

## *Viewpoint*

# Scots in the West Indies in the Colonial Period: A View from the Archives

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In the incipient historiography of Scotland and the West Indies in the colonial period, historians have adopted distinct methodologies and approaches to archival research. First, some have taken a metropolitan-based approach and used source material accordingly. For example, T. C. Smout's early work on sugar houses and the development of Glasgow are classic cis-atlantic studies based on Scottish records such as port and customs records.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, other historians have adopted a transatlantic approach and utilised material generated and stored in institutions in both Great Britain and the Caribbean. Alan Karras's pioneering book *Sojourners in the Sun* (1992) utilised material in the National Library of Scotland, National Records of Scotland (then the Scottish Records Office) as well as archival sources located in America and Jamaica.<sup>2</sup> This strategy was followed by Douglas Hamilton in *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750–1820* (2005).<sup>3</sup>

Records revealing activities across the Atlantic world were generated in both Scotland and the Caribbean at the time. For example, the ledgers and journals of Alexander Houston & Co. – the premier Glasgow–West India firm before bankruptcy in 1805 – reveal much about mercantile practices in eighteenth-century Glasgow.<sup>4</sup> Plantations records were also systematically generated in the West Indies to be sent back to Great Britain to absentee owners. The Stirling of Keir papers in Glasgow City Archives is one of Scotland's most comprehensive collections related to Scots in eighteenth-century Jamaica. The records often reveal hitherto unknown activities. Using planter William McDowall's letter book, Stuart Nisbet has explored the origins of fortunes accumulated in the Leeward islands of St Kitts and Nevis and the impact on pre-industrial

<sup>1</sup> T. C. Smout, 'The Development and Enterprise of Glasgow 1556–1707', *The Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 6, no. 3 (1959), 194–212.

<sup>2</sup> A. L. Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun: Scottish Migrants in Jamaica and the Chesapeake, 1740–1800* (Ithaca, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> D. Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750–1820* (Manchester, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> National Library of Scotland (hereafter NLS), MS8795, Alexander Houston & Company's Home Letter book, 1777–78.

Glasgow.<sup>5</sup> Correspondence between merchants in Scotland, planters in Demerara and factors in the West Indies can be found in, for example, the records of John Campbell senior & Co. which reveal the activities of a Glasgow merchant firm up to the emancipation of slavery in 1834.<sup>6</sup>

These holdings are now well known to historians of Scotland and the Caribbean, although records generated in the West Indies less so. However, colonial deeds illustrate plantation sales and credit agreements, ecclesiastical records reveal religious affiliations, wills and inventories provide details of those who died abroad including untold numbers of Scots, especially in Jamaica. Stuart Nisbet has recently advocated using colonial records to reveal a fuller narrative of Glasgow's relationship with the Caribbean before and after the Union of 1707. While correctly assessing the risks to material located in the modern Caribbean (e.g. hurricane, flooding and poor storage conditions), the inference was that few locally generated sources remain.<sup>7</sup>

Based on two research trips in recent years, this article elaborates upon the practicalities of researching eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Scots in the holdings of institutions in the modern Caribbean. The importance of record-keeping across the British-Atlantic world should mean – at least in theory – a vista of surviving material for historians. In general this is true, especially for Scottish archives, but identifying and sampling records located across the Atlantic is often a complex and labour-intensive process.

During ongoing research on Glasgow's West India merchants, planters and Scottish adventurers in the Caribbean, I have attempted to supplement sources held in Scottish and English archives with material generated and/or located across the Atlantic. This transatlantic approach evolved from a Master's thesis at the University of Glasgow in 2010.<sup>8</sup> A case study of a late-eighteenth-century Glasgow–West India firm, Leitch & Smith, revealed their origins, Caribbean activities and economic impact on Glasgow. Established by Archibald Smith senior in the aftermath of the War of American Independence, the family firm passed on after his death to his sons, James and Archibald Smith junior. The Smiths of Jordanhill family papers in Glasgow City Archives includes some material related to the firm's activities in the West Indies between 1776 and

<sup>5</sup> NLS, 301/107, Letter book of William McDowall, c.1726–1735. See, for example, S. M. Nisbet, 'That Nefarious Commerce – St Kitts Slavery and the West of Scotland', *Proceedings of Caribbean Studies Conference* (2008), 1–14.

<sup>6</sup> Glasgow City Archives (hereafter GCA), TD1696, Campbell of Hallyards papers. See S. Mullen, 'The Great Glasgow–West India House of John Campbell senior & Co.', in (ed.) T. M. Devine, *Recovering Scotland's Slavery Past: The Caribbean Connection* (Edinburgh, 2015).

<sup>7</sup> S. M. Nisbet, 'Sugar and the Early Identity of Glasgow: Glasgow Planters in the Leeward Islands, c.1650–1750', *Scottish Archives*, 19 (2013), 69.

<sup>8</sup> This was eventually published as 'A Glasgow–West India Merchant House and the Imperial Dividend, 1779–1867', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 33, no. 2 (2013), 196–233.

1867.<sup>9</sup> However, while the collection related to the family itself is voluminous, there is surprisingly limited material related to the West Indies. The material that does survive is narrowly focused on Jamaica, especially sugar estates Iter Boreale and Heywood Hall.<sup>10</sup> However, Archibald Smith's correspondence referred to a 'Grenada business' of which there seemed to be no surviving documentary evidence in the family collection.<sup>11</sup>

After stumbling upon an important collection of online sources related to the Smiths of Jordanhill – the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints digitised sources of records held in Grenada Supreme Court – I complemented the family papers related to business interests in Glasgow and Jamaica with Grenada deeds outlining Leitch & Smith's activities on the island. Meshing disparate records completed an overview of Atlantic world activities that had hardly been explored before in a Scottish context – such as usurious credit practices – as well as the source of fortunes derived from Caribbean slavery, and the dispersal of wealth in Scotland. I continued the transatlantic approach throughout my doctoral research and I was fortunate enough to visit both Jamaica and Grenada in April 2014. More recently, and with assistance of a grant from the Royal Society of Edinburgh, I extended my focus into Trinidad and spent a month in Port of Spain in May 2016. This article is not concerned with findings as such but will instead discuss undertaking research in Caribbean archives and provide recommendations for other researchers. This article could be read in conjunction with online articles on the similar themes.<sup>12</sup>

In many ways, emigration patterns of eighteenth-century Scots defined my own journey over two centuries later. The premier destination for Scots in the Caribbean in the colonial period was Jamaica, although smaller islands ceded after the Seven Years War (1756–63) such as St Vincent, Grenada and Tobago became Scots enclaves too. Trinidad was ceded to Great Britain in 1802, offering unrestricted opportunities to Scots. Perhaps around 17,000 young Scots emigrated to the West Indies during the period 1750 to 1800.<sup>13</sup> Scots operated in networks and provided patronage for others in the form of jobs, credit and business opportunities. Many worked in merchant firms located in hubs such as Kingston in Jamaica, St George's in Grenada or Port of Spain in Trinidad while the plantations also provided jobs and opportunities. Some young men became overseers and supervised the enslaved while others became attorneys and managed several estates. Ownership of enslaved people and plantations was viewed as a sure means to rapid wealth (though this was not always the case). A professional Scottish class such as medical doctors and surgeons resided

<sup>9</sup> GCA, TD1, Smiths of Jordanhill collection.

<sup>10</sup> GCA, TD1/1081, Papers concerning Jamaican estates, 1776–1872.

<sup>11</sup> GCA, TD1/26/3, Letter from Archibald Smith, 11 August 1815.

<sup>12</sup> A. Graham, 'Research in Jamaica', *The Junto: A Group Blog on Early American History*, <https://earlyamericanists.com/2016/05/20/guest-post-research-in-jamaica/>.

<sup>13</sup> Hamilton, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World*, 23.

in many colonies and serviced both the enslaved and Europeans.<sup>14</sup> Many Scots dreamed of acquiring sufficient wealth in the West Indies to facilitate a return home to luxurious retirement on a landed estate in places such as the lower Highlands or Perthshire.<sup>15</sup> Some became rich and achieved their dream while many – probably even most – died abroad. However, while Scots entered into the plantation economy to accumulate wealth derived from slavery, I was there to discover more about their exploitative activities and to document and disseminate my findings.

It is essential (and this seems common sense) to identify a substantial cache of sources prior to departure for the Caribbean. Sometimes the records are not as voluminous as they might seem or are incomplete. Contacting archivists and librarians usually provides some idea of available material as well as access to specific items. It is imperative researchers also identify uniqueness of material. Duplicate material – like Governor’s Dispatches – was systematically sent to London and many are typically available in The National Archives at Kew. Some guides to undertaking research can help. Guy Grannum’s *Tracing Your Caribbean Ancestors: A National Archives Guide* (2012) provides a good overview of resources. Basic groundwork might save a transatlantic trip to examine sources also located in the UK. Moreover, it is worthwhile scrutinising the availability of online material first. The British Library provides excellent, unique material via the Endangered Archives project. Although not principally focused on Scots in the West Indies, some traces are found in the online collections related to, for example, St Vincent, Jamaica and Grenada.<sup>16</sup> Grenada deeds are also available through local branches of the Church of the Latter-day Saints in Great Britain.

If you do decide to make the trip to the Caribbean, it is good practice to visit as many institutions as you can – there is much scope for discoveries of uncatalogued material. It is strongly advisable to arrange letters of introduction before departure that confirm the credentials of bona fide researchers. This may seem old-fashioned to researchers who usually work in British archives although in some cases UK institutions do insist on similar measures. The basic guidelines set by the British Library (i.e. full name, research area, intention of publication all listed on headed paper and signed by home institution) offers a useful model for similar letters for Caribbean archives.<sup>17</sup> It is best to carry a general letter of introduction and, in addition, others that are specifically addressed to the lead archivists/librarians of the institutions that hold the material. These will not always be required but sometimes they are essential and will, quite literally, open doors in archives in Jamaica and elsewhere.

<sup>14</sup> R. B. Sheridan, *Doctors and Slaves: A Medical and Demographic History of Slavery in the British West Indies, 1680–1834* (Cambridge, 1985), 56–61.

<sup>15</sup> Karras, *Sojourners in the Sun*.

<sup>16</sup> ‘British Library Endangered Archives: Caribbean’, <https://eap.bl.uk/search/site/Caribbean>.

<sup>17</sup> ‘Consulting Western Manuscripts’, British Library, <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/inrooms/stp/register/appointment/mssapprove/consultmanuscripts.html>.

Settled in 1655 during the first phase of English colonisation, Jamaica replaced Barbados as the most prolific sugar-producing island in the British West Indies around a century later. Scots were said to have arrived on Jamaica after the failed attempt at settler-colonisation in Darien on the isthmus of Panama in the 1690s. Given that it was a major plantation economy for almost three centuries, it is perhaps unsurprising the island retains the best archival material in the region. Published guides provide further details. Nadine Hunt's recent survey has established a useful taxonomy of holdings (public central, public local, statutory bodies, private, and ecclesiastical records) in Jamaica institutions.<sup>18</sup> James Robertson's article on Jamaican archival material and Kenneth Ingram's *Manuscript Sources for the History of the West Indies* are invaluable overviews of available material in the Jamaica Archives and Record Department (JARD) in Spanish Town and in the National Library of Jamaica (NLJ) in downtown Kingston.<sup>19</sup> The NLJ also has an online catalogue.<sup>20</sup> The Registrar General's Department in Twickenham Park (formerly known as Island Record Office) holds sources such as wills and the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, also has a dedicated West Indies Collection.<sup>21</sup>

JARD is located on the corner of King and Manchester Streets in Spanish Town in St Catherine, some twenty miles from the Mona Campus. This is a pretty run-down area (Spanish Town was the island's first seat of Government) although I had the benefit of local guides who became my host family while in Jamaica. Public transport is non-existent and the only alternatives are private car hire or taxis (the quotes I received for the latter were expensive). I would urge visiting researchers to carefully plan travel arrangements: it has been known for the archives to close early on occasion leaving researchers to secure alternative transport at short notice. Photography is allowed, but is priced per page and at a prohibitive cost (which is the case for all institutions that I visited on the island). I was quoted J\$550 (c.£3.30) per image. If the resulting photograph is too faded and you must reshoot, then that will be another £3.30! Microfilms, photocopies and scans of some sources can be ordered, but I decided to go back to basics with a pencil and Moleskine notebook.

<sup>18</sup> N. Hunt, 'Inventory of archival holdings in Jamaica', *Endangered Archives Programme*, [http://eap.bl.uk/downloads/eap148\\_survey.pdf](http://eap.bl.uk/downloads/eap148_survey.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> J. Robertson, 'Jamaican Archival Resources for Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Atlantic History', *Slavery & Abolition*, 22, no. 3 (2001), 109–40; K. E. Ingram, *Manuscript Sources for the History of the West Indies: With Special Reference to Jamaica in the National Library of Jamaica and Supplementary Sources* (Jamaica, 2001). Jamaica Archives and Record Department (hereafter JARD), <http://jard.gov.jm>.

<sup>20</sup> National Library of Jamaica (hereafter NLJ), Manuscript and Archive Collection, <http://nlj.gov.jm/manuscripts-2/#>.

<sup>21</sup> The University of the West Indies, Mona: West Indies Collection, <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/library/west-indies-collection-0>.

The material held by JARD is, however, internationally important and I will provide relevant examples here. Crop Accounts (JM JARD 1B/11–4) contain details for each estate on Jamaica – including produce and profits – between 1740 and 1927. In theory at least, it should be possible to identify Scottish-controlled estates in 1834 via the *Legacies of British Slave-ownership* website and work backwards to identify paths into ownership and profitability over a set period.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, the Powers of Attorney (JM JARD 1B/11–24–147) record all legal authorisations that enabled individuals on the island (such as attorneys) to act on behalf of others on the island (such as absentee owners). These sources reveal important networks of Scots on Jamaica. Thirdly, Jamaica Inventories (JM JARD 1B/11–3) are available on microfilm and labour-intensive research reveals the ubiquity of property-owning Scots on the island. For example, *The Edinburgh Magazine* announced the death of James Riddoch Esq. in Montego Bay on 10 September 1797.<sup>23</sup> His inventory revealed not only the extent of his wealth but also aspects of his life as a carpenter in St James parish in the north-west of the island. At the time of his death, he was worth over £6,500 Jamaican currency (c.£4,600 stg), mainly held in enslaved people. Riddoch owned numerous gangs of male slaves including carpenters such as Romeo (worth £180 stg). The carpenter had several ‘open accounts’, no doubt owed by local planters for carpentry work on plantations. Perhaps Riddoch travelled from Scotland with carpentry skills and trained enslaved men to undertake skilled work from which he accumulated a substantial fortune.<sup>24</sup> There are also other records that point to distinctive aspects of Scottish civil society that were exported abroad. The first of its type in the West Indies, St Andrews Scots Kirk in Kingston was founded in early 1814 after a group of Scots petitioned the Mayor and Aldermen to request the establishment of a ‘Presbyterian place of worship ... to accommodate so numerous a community’.<sup>25</sup> There are mountains of evidence related to Scottish involvement in colonial Jamaica waiting to be discovered in this institution alone, although any researcher travelling from Scotland, like myself, will always be governed by the triple constraints of scope, schedule and cost.

The Registrar General’s Department in Twickenham Park (formerly known as Island Record Office) holds sources such as deeds and wills lodged by those who died on Jamaica in the colonial period. For example, in his settlement of 1821, one Scottish planter, James McGregor, left instructions to sell his ‘share in the plantation Hopton’ including ‘five slaves’ before remitting the money in Scotland to be deposited in the Royal Bank in Scotland.<sup>26</sup> It is possible to ascertain the wealth on death of colonial Scots as well as post-mortem property transmission strategies by cross-referencing these wills with inventories lodged

<sup>22</sup> *Legacies of British Slave-ownership Database*, <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>.

<sup>23</sup> *The Edinburgh Magazine or Literary Miscellany*, 9 (1797), 79.

<sup>24</sup> JARD, 1B/11/3/86, Inventories, 1797, f. 43.

<sup>25</sup> JARD, 5/20/2/1, ‘St Andrews Scots Kirk, Minutes’, 1814, n.p.

<sup>26</sup> Jamaica Island Record Office, Wills 1821–22, vol. 100, 186.

in JARD, although costs, once again, are extremely prohibitive. Just for the privilege of examining the sources in the Registrar General's Department, foreign researchers are charged J\$1,500 (*c.* £9) per hour! In practice, this means typical researchers on short-term trips will only be able to examine a small number of wills.

There is a treasure-trove of material in the NIJ, located at 12 East Street in downtown Kingston, including manuscripts, maps, and microfilms. At least some of the microfilmed newspapers held there (such as the *Jamaica Royal Gazette* owned by Scot Alexander Aikman) can be found in The National Archives in London but do check specific dates for coverage. I spent many afternoons searching through the card-index system for Scottish surnames and related plantation records. The letter books of the Georgia Estate in Trelawney – owned by the Gordon family of Cairness – revealed the activities of Scots in the plantation economy. The Gordon family's Scots attorney, Francis Graham, left for Great Britain in July 1812 and delegated management of estate to George William Hamilton. The correspondence over the course of the next year illustrates the challenges faced by the young overseer.<sup>27</sup> By comparing plantation records in Jamaica with records generated later in Great Britain, the historian can assess the fate of Scottish adventurers. George William Hamilton managed to return home a wealthy man. On the emancipation of slavery in the British West Indies in 1834, he claimed over £11,500 stg in compensation.<sup>28</sup> He died in Edinburgh in 1857, leaving a fortune of over £8,700 stg and much of it went to his family including his wife, a free mulatto woman named Martha Hamilton of Spanish Town.<sup>29</sup> Hamilton was buried in Glasgow Necropolis.

For any postgraduate researcher in Jamaica, I would thoroughly recommend residing at the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies in Kingston. The University are very accommodating to visiting researchers and during my trip in April 2014, I made use of the library (including the West Indies and Special Collections). The modest fee for visiting researchers was an excellent investment and provided instant access to both primary material and secondary works related to Caribbean, Atlantic world and British imperial history. The large collection of Caribbean journals opened up a wealth of scholarship usually ignored by British-based researchers. Smaller archive holdings such as the West Indies and Special Collections often throw up previously unknown or lightly cited material and it was no different in my quest to find Scots. For example, the records of Lachlan Campbell, Deputy Provost Marshall of

<sup>27</sup> NIJ, MS 132, Letter book of Georgia Estate, I, 122–39.

<sup>28</sup> 'George William Hamilton', *Legacies of British Slave-ownership Database*, <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/14412>.

<sup>29</sup> National Records of Scotland, SC70/4/58, Deed of Settlement of George William Hamilton, 12 June 1858, 362–99; SC70/1/99, 'Add. Inventory', 14 December 1858, 367.

Tobago, revealed his surprise when arriving in 1776 on an island he described as a ‘Scotch colony’ as it contained so many of his compatriots.<sup>30</sup>

After a productive time in the archives and libraries of Kingston and Spanish Town, I made my way down to the south-eastern Caribbean island of Grenada. Grenada has a contested history. Occupied by the French from the 1650s, it was taken by Great Britain during the Seven Years War (1756–63) and retained with other ‘Ceded Islands’ under the terms of the Treaty of Paris on 10 February 1763. As Scots enjoyed unrestricted access to the British Empire after the Union of 1707, they were actively involved in the settlement and planting of Grenada. There is a developing historiography of Scots on the island although there is a paucity of local sources. Unfortunately, the island’s National Archives are closed due to building damage after Hurricane Ivan in 2004, although there is a very useful guide about researching on Grenada which should be consulted in advance of any trip.<sup>31</sup> There are holdings in Government House, some of which is available online through the British Library *Endangered Archives* project.<sup>32</sup> From previous research on the Smiths of Jordanhill, I knew there was surviving material in the Grenada Supreme Court Registry in the capital St George’s: a letter of introduction is required for entry to examine the records stored in what is a working court. This is not a professional archive; the material is stored in poor conditions and the holdings are uncatalogued with little sense of order. A historian’s dream and nightmare at the same time. But these sources reveal little-known practices of Scottish merchants and planters on the island and in nearby Carriacou: credit agreements; patterns of land acquisition; and post-mortem strategies. For example, the last will and testament of Thomas Campbell was entered into the Register Office of Grenada on 9 May 1796 after his death the year before.<sup>33</sup> Campbell was the brother of prominent Glasgow–West India merchant John Campbell senior, and the testament revealed how Campbell ensured the estates remained in the hands of family after his death and were managed by other Scots in the meantime. Grenada Supreme Court also holds records related to the neighbouring island of Carriacou where Scots were also prominent.

More recently, I spent a month in Trinidad in May 2016. The islands of Trinidad and Tobago have a contrasting historical relationship with the British Empire. Tobago was ceded by the French to Great Britain in 1763 and was established as a British colony by 1803; Trinidad was captured by Great Britain from Spain in 1797. Tobago was almost overrun by Scots in the 1790s while there were fewer on the neighbouring island of Trinidad. The latter island had

<sup>30</sup> The University of the West Indies, Mona: West Indies and Special Collections, Accounts, Bills and Receipts of Lachlan Campbell, Deputy Provost Marshall Tobago, 1772–82.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Website of the National Archives of Grenada’, <https://grenadanationalarchives.wordpress.com/2015/10/12/how-to-look-for-records-of-west-indian-colonies-before-1782/>.

<sup>32</sup> ‘Digitising the endangered archives of Grenada’, <https://cap.bl.uk/project/EAP295/search>.

<sup>33</sup> Supreme Court Registry, St George’s, Grenada, vol. F2, 9 May 1796, 178.



a shorter involvement with chattel slavery. Trinidad was finally ceded to Great Britain under the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 and slavery was abolished 32 years later. Glasgow merchants were involved with planters on both islands and Scots travelled in some numbers. However, there is a dearth of plantation records in modern institutions and ironically there seems to be more material related to Trinidad in Scottish archives (although they are limited in Scotland too). There are reasons for this. First, Trinidad was a slave colony for a relatively short period, which means there were fewer records generated and sent to Great Britain compared with, for example, Jamaica. Secondly, and unfortunately, a fire at the Government's Red House in Port of Spain in 1903 destroyed a lot of important records related to Trinidad's colonial era.

Once again, I made use of collections at the University of the West Indies although this time in the St Augustine Campus. Their catalogue is available online.<sup>34</sup> The West Indiana and Special Collections in the Alma Jordan Library holds some significant collections such as microfilms of contemporary newspapers and Church records such as those from Greyfriars Kirk. The records of the London West India Committee also reveal early connections between merchants in the metropolis and outports, including Glasgow.<sup>35</sup> There are also holdings of Trinidad newspapers but at least some of these can be found in the British Library.

The National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago at 105 St Vincent Street in Port of Spain holds the records for both islands, the National Archives of Tobago having been closed in the 1990s. There is a basic online catalogue and it is also worthwhile contacting them beforehand.<sup>36</sup> Photography is allowed in this institution. Although the material held here is less extensive than for Jamaica, it is important nonetheless. It includes material such as newspapers, correspondence and dispatches with the Colonial Office as well as Trinidad land deeds from the later nineteenth century. There are also various Tobago deeds, conveyances, concessions and wills from 1763 up to the end of Caribbean slavery in 1834. These records are useful for revealing the economics of island life but often illustrate more intimate relationships, including the 1788 marriage contract of Charles Irvine to Miss Elizabeth Kennedy which revealed the Scots planter's provisions for his wife on the event of his death.<sup>37</sup> There has been much less scholarly focus on Scots on Trinidad and Tobago compared with either Jamaica or Grenada and this awaits detailed examination.

Scotland exported people across the Atlantic world in the colonial period: many thousands went on to become overseers, attorneys, planters, slave-owners and merchants in the West Indies. Scotland's story, therefore, can be found not

<sup>34</sup> The University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, Trinidad and Tobago: West Indiana and Special Collections (hereafter UWISTA), <http://libraries.sta.uwi.edu/ajl/index.php/caribbean-resources/west-indiana>.

<sup>35</sup> UWISTA, Alma Jordan Library, London West India Committee Records.

<sup>36</sup> The National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago (NATT), <http://natt.gov.tt>.

<sup>37</sup> NATT, Conveyances, 1788-93, 11 November 1789.

just in Scottish and English archives, but also in institutions across the modern Caribbean (as well as North America). This article provides an introduction to researching in the archives and libraries of Jamaica, Grenada and Trinidad with a specific emphasis on Scots in the colonial period. This type of research is often a frustrating but ultimately a very rewarding process. Historians of Scotland and the Atlantic world are now much interested in understanding how important Scotland was to the Caribbean, and alternatively how important the Caribbean was to Scotland. The nation's historical connections with Caribbean slavery, as well as the urban and economic development of Scotland and Glasgow can, of course, be uncovered in metropolitan archives. But there is little question that a more comprehensive picture of Scots in the colonial West Indies would be uncovered by historians who turn to hardly-used archival sources held in archives across the Atlantic. The challenge remains to recover and disseminate this forgotten aspect of Scotland's imperial history.

