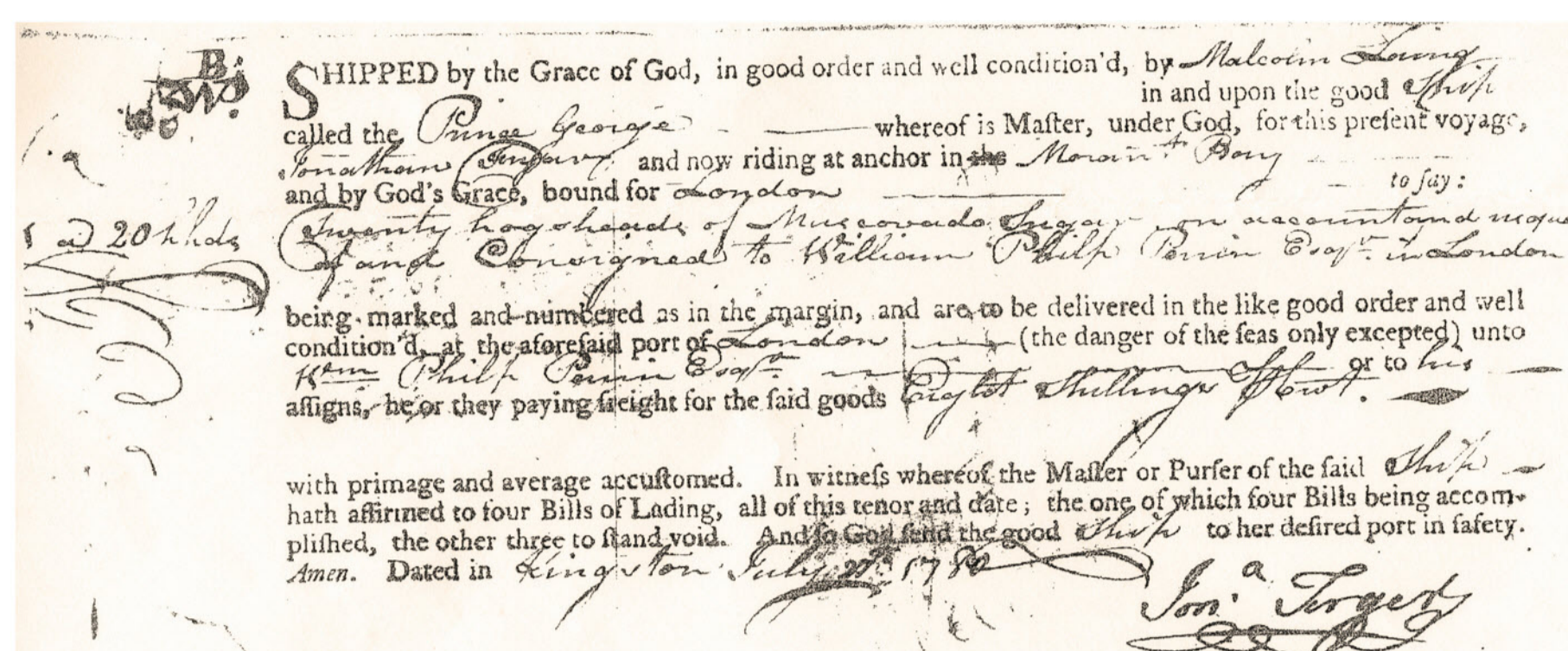


# BITTERSWEET

## A STORY OF FOUR SUGAR PLANTATIONS

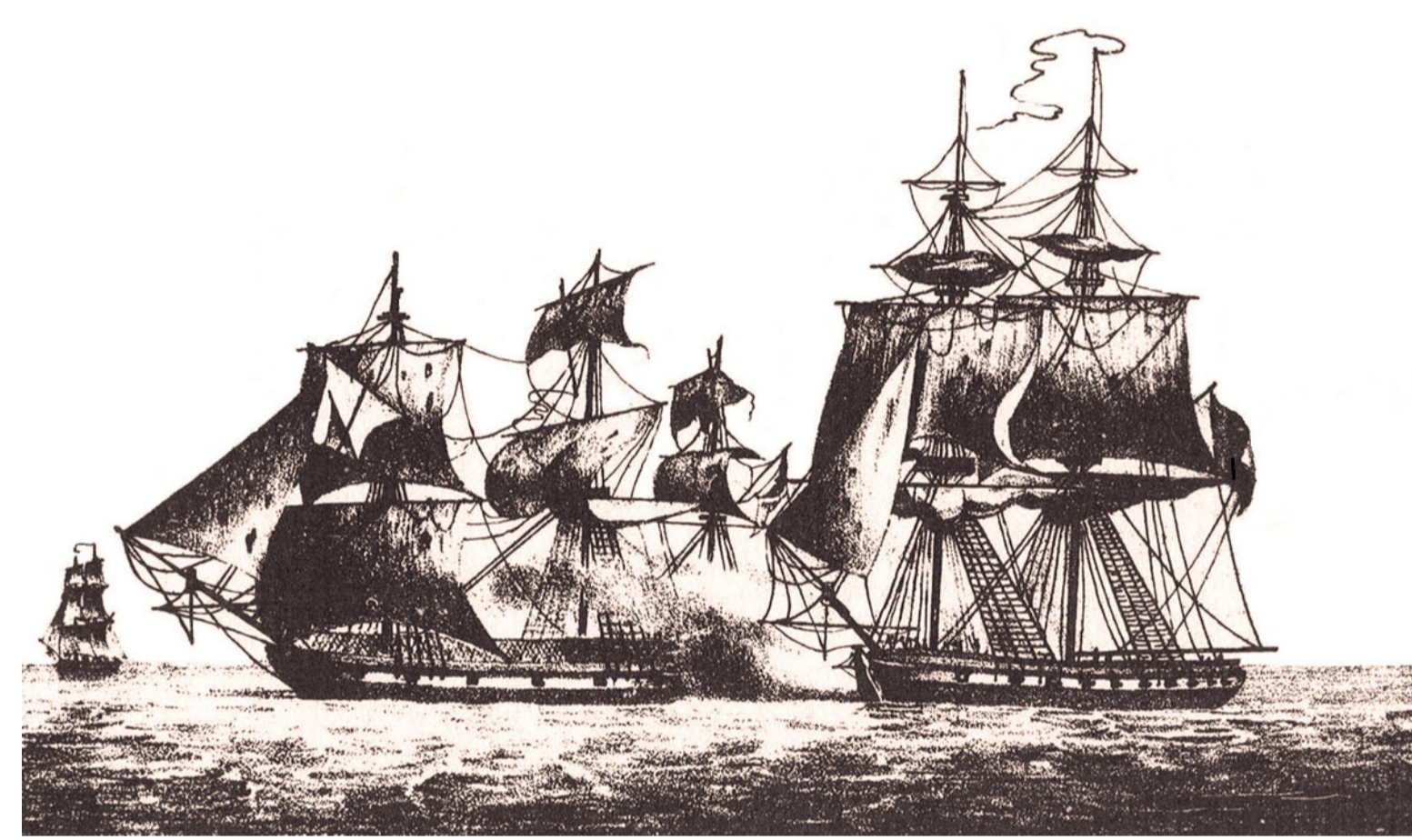
### CARGOES AND REACTIONS BACK HOME



The sugar and rum were shipped back to Britain. This is the bill of lading for twenty hogsheads of sugar shipped on board the *Prince George*

Insurance was essential because there were so many different accidents that could happen to the West Indian ships. In 1761 William Philp Perrin's attorney wrote from Jamaica:

*I hope you will meet with no loss from the great risk you run in not insuring the produce of the estates on the different ships. Could I have brought the Blue Mountain sugars to town would have sold them here but the risk of bringing them down is almost as great as sending them to England, as our Island is greatly infested with privateers.*



This is a picture of a slave ship beating off a privateer.

The 1761 letter continued:

*About the middle of last month a vessel coming from Manchioneal loaded with rum was taken [captured by the French] off the east end of the Island. There was ten puncheons on board belonging to Grange Hill. It was a great disappointment and loss. I have not been able to get any rum or sugar to market and I am greatly straitened for money.*

There were seldom congratulations from home for a job well done. Instead the absentee plantation owners in England expected larger and larger profits without any comprehension of the work required to ensure maximum productivity from the slaves.

They developed their theories of management from gossip at the tea table or in the coffee house and instructed their attorneys accordingly.

*I can by no means approve of Mr Needham's advice of picking out a hundred of the best Negroes of Vere estate to send to the other estates. They must all or none go, being every one Creole Negroes and all their families connected. Besides the risk of carrying them from a dry part of the country to a wet is dangerous. And if they do not take kindly with it, it may be a means of loosing one half of them.*



In one of his first letters to Jamaica, William Philp Perrin requested plants for Oxford University's botanic garden. His attorney was dumbfounded because he knew more about sugar production and slave management than he did about wild flowers. He replied:

*I received your letter from Oxford desiring me to send you a plant from the Changeable Rose at the Retrieve [coffee plantation]. There is none such there. Besides it is not the proper time of year to send plants to England. In the spring shall endeavour to make a collection for you.*

This display has been supported by Sir Richard FitzHerbert Bt, of Tissington Hall, Derbyshire and by the Historic Houses Association.

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Tea



Sugar