

Looking for the Irish in the Trinidad Colonial Haystack

By Patricia Mohammed

Locating an Irish overseer in late 19th century Trinidad

A common error in describing migrants is to group them with a majority nationality or archetype. One such obvious mistake has been to assume that all Caribbean migrants in post war Britain were Jamaicans. Similarly in Trinidad, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the English, Scots and Irish were taken to be a largely undifferentiated group. Yet Ireland and the Caribbean have been linked for over four hundred years since the early transportation of Irish indentured labourers to the British colonies such as Barbados, and later Jamaica and Montserrat in particular. As Nini Rodgers's research has shown, the Irish were also found in other Caribbean destinations, among them the French colonies of Guadeloupe, Martinique and Saint Domingue where they shared the Catholic faith¹. Migration of the Irish to Trinidad occurred much later, primarily from the nineteenth century onwards when the Crown Colony system of government included migrants from Ireland, whom, as we shall see, came largely as managerial or professional classes, rather than as poor or destitute servants to this colony.

My contemporary familiarity with English and Irish cultures and peoples has perhaps made me a little more perceptive of distinctions between closely associated nationalities. Over the last two decades I travelled extensively to what is now known as Northern Ireland and to the Republic of Ireland. My husband, English born artist Rex Dixon, had worked in Belfast as a lecturer in Fine Art at the College of Art & Design, part of the Ulster Polytechnic, now the University of Ulster, during the "troubles" from the early 1980s, and survived life in this city in turmoil, despite his Englishness. During this time he established a close friendship with one of Northern Ireland's most famous artists, Graham Gingles, and they have remained life long friends and colleagues. Graham lives on the Antrim Coast in a small village named Ballygally whose most outstanding landmark is a seventeenth century castle, now housing the Ballygally Castle Hotel. The pastoral rolling hills and seaside villages, like Cairncastle and Glenarm, and the spectacular views of the Antrim coast, together with the peaceful ambience of the village, has lured us back for two decades now: the tranquility makes for a most productive writing space. These visits provided me with an increasing interest in and growing familiarity with the history of Ireland. When I began my current novel, a component of which is set in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century on a sugar cane estate in Trinidad, I wanted to make one of my characters an Irishman who had migrated from Northern Ireland to take up a position as an overseer on a sugar estate in Trinidad. What better place to derive his origins than the people and sites I had come to know well through the churchyards and gravestones I had scoured which told the histories of many who had migrated and some who had even returned.

In locating this character in the late nineteenth century, I needed to ensure what were in fact credible occupations for Irishmen in Trinidad at this time. One of the images I came across that supported the historical presence of an Irish overseer was a photograph in *The Art of Garnet Ifill: Glimpses of the Sugar Industry*².



Figure 1 – English, Scottish and Irish Overseers at Gymkhana, Picton Estate, Trinidad, Photo by Garnet Ifill – 1954

Searching for an appropriate caption for this photograph which was taken by the Trinidadian artist and photographer Ifill in 1954 (Figure 1), Brinsley Samaroo, a Trinidadian historian, made reference to a poem entitled *The Sugar Cane* by Dr. James Grainger published in 1764. Grainger, a Scottish doctor, poet and translator wrote this poem in flowery eighteenth century prose as a lengthy ode to the sugar cane industry, producing one of the best descriptions of life on a West Indian plantation at this time. So taken was Grainger by the beauty of the crop and the culture of plantation life that he was moved to wonder why the sons of local planters left the West Indies to spend their time in Europe. “While such fair scenes adorn these blissful isles, why will their sons, ungrateful, roam abroad? Why spend their opulence on other climes?”³ In selecting Grainger’s poem as a point of departure for crafting his caption, Samaroo writes “Whether it was 1764 or 1954, the sugar cane plantations of the Caribbean had always attracted young English, Scottish and Irishmen. Here the young overseers and managers, attended by their local grooms, gather for the Picton Estate gymkhana”⁴. In doing so, Samaroo acknowledges the established image of power, status and leadership of a generic white British male presence in the sugar industry and on the estates, from the early nineteenth into the twentieth centuries in Trinidad. The colonial control of sugar production dominated until 1975 when the British company Tate and Lyle sold the now floundering industry to the Trinidad government. Thus the scene in Figure 1 is a fairly accurate depiction of the hierarchy of ownership and management on the estates and the industry, as it operated well into the twentieth century. In my reading of ephemera including the *Trinidad Guardian*, *Port of Spain Gazette* and *The Mirror* newspapers between 1914 and 1920, I had come across interesting information

that confirmed the presence of these youngish men who would occupy relatively high rank in the sugar cane industry. By a leap of imagination that one is allowed in constructing a character for a novel, I imagined that this group could very well include an Irish overseer among them.

Who among the Irish came to Trinidad in the nineteenth and early twentieth century? What were the reasons that could have brought my character to this island? What would have typified his lifestyle? What circumstances would keep him here or allow his return to his homeland? It is not possible, given the limited documentation that specifically covers the historical experience of the Irish, to present anything approaching a comprehensive history of this group as they lived under colonial administration from 1797 to 1962, the latter being the year in which Trinidad and Tobago gained independence from Britain. What follows therefore is a synopsis of the impressions I formed as a writer and some idea of how this allowed me to piece together partial and fragmented accounts in order to create a credible and rounded Irish character for late nineteenth century and the first two decades of Trinidad's history.

The early Irish in Trinidad

While the Irish were legendary as immigrants who carved their identities into Caribbean terrain, leaving, as they did, place names such as Irishtown and Sligoville in Jamaica that marked their origins, the majority of historical studies on Irish in the Caribbean have been carried out on the Irish in Jamaica, Barbados and Montserrat. These studies have viewed Irish migrants, apart from a few exceptions⁵, largely as servants and early working class settlers of the New World. The settlement of the Irish in Trinidad, where less significant numbers migrated, has been a more minor subject of historical enquiry, although, not entirely untreated as I have found out.

As recently as March 17, 2011, the Irish community of Trinidad was reported as a notable population. Writing on St Patrick's Day, Louis B Homer of the *Trinidad Express Newspaper* writes how "...the Irish diaspora – including the Caribbean, where in Montserrat, it's a public holiday – will celebrate St Patrick's Day. Irish nationals and those of Irish ancestry in Trinidad and Tobago gather at various homes to pay their respects to the patron saint of Ireland who was responsible for the spread of Christianity in that country"⁶. Thus in 2011 the presence of the Irish in Trinidad is still being recognized as an ethnic and faith community, although how and when they arrived and how they retained these identities and practices is not specified in the brief journalistic account.

Anthony De Verteuil, a Trinidadian born in 1932 who studied for his BA in English and History at the University College, Dublin, Ireland, and was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest in Ireland in 1962, offers a more substantial insight. In *Sylvester Devenish and The Irish in Nineteenth Century Trinidad*, De Verteuil sets out to trace the Irish community in Trinidad before 1800, aiming "to provide a contribution, however small, to the social history of our country during the period (19th century). [The book is].... intended to stimulate the present-day descendants of the Irish to take an interest in their roots in the Emerald Isle"⁷. While De Verteuil admits in his Preface to having

used primarily “family accounts of their origin at face value,” histories, whether from oral or written sources, are invariably compromised, and it is unlikely that an untarnished historical truth emerges. De Verteuil culls together details from a wide range of sources including past histories of Trinidad and Tobago such as that by E.I Joseph (1839)⁸, newspaper reports of deaths and obituary columns, various church and school archives and colonial records. As a Catholic priest he also had access to family members of high standing in his congregation who possessed photographs and other ephemera. In addition, his sojourn in Ireland, together with his training in the priesthood, afforded him a particular advantage in accessing sources such as church records, which are clearly vital to the historical traces he attempted to recover. This relatively small book of 138 pages represents the primary source on the Irish presence in Trinidad and provided me with an overview of family names and marriages, land ownership, occupations, places of worship and the dispersed geographical locations of the Irish on the island. Although De Verteuil rarely traces the origins of the Irish migrants, suggesting that many came directly from Ireland, he does make reference to a family named Kavanaugh as one of Irish extract coming from Newfoundland. The Kavanaughs were lumber merchants and had sold their business in 1885 when they came to Trinidad, settling in a house on Queen’s Park West in Port of Spain, an upper class residential district at the time.

Looking back in time, De Verteuil notes that the presence of the Irish in Trinidad significantly predates the English take over of the island. The 1776 “cedula of population”⁹ which redefined the demographics of Trinidad, allowed, under certain conditions, the settlement of Irish and French Catholics into the island. De Verteuil documents how the first groups were a number of families who settled in Chacachachare, the small island off the northwest coast of Trinidad nearest to Venezuela. The Cariges family, for example, had migrated from County Clare to Spain, had then moved and settled briefly in the Island of Margarita for health reasons and later trans-migrated to Trinidad. It was this family who, some years before 1800, founded a “special College in Trinidad” to educate twenty-two boys of Irish families who had migrated under the conditions of the Cedula. Since the Royal Cedula provided incentives to foreigners, preferably Catholics, to populate the island, and landowning and professional families were attracted, this also led to the opportunities for creating schools and education for the young Irish.

What remains unclear however is a demographic head count of the Irish who were present in Trinidad in the early nineteenth century. Records of the Irish presence available in the Parish archives of Catholic churches in Trinidad among them the archive of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port of Spain are useful sources of data that might still be mined. It was from such sources that De Verteuil was able to identify individual Irishmen such as John Nihell, the single Irishman among two Spaniards and seven French who were members of the Cabildo as late as 1786¹⁰. The Cabildo, referred to as the Illustrious Cabildo, was a municipal council created in Spain and founded in Trinidad at San José de Oruna (St. Joseph) the first capital of the island, in the year 1592, continuing as the governing body of the island until its capture and rule by the British.

Citing their Irish surnames, de Verteuil traces the history of several key families to suggest a sense of a distinctive Irish community living in Trinidad during the 19th century. Among these he identifies the Irish name of O'Connor, tracing this family back to James Lynch O'Connor, a surgeon in the British army who was posted to Trinidad in 1817. James Lynch O'Connor was present in the battle of Waterloo and accompanied his company to Trinidad when it was posted there in 1817. As De Verteuil notes "On his arrival, he applied to Sir Ralph Woodford, the Governor, and obtained a 'license to practice Physic and Surgery in the Island'. This allowed him to go into private practice which he did with some success"¹¹. James has five sons and a daughter. The sons were sent to school in Ireland with three of them clearly returning. In the Blue Book records of 1874, one is listed as the sub-intendant or sub-commissioner of Crown Lands, another as a Crown Solicitor and the third as registrar in Bankruptcy. De Verteuil's comment is clichéd here in relation to Irish character. He writes: "They had hot Irish tempers and around 1870 one of them narrowly escaped prosecution for assaulting the editor of one of the newspapers"¹². There is no real evidence to justify his adoption of this stereotype.

Other Irish surnames listed by de Verteuil between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were Devenish, Fitzgerald, Mahoney, O'Gorman, Galwey, Patrice, Walrond, Nugent, Kelly and Lloyd. Some, but not all of these, he identifies as merchants, some as landowners. De Verteuil's overview of the Irish in Trinidad from the early nineteenth century illustrates that the Irish could be found at all levels of society. Two brothers, identified as the Kernahans, had emigrated from Ireland as overseers, according to De Verteuil, but at various times they had also owned estates at Chaguanas, Manzanilla and Cedros. They are reputed to have arrived in Trinidad some time before 1840. There is no explanation of how, arriving as overseers, they were able to acquire property but one can surmise that in the period of agricultural expansion where Crown lands had increasingly become available for purchase from 1868 onwards and where freed indentured Indians had already begin by the middle of the nineteenth century to purchase land, that enterprising Irish overseers would equally be able to acquire property¹³.

Some of the Irish were involved in professions, among them John Barton Hutton from Dublin, a barrister; M. Fitzgerald a puisne¹⁴ judge; as well as James Bernard Flood Kenny who "came out to Trinidad as an Attorney for the All Trinidad Sugar Estates, in the 1880s. The family was originally from County Cavan"¹⁵. Two Irish men were also important in the early newspaper industry. In the 1820s Mathew Gallagher was proprietor of the *Trinidad Weekly Courant* and T.R.N. Laughlin, proprietor and editor of the *Port of Spain Gazette* from 1875 to 1899. This sampling taken from a larger group examined by De Verteuil allowed me to recognize an Irish presence among the landowning and professional classes in Trinidad in the nineteenth century which could provide some historical basis for my Irish overseer in Trinidad to engage in social mixing with his compatriots, should he choose to do so.

- De Verteuil also reminds his readers that the poor whites of Barbados, among whom there were Irish, were encouraged into the police force of

Trinidad in the last decades of the nineteenth century. The force was further reinforced directly by five members of the Royal Irish Constabulary who were appointed to reorganize the detective branch in 1874. From this group of five, J.N. Brierly stands out. Apart from his shrewdness as a detective, he remained in the Trinidad Police Force for over thirty years. In the 1890s he was made Senior Inspector establishing a system of policing in Trinidad premised along the lines of the Royal Irish Constabulary. However, not all the Irish who came were as law abiding and when De Verteuil describes the significant Irish military presence remaining after the British York and Lancashire Regiments left in 1889, he does so euphemistically as “not always paragons of virtue and certainly [leaving] ...more illegitimate than legitimate descendants behind them in Trinidad”¹⁶. This is again a useful insight for the construction of my Irish character who leaves illegitimate progeny behind in Trinidad when he returns to Ireland.

Faith and migration had been a consistent theme in 1776 and the spread of Catholicism in Trinidad, although dominated by French Catholicism, continued with the later infusion of Irish priests and nuns. It appears that some Irish priests were originally sent out to Trinidad “because they had weak lungs. It was believed in medical circles in the late nineteenth century that a hot climate was good for those with consumption”.¹⁷ De Verteuil states that while many died in the course of their duties, presuming that the disease was already at an advanced stage, several diocesan priests served the church and its outreach to smaller parishes admirably. Many taught at the St Mary’s College for boys, a Catholic secondary school established in 1863 to compete with the Queen’s Collegiate School (later Queen’s Royal College) the latter formed in 1860. It is also in the religious field that we find one of the few direct references to Irish women. The St Joseph of Cluny sisters, an order first started by the French in Ireland, was responsible for sending at least two Cluny sisters per year to Trinidad. The first Irish Cluny sister to arrive was the Dublin born Sister Helwidge Carey in 1841, with the second Sister Emelienne Redmond in 1844. From 1863 onwards sisters were sent more regularly and expanded their outreach on the island, establishing a number of primary and secondary schools as leading places of education for girls, including the St Joseph’s Convent in Port of Spain.

Taking a cue from De Verteuil’s lead, in my own search for placenames that apparently record a direct link to the Irish, I stumbled upon the Roman Catholic Parish Church of Saints Paul and Patrick, located in Newtown (originally New Town), Port of Spain. The reference to Saint Patrick was an obvious one as it brought to mind immediately the Patron saint of Ireland. I sought out the church to discern signs of a lingering Irishness and found a beautiful stone structure which cast a short shadow in the midday sun, its somberness mitigated by the shouts and cries of primary school girls and boys on their lunch break (Figure 2). I took a few photographs of its interior and exterior and, as luck would have it, ran into a friend who was an active parishioner. She provided me with the short printed history of the building¹⁸.

The first church on this site built in 1856, was constructed to ensure that there was a parallel Christian house of worship for the Catholic Parish of New Town, and to balance the All Saints Anglican Church that had served the Protestant population of New Town since 1844. The official records noted that “the new parish began with the baptism of Alexander Walker on 9th August, 1856, signed by the first parish priest, Rev I. Taffe”¹⁹. The name Taffe is generally regarded as an Irish name and can be traced back to early Irish origins in Dublin. In the great potato famine of the 1840s, and the exodus to North America, immigration and passenger lists show many Irish people bearing the name Taffe²⁰. Over the next two years the congregation expanded and a plan for a more prestigious building was agreed upon. The new foundation stone of the present church was laid and dedicated to Saints Paul and Patrick, on 29th June 1858. “Funds for the project were collected in Trinidad and neighboring islands. The Colonial Government contributed \$2,160 while parishioners collected \$1800, but as much more was needed, so parish priest Rev Fr. J. Lynch turned to the United States where he was successful in raising \$3000 in New York and \$2,000 in Boston.”²¹



Figure 2- Front exterior of the Church of Saint Paul and St Patrick on Maraval Road, Port of Spain with Statue of St Patrick prominently displayed high above. Photo: Patricia Mohammed 2013

Two features of the church hold interest for their Irish connection.



Figure 3 –Second Sculpture of St Patrick in the Interior of the Church of Saint Paul and St Patrick on Maraval Road, Port of Spain. Photo: Patricia Mohammed 2013

The first feature is the interior of the church, which today still carries evidence of both the Irish and English presence. The architecture is Victorian in its outer facing built of red brick imported from England, with interior pillars of marble from Carrara and Siena. The walls on both sides are lined with ten carved panels representing the emblems of the Passion of Christ, and the pipe organ, built by the famous English firm Walker and Sons, was the first of its kind to be installed in a church in Trinidad. The clinching Irish motif, however, is safely protected by a painted masonry niche and a fretted gable hood. Centrally located very high above the main entrance is a larger than life statue of St Patrick. The statue, in Figure 2, recalls the conventional Christian representation with St. Patrick wearing a chasuble, a bishop's mitre and carrying a bishop's staff or crozier. Inside the church, on the southern entrance is another statue of St Patrick (Figure 3). This one bears the more legendary features of Saint Patrick: two

snakes are curled around the base of his staff although his preaching scarf is decorated at the two ends with the symbol of a St George Cross, similar to the Maltese Cross, rather than a Celtic one, perhaps the closest to a stylized symbol of the shamrock, the Irish plant that St Patrick was said to have used to explain the concept of the Holy Trinity to his converts to Christianity.

The second feature, a beautiful open Gothic roof, replaced the old roof and was added in 1902 as a result of leaks. Archbishop Patrick Vincent Flood consecrated this newly renovated building on 23rd November of the same year. De Verteuil had noted that Father Flood was the seventh of ten Bishops who had presided over the Diocese of Port of Spain during the 19th century, serving from 1887 into the twentieth century. A French predecessor in this position, Archbishop Gonin, had foreseen the impact of the Irish presence by this time, commenting on the presence of the Irish coadjutors from whom his successor would be chosen "Après moi le deluge"²². Flood lived up to this prescient statement. He had become Archbishop at the time when French patois was being replaced increasingly by an English tongue. Thus sweeping "away all that was French in the Church in Trinidad. He was proud too of his Irish descent and built the present Archbishop's residence facing the (Queen's Park) Savannah, architecturally a cross between an Irish and Indian style"²³. In the words of his equally influential Irish compatriot, J. N Brierly of the Royal Constabulary, Archbishop Flood "was an eloquent, genial, witty, liberal-minded Irishman, who to show his great love for his native country, imported Irish marble and red polished Irish granite as substantial embellishments to an otherwise unpretentious building"²⁴.

De Verteuil, effectively sums up the Irish presence at the end of the 19th century. He speaks to the migration of the "Black Irish," those who had moved to Trinidad from the poor of Barbados as members of the lower police rank and settled in small communities of poor whites such as Patna Village in Diego Martin, in north Trinidad. Some served as domestics in upper class households where among the elite Trinidad families it had become fashionable to have among ones retinue of primarily black servants, some white servants as a mark of one's sufficiently elevated status. On the whole however, as De Verteuil notes:

The Irish creoles straddled a wide range of society from lower middle class to upper class and (unlike the Germans in Trinidad) never seem to have considered themselves as a group apart. Around 1900, a few of them were numbered among the elite who possessed houses around the Queen's Park Savannah ... Andrew Kernahan, proprietor of the flourishing coconut estates of San Quentin and Le Pommier at Cedros, has his town house at Queen's Park East, almost next door to Abel Devenish whose wealth had been in sugar estates at Point-a-Pierre²⁵.

De Verteuil suggests that the linguistic spread of the English language to the French speaking population was as a direct result of the Irish influence: in schools, through the church and through intermarriage. He credits what emerged then as the Trinidadian 'flat' accent to the Irish impact. He writes that "by 1896 four Irish Dominican priests had arrived in Trinidad, and by the early

twentieth century, the parishes throughout the country were administered largely by the Irish Dominican Province²⁶. As previously noted, Catholicism was originally introduced by the French into Trinidad under the agreement of the Royal Cedula of 1776. With the gradual increase of English speaking Irish priests, the Catholic church itself underwent transformation in Trinidad and was more in tune with the language of political governance - English - under the British Crown Colony system.

What might constitute the distinctiveness of the Irish contribution on religion and language cannot be accurately measured and can merely be surmised. Evidence of their presence in Trinidad nonetheless remains in the sprinkling of Irish names that dot the telephone directory of Trinidad and Tobago in the 21st century, among them O'Connor, O'Brian and Kelly and in places names such as Kernahan Village on the east coast of Manzanilla, where the Irish-owned Kernahan coconut estate once flourished.

The Irish and the East Indian presence

In my search for Irish traces in Trinidad, I was particularly interested in their relationships with the East Indian population, as my proposed character arrives in the last decade of the nineteenth century to be an overseer on an estate on which East Indians were indentured. By this time, long after the abolition of slavery, East Indians provided the majority of labour on the sugar plantations. A singular find came in the form of an oral history record located at the West Indiana special collection of the University of the West Indies Library, St Augustine. I read with fascination a transcript of the oral account of Linton Gibbon, told by Mr. Gibbon himself in 1976 when he was about 88 years of age. Historian Marianne Ramesar had discovered this exciting tale long before me. She had drawn on Mr. Gibbon's bird's eye view to introduce details of the journey of Indian repatriates, as Linton Gibbon had made the sea voyage to India as a sailor on board one of the ships taking Indians 'home' who had completed their indentured period and chose to return to India²⁷. His oral history had allowed insights about this voyage. I was curious about what Gibbon's story might tell me of the Irish in early twentieth century Trinidad, another time period which my proposed novel spanned. Linton's father was Frank Gibbon, an Irishman who arrived in Trinidad in 1859 at the age of 17 and who had entered the civil service²⁸. Moving his way up the civil service ladder, by 1893 Frank Gibbon was appointed Senior Inspector of Immigrants. By the time Linton Gibbon, born in 1888, was thirteen years old. He was, as he describes himself, "a cantankerous little fellow". Being one of eight children to Catholic parents no doubt explains his need for space and freedom. After a year's spell in a drugstore, he says he found himself on Nelson Island, the recipient quarantine island for newly arrived Indians. At the age of 14, Linton had obtained a job to provide meals - breakfast and dinner - for some 1200 to 1400 Indians. Perhaps he acquired the job as a result of his father's close connections to the administration of East Indian immigration. It may also have been that he was a relatively mature young man for his age, as the rest of his biographical account reveals. He recalls that:

Every morning, there was a daily store of rice, sugar, potatoes, sheep etc., enough food to last to provide two meals a day... about 10,000 chupattis were cooked ... I have eaten many of these...I would be given a kerosene tin, full of Indian butter, which they called ghee, made from cows in India, and specially imported for them²⁹.

After one year of doing this job on Nelson Island, in 1903, at the age of 15, Linton Gibbons made the trip to India with the time-expired Indians. Earning a free return passage back to Trinidad, he travelled via London on the British India steamer *Gurkha*. From this point, demonstrating all the signs of a young and daring man, he spent some time on the continent of Europe, and then traveled to Cork University where he had a cousin studying law. Gibbons had a short stint at university education in Cork but seemed to have more of a practical bent and attached himself at the end of one year to a shipbuilding firm in Belfast as an engineering trainee. Having first contracted diphtheria and nearly died, he then experienced the tragedy of losing all his belongings in a fire. At his father's summons, Gibbons returned to Trinidad and was employed by George Huggins as an overseer on his cocoa estate near Siparia.

Postscript

And so I located the possibilities and spaces for my Irish overseer, finding for him a legitimate context him in Trinidad, with professional, personal and religious connections to others in this society. This exposure to the history of the Irish in Trinidad in the nineteenth century, and my own experience of contemporary Ireland, allows me to rub together fire sticks of imagination and reality, and to construct a credible Irish character for a novel, warts and all.

NOTES

¹ Rodgers notes "The Irish had nonetheless never limited their Caribbean destinations to British colonies. In the early 1670s a visitor came upon a settlement of one to two hundred Irish on Guadeloupe ". See Nini Rodgers, "The Irish in the Caribbean 1641-1837: An Overview" *Irish Migration Studies in Latin America*, Vol. 5, n°3 (November 2007) 150. See also Hilary McD Beckles "A 'riotous and unruly lot': Irish indentured servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713", *William and Mary Quarterly* Third Series, Vol. 47, No. 4 (Oct., 1990), 503-522

² Brinsley Samaroo, *The Art of Garnet Ifill: Glimpses of the Sugar Industry*, (Hertfordshire, Great Britain: Hansib Publications, 2003) 52

³ Ibid., quoted by Samaroo, p. 52.

⁴ Ibid., 52.

⁵ Rodgers, "Irish in the Caribbean 1641-1837:An Overview", 147.

⁶ Louis B Homer, "When the Irish Came" *Trinidad Express Newspaper*, Story Created: Feb 6, 2011. http://www.trinidadexpress.com/news/When_the_Irish_came-115452139.html

⁷ Anthony De Verteuil, *Sylvester Devenish and the Irish in Nineteenth Century Trinidad* (Port of Spain: Paria Publishing Co. Ltd., 1986) v.

⁸ Edward Lanzer Joseph, *History of Trinidad*, (London:F.Cass,1838), 272

⁹ The cedula of population in 1776 was an edict by the representative of the King of Spain, José de Gálvez, opening Trinidad to immigration from, primarily, the French Caribbean islands.

Negotiated by Phillipe Rose Roume de Saint-Laurent, a key figure in Trinidad's colonial history, the edict consists of 28 articles governing several forms of land grants to encourage population growth, natalization of inhabitants, taxation, armament of slave owners, the duty and function of a militia to protect the island, and merchant and trade issues. The edict invited persons of the

Roman Catholic faith who would swear loyalty to the Spanish Crown to receive land allotments in sizes depending on their race and heritage. Specifically, it granted 32 English acres (130,000 square metres) of land to each Roman Catholic who settled in Trinidad and half as much for each slave that they brought. 16 acres (65,000 m²) was offered to each free person of color, or *gens de couleur libre*, as they were later known, and half as much for each slave they brought. The effect of the cedula was immediate, as what had once been a small colony of 1000 in 1773 had boomed to 18,627 inhabitants by 1797.

<http://www.pariapublishing.com/cedula1783.htm>

¹⁰ E.L. Joseph, quoted in De Verteuil, "Sylvester Devenish", 6.

¹¹ De Verteuil, "Sylvester Devenish", 11.

¹² Ibid.,11

¹³ From my sampling of the period between 1914 and 1920, there were for instance many newspaper advertisements for the sale of Crown Lands and for cocoa estates that were being sold out by other landowners. A parallel if earlier example is that of Thomas Thistlewood of Jamaica. Thistlewood, born in Lincolnshire in England migrated to Jamaica in 1750 when he was 29 years old as an overseer of the Egypt sugar plantation. Later he would become a landowner himself. He left a graphic diary of his sexual encounters as well as life on the plantations which has been a valuable source of data for historians of slavery. See Douglas Hall, *In Miserable Slavery: Thomas Thistlewood in Jamaica, 1750-86*, (United Kingdom: Macmillan,1999.)

¹⁴ A Puisne Judge is a rank other than Chief Justice and these judges were of inferior status, serving in the lower courts and courtrooms of the island.

¹⁵ De Verteuil, "Sylvester Devenish", 16.

¹⁶ Ibid., 11.

¹⁷ Ibid., 41.

¹⁸ "A Brief History of the Roman Catholic Parish Church of Saints Paul and Patrick, Newtown" Parish records. Undated. My thanks to Joycelyn Germain for providing copy of this document.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ See for confirmation that this name is generally viewed as originally Irish

<http://www.houseofnames.com/taffe-family-crest>

²¹ St Patrick Parish Records "Brief History of the Roman Catholic Parish Church of Saints Paul and Patrick, Newtown"

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ De Verteuil, "Sylvester Devenish", 44.

²⁵ Ibid.,17. Kernahan and Devenish are two of the small Irish-related elite whose life stories De Verteuil was able to trace with some detail in *Sylvester Devenish and the Irish in Nineteenth Century Trinidad*

²⁶ Ibid., 43.

²⁷ Marianne Ramesar, "The Expatriates" in *Across the Dark Water: Ethnicity and Indian Identity in the Caribbean*, David Dabydeen and Brinsley Samaroo (Eds) (Warwick University Caribbean Studies, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Education Ltd,1966). 175-200.

²⁸ De Verteuil makes no specific mention of Frank Gibbon, perhaps because his focus tended to be on the Police, Military and the Church; he does mention that many of the Irishmen came as civil servants.

²⁹ Ramesar, "The Expatriates", 176.