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Chapter 7: Interpreting Race, Class, and Gender in Saba's Domestic Spaces and Material Culture

Chapters 5 and 6 have presented the results of archaeological excavations across a wide variety of sites across Saba's plantation and non-plantation contexts. The discussion will now proceed to interpretations of Saba's domestic space and material culture through data garnered through these excavations coupled with documentary evidence garnered from the sources outlined in Chapter 4.

Housing, domestic architecture, and cisterns

The house and home ownership occupies a central place in Saban class consciousness; in fact, there are no recorded instances of rental arrangements or payments for Sabans in the documentary record prior to 1863. Therefore, by studying types of house ownership and archaeological remains of domestic structures, important insights into class and race can be gleaned by their remains and associated archaeological deposits. The relationship between home ownership and class consciousness in capitalist social contexts has been a common object of study by numerous academics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. While Saba was not a capitalist society prior to emancipation, the primacy of house architecture and home maintenance in Saban culture allows some parallels to be drawn between the two.

House ownership, architecture, and maintenance was and continues to be one of the predominant means among Sabans for projecting class. Houses, regardless of their size, were carefully maintained throughout Saba's colonial period with a pride and particularity to detail not seen in other regional islands (Labat 1724:342; Teenstra 1977:367; Price 1934:49-50). "Sabans' pride in maintaining their own appearance that that of their homes," quoted an administrator in the 1960's, is such that "they still do even if it means going without bread" (Crane 1971:237). Class consciousness relative to house maintenance was exemplified by Governor Edward Beaks Jr. in a series of exchanges with the Governor of Curaçao in the 1850's. Beaks placed his house at the disposal of the Government for holding meetings, since he considered the Church in The Bottom, which his predecessors used, to be an unsuitable location for conducting such affairs (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT:12/6/1858). Due to his declining income after taxes were annulled for manumitting enslaved Africans, for which he received f20 each, his annual income steadily declined each year from f1,300 in 1852, to a point by 1858 where the Governor of Curaçao could, "with much accuracy, judge the embarrassed state I am

placed in, to maintain myself, + family, with even the common necessities of life, added to which, to defray certain unavoidable expenses in my Government, with so small an income..." (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT:12/6/1858, original emphasis). The use of Beaks' own house to hold government sessions placed it in a very prominent position in the public eye, which led him to become increasingly embarrassed regarding its state and appearance to Sabans. "...And whereas my house is now requiring considerable repairs, and not having it in my power, to put it in a proper condition – I beg leave, with much submission, to solicit Your Excellencys assistance of f500 or f600 to enable me, to put the necessary repairs to it" (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT:12/6/1858, original emphasis). A sum of f600 was eventually granted by the Governor of Curaçao to Saba, though intentionally vague, "to be employ'd in acts of charity" (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT:11/3/1862). This response created a humiliating position for Beaks, as he was forced to choose between dealing with an acute affront to his class consciousness with the state of his house, or providing it to others in the island who would benefit from it at a subsistence level. The sum, however, was first forwarded to the Governor of St. Eustatius, who remorselessly kept it for himself instead, as he claimed that he had no instructions to send it to Saba (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT:14/5/1862). Beaks reiterated his request to use the funds for his house repairs, "that if it is not in Your Excellencys power, to grant to me, the aid that I so much require to support myself + family with; and to repair my house, that Your Excellency will as early as practicable, submit my grievous situation to His Excellency, The Minister of the Colonies... to obtain, an annual allowance for me, and be the means, of preventing myself, + family, from experiencing in future, actual want etc. etc." (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT:13/11/1862, original emphasis). The money was eventually obtained by Beaks and put towards his house renovations.

The term *estate* in the Saban documentary record describes a house, its associated land, and the material possessions of the household, and appears most often in context among sales of the aforementioned following the death of the head of a household. The estates of free African descent Sabans did not appear to be large, as any lands that are mentioned were referred to as "spots", and houses were not explicitly mentioned in most entries which implicitly reflects their low value. Thatch houses constructed on these spots of land would also have carried little in terms of monetary value compared to a "traditional" Saban house. The relatively low values of estates among free Sabans of African descent prior to emancipation may have led the heirs of estates to settle them to them amongst themselves rather than having to incur court and secretarial fees for bringing the issue before the Vendue Master or the Delegated Bench of Justice, which would explain their scarcity in the documentary record.

Visitors to the island since Labat in 1701 have remarked upon the island's cleanliness and the efforts that homeowners put towards maintaining and beautifying their house (Labat 1724:342;

Teenstra 1977:367, 377; Kruythoff 1939:102). The earliest accounts of land valuation are found in the Vendue Book 1780-1825. The value of lands offered for auction in this record and the 1820-1870 sales book range from plots so small that they are often only termed “a spot of land”, selling for 3 pieces of eight, to 200 pieces of eight for land “in the mountain”, to 400 pieces of eight for the whole of “Break Hart Hill”. Unfortunately, lands were not surveyed to provide any indication of their area, and their locations are not always documented. Rather, they were described relative to their location to other known areas, such as “joining Thomas Darsey” or “in Flat Point”, or to a physical feature such as “by the coconut trees”. Out of a total of 69 sales of land which did not include a house or cistern, 58 were valued below 100 pieces of eight, and 49 were priced below 50 pieces of eight. The Sales Book 1820-1870, unfortunately, rarely lists the cost paid for goods, including land transactions. However, one entry in particular is quite detailed. On 25 September, 1835, 17 x 9 fathoms (506.79m square) composing “a small spot of land” was sold for 12 pieces of eight, lying “at the foot of the hill to the left hand side going to the gap, bounded as follows: to the south with Thomas Dinzey, to the North West, adjoining the land of Miss Pleasant Hassell, to the East or foot adjoining the common road” (SVB:25/9/1835). This would have been a property located in the periphery of The Bottom, situated at the southwest of the settlement, at the foot of Paris Hill, on the west side of The Gap, which is the gut dividing Paris Hill from Fort Hill. This provides some insight relative to the size of lands referred to as a “spot”.

Thomas Dinzey was the largest landowner in Saba by the late eighteenth century, and upon his death in the 1820's, a partial probate inventory of his estate included 16 separate tracts of land across the island, the four-hectare sugar plantation in The Bottom, and 52 enslaved Africans (SBRM 4/1/1831), making him both the largest owner of both lands and enslaved Africans likely to have ever lived on Saba. His lands encompassed half of The Bottom, most of the land around Paris Hill and Great Hill, and all of the Tent, the Ladder, Cow Pasture, Middle Island, the Bush except for a few pockets that were sold as “spots of land” (SBRM:27/1/1827). Together these lands occupy approximately 200 hectares (the majority too steep or rocky for sugar cultivation), or about 14% of the island's surface area. This inventory of his estate was valued at 9025.0.0 pieces of eight (SBRM:271/1827). Unfortunately, his house and other possessions were not tallied in the document. In terms of Saba's upper classes throughout the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, Dinzey can be considered the known extreme. The largest breadth and value of material goods listed in Saban probate inventories was that of Peter Mardenborough, which included 7 plots of land totaling pcs. 551, 10 enslaved Africans at pcs. 1,930, one cow at pcs. 50, household furniture valued at pcs. 102, a “house and place” at pcs 400, and a half share in a canoe at pcs. 2.6. (DNAr 1.05.13.01 #542:5/20/1785).

However, when brought into a regional social context, Dinzey's and Mardenborough's class are considerably more modest.

Johannes de Graaf was a former governor along with a wealthy plantation owner on St. Eustatius. Following his death in 1808, his estate was inventoried and appraised by British authorities occupying the island at the time, which included his plantations, industrial buildings, lands, enslaved Africans, and household materials, valued at 246,382 pcs eight. He owned 33 tracts of land, many of which included houses and cisterns. In addition, he owned seven sugar plantations (Concordia, Benners, Berg & Heuvel, Vreeders Oort, Calabash Tree, Bredal, Solomon's Temple, and Fair Play), complete with all relevant infrastructure for processing sugar. The plantations and all other lands, including houses and cisterns, were valued at approximately 180,000 pcs eight. Scattered across the plantations were 134 enslaved Africans consisting of 50 men, 41 women with 8 children, 19 boys, and 16 girls. He also owned 60 enslaved Africans "about the town", nine "watchmen in different places", 18 tradesmen including five carpenters, five masons, two coopers, four shoemakers, one tailor, and one barber, and 15 house servants, thirteen of which were women and girls. Together these enslaved Africans were valued at 59,875 pcs eight. A supplementary inventory of de Graaf's estate is held at the National Archives in Curaçao (AN 298), and lists additional land holdings: a spot of land in Lower Town; two spots of land around the Anglican Church in The Bottom, one spot of land near the trail to St. John's; and "a spot of land called Round Hill". The addendum states that he also owned one dozen enslaved Africans that worked as his personal agents on other islands: three men on St. Thomas, a woman on Trinidad, two men on St. Bartholomew, and three men whose location was abroad but unknown. Three men were also listed for Saba. They were probably agents, but may have been formerly engaged on de Graaf's plantation(s) on the island.

Dinzey's holdings are significantly smaller in area and value than de Graaf's. This is also clearly evident in the probate inventory of de Graaf's sundry items in his house are discussed in the following section on material culture, though unfortunately no such inventory is available for Dinzey. Regardless, it is clear that Dinzey's class must be considered in both a local and regional context, as while he represented the highest class household on Saba, his landholdings and material goods are far more comparable to a small plantation owner or a successful merchant in contemporary St. Eustatius.

Houses on Saba were not always wholly owned by one individual or married couple. While little is known about the nuances of house ownership prior to 1780, there are many instances in the nineteenth century where an individual or group could own half of a house, or even as little as ten per cent (SNB:4/12/1857). A similar circumstance existed for cisterns. In the Vendue Book 1780-1825, there are three instances of "land, house, and cistern", two of "house and land", and one of "land" sold for half ownership. In every case, these are priced between 16 to 80 pieces of eight, which, as

previously discussed, fall among the lower tiers of house and land values on Saba even when their sale price is doubled to represent the approximate price for the whole.

Cistern ownership could also be used as a form of social leveraging within Saba's internal economy. Not every household owned a cistern as their construction was relatively expensive; some were owned in shares with other households or individuals, while others had no access at all and relied instead upon well water or from water caught on rooftops and stored in water jars. At Middle Island, for example, the population reached up to 75 residents in 1865, but the village harboured only five cisterns, two of which were built side-by-side and owned by the inhabitants of House #2. Water consumption models based upon average monthly rainfall, cistern size, and catchment areas, combined a series of water consumption volumes per person per day, determined that the cisterns at Middle Island were incapable of supplying even minimal water requirements for the entire village in 1865, necessitating many inhabitants to obtain water through other means (Espersen 2013:21-22). Those who did not own or have shares in a cistern, especially those living in thatch houses, would instead have to obtain their water from the small well at the village, or at Well's Bay. Otherwise they would have had to obtain water through Middle Island's internal economy, creating the potential for powered relationships between those with access to water through cisterns, and those without, especially in times of drought. This situation was not unique to Middle Island, and would have occurred across the whole island.

Frans Brugman, an architectural historian, conducted an architectural survey of houses in The Bottom, Windwardside, Hell's Gate, and St. John's to uncover elements that could constitute a unique "Saban tradition" of domestic architecture. Brugman (1995:59-60) defined the "Saban house" as follows:

It is only one storey in height and of timber-framed construction on a stone plinth. The exterior walls are covered with rectangular wooden shingles which are painted white. The sash-windows are three panes wide and two times two panes high, and are fitted with shutters. Also the doors have stormshutters. The shutters are generally painted green and white... The roofs – generally painted red – have a right angle proportion with a rise of 3, a run of 4 and a pitch of 5; with its nominal angle of 37 degrees... The oldest type here is the hipped roof; in addition the gabled roof is frequently found...

Saban wooden houses were typically rectangular, and commonly constructed with mortise-and-tenon joints (Brugman 1995:27, 30). This allows the house to bend along the joints against lateral forces, granting them excellent resistance to hurricanes (Brugman 1995:30). Mortise and tenon construction was also used in ship construction, which is notable given that Sabans constructed ships up to 60 tons on the island itself, and was also home to many sea captains. This method of construction also allowed a house to be easily dismantled and moved piecemeal to another location if necessary, which occurred

when Palmetto Point was evacuated in 1934. One of the former village's houses was relocated to Hell's Gate, and inhabited by Pearl Zagers, who was born and raised in Palmetto Point (Brugman 1995:67; Pearl Zagers, personal communication 2008). The layout of her house is depicted in Figure 13 below. Roofs were shingled with either cedar or walaba wood. Tongue and groove flooring is present in some houses, but this would not have occurred prior to 1855 (Brugman 1995:27). House 1 at Middle Island evidently had earlier flooring with gaps between the floorboards, since excavations within the house foundations recovered many small and thin objects such as coins, marbles, fish scales, and glass beads. Brugman's survey noted that no Saban houses were constructed with brick except for chimneys and hearths. Domestic masonry construction materials were commonly limited to locally modified andesite cobbles that were shaped either into what are known on Saba as "face stones"; a cobble wherein on face is modified to be flat, and aligned to the structure's exterior. These were bonded with locally produced mortar to construct cisterns, village walls, and house foundations. In other instances, local andesite cobbles are fully modified into rectangular blocks to construct house foundations, such as House 1 at Middle Island.

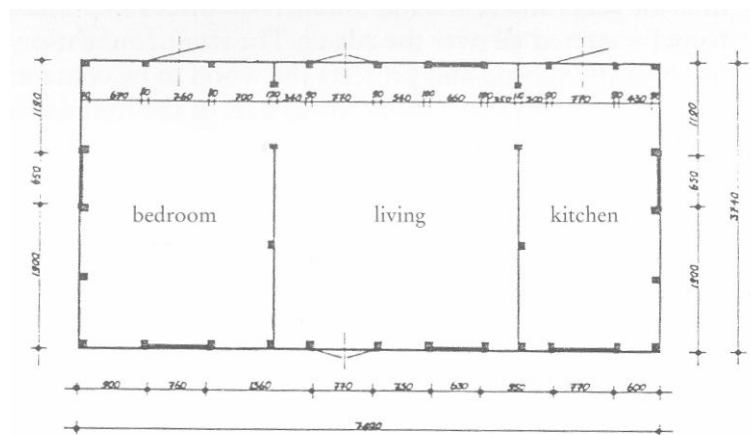


Figure 108: Layout of Pearl Zagers' house in Hell's Gate relocated from Palmetto Point (Brugman 1995:66). External measurements in millimeters.

Saban houses are typically rectangular, but, as Brugman observed, Sea Captains' houses somewhat larger and more elaborately decorated (Brugman 1995:30). The smallest houses included in Brugman's survey were divided into three rooms, consisting of one bedroom, a dining room with a kitchen, and a living room, "better developed than the simple ordinary kunuku houses of the Leeward Islands, which usually consist of only two areas" (Brugman 1995:30). Larger cottages were partitioned so as to include two additional rooms (Brugman 1995:31). The symmetry typical of Saban houses,

Brugman mused, “could encompass hidden traditional reasons by shipwrights to do such above the minimum demands for functionality” (Brugman 1995:31).

The smallest house surveyed by Brugman measured 769cm x 374cm, for an area of 28.76m². However, none of these houses had dry stone (no mortar used) foundations. This is because his study did not include the extant house foundations in the historic peripheral villages on Saba, such as Cow Pasture, Middle Island, and Palmetto Point, none of which were inhabited beyond the 1950’s, and any pre-existing dry stone foundations in The Bottom, Windwardside, St. John’s, and Hell’s Gate would have been since reconstructed as either cut stone and mortar or cement foundations. As seen in Chapter 6, the aforementioned house is very close to the average house dimensions and area of all house foundations at Palmetto Point. However, there are seven houses with smaller areas, with five houses at about 25m² or less; the smallest at Palmetto Point was just 520cm x 3560cm for an area of 18.60m². All houses at the site were set upon dry stone foundations (no mortar used) except for House 5, which not coincidentally had a cut stone block and mortar foundation and happened to be the largest at 810cm x 540cm; an area of 43.99m². The few extant house foundations at Middle Island consist of two cut stone and mortar foundations for Houses 1 and 2. House 1 measured approximately 440cm x 600cm, or 26.40m². House 2, the largest at Middle Island, measures 588cm x 512cm, for an area of 30.10m², slightly above the size of Brugman’s smallest surveyed house. Houses 4 and 5 are small, square dry stone foundations, just 16.59m² and 12.73m² area. However, these small houses are not limited to Middle Island and Palmetto Point. An abandoned, small, two room house can be found between the Crispeen Track and The Bottom, which measures just 340cm x 450cm. This house was not surveyed by Brugman, and it would have been more akin to those that were located upon the smaller foundations at Palmetto Point and Middle Island, and the house displayed in Figure 111 from The Gap, an area of The Bottom.

The abundance of dry stone foundations at Palmetto Point was not seen to the same degree in The Bottom, Windwardside, St. John’s, and Hell’s Gate. None were noted in Brugman’s survey of these villages. While these foundations likely existed to a certain degree in these villages while Palmetto Point was settled, to date few historical photos from the nineteenth century known to the author show dry stone foundations in The Bottom, Windwardside, or St. John’s; most are cut stone and mortar. An undated photograph from The Bottom shows a dry stone foundation, home to free Sabans of African descent. Excavations of Structure 2 at SB 037 by SABARC from May-June 2014 revealed a well cobbled dry stone foundation of an early colonial house which did not survive the hurricane of 1772. Constructing a dry stone foundation rather than a cut stone and mortar foundation is both less labour intensive and a cheaper option. In addition, the dry stone foundations Palmetto Point and Middle Island are mostly equivalent or less in area to Brugman’s smallest surveyed house

size of “traditional houses” on Saba, with the exceptions of Houses 4 and 9 at Palmetto Point, which are 43.74m² and 37.60m² respectively. It is notable that a proliferation of dry stone foundations is found among a village whose residents and their descendants are considered to be socially “backwards” or low class by their Saban contemporaries. There is a tangible relationship between class and house foundations, if at least by the nineteenth century.



Figure 109: Undated photograph from The Bottom. Courtesy of Will Johnson.

Brugman’s observation about the complete absence of brick masonry in traditional Saban domestic architecture is important, because all known sugar boiling houses on Saba, SB 001, SB 004, and SB 007, incorporate bricks in their construction, either Dutch Ijssel bricks, or red bricks, presumably English. In addition, the only known concave red ceramic roof tile found on Saba was recovered from Level 8 in Unit 2 in the boiling house at SB 001, and upon the surface of the same site near Structure 4H. This demonstrates with near certainty that SB 001 was constructed to non-local specifications and owned by non-Sabans. SB 004 is harder to correlate with Brugman’s observation since it very likely did not survive into the eighteenth century, let alone past 1665, and a “Saban style” for architecture may not have been culturally standardized by that point.

Housing and domestic architecture is clearly a strong vector on Saba for projecting class throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In particular, those houses identified that do not fit the “Saba style” as outlined by Brugman can be indicative of both class and potentially race. Ceramic

roof tiles were only found at SB 001, owned last by Simon Doncker of St. Eustatius, and brick was used as a construction material on larger houses found only at SB 037 and probably SB 007. Smaller, two room houses were not surveyed by Brugman but were found throughout Saba during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Enslaved African houses were similarly not considered by Brugman.

“The House”, class, and Saban culture

The primacy of the house as a defining element of one’s class in pre-emancipation Saba created a semantic and ideological divide among residents with regards to domestic structures that did not fit the “Saban style” as defined by Brugman. This at least includes enslaved African wattle and dry stone domestic structures such as Structures C, D, E, and H at Spring Bay Flat (SB 007), Structure A (potentially) at Spring Bay (SB 001), and Structures 5 and 6 at Flat Point (SB 001); the wattle huts inhabited by free people of African descent at Middle Island (SB 026), which includes House 2; and the dry stone animal shelters such as SB 039 and SB 022 which are identical to enslaved African domestic structures found at Spring Bay Flat and Flat Point, respectively. This ideological divide is visible on the 1861 Saba census, which in addition to the population, also recorded the “number of houses, including Thatch ones, in which three persons, are also located” (NArC AN NAC 4 Gouverneur 103 RT). The Saban definition of what constitutes a “house” did not necessarily extend to domestic structures constructed of thatch, so this had to be clearly stated upon the census. On Saba, thatch houses refer to those built of woven sticks (wattle) or with boards and nails, but with always with roof of palm fronds. A modern replica of a wattle house was constructed by the St. Eustatius Center for Archaeological Research on that island in 2013, shown in the figure below.



Figure 110: Reconstructed wattle house, built on St. Eustatius by SECAR in 2013. Courtesy of SECAR staff.



Figure 111: Thatch roof house in The Gap (section of The Bottom), circa late 19th – early 20th century.

Photo courtesy of Will Johnson.

A rough scale of the house from The Gap is possible from the woman standing flush to its entrance. The house length is approximately 2.75 times her height. If she is anywhere between a height of 160cm to 200cm, then the house measures between 440cm to 550cm long. The house is clearly rectangular, therefore even if the width constitutes 75% of the length, the area falls between 14.52m² and 22.68m². In any case, despite the variances, this thatch house is significantly smaller than the smallest “traditional house” recorded by Brugman.

Direct archaeological evidence of thatch houses from survey and excavations were found with House #3 at Middle Island and Structure C at Spring Bay Flat. Both houses featured an interior cobbled stone floor, however, they differed in that the stones of the former were broad and flat, while that of the latter were smaller and rounded. The cobbled floors on both also extended out into a relatively square entranceway. Two postholes were also found along the southernmost (back) wall of Structure C approximately 50cm apart, each about 12cm in diameter. As discussed in Chapter 6, the broad, flat terraces downslope of House 2 and 3 at Middle Island would have also harboured thatch houses, since the 1865 census recorded 19 houses at the village, and these modified regions of the site represent the only other practical areas for habitation.

Thatch houses were located throughout villages of pre-emancipation Saba, but probably limited mostly to the peripheries of The Bottom and Windwardside. Will Johnson (personal communication 2013, 2015) recounts that “there was an area below the Chinese restaurant in

Windwardside and below Eric and Janice Johnson's house which was known as "The Alley". There were about eight black families there (Maxwell and Rose mostly). One of them an old bachelor... (was) Joe Maxwell, lived in a semi thatch house with a dirt floor which through sweeping was hard as cement. The walls were pasted with photos of Jesus and other pages from Life Magazine and the few Magazines which came to the island. This was in the nineteen fifties and I am sure that some survived in other parts of the island up and until the Second World War. Helen Peterson (aged at the 91 time) was just telling me recently that her grandfather the well-known Henry Hassell Johnson was living in a thatch house on Booby Hill before he moved to Statia as a boy and became a very successful businessman there." Thatch houses evidently were not the exclusive domain of African descent Sabans. Their association with class is evident given their consistently small sizes, smaller than all "traditional houses" surveyed by Brugman, and Beaks' clarification on house definitions on the 1861 census.

Material culture in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Saba

Compared to housing, material culture in general provides more subtle vectors for projecting class, race, and gender in pre-emancipation Saba. Since class is a process, it follows that the capacity for material culture to express class will change through time as well. By understanding the social organization of certain periods, it will be possible to identify assemblages and individual artifacts that existed in a dialectic with class, race, and gender. It must be reiterated, however, that while class is a process, gender and race are imposed upon individuals within the context of a given society. In the context of colonial Saba, gendered assemblages are visible as products of and spaces and activities specifically ascribed to either women or men, in a dialectic with differential access to power. Unlike class, gender, in certain contexts, may be reflected within a singular artifact due to rigid, externally-imposed divisions of labour and activities based upon gender that cannot be transcended without a radical shift in the given culture's ideology. Identifying gendered labour, activities, and their associated spatial contexts, therefore, can by extension engender their associated material assemblages. Gender norms, however, also operate in dialectic with race. Therefore, what is considered a gendered activity among white Sabans, such as Saba lace manufacture, may not have been so among Sabans of African descent.

The house and home ownership has been established as the primary means for projecting class on Saba. Saban material culture builds upon the use of the house as a class vector, as it appears to be employed primarily as a means to project class centered upon material enhancements to the interior of the house and household members. Recall from Chapter 4 the observation by Father Fast in 1857 on Saban material culture: "the craving for luxury in furniture, but especially in clothing, is great. It is therefore only for this that their money seems to be disposable" (*Nomina Geographica Neerlandica*

1885:213; <https://thesabaislander.com/2016/06/>, last accessed 11 July 2016). This provides clear, even hierarchical context when interpreting early to mid-nineteenth century Saban material culture and its dialectic with race, class, and gender. However, this observation is probably limited to the majority population of white Sabans together with certain free African descent residents, who together had access to credit or at least some form of disposable income.

The material culture database for this research was drawn from archaeological excavations, probate inventories, and sales records. The Vendue Books for 1780-1825 and 1815-1875 deal primarily with sales in bulk, consisting mostly of goods listed in probate inventories, several instances of shipwreck salvage, and one instance of a travelling salesman who sold tools and tailoring goods. The probate inventories provide an important source of information relative to the island's material culture, especially those items that either are not commonly preserved or deposited in the archaeological record, such as furniture, clothing, and gold. The document lists the quantities of each item or group of items, their sale price, the vendor or previous owner, the purchaser, and the transaction's date. Figure 112 lists the total instances of commonly auctioned items, whether single or in bulk, in which there are at least three recorded sales.

There appears to be some regular purchasing patterns within the Vendue Books prior to 1863 relative to gender. Overall, most purchases were made by men, presumably the heads of households. The exceptions on large purchases appear to be widows and unmarried women with their own household. Items quantities small enough to permit some inference, such as beacon stones, were bought exclusively by men, while there was no item below that quantity which was purchased only by women. Even those items that were associated with women's activities, such as tailoring, were mostly purchased by men.

In 1826, a travelling merchant by the name of Robert Ferrier stopped through Saba sold a wide variety of tailoring goods, clothing, tools such as knives and drills, and miscellaneous goods such as books and umbrellas. From the 152 recorded sales by this merchant, the goods sold consisted mainly of thread, patterned cloth, and muslin, but from this total, just 17 were sales to women. Among these women, one was known to be of African descent (Mary Ann Johnson), and two were probably such (Miss Bey and Susan Hassell). The last, Ann Horton, was probably white, and likely either unmarried or widowed. Therefore, based upon the purchases by gender within the Vendue Books, married male heads of households among white Saban families, and probably married African descent families as well, generally assumed control of finances and irregular purchases. Racially, most purchasers during estate auctions, with few exceptions, were white Sabans. However, regarding the estate of Sarah Gumbs, a free African descent woman, all identifiable purchasers were African descent, such as Daniel Woods, Pleasant Hassell, and Charles Hassell (SVB 1816-1876:14/11/1853). The only other purchaser,

H. (Henry) Hassell, was one of several with the same name during this time and thus cannot be identified as a particular individual. Otherwise purchases by African descent Sabans during auctions of white Sabans' estates were rare; Pleasant Hassell bought an enslaved African named Phetita in 1825 from the estate of Rebecca Simmons, and Charles Hassell bought four milk mugs and flower pots from the liquidated estate of Arthur Gozales (SVB 1816-1876:4/2/1860). Enslaved Africans were not wholly barred from participating in auctions, at least by the mid nineteenth century, nor did they actively participate either. There is only one recorded instance an enslaved African as a purchaser (SVB 1816-1876:29/10/1847), by the name of Manerva, who bought two blue china cups for f0.38.

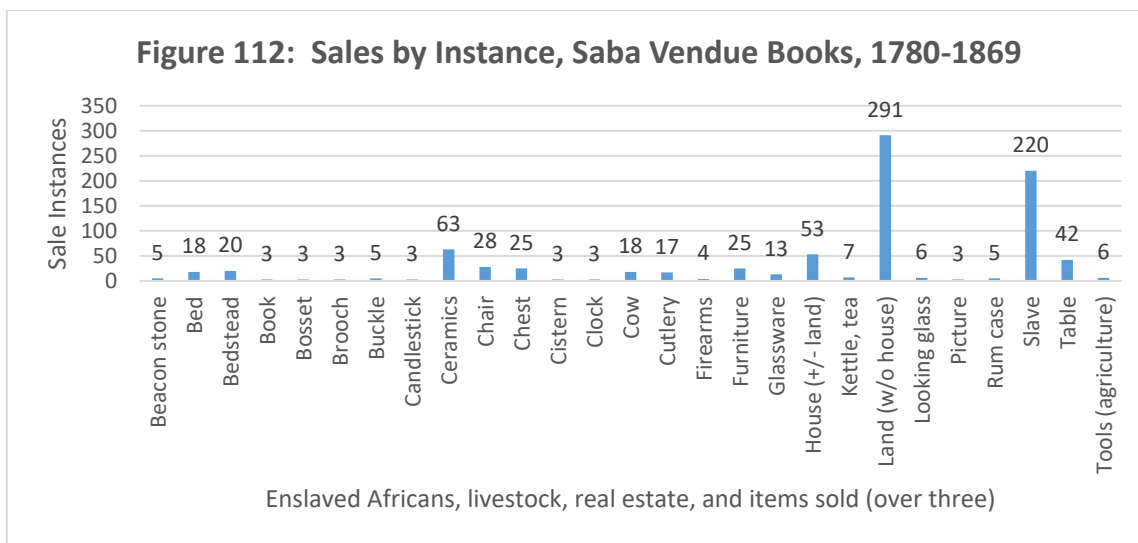


Table 7 on the following page lists the low, high, and average price of individually purchased goods in the Vendue Book 1780-1825. The prices are listed in pieces of eight, with bits and stivers converted to decimal.

Item	Count	Low	High	Avg
Barrell (water)	1	0.125	0.125	0.125
Beacon stone	5	3.375	5.500	4.775
Bed & bedstead	11	6.000	40.000	27.000
Bedsack	1	0.500	0.500	0.500
Book	1	0.500	0.500	0.500
Bookcase	1	6.750	6.750	6.750
Bosset	2	6.000	6.000	6.000
Broom	1	0.675	0.675	0.675
Buckle (knee)	2	1.375	1.550	1.456
Buckle (shoe)	1	5.625	5.625	5.625
Button (gold, pair)	1	5.000	5.000	5.000
Candle stick	4	0.125	0.550	0.418
Chair	16	0.500	11.000	4.459
Chest	8	1.000	9.000	2.818
Clock	1	4.000	4.000	4.000
Cow	7	40.000	60.000	49.600
Cupboard	1	0.500	6.000	3.250
Desk	4	2.250	30.000	17.062
Flour (barrell)	14	3.125	7.250	5.342
Frying pan	1	0.375	0.375	0.375
Glass (wine)	4	1.125	2.020	1.572
Gun	4	3.500	6.625	5.060
Gun (Pepper box, old, silver)	1	1.500	1.500	1.500
Hatchet	1	4.375	4.375	4.375
House	22	33.000	600.000	311.000
Kettle (tea)	3	0.875	3.125	2.166
Kettle (wash)	2	1.500	7.250	7.250
Land	78	3.000	400.000	51.000
Large bible	1	0.500	0.500	0.500
Musket	1	3.000	0.000	0.000
Pig	1	3.250	3.250	3.250
Rum (cask)	1	25.000	0.000	0.000
Schooner	1	999.000	999.000	999.000
Shoes, pair, with knee buckles	1	5.125	5.125	5.125
Slave Boy	16	50.000	276.000	172.625
Slave Girl	15	66.000	352.000	181.066
Slave Man	32	30.000	483.000	225.500
Slave Woman	32	6.000	400.000	201.156
Table	21	0.375	22.000	6.529
Tobacco (cask)	1	7.687	7.687	7.687

A wide variety of goods were sold in the Vendue Books, ranging from everyday household items such as a broom and chairs, to items beyond the expense of many which included large tracts of

land and a whole schooner. Unfortunately, it cannot be determined whether the items listed per estate are remainders after benefactors received their inheritances, or if they represent the entirety of an estate. Therefore, only partial inferences can be made concerning each estate owner and the associated items. From this list, a house could be furnished with a simple table, four chairs, banana leaf bedding (no cost), ceramics and other basic household items for less than 14 pieces of eight. Ceramics are listed on a separately on Table 27 in the Appendix, as they were often sold in lots consisting of a variety of vessel types.

Cows are evidently expensive when compared to other livestock such as pigs, and shareholding cattle was a common practice on Saba at least by the early nineteenth century (1.05.13.901 #540.1:3/5/1820). Therefore, a low-income household could be expected to own chickens, a pig, or goats, and perhaps shares in cow. Outright ownership of cattle, especially of a pair capable of reproducing, would have served at least as a supplemental source of income. It is therefore unsurprising that some residents took to breeding and exporting cattle in the early nineteenth century. This continued into the twentieth century, and by 1951, of the 79 Sabans engaged in agriculture, 42 of them owned "mixed" farms composed of several plots of land scattered about the regions of The Bottom, Windwardside, and Hell's Gate, and owned one to two cows each (Keur & Keur 1960:75).

The range in value between certain furniture articles, such as chairs, tables, and beds with bedsteads, demonstrate that these were employed as a means to project class. The three most expensive tables, priced at 11.5.0, 18.0.0, and 22.0.0 pieces of eight, were all made from mahogany. This was followed by a round tea table for 12.0.0, a mahogany table for 11.5.0, and finally a small mahogany table for 8.2.0. The only other wood type mentioned in the list, a square maple table, sold for 4.0.0. A broken mahogany table sold for 3.0.0, more valuable still than two unspecified dining tables and three deal tables, which refers to softwood such as pine or fir. Mahogany was a valuable furniture wood across colonial Europe, and this clearly extended to Sabans, which continues into the present day. The wood is very resistant to decay, which also provides utilitarian value on Saba given conditions at higher elevations on the island in Windwardside and Booby Hill which are highly conducive to the growth of moulds and fungi, especially upon dark surfaces.

Bed and bedstead ownership is indicative of class, both during the colonial and early post-colonial periods. Those estates that owned them were also auctioning other items associated with higher class such as items made from lignum vitae and mahogany, high-priced houses, silver cutlery, and groups of enslaved Africans. Out of all 20 bedstead sales, most prices ranged between 25 and 93 pcs of eight; the two outliers priced at 6 pcs of eight probably represent those in need of repair. The majority of Sabans during this time, rather, would have slept on beds of straw or banana leaves. This

practice continued on the island up to the mid-twentieth century (Will Johnson, personal communication 2013; Lorna Simmons, personal communication 2014).

Prices of enslaved Africans declined gradually upon Saba as the nineteenth century progressed. However, higher prices could be fetched by selling to other islands which occurred on occasion. The prices set for individuals differed primarily by age and gender, but also by skills.

Cutlery was often auctioned in lots in the Vendue Books, and appeared with enough frequency and variance in price to indicate that it was also tied to class. Silver cutlery is notably more expensive than the others listed, which were probably pewter; in one instance, seven silver table spoons sold for 2 pieces of eight each, while eight non-silver spoons went for about 4 stivers per piece.

ID1	ID2	ID3	QUANTITY	Pcs. 8	BITTS	STIVERS	DATE
Spoon	silver	table	8	33	0	0	?/4/1784
Spoon	silver	table	8	33	0	0	?/4/1784
Spoon	silver	table	7	14	0	0	3/11/1815
Spoon		table	8	0	5	3	17/4/1784
Spoon		small	6	0	1	2	17/4/1784
Spoon		tea	8	0	2	0	?/4/1784
Spoon			5	4	4	0	30/3/1824

The Saba Government Log Book 1816-1836 (DNAr 1.05.13.01 #319) provides some small insight into the range of goods imported into the island that were subject to import duties for the years 1820-1823. These detailed in Tables 60a, 60b, 60c, and 60d in the Appendix. The list consists primarily of bulk staples and construction materials. Flour is by far the most predominant staple food, numbering 340 barrels in total over the four years. The year 1820, however, lists 167 barrels imported, which consists of half the total imports for the period concerned. Several other goods, such as lumber, shingles, and salt fish, show quantities for 1820 that surpass all imports for the following three years. The large imports of food and construction materials for 1820 are a direct consequence of the structural and financial state of Saba and other surrounding islands following the damaging hurricane of 1819; it was noted by the Gezaghbeber at the time that following the hurricane, “all ground provisions saved will be shortly consumed” (DNAr 1.05.13.01 #319:30/9/1819). Therefore, the difference in staple food imports between 1820 and 1821 not only reveals the damage from the hurricane, but provides a general indication of the amount of food necessary to see the island through to the next round of crop harvests in 1820. The difference in sugar imports between 1820 and the following years also substantiates Teenstra’s statement that the sugar plantation in The Bottom produced only enough sugar to satisfy Saban demand; 13 barrels of sugar were imported in 1820, compared to just 12 between 1821 and 1823. In “average” years such as 1821-1823, some imports of staple foods were still required on Saba, though it can be safely assumed that a proportion of these

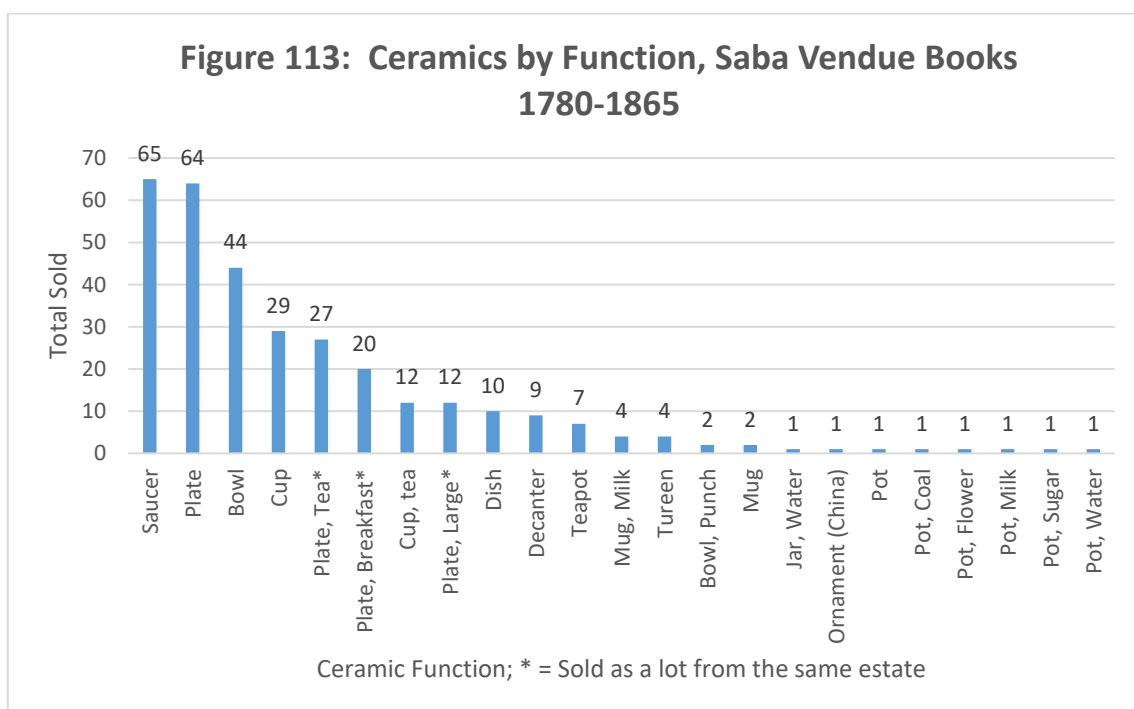
were for consumption by the enslaved Africans working on the Dinzey plantation. Viewed together, these import tables indirectly demonstrate the level of self-sufficiency of Saba through subsistence agriculture and small surpluses available through the island economy. It is apparent too that other material goods not included on the import duties list were simply not arriving to the island in sufficient quantities to merit specific taxation, thereby demonstrating the prevalence of subsistence-based livelihood across Saba.

Sales of ceramics on Saba were found only in the Vendue Books. The only other documented instance specifying ceramics occurs in the Government Log Book (DNAr 1.05.13.01 #319:31/12/1823), where a crate of “Qurins warr” is included in a list of goods which were subject to import duties for the year 1823. This would have been a crate of “Queen’s ware”, a common synonym for creamware, but originally distinguished by its particular rim style. Creamware was growing unfashionable in Europe and the colonies by this point in time (Miller 1991:1), and by consequence this would have been a shipment of cheap ceramics. In the Vendue Books, ceramics were often grouped under the term “household goods” or “household wares”, sold as a lot of miscellaneous wares including wine glasses and spoons, or simply “earthenware”. Out of 63 sale instances in the Vendue Books, all but two of them describe a form and function, such a plate, pot, bowl, tureen, or teacup. In most cases, they are simply referred to as such with no other descriptors. The other two refer to groups of ceramics, either as “crockery wares” or “earthenware”, and the latter is the only entry in the Vendue Books that refer directly to fabric. Just 13 entries referred to colour or style: this included three instances of white plates, and ten for “China”, “Chinea”, “Chinny” or “Chinese” ceramics. From the Chinese ceramics, three were referred to as “blue”. “Chinny” in this case was recorded in a Saban dialect and pronounced with a long “i”, and refers to “Chinese”. Hand painted and blue transfer print pearlware was commonly referred to in Staffordshire as “China glaze” ware after 1775 (Miller 1991:8), further compounding the problem of identification by records. While in two instances ceramics were referred to as “Chinese”, this does not necessarily imply that they were Chinese porcelain. These references date to 1782 for the “Chinny plates” and 1824 for the blue “Chinese” punch bowl, and can thus also describe blue hand painted ware, or in the case of the latter, also transfer print pearlware. Both were refined earthenwares originally manufactured as a popular imitation of Chinese porcelain. Blue transfer print ware with Chinese scenes were popular in Europe and the New World at this time, especially at during the late eighteenth century (Samford 1997). Whether pearlware or actual Chinese porcelain, the “Chinese” aspect of the wares in the Vendue Books were significant enough to merit their description as such. This also applies to “white” as a descriptor for otherwise undecorated plates. The 1782 sales of white plates probably refer to either creamware, white salt glaze stoneware, or undecorated or minimally decorated white-glaze tin enamel ware.

Ceramic prices were at times wildly inconsistent relative to their description. In one instance in 1817, a lot of 30 “China plates” were sold for just 1.4.0 p/8. They were purchased by Richard Dinzey, son of Thomas Dinzey, who can be assumed to have some sense of ceramic styles and values; each piece in this lot would have cost about 2.5 stivers each, a great bargain regardless if they were actual porcelain or transfer print refined earthenware. The price per plate is the lowest among all ceramic sales in pieces of eight in Saba’s documentary record. In the same year, two China plates sold at a separate estate auction for 1.6.0 p/8. The second extreme of this auction lies in the quantity of plates, which is the largest lot of plates sold at once. While thirty Chinese porcelain plates would have been valuable in monetary terms elsewhere in the Caribbean, the sheer quantity of thirty plates in most Saban households would have been impractical. Other price inconsistencies were noted. Both the “white plates” sold in 1782 and the “Chinny plates” sold the following year were sold for nearly the exact price: the bulk purchase of the former equaled pcs. 0.2.0 each, while the latter was pcs. 0.2.1 per plate. Their relative values in Europe, however, would have been substantially different at the time. The “Chinese” plates, whether actual Chinese porcelain or European blue hand painted/transfer print pearlware, would have sold for a considerably higher price than either white salt glaze stoneware or tin enamel ware, both of which were falling out of fashion, and creamware, which was both popular and affordable in most varieties (Miller 1991:1). These price inconsistencies, along with others listed in Table 27, demonstrate a gulf between those elements of ceramic form, fabric, and decoration that were valued by potters and connoisseurs versus those that were considered important or irrelevant to Sabans.

At the absentee-owned plantation at Spring Bay Flat, however, conscious choices about ceramic types that were provided to enslaved Africans by the plantation owner or manager are apparent. While late eighteenth to early nineteenth century transfer print wares were found in the boiling house assemblage and in surface contexts associated with the Big House, only one very small sherd of it was found between all of Structures C, D, E, and F. Transfer print wares were popular in Europe during the last twenty years of the eighteenth century, especially upon pearlwares, and this corresponded with a purchasing price rivalled only by Chinese and European porcelains (Miller 1991:8,15). Since Spring Bay Flat was foreign-owned through Statia by wealthy plantation owners during the time of its “Golden Rock” era, their tastes and values in ceramics most likely would have corresponded to ceramics currently in vogue among the upper classes of Europe rather than Saba-situated tastes, such as those that were apparent on Saba. Therefore, during this period enslaved Africans on the Spring Bay Flat plantation were correspondingly furnished with cheaper wares according to St. Eustatius’ market values rather than those upon Saba.

Ceramic decoration is an important signifier both for dating and differentiating between cultures in archaeology, and given their survivability in the archaeological record relative to more perishable artifacts, they have understandably become the object of disproportionately more studies. Their value to archaeologists in understanding past cultures is not necessarily a direct reflection of their social value to the cultures who used them, however. It is clear from these records that the form and functionality of ceramics were generally of more importance to most Sabans than decoration, despite the wide variety of ceramic décor types that are present in archaeological assemblages at sites contemporary to the Vendue Book 1780-1825, such as SB 007, SB 027, and SB 036. This demonstrates that utility generally took precedence over décor among non-upper class Sabans, and given the nonchalance of appraisers towards the descriptions of vessels offered for sale, ceramics were evidently not a primary means of projecting class among most residents in pre-emancipation Saba, relative to the more important material vectors such as one's house, lands, and furniture. The prevalence of utilitarian ceramics is further highlighted on Figure 113. Saucers, plates, bowls, and cups consist of 77% of the total sales, discounting the single lots of breakfast plates and tea plates.



A cause for the preference for utilitarian ceramics appears to be due to the lack of many equivalent households on Saba that would be considered among the highest echelons of the upper class in a regional context. When viewed from a broader perspective, the best Saban exemplar is Governor Thomas Dinzey. His position as governor aside, he had the regional class on par with a successful small plantation owner, but with the social networks both on Saba and abroad approaching that of the region's elite such as Johannes de Graaf.

In the absence of a material assemblage for Dinzey, the closest in the present is the SB 036 ceramic assemblage. This suggests an upper class assemblage in that the temporal changes in proportions of specific, more valuable types of ceramics per level between 1750 and 1850 were contemporaneous to shifts in pricing and popularity of the same types in Europe (Miller 1991:12-22). Therefore, the owners of the ceramic assemblages made efforts to keep up with the latest styles; this was not common on Saba, thereby for them, either explicitly or implicitly, it was a means of projecting class, making this household one of the exceptions on Saba relative to class projection via ceramic style and décor. This is particularly the case in the assemblage with creamware, transfer print wares, tin enamel ware, and Chinese porcelain. Transfer print wares are well represented throughout Levels 2-5 and are the most numerous throughout, notably at the expense of creamware, and especially by Levels 2 and 3. Chinese porcelain is also consistently represented in each of the levels, with the highest proportions (MNI 5) in Level 6, which dates to the mid eighteenth century. Viewed from a Saban perspective of ceramic descriptions, the higher-valued “Chinny wares”, consisting of either Chinese porcelain and transfer print earthenwares, consistently outnumbered the lesser valued “white” wares and the least valued other “earthenwares” in the SB 036 assemblage, marking it one of the few upper class assemblages on the island identifiable based on ceramics alone.

When viewed from a regional context, however, the SB 036 assemblage and the estate of Thomas Dinzey are once again considerably more modest in class. The probate inventory of Johannes de Graaf’s household and plantation items on St. Eustatius, tallied in 1808 by British officials, is quite large yet incomplete since not all of the plantations were inventoried (DNAr 1.05.08.01 #729). Within his house, he owned a large library of books including at least 9 in French, 20 in English, and 57 in Dutch, a “parcel of old printed books of little value”, and a “chest containing history and law books”. Various volumes of correspondences were also kept, including one set of missives from Portuguese and Dutch Jews. All of these books spanned subjects from geographies and travel accounts of regions such as China and Brazil, politics, law, medicine, dictionaries, American and European history, a dictionary of the arts and sciences in five volumes, chemistry, to Psalms and studies of the New Testament. In this sense could be figuratively styled as a “Renaissance Man”, either to himself, by others, or both. The contents of the library are listed in Table 26 in the Appendix. The probate inventory of other material goods spans 16 pages, with the majority consisting of furniture, household items of gold and silver, and Chinese porcelain. The entirety of the material inventory is listed in Tables 25 in the Appendix.

The ceramic assemblage consisted almost entirely of Chinese porcelain, and perhaps to some extent transfer print pearlwares. The assessor recorded 466 “China” vessels, which included at least seven large sets, with some services numbering over 100 vessels. Together the “China” assemblage

was valued at 300 pcs eight, but “not including a sett of blue China in daily use” (DNAr 1.05.08.01 #729:36). Colour was only noted in a few instances; there was a set of “blue China” that was noted for daily use, and 14 red dishes that were described as “red China”, which are probably varieties of the Famille Rose group (Madsen & White 2011:106-110). These are not red transfer print ware, as this variety was not produced until the early nineteenth century. The large majority of vessel forms among the porcelain included plates, which were either shallow, soup, or unspecified; and dishes, consisting of round, oval, tart, or unspecified. Other less common forms included two tureens, six sauce boats, a pickle stand, three butter pots, and a blue jar with a cover. Tin enamel ware was also found among the ceramics, all members of the remainder of a 56-piece set consisting of 40 shallow plates, three soup plates, seven small plates, five dishes, and one sauce boat. The descriptive inventory only lists five creamware vessels, which were recorded as “white Queen’s ware”. This would mark it as the whiter, later variety of creamware that became abundant by 1800. However, in the valuation later in the document, an entire “chest of Queen’s ware” was appraised at 10 pcs eight, which indicates that there were many more creamware vessels that were not recorded in the descriptive inventory. The only examples of earthenware are 10 French water jars, appraised together at 10 pcs eight. Table serving ware was accentuated by a variety of 9 silver waiters, 3 silver dishes, and 2 silver sugar dishes. Tea wares were notably scant in the inventory, and may indicate that Mr. and Mrs. de Graaf may not have been fond of the beverage. Nonetheless, these included one silver tea kettle, 3 small “plain” teapots, and one unspecified teapot. Cups in any form are also nearly absent on the inventory, which is probably observation or value bias on the part of the assessor. The cutlery was composed mostly of silver utensils. This included 96 silver spoons, ranging from table (47), soup (10), tea (17), dessert (25), and one olive spoon; 34 silver forks, 4 small silver forks, and 10 French forks; and 25 silver-handled knives. Other notable silver-forged items included two small silver cups, 18 silver candlesticks, one silver goglet (a tall decanter for serving water), 6 salt cellars, and 3 pairs of silver spectacles. One of the silver candles was described “with branches”, along separately with one pair of branches with “6 silver pieces to fix under the said branches”.

A small, separate assortment of household wares were marked as “daily use”, and this was clearly reiterated in the valuation. These items consisted of two milk pots (probably earthenware), one silver snuffer and stand, 16 spoons (soup, tea, and table) which were probably pewter, an oil and vinegar stand, one non-silver sugar tong, one non-silver tankard with cover, one unspecified tea pot, two black pepper boxes, four silver candlesticks, and a certain number of blue China vessels. All of the spoons designated for “daily use” are not silver, and likewise, silver table utensils are absent from the above list. Together, however, these daily use wares compose only a small percentage of the total number of similar and more valuable goods. These would have been reserved for special occasions or

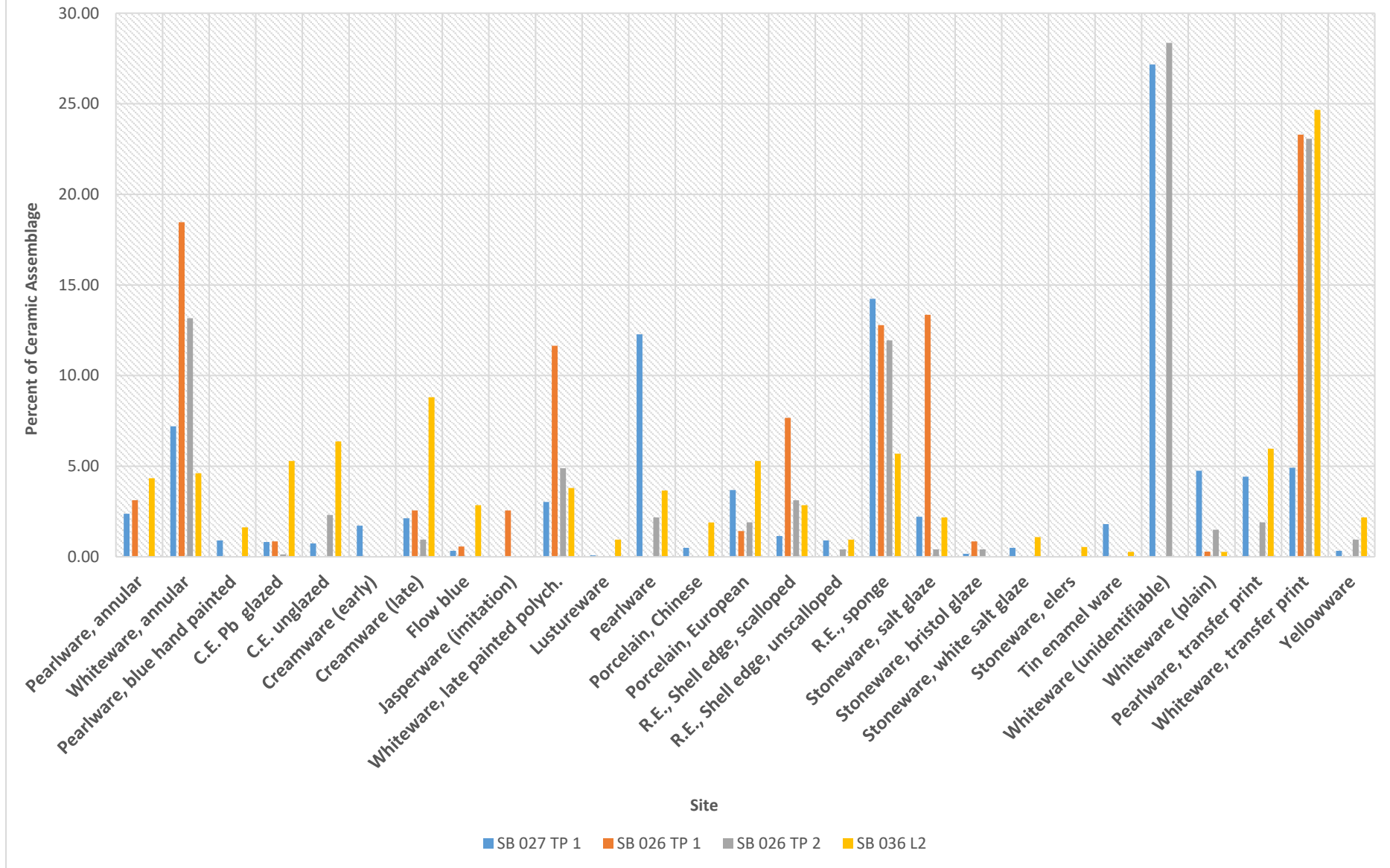
for hosting guests. This demonstrates that within the de Graaf household, ceramics, cutlery, serving ware, and table accessories such as candlesticks were an active vector for both class consciousness and class projection.

The estate of Thomas Dinzey is comparatively modest when placed within its contemporary regional perspective. However, within the context of Saba, Dinzey and his household still would have represented the uppermost of the island's upper class. While a variety of sites within a range of temporal and spatial contexts were included in this research, the best comparative assemblages collected range throughout the mid to late eighteenth century, and throughout the nineteenth century. In the absence of a comparative assemblage for Thomas Dinzey for the early to mid-nineteenth century, the Level 2 ceramic assemblage from SB 036 is large enough to serve as a suitable potential upper class example from the early to mid-nineteenth century. Unlike the relative nonchalance of the late eighteenth century Vendue Book appraisers and purchasers towards "white" ceramics versus "Chinny" wares, it is clear that the household that produced the SB 036 assemblage during this time did not share these sentiments. When compared to contemporary ceramic assemblages from Trash Pits 1 and 2 from Middle Island and Trash Pit 1 from Palmetto Point, some stylistic preferences are clearly evident. Ceramic types, based upon décor, are represented as percentile proportions on Figure 114.

As discussed in the previous chapter, ceramic types within the SB 036 assemblage represented an attempt by the household to keep up with the newest, in-vogue styles available between the last half of the eighteenth century to the mid nineteenth century. With respect to Level 2, with a MCD of 1827, a preference for late creamware, European and Chinese porcelains, early annular wares, transfer printed wares, and a small proportion of other expensive ceramics such as lusture ware and elers stoneware, is clearly evident over other available styles such as later (whiteware-based) annular ware, sponge ware, and late (post-Napoleonic wars) hand-painted polychrome whiteware (often termed "Gaudy Dutch"). These latter, cheaper types (Miller 1991:6), conversely, are seen in significantly larger proportions in Middle Island and Palmetto Point, and together comprise the majority within the respective assemblages. The large amount of indeterminate whiteware in SB 026 Trash Pit 2 and SB 027 Trash Pit 1 would be representative mostly of later whiteware varieties which feature large, undecorated areas such as late annular ware, sponge ware, "Gaudy Dutch", shell edge ware, transfer print ware limited to plate rims, and plain whiteware. It should be noted that the apparent high proportion of unglazed coarse earthenware at SB 036 level 2 compared to SB 027 and SB 026 is due to 40 sherds from a single hollowware vessel incised with a double "V" pattern along the shoulder. The proportion of late creamware in the SB 036 Level 2 assemblage, at about 8%, cannot be reliably dated relative to the rest of the assemblage since it was produced throughout the nineteenth century. They

may have retained a Saba-specific value as a “white” ceramic into the nineteenth century. However, given the propensity of the household to keep up with the latest styles beyond Saba, it probably represents the earliest ceramics in this level. An abundance of transfer print whiteware is evident throughout all four assemblages. By the second to third decades of the nineteenth century, the price of transfer print wares dropped by approximately one third to one half from 1796, and by 1854, the price was only about twice that of undecorated creamware, the cheapest variety produced by English potteries (Miller 1991:14). Therefore, it appears that transfer print wares, also regarded as “Chinny” wares, maintained a cross-class appeal during mid to late nineteenth century Saba, due to its affordability, (presumably) aesthetic appeal, and that they appear to have been commonly mistaken for Chinese porcelain. On its own accord, this ceramic variety on Saba is not a reliable indicator of class in any quantity without further context during this time. The abundance of sponge wares, late hand painted polychrome wares, and later varieties of annular ware in the Middle Island and Palmetto Point assemblages, though, together suggest lower class. These ceramics were among the cheapest variety available throughout the mid to late nineteenth century (Miller 1991:1). Correlating low proportions of these wares to high proportions of transfer whitewares and porcelains on mid to late nineteenth century Saban assemblages may be indicative of upper class based on a given ceramic assemblage alone, while high proportions of sponge wares, later annular wares, and late hand painted polychrome wares in an assemblage appears to suggest lower class.

Figure 114: Comparative Ceramic Assemblage by Decor - SB 026, SB 027, SB 036



The glass assemblages collected and analyzed from the sites excavated as part of this research are disproportionate in relative interpretive value. While excavations at SB 026 and SB 027, among other sites they are negligible. Trash Pit 1 at SB 027, associated with House 5, the largest at the village, contained a similar assemblage to both Trash Pits 1 and 2 at Middle Island; the latter associated with House 2, also the largest at Middle Island. Alcohol consumption at SB 036 during the nineteenth century, with an MNI of only six bottles, is significantly less for its contemporaries within Trash Pits 1 (MNI 91, plus a MNI of two demijans) and 2 (MNI 71 and a MNI of one demijean) at Middle Island and Palmetto Point (MNI 93, plus a MNI of one demijean). Known types of liquor between Middle Island and Palmetto Point included brandy, Bordeaux wine, gin, and cherry liqueur, specifically P.F. Heering, which was based in Denmark. The assemblage presumably included rum, although there were no seals or embossments on bottles which betrayed their contents as such. Alcohol consumption appears to have been public and normalized within some households, as exemplified by Trash Pit 2, which was a refuse pit for the House 2 inhabitants. Trash Pit 2 was prominently located in the front yard beside the family burial plot facing downslope towards the rest of Middle Island, with over 100 kilograms of glass within an open hollow in a terrace. The small numbers of eighteenth century glass bottles recovered from enslaved African domestic contexts at Spring Bay Flat and Flat Point are not necessarily indicative of alcohol consumption, as they were forbidden from consuming it, and may instead reflect re-use, such as for water storage.

Reuse of bottles for other purposes has been noted in Saba's oral history and the archaeological record. Eddie Hassell (personal communication 2008) has a collection of several nineteenth century Dutch gin stoneware bottles on display at his bar, "The Swinging Doors", and stated these bottles were often reused by residents of Palmetto Point as torches. The bottle would be filled with fish oil, stuffed with a rag or length of rope, and lit. These were most useful by residents during Sunday mornings, whereby they would leave Palmetto Point in the dark prior to sunrise in order to attend church in The Bottom. This account was repeated by Carl Zagers (personal communication 2008), a former resident of the village. The author has also noted a recurring artifact patterning between domestic areas and those beyond, whereby glass and stoneware bottles are the most common type of artifact found on trails and formerly cultivated lands. These bottles would have served (most often) as water bottles during their last use. This type of reuse was also noted at a cistern in Cow Pasture, where five intact early to mid twentieth century glass bottles were recovered from the bottom, evidently dropped into the cistern as they were being filled. The greenstone awl found within Structure 6 at Flat Point, among the shell debitage and seventeenth to mid eighteenth century ceramics, was notably pointed and sharp and was very likely reused by enslaved Africans who frequented the structure.

Medicine bottles also formed a small but significant proportion of the glass assemblages at Middle Island and Palmetto Point. An MNI of six medicine bottles were recovered from Trash Pit 1 at SB 026, together with another MNI of five from Trash Pit 2, while Trash Pit 1 at SB 027 yielded a MNI of five medicine bottles. At SB 036, conversely, the contemporaneous context (Level 2) only produced one medicine bottle. This may be reflective of the higher expenses for doctors' visits to Middle Island and especially Palmetto Point, and the villages' corresponding relative lack of income. Additionally, one of the mitigating factors in the evacuation of Palmetto Point was the lack of regular access to medical attention (Espersen 2009). Patent medicine, then, may have been regarded as a more affordable (albeit risky) alternative to a doctor. In a similar vein, high consumption rates of patent medicine among lower class relative to middle and upper class residents of mid to late nineteenth century U.S.A. has also been observed (Howson 2003).

Gendered glass assemblages are present across non-plantation contexts Saba when associated with remote animal pens and butchering sites. Tending to livestock in remote areas, together with butchering, were both male-oriented activities among white Sabans and Sabans of African descent (Will Johnson, personal communication 2012, 2013). "Pigpen parties" still occur at Hell's Gate in the present day, whereby Sabans, mostly men, congregate at a pigpen just south of the village to drink. As listed back on Figure 12, enslaved Africans listed as "field hands" owned by Sabans were also predominantly male, with only about 13% being women. Therefore, this appears to be a gendered activity regardless of race and legal status. Three such assemblages are known on Saba at SB 11 and SB 050, and Trash Pit 3 at SB 026.

The enslaved African assemblages recovered from excavations are derived from two general temporal contexts. The SB 001 assemblage from the surface, together with Structures 5/6 and 3/7, point to an occupation during the second half of the seventeenth century, probably with an interruption after 1665, and throughout the eighteenth century to 1772. The SB 007 assemblages were exposed to consistent surface debris intrusions from the Amerindian occupation period throughout the plantation's operation from the mid eighteenth century to around 1810. By extension, these intrusive materials would also have included colonial artifacts. While the different temporal contexts do not allow for direct material culture comparisons, qualitative comparisons can be drawn between enslaved African contexts with SB 007 with Levels 3 and 4 from SB 036.

One of the clearest absences within the ceramic record of Structures C, D, and E at SB 007 concerned transfer print wares. Across all contexts between the three structures, only one tiny sherd was recovered. Surface collections at SB 007 which concentrated around the boiling house only recovered six sherds of transfer print pearlware, and a large fragment of a black transfer print creamware teacup was found near the Big House. Conversely, transfer print pearlware was the most

common ceramic type from Level 3 (MCD 1798) in SB 036 with 166 sherds, and in Level 4 (MCD 1785) it was second only to creamware. In a similar vein across enslaved African contexts at SB 001, tin enamel wares and lead glazed coarse earthenwares together compose the most common ceramic types, with no recorded Chinese porcelain. The household from Levels 3 and 4 from SB 036 continues to show a marked preference and regular use of Chinese porcelain. Small quantities of this are also found among Structures C, D, and E at SB 007, which may suggest its use as a valued object rather than numerous vessels that saw regular use, although how they were obtained is speculative.

Since transfer print pearlware was among the most expensive ceramic type during the last two decades of the eighteenth century (Miller 1991:9, 13-14), its price was likely taken into consideration by the owner of Spring Bay Flat when purchasing ceramics to supply to enslaved Africans tied to the plantation. This conscious differentiation between the value of transfer print wares to creamware by the owner of the Spring Bay Flat plantation, meanwhile, contrasts to the equal value assigned to undecorated “white” ceramics versus “Chinny” wares by contemporary Sabans in the Vendue Books. This, however, would be expected since the plantation owners during this time were Abraham Heyliger, followed by Carel Seelig, both wealthy plantation owners on St. Eustatius during its “Golden Rock” era.

Afro-Caribbean ware has not been definitively identified on Saba, which is unfortunate as studies of household choices relative to use and ownership of these vessels would certainly demonstrate its utility on the island as a material vector for race, class, and possibly gender. While it was manufactured in nearby St. Kitts and St. Eustatius (Heath 1989; Gilmore 2005; Alhman, Schroedl, & McKeown 2009), they can be indistinguishable from imported and locally produced and imported undecorated Amerindian wares without excellent archaeological context. Even then, differences between tempers, clays, and manufacturing processes between Amerindian and Afro-Caribbean ceramics are not sufficiently understood on Saba to permit reliable identifications based solely upon visual analyses.

Beyond the aforementioned elements of Saban material culture, other tenable comparisons are difficult to draw. Gun use and possession by enslaved Africans on Saba was noted in the early nineteenth century, and supported by the remains of gunflints and a Bess-type gunlock from Structures C, D, and E at SB 007. This indicates that relations between owners and enslaved Africans, both on plantation and non-plantation contexts, were sufficiently civil that this was not perceived as a general threat to their wellbeing and the island’s security. Cowrie shells have only been recovered at SB 001 and SB 004, which were among Saba’s first sugar and indigo plantations. While the Atlantic Grey Cowrie, *Luria cinerea*, occurs in the eastern half of the Americas, other cowrie species are common in the Indian Ocean. Across East, Central, and Western Africa, they were highly prized and

used for ornamentation, ritual, and as trade currency (Rice & Katz-Hyman 2010). It is expected that most cowrie shells brought to Saba would have arrived during the 1650 to 1665 period, coinciding with an import of at least 300 enslaved Africans to Saba to work sugar and indigo plantations, and secondly during the 1700 to 1727 period, where a second wave of coffee, sugar, and indigo plantations required enslaved labour. The only recorded import of enslaved Africans after 1727 was nearly one hundred years later, in 1819. During Statia's boom as the "Golden Rock" from the 1760's to 1795, it may have been possible for enslaved Africans on Saba to obtain cowrie shells from St. Eustatius via trade. Nonetheless, these cowrie shells, whether the native variety or those brought from across the Atlantic, bear a close association with enslaved Africans.

Beads were recovered in small quantities from several sites. A clear glass bead was recovered from Structure C; the interior of House 1 at Middle Island produced five 21-faceted blue beads, commonly known as "Russian blue beads", and a 12mm diameter black bead which may be a rosary bead; SB 036 contained a faceted 7mm turquoise bead, a 4mm diameter shell bead, and an 11mm diameter black bead with green swirls; while SB 004 featured an eight-faceted purple French slave trade bead from Nantes. While there have been some correlations between blue coloured beads and (West) African worldviews (Sitne, Cabak, & Groover 1996) and status and cultural affiliation (DeCorse 1999), the bead assemblages between most of these sites are simply too small to permit any tenable inferences concerning their social significance. The French slave trade bead, though, is clearly associated with the trans-Atlantic slave trade. These beads were manufactured specifically for trade in France's coastal West African forts rather than in its colonies in the New World, and since it was found within the context of a sugar and indigo plantation, it probably arrived to the Caribbean as a possession of an enslaved African rather than a European.

Clothing and personal adornments are a pervasive and very visible vector for class. Unfortunately, very few remains of clothing and jewelry were recovered from excavations, and were scarcely mentioned in Saba's documentary record relative to other material things, with the notable exception of Robert Ferrier's sale in 1826. In the Vendue Book 1780-1825, a "pack of cloathes" for children was purchased from the estate of Peter Halley by John Halley for pcs. 13.5.0., together with a hat for five stivers, and a bluish "broad cloth coat" for pcs. 1.5.1 on 17 April 1784. Just five buckles were counted among the inventories in the Vendue Book 1780-1825, including two knee buckles, one shoe buckle, and two stock buckles. They varied little in cost, ranging from just pcs. 1.1.5 for a stock buckle, to 2.5.5. for a shoe buckle. While a small variety of buttons were recovered from excavations, their numbers are insufficient for a reliable assessment concerning their use as ideological vectors. A pair of gold buttons were part of the estate of Peter Collins, and were purchased for pcs. 2.5.0. on account of his son by Edward Beaks at interest. Their purchase in this fashion by Edward Beaks

indicates that they had some real or perceived symbolic value to Peter Collins' son. The only other indication of clothing recovered from excavations are small assemblages of copper-alloy hooks and eyes for fastening garments, which again are too small in number and distribution to be of much significance. Purchases from Robert Ferrier by Sabans reveal that tailoring was pervasive on Saba. Unfortunately, these pages of the Vendue Book 1816-1876 are in poor condition. The ink is very faded, making parts illegible, and the right sides of the pages crumbling away, thereby destroying purchase prices. Nonetheless, from 152 purchases, 26 were for thread, and 31 were for yards of textiles such as muslin, cotton (including madapollam), and patterned fabric. Other tailoring related items included a thimble and three sets of shirt buttons. Compared to raw materials, few finished garments were purchased; this included only six pairs of cotton shirts, one order of stockings (per dozen), and two pairs of shoes. The dearth of finished garment purchases relative to tailoring supplies demonstrates both that tailoring was widespread, and Sabans largely tailored their own clothing for personal use and local sale. Lt. Governor Edward Beaks, however, took advantage of the opportunity to purchase a silk dress, the only recorded sale for either silks or dresses. This was evidently an exercise in class projection on his part, and for the recipient of the dress, which was probably his wife.

While material culture provides a wide variety of potential vectors for projecting class, race, and gender, their efficacy for such is not universal and are naturally dependant on a dialectic with social, spatial, and temporal contexts. The documentary and archaeological records highlighted a variety of class-specific vectors, including household furniture, beds, boat ownership and shareholding, and ceramics. Gendered assemblages were visible though alcohol bottle trash pits, whether hidden or open, within or around agricultural sites. Race was somewhat discernable in the material record. The eight faceted French slave trade bead found at SB 004 indicates a probable association with enslaved Africans rather than Europeans during its last use, but unfortunately it was found on the surface near an eroding shoreline, rather than within a sealed context. The large, perforated cowrie shell also found at SB 004 was very likely associated with use by enslaved Africans, and though its species was not identified, since cowries do not naturally occur around Saba, it was probably brought along by an individual from West Africa. The olive shell with the shorn tip from SB 036 may also be associated with use by enslaved Africans, since no white Saban are known to have used shells as jewelry, but its context is unfavourable, and thus may also date to the pre-Columbian period. The context of the lockbox under an enslaved African house-yard at Spring Bay Flat associates it with race, and the assemblage contents provided a strong association with West African afterlife and transformative elements. The confirmation of the teeth as being from the same individual, and isotope analysis that shows a birth in West Africa, and subsequent (forced) migration to the Caribbean mirrors the journey of millions of other Africans during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and it can be

comfortably stated that this individual was, at some point in his or her lifetime, an enslaved African in the Caribbean.

Diet

There were noted differences and similarities between the faunal assemblages from the sites involved in this research. In particular, differences were noted between the relative proportions of fish, shell, and large mammal remains. A more detailed study of faunal remains from certain sites was proposed by the author as a bachelor's thesis topic to Philippa Jorissen, who subsequently spent a semester at the Florida Museum of Natural History under Irvy Quitmeyer to study the faunal remains from SB 026, SB 027, and SB 030, a section of Hell's Gate known as "Behind-the-Ridge". While SB 030 was not studied as part of this research, its use as a comparative assemblage for SB 026 and SB 027 is still valuable since they are contemporary sites, and its inhabitants were similar in terms of race and class to SB 027 (Will Johnson, personal communication 2014).

According to Jorissen's research (Jorissen 2015), there were notable differences between these three sites relative to consumption levels of mammals, fish, and shellfish. Figure 115 shows the biomass for identified taxa, identified fish by species, and identified large mammals by species (Jorissen 2015:49, 50, 52). Since no allometric data was available for *Neoloricata*, they were not included in the biomass although they clearly constituted a dietary element between the three sites (Jorissen 2015).

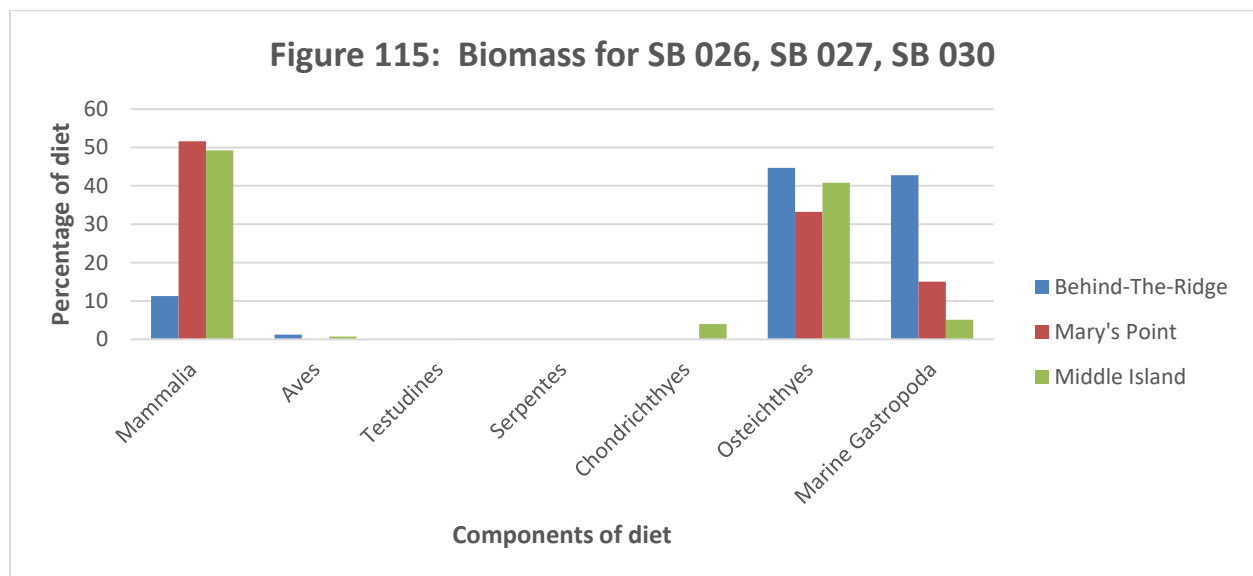


Figure 115: Biomass for Palmetto Point, Middle Island, and Behind-the-Ridge (Jorissen 2015:52).

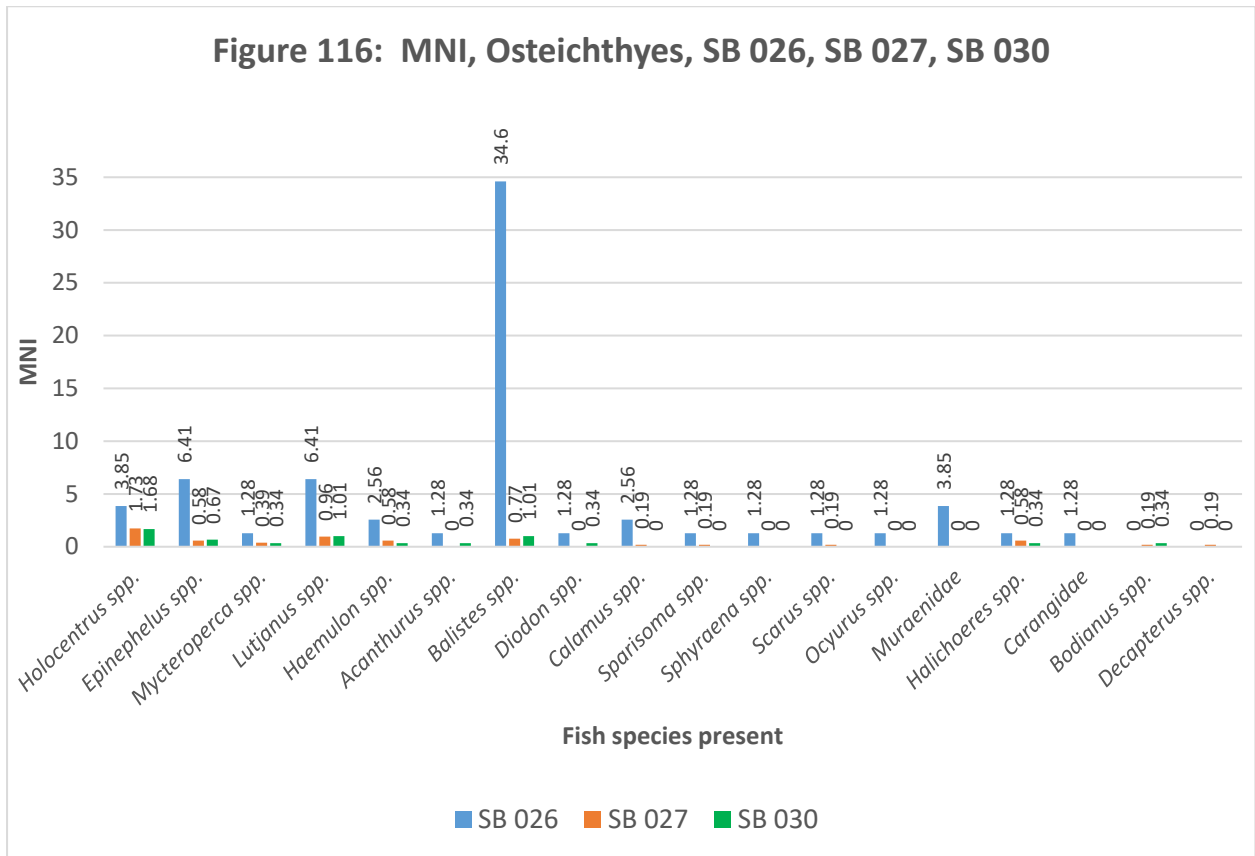


Figure 116: MNI for fish species, Palmetto Point, Middle Island, and Behind-the-Ridge (Jorissen 2015:49)

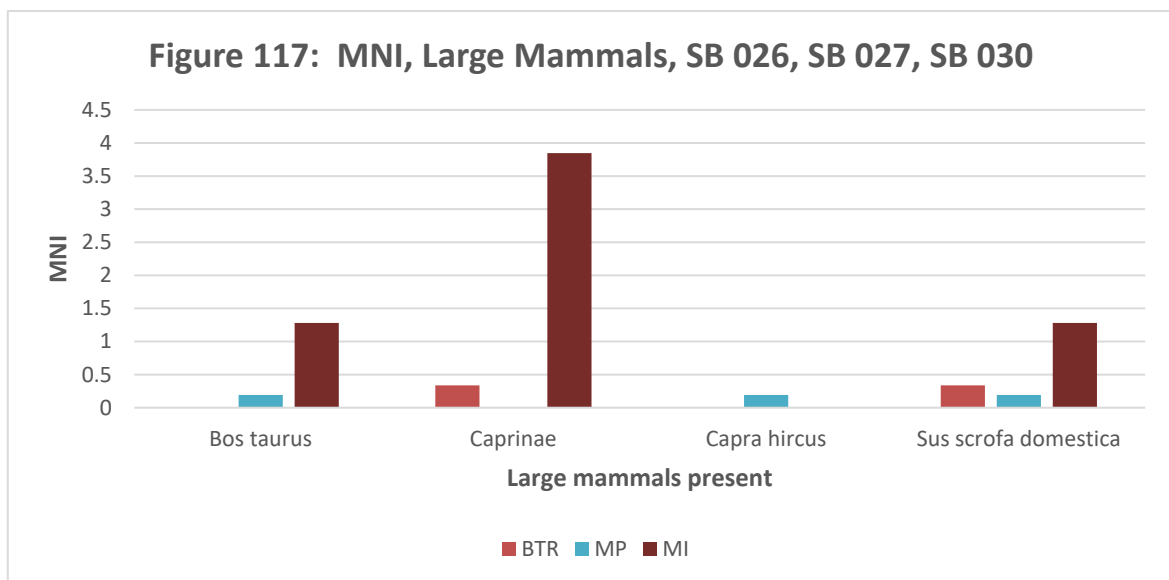


Figure 117: MNI for large mammals, Middle Island, Palmetto Point, and Behind-the-Ridge (Jorissen 2015:50)

The diets among residents of all three villages appear to rely upon large mammals, shellfish, and fish as primary food sources, but the relative proportions of each may have varied depending on

the availability of each at certain points in time. The higher proportions of large mammals at Middle Island, especially goats and pigs, likely reflects animal pen ownership by the inhabitants of Houses 1 and 2. As previously mentioned, cattle are known to have been kept at Middle Island, either in pens or within the western extreme of the village. The shellfish assemblages consisted mostly of intertidal shellfish such as *Neoloricata sp.* and to a smaller extent *Fissurella nodosa*, *Cittarium pica*, though Jorissen noted up to 15 species of shellfish at Palmetto Point (Jorissen 2015). No large shellfish such as *Strombus gigas* were found amongst the assemblages, or notably, in any colonial period assemblage from Saba. The abundance of *Neoloricata sp.* and *Fissurella nodosa* between the three sites is notable since although they continue to be consumed on many Caribbean islands, they are not considered as a food item to Sabans, and are only used as bait for fishing. *Cittarium pica*, known regionally as “whilks”, continue to be harvested and are commonly served in a stew. Unlike Middle Island and Palmetto Point, Behind-the-Ridge is located nearly one kilometer from the nearest access to the sea at Cove Bay, starting from an elevation of approximately 270m, therefore despite the difficulty in accessing marine resources, intertidal shellfish still constituted an important part of their diet. The very large amount of *Neoloricata* and *Fissurella nodosa*, together with smaller amounts of *Cittarium pica* and even the diminutive *Littorina sp.*, many less than 10mm diameter, within Structure 6 at SB 001 clearly attests to the importance of intertidal shellfish in the diet of the enslaved Africans living on the plantation. Shellfish assemblages at Structures C, D, and E at SB 007 are more proportionate to the remains of small fish, supplemented by some large mammals. Behind-the-Ridge, Palmetto Point, and Middle Island were small, peripheral villages that are no longer inhabited, and consumption of *Neoloricata* and *Fissurella nodosa* are likely indicative of lower class since no remains of *Fissurella nodosa* and *Neoloricata* were found among the faunal assemblage of SB 036 throughout its entire use period. The SB 036 assemblage, in fact, only produced two Frenchmen’s whelks and a few fragments of *Cittarium pica*. Intertidal shellfish evidently composed little to no part of the eighteenth and nineteenth century upper class diet in The Bottom. While fish did not compose a large proportion of the assemblage from SB 036, the remains themselves included a range of sizes, but notably, many were large. The lack of intertidal shellfish and the abundance of large fish and mammals stands in contrast to the remains recovered from all other sites concerned in this research, and suggests that this was not a lower class faunal assemblage. The ability to procure large fish implies that the household had continual access to a large, offshore boat, or that they had the social or financial means to regularly procure them. The class vectors implicated in the continual access to large fish further strengthens the assertion that this household was among Saba’s upper class.

The author frequently fishes from shore across Saba, and the species of fish caught in shallower waters reflects the fish remains present between the three sites. The common names of

fish species present among the Palmetto Point, Behind-the-Ridge, and Middle Island assemblages includes, in order of appearance on Figure 116: *Holocentrus*, which refers to the squirrelfish; *Epinephalus* is very likely a small grouper of the species *Epinephalus maculatus*, locally known as “butterfish” due to the texture of the cooked flesh and commonly caught from shore; *Mycteroperca* refers to several medium-sized groupers which frequent reefs around Saba; *Haemulon* refers to several species of grunts which are commonly found around Saba reefs; *Balistes* refer to triggerfish, probably mostly *Melichthys niger*, commonly known as the Black Durgon and known locally as “pigfish” due to the grunting sound it produces after being landed. This species is readily caught from shore on Saba where there is access to deeper water, which is evident based upon its abundance at Middle Island. *Acanthurus* refers to Surgeonfish; *Diodon* refers to species such as pufferfish, boxfish and porcupine fish; *Calamus* refers to fish commonly known as porgies; *Sparisoma* and *Scarus* refer to genus parrotfish; *Muraenidae* refers to moray eels; *Halichoeres* refer to the wrasse genus; *Carangidae* refers to the jack family; and finally *Decapterus* refers to the mackerel genus. Except for the mackerel present at Middle Island, all of these fish inhabit shallow coral reefs and can be caught from shore with hook and line. No deeper water reef fish such as yellowtail snapper (*Ocyurus chrysurus*) or red snapper, locally known as “redmen” (*Lutjanus campechanus*), were present in the assemblage, and also lacking are any of the large, open water species such as yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*), dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*), or wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*). Mackerel, together with Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*), are species that were commonly salted and sent to the Caribbean as “salt fish”. In light of the absence of other open water species, this mackerel is almost certainly salt fish. Jorissen (2015) identified at least three Moray Eels (*Muraenidae*) at Middle Island, and either shark, stingray, or skate at Palmetto Point. The author has observed through personal communication with Sabans that small sharks and stingrays are kept and eaten if caught while fishing. Moray eels and other eels are occasionally caught while fishing, though they are not intentionally targeted, and are also not typically considered as food by Sabans. Jorissen also noted the absence of *Sphyræna spp.* (barracuda) among the assemblages, which is probably due to their propensity to harbour ciguatoxins which are common among large, predatory reef fish around Saba, and especially the Saba bank (Jorissen 2015; Keur & Keur 1960). Fish consumption at SB 001 appears to be secondary in importance to intertidal shellfish based upon the sheer number of the latter. The fish remains are clearly all from small species and is consistent with diets from Palmetto Point, Middle Island, and Behind-the-Ridge. The presence of *Diodon* at Structure 6 in SB 001, Behind-the-Ridge and Middle Island, which probably consists of pufferfish or porcupine fish, is curious since nearly the entire flesh and organs of these fish are extremely poisonous, and it is highly doubtful that they were consumed. Their use outside of a food source at this point is only speculation, but it may relate to the use of the flesh or organs as a

poison or narcotic, or perhaps reuse of the caltrop-shaped bones as a defense against intrusions into or around one's household at night by ghosts, locally known as "jumbies". In an account by Will Johnson of "Big Jim", a free Saban of African descent in the early twentieth century, Johnson describes that "...night filled him with terror. He was afraid of jumbies, and to protect himself, broke up empty Bay Rum bottles and sprinkled the pieces on the floor. No one could convince him that a ghost's feet couldn't be cut" (Johnson 1994:50).

Together these assemblages of shallow reef fish and salt fish suggests that the inhabitants of Behind-the-Ridge, Middle Island, and Palmetto Point did not have the economic or social means to acquire larger, seaworthy boats capable of offshore fishing, and especially in the case of Middle Island, residents did not discriminate between fish in terms of suitability as food. Therefore, the diet consisting of these reef fish at SB 001 Structure 6, Middle Island, Palmetto Point, and Behind-the-Ridge is indicative of lower class. The faunal assemblage for SB 036, in contrast to Palmetto Point, Middle Island, and Behind-the-Ridge, features larger fish evidenced by vertebra and ribs, and large, stiff pectoral fins such as from *Thunnus sp.* and large *Caranx sp.*, though most were unidentifiable to the author. This indicates that the households that produced the assemblage had access either to larger, offshore fishing boats, or the means to acquire large fish either through trade or purchase, and consequently indicative of upper class.

Saba has been historically recognized for the quality of its horticultural produce, most notably for giant cabbages and banana trees, and the quality of its potatoes (Adams 1795; Anonymous 1778; Thompson 1814; Wentworth 1834). Other produce included tannia, "indian corn", cassava, and yams. Fruit trees are found across the island, but are mostly dominated by mango trees. These can be found scattered throughout the mid ranges of the island, but well The Bottom, and especially in the area known as Tara Ground where there is a large, pure stand of old growth mango trees. Mangoes do not grow as well in the upper ranges of the island, in particular the mid to upper western part of Saba, including Windwardside, Booby Hill, The Level, and the upper portion of Hell's Gate as they are exposed to the trade winds. Warmer air from the trades condenses as it is funneled upslope to the island's higher, cooler windward regions to produce or increase localized cloud cover, which readily fosters the growth of a black mould upon mango fruits and leaves in these areas (Lloyd Simmons, personal communication 2013; Harry Simmons, personal communication 2013). Fruit trees such as soursop, orange and tamarind were noted at Palmetto Point and Middle Island, while lemon trees can be found in the upper reaches around The Mountain. Indigenous fruit trees are found mostly in the mid-levels of Saba; soursop is common, and a small grove of *Eugenia ligustrina*, which grows small edible fruits, was found by the author just below English Quarter. Bananas were cultivated in the upper levels around and within the crater of The Mountain. These fruits, vegetables, and root crops

were cultivated and collected by subsistence agriculturalists across the island, and surpluses were shipped to St. Eustatius to be sold. Therefore, these surpluses would also have been available for local purchase by Saban plantations to partially fulfill the ration requirements for their enslaved Africans. In addition, the personal plots allotted to enslaved Africans for their own use very likely featured the same vegetables and root crops that were cultivated by free subsistence agriculturalists, therefore lending further similarity to the diets between them and low class Sabans.

Burial practices

There are distinct temporal and spatial differences in burial practices across Saba. Saban burials were either unmarked, or marked with either dry stone arrangements, burial vaults, cobbled stone and mortar rectangular markers (herein referred to as “mock vaults”), or grave stones (also including cement crosses). In a tradition now unique to the modern Caribbean, white Sabans and many free African descent Sabans were buried close to their own house in a plot designated as the family graveyard, with most aligned to face east. Middle-aged and elderly Sabans took a certain pride in having their own coffins constructed, and they were often kept underneath their beds until the time they were required (Crane 1971:62). Burials upon church property did not occur until at least the last half of the nineteenth century; the earliest datable marker in this graveyard dates to 1854, while the earliest example in the Catholic churchyard in Windwardside dates to 1876. In at least one instance, a plot of land was designated as a burial ground set apart from churches, whereupon land was sold to the government of Saba in English Quarter for use as a burial ground for the poor (SVB 1816-187:20/1/1873). Unfortunately, this plot could not be located during a pedestrian survey, and may have been destroyed during the construction of the Agriculture Department and other houses in the area.

Regardless of whether it existed or was never implemented, the necessity for such a graveyard indicates that a continuous number of those that were considered Windwardside’s poor by governing officials either did not wish to follow the Saban house-yard burial tradition, or more likely, simply lived on very small plots and did not have the available land around their house for such, and could not afford (or were not permitted) a burial in a churchyard. Such households almost certainly existed before this time, and would have been situated on “spot of land” in Saba’s documentary record.

Saba’s population had also been continuously growing throughout the nineteenth century. In 1816 there were 1,145 residents, climbing to 1,617 in 1847, 1,877 in 1861, and 2,072 by 1878. Therefore, the availability of land for households and agriculture would have been nearly halved from the beginning of the century, and larger household lots were probably subdivided for further house construction. Other households with burgeoning families did not make structural adjustments, and

small houses sleeping up to a dozen family members were not uncommon (Lorna Simmons, personal communication 2014; Will Johnson, personal communication 2013; Pearl Zagers, personal communication 2008). In households with small yards that had been continuously occupied by family members into previous centuries, there may simply have been little to no land remaining for house-yard burials, thereby necessitating the new graveyard for the poor. An increase in poverty, therefore, was commensurate throughout nineteenth century Saba with a population increase otherwise unseen in the island's colonial and post-colonial history.



Figure 118: Bobby Every poses with his coffin which he constructed himself. Courtesy of Will Johnson.

The earliest known grave markers employed on Saba are arrangements of unmodified, unmortared stones. This can consist either of a flat or heaped pile of stones, or an outline of stones around the interred individual. In some instances, this outline consists of carefully selected flattened stones, set into the ground widthwise in order to form a line, with a more rounded rock serving as the headstone. These can be found throughout the island in small numbers, and three have been noted in the graveyard near The Gap in The Bottom in an apparent mid twentieth century context.



Figure 119: Dry stone grave at House 2, Middle Island.



Figure 120: Dry stone outline grave at House 2, SB 026.

The earliest use of grave markers other than dry stone piles or outlines dates to 1825, within the Thomas Dinzey graveyard in The Bottom. This was probably located close or adjacent to his former homestead. The graveyard hosts the household of the former governor, his descendents and their wedded partners, and a probably a select few unrelated individuals. Thomas Dinzey's grave marker consists of a type that became prevalent among Saba's upper class during the nineteenth century. It was built of locally sourced grey andesite cobbled into rectangular blocks and stacked to at least to two levels in the form of a rectangle roughly proportional to the individual interred, and aligned to face east. The top would then be covered with a thin layer of mortar to make a smooth, plain surface. From herein this will be referred to as a "mock vault" grave marker. There are no other distinguishing features of Thomas Dinzey's marker, other than the initials "T.D. AG'D 72 Y" engraved in serif onto a block in the northwestern corner. Most grave markers constructed in this style were otherwise unmarked. A partial survey of grave markers across Saba from churchyard cemeteries, public cemeteries, and certain households across Saba produced a count of 50 graves in this basic style. Probable pre-emancipation variations to this type of grave include the addition of a tall obelisk as a headstone, which often housed a slate engraved with the details of the deceased in cursive writing. Few datable examples of the nineteen known markers remain due to the poor preservation of the slates, but one behind Lambee's Place in Windwardside dates to 1864, while a second in the Catholic cemetery in Windwardside dates to 1876. Another variant to this type includes the use of engraved

marble or slate slabs, usually in approximate dimensions to the surface area of the mock vault marker, which was laid on top of it. This occurred in four instances, and dated to 1854 (Elizabeth Winfield), 1862 (B.R.W. Horton), 1875 (Moses Leverock, former Lt. Governor), and 1898 (Joanna D. Leverock). Not coincidentally, these were all markers for known upper class Sabans. As previously mentioned, the marker for B.R.W. Horton also prominently featured the Mason symbol encircled by laurel leaves.



Figure 121: The grave of Thomas Dinzey, showing his carved initials. The corner of the grave of B.R.W. Horton can be seen to the left of Dinzey's grave.

The use of grave stones and mock vaults as markers became increasingly common by the late nineteenth century, and were the norm by the twentieth century. These can be found in both the churchyard cemeteries, and the Saban house burials. The use of grave stones and vaulted graves as markers, however, did not extend into Palmetto Point, Middle Island, or the plantations at Flat Point, Spring Bay, and Spring Bay Flat. The latter cannot be claimed with complete certainty, though, given the cliff's erosion which has reached right up to the Big House, to the point of consuming part of the north east part of the house foundation. No grave markers are known for Spring Bay. The one marker found at Flat Point is located about 20m northeast of the probable location of the Big House, and aligned to face north, shown in Figure 112 below. Given its context within SB 001, it represents the oldest known grave marker on Saba. At Spring Bay Flat up to fourteen suspected dry stone graves were identified, though no interred individuals were located after thin test trenches across four that

were considered the most likely. Therefore, it appears that enslaved Africans who lived and died on the Spring Bay Flat plantation were probably buried in unmarked graves, as burial at sea is unknown in Saba.



Figure 122: Probable dry stone grave marker, Flat Point plantation.

Palmetto Point and Middle Island both feature multiple burials associated with houses. At Palmetto Point, at least seven dry stone outline graves have been identified, and at Middle Island, 9 have also been found. Those at Middle Island are concentrated at House 2, and also to the west of Cistern 5. Middle Island also features dry stone graves, which are found also at House 2, with another pair just 3m south of House 1. Notably, though, those at House 1 are heaped piles of dry stone, which even include some cut stone that would have otherwise been used as part of a house foundation or a hearth. There have been a few posthumous modifications in the later twentieth century to the burials at Palmetto Point, whereby small cement crosses were erected on one associated with House 9, and a plaque associated with House 5. Curiously, a grey granite gravestone, rounded at the top, was found unused and deposited face-down on the surface at House 2 at Middle Island in two pieces. The largest was found between Graves 3 and 4, while the second, smaller fragment was located near Trash Pit 2. The gravestone was smooth and polished, but bore no etchings or other forms of modification. Considering the number of houses that were present on the 1861 and 1865 censuses at each village,

this does not correspond to the number of graves located. While a margin of error on the part of the survey can be attributed to the preponderance of stones scattered across the surface, making dry stone grave markers difficult to identify, this indicates that some burials may have been unmarked, or have since lost their marker.

The differences in markers across Middle Island itself is also noteworthy. There are three types of grave markers across the village. This consists of two heaped dry stones at House 1, the aforementioned dry stone outlines, and a third, which is somewhat a hybrid of the two. The third is composed of a single layer of stones set into the ground to form the rough outline of an elongated hexagonal coffin, with two stones to flare out at the shoulders, and a single stone protruding somewhat higher than the rest as a headstone. The last two both occur at House 2; three of them are the second variety, while six are from the third. Since the house had at least two different white families as tenants during the late nineteenth century, and probably more previously, this difference in marker style among the graves may be indicative of slight differences in burial practices between households. All the known tenants of House 1 during the nineteenth century were of African descent, and this is the only house with associated burials that are heaped dry stones. As of the 1865 census, there were 70 inhabitants across 19 houses. Since the village was also occupied between the late eighteenth century and the 1940's, the presence of just 17 grave markers represents only a fraction of the former residents who lived and died at Middle Island. In particular, the absence of grave markers upon the flat, terraced areas of Middle Island which would have supported wattle huts suggests that the traditional Saban grave markers were not consistently employed for burials if indeed individuals are interred there.

There are two known styles of interment on Saba. The first and presently universal method involves lining the bottom and sides of the grave pit with either modified or unmodified locally sources stones, in order to form a chamber for the individual's coffin. The top of this vault is then either covered with a broad, flat stone, or a series of elongated stones, and the rest of the pit is backfilled with soil. A detailed overview of the Saban underground vault tradition is provided by Haviser (2015), who notes that it appears to have direct roots in the burial practices of Wales. The second style, for which the only example is known from the Fort Bay Ridge site (SB 037), involves a shallow burial with no coffin in an unmodified pit.

A good example of the first style was noted in late April of 2015, when construction crews in The Quarter section of Windwardside accidentally penetrated a burial vault of an unknown grave. The author documented the burial, and noted some differences in style compared those excavated by Haviser (2015). The burial follows the Saba style noted by Haviser in that it consisted of a vault lined with andesite stones aligned inward with a flat face, either natural or cobbled. The vault measured

53cm high, 52cm wide, and approximately 210cm long. The vault stones were bonded with mud, and the individual in the grave was aligned to face east. A slight variance was noted in this grave's capstone, in that rather than a solid, flattened block of stone, it consists of a series of elongated andesite stones bonded with mortar, with flat faces aligned inwards towards the vault. Coffin nails lined the perimeter of the interred individual in a rectangular fashion. Aside from the coffin nails, the only other artifacts recovered were a second molar and two pairs of hook and eye clothing fasteners, one of which laid atop the posterior of a lumbar vertebra, indicating that it was from a front-fastening garment. The bottom of the vault is approximately 122cm (4ft) from the surface, and the grave is marked with a dry stone marker. The burial is difficult to date given the absence of contextual artifacts, but based upon the dry stone grave marker in Windwardside, it probably dates prior to the late nineteenth century.



Figure 123: Grave vault at the Windwardside parking lot in "The Quarter", facing east.



Figure 124: Dry stone outline grave marker atop the vault of the Windwardside parking lot grave. Note the closely-set series of eight stones running east to west. Faces west.

The second known interment style is derived from the Fort Bay Ridge site (SB 037). The remains were remarkably well preserved in stark contrast to all skeletal remains encountered by the author using the burial shaft vault tradition. It appears that decomposition increases rapidly since this technique produces preserves a large air pocket due to the cap stone(s) laid upon the top of the vault. The shallowness of the burial shaft, the lack of lining in the shaft, the absence of a coffin, grave marker, and grave goods, and its location quite some distance from house foundations all strongly suggest that this is an individual that was not accorded a traditional Saban burial, and by extension was not considered Saban. These characteristics alone strongly suggest that this individual was enslaved. The strontium isotope ratios show an origin in West Africa, and therefore this woman was a first-generation enslaved African.

The adoption of gravestones and mock vaults as markers represents a shift in cultural practices among Sabans, and served as a nascent class vector due to their expense. Grave stones and mock vaults require labour and materials which increase in cost relative to the size and style desired by interested parties, whereas dry stone markers, whether piles or outlines, can be made with no monetary investment. A tangible class divide is present at Middle Island, Palmetto Point, and among lower class residents of The Bottom, St. John's, and Windwardside through their continued use of dry stone grave markers rather than grave stones and mock vaults, which intensified as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries progressed as dry stone markers slowly fell out of favour. Class consciousness

relative to burial markers is evidenced by the unfinished, abandoned grave stone at House 2 in Middle Island, among the dry stone house yard burials.