THEME TWO: COLONIAL FORTIFICATIONS

FROM IRELAND TO NEVIS: THE LIFE OF GOVERNOR JOHN JOHNSON

Tessa Machling

'Your Lordships shall not fail of the plans of the fortifications as soon as they are finished, but the unaccountable people of this island will neither consent to make new ones nor so much as mind their old, which are all out of repair'

John Johnson to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, 27/7/1705 (PRO CO153/9)

From the earliest days of the author's research, it has been obvious that the years between 1700 and 1710 hold the key to understanding the development and decline of the Nevis fortifications. In this decade, fort building reached it's maximum with twelve forts being built and repaired on Nevis. However, soon after their construction, these forts were destroyed when the island suffered a debilitating French attack in 1706. From this date the island fell into a decline, which would mark the end of its status as 'Queen of the Caribees': the military defence of the island mirrors this decline.

The previous interim report (Machling 2000) examined the archaeological remains of these early 18th century forts. However, the current report is historically based and examines the life of one man who designed and oversaw the construction of the Nevis forts in the early 1700s. The report attempts to place the forts in context within the life of one of Nevis's most influential military men, Governor John Johnson. In comparison with his peers, Johnson's background was not typical of that of a Caribbean Governor and it is for this reason that his life history is worthy of study.

Johnson and the 27th Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers

In July 1701, the 27th Inniskilling Regiment of Foot set sail from Cork, in Ireland, for the Caribbean. Captain John Johnson, soon to be Major of the 27th, Lt. Governor of Nevis and then Governor of the Leeward Islands and currently Captain of a Grenadier Company, was on his way to becoming one of the most interesting, and influential, military men in Nevis' history. Daniel Parke (Governor of the Leeward Islands from 1706-1710) would later, snidely, describe Johnson's history as follows: 'Coll. Johnson was bred a bricklayer, he went into the army in the Irish warr in Tiffeny's regiment, he was very dextrous in bringing his Coll. black cattle for which service from a Sergeant Tiffeny made him a Captain. Codrington made him Major and Lt. Governor of Nevis, he could neither write nor read' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO239/1/15: 4/10/1706).

Johnson's Regiment, the 27th Inniskillings, comprised Protestant men from Enniskillen, County Fermanagh and had been formed in the late 1680's, to defend the area against King James II, represented by the Earl of Tyrconnell and his armies. The regiment had started life as an amateur militia who fought so effectively that, in 1689, William of Orange gave them status as an official regiment in gratitude for their services (Copeland-Trimble 1876, Constable 1928).

In June 1689, Captain John Johnson was given a commission to be military Engineer to the regiment, under its Colonel, Zachariah Tiffin. The precise details of Johnson's career are vague prior to this date. It would appear that Johnson had been in the army before 1689, and may have been the John Johnson mentioned as an Ensign in the Scottish, Royal Regiment of Foot in February 1685 (Army Commissions, PRO WO25/1/457: 2/1685). He could also have been in another regiment whose records have not survived. Alternatively, he may have been one of the original Inniskilling men, an amateur soldier born and bred in County Fermanagh.

The surname 'Johnson' would point to South-West Scottish ancestry and the presence of many 'Johnsons' in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland (Dunlop 2000) might suggest that his ancestors had been one of the many Protestant planters from Scotland, who went to Northern Ireland in the mid 1600s as part of Oliver Cromwell's 'settlement' of the island. The description by Parke of Johnson being a 'bricklayer' who 'went into the army in the Irish warr' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO239/1/15: 4/10/1706) would also support the interpretation of Johnson as a local man, who only joined the army upon James II's threat to Ireland. Alternatively it may just reflect Parke's bitterness towards this man, whom he clearly regarded as an upstart of low breeding.

From 1689-1690 the newly formed 27th Regiment of Foot were involved in the Battle of the Boyne, amongst others in Ireland, and in 1692 were sent to Flanders. Whilst there, they 'were employed in strengthening the walls of Dixmude' (Constable 1928). As the Regiment's engineer, Johnson would clearly have been involved in this project.

Johnson would appear to have been a good soldier. In April 1693, whilst the regiment were serving at the Tower of London, he received a commission to be Captain of the Grenadier Company in the regiment (Army Commissions, PRO WO25/274: 4/1693). Grenadiers were some the most prestigious troops in any regiment, responsible for frontline attack by throwing grenades at the enemies defences. As such they were regarded as men of great bravery. To be a successful grenadier it was essential to be a good athlete and it was an honour reserved for men of great ability. Interestingly, such men were also noted as being the most handsome of the troops, almost certainly due to their height and athleticism (Evans 1990).

In 1695, the 'Inniskillings' were present at the siege of Namur in Belgium, and Grenadiers from the 27th took part in the final, successful, assault on the fortress. In 1696, they were involved in yet more fortification work and constructed an entrenched camp at Anderlecht. By the end of 1697 they had returned to Ireland and stayed there until 1701, when news of their transfer to the West Indies was received (Constable 1928).

A military posting to the West Indies was dreaded. It was seen as a death sentence, and, indeed, many men never returned, often dying from disease or from infection. Day to day life was little better. Often the soldiers had few clothes, let alone uniforms; in many cases they were not provided with food and, as they were often not paid for years at a time, had no means of purchasing any. As Constable states, a posting to the Caribbean was seen by the soldiers as '…an exile in which his existence was completely forgotten and from which, even when broken in health, he could not hope to return' (Constable 1928:47).

On Nevis, the picture mirrored that of the other islands. In 1668, the soldiers on Nevis were described as 'bare and naked' (Tobias Bridge, CSP: 1661-8, No. 1760: 27/5/1668) and by 1678 as having no arms and ammunition (William Stapleton, PRO CO153/2: 1/4/1678). By 1681, William Stapleton commented that it would be 'much more honourable to disband them than to famish them' (William Stapleton, PRO CO153/3: 12/11/1681). By 1682, they had not been paid for four years (William Stapleton, PRO CO1/48/183: 25/3/1682). In 1700, they had fared even worse, with the island refusing to quarter the soldiers unless they 'work in the fields with the negroes' (Colonel Fox, CSP: 1700, No.373: 1/5/1700).

Into this misery went the 27th Inniskillings. Tiffin's regiment arrived in Antigua in 1702 and in August of that year Tiffin died and was replaced by Colonel Thomas Whetham (Constable 1928). Their first action in the Caribbean came in 1703 when the Regiment was part of an expedition to Guadeloupe under the command of the then Governor of the Leeward Islands, Christopher Codrington (the third). It would seem that Johnson first met Codrington at this time (Christopher Codrington, PRO CO 152/5: 3/1703).

Christopher Codrington III

Christopher Codrington (the third) had been born in Barbados to a family of note who had a large estate in England as well as considerable plantations in both Antigua and Barbados (Harlow 1989). Codrington's father, Christopher Codrington (the second), had been Governor of the Leeward Islands from 1689 until 1698 (Henige 1970), and appears to have been responsible for many military improvements in the Leewards (Christopher Codrington, PRO CO152/1: 3/7/1693).

His son was sent to England to be educated and eventually received a fellowship at All Souls College, Oxford in 1689. In early 1693, Codrington volunteered for an, ultimately unsuccessful, expedition to capture Martinique. After this defeat he went to St. Christopher and inspected the forts and defence of Nevis, Antigua and St. Christopher with his father, learning the trade of Governorship as he went (Harlow 1989). Codrington then returned to Oxford. In 1695 he, like the 27th Regiment, served at Namur, where he was promoted from Captain to Lieutenant Colonel. He then returned once again to his Oxford Fellowship before travelling to Paris (Harlow 1989).

On the death of his father, in 1698, he was appointed Governor of the Leeward Islands. After two years of discussion over payment, he finally arrived in the Leeward Islands in September 1700. As Governor, Codrington passed many laws and restructured the corrupt system of justice present in the islands. He would appear to have been a man who respected education and learning and tried to promote it in others, a trait which may have attracted him to Johnson, a man of apparent low birth who clearly had the potential for 'improvement'. Codrington could see nothing wrong with slavery but, in direct opposition to the planters, believed in education and religion for the slaves and later, in his will, founded Codrington College in Barbados (Harlow 1989).

Others of his laws provided land for small planters through taxation on large landowners who did not cultivate their estates. On Nevis, he passed acts for repairing the breast works and for the better regulation of the militia (Nevis Act, PRO CO185/3: 13/2/1701). In 1701, he wrote that 'Nevis seems to be naturally stronger and better fortified, still there is great want of good armes and ammunition, but if care was taken, the militia of that island might be brought to some discipline' (Christopher Codrington, PRO CO153/7: 16/7/1701).

In Guadeloupe in 1703, Codrington was so impressed with Captain John Johnson's actions, that he made him first Major and then Lt. Governor of Nevis in July of that year (Grant and Monro 1910). In 1704, Codrington was replaced by Sir William Mathew as Governor of the Leeward Islands, but stayed on in Antigua to oversee his plantation.

Johnson's Forts

From 1703-6 Johnson, as Lieutenant Governor, set to work improving the forts and defences of Nevis (John Johnson, PRO CO 152/6: 9/2/1704). It is difficult to establish the level of Johnson's involvement in these works, although it would seem that Johnson was mainly responsible for the design and construction. It is, however, almost certain he was working under the influence of Codrington: as Parke states 'Johnson protested to me that he never did any one thing but by Coll. Codrington's advice' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO239/1/15: 4/10/1706).

Codrington had obviously intended to repair the Nevis fortifications, continuing the work started by his father in 1693 (Christopher Codrington, PRO CO152/1: 6/11/1693). However, in the years prior to Johnson's arrival little work was carried out and it would appear that men and arms were of more importance to Codrington (Christopher Codrington, PRO CO153/7: 20/8/1701; Nevis Act, PRO CO185/2/42: 1702). Codrington did visit the Nevis forts in 1701

and suggested that certain forts needed repair (Christopher Codrington, PRO CO 152/4: 25/8/1701), but does not appear to have suggested exactly how the repairs should be achieved.

With Johnson's experience as a bricklayer, engineer and soldier there is no reason to suggest that he was not capable of the works he claims to have instigated (John Johnson, PRO CO152/6: 15/9/1705). It must not also be forgotten that Codrington, for much of this time, would have been in Antigua and would therefore have been unavailable to Johnson, who was in Nevis. Indeed, Sir William Mathew clearly believed Johnson was responsible for the forts and stated 'Nevis is in much the best posture and defence of any island...I must do Col. Johnson the Lt. Gov. thereof that justice, to tell your Lordships that it is chiefly due to his great care and dilligence and that his zeal for her Majesty's favour truly deserves your Lordships favour' (William Mathew, PRO CO153/9: 31/8/1704). Thus it would appear that Codrington may have suggested to Johnson that the forts needed repair and the precise design, construction, etc. was then down to Johnson who had far more experience in such matters.

Fig. 2.1 Mathew's Fort at the Golden Rock Pavilion, February 2000.

By 1704 the forts are described as nearly finished (Council of Nevis, PRO CO154/5: 22/3/1704). Well designed and built, from faced and shaped stones with lime mortar, the forts were the most considerable ever constructed on the island and form the majority of the early 18th century structures which survive to the present day. For example, the stonework present at the Golden Rock Pavilion (Mathew's Fort) and the remains at the Four Seasons Resort (Old Road Fort) and at Paradise Beach (Cotton Tree Fort) recorded by the author in 2000 (Machling 2000), represent the remnants of Johnson's forts (Figs. 2.1 & 2.2). This was quite an achievement for the 'young engineer' (John Johnson, PRO CO152/6: 15/9/1705) who had left Ireland in 1701.

In December 1704, Mathew died and Johnson, as Deputy Governor of Nevis, became Governor of the Leeward Islands, until the lengthy procedure of nominating and sending a new Governor from England could be achieved. He continued the defences of Nevis and also worked on Monk's Hill Fort on Antigua, a project started by Codrington (John Johnson, PRO CO152/6: 9/2/1704). Johnson also tried to improve the lot of the soldiers based in the Leeward Islands building barracks on Antigua and pleading the soldier's case for better treatment. It would appear the soldiers' conditions had not got any better from those experienced in the late 17th century. Indeed, in many cases they appear to have got worse. For instance, in 1705, when Johnson refused to pass a prejudicial law, the inhabitants of Nevis turned the soldiers out of their lodgings, forcing them to 'build themselves huts for their cover' (John Johnson, PRO CO153/9: 27/7/1705).

By 1705, a replacement for William Mathew had been found. In March 1705, a Daniel Parke received his commission to be Governor of the Leeward Islands (PRO CO153/9: 27/3/1705), and arrived in the Caribbean in May 1706.

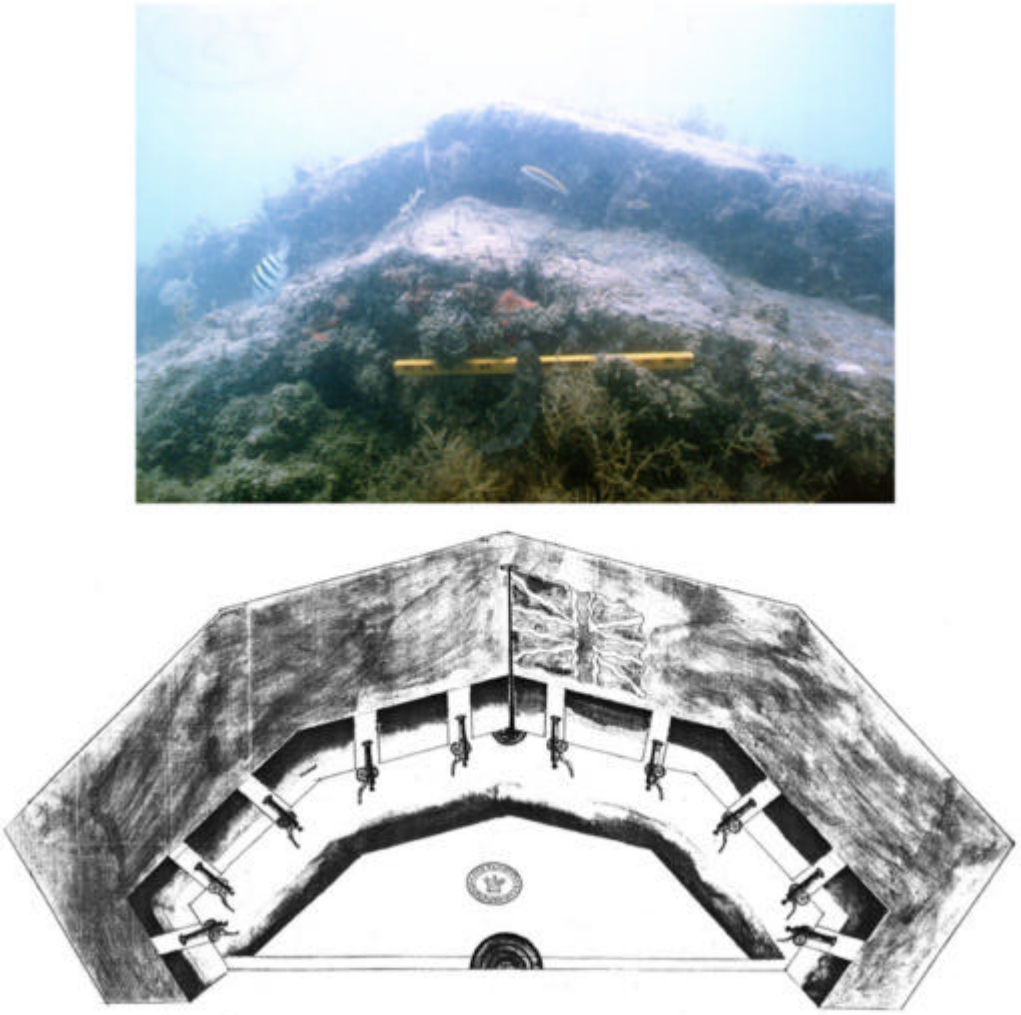

Fig. 2.2 Old Road Fort, May 2000: The angled wall shown on Johnson's fort plan of 1705 can clearly be seen (Underwater photo: Kester Keighley)

Daniel Parke

Parke in his previous positions on the Virginia Assembly and as escheator for York County had been accused of maladministration. When the accusations were made public, he had returned to England without leave. He had made his money from tobacco, had bought a country estate and then ran for Parliament. He won his seat through bribery and, when the corruption was discovered, was expelled from Parliament. An even more interesting and insightful, though unsubstantiated, story is told about Parke and relates to an incident that apparently happened on Antigua.

An attack on Antigua in the 1700s resulted in a number of prisoners being taken to Dominica by the Caribs. Amongst the prisoners was Parke's wife. Daniel Parke hastily threw together a fleet to go to Antigua to rescue his lady. However, when the fleet arrived, they were met by an, apparently, unhurt and calm Mrs. Parke. Thanking the rescuers for their concern and efforts, she calmly stated that she found the Carib chief to be much kinder than her husband, and, as such, preferred to remain on Dominica. Requesting to be remembered to her friends, Mrs. Parke despatched the rescue party to Antigua without her (Crandall 2000: 189). Whether true or not, this story was clearly believable enough to be told and retold over the years: Parke was obviously not a well-liked man.

In the 1690's, he served as a volunteer in Flanders and redeemed his reputation by bringing news to Queen Anne of the victory at Blenheim. After 'a period of assiduous attention at Court' (Harlow 1989), upon Mathew's death, he was offered the position of Governor of the Leeward Islands. This meant that Johnson again became Lieutenant Governor of Nevis. It also meant that the two Governors previous to Parke were still in the Leeward Islands, as Parke seems to have seen it, potentially watching and reporting his every move.

Parke appears to have been violently jealous and suspicious of Codrington and immediately set about damning his, and by association, Johnson's name (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/6: 15/7/1706). Parke was extremely disliked by the planters of the Leeward Islands, apparently due to his philandering with planters' wives and his pompous attitude (Harlow 1989). His accusations against Johnson and Codrington were harsh, and would appear to be mostly unfounded.

The French Attack

In 1706, the first test of Johnson's forts came when the French attacked Nevis. On 7th February the French ships came into range and, as Col. Richard Abbott narrates, 'gave their broadsides which was returned very warmly by three of our own forts [probably Mathew's, Old Road and Cotton Tree forts] battering on them at one the same time doing considerable damage to the ships and killing the commander of the 70 gun ship' (Richard Abbott, PRO CO184/4: 13/3/1706). After this, as Johnson states 'perceiving the roughness of the forts, platformes and trenches, which were observed to be well lined, twas thought adviseable to remand them [the French soldiers] on board' and five days were '...spent without any real action more than exchanging great shot daily between the forts and the enemy's ships; with some damage on their side but none to ours' (John Johnson, PRO CO153/9: 13/3/1706). The French finally stood off and headed for St. Christopher.

Johnson, apparently perceiving that Antigua was also in danger, took some of the 27th Regiment to that island. However, after sacking St. Christopher (Council and Assembly of Nevis, PRO CO152/6: 12/3/1706) the French returned to Nevis on the 21st March. The arrival of the fleet to the north of the island convinced the Nevis commanders that 'the enemy would attempt their landing to the northward and accordingly the troops were posted' (Richard Abbott, PRO CO152/6: 3/6/1706). Johnson's coastal batteries were effective and provided no means of landing on the western coast. The landing bays on the south and east of the island were also protected by forts.

The French, realizing that attack on the west would be futile, split their fleet and in the night landed 3000 men in Green Bay to the south west of the island. By day break on the 22nd they were in command of 'foure of the best platforms which were only defensible to the sea' (Richard Abbott, PRO CO184/1/6: 21/3/1706). Those four platforms almost certainly included the forts at Old Road and Cotton Tree and it is likely that the disabled cannon (Fig. 2.3) found during investigations by the author in 2000, result from this attack (Machling 2000).

Nevis was sacked and 'two thirds of the chief town was burn'd to the ground' (David Dunbar, PRO CO152/10: 7/7/1715). Many sugar estates were also destroyed. From contemporary accounts it would appear that defeat was not inevitable, rather the result of the neglect of two Nevis planters, Colonel Burt and Colonel Butler, who had been stationed at the bay: 'the former leaving his post and the latter not taking that due care as became him' (Richard Abbott, PRO CO184/1/19: 22/4/1706). However, later that year, when Parke arrived in the Caribbean, he immediately seized the opportunity to criticize, and blamed the whole affair on Johnson and Codrington's mismanagement. He accused Johnson, amongst other things, of having taken all the good guns to Nevis, which were 'now all distroyed' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/6: 15/7/1706) by the French. Although Parke's comments were vicious, he was not Johnson's most dangerous enemy. That role was filled by John Pogson.

Fig. 2.3: The broken muzzle of Gun 4, Cotton Tree Fort, May 2000. (Photo: Kester Keighley)

Johnson and Pogson

In September 1706, Johnson was in St. Christopher dining with a Mr Kimberson. At dinner, there was an angry exchange of words between Johnson and his old rival Pogson, tenant of William Freeman of St. Christopher. Freeman had lost possession of an estate under Codrington's Governorship in 1701, and felt he had been badly treated (Harlow 1989).

The Freeman affair was reported to England and although Codrington's name had been unanimously cleared, bad feeling between Codrington and Freeman (and by their association with the two rivals, Johnson and Pogson) existed for many years after the event. In April 1704, this animosity was further developed when Johnson was tricked into passing illegal legislation on St. Christopher and was wrongly accused, by Pogson, of accepting a bribe to do the same. Johnson, when he discovered the lie, had removed Pogson from the Council of St. Christopher (Council of St. Christopher, PRO CO152/6: 4/1705). Pogson felt he had been wronged and wanted revenge.

According to contemporary trial accounts, as Johnson left dinner at Kimberson's, Pogson followed him out. Riding home, Johnson stopped to tie his breeches and was caught by Pogson, who drew a pistol and shot him. According to Coll. Richard Payne, who witnessed the event, Johnson said '"I am barborously murdered"' and '...dismounted his horse and lay down on his back'. Payne was sure that there had not been a duel and, in his statement, confirmed this by saying that Johnson was unarmed. In short, Johnson had been murdered in cold blood (Richard Payne, PRO CO152/7: 14/10/1706). Johnson was dead, sacrificed as 'Coll. Codrington's martyr' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/6: 15/9/1706).

After Johnson's murder Parke's, now unchecked, complaints increased dramatically. In the aftermath of the French attack Parke's commented that 'I should have suspended Col. Johnson had he not died for I think he was wanting in his duty both before and after the taking of Nevis' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO239/1/15: 4/10/1706). He also accused Johnson of incompetence as an engineer: 'Collonell Johnson who understood nothing of the matter, poor man he could neither

write nor read therefore twas not likely to understand fortification, put them to soe much charge in building of a little fort and platformes that were of noe use to him that I can't gett them now to do anything; there is here a trench as they called it that is a streight ditch and the ditch on the wrong side' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/6: 9/12/1706).

This last attack was clearly unfounded as Johnson's forts had defended Nevis admirably and were only let down by the incompetence of Colonel Burt and Colonel Butler at Green Bay. The charge against the usefulness of the trenches would be further refuted by Sir William Mathew (the second), who commented, in 1734, that there was, 'a good ditch and rampart...which may be repaired well to be defended' (William Mathew, PRO CO152/20/148: 31/8/1734).

By 2nd October 1706, Pogson had been captured and was in Fort Charles on St. Christopher, awaiting trial (Council of St. Christopher, PRO CO241/1: 2/10/1706). By the end of October, Pogson was free, having been unanimously acquitted of murder by a jury of his fellow islanders, leading even Parke to complain of an unfair trial: 'had not my instructions tyed me up to the contrary I would have turned out all the twelve justices' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO153/9: 9/12/1706).

In November, Pogson's wife Sarah petitioned the Council of St. Christopher on behalf of her husband (Sarah Pogson, PRO CO241/1: 23/11/1706) who had fled to England after Parke had threatened to charge him on a lesser count of stabbing Johnson (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/7: 31/10/1706). However, by 1707, he had returned to Nevis and was triumphantly elected to the Assembly of St. Christopher after Queen Anne had ordered him turned out of Office on the Council (Queen in Council, PRO CO152/7: 17/4/1707).

The Demise of Daniel Parke

Meanwhile, Parke was still intent on persecuting Johnson and as he was now dead, he turned on his widow. Parke had arranged for a Major Gore to administer Johnson's estate, but had since discovered that, at the time of his death, Johnson was due the profits of seven ships seized during his Governorship. Parke claimed that half of this prize was due to him, and that on doing his accounts after Johnson's estate had been settled, realized 'that Coll. Johnson owed me more than what I bought of ye administration came to' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/7: 8/3/1708) and that should there be any complaints by Johnson's widow against the settlement he will 'return all I had and lett her make ye most of it and lett her pay me my due...for should I take all manner of advantages of ye ships as Coll. Codrington and as by his advice Johnson did' (Daniel Parke, PRO CO152/7: 8/3/1708).

By 1710, the general hatred of Parke was growing and he had been shot at a number of times. On one occasion, a Nevisian slave, firing at point blank range, caused Parke's horse to shy, leaving Parke to suffer only a wounded arm (Harlow 1989). As complaints to England steadily grew, Queen Anne ordered him home to answer the charges against him. However, Parke delayed his return, even going so far as to break up a meeting of the Antiguan Assembly 'at bayonet point' (Dunn 1973).

The Antiguans were infuriated by this act and, while Parke hastily barricaded his house, raised 300 armed men against him. On 7th December matters came to a head and the Antiguans demanded that Parke leave Antigua. He refused and fired cannon at the assembled rebels who surrounded his house. An exchange of fire ensued and Parke was hit in the leg by a bullet. The rebels immediately set upon him, beating him to death (Walter Hamilton, PRO CO153/11: 23/2/1711).

Thus ended the life of Johnson's most publicized critic. In the months that followed, his murderers could not be identified, and in the end no one was prosecuted. As Dunn states: 'it was scarcely feasible to prosecute the entire island population' (Dunn 1973: 146). Parke had received

the same fate as Johnson, albeit under far different circumstances, and the killers of both remained free. The dangers of being a Governor in the Caribbean had now been proved, twice.

Discussion

Inevitably, what is known about all the above men results from details gleaned from historical documents. These same documents are the result of conscious retention and disposal: all archives are the product of what is deemed to be worthy, with the bias exacerbated by x-factor events (such as fires, floods, etc.), which can destroy whole archives. However, although incomplete, the general picture evidenced by the historical records of Nevis is remarkably consistent. The three figures in this study, Johnson, Codrington and Parke, wrote many letters, which survive in the Public Record Office. As has been shown above, although written with intent, these letters offer many insights into their lives, motivations and achievements and general character outlines become apparent from the tone of their writings.

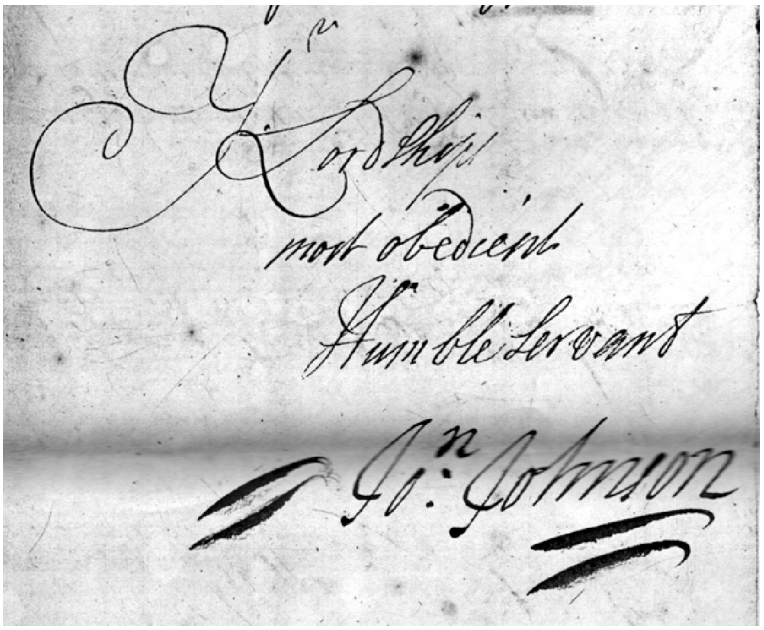

Fig. 2.4: Detail from a letter by John Johnson (PRO CO152/6: 15/9/1705)

Whatever the precise details of Johnson's life, he was clearly exceptional in Leeward Islands' military history. Apparently born without wealth or status, and possibly even illiterate, he rose through the ranks to become Governor of the Leeward Islands. If he was the Ensign, mentioned as being in the Royal Regiment of Foot in 1685, it is likely that Johnson was in his mid to late thirties when he died (ensigns were usually between 16 and 20 years old). However, it is impossible to say for certain how old he was when he was murdered. There is also no clue in the records as to what happened to his body: he may have been brought back to Britain, although it is more likely that he was buried in one of islands, possibly where he was murdered, on St. Kitts.

It is also difficult to know what would have happened had he survived. In all probability, Parke would have suspended him from duty. In time, Johnson would probably have redeemed himself, as many others before, and after, him did. The next obvious step for a soldier such as Johnson would be to become Colonel of his own regiment, possibly returning to Britain. However, as a soldier, Johnson would have continued to face the threat of death on many occasions and, even had it not been for Pogson, would probably not have survived to old age. As has been shown, life for the Caribbean soldier was brutal and brief and death from an infected injury, disease or in battle was not uncommon. Indeed, from accounts of the losses sustained in Guadeloupe in 1703 (18 officers and 226 soldiers dead, and 18 officers and 191 soldiers wounded) it is a

wonder that Johnson ever lived to become Governor of the Leeward Islands (PRO CO152/5: 1703).

Another common path followed by ex-officials and soldiers was to remain in the Leeward Islands as planters and slave owners. This part of the history of Johnson must not be forgotten. As the architect of Nevis defences in the early 18th century, Johnson would have been part of the slave culture of the Caribbean, ordering slaves to work on the defences of Nevis. He probably aspired to be a slave owner: the ultimate achievement of the white Caribbean self-made man. In realizing the achievements of this man, we must not lose track of the many, in this case, historically invisible, slaves who toiled in forced labour to make his designs a reality: the true builders of the forts.

Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to the staff at the PRO, for being so useful in finding obscure documents and for manhandling bulk orders to my desk. My great thanks also go to Major Jack Dunlop, of the Royal Enniskilling Fusiliers Regimental Museum, who promptly provided much useful information concerning the 27th Inniskillings. Thanks are also due to the Nevis Heritage Project for the funding of the first year of my postgraduate research and this report, and to AHRB for funding my full PhD research programme.

References

CSP: Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies.
PRO: Primary documents located in the Public Record Office, Kew, United Kingdom (includes: WO: Primary documents, War Office Series, CO: Primary documents, Colonial Office Series).

Constable & Co. 1928. *The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers: December 1688-July 1914*. Constable and Company Ltd., London.

Copeland-Trimble, W. 1876. *The Historical Record of the 27th Inniskilling Regiment.* London.

Crandall, D. R. 2000. *A Military History of Montserrat, West Indies: Attacks, Fortifications, Cannons, Defenders, 1632-1815.* Privately published,

Dunlop, J. 2000. pers. comm. Major Dunlop is Curator of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Regimental Museum, Enniskillen, Northern Ireland.

Dunn, R. S. 1973. *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713.* W. W. Norton & Company, London.

Evans, I. H. 1990. *Brewers Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. 14th Ed. Cassell, London.

Grant, W. L. and Monro, J. Eds. 1910. *Acts of the Privy Council: Colonial Series. 2: 1680-1720.* London.

Harlow, V. T. 1989. *Christopher Codrington, 1668-1710*. 2nd Ed. Hurst & Company, London.

Henige, D. P. 1970. *Colonial Governors from the 15th Century to the Present.* University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin.

Machling, T. 2000. Old Road Fort, Cotton Tree Fort and Dukes Sconce/Abbotts/Coles Point Forts: Fieldwork 2000. in Morris, E., Crosby, A. Leech, R. & Machling T. (Eds.) *Nevis Heritage Project Interim Report 2000,* 45-73. Nevis Heritage Project, University of Southampton, Southampton.