

University of Bristol

# The University of Bristol: Our History and the Legacies of Slavery

BRISTOL.

By J. Bartholomew, F.R.G.S.



## CONTRIBUTORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Contributors

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Lead authors and contributors are listed at the beginning of each chapter.

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Shield on outside of HH Wills Physics Building



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# INTRODUCTION

## Overview

*This report investigates the links that the University has with the Transatlantic Trafficking of Enslaved Africans to inform how the University engages with debates about the legacies of the past.*

In order to understand the past, we need to place the University of Bristol within the broader context of Britain's colonial history and analyse how the past has shaped current discussions about identity, social and racial inequalities.

Debates about Britain's involvement in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans have been the subject of numerous academic research projects in the last century or so. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, scholars from various backgrounds have focused on the economic impact of the slave trade on the nation's wealth. The scholarship has seldom examined the ways in which slavery profoundly shaped British society and the role it played in consumption, culture, citizenship, social cohesion and inequalities. In the last 20 years and in the global context of demands for forms of reparations from former colonies, institutions from the banking industry, theatres and museums to universities and several other sectors, have been engaging with discussions about their role in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and the negative legacies of the past.

Over the last decade, the University of Bristol has been engaging with staff and students about its links with the history of enslavement and its initiatives to address the legacies of the past. Discussions have highlighted the need to address difficult histories such as the historical links with slavery and buildings named after individuals who had links with an economy based on the labour of enslaved people. The University has taken direct action to address systemic disadvantages in education, including through the launch of the Black Bristol Scholarship Programme. It is engaging with discussions about eradicating racism and exclusion, and exploring more opportunities for staff, students and the community to engage with the production of knowledge.

This report follows similar studies undertaken by other universities such as Glasgow, Oxford and UCL, and explores two key areas specific to the University of Bristol:

- The founding of the University, the University College Bristol and its network of interests, and
- Key families related to the history of slavery in Bristol, represented in our logo and the fabric of our estate.



## BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

Professor Olivette Otele was appointed in January 2020 to conduct research about the University's past and links with slavery. Shortly after the appointment, the country went on lockdown. That proved to be a major hurdle to access archival material that was held in the University's archives. The Special Collections Team led by Michael Richardson, supported by Hannah Lowery, Karen Anderson and Jaimie Carstairs, provided the material that had been digitised. Some of the material provided led us to look into the University's history of donations and scholarships but also moved the research away from the links between the University and slavery.

Two undergraduate interns, Lillian Waddington and Valuola Ojeme, were appointed in September 2020. They were to support Professor Otele in identifying key names that were recurrent in the material and that seemed to have played a key role in setting up the University College.

One major drawback was the lack of documents related to finances of the University of Bristol. It was difficult to find accounts, and full details about the amounts and those who funded the University of Bristol.

Nonetheless, it became apparent that those who set up the University College played a key role in promoting it and keeping it financially viable. It is therefore likely that some of those individuals and businesses continued their financial commitment to the institution.

Understanding how the University College was set up and its context allows us to ascertain that those individuals were committed to education and wanted the city to support the institution. Unfortunately, access to key documents related to their links with slavery remained an important issue throughout the research period. Secondary material and Professor Otele's knowledge of the History of Bristol (PhD dissertation on Bristol and slavery and its links with slavery helped bridge certain gaps in source material available.

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# HISTORICAL CONTEXT

England's involvement in the slave trade started in the 1550s and officially ended in 1807. Bristol's role was key to that history and its participation in the trade officially started through the Society of Merchant Venturers (the Society), a merchant collective recognized by Royal Charter in 1552. The Society held significant commercial sway in Bristol, effectively controlling imports and exports for some 250 years<sup>1</sup>.

Whilst records don't clearly show how the slave trade became a focus for members of the Society, a key figure in Bristol's history, and member of the Society, was Edward Colston. Colston had become a member of the Royal Africa Company (RAC) in 1680. A trading company operating along the west coast of Africa, the RAC's original intent was to exploit African gold fields. However, it quickly developed the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and controlled it in England until its monopoly was dissolved in 1698, opening the doors for port cities such as Bristol to engage in the slave trade.

Colston was deeply involved with the RAC as a member and then as its deputy governor, investing in and playing a key role in the purchase of African captives.<sup>2</sup> During this time, he also became a member of the Society (c 1683).

As noted by Dr Stone on the Society's website:

*Whilst the Society itself did not invest in slaving voyages, a recent study<sup>3</sup> has shown that at some point in the eighteenth century one quarter of the Society's members were themselves involved directly in this abhorrent trade, representing approximately one fifth of the 536 slave traders in Bristol.<sup>4</sup>*

While not all Society members were directly involved in the slave trade, it is well documented that most members (if not all) would have benefitted from it through the associated industries of "...shipbuilding; provisioning supplies to the ships involved; the processing of slave-produced commodities such as sugar and tobacco; the production of commodities used in the purchase of slaves, especially brass; the ownership of interests in plantations in the Caribbean and the Americas; or through the banks that financed both trade and manufacturing."<sup>5</sup>

Bristol's role in the slave trade, the history of the Society and individuals such as Edward Colston, his life and his statue, have been the subject of debates for decades. As important as these are, they have also obscured several other stories and in particular the history of the University of Bristol and its complex links with enslavement.

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1 Stone, R. (2021, May 20). Transatlantic Slave Trade. The Society of Merchant Venturers. Retrieved November 25, 2021, from <https://www.merchantventurers.com/who-we-are/history/transatlantic-slave-trade/>

2 David Eltis, Richardson, Bristol Radical History Group. See Bibliography.

3 Böhm, T., & Hillmann, H. (2015). A Closed Elite? Bristol's Society of Merchant Venturers and the Abolition of Slave Trading. In *Chartering Capitalism: Organizing Markets, States, and Publics* (Vol. 29, pp. 147-175): Emerald Group Publishing Limited

4 Stone, R. (2021, May 20). Transatlantic Slave Trade. The Society of Merchant Venturers. Retrieved November 25, 2021, from <https://www.merchantventurers.com/who-we-are/history/transatlantic-slave-trade/>

5 Ibid.





*Clifton Suspension Bridge*



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# THE UNIVERSITY'S HISTORY

**Professor Olivette Otele, Lillian Waddington and Valuola Ojeme**

## **The University College: a network of interests**

The University was set up in 1909, long after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and slavery in 1833. However, its predecessor institution, the University College, was established in 1876. It was supported by educators such as John Percival, headmaster at Clifton College and Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College Oxford amongst others. When the University College was set up, the city of Bristol had gone through tremendous changes. From appointing Isambard Brunel as Project Engineer for what would be later known as Clifton Suspension Bridge, to demands for political reforms following the riots of 1831 after the House of Commons passed the Reform Bill, the access to clean water through waterworks in the 1840s, to setting up the University College in 1876, a year before the Colston statue was erected. These changes may appear to be unrelated at first glance but Bristol had established itself as a centre for international trade in mid-18th century and the source of wealth came from its trade with the world including its involvement in the African trade.

By the 19th century slave traders and plantation owners who had received compensation for the loss of their so-called 'property' had invested in other ventures and donated to various causes. 19th century Bristol was benefitting from the support of wealthy patrons, from former families of planters, to slave traders, and to staunch abolitionists. The history of the city of Bristol is therefore a multi-layered story of legally sanctioned displacement of human beings, coerced labour, trade and collaborations between various groups, exclusion as well as abolitionism and philanthropy.

## **From the debates to the research: University College Bristol**

### *Methodology*

The approach chosen for this research was based on the availability of source material. It followed four leads:

- Lead 1: Understand the context in which the University College Bristol (UCB) was set up by delving into several source material.
- Lead 2: Identify a network of donors and educators who contributed to the University College and to the University.

- Lead 3: Examine the nature and frequency of donations and try and see if some of those individuals or their families received compensation money (using the UCL British Slave-Owners Database) and have a list of individuals and try to identify their relationships and their business interest within and outside the University
- Lead 4: Look at the links between the University and slavery with the aim of challenging definitions around the notion of direct and indirect links.

### Research Project

This part of the research is based on archival material provided by the archivists of the University of Bristol in March to September 2020. The pandemic had an effect on the project as most documents were not digitised and one could only work on the following:

- A. Memorandum and Articles of Association UCB (MAA) 1862-1867
  - B. A rough copy of the list of citizen petitioners to the King for a University (1908).
- Several individuals were put in groups of occupations to have a clearer picture of the nature of the trades and professionals involved. Particular attention was paid to identifying names of traders associated with Merchant Venturers.
- C. DM506 (1889): papers relating to Bristol Medical School, Bristol Day Training College, Bristol Educational Society, University College Bristol and the University of Bristol (committee minutes and so on) - DM506-55; DM506-56; DM506-57; DM506-58; DM506-59.
  - D. University Bristol Sustention Fund (1887-1888): this sustention ledger provides information about donations.
  - E. E. Memorandum and Petition to the King.

These list of names and documents highlight the fact that a number of professional and influential Bristolians were keen to convince the crown and politicians of the

importance of a university in Bristol. The main argument was that there was no such institution in the region. The momentum and the commitment were important enough to gather traction outside Bristol (Oxford). This also emphasizes the fact that Bristol's educational scene and businesses were intertwined, which had ramifications beyond the city.

### Minutes of committee meetings

When we examine these minutes, one notices that several individuals appear regularly and over a long period of time. That might be an indication of their commitment to the committee and to the University. This might also add credence to the assumption that these committees' members were a tight knit group that seem to have some influence across various aspects of Bristol's society.

#### *1. The most frequent attendees were:*

1. G.F. Schacht with 38 appearances from 9th October 1889 to 14th of March 1894. He was appointed chair 3 times.
2. Albert Fry with 30 appearances from 9th of October 1889 to 14th March 1894. He was chairman of the committee 30 times. He had an avid interest in educational works, especially in the University College Bristol. He has largely been accredited as the reason for its inception and success under his chairmanship. Albert Fry was also linked to Member of Parliament and committee member Lewis Fry (who appeared 10 times in the documents we examined between 12th Nov 1890 - 12th March 1894).
3. Dr Robert Shingleton Smith with 26 appearances from 9th October 1889 to 14 March 1894. He was a lecturer in physiology first then was appointed as professor.
4. Mr. J. W. Arrowsmith appears 29 times from 13th October to 13th Feb 1894. Arrowsmith had a company of the same name and was a major printer and publisher in Bristol.



5. Mr. P. F. Worsley, with 16 appearances from 13th November 1889. He was chair of the committee 6 times, and he was a Chemistry teacher.
6. Mr. F. M. Alleyne appeared 16 times from 11th December 1889 to 14th March 1894. We found little information about him in the documents we analysed.
7. Prof. Lloyd Morgan appeared 16 times in the documents from 11th September 1889 to 14th March 1894. He taught at the University College and fought hard for the Charter for the University College to be established. He specialised in the study of animal psychology.
8. Prof. Reginald Fanshawe appeared 24 appearances from 9th Oct 1889 to 14th March 1894. He was professor in Classics.

### **Key points**

There were many committee members who made over thirty appearances, which suggests that there was a small group of people who were regularly present in those meetings. The committee members were staff of the University and people who had considerable influence and were involved primarily in businesses external to the University. The documents examined also suggest that the close-knit group had connections across Bristol within the University College and had political influence. Lewis Fry and the Fry family were indeed very influential in the committee. Albert Fry's approval as the chair of the committee was necessary for most important decisions.

### ***2. Relationship between the Merchant Venturers (MV), local businesses and the University College Bristol (UCB)***

The individual members of the MVs are not revealed in the pages we looked at in detail. (pp.1-40). However, we know that they played a crucial role in the UCB. For example, The Society of Merchant venturers lent their large hall to house the extra lectures on 9th October 1889. New district classes that the committee was setting up were changed based on the Merchant

Venturers' (MV's) curriculum such as: Latin, French, Freehand and perspective drawing (these subjects were already taught at the MV's school.

Committee members were also associated with the following local businesses.

1. J.W Arrowsmith was a printer and publishing house, associated with the Hugh Conway scholarship and they printed his 1884 book 'Called Back'.
2. Western Daily Press
3. Mercury Daily Post
4. Bristol Times and Mirror
5. Evening Post
6. H. Hill
7. J. Fawn and Son

### **Key Points**

Through these examples, we can see that the transactions between the MV and the UCB were on an optional basis so neither party was coerced (this was not recorded as forced) and these good-natured interactions highlight amicable and beneficial relationships between both MVs and committee members. A range of businesses were also used by the University, from cleaning companies to newspaper businesses and so on. That nature of those relationship was multi-layered as we will see in the following pages. Some of these companies were further involved in the University College through donations while others remained on business terms with the UCB.

### ***3. Salaries of staff, other financial benefits and group dynamics.***

This section provides a comprehensive look into the salaries of the staff and provides an insight into the monetary value placed upon certain staff members thereby depicting either seniority and/or hierarchy.

There seem to have been interesting internal party dynamics. For example, in the November 12th, 1890,

meeting Prof. Rowley, Mr. A. Richardson, Mr. J. Rafter, Mr. A.P. Chattock, Mr A. Leipmar, all received a salary increase but at the same period, Mr James Luick requested for such an increase in his application but was unsuccessful.

Professor Schuman had another job in New South Wales (member of committee).

On 13th November 1889 it was organised that  $\frac{3}{4}$  fees for extra lectures to be given to Professor Rowley (member of committee).

### Key Points

Some lecturers had various sources of income within the University. For example, Professor Lloyd Morgan was paid for his role as both Dean and professor. This shows that there was no strict delineation between administrative duties and teaching duties. Senior staff members were also expected to teach. The documents examined also show that the cost of new equipment, grants, workshops, and any developments to school departments were detailed and the Committee wanted financial information about various aspects of the UCB's inner workings, from salaries of its staff and committee members to the payment for cleaning services.

The 'share fee' column in the documents provides further details about the management of the University College. The 'share fee' refers to the percentage lecturers and/or professors could receive if their classes were popular. It was a form of retainer for the lecturers. The more attendees the class had, the higher the 'share fee' was.

### 4. Scholarships and Other kinds of support for students

We found various pieces of information about scholarships, the recipients and about an awarding body of the scholarships as well as their purpose. Amongst such scholarships were:

- The John Stewart scholarship for 'poor lads native of Bristol'.
- The Cath Winkworth scholarship for female students.

- The Evening scholarship/grant for evening students. This included a fee reduction, or grants.

### Key Points

A range of scholarships were aimed at supporting particular groups such as women, and men from poorer families. These philanthropic deeds included several small and medium size grants. They ranged from: a grant for £10 to allow students to take part in a new scheme, a reduction of fees for certain students, the availability of evening schools (and the reduction of their fees from £5.00s.0d to £3.6s.00d), a further science scholarship to be awarded annually, to loans to students, or the opportunity for students to pay their fees in instalments. However, despite these efforts, education remained expensive for most people. £3 in 1889 (approximately £387 in today's money) remained an important amount for most working-class families so the University College Bristol mainly catered for young people from the middle or upper classes

### 5. Sustentation Ledger (Reference DM372/1/12)

The document provided us with information about the financial contributions key individuals made towards the University College Bristol. It further ascertained the point about the names of donors and the frequency of financial donations from those prominent benefactors. The documents include the addresses of donors, more associated businesses, and a record of female contributions.

When examining the addresses of the donors (some from the Caribbean and India) we can better identify a correlation between Bristol's executive committee and a global network. Similarly, the inclusion of the contributions of women provides us with valuable information about the involvement of women both as a subsidiary to their husbands and in some cases independent of a man completely (the Robinson family). All donations were pledged to begin in different years, but they were annually renewed, unless otherwise stated by the ledger-writer, to be annually renewed each year.



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## 6. Frequent donors

The size of the donation was not necessarily contingent to the frequency of appearances in the committee meetings, neither was it visibly linked to influence in the committee. Names such as Fry and Wills do consistently rank high in recurrence, but lesser-known people are also regular donors. However, one can also see a correlation between the frequency of donations and appearances in the committee and a link between repeated financial and academic interactions between the same people and the University College Bristol. This reaffirms the idea that there was a tight knit group that was involved around and within the University College Bristol.

**Key names** The Robinson family made donations (usually £2.2s.2d or £1.1s.1d) but also pledged twice (£50.0s.0d from Alfred Robinson and one of £250.0s.0d from Edwards J.P. Robinson).

- The Budgett family donated 13 times (usually between £1.1s.1d to £10.10s.10d).
- The Fry family members such as Albert Fry, Lewis Fry, their spouses and other female family members, such as Miss Mary Fry, and Miss R.W Fry to name a few also appear as donors. Albert Fry was the most frequent chairman in University College meetings. Lewis Fry was chair once. Frequency of donations might also be linked to seniority in the committee.
- In addition, the name Fry also occurs among multiple other names: Pope, Abbot, Fry & Brown, which is similar to business names we found associated with the University College Bristol.
- The Baker family donated 33 times. This was between £10.10s.0d and £1.1s.0d
- The Wills family donated 37 times. They promised to donate usually between £2.2s.2d to £10.10s.10d. Once, £250.0s.0d.
- J. Arrowsmith donated five times. He pledged to donate £250.0s.0d once. Arrowsmith was heavily involved in the pledges of donations with money

transferred to a “Special Fund” and donating a one-off lump sum of £250.0s.0d.

- The Worsley family donated 9 times. Once, Mr Worsley pledged to donate £250.0s.0d. One pledge was transferred to the “Special Fund” for six years.
- Dr R. Shingleton Smith donated three times. Two pledges were made to start before the first committee meeting. And, like Worsley, one pledge was transferred to the “Special Fund” for six years.
- Mr. and Mrs. Schacht pledged a total of three times, pledging between £2.2s.0d and £5.5s.0d. Schacht had the highest frequency of appearances in the committee meetings: ranking at 38.
- Mr. and Mrs. Alleyne pledged a total of four times. Two pledges were made before the first committee meetings, and one made in the same year that the committee started.
- Schacht, Arrowsmith and Fry had one lot of pledges transferred to a “Special Fund”. Names were linked with the committee minute book.

### Business and donations

When we examine the list of businesses hired by the UCB, we noticed that the following ones also made donations or pledged. We do not have detailed information about these businesses.

- Fawn and Son, J. The company pledged to donate two lots of £1.1s.1d during the years 1879/80-1898/9. Based on their presence in other documents, we noticed that the company was also closely associated with the Committee.
- H. Hill pledged three lots of £1.1s.1d from 1883/4-1908/9.
- Austin and Sons pledged to donate three lots of £1.1s.0d during the years: 1879-1900 and their initial pledges until 1889, were all before the first committee meeting in 1889.
- Baker, J and Sons pledged to donate one lot £1.1s.0d from 1882/3-1888/9. This was before the first committee meeting.

- Parnall, W and co-pledged £1.1s.0d from 1879/80-1880/1.
- G.B. May pledged £1.1s.0d from 1880/1-1881/82.
- L. Thomas and Sons pledged twice, two lots of £1.1s.1d between the years 1889/90 to 1898/99.
- O. J. Gullick had money transferred to him from another business, Bird & Co, F. in 1890 and since then he pledged to donate two lots of £1.1s.1d during the years: 1889/90-1908/9.
- J. Crispin and Sons and J. Crispin's wife pledged to donate one lot of £2.2s.2d from the years 1895/6 to 1898/9.
- Bird & Co, F. donated one lot of £1.1s.0d from the years: 1888/9 and one donation pledge was transferred to O.J. Gullick.

### Key Points

There were numerous anonymous donations that have been linked to the Fry family in the ledger. They pledged so frequently (53 times) that it would take a considerable amount of time to add their donations up. We noticed that not every big donor was part of the University College Bristol Committee. Some individuals made one-time large donations, such as Dr M. W. Travers, who donated £105. Donors tended to be across the country including in Sussex, London, Somerset, Sheffield, Warwickshire, Norwich, and Liverpool. Some donors' addresses were abroad.

This section shows that the same names are recurring and that can be linked to influence. Below there is an extensive list of businesses that were hired by the University College, and these same businesses were pledging to donate considerable amounts of money to UCB. This mutually beneficial business relationship between the companies and the UCB suggests that it was not just the attending members that could buy their way into the UCB, it was the companies as well.

Despite the idea of close-knit interactions, not all the businesses hired by the UCB were in the donation ledger, but one could assume that making a donation

was potentially a way to be considered for a business relationship with the UCB. Many of the businesses commenced donation pledges before the first committee meeting in 1889.

### Conclusion and key findings

We looked at documents, starting in 1862. Although the University was set up in 1909, it is important to understand that donors had a long relationship prior to that date with the University College Bristol.

Bristol in the 18th and 19th century was a mercantile city with several families involved in various trades. The relationship with the University College was an extension of that longstanding relationship as exemplified by the Fry family, Arrowsmith and many others as donors. Several donors were also lecturers, and others became Vice-Chancellor (Lloyd Morgan for example). The recurrence of names, which are regularly involved in several committees is in keeping with research done on Bristol about the close-knit community of investors and traders, including slave traders, who socialised and had working or business relationships in Bristol from the 18th to the 20th century and onwards. In addition, about 30 individuals and businessmen have been identified as having been crucial in the development of University College Bristol and in supporting the University of Bristol financially. No information could be found regarding their direct relationship with the slave trade and slavery. Those names do not feature in the UCL Database about slaveowners who received compensation after the abolition. Further research is needed to provide more information about the businesses and their owners.

As far as donations and philanthropic deeds are concerned, several bursaries were aimed at supporting students including women. It would be interesting to look at the history of such donations and investigate how the history of philanthropic deeds extended to support the students of African descent in Bristol in the 20th and 21st century.





Window in the Fry Building





Cover of the Visitors' Book



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# KEY NAMES: COLSTON, FRY, WILLS AND GOLDNEY

**Dr Richard Stone**

## Family Connections

Four families with connections to slavery are remembered in the nomenclature and symbolism of the University of Bristol: Wills, the Frys, the Colstons, and the Goldneys. Devices representing the first three of these appear on the University's current logo (designed in 2003 from the coat of arms awarded at foundation in 1909). Halls of residence are named after both the Goldney and Wills families, and several other buildings and facilities across the University's campuses bear the name of either the Wills or the Frys. The nature of the link between each of these families and the University is different, with the memorialisation of the Wills and Frys reflecting financial connections to the institution, and that of the Colstons and Goldneys being symbolic.

## The Wills and Slavery

There can be no doubt that the Wills family benefitted from slavery. They were not, though, (as popular imagination often believes) either slaveowners or slave-traders. The records of all 2,114 known Bristol slave-trading voyages do not mention the name 'Wills'.<sup>6</sup> No members of the family claimed compensation when Britain abolished slavery in 1833, and the family's property records reveal that they held no land in the United States prior to the 1890s.<sup>7</sup>

Undoubtedly, however, they did owe a substantial proportion of their wealth to trading in tobacco grown by enslaved people. Expanding over several generations from a tobacco shop on Castle Street in Bristol, W.D. and H.O. Wills became one of England's leading tobacconists. Tobacco in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was principally grown in the south of the United States, where slavery was not abolished until 1865. For the first seventy-seven years of the business,

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<sup>6</sup> D. Richardson, *Bristol, Africa and the Eighteenth-Century Slave Trade to America*, 4 Vols. (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 1986-1996).

<sup>7</sup> A search of the Legacies of British Slave Ownership Database (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/search/>, [accessed 10/07/20]) reveals four claimants with the name Wills, none of whom are members of the Bristol family. The earliest of the eighty American properties listed in the W.D. and H.O. Wills archives was not owned until 1891. See: Bristol Archives, 38169/Est/3.

founded in 1786, the vast majority of the tobacco Wills processed was thus produced by enslaved Africans and their descendants.<sup>8</sup> The family did not deal directly with the planters, purchasing their tobacco from brokers in Liverpool, London, and Bristol.<sup>9</sup> However, correspondence with the brokers leaves no doubt that this tobacco was grown in the slave plantations of the US South. The latter nineteenth century saw the Wills firm grow at a significant pace, particularly off the back of purchasing the patent for the Bonsack machine in 1883, which pioneered the production of machine-rolled cigarettes. In 1901 W.D. and H.O. Wills merged with other British tobacco producers to form Imperial Tobacco, with William Henry Wills serving as the first Chairman.<sup>10</sup> While this last, and arguably biggest, phase of expansion post-dated the use of enslaved labour in tobacco production, it is important to note both the continued use of highly exploitative 'sharecropping' arrangements on the tobacco plantations throughout the latter nineteenth century, and that the Wills family would not have been able to expand their business in such a way without the foundations and capital laid during the slavery era.

## The Frys and Slavery

The Fry family arrived in Bristol in 1753, when Joseph Fry set up as an apothecary. He is known to have been selling chocolate from at least 1759, and in 1761 (in partnership with John Vaughn) purchased an established chocolate business.<sup>11</sup> By 1764 the firm had agents in 53 towns, and a warehouse in London.<sup>12</sup>

As the firm passed through the generations of the Fry family, it was clearly becoming more than just a regional business. By the 1820s, Frys were using as much as 39 per cent of the nation's imports of cocoa beans, and the introduction of new products (including eating chocolate) saw their sales grow from £11,000 in 1836 to £103,000 in 1867 and £1.9 million by 1914.<sup>13</sup> While two other firms of Quaker chocolate-makers (Cadbury Brothers and Rowntree and Co.) took an increasingly large share of the market, their business remained successful and profitable. Cadburys and Frys eventually merged in 1918, but it was not until the first decade of the twentieth century that Cadburys sales surpassed Frys.<sup>14</sup>

As with the Wills family, there is no evidence of the Frys either owning or trading in enslaved people.<sup>15</sup> There can be little doubt, however, that the chocolate the Frys processed was, until 1833, produced from ingredients cultivated by enslaved labourers. For much of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the cacao beans used by the Frys were grown in Caribbean slave plantations. From 1784 to 1853, cacao grown in the British possessions paid an advantageous customs rate, so given Bristol's strong focus on Caribbean trade this would have been the obvious source of beans for J.S. Fry and Sons.<sup>16</sup> The abolition of slavery in the Caribbean coincided with the abolition of protectionist duties, so thereafter other sources of plantation goods, including many where slavery was still legal, were able to compete. The Frys thus turned to other sources of cacao beans and sugar, including the Portuguese island of São Tomé where slavery was not abolished until 1875. Their business thus used goods produced by those who were

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8 E. Royce, *The Origins of Southern Sharecropping* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), ch.6.

9 B. Alford, *W.D. and H.O. Wills and the Development of the UK Tobacco Industry, 1786-1965* (London: Methuen, 1973), p.41.

10 The history of the Wills business in this section is drawn from Alford, *W.D. and H.O. Wills*.

11 J. Mosley, 'Fry, Joseph (1728-1787)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).

12 S. Diaper, 'J.S. Fry and Sons: Growth and Decline in the Chocolate Industry, 1753-1918', in C. Harvey and J. Press (eds.), *Studies in the Business History of Bristol (Bristol: Bristol Academic Press, 1988)*, p.36.

13 Diaper, 'J.S. Fry and Sons', pp.37-40.

14 Diaper, 'J.S. Fry and Sons', pp.45, 40.

15 A search of the Legacies of British Slave Ownership Database (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/search/> [accessed 10/07/20]) reveals two claimants with the name Fry, neither of whom are members of the Bristol family. There are three people with the name Fry listed as involved in Bristol's slave-trading voyages, but again none of these are members of the family. Richardson, *Bristol, Africa and the Eighteenth-Century Slave Trade*.

16 A.W. Knapp, *Cocoa and Chocolate: Their History from Plantation to Consumer* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1920).



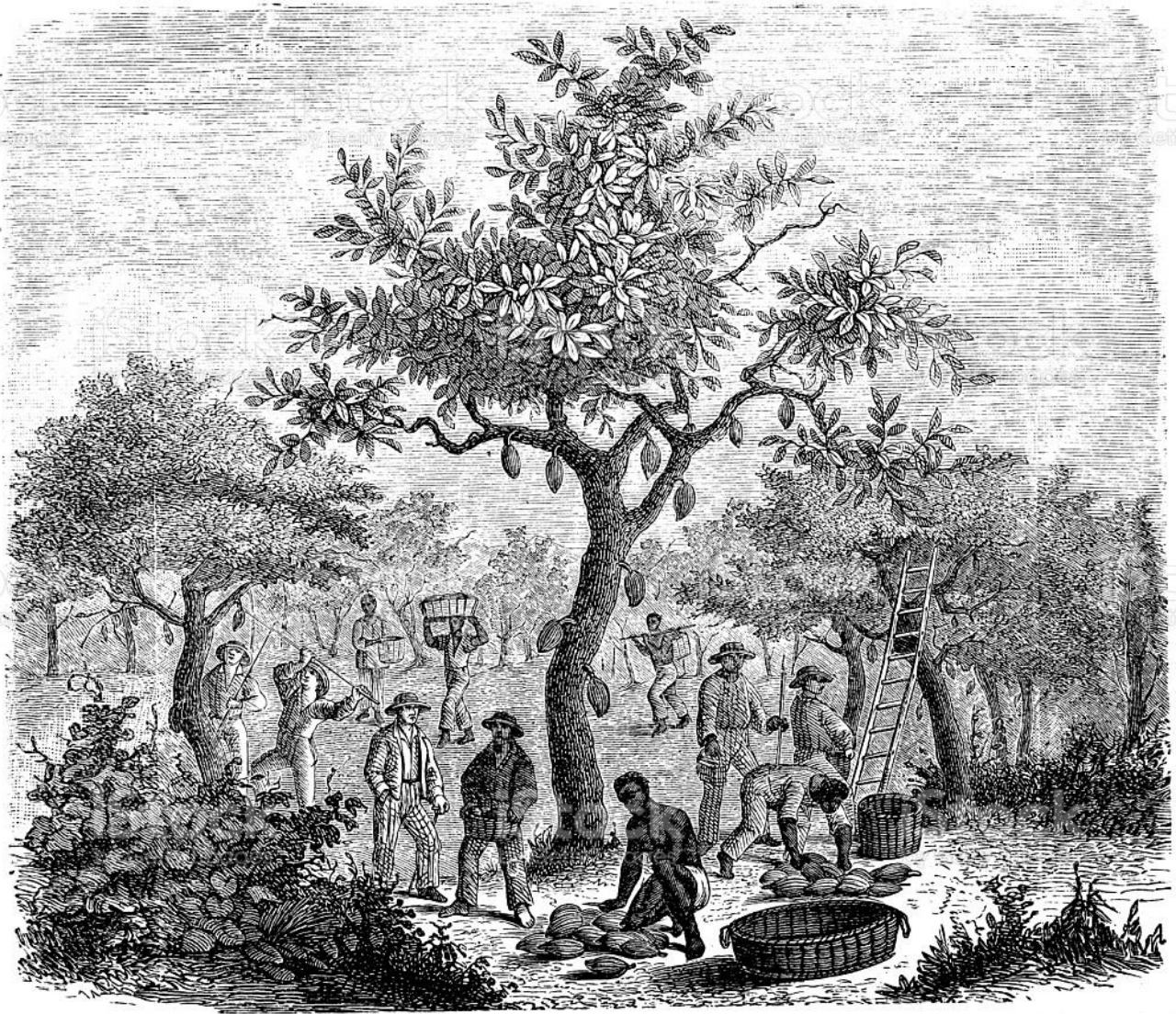


Illustration of a Cocoa plant

legally recognised as slaves for almost 150 years.

In February 1902, Joseph Storrs Fry received a letter from William Cadbury, informing him that enslaved labour was being used in the São Tomé cocoa plantations.<sup>17</sup> The chocolatiers sought to investigate labour practices on the island, but continued to purchase cocoa produced there. While legally registered as Indentured Servants and paid a small wage, there can be little doubt that these labourers were subject to both de facto slavery and horrific conditions. In the words of the Fry's agent Joseph Burt, a contract worker was 'taken from his home against his will... forced

into a contract that he does not understand, and never returns to Angola. The legal formalities are but [a] cloak to hide slavery'.<sup>18</sup> Around 70,000 people were brought to the island from mainland Africa between 1880 and 1908, and mortality amongst newly-arrived laborers was consistently reported at 19-28 per cent.<sup>19</sup> Even before this they had to face horrific conditions, with one journalist describing 'shackles in profusion – shackles for the hands, shackles for the feet, shackles for the three or four slaves who are clamped together at night' and 'the skeletons of slaves who have been unable to keep up with the march, and so were murdered or left

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17 L.J. Satre, *Chocolate on Trial: Slavery, Politics & the Ethics of Business* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2005), pp.18, 22-3.

18 C. Higgs, 'Happiness and Work: Portuguese Peasants, British Laborers, African Contract Workers, and the Case of São Tomé and Príncipe, 1901-1909', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, No. 86 (2014), p.67.

19 W.G. Clarence-Smith, 'The Hidden Costs of Labour on the Cocoa Plantations of São Tomé and Príncipe, 1875-1914', *Portuguese Studies*, Vol. 6 (1990), pp.153-6.



to die'.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, on being presented with a report on conditions in São Tomé, Joseph Storrs Fry remarked 'the main point of the question is not how the *serviçal* [servant] is treated, but whether or no, he is a slave'. It was not until 1909, two years later, that he ceased to buy slave-grown São Tomé cocoa.

## Wills, Fry, and Abolition

It is also important to note that members of both the Fry and Wills families were supporters of the campaign to abolish slavery. This highlights that important point that it is possible through your actions, such as dealing in enslaved produced goods, to further a practice to which you are morally opposed. Involvement in the abolition movement also shows that the families would have been acutely aware of the conditions under which the goods in which they were trading were produced. The Wills were not leading proponents of abolition, and hence evidence for their support is limited. However, the four leading members of the family all made financial contributions to the campaign of abolitionist candidate Edward Protheroe in Bristol's 1830 parliamentary election. Given that the issue of abolition dominated the election campaigns in Bristol that year, and the public nature of the ballot, this is a clear statement that at this time the Wills family supported the immediate abolition of slavery.

The Fry family were much more active campaigners for abolition than the Wills, showing a long-term commitment to the cause. As early as 1793, Joseph Storrs Fry (grandfather of the generation linked to the University) was listed as a subscriber to Olaudah Equiano's famous abolitionist text *The Interesting Narrative*.<sup>21</sup> This commitment clearly lasted throughout his life and

when leading abolitionist Thomas Clarkson started a new campaign in 1822 to abolish slavery itself, J.S. Fry was one of just six Bristol residents on his nationwide list of 519 supporters.<sup>22</sup> By 1826 Bristol once more had an Anti-Slavery Society, and J.S. Fry, with his son Joseph (the father of Bristol University's Joseph Storrs, Lewis, and Albert), was on the committee.<sup>23</sup> J.S. Fry's second son was also a firm supporter of the abolitionist movement, and in 1850 went on a three month tour of Europe promoting the cause. His son Francis and granddaughter Norah both made significant donations to the University.

## Wills, Fry and financial connections

The Wills might well be described as the founding family of the University of Bristol, such was the volume of cash and other resources that they poured into the institution over its first fifty years. Indeed, Bristol's former Vice-Chancellor Hugh Brady had described these 'transformational gifts' as an 'embarrassment of riches for which we remain truly grateful'. Having been the second-worst funded higher education institution in Britain, the supporters of University College Bristol (predecessor of the modern University) needed to secure £200,000 in order to show a sound financial footing and be awarded the full University status which would allow them to independently award degrees.<sup>24</sup> An initial gift of £100,000 from Henry Overton Wills proved crucial in getting the ball rolling in the fundraising process, and other members of the Wills family also gave significant sums, taking their total contribution to £161,000. Significant funds also came from the Fry family, with £10,500 from Joseph Storrs Fry, £5,000 from Francis J Fry, and £2,000 from the University's Chairman

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20 H.W. Nevinson, *A Modern Slavery* (London: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1906), pp.112-3.

21 V. Caretta (ed.), O. Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings* (London: Penguin, 2003), p.388.

22 M. Dresser, *Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in Bristol* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 2007), p.199.

23 Bristol Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society, *Report of Proceedings*.

24 M. Sanderson, *The Universities and British Industry* (London: Routledge, 1972), pp.70-71.

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Lewis Fry.<sup>25</sup> Donations from the Wills and Fry families thus made up 89 per cent of University of Bristol's inaugural £200,000 funding.

The initial contributions from the Wills family were just the tip of the iceberg of the financial benefits that the University received from them. Donations with a known value total over £1.37 million were recorded between 1909 and 1957, excluding several significant gifts of land and property to the University. These include Royal Fort House, Coombe Dingle Pavilion and Sports Fields, and Bracken Hill House. Combined with other properties where the value of the donation is known (including Wills Memorial Building, H.H. Wills Physics Laboratory, Victoria Rooms, and Wills Hall), these represent a considerable proportion of the University's current estate. The Wills donations make up 63 per cent of all identified gifts to the University between 1909 and 1960.<sup>26</sup> Given University College Bristol's precarious financial state, these gifts were thus truly transformative. Indeed, the University may not have existed or endured without these injections of capital.

The Frys, while successful, were comparatively less wealthy than the Wills. Their financial contributions to the University, while still significant, were thus on a more modest scale. Their contribution came more through leadership and advocacy, particularly through younger sons of the family Albert Fry (a carriage maker) and Lewis Fry (solicitor and MP). The two brothers served successively as chairmen of the University College Bristol and Bristol University from 1822 to 1914, and Lewis Fry continued as a Pro Chancellor until 1921.<sup>27</sup> Support from the Frys continued into the next generation, with Norah Fry serving on the council for

over 50 years.<sup>28</sup> She made numerous donations to the University throughout her life and on her death, totalling over £29,500, principally focused around teaching, and researching the needs of people with disabilities.<sup>29</sup>

## Colston: Symbolic Connections

While often remembered for the £63,000 he gave to charitable causes in the city, there is perhaps no more famous slave trader in Bristol than Edward Colston. Colston was a member of Bristol's Society of Merchant Venturers. Founded in 1552, this was essentially a merchant's guild, which helped to regulate and facilitate trade in Bristol, carrying out philanthropic activity, and lobbying on behalf of the city's merchants over issues such as access to the slave trade.<sup>30</sup> He was also a senior figure and investor in the Royal African Company, the organisation which pioneered the British slave trade. During Colston's time with the Company, it forcibly carried 84,500 enslaved men, women, and children across the Atlantic. The University has no direct connection to Edward Colston, who died nearly two centuries before the founding of the University.<sup>31</sup> The descendants of Colston's heirs were not involved in the University's creation and donated no money in the early years. There are, however, two donations in 1956 and 1968 (of £75,000 and £25,000 respectively) from the Colston Educational Trust/Charles Colston Trust. In 2020 values, these would be worth between £2.4 million (RPI) and £8.7 million (%GDP). Rather than one of the charities founded by Edward Colston, this would appear to originate with Conservative politician Charles Colston (1854-1925), a direct descendant of Mary Hayman,

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25 The other Wills contributions were: Henry Overton Wills, £100,000; Lord Winterstoke, £35,000; the estate of Sir Fredrick Wills, £10,000; E. Channing Wills, £10,000; George A. Wills, £3,000; H.H. Wills, £2,000; W. Melville Wills, £1,000. C.S. Knighton (ed.) *Bristol University: Conception to Foundation* (Bristol: Bristol Record Society, 2019), p.447.

26 Total recorded donations to the University (excluding those it has been impossible to value) were £2.16 million, and those from the Wills £1.37 million. 'List of Major Donations to the University of Bristol'. This spreadsheet was compiled by Sally Meadows from the University's Development and Alumni Relations Office from Council and Senate minutes. I am grateful to Alicia Jago from DARO for sharing it with me. The spreadsheet (DM2980), along with the minutes from which it was compiled (DM2287) are held in the University of Bristol Special Collections. This spreadsheet has been supplemented with information from the Endowments spreadsheet, held by the Finance office.

27 S. Whittingham, *The University of Bristol: A History* (Bristol: University of Bristol, 2009), p.13.

28 'Obituary, Mrs. Norah Cooke-Hurle' [née Fry], *University of Bristol Gazette*, vol. 5 no. 1 (October 1960), pp.6-8.

29 O. Russell, 'Norah Fry – what can we learn from history?', *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 43 (2015), p.86; 'List of Major Donations'.

30 P. McGrath, *The Merchant Venturers of Bristol*, (Bristol: Society of Merchant Venturers, 1975).

31 K. Morgan, 'Colston, Edward, 1636-1721', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2020).

niece of Edward Colston and heir to the vast bulk of his considerable fortune.<sup>32</sup> These donations to the University can thus be connected to money made by a trader in enslaved people.

The University's principal connection with Edward Colston is the foundation in 1899 of University College Colston Society.<sup>33</sup> The name comes from a long tradition of founding philanthropic societies in Bristol, both to honour the memory of Edward Colston, and to continue charitable works in a similar vein.<sup>34</sup> For the first century or so of their existence the Colston societies were not particularly significant, raising only modest sums of money, and essentially acting as 'gentlemen's clubs'. In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, however, they underwent unprecedented growth, becoming the focus of both much civic pageantry, and of Bristol's charitable giving.<sup>35</sup> University College Bristol treasurer J.W. Arrowsmith and several members of the Wills and Fry families were presidents of the Anchor Society, which also made grants of £1,350 to University College 'in remembrance of Edward Colston's interest in education'.<sup>36</sup> The Colston society model was thus an obvious one when seeking to raise funds for the financially struggling nascent University. It may also have conferred an air of respectability and tradition upon the University. As Eric Hobsbawm and others have observed, the late nineteenth century witnessed widespread creation of 'invented traditions', which imbued legitimacy by 'establish[ing] continuity with a suitable historic past'.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, it could be argued that the University today is attempting to do the same in its marketing, with its brand identity organised

around the idea of 'tradition with edge'.<sup>38</sup> In the early days of the University, such legitimisation would have been seen as necessary due to the social, political, and religious backgrounds of its founders, who were predominantly dissenting Liberals and had made their money in business. Indeed, for a number of years the predominantly Conservative Society of Merchant Venturers opposed the University, and promoted its own rival institution.<sup>39</sup> Associating with the broader attempt to establish Colston as a unifying 'founding father' figure for the city thus served a clear purpose for the University.<sup>40</sup> The Society of Merchant Venturers Technical College was eventually to be merged into the University, with several members of the Society joining the board.<sup>41</sup> This, combined with ongoing support, has led to the building which houses the department of Engineering being named for the Society of Merchant Venturers.

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32 Steeds and Ball, *From Wulfstan to Colston*, p.84. Following the terms of Edward Colston's will, Alexander Reader (husband of Hayman's daughter and heir Sophie) changed his family name to Colston to secure the inheritance.

33 D. Carleton, *A University for Bristol* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 1984), p.13.

34 H.J. Wilkins, *Edward Colston: A Chronological Account of his Life and Work, Together with an Account of the Colston Societies and Memorials in Bristol* (Bristol: J.W. Arrowsmith Ltd., 1920), pp.96-118.

35 S. Jordan, 'The Myth of Edward Colston: Bristol Docks, the "Merchant" Elite and the Legitimisation of Authority, 1860-1880', in S. Poole (ed.), *A City Built Upon the Water: Maritime Bristol, 1750-1900* (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 2013), pp.178-9.

36 Wilkins, *Edward Colston*, pp.114-5.

37 E. Hobsbawm and T. Ranger (eds.), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: CUP, 1983), p.1.

38 M.K. Lee-Warren, *Our Brand Identity Design Principles*, University of Bristol (Revised March 2020), p.8.

39 Knighton (ed.), *Bristol University*, pp.xliv-xlvii.

40 Jordan, 'The Myth of Edward Colston', pp.175-196.

41 Knighton (ed.), *Bristol University*, pp.xliv-lix.



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# ADDITIONAL NAMES

## Secondary Research - Alicia O'Grady

### Goldney: Symbolic Connections

The Goldney family is known to have had a long association with mercantile trade in Bristol, and family connections to the Society of Merchant Venturers.

Evidence for the life of the Goldney family in Bristol “exists almost entirely in public records, chiefly those of the Society of Friends, and with a few references in those of the Corporation of the City of Bristol...

some family documents have survived, but these are miscellaneous, mainly business papers.”<sup>42</sup> This brief overview draws on secondary sources of research to provide a summary of the family's involvement with the Society of Merchant Venturers and the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans.

Thomas Goldney I was the first of the Goldney family to make a significant contribution to the merchant community of Bristol. He initially served as an apprentice in Bristol for seven years, enabling him to become a freeman of the City in 1646. He established a grocery mercantile, building it into a successful business. Both Thomas I and his wife joined the Society of Friends (the Quakers).

Their son Thomas Goldney II (1664-1731) followed in his father's footsteps, taking over the family grocery business. He was admitted to the freedom of the city in 1688. He married the daughter of Thomas Speed, a 'free burgess' of the Society of Merchant Venturers. Speed had been Warden (the chief officer) of the Society of Merchant Venturers for 1651-2, and it is reasonable to assume that this family connection to the Society assisted Thomas II's business dealings.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Thomas II began expanding his business interests to include investments in at least one privateering expedition and local mining and industry works; he also became an agent for the Collector of Customs for the port of Bristol.

Records indicate that Thomas II was involved in funding several sea voyages associated with the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans, in particular the Woodes-Rogers voyage of the *Duke* and her sister ship *Duchess*. Information documented in the National Archives show how that voyage, and more financed by both Thomas Goldney II and his son, were part of the triangular slave trade.<sup>43</sup> Thomas II was the largest

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<sup>42</sup> P K Stembridge, *The Goldney family: A Bristol merchant dynasty* (Bristol: Bristol Record Society's publications Vol XLIX, 1998), p. X.

<sup>43</sup> The National Archives Exhibitions & Learning online | Black presence | Learning journeys. (n.d.-b). [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/journeys/voyage.html/questions.htm#8). Retrieved 26 November 2021, from <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/journeys/voyage.html/questions.htm#8>



Goldney House and Gardens

shareholder in this particular venture, with 36 of 256 shares at the rate of £103 10s each.<sup>44</sup>

Thomas Goldney III (1696-1768) continued the family tradition of mercantile interests, expanding them through investments in mining, copper and iron works across Bristol, Chester and North Wales. Eventually, Thomas III and his father held the controlling shares in Abraham Darby's ironworks at Coalbrookdale. There is little doubt that the funds making this investment possible resulted directly from the profits made by the Goldneys in the Woodes-Rogers voyage.<sup>45</sup>

During their time, the ironworks produced, amongst other things, manillas and the brass objects, which slavers then used to trade for human cargo. The business interests maintained by the Goldneys – in ships, mines, property and eventually banking – undoubtedly relied on the ongoing development of transatlantic expeditions and the slave trade in particular in the 18th century.

Apart from his business career, Thomas III had a half share of the Clifton house, grounds, and household

goods that had been purchased by his father in 1705 (Goldney House, listed grade II\*). Thomas III spent significant funds and time in the management and development of this property.

The estate was broken up in the mid-nineteenth century, with the University acquiring Goldney House and a proportion of the garden. It is through this acquisition that the Goldney name has become associated with the University.

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44 Tembridge, p 15.

45 B.M.H. Rogers, *Woodes Rogers' Privateering Voyage of 1708- 11*, *Mariner's Mirror* 19(2) XIX p .205

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# NEXT STEPS: USING RESEARCH TO INFORM AN INCLUSIVE FUTURE

**Dr Jane Khawaja and Professor Judith Squires**

We often refer to anti-racism as a journey and part of this involves understanding our past in order to look to the future. We have responsibilities today as a result of the history and legacies of slavery and colonialism. In commissioning research into our institution's history, we acknowledge and better understand our historic connections to slavery.

We acknowledge both how challenging the findings of the report are to our institution, and how painful and difficult this will be to many in our community, city and beyond. We are determined, then, that this report must be a critical moment for us as an institution, and mark a new, long-term dedication to the research, review, and assessment both of our institution's history and of how that history should inform our future actions.

Central to our ongoing work will be conversations across our University about restorative justice.

Professor Olivette Otele, in the next section, suggests forms of restorative justice and notes some recommendations. We welcome debate on future approaches. One of the first steps we have committed to is consulting on the naming of our buildings associated with the family names highlighted in the report



## AFTERWORD: FORMS OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Professor Olivette Otele**

Debates about reparations and forms of restorative justice are related to the legacies of Britain's colonial past. Since the abolition of slavery in 1833, former enslaved peoples and their descendants have been demanding forms of compensation to allow them to access land and means to support their families and communities. With the Compensation Act of 1837, former slave owners received compensation from the British Government for the loss of their so-called property. The issue of reparation has continued over the following centuries.

In the last three decades, institutions in the USA have tackled the question. Debates about forms of reparations and self-determination of people of African descent have also been at the forefront of discussions and demands in Africa during colonisation and since decolonisation, from activists to intellectuals and policy makers.

At a basic level, the term 'reparations' entails a form of compensation paid by the perpetrators of wrongdoings to victims. The term is multi-layered and has often been used to reduce the idea of repairing to the notion of financial payment only. As far as the transatlantic and India Ocean enslavements are concerned, the remits are broader and include land restitution and dialogue about the cultural, social, economic legacies of the past

and how they had an impact on people of African descent. The terms restorative / reparative justice are also used more broadly to engage with the various means to address the imbalances of the past in addition to or beyond, financial compensation. Restorative justice or reparations imply a dialogue in which the injured parties structure the conversation and the strategy in discussion with the perpetrators. Restorative justice is a process that has also been equated to transitional justice. The latter is used in societies transitioning from war to peace processes or in post-war societies that are struggling to reach social cohesion.

The current discussions in relation to colonial slavery are set around the notion of legality of the slave trade at the time or around the idea of direct and indirect links that would exonerate the beneficiaries of the slave trade, and slavery centuries after the abolition of the slave trade and slavery. The path towards forms of reconciliation at a local level necessitates a multi-agency approach and cannot be achieved only through discussions at academic levels. A restorative justice strategy in such context can only be informed by robust and transparent local, national and international debates and the willingness to challenge the multiple definitions of the term justice. Race is a social construct and racism is

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one of the many legacies of colonial pasts. Anti-racism strategies cannot therefore be substitutes to restorative justice, but they can provide important and necessary steps for debates and actions to address racial discrimination.

Continuing work on the links between the University of Bristol and people of African descent in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century will therefore be incredibly important if the University wants to move away from the dichotomy of enslaved victims or perpetrators on the other. The enslavement was a dehumanising process that reduced enslaved people to a monetary value but there was a more complex story of resilience and resistance that also took place. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, various institutions (both private companies and universities) have been engaging with their history and in particular with their links with slavery. Understanding where the University of Bristol situates itself in these debates will be crucial if it is to address questions related to restorative justice.

Some institutions such as the National Trust and English Heritage have conducted academic research on those links but did not explicitly state that they were working on forms of restorative justice. Others such as Greene King and Lloyds Bank have examined their history and decided to focus on a continuation of their diversity strategy rather than specifically addressing the legacies of enslavement. They have acknowledged the past but have not seen it necessary to address the question of restorative justice. The merit of such approaches is to make the histories of the past available to all. They acknowledge their direct and indirect connections with enslavement. They acknowledged the negative legacies of the past including exclusion and racism and have sought to address the imbalances through an anti-racism strategy.

Other institutions such as the University of Glasgow have decided to establish links between accumulated wealth and what sums allocated to or what initiative should

be answering demands for any form of reparations. As Stephen Mullen<sup>46</sup> showed, the sums allocated do not reflect direct enrichment as it is impossible to completely assess how much wealth was created and how much is directly linked to each enslaved labour. These institutions often seek to make a case for direct and indirect links to slavery, and those pieces of research are indeed valuable. However, enslavement was about the commodification of black and brown bodies as much as it was about intergenerational trauma, hierarchisation, and racism that led to centuries of racial inequalities and various forms of discrimination. Solely focusing on direct and indirect actors (such as the Merchants) and links of such histories continues to perpetrate forms of erasure regarding the histories of African captives enslaved in the Caribbean, including their descendants in Bristol. As fascinating as academic research is about slave traders, those pieces of research also serve as a marker of a significant tendency that is a fascination for the alleged entrepreneurial skills of Bristol's forefathers. Research about merchants needs to sit alongside work on enslaved populations and their descendants.

### **A path for the University of Bristol**

To bridge the gap that exists between the stories of the past focusing on traders and merchant families, a study regarding the enslaved and their descendants in Bristol and their trajectories would be a valuable addition to understand the overall history of enslavement.

This report seeks to provide initial information about the University's links to slavery but also to look further into the question of restorative justice, highlighting that the key points are not about direct and indirect links but about the legacies of enslavement within and outside the University.

Based on similar approaches at universities with links with slavery, the following points are aimed at providing a starting point for a broader discussion about forms of restorative justice that are uniquely adequate

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46 Mullen, S., 'British Universities and Transatlantic Slavery: The University of Glasgow Case', *History Workshop Journal* v91 n1 (20210727): 210-233.

for Bristol. Restorative justice is an on-going process that is open ended and is about transformative changes that address the broader issues of systemic racism and inequalities.

- It requires a culture shift and a rethinking of the notion of philanthropic deeds.
- It entails collaborations, co-production of a restorative justice strategy and a consultative process that go beyond one-off grants and short-term scholarships.
- It provides the space for various communities to engage with the legacies of the past.

The University of Bristol is already engaging with anti-racism and diversity processes through Anti-Racism Steering Group initiatives, the Decolonising the Curriculum groups, Widening Participation initiatives, mentoring schemes, apprenticeships, and activity with the Students' Union and scholarships.

- It needs to bring these strands together to work on a long-term strategy that addresses inequalities in Education and Research, and in Bristol in particular.
- It needs to involve people within the university working on the renaming of buildings.
- It needs to challenge assumptions about knowledge production and make a radical decision to reach communities that the University is not already working with.

Bristol's philanthropic tradition should be part of the debate about restorative justice, and addressing the profound social and racial divides that exist within the city should be a priority.

Practically, the University of Bristol could:

- Expand on current scholarships and offer more substantial funds that allow research on the links between the University, the city and people of African descent at local and international levels.

### **Further and long-term engagements that must be part of a restorative justice strategy**

- Engage more strongly with Bristol's Commission on Racial Equality and support its key priorities (Education, Health including mental health, the Criminal Justice System; Housing and Employment/ Business and Economy; Leadership, etc.)
- Consider, research, and support initiatives that look at intersectionality and in particular how race, class, age, religion and gender affect women of African descent especially in Bristol.
- Beyond Europe, the University needs to rethink its position on a longer and sustainable strategy regarding restorative justice. Engaging with people of African descent in the Caribbean and, crucially, with Africa itself must inform its long-term strategic approach to repairing.

It is not the University's role to solve all problems that the City of Bristol is facing but it needs to openly demonstrate that it is committed to working on the recommendations. The University of Bristol will thus demonstrate that is not an 'ivory tower', and that it is indeed attuned to local, national and international imperatives and can contribute to positive change.





## CASE STUDY: THE PERIVOLI AFRICA RESEARCH CENTRE (PARC)

Established in January 2020 by a generous donation from the Perivoli Foundation, the Perivoli Africa Research Centre (PARC) represents the University of Bristol's cross-disciplinary commitment to championing transformation in research and partnership to advance Africa's achievement of its own aspirations.

PARC's work suggests that such an approach must include a journey of transformation in the University's partnerships with research and higher education actors and institutions in the continent. The goal must be a recognition and a redressing of the multiple power imbalances that continue to shape global North-Africa research relations – and that serve to perpetuate inequities in the global science and research ecosystem as a whole. —These legacies of colonialism harm not only the prospects of individual African scholars, groups or organisations – they undermine the potential impacts of, and wider returns from Africa's academic endeavour for the continent's future.

A fundamental, guiding principle in PARC's work to champion transformation in global North-Africa partnerships is the imperative of centring the perspectives, voices and terms of African scholars, research institutions, and constituencies in the setting of directions and approaches for structural and strategic change.

PARC has the potential, therefore, to galvanise and offer a unique platform for Africa-centred dialogue that explores and charts opportunities for the University's pursuit of restorative justice through new modes of engagement with the continent – and as part of its strategic ambitions for the coming years.







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Copy of the list of citizen petitioners to the King for a University (1908).

DM506 (1889): papers relating to Bristol Medical School, Bristol Day Training College, Bristol Educational Society, University College Bristol and the University of Bristol (committee minutes and so on) - DM506-55; DM506-56; DM506-57; DM506-58; DM506-

University Bristol Sustention Fund (1887-1888): this sustention ledger provides information about donations.

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