The National Archives

Supporting research at The National Archives

Winter 2013

Welcome to our first research newsletter of 2013!

2012 was a busy year for us and we were delighted to be successful with so many of our funding bids. The Research team work hard to secure external funding which allows important research to be carried out that we otherwise would not be able to commit to.

Some of our more recent grant successes include:

- A collaboration with the University of Portsmouth to develop an online resource to map **bomb sites** of the Second World War
- A project with University College London to build a database and offer training and workshops on the theme of Legacies of British Slave ownership
- Further funding for the extension of the **Opening Up Archives** traineeships
- A National Archives led project to catalogue and make searchable the whole of the MH13 series: General Board of Health and Home Office and Local Government Act Office: Correspondence from the period 1848-1871. This project is called 'Death, Dirt and Disease'
- A partnership between The National Archives, Institute of Historical Research, East Sussex Record Office and Berwick Record Office to offer archival training to post graduate students (read more about this on **page 3**)
- An EU funded project to identify remaining legal barriers to access and re-use of public sector information. The National Archives, along with twenty five other European partners are involved in this work.

In previous editions of this newsletter we've featured the Medieval team, the Modern Domestic team and the Military, Maritime and Transport team (all Records Specialist teams in the Advice and Records Knowledge department). We're continuing this series of articles by presenting the Map and Photographs team in this issue. Please see **page 10** for details.

Other features include a piece entitled Tithe Maps Described, an article about our education bursary scheme, as well as an article about Indentured Irish Labour. Once again, our thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter.

Ruth Roberts
Editor and Research and Academic Liaison Advisor
The Research Team
The National Archives



The Research team: Ruth Roberts, Victoria Lain and Valerie Johnson

In this issue

Diversity education bursary scheme

Managing Digital Records

Tithe maps described

Meet the Maps and Photographs team

Indentured Irish Labour

Gerald Aylmer seminar 2013: Why Material Culture?

We would like to invite you to the next Gerald Aylmer seminar to be held on Friday 22 February starting at 09:30 in the Chancellor's Hall, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, London history.ac.uk/contact

The seminar is jointly sponsored by the Royal Historical Society, the Institute of Historical Research and The National Archives. This year we have also been grateful for expert advice from colleagues at the University of Warwick. The theme for this seminar is 'Why Material Culture?' The programme has four panel sessions with short presentations and open discussion. The sessions are:

- The Historical Value of Material Culture
- Material Culture in a Digital World
- Investigation, Interpretation and Dissemination of Material Culture
- Transnational connections

The programme ends with a keynote speech by Sir Mark Jones.

Please email research@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk for a booking form and/or the detailed programme.

Attendance is free but numbers will be limited so please get in touch soon.

'Higher Education Funding for Beginners'

The National Archives, Kew
Tuesday 26 February 2013
09:45 – 16:00

Following on from the publication of the 'Funding the Archives Sector' research report, The National Archives is running a free event in the spring for anyone working in the archives sector.

The event aims to:

• Improve understanding of the landscape in which HE funders operate
• Raise awareness of specific HE funders
• Encourage archive services to think about partnership working and collaborations

The morning session will include speakers from funding bodies and case studies presentations. The afternoon will give delegates the chance to discuss project ideas and consider how to develop fundable partnerships.

To book a place please click here.

A full programme will be sent to delegates prior to the day.

Postgraduate workshops

The National Archives will be running a series of workshops for postgraduates in 2013, teaching archival research skills for historians.

Dr. Sean Cunningham and Dr. James Ross from the medieval and early modern team at The National Archives, in collaboration with the Institute of Historical Research, East Sussex Record Office and Berwick Record Office, put together a successful bid to the Arts and Humanities Research Council to fund the workshops.

The series of workshops – one medieval, one early modern, and one modern - will be aimed at postgraduate research students, teaching them some of the skills needed to research the holdings at The National Archives and at local archives. This will include themed sessions on the records relating to different subjects as well as expert advice on how to make best use of catalogues, datasets and other research tools. The sessions will be run by experts in the different disciplines, both from The National Archives and elsewhere.

The sessions will run initially at Easter and then again in the summer, over the course of a week. They will also be recorded and made freely available on the web. Places on the workshops will be fully funded, with preference given to students in receipt of AHRC funding. Applications should be made via the IHR website – please look there for further information.

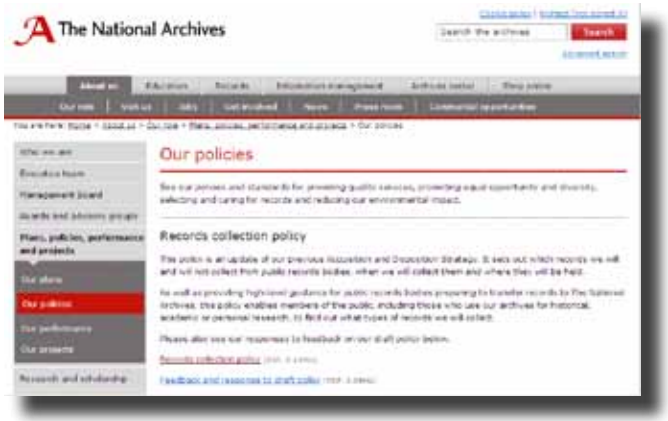
The National Archives publishes Records Collection Policy

The National Archives has published a new **Records Collection Policy**.

This policy is a refresh of our previous Acquisition and Disposition Strategy and sets out which records we will and will not collect from public records bodies, when we will collect them and where they will be held.

What's new

The policy has been updated to include more detail on formats such as datasets, digital formats and case files. It also contains information on the transition to the **20-year rule**.



As well as providing high-level guidance for public records bodies preparing to transfer records to The National Archives, this policy enables members of the public, including those who use our archives for historical, academic or personal research, to find out what types of records we will collect.

Click here to access the policy online:

Records collection policy (PDF, 0.12Mb)

Ongoing collaboration

We have collated and considered all comments following the publication of our draft policy in the summer. See **our responses** on our policies page.

We are also reviewing all of our guidance on appraisal and selection, in line with the new policy. We will invite feedback from the public on **Operational Selection Policies** (OSPs), which are applicable to individual departments and agencies, or to records relating to a cross-departmental theme.

Study day at the University of Central Lancashire

The National Archives is co-hosting a study day with the Institute of Local and Family History Research at the University of Central Lancashire, for experienced amateur researchers as well as students researching the north-west of England. Many of the collections held by The National Archives, such as the census records, land survey records and some military service records, are already well-used and recognised as invaluable sources by both local and family history researchers.

However, there are thousands of lesser-known series of records offering new insights for researchers, particularly when considered alongside locally-held records. Many key resources held at county record offices, such as school and workhouse records, were produced by local administrative bodies which reported back to central government agencies whose records are held at The National Archives. Records specialists from The National Archives will focus on some key record series and how the stories that they reveal can add a new dimension to research in the North West.

Book tickets for the day through the **UCLAN website**.

- Date: Saturday 27 April 2013
- Venue: Institute of Local and Family History, University of Central Lancashire, Preston PR1 2HE
- Start time: 09:30
- Further information: **lfhistory@uclan.ac.uk**

uclan
University of Central Lancashire

Move to the 20-year rule begins



On the 1 January 2013, the government began its move towards releasing records when they are 20 years old, instead of 30.

A Commencement Order that brings into force the relevant parts of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010, plus two transition orders, have all been signed and laid in Parliament by Lord McNally, the Minister responsible for the 20-year rule.

This secondary legislation reduces the point at which public records are transferred to The National Archives from 30 to 20 years. It also reduces the lifespan of certain Freedom of Information Act 2000 exemptions.

Over a ten-year transition period, The National Archives will work with government departments to speed up the process of files transferred under the 30-year rule, receiving double the amount of files each year, to prepare for the transfer of records under the 20-year rule.

This means that during 2013 The National Archives will receive records from 1983 and 1984. Then, two further years' worth of government records will be transferred each year until 2023 when we will receive records from 2003.

Please **click here** to read more about the 20-year rule.

Diversity education bursary scheme

Parveen Betab, The National Archives

We have an active equality and diversity programme within The National Archives that develops initiatives and actions across the organisation to improve access and inclusion. Building on work we've already done on equality and diversity, and as part our archives leadership role, The National Archives has recently established a Diversity Education Bursary Scheme.

This aligns with The National Archives' action plan to support the government policy on archives, **Archives for the 21st century**. Among the recommendations made in the action plan is that: 'The make-up of the workforce [in archives] should be more representative of wider society'.

Over the last decade a significant amount of research has gone into exploring the diversity of the archives sector and the barriers to entering the sector faced by particular groups. These barriers can sometimes be financial.

The report Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future: The report of the Archives Taskforce, Annex G, Archives Workforce Study, MLA 2004 explores the issue of ethnicity:

> **'The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups engaged in professional archives work in Great Britain is small in proportion to the proportion of persons of that group in the population of Great Britain. The demographic profile of archivists currently in employment is hard to quantify exactly. But existing research appears to confirm that it is overwhelmingly concentrated in the White, European majority population'.**

At The National Archives we wanted to develop a scheme that helped to remove some of the exisiting barriers by providing financial support for entry into the sector and attracting entrants from a variety of backgrounds in particular those who may be excluded on socio economic grounds. It also aims to address the issue of underrepresentation of Black and Minority Ethnic employees in the archives sector by encouraging applicants from diverse groups using targeted advertising campaigns in addition to our usual channels.

The new scheme funds two bursaries per year for a period of two years and is designed to help candidates achieve postgraduate qualifications that will enable them to work in the archives sector.

Last year we received applications from a wide range of candidates. The winners - who both demonstrated a passionate commitment to the work of archives and a diverse range of skills – were Etienne Joseph and Dawn Harman, who

both began courses at University College London this September. Each received funding to cover tuition for one year and contribute towards the other costs associated with postgraduate study.

We were delighted to be able to award the bursaries and to see how much Etienne and Dawn are both making progress and enjoying their studies. Below they talk of how the bursaries have benefited them and the progress they are making so far.

Two further places will be available on the Diversity Education Bursary Scheme in 2013, we will be advertising for applications in May/June 2013. For further information please contact Parveen Betab – Equality and Diversity manager at The National Archives: pbetab@nationlaarchives.gsi.gov.uk

Etienne Joseph on being awarded the bursary in August 2012

'I feel privileged to be awarded The National Archives Diversity Bursary. This funding means that I will able to start my masters (MA) course in September and focus fully on my studies rather than being distracted by serious financial concerns.

The National Archives' decision to invest in my future has given me a big confidence boost. I know that I will now be able to meet my full potential for a long and rewarding career in this sector.
I am so grateful for this opportunity and I am looking forward to beginning my studies at University College London (UCL).



Etienne Joseph ▸

Being awarded a Diversity education bursary from The National Archives has literally changed my life. I have worked in community engagement and education for several years, all the while nursing a fascination for archives, and their possible educational applications. The cost of an Advice and Records Management masters (MA) [can be] prohibitive. The offer of a bursary has allowed me to pursue my dreams, training in the archives sector at one of the country's premier institutions for this type of qualification. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and very much looking forward to working within the sector.'

Dawn Harman on progress so far, January 2013

'I am roughly one third of the way through my MA course in archives and records management; I have gained a lot in a relatively short space of time from the experience so far. The teaching at UCL is stimulating and has furthered my understanding of the principles of the profession. I have been fascinated to learn about political, legal and ethical aspects of the profession, particularly from the aspect of cultural identity and of access of archives. I enjoy discussing these theoretical matters with my peers and putting them into real life-scenarios which allow me to consider about how I may overcome any such issues in my future professional life.

I have also benefitted from the multiple field trips and numerous guest lecturers that have visited UCL and spoken about their professional experiences in the sector such as representatives from London Metropolitan Archives and the British Library. It is inspiring to learn how the archive community, despite the financial challenges of the times, are still preserving records for the benefit of future generations.

Upon beginning my course I was determined to devote time to some voluntary work as a means of giving back to the archive community and to put my teaching straight into practice. Since September I have been volunteering at Bishopsgate Institute once a week. I have been assisting by digitising photographs from the collections and am currently working on a small cataloguing project which has allowed me to familiarise myself with AdLib software, which I had not previously encountered.

I am looking forward to embarking upon the next term of the course in which I will be developing one of my interests about the use of technology the profession as I have chosen to take a course in encoded archival description. I will also begin to prepare my ideas for my dissertation; I am looking forward to undertaking this self-guided work, though must admit that I think it will be difficult to pick only one topic for further study!

So far I have found the course, combined with my voluntary work to be intensive, but incredibly fulfilling. I am very grateful that I have been given both the opportunity and the support required to undertake my MA course.'



Dawn Harman

Managing Digital Records

David Clipsham, The National Archives

A key principle in the world of digital preservation is to know exactly what digital objects you hold. This means understanding what file formats are present in your collection.

Armed with this knowledge you can then take long-term preservation decisions around your collections. A preservation policy might state, for example, that all Word Perfect files should be migrated to the Open Document formats, or that executable files may not be ingested. File format identification is the first step toward being able to apply that policy.

The National Archives developed its own tools to meet this requirement. PRONOM is a technical registry of file format information. DROID is a utility that scans a collection of digital files and reports back on the file formats it finds.

The simplest way to identify a file's format is to check the file extension – the part of the file's name following the last dot. Common examples include '.txt', '.jpg' and '.doc'. Unfortunately this is not a very reliable method, because these file extensions are not always standard, are easily changed whether deliberately or mistakenly, and entirely different file formats may share the same extension.

DROID instead scans the internal byte-code of your digital files, and compares the sequence of bytes against a series of known byte sequences, or file format signatures, that are stored in the PRONOM registry.

PRONOM and DROID were initially created to help The National Archives to manage the digital records it receives from the UK Government. Since being made publicly available in 2004-5, these tools have grown substantially, and together they are used by heritage institutions and other organisations the world over to help assess digital collections and assist with long-term preservation.



The DROID and PRONOM team at The National Archives ▸

DROID and PRONOM have an extremely active user community, with several institutions and individuals regularly contributing new file format information and suggesting further improvements. Georgia Technology Research Institute, the National Library of New Zealand, and the US National Archives and Records Administration are among our most regular contributors.

Our community has really helped the tools grow, and we hope they will continue to do so for many years to come.

In December 2012, DROID and PRONOM were short-listed finalists for the Digital Preservation Coalition's Digital Preservation Awards, in the DPC Decennial Award category, recognising outstanding contribution to the field of digital preservation over the last ten years.

These awards are important because they celebrate how far digital preservation has come. They recognise innovation and success and they help to raise awareness and generate publicity around the importance of digital preservation. The overall winners were the extremely worthy Archaeology Data Service, which works hard to promote best practice in the use of digital data in archaeology.

Tithe maps described: academic collaboration with The National Archives opens up new views on landscapes

Rose Mitchell, The National Archives

Descriptions of the tithe maps of England and Wales are now online at The National Archives, thanks to Professor Roger Kain and Dr. Richard Oliver who kindly allowed access to their data from a research project conducted at Exeter University in the 1990s, which underpinned their published catalogue The Tithe Maps of England and Wales, (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

Tithe maps can reveal a wealth of information about places in Victorian times. They date from around 1840, and are often the earliest detailed map of a village, town or parish, made before Ordnance Survey maps came into widespread use, and around the time of the first census in 1841. They show a landscape where ancient drove ways and traditional open fields were still found, alongside newer railways and cotton mills.



▲ Tithe map for Droylsden near Manchester (part) IR 30/18/106

It was previously difficult to find even the document reference for tithe maps in The National Archives' online catalogue. Now everyone can access a full description based on expert academic work, which makes available online information such as the date and scale of each map, the map maker's name, and where an earlier map was used. This new online presentation of tithe map descriptions may help to open up new views on the data. One can now easily search for specific landscape features nationwide; perhaps this may spark research into the incidence of druidic altars, elvan pits, gurgos and menageries – all to be found in the tithe map descriptions.

Tithe maps are important for social, local and landscape historians, and of wider interest, for industrial, urban, agrarian and archaeological research. Decorative features may be of interest to the art historian. The benefits of this project for academics are highlighted by Professor Christopher Dyer, Emeritus Professor of Regional and Local History at the University of Leicester:

"These maps record houses, fields and boundaries of the mid nineteenth century, but many of these features have much earlier origins, so they are helpful to those of us who take a long view of the history of the countryside. Many local historians use the tithe maps in the county record offices, but they have not always been kept locally, or they have been damaged, and some scholars work outside their local area, so we need to be aware of the copies preserved in The National Archives. Now the whole series for every county can be accessed through the new online Discovery catalogue, with detailed descriptions of each map, such as the presence of open fields and prominent buildings such as tithe barns. We should be grateful to The National Archives who have once again made life easier for researchers."

This project showcases how users can benefit by partnership between academics and the archives. If academic readers have data about the records held at The National Archives, it may be worth considering whether it could be made available in a similar way.

Meet the Maps and Photographs team

The Maps and Photographs team at The National Archives comprises two map archivists, Rose Mitchell and Andrew Janes, and photographs specialist Steven Cable.

The team provides advice to the public in the reading rooms and via emails, letters and telephone calls. As the records of many different government departments include cartographic and photographic materials, we need to have a broad general knowledge of The National Archives' holdings.

Our map collection is one of the largest in the world, containing maps of all kinds dating from the 14th century to almost to the present day. Photographs begin to appear among the records from the 1850s onwards. More information about our holdings of **maps** and **photographs** is available on our website.

A major part of our work is to improve access to maps and photographs. Many records in these formats lie undescribed – or even undiscovered – within files of correspondence or other papers. The team brings material to light by running projects to create or improve online catalogue descriptions, sometimes working with volunteers or other staff. Current and recent projects include:

- **Photographs registered for copyright at Stationers' Hall, 1883-1912 (COPY 1)**
- **W E Hayward Collection – an extensive accumulation of railway history material rich in photographs and postcards (ZSPC 11)**
- **Ministry of Works plans and architectural drawings (WORK 29-38, 40-44)**
- **Ordnance Survey boundary remark books (OS 26)**
- **Railway and canal maps and plans (RAIL 1029-1037)**
- **Tithe maps (IR 30). See separate article on page 9**

Joint projects with our Systems Development Department have focused on geo-referencing and digitising a number of photograph-rich record series to make them available to view online. These include inter-war photographs of the UK and Ireland (INF 9); National Coal Board photographs (COAL 80); and photographs of Crown Estate properties (CRES 43). These and other selected data, including the newly-enhanced descriptions of tithe maps and a gallery of early maps, are being made accessible via our experimental **Collections on a Map** tool.

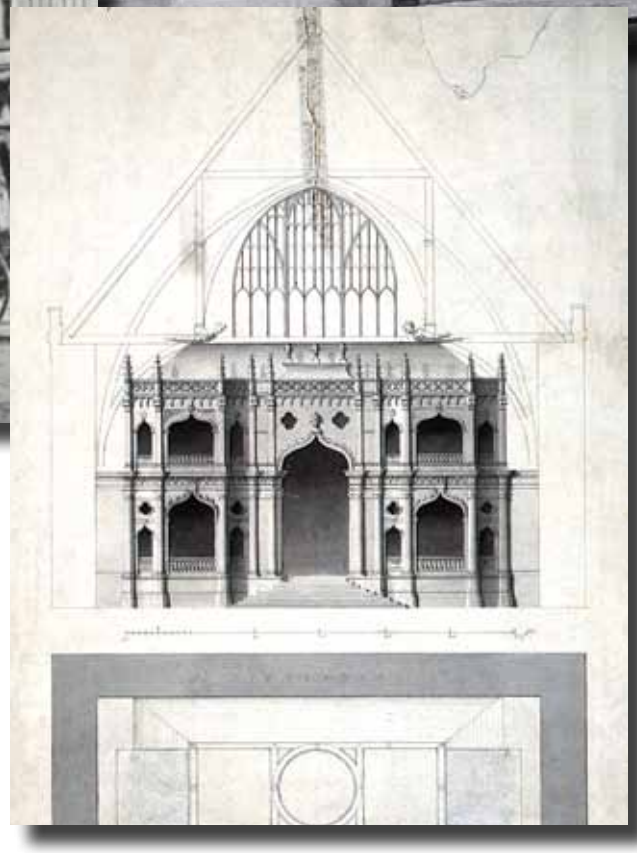
Another cross-team project is making photographs from the Colonial Office photographic collection (CO 1069) available for researchers to view and comment on via **Flickr**.

Exterior of the ticket hall at Rayners Lane Station, taken from ZSPC 11/256 ▸





▲ Bridge Street, Sydney c1900, taken from CO1069/591



Office of Works and successors, Houses of Parliament, Plan of South End showing Fronts to Law Courts, 1746, taken from WORK 29/3244 ▸



◀ Map of canals and navigable rivers of England and Wales, c1910, taken from RAIL1029/56

- International boundaries and rights of way courses delivered jointly with the University of Durham's International Boundaries Research Unit and with the Institute of Public Rights of Way and Access Management
- A conference on military maps from the 16th century to the Korean War
- Contributing a session on colonial and other overseas mapping to a conference on early modern maps, and to a separate course on the history of cartography for the University of London
- Presentations and displays for the Royal Photographic Society History Group and members of Archives for London
- A Registers Reunited event where photographs and registers from the COPY record series now held at The National Archives were displayed alongside records still held by the Stationers' Company



▲ The Map and Photographs Team l-r: Andrew Janes, Rose Mitchell and Steven Cable

The team also acts as a source of knowledge on The National Archives' maps and photographs, and on how they fit into the bigger picture of cartographic and photographic history. We work to raise the profile of the map and photograph collections, by giving talks, writing articles and blog posts, and running events on a wide range of subjects. Recent and forthcoming events include:

We are keen to encourage academic projects using our records. For instance, we have contributed advice and support to the JISC-funded **Bomb Sight website** and mobile app developed by the University of Portsmouth and based partly on Bomb Census maps held here.

Indentured Irish Labour

Michael Mahoney, The National Archives

Whilst doing research for the **'Caribbean through a lens'** user participation project, a chance phone call from a community group in Birmingham led to the uncovering of a remarkable hidden history of Irish servants or indentured labour being employed on English owned plantations in the Caribbean. At The National Archives, we have unique documentation that demonstrates the sale of indentured labour before, during and after the English Civil War of the 17th century[1]. Many thousands of dispossessed Catholic Irish men, women and children were transported either willingly or unwillingly in this period to work on new sugar and tobacco plantations in Barbados, Jamaica and the smaller Caribbean islands including St. Kitts, Nevis, Antigua and Montserrat.

Few people today realise that during the 17th century, far more Irish were sold as slaves than Africans. One author states that 'some 52,000 Irish, women, boys and girls were sold to Barbados and Virginia alone. Another 30,000 Irish men and women were taken prisoners and ordered transported and sold as slaves'[2]. For many poor and dispossessed Irish before the Civil war, signing an indenture contract with a sea captain and being transported to the Caribbean was a great adventure. Promises were made about free land and tools once the indenture (normally seven-years) had been completed.

However, during and after the Civil War, the practice was used by Oliver Cromwell's government to dispossess families of their land and transport them abroad as slaves. Innocents and criminals alike were transported. All Catholic-owned land was confiscated in the **Act for the Settlement of Ireland 1652**, and given to Scottish and English settlers, Parliamentary soldiers or Parliament's financial creditors – the policy of 'To Hell or to Connaught'[3].

1 **HCA 30/636**, **CO 1/21** and **CO 1/42**.
2 Banished and Forgotten, Irish slaves in the West Indies, by Louise Gherasim, AuthorHouse, 2009, pxxiii.
3 To hell or Barbados, Sean O' Callaghan, Brandon, 2000.

Once in the Caribbean, most plantation owners considered servants and freemen from Ireland as a potentially subversive lot who had to be controlled and kept in a labouring status. The English government variously referred to the Irish as: rogues, vagabonds, rebels, neutrals, felons and military prisoners[4]. Punishments for attempted escapes included branding the letters 'FT' (Fugitive Traitor) on the servant's forehead.



▲ The image above (INF 10/44/6) is but one legacy of British governance as the sugar estate is named after Daniel Searle, British Governor of Barbados in the 1650s.

4 Sugar and Slaves 1624-1713, Richard S. Dunn, Jonathan Cape, 1973.

There was also explicit racism towards the Irish. One assembly member in Barbados is quoted in 1667 as stating, 'We have more than a good many Irish amongst us, therefore I am for the downright Scott, who I am certain will fight without a crucifix about his neck'[5]. English masters considered their Irish servants as belonging to a backward culture, unfit to contribute anything beyond their labour to colonial development. Their adherence to the Catholic religion reinforced the planters' perception of them as opposed to the English Protestant colonizing mission. Moreover, fear of a French invasion of the island led to a deep distrust of the Irish.



▲ CO 1069/385: taken from an album which shows general views of industry and agriculture, used in the St Lucia report for 1953-54

5 **CO 1/21**, folio 108.

By the third quarter of the 17th century on the island of Montserrat, the Irish immigrants were in the ascendancy. A 1678 census shows a vibrant community of almost 1,900 Irishmen, women and children - a verifiable 50% of the population - existing as either indentured servants or freemen. Comparable figures for the other Leeward Islands were 26% Irish on Antigua, 22% on Nevis, and 10% on St Christopher[6].

In Jamaica, the Lords of Trade and Plantations considered a liberal immigration policy the most effective way to solve the white labour shortage and expand the white population. Successive governors promised immigrants religious tolerance and easy access to land ownership, and servants from Ireland as well as Irish freemen from Barbados and the Leeward Islands responded in the period 1660-1700. Jamaica became the leading West Indian destination for Irish and English servants departing from Kinsale, Bristol and London in this period.

By the 1660s and 1670s, some plantation owners found a way to ensure a free supply of slaves. The breeding of Irish women with African male slaves led to a lucrative trade in lighter-skinned slaves. A law was passed against this practice in 1681, not for moral reasons, but because the practice was affecting the Royal African Company's profits in the slave trade[7].

The legacy of such a diaspora today is that on several of the Caribbean islands there are place names such as Cork Hill, Kinsale, Roche's mountain, Carty's Gaunt and Delvins from the Emerald Isle. In islands such as Montserrat, St Patrick's Day is a national holiday among the inhabitants and the telephone directory contains page after page of Irish names such as Allen, Ryan, Daley, Farrell, Riley and Sweeney[8].

6 A 'riotous and unruly lot': Irish indentured servants and Freemen in the English West Indies, 1644-1713, Hilary McD Beckles, William and Mary Quarterly XLVII, 1990.
7 'Irish Slavery' by James Cavanaugh: **www.raceandhistory.com/cgi-bin/forum/webbbs_config.pl/noframes/read/1638**
8 Montserrat St Patrick's Day celebrations: **www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QHYFXDGf4Y** and **www.youtube.com/watch?v=KK6SngWCjOI**

If you would like to get in touch with us, or if you have ideas for inclusion in future issues of this newsletter, email us at **research@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk**. Please note that we reserve the right to edit articles.

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