

# **Legacies of Enslavement Interim Report One**

## **Report by the Pepys Librarian/Keeper of the Old Library**

### **Introduction**

The University of Cambridge has begun a project to investigate whether there is evidence of institutional benefit from slavery. The project involves the appointment of two post-doctoral researchers, under the guidance of Professor Martin Millet.

A number of Colleges have initiated parallel projects to examine their archival materials, with a Fellow responsible.

In the Michaelmas Term 2019, Magdalene initiated a preliminary investigation, setting terminal dates of 1650 to 1850 in the first instance. The investigation looked at what -- if any -- relevant materials might be available within the Archive and College collections under certain (provisional) headings. These were: memorials and monuments, naming (eg. of prizes, buildings), benefactions (eg. for the establishment of fellowships, studentships) and gifts of silverware. The purpose of the work was to determine whether a more substantial investigation would be fruitful. While the term 'slavery' has a wider connotation worth further thought, the main focus of this 'scoping' project was on looking at whether there is evidence that the College has benefited financially from the Transatlantic slave trade.

### **Funding**

The project was funded by the generosity of the Centre for History and Economics.

### **Project Researcher**

The main researcher on the project was Ms Mandy Marvin, a professional archivist, who undertook 50 hours of work within the College and other key archival sources.<sup>1</sup> She worked on a day-to-day basis with the Archivist, Dr Matilda Watson, and advice has also been given by the Archivist Emeritus, Dr Hyam.

Ms Marvin's research has made a very major contribution indeed to this report by the Keeper of the Old Library. The Keeper of the Old Library wishes to record here the great debt to Ms Marvin.

### **Terminology**

In direct citation of historical sources, original terminology, is retained.

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<sup>1</sup> Chief sources consulted were A History of Magdalene College Cambridge 1428-1988, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, and the UCL-hosted 'Legacies of British Slave-ownership' web database; some cross-checking of other sources.

## Report

### (1) Memorials and Monuments in College

*Investigations here focused on the memorials and brasses in Chapel and the stained glass in Hall. The main issues surround whether the College is publicly commemorating figures associated with the transatlantic slave trade.*

Apparently no comprehensive, ready-reference list exists of the Chapel stall-plates and other memorials around the College, nor lists of the heraldic glass in the Hall and elsewhere, or the heraldic emblems on the buildings. However, information can be found in *Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of Cambridge* (1959) and in notes by Nuttall, housed in the Magdalene College Archive.<sup>2</sup> Various articles published over the years in the Magdalene College Magazine also contain information.

(a) Most of the shields in First Court are of monastic houses such as Crowland Abbey, so these pre-date the transatlantic slave trade and the arms over the arch leading from First Court 'into the Screens' are the Audley arms, of sufficient topical antiquity to escape examination in this report.

(b) Over the College's entrance gateway, however, are the emblems of Neville-Griffin, Lord Braybrooke, placed there at some time between about 1852 and 1854; standing for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Braybrooke, Richard Aldworth-Neville, later Griffin (the name was taken in 1797), who does have ties to slavery (see Section 3 below).

(c) According to the *Inventory*, the Combination room's heraldic glass includes shields-of-arms (surmounted by coronets) of Lord Braybrook and Griffin, for Richard Neville-Griffin, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Braybrooke.

(d) In the Chapel also are the Neville/Braybrooke shields, and a window in memory of the Revd George Neville Grenville (first window North side).

(e) Some of the other Masters and Visitors represented in the Chapel, chiefly by way of the brass stall-plates, and (details to be confirmed) in the heraldic glass in Hall and perhaps elsewhere, have ties to slave estates in Jamaica or Barbados (see section 3 below).

(f) In the Hall there are the arms of Queen Anne, who, as the National Portrait Gallery put it, 'continued the tradition of royal support for the British slave trade.' She secured the *Asiento* signed in 1713 giving exclusive rights to the British nation 'to provide enslaved Africans for the Spanish West Indies for thirty years. The Government sold the contract to the newly founded South Sea Company for £7.5 million. Queen Anne also secured over 20% of the stock for herself.'

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<sup>2</sup> The College might find it useful, for this and future purposes, to collate the information—perhaps in a centralised database, rather as we are doing for the portraits.

(g) From 1672 the Royal African Company had had a monopoly, courtesy of Charles II, on the burgeoning slave trade. Samuel Pepys, who is variously memorialised around the College -- and transparently so in the form of the Pepys Library -- is known to have profited from the slave trade at least as an investor, having shares in the Royal African Company (of Merchant Adventurers), and at least one African among his household: 'Doll', a cook (though apparently Doll was borrowed for temporary work from William Batelier.). Pepys was given ownership of a slave on a plantation, whom he eventually sold. For Doll, see the Diary entry for 5<sup>th</sup> April 1669. For the slave, see Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson, A 185, ff.66& 70; and A 181, f. 317 for the request for the slave to be sold).

(h) We have not identified anything yet in the UCL database or DNB for Arthur Annesley, 5<sup>th</sup> Earl Anglesey, whose money paid for the Pepys Library's move into the 'New Building' and for the Pepys Librarian's salary of £10 per annum.

(i) The north-west window in Hall has the shield of John Hume (who assumed the name Egerton in 1849), son of John (Cust), 1<sup>st</sup> Earl Barlow, and his first wife Sophie Hume, dated 1833—which suggests it perhaps marked his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday (b. 1812). According to the UCL database, his father's estate included substantial property in British Guiana (Demerera), 716A & B (the estate was called 'Greenwich Park'): the record relates "30<sup>th</sup> Nov 1835 | 185 Enslaved | £10058 15s 4d." *Parliamentary Papers* shows British Guiana claim no. 716A & B, each of £5029 7s 8d to John Earl Brownlow and Wilbraham Egerton together. There were 190 slaves counted in 1832 on the Greenwich Park estate, the year before the student's shield was installed.<sup>3</sup>

## **(2) Naming of Prizes, Buildings**

*Reviewing the College's named buildings and courts has not produced any immediate or obvious connection with slavery. Much of the College either pre-dates or post-dates the time-span to which the study is largely confined. Prizes are often named after twentieth-century benefactors or honorands.*

### Case Studies

(a) Bright's Building. Neither Mynors Bright (1817-1883) nor his parents appear to have a connection with slavery. Ms Marvin comments that she has not had a chance to pursue whether the Elizabeth Bright who appears in the UCL database (having been awarded nearly £29 3s 1d for one slave in December 1835) is Mynors' mother, whose maiden name he bears. We do not expect she is, but it could be pursued for thoroughness' sake.

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<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that much of the material included here involves lists for the purposes of reparations – payments to estate owners or those with shares in plantations, when slavery was abolished in the mid nineteenth-century.

(b) Benson Court/Hall. Research has found no direct family link with slavery for A.C. Benson's family, the quantities of money he invested in the College's buildings, and many other inscriptions in his honour around College. The UCL database has also been checked for his mother's maiden name (Sidgwick), with no results returned.

(c) Neither Cripps (modern benefactor) nor Mallory has any readily identifiable link to slave-involved antecedents.

(d) 'Buckingham' predates the parameters of this project.

Additional note: The College may wish to look into the antecedents of those for whom rooms have been named (e.g., the Ramsay Room in Bright's Building, named for Allen Beville Ramsay, for whom we have not found anything of concern in a brief check), in case of strong associations of the family name with slavery. We note, however, that most named rooms are called after twentieth-century individuals.

### **(3) Masters, Visitors and Benefactors 1650-1850**

*The clearest area for further investigation under this heading would be the Masters and Visitors to the College in the early nineteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Benefactors to the College who supported fellowships or studentships or contributed to the buildings are also relevant*

In this section, research is indebted for information from the following very useful resource: *English Heritage Properties 1600-1830 and Slavery Connections A Report Undertaken to Mark the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Atlantic Slave Trade, Volume One: Report and Appendix 1*, by Miranda Kaufmann (2007); this was prepared using Nick Draper's database which is one of the foundations of the UCL database.

Fellowships and studentships (scholarships). Ms Marvin comments that she has not so far been able to pick up a lead in the biographical and *Legacies* web site for links to slavery for the named scholarships created during the time-span (1650-1850) covered by this study. Again, picking through benefactors' financial records and other relevant material may help to identify the source of their wealth more specifically.

As indicated above, the Visitors and Masters give one rather more to pursue.

(a) The entry from DNB informs us about: Griffin, Richard [formerly Richard Aldworth Neville], second Baron Braybrooke (1750–1825), politician, was born on 22 June 1750 in Duke Street, Westminster, and baptized Richard Aldworth at Windsor, on 29 June, the only

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<sup>4</sup> 'Visitor' is a formal position and, at this period, the Visitor had the statutory right to appoint a Master.

son of Richard Neville Aldworth (1717–1793) politician, who in 1762 added Neville to the family name, and his wife, Magdalena Calandrini (c.1718–1750). From 1762 he held the sinecure of provost-marshal of Jamaica, which was said, towards the end of his life, to have brought him in all about £120,000. Miranda Kaufmann noted that such income would be enable the recipient's '[i]nvestment in the refurbishing or remodelling of [their] properties or the expansion of their associated estates' which could be investigated further. When Richard Aldworth Neville inherited Audley End in 1797, he expanded the estate, and his son later altered the house considerably.

Note: The purpose of the role of Provost-Marshal of Jamaica, and what the role entailed, what powers were exercised by proxy, etc.-- should probably be considered also. What judgements and correspondence exist and what effect on people's and communities' lives these might have had. The National Archives holds records (ref. PRO 30/50; Sir Henry Neville and Richard Neville Aldworth [sic]: Papers) that include 'numerous legal papers, deeds and accounts concerning the interest of the Neville family in the office of Provost Marshal General in Jamaica (1758 to 1834)...'. These have not been examined in detail yet.

(b) The Hon. George Neville Grenville, Master of Magdalene from 1813-1853, was with another, awarded £20,000 compensations. This is outlined in a marriage settlement trusteeship document for the Jamaica Hope Estate St Andrews; this was during his mastership at Magdalene.

This is information from the UCL slavery database entry: son of Richard Griffin, 2nd Lord Braybrooke, Baron of Braybrooke and Catherine Grenville. Married Lady Charlotte Legge, daughter of George Legge, 3rd Earl of Dartmouth and Lady Frances Finch, on 9 May 1816. Baptised George Neville; 1825 changed name to George Neville-Grenville: his uncle Thomas Grenville conveyed to him the Butleigh Court, Somerset estate. (Thomas had just inherited it from James Grenville, Baron Glastonbury. Neville took the additional name of Grenville).

The compensation claim is recorded thus:

Jamaica St Andrew 114 (Hope Estate):

25th Jul 1836 | 379 Enslaved | £6630 5s 6d<sup>5</sup>

Other relevant documents include:

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<sup>5</sup> Claim Notes *Parliamentary Papers* p. 297.

T71/865: claim by the Duke of Buckingham. Paid to The Marquis of Breadalbane and The Hon. G. Neville Grenville, as trustee by a marriage settlement, dated 11/05/1819, for £20,000.

T71/1607: letter from G. Jago, no. 11 Trelleck Terrace, Pimlico, stating: 'I am directed by His Grace the Duke of B&C...to ascertain what sum will be awarded and at what period the same will be payable' (for St David claim nos. 114 and 150).

In a telling account, we find the following, from Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey, *The West Indies in 1837* (London, Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1838) p. 173: the authors passed through Hope estate, belonging to the Duke of Buckingham, commenting:

“we saw three white immigrants ploughing in the same field, in which a gang of negroes were at work with the hoe. About fifty Europeans have been brought out to this estate, under an agreement which entails an enormous annual expense on its proprietor. No preparation was in the first instance made for their reception, and the hardships they endured, and their own intemperate habits, carried many of them off. Those who remain, are more comfortably circumstanced, and a few of them work steadily, but in this climate one negro is worth two or three Europeans”.

The College may wish to see if any money, silver, books, etc., might have been given the College by him or his son (though from the College history, it sounds as though he and his wife left in less than happy circumstances, having to make room for Barton Wallop).

(b) His son, the Revd George Sandby (1769 – 1852) was '[a]warded part of the compensation for Tryall estate in Hanover Jamaica with others, ownership apparently descending from the Acres family of Hanover.'; the grandson left quite a large sum on his death in 1880 (personal estate £25,000).

(c) Elizabeth [née Griffin; Grey, Wallop], Countess of Portsmouth (Visitor). Elizabeth, Countess of Portsmouth, Visitor d. 1762. There is a summary in the UCL database of her connection via her husband's co-heir, the Hon. Ralph Grey (1661 – 1706). She was trying to reclaim money from the sale of an estate. The issue was whether or not slaves ('worth' £2,000) counted as goods for the purpose of the value of the estate. The record of the Will reads: 'Will of Ralph Lord Grey Baron of Warke proved 02/07/1706. He left his estates to his cousins Lord North and Henry Neville on condition that the latter change his name to Grey, which he did. 'I give to my two young blacks Beaver [sp?] and Ffibbe the sum of 40 pounds apiece to be laid out to the best advantage for them in putting them out to a trade or otherwise' as his executors saw fit, 'and all the rest of my Negroes or Blacks now in England I give their liberty and ten pounds apiece.'

#### **(4) Gifts of silver**

*The College has a number of items of silverware, acquired over a long period of time. The earliest records of donations of silver go back to then seventeenth century. Silver items are still given quite routinely to the college for special occasions and in particular for commemoration by Fellows of certain anniversaries, such as 25 years as a fellow. The questions asked in regard to silverware were as follows: whether the silver was acquired by the donor through financial benefits derived from the slave trade; whether the silverware was itself manufactured with labour or material derived from the slave trade; and whether silverware promoted or associated the College with slavery.*

#### **Case Study**

The pair of silver candelabra depicting enslaved black Africans (chained) is the most visual of the reminders of slavery in the silver collection. They came to the College by way of Philip Cohen, a nephew and ‘a great favourite’ of the illustrious Magdalene alumnus the Rt Hon. Arthur Cohen, KC. Inconveniently for our purposes, predecessors (father, Uncle Arthur, grandfather) just referred to ‘plate’ in their wills, but happily Philip was more specific when he was hastily writing his will.

From its entry in inventories held in the College Archive, it seems the mounted inscription on the candlesticks isn’t as Philip stipulated. He’d instructed they should say ‘Left in Memory of the Right Honourable Arthur Cohen K.C. from the Collection formed by his Grandfather’.

Arthur’s grandfather was Levy Barent Cohen (alt spellings Levi, Barend). From Levy and his relict’s wills, as well as from other secondary sources dipped into, they clearly had plenty of ‘plate’ and jewels, diamonds included. Philip’s will indicates that the provenance of the candelabra was from his great-grandfather’s substantial collection, other pieces of which he also bequeathed in his will. (N.B.: This additional provenance information may also have an effect on their valuation.)

Correspondence or other notes, memoranda, paperwork, relating to the candelabra, if such records exist at Magdalene, amongst the family’s papers, or other archive repositories or private hands, might give more information. One would imagine that they would have corresponded regarding such a transfer to the College’s keeping. Someone could also check through other family members’ wills, as there were rather a lot of children produced from Levy’s marriages to the Diamantschleifer sisters (Fanny, then Lydia (‘Liba’/Liebe), and the candelabra might have made their way to Philip a bit sideways, so to speak- through other family members. It also could just have been given without wills or written records—gifts over time, etc. Maybe from Arthur to Philip, even?

Leaving aside for the moment the candelabras' overt reference to enslaved peoples, their provenance might also be explored in more depth: for example, one could pursue whether there any surviving inventories, either amongst household papers, such as for valuation, and/or a probate inventory or etc., or purchase accounts/pocket memoranda even , Also could try to trace with whom the family was insured (Sun Fire, perhaps?) and insurance records that could be checked. Also banking and stocks and shares records.

Keeping in mind always the thought of 'follow the money', a substantial portion of Levy Barent Cohen's trade was in diamonds, and the suggestion is chiefly Brazilian diamonds. There are links with that to slavery, so this might be looked into. It sounds like family records will be patchy owing to intentional destruction, and that the researcher would have to work through records of Hope & Co. to follow the trail or pick up leads. Also it sounds as if his cloth trade had at least some ties to the East India Company. It looks like there's scope for research in the StadsArchiv in Amsterdam (records of Hope & Co.) as well as further Barent/Barend Cohen research there. Levy could have just inherited them from his own forebears, or brought into the marriage via the Diamantschleifers or otherwise been given them, with no suggestion of the family's connections to slavery other than their subject matter.

Metallurgical tests have not been undertaken to assess the sources of gold or silver in the collection. It is possible it was derived from mines where slave labour was used.

### **Notes on the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, as pertaining to Magdalene**

The College in the eighteenth century was a centre of liberal evangelical thought. The college is probably right to regard Peter Peckard (Master, d. 1797), as an important influence over the individuals who promulgated the Act for the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in 1808. The story is well known in College: Peckard, as Vice Chancellor, set an essay prize topic on the slave trade, which was won by the future abolitionist, Clarkson (a student of St John's College). Peckard was almost certainly the first person to preach in Cambridge against the slave trade, and his sermon represents a cogent and moving appeal for the abolition.

### **Summary**

A great deal has been achieved in this scoping project. There is little evidence of substantial direct benefit from the transatlantic slave trade, but through the wealth of benefactors who had interests in the slave trade, the College might well have benefited.

(a) It might be assumed that Pepys did not purchase all the books for his library from his investments in a company associated with the slave trade; but these investments did add to his income. He also contributed financially to the building of what is now the Pepys Building.

(b) The Neville Grenvilles/Braybrookes/Howards (the Visitors and Masters) would reward further research, including most directly how they materially and financially benefited Magdalene. For example, there is evidence that that (in addition to one of the family making improvements to Audley End mentioned above, the Nevilles also sent workmen to effect repairs at Magdalene. Their surviving personal and estate account books as well as Magdalene's could be checked.

(c) With the above exceptions, there is little evidence so far of memorialisation of people with links to the slave trade.

(d) The papers of the Ferrar family, who were deputies in the Virginia Company, have not been closely examined in this project, and probably should be. They comprise several thousand documents of great interest to scholars. The Virginia company went bust in 1626, before the start date of this project. However, the company was certainly involved before that date in colonial activity in both Virginia and Bermuda. They were not benefactors to Magdalene but their family papers came to the College on the death of a descendant in the early 19th century (Martha Ferrar, who married Peter Peckard) and we gain financially from their reproduction via a web site.

(e) The 'slave boy' candlestick is difficult to interpret: it might be an image intended as a statement against the slave trade, or it might be seen as an image of a 'dignified' slave (itself a highly racist position). It is difficult to tell -- and either way the image needs some explaining.