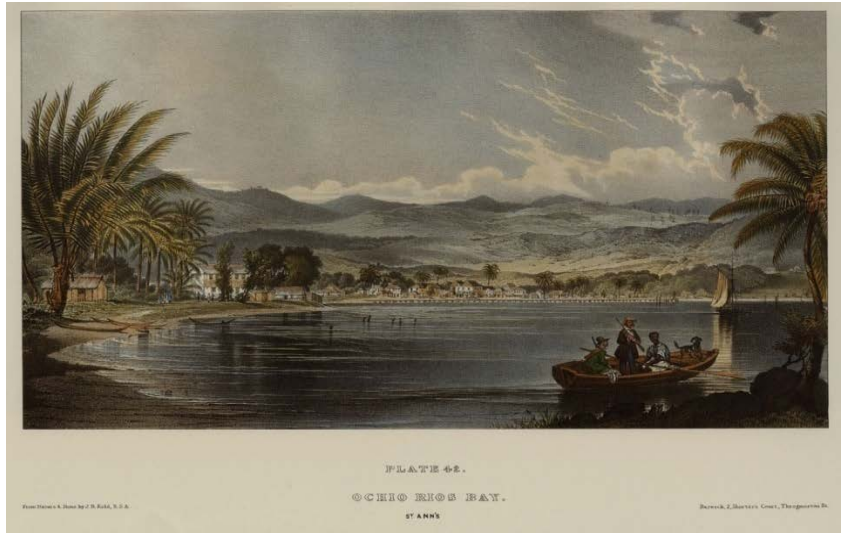


The History of St. Ann

Location and Geography

The parish of St. Ann is located on the northern side of the island and is situated to the West of St. Mary, to the east of Trelawny, and is bordered to the south by both St. Catherine and Clarendon. It covers approximately 1,212 km² and is Jamaica's largest



parish in terms of land mass. St. Ann is known for its red soil, bauxite - a mineral that is considered to be very essential to Jamaica; the mineral is associated with the underlying dry limestone rocks of the parish. A typical feature of St. Ann is its caves and sinkholes such as Green Grotto Caves, Bat Cave, and Dairy Cave, to name a few.

The beginning of St. Ann

St. Ann was first named Santa Ana (St. Ann) by the Spaniards and because of its natural beauty, it also became known as the "Garden Parish" of Jamaica. The parish's history runs deep as it is here that on May 4, 1494 while on his second voyage in the Americas, Christopher Columbus first set foot in Jamaica. It is noted that he was so overwhelmed by the attractiveness of the parish that as he pulled into the port at St. Ann's Bay, he named the place Santa Gloria. The spot where he disembarked he named Horseshoe Bay, primarily because of the shape of the land. As time went by, this name was changed to Dry Harbour and eventually, a more fitting name based on the events that occurred - Discovery Bay. When he anchored at this location, Columbus' first impression of the parish and its people was that "there were so many

Indians that the earth was covered with them” (Cundall). It is said that two canoes filled with Indians met him and his men on arrival.

Sevilla La Nueva (now Seville) - Jamaica’s First Capital

Sevilla La Nueva or New Seville is where the island’s first capital can be found a mile west of the town of St. Ann’s Bay. This settlement is said to be the oldest Spanish settlement in Jamaica and one of the first cities established by Europeans in the Americas. After the Spaniards had left the island, they would come back in 1509 with the intention of setting up a Spanish colony. Diego Colon (Son of Christopher Columbus) who at the time was the hereditary viceroy of the Americas, commissioned and sent Juan de Esquivel to establish a colony here. It is estimated that he along with fellow Spaniards arrived in Jamaica in November 1509. Juan de Esquivel and his men assisted in the founding and groundwork of Sevilla La Nueva as many notable buildings were constructed including a Monastery, a Cathedral and Palaces. Juan de Esquivel was also the first Spanish Governor of Jamaica.

Upon establishing Sevilla La Nueva as a new city and capital, Esquivel brought in sixty to eighty colonists and livestock. From the outset, the colonists were faced with the arduous task of securing a satisfactory labour force in order to find gold. Esquivel introduced the encomienda system; where groups of Arawaks and their land were assigned to select Spaniards for the purpose of labour and conversion (Christianity). Disease began to take its toll on both the colonists and Arawaks as their numbers began to diminish. Consequently, by 1513 the Spaniards were permitted to bring in three African slaves. With this event, it marked the arrival of the first Africans in Jamaica. Further decimation of the Arawaks by diseases and ill treatment by the Spaniards forced the Spanish crown to introduce the Triangular Slave Trade. The ill treatment of the Arawaks became so prevalent that Africans inevitably became a part of the life of Sevilla as the Arawak presence declined. The mix of ethnicities has made Seville (current name) an archaeological dream since there remains evidence of the presence of Taino, African, Spanish and English on this site.

St. Ann under the English

Under English rule, Santa Ana was soon renamed to St. Ann's Bay after Lady Anne Hyde, the first wife of King James II of England. There has been some historical controversy regarding this, as some have stated that the name Santa Ana was the Anglicized form of St. Ann's Bay. Over time, the town developed into a fishing port with many warehouses and wharves as the English settlement grew larger. It was not long after the development of St. Ann's Bay that it was named the capital town of St. Ann. The bay was named as the capital not only because of its rapid productivity but also because it housed one of the largest shipping ports for bananas and bauxite. However, the rapid development of the town of Ocho Rios in recent years into the ideal destination soon outshined the capital town; for many visitors seeking the traditional Jamaican experience it still remained a popular destination. St. Ann's Bay is home to several buildings of importance to the history of St. Ann such as the St. Ann's Bay Parish Church, the St. Ann's Bay Courthouse and the Old Jailhouse.

St. Ann today is far different from what it was in previous centuries. It was where Spanish settlement and civilization started in Jamaica and even though the capital was moved, it remains one of the most historical parishes in the island. Along with Trelawny, St Ann has the most free villages in Jamaica and also one of the earliest to be established in the island; Clarksonville - founded in 1835. In the early days, St. Ann was known as a small market town/fishing village, but since then, major development has taken place and it has evolved into one of the major players in the island's Bauxite Industry with Noranda being the main producer, which also plays an important role in the economy of St. Ann. Since the early 1950s bauxite played an important role in the economy of St. Ann. It was discovered in the parish by Sir Alfred D'Costa who reared cattle on the uplands near Claremont. Because of the cattle's lack of productivity, he sent samples of the red soils on his land for testing. It took many years of additional testing before the industry became a flourishing one.

Tourism

Another crucial factor to the development of St. Ann is that of tourism. Tourism is considered to be one of the biggest economic pulls for the parish. As a result of this, St. Ann has overtime grown into one of the chief destinations in the island for both locals and tourists alike. It can be said that the birth of St. Ann's tourism began when the government established the St. Ann Development Company in the 1960s, under the direction of the Urban Development Corporation (UDC). The UDC chaired by Mr. Moses Matalon, acquired a loan of £250,000 from the Commonwealth Development Corporation of the United Kingdom (Hall and Holding). The main aim of the loan was to reclaim and develop up to 80 acres of beach land in the Ocho Rios Bay area as well as other portions of lands nearby (Hall and Holding). The harbour was dredged and the area zoned for the development of hotels and resort apartments. More hotels and apartment would have been built in later years, as it was observed that the overall investment in the area was a successful development.

The development and upgrading of other hotels in the surrounding areas of Ocho Rios quickly fell into place and facilitated the steady growth of the tourism industry in the parish. Over time, Turtle Beach provided an ideal location for a cruise ship pier which was later established and extended to accommodate two megaliners at once. Marinas were also constructed and cruise shipping as a result of this expansion, had added considerable activity to the tourism product in Jamaica. Thousands of passengers visit weekly and take great advantage of the craft industry which thrives on the north coast of Jamaica. In fact, between 1989 and 1992, Ocho Rios received approximately 73 percent of the island's cruise ship passengers and it was estimated that cruise ship passengers contributed some US \$77 million from stop over visitors. Among the development that took place was the reorganization of Ocho Rios, the construction of a shopping centre and a crafts market amongst others. Further development in the area of tourism took place with the establishment of an all inclusive hotel. This would be the first of its kind in St. Ann but the second overall in the island. This was in 1978 with the conversion of the Tower Isle Hotel, to Couples All Inclusive Hotel. The importance of this hotel stretches far

beyond the shores of Ocho Rios as it is said that modern Jamaican Tourism Industry began with the creation of this Hotel as it provided the initial thrust for Jamaican Tourism (Martin).

This tourism sector of St. Ann has continued to bring thousands of new visitors to the island and St. Ann has blossomed into one of the leaders in tourism in Jamaica. Some of the island's best hotels and beaches can be found in the parish and over the years, St. Ann has become globally recognized as one the best places to vacation when in the Caribbean.

Notable places/ buildings in St. Ann

Apart from its hotels and beaches, St. Ann's rich history has drawn both locals and tourists to its many historic buildings and sites. Some notable sites in St. Ann include:

Ocho Rios Fort –is located beside the Reynolds bauxite installation in Ocho Rios. It was built in the late 17th century and was strengthened in 1780 when a French attack was feared.

Cardiff Hall Great House – owned by the Blagrove family from 1655 to 1950. The present Cardiff Hall Great House was built in 1789 by John Forsythe, the Scot Architect. It is a private property.

Clarksonville - named by Rev. John Clark, Baptist minister stationed at Brown's Town in St. Ann in 1835, for Thomas Clarkson who was an English advocate of the abolition.

Seville Heritage Park – Located on the historic Seville Estate is the Seville Great House and Heritage Park. Also located on this property is a Great House and collection of artifacts.

32 Market Street - This location in St. Ann's Bay is the birthplace of Jamaica's first National Hero; Marcus Mosiah Garvey who was born here on August 17, 1887.

Cave Valley Chimney - Cave Valley Sugar Estate was probably built in or about 1872 as the plaque on the chimney bears the date. It was once part of the sugar factory and took smoke and fumes away from the factory.

St. Ann Parish Church – This was completed in September 1871, and was consecrated by His Lordship the Bishop of Kingston, Rt. Reverend Courtney on Wednesday September 20, 1871 as the church of ‘St. Anne’.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help – When the Spanish settlement of Seville La Nueva was moved from the coast to higher ground, construction of a cut stone Church started in 1534 by Abbot Peter Martyr of Angleria, Italy. Only the Church walls were built as in 1534 the Spanish Centre of Government was moved to Spanish Town.

The Old Jail – the first prison to be erected in Jamaica. It was initially built as a fort in 1750 but was rendered useless after nine years and converted into a jail and a house of correction.

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