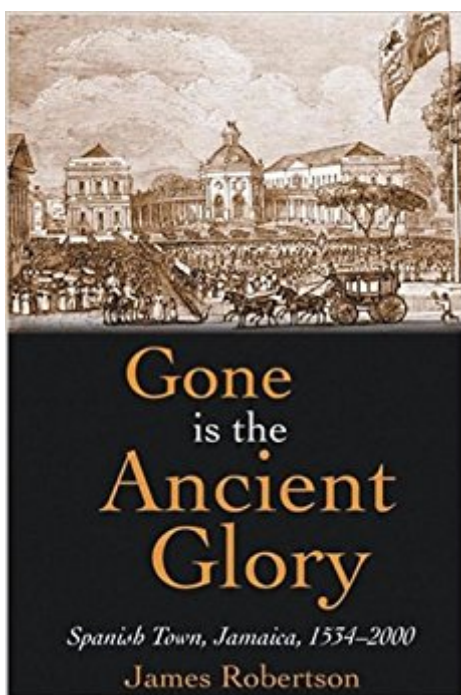


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Gone Is The Ancient Glory: Spanish Town, Jamaica, 1534-2000



Synopsis

Spanish Town is an old town. As Jamaica's capital for nearly 350 years and subsequently as a major urban centre, its streets and squares witnessed key political and social transitions. But although the once proud city has lost all its ancient glory, Spanish Town has a rich and textured legacy. James Robertson guides the reader through the landmarks, identifying sites and scenes long lost and showing what is still there to be appreciated. His account of Spanish Town's long history is firmly rooted in the streets and lanes of the town, its nooks and niches, sounds and smells. The urban landscape he presents is a peopled landscape, inhabited by rich and poor, enslaved and free, notables and eccentrics, Africans and Europeans. He shows convincingly that the colonial capital provided both a cultural and political counterpoise to the colony's merchants and plantations and that its diverse inhabitants had created a 'creole town' as early as 1750 when they were still preparing to build Spanish Town's splendid Georgian square in the midst of its multiplying yards. The work is based on extensive research in scattered archives and is illustrated by a variety of rare and wonderful images.

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James Robertson is a Lecturer in the Department of History and Archaeology, University of the West Indies, Mona.

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