

ABORIGINAL AND EARLY SPANISH NAMES
OF SOME CARIBBEAN, CIRCUM-CARIBBEAN ISLANDS AND CAYS

By Kenneth C. Dick

The Leeward (*Sotavento*) Islands which run from Guadeloupe to St. Croix were named "leeward" because the Spaniards practiced sailing to their leeward. All of these islands were said to have been inhabited by, or, in power of Caribs.

The Carib-cannibal tradition began at San Salvador (Watlings Island) on October 12, 1492, when Cristóbal Colón (Christ-bearer; colonizer) first stepped on "American" shores. These peaceful natives, and in fact all whom Columbus encountered in his First Voyage, belonged to the so-called Taino culture of the Arawak language group. The Arawaks, an Amerind people, came out of various places in South America, probably by way of Peru, Ecuador, Guiana, Colombia, Venezuela and Trinidad some two to three thousand years ago. The name Arawak first appears in literature in the late 1500's. Juan López de Velasco noted the presence of people who called themselves "Arawak" on the Guinea Coast. Cohane writes: "The name by which people called, and still call, themselves, a blending of two names that reigned supreme in England and Ireland and across Europe, and around the Mediterranean, in Asia, Africa and South America was-ARAWAK: Awak, or Awa and Ok."*

Columbus inquired of the natives (no doubt in sign language) on San Salvador (to whom he gave the name *Lucayas*) from whence came the enemy who warred upon the Lucayans, stealing their women, plundering and committing man-eating atrocities. The Lucayans indicated directions to the West (Florida?) and to the South. Columbus heard the oft repeated word *caniba*, or *canima*, or, *caribals*, which to him sounded like *cannibales*. To the Spaniards, all hostile natives were henceforth dubbed *Caribes*. De Cuneo speaks of both "the Caribs and Indians" as if there was a marked racial distinction. In 1503 Carib was made the official designation of hostile Indians subject to capture and sale. De Rochefort wrote that "the island (Carib) natives called themselves *Calinago*, which is the name for the men, and *Calliponan*, which is that of the women, collectively they call themselves *Oubao-Bonon* 'inhabitants of the Islands', and by other native tribes as *Cofachites*; these people came from the Haven of Caribana (Florida?); the Spaniards imposed the name *Caribes* on many Indian tribes of the mainland (South America); the insular Caribs believed that they descended from the tribe *Calibites*".**

*Cohane, J.P. *The Key*, Crown, N.Y., 1969.

**De Rochefort, Charles. *The History of the Caribby Islands*, London, 1666.

Thomas Jefferys in his *West Indies Atlas* (1773) introduced the designation "Caribbean Sea" that was to become standard on maps though not adopted in Spanish lands. The entire Caribbean area came to be known as *Islas y Tierra Firme* ("islands and mainland") which was referred to by the English as "The Spanish Main". This became *Islas y Tierra Firme de las Indias* or in English the equivalent of The West Indies (the Caribbean Sea and Circum-Caribbean area).

The first people to be called "Indians" were those who occupied the Greater Antilles: Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico, Jamaica.* Cuba, the largest island in the Antilles, together with some 1634 other islands, offshore islets and cays comprise the West Indies. By the Treaty of Paris, 1898, Spain relinquished Cuba to the U.S. in trust for its inhabitants and ceded Puerto Rico and the "Spanish Virgin Islands" to the U.S. (Puerto Rico, Vieques, Culebra and adjacent cays). Two islands were purchased by the U.S. which were omitted in the treaty.

The derivative use of the term *Antilles* is rather complex. The names *Antillia* and *Antilles* long antedate Columbus. *Antillia* was believed to have been a large island in the Atlantic, some 850 leagues west of and about the size of Portugal which, according to the Ruysch chronicles and Portuguese myths, was the refuge home for King Roderick (last King of the Visigoths in Spain), along with seven Christian bishops and their following who fled Portugal after a battle with the Moors in the eighth century and who peopled seven cities on that "island".

Toscanelli wrote to Columbus saying that *Antilia*, Island of the Seven Cities, was on the way to Japan, the mythical *Antillia* that so many Portuguese and French navigators had sought in vain. *Antillia*, also *Antela*, *Atilhas*, *Antiglia* is shown on the Becarrio map of 1435; the Pareto map of 1455; the Benincasa map of 1482 in which *Antillia* is probably Cuba and *Reylla* is probably Jamaica, yet other notable maps, for example, Giraldi 1426, Valsequa 1439 and Fra Mauro 1459 show nothing of *Antillia*, while Caneriu's map of 1502 names the large West Indies group *Antilhas del Rey de Castella*. According to Behaim, a Spanish vessel in 1414 sighted the "island". Martyr in his *Decades of the New World or West India* in narrating the discovery of Cuba and Hispaniola: "it seemeth that both these and other islands adjoining, are the islands of *Antillia*". It was generally assumed, both in Portugal and France, that Hispaniola, the Island of Seven Cities, was *Antillia* and the pearl of the Antilles. Hence, the names *Las Antilhas* and *Les Antilles* for the West Indies.

*Lovén, Sven. *Origins of the Tainan Culture, West Indies*, Göteborg, 1935.

Ever since Vincenzio Formaleoni called attention to the delineation of Antillia in Bianco's map of 1436, as indicating some knowledge of "America", there have been those to urge claims of a large island in the great western sea.

Humboldt hypothesized that the name *Antillia* was derived of *Al-Tin*, Arabic for "the dragon". The Pizigoni map of 1367 cites Arabic experience in proof of dragons rising from the depths of the sea and snatching the crew from on board. *Antela*, the version on the Laon globe, is identical with the name of Lake *Antela* of northwestern Spain. Humboldt admits that *Antillia* may be readily resolved into two Portuguese words *ante* and *illa* ("island"). *Illa* is the old form of *ilha* found in many maps that either way would be pronounced *illia*, that *Ante-illia* would naturally be slurred into "*Antillia*" meaning the "island out before" or, more correctly, "the opposite island" (opposite Portugal).*

Ever since 1503, almost without exception, every chronicler, historian and anthropologist recording accounts of Indians eating their enemies, has repeated the etymology *Carib*. Unscientifically, Columbus had introduced the longest lasting misnomer in Western hemisphere history, and present day historians continue using the language and culture classification *Carib*. If there did exist warlike peoples by that nomenclature, then surely they were made up of many sub-cultures as were the *Arawaks*. No less an authority than Douglas Taylor writes: "This island Carib...must be considered belonging to the Arawakan family".** Numerous theoretical treatises have been published tracing the migration of the *Arawaks* but scarcely anything concerning the so-called *Caribs*, whether red or black, and referred to as the last migrants in the chain from Tobago to the Virgin Islands. There is no documented record of *Carib* Indians having inhabited St. Thomas, or St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands. Who were their progenitors in the main stream? And question of questions: What people erected the huge megaliths on the plateau of Greencastle Hill, Antigua, possibly to be dated c. 3000 B.C.?, a site that was only discovered in 1930.

We should consider that clusters of peaceful peoples, when enslaved or pushed to the limit of endurance, can and do become rebellious. The Spaniards in their greed for gold and slaves, the conversion of "pagans" to Catholicism being a last weak excuse, subjected the Indians to degradation and death. Anyone of them who so much as raised a spear in defiance was automatically labeled "*Carib*" and doomed for extinction. That some aborigines were given to anthropophagy is not unique.

*Babcock, W.H. *Legendary Islands of the Atlantic*, Research Series #8, American Geographical Society, N.Y., 1922.

***International Journal of American Linguistics* 20, pg. 4, 1954.

The eating of human flesh is a widespread custom, going back into early history and found among peoples on most continents, and is still practiced in parts of New Guinea, Africa, Melanesia, Polynesia, New Zealand, Australia, Sumatra, Borneo, and in various tribes in North and South America. Human flesh appears on the markets of famine areas of China. Cannibalism occurs among the fringe cultures as a need for food; as part of a tribal drama, animism, deism, sacrifice to the gods, spirit fetishism, totemism, filial piety, social justification; for psychological and magical purposes; mythological mechanisms involved in apostasy; therapeutic values; to assimilate the strength and wisdom of the person eaten. The complex symbolism of the Eucharist is here relevant. It appears as religious motifs in many myths and legends. Some tribes eat only relatives--fathers do not eat their own children, but mothers do. Anthropologists have made it a distorted history of motive. Evidence is insufficient to support a single simple explanation of this custom. But whatever the attribution, it is a subject that needs a great deal more study. With regard to the Carib eating human flesh Fewkes comments: "There is evidence that the Carib has been maligned".*

Etymology of toponyms of the pre-Columbian Antilles abounds with perplexities even when one knows something of the languages involved: Igneri (pre-Caribbean Arawak) Cabre, Taino, Ostione, Ciguayo (sub-Arawakan), Arawak, and Cibuney (variously Cibuneye, Ciboney, Siboneye, Sibaney) who were referred to as "stone people" because they lived in caves. The Cibuney inhabited Cuba, Western Puerto Rico and portions of Haiti. Rouse cites evidence of Cibuney culture in the Lesser Antilles: "They were the original inhabitants of the West Indies".** The Tainos inhabited western Puerto Rico and Es-pañiola; the Arawaks, Jamaica and Trinidad, and the last of the migrants--the "Caribs", the chain from Tobago to the Virgin Islands and possibly as far West as Vieques. Sauer strongly suggests that Cibuney, along with Taino and sub-Taino, should be dropped as an ethnic term. The Spaniards knew that common speech and habits extended from the Bahamas to Puerto Rico and Jamaica in contrast to the great diversity on *Tierra Firme*. Sauer points out that the misnaming comes from incorrect translation by Bishop Las Casas in his *Apologetica Historia* who, for want of a better nomenclature for neglected slave groups, called these MesoIndian inhabitants "exbuneyes", which led Lovén to assume that another sub-culture was meant for the predecessors of the Arawaks. Sauer believes that the prefix "ex"

*Fewkes, J.W. *The Aborigines of Puerto Rico and Neighboring Islands*, Government Printing Office, 1907.

**Rouse, Irving B. *Handbook of South American Indians*, Julian Steward, ed., Smithsonian, Washington, D.C., 1963.

was an error of transposition for "ci".*

Rouse makes a precise statement: "Today, to the best of my knowledge, there are no sites clearly identified with historically documented occupation". To which Haag adds: "This applies for the entire Antilles from Trinidad to Cuba. The Carib people of Dominica and the black Caribs of the Bay Islands of Honduras, have preserved only fragments of even their Carib language. Nothing else of the culture is still viable".** Rouse suggests a proper procedure would be to avoid ethnic terms such as Arawak and Carib when labeling prehistoric remains "except where we have documentary to that effect".

Attempts to discover some common language pattern amongst these primitive peoples has not met with much success. Farabee lists the Macusis, Waiwa, Waiwe, Parakutu, Chikena, Katawi, Wakeri, Apalii, Porokoto and Azumara as (mainland South American) tribes all having the same word for "water"--tuna, yet having no other words common to their vocabularies.*** The spoken language of these tribes depends largely upon intonation, as does the spoken language of the Chinese. In addition, there are endless variations of the languages and pronunciations. Hoff writes: "With the exception of the glottal stop and the voiced glottal fricative h all the consonantal phonemes have two allophones, a palliative allophone and a non-palatalized allophone".**** There are literally thousands of dialects and offshoot languages of other Circum-Caribbean tribes which emanated out of Central and South America and very possibly as far away as from some islands of the Pacific whose peoples touched the western shores of Central America. The mid-Caribbean archipelago had acted as convenient stepping stones for reaching all parts of the Antilles. We know from goods exchanged and the methods of refining and casting of metals that far flung tribes were in contact with aboriginal West Indians. There is even speculation that Jomon pottery from Kyushu, Japan (c. 3600 B.C.) was the forerunner of pre-Columbian Amerind pottery found at Valdivia, Ecuador (c. 3200 B.C.).*****

The earliest evidence of man in the Circum-Caribbean area is found at Muaco, Cucuricho and Taimi Taima, Venezuela, at

*Sauer, Carl Ortwin. *The Early Spanish Main*, California Press, Berkeley, 1966.

**Haag, W.G. *The Identification of Archaeological Remains with Ethnic Groups*, Proceedings of the Second International Congress, Barbados, 1967.

***Farabee, W.C. *The Central Caribs*, Vol. X, Anthropological Publication, Univ. Penn., 1924.

****Hoff, B.J. *Van Het Koninklijk Instituut*, The Hague, 1968.

*****Olsen, Fred. *On the Trail of the Arawaks*, Univ. Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1973.

just under 15,000 B.C.*

In his seventh *Decade*, Peter Martyr wrote that the Lucayas Islands (later to be called the Bahama or Bahama Islands (originally a British grant to Sir Heath in 1629) were the "useless" islands from which it was proper to ship natives to places where they could be worked as slaves. These islands, states Martyr, were the first part of the New World to become completely depopulated (starting during the time of discovery of Florida by Ponce de León in 1513). The Lucayans who were clearly Arawak were transported in large numbers to serve as pearl divers in the Gulf of Paria and to work in the mines of Hispaniola. In less than one generation some six million native peoples perished; within one hundred years of Columbus' landing they became extinct in the Antilles.

In passing, it might be noted that the first Negroes from Africa were brought to the Antilles in 1511. By the mid 1600's in the West Indies there were nearly as many white slaves as black. During depressed periods a white indentured worker, almost without monetary value, was lower than the lowest Negro slave and could be purchased for a hogshead of salt. As late as the mid 1800's, in Jamaica, a white slave could be bought for a hundredweight of Guinea corn. "When want of labor began to be felt in the colony of the U.S. Virgin Islands, traffic in slaves was encouraged by King Christian V of Denmark who purchased in Africa from the King of Acquaban the two forts of Frederiksburg and Christianburg on the Gold Coast of Africa."** The Aquabamos slaves were from a tribe who were warriors and noblemen of Africa, slave holders, not slaves in their own land. With rare exception, slaves coming from Africa had been slaves at home, born in slavery, bred for it by a long line of "accustomed" slaves. The Negro invented the institution of slavery, demanded it by submitting to it, something the black ruling class learned through satisfying demand for blacks reduced to slavery.

Since aboriginal tribes did not arrive in the Indies at any given location all at one time but came in a series of overlapping waves, each wave brought with it an admixture of cultural and lingual changes, depending, of course, upon their contacts and affiliations with other peoples along the migratory routes. Naturally, such diffusion makes it impossible to go back over the past centuries to identify some of the original place names, thus, we are compelled to rely upon the few reference sources which have been preserved. Records of early explorers in the Caribbean Islands and their chroniclers are

*Rouse, I., and Cruxent, J.M. *Venezuelan Archaeology*, Yale Univ., New Haven, Conn., 1963.

**Zabriskie, L.K. *The Virgin Islands of the United States of America*, G.P. Putnam, N.Y., 1918.

sometimes confusing and contradictory. For example, statements made by Ferdinand Columbus are not always reliable. As for later historians, the same might be said of Samuel E. Morison. But to begin at some point is what is important, even though this disquisition be superficial. When new data become available, we can always amend. Perhaps such challenge may appeal to others having this narrow interest in Caribbean island toponymy.

The major fountains of data stem largely from old maps such as those of Juan de la Cosa, 1500; Andrés de Morales, the first geographer to make a map and description from field observation of any part of the New World, *El Mapa Más de la Isla de Santo Domingo*, 1508; the mappemondes of Cantino, 1502, the oldest of European maps showing America,* if the La Cosa map is not truly of a date prior to 1502; the Vespucci, 1526; the Diego Ribero, 1529; the Alonso de Santa Cruz, 1536; an anonymous map in the *Archivo Historica Nacional* and lithographed by Marcos X de la Espada in 1877; from the writings of several imposing Spanish chroniclers: Peter Martyr (Pietro Martire d'Anghiera), *De Rebus Oceanicis et Novo Orbe*, 1516, which was the first account of the discovery of America; Oviedo (Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés), *Historia General y Natural de las Indias Occidentales*, 21 volumes partially published 1535-1847, in completed form 1851-1855; Las Casas (Bartolomé de), *Breve Relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, 1522, first printed in 1875-76, perhaps the most important historical source relative to Columbus' discovery of the New World; Bernáldez (Andrés), *Historia de los Reyes Católicos*, covering the period of Spanish history from 1488 to 1513, finally published in 1856; Annríquez (Pedro) with Columbus on his Second Voyage, mentions the order and names of the islands as discovered. Also of importance are the chronicles of Dr. Diego Alvarez Chanca, Michele de Cuneo and Melchior Maldonado whose account is the basis of Martyr's in his *Decades of the New World*.

Pertinent Spanish records having lacunae, we must look further to the annals left by French and Spanish missionaries such as Dutertre, R.P. Labat, Fray Raymond Breton (*Dictionnaire Caraibe Francais*, 1665), Fray Ramón Pané, and lesser known Franciscan and Catalan friars. We might also include such works as *The Voyage of Robert Dudley, Earl* (1594-5) Hakluyt Society, Lichenstein, 1899; Lucien Adams' *Dialectes, de la Famille Caraibe*, 1893; Adams and Le Clerc, *Grammaire Caraibe*, 1878; the vocabularies of Brasseur de Bourbourg; D.G. Brinton's *Arawak Language of Guiana*; the treatises of Coll y Toste of Puerto Rico, and Bachiller y Morales of Cuba.

**Mundus Novus* or "America" applied solely to the southern hemisphere. The northern hemisphere was known to the Spaniards only as "Florida".

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
Alta Vela	Alto Velo C.C. ("High Veil")	
Anegada ("flooded land")	Anegada	
Anguilla ("eel") (Anguilla, Sombrero and <u>Enegada</u> , in letters patent, 1620, were given by the King of England to James Hay, Earl of Carlisle.)	Mallionuhana F.R.B. (Carib) ("Place of Water")	
Antigua ("ancient")	Santa Maria la Antigua C.C.	Otiyaladli F.R.B. Waladi F.R.B. (pre-Arawak) Waradli D.N. (Carib, "fish oil island". The Caribs came here to fish for turtle and shark for medicinal and lighting oils.) Warikad D.N. ("subdue", "rape", the island so often raided from Domi- nica to obtain women.) Yaranqui F.C. (Arawak) ("Dagger Tree Islands")
Aruba	Isla de Brasil C.C. (Claimed for Spain in 1499 by Ojeda)	Arubeira F.C.
Bad Luck	Isla de Malhado C. de V.	
Barbados	Isla de los Barbudos F.C. ("Bearded fig trees") Sea Captain John Powell was first to land on this island, 1625	Ichirouganaim F.R.B.
Barbuda ("long beard")	Dulcina	Ouahomoni F.R.B. ("Heron Island")

Bastimientos	Isla de Bastimientos F.M. ("Isle of Provisions")	
Baque		Baque
Beata	Madama Beata C.C. ("Blessed Lady")	
Bequia	Sancta Chaterina L.C.	Bekuya or Bek (from old maps only)
Berique	Isla de Graciosa C.C.	Berique
Bermuda	Bermudas (discovered in 1505 by Juan Bermídez {ver- mudes}; called Isla La Garca by early writers after his ship. For a while the English changed the name officially to Somers Islands.)	
Bimini	Isla de Beimini P.M. (variously Beniny, Beiminj)	Boiuca S.M.
Blanca, or Blanquilla	El Martinet C.C. ("The Martlet")	
Boca del Toro	Boca del Toro S.C. ("Mouth of the Bull")	
Bonacca (one of the Bay islands, Rutatan, Utila, Barbarat)	Isla de Bonassa C.C.	Guanaja or Guanaca
Bonaire	Isla de Palo Brasil ("Isle of dyewood trees")	Bonjaj

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
Brass (Inner & Outer)	Las Islas de Blas (from sailing directions)	
Camanoe		Camanoe
Cannouan		Cannouan S.I. (the name of the turtle from which Indians obtained lighting oil - Van der Plas)
Caracol	El Caracol C.C. ("The Snail")	Chacachacare
Carriacou		Carriacou
Caymans	Caiman ("crocodile")	Karikakutti F.R.B. ("It is rugged")
Brac.	Breac. Appeared on 16th century charts as Las "Tortugas { "Turtle Islands" } F.C."	Karaua F.R.B. ("Drumbeat")
Cayo Moa Grande	Cayo Moa Grande C.C.	Coche
Coche		
Conception		Concepción C.C.
Congo Cay		Lanceolate ("Shuttle Island") or Cayo Congo ó Lovango Chico
Cow and Calf		Ternera y La Vaca
Cozumel		Cozumel J. de G.
Crooked Island		La Isabela C.C.
Cuba	Cuba ("cask")	Samaot L.C. Samoet F.C. Saomete S.M. Cuba C.C. Colba S.M.

Cuba {continued}

Cuba	Fernandina F.C.	<i>Guana-hatabeyes</i> S.L. ("dwellers of the mountains")
Cubagua	Curiana ("Cockroach")	Cubagua
Culebra	Calebra ("The Snake")	Couicubera C. de R. (Carib)
Curagao	Isla de Gigantes C.C. (Morison states that Columbus discovered Aruba, Bonaire & Curacao, but Russell-Harris claims that Curacao was discovered by Alonso de Ojeda in 1499.)	Curacoa ("bitter")
Desecheo	Desecheo ("rejected")	Chiccheyo
Desirade	La Deseada F.O. ("The Desired")	
Dog Island	Isla del Perro	Ouaitoucoubouli F.R.B.
Dominica	Sancta Dominica C.C. (Charis, in Latin.)	Caire S.M. (Carib) Ceure F.C.
Eleuthera		Quaris D.A.C.
Escudo de Veragua (escutcheon of Veragua, Duke and grandson of C.C.)	El Escudo C.C. ("The Shield")	Wyrtukubuli ("fire-Heaven" thought to mean Sirius) D.N. Kamukali ("ghost or spirit") D.T.
Falcon	El Falcon C.C. ("The Falcon")	Iti A. de O.
Fish Cay	Cocoloba	Uvita

PRESENT NAME

French Cap

Flanagan

Florida Keys

Goat

Gonave

Grand Bahamas

Great Corn

Great Inagua

EARLY SPANISH NAME

Cayo Francés ó de Aves ("Bird Cay")

Cayo Consejos ("Council Cay")

Los Martires P. de L.
("The Torments")

Isla Cabra C.C.

Isla de Gonave C.C.

Tera Beimini P.M.

Grande del Maiz

Grenada

ABORIGINAL NAME

Cayo Francés ó de Aves ("Bird Cay")
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Tera Beimini P.M.
Grande del Maiz

La Concepción C.C.
La Asuncion I.C., and named
Ascension by Juan de La Cosa
of Santa Maria, first voyage
of Santa Maria de Guadalupe C.C.
(sometimes "Guadalupe").
According to Oviedo, the
first words heard by the crew
of Columbus upon landing in
Guadeloupe were: "Taino",
"Taino": = Peace!, Friends!"

Cama 'one, Camahogne F.R.B.
Kamahuya ("thunderbolt", the tribe of
Kamahuya Caribs lived in Grenada
and the Windward Islands, some
18,000 of them). -Vasquez
Turuqueira F.C.
Caloucaera F.D.B.
Caracueira S.I.
Kerkeria or Quigeri S.M.
Kalevut (Piri Re's map, 1513)
Kalevat S.M.

Isla de Guanabo
Guanaja

Guanaha

Haiti or Hayti	Isla Espanola C.C. (Latinized by Martyr into Hispaniola - "The Spanish Isle"). Haiti, like Santo Domingo, is a recent division of Hispaniola.	Quisqueya (Arawak) Aitij F.R.B. (Carib) ("mountainous country")
Huerta	Isla de Huerta C.C. ("The Garden")	Bohio Bofio Vosio Quiribiri
Huevas	Isla El Delfin C.C. ("The Dolphin")	Ebengelista, Evangelista J.de L.C.
Isle of Pines	Isla de Mujeres F. de C. ("Isle of Women")	Xamayca (Arawak) ("Isle of Springs")
Isla Mujeres	Jago M. de C. also Sant'Iago or Santiago ("St. James" was tried for Jamaica but was not adopted.)	Martyr wrote it as Jamaica in his Decades, 1511, and Jamaica it has remained.
Jamaica	Jardín de la Reina	Xamayca (Arawak) ("Flower garden of the Queen")
El Romero	El Romero ("The Pilgrim")	La Sola C.C.
La Granja	La Granja ("The Farm")	Monte Cristi C.C.
Las Mulatas	Las Mulatas ("Mullato Wenchies")	Las Barbas C.C. ("The Whiskets")
Leduck Cay	Leduck Cay	Islita Borgem
Little Corn	Little Corn	Pequeña de Maiz

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
Little St. Thomas	San Tomás Chico	
Long Island (Bahamas)	Fernandina C.C.	
Los Frailes ("The Friars")	Las Guardias C.C.	
Los Testigos ("The Witnesses")	Los Testigos C.C.	Guarionex
Lovango (Awango) Cays	Lovango Grande, Chico, and Media	
Lovango, Congo, Mingo Margarita	Isla de Margarita C.C. ("Isle of Pearls")	Cabagua
Mariagalante	Santa María la Gallante C.C.	Tuluakaera S.L. Aichi F.R.B.
Marigot		
Martinique	Matinino C.C. ("Isle of Women") Madanina P.M. Matremino F.C.	Touanacera F.R.B. (Arawak) ("Iguana Island") Ouabo F.R.B. (Carib)
Mayreau (one of 600 islets of the Grenadines between St. Vincent and Grenada)	Mayero	
Mona	Mona C.C. ("pretty")	Amona
Monos ("monkeys")	Cabo Bato C.C.	
Monte Cristi (one of the Seven Brothers Islands)	Monte Christi C.C.	
Montserrat	Santa María de Monserrate C.C.	Alliouávana F.R.B. (Carib) ("Island of the prickly bush") Ayiungana F.R.B. (Arawak) (a plant for which we have no name) Alliou = Aloe?

Navassa	Navassa C.C.	Originally named as San Martin by C.C., shortly thereafter renamed Nuestra Senora de las Nieves ("Our Lady of the Snows") Neipes A. de S.C.	Walira S.L. (Arawak) Ouallie F.R.B. (Carib)
Nevis			
Pelican Cay (Northernmost of the U.S. Virgin Islands)	Islotillo Bajo y Penasco so ("Low & Rocky Islet")		
Provvedencia	Isla de Provvedenia		
Puerto Rico	San Juan Bautista C.C. ("St. John the Baptist")	Columbus first called it "Carib"- "and in that island Carib".	Baneque (Lucayan/Arawak) C.C. *Borinquen (Tainan) Bueno P.R.B. (Carib)
Rat Cay			Burichena P.M. Burinquen C. Y T. Boriquen, Buriquen, Burenguen Burunguen D.A.C.
Rat Island			
Provvedencia			
Puerto Rico			
Rat Cay	Isla Y Rota		
Rat Island	La Amiga C.C.		

The earliest map we have of Puerto Rico which appears in the second volume, *Atlas of Alonso de Santa Cruz, Islario General de Todas las Islas del Mundo*, 1510-1520, first published in 1541, the island of San Juan is designated Sanivan (Isla de San Ivan?). Ponce de León, in 1509 named the city on the north side "San Juan de Puerto Rico", the change of names between the capital and the island took place in 1521 whereby the latter was henceforth known as Puerto Rico ("Rich Port") on official Spanish maps. Largest of the Spanish Virgin Islands it was acquired by the U.S. in 1898.

*Luis Vaez de Torres wrote that the aboriginal name of Borinquen is made up of: Bo=man or master; ri=valor, force; nof them, of the; que=the earth; n=final sign of the plural; "Land of valiant masters", "Fatherland of Powerful Men".

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
Ragged Islands	Las Islas de Arenas C.C. ("Sandy Isles")	Siba ("rock or stone") S.L.
Redonda ("Roundabout")	"Sea", "Sister", "North", "South", and "Nurse".	Ciba (Arawak) S.L.
Rum Cay	Santa Maria la Redonda C.C. ("St. Mary the Rotund")	Amonahana ("cotton") F.R.B.
Saba ('Sab <u>a</u> th?')	Santa Maria de la Concepción C.C. San Cristobal C.C.	Caaroucaera ("island of the parrot with long feathers") S.L.
Saba Cay	Isla de Montalvan	Guanahani C.C. ("Iguana")
Sacrificios	Isla de Sacrificios A. de H.	
Saintes, Les Isles	Todos los Santos C.C.	
Salvador (Watlings)	Sant Salvador C.C. ("Holy Saviour")	
(The name Watlings Island first appeared on John Thornton's chart of the Bahamas in 1700)		
San Andres ("St. Andrew")	San Andres	
Saona	La Bella Saonese C.C.	
Savana or Green Island	La Isla Cabrita ó Savana	
St. Barthelémy		
Santo Domingo	Santo Domingo B.D.	Wanaloa S.L.
(like Haiti, a recent political division of Hispaniola)		Ouanalao F.R.B.
		Doudouton-Timani C. de R. (Carib)
		Quisqueya ("vast country")
		Nhidonam F.R.B.

St. Croix

variously--Crux Santa,
Sainte Croix, Santo Cruce,
Santa Crux, Santa Cruz,
Santa Croix

Santa Cruz C.C.

("Island of the Holy Cross")
Uninhabited from 1695 to 1733

Cibogueira G. de O. (Arawak)
("Men of the Stony Land")
Libuqueira G. de O.
Turuqueira F.C.

Ayay P.M.

Fahi F.R.B.

There is much confusion amongst the early chroniclers as to the aboriginal name for St. Croix. Oviedo cites Cibogueira and in several other instances as *Libuqueira*, perhaps a copyist's error.* There is further lack of clarity as to just which island bore the name Ayay. McGuire lists it as Ayay; Breton as Ahi-Ai; Martyr as Ayay; Chanca as Aye Aye; still other sources as Iaha. Chanca says that Cibogueira, Libuqueira and Turuqueira are all Guadeloupe; "There are three islands which is (sic) called Turuqueira, the other which we first sighted, called 'Ceyre' and the third called 'Ayay'." (These islands have been identified as Guadeloupe, Maria Galante, and St. Croix. But Turuqueira and Ayay have also been taken to be the two islands which together form Guadeloupe, while Ceyre was actually Dominica. Ceyre is no doubt the same island as Quaris?) Continues Chanca: "At Cibogueira there are two other islands in this group, Ceyre and Aye Aye. These peoples are all the same and some travel north to other islands up to 150 leagues away." (Columbus used four different measurements of nautical miles to equal one league--1.5, 2.89, 3.5 and 3.18.) It would seem that Chanca at that time was off the island of Maria Galante and had observed Guadeloupe (Basse Terre) as Turuqueira, Grand Terre as Ay Ay and Dominica as Ceyre. Which then is Ayay? Grand Terre or St. Croix? If one is to be influenced by Morison then Nevis was Ay Ay, but there is too much evidence against this assumption.

St. Eustatius

[*Figuereo, Alfredo E. *Journal of the VIAS*, Number 2, 1975]

Sancta Anastasia C.C. (In 1635

the Dutch called it Nieuw Zeeland but later Anastasia

which they stabilized into Alwa ("cashew") D.N.

St. Eustatius. Sir Francis Drake called it Estazia in a

sound imitation of its aboriginal Indian name.)

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
St. James Islands	Los Dos Santiagos ("The Two St. James")	
St. John, V.I.	San Juan Isola de Sant Xoan P.M. Santa Cruz (The Little Bay of the Holy Cross) now Cruz Bay, as distinguished from La Bahía Grande de la Santa Cruz, or Great Cruz Bay. The Spanish were followed on St. John by maverick Englishmen, who translated San Juan into St. John; then the Danes translated it to St. Jan and the Americans back to St. John. On Thomas Jefferys' map of 1794 it appears as St. John's.	Malliagonkieru (questionable, see note under St. Thomas, V.I.)
St. Kitts (St. Christopher)	Santa Lucia C.C. (Columbus' sailors referred to it as La Isla Gorda, "The Fat Island")	Liamaiqa F.R.B. ("Fertile Isle")
St. Lucia	Santa Lucia C.C.?	Touanaloa (Arawak) ("The Place of the Iguanas")
St. Martin	San Martin C.C.	Hewanorra (Carib)
Saint Thomas (off N. Coast of Haiti)	Marigot C.C.	Walichi S.L. ("Island of Women") Sulauiga (Sheetjens, "Land of Salt") Ouaalichi F.R.B.
Saint Thomas, V.I.	Santo Tomás Sancto Thomé	Aburakeiru (questionable)*

**Aburakeiru*, *Malliagonkieru* are two names that appear on an old, unsigned, undated map in the British Museum, London. It is not clear exactly to which of the islands the name is to apply. Both names appear next to the islands of St. Thomas and St. John.

There seems to be no historical record as to who named St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. Daring Columbus' second voyage to the New World, after sailing northward from St. Croix, Morison claims that the barges and lighter caravels maneuvered through Necker Island Passage and squared away down through the channel named later after Sir Francis Drake while the Mariagalante, Gallega, Colina and the bulk of the fleet jogged along south of Virgin Gorda, Salt, Peter, Norman, St. John and St. Thomas Islands; all seventeen vessels rendezvousing at sea, southwest of St. Thomas on November 18, 1493 en route to what is now Anasco Bay, Puerto Rico. Fairbank* is in strong disagreement with Morison, stating that it would have taken longer than two days to tack against seas and headlands from the area of Pillsbury Sound to Anegada and back to the rendezvous point southwest of St. Thomas; that the heavier ships stayed at anchor and when they did go on to Puerto Rico they anchored in the Bay of Aguadilla or the Bay of San Francisco (otherwise known as Aguada Antigua) and not in Anasco Bay. Drake in 1595; Cumberland in 1598; Hendrick in 1625; and Ponce de Leon in 1512 all anchored in the Bay of Aguadilla. Some authorities say Columbus sailed the North, not the South, Coast to Puerto Rico.

To the best of our knowledge, Columbus made no landing on St. Thomas or St. John, nor did he anchor in any cove, bay or harbor of these two islands. Though the log of his Second Voyage has been lost, the originals were, in part, written into history by a number of his contemporaries like Martyr, Oviedo, Juan de la Cosa, Ojeda, Diego Columbus, Ferdinand Columbus, Chanca and Las Casas, but without mention of Columbus having explored or named these particular islands. Columbus simply bestowed one name for the entire archipelago: Archipiélago de las Virgenes.

There is mention (but without documentation) in the *Geographic Dictionary of the Virgin Islands of the United States*, Special Publication #103, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1925, James W. McGuire: "the name of the three islands (St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John) were bestowed by Columbus himself...the smaller cays were named by the Buccaneers". Even the latter part of this quote is not wholly true. The American Geographical Society; Library of Con-

*Fairchild, Miles H. *Debated Headlands, Cristobal Colon's Second Voyage, and Puerto Rico*, Sutcliff Press, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico, 1973.

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
St. Thomas, V.I. {continued}		

gress; U.S. National Archives and Records Service; Natural Resources Branch; Navy and Old Army Branch - Military Archives Division; Civil Archives Division; the national archives of Britain, Portugal, Spain, Germany, France, Italy, Netherlands, Denmark, the Vatican, fail to reveal the namer of St. Thomas, much less which Europeans first set foot upon it. The Dane, Erik Nielsen Smidt, a sea captain, traded in the Indies in 1660 and came to what is now St. Thomas for the last time on February 25, 1663 (some records show July 1, 1665 and March 30, 1666) with a small contingent which included Jensen Slagelse, a Lutheran minister among the first colonists brought from Europe to take possession of the island for Denmark. At that time the island was simply referred to as "An island of the Danish West Indies". Smidt failed to establish a Danish colony except for raising a flag on Smidsborg and starting a fort. Bluebeard's Castle Tower was built in 1689 and was provided with a breastwork of thick Gri-Gri planks at the top for protection of the lookout. This area was known and referred to as Smidsborg by the first official governor of the Virgin Islands.*† Knox conjectured that five Frenchmen made their way from St. Croix to "Crab Island" (Vieques) and thence to St. Thomas in 1647 but the details have not been handed down to us. The Dutch made an abortive attempt to settle St. Thomas in 1657; it was held by the English in 1667. The Dutch West India and Guinea Company, not the Danish crown finally colonized the then unoccupied island of St. Thomas in 1672; the Company being sole owner and ruler of the Danish West Indies comprising St. Thomas and St. John. The Brandenburger Trading Company was admitted in 1685. In 1755 the King of Denmark acquired the companies' rights and assumed full control. (St. Croix had been bought from France in 1733.)

There are those who conjecture that St. Thomas may have been named by early religious settlers. John the Second sold into slavery those Jewish immigrants who still remained in Portugal. Children under fifteen were taken from their parents and in 1493 sent to the St. Thomas Islands (São Tomé e Príncipe, off the west coast of Africa) to be reared as Christians.

*Larsen, Jens P.M. *The Virgin Islands Story*, Muhlenberg Press, Phila., 1950.

†q.v. Westergaard, W.C. *The Danish West Indies 1671-1917*, Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1917.

St. Thomas, V.I. {continued}

Other Jews were sent to Brazil. São Tomé was later occupied by the Dutch from 1641 to 1644. There has been speculation that some of the Christianized Jews from São Tomé and Brazil later reached St. Thomas, West Indies. But speculation is not documentation. The Catholics did not arrive in St. Thomas until 1701 (in St. Croix in 1647); the Sephardic Jews in 1654; the Lutherans in 1666; the Dutch Reformists in 1667; the Moravians in 1732. The island had its name long before these dates. When Schmidt (or Schmidt) arrived on St. Thomas the island was unoccupied (some reports have it that there were four Indians, one with a wooden leg), I received a personal communication from John L. Anderson, author of *Night of the Silent Drums*, undocumented reference that St. Thomas was named in honor of the patron saint of a revered Dutch sea captain named Thoma (given name not stated), that virtually all of Thoma's male descendants for several generations were sea captains--Claes, several Jacobs, a Samuel, a Hermanus, a Hendrich, a Pieter, most of whom had slave women for mothers. In later years, "Thoma" gradually became "Thomas", and, of course, there are now many Thomas families scattered throughout the islands.

One of the early descendants of Captain Thomas, named Jacob, was born in Leiden but obviously had colored blood in his genes. In the late 17th century he moved to St. Thomas, then went to Tortola, and finally to St. John where he resided at Brown's Bay (originally Bryne's Bay named for an earlier Englishman). He set up a pied-à-terre there, long before the Danes took over St. John and established a dark-skinned family, visiting there between voyages.

Two of Captain Jacob Thomas' daughters, Elisabeth and Maria, stayed at Brown's Bay alone after the Captain's death, and married planters who came in later under the Danes. Elisabeth was the wife of Peder Krøyer who got Brown's Bay by marrying her, and Maria married Pierre Castan, a Huguenot French rake who established a plantation up the gut from Krøyers. Both wives and Krøyer died, with their children in the slave rebellion of 1733-34. One of Castan's slaves was Bolombo, a king of the Adampe tribe in Africa who became a bomba, or slave driver, on the Suhm plantation at Coral Bay, and one of the chief instigators of the rebellion. Bolombo envisioned taking for his Queen, Beffru, an African Princess also of the Adampe tribe, and a female slave of Peder Krøyer, to rule his own kingdom of St. Jan.

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
St. Thomas, V.I. {continued}		
In checking with the Municipal Record-Office in Leiden we find several Jacob Thomasz (i.e. Jacob son of Thomas) had been born there in the 17th century but there is no record of any of them having departed for the Indies. Perhaps the answer might some day be found in a log of some privateering expedition. According to Harisse, by 1504, there had been twenty-seven known expeditions to the Indies: between 1506 and 1549, from Spain alone, 363 ships cleared for the Indies. Regrettably is the fact that many of the early records of the Virgin Islands were destroyed by former Virgin Islands Governor John D. Mervin because of "lack of storage space".	After all the pros and cons we are forced to come to the conclusion that Christopher Columbus must have named St. Thomas if only for the reason that this island's name appears on a map in the Royal Library, Copenhagen, Denmark, dated 1513 and signed Bartholomaus. This seems to be the earliest known map on which the name St. Thomas is set down. Presumably it is the work of Bartolomé Columbus or Bartolomé de Las Casas (whose only source of data was from Columbus).	Iouloumain F.R.B. ("rainbow")
St. Vincent	San Vincente C.C.	Santa X. Tobal J. de I.C.
Seven Brothers	Yslas Quattro Hermanos C.C. (Columbus counted only four islets.)	
Shark Cay	Tiburón	
Sombrero	Sombrero	Cayo de Sula ("Gannet Cay")
Sula Cay	Sula	Urupaina S.L.
Soldado	Soldado	El Gallo ("The Cock")
Thatch Cay, or Teyer Cay, Deck Island	Thatch Cay, or Teyer Cay, Deck Island	Cayo Verde ("Green Cay") There are numerous cays and islands named Green, Grass, Goat, Thatch and Buck.

Tobago	Tavaco F.C. also Cobaco ("tobacco") Belaforma C.C. ("Beautiful") Tabagno R.D. Isla Verde P.M.	Aloubaatra F.R.B. Urupaina S.L.
Tortola	Tortoledove ("Turtledove")	Isla de Mayo V.Y.P.
Tortuga	Isla de la Asumpcion C.C.	Isla de la Tortuga C.C. ("Isle of the Turtle")
Trinidad	("Trinity")	La Ysla de la Trinidad C.C. ("The Cockroach")
Turtle Dove Cay		La Cucaracha ("The Cockroach")
Two Brothers		Dos Hermanos Islas
Utila		Utila
Uva ("Grape")		Quirivi
Vieques ("Crab Island")	*Gratirosa (Graciosa S.M.) Santa Ursula A.T.	Beyeqe A. de S.C. Boroqui A.B. Burignen R.P.L. ("Island of Crabs") Bque to Bieque to Vieques

*re: Gratirosa or Graciosa--no map or chart ever used this name prior to Morison's map and certainly not for Bieque or Vieques. La Isla de Gracia was not an island. It is questionable that there was an actual island of Graciosa, possibly it was Bequia in the Grenadines. The following are just a few names for Vieques: Baran - Italian map of Maggiola, 1519; Bejej - Portuguese map of Santa Cruz, 1541; Boieque - Portuguese map of Diego Hanen, 1568; Beig - Italian map of Juan Reizo a Oliva, 1591; Bieque - Dutch map of Jacobbez, 1621. The spelling Boroquen, Burequen, Burequen does not begin to appear until after 1629.

<u>PRESENT NAME</u>	<u>EARLY SPANISH NAME</u>	<u>ABORIGINAL NAME</u>
Virgin Islands	Archipiélago de las Virgenes C.C. Las Once Mil Virgenes P.M. ("Eleven Thousand Virgins")	
	Columbus' crews counted 46; there are 67 U.S. and 48 British Virgin Islands	
	Spanish - Las Islas de las Virgenes French - Iles des Vierges Danish - Jomfruerne German - Jungfern-Inseln	
	In 1520 João Fagundes used the name Onze Mil Virgenes for a group of islets off the Newfoundland Coast. Also in 1520 Magellan named a peninsula south of the Magellen Strait in honor of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins.	
virgin Gorda	Virgin Gorda ("Fat Virgin") John P. Knox says that Columbus named this island "Santa Ursula".	
Water Island	Bizigorda A. de S.C.	
Waterlemon Cay	Isla de Agua Cayuello Acantilado ("Steep Little Cay")	
Whistling Cay	Cayo Bajel ("Ship Cay")	
Zorobaro	Isla Colon	

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS USED

A.B.	Andrés Bernáldez	F.M.	Ferdinand Magellen
A. de H.	Antarro de Herrara	F.O.	Fernández Oviedo y Valdés
A. de O.	Alonso de Ojeda	F.R.B.	F. Raymond Bretton
A. de S.C.	Alonso de Santa Cruz	G. de O.	Gonzalo de Oviedo
A.T.	Aurelio Tió	J. de L.C.	Juan de la Cosa
B.D.	Bernal Diaz	J. de G.	Juan de Grizalba
C.C.	Christopher Columbus	L.C.	Bartolomé de las Casas
C. de R.	Charles de Rochefort	M. de C.	Michael de Cuneo
C. de V.	Cabeza de Vaca	P. de L.	Ponce de León
	(Alvor Núñez de Vera)	P.M.	Peter Martyr
C. Y T.	Coll Y Toste	R.D.	Robert Dudley, Earl
D.A.C.	Dr. Diego Alvarez Chanca	R.P.L.	R.P. Labat
D.C.	Diego Columbus	S.C.	Sebastian Cabot
D.N.	Desmond V. Nicholson	S.L.	Sven Lovén
D.T.	Douglas Taylor	S.M.	Samuel E. Morison
F.C.	Ferdinand Columbus	S.W.R.	Sir Walter Raleigh
F. de C.	F. Hernández Córdoba	V.Y.P.	Vicente Yañez Pinzón