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The Newsletter of the Barbados Genealogy Group (BGG)

# Connections



## DLOC WEBSITE

"A forum for family researchers in Barbados and the diaspora to stay connected through news, articles, tips and tricks."

### BGG Objectives

- Encourage and promote family research.
- Foster communication, cooperation, mentorship.
- Educational talks, discussions and workshops.
- Share resources.
- Develop presentation skills.
- Advocacy in family research.
- Provide encouragement and support to young people in researching their family history.

### Mission Statement

"To inspire and encourage Barbadian-related family history research and to foster the development of individual and shared identities."



# dLOC

DIGITAL LIBRARY OF THE CARIBBEAN

The continued digitization of website includes two collections records makes it convenient for that can be useful for research of persons to conduct genealogical Barbadian genealogy. research within the comfort of their own home.

The Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC) website – [www.dloc.com](http://www.dloc.com) - is a cooperative digital library resource from and about the Caribbean. This organization partners with institutions to provide online access to digitized versions of Caribbean cultural, historical and research materials, which are currently held in archives, libraries, and private collections. The

Under the collection of the Barbados Archives Department, persons can find the *Proved Wills Index, 1860 – 1959* and the *Inventories of Property and Personal Effects, 1764 – 1888 index*. Both collections can be helpful in identifying the year that an ancestor died since most wills are probated soon after the death of a person and inventories of property were conducted soon after a will is read.

# THE IRISH: UNWELCOMED MIGRANTS?

The Irish who came to Barbados during the 17th century were often times greatly despised and disregarded by the English colonists.

Some Irish entered indentureship arrangements with English merchants to escape famines, high levels of unemployment and English military disruption in their homeland. Their travel cost, food, clothing, and shelter on the plantations were covered and in exchange they agreed to work for a period of up to 7 years, after which their masters were to offer "freedom dues". This could include a small parcel of land and a sum of money.

Many Irish, however, were forcefully sent to the island. In September 1649, prisoners of war were sent to the island by Oliver Cromwell after the capture of Drogheda, Ireland. In 1654 Governors of several Irish counties received orders to arrest all unemployed men and women, children who were in hospitals or workhouses, and all prisoners for them to be "Barbado'ed". As a result, the number of Irish greatly increased from the 1650s causing great concern to the local authorities.

Governor William Willoughby expressed apprehension in 1667 that over half of the 4,000 militia men on the island were Irish. He requested that the officials in England send additional servants to the island who were not Irish.

This mass influx of Irish to the island resulted in the English colonists seeking to restrict and oppress these migrants. Many of them were imprisoned, physically abused, publicly flogged, victimised, and even deported from the island. They did possess legal rights and could take their matters before the law courts if they perceived they were being mistreated and for breach of contract. For example, in December 1656 an Irishman named Patrick Cornelius filed a complaint in the court that while being punished by his master, his leg was severely injured



resulting in the loss of use of his leg. The magistrate ruled in his favour and declared him a freeman as compensation. However, few Irish took their matters before the court and those who did, faced further abuse and hardship. One example also occurred in December 1656 when an Irish servant named Daniel Duncombe, took his master, Captain John Symmonds, before a magistrate for failing to pay him his "freedom dues" upon completion of his indentureship. Not only did he refused to pay him when ordered by the magistrate and later the Governor, but gave him a severe beating for having the audacity to take legal action against him. Eventually he was paid from the public treasury.

The Irish were considered by the English colonists as disobedient, lazy, aggressive, and of "a backward culture" who were "good for nothing but mischief". In 1675, planters stated that they found Irish to be "of small value". The following year, Governor Atkins echoed the complaints of the planters to British officials stating that "the planters are wary of [the Irish] for they prove commonly idle..." Not only were they held in low

regards but were kept in slave-like conditions, worked in field gangs with enslaved Africans, and were mistreated by the planter class.

English settlers ultimately feared that the Irish would rise up in rebellion or join the enslaved population in revolt. In 1655 Governor Searle learnt of a rebellion in Thicketts which involved several Irish servants and enslaved Africans. On 15th July, 1656 the Governor learnt of a rebellion involving Irish servants on the estate of Robert Margott. Investigations into the rebellion led to the arrest and imprisonment of 5 Irishmen who declared that they were opposed to the "furtherance of the English nation." The Irish were suspected to be involved in the islandwide slave conspiracy of 1675 and the aborted slave revolt of 1692 but their involvement was never proven.

Englishmen fears were heightened during periods of war with the French, which occurred during the 1660s and 1680s. They feared that the Irish would either run off or aid the French who were also Catholic.

By the 1720s their numbers had declined, due to migration either to the USA or Jamaica. With declining numbers and the cessation of war with France, the Irish sought less confrontation with their English masters. The Irish freemen and women sought to live quietly and obscurely in the back country and were deemed by the English as "tolerable social misfits".

*Source: Beckles, Hilary. "A Riotous and Unruly Lot: Irish Indentured Servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713"; Beckles, Hilary, and Verene Shepherd. Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader. Kingston [Jamaica: Ian Randle, 2000. Print. Pp.226-238*

# IS YOUR SURNAME GRANT?

By Dr. Patricia Stafford

In the last *Connections* I wrote about the origin of the name McLean and how some people in the island may have taken their name from the Jacobite rebels who were transported to Barbados after the 1745 Rebellion in the British Isles.

MaccLean is obviously a Scottish name but, many will not realise that Grant is another name which comes from Scotland. In the *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, James Brandow wrote about the family of William Grant who owned Castle Grant and arrived from Strathspey, Scotland, about 1671. William Grant had close connections with the Scottish elite, but here is the story of a number of Grants who arrived in the island as prisoners.

The document, RB3/37/449, at the Barbados Department of Archives is headed with the note

“Several persons found Guilty of High Treason“, “each of them unfortunately engaged and concerned in the late unnatural rebellion,” They were conveyed here by Samuel Smith of London, merchant, to serve seven years to commence” from the time of arrival in a colony or plantation in America.” They arrived here sometime prior to September 1748 when their sentences would start and no less than eleven of

these men on the ship were named Grant. There were four John Grants, three Alex Grants, Peter, Archibald, Congar and James Grant.

Calum I MacLean, a Scottish folklore expert, tells their story in a book, *The Highlands*, published in 1959. Although the elite of the Grant clan supported King George III when the “Bonnie Prince” Charles Stuart, raised an army in Scotland to re-claim what he believed to be his father’s rightful throne, the Grants who lived in the area of Glen Morrison went to fight for the Prince at the battle of Culloden. But the battle was lost for the Prince and his loyal followers became outlaws. They were chased down by the local chieftain, Ludovick Grant and his men, and when they could not be caught were promised a free pardon if they would surrender. But that was a lie, and instead they were captured in chains, shipped here to Barbados and set to work on the plantations.

So is your name Grant? And if so you may be descended from a slave owner, from someone who lived on a slave owner’s plantation, from a proud Scottish rebel – or simply because an ancestor liked the sound of a name associated with rebellion.

## ST. MATTHEW’S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Knowing history and geography can prove quite useful when engaging in genealogical research. This knowledge can be of great assistance in relation to the various churches located around the island since they provide persons with various records relating to ancestry such as baptism, marriage, and burial information.

One of the many Anglican churches located on the island of Barbados is St. Matthew’s Anglican Church at Jackmans, St. Michael. This church

was built on three-quarters of an acre of land from Friendship Plantation which was owned by a Mr James Rogers. The cornerstone of this church was laid on 21 November 1829 and it was consecrated on 18 March 1830. However, the church was totally destroyed by the hurricane which hit Barbados on 11 August 1831. The church was rebuilt in 1832 at



a cost of five hundred and sixty-six pounds (£566) with local funds and a subsidy from Bishop William Hart Coleridge. In 1841, James Rogers donated another half-acre of land to extend the burial ground.

Deposited at the Barbados Department of Archives are various records from this church. They are:

Baptism records 1840 – 2007

Marriage records 1836 - 1984

Burial records 1844 – 2009

Unbaptised persons and stillborn records 1913 – 1963

Confirmation rolls 1893 – 1957

Communicants’ Register (Electoral Roll) 1937 – 1946

This church served persons in the surrounding districts of Friendship, Belle, Waterford, Jackmans, Lears, Near Lears/Bibby’s Lane, Neils Plantation, Lower Estate, Dayrells, Cane Wood, and others.

Before the establishment of this church, the nearest Anglican church that persons from these districts attended was St. George Parish Church.

Source:

[Anglican Diocese of Barbados: St. Matthew – www.anglican.bb/matthew](http://www.anglican.bb/matthew)

## BGG ARCHIVES

## SOME RECORDS FROM THE BARBADOS ARCHIVES DEPT.

### Presentations for 2021 on YouTube:

“Tracing Barbadian Genealogies Using Online Sources Pt. 1”—Nicholas Mayers

<https://youtu.be/COTwjOwVDBU>

“Discovering My Roots through Old Barbados Maps” - James Webster

<https://youtu.be/yPIIKuWMzL8>

### Past Issues of Connections:

<https://barbadosgen.wordpress.com/connections-newsletter/>

Lists of Inhabitants with Archives References.

RB9/3/1 St Thomas 1890

RB9/3/3 St George 24 March 1739/40

RB9/3/4 Parish not named but probably Christ Church after 1758

RB9/3/5 St John 1774

RB9/3/6 St Peter 1789

RB7/26 and 27. Manumissions, 1832 to 34, sorted by owner and sorted by slave name.

### SOME IMMIGRATION RECORDS

The Barbados Department of Archives contains a variety of records which can be useful when conducting genealogy research. Among the many records deposited at this institution are emigration records which span the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. The following are a list of emigration records contain at this institution.

**Victoria Emigration Society 1893-1953:** Records of women who migrated from Barbados to Canada, United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

**District A Emigrants registers/Panama Register 1904-1912:** This contains registers of persons that emigrated from Barbados to Panama and other Caribbean Islands. The records contain the name, sex, age, abode, parents' names, destination, emigration agent, contractor, and period of contract.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**July—Tracing Barbadian Genealogy Using Online Sources Pt. II — Nicholas Mayers**

**September & November —TBA**

**Submission of articles for our upcoming newsletter are welcomed and can be submitted via email to [library@barbmuse.org.bb](mailto:library@barbmuse.org.bb)**

### Executive of the BGG >>>

NAME	ROLE
Harriet Pierce	Facilitator
Dr. Patricia Stafford	Deputy Facilitator
Marie-Claire Lyder	Secretary
Nicholas Mayers	Information Officer Editor
Angela Skeete	Education Officer

The Barbados Museum and Historical Society was established in 1933 by an Act of Parliament. It is housed in historic buildings which were originally used as the military prison of St. Ann's Garrison.

The Shilstone Memorial Library is a research library. It is open Monday to Friday and every 2nd and 4th Saturday 9am – 1pm.

**Contact Harriet Pierce, Librarian for further information.**

**Address:** St Ann's Garrison, St Michael, Barbados.

**Phone:** 1 246 538 0201

**Email:** [library@barbmuse.org.bb](mailto:library@barbmuse.org.bb)

