

ABSTRACT

SETTLEMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIO MINHO VALLEY (1655-1700).

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This study attempts to describe and analyse the nature and extent of settlement by the English, of the Rio Minho region (Clarendon) in the latter part of the seventeenth century (1655-1700). Thus, its scope is the early parish of Clarendon, established in 1664, Vere and the eastern portion of what is now the parish of Manchester.

The study examines in outline the geographical features of the region and its potentials for human settlement and economic development. In this, attention is focused on the Amerindian settlers and their contribution to the development of the region, their Spanish successors, the English and the Africans who all made their contribution.

The contribution of the Spanish settlement is examined in the light of what they bequeathed to the English when the latter arrived in 1655.

This is assessed in the light of what other writers have said about the Spanish neglect.

An examination is made of the sources of settlers to the region, methods of land allotment and the extent of settlement and economic transformation of the region by the English during the first forty-five years.

The sources of capital and the quantity of this is examined and analysed, as are some of the problems faced by the pioneer English settlers in the heartlands of the Rio Minho.

The study concludes that by the beginning of the eighteenth century the valley and plains of the Rio Minho, despite the many setbacks, had established the basis of plantation economy and society.