

Estate Beeston Hill

Estate Beeston Hill, matriculated as Company Quarter No. 6, was a standard size sugar plantation encompassing 150 acres. Located about a mile west of Christiansted, it was founded in 1738 by James Stoane, an Englishman born in Bermuda, who came to St. Croix via Tortola in the British Virgin Islands. By the time of his death in 1750, Stoane had transformed the land into a sugar plantation.

In 1830, Beeston Hill had 75 acres of sugar under cultivation and was being worked by 52 enslaved persons (23 males and 29 females). Its absentee owners were the heirs of Thomas Seale, none of whom lived on St. Croix. David L. Finlay, who had become manager in 1827 (see below), was therefore the only White person of authority on the property in 1830.



1. Sucky and her son Ellich

African, born ca. 1774. She was brought onto Estate Mount Welcome in 1787, having been purchased in St. Thomas, and put to work in the cane fields. In 1797, she was valued at Ps. 500 in and was said to be capable in 1802. But in 1804 her value had declined to Ps 200, indicating that she probably lost her arm since 1802. Her son Ellich aka Ellich/Allick was born in 1797 or 1798.

Sucky and Ellich were sold to Estate Beeston Hill sometime between September 1815 (when they were listed on a Mt. Welcome inventory) and 1818 (when they appear on the Beeston Hill Head

Tax List). Most likely this transition occurred in 1816, when a large number of slaves on Estate Mount Welcome were sold. Both Sucky and Ellich were listed on a inventory of Beeston Hill prepared in 1838: she was said to have no value; Ellich, a carpenter was appraised at Ps. 350. Neither of them appears in the 1841 census or any subsequent census.

2. David L. Finlay

Born in Ireland and baptized in the Presbyterian Church ca. 1798, Finlay came to St. Croix around 1822 when he took out a Burgher Brief. In 1824, he was living with Mary Alette Meyer, a free woman of color and their child Ellen at 16A Queen Street in Frederiksted, a property that he purchased the following year and sold in 1827, when he became manager of Estate Beeston Hill. It is not known how long he worked on Beeston Hill. Between 1835 and 1849, he managed and lived on estate Concordia, a large sugar plantation near Frederiksted. In 1850, he married Mary A. Meyer, and the couple was living at his house in Frederiksted with their 8 children ages 7 to 25. At the time he was unemployed, while she supported him as a shopkeeper. He died of dropsy in 1856, leaving his house in Frederiksted to his widow and children.

