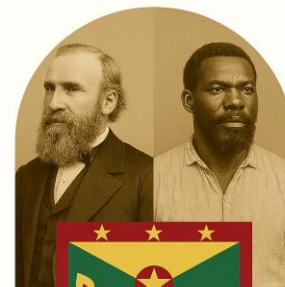


# Newsletter: Edition 1 - 01 October 2025



## IN THIS ISSUE;

- 1. Introduction:** Uncovering Grenada's Hidden Histories
- 2. Why Depths of Paradise matters:** Restoring erased voices
- 3. The personal spark:** Breaking through the 1838 silence
- 4. Research update:** 1,061 claimants linked to enslaved lives
- 5. Community spotlight:** Hortense Watson's journey from Grenada to Britain
- 6. Institutional reckoning:** Bank of England & the Trevelyan
- 7. How to get involved:** Share your stories, join the debate



*Depths of  
Paradise*



## 1. Uncovering Grenada's Hidden Histories

We are delighted to welcome you to the inaugural edition of the Depths of Paradise newsletter - a new journey into Grenada's complex and resilient past. This space is dedicated to spotlighting the stories, people, and legacies too often hidden beneath the surface of paradise. With every edition, our aim is to breathe life into histories long silenced, connect our readers to new research, and foster a vibrant community of memory and reflection.

This first newsletter marks the beginning of an ongoing conversation. In the months ahead, you can expect regular updates about our digital archive housed on [www.depthsofparadise.com](http://www.depthsofparadise.com), including news about the website, the release of fresh batches of research, feature blogs, upcoming events, and new endorsements. Each issue will offer insights into the reparative work of our project, highlight the voices of descendants and researchers, and share opportunities to connect with Grenada's living history.

Thank you for joining us as we embark on this journey to remember, reclaim, and reconnect. Your presence is part of a growing movement to honour the depth and complexity of Grenada's story. Together, we will ensure that these histories are not only uncovered but celebrated, resonating across generations and the diaspora.



Let us dive into the depths where every story matters, and every memory is a step towards enlightenment.

## 2. Depths of Paradise: Revitalising Grenada's Hidden Histories

Grenada is often described as a paradise, lush hills, turquoise waters, and a rhythm of life that feels timeless. But beneath that beauty lies a deeper story. One of survival, resistance, and resilience. *Depths of Paradise* is a digital archive and storytelling project that uncovers the lives of Grenadian estate claimants who received compensation after slavery's abolition **and** the thousands of enslaved people they held in bondage.

This is not just a history project. It's a reparative initiative. A living archive. A call to remember, reclaim, and reconnect.



### Why this matters

History is often told from the perspective of the powerful. By connecting these records, we are reclaiming the narratives of those who were denied both freedom and recognition. This project will provide researchers, students, families, and descendants both in Grenada and across the diaspora with a resource that restores erased histories and strengthens cultural memory.



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But this is not just about the past. Understanding Grenada's emancipation story helps us confront questions of heritage, justice, and identity today. It is about ensuring that the experiences of the enslaved are remembered not as footnotes, but as central to Grenada's history.

### 3. The Personal Spark

This project began with a brick wall.

Like many family researchers, I traced my lineage with growing excitement until I hit 1838. The year of emancipation. Before that time, we face the limits of the archival record. The earliest documentations comes from the slave registers from 1817 and newspaper reports (usually documenting runaways), and then individuals appear only by a single given name, leaving little trace of familial ties or connections. It was not until 1838 that those formerly enslaved began to be recorded with family names that we would recognise today. I realised that the silence wasn't accidental. It was systemic. The enslaved were recorded as property, not people. Their lives were reduced to numbers in compensation claims.

**All Former British Colonial Dependencies, Slave Registers, 1813-1834 results**

Your search 1-50 of 349,418

To get better results, add more information such as First Name, Last Name, Birth Info and Death Info—even a guess will help. [Edit your search](#) or [learn more](#)

View Record	Name	Birth Date	Residence Date	Residence Place	Enslaver	View Images	Primary
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Lamour	abt 1787	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Phillip	abt 1780	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Cook	abt 1807	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Marianne	abt 1789	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Adel	abt 1793	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Agathe	abt 1787	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Jeanne	abt 1777	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Clarisse	abt 1767	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Marie Rose	abt 1811	1817	Grenada	Clare Aguiton	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	James	abt 1784	1817	Grenada	George Arnold	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Cassimer	abt 1777	1817	Grenada	George Arnold	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Jenny	abt 1793	1817	Grenada	George Arnold	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Sally	abt 1787	1817	Grenada	George Arnold	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	James	abt 1806	1817	Grenada	George Arbuthnot	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Domingo	abt 1801	1817	Grenada	Jose Arcay	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Antonia	abt 1767	1817	Grenada	Jose Arcay	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Dick	abt 1792	1817	Grenada	John Aerstin	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	John	abt 1787	1817	Grenada	John Aerstin	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Thomas	abt 1767	1817	Grenada	John Aerstin	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	Dick	abt 1772	1817	Grenada	John Aerstin	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓
<a href="#">View Record</a>	John	abt 1787	1817	Grenada	John Aerstin	<a href="#">View Images</a>	✓

So I asked: *What if we could pair those claims with the names in the slave registers? What if we could restore the humanity behind the ledgers?*

That question became *Depths of Paradise*.

The project name was chosen to illuminate the layered realities that existed on Grenada's seemingly idyllic shores. On the surface, the island radiated abundance and beauty, a paradise for those who benefited from its land and labour. Yet beneath this veneer lay far deeper currents: generations of enslaved people whose lives, pain, and endurance shaped the very soil itself. While estate claimants and the enslaved occupied the same Caribbean landscape, their experiences diverged dramatically, one group receiving compensation and recognition, the other denied both humanity and justice.

#### 4. The Research Angle

Unlike other projects that focus solely on British absentee owners, *Depths of Paradise* includes those that stayed on the island to form long lasting legacies that permeate in todays society. It works with British archival data and captures insights from Grenada.

[illegible]



## Impact and Benefits

What will this archive achieve?

- A **resource for schools**, researchers, and families tracing their roots
- A platform for **reparative justice debates** and historical reckoning
- A source of **cultural pride**, showing the endurance of the ancestors of the Grenadian people
- A **living history project** that grows with community input



This isn't just about the past. It's about how we shape the future.

## 5. Call to Community Pride

Let's be clear: this isn't just a story of tragedy. It's a story of **resilience, culture, and endurance**.

The enslaved in Grenada resisted. They survived. They built families, communities, and legacies that continue today. *Depths of Paradise* is a way to reclaim ownership of Grenada's story from the inside out.

*What can you expect to see from the project?*

One of the stories we researched was that of **Hortense Watson**. Hortense was born enslaved in Grenada but later moved to Britain as a domestic servant after emancipation, working for the family that had previously owned her. She stayed with the family as they moved around the country, spending time in a stately home in Cumbria before settling in her final residence in London.

Her life, once marked by servitude and silence, has found a powerful voice through art and remembrance. Though she lived humbly her story now stands among six Black figures honoured in Jersey's 2022 commemorative stamp collection, released during Black History Month.

You can look forward to other stories of formerly enslaved people who achieved prominence through their strength and fortitude.

## 6. Institutional Reckonings

We will explore the link with institutions such as the **Bank of England**. In the late 18th century, the Bank of England became the sole owner of two sugar plantations in Grenada (Bacolet and Chemin) after their original owners defaulted on a loan. This made the Bank directly responsible for 599 enslaved people, a legacy it has since acknowledged through public exhibitions and formal apologies.



We will also spotlight significant families such as the Trevelyans, historical owners of six Grenadian plantations and over 1,000 enslaved people. Their descendants publicly apologised in 2023 and pledged £100,000 toward a community development fund and set up a charity for cultural developments.

Their gesture, described as commendable by the Grenada National Reparations Commission, marks a **rare and meaningful step by a British family toward reckoning with the enduring impact of slavery.**

## 7. What's Next?

We're building a **searchable digital archive** at Depths of Paradise. You'll be able to explore by estate, parish, claimant, or enslaved person. You will see all of this on our [website](#), however, it will take some time to complete so we'll let you know as we add more detail to the site. We're also launching:

- Monthly **newsletters** with updates and reflections
- **Blogs** and interpretive essays
- **Videos**, podcasts,

This is just the beginning. By weaving these records together, we can begin to see Grenada's history as a whole, not just through the lens of those who held power.

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Depths of Paradise is a community project, and we would love you to be part of it. Here's how you can get involved:

- **Subscribe** to our newsletter for updates and reflections
- **Join the Debate on Facebook:** Share your thoughts, ask questions, and take part in conversations about Grenada's history and its legacies on the Facebook group ([Grenada Genealogical and Historical Society Online](#)). What does reparative justice mean for Grenada? How should we commemorate the lives of those who struggled?





- **Send us your stories.** Do you have family stories, documents, or even oral histories connected to life in Grenada from 1763 -1900? This could help us to recognise the resilience, adaptation, and community-building for the decades after British rule and post emancipation.
- We welcome contributions that help bring this history alive. Every voice adds to the richness of the archive. If you have portraits, estate documents, or symbolic art to share, we'd love to include them.

So, drop us a message, comment on Facebook, or email us. Your voice is part of this archive.

The strength, courage, and bravery of the enslaved are the foundation on which modern Grenada stands. Their resilience teaches us not only about survival but about the power of hope and renewal.

**Depths of Paradise is more than an archive, it is a call to descendants of both sides of slavery to recognise our shared history and work together for a more just and compassionate world.**

**By facing the past honestly, we can shape a future built on dignity, memory, and unity.**