which were independent of each other; SBAs were included. Nine two-unit courses were introduced in 1998 (history was not one of them); by 2012 there were twenty-four subjects offered at CAPE. Six units including one-unit Caribbean Studies and Communications Studies were accepted by UWI for normal matriculation. But it was quite a struggle to get wide regional acceptance for CAPE; some 'prestige' schools, especially in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica, resisted strongly, and in some cases the governments had to intervene and order that the CAPE examinations be taken. By around 2007, however, GCE A levels were on their way out in the region.

In his final chapters, Bryan examines developments since the end of the 1990s and the challenges looming for CXC in the current era of economic decline and austerity. A thoughtful conclusion on the legacy of CXC ends the book; he thinks that by and large it has fulfilled its mandate and has influenced education in the Caribbean in many, largely positive ways. His study is a solid, well researched history of a regional institution which has touched even more lives than UWI—with which it has so many links—and which has shaped two generations of young people of the English-speaking countries.

Professor Bridget Brereton, University of the West Indies, St Augustine
doi.org/10.68027/742905

David Buisseret, *The Going was Good: Memoir of a Transatlantic Life* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: Dorrance Publishing Co., 2017). 275 pp. ISBN 9780812248296. US$ 29.95, paperback.

This book is the autobiography of David Buisseret, an academic, but it is not an academic book. Buisseret does not tell us anything substantial about the ideas, big or small, in his prolific scholarly writings, and he is too modest to provide a convenient list. Born in England in 1934 into a solid middle class family of Belgian antecedents, he was (to use his own

words) part of the 'lucky generation' too young to fight in the Second World War (1939–1945), and he escaped later with only two years of national service, part of which was spent guarding the Suez Canal, but apparently without firing a shot in anger.

Early high points in his ascent up the academic ladder were his success in capturing a scholarship to Cambridge University in 1952, the brilliant completion of his first degree as a history major there, and his subsequent acquisition of a Cambridge scholarship to do a PhD on seventeenth-century French political and economic history, which he completed expeditiously in 1961. There had been no need to waste time with all the nerve-wrenching business of finding a research topic. One of his tutors promptly suggested a viable topic. This completion was followed by his selection as a three-year (1961–1964) post-doctoral fellow at his former college in Cambridge University, no mean academic distinction. There he did a little teaching and apparently much consolidation of his biography of Sully, Louis XIV's extraordinary prime minister (1589–1610). By 1964, at the age of thirty years, David Buisseret, presumably bilingual son of a French-speaking schoolmaster, could already echo the title of this book: *The Going was Good* and the transatlantic life had begun.

In his self-effacing unaffected narration of his life, Buisseret made all this academic achievement seem so unexceptional. He never really seemed to have studied until he started his PhD research in France. Yet, the academic talent was always lurking in the background, and if he had unimaginably stayed in the British Army, not even a tank could have stopped him from becoming an officer! By age thirty, all the major elements of his life appeared to have already been in place: he was a good practising Catholic, a man of faith; a man who loved libraries, but equally addicted to the outdoor life of touring and camping, and to gentlemanly games, like cricket (not football), clearly his favourite. His life already was successful, well-regulated, quite balanced, disciplined (after all he had been a scout and a cadet), and with no hit-and-miss romantic adventures, he had met in France the lady of his life, who became his wife in September 1961.

With an increasing family of young children, Buisseret, a quintessential family man, could not afford to flit from one job to the next. He spent sixteen years in Jamaica, at the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies (1964–1980). This was followed by fifteen years in Chicago at the Newberry Library and its associated Hermon Dunlap Smith Centre for the History of Cartography; and then eleven years (1995–2006) as Garrett Professor of the History of Cartography at the University of Texas at Arlington. He was employed at the University of the West Indies, Mona, as a specialist in European history in what was evolving as a Caribbean social history-focused Department. Buisseret is well aware that he flew off creditably in a new direction by introducing undergraduate courses in Jamaican historical landscape and in Caribbean material culture. His work in the aerial photography of Jamaica obviously benefitted from his army experience with aircraft and sailing boats. Unable to endure the financial hardship of Jamaica in the late 1970s, Buisseret accepted a post in Chicago which sent his career in a new and apparently uncharted direction in the underdeveloped field of the history of cartography. Here he was his own boss, though surrounded and supported by a collaborative cluster of like-minded, similarly motivated professionals in allied research centres. It was here that Buisseret did his best work as a historian of cartography and promoter of the recovery and interpretation of maps of North American explorers. The subsequent appointment at the University of Texas consolidated and broadened his work apparently to global dimensions.

But, curiously, Buisseret's initial study of seventeenth-century Europe was providentially foundational to almost all his later work in Jamaica and the American mid-west, and he never quite abandoned it. Seventeenth-century colonisation in the Caribbean sprang from seventeenth-century Europe, and so, too, did some of the early exploration and map-making activities of Europeans in the New World. As his reputation and publications increased, Buisseret must have mused 'The Going was Good'.

This book is not an account of the life and times of one man, David Buisseret. Do not look in it for an account of the politics or sociology of

England, Jamaica, or the American mid-west (you will get only some quick jabs into new 'developments' Buisseret dislikes). Look at this book as an account of a man and his tribe: his wife, his children, his parents, his wife's parents, his children's spouses, and their children. Buisseret watched his children grow into adulthood and followed their fortunes. Family reunions were obviously evocative occasions; the book is replete with colourful family photographs. In this respect, the book is inspirational. Buisseret has lived a good life, 'The Going was Good'.

Professor Carl Campbell, University of the West Indies, Mona
doi.org/10.68027/742906

Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). 360 pp + 14 illus. ISBN 9780812224238. US$ 40, paperback.

Explicitly comparative works like this one (or like Gwendolyn Hall's *Social Control in Slave Plantation Societies: A Comparison of Saint-Domingue and Cuba*) often succeed in setting historical developments into a new light. Here, the authors begin by affirming the industrial nature of sugar-production in their two chosen islands during the eighteenth century. They exaggerate a little in affirming the novelty of this development, considering that fully-fledged industrial enterprises had long existed in Europe, in the construction of galleys at the Venetian Arsenal, for instance or in the manufacture of artillery in the arsenals of early seventeenth-century France.

They go on first to set out the ways in which sugar-production in Jamaica and Saint-Domingue differed from earlier models in the Lesser Antilles, and then to explain the similarities in the two larger islands. These both had new and fertile land to bring into production, and a terrain which encouraged the use of communications by sea, as well as