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### Le Mont 1793–96

#### George III

'He protected the weak, gave relief to the needy,  
The misfortune of others always touched his heart:  
But he is no longer – Alas! and cruel fate  
Has too soon ended his noble career,  
People of Guernsey, let us confound our heartfelt grief  
For we have lost our prop, our friend, our father.'

Translated from the tribute to Major General Small  
in *La Gazette de Guernesey* of 19 March 1796.

A simple explanation for the move of the Lieutenant-Governor from Tower Hill could be that a larger, brand-new residence in spacious grounds had become available in what modern estate agents would still describe as a highly desirable area on the western edge of St Peter Port. In an area of high ground on *le fief de Rozel* which overlooked the south-western slopes of the town, Marie David had inherited two fields from her father Jean. In 1781 she and her husband, Thomas le Retilley, sold the fields and a cattle-shed to Nicolas Maingy who already owned a neighbouring field. Together, the three fields amounted to eleven *vergées* and two perches, or just short of three acres, and it was there, in the corner made by Mont Durant and Petite Marche, now known as Mount Durand and The Queen's Road, that Nicolas Maingy built his new mansion in 1793.

In style it was very much of its time for a Georgian residence of some standing. It was south-facing and was accessed via a semi-circular driveway off Mont Durant road.

The main residence was of three storeys and was flanked by two detached, two-storey buildings, that to its west being a coach-house, that to its east of unknown purpose.

This was altogether a residence more fit for the personal representative of the Crown, and as he enjoyed the fairest of views over St Peter's Valley and strolled across his fine lawns, the first occupant, Major General John Small, must have felt some relief to have avoided the cramped confines of his predecessors in Tower Hill.

Le Mont was originally south-facing, as in this 1865 watercolour of The Mount as it had by then come to be known.



The Mount today.

These were relatively harmonious years for the Island's relationship with the Crown. Admittedly, Britain and France were at war and the threat of invasion was ever present, but Guernsey had cause to enjoy a sense of well-being, too. Privateering was flourishing, the first Guernsey glasshouses were being built for the growing of grapes and exotic fruits, Methodism was putting down roots in the wake of John Wesley's visit in 1787, the first regular mail service was in place and Guernsey's first theatre, the Theatre Royal, had opened for business. As for the war with France, a young and recently knighted Sir James Saumarez,