

RENEGADE CANE[®]RUM

(UPPER) PEARLS ST. ANDREW

HISTORICAL PROFILE BY JOHN ANGUS MARTIN

Pearls is a large coastal village in the parish of St Andrew that is best known for the now abandoned Pearls Airport, the island's first airport since closed to air travel after 1984 with the opening of the Maurice Bishop International Airport at Point Salines. It is also known for the extensive and important Amerindian site that was practically destroyed in the construction of the runway. Ruins of two airplanes (Cuban and Russian) sit abandoned and attract visitors as a reminder of the Cold War and the US invasion of Grenada in 1983. On its eastern shore is the Pearls Beach.

The current village of Pearls derives from the consolidation by its new British owners of three French properties in the 1760s—a large 18th-century sugar estate known as Mont Loria (after the Riviere du Mont Loria that ran through the estate) of 672 acres, which utilized a waterwheel powered by the Simon River on its southern border (# 6), and two small coffee estates (#s 8 known as Bellair & 10 as Mont Loria in Figure 1 below) of 96 and 128 acres, respectively.



Figure 1: Mont Loria Sugar Estate (Nos.6), St Andrew (in red) and adjoining coffee estate (#s8, 10)

The Mont Loria sugar estate, owned by François de Flavigny, was sold to Edmund and Thomas Proudfoot for 1.8 million livres by 1765. With the additional purchases of the contiguous coffee estate, they created Upper (220) and Lower (385 acres) Pearl sugar estates by 1772 and owned by Edmund Proudfoot¹ and Thomas Townsend, both managed separately though owned and managed by the same proprietor into the mid-1800s. Also by 1772, two windmills were constructed on both estate, with the ruins of the one at Lower Pearl still evident today.



Though the sugar estate was recorded solely as Pearls in 1801, it continued to record its output per Lower and Upper Pearls. In 1802 it was appraisal for £166,317 (most likely currency and not sterling). The estates were run separately into the mid-1800s, and today Upper Pearls and Lower Pearls are place names in the areas once occupied by the respective estates. The Belair name also remains for the original coffee estate.

By the 1860s the combined 960 acres Pearls sugar estate was experiencing financial difficulties like many sugar properties at the time, and was auctioned by the Encumbered Estates Court in 1867, selling for only £3000 currency. In 1889, the 1090 acres Pearls estate was owned by Augusta Law, but by 1940 it was only 377 acres and owned by Frank

DeGale and others. By the mid-1940s it was sold to the Government of Grenada to build the island's first airport. In the construction of the airstrip, the remains of an extensive Amerindian site were destroyed. The Pearls Airport has been closed since 1984 when it was replaced by the MBIA, with the buildings used to house members of the Special Branch of the Royal Grenada Police Force and the runway used for car racing.



Figure 3: Pearls Estate, St Andrew, 1867 (Courtesy Library of Congress)



Figure 4: Ruins of windmill tower at Lower Pearls (John Angus Martin, 2016)



Figure 5: Pearls Beach at Lower Pearls (John Angus Martin, 2015)

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THE (UPPER) PEARLS ESTATE/COMMUNITY

1738: Jacques de Kearney (born in Galway, Ireland in 1689) made captain of the troops/king's lieutenant at Grenada

- Jacques de Kearney acquired the 210 quarres property.

1739: Death of Jacques de Kearney in June.

1739: François de Flavigny II (b Grenada 1706/captain in 2nd 24/5/1735) owned by succession of Kearny the 210 quarres property.

1741: François de Flavigny II, Captain of the Calvary Company of the Quartier du Grand Marquis.

1763: 672 acres (210/160 quarres) sugar estate (#6 on Pinel's map) with 167 enslaved (1503 livres tax) owned by François de Flavigny by succession/acquisition of Kearny. : 96 acres (30/20 quarres) Bellair coffee estate (#8) owned by the heirs of Duchêne on the rights of Pascal Larcher.

- 128 acres (40/28 quarres) Mont Loria coffee estate (#10) owned by Houc on the rights of Tremplar by donation of Lamitoininére.

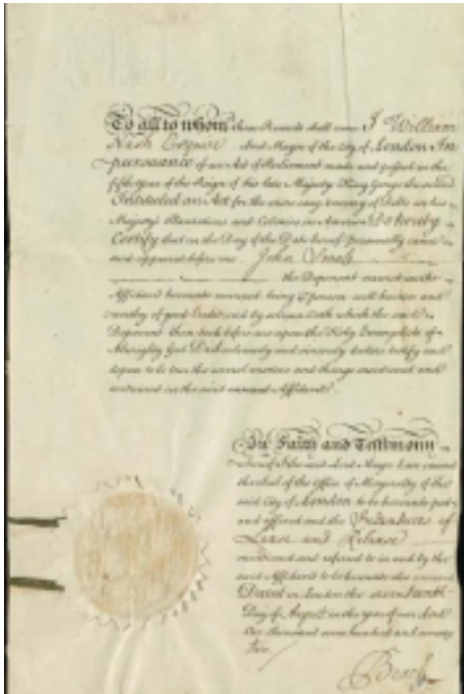
1765: Edmund and Thomas Proudfoot purchased the three properties: Flavigny (#6) for 1,800,000 livres, Bellair (#8) and Mont Loria (#10) and created the Pearl(s) estate. : Flavigny "received payment of bills of exchange in London, but sent letters protesting "for want of payment, with the British commander Scott, refusing him entry to return to the island to claim his payment.



1768: Edmund Proudfoot, member of the House of Assembly, killed Peter Gordon, member of His Majesty's Council and lately a captain in the 70th regiment (brother to Capt Harry Gordon, chief engineer of the Grenades), in a duel in June; he was 33 years old.

Memorial to Peter Gordon, Clatt Churchyard, Kirktown of Clatt, Aberdeenshire, Scotland

1772: 385 acres in canes with 180 enslaved/old works: Water mill/new works: Windmill owned by Proudfoot and Townsend (Lower Pearls).



- 256 acres sugar estate (220/36 woods) with 120 enslaved/new works. Windmill owned by Proudfoot and Townsend (Upper Pearls).
- On 12 July "Edmund and Thomas Proudfoot, Esqs. to Thomas Smith Esqr. Mortgage for Securing £9000.00 and interest."
- On 30 July 1772, Edmund and Thomas Proudfoot sell Thomas Smith, Mount Loria, and Bellair, now generally known by the name of the Pearl Estate. Signed
- "Edmund Proudfoot" "Thomas Proudfoot" "Thomas Smith."

1792: On 15/16 October James Law "seized and possessed by virtue of indentures of lease and release of the plantations, lands and implements, in the island of Grenada, called Upper and Lower Pearls Estate."

1794: Death of Edmund Proudfoot on 8 May in Martinique.

1795: "On the night of the 5th several fires were perceived from the ships in the Upper Pearls and Carriere areas, which proved to be the trash-houses or buildings for preserving the cane-fuel on these estates and some others."

MARSHAL'S-OFFICE;

NOTICE is hereby given, that a Negro Slave named Ben, formerly belonging to the Pearl Estates, confined in goal since the 21st July 1799, as a runaway; if he is not liberated by his owners within fix weeks from the date hereof, will be sold on the Public Parade, in the Town of St. George, on Saturday the 9th day of January 1802, to defray his goal fees and expences, by order of His Honor the President.

J. E. PYM. Dep. Prov. Mar.

St. George's, November, 27.

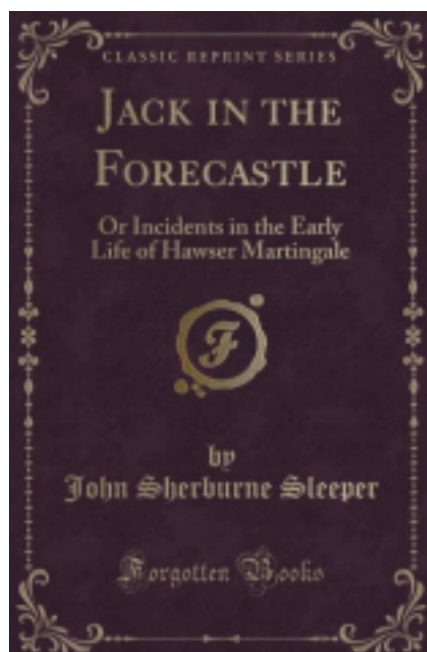
Advert in the St. George's Chronicle (11Dec1801) for Ben who has been confined to jail since 21st July 1799 as a runaway. If he is not claimed by 9 Jan 1802 he will be sold to defray costs.

1801: Pearls Sugar Estate listed as (#4) on Gavin Smith's map, with water mill in the south (Lower Pearls) and windmill in the north (Upper Pearls).

1802: An appraisal by Alexander Fraser and John McDonald valued Pearls estate at £166,317 currency.

1804: "On the Upper Pearls Estate of the 89 field slaves, 64 were women and 25 were men. Again the men dominated the elite jobs." (N Phillip, "Producers...")

1805: Pearls sugar estate owned by the "Heirs of Edmund Proudfoot."



1813/14: John Sherburne Sleeper, a 19 year-old American, describes working on the Upper Pearl estate and its diseased environment because of the surrounding swamps in Jack in the Forecastle: Or, Incidents in the Early Life of Hawser Martingale).

1817: 160 enslaved on the Upper Pearl Estate "In lawful possession of William Law, trustee."

1818: "Engines of the independent type supplied to the sugar plantations ordered from New Orleans by James Law (29 Great Winchester Street). G G Munro, of Pearl Estate."

1819: 166 (3born/11died) enslaved/26 mules/109 horned cattle produced 245,152 pounds muscavado sugar/10,000 gals rum on the Upper Pearl estate.

1820: 161 enslaved/25 mules/70 horned cattle produced 191,699 pounds muscavado sugar/8,000 gallons rum on the Upper Pearl estate.

- 160 (92 Females/68 Males) enslaved on the Upper Pearl Estate "Belonging to or in the lawful possession of George Gun Munro, attorney of William Law."

1821: 168 enslaved/23 mules/90 horned cattle produced 257,742 pounds muscavado sugar/12,780 gallons rum on the Upper Pearl estate.

1822: 161 enslaved/22 mules/100 horned cattle produced 266,591 pounds muscavado sugar/ 16,340 gallons rum on the Upper Pearl estate.

1823: 155 enslaved/22 mules/101 horned cattle produced 326,466 pounds muscavado sugar/ 24,728 gallons rum/704 gals molasses on the Upper Pearl estate.

- 155 (87 Females/68 Males) enslaved on the Upper Pearl Estate "Belonging to or in the lawful possession of George Gun Munro as Attorney of John Goodson."

1824: 151 enslaved/21 mules/100 horned cattle produced 294,286 pounds muscavado sugar/ 14,032 gallons rum on the Upper Pearl estate.

1825: 154 enslaved/30 mules/94 horned cattle produced 245,886 pounds muscavado sugar/ 10,000 gallons rum on the Upper Pearl estate.

1837: Slave Compensation Claim from Samuel Proudfoot Hurd and William Law for Upper Pearl estate for 126 enslaved for £3691 7S 0D.

1840: "At Pearl Estate, in Grenada, West Indies, on the 2nd of July last, Mr. Edward Forrester, son of the late Mr. Edward Forrester, of Slacks, Bewcastle, died, aged 36 years."

1867: In January "particulars of four valuable Estates: known as the Pearls and Boulogne Estates, both situate in the Parish of St. Andrew...., containing together 1,808 acres, or thereabouts: which will be sold by auction by Messrs. Leifchild and Cheffins, before James Fleming, Esquire, Q.C., and Reginald John Cust, Esquire, Commissioners for Sale of Incumbered Estates in the West Indies, at the Sale Room of the Commissioners...." : On 19 August "The Pearls estate, in the island of Grenada, containing 960 acres, sold for £3,000 currency by Encumbered Estates Court." (see Figure 3 above)

1889: 1,090 acres Pearls estate owned by Augusta Law.

1943: Pearls Air Field opened as the island's first airport on the former Pearls estate, 153 acres of which was purchased by the government for that purpose.

1962: Archaeologist Ripley Bullen carried out excavations at Pearls, providing information on the disturbed site.

1966: "Aerial photos show sugar cane growing over the site, with a few coconut trees." : Extension of the runway at Pearls Airport to 1,684 meters.

1980: Archaeologist Henry Petitjean Roget "collected information on site locations, but little came of those efforts."

1984: Pearls Airport closed following the opening of the Maurice Bishop International Airport.

1987: "A carved 'green stone' pendant was found and what might be called a 'jade rush' ensued."

1988/9: "The Foundation for Field Research sponsored surface surveys and test excavations, led by Thomas Banks and Annie Cody, at the Pearls site."

1989: "A third expedition, led by William Keegan and Annie Cody, was undertaken" in August at the Pearls archaeological site.

1990: Archaeologist William Keegan carried out excavations at Pearls, providing the most detailed information on this valuable Amerindian site.

2017: Archaeologist Jonathan Hanna carried out tests at Pearls Amerindian