

financed important infrastructure and communal projects, their commercial activities drew revenues to Swedish state coffers, and their advice and expertise was needed in the unceasing flow of administrative matters. On the other hand, the council's relationship with them had to be constantly negotiated and re-negotiated. Their interests and personal dealings often came head to head with the governance and jurisprudence of the Swedish colonial administration. They often used their relative power as council members as they saw fit, either hindering or furthering the work of the administrative body. Some of them seriously challenged the Swedish administration in matters of politics and jurisprudence. Elbers and Cremony were among the ringleaders responsible for the mutiny of 1810 which ousted the judge and government secretary from the island. The mutiny is further described in the following chapter.⁹⁰

Masters and Mariners

Another picture of the colony's cosmopolitan make-up is provided by surviving muster-rolls from 1814–15. The muster rolls holds records of individual mariners' age, task, pay, race, as well as birthplace or place of residence. Most masters and seamen were white creoles and hailed from nearby Caribbean colonies. An overwhelming majority came from Dutch colonies or from colonies with a strong Dutch cultural dominance. Curaçao, St. Eustatius and St. Martin was the birthplace of many, while Saba was the greatest source of maritime professionals engaged in the shipping of St. Barthélemy. Names like Barnes, Beakes, Beal, Dinzey, Hassell, Heyliger, and Simmons were commonplace Saban family names active in the transit trade in small vessels, names which particularly survive on St. Barthélemy to this day. There was also a significant contingent of French regulars that came primarily from Guadeloupe and Martinique, but also Saint-Domingue, Les Saintes, and Marie Galante. From the other

⁹⁰ Petition of St. Barthélemy merchants, 14 November 1810, Ankarheim's report, 14 June & 7 September 1811, SBS 1C, SNA; Tingbrand, *Who was who*, 63, 198–99.

colonies, St. Thomas, St. Croix and Puerto Rico were among the most notable sources of maritime personnel, but comparably few came from British colonies. Only Anguilla, Bermuda and St. Kitts had any real representation among mariners.⁹¹

It is telling to note that among the European mariners (612), a majority were in fact Swedes either from Sweden proper or from the recently ceded Finnish territories (288). There were many reasons for this relatively high concentration of Swedish mariners. First of all, there was a demand for Swedish masters and skippers onboard neutral Swedish vessels registered in St. Barthélemy, as it enhanced the appearance of legitimate trade in the eyes of foreign privateers and cruisers. On another note, there were comparably many Swedish sailors that absconded to southern waters, attracted by high wages, especially onboard American-owned ships as well as the prospect of evading domestic conscription in the wake of Russo-Swedish conflicts.⁹²

The remainder of the Europeans mainly had origins in Italian (68), French, (65) or Spanish (28) port towns, as well as a plethora of maritime centers in the Mediterranean. There were many records of mariners from Galicia, Genova, Leghorn, Lissabon, Malta, Marseille, Nantes, Naples, Oporto, Sardinia, Sicily, Ragusa, Trieste, and Venice. Comparably few came from the regions of the Baltic and North Sea, with only a few mentions of Altona, Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Hamburg. Most of them were German natives of Stralsund (25), and were recorded as Swedish subjects. A nationality almost as heavily represented among the mariners were the Americans (206). Most of them were simply recorded “America” as their birthplace but there unsurprisingly high numbers of people from New York and Philadelphia and their respective hinterlands. There were

⁹¹ Wilson dataset on St. Barthélemy mariners (2015), extracted from 1814–15 muster rolls, in AM 265, FSB, ANOM. The dataset includes a total of 275 registered vessels and a total of 1,980 mariners. The total figures do not represent altogether unique vessels and persons, as there are numerous double entries due to the fact that vessels were registered more than once during these years.

⁹² Müller, *Consuls, Corsairs, and Commerce*, 188; The Swedish mariner problem is mentioned in several of consul Söderström’s letters to the Board of Trade between 1786–90, vol. 1, *Diplomatica Americana*, SNA.

a few mariners from diffuse South American origins (29), such as “Brazil”, “Oronoco”, or simply, the “Spanish Main.”

As vessel owners likely hired whomever was available, there was little regard paid to the national or ethnic compositions of crews. Especially the larger ship crews could be a real mix of worlds, like the ship *Norrköping* of 235 tons and a crew of 14, owned by the aforementioned J.J. Cremony and registered in July 1814. The master was from Rhode Island, the skipper from Campeche, the boatswain from Wolgast, while the seamen hailed from Portugal, Uddevalla (Sweden), Curaçao, the Azores, Marguerite, Gothenburg, Jamaica, and Philadelphia. Only rarely did the ship-owners bother to assemble more homogenous crews. A shipowner who did this fairly constantly was the English-born William Cock, one of the richest and most respectable merchants of St. Barthélemy, who also sat several terms in the island council. He registered his hermaphrodite brig *Eliza* twice in 1815. One of her voyages carried a crew of 14, consisting of 5 Swedes and the rest of Americans from the continental United States. The other voyage carried 15 crew members, of which 12 were from Sweden and Finland while the remainder were French or American. Regional affinities or family networks also seemed to have an effect on crew composition. Saban ship-owners were comparably often also the master onboard their relatively small vessels, carrying with them a limited crew of Sabans and their own slaves.⁹³

Members of the black population, both free and slaves, were a significant portion of the composition of crews, 354 out of 1,980, or nearly 18 percent according to the muster-rolls of 1814–15. Larger ships regularly carried a few slaves as cooks or “boys”, while the smaller, particularly the ones owned by Sabans or natives from other neighboring colonies could consist of a majority of slaves. For instance, the schooner *Intrepid*, owned by Pierre Arnaud, was captained by the Saban James Vaughan, the only white man onboard, the remaining six seamen were all slaves. The

⁹³ “Mr Guillaume Cock, le plus riche et respectable de nos négociants et un des membres du Conseil d’Administration et de finance; possédoit un Brick, appelé Eliza, qu’il envoya avec un cargaison de valeur au Brasil [...]” Norderling’s report, 3 September 1817, SBS 5A, SNA.

schooner *Lisa* of tons, was manned by two whites from St. Martin and St. Lucia, the rest were slaves; Mingo, Tom, Jack, Will, John, and two named Peter. They were all the property of the shipowner Auguste Rabainne. Usually the slaves who were part of the crew belonged to the ship-owner, but there are numerous records of slaves who were rented out by third parties for individual expeditions. There were a few free black ship-owners, of which William Panilio was the most prominent in 1814–15. During that time he had registered *Basseterre* of 35 tons, with a crew of two whites and seven slaves, and *Penelope* of 20 tons, with an all-free, creole crew. The slaves all belonged to Panilio, and he was indeed one of the largest slave-owners among the merchants directly involved in shipping. He also had the distinction of having the only recorded free black person as master of a vessel, the “Negro” Dominic Mathias Rafael, a 30-year old Curaçaoan who helmed the *Penelope*.

Urban Life and Commerce

The commercial society of Gustavia included its cohorts of retail traders, hawkers, hucksters, shopkeepers and insurance brokers. In 1800, the city had 37 on record. An example was Joseph Hart, a North American who had settled in St. Barthélemy around the beginning of the 19th century. He rented a house on East Strand-Street where he retailed American goods such as “Beef, Pork, Hams, Cheese, Corn, Codfish, Lard, Soap, Candles, Tar & Potatoes.” Gustavia was also home to a range of artisans and professionals catering to different needs, including 6 tailors, 8 masons, 18 carpenters of different descriptions, 6 bakers, 4 butchers, 2 hatters (including 1 *modiste*), 6 surgeons, 3 shoemakers and cobblers, a blacksmith and a watchmaker. In this commercial variety there is still the clear imprint of maritime enterprise and its needs. A special indication of this is the abundancy of taverns, inns, grog-shops and billiard houses. There were 8 buildings recorded as lodging-houses, and 22 establishments with license to serve liquors and “keep billiards”. Different forms of gambling, cockfights and card games were popular preoccupations in the town, but