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JAMAICA.

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FURTHER RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 15 December 1830;—for

C O P I E S

OF ALL

COMMUNICATIONS relative to the reported Maltreatment  
of a Slave named *Henry Williams*, in *Jamaica*.

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(In Continuation of Paper, No. 91, ordered to be printed, 23 December 1830.)

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Colonial Department, }  
Downing-street, }  
13 July 1831. }

HOWICK.

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Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,  
15 July 1831.

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SCHEDULE.

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No.

- 1.—Copy of a Despatch from the Earl of Belmore to Viscount Goderich, dated King's House, Jamaica, 1st February 1831 (with four enclosures) - - - p. 3
- 2.—Copy of a Despatch from Viscount Goderich to the Earl of Belmore; dated Downing-street, 9th May 1831 - - - - - p. 7
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## C O P I E S

OF ALL

COMMUNICATIONS relative to the reported Maltreatment  
of a Slave named *Henry Williams*, in *Jamaica*.

— No. 1. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderich* ;  
with Four Enclosures.

MY LORD,

King's House, Jamaica, 1st Feb. 1831.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatches of the dates stated in the margin, and regret to learn that the measures I thought it my duty to adopt in the case of a complaint referred to me by the Colonial-office of Mr. Whitehouse against Messrs. Betty and Bridges are deemed by your Lordship unsatisfactory.

9 December.  
11 December.  
14 December.

To answer your Lordship's despatches seriatim I am to observe that the various documents which accompanied Mr. Townley's communication to the Colonial-office are accurate copies of the correspondence between my Secretary and Mr. Whitehouse.

My instruction from Sir George Murray was to transmit copies of the charges against Mr. Betty and Mr. Bridges to those persons, and to acquaint them that I was ready to receive such explanatory statements as they might think proper to make; and that with the assistance of the Crown-officer I should afterwards examine such statements for the purpose of ascertaining whether it was necessary to inquire further into the truth of Mr. Whitehouse's story; to call upon him to substantiate it; and finally to transmit to Sir George Murray my report and opinion, together with the materials on which they were founded.

I thought I had complied implicitly with my instruction. I transmitted copies of Mr. Whitehouse's charges to Messrs. Betty and Bridges; and when I received their answer, I consulted the Attorney-General whether any and what further proceedings were necessary. Your Lordship is in possession of the Attorney-General's opinion, a copy of which is enclosed, and upon that opinion I acted. The object of my instruction appeared to me directed to *inquiry*, and if it should appear to the Crown-officer necessary to institute legal proceedings, to direct him to do so. I was not expected to act on my own individual opinion; and if Mr. Whitehouse, from the nature of the law relating to Slaves, was unable to substantiate his charge, the blame attaches to the law, and not to me. The letter from my Secretary, which has called for an expression of your Lordship's displeasure, did, with the exception of one ill-chosen word, detail substantially my sentiments to Mr. Whitehouse; and with all deference to your Lordship's better judgment, I still think Mr. Whitehouse's communication to me was desultory and inconclusive, and rather framed with a view of creating a belief that no relief could be obtained against oppression from the authorities of the Island, than for any useful or practical purpose.

Mr. Bullock's letter was written during my absence from the seat of government, and on my return, when he called my attention to the unfortunate expression of "impertinent" which he had used, and which I considered highly objectionable, as it certainly did admit of an offensive construction, although Mr. Bullock explained

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to me that it had been used as synonymous to, irrelevant, or not appertaining to the subject. Your Lordship very naturally observes that Mr. Bullock ought to have disavowed any intentional incivility to Mr. Whitehouse ; and it is only due to him to inform your Lordship that he did write to Mr. Whitehouse, expressing his regret at having employed an expression which could be considered offensive or inconsistent with the civility or decorum of official correspondence. I have the honour to enclose to your Lordship the copy of a letter I have received from Mr. Bullock on the subject, as he is very desirous of removing any impression from your Lordship's mind that he has any hostile feeling towards Dissenting Ministers.

Had I been in possession of your Lordship's despatch of 9th December last, I perhaps might have felt myself authorized to have suspended Mr. Betty from the magistracy, on account of what might have been deemed his contumacious refusal to satisfy the inquiries of His Majesty's Government ; but Sir George Murray's instructions gave me no such authority ; it being possibly supposed that The King's displeasure would have had greater effect, proceeding direct from the Secretary of State, than if it had appeared to have originated with the Governor of Jamaica ; and I submit to your Lordship's judgment, whether at the time when I was in correspondence with the Colonial Secretary on this subject any interference on my part might not have been deemed premature.

I have never refused my countenance and protection to ministers of religion of all persuasions, nor do I participate in the prejudices which are supposed to prevail here against those who dissent from the doctrines of the Established Church. On the contrary, I am fully sensible of the great benefits which have resulted to mankind from the diffusion of religious instruction, and I employed all my influence to remove from the slave-law any insidious allusion or distinction affecting dissenting ministers.

I can with great truth assure your Lordship that my anxious desire in this, and has been in all other cases referred to me, was to carry into effect the instructions of His Majesty's Government according to the best of my judgment; and I am still at a loss to know what other course I could have pursued towards Mr. Whitehouse, or how his complaint could have been disposed of otherwise than before the legal tribunals. The Attorney-General advised me to call upon Mr. Whitehouse to substantiate his complaint against Mr. Betty, by transmitting authentic documents, verified on oath, to the Crown-office, when proceedings would be adopted consonant with the principles of British judicature, to obtain a full and impartial investigation of the matter, so as to ensure a legal conviction or acquittal. With this advice I complied, and shortly afterwards Mr. Betty's death rendered all further consideration of this subject unnecessary.

I cannot conclude this despatch without informing your Lordship that I thought it only just to the Rev. Mr. Bridges, to afford him an opportunity of satisfying your Lordship's doubts, whether or not he had encouraged Mr. Betty to send Henry Williams to gaol for attending a Methodist meeting, and enclose his answer to a communication I directed to be made to him on this subject.

I have, &c.

(signed) BELMORE.

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(Enclosure, No. 1.)

SIR,

King's-House, 27th July, 1830.

I ENCLOSE for your information the Copy of a Despatch from the Colonial-office, of 6th May last, accompanied by an extract of a communication which had been received from the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

I further enclose the copy of a letter addressed by the direction of his Excellency the Governor to Mr. Betty and the Rev. G. W. Bridges, with Mr. Betty's and Mr. Bridges's answers thereto ; and as his Excellency is instructed by Sir George Murray, with the assistance of his confidential legal advisers, to examine this

MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 5

this statement of Mr. Betty, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it will be necessary to inquire further into the truth of the account given by Mr. Whitehouse ; His Excellency requests that you will take this document into your consideration, and report to him your opinion whether any and what further proceedings are necessary, holding in recollection, that Mr. Betty positively refuses to enter into any discussion with Mr. Whitehouse.

Hon. Mr. Attorney-General.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *W. Bullock.*

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(Enclosure, No. 2.)

SIR,

Spanish Town, 27th August, 1830.

I BEG leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant enclosing copies of a despatch from the Colonial-office of the 6th of May, and of communications from Mr. Betty and the Rev. G. W. Bridges, and requesting that I would take the same into consideration, and report to his Excellency the Governor my opinion whether any and what further proceedings are necessary to be adopted.

Adverting to that part of Sir George Murray's letter to the Earl of Belmore, in which he states that should " His Lordship receive explanatory statements from Messrs. Betty and Bridges, he was to examine them for the purpose of ascertaining whether it were necessary to inquire further into the truth of the account given by Mr. Whitehouse, and to call upon him to substantiate it." And as both Mr. Betty and Mr. Bridges decline to enter into any discussion whatever with Mr. Whitehouse on the merits or demerits of the complaint preferred by him against them, I am unable to form any opinion on the statement of Mr. Whitehouse, uncorroborated as it is even by the oath of the accuser himself, or by the testimony of others who are competent to substantiate the same before the ordinary tribunals of the country.

I take the liberty therefore of recommending his Excellency the Governor to direct a communication to be made to Mr. Whitehouse, that if he be prepared to substantiate the complaint which he has made against Mr. Betty, that his proper course to pursue is to lay authentic documents, verified by oath, in the Crown-office, where proceedings will be adopted consonant with the principle of British judicature, to obtain a full and impartial investigation of the matter, so as to ensure a legal conviction or acquittal.

As far as the Rev. G. W. Bridges is implicated, it is but justice that I should convey to his Excellency my humble opinion that he has refuted the charges which tend to cast a reflection on his character as a Clergyman, by the unjust insinuations of harshness and severity, by the confinement of two of his domestics in the Rodney Hall workhouse, which is designated by Whitehouse " as the seat of darkness ;" whereas it appears that one is a criminal, sentenced by the laws of the islands for imprisonment for life, and the other is employed as an hired domestic by his own free will and consent.

The alleged punishment of a Slave not the property of Mr. Bridges is distinctly denied, and relates to an occurrence which took place several years back, where he was ordered off the property where he was detected passing on the provision-grounds of Mr. Bridges's servants, since which period Mr. Bridges states he has evinced towards the same individual trifling acts of kindness, which Mr. Whitehouse has illiberally converted into measures of compromise to avert a prosecution.

I have, &c.

*W. Bullock, Esq.*

(signed) *Hugo James.*

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(Enclosure, No. 3.)

MY LORD,

Spanish Town, 1st February 1831.

I AM very much concerned to find that an unfortunate expression I made use of in conveying your Lordship's sentiments to Mr. Whitehouse should have drawn upon me the displeasure of Lord Goderich.

The expression was singularly ill-chosen, particularly in a letter in your Lordship's name, and to a person not inclined to put the most liberal construction on language employed towards him.

I think it will be in your Lordship's recollection, that I mentioned the circumstance to you shortly after my letter was despatched, and I then anticipated the construction which Mr. Whitehouse would put upon it. I certainly had not anticipated that it would form the subject of a grave charge against me to the Colonial-office, more especially as I wrote to Mr. Whitehouse, stating my regret at having made use of the word "impertinent," which I had used as synonymous to "irrelevant," or not appertaining to the subject.

Perhaps it might have been expected that Mr. Whitehouse would have had the candour to state my explanation, which would have rendered unnecessary the admonition your Lordship is directed to give, to avoid in future language calculated to give pain.

I must here appeal to your Lordship's justice, whether I have not, upon all occasions, been particularly cautious not to employ my own language in conveying your sentiments; whether I have not often sent to your Lordship drafts of letters for your perusal, from an apprehension that your sentiments might not exactly correspond with mine; and having acted as private Secretary to the different Governors for the last 20 years, I trust I have never been found employing in letters written by their order expressions which they could disapprove of.

As for any supposed feeling I could have in writing to Mr. Whitehouse in any other manner than I should to any other person, I certainly do not feel it necessary to defend myself. I never saw that person in my life. I have never felt any prejudice against Ministers of any persuasion. Indeed the only instance when I did interfere, and with effect, was, when I thought two persons had been improperly treated by two magistrates of St. Ann, and I strongly recommended Sir John Keane to dismiss them from the magistracy.

I have, &amp;c.

His Excellency  
The Earl of Belmore.

(signed) *W. Bullock.*

(Enclosure, No. 4.)

SIR,

St. Ann, 26th January 1831.

I BEG to return my most grateful acknowledgment to his Excellency the Governor for affording me an opportunity of removing a doubt which appears to be entertained by Lord Goderich, whether I had encouraged the late Mr. Betty to send Henry Williams to gaol for attending a Methodist meeting.

Perhaps the simplest mode of satisfying his Lordship will be by the following extract of my communication to his Excellency the Governor, of 25th July last, in answer to the charge which Mr. Whitehouse had thought proper to prefer against me, a copy of which communication was, I presume, transmitted to the Colonial-office :

" I am first charged with having encouraged Mr. Betty, a magistrate of my parish, in his alleged severity against a negro who belongs to a property adjoining my residence, because that negro was a sectarian.

" I undoubtedly did use all my persuasion to rescue that negro from the trammels of sectarianism; and as he appeared an intelligent person I felt a particular

## MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 7

ticular interest in the success of my exertions, especially as I knew that it was the anxious desire of his manager that he should not continue to attend these itinerant preachers. During the time my church was under repair, I performed Divine Service, sometimes to very large congregations, at my own house, to which I invited all around me, and amongst others the Slaves belonging to Rural Retreat. But I used no threat—no compulsion; nor indeed could I use any with those who are not under my control.”

I will venture to add another extract from the same communication, and having done so, I shall be no longer suspected of employing any other means than gentleness to bring back Dissenters to the communion of the Established Church.

“ When I observe around me many who were contented, now poor, spiritless, and dejected, I cannot, as a Christian clergyman, behold the progress of such extensive mischief without employing my humble, but zealous endeavours to save my flock from wholesale misery. But I have never controlled their religious feeling by unfair means. My house is open to family prayers every evening; but I have confined my interference to inviting them there, and to the offer of my best advice.”

I have, &c.

W. Bullock, Esq.

(signed) C. W. Bridges.

— No. 2. —

COPY of a DESPATCH from Viscount *Goderich* to the Earl of *Belmore*,  
dated Downing-street, 9 May 1831.

MY LORD,

Downing-street, 9 May 1831.

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch dated the 1st February last, respecting the case of Mr. Whitehouse.

I am happy to acknowledge that the course of proceeding adopted by your Lordship was in strict conformity with Sir George Murray's instructions. The question upon which your Lordship's judgment is at variance with my own, is, whether under the circumstances of the case, which Sir George Murray did not contemplate, it would not have been more fit that the local government should themselves undertake the investigation urged upon them by Mr. Whitehouse, and whether the case was properly disposed of by requiring that gentleman to undertake, at his own risk, the office of public prosecutor. Although I have the misfortune still to differ from your Lordship on these points, I must entirely disavow any intention of attributing to you a deficiency of zeal for His Majesty's service, or for the protection of the Slave population of Jamaica.

I am happy to learn that the equivocal word used by Mr. Bullock in his letter to Mr. Whitehouse was not really employed in its more harsh and ordinary sense, and that Mr. Bullock apologized by a subsequent letter for the inadvertent use of an expression susceptible of such a construction,

The opinion of the Attorney-General of Jamaica of the 27th of August last, to which you have referred, does certainly point out the precise course of proceeding which was afterwards adopted, with reference to the complaints of Mr. Whitehouse, and demonstrates that your Lordship acted with the full sanction of the highest legal authority within your reach.

I exceedingly regret that the terms of my former despatches on this should have occasioned your Lordship any uneasiness, or that they should have subjected you to the trouble of entering into further explanations of motives by which you were



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guided. I am so sensible of the difficulties connected with the government of Jamaica at the present time, that I cannot make any addition to them without extreme reluctance; I could therefore wish to close this correspondence with assuring your Lordship that the mere difference of opinion which may happen to arise between us as to the most proper mode of conducting a particular inquiry is in no degree incompatible with the highest respect for your Lordship's judgment, or with the most implicit confidence on your justice and humanity.

I have, &c.  
(signed) GODERICH.

— No. 3. —

Copy of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to Viscount *Goderich*,  
dated King's House, Jamaica, 4th April 1831.

MY LORD,

King's House, Jamaica, 4th April 1831.

REFERRING to your Lordship's despatch of 18th February last, relative to the proceedings of the grand jury in the case of Mr. Bridges, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Mr. Bridges's name is not in the commission of the peace.

I have, &c.  
(signed) BELMORE.

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JAMAICA.

FURTHER RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The  
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(In continuation of Paper, No. 91, Ordered to be Printed,  
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