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THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SLAVERY: SANDY POINT PLANTATION AND THE PRINCE STORR MURDER CASE

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ABSTRACT

The American Revolution led to dramatic changes in the demography of the Bahamas. As noted by Craton and Saunders in Islanders in the Stream (1992), the influx of the American Loyalists and their slaves saw the overall population of the Bahamas double and the percentage of African slaves in the population increase to above 50 percent. This period also saw the expansion of settlement to many of the Bahamian islands previously depopulated since the end of the Lucayan period.

Understanding the culture of Loyalist settlements outside of Nassau has been hampered by a lack of records. Craton and Saunders point out that only one Loyalist diary exists from this period, Charles Farquharson's journal from his plantation on San Salvador. Although Kathy Gerace has provided a comparative framework on three Loyalist plantations on San Salvador (Gerace, 1982), Farquharson's plantation has been the focus of much of the investigation of Out Island slave life because it allowed for the integration of the demographic data available in slave registers with the more qualitative information from Farquharson's journal.

Farquharson's journal, however, is not the only qualitative source that can be used to interpret the demographic trends on an Out Island plantation. In 1833, there was a slave murder at Sandy Point plantation on San Salvador that resulted in a murder trial in Nassau of the slave overseer, Prince Storr, which included extensive written testimonies from numerous Island inhabitants, slave and free. These narratives are used not only to recount one of the dramatic events of pre-emancipation Bahamas, but also to better understand the demographic trends in the slave populations. The combined Farquharson/Storr accounts suggest that Out Island slavery was characterized by unstable hierarchies caused by a weak or absent planter class and fairly strong slave family networks and a growing slave population. Creolization seems to have been widespread. Sandy Point, however, did not exhibit these trends which may have contributed to the instability, and ultimately the murder, at the plantation.

INTRODUCTION

I have co-directed a short-term study abroad program for DePaul University each December for the past several years. As part of that course, I have had my students study one plantation in order to get a better understanding of slave life. I chose Sandy Point plantation because of its accessibility during our time on San Salvador and asked the students to use the slave registers along with their observations of the plantation ruins, to interpret slavery on San Salvador. They used Gail Saunders analysis of Farquharson plantation as a model for their own work. Working with them each year has been a valuable research exercise, and while this paper is my own analysis of the various sources, I am nevertheless indebted to my students for working with me on this project.

San Salvador has a special place in the study of slavery in the Bahamas. Because Charles Farquharson left the only extant journal of an Out Island Planter from the plantation period, his plantation has been the most intensively studied outside of New Providence.[1] Several years ago in my work with my students,

[1] Charles Farquharson, *A Relic of Slavery: Farquharson's Journal for 1831-32,* Ormond J. McDonald, ed., (Nassau: The Deans Peggs Research Fund, 1957).

Grace Turner from the Antiquities, Monuments & Museums Corporation pointed me toward similar records for Sandy Point plantation.[2] In this case it is not a planter journal but a transcript of one of the most dramatic slave murder trials in the Bahamas in the pre-emancipation period. In my paper, I would like to not simply narrate the dramatic events of 1833 at Sandy Point, but also provide some of the demographic context that might explain these events and in turn expand on our understanding of the nature of slavery on San Salvador in the 1820s and 1830s.

SLAVERY IN THE BAHAMAS

The history of slavery in the Bahamas has been a ripe topic for research during the past several decades. Historians like Michael Craton and Gail Saunders have developed a picture of Bahamian slavery that contrasts sharply with the Caribbean generally. Although still an unjust and morally corrupt institution, Bahamian slavery was more benign than its counterparts in other parts of the Americas. Bahamian slaves did not suffer from the high death rates, sex ratio imbalances and harsh working conditions of the Caribbean sugar islands. The Amelioration Acts passed by the British Parliament in the 1820s, also provided slaves more legal protections than existed in the United States during this same period. Moreover, as emancipation approached in 1834, many slaves on the Out Islands had far greater autonomy than slaves on mainland American plantations as white planters moved away to Nassau, or left the Bahamas completely.[3]

Slave demographics are much better understood in the British colonies than they are in the antebellum United States because of the mandatory registration of slaves beginning in the 1820s. From 1822 to 1834, The Bahamas made a triennial census of all slaves, including their location, sex, age, origin (Creole or African), race (black or mulatto), and in later censuses, occupation. From these records, we know that by 1822, the Bahamian slaves could be described as a relatively healthy and stable population. Sex ratios were relatively balanced, allowing most slaves to find a partner. Birth rates were higher than death rates, allowing for a gradual population increase. Overall the age pyramids show that the slave population was fairly healthy with a high percentage of children demonstrating slave fertility. According to Craton and Saunders, "there were two peaks of mortality in early childhood, in the first few months and around the age of two, and a steadier but still high rate of erosion among slaves of working age," but the rates were still lower than West Indian slaves populations generally. Two important trends limited the demographic growth of the slave population—the out migration of slaves from the Bahamas (restricted in 1823) and the increased manumission of slaves.[4]

Based on the slave laws from the 1820s, we also have some idea of the lifeways of slaves. The amelioration laws required slaves be provided with basic provisions, and nearly all Bahamian slaves had the opportunity to augment their diet from individual provision fields and fishing. The slave registers also suggest that most slaves lived in "stable monogamous marriages,. . . nuclear households, . . .and extended famil[ies]." By 1822, 65 percent of the slaves lived in nuclear families with two parents, 17 percent in families with one parent, and only 18 percent lived alone or with only a partner.[5]

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[2] For a brief summary of the case see Grace Turner, "An Archaeological Record of Plantation Life in the Bahamas," *Journal of the Bahamas Historical Society,* 14(1992):35.

[3] Michael Craton and Gail Saunders, *Islanders in the Stream: A History of the Bahamian People*, vol. 1 (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1992), ch. 16: Howard Johnson, *Bahamas from Slavery to Servitude: 1783-1933* (Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, 1996), ch. 3.

[4] Craton and Saunders, *Islanders,* p. 273.

[5] Craton and Saunders, *Islanders,* ch. 17.

In addition to having a healthy slave population with strong nuclear family structures, the Out Islands were also characterized by a weak to non-existent planter class. The decline in cotton production due to soil erosion and the chenille bug (an important reminder of the strong interconnection between the environment of the Bahamas and its history), led to the exodus of white planters from the Out Islands and the Bahamas generally. These planters removed not only themselves, but also many of their slaves—Craton and Saunders note at least 20 percent of the slave population, and probably a similar or greater number of planters, left the Islands between 1816 and 1823 when inter-colonial transfers were restricted.[6]

SLAVE DEMOGRAPHICS ON SAN SALVADOR

San Salvador (or Watling's Island as it was then known) mirrors these trends. Although the slave population in 1822 was almost identical to the slave population in 1834 (355 to 357), these numbers mask the actual demographic growth. Between 1821 and 1823, planter Burton Williams removed 75 percent of his slaves to Trinidad so that by 1825, the slave population had dropped to 288. In spite of further transfers in succeeding years, the population increased back to its earlier level. The sex ratio on the island shows a similarly healthy population. Although the sex ratio in 1822 was 1.2:1, it was 1:1 by 1834. Most slaves on the island lived on relatively small plantations—of the eight plantations in 1834, only one had more than 100 slaves, and five had less than fifty. Moreover, most of these slaves had little or no supervision from white planters. Missing on the island was a strong planter class. Although the 1810 census reported 21 whites on the Island, by 1834, Charles Farquharson may have been the only white planter remaining.[7]

What did these demographic trends mean for the social and community structure of specific plantations? Historians have given Charles Farquharson's plantation considerable attention because of his journal. Farquharson was from Scotland and by the 1820s was married to Kitty Dixon, a free mulatto and mother of John Dixon of Dixon Hill Plantation. Of Farquharson's 35 slaves in 1822, 37 percent were African, and 49 percent were under the age of 20. The plantation had a strong family structure; only four African-born slaves lived outside a family unit. By 1834, the slave population had grown to 52; the growth due almost all to natural increase (purchases and sales had left a net increase of one). The percentage of African slaves had declined to 19 percent. Five households can be identified in the 1822 register and although the 1834 register shows more single individuals, Craton and Saunders suggests this may represent separate housing by sex for older children and young adults rather than an actual breakdown in the family structure.[8]

The story of the Storr slaves is a bit more complicated. In 1822, the slaves owned by the Storr family appear on three registers—the estate of John Storr Sr., John Storr Jr, and Eliza Storr (John Storr Jr.'s wife). John Storr Sr. and Eliza Storr both owned slaves on San Salvador in 1822, John Storr's probably at Sandy Point and Eliza Storr's at Polly Hill.[9] In

[6] Craton and Saunders, *Islanders,* p. 225.

[7] Craton and Saunders, *Islanders,* ch. 16.

[8] There also seems to be a pattern of listing recently born slave children at the end of the slave register. This discussion of the Farquharson's slave community is drawn from Craton and Saunders analysis in *Islanders*, ch. 18. Kathy Gerace reviews the material remains of Farquharson's Plantation, Sandy Point, and Fortune Hill plantations in "Three Loyalist Plantations on San Salvador, Bahamas," *The Florida Anthropologist* 35 (December 1982):4; Kathy Gerace, "Early Nineteenth Century Plantations on San Salvador, Bahamas: The Archaeological Record," *The Journal of the Bahamas Historical Society*, 9 (1987):14-21,

[9] The earlier history of Sandy Point is more difficult to determine. Kathy Gerace notes that the

1822, John Storr, Sr. owned 53 slaves—thirteen on Rum Cay, one in Nassau, one captured during the War of 1812 by the Americans, and thirty-eight on Watling's Island. Only four of the 38 (11 percent) seem not to be a part of a family unit and one-third were born in Africa. They seem to have created five distinct family units, three with two parents present and two single-parent households. Although these slaves probably formed the original slave community at Sandy Point, their lives were disrupted in order to settle John Storr's estate. In 1825, his trustees sold all of the slaves to Robert Butler and they were removed to Rum Cay.

The demographic pattern of Eliza Storr's slaves mirrors those of Charles Farquharson and her father-in-law, John Storr. Eliza Storr was the heir of Nicholas Martin Almgreen and owned her slaves outright. Eliza Storr had 40 slaves in 1822 and 31 were located on San Salvador. Her slaves on San Salvador were probably originally centered on Polly Hill plantation, the former Almgreen estate; although by 1833 they seemed to be divided between Polly Hill and Sandy Point. The slaves can be grouped into three family units in 1822, two households headed by two parents and the other one by a single mother. Two of these households were extended families, however, with older daughters having children of their own. Only one of the slaves seems to be single. Eliza Storr had a much higher percentage of creole slaves, already 87 percent in 1822. Forty-two percent were under the age of 20. By 1834, the plantation has four family units and only two adult slaves appear to be within these family units. Half a dozen very young slaves (less than five years old) appear at the bottom of the register but were almost certainly the offspring of the now adult children listed in the family units above.[10]

What do these demographic trends suggest? Allan Kulikoff has shown for the Chesapeake that as slave population sex ratios become more balanced, the percentage of creole slaves increases, and family structures became more stable, a process of acculturation or creolization occurs in which African cultural traits are transformed into an Afro-American culture. Studying the material culture of the southeast North America, Leland Ferguson and James Deetz saw similar trends of creolization—the reinterpretation of African cultural traits in a New World context. On the mainland, this process occurred over the course of the eighteenth century and seems to have been replicated on at both Farquharson's and Polly Hill plantation by the 1820s—about a generation after the slave settlement.[11]

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first owner of the estate was Bud Cade Mathews who was granted the land in 1803 and appears to have been resident by 1805. John Storr, Sr. received a grant of land on San Salvador from the crown in 1814. John Storr himself may have been resident on the island after that date, but he has died by 1822. See Land Grant Book L1, Department of Archives, Nassau, The Bahamas.

[10] Sandra Riley, *Homeward Bound: A History of the Bahama Islands to 1850 with a Definitive Study of Abaco in the American Loyalist Plantation Period* (Miami: Island Research, 1983), 106; Personal Conversation with Kathy Gerace (2003). The succeeding discussion of the Storr slaves is drawn from the various slave registers held in the Department of the Archives, Nassau, The Bahamas. It seems likely that the various Storr slaves were commingled on at least two plantations. Charles Farquharson in his journal reported allowing the slaves go to visit Old Ben's funeral at Polly Hill in December 1832. Ben's death is reported in Eliza Storr's 1834 slave register. At the same time, at least one of the slave families identified in Eliza Storr's register, headed by the slave woman Elsy, were reported living at Sandy Point. See Farquharson's *Journal*, p. 80.

[11] Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground: Archaeology and Early African America, 1650-1800* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992); James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: An*

The case of John Storr Jr.'s slaves is strikingly different. Until 1828, most of John Storr, Jr.'s slaves were located in Nassau and on Rum Cay. In 1822, John Storr owned 9 slaves including Prince Storr, then 28 years old and living in Nassau. None of the slaves were under the age 10, and included only one probable couple—Caulker and Rachel, aged 64 and 50. Caulker and a younger slave, Adam, were the only African-born slaves. By 1825, Storr's slave holdings had increased to 14—six in Nassau, seven on Rum Cay, and one on Watling's, the African, Adam. John Storr Jr. significantly increased both his slaveholding and his presence on the Island by 1828 (probably after he received his portion of his father's estate) when he has 28 slaves. Moreover, he shifts his slaveholding from Rum Cay to San Salvador. Although at least one set of slaves seems to have come from Eleuthera, some of these slaves were probably already on the island as they seem to be related to slaves already owned by Eliza Storr. Although the shift of slaves out of the Out Islands in the previous decade has been well documented, the case of John Storr is an important reminder that slave community formation may still have been occurring on at least some plantations late in the plantation period as planters were seeking greener pastures and shifting slaves from one island to another within the Bahamas. As with all but the last of Storr's slave registers, Prince Storr heads the list of slaves.

Storr's slaves don't seem to fit as clearly into nuclear family groupings. Although the register may reflect several couples—Caulker and Rachel, Quash and Sally, Jacob and Ruth, Kingston and Sue, only Jacob and Ruth may also have children included in listing. Unlike Farquharson's and Eliza Storr's slave holdings, where slaves and slave families can be tracked for twelve years through the registers, John Storr Jr.'s slaves are a more recent conglomeration. The slaves are relatively young, 58 percent are under the age of 20, and only three are African-born.

By 1831, Storr's slaveholdings have increased from 28 to 41. Again, all but two are located on Watling's Island. The additional slaves are all under the age of 20 except for one recent purchase in Nassau. Five of the new slaves are under the age of 2 and most certainly represent the children of the slave couples identified in 1828. By 1834, the number of slaves would increase to 47, all but three on Watlings. With three slaves dying since the previous register (and one being manumitted), the ten young slaves under the age of three account for this increase. Although broader kinship networks probably existed, by the early 1830s, the formation of nuclear families among the Sandy Point slaves was just beginning. Moreover, Sandy Point seems to include at least two different groups of slaves—one with long-standing connections to the island, and the other more recent immigrants, but with strong connections to John Storr and Nassau. Tensions would develop in the Sandy Point community along these fissures.[12]

THE PRINCE STORR MURDER TRIAL

Slave unrest was by no means unknown in the Bahamas or San Salvador in particular. One of the events Charles Farquharson recorded in his journal was a minor rebellion by a group of the slaves on his plantation. Importantly, the disturbance seems to have occurred when Farquharson was off the Island and his mixed-race son, James, was in charge of the plantation. Clearly, even in the presence of the slave master, accommodation and compromise were crucial given the relative isolation of San Salvador

Archaeology of Early American Life, 2nd ed. (New York: Anchor Books, 1996). For discussions of creolization and slave architecture in the Bahamas see Paul Farnsworth, "'Negroe Houses Built of Stone Besides Others Watl'd + Plaistered': The Creation of a Bahamian Tradition," *Island Lives: Historical Archaeologies of the Caribbean*, Paul Farnsworth, ed. (Tuscaloosa: The University Press of Alabama, 2001), 234-71.

[12] The origin of John Storr, Jr.'s slaves will be subject for further investigation.

and the lack of any real military or militia presence on the island. James's authority does not seem to have been recognized by the slaves, making his harsh treatment all the more unacceptable. Although the details of the insurrection cannot be recounted here, an altercation between James and one of the slaves, Alick, led to a general slave uprising and the Farquharsons called on Prince Storr from Sandy Point, and John Dixon from Dixon Hill, to assist with putting it down. Three of the key leaders of the uprising were sent to Nassau for trial, including Alick, but further slave unrest occurred at the plantation and Charles and James Farquharson took two additional slaves to Nassau for trial. Governor, Sir James Carmichael Smyth, urged leniency, however, noting both James Farquharson's mixed race and familiarity with the slaves, the inappropriate harshness of the punishments he meted out in his father's absence, and the need for greater accommodation to the slave population on an island so removed from white authority. He also noted the willingness of the slaves to submit to authority after the rebellion. All the slaves returned to San Salvador except for Alick who was ordered sold.[13]

The conditions for slave rebellion were even greater at Sandy Point where no white planter was present and the overseer, Prince Storr, was himself a slave and a relatively recent arrival to the island. We know relatively little of Prince Storr's youth. He was creole, or born in the New World, and may have been raised in Nassau. He is listed as living in Nassau in both the 1822 and 1825 slave registers, so in 1833, he had been on the Island no more than eight years. It is possible that like James Farquharson he was the illegitimate son of the plantation owner, John Storr, but there is no evidence of this as his race is consistently given as "Black" rather than "Mulatto." Therefore Prince Storr's authority would have been compromised by his race, slave status, short tenure at Sandy Point, and perhaps his lack of familiarity with plantation slavery or at least Out Island life. Moreover, the relative instability of the family and community structure on the plantation, outlined above, would have further exacerbated his management problems.[14]

One year after the return of the Farquharson slaves from their trial in Nassau, unrest broke out at Sandy Point. In July 1833, a passing schooner stopped at San Salvador and got news of "an atrocious murder". San Salvador did not have a resident magistrate at this time, so when the schooner brought the news back to Nassau, the royal governor, Blayney Balfour, sent a man-of-war with a magistrate to investigate (Carmichael Smyth having just been replaced as Royal Governor). He hoped that the "moral effect of a King's Ship being employed on the occasion would be good," and further he feared that news of the British Parliament passing gradual emancipation would bring a general slave insurrection. The visiting magistrate, John Podmare, took testimony from Prince Storr, a number of the Storr slaves, and from the Farquharsons. The trial is unique; because Prince Storr was himself a slave, testimony from the other slaves was admissible as evidence.

As the investigation unfolded the circumstances at Sandy Point seem to have been similar to the uprising at Farquharson's plantation the year before. The murdered slave, Sancho, was one of the slaves purchased by John Storr between 1825 and 1828. He had spent his teenaged years at Sandy Point and was about 19 in 1833. According to chief witness for the prosecution, Andrew Storr, on Friday, June 28, Prince Storr's wife, Teresa, accused Sancho of stealing ground nuts and directed Andrew to lock Sancho in the cellar of the plantation house to wait the return of her husband. When Prince arrived, he brought Sancho out of the cellar and

[13] Craton and Saunders, *Islanders,* pp. 354-6; Farquharson, *Journal,* 57-64.

[14] The transcript of the Prince Storr murder trial and the subsequent letters between Governor Balfour and the Colonial Office can be found in the Governor's Dispatches for 1833 in the Department of Archives, Nassau, The Bahamas, and in Bahamian Governor's Dispatches (C.O. 23/89) in the Public Record Office, London, England.

"collared him and dashed him down." He then directed Sancho to bring a ladder out from under the "Piazza," but Sancho objected that he couldn't carry it himself. It seems that Sancho may have just spent the two days as a run away without food (which may explain his need to steal the ground nuts).

Prince's anger seems to have flared, and he started to beat Sancho with a barrel stave and then put the ladder over Sancho's head and knocked him to the ground three times, each time Sancho rising between blows. Prince directed Andrew to bring a rope to tie up the slave. Sancho started to run away, but Prince, "ran after Sancho, and caught him, threw him down, sat upon him, and choked him—squeezed him hard round the neck with both hands." Although some slave witnesses reported seeing Prince also twisting Sancho's neck, Andrew denies this was the case.

Prince next directed Andrew to tie up Sancho in the "Negro House," and Prince Storr proceeded to flog Sancho "with a task line." When Prince may have become tired, he ordered Andrew to continue flogging Sancho. Once this stage of the flogging was complete, Prince ordered Sancho to be tied to a tree with his arms in the branches. Hunched over, Sancho was described as having "His face. .. looking down to the ground, and his back. . up." Prince began flogging Sancho once again and then tied another slave, James to Sancho. The second slave may have been a confederate of Sancho's, either in running away or in stealing the ground nuts.

The next day, Sancho was sent into the fields to weed, but he complained he was unable to do so and instead spent the day in "the house," possibly the plantation house and "he did no work that day." Sunday seems to have been a day of rest but on Monday, Sancho returned to work and fed the hogs. If events had ended there, this could have been another unrecorded case of the brutality of slavery, but on Tuesday after milking the cows and bringing the milk to the house, Sancho took sick with pains in his neck. Prince seems to have not taken Sancho's illness well and was reported to have screamed and "jumped" when he heard the news. Sancho was helped into the loft of the plantation house (he normally lived in the kitchen) where he died on Friday, just one week after his punishment. He was buried on Saturday. Although the witnesses against Prince Storr differ in minor details, they agree on the overall description of events.

The relationship of the witnesses against Prince Storr is important. Although Prince Storr had been a slave of John Storr since 1822, he seems to have had no family connections on the island other than his wife, Teresa. Although most of the other slaves were of recent acquisition, at least some of them are part of a larger family network. As noted above, the creation of nuclear families had been retarded at Sandy Point, but nevertheless many of the slaves were related to one another. Andrew Storr, the chief witness for the prosecution was the brother of Sancho Storr and reported that three of his sisters and his mother also lived at Sandy Point. This extended family was challenging the authority of the Prince Storr.[15]

The final witness for the prosecution was Doctor John Richardson who testified that Sancho Storr's death was consistent with the trauma he would have received from his punishment. It would have been possible for Sancho to have worked several days, the "inflammation" of his spine taking up to a week to kill him. Thus, the testimony that Sancho was able to work for several days after his punishment was not proof that his flogging and death were unrelated.

The plantation elites told a rival story. Although confirming many of the details reported by the slaves, the elites tried to down

[15] Andrew Storr reports that his mother is Elsie. Eliza Storr owns an "Elsy" who could be the right age to be Andrew and Sancho's mother. Andrew Storr, however, had been a slave of Alexander Forbes until 1825. It is possible that Eliza Storr had sold Elsy's children to Alexander Forbes before 1822. This suggests that there may be family connections between Eliza Storr and John Storr's slaves that predate John Storr Jr.'s slave purchases in the 1820s. Moreover, it is also seems likely as noted above that at least some of the two sets of slaves were commingled at Sandy Point by 1833.

play the level of violence against Sancho. Christiana Farquharson, Charles Farquharson's daughter, was staying at Sandy Point when Sancho Storr was punished. Farquharson was sitting on the Piazza, or front veranda at Sandy Point when Teresa confined Sancho to the cellar and the two "plantation mistresses" were able to view the proceedings in the yard when Prince returned. Farquharson denied that Prince knocked Sancho down and claimed that Prince was unsuccessful in putting the ladder over Sancho's head. She claims she didn't see Prince use any kind of violence against Sancho. She also reported seeing Sancho performing his chores the next week.

Both Christiana and her brother, James Storr, report that Prince treated the slaves humanly, kindly and affectionately. Charles Farquharson (who only the year before had called on Prince's assistance in putting down his own slave rebellion), explained "He has always observed him [Prince] to be a kind and humane and attentive to their [the slaves] wants." Moreover, the master of the cargo vessel who regularly visited Sandy Point plantation, William Claxton, reported that that Prince "is very kind to the people—too kind—he believes the Prisoner to be a humane kind hearted man." Only one slave, Leah, testifies in Prince Storr's defense.

Prince Storr gave a still different version of events. He testified that Andrew and Sancho had taken the ladder out from under the Piazza intending to break into the house and when discovered, ran away. Prince proceeded to punish Sancho, who remained in the yard, ladder in hand. Sancho did try to run off, was caught and given 29 stripes. Because Sancho was still "sulky and obstinant," Prince gave him several more lashings on Saturday. On Wednesday, Prince was away from the plantation and on his return asked Sancho if he had been idle—which Sancho denied in spite of other slaves reporting that he had stopped work the moment Prince had left. On Thursday, Prince went to Polly Hill and on his return his wife, Teresa, told him that Sancho was ill, and Sancho died the next day.

Prince reported that there was grumbling among at least some of the slaves almost immediately, so he asked both James Farquharson and John Dixon to come and view the body. Moreover, he told the slaves they could keep the body for a week and have the whole island view it for all he cared. Prince gave the slaves lumber and nails and in traditional Bahamian fashion, they built a coffin that night and buried Sancho the next day.

Where the actual truth lay was difficult for even John Storr, the plantation owner to determine. In a letter to Charles Farquharson, John Storr reported that the murder "has made a great noise here [Nassau]." Storr seemed really torn in whether to believe the charges or not, "I cannot give you any idea of the very painful feelings the receipt of the account brought by the *Traveller* gave to all of us, by Toby's statement to the most horrid cruelty was by Prince on the man Sancho." Although seemingly horrified by Prince's acts, Storr wants to believe the reports are untrue and explained, "I suspect that he [Toby] and Prince must have had some dispute." At the same time Storr kept coming back to the reality of the situation. Later in the letter, after asking Farquharson to help Prince to prepare his defense, Storr returns to Toby's description of Sancho's body, "raw all over and he [Sancho] was hung up the hands and his feet not allowed to touch the ground and a boy was put on his shoulders to bear all this weight upon him and that he was flog'd again and put into the stocks."[16]

Storr did have confidence in Podmore, the investigating magistrate (and also a slave owner) and seemed to genuinely want him to make a thorough investigation, which Storr hoped would acquit Prince, asking Farquharson to make sure that Podmore examined the backs

[16] Letter John Storr to Charles Farquharson, 24 July 1833, O'Brien Collection, Department of Archives, Nassau, The Bahamas. The "Toby" mentioned in John Storr's letter cannot be identified; neither John Storr Jr. nor Eliza Storr owned a slave named Toby. It might be a nickname for one of Storr's slaves brought to Nassau to testify at the trial, most likely Andrew Storr.

of the other slaves to see if they had any signs of having "at any time been cruelly treated." He also suggested that the "parties on both sides ought to be examined without [outside] privately, that each person might not know what the other says." At the same time, Storr noted that he was not contacting Prince directly because "some bad notice might be attributed to it."[17]

Although Governor Balfour had at first urged action against Prince, the local Bahamian elites did not support such action. In spite of the testimony of the slaves at Sandy Point and the evidence of Dr. Richardson, the Attorney General did not press for conviction, and the chief Justice further encouraged the jury that "there appeared to me to be little or no accordance between the principal witnesses for the crown in matters of fact," and the jury acquitted Prince Storr of murder.

After Prince's acquittal, John Storr, his master, petitioned the governor for Prince's return to Sandy Point. Although governor agreed that the witnesses did not provide sufficient proof for a conviction, he nevertheless believed that Prince Storr had acted inappropriately as overseer at Sandy Point and was responsible for the death of Sancho Storr. As a consequence he barred Prince Storr from returning to the island. Although he recognized that his decision might give other slaves the ground for making similar charges against the overseers as a way of removing them from supervision, he noted that anyone who acted as Prince Storr did was "unfit for his situation" and should be removed.

Just as the trial was coming to a conclusion, word reached Nassau of gradual emancipation. Slaves would be formally freed the next year, 1834, followed by a transition period when they would work under indentures. Slaves were fully emancipated in 1838. John Storr used the emancipation bill to create a loop hole that allowed for Prince Storr's return—he manumitted Prince, removing the governor's power to refuse the slave's return and Prince returned to Sandy Point, not only acquitted but also a free man. Balfour's superior in London saw the irony and criticized Balfour for his attempt to prevent Prince's return. The governor should have anticipated John Storr's action and rather than punishing Prince for the murder of his fellow slave, he instead returned to the island in triumph a free man.

CONCLUSIONS

This case is not only interesting for the dramatic events it retells, but the trial transcript provides important information on slave life and the Sandy Point community. As noted earlier, San Salvador had truncated elite. Christiana Farquharson's visit to Sandy Point replicated that of many isolated planter-class women visiting neighbors to enjoy female companionship. But the players highlight the differences in San Salvador. Christiana Farquharson was the free mulatto daughter of Charles Farquharson and her host, Teresa Storr, was a black slave. In the absence of white planters, class, rather than race or even slave status, were the determining factors for social differentiation. Similarly among the planters themselves, race was not a strong determining factor. The male leadership of the island—Charles Farquharson, James Farquharson, John Dixon, and Prince Storr—included one free white, two free mulattos and one black slave.

Christiana Farquharson also gives voice to the important division within the Sandy Point community suggested by the demographics. She explains that there was a long standing rivalry between the slave Elsy—mother to both Andrew and Sancho—and Prince's wife Teresa. The relative stability on Out Island plantations probably came less from the planter hierarchy and more from the family and kinship networks among the slaves. If planters used undue force, as was the case at both Farquharson's plantation under James Farquharson and at Sandy Point, the work systems broke down and the planters had to work jointly to regain control through a process of punishment and accommodation. The case of Sandy Point highlights the problems

[17] Ibid. This correspondence also suggests that Prince Storr was able to read, even if he was unable to write.

that instability within the slave community could create. Although slave overseers were probably not unusual by the 1830s when so many white plantation owners had left the Out Islands, Prince Storr did not have long-standing connections to the other slaves he supervised. It is telling that the oldest male slave in John Storr's slave list, Old Caulker, had died less than two years before, perhaps further weakening the social structure at the plantation. Caulker had moved with Prince to San Salvador from Nassau.

The trial transcript also provides some insight into the geography of the plantation itself. The plantation house (mostly likely originally built for John Storr Sr.) was not merely the home of Prince and Teresa Storr. The cellar, as can be seen today at Sandy Point, had its own entrance and probably had no access to the house itself since it could also be used to lock up Sancho Storr.[18] The first floor was probably the living quarters for Prince and Teresa, but the attic, which almost certainly was accessed by a stairway from within the house, was used by slaves so the plantation "master and mistress" would not have had complete privacy. The veranda or "piazzas" were important living and entertainment spaces and should not be viewed as appendages to the house. The kitchen was not only a work building but also housed some of the household slaves—not all slaves lived in the quarter—and Sandy Point seems to replicate North American distinctions of agricultural and domestic slaves.

Oddly enough, emancipation brings a kind of darkness to the historical record for San Salvador. We know far more about the people, events, and lifeways before 1834 than we do for the decades following. Prince Storr, free a year before his fellow slaves, lived until 1847, dying wealthy enough to have his will probated in Nassau. John Storr had died the year before leaving his estate to his wife, Eliza, and his will doesn't list Prince as an heir; nevertheless Prince obtained land both at Polly Hill and "The Village," perhaps as a gift from John Storr. Prince in turn leaves a house lot to Leah Millar and her son James Wright—possibly the same Leah who was the only slave to testify in his defense; James Wright was Prince's manager or overseer. Most of Prince's estate was placed under a trust controlled by Nassau merchants for the benefit of his wife, Teresa, during her lifetime, and eventually to his children, Thomas, Richard, and Maria. Family formation at Sandy Point had only been delayed.[19]

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[18] The lock to the cellar door was found in the excavation at Sandy Point. For the archaeology of Sandy Point see Gerace, "Three Loyalist Plantations"; Personal Conversation with Kathy Gerace (2003).

[19] Will of John Storr and Prince Storr, Department of Archives, Nassau, The Bahamas.

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