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Buena Vista: Life and Work on a Puerto Rican Hacienda, 1833-1904

Guillermo Baralt

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This book traces the history of Buena Vista, an estate located in the southern foothills of Puerto Rico's central mountain range. Now a popular living history museum, Buena Vista flourished in the nineteenth century--first as a farm that furnished food for the city of Ponce and surrounding plantations, later as a producer of corn and cornmeal ground at the estate's water-powered mill, and finally as a coffee plantation. Drawing on an impressive range of primary sources, Guillermo Baralt portrays the estate's history as a series of overlapping changes: from slavery to salaried labor, from primitive processing techniques to the latest in mill technology, from Spanish rule to American control, and from hard-scrabble country life to life as part of the world marketplace. Richly illustrated and written in a lively narrative style, *Buena Vista* paints a compelling portrait of an era, an island, a family, and an estate, bringing a period in Caribbean history to vivid life.

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