



Caribbean Connections and slavery

Text written by Dr Fiona Salvesen Murrell, Curator, Paxton House, Dr Charles Fletcher, and edited by Dr Peggy Brunache. Copyright The Paxton Trust, 2026.

Introduction

Several members of the Home family who built and owned Paxton House became involved in transatlantic slavery; some long before Paxton House was even built.

Paxton House, however, was not built with money derived from transatlantic slavery, but from 1774-1791 interior decorations and furnishings were commissioned for the house using proceeds from slavery.

Later, from 1815-c.1835 the proceeds from enslavement are likely to have been invested in the Home family's estate, but further research is required to establish exactly where the money was spent. This text was updated in 2026 to reflect new research and explain the Caribbean Connections of Paxton House in more detail.



Richard Waitt (d. 1732) George Home (of Virginia) (1698-1760), c.1714/15. The Paxton Trust

1716-1750s

The earliest member of the family who became involved in transatlantic slavery was **Francis Home of Quixwood (1672-1721)**. Francis, like his brother **Sir George Home of Wedderburn (1667-1720)**, and George's son, also named **George Home (of Virginia) (1698-1760)** were involved in the Jacobite Uprising of 1715, were captured, and received death sentences or transportation to the colonies.

Francis bought his freedom as he left Liverpool but was still transported in chains to Virginia in 1716. There he began working for Colonel Robert Carter in Rappahannock. Carter was reckoned to be among the richest men in Virginia and the owner of 300 enslaved people. By

1732, Carter owned 3000 enslaved people and 300,000 acres of land. Francis fathered a son, **Alexander Home (1708-58)**, who worked in Barbados, Guadeloupe, Jamaica, and the West Indies from 1748 and he would undoubtedly have been involved in the institution of slavery.

George Home (1698-1760) was pardoned from his involvement with the Jacobites on account of his youth, but after a scandal in the Scottish Borders, made his way to Virginia in 1721, however his uncle Francis died just before he arrived.

George began his career in Virginia working for a tobacco merchant's store; tobacco was grown using enslaved African labour. Working in a store, George would have learned how to trade and barter British produced goods in exchange for tobacco which was then shipped back to Britain. George then trained as a land surveyor. In this role, George was well acquainted with the plantations of the region and associated enslavers including George Washington with whom he became friends in 1748 and taught him how to survey.

Find out more about George Washington and slavery: [George Washington and Slavery](#)

Ninian Home, second owner of Paxton House

Meanwhile, back in Scotland, George's nephew, **Ninian Home (1732-95)**, the son of George's sister Isabel and her husband Alexander Home, needed to learn a trade, as his parents were not wealthy enough for him to live as a landed gentleman. Ninian was sent to stay with his uncle George in Virginia in 1751, to 'keep his master's store'.

Ninian returned to Scotland in the autumn of 1752 as the tobacco trade was not as successful as he had hoped. The next we know of Ninian is that by 1756 he was working in St Kitts in the Caribbean where he remained until 1759 and was still listed as being of 'St Kitts' in 1765. This meant Ninian owned some property on St Kitts. Further research is needed to learn about his activities there, but as St Kitts was Britain's richest sugar producing colony, Ninian would have been working in the sugar trade perhaps on plantations or with merchants.

Ninian fathered a daughter named **Elsie** in St Kitts who was sent to Scotland in 1760 to be raised by Peggy Tailour, wife of the rector of Musselburgh Grammar School. It is highly likely that Elsie's mother was Black or mixed race. **Elsie Home** (c.1756- after 1796) was kept secret from the rest of the Home family for 20 years. Ninian's younger brother, **George Home (1735-1820)** took responsibility for her upkeep after Ninian's death.



This silhouette represents Elsie Home. No known image of her survives.

Ninian became financially invested through joint shares in slaving vessels and jointly involved in shipping cargo around the Caribbean, including enslaved people from 1761. Ninian spent much of his career in the Caribbean, though he returned to Scotland several times.

Ninian went to Grenada immediately after this French colony was ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Paris of 1763. He married Penelope, most likely a British enslaver's daughter, between 1764 and 1768. They had no children, and she died in Grenada on 30th September 1794. Different archival references indicate Penelope may have been related to the Payne family based in St Kitts and Antigua, or to the Scottish enslaver, Alexander Campbell (1739-95), Ninian and Penelope's close friend and business partner.

Waltham plantation, Grenada

In 1764, Ninian purchased three adjacent plots of land totalling 554 acres on the mountainous north-east coast of Grenada for £21,764 and 14s from two French plantation owners. Ninian named the land Waltham. His purchase included the enslaved people who had been forced to produce coffee, cocoa, and sugar. By 1771, there were 213 enslaved adults and children at Waltham. In 1780, Ninian and Penelope purchased another 100 acres, enlarging Waltham. At the time of Ninian's death in 1795, Mather Byles, Ninian's secretary, recorded 259 enslaved people at Waltham.

Waltham was purchased with the aid of a loan of £5648 from the London trading house Simond and Hankey and a Dutch mortgage of £9000. The terms of the mortgage compelled him to sell all produce through an agent who deducted charges, interest, and repayment instalments, leaving any profit balance for Ninian. (This mortgage was not cleared until 1836 by his heirs). Very little of the money Ninian borrowed was paid by in his lifetime and in fact, he died owing over £38,000, equivalent to over £4 million today.

Paraclete plantation, Grenada

The second plantation acquired was a third-share (100 acres) of Paraclete estate on the eastern side of the island, bought for £4747 9s 5d. Paraclete's ownership was shared 3 ways – Ninian and Penelope had a third; Patrick Home (the builder of Paxton House and Ninian's uncle) had one third, and the remainder was shared between several people including Sir James Cockburn (1729-1809), a Scottish MP, and Henry Douglas, a London-based West India merchant.

This group mortgaged Paraclete as a whole (in total 465 acres with 222 enslaved people) in 1770 for £5,416, granting life annuities to 12 individuals who advanced money. Although Ninian and Penelope sold their share in Paraclete to Alexander Campbell in 1776, the couple stayed there frequently with Campbell until the end of their lives. The Paxton Trust owns a set of eight views of Paraclete estate, painted in 1789 by Scottish artist, Adam Callander which are on permanent display.



Ninian and Penelope Home. Detail from a view of Paraclete estate, Grenada by Adam Callander, 1789.

The Paxton Trust

Cotton plantation, Mustique

Between 1780 and 1794, Ninian and Penelope Home leased a 'small area', exact size unknown, of the islands of Mustique (part of the Grenadines) from Alexander Campbell who owned 'Greater and Lesser Mustique', land which totalled 1370 acres. Mustique is 74 miles north of Grenada. The main product grown by the enslaved labourers was sea island cotton, a premium high-quality cotton.

Records show that in 1787 when Ninian and Penelope renewed their lease, they 'owned' 56 enslaved adults and children on Mustique. In 1792, they made a life-rental agreement for the portion of land on Mustique, and 69 enslaved people were recorded. However, the market for their cotton was declining due to international competition and at least one crop had not sold.

In 1794, Campbell sold the islands to his relative, John Campbell for £69,100 including 246 enslaved people. A 'schedule' ([Deed Book 1793-1794 | Endangered Archives Programme](#)) listed most of the names of the 75 enslaved people 'owned' by co-renters, Ninian and Penelope:

Males:

Billy, Augustine, Pharoah, Modist, Norfolk, Jamie, Ceasar, Carlos, Alexander, Peter, Colin, Grenade, Caligula, Lewis, Duncan, Vincent, Gay, Jacob, Shand, Joseph, Toby, Reynolds, Antoine, Roger, Jean, Jean-Pierre, Toby Alandingo [or Toby Nandingo], Fortune, Julian, Diamond. [30 men]

Females:

Jeany, Hester, Mary, Betsy, Nancy, Little Baby, Jean, Janet, Agnes, Madelon, Madelaine, Francois, Genevieve, Perrine, Francoise, Agathe, Ester, Bellona, Jeanne Rose, Pelagie, Fanchonette, Luce, Nancy, Bright, Betty, Baby, Kitty One Foot. [27 women]

Male children:

Michel, Piggy, Charles, Jean Baptiste, Many [?] Gland, Mark, Pierre, Robertson, Jean Louis, Billy, George [11 boys]

Female Children:



Sea Island cotton.

Photo by Forest and Kim Starr,
source: [File:Gossypium barbadense \(22765770474\).jpg - Wikimedia Commons](#)

Catherine, Felicite, Jenny, Charlotte, Colastic [4 girls]

And:

Laurent, an Old Invalid Carpenter.

This totals 72 named people; there may have been three unnamed babies.

Ninian and Penelope Home and Paxton House

Having rented Paxton House from 1768, Ninian and Penelope decided to purchase the house in 1773 from his uncle, Patrick Home. They paid £12,000 which was funded by a loan of £10,000 secured upon Waltham estate and by using funds from the sale of Ninian's inherited farm of Jardinefield, two miles west of Paxton. They furnished the house with mahogany furniture made by master cabinetmakers in London, Thomas Chippendale Senior and Junior from 1794-91, commissioned painted ceilings and soft furnishings, and invested in the Paxton estate with landscaping and agricultural improvements.

Waltham, Grenada (1764-1795)

By 1788, Ninian had 200 enslaved people on Waltham, the oldest of whom was 90-year-old Agatha and the youngest, named Bristol, aged only two months old. Children were either sold into slavery or born into slavery, if their mother was enslaved, and were legally the property of an enslaver. At the peak of their business in the early 1790s, Ninian and Penelope 'owned' 349 enslaved people at Waltham and Mustique, including at least 7 enslaved domestic servants who were owned personally, rather than listed as part of the estates. The Home family archives can provide glimpses into who the enslaved were with brief notes that detail their (first) names, ages, occupations, and their monetary value as an enslaved labourer. Occasionally further insights were recorded such as if they were born on the African continent, their perceived work ethic, and details of any illnesses or disabilities.

The archives can be searched online: [Paxton House | eHive](#)

Crops grown at Waltham plantation for export were primarily sugarcane (byproducts included raw sugar, rum, and molasses), coffee, and cocoa. Although Ninian's income fluctuated due to violent forms of punishment and diseases that negatively impacted the enslaved people, environmental conditions including significant storms damaging crops (1781, 1786, and 1787 crops were wiped out by hurricanes), market forces, and produce being lost in shipwrecks whilst being transported to market, he was still able to make profits. Ninian applied his profits to furnishing Paxton House and improving and extending his Caribbean estates.

During Ninian's residence in Grenada, he craved a remunerated government office which would yield both prestige and a secure source of income. Eventually, after much campaigning on his behalf by both Patrick and George Home, Ninian was appointed Lieutenant Governor of Grenada in late 1792.



Detail of Adam Callander's 1789 painting showing enslaved people maintaining the grounds of Paraclete estate, with a white man, probably Ninian, in the foreground. The stepped waterfall was not just a picturesque landscape feature created by the hard work of enslaved people; its primary purpose was used to transport the cut sugar cane to the boiling house and processing factory.

Treatment of enslaved people by Ninian Home

Archive documents suggest that Ninian was concerned about the welfare of enslaved people on his plantations. He provided a Scottish-trained doctor to treat their illnesses or injuries; enslaved pregnant women were allowed to stop work for a short period prior to the birth of their baby and nursing mothers were allowed up to a year off. Surviving letters show that enslaved people were allocated gardens to cultivate food for themselves and were allowed to sell any surplus at market. This food production meant slave owners (enslavers) could repudiate their responsibilities for providing adequate nourishment for the enslaved labour force by becoming less reliant upon imports (such as oats, flour, and salted herring from Scotland).

In general, plantation managers and overseers treated enslaved people with extreme violence, exploitation, and torture. Ninian Home, like many enslavers, realised that the supply of trafficked African people was eventually going to stop. It was therefore in the best interests of his business to prevent the enslaved people on his estates from dying from

abuse, disease, and malnutrition to maintain a sufficient labour force. He wrote in paternalistic terms to his overseer, Ninian Jaffray, at Waltham, believing that the enslaved Africans were incapable of independent living and inferior to white people. Jaffray was from Duns, Berwickshire and worked at Waltham between c.1788-91. Jaffray was cruel and abusive; he beat and raped enslaved people. Ninian Home wrote:

'Before I left Grenada, I gave you the best advice I was capable of... Kindness and humanity to the slaves was one of the things I endeavoured to impress most strongly in your mind... They poor things are so dependent upon the white people over there and so much in their power, that wantonly to use that power is the height of cruelty. A manager of a plantation should consider himself as the father of the slaves, and treat them with tenderness. They are human beings as well as ourselves and very capable of distinguishing between what is right and what is wrong...' (22 October, 1789, Ninian Home, Paxton House, to Ninian Jaffray, overseer, Waltham, Grenada)

Jaffray was eventually dismissed for being 'too volatile'. Ninian knew that the efficiency of the estate and its profits depended upon the work rate of enslaved people – he needed them to be as healthy and cooperative as possible.

Ninian may have been influenced by the Scottish Enlightenment's 'sense of humanity' and believed that enslaved people who were healthier and more cooperative would improve his profits. But human morality did not overwrite his desire for wealth through the ownership, exploitation, and abuse of Black bodies.

Ninian and Penelope brought two of their enslaved domestic servants, Tom, a valet, and Martine, a lady's maid, from Grenada to Paxton House (1788 to 1792). Tom died at Waltham in 1832 having survived the uprising, but we don't know what happened to Martine. She, like Tom, may have been taken back to Grenada with the Home's in late 1792. However, Martine was not listed on later inventories at Waltham, or in the list of domestic enslaved servants in 1796, who were not included in the main estate records.

Ninian was heavily invested in the institution of slavery and campaigned against the abolition of the slave trade. He wrote repeatedly to his uncle Patrick Home, then MP for Berwickshire, to vote against abolition.

Death of Ninian Home in the Fédon Uprising, Grenada

Until 1763, Grenada had been a French colony, and French control was temporarily restored from 5 July 1779-3 Sept 1783. Under British colonial rule, several estates remained in French ownership. However, ongoing conflict between Britain and France caused friction between French (Roman Catholic) enslavers; their British (Protestant) counterparts; and the British colonial authorities. White French enslavers, free people of colour, and their enslaved people were hostile towards the British.

The late 18th century was an Age of Revolutions, questioning the meaning of liberty, the innate rights of humanity, and the authoritative role of a government over its people that affected Western Europe and its colonial territories in the Americas. In 1789, *'The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen'* in France granted French citizenship to freed people. This was followed in 1791 by the temporary emancipation of enslaved people in most French Caribbean territories during the Haitian Revolution on Saint-Domingue (now Haiti). The news of the Saint-Domingue slave rebellion spread and inspired unrest for those seeking freedom (either from slavery or from European colonial control) in other parts of the colonial Atlantic world. In March 1795, Julien Fédon led an uprising on Grenada against the British authorities and British planters. Fédon was the biracial son of a Frenchman and a free Black woman and owned the 360-acre Belvedere estate and 96 enslaved people.

Fédon's uprising lasted around 15 months and caused devastation to the island and its economy. Around 7000 enslaved people were killed in fighting, or in retaliation for their insurrection, and many others were deported. Ninian Home was captured by the rebels in early March 1795 and held for a month in a well-defended camp on Mount Qua-Qua, above the Belvedere estate. After Fédon's brother was killed by the British, Fédon ordered the killing of 48 out of the 51 captives (that included Governor Ninian Home, Alexander Campbell, and other white enslavers and British sailors). They were executed. Ninian was the last to be killed on 8th April 1795. A Scottish doctor, Dr John Hay, a minister, and one other man were spared.



Detail of Adam Callander's 1789 painting of Paraclete showing enslaved people working in the gardens and their homes in the middle distance. Ninian may be seated under the tree. The water feature was used to transport the cut sugar cane down to the factory. The unbleached cloth for the enslaved people's clothing was probably made in Scotland. The Callander paintings do not show the harsh realities of life on the estates.

George Home and Waltham, Grenada (1796-1820)

Ninian's estates of Waltham and Paxton House and over £38,000 of debts (nearly £4 million today according to the Bank of England inflation calculator) passed to his younger brother **George Home (1735-1820)**, who never visited Grenada. George was an Edinburgh-based lawyer and from 1781-1806 was one of the principal clerks to the Court of Session.

From c.1796/7, George Home sent his own money and borrowed a further £13,000 to repair and reinstate parts of the plantation that were damaged during the uprising. George retained ownership of Waltham as an absentee landlord using agents and Scottish managers to oversee it. Both Waltham, and Ninian's huge debts, were a substantial drain on George's Scottish-based income and George did not receive any income from Waltham for 20 years. However, George felt obliged to retain Waltham and Paxton, believing that he had an obligation to do so for the sake of his family and dependents.

They included Elsie, **Nancy Stephens**, and George's younger brother's Frank's child, **Jean Home**, who born in the West Indies to a Black or mixed-race woman before 1779. Jean was trained as a mantua maker in Edinburgh in the mid-1790s. Frank (Francis) Home had worked in the West Indies and Dominica. He owned an unknown number of enslaved people, worked for the Colebrooke Bay Company, and had a half-share in a Dominican estate. He died in 1779.

George hoped that Waltham might eventually turn profitable, despite the Act to Abolish the Slave Trade, which was passed in Britain on 25 March 1807, ending the ability to acquire new African captives and their descendants for enslavement in Caribbean colonies. This Act, however, did not prevent the continuation of slavery in British colonies.

George died in 1820.



George Home (1835-1820) by Sir Henry Raeburn. The Paxton Trust.



This silhouette represents Jean Home (before 1779-after 1796). No known image of her survives.

After George's death, Paxton House in Scotland and Waltham in Grenada were inherited by **William Foreman (1782-1852)**, whose elder brother John (1781-1847), had trained and qualified as a doctor in Scotland in 1800/01 with the support of George Home. (John inherited Wedderburn Castle, Duns, from George, and the brothers added 'Home' to their surnames).

In 1801, John Foreman went to work in Grenada as the estate doctor at Waltham for £100/year for three years. Aside from treating any illnesses and injuries, John also inoculated the enslaved people against smallpox and cared for the 'old and infirm'.

George Home frequently wrote to John Foreman asking how the enslaved people were. For instance, George stated that the pregnant '*ladies... should have every reasonable comfort their situation admits of...*' (13 Sept 1801). Whether the treatment of all pregnant enslaved women improved cannot be verified. That same month, George was pleased to hear of improved sugar crops at Waltham obtained without injury to the enslaved, adding; '*I should feel regret if it had occasioned the negroes to be overworked, which I hope they never will be.*' What was classed as 'overworked' is a matter of debate.

John Foreman subsequently broke the terms of his contract and left Waltham after little more than a year there. He went on to purchase his own plantations in Grenada.

At the start of the nineteenth century, with the approaching Abolition of the Slave Trade and therefore, the inability to acquire more African captives, enslavers now had to prioritise the health, safety, and sexual propagation of their existing enslaved labour force. The 'proper' care of the old and infirm and indeed all the enslaved people also featured in the letters from George to his estate manager, John Fairbairn (1773-1820), at Waltham (in post from February 1798 until his death in 1820). George's concerns were, mainly, driven by commercial considerations, but he also showed a deep and lasting consideration of those in Grenada.

An overseer at Waltham, Adam Black from Duns, Scotland, was sent home in 1815, as John Fairbairn would not allow him to '*flog or ill use*' slaves. Black had sired five children through sexual coercion with several enslaved women, all of whom were left behind on the estate when he departed.

In 1815, the debts on Waltham estate stood at £24,183, comprising the mortgage, interest arrears and debts to Simond and Hankey, the mortgage lenders. This was a reduction of around £3000 on the previous year, so the estate was in profit. In light of the estate's return to profitability at this time, George Home was permitted to draw in an income (£500) for Waltham for the first time since he succeeded to the estate.

In 1816, William Wilberforce was proposing legislation to prevent British planters from purchasing further enslaved people from nations still engaged in the transport of slaves (the Spaniards, Portuguese, or others). George Home's correspondence reveals him to have been

strongly opposed to the abolition of slavery in the West Indies. He believed that any regulation of slavery should come only from local assemblies in the West Indies rather than the British Parliament.

Admiral Sir David Milne (1763-1845) and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

The naval career of Admiral Sir David Milne (1763-1845), who was a great friend of George Home, spanned the final years of the slave trade and the start of abolition. As a young sailor in the 1790s he fought for British control of the Caribbean while the Royal Navy was still protecting slave traders. In 1816 he had a prominent role in the Battle of Algiers, which stopped the enslavement of Europeans by the Barbary corsairs. Finally, as the Royal Navy's commander of the North American station after the abolition of the slave trade, he organised the interception of slave ships and the return of their victims to the African continent (but not to their original port of departure).

Milne and his son, Alexander Milne, who also became part of the British navy, described some of the horrific conditions they and their colleagues found on the ships transporting African captives to the Caribbean; but tempered his horror with the promise of the monetary reward the sailors would receive for the capture of the illegal ships and their cargo. Due to a lack of resources, they could not stop all the slave traders, and others carried on their way, sometimes with additional provisions supplied by the Navy to ease a little of the suffering of the captives. Milne's other son, David, married Jean Home, heiress to Paxton, in 1832.

The Campaign for Abolition

Despite the universal support in favour of slavery by enslavers, merchants, insurance companies, mortgage lenders, banking industry, and others with related financial investments, many enslaved people fought against their situation with both small and greater acts of resistance and defiance. Some ran away temporarily or permanently (although, this was much harder to do on islands without rainforests or dense vegetation and/or significant mountainous landscape to elude capture).

Uprisings were common in the Caribbean, particularly on the islands where enslaved people greatly outnumbered whites, but where treatment was harsher and more violent. The ruling elite uniformly believed that any act of rebellion had to be crushed, and felt justified to inflict sadistic forms punishments, death and torture as reprisals.

For the enslaved and their descendants, as well as supporters for their cause, such as the Abolitionists in Britain, acts of resistance were absolutely necessary to acknowledge and affirm their humanity and to (re)gain their freedom from bondage. Throughout the diaspora today these brave people (such as Julien Fédon) are regarded as and celebrated as freedom fighters.

Mary Prince (b.1787/8), who had been enslaved in Bermuda, Grand Turk, and Antigua, wrote in 1831: *“All slaves want to be free – to be free is very sweet...The man that says slaves be quite happy in slavery—that they don’t want to be free—that man is either ignorant or a lying person. I never heard a slave say so.”*

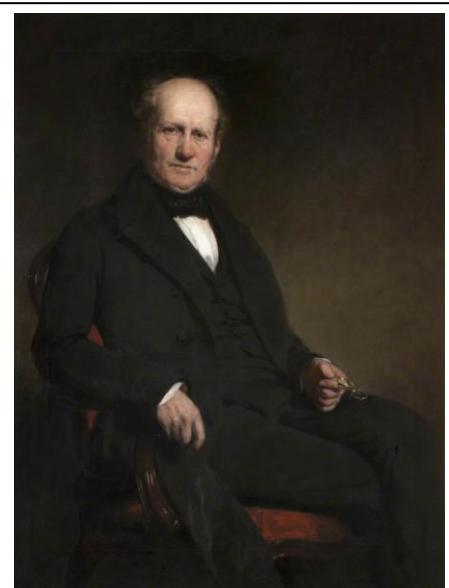
Slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1834, but in most cases the enslaved people had to work a further four years as ‘apprentices’ (although their working conditions on British owned plantations did not change), before they became free people.

William & John Foreman Home, enslavement, and the Slave Compensation Commission

In 1835, a claim from William Foreman Home, as proprietor and owner-in-fee was made to the British Government’s Slave Compensation Commission for the Waltham estate which had, at that point, 247 enslaved people. This included 90 enslaved people that William had purchased from his brother John’s failing Grenadian estate of *L’Est Terre* in 1833 for £3500 to help his brother repay some of his debts, at a time when this was almost illegal. These people moved to Waltham in 1833, bringing the enslaved population up from 157 to 247.

For the loss of future revenue because slavery was made illegal, William was awarded £6,226.16/- on 2 Nov 1835 by the Slave Compensation Commission which had £20 million to compensate enslavers, but not the enslaved. In 2026, the equivalent sum awarded to William would be c.£697,000 (Bank of England’s inflation calculator). John tried to claim some of this ‘compensation’ from his brother for the ninety people who had recently been transferred but we do not yet know whether that money was given to John.

The process of gaining a release from the original Waltham mortgage taken out by Ninian Home in 1764 began in January 1835. This was undertaken in anticipation of the compensation money being awarded later that year to prevent the mortgage lender’s heirs from counterclaiming against the compensation awarded for Waltham. From the surviving documents, the sums outstanding on the mortgage were in the region of £1200-£1300. Even if this sum was subtracted from the compensation there was obviously a great deal of money left over. However, John Foreman Home wished to claim money for the 90 enslaved people which had been transferred from his estate of *L’Est Terre*, Grenada, out of the Waltham compensation (which may have been around £2,268 pro rata). So, William



William Foreman Home (1782-1852), by John Watson Gordon. The Paxton Trust.

Foreman Home may have ended up with somewhere between £2700 and £4000. Further research is still to be undertaken on this.

John owned *L'Est Terre* by 1805. He and his wife, Adelaide Cousine Rochard (1767/8-1859), a French widow, who were married in 1804, also owned Gomier estate, Grenada. Adelaide was the daughter, and possibly granddaughter of French colonial administrators and may have inherited Crochu estate, Grenada.

Adelaide and John brought two enslaved servants with them to Britain, possibly as early as 1805: Marie Louise Fortune (d.1871) and Frederick Gashard (c.1791- after 1882). Marie remained Adelaide's servant until Adelaide died; thereafter she was supported by an annuity from Adelaide's estate and lived out her days on the Home family's Wedderburn Castle estate, Duns. Frederick was last noted as living in Chirnside, Berwickshire, in 1873, aged 82, supported by an annuity paid to him by David Milne Home. John travelled to Grenada in 1832 to try and sell his and Adelaide's Grenadian estates to reduce their debts. John became the manager of Waltham until his ill-fated return to Britain in 1842 when he became ill and died five years later.

Post-emancipation

After 1838, labourers at Waltham worked from 6.30am until 6pm, with two breaks totalling 2.5 hours for meals and rest. However, although they were now paid a paltry sum, they had to pay rent for their homes and provision grounds.

Following the end of slavery, sugar estates such as Waltham became increasingly unviable economic concerns. Waltham struggled to produce enough sugar to cover its costs. One of the main problems facing Waltham was retaining enough workers to undertake the cultivation and production of sugar, many other estates in Grenada were abandoned for this reason. In light of these economic realities, Waltham estate was advertised for sale in 1844. It was bought by George Walker of St Vincent for just £2,500. However, William's failure to produce proof that the estate was unencumbered delayed final settlement for four years.

Waltham today

The former Waltham estate is now thickly forested in the hills which were once cleared for the cultivation of sugarcane, coffee, and cocoa. On the land closest to the sea, which is the most level, village homes have been constructed, and St



Waltham Bay, Grenada. Photo by Zoe Smith, 2025

Marks Secondary School is built directly onto the foundations of some of the original plantation buildings. Playing fields cover the area which was probably the gardens in front of the former plantation house and the yard for the mules.

The ruins of the windmill are extant as are the remains of the aqueduct that powered the sugar mill, and the reservoir dam and canal, amongst other remnants of the estate. The local fishermen use the same promontory (modernised) for their vessels that was used to load and offload goods and people in the bay in the 18th and 19th centuries. The same paths are in the village of Waltham that were drawn onto the 1772 estate map in the Trust's collection. According to Grenadian historian, John Angus Martin, until the 1950s, most people in Grenada tended to stay in the same area that their ancestors had lived in, therefore, some people resident today have unique connections to the people who worked the land freely or forcibly.

Partnerships

In 2024-2026, with co-production project funding from Museums Galleries Scotland, The Paxton Trust formed a partnership with Exodus Collective, Grenada, working with children of Bonair Government School and Waltham community elders. This was part of wider project entitled '**Caribbean Connections Creative Partnership – Bridging Borders**' with UK partners, Edinburgh Caribbean Association, and Descendants Children's Charity. We all worked with Grenadian-born multimedia artist and filmmaker, Billy Gérard Frank whose work is focused upon the legacies of transatlantic slavery. This project aimed to amplify marginalised voices, agency over one's cultural narrative, and promote intergenerational dialogue.

Each partner held a series of workshops and created a uniquely powerful film reflecting on the connections between Paxton House and the Caribbean. The Grenadian film was shot on the Waltham estate where participants explored our shared heritage. Descendants focused upon abolitionist Ottobah Cugoano's life story, telling it through the eyes of children aged 4 to 16 in spoken word, song, and poetry. And Edinburgh Caribbean Association's Leilani Taneus Miller performed her own poetry and spoken word in different spaces at Paxton House to the evocative specially composed music of cellist Beau Taneus-Miller.

Frank's exhibition '**Palimpsest**' (Paxton House, 3 May - 31 October 2025) featured his art film of that name with which he represented Grenada at



Waltham, 2025 with the children of Bonair Government School and the remains of the aqueduct.

the Venice Biennale in 2022, as well as multimedia works which have been created since 2022. Frank had an artist's residency in Scotland funded through the exhibition at Paxton House where he collaborated with Glasgow Print Studio to create four screenprints for the exhibition entitled '**Colonial Imaginary**' (2025). The Paxton Trust acquired these prints and '**Palimpsest Tales: Spun From Sea and Memories - Sonnet No.2**' (2022) for its collection with the support of the National Fund for Acquisitions, Art Fund, and donations.



Sonnet No.2 features one of the costumed figures performing Shakespeare Mas featured in Frank's art film 'Palimpsest'. 'Shakespeare Mas' is a traditional component of Carriacou's annual carnival, part of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. It passes down oral history through performance, costume, music, and spoken word. The documents behind the masked figure were written by Lieutenant-Governor Ninian Home in response to the Fédon Uprising.

Text written by Dr Fiona Salvesen Murrell, Curator, Paxton House, Dr Charles Fletcher, and edited by Dr Peggy Brunache. Copyright The Paxton Trust, 2026.