

# Places of Significant African Presence in Guyana

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The African Villages

By

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Some villages are places of significant African presence in Guyana. Following emancipation, communal villages and proprietary villages developed when African freedmen bought plantations or front lots of plantations from the European proprietors. Other African villages also sprang up which did not originate this way.

## VILLAGES ESTABLISHED ON PURCHASED PLANTATIONS

The African village movement which started in 1839 in British Guiana when the freedmen bought Plantation Northbrook was part of a Caribbean phenomenon which took place in other British colonies following emancipation. This is the view of Rawle Farley, economic historian, who stated: "The establishment of the village settlements of British Guiana forms one of the most remarkable phases of the whole Caribbean economic development."<sup>1</sup> He contended that the Act of Emancipation in 1833 "established the conditions under which freeholds might be easily acquired."<sup>2</sup> The freedmen having received their liberty desired to possess lands of their own. Another factor leading to the rise of the village movement was the number of abandoned cotton plantations which the freed Africans were able to purchase from the white planters. By 1838 cotton plantations in British Guiana were no longer lucrative because the British were buying cheaper cotton from the United States of America.<sup>3</sup> Some of the estates that were sold were coffee and cocoa estates. According to Young, by 1838 "fifty-eight of the eighty plantations on the Courantyne Coast were already abandoned; between the Berbice and the Mahaica Rivers the proportion was roughly the same, and on the Essequibo Coast there were but two isolated estates under cultivation."<sup>4</sup> The freedmen's possession of money to purchase this land is another factor that precipitated this movement.<sup>5</sup>

The terms of reference state that places of significant African presence e.g. villages established on the purchased plantations should be identified along with the names of the purchasers, original owner of the plantation, original name of

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<sup>1</sup> Rex Nettleford, ed., *Apprenticeship and Emancipation* (University of the West Indies, n.d.), 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>3</sup> The Village Movement. Retrieved 14 December 2020 from [www.guyana.org/features/guyanastory/chapter54.html](http://www.guyana.org/features/guyanastory/chapter54.html).

<sup>4</sup> Allan Young, *Approaches to Local Government* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958), 12.

<sup>5</sup> Nettleford, 78.

the plantation, date purchased and purchase price. Two kinds of villages arose from the purchase of land: communal villages and proprietary villages. According to Cruickshank the communal villages were “plantations bought as a whole in undivided shares by a number of people.”<sup>6</sup> He describes the proprietary villages as “front lots of land on plantations bought separately by individuals.”<sup>7</sup> It was the African freedmen who bought these lands from their white proprietors.

## **COMMUNAL VILLAGES**

### **ANN’S GROVE, EAST COAST DEMERARA**

Original name: Two Friends

Date when transport was passed: 5 May 1849

Name of African purchasers: The transport was passed to the following representatives of 76 freedmen - Benjamin Bobb, Fortune Scipio, Belfast Alexander, Nedd Hercules

Original owner: John Croal

Note: On buying Pln. Two Friends, John Croal name the eastern half of the plantation after his sister Ann.

Price; \$7,000<sup>8</sup>

## **BACHELOR’S ADVENTURE**

Purchasers: 33 African freedmen

Price: 5 cents per acre<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> David Granger, ed. and James Graham Cruickshank, *Scenes from the History of the Africans in Guyana* (Georgetown: Free Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>8</sup> “Ann’s Grove”, *Emancipation*, No. 7, 1999-2000, 32.

**BAGOTSTOWN, EAST BANK DEMERARA**

Date Purchased: Unknown

Original Name of Plantation: Peter's Hall

African-Guyanese purchaser: Bagot (porknocker)<sup>10</sup>

**BAGOTVILLE, WEST DEMERARA**

Original Name of Plantation: Pln. Mindenburg

Date of transport: 1843

Name of original owners: James Bagot and Justice Perry

African-Guyanese purchasers: Children of freedmen who owned land in Canal No. 1<sup>11</sup>

**BELLADRUM, WEST COAST BERBICE**

Purchasers of half of Pln. Belladrum: African freedmen<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> "Bachelor's Adventure," *Emancipation*, No. 7, 1999-2000, 34. Source: Oral village historians: Lack Clarke and Cleveland Glasgow), 34.

<sup>10</sup> "Bagotstown," *Emancipation*, Vol, 2, No. 14, 2006-2007, 23. Source: Oral historian, Godfrey felix, Village elder.

<sup>11</sup> Gershom O. Browne, *History of Bagotville Village*. Georgetown: Free Press, 1999, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Granger and Cruickshank, 4.

**BETERVERWAGTING, EAST COAST DEMERARA**

Original name: Pln. Beterverwagting

Date of transport: 15 April 1841

Purchasers: 62 freed Africans (Cruikshank, p. 3); 145 freed Africans (Adamson, p. 36)

Original owners: Mr. Dankett, Mr Murray

Price of plantation: \$\$22,000<sup>13</sup>

**BUXTON**

Original name: Pln. New Orange Nassau

Date of transport: 2 January 1841

Purchasers: 128 Freed Africans from Plns. Annandale, Non Pareil, Lusignan, and Met-en-Meerzorg.

Name of original owner: James A. Holmes

Price: \$50,000<sup>14</sup>

**DEN AMSTEL**

Original name: Den Amstel

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<sup>13</sup> Granger and Cruikshank, 3. See also Alan H. Adamson, *Sugar without Slaves* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1972), 36.

<sup>14</sup> Cruikshank, 2-3.

Purchasers: 125 freedmen

Original owner: John Craig

Date of Purchase: 1847<sup>15</sup>

Price: 1,604 pounds 3 shillings and 4 pence<sup>16</sup>

## **DINGWALL**

Name of Purchaser Kofi (Cuffy) Alexander

Date of Purchase: 1851<sup>17</sup>

## **FELLOWSHIP, WEST COAST DEMERARA**

Date Purchased: 1846

Purchasers: 25 Freed Africans (Cruikshank, p. 3), 83 Freed Africans (West)

Names of Purchasers: Ancestors of the Jacksons, Russells, Veiras, Jordans, Cummings, Hicksons, Archers, Blacks, Henrys, Jacobs, Hendricks, Greens, Lewis, Watertons, Daniels, Waddells, Barts, Thornes, Pollards. There were others but Ms. West states that these were more important.

Price: \$6,000<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> "African-Guyanese Monuments," *Emancipation*, Vol, 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 30.

<sup>16</sup> Rex Nettleford, ed., *Apprenticeship and Emancipation* (University of the West Indies, n.d.), 82.

<sup>17</sup> "Plantation Leeds and Dingwall (No. 40 Village), *Emancipation*, Vol. 2, No. 12, 2004-2005. Oral historian: Rudolph Kendall.

<sup>18</sup> Jacqueline Allen-West, *The History of Den Amstel & Fellowship-Guyana under Siege*. Retrieved from [www.guyanaundersiege.com/Historical](http://www.guyanaundersiege.com/Historical).

### **FRIENDSHIP, EAST COAST DEMERARA**

Original Name: Pln. Friendship

Date Purchased: 1841

Purchasers: 168 African freedmen

Price: \$80,000<sup>19</sup>

### **GIBRALTER, EAST BERBICE**

Purchasers: 20 freedmen

Price of land: \$4,383

### **GOLDEN GROVE, EAST COAST DEMERARA**

Original Name: Pln. Williamsburg

Date Purchased: 5 January 1848

Purchasers: 50 freed men including Bentinck and Tuckness Sancho<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> "Friendship," *Emancipation*, No. 7, 1999-2000, 36. Cruickshank states that 170 freedmen bought the plantation.

<sup>20</sup> Sancho Family History. [freepages.rootsweb.com/rossselwyn/genealogy/family.htm](http://freepages.rootsweb.com/rossselwyn/genealogy/family.htm).

**GOLDEN GROVE, WEST COAST BERBICE**

Date Purchased: 1838-1840

Purchasers: 14 African freedmen

Price of land: \$1,716<sup>21</sup>

**GOOD INTENT, WEST BANK DEMERARA**

Date Purchased: 1857-1858

Purchasers: Freedmen of the Congo and Oku (Yoruba) tribes

Original Owner: A Dutchman<sup>22</sup>

**HOPETOWN, WEST COAST BERBICE**

Date of Purchase: 12 October 1840

Purchasers: The Blair Brothers and 49 proprietors including Pompey Joseph and Jacob Wilson

Original owner: James Blair

Price: \$2,000<sup>23</sup>

**INVERNESS VILLAGE (NO. 8 VILLAGE), BERBICE**

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<sup>21</sup> Young, 13.

<sup>22</sup> "Good Intent," Emancipation, No. 7, 1999-2000, 38.

<sup>23</sup> Hopetown Village: a Close knit community. Retrieved from [www.kaieteurnewsonline.com](http://www.kaieteurnewsonline.com) on 28 November 2020. Another source claims that the eastern half of Pln. Perseverance was bought by 109 former slaves.



Purchasers: 18 African freedmen

### **ITHACA**

Date of Purchase: 3 December 1868

Purchasers: Ancestors of the Caesar, Goodchild and Frantzen families.

Original owner: Mr. Schumacher<sup>24</sup>

### **JOPPA**

Transport passed: 11 October 1892

Purchasers: Richard Richmond (purchased the western half of Joppa)

Original Owner: James Bagot

Note: Today sixty per cent of Joppa's population are East Indian.

### **KINGELLY, WEST COAST BERBICE**

Purchasers: Cudjoe McPherson and Jesse McPherson<sup>25</sup>

### **LEEDS (No. 51 Village)**

Original Name: Pln. Leeds (No. 51)

Date Purchased: 1840s

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<sup>24</sup> "Ithaca," Emancipation, No. 4, 1996-1997. Another source claims that Ithaca was purchased by 8 Freed Africans in 1842 for \$10,000.

<sup>25</sup> "Kingelly," Emancipation, Vol, 2, No. 13, 2004-2005, 22.

Purchasers: Kofi Alexander and his three brothers (Freed Africans)<sup>26</sup>

### **LICHFIELD, MAHAICA, WEST COAST BERBICE**

Date transported: 14 November 1840

Purchaser: Cudjoe McPherson (he divided the estate into 12 lots which he resold to other African freedmen namely, L. McPherson, J. McPherson, Q. London, T. Dodson, D. Richard, C. Bolingbroke, S. Tappin, M. Cudjoe, Q. Peters, P. Semple, J. Willoughby).<sup>27</sup>

### **LIMLAIR, CORENTYNE, EAST BERBICE**

Name of Purchasers: John Smith and Old Scott (former Indentured Africans) who bought the land on behalf of the other indentured Africans. They collected the cash from them and paid for the land. John Smith paid for the leeward half and Old Scott paid for the windward half.<sup>28</sup>

### **LOVELY LASS**

Purchasers: African freedmen<sup>29</sup>

### **MOCHA-ARCADIA, EAST BANK DEMERARA (Northern portion of Pln. Mocha)**

Date transported: 9 April 1842

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<sup>26</sup> "Pln. Leeds and Dingwall," *Emancipation*, Vol. 2, No. 12, 2004-2005, 20.

<sup>27</sup> "Lichfield Celebrates 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary," *Guyana Chronicle*, Sunday, 4 November 1990

<sup>28</sup> "Limlair," *Emancipation*, Vol. 1, No. 9, 26.

<sup>29</sup> "Lovely Lass," *Emancipation*, Vol. 2, No. 13, 2004-2005. Oral historian, villager Norma Grant, is the source.

Purchasers: African freedmen including Milton Frankland and Jacob Bagot

Original owner: Richard Grovner Butts<sup>30</sup>

### **NABACLIS, EAST COAST DEMERARA**

Original name: Pln. Williamsburg<sup>31</sup>

Date Purchased: 5 January 1848<sup>32</sup>

Purchasers: 50 shareholders including Bentinck and Tuckness Sancho.<sup>33</sup> However, by 1863 there were 70 shareholders including Bentinck Sancho, Hanover Simon, Jacob Pendleton, Richard Primus, Morison Niles, Thomas Edwin, Prince Goring, Henry Jack, John Baptiste, Frank Alick, Joe Jerrick, London Briscoe, Bonaparte Baird, Sydney Caesar, Ellen Gill, Hannah Dublin, Jukel Prince, Nathaniel Thomas, Robert Toney, Bristol Hopkinson, James Smith, Abraham Simon, William Clark, Sambo Thompson, Hanover Sammy, George Jack, James Moore, John David, Stably Barry, Samson Johnson, Giles Luke, Daniel Walcott, David Limerick, Bristol Newport, Trim Pompey, Nanny Jeremiah, Mars Mitchell, Gilbert Frank, Kitty Cudjoe, Paul Minkey, Horatio Reynolds, Jemima Tom, William Cummings, David Bramah, Philip Cupidore, Jeffrey Sumner, Thomas Clark, Smith Glasgow, Harry Joe, Stewart Mason, Prince Mason, Pollard Mason, Solomon Charles, Stephen Hopkinson, Gabriel Williams, Michael Porter, Samson Colin, Dick Morison, Johnny Bob, Hector John, Roger Cambridge, Stripe Adam, Playter Ben, Montrose Hopkinson, Minkey Ben, Daniel Isaac, Sammy William, Thomas Isaac, Benjamin Glasgow, Jacob Joe, George Bradford, Quamina Nestor, Joseph Joe, James

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<sup>30</sup> Joseph Pollydore, "Mocha-Arcadia Village," *Emancipation*, Number 2, 1994.

<sup>31</sup> Golden grove- A Place where Smiling Faces are Infused with a Bustle of Activity. Retrieved 20 June 2014 from <https://guyanachronicle.com/2014/06/20>.

<sup>32</sup> The Sancho Family of Guyana. Retrieved 28 November 2020 from [freepages.rootsweb.com/~rosselwyn/genealogy/family.htm](http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~rosselwyn/genealogy/family.htm).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

Charles, Pharoah Chase, Paul Augustus MacKinnon, William John Dovesgain or Dubigan, Primus Simon, Adam Adams, Edward Lammy, Ben Providence, Fatima, Grant, Lucy Cambridge, Philbert Horation, Colin Munro, Richard Tomas, Edward Ross, James Timmerman, Abel Williams.<sup>34</sup>

## **PERSEVERANCE, MAHAICA**

Date Purchased: 1838-1840

Purchasers: 109 freedmen purchased the western half of Pln. Perseverance.

Price: \$2,000<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Nabaclis. Retrieved 3 December 2020 from <https://l.bp.blogspot.com>.

<sup>35</sup> "Perseverance," *Emancipation*, No. 7, 1999-2000, 39.

## **PLAISANCE, EAST COAST DEMERARA**

Date Purchased: 1842

Names of Purchasers: Monday Afolá, James Alfred, January Alick, Slake Amouret, Sorelace Andries, William Arrundell, Steven Barnweld, Columbus Barnwell, Sultan Bob, Gulliver Bunbury, James Burnett, Yoeriden Carbery, Flofet Easton, Frederick Carey, Alvin Cummings, Cyrus Cupido, Victor Daniel, Mallriva Daniels, Friday D'Esperant, Forerets Doudlas, Cornelius Douglas, Cubrian Douglas, Pitt Ducas, Jacob Elder, Anthony Fraser, Rollie Fraser, Prince Furey, Greg Neptune, Henry Herbert, Caesar Ince, William S. Jaco, Flushling Jupiter, Success(sic) Jupiter, Sunday Len Duictel, Philip Liverpool, Robin Liverpool, Hamel Manuel, Cobus Martin, Peter McCloud, Rubey McFarlane, Furnelius McIntosh, Andrew Mingo, Annibal Mingo, Michael Mitchell, Mentor Pollard, Sundy Post, William Richardson, William Rogers, Frank Samuel, Paul Scooner, Isaac Scott, Pompey Semple, William Silley, Cato Simpson, Edward Smyrna, Louis Stay, Hercules Thomas, Sa Jose Tousseau, Alexander Trim, Walter Tyson, Emudmund Vigilant, Morris Williams, Simon Williams, Hercules Wills, James Wilson, John M. Pollydore, Ned Wilson, Sanderman Wilson.<sup>36</sup>

Original Owner: A.J. Watershodt<sup>37</sup>

Price: \$39,000

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<sup>36</sup>Laurence Clarke, ed., *Plaisance: From Emancipation to Independence and Beyond* (Beryl Adams Haynes, 2010), 12.

<sup>37</sup>Plaisance. Retrieved 27 November 2020 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plaisance\\_Guyana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plaisance_Guyana).

## **PHILLIPI**

Date Purchased: early 20<sup>th</sup> century

Purchasers: 28 Africans<sup>38</sup>

## **RELIEF VILLAGE**

Date of Purchase: 1841

No. of Purchasers: 20<sup>39</sup>

## **PLN. ROOME/NUMBER 5 VILLAGE, WEST COAST BERBICE**

Date Purchased: 15 March 1860 by Rev. Roome who sold it to 17 Africans in 1861

Price: \$170<sup>40</sup>

## **ROSE HALL, CANJE BERBICE**

Date Purchased: 15 August 1842

Original Owner: Henry John Baird

Names of Purchasers: 52 Freed Africans namely: Prince Ross, Saul Brush, Caspar Cupido, Robert Trouble, Jas Fingal, Billy Lewis, Daly Ault, Wellington Ault, Hope Ross, Thomas Harper, John Thomas, Crawford Charles, Wellington Benn, Peter

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<sup>38</sup> "Phillippi," Emancipation, Vol. 2, No. 12, 2004-2005. Source: Rodrick Benn.

<sup>39</sup> "Relief Village," Emancipation, Vol. 2, No. 14, 2006-2007, 27.

<sup>40</sup> "Pln. Roome," Emancipation, Vol. 2, No. 12, 2004-2005, 24.

Collins, Sampson Maurant, Samuel Thomas, Paul Lewis, Billy Rose, Wallace Mark, Charles Ault, Wilkey Douglas, Wilson Ross, Lewis Ross, Fairbairn Ross, Adam Ross, Harry Fingal, George Barry, Richard Dick, Peter Alexander, Sam Wal, Bartram Ross, Dinday Ross, Timothy Smith, Primo Cort, Sandy Haywood, Robert Cort, Sherwood Moore, Price Schrack, Roderick Merchant, Cumberland Adams, Soward, Agnes, Sandy Maurant, Judy Simon, Thomas Layfield, Jeffery Simon, Blucher Pitt, Mary Bridgeward, Bobb Cort, Napper Cort, Trim Cort, David Ross, and Robert Brown.

## **SEAFIELD**

Mr. William Carmichael claims that Freed Africans bought the village of Seafield.<sup>41</sup>

## **ST. JOHN**

Original name: Pln. St. John

Purchasers: 46 Freed Africans

Date Purchased: Before 1840

Price: \$5,000<sup>42</sup>

## **VICTORIA**

Original Name: Pln. Northbrook

Date Purchased: 7 November 1839

Purchasers: William Lewis, John Sistenard, Cornwall Porter, Quamina Adam, Michael James, Simon King, Quashie Rodney, Rice Lewis, Hannah Porter,

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<sup>41</sup> "Seafield," *Emancipation*, Vol. 2, No. 12, 2004-2005, 28.

<sup>42</sup> Allan Young, *Approaches to Local Government* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958), 13.

Welcome James, Ben Benjamin, Prince Edinborough, John Robson, Wm. Gammell Reavy, James Handy, John Fiddell, Cupidore Hopkinson, Jack Mitchell, Primus Samuel, Bill Williams, Peter Hope, Wm. Negelly, Caesar Simon, Bristow Barrett, Marlboro Sam, Cicero Hercules, Gamby James, Blackwell Lancaster, Belinda Hopkinson, Tom Andrew, Aaron Duke, Nat Williams, Nelson Jackson, John Lewis, Daniel Isaac, Dublin David, Thos. Colin, John Shakespear, John Wheeler, Romeo Isaac, Martin Invarara, Maria Grant, Adam Grant, Scipio Samuel, Ned Mackie, Moses Hopkinson, Pat Murphy, Simon Tate, Samuel Cooper, Thos. Hercules, Hamlet Cato, Quashy Porter, Alex Porter, Melville Porter, Sammy Knight, Hall Porter, Valentine Glen, Wm. Smart, Thos. Baillie, Frank Laurence, John Allen, Charles Hamilton, Colin MacRae, James Mercury, Simon Hanover, Willie Cummings, Simon Scott, John Lion, Cross Summer, John Lougham, Kenric Jarrick, Harry James, Catherine Tom, Dorset Europe, Toby Jonas, Spencer Simon, Stephen Porter, Quashy Beard, Polidore Hutt, Isaac Chapman, Abel Cockfield, Philip Robson, Samuel Burk.<sup>43</sup>

Original Owner: Hugh Rogers (deceased at the time of the purchase).

Price: \$10,284.63 or \$30,000 guilders<sup>44</sup>

## **VOORZITIGHEID (JONESTOWN), MAHAICA**

Purchasers: Freed Africans

Date of Purchase: Before 1845<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> David Granger, ed., and J.G. Cruickshank, *Scenes from the History of the Africans in Guyana*. Georgetown: The Free Press, 1999, 17.

<sup>44</sup> William N. Arno, *History of Victoria Village, East Coast Demerara* (Georgetown: Guyana heritage Society, 2000), 13.

<sup>45</sup> "Voorzigtigheid," *Emancipation*, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 29.



## **VREES –EN-HOOP**

Original owner: John Stewart Jr. (Prominent mulatto son of a British planter)<sup>46</sup>  
John Stewart Jr. bought Vrees-en-hoop from the Dutch in 1839.<sup>47</sup>

Purchasers: It is possible that African freedmen bought Vrees-en-hoop from proprietor John Stewart; it is not clear.<sup>48</sup>

Date of Purchase by African Freedmen: Before 1841. Magistrate Wolseley listed Vrees-en-hoop among other freehold properties bought by the Freed Africans and apprenticed labourers in Demerara up to 1841.<sup>49</sup> John Stewart Jr. was not formerly enslaved. He was a member of the British Parliament.<sup>50</sup>

Price: 541 pounds 13 shillings 4 pence<sup>51</sup>

## **ZORG-EN-HOOP, WEST BANK DEMERARA**

Purchasers: 30 African freedmen<sup>52</sup>

Original Owner: Albert Voomberg was the proprietor of Pln. Zorg-en-hoop in 1835.<sup>53</sup> It is possible that he may have been the one who sold Pln. Zorg-en-hoop to the Freed Africans.

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<sup>46</sup> Legacies of British Slave-ownership: John Stewart. Retrieved on 21 December 2020 from <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/8816>.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Oslen Small, "Symbol of Freedom," *Emancipation*, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 31.

<sup>49</sup> Nettleford, 82.

<sup>50</sup> Legacies of British Slave-ownership: John Stewart Junior. Retrieved on 21 December 2020 from <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/8816>.

<sup>51</sup> Nettleford, 82.

<sup>52</sup> Granger and Cruickshank, 4.

## PROPRIETARY VILLAGES

Proprietary villages arose when proprietors of plantations decided to sell their front lands to freed Africans after emancipation in 1838. The planter's aim was to encourage the freedmen to continue working on the plantation. In 1840 Edward Carberry, proprietor of plantations **Dageraad, Mocha, and Westfield**, sold the frontlands of his three estates to the African freedmen at the price of \$100 to \$150 to \$200 according to the size of each allotment.<sup>54</sup> This was the origin of the village of **Queenstown, Essequibo**. In 1840, **Danielstown and Bush Lot** were also bought by parties of African freedman<sup>55</sup>

Other proprietary villages developed when groups of Freed Africans pooled their resources to purchase the front lands of **Peter's Hall, Farm and Garden on the East Bank of Demerara**.<sup>56</sup> The date of these purchases is unknown.

On the West Coast of Demerara, proprietary villages sprang up on **Plantations De Kinderen, Stewartville, Anna Catherine and Hague** when front lots were sold to African freedmen.<sup>57</sup> On the East Bank of Demerara, **Albert Town developed when African freedmen bought the frontlands of Pln. Thomas**. Proprietors of plantations **Rome and La Penitence** on the East Bank of Demerara also sold front lands to African freedmen and more villages developed.<sup>58</sup> The date of these purchases is unknown.

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<sup>53</sup> Legacies of British Slave-ownership: British Guiana 514: Pln. Zorg and Hoop. Retrieved from <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/claim/view/8727>.

<sup>54</sup> Allan Young, Some Milestones in Village History: a series of Six Radio Talks by Allan Young to Mark the Local Government Centenary Celebrations of February 10, 1957, 3.

<sup>55</sup> The Village Movement. Retrieved 26 November 2020 from [www.guyana.org/features/guyanastory/chapter54.html](http://www.guyana.org/features/guyanastory/chapter54.html).

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Granger, 6.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

**The front lands of Plns. Look-out, Ruby, and Hyde Park on the West Coast Berbice were also purchased by African freedmen.**<sup>59</sup> According to Farley, **Pln. Ruby was sold to the African freedmen before 1841** for 320 pounds 16 shillings and 8 pence.<sup>60</sup> **Glasgow village in New Amsterdam also originated as a proprietary village.** Following emancipation, the owners of Glasgow divided its front lands and sold them to Freed Africans.<sup>61</sup> **Edinburgh in Berbice** was an abandoned village which was sold by its proprietors to the African freedmen.<sup>62</sup> **Fyrish, Corentyne** is another proprietary village. Its owners “surveyed and laid out plots of lands in the western half of the cotton plantation and sold these to the Freed Africans.”<sup>63</sup> **Courtland, Berbice** is listed as another proprietary village. It is claimed that the village was “sold in ‘pieces’ to free Africans by the white owners after Emancipation.”<sup>64</sup> Oral historians, Kwame Odinga and Desmond Pitt claim that **Veeriniging** “started out as a proprietary village.”<sup>65</sup> They claim that part of the south-eastern section of the village is called Congo Town and Africans bought land in that section.<sup>66</sup> As late as 2002, their descendants were still residing there. The dates of these purchases are unknown. Prices of the land are unknown.

**Williamstown** was also a proprietary village. The front lands of Pln. Aberdeen were “divided and sold to Africans who established the village of Williamstown.”<sup>67</sup> The date of purchase is not known.

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Nettleford, 82.

<sup>61</sup> “Glasgow Village,” Emancipation, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 25.

<sup>62</sup> “Edinburgh,” Emancipation, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 22.

<sup>63</sup> “Fyrish,” Emancipation, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 23.

<sup>64</sup> “Courtland,” Emancipation, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 21. Source: Thomas Thom, oral historian.

<sup>65</sup> “Vereeniging,” Emancipation, Vol. 1, No. 9, 2001-2002, 28.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> The Village Movement. Retrieved from [www.guyana.org/features/guyanastory/chapter54.html](http://www.guyana.org/features/guyanastory/chapter54.html).

There were other villages which had a significant African presence.

## **OTHER VILLAGES**

### **WINKEL VILLAGE, BERBICE**

The Winkel village lies within the town of New Amsterdam. The Winkel village housed African artisans such as blacksmiths, masons, bricklayers, coopers and carpenters of the colony when it was administered by the Dutch.<sup>68</sup> The original Winkels were white men who served as blacksmiths and masons in the Netherlands and were brought to the colony to serve as indentured servants. Then the idea was conceived of training the enslaved to be Winkels by teaching them a trade.<sup>69</sup> At first the Winkel Department was at Fort Nassau, 50 miles of the Berbice River.

When the present New Amsterdam was built in 1790, Winkel Village was established behind the All Saints Scots Church and Manse.<sup>70</sup> These slaves became the possession of the British government in 1803 when the Dutch colony of Berbice surrendered to the British. An agreement was signed between the two parties stating: "The plantations, lands, manufactories, workshops, slaves, effects, and possessions of the Berbice Association of whatsoever nature, shall be considered private property in the same manner as agreed to by the capitulation to General Whyte in May, 1796."<sup>71</sup> Therefore, the Berbice Association surrendered its enslaved African Winkel and four plantations – St. Jan, Dageraad, Dankbaarheid and Sandvoort to the British. The enslaved African Winkel worked in the maintenance of public works. Some worked at the Fort. By 1821

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<sup>68</sup> Granger, ed., 58-59.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., See also James Rodway, *Guiana: British, Dutch and French* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1912), 112.

there was a Winkel School in the village where Mrs. John Wray taught enslaved girls the art of Needlework.

The enslaved African Winkel were freed by the British Government in 1831. These 298 enslaved Africans were worth 14,900 pounds.<sup>72</sup> They were allowed to remain in their houses on the estate but were expected to maintain themselves after their emancipation. The British Crown would no longer support them.<sup>73</sup> In 1890, the Winkel villagers petitioned the Combined court and consequently allotments of Winkel village were made to formerly enslaved Winkel or “descendants of formerly enslaved Africans claiming certain interests in the said village.”<sup>74</sup> Former Winkel who were still alive in 1890 were: Lysander Bernard, William Thorne, Richard Downer, Charlotte Fredericks, Grace De Wall, Priscilla Rose, Sally Headicker, Hariette January, Rosaline Fredericks, Johanna Prince, Mrs. Myres, Ann F. Gournal, Elizabeth Ferdinand, Lydia Houston, Rebecca Wolff, Madeline Denba, Elizabeth Dykeman, Louisa Marimees, Susan Rose.<sup>75</sup> Thirty-eight (38) descendants of the enslaved African Winkel still survived in 1890.

Cruickshank described the enslaved Winkel people as “the aristocratic Blacks of Berbice.”<sup>76</sup> It is noteworthy that the Winkel village still exists today in New Amsterdam, Berbice. But many of the original families are no longer living there.

## **AIRY HALL VILLAGE**

**Original Owner: An oral historian claims that Mr. Thompson owned part of Airy hall village and private farmers owned the remainder of the estate. Gradually these lands were sold. One is not told to whom they were sold.<sup>77</sup> However,**

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 69-70.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 73.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>77</sup> Airy Hall: The World Beyond Georgetown. Retrieved from [www.stabroeknews.com](http://www.stabroeknews.com)

Legacies of British Slave ownership: Sandvoort states that Elizabeth Jackman owned the estate from 1823-1834.<sup>78</sup> There were only 26 enslaved persons on the estate in 1832. There is no evidence that African freedmen bought the estate. Airy Hall is on the list that I received from IDPADA-G.

Note: East Indian people are currently residing in Airy Hall.

### **BARACARA, EAST BERBICE-CORENTYNE**

Baracara originated as a maroon community. Runaway Africans fled to Baracara in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and settled on the east and west banks of the Canje River.<sup>79</sup>

### **DARTMOUTH VILLAGE, ESSEQUIBO**

This had its origin as a place for African freedmen “who could not find solace in the existing sugar plantations.”<sup>80</sup> The land was not bought by the African freedmen. It was land that the sugar planters did not want for it had no drainage system nor sea defence. So the Africans who settled there lived in flooded conditions.

### **SANDVOORT, WEST CANJE BERBICE**

Originally, Sandvoort belonged to the Berbice Association.<sup>81</sup> In 1818 it was sold to D.C. Cameron and John Cameron. By 1831 it was still owned by D.C. Cameron and John Cameron.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Legacies of British Slave-ownership: Airy Hall, British Guiana. Retrieved on 22 December 2020 on [www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estates/view/1087](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estates/view/1087).

<sup>79</sup> Baracara. Retrieved on 22 December 2020 from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baracara>.

<sup>80</sup> The Glory of Dartmouth. <https://www.guyanatimesinternational.com>.

<sup>81</sup> Alvin O. Thompson, A Documentary History of Slavery in Berbice, 1796-1834 (Georgetown: Free Press,2002), 172.

<sup>82</sup> Legacies of British Slave ownership: Sandvoort, British Guiana. Retrieved on 22 December 2020 from [www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/1087](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/1087).

Thorald Sinclair, oral historian, claims that Sandvoort “was established soon after the abolition of slavery as a self-governing village. The entire area was owned by Edward John London.”<sup>83</sup> He claims that “the first community was occupied by three dominant tribes of African descent: Oku, Quashy and Congo.”

### **UNION VILLAGE (NO. 53)**

This village did not originate as a plantation. This was land on which African indentured immigrants settled after Emancipation. Former Headmaster Henry Gershom claims that from 1845- 1893 freed Africans from Liberia, Sierra Leone and Barbados travelled to British Guiana to work as Indentured servants.<sup>84</sup> This Village has remained an African village and has strong African retentions.

### **CONCLUSION**

The African presence can still be found in the above-mentioned villages. These villages originated in the nineteenth century. The majority (approximately 38) of the villages began as communal villages. A minority (approximately 22) started as proprietary villages. The remaining varied in origin.

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<sup>83</sup> Shabna Ullah, Sandvoort. Retrieved on 22 December 2020 from [www.stabroeknews.com/2014/01/26/Sunday/beyond](http://www.stabroeknews.com/2014/01/26/Sunday/beyond).

<sup>84</sup> “Union,” Emancipation, Vol. 1, No.9, 2001-2002.

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