The Allicocks’ of Noitgedacht

By Dmitri Allicock

When you start about family, about lineage and ancestry, you are talking about every person on earth. Alex Haley - Author of 1976 Roots

Beyond the populated coastal areas of early Guyana, rivers formed the natural highways, winding inland where undisturbed impenetrable vegetation closes in upon its banks. It was in the latter part of the 1700s that a family of Allicocks sailed 65 miles up the Demerary River and decided to drop anchor at a location called Noitgedacht and would call it home for centuries.

One of the most common names still found in Upper Demerara is Allicock and the story of this family is interwoven within the history of the area and historical Guyana.

The journey of the original Allicock settlers is thought to be originating out of England via the colonies of America, before entering the Caribbean and Demerara. The actual name was also altered from its original form and probably on entrance into America as history appears to point to.

The large extended Allicock family from Upper Demerara is traced to the five original siblings’ settlers, John, Thomas, Robert-Frederick and their two sisters Sarah and Susanna Allicock. Of the five, John Allicock did not appear to have any descendants.

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1 The Demerara was called the Demerary River at that time.
John Allicock, until his death in 1819, had owned Plantation Wismar - 401 acres on the western back of the river opposite Noitgedacht after 1759 Anthony and John Somersall. The sisters, Sarah Allicock married Anderson and Susanna to a Morehouse and lineages were lost to history. Thomas Allicock had one daughter, Elizabeth, and line is well preserved. The illustration to the left is that of Theodore Kersting, circa early 1800s, who was the husband of Elizabeth Allicock. Theodore Kersting was German born and was part of the British military in the colony.

The vast amounts of Allicocks known today are the descendants of Robert Frederick Allicock who owned Noitgedacht also called Retrieve. The Plantation Noitgedacht was said to be 4,901 Rhynland acres. That was the old measurement used by the early Dutch and British of that time period. It was also listed that lots 42, 43, 44, 45 and 46 was the property of Robert Frederick Allicock. The land owned added up to 5,146.05 international acres or 8.040 square miles. This is roughly the area between Arakwa Creek to the north and Three Friends or Maria Elizabeth to the south.

Plantation Noitgedacht was situated on the eastern back of the river in the area called Mackenzie today. The general area known as Mackenzie is part of the floodplain of the Demerara and a prized piece of land which is the largest area of natural open flat land along the entire 215 miles length of the Demerara River valley. A natural feature created also by the many creeks converging in this area. The powerful Kara- Kara Creek\(^2\) \(\{\text{Karrekarre}\}\) empties north of Speightland and due to its size and strong current, assisted in creating this flood plain. The Cakatara Creek \(\{\text{Kaywaka}\}\) to the south, located in the front of the bauxite Plant, is an actual tributary of the Kara –Kara. In the 1930s, it was possible to paddle a corial from Cakatara to Kara-Kara Creek, encircling the whole of Mackenzie before the Cakatara Creek was partially filled in. The mouth of the Cakatara still exists and access to the entrance of the bauxite plant today is made possible by a large culvert under the roadway.

Some smaller creeks along the Mackenzie shores were also filled in when the bauxite plant and housing areas were built. The Watooka and Surapana creeks to the south also added to the floodplain that makes up the area. The back or inland areas of Mackenzie still retains some of its original low swampy lands towards the approaching hills and near the former Kara-Kara bauxite mines.

\(^2\) **Kara-Kara** is believed to be named after the Carra- carra, the beautiful scarlet climber that once grew there.

\(^3\) The creek was called **Karrekarre** by the Dutch.
Robert Frederick Allicock would have chosen this site for its necessary proximity to the Demerara River and accessible large span of fertile land. Thick original lush forest once covered this area with luxuriant botanical wonders and magnificent hardwood trees of greenheart and mora with buttresses that extended 25 feet up the trunk. A river valley created by millions of years of erosion of the Guiana plateau whose water accumulated and deposited rich humus on its journey to the sea. It was on these shores that lands were cleared for cultivation, livestock and the establishment of his home and outbuildings.

On Sept. 10, 1822 when Robert Frederick Allicock took his quill, or feather pen, and wrote his last will and testament, he was in a totally different Guiana. The brilliant morning sun of his last days in Demerara would have illuminated an entirely different age. Most of the land along the banks of the Demerary River was divided into plantations and worked by slaves. The movement to end slavery had brought an end to the importation of Africans in 1807 but slavery was still in effect. Dutch and English were the primary language as English culture and laws slowly took over. Ownership of land and property defined the era. Robert Frederick Allicock’s fears and concerns of the times would have also been deeply on his mind as he said goodbye to family and property. His historical Will laid the foundation for research and understanding of his family and is pivotal to the heritage of all the Allicocks of Demerara.

The separate three former Dutch colonies of Demerara, Essequibo and Berbice were finally united into one entity called British Guiana in 1831 and were govern from Georgetown the former Dutch city of Stabroek. “Guiana” would have been foreign to Robert Frederick Allicock and new to his children. It is natural to think in terms of Robert Frederick Allicock and family in earlier “British Guiana.” However, British Guiana did not exist just yet.

The Allicock children went on to find their way through an unforgiving and difficult world. They would experience the most important event of that century with the abolition act of Slavery in 1833 which eventually brought an end of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Africans. No more were a people reduced to basic commodities as the genesis of a new social and economic relationship came of age. With the end of slave labor, the huge demand for manual labor for all of Guyana’s industries brought Indians, Portuguese and Chinese as the six races of Guyana were created.
Robert Frederick Allicock died on October 10, 1822 and his Will was deposited in the Registrar office of Georgetown formerly Stabroek 29 of October, 1822. He left behind 8 children by Ann Mansfield, James, John, Mary, Lucy, Charles, Robert, David and Joseph and one young child, Nancy by Hannah Simon. The early death of Robert Frederick Allicock left his mostly minor children under the legal care of a good friend in John Dagleish Paterson which symbolized the sign of the times. This was probably one the most important personal event in this family’s history. Mostly minor mixed race children were left to survive in a rigid, primitive, and harsh race-based slave society.

The legacy the Allicocks’ would be carried by the bloodline of six of these children whose lineages now spreads across Guyana and the continents around the world. Most of the early generations did not move or resettle and lived on their ancestral lands or within close proximity. A few did relocate further up river such as his granddaughter Mary Allicock and husband John Bremner, lived at Akyma, located 6 miles upriver, and grandson George Allicock, owned and lived at Sebacabra further upriver. Another grandson, Garvan Allicock died in Georgetown.

Robert Frederick Allicock’s second son John Allicock and his wife Catherine DeNieuwerkerk lived at Watooka in the 1820s. Nancy Allicock, the last child had owned an area south of Noitgedacht.

The settlement that preceded Mackenzie grew up around Robert Frederick Allicock’s home and out-buildings in a manner very similar to that of Paterson at Christianburg.

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4 Illustration is page four of the 1956 copy of Robert Frederick Allicock’s Will.
The Demerara born children of Robert Frederick Allicock would establish their family presence and bloodline firmly within the roots of early Guyana. The children were listed in the 1822 Will in chronological order of their births.

**James Allicock/Susanna Maria Jacoba Linguis** (Married August 12, 1815) - Children: Evaline, Charles-William, Robert-Frederick, Simon, Daniel, Bannabus, George, Catherine, Mary, and Salomie. Marriage bans published in Demerara and Essequibo. He was a protestant bachelor, born of the colony. His intended is Suzanna Maria Jacoba Linguis- widow Boederg also born in this colony of the protestant religion- *Royal Gazette*, August 12, 1815.

**John Allicock/Catherine DeNieuwerkerk** (Daughter to Cloot DeNieuwerkerk June 27, 1779-1835, and Mary Hill, sister to Elizabeth who was J. D. Paterson’s first wife); this family lived at Watooka. Children: David, Thomas, Alleyne, Catherine, Edward, John, Garvan, George and Susan.

**Mary Allicock** – Married Sept 6, 1829 /**John Mansfield** – Mary Mansfield née Allicock -Will date Jan 26 1875. John Mansfield died August 31 1857: Note the date of marriage Sept.6 is from the *British Guiana Colonial Index*. The *Royal Gazette* has Sept 2 1829; Mary is listed as a minor with J.D Paterson consenting. Religion listed as Protestant. : She had no children and blood line ends.

**Charles Allicock/Yetta McFarlane**- Children: James, Walter, George, Philip, Margaret, Caroline, Georgina, Winifred.

**Robert Allicock/Phoebe**- Children: David, Anne, Alfred.

**Lucy Allicock and David Allicock** had no children {blood line ends}.

**Joseph Allicock** - Had three relationships/ marriages.

A. **Joseph Allicock/ Francis Pollard**- Child: Josiah.

B. **Joseph Allicock/Julia Mansfield**- Children: Joseph, George, Thomas, Robert, Margaret, Mary.

C. **Joseph Allicock/Mary Elizabeth Spencer** {was the Daughter of John Spencer {Original}. Children: Catherine, William, James, Johnny, Francis, Theresa, Edith and Richard.

**Nancy Allicock** – had two marriages.

A. **Nancy Allicock** (1820-1848)/**David Paterson** {1818-1847} – Daughter: Catherine Jane

D. **Nancy Allicock/ John Spencer** (The first son of the original John Spencer) Children: John, Maria- Elizabeth, and Lucy. The area known as Maria- Elizabeth gets its name from the child Maria-Elizabeth.
Many crops including cocoa, coffee, plantain, sugar and cotton were grown on the early plantations of upper Demerara. The attraction to hardwood, then balata rubber, and precious gold and diamond resources brought new businesses and improved life.

The Upper Demerara Plantations was replaced by the timber, balata, and gold influences was followed by population increases in the area. Life changed for many as they worked directly or indirectly with these industries. The Paterson’s Sawmill created the first glimpse of a village.

Many of Robert Frederick Allicock’s descendants also worked privately as farmers, timber grant owners or provided service like shop keeping, transportation and midwifery.

Many contracted their labor with timber grants, balata, gold and diamond business which saw many homes fatherless for months as they worked in the hinterlands of Demerara and Essequibo.

Improved technology also occurred in this time period. Sail boats were replaced with steam brigs as transportation and communication improved. The construction of Guyana’s first water-powered sawmill at Paterson’s Sawmill at Christianburg added to the improvements.

The gravesites for Robert Frederick Allicock and all his children would have been in their family plot next to their home similar to that of the Paterson’s family plot, which still exists, though just a shell of what it was. This was the traditional manner in which all the early settlers were interred. It was only with the coming of church buildings later that church plots were used by those who did not have family plots. The Christianburg Scots Church of 1898 and The Seven Days Adventist Church of 1897 at Botaba were two of the earliest churches in the area. There was an earlier Scots Church building prior to the one of 1898 that was located at the same Christianburg area.
In 1916, The Demerara Bauxite Company Demba chose to build the Bauxite Plant, housing development, and later the Alumina Plant, in the same area that attracted Robert Frederick Allicock – and probably for similar reasons.

All landmarks and physical evidences of this family historical presence were covered when Demba built up this floodplain, establishing the bauxite plant, community and later, alumina plant. The only known grave in the area of Mackenzie is the 1934 tomb of Abigail Binning née DeNieuwerkerk which still sits in the compound of the Mackenzie Catholic Church. The gravesite of the last child of Robert Frederick Allicock, Nancy Allicock was known. Nancy was buried at Maria Elizabeth alongside her second husband, John Spencer, on the western bank of the River. The area was marked by a clump of cookerites palm trees for over 100 years but it is now lost to the wilderness of Demerara.

The children of this early Upper Demerara family would go on to weave a vast web of relations with other settlers in the area. As fate would have it, I am descending from three of the children, John, Joseph and Nancy Allicock. Hundreds of families are traced to this family and many have lost the name through marriages. Quite a few past and current notable Guyanese derive from this first generation of Allicocks.

The Westmaas family Allicock’s roots comes from the son John Allicock. Author of Black Water People Dr. Carmen Subryan of the Barclay family, descends from the son Robert Allicock. Jamaica’s former Consul General in Miami and now ambassador to Japan, Ricardo Allicock, is from the two children Charles and Joseph. Many more current individuals in the news are traced to this family including current body builder Alicia Harris whose line is from Joseph and Nancy Allicock. Opera Star Aubrey Allicock comes from the three children John, Joseph and Nancy. Former NFL player, Kevin Huntley is also traced to the children John, Joseph and Nancy.

5 Abigail Binning née DeNieuwerkerk descends from Richard DeNieuwerkerk the only sibling of Catherine DeNieuwerkerk who was married to John Allicock of Robert Frederick Allicock. Abigail DeNieuwerkerk Binning was married to George Alexander Binning and were the grandparents of Manly Binning, family historian.

6 Maria Elizabeth also known as “three friends” was named after the daughter (born 1845) Maria Elizabeth of Nancy Allicock and John Spencer the second.

7 Left to right the in picture is- David, Donald, Dennis, and Richard (Rory) Westmaas- 1943. Professor Rory Westmaas featured in the early politics - the birth of Independent Guyana and served as the press sec. vice president and executive member of the central committee of the People Progressive Party.
The small areas of Noitgedacht and Retrieve at Mackenzie today were named in symbolic memory of history. The 1800s saw the establishment of the basic pillars and foundations of this family and its heritage. The tides of the Demerara River witnessed the sunset of the earlier influences as the century came to a close. The building of the Wismar to Rockstone Railway in 1897 followed closely by a century of bauxite was yet to be materialized. Major changes were on the horizon as the grandchildren and great grandchildren of Robert Frederick Allicock of Plantation Noitgedacht forged ahead into the brightness of 1900, leaving behind the fog of history and memories of challenging times. The precious names of the siblings, John, Thomas, Sara, Susanna and Robert Frederick Allicock along with his wife Ann Mansfield plus Hannah Simon are remembered. The nine children of Robert Frederick Allicock, James, John, Mary, Lucy, Charles, Robert, David, Joseph and Nancy along with Elizabeth Allicock of Thomas Allicock are treasured.

When Robert Frederick Allicock dropped anchor in the wild of Demerara and settled Noitgedacht, meaning never thought or imagine, it was indeed so, and the stage was set for the drama of over two hundred years of amazing history. The value placed on family heritage equates honor, appreciation and pride. The great quality of love for family will live on and the memory of the Allicocks’ of Noitgedacht will be forever cherished.