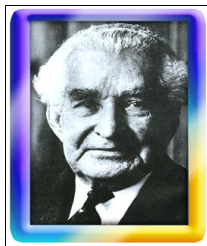


# NATIONAL HEROES



Sir Alexander Bustamante   Norman Washington Manley   Paul Bogle   George William Gordon   Marcus Mosiah Garvey   Sam Sharp   Nanny of The Maroons



When Bustamante began to make his presence felt in Jamaica, the country was still a crown colony. Under this system, the Governor had, the right to veto at all times, which he very often exercised against the wishes of the majority.

Bustamante was quick to realise that the social and economic ills that such a system engendered had to be countered by mobilisation of the working class.

Pay and working conditions were poor in the 1920s and 1930s. Failing harvests and the lay-off of workers resulted in an influx of unemployed people morningfrom the rural areas into the city. This mass migration did little to alleviate the already tremendous unemployment problem.

Bustamante first impressed his name on the society with a series of letters to **The Gleaner** and occasionally to British newspapers calling attention to the social and economic problems of the poor and underprivileged in Jamaica.

The years 1937 and 1938 brought the outbreak of widespread discontent and social unrest. In advocating the cause of the masses, Bustamante became the undisputed champion of the

working class. He also confronted the power of the Colonial Governor, declaring, "Long live the King! But Denham must go."

During the troublesome days of 1938 the security forces were everywhere eyeball to eyeball with Bustamante and the workers. Labour unrests continued on and off.

On September 8, 1940, Bustamante was detained at Up Park Camp for alleged violation of the Defence of the Realm Act. He was released seventeen months later.

In 1943 he founded the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) with himself as head. The first general election under Universal Adult Suffrage came in 1944 and the JLP won 22 of the 32 seats.

Sir Alexander became the first Prime Minister of Independent Jamaica in 1962. He retired from active politics in 1967. He died on August 6, 1977, at the age of 93.

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Norman Washington Manley was born at Roxborough, Manchester, on July 4, 1893. He was a brilliant scholar and athlete, soldier (First World War) and lawyer. He identified himself with the cause of the workers at the time of the labour troubles of 1938 and donated time and advocacy to the cause.



In September 1938, Manley founded the People's National Party (PNP) and was elected its President annually until his retirement in 1969, 31 years later.

Manley and the PNP supported the trade union movement, then led by Alexander Bustamante, while leading the demand for Universal Adult Suffrage. When Suffrage came, Manley had to wait ten years and two terms before his party was elected to office.

He was a strong advocate of the Federation of the West Indies, established in 1958, but when Sir Alexander Bustamante declared that the opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) would take

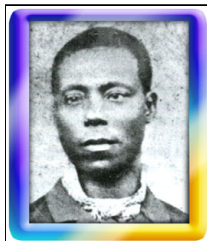
Jamaica out of the Federation, Norman Manley, already renowned for his integrity and commitment to democracy, called a referendum, unprecedented in Jamaica, to let the people decide.

The vote was decisively against Jamaica's continued membership of the Federation. Norman Manley, after arranging Jamaica's orderly withdrawal from the union, set up a joint committee to decide on a constitution for separate independence for Jamaica.

He himself chaired the committee with great distinction and then led the team that negotiated the island's independence from Britain. The issue settled, Manley again went to the people. He lost the ensuing election to the JLP and gave his last years of service as Leader of the Opposition, establishing definitively the role of the parliamentary opposition in a developing nation.

In his last public address to an annual conference of the PNP, he said: "I say that the mission of my generation was to win self-government for Jamaica, to win political power which is the final power for the black masses of my country from which I spring. I am proud to stand here today and say to you who fought that fight with me, say it with gladness and pride, Mission accomplished for my generation.

"And what is the mission of this generation? ... It is... reconstructing the social and economic society and life of Jamaica". Norman Manley died on September 2, 1969.



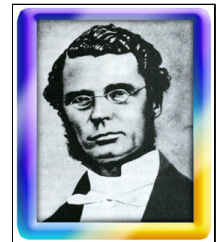
Paul Bogle, it is believed, was born free about 1822. He was a Baptist deacon in Stony Gut, a few miles north of Morant Bay, and was eligible to vote at a time when there were only 104 voters in the parish of St. Thomas. He was a firm political supporter of George William Gordon.

Poverty and injustice in the society and lack of public confidence in the central authority urged Bogle to lead a protest march to the Morant Bay courthouse on October 11, 1865.

In a violent confrontation with full official forces that followed the march, nearly 500 people were killed and a greater number was flogged and punished before order was restored.

Bogle was captured and hanged on October 24, 1865; but his forceful demonstration achieved its objectives. It paved the way for the establishment of just practices in the courts and it brought about a change in official attitude which made possible the social and economic betterment of the people.

Born to a slave mother and a planter father who was attorney to several sugar estates in Jamaica, George William Gordon was self-educated and a landowner in the parish of St. Thomas.



In the face of attempts to crush the spirit of the freed people of Jamaica and again reduce them to slavery, Gordon entered politics. He faced severe odds as the people whose interests he sought to serve did not qualify to vote.

He subdivided his own lands, selling farm lots to the people as cheaply as possible, and organised a marketing system through which they could sell their produce at fair prices.

Gordon urged the people to protest against and resist the oppressive and unjust conditions under which they were forced to live.

Gordon was arrested and charged for complicity in what is now called the Morant Bay Rebellion in 1865. He was illegally tried by court martial and, in spite of a lack of evidence, convicted and sentenced to death. He was executed on October 23, 1865.

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