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INDIAN INDENTURE IN THE DANISH WEST INDIES, 1863–1873

Lomarsh Roopnarine

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Lomarsh Roopnarine
Jackson State University
Jackson, USA

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This book is dedicated to the indentured Indians brought to St. Croix as well as to my two children Josha and Priya Roopnarine who spent their first years on the island.

"To a stranger a noticeable feature of the population of St. Croix is the cooly element…The men are mostly handsome and graceful while the women are exceedingly homely. They are shrewd and intelligent, acquire information easily, and some of them write beautifully in the characters and methods of their own country, and frequently communicate with and forward remittances to friends at home through the British consul at Basin".

Hynes. S. B.
Harper's New Monthly Magazine, January 1872, p. 202

Preface

The idea of writing a book on Denmark's solitary experiment with East Indian indenture on St. Croix from 1863 to 1873 emerged from a multitude of evolving interests. The first interest occurred in the late 1990s when I was conducting research for my doctoral dissertation on East Indian resistance and accommodation in the Caribbean at the Indian Record Office in the British Library, London. There, I came across some unusual information on Denmark's involvement with East Indian indenture on St. Croix. I was struck by what I found because I was unfamiliar with the fact that the British Government allowed the Danish planters on St. Croix to import East Indian indentured servants to substitute for the loss of slave labor. I was also struck by what I found because the literature on East Indian indenture in the Caribbean has not seriously addressed this labor experiment on St. Croix. In fact, most books on indenture in the Caribbean rarely mentioned East Indian indenture on St. Croix.

The second interest occurred when I accepted a faculty position in history at the University of the Virgin Islands on St. Croix in 2002. I was asked to teach United States Virgin Islands and Caribbean History, among other courses. Within my first year, I realized that even though East Indians were brought to St. Croix, the experience of these laborers were marginalized or relegated to footnotes in many major textbooks on the Caribbean region. The late Guyanese historian Isaac Dookhan gave only two pages of academic attention to East Indian Indenture on St. Croix in his widely used book, *A History of the Virgin Islands of the United States*. American political scientist William W. Boyer, in his book, *America's Virgin Islands: A History of Human Rights and Wrongs*, gave

even less attention to East Indian indenture on St. Croix. However, Indian researcher Kalyan Kumar Sircar should be recognized as the first person to write significantly and substantively on East Indian indenture on St. Croix. His article, "Emigration of Indian Indentured Labor to the Danish West Indian Island of St. Croix 1863–1868" remains one of few studies on East Indians on St. Croix. Nonetheless, Sircar was writing from Europe and therefore did not demonstrate a thorough understanding of the local realities of St. Croix. Two other historians wrote on East Indians on St. Croix. The first is Danish historian Aase Rothausen Nielsen; his master's thesis was *Immigration of arbejdskraft til St. Croix 1860–1878. En analyse of og vurdeing af immigrationen samt dens betydning for arbejdskraftens sammensaetning og vilkar* (Labor Immigration to St. Croix 1860–1878: An Analysis and Assessment of the Immigration and Its Importance to the Composition and Conditions of the Labor Force). Copenhagen, (1973). The other author is Danish historian Peter Hoxcer Jensen; his master's thesis was *Indforsel of friarbejdskraft til St. Croix 1849–1876, med saerligt henblik pa immigrations-og arbejdslovgivningen* (Importation of Free Labor to St. Croix, 1849–1876, with Special reference to the Immigration and Labor Legislation), Arhus, (1978). Jensen also addressed East Indian indenture on St. Croix in one chapter, "Importation of Foreign Labor,`" in his book, *From Serfdom to Fireburn and Strike: The History of Black Labor in the Danish West Indies 1848–1916,* (1998). These studies, however, examined the process of importing East Indians to St. Croix.

The third interest occurred in 2007 when I met Virgin Islands historian George Tyson. I expressed to him the academic marginalization of East Indian indenture on St. Croix and asked if he could address this issue in his future writings on the Virgin Islands. To my surprise, he told me that he had copy of a "Coolie Journal" and asked me if I would like to have a copy. Later, I realized that this was the only surviving copy (35 pages) on the characteristics of the East Indian indentured servants who were brought to St. Croix. I was fortunate also to receive a hard copy of an article in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (January 1872) from former English Professor Robin Sterns at the University of the Virgin Islands on Danish West Indian society that covered Indians. This was a rarity. I eventually used these and other sources to publish three articles: "The First and Only Crossing: Indian Indenture on Danish St. Croix 1863–1868" *South Asian Diaspora* Vol. 1. No. 2, 2009: 113–140; "Repatriation and Remittances of ex-Indian Indentured from Danish St. Croix, 1868–1873" *Scandinavian Journal of History* Vol. 35. No. 2. 2010: 247–267;

"A Comparative Analysis of two failed Indenture Experiences in Post-emancipation Caribbean: British Guiana (1838–1843) and Danish St. Croix (1863–1868)" *IberoAmericana Nordic Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies,* Institute of Latin American Studies, Stockholm University, Vol. 42. No. 1 & 2 (2012): 203–230.

The fourth interest occurred when I presented a paper at the conference on the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery and indenture conference in Suriname on June 6, 2013. On the program, there were topics on every island in the Caribbean that experimented with East Indian indenture except for St. Croix. However, the omission of the St. Croix experience with indenture did not go unnoticed. One of presenters on the panel that I had chaired addressed this omission. The presenter stated repeatedly that there is a need to put the St. Croix experiment in a book form and Lomarsh Roopnarine is the best person to do so. I took this remark rather seriously. The final interest occurred in March 2014 when I presented a paper on 150th anniversary of the arrival of East Indian indentured servants on St. Croix at the Landmarks Society of that island. I was shocked and stunned by the size of the audience as well as by the interest of many who wanted to find their indentured roots. I left St. Croix thinking that only a comprehensive book would solve this need.

As in most attempts at researching a specific topic like Indian indenture on Danish St. Croix, the author has received direct and indirect help. It is not possible to list all the names, but I will say a thank you to all of them. Special thanks go to the library staff at the University of the Virgin Islands and the Whim Museum on St. Croix as well as the participants who were willing to share information on Indian indenture on St. Croix either through a survey, interviews, or conversations. Jackson State University funded one of my presentations at Whim Museum, and the Director, Sonia Dow, at the aforementioned museum was kind enough to invite me to present a paper on Indian indenture on St. Croix. I benefitted greatly from the comments on my presentation. Special thanks go to Joshua Cotton from Jackson State University for helping with the technical aspects of this manuscript as well as to Olasee Davis from the Virgin Islands for providing me with information I needed for the location of the plantations. I would like to mention in appreciation that the Virgin Islands Humanities Council offered me a $5000 grant. Unfortunately, I never received the funds because the National Endowment for the Humanities in the USA suspended all funding to the Virgin Islands Humanities Council until further notice. Finally, the following articles, published in a number of world

journals on Indians in the Danish West Indies, now the United States Virgin Islands, used in this book but mostly rewritten, are acknowledged: (1) "Comparative Analysis of Two Failed Indenture Experiences in Post-Emancipation Caribbean: British Guiana (1838–1843) and Danish St. Croix (1863–1868)" *IberoAmericana Nordic Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, Institute of Latin American Studies, Stockholm University, Vol. 42. No. 1 & 2 (2012): 203–230; (2) "Repatriation and Remittances of ex-Indian Indentured from Danish St. Croix, 1868–1873" *Scandinavian Journal of History* Vol. 35. No. 2. 2010a: 247–267, http://www.tandfonline.com; (3) "The First and Only Crossing: Indian Indenture on Danish St. Croix 1863–1868" *South Asian Diaspora* Vol. 1. No. 2, 2009: 113–140, http://www.tandfonline.com

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Abstract For over three centuries, the economy of the Danish West Indies revolved around sugar and slaves, which made St. Croix, in particular, one of the richest colonies in the Caribbean. But after the abolition of the slave trade and slavery, the Danish West Indies slumped into economic depression. The planter class was nervous as to what would become of their plantations and their survival in the absence of slave labor. Like elsewhere in the British and French West Indies, the Danish West Indian planters chose to import foreign labor to meet labor demands and sustain plantation agriculture. The Danish Crown decided to help out in this process but did not have a sound plan. Nevertheless, some measures were put in place to experiment with Indian indentured labor, which began in 1863 in St. Croix.

This introductory chapter provides background information on the history and society of the Danish West Indies from the 1620s to 1878 to coincide with the period of Indian indenture in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Some general information will be on the overall Danish West Indies, but the main focus will be on St. Croix, to which East Indians were brought to labor on the estates/plantations. The purpose of this information is to provide a general knowledge of the Danish West Indies so that the indenture experiences of East Indians can be contextualized with other events sweeping through the islands at that time. This chapter provides a general background of East Indian indenture in the Caribbean, which has received enormous

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academic attention. Finally, the methodology, the aim, the purpose, and the focus of the book are explained in the second half of the chapter.

Historical and Social Context of Danish West Indies up to 1878: History and Society

The Danish West Indies is made up of three small islands (St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John) in the Northern Caribbean, 40 miles east of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. These islands are located in the Lesser Antilles in the Leeward island chain. The total area of all three islands is about 132 square miles. St. Croix is the largest, 20 miles long and seven miles wide, while St. Thomas is 13 miles long and three miles wide. St. John is nine miles long and five miles wide. St. Thomas is largely infertile and mountainous but has an excellent harbor. St. Croix is generally flat and the clay soil is more suitable for plantation agriculture. St. John is mainly forested.

The Spaniards claimed these islands in the early sixteenth century but ignored them because they were thought to be relatively dry, lacked precious metals, and were inhabited by fierce Caribs. By the 1600s, however, other Europeans—mostly privateers, pirates, and smugglers—used these islands as a base to launch attacks on the Spanish Caribbean and Spanish Latin America. The Danish West Indies remained a pirate base for a number of years and served as a depot (station) for European traders carrying goods (slaves included) from Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean. By the 1620s, St. Croix and St. John attracted attention from a few hundred British, French, and Dutch sugar planters. The development of sugar plantations proved futile, however, because of intercolonial European Caribbean warfare (see Figueredo 1978). After a series of failed colonization attempts by various European nationalities in the latter part of the seventeenth century, St. Thomas and St. John were under control of the Danish West India Company. Denmark eventually bought St. Croix from the French in 1733, placing all three islands in the ownership of the Danes. Unlike other European powers in the Caribbean, the Danes allowed all European nationalities to colonize the Virgin Islands. Actually, from 1773 to 1917, Danish nationality in the Danish West Indies was a minority population. The reason for this unusual colonial situation was that the Danes experienced high levels of deaths and therefore non-Danish nationals were encouraged to settle and colonize the Danish West Indies through various tax incentive schemes (Boyer 2012). The result was a multiplicity of European nationalities in the Danish West Indies: Dutch, French, Swedish, Danish, British, Portuguese, German, Norwegian and

Brazilian. English was the language of the government, while the Africans spoke a Dutch Creole called Negerhollands (see Highfield 2009).

The absence of native people and the failed immigration scheme with Europeans to provide the labor on the plantations caused the Danes and European nationalities to turn to Africa—like their European counterparts elsewhere in the Caribbean. Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an estimated 53,000–57,000 African slaves were brought to the Danish West Indies to work on the sugar plantations through the infamous African Slave Trade. No less than 30% of slaves perished on the Middle Passage. Conditions on the sugar plantations were unbearable. They were housed in subhuman dwellings and worked on the plantations from sunset to sundown with inadequate rations and medical care. Thousands died from overwork, malnutrition, disease, stress, and stern treatment. Charles Taylor (1888: 205) wrote that slaves were "liable at the slightest provocation to be whipped or tortured—sold away to Porto Rico—to lose their life or a leg for stealing, or to be broken on the wheel." Some Africans resisted slavery through flight and formed independent enclaves such as *Maroonberg* on the east end of St. Croix. Some slaves challenged their masters directly. In 1733, slaves revolted against their masters on St. John and held the island for six months after which they were finally defeated by European authorities. The revolutionaries were severely punished, including public executions. Finally, African slaves defeated their masters through a rebellion on St. Croix and gained freedom in 1848. Except for the Haitian Revolution of 1804, the Danish West Indies, particularly St. Croix, is the only other Caribbean island where slaves gained outright freedom through direct insurrection.

During slavery, Africans contributed immensely to the development and transformation of the Danish West Indies. They single-handedly, through back breaking labor, transformed these sleepy forested islands into large tracts of productive plantations/estates, making St. Croix in particular the most profitable island in the eighteenth century. Sugar made up more than 80% of the total value of goods exported from the Danish Caribbean to Denmark (see Westergaard 1917). The arrival of Africans also brought about a profound demographic and sociological change in the Danish West Indies. Blacks surpassed whites as the numerically dominant racial group but wielded no significant power in the plantation system. By 1835, 1892 whites and 19,876 slaves lived on St. Croix, 3520 whites and 5298 slaves lived on St. Thomas, and 344 whites and 1929 slaves lived on St. John. The racial imbalance created the social hierarchy of a slave society in the Virgin Islands, with whites, free coloreds,

free blacks, and enslaved blacks occupying the higher, middle, and lower classes, respectively (Roopnarine 2010b: 92–94).

There were some other noticeable patterns soon after emancipation. Firstly, the newly freed Africans continued their struggle for better living and working conditions since the residues of slavery were still around. Some Africans stayed on the plantations, while others left the plantations permanently. Meanwhile, the planters continued their stranglehold on labor by introducing and imposing a host of new regulations that effectively transferred post-emancipation labor relations into their hands. The Africans saw this as an attempt by the planters to bring them back into slavery (see Jarvis 1945). Tensions reached a boiling point, and in 1878, the working class Africans rebelled (Fireburn) against the powerful post-emancipation planter class and burned down a number of plantations and Frederiksted, one main town on St. Croix. Secondly, plantation/estate lands were parceled out into small holdings, although this occurred more in St. Thomas and St. John. On St. Croix, the plantations were either phased out completely like in the mostly dry west end of the island, or were centralized and supported with new technology. Either way, the pendulum of power never swung too far away from the planter class. The planters influenced the direction of labor through their representation in the Colonial Council, the local governing body in the Danish West Indies. Thirdly, the Danish West Indies, particularly St. Thomas, experienced a degree of urbanization as well as out-migration from the estates and from the islands. Sugar cane cultivation was eventually phased out on St. Thomas and St. John and received a death blow with the introduction of European beet sugar in the world market in the early 1880s. Danish West Indian sugar could no longer compete with the cheaper and more preferred beet sugar. Lastly, the general description of St. Croix soon after emancipation was one of continued tension between the working class and the planters, precipitated by the abolition of the African Slave Trade and then slavery. The consequence was a continuous economic decline of the Danish West Indies, although it was more noticeable on St. Thomas and St. John than on St. Croix. Generally speaking, Danish West Indian society revealed feudalistic features, with firm boundaries between the planter and the mainly black laboring class. The Danish West Indies was essentially a caste society with firm boundaries where individuals remained more or less to the stations of life they were born into until death. Central to this plantation system was the abuse of the laboring force that was intended to maximize profits and retain the status quo. Such was the legacy of the Danish West Indian colonialism in which the echoing words were power and profit.

Methodology and Challenges

The book is based on my research on Caribbean indentured experience over the past 20 years, particularly on labor migration and resistance. Specifically, I lived and worked on St. Croix from 2002 to 2012 and therefore was able to access sources from the Whim Museum and the University of the Virgin Islands. I also conducted research at the National Archives in Washington, DC, on files relating to the United States Virgin Islands. I also visited former plantation sites of indentured Indians on St. Croix. Although some statistics are provided, the book is based on qualitative analysis using archival and nontraditional sources such as oral tradition. One chapter is dedicated to views and voices of indenture from about five participants from various backgrounds on St. Croix. One major challenge, however, is how one recovers or reconstructs the indentured narrative and the memory of indentured people when Indians are no longer around—not even any traces of them, I tackle this challenge by using the archival and oral history approach. First, I am fortunate to have the original list of the passengers who arrived in 1863. From this list I can draw conclusions about their gender, caste, age, and so on. I theorize what and how indentured Indians might have thought and felt, and I compare the St. Croix indenture experiment with other experiments in the Caribbean at that time. I argue that this technique is useful in recovering the past since history is not merely a record of significant events of the past. The concerns and questions in this study are: (1) Why were Indians brought to St. Croix? (2) How were they recruited? (3) What were their experiences in the holding depot and on the sea voyage? (4) Where were they distributed on St. Croix? (5) How was their plantation experience? (6) Was their plantation experience different from other indentured servants in the Caribbean? (7) Why did indenture collapse on St. Croix but continue elsewhere in the Caribbean? Full answers to these concerns and questions might not be possible, but attempts will be made to analyze and answer most of them.

Background of Indian Indenture in the Caribbean

The story of Indian indenture in the Caribbean (except St. Croix) has received enormous academic attention in a multitude of publications. The purpose here is to provide a general overview. Readers interested in a more in-depth analysis are referred to my prior book, *Indo-Caribbean Indenture: Resistance and Accommodation* (2007). For about 80 years (1838–1917), the British, Danish, Dutch, and French governments brought about 500,000 indentured

Indians from India to the Caribbean (see below). The arrival of these individuals was in response to (1) a labor shortage brought about because of the gradual withdrawal of Africans from plantation labor following slave abolition in various time periods in the mid-nineteenth century; and (2) the unsatisfying results of indentured labor from Europe, Africa, Java, Portugal, Madeira, China, and within the Caribbean. Of the 500,000 indentured Indians brought to the Caribbean region, an estimated 175,000 returned to their homeland when their contracts expired, while another 50,000 of those persons remigrated to the Caribbean for the second and even the third time. The following charts show the number and percentage of Indians brought to the Caribbean. British Guiana and Trinidad received the bulk of the emigrants (Fig. 1.1).

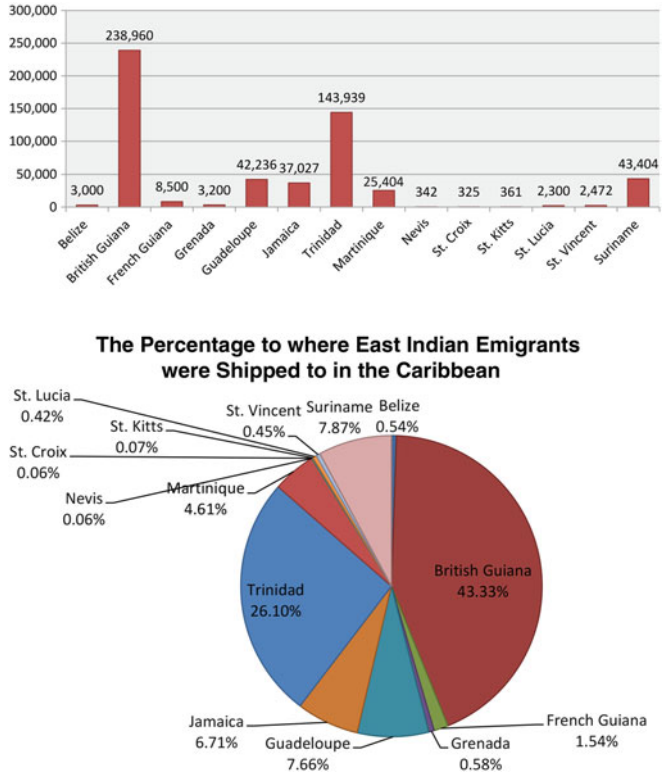

Fig. 1.1 Where East Indian emigrants were shipped to in the Caribbean (Roopnarine, Lomarsh, *Indo-Caribbean Indenture: Resistance and Accommodation*, Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2007, 7)

Organization of Indian Indenture

When Indian indenture began in British Guiana in 1838, there was never any formal organization of the system other than the involvement of private individuals and private companies. The reason for this private endeavor was that indenture was already privately practiced in a satisfactorily standard manner in Mauritius and other islands in the Indian Ocean, places which had also experienced slave emancipation and a subsequent labor shortage. From 1834 to 1837, at least 7000 Indians were shipped from Calcutta, India, to Mauritius to work as indentured laborers (British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter B.P.P) 1874: 2). This movement caught the attention of Caribbean planters who then negotiated with private firms for indentured laborers for their sugar plantations. The first shipload of 396 indentured Indians eventually arrived in British Guiana in 1838. These indentured Indians were severely abused by their plantation overlords. Ninety-nine of them died within the first two years of indenture (see Scoble 1840). The British Government subsequently suspended Indian indentured emigration to British Guiana. However, indenture resumed in 1845 but was suspended in 1848 because of financial difficulties. Indian indenture resumed in 1851 and continued until 1917, when it was uniformly abolished across the world (Roopnarine 2008: 208).

From 1854, the British government moved the private organization of indenture from a private practice to a state-controlled one. Indian indenture was organized and regulated by a three-way collaboration and interaction between the British Colonial Office, the Indian government, and respective Caribbean colonial governments (Look Lai 1993: 57). The purpose of the three-way collaboration was to prevent malpractice in the recruitment process, to avoid deaths on the sea voyage, to protect Indians from abuses in the Caribbean, and to discharge repatriation obligations. These obligations were often not met, and the main challenge was the powerful capitalist economy, which operated on material rather than human values. The administrators of the indenture system were merely interested in dividends and not in the general welfare or protection of those who came under their sway. Power and responsibility was distinctly disconnected (Roopnarine 2007: 33). Moreover, the Indian government was too weak to ensure a proper functioning of the indenture system because of its subordinate position within the colonial indenture system. To be sure, the Indian government was interested in protecting its citizens from exploitation and favored myriad legislation to achieve these goals. However, when pressured, the Indian government adopted a neutral

policy of overseeing the fair commercial transaction of Indian emigrants but was reluctant about getting mixed up in any bargains (see Cumpston 1956; Mangru 1987). The Indian government was too distant from the day-to-day experience of indentured Indians and placed instead the responsibilities on the Protectors of Immigrants to ensure that Indian rights were not violated. The problem, however, was that these individuals shared more interests with the planter class than with the individuals they were supposed to protect. Additionally, the appointed Protectors of Immigrants generally did not fully understand the languages and customs of Indian indentured laborers, even with the support of interpreters (B.P.P. 1874: 24).

The British Government's Reluctance to Allow Indian Indenture in Non-British Territories

Within the context of an unmanageable system, the British and the colonized Indian governments were reluctant to allow other European powers to recruit Indians to labor in foreign colonies. The governments were aware of defects in the indenture system but allowed the system to operate within the limits of British Caribbean colonies. Both governments preferred dealing with problems when they emerged instead of designing and developing a sound structural system of indentured labor. The reason for this approach is that indenture was perceived as a temporary labor force, a transition from slavery to free labor. Long-term policies were not prioritized and implemented because the Indian government was not sure whether Indians would be well protected outside of its own jurisdiction.

The Indian government's reluctance to permit Indians to labor in non-British colonies was noticed in 1851. In that year, the French government laid before the British government a proposal to recruit Indian laborers for La Reunion (Bourbon), an Indian Ocean island, but was rejected because of limited guarantees to protect Indian laborers. After some discussion with regard to the fair treatment of Indian laborers, the British and Indian governments agreed that indentured emigration should be legalized from India to La Reunion but not to the French West Indian Departments of Guadeloupe, Martinique, and French Guiana. The reasons for the objection were as follows: insufficient space for emigrants on the ships, inadequate provisions for surgeons on the ship, insufficient dietary resources and unsuitable clothing for the voyage, and the absence of British Protectors at French Ports in India and in the Caribbean colonies (B P.P. 1874: 29–32). The distance from India to the French West Indies was too far to guarantee protection of the laborers.

The French government, however, persisted and asked the British government to recruit Indian laborers in 1854, 1857, and 1858. The British government subsequently consented in the 1860 Convention and allowed the French to recruit Indian laborers, a policy that was finally ratified in 1862. The main reason for a change in policy was that the French were recruiting Africans, which the British feared would revive the African slave trade. Furthermore, the French government agreed to follow a series of rules and regulations designed to protect Indians in foreign colonies. Chief among them were that a British Agent and a British Consul should be stationed at the Ports in India and in the French Caribbean colonies. Finally, the British and Indian governments reserved the right to suspend and stop indentured emigration to French colonies if so needed at any time (B.P.P. 1874: 29–32). By 1860, various western European countries saw Indian indenture as the possible solution to replace the acute labor shortage in their former slave colonies. The general perception in the Caribbean was that Indians were reliable workers. Therefore, nothing was surprising about the Danish government's proposal in 1862 to the British government for permitting the indentured emigration of Indians to St. Croix. Nor was it a surprise that the Dutch government in 1873 brought the first shipload of indentured Indians to Suriname.

Plantation Experience

Indians were brought to the Caribbean on an indenture labour contract system that bound them essentially for five years on a sugar plantation with a fixed daily wage (about one shilling a day). At the end of the five years, indentured servants were given the option to re-indenture for another five years and qualify for industrial residence in the colonies as well as an entitlement to free repatriation. After 1873, indentured Indians were given the option to exchange their rights to a return passage back home for a parcel of land, normally about five acres. A majority of Indians accepted the third option and stayed in the Caribbean, mainly in Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad, after their contracts expired. Life during indenture was harsh. On arrival, Indians were placed in vacant slave quarters that can only be described as subhuman conditions, and they were also isolated from the rest of the population. Their labor contract was designed largely to benefit their employers. The worst aspect of their contracts was immobility and fixed wages coupled with a series of ordinances that governed the indentured servants' daily lives. The planters ensured that the indentured servants complied with the restrictive and one-sided terms of their contracts. Any deviation from this obligation resulted in hefty fines and punishment for the indentured. Arguably,

the early post-emancipation labor relations were based on retaining a cheap labor supply, pruning costs, and reaping as much as profit as possible. The planters certainly had the upper hand in this relationship.

In spite of disadvantages, indentured Indians continued to arrive in the Caribbean because of bad socioeconomic conditions at home and opportunities to work and save from indentured contracts. With the government's exchange passage for land policy, Indians had moved from being sojourners to settlers. By 1900, numerous small settlements emerged around the sugar plantation complex. Indians used their savings to buy vacant land and engage in sugar and rice cultivation. What emerged was a petty class of farmers and rural rice-planting elites. Their progress was also noticed in culture. They retained remarkable aspects of their culture during indenture, although their caste system broke down because of the inconsistencies of Western and nineteenth century India labor expectations. Achieved rather than ascribed characteristics determined how labor functioned in the Caribbean. Nevertheless, in colonies where Indians were a majority population, the retention of their culture was born out of direct resistance to Western culture and values as well as the steady influx of Indians to the indenture system.

The indentured Indian world was very busy. There were those who were indentured. There were those who were leaving the colonies. There were those who re-indentured for another five years. There were those who deserted the plantations. These multifaceted characteristics transformed indenture into a complex labor system. However, on the question of whether they had achieved any economic benefits from indenture, the answer is mixed. Of all indentured servants, an estimated 30% benefited in terms of acquiring land, savings, and an independent survival beyond the confines of the plantation. Another 40% did moderately well, while about 30% were victims of indenture. The latter group was worse off in the Caribbean than in India. Some became beggars in the Caribbean and in India when their contracts expired. The system of indenture was never meant to last forever, and in 1917 the British and Indian governments abolished it, primarily because of planters' exploitation and neglect, and rising national sentiments in India.

The Aim and Purpose

A majority of studies on Caribbean Indian indentured servitude have focused predominantly on the larger territories—Guyana, Trinidad, and Suriname—where Indians have become the majority population (see Laurence 1995; Look Lai 1993; Hoefte 1998; Mangru 1987, among others). The smaller Indian

indentured experience on St. Croix is practically ignored. Unfortunately, this imbalanced attention demonstrates the insularity and parochialism that so characterizes the study of Indo-Caribbean indentured servitude within Indian Caribbean historiography. The Danish government's experiment with Indian indentured servitude was obviously not as large as that in other areas of the Caribbean. The Danish West Indian planters' efforts, however, to substitute indentured laborers from India for the lost slave labor on St. Croix demonstrates the importance of Indians to the maintenance and survival of the sugar industry in the early post-emancipation Caribbean. Equally significant is the fact that the movement of Indians to labor as indentured laborers on St. Croix under a series of restrictive laws reveals a project that was interconnected with the expansion of world capitalism, colonialism, and social Darwinism that was sweeping through Western-influenced societies in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. European powers, including the Caribbean planters, agreed unanimously that the post-emancipation Caribbean labor crisis could be remedied through the importation of foreign contractual labor, mainly from Asia, India, and China. However, no uniform approach was applied on how this labor would be organized and employed. For this reason, the indenture system evolved differently in the Caribbean colonies that experimented with contract labor. In British Guiana and Trinidad, the indenture system lasted for about three-quarters of a century. By comparison, the Indian indenture system on Danish St. Croix was a short-term phenomenon. Therefore, the lumping of Caribbean Indian indenture as one broad experience would be inaccurate. Some similarities certainly can be discerned, especially from the point of view of the indentured servants in terms of ill-treatment and unprotected labor laws. However, some other questions are warranted. Why did the Danish experiment with Indian indenture collapse after only five years? Why were Indians not the major post-emancipation labor force on St. Croix, especially since they had earned a reputation for being reliable workers in the British Caribbean? Furthermore, why was Indian indenture terminated on St. Croix during an urgent labor need and while indenture was at its peak in other Caribbean colonies?

Difference Between Immigrant and Indenture Labor

During my research, I was asked on a number of occasions to explain the difference between immigrant and indentured labor during post-emancipation St. Croix. I thought that this was an excellent question. When indentured Indians arrived on St. Croix in 1863, there were two labor ordinances: one for

the native labor force or the recently freed slaves and the other for immigrant laborers. The native labor ordinance (1849 Labor Regulations) was intended to regulate labor relations between the laborers and planters but was designed largely to benefit the latter. The main features were: the natives worked on yearly contract, they received fixed wages according to class, and they were allowed to farm the land, among other minor amenities. The immigrant labor was different. However, the Colonial government and the planters had wanted to use the 1849 labor regulations to bring immigrant laborers particularly from India. The British government rejected the regulations because they were too harsh. Subsequently, the immigrant labor ordinance was revised to include a five-year contract with an option to renew upon expiration and a bounty of 40 dollars. The laborers were entitled to a return passage home when their contracts expired. They were given basic housing (abandoned slave quarters), medical care, rations, and fixed wages in exchange for supplying continuous labor to the planters. There was also a British Consul known as the Protector of the Immigrants. Except for minor differences, an Indian indentured contract on St. Croix was similar to the one practiced in Guyana, Trinidad, and Suriname. Contrary to expectations, only one batch of indentured Indians was brought under this labor ordinance. Most immigrants came from the Eastern Caribbean islands, and so the labor ordinance was again revised to meet this new development. The five-year contract was reduced to one year with the option to reenter into new contracts. The bounty and the rights to a free return passage were dropped. In essence, there were three labor ordinances at one point in the 1860s on St. Croix: (1) native; (2) indenture; and (3) immigrant. The main difference between immigrant labor and indenture on St. Croix was that the latter was more organized: the recruitment system was monitored, sea transportation was guided by a series of regulations, indentured Indians were assigned a Protector of Immigrants to work out grievances. None of these regulations applied to immigrant labor from the eastern Caribbean islands, which had no protection (except from their home government) and was at the mercy of the planter class. One can argue that immigrant labor was, like European serfdom, without physical protection from the planters. Indenture was, in some ways, a modified form of African slavery in the Caribbean but not slavery since it had an expiration date.

The Focus of the Book

The introduction chapter or chapter 1 examines the circumstances and conditions on St. Croix following the abolition of slavery in 1848. The focus is on how and why the new labor regulation (Labor Act) was instituted and

what impact it had on the newly freed laboring force as well as on the island. An analysis of the constitutional changes of the island, starting briefly from Company Rule and ending with the Crown Rule in 1863, will be provided. The chapter intends to show how the many constitutional changes and reforms might have influenced and affected labor conditions on St. Croix. Chapter 2 examines the circumstances and conditions on St. Croix following the abolition of slavery in 1848. The focus is on how and why the new labor regulation (Labor Act) was instituted and what impact it had on the newly freed laboring force as well as on the island. An analysis of the constitutional changes of the island, starting briefly from Company Rule and ending with the Crown Rule in 1863, will be provided. The chapter intends to show how the many constitutional changes and reforms might have influenced and affected labor conditions on St. Croix. Chapter 3 examines and analyzes the arrival of indentured Indians and the distribution of indentured Indians to the Danish Caribbean island of St. Croix between 1863 and 1868. The chapter shows how Indians were recruited and shipped, and documents their Caribbean distribution on St. Croix. The argument is that although indentured Indians were one segment of the post-emancipation Virgin Islands labor force, their entrance into St. Croix demonstrates the Danish government's desire and confidence to rely on labor from India to resolve the labor shortage. Chapter 4 assesses the caste, religion, and gender of the emigrants to make some significant observations on how these characteristics determined the way the emigrants adapted, accepted, or resisted their indentured servitude. Additionally, their overall plantation experience will be assessed in relation to the Danish imperial emigration project. The chapter examines how indentured Indians were treated on the plantations and what circumstances led to the collapse of indenture. Chapter 5 examines re-indenture, repatriation, and remittances of indentured Indians on Danish St. Croix. The main focus will be to examine why most indentured Indians refused to renew their contracts and how ex-indentured Indians were repatriated. Finally, the chapter documents how much remittance Indians took back with them to India. An argument will be provided to see whether they were better off in their homeland or on Danish St. Croix during the period of indenture. Chapter 6 analyzes two failed indentured experiences in the early post-emancipation Caribbean: British Guiana (1838–1843) and Danish St. Croix (1863–1868). The primary aim is not merely to compare and contrast major indenture events in British Guiana and Danish St. Croix but to investigate how the British, Danish, and the colonial Indian governments as well as the Caribbean planters administered the indenture system. The chapter also investigates whether or not any lessons were learned from the failed British Guiana indentured experience, 20 years before the

St. Croix experience. Chapter 7 presents the views of contemporary participants living on St. Croix on Indian indenture on the island. A cross section of individuals was interviewed for their views on indenture. The purpose of this approach is not to rely solely on printed material to analyze indenture. The final chapter summarizes the findings of the study and concludes that Indian indenture on Danish Croix has played an important role in the early post-emancipation history of the Danish West Indies. Indian indentured labor was used to sustain a dying plantation system. The hope and expectation of this book to bring awareness to a forgotten, if not ignored, historical event of the Danish West Indies.

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CHAPTER 2

Post-Emancipation St. Croix 1849–1878

Abstract This chapter examines the early post-emancipation period in Danish St. Croix and reveals the challenges the planters faced in their continuous attempt not only to save the sugar industry but also to control labor. While the planter class lost the control over labor and were forced to come to grips with a changing employer–worker situation in that they had to pay wages, they influenced the local government to seek alternative sources of labor. The planter class argued for contract labor to compensate for the unreliability of the existing labor force. They eventually brought in laborers from the surrounding Caribbean islands but they also experimented with one shipload of indentured Indians from the Indian subcontinent. The process was not straightforward. The planters had to negotiate and sign various agreements mainly to safeguard the laborers from planters' abuse. In the end, about 321 indentured arrived on Danish St. Croix in 1863.

The previous introductory chapter provided an organization of the book and assessed the general pre- and early post-emancipation features of St. Croix. A general Indian indenture experience was provided to contextualize the St. Croix experiment with the wider Caribbean Indian indenture. This chapter examines the circumstances and conditions on St. Croix following the abolition of slavery in 1848. The focus will be on how and why the new labor regulation (Labor Act) was instituted and what impact it had on the newly freed laboring force. An analysis of the constitutional

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changes of the island, starting briefly from Company Rule and ending with the Crown Rule in 1863, will be provided. The reason for the latter section is to show how the many constitutional changes and reforms might have influenced and affected labor conditions on St. Croix when Indians arrived in 1863.

Labor Act

The years following slave emancipation (1848) in the Danish West Indies, and in particular on St. Croix, were very unsettling. The central problem was the polarization of the planter and laboring classes. At one level, the planter class was determined to retain as much as possible pre-slavery labor conditions, a feeling no doubt cultivated during several centuries of domination over slaves that they thought were inferior people. The main argument for this position was that emancipation had not only diminished their control of labor but had also left a large labor vacuum on the plantations. The newly freed labor force either refused to work regularly or asked for wages they could not afford. The planter class eventually petitioned the Danish Crown on the above conditions for the loss of their slaves and received 50 Danish West Indian dollars for each slave that was freed on their plantation (Boyer 2010:38). The granting of financial rewards to the planter class was indicative of how coercive this class had become in the Danish West Indies. Moreover, this reward was given when Europe, including Denmark, was making a political transition from despotism to democracy. Given the support and passion for this transition, one would have expected that the ex-slaves would have at least been marginal beneficiaries, considering that they provided forced labor for their plantation overlords for centuries. Ex-slaves received nothing but so-called freedom.

At another level, the newly freed labor force tried to make the best out of their freedom. Their first reaction was to drift away from the plantations and find employment in urban areas or to move to other neighboring islands. While these options were not realistic because there were few employment opportunities beyond the plantations, unknown numbers of newly freed Africans never returned to work for their former masters. Still, some freed Africans stayed on the plantations and worked on a part-time basis while seeking an individual and independent survival through ground provision farming, fishing, and small-scale trading and selling in open markets. The newly freed Africans were able to exercise these semi-liberal options because the planters could no longer force them back on the plantations due

to a lack of clarity on how and in what manner labor relations would be conducted after emancipation. The loophole, however, was quickly resolved, and the newly freed Africans were practically forced to reenter into labor relations and conditions that were unfavorable to them.

Governor Peder Hansen, who replaced Governor Von Scholten in 1848, put forward a lengthy document called the Provisional Act to Regulate the Relations between the Proprietors of Landed Estates and the Rural Population of Free Laborers, to be instituted immediately but subject to revisions in the near future. This document, known as the Labor Act, had 23 sections. Danish historian Peter Jensen summarizes this Labor Act: Section 1–4 deals with contracts, namely, laborers were required to enter yearly contracts from October 1; sections 5–8 specified types of work and hours; sections 9–12 treated wage questions and requirements according to class category, such as first-class wage workers received 15 cents per day, second-class 10 cents per day, and third-class five cents per day; sections 13–22 addressed problems relating to the daily plantation routine; the final section was informative, stating that only contracts from the Labor Act would be recognized (Jensen 1998: 99–100).

Obviously, the intent of the Labor Act was to cow and control the laboring class into submission. Historian Antonio Jarvis (1945) declares that the Act gave the planters the power to push the newly freed Africans back into slavery, while travel writer Charles Taylor (1888: 147–8) espouses that it was "an ugly blot on rural happiness" on St. Croix. This was somewhat similar to the *corvee* system instituted in Haiti soon after the slave revolution in 1804. William Boyer captures the consequences of the Labor Act succinctly:

> The black people of the Virgin Islands had found that liberty did not mean freedom. They found that their freedom struggle, far from being over, was just beginning. They found that changes in forms, words and labels did not mean change in substance. Their bondage and penury continued. They traveled a long and painful road of hopelessness—a road from slavery to serfdom (2010: 60).

In contrast to other post-emancipation labor regulations in the Caribbean, the Labor Act on St. Croix was not only the most compulsory but also the longest. For example, in the British and Dutch West Indies colonies, the post-emancipation labor regulation system, called the apprenticeship, lasted from 1834 to 1838 and from 1863 to 1873, respectively, while in Cuba, the "Patronato" (an apprenticeship), lasted from 1880 to 1886. Obviously,

the planters were determined to maintain the pre-emancipation labor status to ensure their economic survival as well as security. They were under the impression that if the newly freed labor population was unregulated, there would be a mass movement off the plantations and even retaliation against them for the sins of slavery. Arguably, Governor Hansen was considering the above issue when implementing the Labor Act. He wished to give as much power as possible to the planters in order to ensure that Denmark could hold on to the Danish West Indies. This approach, whether real or imagined, was conceivably an important short-term measure to deal with the residues of slavery in the Danish West Indies. In the context of the long term, it is safe to conclude that Denmark in the 1850s was preparing to sell these islands to another imperial nation. Perhaps what is also critical about the Labor Act is that it was inconsistent with the gradual new trends and postures toward the respect and dignity for all people, a slow departure from the colonial condescension to people of color. For the newly freed Africans, the Labor Act was simply the denial of the elementary forms of liberty.

Impetus for the Importation of Foreign Labor

Whatever might have been the motive behind the Labor Act, the newly freed Africans viewed labor relations on the plantations with much trepidation. Because of that, they sought to extract as much as possible from their contracts for a better life. Some of them engaged in strikes for better working and living conditions, while others migrated to urban areas, to St. Thomas and St. John as well as to the neighboring islands such as the British Virgin islands. Historian Isaac Dookhan (1974) underscores that in 1849 on 77 plantations in the center district of St. Croix, laborers refused to work and instead called a strike. The strike was subsequently suppressed by the police, but a number of workers refused to renew or enter into contracts. Migratory laborers found employment as trades, docks, and service workers. The planter class was not oblivious to the gradual drift from the plantations and decided to adopt a compulsory passport system by regulating the number of individuals traveling between the islands. Nonetheless, migration continued. From 1850 to 1917, the population dropped from 39,624 to 26,051. In 1846, the population of laborers was 15,328, and by 1853, it dropped to 12, 865, an estimated decline of 25%. Interesting, too, is that the drop in population was male-oriented. There was a female surplus because of more female births, more deaths among men, and more emigration among men (Jensen 1998:71). The decline of the laboring population, however, was not

all directly related to migration. Some laborers were unfit to do agricultural work, while others died from disease. Nevertheless, from this background the planters argued that the post-emancipation labor force was too small and unreliable to sustain the estates. They emphasized that the recruitment of foreign labor was the only recourse to resolve the domestic labor demand. Hence, immigration schemes were drafted to bring in foreign contract laborers to St. Croix. From 1850 to 1917, an estimated 10,000 foreign laborers entered St. Croix to work mainly on the sugar estates (Tyson 1995). The graph below shows the number of foreign laborers brought to St. Croix between 1860 and 1870, the period in which Indians were also brought as indentured laborers (Fig. 2.1).

Some important information can be drawn from the aforesaid chart. During the entire period of immigration from 1850 to 1917 on Danish St. Croix, immigrant labor peaked from 1860 to 1870. Equally significant is that the highest number of foreign laborers for a single year was in 1863, when an estimated 2000 laborers entered St. Croix, the same year Indians were also brought to St. Croix. Over 90% of foreign labor came from the Lesser Antilles, with Barbados contributing an estimated 77%, mainly because that island had a labor surplus. Only 5% of foreign labor came from outside the Caribbean, chiefly from Madeira, China, and India. Even

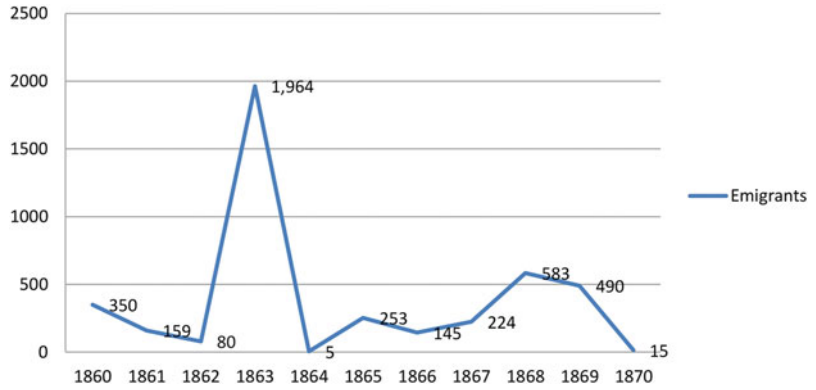

Fig. 2.1 Foreign labor to St. Croix, 1860–1870 (Created from Jensen, H. Peter (1998). *From Serfdom to Fireburn and Strike: The History of Black Labor in the Danish West Indies 1848–1916*. Christiansted: Antilles Press, 164)

more significant is that the migrant/labor demand on St. Croix was exceptional when compared to the rest of the Caribbean. The main supplier to the post-emancipation labor demand on St. Croix came from within the surrounding islands, namely from the Spanish-, Dutch-, and English-speaking islands. The opposite was the case for most Caribbean islands that sought foreign labor after slave emancipation. Asian indentured laborers filled the post-emancipation labor demand outside of Danish St. Croix (Jensen 1998: 162–195). Significant, too, is that a majority of the emigrants were of African descent and were single males from ages 15 to 30. What this means is that during the post-emancipation period, the majority of the laborers were from other Caribbean islands since the native males had already left or were leaving the plantations for urban areas or other islands. An unknown number of men from the Eastern Caribbean islands formed unions or married native Cruzian women, forming the first inter-island ethnic relations on St. Croix (Field notes 2012).

Other Significant Events During the Post-Emancipation Period

The decline of the laboring population corresponded with the general decline of the Danish West Indies, more so on St. Croix. Sugar production declined even before the abolition of slavery and continued during the post-emancipation period. Not all the decline was homegrown. Competition from beet sugar in Europe, the imposition of various colonial taxes on the planter class, and unfavorable market conditions contributed to the general malaise of plantation agriculture on St. Croix. However, the planters did not abandon sugar cultivation. Some planters did leave the island, but many stayed and introduced innovative plantation techniques. New crops, such as cotton, and efficient sources of energy, such as steam power, were introduced. These moves eventually cut costs and increased productivity. Many plantations were also converted into cattle ranches on St. Croix.

The political landscape of the Danish West Indies was also undergoing transformation that affected early post-emancipation labor relations. Three years after the Labor Act was instituted in 1852, the Danish West Indies experienced a constitutional reform. Actually, this reform was one of a series of constitutional reforms that occurred in the Danish West Indies since 1671. Like other colonial powers in the Caribbean, Denmark allowed the islands to govern themselves privately, namely the Danish

West India Company. This Company consisted of shareholders. Although the Demark had control over all colonial affairs in the Danish West Indies, the Company experienced and enjoyed a significant level of power and privilege. Over time, however, the Company was fraught with problems. The main problem was the constant tug-of-war between the Company and the planters over issues such as free trade and taxation. The Company imposed restrictive trade and taxation to collect revenues to improve the island, while the planters pushed to sell their produce on the open market for the best price possible. The result was a transfer of Company rule to the Danish Crown. Dookhan writes (1974: 67):

> The colony of the Virgin Islands was seen as a profit-making enterprise whose resources must be tapped for the benefit of the shareholders. Trade was consequently channeled within narrow restrictions thereby running counter to the aspirants of the colonists who saw prosperity in terms of free trade. Restriction caused irritation and conflict of interest leading the colonists to agitate for a greater measure of local autonomy and Crown control. The surrender of the company to the demands of the colonists was a tacit acknowledgement that it was incapable of sustaining a conflict with an economically more powerful adversary.

The situation in the islands after the abolition of slavery was that it never got better as time wore on. It was neither peaceful nor productive. Historian Waldemar Westergaard (1917: 253) confirms that abolition of the slave trade, the end of slavery, and the introduction of beet sugar on the international market resulted in a decline of importance of Danish West Indian sugar. Tyson added that on post-emancipation St. Croix, sugar production reached its height in 1820 but declined thereafter because of difficulties brought on by falling sugar prices, production costs, poor soil fertility, scarce investment, and a shrinking labor force. "Deteriorating economic conditions led to the failure of many marginal producers and the number of sugar estates fell from 179 in 1815 to 138 in 1847. Several holdings on the East End were permanently abandoned at this time. Other properties were absorbed by more successful producers. Another consequence of the depression was a shift from family to corporate ownership of many properties" (2006). So when Indian indentured arrived on St. Croix in the early 1860s, they met general stagnation, labor unrest, social tensions, and a gradual decline in the interest of plantation agriculture. Denmark was also making plans to sell the islands to the United States. Moreover, the islands had experienced droughts, cholera

epidemics, and population fluctuations. Specifically, on February 5, 1866, fire wreaked havoc on Christiansted, destroying churches, schools, and 36 private buildings. In 1867, an earthquake and a hurricane hit Frederiksted, inflicting enormous damage (Taylor 1888:147).

Negotiations for Indentured Indians to Danish St. Croix

The Danish Crown was certainly influenced by the British Government's decision to allow the French colonial planters to import indentured laborers to their plantation in La Reunion, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana in 1860. Like the French experience, the Danish planters found the process to be protracted. The British government took almost two years to assess and accept the Danish proposal to import indentured laborers to the Danish West Indies. The process began in November 1861, when the Danish Ambassador, M. de Bille, sent a proposal to the British government for permission to import Indian laborers to St. Croix under similar circumstances given to the French government a year earlier. The Ambassador stated that a slave insurrection in 1848 had altered labor relations on St. Croix. The newly freed laborers had retreated from agricultural occupation and the continuation of sugar cultivation on the island depended largely on foreign labor. The proposal was rejected. Sir Charles Wood, the Secretary of State for India, asked for a more "needful legislation" from St. Croix, namely more input from the Colonial Council of St. Croix, the main governing body on the island. The Danish Ambassador was handed a hasty proposal that resembled the restrictive 1849 labor regulations in anticipation of the recruitment season in India ending in early March. After a dialogue between the British government and the Colonial Council of St. Croix that spanned two years, the ultimate adjustment and modification of the new Labor Ordinance was accepted by the British government, but it had to be finalized by the Indian government (B.P.P. 1874: 34). John Geoghegan, an emigration agent in India, proffered that the subordinate Indian government accepted the Ordinance with even some imposing penalties. Finally, Act VII of 1863 was passed, allowing Demark to transport Indians to St. Croix (B.P.P. 1874: 34). The Ordinance contained 16 elaborated sections and was similar to the one used in the British and French Caribbean. The main features were: to avoid dishonest recruiting practices; to satisfy a sex ratio of at least 25

females to every 100 males; to allow inspection on the transporting vessels and on the plantations; and to meet the expectations of the elaborated labor contracts such as wages, housing, worked performed, medical care and repatriation rights, among others (B.P.P. 1874: 34). This elaborate system was not applied on St. Croix, however, mainly because indenture was in its infancy. Instead, a British Consul was appointed and stationed at Bassin, the former Capital of the Danish West Indies located on St. Croix. But he carried out the same functions and responsibilities as the chief immigration officer in other Caribbean islands. The British Consul inspected the conditions on the plantations, listened to the complaints of Indian indentured laborers, and reported to the British Colonial Office in London. Did the Consul live up to the responsibilities? What was his background in terms of understanding the language, customs, and culture of indentured emigrants? Was he approachable?

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CHAPTER 3

Recruitment and Distribution of Indentured Indians

Abstract This chapter analyzes the ways in which indentured Indians were recruited from India to labor on Danish St. Croix. The evidence shows that some indentured signed the labor contract on their own accord while others were duped. However, it is difficult to determine what percentage left of their own free will and how many were forced into contracts. Nevertheless, it is argued that by the 1860s, some of the irregularities in the recruitment, emigration and transportation of indentured Indians from India across the Indian and Atlantic Oceans to Danish St. Croix were remedied, although deceitful practices in the overall indenture labor scheme continued. The chapter also shows where the laborers were distributed on specific locations/plantations on the islands and argues that the location of the laborers determined the intensity of their contracts in terms of their approach, their isolation and their eventual access to the wider society.

The previous chapter analyzed the conditions on St. Croix that eventually led to the arrival of indentured Indians. Undoubtedly, they entered into an environment where they had little knowledge of the tensions between the planter and laboring class over working conditions. The question is, Would these new arrivals be treated differently? What role would they play in the ongoing dispute between the planter and the laboring class? This chapter examines and analyzes the arrival of indentured Indians to the Danish West Indian island of St. Croix between 1863 and 1868. It shows

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why Indians were recruited, how they were shipped, and documents their Caribbean indentured and post-indentured plantation experience. The argument is that although indentured Indians were one segment of the post-emancipation Virgin Islands labor force, their entrance into St. Croix demonstrated the Danish government's desire and confidence to rely on labor from India to resolve the labor shortage.

Recruitment

The recruitment of indentured Indians began on St. Croix rather than in India. Whenever the planters needed laborers, they would send their request to an official on St. Croix and that information was then forwarded to the Emigration Agency in India. The following information from an application for indentured servants on the plantations on St. Croix is an example of requests from various estate/plantation owners. (Table 3.1)

Table 3.1 Recruitment

Dates	*Plantation owners*	*Requests*	*Plantations*	*Remarks*
June 14, 1863	P.M Dermott	20	Rattan	
June 14, 1863	J. Farrelly	20	Morning star	
July 11, 1863	J.J Lund	25	Gramon	Not clear
July 14, 1863	J. Grogan	56	Not known	
July 14, 1863	R. G Knight	35	Not known	
July 14, 1863	R.G Knight	25	Not known	
July 16, 1863	W. Moore	10	Spring garden	
July 18, 1863	J. O'neale	20	Clifton hill	
July 18, 1863	J. O'neale	10	Glyeen	Not clear
July 20, 1863	Nelthroppe	10	Ropetwift	Not clear

Source: *Coolie Journal 1863*

By the 1860s, there was at least one agency for British and French colonies. There was never an Emigration Agency established for the Danish West Indies because the recruitment of Indians for St. Croix had just begun. The Danes worked with the British Caribbean Emigration Agency (Trinidad) in India since this agency was in existence longer than the French one, which had just started in 1860. Moreover, the recruitment for the French colonies occurred mainly in South India. The Dutch Caribbean Emigration Agency was not established until 1873, when the first shipload of Indians was taken to Suriname. The recruitment of Indians to St. Croix occurred in North India, and the ship sailed from Calcutta, a north Indian port. When the Emigration Agency received a request from the Caribbean planters, licensed recruit-

ers were contacted to recruit the numbers requested. The common figure was around 350–400 laborers. In most cases, the potential laborers seldom approached the recruiters. It was the recruiters who approached the potential laborers. For this reason, recruiters were forced to hire unlicensed recruiters to assist them in recruiting the large numbers of people sought as laborers. This was the first of a series of problems with the indenture system. The unlicensed recruiters were paid according to the number of recruits they brought in, and their main goal was to have as many recruits as possible. One way they achieved this goal was presenting false stories of easy work, great pay, and the opportunity to own land in the overseas plantation colonies. How many potential laborers were duped this way into indenture has been a less lively topic in the study of indenture simply because of the dearth of information. For St. Croix, no more than 10–12% of potential laborers were deceived into signing labor contracts. There are two reasons for this conclusion. The first is that by 1863 a larger geographical area of people in India was aware of the deceptive side of indenture and was therefore more likely to reject the possibility of going overseas. The second is that by 1863 potential laborers were asked in front of a judge if they had agreed to travel overseas as well as been given the option to withdraw from going overseas just before departure if they so desired. Additionally, relatives could have claimed potential laborers in the holding depots if they were believed to have been duped or kidnapped into indenture. What is certain is that a majority did not know exactly where they were going. Indians were familiar with *Tapu*, the name associated with indenture and the Caribbean islands. Actually, by 1863, ex-indentured Indians were returning from British Guiana and Trinidad, and these returnees generally shared their indentured experience with potential laborers. However, none of them ever went to Croix, which meant that information about the Danish West Indies among the potential laborers was limited.

In 1863, three hundred and twenty-one Indians (244 males, 60 females, 14 boys, 2 girls and 1 infant) were recruited for Danish St. Croix, just shy of the 350 recruits allowed on each ship.

Indentured laborers bound for Danish St. Croix were recruited from Bihar and Bengal, the North West Provinces (currently known as Uttar Pradesh), Oudh, Fyzabad, Gonda, and Basti in the United Province. Some were recruited from Punjab. Their names on the list reflected specific regional residence. For example, the name Singh is a Sikh name, which comes from Punjab. They were certainly not from South India. Information on the depot where these laborers were kept before departure is sketchy. But information on other emigrants going to Fiji and British Guiana, for example, can provide an idea of the depot. It was located on the coast near

a port in north and south India. It was an enclosed building. After potential laborers passed the "emigrant exam", that is, were declared medically fit for the sea journey, were determined to have understood the terms and conditions of the indentured contract, and had agreed to go willingly, they were placed in the depot until a ship was ready to take them to St. Croix. Because of the time spent in the depot was fairly long, many people would have felt intimidated or obligated to go along with the process and would not have voiced their true feelings against the system because of the fear of reprisal.

The depot was a world of diversity. Potential laborers were from various caste and religious backgrounds. There were single and married women. Some women were pregnant by rape or became pregnant through "depot marriage" for protection against male predators. There were young children as well as births and deaths. Research indicates that these events might have not occurred with the only shipload of Indians to St. Croix. But had more Indians been brought to St. Croix, these events would have likely occurred, since they were constant features of the indenture system. The diverse depot world produced a culture of camaraderie based on makeshift relations of brotherhood and sisterhood alongside social conflicts, feeling of rupture from home, infections from various diseases, poor sanitation, and anxiety about the unknown. Potential laborers realized that to survive their five years of indentured service, differences between low and high castes, between Hindus and Muslims, between single and married women, had to be suppressed. Realistically, the potential laborers' depot experience was one of the most remarkable social transformations, one that was never seen before among the nineteenth century Indian peasantry. Arguably, this transformation was born out of colonial efforts to create a semi-free labor system, but the sentiments of togetherness in times of despair was motivated and developed by potential laborers. What emerged from the cultural togetherness were leaders of representation of and resistance against the injustices of indenture. These leaders became known as depot lawyers, sea lawyers, and plantation lawyers.

If the depot was the place where Indians formed makeshift partnerships and unions to survive, the sea journey from India to St. Croix would certainly test the strength and sentiments of this cultural togetherness. The sea journey represented the first realistic break from India. There was no return until five years had passed. After they passed another physical examination, they were marched on to the ship *Mars* and were then placed into partitioned quarters. Young men were placed in front of the ship, married men on the port side, married women on the starboard side, and young unmarried women and girls in the aft. This placement was intended to reduce social intercourse among the passengers. Myriad events occurred on the sea jour-

ney to the Caribbean. First, Indian passengers, in particular, women, were abused by the very crew intended to protect them. The crew also inflicted physical punishment on Indian passengers to maintain discipline. Resources such as food, water, and warm clothing were very often of poor quality and limited quantity. Overcrowding, cramped spaces, and poor ventilation were common experiences on the ships (B.P.P. 1874: 24–27). Second, Indian passengers encountered disease and death on board the ships. Some common diseases were cholera, typhoid, dysentery, scurvy, scorbutic diarrhea, and *beriberi*. The four deaths of Indian emigrants on the *Mars* to Danish St. Croix were unusual. The average death rate during the 80 years of transporting Indians from India to the Caribbean on the high seas ranged from 8% to 22%. This is a rather substantial number when considering that 500,000 Indians were brought to the Caribbean and 175,000 returned to India. Still, another 40,000 migrated for a second time to the Caribbean. If we calculate that over 700,000 Indians crossed the Atlantic Ocean during the period between 1838 and 1955, and the average death rate was at a conservative figure of 5%, then an estimated 35,000, if not more, died on the sea voyage (see Roopnarine 2010c). The death rates among Indian children and infants were even higher. In season 1859–1860, 18.4% children embarked or were born on the voyage. The mortality rate between one and 12 years old was 16.5%, while the death rates for infant were 34.7% (B.P.P. 1863: 45). In the following two seasons, from 1860 to 1862, the death rate improved marginally. The reasons for deaths were the poor state of the emigrant before departure, the inadequate medical arrangements to determine unfit Indians to undergo the risks of a long sea voyage, the high ratio of women and children, the neglect of proper sanitary precautions on board the ships, the poor quality of water and diet, and the inexperience of medical officers (B.P.P. 1863: 43–7). Yet—and on the voyage to St. Croix—a majority survived using physical, mental, and spiritual strengths, as well as ship-brother and ship-sister relationships, to console and coexist. Additionally, it was in the depots and on the ships to the Caribbean that Indians developed the art of cultural resistance to restore lost India and to cope with the repressive nature of the indenture system (Roopnarine 2007: 81).

The Distribution of Indentured Indians on St. Croix

The following is the list of indentured Indians who arrived and subsequently were distributed to various plantations on the south shore of St. Croix: Lower Bethlehem received 64; Estate Mount Pleasant 50; Estate

Diamond 25; Rattan 10; La Princesse 10; Lower Love 11; Golden Grove 16; Upper Love 15; Fountain 15; Goodhope 25; Diamond 19; River 56 (see Appendix 1 for full list) (Table 3.2). The location of plantations might not have been as accurate as in 1863. According to ecologist Olasee Davis, some estates or plantations on St. Croix had the same names but were

Table 3.2 The distribution of indentured Indians lower Bethlehem (64) on St. Croix in 1863

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
4	Raney Sing	23	M	Deposit 15 July 1865 $30
5	Moheepsing	24	M	$20
116	Hurrysial	24	M	Deposit
11	Ramdeen	21	M	Deposit $15
47	Buddao Miser	18	M	Deposit
42	Ramjam	17	M	Deposit $20
21	Thacooroofs	28	M	Removed to jealousy
17	Mokoondlall	21	M	Removed to jealousy
9	Leendyall	26	M	Deposit $30
8	Munbode	23	M	Died 16 Jan. 1864
72	Mahairband	28	M	Deposit
27	Gumefs	19	M	
152	Bhudohee	18	M	Deposit, withdrawn
7	Boyjnath	28	M	Deposit $31
277	Pultoo	22	M	Deposit $15
273	Muckram Sing	38	M	Removed to jealousy deposit
13	Dulloo Meifser	18	M	
18	Chultroo	22	M	Removed to jealousy deposit $23
26	Ramloll	16	M	
16	Ramtohull	35	M	Deposit
370	Khooblall	22	M	
38	Curmu	15	M	
371	Bucktowar	40	M	Died 1865 deposit $21
372, 373	Tewanah & infant Ruseown	23 & 1.5	F & M	
374	Paunchoo	3	M	
375	Boodace	6	M	
379	Butchnee	16	F	Gave birth to a female child 21 May 1864
378	Bhowaneedeen	19	M	
376	Lookae	8	M	
377	Mutow	14	M	
271	Nufsechun	15	F	

Table 3.2 (continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
222	Hubeeb Khan	30	M	Deposit, $50
58	Murutchedh	23	F	Removed to jealousy and moved elsewhere
181	Peer Khan	26	M	Removed to jealousy
221	Afzull Khan	30	M	
272	Lubruttun	13	F	Removed to jealousy
156	Dabeedeen	28	M	Removed to jealousy
157	Needheah	22	F	Removed to jealousy—gave birth to a female child on 1 June 1863, prematurely born, died 10 July following jealousy
105	Heungullkhan	30	M	
199	Ameerun	30	F	
162	Meurutchedh	30	F	Removed to jealousy
154	Lobhan	25	M	Removed to jealousy
380	Lomun	27	M	Deposit again $9
381	Tejnee	22	F	
383	Leivah	8	M	
382	Rudeeah	12	F	
359	Rosun Khan	23	M	Deposit $50, withdrawn
360	Futtey Khan	26	M	Deposit
168	Lewbheek	23	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
358	Pandhohee	24	M	Deposit
355	Boodram	35	M	$50 deposit, withdrawn
356	Dahee	29	M	$50 deposit, withdrawn
192	Lahatoo	23	M	
134	Hoseinbuc	19	M	
227	Muckdoom	35	M	Removed to jealousy
194	Edum	40	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
130	Lobhan	25	M	Removed to jealousy
191	Allabux	26	M	Removed to jealousy
155	Neermer	30	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit, withdrawn April 1865
181	Peerkhan	26	M	
166	Lewlall	15	M	Removed to jealousy and died 1865
193	Lhoyk Lootoobally	30	M	
121	Khodaby	17	M	Removed to jealousy

Source: *Coolie Journal: The Distribution of Indians on Danish St. Croix* (1863)

located in different parts of the island. For example, there were two Estate Diamonds on St. Croix. One was located in the west and the other was in the east of the island. Similarly, Fountain estate had two names: Little Fountain and Big Fountain. The reason for the same names is that during the colonial period on St. Croix, some estates on the island changed ownership. For example, Lower Bethlehem was known by another name. Davis informed me that "by 1784, the de Windt brothers sold the entire Bethlehem estate. And in 1831, Benjamin Deforest brought Middle Works, Upper Bethlehem, and Lower Works at an auction. Middle Works, at that time was called Old Bethlehem, Upper Bethlehem was known as New Bethlehem, and Lower or Bay Works became known as Fair Plane" (email interview February 10, 2015). Therefore, on the map of St. Croix, Davis marked number 4 where Lower Bethlehem became Fair Plane. Bethlehem Estate property started from where the current Virgin Islands National Guard is located not too far from centerline road near the University of the Virgin Islands. However, different sections of the estate had different names, such as Old, Bethlehem, Upper Bethlehem, Lower Bethlehem, and so on (email interview February 10, 2015).

Three more points should be stressed with regard to the distribution of indentured Indians. Firstly, Indians were distributed mostly to the west side on St. Croix, mainly because of the location of the plantations. The north side was mainly mountainous and was not conducive to plantation agriculture, while the east side or the east end was mainly dry, although cotton was cultivated in this region. Secondly, the plantations were located in the flat or semi-hilly areas in the west side of the island. However, the factory, and particularly the windmills, were located on hilltops to maximize wind energy to turn sugarcane into sugar. What this means, then, and like Africans before them, is that indentured servants had to carry or haul the cut canes on carts from the flat areas to hilltops. By contrast, in British Guiana and Suriname, for example, sugarcane was cultivated on mud flats, and the punt and canal system was used to transport sugarcane from the fields to the factory. Whatever method was used, it was back-breaking work for the laborers. But sugarcane cultivation was harsher on St. Croix because of the geography and the method used. Thirdly, in 1863, St. Croix had one main road (today, Centerline Road) that ran from the east to the west of the island. Secondary roads were limited and undeveloped. The plantations were unconnected and isolated, so that when Indians were distributed to them they were also isolated. Their isolation was also reinforced by the ordinances in their indenture

contract. Specifically, they were required to serve their assigned plantation and could only move with the permission or "pass" from their employer. If they were to lodge a complaint to the British Consul at Bassin (today Christiansted) against their employer, they did not only have to travel a great distance but they had to ask for permission from the very employer they were trying to prosecute. The British Consul seldom visited the plantations. It was the indentured servants who had to visit the British Consul, if so needed. They had to lie to get a "pass" or simply dropped the idea of lodging a complaint against their employer for a fear of reprisal.

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CHAPTER 4

Typology of Indentured Indians and Their Plantation Experience

Abstract This chapter underscores that although the majority of indentured Indians were landless peasants and were from Northeastern India, they differed in their overall status. They were from the low and middle caste as well as from Hindu and Muslim religions. Men were the majority, and women were the minority. A third of the laborers were teenagers. The chapter also reveals that the experience of Indians during their five years of contract labor was notoriously bad. Their wages were cut, their rations were delayed and medical attendance and housing were inadequate; this was coupled with poor supervision, neglect and ill-treatment on the estates from the planter class. Indentured Indians relied on their own strength, such as the reconstruction of their culture and the practice of their religion, to cope with plantation life.

The previous chapter showed how Indians were recruited as potential laborers, what their sea voyage experience was like, and the distribution of them on St. Croix. The chapter revealed that not all Indians embarked willingly to do plantation work and that their overall depot and sea voyage experience raised doubts about five years of indenture on St. Croix. However, there was no turning back as soon as the ships left the port of India. Instead, the emigrants developed strategies of bonding to deal with their unknown journey from India to St. Croix. This chapter assesses the typology of the emigrants in order to make some significant observations about how these characteristics might have determined the way the emigrants adapted, accepted,

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or resisted their indentured servitude. Additionally, their overall plantation experience will be assessed in relation to the Danish imperial indenture emigration project. The chapter documents how indentured Indians were treated on the plantations and shows the circumstances that might have led to the collapse of indenture on St. Croix.

Caste

To recall, 321 indentured servants arrived on St. Croix in 1863 from the port of Calcutta, India, to work on the sugar plantations for five years. They were distributed to the following plantations: Estate Mount Pleasant received 50; Estate Diamond 25; Rattan 10; Lower Bethlehem 64; La Princesse 10; Lower Love 11; Golden Grove 16; Upper Love 15; Fountain 15; Goodhope 25; Diamond 19; River 56. Most of the emigrants were Hindus, Muslims, or Punjabi. Of 321, 280 were Hindus, 22 were Muslims and 19 were Punjabi. There were 239 adults with 261 males and 60 females, 70 male teens, 12 female teens, and a few infants. What observations can be drawn from the types of laborers brought to St. Croix in the previous chapter? What were their castes? How many came from the low, middle, and high caste? What was the ratio between men and women? What were their religious backgrounds? What they might have thought when they first landed on Frederiksted, St. Croix? What were their impressions of this small island?

Caste is a form of social stratification whereby groups of people are placed in ascribed ranks at birth, with little or no opportunity for social mobility. People are born to the stations of life and remained so until death. Caste boundaries are firm. There were four main castes during nineteenth century India: Brahmins (priests), Kshatriya (warriors), Vaisyas (merchants), Sudras (peasants). Below these caste categories were the Pariahs (untouchables) who were not even considered to be a caste. There were also thousands of sub-castes. Each individual belonged to a *jati* or kinship group. Most of the indentured servants came from the low caste or from the peasantry. This was consistent with other shiploads of indentured Indians to other Caribbean colonies. That low caste made up the majority of Indians was expected but not obvious. The low castes were likely to have signed contracts to labor overseas because they were a disadvantaged group in nineteenth century India. They would have been unemployed, looking for any opportunity to better their lives. However, high castes also came to St. Croix and the Caribbean because of unexpected events in

their lives. One example is the Great Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 that displaced thousands of Rajput high caste Indians and Nana Sahib's soldiers. To avoid persecution for resisting against the British, many escaped by indenturing themselves overseas. The caste status of emigrants shown in documents was not all accurate because some indentured Indians deliberately gave Registrar Officials incorrect names to conceal their caste identity in order to start new associations in the Caribbean. This incentive was more common among the low castes who wanted a higher status in the Caribbean Indian communities. They simply had nothing to lose. Samaroo captures this depot practice impressively. "Men and women from the villages of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, looking around in the receiving depot and seeing no one who could attest to the true origins, gave themselves new names which indicated the upward direction which they now wished to pursue. They were now *Singh* (lion), *Sher* (tiger), *Raj Kumari* (princess), *Maha Raj* (great king) or *Maha Bir* (great warrior)" (1999/2000: 20). The immigration authorities were not concerned if Indians up-casted themselves, since they knew caste would be meaningless on the Caribbean plantations. What mattered more to the authorities was how physically fit the emigrants were to perform rigorous labor on the plantations. Even then, this concern was not taken seriously since there were always among the arrivals those who were unfit to work on the plantations and eventually became an eyesore to the plantation authorities and the public through vagrancy and homelessness. To the Indians, however, a high caste status carried prestige and privilege which could only be ascribed at birth. The opportunity to up-caste at the emigration gates in India was an opportunity to break from an inflexible social past and to create a new beginning in the Caribbean. This process was not as obvious as it might seem because high castes were called upon to perform various cultural functions, and if the up-casters, were discovered to have fabricated their true status, then they were ridiculed by the Indian community and restrained from performing any religious functions. Some high caste Indians also concealed their identity to immigration officials to gain entry to the Caribbean, particularly those who were fleeing the Sepoy Mutiny to avoid persecution. The planters, however, were skeptical of high caste Indians because they were more inclined to ask questions and resist plantation work. The plantation system actually did not nourish or nurture caste principles because it operated on the Western notion of achieved characteristics in the workplace. To Indians, caste was central to their internal socialization process in terms of religious practices and observances, marriages, and general associations.

Caste had much more importance externally in St. Croix in that it allowed Indians to preserve and retain their ancestral customs beyond the plantation system, but not like they did in India. Caste was more flexible in the Caribbean, and relationships, including marriage, between all castes were encouraged because of the diverse Indian emigrant community. The travel writer S. B. Hynes for the *Harper's Monthly Magazine in 1872* observed the following about Indians on St. Croix.

> They are extremely fond of money, and save all they earn, trading among themselves and with the negroes, with whom, however, they will not mix socially, though they do not object to work with them; and, as they still maintain their differences of caste, some portions of their own community will not associate with others, even on the same estate. They have learned to speak English, or, at least, the patois used by the negroes, with exactly the same accent, but retain most of their own customs. They insisted on burning the body of the first man who died among them after they were brought to the island; but upon the occasion of another death they were informed that if they desired to perform the same rite they must provide their own lumber for the funeral pile; and as they never expend money when they can avoid it, they have since thrown the dead in the sea (202).

There is no indication that any Brahman priest was among the emigrants that came to St. Croix, which meant to carry out religious and burial functions, someone among them with some knowledge of Hinduism was called upon. The duties of the selected person were based on memory rather than the mastery of Hindu scripture with regard to officiating weddings, funerals, and the rite of passage. What emerged on the estates was a melange of flexible Hindu ceremonies, beliefs, and practices. While these events in India were certainly regarded as abominable and maligned as incompetent, on St. Croix, the makeshift plantation *Pandits* or priests were venerated as saviors, if not saints.

Gender

There was also a noticeable gender disparity among the emigrants. The agreement and arrangement signed between Britain and Denmark on indentured Indian emigration was that at least a third of the emigrants should be female. The agreement was not discharged and 60 instead of the 78 Indian females required were brought to St. Croix. That a majority

of the emigrants were males should be not surprising since the planters specified that they preferred a predominant male labor force. This priority was consistent with the parochial and patriarchal plantation world whereby women were perceived and treated as inferior to men. This gender disparity was noticed on the sugar plantations on St. Croix. All the plantations received a shortage of Indian women. For instance, of the 60 indentured Indians allotted to Plantation Lower Bethlehem, only 10 were women. Two dynamic events emerged from the gender disparity among the Indian population on St. Croix. The first was a breakdown of Indian family relationships, especially the extended family. The Indian social structure revolved around strict caste characteristics which preferred that Indians socialize among themselves and choose spouses within their own caste and ethnicity. The gender disparity undermined the continuation or reconstruction of these cultural forms on St. Croix. What emerged instead was the breakdown of Indian culture and jealousy among Indian males on the plantations for scarce Indian females. This behavioral pattern did not lead to spousal abuse and murder on St. Croix as it did in British Guiana and Trinidad (Mohapatra 1995). The record shows no murder among the emigrants for the decade Indians were indentured on St. Croix, although a few did commit suicide. The suffering and pain were more mental. Tinker generalizes that in overseas indentured colonies "a wife was a symbol of status, security and prosperity; the low-status, poor man was always liable to have his wife taken away by a superior" (1974: 202). The second was that the shortage of women gave women some unexpected power in the Caribbean. Women generally left one male for another and even openly cohabited with more than one man at the same time. They were not subjected to the bride price as in India, and many did have their own bank accounts, traditions Indian women seldom experienced before. Conversely, and in view of the shortage of women of marriageable age, some fathers married their daughters out heartlessly to several men and received substantial amounts of money that was sometimes more than what an average indentured Indian would have made during five years of indentured service. This practice was noticeable in British Guiana. However, if the emigration of Indians had continued, this social ill would have probably become a part of the Indian indentured experience on St. Croix as it did elsewhere in the Caribbean where Indians were indentured. What was certain on St. Croix was that the shortage of Indian women led to a low birth rate and an overall decline of the Indian population on St. Croix. During the five years of indenture, only 18 children were born (Sircar 1971: 142).

Misspelling of Names

Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the emigrants was the misspelling of their names on the registration list. The Registrar Officials were unfamiliar with Indian names and spelt them according to Western sounds. Even worse was that a majority of indentured Indians enabled the dysfunctional registration system. Many indentured Indians could neither read nor write and so were incapable of pinpointing the misspelling of their own names. Even if they had recognized the misspelling of their names, they would have not questioned it seriously because arriving indentured Indians to the Caribbean were submissive to authority figures. The most serious consequence of incorrect spelling of names was that remittances from the Caribbean did not reach the payee's relatives in India. Similarly, letters from India did not reach intended recipients in the Caribbean. How much of this happened between St. Croix and India is not precisely known. But given the common problems with the misspelling of the names elsewhere in the Caribbean at the same time, some Indians might not have transferred their savings successfully from St. Croix to India. Up to the last decade of the indenture (1900–1910), in other Caribbean colonies like in British Guiana or Trinidad, there were unclaimed remittances in colonial banks because heirs were not found in India. Some might have died or migrated, but some were not found because of the improper spelling of the names.

Plantation Experience: Housing and Working Conditions

St. Croix was dominated by plantations that did not change much in appearance or activity for over 200 years. Sugar was the main crop, but there were also cotton and other crops (see Tyson 1992). The sugar plantations ranged in size from about 50 to several hundred acres, according to the wealth of the plantation owner. Despite the size, the plantations included sugar fields, residential areas such as the Great House for plantation owners, former slave quarters, and a factory area. Virgin Islands historian George Tyson divides these zones more precisely: "1. Great House Complex: owner's and/or manager's residence, kitchen and other service buildings, servant quarters, wells, cisterns, privy, burial grounds, hospital; 2. Factory Complex: grinding mill, boiling, curing and still houses, storerooms, craft shops, stables, overseer's house, pens, bell, cotton ginning

house; 3. Workers' Village: cottages, barracks, kitchens, garden plots, burial grounds; 4. Field System: stone walls, fencing, terraces, water troughs, watch houses, wells/fan mills, aqueducts, burial grounds" (Tyson 2006). When Indians arrived on St. Croix, they were marched to plantation barracks or abandoned slave quarters commonly known as "Nigger Yards". Some newly freed slaves were still living in these dwellings, but a majority drifted away from them and found employment elsewhere. The inhumane stigma, however, remained. Slavery was abolished, but these living quarters remained. The plantation owners made no attempt at improving them, not even with basic repairs (see below). Little had changed, including the mind-set of the planters towards labor. Like the newly freed slaves, some planters left the island but many stayed with a pro-slavery mentality. The indentured Indians were bound first and foremost to their plantation bosses through the legal labor contract and their pro-slavery mentality. The following is an example of an indentured contract.

> This indenture made on the first day of the month in the year 18.., between _____, as proprietor (or attorney, etc) of Plantation_____, in the county of _____, in the colony of _____, of the one or first part, and several (Indian, Chinese, etc, as the case may be) immigrants whose names are respectively subscribed hereto, of the other or second part, witnesseth as follows: That the said employer agree to hire the services of the said immigrants, and the said several immigrants agree to serve the said Employer as Labourers for the term of _____years, commencing on the 1st day of month, 18.., subject in all respects to the provisions of the Consolidated Immigration Ordinance (Roopnarine 2007: Appendix 6, 129).

Attached to this document was a long list of rules and regulations that essentially required Indians to work for at least five years under a series of inflexible labor laws, such as fixed wages and at fixed residences, while the planters were obligated to provide basic amenities such as housing, daily rations, minimum medical care, and return passages. Any breach of contract by either the indentured Indians or planters resulted in fines, punishment, and even imprisonment for both. On St. Croix, indentured Indians signed a five-year contract that required them to work 9½ hours for 6 days each week, except on holidays. They also received housing, medical attention, and weekly rations, the latter charged at 10 cents per day. They were paid 20 cents per day. Indentured Indians were entitled to repatriation rights after serving five years and were offered a $40 bounty to re-indenture if so desired without losing the right to return passage

(B.P.P. 1874, 34). Indentured Indians, of course, had to comply with myriad rules and regulations imposed on them. In essence, Indians were at the mercy of their employers, but they were not subject to the restrictive labor regulations of 1849 in the Danish West Indies soon after slavery was abolished. Two distinct benefits of indenture were that Indians were paid 5 cents per day more than the local labor force and could return home when their contract expired at the expense of the colonial government. Some indentured benefits, however, were also canceled out. The food for which Indians were charged 40 cents was supplied to the natives for 25 cents. Moreover, the terms of the contract stated that Indian food such as rice, peas (dhal), coriander seeds, ghee, flour, black pepper, and turmeric should be supplied to Indians in a modest quantity. But it was supplied to them partially, even though they were charged 10 cents per day. In dismay, Indians demanded money in lieu of food and preferred to cater for themselves. The planters consented to this request because it was cheaper for them (Bengal Emigration Proceedings, hereafter B.E.P, 1863: 25). This was, however, a breach of the indenture contract. The serious consequence that emerged from the dispute was that Indians did not use their money to buy food but saved it. This might have been one aspect of their industrious habits of saving, but many ended up weak and even died from inadequate diet and overwork.

Poor health and disease were rampant among the emigrants. The death rate was astoundingly high. Of 321 Indians who left Calcutta in 1863, 4 died on the voyage and from February 1863 to December 1864, 19 died on the plantations, more than 6% during the first year (B.E.P 1865: 7–9). In contrast, the death rate for the local labor force, which encountered a fever epidemic, was 5%. Of the ten indentured Indians assigned to Plantation Rattan, four (40%) died and, of these, three were young individuals. On St. Croix, the guidelines to determine the category of deaths, such as minimal, medium, or excessive, on the plantations were yet to be established. In British Guiana and Trinidad, as the indenture system matured towards the end of the nineteenth century, rules were laid down to determine the degree of deaths. Six percent of deaths on any given plantation was considered excessive and was enough grounds to stop future allotment of indentured Indians to such plantation until death rates improved. On St. Croix, the colonial officials attributed high death rates to a shortage of well-qualified medical personnel. Only six medical doctors were on the island of 23,000 people in the 1860s. Moreover, while it might be argued that indentured Indians lacked the immunity for Caribbean dis-

eases and therefore encountered a higher death rate than in their departed homeland, crowded conditions and primitive sanitation helped spread disease. Actually, overcrowded housing arrangements were a serious problem. Through an agreement between Britain and Denmark in 1862, indentured Indians were entitled to a room in a house, free of rent, for each one of them. This agreement was never met, and Indians huddled in abandoned slave quarters. In some cases, six Indians were lodged in one room, and in one case a man and his wife and two single men were placed in one room. One plantation manager was asked why so many Indians were lodged in one room, and his reply was that if Indians were given separate rooms he would have none left for fresh emigrants (B.E.P 1865: 7–9).

Adaptation to Plantation Life

History had taught indentured Indians in their own homeland that if they were to survive hardships like five years of plantation life, a lot would depend on their own pre-indentured experience and inner strength. Indentured Indians were not exposed to the rigors of sugarcane plantation work before they arrived on St. Croix. But they were certainly exposed to harsh socioeconomic conditions in India. The low caste, in particular, was treated as below human because they were tied to their landlords like slaves. These conditions—which were perhaps worse than those elsewhere in the Caribbean—inadvertently prepared them to deal with sugarcane plantation life, which undeniably was one of the hardest forms of agricultural life for the laboring class. To many Indians, working on a daily basis on a specific plantation was indeed physically difficult and exhausting, but constraints placed on them had a deeper impact on their minds. Peasant labor in nineteenth century India was largely a communal business dictated by customs, needs, and traditions. Indentured servants experienced the opposite on St. Croix. They were bound to their plantation bosses on various estates/plantations from sunset to sundown with little room to practice or even reinvent their homeland work routine. Their purpose on St. Croix was to provide the labor to the plantations, and while they had the right to challenge working conditions, the reality was that the odds for better working standards were simply stacked against them. The plantations can be best described as prisons without walls, and indentured Indians were prisoners sentenced to five years of labor. The indentured Indians understood that the only legal way out of this contracted obligation was to go along with the system until the day of freedom arrived. Any deviation from this approach, especially

disturbances, would simply delay their day of freedom. They were caught in the twilight of indenture and freedom. The late Trinidadian Prime Minister Eric Williams (1944) wrote how ironic it was that a commodity as sweet as sugarcane would cause so much hardships for those who labored to produce sugar. Worse still was that indentured Indians suffered from homesickness. In other Caribbean islands, there was a continuous importation of fresh emigrants from India that brought with it the culture, customs, and conversations about India that facilitated and reinforced bonds among the emigrants. This interethnic exchange among new arrivals and Caribbean-based indentured Indians was not one-way. Arriving emigrants generally received information about the pros and cons of indentured labor from residents who were indentured earlier that eventually helped them to adjust to an ever-conflicted plantation world. None of this happened on St. Croix. Indentured Indians were not only isolated on the plantations but St. Croix never received a second wave of indentured Indian emigrants, which meant that the first batch of indentured Indians never saw people like themselves until their contracts expired. To people known for their home-loving character, the loss of and nostalgia for things about India certainly contributed to some social ills, including depression, on the plantations. Indians were left to imagine their homeland, although they wrote and received letters from their spouses and relatives in India.

The indentured Indian experience was not always about bowing to oppression. They challenged and responded accordingly to their daily indentured existence. This approach did not overthrow the planter's power, but it did create a space for the indentured. The reputable Australia-based Fijian historian Brij Lal (2004) espouses that while Indians suffered during indenture, they created opportunities for themselves. This creativity came largely from inner cultural strength that the powerful plantation system was successful in disturbing but not dismantling. For example, indentured Indians brought with them to St. Croix the memory of the religious story of Rama's banishment for 14 years. Through determination and sacrifice, Rama was able to return home from banishment. Indentured Indians used this story and other religious stories like the sacrifice of Sati, the venerated female character in Hinduism, as a powerful metaphor to their own departure from India and adjustment to plantation life. They realized that someday they would return home. Likewise and over time, indentured Indians understood that the plantation system would not be flexible to them but that they had to be flexible in the plantation system. They conformed and adjusted accordingly without losing sight of themselves. Resistance to plantation life also took

physical forms on St. Croix. On every plantation, indentured Indians were removed and sent to another one. The removal of indentured Indians from their plantation base was in all probability a result of resistance to plantation conditions and not a good gesture from their plantation bosses so that the person could have a better life. The planters invested in their indentured workers, which in all likelihood meant that they would try to keep them on their plantations to maximize profits.

Immigration Cost

The largest disappointment with indenture on St. Croix was its steady decline. Normally, after the first and second year, and as noticed in British Guiana and Trinidad, more indentured Indians would have been imported. No new imports occurred on St. Croix. The main problem was the costs connected to immigration, which fell on the colonial government and partly on the planters through loans. In the 20 years between 1859 and 1878, overall immigration had cost the colonial government of the Danish West Indies an estimated $138,000. Of this sum, Indian immigration between 1863 and 1865 amounted to $57,786, almost 42% of the total cost (Jensen 1998: 173–74). The cost of importing Indians to St. Croix in 1863 amounted to £7128. 2s, and returning them to India came to £3184. 10s (Sircar 1971: 145). This pattern was no different in other Caribbean islands where Indians were indentured. In these colonies, British Guiana, Trinidad, and Suriname, the planter offered Indians land to settle in exchange for their return passage to India. By the 1880s, potential returnees were expected to contribute to their passage. Indians eventually stayed in these colonies. The plan to settle Indians in St. Croix in exchange for return passages was never encouraged. In the end, Indian emigration was too costly to sustain for Danish St. Croix. Moreover, immigration from the surrounding Caribbean islands was far cheaper than Indian emigration. The Danish West Indian planters were unable to stick to the agreement signed in the 1862 convention between Britain and Denmark. They were simply financially incapable of meeting the expense of Indian emigration. As a consequence, wages were cut, the food supply was short, and housing was overcrowded. Indians realized that indenture had turned out to be harsher than anticipated and pointed to maltreatment received and high death rates encountered on the plantations. They also realized that the opportunity to work, save, and return home and live fairly comfortably in their villages was elusive.

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CHAPTER 5

Re-Indenture, Repatriation and Remittances

Abstract This chapter documents the re-indenture, the remittance and the repatriation of Indians. A minority of indentured Indians chose to re-indenture on Danish St. Croix when their contracts expired, while a majority of them returned to India in 1868. Those that re-indentured hoped for better achievements while those that returned were disappointed with indenture. Returning Indians also realized that indenture was designed to meet the needs of the planter class rather than their own. Indians took back with them an estimated $12,000. The average savings of the 250 returning ex-indentured Indians was $50.00 or $10.00 for five years. It is argued that this was a major disappointment and for this reason, coupled with bad managerial practices, the British Consul advised the British government not to send any further shipments of Indians to St. Croix until proper measures were taken to safeguard the laborers. This suggestion did not materialize and indenture was abolished on the island of St. Croix in 1873.

The previous chapter showed that Indians were recruited from a cross section of Indian society. They were mainly young low caste males, but women made up 25% of the emigrants. Indentured Indians suffered because of neglect and abuse. On the whole, some chose to stay when their contract expired, but a majority chose to return to the homeland (Dharti Mata). This chapter examines the re-indenture, repatriation, and remittances of ex-

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indentured Indians from Danish St. Croix to British India during the period from 1863 to 1873. The chapter focuses on why most indentured Indians refused to renew their contracts, how ex-indentured Indians were repatriated, and how much remittances Indians took back with them to India.

Re-Indenture of Ex-Indentured Indians on St. Croix in 1868

A majority of Indians came to St. Croix mainly because of the opportunity for employment, to earn wages and to acquire savings as well as an option to return home when their indenture contracts expired. They never had any intention to stay on St. Croix nor did they make any attempts to settle when their contracts expired. Some Indians renewed their contracts for another five years but with the intention of not staying when their contracts expired for the second time. In some ways, those Indians who stayed for another five years were duped twice into indenture: first, by the recruiters in India who presented false promise of indenture, and second, by the planters who offered bounties. Either case was too much to resist. Moreover, indentured Indians were subjected to specific conditions in their contracts, explained in two of sixteen ordinances signed in the Convention of 1862 between the British government and the Danish Crown. The two ordinances stated that indentured Indians would be guaranteed wages and free return passage to India after successfully completing their five-year contract. The Indian government was interested in allowing indentured Indians to labor overseas but declared that they return home when their contracts expired. They were not to engage in any secondary migration or become permanent settlers on St. Croix or in any other foreign land. The motive for these strict instructions was to protect indentured Indians from labor abuse abroad, to bring their savings home as well as to replace them by other indentured Indians who needed employment. Were these instructions obeyed on St. Croix? How come all of the time-expired indentured Indians did not return home?

The planters on Danish St. Croix were very much aware of the indenture system in British Guiana and colonial Trinidad, which started two decades before St. Croix. A brief report in the Bengal Immigration Proceedings (January 1863) shows that the Danish West Indian Government was aware that 1500–2000 Indians were expected to go to Trinidad, which was more than what the planters needed. The Danish colonial government wondered if these Indians should be brought to St. Croix instead, where there was a more dire need for contract labor. Whether or not the Danish planters collaborated with other Caribbean planters on indenture is not precisely known.

The procedures, however, on how to return Indians back home from St. Croix, British Guiana, and Trinidad show similarities. In British Guiana and Trinidad, the planters argued that repatriation of ex-indentured Indians was too expensive and suggested that they should re-indenture for another five years, receive a $50 bounty and qualify for free return passage, providing that indentured rules and regulations were not violated (B.P.P 1864: 147). Indentured Indians were subsequently required to work for ten years, instead of five in order to be guaranteed a free return passage. The main reason for the change in policy was the planters' question: "Why invest in indentured servants and send them back so quickly to an environment where their plantation experience is less desirable?" (Roopnarine 2008: 209–212). The same argument was echoed on St. Croix. But there were two differences in the repatriation policy on St. Croix in the 1860s. Indentured Indians were given an option to re-indenture rather than being forced to and received 40 dollars for re-indenture instead of 50 dollars. The ten dollar difference between the two bounties offered was a substantial amount of money when considering that indentured Indians on St. Croix were making 20 cents per day. Of course, the indentured Indians were not aware of the financial differences between the bounties. In 1868, of the original 321 indentured Indians, 34 of them chose to re-indenture and received 40 dollars without losing the right to a free return passage from where they emigrated in India, namely Calcutta. This included the ex-indentured wife, children who left India under the age of ten years, and those born in the colony. The return passage had to be claimed within 18 months from when it was due or the person would risk losing the right to a paid return passage back to India. In 1873, when the second five-year contract expired, these indentured Indians were again given an option of taking 40 dollars in exchange for forfeiting their right to return passage or residing on St. Croix with rights to citizenship. It was simply too expensive to repatriate a small number of ex-indentured Indians directly from St. Croix to India. A majority of these Indians were encouraged to accept the bounty but did not stay on St. Croix. They went to Trinidad with the intention to indenture on that island or joined other returnees back to India. These options were admirable and showed the planters' willingness to offer Indians incentives to settle on St. Croix. But they came too late, despite the fact that these Indians were on St. Croix for ten years, a substantial amount of time to become acquainted and acclimatized to St. Croix. Ten years on St. Croix would have also made them less attached to their homeland, especially since they were the only Indians on the island. They would have made some connections and associations with the non-Indian population on St. Croix. The mere fact that they survived ten years of indentured labour on St. Croix

demonstrated an achievement in and of itself. These time-expired Indians would normally return to India but indentured themselves to another colony like Mauritius, Fiji, Natal, or Trinidad. Not much is known about them after they left St. Croix.

Of the 35 re-indentured Indians, one died before he started his second term, while fewer females stayed. From the list, it is difficult to determine the females who re-indentured for the second time since only one of their names is listed. The repatriation list shows that 30 out of the original batch of 60 women returned home. What this means is 22 women re-indentured out a total of 40. This is highly unlikely and reveals one of major flaws of registration of indentured Indians on St. Croix (see Table 5.1). Certainly, fewer women re-indentured and more women died on the estates, some during childbirth. Many of these women might have followed the wishes of their husbands and re-indentured. The sexual imbalance must have caused some social discomfort and chaos among the Indian population, especially since Indians were socialized according to caste expectations, namely to marry or form unions with members of their own caste or religion. Interesting, too, is the fact that Indian women were willing to go back home to a village life that would most likely ostracise them—because they had broken caste customs through out-migration—reinforced the thought that conditions on St. Croix were worse than in India.

Noticeable from the aforesaid table of re-indentured Indians is that a majority of them re-indentured on Estate River, indicating that a decision might have been made to re-indenture as a group, probably because of better treatment received on this particular estate. They might have also indentured as a group to foster ethnic ties in a predominantly colonial and Creole society. Of the re-indentured, there were seven Singhs, eight Muslims, and 20 Hindus. Additionally, the attractive bounties offered were perhaps the deciding incentive to re-indenture. It was equal to one full year of hard work on the sugar estates and was equal to or greater than what most indentured Indians had saved in their five-year sojourn on St. Croix (see below). In contrast, the attractive bounties that the planters offered reveal the confidence they placed on indentured Indians to provide the labor on estates. The attractive bounties also reveal that the planters probably benefited economically from the investment of indenture, enough so that they wanted to offer a significant sum of cash, especially when they claimed dire economic distress throughout the post-emancipation period. However, for the re-indentured Indians, these were bounties that were difficult to ignore. They probably sent these bounties back to relatives in

Table 5.1 Names of re-indentured Indians on various estates on Danish St. Croix in 1868

Names	*Plantations*	*Depot number*	*Amount received*
Teecum Sing	Sionfarm	216	$40.00
Deybeepursad	Sionfarm	274	$40.00
Latchman	Sionfarm	349	$40.00
Gaangebeer	Sionfarm	264	$40.00
Goomannee	Sionfarm	208	$40.00
Boodeeah	Sionfarm	209	$40.00
Chaytah Sing	Sionfarm	210	$40.00
Dulooo Miser	Sionfarm	13	$40.00
Rannee	Lower love	217	$40.00
Sirdar Khan	Lower love	18	$40.00
Laallgee	Lower love	65	$40.00
Ram Sing	Lower love	232	$40.00
Alladee	Lower love	270	$40.00
Deen Mahomed	River	325	$40.00
Sooneah	River	366	$40.00
Beerbull	River	326	$40.00
Abdhool Khan	River	351	$40.00
Nanbee	River	353	$40.00
Sookeeah	River	354	$40.00
Enaught Sing	River	225	$40.00
Busawak Sing	River	315	$40.00
Ramdyal	River	241	$40.00
Chundoo	River	357	$40.00
Nekah Singh	River	220	$40.00
Hoseinbuy (child)	River	351	$40.00
Hoseinbuy	River	335	$40.00
Sursun Khan	River	332	$40.00
Ransee	River	Not given	$40.00
Gandes	River	Not given	$40.00
Bhowammadeen	Bethlehem	378	$40.00
Meetoo	Bethlehem	317	$40.00
Cheeroree	Bethlehem	188	$40.00
Cootooballe	Bethlehem	193	$40.00
Badoorah Singh	Rattan	322	$40.00
Rifsoo	Rattan	45	$40.00
35	6		$1, 360

Source: *Coolie Journal*

India or saved the money until their final return home. Most of the re-indentured Indians did not accumulate any significant savings on their first five year term and this might explain why they chose to re-indenture for a second term. They simply did not want go back home empty-handed.

The most obvious flaw, however, with the list of re-indentured Indians was the distorted spelling of their names. The names of these indentured Indians were spelled and printed according to the expectations of the registrar personnel. The obvious characteristic is the double letters in many names indicating that the registrar was not familiar with Indian names. The implication is that most Indian names have a prolonged sound. Equally troubling is that these names were truncated from the original list in 1863. What apparently happened was that the original registered names in 1863 were initially misspelled by a particular registrar or registrars. Five years later, the original list of names was not used to register re-indentured Indians. Instead, Indians were registered under a different registrar or a different registration system, which meant that the names were misspelled twice. More interesting is that the re-indentured list of names was also misspelled. For instance, on the original list, a name was spelled Dulloo Meifser but on the re-indentured list the same name with the same depot number was spelled Dulooo Miser. Other Indians were given a different first name but retained their last name. Radlay Khan who had a depot number of 332 was given the same depot number but a different first name of Sursun. Depot numbers were also mismatched. Some re-indentured Indians were given a different depot number from their original number which was similar to the depot number of those who had departed after their first term expired. The reason for this distortion was that Indians were not given an identification card on arrival. Moreover, many were too illiterate to pinpoint the misspelling of their own names. The consequence was that St. Croix Indians did not communicate efficiently and effectively with their relations in India and vice versa. Savings were also misplaced (see below). Worse still, are (1) after five years of experience with Indian indenture one would have expected the planters to at least get the names of their indentured labourers correct, and (2) the contemporary descendants of indentured Indians in the Caribbean still carry these misspelled names.

Repatriation and Remittance of Ex-Indentured Indians from Danish St. Croix in 1868

In spite of the attractive bounties offered, a majority of Indians opted to leave St. Croix and return to India when their contracts expired. Among the returning ex-indentured Indians were 186 adult males, 32 females, eight non-adult males, three non-adult females, and 21 children. The following table shows a list of returning Indians from estate Mount Pleasant (Table 5.2). The full list of returnees is in Appendix 2.

Table 5.2 Estate Mount pleasant

Depot No.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
6	Kunou Sing	26	M	
56	Lunkurah	18	M	
275	Bindrah	17	M	
153	Calkah	18	M	
57	Utchrou	11	M	
240	Gayoud	16	M	
151	Ramduth	19	M	
60	Toolseah	14	M	
212	Hurry Roy	18	M	
213	Tuninta	17	M	
35	Bhagarutt	19	M	
323	Rufseeown	6		
132	Purrag Sing	18	M	
383	Seewah	13		
74	Auditt	21	M	Deposit
177	Booooo	21	M	
102	Divarkah	27	M	Deposit
173	Reckoah	17	M	Deposit
115	Gooroochun	20	M	
103	Lullith Geer	23	M	Deposit
113	Fowdar	17	M	
114	Bhuguran	19	M	Deposit
144	Hurruck	16	M	
143	Lewnundun	16	M	Deposit
43	Bundoo	26	M	
49	Bhoosun	16	M	
50	Purrooah	17	M	
51	Phagoo	14	M	
19	Lullith	18	M	
20	Thacoory	21	M	
22	Hurry	26	M	
44	Thacoormoney	22	F	
25	Unatcheah	12	F	
53	Roopeeah	12	F	
52	Lookaree	6	F	
100	Punioah	20	F	
52c	Madaree	6	F	
52b	Oodoah	4	F	
52a	Dooknah	3	F	
99	Lohorai	23	M	
15	Lumrah	17	M	
178	Mungur	27	M	
24	Nafso	24	F	
204	Roodnee	21	F	
312	Lhaik Lobratee	24	M	
179	Ugnooah	25	M	

Again, the estates from which these Indians departed were not carefully documented. For example, the original list of distribution in 1863 shows that 321 Indians arrived and in 1868 that 250 Indians departed from St. Croix. But the departing list shows 228 names; 22 names were unaccounted for. Paradoxically, some of the unaccounted names had significant amounts of savings attached to them, as much as $50.00. Still, on the original list, 54 and 10 Indians were allotted to Estates Lower Bethlehem and Rattan, respectively, but these estates were not mentioned or recorded as places from where Indians departed in 1868. Rather, three new estates were included: La Grange, Jealousy, and Castle. In the remarks column of the original list, a significant number of Indians were moved from various estates to Estates Jealousy and Castle for unknown reasons. However, only 11 ex-indentured Indians were listed as departing from these estates. Still, some Indians died on St. Croix but were listed as returning back to India. The careless documentation of Indians on which estates they worked and migrated from to India represented a major flaw of the indenture system on St. Croix. One colonial official reported in the *Coolie Journal* that the Indian indentured experienced on St. Croix was poorly recorded.

The 250 ex-indentured Indians were sent back on the Danish barque *Dorothea Melchior*, leaving St. Croix on July 16, arriving at Calcutta on December 16, 1868. The age of the returnees was mainly young adults in their twenties and children who arrived from India or were born on St. Croix. This might explain the low death rate on the return voyage. The common reports from the Protector of Immigrants at Calcutta were that indentured Indians experienced more deaths on their journey from India to the Caribbean than from the Caribbean to India. The reason for this difference was that Indians on the whole were weaker prior to indenture, and after serving five to ten years of plantation life, they had become more robust and thus were more physically prepared for their journey to India. Additionally, Indian returnees would not embark on the long sea journey back home if they were not fit because they were aware of the consequences. Generally speaking, returning Indians were normally happier than arriving Indians to the Caribbean for reasons relating to the excitement of approaching home and a closure to their indentured lives in the Caribbean (Samaroo 1982; Roopnarine 2006: 315–17). Ethnographic research revealed that many Indians did not go back to India precisely because of the dangers associated with the sea journey. The Protector of Immigrants at Calcutta reported four adult men and one woman died as

well as four births on the voyage from St. Croix to India, of whom three died (Coolie Journal 1863) The Protector claimed that the ex-indentured Indians "expressed themselves perfectly satisfied with their treatment during the voyage and spoke highly of the kindness of commanders and officers" (Coolie Journal 1863). Why these Indians left after their first term expired, especially when the plantation management encouraged them to stay on St. Croix is a question of speculation. They left no written records on why they departed St. Croix. The planter's inducement of bounties was perhaps inadequate to returning Indians. Perhaps if they were offered land and bounties like in British Guiana and Trinidad, many Indians might have stayed on St. Croix. The land inducement was one major reason why Indians stayed in British Guiana and Trinidad. Nonetheless, some speculations can be made as to why they departed St. Croix. The most obvious was the abusive nature of the indenture system in an alien environment away from their supporting material and cultural base. Some Indians left because they intended only to serve a single contractual term on St. Croix. They were simply homesick in a semi-Western oriented authoritative environment where work and life revolved around the economic capitalist concept of time rather than their homeland religion and culture. One nineteenth century observer on St. Croix spoke of Indian women being exceedingly homely, and some of them wrote beautifully in the characters and methods of their own country. The observer noted further that Indians did not mix socially and maintained caste differences with some portions of their own community and estates (Hynes 1872: 202). Other reasons for returning varied from the desire to die in their homeland to the desire to live among their own ethnic group and to re-indenture to another island where their indentured experience might provide better opportunities (Roopnarine 2008: 222).

How much savings did ex-indentured Indians take back with them to their home villages? The idea of accumulating savings was one central reason why Indians migrated to St. Croix as indentured servants. The *Coolie Journal* shows that 250 returnees with a sum of £2463. 13s. 4d ($12. 503. 10¢) were remitted on Danish barque *Dorothea Melchior* from St. Croix to India in July 1868. The exchange rate was $5.07.50 to £1. The Indian researcher K.K. Sircar (1971: 143) thought that if the remittance was sent through the government, the exchange rate would have benefited the remitters more. The government exchange rate was $4.80 to £1, which meant Indians would have received £2604. 16s. 3½ d instead of £2463.13s. 4d, avoiding a loss of an estimated £141. Additionally,

remittances were not imputed with sufficient care. The Immigration Committee reported that, for example, ex-indentured Indian, No. 143 Sewnundun, was entered on the list for $198.58 and another remitter No. 122 Soumber, for the sum of $15.00, whereas the latter was entitled to the amount of $66.43 and the former only $147.15. The amount of $51.48 was wrongfully credited to Sewnundum in the amount of $198.00 (*Coolie Journal* 1863).

There is a dearth of information on how much savings each individual took back to India. One of the 16 ordinances written down in the 1862 Convention between Britain and Denmark to recruit Indians for St. Croix stated that the Superintendent of Immigration would keep a protocol on the list of the immigrants, their ages, place of birth, dates of arrival, vessels in which they arrived, savings acquired, deaths, birth, re-indenture, repatriation, among other information (B.E.P 1863: 19). However, these requirements were not met. From the list of returnees in 1868, no information was given on how much savings each individual accumulated. Instead, the total amount of savings was given for all of the returning passengers. In 1865, there was some evidence (see Appendix 2 under comments) that indentured Indians had acquired some savings of as much as $50.00 dollars in two years. Nonetheless, through calculations we can determine how much savings Indians took back with them on an average. If indentured servants were earning 20¢ per day for six days a week, their earnings per month would be $4.80. For the entire year, their earnings were $57.60, which means for an entire five-year contract, they would have potentially earned not more than $290.00. Two hundred and fifty ex-indentured Indians took with them a total savings of $12. 503. 10 cents, an average of $50.00. The yearly average savings was $10.00. This figure is much lower if other expenses and court fines are factored in. Ten dollars was below expectations, especially since the exchange rate to pounds fluctuated. Indians exchanged their savings to pounds and then to rupees, which was not always in their favor. Worse still, K.K Sircar (1971) cited that of 245 returnees (five died) only 149 had remitted savings while the remaining 96 returned penniless. The latter was given a small allowance to return to their villages. Some of these Indians did not bother to go back to their villages but stayed in urban sprawls of Calcutta and lived out their lives.

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CHAPTER 6

Indian Indenture in British Guiana (1838–1843) and Danish St. Croix (1863–1868)

Abstract This chapter provides a comparative analysis of indentured Indian experiences in British Guiana and Danish St. Croix to mainly understand if the approach to indenture 20 years apart in two Caribbean colonies governed by two different imperial powers had changed or if anything positive was learned from the first experience in British Guiana. The finding was that the authorities decided to abolish slavery in both colonies but were poorly prepared to deal with post-slavery labor challenges. To save the sugar industry, they allowed indenture as a substitute for slavery. Yet there was not an organized plan in place on how indenture would function. The experiments with indenture in both British Guiana and St. Croix operated in the tradition of slavery or slavery in disguise and both were failed systems of labor. Indentured labor was poorly supervised and indentured Indians were mistreated in both Caribbean colonies. The planters tried to conceal these aspects of indenture but private investigation and inspection by private organizations on the living and working conditions of indentured Indians exposed the evils. The British Crown and the Indian government abolished indenture in both colonies after the first five-year contract expired. Indentured labor resumed in British Guiana in 1845 but not on Danish St. Croix.

The preceding chapters examined the indentured Indian experience on St. Croix. The analysis is now extended to British Guiana, where the first experience with Indian indenture failed. Specifically, the chapter analyzes two failed indenture experiences in the early post-emancipation Caribbean: British Guiana

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(1838–1843) and Danish St. Croix (1863–1868). Both failed experiments lasted for five years and were the first indentured experiments in both colonies, 25 years apart, after slave emancipation. The primary aim of this chapter is not merely to compare and contrast major indenture events in British Guiana and Danish St. Croix but to investigate how the British, Danish, and the colonial Indian governments as well as the Caribbean planters administered the indenture system. The chapter also investigates whether or not any lessons were learned from the failed British Guiana indentured experience, 20 years earlier than the St. Croix experience.

Recruitment in India

The first batch of Indians imported to British Guiana consisted mainly of "Gladstone Coolies," since Gladstone was instrumental in negotiating for them and a majority went to his two plantations, *Vreed-en-hoop* and *Vreedestein*. More than 70 % of these Indians were recruited from the Chota Nagpur region, home to one of India's tribal peoples. Some Indians indentured themselves voluntarily, but a larger number of them were subject to deceitful methods of recruitment. They were told fanciful stories of indenture in the Caribbean by recruiting agencies and their fellow Indian recruiters that essentially concealed the harsh characteristics of plantation life. British colonialism also interfered and impacted the material, cultural, and economic livelihoods of the tribal people in the Chota Nagpur region, forcing out-migration and alternative ways of survival (Kondapi 1951). Their limited knowledge of the world beyond their village made them vulnerable to indentured immigration (see Tinker 1974). The *Bengal Hurkaru,* a local Indian newspaper, printed a number of letters from the community expressing their views on the recruitment of Indians to overseas destinations. One stinging letter titled, "Trade in Coolies," expressed that the natives of India were kidnapped and put on board ships against their will for the purpose of indentured labour overseas (*Bengal Hurkaru,* July 4 and 15, 1838). The recruitment of the first batch of Indians to British Guiana was poorly conducted, as Indians were going overseas against their will.

Most of the Indians who were brought to St. Croix came mainly from Bihar and Bengal. But information on how they were recruited is scarce (see Chap. 3). However, the charges leveled against the transportation of the first batch of indentured Indians to British Guiana were instrumen-

tal in bringing some changes and improvements to the overall indenture system. When the recruitment of indentured Indians to St. Croix began in 1863, there were some significant improvements, although not completely free from bad practices. The State had assumed control of indenture and implemented a series of regulations from recruitment to transportation to indentured plantation labor. For instance, medical personnel were employed to oversee the holding depots to ensure that Indians were well fed and well suited for the three-month sea journey from India to St. Croix. Potential indentured workers were not primarily deceived into serving indentured service abroad. Some fraudulent practices did occur, but they were not as numerous as in the earlier recruitment of Indians to British Guiana. The Indians accepted indentured service because of steady unemployment, caste exploitation, unexpected natural disasters, and civil unrest in their villages.

Sea Voyage

Of the overall indentured experience, the shipping of Indians over the dangerous Indian and Atlantic Oceans is less known, especially for the periods under discussion. Detailed accounts on the conditions of Indian sea voyages on the *Hesperus* and the *Whitby* (to British Guiana) as well as the *Mars* (to St. Croix) are distressingly scarce. Even when accounts did exist, they were not recorded by Indian passengers but by the organizers of indenture. One recent reliable source *Theophilus Richmond, The First Crossing: Being The Diary of Theophilus Richmond, Ship's Surgeon Aboard The Hesperus, 1837–8*, shows how planter John Gladstone employed Theophilus Richmond, a 25-year-old medical doctor/surgeon, on aboard the ship *Hesperus* in 1837–1838 to transport 170 indentured Indians to substitute for the loss of enslaved laborers in British Guiana (Dabydeen et al. 2007:xvi–xvii). The ship set sail on June 23, 1837, from Liverpool, England, traveled around Africa, and stopped in Mauritius on August 30. *Hesperus* then travelled to and reached Calcutta, India, on December 8, and eventually set sail for British Guiana, its final destination, where it arrived on April 26, 1838. Another ship, the *Whitby*, left India and arrived in Berbice, British Guiana, on May 5, 1838 with 267 indentured Indians—a total of 437 for the entire colony. The *Coolie Journal* (1863) shows that 321 indentured Indians were transported on the steamship *Mars,* which departed Calcutta in early March and arrived on Danish St. Croix on June 13, 1863.

Distribution of Indentured Indians

Within days of arrival in British Guiana and St. Croix, Indians were distributed to various plantations whose employers were responsible for their sojourned indentured service. Some interesting analyses can be drawn from the distribution of Indians to British Guiana and St. Croix. First, these Indians were put to work soon after arrival and denied any time to acclimatize or even learn plantation work. Some of them might have been accustomed to hard agricultural labor in their homeland but certainly not planting, weeding, harvesting, and producing sugar. This experience was different from slavery. African slaves were given an acclimatization period. For this and other reasons, some critics of indenture argued that the labor system was a modified system of slavery (Tinker 1974; Beaumont 1871). Second, these Indians were recruited from different regions in India with varying religions and social structures. Some of these differences were diluted during the sea voyage as Indians bonded together to deal with more pressing issues such as abuse and survival (Samaroo 1999/2000: 19). However, it is probable that Indians were dispatched to various plantations irrespective of their cultural, caste, and religious identities, or their family backgrounds. This might have certainly affected family stability and undermined the hope of reconstructing family life in the Caribbean. Third, the distribution lists show an enormous gender disparity. Of the total 437 Indians brought to British Guiana, only 12 were women, while on St. Croix women constituted 60 out of a population of 321. This disparity might not have mattered since Indians were sojourners in the Caribbean, and single males and females would have most likely returned to a more favorable family environment when their contracts expired. Indian males, in particular, could have also formed unions with other ethnic groups in their new environment. This situation did not materialize mainly because Indians socialized according to their conservative caste customs which frowned upon socializing and mixing with other ethnic groups and even with different castes within their own social hierarchy. Because of the gender disparity, Indian males either remained single or competed for scarce Indian women, which led to jealousy and unwanted social ills such as wife-chopping and murder in their isolated communities. Statistics on the social ills of indentured Indians during the period under analysis are not available. But when indenture resumed in 1845 and continued until 1920, social ills, including wife murders, were a permanent feature of the labor system. For instance, in British Guiana, between 1885 and 1900, of 103 murders, 78 were women, while 58 were wives (Mohapatra 1995: 22).

Plantation Experience

The core of the Indian Caribbean plantation experience began with signed labor contracts in their homeland. The contracts consisted of laws and ordinances that were not easily comprehensible to modern researchers, much less to the nineteenth century Indian peasantry. The majority of Indians who signed labor contracts, or were forced to do so, did not understand the labor requirements and obligations that awaited them in the Caribbean. Many were simply non-literate. Moreover, the contracts were largely developed and designed in the economic interest of the planter class but contained some incentives to draw Indians into indenture overseas. Indentured Indians received fixed wages, free housing, medical care, and rations in exchange for their continuous labor. At the end of the fifth year, they had the option to accept a bounty of $40 in St. Croix and $50 in British Guiana and re-indenture for another five years. The planters, however, did not meet their expected obligations, and were not generally punished, unless their actions were severe. The planters' privileged position revealed the one-sided nature of the indenture system. Their reluctance to live up to expected obligations was largely responsible for continued social conflict between themselves and indentured Indians.

Although the contracts stated that indentured Indians should be given suitable housing, the planters made no real attempt to meet this obligation. Instead, with the aim of curbing additional costs, the planters housed indentured Indians in abandoned slave dwellings, where conditions were deplorable and degrading. The abandoned slave dwellings consisted of a series of flat one-room houses or huts that afforded no family privacy. These one-room houses were designed to accommodate two persons, but in British Guiana the one-room houses were used to accommodate seven to 11 indentured Indians. Similar circumstances of overcrowding were noticed in St. Croix. Six Indians were lodged in one room, and in one case a man and his wife and two single men were placed in one room. When one plantation manager was asked why so many Indians were lodged in one room, he said if Indians were given separate rooms then there would be none for incoming immigrants (B.E.P 1865: 9). The one-room houses lacked any indoor plumbing, and so indentured Indians washed, cooked, and relieved themselves outdoors. Indentured Indians were subsequently not only exposed to but also suffered from a range of diseases such as chigoes, cholera, and dysentery. These diseases emerged mainly from unsanitary environments and poor hygiene (B.P.P 1839: 105).

The working conditions were equally bad. Indians were required to work nine hours per day six days per week, excluding holidays. They were engaged in almost every aspect of sugar cane plantation work—from weeding and molding to cutting and transporting the sugar cane to the factory. This was strenuous work that tested and taxed the temperament of even the most docile and disciplined indentured laborers. Some indentured Indians accepted indenture but others took militant actions that included strikes and riots. In response, the plantation management either fined or physically punished them. Testimonies from the Anti-Slavery Society, members of the plantation staff, and indentured servants in courts revealed that indentured Indians were severely mistreated in British Guiana and St. Croix. The most severe mistreatment involved flogging on the plantations as well as neglect in the hospitals or "sick-houses." These buildings were inadequately equipped with medical supplies and poorly staffed. Several reports indicated that conditions at "sick-houses" were heart-rending and frightful (B.P.P 1839: 90–99; Nath 1975; Dookhan 1977).

Not surprisingly, death rates in both colonies were high. Of the 437 Indians transported from India to British Guiana, 98 of them died during their five-year contract from 1838 to 1843. This was almost 25 % of the population. The situation was marginally better on St. Croix. The British Consul's dispatch to the British Colonial Office showed that Indians on St. Croix suffered from poor health emanating from inadequate diet, overwork, ill-treatment, neglect, and disease. Of 321 Indians who left Calcutta in 1863, 19 died on the plantations, more than 6% during the first year (B.E.P 1865: 8). Not all of these deaths were connected to indenture. Some Indians committed suicide or drowned, while others deserted the plantation and were never found. The high death rates were considered excessive and were among the reasons that future allotment of indentured Indians to both colonies was stopped.

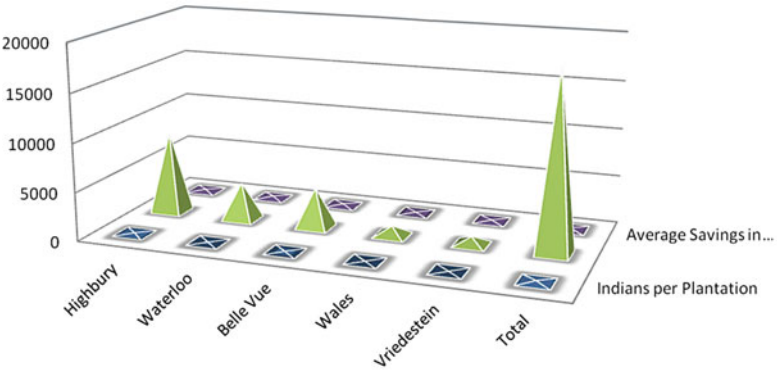
The poor treatment indentured Indians received in British Guiana and St. Croix raises and reveals some interesting questions and points. Why did Indians receive poor treatment in the Caribbean colonies? Was it because the planters thought that peasant-oriented Indians were treated worse in their homeland, which gave them enough reason and justification to administer similar practices on their plantations? Actually, there is a modicum of truth to this generalization. The plantocracy believed that the punishment meted out to Indians in the Caribbean would not have constituted a serious offense in India and so why should they be held responsible for poor treatment of indentured Indians? Similarly, if peasant Indians

were treated poorly in their homeland, why would they expect a different treatment in the Caribbean? The planter class claimed that because it was fellow Indians who were in the positions of authority over the indentured Indians (overseers, managers and drivers) and not them, it was Indians who acted wrongly and in a manner inconsistent with power and responsibility. Indians simply exploited other less fortunate Indians. Perhaps one can conclude with reasonable justification that the above-mentioned circumstances were little different than what enslaved Africans endured during slavery. There are two possible reasons for this conclusion. The planter class, which was molded in the belief in a forced labor system for over four centuries, would have found nothing unjust about indentured labor. The indentured servants themselves bore a striking resemblance to the Africans they replaced on the plantations. They were dark-skinned and supposedly inferior, and therefore fit the vital criteria upon which the plantation system functioned. There were, however, some unique characteristics of the indenture system that were not present during slavery, although the stains of slavery, especially in the domain of control, were not totally removed.

Remittances

In spite of hardships, indentured Indians were able to remit savings to their homeland. Figure 6.1 shows Indians remitted £18,448, or $88,550, from five plantations in British Guiana in 1843 (B.P.P 1843: 33–37). In contrast, the information on savings Indians acquired on St. Croix is scattered and sketchy. On the so-called *Coolie Journal* list of indentured Indians on St. Croix, the remarks section shows very little information on savings. Actually, a number of Indians had no savings beside their names. For instance, on plantation Lower Bethlehem, only 14 out of 64 indentured Indians had savings deposited beside their names ranging from $9.00 to $50.00 or £2 to £10 (*Coolie Journal* 1863). The total amount of savings Indians took back with them on their return voyage from St. Croix to India in 1868 was just over $12,000 or £2500.

The amount of savings Indians remitted to their homeland reveals the industrious side of some indentured Indians, who were determined to make the best of adverse circumstances. They were able to do so only against tremendous odds because they were locked in a low plantation wage regime that offered them not more than 24 cents or one shilling per day for unskilled manual labor. This meant that their weekly income was around five shillings or $1.20 and their monthly and yearly income were



	Highbury	Waterloo	Belle Vue	Wales	Vriedestein	Total
Indians per Plantation	68	21	31	16	9	145
Total Amount of Savings in Pounds	8,536	3,888	4,136	1,035	853	18,448
Average Savings in Pounds	125.53	185.14	133.42	64.69	94.78	127.5

Fig. 6.1 Savings Indians acquired on five plantations in British Guiana in 1843 (*Source*: British Parliamentary Papers (1843), XXXV (404) "Correspondence relating to the return of coolies from British Guiana to India." London, Colonial Office, 33–37)

£1 or $4.80 and £12 or $55, respectively. For an entire five-year contract, they would have potentially earned not more than £60 or $300.00. In 1843, on five plantations in British Guiana, the average savings were around £127 or $609 for each indentured Indian. In that same year on plantation *Belle Vue*, for instance, 31 Indians had total savings of £4120 or $19,819, an average of £133 or $638 each. The highest savings on that plantation in 1843 was £427 or $2049 while the lowest was £10 or $48 (B.P.P 1843: 33–37). Savings were much lower in Danish St. Croix. In 1868, the 250 (five died en route) ex-indentured Indians from St. Croix took with them back to India on average £10 or $50, which means they saved £2 or $10.00 per year on average.

Why indentured Indians in Danish St. Croix were less able to accumulate savings than indentured servants in British Guiana is open to speculation. One reason, as stated above, might have been that accumulated

savings were poorly recorded in Danish St. Croix and therefore did not reveal the actual amount saved. Indentured Indians also were skeptical of the overall indenture system, including the banks. Some of them did not deposit their savings in government banks, fearing that they would not be able to withdraw them at their convenience. Instead, they stored their savings in bed mattresses or in tree holes, which were not declared to the recorders. Even on their final journey from the Caribbean to India, many ex-indentured Indians simply concealed their savings from port authorities and stashed them in their clothes, belts, and private areas of their body. Other Indians used their savings to buy gold, and were not counted in the overall savings. The high savings accumulated, especially in British Guiana, did not come from indentured service. Rather, savings came from other occupations and engagement in petty capitalism such as the retailing of goods and services as well as money lending to fellow Indians at high interest rates. It is also probable that the high savings in British Guiana might have been a representation of an entire family rather than an individual, although the savings were listed in individual names. Alternatively, savings were low in both colonies probably because of fines imposed on indentured Indians for violating the labor contract; or indentured Indians might have lost working days to appear in court to defend themselves against accusations and infractions. The data seems to support this possibility in British Guiana (see below). The situation was somewhat different on St. Croix. Food for which Indians were charged 40 cents was supplied to the natives at 25 cents (B.E.P 1865: 7). The comparatively high charges must have used up some of their savings. Savings from both colonies were high when compared to India, even if they were below their expectations. The planters used these savings as evidence that the labor system provided opportunities for Indians to work and save as well as to remit savings to their homelands. They also pointed out that the wages Indians earned were higher than what they were accustomed to in their homeland and that the failure of other laborers to accumulate savings was due to their personal limitations.

The stark reality is that a majority of indentured Indians did not remit much savings at all. In British Guiana, on plantation *Vriedestein*, of an initial total of 31 indentured Indians, only nine had savings at an average of just over £50 or $240 each, which meant that for each indentured year, they had saved on an average £10 or $48 (British Parliamentary Papers 1843: 33–37). A similar pattern was recorded on St. Croix. The Indian researcher K. K. Sircar (1971) claimed that out of 245 returnees

from St. Croix, only 149 had remitted savings while the remaining 96 returned penniless.

The Abolition of Indenture *in Both Colonies*

The British Crown was suspicious of the planters' favorable account of indenture and proceeded towards total abolition. The Crown was persuaded when *Friends of India* and the *British Emancipator*, the official organ of the Anti-Slavery Society of Great Britain, published reports of severe mistreatment of indentured Indians prior to leaving India and on two plantations in British Guiana. In 1839, the British Crown sent Mr. Justice Coleman to inspect and investigate the conditions on five plantations in British Guiana. Coleman found that, while the conditions on some plantations were unfavorable, the indentured Indians were cheerful and content as well as adapting well to their new environment. Coleman's investigation complemented the planters' view of indenture. A second envoy, under the leadership of Sir M. McTurk, was appointed by Court of Policy to report on the conditions under which indentured Indians worked. The report portrayed a distressing picture of indenture on two plantations in British Guiana. Indians were working and living in the tradition of slavery. They were not only overworked but were given no medical attention. They were left to die on their own with their flesh rotting on their bones. Meanwhile, John Scoble, the Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, visited five plantations in British Guiana and found that the actual mistreatment of indentured Indians was concealed from the British Crown. He eventually wrote an impressive pamphlet exposing the harsh treatment of indentured Indians in British Guiana. He exposed how Indians suffered from sickness, overcrowding, physical punishment, distress, disease, and death (Scoble 1840). On one occasion, overseer Charles Jacob was accused of flogging laborers and rubbing salt into their wounds as well as extorting money from them. Jacob was eventually fined and imprisoned (B.P.P 1839: 75–125; Dookhan 1977). In response to the severe mistreatment, the British Crown and Indian government issued a prohibition against further importation of indentured Indians to British Guiana.

The abolition of indenture on St. Croix was somewhat different from that on British Guiana, although there were some similarities with regard to the harsh treatment of Indians on that island. One main problem was the costs of importing indentured workers from India, which fell on the colonial government and partly on the planters through

loans. In the 20 years between 1859 and 1878, overall immigration to St. Croix, which included other ethnic groups, had cost the Danish colonial government an estimated $138,000 or £28,750. Of this sum, Indian immigration between 1863 and 1865 amounted to $57,786 or £12,038, almost 42 % of the total cost (Jensen 1998: 173–74). The cost of importing Indians to St. Croix in 1863 amounted to $34,214 or £7128.2 s, and returning them to India came to $15,283 or £3184.10s (Sircar 1971: 145). Indian immigration was not only too costly but Danish St. Croix was also too weak financially to sustain this immigration. Moreover, it was cheaper for the planters to import laborers from the surrounding Caribbean islands.

Indian indenture on St. Croix was also abolished because of poor supervision and poor treatment of the laborers. The British Consul, Harry Rainals, who was stationed on St. Croix to look into the welfare of indentured Indians, inspected the working and living condition of the laborers. In his report to the British Crown, he recommended the following:

> I regret that I cannot consistently with truth submit a more favorable report to your Lordship with regard to the immigrants [Indians]; but it appears to me the more necessary that the fact should be known to your Lordship, because I am given to understand that the government and emigration committee of this island contemplate sending to India for a supply of emigrants. Before this is done, I presume the proposed agreements will be submitted for approval to Her Majesty's government, and in that case I would respectfully express the opinion that it would be desirable that not only the contracts should be differently and more carefully worded but that some measure should be adopted to secure the fulfillment of the engagement entered into, for the more numerous the immigrants, the less attention and care will probably be bestowed upon them (B.E.P 1865: 9).

The bonded laborers themselves expressed a desire to be free from indenture. A majority of them did not commend or condemn indenture but were rather disappointed to have not extracted more from their contracts. When their contracts expired, more than two-thirds of them opted to return to their homeland. In 1843, ships *Louisa Baillie* and *Water Witch* departed British Guiana with 191 and 44 Indians, respectively. Thirty died on the return voyage, while 60 remained in British Guiana for another five years (British Parliamentary Papers 1843: 33–37). In 1868, 250 time-expired Indians left St. Croix for India on the *Dorothea Melchior*, while the remaining 30 renewed their contracts for another five years. After the end

of their second term in 1873, these Indians waived their rights to a return passage and accepted a cash bonus of $40.00 each. They eventually went to Trinidad to return to India or to find alternative employment.

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CHAPTER 7

Views and Voices of Indenture

Abstract This chapter presents the views of contemporary participants living on St. Croix on Indian indenture on the island. A cross-section of individuals was interviewed for their views on indenture. The purpose of this approach was not to rely solely on printed material to analyze indenture. Although information was limited since traces of the descendants were difficult to find, some original sources and unexpected and previously unheard voices, and in particular, a few photographs of actual indentured servants never seen before are provided to enhance and enrich the historiography of indentured Indians on Danish St. Croix.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide alternative views and voices of indenture on St. Croix as opposed to solely relying on archival information and institutions. For the oral history of indenture, I conducted email interviews, telephone interviews, and distributed a survey (see below). I held a number of unstructured interviews and engaged with a cross section of individuals on St. Croix from 2002 to 2012. Interesting, too, a few individuals from outside of St. Croix who turned out be valuable sources, contacted me via email to help them "discover" their ancestral roots. I chose to include and discuss five participants out of 30 or so from whom I have received information. The five participants share diverse views but are representative of the overall interviews. I decided to include the names and photographs of the participants who wished to

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have them published. Unfortunately, a few participants promised to be a part of the research but never responded further. Some participants' responses needed clarification, and in some cases, analysis. However, I tried to present their views unedited. Participant # 1 was chosen to show the views of indenture from India, the original base of indentured Indians. Participant # 2 was chosen because she claims to be a direct descendant of one of the indentured Indians on St. Croix, which is a rarity. Participants # 3, 4 and 5 were chosen not to show the connection between them but the ongoing search for indentured roots. Many more participants claimed that they had some "Indian in them," but this information could not be verified. The survey was as follows:

1. Could you provide a brief bio of yourself such as your ethnicity, where you were born, and how long you have been living (or not living) on St. Croix (STX)?
2. Why do you think the Danish Crown brought Indians to STX?
3. Could you narrate anything you know or do not know about Indian indenture on STX?
4. Are you in any way connected to the indentured Indian experience (family or otherwise) on STX? Or are you aware of anyone who is connected to Indian indenture on STX?
5. Do you think it is important to study Indian indenture on St. Croix? Why or why not?
6. Is there anything you may wish to add on the Indian indentured experience on STX?

Participant # 1

This participant has been living on St. Croix for about two decades and held a few high-level occupations, including an adjunct faculty position at the University of the Virgin Islands. He is of East Indian extraction from India. From the telephone interview, the participant stated that there was no such thing as Indian indenture of St. Croix. I asked how you do know there was never an Indian indentured experiment on St. Croix. The reply was it never happened. The participant faxed me the following information and agreed to have it published. "The Indian people were brought to the West Indies by the British Crown as India was under the British Raj almost 200 years ago up to 1947. Indians were brought in because of their experience in sugar production. Indians when they were brought in were given tall hopes of providing land in the West Indies and were promised a return ticket periodically.

This did not happen. After they reached the West Indies they were treated as slaves. They got to get first names as English names to get into the schools. After some time when Indians were allotted land in Trinidad and Jamaica, they were given all low lying land. Danish Crown held no knowledge of Indians as the British Raj. Hardly any Indian or no Indians during 1863–1873 came to St. Croix." (February 4, 2015). In a telephone interview with two other participants from India living on St. Croix for almost two decades shared somewhat similar information, namely that Indian indenture never occurred on St. Croix and proceed to "inform me" about indenture in the Caribbean. At a broad level, the responses from these Indian nationals with regard to indenture on St. Croix raise and reveal some interesting questions and analyses. How come Indians from India have such a limited knowledge of indenture in the Caribbean? Moreover, why their knowledge of indenture in the Caribbean is ad hoc? It appears that the literature (written and oral) is not available or readily accessible in India and St. Croix, and whenever available, it is not accurate. Or, it is simply that they are not interested. At a deeper level, the discussion of indenture on St. Croix even among Indians is limited. What is also interesting is that Indians from India and Indians from the Caribbean, Trinidad, and Guyana, do interact in business and religious circles. Over 40% of the information is inaccurate and the intention is not to ridicule the participants but to show how indenture is viewed on St. Croix in modern times. In some ways, this is expected because the exclusion of this history of St. Croix. For the sake of clarity, Indians were not given land to settle on Croix and they did receive a return passage to their homeland, at least the first batch that returned to India in 1868. The participant's perceptions are correct that some level of deception occurred in the movement of Indians from India to the Caribbean and their plantation experience was somewhat like slavery. But his views that Indian indenture did not occur on St. Croix is myopic and inaccurate.

Participant # 2

This participant does not need any analysis. The following are the words of the participant. "My ethnicity is a mixture of African, East Indian, Danish, and English. I was born in New York and have never visited St. Croix, though both my paternal grandparents were born there. My paternal great-grandparents were both indentured servants from India, and were both on the ship that arrived from India to St. Croix in 1863. From the name I found on the ship's manifest, my great-grandfather was 20 years old when he arrived in St. Croix. I was able to establish his Indian name as "Deemuhammed." His

name was later changed to Charles Bernhardt. My great-grandmother was a young child when she arrived in St. Croix. I don't know her Indian name, but it was changed to Jane Bernhardt. Because my great-grandmother came to St. Croix as a very young child of either 4 or 9, she seems to have had some level of formal education, based on handwriting samples I have of hers that are on the back of old family photos. I don't know if her story is typical of the average indentured servant experience. My great-grandparents did not repatriate after their contracts expired. They both appear in the 1890 census, where my great-grandfather's occupation is listed as a 'hostler.' I don't know much about my great-grandfather, but there is one thing that I find quite interesting about him. He became Anglicized upon coming to St. Croix, but he didn't seem to be very happy about losing his Indian name. In fact, the only thing most of his descendants knew about him was his Indian name, which my family told me was 'Deemohamden.' Since there was only one ship that arrived from India to St. Croix, I was able to confirm his name on the ship's manifest as 'Deemuhammed.' It was an exciting discovery to find out that family lore was pretty accurate and that my great-grandfather's name had been re-discovered and therefore not forgotten. Another interesting fact is that at least one of the sons of my Indian great-grandparents carried on the tradition of working in the sugarcane industry—in the production of rum—in San Pedro de Macoris, Dominican Republic, where he moved after he left St. Croix. I definitely think it is important to study the history of indenture on St. Croix, the lives of the people brought from India and the impact they had on the culture of the island. Also, their economic contributions should not be ignored or forgotten. St. Croix only received 321 Indians, so knowing the history of this small population of people would be very interesting.

Participant # 3

This participant is originally from the United States but has lived on St. Croix for over three decades. The participant is a historian conducting research and interviewing people who lived in the Water Gut neighborhood of Christiansted. The participant was told that Harry Edwards had at least one parent who was of East Indian extraction. The background of this individual is mysterious. It is not certain if this person was a descendant of indentured Indians. But evidence of East Indians living in Christiansted and around the island does surface. In a conversation with another participant this participant was told that two "Coolies" were living with a family as servants. One of my former students at the University of the Virgin Islands said her grandmother was a "coolie" who came to

St. Croix in 1870s. It is interesting to note that almost everyone used the word "Coolie" to discuss their connection to India, unaware that the word is offensive to Indians in the Caribbean. Actually, the word is widely used on St. Croix when indentured Indians are discussed.

Participant # 4

The story of this participant is important as well as significant to the understanding of why the records at the Whim Museum on St. Croix showed that there are a number of "Coolies" shown in the census after indenture ended on St. Croix in 1873. To recall, all time-expired Indians left the islands when their contracts expired and even when they were offered the option to renew them. They left for Trinidad and then to India. The word "Coolie" is not defined anywhere in the records. Generally speaking, "Coolie" can be referred to Chinese laborers or anyone who were contracted to work on the plantations or estates. The census records seem to refer to East Indian laborers as "Coolie." However, whether these "Coolies" appeared in the census records in 1880, the 1890s, and 1900 is open to speculation. It is possible that ex-indentured Indians might have migrated from other islands in the Eastern Caribbean, especially from St. Kitts and Nevis to St. Croix. In a lengthy conversation with one participant, after my presentation on the legacy of indenture on St. Croix, I was informed that the participant was not only a descendant of indentured Indians but that her ancestors went to Nevis from India in 1861 and then migrated from Nevis to St. Croix about a decade later. The participant stated that although she was born in New York, her parents are from St. Croix. She said that "my parents would often talk about their childhood days on St. Croix with great pride. My mother would tell me stories about her beautiful mother, who was born on the island of St. Kitts. My maternal grandmother was called Ellen, and she came to St. Croix as a very young girl. She was of East Indian and Scottish lineage. My mother told me as a child [that], she remembers meeting her East Indian grandfather at the tender age of ten, my mother made me read Gandhi and introduced me to curry." She continues, "due to a labor shortage on the island of St. Croix, East Indians were brought to work as indentured laborers and my family worked on plantation Bethlehem. This took place after the slave revolt on the island. Many of the Indians were abused during this period and eventually the indentured labor ended." Trinidadian historian Kumar Mahabir (2016) writes that "according to *St. Christopher Advertiser and*

Weekly Intelligencer (January 13–February 11, 1862), on June 3, 1861 the *Dartmouth* docked in St. Kitts with 337 Indian passengers. There were 186 adult males, 103 adult females, 13 boys, 10 girls, 10 male and 15 female infants. There was a total of 209 males and 128 females. The largest number of immigrants (29) was sent to Dewar estate and the smallest number (four) was sent to Mansion estate. More females than males were sent to West Farm, Dupuys, and Golden Rock estates (ten females to eight males, 6–5 and 4–3, respectively). These figures include adults and children. An average of 13 immigrants went to the 25 designated estates while six were immediately sent to the Colonial Hospital." Some of these ex-indentured Indians might have migrated to St. Croix. Sircar writes that 65 Indians were brought from St. Kitts to St. Croix after indenture expired on the latter island. The next participant provides an interesting case with regard to the intra-Caribbean migration of ex-indentured servants.

Participant # 5

The following are the words of the participant. "I was born and raised on St. Croix, but my family migrated to St. Croix. My father is Joachim Dariah who is from St. Lucia, West Indies, and my mother is Justine Abraham-Dariah, who is from Dominica, West Indies. My parents met on the island of St. Croix when opportunity blossomed in the 1960s. My father's family were indentured Indians that settled in St. Lucia. My father's mother was half-black and half-Indian, and his father was all Indian. My mother is mixed, with black and other ethnicities. In May 2014, I took the DNA test with www.ancestrydna.com and I came to discover that I am 51% Central African, 42% Central and South Asian (mainly India), 4% European and 3% Pacific Islander. I was motivated to come to the presentation [the author's presentation on Indian indenture on St. Croix in 2014] because I have been doing my family research with other family members and we were stuck and needed more answers to our questions. I was hoping at the meeting that I could find more information on Indians in the Caribbean and was hoping to get leads on who and where I should conduct my additional research. We discovered through archive documents who were my great-grandparents, but we want to know which boat they came on to St. Lucia and possibly their birth locations in India".

Fig. 7.1 Jane Bernhart, one of the indentured Indians who came to St. Croix when she was three or four years old. This is the only available photograph of indentured Indians on St. Croix. Courtesy of the Bernhart Family

Fig. 7.2 Boy of South Asian origin in the Danish West Indies in 1903. Maritime Museum of Denmark, file no. 000015688

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CHAPTER 8

Conclusion

Abstract This is the first in-depth study on the only shipload of indentured Indians to Danish St. Croix in 1863. The expectation of the planter class was that indentured Indians would be the main supplier of labor to post-emancipation Danish West Indies as they had done in the British, Dutch, and French West Indies. This did not happen. Instead, black workers from the Eastern Caribbean islands provided the labor. The Indian indenture did not pan out because of poor management and poor treatment of the laborers from the planter class. Despite this, indenture would have continued as it did in the aforesaid islands amid problems but the Danish government was not genuinely interested in not only continuing with plantation agriculture but also with ownership of the islands. The Crown believed it was time to give up the islands to the USA, which it eventually did in 1917. Indian indenture was also too costly when compared with importing labor from within the Caribbean. The laborers were disappointed with the overall system to at least not extract more final gains. Many went back to India empty-handed. Their contract simply got the best of them. While they never had their day and they left no traces of themselves, their history and how they participated in the planters' attempt to resolve the post-emancipation labor crisis should not be ignored. Their history has now been told after more than 150 years.

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In 1863, after two years of negotiation between the British and Danish governments, the Danish planters were allowed to import Indian laborers on their plantations. Three hundred and twenty-five indentured Indians were transported from the port of Calcutta, India, on February 1863 and arrived at Frederiksted, St. Croix, three months later. Few died. The arrival of these emigrants was in response to a labor shortage emerged from the gradual drifting of freed Africans from plantation labor. Subsequently, there was a noticeable decline in the local labor force. For Africans, the plantations held no interest in terms of sustaining a livelihood. Many found employment in non-plantation sectors, while others worked part-time on the plantations. The planters argued that the existing labor force was inadequate to sustain and support sugarcane cultivation. They wanted foreign labor. The push for foreign labor to resolve the post-emancipation labor shortage on St. Croix was not unusual. Other European countries, in particular, Britain, France, and Holland, also used Indian indenture in their former Caribbean slave colonies. Indians were thought to be the most reliable laborers after emancipation. Actually, by the 1860s, an estimated 20,000–30,000 indentured Indians had already been brought to the British Guiana and Trinidad to work on the plantations.

The indenture system had become so extensive that rules and regulations were implemented to organize it. The British and colonized India governments set down a series of conditions to monitor and manage the recruitment, transportation, and plantation labor of indentured Indians in order to stamp out exploitation. However, the governments' policy did not mean that indentured Indians were well protected overseas. The Indian government lacked any real power. The British imperial government assigned the Indian government to a subordinate colonial status, thereby stifling and strangling its ability to carry out mandated responsibilities. The colonized Indian government was forced to stay neutral or entered into concessions with the imperial government that disfavored overseas indentured Indians. Meanwhile, the antagonistic relationship between planters and laborers during the post-emancipation period on St. Croix undermined any progress towards the fair practice of labor. Instead of progress, there was stagnation. Instead of determination and growth, there was decadence, dissatisfaction, and disintegration. In the struggle for the domination of capital in a so-called free labor market, indentured Indians were caught in the middle of this conflict. There was nothing significant about this middle position other than being treated like the rest of the laboring class or being subservient to planters' pressure.

The prevailing thought during post-emancipation St. Croix was that any source of discontent would not challenge but would favor the status quo of the plantocracy. Adjustment to the changing reality of labor, namely the fair play between work and wage, was not a natural attribute of the planter class. Politics also played a role when Indian indenture was introduced on St. Croix. In the 1860s, Denmark was seeking to get rid of the Virgin Islands and had made meaningful contacts with the United States to sell the islands. In this regard, Denmark was not interested in fostering a genuine post-emancipation labor relationship between the planters and laborers. Indians themselves were discouraged by the poor treatment they received from the indenture system on Danish St. Croix and chose to leave when their contracts expired. Denmark never had total control over the affairs of the Danish West Indies. Instead, the imperial government allowed the colonial process to be controlled by the local government, which in turn, was influenced by European planter nationalities that rarely deviated from a pro-slavery mentality. This was the main obstacle to the fair practice of indenture on St. Croix.

Denmark's experiment with Indian indenture failed because of a series of reasons. Firstly, Denmark agreed to the rules and regulations of the indenture contract stipulated by the British-influenced 1862 Convention. But this binding agreement was not discharged. In each stage of indenture, there were loopholes that were manipulated and exploited. Secondly, the Danish planters were too financially weak to meet the expectations of Indian indenture on St. Croix. Indian indenture emigration was too expensive. While Indians were brought to St. Croix to labor under specific conditions like those in British Guiana and Trinidad, the planters used the restrictive 1849 labor regulations to organize and conduct Indian indenture. The end result was disastrous for indentured Indians: wages were cut, rations were delayed, and medical attendance and housing were inadequate—coupled with poor supervision, neglect, and ill-treatment on the estates. The planters were not concerned with the stability of Indian family life on St. Croix. Instead, the daily routine revolved around Western forms of work and time, which was inconsistent with Indian concepts of work that operated on religion, rank, purity, caste, and so on. Indians tried to rely on their own strength to cope with the five years of their indentured contracts. While this strategy boded well for them in some ways, it was not strong enough to deal with all the ills of indenture. The worst aspect was the low confidence in the British Consul to resolve indentured laborers' grievances. The Consul received information on the poor treatment

of indentured Indians but never acted upon it. Instead, he sent a final recommendation to the British Crown. A positive approach, as noticed elsewhere in the Caribbean, would have been the consistent monitoring of the indenture to nip the problems early and firmly recommend changes. It is doubtful, whether on foot or horseback, that the Consul visited the plantation domains regularly of the indentured Indians to ensure a fair practice of indenture. His mere presence would have made a difference insofar as Indians were not alone in their pursuit of a decent indentured life. The Consul gravitated to people like his own, where he was not isolated, where he was understood, where his feelings were shared, and where his language was accepted. This was certainly not the indentured but the planters' world.

Little wonder that a minority of indentured Indians chose to re-indenture on Danish St. Croix when their contracts expired, while a majority of them returned to India in 1868. Those that re-indentured hoped for better achievements while those that returned were disappointed with indenture. Returning Indians also realized that indenture was designed to meet the needs of the planter class rather than them. The 250 returning ex-indentured Indians from St. Croix were transported back to India on Danish barque *Dorothea Melchior*. The voyage was satisfactory, and the returning passengers encountered few deaths. The documentation of indentured Indian experience, however, on St. Croix was carried out with little care. Names were misspelled, depot numbers were mismatched, and savings were misplaced. Individual savings were not recorded. However, Indians took back with them an estimated $12,000. The average savings of the 250 returning ex-indentured Indians were $50.00 or $10.00 for five years. This was a major disappointment, which was compounded by unfair exchange rates. For the aforesaid reasons as well as a lack of a genuine interest from the Danish Crown to promote a semi-slave labor system soon after emancipation on Danish St. Croix, Indian indentured labor on that island collapsed in 1868. The British Consul advised the British government not to send any further shipments of Indians to St. Croix until proper measures were taken to safeguard the laborers. This did not happen, and indenture was abolished on the island. Indian indenture was discontinued on St. Croix in 1873, precisely at a time when indenture was making a transition in British Guiana and Trinidad. Indians there were given parcels of land to settle on in lieu of return passage home. This change in policy led to the development of a noticeable Indian population in British Guiana and Trinidad. However, the system was finally abolished

in 1920, but the repatriation of Indians continued until 1955, when the last ship, *Resurgent*, sailed with 235 Indians from British Guiana to India. Indenture was finally abolished because of mounting pressure from the Indian National Congress, renewed agitation in India and the Caribbean, and the recommendation of the Commission of Enquiry on conditions of Indians abroad in the early twentieth century. The Indian government believed that Indian indentures were abused abroad, and in 1920 India chose to abolish Indian indentured emigration to the Caribbean, nearly 50 years after the first and only experiment with Indians on St. Croix.

A comparative analysis of the two failed indentured service experiences in British Guiana and Danish St. Croix revealed interconnected concerns and contradictions. The most fundamental was that the authorities decided to abolish slavery but were poorly prepared to deal with post-slavery labor challenges. To save the sugar industry, they allowed indenture as a substitute for slavery. Yet there was not an organized plan in place on how indenture would function. Consequently, the first experiment with indenture in British Guiana and St. Croix operated in the tradition of slavery or as slavery in disguise. In desperation to satisfy the demands of a so-called labor shortage, the planters initiated and negotiated for the arrival of roughly 400 and 300 indentured servants for British Guiana and St. Croix, respectively. In the former colony, neither the British Crown nor the colonized Indian government was actively involved in the movement of Indians. The planters were left alone to pursue their objectives. In the latter colony, the movement of Indians was regulated by a series of rules, mainly because of the abuses in the first experiment with indentured Indians to British Guiana. Nonetheless, this research finds that indenture was poorly supervised and indentured Indians were mistreated in both Caribbean colonies. The planters tried to conceal the mistreatment, abuse, flogging, exposure to disease, deaths, and withholding of wages from the British Crown and Indian government. However, private investigation and inspection on the living and working conditions of indentured Indians exposed the evils of indenture. In response, the British Crown and Indian government abolished indenture in both colonies after the first five-year contract expired. At the end of the five years of service, more than two-thirds of the time-expired indentured Indians returned to their homeland, demonstrating their disappointment with indenture. The indentured labor was resumed in British Guiana in 1845 but not on Danish St. Croix.

In the final analysis, there were many disappointments with Indian indenture on St. Croix but two worth further discussion. First, there was

no doubt that emancipation placed pressure on the planter class to conform or adjust to the new realities of labor, that is, a society different from what had existed for three centuries. That was essentially a society based on power, prestige, privilege, and above all, protection for the planter class. Some planters buckled under a new semi-free but ever-changing post-emancipation St. Croix. Others continued as if nothing had happened. Whatever might have been the case, the consequence was that the planter class was a victim of its own success in a sense because it had never fully prepared itself for the future. The mood and manner appeared to be this: if the planter class failed, so should everything else around them. What this means, in local parlance, is that all of us will have to go down in the same ship if we don't succeed. Second, it would have been expected that nineteenth-century indenture would not be free of problems, but attempts to improve it once it was put in place were not a priority, even with the well-intentioned employers. The latter might have even been jeered at for their pains to ensure a decent indenture system. For many Indians, the indenture system had got the best of them, as evidenced by their flight to their homeland when their contracts expired. But what is more disappointing is that the indentured Indians never had their day, because they left no traces of themselves, no Hindu Temples, no architecture, no sculpture, no monument, and no writing, as noticed elsewhere in the Caribbean where Indians were indentured. This book is a dedicated to the indentured Indians brought to St. Croix.

Appendix 1

The Distribution of Indentured Indians on St. Croix in 1863

Lower Bethlehem (64)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
4	Raney Sing	23	M	Deposit 15 July 1865 $30
5	Moheepsing	24	M	$20
116	Hurrysial	24	M	Deposit
11	Ramdeen	21	M	Deposit $15
47	Buddao Miser	18	M	Deposit
42	Ramjam	17	M	Deposit $20
21	Thacooroofs	28	M	Removed to jealousy
17	Mokoondlall	21	M	Removed to jealousy
9	Leendyall	26	M	Deposit $30
8	Munbode	23	M	Died 16 Jan. 1864
72	Mahairband	28	M	Deposit
27	Gumefs	19	M	
152	Bhudohee	18	M	Deposit, withdrawn
7	Boyjnath	28	M	Deposit $31
277	Pultoo	22	M	Deposit $15
273	Muckram Sing	38	M	Removed to Jealousy deposit
13	Dulloo Meifser	18	M	
18	Chultroo	22	M	Removed to jealousy deposit $23
26	Ramloll	16	M	

(*continued*)

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(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
16	Ramtohull	35	M	Deposit
370	Khooblall	22	M	
38	Curmu	15	M	
371	Bucktowar	40	M	Died 1865 deposit $21
372, 373	Tewanah & infant Ruseown	23 & 1.5	F & M	
374	Paunchoo	3	M	
375	Boodace	6	M	
379	Butchnee	16	F	Gave birth to a female child 21 May 1864
378	Bhowaneedeen	19	M	
376	Lookae	8	M	
377	Mutow	14	M	
271	Nufsechun	15	F	
222	Hubeeb Khan	30	M	Deposit, $50
58	Murutchedh	23	F	Removed to jealousy and moved elsewhere
181	Peer Khan	26	M	Removed to jealousy
221	Afzull Khan	30	M	
272	Lubruttun	13	F	Removed to jealousy
156	Dabeedeen	28	M	Removed to jealousy
157	Needheah	22	F	Removed to jealousy—gave birth to a female child on 1 June 1863, prematurely born, died 10 July following jealousy
105	Heungullkhan	30	M	
199	Ameerun	30	F	
162	Meurutchedh	30	F	Removed to jealousy
154	Lobhan	25	M	Removed to jealousy
380	Lomun	27	M	Deposit again $9
381	Tejnee	22	F	
383	Leivah	8	M	
382	Rudeeah	12	F	
359	Rosun Khan	23	M	Deposit $50, withdrawn
360	Futtey Khan	26	M	Deposit
168	Lewbheek	23	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
358	Pandhohee	24	M	Deposit
355	Boodram	35	M	$50 deposit, withdrawn
356	Dahee	29	M	$50 deposit, withdrawn
192	Lahatoo	23	M	
134	Hoseinbuc	19	M	
227	Muckdoom	35	M	Removed to jealousy
194	Edum	40	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
130	Lobhan	25	M	Removed to jealousy

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
191	Allabux	26	M	Removed to jealousy
155	Neermer	30	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit, withdrawn April 1865
181	Peerkhan	26	M	
166	Lewlall	15	M	Removed to jealousy and died 1865
193	Lhoyk Lootoobally	30	M	
121	Khodaby	17	M	Removed to jealousy

Estate Mount Pleasant 50

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
6	Kunou Sing	26	M	
56	Lunkurah	18	M	
275	Bindrah	17	M	Died 15/965
153	Calkah	18	M	
57	Utchrou	11	M	
240	Gayoud	16	M	
151	Ramduth	19	M	
60	Toolseah	14	M	
212	Hurry Roy	18	M	
213	Tuninta	17	M	
35	Bhagarutt	19	M	
62	Dussou	23	M	Died Aug 1864
63	Pooarutt	25	M	Died 1865
132	Purrag Sing	18	M	
123	Hurbhumgun	18	M	Died 1865, deposit
48	Dhumai	17	M	
74	Auditt	21	M	Deposit
177	Booooo	21	M	
102	Divarkah	27	M	Deposit
173	Reckoah	17	M	Deposit
115	Gooroochun	20	M	
103	Lullith Geer	23	M	Deposit
113	Fowdar	17	M	
114	Bhuguran	19	M	Deposit
144	Hurruck	16	M	
143	Lewnundun	16	M	Deposit
43	Bundoo	26	M	
45	Bisso	17	M	
49	Bhoosun	16	M	
50	Purrooah	17	M	

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
51	Phagoo	14	M	
19	Lullith	18	M	
20	Thacoory	21	M	
22	Hurry	26	M	
44	Thacoormoney	22	F	
25	Unatcheah	12	F	
53	Roopeeah	12	F	
52	Lookaree	6	F	
100	Punioah	20	F	
118	Benrino	28	F	
52c	Madaree	6	F	
52b	Oodoah	4	F	
52a	Dooknah	3	F	
99	Lohorai	23	M	
15	Lumrah	17	M	
178	Mungur	27	M	
24	Nafso	24	F	
204	Roodnee	21	F	
312	Lhaik Lobratee	24	M	
179	Ugnooah	25	M	
80	Lhaik Lobrate	28	M	From fountain

Estate Diamond 25

Depot number	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
83	Ramdehun	12	M	
84	Elyheebuse	17	M	
85	Rhooblall	30	M	
239	Mustbeer	17	M	
264	Goorjeehun	23	M	To St. George's Hill
337	Goonjooman	23	M	
265	Gimefs	26	M	
12	Lreedall	21	M	
332	Radlay Khan	28	M	
333a	Loomun	6	M	
83a	Lutchnum	9	M	
112	Rajcoomar	19	M	
106	Bhyroo	17	M	
87	Puttearah Pavvy	15	M	
131	Deepchaud	16	M	
86	Chuckouree	18	M	

Depot number	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
108	Loohan	13	M	
107	Ruggoobur	30	M	
241	Roomdyall	15	M	
90	Behadoor	17	M	
91	Mooneah	25	F	
109	Lookareah	22	F	Gave birth to a female child. 4th July 1868
109a	Beelareah	2	M	
160	Poiree	23	F	
111	Beebeejam	19	F	

Rattan (10)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
208	Goomanee	20	M	
209	TahlingBoooeah	20	F	
209a	Gunassef	2	F	Died 1865
274	Deybeeppursad	20	M	
357	Lhundoo	25	M	
362	Mutroonee	25	F	Died 1864
210	Chiytah Sing	18	M	
88	Briylall	21	M	Died at hospital 6 Aug. 1864
319	Doorga Sing	28	M	Died 12 Jan. 1865
	Lutchman	23	M	

Lower Bethlehem (64)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
4	Raney Sing	23	M	Deposit 15 July 1865 $30
5	Moheepsing	24	M	Deposit $20
116	Hurrysial	24	M	Deposit
11	Ramdeen	21	M	Deposit $15
47	Buddao Miser	18	M	Deposit
42	Ramjam	17	M	Deposit $20
21	Thacooroofs	28	M	Removed to jealousy
17	Mokoondlall	21	M	Removed to jealousy
9	Leendyall	26	M	Deposit $30

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
8	Munbode	23	M	Died 16 Jan. 1864
72	Mahairband	28	M	Deposit
27	Gumefs	19	M	
152	Bhudohee	18	M	deposit, withdrawn
7	Boyjnath	28	M	Deposit $31
277	Pultoo	22	M	Deposit $15
273	Muckram Sing	38	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
13	Dulloo Meifser	18	M	
18	Chultroo	22	M	Jealousy deposit $23
26	Ramloll	16	M	
16	Ramtohull	35	M	Deposit
370	Khooblall	22	M	
38	Curmu	15	M	
371	Bucktowar	40	M	Died 1865, deposit $21
372, 373	Tewanah & infant Ruseown	23 & 1.5	F & M	
374	Paunchoo	3	M	
375	Boodace	6	M	
379	Butchnee	16	f	Gave birth to a female child 21 May 1864
378	Bhowaneedeen	19	M	
376	Lookae	8	M	
377	Mutow	14	M	
271	Nufsechun	15	F	
222	Hubeeb Khan	30	M	Deposit $50
58	Murutchedh	23	F	Jealousy moved elsewhere
181	Peer Khan	26	M	Removed to jealousy
221	Afzull Khan	30	M	
272	Lubruttun	13	F	Removed to jealousy
156	Dabeedeen	28	M	Removed to jealousy
157	Needheah	22	F	Removed to jealousy—gave birth to a female child on 1 June 1863, prematurely born, died 10 July following jealousy
105	Heungullkhan	30	M	
199	Ameerun	30	F	
162	Meurutchedh	30	F	Removed to jealousy
154	Lobhan	25	M	Removed to jealousy
380	Lomun	27	M	Deposit again $9
381	Tejnee	22	F	
383	Leivah	8	M	
382	Rudeeah	12	F	
359	Rosun Khan	23	M	Deposit $50, withdrawn
360	Futtey Khan	26	M	Deposit

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
168	Lewbheek	23	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
358	Pandhohee	24	M	Deposit
355	Boodram	35	M	$50 deposit, withdrawn
356	Dahee	29	M	$50 deposit, withdrawn
192	Lahatoo	23	M	
134	Hoseinbuc	19	M	
227	Muckdoom	35	M	Removed to jealousy
194	Edum	40	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit
130	Lobhan	25	M	Removed to jealousy
191	Allabux	26	M	Removed to jealousy
155	Neermer	30	M	Removed to jealousy, deposit, withdrawn April 1865
181	Peerkhan	26	M	
166	Lewlall	15	M	Removed to jealousy died 1865
193	Lhoyk lootoobally	30	M	
121	Khodaby	17	M	Removed to jealousy

La Princesse (10)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
76	Golluck	25	M	Died 28 April 1864
77	Odoychand	24	M	
165	Ladub	14	M	
101	Seeboo	18	M	
89	Nobinbaul	30	M	Deposit
95	Rugoonauth	30	M	
94	Jeebun	15	M	
93	Nufjeer	28	M	Deposit
96	Poorneenah	19	F	
97	Seettoo	34	F	

Lower Love (11)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
244	Dabeedien	25	M	Deposit
249	Lenchurran	24	M	
250	Ramsurran	23	M	

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
159	Poorowah w/infant 320	24	F & F	
158	Iewloll	28	M	
320	Bhowaneedeen	30	M	Died 13 February 1864
256	Hurdyall	27	M	Deposit
263	Bhugwan	24	M	
257	Doodah	18	M	
259	Ramlogan	17	M	

Golden Grove (16)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
133	Lutchman (Sing)	2	M	
120	Ramkelown	18	M	
238	Luggutt	36	M	
170	Lumarrun	18	M	
147	Choonee	22	M	Died 20 October 1864
129	Oozagheer	26	M	
145.5	Golab	16	M	
137	Rutchpaul	24	M	
185	Burran	18	M	
136	Cootbeen	21	M	
140	Rujunee	24	F	
145	Oozeer	21	M	
142	Nunkoo	26	M	
146	Luttun	22	M	
173	Mottee	23	F	
141	Gendeah	28	F	

Upper Love (15)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
75	Gopaul	24	M	Died 8 April 1864
182	Ludeymoney	20	F	
119	Russick	19	M	
202	Hunodutt	24	M	
54	Denonath	21	M	
30	Rohomutt	30	M	Deposit

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
117	Fohim	28	M	
71	Purran	18	M	Deposit
68	Luodaghur	30	M	Deposit
64	Lhaik Baboo	26	M	Deposit
69	Haronee	17	F	
66	Lohochurry	28	F	
104	Munseerally	19	M	Deposit
55	Hurro	20	F	
130	Lobhan	25	M	
70	Khemah	28	F	From Good hope 17 July 1863

Fountain (15)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
223	Leeowdee	35	M	Died 8/165
80	Lhaik Sobratee	28	M	Removed to Mt. Pleasant & Plessen
228	Alabeebux	17	M	
317	Meetoo	24	M	
261	Nowray Khan	26	M	Died 1865
139	Muttroo	21	M	
237	Ohaheedoo	18	M	
174	Abdool	28	M	
314	Lhaik Bugun	21	M	Died 1865
315	Peerbuy	18	M	
316	Dowluth	26	M	
313	Shaik Rufatee	25	M	
310	Khodabuy	28	M	Died 1865
394	Mooneah	22	F	
392	Rookmoneah	20	F	

Goodhope (25)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
234	Supersan Sing	32	M	
186	Gopaul	25	M	
245	Badooram	11	M	Died 4 September 1864
368	Sewdull	26	M	

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
260	Purjulleet Narain	23	M	
267	Sewrutten	26	M	
318	Judoosing	26	M	
254	Calleechurn	23	M	
252	Nuseeb	11	M	
251	Abdool	19	M	
258	Lookaree	24	M	
231	Lullah	24	M	
246	Lugroop	24	M	
189	Mahabeer	24	M	
236	Oozagheer	28	M	Died 4 February 1864
230	Orree	24	M	
293	Sewburran	26	M	
242	Budoloo	25	M	
266	Bingfurry	22	M	
125	Boodoo	40	M	
70	Khemah	28	F	Removed to upper love 17 July 1863
161	Amerun	21	F	Died 5 June 1864
364	Loogeah	16	F	
81	Lugeenah	28	F	
81a	Dedarbuy	9	M	Died 1864

Diamond (19)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
163	Shairally	16	M	
135	Hunsah	23	M	
369	Emomboo	22	M	
203	Shaik Bufsarutt	26	M	
276	Bugoobur	24	M	
339	Madho	19	M	
343	Golam Hoseind	25	M	
340	Bhoolaee	30	M	
342	Khermah	19	M	
345	Purohee	26	M	
138	Bhoolaee	26	M	
344	Joypaul	25	M	Died 1864
184	Ramchurran	19	M	
326	Namultally	17	M	
195	Nuliff	35	M	
361	Fooleah	36	F	

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
206	Jumneah w/Infant 321	24	F	
385	Libance	22	F	
82	Joomur	14	M	

River (56)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
216	Ticcum Sing	23	M	
220	Nekah Sing	26	M	
321	Futtey Sing	30	M	
322	Budowah Sing	30	M	
225	Emrith Sing	19	M	
232	Ram Sing	19	M	
301	Punjab Sing	32	M	Deposit, died
215	Bufsowah	25	M	
233	Bhoosan	32	M	Deposit
327	Sookmund	35	M	
324	Dabeedutt	26	M	
218	Sirdar Khan	27	M	
217	Bany	26	M	
224	Madaree	21	M	
65	Lalljee	15	M	
226	Beerbull	30	M	
325	Deemmuhomee	20	M	
351	Abdool Rahim	40	M	
352	Foorsun Khan	12	M	
351a	Hoseinbuy	8	M	
353	Nunkee	30	F	
128	Oozerun	32	F	Deposit
335	Hoseinbuy	27	M	
347	Bumdally	33	M	
348	Humsubally	9	M	
354	Sookeah	15	F	
366	Soogeeah	16	M	
333	Samkulleah	22	F	Died in April 1864
148	Nundloomar	28	M	Removed to castle
150	Bucktowar	30	M	Removed to castle
122	Soumbur	28	M	Removed to castle
198	Behadoor Khan	35	M	Removed to castle
169	Dookee	22	M	Removed to castle
171	Rullun	24	M	Removed to castle

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
200	Rambuy	30	M	Removed to castle
183	Mahairchan	23	M	Removed to castle
61	Ruckutoo	20	M	Removed to castle
338	Man Sing	21	M	
187	Mottee	22	M	Removed to castle
188	Chuckoonee	24	M	Removed to castle
331	Sewbaluck	26	M	Removed to castle
167	Bhugeyloo	18	M	
341	Doorgah	21	M	Deposit
No #	Gaiander			Professional cook
No #	Bunsee			Professional cook
149	Mucktoolah	24	F	Removed to castle
127	Parbutteah	25	F	Removed to castle, gave birth to female child, 7 Nov. 1863 & died
201	Rookmin	27	F	Removed to castle
124	Ameerun	35	F	Died 19 May 1864
270	Alladee	16	F	
207	Moynah	25	F	
235	Dyall	28	M	Died 12 February 1864
205	Mongeeah	22	F	
205a	Jumoonah (child)	4	M	
323	Kahur Sing	24	M	Removed from the hospital 17 July 1863
214	Jewah Sing	38	M	To River from hospital died 1864

Source: *Coolie Journal: The Distribution of Indians on Danish St. Croix* (1863)

Appendix 2

Estate Mount Pleasant

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
6	Kunou Sing	26	M	
56	Lunkurah	18	M	
275	Bindrah	17	M	
153	Calkah	18	M	
57	Utchrou	11	M	
240	Gayoud	16	M	
151	Ramduth	19	M	
60	Toolseah	14	M	
212	Hurry Roy	18	M	
213	Tuninta	17	M	
35	Bhagarutt	19	M	
323	Rufseeown	6		
132	Purrag Sing	18	M	
383	Seewah	13		
74	Auditt	21	M	Deposit
177	Booooo	21	M	
102	Divarkah	27	M	Deposit
173	Reckoah	17	M	Deposit
115	Gooroochun	20	M	
103	Lullith Geer	23	M	Deposit
113	Fowdar	17	M	
114	Bhuguran	19	M	Deposit
144	Hurruck	16	M	
143	Lewnundun	16	M	Deposit
43	Bundoo	26	M	
49	Bhoosun	16	M	
50	Purrooah	17	M	
51	Phagoo	14	M	

(*continued*)

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(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
19	Lullith	18	M	
20	Thacoory	21	M	
22	Hurry	26	M	
44	Thacoormoney	22	F	
25	Unatcheah	12	F	
53	Roopeeah	12	F	
52	Lookaree	6	F	
100	Punioah	20	F	
52c	Madaree	6	F	
52b	Oodoah	4	F	
52a	Dooknah	3	F	
99	Lohorai	23	M	
15	Lumrah	17	M	
178	Mungur	27	M	
24	Nafso	24	F	
204	Roodnee	21	F	
312	Lhaik Lobratee	24	M	
179	Ugnooah	25	M	

Estate Diamond

Depot number	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
83	Ramdehun	12	M	
333	Reebeejoun	24	M	
85	Rhooblall	30	M	
239	Mustbeer	17	M	
337	Goonjooman	23	M	
265	Gimefs	26	M	
12	Lreedall	21	M	
332	Radlay Khan	28	M	
333a	Loomun	6	M	
83a	Lutchnum	9	M	
112	Rajcoomar	19	M	
106	Bhyroo	17	M	
87	Puttearah Pavvy	15	M	
131	Deepchaud	16	M	
86	Chuckouree	18	M	
108	Loohan	13	M	
107	Ruggoobur	30	M	
90	Behadoor	17	M	

Depot number	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
91	Mooneah	25	F	
109	Lookareah	22	F	
109a	Beelareah	2	M	
160	Poiree	23	F	

Castle

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
148	Nundloomar	33	M	
150	Bucktowar	35	M	
169	Dookie	27	M	
61	Ruckutoo	25	M	
187	Mottee	27	M	
331	Sewbaluck	31	M	

Jealously

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
154	Sobhan	30	M	
21	Shacoordofs	33	F	
162	Munatcheeah	35	M	

La Grange

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
272	Lubruttun	13	F	
126	Peerkhun	25	Not listed	
221	Afjsill Khan	35		
17	Mohoondlall	26		
	Soman	30		

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
123	Sonnebuy	38		
183	Mahairchan	28		
127	Parbutteeah	30		
201	Rookman	32		
149	Muchtoolah	29		
	With twins and a 2 year old			
273	Muckram Sing	38	M	deposit
18	Chultroo	22	M	deposit $23
58	Murutchedh	23	F	
156	Dabeedeen	28	M	
157	Needheah	22	F	
168	Lewbheek	23	M	
194	Edum	40	M	
191	Allabux	26	M	
121	Khodaby	17	M	

La Princesse

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
77	Odoychand	24	M	
165	Ladub	14	M	
101	Seeboo	18	M	
89	Nobinbaul	30	M	Deposit
95	Rugoonauth	30	M	
94	Jeebun	15	M	
93	Nufjeer	28	M	Deposit
96	Poorneenah	19	F	
97	Seettoo	34	F	

Lower Love

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
244	Dabeedien	25	M	Deposit
249	Lenchurran	24	M	
250	Ramsurran	23	M	

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
159	Poorowah w/infant 320	24	F & F	
158	Iewloll	28	M	
256	Hurdyall	27	M	Deposit
263	Bhugwan	24	M	
259	Ramlogan	17	M	

Golden Grove

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments on deposits*
133	Lutchman (Sing)	2	M	
120	Ramkelown	18	M	
238	Luggutt	36	M	
170	Lumarrun	18	M	
129	Oozagheer	26	M	
145.5	Golab	16	M	
137	Rutchpaul	24	M	
185	Burran	18	M	
136	Cootbeen	21	M	
140	Rujunee	24	F	
145	Oozeer	21	M	
142	Nunkoo	26	M	
146	Luttun	22	M	
73	Mottee	23	F	

Upper Love

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
182	Ludeymoney	20	F	
119	Russick	19	M	
202	Hunodutt	24	M	
54	Denonath	21	M	
30	Rohomutt	30	M	Deposit
117	Fohim	28	M	
71	Purran	18	M	Deposit
68	Luodaghur	30	M	Deposit

(*continued*)

(continued)

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
64	Lhaik Baboo	26	M	Deposit
69	Haronee	17	F	
66	Lohochurry	28	F	
104	Munseerally	19	M	Deposit
55	Hurro	20	F	
219	Lobhan Khan	28	M	
70	Khemah	28	F	

Fountain

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
80	Lhaik Sobratee	28	M	
228	Alabeebux	17	M	
317	Meetoo	27	M	
237	Ohaheedoo	18	M	
174	Abdool	28	M	
315	Peerbuy	18	M	
316	Dowluth	26	M	
313	Shaik Rufatee	25	M	
394	Mooneah	22	F	
392	Rookmoneah	20	F	

Goodhope

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
234	Supersan Sing	32	M	
186	Gopaul	25	M	
368	Sewdull	26	M	
260	Purjulleet Narain	23	M	
267	Sewrutten	26	M	
318	Judoosing	26	M	
254	Calleechurn	23	M	
252	Nuseeb	11	M	
251	Abdool	19	M	

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
258	Lookaree	24	M	
231	Lullah	24	M	
246	Lugroop	24	M	
189	Mahabeer	24	M	
230	Orree	24	M	
293	Sewburran	26	M	
242	Budoloo	25	M	
266	Bingfurry	22	M	
125	Boodoo	40	M	
364	Loogeah	16	F	
81	Lugeenah	28	F	

Diamond

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
163	Shairally	16	M	
135	Hunsah	23	M	
239	Mustbeer	17	M	
203	Shaik Bufsarutt	26	M	
276	Bugoobur	24	M	
139	Muttroo	26	M	
343	Golam Hoseind	25	M	
342	Khermah	19	M	
345	Purohee	26	M	
184	Ramchurran	19	M	
326	Namultally	17	M	
195	Nuliff	35	M	
361	Fooleah	36	F	
206	Jumneah w/Infant 321	24	F	
385	Libance	22	F	
82	Joomur	14	M	

River

Depot no.	*Name*	*Age*	*Gender*	*Comments*
321	Futtey Sing	30	M	
233	Bhoosan	32	M	Deposit
327	Sookmund	35	M	
324	Dabeedutt	26	M	
224	Madaree	21	M	
348	Humsubally	9	M	
338	Man Sing	21	M	
201	Rookmin	27	F	
207	Moynah	25	F	
205	Mongeeah	22	F	
205a	Jumoonah (child)	4	M	
323	Kahur Sing	24	M	
344	Doorgah	26	M	

Source: *Coolie Journal*

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