

West Indian Co. restores mansion to former grandeur

On Dec. 24, 1917, the West Indian Co. purchased from the widow of Louis Delinois, the old and famous Berg mansion at Cathrinebjerg, No. 8 Great Northside Quarter, and a sizeable number of acres of undeveloped land around it (Dermark Hill).

At the time of purchase, the mansion was in a run down condition. Painted a dull red, it seemed like an abandoned military installation. Skilled workers were put on the job immediately, with intent to restore the mansion to some semblance of its earlier grandeur.

Letter to the editor of the St. Thomas Bulletin, dated April 11, 1918, and signed, A Citizen. Condensed:

"It has been a pleasure for this writer to notice how during the last few months the old and famous



History Corner
Isidor Paiewonsky

Cathrinebjerg mansion has been repaired by its new owner, the West Indian Co. In its new splendor, the building stands there overlooking the town and harbor; the old color of red, having been replaced by the far more impressive color of white.

"The new owner having done so much to beautify the place, could it not be possible that the island authorities find money to put the public road which leads up and around the place, in similar good repair?"

"I know that funds for such a

purpose are scarce at present, but where there is a will, there is a way. Certainly some money could be found to do that portion on the eastern side of the hill, locally known as High Road. This section has an unimpeded view of the town in the valley below, and of the harbor.

"From time immemorial it has been the favorite resort of nursemaids and children, as well as the public in general, especially on Sunday afternoons. Also, people

come regularly during the week to seek relaxation in the restfulness of the place, its scenic vistas, and to enjoy the cool breezes that always blow there.

"You, Mr. Editor, over the years have been a frequent visitor to this beautiful spot. Please help us draw official attention to this gem...!"

Reply from Mr. Leroy Nolte, editor of the St. Thomas Bulletin, dated April 12, 1918. Condensed:

"We approve all that the writer has said, both in admiration of the renovated building at Cathrinebjerg and his pleas for the improvement of High Road. Excepting the Emancipation Garden promenade, there is no place so popular with nursemaids and children, in fact with folks in general, as this well known High Road, with its combined attractions of fine views and pure air..."

Note: This writer remembers, as a child, the many happy hours spent on High Road with other children. A big event in our lives was our exchange of greeting with Consul Louis Delinois as he passed on his way to the Berg mansion which he and his family occupied.

We could see the beautiful carriage coming from the distance with its spirited horse and uniformed coachman. As the carriage passed us we would cry out, 'Good afternoon, Mr. Delinois.' He would take off his hat and bow to us. I.P.

Today, 69 years later, High Road has become an ugly hemmed-in passageway. The vistas from High Road have been blotted out by a monstrous concrete block wall. The questions are: How? Why? Who permitted this sacrilege?