

ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN:
An Analysis Surrounding Jamaica, 1800-1852 with Case Studies

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

This article traces the experiences of orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) during the British slave trade between 1800-1852, while looking specifically at connections to Jamaica. The British set out to colonize, ‘civilize,’ and control Black parents, children, and bodies throughout Jamaica, as particularly shown through enslavement practices and governmental regulations implemented that impacted notions of safety, protection, and autonomy for Black families. Such practices and regulations changed and evolved as abolition, apprenticeship, and emancipation came into effect. Although the legal landscape was changing, the horrific systemic abuse against Black people remained the same. Yet, there is evidence that even within that broad system of British-implemented and enforced control, there were frequent moments of collective care, resistance, and bonds formed between both kin and fictive kin within Black communities. Although Empire, in general, tended to silence voices of the subaltern, and especially their children, this thesis explores the ways in which members of those communities shaped that control and fought to be heard.

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CONTENT WARNING

This thesis contains potentially triggering topics, and discusses themes of anti-Black racism, enslavement, sexual assault, torture, murder, and family separation. Please prioritize your mental health and safety.

NOTE ON LANGUAGE

Amenge alingomuliro amalima ukasabaghuewa nduihani yaghu

Wisdom is like fire, you can get it from a neighbour

- *Nande proverb*

Language and terminology are constantly evolving, especially when it comes to debates and terms of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). Throughout my work, I make the conscious choice to capitalize the term ‘Black’ when discussing people of African descent. However, I also make a deliberate choice when I do not capitalize the term ‘white’ when discussing race. This decision has been informed by research, along with consultations with people of the global majority, Black, and Indigenous folks, along with EDI experts driven by my time on Canada’s Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council’s EDI team from September 2019 to April 2021. Since many Black people were uprooted from their homes and heritage during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, along with being negatively impacted by colonialism, they do not necessarily have a connection with their ancestral nation and culture; as a result, many have embraced Black as such. Conversely, white people, as drivers of colonialism, do not face that cultural erasure and genocide. Additionally, capitalizing ‘white’ echoes practices implemented by white supremacists; behaviour that must not be tolerated. After reading sources and listening to perspectives that both supported and refuted capitalizing ‘white,’ I determined that the best practice for myself, when referring to race, is to continue to leave ‘white’ lowercase, and ‘Black’ capitalized.¹

I am also very grateful for the time and physical, mental, and emotional labour Dr. P. Gabrielle Foreman and other senior slavery scholars put into curating, “Writing about Slavery/Teaching About Slavery: This Might Help.” The discussions of language, impact,

¹ Eliana Miller, “The Associated Press announced it will not capitalize W in white.” *Poynter Institute*, (2020); Mike Laws, “Why we capitalize ‘Black’ (and not ‘white’).” *Columbia Journalism Review*, (2020); Merrill Perlman, “Black and white: Why capitalization matters.” *Columbia Journalism Review*, (2015); Ann Thúy Nguyễn, and Maya Pendleton, “Recognizing Race in Language: Why We Capitalize ‘Black’ and ‘White.’” *Centre for the Study of Social Policy*, (2020).

principles, practices, and additional resources to consult were invaluable throughout my writing process. Thank you, Dr. Foreman et al., for creating a publicly accessible document to help challenge current narratives of slavery studies, and to help me think critically about the language I choose to use throughout my work.²

My considerations regarding language choices, race, and colonialism were shaped by listening to Foreman et al., along with activists and educators such as Whitney Alese, Marie Beecham, Alyssa Gray-Tyghter, Jacquelyn Ogorchukwu Iyamah, Dr. Brittani James, Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, Monique Melton, Queen Muse, Taylor McNallie, Kimberley Obongonyinge, Layla F. Saad, Michelle Saahene, Sophie Williams, and the organization *No White Saviors* (Also Olivia, Sharon Nyanjura, Lubega Wendy, Jonathan Sebuliba, Okot Robert, Allan Walker, Rwothomio Gabriel).³ Thank you all for the time, effort, and mental, emotional, and physical labour that goes into creating your educational content.

In listening to the voices of Black educators and leaders, I chose to use the term ‘enslaved’ throughout my thesis. As Marie Beecham stated, “Slave is an identity; it says, ‘This is who they are.’ Enslaved is a circumstance; it says, ‘This is what was done to them.’”⁴ Similarly, I use the title of ‘enslaver’ instead of ‘slaver,’ ‘slave master/holder/owner,’ or ‘planter’ (when referring to someone who owned people as property). This language consideration stemmed from the community-sourced document curated by Foreman et al.

² P. Gabrielle Foreman, et al. “Writing about Slavery/Teaching About Slavery: This Might Help” community-sourced document, June 22, 2020, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A4TEdDgYslX-hlKezLodMIM71My3KTN0zxRv0IQTOQs/mobilebasic>.

³ Whitney Alese: @thereclaimed; Marie Beecham: @mariebeeceh, www.mariebeeceham.org; Alyssa Gray-Tyghter: @alyssagtyghter, Herstorically Speaking; Jacqueline Ogorchukwu Iyamah: @ogorchukwu; Dr. Brittani James: @drbrittanij, www.brittanijames.com; Dr. Ibram X. Kendi: @ibramxk, www.ibramxkendi.com; Monique Melton: @moemotivate, @shinebrightertogether; Queen Muse: @thequeenmuse; Taylor McNallie: @taylormcnallie; Kimberley Obongonyinge: @blackbehaviouruk; Layla F. Saad: @laylafsaad, www.becomeagoodancestor.com; Michelle Saahene: @michellesaahene; Sophie Williams: @officialmillennialblack, www.sophiewilliamofficial.com; *No White Saviors*: @nowwhitesaviors.

⁴ Marie Beecham (@mariebeeceh), “I started saying ‘enslaved people’ instead of ‘slaves.’” *Instagram*, June 16, 2021. https://www.instagram.com/p/CQMRBkPhqIP/?utm_medium=copy_link.

Learning from *No White Saviours* also provided me with the term Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs), which I adopted into the language of my thesis as it more accurately described the circumstances regarding many of the children discussed. Countless children impacted by the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonization were not true orphans. Many still had living parents, and other family members, but were ripped away from them by enslavers and colonial officials and were then given the title, ‘orphans.’

Finally, I would like to reiterate the importance of being deliberate and reflective when choosing words. The language we use tells a story, and it has an impact, whether intended or not. It is crucial to be critical of our language choices and to understand that preferred terminology will change over time; the main thing is that we must be willing to evolve with it.

NOTE ON WHITE SAVIOURISM

Ingwe ikhontha amabala ayo amlhlope namnyama

The leopard licks both its black and white spots

- Zulu proverb

When I first developed this project, my goal was to learn about the experiences of orphaned, and vulnerable children (OVCs) in British colonies. Although enslavement is often considered Black history, it must be remembered that it is also white history through the roles of enslavers and colonizers. As such, I was interested in discovering if white British abolitionists and Christians practiced the morals they often adamantly proclaimed. I wanted to see if there were examples of white British abolitionists and Christians who financially supported abolition or Jamaican OVCs. After all, as many abolitionists noted, Christianity and slavery could not coexist when considering the religion's Golden Rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' Reverend William Shepherd, under the pseudonym Timothy Touchstone,⁵ explored the hypocrisy of Christian nations participating in the slave trade within the following satirical lines:

Religion and slavery can never exist in the same nation. ... My plan is, therefore, to conclude the contest directly by a speedy, summary process, and thus restore ourselves to a fair and equitable claim to the character of a consistent people, a people who scorn to act directly contrary to their principles; but who are ever ready to evince to all the nations round, their unalterable determination to unite their practice most truly and inviolably with their professions. The process I mean is, (for if slavery is to exist still, there is not, nor can be, any other possible mode of action) to abolish Christianity altogether.⁶

With strong stances against slavery by white British abolitionists and Christians in mind, I drafted the section of my thesis entitled, "Interactions with White Figures." As I dove into my research, I recognized that this chapter had the potential to develop white saviourist and 'white man's burden' narratives, which I strongly wanted to avoid. The reasoning behind the

⁵ Jessica Moody, *The Persistence of Memory: Remembering Slavery in Liverpool, 'slaving Capital of the World*. (Oxford University Press, 2020): 132-3.

⁶ Elizabeth Heyrick, ed., *The Humming Bird; or, Morsels of Information, on the Subject of Slavery: with Various Miscellaneous Articles*. (Leicester: A. Cocksaw, 1825): 265.

chapter is not to highlight white people / families who acted as ‘saviours’ to Jamaican OVCs, but rather to explore if the abolitionist movement and the ‘charitability’ of white British Christians were submerged in hypocrisy.

It is also crucial to note that although the abolitionists analyzed in “Interactions with White Figures” advocated and fought for slavery’s end, they still possessed their own racial prejudices and biases. To provide a brief example, this is evident when looking at Hannah More’s 1788 poem, “The Slave Trade: A Poem.” While arguing for the end of slavery, she penned the lines, “Though dark and savage, ignorant and blind, / They claim the common privilege of kind; / Let malice strip them of each other plea, / They still are men, and men should still be free.”⁷ While acknowledging that enslaved people from Africa were humans, just like those enslaving them, her own racial assumptions shone through when she called them, “dark and savage, ignorant and blind.”

Most societies, customs, beliefs, and values that were [are] different from European ways of life were [are] considered to be ‘lesser than’ by Western nations. Those beliefs contribute[d] to the spread of colonialism, missionary work, and other efforts to ‘civilize’ those nations that were [are] different. The beliefs also worked to strip humanity away from those who were ‘othered;’ in this thesis’ case, enslaved people from Africa. Such dehumanization acted as an excuse to drive slavery, and the institutionalization of slavery perpetuated the dehumanization and mistreatment of those being held as property. The cyclical structure resulted in both aspects supporting each other to help the practice thrive, which created lasting impacts still felt today.⁸ Although it is impossible to apply current

⁷ Hannah More, *The Complete Works of Hannah More*. Vol. I. II vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1840): 28.

⁸ Just one example of this can be seen in the medical field. During slavery, many myths about Black bodies developed, including that Black skin is thicker, more resistant to pain, and had less sensitive nerve endings. In the mid-nineteenth century, one enslaved man, John Brown, was subjected to torturous experiments by Dr. Thomas Hamilton to examine how ‘deep’ his Black skin went. Another white doctor, Samuel Cartwright, wrote a report in 1851 claiming a number of physical and psychological differences between Black and white bodies. He used those ‘differences’ to defend slavery by stating it was ‘an improvement’ on their lives in Africa. He argued that their blood resulted in “ignorance, superstition and barbarism;” compared Black

societal values and standards to the past (despite the fact that racism has always been, and will always be, wrong), it is important to highlight that even those fighting for abolition and emancipation held racist notions and beliefs. It is not the intention of this thesis to portray those figures as ‘perfect’ allies, unbiased, or beyond racial prejudice simply because they advocated for the end of slavery.

I would like to offer a special thanks and gratitude to the organization, *No White Saviors*, for taking the time to hold conversations with me about my concerns for the chapter. The discussion that ensued regarding knowledge production, counter-narratives, and white-washed sources was crucial to my thesis’ development. Those topics kept me aware of my responsibility of accountability to provide a properly represented history, and the importance of being critical of every aspect of my research, analysis, and writing.

people physically, and mentally to children; and included a section on Drapetomania, or “the disease causing slaves to run away.” He also claimed that Black people were, “insensible to pain when subjected to punishment.” Unfortunately, many of those myths are still prevalent in the medical field today. A 2016 study asked medical students and residents 15 biological differences between Black and white bodies, 11 of which were false. The study revealed that 50% reported, “that at least one of the false belief items was possibly, probably, or definitely true.” The study also determined that white medical students, and residents who believed the false claims had racial bias in their pain treatment recommendations for Black vs. white patients. See John Brown, *Slave Life in Georgia: A Narrative of the Life, Sufferings, and Escape of John Brown, a Fugitive Slave, Now in England*. (London: L.A. Chamerovzow, 1855): 48; Samuel A. Cartwright, M.D., “Report on the Diseases and Physical Peculiarities of the Negro Race.” In Hester, *The New-Orleans Medical and Surgical Journal, Devoted to Medicine and the Collateral Sciences*, 691-715. (New Orleans: Weld & Co., 1850): 692-3, 694, 714, 696-7, 707, 710; Kelly M. Hoffman, Sophie Trawalter, Jordan R. Axt, and M. Norman Oliver, “Racial bias in pain assessment and treatment recommendations, and false beliefs about biological differences between blacks and whites.” *PNAS* 113, no. 16 (2016): 4298-9.

INTRODUCTION

A child is a child of everyone
- *Sudanese proverb*

This thesis revolves heavily around the aspect of inequity. It examines the treatment and experiences of children, applying the lens of critical identity studies and intersectionality⁹ in a temporally comparative manner on orphaned or vulnerable children (OVCs) in the modern British Empire. The investigation begins in 1800, analyzing the realities of enslaved children within the island of Jamaica. Then the scope broadens to analyze their experiences through the British Slave Trade Act of 1807, which outlawed the slave trade and enslaving new people; apprenticeship in 1834, which freed enslaved people aged six years or younger and saw all other enslaved people indentured as free labourers for their enslavers for an additional seven years; and finally, total emancipation in 1838, notably three years before apprenticeship was originally supposed to end. Focusing between 1800 and 1852 allows for analysis of emerging changes from the Empire's earlier commercial status to a more formal Empire. The 52-year span also permits investigation of a cholera epidemic on the island from 1850-1852 and the resulting laws that were implemented concerning vast numbers of children whose parents perished from the illness. It should be noted that there was an uprising in Jamaica in 1831-1832, which contributed to the end of enslavement; however, this thesis will not explore those events as that would make its scope too large and unmanageable for this project.

Most of history tends to be recorded from the perspective of those who enjoyed some degree of privilege, namely white, cis-gendered, heterosexual, able-bodied, western men of a higher socio-economic status. This is no different when analyzing the history of enslaved children in colonial Jamaica. However, it is impossible to have a complete understanding and

⁹ See Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics." *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1, no. 8 (1989): 140.

proper contextualization of events without regarding the views of subaltern¹⁰ groups as well, namely: enslaved people within Jamaica and the wider British Empire; children; and occasionally, British women. When only sources created by dominant voices (i.e. British enslavers, colonial officials, enslavement ship sailors, politicians, etc.) are explored, it is impossible to properly understand the events and climates researched. Meanwhile, it is more difficult for scholars to integrate subaltern groups into their analysis largely since typically, they were excluded or ignored in records. However, when those voices *are* included, a more complete understanding and contextualization is achieved. Such practices provide a fuller picture through the inclusion of multiple communities instead of a specific perspective of the past.

It is important to study children as there is often a source limitation when searching for their narratives in records. Certainly, this may be because children did not create as many sources or if they did, they were deemed unworthy of saving or studying. It must be noted that children's voices are often disregarded more so than others due to their age, and lack of 'worldly experience,' resulting in them being excluded from preserved records. When seeking to answer why children and childhood should be studied, historians Audra A. Diptee and Martin A. Klein stated,

The most obvious answer is, of course, that children are the means by which all societies not only biologically, but also culturally, reproduce themselves. Thus an historical analysis of children has the potential to shed light on the common priorities and values of any particular society. Furthermore, understanding childhood experiences provides greater context and a more holistic portrait of the human experience.¹¹

¹⁰ Subaltern studies is defined as: "the study of social groups excluded from dominant power structures, be these (neo)colonial, socio-economic, patriarchal, linguistic, cultural, and/or racial. When people lack voice, when they are barred from systems of political or cultural representation, they are called subaltern." See David Coghlan, and Mary Brydon-Miller, "Subaltern Studies." *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research*, (2014).

¹¹ Audra A. Diptee, and Martin A. Klein, "African Childhoods and the Colonial Project." *Journal of Family History*, 35, no. 1 (2010): 3.

Typically, society demands that children be seen and not heard. They are often portrayed as passive beings with no meaningful contributions to society until they are grown. However, this is an inaccurate depiction; children *are* active participants in the world. As such, this thesis was not to give the children a voice, because they already had one. Rather, my goal for this project was to provide a platform for their voices and experiences to be heard.

Building off that concept, sources such as government reports; preserved letters; newspaper articles; enslavers' plantation records; wills; poems; and British Parliamentary Bills were read across the grain to determine the experiences of children. In addition to sources from a colonial perspective, the memoirs of enslaved people are included. The range of sources provides a better understanding of the moral and physical implications surrounding 1800-1852 British Empire; contextualizes the reasoning behind the actions of both enslaved and enslaving communities; and better explains the use of fear, othering, and racism by colonial forces. I answer my research questions by analyzing preserved records of treatment faced by the imperial subaltern to determine if there were temporal commonalities or if conduct changed with the time periods. Additionally, it is important to note certain terminology. Occasionally, I call such experiences fostering or adoption, but it must be understood that adoption was not formalized in England until 1926.¹² While modern terminology cannot be applied to the past, I chose to implement such language to provide a contextualization and understanding of such practices for a modern audience. Indeed, historian George K. Behler noted that although British adoption was not legalized until the twentieth-century, informal adoption and fostering had a long history within the country, dating back to the medieval period.¹³ Therefore, although there were no formal structures,

¹² C. Donovan, A. Mandal, and F. Finlay, "The History of Adoption in the United Kingdom." *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, 105, no. 1 (2020): A171.

¹³ George K. Behler, *Friends of the Family: The English Home and Its Guardians, 1850-1940*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998): 273-5.

the concepts of adoption and fostering were well understood in nineteenth-century Britain and its empire.

Throughout the slave trade, African children were often taken from their biological families and sent overseas to be enslaved. Migration across the British Empire connected England to the lands they invaded, and also contributed to what historian Susie Steinbach called the “small but vibrant non-white populations” found within Britain.¹⁴ Indeed, although ‘Britishness’ is often considered to be a synonym of ‘whiteness,’ there were thousands of people of the global majority living throughout England in the nineteenth-century.¹⁵ This included the mixed-race children of white enslavers from Jamaica, who will be explored in greater detail during Chapter Four. Additionally, although such migration created a link between the two nations, it is important to note the power-over relationship imbalance. As historian Catherine Hall noted, “The links between Jamaica and England were not neutral, not simply a chain of connection. ... they were relations which were mutually constitutive, in which both coloniser and colonised were made. That mutual constitution was hierarchical: each was party to the making of the other, but the coloniser always exercised authority over the colonised.”¹⁶

This thesis focuses specifically on the experiences of orphaned and vulnerable children in Jamaica. Youth who were separated from their biological families either prior to arrival in Jamaica or once on the island were often absorbed into Black communities and cared for by ‘foster’ families. Such kinship networks resulted in children ‘adopted’ by other enslaved adults when separated from their birth families. While examples of those practices

¹⁴ Susie L. Steinbach, *Understanding the Victorians: Politics, Culture and Society in Nineteenth-Century Britain*. (New York: Routledge, 2017): 70.

¹⁵ Steinbach, 70.

¹⁶ Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830-1867*. (The University of Chicago Press, 2002): 8.

from pre-emancipation sources were limited, the research illustrated the importance of kinship networks both during and after slavery.

The project begins with a historiographical analysis of pre-existing literature to contextualize my own work. When investigating OVCs in Jamaica, my focus was solely on the communities of enslaved Africans and their descendants. I sought to explore the practice of removing children from families. I also looked to answer how enslaved children were transported to Jamaica, and their movement within the island, along with the British Empire at large. When enslaved children were removed from their biological families, I explored if and how they were fostered by kinship networks and other enslaved communities throughout their lifetime. Finally, I aimed to answer if there were examples of enslaved children interacting with white figures, whether through financial support, lodgings, or other means.

To analyze the experiences of OVCs in Jamaica, we must first understand British societal values and their correlation (or lack of correlation) to the colonial island. In England, life was gendered into separate spheres. Men belonged to the public sphere - working outside the home and participating in politics and society. Women belonged to the private sphere - remaining in the home to raise children, cook, clean, and tend to the household and their husband. British women strictly remained in the private sphere, but Steinbach noted the 'permeable barrier' men had to domesticity. While they were in the public sphere during the day, they returned to the private sphere in the evening.¹⁷ The behaviour of British men had strict codes in upper-middle and upper-class society. Traits such as independence, individualism, integrity, and work ethic combined into 'good character,' which was crucial to maintain social standing. Such good character implied a duty to family, as Steinbach termed: "an ability to support and protect one's dependants as well as oneself without turning to

¹⁷ Steinbach, 166.

others...”¹⁸ Sense of duty drove ‘honourable’ men to put their family first, to ensure their well-being and that they were provided for even if something were to happen to him. This thesis will explore this call of duty further within Chapter Four through an analysis of white British fathers’ acknowledgement and provisions for their mixed-race children born in Jamaica.

While British society prescribed women to the home and men to society, this practice did not correlate to realities found throughout Jamaica. Enslaved women were forced to work alongside men. Strong young women were often put into the first field gang, bearing the toughest forced and stolen labour, knowledge, and skills.¹⁹ In Jamaica, enslaved women were thrust into the public sphere through their work, but just as British men experienced a ‘permeable barrier’ between public and private spheres, so too did enslaved women. The women were still expected to clean, do laundry, mind children, cook, and tend to their home and husband while their labour was back-breakingly exploited to provide resources to send back to England. In Europe, white women were viewed as fragile creatures who required the protection of honourable men; they were necessary for reproduction but lacked the capacity to be useful for most things beyond that. Due to the dehumanization of Black people, and myths perpetuated about their bodies, strength and pain tolerance, Black women were viewed to be stronger and more capable than their white peers. They were deemed useful both for reproduction, but also for general labour. However, it must be noted that the permeability of Black women between the public and private spheres was not created because they were thought highly of, but rather because of the racism and systemic abuse perpetuated against them.

¹⁸ Steinbach, 167.

¹⁹ Foreman and other slavery scholars recommend using “stolen labour, knowledge, and skills” when discussing the theft and exploitation of Black people who were enslaved. See P. Gabrielle Foreman, et al. “Writing about Slavery/Teaching About Slavery: This Might Help” community-sourced document, June 22, 2020, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1A4TEdDgYs1X-hlKezLodMIM71My3KTN0zxRv0IQTOQs/mobilebasic>.

The British Empire depended on strict colonial rule to survive. British and western views, values, systems, and structures were implemented on the lands they invaded. That territory's traditional way of life was often viewed inferior, incorrect, and needing to be exterminated. To enforce British values on enslaved Africans in Jamaica and place themselves at the top of a hierarchy they believed in, the home country needed British officials on the ground. In Jamaica, the Jamaican Assembly was established, which was the governing body on the island. Out of the British sugar colonies, Jamaica was the largest, and many Britons made their fortune from exploiting and stealing the labour of enslaved Africans and Afro-Caribbeans and enforcing British ways of life throughout the lands they occupied.

There were many examples of matrilineal societies around the globe, including multiple African countries. However, British customs were patriarchal. When Britain established their colonies, they enforced patriarchal values and structures. That had an impact on children throughout the empire, as illustrated in a clause of the 1851 *Act for the Establishment of an Orphan Asylum, and for Certain Other Destitute Children*. The Act resulted in the forced institutionalization of orphans in Jamaica; however, the definition of orphan must be noted: "children ... who shall have lost ... their parents, or father..."²⁰ Children were deemed orphaned not only if both their parents died, but also if just their father died. That meant that even if the child had a living mother, they were still considered orphaned and vulnerable to institutionalization. Despite basing society around patriarchal structures, there were instances where matrilineal lines 'overrode' those of the father, such as children adopting the enslaved status of their mother even if their paternity was white European and therefore free. Interestingly, matrilineal lines were only considered over patriarchal lines when it benefitted enslavers; if all children born to white fathers were

²⁰ *The Laws of Jamaica, Passed in the Fourteenth Year of the Reign of Queen Victoria [Session I-III]*. (Jamaica: William J. Pearson, 1851): 288.

granted free status, enslavers' exploited workforce would be greatly reduced in number.

Mixed-race children adopting their mothers' status worked to establish an 'evergreen' enslaved community. Such examples are discussed further in Chapter Four.

Colonization was [is] often obsessed with blood quantum, miscegenation, and labelling racial categories. During nineteenth-century Jamaica, there were seven main titles to rank mixed-race people into a hierarchical structure based on their perceived proximity to whiteness. Such terminology is now considered very outdated and derogatory. Taking that into account, this thesis attempts to avoid that language as much as possible and instead uses the term 'mixed-race,' or 'biracial' where accurate; however, the aforementioned labels are occasionally used by a few primary sources. To provide contextualization for those instances, the seven categories are listed below according to racial identity and parentage:

Sambo: Black parent, mulatto parent;
Mulatto: Black mother, white father;
Quadroon: mulatto mother, white father;
Mustee: quadroon mother, white father;
Mustiphini: mustee mother, white father;
Quintroon: mustiphini mother, white father; and
Octoroon: quintroon mother, white father.²¹

Finally, considering the focus of this thesis is the experiences of children, I analyzed the predominant definition of 'childhood' and corresponding ages of changing life status. Typically, there were three stages consisting of childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. In 1816, the Jamaican Assembly passed a law stating that raping enslaved girls 10 years of age or under was punishable by death. As historian Colleen Vasconcellos noted, by enacting this law, the Assembly defined childhood as 10 years of age or below, with 'girlhood' and 'boyhood' between the ages of 11 to 15, and adulthood beginning at age 16. Despite those

²¹ Kamau Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica 1770-1820*. (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2005): 167.

relative guidelines established in Jamaica, Vasconcellos also revealed the inconsistency present,

Although Jamaican planters and estate managers did not consider the ‘girls’ and ‘women-girls’ who worked in the second gang as adults, we have seen how some planters took these girls as sexual partners. Therefore, despite an acknowledgement of their sexuality and their entrance into adult situations, these girls remained ‘girls’ until they joined the first gang as adults at the age of sixteen.²²

Enslavers defined adulthood beginning at age 16, this is a definition typically supported by historians throughout the field. However, it is interesting to note the differing concepts of childhood and adulthood when considering practices within Jamaica versus Britain.

Historians R.I. Woods and P.R.A. Hinde conducted an analysis of the ages at which Britons married during the nineteenth-century. The age depended on location, occupation, and social class, but for women, it was within a range of 20-27 years old.²³ Historian R.B. Outhwaite also investigated the age of marriage in England. In 1851, men were typically married at 25.8, and women at age 24.6,²⁴ and although marriage does not equate adulthood, as those in their mid-twenties were certainly considered adults, it should be noted that in England, the age of majority was 21, something which was adopted into many British colonies.²⁵ Therefore, Britons were legally considered adults at age 21.

Although the pre-existing literature agrees with defining enslaved adulthood at age 16, it is also important to note the roots of ‘adultification’ of Black children. While British women typically married between the ages of 20-27, polite society formally expected them to be celibate until their wedding night, indicating that any point prior to that event was

²² Colleen A. Vasconcellos, “From Chattel to Breeding Wenches: Girlhood in a Jamaican Slave Community,” in Jennifer Hillman Helgren, and Colleen A. Vasconcellos eds. *Girlhood: A Global History*. (Rutgers University Press, 2010): 338.

²³ R.I. Woods, and P.R.A. Hinde, “Nuptiality and Age at Marriage in Nineteenth-Century England.” *Journal of Family History*, 10, no. 2 (1985): 122, 125, 140.

²⁴ R.B. Outhwaite, “Age at Marriage in England from the Late Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century.” *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 23 (1973): 58.

²⁵ *Bell's Weekly Messenger, London*. (December 25, 1848): 4; “Cape of Good Hope.” *London Evening Standard*, (November 30, 1829): 2; Robert Woods, *The Demography of Victorian England and Wales*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 87.

inappropriate to participate in sexual acts. Meanwhile, enslavers frequently raped Black girls, something that was so prevalent the attempt was made in 1816 to protect those aged 10 years or younger. As recent studies have determined, Black children are often (incorrectly) perceived to be more adult-like compared to their white peers. This has been coined as ‘adultification,’ where Black children are viewed as less innocent, more guilty, and are hypersexualized.²⁶ As a result, Black children are often not allowed to be children, especially to the same extent provided to their white peers. Although a modern concept, adultification was present within the British Empire, as shown through the exploited child labour and sexual abuse present in Jamaica (and elsewhere).

Adultification saw (sees) Black children perceived to be older than they are, which impacted concepts of childhood. This was especially important as abolition loomed in the British Empire. As will be discussed further in the thesis, enslavers often turned to girls as their solution to ensure reproduction within labour forces, resulting in shortened ‘childhoods’ and ‘girlhoods.’ At age 16, enslaved children were considered strong and healthy, and were moved to adult work gangs to have their labour and reproductive potential exploited by enslavers. Although they were reaching their peak physicality and considered adults legally, one wonders how or if the age of 16 equated to adulthood mentally or emotionally.

²⁶ Alison N. Cooke, and Amy G. Halberstadt, “Adultification, anger bias, and adults’ different perceptions of Black and White children.” *Cognition and Emotion*, 35, no. 7 (2021): 1416.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

*Until lions have their own historians,
accounts of the hunt will always glorify the hunter*
- African proverb (country of origin unknown)

Scholarship on the global trans-Atlantic slave trade has been ongoing since the beginning of the practice itself. Originally consisting of two camps, those arguing that slavery should continue, and those insisting the practice must end; the sources have evolved over hundreds of years to present more nuanced arguments and broader considerations, such as the experiences of enslaved families, the demographic structure of communities, and the upkeep of African traditions overseas. Even with that growth, history typically excluded the perspective of children, with those narratives growing in the field only within the past few decades. The implication is that children's stories are unimportant or undocumented. However, such a presentation of history is misleading and untruthful: children's voices throughout history *can* be heard.

Children were important members of enslaved communities; however, they were often erased and excluded from the historical narrative. This historiographical analysis seeks to understand the experiences of youth throughout enslavement, apprenticeship, and emancipation in British Jamaica, and their inclusion in records. The investigation seeks to determine the incorporation of children in studies of enslaved populations throughout the tropical island. Research of six prominent historians will be temporally analyzed, ranging from the 1970s through 2019. This publication range provides the opportunity to track evolutions present in the field of slavery studies within the span of nearly a half-century of development.

Beginning with Barry W. Higman's articles, "Household Structure and Fertility on Jamaican Slave Plantations: A Nineteenth-Century Example," and "The Slave Family and Household in the British West Indies, 1800-1834," the author worked to provide a unique

approach to situate the demography of enslaved communities throughout the island. Richard Dunn's life work analyzing an estate in Jamaica and an estate in the United States culminated in an article, "A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life at Mesopotamia in Jamaica and Mount Airy in Virginia, 1799 to 1828," and his book, *A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life and Labor in Jamaica and Virginia*. Higman dedicated over 40 years to his research, which provided a distinct perspective into the evolution of the author's work and the academic field as a whole. In a sense, it questioned how the author, and others, portrayed slavery and worked to provide an alternative narrative. While neither of those authors focused solely on the topic of enslaved children, they were helpful instruments to establish the overarching analysis of enslaved families in the historical narrative.

Colleen A. Vasconcellos' article, "'To Fit you All for Freedom': Jamaican Planters, Afro-Jamaican Mothers and the Struggle to Control Afro-Jamaican Children during Apprenticeship, 1833-40," and book chapter, "From Chattel to Breeding Wenches: Girlhood in a Jamaican Slave Community," noted a shift from focusing on enslaved families as a whole, to instead consider the individual realities faced by children. Audra A. Diptee and Martin A. Klein continued that focus through their article, "African Childhoods and the Colonial Project," where they argued the importance of studying children and childhood. Diptee then expanded her scope to again consider broader enslaved communities in her book, *From Africa to Jamaica: The Making of an Atlantic Slave Society, 1775-1807*, where she highlighted the cruel practice of family separation throughout the slave trade.

Jenny Jemmott expanded on Diptee's analysis of familial separation in her book, *Ties That Bind: The Black Family in Post-Slavery Jamaica, 1834-1882*. Jemmott explored not just the structure of Black families, but broader relationships and interactions between relatives and fictive kin in the post-emancipation period. Her article, "Recovering the Lost: Efforts at Reuniting Victims of Forced Separation after 1834: Some Case Studies from

Jamaica, 1834-1860,” built off research from her book to consider how kinship networks looked to reunite families who were separated after slavery’s end.

Daniel Livesay’s book, *Children of Uncertain Fortune: Mixed-Race Jamaicans in Britain and the Atlantic Family, 1733-1833* sought to define family, white British men’s duty to offspring produced out of wedlock, and explore migratory patterns from Jamaica across the wider British Empire. His article, “Transatlantic Family-Making: Jamaica and Great Britain,” continued his unique approach analyzing the ways in which Jamaica and England became connected and how notions of family continued to evolve and expand.

Published in 1973, Higman’s article, “Household Structure and Fertility on Jamaican Slave Plantations: A Nineteenth-Century Example,” made for a comprehensive introduction to the topic of enslaved communities in Jamaica. Higman took a unique approach studying the demographic data of enslaved households and how they were organized. Higman noted that the west often blamed low fertility rates of enslaved Caribbean communities on moral failings and differing notions of family.²⁷ His work sought to challenge dominant narratives within the study of enslaved communities to examine the role of kinship networks and formation of families.²⁸

Higman’s analysis utilized a unique set of sources to provide a new approach to the topic by implementing the Account Book of Old Montpelier plantation from 1824-1828 and reports made by the estate. Other primary sources he implemented were the laws of Jamaica during the time, reports from Parliamentary papers, registries of enslaved people, medical studies from Jamaica, historical analyses of the island, records of Jamaican marriages and baptisms of enslaved communities, and minutes from missionary meetings. The range of sources used allowed Higman to contextualize different aspects of enslaved life within

²⁷ Barry W. Higman. “Household Structure and Fertility on Jamaican Slave Plantations: A Nineteenth-Century Example.” *Population Studies*, 27, no. 3 (1973): 527.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

Jamaica. However, he noted the limitations of the source material by recognizing pages were missing from the Account Book and the fact that information about kinship was not recorded. Higman partially overcame those gaps by using the returns of registrations of enslaved people from six separate years.²⁹ A shortcoming of the sources that was not acknowledged was the fact that all the primary sources were recorded, created, written, and preserved by the British. Considering that the sources were from those who had power and relative privilege within a racist society, the perspectives of enslaved people likely were not accurately or fully recorded. When the enslavers created the existing literature and documents, biases were preserved within the data. Higman's study was quite transparent as he noted several limitations within his source material, data, and his research time and location.³⁰ However, he failed to consider how the literature he chose to use presented a certain lens of life in Jamaica during enslavement. Had he sought out sources presenting the perspectives and experiences of enslaved communities, the supplementary material would balance the bias created from using British-made documents.

Higman's study analyzed fertility rates of enslaved communities by examining the structure of their households. Such an approach was unique to counter the infertile narrative of Black people within Jamaica. He determined that fertility rates were highest within households of a woman living with a man and children. The second highest case of fertility was in structures of households lacking mates. Due to the data analysis, Higman determined that when there was a mate in the household, it was conducive, but not essential to reproduction.³¹ As Britons blamed the lack of children within enslaved communities on the shortage of nuclear families, Higman's study challenged pre-existing notions that the scarcity of Christian marriages were prohibiting the growth of enslaved workforces through natural

²⁹ Higman, "Household Structure and Fertility," 527-8.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 527, 528, 534, 548.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 545.

reproduction. Although Higman sought to understand the structure of households and the role of kinship networks in enslaved communities through Jamaica, his focus was to ultimately learn about reproduction and fertility rates. His study focused on numbers, rather than the experiences of enslaved people.

In 1975, Higman published a second article entitled, “The Slave Family and Household in the British West Indies, 1800-1834.” In that piece, Higman recognized the role of colonialism and slavery on Black families in the Caribbean, arguing that whilst many of his contemporaries considered such families to be ‘chaotic’ and ‘disorganized,’ they failed to acknowledge that the nuclear family structure pushed by the British was often not sustainable *because of* the British themselves. Higman’s article stood out for challenging racist and derogatory notions and views present within many of his peers’ works. He understood the importance of being critical of sources, stating that many of the contemporary views were formed due to uniformity and reliance on colonial sources. He proposed to challenge the interpretation by expanding evidence beyond those that were typically used in pre-existing literature.³² Higman’s range of primary sources included travel memoirs, historical studies of the time, colonial reports, records of plantations, enslavement estate management instructions, letters, list of marriages, parish records, writings on the slave trade, and religious tracts. Those primary sources, alongside a range of secondary sources, provided ample evidence for Higman to conduct his demographic study of enslaved families.

Higman’s research ultimately determined a unique perspective that communities of people without kin increased throughout the slave trade rather than the practice decreasing nuclear families.³³ While ample scholarship argued that nuclear families were not popular amongst enslaved communities, in actuality, the separation of families and kin resulted in the

³² Higman, “The Slave Family and Household,” 262.

³³ *Ibid.*, 287.

number of nuclear families appearing smaller. Additionally, he discussed the laws of amelioration which attempted to prevent the separation of families, but noted while they were obvious failures, there was a lack of studies on enslaved families separated by sales.³⁴ While both of Higman's studies presented new evidence and challenged dominant derogatory perceptions of enslaved families, he focused on the numbers rather than the people impacted by the horrific practice, resulting in a cold, less humanity-focused presentation.

Another author who sought to understand demographic statistics of enslaved families throughout Jamaica was Richard Dunn. He tackled the topic through multiple medias, including an article published in 1977, a 2014 book, and a website available online to the public. Although Dunn, like Higman, sought to understand demography structures, their approaches differed. Unlike Higman's statistic-based analysis, Dunn sought to preserve his findings as individuals, kin, and families. His analysis resulted in a warmer, more human display of his results. Dunn's historiography begins with his 1977 article, "A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life at Mesopotamia in Jamaica and Mount Airy in Virginia, 1799 to 1828."

Dunn's article focused on enslavement estates in America and Jamaica. Both plantations undertook a detailed census of their enslaved populations on the same day in 1809.³⁵ Records of enslaved people were relatively rare for the time. If such accounts were taken, the people were primarily included as property rather than individuals and often excluded notes on their age, health, occupation, and familial links. By comparing an American estate and a Jamaican plantation against each other, Dunn sought to understand how the communities differed from each other despite having the shared reality of enslavement. While his focus was statistical in nature, Dunn recognized that upon

³⁴ Higman, "The Slave Family and Household," 287.

³⁵ Richard S. Dunn, "A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life at Mesopotamia in Jamaica and Mount Airy in Virginia, 1799 to 1828." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 34, no. 1 (1977): 32.

examination, the communities could not be summarized into a formulaic equation. The case studies were made up of real people “with variegated life histories and complex communal roles.”³⁶ Such recognition of people *as* people noted a shift from the purely statistical approach to a humanist, individualist lens when analyzing the realities of enslaved communities. Despite Dunn’s acknowledgement, he still occasionally summarized the two plantations into numerical presentations.³⁷ However, much more frequently, he presented his findings in a way that preserved the identities of the people he studied.³⁸

Dunn relied heavily on estate records from both the plantation in America and Jamaica to inform his research. He paired those with other primary sources such as magazines, wills, minute books, expense accounts, property tax records, letters, field labour books, and abolitionist writings, and narratives. The primary sources, in conjunction with the secondary sources, allowed Dunn to provide analysis that indicated a shift in the existing literature, beginning to focus on the individualistic considerations of enslavement instead of reducing the communities down to statistics.

Dunn’s humanistic approach when examining the experiences of enslaved people developed throughout his career, as evidenced through the publication of his life’s work, *A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life and Labor in Jamaica and Virginia*, in 2014. Dunn had a clear goal of learning from his previous research and to provide a detailed analysis of enslaved life, compared to the broad picture studies that were popular at the time. He acknowledged the length of time he studied his topic, saying that he would not recommend spending forty years dedicated to a project, but that the length of time “reflect[ed] the difficulty in bringing to life some very hidden people...”³⁹ Unarguably, analyzing subaltern

³⁶ Dunn, “A Tale of Two Plantations,” 33-4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 41, 45, 52, 58.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 38-9, 43-4, 47, 49, 50-1, 59.

³⁹ Richard S. Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life and Labor in Jamaica and Virginia*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014): 1.

histories *is* difficult because non-European voices were disregarded and excluded from preserved sources. However, I believe Dunn's language here was too informal; it is not that enslaved people were hiding in the sources, but rather, they were forcefully buried. He acknowledged the complicated nature of slavery studies and the fact that almost all preserved sources were created by enslavers rather than the enslaved communities themselves.⁴⁰ That acknowledgement was something lacking within Higman's articles. Dunn's recognition of the sources' shortfalls provided an accountability and transparency to his work.

Although Dunn stated such dedicated analysis is not recommended, his choice to do so provided a novel experience of watching his research grow and evolve as time went by. He acknowledged a gross misstep from his 1977 article, where he proclaimed that, "if one had to be a slave, Mount Airy was a better place than Mesopotamia."⁴¹ He recognized that his presentation of American enslavement as more 'benevolent' was quite problematic. His dedication to his research also allowed him to witness evolving discussions within the field when considering initial debates of whether European enslavement of Africans stemmed primarily from racism or a recognition of economic cost-effectiveness. Dunn argued looking back, that such discourses were irrelevant because racism fuelled the oppression until the two "became so intertwined that scarcely anyone in Europe or white America ventured to question the enslavement of African people until the mid-eighteenth century."⁴² That statement illustrated an evolution in perception. No longer was slavery a debate of fiscal responsibility, but a recognition that the practice stemmed from, and was fuelled by, racism and white supremacy. Slavery was no longer excusable or justifiable.

Dunn indicated shifts in analysis of slavery within the British empire during the 1970s and 1980s largely due to historians David Eltis and Barry Higman. Eltis created a database

⁴⁰ Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations*, 1.

⁴¹ Dunn, "A Tale of Two Plantations," 65.

⁴² Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations*, 18.

of over 35,000 journeys from the trans-Atlantic slave trade. That project created a stark realization of the massive systemic practice of enslavement and was a landmark achievement within the field. Dunn also acknowledged the dedication of Higman to reconstruct enslaved community compositions between 1807 to 1834. Combined, Dunn noted that Eltis and Higman “established an admirable framework for investigating British Caribbean slave life.”⁴³ However, Dunn had a similar critique in that their works have barely any ‘human dimension’ within their numbers and statistics. Dunn noted the shift from quantitative measurements to qualitative narratives when analyzing enslaved people, “...there is also a strong current interest in slave biography, to illuminate through individual life stories the personal dimensions of the slave experience. And here I think that my intergenerational study of the slaves at Mesopotamia and Mount Airy may have relevance.”⁴⁴ Dunn valued the rich history gleaned from studying individual experiences and considering humanity - something that set him apart from his predecessor, Higman.

Colleen A. Vasconcellos’ 2006 article, “‘To Fit you All for Freedom’: Jamaican Planters, Afro-Jamaican Children during Apprenticeship, 1833-40” provided a shift in the scholarship to focus solely on the experiences of children instead of enslaved families and communities as a whole. Vasconcellos implemented a range of primary sources such as books, letters, official colonial correspondence, newspaper articles, laws implemented throughout the island, Jamaican Assembly records, essays, abolitionist writings, affidavits of apprenticed people, and legal records. The range of primary sources, combined with Vasconcellos’ secondary sources, presented strong, well-researched arguments. Including affidavits of apprenticed people ensured representation beyond records created by colonial

⁴³ Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations*, 19.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 19-20.

officials. The variety of material implemented created a balance of social and political aspects of Jamaica.

Vasconcellos situated her research within the existing literature noting that previous historians presented slavery as a gendered institution, driven by concepts of economic greed and coercive reproductive efforts. She argued that such structures extended into the emancipation period as well. Although enslavers pressured mothers to reproduce and enter their children into the apprenticeship program, many refused to be coerced and fought to maintain their own decision-making. What resulted was a shifting social dynamic with children as the driving force. Vasconcellos' work took a different approach from existing literature. Typically, studies of families examined experiences during enslavement, as evidenced through Higman and Dunn. However, there was a lack of analysis of those families post-emancipation and even fewer tracking the transition from enslaved to free. Vasconcellos' article was the first within the authors included in this historiographical analysis to continue the period into apprenticeship and beyond.

In the tracking timeline, Vasconcellos noted how childhood evolved with the eradication of enslavement. Prior to apprenticeship, enslavers employed coercive and sometimes forceful means to create reproduction amongst enslaved communities; after apprenticeship, enslavers viewed children as a drain on resources. As Vasconcellos summarized, "children shifted from investment to liability overnight."⁴⁵ Despite enslavers' stance that children were worthless, Vasconcellos argued that communities determined their own value regarding children and childhood, illustrated through numerous examples of freedom negotiated on children's behalf.⁴⁶ Ultimately, Vasconcellos' choice to analyze the transitory period from enslavement, to apprenticeship, to freedom allowed arguments on the

⁴⁵ Colleen A. Vasconcellos, "'To Fit you All for Freedom': Jamaican Planters, Afro-Jamaican Mothers and the Struggle to Control Afro-Jamaican Children during Apprenticeship, 1833-40." *Citizenship Studies*, 10, no. 1 (2006): 67.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

crucial role of children and childhood in creating post-slavery Jamaican society.⁴⁷ Such an argument was ground-breaking because children, typically, were disregarded in the sources and not considered to be agents of change. Similar to Vasconcellos' approach, my thesis aims to recognize the societal significance of children.

Vasconcellos also had a chapter, "From Chattel to Breeding Wenches: Girlhood in a Jamaican Slave Community" that was published within the 2010 book, *Girlhood: A Global History*. Once again, Vasconcellos diligently explored current historical analysis of the topic to situate her own work. She discussed historians such as Wilma King and Marie Jenkins Schwartz whose studies on children in American slavery set off greater analysis of childhood and enslavement.⁴⁸ Historians Barbara Bush, Richard Sheridan, Kenneth Kiple, and Richard Steckel focused on enslaved mothers and how their horrific treatment negatively impacted pregnancy and children.⁴⁹ Such studies were evolved by Marietta Morrissey, Lucille Mathurin Mair, and Hilary Beckles to examine mother-child relationships, but with a greater focus on gender within slavery.⁵⁰ Finally, Vasconcellos discussed historians Barry Higman and Elsa Goveia who were the first to primarily analyze enslaved childhood within the larger context of enslaved families in the Caribbean.⁵¹

Vasconcellos noted two main gaps within the historical research. Firstly, when children were studied, they were grouped together without acknowledging the ways in which gender created unique experiences. My thesis addresses the importance of applying an intersectional approach to understand how gender, along with other identities, impacted the experiences children faced. Secondly, the pre-existing literature often attempted to capture a

⁴⁷ Vasconcellos, "To Fit you All for Freedom," 68.

⁴⁸ Colleen A. Vasconcellos, "From Chattel to Breeding Wenches: Girlhood in a Jamaican Slave Community," in Jennifer Hillman Helgren, and Colleen A. Vasconcellos eds. *Girlhood: A Global History*. (Rutgers University Press, 2010): 326.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

static moment in time during the Atlantic slave trade. To rectify the shortfall, Vasconcellos aimed to analyze how the concept of girlhood evolved alongside slavery, abolition, apprenticeship, and emancipation. Vasconcellos' approach yielded important results. By expanding the temporal analysis, she was able to trace how enslavers evolved from viewing children as 'burdens,' to important future labourers as abolition approached. Girls, in particular, became valued for the reproductive potential that enslavers could exploit to produce an evergreen labour force.⁵² As a result, girlhood was threatened and shortened to consider young girls as 'women,' and capable of reproduction - even by coercive or forceful means.⁵³

Historian Audra A. Diptee partnered with Martin A. Klein to produce their 2010 article, "African Childhoods and the Colonial Project." Diptee and Klein provided a unique perspective on the topic of childhood and slavery. Unlike their predecessors previously mentioned, who focused solely on experiences in the Caribbean, and occasionally the American South, Diptee and Klein discussed the importance of considering childhood in African countries, and the detrimental impact of colonialism. They acknowledged the gap in scholarship and why African children deserve to be highlighted in research:

That African children are only superficially discussed in studies that adopt a global approach is by no means surprising. Specialists on African history themselves, after all, have only recently begun to seriously contemplate the historical experiences of children. They have, of course, long recognized that children were actors in major themes of African history: children were often targeted by [en]slavers in Africa; made victims of the domestic, trans-Saharan and trans-Atlantic slave trade in significant numbers; crucial to the familial, communal, and social fabrics of African societies; a highly valued labor source; and, during the colonial era in particular, real efforts were made to control, remake, and/or manipulate African childhoods.⁵⁴

Despite the enormous role played by children in African society, Diptee and Klein noted that their exclusion from historical analyses is ridiculously overwhelming.

⁵² Vasconcellos, "From Chattel to Breeding Wenches," 327-8.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 339.

⁵⁴ Diptee, and Klein, "African Childhoods and the Colonial Project," 3.

Diptee and Klein solely use secondary sources during their historiographical critique. The article was set apart as an argument about the presentation of history, rather than analysis of the history itself; however, the spirit of Diptee and Klein's message was integral to the development of this thesis. The reminder that many of the enslaved children's childhood began in Africa, and how those countries viewed childhood, was key to understanding how those concepts remained the same or evolved as people were forcefully transported across the Atlantic. While analyzing the present narratives of enslaved childhood, Diptee and Klein determined that childhood was 'interpreted, understood, and socially institutionalized,' depending on culture, temporality, and its intersection with the children themselves.⁵⁵ Such considerations were evident as experiences of children certainly diverged depending on if the case studies took place during enslavement, apprenticeship, or emancipation.

Taking many of the considerations discussed above, Diptee produced the book, *From Africa to Jamaica: The Making of an Atlantic Slave Society, 1775-1807* in 2012. In the book, Diptee studied how the lives of enslaved people in Jamaica were shaped, but also how those communities occasionally acted as changemakers within the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Diptee acknowledged evolutions in the field of slavery studies, and her efforts to provide a humanistic analysis of the events and people, noting that "[t]he history of these lives has been told many times, in many ways; with each retelling, efforts have been made to move one step further from 'silencing the past.'"⁵⁶ Within Diptee's retelling, she argued that the existing literature overemphasized the role and quantity of adult males brought to Jamaica during her temporal period. She also disagreed with the prominent presentation that adult males were favoured amongst enslavers in the Caribbean. Instead, Diptee asserted that the health and

⁵⁵ Diptee, and Klein, "African Childhoods and the Colonial Project," 4.

⁵⁶ Diptee, Audra A. *From Africa to Jamaica: The Making of an Atlantic Slave Society, 1775-1807*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012): 3.

condition of enslaved people had the biggest impact on prices and ‘purchase’ patterns, followed by age and sex as secondary considerations.⁵⁷

Diptee leveraged a range of primary sources, such as Jamaican Assembly records, letters, documents from enslavement ships, historic interviews, journals, colonial treasury logs, legal testimonies/documents, colonial correspondence, British parliamentary debates, records from enslavers, abolitionist writings, ‘purchases’ of enslaved people, newspaper articles, colonial political meeting minutes, travel accounts, medical reports, and court cases. Diptee’s large range of sources buttressed her arguments throughout the book as they considered multiple perspectives and accounts. Through the research that informed Diptee’s study, she concluded that adult males were not the sole focus for enslavers in Jamaica. Due to abolition of the slave trade, enslavers valued women and girls to ensure a reproductive-based labour force.⁵⁸

While Diptee analyzed the realities of enslaved communities during the slave trade, historian Jenny M. Jemmott sought to explore what happened to those who were enslaved and separated from their families. That concept drove her 2007 article, “Recovering the Lost: Efforts at Reuniting Victims of Forced Separation after 1834: Some Case Studies from Jamaica, 1834-1860.” Jemmott noted that the prioritization of attempts to reunite separated family members with each other following emancipation has been discussed by a few historians, but that Black family reconstitution in Jamaica, specifically, had not gained much focus. However, the reunification efforts on the island were important to analyze due to the unique geographic location. Its proximity to Cuba and the southern United States, where slavery was still protected by law, resulted in Black families living under constant threat of capture and re-enslavement.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Diptee, *From Africa to Jamaica*, 4-5.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 116.

⁵⁹ Jenny M. Jemmott, “Recovering the Lost: Efforts at Reuniting Victims of Forced Separation after 1834: Some Case Studies from Jamaica, 1834-1860.” *The Journal of Caribbean History*, 41 no. 1/2 (2007): 183.

By using primary sources such as Colonial Office documents, official state correspondence, personal letters, petitions of re-enslaved family members, the Slave Trade Act, newspaper articles, and historical narratives from the time, Jemmott was able to recount the perspectives of both colonial and Afro-Caribbean people. Jemmott leveraged a large repository of personal and official correspondence tracking the case studies of re-enslaved people from Jamaica, and efforts to reunite them with family. Through those sources, Jemmott was able to provide numerous case studies of Black families forcefully separated after emancipation. The majority of the cases were children who were captured and re-enslaved. As children are often amongst the most vulnerable members of communities, and often disregarded in sources, Jemmott's article provided a unique analysis and insight into the threats children faced, even if they had 'free' status.

Jemmott continued to highlight the experiences of Black families after emancipation through her 2015 book, *Ties That Bind: The Black Family in Post-Slavery Jamaica, 1834-1882*. Jemmott once again noted the gap in existing historical literature, noting that most of the analysis of Black families temporally looked at the span of the slave trade, and within that timeframe, household structures and types of families dominated the research.⁶⁰ Jemmott challenged the existing literature, such as disagreeing with the use of the western nuclear family as "the norm and the prerequisite for stability" within enslaved communities.⁶¹ Jemmott intended to move beyond focusing on the slave trade to consider the experiences of Black families after emancipation, and to analyze broader definitions of 'family,' without being limited by the western concept of the nuclear family.⁶²

To challenge popular notions within the field of slavery studies, and Black families in Jamaica, Jemmott used a number of primary sources, such as manuscripts, parliamentary

⁶⁰ Jenny M. Jemmott, *Ties That Bind: The Black Family in Post-Slavery Jamaica, 1834-1882*. (Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press, 2015): 1.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, 4.

papers, Jamaica government sources, ecclesiastical writings, newspapers, and a range of relevant publications created during the time. The broad range of primary sources supported Jemmott's arguments and helped forge a newer perspective when analyzing the Black family in Jamaica. Through those sources, Jemmott illustrated that the Black family was systemically targeted in Jamaica through British laws and values. In one instance, Christian marriages were leveraged to withhold "legitimization from family forms outside of the elitist ambit, the laws were intended to marginalize and even denigrate these informal unions which had been adopted by the majority of the masses of Jamaican people."⁶³ Indeed, by using the nuclear family as the 'normal,' historians were contributing to the discrimination and systemic devaluation of Black families.

Similar to Jemmott's analysis of Black families, historian Daniel Livesay sought to provide a unique narrative by expanding the geographic scope to consider the interconnectedness of 'family' across the Atlantic through his book, *Children of Uncertain Fortune: Mixed-Race Jamaicans in Britain and the Atlantic Family, 1733-1833*, published in 2018. Livesay's book looked at mixed-race children; while most white fathers offered no acknowledgement or support to such offspring, a significant minority did, often opting to send their children to Britain - thus, creating trans-Atlantic families.⁶⁴ Livesay situated his research alongside a few other scholars who examined the presence of people of the global majority in Britain to analyze interpretations of race, racial identity, and mixed-race families. Such a focus sets Livesay apart from the dominating existing literature, which, he argued, had been "relatively uninterested in evolving ideas about race in Jamaica."⁶⁵

To inform his book, Livesay turned to a wide range of primary sources such as letters, colonial correspondence, wills, travel narratives, newspaper articles, academic journals,

⁶³ Jemmott, *Ties that Bind*, 187.

⁶⁴ Daniel Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune: Mixed-Race Jamaicans in Britain and the Atlantic Family, 1733-1833*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018): 2.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 10.

writings on slavery, political tracts, commission inquiries, historical narratives, journals of enslavers, and abolitionist writings. Through his investigation, Livesay determined that concepts of family evolved within the nineteenth century. While previous scholars attested that Britain was a racially diverse island, Livesay went beyond to prove the racial integration that was commonplace. His research illustrated the ways in which white people from all classes interacted with people of the global majority, and the resulting interracial relationships and marriages that took place.⁶⁶ His research produced different results from much of the existing literature which portrayed white and Black lives in Britain as very separate.

The final source analyzed in this historiographical section is Daniel Livesay's 2019 article, "Transatlantic Family-Making: Jamaica and Great Britain," in which he continued to build on themes illustrated in his 2018 book. Livesay's article discussed many issues touched on by previous scholars throughout this section, such as the demographic structure of Jamaica (Higman and Dunn's research); an insistence that the western nuclear family structure was the 'proper' family form (Higman and Jemmott's works); and racist notions that were weaponized to discriminate against people of the global majority (Jemmott and Livesay's scholarship). In the article, Livesay explored family formation in Jamaica, noting that enslaved families were left vulnerable to, and considered with indifference by, colonial enslavers.⁶⁷

To investigate family-making practices, Livesay engaged several primary sources including travel accounts, letters, records from the Jamaican Assembly, historical narratives, a will, and a newspaper article, along with numerous secondary sources. Livesay's article determined that many of the racist beliefs held, and the ways that Black people were talked

⁶⁶ Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune*, 401.

⁶⁷ Daniel Livesay, "Transatlantic Family-Making: Jamaica and Great Britain." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*, (2019): 3.

about, resulted in long-lasting discrimination.⁶⁸ Such concepts especially revolved heavily around Black families, with the insistence “that Jamaican children could only be saved if their parents followed the British standard of nuclear households and organization.

Transatlantic families, therefore, were supposed to fit only one model, and the influence was only to flow in one direction.”⁶⁹ However, Livesay (alongside Higman and Jemmott) is among one of the few scholars who acknowledged that while the nuclear family was pushed on Black people as the only acceptable family, the oppression driven by white people detrimentally impacted the ability for enslaved people to form sustainable families.⁷⁰

Witnessing the evolution of slavery studies from a calculated, statistical approach to a humanistic lens allows me to situate my research within the latter methods. Like Dunn, I situate my research within the individual, personal experiences of enslaved people. My research goes beyond current historical focuses of enslaved families or mothers to solely attempt to grasp the experiences of enslaved children, specifically those children who were orphaned or left in vulnerable situations. Similar to the temporal limitations mentioned throughout the historiographical section, my research tracks such experiences from enslavement to emancipation to recognize the transitional timeline that many Black people in Jamaica lived through.

⁶⁸ Livesay, “Transatlantic Family-Making,” 11.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

CHAPTER ONE: ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN JAMAICA

Etseme yomubuthi yomwana eriseka
The happiness of a parent is to see her child laughing
- *Nande proverb*

Pre-August 1, 1834

A ûi maraya da rigar buzu / a gan shi da ta ûarfe
Let one refuse an orphan with a skin coat, one day will see him in armour
- *Hausa proverb*

While there was great emphasis and respect placed upon the family and the home in nineteenth-century British society, such concepts were not transferred to enslaved families. Oftentimes, enslavers had no qualms separating relatives if it resulted in financial profit or another type of benefit for themselves; for example, removing those considered ‘troublesome’ from their estates. Not only were adult couples frequently separated, but so too, were children from parents. Such child removal had significant implications on those who were taken, but also on the parents who lost their offspring. British theologian, Richard Watson, quoted a recollection shared with him by William Gilgrass, a Wesleyan missionary stationed in Jamaica. The memory recounted the moment when an enslaver in Kingston sold a child for monetary gain,

one of the female slaves having two fine children, he sold one of them, and the child was torn from her maternal affection. In the agony of her feelings she made a hideous howling, and for that crime was flogged. Soon after, he sold her other child. This 'turned her heart within her,' and impelled her into a kind of madness. She howled night and day in the yard; tore her hair; ran up and down the streets and parade, rending the heavens with her cries, and literally watering the earth with her tears.⁷¹

Such harrowing accounts were common throughout the empire and many British abolitionists sought to prevent similar acts from happening again.

⁷¹ Richard Watson, *A Defence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions in the West Indies: Including A Refutation of the Charges in Mr. Marryat's "Thoughts on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, &c."* And in Other Publications: With Facts and Anecdotes Illustrative of the Moral State of the Slaves and of the Operation of Missions. (London: Thomas Cordeux, 1817): 26, footnote 3.

In 1824, the British Parliament passed an Order in Council with seven clauses aimed to improve the conditions of enslaved people throughout the empire. The fourth item included, “Marriage to be encouraged; families never to be separated; and the property of the Slave to be protected by positive law.”⁷² The Order in Council was to be enacted in Trinidad, then extended to other colonies. Places with an Assembly, such as Jamaica, were expected to enact similar regulations on their own.⁷³ Despite the order and attempts to protect enslaved families from traumatic separations, many enslavers ignored the laws.

Child removal was common in enslaved families despite the 1824 orders of amelioration and was often advertised in newspapers. *The Royal Gazette, Jamaica* had one such advertisement on July 21, 1827, promoting the upcoming sale of Ben, a Black waiting boy around 16 years of age; Sally, a biracial ‘drudge’ approximately 12 years of age; and George, a Black waiting boy, roughly 12 years of age, by WM. Rose.⁷⁴ As no adults were advertised in the sale, it can be inferred that those children were ripped away from their families, if they had not already been separated prior to then.

In 1826, Britain attempted to enforce the 1824 orders of amelioration through a new collection of Jamaican enslavement laws. The first clause was to assign a Protector and Guardian of enslaved people. The Officer would be nominated by the Crown and was supposed to be, “wholly unconnected with the possession or even the administration of slave property.”⁷⁵ However, the Jamaican Assembly rejected the Crown-nominated Officer and instead created a *Council of Protection* made entirely of white plantation owners and enslavers from each parish. The *Council* would then hear and rule on the complaints made

⁷² *The Bristol Mirror*, (March 20, 1824): 3.

⁷³ William A. Green, *British Slave Emancipation: The Sugar Colonies and the Great Experiment, 1830-1865*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976): 65, 104, 107.

⁷⁴ *The Royal Gazette, Jamaica*, (August 4, 1827): 6.

⁷⁵ The Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, *The New Slave Laws of Jamaica and St. Christopher's Examined; With an Especial Reference to the Eulogies Recently Pronounced Upon Them in Parliament*. (London, Bagster and Thoms, 1828): 3-4.

by enslaved people. *The Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions* noted the conflict of interest involved with the *Council* and highlighted a letter received in 1827 from William Huskisson, Secretary for the Colonies:

The Council of Protection cannot be considered an effectual substitute for the office of a distinct and independent Protector. It will consist of those individuals over whom the Protector was to exercise his superintendance. Their duties are limited *to the single case of extreme bodily injury*, and are to be discharged only if they think proper. The periodical returns, required from the Protector upon oath, are not to be made by the Council, nor are they even bound to keep a journal of their proceedings.⁷⁶

If it was not already clear by then, it was now evident that enslavers in Jamaica had no intentions of following orders of amelioration or allowing the Crown power to regulate the practices enacted on their plantations and throughout the island.

In 1826, the *Society* also examined the law preventing families from being separated. They noted that the 1824 order stemmed from a 1735 law. However, there was only one specific context in which families could not be separated; that is, if they were *enslaved* together, they had to be *sold* together, and only when the sale was ‘voluntary.’⁷⁷ The *Society* noted how Jamaica’s *The Royal Gazette* had numerous examples each week of children parted from their parents and sold separately to pay a debt or tax: sales which were deemed ‘involuntary.’⁷⁸ Such loopholes allowed enslavers to skirt the law and continue to tear children away from their families for their own profit, as seen with the example of Jane, in the image below.

⁷⁶ The Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions, *The New Slave Laws of Jamaica and St. Christopher's*, 4.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

30-31 Kingston, July 28, 1827.
TAKE NOTICE, That on Wednesday, the 8th
of August next, I shall put up for Sale, at Miss
Hately's Tavern, at Yallahs-Bay, a Negro Child,
about 7 years of age, named **JANE** or **JANE DEL-**
PRATT, to be sold for Taxes due by Mount-Sinai
Estate.
JOSEPH DELPRATT, C. C.

31-32 July 30, 1827.
The above Sale is postponed until Wednesday the
15th day of August next.

Figure 1. Advertisement of 7-year-old enslaved child, Jane, for sale to pay enslavers' taxes.⁷⁹

Sales similar to Jane's case above were common in Jamaica to pay off enslavers' debts. However, sometimes enslaved families were separated not through sales, but through levies to pay off creditors, or those to whom enslavers owed money. The abolitionist publication, *The Humming Bird; or, Morsels of Information on the Subject of Slavery*, published one such case for British audiences to read about. In an address to the editors, the author recounted the time they were on a Jamaican coffee plantation where there were 70 or 80 people held as property. The enslaver was deeply in debt and was aware that his creditors wanted to levy the enslaved people to pay the amount owed. One night, while the enslaver was away, but the author was there, the Marshal's deputies came to capture the enslaved people. Some of those people being held as property resisted the deputies, with many men running from the estate or hiding amongst coffee trees. The author witnessed the aftermath of the deputies' invasion attesting that,

They secured, however, ten or twelve men, and most of the women and children, amounting, in the whole, to between thirty and forty, which were huddled together on the outside of the principal fence, and presented such a heart-rending scene, as I never

⁷⁹ *The Royal Gazette, Jamaica*, (August 4, 1827): 19.

witnessed before, and should be very sorry ever to witness again. Some of the children had lost their mothers, and some of the mothers had been torn away from a part of their children; for some of the little urchins also escaped. One woman, in particular, had six or seven children; two or three of them were seized, and the others escaped, but the youngest, an infant, had been caught, and she wept aloud, and very bitterly for it, saying, 'That she must give herself up, if the child were not got back; for she could not live separate from it.'⁸⁰

Due to a sense of entitlement, greed, and capitalistic drive, families were separated on that coffee estate, and many others like it, due to the financial failings of enslavers. The example above of just one instance, on one estate, illustrated multiple children and parents separated from each other to pay the debts of the enslaver. When considering this one instance, in one household across hundreds of years of the slave trade, across the entire British empire (and the world at large), the number of children separated from their parents becomes astronomical.

In November 1831, Britain, again, attempted to enforce laws of amelioration through a revised Order of Council that expanded on the 1824 version to include 121 clauses.⁸¹ This time, the law was implemented in every colony, instead of allowing the Assembly power to follow the order.⁸² Regardless, Jamaican enslavers still disagreed with the law and disregarded the new regulations. Henry Whiteley documented enslavers' discontent when he travelled from England to Jamaica to find employment in 1832. When he left England, he held beliefs that enslaved people were treated favourably. After spending seven weeks on a sugar plantation, he left Jamaica and wrote an account of his time there and how, after witnessing the realities of colonial slavery, his outlook on the practice shifted. Whiteley noted that upon his arrival in Jamaica, he met Hamilton Brown, who was the representative of St. Ann's parish in the Colonial Assembly. During their meeting, Brown swore that the 1831 Order, "should never be adopted in Jamaica; nor would the planters of Jamaica ...

⁸⁰ Heyrick, 137-8.

⁸¹ Caroline Quarrier Spence, "Ameliorating Empire: Slavery and Protection in the British Colonies, 1783-1865." (Doctoral Dissertation, Harvard University, 2014): 189.

⁸² Green, *British Slave Emancipation*, 112.

permit the interference of the Home Government with their slaves in any shape.”⁸³ Indeed, Jamaican enslavers protested against discussions of emancipation stating that, “The Legislature of Jamaica has, from the moment of its existence, claimed and enjoyed the right of initiating and passing all laws relating to the internal affairs of the Colony. It must be expected to resist the interference of any external power with the exercise of that right.”⁸⁴ Evidently, Jamaican enslavers believed themselves to be above the law and Britain too far away to enforce regulations. The fact that the British Government was deemed to be an ‘external power’ and laws that they passed were considered to ‘interfere’ with the way of life on the island spoke volumes to the lack of respect and agency given to the home country.

Jamaican resistance to British enslavement laws and concerns around ‘interference’ had a long history in the empire. Even when the enslavers were in London, they were vocally opposed to implementing laws requested by the British government. A meeting on May 17, 1804 at the London Tavern provided an insight into colonial Jamaican resistance, when a proposal of suspending the Slave Trade was rejected. It was noted that during the meeting, a large majority agreed to a motion brought forward by Mr. Lyon, the agent for Jamaica, “that every legal and proper step should be taken to oppose the progress of any Bill which may be brought into parliament either to suspend or abolish the Slave Trade.”⁸⁵ A long history of resistance bolstered the confidence of enslavers in Jamaica; being able to push against the home government for almost a decade (in just this instance) empowered them and created a sense of safety to ignore British law even while in Britain.

The abolitionist publication, *The Humming Bird*, discussed the Jamaican climate and attitude toward British laws of amelioration. When Britain requested colonies to implement

⁸³ Henry Whiteley, *Three Months in Jamaica, in 1832: Comprising A Residence of Seven Weeks on a Sugar Plantation*. (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1833): 2-3.

⁸⁴ *A Statement of the Objections of the Jamaica Proprietors, Resident in Great Britain, to Certain Enactments in Mr. Secretary Stanley’s Bill for the Abolition of Slavery*. (London: A.J. Valpy, 1833): 19.

⁸⁵ Robert Isaac Wilberforce, and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. III. V vols. (London: John Murray, 1838): 166.

the laws, Colonial Assemblies told the home government that they were underway in the colonies. However, when the British government finally investigated what the colonial laws actually were, colonial legislators could not “produce any satisfactory laws of their own on a subject which so imperiously called for legislation...”⁸⁶ Given the repeated disregard for British orders regarding the slave trade, and refusal to implement laws of amelioration, it is highly likely that enslavers also ignored the rule of keeping families together – if there was profit or power involved, separating children from their parents was something willingly done.⁸⁷

Post-August 1, 1834

Chaona mnzako chapita mawa chili paiwe
Your neighbour’s misfortune today may be yours tomorrow
- *Chichewa proverb*

Emancipation meant that children under six years old were automatically granted ‘free’ status. Youth who were deemed ‘orphans’ were adopted into the apprenticeship system. As discussed, many former enslavers greatly disliked emancipation and the apprenticeship program, believing they were being ‘robbed’ of their ‘property’ and fortunes, despite twenty million sterling pounds (almost 30 billion Canadian dollars in 2022) in ‘reparations’⁸⁸ granted to Jamaican enslavers.⁸⁹ Abolitionist, Elizabeth Heyrick, pointed out the illogicality of reparations for enslavers,

But if the West Indian gentlemen fail to obtain *protection* against the designs of the abolitionists, then, they demand *compensation*, in the event of the emancipation of their slaves, to the immense amount of *sixty four millions*. ... If compensation be

⁸⁶ Heyrick, *The Humming Bird*, 229-30.

⁸⁷ The British Newspaper Archives has a gap in Jamaican newspaper records between the Order’s enforcement (1831) and emancipation (1834). While this prevents finding advertisements of enslaved children for sale, the past behaviour of Jamaican enslavers shows a pattern, surmising that children were likely ripped from their families despite the law.

⁸⁸ To provide enslavers with ‘compensation,’ the British Government took out a loan from the Rothschild syndicate. From 1835 onward, the British Government was paying off this debt, with the 11,098 accounts finally redeemed in **February 2015**. See Kris Manjapra, “The Scandal of the British Slavery Abolition Act Loan.” *Social and Economic Studies*, 68, no. 3-4 (2019).

⁸⁹ *Objections of the Jamaica Proprietors*, 18.

demanded as an act of justice to the slave holder, in the event of the liberation of his slaves; - let justice take her free, impartial course; - let compensation be made in the first instance, where it is most due; - let compensation be first made to the *slave*, for his long years of uncompensated labour, degradation and suffering.⁹⁰

Heyrick reflected on why enslavers were provided compensation for the end of slavery, instead of those people who had been enslaved and had their homelands, cultures, languages, futures, labour, skills, knowledge, and families stolen from them for hundreds of years.

Despite the arguments against the significant ‘reparations’ enslavers received, many of them actively sought even more ‘compensation’ to reduce what they considered to be their ‘losses,’

An attempt was made, but speedily defeated, to make the apprentices repay the time lost in child-birth, under the plea that the offspring no longer belonged to the owner of the mother, and that he had a right, under all circumstances, to his forty hours and a half labour in the week. It was also attempted to make them repay the time lost in attendance on their sick relatives; the mother, if she attended a dying infant; the child, if it attended its dying parent; but the Governor at once put an end to this attempt, and the case was too monstrous to admit of contest.⁹¹

Although the movement was ultimately unsuccessful, the attempt to have apprentices ‘pay back’ time used when giving birth, or nursing dying children or parents, illustrated how humanity was continuously stripped from Black people in Jamaica. A further example took place in Jamaican workhouses where apprenticed people were sent for punishment. James Williams published an account of his time in the apprenticeship system and recounted experiences faced by women in St. Ann’s workhouse. When the supervisor of the institution was present, he would not allow women with young children to breastfeed as he claimed the children were free, and there was nothing in the law that allowed mothers time to take care of them. Williams noted that it was only the ‘good will’ of prison guards that permitted women to feed the babes.⁹² Those examples exemplified the lack of agency and control Black

⁹⁰ Elizabeth Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition, or, An Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest, and most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery*. (London: Hatchard and Son, 1824): 16.

⁹¹ A Proprietor, *Jamaica Under the Apprenticeship System*. (London: J. Andrews, 1838): 93.

⁹² James Williams, *A Narrative of Events Since the 1st of August, 1834*. (London: G. Wightman, 1838): 14-5.

families and children had over their own person and relatives, and how enslavement and apprenticeship revolved heavily around proving white control over Black persons.

Apprenticeship laws failed to protect Black families, as seen above. One day, when Williams was in a field close to a public road, he saw an old man and a woman handcuffed together being escorted by policemen. Offering the group oranges, Williams was able to talk to the imprisoned apprentices. After talking to the woman, he learned that she was being sent to the workhouse because she refused to give her free child to the estate's overseer to exploit their labour. Williams noted the growing prevalence of similar coercion throughout the island, "I hear that many people begin to talk that the free child no have no right to stop on the property, and they will turn them off if the mothers don't consent to let them work..."⁹³ Upon the implementation of apprenticeship, formerly enslaved people were under the impression children 6 years of age or younger were granted 'free' status. Although the law affirmed their freedom, the vagueness of children and family rights created vulnerability with enslavers abusing the lack of explicit family protection. They were taking advantage of loopholes in an attempt to coerce free children into apprenticeship by threatening to separate families if they did not acquiesce.

Case Study of James Williams

We desire to bequeath two things to our children.

The first one is roots; the other one is wings

- Sudanese proverb

Apprenticeship failed to provide Black families with protection and stability; they still faced many threats. Older children who were forced into apprenticeship were often left vulnerable even if their parent(s) was or were still alive. In 1837, James Williams shared with Britons his experiences as an apprentice. He revealed he was approximately 18 years

⁹³ Williams, 20.

old in 1837, meaning he was around 15 years of age when apprenticeship began in 1834. He revealed his daily schedule to British audiences, saying,

I had too many things to do – first thing in the morning I had to blow shell, then to go to pasture and get in milking cow, and to milk them – then had to look over the sheep and cows, and all the stock, and to dress them that have sores – then to get them altogether, and give to one little boy to take them to pasture; at nine o’clock go to breakfast for half an hour, then have to go mend gaps in the stone wall, after that have to take two asses and a bill, to cut bread-nut food for the horses – had to climb the high trees to cut the bread-nut – then to chop it up, and load the two asses and take it home, and to come back for another load: - This finish between four and five, and by that time the little boy bring in all the cattle. I have to look over them and to turn them into different pastures, then have to go and get a bundle of wood for the watch-fire, and after that to supper the horses in the stable at night; they don’t allow me to go to [apprentices’ housing] – obliged to keep watch all night, sleeping in the kitchen, and to answer all call; Massa said I was only four years apprentice, and don’t entitle to any time – that only one day in a fortnight due to me to work my ground and feed myself. Massa never give me food; he allow me every other Sunday to work my ground, and sometimes he let me change it for another day. Magistrate say that was all the time the law allow.⁹⁴

The years of apprenticeship were to ‘prepare’ formerly enslaved people for freedom by working for their former enslavers without pay. The argument that enslavers made in British Parliament was that they were unprepared and the transition from enslaved to free was too drastic.

English apprenticeship was not novel, as it dated back to the Medieval period. What was new, however, was the duality of the system depending on if the person was a white apprentice in Britain or a Black apprentice in Jamaica. Indeed, the basis of English apprenticeship had always been a symbiotic relationship, “binding servant to master and vice versa; in which the master personally taught the apprentice; took responsibility for the latter’s moral welfare; and gave him board and lodgings.”⁹⁵ However, as exemplified through Williams’ testimony, Jamaican apprenticeship was just an extension of enslavement that benefitted the enslavers because now they did not have to provide payment, food, or lodgings

⁹⁴ Williams, 5.

⁹⁵ Charles More, *Skill and the English Working Class, 1870-1914*. (London: Croom Helm, 1980): 41.

and often the apprentices were unprotected by British law compared to when they were enslaved.

The concept that emancipation must be gradual and apprenticeship as a necessity was criticized by abolitionist Elizabeth Heyrick. She pointed out that often the arguments revolved around the ‘absurdity’ of immediate emancipation by comparing it to placing a lavish meal in front of someone who was starving, where the food within their weakened digestive system would kill them; or bringing somebody suffering from frostbite into sudden contact with intense heat; or, finally, taking a long-term prisoner from a dark dungeon into the ‘dazzling’ sunlight. Heyrick agreed that the transitions argued above, “from famine to plenty, - from cold to heat, - from darkness to light” must be gradual when considering the health of the individual. However, she asserted that the argument of gradualism lost its logic when considering freedom out of the clutches of a thief or assassin, or out of the ‘jaws of a shark or a tiger.’ She left readers with a thought-provoking question on the topic: “Must, it, therefore, follow, that the wretched victim of slavery must always remain in slavery? - that emancipation must be *so* gradual, that the blessings of freedom shall never be tasted by him who has endured all the curses of slavery, but be reserved for his posterity alone?”⁹⁶ Not only were enslavers taking advantage of laws to exploit the stolen labour, knowledge production, skills, and time of Black people through the implementation of apprenticeship, but they also used the law’s vagueness to increase punishment against them.

In Williams’ narrative, he detailed abuses suffered throughout apprenticeship. Williams told readers that enslavers’ cruelty often increased after 1834, stating that, “Apprentices get a great deal more punishment now than they did when they was slaves; the master take spite, and do all he can to hurt them before the free come; - I have heard my master say, ‘Those English devils say we to be free, but if we is to be free, he will pretty well

⁹⁶ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 11.

weaken we, before the six and the four years done; we shall be no use to ourselves afterwards.”⁹⁷ Williams attested apprentices were punished more frequently and more cruelly than before, and overall, they were ‘a great deal worse off’ than when enslaved.⁹⁸ Williams, himself, experienced the overzealous increase of punishments. As an apprentice, he was severely flogged seven times and sent to the workhouse four times; meanwhile, when he was enslaved, he was never flogged, stating that he “sometimes was switched, but not badly.”⁹⁹

The first time Williams was flogged was shortly after apprenticeship laws were enacted in August 1834, when he was approximately 15 years old. His enslavers, Mr. Senior and his sister Miss Senior, tried five men and three boys in front of the magistrate, Dr. Thompson. The magistrate found them all guilty of charges that Williams attested were fabricated.¹⁰⁰ Dr. Thompson flogged the men with the Cat O’Nine Tails whip¹⁰¹ and the boys with switches; Williams was sentenced to 39 lashes, an event he remembered vividly, “... my back all cut up and cover with blood, - could not put on my shirt - but massa say, constable not flogging half hard enough, that my back not cut at all; - Then the magistrate make one of the police take the Cat to flog the other three men, and him flog most unmerciful.”¹⁰² A short while later, Williams was brought before the magistrate because Mr. Senior said he did not bring the sheep out to the fields until 9am. Williams defended that the sheep were to be kept in to be sheared, but the magistrate sentenced him to be locked in Knapdale’s dungeon for ten days and nights in a cell barely big enough for him to lay down, and with only a pint of water and two coco or plantains to eat a day. Williams returned to Mr. and Miss Senior extremely

⁹⁷ Williams, 1.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Later on in Williams’ narrative, he admitted to a wrong-doing, acting as an accessory to stealing pork from Mr. and Miss Senior. His honesty later in his account indicated that he likely told readers the truth when stating that none of the apprentices had done anything to deserve punishment at this point and at future moments in his testimony.

¹⁰¹ The Cat O’Nine Tails whip had nine separate knotted lashes made of leather.

¹⁰² Williams, 2.

weak, but they claimed he wasn't punished 'half enough,' and was immediately ordered to work.¹⁰³

A week after Williams was let out of the dungeon, a different magistrate, Mr. Rawlinson, arrived at Mr. Senior's estate saying that the dungeon was just a warning and the punishment was not over. During the trial, Mr. Rawlinson prompted Mr. Senior on what to say to ensure Williams received punishment - 20 lashes that were so severe, he fainted.¹⁰⁴ Ten days later, Mr. Senior tried Williams for not putting the horses and cows into pasture after getting home from that flogging. When Williams defended himself to Mr. Rawlinson by explaining the event left him ill and hospitalized, the magistrate ignored him and sentenced him to another 25 lashes. Williams implored for mercy, as his wounds from 10 days previous had not yet healed, but the punishment was cruelly inflicted anyways, with Williams remembering that he, "was flogged with lancewood switches upon the old flogging - it tear off all the old scabs, and [he] was not able to lie down on [his] back for two or three weeks after - was made to work with [his] back all sore."¹⁰⁵

A month after that flogging, Mr. Senior brought Williams in front of the magistrate for not informing him of pasture gates that had fallen (despite, as Williams attested, driving through them himself every day). Frightened, Williams ran away, was locked in a dungeon for ten days, and was tried for the fallen gates, along with running away. He was sentenced to St. Ann's Bay workhouse for nine days where he was to 'dance' on the treadmill,¹⁰⁶ work in the penal gang, be locked in the workhouse dungeon every night, 'pay' fifty days out of his own time to Mr. Senior, receive 15 lashes, and be locked in Mr. Senior's dungeon at night upon his return home.¹⁰⁷ After nine days in the workhouse, Williams returned to Mr.

¹⁰³ Williams, 3.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

¹⁰⁶ On the treadmill, prisoners' wrists were strapped to a bar. If they mis-stepped, they hung by their wrists while the steps cut their shins and prison guards flogged them. See Williams, 7, 8, 12, 15, 17.

¹⁰⁷ Williams, 6.

Senior's estate, where he was locked in the dungeon day and night, despite the magistrate sentencing him to be locked up at night only. Three weeks after returning from the workhouse, Williams got very sick and nearly died, which he implied stemmed from the torture he received at St. Ann's.¹⁰⁸

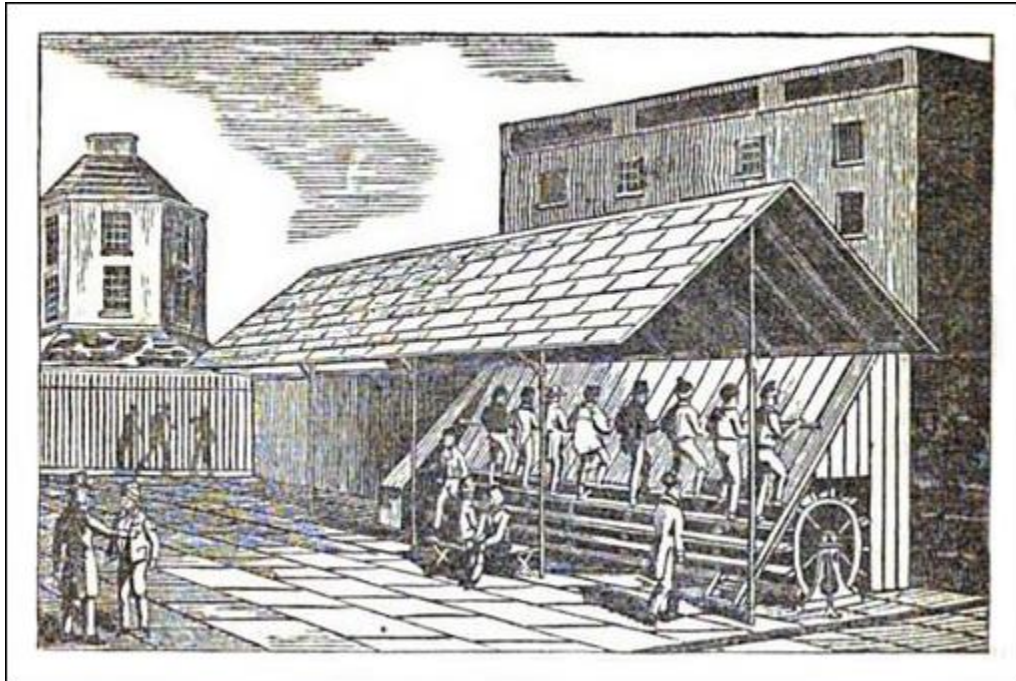


Figure 2. Men 'dancing' the treadmill.

After Williams' first trip to the workhouse, he noted it was a long time before Mr. and Miss Senior punished him again. However, the minimal personal time he had was reduced even further as he paid off the fifty days 'owed' to Mr. Senior. Williams was no longer allowed Sundays off to rest, and every Wednesday he was granted only a half day to work his grounds, the other half of the day was used to pay the 'debt.' Williams attested that for one year and three months (making him approximately 16 or 17 years old), Mr. and Miss Senior exploited his labour on the half day without providing him nourishment to fuel his body.¹⁰⁹ In November 1836, when he was around 17 years old, he was beaten by Mr. Senior. When Williams told Mr. Senior that the law protected him from such beatings, and that he would

¹⁰⁸ Williams, 9.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 9-10.

complain to the magistrate, Mr. Senior responded that was no threat and he will “lick the five pounds out of [Williams] that the magistrate will fine him.”¹¹⁰ Such a response reinforced previous patterns of enslavers disregarding and disobeying colonial laws of amelioration and believing they could exist outside of British regulations. Williams and two other apprentices - Joseph and Amelia Laurence - were sent to the workhouse for seven days. Williams’ crime this time? Uttering the words, “It wasn’t a man made this world, and man can’t command it: the one that make the world will come again to receive it, and that is Jesus Christ!” when he was being unfairly punished.¹¹¹

When Williams returned from his second internment at the workhouse, Mr. Senior ordered him to climb trees to cultivate bread-nut for the horses. Williams told Mr. Senior he was unable to do so because of the floggings he received in the workhouse, noting that was the sixth time he was flogged. Mr. Senior responded that he would, “make it ten times too, and if [Williams was] sick, [he] must die.”¹¹² That threat frightened the young Williams and he left Mr. Senior’s estate to complain to the governor. Williams was brought before the magistrate and tried for his ‘disobedience.’ Mr. Rawlinson sentenced him to 25 lashes (despite his wounds from the workhouse floggings not yet being healed), and seven more days in the workhouse. Williams criticized Mr. Rawlinson for his lack of justice, which resulted in his workhouse sentence being extended from seven to fourteen days.¹¹³

During each trip to the workhouse, Williams shared the experiences of various people also imprisoned within. Interestingly, on this most recent visit, he seemed to note other children for the first time. Throughout his previous descriptions, he used the language of ‘men,’ ‘man,’ ‘women,’ or ‘woman.’ However, during this incarceration, Williams talked about a ‘young mulatto girl,’ likely indicating that there was another child within the

¹¹⁰ Williams, 10.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

workhouse at the same time as him. Through Williams' account of her treatment, it became clear that the cruelty of enslavers and prison guards remained the same despite gender or age.¹¹⁴ In the case of the young girl, Margaret, she was plagued by stomach pains throughout her ten day sentence (a symptom Williams noted was common amongst apprentices who were flogged and forced on the treadmill), and she often mis-stepped on the machine, causing her to be severely flogged, along with injuries to her legs from the mill. Despite struggling to work the machine, the prison guards consistently forced her on it and Williams noted that their cruelty was encouraged by the person she was apprenticed to, "one evening her master [Mr. Chrystie, the saddler] come to the workhouse, when she was on the mill - he beg the boatswain to let the mill go fast, and flog Margaret well, and make her feel it, so that she will keep away from it after."¹¹⁵

Williams repeatedly illustrated that apprentices (no matter age, gender, or health status) were treated with horrific cruelty; oftentimes enslavers tortured them just to show that they could. Those acts of dehumanization aimed to highlight the power imbalance between Black apprentices, and white enslavers and prison guards. Those inflicting the punishments (be they enslavers, or enforcers) did not care about 'lost' labour while apprentices were imprisoned or recovering in hospital - they cared about torturing them. Mr. Senior further reinforced that when he told Williams he would easily lose his labour if he could send Williams to the workhouse for six months.¹¹⁶ The blood-thirsty cruelty was not driven by a genuine desire for 'justice.' Williams illustrated that by acknowledging the one time he undertook a wrongdoing as an accessory to stealing pork from Mr. and Miss Senior. To prevent innocent people from being punished in his place, Williams stepped forward and

¹¹⁴ In fact, oftentimes, women and girls in these institutions were especially vulnerable to sexual harassment, assault, and coercive measures. See Williams, 15.

¹¹⁵ Williams, 18.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 19.

admitted to his part in the theft. As punishment, he was merely fined 10 shillings.¹¹⁷ To pay the fine, Williams relied on his father and one other man from whom he borrowed money.

Even in instances where families were not separated, children could not rely on the protection of their parent(s). Williams was a vulnerable child despite being on the same estate as his father. Throughout his account, he mentioned his father only twice. The first instance was when his father lent him the money to pay the pork fine to Mr. and Miss Senior; the second time was when Williams acknowledged he would have starved to death if his father and other apprentices had not given him food.¹¹⁸ Parents were limited in the ways they could help their vulnerable children. With Williams, where he was often the target of Mr. Senior's wrath, his father financially helped him and also acted in resistance to slip his son food when he was hungry.

Williams attested one final time when Mr. Senior tried to punish him; however, that time, Mr. Rawlinson told Mr. Senior he wrongfully accused Williams.¹¹⁹ That event took place in January 1837. That February, he was approached by James Finlayson (a former apprentice who purchased his freedom) to provide his narrative of apprenticeship to two Britons, Mr. Sturge and Mr. Harvey, who sought to understand how apprentices were treated. After he shared his story, Mr. Sturge offered to pay for Williams' freedom from apprenticeship and brought him to Liverpool, England.¹²⁰ Williams' story was published as evidence against apprenticeship, with the end of the narrative attesting to Williams' truthfulness through a signed document of six Christians who knew James Williams, and attested to his good and honest character.¹²¹ The account of Williams' plight ended with a

¹¹⁷ Williams, 21-22.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 22, 23.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 22-24.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

plea to Britons to end the practice and grant immediate emancipation to Black people living in her colonies:

Let it not be forgotten, that the people of England have paid twenty millions for the abolition of slavery, and that a large amount is still being annually drawn from the public revenue, for the support of more than one hundred stipendiary magistrates! Yet, notwithstanding this costly – this monstrous sacrifice of British treasure, the object for which that sacrifice was made, has never been attained – *slavery has not been abolished* – it exists with unmitigated rigour, in its most ferocious, revolting, and loathsome aspect. Cruelties unheard of – unthought of in the worst days of slavery, are now being ‘heaped like burning coals’ on the heads of the long suffering, and patiently enduring sons and daughters of Africa. ... There is but one remedy – half measures are worse than useless – it requires but a single, brief, simultaneous and energetic movement, and the struggle is over. Immediately re-organize your Anti-Slavery Societies – let the country be aroused – and let the people, with one voice, instruct their representatives peremptorily to demand the instant, the unconditional, and the everlasting annihilation of the accursed system.¹²²

Although Williams’ story singles out the experiences he faced, he provided readers with many examples throughout that showed his realities were not unique and the cruelty was commonly experienced by apprentices in Jamaica.

From the experiences of orphans and vulnerable children pre-emancipation, through to apprenticeship, it became evident they were subjected to the whims of enslavers and white colonial officials. They were dehumanized, separated from their parents, siblings, and families despite British laws of amelioration and attempts to protect Black families.

Enslavers utilized loopholes to disregard their home government’s laws, such as using ‘debts’ as an excuse to separate children from families, and using apprenticeship laws to coerce stolen labour from freed children by threatening to remove them from their parents.

Enslavers and colonial officials did not differentiate between gender, age, health status, or other identities when inflicting cruel punishments. Indeed, rape and sexual coercion were often used to dehumanize, punish and enforce white power-over systems against Black female bodies more so than their male peers. As Williams’ testimony showed, children were

¹²² Williams, 25-26.

flogged and sent to workhouses to ‘dance’ the treadmill, work in penal gangs, and be punished alongside adults, with no mercy or light-handedness shown to them. Amelioration and apprenticeship regulations had goals to protect Black families, however, they were often left in vulnerable situations due to vagueness surrounding the laws or colonial disregard of British-implemented orders.

CHAPTER TWO: THE ROLE OF KINSHIP NETWORKS

Gidi gidi bu ugwu eze
Unity is strength
- *Igbo proverb*

Although enslaved people were torn away from their homes, land, and culture during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, many African traditions continued to be practiced in territories to which they were brought. One such concept was family structure. Western cultures traditionally support the nuclear family (husband, wife, and children) and indeed, often portray that configuration as the only acceptable one. Meanwhile, West African countries often practiced (and practice) kinship networks and family structures. Those traditions were primarily blood-based through siblings, parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents, and extended members. These units often expanded to include marriage links. However, historian Jenny M. Jemmott explained that it is important to note that blood ties usually took precedence over marriage ties. Finally, these kinship units typically lived together in a multi-building compound.¹²³ Although frequently separated from relatives upon enslavement and arrival in Jamaica, Africans sought to recreate these networks and often implemented ‘fictive kin’ to replicate family units.¹²⁴ Such reproductions played a role in ‘foster’ families for orphaned or vulnerable children (OVCs) who were torn away from birth parents during their enslavement.

The replication of family units combined with another preserved West African practice of what Niara Sudarkasa called, “the notion of commitment to the collectivity.”¹²⁵ In pre-colonial West African countries, the extended family and familial compound was a system of support and worked as a collective to raise children. Jemmott noted that the

¹²³ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 18.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

¹²⁵ Niara Sudarkasa, “Interpreting the African Heritage in Afro-American Family Organization,” in *Black Families*, 2nd ed., ed. Harriette Pipes McAdoo (Newbury Park: Sage, 1988): 43; Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 21.

practice evolved in Jamaica to include, “continued expression in networks of familial support and family advocacy; in collective activism by communities of parents on issues such as education, health and welfare of children; and in the continued involvement of the extended family and the entire community in the upbringing of children.”¹²⁶ It is based on those understandings of family, collectivity, and community that I analyze the realities of kinship networks in Jamaica.

Unfortunately, enslaved family structures were often unrecorded by enslavers and their management. There were few efforts to document the people who were held as property and if so, it was generally just a book name and value. After emancipation, records became more common as it became a way to ensure people were not re-enslaved. Fortunately, there are some historians dedicated in their attempts to understand enslaved life in Jamaica. As previously explored, these historians include Barry Higman’s analyses of enslaved household structures and demographic trends; Richard Dunn’s life work studying Mesopotamia and Mount Airy; and Colleen A. Vasconcellos’ efforts to include the experiences of children in Jamaica across enslavement, apprenticeship, and freedom.¹²⁷ Due to the inaccessibility of enslavement records pre-August 1, 1834, this section leans heavily on the works of the authors mentioned above to determine the experiences of OVCs and kinship networks prior to abolition and apprenticeship.

¹²⁶ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 21; Simeon Chilungu, “Marriage, Family and Kinship Ties in Africa,” in *African Continuities/L’Héritage Africain*, ed. Simeon Chilungu and Sada Niang (Toronto: Terebi, 1989): 63.

¹²⁷ See Barry W. Higman, “Household Structure and Fertility on Jamaican Slave Plantations: A Nineteenth-Century Example.” *Population Studies*, 27, no. 3 (1973): 527-50; Barry W. Higman, “The Slave Family and Household in the British West Indies, 1800-1834.” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 6, no. 2 (1975): 261-87; Barry W. Higman, “Demographic Trends,” in David Eltis, Stanley Engerman, Seymour Drescher, and David Richardson eds. *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017): 20-48; Barry W. Higman, “Demography and Family Structures,” in David Eltis, and Stanley L. Engerman eds. *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 479-511; and Barry W. Higman, *Slave Population and Economy in Jamaica, 1807-1834*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). See Richard Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life and Labor in Jamaica and Virginia*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014); and Richard S. Dunn, “A Tale of Two Plantations: Slave Life at Mesopotamia in Jamaica and Mount Airy in Virginia, 1799 to 1828.” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3, no. 34 (1977): 32-65. See Colleen A. Vasconcellos, *Slavery, Childhood, and Abolition in Jamaica, 1788-1838*. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2015); and Vasconcellos, “From Chattel to Breeding Wenches,” 325-343.

Vasconcellos argued that child separation was sometimes deliberate, with enslavers thinking it would provide greater benefits than keeping families together. One supporting claim was that young children were more profitable because they had years of potential labour to be exploited; girls, in particular, were considered an economical choice due to reproductive prospects. Indeed, many enslavers thought that separating children from their families benefitted themselves, as the enslaved children would become attached and loyal to their enslavers, as a pseudo-parent figure.¹²⁸ Two further thought processes were shared by Dr. Collins, a British doctor in Jamaica. Firstly, he argued that their young age made familial separation easier, resulting in a more seamless adjustment into enslavement. His second point was that because of their age, they were easier to control, and could develop English and required work skills at a faster pace compared to developed adults.¹²⁹ The high demand of enslaved children was discussed by Vasconcellos, noting that African girls were often transported across the Atlantic in numbers greater than adult women.¹³⁰ As a result of those beliefs, enslaved children were often brought to Jamaican plantations without their parents or adult family figures.

Pre-August 1, 1834

Chinguru chia abamura nchogu egwatia mbara
The strength of human beings [together] is like an elephant splitting wood
- *Gusii proverb*

In pre-emancipation Jamaica, enslavers typically shaped the structure and routine of childhood, preventing childcare from being controlled by families and kinship networks.¹³¹ However, that did not mitigate the importance of kin and ‘fictive’ kin. There were attempts to bring African community-based values into life on the Jamaican plantations. In 1785,

¹²⁸ Vasconcellos, *Slavery, Childhood, and Abolition*, 329.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Higman, “The Slave Family and Household,” 279.

British enslaver, Bryan Edwards, noted that enslaved people from Africa often proposed to ‘adopt’ newly arrived children who were separated from family. Additionally, Edwards indicated that such actions were viewed positively and that, “The strangers too were best pleased with this arrangement, and ever afterwards considered themselves as the adopted children of those by whom they were thus protected, calling them parents, and venerating them as such.”¹³² The termination of the legal slave trade had many enslavers looking to children to supplement their coerced labour force. Whereas before abolition, young people were viewed as a burden on resources, they were now seen as potential labourers and as future parents themselves. With the shift, enslaved children began to be included in records in a bit more detail.

A report from August 1, 1825, sought to record information about enslaved families at Old Montpelier, a Jamaican estate. The report included information about OVCs being fostered within the enslaved community, although that information was mentioned infrequently. The report noted that there were three separate instances where a child’s mother had died, and they were taken in to live with and be cared for by their grandmothers.¹³³ The report also included a case where a household consisted of a man and woman (relationship unknown), her two children (paternity unknown), and an orphaned girl whose mother had died.¹³⁴ A report of one estate (Old Montpelier) from one year (1825) provided multiple examples of OVCs being cared for by both kin, and ‘fictive’ kin, indicating that the practice was likely prominent within other enslaved communities, throughout the entirety of the slave trade.

Mesopotamia, another Jamaican estate, also provided examples of children cared for by their grandmothers upon the death of their mother. In November 1827, a baby girl, named

¹³² Bryan Edwards, *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, vol II. III vols. (London: John Stockdale, 1801): 155; Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society*, 166.

¹³³ Higman, “Household Structure and Fertility,” 540.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

Sarah McAlpin, was born to a Mesopotamian field hand, named Flora. McAlpin's presumed father, Robert, was also enslaved at the estate. After the birth, Flora immediately died from dropsy. Historian Richard Dunn speculated that Robert received help from his mother, Sarah Affir, to care for the baby until her death at six months old in May 1828.¹³⁵ When an enslaved woman, Dido, was repeatedly punished for suffering stillbirths and miscarriages, she self-liberated herself from Mesopotamia in 1831, following the death of her three-month old baby. She left behind her eight-year-old daughter, Georgiana, who was presumably looked after by her maternal grandmother until Dido's return later that year.¹³⁶ Not only were grandmothers often employed to help raise OVCs, so too were older siblings. Dunn discussed the story of Lizzie, an enslaved woman at Mesopotamia, who self-liberated herself from the estate in 1830. However, Lizzie had children and left her thirteen-year-old daughter to care for her one-, and four-year old.¹³⁷ Despite now being an OVC herself, her adolescent daughter looked after her siblings until Lizzie's return in 1832.

Twenty OVCs were recorded arriving at Mesopotamia in March 1792 from a Guinea enslavement ship. Eleven boys and nine girls were brought to the estate together, but without any adults, being torn away from their families upon enslavement. Two of the boys were approximately eleven years old, and nine were thirteen; seven of the girls were estimated to be eleven years old, and two were thirteen.¹³⁸ Most of them were still in their teens by 1800. The records did not indicate others caring for them and they were noted to be put into strenuous labour. Dunn presumed that likely resulted in the twenty children forming kinship networks between each other. Dunn supported that claim by noting one of the enslaved people, Matura, named her daughter after one of her shipmates, Fancy, nine years after

¹³⁵ Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations*, 97.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 171-2.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 178-9.

Fancy's death which indicated a strong bond that withstood years of separation.¹³⁹ Dunn considered the horrors experienced by the twenty Guinean children beginning with their removal from their families in West Africa and their strenuous journey to the coast where they were isolated, chained, and put onto enslavement ships. They survived the horrific trans-Atlantic crossing, and were sold and branded upon their arrival to Mesopotamia all while they were still children. Then, immersed into a community of 300 strangers, they were forcefully employed in the cane field gangs where they worked twelve hours a day.¹⁴⁰

Along with the few explicit mentions of OVCs at Mesopotamia, they were also mentioned in passing to indicate their presence. When discussing enslaved food production for their own consumption, it was mentioned that Mesopotamian managers always stated the enslaved were 'well cared for.' A specific example came in 1802, when they provided an extra 1,500 to 2,000 plantains to enslaved people, with 660 specifically designated to 22 "invalids and orphaned children" unable to grow and tend to their own food production.¹⁴¹ Academic Kamau Brathwaite also discussed bounties that were paid to women with six or more living children to encourage new labour production. Those women were exempt from hard labour to raise their children, and the six could either be biologically theirs or adopted into their family.¹⁴² Enslaved people faced many burdens, but there are countless examples (as illustrated above) that show the importance of compassion and sense of community, and their implementation and mobilization to protect the most vulnerable.

After the abolition of the slave trade until apprenticeship, enslavers began to view children as having value. They were more malleable, and theoretically, had more years of labour to exploit than an adult. Strategies were put in place to support OVCs, such as providing rations to those who were unable to grow their own food, and providing incentives

¹³⁹ Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations*, 179.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 180.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 154.

¹⁴² Brathwaite, *The Development of Creole Society*, 293.

to mothers of large families to have or adopt six or more children. Through these efforts, enslavers were hoping to have an evergreen, self-sustaining enslaved community. Many of those who were held as property also made attempts to protect OVCs during this period by caring for those who arrived on estates without guardians. In one instance, children who arrived in a group created their own kinship network to support each other through their shared ordeals. However, after apprenticeship began on August 1, 1834, children were once again considered to have little value to enslavers as they were now free. Despite the changing views by colonial drivers on the island, Black communities continued their efforts to look after OVCs during a new transitional period from slavery to apprenticeship.

Post-August 1, 1834

Aba murdom yidado, ba murdom yidannó yugó
There is no one who has ten fingers who does not have ten relatives
- *Teda proverb*

Jemmott noted that formation of ‘fictive’ kin played a special role post-emancipation, where the sense of responsibility, community, and collective good saw children being cared for by such kinship roles.¹⁴³ From 1850-1852, Jamaica suffered heavily from a cholera outbreak, with an estimated 40,000-50,000 deaths out of a population of 400,000.¹⁴⁴ The island was noted to be amongst the worst struck in an epidemic that travelled around the world. In Europe, it was noted that 1 out of every 150 people had cholera, but in Jamaica the statistic became 1 in every 6 or 7 people.¹⁴⁵ In the city of Goshen, estimates were that 3 out of 4 choleric cases ended in death; similarly, near the town of Carron Hall, evaluations

¹⁴³ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 27.

¹⁴⁴ Gavin Milroy, *A Copy of the Report Made by Dr. Milroy on the Cholera Epidemic in Jamaica, 1850-1851: and Copies of Extracts of Despatches Addressed to and Received from the Governor of Jamaica in Relation to the Said Report*. (London, 1854): 4, 33.

¹⁴⁵ John Parkin M.D., *Statistical Report of the Epidemic Cholera in Jamaica*. (London: William H. Allen, 1852): 6.

deemed that only 1 in 20 cases recovered.¹⁴⁶ As a result of these high fatality numbers, there were significant numbers of OVCs created by the epidemic.

In 1851, the Jamaican Assembly passed the *Act for the Establishment of an Orphan Asylum, and for Certain Other Destitute Children* in response to the number of children left parentless following the outbreak. *The Sun* published a newspaper article on January 8, 1851 which explained the terms of the *Act*:

The most important topic which is engaging public attention at Kingston is the formation of an orphans' asylum, for the reception of cholera orphans, from infancy to twelve years old. It is intended that the inmates of this place shall be lodged, clothed, fed, taught to read, and write a plain hand, and also exercised in daily agricultural labour, until they attain the age of fourteen years, when they will be indentured, for the term of seven years, as agricultural apprentices.¹⁴⁷

For the educational component, children aged twelve years or younger were taught reading and writing by competent teachers for at least four hours a day. Children who were older than twelve were instructed for at least two hours daily. The agricultural labour component saw every child participating with work tailored 'to their strength and capacity.' Children twelve and under were not allowed to work for more than four and a half hours daily, and labour from those older than twelve was capped at seven hours. Finally, once the institutionalized child reached fourteen years of age, they entered apprenticeship as an agricultural labourer for an additional seven years, until they reached twenty-one years of age.¹⁴⁸ Depending on when a child arrived at the Orphan Asylum, there was the potential for seven to twenty-one years of their life to be taken out of their hands.

The *Act* possessed significant power – more than what was required to help the poor. The state was able to transfer parental authority for orphans, but also vulnerable children deemed 'destitute,' to be committed to the Asylum – essentially granting the power to

¹⁴⁶ Parkin, 35.

¹⁴⁷ *The Sun, London*, (January 8, 1851): 6.

¹⁴⁸ *The Laws of Jamaica*, 291.

forcibly remove children from their homes.¹⁴⁹ The *Act* allowed, by law, for the chairman of quarter sessions to send to the Asylum any child under twelve years old deemed to be abandoned, ‘destitute,’ and without any means to financially support themselves, regardless of “whether such child shall be an orphan or not.”¹⁵⁰ That meant that even if a child lived with their family, if they were deemed to be ‘too poor’ by British standards, parental rights could be transferred to the state, and the child could be taken by police to the Orphan Asylum. Not only did chairmen hold special powers to institutionalize OVCs, but so too did the Asylum’s benefactors. The Orphan Asylum relied solely on charitable donations for its establishment and maintenance. To ensure donations, the *Orphan Asylum Act* provided donors with ‘incentives.’ Those who donated £100 became a ‘life governor’ of the society; those who gave £5 or more a year became a ‘governor’ of the society; and those who supplied between twenty shillings, and £5 became a ‘member.’¹⁵¹ Each £1 that a member and governor donated annually allowed them to propose one child to be admitted to the Asylum each year; every life governor was granted an allotment of ten children.¹⁵² Although those under the age of six years old possessed ‘free’ status upon emancipation, being committed to the Orphan Asylum resulted in re-enslavement through the seven years of indentured labour following their institutional release at fourteen years old. The *Orphan Asylum Act* allowed chairmen and donors to institutionalize OVCs. Considering the vindictive behaviours analyzed previously throughout Jamaica, it was possible that chairmen or donors may have recommended children to be taken to separate families as punishment or as coercion to be granted the child’s labour on their own estate.

The role of kinship networks came into play following the cholera outbreak; many children were left parentless, but that did not mean they were without anyone to provide or

¹⁴⁹ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 121-122.

¹⁵⁰ *The Laws of Jamaica*, 288.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 289.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

care for them, as many OVCs were ‘adopted’ by extended family or the wider ‘fictive’ kin community.¹⁵³ Such measures were likely an act of resistance influenced by the state attempting to force OVCs into apprenticeship, following time in the Asylum.¹⁵⁴ To prevent the re-enslavement and forced institutionalization of Black children, the extended community and familial networks came together to ‘adopt’ them to ensure they were protected.

Despite efforts to care for vulnerable children, the cholera epidemic in Jamaica created racist reactions throughout Britain. The English blamed child mortality on parents not providing adequate care and pushed for Black people in Jamaica to adopt British hygiene standards. Not only were parents blamed, but kinship networks who took in OVCs were often disregarded in British newspaper reporting on the pandemic. The *Falkirk Herald* reported that the number of orphans was distressing, and a grave cause of concern for Jamaican authorities: “Hundreds of children of tender age are left utterly destitute; for fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, have been swept away by the pestilence. They are to be seen in houses forlorn and helpless. Infants are found lying on the floor forsaken by friends and relatives, for they are sleeping in death, and these innocents are kept from perishing by the visits of the benevolent.”¹⁵⁵ Ignoring those in Jamaica who looked after OVCs during and after the cholera epidemic was unsurprising. Considering that the Orphan Asylum relied solely on benefactors, the newspaper article was likely used to draw charitable donations from Britain to help the island. Charity work was [is] often rooted in trauma porn:¹⁵⁶ showing images or providing descriptions of starving children; or the bodies of those killed in violence, or natural disasters; or those living in severe poverty and are houseless or underclothed to influence donations made to the organization. The concept is that seeing or

¹⁵³ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 122.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 137.

¹⁵⁵ “The Cholera in Jamaica.” *Falkirk Herald*, Stirlingshire (January 2, 1851): 4.

¹⁵⁶ Discussion of trauma porn is still lacking within academia. However, the concept and impacts of the practice are discussed within many activist and social justice circles. See Brittany Johnson, “What Trauma Porn Is, and Why It Hurts Black People.” *The Mighty* (2020).

hearing about such circumstances draws pity, and empathy from those who are more fortunate. They feel thankful for the lives they live and provide funding to help those who live oppositely.¹⁵⁷ If the newspaper reported that the ‘forlorn and helpless’ children were cared for, donations would likely decrease; so instead, it reported that the pandemic “seem[ed] to have destroyed all the social affections” of those in Jamaica.¹⁵⁸

Historian Daniel Livesay noted that those racist stereotypes of insufficient Black parenting, and the aloofness and individuality of Black people and families continued to appear throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Such biases culminated with a 1945 report published by the West India Royal Commission which blamed women of African descent in Jamaica for “lagging behind the rest of the empire in maternal affection,” and insisted the only hope for Jamaican children was for parents to implement British notions of nuclear families and structures.¹⁵⁹ Demanding that families in Jamaica adopt the ‘standard’ British and western nuclear family structure, and admonishing them for any other variation of ‘family’ was (is) drenched in hypocrisy. Britain (and much of the world) spent centuries tearing Black families apart through murder, malicious separation, and enslavement. They then turned around and demanded Black communities model what the west determined was an ‘appropriate’ family structure without acknowledging their role in Black family destruction and upheaval. Furthermore, efforts in Jamaica to reunify families post-emancipation, or kinship networks looking after OVCs, were disregarded by colonial sources to claim racist stereotypes of Black indifference, and lack of care and affection, despite countless examples proving the opposite.

¹⁵⁷ The concept of trauma porn is largely problematic: instead of thinking of viewers and showing them horrific images to invoke feelings of charity, and empathy, one needs to instead consider how those photographed feel - often, they’re shown in vulnerable states during a time of distress, where they’re photographed, often without consent, and their image is used by large charities to draw in money.

¹⁵⁸ “The Cholera in Jamaica.” *Falkirk Herald*, Stirlingshire (January 2, 1851): 4.

¹⁵⁹ Daniel Livesay, “Transatlantic Family-Making: Jamaica and Great Britain.” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History*, (2019): 11.

Case Study of George Wellington Crawford

Pooli wo kawritan de iida
Unless birds come together, a flapping sound is not heard
- *Fulbe proverb*

In addition to adults forming protective relationships with children, on some occasions, the kinship *between* children resulted in the difference between enslavement and freedom. Such was the case with George Wellington Crawford, a Black child, who was abducted from Montego Bay shortly after apprenticeship came into practice. Wellington had been lured onto the vessel of a Captain James and his wife, Hannah, to complete a chore. He was then abducted and taken to Cuba, where he was sold to a man named Garcia. Jemmott discovered that there was no mention made of his parents, but that his disappearance was reported by friends and extended relatives, meaning that he was an OVC. Wellington's kinship network fought for his freedom and advocated on his behalf to authorities. In particular, two other boys, Francis Grant and William Mitchell, played a key role in Wellington's recovery. The governor of Jamaica sent Grant and Mitchell to Cuba in 1838 (under British consul protection) in order to identify Wellington.¹⁶⁰ After nearly a decade of enslavement in Cuba, Wellington was returned to Jamaica, and freedom, in large part thanks to Mitchell and Grant – children themselves and friends of Wellington who did not give up on his rescue.

Wellington was not the only child kidnapped and enslaved by Captain James. It turned out that James, his wife, his son, and his brother-in-law collaborated to abduct multiple young boys. In fact, although Jemmott noted William Mitchell as a friend of Wellington's from Jamaica, it seems like he was also enslaved by James and sold in Cuba alongside Wellington. A newspaper article from *The Barbadian*, dated November 30, 1839, discussed the trial of James for his human trafficking crimes:

¹⁶⁰ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 103-104.

Regina vs John James – The prisoner was Captain of a drogger trading from the Northside to Kingston, and indicted as our readers are aware of having taken off two boys from Montego Bay in this Island in 1833, and sold them as slaves in Cuba. ... charging him with having carried off and sold in slavery, the boy named Frank, ... which designates such an offence as piracy, and punishes it with death without benefit of clergy. ... The boys did not seem above 13 or 14 years old, and consequently could not have been above 8 or 9 when they were taken to Cuba. It appeared that they were not the only ones who were kidnapped (if we may so term it) on the same occasion. There were two others, one named William Allan who died in Gaol since his return to Jamaica, and another named Wellington not yet rescued from the debased system to which he has become subjected. Frank and [William] Mitchell were not taken at the same time, they did not know one another before the occasion. ... Frank did not know when he went on board, that either Mitchell, Allen, (the boy since dead) or Wellington (still in Cuba) were on board. He was told to go below, and it was not until the next morning that he found he was not the only destined Cuban slave.¹⁶¹

Once in Cuba, the children, minus Wellington, were sent to Garcia, a baker in St. Jago de Cuba. A week later, the children saw a man named Brown John, whom they knew from Jamaica. Upon learning their story and current enslavement, Brown John went to the Governor on their behalf, who sent soldiers to take them to the Governor's Secretary's estate. The children remained there for five years, until,

the relations of Wellington, the boy who still unfortunately remains in Cuba, had made some stir in the matter in Lord Sligo's time, that steps were taken for their recovery, and ultimately they were liberated. ... Mitchell was the son of a woman called Patty attached to Flowerfield estate, near [Montego Bay]. Mitchell had not seen his mother until during the course of the trial this day, when she came into Court, and on which occasion the meeting was said to be very affecting. The boy was soon after called on the boards to give his testimony, and he was so affected that the Counsel forbore to examine him for some minutes. ... He was taken on board the vessel at Montego Bay before Frank was (as was also William Allan and Wellington), and it was not until the next day that he and they knew that he (Frank) was on board.¹⁶²

For James' practice of abducting and enslaving children, and separating them from their families, he was found guilty and sentenced to death.¹⁶³ Although the newspaper recording of the trial did not indicate whether Mitchell and Wellington knew each other prior to their

¹⁶¹ *The Barbadian*, (November 30, 1839): 4.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ It is important to note that James evaded his death sentence as the law had been changed in a Parliamentary statute, removing execution, and substituting it with transportation for life. Since the law had been changed, James was tried under an Act that no longer existed, meaning the sentence could not be carried out, nor could he be retried for the same offence. See *Morning Journal, Kingston*, (February 1, 1840): 4.

enslavement together, nevertheless their shared experience would either create a bond or strengthen a pre-existing relationship. It is indisputable that Mitchell played a crucial role in Wellington's recovery, as Wellington affirmed that he had been, "found by William Mitchell," exemplifying the kinship formed through the shared experience.¹⁶⁴ Wellington, himself, then went on to be a driving force in the recovery of other abducted Jamaican children in Cuba, which indicated the cyclical nature and importance of kinship in post-emancipation Jamaica.¹⁶⁵

The efforts implemented by Wellington's kinship network in his protection and recovery had rippling effects throughout the island. After James' trial, numerous investigations took place before the Stipendiary Justices against a Spaniard, Antonio Soza; a man named Dr. John; and a Montego Bay merchant, Daniel Levy, Esquire.¹⁶⁶ Those men were all set to stand trial against accusations of human trafficking. The movement created by Wellington's kinship network was monumental as it seemed that societal standing did not guarantee protection against the investigations. The merchant, Daniel Levy, was an esteemed member of society, with the *Morning Journal* 'regretting' to inform their readers of his charges. Although he was not protected against accusations, the outcome of the trial still seemed to lean in his favour, with the newspaper stating, "The high character which Mr. Levy bears in the community in which he resides, and the known humanity of his disposition, leads us to conclude, that he will be enabled to prove, that he has had no participation whatever in the diabolical traffic carried on by persons who were in command of his trading vessels."¹⁶⁷ Although legal justice was frequently denied to Black people in Jamaica, kinship networks came together to demand action, such as with Wellington's recovery. When colonial action

¹⁶⁴ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 104.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 104-107.

¹⁶⁶ *Morning Journal, Kingston*, (November 15, 1839): 3.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.* Information about the outcome of his trial could not be found, but a newspaper article from 1844 referenced the schooner boat of a Daniel Levy, esq. of Montego Bay, likely indicating that Levy successfully evaded a guilty verdict. See *Belfast Commercial Chronicle*, (November 23, 1844): 2.

did not happen, they took matters into their own hands, such as through reunification attempts following emancipation.

It must be stated that Wellington's case was not unique and unfortunately, some people never returned to Jamaica from their kidnappings. Jemmott's article, "Recovering the Lost: Efforts at Reuniting Victims of Forced Separation after 1834: Some Case Studies from Jamaica, 1834-1860," detailed many specific examples of kidnapping and re-enslavement following emancipation, proving that such occurrences were readily practiced to feed the ongoing slave trade. Black people in places where slavery was abolished lived with that threat as a reality. Those who were captured were taken to and re-enslaved in places like Cuba and the Southern United States where possessing people as property was still protected by law. Following 1834 emancipation, Jemmott noted that by 1848, kidnappings had increased so much that official government reports were sent to Britain regarding Jamaican residents' concerns about re-enslavement.¹⁶⁸ In addition to official correspondence sent to the home country, Hector Mitchell, mayor of Kingston, noted parents often asked him for guidance on reunification processes for their children. Anthony Barclay, British consul to New York, also commented on the 'considerable extent' of child snatching, along with reporting that approximately 14 boys were taken to Norfolk, Virginia from Jamaica in 1851, likely re-enslaved.¹⁶⁹

Reunification efforts were complicated. Jemmott organized recovery attempts into three main categories: the first instance involved families and kinship networks alerting trusted colonial officials about the kidnapped child; the second category consisted of those who were recovered to Jamaica from re-enslavement and sought help from the Governor to liberate family members still captive; and finally, those who went to the authorities in their

¹⁶⁸ Jemmott, "Recovering the Lost," 183.

¹⁶⁹ Jemmott, "Recovering the Lost," 192; CO 137/311, Charles Grey to Earl Grey, 27 December 1851, enclosing circular from Robert Harrison, U.S. Consul in Jamaica, and also letter from Anthony Barclay, British Consul in New York.

place of re-enslavement seeking help to get back to Jamaica.¹⁷⁰ Interestingly, all three categories were present within the circumstances surrounding Wellington's re-enslavement in Cuba. His disappearance was reported to colonial officials in Jamaica by his kinship network; once returned from enslavement in Cuba themselves, Francis Grant and William Mitchell advocated for Wellington's recovery; and while in Cuba, Grant and Mitchell alerted Brown John to their kidnapping and he went to the Governor on their behalf.

It is important to analyze the reunification attempts made by kinship networks to re-establish families that were separated by the slave trade as it reinforced the prioritization of blood ties, discussed by Jemmott, and the 'commitment to the collectivity' explained by Sudarkasa. Community was well-established and integral throughout enslavement and into emancipation. Jemmott also noted that studying reunification efforts by Black people also dispelled "racist/elitist representations of Black nonchalance to family," that was argued by British enslaver and colonial official, Edward Long; and British enslaver, Mrs. A.C. Carmichael, along with others throughout history.¹⁷¹ As perfectly put by Jemmott, no matter if it took place while holding people as property was protected by law or after emancipation was enacted, separation "occasioned disruption, disintegration and devastation for many Black families."¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰ Jemmott, "Recovering the Lost," 184.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 195-6.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 195.

CHAPTER THREE: INTERACTIONS WITH WHITE FIGURES

Ile la ti n ko eso re ode
Charity begins at home
- Yoruba proverb

Case Studies of Dido Elizabeth Belle, and Sarah Forbes Bonetta

Amaanhe ngakaahea gatuke tegakweeba waabo hai
The water, which boils, does not forget its home
- Kuria proverb

There are a few commonly discussed examples of Black children interacting with white families during the slave trade, outside of enslaver and enslaved dynamics. One example was Dido Elizabeth Belle, whose story influenced Amma Asante's 2014, not-fully-accurate, movie *Belle*. Belle was born with 'free' status in 1761 London; she was the daughter of British navy admiral Sir John Lindsay and Maria Bell(e), an African woman. Although the history of Maria Bell(e) is still a subject of debate, it is thought that she was enslaved on a Spanish ship before being taken by Lindsay, as a prize, obtaining 'free' status at some point before 1772.¹⁷³

At an uncertain point in time, Belle and her white cousin, Elizabeth Murray, were moved into the home of their great-uncle, Lord Mansfield. Despite being mixed-race in a highly racist society, Belle's experience with her white family members was relatively comparable to her cousin's. Belle was educated alongside Murray, she was provided stylish clothing and comfortable living arrangements, and she was left an inheritance in her great-uncle's will. Notably, she was not permitted to dine alongside her family, but would join them afterwards.¹⁷⁴ Part of the fascination with Belle possibly stems from her experience at

¹⁷³ John J. Clune, and Margo S. Stringfield, *Historic Pensacola*. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2009; revised paperback edition, 2017): 113; Gretchen H. Gerzina, "The Georgian Life and Modern Afterlife of Dido Elizabeth Belle," in *Britain's Black Past*, ed. Gretchen H. Gerzina (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020): 164-5.

¹⁷⁴ Gerzina, 170-1.

the Mansfield house. She was treated *almost* as an equal to her cousin, Murray. Her extended family genuinely cared for her, as shown through Lord Mansfield's will where he left her an annual income of £100, and a lump sum of £500 to provide for her.¹⁷⁵ Regardless of the familial affection, being treated *almost* as an equal is far different than being treated with actual equity. Belle would have been well aware of the differences between the experiences granted to her compared to Murray, even within a family home.

Another well-known example of a Black child 'fostered' by a white family is the story of Sarah Forbes Bonetta, Godchild and ward of Queen Victoria herself. Bonetta was from the Egbado (now Yewa) – a Yoruba tribe in Nigeria. In 1848, when Bonetta was five years old, her parents were killed in an attack issued by King Gezo of Dahomey; her life was spared, and she was enslaved in the King's court.¹⁷⁶ In 1850, Gezo 'gifted' her to navy captain, Frederick Forbes, the British envoy to Dahomey. Forbes' goal, on behalf of Britain, was to convince Gezo to abandon the slave trade and yet, he was given an enslaved girl. Forbes believed that as a survivor of Egbado's massacre, she would be considered a ward of the state back in England and charitable people would pay for her education. Forbes took Bonetta to Britain with him in 1850 on the H.M.S. *Bonetta* (contributing to her surnames of Forbes Bonetta). Once they arrived, Forbes sent his educational proposal for Bonetta to Queen Victoria, who decided to act as her 'protector.'

In a new country, there was much speculation around her background. Forbes believed that her family was from good standing, since she was kept enslaved at Gezo's court instead of being sold for profit.¹⁷⁷ English media clung to this suggestion with the *Evening Mail* describing the seven-year-old as a "juvenile princess," the *Saint James's Chronicle*

¹⁷⁵ *Reading Mercury, Berkshire*, (April 15, 1793): 4.

¹⁷⁶ Caroline Bressey, "Of Africa's brightest ornaments: a short biography of Sarah Forbes Bonetta." *Social and Cultural Geography* 6, no. 2 (2005): 254.

¹⁷⁷ Frederick E. Forbes, *Dahomey and the Dahomans: being the journals of two missions to the king of Dahomey, and residence at his capital, in the year 1849 and 1850*. (London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1851): 207.

calling her “an African infant princess,” and the *Montrose, Arbroath, and Brechin Review* stating that, “Her Highness seem[ed] an intelligent child.”¹⁷⁸ Evidently, Bonetta’s past had captivated English audiences, forcing her, without her consent, into the public sphere and imagination. Worried about her health in the British climate, arrangements were made in 1851 for Bonetta to return to Africa to attend school in Sierra Leone. Throughout her life, Bonetta remained supported by Queen Victoria, and she married James Davies, an African merchant, in 1862. As an adult, she suffered from ill health and died in 1880.¹⁷⁹

Similar to Belle, those ‘caring for’ Bonetta felt affection toward their ward. Reverend Henry Venn noted in his diary, “The Queen has taken fancy to [Bonetta] and agrees to pay for her education.”¹⁸⁰ Additionally, when the Queen learned that Bonetta was sick in 1880, she was notably ‘grieved and shocked.’¹⁸¹ The experiences had an evident impact on Bonetta, as her first daughter was named Victoria, after the Queen. Furthermore, after Bonetta’s death, Victoria was sent to England to live and receive education through the Queen’s support.¹⁸²

When discussing the experiences of Belle and Bonetta (and those in similar circumstances), it is crucial that historians are critical of the impacts of colonization and ideologies of white supremacy. Belle and Bonetta were separated from their culture to be integrated into western society. They were considered ‘helpless’ children who needed to be ‘rescued’ from their circumstances. However, as the previous chapter highlighted, the role of kinship networks in Black communities must not be underestimated. Although it will never be known for sure, it is likely that Belle and Bonetta would have been cared for by others in

¹⁷⁸ *Evening Mail, London*, (September 23, 1850): 7; *Saint James’s Chronicle, London*, (September 24, 1850): 2; *Montrose, Arbroath, and Brechin Review, Angus*, (September 27, 1850): 2.

¹⁷⁹ Bressey, 254-5, 258, 263.

¹⁸⁰ William Knight, *Memoir of Henry Venn, B.D.: prebendary of St. Paul’s, and honorary secretary of the Church Missionary Society*. (London: Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, 1882): 213.

¹⁸¹ Bressey, 263.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

their communities and could have remained immersed in their cultures. However, due to beliefs of British, and white, superiority, those interacting with Belle and Bonetta assumed they were better off living in Britain amongst white society which perpetuated the notion of nineteenth-century white supremacy and white saviourism.

Similar to enslaved Black people around the world, Belle and Bonetta, despite their 'free' status, had their freedom and agency stripped from them. They were forced to live according to Lord Mansfield and Queen Victoria's rules and whims. Their sense of belonging was removed. They were assimilated into western living and circumstances of British high society privilege. However, they were not fully welcomed into the European way of life, as they were always held at a distance and one-degree removed because of the colour of their skin. Belle and Bonetta were no longer treated identical to their Black peers, but nor were they treated like young white ladies in British society. Belle, despite being in her family's home, was unable to share meals at the family table and received differential treatment compared to her white cousin. Bonetta went from being enslaved at King Gezo's court to being a captive in Queen Victoria's world. Although Belle and Bonetta were given pretty trinkets and status, and were adored by the white households they lived in, they had no control over their lives and were unable to truly have choice. A bird in a cage, even a cage made of gold and encrusted with diamonds, is still trapped and unable to fly, after all.



Figure 3. & Figure 4. Left: portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle and her cousin, Lady Elizabeth Murray, at Kenwood House around 1776; Right: photograph of Sarah Forbes Bonetta by Camille Silvy, 1862.¹⁸³

The examples of Belle and Bonetta have one thing in common, the white families ‘fostering’ the children had immense influence and power. The fact that it was Lord Mansfield and Queen Victoria acting as guardians likely contributes to the popularity of Belle and Bonetta’s stories, explaining why their circumstances are relatively well-known. In a sense, those looking to welcome Black or mixed-race children from the diaspora into their homes needed to be in similar positions. They required enough wealth to afford an extra person within their household; they needed to be powerful and respected enough to not lose social standing for taking in children of the global majority in a highly racist society; and they needed to live a life of relative leisure to be able to engage in philanthropic efforts. Due to the criteria listed above, questions develop regarding other documented examples of similar interactions with white families.

¹⁸³ National Portrait Gallery, CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Earls of Mansfield, Scone Palace, Perth, Scotland.

Analysis of British Abolitionists

Bundu mu jiri hari la, a su ba gu te kare
Even if a log floats in water for a long time, it will never become a crocodile
- *Songhai proverb*

Although the slave trade was successful and popular throughout the British Empire, there were abolitionists who disagreed with the concept of keeping humans as possessions. To analyze if the white, British abolitionist movement and Christian society reflected the values they were teaching, an examination of the wills, memoirs, and works of abolitionists Mary Morris Knowles, John Newton, Elizabeth Heyrick, William Wilberforce, and Hannah More was conducted to search for instances of financial support or shelter offered to Jamaican orphans or vulnerable children (OVCs) or to the abolition movement.

Mary Morris Knowles

Mary Morris was born in Rugeley, Staffordshire, in 1733 to a wealthy family of established Quakers. Growing up in a Quaker family provided Morris with a very different lifestyle compared to most British women at the time. She was taught to read and write; she studied the Bible and important Quaker texts; she was well-read in both poetry and prose; she was taught to understand and analyze scientific developments; and she was thought to be fluent in French.¹⁸⁴ Encouragement in her education and curiosity led her to develop strong beliefs on social justice and equity, along with notions of who she was, and how her faith influenced her worldview. Morris published a number of works throughout her lifetime,¹⁸⁵ including a poetic defense of her Quaker beliefs, a satirical autobiography, an article in

¹⁸⁴ Judith Jennings, "Mary Morris Knowles: Devout, Worldly and 'Gay'?" *Quaker Studies* 14, no. 2 (2010): 197; Edwina Newman, and Judith Jennings, "New Perspectives on Eighteenth-Century British Quaker Women." *Quaker Studies* 14, no. 2 (2010): 171.

¹⁸⁵ While many sources state the volume and importance of Morris Knowles' writings on political, social, and theological topics, her works are inaccessible. They are primarily only available for in-person viewing (such as at the Library of the Society of Friends, or the British Library, both in London, England), and are undigitized for public consumption. The only writing by Morris Knowles that is publicly accessible is the inscription of a tobacco box that will be discussed in this section of the thesis. As a result, a reliance on secondary sources is required when discussing the abolitionist work of Morris Knowles.

Gentleman's Magazine, and a range of preserved letters.¹⁸⁶ Morris also held her own in a patriarchal, sexist society, often engaging in political and religious debates.¹⁸⁷ In addition to her intellectual accomplishments, Morris gained fame and wealth with her artistic abilities. Noted for her embroidery skills, Queen Charlotte commissioned her to create a needle painting of King George III.¹⁸⁸ Finally, Morris advocated for women, and her right to choose a husband, marrying Thomas Knowles at age 33 - an age where she was considered a spinster by society.¹⁸⁹

During her time in London, Morris Knowles befriended Jamaican-born, Jane Harry, who was the daughter of British plantation owner, Thomas Hibbert and a Jamaican woman, Mrs. Harry.¹⁹⁰ Hibbert sent Harry and her younger sister, Margaret Harry, to England to receive education. Jane Harry was placed under the guardianship of Nathaniel Sprigg and his wife whilst Margaret Harry attended boarding school.¹⁹¹ When British men in the colonies acknowledged their mixed-race children, it was common for them to arrange for their offspring to be sent to England for education and to be placed with white families. Such arrangements will be discussed in greater detail throughout Chapter Four.

It was at the Sprigg household that Morris Knowles met Harry. Although Morris Knowles was more than 20 years older than Harry, they bonded over a shared love of painting. When Harry's sister died while at boarding school, she turned to Morris Knowles for guidance and comfort. Morris Knowles recommended reading the Bible and trusting in God's guidance, which in turn, cultivated a deep belief in the Quaker faith for Harry.¹⁹² Upon converting from the Anglican Church to Quakerism when she was around the ages of

¹⁸⁶ Judith Jennings, "A Trio of Talented Women: Abolition, Gender, and Political Participation, 1780-91." *Slavery and Abolition* 26, no. 1 (2005): 56, 57, 65.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 58-9.

¹⁸⁸ Jennings, "Mary Morris Knowles," 197.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ Jennings, "A Trio of Talented Women," 59.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 60.

18-20, Harry was no longer welcomed to live with the Spriggs. She was then invited to stay with the Knowles. Morris Knowles protected and helped her friend by ensuring she had a safe place to live. Morris Knowles also played a key role in Harry's employment working as a governess at the estate of Morris Knowles' affluent cousin, Sampson Lloyd III and his wife, Rachel Barnes Lloyd.¹⁹³

Harry was a vehement supporter of abolition. When her father died, he had bequeathed enslaved people to Harry's mother and Harry had a goal of ensuring all of their freedom.¹⁹⁴ Just as Morris Knowles was influential in Harry's life, Harry played an important role in the Knowles' household. Thomas Knowles involved himself in a committee and an association that often met at the Knowles' home, aimed at ending the slave trade. Harry's first-hand experience with the socio-economic realities of the slave trade and desire to grant 'free' status to the enslaved people held by her mother likely impacted the Knowles to also support abolition.¹⁹⁵

While Thomas Knowles participated in committees and associations, Morris Knowles leveraged her experience as a writer, inscribing a poem into a tobacco box, "Tho various tints the human face adorn / To glorious Liberty Mankind are born; / O, May the hand which rais'd this fav'rite weed / Be loos'd in mercy and the slave be freed!"¹⁹⁶ Morris Knowles had a history of arguing for women's rights and religious rights; she now extended her social awareness to include the rights of enslaved people. Morris Knowles' participation in abolition likely also stemmed from her family and childhood, as Quakers were central to the movement at the time. The inscription on the tobacco box was meaningful as it served as a

¹⁹³ Jennings, "A Trio of Talented Women," 61.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ Library of Religious Society of Friends, *Inscriptions for a Tobacco Box, 6mo 13 1788* in MSS Vol. 334 [Gibson MSS, Vol. I]: 193.

reminder to consumers that the tobacco being used in Britain was produced through enslaved labour.

Morris Knowles' Quaker teachings allowed her to believe that spirituality could be tied into natural law and politics to form a more equitable society.¹⁹⁷ She implemented her belief in social justice into her writings, culminating in a poem criticizing the slave trade on a tobacco box produced by enslaved labour. Her desire to fight for liberty and equality was expanded to enslaved people, likely due to her friendship with Jamaican-born, Jane Harry. When Harry was turned out of her guardians' home, Morris Knowles took her in and helped her find employment. Morris Knowles also opened her home to an abolition association joined by her husband. With all her involvement in the abolition movement, one would think that she might have left monetary support to further abolitionist goals upon her death in February 1807. Analysis of Mary Morris Knowles' will refuted that assumption. Her will revealed that she left the entirety of her estate and belongings to just one person: her son, George Knowles.¹⁹⁸ Despite Morris Knowles' fervent support of the abolition movement, she allowed her involvement to die with her, as she did not bequeath any supports to help those impacted by the horrific practice. Although the *Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade* passed the month following her death, she did not leave financial aid to lobby the *Act* prior to its passing.

John Newton

John Newton was born July 24, 1725 and died December 21, 1807.¹⁹⁹ While he was well-known for his famed hymn, *Amazing Grace*, Newton's life saw him in many different roles. He was a self-proclaimed sinner and a sailor working in the slave-trade. He noted

¹⁹⁷ Jennings, "A Trio of Talented Women," 56.

¹⁹⁸ Mary Knowles, "Will of Mary Knowes or Knowles, Widow of Ely Place London." *The National Archives*, 1807. PROB 11/1464/175.

¹⁹⁹ John Newton, *The Life of John Newton, Once a Sailor, Afterwards Captain of a Slave Ship, and Subsequently Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, London*. (New York: Pudney, Hooker, & Russell, 1854): 9, 109.

many times in his life where he recognized God's providence and wanted to strengthen his faith and weaken his sins; however, those moments were always short lived.²⁰⁰ He fell in love with and married Mary Cattlet after many years of courtship. As he grew older, he made more serious attempts to amend his life. While he participated in the slave trade, Newton admitted his ignorance and did not consider the practice's 'lawlessness.' He thought God's path led him to the trade and considered it to be an easy, profitable, and respectable career.²⁰¹ However, Newton noted that although he was accustomed to the practice, even he was occasionally shocked at the constant use of chains, bolts, and shackles involved in the enslavement process.²⁰² Such a note indicated the individualistic nature of society. Enslavers were focused on building their fortune and driving profits to provide for themselves and their families. They did not stop to consider the horrors they were inflicting on other human beings – or, if they did, they decided that it was not a contentious issue for them. They could live with their actions because it resulted in wealth. Additionally, working on enslaving vessels likely attracted many who were power hungry with cruel natures. Such employment allowed them to maintain power-over systems and perpetuate systemic violence and abuse against those they considered inferior and inhuman.

In 1750, Newton went from being a sailor on an enslaving ship to being appointed commander as he led three separate trips to Africa to enslave people as property.²⁰³ In 1754, he was supposed to lead his fourth enslavement vessel, but fell sick two days before embarking.²⁰⁴ Missing the voyage was a turning point for Newton; he left the slave trade, advocated for abolition and later admitted he should have, "quitted [*sic*] it sooner, had [he]

²⁰⁰ Newton, *The Life of John Newton*, 11, 53-5.

²⁰¹ John Newton, *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade*. (London: J. Buckland, J. Johnson, 1788): 4; Newton, *The Life of John Newton*, 70.

²⁰² Newton, *The Life of John Newton*, 69-70.

²⁰³ Newton, *The Slave Trade*, 3.

²⁰⁴ Newton, *The Slave Trade*, 3; Newton, *The Life of John Newton*, 70.

considered it, as [he] now [did], to be unlawful and wrong.”²⁰⁵ Upon his reform, he embraced religious instruction and was ordained as a minister in 1764, preaching at Saint Mary Woolnoth parish in London.²⁰⁶

With Newton’s newfound views supporting abolition, he used his position as a minister to preach against the slave trade from the pulpit, calling the practice a ‘national sin.’²⁰⁷ His sermons supporting abolition often worked to educate the public on England’s participation, revealing that ½ to ⅔ of the global trade was thought to be in English control. Newton proclaimed that,

If the trade is at present carried on to the same extent, and nearly in the same manner, while we are delaying from year to year to put a stop to our part of it, the blood of many thousands of our helpless, much-injured fellow-creatures, is crying against us. The pitiable state of the survivors who are torn from their nearest relatives, connections, and their native land must be taken into the account. - Enough of this horrid scene. I fear the African trade is a national sin, for the enormities which accompany it are now generally known; ... Can we wonder that the calamities of the [French Revolution] begin to be felt at home, when we ourselves willfully and deliberately inflict much greater calamities upon the native Africans, who never offended us?²⁰⁸

Newton’s sermons were carefully crafted to ensure great impact on his audiences. In multiple homilies, as seen above, he recognized that English citizens understood the bloodied events of the French Revolution. He used that conflict to draw contextual parallels to the horrid practice of the slave trade,

If you are justly shocked by what you hear of the cruelties practised in France, you would perhaps be shocked much more, if you could fully conceive of the evils and miseries inseparable from this traffic ... There is a cry of blood against us; a cry accumulated by the accession of fresh victims, of thousands, of scores of thousands, I had almost said of hundreds of thousands, from year to year.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁵ Newton, *The Slave Trade*, 4.

²⁰⁶ Newton, *The Life of John Newton*, 71, 79; Newton, *The Slave Trade*, 4.

²⁰⁷ John Newton and John Cecil, *The Works of the Rev. John Newton, Late Pastor of the United Parishes of St. Mary Woolnoth and St. Mary Wool-Church-Haw, Lombard Street, London. Containing an Authentic Narrative, etc. Letters on Religious Subjects, Cardiphonia, Discourses Intended for the Pulpit, Sermons Preached in the Parish Church of Olney, and a Review of Ecclesiastical History, Olney Hymns, Poems, Messiah, Occasional Sermons, and Tracts. To Which are Prefixed, Memoirs of his Life, & By the Rev. John Cecil, A.M.* Vol. II. II vols. (Philadelphia: Uriah Hunt, 1839): 438.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 429-30.

Analysis of Newton's teachings revealed he understood the wrongs he committed in his past and used his position, social standing, influence, and power to try to rectify his role in the enslavement of countless Africans. Newton used his privilege to emphatically object to the slave trade and educate the English public on the abuse and trauma involved in the genocidal practice.

For someone as involved in the abolitionist movement as Newton was, one would think he left money to aid in the fight upon his death in December 1807. However, his will dispelled that notion. Newton left money to his family members: £50 to his sister; £50 to his widowed sister-in-law, Anne Newton; and £50 each to his nephews, Benjamin and Henry. He left money to people who had worked for him: £70 to Edward Batt, the clerk at Saint Mary Woolnoth; £200 to his servant Elizabeth Crabb; £10 to Crabb's niece, Mary Walker; and £100 to his servant Sarah Hodges. The majority of his belongings were left to his adopted child, Elizabeth Catlett, who was his primary caregiver in his old age.²¹⁰ Newton also left £50 pounds in Trust to the Treasurer of the *Sunday School Society*, a society that supported and encouraged the formation of Sunday schools throughout English counties.²¹¹ Finally, he left £50 in Trust to the Treasurer of the *Society for the Relief of Poor Clergymen in the Country*.²¹² Despite Newton's adamance about abolition and support for enslaved people, he did not leave anything to help the cause or the people affected by the slave trade.

Elizabeth Heyrick

Elizabeth Heyrick (née Coltman) was born in Leicester, England in 1769, the second eldest child, and first daughter, amongst four other siblings.²¹³ Heyrick's father was a successful worsted manufacturer and both of her parents were well-educated, with her mother

²¹⁰ Newton, *The Life of John Newton*, 107.

²¹¹ Newton, *The Slave Trade*.

²¹² John Newton, "Will of Reverend John Newton, Clerk of Saint Stephen Coleman Street, City of London." *The National Archives*, 1808. PROB 11/1474/56.

²¹³ Sydney Hartweave, "Heyrick, Elizabeth (1769-1831)." In Candice Goucher, *Women Who Changed the World: Their Lives, Challenges, and Accomplishments Through History*, 475-480. (ABC-CLIO, 2022): 475.

working as a craftswoman, poet, and book reviewer.²¹⁴ When Heyrick was a teenager, she met John Heyrick, a young lawyer, and they married in 1789. After their wedding, John Heyrick joined the 15th light dragoons, serving in England and Ireland, accompanied by his wife during his postings. In 1797, Elizabeth Heyrick returned home from a church service to discover that she was left a widow, with John Heyrick suffering a fatal heart attack while she was gone.²¹⁵ With her husband deceased, Heyrick moved back home with her parents, where her father provided her a generous allowance. Those funds allowed Heyrick to focus on philanthropic efforts, such as establishing a school; visiting prisoners and hospitals; providing charitable donations to those in need; advocating against animal cruelty and slavery; and writing over 20 books and pamphlets on a range of social issues.²¹⁶

Historian Sydney Hartweave succinctly explained Heyrick's impact on the anti-slavery movement: "[she] was hardly the first person to write on the subject of abolition. However, her work is notable for pushing for immediate abolition, when other leaders at the time were agitating for a more gradual process."²¹⁷ Not afraid of going against the status quo of most abolitionists at the time, one of Heyrick's most important writings, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition, or, An Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest, and most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery*, sought to make the slave trade understood by, and relatable to, every person in Britain. Throughout her tract, she argued that every Briton either actively supported slavery or its abolition - there was no middle ground or room for complacency,

But let us, *individually*, bring this great question closely home to our own bosoms. We that hear, and read, and approve, and applaud the powerful appeals, the irrefragable arguments against the Slave Trade, and against slavery, - are we *ourselves* sincere, or hypocritical? Are *we* the true friends of justice, or do we only cant about

²¹⁴ Claire Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780-1870*. (New York: Routledge, 2005): 74; Hartweave, 475.

²¹⁵ Hartweave, 475; Janet Willen, and Marjorie Gann, *Speak a Word for Freedom: Women Against Slavery*. (Tundra Books, 2015): 15.

²¹⁶ Willen, and Gann, 15; Midgley, 74; Hartweave, 475.

²¹⁷ Hartweave, 475.

it? – To which party do *we* really belong? – to the friends of emancipation, or of perpetual slavery? Every individual belongs to one party or the other; not speculatively, or professionally merely, but practically. The perpetuation of slavery in our West India colonies, is not an abstract question, to be settled between the Government and the Planters, - it is a question in which we are *all* implicated; - we are all guilty, - (with shame and compunction let us admit the opprobrious truth) of supporting and perpetuating slavery. The West Indian planter and the people of this country, stand in the same moral relation to each other, as the thief and the receiver of stolen goods. The planter refuses to set his wretched captive at liberty, - treats him as a beast of burden, - compels his reluctant unremunerated labour under the lash of the cart whip, - why? – because WE furnish the stimulant to all this injustice, rapacity, and cruelty, - by PURCHASING ITS PRODUCE. Heretofore, it may have been thoughtlessly and unconsciously, - but now this palliative is removed; - the veil of ignorance is rent aside; - the whole nation must now divide itself into the *active supporters*, and the *active opposers* of slaver; - there is no longer any ground for a neutral party to stand upon.²¹⁸

Those critical lines pack a powerful punch. Heyrick used the writing as a moment of self-reflection and an awakening for Britons. By accusing every person of either actively supporting or actively opposing slavery, Heyrick cunningly moved to motivate the complacent: those who disagreed with slavery, but either did not know how to participate in abolition, or simply did not care enough to do anything about it. Grouping those people in with acting enslavers was a powerful tool to encourage mobilization against slavery. The spirit of Heyrick’s message was famously worded by theologian Desmond Tutu: “If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.”²¹⁹

Within her tract, Heyrick even explained how the typical Briton could contribute to slavery’s end. She recognized the power that people held - even those people society did not consider powerful, namely women and the lower classes. Heyrick encouraged boycotts against enslaved-made products, explaining the importance of buying power and the role each person played in the journey to emancipation. Truly, after her tract’s publication,

²¹⁸ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 4.

²¹⁹ Robert McAfee Brown, *Unexpected News: Reading the Bible with Third World Eyes*. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984): 19.

people could no longer claim ignorance regarding the connection between their purchases and the continuation of slavery. Heyrick believed that boycotting enslaved-made products would pressure enslavers to switch to voluntary labour instead of forced labour: “When there was no longer a market for the production of *slave labour*, then, and *not till then*, will the slaves be emancipated.”²²⁰ The boycotts, Heyrick argued, required a simple substitution that anyone could easily do, and that Britons had a moral obligation to do, as well:

Think, but for a moment, at what a trifling sacrifice the redemption of *eight hundred thousand of our fellow creatures from the lowest condition of degradation and misery may be accomplished*. Abstinence from *one single article* of luxury would annihilate West Indian slavery!! But *abstinence* it cannot be called; - we only need substitute *East India*, for *West India* sugar, - and the British atmosphere would be purified at once, from the poisonous infection of slavery.²²¹

Not only was Heyrick radical for arguing for immediate abolition compared to gradual, but she also advocated for the layperson to recognize the power they held in their hands instead of following society’s narrative that only the rich and influential could make meaningful change.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Heyrick sought to mobilize women into abolition, arguing that they belonged in the movement. She, and two other women, anonymously produced a monthly publication called *The Humming Bird; or, Morsels of Information on the Subject of Slavery*, that often included pieces calling directly to the women of Britain, with one address proclaiming that, “The time is gone by, when the energies of the female sex were wasted upon laborious and everlasting tasks of needle-work, and their literature was confined to cookery books. ... The English Ladies ... have now taken their proper rank in society.”²²² To support the women participating in abolition, Heyrick co-founded the *Female Society for Birmingham* in 1825 - the first women’s anti-slavery society in Britain.²²³ Often, the role of

²²⁰ Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition*, 5.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 24.

²²² Heyrick, *The Humming Bird*, 195.

²²³ Midgley, 44; Hartweave, 479.

women as mothers, along with Christian and national pride, were leveraged to influence women's participation,

At this moment fancy paints to me the English – the Christian mother reading the sacred narrative of Israel's sufferings – pausing to look around on her own dear children – blessing God with tears of joy that ... she may fondle her babe in the pure air and the bright sunshine, without fear that it should be cast as food to the crocodile. ... Yet alas, there is a race of wretched beings, differing only in color and the weight of their woes, living in a state of wretchedness equal to that inflicted by the obdurate Pharaoh on the posterity of the patriarchs, a race kept in the severest bondage ... by the professed followers of the Son of David – the Prince of Peace and Love – by our fathers, our husbands, our sons, our brothers. Women of England! ... I would direct your attention, to our persecuted and injured fellow-subjects; but let me ask where is our boasted humanity? Where our boasted influence in society? If we have hearts to feel for the wretchedness of others, if we be honored and have weight in our families, why does this detestable system of slavery continue to darken our national glory with its disgraceful stains?²²⁴

By having predominantly Christian women think back to the Israelites' enslavement in Egypt, along with the forced removal and murder of their sons, there was an attempt to create a sense of solidarity, connection, and bond between white women in Britain and Black enslaved women in British colonies.

However, not everyone agreed with women's participation in the movement; abolitionist William Wilberforce was particularly vocal about his disapproval, arguing that it was 'unsuitable' behaviour for the 'female character,' as supported by Biblical Scriptures.²²⁵ Despite Wilberforce's fragility about it, women's involvement in abolition had a significant impact, especially when they were formalized into anti-slavery societies. Many of them financially supported charities, abolitionist causes, and even men's groups. In fact, the *Female Society for Birmingham* was one the largest contributors and recognized the unique position they held to make meaningful change. In 1830, they refused to grant money to the men's organization in London because that group advocated for gradual abolition and supported Parliamentary motions that delayed emancipation. The men were told that until

²²⁴ Heyrick, *The Humming Bird*, 361-2.

²²⁵ Willen and Gann, 14.

they reversed those stances, the women would not give them any money. Less than two months later, the men removed ‘mitigation and gradual abolition’ from their title; now known as the *London Anti-Slavery Society*, they supported immediate abolition and emancipation.²²⁶ In a society where women’s voices were often silenced, disregarded, or deemed unimportant, the women of the *Female Society for Birmingham* had a proven impact, influence, and role to play in British society.

Heyrick often tried to live her life following her beliefs. She participated in charitable actions, such as paying prisoners’ fines who were charged with petty crimes.²²⁷ In addition to her compassion for fellow humans, Heyrick also had deep empathy for animals. Heyrick and her sister once came across an exhibit of bull-baiting, where a bull was chained while dogs attacked. When Heyrick was unable to stop the ‘sport,’ she simply purchased the bull on the spot, sheltering it in a woman’s parlour until the spectators moved on.²²⁸ Such philanthropic efforts were made possible by her father’s generous allowance provided to her upon her husband’s death; funds which she was accustomed to, as she grew up rather fortunate due to her father’s successful business.²²⁹

Despite her shown generosity and affluence throughout her lifetime, when Heyrick died October 18, 1831, her will told a different story. To her brothers, John and Samuel Coltman, she left £100 pounds each. She bequeathed her remaining property of clothes, furniture, her house, and whatever money she had, minus the £200 promised above, to her sister, Ann Coltman. Upon her sister’s death, Heyrick willed that her house and money were to be divided equally between her nephew, John Coltman and her niece, Sarah Coltman.²³⁰ A later codicil willed £50 each to her above-mentioned nephew and niece. The whole of her

²²⁶ Willen and Gann, 17.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ Hartweave, 479; Willen and Gann, 14.

²³⁰ Elizabeth Heyrick, “Will of Elizabeth Heyrick, Widow of Leicester, Leicester.” *The National Archives*, 1831. PROB 11/1791B/309.

property left to her sister was altered to be divided equally between her two brothers. Heyrick also left £10 to her relative, Joseph Coltman, possibly for an annual payment until his decease.²³¹ A vocal, ground-breaking abolitionist during her life, Heyrick, like all the abolitionists analyzed thus far, left no financial support to emancipation efforts. As previously discussed, Heyrick disagreed with Jamaican enslavers receiving ‘reparations’ upon enslavement’s end and argued that those who were enslaved should receive compensation instead. Despite that publicized stance, when Heyrick passed away, she did not leave any funds to act as reparations to those who were enslaved.

William Wilberforce

William Wilberforce was born August 24, 1759 and had a long and successful career as an independent politician and member of the House of Commons. He was most well-known for his dedication to the abolition movement and attempts to pass the bill in parliament. Wilberforce’s interest in abolition began in his childhood, and he wrote in his journal that he hoped to improve the situation of enslaved people and rectify the wrongs of the practice.²³² His sons noted that this perseverance along with, “his glowing and persuasive eloquence, his high political influence rarely combined with independence” uniquely distinguished him as the ideal candidate to fight for abolition from within the political system.²³³

In 1785, Wilberforce, like many of the abolitionists previously mentioned, entered a new phase of life, stemming from a religious awakening. He noted that,

Often while in the full enjoyment of all that this world could bestow, my conscience told me that in the true sense of the word, I was not a Christian. I laughed, I sang, I was apparently gay and happy, but the thought would steal across me, ‘What madness is all this; to continue easy in a state in which a sudden call out of the world would consign me to everlasting misery, and that, when eternal happiness is within my grasp!’ For I had received into my understanding the great truths of the gospel, and

²³¹ Heyrick, “Will of Elizabeth Heyrick.”

²³² Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I. V vols. (London: John Murray, 1838): 147-8.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 148.

believed that its offers were free and universal; and that God had promised to give his Holy Spirit to them that asked for it. At length such thoughts as these completely occupied my mind, and I began to pray earnestly.²³⁴

That revelation brought Wilberforce to a previously mentioned abolitionist, Reverend John Newton. From November 30th-December 3rd, 1785, Wilberforce fiercely debated with himself about visiting Newton to discuss faith; on December 4th, he finally made up his mind and left a letter requesting a visitation.²³⁵ Following their meeting, Wilberforce noted that he was left “in a calm, tranquil state, more humbled, and looking more devoutly up to God.”²³⁶ That event sparked a life-long friendship between Wilberforce and Newton.

Newton was a source of encouragement throughout Wilberforce’s political life, writing with lines of inspiration when Wilberforce’s *Abolition of the Slave Trade Bill* attempts were unsuccessful, “Yes, Sir, you have many praying for you ... It is hoped and believed that the Lord has raised you up for the good of His church, and for the good of the nation. This makes you truly a public person, and give you a place in the hearts of many who never saw you, and whom you will never know.”²³⁷ Newton motivated Wilberforce to continue in politics, reminding him of the benefits of holding an independent seat in the House of Commons, and the silent influence his character had on other politicians; even if Wilberforce felt disheartened about abolition’s progress, Newton was there to encourage him to keep fighting.²³⁸

Indeed, Wilberforce often felt discouraged as his various abolition attempts were struck down repetitively throughout a 20-year period. In 1786, Wilberforce began his slave trade abolition journey by making inquiries of African merchants, and by 1788, most of his

²³⁴ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 88.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 93, 95-6.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 97.

²³⁷ Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Correspondence of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I. II vols. 1840. (London: reprinted by Mnemosyne Publishing Co., 1969): 56.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 132.

social interactions revolved around the cause.²³⁹ Wilberforce indicated that on February 2nd, 1788, he planned to move his first *Slave Trade Abolition Bill* into the House of Lords. He was met with fierce opposition, which resulted in a Privy Council summons where African merchants argued that the slave trade was a ‘necessity’ and that the practice was ‘humane.’ Afterwards allies of abolition presented their evidence and witnesses.²⁴⁰ Wilberforce then fell ill for several months, meaning that the Bill was not introduced into the House. Wilberforce worked with other abolitionists developing material arguing against the slave trade, until he introduced the *Bill* to the House of Commons on April 18, 1791; unfortunately, it was struck down 163 votes to 88.²⁴¹ Although disappointed, Wilberforce did not give up. Every year from 1791 to 1799, 1804, and 1805, he introduced a *Slave Trade Abolition Bill* with varying degrees of success; some were struck down immediately, some made it through multiple readings, but ultimately, all were lost in voting stages.²⁴² It must be noted that during 1800-1803, although he did not initiate the *Bill* in the House, he continued to work with fellow abolitionists building their supporting arguments.²⁴³

In 1806, Wilberforce again brought abolition of the slave trade before the House of Commons with great success, “The resolutions, which were proposed by the leading ministers, declared the Slave Trade to be ‘contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sound policy;’ and that the House would ‘with all practicable expediency’ proceed to abolish

²³⁹ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 149, 160.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 166-7.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 287, 298-9.

²⁴² Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 345-6; Robert Isaac Wilberforce, and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. II. V vols. (London: John Murry, 1838): 19-20, 48-50, 83-4, 139, 141-2, 218, 277, 329-330; “House of Commons.” *Aberdeen Press and Journal, Aberdeen* (June 23, 1800): 3; “House of Commons.” *Salisbury and Winchester Journal, Wiltshire* (June 29, 1801): 2; Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. III., 30, 41, 46, 50, 88, 162-3, 166, 168-9, 174-8, 180-1, 183, 212, 216-7.

²⁴³ In 1800, and 1801, abolition by a ‘general convention’ seemed likely, and could not be jeopardized by a parliamentary loss; in 1802, the House of Commons session was focused on crime in Trinidad, preventing the Abolition Bill to be brought up; in 1803, Wilberforce’s ill health, and then national security concerns during their war with France prohibited the Bill to be introduced. See Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. III., 162-3.

it.” Wilberforce noted that their resolutions passed with votes over 100 to 14.²⁴⁴ On February 3, 1807, the House of Lords discussed the trade’s abolition, where it was carried 100 to 34 votes. On February 20th, 1807, the *Bill* was to be contested in the House of Commons; on the 23rd it was voted 283 in favour of the *Bill*, with only 16 opposed - after nearly two decades, the slave trade was officially abolished.²⁴⁵ However, there was still much to figure out. At first, the plan was to ban the slave trade without inflicting any penalties on those who illegally participated; that thought process was quickly discarded in favour of penalizing those who broke the new law.²⁴⁶ Now the ‘purchasing’ of newly enslaved people was illegal, but the possession of those enslaved and ‘purchased’ prior to the *Bill* was permitted. That brought its own set of troubles: how could law enforcement determine when someone had been enslaved and purchased? That concern drove Wilberforce for the next decade of his life.

In 1812, Wilberforce began advocating for *The Registration Bill*, which would require enslavers to register information about the people they were holding captive to prevent illegal importation of newly enslaved people. In 1816, there was a great deal of opposition to the *Bill*, but ministers recommended the enforcement of registration. In 1818, there was a motion to form a committee to examine actions made after the ministers’ registry recommendation. By 1819, the colonial assemblies had passed, or were in the process of passing, registration bills.²⁴⁷ Following his success at implementing the *Registration Act*, Wilberforce finally turned his sights to complete abolition. However, he was also growing older and his health was declining; in 1822, he partially retired, allowing younger abolitionist politicians to take

²⁴⁴ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. III., 259-63, 270-2, 286-7.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 292-3, 295-8.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 298-9.

²⁴⁷ Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. IV. V vols. (London: John Murray, 1838): 19, 169, 371; Robert Isaac Wilberforce, and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. V. V vols. (London: John Murray, 1838): 10-1.

over the heft of the movement.²⁴⁸ 1823 saw Wilberforce dedicated to writing a Manifesto on the state of enslaved people in British trans-Atlantic colonies, calling for total emancipation. It was published in early March and was well received; so much so that a West Indian enslaver told Wilberforce that his work, “has so affected me, that should it cost me my whole property, I surrender it willingly...”²⁴⁹ Wilberforce’s influence was undoubtable, so it was difficult for many when he fell gravely ill in 1824, which culminated in his retirement the following year.²⁵⁰ Wilberforce passed away 10 years later on July 29, 1833, one month before the House of Lords passed the *Slavery Abolition Act*, completing his last parliamentary goal.

Wilberforce is one of Britain’s most famous abolitionists. It is unsurprising he gained such a reputation given his life-long dedication to passing his bills in Parliament. However, one must consider how his age, sex, and race contributed to his legacy. When Wilberforce first began working on abolition, he was relatively young. As such, his attempts were often brushed off as young idealism. Other politicians did not begin to take Wilberforce, or his ideas, seriously until he was older and considered more experienced and wiser. There were many female abolitionists who dedicated a large portion of their lives to abolition (some studied throughout this section, along with many more not mentioned). However, their stories are often disregarded in favour of men like Wilberforce, Newton, and Zachary Macauley, to name a few. Wilberforce’s legacy was built and perpetuated in large part due to being a privileged white man. There were countless Black people throughout slavery who fought for their freedom and the abolition of the trade. However, their names have been erased or not discussed. Oftentimes, they met horrifically violent deaths at the hands of enslavers and colonial officials, such as Samuel Sharpe or Queen Nanny. While this section

²⁴⁸ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. V., 129.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 164-7, 168.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 223-4, 229, 233-5, 237-8.

analyzes white abolitionists to track the hypocrisy of their efforts, it is important to be critical of which figures are hailed as heroes throughout historical sources and who are typically excluded from such discussions.

In addition to Wilberforce's connection to Newton, he had connections to another abolitionist analyzed in this section, Hannah More. Their relationship was full of inspiration and support, and they often considered each other as a confidant. More frequently sent Wilberforce chapters of her manuscript, *Hints Towards Forming the Character of a Young Princess* for his comments. Despite Wilberforce's hectic political life, he made time to review the pages she sent him, saying that the book "will do [More] credit, which is saying much." In addition, he encouraged her to include her name on the work instead of publishing anonymously or under a pseudonym.²⁵¹ For Wilberforce, he often shared his thoughts on abolition's progress with More. A letter from 1804 revealed his plans to bring the topic back to the House of Lords, and that although he would consent to a proposal of a 5-year suspension of the slave trade, he could not agree on a compromise long-term.²⁵²

The two friends thought highly of each other, with More writing that Wilberforce's character was "one of the most extraordinary I ever knew for talents, virtue, and piety. It is difficult not to grow wiser and better every time one converses with him."²⁵³ More worked to establish schools in the English countryside and it was her dedication to education that impressed Wilberforce the most, noting that she,

shut up herself in the country to devote her talents to the instruction of a set of wretched people sunk in heathen darkness, amongst whom she was spending her time and fortune in schools and institutions for their benefit, going in all weathers a considerable distance to watch over them, until at last she had many villages and some thousands of children under her care. This is truly magnificent, the really sublime in character.²⁵⁴

²⁵¹ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Correspondence of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 314.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, 299-300.

²⁵³ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 138.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 238.

Wilberforce was so impressed, that he frequently provided charitable donations to More to help fund her enterprises. He expressed that he had “more money than time,” and invited her to ask him for money “without reserve” to support the schools.²⁵⁵ He considered the institutions to be an important development in the countryside and wanted to see their success long-term, noting in a 1798 letter to More that should he die, he arranged for her Somersetshire’s operations to continue to receive funding and he encouraged her “to venture boldly.”²⁵⁶

William Wilberforce died July 29, 1833. Considering his long-term dedication to abolition, his shown generosity and charitable spirit, his will, although long, was relatively underwhelming. To his wife, Barbara Ann Wilberforce, he bequeathed £300 to be paid immediately following his death. He left her, “all the carriages, horses, plate, linen, china, and all other ware, pictures, wines, liquors, and household furniture.” She was also willed the opportunity to choose items of interest from his collection of books, pamphlets, and maps; afterwards, the remainders were to be divided into equal shares for his sons.²⁵⁷ To his eldest son, William Wilberforce, he bequeathed an annuity and a retained Rent Charge. A later codicil required his son to convey the rent charge and annuity to Wilberforce’s Trustees and Executors; if William failed to meet the requirements, all his bequests would be revoked and annulled. To his daughter-in-law, Mary Frances Wilberforce, wife of William, he bequeathed an annuity of £500, as long as she did not remarry if she became a widow. His son, Reverend Robert Isaac Wilberforce, was left all Wilberforce’s documents and papers (minus the books mentioned above). Additionally, Robert was bequeathed £10,000, in the meantime to be paid interest for the sum at £4% a year. A later codicil revoked the £10,000 bequest as Wilberforce provided that sum in Robert’s marriage settlement. To his youngest son, Henry

²⁵⁵ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 246-7.

²⁵⁶ Wilberforce and Wilberforce, *The Correspondence of William Wilberforce*. Vol. I., 184.

²⁵⁷ William Wilberforce, “Will of William Wilberforce, Esquire.” *The National Archives*, 1833. PROB 11/1825/373.

William Wilberforce, he bequeathed £10,000, in the meantime to be paid interest for the sum at £4% a year. Wilberforce also bequeathed Henry an additional £400, to provide him a similar advantage as his other sons, who were given articles around the same value when they were establishing themselves. Lastly, to his amanuensis (writing assistant), Mr. Joseph, Wilberforce left £200.²⁵⁸

In addition to the individual bequests, William Wilberforce willed that after both his and his wife's deaths, Thomas Pearce James and his son, Samuel Wilberforce, were to receive £10,000 with interest at £4% a year per a previous settlement agreement. Wilberforce also bequeathed £10,000 with interest at £5% a year each to a William Sargent Esquire and his son, William Wilberforce Jr. To his sons, William, Robert Isaac, Samuel, and Henry William, and his son-in-law, Reverend John James, Wilberforce bequeathed the right of patronage and presentation to a certain Chapel and Chapelry at Mill Hill, in the Parish of Hendon. Finally, to his executors, James Stephen Jr., Abel Smith, John Thornton, and Richard Spooner, Wilberforce bequeathed his leasehold, freehold, and real estate properties to sell and convert into money, to place into Trust and investments in lands in England or Wales; and in parliamentary stocks; public funds of Great Britain; or in Governmental or real Securities in England or Wales.²⁵⁹ Despite Wilberforce's long fought efforts to pass Abolition in British parliament, he left no monetary support to help the newly implemented law, nor to aid those impacted by slavery. While his will ensured the successful future of his family per the strong social conventions of the time, Wilberforce possessed a lot of wealth that could have been shared upon his death. He showed throughout his lifetime that he was quite generous when providing charitable support to white people, such as his frequent donations to Hannah More's schools. Perhaps, despite arguing for abolition, Wilberforce's

²⁵⁸ Wilberforce, "Will of William Wilberforce."

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

racial biases shone through when he left not a single pound to support abolition or to act as reparations for enslaved people.

Hannah More

Hannah More was born in Gloucester, the fourth of five daughters, in 1745. More's parents believed it important for their daughters to receive an education, and planned for them to open their own boarding school.²⁶⁰ In order for those plans to come to fruition, More's eldest sister attended a French school in Bristol; upon her return to the More household each weekend, she taught her sisters what she learned.²⁶¹ When the eldest More sister was twenty, she and the other older sisters opened their first boarding school and it flourished with 'uncommon success.'²⁶² The eldest sister took Hannah More into her care to live at the school when she was twelve years old. Surrounded by knowledgeable people, More absorbed her lessons and began to receive an impressive reputation in the literary world.²⁶³ By the time she turned twenty, she was fluent in Italian, Latin, French, and Spanish.²⁶⁴

When Hannah More was twenty-two, she received a marriage proposal from a wealthy gentleman she met through her schooling, who was more than twenty years her senior. She gave up her share in her family's school, preparing to become the wife of a 'man of large fortune.'²⁶⁵ More's fiancé postponed the wedding date multiple times, resulting in her sisters and friends advocating for the arrangement's termination. When More and her fiancé amicably broke off their engagement, he offered her an annuity, which she rejected. However, he proceeded anyway, despite More's wishes, providing her an annual sum so she

²⁶⁰ William Roberts Esq. and Hannah More, *Memoirs of The Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. I. II vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1834): 18.

²⁶¹ Roberts and More, *Memoirs of The Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. I., 18.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 19.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 19, 20.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 28-9.

could devote herself to her literary pursuits, establish schools with her sisters, and act as compensation for her wasted time during their failed engagement. Upon his death, he also bequeathed her £1,000.²⁶⁶

With the financial freedom provided by her ex-fiancé, Hannah More was able to follow her passions. She declared, “there are but three things [in the world] which deeply interest me - the state of the church, the religious progress of the king, and the abolition of slavery.”²⁶⁷ Unsurprisingly, she found herself in social circles with Wilberforce, and as previously mentioned, the two developed a friendship. Through letters to her sisters, More revealed that she was kept informed of Wilberforce’s abolition plans in the British parliament and was involved in behind the scenes efforts.²⁶⁸ In 1815, friends holidaying in Geneva sent More a paper from there that declared agreement with the English in supporting abolition. More then turned to Wilberforce, entrusting him to publish the document in newspapers to ensure English audiences knew of the movement’s growing popularity across Europe and the globe.²⁶⁹ In addition to Wilberforce, she also became a close acquaintance to Reverend John Newton, with the two in frequent contact with one another.²⁷⁰

Not only did More participate in the abolition movement by building a social network of like-minded individuals, but she also supported the cause through her writings. While concerned with the overall treatment of enslaved people, and ending the horrific practice, More drew attention to the realities of orphans and vulnerable children through the lines of one of her poems:

Whene'er to Afric's shores I turn my eyes, / Horrors of deepest, deadliest guilt arise; /
I see, by more than Fancy's mirror shown, / The burning village and the blazing town:
/ See the dire victim torn from social life, / The shrieking babe, the agonizing wife! /
She, wretch forlorn! is dragg'd by hostile hands, / To distant tyrants sold, in distant

²⁶⁶ Roberts and More, *Memoirs of The Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. I., 29.

²⁶⁷ William Roberts Esq. and Hannah More, *Memoirs of The Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. II. II vols. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1837): 344.

²⁶⁸ Roberts and More, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. I., 272, 309-10, 311, 312, 410.

²⁶⁹ Roberts and More, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. II., 227.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 4-6, 10-13, 24-27, 42-44, 53-55, 59-61, 82-84.

lands! / Transmitted miseries, and successive chains, / The sole sad heritage her child obtains! / E'en this last wretched boon their foes deny, / To weep together, or together die. / By felon hands, by one relentless stroke, / See the fond links of feeling Nature broke! / The fibres twisting round a parent's heart, / Torn from their grasp, and bleeding as they part.²⁷¹

Although her words described the experience of an enslaved mother, the lines can be read across the grain to recognize the treatment of OVCs during the slave trade. As previously explored, many OVCs were ripped away from parents, regardless of laws protecting enslaved families. Through the above lines, More helped to highlight the horrific treatment of enslaved people and elicit empathy for them from the British public.

More criticized the basis upholding the slave trade, and the superficiality of racism, in the following lines: “What wrongs, what injuries does Oppression plead, / To smooth the crime and sanctify the deed? / What strange offence, what aggravated sin? / They stand convicted - of a darker skin!”²⁷² She also publicly denounced those who participated in the enslavement of other humans,

And thou, WHITE SAVAGE! Whether lust of gold / Or lust of conquest rule thee uncontroll'd! / Hero, or robber! - by whatever name! - / Thou plead thy impious claim to wealth or fame; / Whether inferior mischief be thy boast, / A tyrant trader rifling Congo's coast; / Or bolder carnage track thy crimson way, / King's dispossess'd, and provinces thy prey; / Whether thou pant to tame earth's distant bound; / All Cortez murder'd, all Columbus found; / O'er plunder'd realms to reign, detested lord, / Make millions wretched, and thyself abhorr'd...²⁷³

The practice of the slave trade was often defended by claiming that African societies, and those enslaved, were ‘savage.’ Similar arguments were used to ‘justify’ the genocide of Indigenous Peoples around the globe. By invoking that language, and calling practitioners a “white savage,” More drew attention to the hypocrisy and double-standard present. The English were participating in actions that they would deem unacceptable, and immoral if carried out by communities of the global majority. More’s ingenious lines acted as a means

²⁷¹ More, *The Complete Works of Hannah More*. Vol. I., 28.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 29.

to shame those building a fortune on others' enslavement and exploitation. She compared English bloodshed in Africa, and of enslaved populations, to the murders and atrocities committed in Mexico by Spanish conquistador, Cortez. This comparison was an accessible example that people in Britain would have understood, thus acting as a successful translation of the slave trade's horrors into the minds of the public.

Through More's writings, and her association with other abolitionists, her stance on the slave trade was clear: it was a deplorable practice that needed to end. In addition to her writings, she also attempted to help those who were enslaved through actions. Although such efforts were not taken in Jamaica, the focus of this thesis, it is important to still highlight her attempts, which focused on the Burman empire. In a letter to friends dated August 1822, More noted that she sent help to a Mrs. Judson to "[redeem] two or three more little Burman slaves."²⁷⁴ The following year, in July 1823, another letter from More revealed that she was left a legacy of twenty guineas by a dignitary she had never met. She used that legacy to, "[indulge] [herself] by redeeming two little slaves in the Burman empire..."²⁷⁵ Beyond those few lines, there were no further mentions of the children's state or what the word 'redeem' meant in both of those instances. However, given More's detestation of the slave trade, it is unlikely she funded purchases designed to keep people in slavery.

Hannah More died September 7, 1833 as a 'spinster.' As a result, she left many bequests in her will, further illustrating her charitable nature. She divided her personal belongings amongst fifty-one people, and one library. The remainder of her personal estate was bequeathed to a Church in the parish of Saint Philips and Jacob, Gloucester, for its endowment, and to provide for a minister.²⁷⁶ As for money, More divided her wishes into three categories: amounts left in guineas (equivalent to one pound, one shilling), amounts left

²⁷⁴ Roberts and More, *Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah More*. Vol. II., 254.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 364.

²⁷⁶ Hannah More, "Will of Hannah More, Spinster of Clifton, Gloucestershire." *The National Archives*, 1833. PROB 11/1822/405.

in pound sterling money, and amounts left in stocks. With guineas, she left amounts bequeathed to 54 people, totalling over 1,020 guineas (equivalent to over £1,070 at the time), and 4 schools / charities / clubs amounting to 76 guineas (equivalent to just under £80 at the time).²⁷⁷ More left £800 in stocks to Dr. Ryder Bishop (£500), and William Wilberforce (£300), and £5,800 in stocks to 22 societies / charities / infirmaries / schools.²⁷⁸ For sterling money, More left over 70 people more than £11,700, and over 40 charities / clubs / societies / hospitals / institutions / schools more than £3,000.²⁷⁹

Of the more than £11,700 willed, £1,600 of that money was bequeathed to her friend, Mary Frowd, along with half the profits from the sale of More's *Cheap Repository Tracts*, and a large portion of her personal belongings. £1,030 was left to sisters Mary and Margaret Roberts, with the other half of the *Cheap Repository Tracts* profits, and another large portion of More's personal estate. However, her charitable nature cannot be denied when analyzing the 1,026 guineas, £800 in stocks, and over £11,700 left to individuals; and 76 guineas, £5,800 in stocks, and over £3,000 left as charitable donations. Of greatest interest to this investigation were the donations to abolitionist causes. Hannah More left £50 pounds in sterling money to the *Bristol and Clifton Female Anti-Slavery Society*, and £500 pounds in stocks to the *Anti-Slavery Society* formed by William Wilberforce and Zachary Macauley.²⁸⁰ More's charity to the *Anti-Slavery Society* only further highlighted the failings of Wilberforce, as he did not even leave money to his own abolition *Society*, whilst More did. Out of the four abolitionists analyzed thus far, More was the first to support the movement both in her daily life and also leave financial assistance to help after her death.

The case studies above cannot be used to claim that only 1/5th of all British abolitionists followed what they were preaching through their actions, but the samples show

²⁷⁷ More, "Will of Hannah More, Spinster of Clifton, Gloucestershire."

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

an interesting pattern throughout the abolitionist movement that suggests a certain degree of hypocrisy and performativity. Indeed, there may be many white abolitionists who financially supported those who were enslaved and larger emancipation efforts that were not analyzed in this thesis. The sample size above cannot be a be-all end-all of similar investigations; however, the five figures investigated above provide a contextualization of the abolitionist movement in Britain.

While many supporters argued their position was based on morality and Christianity, their lack of monetary support for the movement resulted in their advocacy becoming lip service. It is understandable that the priority of many would be to ensure their family's well-being; men were expected to provide for their families to maintain or increase their class standing. Women often possessed less wealth than men as they were unable to hold property and were forced to rely on male family members for income, housing, and forms of financial protection. However, even while holding space for the realities above, those participating in philanthropy and abolition were typically from financially secure backgrounds. They possessed status, authority, and leisure time. As illustrated from the abolitionists analyzed throughout this section, they had more than enough money to guarantee their family's future legacies and still leave generous donations to support the end of the slave trade or to act as reparations for those who were enslaved.

CHAPTER FOUR: COLONIAL CHILD MIGRATION

Wachemshe haohao kwangu utapoa
Let those who are with me be healed
- Swahili proverb

Analysis of European Fathers' Wills

Water may cover the footprint on the ground,
but it does not cover the words of the mouth
- Igbo proverb

The concepts of moral duty and social responsibility encompassed life in nineteenth-century Britain. As a result, there were many examples of white fathers ensuring provisions for their mixed-race children in their wills. Although, it must be mentioned that was not always the case; there were many white men who refused to acknowledge their paternity or support the mother and child(ren). In fact, historian Daniel Livesay estimated that as many as 80% of white fathers kept their children enslaved, while leaving their paternity unclaimed.²⁸¹ When considering mixed-race children in Jamaica, there was the added complication regarding the child's status as 'free' or 'enslaved.' It was common for white men throughout the colonies to father children with enslaved women, most often through coercion or rape.²⁸² In such instances, the resulting offspring often became 'property' of the mother's enslaver. That left the father with two options: one, to purchase his child(ren)'s freedom, or two, do nothing. Livesay calculated that approximately only 1/5 of mixed-race enslaved children were granted 'free' status by white parents, along with a form of continued support.²⁸³

An analysis of 54 wills left by white men in Jamaica between 1800-1852 revealed interesting findings. The wills of John Drummond (1802), Duncan Campbell (1810), Joseph

²⁸¹ Livesay, "Transatlantic Family-Making," 4.

²⁸² Historian Daniel Livesay discussed the frequency of rape against Black women by white men throughout Jamaica. One specific example he gave was of Thomas Thistlewood whose diary recorded almost 4,000 'sexual acts' with women of colour from 1750-1787. It must be noted that even relations that were 'consenting' become problematic due to the differential power dynamic between white men and Black women during enslavement. See Livesay, "Transatlantic Family-Making," 4.

²⁸³ Livesay, "Transatlantic Family-Making," 4.

Bennett (1810), and Edward Hedley (1829), exemplified instances of white men leaving provisions in their wills to pay for the manumission of their orphaned²⁸⁴ offspring.²⁸⁵ The wills of Andrew Reddie (1820), James C. Grant (1822), and Nathaniel Wright (1842) provided cases of children already possessing ‘free’ status within their fathers’ wills, likely meaning that the father ensured their freedom at birth or shortly afterwards.²⁸⁶ Conversely, the wills of John Drummond (1802), Duncan Campbell (1810), Thomas Winder (1816), James Hedley (1820), John Malcolm (1829), James Blair (1835), and John Holmes (1836)²⁸⁷ exemplified white men including mixed-race children in their wills without mentioning whether they were free or enslaved.²⁸⁸ Finally, the wills of Thomas James (1805), George

²⁸⁴ Due to the paternalistic society in nineteenth-century England and its colonies, and since women were unable to hold property, although the children still had living mothers, they were, nonetheless, deemed ‘orphaned’ upon the death of their fathers.

²⁸⁵ John Drummond, “Will of John Drummond.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: in addition to Thomas Drummond the younger (see footnote 20), John Drummond acknowledged his paternity to enslaved children William (mother, Eleanor), and Maria (mother, Kitty)]; Duncan Campbell, “1810 Will of Duncan Campbell.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); Joseph Bennett, “Will of Joseph Bennett.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); and Edward Hedley, “Will of Edward Hedley, Entered 24th October, 1829.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013). [Note: In one instance, a son granted his father’s mixed-race enslaved children ‘free’ status in his will. See Dennis John M. James, “Will of Dennis John Myrie James.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013)].

²⁸⁶ Andrew Reddie, “Will of Andrew Reddie 1820.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); James C. Grant, “Will of James Colquhoun Grant 1822.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: Grant did not explicitly mention the status of his 7 children, but did note that their mother, Ann Wilson, possessed ‘free’ status]; and Nathaniel Wright, “Will of Nathaniel Wright.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013).

²⁸⁷ Personal correspondence with Liz Watson, a descendant granddaughter of Samuel Benjamin Holmes. I am eternally grateful to Liz for sharing her family research with me when I hit a wall looking for records of the Holmes children.

²⁸⁸ John Drummond, “Will of John Drummond.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: John Drummond mentioned two mixed-race males named Thomas Drummond – he claimed paternity for Thomas Drummond the younger (‘free’ or ‘enslaved’ status not mentioned), but did not state the relation of Thomas Drummond the elder (mentioned as having ‘free’ status)]; Duncan Campbell, “1810 Will of Duncan Campbell.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: Duncan Campbell chose to manumize 4 of his enslaved ‘mulatto’ children, but did not mention freedom for 3 other ‘quadroon’ children he had. Due to their ‘quadroon’ status, it is possible they had already been manumized, or possibly born with ‘free’ status, meanwhile his ‘mulatto’ children were born with ‘enslaved’ status]; Thomas Winder, “Will of Thomas Winder.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); James Hedley, “Will of James Hedley.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); John Malcolm, “Will of John Malcolm of Argyll.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); James Blair, “Will of James Blair.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); and John Holmes, “Copy Will of John Holmes.” *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013); “Jamaica, Church of England Parish Register Transcripts, 1664-1880.” *Family Search*, Vere > Baptisms, marriages, burials 1694-1825, 1: 43, 44, 49, 75. [Note: out of Holmes’ 4 children, Thomas Addison, George Wood, Samuel Benjamin, and Susan Frances Holmes, only Susan was listed as a ‘free mustee’ in the Baptismal records]. [Note: the will of John Campbell left a provision for his ‘natural son,’ John Prior Campbell, but did not mention John the younger’s race. Most

Malcolm (1813), Peter Campbell II (1818), Richard Dickson (1820), Neil McCallum (1835), and William Fraser (1840) illustrated examples where white men left provisions for mixed-race children without indicating the relationship. It is possible that the men were unrelated to the children and included them as an act of charity, but it is more likely that those children were fathered by the men who refused to acknowledge relations, but at the same time, felt some degree of responsibility. This is especially more likely as the children in Malcolm, Campbell, McCallum, and Fraser's wills shared the men's last names.²⁸⁹

Indeed, the status of white men's children in the colonies was a topic of discussion in Britain. One newspaper article argued that since the father was a white European, the child (regardless of race) should be born with 'free' status: "Now by what law could the son of an Englishman be born a slave? the Englishmen, who discovered and planted those Colonies,

white men did indicate if their offspring was mixed-race, so it is possible that John Prior Campbell's mother was also white. Due to the lack of clarity regarding Prior Campbell's race, Campbell Sr.'s will has been left out of the count. See John Campbell, "Will of Hon. John Campbell, New Hope 1802, (PRO London, PROB 11/1379)." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013). The will of Peter Campbell III contained similar circumstances, acknowledging 4 'natural' children: John and Peter Campbell (mother, Lilly McGregor), Peter Metcalfe (mother unlisted), and Colin and Mary Peacock (mother unlisted). Peter Campbell's will has also been excluded from the count due to the ambiguity surrounding his natural children's race. See Peter Campbell, "Will of Peter Campbell III, Kilmory & Jamaica, 1819, (PRO London, PROB 11/1658)." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013)].

²⁸⁹ Thomas James, "Will of Thomas James." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: Thomas James included provisions for a pregnant Black woman named Sarah, and her 3 (soon to be 4) children, Catherine, William, and Sarah]; George Malcolm, "1813 Will of George Malcolm." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: George Malcolm left provisions to Elizabeth Sinclair and her two sons Alexander and Donald Malcolm. Relations nor race were mentioned, but an Elizabeth Sinclair was listed in an 1823 Census of inhabitants of Hanover Parish as a 37-year-old 'quadroon', and an Alexander Malcolm was listed in the same Census as a 19-year-old 'quadroon' – no Donald Malcolm was listed. See "A Census of the White & Brown inhabitants & other Persons of Free Condition of the Parish of ? Hanover distinguishing their Sexes, Colour, Ages and places of Residence ? 1823 (2: Lucea)." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013)]; Peter Campbell, "Will of Peter Campbell II, Kilmory & Jamaica, 1818, [PRO London, PROB 11/1601]. *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: Peter Campbell left provisions for William Campbell, "the son of a woman of colour called Maria."]; Richard Dickson, "Will of Richard Dickson, [dated 28th March 1820; probated 25th April 1821.] *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: Richard Dickson left provisions for Elizabeth Douglas and her children James and Patrick. Relations nor race were mentioned, but an Elizabeth Douglas was listed in an 1823 Census of Hanover Parish inhabitants as a 30-year-old 'mustee', and a James Dickson was listed as a 9-year-old 'mustifina' – no Patrick Douglas or Patrick Dickson was listed. See "A Census of the White & Brown inhabitants & other Persons of Free Condition of the Parish of ? Hanover distinguishing their Sexes, Colour, Ages and Place of Residence ? 1823." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013)]; Neil McCallum, "Will of Neil McCallum of Hanover Jamaica." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: Neil McCallum left provisions for Jane Kerr, and her children, Alexander and Ann Teresa McCallum, "free people of colour."]; and William Fraser, "Will of William Fraser of Kingston." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013) [note: William Fraser left provisions for the infant son of an apprentice named Princess MaCartney – the son's name was James Fraser].

took with them the English law as their birthright, ... so far as English law is to be considered, every son of an Englishman, whether by a black, red, yellow, or white woman, is *born free*.”²⁹⁰ As a result, the article questioned how children with white paternity were born enslaved. The practice was adopted from the Roman Civil Law, *partus sequitur ventrem*, where the child possessed the same status as the mother. However, in a land where British law ruled, enslavers had no right to enforce a Roman Civil Law.²⁹¹

Additionally, the newspaper tackled the concept of men’s moral and family duties noting that:

almost all the Mulattoes are natural children. ... By the law of England a *penalty* is attached on the father of a natural child (if he can be discovered) by compelling him to pay for such child’s support. By the Colonial law the father, if he connect himself with his own slave, has a *premium* – and what sort of premium? – a *property* in the issue! ... For the honour of human nature it may be hoped that instances of a father’s selling or keeping in slavery his own son or daughter are rare; but if the Colonial Law render such an outrage on human feeling possible, that law ought surely to be altered. ... we would earnestly recommend to their consideration the propriety of at once extending the right of freedom *by birth* to all Mulatto children.²⁹²

Evidently, there was great concern around mixed-race children, and their relative fluidity between ‘free,’ and ‘enslaved’ status. Also, it is interesting to note the concept of child support for ‘natural’ children in British law, as mentioned in the newspaper article excerpt above. Perhaps that sense of legal duty drove many white fathers to provide (to some extent) for their mixed-race children; not necessarily out of a genuine desire to, but because of the definition of a man’s good character, and the potential repercussions of being deemed ungentlemanly and unhonourable amongst British society.

For those men who recognized their offspring, oftentimes, upon their death, they arranged for their children to leave Jamaica and reside in England. Historian Daniel Livesay’s research explored such cases in detail. One example was the 1803 estate of

²⁹⁰ “Slavery of White Men’s Children in the West Indies.” *Chester Courant, and Anglo-Welsh Gazette*, (May 25, 1824): 4.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*

²⁹² *Ibid.*

William Thomson, a Jamaican carpenter, who planned for his son, William, to travel to and live with his uncle, David Clark, in Liverpool before attending school in Scotland. In addition to securing his son's future in his will, Thomson also left £20 to his orphaned mixed-race nephew living in Scotland.²⁹³

Another example provided by Livesay was of John Whittaker, whose will stated his two mixed-race sons were, "never to return to Jamaica or any part of the West Indies."²⁹⁴ While Whittaker ensured his sons were 'handsomely' provided for, only one of the mothers, Mary Graves, was included in his will and was later removed in a revision.²⁹⁵ Who Whittaker left inheritances to and who he excluded provides insight into where familial and social responsibility lines were drawn, especially when it came to 'illegitimate' families and orphans in the colonies. Paternal responsibility was commonly accepted in Britain to extend to mixed-race children, as evidenced by Thomson and Whittaker's adamantness to ensure their sons came to and remained in Britain. However, such obligations often ended at the children and did not include mothers, especially in cases when the 'relationship' between mother and father was severed. Evidently, life in England seemed more promising for young, fatherless children than remaining in Jamaica with the mother. Additionally, as shown through the case of Whittaker and the image below, it was extremely common for white men to father children with multiple Black or mixed-race women, often indicating the use of coercion or rape in those instances.

²⁹³ Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune*, 309.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 260.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

I hereby give and bequeath thirty six acres of Land known as Cole Bottom being part of Samuels Cove joining on Haughton Tower Spring and Samuels Cove to Elizabeth Douglas and her two children James and Patrick To hold to them their heirs and assigns for ever and I hereby give and bequeath to each of them the said Elizabeth Douglas and her two children the sum of three hundred pounds the said sums to be paid to the said Elizabeth Douglas twelve months after my decease and to be paid to the said James and Patrick when of age the interest to be payable annually to them for their support and the said respective sums to be paid from my wharf and the negroes attached to it as hereinafter mentioned

I also devise that a house be put up to the value of three hundred pounds at the expence of Cousins Cove estate on said Land in such place as the said Elizabeth Douglas may point out as soon after my death as possible

I hereby give and bequeath to Fanny Fraser and her daughter Mary Dickson the house I built for them at Lances Bay with ten acres of Land adjoining thereto to them and their heirs for ever and I desire that the sum of five hundred pounds to be paid to each of my daughters Sarah Grant and Mary Dickson two years after my decease and thirty pounds annually for her lifetime to my late housekeeper Fanny Fraser to which sums I make subject my Wharf at Davis's Cove and negroes attached thereto

I give and devise to my daughters Judy and Annie and son William[*] the children of Nelly Murray my house in Lucea with the furniture thereto share and share alike to them their heirs and assigns for ever and I further bequeath to William my two negro men named James and Benjamin also William Murray to my daughter Judy a Sambo woman named Nancy and her daughter Sally and a negro woman named Jannet and to my daughter Annie a negro woman named Polly and her daughter Mary together with their future issue and increase to hold to them and their heirs and assigns for ever

Figure 5. Transcribed will of Richard Dickson, of Jamaica, acknowledging his mixed-race children.²⁹⁶

Thomson, and Whittaker were not the only white fathers who left provisions for their mixed-race children in their wills and had desires for them to leave the island for Britain. Livesay analyzed 59 wills of white men in Jamaica between 1803-1815 to determine the percentage that recognized mixed-race children and included provisions for those who were currently living in Britain or would be sent there afterwards.²⁹⁷ He determined that between 1803-1805, 9.6% of wills included explicit references, and 15.5% of wills included both explicit and implicit references to mixed-race children and plans for their futures to be secured in Britain. Between 1813-1815, explicit references decreased to 9.1%, but the combination of explicit and implicit references increased to 18.9%.²⁹⁸ Paternal final wishes

²⁹⁶ Richard Dickson, "Will of Richard Dickson, [dated 28th March 1820; probated 25th April, 1821]." *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013). Included alongside the transcribed will is an introduction to people included who were recorded in the 1823 Hanover Census. Elizabeth Douglas was 30 years old and recorded as a 'mustee'; her son, James, was 9 years old, and noted as a 'mustifina'; her son, Patrick, was not included in the census. Fanny Fraser was 55 years old and described as a 'mulatto', her daughter, Mary Dickson, was 36 years old, and noted as a 'quadroon'. Nelly Murray was not included in the census details; but her children, Judith Dickson (23 years old), Ann Dickson (22 years old), and William F. Dickson (25 years old) were all listed and given 'quadroon' status. See "Persons in the Hanover 1823 Census Named in Richard Dickson's Will," *Jamaica Family Search Genealogy Research Library*, (2013).

²⁹⁷ The references broke down into two separate categories: explicit, and implicit. Explicit references consisted of children being listed alongside a racial category; meanwhile implicit references occurred when children were recorded as illegitimate; see Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune*, 404.

²⁹⁸ Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune*, 403.

took Black children from Jamaica to Britain, but as a result, fragmented their family as they were separated from mothers for a ‘better life’ off the island. Livesay affirmed that gender and race prohibited mothers from joining their children for a new life in Britain.²⁹⁹

The influence of gender must not be understated when it comes to understanding how children migrated from the colonies to Britain. Indeed, white fathers were more likely to make arrangements for their sons than daughters. Expanding on the 59 wills above, Livesay analyzed an additional 45 (to total 104 wills) ranging from 1773 to 1815. A gendered pattern was easily discernible within plans for mixed-race children to leave the island for Britain,

65 percent of the migrants were male. More specifically, 56.1 percent cent of these wills made provisions only for boys to be sent abroad. Another 26 percent made stipulations only for girls, and a final 17.5 percent included both in plans for Europe. More revealingly, 14 percent of all wills asked that a son of color be sent abroad, while a daughter of color stayed behind. Only 5 percent made the reverse stipulation. These trends against girls grew worse over time. Whereas roughly equal numbers were asked to go to Britain in wills from 1773 to 1775 (fifteen boys versus thirteen girls), nearly double the number of young men as young women were sent abroad in wills from 1793 to 1795 (thirty-one boys versus seventeen girls).³⁰⁰

While there were some mixed-race women who also sought to increase their children’s fortune and standing by sending them away from Jamaica upon their death, the practice was mostly done by fathers. Between 1813-1815, Livesay noted the wills of five mixed-race women, although only two were named: Tereisa Shaw and Cecilia Ann Morris.³⁰¹ As a result of the male dominated arrangements, the wills and wishes of white fathers had little compassion for the women in their lives – Black mothers were separated from their children, and daughters were commonly left in Jamaica while brothers were sent to England. Additionally, the plans of the deceased father also disregarded the agency of their mixed-race offspring. They were not provided the option of leaving Jamaica for Britain; instead, arrangements were made and they were expected to dutifully follow orders.

²⁹⁹ Livesay, *Children of Uncertain Fortune*, 283.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 288-289.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 345-346.

Enslaved Children of the Trans-Atlantic Crossing

Bocha ke palesa
Youth are the hope
- *Sotho proverb*

That lack of agency was also prevalent in the lives of Black children without white paternity. Enslaved children (and adults) had no control over their own persons and movements; they were forcibly captured, displaced, and migrated across the globe. The trans-Atlantic voyage was full of danger for enslaved people. The abolitionist publication, *The Humming Bird*, presented grim statistics of the slave trade and voyage. At the time of its publication in 1825, European nations kidnapped 80,000 Africans each year (1/14 of the population of England at the time). Approximately 1/3 of that number (26,666) died during the passage for multiple reasons, including, being thrown overboard by enslavers;³⁰² jumping overboard in an act of resistance and self-liberation; or suffocating from overcrowded conditions. Another 1/3 (26,666) died during, what was called, *the Seasoning*³⁰³ - being sold as property at enslavement markets; being branded with enslavers' initials; having their labour forced to extremes; and being tortured and abused by enslavers. Therefore, 2/3 (approximately 53,332) of the enslaved people kidnapped by European nations each year were killed either on the voyage, arrival, or after their 'purchase,' with the remaining 1/3 (26,666) forced into perpetual enslavement.³⁰⁴ Throughout the slave trade, enslaved people were considered as goods or objects to be owned. If they were sick, or deemed to be

³⁰² Throughout the history of the slave trade, there were numerous examples of enslaved people murdered by being thrown overboard enslavement ships. One of the most infamous examples of this was the case of the *Zong* massacre, which resulted in a social movement in Britain to abolish the slave trade. The article used in this footnote specifically referred to the case of the French ship, *Le Rodeuir*, who enslaved approximately 160 people from Africa. Upon travel to Guadeloupe, the enslaved people were plagued by ophthalmia (inflammation of the eye, resulting in blindness), which spread to the crew. Before the ship reached port, the enslavers murdered upwards of 30 blind enslaved people by throwing them into the sea, "because had they landed them no one would have bought them, and they would have had the expense of keeping them for nothing." See Heyrick, *The Humming Bird*, 28-30.

³⁰³ Historian Richard Dunn considered *the Seasoning* to be the first 2-3 years of enslavement. See Dunn, *A Tale of Two Plantations*, 157.

³⁰⁴ Heyrick, *The Humming Bird*, 30.

‘worthless’ or ‘trouble,’ enslavers did not consider them as humans and killed or maimed as they saw fit. The constant stripping of humanity helped to drive the slave trade and made every moment of enslavement perilous to the people being held as property.

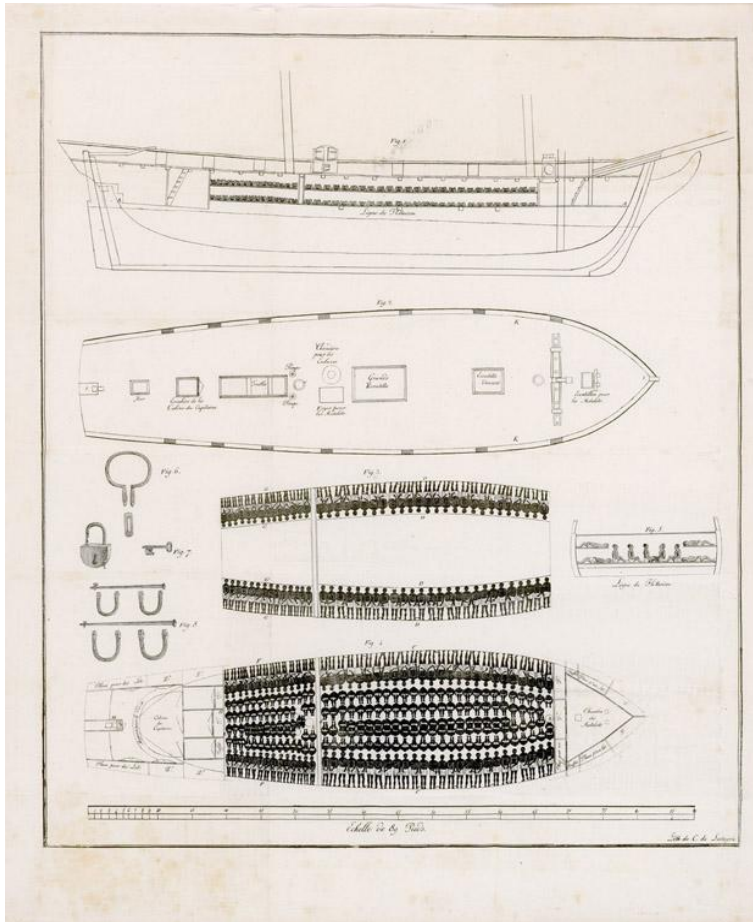


Figure 6. Diagram of French enslavement ship “Vigilante,” captured by the British in 1822.³⁰⁵

Throughout the trans-Atlantic transport, enslaved people often had their hands and feet shackled, and were bound to each other to inhibit movement. Enslaver turned abolitionist, John Newton, described that those being held captive were kept like that for up to ten months, with respite

only in some cases of serious illness.³⁰⁶ Enslaved Africans were kept in inhumanely close quarters underneath the ship, where the presence of feces, urine, and vomit aided in easily transmissible illnesses and disease. Due to sickness, torture, malnourishment, and murder, many who were held captive did not survive the voyage and died at sea.³⁰⁷

The crossing was even more dangerous for young children. In an environment where worth was placed on one’s potential for physical labour, those who were too young to work or were still reliant on their mothers were considered even more expendable than their older

³⁰⁵ *Affaire de la Vigilante : bâtiment négrier de Nantes*. (Paris: De L'imprimerie de Crapelet, 1823): 9.

³⁰⁶ John Newton, *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade*. (London: J. Buckland, J. Johnson, 1788): 15.

³⁰⁷ Newton, *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade*, 17; Michelle Faubert, *Granville Sharp’s Uncovered Letter and the Zong Massacre*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 16-18

peers. In Newton's testimony of his experiences with the slave trade, he recounted an event where a Mate on a ship had 'purchased' an enslaved woman who had a child around one-year's old. During the night, the Mate was awoken by the child's crying, and threatened that he would take matters into his own hands if the crying did not end. When the crying continued, the Mate forcibly removed the child from the mother and threw them into the sea.³⁰⁸ The child was not considered worthy of life because of the efforts, resources, and time it would take before they were deemed valuable due to their labour production. The child's humanity was stripped away and they were considered purely through an economical lens. Even within Newton's testimony, the child's humanity is denied with Newton referring to the child as 'it' twice.³⁰⁹

Although the event above happened at some point prior to 1800, it is important to understand the sort of instances that took place that convinced even those participating in the slave trade to instead advocate for abolition. Despite a growing effort in England against slavery, abolishing the British, and indeed global, slave trade was a lengthy process. British Abolition laws passed in 1807, but their Emancipation Act was not enacted until 1833. Abolition in 1807 made it illegal to continue to capture, transport, sell, and buy *newly* enslaved people in the British Empire, but the Emancipation Act made it illegal to own *any* captive person. The Act meant that all previously enslaved people were to be freed and achieve full emancipation, with Jamaica participating in an apprenticeship program to 'prepare' formerly enslaved people for their freedom. Although the British territories outlawed the practice, there were places where slavery was still legal. Jenny Jemmott noted that if children were reunited with family after abolition, there was still the threat of

³⁰⁸ Newton, *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade*, 18.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

separation as Black people were kidnapped and sold to places where it was legal – mainly Cuba and the southern states of America.³¹⁰

Even where slavery was illegal, there were still many examples of it thriving on the black market. It proved difficult to curbe the popularity and power of the global slave trade, resulting in attempts to impede the practice and hold nations accountable for their participation. The United States joined Britain in making the slave trade illegal in 1808, with the Netherlands following suit in 1814, France the next year, Spain and Portugal also in 1815 for the northern hemisphere, and finally including all Spanish territories in 1820. In 1817-1818, there were bilateral treaties formed between Britain and Portugal; Britain and Spain; and Britain and the Netherlands to legalize the right for their warships to approach and search vessels (flying under those national flags) that had reasonable suspicion of participating in the slave trade.³¹¹ Such treaties grew in popularity and between 1841 and 1862, numerous agreements of similar bases were formed with nations such as Austria, Prussia, Russia, Belgium, Germany, France, and the United States.³¹² However, those treaties often contained strict guidelines; the British-Spanish agreement had 12 clauses to be followed. Clause X provided that enslaving ships could not be detained unless there were people being held as property on board with the intention of them being sold into the slave trade. Additionally, British ships could not detain Spanish vessels unless the enslaved were kidnapped from the coast of Africa where slavery was illegal.³¹³ With many requirements (especially ones that were difficult to track, such as where the people were kidnapped from), it made successful detainment of enslaving ships difficult to achieve.

³¹⁰ Jemmott, *Ties That Bind*, 80.

³¹¹ Andrea Nicholson, “Transformations in the Law Concerning Slavery: Legacies of the Nineteenth Century Anti-Slavery Movement,” in *A Global History of Anti-Slavery Politics in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. William Mulligan, and Maurice Bric (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013): 219.

³¹² *Ibid.*, 220.

³¹³ “Slave Trade.” *Royal Gazette of Jamaica*. (April 11, 1818): 4.

Regardless, those treaties *were* crucial to effectively curb the slave trade; indeed, a translated French letter from 1824 showed the inefficiency of global abolition without the opportunity to hold other nations accountable. A French ship, *Two Nations*, was captured by an English vessel,

(at the moment when she appeared before Uragua [*sic*], with a *cargo of ebony*,) and carried to Kingston, has been released, the Admiral having declared that no one had a right of capturing the French flag: in consequence of this, the brig returned to Uragua [*sic*], where she landed 456 *logs*. Had the *wood* been good, it would have had a fine sale, but owing to the *bad state of the bulk of the cargo*, it is of the smallest kind.³¹⁴

The letter excerpt revealed dehumanizing language used to refer to enslaved people (a ‘cargo of ebony;’ ‘logs;’ and ‘wood’), however it also showed the lack of power other nations had to interfere in the illegal slave trade until treaties were formed. Although France had outlawed the slave trade for almost a decade by the time the *Two Nations* was captured by the British and was caught directly breaking the law, due to geopolitics, and the lack of a formed treaty, the British had to drop the case. As a result, the *Two Nations* immediately returned to the illegal practice of capturing and holding humans as property.

A successful example of a British-captured ship took place during the 1847-1850 excursion of the *Bonetta* that saw Fredrick Forbes bring Sarah Forbes Bonetta to England, at a time when Britain had formed treaties with other nations. Their ship captured six empty enslaving vessels, and one enslaving ship with approximately 400 people being held captive onboard.³¹⁵ An earlier example of the agreement to stop and search suspicious vessels took place in 1839. A Spanish ship named the *Caridad Cubana* was captured by the British carrying enslaved people from Bissau, Guinea-Bissau, in West Africa, to Kingston, Jamaica. When the ship was boarded, detailed accounts were created of the people being carried – which was rare when the slave trade was legal. Typically, ship logs included the total

³¹⁴ Heyrick, *The Humming Bird*, 342-343.

³¹⁵ *Morning Herald, London*, (September 23, 1850): 2.

number of captives that embarked and disembarked, but that was often the only information provided. The *Caridad Cubana* was recorded carrying 174 captured people, 144 of which were noted in detail. Of those 144, records show that there were 9 girls and 20 boys ranging in age from 6–12 years old; 3 female teenagers and 8 male teenagers between the ages of 13–19; 20 adult women aged 20–48; and 84 adult men ranging from 20–55 years old.³¹⁶

Considering there were 29 young children, 11 adolescents, and only 20 women, it can be inferred that a significant portion of youth were torn away from at least one of their parents, if not both, when they were enslaved. Within the records, the names, age, height, and sex assigned at birth³¹⁷ of the passengers were all preserved; information about the captive children can be viewed in the table below.

³¹⁶ “African Names - Database.” *Slave Voyages*. <https://www.slavevoyages.org/resources/names-database>.

³¹⁷ The gender binary is a western concept enforced through colonization. 2SLGBTQQIA+ communities have always existed and will always exist. I am acknowledging them by using the more modern term *sex assigned at birth*. This term recognizes that gender identity and biologically assigned sex are two different concepts, along with recognizing that the prescription of ‘male’ or ‘female’ may not have been accurate for all the passengers listed. See Brooklyn Leo, “The Colonial/Modern [Cis]Gender System and Trans World Traveling.” *Hypatia*, 35, no. 3 (2020): 454-474; and Shiera S. el-Malik, “Rattling the binary: symbolic power, gender, and embodied colonial legacies.” *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 2, no. 1 (2014): 1-16.

Children and Adolescents of the <i>Caridad Cubana</i>					
<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex Assigned at Birth</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex Assigned at Birth</i>
Conta	6	Female	Senai	11	Female
Daniel	6	Female	Marailah	12	Male
Serai	7	Male	Mellalie	12	Male
Tambah	7	Male	Connedia	12	Male
Tamonrah	7	Male	Tambah	12	Male
Larah	7	Female	Caterine	12	Female
Era	8	Male	Liza	12	Female
Tatah	8	Female	Lamainai	13	Male
Anante	9	Male	Guai	13	Male
Neufa	9	Male	Coton	13	Male
Simile	9	Male	Coombah	13	Female
Todaicuba	9	Male	Sambah	14	Male
Garraparre	9	Male	Labot	14	Male
Senairia	9	Female	Branfo	16	Male
Cariffe	10	Male	Maronbah	16	Male
Collai	10	Male	Coomba	16	Female
Laon	10	Male	Mesalai	17	Male
Massa	10	Male	Larah	18	Female
Tenda	10	Female	Mayal	19	Male
Ivallai	11	Male	Monza	19	Male
Memonideu	11	Male	Sarrabah	19	Male
Lambah	11	Male	Lononie	19	Male

*Table 1. Youth of the Caridad Cubana as recorded upon the ship's capture.*³¹⁸

³¹⁸ "African Names - Database." *Slave Voyages*.

When the *Caridad Cubana* was caught, the details of captives acted as a ‘formal record’ of emancipation to help protect the passengers from being re-enslaved moving forward.³¹⁹ Unfortunately, the records did not include relations (if any) between people to track how families were kept together, or more likely, separated during the enslavement, voyage, and planned sale of people as property. However, inferring from patterns that have been revealed throughout this thesis, it can be estimated that at least some of the children were separated from family. Most likely, if any families were kept together, it would have been younger children, as they were more likely to be with their parent(s) upon enslavement. However, as children grew older and became more independent, the risk of being captured alone would increase. As children reached ages 10+ years, enslavers would especially want to capitalize on their budding strength and ‘optimal years’ for the strenuous stolen labour, knowledge, and skills to which enslaved workers were subjected. Sailors involved in the British slave trade admitted to separating families early on; oftentimes, mother, father, and children were put onto different ships out of Africa. The only exception to that practice was with breast-feeding children, who were kept with their mother (when they were permitted to live). As demand for infants was low, they were often ‘given away’ as a bonus upon the ‘purchase’ of their mother.³²⁰

Case Study of Akeiso (Florence Hall)

Kila ndege huruka na mbawa zake
Every bird flies with its own wings
- *Kiswahili proverb*

While most narratives of children who were transported across the trans-Atlantic were not preserved, there is a surviving account of a woman named Akeiso. Although Akeiso’s narrative is undated, it is believed to be from around 1810. The 4-paged, hand-written

³¹⁹ “Register of Africans from the Goleta ‘Caridad Cubana.’ *Slave Voyages*.
<https://www.slavevoyages.org/resources/images/category/Manuscripts/152>.

³²⁰ Diptee, *From Africa to Jamaica*, 58, 55.

account begins in Africa with the Eboe (now Igbo) people in Nigeria. Akeiso attested that she barely remembers life in Africa prior to her enslavement, but recalled her community: attending to people, fishing, guarding birds and chicken from hawks, and playing with the other children.³²¹ One day, while Akeiso was playing with the others away from their houses, enslavers came, snatched the children, and tied their hands together. The children cried out, but since they were a distance from their homes, no one heard them.³²² The children were ‘hurried along’ until daybreak. Akeiso noted that the group hid during the day, and travelled in darkness for 15 nights of hunger, sadness, and likely fear. The morning of the 16th day, the children were forced onto a ship, where they left “[their] Country, and [their] freedom, and consigned to foreigners and Slavery.”³²³

Akeiso’s memoir allowed for a unique insight into the trans-Atlantic crossing. Once on board the ship, Akeiso recounted that she, and the others, had their beads and shells taken from them. She noted that the children were naked and allowed to walk around the ship. However, she remembered the adults chained, and forced below deck in cramped and dark conditions.³²⁴ The food provided throughout the voyage was limited and bad, the enslaved were frequently severely tortured, and death onboard the ship was common.³²⁵ Akeiso noted that the prevalence of death resulted in a desensitization of it; the enslaved were no longer afraid of dying, and they believed that “those who died, were restored to their people and Country.”³²⁶ The ship eventually landed in Jamaica, where Akeiso’s Eboe identity was stolen from her. Instead of Akeiso, she was called Florence Hall, an occurrence that “soon put an end to all recollections of [her] people - another name - a strange language...”³²⁷ Akeiso

³²¹ Akeiso (Florence Hall), *Memoirs of the Life of Florence Hall*. (The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1810): 1.

³²² *Ibid.*, 1-2.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 2.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

suffered a decade of severe punishment in Jamaica, where her labour was exploited prior to writing her narrative.

Akeiso's account provided a narrative of the enslavement process from capture, transportation to the ships, the voyage across the trans-Atlantic, and life once in Jamaica from the experience of a child. That allowed the differences between adults and children on that particular ship to become evident. Adults were chained beneath the ship, while the young were able to walk around the deck - that information may not have been provided by an adult if they spent the entire trip below and did not know where the children were during the voyage. Akeiso's experience of enslavement followed structures discussed throughout this thesis. She was captured without adults, as she was an older, more independent child away from her community playing with others her age. Once on the enslavement ship, they were stripped of African identity through the removal of their beads and shells; they were tortured; provided insufficient provisions; and death ran rampant amongst those being held as property. In Jamaica, African identity continued to be destroyed through the renaming of traditional names to English ones. Although Akeiso's experience was indistinct amongst enslaved people from Africa, the fact that her narrative was written down and preserved is unique due to her gender and enslaved status.

Whether children travelling across the British Empire were mixed-race children of white men, or enslaved from Africa, they all lacked agency over their movements. In instances of mixed-race children, they were torn from their mothers and wider kinship networks in Jamaica and placed onto a vessel to be shipped to Britain, where they were often forced to live with unfamiliar extended family, friends of their father, or institutionalized into boarding schools. Such arrangements were often enforced through the father's will upon their death, where the wishes of the child(ren) or living mother were not cared about, nor

considered. The fathers considered the child removal best for their offspring's future by removing them from the small island to a more 'promising' future in England.

Children from Africa were also torn from their communities and subjected to the dangers of the trans-Atlantic crossing where torture and death was prominent. They were stripped of any form of little control they had over their lives, and subjected to the whims and control of enslavers. From the moment of their capture, through the voyage, and life in Jamaica, violence, abuse, and exploitation was their new standard of life. Many were separated from their parents either during their kidnapping or because they were placed onto separate vessels out of Africa to create a more vulnerable state to ensure greater control over the children.

CONCLUSION

Gutiri muthenya ukiaga ta ungi
No day dawns like another
- *Gikuyu proverb*

Although both children and adults experienced enslavement during the global slave trade, the experiences faced by younger people were unique. Their age intersected with their gender and race to produce vulnerability unlike that encountered by adults. There has been a progressive evolution of slavery studies to consider individual experiences, and the practice's impact on people instead of simply overarching themes of the trade. When analyzing the experiences of enslaved children in pre-emancipation Jamaica, there were uncountable examples of family separation. Youth were often taken away from their families to profit enslavers. The British Government enacted a series of amelioration laws to increase the 'quality' of life of those being held as property; in those laws were protections for enslaved families. Despite those orders, enslavers discovered loopholes or occasionally outright disobeyed the law and continued to remove children from their kin. Even after emancipation, enslaved families faced many barriers with 'former' enslavers threatening to remove free children from their property, resulting in family separation, if parents did not agree to re-enslave the youth as apprentices. The case study of James Williams attested to how apprenticeship did not result in the amelioration that Britons believe it would: enslavers no longer had to provide food or clothing, punishments increased in severity and frequency, and family status remained in a state of vulnerability.

Not only did biological family play a key role in Jamaica during 1800-1852, but so too did 'fictive' kin and kinship networks. Demographic studies of Jamaican estates showed multiple examples of orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs) adopted into the homes of enslaved people prior to emancipation. Such strong community values also played a key role after August 1, 1834, as well. When cholera broke out in Jamaica, the population had high

mortality rates; as a result, many children became OVCs. When the Jamaican Assembly passed the *Act for the Establishment of an Orphan Asylum, and for Certain Other Destitute Children*, it meant that OVCs were institutionalized until the age of 14, after which they were apprenticed for an additional seven years. Although children under the age of six were freed after August 1, 1834, the *Act* resulted in a re-enslavement of children. Within the apprenticed Black community, this re-enslavement was considered unacceptable and there were efforts to integrate OVCs into family homes to protect them from institutionalization. Kinship networks in Jamaica were also essential in family reunification efforts. Many formerly enslaved people banded together in attempts to bring family back together from across the British Empire after becoming free. As illustrated through the case study of George Wellington, children often formed their own kinship networks that occasionally made the difference between re-enslavement overseas and being brought back to freedom in Jamaica.

Periodically, OVCs also interacted with white nobility, such as with the case studies of Dido Elizabeth Belle and Sarah Forbes Bonetta. When Belle moved into the home of her great-uncle, Lord Mansfield, alongside her cousin, Murray, she was treated differently as a mixed-race relative compared to Murray, who was white. Her experience illustrated where family lines ended and racial lines began, and the refusal to cross the two. In high society England, Belle was held at arm's reach from her extended family members. Sarah Forbes Bonetta experienced similar types of exclusion. Torn from her home in Africa, Captain Frederick Forbes believed he was bringing her to a better life in England, where she became a ward of Queen Victoria. Both of them were torn from their culture and forcefully assimilated into British ways of life. Their heritage was erased, which was exemplified through Bonetta's name - it changed to that of Captain Forbes, and the name of the ship on which they sailed. Although living in high society, Belle and Bonetta had lower standing than their white peers due to their race.

In addition to interactions with Lord Mansfield, Captain Forbes, and the Queen, analysis of British white abolitionists revealed that most of them did not live their lives supporting the movements they believed in. While supporting abolition during her lifetime, and befriending Jamaican-born Jane Harry, Mary Morris Knowles died without leaving any financial support, or charitable donations to further emancipation efforts. John Newton evolved from an enslaver, leading expeditions to Africa into a religious instructor preaching abolition. Despite his repentance, Newton also left no bequeaths to support the freedom movement. Supported by a generous allowance from her father, Elizabeth Heyrick devoted her life to philanthropy and her arguments for emancipation became famous upon publication. Although her literary contributions to the effort were unquestionable, her charity was, as she did not make any provisions for them in her will. William Wilberforce spent 20 years of his life advocating for change within the British Parliament pushing for abolition to become a law. Regardless of his irrefutable dedication and wealth that came with a political career, Wilberforce did not leave any financial support behind to ensure all his earthly efforts were not done in vain. Hannah More's failed engagement provided her with monetary compensation allowing her to pursue philanthropic endeavours. More supported her beliefs through a legacy left through donations to the *Bristol and Clifton Female Anti-Slavery Society*, and stocks left to the *Anti-Slavery Society*. Out of five vehement abolitionists analyzed, only one reinforced the beliefs by providing support to maintain the movement after their presence on earth was gone.

Analysis of 54 wills left by white fathers allowed the realities of mixed-race children to come to light. The majority of those children were left enslaved, with only a small portion being granted 'free' status by their white parent. When they did receive freedom and support, fathers often removed child(ren) from their mothers to send them overseas to be educated and to live in England. There were often strong feelings against child(ren) remaining in Jamaica,

likely influenced by racist notions of Black society and the desire to enforce western ways of life onto all non-European people. The importance of intersectionality also came into effect as there was a stark difference between the number of sons sent to Britain compared to daughters. Paternalism also became evident through Chapter Four; although most of the children still had a living mother, because their father had died, they were considered orphaned. Provisions left in the fathers' wills stripped the offspring of their agency as they had no say in leaving their mother, community, and island to live in England.

Just as children were transported across the ocean due to wishes left by deceased fathers, enslaved children of the trans-Atlantic crossing were also unable to control their movements and forced migration. Those captured on enslavement vessels faced highly dangerous situations: they were chained together in cramped, dark, damp spaces filled with feces, and bodily fluids; vulnerable to decimating spreads of disease; provided minimal food and water; subjected to horrific torture, and many were vindictively thrown overboard; and torn apart from their loved ones. There was an example of a child murdered and thrown into the waters because their crying irritated enslavers running the ship. The slave trade continued to survive illegally even after much of the world had the practice outlawed. As a result, many countries established treaties to provide checks and balances to detain any ships flying under the agreeing nations' flags. However, the regulations were often so stringent that unless extremely specific conditions aligned, enslavement ships could not legally be detained. Akeiso's memoir provided a unique experience of life on one such ship as she was transported from Africa to Jamaica as a child. In her account, she noted that children on board her ship received differential treatment than adults, as they were permitted to walk about the deck instead of being held captive below. The experiences faced by Dido Elizabeth Belle, Sarah Forbes Bonetta, and numerous children mentioned in the wills of white fathers

illustrated the frequency at which children travelled across the ocean, connecting Africa, the Caribbean, and Europe through kinship and familial lines.

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