

A SWISS MEDICAL DOCTOR'S DESCRIPTION OF BARBADOS IN 1661.

THE ACCOUNT OF FELIX CHRISTIAN SPOERI

Edited and Translated by

Alexander Gunkel and Jerome S. Handler

Southern Illinois University

INTRODUCTION

Continental Europeans who visited Barbados in the seventeenth century occasionally published accounts of the island, but some of these are generally not well known, and apparently have not been utilized by researchers concerned with early Barbadian history.¹ An example of such an account is the one written in German by Felix Christian Spoeri.² Although it is not an especially rich source of detailed information on island life, it does contain materials which we hope will be of interest to readers of this journal.

Very little biographical information is available on Spoeri. Born in 1638, he was a German-speaking Swiss physician and surgeon who came from an old Zurich family.³ For unstated reasons he left his homeland, while in his early twenties, and made his way to Holland. At Amsterdam, in 1660, he signed aboard the *Black Horse*, a ship captained by a Mr. Armstrong of Exeter, England. The ship, a merchantman of 400 tons with a crew of 34, was bound for Barbados with a principal cargo of 52 horses from northern Holland. Presumably, Spoeri was expected to care not only for the ship's crew, but especially for its valuable animal cargo.

Sailing from Amsterdam on November 28, 1660, the *Black Horse* arrived at Barbados on January 11, 1661. Approximately four weeks later, after having sold its cargo, the ship left Barbados for New England where it acquired timber, salt meat, flour, and thirty horses. With this cargo the *Black Horse* returned to Barbados, arriving on April 30, 1661. Spoeri again left the island on June 15, 1661, and continued to travel on merchantmen between the West Indies and Europe. On December 3, 1662 he returned to Barbados once more and three weeks later embarked for Tortuga, off the coast of Venezuela.

Thus, over the span of a few years, Spoeri made a number of voyages between the Old and New Worlds and within the West Indies. His account indicates that the ships on which he sailed were principally engaged in transporting horses to the West Indies. In all, Spoeri visited Barbados at least three times during the early 1660s, and spent a total of approximately fourteen weeks on the island. However, only his experiences on the first visit (January 11, 1661 to February 8, 1661) are related in any detail, and it is in this section of the book (pp. 10—29) that he also describes what most impressed him on the island. This section, and two other minor passages relating to Barbados (pp. 47—48, 66), are translated in their entirety.

A few comments can be made concerning Spoeri's account and the procedures employed in translating it: The descriptive sections appear to have been written some years after Spoeri's visit to the island (e.g., see note 6), but it is difficult to determine the extent to which these are based upon journal or diary notes (he evidently kept some record during his voyages), and recall. His ap-

parently faulty comprehension of the English language, shortcomings in observational abilities and recall, limitations in contemporary knowledge, e.g., in geographical and medical matters, have resulted in some distortions and errors.

Despite such limitations, as well as the relative brevity of descriptive passages, Spoeri's account can aid in reconstructing early Barbadian history by complementing information provided by other observers. The information he provides corroborates to some extent that available in other sources and offers additional details on certain matters which may be of interest to specialized researchers.

In general, it is tempting to provide extensive commentary in the form of notes, but the brevity of Spoeri's account would make abundant annotation cumbersome and increase the length of this paper beyond reasonable proportions. Thus we have tried to limit the number of footnotes and primarily confine these to matters immediately pertinent to translation difficulties and problems. In the notes, we have also suggested some published sources which consider in greater detail some of the topics Spoeri brings to the reader's attention.

Because the account is written in seventeenth century High German, and follows the conventions of the day in punctuation, syntax, word usage, etc., it was necessary to make various adjustments, in order to produce a smooth reading translation and to clarify ambiguities. Such adjustments include modifications in Spoeri's sentence structure and punctuation. For instance, his frequent lengthy sentences were normally separated by us into shorter ones, thus necessitating addition or deletion of conjunctions, prepositions, etc. We have, however, followed Spoeri's paragraph divisions to facilitate cross-checking with the original account.

In addition, in many cases the noun referants of pronouns are not immediately clear, and a literal translation of such pronouns does not resolve ambiguities. To clarify these, we have injected the noun to which Spoeri refers, except for a few uncertain instances in which we simply translated the pronoun. This may sometimes make for some cumbersome reading, but we feel that it results in increased specificity in the translation. In all, we have aimed at a translation which is faithful to informational accuracy, rather than at one which approaches literary elegance.

In a few cases we have been unable to resolve ambiguities in Spoeri's account; the reader's attention is drawn to such cases in the notes. Similarly, certain terms or words do not conveniently translate into English, and sometimes multiple translations are possible.⁴ In such instances the original wording has been retained in italics in the translation, and an explanatory footnote is provided. In general, all italicized words or terms are exactly as they appear in the original text, and all of our comments, additions, etc. in the translation are included within brackets. Finally, bracketed page numbers refer to the pages in Spoeri's German text.

SPOERI'S ACCOUNT

[p. 10] On the eleventh [January, 1661] at eleven o'clock in the morning we noticed land. After careful observation we concluded that it was definitely the island of Barbados, our destination. This made us all very happy, especially the ship's master, as we completed this enormous voyage of 1500 miles in such a short time, without striking any sails, and yet having preserved forty-eight horses [out of fifty-two] in such good condition.

At three o'clock in the afternoon we reached port; rounding its corner, we passed a fort flying a royal flag. According to custom, we struck our upper sails

in front of the fort and saluted its flag with five cannon shots. The fort answered us with three shots, whereupon we cast anchor and thanked God from the bottom of our hearts for our merciful delivery.

The following day we landed the horses which we had on board. They were all sold in two days, some for six thousand pounds of sugar, but others for two thousand to three thousand pounds. Thus, the ship's merchants made an enormous profit.

The island of Barbados lies twelve degrees, forty-five minutes north of the equator, and is the uppermost of the *Canibales* or Carib Islands (they are called such because of the wild cannibals [p. 11] who formerly lived on the islands and even to this day are found on the island of St. Vincent) and lies fifty miles from the mainland. It is thirteen miles long and seven wide.

When the Spanish first discovered America, and this island as well, they used it as a station for provisioning ships. They stocked it with hogs, sheep, goats, rabbits and other animals and allowed them to run free into the wilderness. Whenever they then came from Hispaniola they caught these animals and took them along, and also supplied themselves with fresh water; for this island has one of the very best of springs that one can find in the world whose source is not more than ten or fifteen steps from the sea. Thereafter, the English also spread into foreign lands and settled 600 strong on Barbados. On the south side of the island they built a handsome settlement and named it *Sand Town*.⁵ It lies alongside a fine sandy bay which is formed like a crescent. Handsome forts are located at each end, and in the middle, of the crescent so that the town can protect itself against all enemy attacks, as it was able to do in 1664, when Sir Admiral de Ruyter came into the harbor with thirteen ships.⁶ [p. 12] However, the harbor floor is not the best since there are many sharp stones which cut the anchor cables; therefore, these cables must be kept in casks which keep them off the harbor floor.

Aside from *Sand Town*, there is another little village on the west side of the island called *Spechies* [Spikes, i.e., Speightstown]. Today this settlement is so heavily populated and congested that no land whatsoever is available. All of the island's land is divided into plantations, each of which has its own master. Thus, the island's houses are scattered here and there, except those of the above mentioned two settlements. For the most part, the air of this island is healthy. The wind blows throughout the year from the east as it does in all other places lying between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. But when the wind crosses this area they can expect a great storm, which they call hurricane. Then the sea rages and swells to such an extent that big merchant ships are thrown two to three and more miles inland. To cite a recent example, just six weeks prior to our arrival seven big ships were thrust onto the land and smashed.⁷ There are different opinions about the actual cause of the wind blowing all the time in one direction. I agree with those who ascribe this phenomenon to the sun [p. 13] and the moon which pull the wind along by their rapid movement from east to west. This occurs only between the Tropics where the sun and the moon have their steadiest course. In this region, day and night are almost always of the same duration and do not vary more than one hour. The wind blows from about four o'clock in the evening until eight or nine o'clock in the morning, but during the day it is mostly quite calm. There is no snow whatsoever during the winter months, but instead they have somewhat more rain which arrives without warning and without any change in the air. Most per-

sons who come here from Europe will have to overcome an illness which the inhabitants call *Contrey Diseases*. Its nature is such that the people turn quite yellow, their stomachs and legs swell, and sometimes their legs burst and remain open. These ulcers can endure no dirt whatsoever and must be healed with medicines that dry up the wound.

In my opinion, this illness arises because people lack their normal foods and must use others; secondly, because of the hot climate, people are induced to drink much water and thus natural digestion is prevented which [p. 14] results in watery blood; thirdly, they use hammocks instead of beds. These are rough coverlets woven out of cotton and are four yards long and four yards wide. They are pulled tight at both ends like a fish net. Hammocks are suspended at both ends inside a room, but out of ignorance some people suspend them from two trees under the open sky and thus they catch the dew.⁸ This is highly detrimental to everyone since the stomach, the kitchen of the body, loses its warmth; because of the cold the body's pores clog resulting in bad blood which usually emaciates people and causes ultimate death.

On this, as in all other islands of the West Indies, there is a tiny poisonous animal, called chigger, which is not unlike a flea. The chigger slips completely unnoticed into the skin, under the nails, or both, of a person. Its poisonous character causes a tiny growth, as large as a pea, to appear. When this growth is removed entirely, the wound can easily be cured with either tobacco or other ashes; however, if the growth breaks its poison spreads and this can often result in the loss of toes, and, occasionally even the shanks. Chiggers usually get on the shanks and feet because most of the inhabitants go barefoot.

After removal of this growth, I boiled down *Ung. Aegyptiac* [p. 15] and made little balls from it. I placed these into the hole which I then bandaged. Chiggers also enter the rump when one squats in the field occasionally to relieve oneself. For that [i.e., to combat the chiggers] the inhabitants utilize a cut up lemon, but if the chiggers become very numerous man is bound to die from them. In southern regions, there are long poisonous worms which work themselves into people's legs. The inhabitants, especially the Moors, know how to handle these by removing them with wood splinters. They use the same treatment for chiggers.

Then there are also little mosquitoes which, at night, torment man very much because wherever they alight, and are able to sting, there develops a swelling the size of a half pea. When such a swelling on the body is broken it can even produce blisters. I noticed these on our cannoneer [of the ship *Black Horse*] when he broke his upper arm in a fall. After setting the arm I gave him ointment in order to strengthen the limb again. For several days he used the ointment to good advantage, but once, when he had to rush off in a hurry, he left the jar containing the ointment uncovered, and a great number of mosquitoes collected and got stuck in it. As a result the whole arm, where it [p. 16] was covered with the ointment containing mosquitoes, flared up with poisonous blisters. I tried to treat these as I would a gangrene or a burn, with different kinds of medicines, but all to no avail because the arm began to rot at several places. Therefore, I had to take the most stringent measures, namely scarifying or incising. Afterwards, I bathed the whole arm in brandy containing *Ung. Aegyptiac* and a bit of dissolved Theriaca, and then covered it with a cataplasm or poultice. By this means I finally obtained a successful cure.

The most common religion on this island is the same as the one taught in England today. Aside from this religion, there are also many sectarians or heretics who went to Barbados in order to have more freedom. Moreover,

there are also many *Negros* and Indians ⁹ who are bought as slaves by the English. They are serfs and are forced to plant the island's produce. All of these slaves are acquired through trade in Angola, Guinea and other places where they were made prisoners of war by their own countrymen, and where Christians traded them for a trifling price of various glass beads, copper, iron, cloth, mirrors, and other things. The slaves are resold, at a tolerable profit, according to whether they are young or old and whether they are tall and well built. I believe the slaves perform their idolatrous [p. 17] ceremonies and customs in honor of their God who is mainly the Devil. These ceremonies consist of particular dances, drumming on a hollow tree trunk over which an animal skin is stretched, making clapping noises by knocking two rocks together, and accompanying this with terrifying shrieks and bodily movements. For these ceremonies they often remain together all night long. However, toward morning, everyone returns to his place of work to plant the produce of the land such as sugar, tobacco, cotton, and indigo. They are very hardworking. The slaves also marry among themselves, and their children belong to their master. However, the children are instructed and brought up as Christians.¹⁰

p. c.

There are plantations where a master owns one hundred or more of these slaves. The Christians place an overseer above the slaves who commands them and who puts everyone to work. To each household he assigns a parcel of land on which the slaves plant their food and from which they have to maintain themselves without burdening their master. All of them go about naked, but the Christians oblige them to cover their privities with round aprons just like the ones potters wear in Switzerland. When slave mothers go to work, they tie the young children onto their backs. While they work they frequently give their children the breast, across the armpits, and let them suckle. By nature slave women have very long [p. 18] breasts because they go about naked all the time. When slaves first come to Barbados and are forced to work they often die of hunger [by refusing to eat]. They imagine that if they die they will go to another land where riches, honor, and splendor will not be lacking, but where there will be an abundance of everything.

hand

The government of this island consists of a governor who is appointed by His Majesty of Great Britain. He alone judges capital crimes and passes sentence on life and death. A Major and Judge deal with debts and other disputes according to English law.

Sugar is the principal and most abundant commodity found in the Caribbean Islands. Let us properly describe its manufacture because of its virtues in medicine and in foods. What happens is this: the field where sugar is to be planted is prepared; next they take one section from the lowest part of a cut piece of cane and split this section lengthwise into two, three, four or more parts, depending on how wide or narrow the section is. They then make little holes in the ground, a half foot deep and two and one-half feet apart." Next, one of these cane pieces is placed into the hole and left to protrude a finger's width above the surface. They continue in this manner until the whole field is completely planted. When the piece of cane takes root and [p. 19] begins to grow, the planters fill up the holes so that the entire piece of cane is covered whereupon the cane quickly begins to grow. This growth [sugar cane?] is not unlike [the plant] which coopers use in Switzerland. As the cane grows, it is formed into a round reed which develops more or less equal joints in a year. This reed, as thick as a wide thumb, is spongy on the inside and com-

10

pletely full of sweet juice. In the third year the cane matures and reaches a height of six to eight feet, including its top. Once or twice a year the cane tops are cut off and are given to the cattle as fodder. When the cane is about three years old it is cut at both top and bottom, and is bound into loads which are carried to the mill. Those parts of the cane plant which cannot be used are spread out in the fields, and when dry it is burned and used instead of dung. In the mill, small bundles, of about eight sticks of cane, are tied together, and are placed between two rollers which immediately catch the bundles and pull them through. The rollers are four feet high, the thickness of a *sagbaums*¹² and are turned either by slaves or by cattle. On the other side of the rollers stands a Negro who removes the pressed-out cane. Below the rollers is located a collecting device from which the juice [p. 20] is scooped out and then carried to the coppers. There are usually three or four coppers. The first is the largest: in it the juice is evaporated and boiled down to such an extent that the next copper is filled to the brim. So it goes until the last copper. When the liquid is finally done it is sprinkled with unslacked lime taken from a vessel. After this, the juice is poured into either a wooden or an earthenware pot (which is wide at the top, pointed at the bottom, and also has a plugged hole) and is put in a cool place in order to cool down or harden¹³. When this is done they pull the plug out of the vessel and then a syrup or juice runs out, which is not yet sugar, but which gradually clears up by itself. The longer the syrup stands, the whiter it becomes; it is then called *Muscavado*. The molasses syrup is then put up in chests or casks for shipment. We do not need to mention the unclean conditions involved in the making of sugar because those who are fond of sweets would then lose their desire. They sweeten all kinds of fruit with the syrup, and also distil it into a spirit, called *Kill Divel*, which is as strong as distilled wine.

Next in importance to sugar is cotton in which whole fields are planted. Every year cotton is raised from seed [p. 21] and is planted in rows in January. In May the plant begins to bloom and produce a fine yellow flower similar to that of a hedge-rose. It has many branches, all of which have flowers. When the flower has died, a growth as large as a walnut appears which contains the cotton. As soon as this pod is ripe it pops open and the cotton is then collected daily until the plant bears no more. The cotton plant grows two yards tall. Its leaves are round and are rough on the underside. The seed is black and is shaped like an appleseed.

It is not necessary to describe tobacco and how it is planted because it grows in Switzerland and, unfortunately, is known all too well.

Indigo is made from a plant which is sown like flax in our country and is almost similar to it. The seed is extracted when it is ripe while the plant is put in hollowed-out trees or troughs and water is poured over it. They let it lie there until it is quite soft and smooth, and then pound it with pestles until all is crushed. Then they strain it and fully press out the left overs. The juice is then poured up to a hand's width high, into clean vessels, and is dried in the sun. When dried, [p. 22] the indigo is similar to a block of blue stone. It is then divided into pieces and is packed into leather bags or kegs.

Also, quite a bit of ginger is planted. Whole barrels full are confected and preserved.

The following fruits are to be found on this island: limes, lemons, sweet and sour oranges, maize, plantains, pineapples, guavas, cassava, sweet potatoes, melons, cucumbers, and *kuerbsen*.¹⁴ With respect to garden plants and pulses,

A SWISS MEDICAL DOCTOR'S DESCRIPTION OF BARBADOS IN 1661:
THE ACCOUNT OF FELIX CHRISTIAN SPOERI

lemons and oranges grow in large quantities and are used for food and drink as we use them. Aside from these, there is yet another kind of citrus fruit whose tree is not taller than a man's height. They plant it in dense hedges and, because of its pointed thorns, the hedges cannot be climbed. A fruit as large as a peach, which resembles and tastes like lemon, grows on this tree. Aside from its thin skin, this fruit is full of juice of which whole kegs are shipped to England. The juice is needed for beautiful colors. This kind of plant is called Lime and the juice is called *verjus*.¹⁵ J 1.c.

The Pineapple, called *anassa* in Dutch, is the noblest fruit found in all of the West Indies. It grows on a bush as tall as a man. The fruit is as large as a melon and looks like a pine [p. 23] cone; the skin is scaly like that of a fish. To eat it, it is first peeled and then laid into fresh water. Above all, it possesses a fine taste so that when eating it one imagines eating preserved quinces, fine apples, or strawberries.

Guava is a fruit similar to a peach. It grows on a tree of some height and is yellow on the outside and quite red on the inside. It has a number of seeds like the Medlar and a very good taste.

Platanos, in English *Plantains*, grow on a small tree, of about a man's height, which has large tender leaves like tobacco. The fruit grows from between its branches and is about five inches long and one inch thick. It looks like a bean, is golden yellow in color, and tastes very good. From thirty to one hundred plantains grow on a single stem.

The manchineel apple grows on a tree of some height. It has a most excellent and pleasant smell which deceives many newcomers who are tempted to eat it. Immediately upon eating it, a person bloats up and will die if help is not quickly forthcoming. I observed such a case in our ship's cabin-boy. The first time this boy came ashore he found this apple tree and, believing himself to be in Holland, picked up some and stuffed his mouth with them. But before long he began to bloat and complained to the [p. 24] boatswains who became frightened. They quickly brought him on board and urged me to give him something to make him vomit. I hurried to the galley and had them give me luke-warm water, into which I poured olive oil. The boy drank this and after he vomited he soon felt better. Finally, I gave him a sudorific of *Theriaca* and the electuary *diacordii* which caused his complete recovery and he was more careful in the future. Cattle and fish are also poisoned in this way when they eat manchineel. When the tree's leaves are pulled off a white milky sap appears which produces blisters if it touches uncovered skin. The Indians use the sap to poison their arrows. S

Maize is the islander's grain. It grows as tall as a man. On each stalk there are three or four ears, each of which contains one hundred or more small kernels which are similar to lentils. These kernels are pounded up and bread is baked from them.

In addition, the inhabitants have yet another kind of bread which they call cassava. This is made from yuca, a root similar to a long beet. After the root is dug up it is chopped into pieces and the juice is pressed out (because of its poisonous nature whosoever eats it with the juice bloats up and dies). The cassava is then dried in the sun and is later pounded to powder. It makes [p. 25] as good a flour as the best corn and has a fine taste. The English bake the flour into cakes on a hot stone between two hot irons. However, the cakes must be eaten fresh because they do not keep for more than three or four days. J

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Sweet potato is a root similar to [the European] potato, but it is a little bit bigger. Its skin is quite red and its inside yellow. They are cooked and fried and are used instead of bread. They taste like chestnuts and the inhabitants' drink, about which we shall speak later on, is made from them.

There are two kinds of melons: musk melons and water melons. The former have a musk odor, are sweet, and are eaten with *aggaj*,⁶ that is, white pepper and salt.

Water melons grow as large as big bowling balls. They are dark green on the outside but blood red on the inside, and are full of black seeds. They have a fine taste, but because of their watery composition, they crumble when eaten.

In addition to these plants there are many other kinds of garden produce such as cucumbers, all of which make very good food.

11
M.C.P.
Their beverages include Mobby, punch, and lime drink. The first is made from the sweet potato root. The roots are cleaned and boiled in fresh water until they are soft. Then they are mashed to a pulp and put into a [p. 26] wide, large vessel. Fresh clean water is poured on the pulp and it is sweetened with molasses or sugar juice. A bit of ginger is then hung into the drink and it is allowed to ferment in a warm place. When this is done, the Mobby is put away in a cellar for use. It makes an excellent drink and satisfies like beer or wine, but does not keep for more than five or six weeks because of the hot climate.

Punch is prepared fresh each time one wants to drink it. It is made in the following manner: one takes a basin of water and sweetens it with sugar; then lemon juice, and finally the above-mentioned Kill Devil or Brandy is added, according to the desired strength. Then the punch is ready.

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Lime drink is made in the same manner as punch except that, instead of Kill Devil, Madeira wine is used. It is used by the Gentlemen of the Island.

They have no livestock other than what is brought onto the island such as hogs and goats. The goats are of a particular kind and remain quite small, but their meat is first-rate. Sheep increase in numbers on the island.

Fish are taken daily from the sea, but they must be eaten fresh or they become mealy. Aside from these foods, many items such as flour, salt meat, beef, dried cod, and herring are imported.

[p. 27] I was unable to notice anything special with respect to animals and vermin, but there are few in this land because of its large population. This island is much more populated than any of the others; thus, animals and vermin are driven away by the people.

There are also all kinds of snakes which, however, cause no harm to anyone. There are many black and red crabs which cause much damage to the inhabitants' plantations. They make holes in the fields and, in time, destroy the plants. The land crabs are not edible: however, those inhabiting the sea are eaten just like crayfish.

Scorpions, which are very white in color, are found in old trees and also, occasionally, between the walls of houses. When they sting a man his life is placed in grave danger.

There is a great number of birds, namely gobblers, hens (which have a red growth, like the gobblers, on their heads), ducks, pigeons, parrots and parakeets. Also to be encountered is the small hummingbird which is no larger than a cockchafer and has magnificently colored feathers. Its body smells like musk. It takes nourishment from all kinds of flowers, but primarily from the fine yellow

A SWISS MEDICAL DOCTOR'S DESCRIPTION OF BARBADOS IN 1661:
THE ACCOUNT OF FELIX CHRISTIAN SPOERI

flowers of the *Juca Indica*, from which Aloe juice is made. Instead of costly precious stones, the womenfolk [p. 28] hang these [flowers?] on their ears because of their lovely odor, nice color, and brightness.

There are also very poisonous spiders whose bodies are as large as apples. They spin their webs from one tree to another and these are strong enough to enable them to catch small birds in them. I have several specimens of the spiders' *zaen*¹⁷ which are like birdclaws. The spiders are of various colors, are pretty to look at, and have a gloss like velvet.

The Aloe is half a foot thick and its leaves are five to six inches wide and three to four feet long. It is frequently found on this island. When the leaves are broken off, a juice, like white glue, runs out. This juice is dried in the sun and is then called *Aloe Succotrina*. A stalk, six to eight feet high with many nice yellow flowers on top, grows from the center of this plant. It has a pleasant smell.

The Coculus di Levante or Nux vomica [i.e., The Physic Nut] is also found on the island. It grows on a little tree which is comparable to a nut tree. In form and size, it is like a large laurel. When the black pod is removed [from the outer covering], a white kernel is exposed. This kernel is as sweet as Hazelnut and can be split down the middle where a thick film is located. When even the strongest person takes just one of these he vomits as forcefully [p. 29] as if he had taken a strong Antimony purge. But when the film is removed one can derive five to eight or nine mild purges from the kernel, and this is the way in which the inhabitants use it.

This is what I observed on the island of Barbados . . .

[Spoeri's ship, the *Black Horse*, as noted in the introduction, deposited its cargo at Barbados after coming from Holland, and left the island for New England where it took on various goods. The ship then returned to Barbados, and Spoeri presents the following brief passage on this, his second, visit to the island]:

[p. 47] On the 27th of April 1661, we passed the Tropic of Cancer and caught the eastwind which helped us along well, so that, on the 30th of April, we happily arrived in good condition at the island of Barbados for which we thanked God. We lost but one horse [out of thirty].

On the 1st of May we brought the twenty-nine horses ashore and because of their good condition the merchants were very pleased.

On the following day, the 2nd of May, we brought the remaining goods ashore and also prepared to load other goods to be shipped to London. However, it did not look as if we could get a full load because shortly before our arrival, all sugar, cotton, tobacco and other goods had been shipped off. Thus we lay idle for ten [sic] weeks and still could not get a full load. Therefore [p. 48] our captain, upon advice of his agents, decided to sail to the islands of Nevis and St. Christopher and there to look for a full load.

On the 15th of June we departed from the island of Barbados . . .

[Spoeri continued his travels on merchantmen voyaging between the West Indies, Europe, and North America. On August 30, 1662, he embarked from Amsterdam on the *St. Peter*, a ship captained by Thomas *Aubone* of Newcastle, England. The *St. Peter* made for Limerick, Ireland, where it loaded salt meat and other goods, in addition to thirty horses, for Barbados; during the sea voyage fifteen of the horses perished. The ship arrived at the island in December and Spoeri presents the following brief entry on his third visit]:

[p. 66] In Barbados we landed the fifteen horses; the profit from these alone paid for those which did not survive, and for the voyage as well. Then our agents decided to send us to the island of Tortuga in order to load the ship with salt to be transported to New England.

After we had unloaded the ship, we had it ballasted again with sand. We left Barbados on December 28. On January 1, 1663, without incident on the voyage, we arrived at the island of Tortuga

NOTES

1. An effort to bring such items to the attention of readers of this journal was started with the translation and publication of Father Biet's account (J. S. Handler, "Father Antoine Biet's Visit to Barbados in 1654," *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, Vol. 32, 1967, pp. 56—76). It is also presently intended to translate the account by Heinrich Von Uchteritz (*Kurtze Reise Beschreibung . . . auf der insul Barbados . . . Wissenfels*, 1712, 32 pp.), a German adventurer who fought with the Royalists during the English Civil War, and who was shipped to Barbados as an indentured servant by Cromwell.
2. *Americanische Reiss-Beschreibung nach den Caribes Insslen, und Neu-Engelland*. Zurich, 1677, 90 pp. Spoeri's book was located, and its relevant passages duplicated, while Handler held a research grant from The American Philosophical Society (Johnson Fund).
3. *Dictionnaire Historique et Biographique de La Suisse . . .* Vol. 6. Neuchatel, 1932, p. 298. Alternate spellings of the name are Spoerri, Spoerry, and Spori.
4. Various German-English dictionaries were employed, including the Grimm brothers' sixteen volume German etymological and historical dictionary *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Edited by the German Academy of Sciences of Berlin, Leipzig, 1854—1960).
5. Obviously Bridgetown. Why Spoeri refers to the island's main town in this way is uncertain, but there is no evidence that it was ever referred to by anything other than The Bridge or Bridgetown.
6. Actually De Ruyter arrived at Barbados in 1665 with more than thirteen ships (for accounts of this event see V. T. Harlow, ed., *Colonising Expeditions to the West Indies and Guiana, 1623—1667*. London, 1925, pp. 109—113), but this reference to an event which occurred a few years after Spoeri last visited the island could be interpreted to imply that his account was based on more than a journal he kept at the time, and that various remarks were written after his visits to the island.
7. Spoeri's information that a hurricane hit Barbados in late 1660, and Biet's earlier recording of another in 1653 (Handler, *Father Antoine Biet's Visit*, . . . p. 65) supplement Otis Starkey's list of seventeenth century hurricanes (*The Economic Geography of Barbados*. New York, 1939, p. 25), in which 1666 is recorded as the earliest date.
8. For more details on the manufacture and use of hammocks in Barbados at this period see J. S. Handler, "Aspects of Amerindian Ethnography in Seventeenth Century Barbados," *Caribbean Studies* (In Press). This paper also treats in greater detail a number of topics discussed below by Spoeri, including the use and preparation of cassava, the manufacture of Mobby, edible crabs and techniques used in collecting them, the use of manchineel as a poison by Indians and in fishing, etc.

A SWISS MEDICAL DOCTOR'S DESCRIPTION OF BARBADOS IN 1661:
THE ACCOUNT OF FELIX CHRISTIAN SPOERI

9. For more details on Barbados' Amerindian population see J. S. Handler, "The Amerindian Slave Population of Barbados in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," *Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 8, 1969, pp. 38—64; and J. S. Handler, "The Amerindian Slave Population . . ." *op. cit.*
10. At this period it was highly unusual to instruct any slave in Christianity.
11. See David Watts ("Origins of Barbadian Cane Hole Agriculture." *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, Vol. 32, 1968, pp. 143—151) for details on sugar planting prior to the introduction of the cane-hole system. Spoeri's account of cane planting, cutting, and processing should also be compared to Richard Ligon's much more detailed description (*A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados*. London, 1657 p. 85ff.), from which it deviates in some details. For instance, Spoeri notes (see below) that slaves could be used to turn the mill rollers. an observation which, as far as we can tell, is unique for the period.
12. *Sagbaum*. A tree to be cut up for boards.
13. For more details on the construction and use of the sugar pot, and its role in stimulating the development of a cottage pottery industry in Barbados, see J. S. Handler "A Historical Sketch of Pottery Manufacture in Barbados," *Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society*, Vol. 30, 1963, pp. 129—153.
14. *Kuerbsen* has at least two meanings which could be applicable here: In one sense it can be a generic term for *Cucurbita*; in another sense it can specifically mean pumpkin. With respect to the latter meaning, it can be noted that David Watts, in his exhaustive study of plants introduced to Barbados during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, states that the earliest written identification of the pumpkin in Barbados appeared in 1750 (*Man's Influence on the Vegetation of Barbados, 1627—1800*. University of Hull, Occasional Papers in Geography, No. 4, 1966, p. 91).
15. *I.e.*, verjuice, which was, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, "formerly much used in cooking, as a condiment, or for medicinal purposes;" yet, Spoeri seems to imply its use as a coloring agent or dye.
16. *Aggaj*. We have been unable to identify this as either a German or English term. It may, however, be Spoeri's rough phonetic spelling of an English word or words.
17. *Zaen* refers to teeth or anything which give the impression of tooth-like projections.