



Notes on the West Indies: Written during the Expedition under the Command of the Late General Sir Ralph Abercromby (Cambridge Library Collection - Slavery and Abolition) (Volume 1)

George Pinckard

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George Pinckard (1768-1835) was an army surgeon who arrived in the West Indies in 1796. His letters to a friend were published as *Notes on the West Indies* in 1806; a second edition came out in 1816. He describes at length all that he saw, from the very beginning of his journey, with vivid portrayals of characters and experiences: for example, before departure he saw a sailor being flogged around the fleet for desertion. Arriving first in Barbados, he describes the island, its people and its wildlife. He visited a slave trader's ship, and he gives a very good report of the condition of the slaves (most of whom were teenagers), in sharp contrast to horrific accounts also in circulation. His derogatory opinions about many of the Africans and half-castes that he met, particularly the women, perhaps typify the responses of a westerner of his age and class.

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