. Sturtz, "The 'Dimduke' and the Duchess of Chandos: Gender and Power in Jamaican Plantation Management –A Case Study or, A Different Story of 'A Man [and his wife] from a Place Called Hope,"' *Interamerican* 29 (1999).

[44] Hilary McD. Beckles, *Centering Woman: Gender Discourses in Caribbean Slave Society* (Kingston: Oxford: Ian Randle; James Currey, 1999), 61.

[45] Ibid., 81- 82. Yeh also sees the rising of the culture of sensibility following the "reformation of manners" in the seventeenth century. This culture clashed with the harsh world of slavery in the Caribbean. For an example of a harsh slave owner, see *The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave. Related by Herself. With a Supplement by the Editor. To Which Is Added, the Narrative of Asa-Asa, a Captured African* (London: Published by F. Westley and A. H. Davis, Stationers' Hall Court, 1833). According to John Stewart, "Nothing was more common formerly than for white mistresses not only to order their slaves to be punished, but personally to see that the punishment was duly inflicted." *A view of the past and present state of the Island of Jamaica* (Edinburgh: Published by Oliver & Boyd, 1823), 172.

insalubrious influences on the susceptible women. Furthermore, tales of debauchery, overconsumption, overt sexuality, infidelity, and miscegenation chilled the hearts of the European readers. Especially in the mid eighteenth century, when sensibility characterized the genteel British lady, the stories of West Indian voracious consumption and insensibility demonstrated the hazards of trans-Atlantic relocation. Travel writings by men who visited the Caribbean fulfilled the desires of British readers who were curious about the lives of the individuals who inhabited the West Indies. Travel histories were one of the most popular literary forms in the eighteenth century. Seemingly more edifying than novels, they provided both "pleasure" and "instruction" for their readership.[46] The authors described exotic locations and the people inhabiting these various locales by employing these two themes. Therefore they could provide enjoyment for the readers while remaining informative. Although these descriptions did not provide a complete illustration of the entire white population, they still had weight in creating stereotypes of the women who inhabited the plantations in the Caribbean.

Combined with the stories about the women slave owners, travel narratives provided a published means by which cultural and gender prejudices were disseminated to the literate European population. Comparing these authors' opinions on creole white women illuminates the common trends within the travelogue discourses on the perceptions of the West Indian women. Travel narratives, including Edward Long's *History of Jamaica* (1774) and J. B. Moreton's *West India Customs and Manners* (1793), informed European readers about women in Jamaica.[47] A wide spectrum of publications quoted these histories, which confirmed their authority for Europeans and thereby shaped public views and opinions on the "exotic" Caribbean. These

[46] Charles L. Batten, *Pleasurable Instruction* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 25.

[47] Other travel histories include Bryan Edwards, *The History Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (London: Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1801); William Beckford, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica* (London: T. and J. Egerton, 1790).

perceptions continued to influence the researchers of the history of the West Indies even into the next century. Male-authored works dominated the perceptions of creole life in eighteenth-century Jamaica while purporting to provide unbiased accounts of noteworthy locations. These writings portrayed white women in the Caribbean as voracious consumers of material goods who were committed to overindulgence in the sugar plantation island landscape.

J. B. Moreton's 1793 publication *West India Customs and Manners* represented creole women as sexually charged and negatively influenced by their encounters with slave women and the hot climate.[48] Moreton's larger agenda included articulating the evils of slavery. By depicting the creole white women in this derogatory fashion, he displayed the effects of slavery on the white populace. Although the creoles sent to England met his approval in manners, the same could not be said for those who remained on the island. Moreton disdained the custom of "those who receive their education amongst negroe women, and imbibe great part of their dialect, principles, manners and customs."[49] Creole women were an oddity to him; at first they had the appearance of beauty and style, but on closer examination they repulsed him with their vulgar conduct. However, Moreton allowed that "creole ladies, who have been properly educated and polished in England from their infancy in polite schools" were "no doubt, as prudent, chaste, and fine women as any in the world, save only what difference of climate produces."[50] Like other authors, Moreton contended that the propensity still remained for improper behavior, even in the women who had had the finest education, through their contact with the hot climate.

[48] For a larger examination of travel narratives and their correlation to the creation of a stereotype for creole women in the long eighteenth century, see Chloe Northrop, "From Stereotype to Caricature: White Women in the British West Indies," M.A. Thesis, University of North Texas, 2010.

[49] J. B. Moreton, *West India Customs and Manners: Containing Strictures on the Soil, Cultivation, Produce, Trade, Officers, and Inhabitants: with the Method of Establishing, and Conducting a Sugar Plantation. To Which Is Added, the Practice of Training New Slaves. By J.B. Moreton, Esq. A New Edition* (London: Printed for J. Parsons; W. Richardson; H. Gardner; and J. Walter, 1793), 121.

[50] Ibid., 107.

Moreton believed that no matter how fine and refined the white women in the Caribbean appeared, their nature caused them to revert back to local traditions and slave-like speech and behavior once they left the polished culture of England. Those who remained in "Jamaica from their infancy, are soft, innocent, ambitious, flirting play-things."[51] He was also shocked at their behavior in their own homes and found "if you surprise them…instead of the well-shaped, mild, angelic looking creature… you will find, perhaps, a clumsy, greasy sofa, in a dirty confused hall, or piazza, with a parcel of black wenches, learning and singing obscene and filthy songs, and dancing to the tunes."[52] He viewed this contact with slaves as corrupting for the young creole women. The slave women supposedly taught these girls the arts of seduction, and other crude behavior that shocked Moreton. He recounted a saying about these young girls: "Creole miss when scarcely ten: Cock their eyes and long for men."[53] Such stories would have shocked readers when this publication reached its audience at the close of the eighteenth century. The corruption of the black women was compounded by the lack of religion in the West Indies. According to Moreton, creoles hardly went to church and were instead taught "jilting, intrigues, and scenes of obscenity."[54] These statements did not bode well for their reputations in England, which had undergone a "Reformation of Manners" movement in the late seventeenth century. Yeh affirms that this creole culture "clashed with changing sensibilities across the Atlantic," due to the "violent and overtly sexual surroundings" of the creole white women.[55] This rise of politeness and manners that attempted to rid England of vices conflicted with the reports of the transgressions present in the British West Indies.

[51] Ibid., 108.
[52] Ibid., 108-109.
[53] Ibid., 109.
[54] Ibid., 111.
[55] Yeh., 82.

To bolster his argument, Moreton described a personal encounter with a creole family. He recounted meeting a widow with two daughters who invited men to inspect "Miss Louisa" and "Miss Laura" for marriage. The young girls were "gaudy and elegantly dressed, and extremely tight-laced; their cheeks had been artfully scorched with red peppers which gave them beautiful blushes."[56] Moreton noted the peculiarity of their speech: after asking Miss Louisa if she would like some turkey, she answered "tank you sir, wid all my hawt."[57] He attributed their speech to the influence of country manners and encounters with the slaves. After dinner they took a walk; after the women loosened their stays, the author and one of the daughters "went intentionally astray."[58] He was not above paying attention to these girls and enjoyed their company, but his regard was for their appearance, and not for their comportment. He also noted their attire was "gaudy and elegant," rather than respectable or tasteful. Furthermore, their false blushes due to the peppers masked their indelicacy, as they were immodest, and one of the girls was willing to allow Moreton to take advantage of her "loose stays."

Male travel writers viewed creole women neither as chaste nor as virtuous as the British women who visited the islands. They presented British women as refined, and yet susceptible to the location and climate, which could influence them to become lascivious as the creole women were. Moreton himself obliged some women in the country to "please their inclinations."[59] He engaged in activity with them only because they were predisposed to enjoy male company, and it was his duty to learn and participate in their local traditions. This did not lead him to withhold judgment on a neighboring woman in a compromising situation. Moreton recounted the story of one creole woman whose husband found her "in a situation which I shall not mention" with a

[56] Moreton, 114.
[57] Ibid., 118.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 110.

"captain of war." The cuckolded husband found that his wife had had "criminal connections with the marine hero," as well as "with merchants, planters, and clerks," and had left letters and journals of her exploits.[60] This story resonated with the scandal caused by Elizabeth Manning, which was notorious in the West Indies in the eighteenth century. She ran away with a high-ranking creole planter, and when her husband initiated divorce proceedings, her white maid eternally ruined Manning's name by declaring that Manning had relations with a man of African descent.[61] The stories of adultery and "criminal conversation" surely reached England through sources like *West Indian Customs and Manners*, showing that the young creoles' encounters with slaves and climate had ruined them, even as adults in marriage.

Moreton excused their mistakes by blaming the colonial system. The author tried to put their lack of proper behavior in perspective: "Not withstanding the little foibles of creole women, they have many good qualifications, and are vastly better than men."[62] He rebuked the creole men for their excessive drinking and gambling. Even though the creole women were not flawless in their protocol, he noted their kindness and good looks. But even though he acknowledged their "good qualifications," he still mentioned their sexually forward behavior. The speech and manners of the creole women were altered through the influence of the slave women and the negative effects of climate. Moreton provided the most stinging criticism for the creole women, yet he did not completely censure their characters. Putting the responsibility on the structure of slavery and lack of education, he chastised the plantation culture. This plantocracy produced a

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[60] Ibid.,108.

[61] Trevor Burnard, "'A Matron in Rank, A Prostitute in Manners:' the Manning Divorce of 1741 and Class, Gender, Race and the Law in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica," in *Working Slavery, Pricing Freedom: Perspectives from the Caribbean, Africa and the African Diaspora*, ed. Verene A. Shepherd (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 133-153.

[62] Moreton, 110.

group of women who did not fit in with the English ladies, yet were not plantation workers either. He marveled at their behavior and treated it as if they were foreigners and not British subjects.

Like Moreton, Edward Long sought to illuminate life and customs in the Caribbean. Long's *History of Jamaica* is one of the most important and enduring works on creole plantation life produced during this period. Long had many connections with the West Indies, particularly Jamaica. He was the descendant of West Indian planters, and his brother-in-law Sir Henry Moore was Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica.[63] Long spent many years in Jamaica writing this work, which achieved the most comprehensive, albeit rather biased and racist. view of the colony and continues to be a standard in this field. Long created this work through his extensive notes, records from England, and his own personal experience from living in Jamaica.[64]

Long's work details many aspects of life in the Caribbean including, diet, fashion, botanical information, and descriptions of the inhabitants in this valuable English possession. Although Long wrote positively concerning creole women, he still admonished them in small matters: "Few are more irreproachable in their actions than the Creole women: they err more in trivial follies, and caprices unrestrained, than in the guilt of real vice."[65] According to Long, they were unrestrained due to indulgent parents and often a lack of education in manners. He also remarked on their "vanity and pride" that were left unchecked in childhood, which would lead to a temper to frighten away even the most obliging of spouses "whose misfortune it may be to be linked in the nuptial bonds with such a temper."[66] However, overall these were trivial follies, for example gossiping and vanity, and not the great social detriments that seem to embody the views

[63] "Long, Edward (1734–1813)," Kenneth Morgan in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., eee ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2014, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16964 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[64] Morgan, "Long, Edward (1734–1813)."

[65] Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica: Or, General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of the Island: With Reflections on its Situation Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government* (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), 2: 283.

[66] Ibid., 283-284.

of the English population towards the British West Indians. He advised the women with the recommendation: "To please the eye, requires only the skill of a common mercenary harlot; but to captivate the heart, and charm the mind, a woman must divert herself, a soon as possible, of gross ignorance (that softer-mother of pride), silly prattle, and conceited airs."[67] He believed that they had the potential to become typical well-bred English women and so deplored that "such excellent talents should lie waste, or misemployed, which require only cultivation to make them shine out with dignity and elegance."[68] Long desired that the creole women separate themselves by cultivating refined manners and education through reading in order to place themselves socially and educationally above their sexual competition. The author concluded his remarks on the creole women: "To sum up the character of the Jamaica ladies, I shall conclude with this remark; that, considering the very great defects in their education, and other local disadvantages, their virtues and merits seem justly entitled to our highest encomium; and their frailties and failings to our mildest censure."[69] Long found less to criticize in the creole women than other authors, but his thoughts produced lasting notions on the character of these women, including their conduct, social customs, and lack of education.

Food and Feasting in the West Indies

Long also detailed the creole dietary habits, which demonstrated the unfamiliar customs prevalent in the West Indies. European travelers linked consumption to behavior, the better to describe and portray white creoles inhabitants in the West Indies negatively. Long famously depicted creole life in the West Indies for creole women, remarking how he found them at lunch "employed in gobbling pepper-pot, seated on the floor, with her sable hand-maids around her."[70]

[67] Ibid., 284.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 286.
[70] Long, 279.

Pepper-pot originated from an African dish and became a creole staple when transplanted to the West Indies. Long censured the creole women for both poor manners and the ingestion of transcultured fare. Not only did these aspects seem to affect behavior, but physical well-being as well. Long was only one of many observers of creole feasts in this tropical location, which became a topic of both wonder and censure. According to historian Larry Dale Gragg, the West Indian plantocracy attempted to enact a genteel lifestyle through a shared meal, a notion based on hospitality similar to British mores.[71] Recently Christer Petley has demonstrated the solidarity of the Jamaican plantocracy through shared meals.[72] These creole whites participated in large feasts with copious amounts of food and drink. However, the adaptation in food from the standard British fare to the exotic West Indian dishes showed a shift from the established norms in the metropole.[73] The large feasts given by the Jamaican plantocracy displayed their wealth, but also their inclination towards overconsumption. This aspect of the performance of wealth through the sharing of food by non-aristocratic affluent white individuals supports Troy Bickham statement

[71] Larry Dale Gragg, *Englishmen Transplanted: The English Colonization of Barbados, 1627-1660*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 176. Gragg states: "As eagerly as they sought to recreate the family lives they had known in England, Barbados planters also embraced a hospitable lifestyle, similar to that of the Stuart gentry. They enjoyed amiable large gatherings and good food and drink, but they invested in this congeniality and friendship not only to display their generosity but also to enhance their standing and demonstrate their wealth and power. Entertaining helped planters lay claim to their place in the social order" (176).

[72] Christer Petley, "Gluttony, excess, and the fall of the planter class in the British Caribbean" *Atlantic Studies*, 9 (2012): 85-106. See also Carole Shammas, "Food Expenditures and Economic Well-Being in Early Modern England," *Journal of Economic History* 43 (1983): 90; S.D. Smith, "Sugar's Poor Relation: Coffee Planting in the British West Indies, 1720-1833," *Slavery and Abolition* 19 (1998): 68-89; Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Kay Dian Kriz, "Curiosities, Commodities, and Transplanted Bodies in Hans Sloane's 'Natural History of Jamaica,'" *The William and Mary Quarterly* 57 (2000): 35-78. For dining on turtle in eighteenth-century London, see Holger Hoock, "From Beefsteak to Turtle: Artists' Dinner Culture in Eighteenth-Century London," *The Huntington Library Quarterly* 66 (2003): 27-54.

[73] Richard Warner focused on this subject in his *Antiquitates Culinariae; or Curious Tracts Relating to the Culinary Affairs of the Old English, with a Preliminary Discourse* (London: Printed for R. Blamire, 1791). In his *Antiquitates Culinariae* he argued the British culinary traditions had "exchanged the barbaric magnificence, for simple elegance" (57). He further described that "substantial comfort" had replaced "unmeaning pomp," in feasts (57). Finally, he reported that "ill-judged hospitality," had gone out of style "for active industry, which enables the larger part of the community to live independent of the precarious bounty of the great; and undiscriminating charity…. which amply provide for the children of poverty and distress" (57). These statements, from the late eighteenth century, show that the prevailing notions towards discrimination and taste in England did not reach the West Indian displays of abundance. See also Sandra Sherman, "Gastronomic History in Eighteenth-Century England," *Prose Studies* 26 (2003): 395-419.

that “novelty, quality, presentation and preparation of food became expected ways of displaying wealth and taste amongst the middling and elite ranks…eating was a public performance.”[74] In the eighteenth century, white families in the West Indies attempted to display their wealth and sociability through opulent meals. However, European observers noted both the excess and the

Figure 2.1: J. F., “A West India Sportsman,” London: William Holland, 1807, Courtesy of the British Museum, 1877,0811.206.

lack of decorum present in these creole feasts. Rather than genteel hospitality, overindulgence characterized the white creole populace in both travel writings and satirical prints.

Visual representations coupled with the written descriptions in the travel narratives rendered the creoles comical, and ridiculous figures. In the satirical print, “A West India Sportsman,” by William Holland (Figure 2.1), a planter gentleman is seen lounging in his estate. The loaded table contained a feast of fish, a side of meat, and a suckling pig, all accompanied by an African slave fanning away pests. Shaded by another slave, both full and empty bottles of liquor litter the ground around the resting white creole. These beverages included royal punch,

[74] Bickham, “Eating the Empire,” 79.

sangaree, brandy, and rum, ranging in size from five to ten gallons.[75] Another slave carried a large fortified beverage to him, depicting the laziness and overindulgence that were seen to characterize the creoles who inhabited the West Indies. The excessive dining habits of the creole population illustrated a shift from the new views in Britain on "respectability." According to Woodruff Smith, in the early eighteenth century, lineage determined "gentility." However, throughout the eighteenth century, "respectability" replaced "gentility" in importance. According to Smith, the British emphasized "moderation" and "individual self-control."[76] Since the white creoles did not bother to moderate their intake of food and beverages, European observers did not view them as respectable. Furthermore, creoles were also chastised for gluttony. As one of the "seven deadly sins," the glutton showed immorality through excessive ingestion. Sara Pennell argues that eighteenth century "regimen texts counseled modest intake…to sustain corporeal equilibrium."[77] Therefore the opulent feasts of the white creole population did not follow the protocol of respectability and morality valued in the metropole. Furthermore, the "culinary adaptation" of prepared foods, due to the influence of slaves, showed a further shift from established norms in Britain.

Lady Maria Nugent, wife of Lieutenant-Governor George Nugent, lived in Jamaica from 1801-1804. Nugent observed white creoles not for hereditary wealth, but rather for their behavior and manners. She recorded her dining experiences in her journal, which remains one of the most illuminating sources about the consumption of food in Jamaica during this period. As an outside

[75] For more on this print, see http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1470585&partId=1&searchText=west+india+sportsman&page=1.

[76] Woodruff D. Smith, "Complications of the Commonplace: Tea, Sugar, and Imperialism," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 23 (1992): 276.

[77] Sara Pennell, "The Material Culture of Food in Early Modern England, Circa 1650-1750," Thesis (D. Phil.), Oxford University, 1997, 232-233.

observer, the displays and feasts she attended struck her with both awe and disgust. After one opulent dinner she observed:

> I do not wonder now at the fever the people suffer from here –such eating and drinking I never saw! Such loads of all sorts of high, rich, and seasoned things, and really gallons of wine and mixed liquors as they drink! I observed some of the party today eat of late breakfasts, as if they had never eaten before: a dish of tea, another of coffee, a bumper of claret, another large one of hock-negus; then Madeira, sangaree, hot and cold meat, stews and fries, hot and cold fish pickled and plain, peppers, ginger sweet-meats, acid fruit, sweet jellies, in short, it was all as astonishing as it was disgusting.[78]

During her tours of the Jamaican plantations, Nugent often remarked on her fatigue from the amount of food and number of meals her duty required her to attend.

The culinary integration in this West Indian feast demonstrates how transnational networks affected the white colonists. The white creoles were no longer strictly European in diet, and therefore open to criticism for being a non-European "other." If their consumption resembled that of the free and enslaved black population, their behavior and decorum might show delineation from the established norms as well. According to Kathleen Wilson, these customs included: "drinking 'Spanish' chocolate and sangria; using African 'chewsticks' to clean their teeth; eating quantities of turtle, which was believed to contribute to white Creoles' 'yellowish' complexions; and sleeping in hammocks, a custom borrowed from the Indians."[79] The use of foreign goods showed that Jamaica was not strictly "British" but more of what Wilson calls a "hybridized outpost of empire."[80] Their love of dancing with abandon at their balls seemed to further confirm their deviation from metropolitan standards of behavior.[81] This rendered the colonists subject to scrutiny in travel narratives for their deviation from the normative culture in

[78] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago: Reprinted from a Journal Kept by Maria, Lady Nugent, from 1801 to 1815,* ed. Frank Cundall (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by A. & C. Black, 1907), 78.
[79] Ibid., 147-148.
[80] Wilson, 147.
[81] See Figure 2.4 for a visual representation of this phenomenon.

England. Yet English popular consumer goods were not strictly British either; for instance, the taking of tea. In the hot climate of the West Indies, creole women did not take their tea "boiling hot," as custom in England dictated. The creoles would let their tea cool and then drink it: "the Creole ladies sip their tea till it cools to about milk-warmth."[82] Even tea-drinking, that most central of British customs, was tainted by the creolization process; the creoles demonstrated an overall preference for drinking the New World product, chocolate, rather than the beloved English beverage, tea.[83] Tea was an imported luxury good imported to England from India and China, yet had become part of the British identity, and the departure from the strict performative aspect of tea taking showed that the creoles were not maintaining their heritage. Tea drinking in Britain had been in vogue since the early 1700s, taken with sugar, the West Indian plantation product. It began as an international novelty associated with gentility and luxury, but its popularity waned until the addition of sugar. Since the British added sugar from their colonies, this made the product appear more national.[84] Therefore, the creolization of their beverage of tea in the West Indies was taken as an affront, since it seemed to deviate from the normative performance of tea in British society.

Another European observer noted the overconsumption of food and beverage in the West Indies and published his observations for a curious European audience. Frederick Bayley, an Irish newspaper editor, accompanied his father to Barbados and other West Indian locations for four years in the early nineteenth century.[85] Upon his return to Great Britain, Bayley published

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[82] Long, 273.

[83] Ibid., 271.

[84] Woodruff D. Smith, *Consumption and the Making of Respectability: 1600-1800* (New York: Routledge 2002), 122-123.

[85] For Baylay's life and career see, "Bayley, Frederick William Naylor (1808–1852)," H. C. G. Matthew in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2007, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1750 (accessed July 17, 2015).

his experiences in *Four Years in Residence in the West Indies* (1830).[86] Bayley described the delight and splendor of creole food in his chapter entitled "Eating and Drinking." In this section, Bayley enticed the readers with descriptions of the edible delights found in Barbados. "I have eaten of the best soup, and drunk of the best wines," he reported, "I have dined with the wealthiest, and danced with the fairest creoles."[87] Using colorful descriptions, the Irish author depicted life in the West Indies: "Reader, it is not love, nor hatred, nor jealousy; it is not wealth, nor fame, nor ambition, but it is more necessary, more indispensable than these: it is eating! eating! eating!"[88] Collective dining characterized the West Indian experience for this traveler. Unlike Nugent, Bayley enjoyed his meals and appreciated creoles' love of feasting.

European standards of behavior underwent a shift during the eighteenth century, which according to Rebecca Spang, included equating "taste with virtue."[89] Women were expected to display their good taste through eating abstemiously in public. Nugent, however, remarked that the women only maintained moderation when in mixed company. When they were alone, the women would partake as much as the men. When Nugent lunched with a group of local ladies, a Mrs. Cox started "with fish, of which she ate plentifully, all swimming in oil. Then cold veal, with the same sauce!! Then tarts, cakes, and fruit. All the other ladies did the same, changing their plates, drinking wine…as if it were dinner."[90] Nugent noted that the ladies consumed parsimoniously in the evening at dinner; however, their lack of "proper manners" did not escape Nugent's watchful eye. Determining that women indulged more when men were not present,

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[86] F. W. N. Bayley, *Four Years' Residence in the West Indies* (London: W. Kidd, 1830).
[87] Bayley, 144.
[88] Ibid., 146.
[89] Rebecca Spang, *The Invention of the Restaurant: Paris and Modern Gastronomic Culture* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000), 91.
[90] Nugent, 106.

Nugent viewed the overabundance of food as having a direct effect not only on the manners of the creole women, but also on the poor health of the creole men.

Metropolitan visitors frequently wrote on the general ill-health of the creole white men in Jamaica. They attributed this affliction to food and alcohol overconsumption. Spang argues that in the eighteenth century "experts insisted that overeating and the careless consumption of stimulants could have almost immediate effects on mental, as well as physical health."[91] Eliza Fenwick, a British educator, joined her daughter Elizabeth in Barbados to establish a local school in the late eighteenth century. She commented on the effects of alcohol on the creole male inhabitants. According to Fenwick, "Nothing is so common here as old ladies of from 80 to 100 years of age. The men shorten their period by intemperance and sensuality."[92] In Fenwick's observation, the women's overconsumption of food did not lead to long-term deleterious effects. Fenwick's own son Orlando began to mix his water "with a very small portion of rum," following the style of white men in the Caribbean. Fenwick soon observed that the "heat induced thirst, and in the hurry occasioned by his business, his quantity could not always be measured with due restriction."[93] This led Fenwick to worry that her son, like her West Indian son-in-law a Mr. Rutherford, would succumb to alcoholism. Shortly after Fenwick's arrival, Mr. Rutherford abandoned Fenwick's daughter, Elizabeth, while she was still recovering from the birth of her fourth child. Fenwick observed that creole men suffered from both debt and overuse of alcohol, rendering them deplorable creatures like the drunkard Mr. Rutherford who deserted his family.[94]

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[91] Spang, 37.

[92] E., Fenwick, Mary Hays, and A. F. Wedd. *The Fate of the Fenwicks; Letters to Mary Hays* (1798-1828) (London: Methuen, 1927), 171.

[93] Ibid., 173.

[94] Sadly, Fenwick's fear for her son were realized as he succumbed to yellow fever in 1816. See also "Fenwick, Eliza (1766?–1840)," Marilyn L. Brooks in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37413 (accessed July 17, 2015).

Creole gentlemen indulged not only in abuse of alcohol, but in overeating as well. Nugent validated this belief by recording the ill health of the white creoles due to voracious dining. At one dinner she was "pressed to taste of so many things that it was scarcely possible to avoid being stuffed into a fever."[95] Although Nugent attempted to regulate her intake, she did not view the same efforts of moderation with the creole gentlemen. Nugent observed at Mrs. C. Eillis's Estate in Fort George, "there was wine, biscuit, &c. prepared for us…[and] although the gentlemen of our party had all eaten and drank at Fort Brunswick, they did the same here, and I am sure so much eating injures the health of many of them. General N[ugent] and I touched nothing at either place."[96] Nugent and her husband sensed the need to abstain from overeating, whereas the local creoles were prone to excess. A week later in Seville, Nugent concluded: "I am not astonished at the general ill health of the men in this country, for they really eat like cormorants and drink like porpoises."[97] Nugent censured the creoles further on the conclusion of her tour. On April 24, 1802, after two months of traveling Jamaica, Nugent returned to the Government Pen.[98] The country estate was the last stop before returning to the Jamaican capital, Spanish Town. Nugent surmised her view on the island inhabitants: "It is extraordinary to witness the immediate effect that the climate and habit of living in this country have upon the minds and manners of Europeans…in the upper ranks they become indolent and inactive, regardless of everything but eating, drinking, and indulging themselves."[99] Nugent was not alone in her scrutiny of the white creoles. The habits of immoderation, particularly food and drink, opened the white population to censure.

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[95] Nugent, 119.
[96] Ibid., 103-104.
[97] Ibid., 108.
[98] "Pen" denoted a rural farm or residence in the British West Indies.
[99] Nugent, 131.

Europeans' attention to the consumption of food in the West Indies demonstrates the importance of cross-culturalization in the colonial world. When Europeans dined in the West Indies, they immediately observed the differences from the meals in the metropole. Although the creoles attempted to demonstrate British hospitality through collective dining, they did not follow the decorum present in England. This confirms Caribbean historian Richard S. Dunn's observation that for all the creole's "*nouveau riche* pursuit of English genteel standards, the sugar planters lived like no Englishmen at home."[100] Food and overconsumption characterized one aspect of the difference from the inhabitants in the metropole, so creole whites ultimately displayed their "creolization" and not their gentility. Their lifestyles demonstrated the "boom-and-bust way of life" so noted by English observers. The meals displayed the abundance of exotic foods available in the sugar islands, but also portrayed the synthesis of the meals and the use of foods, flavors, and techniques from the African populations, including the enslaved population and the Maroons.[101] Although the creoles attempted to create a hospitable atmosphere for visitors, their overindulgence led to scrutiny for their transcultured lifestyle and demonstrated their divergence from metropolitan mores.

Fashion in the Tropics

One aspect that the women in Jamaica did not initially want to "creolize" seemed to be British fashion. Long's 1774 account censured the fashion adherents in Jamaica for their strict

[100] Richard S. Dunn, "The English Sugar Islands and the Founding of South Carolina," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 101 (April 2000): 153.

[101] The "Maroons" were runaway slaves who gained their freedom by forming communities in mountains and caves. Although they were autonomous and assisted in the capture of newly escaped slaves, encroachment on their land led to a revolt in 1795. Local Jamaican whites approved of the swift action by the Governor, Alexander Lindsay, Lord Balcarras, against the rebelling maroons in Trelawney. The slave revolt ended in 1796, but not without great alarm to the white planters. For more on the Maroon population, see Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca [N.Y.]: Cornell University Press, 1982); Richard Sheridan, "The Maroons of Jamaica, 1730-1830: Livelihood, Demography, and Health," in *Out of the House of Bondage: Runaways, Resistance and Marronage in Africa and the New World* ed. by Gad J. Heuman, 152-172 (London: Cass, 1986); Mavis Christine Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796: A History of Resistance, Collaboration & Betrayal* (Granby, Mass: Bergin & Garvey, 1988).

devotion to the mode from London.[102] He observed that these devotees did "not scruple to wear the thickest winter silks and satins; and are sometimes ready to sink under the weight of right gold or silver brocades."[103] Gold and silver brocades represented some of the most expensive fabric, and although often reserved for court dresses, according to Long's account these textiles made appearances in Jamaica.[104] They did not only don the latest apparel, but strove to emulate fashionable accessories as well. According to Long: "Their head-dress varies with the *ton* at home; the winter fashions of *London* arrive here at the setting in of hot weather; and thick or thin caps, large as an umbrella, or as diminutive as a half crown piece, are indiscriminately put on, without the smallest regard to the difference of the climate."[105] Long's readers undoubtedly scoffed at the level of commitment these inhabitants of the tropical island maintained. Even their hairstyles found space in his scathing review: "nay, the late preposterous mode of dressing female hair in London, half a yard in perpendicular height, fastened with some score of heavy iron pins, on a bundle of wool large enough to stuff a chair bottom, together with pounds of powder and pomatum, did not escape their ready imitation."[106] Although his opinion on their attire indicated his incredulous censure, he complimented the women on their prudence with regard to accessories: "The richness of their dress does not consist, as with the English ladies, in a multitude of things piled one upon another; but in the finest linen, laces, and jewels, so despoiled as to add very little to inconvenience, and produce the most ornamental effect."[107]

[102] Long, 522.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ribeiro, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe, 1715-1789*, 38. For brocade fabric in eighteenth-century Europe, see Evelyn Svec, "An Eighteenth-Century Brocade," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 38 (1951): 229-230.
[105] Long, 522. For an analysis of an anecdote revolving around women and fashion from Barbados in the eighteenth century, see Erin Mackie, "Cultural Cross-Dressing: The Color Case of the Caribbean Creole," in *The Clothes That Wear Us: Essays on Dressing and Transgressing in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, edited by Jessica Munns and Penny Richards (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999): 250-270.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid.

After his small words of complimentary remarks on their accessorizing abilities, he continued his reproach: "Nothing surely can be more preposterous, and absurd, than for [a] person residing in the West-Indies, to adhere rigidly to all the European customs and manners; which, though perhaps not inconvenient in cold Northern air, are certainly improper, ridiculous, and detrimental, in a hot climate."[108] Not surprisingly, the lack of approval from these metropolitan sources did not deter these women, who avidly sought both news and fashionable goods from the metropole. Thankfully for the health and well being of women in the West Indies, the late eighteenth century brought changes in styles for European fashion. The lighter fabrics and the popularity of muslins with a looser fit must have come as a welcome relief for the fashion enthusiasts of Jamaica.[109]

Although the loudest voice concerning fashion in Jamaica, Long was neither the earliest nor the most scathing. Early opinions concerning fashionable attire in Jamaica can also be seen in a letter from Port Royal dating from 1687. The Reverend Francis Crow grumbled against the desire of the non-elite for fashionable attire. Crow remarked that even "a cooper's wife shall go forth in the best flowered silk and richest silver and gold lace that England can afford, with a

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[108] Ibid.

[109] Some scholars argue that this fashionable trend for the looser fabrics was West Indian in origin. Valerie Steele describes in *Paris Fashion: A Cultural History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), "There is some evidence that the chemise dress had colonial as well as classical and English antecedents. Much of French eighteenth-century wealth was based on Caribbean sugar–and Creole ladies understandably favored cool, light, white fashions. Both the material and the indigo that (with bleaching) tinted it to a striking bluish white came from the tropics" (39). Additionally, as Andrea Stuart argues in *Josephine: The Rose of Martinique* (London: Pan Books, 2004), "In fashion, furniture, and daily life, Creoles set the tone" (54). With French Creoles such as Josephine de Beauharnais setting the tone for French fashions in the late eighteenth century, the idea that fashion emanated solely from the metropole seems unlikely. Furthermore, these fabrics did not originate from metropolitan Europe, but were imported from colonial locations such as India. For a larger consideration of muslin, see Chloe Wigston Smith, *Women, Work and Clothes in the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Laura George, "Austen's Muslin," in *Crossings in Text and Textile* edited by Katherine Joslin and Daneen Wardrop (Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire Press, 2015).

couple of Negroes at her tail."[110] Such observations undoubtedly caused anxiety in England. With no traditional aristocracy in place in this colonial outpost, the means of distinguishing ranks were less clear. The wealth derived from the sugar plantations allowed these imperial inhabitants to purchase the fashionable items they desired, regardless of their place in the hierarchy. Other seventeenth-century sources included Hans Sloane. While accompanying Governor Albemarle to Jamaica in 1687, Sloane recorded detailed botanical information, yet even this man of science remarked on the sartorial trends in this Caribbean island. In the 1707 *Voyage to the Islands* Sloane observed that "clothing of the Island is much as in England, especially the better sort…. It seems to me the Europeans do not well, who coming from a cold Country, continue here to Clothe themselves after the same manner as in *England,* whereas all the Inhabitants between the Tropics go even almost naked…."[111] Seventeenth-century and early eighteenth-century white inhabitants chose to adhere to British fashions and textiles, even in this tropical location. In the probate inventory of Thomas Prigg of Port Royal, he possessed at the time of his death "old Woollen Clothes."[112] Apparel made from wool would certainly not have been comfortable in the tropical climate, yet such fabric choices continued in to the eighteenth century.

In the mid-eighteenth century, Charles Leslie's *A New History of Jamaica* (1740) remarked on the fashions for posterity as well. Leslie remarked that the "ladies are as gay as any-where in *Europe*, dress as richly, and appear with as good a Grace. Their Morning Habit is a

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[110] Reverend Francis Crow to Giles Firmin, 7 March 1686/7, *Jamaican Historical Review*, III, 54, as qtd. in Richard S. Dunn, "The English Sugar Islands and the Founding of South Carolina," *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 101 (April 2000), 150.

[111] Hans Sloane, *A voyage to the islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica, with the natural history of the Herbs and Trees, Four-Footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, &c. of the last of those islands; to which is prefix'd an introduction, wherein is an account of the inhabitants, air, waters, diseases, trade, &c. of that Place, with some Relations concerning the Neighbouring Continent, and Islands of America. Illustrated with the figures of the things describ'd, which have not been heretofore engraved; In large Copper-Plates as big as the Life. By Hans Sloane, M. D. Fellow of the College of Physicians and Secretary of the Royal-Society* (London: printed by B. M. for the author, 1707), I: xlvii.

[112] Thomas Prigg, Port Royal Smith 1686 Vol. 2 Fol. 191- http://nautarch.tamu.edu/portroyal/archives/Inventories/Vol2/2-191.htm

loose Night-gown, carefully wrapped about them, before Dinner they get out of their Dishabille and shew themselves in all the Advantage of a becoming rich neat Dress."[113] As Amanda Vickery has shown, "neat" denoted taste and "propriety" for eighteenth-century consumers.[114] Fashionable displays extended down the ranks, as even servants arrayed themselves in "a linen or striped Holland Gown, and plain headcloaths."[115] Less extravagant than the "ladies" of the island, these servants donned garments with lower quality fabric that were durable for labor in this tropical location.[116] According to Moreton, white creole ladies dressed with taste only when they could be viewed in a public setting. He opined: "when they dress, they decorate themselves elegantly; abroad they appear as neat as if they came out of band-boxes, lovely and engaging; -at home, diametrically the reverse."[117] Therefore, this fashionable attire was a façade and in private settings they revealed their true nature of unordered dishabille.

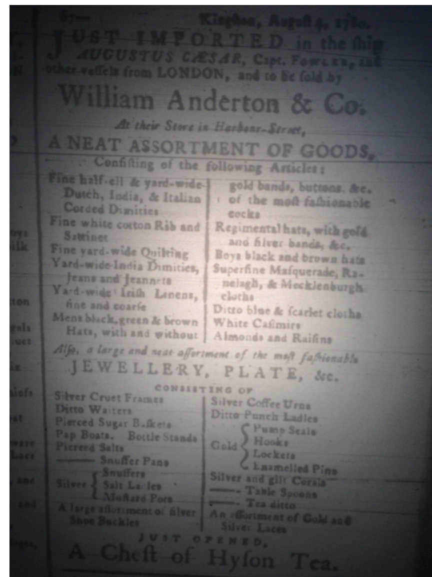
[113] Charles Leslie, 34-35. Figure 2.2 also shows how "Neat" was a desirable quality for colonial consumers.

[114] Amanda Vickery, '"Neat and Not Too Showey': Words and Wallpaper in Regency England," in *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America*, edited by John and Amanda Vickery Styles (New Haven and London: Yale University, 2006), 214.

[115] Leslie, 35.

[116] For slave attire and clothing for the free black population in Jamaica see Stephen O. Buckridge, *The Language of Dress: Resistance and Accommodation in Jamaica, 1760-1890* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2004).

[117] Moreton, 109.



Kingston, Auguſt 4, 1780.

JUST IMPORTED in the ſhip
AUGUSTUS CÆSAR, Capt. FOWLER, and
other veſſels from LONDON, and to be ſold by

William Anderton & Co.

At their Store in Harbour-Street,

A NEAT ASSORTMENT OF GOODS,

Conſiſting of the following Articles:

Fine half-ell & yard-wide Dutch, India, & Italian Corded Dimities
Fine white cotton Rib and Sattinet
Fine yard-wide Quilting
Yard-wide India Dimities, Jeans and Jeannets
Yard-wide Iriſh Linens, fine and coarſe
Mens black, green & brown Hats, with and without gold bands, buttons, &c. of the moſt faſhionable cocks
Regimental hats, with gold and ſilver bands, &c.
Boys black and brown hats
Superfine Maſquerade, Ranelagh, & Mecklenburgh cloths
Ditto blue & ſcarlet cloths
White Caſimirs
Almonds and Raiſins

Alſo, a large and neat aſſortment of the moſt faſhionable

JEWELLERY, PLATE, &c.

CONSISTING OF

Silver Cruet Frames
Ditto Waiters
Pierced Sugar Baſkets
Pap Boats. Bottle Stands
Pierced Salts
——— Snuffer Pans
Silver Snuffers
Silver Salt Ladles
Silver Muſtard Pots
A large aſſortment of ſilver Shoe Buckles
Silver Coffee Urns
Ditto Punch Ladles
Gold Pump Seals
Gold Hooks
Gold Lockets
Gold Enamelled Pins
Silver and gilt Corals
——— Table Spoons
——— Tea ditto
An aſſortment of Gold and Silver Laces

JUST OPENED,

A Cheſt of Hyſon Tea.

Figure 2.2: *Royal Gazette*, August 4, 1780. Photo by Author.

White women were not the only ones interested in fashion in this outpost of empire. William Beckford's *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica* from 1790 described the splendor of the mixed-race population of Jamaica. According to Beckford, the mulattoes had "their public balls, and vie with each other in splendor of their appearance; and it will hardly be credited how very expensive their dress and ornaments are, and what pains they take to disfigure themselves with powder and with other unbecoming imitations of European dress." [118] However, their more common wear "and mode of attiring, are picturesque and elegant; and as the forms of the young women are turned with equal grace and symmetry."[119] A probate record from 1791 recording the goods left by Elizabeth Needham of Kingston, a free mulatto, agrees with Beckford's proposition concerning the splendor of some of the mulatto women in urban Jamaica. Needham, a slave owner in her own right, purchased luxury goods and furniture. She also left behind "Three mahogany chests containing wearing apparel jewells and trinkets" to the value of

[118] William Beckford, *A Descriptive Account of the Island of Jamaica* (London, T. and J. Egerton, 1790), 389.
[119] Ibid.

around five hundred pounds.[120] Although Needham represented a very wealthy woman with an estate estimated to be worth over eleven thousand pounds and did not reflect the status of the entire mixed race population on the island, many other mulatto women also had money and a desire to purchase and acquire luxury goods.

Although travel narratives record impressions concerning the attire of the colonists in Jamaica, descriptions of clothing find little space in the probate inventory records.[121] Materials including silks and chintz traveled to this island, with mantua makers on the island to craft the gowns from the imported fabric.[122] Undoubtedly, clothing passed to others after death, and the clerk had little material to work with in their inventories.[123] For instance, the entry for Sarah Cook from Kingston in 1790 noted that she "bequeathed to different persons" her "Sundry wearing apparels and trinkets."[124] Vague notations like "wearing apparel" appear most frequently, while more detailed entries including more than an ambiguous sketch were relatively rare. However, Elizabeth Bell from Kingston, who died in 1791, left "Six colord gowns, two white gowns, one pink quilt gown, one blue gown," as well as "One silk petticoat, five aprons, nine felt handkerchiefs, [and] six caps."[125] Such records do not fully depict the vibrant fashionable goods present in Jamaica, which are more illuminated in the announcements from periodicals such as the *Cornwall Chronicle*, *Kingston Gazette,* and the *Jamaica Mercury* in Jamaica.

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[120] Elizabeth Needham, June 29, 1791, Inventories, Jamaica Archives and Records Department, Spanish Town. Hereafter, all references from the Jamaica Archives will be JA.

[121] These variations are not too surprising, as the travel narratives were meant to be read by a large and varied audience, and therefore contain information that would "instruct and entertain," whereas the inventories were official records, meant to be read by a select few.

[122] Roxana Short, December 9, 1779, Inventories, JA. This inventory contained mention of "4 pieces of Chintz and copper plate linen" as well as "yellow silk for a gown."

[123] For a much larger discussion of inventories in early-modern Europe, see Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the "Ancien Regime"* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

[124] Sarah Cook, December 16, 1790, Inventories, JA.

[125] Elizabeth Bell, June 18, 1791, Inventories, JA.

Goods of all kinds arrived from the metropole and the local merchants placed numerous advertisements in the newspapers. These stores boasted the "neat" garments so prized by metropolitan and colonial consumers alike. For example, William Anderson & Co. placed an advertisement in the *Royal Gazette* in 1780, stating that their establishment had a "Neat Assortment of Goods" (Figure 2.2).[126] Merchant Peter Breton in the *Jamaica Mercury* boasted of goods "Just imported from London" for sale in his store on Church Street, broadcloths, "white and colored gauzes," fans, feathers, "ladies silk and satin shoes and slippers," as well as chintz, linen, cottons, muslins, and calicoes.[127] In Falmouth, George Waterhouse's store had callimancoes, as well as hair powders and pomades.[128] Other advertisements in the *Cornwall Chronicle* in Martha Brae Point proclaimed "fashionable printed linens and cottons," as well as an assortment of other goods for "cash, produce, or payment in crop."[129] These items were available in the local stores, and could be adapted according to the purchaser's taste for the cut and style of the garment.[130]

Like their British counterparts, colonial women in this tropical locations enjoyed shopping. Inhabitants of Jamaica agreed that the best shopping could be found in Kingston. According to travel author John Stewart in 1808, ladies in the merchant town could "occasionally relieve the tedium of existence with a *shopping*; that is, a rummaging over every shop, without any intention, perhaps, of buying any thing; an *amusement* which the females here

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[126] See Figure 2.2 for a representation of the advertisements in Jamaican newspapers.

[127] *Jamaica Mercury*, June/ July 1779, September 30, 1779, Special Collections, University of the West Indies at Mona Library.

[128] *Cornwall Chronicle*, September 18, 1792, Special Collections, University of the West Indies at Mona Library.

[129] *Cornwall Chronicle*, December 7, 1790, Special Collections, University of the West Indies at Mona Library.

[130] For a larger analysis of the process of purchasing fabric and the crafting of ensembles, see Ribeiro, "Getting and Spending," in *Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe,* 43-65.

are as partial to as those of the first fashion in the British metropolis."[131] Creoles who lived in the country often traveled to Kingston in order to view the merchandise from the mercantile center. "The country ladies have," posited Stewart, "a mighty relief in their periodical visits to friends and relations. These removals may more properly be termed *migrations*, as a whole family, perhaps to the amount of thirty or forty, including domestics, set out together on a six or eight weeks' visit!"[132] Shopping trips to the mercantile centers of Jamaica allowed the rural inhabitants to remain abreast of metropolitan mores and fashions.[133]

Although many of the male-authored publications portray creole women as consumers of luxury goods with no prudence or self control, some female writers seem to contradict this view. Janet Schaw's description of creole lifestyle does focus on fashionable attire and the desire for metropolitan goods, but her portrayal does not agree with other publications.[134] The "Journal of a Lady of Quality" by Schaw reveals a rare insight because of the author's candor and wit. Schaw, an elegant and well connected Scotswoman, traveled with her brother to the Carolinas, Antigua and Portugal on a Grand Tour. The North American Colonies, The West Indies, and the Continent comprised her pleasure trip. Schaw traveled with Fanny, a creole young lady, who had attended boarding school in Britain. Schaw meant for her work to be read and circulated by her friends back at home and did not intend this journal for a general audience through publication. She found herself received by the best society in Antigua and enjoyed her traveling, and often remarked on the exotic foods she encountered. She attempted to illustrate their lifestyles and

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[131] John Stewart, *An Account of Jamaica, And Its Inhabitants* (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees and Orme, 1808), 193.

[132] Stewart, 193.

[133] Although Kingston provided more shopping choices for the inhabitants of Jamaica, the best shopping could be found in London, and those fortunate enough for connections to this metropolitan center could have more items of distinction. Traveling to London oneself provided the ultimate shopping experience. See Chapter 3: The Brodbelts of Jamaica for a description of a trip to the metropole and the ensuing purchases made on her journey.

[134] Janet Schaw, Evangeline Walker Andrews, and Charles McLean Andrews. *Journal of a Lady of Quality; Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the Years 1774 to 1776* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 114-115.

appearances for her acquaintances back at home to understand this West Indian culture. Schaw traveled in the years 1774-1776, determined to experience all of the exotic foods, fashions, and society the island had to offer.

Regarding the local population, Schaw did not censure their lifestyle and behaviors, like authors Moreton and Long. Schaw stated: "In their persons they are very genteel, rather too thin until after thirty, after that they grow plump and look much the better for it. Their features are in general high and very regular, they have charming eyes, fine teeth, and the greatest quantity of hair I ever saw, which they dress with taste, and wear a great deal of powder."[135] The creoles remained stylish with powder in their hair. The shops in the West Indies offered the latest fashions from London for those who lacked means or connections to receive the goods directly from Europe. They also were concerned with maintaining current fashions. They accomplished this through dressing as "light as possible; worked and plain muslins, painted gauzes or light Lustrings and Tiffities are the usual wear. They have the fashions every six weeks from London, and London itself cannot boast of more elegant shops than you meet with at St Johns."[136] Purchasing the latest clothes sent from London kept the creole ladies in the latest styles, and connected them to Europe.

One area of fashion that diverged from metropolitan styles was the curious "masks" that white women reportedly wore. The hot Jamaican sun apparently caused many women to cover their faces to avoid all contact that might darken their skin at all. Although Schaw approved of the fashion of the ladies of the West Indies, she did not agree with the custom of keeping creole girls away from all sunlight and activity. She did not believe that they reached their full potential for "they want only colour to be termed beautiful, but the sun who bestows such rich taints on

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[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid.

every other flower, gives none to his lovely daughters; the tincture of whose skin is pure as the lily, and as pale."[137] The creole ladies wore masks so as not to tint their skin and make them brown, a color associated with the slaves and the mixed-race population. Schaw observed: "From childhood they never suffer the sun to have a peep at them, and to prevent him are covered with masks and bonnets, that absolutely makes them look as if they were stewed." Schaw's companion Fanny was prevailed upon to wear a mask, but Schaw did not agree with this custom and drove around Antigua and St. Christopher setting "face to weather, wherever I have been. I hope you have no quarrel at brown beauty."[138] She would not suffer to wear the mask and was proud at the color she could see on her face, believing it showed her blooming health. She also observed that under the mask, Fanny was wilting and losing her "rose" color, becoming as pale as the local creole women. They did not want to seem tainted through their residence in this tropical location. Any alteration of dress and appearance might undermine their perceived racial "purity." The measures that these women took to maintain the "hierarchy of color" in their skin is seen by contemporary scholars as evidence of the insecurity of the creole white women. Literary scholar Deidre Coleman asserts that women donned these masks as "an expression of deep-seated racial insecurities within Britain's white creole communities."[139] This is also apparent in the cashew oil women put on their faces to "preserve an 'aristocracy of skin.'"[140] This extremely pale skin color, however, resulted in the creole women looking sickly to European eyes. Satirical prints mocked their avoidance of the sun. Although these inhabitants of Jamaica attempted to don attire that would enable them to appear like genteel British ladies,

[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] Coleman, 171.
[140] Schaw, 172.

observers still remarked on the differences in their accessories and appearance, rather than on their desired resemblance to the British fashionables.

Other authors visiting the West Indian island of Antigua also commented on the use of fashionable attire in order to conceal their skin from the sun. Travel historian J. A. Luffman, writing in 1789 on the customs and manners of Antigua remarked on the severe measures creoles took to avoid the sun. Regarding their attire, Luffman recorded that "Their dress is generally light, and inclined to tawdry, and their conversation languid, except when a little of that species

Figure 2.3: J.F., "West India Fashionables." London: William Holland, 1804, Courtesy of the British Museum, 1877,0811.204.

of harmless chat, which ill-nature has called scandal."[141] Luffman observed: "The ladies, inhabitants of this place, seldom walk the streets, or ride in their wiskys, without masks or veils,

[141] J. A. Luffman, *Brief Account of the Island of Antigua Together with the Customs and Manners of Its Inhabitants, As Well White As Black : As Also an Accurate Statement of the Food, Cloathing, Labor, and Punishment, of Slaves: in Letters to a Friend Written in the Years 1786, 1787, 1788* (London: Printed for T. Cadell, 1789), 6.

not, I presume, altogether as a preservative to their complexions, being frequently seen at a distance unmasked, but as soon as they are approached near, on goes the vizor, thro' which, by a couple of peep-holes, about the size of an English shilling, they have an opportunity of staring in the faces of all they meet."[142] Accessories like those described by Luffman became altered in the tropical climate and exposure to the sun.

Jamaicans in Visual Print Culture

Satirical prints were another means of disseminating exemplifications of women who inhabited the colonial Caribbean.[143] Satirical prints visualized and often strengthened the descriptions seen in the travel narratives. For example, in "West India Fashionables" (Figure 2.3) published by William Holland, the bonnet on the woman's head is uncomfortably large. This print mocks the social anxiety of sun exposure by exaggerating the efforts, which these women took to ensure that their skin was not darkened. Rather than achieving the desired appealing effect, their pallid countenance combined with their lack of fresh air and exercise made the ladies appear ill.[144] These prints captured elements described in writings, including the creole's avoidance of the sun.[145]

The metropolitan preoccupation with the creoles' perceived overindulgence and overt sexuality, as well as the insensibility of Jamaican women, provided source material for this popular media. Print culture took these descriptions, and artists created enduring images of these colonial inhabitants. The anxiety concerning the nature of women in colonial locations

[142] Luffman, 6. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, no examples of these masks described by Schaw and Luffman remain in collections.

[143] See T. J. Barringer, Gillian Forrester, and Barbaro Martinez-Ruiz, *Art and Emancipation in Jamaica: Isaac Mendes Belisario and His Worlds* (New Haven: Yale Center for British Art in association with Yale University Press, 2007) for an examination of the artistic undertakings in the West Indies during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

[144] Shaw, 114-115.

[145] See Figure 2.3 for a rendition of this print. For a larger description of this print, see http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1470507&partId=1&searchText=west+india+fashionables&page=1.

manifested visually in these satirical prints.[146] These are some of the few visual representations of white creole women that are still intact. Although Agostino Brunias created popular representations of the West Indies for European audiences, he did not depict white women in the Caribbean. Few portraits remain that depict white Jamaican inhabitants.[147] According to Kay Dian Kriz, white women who inhabited the West Indies proved a "specter" in eighteenth-century visual print culture. Although written descriptions of women appeared in printed works such as the aforementioned travel narratives and in other fictional works, satirical prints seem to be some of the only remaining visual depictions of creole women.[148] These visual satires were displayed in large metropolitan shops where the British population would have been familiar with the depictions. These caricatures exaggerated the negative aspects, such as the debilitating effects of the climate and slavery, to craft an unflattering picture of the creole women. Visual depictions such as the satirical prints agree with the stereotype from the travel narratives and the few famous examples from the contemporary culture in England.[149]

[146] Amelia Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked: Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth-Century English Prints* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 15. Art historian Amelia Rauser argues that printmakers in England had the task of "unmasking" individuals through these caricatures. This would reveal their true selves, and allowed for more transparency.

[147] A few portraits survive from eighteenth-century Jamaican sitters. For example, two portraits by Phillip Wickstead hang in the National Gallery of Jamaica. Wickstead journeyed to Jamaica on the behest of William Beckford, and painted portraits of the gentry and merchants inhabiting Jamaica. See also Rosalie Smith McCrea, "John Blagrove and Cardiff Hall, St. Ann's Jamaica, 1753-1824," *The Journal of Caribbean History* 47 (2013): 123-128.

[148] Kay Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700-1840* (New Haven: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British, Art: Yale University Press, 2008), 6.

[149] See Chapter 2 for the metropolitan view of the life of the infamous Teresia "Con" Phillips.

Figure 2.4 Abraham James, "A Grand Jamaica ball! or the Creolean hop a la mustee; as exhibited in Spanish Town," published by William Holland, 1802, Courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, lwlpr10214.

As creole women did not often have the means to be portrayed in the burgeoning public art sphere, such as having formal portraits exhibited openly, satirical prints were instrumental in constructing the visual image of these women.[150] The white women were, according to Kriz, "invariably cast as fun-loving (at best) or, more commonly, cruel, lazy, and lascivious characters" in these prints by artists such as Abraham James.[151] These popular prints increased the negative stereotypes in the late eighteenth century, visualizing the already prevalent notions about the plantocracy of the West Indies. Creoles appear to be lazy, insensible social upstarts donning the latest British fashions. The depictions of the creoles by artists such as James did not feature only creole women, but creole men and slaves as well. The negative aspects of the men are

[150] For the growing public sphere in the eighteenth century, see Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989). Regarding the public sphere and art, specifically in France, see Thomas E. Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985). There do not appear to have been any art exhibitions in Jamaica open to the public, but the artists who visited Jamaica seem to have been aware of the works shown in London at the Society of Artists' exhibition. See Tim Barringer, "Picturesque Prospects and the Labor of the Enslaved," in *Art and Emancipation in Jamaica*, 45.

[151] Kriz, 166.

illuminated through their excessive drinking and poor manners. The creole women were not singled out as the only immoral individuals in the West Indies. The whole creole society was attacked, showing the lack of manners and the social transgressions present in the white population. These social critiques concerning indiscriminate behavior reinforced the perspectives of the creole white women.

Fashionable customers in the metropole purchased these caricatures, which were for sale in art gallery-type print rooms. People made collections of certain artists' prints, which were valued for their aesthetic quality. William Holland owned a print room gallery with many of these items available for purchase and perusal.[152] Print shops such as Holland's consisted of lounges catering to the fashionable clientele who frequented these shops and held exhibitions in which the works were for sale.[153] His shop contained a print entitled "A Grand Jamaican Ball! or the Creolian hop a la Mustee; as exhibited in Spanish Town," after a drawing by James.[154] With his career as a "soldier-artist," James returned from Jamaica armed with his experiences in this plantation setting to create these enduring images of creole high society. His set of cartoons generated a lasting image of Jamaica at the turn of the nineteenth century.[155] Satirical images, such as this one published by Holland, illustrated social life in Jamaica as one with more relaxed morals than Great Britain. In this print, inhabitants of the sugar plantation island are enjoying a dance in this in this scene of mirth and folly.[156] This depiction of creole culture captured the

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[152] Holland's first shop was in Drury Lane, and then he moved to Oxford Street. For satirical print culture, see Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker & Co, 2007).

[153] Ibid., 97.

[154] See Figure 2.4, for "A Grand Jamaican Ball!" by Abraham James.

[155] James Robertson, *Gone Is the Ancient Glory: Spanish Town, Jamaica, 1534-2000* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 2005), 124. For Abraham James see Roger N. Buckley, "The Frontier in the Jamaican Caricatures of Abraham James," *Yale University Library Gazette* 58 (1984): 152-162.

[156] Although satirical, this print does portray the creoles as fond of dancing, which other sources confirm as well. One young creole, Ann Gardner Brodbelt, of Spanish Town, Jamaica, wrote that her relative "Anna" would "dance in the negro style from Morn 'til Night if you will let her," in Geraldine Nutt Mozley and the Institute of

essence of the stereotypical view of West Indian plantocracy, with drinking, cavorting, and the creoles lifting their legs in raucous dancing. In the top right of the print, a man fondles a woman behind a curtain, only partially concealing this indelicate behavior. The woman's loose-fitting gown allows for easy access to this cavalier man. James depicted the women dressed in finery, drinking, dancing with her legs in the air, and associating with the black slaves.

While this print poked fun at the creole society, it also reveals the social anxieties about the West Indies. The creoles in the print are not behaving like "proper" British subjects. Social and moral deviance, visually rampant in the West Indies, struck viewers in what they considered to be a "true portrait." In another print by James, "Seger smoking society in Jamaica!," (Figure 2.5) both male and female inhabitants smoke huge cigars, which were not in fashion in "polite" society in England.[157] Although they are in mixed company, they are relaxed, leaning back in chairs. Most shockingly, the women have their legs spread in the air to catch the breeze. This visualized the perception of wanton behavior with women drinking copiously from enormous goblets of fortified beverages. This image is supposed to depict the Jamaican Assembly, showing that the profligacy was present even in the "high society" of Jamaica. By representing even the richest and most powerful as succumbing to the wickedness and decadence of the tropical regions, James showed the entire culture subject to moral decay.

Jamaica, *Letters to Jane from Jamaica, 1788-1796* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by the West India Committee, 1938), 116.

[157] See Figure 2.5 for "Segar Smoking Society in Jamaica" by James. See also Robertson, 124.

Figure 2.5: Abraham James, "Segar smoking society in Jamaica," published by William Holland, 1802, Print on paper, Courtesy of the British Museum, 1877,0811.208.

Due to the popularity of West Indian subjects, prints were a fashionable addition to the written descriptions. As historian James Robertson argues, these prints display the metropolitan interest for West Indian depictions, which emphasized the vast differences between life in England versus the Caribbean.[158] They also demonstrate the lack of "Englishness" in the West Indian colonies and show the separation and deterioration of British customs there. As Robertson puts it, the "'Englishness' of Anglo-Jamaican society, a key element in its own self definitions, became more open to metropolitan sneers and jeers."[159] These creoles were an object of fascination, and the caricatures visualized the stereotypes of the creole white women for the British audience, who were eager to purchase and view the prints that would reveal the "inner character" of the sugar plantation societies. These prints reaffirmed the view that the climate and slaves negatively influenced the white creole women, and justified the stereotypes, especially through the prints of James, who was seen as a sort of authority on colonial life through his

[158] Robertson, 124-125.
[159] Ibid., 125.

interactions with the culture and his status as "soldier-artist." These visual representations continued the trend of ridicule towards the white creole women.

Figure 2.6: Richard Newton, "A Forcible Appeal for the Abolition of the Slave Trade," published by William Holland, 1792, Courtesy of the British Museum, 2007,7058.1.

It is worth nothing, though, that although they were depicted as morally and sexually indiscriminate, white creole women were not shown to be cruel or malicious slave owners in these prints produced by James. In other satirical prints, the lack of sensibility in creole women is portrayed more strongly. Although the two works by James depicts creole society as overindulgent and inclined to overconsumption of alcohol, as well as sexually loose in their behavior, the work 1792 print by R. Newton and sold by William Holland depicts the insensibility of creole women more strongly. In this print entitled "A Forcible Appeal for the Abolition of the Slave Trade," (Figure 2.6) two men dressed in dapper striped suits whip two

slaves tied to trees.[160] The two men meting out the punishment look to be of mixed race, and are perhaps overseers on a plantation. The viewer is drawn to one of the slaves depicted receiving the punishment, where only the naked wounded backside of the distressed is seen. The other is facing sideways, wearing white pants and a turban, with her shirt removed and breasts exposed. Her face displays the horror of the oncoming lashes and is juxtaposed with the white woman in the background. The woman in the background is not participating in the punishment, but does not seem moved by the brutal act. A slight smile marks her slightly rouged face. Her white gown and pink jacket blow listlessly in the tropical breeze. A befeathered turban completes her ensemble. Far from being distressed by this scene, she is relaxed, with one arm gesturing to onlookers in a peaceful greeting. Therefore the white woman in Jamaica was portrayed as diverging from popular perceptions of female sensibility in England.

The writings and satirical prints concerning women in eighteenth-century Jamaica portray them as social failures, diverging from metropolitan standards of behavior, yet, at the same time, overconsuming British goods and lacking in modern sensibility. These popular writings and characters created a view of these women as negatively influenced by their relationship to their colonial landscape and the slave population. Their perceived overindulgence in food and beverages further augmented the characterization of them as diverging from metropolitan standards of behavior. Furthermore, their desire for British goods opened them to ridicule as voracious and mindless consumers, even though these goods bound them back to the mother country. The attempts of these transoceanic women to portray themselves as British ladies through their purchases were characterized instead as overconsumption of unnecessary and vulgar goods. In the case studies of familial correspondence, their love of fashionable attire is clear, but a sentimental strand towards familial connections takes precedence over the voracious

[160] See Figure 2.5 for the "A Forcible Appeal for the Abolition of the Slave Trade."

consumer of fashion.[161] Furthermore, eighteenth-century authors characterized the West Indies as negatively affecting women from the moment they arrived in the tropical scene. The travel narratives and prints found a fictional addition in novels and other popular publications strengthened and expanded the characterizations seen in these prints and travel narratives. Women in these depictions found few positive representations in eighteenth-century disseminations, which ranged from rehabilitated to cruel and even mentally unstable. These fictional, exaggerated portrayals nevertheless produced lasting impressions regarding the insensibility and overconsumption present in the West Indies.

[161] See Susan Moller Okin, "Women and the Making of the Sentimental Family," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 2 (1982): 65-88 for a discussion concerning the development of sentimentality towards family members in the eighteenth century.

CHAPTER 2

JAMAICAN WOMEN IN SENTIMENTAL NOVELS AND OTHER LITERATURE

Although the rapidly developing sugar industry provided wealth for the plantation owners, the women who resided in colonial Jamaica did not always find social success in England. Tales abounded that these women diverged from the "proper" English women at home. Back in England, the creoles' contact with the sultry island climate and the large population of slaves inhabiting the island created a sense of anxiety regarding the nature of these transplanted individuals. As seen in Chapter 1, these women found an unflattering portrayal in both satirical prints and travel narratives. Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, novels and other popular publications strengthened these stereotypes of colonial women who resided in the West Indies. Eighteenth-century authors portrayed creole white women as sexually-charged social climbers. Although they attempted to consume the same British goods and fashions as their metropolitan counterparts, they never achieved social success or acceptance from their emulation. These fictionalized depictions appeared on stage, in periodical publications, and in novels. As sensibility became more prized in the eighteenth century for genteel British women, the perceived lack of such tender feelings in creole women made them seem to deviate from metropolitan standards.

Sensibility, and the sympathy that accompanied it, was a central characteristic of this literary trend for devotees. As novels grew in popularity throughout the eighteenth century, these fictional accounts give a picture of the burgeoning stereotypes surrounding women in colonial spaces. Novels concerning women in colonial locations do not portray them as women of sensibility. In these literary accounts, creole women were fantastical characters who transgressed metropolitan social mores. For example, Daniel Defoe's early work, *Moll Flanders* (1722),

created an enduring image of a heroine who, after spending time as a criminal and woman of ill repute, refashioned herself in a colonial setting.[1] Although transported to Colonial Virginia, this infamous character became part of the gentility in her new home. This popular work indicated to readers the possibility of such a status overhaul in these peripheral locations. Signaling the possibility that social failures in England could become respectable in the colonies, these depictions augmented the fear of the colonies as places without proper social limitations. Stories of infamous figures in England who went to the New World to rehabilitate their image from debauchery to respectability in the colonial landscape captivated the English imagination. One woman in eighteenth-century England seemed to embody the character of Moll Flanders. The notorious Teresia "Con" Phillips, infamous in England for her "scandalous memoirs" from her time as a courtesan, traveled around Europe before migrating to Jamaica. Phillips and her tenure in Jamaica augmented the negative images of women in the West Indies. She was possibly the only woman in the eighteenth century to hold a colonial office, yet back in England she had a reputation as a seductress. Phillips held the position of "Mistress of the Revels," which provided her with the opportunity to participate in the cultural life of the elite in Jamaica. After surviving five husbands and countless lovers, she had gained a reputation as a "black widow," one who devoured her husbands, and materially gained from their devotion to her. Phillips succeeded in the colonies because there she had access to "perform" in a new colonial arena, without the social mores which had stained her character in England.[2]

[1] For the character of Moll Flanders and colonialism see Gabriel Cervantes, "Convict Transportation and Penitence in *Moll Flanders,*" *ELH* 78 (2011): 315-336; Gwenda Morgan and Peter Rushton, "Fraud and Freedom: Gender, Identity and Narratives of Deception among the Female Convicts in Colonial America," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34 (2011): 335–355; Dennis Todd, *Defoe's America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[2] Kathleen Wilson, "The Black Widow: Gender, Race, and Performance in England and Jamaica," in *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century,* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 129-169. For Teresia Constantia Phillips and her life as a "scandalous memoirist," see Lynda M. Thompson, *The 'Scandalous Memoirists' Constantia Phillips, Laetitia Pilkington and the shame of 'publick fame'* (New York: Manchester

Following a lover, Henry Needham, to Jamaica, Phillips reveled in her new home and seemed to conform to the stereotype of creole white women, although her notorious character predated her time in Jamaica. To metropolitan viewers, Phillips belonged in such a climate and culture. Many of her critics believed she fit into the society of Jamaica, which explained the degree of prominence she achieved during her time in the West Indies. However much Phillips seemed to agree with the culture as perceived in the metropole, Phillips never identified with the creoles, and wrote against their lifestyles and habits. The *Columbian Magazine* republished her thoughts on life in the West Indies in an article entitled "Jamaica in Miniature; or A Collection of Impossibilities." In this article, written by the "celebrated authoress and beauty" forty years previously, Phillips mentioned many prominent creoles by name in a satirical and ironic look at the creole culture.[3] Phillips criticized the creole women with her stinging words: "When beauty, wit, and soft good nature/ Or tongue unting'd with meanest satire,/To Creole women once belong,/ Muse, I'll admit you're in the wrong."[4] In other words, Phillips stated in this compilation of "impossibilities" that the creole women were devoid of "beauty, wit, and soft good nature." The "celebrated authoress" also alleged that if she found a creole woman possessing these characteristics then she would recant her assertion. Phillips continued to invoke stories like those about the prominent creoles such as Elizabeth Manning and her lover Ballard Beckford. Manning was notorious herself for the public divorce trial with her husband, at which Manning's maid alleged that her mistress had sexual relations with a black slave.[5] Phillips had a

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University Press, 2000); Claire Brant, "Speaking of Women: Scandal and the Law in the Mid-Eighteenth Century," in *Women, Texts, and Histories 1575-1760*, edited by Clare Brant, and Diane Purkiss, (London: Routledge, 1992), 242-270; E. J. Burford, *Wits, Wenchers, and Wantons: London's Low Life: Covent Garden in the Eighteenth Century* (London: R. Hale, 1986).

[3] Teresa Con. Phillips [*sic*.], "Jamaica in Miniature; or A Collection of Impossibilities," (c. 1760) in *Columbian Magazine*, (Philadelphia: Printed by W. Spotswood, 1798), 578.

[4] Phillips, 578.

[5] See Trevor Burnard, "'A Matron in Rank, a Prostitute in Manners': The Manning Divorce of 1741 and Class, Gender, Race and the Law in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica," in *Working Slavery, Pricing Freedom: Perspectives*

reputation in England for her lifestyle, and was famous for her memoirs and her ostentatious modes of dressing, yet viewed the creole women as beneath her. Although her memoirs publicized her love affairs and litigations, she still attacked creole women their lack of good will toward one another as well as their want of good nature, beauty, and wit. Her censure contributed to a negative image for these West Indian women.

In 1757 Lieutenant-Governor Henry Moore appointed Phillips to the aforementioned position of "Mistress of the Revels." As a close friend of Moore, who was married to the travel-historian Edward Long's sister, Catherine Maria, Phillips enjoyed the high society of Jamaica. The formerly "scandalous woman" became a colonial authority. This demonstrated for metropolitan observers the relative ease for a woman of a dubious reputation to climb socially in the West Indies. The new setting was a perfect stage for someone like Phillips to restart. Although she considered herself strictly British, and even wrote against the creole women in Jamaica, she could not escape creolization herself, which showed itself especially through her black servants and her ostentatious show of wealth. Phillips's success in Jamaica and the colonial office seemed to cement her creolization process. Interestingly enough, reports of her death in the popular sensationalist publication the *Town and Country Magazine*, revealed that at the time of her decease, she was reduced to unfortunate circumstances. The article from 1795 recounted the events surrounding her death. According to the *Town and Country Magazine*, on hearing of her rapidly deteriorating condition, she "desired a looking glass to be placed at the foot of the bed, that she might contemplate at her ease the ruins of that beauty which had captivated the affections of so many men."[6] The article also informed readers that the custom in Jamaica was for relatives and friends to accompany the deceased to their final resting place. However,

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from the Caribbean, Africa and the African Diaspora, edited by Verene A. Shepherd, 133-52 (New York, NY: Palgrave, St. Martin's, 2002).

[6] "Anecdote of Constantia Phillips," *Town and Country Magazine*, June 1795.

Phillips had no such procession, for "on this occasion not a single person paid this last sad token of respect to this women, her corpse being conveyed to the grave by negro servants only."[7] Although Phillips achieved an official position in this Jamaican landscape, she did not earn respect and love from her fellow island inhabitants. For metropolitan observers, Phillips exemplified the immorality of the West Indies and undoubtedly helped reinforce the negative stereotype in the minds of the British subjects, who were all too eager to place truth behind the spicy details of the travel narratives.[8]

The *Town and Country Magazine,* while including articles about the personal lives and sexual escapades of the London elite, titillated its audience with other reports of the West Indies besides that of Phillips, particularly stories concerning the creoles occupying the islands.[9] The November 1784 article "Histories of the Tête-à-Tête, annexed; or, Memoirs of the Approved Candidate, and Miss Amb—*ſ*e," unfolded the tale of a naval commander, who, after turning from the West Indies, met a young lady in England. The hero began to pursue a "Miss Amb—*ſ*e," whom he found to be superior to his previous amour in the West Indies. As the sailor began to "make a comparison between his last mistress at Jamaica, and Miss Amb—*ſ*e, he could not help thinking her infinitely more delicate, desirable, and attractive."[10] According to this publication, the ladies in Jamaica could not compare to the English women back home. Although not a stinging criticism of the women in Jamaica, it still demonstrated how they fell short of the ideal.

Other articles from the *Town and Country Magazine* also portrayed the West Indian islands as an undesirable location. In one report, when a cruel husband tried to force his young

[7] Ibid.

[8] See Chapter 1 for the genre of travel narratives and their influence on the rhetoric surrounding women in the British Caribbean world.

[9] See also Matthew J. Kinservik, *Sex, Scandal, and Celebrity in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

[10] "Histories of the Tete-a-Tete, annexed; or, Memoirs of the Approved Candidate, and Miss Amb—*ſ*e," *Town and Country Magazine,* November 1784.

wife to move to Jamaica, she found she could not abide by that sentence of transportation. He attempted to "force her from her native country to a scorching climate unfavourable to beauty, unfavorable to health."[11] This young lady ran away with a lieutenant, and when her husband brought a criminal conversation case to court, the jury favored the wife's case. British readers avidly consumed criminal conversation cases like this one, where a husband sued his wife's lover to receive compensation for infidelity.[12] The court only awarded the wounded husband one shilling due to the harshness of his threat to force her to move to Jamaica. The *Town and Country Magazine*, while not the loudest voice contributing to the negative perception of women in the West Indies, still contributed to the general perception of wantonness and loose moral proclivities.

Another publication reporting stories of excessive West Indian women included *The Bon Ton Magazine. The Bon Ton* was a publication predominately fixated on "sexual gossip about the rich and famous combined with sensationalised news and fantastic everyday-life stories."[13] This magazine also included reports of criminal conversation cases. Such accounts demonstrated the overall public preoccupation with female chastity and marital fidelity. By publishing articles that highlighted debauchery and infidelity, and by linking these characteristics with the hot climate, the editors strengthened the negative misconceptions about creole women that many consumers believed to be true.

Although not the only theme, licentiousness of creole women filled the pages of the *The Bon Ton Magazine*. In the Feb. 1792 article, "The Amorous Recluse, and the Jolly Tyler," the authors reported a story about a woman from the West Indies. "[B]orn between the tropics" and

[11] "Histories of the Tete-a-Tete, annexed; or, Memoirs of Mr. Mus-L and Mrs. F—s—r," *Town and Country Magazine*, March 1789.

[12] Marilyn Morris, "Marital Litigation and English Tabloid Journalism: Crim. Con. In *The Bon Ton* (1791-1796), *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28 (2005): 34.

[13] Morris, 33.

endowed with "all the warmth as well as all the lassitude of her climate," this creole contained the typical characteristics of those from the sultry sugar plantation islands.[14] Her "lassitude" did not extend to her adventures with a local workman, who visited her by climbing into her window. Determined to catch her in the act, husband set a trap to catch her in her offense. Furthermore, this cuckolded husband felt "Uneasy, at a negro servant who came over with her from the West Indies." Although originally possessed of good health, the enslaved man began to deteriorate. When questioned concerning the cause of his ill health, "he imputed his decay of constitution to her insatiable sensuality" before dying of physical exhaustion.[15] According to the article, female servants confirmed the tale and revealed that their mistress had taken this slave as a lover. As Marilyn Morris demonstrates, eighteenth-century rhetoric "linked female purity to national stability."[16] The implication was that this climate produced sexually voracious women, which, by extension, placed the entire colonial scheme in a precarious position. This preoccupation portrayed women as subject to the damaging effects of the climate and slavery, and prone to depraved behavior. *The Bon Ton Magazine* had many stories of marital infidelity in Britain, showing that not only creole women were disposed to immoral behavior. However, writers implied that the correlation of climate and slavery exacerbated the predisposition in women for immorality. Phillips' life and these stories blurred the lines between fact and faction for eighteenth-century readers.

The British fascination with the West Indies continued throughout the eighteenth century, and the creole woman became a set stereotype. Literary historian Willie Sypher compares this

[14] *The Bon Ton Magazine*, Or, *Microscope of Fashion and Folly,* (London, W. Locke, 1791-1795; D. Brewman, 1795-1796) 5: 453-54.
[15] *Bon Ton Magazine,* 454.
[16] Morris, 50.

interest with the creole to that with the "nabobs" returning from India.[17] The main causes for negative attention towards the creoles were climate, slavery, overconsumption, and insensibility.[18] Common individuals could attain vast fortunes, and these *nouveau riche* consumers found a bitter audience back in England. These works illuminate the discourse defining "Englishness" in which eighteenth-century authors engaged.[19]

The fictional depictions of creole men showed them to be, however misguided, able to overcome their tropical background by rehabilitation in the metropole. Richard Cumberland's play *The West Indian* (1771) engaged with the preoccupation regarding colonial contact and personal character.[20] Belcour, the amorous hero, bemoaned his "curs'd tropical constitution."[21] Belcour, the repentant sinner, is reminiscent of the infamous eponymous hero in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones.* This sentimental play sought to recuperate the poor reputation of the West Indians and reintegrate them into society. Depictions of creole women did not show the same

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[17] "Nabobs" initially referred to members of the East India Company, who returned to England with riches from their adventures. Although wealthy, they gained their riches through means that were considered "uncertain" by the established British elite. The most famous "nabob" was Robert Clive. See also Tillman W. Nechtman, *Nabobs: Empire and Identity in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[18] Willie Sypher, "The West-Indian as a 'Character' in the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Philology* 36 (1939), 503. See also Elizabeth Nunez-Harrell, "The Paradoxes of Belonging: The White West Indian Woman in Fiction," *Modern Fiction Studies* 31 (2009): 281-293.

[19] See also Lisa A. Freeman, *Character's Theater: Genre and Identity on the Eighteenth-Century English Stage* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

[20] For the life and influence of Richard Cumberland, see William D. Brewer, *Staging Romantic Chameleons and Imposters* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015). Brewer notes that Richard Cumberland was "the most prolific and popular dramatist of his era" (61). Brewer marks *The West Indian* as one of Cumberland's six most successful plays. Under the direction of David Garrick at Drury Lane, *The West Indian* flourished. Cumberland later sold the copyright and claimed to have sold 12,000 copies. For more on Cumberland's life see "Cumberland, Richard (1732–1811)," Arthur Sherbo in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6888 (accessed July 17, 2015). This popular play reached the Atlantic Seaboard colonies as well. George Washington saw a performance of *The West Indian* in 1772 in Annapolis. For the spread of Cumberland's plays to the colonies, see Charles S. Watson, *The History of Southern Drama* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), 10.

[21] Richard Cumberland*, The West Indian: A Comedy, in Five Acts* (Boston: John West and Company, 1809), 75. See also Maaja A. Stewart, "Inexhaustible Generosity: The Fictions of Eighteenth-Century British Imperialism in Richard Cumberland's 'The West Indian,'" *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 37 (1996): 42-55; Jean Marsden, "Performing the West Indies: Comedy, Feeling, and British Identity," *Comparative Drama* 42 (2008): 73-88. For another example of depictions of West Indians on stage, see James Townley, "High Life Below Stairs: A Farce," Written by David Garrick, Esq. Taken from the manager's book at the Theatre Royal Drury-Lane (London: Printed by R. Butters; and sold by all the booksellers in town and country, [1780?]).

optimism. Representations of women in the novels were even worse than those in travel narratives and satirical prints, including more extreme negative features such as severe cruelty and mental instability. Thus, the creole white women degenerated from being an imperial "other" in travel narratives, to being a sinister deviant used to show the result of the combined vices of tropical climate and slavery. Few positive literary depictions suggested that there might be a possibility of rehabilitation in England for women from the West Indies.

Literary depictions that show women from the West Indies in a positive light portray them containing the sensibility prized in eighteenth-century society. Unlike the negatively-portrayed characters who degenerated in the tropical climate and society, the few positively-portrayed creole characters rose above their colonial counterparts. Two surviving works that incorporated the possibility of rehabilitation are Lucy Peacock's *The Creole* (1786) and Jane West's *Advantages of Education or the History of Maria Williams* (1793). Included in a collection of shorter stories, Peacock's novelette told the story of a West Indian heiress, Zemira, who, although victim to the vices of a gallant who took advantage of her fortune, ended up freeing her slaves and relocating to England.[22] Unlike other literary depictions of West Indians who reveled in the vices, economic prosperity, and material benefits of plantation life, Zemira found refuge in England after losing her fortune to a charlatan.[23]

Peacock's story began in England, where the distressed Zemira happened upon an estate of a Mrs. Sedley and recounted her sad tale. Mrs. Sedley was alarmed at the appearance of a woman whose "complexion was dark; and her face, though it could not be called handsome,

[22] Lucy Peacock, an author for children's books, wrote mostly on subjects concerning education. See also G. Le G. Norgate, "Peacock, Lucy (*fl.* 1785–1816)," rev. M. Clare Loughlin-Chow, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/21678 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[23] For more on Peacock's *The Creole* and the literary depictions of marriage in the Caribbean, see Jocelyn Fenton Stitt, "Gender in the Contact Zone: West Indian Creoles, Marriage and Money in British Women's Writing, 1786-1848," in *Before Windrush: Recovering an Asian and Black Literary Heritage Within Britain* edited by Pallavi Rastogi and Jocelyn Fenton Stitt (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008).

possessed such sweetness and sensibility, that rendered it more captivating than beauty itself."[24] Unlike many creole women in fictional accounts, Zemira had "sensibility" in her face. Mrs. Sedley believed that Zemira was possessed of a genteel demeanor, although she was now reduced in station, and it seems clear that her "address and education seemed to have designed for the most elevated sphere of life."[25] The creole woman admitted that her tale had not always been one of misery. She recounted her early years as an heiress in an unnamed West Indian island. After the death of her mother, Zemira's father had dedicated his life to her happiness and education. Understanding the deficiencies in education present on the island, her father had hired tutors who trained Zemira in French, Italian, Latin, and moral philosophy. Following the untimely demise of her father, Zemira possessed a large independent fortune and retired from social life to renew her studies in a secluded villa. On the arrival of an American gentleman who appeared to possess all the qualities Zemira desired in a spouse, she quickly fell for the rake in disguise.

As a young woman unacquainted with the arts of a disingenuous lover, she had quickly succumbed to his schemes. Zemira recalled his early appearance: "His stature was of the middle height, graceful and well proportioned; his education was liberal; his judgment correct, and his manners gentle and engaging: but his countenance! Oh, why did nature form it so ingenuous? Why was not perfidity and ingratitude stamped on every feature?"[26] Heedless to the warnings of friends who declared "it madness in me to lavish so large a fortune on a young man possessed of no other recommendation than that of a good person and education," the couple was married

[24] Lucy Peacock, *The rambles of fancy; or, moral and interesting tales. Containing, The Laplander, The ambitious mother, Letters from - Lindamira to Olivia, Miranda to Elvira, Felicia to Cecilia, the American Indian, the Fatal Resolution, the Creole. By the author of The adventures of the six Princesses of Babylon. In two volumes. ...* (London, printed by T. Bensley, for the author; and sold by J. Buckland, Paternoster-Row ; T. Hookham, New Bond-Street ; T. Becket, Pall Mall ; J. Pridden, Fleet-Street ; A. Perfetti, No 91, Wimpole-Street ; and by the author, No. 28, Warwick-Street, Golden-Square, 1786), II, 112. See also Sypher, 512.

[25] Peacock, *The Creole*, 2: 112.

[26] Ibid., 2: 118.

within six months.[27] Zemira and the American scoundrel Mr. Groveby prepared for matrimonial bliss, and soon welcomed a young son, Theodore. Groveby soon proposed moving from the Caribbean back to America, and Zemira packed her belongings to join her husband. Zemira had been alarmed to find on the day of the voyage that he had liquidated her fortune, sold her properties, and left her alone in the island. Victim to the schemes of this rogue, Zemira then possessed only one small plantation, and pressing financial distresses to address. Additionally, she had found the fellow creoles on the island unwilling to assist her in her state. "This sudden reverse of fortune gave me an opportunity of discovering a similar alteration in the conduct of my acquaintance," Zemira recalled, "the warmth of friendship was changed into cool indifference; and those few who still continued to wear the appearance of cordiality, rendered my visits irksome, by satirical remarks, or mortifying reflections."[28] Due to her husband's machinations, Zemira had plunged from being one of the richest women on the island to being practically destitute and devoid of the assistance of relatives and friends.

Although facing financial ruin, Zemira still possessed a level of propriety and sensibility regarding her enslaved subordinates. Unlike her fellow plantation owners, she did not mistreat her slaves and acted as a benefactress to the people she owned. Peacock portrayed Zemira as a sensible slave owner who did not seek to profit off the sale of her slaves, even at her financial peril. Zemira contended that "we have no right to tyrannize over, and treat as brutes, those who will doubtless one day be made partakers with us of an immorality."[29] After freeing her slaves rather than subjecting them to a ruthless sale, Zemira witnessed their reaction: "not a dry eye was

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[27] Ibid., 2: 120.
[28] Ibid., 2: 124.
[29] Ibid., 2: 125. George Boulukos views this as an employment of the "happy slave" or "grateful slave" literary trope. Boulukos shows how works such as *The Creole* did not show African slaves eager for independence, but focused on their contentment and loyalty to their white British owners. For more on this rhetoric in eighteenth-century literature, see *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

seen among them: so far from being elated with the freedom offered them, they seemed desirous of rushing again into slavery, that I might reap the benefit arising from the sale of them."[30] Zemira and her young son retired to a cottage with one former slave who now acted as a companion. The freed slaves provided food and items for the small family and sustained them throughout this period of hardship. She faced this humiliation of dependence on the same individuals whom she had formerly owned with determination and had lived a quiet life for twelve years.

On the arrival of a new neighbor, who had relocated to the West Indies during his retirement from service as a military officer to begin a plantation with his teenage daughter, Zemira's fortunes had begun to change again. Her young son immediately fell in love with the young Juliana, and Zemira despaired for her son's prospects. Since he was a penniless young man with few opportunities, she believed the planter neighbor Mr. Seamore would not relish the union between the young couple. However, he accepted young Theodore as a man of sense and had not rejected the prospect of uniting their families. He proposed moving to England for the wedding and to settle business matters. When a fire separated them from their companions, Zemira and Theodore believed that their friends must have perished in the tumult. Destitute once again, Zemira and her son appeared at Mrs. Sedley's estate.

Mrs. Sedley welcomed the two into her home and promised assistance after consulting with her husband. On the arrival of her husband, she discovered him perishing from a wound from a duel. On his deathbed he revealed that love for Mrs. Sedley caused him as a younger man to trick a West Indian heiress from her fortune in order to have her fall in love with him. Shocked, Mrs. Sedley called in Zemira who confirmed that this man was the one who had mistreated her. As he faded on his deathbed he apologized for his actions and restored her fortune. The man who

[30] Ibid., 2: 129-130.

had shot him in a duel arrived at the home and revealed that he was none other than Mr. Seamore, who had not perished in the fire after all. Reunited, Juliana and Theodore, with his fortune now intact, are married, and Mrs. Sedley and Zemira remained close in friendship after the death of the husband they unknowingly shared.[31]

Peacock's character of Zemira portrayed the ideal creole who treated her slaves benevolently, sought education, and lived a life of propriety back in England. By freeing her slaves, Zemira transcended the social evils of plantation slavery. At the conclusion of the tale, she still possessed her fortune, but due to her good deeds, she could enjoy it in England without the guilt associated with her past. Additionally, by making Zemira the victim of a rakish American, Peacock presented the fears that creole fortunes belonging to unprotected heiresses might fall in the wrong hands. Providentially, all ills were righted in the end of the novella, but not until after years of distress for the poor heroine.

Peacock's story contained sympathy for the plight of women who became victims to fortune hunters. Significantly, it was Zemira's virtue that allowed her to rehabilitate in England. After eschewing her plantation background by freeing her slaves, she could make the journey to England unsullied. Other positive portrayals in literature also included women who escaped from life in the tropics for a quiet rural life in England. Women who inhabited the West Indies, but returned to England to educate their daughters or for other sentimental reasons, found much more favorable renditions in eighteenth-century literature. These literary depictions reflected the general public fear of the West Indies, and the desire to keep young girls in England so that the association with slavery and the plantation lifestyle would not taint them.

Novels with more positive portrayals of white women in the West Indies were not obsessed with luxurious possessions, contained propriety when it came to consumption and

[31] Ibid., 2: 146-177.

behavior. Creole women who left the West Indies and returned to England to lead genteel but unobtrusive lives received approval in literary works.[32] In Jane West's *Advantages of Education or the History of Maria Williams* (1793), the heroine did not inhabit the sugar plantation islands and so escaped the moral taint from this sultry land.[33] West's *The History of Maria Williams* fashioned the story of a mother's attempt to raise a morally assured daughter in the late eighteenth century. The author portrayed Maria's father as a fiscally profligate man who returned to his property in Jamaica once he had depleted his cash in London while living a lavish lifestyle. Maria's mother accompanied her husband when it was clear that his business schemes in the West Indies were not as profitable as could be wished. A friend confided to Mrs. Williams that estates were run best when a wife was around to assist in the management.[34] Mrs. Williams departed for Jamaica and left Maria in a boarding school in order to not "expose her only child to the danger of the sea, or the unhealthy climate of the new world."[35] Material objects helped connect this separated family during their parting. Mrs. Williams possessed a small miniature of the young Maria, which comforted her during her sad journey. Mrs. Williams explained: "During my melancholy voyage, my whole employment was to gaze upon your picture, or to commend

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[32] Several female authors in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century crafted works that involve the West Indies. These novels include Mary Hay's *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* (London: Robinsons, 1796); Helena Wells's *Constantia Neville, or the West Indian* (London: C. Whittingham for T. Caddell, 1800); Jane Austen, *Mansfield Park* (London: Printed for T. Egerton, 1814). See also Deirdre Coleman, "The Global Context," in *The Cambridge Companion to Women's Writing in the Romantic Period*, edited by Devoney Looser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[33] Jane West wrote this novel under the pseudonym Prudentia Homespun. A conservative writer, she followed *Advantages of Education or the History of Maria Williams* (1793) with her best-known work, *A Gossip's Story* (1796). For more concerning West, see Barbara Joan Horwitz, *British Women Writers, 1700-1850: An Annotated Bibliography of Their Works and Works About Them* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 186; "West, Jane (1758–1852)," Gail Baylis in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29086 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[34] Jane West, *Advantages of Education, or, the History of Maria Williams* (London: Printed for William Lane at the Minerva Press, Leadenhall-Street, 1793), II, 135. For the character of creoles and abolition, see, Carolyn Vellenga Berman, *Creole Crossings: Domestic Fiction and the Reform of Colonial Slavery* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006).

[35] West, *The History of Maria Williams*, 1: 1 7.

my deserted child to that Providence, which seems peculiarly attentive to the sorrows of orphans."[36] This small reminder of her daughter comforted Mrs. Williams as she travelled to her new, but temporary home of Jamaica.

Although Mrs. Williams left her daughter to journey to Jamaica, she took care to ensure for her daughter's education. Maria began her instruction and lived a modest life during her residence at the establishment of a Madame du Pont. After receiving word of Mr. Williams' death, Maria prepared to reunite with her mother, who planned to return from her West Indian sojourn. Maria's schoolmates, and the instructors themselves, believed that Maria was now a "West Indian heiress," and began to give special treatment to this supposedly rich young girl. Maria's associates questioned her: "What carriage will your mamma keep? Where will her country house be? Will she have a servant out of livery? Shall you have more than six new dresses a year? Do you intend going to all the race balls?"[37] The students at du Pont's boarding school, conscious of the conventional behavior surrounding creoles returning to England from the West Indies, inquired after Maria's supposed new lifestyle. However, when Mrs. Williams arrived at the boarding school and reunited with her young daughter, they all showed surprise at her lack of ostentation, and even more so at the desire of Mrs. Williams to live a frugal life in a country cottage. Unlike the stereotypical absentee planter, the two women did not live in a fashionable residence with all the accouterments of the elite in London or Bath, but chose to live in the country.

The Williams's new home, full of comfort, lacked the elegance at which stereotypical creoles grasped. Maria, unsure of her position in relation to what her schoolmates had expected, and her daily life with her mother, questioned why they did not have the luxury expected of West

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[36] Ibid., 2: 138. For motherhood and the crafting of the role of "mother" through material goods in the colonial world, see Chapter 3, "The Brodbelt Family of Jamaica."

[37] Ibid., 1: 12.

Indian wealth. Her mother explained that living parsimoniously allowed them to live within their means and inhabit the station that best fit their lifestyle. They should live a comfortable life, but still retain enough for charitable works. She explained that they were not rich, and could not afford to live like their wealthy neighbors. According to Mrs. Williams, the best kind of luxury was that of "mental luxury," or knowing she could live within her means. Although Maria desired luxurious goods, like "large houses, elegant furniture, and expensive pleasures," they were beyond the budget that Mrs. Williams created. She admonished Maria who had "once or twice urged me to exceed the sum I proposed, by saying that a trifle more would purchase something far more fashionable or genteel. I have previously calculated my expences, and have endeavoured to preserve order and proportion in every part, as nothing is to me so absurd, as a motely mixture of profusion and meanness."[38] Maria agreed with her mother and began to study classical examples and those of the "eastern nations," which would furnish her examples of "the luxurious effeminacy that marked the declining days of Rome, [by which] she endeavoured to inspire the attentive girl with an abhorrence of extravagance, corruption, and licentious behavior."[39] Maria learned that the best kind of life was one in which she could assist others and earn praise due to her diligence to her mother and her willingness to help the less fortunate near her.

Although Maria attempted to live prudently, temptations towards a more lavish lifestyle came in the form of a new friendship with the heiress Charlotte. The leaders of the neighborhood socialized with Maria and her mother, and Charlotte desired that Maria accompany her to a masked ball. Mrs. Williams tried to excuse Maria from going, because "a peculiar dress would be necessary…and such a preparation, for only one night, would in her circumstances be

[38] Ibid., 1: 65.
[39] Ibid., 1: 40.

extravagant."[40] Charlotte offered to purchase an ensemble for young Maria, and still, Mrs. Williams declined the invitation out of proper decorum. Maria, heartbroken from missing this lavish treat, cried and bemoaned her fate. Mrs. Williams explained that she only was "anxious to keep you ignorant of pleasures, which it is not in my power to procure. Suppose I had yielded to your present wish, what security can you give, that after having once experienced the wild throb of tumultuary transport, you will preserve your relish for those calm delights which at present afford you so pure a satisfaction?"[41] Maria understood the frivolous nature of the masked ball, and redoubled her efforts concerning charitable deeds in her community.

Even with all of the propriety instilled by Mrs. Williams, Maria's future happiness was not guaranteed. Later in the novel, Maria barely escaped the clutches of a philanderer, Sir Henry Neville, who desired to bespoil Maria's virtue. In the end, due to the careful attention of Mrs. Williams, and the good education and character of Maria, she did not fall victim to the aristocrat's schemes. Maria met the good young Mr. Herbert, who happened to be the son of Mrs. William's close friend. The Herberts also had connections in Jamaica, but chose to reside in England and ally their morals with British mores. He presented a respectable and desired spouse for Maria and both families found the match to suit their desires.

West's depiction of creole habits and lifestyles did not agree with other descriptions of the lavish displays of absentee planters. The author demonstrated how education and prudential living could create respectable creoles who returned from the West Indies. By living modest lifestyles, they could overcome the stain of their origin and mask the taint deriving from the origination of their income. Maria's desire to devote time to charitable acts, rather than attending masked balls, illuminated the proper behavior for this young woman. Mrs. Williams instilled this

[40] Ibid., 1: 44.
[41] Ibid., 1: 50.

behavior in her daughter and presented a counterpoise to other creole characters in literature. Although material goods were important to this family, it was either modest or sentimental manifestations that found approval in novels such as *The History of Maria Williams.*

The History of Maria Williams proposed that women who remained in England for education could find social and sentimental success according to British standards; however, other portrayals in eighteenth-century literature were not as favorable. Peacock and Williams's works stand alone as positive depictions of West Indian women. Most other literary delineations, beginning with William Pittis's 1720 *The Jamaica Lady,* range from portrayals of sexually lascivious women, to Charlotte Brontë's infamous depiction of West Indian insanity in her 1847 novel, *Jane Eyre.* The motives for the authors grew as the abolitionist movement gained strength, which bolstered the desire to depict women in the West Indies unfavorably, due to their contact and role in the society surrounding slave plantation culture.

An early novel, Pittis's *Jamaica Lady,* borrowed from the tropes of the travel histories, reflecting the same themes while considering the sexual morality of two Jamaican women. As literary scholar Erin Mackie argues, the author William Pittis infused his work with "anti-colonialist panic, xenophobia, and misogyny."[42] First published in 1720, Pittis depicted the drama of two women on board a ship bound for England. Set in 1713, the scene took place the same year that the navy was recalled from Jamaica back to England following the Peace of Utrecht.[43] This novel fixated on the sexual morality and freedoms displayed by two women traveling from Jamaica. As literary characters, Bavia and Holmesia possessed sexual morals that

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[42] Erin Mackie, "Jamaican Ladies and Tropical Charms," *Ariel* 37 (2006), 192.

[43] Ibid., 197. As part of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, Great Britain gained the monopoly for trade with the Spanish Empire, including the "asiento," which allowed Britain to have access to the African slave trade in Spanish America. The South Sea Company benefitted from this treaty as they took control of the slave trade in the Atlantic. See Brendan Simms, *Three Victories and a Defeat: The Rise and Fall of the First British Empire, 1714-1783* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 68. As Britain became more committed to the West Indies and to the slave trade through these colonial victories, more British inhabitants became connected to the Companies that facilitated the slave trade.

sat uncomfortably with British audiences.[44] Pittis described Bavia as being an honest woman before she traveled to Jamaica; however, the sultry climate altered her to become a sexually promiscuous woman. Holmelsia, a woman of mixed descent also travelling aboard the vessel, also did not have any pretentions towards piety or morality. Pittis stated his purpose in writing this story was "to expose the Vice of two notorious Women, that others, whose Inclunations direct 'em the same Course, may (if not for fear of future Punishment, yet) by the Dread of present, and of publick Shame, be refrain'd from their ill Intentions."[45] Pittis used these two characters to represent the dangers of the West Indies. Although Bavia and Holmesia had different backgrounds, their sexual proclivities thrust them to the same conclusion, demonstrating the inevitability of immorality on the sugar plantation islands.

Holmelsia, a socially ambiguous progeny of the liaisons between the white population and the black slaves, hailed from Jamaica. She "was a Creole, and consequently of a pale yellow Complexion…when mov'd, of an implacable, revengeful Temper; yet a great Pretender to Piety and Virtue."[46] After spending time as a kept mistress, birthing an illegitimate child, and conducting a hasty marriage, Holmesia decided to return to England with a female companion and without her husband.[47] Although this story of Holmelsia was not extraordinary for novels in the eighteenth century, the justification of her actions shows the perceived state of the morals in the West Indies. For, it was thought that in the West Indies, "They had a quite different Method of Practice; and that Woman is of greatest Reputation in *Jamaica* who manages her Intrigues

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[44] Carol Barash, "The Character of Difference: The Creole Woman as Cultural Mediator in Narratives about Jamaica," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 4 (1990), 406-424. According to Barash, "The text is structured by the intermingled stories of Bavia and Holmelsia…who meet on board and who are linked both by the sexual freedoms they exercise on and off ship, and by the…punishment for their sexual liberty in the novel's conclusion" (416).

[45] William Pittis, *The Jamaica Lady: Or, the Life of Bavia. Containing an Account of Her Intrigues, Cheats, Amours in England, Jamaica, and the Royal Navy. ... with the Diverting Humours of Capt. Fustian*, (London: printed; and sold by Tho. Bickerton, 1720), Preface 3.

[46] Ibid., 8-9.

[47] Ibid., 46-47.

with most Prudence, and not who has the greatest Share of Modesty; for that the Scandal does not lie in the Action, but in the Discovery."[48] This same principle, that scandal lay not in the action but in the discovery, was undoubtedly practiced in England; however, the belief that it was commonly accepted in the Jamaican scene made the West Indies appear to be a place satiated with vice. Metropolitan observers viewed the climate as a real and almost immediate factor in altering the morality of both the men and women in the West Indies.

Since Holmesia lived in Jamaica her whole life, her contact with the hot climate rendered her immoral from the beginning. However, the other character Bavia originated from England, which meant that her behavior altered in this colonial soil from a previous life of morality. Although she attempted to remain pure, within seven years she succumbed to the desires of the flesh that the climate and the instability of life in Jamaica imbued within her. Therefore, this novel proposed that even women who were not born on the tropical island could diverge from their proper "British" backgrounds. Fellow travelers on the ship questioned why Bavia relocated to the West Indies, since only "mad People and Fools, when posses'd of a plentiful Fortune, or even of a moderate Competency in *England*, in Paradice, would leave it, to go to *Jamaica*, the Sink of Sin, and Receptacle of all manner of Vices."[49] Only individuals with dishonorable desires or reputations would choose to live in a place such as the West Indies. The colonies there were not the place of tropical delights, but "A Place so intolerably hot and suffocating, that he swore that was only a brown Paper betwixt it and Hell."[50] This ringing criticism agrees with the

[48] Ibid., 45.

[49] Ibid., 10-11. See Figure 3.1 for an image of metropolitan perceptions of life in the West Indies. Although satirical in nature, the 1803 print "The torrid zone, or, Blessings of Jamaica" by William Holland indicates that the "blessings of Jamaica" included yellow fever and possible death. The white creoles portrayed are morally lax and possibly imbibing opiates to combat the horrors of life in Jamaica. This print represents an angel of death looming over unsuspecting Jamaican residents. Bellow them yellow fever loomed with a draught of opium awaiting the languishing creoles. Surrounding the yellow fever, creatures of darkness, and skeletons of those had had previously succumbed to the disease floated, awaiting further victims to join them.

[50] Ibid., 10-11.

overall perception of the West Indies as a place in opposition to England in both climate and manners.

Although Bavia's background remained unclear, the narrator revealed that she had been married in England, but that her husband had sold her in an attempt to rid himself of her. Fated for an Eastern seraglio, she expressed a desire to return to England. Bavia gave the captain a precious gem in her possession in exchange for her own "jewel." The captain agreed not to send her into the clutches of a sultan and proposed the West Indies as her destination.[51] She admitted

Figure 3.1: "The Torrid Zone: or Blessings of Jamaica," published by William Holland, 1803, Courtesy of the Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, lwlpr10433.

that although the Caribbean was not an ideal situation, it would please her "to live amongst Christians."[52] After inhabiting the island for seven years, she began to deviate morally and succumbed to the tropical carnal passions by taking a lover. While she "gloried in her Guilt," she

[51] Ibid., 19. For fears concerning white slavery in early-modern England, see Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600-1850* (London: J. Cape, 2002).

[52] Ibid., 15-18.

prided herself to have "acquir'd so compleat a Gentleman for her Gallant."[53] Not satisfied with her conquest, she soon found another conquest to replace her first. Pittis somewhat excused her for her behavior, for, "'twas not her natural Inclination, but that cursed malevolent Planet which predominates in that Island."[54] The climate had such a power that it "changes the Constitution of its Inhabitants, that if a Woman land there as chaste as a Vestal, she becomes in forty-eight Hours a perfect Messalina, and that 'tis as impossible for a Woman to live at *Jamaica* and preserve her Virtue, as for a Man to make a Voyage to *Ireland,* and bring back his Honesty."[55] No matter how pure and uncorrupted a woman might have been in England, tropical desires soon overcame their chastity. According to authors such as Pittis, women inevitably deviated from metropolitan mores in this tropical landscape. Following her conquests and her assistance in corrupting another young woman of virtue, Bavia did not return to England at the conclusion of the novel. As a "Scandal to her Sex," she ended up residing in Ireland, "that she might no longer be a Disgrace to her Friends."[56] Due to her degeneration, she could not hope to be accepted back in England. Bavia was now ostracized from her homeland due to her conduct and her colonial contact.

The two characters crafted by Pittis represented some of the first instances of employing the stereotype of the depraved West Indian woman. The West Indies were of interest in England ever since Edward Ward's *A Trip to Jamaica* was first published in 1698, followed with eight

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[53] Ibid., 24, 26.

[54] Ibid., 35.

[55] Ibid. For more representations of Ireland as a British colony, see John Gibney, "Early Modern Ireland: A British Atlantic Colony?," *History Compass* 6 (2008): 172-182; Keith Jeffery, *An Irish Empire?: Aspects of Ireland and the British Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

[56] Ibid., 95-100. For more concerning Ireland as an English colonial site, see Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World, 1600-1800* (Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Stephen Howe, *Ireland and Empire Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

editions by1702.[57] In his travel narrative, Ward criticized creole white women, preceding even the remarks of Long and J.B. Moreton.[58] Ward famously remarked that the only women who would travel to Jamaica were those who "have been Scandalous in England to the utmost degree, either Transported by the State, or led by their Vicious Inclinations; where they may be Wicked without Shame, and Whore on without Punishment."[59] Pittis's and Ward's works have many similarities due to their close association. Since Pittis himself never traveled to Jamaica, literary historian William McBurney proposes that Pittis received his first-hand knowledge of the location and people from Ward, his travel historian acquaintance.[60] Authors like Pittis used travel histories as a template in the creation of this literary stereotype that developed throughout the eighteenth century and came to fruition in the nineteenth century.

Portrayals of West Indian characters abounded in novels that depicted the women as social failures and sexual pariahs, and lacking in the sensibility that was so esteemed by eighteenth-century British women. Sarah Scott's popular *History of George Ellison* (1765) portrayed a creole character, Mrs. Ellison, who appears more of a transitional figure in between the positive portrayals in Peacock and West to a completely deranged "madwoman in the attic" from nineteenth-century novels. Scott narrated the story of a colonial merchant who married a wealthy creole woman, inheriting a plantation in Jamaica in the process.[61] The eponymous George Ellison possessed the sensibility that his wife did not have. After arriving on this tropical

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[57] William H., McBurney, Arthur Blackamore, Eliza Fowler Haywood, and Mary Davys, *Four before Richardson: Selected English Novels, 1720-1727* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), xx.

[58] For the lives and writings of Long and Moreton, see Chapter 1.

[59] Edward Ward, *A Trip to Jamaica: With the True Character of the People and the Island* (London: J. How, 1700), 16.

[60] McBurney, 85n, 86n.

[61] Sarah Scott (1720-1795), sister of the wealthy bluestocking Elizabeth Montagu, published works that brought together history and fiction. Scott authored many books anonymously. *The History of George Ellison* was well received and fairly popular. See also Markman Ellis, *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender, and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87-118. Ellis notes that the novel was "well received and achieved some popular success. The Noble brothers published a second edition in 1770 for their chain of circulating libraries, and in a heavily abridged form, the novel had seven further issues before the end of the century" (89).

island, Ellison found the accessories of the local women to be excessive: "the egrets, pompons, and bracelets of fashionable nymphs appeared to him oftener burdensome than ornamental."[62] In his estimation, the local women prized vulgar accessories rather than tasteful adornments. His future wife, although older than he and past her bloom, behaved well and caught his attention. Her fortune was not a temptation for Ellison whose "heart was void of those nice sensibilities."[63] In this work, Ellison serves as a foil to expose the corruption of creole women, such as Mrs. Ellison.

Ellison, unaccustomed to the nature of sugar plantation lifestyles, grew troubled in his new station and the expectations regarding the treatment of his subordinates. His uneasiness shocked his wife who possessed "a reasonable share of compassion for a white man or women, but had from her infancy been so accustomed to see the most shocking cruelties exercised on the blacks, that she could not conceive how one of that complexion could excite any pity."[64] She did not regard the black slaves as human; although she was not necessarily cruel, she was insensitive to sufferings through her lifelong association with the system of slavery. Ellison attempted to ameliorate the conditions of his slaves and thrived in his role as mediator and arbiter in this paternalistic society. However, Mrs. Ellison soon revealed her jealous nature with controlling and manipulative behavior.[65] Through her "arts" she enslaved her husband, and, Scott determined: "Love may assume a tyrannic air, and from a long habit of self-gratification, a person may be brought to seek less the happiness of the beloved, than her own indulgence."[66] This extended to Mrs. Ellison's "narrow and ungenerous mind," which stretched to

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[62] Sarah Scott, *The History of Sir George Ellison*, edited by Betty Rizo (Lexington, Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 1996), 9.
[63] Scott, *The History of George Ellison*, 9.
[64] Ibid., 10.
[65] Ibid., 20.
[66] Ibid., 22-23.

overindulging their young son and removing any strictures Ellison attempted to place in his life.[67] The fear of corrupting another generation led Ellison to believe that the only recourse was to send the young boy to England for his education. After the death of his wife, the somewhat relieved Ellison as well as his young son removed to England, where both the behavior and climate suited him much better. Mrs. Ellison was portrayed not as wholly depraved as will be seen in characters in Charlotte Smith's *The Wanderings of Warwick* (1794), and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), but as uneducated and unaware of her shortcomings. Although Ellison attempted to improve his wife, her upbringing rendered her unreceptive to his teaching. Scott demonstrated that these behavioral deficiencies could be remedied by education in England and a modification towards a more sensible outlook regarding slavery and society.

As the eighteenth century drew to an end, literary depictions of women in the sugar plantation islands grew in vice and debauchery. Smith's *The Wanderings of Warwick* portrayed the insensibility and cruelty common to literary depictions of creole women in Jamaica.[68] In this novel, the hero Warwick courted for a short time the heiress of a large plantation, but decided against settling into matrimony. "To sacrifice all these advantages, and become a married man, was not to be thought of," for young Warwick, "though my fair creolian could have given me the whole island."[69] He encouraged a friend, who happened to be stationed in Jamaica as well, to pursue this wealthy young lady. After securing her acquiescence for an engagement, the future seemed propitious for the young officer.

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[67] Ibid., 30.

[68] Charlotte Smith married the son of a West India merchant. She criticized the inhumanity of the slave owners in Jamaica and her works contain anti-slavery sentiments, though this did not stop her husband and his family from collecting revenue from their plantations in Barbados. This was not enough to maintain the finances of the family. Smith turned to writing to supplement their income. According to Sarah M. Zimmerman, Smith frequently adopted "the prototypical figure of the wanderer (who may be male or female) as a vehicle for social commentary." See "Smith, Charlotte (1749–1806)," Sarah M. Zimmerman in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, October 2007, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25790 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[69] Charlotte Smith, *The Wanderings of Warwick* (London: Printed for J. Bell, 1794), 47.

The fortune possessed by the young creole heiress proved to be a veneer to a cruel and domineering disposition. After preparing for a lavish wedding celebration, the lieutenant surprised Warwick one afternoon by rushing in to his accommodations. Warwick questioned the motivation for such behavior in the middle of the heat of an afternoon. He replied that all connections with the young heiress, Marianne, were finished and he was prepared to quit the island and leave all the attachments he had formed. Warwick, alarmed at his friend's propositions, pressed for more information. He described an encounter at the young lady's home that day that prompted his abrupt change in sentiment. On a romantic whim, he desired to surprise her at her home for a romantic stroll and conversation. He recollected waiting in "the apartment where Miss Shaftesbury sits in a morning— it was elegantly dressed with flowers;—her toilet was tastefully set out;—her musick-book was open at a pathetic song;—every thing round seemed to breathe tenderness and love; and I reflected with delight that the fair form—the elegant mind that made these arrangements was soon to be mine."[70] These material trappings of a woman imbibed with sensibility soon proved to be nothing but a façade.

Delighted by the sentimental scene he happened upon, he quickly became alarmed at the scene he witnessed outside. After hearing a commotion he stepped outside to the colonnade overlooking the grounds, where he "was struck with a fight that has for ever cured me of trusting to the appearance of female softness and tenderness." He saw his "fair, my gentle Marianne, whom I have seen weep over the fictitious distresses of a novel, and shrink from the imaginary sorrows of an imaginary heroine," approaching the victim. Marianne "walked with cool but stately steps before two old negro women who dragged between them a mulatto girl of ten or eleven years old, while another stout negro woman followed with the instrument of punishment in her hand, which I soon found was to be applied to the unfortunate little creature." After

[70] Smith, 52.

covering the unfortunate girl's mouth to stop the cries of "dear Missy," Marianne began to administer the punishment herself. Alarmed, the affianced officer "saw this women, with whom I had fondly dreamed of passing a life of felicity…direct the punishment, and increase its severity." Watching the sight in horror he "heard the shrieks of the miserable little victim; —I saw her back almost flayed." Although he could hardly stomach the scene, his beloved "seemed to me to enjoy the spectacle." Unable to bear any more, he raced away determined never to see her again. He believed that such scenes would render his life miserable, notwithstanding her fortune, even if "her portions were had the kingdoms of Europe."[71] Warwick, although sharing in his friend's misery over the event, did not disagree with the decision to sever ties with the family. He recalled that she ended up marrying an American, who did not have the same sentiments as the British towards treatment of the enslaved population.

Smith's depiction of this young creole woman added to the number of publications that influenced the metropolitan perception of women residing in the West Indies. She portrayed Marianne as a sentimental young lady, who cried while reading novels, and enjoyed tender music and flowers. Marianne appeared to an unaccustomed viewer to possess sentiments of an ideal British young genteel woman. Although she enjoyed novels and music that contained sensibility, her tender feelings seemed only extended to the characters in novels. Regarding the enslaved people under her care, Marianne enjoyed dispensing punishments herself, as witnessed by her British fiancé. The cruel treatment of her subordinate shocked the young lover, who saw meanness under the appearance of sensibility. This was perhaps heightened by the fact that the young girl was a mulatto, and he perhaps related to her as the offspring of her planter father. The young age of the victim also contributed to her helplessness, while her cries for mercy fell on her

[71] Ibid., 53-55.

mistress's deaf ears. Although the young man was not invited to witness this event, his accidental viewing permanently stripped away his affection for his fiancée.

The story's narrator, Warwick, pointed out that not all women in Jamaica demonstrated similar treatment of their subordinates. He did "not mean to infer from thence, that all the women of that country in superior life are without tenderness. –But it is astonishing how habit influences the human character, and how little impression is made on our feelings by objects to which we are from our infancy or early youths accustomed."[72] Scenes of suffering, witnessed frequently and from an early age, rendered these young women less sensible to the misery of the enslaved population. Although they cried over the distresses of a fictional character, they were unresponsive to the real agonies in their vicinity.

Most creole women in late eighteenth-century novels possessed the vice of cruelty towards subordinates, and authors added the immorality of overconsumption to their characters. In *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* (1796), Elizabeth Helme unfolded a frightening character. The plantation mistress Mrs. Walters possessed the depravity of mistreatment of slaves with an overindulgence in material objects.[73] Mrs. Walters, born and raised in the West Indies, displayed little sympathy towards her slaves. Like other depictions of creole women, "education and example had rendered Mrs. Walters unfeeling," much like Marianne from *The Wanderings of Warwick*. One of Mrs. Walters's former slaves, Felix, recounted his experience with Mrs. Walters, and the horror of living under her cruel regulation. Recalling his initiation to plantation life in the West Indies, Felix described the horror awaiting the new slaves. In Jamaica, the

[72] Ibid., 57.

[73] Elizabeth Helme, *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* (London: Published by J. Clements, Little Pulteney Street, 1841). According to Mary Robinson, Elizabeth Helme worked as a novelist and published educational works. She also translated Plutarch's *Lives*. It is uncertain how widespread or popular *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* was at the time of publication. It does not seem to have been as far-reaching as the other works mentioned in this chapter. For an examination of this work, see Mary Robinson and Julie A. Shaffer, *Walsingham, or, The Pupil of Nature* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2003), 545-547.

owners customarily branded "the newly-purchased slaves just above the shoulders with the initials of their owner's name—an operation that is performed by heating a piece of silver, on which the letter[s] are engraven, over a flame of spirits, and pressing it on the back."[74] Although this ceremony would distress the sentimental faint-hearted British woman, Mrs. Walters did not shy away from the violent undertaking. Far from disapproving of this ceremony, Mrs. Walters "performed [it] herself, affirming that the slaves, forced to participate in this ceremony, never pressed the stamp sufficiently to make the letters legible."[75] As Mrs. Walters "made ready to give me the usual marks," they appeared to the newly enslaved man to be "doubly horrid from the preparation."[76] This physically painful act, meted out by a woman with all the appearance of goodness and virtue, shocked the young man. He found salvation from his burning ritual from Mrs. Walters's son, Henry. Happening upon the scene "he insisted to his mother who, in spite of her temper, was extravagantly fond of him, that his father had bought me for him, and that he had determined I should be marked with his own initials only." Felix determined that his young master's "goodness [was] engraven on my heart in far more indelible characters." Despite the violent temper of the plantation mistress, Felix enjoyed the companionship of his young master.

Although viciously volatile regarding the humans she owned, Mrs. Walters cherished her other material possessions. Like many consumers in the eighteenth-century British world, she enjoyed porcelain goods.[77] Mrs. Walters, "who was extravagantly fond of china, had a present of

[74] Helme, 78.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.
[77] For porcelain consumption, see Alden Cavanagh, and Michael Elia Yonan, *The Cultural Aesthetics of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain* (Farnham, Surrey, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub., 2010); P. M., Guerty, and K. Switaj, "Tea, Porcelain, and Sugar in the British Atlantic World," *Magazine of History* 18 (2004): 56-59; Stacey Sloboda, "Porcelain Bodies: Gender, Acquisitiveness, and Taste in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Material Cultures, 1740-1920*, edited by John and Alla Myzelev Potvin (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009).

a valuable set from England, and which was placed on a table in the saloon."[78] While playing in the room, young Henry broke the set. Knowing the temper of his mother, he ran and hid with Felix to escape her wrath. After waiting what seemed like an appropriate time to cool her anger, Felix emerged to scope the scene and warn Henry if he needed to remain concealed. Happening upon the scene, Felix knew "no terms strong enough to paint the confusion I was witness to: all the slaves had been called, and accused with the mischief, but their innocence alone had been a poor defence: she had buffeted and struck them with her new object."[79] Not content with her punishment to the innocent slaves, she turned to Felix. "Screaming with passion," she proclaimed that Felix must have been the culprit and vowed to "have him flayed alive."[80] Felix decided to take the blame for his young master's mistake and replied, "If I have done it, madam, I am willing to pay the forfeiture."[81] Felix witnessed her reaction as his mistress watched "with an inhumanity unbecoming her sex," as he was carried away. Henry could not stand that poor Felix should receive the punishment for his blunder and threw himself in between the unfortunate slave and the instrument of torture, and received the first blow. Henry announced to the witnesses that "If the paltry china must have a victim, let it be me. I am the offender, and if blood must be the expiation, it shall be mine."[82] Mrs. Walters would not permit her beloved son to receive corporal punishment and stopped the entire affair.

Mrs. Walters allowed her passion for material objects to exceed her love of humanity. By placing the china set above the well-being of a human life, she demonstrated that material

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[78] As Helme shows in this work, material possessions were important to eighteenth-century consumers, particularly in the West Indies, because such objects were rare. For a complete set to make it across the ocean unscathed would have made such an acquisition a prized collection. The subsequent familial cases illuminated in the following chapters will show that such attachment to objects occurred more commonly to sentimental objects from family members, rather than to inherently expensive items from the metropole.

[79] Helme, 79.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid., 79.

possessions meant more than human lives. When she found the broken china, she committed to "flay" the offender. These material trinkets surpassed the value of her human subordinates, whom she physically marred by branding and whipping. To the metropolitan gaze, this kind of behavior deviated from ideal womanly tenderness. Later in this novel, disgruntled slaves murdered Mrs. Walters, but, through the machinations of Felix, spared the life of the kind Henry. Novels depicted these creole women as vicious and cruel, and more concerned with their decorative objects than human life.

Ranging from Scott's *History of George Ellison* to Helm's *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest*, these works portrayed creole women as materialistic and unfeeling. Mrs. Ellison represented a poor mother, whose jealousy of her husband and constraining behavior towards him left the hero relieved when she met an untimely demise. Marianne from *The Wanderings of Warwick* appeared to be a genteel British lady with all the material possessions of a woman of sensibility, but she fell short of the ideal through her cruel treatment of her subordinates. Finally, Mrs. Walters in *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* displayed tyrannical behavior towards her slaves, consumed with passion for her luxury possessions but heartless towards human beings. Bordering on mental instability, Mrs. Walters met her fate through a slave uprising.[83] These portrayals of women in the West Indies grew in severity, and this stereotype would culminate in infamous characters who represented the continued fascination with the West Indies and the women who resided in these tropical islands.

[83] A twentieth-century work centering on an eighteenth-century legend from Jamaica also portrayed the female slave owner being murdered by her slaves. Herbert G. de Lisser's *The White Witch of Rosehall* (London and Oxford: MacMillan Education Ltd., 1982), was originally published in 1929, although de Lisser set the work in 1831. Based in fact, this story became obscured with legend. Annie Palmer was a plantation mistress and was murdered by her slaves in the slave uprisings of 1831, but the rest is lost in fiction. This story shows how "rememory" of slavery and creole white women can have a great impact on the depictions of white women in the West Indies in the long eighteenth century. The literary stereotypes remained and actually grew with severity even after the nineteenth century depictions such as in *Jane Eyre.* This twentieth century rendition shows how popular interest remained in the British sugar plantation era in the West Indies. For "rememory" see Gwendolyn DuBois Shaw, *Seeing the Unspeakable: The Art of Kara Walker*,(Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

The abolitionist movement combined the undesirable descriptions in the travel histories with those in novels and other literary depictions to aid their cause of ending slavery.[84] As seen in the previous works, men in the West Indies are viewed as somewhat lax, but with the ability to improve in the metropole.[85] The portrayals of women in the West Indies grew in severity, and were seen by eighteenth-century authors to represent the ills associated with colonial slavery. Pointing to these negative representations, abolitionists blamed the lack of education and the exposure to a violent lifestyle, coupled with overconsumption of material goods, for the vice present in the West Indies. Literary scholar Willie Sypher sums up the depiction of creoles: They are "Yellowish in complexion, lassitude of body and mind, fitful spells, of passion and energy, generously bordering on improvidence, sentimentality combined with a streak of haughtiness and cruelty to subordinates, and a certain exotic grace, especially in the creole girl."[86] In these novels the characters of creole white women have ranged from benevolent slave owners to cruel plantation mistresses. Anna Laetitia Barbauld's "Epistle to William Wilberforce, Esq. on the Rejection of the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade," contained strong language to expose the negative influences of slavery. As an active abolitionist, Barbauld wrote a poem to argue the destructive nature of the influence of slavery for British citizens. She attacked first the West Indian men, and then progressed to the creole women, writing:

> Lo! where reclined, pale Beauty courts the breeze,
> Diffused on sofas of voluptuous ease;
> With anxious awe her menial train around
> Catch her faint whispers of half-uttered sound;

[84] For the literature of abolition, see Felicity Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race, and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); A. A. Markley, *Conversion and Reform in the British Novel in the 1790s: A Revolution of Opinions* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.)

[85] Although creole men were censured for the sexual liaisons with the enslaved population in travel histories and in popular publications, white women also received blame for allowing their husbands to wander. Even in areas where they had little control, their husband's infidelity was also viewed as a social failure on the part of the creole women.

[86] Sypher, 504.

> See her, in monstrous fellowship, unite
> At once the Scythian and the Sabyrite!
> Blending repugnant vices, misallied,
> Which frugal nature purposed to divide;
> See her, with indolence to fierceness joined,
> Of body delicate, infirm of mind,
> With languid tones imperious mandates urge;
> With arm recumbent wield the household scourge;
> And with unruffled mien, and placid sounds,
> Contriving torture, and inflicting wounds.[87]

This poem employed the negative portrayals from travel literature, novels, and satirical prints to describe a violent, unstable, and unproductive character. Barbauld described these "pale" beauties of the West Indies, listlessly reclining on sofas, surrounded by slaves. She agreed with representations that appeared in both eighteenth-century popular publications and works of fiction.[88] The use of the term "Scythian" represented savagery and barbarism, while "Sabyrite" described a person seeking luxury, pleasure, and comfort. Therefore the creole women were a combination of both, truly both archaic and dangerous. Barbauld also stated that they were "infirm of mind" to demonstrate their lack of education, and then concluded her poem with these women "contriving torture, and inflicting wounds" to convey their proclivity towards heinous violence. This new stereotype was now one of the tyrannical and somewhat unstable slaveholder.[89]

Previous works had examined either on the destructive power of the climate towards sexual morality, or had concentrated on the violent influences of slavery towards the disposition of the West Indian women. Nineteenth-century authors brought together these two determinants,

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[87] Anna Latetitia Barbauld, "Epistle to William Wilberforce, Esq. on the Rejection of the Bill for Abolishing the Slave Trade," *The Works of Anna Lætitia Barbauld: With a Memoir* ed. Lucy Aikin, (London: Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1791), 176. For Barbauld's life, see William McCarthy, *Anna Letitia Barbauld: Voice of the Enlightenment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[88] See Chapter 1 for representations by Edward Long and J. B. Moreton.

[89] According to Sue Thomas, authors linked "the degenerate moral and intellectual character of the white Creole with the cruelties of the slave-labor system in Jamaica." See Sue Thomas, "The Tropical Extravagance of Bertha Mason," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 27: (1999), 1.

most famously in *Jane Eyre* (1847) by Charlotte Brontë. The creole characters in *Jane Eyre* do not possess even slightly positive attributes, as did the benevolent slaveholders seen in eighteenth-century literature. One of the most enduring villains in Romantic literature was the "madwoman in the attic" from *Jane Eyre.*[90] Brontë introduced the character as strange events occurred in the manor, but she is little more than an apparition throughout the story.[91] Hidden in the attic, Bertha Antoinetta Mason remained an enigma throughout most of the novel.

Although Mason was little more than a specter, the hero, Edward Fairfax Rochester revealed Mason's background as a West Indian heiress who suffered from alcoholism and mental instability. She proved incapable of any conversation other than ranting and cursing. She represented a truly sinister symbol of the effects of the climate and slavery upon a woman. In contrast, the heroine, Jane Eyre, a governess in the Rochester household, embodied the pure, untainted, and ideal British woman. Eyre and Rochester fell in love and at their wedding, Eyre learned that Rochester had a wife hidden in the attic of the manor. Rochester kept his spouse, whom he had met during his travels in the West Indies, locked in the attic due to her insanity. As the daughter of a merchant and creole wife from Spanish Town, Jamaica, Mason possessed the attributes commonly associated with creole women, as noted in other literary examples.[92] Although married for nearly fifteen years, Mason's madness had increased with time. Rochester did not wonder at her insanity, since "she came of a mad family," born of a mother who was

[90] For scholarship on Bertha Mason in literary studies, see Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry* 12 (Autumn, 1985): 243-261; Laurence Lerner, "Bertha and the Critics," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 44 (Dec., 1989): 273-300; Nancy Armstrong, "Captivity and Cultural Capital in the English Novel," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 31 (Summer, 1998): 373-398; Berman, *Creole Crossings*.

[91] Other "madwomen" in nineteenth-century literature besides Mason include Lady Audley, in Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1867), the eponymous character Thérèse Raquin in Emile Zola's 1867 play, Anne Catherick from Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1859), and the unnamed woman in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892).

[92] Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (Oxford: Oxford, 1975), 304.

"both a mad woman and a drunkard!"[93] Duped into that marriage in order to increase his wealth, he has had no choice but to remain with his lunatic wife.

As the second son to a wealthy family, avarice had caused Rochester's father to send him to Caribbean to wed a West Indian heiress. His father's acquaintance, Mr. Mason, whose daughter possessed a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, soon caught the amiable Rochester's attention. Although agreeable in appearance, "the boast of Spanish Town for her beauty," her appearance kept hidden her mental instability.[94] Not well acquainted, Rochester and Mason only met at parties, which she attended fabulously attired and "splendidly dressed." Bereft of conversation, Rochester excused his hastiness in marrying her: "She flattered me, and lavishly displayed for my pleasure her charms and accomplishments."[95] Resplendently outfitted in the current European fashions, she displayed her wealth and position for all to see. Rochester believed himself in love: "I was dazzled, stimulated: my senses were excited; and being ignorant, raw, and inexperienced."[96] The climate, combined with the novelty of this woman, "dazzled" and "stimulated" him, leading him to proceed without considering caution. The Mason family further deceived Rochester by hiding the truth about the mother's condition. They informed Rochester that his bride's mother was dead, although he eventually found out she was locked away in an insane asylum. Rochester's family, aware of this affliction, still convinced him to marry the young woman for her fortune, regardless of the familial condition. Although he attempted an amicable relationship with his new bride, he found that achieving any level of conversation with her was impossible, "at once coarse and trite, perverse and imbecile."[97] Her demeanor did not improve with time, and Rochester became truly miserable in his Jamaican home. Recalling the

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[93] Brontë, 306.
[94] Ibid., 321.
[95] Ibid..
[96] Ibid., 322.
[97] Ibid.

early days in his marriage, Rochester revealed that his wife's "character ripened and developed with frightful rapidity; her vices sprung up fast and rank: they were so strong, only cruelty could check them; and I would not use cruelty." As a creole woman, Mason did not shrink from physical violence; however, Rochester did not approve of such methods regarding the treatment of his wife. He summed up the character of the woman with whom he was now legally intertwined: "Bertha Mason,— the true daughter of an infamous mother,— dragged me through all the hideous and degrading agonies which must attend a man bound to a wife at once intemperate and unchaste."[98] Hating more her "debauchery" than her mental insanity, Rochester felt oppressed in his island abode.

Following his marriage to this woman of fortune who lacked moral character and mental stability, Rochester found his existence more than he could bear. About to take his own life, he felt a "wind" from Europe brush his face, and sensed a breeze from Europe calling him back.[99] Rochester decided to lock Mason up in his manor in England, and hired a strong nurse to care for her and protect the house from her madness.[100] On the day of Rochester and Eyre's wedding, Mason's brother arrived in order to stop the wedding by revealing the existence of his sister.[101] Although her appearance temporarily ruined Eyre's hopes for happiness, Mason returned to her attic imprisonment, a vampire-like creature, dehumanized and placed far away from human contact.[102] Only through her self-immolation at the end of the story did Mason find freedom.

[98] Ibid., 323.

[99] According to Thomas, the "sweet wind from Europe" is the call for emancipation for the black slaves and Thomas Buxon's movement in the House of Commons. This was also seen through amelioration laws from the British to the Jamaican House of Assembly (Thomas, 8).

[100] Brontë, 323-326.

[101] Sharpe argues that in this scene "Bertha Mason is a Calibanesque figure — a cannibalistic beast who chews her brother's flesh to the bone, a fiend who spews forth obscenities, and a monster who cannot control her sexual appetites." Jenny Sharpe, *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 45.

[102] Clement King Shorter, *The Brontes: Life and Letters. Vol.1*, (Hodder & Stoughton, 1908), 383, 384. Brontë remarks in her correspondence that Bertha Mason suffered from "moral madness." Brontë stated in a letter to W. S.

Now uninhibited from the binds of his unwanted marriage, Rochester could marry Eyre. Her death cemented the happiness of Rochester and Eyre.

This literary depiction resonated with other works, such as Scott's *History of George Ellison*, where a British man attempted to "save" the creole woman from her depraved ways. However, Brontë's creole was past the point of redemption, and her suicide was the final punishment for her former crimes, leaving Rochester free to be with the pure, uncontaminated British woman, Eyre. This story met with immediate success in the nineteenth century, and the character of Mason, imprisoned in this gothic manor, became a notorious villain in Romantic literature. Mason did not have a voice in this story, nor did she have a chance to tell her side, justify her situation, or let the reader have a chance to judge her sanity. The male character's words, and Eyre's reflections on her, shaped her character as frightening and menacing. Like many other creoles without a voice, metropolitan observers narrated her existence.

In the long eighteenth century, creole white women from the British West Indies were subjected to scrutiny in male-authored travel histories. Such narratives placed the creole women in the "other" category, between the British women and the savage. Although authors in the metropole were also satirizing British women, according to the colonial rhetoric, British women attained a high level of status whereas the creole women were less than ideal. All the negative aspects from the travel histories and caricatures culminated in the fictional literature focusing on the British West Indies. Here, the creole women were no longer portrayed as merely indolent or characterized by their poor manners. Fiction authors in the eighteenth and nineteenth century depicted them as lascivious and cruel. These works created a prevalent stereotype, but fictional works also allowed for the possibility that creoles who went to Britain for education and returned

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Williams: "There is phase of insanity which may be called moral madness, in which all that is good or even human seems to disappear from the mind, and a fiend-nature replaces it…Mrs. Rochester, indeed, lived a sinful life before she was insane, but sin itself [is] a species of insanity- the truly good behold and compassionate it as such."

to the West Indies might dislike the islands and long for their life in Britain. For example, many women loathed life in the Caribbean, and returned to England after the death of their husbands.

The presented model of white creole women from eighteenth-century works contained varied and poignant representations of women who inhabited the West Indies. Although fictional, they still influenced the perceptions of life and the degenerative possibilities from contact and habitation in the sugar plantation islands. Although Peacock and West proposed that creole women could attain success in the metropole through education and through moving back to and remaining in England, the bulk of the literary depictions do not contain the same hope for rehabilitation. Beginning with Pittis's *Jamaica Lady*, the characters experienced social failure, which ranged from sexual immorality to cruelty towards their subordinates. These women usually did not possess any degree of sensibility, as had their predecessors in eighteenth-century novels, and their portrayals of vices and malice grew throughout the century. Mrs. Ellison in Scott's *History of George Ellison* was overindulgent to her son, but did not contain the viciousness seen later depictions, like Marianne from Smith's *The Wanderings of Warwick* (1794), or Mrs. Walters from Helme's *The Farmer of Inglewood Forest* (1796). Culminating in Bertha Mason from Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), the vices and depravity reached a literary climax. Although not all as popular as *Jane Eyre*, the other literary works still contributed to the general stereotype surrounding women who lived in the West Indies. Whether creole or British, the colonial taint surrounded the female inhabitants of this tropical locale.

While many creole women might have resembled these fictional depictions, many strove to live chaste lives and maintain connections with their loved ones through the sharing of goods. Although they consumed items from the metropole, they seemed to enjoy these goods best when they came from a loved one and represented a separated friend or relative. Many of these goods

did not contain inherent value, but became treasured items due to their association with loved ones. Scrutinized and categorized, white women in the West Indies were not often in charge of their destinies in the West Indies. These women crossed over with their husbands or fathers, to live an idle life with little entertainment. Many of them lived abstemious lives, demonstrated through their lack of partaking in alcoholic beverages as noted in travel narratives. Some women attempted to recreate some kind of British culture, but often succumbed to some kind of undemanding plantation life, cultivating both interest in material goods and metropolitan culture and unconcern with the issues of plantation slavery around her. Contemporary characterizations of women in the West Indies suggested that women in the West Indies, whether born there or resident for a period of time, became lascivious, cruel, and more preoccupied with material possessions than human lives. However, in the writings left behind by women in diaries and journals, letters, and correspondences suggest that women who travelled to and resided in the West Indies were still concerned with familial matters. Although they were aware of British fashions and trends, they cared more for sentimental objects and retaining connections with loved ones than for fashionable frivolous objects. Correspondences with relatives and friends and the sharing of small trinkets sustained these women during long and tedious time away from beloved connections separated by the Atlantic. Lady Maria Nugent and other British women like Sarah Dwarris, Ann Appleton Storrow, Margaret and Mary Cowper, and Ann Brodbelt attempted to retain connections to their loved ones in England and the wider Atlantic World, and did not succumb to the lascivious and depraved behaviors depicted by these authors. Although there is little evidence that this sentiment extended to the enslaved population present in their plantation island, they did possess sensibility towards their family and friends back home. Women who

inhabited this colonial space missed family and friends across the ocean and longed for items by which to remember them.

CHAPTER 3

THE BRODBELT FAMILY OF JAMAICA

The Brodbelt family of Jamaica exemplifies a family who experienced the empire through education and material culture.[1] Until quite recently, scholars have ignored colonial children in imperial locations.[2] By overlooking young people, particularly women in their adolescence, historians have disregarded the experience of a sizeable percentage of the colonial population.[3] Individuals participated in colonial life in various ways during their formative years. They responded to their circumstance either by identifying with the mother country, or by forming their identity in opposition to "others" present in imperial settlements.[4] In colonial locations such as British Jamaica, a large percentage of the rich young white children traveled to England for their education and so had experiences as colonial youths attempting to assimilate into metropolitan culture.[5] These colonial subjects inhabited a middle ground between metropole and colony. For example, while living in Jamaica, the school-aged children Nancy and Jane

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[1] Much of this chapter appeared in Chloe Northrop, "Education, Material Culture, and Coming of Age in Eighteenth-Century British Jamaica," *Traversea* 2 (2013): 60-79.

[2] Scholarship on early-modern childhood has benefitted from Philippe Ariès' seminal *Centuries of Childhood* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962). Although Ariès' theory that "childhood" was socially constructed during the seventeenth and eighteenth century has received much response and criticism, his work opened discussion towards the subject of childhood studies. For a recent work considering globalization of childhood see: Peter N. Stearns, *Childhood in World History* (Routledge, New York, 2006). In Roland Sintos Coloma's 2009 compilation *Postcolonial Challenges in Education,* the essay by Lisa Weems, "Border Crossing with M.I.A. and Transnational Girlhood Studies," argues "for a shift in the field of girlhood studies to consider the ways in which global capitalist and imperialist dynamics operate within the material practices and representations of 'girlhood' or 'the girl child.' In other words, 'girlhood' becomes a site that consolidates assumptions and practices regarding difference, colonial power, and economic relations between and among gendered subjects in transnational contexts": Lisa Weems, "Border Crossing with M.I.A. and Transnational Girlhood Studies," in *Postcolonial Challenges in Education,* ed. Rolando Sintos Coloma, (New York: Peter Lang, 2009), 179.

[3] According to Trevor Burnard, the total population in Jamaica in 1788 was 254,184. The white populace was only 8.1 per cent of the whole, numbering 18,347. See Table 1, in Trevor Burnard, "European Migration to Jamaica, 1655-1780," *William and Mary Quarterly* 53 (Oct., 1996): 772. Burnard does not give a demographic breakdown of the percentage of children in the colonial white population.

[4] In colonial Jamaica, various groups of individuals inhabited this colonial space, including a small percentage of indigenous peoples, African slaves, free blacks, and various European groups. See Catherine Hall *Civilising Subjects*: *Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830-1867* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002).

[5] Wylie Sypher estimates that seventy-five percent of the creole whites went to Britain for their education. See "The West Indian as a 'Character' in the Eighteenth Century," *Studies in Philology* 36 (1939), 504.

Brodbelt demonstrated their British nationality by embracing the material culture of England.[6] These goods served two purposes for the members of the Brodbelt family. First, the objects assisted in self-fashioning the Brodbelts' British identity out on the periphery of the empire. Additionally, material objects from Britain helped to forge bonds between members of this displaced family. Francis Rigby Brodbelt, as an educated doctor, followed current events and desired that his children gain knowledge of international affairs as well. Through studying the experiences of families such as the Brodbelts, scholars can develop their understanding of both family and cultural values in the empire. By maintaining cultural ties with the metropole through schooling and material culture, the Brodbelts inhabited an ambiguous position; neither fully British nor West Indian creole. Engaging in British education and consuming material goods allowed this family to fashion their identity as members of the British Empire, while inhabiting a space of both metropole and colony. Additionally, the accomplishments she achieved while attending school in England allowed the youngest Brodbelt, Jane, to acquire the achievements that would mark her as a desirable marriage companion.

The role of childhood in colonial sites is a relatively uncharted field in imperial historiography, and research on family in the British West Indies is scarce compared to scholarship on other imperial locations, especially Colonial America.[7] As Kathleen Wilson argues, "The fabulously wealthy Caribbean planter that emerged in fact and fiction came to represent the West Indian uncouthness, backwardness and degeneracy that inverted the acclaimed standards of English civility and culture."[8] Wilson posits that this broken idea of

[6] For more on childhood in eighteenth-century England, see Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 449-478. See also Leslie Reinhardt, "Serious Daughters: Dolls, Dress, and Female Virtue in the Eighteenth Century" *American Art* 20 (Summer 2006): 32-55 for an interesting article concerning material culture and childhood.

[7] See Chapter 1 for studies on women in the West Indies during the eighteenth century.

[8] Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2003), 130.

"family" in the West Indies led to unfavorable stereotypes regarding life in the West Indies. Since, according to Wilson, the institution of "family" was representative of the entire state of the British realm, the unusual arrangements found in the colonies did not fit in the metropolitan-created value system.[9] As seen in Chapter 1, colonists in the Caribbean islands attempted to create family life similar to that back home; however, the lack of respectable women for marriage often made this an uphill battle. Jamaica dominated the ways that the British imagined the Caribbean because of its sugar crops and the wealth and profits from that industry. This exotic island fascinated British minds.[10] According to eighteenth-century opinions, women in Jamaica "were prone to licentiousness and infidelity, as well as swearing, drinking, and obscene talk."[11] They were not seen to possess the "manners" customary in Britain. Many of the young men sent back to England for education did not fit in to the social structures there, and some were soon sent back to the West Indies.[12] However, this did not deter creole white families from dispatching their children to be educated in Britain.[13]

Childhood in the West Indies in many ways mirrored childhood in mainland Britain.[14] The young inhabitants and scions of the Jamaican plantocracy indulged in British goods and

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[9] Wilson, "Rethinking the Colonial State: Family, Gender, and Governmentality in Eighteenth-Century British Frontiers." *American Historical Review* 116 (2011): 1294-322

[10] For recent scholarly works concerning the Caribbean in historical studies, see Chapter 1.

[11] Sarah E. Yeh, "'Sink of All Filthiness': Gender, Family and Identity in British Atlantic, 1688-1763," *The Historian* 68 (March 2006), 74.

[12] Ibid, 75-76.

[13] Although there is no direct evidence that Jean-Jacques Rousseau's popular educational tract *Emile* directly influenced the educational values of families in the West Indies, this work affected both European Continental and British considerations of childhood and education. For the shift for children concerning fashion, toys, literature, and pedagogy in the late eighteenth century following Rousseau's writings, see Jennifer J. Popiel, *Rousseau's Daughters: Domesticity, Education, and Autonomy in Modern France* (Durham, N.H.: University of New Hampshire Press, 2008). Popiel describes the looser garments for children in the latter half of the eighteenth century, as well as toys that assisted children educationally in their early years.

[14] The age of "innocence" in England lasted until about age seven. However, girls were dependent on their parents until marriage, which girls could enter beginning around age fourteen. The age of "discretion" and independence was not until twenty-one. I will use the term "girlhood" and "childhood" to represent the young girls from the Caribbean until marriage, as these girls were unlikely to attain independence from their families through attaining maturity. The girls under study in this work married before the age of "discretion," therefore remained part of the "childhood" cycle for their education and entrance into society. For "childhood" in eighteenth-century

valued metropolitan material culture. However, the presence of a large enslaved population created an environment unlike that experienced in England. European observers noted the overindulgence exhibited in the progeny of the wealthy Caribbean elite, stemming from both their parents and others responsible for their upbringing.

Eighteenth-century travel authors depicted the damage that contact with the black enslaved population did to West Indian children.[15] According to these narratives, the connection irrevocably spoiled the character of the young white inhabitants. At a young age, these children became accustomed to seeing violence against black slaves, including maiming and whippings. Many British writers believed that witnessing the infliction of pain upon others became an amusing pastime for this juvenile population. Additionally, young girls became "harsh and domineering" when dealing with their subordinates.[16] The presence of a staff of individuals who were expected to bend to the wills and caprices of these adolescent masters created a host of admonitory tales of life in the West Indies.

While elite children in England were often raised first by a nurse, and later under the tutelage of a governess, a shift towards maternal care for children permeated late eighteenth-century British culture. This trend did not extend to the Caribbean islands, where several African slaves cared for each creole child, and were ordered to obey every whim of these young heirs. According to Lady Maria Nugent, wife of the Governor of Jamaica from 1801-1805, West Indian children were "allowed to eat every thing improper, to the injury of their health, and are made

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England, see Anja. Müller, *Framing Childhood in Eighteenth-Century English Periodicals and Prints, 1689-1789* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2009).

[15] Satirical prints provided visual representations for the stereotypes prevalent in travel narratives. For an example of a print satirizing creole life in the West Indies, see Figures 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, and 3.1.

[16] Lucille Mathurin Mair, Hilary Beckles, and Verene Shepherd. *A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica: 1655-1844* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2006), 121.

truly unamiable, by being most absurdly indulged."[17] At the Skinner home in Jamaica, Nugent observed the young daughter named Bonella. She was a "sweet child, but so spoiled that I am afraid she will be a little tyrant. Mrs. S., like all Creole ladies, has a number of servants with her, and all are obliged to attend to any caprice of the little girl, as well as her mamma; and I grieve to see it."[18] Nugent understood the difficulties in this plantation society and sought to prevent her own son from similar vices. She shuddered that her son would be raised to think "himself a little king at least, and then will come arrogance, I fear, and all the petty vices of little tyrants," and vowed to raise him in a different manner.[19]

The lack of educational opportunities in the Caribbean contributed to the perception of indifference and neglect regarding the upbringing of children in the West Indies. Parents had the choice of educating children at home, sending them to private schools on the islands, or dispatching them abroad for schooling. Those who remained in the sugar plantation islands for education at home faced censure, as this 1812 Cautionary Tale published in the *Jamaica Magazine* warned:

> Eliza remained at home under the protecting wing of a foolishly fond mother, who LOVED her to such excess that she never thwarted a wish of her heart, but allowed her to pursue in everything the free bent of her own inclinations. Insensible to the blessings of mental cultivation herself, this INDULGENT mother would not even force reading and writing upon this her darling, FURTHER THAN SHE HERSELF LIKES…so that by time that Eliza had arrived at womanhood she knew but little, and that little imperfectly and but by halves.[20]

The opportunities for instruction in proper schools were few in the West Indies, and children either had to be shipped to England, or learn at home from their parents or tutors.

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[17] Maria Nugent, and Frank Cundall, *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago: Reprinted from a Journal Kept by Maria, Lady Nugent, from 1801 to 1815, Issued for Private Circulation in 1839* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by A. & C. Black, 1907), 193.

[18] Ibid, 191.

[19] Ibid.

[20] *Jamaica Magazine* 2 (June 1812). See also, Mair, 122.

Remaining at home resulted in a second-rate education for these young girls, and would open them to ridicule from those "polished" visitors because of their speech and manners. Travel writer Edward Long, in his *History of Jamaica,* remarked, "The more gentle and esteemable fair-ones apply themselves to repair the deficiencies of an imperfect education, by giving some leisure hours to the most approved authors, by whose help they might add the delights of a rational conversation to those abundant graces which nature has bestowed upon them."[21] Even though some of the more "esteemable" attempted to improve themselves through reading, these travelogues suggest that the vast majority preferred leisure time to strenuous scholarly efforts. Fellow travel writer J. B. Moreton also commented on creole education in his *West India Customs and Manners* and commented on the results of boarding school. Moreton seemed unsure of the benefits of the custom of sending creole children to England for their education. He proposed local schools for the general improvement of creole children, with "proper English masters and mistresses."[22] He argued against metropolitan education for young women, for, if they went to England, they might return to Jamaica dissatisfied with the slower pace of plantation life. After living in England, Jamaica would seem a "flat land" and "insipid," compared to the delights of the entertainments available in London.[23] Although they advocated educational endeavors for creole women, travel authors disagreed on the best method for attaining the necessary instruction.

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[21] Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, or, General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of the Island: With Reflections on Its Situation Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government : Illustrated with Copper Plates* (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), 284.

[22] J. B. Moreton, *West India Customs and Manners: Containing Strictures on the Soil, Cultivation, Produce, Trade, Officers, and Inhabitants: with the Method of Establishing, and Conducting a Sugar Plantation. To Which Is Added, the Practice of Training New Slaves* (London: printed for J. Parsons, Paternoster Row; W. Richardson, Royal Exchange; H. Gardner, Strand; and J. Walter, Piccadilly, 1793), 120.

[23] Moreton., 112-113. Furthermore, Moreton believed that once a young creole girl traveled to England, she soon received the title of a "rich West Indian heiress" and would be married to some Englishman who sought financial gain from the match (112).

According to Long, approximately three quarters of the children from the West Indian plantocracy class received their education in England, while not "two of the three" who went to England returned to live in Jamaica permanently.[24] Furthermore, after returning home, the children were often more educated than their parents, which created tensions that Nugent perceived as a great "misfortune" for the creole West Indians.[25] These young creoles found boredom awaiting them in their colonial homeland, and they could not display their accomplishments to their full potential in the sugar plantation islands. Nonetheless, creole young women who did not go to boarding school were portrayed as ignorant and uneducated. The lack of education in creole white women and their peculiar speech created social boundaries for metropolitan observers such as Nugent.[26]

These girls allegedly matured into unsuitable wives and mothers. As imperfect "British ladies," they became notorious in both travel writings and literature, as seen in Chapter 2.[27] However, some families had the financial means to hire a governess from England. Others turned to private schools in growing urban cities like Kingston. A Mrs. Robinson established a boarding school in Kingston in order to compete with the fashionable English boarding schools. She offered "those elegant accomplishments which are taught in schools" as well as "Embroidery, Felagree, Flower-Making, Landscapes, [and] Maps."[28] Additionally, this school employed "Proper masters in French, writing, drawing, music and dancing."[29] Although this school provided the same curriculum that was popular in England, many families still chose to send their children overseas for their education.

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[24] Long, 510-511. The exact number for the population is not included in Long.
[25] Nugent, 125.
[26] Ibid., 76, 102.
[27] These travel narratives include Long, Moreton, and Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (Philadelphia: J. Humphreys, 1805).
[28] Mair, 123.
[29] Ibid.

Janet Schaw, the Scotswoman who traveled to the West Indies on a "Grand Tour" across the Atlantic, disagreed with this practice of sending children away at a young age to Europe. Although this was the main way for young creole girls to receive a "proper" education, most of the authors agreed that this practice also did harm to the pupils. Schaw and her young companion Fanny met with many of the latter's former boarding school acquaintances from Britain. Although Fanny found pleasure in discussing and remembering former friends, Schaw went against her usual positive exuberance about the customs in the West Indies, and gave her opinion on the practice of sending young girls to Britain for their education. She did not believe they should be sent away at such a delicate age, for "they form their sentiments in Britain, their early connections, commence there, and they leave it just when they are at the age to enjoy it most, and return to their friends and country, as banished exiles; nor can any future connection cure them of the longing they have to return to Britain."[30] Although she enjoyed her own experiences in the West Indies, Schaw did not think that it was superior to life in Britain. These girls would be part of neither society; they would return to the plantations without the comforts they were used to in Europe and always long for the society they enjoyed during their education.

Nonetheless, schooling abroad gave the creoles the education they desired, coupled with the experience of living in the motherland. According to Lucille Mair, parents selected England as the top choice for overseas schooling. Additionally, parents sent their female children at a younger age than boys. Although there is a perception that creole parents did not raise their children to be "proper" English inhabitants with regard to education, the Brodbelt family does not fit in to this stereotype. The Brodbelt parents were involved in their children's education.[31]

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[30] Janet Schaw, Evangeline Walker Andrews, and Charles McLean Andrews, *Journal of a Lady of Quality: Being the Narrative of a Journey from Scotland to the West Indies, North Carolina, and Portugal, in the Years 1774 to 1776* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1921), 92.

[31] Mair, 124.

Dr. Brodbelt seemed aware of the lack of erudition present in Jamaican ladies, and took an active role in developing his daughter's curriculum.

Transatlantic correspondences provide insight into the strife and trials of maturation in the late eighteenth century.[32] The Brodbelt family correspondence reveals the lives of two young women, Jane and Nancy Brodbelt. Francis Rigby Brodbelt, a prominent doctor in Spanish Town, had the money and connections to send his children to England for their education.[33] Some of the matters written in the letters might seem trivial; however, these seemingly inconsequential events were important as methods of communication for a divided family.[34] Through the letters of Ann and Nancy Brodbelt, Jane's mother and sister respectively, everyday life in Spanish Town, Jamaica, comes to life. While the correspondence from Jane back to Jamaica does not survive, the letters she received are an illuminating source about a wealthy white creole family in the British West Indies.

To ensure that their daughters would become "accomplished" British ladies, the Brodbelts sent Nancy and Jane to Eliza Fenwick's school named "Flint House" in Greenwich, a popular destination for wealthy West Indian children.[35] These feminine boarding schools offered

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[32] The Brodbelt family lived in urban Jamaica. Although they owned land and participated in slave labor, they were not part of the plantation lifestyle. Dr. Brodbelt, as a physician, had contracts with various plantations to provide medical attention to the enslaved population. However, they did not own sugar-producing property. Both Dr. and Ann Brodbelt came from financially well-off creole white families. Ann had wealthy family connections in England who looked after the children while they were in school.

[33] For Ann Brodbelt see: "Brodbelt, Anne (1751–1827)," Natalie Zacek in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/70273 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[34] The painting of the Brodbelt children shows the importance of the portraits to show their connection to Britain, and to remember loved ones who were across the Atlantic. Bridget Brereton notes the utility of using women's writings in Caribbean history, as women were often the "scribes of the family." These sources are beneficial concerning "motherhood and marriage, health and sexuality, domestic life and household management, and the rearing and education of girls." See Bridget Brereton, *Gendered Testimony: Autobiographies, Diaries, and Letters by Women as Sources for Caribbean History* (Mona, Jamaica: Department of History: University of West Indies, 1994), 5.

[35] Other young Jamaican ladies who attended Flint House include Sarah Goodin Barret Moulton, aunt of the more famous Elizabeth Barret Browning, British poet. Thomas Lawrence immortalized Sarah in a 1794 portrait entitled "Pinkie," which now hangs at the Huntington in California. Sarah died of whooping cough in 1795. Undoubtedly, she and Jane were acquainted, as they were both from the same small island, and inhabited Fenwick's

classes that would assist young women in attaining, as Ann Bermingham has shown, "the necessary accouterments of style."[36] Bermingham focuses on the importance of "[t]he pursuit of accomplishment[s]" for young women at the end of the eighteenth century, and explains how "accomplishments" became purchasable as part of the "consumerist culture" in metropolitan England.[37] Furthermore, Amanda Vickery argues that accomplishments for eighteenth-century girls "were an exhibitionary strategy in the polite marriage market, a subliminal form of advertising in the drawing room."[38] Schools like Fenwick's taught young women traditional courses that would assist them in managing a household. These subjects included arithmetic, bookkeeping, and English. Other classes that might prove useful, like English and natural history were often included in the curriculum as well. But for a young woman who wanted to achieve a higher degree of polish, and gain the "accomplishments" that would best set her apart from her compatriots on the marriage market, additional skills were necessary.[39] Only at an English boarding school would the young creole women polish their French, embroidery, music, drawing, and horsemanship. Dispatched with the desire to gain all the trappings of a member of the English elite, Jane began her education in 1788, at about eight years of age. Soon after her arrival, Ann sent a letter to Jane in October 1788 about a doll Jane had recently received. She inquired: "pray what is my Granddaughter's name? I hope you make yourself all the clothes she wears, for that will teach you to make your own by and by; which is a very commendable thing in a young

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school at the same period. For Sarah Moulton, see "Moulton, Sarah Goodin Barrett (1783–1795)," Kate Retford in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, October 2005, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/93084 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[36] Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven, CT: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2000), 183.

[37] Bermingham, 189, 186.

[38] Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 232. See also, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1998).

[39] Bermingham, 189.

Lady and saves Her many disappointments from her Milliner or Mantua Maker."[40] Ann displayed her focus on Jane's material benefits from school, including the possibility of learning how to sew and tailor clothes. As Ann preferred to have her attire assembled and shipped from London, she realized the benefits of the ability to mend one's own clothes and not rely on local dressmakers, who did not have what she believed was the skill or talent of those in the metropole. Additionally, Jane's engagement with her doll mirrored her future occupation as a mother. As Jane Eva Baxter has argued, material objects have an important role in "establishing and reinforcing social roles for children during childhood and later in their gendered roles as adults."[41] Therefore, through interaction with her doll, she could reinforce her mother's "desires, hopes, fears, and longings," for her daughter.[42] Jane Brodbelt, far from her Jamaican home, participated with a doll not only for play, but to learn vital skills for adulthood. Ann enjoyed both discussing her amusements and receiving examples of Jane's talent and progress with embroidery and drawing.

Material objects assisted in connecting this divided family during their separation. Through touching and handling these items, Brodbelt felt attached to her children.[43] One such item included locks of her children's hair. Hair served as a popular item of exchange for remembrance in early modern Europe. While part of the living body, hair also could be shorn

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[40] A "mantua maker" was a term for a dress-maker in the eighteenth century. Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, October 17, 1788, in Geraldine Nutt Mozley and the Institute of Jamaica, *Letters to Jane from Jamaica, 1788-1796* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by the West India Committee, 1938), 11. All subsequent references to this printed collection of letters will be *Letters to Jane*. All letters are written from Spanish Town unless otherwise noted.

[41] Jane Eva Baxter "Socialization and the Material Culture of Childhood," in *The Archaeology of Childhood: Children, Gender, and Material Culture* (Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press, 2005), 39.

[42] Ibid., 44.

[43] Sentimentality towards material goods was not unheard of in eighteenth-century England. Appearing often in novels, the characters would exchange items with one another. Dating from 1790, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary,* these goods were known as "keepsakes." Deirde Lynch views this as a distinctive phenomenon of reciprocity using material objects. See also Deirdre Lynch, "Personal Effects and Sentimental Fictions," in *The Secret Life of Things: Animals, Objects, and It-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England,* edited by Mark Blackwell (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2007).

and dispatched to a loved one. Treasured for its connection to a person, locks could be touched and act as a talisman for both living and post mortem connections. According to art historian Angela Rosenthal, “a lock of hair can serve as a synecdoche for the body whence it came, possessing in the eye, or rather fingers, of the beholder stronger representational power than, for example, a painted portrait.”[44] Jewelry containing hair was also popular in the eighteenth century, with lovers’ locks adorning necklaces. According to Marcia Pointon, these objects gained importance through their ability to signal remembrance for individuals who were separated through space or permanently removed through death. “These artefacts are not abstract,” Pointon argues, “but tangible and were understood to bring into tactile proximity the loved one.”[45]

After receiving one such prized possession, Ann wrote to Jane: “I have been comparing the lock of Hair you sent me from Margate with the pretty curl I cut from off your head a short time before you left me, and I find that your hair is at least six shades darker than it was then. Your dear Brother and Sister’s are so exactly alike in colour that I can scarcely tell which is which.”[46] Ann’s “touch” and interaction with this physical representation of her children assisted her in remembering her offspring and commenting on their development. The use of these goods, along with the association of these objects with their children helped create identification with her role as a “mother.”

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[44] Angela Rosenthal, “Raising Hair,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* (38) 2004: 2.

[45] Marcia Pointon, “Secular Memorials: Mourning and Memory in Hair Jewellery,” *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewelry* (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2009), 297. For hair jewelry see: Helen Sheumaker, “‘This Lock You See’: Nineteenth-Century Hair Work as the Commodified Self,” *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 1 (November 1997): 421-445; Hanneke Grootenboer, “Treasuring the Gaze: Eye Miniature Portraits and the Intimacy of Vision,” *The Art Bulletin* 88 (September 2006): 496-507.

[46] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 18 October 1789, *Letters to Jane*, 21.

Hair was not the only visual reminder that this colonial mother possessed. To commemorate their time in the metropole, the Brodbelt commissioned a portrait of their three

Figure 4:1: Richard Cosway, *Brodbelt Children*, 1788, in Geraldine Nutt Mozley, *Letters to Jane from Jamaica, 1788-1796.* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by the West India Committee, 1938), Frontispice. From left to right Jane, Nancy and Rigby Brodbelt.

absent children (Figure 4.1). They requested this portrait as Nancy's education drew to an end, and sought a fashionable portrait painter to create this rendition of their offspring. Shortly after Jane's arrival in England, the younger Brodbelts sat for a miniature pastel in the London studio of Richard Cosway.[47] Cosway, the fashionable London painter, specialized in portrait miniatures.

[47] See Figure 4.1 for the painting of the Brodbelt children by Richard Cosway. According to the Victoria and Albert Museum, Cosway was the "Principal Painter to the Prince of Wales, Royal Academician, and the leading fashionable miniature painter of the day" in the late eighteenth century, and he "developed an intriguing and highly sophisticated new form of portraiture to offer his clients. These portraits joined the graphic qualities of pencil drawing with the fine detail of miniature painting. The figures were sketched out with great vigour while the faces were carefully delineated using the miniature painter's techniques" (http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O65854/drawing-sir-james-hamlyn-first-baronet/). Perhaps the Brodbelt children

According to his contemporary John Feltham in his 1804 *A Picture of London,* Cosway's portrait miniatures, noted for their "taste and talent," were generally of a larger size than the fashionable miniatures placed in jewelry and collections.[48] In 1771, he became a member of the most prestigious artistic group in Great Britain, the Royal Academy of Arts, which demonstrates the importance of miniatures in eighteenth-century society.[49] Known better for his work as a society painter of portrait miniatures, specifically for the patronage of George, Prince of Wales, Cosway was the most fashionable choice for the rendition of the Brodbelts.[50] As the senior Brodbelts were in distant Jamaica, their metropolitan relatives arranged the sitting. Cosway placed the eldest Brodbelt, Rigby, standing and attired in van Dyckian costume. Art historian Kate Retford has noted how society painters in eighteenth-century England favored the costume and works of Sir Anthony van Dyck "to create their favoured images of the 'modern family.'"[51] In a more contemporary guise, Nancy, the eldest daughter is sitting in a flowing white muslin gown. Next to her is Jane, the youngest, also in a light gown and looking adoringly at her two siblings. Looming above the Brodbelt children stands a bust of Galen, the classic physician from ancient Rome. This figure ostensibly represents their physician father. In the background the classical columns and drapery compliments the motif created by the Roman bust. The sentimental

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were rendered in such a fashion. Once such miniature of Cosway measured Height: 22.9 cm, Width: 14 cm, comparable to the Brodbelt's portrait.

[48] John Feltham, *The Picture of London, for 1804, Etc.* (London: Richard Phillips, 1804), 272.

[49] "Cosway, Richard (*bap.* 1742, *d.* 1821)," Stephen Lloyd in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, January 2008, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6383 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[50] Stephen Lloyd, *Richard Cosway* (London: Unicorn Press, 2005), 9. For Cosway's life, as well his stylish wife Maria, famous for her liaison with Thomas Jefferson and her success as an artist in her own right, see Lloyd, *Richard & Maria Cosway: Regency Artists of Taste and Fashion* (Edinburgh: Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1995).

[51] Kate Retford, "Sensibility and Genealogy in the Eighteenth-Century Family Portrait: The Collection at Kedleston Hall," *The Historical Journal* 46 (2003): 533-560. See also Deborah Cherry and Jennifer Harris, "Eighteenth-century Portraiture and the Seventeenth-Century Past: Gainsborough and van Dyck," *Art History* 5 (1982): 287–309. According to Aileen Riberiro, in "Portraying the Fashion, Romancing the Past: Dress and the Cosways," in Lloyd, *Richard and Maria Cosway,* Cosway favored the van Dyckian style, in which Rigby is depicted (103).

rendering of the two Brodbelt girls can be viewed as part of the shifting delineations of young members of wealthy families in portraits around the middle of the eighteenth century.[52] Their mother appreciated the careful treatment of her daughter's youth and innocence, as seen in their light white dresses. Pointon notes the importance of the depiction of children in her study of eighteenth-century British portraits.[53] She describes the change of the representation of family during the eighteenth century, with artists favoring a more sentimental gaze at childhood. Although the stern bust dominates the top of the space, Rigby appears at ease, leaning on the column, which holds the representation of the *paterfamilias*. Nancy, poised in a natural elegance on a nearby chair, also lacks the stiff posture with which artists' previously depicted children. Cosway depicts Jane as if she were not sitting for a portrait, but caught in a moment of adoration for her two older siblings.

Brodbelt's commission of and relation to material goods such as the portrait of her children demonstrate how a colonial family remained connected to one another and to the metropole through material culture. Not only reaffirming her role as a doting mother, this decorative object also assisted Brodbelt in displaying her status, as evidenced by her ability to gain a portrait of her children by the popular Royal Academician. Through touching and handling as well as exhibiting the items, she could feel connected both to her children and to the fashionable metropolitan world. As Alden Cavanaugh has argued, material goods and the tangible interaction with those items created a "miniaturized space that invites the construction

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[52] See Retford, *Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2006). See also Retford, "Sensibility and Genealogy in the Eighteenth-Century Family Portrait," 541; Desmond Shawe-Taylor, *The Georgians: Eighteenth-Century Portraiture and Society* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990); James Christen Steward, *The New Child: British Art and the Origins of Modern Childhood, 1730-1830* (Berkeley: University Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, University of California, Berkeley, in association with the University of Washington Press, 1995).

[53] Pointon, "The State of a Child," in *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 1993).

of identities and ideas, in which meaning is constructed through use and decoration."[54] Cavanaugh asserts that decorative arts contributed to the account of royal motherhood, and that this narrative could be extended to mothers with purchasing power in the growing consumer world.[55] Brodbelt, although not a queen or aristocratic, used decorative objects to reveal the importance of motherhood for a colonial woman in the eighteenth century. Therefore Brodbelt's portrait served as a means both to view her children and to exhibit this fashionable metropolitan item to her Jamaica connections.

Ann wrote to Jane shortly after receiving the portrait, sharing her excitement on the visual depiction of her offspring. Ann exclaimed "I sent your Picture over to Mrs Harrison's, and they all thought it very like you; Dorothy and Kit did not want it to be carried away again, but that could not be granted by me, for I should by that means lose the pleasure of looking at you twenty times in the day."[56] This portrait became a local sensation as the neighbors both visited and commented on the portrayal of the young Brodbelts. Ann noticed even small physical changes in her children:

> Rigby's face is certainly much altered but am sure its very like Him from what I can recollect of it when He left Jamaica, and the striking resemblance there is to your Papa in his forehead and eyes. Nancy's face has altered very little, I should have known it among many for hers, she is drawn with a fine skin and complexion, the first she has always had and the latter I daresay she now has. Bessy Brammer tells me that nothing can be more like her than it is, and that her Hair was exactly in those curls the day she went from Mrs Fenwick's to sit for it. She also informs me that you are grown fat, that your skin is

[54] Alden Cavanaugh, "The Queen's Nécessaire" in *The Cultural Aesthetics of Eighteenth-Century Porcelain,* edited by Alden Cavanaugh and Michael E. Yonan (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010): 120. Ewa Lajer-Burcharth and Sarah Cohen have contributed much to the scholarship on "touch" in relation to art. Burcharth's theory that "touch was established as a key category for understanding the formation of subjectivity" is an important tool to understand the importance of small items. See Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, "Pompadour's Touch: Difference in Representation," *Representations* 73 (2001): 56; Sarah Cohen, "Body as 'Character' in Early Eighteenth-Century French Art and Performance," *The Art Bulletin* 78 (1996): 454-466.

[55] Cavanaugh, "The Queen's *Necessaire*," 121.

[56] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 12 April 1789, *Letters to Jane,* 18.

greatly cleared and your lips red but no colour as yet in your cheeks.[57]

Ann used this portrait to converse with acquaintances about her children, especially their growth and development during their abroad in England. It provided an opportunity for conversation about her family, separated by distance but linked through this portrait. This painting helped Ann remain connected with her children when she gazed at this representation of her loved ones.

During a later trip to England, Ann had her likeness made. In 1790, Ann embarked on a

Figure 4.2 Isabella Beetham, "Ann Brodbelt," *Letters to Jane, 33.*

voyage to England to collect her eldest daughter Nancy from school.[58] Accompanied by her two household slaves, Ann planned to engage in a pleasurable shopping trip while Dr. Brodbelt remained in Spanish Town. Ann sought to record permanently her fashionable attire in a manner that was "in vogue" in London. Therefore she visited the stylish shop of Mrs. Beetham to have her likeness created in a silhouette miniature (Figure 4.2).[59]

[57] Ibid. Schaw, in her travels, also commented on the complexions of creole women. See Chapter 1 for a greater discussion on Schaw and her comments on skin tones in the Caribbean. For "complexions" and the West Indies, see Deirdre Coleman, "Janet Schaw and the Complexions of Empire," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 36 (2003): 169-93.

[58] Mozley, 24.

[59] See Figure 4.2 for the miniature of Ann Brodbelt by Isabella Beetham.

By purchasing this permanent display of her time in London, Ann Brodbelt showed her cosmopolitan sagacity. Pointon examines eighteenth-century miniatures and argues that these items were viable in the "construction of personhood, [and] the identity of the individual subject." These material goods "are less imitations of the real world than tactile artifacts to be held, viewed, and shown."[60] Ann certainly desired this object to be viewed back in the West Indies, and so she arrived for her sitting clad in the highest fashion and accessories. Isabella Beetham was a popular choice for silhouette paintings, particularly bust-length paintings on glass.[61] She received famous customers such as Admiral William Bligh and Dr. Joseph Priestly, and ran an advertisement in *The Times* on 6 March 1792: "Mrs. Beetham. Profiler, 27, Fleet Street. Likenesses painted on polished glass, in a style entirely new 3s to 3 guineas."[62] Beetham created these silhouettes from a shadow behind a portrait on flat-glass prepared 'crystal' shaped into an oval and used a brush for the sitter's clothing and a needle for fine details such as hair.[63]

Although not the height of fashion in the metropole, the rarity of this item in colonial Jamaica, combined with the skill of Beetham rendered this a valuable purchase for Ann. Averil Mackenzie-Grieve, Ann's biographer, describes the silhouette: "The lace falls and the ruffles of Anne's handsome, tall-crowned hat were a miracle of skill, and the fichu superbly crisp and puffed over a tight-laced corsage."[64] The silhouette depicts a fashionable woman with a tall and elaborate hat and a stylish dress with a small waist. Due to the lack of professional miniature silhouette artists in the West Indies, Ann would possibly be the only one of her acquaintances with such an elaborate illustration. The overemphasis on the headpiece, bust, and waist would

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[60] Pointon, Miniature Portraits in Eighteenth-Century England," *Art Bulletin* 83 (2001): 68.

[61] Sue McKechnie, *British Silhouette Artists and Their Work, 1760-1860* (London: P. Wilson for Sotheby Parke Bernet, 1978), 522.

[62] Ibid., 520-21.

[63] Ibid., 13, 15.

[64] Grieve, *The Great Accomplishment: Accomplishment: Biographies of Five Women of the 18th Century Living in the Colonies* (London: Bles, 1953), 81.

ensure that her youth and fashion were captured permanently in a small image. This item would be able to be held and reexamined during the monotony that awaited her upon returning home to the West Indies. Ann took this object back to the colonies as a singular depiction of her fashion, taste, and participation in British culture. On March 24, 1792, the *Royal Gazette* announced the arrival of "Mrs. and Miss Brodbelt" back to Jamaica.[65] In addition to the silhouette, Ann disembarked armed with other fashionable items from Europe to mark her and her daughter's distinction in the colonial world.[66]

Small delineations of loved ones such as the Cosway depiction of the Brodbelt children and Beeetham's silhouette of Ann allowed separated families to remain connected to one another despite oceanic separations. Ornamental pieces such as the painting not only linked Ann with her children, but also assisted in attaching Jane to her homeland and parents. On her arrival home, Ann decided to complete the family's picture gallery by procuring an image of Dr. Brodbelt. Although artists like Philip Wickstead did travel to Jamaica and produce portraits of the landowning elite, it appears that the Brodbelts created a profile without the proper equipment or trained artist (Figure 4.3). Although of a poorer quality than the silhouette taken in London, Ann wrote to Jane that "it's thought very like Him."[67] Excusing the lack of materials for such endeavors and "considering the disadvantages attending the taking of it here, where we are in want *both* of a machine to steady the Head, and a proper shade of light for it," she sent it to Jane along with other items from home. Describing the profile, Ann exhibited the desire to have her husband depicted in the latest British fashions as she had viewed them during her recent visit: "Your Father's hair is generally dressed as the Gentlemen now wear it in England – nearly straight at the sides – and as he has but a small quantity of hair on the top of his Head, he combs

[65] *Royal Gazette,* Kingston, 24 March 1782.
[66] Ibid., 82.
[67] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 18 July 1792, *Letters to Jane*, 32.

it smooth on the forehead. I have mentioned these things, and it is right to have it done as he usually dresses."[68] Dr. Brodbelt adorned himself in what was viewed to be "British," in order to complete the family's visual depictions. Following Ann's trip to England, she now crafted images of her family to have permanent portrayals of their fashionability according to metropolitan standards. Although somewhat "creolized" in the colonial setting, Ann still desired that her family be in metropolitan vogue. Rather than mindless consumption, these acquisitions were thoughtfully planned in order to participate in tasteful trends from the capital.

Furthermore, silhouettes could be shared with family members in order to serve as a reminder of the portrait. Ann sent her daughter Dr. Brodbelt's amateur profile in order for Jane to have it reduced by a more professional artist and made into two miniature portraits.[69]

Figure 4:3 John Miers, "Francis Rigby Brodbelt," c. 1792, *Letters to Jane,* 65.

Jane was allowed to keep one for herself and ship the other back to her family. According to

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[68] Ibid. For colonial self-fashioning and portraiture, see T. H. Breen, "The Meaning of Likeness: Portrait-Painting in an Eighteenth-Century Consumer Society." in Ellen G. Miles, ed., *The Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993): 37-59.

[69] For the miniature portrait of Dr. Brodbelt by John Miers, see Figure 4.3.

Pointon, "the collecting of miniature portraits expressly for display proved one way of establishing a visual family tree."[70] Certainly Ann desired to display her family in a matching set of miniature portraits. Perhaps Beetham's silhouette would have been included in the collection for her daughter. The family set of miniatures would enable her to view her beloved family in a matching collection.[71] Arranged with "same kind of frame, […] a black with a gilt circle within the black," the miniatures exhibited those closest to her both for her own viewing and possibly for viewing by the extended family and local acquaintances. Mimi Hellman describes in her work this desire to possess matching items, where she contends that sets carried "prestige" due to the "rarity or luxury" of the object, as well as the difficulties in making things match in an era without mass production.[72] The Brodbelts demonstrated their connection to the metropole through the display of rare items such as miniature paintings and decorative objects from their daughter.

Jane's progression in her education included material endeavors that would assist her in becoming an accomplished young lady. Ann desired Jane to produce for her a "Fan, and I dare say I shall approve of the performance. Your dear Papa desires me to tell you that He is really at a loss to name what work you shall do for him, therefore he requests the favour of Mrs. Fenwick to determine what it shall be."[73] Jane crafted the decorative object for her mother and shipped it across the Atlantic. Ann later effused to her youngest child that she "must not omit saying that I

[70] Pointon, "Surrounded with Brilliants," 49.

[71] Pointon elaborates on the use of miniatures to create "imagistic family trees," based on an "ordered system." See "Surrounded with Brilliants," 48.

[72] Mimi Hellman, "The Joy of Sets: The Uses of Seriality in the French Interior," in *Furnishing the Eighteenth Century: What Furniture Can Tell Us About the European and American Past* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 131.

[73] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 16 September 1792, *Letters to Jane*, 40.

am greatly pleased with my fan."[74] These items were vital in connecting a family and producing concrete representations of the absent members.

As Jane progressed in both years and skill, she produced works that were more complex. Ann remarked that "the nice Fringe you made for me has come to hand without the least injury and looks delicately white."[75] Ann could use this fringe and other trimmings to update her older garments. However, to overexert herself with needlework because she was afraid it would hurt her eyes. Also, Jane sent two pieces of print work she had produced. Her mother displayed it in the front room so that it would be admired by all their acquaintances in Spanish Town.[76] Her adoring parents appreciated her achievements, and other family members and friends in this colonial outpost joined in praising her efforts as well.

Sentimental exchanges of material goods connected Jane not only to her mother, but to her father as well.[77] Far from being an absent or aloof father, Dr. Brodbelt proudly engaged with his daughter's education and accomplishments. Dr. Brodbelt received small gifts from his daughter, which visually displayed her achievements from school. Jane asked her father to send a request for her to make from school to send to him. He expressed gratitude for the impending present: "I thank you very much for working the Handkerchiefs for Me, which I will certainly wear when I get them."[78] Vickery has shown that the "balance between useful and ornamental accomplishments was hotly debated," and it appears that Jane attempted to create a useful and

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[74] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 24 December 1792, Ibid., 40. See Figures 6.2 and 6.3 for examples of contemporary fans.

[75] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 15 June 1794, Ibid., 89.

[76] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt 4 May 1795, Ibid., 105.

[77] Although the role of material objects in the construction of "fatherhood" in the eighteenth century has not received considerable historical investigation, the Brodbelts demonstrate a need for further inquiry in this subject. Scholarship on fatherhood in eighteenth-century British art has benefitted from Retford's *The Art of Domestic Life*. Retford examines portraits of fathers in the eighteenth century and demonstrates an aspect of fatherhood in eighteenth-century aristocratic and upper class Britain.

[78] Francis Rigby Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 8 September 1793, *Letters to Jane,* 70.

ornamental object in her quest for material success in her education.[79] As both a decorative object and a functional gift, the handkerchiefs could be drawn out in company in order to display his daughter's skill and progression in her boarding school endeavors. These material objects expressed her desire to please her parents through small manifestations of her accomplishments, which served as sentimental as well as practical goods.

Dr. Brodbelt received more demonstrations of Jane's progress at Flint House. He thanked Jane "for your pretty little present of work for my Watch, which I shall wear with great pleasure as it is very neatly made and convinces me of your grateful recollection of a long absent Parent."[80] He missed his youngest daughter and appreciated her gestures from her English school. Jane recognized her father's desire for her to attain scholastic success and crafted a gift for her father that included both her material and mental achievements. Dr. Brodbelt exclaimed: "The motto with the embellishments gave me infinite satisfaction as it shows you venerate our most inestimable Constitution and our very excellent King. I am sorry you accuse me of not writing, but I can assure you I make a point of answering your letters as soon as I receive Them."[81] Dr. Brodbelt actively engaged in his position as a father through inquiries about her scholastic achievements as well as by receiving material objects from his daughter.

Her scholarly father noticed Jane's material accomplishments, however, Dr. Brodbelt enjoyed when she used these skills to display her mental capabilities.[82] Regarding drawing and painting, he requested she learn how to paint flowers, which was considered a skill of a well-bred woman: "When Mrs Fenwick thinks you sufficiently qualified in drawing, I will be obliged to you to request of her to have you taught drawing in the Botanical way, and I wish you had it in

[79] Vickery, 233.
[80] Francis Rigby Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 7 July 1793, *Letters to Jane,* 63.
[81] Ibid.
[82] For the permeation of Enlightenment in this remote imperial location, see James Robertson, "Eighteenth-Century Jamaica's Ambivalent Cosmopolitanism," *History* 99 (2014): 607-631.

your power to learn a sufficiency of Botany to make you a good Florist, but I do not mean by this to take you from drawing of landscapes, Faces, hands &c."[83] As Bermingham has shown, botany was a popular study for young woman because it was seen as a "particularly potent means of inculcating sensibility and spiritual values."[84] Botany, and the ability to draw flowers, were touchstones of the accomplishments desired from an English education.

Although accomplishments and their connotations for marriageability seemed to be the greatest reason for sending Jane to Flint House, Dr. Brodbelt also focused his attention on Jane's scholarly edification. He wrote in February 1789 of his concern that she be diligent in her studies. He hoped to "have the pleasure of perceiving your improvement which I hope is very great, as well in writing and reading and all other accomplishments which Mrs Fenwick thinks proper for you to learn; and I hope that you often recollect that the faster you learn for much the sooner you will return an accomplished lady to your dear father and mother in Jamaica."[85] Dr. Brodbelt did not appear to be a father who lacked ambitions for his young daughter's education. He took time to write correspondence to Jane detailing his plans for her studies, so as to ensure that she received all the possible benefits of the opportunities overseas. Ann also understood the importance of Jane's educational progress and wrote, "You have abilities to acquire every accomplishment, and your dear Papa will spare no cost, so that you have nothing to do but apply with all your heart."[86] Although Jane's parents participated actively in her progress, they also understood the importance of her own contribution. As Jane grew, Dr. Brodbelt's expectations for her diligence and studiousness increased.

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[83] Francis Rigby Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 8 September 1793, *Letters to Jane,* 70.
[84] Bermingham, 206.
[85] Francis Rigby Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 17 February 1789, *Letters to Jane,* 16.
[86] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, n.d., Ibid., 33.

By 1792, Jane's maturation merited an increase in her allowance. On April 8, Dr. Brodbelt wrote that "four or six guineas a year will be sufficient," in addition to her regular sum given for her additional needs.[87] This increase in her stipend represented a growing reliance on her own judgment, since it was given directly to her and not to her English relatives. To exhibit her progress, Jane wrote later that year to her father from boarding school: "I learn Musick, Drawing, French, English, Dancing, Writing, Geography, Singing."[88] Her advancement in French seemed to please both her parents, who desired that she speak French well and without a strong accent. In October 1792, Ann queried: "How does French go on? I hope you speak nothing else at School, and that you take pains to pronounce it properly, for without you do that, you had better not to speak it at all."[89] When Jane's brother visited her in 1793, he communicated to their mother and praised Jane's scholastic skills. Ann wrote to Jane: "Your Brother tells me that he thinks you improved in your playing and singing, and that you are likewise so in your French."[90] Speaking French would ensure Jane was more cosmopolitan and could converse in the language of the European elite.

Furthermore, Dr. Brodbelt wanted his daughter to be well conversed in history. Along with the traditional curriculum of arithmetic and reading, Dr. Brodbelt requested that she "Let me know if you can calculate Interest and how far you are advanced in Arithmetick. I hope you read History with great attention, and study Geography constantly, both which will improve your mind, and render you a very pleasant companion."[91] For Jane's father, the traditional accomplishments of needlework, flower painting, and dancing were not enough. He also desired that Jane gain the ability to hold a conversation based on her reading. Although novels became

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[87] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 27 April 1792, Ibid., 33.
[88] Jane Brodbelt to Francis Brodbelt (unsent), Ibid., 37.
[89] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 16 September 1792, Ibid., 40.
[90] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 25 November 1793, Ibid., 77.
[91] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, n.d., Ibid., 82.

increasingly popular throughout the late eighteenth century, Dr. Brodbelt did not wish his daughter to become engrossed in these sentimental works. “As I know you are fond of reading I would advise you to read History and not Novels,” Dr. Brodbelt implored her, “for you will receive infinite benefits, by the first and none by the last.”[92] One of the benefits of both speaking French and learning history included the knowledge of the events of the ongoing French Revolution. The actions in France beginning in 1789 affected the inhabitants of the Caribbean, who constantly feared a French invasion of their islands. Dr. Brodbelt wrote to Jane to entreat her to read and be knowledgeable of the events in Revolutionary France. He recommended John Whitaker’s *Real Origin of the Government*, and Abbé Barruel’s *History of the Clergy During the French Revolution*.[93] Even though the Revolution was still progressing, Dr. Brodbelt understood the importance of the proceedings in the hereditary enemies of Britain.[94] He requested: “I wish you and your dear Brother would make yourselves perfectly well acquainted with all the transaction of France and the other Nations from the beginning of the Revolution to the end of It, or to the end of the War, which I wish was at an end…Recollect that you are never to speak any thing but French to Him.”[95] Jane’s brother Rigby had firsthand experience of the events of the French Revolution.

Against his mother’s wishes, Rigby decided to visit Revolutionary Paris during his Grand Tour through Europe. He was present on the day of the death of Louis XVI. Along with some

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[92] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, n.d., Ibid., 42.

[93] These two works were published in 1795 and 1794 respectively. See: John Whitaker, *The Real Origin of Government* (London: Printed for John Stockdale, 1795); *The History of the Clergy During the French Revolution A Work Dedicated to the English Nation: by the Abbé Barruel* (Dublin: Printed by H. Fitzpatrick, for P. Wogan, 1794).

[94] News of the events in Revolutionary Paris reached this colonial outpost and influenced the inhabitant’s writings. In 25 May 1795, Jane’s cousin Anna Maria Millward sent a letter to Jane thanking her for the gifts sent to her children from England. Millward wrote her “thanks for the little Wax doll, which I am sorry to say she soon made share the like fate of the King and Queen from France”: Anna Maria Millward to Jane Brodbelt, 25 May 1795, *Letters to Jane,* 112. Millward likened the doll’s fate to that of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, demonstrating the awareness of major events, even in this remote location.

[95] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 4 October 1795, *Letters to Jane,* 118.

friends, Rigby dipped a piece of paper in the blood of Louis XVI and sent it back home to Jamaica.[96] His shocked mother reported to Jane: "[Rigby] sent enclosed in his Father's letter a piece of paper besmeared with the Blood of the unfortunate Louis, which so fully brought to my recollection the *cruel* fate of that poor King, that it was some moments before I felt myself comfortable again."[97] Ann had begged Rigby not to go to France, but Rigby returned to Great Britain unscathed from his short adventure in Revolutionary Paris. This item, along with Jane's accomplishments from school, was also displayed in the house for the neighbors and curiosity-seekers alike to gaze at and see a relic from the "poor King" of France. These objects became sentimentalized in their colonial location due to the representation of their separated family members. Furthermore, the blood-stained paper became a sentimental object in its own right, as it represented a martyred monarch, victim of an uprising. The display of this macabre item also showed the Brodbelt's knowledge of and connection to the larger world. Such a worldly status could not have gone unnoticed in a stratified and conflicted area such as the sugar island of Jamaica. Although such items became romanticized and transformed into relics in metropolitan areas, the rareness of this object in this colonial outpost of empire rendered it a family treasure.

Many objects traveled across the Atlantic to cement familial ties within the Brodbelt family. Nancy prized sentimental items from her sister after her own return to Jamaica. Nancy requested a lock of Jane's hair to put in a ring, "as what I had in it is worn out."[98] Additionally, Nancy engaged with this object through "touch" to the extent that she wore out the ring and

[96] Christine Quigley states that the crowd surged forward to dip whatever items were close at hand to keep as "mementos" of this occasion. See *The Corpse: A History* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1996), 250.

[97] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 25 November 1793, *Letters to Jane,* 76. See also Richard Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances: Representations of Dress in Revolutionary France* (Oxford: Berg, 2002) for a larger discussion of royalist relics.

[98] Ann Maria Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 25 May 1794, *Letters to Jane*, 88-89.

required a new one.[99] Thus, this small item reminded her of her sister thousands of miles away and comforted her between meetings. Additionally, although Ann traveled to London herself to purchase clothing and fashionable items, both she and her elder daughter Nancy relied on Jane in England to keep them aware of the current trends in the metropole. Ann showed her dependence on hearsay regarding the current fashions in London in a letter in 1794: "I hear the present Fashion in England is for the Ladies to wear no Petticoats, and to go as little covered as possible with a *tucker*, for no handkerchief is allowed of. I think the next change of fashion should be that

Plate 8. (Left) Round gown of clear lawn with cherry-coloured sash.

Figure 4.4 *Gallery of Fashion* (London: Nikolaus von Wilhelm, December 1794), Plate 8.

of a Gauze dress alone, and the Petticoat totally exploded."[100] Ann implored: "Whenever you write to me from home remember and give me some account of the fashions, for tho' I do not attend to them much myself yet I wouldn't not wish to be altogether out of them, so as to appear

[99] For "touch" in England in the previous century, see Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-Century England* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003).

[100] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 12 October 1794, *Letters to Jane,* Mozley, 96.

ridiculous."[101] Ann was concerned about dressing in the latest style even though she was removed from the metropolitan center. Nancy also wrote of her boredom in Jamaica and requested that Jane send "a very long letter […] to tell me all the *news,* fashions etc. etc. for in this dull place we do not know much of either."[102] Nancy also commissioned Jane to purchase for her bath garters, stay laces, and "six papers of middling pins, and six ditto of short whites" because "they may be had for next to nothing in London and cannot be got in this paltry place for money nor anything else."[103] Nancy, accustomed to the convenience of shopping in London, found the commercial goods available in the island both frustrating and undesirable. She did not want to adapt to the accessible items in Jamaica, but chose instead to wait for the British goods to be shipped to her.

As a creole woman interested in fashion, Ann also wished to demonstrate the highest styles in Jamaica. While she refrained from purchasing the fashions in the local shops she often requested that Jane purchase the latest fashions to send to Spanish Town. Ann wrote to Jane: "Now that I am speaking of dresses I must tell you that ours are at last got to hand…I am very much pleased with the Materials and the mode they are made up in. Mrs Gifford's caps &c are as usual very Tasty and neat and remarkably well packed, which I cannot say for Abrams's, for the caps are so much tumbled that you can scarcely make out what form they are."[104] The hazards of transit encompassed one of the issues of purchasing goods and shipping to the West Indies.

[101] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 13 November 1794, Ibid., Mozley, 98-99. Aileen Ribeiro shows that during the 1790s, while Britain and France were once again at war, the disruption in communications resulted in British and French fashions developing along separate paths. In the 1790s, "English costume is a sometimes cluttered synthesis of the prevailing Neoclassical styles with the addition of Romantic ornament" in *Art of Dress: Fashion in England and France 1750 to 1820* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 109. She also contends that during the middle of the 1790s, the popular styles in England revolves around "quiet simplicity; it is the most sober period in the history of dress of the whole eighteenth century. Dresses in the predominant white muslin were softly draped in the style of the chemise gown, or in the popular wrapping-gown (109).

[102] Ann Maria Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 1 November 1792, *Letters to Jane,* Mozley, 43.

[103] Ibid., 43. Jane was also commissioned to purchase the father's medicines for his practice in Jamaica.

[104] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 4 May 1795, *Letters to Jane,* Mozley, 106.

Goods frequently took a great amount of time to reach their destination, and often did not arrive in time for the intended occasion. In October 1793, Ann wrote of Jane's sister Nancy waiting for her "finery" from England in time for a ball.[105] Jane's cousin Anna Maria Gardner Millwood wrote in December that Nancy never did receive the items and "was a little disappointed in not getting her fine cloaths for the sessions."[106] Nevertheless, the disappointments of ruined or lost goods did not deter these creole women from purchasing goods from London. Ann asked her youngest daughter to visit "Abraham's Warehouse" and obtain "Whatever is fashionable to wear about the Waist either in Ribbon Sashes or any other, I must beg Mrs. P. to have four of different colours sent for each of Us."[107] It was the details of the fashionable ensembles that helped separate Ann and her elder daughter in Jamaica from the other colonial women, since, as Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell shows, it was "trimmings and accessories that determined whether or not a person was in style."[108] These small distinctions in clothing helped separate the Brodbelts from the moneyed mulatto women in Jamaica.

Many mulatto women in the West Indies also participated in fashionable displays of their wealth. As the daughters of prominent planters and rich townsmen, they had the money to purchase the splendid garments available in the West Indies. Daniel Roche states that fashionable items were "weapons in the battle of appearances. They were employed to erect a barrier, to

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[105] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 20 October 1793, Ibid., Mozley, 70.

[106] Anna Maria Millward to Jane Brodbelt, Mount Pleasant, Jamaica, 10 December 1793, Ibid., 78.

[107] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 15 May 1794, Ibid., Mozley, 83. Ann's shopping list included: "From Abraham's Warehouse for Mrs. Brodbelt. 2 Fashionable White Morning dresses to be made of muslin or calico, with long sleeves. 2 dresses of the above description for Miss B. 2 Fashionable half dress Handkerchiefs. 2 Powdering Gowns of *fine* Calico trimmed with Muslin. 6 Fashionable Morning Caps, 4 of which (it's requested) may be draped with the same Ribbons as those on the Gowns." From "Mrs Gifford Tavistock Street. A P Stiff Turn stays for Miss Brodbelt. A Full dress Cap or Hat…A Smart half dress Cap –for Mrs B- Two Fashionable Morning Bonnets or Hats, for Mrs and Miss B- 8 Sashes of Ribbon or Whatever is more fashionable, for Mrs and Miss B-" in Mozley, 84.

[108] Kimberly Chrisman-Campbell, "Fashioning (and Refashioning) European Fashion" in *Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700-1915* (Munich: Delmonico Books, 2010), 17.

stave off the pressure of imitators and followers who must be kept at a distance."[109] The Brodbelts were able to maintain this barrier through the purchase of goods directly in England. Locally-made goods had "the unthinkable risk of meeting a mulatto mistress clad in the rest of the piece; for these women spent enormously on dress and favoured the richest imported silks, ribbons, laces and gauzes, tight kid shoes, silk stockings, smart parasols, and a profusion of jewellery."[110] The Brodbelts used their English items and their connection with Jane in England to remain at the forefront of fashion in the West Indies.

Jane's larger family also participated in the exchange of goods during her schooling. The Brodbelt's young newlywed cousin, Anna Maria Millward owned, along with her husband, several plantations in Jamaica. Anna Maria had several children while Jane was in England for her education, and Jane sought to ingratiate herself with her extended family by sending gifts back to the Caribbean. "You cannot think how pleased your little Cousins were with the Play things you sent them," Anna Maria effused after receiving goods such as dolls for the young children.[111] She later wrote: "I am glad to hear you have finished the Pieces of Print Work for me as I wish much to have some of your performance to adorn my drawing room. Your Profile which now hangs there I often look at with much pleasure and hope that one day or other I may see the original skipping about there, and being admired by all who see her for her mental accomplishments."[112] The goods Jane created for her family provided a visual representation of her skills and of the progression of her education. These items became more complex as her schooling grew to a close.

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[109] Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the "Ancien Régime"* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 6.
[110] Grieve, *The Great Accomplishment,* 92.
[111] Anna Maria Millward to Jane Brodbelt, 6 April 1792, *Letters to Jane,* 30.
[112] Anna Maria Millward to Jane Brodbelt, 12 September 1792, Ibid., 38.

As Jane's education progressed, her parents inquired more after her skill and practice of music. The possession of a talent such as playing an instrument would ensure that she would have an accomplishment to display in her homeland, and a hobby to engage her during the tedium that awaited her in the sugar plantation island. Additionally, she could perform for family, neighbors, and potential suitors to display her metropolitan accomplishments. Not only would Jane need to learn how to play an instrument, but it also was necessary for her to be able to tune her own instrument, as those skills were not readily available in Jamaica. He reminded Jane to study "with greatest attention the best books on Musick, so as to teach you that Science systematically and make you a Mistress of the Technical words, and to have you taught properly to tune the Harpsichord and grand Piano Forte."[113] The talent of playing music would separate her from the other creole young women who did not possess such skills.

Although Jane's parents demanded close attention to her studies, as she progressed, they allowed her to spend more holidays away from school to experience the culture and sociability of the metropole. During one holiday, while visiting acquaintances from the West Indies at Bath, the Brodbelts reminded her to display proper gratitude.[114] Jane's parents expected to her "treat Mrs H. and all the family to 2 or 3 plays, and to a concert or two, and when coming away to give each of them some trifle by way of a remembrance of friendship, but recollect, all this must be done with a handsome delicacy attended with great address."[115] The Brodbelts expected their youngest daughter to participate in the artistic endeavors available in England. Jane's maturation included both talent in playing music as well as the skill of selecting performances to delight her benefactors. While live performances were not unheard of in the West Indies, the ease of access

[113] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 20 May 1794, Ibid., 86.

[114] Bath, the fashionable spa, was a popular destination for absentee planters from the West Indies. See David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 56.

[115] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 6 July 1795, *Letters to Jane,* 112-113.

and greater selections in the urban centers of England provided Jane with opportunities to attend that she would not have back in her Jamaican home.

Along with the appreciation of music, Ann desired that Jane would possess other endowments in order to portray herself as a well-bred woman of fashion and a desirable companion. Jane's mother recounted the story of a "Miss Harris," who married well even though she did not posses "a sixpence in the World: therefore you see what mental and personal attractions will accomplish, and which she possessed in a high degree."[116] According to Ann, "personal attractions" included concern with one's posture, in order to stave off crookedness of figure: "I think with the Generality of the World, that a *well-formed shape* is far preferable to the beauties of the face."[117] Jane's mental accomplishments would not be displayed to their best advantage without careful attention to her appearance.

Jane's maturation process also included shopping and attiring herself in the latest fashions. Ann warned Jane to "[o]bserve that all the materials are of the best quality, for they are not only the most genteel, but the most lasting. Let every thing fit exactly to your Shape and put them on with *great* taste."[118] As Jane developed, it became increasingly important to ensure that she dressed with style and to the best advantage for her figure. Ann also desired that her daughter develop the elusive "taste" while in England. According to Bernard Herman, "taste" was a "coded material and performative language strategically employed in a process of self-

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[116] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 8 June 1793, Ibid., 61.

[117] Ibid., 62. When Jane was sixteen, a family acquaintance "Mr. Raymond" came to pay a visit to her at Flint House, and kissed her. Both Mrs. Fenwick and the Brodbelts found this to be a breech in propriety. Jane's father wrote: "I rejoice exceedingly that you considered how very right your good Governess acted in speaking to you about Mr Raymond's kissing you when he called at Flint House, for it certainly was very wrong and indelicate, as such a liberty should only be taken by a Parent or a very near Relation…" (Francis Rigby Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 28 February 1793, *Letters to Jane,* 54). The Brodbelt family affectionately called the young man in question "Mad Raymond", and perhaps such behavior was expected from a vivacious young man. Although the Brodbelts wished Jane to possess womanly charms to attract a husband, they felt like she was much too young at sixteen to be receiving such favors. Remarkably, this gentleman, Captain William Raymond of the 13th Light Dragoons, married her sister Ann Maria (Nancy) in 1798, although he was eighteen years older than she. They resided in Chudleigh.

[118] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 17 May 1795, *Letters to Jane,* 109.

identification along lines of both affinity and difference. In this sense, taste serves as an instrument that simultaneously privileges processes of social cohesion and social distinction. Taste in this context informs material and visual representations of power."[119] The Brodbelts expected Jane to display both her "taste" and her educational accomplishments on her return to the West Indies.

As Jane's education in England drew to a close, Dr. Brodbelt worried that she had not taken full advantage of the opportunities in the metropole. He grieved over the lack of scholastic progress perceived in the fellow creole ladies and emphasized his desire that Jane not join their ranks. Travel writers and visitors to the West Indies recorded their perceptions of the lack of motivation for educational endeavors in the Caribbean, and Dr. Brodbelt agreed with those observations. "It is really a grievous heartbreaking business," he wrote, "to see how ignorant and supercilious most all the young Ladies return to Jamaica from school: it is more than probably that this Ignorance arises from the young Ladies' friends keeping them too much from School, and allowing them to come Home too often."[120] His assessment agreed with travel historian Long's consideration of "the very great defects" in the education of the creole ladies of Jamaica.[121]

Concerning educational endeavors in Jamaica, Long remarked: "The education of the youths *remitted* from this island is, in general, so mismanaged, that…not one in ten would ever arrive at the age of discretion, or return."[122] In contrast, Dr. Brodbelt displayed concern for his

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[119] According to Bernard Herman, "Taste can be read as a system of social and cultural values focused in the eighteenth century on regularity, hierarchy, order, and standardization, all materially grounded in and made visible through architecture and an astonishing range of artifacts and social behaviors," in "Tabletop Conversations: Material Culture and Everyday Life in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World," in John Styles and Amanda Vickery, *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700-1830* (New Haven, CT: Yale Center for British Art, 2006), 43.

[120] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 4 October 1795, *Letters to Jane,* 117.

[121] Long, 286.

[122] Ibid., 247.

children's education.[123] Resisting the urges both to indulge every whim of his offspring and to demonstrate a complete lack of caring for their scholastic edification, Dr. Brodbelt did not confirm the stereotype found in novels concerning eighteenth-century Jamaica. His close attention to Jane's curriculum separated him from the other families in the Caribbean who allowed their offspring to participation in disorganized schooling. After a strict and circumscribed instruction, and Jane's coursework was coming to an end as she reached her sixteenth birthday.

Jane's completion of her education and her "coming of age" process included her families' increased reliance on her for news and for access to goods to purchase and ship from the metropole. Additionally, Dr. Brodbelt depended on Jane to purchase special medical supplies in London to send to Jamaica. Furthermore, Nancy, Jane's elder sister, who completed her education and returned to the Caribbean, relied on Jane for reports of fashions and gossip when she returned to the sedentary life of Spanish Town. Most importantly, her transition to adulthood depended on the material goods she would purchase to take back home, and both her display and manipulation of these possessions.

The Brodbelts attempted to ameliorate the monotony of life in the West Indies for their young girls returning home from schooling through the acquisition of material goods. Long famously recorded in his work that the education creole children "usually receive in Great-Britain does not qualify them for useful employment in Jamaica."[124] Jane's parents compiled a list of items she would need to retain her cultivation from England. They understood the

[123] Long described creole parenting: "they have not the watchful attention of a parent, to check their intemperate follies, to conduct them into the ways of prudence, and habituate them in the practice of self-denial! How much to be regretted, that the fond father, whilst his son thus remains unemployed in useful pursuits during the most headstrong career of his life, is wearing himself out with incessant toil and anxiety to no other effect than feeding the passions of an indolent or profligate spendthrift" (247).

[124] Ibid., 246.

importance of these material acquisitions to assist Jane in engaging in "useful employment" of her time.

The manipulation and possession of certain goods assisted in the formation of individuality in the colonial world. Maya Jasanoff states that "possessions are critical indicators not only of personal taste, but also of social milieu, wealth, education and status. By acquiring them one can craft and advertise a particular persona."[125] The "persona" that the Brodbelts assisted Jane in crafting required material goods from the metropole. As T. H. Breen has shown us, colonial Americans "self-fashioned" their identity by engaging with British material culture. The Brodbelts also, as Breen proposes, "went about the business of constructing a visual imagination out of the materials and experiences of everyday life."[126] They desired to display their cosmopolitan nature through consumption of British items.[127]

On the conclusion of her education in England, Jane received a stipend from her father, with which was enclosed a list that included jewelry, clothing, and a musical instrument. Jane was encouraged, however, to use the money as she determined. We can see Jane's acquisitions through the lens of authors Jackie Kirk, Claudia Mitchell, and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh. They propose that young girls develop "agency" through currency and decision for conspicuous consumption.[128] With her own money to spend on material goods, Jane enacted agency though

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[125] Although there have been excellent works on consumption and the creation of a national identity, few works have considered the role of "colonialism" in consumption. Maya Jasanoff demonstrates the use of material culture in "self-fashioning" throughout the British Empire. Jane's coming of age purchases can be seen as part of her "self fashioning" in the metropole for her imperial experience. See "Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning," *Past & Present* 184 (August 2004), 110-111. See also Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750-1850* (New York: Knopf, 2005).

[126] Breen, "The Meaning of Likeness," 39.

[127] For the Brodbelts, these items included the previously discussed goods such as miniature portraits, silhouettes, fashionable goods, and accessories such as fans, belts, and lace trimmings.

[128] Jackie Kirk, Claudia Mitchell, and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh, "Toward Political Agency for Girls: Mapping the Discourses of Girlhood Globally," in *Girlhood: A Global History* ed. Jennifer, Helgren, and Colleen A. Vasconcellos (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2010) These authors explain that in the "first world" young girls "suddenly have a currency all of their own, and there is no shortage of public data…to the purchasing power…to consume" (18). Jane's coming of age resonates with that proposed by *Girlhood.*

her consumption and assisted in crafting her own identity through the objects she purchased to take back to her home in Jamaica. Breen reveals how colonial individuals participated in a "social process known as self-fashioning," and through this phenomenon they enacted "human agency."[129] Through acquiring these goods, Jane was "self-fashioning" her identity as a member of the consumer elite in the British Empire. These items were not just souvenirs from England, but necessary items to help her retain her development and accomplishments from her time at school.

Throughout Jane's education, her parents raised animals such as cows and goats and at the completion of her time in England they sold the livestock. This gave Jane her own income to spend on necessary commodities in England.[130] Jane was allowed to exercise her own will in choosing the items. Her father remarked: "I therefore beg that you will appropriate it to any use you think proper when you are coming out."[131] However, Dr. Brodbelt had one request for Jane. He asked that she would purchase a "handsome gold watch and chain as a remembrance of my approbation and love." [132] He reminded Jane to make sure that the jewelry was of good quality due to the difficulty of finding a jeweler to mend items in the Caribbean. They also desired that Jane buy a pearl necklace to match the "very elegant" pins and earrings that Ann had in Jamaica.[133] These family treasures were to be bestowed on their youngest daughter on her return.[134] They recommended a close relative to assist Jane in her purchases to ensure she was not cheated. However, they did not want Jane to acquire anything unless it was of her own choice. Dr. Brodbelt reminded Jane: "Recollect we don't desire you to lay out your Money in Pearls,

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[129] Breen, "The Meaning of Likeness," 39.

[130] Francis Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 30 December 1795, *Letters to Jane,* 125.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

[134] See Marcia Pointon, *Brilliant Effects: A Cultural History of Gem Stones and Jewellery* (New Haven: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2009) for an examination of the meanings behind these bejeweled adornments in eighteenth-century society.

unless it perfectly pleases yourself."[135] As part of her coming of age process, Jane now had purchasing power and discretion to acquire luxury goods such as jewelry.

Along with ornamentation, the acquisition of a musical instrument provided Jane an opportunity to both exercise her judgment and provide an opportunity for displaying her achievements. Dr. Brodbelt wrote: "I have likewise another token of my Affection to make you, which is a Musical Instrument for you to bring to Jamaica, and which I also leave to your own choice," either a harpsichord or a pianoforte. He asked Jane to ensure that the music master of her school approved of the choice. Additionally, he reminded Jane to learn to tune the instrument she chose, as there would not be an individual to perform that task in the West Indies. Jane would be able to best display her accomplishments if she chose the instrument herself, and had the knowledge of how to interact with and manipulate this good. Hellman's work on furniture and sociability denotes the importance of the "performative" aspect of interacting with eighteenth-century household items. "Through strategically designed aspects of form and function," Helman argues, "furniture appeared to accommodate and flatter its users as they pursued such activities as reading, writing, conversing, eating, dressing, and game playing."[136] Performance on this instrument would display her developed form and posture, as well as her musical talents. In this aspect, her contact with her pianoforte would be "visual and kinetic; objects were not simply owned, but indeed performed."[137] The Brodbelts desired that Jane present her accomplishments to the best advantage, and her "performance" would ensure approval with her education and polishing from the metropole.

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[135] Ibid., 125-126. For bestowing jewelry concerning a young woman coming to age in marriage in eighteenth-century England, see Marilyn Morris, *Sex, Money & Personal Character in Eighteenth-Century British Politics* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 161-162.

[136] Mimi Hellman "Furniture, Sociability, and the Work of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32 (1999): 416. In this essay, Hellman suggests "that decorative objects conveyed meaning not simply through possession but also through usage, through a spatial and temporal complicity with the cultivated body that produced the appearance of leisured, sociable ease," (416).

[137] Hellman, 416.

Dr. Brodbelt would never enjoy the fruits of his labors concerning Jane's education. The report of his death reached Jane in December 1795, only a few months before her planned return to the West Indies. According to a friend of Dr. Brodbelt, "This day I have received, a most serious check, in the fall of my most favorite friend, the death of good Mr. Brodbelt of Jamaica, it is said he has died rich as provided well for his family, but above all he left a most excellent character, a very material part, and very difficult to support thro' a life of business."[138] Jane's sister Nancy's letter reached her in February lamenting that their father's final conversations regarded their impeding reunion: "His only Conversation when we were alone was of the Happiness we should experience this Year in *all* meeting"[139] Although Dr. Brodbelt's death was unexpected, he had prepared for it. In his will, he allocated provisions for not only his wife and heir, but also for both of his daughters. He left Nancy and Jane ten thousand pounds each, ensuring their future and marriage prospects.[140] His careful planning ensured that his beloved family would retain their position in society and continue living in a genteel state.

Although the grief struck the entire family from this tragedy, Ann soon wrote to Jane reminding her of the items she needed to obtain to plan her journey home efficiently. Amidst bereavement, Ann detailed instruction concerning Jane's homecoming to the Caribbean. This letter did not include sentiments for the grieving Jane or details of Dr. Brodbelt's funeral, focusing instead on business and paying little attention to the emotional state of the family or her daughter in England.[141] Additionally, she enclosed a list of items that the family needed that Jane was to buy. She suggested that Jane purchase new music to play: "Bring out some fashionable

[138] Mozley, n.,127.

[139] Ann Maria Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 1 February 1796, *Letters to Jane,* 128.

[140] Francis Rigby Brodbelt, will proved 18 May 1796, Island Record Office, Spanish Town, Jamaica.

[141] Ann reminded Jane: "…As you will require a Female attendant during the voyage, if you could meet with either a brown or a Black person of a Fair character, who has been already to in the Island, and is inclined to return again, you may hire one of that description [typo?] for a trifle, and who will answer your purpose much better than a White Servant, for you will not know what to do with Her after you arrive here": 1 February 1796, *Letters to Jane,* 129.

music, both in the Lesson as well as Sing song way, as you had better learn a few of each, as anything *new* is very taking here."[142] To avoid seasickness, Ann kindly recommended dried bruised ginger tea to drink on the ship. She also reminded Jane to purchase "3 pair Sheets," and "3 pr pillowcases" for a clean and comfortable voyage. Ann's letter displayed concern with receiving her own goods, as well as with Jane's comfort, even though her husband had just died and Ann was still in mourning. Ensuring material concerns was foremost for Jane, who, after safely arriving in Jamaica, could receive more consoling words in person.

In order for Jane to purchase her essential items, Ann enclosed a list of the fashionable attire needed in the West Indies. She included both items for mourning and various other garments to construct her wardrobe. Jane was now a lady of style returning from England, and her mother wished her to be "completely fitted out before you leave England."[143] Her garments included: "two riding Habits mentioned in the inclosed List, but you had better bring out *only one,* and let that be made of a Cloth which will both answer the purpose of *Second* mourning, and be of use to you when that is at an end, by changing the lining and buttons."[144] The first and second mourning periods prescribed various costuming changes, and Ann hoped that Jane efficiently provided herself with dress that would suffice for both.

Ann did not limit her list to mourning garments. She remembered other "Articles of dress &c., &c. which J. G. Brodbelt will require at the time of Her quitting England," which consisted of "6 morning caps, 8 night caps, 4 genteel fashionable dresses, proper to pay Yea visits in, [and] 4 very smart white morning dresses."[145] These stylish ensembles would assist Jane in her

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[142] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 1 February 1796, Ibid., 130.

[143] Ibid., 131

[144] Ibid. According to Lou Taylor: "Mourning dress for the wealthy became increasingly fashionably styled, with black coats and breeches for men and mantua dresses for women, in black and half-mourning mauve," in Lou Taylor, "Mourning Dress," *The Berg Fashion Library*, 2005. http://www.bergfashionlibrary.com/view/bazf/bazf00408.xml (accessed 9 Apr. 2012).

[145] Ann Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, 1 February 1796, *Letters to Jane*, 130.

reestablishment in Jamaica. After tragedy struck the Brodbelt family, Ann's desire for efficiency and a timely return for her youngest daughter took precedence over Jane's agency in determining her "trousseau." Although Jane was given preference when it came to her musical instrument, choice of sheet music, and jewelry, her wardrobe needs were circumscribed. Jane might have had discretion in the cut and fabric of her dresses, but Ann dictated the quantity and items.

With Jane's arrival in Jamaica, the three Brodbelt women were together again. However, Ann found the West Indian home unbearable after the death of her husband, and decided to return to England accompanied by her daughters. Choosing to relocate closer to her British relatives, Ann, now a wealthy and independent widow, joined many other wealthy retired West Indians in Bath.[146] The schemes for Jane's triumphant arrival to Jamaica, attired in the most fashionable dress and displaying her accomplishments to great success, gained her a wealthy creole husband named Peter Mackenzie. Jane's second tenure in England ended with her marriage in 1798, with the newlyweds returning to Jamaica. They lived in the Caribbean until her husband's death in 1856, when she retired in England as well. Jane's brother Rigby took his father's seat on the Council, and practiced medicine in Spanish Town from 1797-1810.[147] Although this family participated in Caribbean life, they were closely attached to the British world, and felt like British imperial subjects, occupying the space of both the West Indies and the metropole.

The Brodbelt family does not conform to the rhetoric of "family" in the West Indies. They participated in British material culture and received their education at British boarding schools. Dr. and Ann Brodbelt paid close attention to the lessons and accomplishments their

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[146] Grieve, 108.

[147] Rigby died in 1827, Ann never recovered from the shock, and died later that year. The next year Nancy and her son died. Jane and Peter lived in Jamaica, and after Peter's death, Jane went to England with her own daughters. The Brodbelts are now gone from Jamaica.

daughters learned and even participated in their education by recommending works to help with their edification. Additionally, the use of material culture marked a shift in the language and focus of their trans-Atlantic correspondence. Although the Brodbelts sent money for Jane to acquire goods to form her identity as an accomplished lady returning to the West Indies, they relied on her discretion in the choice of items. This marked Jane's "coming of age" and her completion of her educational process. These desired accomplishments, so prized in the eighteenth-century marriage market, would distinguish the young Brodbelt women from local rivals. Her "self-fashioning" through her British education would distinguish her as an accomplished lady of style for a potential husband. Jane's coming of age depended on both the completion of her education and her ability to display her accomplishments in her Caribbean home. Both the use of tasteful jewelry and the playing of a musical instrument would display her cultivation to her best advantage. Furthermore, fashionable attire from England would mark her as a lady of distinction in the urban Caribbean colonial world. After the untimely death of Dr. Brodbelt, Ann and her daughters returned to England, marking the ease of establishment in either returning to their former homes in the islands and began families of their own.

Due to the careful attention of the Brodbelts, their daughters did not display the characteristics of creole women noted by travel historians. The "soft and spiritless," creole lady with every step betraying "languor and lassitude," does not characterize the Brodbelt women.[148] Although this family does not represent the entire creole population, particularly the plantation families in the rural West Indies, it does demonstrate that the entire creole population cannot be reduced to stereotypes and caricatures.[149] This cosmopolitan family experienced the empire by

[148] Edwards, 13.

[149] Most stereotypes pertaining to the West Indian populace regard the women who lived on the plantations, who were either married or daughters of plantation owners, or oversaw the large properties in the Caribbean themselves.

retaining close connections to family and loved ones in Britain. Furthermore, through participation with British material culture, the Brodbelts remained linked with the metropole. Additionally, the young women in this family used items from England both to come of age following their education and to display their accomplishments from school.

CHAPTER 4

LOYALISTS IN JAMAICA: THE COWPER AND STORROW FAMILIES

In the years following the American War for Independence, many women left their families and their familiar landscape to relocate to a foreign locale. Regardless of wartime loyalties, once the men in their lives, whether husband or father, decided to venture into the great unknown of the British Empire, women had no choice but to follow their patriarchal heads of household. Despite dislocation, family members maintained transatlantic connections. This chapter considers Ann Appleton Storrow, and Margaret and Mary Cowper, who experienced the American War for Independence first hand in the Atlantic Seaboard, briefly stayed in England, and then relocated to Jamaica. Although transplanted to this tropical island, they did not transform into women obsessed with consumption and luxury as seen in the fictional depictions from eighteenth-century novels. Like the Brodbelt family, material culture characterized their experiences during their time in Jamaica. While the Brodbelt family was oriented only towards England in their familial scope, for the Cowpers and Storrows, the sending and receiving of goods allowed them to remain connected with their loved ones both in the newly formed United States and in Great Britain. Assisted by these sustained contacts, both Ann and Margaret also eventually returned to North America later in their life and resided in the homeland of their birth. Although these loyalist families were from different locations in colonial America, striking similarities arise from their sojourns in Jamaica following the cessation of military action.[1]

As many recent studies have shown, the ties of loyalty to the American cause or to the British crown were more fluid than once imagined.[2] Especially for women, bonds of political or

[1] On migration to Jamaica following the American War for Independence, see Wallace Brown, "The American Loyalists in Jamaica," *Journal of Caribbean History* 26 (1993): 121-146.

[2] For loyalism during the American War for Independence, see Mary Beth Norton, *Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women 1750-1800* (New York: Cornell University, 1980); Wallace Brown,

national loyalty seemed less important than those of kinship and friendship. The Cowper sisters, Ann Appleton Storrow, and many other eighteenth-century women who were compelled to leave the emerging United States of America following the Treaty of Paris in 1783, did not sever all ties to their former lives. As Patricia Rogers, in her study of loyalists in the Anglo-American world posits: "While ideology undoubtedly drove certain individuals to act, the majority of colonists based their decisions upon complex and intertwined factors including personal interests, community, and family ties, as well as perceived present and future opportunities."[3] Although rich in detail, the letters left behind by Storrow and the Cowpers do not give us an idea of their own personal loyalties. Rather, the lively writings of these women discuss material goods in a sentimental manner as a mode of connection between them and their correspondents in the United States of America. Exile provided them with the stage for the unfolding drama of dislocation and uncertainty, reenacted in their lively letters to loved ones back in America. The writings of these women contain highly sentimentalized language concerning the material goods exchanged between them and their correspondents in America. For, according to Sarah Pearsall, "sentimentalizing families was one way of coping with the dislocations of the eighteenth

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"Loyalist Historiography" *Acadiensis* 4 (1974): 133-138; Ann Gorman Condon, "The Family in Exile: Loyalist Social Values after the Revolution," in *Intimate Relations: Family and Community in Planter Nova Scotia, 1759-1800*, ed. Margaret Conrad (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1996); Judith L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2002); Philip Ranlet, *The New York Loyalists* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986); Janice Potter-MacKinnon, *The Liberty We Seek: Loyalist Ideology in Colonial New York and Massachusetts* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983); Robert Stansbury Lambert, *South Carolina Loyalists in the American Revolution* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1987); Barry Cahill, "The Black Loyalist Myth in Atlantic Canada," *Acadiensis* 29 (1999): 76-87; Wallace Brown, *The King's Friends: The Composition and Motives of the American Loyalist Claimants* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1965); J. M. Bumsted, *Understanding the Loyalists* (Mount Allison University: Centre for Canadian Studies, 1986); David A. Wilson, "The Ambivalent Loyalists." *Acadiensis* 14 (1984): 122-37; Paul H. Smith, "The American Loyalists: Notes on Their Organization and Numerical Strength" *William and Mary Quarterly* 25 (1968): 259-77; W.S. MacNutt, *The Atlantic Provinces: the Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1965).

[3] Patricia Rogers, "The Loyalist Experience in an Anglo-American Atlantic World," in *Planter Links: Community and Culture in Colonial Nova Scotia*, edited by Barry Moody and Margaret Conrad (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 2001), 167.

century."[4] Pearsall's examination of families in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world demonstrates that sentimentality regarding kinship networks was one aspect of letter writing. She contends that mention of "loving attachments" in these Atlantic letters was due to these individuals' "seemingly imperiled status as a result of the many and frequent dislocations of an Atlantic world."[5] These long distances could be crossed through frequent letter writing that included decidedly sentimental language, which was conventional for correspondence in the late eighteenth century.

As seen in the Introduction, sensibility permeated eighteenth-century print culture. However, the language of sentiment was not limited to the genre of novels, as young women writing letters appropriated this form. The trauma of the war and the loss of their familial property and homes dislocated them from the place of their birth. When their patriarchal head of household chose to leave their homeland, these women left behind many of their friends and relatives who had placed their future with the burgeoning United States of America. In the cases I will examine here, the Cowper and Storrow families moved to the Caribbean island of Jamaica. As these women experienced wartime losses, were removed from their families, and placed on an exotic island, their connections with sentimental figures in eighteenth-century novels became real. This language assisted in coping with the feeling of loss due to the separation from friends and family.

In this time of upheaval in the imperial Atlantic, displaced women utilized material objects both to forge personal bonds and to create a common language by which they could identify themselves as members of the colonial elite. Additionally, the exchanged materials

[4] Sarah M. S. Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 7. See also Pearsall's "'Citizens of the World': Men, Women, and Country in the Age of Revolution," in *Old World, New World America and Europe in the Age of Jefferson*, edited by Leonard Sadosky (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

[5] Pearsall, *Atlantic Families*, 9.

reminded them of the individual that object represented. These items were more than just mere clothing or decorative objects, they were concrete reminders of the person who had acquired the goods for them. Recent studies concerning eighteenth-century families are concentrating on the aspects of sensibility concerning the relations between family members.[6] Although many works have concentrated on the rise of sensibility and sentimentality in the broader eighteenth-century world, few have noted the role that material objects played in heightening this phenomenon.[7] Furthermore, few works focus on the loyalist diaspora following the American War for Independence. One exception is Maya Jasanoff's *Liberty's Exiles* that begins to uncover the nuanced and vibrant experiences of loyalists who chose to leave America.[8] For the most part, however, the stories of women who relocated to Jamaica and maintained ties with their American relatives and friends have been overlooked.[9] Although their personal beliefs concerning the American War for Independence do not survive in their writings, their feelings about Britain are revealed in their becoming a part of the loyalist diaspora following the

[6] See Kate Retford, *The Art of Domestic Life: Family Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2006) and Pearsall, *Atlantic Families*.

[7] Works that focus on sensibility and literature in the eighteenth century include: John Mullan, *Sentiment and Sociability: The Language of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Ann Jessie Van Sant, *Eighteenth-Century Sensibility and the Novel: The Senses in Social Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[8] Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011).

[9] See Figure 5.1 for a representation of the reception of the loyalists in Britain, the painting taken from a portrait by Benjamin West. This fanciful painting comes from a detail from a portrait of John Eardly Wilmont, and portrays Britannia, backed by Religion and Justice welcoming loyalists to England following the American War for Independence. The loyalists include freedmen, indigenous peoples, and women and children. In the front of this group are pictured men who lost both land and property. John Eardly Wilmont was an advocate for loyalist compensation, and this allegorical painting was included within his portrait. Many who sought refuge in England, however, did not find the warm welcome they sought. Families such as the Storrows and Cowpers soon left this temporary sanctuary to form new lives in the Caribbean island of Jamaica.

cessation of fighting.

Figure 5.1: Benjamin West*, Reception of the American Loyalists by Great Britain in the Year 1783*. Detail from a Portrait of John Eardley Wilmot, 1812.

Ann Appleton Storrow and Margaret and Mary Cowper represent two instances of displacement following the Peace of Paris in 1783. Although the fighting officially ceased, for those who remained loyal to the British Empire, the struggle to find a space in the larger British Empire had only just begun. Both the Cowpers and Storrow hailed from respectable families on the colonial Atlantic Seaboard and the two families found themselves in Jamaica in the years after the American War for Independence.[10] Here their similarities end. Storrow, a married woman with children, had worries and cares in urban Kingston far different from those of the Cowper sisters who relocated to a rural plantation. In both cases, however, these women sustained associations with their friends and family members through letters and the sending and receiving of material goods. They valued these goods not only because it was difficult to obtain such objects in Jamaica, on the imperial periphery, but because of the objects' relationship to the person who acquired the items to send. Therefore, the sharing of commodities between relocated

[10] Although the Cowper and Storrow families had similar backgrounds, and a shared experience of relocation to Jamaica, but to my knowledge, they were not acquainted.

loyalist women and their families separated by the Atlantic demonstrates an important aspect of the late eighteenth century imperial experience. Although they made themselves comfortable in various imperial landscapes, their true "home" remained wherever loved ones and family resided.

Figure 5.2: "Ann Appleton Storrow," date unknown, in Charles Denny, *Ann Appleton Storrow: 1760-1796*, unpublished manuscript, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, insert following Chapter V.

Letters and the exchange of goods provided a tangible connection for these individuals and crafted a sense of "family," despite the physical location of the various individuals.[11]

Born to a respectable family, Ann Appleton Storrow spent her childhood in colonial New Hampshire.[12] Born in 1760, as the granddaughter of John Wentworth, Royal Governor of the Province of New Hampshire, and as the niece and cousin of two other governors, she inhabited an enviable space in colonial social life.[13] Although her father Samuel Appleton died at sea

[11] A recent article that considers the role of family and empire is Esme Cleall, Laura Ishiguro, and Emily J. Manktelow, "Imperial Relations: Histories of family in the British Empire," *Journal of Colonialism* 14 (2013), np.

[12] For a visual depiction of Ann Appleton Storrow, see Figure 5.2.

[13] All biographical information concerning Ann Appleton Storrow comes from the notes and papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society concerning the Storrow Family. For Ann's grandfather and his relation to the American War for Independence, see Emily L. Schulz, *New Hampshire in the American Revolution* (Washington D.C.: The Society for the Cincinnati, 2010).

leaving her bereft mother, Mary Wentworth Appleton, with three children, her grandparents gladly raised her. When the war arrived to New England, Ann was then living in Portsmouth. Her future husband, Thomas Storrow, hailed from Kingston, Jamaica. As the firstborn son of a successful shipwright, at his father's death he inherited most of the property. His father left a widow, and two sons, Thomas and his brother Nicholas, as well as two daughters.[14] According to later accounts, Storrow did not feel justified in receiving the bulk of his inheritance, and split the property more equitably with his brother.[15] His generosity with his brother proved unfortunate, as Storrow's remaining property did not render him independent. Storrow relied on the benevolence of his mother, who lived on the cash settlement received at the death of her husband. As a young man, Storrow formed an attachment to a Miss Dawson in Jamaica, of whom his mother heartily disapproved. Following his mother's advice, Storrow left Jamaica to join the British army as an officer. While journeying to join his regiment, privateers captured his vessel and carried him to Newport.[16] On parole, he visited the hometown of Ann Appleton. Due to the loyalist sympathies in this town, he was able to move quite openly and so met the charming young Ann. Although he met with the initial disapproval of both Ann's mother and grandmother, in the end her grandmother relented and Thomas joined her prestigious family by marrying Ann in December 1777.

[14] According to Douglass Mann, Storrow's estate was valued at £13,197 at his death, in "Becoming Creole: Material Life and Society in Eighteenth-Century Kingston, Jamaica" (Ph.D. Diss, University of Georgia, 2005, fn. 25).

[15] These reports, by Charles Denny and Henry Barlow Brown are unpublished and in the Ann Appleton Storrow Papers at the Massachusetts Historical Society, hereafter referred to as MHS..

[16] Charles Denny, *Ann Appleton Storrow: 1760-1796*, Unpublished Manuscript, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS, 5.

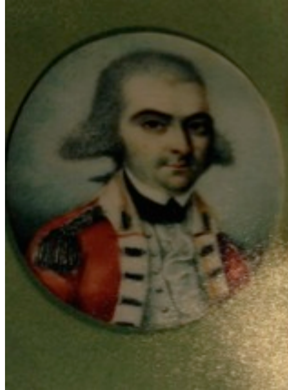

Figure 5.3: "Thomas Storrow," miniature, reported to have been commissioned in the West Indies around 1781, private collection, in Charles Denny, *Ann Appleton Storrow: 1760-1796*, unpublished manuscript, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society, insert following Chapter V.

Initially the newlyweds lived in New York with Ann's Aunt Butler before journeying to England to reunite with Storrow's mother. When in England, Ann realized how financially dependent Thomas was on his mother due to his profligate spending habits. Although he owned land in Jamaica, he did not live within his means. Despite financial insecurity, their first child, Thomas Wentworth Storrow arrived in 1779. In order to release himself from dependence on his mother, Storrow decided to rejoin his regiment in the West Indian island of Antigua. Part of his earlier release and parole from his imprisonment in wartime New England dictated that he could not participate in fighting in Colonial North America. Storrow therefore travelled to the Caribbean to earn his fortune and fight against the French.

Although many men who accompanied Storrow to the disease-ridden West Indies perished, Storrow escaped unscathed. His formative years in Jamaica might have given him an advantage against the climate and diseases that many other British soldiers did not possess. While in St. Kitts, Storrow sent a miniature of himself to his wife for her to keep in remembrance of him.[17] For Ann, this object would be the first of many that would cross the Atlantic to serve as a reminder of those separated by an ocean. In 1784, following the completion of the War, the

[17] Henry Barlow Brown, "Thomas, father of Thomas Wentworth Storrow," Unpublished Manuscript, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS, 5. For a visual depiction of Thomas Storrow, see Figure 5.3.

Storrows decided to settle in Nova Scotia. The British deemed Nova Scotia to be an adequate sanctuary for those displaced loyalists to establish new settlements close to their former colonial homes. Nova Scotia seemed a haven for loyalists, and Storrow hoped to set up a successful business to ensure the future of his family.

These early years from 1785-1787 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, seemed to be pleasant for Ann and her family. Thomas entered into business with Ann's Uncle Butler, and Thomas placed most of their disposable income into the scheme. The Butlers, Storrows, and a Mr. Fraser all put their money in business in St. Andrews, located across the Bay of Fundy on the coast near Maine. Butler also purchased land himself and on nearby Campobello Island, and encouraged the Storrows to do so as well, and they began to settle in their new home. This proved an ill purchase, as unfortunately, another man, Mr. Owen, had prior claim to the property and evicted the Storrows out with little money or moveable goods left to them. The beleaguered family had moved now from colonial New Hampshire to New York, then to England, and now to multiple places in Canada. Furthermore, their investments were not proving to be financially profitable, and Storrow decided to remove to Jamaica to his paternal property and attempt success in his place of origin. In 1789 Storrow departed alone for his Jamaican properties. Alarmed by news of Storrow's illnesses in 1791 on the sugar plantation island, Ann and her now five children, two sons and three daughters, followed, determined to establish a more positive outcome in a new location.[18]

[18] Of the Storrows' five children, four attained adulthood. These children include Thomas Wentworth Storrow, 1779-1862. Thomas became a successful merchant and friends with Washington Irving, and his children married into Irving's family. Ann Gillam Storrow, better known as "Nancy," was born sometime around 1784. She never married and was best known for her hospital work in Cambridge during the Civil War. Louisa was born in 1786 and later married Stephen Higgins and had ten children. Another son was Samuel Appleton Storrow, born in 1787. He would later become a Colonel in the U.S. Army. Ann Storrow's final child was Rebecca Susannah born 1790, and died shortly before Ann. See Charles Denny, "Ann Appleton Storrow 1760-1796," Unpublished Manuscript, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

While Ann was displaced many times following the American War for Independence as her extended family separated due to wartime loyalties and its aftermath, this removal was by far the most severe for Ann and her family. While in Jamaica, Ann experienced exile from the society and friends she had enjoyed in both New Hampshire and Nova Scotia. She had little company, as well as abundant anxieties for her large family and her husband's financial failures and frequent illnesses. Like other mothers in Jamaica, Ann constantly worried over the health of her family.[19] With diseases such as yellow fever and malaria rampant in coastal cities such as Kingston, Ann feared the possibility of tropical disease. Her letters from Jamaica contained anxious reports regarding the climate and the lack of a stimulating intellectual environment for herself and her children.

Although the cares for her family encompassed the bulk of her correspondence, Ann's letters to her sister, Rebecca Appleton Brown also display the material woes present in Colonial Jamaica. With little extra income for the increase in expenses, she worried about properly attiring her family. In one letter to her sister in 1792, Ann bemoaned: "for I am sure they wear out as many clothes here in 6 months as they would in twelve."[20] Due to the humid tropical weather and the need to wash them more frequently because of the heat, clothes did not last in that environment.[21] These concerns over the appearance of her family and of the fashion present in Jamaica merited space in her letters as well.

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[19] See the *Journal of Maria Nugent* for a candid account concerning the health of families: Lady Maria Nugent and Frank Cundall, *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago: Reprinted from a Journal Kept by Maria, Lady Nugent, from 1801 to 1815* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by A. & C. Black, 1907).

[20] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 26 April 1792, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS. As far as possible, I have retained original punctuation and spelling. All letters are from Kingston Jamaica unless otherwise noted.

[21] For clothing in Jamaica, particularly for the enslaved population, see Stephen O. Buckridge, *The Language of Dress: Resistance and Accommodation in Jamaica, 1760-1890* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2004).

Ann longed for news from home and cherished each letter received from her friends and family. She wrote to her sister during the summer of 1792: "I am happy in acknowledging the receipt of your letters of 26th April, with the other you forwarded and have no other fault to find but that it was not half long enough. I shall be seriously angry with you if you don't convert your aversion to writing and send me such letters as you know I like. You never mention a word how your own family go on."[22] Pearsall argues that eighteenth-century letter writers kept record of the length of letters received and sent in order to keep a reciprocal balance in exchange.[23] Although removed from her loved ones, Ann still desired to be acquainted with important events and even daily life and gossip. She sentimentally wrote that her sister's letters were not even half as long as she desired. Familial concerns were at the foremost of importance for letters, but material matters were never far behind.

[22] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 28 June 1792, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS.
[23] Pearsall, *Atlantic Families*. See particularly Chapter 1: "The Perils and Possibilities of Atlantic Distance," 26-56.

Figure 5.4: Nicholas Heideloff, "Hyde Park, Riding Dress," *The Gallery of Fashion*, Vol IV, no. 2, May 1797 (London).

News of fashion did not escape Ann's attention in her letters back to America. According to Ann, the fashion in Jamaica included the " beaver hat" as "the most general fashion, squeezed on to the head like a mans."[24] "A few bonnets you see," she continued, "made very small, and some of them trimmed in the most fantastic stile the hair dress'd closer than of late and hanging loose behind."[25] Describing the fashion in Jamaica, Ann painted a picture of elite colonial life in the sugar plantation island. In urban Kingston, fashions from the metropolitan centers of Europe and the early United States could be seen paraded through the promenades and streets of this mercantile center. Beaver hats, suited more for a cooler climate, were still worn in this sultry heat. Although "the dress of the neck is nothing new," surprisingly "Jackets are much worn, with

[24] I am grateful to Mann's "Becoming Creole," for a transcription of this statement: Douglass Mann, "Becoming Creole," 153. Much of the beaver pelts originated in North America and traveled to the metropolitan centers in France and Great Britain to be processed into fashionable hats and accessories. For an image of a beaver hat published in a 1797 edition of *The Gallery of Fashion*, see Figure 5.4.

[25] Ibid.

two narrow flournas on the coat."[26] Due to the popularity of a more natural silhouette and lighter fabrics, women in Jamaica could adhere to the fashion trends in Europe without worrying about the hazards of health that the former silk brocades and hooped ensembles had created. The current fashions coincided with the mainland popularity of "muslins" in the style of "polonese, and trimed with [unreadable word] all with capes made in the stile of Mrs. Campbell."[27] Not only were their dresses lavish and trimmed with the greatest attention, but their adornments enriched their garments. Regarding accessories, Storrow wrote that the creole women in Jamaica wore "gold earings of different patterns, very beautiful." To complete the ensemble, every creole "lady here wears handsome shoes… all painted sandals or painted leather, silk stalkings are almost as common as legs."[28] Ann approved of their taste and style: "indeed they dress [here so] prodigiously, the muslins exceed every thing [I] ever saw for fineness and variety…. the beauty of which is more than I can describe."[29] Although not able to afford a wardrobe as extensive and lavish as theirs, she was not without praise for their elegance in both costume and accouterments. Sharing the local fashionable attire with her correspondents allowed Ann to reveal life and society in her new home, and connect with her loved ones on a topic that excited and interested them both.[30]

As part of the exchange of goods and ideas across the Atlantic, Ann wanted to participate beyond letter writing to her correspondents. Ann not only described the fashions to her sister, but also intended to send her a pair of white gloves from Jamaica to show off the

[26] Mann, 153.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Women on both sides of the Atlantic enjoyed sharing news concerning fashion. Historian Vickery argues: "Beyond its instrumental role, the exchange of information 'in the fashion way' had wider implications for feminine culture. Filling their letters with 'Fashions, Flounces & Flourishes', women shared clothes, advice and experience. Basic to female relationships was the exchange of consumer services." Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter,* 183.

beauty of this item.[31] Furthermore, Ann sent a book of fables to a friend in America, demonstrating that the transoceanic exchanges were not a one-way street.[32] Letters and gifts passed between this network of family and friends. Furthermore, these gifts allowed Ann to share the goods she wrote about and solidify the bonds of kinship indicated in the letters. When her sister wore the gloves, she would be wearing a material reminder of her faraway sister. Not merely an accessory, these gloves would touch and adorn her hands and serve as a constant and tangible reminder of the absent person.

Throughout Ann's stay in Jamaica, she missed the society of friends who remained in her previous locale, particularly in St. Andrews. Although she had lived in many places, she missed the company of her loved ones the most in her new tropical dwelling. She prized any letter from her acquaintances, especially those from her relations. "I never felt the loss of [friends] more keanly than the present time having not a single female acquaintance in town," Ann admitted.[33] Additionally, she felt the absence of social exchanges and meetings. According to Ann: "The conversation of women generally speaking is not very edifying."[34] She missed all of her support from her family and longed for a day when she could return. Additionally, she found the lack of

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[31] Local shops, like that of a Mrs. Jones on Church-Street in Kingston, offered "Ladies kid and coloured," as well as "Gentlemens wash leather Gloves." *Royal Gazette* Kingston, 13 February 1782. For gloves and their relationship to the creation of identity for women, see Ariel Beaujot, '"The Beauty of her Hands': The Glove and the Making of the Middle-Class Body," in *Material Women, 1750-1950: Consuming Desires and Collecting Practices*, edited by Maureen Daly Groggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009): 167-183. Beujot argues that "[c]lass, race and nation were imbedded into the practice of wearing gloves, which protected white skin" (168). Furthermore, wearing gloves in the colonial world acted "as a protective cover for the skin and helping women to maintain the important distinction between the white race and other conquered races, the glove was involved in the performance of femininity" (168). Gloves can be seen as both an emblem of fashion and a wearable good that would assist women in preserving their pale complexions.

[32] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 16 September 1792, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS.

[33] Ann Appleton Storrow to "Penny" Penelope Wentworth Butler, 28 September 1792, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS.

[34] Ibid. Nugent also remarked on the lack of satisfying female companions in her journal. Nugent commented on the local women: "Soon after, the ladies began to arrive…Find a sad want of local matter, or, indeed, any subject for conversation with them…I mean in the future not to attempt anything like a conversazione, but to have Friday dances" (Nugent, 21). These comments support the stereotype concerning creole women, while at the same time showing Nugent and Storrow's desire to separate themselves from the local population.

opportunities for her children a strong enough incentive to send her eldest son to her sister's home for his education.

Although many parents in Jamaica chose to send their children to England for schooling, the Storrows chose to send their son to their former place of inhabitance in St. Andrews. Since he would reside in Ann's sister Rebecca's home, this would prove cheaper than education in England, and provide a strong bond between him and her family. She entrusted the care of her eldest son to her sister and believed that the opportunities would be greater in early-national United States than in the sugar plantation islands. Ann missed her child, but decided that the best prospects could be found in the place of her upbringing. Material matters were foremost in her correspondence, as she wrote of her desire to send her son "another suits of clothes" to add to his wardrobe.[35] Even though her eldest son was now in the care of another, Ann wanted to assist in his personal attire.

In order to keep her sister abreast of her niece Nancy's maturation, Ann sent her daughter's sampler to demonstrate the young girl's progress. According to the proud mother the sampler contained: "in it all her own work, except a little assistance I gave her in shaping the… Stich flowers, it a small slip of a thing, but there was a mistake in buying the canvas… I thought she might learn to mark on that as well as in any other. I hope you will be pleased with it."[36] Although this small piece of stitching might have seemed inconsequential in the broader Atlantic world during this tumultuous time, the girl's small accomplishment would likely not go unnoticed by Nancy's extended family. This item represented an important milestone in her education, and her "accomplishments."[37] As seen with the Brodbelt family, these

[35] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 13 April 1793, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS.
[36] Ibid. Ann Gillam Storrow was referred to as "Nancy" in her mother's letters.
[37] For "accomplishments" and the education of young girls, see Ann Bermingham, *Learning to Draw: Studies in the Cultural History of a Polite and Useful Art* (New Haven, CT: Published for the Paul Mellon Centre for

accomplishments were an important component of a young girl's education and maturation. By sending this item, her family would possess a tangible representation of their young relative. Even though they were far away in distance, they could still visualize the progress and success of this young girl. Ann also had a chance to display her care as a mother in teaching her daughter this skill that was necessary for women of the British gentry in the late eighteenth century.[38] Prudent and respectable housewives of the rural gentry prized their sewing expertise and the ability teach these skills to their daughters.[39] Ann sent this not only to demonstrate the developing skill of her young daughter, but also to assert her position as a member of the colonial gentry. Regardless of their distance from the metropole in this colonial outpost, still Nancy was learning proper accomplishments that demonstrated her position in society and preparing her to have the accomplishments she needed to be a marriageable woman in the eighteenth-century Atlantic World. As a woman with little fortune, these achievements might assist her in finding a desirable spouse. These objects would also contain sentimental value, as they could be touched and held to remind loved ones far away of her.

As her sons matured, Ann prepared to part with them for their educational endeavors. Her transatlantic exchange of people and goods also included more clothing items for her children in North America. When the Storrows sent their youngest son Samuel to North America for his

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Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2000) and Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

[38] Scholarship concerning eighteenth-century motherhood has benefitted from the works of: R. Perry, "Colonizing the Breast: Sexuality and Maternity in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Forbidden History: The State, Society, and the Regulation of Sexuality in Modern Europe*, edited by J. C. Fout (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood : British Writing and Culture, 1680-1760* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

[39] See Vickery*, The Gentleman's Daughter,* 10, 23, 151; Rozsilka Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (London: Women's Press, 1984); Laurie Yager Lieb, '"The Works of Women are Symbolical': Needlework in the Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 10 (Spring 1986): 28-44.

education, Ann sent a list of the items she packed in his equipage.[40] His outfits included "a broadcloth suit of clothes, a coat of his fathers" that she believed would "make him a good second suit." He also possessed "1 suits of nankeen…2 shirts, 5 pair stockings, 5 pocket handkerchiefs, 3 pair shoes, [and] 2 hats."[41] According to Ann, young Samuel possessed a "prodigious wardrobe," and his caring mother carefully noted all the articles she sent.[42] This ensured that she handled and cared for his clothing before his long journey to his new place of abode. She further explained: "I muse premise that one of his shirts is not quite finished. And I fear the wristbands on all are too little, I have therefore sent a small pair of the cloth to make new ones if you find it necessary. His stockings are those I brought with me. They have never been [worn] and I fancy will do pretty well for some time."[43] Like colonial mother Ann Brodbelt, Ann Storrow used objects in the formation of her identity as a mother.[44] Through her physical interaction with the goods and her careful inventory of each item, she displayed her concern for the well-being of her offspring. The prospect of removal and distance only heightened such feelings at the time of departure.

Due to strained finances and the hazards of shipping goods in the late eighteenth century, Ann could not always send all of the items of clothing to her children that she desired for them. In April 1793, Ann revealed to her sister that she "wanted very much to have sent him [Samuel] another suit of clothes, and some linen, but could not conveniently by this opportunity."[45] She hoped that he would not be in "absolute want" and wished that she would be able to send them

[40] Samuel Appleton Storrow, was around six years old when he was sent to Ann's sister's residence in 1792.

[41] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 24 April 1792, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS. "Nankeen" refers to a cloth that originated from China with a yellowish color used in trousers.

[42] According to Daniel Roche, noble men in eighteenth-century France owned about eighty garments, whereas wage-earners possessed around five or six items. See Daniel Roche, *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the 'Ancien Regime,'* edited by Jean Birrel, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 118-150.

[43] Ibid.

[44] For a larger discussion of this phenomenon, see Chapter 3.

[45] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 13 April 1793, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS.

items shortly. Ann wanted to continue supplying clothes and otherwise assisting in her children's care, even when they were no longer under her direct attention. This would ensure that she still played a role in the lives of her beloved offspring. The Storrows remained close to their children due to their careful attention to material possessions and their watchfulness concerning their children's educational endeavors.

Although the Storrows sent many of their children away for their education, they were not uninvolved in the development of their curriculum. As a member of the colonial elite of New Hampshire, Ann had received a proper education for a young lady, and she expected her children to achieve similar prospects. Writing to her sister in 1793, Ann expressed her desire that her son focus more closely on arithmetic and writing, and well as acquire "some little knowledge of the French language."[46] As her husband continued to struggle in both his health and finances, Ann understood the importance of her children gaining a proper education. This would ensure proper management of their property and conducting business in a way to support the family.

Ann's husband's failing health required the family to relocate once again, with the goal of going to St. Andrews, where the Brown family lived, along with the Storrows' sons Thomas Wentworth and Samuel.[47] Due to Storrow's continued illness, they did not progress beyond Boston, where they remained with Ann's half brother John Clapham. Storrow never recovered and died on October 21, 1794. Although in mourning, Ann still concerned herself to send dispatch pieces for a garment for her daughter including "2 tissets, a tucker, and ribbin for her white frock."[48] Additionally, Ann sent a "pair of bodices to finish, I have done one sides…other

[46] Ann Appleton Storrow to Rebecca Appleton Brown, 5 June, 1793, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS.
[47] Denny, 35.
[48] Ann Appleton Storrow to "Penny" Penelope Wentworth Butler, 27 October 1794, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, MHS. In late 1794, Nancy stayed with Ann's cousin Penny for an extended period of time. The letters are unclear why the mother and daughter parted during this period of bereavement.

you will be good enough to finish, and put bone in them."[49] Ann also desired that her daughter be exposed to music while separated: "[L]et her hear your piano forte," Ann requested, "and make her sing with you, she has some idea of musick."[50] This colonial mother's aspirations were for her children to receive all the benefits of their education, no matter the circumstances at home. Ann did not leave out any detail in her letter: "I have sent 3 dollars by [Nancy] she will probably want a pair of shoes."[51] Finally, Ann requested that her correspondent procure for her "a pair of gloves" to be sent to Ann in her new home. Even during her time of upheaval and potential financial ruin, Ann still cared for the material concerns of her family.

With the assistance of friends and relatives, in 1795 Ann opened a boarding school for young

MRS. STORROW's boarding school, at Hingham, will be open for the reception of young Ladies, on the 20th of *April*—The pupils are to be instructed in the English Language, grammatically—Arithmetic—Needle-Work, both plain and ornamental—with a general knowledge of Geography. The utmost attention will be paid to their personal health, and the formation of their minds and manners. The terms are *fifteen shillings* per week, washing included; and *thirteen* without. The vacations are to be twice in a year, one to commence the 15th of *May*, and the other the 15th of *November*. The separate charges are Dancing, which will be *eight dollars* per quarter, and *four* entrance; French, *six dollars* per quarter; Music not yet provided, but will be, when a sufficient number of pupils make it an object. No young lady will be admitted under eight years of age.

[1795] April 20

Figure 5.5: Advertisement, April 20, 1795, Miscellaneous Folder, Ann Appleton Storrow Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society.

girls in nearby Hingham, Massachusetts.[52] Left with little from her financially unstable husband, her boarding school allowed her to remain independent and to be near loved ones, including her eldest son Thomas Wentworth, and her beloved sister in Boston. This school also permitted her

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[49] Ibid.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] See Figure 5.5 for a visual representation of her advertisement. See also Denny, 60. This advertisement indicates that Ann operated her school in April 1795, seven months after the death of her husband. Lou Taylor affirms that women who frequented the French Court had to wait six months after the death of a spouse before appearing socially in black attire. See Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1983), 107. Although the rules were less stringent in England, six months did seem a socially-acceptable period of mourning before reentering society.

to educate not only her own daughters but neighboring children as well. This seemed to be a happy period in her life, when she was surrounded by the friends and family with whom she had corresponded during her tenure in the Caribbean. This short period of tranquility ended with the death of her youngest daughter Rebecca. This blow proved too heavy for Ann who suffered a mental shock from which she did not recover. No longer able to continue her educational endeavors, she moved into confinement. While surrounded by her sister, relatives, and loved ones, she died shortly thereafter in 1796. Her son Thomas Wentworth remembered her fondly as the instrumental parent who "derived from nature a good capacity, which was improved by education, and as she became more acquainted with the world and was brought to bear its trials, her character acquired great strength by which she was enabled alone to sustain herself with firmness, without losing the feminine qualities or showing a want of dignity."[53] He reminisced on her religious nature and firmness of understanding that greatly superseded her husband. Although her life had proved difficult, mainly because of financial insecurity and upheavals due to war and illness, yet she had remained a determined mother for her children and earned the love and respect of her wider family and friends.

Although Ann Appleton Storrow lived a relatively short life, she inhabited many spaces of the British Empire during the late eighteenth century. Born in New Hampshire, she lived in England, Canada, Jamaica, and Massachusetts before her death. Her family remained important to her throughout her life, and the items sent and received from her period of separation in Jamaica helped retain important ties both for her and for her young children. Through her correspondence and her exchange of small items, she maintained these connections that proved invaluable after her husband's failed health and ventures in Jamaica. Her children lived in early-national Massachusetts and enjoyed success in that area. Although she had been a "loyalist," Ann

[53] Denny, 63.

seemed not to harbor any resentment against the land of her birth and was welcomed back in the 1790s, when she opened a successful school for a short period of time.[54] The exchange of letters and sending of items across the Atlantic assisted Ann in forging lasting ties both as a mother and to the land of her birth. These elements characterized her imperial experience. In her short lifetime, Ann's life seemed to be in a constant upheaval, greatly owing to the poor decisions of her husband in business and property. In the end, her relationships with her family and friends were the ones that outlasted imperial struggles and her tenure on the sugar plantation islands.

Margaret and Mary Cowper followed a similar pattern of displacement and made related efforts to maintain ties while in Jamaica. Like Ann, these women maintained bonds with their friends and family members through letters and the sending and receiving of material items. The Cowper sisters, daughters of Basil Cowper and Polly Smith Cowper, originated from Savannah, Georgia.[55] Basil Cowper, originally from Scotland, was a successful merchant who married Polly Smith in 1769. Polly was the daughter of South Carolina planter John Smith, and she gained the accolade of "accomplished young lady" in the *Georgia Gazette.*[56] The Smiths had wealth and position in their plantations both in Coosawhatchie, South Carolina, and on the Savannah and New Rivers in Georgia.[57] Polly was one of eleven children in this tightly-knit family and was

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[54] Pearsall has argued that terms such as "loyalist" do not describe the experience of many Atlantic individuals. For these women often sought to "nurture familiar and sensible attachments in situations of change. Many in this era, especially but not exclusively women, understood their ties in terms of familiarity and sensibility, and they used these concepts, deriving from an Atlantic world, in order to negotiate attachments in a time of displacement," "'Citizens of the World': Men, Women, and Country in the Age of Revolution," 62. These "attachments" can be seen, for example, in Ann's continued correspondence with her family during their several moves, including their stay in Jamaica.

[55] For connections between Georgia and the Caribbean, see Paul M. Pressly, *On the Rim of the Caribbean: Colonial Georgia and the British Atlantic World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2013); Jack P. Greene, "Early Modern Southeastern North America and the Broader Atlantic and American Worlds," *The Journal of Southern History* 73 (2007): 525-38.

[56] *Georgia Gazette*, February 22, 1769, as quoted in William Harden, "Basil Cowper's Remarkable Career in Georgia," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 1 (1917): 24.

[57] Don Juan McQueen, and Walter C. Hartridge, *The Letters of Don Juan McQueen to His Family: Written from Spanish East Florida, 1791-1807* (Columbia, S.C.: Published for the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America by Bostick & Thornley, 1943), xxii-xxiii.

particularly close to her sister Anne Smith McQueen. Cowper had dealings in rice and indigo plantations, as well as a successful trading business with his partner Edward Telfair.[58] At the commencement of the War for Independence, Cowper and Telfairs boasted trade in “Bengal check, dyed glazed linen, cotton velvet, shalloons, bombazines, Russian drabs, fine Irish linen, women’s calamancoes, [and] blue and red strouds.”[59] According to Paul Pressly, a large portion of imported goods in Georgia from Great Britain passed through the stores of Cowper and his partners.[60] All seemed promising for this family when they had a daughter, Mary Anne in 1776, and another girl Margaret, in 1777. As daughters of a wealthy family with property and plantations in both South Carolina and Georgia, these young girls’ prospects seemed limitless.

As one of Georgia’s leading citizens at the commencement of hostilities between Great Britain and the Colonies, Cowper took a cautious position. Cowper did not desire British infringement on trade and life in the colonial sphere; however, he also did not want to alienate either side and tried to weigh his loyalties to the best advantage. After the British capture of Savannah, Cowper declared his loyalties to the British Empire. In 1778, Cowper’s name was on a list of loyalists who had their property confiscated.[61] Due to his wartime loyalties, Cowper was banished from Georgia as part of his punishment for choosing the wrong side in the war.

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[58] Pressly, *On the Rim of the Caribbean,* 141, 168, 180.

[59] Ibid., 180. For the construction of garments from this fabric, see Kathleen A Staples and Madelyn Shaw, *Clothing Through American History: The British Colonial Era*, 2013 <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=652682>; Alice Davis Donahue, “Eighteenth Century Chesapeake Clothing A Costume Plan for the National Colonial Farm” (Thesis, M.A., University of Maryland, 2008); John T. Schlotterbeck, *Daily Life in the Colonial South* (Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood, An Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2013), 168. By the mid eighteenth century, colonial merchants imported fashion dolls to display the latest fashions from England. Seamstresses, mantua makers, and tailors would craft stylish garments based on metropolitan mores.

[60] Pressly, 284 n.42. Pressly affirms that Cowper had the largest firm at the beginning of the Revolution.

[61] Harden, 26-33.

The Cowpers journeyed first to England with their two daughters, accompanied by Polly's sister Anne and her daughter Eliza.[62] Margaret and Mary Cowper's cousin Eliza McQueen was their closest relation. Born on the Grange, the Cowpers' Savannah plantation in 1778, all three of the young girls experienced the tumult of the Revolutionary years together. Beset by raids from both sides, Eliza soon departed to her parents' plantation in South Carolina. Although her father John McQueen had fought on the Patriot side, he also had unsuccessfully speculated on land and fled to Spanish Florida. Creditors placed the McQueen property up for auction, and the Smiths had to intervene to purchase back the plantations for their daughter.[63] Anne and Eliza joined the Cowpers in their sojourn to England, but the Cowpers and McQueens parted ways in 1791, with the Cowpers journeying to Jamaica while Anne and Eliza returned to South Carolina.[64] Having received property in this sugar plantation island as compensation for their loss in Georgia, Basil, his wife Polly, and their two daughters settled in Baron Hill, Jamaica. The young girls felt alienated from their family in the larger Atlantic World, especially Eliza. The Cowpers would maintain a lively correspondence with their beloved cousin and exchange many trinkets and valuables across the ocean as tokens of remembrances of their love and affection.

[62] It is unclear when the Cowpers and McQueens went to England, but the documents suggest they were there a few years before separating in 1791.

[63] McQueen and Hartridge, *The Letters of Don Juan McQueen to His Family,* xxviii

[64] Robert Mackay, Eliza Anne McQueen Mackay, and Walter Charlton Hartridge, *The Letters of Robert Mackay to His Wife, Written from Ports in America and England, 1795-1816* (Athens: Published under the auspices of the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America by the University of Georgia Press, 1949), xxvii-xxxi. For a map detailing the different paths taken by members of the Cowper's family, see Figure 5.6.

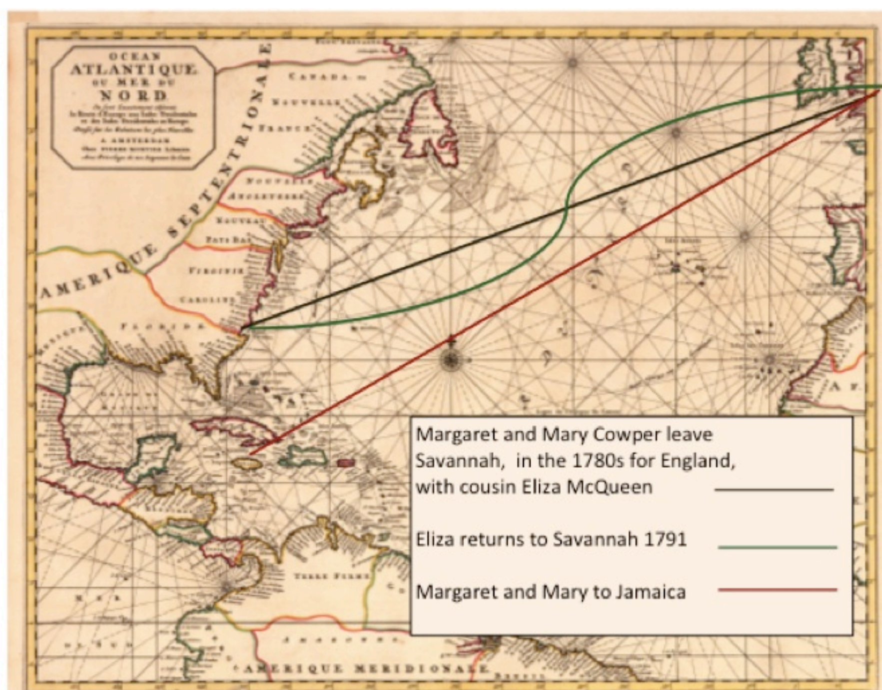

Figure 5.6: "Map of the Cowper Family Journey," Graphic by Author.

Sentimental language comprised much of the correspondence between these young cousins. In an early letter to Eliza in July 1791, Margaret began by writing in an expressive tone to her young cousin: "I will begin from the time that we parted from each other with such sorrowful hearts."[65] The use of "sorrowful hearts" indicates the deep relationship that these girls felt for one another and their desire to demonstrate how keenly they felt their loss of proximity. She then described the voyage and the "sea sickness" that plagued her and her sister Mary. The mosquitos heartily "welcomed" them to their new home. Local news and gossip were not omitted from her letter: "I had almost forgot to tell you that we have been invited to the Martha Brae ball, and to a private dance in the neighborhood by a Mr. and Mrs. Barnett, of a place called Sportsman Hall, to neither of which we went on account of Mama's being so poorly."[66] She implored Eliza to "write me a full account of the ball on your voyage, and what happened to you

[65] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, July 1791, Mackay-McQueen-Cowper Papers, Georgia Society of Colonial Dames Collection, Georgia Historical Society, Savannah. Subsequent references to this collection will be abbreviated "GHS."

[66] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, July 1791, GHS.

after we left England, and how you arrived in America, or if you make any little journey give me some sort of a journal, as I shall you."[67] The Cowpers desired that Eliza maintain the same level of commitment in writing often and about all the details that interested and affected her life.[68]

Although separated from their cousin, the Cowpers attempted to cross the distance by writing of the somewhat familiar and yet distinctive scenes greeting them in Jamaica. Describing the local inhabitants, Margaret portrayed the enslaved people on their plantation: "it appears very strange to me, to see nothing but black faces all around us, and I did not know one from another, or understand them at all. Indeed I was at times ready to laugh, for they speak such strange jargon, we have a little girl that waits on us."[69] Despite growing up in Georgia and South Carolina, the Cowper sisters found that Jamaican plantation life proved different from their former home. Soon after their arrival they toured a sugar mill and boiling house, which proved "very curious & pleased us much. We wished for you at both places and indeed you are always in our thoughts."[70] This shared communication demonstrated their desire to inform their cousin of the different experiences they had had without her, and that they had not forgotten nor stopped missing their former companion.

The Cowpers also corresponded about pastimes for both themselves and Eliza. One commonality they shared included a love of music. In November 1791, Margaret queried: "I hope you got your Harpsichord safe home and in tune, pray tell us everything about it, there is a

[67] Ibid. At the end of this letter, Margaret indicates that she has also written to Eliza's brother, John McQueen. She inquires after John's recent dance partner. Her curiosity concerning John's affairs did not diminish over the years and she and John would later marry.

[68] Another case of reciprocity in the Atlantic World includes Henrietta Whitehorne's correspondence with her sister-in-law Elizabeth. Henrietta, married to Elizabeth's brother James, resided in Kingston and wrote: "On opening my eyes this morning, my first feeling was anxiety to hear whether the packet, which came in yesterday evening, had brought me any letters from England, my second was shame as not having deserved one from you, by never having answered the kind, long letters you sent to me." Henritetta Whitehorne to Elizabeth Whitehorne 25 April 1826, India Office Records and Private Papers, British Library, MSS EUR/D1203/3.

[69] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, July 1791, GHS.

[70] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, November 1, 1791, GHS.

music master living near us and Papa is going to let us take some lessons, which I shall be exceedingly glad of."[71] In another letter, Margaret informed her cousin that their daily life included harpsichord playing. She also described their daily schedule: "We generally rise between six & seven, & go to breakfast between seven & eight, after which one of us goes to the Harpsichord for two hours, while the other goes to my Desk, which we find very convenient, either to Draw, Cypher or write, such as translation, Diary's which we continue."[72] As part of polite Anglo-Atlantic society, musical instruments such as harpsichords allowed these women to participate in a common language that transcended their colonial landscape.[73] Although not unheard of, a musical instrument in this imperial outpost would have been a treasured object, both to relieve their daily monotony and to improve their posture. They allowed two hours each day for writing and music. Their program also consisted of needlework, spending time with their mother, and reading aloud. They informed their cousin that they went to bed "early as is the custom in this part of the Country," but did not take many afternoon walks, as the high temperature did not permit such ventures.[74] Finding mutual interests and describing their daily lives to their cousin helped to create a common language for their interaction in the years ahead.

A few years later, around 1794, the Cowpers visited Eliza and their maternal family in the United States. The girls spent much of their time at the "Cottage," a forty-five acre plantation five miles from Savannah.[75] Although the Cowpers stayed with relatives, the three young women were often separated due to Eliza's visits to her father in Spanish Florida, and their letters continued in this new setting. Social and material cares took up much of their correspondence during their time in North America. The letters contained news of acquaintances, garments,

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[71] Ibid.
[72] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, December 8, 1791, GHS.
[73] As seen in Chapter 3, the Brodbelts also enjoyed musical performance.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Mackay and Hartridge, 252.

shoes, and lively gatherings. News of fashion from Margaret reached Eliza in a letter from June 1796. Margaret speculated that Eliza would be the unrivaled belle of her circle but should "have kindly let the Dons escape this time with the whole hearts. I thought your Chemise would have done execution, & in that opinion sent it on by Don Carloss together with a couple of your shoes from Jamaica."[76] This metaphor of a dress slaying the hearts of the potential suitors demonstrates the importance of attire for these young girls.

Another instance regarding dress during the Cowpers' stay in early-national United States demonstrates the necessity of preparation for unexpected guests. While Mary visited other relatives, Margaret related an unfortunate incident to her sister in July 1796:

> I had a most unexpected visit last night from—no other than the great Hampden, having gone into the parlour while my bed was making, and tired of lying down I went to the Harpsichord in hopes of amusing myself a moment. Who should enter but his Lordship, a pretty figure you may suppose I made my Head tyed with a handkerchief, moucousins on my feet, and Mama's long dressing gown wrapped around me, it was too late to retreat, so I made the best of it.[77]

As a young lady of education and style, Margaret found herself ill-equipped for such a visitor. Margaret chose to make light of the issue and relate it as an unlucky, but comical situation. Margaret later requested her sister to send a pink "robe de chambre," perhaps a more fetching informal alternative to prevent another wardrobe mishap from taking place.[78]

Poignant and tender language abounded in Margaret's letters, and grew in force over the years. When separated from her sister and cousin in 1797, Margaret wrote "my heart has played truant my dear girls ever since you left us, it followed you to town."[79] Later Margaret exclaimed to Eliza: "How seldom it is that two or three people who are alike, congenial souls meet together.

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[76] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, June 11, 1796, GHS.

[77] Margaret Cowper to Mary Cowper, October 1796, GHS. The identity of the gentleman, styled "Lordship" by Margaret is unknown.

[78] Mary Cowper to Margaret Cowper and Eliza McQueen, September 10, 1797, GHS.

[79] Margaret Cowper to Mary Cowper and Eliza McQueen, Date Unclear, 1796, GHS

Similarity of taste & opinions is not common even where it would be most desirable."[80] This common language of similitude continued the bonds of friendship in absence of person, but not of thought and remembrances. Although the Cowpers received ample hospitality from their Georgia and South Carolina relatives, they returned to Baron Hill in 1800.

Once back in Jamaica, the Cowpers wrote recalling happier times with their dear cousin. Margaret penned a letter in January 1800: "I am continually trying to imagine the arrangement at the Cottage now. Tell me who occupies our old room? It is one of my chief pleasures to think of the past." She also asked of the events in town:

> Are the Assembly's yet begun?…I often recall those I have been at with regret…& declared that I had no pleasure in it—the music & dances which used about absolutely to vex me for their old fashion & bad performance, & the poor Beaux, at some of whom we could not forbear laughing at, tho' at the same time we were mortified at having no more—all, all of them rise in my estimation, because I shall see them no more.[81]

Now a woman in her early twenties, Margaret realized the lack of opportunities she had in rural Jamaica for such social occasions. She mentioned that the town Falmouth hosted monthly balls, but did not believe they would attend, as she would "not enjoy them much."[82]

[80] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, January 15, 1800, GHS.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.

Fashionable concerns were never far from the Cowpers' minds, even in their peripheral location in the Caribbean. Margaret implored her cousin Eliza: "Forget not your promise to send

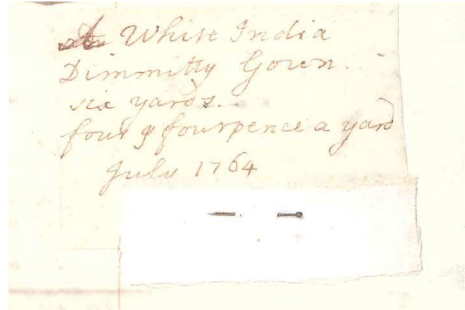

Figure 5.7: "A White India Dimmitty Gown…" in Barbara Johnson, and Natalie Rothstein, *Barbara Johnson's Album of Fashions and Fabrics* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 10.

me patterns of all the pretty things, I have seen nothing here worthy of communication except the pattern for working a veil, which may also be wrapped around the head as a Turban (any fancy way)."[83] Turbans became popular in the 1760s and continued to be a mainstay in both European and colonial settings.[84] Additionally, the Cowpers relied on their cousin's discretion concerning the purchase of cloth and fashionable goods in Savannah. Margaret inquired if the Manchester merchant had visited the town, and if so, requested that she order "5 pieces fine Cotton Cambric, 2 pieces pretty Gingham—2 pieces pretty Dimity—A piece of India plain muslin for handkerchiefs—2 pieces muslin (in contemplation for the races in May) not exceeding $2 pr

[83] Ibid.
[84] "Turbans," *Berg Fashion Library,* http://libproxy.library.unt.edu:2366/view/bdfh/bdfh-div13031.xml.

yd."[85] Although Margaret preferred English design, she did not discriminate against "anything that is pretty either Japan, striped, sprigged or anything you will think suitable—a piece of green chintz for Mary Anne—the same style as mine, & as they are not so fashionable, I suppose lower

Figure 5.8: Dress, Woven/ Printed Cotton, BATMC 1.09.2004, Fashion Museum at Bath, Photo Taken by Author.

priced—10 y'ds lace as broad & fine as can be got for $3 per yd."[86] Margaret depended on her cousin's urban connections to obtain goods that were not as readily available in rural Jamaica. As a trusted individual, Eliza would ensure that Margaret would not be adorning herself in something that was overpriced, of lesser quality, or unfashionable. These goods would be valued not only for their utility, but also for the person who obtained them.

The Cowpers prized news from Georgia and South Carolina almost as much as material goods themselves. Margaret wrote to Eliza stating that "I long to hear all the chit chat, who are

[85] See Figure 5.7 for an example of "dimity" from Barbara Johnson's album of fabrics. This sample came from India in July 1764. See Barbara Johnson and Natalie Rothstein, *Barbara Johnson's Album of Fashions and Fabrics* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 10.

[86] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, January 15, 1800, GHS. According to the *Fairchild's Dictionary of Textiles* "japonais" refers to a "very lightweight silk poplin" that was used for summer dress Phyllis G. Tortora, and Robert S. Merkel, *Fairchild's Dictionary of Textiles* (New York: Fairchild Publications, 1996), 294. For an image of "sprigged" cloth from the late eighteenth century, see Figure 5.8.

the Belles, & what beaux are the most conspicuous."[87] Although removed from their former inhabitance, the Cowpers still desired to be aware of the social gossip. They also inquired after a map of the United States, for they enjoyed "the minute geography of a country we love so well."[88] As educated women in the wake of the Enlightenment, they felt keen on preserving their knowledge of their domicile. These objects were to both remind them of persons and places they had visited together and to preserve the bonds that Eliza and the Cowpers had formed during their lives together. News of trends in dress were not far to follow: "I have seen nothing new in fashions, since my arrival. I have made up a gown or two, but all the old way & mostly by the New York fashions—lace across the bottom of the waist, as I think it the prettiest way I have seen for the long waists, which prevail entirely here."[89] As the fashion for long waists in the neoclassical style gained popularity in both metropolitan and colonial locations, the Cowpers followed the trends emanating from the centers of Atlantic fashion.

Although many items were mentioned in the letters, one stood out in importance. The

Figure 5.9: Hair Locket, eighteenth century, Courtesy of Julie Wakefield, author of Austenonly.com.

[87] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, May 5, 1800, GHS.
[88] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, January 15, 1800, GHS.
[89] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, May 5, 1800, GHS.

final article that Margaret requested from Eliza was a lock of hair, "if it can be spared."[90] Margaret intended "when I am rich enough, that I may have them set & placed among my Jewls—I never look at my little locket without exclaiming 'dear darling locket is my destiny to be entwined with thine? Is that precious Hair to be the Talisman of my fate?'"[91] Margaret lamented that Eliza had none of hers, but would treasure the hair she received in "a place among the valuables."[92] In her study of eighteenth-century letter writing, Pearsall argues for the importance of sentimental language in Atlantic correspondences; yet this letter demonstrates that such sentimentality extended not only to words but to objects as well. Margaret's sentimental exchange about hair jewelry reveals the importance of objects for separated loved ones. According to Amanda Vickery's work in eighteenth-century Great Britain: "Such intimate rituals emphasize the talismanic properties of material things and bear witness to the personal significance of inconspicuous consumption."[93] These small decorative objects could adorn the wearer's body while serving as a tangible reminder of the person separated from the wearer by an ocean.[94] Although hair jewelry is often associated with mourning, it was also frequently worn as tokens of a beloved. According to David Tenenbaum Deutsch in his study of jewelry,

[90] Ibid. For an example of a hair locket from 1800, see Figure 5.9. Although a locket, this object appears similar to the hair jewelry requested by Nancy Brodbelt to be worn as a ring. See Chapter 3 for the importance of hair mementoes in transatlantic exchanges.

[91] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, January 15, 1800, Mackay-Stiles Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Subsequent references to this collection will be "SHC."

[92] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen, January 15, 1800, SHC.

[93] Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter*, 185.

[94] See also Marcia Pointon, "Materializing Mourning: Hair, Jewellery, and the Body, in *Material Memories: [design and evocation]* ed. Marius Kwint, Jeremy Aynsley, and Christopher Breward (Oxford: Berg, 1999): 39-71; Pointon, "Wearing Memory: Mourning, Jewellery, and the Body," in *Trauer Tragen-- Trauer Zeigen: Inszenierungen Der Geschlechter*, edited by Gisela Ecker (Fink: Munchen, 1999): 65-81; Martha Gandy Fales, "Mourning, Love, and Fancy Pieces," and "Hairwork" in *Jewellery in America, 1600-1900* (Suffolk, U.K.: Antique Collectors' Club, 1995): 23-28, 98-107; Christiane Holm, "Sentimental Cuts: Eighteenth-Century Mourning Jewelry with Hair," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38 (2004): 139-43; and Susan M. Stabile, *Memory's Daughters: The Material Culture of Remembrance in Eighteenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

"the use of hair in jewelry was almost like a relic—a way to keep a dear one around."[95] Additionally, the emotionally charged language directed towards this object demonstrates the value placed on it; the wearer believed that her destiny was entwined with that of the person represented by the locket of hair. As Festa has demonstrated: "Self and possession blend together in the sentimental object, breaking down the neat divisions between alienable and inalienable that facilitate commodity exchange. Since sentimental objects cannot be loved by others in the same way, that is, they create a form of *inalienable* value that cannot be replaced by money or goods of like kind."[96] Margaret's intention to place Eliza's lock of hair in a locket transformed an ordinary object into a sentimental possession.

The Cowpers' return to Jamaica found them strangers in this unfamiliar tropical landscape. Although they had lived some years in Jamaica, their time in the United States rendered the customs of the Caribbean plantation life unfamiliar. They attended the social gatherings, but "being strangers made everything seem strange…the comparison between it & those we had last attended, accompanied by so many dear & agreeable companions & friends did not tend to place things in the most favorable view!"[97] Remembering the social occasions with their friends now greatly distant made the dance and social life seem less exciting. Still, she did not omit that "The Ball room is a very good one, & the music very good with fashionable tunes. The ladies dress very expensively, as most of them have everything of that kind sent from England. They talk of sending & going there with much more indifference that you do of a northern jaunt in Georgia."[98] They did mention of meeting "very few young ladies, & none of

[95] David Tenenbaum Deutsch, "Jewelry for Mourning, Love, and Fancy, 1770-1830," *The Magazines Antiques* (April 1999): 568.

[96] Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Britain and France*, 74.

[97] Mary Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, April 10, 1800. GHS. See also Kathleen Wilson, "The Black Widow," in *The Island Race*: *Englishness, Empire, and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003): 129-168.

[98] Mary Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, April 10, 1800, GHS.

them that particularly interest one."[99]Although the Cowpers called Colonial Georgia, Great Britain, Jamaica, and the United States home, it seems that their sentiments fell most closely with their loved ones in North America. They treasured the intelligence about happy events, celebrating Eliza's marriage to Robert Mackay (Figure 5.10) in January 1800, and delighted in the tidings of their first child in the autumn of that year.[100]

After the birth of Robert, Eliza's firstborn, the Cowpers pined for news of the small child. One of the slaves on the Cowper's plantation was the same age as young Robert. Margaret and

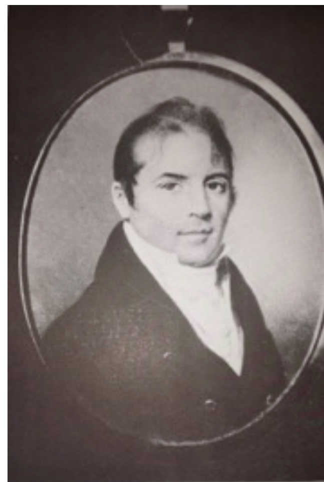

Figure 5.10: Edward Greene Malbone, "Robert Mackay," miniature, in Robert Mackay, Eliza Anne McQueen Mackay, and Walter Charlton Hartridge, *The Letters of Robert Mackay to His Wife, Written from Ports in America and England, 1795-1816* (Athens: Published under the auspices of the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America by the University of Georgia Press, 1949), frontispiece.

Mary played with the young child and dreamt of the small relation in Georgia: "We have a little Negro child…who I often play with & think of your dear child, & regret I cannot metamorphise this little black boy in his exact resemblance tho' as it is I seem to have a real affection for the child, a pretty, engaging little creature."[101] Although they owned this child, most likely destined for the dangerous sugar plantations, the Cowpers likened him to their young relative, secure

[99] Ibid.
[100] See Figure 5.10, for a miniature portrait of Robert Mackay by Edward Greene Malbone.
[101] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, August 7, 1802, GHS.

across the Atlantic.[102] By thinking of this boy as a surrogate for the happy, and most likely pampered child in the United States, they ignored the reality of life on the sugar plantation island. As Trevor Burnard has demonstrated, enslaved children in Jamaica held little value especially prior to the abolition of the slave trade in 1807.[103] Child slaves had short life expectancies, and plantation owners often considered them burdensome, unproductive individuals in this harsh environment. The child became a fetish for the Cowper sisters, representing something other than himself in order for them to engage in their sentimental imagining of their loved one far away.[104] Sensibility, and the moral superiority due to heightened emotions it bestowed only extended so far in this instance. Although they missed their own family connections, they did not extend these sentimental feelings beyond this enslaved individual. They romanticized the situation in order to imagine their beloved relation far away in this curious fashion while ignoring the brutal existence perpetuated by their own family.[105]

Although the letters often contained happy news of marriages, childbirths, and of family tidings, other letters were more sober. As the Cowper women faced tragedy, they once again turned to their correspondents over the Atlantic Ocean. In July 1802, Mary sent a letter to Eliza informing her of their loss: "I hope before this reaches you—you will have had a letter from Margaret telling you of the late mournful event in our family—the death of my dear Father 28 June."[106] The widow and two daughters mourned the tragic passing and felt alone in Jamaica, far away from loved ones over the Atlantic Ocean. Although they were in good health, according to

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[102] For a recent publication concerning slavery and childhood, see Colleen A. Vasconcellos, *Slavery, Childhood, and Abolition in Jamaica, 1788-1838* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2015).

[103] Trevor Burnard, "Why Were Women Worth Less? Valuing Female Slaves in Jamaica, 1674-1788," Conference Paper, *Sexuality and Slavery: Exposing the History of Enslaved People in the Americas*, University of Texas at Austin, 2011.

[104] For more on commodity fetish, see Thomas A. Sebeok, "FETISH," *The American Journal of Semiotics* 6 (1989): 51-65.

[105] The extreme conditions in the colony did result in some questionable behavior that seems to have laid down the foundation for the stereotypes perpetuated by Edward Long and J. B. Moreton.

[106] Mary Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, July 15, 1802, GHS.

Margaret there remained "just three solitary women alone in a world that our hearts cannot acknowledge any interest in."[107] They were in need of income due to the tumult of the continued conflicts in the Caribbean, but they did not want to sell all their Jamaican property at a loss. While they wanted to return quickly to friends and family, they realized the necessity of overseeing their financial affairs in the plantations. They managed the planting of pimento and coffee on their estates and hoped for a better financial future in which they could relocate to be nearer their loved ones.[108] With the renewal of war between Great Britain and France in 1803, the Cowper women were more anxious than ever to leave Jamaica. They did not know where to turn for assistance: "The general confusion throughout the world is such as to deprive us of any hope. Every day brings us such dismal accounts of the failures at home, & the great emergencies everywhere that I first look for the worst at once. Imagine if we had ample means to go where we chose. How are we to get to Georgia? War stares us in the face with all its terrors & can 3 unprotected women venture in danger of the sea & of the Enemy?"[109] Seemingly alone and unprotected in the harsh landscape of the Caribbean plantation islands, these women found comfort from their exchange.

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[107] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, August 7, 1802, GHS.

[108] Ibid. Pimento, according to an 1842 publication concerning pharmaceutical plants and medications, was also referred to as "all-spice." The author, Sir Robert Christison affirmed that pimento had been in Europe since the seventeenth century. Christison described the plant as possessing "a strong aromatic odour, and a hot aromatic taste, combining that of cinnamon, nutmeg, and cloves," in Sir Robert Christison, *A Dispensatory, Or Commentary on the Pharmacopoeias of Great Britain: Comprising the Natural History, Description, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Actions, Uses, and Doses of the Articles of the Materia Medica* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1842), 694-695. Although sugar dominated the colonial economy, plantation managers often planted other crops to augment their income. For smaller estates such as the one owned by the Cowpers, pimento and coffee might have been a more manageable investment to cultivate, rather than the labor- and capital-intensive sugar. For planting practices in Jamaica other than sugar, see Kathleen E.A. Monteith, "Planting and Processing Techniques on Jamaican Coffee Plantations, during Slavery" in *Working Slavery, Pricing Freedom, ed. Verene Shepherd* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 112-132; "Boom and Bust in Jamaica's Coffee Industry, 1790-1835" *The Journal of Caribbean History* 47 (2013): 1-27; S.D. Smith, "Coffee and the 'Poorer Sort of People' in Jamaica during the Period of African enslavement," in *Sugar Without Slavery*, ed. Verene Shepherd (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2002), 102-128.

[109] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, December 27, 1803, GHS.

Anxious about the state of affairs in England, the remaining Cowpers realized that the future of the British Empire determined theirs as well: “our fate is involved with it whatever happens.”[110] A few years later the Cowpers were able to relocate to Bristol, England. Luckily, Eliza’s husband’s business called him overseas once again to Liverpool, and the Cowpers and their cousin once again inhabited the same country. Now that their future seemed prosperous in the more stable environment of urban England, the Cowpers once again renewed their exchange of goods and fashion news with their cousin. Margaret wrote: “We talk of going to town tomorrow to order some shoes from a capital maker in Bond [St]…Hers not quite so expensive as Brickrer & the shoes are beautiful.”[111] They also inquired after the business trip of Eliza’s husband that was to take him to the United States. They requested the transportation of “a few little tokens” back to their family in Georgia.[112] Although separated for many years from their connections in the United States, these women had not forgotten their loved ones, and these gifts would remind them about their distant, but not forgotten relatives.

[110] Margaret Cowper and Mary Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, March 23, 1804?, SHC.
[111] M. Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, Date Unclear, 1805-1808?, SHC.
[112] Ibid.

Figure 5.11: La Belle Assemblée, "Fashionable Spring Dresses," June 1 1808, Engraving, © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, E.2456-1888.

While in England, Margaret and Eliza continued their correspondence about fashion. Writing from Kensington, Margaret asked if Eliza required any item from London: "A mantle & bonnet? Or a new gown? I am my own mantua maker at present & have a couple of gowns in hand. My summer mantle not yet determined. Silk is extravagantly dear. But I must have something do not expect however to be absolutely dazzled by my magnificence."[113] In June she related the news that cotton goods: "are now very cheap & very pretty you may get a beautiful…cambric or thread over yellow, blue lilac, pink, or green for 13/g a gown, it is beautyful for children's wear. They are much worn as calicoes."[114] She also enclosed a piece of blue muslin to demonstrate its cost-effectiveness and utility for use in a pelisse.[115] Due to their

[113] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, Date Unclear, May 13, 1808?, SHC.
[114] Margaret Cowper to Eliza McQueen Mackay, Date Unclear, June 8, 1808?, SHC.
[115] According to fashion historian Kimberley Chrisman Campbell, a pelisse is "a long, front-fastening coat with long sleeves and the high waist of fashionable gowns—appeared at the end of the eighteenth century and remained fashionable until the mid-nineteenth century. The term originally referred to a fur-trimmed cloak worn by hussar regiments, a type of light cavalry first deployed in Hungary" ("France." *The Berg Fashion Library*. Sept. http://www.bergfashionlibrary.com/view/bewdf/BEWDF-v8/EDch8036a.xml (accessed 9 Jan. 2014)). For an example of a blue pelisse from a French fashion print in 1808, see Figure 5.11.

shared love for fashion and decorative items and the correspondence which contained details for them to include in their many letters, the bonds of kinship and friendship lasted until their deaths.

Their connection included Eliza naming her first two daughters after her beloved cousins, and was even stronger after Margaret married Eliza's brother, John McQueen, in 1810.[116] McQueen, along with his wife and her mother and sister returned to Jamaica, and in 1816 received the news of Eliza's husband's death. Margaret wrote to Eliza: "With a heavy heart I now take up the pen to write my dearest Eliza! Whose grief cannot but be the grief of all who love her —yet it if not in human power to heal the wound which pierces so deep – I can only pray the almighty to comfort & sustain you & of his infinite wisdom and mercy to make this present affliction tend to ever-lasting good."[117] McQueen did not fare well in Jamaica, and he, along with Margaret, moved to Georgia. McQueen bequeathed much of his property to Eliza and her children, as he and Margaret were childless. McQueen himself died in 1822, and it is unknown when Margaret perished. Mary lived until 1856, and Eliza until 1862. Eliza had five children who benefitted from receiving property from their aunt and uncle.

The friendship between Margaret and Mary Cowper and Eliza McQueen survived their fathers' differing political sentiments during the American War for Independence, multiple Atlantic crossings, and long separations. These bonds continued through their shared correspondence and the exchange of goods between them. The decorative objects they exchanged represented their friendship and acted as a visual representation of loved ones separated by an ocean. These ties of kinship continued throughout these struggles and remained until they were together again. Margaret ended up marrying John McQueen, and both he and Margaret lived in Georgia According to Rogers, most of the "familial and social ties to the

[116] Hartridge, *The Letters of Robert Mackay to His Wife,* 252.
[117] Margaret Cowper McQueen to Eliza McQueen Mackay, December 1, 1816, SHC.

United States, while tried and strained during the upheaval, ultimately survived."[118] Their shared love for fashionable items and news concerning trends and styles gave them a common language no matter their location in this broad Atlantic World during the Revolutionary period. Ideology played an important role in the decision of many individuals concerning their life and choices, but for these women, it seemed to play a relatively minor role. What mattered most were the bonds between them and their loved ones, which survived through the correspondence and exchange of material tokens.

Both Ann Appleton Storrow and Margaret and Mary Cowper experienced removal from a beloved homeland, but that was not the end of their story with America. The friends and relatives left behind were not forgotten, and continued to play an important role in their life. Due to their prolonged correspondence and the sharing of goods, the ties that bound them to their loved ones did not diminish due to their absence. Without these items that were sent across the oceans, the visual reminder of their loved ones would have been less poignant. These letters and goods acted as replacements for the physical closeness they once shared with their friends and family.

[118] Rogers, "The Loyalist Experience in an Anglo-American Atlantic World," 169.

CHAPTER 5

"LIVELY COLOURS AND SHEWY": MIDDLING AND POORER FAMILIES IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY JAMAICA

Due to war, unpredictable weather, and tropical diseases in this colonial landscape, Britons who relocated to the West Indies often found life precarious. Although some colonial adventurers found wealth and fortune through investments and productive sugar plantations, not all those who moved to the West Indies realized monetary success. Families like the Nugents enjoyed a high status on the island due to their governmental position, and the Brodbelts found both social and financial success as well. Not every family enjoyed such stability, though. As seen in Chapter 4, both the Storrow and Cowper families struggled in their new homes. The Storrows attempted to run their business in urban Jamaica, while the Cowpers owned a plantation in northern Jamaica. Neither family found the financial prosperity they hoped for, yet they strove to make their endeavors successful before abandoning Jamaica to seek prospects elsewhere. Many others who relocated to the Caribbean islands dealt with financial collapse. Despite the notion in eighteenth-century novels and travelogues, according to which the stereotypical male West Indian opportunist gained immediate fortune and the female enjoyed material abundance, families such as the Kings, Dwarrises, and Titfords struggled in their new home.

The connection with loved ones provided important support during uncertain times for these displaced families. Sentimental language in written correspondences, along with the exchange of material possessions, provided comfort for women and young men who felt alienated from their familial networks. These letters and trinkets from their families spread across the Atlantic World and sustained these colonial inhabitants throughout the hardships and the monotonous life they faced in their new homes. Although these families often had little

disposable income, they still desired to remain aware of metropolitan fashions and mores.[1] Additionally, they also attempted to emulate the elite by acquiring material possessions and promoting education for their young children. Although these three families, the Kings, the Dwarrises, and the Titfords, all had differing experiences in Jamaica, involvement with material objects and sentimental letters characterized their colonial life.

Letter correspondences facilitated the exchange of news, gossip, and familial information that eighteenth-century colonial inhabitants cherished. As seen in previous chapters, colonists and metropolitan writers alike employed sentimental language in their epistolary communications.[2] Examining and rereading them many times, recipients parsed and inspected these letters from their loved ones, valuing them greatly during their tenure on these remote islands. This language of sensibility extended to the tokens sent from their metropolitan connections.[3] According to Roy Porter, for eighteenth-century Britons this new culture of print and material possessions gave a "growing slice of society opportunities for self-cultivation."[4] This emerging class of individuals sought to emulate their betters by purchasing goods that would allow them to display their membership as part of the cultural elite. Their "self-cultivation" also included employing the language of sensibility in order to create an idea of individuality for

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[1] For a complementary study of this subject in mainland England, see John Styles, *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). Styles posits that "clothes were the most blatant manifestation of the material transformation of plebian life" (3).

[2] Sarah Pearsall, *Atlantic Families: Lives and Letters in the Later Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). For a study concerning the language and culture of sensibility in neighboring colonial and revolutionary United States, see Sarah Knott, *Sensibility and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, by the University of North Carolina Press, 2009). See also Dena Goodman, *Becoming a Woman in the Age of Letters* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009) for a study on women and correspondence in eighteenth-century France.

[3] For empire and exchanges of material goods, see Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Conquest and Collecting in the East, 1750-1850* (London: Harper Perennial, 2006); Maya Jasanoff, "Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning," *Past and Present* 184 (2004): 109-35; See Lynn Festa, *Sentimental Figures of Empire in Britain and France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), concerning sensibility and material culture in the imperial context.

[4] Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World*: *The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2000), 281.

themselves as consumers.[5] This extended to the development of a sense of moral superiority over the "others" present in colonial landscape. Furthermore, these colonists did not see the irony in sentimentalizing the material goods they received from loved ones and employing sentimental tropes in their correspondences, while at the same time inhabiting a brutal slave plantation island. Additionally, they did not shrink from complaints about their own misfortunes and the discomforts they faced, even as they were surrounded by a majority of enslaved Africans who shared this island in far worse conditions.

For many families who inhabited Jamaica, separation from beloved friends and relatives was an unfortunate part of their everyday life. The King family owned plantations and property in Jamaica, including a plantation called Montpelier. One member of the King family, Isabella, married her cousin John Bryan King in the opening years of the nineteenth century and welcomed a son, Francis, to their family. When illness struck John Bryan, he, along with Isabella and Francis, relocated to Newport, Rhode Island, in the United States, possibly due to personal connections or a change in climate. Upon the death of John Bryan, Isabella returned to Jamaica in order to manage her properties and slaves and left her son in the care of a schoolmaster named Mr. Patten, in Hartford, Connecticut.[6] She initially planned on reuniting with her son, but war broke out between Britain and the United States of America in 1812, which disrupted shipping and transportation.[7] Her correspondence during that period of separation between the family in Jamaica and their young relative in New England was suffused with sentimental language, demonstrating their keen loss. The letters that survive originated from Jamaica, sent by various

[5] See also, G. J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); E. Claire Cage, "The Sartorial Self: Neoclassical Fashion and Gender Identity in France, 1797-1804," *Eighteenth-Century Studie*s 42 (2008): 193-215.

[6] All biographical information concerning the King family comes from the King Family Collection, York County Historical Trust, Manuscript File #30037, York, Pennsylvania. Further references will be noted as YCHT.

[7] For the Atlantic implications of the wars between Great Britain and the United States of America, see Karen Hagemann, Gisela Mettele, and Jane Rendall, *Gender, War and Politics: Transatlantic Perspectives, 1775-1830* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

relatives for young Francis, providing encouraging sentiments regarding the young man and his studies.

The family members who remained in Jamaica appreciated the letters that young Francis exchanged with his relatives during his schooling in Connecticut, which they shared together to gauge his educational progression. Isabella wrote to her son shortly after their separation: "I cannot portray to you …of my happy heart on the arrival of your letters, where-in I see your improvements; and at the time of so much trouble."[8] These letters provided comfort during long periods of absence and allowed her to appreciate the progress in his script and composition. His uncle and namesake, Francis B. King, wrote in 1815 to support the young man's attempts at learning French and Spanish.[9] Like the Brodbelts of Spanish Town, Jamaica, the Kings took an active role in Francis's education and suggested avenues of study that would assist him most when he arrived back in Jamaica.[10]

Francis had many correspondents amongst the King family, and he was besieged with advice concerning his future career and educational structure from all of his affectionate family. Relatives Matthew King wrote that he had corresponded with both Francis's instructor, Mr. Patten, as well as with Isabella herself, and approved of his goals and path.[11] He advised Francis "to make the most of your time and particularly apply yourself to those branches of your education which will be indispensably necessary for your success in the mercantile line among others do not neglect to perfect yourself in the French and Spanish Languages Geography and

[8] Isabella King to Francis King, N.D., YCHT.

[9] Francis B. King to Francis King, Port Antonio, Jamaica to Hartford Connecticut, 11 March 1815, YCHT.

[10] See Chapter 3 for more on the Brodbelt Family of Jamaica. See also Geraldine Nutt Mozley, *Letters to Jane from Jamaica, 1788-1796* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by the West India Committee, 1938).

[11] As Isabella's maiden name was King, as well as her married name, it is difficult to determine whether Matthew was related to Francis through his maternal or paternal side.

Bookeeping."[12] He warned him not to neglect "writing and spelling and arithmetic they are so essentially necessary for any person who has the slightest pretentions to education."[13] The caricature of the negligent West Indian family regarding education of their children does not seem to represent the King family.[14] Concerned not only with his education, his relatives also sent messages of love and remembrance.

Placing all their hopes on Francis finishing his education and joining them in Jamaica to fulfill his family duties, the King family eagerly awaited every letter from Mr. Patten's school in Connecticut. Francis's grandmother, Eliza King, reminded him to "be assured it was with heartfelt pleasure I perused those lines in yours to one, my dear Francis; as they are full specimens of your improvements; which must also be truly gratifying to your dear & affectionate mother; especially after being so long separated from her dear child."[15] These letters were more than just a means of communicating news and relating gossip, they were regarded as a manifestation of the person who wrote the letter.[16] Read and reread by all the loving family, these letters became objects of sentimental love and remembrance due to the physical inscription of the person who wrote the epistle.

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[12] James B. King to Francis King, Port Antonio, Jamaica, to Hartford, Connecticut, 14 March 1815, YCHT. Matthew King also corresponded to young Francis reminding him: "My only concern for you now; is your morals & that most essential thing through life a good education; which may always be attained, if the youth is mindful of his studies." (Matthew King to Francis King, Port Antonio, Jamaica, to Hartford, Connecticut, 10 March 1815, YCHT). While encouraging his educational endeavors, he also advised the impressionable youth to maintain morals during his period of education.

[13] James B. King to Francis King, Port Antonio, Jamaica, to Hartford, Connecticut, 14 March 1815, YCHT.

[14] See Chapter 3 for education in the Caribbean sugar plantation islands and the stereotypes surrounding familial attention regarding studies for their children.

[15] Eliza King to Francis King, Bloomfield, N.D., YCHT.

[16] This family exchanged material objects in order to remain close as well. At the birth of a daughter, Isabella's sister Harriet sent her a letter and wrote: "I once again enclose a lock of my curly pate girl. I wish you could see her she has the handsomest head of hair perhaps you ever saw." (H. C. [Harriet Cargill] to Isabella King, 12 October 1818, YCHT). Like many families who lived far away from each other, the Kings exchanged tokens like this lock of hair in order to visualize their loved ones. These objects could be held and examined to compare it to other articles in order to remember the person that article represented. See Chapter 3 for a larger discussion concerning the Brodbelt family and the exchange of hair tokens. See Chapter 4 for hair exchange between the Cowpers and their Atlantic familial connections.

All of the Kings' aspirations for the young student never unfolded as they had planned. In 1817, after the completion of the tumult of wartime conditions across the Atlantic, Francis boarded a ship to return to the island of his birth. En route to Jamaica, the "Brig Robert" foundered, and Francis lost his life. His family mourned the loss of their dear boy, who had provided comfort and affection due to his correspondence with his loved ones. Isabella remarried and moved to York, Pennsylvania, and later had a daughter. The sentimental letters full of love, attention, and advice for the young boy had provided a link between this divided family. Although tragedy struck at the time when their reunion seemed imminent, these letters remained, which represented him and would have provided consolation during their period of mourning.

Regardless of the conditions that colonial inhabitants of the West Indies encountered, the language in letters revealed their distress at the separation from their companions and families. The Dwarris family relocated from their home in England to Jamaica in the 1780s and remained in the West Indies for less than a decade.[17] This young married couple, William and Sarah Dwarris, hoped for more promising financial opportunities by relocating to a new frontier island colony. Educated at Harrow in England, William married Sarah Smith from Coventry. They arrived in Jamaica, in 1781, determined to increase their prospects amongst wealthy relations. William had connections in their new home, and his relatives owned land and held a high position in Jamaican society. William, not very successfully, attempted business in this world of unimaginable wealth, and found the reality of the harsh conditions and climate unlike the land of

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[17] For the Dwarris family's experiences in Jamaica, see Douglas F. Mann's "Becoming Creole: Material Life and Society in Eighteenth-Century Kingston Jamaica," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Georgia, 2005, particularly Chapter 5: "Senseless Extravagance: Excessive Pomp: White Women in Eighteenth-Century Kingston." Mann uses Sarah Dwarris and Ann Appleton Storrow as case studies, along with inventories, letters, and account books, to illuminate the material culture present in Jamaica and to argue as well against the stereotype for "senseless extravagance" in eighteenth-century Jamaica. Mann notes that both Storrow and Dwarris practiced a thrifty and frugal approach to material possessions. Unfortunately, the original correspondence is lost. This version comes from a typescript from the Archives and Special Collections, Otto Richter Library University of Miami.

plenty they imagined. The letters sent back to their family in England display the daily life and struggles that faced these newlyweds.

After preparing for a long and harrowing journey to their new home, the Dwarris couple embarked. Early in the correspondence they began to communicate material concerns, as William informed his relatives: “We are to stop at Portsmith to get some more Sheep & Small Stock, althou’ we have on board plenty of the latter such as Ducks Fowls & Geese and there seems to be a plenty of Wines & malt liquor so we have at any rate, no chance of starving.”[18] Since journeys could last anywhere from ten weeks to a few months, William reassured his family of their adequate provisions. Whether William wrote the statement in jest or in truth, by assuring their family that they would not starve, it indicated that he realized the importance of such precautionary measures.

After arriving safely in Kingston, the couple prepared to settle in the growing mercantile center of Jamaica. They immediately encountered higher prices for foodstuff than they expected. “[A]nd as to Eatables such as hams Tongues & Cheese,” William informed his mother, “they are almost as dear as silver, cheese 3 shillings per round & hams.”[19] He also complained about the high cost of flour and bread as compared to English prices. He remarked that “French Prizes” brought the high prices of flour down, and if not for the seizure, they “should not have a morsel to eat of it.”[20] Sarah also complained about the high price of tea in her new home. She considered herself “fortunate enough to have some which my Aunt, sent, when I first came indeed if I had not had any, I should not have been so extravagant as to have bought it at that price the little I

[18] William Dwarris to Herman Dwarris, 14 May 1781, (Typescript), Archives and Special Collections, Otto Richter Library, University of Miami, 1. All subsequent references concerning the Dwarris family come from this collection. I have retained original spelling and grammar from this correspondence. William’s parents are Herman and Sukey Keyworth Dwarris. William and Sarah Smith are Sarah Dwarris’s parents.

[19] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 14 January 1782, 12.

[20] Ibid. As the British Navy grew in strength, the taking of French ships became more common. During the Seven Years War, the British captured 1165 French merchant ships, whereas the British losses were minimal: John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money, and the English State, 1688-1783* (New York: Knopf, 1989), 198.

have I keep for company as we always Breakfast either upon Chocolate or Coffee."[21] Hoarding away her costly tea for special occasions and company, they prepared to make their home in this colonial urban center. Not yet the capital, Kingston still reminded observers of European cities.[22]

However similar to metropolitan centers in appearance, Kingston contained far more dangerous illnesses and diseases. Newcomers to the tropical islands often fell victim to malaria, yellow fever, and sexually transmitted diseases.[23] Few families escaped unscathed, and their correspondence with their connections overseas indicated the fear present for these colonists.[24] Overconsumption of food and drink often contributed to the poor health of the creoles.[25] Shortly after arriving, William wrote back to his family about a local acquaintance. According to William "poor Dawson" had "complained of a pain in his head & of being sick at his stomach. I advised him to take a vomit as I was sure his stomach was foul – for he eat as he told me

[21] Sarah Dwarris to Herman Atkins Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, Date Unknown, 24.

[22] Ann Maria Brodbelt, more commonly known as Nancy, wrote to her younger sister, Jane, concerning a visit to Kingston with a friend Mary Ricketts. Kingston reminded Nancy of a true English city for "certainly the manners of the People and their mode of living resembles England they keep late Hours, have Suppers, lay a Bed long in a Morning, and what is still better the Ladies and Gentlemen associate very much together" (Ann Maria Brodbelt to Jane Brodbelt, Spanish Town, Jamaica, 19 October 1795, in *Letters to Jane*, 122). In this metropolitan area the "Ladies to go a Shopping when the Gentlemen very often strole in and have a little pleasant conversation; if Ladies are going out a Visiting any where the Gentlemen will attend them in the Carriage, in short my dear Jane their manners reminded me of England." (122). Yet even though this town was similar to urban England, these creole women still preferred to purchase their goods from London.

[23] See also David Geggus, "Yellow Fever in the 1790s: The British Army in Occupied Saint Domingue," *Medical History* 23 (1979): 41–44; James Robertson, "Giving Directions in Spanish Town, Jamaica: Comprehending a Tropical Townscape," *Journal of Urban History* 35 (2009): 718-42; Wendy D. Churchill, "Bodily Differences?: Gender, Race, and Class in Hans Sloane's Jamaican Medical Practice, 1687-1688," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 60 (2005): 391-444. For venereal ailments and the West Indies, see Trevor Burnard and Richard Follett, "Caribbean Slavery, British Anti-Slavery, and the Cultural Politics of Venereal Disease," *The Historical Journal* 55 (2012): 427-451.

[24] Lady Maria Nugent, during her tenure in Jamaica, often wrote in her journal concerning her health and preoccupations with the wellness of her husband. Although neither she, her husband George Nugent, nor their two children born in Jamaica succumbed to any tropical ailments, fear concerning this seeming inevitability loomed in her writings. See Chapter 6 as well as Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal, Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago, edited by Frank Cundall* (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica, A. & C. Black, 1907). Ann Appleton Storrow also worried about the health of her husband. Due to his ailing condition, she moved to Jamaica in order to assist him in his illness: See Chapter 4.

[25] See Chapter 1 and Chapter 6 for Nugent's remarks concerning overeating and her observations concerning the detriments to health from gluttonous consumption of food and alcoholic beverages.

immoderately of Turtle the day before."[26] Dawson did not recover, and William recounted the tragic event. After "he purged" for four hours this young man perished, and the conditions surrounding his death rendered it "so bad in the Morning we could scarcely get him into his coffin."[27] Overindulgence in this tropical scene could result in dire consequences, as witnessed by the Dwarris couple. Attempting to retain ties between the deceased and his family back at home, William removed a token for the bereft family. He "took off with my own hands a lock of his hair part of which I now enclose for his poor Mother her loss is great indeed – the remainder I shall send if this does not get safe."[28] Understanding the hazards of colonial shipping, William wisely sent only a part of the keepsake for the grieving family. Therefore, if enemy ships captured the vessel, or the package somehow did not reach its destination, more of the sentimental item could be sent to the family. These small gestures indicated how important items like locks of hair were for eighteenth-century colonial inhabitants. These tangible reminders of loved ones, whether separated by an ocean, or through death, could serve as mementoes to aid in memory. This final separation, although unfortunate for the family back in England, would have been slightly ameliorated by the kind action from the Dwarris family.

Initially, encountering death merited longer and more detailed entries in the Dwarris's correspondence. However, after several fatalities among connections to the family, the young couple grew weary of maintaining social conventions in this island locale. William's extensive family in Jamaica and the high death rate in this tropical location required them to don mourning attire frequently. As a young couple with little expendable income, the cost of maintaining proper decorum regarding mourning customs seemed daunting. Although mourning rituals

[26] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, 19 November 1781, Typescript, University of Miami Libraries, 8-9.
[27] Ibid., 9.
[28] Ibid. Regarding mortality in Jamaica, see Figure 3.1 for a representation of "The Torrid Zone: or Blessings of Jamaica," by William Holland.

became less stringent in eighteenth-century England, a level of decorum was still expected during bereavement.[29] For relatives, the aggrieved donned black garments and remained in these somber colors for a period of time based on the relational proximity of the deceased before returning to their everyday wear. It is unsurprising that they continued these practices in Jamaica, where the British inhabitants sought to emulate metropolitan mores.[30]

Many stores in Kingston contained a variety of textiles and accessories for all seamstress and millinery needs. However, the Dwarrises found fashionable items in Jamaica more expensive than they anticipated. Alarmed at the cost of fabric in colonial Jamaica, William wrote home to his mother in November 1782: "I was very sorry Sally did not bring out a Black Silk as one or the other of so large a family is always going off."[31] Recognizing the fragility of life in Jamaica, William realized that they had not anticipated their needs regarding fashionable attire in their new home. Bemoaning their inadequate financial state and the pressing necessities, he lamented: "God know[s] how or where the Money for this sudden demand must come from."[32] He regretted the high price of "comely blk. silk Lutestring" in this outpost of empire.[33] Lutestring or lustring silk appeared glossy, yet retained shape and proved quite durable. It is no wonder that the

[29] See also Kimberly Chrisman Campbell, "Mourning and La Mode at the Court of Louis XVI" *Dress* 39 (2005); Marcia Pointon, "Wearing Memory: Mourning, Jewellery, and the Body," in *Trauer Tragen-- Trauer Zeigen: Inszenierungen Der Geschlechter*, edited by Gisela Ecker (Fink: Munchen, 1999): 65-81; Bradley Quinn, "AngloMania: Tradition and Transgression in British Fashion," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 12 (2008): 377-384. Lou Taylor, *Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1983).

[30] For mourning in Colonial America, see Martha Saxton, *Being Good: Women's Moral Values in Early America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003); Susan M. Stabile*, Memory's Daughters: The Material Culture of Remembrance in Eighteenth-Century America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[31] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, 14 January 1782, 12. William often affectionately referred to Sarah as "Sally" in his letters.

[32] Ibid.

[33] See Figure 6.1 for an example of eighteenth-century "lutestring" (also referred to as "lustring") black silk from Barbara Johnson's album of fabrics. Johnson kept many swatches of fabric in her album, which she began in 1746 and continued until the 1820s. Johnson used this Italian lutestring fabric in 1771 for a mourning gown for her uncle.

Dwarrises desired such a fabric that would retain its stiffness without cumbersome undergarments in the sultry climate.

Sarah's plaintive letters concerning her wardrobe soon joined William's missives. Her communication to her family back in England lamented: "I am in want of nothing so much as a Black Silk Gown & Petticoat and am unwilling to Buy one here as...[it] is such a price it quite frightens me." She begged her family to send a Black silk "as our family is so large we are almost always in Mourning the short time I have been here, have been in Mourning twice and as I visit so much and amongst the genteelest family's I could not well appear out of Mourning while my relations are all in."[34] She also mentioned that one of her husband's uncles had given her his recently deceased wife's "Old Bumbersine Gown" to save the cost of mourning garments but that it was "hardly worth making up."[35] Many eighteenth-century women altered gowns to update the styles, as well as to add fashionable trimmings and lace. Fabric often represented the most costly part of a gown, and therefore, transforming older gowns into new ensembles was the

Figure 6.1: "A Black Italian Lutestring Negligee…Northampton May 1771, Mourning for my Uncle Johnson" in Barbara Johnson, and Natalie Rothstein, *Barbara Johnson's Album of Fashions and Fabrics* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 15.

only recourse for budget- and fashion-conscious women. The dilapidated gown given to her from

[34] William and Sarah Dwarris to Unspecified Family Member, Kingston, Jamaica, 8 July 1782, 32.
[35] Ibid.

the wardrobe of a deceased relative did not satisfy young Sarah. Although frugal, she had her limits concerning efforts at remaking timeworn dresses.

The correspondences requesting fashionable attire did not end with funereal garments, but extended to goods that could be resold in Jamaica for a profit. Supplementing their meager revenues with items from England allowed Sarah to participate in the household income. William requested fabric, including black lutestring silk, which could address his wife's immediate needs, as well as provide an easily sellable item. He also wished for crepe in black and white, as well as pink and blue silks and "elegant Painted Ribbons."[36] Interestingly, he also warned that the materials "must not attend to the fashions at home they must be of lively colours & shewy."[37] He mentioned that some of Sarah's previous stock "were too grave & no one liked them," confirming the local preference for brighter ensembles.[38] Finally, he inquired after needles, thread, gauzes, and millinery goods— small items that both assisted and accessorized sartorial construction.[39] He hoped these items would "make good all Debts" they sustained.[40] Fashionable exchanges, and correspondence regarding material objects, allowed this family to share news and assist this young couple in establishing themselves successfully in Jamaica.

[36] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica,, 14 January 1782, 14.
[37] Ibid.
[38] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 14 January 1782, 14.
[39] A decade later, Nancy Brodbelt would write to her sister Jane, confirming the continued need for these small goods and commissioning her sister to purchase for her from England bath garters, stay laces, and "six papers of middling pins, and six ditto of short whites" because "they may be had for next to nothing in London and cannot be got in this paltry place for money nor anything else" (*Letters to Jane*, 143).
[40] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 14 January 1782, 14.

Figure 6.2: "Fichu," Muslin, with whitework embroidery, 1780s, © Victoria and Albert Museum, London, T.285-1977.

The tropical climate rendered alteration in fashionable attire a necessity. Sarah revealed the need for muslin fabric rather than the traditional gauze for handkerchiefs due to the increased perspiration in the sultry conditions. Requesting "a couple of Muslin Aprons and two or three Buck Muslin Handkerchiefs…for you cannot have a Gause one here…as the heat of ones Neck spoiles them soon."[41] The muslin fabric allowed for a sheer, soft, and breathable cloth that did not ruin as easily from bodily sweat. She additionally wished for a new "pair of Sissers that's

[41] Sarah Dwarris to William and Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 1 June 1788, 146. A kerchief, later called "fichu," referred to the fabric that made a "neckerchief," which according to the Berg Dictionary of Fashion History, was "Any square or strip of linen or other material folded round the neck." See "Neckerchief." *The Berg Fashion Library*. (n.d.). http://www.bergfashionlibrary.com/view/bdfh/bdfh-div12115.xml (accessed 11 Nov. 2014). For an example of a white muslin neck accessory similar to the one Sarah described, see Figure 6.2.

well Polish,d otherwise they very soon grow rusty here" to carry in her pockets.[42] Apprising her parents of the textile choices in Jamaica, she informed them that "there is no silk to be got here, and indeed if there was the heat of one hands would spoil it."[43] Furthermore she requested "two or three common Fans as that is a very necessary Artical here."[44] Fans allowed the wearer both to display their sartorial acumen and to possess a useful accessory. With both the heat and

Figure 6.3: "Fan," ivory, mother-of-pearl, parchment, gouache, second quarter eighteenth century, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2009.300.1543.

mosquitos a danger in the West Indies, it is no wonder that Sarah referred to fans as a "very necessary Artical." The sultry climate made certain articles more desired than others, and allowed Sarah to share her experiences with this humid weather through her altered clothing requirements.

[42] Ibid. In this same letter Sarah additionally asked for "pair of Kid Gloves," as well as a Laylock Silk Quilt," and "a little Thread." Finally, she wanted "two or three pair of Slippers for myself…and three pair of Shoes for the Child…he is now whareing of them"…and a "few pair of cotten Stocking, as well as "a common strong purse as they ask me ten Shillings for one and I suppose you can get it in England." These requests provided both a link between Sarah and her parents, as well as between Sarah and England. By remaining abreast of price and fashion in England, Sarah maintained ties with her former homeland.

[43] Sarah Dwarris to William and Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 1 June 1788, 146.

[44] Ibid. For an example of a fan from the late eighteenth century, see Figure 6.3.

Additionally, objects sent from their familial connections in England provided a private avenue for the sale of material goods.[45] The hazards of transit in the late eighteenth-century Atlantic World often resulted in items being destroyed during the long voyage.[46] Careful packing ensured that the goods would make it to Jamaica in well order and not arrive completely spoiled from the journey. In May 1783, Sarah thanked her parents for their continued correspondence along "with the things, owing to there having been pack'd so well – nothing receiv,d any damage, except, the Cloth of the outside, being a little rub'd."[47] Even with the precautions of meticulous storing, some items still sustained some damage throughout the journey. She also expressed gratitude for "the Gause and Ribbons," which she decided were "very pretty," and asked for a further present of "a few yards of …Ribbons" the next time they shipped goods.[48] While expressing her obligation to them for their presents, she also petitioned additional material items for her continued personal consumption as well as for resale in Jamaica. William also saw financial gain from transporting goods from metropolitan England. He informed his father that if their acquaintance "Mr. Ellis" decided to return to Jamaica, to bring with him " a large quantity of boots & shoes would be good" to sell at market, for when William had gone last, "there was

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[45] Recent studies have brought attention to women in the mercantile business, which complicates the previous view that white women were merely consumers in the British West Indies. Christine Walker's article "Pursuing Her Profits: Women in Jamaica, Atlantic Slavery and a Globalising Market, 1700-60," *Gender & History* 26 (2014): 476-518, challenges Lucille Mair's thesis that in eighteenth-century Jamaica, "black woman produced, the brown woman served, and the white woman consumed" (Mair quoted in Barbara Bush, *Slave Women in Caribbean Society, 1650-1838* (London: Heinemann Publishers, 1990, xii). In this study, Walker examines merchant and slave owner Anna Hassall, and her profitable endeavors in Jamaica through female merchant connections in Bristol. Additionally, she uncovers the story of two British women, "Mrs Finlayson" and "Miss McIntosh," who travelled to Jamaica and began participating in the millinery and mantua-making industry (490). Relying on their metropolitan connections, these two ladies "received 'the earliest intelligence of every change of the fashion"' (490). Operating in urban centers of Kingston and Spanish Town, these women created businesses for themselves outside of the patriarchal society in Jamaica. Although women like Sarah Dwarris assisted her husband, stories such as these demonstrate that not all businesses in Jamaica were male-dominated in this masculine imperial landscape.

[46] Spanish Town resident Ann Brodbelt also complained about ruined goods from the long voyage. She mentioned that a "Mrs Gifford" packed her items better than "Abram's, for the hats from Abrams were "so much tumbled that you can scarcely make out what form they are" (*Letters to Jane*, 106).

[47] Sarah Dwarris to William Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 11 May 1783, 44.

[48] Ibid.

not an article in any Store."[49] Seeing an opportunity for successful business endeavors, William sought to gain from a lack of goods in the local shops. These challenging conditions allowed enterprising individuals a space to participate in the consumer society outside of traditional mercantile boundaries.

Due to the scarcity of certain material items in this periphery, opportunists could benefit from metropolitan connections. One young entrepreneur, William Jowett Titford, requested material goods from his relatives in England to resell in Jamaica for profit.[50] Like the Dwarrises, Titford arrived in Jamaica seeking to improve his fortune through his family members who were already entrenched in this island outpost. Although his father resided in Jamaica and worked as a physician, Titford spent his formative years in England under the care of an uncle and aunt.[51] In 1802, Titford departed for Jamaica, armed with hopes of wealth and fortune in this imperial location. His first letter to his aunt and uncle back in England showed the depth of his feelings for his relatives. The sentimental tone spoke of his love and devotion for the family who raised him for sixteen years. "I am with you always every night in my dreams," the fond Titford exclaimed, "though have felt the parting pang & shed the parting tear since I have been at sea & almost thought it cruel to keep me so long & bind my affections to you as father, mother & brother…then to send me 5000 miles away."[52] Once he arrived and settled in Spanish Town, he did not approve of the local inhabitants, in whom "it seems that the governing principle is Pride.

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[49] William Dwarris to "Dear Sir," Kingston, Jamaica, 30 September 1787, 138.

[50] I am grateful for James Robertson for pointing out this collection to me.

[51] William Jowett Titford's mother, Mary Greenaway Jowett, died while William was in England for his education. His father, Isaac Titford, remarried Alice Margaret Dunscomb in New York. The two resided in Jamaica, and owned Mount Moreland coffee and pimento plantation near Kingston. They had several daughters, and William referred to his father's second wife as his mother in his letters. The Titfords spent time in both Jamaica and New York. For more biographical information concerning William Jowett, see Anthony R. Titford, "A Biographical Study of William Jowett Titford (1784-1823/7) and Sketches towards a Hortus Botanicus Americanus" *Journal of the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History* 8 (1977): 120-142.

[52] William Jowett Titford to "My Dear Uncle & Aunt," 26 November 1802, Letterbook of William Jarrett Titford M.D. written to family and friends from Spanish Town Jamaica between 1802-1807, Typescript, University of West Indies, Mona, West Indies and Special Collection, Letter One. All materials concerning Titford come from this collection.

There is no society like England."[53] Observing the high cost of garments in the imperial capital city, he described saving his father from being subjected to purchasing goods at those prices. He wrote: "The sheets & linen," particularly "neckcloths, were very acceptable, as my father was actually going to buy some when I told him what I had brought."[54] Although employed as a clerk in Spanish Town, Titford saw an opportunity for a profitable enterprise in this small urban center, and began soliciting his contacts for material goods.

Titford found an opportunity to sell rare and fashionable objects that were so valued by the local population. Furthermore, as a young man with uncertain prospects, the thought of making extra cash from selling goods did not disagree with his position as a clerk recently arrived from England. He wrote of his business ventures, enumerating the goods that sold better in this tropical environment. "I this evening sold two…round shawls," Titford explained "so that if the rest sell as well, it will turn out a good adventure."[55] He was less certain concerning the prospects for the perfume he brought, and he also worried about his shipment of parasols. He later sent his extra goods to Kingston, and requested that a friend in the growing city assist him in his endeavors: "Pray have you sold the perfumery? You shall have commission. I have sold some shawls & silk gloves (or rather Mrs. Taylor has sold them for me) at 2 & 300 per cent profit. I am afraid that Parasoles will remain on hand – could you sell them?"[56] He later entreated his cousins in England to send over "shawls & gloves."[57] These items, which sold at such a great advantage, were fashionable at the turn of the nineteenth century. Decorative shawls, popularized by the "turquerie" fashions in metropolitan Europe, found a ready audience in the colonial

[53] William Jowett Titford to Richard, 14 January 1803, Letter Two. Richard Titford was William Jowett Titford's cousin and the recipient of many letters from William during his time in Jamaica.
[54] Ibid.
[55] William Jowett Titford to Richard, N.D., Letter Three.
[56] William Jowett Titford to "Dear Madam" 25 January 1803, Letter Five.
[57] William Jowett Titford to "Dear Cousins," 29 January 1803, Letter Seven.

islands as well. As Susan Hines argues, shawls became "a cultural fetish evoking sensual fantasies of a constructed Orient."[58] Popularized by Consulate Parisian women "because of its tactile delicate softness replicating female skin, the cashmere shawl permitted fashionable ladies to dress scantily in public and still remain decorously covered."[59] In the colonial setting, the

Figure 6.4: "Woman wearing a long shawl, 1803," Print, *Un siècle de modes féminines, 1794-1894,* New York Public Library Digital Gallery, PC COSTU-18-Fr.

bright coverings provided shade from the sun, as well as a colorful embellishment for the popular white muslin gowns.[60] Maria Nugent and Pauline Bonaparte, wives of colonial leaders, donned such fashionable items, and it was no wonder that Titford found a market for these goods.[61] This enterprise capitalized on the love of new stylish accessories that characterized white women in Jamaica. By seeing a lack of such moveable goods, Titford profited from the desire for these

[58] Susan Hiner, *Accessories to Modernity Fashion and the Feminine in Nineteenth-Century France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 83.
[59] Hiner, 84.
[60] For a visual example of a fashionable shawl from 1803, see Figure 6.4.
[61] See Chapter 6 for a description of the fashion choices of Nugent and Leclerc.

fashionable items. Furthermore, such profits demonstrated the revenue that could be brought in from reselling items in Jamaica.[62]

Like Titford, William and Sarah Dwarris solicited goods from their connections for both private consumption and to resell for profit. When she requested items for personal use, however, Sarah described them in greater detail. Sarah wrote to her mother that "Mr. Dwarris" had given her freedom with five pounds to purchase necessary goods. She asked them to "get a few things which I much want therefore must truble you to procure them fore me." Begging that they would send her "the best as nobody wears any thing but the best here," she began her list of necessary items:" a pale Pink Silk Peticoat," which she believed she could afford, in addition to other pieces of her ensemble, as well as smart footwear. To these she added cotton stockings, muslin handkerchiefs, and gauze.[63] Expressing her great need for these items, she concluded that she would "be oblig,d to you to send them as soon as you can as I want them much." Finalizing her letter and rereading the contents, she altered her final requests and removed from her list the handkerchiefs, replacing it with a "fine nice work,d Muslin Apron."[64] Not forgetting her husband, she completed her letter by requesting "two pair of Cotton Stocking and two Silk Handkerchiefs

[62] Although concerned with profit regarding the goods he imported, he also exchanged sentimental tokens with his friends and family as well. In 1806 he cut his hair to make three rings for his family back in England (Letter Forty Three). Since he had spent many years with his family in England, this small token helped them remain close after his departure (Letter Forty Eight). He also had a miniature made for his mother, who was then residing in New York. These small sentimental gifts eased the loneliness he felt living away from many of his relatives and loved ones. During the time of war and turmoil in the West Indies, he found sending presents increasingly difficult. Writing to his friend Richard, he wrote of sending him "A mahogany box for you, which also contains some Daily & Weekly newspapers of 1804 & 1805… Sketch of Mary Ann & Margaret – View of 'Content' (for Mrs. Johnson), Profile of Mrs. Marshall (for ditto) Sketch of Mount Moreland, Light Infantry (2) 1st Catharines – Sketch of Hercules & Anteus Townshend Packet by Mulatto William – Mount Moreland – Sketch of Salt Island – Canna or Indian Shot…" Furthermore, he "intended to have sent some Preserved Ginger, tamarinds & pickles, but had not time on account of Martial Law, besides the great expense and trouble at the Customs house" (William Jowett Titford to Richard, 18 April 1805, Letter Twenty Seven). Titford would later publish *Sketches towards a Hortus Botanicus Americanus; or, coloured plates (with a catalogue and descriptions of many species) of new and valuable plants of the West Indies and North and South America. Also of several others, natives of Africa and the East Indies* (London: C. Stower and Newman for the author, 1811-[1812]) based on his encounters in the West Indies and North America.

[63] Sarah Dwarris to Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 11 December 1785, 100.

[64] Ibid.

for Mr. Dwarris."[65] Sarah Dwarris's reliance on her family to procure her fashionable purchases agrees with Jennifer Jones's assertion that, "gift-giving and the sharing of clothing sidestepped the commercial economy."[66] Although part of the commercial economy in the Atlantic World, they were side stepping the traditional mercantile system through their private connections. These items could be purchased at a cheaper cost in London, and doing so provided an avenue for family members to assist one another.

Although William and Sarah requested many items to be shipped across the Atlantic for private use and business transactions, not all goods arriving from England met with the Dwarrises' approval. William wrote to his parents of his gratitude for their shipment of items, but lightheartedly pointed out the unnecessary seasonal attire they included. "I return you thanks" William expressed, "for the handkerchiefs & silk, but cannot help thinking what it was a cold day when you wrote, that made you think I was also in a cold Climate and wanted silk for an under waistcoat. I sometimes find it to warm for an linnen waistcoat."[67] Although they received these goods in January, the difference in climate from the metropole to the colony rendered these accessories excessive. Although some colonists might have preferred to retain the fashions from England, William desired to remain cool without a cumbersome silk waistcoat.[68]

The Dwarrises did not limit their solicitation for goods from England to cloth, accessories, and needlecraft. In order to complete her ensembles, Sarah also commissioned shoes from her

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[65] Ibid.

[66] Jennifer M. Jones, *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion, and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), 217.

[67] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 18 January 1784, 56.

[68] Edward Long, in his *History of Jamaica,* stated that the creoles in Jamaica adhered to the fashions from London, even at the hazard of their health. According to Long, "Their head-dress varies with the ton at home; the winter fashions of London arrive here at the setting in of hot weather; and thick or thin caps, large as an umbrella, or as diminutive as a half crown piece, are indiscriminately put on, without the smallest regard to the difference of the climate." Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica: Or, General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of the Island: With Reflections on its Situation Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government* (London: T. Lowndes, 1774), 522.

familial connections in England. Proper attire for walking in the Jamaican climate proved difficult for Sarah to obtain. After many incoming ships arrived without their requested goods, Sarah began to worry. William declared that he felt "affraid they are shipt on board some outport vessell which will much distress her as she much wants shoe &c. she is tired of buying them here, having given ten shillings for common callimanes shoes which being sent out for sale will scarcely last a week.[69]" Due to the high cost of footwear on the island, Sarah desired that her family ameliorate their situation by sending goods from their metropolitan location, where such items would be more durable and less expensive. The following month, Sarah informed her family that she had still not received her desired shoes from England. Sarah wrote: "I have not receiv'd my things yet which is very strange I am in great want of them I have not a pair of Shoes to wear those that were bought here are good for nothing they wont last a week and you pay for leather 15 & 20 Shillings a pair."[70] Far away from the convenient shops and products in urban England, Sarah felt frustrated with the price and availability of goods in this imperial outpost.

The dissatisfaction with the availability and quality of material objects, particularly proper footwear, continued throughout the Dwarrises' tenure in Jamaica. In 1785, Sarah reminded her mother to "Please to send the shoes as mention'd, now two pair of Colour,d Leather Slippers one pair of Dark Green with Black bows and Heels and one pair of the most fashionable Colour with Bows two pair of Black Leather Slipper with bows, they must be fine Spanish Leather."[71] She described in detail the location of her desired shoemaker, and expressed that they should be purchased at that location since they were "the only ones I can ware with

[69] William Dwarris to Dear Sir [Herman Atkins Dwarris?], Kingston, Jamaica, 26 June 1782, 21.
[70] Sarah and William Dwarris to Unknown, Kingston, Jamaica 8 July, 1782, 34.
[71] Sarah Dwarris to Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 11 December 1785, 100. See Figure 6.5 for an example of shoes from the late 1780s that included the fashionable bows and heels that Sarah requested.

pleasure."[72] She requested both fashionable and functional shoes to assist in completing her ensembles. After these items arrived she sent her gratitude but did not hesitate to voice her distress over the lack of the colorful and stylish shoes she desired. "The Shoes you sent me fit me very well," penned Sarah, however, "I was a little disapointed in not finding the colour,d ones as

Figure 6.5: "Pair of Woman's Indoor Slip-on Shoes," 1785-1790, Costume and Textiles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, M.82.57a-b.

I expected as I was very much in want of a smart pair to whare when I was dress,d but since the Box arrived I have been so fortunitate as to meet with a very neat pair which I bought."[73] Although dependent on family connections for most of their material needs, when those avenues failed, Sarah found items in the local shops, which satisfied her needs at a higher cost.

Not only did Sarah receive goods from familial connections and from local shops, she also created her own accouterments. Writing to her mother in July 1786, she relayed her current occupation of making fashionable headwear. "I have been making me a very smart Bonnet with some of the Gause and Billaum" she wrote, "as nothing but Hats and Bonnets are wore here,

[72] Ibid.
[73] Sarah Dwarris to Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica 26 July 1786, 109.

there is hardly any such thing as a Cap to be seen nowadays."[74] These accessories both provided shade from the hot sun and were a tasteful accessory, and Sarah took pride in her ability to create her own pieces. This allowed her to reuse older fabric, and save the cost of buying them from a local milliner. Her desire to remain in style with a small expendable income inspired Sarah to be more creative with her fashionable consumption. By crafting her own goods and receiving certain items from connections in England, Sarah saved money while still donning stylish ensembles.

The transatlantic exchange of goods was not a one-way street. Although the bulk of goods listed by Sarah came from England, some items found their way from Jamaica to the motherland. Sarah informed her mother that she included in her package to England "my Old Blue Cotton Coat which is quite dirty to be died any Colour you think it will take best except Pink." She also sent her an "Old white Silk Gown if you think it worth dying if not it is of no consequence as it was of not use here," to be made into a petticoat or another gown. When she had the opportunity of sending it across the Atlantic with a friend, Sarah planned for these items to make their way via London to her parents' home. She later wrote of her gratitude to her mother "for the truble she has been at about my Gown & Coat."[75] Traditional shipping would have rendered this operation more costly than she wished; however, due to the private convoy by an acquaintance, she gladly sent her used garments. Since the items were worn and old, she hoped to update them into more stylish pieces. With little extra money for frivolous consumptions, Sarah made use of several avenues to update her wardrobe in order to remain fashionable in her colonial scene.

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[74] Ibid.
[75] Sarah to William Smith, N.D., 129.

Due to their limited income, the Dwarris couple was frugal in both fashionable purchases and entertainments. They did not have extra money to experience all the social life the island had to offer. Sarah bemoaned how few outlets she had for entertainment during the winter season. In England, her family had access to seasonal amusements in the metropole, and Sarah wrote of her gladness "to hear that you have been so gay this Winter."[76] She could not say the same of her opportunities in this frontier of empire, for, "at present very stupid nothing but the theatre no Assemblys no Concerts no amusements of any kind."[77] She did explain that "the subscriptions, here are so high that Mr. Dwarris would not subscribe and though I might be taken by friends I should not like to go without him."[78] Unable to participate in what small social scene there was in Jamaica, Sarah fortified herself for the uneventful winter months.

The next year, however, Sarah wrote of her improved entertainment prospects. "Kingston is beginning to be a little Gay now," Sarah wrote, "as there are Concerts & Assemblys" present in the budding urban town.[79] Although she had "not been to any yet," she had "many Tickets offer,d," but chose to decline once again due to William's inability to purchase a subscription.[80] She determined that she had "no pleasure in going any where without him," and decided to eschew attending altogether.[81] Finally, a few years later, she reported on a social outing during a Christmas celebration. Although it resulted in a sore throat, which she received from "merry making this Xmas at two Dances, by being imprudent in walking home at two O Clock in the morning, & refusing to accept of a close carriage," she still proclaimed that evening a success.[82] The following Christmas, in 1788, Sarah experienced her greatest holiday amusements during

[76] Sarah Dwarris to William Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 11 May, 1783, 46.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Sarah Dwarris to Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 3 May 1784, 62.
[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid.
[82] William Dwarris to Dear Sir, Kingston, Jamaica, 27 January 1787, 124.

her stay in Jamaica. "I never spent so merry a Xmas in Jamaica as this," Sarah declared, " for we were at three private dances which were very agreeable and a great many Entertainments besides."[83] Social life for the Dwarrises and families like them depended on private parties thrown by friends and acquaintances, as more official avenues were too expensive on their meager income.

Although Sarah enjoyed social gatherings and longed for concerts, theatre visits, and assemblies, she did not wish to attend them without her husband. Therefore, she refused offers from acquaintances out of a sense of decorum. Until she and William could afford the subscriptions themselves and attend together, she did not go at all. From all appearances, this couple enjoyed one another's company, despite their uncertain prospects and isolation from close family. William appreciated his wife and procured a sentimental gift for her. "I made Sally one of my hair set in a gold breast pin," William revealed, "which was done in England & brought out by the Gentleman…& is very neat."[84] This small token allowed Sarah to have an item physically close to her that demonstrated her husband's care for her. Meaningful gifts, especially in a land as unstable as colonial Jamaica, assisted in sustaining this couple through financial distress. They appeared to have that lauded yet elusive eighteenth-century companionate marriage where both parties genuinely enjoyed spending time together.

Although they inhabited a colonial home where life appeared tenuous, with the threat of disease, war, and slave revolts constantly present, the Dwarrises chose to begin a family. Material concerns, never far from their mind, grew in importance when Sarah became pregnant. The young couple worried that they might not have the financial means to provide adequate apparel for their new baby. While preparing all the necessary items, William bemoaned that a

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[83] Sarah Dwarris to William and Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 27 January 1788. 142.
[84] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 18 January 1784, 57.

rich aunt in Jamaica had not bestowed on them the material goods they had hoped for. “I really thought she would have made Sally some presents on this occasion,” William informed his mother, “as the expences attending making up Child bed linnen are very considerable here & times never were so hard.”[85] With the high costs of consumer items in Jamaica, they hoped that a more financially stable relative would assist them in their time of need. Writing to her father, Sarah mentioned that she “was oblig’d to begin to make some baby Cloths and have been busy for this Fortnight about them for as I am more than seven Months gone I was afraid to trust any longer.”[86] Rather than relying completely on the benevolence of her family, Sarah decided to augment her baby’s wardrobe with articles she created herself. Far from decking herself out in fashionable attire at the expense of others, her main concern was providing a decent wardrobe for her newborn. Many British women crafted their baby’s garments at home, and Sarah likewise prepared for the upcoming event with careful attention towards the essentials.[87]

As a new mother, Sarah faced decisions regarding newborn ranging from infant linen to the best method of nourishing her child. Her decision to breastfeed does not seem to stem from the desire to participate in the growing cult of motherhood, but rather to keep her child from direct contact with someone of a different race. Sarah informed her family: “I have great plenty of Milk at present and hope it will continue as I should be very unhappy to have him suck a Negro. there is I think something unnatural in seeing a white Child at a Black breast besides that … fear of hurting your child.”[88] Sarah had some desire to feed her own child, but her abhorrence of the thought of her child in direct contact with someone of African decent tinged her

[85] William Dwarris to Sukey Keyworth Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 14 November 1784, 78.
[86] Sarah Dwarris to William Smith, N.D., 82.
[87] Alice Davis Donahue, “Eighteenth Century Chesapeake Clothing A Costume Plan for the National Colonial Farm” (M.A. Thesis, University of Maryland, 2008), 32.
[88] Sarah Dwarris to William Smith, N.D., 82. Barbara Bush affirms that the white population viewed the milk from a woman of African decent to be “tainted.” See “White Ladies, Coloured Favourites and Black Wenches: Some Considerations on Sex, Race and Class Factors in Social Relations in White Creole Society in the British Caribbean,” *Slavery & Abolition Slavery & Abolition* 2 (1981): 249-250.

decision.[89] Although tragedy struck the Dwarris family when their child died in July 1785, they soon welcomed their second baby, upon whom they placed all their hopes for the future.

In a land of instability, especially for the unsuccessful Dwarris family, a new baby provided optimism for their future. Initially "at a loss what name to call him as several persons are advising differently," William determined to name him after his uncle, in anticipation that this gesture might "induce him to make a New Will and perhaps get a Legacy."[90] Christening their infant "Fortunatus," he survived inoculation for smallpox and began his early years in Jamaica. He received many presents from his caring family, including "a bit of Muslin" from his maternal aunt Nancy, which Sarah decided would make "a Frock" for the young boy.[91] Additionally, as a toddler he received "a very fine Parrot," which served as a pet for the young boy in this exotic location. Yet, the parents worried about creolization for their child, and voiced their concerns to relatives in England. "Our Dearly little Fortune grows an entertaining Companion, and says but every thing," wrote William, and "it would amaze you & My Mother to hear his little tongue talk…negroe like which is the worst thing attending Children here, but as they are always playing with the negroe children they learn their ways & language."[92] Although written somewhat lightheartedly, he expressed a genuine concern over the cultural hybridity his son experienced. This anxiety caused many parents to choose to send their children back to

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[89] Scholar Ann Laura Stoler examines this control of intimate contact in her studies between colonizers and the colonized throughout the wider imperial world. According to Stoler, in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), nursemaids in Dutch Java were required to put on clean white clothes so that the children would not be in contact with more skin than absolutely necessary to provide milk. Additionally, the children were not to be in direct contact with the sweat from the Javanese woman, and were to be taken away from any "cozy intimacy" that might be present (190).

[90] William Dwarris to Herman Atkins Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica 6 November 1786, 119. This gesture appeared to work as Fortunatus inherited substantial amounts of property, including plantations in Jamaica. William would inherit Golden Grove from his uncle and bequeath it to his son.

[91] Sarah Dwarris to William and Sarah Smith, Kingston, Jamaica, 1 June 1788, 148.

[92] William Dwarris to Herman Atkins Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 6 September 1788, 152.

England for education in their formative years. The three Dwarrises removed to the metropole the next year, and Fortunatus remained for the majority of his life in Great Britain.[93]

Material concerns took up much of the Dwarris's correspondence to their loved ones during their tenure in Jamaica. Shared items allowed this couple to retain connections with their family back in England. Additionally, Sarah prized the items she received from her parents more than locally-available goods. "I shall where my things with greater pleasure that comes from my Friends than any thing I can get in this Country," Sarah acknowledged to her mother and father in a sentimental letter.[94] Donning articles that she received directly from England allowed her to feel connected with the land of her birth. Furthermore, by sending her needed garments and fashionable accessories, her family could assist in a meaningful way during the couple's time of financial distresses. These goods allowed Sarah to maintain a level of societal decorum during their period of struggle. Although they attempted to curtail spending and financially entrench during their stay in Jamaica, they always seemed to be suffering from pecuniary distress. Sarah bemoaned to her parents: "I am sure it is not possible to be more frugal than we are…but notwithstanding all our frugality we do not spend less than five Hundred a year and that is a great deal of money all Cash I am sure it often vexes me, for if we had that sum in England we should be as happy as the day is long."[95] Sarah wore the garments from her parents and enjoyed a physical closeness to her family by clothing herself in these objects that her parents lovingly

[93] Later, Fortunatus joined a commission that sought to understand law in the West Indies. Due to his services, he received a knighthood, and, interestingly, became an opponent of slavery and proposed gradual abolition. This did not keep him from obtaining compensation for the loss of his emancipated slaves. See W. P. Courtney, "Dwarris, Sir Fortunatus William Lilley (1786–1860)," rev. Jonathan Harris, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, 2004, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8337 (accessed July 17, 2015). For his compensation following abolition of slavery, see "Sir Fortunatus William Lilley Dwarris," Legacies of British Slave-ownership, http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/43211.

[94] Sarah Dwarris to William and Sarah Dwarris, Kingston, Jamaica, 1 June 1788, 146.

[95] Ibid., 147.

chose for her. These presents helped alleviate some of the burden for them, especially as their family grew. After the birth of her child, these objects took on a new meaning for her family who sent gifts across the Atlantic to a beloved baby they had not met. Items bestowed from her sister assisted Sarah in making baby clothes for her newborn son. During this time of financial and emotional instability in Jamaica, this young family had support through the goods they received and the letters they exchanged with their family.

Correspondence provided a means of sharing important and yet still sentimental language with beloved family and friends during a loved one's absence in colonial Jamaica. Each family experienced loss, personal struggles, and unfulfilled hopes in Jamaica. Letters received assisted emigrants during their periods of trial in this land of unimaginable wealth and prospects. Throughout periods of war and instability, material goods were central to the colonial experience in the West Indies. Although the families and individuals examined in this chapter did not possess high government positions or social standing in this sugar plantation island, they still desired to participate in the culture of sentimental letter writing with their families. Furthermore, these individuals used transatlantic correspondence to secure sought material goods both to enhance their fortunes through resale, and to wear and use themselves. The King, Titford, and Dwarris families all sought to augment their social standing in the island society through participation with this popular metropolitan cultural exchange, but they do not display the stereotypical attributes noted in the travel histories or novels. Their prudent decision, and sentimental exchanges demonstrated thriftiness and frugality as well as their desire to remain in touch with British fashions.

CHAPTER 6

SELF-FASHIONING AND MATERIAL GOODS: THE CASE OF LADY MARIA NUGENT

In Jamaica, the colonial outpost of the British Empire in the eighteenth century, wealthy women used material objects to “self-fashion” their identity as members of the British elite. Women with money and status, like Maria Nugent, wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica from 1801-1805, acquired goods in order to display their metropolitan associations and their adherence to British societal customs. Although far from the centers of fashion and objects in London and other European cities, Ann, Nancy, and Jane Brodbelt, as well as Margaret and Mary Cowper, desired to remain knowledgeable of the modes in these cosmopolitan centers. Ann Appleton Storrow and Sarah Dwarris received items from their relatives and this exchange helped them remain linked to their families elsewhere in the larger Atlantic World. Nugent, as the wife of the British-appointed leader of Jamaica, used these material goods not only to exhibit her aristocratic connections, but also to establish herself as the reigning woman of fashion and culture in this imperial colony. Although merchandise was available in local shops in Kingston, Falmouth, and Spanish Town, many imperial inhabitants preferred items that came directly from the metropole. In their writings, women throughout their tenure in this sugar plantation island presented a sentimentalized view of England, as well as a desire to acquire and display goods from their metropolitan connections, and Nugent is no exception. These objects provided a link to England and other privileged connections and allowed them to retain their distinctiveness as members of a British elite society. Furthermore, material objects characterized Nugent’s experience in Jamaica. Through the exchange of attire and the wearing of fashionable ensembles, Nugent crafted her place as the leading lady and British representative in colonial Jamaica.

The creation of identity through luxury goods has been a key focus of current scholarship on material culture. For wealthy women in the West Indies, material items indicated their social status and connection to metropolitan fashion. Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace argues that "[these] commodities became part of the fabric of their lives." Individuals "considered objects like furniture or china not merely as useful but also a valuable indication of who and what they were."[1] Although there has been excellent analysis of consumption and the creation of a national identity, few works have considered the role of self-fashioning in colonial consumption. Maya Jasanoff illuminates the use of material culture in "self-fashioning" throughout the British Empire.[2] Although Jasanoff study centers around imperial consumption in India, her trans-regional methodology remains useful for the study of material culture in other colonial regions. "By accumulating material wealth, objects and property," Jasanoff argues, "individuals had the ability to transform themselves."[3] The manipulation and possession of certain goods assisted in the formation of individuality in the colonial world. Through her use of material objects like fashionable trinkets and gifts from England, Nugent transformed herself from a provincial daughter of a loyalist to the first lady of fashion in Jamaica.

Records concerning the lives of elite women living in colonial peripheries such as Jamaica are rare in archival holdings. Wives of British officials in the West Indies typically did not leave their trace in extant letter collections and journals, although undoubtedly, some undoubtedly remain in private collections. One exception to this scarcity is the journal of Lady Maria Nugent, the wife of the Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica. Intended for private circulation,

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[1] Elizabeth Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects: Women, Shopping, and Business in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 6.

[2] Maya Jasanoff, "Collectors of Empire: Objects, Conquests and Imperial Self-Fashioning," *Past & Present* 184 (August 2004):109-135. See also Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Lives, Culture, and Conquest in the East, 1750-1850* (New York: Knopf, 2005). For self-fashioning and empire, see T. H. Breen, "The Meaning of Likeness: Portrait-Painting in an Eighteenth-Century Consumer Society," in *The Portrait in Eighteenth-Century America*, edited by Ellen G. Miles (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1993): 37-59.

[3] Jasanoff, 110.

this candid portrayal of Jamaica during the Napoleonic Wars provides a valuable record of these years of anxiety in the West Indies. Her view of customs and mores in this sugar plantation island provides a glimpse of society around the turn of the nineteenth century.

Like the Cowper and Storrow families, Maria Nugent hailed from Colonial America. Born in Perth, New Jersey, around 1771, to parents Elizabeth Kearney and Cortlandt Skinner, her family consisted of many lawyers, and her paternal grandmother's family included the powerful Van Cortlandts from New York. The Van Cortlandts wielded power in their colony with members of the family holding the office of Mayor and Chief Justice. At the commencement of the American War for Independence, her father, Cortlandt Skinner was Attorney General and Speaker of the Assembly for New Jersey. He received offers to lead local colonial troops, but Skinner proclaimed himself a loyalist. Far from being secure in war-torn New Jersey, the family relocated to the safer Staten Island, New York, where Skinner received a commission from Sir William Howe to lead troops from New Jersey as Brigadier General.[4] Little is known of Maria Skinner's childhood, but following the American War for Independence, she, along with her parents and siblings, moved to England to begin a new life. The Skinner family received compensation for their confiscated land, and hoped for a more stable and prosperous life across the Atlantic than they had experienced during the years of war and strife in revolutionary United States. Maria Skinner was one of twelve children, and yet she received a decent education. She spoke French and later assisted her husband in his correspondence, evidence that she was a capable and intelligent young woman.

[4] For the Skinner family, see Verene Shepherd and Philip Wright, "Introduction," *Lady Nugent's Journal* (Mona, Jamaica: University of West Indies Press, 2002), xi-xiii; Concerning Lady Maria Nugent, see Kayli McCullough, "Lady Maria Nugent: A Woman's Approach to the British Empire," (Master's thesis, Miami University, 2012); James Robertson, "Giving Directions in Spanish Town, Jamaica: Comprehending a Tropical Townscape" *Journal of Urban History* 35 (2009): 718-42; "Nugent, Maria, Lady Nugent (1770/71–1834)," Rosemary Cargill Raza in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/47677 (accessed July 17, 2015).

Maria Skinner's future husband George Nugent also had a provincial background, although the Nugents had descended from the nobility of Ireland.[5] His paternal grandfather Robert, the Earl of Nugent, was notorious for a series of successful marriages to wealthy widows, through which he had come to possess not only a title, but a fortune as well. Robert's only son Edmund died without marrying and left behind two illegitimate sons, Charles Edmund and George, the latter born in 1757. These two sons could not inherit their grandfather's title, which went to Robert's daughter Mary and her husband George Grenville, later the Marquess of Buckingham.[6] The Grenville connection assisted young George, who became an Aide-de-camp for his uncle during the Marquis of Buckingham's tenure as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Nugent also served as a Member of Parliament for Buckingham as well. It is unknown how Maria Skinner and George Nugent became acquainted, but in 1797, when George was forty years old, the two married. During the winter of 1800, the Nugents joined in celebrations with the Buckingham family at their home in Stowe. A fellow guest described Maria as "the most conceited woman I ever saw, she is very pretty though shorter than myself, she has the smallest head that can be, very thin and little. She is an amazing dresser, never appears twice in the same

[5] For the career of General George Nugent, see "Nugent, Sir George, first baronet (1757–1849)," Peter B. Boyden in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, eee ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2009, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20390 (accessed July 17, 2015).

[6] General Nugent's paternal aunt, Mary Nugent, married George Grenville, son of the Prime Minister of the same name. As General Nugent's father had no legitimate children, the title Earl Nugent passed to Mary and her heirs. George Grenville took the name Nugent as well, making him George Nugent-Temple-Grenville, First Marquess of Buckingham. Their son Richard married Anna Eliza Brydges, daughter of Anna Eliza Elletson and James Brydges, the Duke of Chandos. Anna Elletson owned Hope Plantation and other properties in Jamaica from her first marriage to Roger Hope Elletson, who served as Lieutenant-Governor in the mid eighteenth century. The property in Jamaica passed to her daughter from her second marriage to the Duke of Chandos, Anna Eliza Brydges. Richard Temple-Nugent-Brydges-Chandos-Grenville became the first Duke of Buckingham and Chandos. During this period, Richard and Anna were styled Earl and Lady Temple. Both the Buckinghams and Temples sent letters and presents to Maria Nugent during her tenure in Jamaica. For the Chandos connection, see Linda L. Sturtz, "The 'Dimduke' and the Duchess of Chandos: Gender and Power in Jamaican Plantation Management—A Case Study or, A Different Story of 'A Man [and his wife] from a Place Called Hope'," paper presented at the annual meeting of the Université Antilles Guyane, Groupe de recherche AIP-CARDH, 1997.

[6] Lady Maria Nugent, *Lady Nugent's Journal: Jamaica One Hundred Years Ago: Reprinted from a Journal Kept by Maria, Lady Nugent, from 1801 to 1815,* ed. Frank Cundall (London: Published for the Institute of Jamaica by A. & C. Black, 1907), 236.

gown."[7] When this group went on a shopping excursion a few days later, Nugent "bought a great deal of lace, she seems not to care how much money she spends in dress, but she truly improves upon acquaintance and is a pleasant, even-tempered little woman."[8] Fashion was of great importance to this young lady of style, and her preference for elegant designs continued through her residence in Jamaica.

In 1801, the married couple received the news that General Nugent contracted the appointment to serve as Lieutenant Governor of Jamaica.[9] This sugar island, arguably the most important colony during the turn of the nineteenth century, promised prestige and power to this ambitious couple. Maria Nugent was an attractive, vivacious young woman, who would relish her position as the leading lady in this Caribbean island. Nugent, pleased with her outsider status, believed it set her apart from the creole women inhabiting Jamaica. Although she had been born in the colony of New Jersey, she considered herself completely British, but she did not extend the same courtesy to her colonial Caribbean counterparts. She did not view these women as

Figure 7.1 King's House, Spanish Town," Adolphe Duperly, *Daguerian excursions in Jamaica*, 1844, in Verene Shepherd and Philip Wright, *Lady Nugent's Journal* (Mona, Jamaica: University of West Indies Press, 2002), 11.

[7] Shepherd and Wright, xiv.
[8] Ibid.
[9] This role, along with Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, and the Governor-Generalship of India were the three most prized colonial positions. During his tenure as governor, George Nugent was referred to as "General Nugent." It would not be until his return to England in 1806 that he was made baronet. Therefore, during their time in Jamaica, Maria Nugent was not yet Lady Nugent and the local population called her "Mrs. Nugent."

British, but as West Indian creoles. An avid diarist, Nugent recorded her observations of both the

Figure 7.2: "The great saloon at King's House," From an oil painting by Philip Wickstead, in Shepherd and Wright, 13.

society in Jamaica and her daily activities. As a colonial governmental figure, Nugent used fashion to maintain her connections to the metropole.

Although far from the metropolitan centers of commerce and trade, individuals residing in colonial Jamaica desired to maintain their status from England through material possessions.[10] Nugent began a journal to record her daily life and experiences in the island, which was to be her home for the duration of her husband's post. At first she did not feel prepared for her elevation in status and wrote of her fearfulness regarding the climate and the threat of disease. Nugent did not at first relish the thought of living in Jamaica and "playing the Governor's wife to the *blackies*."[11] Nugent started her journal during the trip from Britain to the West Indies. Fashion played a role in her voyage from England in her choice of headwear. Although she had brought bonnets from the metropole, Nugent chose to don nightcaps rather than her bonnets on the ship. "My nightcaps are so smart," Nugent proclaimed, "that I have tied up all my hair under them,

[10] For a similar study considering colonial India, see Margot C. Finn "Colonial Gifts: Family Politics and the Exchange of Goods in British India, c. 1780-1820," *Modern Asian Studies* 40 (Feb., 2006): 203-231.

[11] Nugent, 2.

and so sit on deck in the most comfortable manner."[12] With the bustle and heaving of the ship, Nugent found it impossible to keep her hair "at all tidy and in good order." She found the nightcap fit her purposes and did not feel at all under scrutiny from her fellow passengers. Since they were all men, she found that they could not tell, "a nightcap from a daycap, it is no matter what I do, so I please myself."[13] Although near to England, Nugent already found her attire and accessories subject to alteration. She chose headwear which she would never have worn while in fashionable society in England, but she found that her voyage allowed for more relaxed sartorial decisions. The ship stopped first in Barbados, to make a preliminary visit to the officials in this smaller island colony. In Barbados, Nugent wrote, "We were immediately surrounded by boats with naked men and women covered with beads, and bringing us all sorts of tropical fruits…Landed with the usual fuss and bustle attending 'Great People.'"[14] Nugent felt alarmed by the attire of the local population, both the lack of clothing and also the novelty of the bead-bedecked women. Nonetheless, Nugent felt pleased with the attention paid to her companions and herself, and continued to prepare to begin her life upon arrival in Jamaica. Her nightcap and her acceptance of the beads adorning the local women would not be the only instances of "creolization" regarding clothing for this newly arrived English woman of style. Some of her choices would be from necessity and others would shock style-conscious Nugent.

Shortly after arrival to their new island home, Nugent settled in to both the King's House in Spanish Town and the "Government Pen," a country abode set aside for British officials in Jamaica.[15] Unaccustomed to the heat of the tropical climate, Nugent found herself lacking in proper attire for the temperature and humidity. Unlike other creole women, such as those

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[12] Ibid., 9.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 10.
[15] For a visual depiction of King's House see Figure 7.1 and 7.2. For an illustration of the Government Pen, see Figure 7.3.

mentioned by Edward Long, who, according to his *History of Jamaica*, did not alter their appearance in the torrid climate, Nugent felt no such qualms in private. Lacking the need to somehow "prove" her Britishness through attire, Nugent adapted her wardrobe to fit the weather. Often writing her journal "*en chemise*," Nugent did not find her absence of full attire wanting or find herself too cold in such "*dishabille*." By January 1802, Nugent settled in to a routine that included bathing "in cold water," followed by writing "&c. some times *en chemise*, and this makes me cool and comfortable for the rest of the day."[16] In the less formal location of her home and the country residence, Nugent allowed herself to relax from the strictures of fashion in order to retain comfort and health in this new environment. She was not unaware of how her fashion choices would resonate in England. Nugent mused: "I often think what a curious sight it would be in England, to see General N. and me, in only our *robes de chamber*, strolling at daylight, eating fruit, &c. This morning was fresher than usual, and we really enjoyed ourselves."[17] Although she enjoyed her more relaxed appearance while in the privacy of her island residence, she would not have appeared in a public gathering without her best attire possible. Nugent enjoyed reigning as the leading lady of Jamaica, but her position would not be without some

[16] Nugent, 75.
[17] Ibid., 151.

awkward encounters.

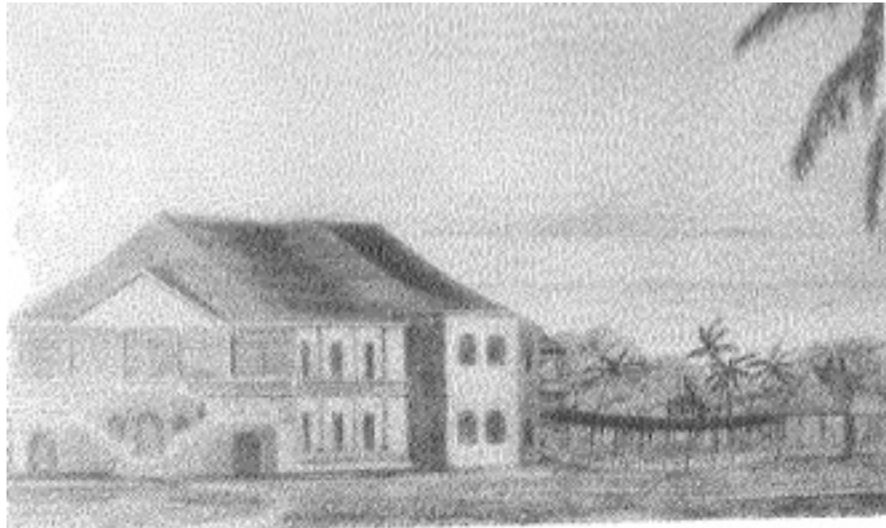

Figure 7.3: "Government Pen," From the 1839 edition of the Journal, probably after a drawing by Maria Nugent, in Shepherd and Wright, 51.

Material concerns characterized Nugent's career as both the wife of the Lieutenant Governor, and the female representative of the British Empire in Jamaica.[18] The local inhabitants expected Nugent to lead the fashionable trends in this remote island, and hoped she would patronize local shops. Soon after her arrival, Nugent met with a member of the Council who recommended her to a milliner whom she felt retained a poor character.[19] Nugent felt it her duty to only patronize local milliners who would give credit to her position and reputation.[20] This incident demonstrates the importance not only of fashion in her new island home, but of

[18] During the Nugent's tenure in Jamaica, the House of Assembly had forty-three members, and met from October to December. The Council consisted of twelve members. The Council, Assembly, and Governor made up the legislature in Jamaica (Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica 1770-1820* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 9). In 1807, there were about 30,000 whites in Jamaica (109). The Jamaican economy depended on the plantation system, which provided goods for trade. Although sugar dominated the trade, along with its subsidiaries molasses and rum, coffee and pimento were also cash crops, albeit less profitable. Merchants, doctors, craftsmen, shipwrights, lawyers, agents, shopkeepers, and the plantations owners made up this colonial scene that the Nugents joined.

[19] Thomas Wallen, President of the Council, encouraged Nugent to "patronize a decayed milliner of bad character. Although it was an unpleasant business, and I got rid of it civilly, but decidedly" (48).

[20] Ibid., 48.

reputation. If one chose clothing from a garment made from a disreputable individual, the opprobrium might extend then to the wearers themselves.

Nugent soon learned that the local women and the wives of the officers were clamoring for her attention and spreading rumors about the companions she most favored. Her maid informed her of the talk she generated. Nugent wrote that she heard "a great deal of gossip from some of our staff about favouratism; Mrs. Pye &c are spoken of as in my confidence, and likely to guide me in my conduct towards others.[21] What ninnies! But to avoid cabals, I determine not to go to Port Royal on Monday, and so I shall not have the lady in my train, and shall prevent at least some remarks."[22] She thought their manners childish, referring to them as "ninnies," but adjusted her own behavior to avoid unwanted attention. Nugent scoffed at the idea that these women could guide her in her conduct, when she believed it was her duty to guide the local inhabitants to her own European standard of etiquette. She vowed to separate herself from the '"*white ladies*' disputes and little gossip. Keep clear of it as well as I can."[23] In this way she removed herself from the local petty issues. She did not want to be perceived as part of the creole society, and she remained aloof to retain her status as a British lady who would not become involved in any scandal or exhibit behavior that could be perceived as meriting local gossip.

Nonetheless Nugent sought to befriend the local population in Jamaica initially by setting herself up as a sort of salonnière. As first lady of Jamaica she attempted to refine society in this provincial landscape. She invited many women over: "Soon after, the ladies began to arrive…Find a sad want of local matter, or, indeed, any subject for conversation with them…I

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[21] Mrs. Pye was the wife of the Kingston-based Major of Brigade, Captain Hampden Pye, 6th West India Regiment.
[22] Ibid., 42.
[23] Ibid., 253.

mean in the future not to attempt anything like a convesazione, but to have Friday dances."[24] Although she tried to act the part of salonnière, she found that she did not have much in common intellectually with the local women. Dancing was something that brought the community together that Nugent also enjoyed herself, so she planned more balls than intellectual gatherings for the future. Although the local women seemed to possess the traits noted by travel authors, Nugent sought to keep herself detached and active. Through her machinations, Nugent could improve the white women through activities that did not involve too much mental stimulation.

When evening dances were not an option for Nugent's interaction with the local women, she was still determined to make the most of her time with visitors. During afternoon call Nugent put her guests to work: "a part of ladies with me at the Penn, and never was there any thing so completely stupid. All I could get out of them was 'Yes ma'am- no ma'am,' with now and then a simper or a giggle. At last, I set them to work stringing beads, which is now one of my occupations; and was heartily glad when their carriages came at 2 o'clock."[25] Uninspired by their capacity for conversation in Jamaica, Nugent resorted to a less mentally stimulating endeavor by instructing them in the handicraft of stringing beads. On another occasion, Nugent and the local women made shoes together. Attempting to fill her time with useful employment, Nugent taught "some of the ladies to make shoes, in the style of Vanderville, and am very busy at the pattern pair."[26] She could not avoid their company completely and had to endure those occasions through creating trinkets and useful material goods in order to pass the time.

Part of her expected duties as the first lady of Jamaica was to send and receive gifts amongst the local women. With the hazards of transit due to wartime conditions and seasonal weather interruptions, material goods were often unavailable for purchase in shops in Kingston

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[24] Ibid., 21.
[25] Ibid., 76.
[26] Ibid., 140. "Vanderville" shoes are not referenced in other sources.

and other urban locations. On one such occasion, Nugent assisted a woman on her wedding day. Greeting the bride, Nugent encountered "A sad scene, the bride was shut up, and in tears, not having been able to get any white satin ribbon from Kingston…but fortunately, I had a whole piece of white satin ribbon, for which I sent to my room immediately."[27] Thus, Nugent was able to perform her duty as fashion benefactress in Jamaica and felt pleased with herself for rescuing the bride from a ribbonless wedding day. Unfortunately, the woman presumed too much and "made her appearance, all over bows of white satin, having cut up the whole piece of ribbon to ornament herself; which was rather an annoyance to me, as I could not replace it, without sending to England."[28] The ribbon, lent in a moment of benevolence, was not supposed to have been a gift. However, once the creole woman carved this scarce commodity to suit her own needs without consulting Nugent, the ribbon was rendered useless to her as its original owner. Still, she was obliged to retain her gracious demeanor through her irritation. Although the bride had quite possibly committed a breach of conduct, as the patroness of the wedding day, Nugent could only bask in the thanks of the woman and not openly mourn the loss of her scarce accessory. Regarding gift giving in Jamaica, Nugent determined that "these presents are, I find, rather a heavy tax; for all my prettiest things go that way."[29] Nonetheless, Nugent felt it her duty to bestow gifts upon the white ladies of society in Jamaica.

As the first hostess in Jamaica, Nugent felt compelled not only to bestow gifts upon the local Jamaican inhabitants, but also to accommodate visitors to the island. During the rebellion on the neighboring island of Saint Domingue, Nugent entertained the émigrés from the war-torn French colony with a dance in Spanish Town. In October 1803, Nugent asked for a "French

[27] Ibid., 265. The bride was a Mrs. Chapman, a Kingston widow who was marrying Mr. Cully, Adjutant of the 85th.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., 206.

country dance" for a "Madame Fressinet," but soon regretted her invitation. Fressinet's "exhibition was so extraordinary, that I almost repented my civility; for her clothes were very thin and she kicked about, and looked as if she had no covering at all. She is very pretty, though the least creature I ever saw; and I cannot help pitying her, for the disastrous scenes she has gone through though she talks of all the St. Domingo horrors with astonishing *sang froid*."[30] Although she was far from the more civilized halls in England, Nugent still expected that the same decorum be present in the gatherings over which she presided. The lapse in modesty shocked the reserved Nugent, who nevertheless somewhat excused the guest's behavior after listening to the sordid tales from the neighboring locale.

While her husband conducted his tours of the island, Nugent often accompanied him. Johnson, Nugent's maid who happened to be hearing impaired, travelled with her on these progressions through the tropical island. However agreeable Johnson was as a companion and maid, Nugent found her lack of hearing both amusing and irritating. Nugent related one incident in March 1802, "My favourite book just now is Dodd's Reflections upon Death. On asking Johnson (who is deaf), for it, she said "Pink or blue to-day, ma'am," thinking of my shoes, as always being the colour of my dress."[31] Although Johnson could not hear Nugent's request, she anticipated the fashionable choices of her employer, and knew of her conscious decisions to match her shoes with her attire. Nugent desired not only to be well read, but well dressed in her island home.

On these expeditions, Nugent often found herself one of the few white women outside the more urban locations in Jamaica. Nugent remarked at one point that Johnson was the only other

[30] Ibid., 234.
[31] Ibid., 89

white woman she had seen for a period on her journey throughout Jamaica.[32] The lack of white ladies in rural Jamaica left Nugent to socialize with women of mixed race. Nugent commented not only on her and the local white women's attire in plantation Jamaica, but also on that of the mulatto women as well.[33] These young women who Nugent encountered had purchasing power to buy fashionable attire and enjoyed both buying and displaying these goods.[34] According to Nugent, during her drive one morning, she "met several of the unfortunate half-black progeny of some of our staff; all fine muslin, lace, &c. with wreaths of flowers in their hats. What ruin for these worse than thoughtless young men!"[35] However, Nugent received many mulatto women, who were often the offspring of high-ranking officials, and did not comment on these women more negatively than she did on the white creole women who inhabited the island. Although Nugent mentioned the mulatto women's fine ensembles, she did refer to them as "unfortunate" and most likely agreed with travel authors about the morally degrading nature of the relationships that resulted in these mixed-raced women and, in turn, their relationships with the white men in Jamaica. Many white women, such as the Brodbelts, preferred to procure their clothing items directly from England, possibly to avoid donning the same outfit as the women mentioned by Nugent. Even with money and a desire to dress lavishly, local women still could not attain the same level of fashionable success as women like Nugent who would always view them as beneath her.

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[32] Ibid., 97. Nugent often felt sorry for Johnson, who had no associates in Jamaica. Other women had black attendants, whereas Nugent's maid was white (104).

[33] For he fashion choices of mulatto, free black, and African populations, see Stephen O. Buckridge, *The Language of Dress Resistance and Accommodation in Jamaica, 1760-1890* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2004); Erin Mackie, "Cultural Cross-Dressing: The Color Case of the Caribbean Creole," in *The Clothes That Wear Us: Essays on Dressing and Transgressing in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, edited by Jessica Munns and Penny Richards (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1999); Douglas F. Mann, "Becoming Creole Material Life and Society in Eighteenth-Century Kingston, Jamaica," Ph.D. Diss., University of Georgia, 2005.

[34] See also Lucille Mathurin Mair, *A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica: 1655-1844* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press: Centre for Gender and Development Studies, 2006), particularly Chapter 8: "The Mulatto Woman in Jamaican Slave Society."

[35] Nugent, 274. Nugent does not give details on the names of these particular acquaintances or which members of the Nugent's staff fathered them.

Regarding Nugent's encounters with the largest population in eighteenth-century Jamaica, she reacted like many of the other European women in the West Indies. Although she was not completely unmoved by the plight of the enslaved African population, still she believed the stories of abuse and poor conditions "very greatly exaggerated."[36] She mostly mentioned amusing occurrences with the individuals in her service. On her wedding anniversary, she gave each of the black domestics "a dollar for a Wedding present. – Their wish was, that General N. and I might live happy together, till our hair was as white as their gowns. They don't know what snow is, or I suppose they would have said snow, rather than gowns; but their muslin is very clean and white."[37] Although their muslin was "clean and white" she felt bemused by their lack of exposure to varying climates. She regarded this group as inferior and did not extend the same sentimental language to their plight as she did to her own sufferings from heat, illness, and exhaustion in this tropical location.

Due to the number of absentee planters, Nugent often found herself the only woman present for dinner parties in the rural estates. She delighted in these occasions for "the attention that is paid me, and the care that is taken of me; all that I say and do is perfection, for I am the only woman."[38] At the house of the prominent Simon Taylor, her unique status allowed her special access to her host.[39] Taylor was one of the richest planters in the West Indies, and chose to manage his estates himself, unlike many of the West Indian absentee plantation owners. Nugent did not find all men in Jamaica as pleasant as Taylor, as she suggested when writing about an encounter with Lord Balcarres, the former Governor of Jamaica. Nugent expressed a

[36] Ibid., 117.
[37] Ibid., 54
[38] Ibid., 86.
[39] Nugent, 88. Simon Taylor was the son of a rich creole woman, and his father profited from the marriage, even changing his last name to hers, showing her family's status and position in the West Indies. See Richard B. Sheridan, "Simon Taylor, Sugar Tycoon of Jamaica, 1740-1813," *Agricultural History* 45 (1971): 285-96.

desire that he "would wash his hands, and use a nail-brush, for the back edges of his nails really make me sick."[40] For the most part, however, Nugent enjoyed the company of the men in Jamaica, and found their society more pleasing than that of the white women with whom she came into contact. Nugent believed that the women in Jamaica inferior to her both intellectually and socially, and enjoyed when she was the only woman present and could entertain and astonish the local men. She expressed concern for their lack of health, for in Jamaica "Women rarely lose their health, but men rarely keep theirs."[41] Nugent believed that the climate was particularly damaging to the health of the creoles in the West Indies.

The climate affected Nugent almost immediately upon her arrival to Jamaica and she attributed her lethargic behavior to the sultry weather. The heat and humidity, combined with the native species of the West Indies such as the mosquitoes and the scorpions, distressed Nugent, who remarked, "here I must mention, among the agremans of this climate, the innumerable musquitos, that have almost eaten us up, and certainly spoilt our beauty."[42] While the mosquitoes were merely bothersome, the scorpions were particularly terrifying. Nugent recounted an event at a dinner party that left her in a panic. "A scorpion crept from under the flap of the table, up one of the Miss Stewart's sleeve, and stung her severely. It was really frightful to see the reptile under the thin muslin sleeve, striking with all its force, and the poor girl in agony."[43] The muslin material added to the frightful experience for Nugent, as she could witness the insect crawling under the thin fabric. Although the light cotton material was fashionable, it proved to be transparent enough to give Nugent quite an encounter with nature. Furthermore, this incident

[40] Ibid., 18.

[41] Ibid., 81. See Chapter 1 for the eating and drinking habits of the creoles. Nugent believed that their overindulgence, particularly the creole men's drinking habits, rendered their lives shorter than the women, who practiced more temperate lifestyles concerning fortified beverages.

[42] Ibid., 32.

[43] Ibid., 259.

demonstrates that although the fabric and cut of the dress might have been similar to one worn in England, the tropical landscape rendered the experience of wearing of the gown quite different than that in the metropole.

The wildlife in this sugar plantation island rendered the everyday experience quite unlike that in the metropole. The Nugents encountered nature in this exotic tropical locale even more closely on another occasion. On a *tête-à-tête* walk from their country farm estate, they espied some berries in a bush that looked like some beads from their beloved metropolitan home. Nugent recalled, "In the hedges we saw clusters of the red (Liquorice) beads, sold in the jewellers' shops in England. They grow on a sort of vine, and are in pods like peas, and spread over the trees in great clusters, looking beautiful."[44] As a romantic gesture, General Nugent "plucked them as we passed through the lanes, and filled his pockets with them; but when we came home, he was covered with black ants, and really tortured with them, and obliged to change everything before breakfast." What appeared to be an aesthetically pleasing reminder of home instead turned into an unfortunate confrontation with the wildlife of Jamaica.

Nugent's trips around the island as part of her grand tours also proved that her fashion choices could be dangerous. Her sartorial decisions led to some fantastical encounters with the natural beauty and danger of this island. One such unfortunate encounter occurred with the tropical hazards of Jamaica. In July 1802, after her carriage nearly capsized in a river, Nugent arrived safely at her destination. Faint with shock and "stiff and heavy with the weight of water about me, my shoes even being full, that I was obliged to be lifted out of the carriage." Consternation filled the "ladies of the house" when they removed her clothing, and they immediately feared the worst upon seeing her skin, which appeared to be covered with bruises. Their fears proved to be unfounded as they realized that the "green and yellow stripes on my skin

[44] Ibid., 87.

proceeded only from the dye of the umbrella having run in streams down my back."[45] After a bath of rum and a meal of warm soup, Nugent felt restored to complete health. The commotion and fear brought about by the stains on her skin show the diverging possibilities present in this tropical landscape. Material objects played a large role in her crafting an identity as the leading

Figure 7.4: "Women's Parasol," Silk knit with glass and steel beads, wood, bone, and metal, c.1805, Los Angeles County Museum of Art. M.67.8.123.

lady in Jamaica, but her experience donning these items did not always live up to her expectations.

Although Nugent enjoyed fashionable goods even to the point of personal hazard in her island home, she felt the most satisfaction from receiving items from England that would ensure her place as the leader of fashion in her new home. Not the stereotypical ravenous consumer depicted in novels, Nugent appreciated fashion most when it came from a familial or political connection. These allowed her to remain linked to the metropole, and maintain important

[45] For a contemporary example of a green parasol from around 1805, see Figure 7.4.

familial network. Her husband's relatives, the Buckinghams and Temples from Stowe, sent letters to the Nugents and fashionable gifts that kept Nugent abreast of the trends in the metropole.[46] Nugent found it prudent to plan her attire carefully, as she found out from a relation of hers on the island "very amusing accounts, of remarks made upon General N. and myself, and find that every word, look, and action, and article of dress, is canvassed; but what does it signify?"[47] Although she downplayed the gossip of the local inhabitants, Nugent carefully prepared her outfits. This would ensure success and local notoriety due to the occasionally extravagant ensembles she wore to the local assemblies.

Shortly after her arrival, she was determined to awe the crowd at her one of the first gatherings given by the Council. At this assembly Nugent dressed "in great spirits for the grand ball, given me to-night by the Council, &c."[48] Nugent reflected that she had "put on my smartest dress, with a gold tiara, and white feathers, and made myself look as magnificent as I could."[49] Attiring herself in stylish ensembles helped Nugent display herself as the first lady of Jamaica and as a member of the fashionable elite of England. Her ensemble, though, was not the only extravagant sight at the ball. Members of the Council and Assembly, as well as some of the military, greeted Nugent and led her in to the House of Records. They conducted her to "a sort of throne, covered with pink silk and draperies festooned with flowers. The decorations of the room were beautiful." Not only were the ornamentations of the room tremendous, but the meal impressed even this discriminating lady of style. "The supper was superb: one dish I shall never forget," Nugent effused. "It was a roasted peacock, placed before me, with all the feathers of the tail stuck in, and spread so naturally, that I expected every minute to see him strut out of the dish."

[46] See n6.
[47] Ibid., 236.
[48] Ibid., 57
[49] Ibid.

After dancing “almost to death, to please both civil and military, army and navy,” she left around one o’clock in the morning.[50] The glamorous and abundant embellishments as well as the exotic meal demonstrated to Nugent the importance of impressing the local residents with new and stylish modes to retain her place as the leader of fashionable choices.

Nugent understood the significance of fashionable choices not only for her, but for her growing family as well. After the birth of her first son, George, in October 1802, Nugent was determined to outfit him in the best materials available. When he reached his first month, Nugent sent him to meet his father attired in “A white satin hat for him to-day…dressed very smart.”[51] The material objects surrounding this young offspring of the empire were no less than extravagant. “A new carpet for dear baby,” Nugent recorded, “a beautiful tiger skin, on which he lies in the veranda, and enjoys the fresh air, early in the morning.”[52] Young George Nugent lounged on an exotic floor covering, from another colonial location. Perhaps this item was a foreshadowing of the Nugents’ future, since they would later travel to India following their tenure in Jamaica. This object from a distant and foreign land found its way to another sultry imperial locale. The layered imperial experience was materialized in this infant’s floorcovering that was possibly singular in the Jamaican sugar island.

As the child grew, Nugent carefully watched his progression through both life and clothing. With the birth of Louisa a year after George in September 1803, Nugent had two children to care and dress. When her firstborn turned two, Nugent dressed “Little G… in boy’s clothes, for the first time, and little L. had a pair of shoes for the first time also.”[53] Clothing choices marked these small milestones in life and only grew in importance. When “Little G.”

[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., 169.
[52] Ibid., 171.
[53] Ibid., 274.

was three, Nugent paraded her young son in the Jamaican capital of Spanish Town, attired "in an Aide-de-camp's uniform; scarlet, with blue facings and gold embroidery, a staff hat and feather, and he really looked lovely; in my eyes at least."[54] Dressing the young Nugent heir in a military style allowed her to identify him with his father's career as a soldier and possibly tell of his own future success. Additionally, presenting this young imperial child garbed as a soldier visually depicted the future of the British Empire itself. The Nugents understood their place and position in this colonial world and were determined to present a strong, healthy, and correctly attired family to the local populace.

Nugent's consumption of material objects in Jamaica extended beyond fashionable attire and decorative objects. To commemorate their time in this island home, Nugent commissioned a portrait of her growing family in a fashion similar to what was available in England. When her husband's business called him away from their country home, Nugent planned to surprise him with visual depictions of his wife and heir. In her letter to her absent husband she told "dear N. all my plans for our meeting," but recorded in her journal that she did not "speak of the portraits, as I hope to surprise him agreeably, for dear Georgie is better represented than I expected. I am an old sharp-nosed fright. – The day as usual; sitting for my picture and talking, &c. with the young Aides-de-camp."[55] Later that summer she "[p]ersuaded General N. to sit to Morelle for his portrait, though more out of charity than any thing else."[56] These portraits would serve as a reminder of their young son's early years and provide a remembrance of his early home later in life, when their tropical abode would be only a faint memory.

Nugent was not only interested in displaying her growing family, but also in retaining connections with her relatives back in England. Thanks to her husband's family members like

[54] Ibid., 292.
[55] Ibid., 196-7.
[56] Ibid., 221.

Lady Buckingham, Nugent remained acquainted with the latest trends from the capital and received many items from her relations. For instance, "a new Neapolitan mantle" arrived in Jamaica for the Governor's wife.[57] On another occasion she received "delightful letters, and several nice presents, from dear Lady Buckingham and dear Lady Temple."[58] Nugent relished the reports from her loved ones in England and felt herself in a state of agitation until more news arrived. Constantly concerned about the state of health in her own small family in Jamaica, she also worried about her beloved friends separated by the Atlantic. "My English letters always put me in a state of happy fuss for a day or two after their arrival," declared Nugent, who happily maintained her correspondence and wrote faithfully of her own affairs in Jamaica.[59]

These presents from her familial connections included both long letters of gossip and family news as well as fashionable garments and accessories. Additionally, her relations sent "beautiful millinery" as well as accouterments.[60] These would certainly have been distinctive pieces that would set her apart from the local ladies of style. Writing to Lady Temple in 1802, Nugent said: "How good you have been to me…by sending me such pretty things – they are really beautiful."[61] She greatly appreciated the "little hat…I cannot tell you how much it was admired."[62] Nugent commented that such fashionable items were "very rare" in Jamaica, and she found it "impossible to get the commonest article of dress without paying immensely dear for it & then it is always of the worst quality – dirty, faded old things…I believe they all look so dingy

[57] Ibid., 133.
[58] Ibid., 137.
[59] Ibid., 64.
[60] Ibid., 79.
[61] Maria Nugent to Lady Temple, 14 February 1802, STG Box 8, Grenville Correspondence, Stowe Collection, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
[62] Ibid.

& tumbled – so you will easily conceive how valuable your present & Lord Buckingham's were to me."[63] She also thanked Lady Temple for placing orders for her in stores in England.

Instead of relying on the goods available in the stores in Kingston, Nugent received her materials directly from England, thus ensuring both uniqueness and authenticity. In April 1804, while at the country estate, Nugent "received two boxes –one full of straw bonnets from dear kind Lady Buckingham, and the other, lace veils, &c. from dear, dear Lady Temple."[64] These gifts helped Nugent remain at the forefront of fashion from England and retain her status as the leader in Jamaica. Additionally, they helped solidify her friendship with her relatives back in England. The ladies in Nugent's family were not the only ones to remember her by sending gifts. Nugent affirmed after receiving a packet in February 1805, "I got delightful letters from all my family and friends, and dear Lord Buckingham has sent me a most beautiful lace cloak."[65] Nugent's family back in England understood the importance of such gifts for Nugent, who was far from her loved ones on the periphery of the empire. Always looking forward to returning to England to their home and connections, Nugent maintained her bonds with her homeland through this transatlantic exchange. Through receiving letters and items, these bonds of family and friendship would remain, while also assisting Nugent in her role as the first lady as well.

Nugent relished in the gifts received from England from her relatives at Stowe, but the most unusual presents came from an unlikely source. Beginning in 1802, Britain and France signed the Peace of Amiens. This treaty heralded a cease-fire between Britain and Revolutionary France, which lasted fourteen months, in between the years of 1802 and 1804.[66] During this brief

[63] Ibid.
[64] Nugent, 257.
[65] Ibid., 280.
[66] The Treaty of Amiens was an "experimental" peace between Britain and France. The Peace of Amiens was the only time that Britain and France were not at war from 1793 to 1815. Both sides had different goals, and this uneasy truce was short-lived. Napoleon Bonaparte was able to use this time to consolidate his power. See John D. Grainger, *The Amiens Truce: Britain and Bonaparte, 1801-1803* (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2004).

respite of constant fighting between these two countries, an unlikely acquaintance emerged between Pauline Bonaparte Leclerc and Maria Nugent. Like the objects received from the Buckinghams and Temples, Nugent would use these material goods received as gifts from Leclerc to display her connection to the metropolitan world and demonstrate her cosmopolitan sagacity. Additionally, the exchange of gifts between these two colonial elites displayed a method by which these women forged political and social connections.

As with Nugent, little is known concerning the childhood of Pauline Bonaparte, but at seventeen she married army officer Charles Leclerc. Her brother Napoleon approved this match, and soon Pauline moved to Paris, the French capital of both fashion and politics. In the metropolitan center, Pauline delighted in the social gatherings, and donned the latest fashions to great acclaim.[67] Following the Battle of the Pyramids in July 1798, Pauline celebrated her brother's growing fame by appearing at a ball given by her longtime acquaintance Madame Permon attired as a Bacchante. According to memoirist Laure Junot, Duchess of Abrantès, her ensemble included a head-dress which "consisted of *bandelettes* of a very soft fine kind of fur, of a tiger pattern. These *bandelettes* were surmounted by bunches of grapes in gold…Her robe of exquisitely fine India muslin had a deep bordering of gold; the pattern was of grapes and vine-leaves. With this she wore a tunic of purest Greek form, with a bordering similar to her dress, which displayed her fine figure to admirable advantage."[68] Junot found it "impossible to describe the effect her appearance produced."[69] Like Nugent, Pauline enjoyed her success as a leader of

[67] Flora Fraser, Pauline Bonaparte: *Venus of Empire* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009). For an earlier work on Pauline Bonaparte's life, see W.N.C. Carolton, *Pauline: Favourite Sister of Napoleon* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1931). See also, Michael Broers, "Napoleon's Women: Skirts around a Throne," *The Historian* 90 (2006): 8-16.

[68] Laure Junot Abrantès, and Olivier Bernier, *At the Court of Napoleon: Memoirs of the Duchesse D'Abrantès* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), 60.

[69] Junot, 60.

fashion and social life; however, her brother Napoleon was making plans that would abruptly affect her life.

Napoleon planned a large scale mission to the rebellious West Indian colony of Saint Domingue. He desired to reassert French authority in 1802 and chose his brother-in-law, General Leclerc, to lead the invasion. Pauline, and her young son Dermide, as a good republican family, accompanied Leclerc to the Caribbean. Although in public Pauline "professed her delight" to join her husband, in private she was less than eager to venture to the island plagued by disease and slave rebellions. According to Junot, Pauline declared, "How can my brother be so hard-hearted, so wicked, as to send me into exile amongst savages and serpents!"[70] Junot encouraged her "as one would a child, by talking of its playthings or new shoes."[71] She informed Pauline that on the island, she would be queen, and that slaves would attend to her every need. Finally, Junot remarked how striking Pauline would appear attired in the "Creole costume."[72] Pauline purportedly responded: 'You really think, Laurette…that I shall look pretty, prettier than usual, in a Creole turban, a short waist, and a petticoat of striped muslin?'"[73] She then rang for her maid to bring bandanas, and began to plan for the balls and parties of pleasure she would host in St. Domingue. Changing the discussion to fashion marked a critical shift in Pauline's attitude towards the journey to the West Indies.

Pauline left in December 1801, assisted by her brother who furnished her for the voyage "with every appurtenance of luxury, elegance, and utility, that the fair voyager might have no desire ungratified."[74] While she was in Saint Domingue, stories of Pauline's vices spread. Rumors abounded of lesbian affairs, orgies with multiple French officers, and "island fever"

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[70] Ibid., 217.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid., 218.
[74] Ibid., 224.

encounters with former slaves.[75] However, in a letter from July 1802, Napoleon praised his sister for her courage in the distress of the campaign. He then turned to fashion: "They are making you the outfits, which the captain of the *Sirene* will bring out to you. I love you very much. Make sure all the world is pleased with you, and be worthy of your position."[76] Part of her "position" as both sister to the First Consul, and wife of the spearhead of the French campaign in Saint Domingue, was to promote peaceful relations with neighboring leaders. As a cosmopolitan lady of fashion who now inhabited a new station in the colonial world, Pauline sent stylish commodities from Paris to Nugent in the neighboring colony of Jamaica in hopes of fostering good relations between these privileged colonial women. Neither of the two ladies were from the traditional nobility of Europe, yet in the West Indies they were part of the exclusive rank. These colonial women used the display of fashionable clothes to demonstrate their status and maintain their elevated position for both the local white and mixed-race population.

Nugent promoted her connections to the larger empire and metropole through fashionable attire sent to her by Leclerc from Saint Domingue. Colonial individuals like Nugent and Leclerc used their stylish commodities to promote not only their national but social connections in the West Indies as well. These women displayed their cultural acumen by receiving and displaying clothing and merchandise received directly from their families and acquaintances in Europe. Thus, as Jennifer Jones argues, "fashion was an important part of elite sociability."[77] Colonial exchanges between Nugent and Leclerc assisted in fostering relations that sidestepped traditional male politics and created mutual obligations between these elite women.

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[75] Fraser, 67.

[76] Ibid., 68.

[77] Jennifer M. Jones, "Selling La Mode," in *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion, and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), 179.

In the summer of 1802, Nugent first wrote of the gifts she had received from Leclerc. At an evening party, she attired herself in a Parisian style that both demonstrated her connection to the larger metropolitan world and agreed with her fashion tastes. "I must mention," Nugent recorded, "that I wore a pink and silver dress this evening, given me by Madame Le Clerc, and which was the admiration of the whole room."[78] Although far from the heart of fashion in cities like London and Paris, Nugent's outfit matched the description of the styles from *The Lady's Magazine,* which advised that "for full-dress" ladies should wear a white petticoat with a "short pink robe of crape, spangled with silver, sloped off the sides, and descending almost in a peak behind, half way down the petticoat. The sleeves the same as the petticoat, and extremely short,

Figure 7.5: *The Lady's Magazine,* Volume 33, March 1802, 36.
http://books.google.com/books?id=mkhGAAAAcAAJ&dq=the%20lady%27s%20magazine&pg=PA436
IA2&ci=88%2C121%2C858%2C1408&source=bookclip#v=onepage&q&f=false

[78] Nugent, 142.

with a twisted border of bangles."[79] This description from a popular publication indicates that, however distant Nugent was from the metropolitan center, she had not diverged from societal stylish modes. Thanks to her correspondence with Leclerc, Nugent possessed a connection to goods that would not yet have been available in this peripheral location.

Later in the summer of 1802, Nugent received a second cargo of Parisian fashions from Leclerc to further solidify their bond of friendship.[80] Nugent provided lavish depictions of many of the ensembles sent by Leclerc, and these garments not only attired Nugent but also Nugent's then infant son "Georgy." At the christening of her firstborn child, Nugent recorded in early November 1802 that he "looked beautiful in his christening dress, and was wrapped, by way of mantle, in a beautiful muslin handerkerchief, embroidered in gold, sent to me by Madame Le Clerc."[81] Leclerc's gifts assisted Nugent in dressing both herself and her young son for special

Figure 7.6: *The Lady's Magazine,* Volume 33, March 1802, 154. http://books.google.com/books?id=mkhGAAAAcAAJ&dq=the%20lady%27s%20magazine&pg=PA436-IA2&ci=88%2C121%2C858%2C1408&source=bookclip#v=onepage&q&f=false.

[79] *The Lady's Magazine*, Volume 33, March 1802, 156. For the engraving of the "Paris Dress" from the same issue, see Figure. 7.5.
[80] Nugent, 149.
[81] Ibid., 167.

occasions. Few Jamaicans had connections with Parisian elites to procure for them such extravagant accessories, thus marking Nugent as an individual with powerful social relationships.

Nugent saved the most extravagant ensemble for an assembly when she could display it to the best effect. In a ball at King's House on November 30, 1802, Nugent donned this astonishing ensemble sent by Leclerc. Recording this outfit "[f]or the benefit of posterity," she recalled attiring herself in "a crape dress, embroidered in silver spangles, also sent me by Madame Le Clerc, but much richer than that which I wore at the last ball."[82] This dress had no sleeves, fitting for the Consulate style, "but a broad silver spangled border to the shoulder straps."[83] According to Nugent, the cut of the dress was "like a child's frock, tying behind, and the skirt round, with not much train." The accessories for the garment were no less excessive: "a turban of spangled crape, like the dress, looped with pearls, and a paradise feather; altogether looking like a *Sultana*."[84] Additionally, Nugent adorned herself with a "diamond bandeau, cross… and a pearl necklace and bracelets, with diamond clasps."[85] The outfit had both exotic and classical elements, popularized by Consulate fashionable ladies like Josephine Bonaparte, and Leclerc herself.[86] Although such accouterments might have seemed somewhat risqué in

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[82] Ibid., 174.

[83] Ibid., 174. See also E. Claire Cage, "The Sartorial Self: Neoclassical Fashion and Gender Identity in France, 1797-1804" *Eighteenth-Century Studies Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42 (2008): 193-215; Betty-Bright P. Low, "Of Muslins and Merveilleuses: Excerpts from the Letters of Josephine du Pont and Margaret Manigault," *Wintherthur Portfolio* 9 (1974): 29–75; Katell le Bourhis, *The Age of Napoleon: Costume from Revolution to Empire 1789–1815* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989); R. Turner Wilcox, "The French Consulate and First Empire, 1799-1815," in *The Mode in Costume: A Historical Survey with 202 Plates* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2008): 236-246.

[84] Nugent, 174. The January 1802 issue of the *Lady's Magazine* reported that "the full-dress head-dresses have a strongly-marked Asiatic character. They are complete turbans placed far back upon the head…Pearl cords pass over some of them. Silver *chefs* shine upon others. A great number of them are made of shawls embroidered in silver or gold" (*The Lady's Magazine,* Volume 33, March 1802, 37). For the fashion plate illustrating this description, see Figure 7.6.

[85] Ibid, 174.

[86] Madeleine Dobie argues that women such as the creole woman Rose de Beauharnais, the future Josephine Bonaparte, accessorized simple muslins with "bold printed pieces such as Indian cashmere stoles, and turban-style head coverings of wrapped Oriental fabric" (119). For, during the late eighteenth century when "the colonies had emerged from obscurity to become the focus of interest and debate, a number of Creole women, including Rose de Beauharnais…established themselves on the Paris scene as celebrated beauties and leaders of fashion" (120). See

British settings, Nugent's attire established her as a leading lady of fashion in the colonial world.[87] Nugent clearly appreciated these outfits which strengthened her connections with Leclerc; however, she was not without astute self reflection on the luxuriousness of the garments: "This dress," Nugent remarked, "the admiration of all the world over, will perhaps, fifty years hence, be laughed at and considered as ridiculous as our grandmothers' hoops and tissues appear to us now."[88] Nugent recorded her triumphantly fashionable attire so that she could remember the details and style of her ensemble, as well as the patroness of her great success.

The exchange of goods assisted the formation of alliances between these two women in the long eighteenth century. Gift exchanges helped solidify both alliances and social status through mutual interchanges. In order to fully participate in this interaction, Nugent needed to return the gesture, for, as social theorist Barry Schwartz notes, "[g]ift exchange is governed by the norm of reciprocity."[89] Nugent reciprocated with English gifts to demonstrate her gratitude and recompense the obligation incurred from Leclerc. Custom dictated that social relationships be maintained through gift giving, and Nugent reported that she had "had a present, of English cut-glass and trinkets, made up for Madame Le Clerc."[90] Since the young wife of General Leclerc resided in the midst of the battle-ravaged Saint Domingue, the English "trinkets" likely provided little comfort to Leclerc. Additionally, Nugent sent a gift to the son of Pauline and

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Madeleine Dobie, *Trading Places: Colonization and Slavery in Eighteenth-Century French Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

[87] Philippe R. Girard, *The Slaves Who Defeated Napoleon: Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian War of Independence, 1801-1804* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011), 111-112.

[88] Nugent, 174.

[89] Barry Schwartz, "The social psychology of the *gift,*" in *The Gift,* 80. See also Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Principle of Reciprocity," in *The Gift: An Interdisciplinary Perspective,* ed. Aafke E. Komter (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), 72. For gift exchanges see Linda Zionkowski, and Cynthia Klekar, *The Culture of the Gift in Eighteenth-Century England* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Alan D. Schrift, *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Harry Liebersohn, *The Return of the Gift: European History of a Global Idea* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

[90] Nugent, 156.

General Leclerc. Dermide Leclerc was only four years old and received from the leaders of Jamaica a toy "hobby-horse, with silver appointments."[91] Through this gift for the young heir of the Leclerc family, Nugent attempted to maintain relations with the French leaders.

Although Nugent accepted gifts from Leclerc with much alacrity, her husband could not do the same. General Leclerc sent a case of claret to General Nugent in September 1802, and Nugent ordered it returned.[92] The French officer did not appreciate the rebuff and returned with what Lady Nugent described as "a remonstrance from the French officers, about the claret, sent as a present, *they said*, from General Le Clerc; still cooly refused, and for particular reasons, but too long to state to-day."[93] Although Nugent could receive fashionable goods from Leclerc, and vice-versa, interestingly, their husbands could not participate in the same acts of benevolence. Where Nugent could adorn herself in the latest French fashion and display her objects for the island to see, General Nugent, in his more official capacity, could not.[94] For, as Jennifer Jones suggests, "Female bonding through fashion" might have created "a homosocial world for women in which gift-giving and the sharing of clothing sidestepped the commercial economy."[95] This "homosocial world" sidestepped not only the commercial economy, but official political structures as well. Through the sending and receiving of gifts, Leclerc and Nugent fostered goodwill between the two tense nations in a way that their husbands dared not attempt.

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[91] Nugent, 156-157. Nugent referred to young Leclerc as "Astyanax" rather than Dermide in her journal. Verene Shepherd, recent editor of an edition of the *Journal of Lady Nugent* has argued that perhaps this was an inside joke for the Nugents, as Astyanax was the young Trojan prince from the classical Illiad version of the siege of Troy (156).

[92] Nugent, 158.

[93] Nugent, 159.

[94] For women's involvement in eighteenth-century political life and patronage, see Elaine Chalus, '"To serve my friends': Women and Political Patronage in Eighteenth-Century England," in *Women, Privilege, and Power: British Politics, 1750 to the Present*, edited by Amanda Vickery (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2001) and Judith Lewis, "1784 and All That: Aristocratic Women and Electoral Politics," in *Women, Privilege, and Power*.

[95] Jennifer M. Jones, "Epilogue: From Absolutist Gaze to Republican Look," in *Sexing La Mode: Gender, Fashion, and Commercial Culture in Old Regime France* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), 217.

Although these women bonded over their mutual love of fashion, they were not politically or ideologically aligned, and their friendship was not destined to last. General Leclerc succumbed to yellow fever in November 1802, and Pauline and her son immediately returned to Paris from the revolt-plagued Caribbean island. Nugent's journal made no reference to the death of the general or the departure of her fellow colonial society woman. The "Madame Leclerc" who sent such sensational outfits to Nugent disappeared from her journal entirely. It is unknown whether they stayed in contact. The Treaty of Amiens ruptured in May 1803, and the British and French once again returned to war. Pauline's brother crowned himself Emperor Napoleon I, and Pauline herself became a Princess through her second marriage.[96]

While first lady of Jamaica, Nugent used her connection with Leclerc in the West Indies to receive the latest European fashions. Leclerc, as a metropolitan woman in the French colony of Saint Domingue, understood the importance of materials from Europe. Leclerc sent goods to Nugent to help form relationships in a cosmopolitan world, and to forge useful connections during the Peace of Amiens. Nugent used these articles to illustrate her cultivation and to demonstrate her affiliation with the larger social network in the colonies. Nugent valued these items for their distinctive nature to separate her from the neighboring population. She, along with her husband, were the most visible representatives of the British crown in Jamaica. Nugent maintained colonial exclusivity by ensuring that she did not attire herself in what other members of the white creole or mulatto population might purchase locally. Their reliance on these goods to form their identity supports Jones's theory of the importance of fashion in "elite sociability" to

[96] Pauline Bonaparte Leclerc married the Italian prince Camilo Borghese after the death of General Leclerc. She remained an advocate for fashionable attire to her death, even after the fall of her brother. During Napoleon's exile in St. Helena, he inquired after the health of his favorite sister, and when he heard she was still beautiful he replied, "Ah, she has only ever cared for her toilette and for pleasure." (Fraser, 236).

form “a sense of citizenship and public participation.”[97] White colonial women like Nugent and Leclerc consumed fashion to promote both national and social connections in the long eighteenth century.

As seen in her fashion choices, Nugent eschewed the idea of becoming “creolized” in Jamaica and always looked forward to her return to Britain, “every day now, will bring us, Please God we live, nearer to dear England, and own domestic comforts there.”[98] She remained a European “other” and never considered herself to be part of the local society. Her duty as the Governor’s wife was to set the example for fashion and morals. Although participating in creole society, she remained aloof, above the gossip. While in Jamaica, Nugent constantly read and reviewed her French to stay accomplished as a European “lady” and not as a creole West Indian. Therefore when she returned home she would not have become the “creole” caricature as it was noted in literature and satire. While reinforcing the stereotype in her own behavior, she still could not control all the creolization forces present in Jamaica.

In August 1805, Nugent and her two children began their journey back to England. General Nugent’s replacement had not yet arrived to relieve him of his governmental duties. Nevertheless, he wanted his family to return to the safer metropolitan location. Nugent maintained her diary on her voyage home and continued to rely on material objects to act as both remembrance tokens and to bond them with separated individuals. Somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean, Nugent recorded on August 21 that her daily routine included having the children brought to her, then “[t]hey kiss papa’s picture, and pray God to bless him.”[99] Although physically separated from their dear loved one still in Jamaica, they remained close to him through the touching of the picture that held his resemblance. This act became ritualized on the

[97] Jones, “Selling La Mode,” 179.
[98] Nugent, 69.
[99] Nugent, 318.

voyage home and acted as a sentimental object of remembrance of their beloved father and husband. Like the hair rings the Brodbelts possessed, and the hair that the Cowpers requested, these tactile objects went beyond a mere material possession to an item that brought an individual physically close and served as a tender memento of a beloved relative.[100]

When nearing the British Isles, Nugent received a reminder of just how much she had changed in the years from her homeland. Her family found the temperature "very cold to *us Creoles*."[101] Although desiring to separate herself from the creole class while in Jamaica, she could not help noticing how creolization affected her family, particularly in their sensitivity to weather changes. "Louisa did not seem to feel so much as George," remembered Nugent, "who looked very grave at first, and then said his fingers were sore, which was a very natural idea for a child, who had never before known what cold was."[102] When arriving in Weymouth a few days later, Nugent grew alarmed over the appearance of her entourage. Her traveling companions "Colonel Irvine and Dr. McNeil were in old brown or pepper and salt clothes, that they had worn some years before in England."[103] Her own attendants, her "three maids were in their best bonnets, &c. but the shape sadly old fashioned, as we soon found, and all their gowns and trimmings much tarnished, by the climate of the West Indies, and by the sun, air, &c."[104] Nugent's own children wore several outfits at the same time, due to the change in temperature that rendered them cold, and "were covered with beads."[105] Surely the sight of such a group might have given onlookers cause for examination. Nugent herself "forgot the dress prepared for me, and put on a full Lieutenant-General's uniform, that I had used as my dress of ceremony on

[100] See Chapter 3 for the Brodbelt family, and Chapter 4 for the Cowper family.
[101] Ibid., 320.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Nugent, 321.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.

the voyage. It was a scarlet habit, with embroidered fronts, and two large gold epaulettes on my shoulders."[106] Their "extraordinary appearance" might have shocked the onlookers, but their evening arrival helped hide their appearance. Nugent kissed the ground and succumbed to tears as she returned to her beloved home safely, accompanied by her two children.[107] Although she was overjoyed to have made it back after a long voyage, fashion still remained forefront in Nugent's mind. Her concern over their appearance, even after months of sea travel and harsh weather, demonstrates the importance Nugent placed on fashionable attire and stylish modes.

Material objects continued to bond this separated family together until General Nugent could return to England. Nugent and her children resided at Stowe House with the Buckinghams, who presented her with a "bust of my dear Nugent, placed on a little cabinet, close behind the

Figure 7.7: John Downman, "Study for a portrait of Lady Nugent," 1806 Courtesy of the British Museum, London, 1936,1116.29.3.

[106] Ibid. Nugent's military-inspired ensemble agrees with Ellen Kennedy Johnson's study on women's dress in Regency England. Johnson argues that "British women appropriated military themes into their fashions, accessorizing the simple, white muslin under-dress with the accouterments à la militaire, such as grogs, epaulets, braided trims, tassels, and feathers" (Ellen Kennedy Johnson, "Trans-coding Nationalism: Subjectivity and Military Themes in Regency Dress" in *Material Women, 1750-1950: Consuming Desires and Collecting Practices*, edited by Maureen Daly Groggin and Beth Fowkes Tobin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 149). Johnson argues that women's dress was an important arena for displaying patriotism, and Nugent's outfit certainly demonstrates her husband's career and her support of his endeavors, by in sartorial decisions and in accompanying him to Jamaica.

[107] Ibid., 321.

bed. It is an excellent likeness, and invaluable to me, and I kissed her most heartily for her kindness, and the party seemed to share in my pleasure and satisfaction. The rest of the evening as usual, but many jokes, by Lord Temple, on their giving me a husband of marble, &c."[108] This marble bust continued to serve as a surrogate for the absent General, since it later functioned as the model when they created profiles of the family.[109] These objects served as near and tangible reminders of her absent husband, who did not return to England until February 1806.

Returned to the capital of the British Empire, Nugent continued to display herself to the

Figure 7.8: John Downman, *Sir George Nugent and family*, From a painting by John Downman, in Shepherd and Wright, 268.

best advantage. Through fashion and decorative accessories, Nugent once again transformed herself, this time from a leader of fashion in the colonial scene to a young lady of style in the metropolitan capital. When Nugent attended the King's birthday celebrations at St. James's with Lady Temple, they donned matching dresses, which consisted of "lavender-colour satin robes, embroidered most richly in silver vine leaves, and bunches of grapes. Our petticoats white satin,

[108] Ibid., 328.
[109] Ibid., 332.

with lavender crape and satin, rich embroidery, and the draperies looped up with a silver arrow. Head-dress, diamonds and feathers, mixed; the feathers, lavender and white. The Queen remarked our dresses, as we went up together, and said they were the prettiest she had seen."[110] As Nugent succeeded in the realm of taste, General Nugent received a promotion to the rank of baronet in late 1806.[111] Nugent, finally a member of the prestigious group to which her husband's relatives belonged, could now relish in her new position as "Lady Nugent."

Following General Nugent's elevation as a baronet, he contracted a commission to India

Figure 7.9: John. Downman, "Liet. General Sir George Nugent, B.t.," 1818-1824 c., Courtesy of the British Museum, 1920,0420.145.

as commander-in-chief in 1811. Nugent accompanied her husband on their next colonial venture before returning to England and settling in Westhorpe House, Little Marlow, in 1815.[112] Their imperial adventures over, they settled into a more quiet life until her death in 1834. General Nugent, although older than his beloved wife, lived until 1849. Buried in the local cemetery near

[110] Ibid., 338.
[111] See Figure 7.7 for a sketch of Lady Maria Nugent from 1806.
[112] For an image of the Nugent family, see Figure 7.8. For portraits John Downman produced during this period of General and Lady Maria Nugent's life, see Figure 7.9, and 7.10.

Westhorpe House, their service to the British Empire in these various capacities would be their lasting legacy.

Figure 7.10: John Charles Bromley, “Maria Lady Nugent,” 1815-1839 c., Courtesy of the British Museum, 1943,0410.1927.

Although Nugent originated from colonial New Jersey, her position within the British Empire was destined to take her further than most other women during this period. Accompanying her husband to his placements in Ireland, Jamaica, England, and India, Nugent self-fashioned her position not through superior rank, but through her discriminating taste and sound judgment of fashionable choices. The material goods exchanged between Nugent and her connections kept her aware of the mores in the wider metropolitan world. Additionally, these items bonded her to the individuals who sent them. The correspondence and gifts solidified relationships between Nugent and her husband’s family. Since her correspondents were members

of the nobility of England, these connections benefitted her husband's career and assisted in elevating him to the aristocracy as well. Furthermore, she proved an asset to her husband through her assistance as hostess and patroness during his various colonial ventures. Together, they removed the stain of his illegitimacy through their promotion to the nobility of Great Britain.[113] Likewise, her brief friendship with Leclerc fostered friendship between the colonial dominions of Great Britain and France during the Peace of Amiens. Even after Nugent left Jamaica, material goods continued to bond her family together and promote her domestic interests. Through her careful use of fashion and decorative objects, Nugent transformed herself from a mere provincial colonial inhabitant to an accepted member of the titled nobility and leader in the wider British Empire.

[113] George Nugent was one of two natural sons born to Edmund Nugent, son of Robert, the Earl of Nugent.

CONCLUSION

By the mid eighteenth century, Jamaica was the largest producer of sugar in the British Empire. The economy of Jamaica flourished, largely through the extraction of labor from African slaves. The success of the British Empire in the eighteenth century depended on the income derived from the sugar plantations in the West Indies. As fortunes rose and fell in this unstable tropical landscape, many of the inhabitants who had come from England sought to emulate life in the metropole. However, the presence of a large slave population, deadly tropical diseases, and an equatorial climate rendered life in the sugar plantations islands quite unlike that in Great Britain. The inhabitants of this colonial location often derived wealth from their endeavors, but found the social life in the Caribbean lacking. Many planters chose to leave the Caribbean and live as absentee planters in England. Far away from the brutal atmosphere, they hoped to establish themselves as respectable members of British society. Instead of finding acceptance when they arrived back in England, they faced skepticism, initially because of their nontraditional methods of deriving wealth from sugar plantations, and later from abolitionists seeking to end the cruel practices inherent in slavery.

Scholars have tended to follow a similar pattern, ignoring women entirely and characterizing those who lived in eighteenth-century Jamaica as social failures and grasping *noveaux riche*.[1] Recently, historians like Natalie Zacek have called for a more significant examination concerning the lives of white women in the West Indies.[2] Scholars are beginning to realize that the conventional characterization has failed to account fully for the few but poignant

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[1] Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies: 1624- 1713* (Chapel Hill: Published for the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, VA. by the University of North Carolina Press, 1972); Trevor G. Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

[2] Natalie A. Zacek. "Searching for the Invisible Woman: The Evolution of White Women's Experience in Britain's West Indian Colonies," *History Compass* 7 (2009): 329-41.

written records left behind by women who lived on the sugar plantation island during this unsettled period. Although these sources do not give a full picture of life in the Caribbean, they do provide a counterpoint to the notion that the experiences of colonial women can be summed up in a single caricature.

Women who inhabited this imperial landscape faced severe public criticism in the long eighteenth century. Through marriage these white women provided a modicum of respectability to the plantation establishment, yet they inhabited an unenviable position. They were derided for their failure to keep their husbands faithful, and further condemned for their inability to create a stable familial environment. The presence of a sizeable mixed-race population attested to their inability to maintain their wayward husbands in order to preserve the whiteness of the British inhabitants who traveled to the West Indies. Conversely, the men who took advantage of their enslaved women faced some censure in British novels and popular publications, but the creole women came to represent all the sinister effects of the colonial experience. Completely in control over an entire race, and yet powerless in the face of white male authority, they inhabited a position of social purgatory. This power paradox was a vast departure from British societal norms. Furthermore, as the ideal British woman rose higher to the pinnacle of purity and economy, the creole appeared to sink lower.

Travel narratives, satirical prints, novels, and periodicals found fodder for their patrons by portraying white women in the West Indies as lascivious, cruel, and insensible to metropolitan standards of behavior. Although many women who relocated to the Caribbean undoubtedly demonstrated some of the characteristics seen in popular novels like *The History of Sir George Ellison,* and *Jane Eyre*, the writings of women who lived in Jamaica showed a desire to remain connected with Great Britain. The popular portrayals of women in the West Indies indicated that

women were subject to stray from proper standards of behavior soon after their encounter with the tropical environment. Depicted as women prone to unwholesome cravings, especially with regard to the consumption of luxury goods, women were used to characterize the societal ills inherent in this colonial experience. The women in this study do not appear to corroborate the characterization portrayed in fictional accounts.

This examination has centered on women who do not appear to be senseless overconsumers of material goods. As seen in Chapter 3, the Brodbelt women received goods directly from England, which kept them both connected to their loved ones and to British society as well. Although they did love fashion and news of trends, they carefully chose their purchases for the best advantage. Additionally, when Jane Brodbelt finished her education, her "coming of age" included purchases based on her own discernment. Money and permission to buy pearls, music, and fashionable ensembles represented her parents' acknowledgement of her ability to select these items for herself. Choosing tasteful items over quantities of luxurious goods, the Brodbelts do not seem to conform to the stereotypes of insensibility and overconsumption.

Furthermore, we have seen how women like Sarah Dwarris, although facing limited resources, created her own ensembles and reused older garments for periods of mourning and maternity. While cultivating both economy and propriety, the Dwarris family still prized objects sent by their family in England. The careful consumption practiced by the Dwarisses in Jamaica complicates the pattern depicted in the travel narratives. Even when only fragments of letter correspondences are available, like in the King and Titford families, material concerns are evident. The exchange of sentimental letters and items like locks of hair and small portraits helped these separated families bridge the distance between the various members in trying times. Consumption and the exchange of objects remained important, but not all-encompassing, for

these families. Likewise, while part of the loyalist diaspora from colonial America, the Cowper sisters and Ann Appleton Storrow used the exchange of material objects to solidify bonds with their loved ones who remained in the United States of America. They maintained ties with their friends and relatives, and sought to keep these bonds through the sharing of letters and small mementoes of love.

Regardless of their sensibility these women showed towards material goods sent to them by their beloved connections in the larger Atlantic world, their lack of empathy towards the enslaved population present in the West Indies created an enduring image of white women in the Caribbean. The writings of women who lived in the West Indies provide insight concerning how the objects mentioned above became emotionally charged in the colonial setting. These items became infused with the language of sensibility, but it appears that this sentiment did not extend to the enslaved population who shared their colonial home. Although the Cowper sisters wrote of their emotional connection to a hair locket sent by cousin Eliza McQueen, they also wrote of dressing a young slave up and playing with him like a doll. These sentiments towards the enslaved population of Jamaica, although not articulated in the same way as the Cowpers, generally apply to all of the women studied.

Similarly, Maria Nugent, who undoubtedly wore some of the most extravagant ensembles seen in this study, considered herself a genteel British lady. She carefully selected and used items that would best construct her identity as the wife of a public figure and enhance her ties to the nobility in England and France. Although Nugent worried about her family and loved ones both in Jamaica and England, her sentiment towards her loved ones and material possessions did not extend to the local enslaved population. Referring to her subordinates as nuisances, she viewed them as a potential threat, particularly since her time in Jamaica coincided with the massive slave

revolt in nearby St. Domingue, which would ultimately result in the free country of Haiti. While not as exaggerated as their fictional counterparts in eighteenth-century novels, these women still contributed to the slave society in the West Indies and were subject to censure for their participation in this culture that valued economic benefits over the lives of a majority slave population.

Although they appropriated the cult of sensibility in the colonial landscape, the "creolization" of this popular trope rendered it different from the metropolitan version, and therefore made it subject to question and derision. They attempted to emulate British cultural norms, but with little metropolitan success, in part because they did not embody the fullest expressions of "sensibility" toward subordinates and foreigners. The few creole women who seemed to find approval in England maintained a social barrier while in Jamaica, and sought to distinguish themselves from their local "creole" counterparts. In doing so, they often found themselves secluded while in the West Indies and not fully accepted in England. Caught between metropole and colony, these isolated women had little control over their destinies and clung to their correspondences with distant loved ones.

White women in the Caribbean were infamous back in England for their exposure to a tropical climate and to an enslaved population, and curious metropolitan viewers attempted to summarize them. These authors popularized the idea that these women, upon entering the Caribbean environment, quickly diverged from proper standards of behavior. However, the actual writings of white women in the Caribbean contain a much less titillating account of everyday life. The letters, journals, and writings of women who inhabited the Caribbean islands offer a more nuanced picture of life in eighteenth-century Jamaica. Neither the cruel, sexualized women of fiction and satire, nor the pure, untainted, British ideal, they negotiated multiple

spaces of empire and attempted to maintain relationships with their loved ones through writings and sharing of possessions. They complained of the lack of or high cost of necessary goods, which was possibly why they prized the items they received in this colonial interchange. They did not appear to enjoy life in the islands and were typically not active in either the business of their plantation homes or in the towns. While ensconced in Jamaica, they missed their friends and relatives overseas, dispersed throughout the Atlantic world. Although this work is based on rare extant sources, which admittedly are not comprehensive, this study complicates the notion that white women in the West Indies lacked sensibility and were prone to mindless overconsumption. Like most women in the eighteenth-century world, they did not holistically conform to the stereotypes popularized through novels and visual depictions, but lived varied and complicated lives.

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