

Little is actually known about Budhoe. His real name was Moses Gottlieb, and he is said to have come from the British Islands, possibly from Barbados. He worked at Estate La Grange in St. Croix. Unlike most slaves he was taught to read and write and he also was a skilled sugar boiler. Because of his literary abilities and his skill on the plantation he was constantly borrowed by other estate owners. Budhoe also displayed outstanding leadership qualities which made deep impressions on both planters and slaves.

In the year 1847, King Christian VIII of Denmark proclaimed a gradual emancipation program for the slaves of the Danish West Indies. From the 28th of July of that year it was ordered that all babies born to slaves would be free and that at the end of twelve years slavery should entirely cease.

The slaves, who had expected immediate freedom, were extremely discontented with these orders. In St. Croix during the years 1848, they secretly planned an insurrection.

Budhoe or General Bordeaux as he was sometimes called, had been the secret organizer and avowed leader of the uprising.

On the evening of Sunday 2, 1848, the slaves began rioting, and the ringing of the bells and the blowing of horns aroused the island of St. Croix. The slaves left their estates and marched on Frederiksted, led by Budhoe.

By eight o'clock on the morning of July 3rd, about 2,000 slaves marched into town. They went directly to the Fort and demanded their freedom. During the day they were joined by about 3,000 more slaves. They threatened that, if their freedom was not proclaimed by 4 p.m., they would burn the town. About this time Governor-General Peter Von Scholten who was reported off island arrived to confront a still orderly but determined crowd. The situation was tense and dangerous; once the destruction and rioting began, nothing might stop it. The Governor went among the crowd and read the famous freedom proclamation known in local history as the Emancipation Proclamation of 1848.

As it took some time for this news to spread through the island, the rioting continued; one band of rioters called the "Fleet" roamed the countryside burning and plundering in the center of the island. They were led by a young black named King. Budhoe accompanied Major Jacob Gyllich, the Danish fire chief, to various parts of the island, and through his influence began to restore order. For days the two men ranged the island telling the slaves of their freedom. At one point in the turmoil, Budhoe saved the Major's life. When the revolt was over it was found that much damage had been done to the estates, but that not a single white person lost his life. It is said that Budhoe had ordered his fellow-slaves not to kill. By August 6, the militia had been reinforced by troops from St. Thomas and Puerto Rico and peace was restored.

Major Gyllich took Budhoe to his home for safe-keeping against retaliation from officials or planters. He was arrested, however, and interrogated for many days. This was because Budhoe was believed to have been a friend of Governor Von Scholten, and many people believed that the Governor knew of the uprising and was in sympathy with the slaves. Budhoe steadfastly denied that the Governor had any knowledge of the insurrection.

Though the leader of the rioters, Budhoe had done the island good service by using his influence to save the lives of many of the planters. But despite this, the new governor, Peter Hansen, ordered him to be deported. He was put aboard the ship, Ornen. Dressed as a gentleman, Budhoe went on board, well provided with clothes and other necessaries, only to have them taken off as soon as the vessel was out of port, and he was put to work among the crew. On the 8th of January 1849, he was landed at Port of Spain, Trinidad, where the Captain told him that if he ever went back to the Danish West Indies he would forfeit his life. He is said to have then gone to the United States.

Today he is recognized as the liberator of his people.