THE ST. GEORGE'S CAYE ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT: RESULTS OF THE 2009 FIELD SEASON

Edited by

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Chapter 1. Introduction

James F. Garber

St. George's Caye played a vital role in the history and development of Belize as an independent nation. This small caye is one of hundreds of islands off the coast of Belize that are part of large reef system, the second largest in the world. Its predominant role in the early history of the English settlement was due to its position and shape. The reef system forms an offshore barrier that protects the coast. Because of the difficulties of navigation, these waters provided safe haven for merchants, buccaneers, and pirates that sailed the Caribbean. To access the mainland and harbors at the mouths of the rivers, one must navigate narrow passages through the reef and then follow a complex system of channels. In order to reach the Belize River, the country's main river system, one must pass by St. George's Caye, thus its strategic location guarding the port (Figure 1.1). Additionally, the caye is crescent shaped making it ideal for careening ships on its leeward side (Figure 1.2).

The Battle of St. George's Caye on September 10, 1798 represents the end of Spain's attempts to conquer the territory that is now known as Belize. Although this battle happened over 200 years ago, it is still plays a large role in Belizean culture, as seen during the annual September Celebrations when people all over the country honor the Battle of St. George's Caye. The fact that the caye is featured on the Belize five-dollar bill is an indicator of its importance (Figure 1.3). The front side depicts a medallion from the tomb of Thomas Potts one of the Bay Settlements early leaders and the back side features a 1764 map of the caye, the Thomas Potts tomb, the Biddle house, and a "bathing crawl".

While much has been written about the history of St. Georges Caye, the first capital of Belize, there has been little archaeology done on the island. With this in mind, we initiated the St. George's Caye Archaeology Project in 2009. The primary elements of the project are composed of archival research, metal detector survey, subsurface probing, and archaeological excavation.

Our first field season was a short one of only 10 days in the summer of 2009. The results of our archival research and fieldwork are presented in the pages that follow.



Figure 1.1. Map of Belize coast showing location of St. George's Caye.



Figure 1.2. Satellite image of St. George's Caye.



Figure 1.3. Belize 5 dollar bill. Front side depicts a medallion from Thomas Potts' tomb, backside shows a 1764 map of the caye, the Thomas Potts tomb, the Biddle house, and a bathing "crawl". This style bill was introduced in 1990.

Chapter 2. Origin of the name "Belize"

James F. Garber and Jaime J. Awe

The beginnings of the Settlement on the Bay and the origin of the name "Belize" have been the subject of discussion and debate since the first written history of the Settlement (1826 Honduras Almanak). At times these debates have "stuck to the facts" and at others have strayed into the realm of legend. Listed here are the various spellings and dates for the variations of the name Belize (Figure 2.1): Balis (1677) in Fray Jose Delgados's journey to Bacalar; Bullys (1705) in a letter from John Fingas to the Council of Trade; Bellese (1720) in a report of Captain Nathan Uring's voyage to Belize; Valis (1724) Report in Madrid of the number of English settlers; Valiz (1783) Spanish map showing "Rio de Valiz /Yngles River Bellese"; Balleze and Bellese (1786) map made by "a Bay Man" showing area allotted to Great Britain for the cutting of Logwood (Figure 2.2); Walix (1786) Spanish map showing logwood area occupied by the English settlers; Wallix (1790) from a map by Rafael Llobet (map is labeled in Spanish); Belize (1790) in letter from Peter Hunter (Superintendent of the Bay Settlement) to Baltasar Rodruguis.

The "Wallace" Hypothesis

The notion that the name Belize came from someone named Wallice, Wallace, or Willis is first reported in the 1827 Honduras Almanak. Below is a passage from Sir John Burdon's Archives of British Honduras published in 1931 that summarizes these claims.

"In the 1827 Almanak the credit for discovering the mouth of the River Belize and making it his place of retreat is given to Wallice, a Lieutenant amongst the Buccaneers, from whose name 'Belize' is said to be derived. The 1839 Almanak gives the founder as the Scotch Corsair chief Wallace, native of Falkland in Kinrossshire, who, after being driven from Tortuga, erected huts and a fortilice at the spot called after him by the Spaniards 'Wallis' or 'Balis'.

Bridges (1828) states that Willis, the notorious Buccaneer and ex-Governor of Tortuga, was the first Englishman to settle on the river, to which he gave his name. He dates this 1638, the year in which the Spaniards drove the Buccaneers out of Tortuga. Bancroft, 'History of Central America,' gives Peter Wallace, with 80 men, as the first settlers at Belize River. An finally, Francisco Asturias (1925) a Guatemalan historian, states that the Settlement was founded by Wallace, formerly Raleigh's First Lieutenant and right hand man, who, he says, is supposed to have first reached Belize in 1617." (Burdon 1931:2-3).

It is important to point out that a number of modern professional historians have noted that no documents dating to the 1600s have been referenced or produced to substantiate the claim that someone named Wallice, Wallace, or Willis was in Belize at this time.

The "Maya" Hypothesis

Starting in the 1950s several researchers have suggested that the name Belize has its origins in the Mayan language. A. H. Anderson, the first archaeological Commissioner of British Honduras suggests that the word Belize is a derived from the forgotten Maya name for the river (Anderson 1958:35). Sir J. Eric Thompson, noted Mayanist, states that Beliz in Yucatec Maya signifies muddy or muddy water (Thompson 1988:43 original manuscript presented to Belize 1970). Assad Shoman (1994) suggests the words Belakin (land towards the sea), Baltiz (land of the Itza) or Beliz (muddy waters) as the origin for the name and finally, Emory King (1999) suggests Belikin meaning land of muddy water.

It is important to note that the Diccionario Maya Cordemex (1980), by far the most thorough dictionary of Yucatec Maya, does not list Beliz, Belakin, Baltiz, or Belikin. Maya words are composed of phonemes (vowel consonant combinations) and each can carry several meanings. Within the Cordemex dictionary one of the many meanings for "be" is muddy water and "bel ha" means canal or aqueduct. There is no historical record of the Maya referring to the Belize area by any of these names.

The "African" Hypothesis

David Hernandez (1990) suggests that the name Belize is an example of linguistic convergence in that slaves who came from the Cabinda Province of Angola were already familiar with the name as there is a river and village named Belize in that locale.

The "Bullys River - Rogues Point" Hypothesis

In a 1705 report to the Council of Trade in London, John Fingas notes the "River of Bullys" where the English load their logwood. A 1786 map of the Bay Settlement shows the present day location of Government House as "Rogues Point". Emory King (1999:9-10) implies that Rogue and Bully are approximate synonyms.

The "Spanish" Hypothesis

It is interesting to note that scholars have sought the origins for the word Belize in English, Mayan, and African languages. No published sources that we are aware of have suggested the origin to lie in the Spanish language despite the fact that several early Spanish maps show Spanish names for numerous locations within Belize. A search of an 18th century Spanish dictionary revealed an interesting possibility (Nuevo Tesoro Lexiconografico de la Lengua Espanola -1739). The word "valiza" (pronounced "baliza" and spelled "baliza" in later dictionaries) is a nautical term that refers to a marker placed by a canoe or launch at the entrance of ports so that ships can enter by not touching shoals or shallows. In more recent dictionaries, the word "valais" refers to lumber. Either of these meanings would be appropriate. The first would be a logical nautical map notation and the second would be a reasonable reference to the river mouth as it is clear from several sources that forest products were loaded at this location.

Throughout the 1600s English mariners (pirates, buccaneers, merchants) were sailing the waters off Belize and would have made landings on the cayes or mainland. However, we should note that most modern historians have rejected claims of English settlement in Belize prior to 1670 due to lack of evidence. We find it interesting that two of the earliest references to the River, "Balis" (Spanish reference in 1677) and "Bullys" (English reference in 1705) are the closest in spelling and pronunciation to "Belize" than many of the variations that follow in subsequent decades. No doubt the debate will continue as to the origin of the name Belize but we hope that the information listed above will be helpful in that discussion.

Balis	1677	Valer	1783
Bullys	1705	Palis	1785
Beller		Wallio	1790
Value	1724	Belize	1790

Figure 2.1. Variations of the name "Belize".

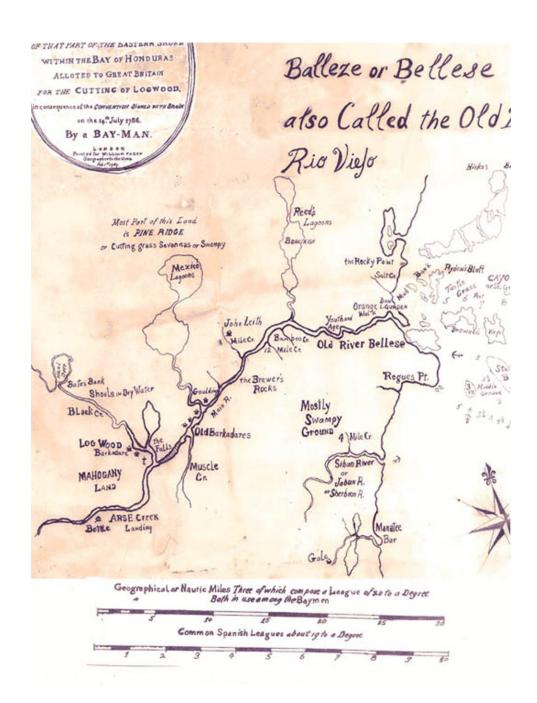


Figure 2.2. 1786 logwood cutting treaty map made by a "Bay Man".

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Chapter 3. The Cannon of St. George's Caye

James F. Garber and Lauren A. Sullivan

At the present time, there are two cannon visible on St. George's Caye (Figures 3.1 and 3.2). The smaller of the two is currently in front of the Searle house (Figure 3.1). It was recovered in Belize City and moved to its present location in recent times. It is not directly related to the history of St. George's Caye.

The larger of the two is situated on the mid-point of the island facing the sea (Figure 3.2). A plaque indicates that it was placed in its present location in 1972. This cannon has been on the island as long as residents can remember. The project crew took measurements of this cannon and produced a detailed drawing (Figure 3.3). Measurements indicate that this is an 18-pounder (maximum weight of a solid iron ball that could fit this bore with approximately ¼ inch allowable for "windage").

Residents also note that a similar cannon was removed from the island by helicopter and taken to Belmopan. This, in all likelihood, is the cannon in Independence Plaza in Belmopan (Figure 3.4). Measurements of this cannon indicate that it is of similar size but the differences are sufficient to indicate that it was made from a different casting mould. We have been unable to locate any records as to when either of these large cannon were placed on St. George's Caye or the circumstances of their use. It is important to note however, that records indicate that the Towser and the Tickler, two private sloops in the Battle of St. George's Caye, were each fitted with an 18-pound cannon. The archives are silent as to what happened to these cannon, but it may be that these two large cannon (one on St. George's Caye, one in Belmopan) are those that played in role in this important battle.

Residents also informed us that there was once a smaller cannon on the island in the general location of the Biddle house which was destroyed in hurricane Hattie in 1961. They also indicated that this cannon was buried by local residents at about the same time that the larger cannon noted above was removed from the island by helicopter. As noted in the introduction, the Biddle house is shown on the back of the Belize 5 dollar bill. A small cannon is shown in the foreground (see Figure 1.3). Interestingly, the Mermaid, another private vessel used in the Battle of St. George's Caye, was fitted with a 9-pound cannon. The one that was buried by residents may be the cannon from the Mermaid.



Figure 3.1. Cannon found in Belize City and moved to St. George's Caye in modern times.



Figure 3.2. Recording the large cannon on St. George's Caye. This may have once been on the Towser or Tickler, sloops that fought in the Battle of St. George's Caye. From left to right; Robert Quinlan, James Garber, Heath Bentley, and John Searle.

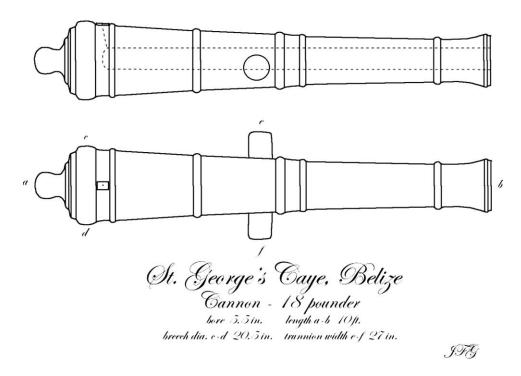


Figure 3.3. Detailed drawing of large cannon on St. George's Caye. Drawing by James Garber.



Figure 3.4. Large cannon in Independence Plaza. This is probably the cannon that was removed by helicopter from St. George's Caye. It may have been one of the cannon on the Towser or Tickler.

Chapter 4. Field Investigations on St. George's Caye: Results of the 2009 Field Season Jennifer Cochran, James F. Garber, John Searle, and Jaime J. Awe

As noted in Chapter 1, there were four main objectives of the first field season: 1) archival research; 2) metal detector survey; 3) probing survey in the cemetery and; 4) archaeological test excavation. This chapter reports the results of objectives 2, 3 and 4. Metal Detector Survey

A metal detector was used during the 2009 field season to identify the location of buried metal artifacts or metal features associated with the early historic period. This metal detector (Mineland-Safari) is a highly sensitive, full band spectrum device that can locate and identify a variety of metals such as iron, aluminum, copper, lead, silver, and gold up to a depth of approximately 2.5 feet.

In order to better determine the sensitivity, accuracy, and usefulness of the device, a small land tract was tested. This property, owned by John Searle, was surveyed by moving the metal detector using large, slow sweeping motions over the entire property. The presence of several metal artifacts was indicated. Shovel testing showed these to be modern metal items consisting of bolts, bottle caps, nails, nuts, and wire.

<u>XU 1</u> The primary purpose of XU1 was to investigate an area on the Searle tract where a large iron reading was recorded. An excavation test unit was laid out to examine the anomaly. XU 1 was a 1x1 meter unit located approximately 22.5 meters south of the modern house located on the property.

Level 1 consisted of the removal of the humus layer and terminated with the discovery of a rectangular concrete block feature located in the southeastern corner of the

unit. The concrete block was approximately 15 cm thick and had a rectangular hole in its center. Only a portion of this feature was present in this unit, therefore the exact dimensions of this feature are unknown. Based upon the exposed portion of the block, however, each side of the block most likely measures 15-25 cm. The size and shape were consistent a concrete footing used in the foundation of a wooden structure. The rectangular hole in the center would have likely supported a wooden beam. A metal pipe was also encountered in the same level immediately to the north of this feature. This portion of pipe recovered was heavily corroded and had a section of black plastic attached to one end. This feature and artifacts present appear to be the associated remains of a modern structure. John Searle Jr. later confirmed the presence of a house built and later demolished in this vicinity. Most of the artifacts recovered from this area including bottle caps, marbles, mirror glass, modern bottle glass, round nails, and wire scraps were consistent with household debris from the modern era.

Level 2 consisted of the removal of matrix surrounding the concrete feature identified in the previous level and terminated at approximately 25 cm below ground surface near the base of the feature. The matrix consisted of a 10YR 7/2 light gray coarse sand with a high percentage of shell and stone inclusions present. Low frequencies of artifacts were present in this level and appeared to be similar to the types of artifacts recovered from the previous level. No other features were identified within this level.

Level 3 was located immediately below level 2 and consisted of a matrix similar to the 10 YR 7/2 light gray coarse sand identified in the previous level. This matrix contained more moisture than the matrix from the previous level. This level terminated at approximately 45 cm below ground surface. Artifacts from this level included a mixture of

modern and older historic items including flowerpot fragments, pieces of plastic, and modern nails.

Level 4 was located immediately below level 3 and consisted of a matrix similar to the previous two levels. This level contained the highest moisture content, as it was the level closest to the water table. This level terminated at the water table approximately 50cm below ground surface. Very low frequencies of artifacts were recovered from this level. No architectural features or associated deposits were identified in this level.

Metal Detector Survey results At the outset, we were optimistic about the use of the metal detector as a useful tool for locating historic era artifacts and areas of historic activity such as workshops, middens, etc. Unfortunately this was not the case. The device proved to be too effective. Due to a substantial amount of modern activity, modern metal items such as nails, bottle caps, wire, etc. are present in most areas of the island that we checked. The device cannot discriminate between old and new and thus it proved to be of little use.

Cemetery at St. George's Caye

Were it not for a one modern era burial crypt and a few modern memorial markers, one would hardy know the St. George's Caye cemetery was a burial ground much less the oldest non-Maya historic cemetery in Belize (Figure 4.1). Virtually all signs of its once striking appearance have been obliterated by storm surges, hurricanes, vandalism, and the ravages of time. Records indicate that the cemetery was reasonably well maintained into the 1920s (Figure 4.2). Destruction began with the hurricane of 1931 followed by hurricanes Hattie in 1961 and Greta in 1978. Hurricane Hattie did significant damage to the cemetery cutting an E-W channel across the width of the island, removing the southern edge of the

cemetery and the cemetery's most notable marker, the elaborate above ground burial crypt of Thomas Potts (Figures 4.2 and 4.3). According to residents, the tomb slid into the cut, which was later filled in to prevent additional erosion. The exact location is not known but it is apparently now outside the limits of the cemetery wall. Erosion from hurricane Greta in 1978 exposed a marble medallion that appears to be from the Pott's tomb (Figure 4.4).

Photographs of the cemetery taken prior to the hurricanes (Figure 4.2) indicate that it was once very similar in appearance to Yarborough Cemetery in Belize City (Figure 4.5). The graves typically consisted of a low rectangular platform composed of coursed red bricks held together by coarsely tempered cement capped with a large white marble or black sandstone slab upon which is an inscribed epitaph. These bricks were brought over from Europe as ballast in the hulls of ships and were used in a variety of building constructions such as St. John's Church and older buildings in Belize City. Residents indicate that there were once numerous unmarked graves in the St. George's Caye cemetery as well. Residents also note that after the hurricanes had broken up many of the stones, lobster fishermen used them for ballast in their traps.

As noted in Chapter 1, St. George's Caye was the primary habitation for the initial English settlement and served as Belize's first capital. The cemetery on St. George's Caye is the earliest known post-Maya European cemetery in Belize. It and the slightly later Yarborough Cemetery in Belize City were known as the burial grounds for the congregation of St. John's Church.

Records do not indicate when the St. George's Caye cemetery was initially established. It is not shown on the 1764 map (Figure 4.6). The earliest carved stone on record is 1787, but there were undoubtedly unmarked graves that predate this. A map made

in 1872 documents the location of 20 graves in the cemetery (Figure 4.7). Prior to the destruction of the hurricanes, James Purcell Usher recorded 21 epitaphs (Usher 1907). These are shown in Appendix 1. In 1926 Thomas Gann notes an additional seemingly early but undated epitaph: "In Reverent Memory of George Hume, Mahogany Cutter and Bayman but God Fearing" (Gann 1926:24). In her exhaustive study of the cemeteries of Belize City, Mary Check-Pennel (1989) documents eight additional burials (Appendix 1). In modern times, a handful of memorial stones have been placed in the cemetery. These are stones only and were not placed there in association with burials.

<u>Probing Survey</u> The objective of the probing survey was to locate any gravestones still present below the ground surface. A grid was measured out on the cemetery grounds within the boundaries of the modern cemetery fence. This grid was marked at approximately one-meter intervals in both the north-south and west-east directions. Due to time constraints, only select areas of the cemetery were probed. The first area included a 24 meter E-W by 6 meter N-S section adjacent the to the southern modern cemetery boundary. The second area included a 24 meter E-W by 8 meter N-S section immediately to the north of the first area. The remaining portions will be investigated during the 2010 field season. The ground was probed at each of these intervals using a 1.5 meter solid copper grounding rod approximately 34 inch in diameter. The objective of the probing was to locate anomalies beneath the surface, as well as depth consistencies of the hardpan layer overlying the water table identified in XU2 located in the north end of the cemetery. The copper rod was pushed into the ground until it was stopped either by an anomaly or the hardpan layer. A probe spot was considered positive if something was located other than the hardpan layer. These locations were flagged for further investigation. When a probed location tested positive, probing in all directions around the positive location at approximately 10 cm increments was used in order check the depth and extent of the anomaly.

The probing survey conducted in the cemetery helped to locate the approximate edge of the channel cut by hurricane Hattie as noted earlier. The fill associated with the channel was loosely compacted and no hardpan layer was present. The copper rod easily went into the ground the full length of the rod (1.5 meters) in this location. Probing indicated that the north edge of the channel cut into the southern portion of the cemetery angling in a SW direction.

UX 2 This test excavation was a 1x1 meter unit placed 9.20 meters east and 3.70 meters south of the west and north wall boundaries of the cemetery. This unit was initiated to gain an understanding of the soil stratigraphy within the cemetery boundaries, identify any layers of cultural debris, and determine the depth of the water table. Only 1 level was excavated in this unit. Soil matrix consisted of a 10YR 7/3 very pale brown coarse sand with a high percentage of stone and shell inclusions. This unit terminated with the presence of a hard substrate (hardpan) covering the whole unit approximately 50 cm below the modern ground surface. This dense, hard-packed conglomerate of stone, shell and sand had an approximate thickness of 2 cm. Two small sections along the northern and southern edges of the unit were tested and confirmed that the water table was present immediately below this layer. Artifacts recovered from this unit include small fragments of glass and red and tan brick fragments.

<u>UX 3</u> This 2x2 meter unit was placed adjacent to the western edge of the modern cemetery boundaries approximately 8.30 meters north of the southwest corner of the cemetery boundary. A dense concentration of artifacts, including numerous green and brown

glass bottle fragments, as well as clay pipe and brick fragments was observed along the back (west) wall of the cemetery. Locals informed us that these were encountered during construction of the support footing for the modern western cement block wall. XU 3 was placed in this location in order to identify the cultural layer yielding these artifacts and any architectural features or deposits associated with this material.

Level 1 consisted of the removal of the humus layer and terminated approximately 10-15cm below ground surface with the discovery of a dense concentration of partial red bricks and smaller brick fragments. Many of the partial bricks and brick fragments showed evidence of a cream, coarsely tempered mortar attached to them. The brick concentration was carefully excavated, mapped, and photographed in order to gather a better idea of the orientation of this feature. Excavations, however, revealed that the concentration of bricks did not appear to be systematically placed in a manner resembling a funerary crypt or any other primary architectural feature. Additionally, no other architectural features were associated with or immediately below the bricks. No human remains were encountered with this brick concentration.

It appears that the brick concentration may have been the remnants of a historic burial crypt located in some other area of the cemetery. The bricks and mortar were consistent with material types used during the construction of funerary crypts from the historic period (see Figure 4.2). Intact funerary crypts dating to the same period can still be found at Yarborough Cemetery located in Belize City (Figure 4.5). The displaced bricks are likely the result of environmental actions, such as erosion, storm surges and hurricanes. As noted earlier, lobster fishermen in modern times used materials from the cemetery for ballast in their traps.

Artifacts from this level consisted of a mix of historic and modern materials. These included glass bottle rim, body, and base fragments, modern bottle caps, stone and earthenware ceramics, and pipe stem fragments.

Level 2 consisted of the removal of the matrix immediately below the brick concentration. The matrix consisted of a 10YR 7/3 pale-brown coarse sand with a high density of stone and shell inclusions. The moisture content of this level was greater than the previous level due to its closer proximity to the water table. The artifact density was greater than Level 1 with the greatest density being found at the base of this level. Numerous clay pipe stem fragments of varying lengths and diameters were recovered. Several partial pipe bowls were also found. Additional artifacts included numerous fragments of porcelain, earthen and stoneware ceramics with surface decoration, blue, green and brown glass bottle fragments, several iron fragments, 2 plain brass buttons, and a military button from the West Indies 7th Regiment (see Chapter 5). A substantial amount of faunal material was recovered from this level including several species of marine fish, whole Queen Conch (Strombus gigas), and marine turtle. Several fragments representing unidentified species were also recovered. These fragments were quite large, consisting of diagnostic elements not characteristic of large marine mammals. These skeletal elements may represent bovine or porcine varieties. A more detailed analysis of these skeletal elements is needed to assign a species designation to these materials. Level 2 was terminated at approximately 40 cm below ground surface. No architectural features were encountered.

Level 3 was located below the previous level and terminated slightly below the water table. A moderate density of artifacts similar to those described in the previous level was

recovered at and below the water table. No architectural features were encountered. The level terminated at approximately 50-55 cm below ground surface.

XU 6 This 1x1 meter test unit was placed approximately 15 meters east of the southwest corner of the modern cemetery boundary. It was positioned to investigate an anomaly encountered during probing.

Level 1 consisted of the removal of the humus layer that contained 10YR 7/3 pale brown coarse sand with a high percentage of stone and shell inclusions. Several modern nails, historic ceramic pieces and a partial brick fragment were recovered from Level 1. This level was terminated at approximately 30 cm below ground surface with the presence of a soil change.

The matrix in Level 2 consisted of a 10YR 7/2 light grey coarse sand with a high percentage of stone and shell inclusions. A concentration of several whole Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*), two large unidentified bone fragments, several bottle rim, body, and base fragments, and one clay pipe stem was encountered at approximately 35-40 cm below ground surface. According to the 1872 cemetery map (Figure 4.7), there may have been graves located in this vicinity. However, this deposit does not appear to be associated with any architectural features or interments.

The matrix in level 3 was consistent with soil encountered in the previous level. No architectural features were identified. Low frequencies of artifacts were recovered from this level including bottle fragments, brick fragments, 4 fragments of hard dark sandstone, and whole Queen Conch (*Strombus gigas*). The dark sandstone had been worked and is similar to the dark sandstone crypt slabs seen in Yarborough Cemetery. The water table was

encountered approximately 50 cm below ground surface and the excavations were terminated.

XU 7 This 2x1 meter unit was centrally located in the northern half of the cemetery 8 meters east of the west cemetery boundary. The objective of this unit was to examine a large anomaly identified through probing. The anomaly was the approximate size of a burial crypt. The unit was placed over the edges of the anomaly as defined by the probing.

Level 1 consisted of the removal of soil overlying the anomaly. The matrix consisted of a 10YR 7/2 light grey coarse sand with a high percentage of stone and shell inclusions. Fragments from red bricks and small pieces of glass were recovered. This level terminated at the presence of a rectangular feature composed of coarsely tempered tan cement. It measured roughly 2x1 meters with the longer dimension in an east-west orientation (Figure 4.8). A smaller rectangular opening was present in its center. This space was large enough to fit an adult of small stature. The edges framing the opening were about 25 cm thick on all sides. The top of this feature was located approximately 20 cm below ground surface. The feature was angled downward slightly toward the east to 30 cm below ground surface.

Level 2 consisted of the removal of the soft matrix located within the rectangular opening. This matrix was carefully excavated, however, no human remains were recovered. The above ground brick portion of the crypt was likely removed by hurricane activity. As a result, the individual located in this crypt would have been displaced. Level 2 was terminated approximately 50cm below ground surface at the base of the concrete portion of the crypt. Few artifacts associated with the grave were recovered.

Probing identified as least one, and possibly two graves, in the southern portion of the cemetery, immediately north of the identified channel edge. However, due to time

constraints, no excavations were conducted in this area. Excavation of these probed areas will be conducted during the 2010 field season.

The 1764 Map

A version of a 1764 map of St. George's Caye was published in 1945 (Figure 4.6). The original is in the archives of Spain and its maker is unknown. We suspect that the map was made during a Spanish inspection of the Bay Settlement after the Treaty of Paris in 1763. One of the conditions of the Treaty was that the British were to dismantle any forts at Black River on the Mosquito Shore and in the Bay Settlement (Belize). Others have suggested that the map was drafted by a Spanish spy.

This early map shows the locations of residences, provision grounds, slaves quarters, gallows, docks, turtle corrals, and a careening ground. We overlaid the 1764 map to the modern survey map of the Caye to get some idea of the spatial relationship between the locations of early documented structures and modern land tracts. Once overlaid, there was some difficulty with the alignment of the maps to one another. The differences between the two maps are no doubt the result of both the accuracy of the 1764 map and the changes in the island topography over time due to hurricanes and modern infilling to raise low and or washed out areas of the island. Residents informed us that in years past they had observed numerous metal objects in the water and ballast stones in an area that corresponds to the blacksmith area, dock and turtle corral. We decided to investigate this area with a small excavation unit placed in shallow water in an area where we had located through probing what we suspected was ship ballast. This unit was designated XU 4.

XU 4 The unit was placed approximately 16 meters east of the modern sea wall and 12 meters north of a modern wood dock. This location was on the windward side of the island in shallow water 50-70 cm below sea level. The matrix removed from this unit was wet screened and removed in one level. The unit was terminated at large feature approximately one meter below the sea floor. Further investigations identified this feature as several boulders of dark stone that is not native to the area. These stones would have likely been used as ship ballast and may be associated with the dock shown on the 1764 map.

Probing indicated that the ballast pile is approximately 6 m N-S by 6 m E-W. Additional survey of the area surrounding XU4 identified several small piles of ballast on the sea floor near a modern wooden dock approximately 12 meters to the south. Several historic artifacts were recovered from XU4 including glass bottle fragments, clay pipe bowl fragment, and several fragments of marine turtle carapace.



Figure 4.1. Photograph of the cemetery on St. George's Caye as it looks today. Large white crypt is a modern burial, gray pillar is a monument to those who fought at the Battle of St. George's Caye, small white "grave" stones (center right) are modern memorial stones but are not associated with burials.



Figure 4.2. Photograph of the cemetery on St. George's Caye probably taken sometime in the 1930's. From <u>A History of Belize: Nation in the Making.</u>

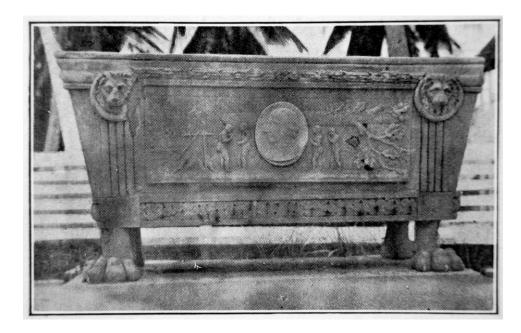


Figure 4.3. Photograph of Thomas Potts tomb, from Gann 1926.



Figure 4.4. Photograph of the marble medallion recovered at St. George's Caye currently curated at the Institute of Archaeology, Belmopan.



Figure 4.5. Photograph of Yarborough Cemetery as it looks today.

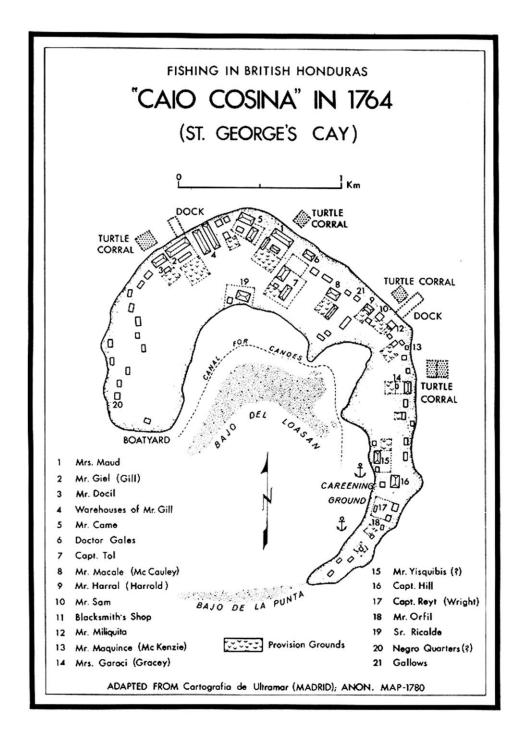


Figure 4.6. 1764 map of St. George's Caye. From Craig 1966.

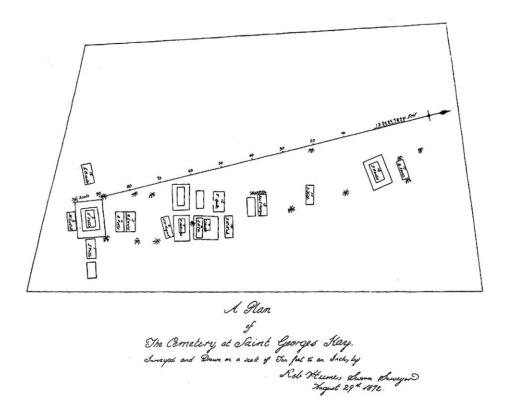


Figure 4.7. 1872 plan map of St. George's Caye Cemetery by Rob Hume.



Figure 4.8. Burial crypt found in XU7.

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1907 Epitaphs copied from the Tombstones in the Cemetery at St. George's Caye, British Honduras.

APPENDIX 4.1

The following were recorded by James Purcell Usher 1907.

Sacred
TO THE MEMORY OF
WILLIAM HENRY AUGUST
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
THE 18TH SEPTEMBER, 1824
AGED 12 MONTHS AND 10 DAYS

BENEATH THIS TOMB AN INFANT LIES

TO EARTH WHOSE BODY LENT

HEREAFTER SHALL MORE GLORIOUS RISE

BUT NOT MORE INNOCENT

WHEN THE ARCHANGEL TRUMP SHALL BLOW

AND SOULS TO BODY JOIN

WHAT CROWDS SHALL WISH THEIR LIVES BELOW

HAD BEEN AS SHORT AS THINE.

OF
JAMES BARTLET, ESQUIRE
NATIVE OF ABERDEEN
MANY YEARS INHABITANT OF THIS SETTLEMENT
WHO, AFTER HAVING FAITHFULLY DISCHARGED
THE DUTIES OF THE SEVERAL OFFICES
TO WHICH HE WAS CHOSEN, AND EMPLOYED
WITH UNREMITTING ASSIDUITY HIS SUPERIOR
TALENTS TO PROMOTE THE WELFARE
OF THE COMMUNITY
DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON THE 24TH DAY
JANUARY, 1800, IN THE 47TH YEAR
OF HIS AGE.

NOTE: THIS STONE IS VERY MUCH WORN.

In Memory
OF
JOSEPH BEVANS
DIED SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1889
AGED 89.

"He is at rest." (Wood Cross)

Sacred
TO THE MEMORY OF
EVE BROASTER

A NATIVE OF MANDINGO, IN AFRICA WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE 28TH JULY, 1821 AGED 65 YEARS

WHOSE INOFFENSIVE PRIMEVAL CONDUCT
ENDEARED HER TO ALL WITH WHOM SHE WAS ACQUAINTED
AND AS A TRIBUTE TO DEPARTED WORTH
THIS STONE IS ERECTED TO HER MEMORY
BY HER DISCONSOLATE DAUGHTER
ARIADNE BROASTER.

THIS RUDE STONE, WHAT FEW SUPERB MARBLES CAN, MAY TRULY BOAST HER LIES AN HONEST WOMAN.

Sacred
TO THE MEMORY OF
SELWYN HODGE COX
SON OF
AUSTIN AND MARY COX
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
APRIL 16TH, 1861
AGED 14 YEARS.

"Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye know not the Son of Man cometh."

Sacred TO THE MEMORY OF THEODOR AUSTIN WILLIAM CRAMER BORN AUGUST 27TH, 1868 DIED FEBRUARY 25TH, 1869.

In Loving Memory of
AGNES MARY
DAUGHTER OF
SYDNEY AND AMY JANE CUTHBERT
BORN 9TH JANUARY
DIED 26TH JUNE, 1892.

"Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Sacred
TO THE MEMORY OF
MRS. MARY ESTILL
DAUGHTER OF
MRS. CATHERINE FERRALL
OF THIS SETTLEMENT
BORN JULY 1ST, 1784
AND DEPARTED THIS LIFE
THE 23RD OF FEBRUARY, 1818
IN THE 34TH YEAR OF HER AGE.

THE REMAINS OF
THOMAS GALE, ESQUIRE,
A NATIVE OF GREENOCK
WHO DIED ON THE 2ND DAY OF AUGUST, 1813
IN THE 29TH YEAR OF HIS AGE
ENDEARED TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS
BY MANY EXCELLENT QUALITIES.
IT WAS NOT HIS LOT TO LEAVE THEM IN EARLY LIFE, AND
WHEN THE LAPSE OF A FEW BUSY YEARS

HERE ARE DEPOSITED

HAD RIPENED ATTACHMENT WITH AFFECTION
TO SUFFER A FINAL AND LASTING SEPARATION
BY A PREMATURE DEATH
AS A TESTIMONY TO DEPARTED WORTH
AS WELL AS A MEMORIAL OF AFFECTION
THIS STONE IS ERECTED

Note: The stone is split and the words cannot be read, and the stone is, in addition, very much worn and difficult to decipher, and the name and date may be different.

BY DISCONSOLATE PARENTS.

Sacred to the Memory
OF
JOHN EMMONS HILL, ESQRE.,
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
11TH OF MAY, 1808,
AGED 37 YEARS.

"Long have I been tossed to and fro,
Till God's decree did summons me to harbour here
below
My anchor here is cast, from all storms free,
Until my swelling sails shall waft me, Lord, to Thee."

Here
LIES THE BODY OF
EDWARD JONES, ESQRE.
WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE
ON MONDAY THE 9TH DAY
OF APRIL, 1804
AGED 49 YEARS.
E.J. 1804

Sacred TO THE MEMORY OF ELMIRA ELIZABETH MCDONALD WHO DIED OF CHOLERA ON THE 13TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1836 AT SAINT GEORGE'S KEY AGED 3 YEARS 2 MONTHS AND 9 DAYS.

"As round this islet flashing beauteous to the sunbeam Rise the frisking billows then melt in ocean's womb, So rose to parents' eyes a darling bud, but sleeping here By pestilence consigned to melt into eternity."

> In Memory of JAMES McNAB WHO WAS BORN AT ST. PETERSBURG IN RUSSIA MAY 21ST, 1833 AND DEPARTED THIS LIFE AT ST. GEORGE'S KAYE SEPTERMBER 14TH, 1863.

THIS TOMB WAS ERECTED BY HIS WIFE MARY JANE $M_{C}NAB$.

In Memory of REV'D. JOHN C. MONGAN, M.A. INCUMBENT OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE ON THE 22ND AUGUST, 1860 AGED 60 YEARS.

Sacred
TO THE MEMORY OF
ROBERT PERRY
WHO DEPARTED
THIS LIFE THE 14TH OF OCTOBER, 1787.
AGED 45 YEARS.
R. P. 1787.

Note: This stone is very much worn and hard to deciper. (1872 map lists name as Robert Emery, died Oct. 14, 1787.)

Sacred TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN POTTS, SENIOR, ESQUIRE, WHO DEPARTED THIS TRANSITORY WORLD THE 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 1821 AT SAINT GEORGE'S KEY AGED 66 YEARS HE FILLED THE SITUATION OF A MAGISTRATE FOR MANY SUCCESSIVE YEARS UPRIGHT IN HIS PRINCIPLES HE ALWAYS ACTED THE PART OF AN HONEST AND INDEPENDENT MAN A MOST BENEVOLENT FRIEND TO THE DISTRESSED AND AN AFFECTIONATE FATHER WHOSE LOSS WILL BE IRRECONCILABLE TO THOSE WHO HAVE SURVIVED HIM

Sacred

TO THE MEMORY OF SARAH POTTS,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 7TH NOVEMBER, 1787

AGED 6 YEARS

AND TO

ANN GRACE

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 5TH OCTOBER, 1800

AGED 33 YEARS

AND TO

CATHERINE

DAUGHTER OF SARAH POTTS

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE THE 5TH NOVEMBER, 1800

AGED 8 YEARS.

S.P. 1797.

A.G. 1800.

c. 1800.

Note: This stone is very much worn and hard to decipher, and the first age given may be different.

Sacred to the Memory of THOMAS POTTS, ESQRE.,

OF DURHAM

SENIOR MAGISTRATE OF THIS SETTLEMENT WHO DID THE 8TH OF NOVEMBER, 1806,

AGED 66

Having resided chiefly in this country upwards of $40~{\rm Years}$, and formed an early attachment to the settlement.

HE WAS A ZEALOUS AND ACTIVE MAGISTRATE, AND IN SOCIAL LIFE HIS AMIABLE QUALITIES WERE HAPPILY BLENDED WITH HIS LABORIOUS HABITS AND UNWEARIED PURSUITS OF BUSINESS.

HE CLOSED HIS USEFUL LIFE LAMENTED AS A PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LOSS, RESPECTED AND BELOVED BY HIS FRIENDS AND VENERATED AS THE FATHER OF THE COMMUNITY.

In Loving Memory
OF
MARY WHITE USHER
DIED 3RD AUGUST, 1894.
AGED 71 YEARS.

The following was published by Thomas Gann 1926.

In Reverent Memory of George Hume, Mahogany Cutter and Bayman, but God Fearing.

Additional burials at St. Georges Caye Cemetery as recorded by Mary Check-Pennel (1989).

MARY ARMSTRONG buried August 10, 1822 (St. John's Burial Records)

HENRY AUGUST GREY buried November 15, 1846 (St. John's Burial Records)

E. Halliday died March 27, 1888

ALICE FRANCES CUTHBERT PEARCE born 1895 and died December 1984.

Her ashes were scattered over the

cemetery in 1985.

CATHERINE FERRAL POTTS buried September 22, 1823 (St. John's Burial Records)

JOHN QUALLO buried November 1, 1954.

died late October 1954 as per Belize Billboard,

November 1, 1954.

MARY TADE (may be Wade) buried August 15, 1818 (St. John's Burial Records)

HAROLD GEORGE USHER from The Clarion, March 22, 1906

In Memoriam

Entered into rest, on March 16th, at 7 P.M. Harold George, aged 2 years and 7 ½ months, youngest son of John Purcell and Ethel Blanch Usher. Interred at St.

George's Caye Cemetery.

Chapter 5. Button of the 7th West Indies Regiment

James F. Garber

A button of the 7th West Indies Regiment was recovered in the excavations within the St. George's Caye cemetery (Figure 5.1). Although historical documents indicate that several detachments of various West Indies regiments (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th) served in Belize, the 7th was apparently never assigned there. There is however, a connection between the 7th West Indies Regiment and Belize. This connection lies in the military history of one of the Settlement's Superintendents, Lt. Colonel George Arthur, who served in that position from 1814 to 1822. Before exploring that connection, background information on the West Indies Regiments is presented below.

In the late 1700s, Brittan was defending its Empire in various parts of the world and thus there was a severe shortage of troops. Troops shipped over from Brittan did not do well in the tropical environment of the Caribbean and casualties resulting from climate adjustment and disease were high. In 1795 to meet this shortage, commissions were issued to Colonels of the British army to raise 8 regiments (more regiments were added later). These initial 8 regiments were formed in Jamaica, the British stronghold in the Caribbean. These were to be commanded by white officers and NCOs and consist of black troops many of which were slaves purchased for that purpose.

The 7th West Indies Regiment (also known as Lewe's or Lewe's Foot) was commissioned on September 1, 1795. It was disbanded in 1803 and reformed with troops from the 9th, 10th, and 12th. It was permanently disbanded in 1819. Soldiers of the West Indies 7th Regiment that were unfit for active service but appropriate for garrison duty were

assigned to the Black Garrison 1st company formed in Jamaica on August 1, 1813. This company was disbanded in Trinidad on August 24, 1817. Additionally, some soldiers of the West Indies 7th Regiment were incorporated into the Black Garrison 2nd company formed in Curacao on June 25, 1815, transferred to Jamaica in March 1816, and disbanded July 24, 1817.

The uniforms of the West Indies 7th Regiment consisted of the following: red jacket (8 buttons below half lapels); yellow jacket facings; red collar (one button and laced button hole on each side); shoulder straps; half lapels (each with 3 buttons and laced buttonholes); yellow pointed cuffs (2 buttons each); short tails; regimental lace (white with brown, yellow, and scarlet line 1802; white with black and yellow line 1814; officer's lace was silver) edged the collar, shoulder straps, top of cuffs, and was used for the button holes of the half lapels and collar; sergeants had same jacket but in scarlet with white silk lace; accoutrements in black; pants were white duck gaiter-trousers from 1795 to July 7, 1810, after that pants changed to blue serge gaiter-trousers; hats were black round with whole brim until 1803, followed by black stovepipe shakos, followed by 'Belgic' shako issued from 1812-1813; officers wore black bicorn hats in dress uniform and round hats in undress uniform (Chartrand and Chappel 1996). Figure 5.2 shows a private of the 5th West Indies Regiment. The uniform is basically the same as those of the 7th with minor differences in regimental trim.

Sometime after its commission in 1795, the 7th Regiment was assigned to Saint-Domingue (the British called it San Domingo, today it is called Haiti) and served there until December of 1798. On July 7, 1809 the West Indies 7th Regiment along with several other military units, capture the city of Santo Domingo (now in the Dominican Republic).

As noted above, various West Indies regiments (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, and 6th) served in Belize, but the 7th was apparently never assigned there. The connection between the 7th West Indies regiment and Belize lies with Lt. Colonel George Arthur (Figure 5.3). His military career began in 1804. He served in Calabria, Egypt, Sicily, Jersey, and the Walcheren expedition. In 1812 he purchased a majority of the 7th Regiment and soon after was given the post of assistant quartermaster general in Jamaica where the 7th was formed. Here he began his career with the Colonial Office and was appointed Superintendent of the Bay Settlement (Belize). He served in that post from 1814-1822. Like most of the Superintendents of the Settlement, his role was controversial. It is important to note that at this point in time, the Bay Settlement was not a colony of Brittan and as per treaty agreement with Spain, the Baymen were allowed to settle, cut and export wood, but not establish a government or plantations. The role of Superintendent was to serve as the Crown's representative and the duties and power were ambiguous and constantly shifting. The only clear role was to ensure that treaty regulations with Spain were enforced. Superintendents did not have the power to govern. It was truly a unique situation in the British Empire without parallel. The "law of the land" at that point in time was Burnaby's Code, established in 1765. It is clear from the records that George Arthur played a key role in strengthening the Crown's role in the affairs of the Settlement. Also of historical importance to Belize, he was the first Superintendent to occupy the then newly constructed Government House that still stands today (it is now the House of Culture). Previous Superintendents lived at the upper end of Haulover Creek.

So, back to the West Indies 7th Regiment button recovered in the St. George's Caye cemetery. The button is made of pewter and is thus that of an enlisted man (officers buttons

were made of silver). If the 7th Regiment was never assigned to Belize, how did this button find its way to St. George's Caye? We have two possible explanations. When George Arthur was assigned to Belize, perhaps he brought with him a few of his best men to assist him in his new assignment. The archives are silent on this issue. It should be noted that in the same excavation unit in the cemetery we also recovered two smaller unmarked buttons of brass and a buckle. The buttons may be of the type found on each side of the military hat between which was a braided decoration. The buckle, also plain, may have been for some other part of the uniform. As noted in the cemetery section of this report, the graves have been severely disturbed by hurricanes and storm surges. One of the crypts excavated in the summer of 2009 had been entirely emptied of its contents, most likely by a storm surge. The buttons and buckle were recovered from the back of the cemetery. Did one of these disturbed graves once contain the uniformed remains of a soldier of the 7th West Indies Regiment?

The other possible explanation lies in the analysis of a skeleton found eroding from the banks of the Mopan River in the Town of Benque Viejo along the western border of Belize (Palacio 1976). The partial skeleton was that of a male who apparently died an accidental death along the river. Amongst the bones were several buttons - two of the 2nd West Indies Regiment; seven of the 3rd West Indies Regiment; and four plain buttons made of bone. In reference to the wearing of different regimental buttons Palacio notes:

Although this would at first seem to be strange, I am told by present police officers that it is not unusual. Friends in different regiments may exchange buttons as souvenirs. These could be substituted for one's own regimental buttons in times of crisis. When military supplies ran short here in the last century, as they often did according to written sources, buttons were probably the most easily interchangeable items among the regiments. Since seven out of the nine buttons are of the Third Regiment, it seems almost certain that the man belonged to that regiment. (Palacio 1976:16).

Is it possible that what we recovered on St. George's Caye are the remains of a soldier of a West Indies Regiment that was assigned to Belize and that he had replaced a missing button with one he had acquired from a soldier from the 7th that he had met in Jamaica or elsewhere in the Caribbean? We will be conducting additional excavations in the St. George's Caye cemetery in the summer of 2010 that might provide some answers.



Figure 5.1. Pewter button of the 7^{th} West Indies Regiment recovered in the St. George's Caye cemetery.



Figure 5.2. Private of the 5th West Indies Regiment. Uniforms of the 7th regiment were basically the same except for minor regimental distinctions. From <u>Costumes of the Army of the British Empire, according to the last regulations 1812</u>. Engraved by J. C. Stadler, aquatint by Charles Hamilton Smith.

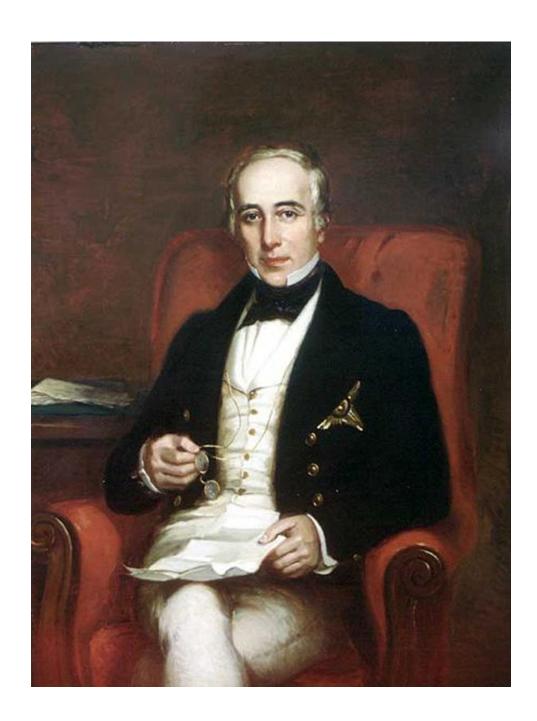


Figure 5.3. George Arthur. Superintendent of the Bay Settlement 1814-1821.

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