

Trinidad and I: The Memoirs of Pierre Ange Rostant, 1891-1970

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Notes by Don and Jeanne Ross

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Author's bio:

- Dr. Pierre Ange (Peter) Rostant, died 1970 age 79

Forward:

- Lived in St. Joseph Village, San Fernando
- had a daughter Marguerite
- cousin Claudette Leotaud
- MBC, MB chB 1916 E. Edinburgh
- Medical practitioner and surgeon

Page 1:

- Born 2 Oct 1891 son of Maurice and Marie Sophie Rostant, at Clarence St. (now called Frederick St), Port of Spain, by St. Mary's College

Page 2:

- 7 boys and 2 girls in his family
- 2 eldest boys died in childhood
- When he was writing this (last 2 years of his life according to elsewhere in the book) there were only three left alive: Louis, Cecil who was known as Dido and Peter (the writer)

Page 3:

- Madeline des Bordes de Nouey is alleged to be the descendent of St. Louis, King of France
- Maurice "was a Planter and member of the Illustrious Board of the Cabildo (the then Legislative Council)
- He also practiced as a doctor

Page 4-5:

- Children of Maurice:
 - Leon Toussaint b. 1794
 - Adele married Bribant de Loity
 - Madeline married a de Pampellone
 - Catherine married a de Paty
- Leon:
 - "He was a sugar planer and owned fourteen of the richest cane estates in Trinidad in and around Couva"
 - "During the period 1835-1860, the greatest single proprietor and wealthiest man in the West Indies."
 - Processed Muscovado Sugar

- Sleighed in hogheads to the mouth of the Couva River to ships. Main destination was North America, but the blockade during the American Civil War stopped this
- Was in the Legislative Assembly
- Involved in the development of the system of indenture labour that followed the abolition of slavery
- Married Marie Louise in 1817
- Children were Maurice (who was the grandfather of Peter, Lennard and Philip)
- Leon lived in a large house north of the main road through Couva, about 200 yards east of the present railway line
- Was a “venerable old patrician gentleman with gay blue eyes and a head full of white silken hair”
- Died in 1877 “a poor ruined man”

Page 6:

- Maurice (son of Leon) born 1819 died 1897
 - Married Susan Stewart – she is buried on a hillside in Caracas Estate beneath palm trees
 - Educated at Ushaw College, Durham, England before Leon was ruined
 - Moved to Puerto Rico and then Dominica to try to restore the family fortunes – was not a success
 - Returned to Trinidad to the post of manager of Brothers Estate which was then owned by the Colonial Company
 - He gave up this post to join the Wilson’s – put in charge of Socunusco Estate of Santa Cruz where he died
- Maurice Jr (father of Peter) born 1851, died October, 1926 at St. Augustine
 - Married Sophia Ganteaume, a direct descendent of Admiral Ganteaume who fought against Lord Nelson at Trafalgar. When he realized the battle was going badly, he returned to France, was cashiered out of the navy and died in disgrace. “His grandson squatted in Mayaro and farmed what is now known as the St. Joseph Estate, Mayaro.”
- Edith married Carl Boos

Page 7:

- A great grandfather of Peter (he doesn’t specify which one) married twice and had 22 children, mostly girls, and their average age at death was 82.
- He had a grandmother, Miss LeFer, who died long before Peter was born
- He had a step-grandmother Lucy Vessigny

Page 9:

- Maurice Jr. and family lived in a small house at the end of King Street, Princetown

Page 10

- Larger house opposite the junction of Manahambre and the old Princetown to San Fernando road

Page 13

- Mother's youngest sister was Louise Ganteaume

Page 14

- Ninie married George Kayne in 1900
 - Son George born September 1901
 - Daughter Muriel born March, 1903 (18 months later)
 - Moved to Jamaica and then London
 - Ninie died in London
 - Children returned to Trinidad where they were brought up as part of Peter's family
 - George died in the early 1920s
 - His 2nd wife was Jamaican

Page 19:

- Maurice Jr's estate was on the south coast of Trinidad and enclosed Maruga and Grand Chemin

Page 21

- Peter studied medicine after 1911

Page 30

- Peter's mother's sister Eliza (Ganteaume) Scott lived in upper Henry Street, Port of Spain

Page 36

- Peter entered St. Mary's College, Port of Spain, in 1902
- There is extensive descriptions of his time there in the pages following

Page 52

- Peter left St. Mary's December, 1910
- Mentions his step-grandmother Lucie and her sister "Aunt Aline"
- His step-aunt Simone married Jean Quesnel

Page 54:

- Peter studied medicine in Edinburgh; he left Trinidad April 1911
- He went to Edinburgh with Alec Fraser on the Royal Mail Steamship Trent
- Alec Fraser was the managing director of Trinidad Shipping and Trading Company

Page 56:

- Andrew Maingot's son in London lived on Norton Road just off Westbourne Grove (Peter visited)

Page 64:

- In 1912 Peter joined the Officers Training Corp

Page 65:

- On July 15, 1914, Peter returned to Trinidad for a visit home. WWI started while he was on the voyage (on the SS Danube – page 68)

Page 66

- Mentions that he returned to Trinidad permanently in 1920

Page 69

- Mentions that Louis Rostant lived in Maruga

Pages 70-71:

- Peter met his wife, France de la Bastide, in Maruga, 1914. They became secretly engaged before Peter returned to Scotland, and continued their courtship by correspondence for 4 years

Page 73:

- Louis Rostant had Perseverance Estate, Cedros

Page 74:

- In the Officers Training Corp (OTC) Peter became Sergeant Major and Quartermaster Sergeant.
- In April 1916 was commissioned in the RAMC

Page 80

- Graduated medical school March, 1916

Page 81

- First lieutenant in RAMC April 1916

Page 82

- Three weeks later Peter was appointed MD to the 22nd Battalion West Yorkshire Regiment stationed near Pocklington, Yorkshire

Pages 83-85

- Three weeks later left for Avesnes, France

Page 90

- Peter's parents retired from Maruga, and were living in Carmody's House, St. Augustine

Page 93

- In early 1917 Peter was in Dunes in northern Belgium

Page 101

- Married June 29, 1918 at Rosary Church, Port of Spain

Page 107:

- Peter was back in Dundee, Scotland on 9 November 1918 and was demobilized April 1919
- In 1919, Dido (his brother) went to medical school

Page 111:

- Peter became employed by the Health Department in the government of Trinidad and Tobago Jan 10, 1920

Page 112

- France has a sister Valentine Pantin

Page 118

- Peter's first son Bernard was born March 28, 1920

Page 127

- Peter's 2nd son John was born May 23, 1923

Page 132-33

- 1924-29: Eugene and Rene died of pulma tuberculosis
- Oct. 1926, Peter lived in a house in St. Augustine
- 1942 Peter's mother died age 93, living on Frederick Street, Port of Spain
- 26 Feb 1930 Peter's 7th child, Antoinette Berne was born and his wife died 13 days later

Page 135

- October, 1930 Peter moved to San Fernando

Page 137

- On 6 December 1931 Peter married France's sister Claire

Page 146

- Valentine, sister of France and Claire, married George Pantin, a solicitor with J B D Sellier and Co.

Page 153

- Oct. 29, 1943; awarded MBE

There is a family tree in the book which begins:

“The family is supposedly direct descendents of Rostang (Rostaing, Rostan) d’Ancézune family of Provence and Comtat Venaissin (11th – 18th century). The Family includes poets, writers, inventors, courtiers, bishops, dukes. Other noblemen and even a saint (Child of the Tropics, page 134). The line became extinct in 1767. In 1750 Léon de Rostang d’Ancézune married Adele du Four de St Martial. They had seven sons. The family had been ruined by terrorism and agrarian disturbances which prevailed in the Papal State of Avignon just previous to the revolutionary outbreak in France. Several of the sons emigrated, one of whom was Maurice de Rostang. Leaving Marseilles about the year 1790, he went to Trinidad [another source says he arrived in 1787], which at the request of Pope Pius VI, had been opened by the King of Spain for colonization and especially for Catholics who had suffered by the troubles of the time. [These revolutions were also effecting the French Islands of Haiti, Martinique, and Guadeloupe, and all the other islands belonged either to England, with whom France was at war, or to Spain, which allowed no foreign settlers, except Trinidad which encouraged settlement after the Cedula of 1783.”

1. Maurice de Rostang d’Ancézune, b. 1757 (France, d. 1800 (Trinidad) married Adele du Four de St Martial who d. 1793
 - I. Adele
 - II. Catherine
 - III. Madeline
 - IV. Léon Toussaint, b. 1794, in 1817 married Marie Louise D’Angleberne, 1794-1865 (died Puerto Rico)
 - i. Margaret
 - ii. Maurice Sr (1819-1897) married
 1. First wife Susan Stewart
 - a. Grace Charlotte
 - b. Marie Louise
 2. Second wife Cecile Meany (Tan Tan), 1832-1901
 - a. Mariquita 1859-1931
 - b. Maurice Jr 1876 (see below for his family)
 - c. Charles
 - d. Fernando
 - e. James Ormand
 - f. Louis Philip
 - g. Marie Cecile
 - h. Edith
 - i. Madeline
 - j. Leontine

Family of Maurice Jr:

Maurice Jr b. 1876 married Sophie Ganteaume

- I. Marie Eugenie (Ninie) married George Kayne
- II. Alphonse Maurice

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- III. Maurice
- IV. Louis (1882-1965) married Hilda Llanos
- V. Frederick (Dr) Cecil (Dido) married Bertha Pantin
- VI. Eugene
- VII. René (1887) married Violet Llanos
- VIII. Pierre Ange (Dr) (1891-1970) married
 - a. First wife France de LaBastide (1897-1930)
 - i. Bernard married Louie Scott
 - ii. Joan married James Porter Reid
 - iii. John married (1) Lorraine McCullough, (2) Marie Bonneau
 - iv. Patricia married George Scott
 - v. Grace married Bernard Lazzari
 - vi. Margueriete married (1) John Brennan, (2) Colin Harrison
 - vii. Antoinette married (1) James de Verteuil, (2) Joseph Bergasse
 - b. Second wife Claire de LaBastide (1892-1967)
 - i. Rose Marie married Keith D'Abadie
 - ii. Marie Anne married Peter Bergasse
 - c. Third wife Hilary Murray