

Chapter 4

Forgotten Women: Anna Eliza Elletson and Absentee

Slave-ownership

Late eighteenth-century representations of the absentee slave-owner depict a rich, ostentatious and often dissolute figure. Novels, plays and newspapers of the period presented caricatures of this West Indian ‘type.’ⁱ Passionate, haughty and extravagant, this figure, almost exclusively male, represented a particular kind of foppish masculinity. In his 1771 novel *Humphry Clinker*, Tobias Smollett vividly described these ‘planters, negro-drivers and hucksters [...] men of low birth, and no breeding.’ Having ‘found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence unknown to former ages’, he suggests ‘their brains’ had been ‘intoxicated with pride, vanity, and presumption.’ⁱⁱ Yet not only does this crude stereotype belie the extent to which many slave-holding men were able to successfully present themselves as polite and respectable gentlemen, it also fails to acknowledge that women, like Jamaican slave-owner Anna Eliza Elletson, were actively involved in the slave-owning enterprise.ⁱⁱⁱ

Although he portrayed the West Indian absentee as uncouth, self-indulgent and male, Smollett had himself married a Jamaican heiress and was economically reliant on remittances from the Caribbean. This was hardly uncommon in late eighteenth-century society. By the 1830s, when slavery was abolished in the British colonies, there were over 3,000 absentees living in metropolitan Britain and although it is difficult to discern concrete figures for the earlier period, rates of absenteeism grew exponentially as the eighteenth century progressed.^{iv} Yet absentees were, as Douglas Hall has demonstrated, ‘a heterogenous lot.’^v Whilst

returning to the metropole was an increasingly attractive proposition for those who had made their fortunes in the Caribbean, other British absentees had inherited plantations and slaves—or annuities and legacies secured on this property—or were mortgagees who had foreclosed on West Indian estates.^{vi} Absentees, in all their diverse forms, occupied an increasingly prominent role in British society.

The West Indian colonies, and Jamaica in particular, lay at the heart of an imperial network reaching the zenith of its profit and prosperity. They were ‘shining Trophies [...] extend[ing] the Fame, display[ing] the Power, and support[ing] the Commerce of Great Britain.’^{vii} The production of sugar was a huge industrial enterprise, underpinned by an exploited and enslaved workforce. As European sugar consumption rose, exports from the West Indies reached new heights. By the early 1770s, 36,000 tonnes of sugar was being exported from Jamaica each year.^{viii} The effects of the American Revolutionary War meant that the years 1775 to 1783 were difficult and tumultuous ones, but the West Indian colonies continued to be profitable.^{ix} The majority of Britons continued to see slavery as fundamental to the maintenance of British commercial supremacy and national prosperity.^x

Like metropolitan commentators, West Indian planters conceived of slave-ownership as a male undertaking. Antiguan planter Samuel Martin’s bestselling manual *Essay Upon Plantership* was dedicated to ‘All the Planters of the British Sugar Colonies’, described as ‘Gentlemen.’ He believed himself tasked with ‘sharpen[ing] the ingenuity of other men, in service of their country’ and offered his aid to ‘every man [...] who wishes to grow rich with ease.’^{xi} Neither was Martin unique. West Indian planters who wrote about their experiences almost exclusively defined the slave-owner as male.^{xii} This is perhaps to be expected, particularly in the latter decades of the eighteenth century, when gendered attitudes and expectations were continuing to harden. As Scottish Presbyterian Minister and conduct-book writer James Fordyce argued, where ‘war, commerce, politics, exercises of strength and

dexterity,' were deemed 'most properly the province of men'; a woman's 'empire' was 'that which has the heart for its object [...] secured by meekness and modesty, by soft attraction and virtuous love.'^{xiii}

Yet despite the proliferation of conduct books that stipulated they conform to these standards of behaviour, women—particularly those in elite circles—could wield significant power. In an eighteenth-century world where political and familial interests were intertwined, elite women were expected to play a role in political life, whether through participating in salons, establishing familial and friendship networks and alliances, getting involved in election campaigns or by intervening in systems of patronage.^{xiv} However, these women always occupied a borderline status: they acted, often skilfully, in the political arena but their activities, and political identities, were fragile and unstable, 'comprised of multiple and sometimes conflicting currents.'^{xv} K.D. Reynolds, in her study of aristocratic women in the nineteenth century, has also demonstrated that women were regularly involved in the economic affairs of the family estate, arguing that to neglect women's involvement in estate business is to ignore a crucial component of the management of rural society. Although Reynolds' research focuses on the Victorian era, she recognises there were many continuities between this and the earlier period.^{xvi} Women in the late eighteenth century were active politically and economically. But these activities were also contingent, filled with complexity and contradiction.

The structure of slave-ownership, like property-ownership more broadly, was inherently gendered. Women were less likely to be absentee plantation-owners than their male counterparts, tending to be smaller scale, resident, urban slave-owners.^{xvii} However, there were still considerable numbers of female absentees, managing their vast Caribbean estates from metropolitan Britain. While the role women played in the abolition movement has been extensively examined, their pro-slavery counterparts have remained virtually

invisible in the historiography of slavery and absenteeism.^{xviii} These slave-owning women, living at the heart of British society, have been entirely forgotten.

Anna Eliza Elletson/Brydges

Anna Eliza Elletson was one such woman. From her stylish Mayfair town house, Anna Eliza was actively involved in the long-distance management of Hope estate, her Jamaican plantation. Between December 1775 and March 1780 she regularly corresponded with John Pool and Edward East, her Caribbean attorneys who were responsible for the supervision of the plantation, the provision of plantation supplies and the shipments of the sugar. This extensive correspondence contains detailed discussions of the practicalities of running an estate and provides a unique insight into the mindset of a late eighteenth-century absentee who also happened to be a woman. Examining Elletson's slave-ownership involves delving beyond the stereotype of the lavish and profligate absentee and challenging traditional conceptions of the plantation-owner as necessarily male. In exploring how gendered attitudes and behaviour underpinned absentee slave-ownership forgotten women like Elletson can begin to be reintegrated into Britain's national memory of slavery.^{xix}

An affluent member of the Hertfordshire landed gentry, it was Anna Eliza's marriage to Roger Hope Elletson, a Jamaican-born slave-owner, that enabled her to acquire Hope Estate. As both 'devisee and sole executrix to his will,' upon her husband's death in 1775 she inherited Hope, a sugar plantation upon which worked 385 enslaved men, women and children.^{xx} Anna Eliza's widowhood was a necessary part of the acquisition of her Caribbean property. Under the common law principle of coverture a married woman's legal existence was subsumed within that of her husband. She could not own property in her own right. Yet following Roger's death his widow was able to assume complete and sole ownership of the estate.^{xxi} Anna Eliza never visited Jamaica, nor ever expressed any desire to do so. Her

relationship with Hope plantation, and the people enslaved upon it, was entirely an epistolary one. This was, in essence, an imagined place, what Catherine Hall has termed a ‘Jamaica of the mind.’^{xxii}

Anna Eliza’s correspondence with her attorneys was heavily gendered. She recognised the atypicality of her position as a female plantation-owner and believed this placed her at a disadvantage. In one of her earliest letters to Pool and East she admitted that planting ‘seldom happens to be the subject of contemplation with Women,’ arguing that ‘our mode of Education does not qualify us for such employments.’^{xxiii} Regular articulations of her insecurity suggest she feared her own ignorance could have a detrimental effect on the success of the plantation. Requesting information from her attorneys about Hope, she was careful to establish that her desire to ‘in any Degree [...] render myself mistress of this subject’ was motivated by a wish to better understand their letters, not because she had any inclination to take charge herself.^{xxiv} Whether through expressing to her attorneys her relief at having ‘such Gentlemen as you’ to manage her Jamaican affairs or praising their ‘strong and masterly’ reasoning, scattered throughout her letters are numerous articulations of the gendered assumptions which underpinned contemporary understandings of plantation-ownership.^{xxv}

There is a danger, however, in overstating Anna Eliza’s gendered sense of subservience. She may have claimed to have known ‘but little of plantation business’ but her knowledgeable, detailed and forthright letters suggest otherwise.^{xxvi} Throughout her correspondence there are many examples of her actively engaging with the practicalities of plantership. Complaining about the dark colour of the sugar; directing her attorneys how to deal with complex legal cases; providing agricultural advice; Anna Eliza’s orders were clear and authoritative. An intelligent and ambitious woman, she was, despite her protestations, extremely knowledgeable about the minutiae of plantation ownership. Even her claim that the

deficiencies in women's education made them unqualified for plantership was followed by a comprehensive and specific list of instructions regarding manure, the manner in which the sugar cane was to be planted and 'the labour of the Negroes.'^{xxvii} Anna Eliza may have represented herself as unqualified for the position as owner and manager of a Jamaican plantation but this did not prevent her from engaging fully and resolutely with the task in hand. Indeed, it is possible that her claims of ignorance were grounded in an understanding that such proclamations were to be expected rather than in any accurate expression of her own abilities.

Anna Eliza's marriage was necessary not only in facilitating the acquisition of her Jamaican property but in enabling her to acquire the knowledge required to become a successful plantation and slave-owner. Evidently, Anna Eliza acted as both confidante and advisor to her 'Dear husband and [...] only certain friend.'^{xxviii} His willingness to share his knowledge about planting and slave-ownership with his wife enabled her to ably adopt the mantle of absentee planter after his death. That Anna Eliza, in a letter to Bristol merchant Mr Gordon, emphasised that 'Mr Elletson was always so well satisfied with your manner of doing business' highlights that she was well informed of the opinions of her late husband.^{xxix} This was also evident in her assurance to overseer Mr Ballard that a recommendation by John Pool had meant 'we were prepossessed in your favour'.^{xxx} Making others conscious that she had been aware of Hope Elletson's views allowed Anna Eliza to derive her own authority from that of her husband.^{xxxi} Yet this did not preclude independent thought and action. Less than a fortnight after his death Anna Eliza referred to Hope as 'my Estate' and commented that, despite her grief-stricken state of mind, she had not had a spare moment 'from writing the necessary letters that are gone to Jamaica.'^{xxxii} When corresponding with those who had been used to dealing with her husband, she was careful to emphasise that 'I now answer on my own account.'^{xxxiii} Neither did she always unthinkingly adopt the opinions of Hope

Elletson, even on occasion implicitly criticising the decision-making of her late husband. She initiated a discussion with Pool and East, for example, about the possibility of sending over an English ploughman to direct the agricultural work on the estate, despite being fully aware that Roger Hope Elletson had not supported the idea.^{xxxiv} Her husband may have provided Anna Eliza with the necessary knowledge to undertake the long-distance management of Hope, but she was unafraid of making her own decisions. A disappointing crop may have led her to lament ‘[a]s a planter I have begun my reign most unsuccessfully’ but the monarchical undertones of such language illustrate a great deal about how she conceived herself.^{xxxv}

It is also possible that Anna Eliza’s professions of ignorance were rooted as much in her status as an absentee as her position as a woman. She believed that her Jamaican-born husband had been ‘a good understanding planter’ but in contrast presented herself as ‘a mere novice,’ admitting that anyone would struggle to cultivate a country with which they were unacquainted.^{xxxvi} Having received several letters from her attorneys shortly after the death of Hope Elletson, Anna Eliza confessed that ‘they tread on a subject of which I am not so perfectly Mistress as I ought to be.’^{xxxvii} Far from indicating that she believed her gender made her fundamentally unsuited to or unqualified for plantation ownership, this suggests Anna Eliza believed any deficiencies she had could, and indeed should, be remedied. Constantly demanding a supply of more information, she clearly believed that through instruction and research she could become a knowledgeable, and consequently successful, plantation-owner.

Elletson was certainly dependent on Pool and East for the implementation of her ideas and instructions. Writing from across the Atlantic, almost 5,000 miles from a plantation she had never visited, she recognised that she was ‘indebted’ to the ‘good management’ of her attorneys.^{xxxviii} Whilst both contemporaries and historians have argued that many attorneys were lazy, profligate and deceitful, Anna Eliza seemed pleased with the conduct of Pool and

East, assuring them that Hope ‘cannot fail to prosper under such good management.’^{xxxix} That she was reliant on the trust and capabilities of others was in no way unique: there were thousands of Caribbean plantation-owners living in metropolitan Britain in the late eighteenth century and the endeavours of their attorneys were critical to their success. However, it is noticeable that this dependency is couched in implicitly gendered terms not echoed in the correspondence of male absentees. The same kinds of professions of ignorance, for example, were not evident in the letters of fellow absentee Thomas Lane. Neither did he use the same language of dependence, instead referring to the ‘obligation’ he felt towards his attorneys.^{xl} Anna Eliza, on the other hand, assured Pool and East that she was ‘relying on your protection’ and thanked them for helping to ‘protect the property of the Defenceless’ and thus ‘act[ing] a noble part.’^{xli} Her orders and instructions may have been forthright and knowledgeable but underlying this rhetoric was the assumption of a male protector and female dependent. This contradiction underpinned much of Anna Eliza’s correspondence as she attempted to negotiate her position as woman and slave-owner.

In 1777 Anna Eliza married James Brydges, joining the highest ranks of the English aristocracy. Shortly after, Brydges inherited the dukedom of Chandos and Anna Eliza became a Duchess. That a marriage between the head of one of England’s most prominent aristocratic families and a gentry-born Jamaican absentee appears to have been met with little disapproval suggests that the dividing lines between different ranks of society, although firm, were not impenetrably rigid. An annual income of around £6,000 could make these divisions considerably more porous.^{xlii} In an eighteenth-century world where the Caribbean colonies were still one of the most vital areas for British wealth-creation, a marriage between landed wealth—still a beacon of British status and influence—and colonial commerce could be mutually beneficial.^{xliii}

Although under the common law principle of coverture ‘by marriage those chattels

which belonged to the woman before marriage, are by act of law vested in her husband', under the laws of equity a married woman could be permitted to own her own 'sole and separate estate' in the form of a trust.^{xliv} These trusts gave wives limited property rights, protected their independent interests during marriage and even occasionally gave women the power to bequeath property as they wished. The extent to which marriage settlements gave any real power to women has been hotly debated, with trusts often containing severe restrictions.^{xlv} Unfortunately, it has been difficult to discover the contents of the settlement between Anna Eliza and James Brydges. However, in Anna Eliza's will—admittedly written in 1789, after Brydges' death—she bequeathed Hope to be settled upon her only surviving child, a daughter also named Anna Eliza, who would later become the Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos. The laws of equity not only provided some married with access to property but could also enable them to transmit it intergenerationally, to daughters as well as sons.^{xlvi}

Neither did Anna Eliza relinquish control of Hope when she remarried.^{xlvii} The regular communication between Pool, East and the new Duchess continued unabated. Although Pool and East sent several letters to Brydges in courtesy, until at least 1782 the majority of correspondence continued to be addressed to Anna Eliza. Indeed, the first letter she sent after her remarriage apologised for the fact that 'that event' had meant she had neglected to answer several letters, but this was the only allusion to her marriage. She then continued discussing estate matters as usual.^{xlviii} The tone of Pool and East's correspondence, however, did change. Whilst they always employed a courteous and considerate tone, when she became a Duchess their language immediately became more explicitly deferential and they used increasingly long and florid subscriptions: an important part of letter-writing etiquette used to distinguish hierarchies of rank.^{xlix} As an elite and high-ranking woman, Anna Eliza wielded significant power. Within the world of transatlantic commerce, hierarchies of class could be as

significant as those of gender.

Gentlemanly Networks

Gentlemanly networks of planters, merchants and financiers were crucial to the practice of absentee-ownership. As David Hancock argues, focussing solely on one individual can be misleading, as they were ‘only one piece of a large puzzle, one character in a complicated story.’¹ Informal gentlemanly networks sustained both the West Indian sugar enterprise and the wider British Empire in the late eighteenth century. Crossing metropole and colony, these networks were held together by ties of commerce, politics, culture and sociability.^{li} Absentees thus often located themselves within a wider transatlantic fraternity of West India gentlemen. New acquaintances or employees tended to be friends or connections of others, and personal introductions, whether by epistolary or direct means, were necessary to establish relationships. Barbadian absentee Thomas Lane’s response to a warning he had received about an unknown Mr Goodridge shows the significance of these pre-established networks. ‘I receive your caution as to this Gentleman with thanks’ he insisted, ‘but you might be assured I shod. not enter into much serious conversation with a Stranger.’^{lii}

It is unsurprising that without access to these kinds of networks female slave-owners could face considerable impediments. Anna Eliza was clearly disadvantaged in this respect when the men of the Jamaican Assembly attempted to pass a bill which would allow them to convey water from Hope to the nearby town of Kingston. They had been friends of Roger Hope Elletson during his time as Governor and waited until after his death before attempting to pass this bill, the implications of which would prove exceedingly detrimental to Hope Estate. She may have heard her husband ‘speak of his friends in Jamaica with so much affection’ but as a woman and an absentee, Anna Eliza did not enjoy the same attachment with these men – or they with her – and thus found herself in a vulnerable position. This was

something she well understood, admitting to her attorneys: ‘my property is in a country whence I have not the happening of having any friends to protect it save you.’^{liii}

Although Anna Eliza did not have access to the same kinds of gentlemanly networks as many male absentees she did have a close relationship with her attorneys, men she describes as ‘steadfast friends.’^{liv} Naomi Tadmor has brought attention to the plurality of eighteenth-century meanings of friendship, highlighting that the term could apply to economic and occupational connections as well as sentimental, sociable and kinship attachments and there is no doubt that this ostensibly professional enterprise was underpinned by personal ties.^{lv} Anna Eliza had known East before he travelled to Jamaica. While he was managing her Jamaican estate, she was heavily involved in the upbringing of his son ‘Neddy’ in Britain. As well as conversations about planting, sugar and the enslaved, the correspondence between the two contained many discussions about Ned, his behaviour and his schooling.^{lvi} Anna Eliza spoke about Ned with great warmth, assuring East that ‘your son is very well, and promising to be everything you can possibly wish him to be’ and the close relationship between the two families was to continue for decades.^{lvii} That Elletson was unashamed to proclaim, ‘You are not mere attorneys to me, you are in fact my best friends’ suggests that although she might not have had access to the same kinds of gentlemanly networks as her male counterparts, her close relationship with Pool and East was crucial to her plantation-ownership. Far from friendship and business being mutually exclusive, they were intimately interlinked, even when the slave-owner was female.^{lviii}

Managing Hope

Despite her gender, her distance from Hope, her claims of ignorance and her dependence on her attorneys, Anna Eliza did not hesitate to proclaim her own opinions regarding the plantation. Organising the system of planting was a considerable commitment. Aware of the

unpredictable weather and area's propensity for drought, she understood the importance of implementing an efficient system of watering.^{lix} 'I have little to count on, unless the scheme of watering is carried into execution,' she implored.^{lx} Anna Eliza's instructions were knowledgeable, detailed and precise. Behind the politely and innocuously written 'I presume you will order the trenches to be dug Crosswise instead of perpendicular, and to bank the trenches up', was a clear order.^{lxi} Such specific and specialist knowledge suggests that, influenced by the spirit of agricultural improvement evident on British landed estates, she was a reader of contemporary agricultural advice books, such as Jethro Tull's bestselling *The New Horse-Houghing Husbandry*.^{lxii} While Richard B. Sheridan has suggested that the lack of attention paid to agricultural improvement was one of the 'eroding effects of absentee landlordism,' it does not appear as if absentees were universally disinterested in 'improving' their Caribbean estates.^{lxiii}

Anna Eliza paid meticulous attention to the accounts she received from Jamaica and put forward a range of methods and techniques in an attempt to improve the quality and quantity of the sugar produced at Hope. Modernising the estate's agricultural practices was a perennial preoccupation. Departing from the wishes of her late husband, her attempts to send a ploughman to Hope 'to Direct the Negroes in our method of plowing, and Harrowing,' reveal her initiative and independent action.^{lxiv} On several occasions she suggested employing specialists to oversee the implementation of new agricultural techniques, such as 'a person from Hispaniola', where she believed the French had had success 'long before it was ever thought of in Jamaica.'^{lxv} Certainly, Anna Eliza lacked neither ambition nor imagination, even asking her attorneys whether it was 'feasible to water [the land] by fire engine?' There was perhaps a naivety in her minimisation of the significance of all the extra expense involved in undertaking these endeavours. Believing, 'it will amply repay me,' she did not appear to have quite comprehended the difficulties involved.^{lxvi} However, this does suggest

that instilled in Anna Eliza was a spirit of agricultural improvement which, Justin Roberts argues, swept through Britain's plantation colonies in the late eighteenth century.^{lxvii}

Agricultural innovation was not indiscriminately rejected. Indeed, it was often embraced.^{lxviii}

Anna Eliza's orders about how to deal with the sugar once it had been reaped and refined were also extremely precise. Her letters were full of a variety of instructions, from how to insure the sugar, to who should ship it and to which merchants it should be sold. Although she dealt with merchant houses in both London and Bristol, unusually, she preferred her sugar to be sold at the latter. 'I have always understood that sugar bears a better price at Bristol, than at London, unless the market overstocked,' she wrote to merchant Robert Gordon, a belief that seems to have been borne out by the fact that 'there is a Difference of from five to six shillings per hogshead, in the sales that have been made at Bristol.'^{lxix} Neither was Elletson hesitant to share her opinions when unimpressed with any aspect of the sugar enterprise. Of repeated concern was the colour of the sugar. Demanding early on that 'the sugar be made as white as possible' she frequently expressed her disappointment with the quality of that which had been produced.^{lxx} The 1778 sugar crop, for example, was in Anna Eliza's opinion, a 'very bad colour' and she instructed her attorneys 'to take particular care to obviate it.'^{lxxi} She may have professed that her attorneys were 'the more competent judges' of the decisions to be made, but the frequency of her own suggestions, directions and instructions completely contradicts this claim.

That Anna Eliza valued the plantation so highly is hardly surprising given the vast wealth Hope produced. Between 1777 and 1783, 1,589 hogsheads of sugar were shipped to London and Bristol from Hope at a total value of £46,557, 6 shillings and 4 and a half pence. Although there was considerable annual variation, that was an average of around £6,651 worth of sugar per year.^{lxxii} Neither was this money considered in abstract or isolated terms; she was pleased to hear that the 1776 crop was going to be a good one 'as I shall have several

sums of money to pay from it in England.^{1xxiii} The wealth that Anna Eliza generated from her Jamaican sugar plantation alone would have placed her amongst the richest in British society. W.D. Rubinstein in his interestingly-titled *Men of Property* cites contemporaneous evidence from the tax returns that suggests in 1801 there were only 1,020 people in Britain earning an annual income of over £5,000, though he also admits that this is probably an underestimate.^{1xxiv} That Elletson was able to amass such wealth and, significantly, without the cultural baggage associated with the West Indian ‘type’, was crucial in enabling her to marry into the highest echelons of the English aristocracy.

Attitude towards the enslaved

One of the most important aspects of managing Hope was governing the enslaved people who worked on the estate. A racial ideology underpinned the institution of slave-ownership.^{1xxv} The reification of whiteness was a key underpinning of colonial rule in the British Caribbean and the writings of contemporary West Indians display an articulation of racial difference where physical, cultural and intellectual attributes are clearly conflated. ‘The negro is possessed of passions not only strong, but ungovernable’ wrote Hector M’Neill in 1788, ‘a mind dauntless, warlike and unmerciful; a temper extremely irascible; a disposition violent, selfish and deceitful.’^{1xxvi}

Yet Anna Eliza’s correspondence was not filled with explicitly dehumanising language. Linda Sturtz has demonstrated how important it was to her to be conceived as a paternalistic mistress.^{1xxvii} She implored her overseer to ensure that the enslaved were ‘well taken care of in sickness or health, and their [...] situations rendered as comfortable as possible’.^{1xxviii} Similarly, she ordered Edward East to treat them with ‘humanity and tenderness,’ adding that ‘it is a matter of the greatest consequence to me that they should be content.’^{1xxix} Economic self-interest was certainly a prime motivation. Anna Eliza drew

attention, for example, to the fact that she was ‘extremely concerned at the loss of the Negroes Bacchaus’ but it is evident that this concern was not rooted in any concern for him or his family: ‘he was so essential to the Still House,’ she bemoaned, hoping ‘that the loss is not irreplaceable.’^{lxxx} Yet, pleased to hear that ‘the Negroes received the melancholy news of their Master’s death with great concern,’ Anna Eliza certainly saw herself as a benevolent planter.^{lxxx} Her use of a paternalistic rhetoric and her apparent interest in the welfare of the enslaved also hints at the ambiguous position of the absentee slave-owner. Geographic removal from the site of exploitation allowed absentees to psychologically distance themselves from the violent horrors of the slave system.

Anna Eliza’s orders to treat the enslaved people ‘with goodness and humanity’ were, however, accompanied by one telling caveat. She may have ostensibly instructed her overseer to ‘continue that humane plan, and never to use any Correction to them’, but this was followed by an important qualifier: ‘unless you see it absolutely necessary, to preserve that authority with which you are invested.’^{lxxxii} Contemporaries recognised that Caribbean slave society was a place where an ‘absolute coercive necessity [...] supersedes all questions of right.’^{lxxxiii} Anna Eliza’s ‘negroes’ were therefore characterised first and foremost by their enslavement; their treatment, however ostensibly generous, has to be conceived within these parameters. Underpinning Anna Eliza’s paternalistic rhetoric was a sense of absolute authority and control, something that was imbued with racial connotations. Despite having no first-hand knowledge, she complained about the ‘well known obstinacy of the Negroes,’ suggesting their activity would remain limited unless they had a white person to direct them, who, ‘being absolute over them obliges them to submit.’^{lxxxiv} Although she argued that ‘they are born to labour in a manner peculiar to their colour,’ Elletson did suggest that ‘we who reap the fruits of that labour, ought to soften it for them’, the only hint in her entire correspondence of an underlying discomfort with this system of forced labour. Yet even here,

there was another important caveat: ‘as much as possible.’^{lxxxv} Despite the lack of explicitly dehumanising language, there is little doubt that Anna Eliza’s slave-ownership was rooted in a hierarchically-conceived assumption of racial difference. Her language of paternalism and protection contained an implicit assumption of superiority that was itself racialised. This raises questions about the way we think about the gendering of slave-ownership and the expression of authority. Whilst speaking to white male social equals, even inferiors, Anna Eliza employed, at least in part, a language of dependency and protection. Yet she simultaneously used paternalistic rhetoric to establish her authority over those who worked on her Jamaican plantation. In this context, it was her whiteness that lay at the heart of her power over the enslaved. Her gender was less significant than her position at the top of a racialised hierarchy; issues of gender were over-determined by those of race.

Ultimately, the enslaved people of Hope plantation were first and foremost conceived of as property. ‘You will please order a regular list of the Negroes, specifying their names and age as near as possible [...] to be annually sent to me,’ Anna Eliza ordered.^{lxxxvi} The values of ten enslaved people leased to Mr Collard, for example, were listed in an ‘appraisalment of negroes belonging to the Estate of Roger Hope Elletson Esq. deceased’ undertaken at the end of lease. All we know of these people are their names and how much they were deemed to be worth: Godfrey at £95, Benneba at £5, and everyone else somewhere in between.^{lxxxvii} These people were considered as little more than units of economic value.^{lxxxviii} That Anna Eliza ordered that ‘particular care may be taken of the breeding Women and their Children, for you well know that on the number and health of the Negroes, depends the success of a plantation’ shows the extent to which the fertility of the female slaves was deemed quantifiable.^{lxxxix} Anna Eliza’s correspondence hints at the contradictions between person and property embodied by the figure of the slave. She may have tried to distance herself from the darker side of the slave system but it is impossible to ignore that this particular form of property-

ownership was property in people.

Conclusion

Jamaican plantation and slave-ownership in the late-eighteenth century was a complex and multifaceted endeavour, particularly for the absentee. These proprietors had to engage with an extensive range of interests, from personal, familial, political and military concerns to those explicitly pertaining to the running of a plantation, slavery, agriculture, trade and finance.^{xc} Absentee plantation-owners certainly encountered problems their resident counterparts did not, but an examination of Anna Eliza's correspondence has shown that far from being passive, uninterested, and even negligent, absentee plantation-owners could and did take an active interest in the management of their estates.

A good deal more work needs to be undertaken on female slave-owners before we can be confident about Anna Eliza's typicality.^{xci} Nonetheless, examining figures like Ann Eliza does help us to explore the relationship between gender and absenteeism. There is no doubt that her letters were inherently gendered. Her repeated professions of ignorance and subservient language suggest that the idea of the knowledgeable male provider and the unassuming female dependent was a powerful one. Although all absentees were reliant on their West Indian attorneys for help and support in the management of their plantations, Anna Eliza couched her far from unique dependence in particularly gendered terms. However, that her correspondence also contains detailed, specific and forthright orders about the management of Hope also shows that eighteenth-century ideas about gender were unstable and inconsistent. Anna Eliza demonstrates that although women were not presumed to be active economic agents or to be able to manage any property they owned, they certainly did so. Women like Elletson could variously, and even simultaneously, buttress, modify, manipulate and undermine societies' gendered assumptions and expectations.

Anna Eliza's authority as a plantation-owner may have been circumscribed by her position as a woman, but examining her correspondence also demonstrates the danger of focussing solely on her gender. Doing so would merely reinforce the notion of some kind of ahistorical female subjectivity. Anna Eliza's gender certainly had an important impact on the way she wrote, thought and behaved. But this cannot be clearly separated from the other hierarchical markers of difference that also underpinned her attitudes, assumptions and authority. In the case of Anna Eliza Elletson these different categories of identity cross-cut in a number of ways which enabled her, as a rich, white, upper-class female absentee plantation-owner, to display her authority, while also limiting the terms of this engagement. These letters demonstrate that hierarchies of gender, race, and class were not distinct or separable. Rather, they were mutually constitutive, reinforcing and supporting, not necessarily coalescing but intersecting in a number of ways in the processes of plantation and slave-ownership.^{xcii} An examination of individuals such as Anna Eliza challenges the notion that absentee slave-ownership was a necessarily male endeavour. It allows us to delve beyond the tired stereotype of the West Indian absentee. Clearly, Anna Eliza bears little resemblance to the 'Upstarts[s] of fortune' and 'men of low birth' Tobias Smolett described.^{xciii} It is important to examine how these slave-owning women thought, acted and behaved in this gentlemanly world. Only then can these forgotten female absentees begin to be reintegrated into the history of British slavery.

Notes

ⁱ Wylie Sypher, 'The West Indian as a "Character" in the Eighteenth Century', *Studies in Philology*, 36:3 (1939), p. 503.

ⁱⁱ Tobias Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker* (London: Penguin, 2008), p. 44. (First published 1771).

ⁱⁱⁱ Linda L. Sturtz, 'The "Dimduke" and the Duchess of `Chandos: Gender and Power in Jamaican Plantation Management - A Case Study or, A Different Story of "A Man [and his wife] from a Place called Hope' *Revista/Review Interamericana* 29 (1999) (Online) Available from: <http://cai.sg.inter.edu/revista-ciscla/volume29/sturtz.pdf> [accessed 26 August 2015], is the only other examination of the plantation-ownership of Anna Eliza Elletson. I have found her illuminating research exceptionally helpful.

^{iv} Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper, Keith McClelland, Katie Donington and Rachel Lang, *Legacies of British Slave-ownership: Colonial Slavery and the Formation of Victorian Britain*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 35; Trevor Burnard, 'Passengers Only: The extent and significance of absenteeism in eighteenth century Jamaica', *Atlantic Studies* 1:2, (2004), p. 181.

^v Douglas Hall, 'Absentee Proprietorship in the British West Indies to about 1850', *Journal of Caribbean History*, 35:1. (2001), p. 101.

^{vi} Nicholas Draper, *The Price of Emancipation: Slave-Ownership, Compensation and British Society at the end of Slavery*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 140, 186.

^{vii} John Campbell, *A Political Survey of Great Britain*, (London, 1774), vol. 2, p. 567.

^{viii} B. W. Higman, *A Concise History of the Caribbean*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 104.

^{ix} Cut off from North American supplies, Jamaica, like much of the British West Indies, experienced acute shortages of food, while the threat of French invasion loomed large in the

imagination. Selwyn H.H. Carrington, 'The American Revolution and the British West Indies' Economy', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 17:4 (1987), p. 82; Andrew Jackson O'Shaughnessy, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 170.

^x Srividhya Swaminathan, 'Developing the West India Proslavery Position after the Somerset Decision', *Slavery and Abolition*, 24:3 (2003), p. 41. See also Srividhya Swaminathan, *Debating the Slave Trade: Rhetoric of British National Identity, 1759-1815*, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), ch. 4.

^{xi} Samuel Martin, *An Essay Upon Plantership*, 5th ed. (London, 1773), pp. v-vi, 3.

^{xii} Jamaican planter Thomas Roughley, for example, warned of the dangers which faced an absentee who 'seldom or ever visit[s] the island or his estates', arguing that consequently 'he understands little of the resources it possesses.' Thomas Roughley, *The Jamaica Planter's Guide; Or, A System For Planting and Managing a Sugar Estate*, (London, 1823), p. 19.

^{xiii} James Forydce, *Sermons to Young Women*, 3rd ed. (Dublin, 1766), vol. 1, p. 258.

^{xiv} Elaine Chalus, *Elite Women in English Political Life, c. 1754-1790*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005), p. 17.

^{xv} Kathryn Gleadle, *Borderline Citizens: Women, Gender and Political Culture in Britain, 1815-1867*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 2.

^{xvi} K. D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*, (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), p. 42-60.

^{xvii} Although still relatively small in size, there is a growing scholarship on female slave-ownership in the Caribbean including Lucille Mathurin Mair, *A Historical Study of Women in Jamaica*, (Mona: University of West India Press, 2006); Hilary Beckles, *Centering Women: Gender Discourses in Caribbean Society*, (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 1999);

Kathleen Mary Butler, *The Economics of Emancipation: Jamaica and Barbados, 1823-1843*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Cecily Jones, *Engendering Whiteness: White Women and Colonialism in Barbados and North Carolina, 1627-1865*, (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007) and Christine Walker ‘Pursuing Her Profits: Women in Jamaica, Atlantic Slavery and a Globalising Market, 1700-60’, *Gender and History*, 26:3 (2014).

^{xviii} Clare Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: the British Campaigns, 1780-1870*, (London: Routledge, 1992) and Moira Ferguson, *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670-1834*, (New York: Routledge, 1992) have been particularly influential.

^{xix}The relative paucity of studies concerning the slave-ownership of British women contrasts dramatically with the extensive literature exploring U.S. women’s involvement in slavery. Catherine Clinton’s *The Plantation Mistress* is just one of many monographs that examines the contribution of white women in the plantation societies of the Antebellum South. Cecily Jones’ excellent comparison of North Carolina and Barbados shows that in both societies white women played an important role both as active economic agents and in helping to construct and reproduce the boundaries of whiteness which underpinned colonial rule, Catherine Clinton, *The Plantation Mistress: Women’s World in the Old South*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1982), p. 15; Cecily Jones, *Engendering Whiteness*, p. 2.

^{xx} National Library of Jamaica [hereafter NLJ] MS29A, AEE to Mrs Staker, 11 December 1775; Huntington Library [hereafter HL], San Marino, CA. Stowe Papers, West Indies Box 3, A List of Negroes on Hope Plantation, 01 January 1776.

^{xxi} Veront M. Satchell, *Hope Transformed: A Historical Sketch of the Hope Landscape, St. Andrew, Jamaica, 1660-1960*, (Mona: University of the West Indies Press, 2012), p. 77.

^{xxii} Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2002), p. 174.

^{xxiii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776.

^{xxiv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776.

^{xxv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 07 December 1775; AEE to East, 13 June 1776.

^{xxvi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 12 March 1780

^{xxvii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776; Sturtz, 'The "Dimduke and the Duchess of Chandos', p. 10.

^{xxviii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to East, 07 December 1775.

^{xxix} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Gordon, 26 December 1775

^{xxx} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Mr. Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{xxxi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776.

^{xxxii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 07 December 1775; AEE to Mrs Staker, 11 December 1775.

^{xxxiii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Mr. Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{xxxiv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776.

^{xxxv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777

^{xxxvi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777

^{xxxvii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 26 January 1776.

^{xxxviii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, January 17th 1776.

^{xxxix} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 6 March 1776. Thomas Roughley, for example, argued that most attorneys were 'engrossed by their own interested speculations [...] too ostentatious, proud and supine to contribute to the good of their constituents.' Roughley, *The Jamaica Planter's Guide*, 7. Historians who have emphasised the general incompetence of

attorneys include Lowell Joseph Ragatz, 'Absentee Landlordism in the British Caribbean, 1750-1833', *Agricultural History* 5:1 (1931), pp. 7-24; Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, London: Deutsch, 1964); Orlando Patterson, *The Sociology of Slavery: An Analysis of the Origins, Development and Structure of Negro Slave Society in Jamaica*. (London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1967).

^{xl} Senate House Library, MS523/967, T Lane to Sir J Alleyne, 03 May 1796; T Lane to R Haynes, 01 January 1805.

^{xli} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777.

^{xlii} HL, Stowe Papers, West Indies Box 2. Hope Plantation, Jamaica. 'Accounts of Production, Sales and Shipping of Sugar and Rum, 1758-1784.'

^{xliii} P. J. Cain and A.G Hopkins, 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Overseas Expansion: The Old Colonial System, 1688-1850', *The Economic History Review*, 39:4 (1986), p. 518; G.E. Mingay, *English Landed Society in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Routledge, 1963), pp. 28-9.

^{xliv} J. Johnson, *The Laws Respecting Women*, (London, 1777), p. 149.

^{xlv} Those engaged in this debate have included Maxine Berg, 'Women's Property and the Industrial Revolution', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 24:2 (1993), pp. 233-250; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, (Abingdon, Routledge, 2002); Amy Erickson, *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870*, (London, Routledge, 1993); Alistair Owens, 'Property, gender and the life course: inheritance and family welfare provision in early nineteenth-century England', *Social History*, 26:3 (2001), pp. 299-317; and R. J. Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

^{xlvi} HL, Stowe Papers, West Indies Box 5. Settlement of Estates in Ireland & Jamaica and

Appointment by His Grace the Duke of Buckingham & Chandos and the Marquis of Chandos, 03 May 1828.

^{xlvii} Satchell., *Hope Transformed*, p. 83

^{xlviii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 06 October 1777.

^{xlx} Eve Taylor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 65.

^l David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 10.

^{li} Katie Donington, 'The Benevolent Merchant? George Hibbert and the Representation of West Indian Mercantile Identity', PhD thesis, University College London, 2013, p. 29.

^{lii} Senate House Library, MS523/967, T Lane to S Wood, 23rd May 1802.

^{liii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 26 March 1776. Anna Eliza was extremely irate at the behaviour of the men of the Jamaican Assembly, convinced they were exploiting her. Aware of her rights as a property-holder, she deemed the Act 'totally repugnant to the Laws of this country' and believed it would be 'reversed here, should it be carried out against me in Jamaica', a prediction which was ultimately proved correct. NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool, June 13th 1776.

^{liv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 12 March 1780.

^{lv} Naomi Tadmor, *Family and Friends in Eighteenth Century England: Household, Kinship and Patronage*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 167.

^{lvi} NLJ MS29A, East to AE, 28 March 1777

^{lvii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to East, 13 June 1776

^{lviii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777.

^{lix} NLJ MS29A, AEE to East, 13 June 1776.

^{lx} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool, 13 June 1776

^{lxi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, January 17th 1776.

^{lxii} Neither was Anna Eliza the only absentee to undertake such a scheme. Susanne Seymour, Stephen Daniels and Charles Watkins have shown how Sir George Cornwall was involved in projects of agricultural improvement on both his Grenadian and Hertfordshire estates, highlighting many overlapping concerns in the management of land, labour and finance. Susanne Seymour, Stephen Daniels and Charles Watkins, 'Estate and empire: Sir George Cornwall's management of Moccas, Hertfordshire and La Taste, Grenada, 1771-1819'. *Journal of Historical Geography*, 24:3 (1998), p. 341.

^{lxiii} R.B. Sheridan, 'The Rise of a Colonial Gentry: A Case Study of Antigua, 1730-1775', *The Economic History Review*, 13:3 (1961), p. 354.

^{lxiv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776. Ploughing was a relatively recent innovation in Jamaica. In 1772 agriculturalist Arthur Young commented that ploughing would be 'a more advantageous form of cultivation' in the West Indian colonies than the standard practice of hoeing by hand. Arthurs Young, *Political Essays Concerning the Present State of the British Empire*, (London, 1772), p. 278.

^{lxv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777.

^{lxvi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool, 13 June 1776.

^{lxvii} Justin Roberts, *Slavery and the Enlightenment in the British Atlantic*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 1.

^{lxviii} W.A.Green, 'The Planter Class and British West Indian Sugar Production, before and after Emancipation', *The Economic History Review*, 26:3 (1973), p. 448. One Jamaican land surveyor argued in 1796 that the recent agricultural improvements in Jamaica 'had been very great.' Nicholas Robson, *Hints for a General View of the Agricultural State of the Parish of*

Saint James, in the Island of Jamaica, (London: John Stockade, 1796), p. 12.

^{lxi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Gordon, 13 March 1776; AEE to Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{lxx} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{lxxi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 07 November 1778.

^{lxxii} HL, Stowe Papers, West Indies Box 2. Hope Plantation, Jamaica. 'Accounts of Production, Sales and Shipping of Sugar and Rum, 1758-1784.' This sum is consistent with that provided by Anna Eliza's Committees who, in a 1791 petition for a maintenance allowance for the Duchess of Chandos, who had in that year been classified 'a lunatic,' argued that this 'Plantation in Jamaica... has generally cleared £6,000 per Annum.' HL, Stowe Papers, STB Personal Box 8/7 'Petition for maintenance allowance for Anna Eliza, Duchess of Chandos, 1791'.

^{lxxiii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776.

^{lxxiv} W.D. Rubinstein, *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy in Britain since the Industrial Revolution*, (London: Social Affairs Unit, 2006), p. 62.

^{lxxv} Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern*, (London: Verso, 1997), pp. 12-15; Christer Petley, *Slaveowners in Jamaica*, (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009), p. 50. Edward Long's infamous *History of Jamaica* contained this ditty:

The general *order*, since the whole began,

Is kept in *nature*, and is kept in *man*.

Order is heaven's first law; and this confest,

Some are and must be, greater than the rest.

Quoted in Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, p. 75. It is important, however, to recognise that eighteenth century understandings of race were complex and uneven. Roxanne Wheeler has shown

that ideas about difference associated with culture, civility and religion were as important to the way Britons viewed themselves as physical characteristics like skin colour or texture of the hair. She argues that it was only towards the end of the eighteenth century that skin colour became ‘the primary signifier of human difference.’ Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 7.

^{lxxvi} Hector M’Neill, *Observations on the Treatment of the Negroes in the Island of Jamaica*, (London, 1788), p. 28. This echoes Edward Long’s assertion that the tempers of ‘negroes’ were ‘in general irascible, conceited, proud, indolent, lascivious, credulous, and very artful.’ Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, Vol. II*, (London, 1774), pp. 407, 365.

^{lxxvii} Sturtz, ‘The “Dimduke and the Duchess of Chandos’, 6.

^{lxxviii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{lxxix} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{lxxx} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 17 January 1776.

^{lxxxi} NLJ MS29A, East to AEE, 10 February 1776. As Katie Donington argues, absentee slave-owners used the trope of the benevolent planter to present slavery as ‘a benign institution’ and the relationship between the enslaver and the enslaved as characterised by patriarchal beneficence. She draws attention to Thomas Bellamy’s 1789 play *The Benevolent Planters* which, according to one review, succeeded in ‘exhibit[ing] the humanity of the worthy Planter in a pleasing light.’ Of course, this archetype was itself gendered. ‘Generous men! Humanity confers dignity upon authority’ announced one of Bellamy’s ‘benevolent planters.’. Katie Donington, ‘The Benevolent Merchant?’, p. 37; *The Monthly Review*, 81 (1789), p. 371; Thomas Bellamy *The Benevolent Planters*, (London: J. Debrett, 1789), p. 3.

^{lxxxii} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Ballard, 13 January 1776.

^{lxxxiii} Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, 2nd ed., (London, 1793), vol.1, p. 13. Quoted in Trevor Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire: Thomas Thistlewood and His Slaves in the Anglo-Jamaican World*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), p. 138. Thomas Thistlewood's cruelty and brutality has been well documented. But, as Burnard notes, Thistlewood's diaries suggest his behaviour was far from unique or particularly aberrant. Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny and Desire*, p. 150.

^{lxxxiv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777.

^{lxxxv} NLJ MS29A, AEE to East, 13 June 1776.

^{lxxxvi} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 7 November 1778.

^{lxxxvii} HL, Stowe Papers, West Indies Box 3, 'Lists of Negro Slaves, Vital Statistics etc., 1776-1788'.

^{lxxxviii} Michael Craton and James Walvin, *A Jamaican Plantation: The History of Worthy Park, 1670-1970*, (London: W.H Allen, 1970), p. 126.

^{lxxxix} NLJ MS29A, AEE to Pool and East, 23 January 1777.

^{xc} Richard B. Sheridan, 'Samuel Martin, Innovating Sugar Planter of Antigua, 1750-1776', *Agricultural History* 34:3 (1960), p. 128.

^{xci} Erin Trahey's work on fellow Jamaican absentee Eliza Virgo Scarlett, however, does show that Scarlett had a smilier interest in agricultural improvement, while also, rather inaccurately, emphasising her own business and managerial incompetence. Erin Trahey, 'The plantation management of Eliza Virgo Scarlett: female proprietorship and the Jamaica economy, 1798-1821.' Unpublished conference paper, *Women, land and the making of the British landscape, 1300-1900*, 19th-20th June 2015, University of Hull

^{xcii} Gerda Lerner, 'Reconceptualizing Differences Among Women', *Journal of Women's History*, 1:3 (1990), p. 116.

^{xciii} Smollett, *Humphrey Clinker*, p. 44.