

# Scottish Involvement in Caribbean Slavery

Eric J Graham

## Bibliography

The University College London initiative 'Legacies of British Slave-ownership', established with the purpose of tracing the impact of slave-ownership on the formation of modern Britain, consisted of two projects:

- The ESRC-funded *Legacies of British Slave-ownership* project - now completed and available online.
- The ESRC and AHRC-funded *Structure and significance of British Caribbean slave-ownership 1763-1833*, which ran during the period 2013-2015. The findings from this provided the basis of the acclaimed two-part BBC documentary *Britain's Forgotten Slave Owners* presented by David Olusoga. Keith McClelland, a co-

director of the 'Legacies' projects, had earlier provided a short but informative report on the compensation of Scottish slave-owners when slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1833: 'Compensating Scottish Slave Owners', *Scottish Local History*, 81 (2011), pp.26-8.

This select bibliography of secondary sources of Scottish involvement in slavery was one of two commissioned as part of the second project and is published here courtesy of the 'Legacies' team. The other survey was of the primary sources held in Scottish public archives and private holdings. The contribution of Stephen Mullen of Glasgow University in compiling both surveys is acknowledged. *Eric J Graham, Research Affiliate, Structure and Significance of British Caribbean Slave-ownership 1763-1833.*

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## Footnote

Scots involvement in the Caribbean stretches back to the late seventeenth century when miscreants and political prisoners – the 'Red Legs' – were transported from Scotland to be sold as slaves in Barbados. Scottish traders first targeted the Leeward Islands – notably St Kitts and Antigua – from the 1690s onwards while the survivors of the Darien Scheme set up as planters on Jamaica in 1700. Indeed, by 1770 Scots accounted for one third of all Europeans on this, the greatest and richest of the British islands. They were also to the fore in exploiting the new opportunities from the windfall of the recurring wars of the eighteenth century – notably on 'the Ceded Islands'

(Grenada, Carriacou and St Vincent) from 1760 onwards. The acquisition of the formerly Spanish Trinidad and Tobago and the capture of the Dutch South American mainland colonies – especially Berbice and Demerara – in the 1790s presented further business opportunities for entrepreneurial Scots who were willing to drive slaves for a living.

In terms of trade, it was a two-way street with large amounts of barrelled herring and Scotch linen – to feed and clothe the slaves – and, latterly, sugar processing machinery shipped out; and vast amounts of tobacco, sugar, rum, rice, cotton and indigo imported – all to the great enrichment of Scotland. The industrial remains and debris of this system still litter the hinterlands of these former colonies. *Eric J Graham*.



Fig.1: Early Map of Barbados, with the Northern Area of 'Scotland' clearly marked.



Fig.2: Map showing John Wedderburn's Paradise Pen estate near Savana-La-Mar, Jamaica. *ESME*.



Fig.3: Francis Humberton Mackenzie, Lord Seaforth – Governor of Barbados and slave plantation owner in Berbice. Portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence.

Fig.4: Interior of a Sugar Boiling House. From William Clark's *Ten Views in the Island of Antigua* (1823).



Fig.5: 'A Surinam Planter in his Morning Dress'. Engraving from John Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796).