

# 1 Introduction

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Slave-ownership is virtually invisible in British history. It has been elided by strategies of euphemism and evasion originally adopted by the slave-owners themselves and subsequently reproduced widely in British culture. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)*, a national Valhalla, the pantheon of not only a handful of heroes but also (unlike, for example, Westminster Abbey) a much wider swathe of the people who are held to have made modern Britain, includes hundreds of Britons who themselves owned enslaved people or whose families owned enslaved people; almost none is identified as a slave-owner. The vast bulk of relevant entries continue to reflect (consciously or otherwise) the strategies of the slave-owners of the early nineteenth century, who evaded the very term ‘slave-owner’.<sup>1</sup>

For example, the *ODNB* says of the lawyer Fortunatus Dwarris that he ‘inherited considerable property’ in Jamaica, where he was born in 1786; that such property of course included men and women remains unsaid.<sup>2</sup> Again, Thomson Hankey, the political economist and governor of the Bank of England, is said by the *ODNB* to have joined his father’s firm Thomson Hankey & Co., ‘plantation owners and West Indies merchants’; the firm, again, owned men and women as well as plantations.<sup>3</sup> At the same time as eliding slave-ownership, the *ODNB* sustains a discourse that sees the ‘West Indian proprietor’ as the victim of the slave-system and of abolition. In the 1770s, for example, Anthony Morris Storer’s ‘Jamaican source of income all but dried up with the economic distress caused by a hurricane compounded by the government’s American policies’;<sup>4</sup> in 1812, the destruction by volcano of the estate on St Vincent belonging to Frederick Thesiger (later lord chancellor, who had left the navy on becoming heir to his father’s estates around 1807 on the death of his brother George) ‘considerably impoverished his family’;<sup>5</sup> in the early 1800s, the novelist Ellen Pickering’s ‘family owned property in the West Indies, but losses and relative impoverishment after the abolition of the slave trade compelled their retirement for some years to Hampshire [from Bath]’;<sup>6</sup> and, in the early 1830s, the pioneering woman journalist

Frances de Peyronnet and her French husband the Vicomte Jules de Peyronnet ‘thanks to the income from the Whitfield sugar plantations [in St Vincent] ... were able to tour Europe in style’, but then later in the decade, with gradual abolition, ‘this source of revenue began to dry up.’<sup>7</sup>

Such entries in the *ODNB* thus refuse to acknowledge slavery, even by name. There is no difference between pre- and post-Emancipation descriptions of ‘West Indian property’,<sup>8</sup> and the words ‘slave-owner’ and even ‘slave’ do not appear. Moreover, the *ODNB* portrays those who owned enslaved people as vulnerable, the real victims. Elsewhere in the writing of British history, the slave-owners, to the extent they are present at all, have been represented collectively as an outworn and reactionary fragment, the losers of history, irrelevant to an understanding of the formation of modern Britain.<sup>9</sup>

Against this background, our project is to reinscribe slave-ownership onto modern British history. Slave-ownership, *pace* the *ODNB*, permeated the British elites of the early nineteenth century and helped form the elites of the twentieth century. Graham Greene and George Orwell, two of the greatest British writers of the past century, were both descended from slave-owning families. Slave-ownership was and remains hidden in plain sight: the names of slave-owners were preserved in families as diverse as those of the architect Sir George Gilbert Scott, the two Lord Chancellors Douglas McGarel Hogg and Quintin McGarel Hogg (Viscounts Hailsham), the political and diplomatic Akers-Douglas family (Viscounts Chilston), the descendants of George Hibbert (the Holland-Hibberts of Broadclyst House in Devon and Munden in Hertfordshire, Viscounts Knutsford) and the millionaire banker and predecessor of the modern Barclays bank, Robert Cooper Lee Bevan. Such names signal the continuities of slave-ownership in the mainstream of British life.

This book presents some of the fruits of our effort to capture those continuities. In it we draw on the data included in the online Legacies of British Slave-ownership database ([www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs)) published in parallel with this volume, and in which readers of this volume will find the material and sources underpinning our arguments and conclusions presented here. The database digitises all the awards in the slave-compensation records of the 1830s and develops more detailed entries for the absentee planters living in Britain at the time of Emancipation or moving or returning there after Emancipation. In this volume, we have sought to use this underlying prosopography in order to build a totalising picture of the slave-owners by reintegrating various forms of history rewriting – economic, political, cultural, social – that are increasingly separate as the profession polarises between specialist work and ‘global’ histories that operate at such high levels of abstraction as to risk losing their moorings in the evidence. We

are thus attempting to reintegrate cultural, political and social history into material history, without becoming reductive. We do not believe that material interests determine positions, even on slavery itself (although we have found very few men and women who gave up slave-ownership or compensation<sup>10</sup>) but we do argue that we cannot fully understand such positions without knowing the material interests that were involved.<sup>11</sup>

We believe that the context provided by the database offers a chance to escape the questions of representativeness that haunt, for example, the pioneering work of Eric Williams on the slave-owners in Britain, which presented a powerful litany of examples but no capacity to gauge their significance.<sup>12</sup> We have tried consistently to respond to that question of significance. Our aim is to answer not only ‘what happened to the slave-owners in Britain after Emancipation?’ but also ‘how important were the slave-owners in the period after Emancipation?’ In this volume, we have focused on major areas that, as discussed below, appear to us to be central. But we believe that our work here is only a fragment of the work that the database can potentially support. We have in no way exhausted its possibilities, but have tried to highlight key findings and to analyse the types of issues raised by the search for the ‘legacies of slave-ownership’. The content of the database is itself fluid, not final: we claim it to be comprehensive in its coverage of the awardees of slave compensation, but, as a database of 47,000 individuals of whom biographical details have been developed for some 3,000, it will always be subject to expansion in the breadth and depth of the knowledge it captures. This book and the online database therefore represent a baseline from which any further work will point to a broader and deeper penetration of British metropolitan life by slave-ownership and its legacies.

We are using the term ‘legacies’ in three, inter-related, senses. The first refers to a direct, causal relationship between slave-ownership or other financial ties with slavery and the subsequent activities of those who were recipients of slave compensation, including but not confined to the disposal of the money that they gained. Second, we use the term in a looser sense to refer to a less direct connection where we can say that slave-ownership shaped, but did not determine or cause in any strong sense, the activities and bearings of people who were constitutive of nineteenth-century Britain. Finally, we believe that the activities of those descendants of slave-owners in the twentieth and indeed twenty-first centuries who continued to shape Britain were themselves in part legacies of slave-ownership. For example, embedded in George Orwell’s description of his family as ‘lower-upper middle class’ – that is, ‘upper-middle class without money’ – is the continuing imprint of slave-ownership: while the money derived from slavery had gone by the time of Orwell’s father, the

social and cultural capital acquired through slave-wealth remained, propelling the family from obscurity in Scotland and sustaining its members within the ranks of a British imperial administrative class.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time, there is a broader context, and we recognise that our definition of legacies is limited. Clearly the social and economic structures of the former slave-colonies themselves are one of the most immediate legacies (perhaps *the* most immediate legacy) of slavery and of slave-ownership, but we do not seek to address here the complex and distinctive paths that led from slave-colony to modern nationhood. These paths have been the subject of much exploration, driven for understandable reasons in large part by the effort to recover the histories of the enslaved people and their descendants. Recent work to (re)integrate the slave-owner into these histories has to date focused on the period of slavery rather than the period after Emancipation.<sup>14</sup> Our sense – and it is no more than that – from our work is that the impact of the former slave-owners in the former slave-colonies themselves was wildly uneven. Many followed the example of the former slave-owner and West India merchant Nathaniel Snell Chauncy, whose will, made in 1848, specified that his property in the Caribbean should be disposed of and that all the money raised should be invested in railway or other companies ‘in England, Wales, Scotland or Ireland or any of the British colonies’.<sup>15</sup> That such withdrawal to Britain and disinvestment from the former slave-economies was a material part of the behaviour of absentee slave-owners, who joined the British state and eventually the British people in abandoning their respective previous commitments to the slave-colonies, is one of the refrains in this book. At the same time, however, absentee former slave-owners also remained invested and flourished, especially in the newer slave-colonies. The movement of indentured people into British Guiana and Trinidad was driven by absentee former slave-owners in Britain. A handful of such slave-owners, including Booker Brothers, who went on to dominate the Guyanese sugar industry until its nationalisation, used the disruption of the Emancipation period to transform their position from agents and managers who were at most small-scale slave-owners to large-scale proprietorship in the aftermath of Emancipation. At present, all we can do is point to the possibilities of further work on the role of the slave-owners, both resident and absentee, in the remaking of the slave-colonies in the period after Emancipation.

Equally, and as crucially, this volume is not about another very direct legacy of slave-ownership, the people of colour born of white slave-owners and women of African origin or descent, both enslaved and free. The records do not support systematic identification of them, but such children are interwoven in our stories of absentee slave-ownership,

appearing in Britain as slave-owners themselves, as autonomous actors and as dependents. They both were legacies of slave-ownership and in turn left legacies themselves, only a handful of which we have reflected here. Again, the absence of discussion of free people of colour in Britain (or indeed the colonies) as a distinct legacy of slave-ownership does not reflect a failure to register them on our part, but rather a recognition that our best contribution is to make our data available and to work with historians dedicated to this subject.<sup>16</sup>

We do not claim that the legacies of slave-ownership are the same as the legacies of slavery. We have used slave-ownership as a lens through which to re-examine the formation of Britain in the critical decades after Emancipation. But slave-ownership was only one form in which slavery came home to Britain, and the slave-owners were only one means of transmission. The persistence of the language of slavery as the antithesis of English freedom was one of those legacies, used by varied groups of Britons across the nineteenth century, its meanings shifting according to the context, as it was also linked to debates over labour, race, gender and civilisation. The *systemic* effects of slavery on the British economy through the flow of tropical commodities into British metropolitan consumption are not captured in our work. We are also focused on the universe of slave-owners at the end of slavery, at a specific point in the mid-1830s. Such slave-owners were *in situ* on 1 August 1834 (the record date for the compensation records) as a result of processes of transfer and transmission of 'slave-property' unfolding prior to that, often over a century or more, and so there are often long continuities of ownership of estates and the enslaved populations working on them. There are also, however, discontinuities and our work does not capture slave-owning families of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who had moved out of the slavery business by the 1830s, such as the Huguenot financier family the Thellussons.<sup>17</sup>

In focusing on slave-owners, we are inevitably privileging their histories over the histories of the enslaved. We have committed resources to retrieving the histories of the slave-owners – resources that might in theory have been deployed in reconstructing the fragments that remain of the lives of enslaved people, lives often truly lost to history. This decision on our part is not because we regard the histories of the enslaved people as less important than those of the slave-owners, but because we approached the project primarily as historians of the British metropole of the mid-nineteenth century. In the course of the project, we have come to see more clearly not only the importance but also the practical possibilities of linking our work on slave-owners to the enslaved populations on whom the system rested, and in a new phase of research we intend

to integrate the two histories as fully as possible. It should also be clear that we are not seeking to rehabilitate or to celebrate the slave-owners, but to underscore through the histories of the slave-owners and their families the continuing presence and significance of slavery in British metropolitan society in the mid-nineteenth century and to illuminate the afterlife of slavery following Emancipation. Because of the importance, in our judgement, of stripping away the layers of insulation between modern Britain and its historical involvement in slavery, and because of the investment by the original 'planters' and 'proprietors' in resisting the term 'slave-owner', we are seeking to reinstate that term in British history-writing, including in the titles of our book, of our project and of our online Legacies of British Slave-ownership database, but we are aware that in so doing we are running counter to the emerging preference for the use of 'enslaver' as the logical counterpoint to 'enslaved person' or 'enslaved people'.

The slave-owners, we are suggesting, played an important part in the shaping of modern British society as agents, but also subjects, of that new world. Our investigation of slave-ownership has enabled us to rethink the notion of decline, to measure the impact West Indian proprietors were able to have economically, politically and culturally in the period after Emancipation, and to trace the continuities in the physical and cultural fabric of Britain. Far from surviving as an archaic fragment, with their political power demolished and their wealth undermined by Emancipation, they were able to mobilise sufficient influence to secure major concessions in return for their acceptance of abolition. In addition to the sum of £20 million that they received in compensation for the loss of their 'property' in enslaved men and women they also benefited substantially from the system of 'apprenticeship', which meant that, although formally free, those previously enslaved were compelled to work on the estates of their masters for a further period of four to six years.<sup>18</sup> Since compensation marked the acceptance of the view that the institution of slavery had been legally and politically sanctioned by the state and that 'the nation' (in this case, British taxpayers) ought to bear the cost of the losses to slave-owners, those erstwhile slave-owners saw no reason to assume individual guilt for the part they had played in maintaining the institution. Once abolition was enacted they joined the chorus celebrating Britain's moral superiority and castigating other, less progressive, slave-owning nations.

Former slave-owners were active in multiple ways in the reconfiguration of economy, state and society that took place in the 1830s and 1840s and in which the abolition of slavery was a significant act. In abolishing chattel slavery in 1833, Parliament was intervening in the rights of property

owners on a much greater scale than previously.<sup>19</sup> The organisation of compensation was in itself a remarkable bureaucratic achievement, one of the hallmarks of the rapidly expanding state. The shift from the use of enslaved labour to diverse forms of unfree and 'free' labour was one of the key changes in this period and one in which the state played a critical part. Despite the widespread assumption that slavery was the antithesis of freedom and that Emancipation had effected an epochal change, slavery was only abolished in the British Caribbean, Mauritius and the Cape, and it persisted elsewhere. Slavery was still being legislated against in India in 1976.<sup>20</sup> Illegal slave-trading continued in the nineteenth century alongside variegated forms of unfree and bonded labour that persisted well into the twentieth century and beyond.<sup>21</sup> The regulation of labour at home, through the New Poor Law and the Factory Acts, and of labour across the empire through indenture were some of the innovative practices of governments that could combine a commitment to *laissez-faire* in some areas with a belief in the need to organise labour not just on a national but also an imperial scale. While Eric Williams argued that 1833 marked a critical moment in the demise of mercantilism, the shift from protection to free trade was by no means linear. The freedom of labour was restricted in many ways both at home and in the empire, not least in the regulation of masters and servants,<sup>22</sup> and the West Indians fought a long rearguard action against free trade in sugar, as Keith McClelland documents.<sup>23</sup>

Some of the slave-owners, most notably John Gladstone, had seen the writing on the wall and had started to reorganise their estates before 1833. Gladstone's efforts to inaugurate the use of Indian indentured labour on his Guyanese estates had limited success in the 1820s but were to provide one of the bases for the large-scale adoption of the system by the 1840s.<sup>24</sup> Some slave-owners tried to adapt to the new conditions of labour on their plantations, as did Lord Holland and Matthew James Higgins, for example.<sup>25</sup> Others abandoned their engagement with the sugar economy and moved their investments elsewhere, using the compensation money to move into a variety of other enterprises from railway construction to maritime insurance and banking, as Nicholas Draper shows.<sup>26</sup> The decline of British proprietorship in the West Indies was thus a neglected aspect of the shift from land to commerce and industry that was a feature of this period. Few slave-owners moved directly into manufacture for their interests had long been in land and commerce.

After 1833 the West Indians abandoned the identity of slave-owner and sought to ensure their place in the reconfiguration of the ruling elite that was part and parcel of the 'Age of Reform'. Determinedly not part of a residual formation in a time of realignment when emergent groupings

were claiming dominance, they declared themselves as modern men, part of the new 'free' world. Between 1828 and 1833, new rights for dissenters, Catholic Emancipation, parliamentary reform, a Coercion Act for Ireland, the abolition of slavery and new forms of government for India together marked a historic settlement across nation and empire. A new hegemony was established, dependent on an alliance between the landed aristocracy and sections of the middle class, committed to an expansion of *laissez-faire* and a reforming state. Government was to be by consent, if possible, at home but reliant on force and dominion in the empire, including Ireland. In the metropole, public opinion had an increased weight as the power of the press increased rapidly and more meritocratic systems of appointment began to slowly displace the patronage that had operated for generations. Slave-owners and their descendants were more likely to be Tories than Whigs but they belonged to the elite that effected these changes and (sometimes) benefited from them. William Gladstone and Henry Goulburn in the House of Commons, Charles Trevelyan in the expanding colonial and civil service, Cardinal Manning in the resurgent Catholic Church, and Captain Frederick Marryat and Charles Kingsley, authors who were among the first generation to be able to make a substantial income from writing, were just some of the many former slave-owners or their descendants who established themselves as influential men in the reconfigured public world.

The abolition of slavery meant a shift in the balance of empire. The British West Indies, especially Jamaica, once the jewel in the crown, became increasingly defined as problematic and unproductive. Attention shifted to India and the East and to the new colonies of white settlement. Younger sons who had headed for the Caribbean now found their opportunities in Australia, New Zealand, Canada and South Africa. Henry Kingsley abandoned his family's long-term interest in Barbados and chose New South Wales for his (unsuccessful) colonial career. Compensation money, or people connected with compensation, moved into new ventures such as the Australian Agricultural Company and the development of South Australia and British Columbia. The Caribbean was no longer seen as a place to make a fortune and was neglected, side-lined in favour of more wealth-producing economies. Slavery was something to be regretted and forgotten, best expunged in so far as was possible from public memory.

Slave-owners and their descendants were active agents in the remaking of race as a hierarchical category. Once slavery no longer fixed the African as inferior, other legitimations for his/her subordination had to be found. Historians, novelists and travel writers with West Indian origins played a significant part in the debates over race in the mid-nineteenth

century and the shift from the ascendancy of abolitionist humanitarian discourse to a harsher version of stadial theory, envisioning the civilisational process as glacially slow. They used their eye-witness experience, as Catherine Hall argues, to make claims as to the veracity of their characterisations of racial difference.<sup>27</sup> In the process they also rewrote the history of British involvement in colonial slavery, successfully constituting themselves as the victims of Emancipation.

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In undertaking our research on slave-ownership, five definable though overlapping sets of literature have shaped our thinking or contributed to the intellectual context within which we have undertaken the work: the series of controversies around the work of Eric Williams; the reflections on the social and political formations of nineteenth-century Britain of Cain and Hopkins and William D. Rubinstein; the 'new imperial history'; an emerging literature on the nineteenth-century colonial state; and work on history, family and gender.

Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* included four connected arguments that are critical for us: slavery was key to the Industrial Revolution; slave-wealth was important to the social, cultural and political fabric of eighteenth-century Britain; the West Indian slave-economy was in decline after 1783 and possibly after 1763; and the West Indian slave-owners were at first a progressive force within mercantilism and then became a reactionary faction in the face of the rise of industrial capitalism.<sup>28</sup> Each of these has a bearing on our work and is in turn illuminated by that work. Each, but especially the first and the third, has attracted sustained controversy and remains too often the subject of an unhelpful polarisation between Anglo-American and Caribbean scholars. Our data might offer the possibility of a commonly accepted basis of evidence for rediscussion of some, although not all, aspects of these sometimes bitter controversies over Williams.

At no stage did Williams argue that slavery 'caused' the Industrial Revolution. 'It must not be inferred', he said, 'that the triangular trade was solely and entirely responsible for the economic development. The growth of the internal market in England, the ploughing-in of the profits from industry to generate still further capital and achieve a still greater expansion, played a large part.'<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, what Williams argued was not simply that the profits of the triangular trade were reinvested in British industry 'where they supplied part of the huge outlay for the construction of the vast plants to meet the needs of the new productive process and the new markets.'<sup>30</sup> In a frequently quoted line he wrote that 'the profits obtained provided one of the main streams of that accumulation of

capital which financed the Industrial Revolution.<sup>31</sup> But he also made the wider argument that the triangular trade gave a triple stimulus to British industry: ‘The Negroes were purchased with British manufactures; they produced sugar, cotton, indigo, molasses, and other tropical products, the processing of which created new industries in England [sic]; while the maintenance of the Negroes and their owners on the plantations provided another market for British industry, New England agriculture and the Newfoundland fisheries.’<sup>32</sup> These arguments have been attacked on two grounds, first by a mainstream consensus that capital was not scarce in eighteenth-century England and second by the argument that the slave-trade (and, less consistently argued, implicitly the slave-economy itself) was not large enough to move the needle of British growth.<sup>33</sup> This second argument is embedded in a historical tradition that emphasises the significance of domestic factors over overseas trade as a whole in British economic development.<sup>34</sup>

It appears to us that there is now movement, by no means linear but perceptible, towards a modified version of Williams’ position among economic historians. Williams focused on British colonial slavery, rather than the wider nexus including American, Brazilian, French and Spanish slavery. Recent scholarship, with a renewed focus on integrating overseas trade into the context of the domestic drivers of growth, and on a broader conception of the slave-economy, has tended to support Williams. Pomeranz’s *Great Divergence* sees the Atlantic slave-economy, with its capacity to add ‘phantom land’ and coal as the two permissive factors allowing Britain to explode from a base comparable to regions of China from about 1800 onwards.<sup>35</sup> Inikori in 2002 reasserted the Williams thesis in a history of British economic development that begins in the fifteenth century and combines Atlantic slavery with the commercialisation of agriculture as the keys to industrialisation.<sup>36</sup> Despite opposition to Inikori’s use of import substitution models, concerns about his conflation of ‘the Atlantic world’ and ‘the slave-economy’, and a residual sense that the mechanisms translating ‘commercial success ... into long-term self-sustained growth remain to be revealed’, Pat Hudson, Maxine Berg and Nuala Zahedieh (among others) broadly accepted Inikori’s central thesis about the importance of overseas trade and within that the importance of the slave-economy.<sup>37</sup> Opposition expressed to Inikori over the role and nature of technological change has potentially been qualified recently by recognition of the importance of colonial wealth in determining relatively high wage levels in Britain.<sup>38</sup> Pat Hudson has recently reiterated support for the importance of the slave-trade and slavery in fostering institutional change in Britain’s credit markets.<sup>39</sup> Above all, at the micro- rather than macro-economic level, local and regional

studies consistently point to the flow of slave-wealth into new institutions and new industries, many concentrated in the centres of commercial and financial power so crucial to financing trade and industrialisation.<sup>40</sup> It might be that such investment could theoretically have been financed from other sources; it is incontrovertible that a significant part of it *was* in fact funded by slavery.

Our material cannot resolve these controversies over Williams' first thesis. By definition, we are concerned with *British* slave-owners of the nineteenth century: Williams' supporters and critics are concerned primarily with the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and his supporters at least increasingly with the Atlantic slave-economy as a whole within these periods. What our material does suggest at the micro-economic level is that the flow of human and financial capital from the British colonial slave-economy was a significant contributor to the remaking of Britain's commercial and to a lesser extent industrial fabric all the way through the first half of the nineteenth century. To this extent, our work confirms the importance of slavery to Britain, but at the same time complicates Williams by qualifying his 'decline' thesis, as we discuss further below.

Williams' second thesis, his insistence on the flow of wealth into British society, culture and politics in the eighteenth century, is distinct from his first thesis on industrialisation because the second is about private wealth rather than national wealth, and about consumption and cultural accumulation outside the commercial and industrial spheres. His pioneering work in this sphere has attracted little controversy (or even interest) compared to the extended disputes over many of his other arguments. In his Chapter 4, 'The West India Interest', Williams sketched the political and social impact of absentee slave-owners on Britain. His method is anecdotal: he presents a series of case studies of individuals and families.<sup>41</sup> The incantatory rhythm of his prose helps the accumulation of examples swell into a rising wall of evidence sweeping the reader along. His examples have subsequently been picked up and repeated: they have become shorthand for illustrating the relationship between Britain and slavery for those who are concerned by it.

What Williams was missing was a context: how representative were his examples? It demands extraordinary effort and resources of course to provide an adequate empirical context. That work is now being done, piecemeal for the eighteenth century: English Heritage, for example, has commissioned systematic work on its properties. Simon Gikandi has recently restated and deepened Williams' themes.<sup>42</sup> Our research now extends Williams' work into the nineteenth century and argues that this process of transfer did not stop in the eighteenth century: instead, all the way through to the 1830s and indeed beyond we can see wealth derived

from slave-ownership being redeployed into country-house building, connoisseurship and philanthropy in Britain. Williams used some of the same sources as us, especially the lists of recipients of slave compensation, but a full analysis of those lists would have been beyond any reasonable lifetime's work given the technological era in which Williams worked. Only the advent of the computer and the pooling of knowledge online have made this analysis remotely possible in the Legacies of British Slave-ownership project. And our findings are entirely supportive of Williams in the context of this second thesis: wealth from slave-ownership was among the significant forces reshaping British society and culture in the nineteenth century.

The third Williams thesis, the 'decline' of the West Indies, is linked to but distinct from the fourth thesis, of the 'West Indian' slave-owners as a regressive class fraction confronting rising capitalist hostility. Williams put the peak of the West Indian system variously at 1763 or the eve of the American Revolution. He was heavily influenced by Ragatz, but also by the dominance of Jamaica in both the contemporary eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British mind and in subsequent historiography.<sup>43</sup> Drescher's assault in *Econocide* (1977) has largely been accepted outside the Caribbean as having fatally undermined Williams.<sup>44</sup> Drescher's main case was that the West Indies were as important a part of England's trade in the 1800s as in the 1760s. Drescher did not point out that these were war years. J. R. Ward's work on the profitability of estates shows a fluctuating pattern: it is clear that estates did recover from the American Revolution, but generally at a lower level of profitability than previously.<sup>45</sup> There was a boom in the 1790s, especially in Jamaica. And in some areas (notably British Guiana), as has been argued, it is clear that there was expansion and profitability, even after 1807. But, as Christopher Leslie Brown says, 'decline' is as much an ideological as a technical concept.<sup>46</sup> The argument here is in large part about the salience of the West Indies in the 'official mind'. Measuring that and putting a chronology on it is hard. But it is clear that, during the American Revolution, British strategy sometimes subordinated the defeat of the American colonists to preserving the security of the West Indies, especially Jamaica; that in the early 1780s the idea of abolition of the slave-trade was axiomatically rejected; and that in the 1790s the importance attached to St Domingue by Pitt emphasised the continuing resonance of the West Indies. It is not credible to say that by 1807 the West Indies had ceased to matter; but that is not what Williams argued. He saw a shift in the balance of forces: it was a relative decline, relative to an industrialising metropole. He saw the 1832 Great Reform Act in starker terms than most modern scholars, but it did surely reflect the accommodation of new social forces by

the state. Equally clearly, the West Indies were less central to the British economy by the 1830s than not only in the 1760s but also in the 1800s. Williams and his critics were united on this, at least. But to argue that slavery was less important to Britain by the time of Emancipation than at the time of abolition of the slave-trade a quarter of a century earlier is not to argue that it had ceased to matter. Our work suggests that, first, slavery, and specifically slave-ownership, had a cumulative weight, in the sense that wealth, status and privilege derived from slave-ownership in the older colonies where 'decline' by the 1830s is irrefutable did not in fact evaporate but in many cases was sustained for decades beyond Emancipation; and, second, new wealth, status and privilege were being created in newer slave-colonies, above all British Guiana, in the decades after the abolition of the slave-trade.<sup>47</sup>

Decline, and especially decline of political power, is also relevant to the final question to which we have consciously navigated in relation to Eric Williams, the nature of the West Indian interest as regressive or progressive. The place of the slave-owners as a class or class fraction has long troubled Marxists. While Williams' departures in *Capitalism and Slavery* had been strongly influenced by the work of C. L. R. James, which placed slavery centrally within transatlantic history, it also coincided with new accounts within British and American Marxism of capitalist development, notably Paul Sweezy's *The Theory of Capitalist Development* (1942) and Maurice Dobb's *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (1946), neither of which discussed slavery.<sup>48</sup> Williams' solution was, first, to emphasise the uniqueness of Atlantic slavery, to stress this was not just a continuation of the institution of slavery that had always been embedded in Western European civilisation (as David Brion Davis unhelpfully formulated it<sup>49</sup>) but a historically specific system constructed at what turned out to be a critical moment. Second, he posited that the dialectical relationship of slavery under mercantile capitalism helped to give birth to the industrial capitalism that in turn destroyed it. Slave-owning was first progressive then reactionary. Williams thus transcends the 'Janus-face' characterisation of mercantile capital more generally, and his conceptualisation is infinitely preferable to the Genoveses' increasingly romantic conceptualisation of slave-owners.<sup>50</sup> But Williams relied on treating slave-owners as a whole, and, despite his own background, Williams as noted above was perhaps over-influenced by the dominance of Jamaica. British Guiana in particular provides many examples of the reproduction and repatriation of recognisably modern metropolitan capital in the slave-economy on the part of recognisably modern metropolitan capitalists. We have also found that many West Indians were highly adaptive: they certainly contributed to the formation of new commercial and industrial institutions, and then

flourished within these. Slave-owners (who then became former slave-owners) played an important role not only in the birth of the Victorian economy but also in its success, especially in finance and commerce: linkages between slave-ownership and the industrial sectors also exist but appear overall less strong than in finance and commerce.

This approach has some resonances with the influential work of Cain and Hopkins on the economic history of British imperial expansion.<sup>51</sup> Though shaped by (among others) Weber and Schumpeter and by Hobson and Veblen rather than *marxist* approaches, two aspects of their argument are important for our purposes. The first is the insistence that the specific features of British imperialism are to be found essentially in the inter-relation between economic and social change in the metropole and the imperial sites, both formal and informal, that Britain constructed. More specifically, they argued that what was at the core of imperial expansion was ‘gentlemanly capitalism’, a phenomenon defined as both an economic and a cultural formation. Capitalism was defined as ‘profit-seeking, individualism, specialisation, a market economy, rational calculation and the postponement of present consumption for the sake of future returns’.<sup>52</sup> But what drove capitalist growth and imperial expansion was not, in their view, the development of industrial capitalism and industrialisation so much as financial and commercial services and that the City of London played a crucial and continuing role in determining the forms of imperialism. This is an economic argument; but it is also pivoted on a cultural one, namely the formation and importance of the ‘gentleman’. Gentility among men was formed by a Christian sense of duty above self-advancement and the maintenance of a distance from and disdain for production and work. Socially and politically, the dominant classes after 1688 came to be a fusion of the financial and commercial elites with the landed gentry and aristocracy, whose wealth derived from rentier capitalism based on commercial agriculture. But the trick was that the prestige, power and authority of the aristocracy appeared to stem from pre-capitalist sources while embracing the values of commercial society. Finance, commerce and land, distanced from the world of manufacturing, became the prime vehicles of wealth creation; imperial expansion was shaped by the export of gentlemanly capitalism.

Though adopting different arguments, the Cain and Hopkins thesis chimes with the work of William D. Rubinstein on wealth-holding and on the social structure of nineteenth-century Britain.<sup>53</sup> Like Cain and Hopkins, Rubinstein placed great stress on the ‘service sector’, arguing that there were in effect two middle classes, ‘by far the larger and wealthier based on commerce and London, the other on manufacturing and the North of England’.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, the traditional aristocracy, while

maintaining its political and cultural domination until at least 1880, was resistant to the absorption of new wealth; the commercial and financial bourgeoisie of the City of London became wealthy on a scale equivalent to, and sometimes surpassing, the aristocratic elites while also outdoing the generation of personal wealth among the industrial middle classes. With the decline of 'Old Corruption' by 1832 and the consequent decay of those whose incomes had been dependent to a considerable extent on the aristocratic state through sinecures and government finance and contracts, there were three predominant segments of the ruling classes: the landed aristocracy and gentry; the financial and commercial middle class; and the industrial middle class. If they were not hermetically sealed off from each other, there was, nonetheless, considerable distance between them. As with Cain and Hopkins, rentier capitalism was crucial for the landed classes, their wealth deriving from not only farming but also mining and urban property; the industrial middle class was based on manufacturing; the commercial and financial middle class turned increasingly to investment in empire and overseas trade.

There has been much debate about the theses of Cain and Hopkins and also of Rubinstein.<sup>55</sup> The role of south-eastern English elites in driving imperialism has been questioned; the degree to which there was a flow of capital between land and industry has been, it is claimed, radically underestimated by Rubinstein. The networks connecting finance and industrial capital have also, it is argued, been underestimated and the nature of supposed hostility or, at the least, distancing from bourgeois culture and values held by the landed elites and the ethos of 'gentlemanly capitalism' have been sharply interrogated. Importantly in the context of this project, neither Cain and Hopkins nor Rubinstein paid any serious attention to the nature and consequences of Britain's involvement in the slavery business and the place of compensation as a source of wealth in Victorian Britain. Rubinstein clearly underestimated the significance of wealth derived from slavery and compensation in the accumulation of personal wealth, as this project shows, although he has revisited this question in his ongoing work and in the light of collaborating with us. Cain and Hopkins have scant reference to slavery or to the British Caribbean, while their definition of capitalism itself excludes a crucial defining feature – a key aspect of both Marxist and Weberian definitions as well of many others – namely the forms of labour underpinning different modes of production and social formations. The empire as a whole rested on the mobilisation of diverse forms of labour extraction and exploitation: the enslaved, apprentices, indentured workers, convict labour, free wage labour, unpaid but 'free' labour, peasantries and hybrid mixes of free, coerced and peasant labour are all to be found at any particular moment

in particular settings.<sup>56</sup> Yet, whatever the criticisms, what remains important is the range of questions that have been raised about core problems in understanding the shape of nineteenth-century British society.

Another key debate has concerned the question of the relative positions of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy. Perry Anderson, for instance, has written of the ‘agrarian and aristocratic stamp of English rulers in the era of the Pax Britannica, the subordination of bourgeois manufacturers and mill-owners to them, with all the consequences – economic, political and cultural – that followed from the cadet role of industrial capital in the Victorian age’.<sup>57</sup> Such a view reflects the liberal, middle-class criticisms of aristocratic power of the period after 1832. Bernard Cracroft, for example, wrote of the landed aristocracy that

So vast is their traditional power, so broadly does it sit over the land, so deep and ancient are its roots, so multiplied and ramified everywhere are its tendrils, and creepers, and feelers, that the danger is never lest they should have too little, but always lest they should have too much power.

Politically, their power had ‘the strength of a giant and the compactness of a dwarf’.<sup>58</sup>

On the other hand, there are those who insist that for all the appearances and for all the persistence of aristocratic, gentry and financial elites in the personnel staffing the centres of power, this was a society reshaped by industrial capitalism, the dominance of the urban industrial middle classes and the ascendancy of bourgeois values.<sup>59</sup>

Our work on slave-owners has also been situated in relation to debates over the significance of race and empire in metropolitan life. C. L. R. James was one of the first to insist on the necessary connections between metropole and colony in his classic text *The Black Jacobins* (1938), but his insights were neglected for decades by white historians. A group of scholars variously influenced by post-colonial theory, by Subaltern Studies and by feminism have been in the forefront of arguing for the constitutive place of empire in the making of modern Britain.<sup>60</sup> Efforts to reconnect the histories of Britain and empire and to challenge the myopia of nationalist histories have provided a powerful imperative. A substantive body of work has emerged detailing the impact of empire on metropolitan society, culture and politics in modern Britain.<sup>61</sup> Empire was central, it is argued, to the construction of identities that were and are historically shaped by the production of differences, whether of class, gender, race or ethnicity. National identities, albeit unstable and heterogeneous, were shaped externally as well as internally and empire played a significant role in defining the aspirations, visions and practices of a range of social groups: both planters and abolitionists, for example, saw in the

colonies an opportunity to change the world and themselves. Britons' self-conception as modern, as Kathleen Wilson has argued, hinged on a developing historical consciousness that was produced by contact and exchange.<sup>62</sup>

It was the presence of erstwhile colonised peoples in Britain from the Caribbean and South Asia that provided one of the inspirations for this new historical writing. Commonwealth immigration from the late 1940s marked the beginning of the multicultural present that we now inhabit. As second- and third-generation children have grown up in Britain, they have been in search of an inclusive national story, one that makes sense of the imperial experience and of contemporary racisms. Among people of African-Caribbean descent the question of slavery has been central. Why had this figured so marginally in British history-writing and in the ways in which this history had been taught? Debates around slavery were given great momentum by the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave-trade in 2007, when the issue was aired in the press, radio and television; galleries and museums focused efforts on new exhibitions; innovative teaching materials were prepared; and community groups organised a huge range of events and commemorations. One of the sources of controversy at that time concerned the extent to which the forms of remembering were dominated by self-congratulation as to Britain's role in being the first major power to abolish the slave-trade and whether this effectively displaced a sense of national responsibility for Britain's involvement in colonial slavery. This mirrored the way in which the abolition of slavery in 1833 was celebrated as a triumphant example of Britain's moral superiority, effectively erasing the long history of the gains secured for the metropole by the enslavement and exploitation of African men and women.<sup>63</sup>

Not surprisingly, most recent scholarly activity has focused on enslaved men and women in an effort to recover those histories that had been erased – whether because they were too painful and difficult to remember and so hard to trace archivally or were associated with forms of denial and disavowal. In Britain the work of forgetting slavery has been aided by processes of distantiation. The distance from the Caribbean and other colonial slave-societies has allowed Britons both in the era of slavery and abolition and since to disassociate themselves from the realities of their place in that system. In tracing the legacies of slave-ownership using the compensation records as our starting point, we are deliberately returning to Britain's/Britons' collusion, both national and individual, and reinscribing slavery into the national/imperial narrative.

One of the notions underpinning the work undertaken in this project has been the concept of an 'imperial social formation'. The phrase has

been particularly associated with the work of Mrinalini Sinha, though it is an approach that informs much recent work in the social, cultural and political history of empire, including that which does not make any particular use of the concept in the way in which Sinha has used it.<sup>64</sup> The concept of an imperial social formation focuses on the ways in which the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of a whole social formation are inter-related and articulated together. Imperialism is understood as a key constitutive element of the processes of social formation.

Metropole and the imperial are not only mutually 'interacting' or 'influencing' but are also, more strongly, constitutive of each other. It is not, however, a process of equal exchange. The relations between them are determined by relations of power – economic, social and cultural and political – through which relations of dominance and subordination are made and remade. How those relations are played out in any particular historical instance are not, it is generally argued, simply consequent upon a single or overwhelmingly dominant source of causation or determination. For example, it is not possible to assign to economic structures and circumstances the sole, originating cause of domination and subordination between, say, Britain and the Caribbean colonies. Similarly, as Sinha has argued in her work on colonial masculinities, the creation and reworking of the relations between 'the manly Englishman' and the 'effeminate Bengali' was not a process in which either cultural identity was fixed before coming into relation with the other: the construction of each was a consequence of the mutually shaping dialectic between them.

Such an approach has been extremely powerful and influential over the past couple of decades in raising new questions and enabling new histories, not least in reshaping the study of British history. Relations between Britain and its empire were not only formed through political policies and circuits of capital accumulation and investment, it is argued, but also lived and shaped through cultural and political processes such as the ways in which the discourses of 'race' came to shape the 'civilising subjects' of Catherine Hall's study.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, the cultural and the political had effects, but within contingent circumstances in which no single element predominated. For instance, dominant conceptions of the capacities of the formerly enslaved populations to work in the conditions of 'free labour' were central to the ways in which 'the labour problem' was named, defined and given shape in the Caribbean following abolition and apprenticeship. The problem was determined, in part, by the setting of limits and the exertion of pressures by economic developments: with abolition, the central economic question became what kind of labour regime could replace slavery. But, in turn, how this was played

out was shaped by both conceptions of the capacities of labour and particular political circumstances. The push to bring in migrant, indentured labour was contingent upon building an effective political alliance that made possible a reconfiguration of the economy in at least some parts of the Caribbean.<sup>66</sup>

Much work in political history remains resolutely focused on metropolitan Britain to the effective exclusion of imperial dimensions. Within this perspective the defining features of the state between *c.* 1832 and *c.* 1880 are its relative smallness, the commitment to *laissez-faire* and to free trade from the 1840s and a studied neutrality in relation to social disputes. At the same time as emphasising the *laissez-faire* character of the state, such views also recognise the extent to which the state intervened as an agent of social discipline in policing, prison regulation and moral reform, most notably in the Contagious Diseases Acts of the 1860s. The state also acted to institutionalise capitalist market relations in a highly punitive, and highly gendered, form through the imposition of the New Poor Law of 1834 while also acting in a 'positive' manner through the Public Health Act of 1848 and in factory acts and the regulation of the hours of labour of working women (1833–53).<sup>67</sup>

However, as Zoë Laidlaw and Kathleen Wilson have shown, if one broadens the horizon of an understanding of the state to see it as an imperial political formation, then a very different picture emerges.<sup>68</sup> As Laidlaw argues, while the British state is often characterised as weak on coercion and strong on consent, colonial states within the empire were frequently prepared to use violence against subject populations. One may see this in the treatment of indigenous groups such as Aborigines in Australia. Slavery itself had been, of course, a system of institutionalised violence; coercion in Ireland was a constant feature of British domination; the suppression of the Indian rebellion of 1857 or the violence meted out in Jamaica by Governor Eyre were not incidental features of imperial rule but structural to it.

Furthermore, as Laidlaw also argues, a consideration of the 'Victorian state' within an imperial context 'reveals the obvious: there was no such thing as "the Victorian state", but rather a series of very different polities across the Empire.'<sup>69</sup> And, while the British state may be characterised as 'liberal', what constituted 'liberalism', seen in an imperial context, has to be severely qualified.<sup>70</sup> The liberal state may have appeared to rest on consent but coercion remains critical to its operations; it may have been *laissez-faire* but interventionism was a central and persistent strategy; it may have stressed the enlargement of liberties and constitutional freedoms but it required the suppression of indigenous peoples and the cultural re-formation of subject peoples; it may have been shaped by a

belief in the rule of 'free markets' but it also depended on state-driven economic policies in relation to Indian cotton or Irish agriculture.

If the colonial state needs rethinking so too do the networks of family and kin. As Davidoff and Hall argued in *Family Fortunes*, the family, with its wide definition including aunts, uncles and cousins not to speak of the in-laws, provided the bedrock of economic organisation in the late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth centuries.<sup>71</sup> This was as true for the West Indian networks as for any other, as exemplified by Katie Donington's analysis of the Hibberts.<sup>72</sup> Marriage structured the meaning of property for men as well as women, and marriage, the system of coverture and inheritance strategies were critical to the intergenerational transmission of plantation wealth. John Rock Grossett, for example, Tory MP for Chippenham (1820–6) and active pro-slaver in the 1820s, was able to accumulate his three Jamaican properties through a judicious marriage with his first cousin Mary Spencer Shirley. As David Sabeen has demonstrated, over many generations in Western Europe, repeated marriages were contracted among a circle of families who 'circulated god-parents, took over guardianship, tutelage and legal representation creating tight bonds of reciprocity' and extensive overlapping kindreds.<sup>73</sup> These patterns were integral to the transatlantic families of the merchants and planters, and the Legacies of British Slave-ownership database will be an important resource facilitating the linking of these networks.

One great advantage of such alliances, as Leonore Davidoff notes, was that they could act as instruments of trust for those whose capital was spread over long distances, while marriage unions countered the centrifugal effects of partible inheritance.<sup>74</sup> The trust device was widely used as a way of providing for dependents – both women and children – and trustees are an important grouping in the compensation records. The trust was based in equity and had been created to preserve landed property intact while ensuring protection for daughters after marriage. To act as a trustee signified a close relationship to the deceased and involved the taking of responsibility for those widows and minors who could not care effectively for themselves and would not be in a position to actively 'husband' property. The trustees could act on the property, sell or rent and make contracts, and as long as the beneficiary continued to receive the proceeds much was left to the trustees' discretion. Trustees are prominent in the database, as are guardians and executors, undoubtedly underscoring the place of kin, as in the case of the lawyer and historian Archibald Alison, who acted as trustee for his brother-in-law.

Under the laws of equity, married women could own their 'sole and separate estates' in the form of a trust. These were primarily used by upper-class families attempting to protect familial interests and rarely

gave women effective power. Married women in common law did not possess an independent persona; they were 'covered' by their husbands. In practice this certainly extensively limited but did not preclude the economic activity of some married women. While Amy Erickson has insisted on the significance of the legal restraints on married women, R. J. Morris has shown that, while imposing the wishes and control of the deceased, the trust could also provide women with some economic independence and proprietorship.<sup>75</sup> Widows and single women, however, could own property and one of the most striking aspects of our findings has been their small-scale ownership of enslaved men and women, particularly in the Caribbean. Women slave-owners are currently beginning to attract attention after the long-sustained assumption that all slave-ownership was a masculine prerogative. Some absentees were able to exercise considerable autonomy, as Hannah Young has explored in her study of Anna Eliza Elletson.<sup>76</sup>

Informed by our hypotheses about what constituted the reconfiguration of Britain after Emancipation and by the issues embedded in the historiography, our re-examination of the formation of modern Britain through the lens of slave-ownership is driven by the prosopographical database of some 2,900 absentee slave-owners. Our primary unit of analysis is thus the individual slave-owner and by extension his or her family.

Such focus on the individual is justified in part by the legal structure of the slave compensation process, which mandated that only individuals could claim and be awarded slave compensation. No firms or other collective bodies were entitled to claim compensation. Moreover, there were no collective investment vehicles for the slave-economy: no West Indian equivalent of the East India Company existed, either administratively or commercially.<sup>77</sup> Finally, the individual is appropriate in tracing commercial legacies in particular because in general the individual was still the fundamental unit among business actors and remained so for the bulk of the nineteenth century, though, of course, individuals were always embedded in wider circuits of family and kin.

Moving from a collection of atomised life stories to general arguments and ultimately to conclusions has raised methodological questions for our work. At the simplest level, our data lend themselves to aggregation, and we have in many cases measured significance by counting and expressing the results as a fraction of a larger whole. The database also allows us to make claims about how representative individual cases are. We can place well-known figures such as John Gladstone in context and determine that he was, for example, one of several dozen merchants to move money into Asia from the Caribbean

slave-economy, and one of hundreds to invest in railways. We have used our results to cross-refer to other prosopographical works, for example the *History of Parliament* and William D. Rubinstein's work on the nineteenth-century rich.

There are limitations, too, in our methods that we must acknowledge. Given the scale of the universe of slave-owners with whom we are dealing, we know relatively little about many of them. We have neither the time nor the resources to undertake forensic investigation for individuals with multiple forms of property or multiple business activities to ascertain precisely how much of their wealth flowed from slave-ownership, from other forms of participation in the slave-economy and from non-slavery-related sources. All we can do is to flag up the existence of such other property or activities and be explicit about the basis on which we have reached judgements as to the materiality of slave-ownership for specific individuals.

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The bulk of this volume is organised thematically, bookended by two chapters and an Appendix that bring together our approaches, themes and material. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the universe of British slave-owners and locates them within the British elites of the period. It has been known since Draper's *The Price of Emancipation* (2010) that between five and ten per cent of the British elites (measured by a variety of criteria, social and political) appeared in the slave compensation records in the 1830s as owners, mortgagees, legatees, trustees and executors, and this chapter extends the analysis of this section of the elites over the forty or fifty years following the end of slavery.<sup>78</sup> Our new work also re-designates British slave-owning as fundamentally English and, especially, Scottish as opposed to Irish and Welsh. Ireland had dramatically different patterns of emigration to the sojourning that characterises Scottish slave-owners, and Scotland was wildly over-represented among absentee slave-owners in Britain. Within England, there were local concentrations, as previously known, around Bristol and Liverpool, but slave-ownership was disproportionately concentrated in the south-east and south-west of England. Our new work shows that slave-owners continued to represent the same proportion of wealthy individuals in Britain from the 1810s until the late 1860s, even as the base of wealthy individuals expanded with the diversification of the British economy and the advent of manufacturing wealth. This points to an unexpected resilience of slave-derived wealth for two-thirds of the nineteenth century. The chapter also summarises some of the cultural, physical and imperial legacies of the slave-owners, pointing in the latter case to a perceptible 'swing east' by former

slave-owners and their families after Emancipation as in many cases they turned away from the post-slavery Caribbean.

In seeking to summarise the 'commercial legacies' of British colonial slave-ownership in the period after Emancipation, Chapter 3 focuses on what are conceived to be the big changes in Britain's economy and its financial and commercial structure in the period following Emancipation (especially in the decades from the 1830s through to the 1870s), which reflected its emergence as the world's first industrial nation: the explosion of British overseas trade; the reorientation of British long-distance commerce towards Asia, Latin America and the settler colonies; the consolidation of the City of London as the centre of global capital flows with its concomitant growth in financial services, in the professions supporting the City and in merchant banking; the emergence of the joint-stock company; the increased integration of Britain through the railway and of the world through the steamship and telegraph; and the birth of the free-trade nation. All these changes were apparently diametrically opposed to the closed agrarian world of colonial preference in which the slave-owners were embedded. Yet the chapter argues that, while many slave-owners were indeed swept away by these changes, many more not only adapted to the new world order but also were among the most active agents of change, transferring financial and human capital generated in slavery to the new industrial and commercial economy. Such commercial and industrial legacies of slave-ownership were uneven, highly material in some areas but marginal or absent in others. Slave-ownership was one component of many in the consolidation of Britain, and specifically the City, as the centre of global capital in the mid- and late nineteenth century.

Together, Chapters 2 and 3 present a modification to Williams' 'decline' thesis. They argue that, while evidence of financial pressures on the slave-economy and on the post-Emancipation Caribbean are indisputable, wealth was still being created for some individual slave-owners and former slave-owners, especially but not exclusively in the newer slave-frontiers colonies, above all in British Guiana. The overwhelming dominance of Jamaica within metropolitan conceptions of the slave-economy, both for contemporaries and in the subsequent historiography, has tended to conceal the vibrancy of the slave-economy in some areas of the British Caribbean. The contribution from British colonial slave-ownership as a whole to British industrialisation did not cease in 1807 or even in the 1830s, but there is still room for acknowledging its decline relative to the manufacturing capacity it was (as Williams argued) helping to create.

Chapter 4 examines some of the political connections and relationships of men who appear in the compensation records in relation to the

institutions and practices of political power between 1833 and the 1860s. Central to this is a consideration of whether we should see them as simply the West India interest in decline, as Eric Williams argued. Having analysed the composition, political affiliations and social bearings of MPs, the chapter then discusses three issues central to the attempted defence of former slave-owners' interests – the debates around apprenticeship in the 1830s, the sugar duties controversies in the 1840s and the introduction of schemes for indentured labour beginning in the 1830s. While the interest was certainly defeated over apprenticeship and sugar, there was no unqualified victory of liberal market capitalism and a culture of anti-slavery. Rather, the abolition of slavery was followed by new forms of coerced labour, facilitated by the mid-Victorian 'liberal' state, and, at the same time, as notions of the anti-slavery nation became dominant, there was also a generalised acceptance both that former slave-owners were victims of abolition and that it was the problem of labour that lay at the core of Caribbean economic and social problems following Emancipation.

Chapter 5 concerns the writings of those slave-owners and their descendants who were concerned to tell their versions of the history of slavery and the plantation and who in the process contributed to the reconfiguration of racial thinking in the aftermath of Emancipation. In a period when literacy was increasing and the reading public rapidly expanding, print culture was assuming ever greater significance in the formation of that important new body – public opinion. Once Britain had defined itself as an anti-slavery nation, these authors speedily aligned themselves with that position, rewrote and disavowed their own histories and were actively involved in the remaking of racial hierarchies. Enthusiasm for the ending of 'the stain' upon the nation could provide a way of screening disturbing associations, partially forgetting and rewriting a long history of British involvement in the slavery business, and at the same time reconfiguring race now that enslavement could no longer be the defining mark of the African. In histories of the nation or the family such as those of William Mackinnon or George Webbe Dasent, in novels such as those of Captain Marryat or the relatively obscure lady author Theodora Lynch, in travel writing such as that by Charles Kingsley and in the poetry of those of greater or lesser fame, authors worked on their own memories and imaginatively reconstructed their relationships to their West Indian connections. Their personal memories and family histories were interwoven with more public forms of remembering and forgetting. Their collective works, discussed in this chapter, provide a formidable case for the weight of the intervention made by erstwhile slave-owners in narrating British history.

Chapter 6 presents a case study of the Hibbert family. It explores some of the ways in which the Hibbert family used the profits of slavery to make an impact on the social, cultural, political and economic landscape over the course of several generations. At the centre of the Hibbert family story is the relationship between colonial labour, transatlantic wealth-generation and metropolitan consumption. Moving between Manchester, Jamaica and London, it outlines the foundation, expansion and consolidation of their wealth and status. The chapter highlights the significance of networks formed through religious identity, marriage, kinship and commerce. It discusses George Hibbert's role in the slavery compensation debates and gives a detailed breakdown of which family members received awards. Both before and after the compensation process, the Hibbert family invested in various forms of acquisition: from town and country houses to cultural consumption, from philanthropic and charitable works to the purchase of political position and finally the reinvestment of funds in new commercial opportunities. In highlighting the imprint that the Hibberts have left behind, this chapter seeks to reconnect the disturbing origins of the wealth that enabled their activities with their tangible legacies. In doing so this chapter demonstrates the potential of the wider data gathered within the database to rethink the ways in which the profits from slavery infiltrated the wider British economy, affecting people and places that remained at a distance from slave-ownership.

Finally, the Appendix, which we regard as an integral part of the volume, describes the structure of the Legacies of British Slave-ownership database, its uses and its limitations. We analyse individuals' 'degree of proximity' to slavery and the capacity in which they were awarded compensation – for example, as owner-in-fee, trustee, executor or mortgagee. We show the interconnections of slave-owners and outline the importance of family networks in the universe of slave-owners. The diachronic nature of the database is explained, showing the geographical movement of slave-owners over time and the development of each of the legacy strands (we have categorised the legacy strands as commercial, political, historical, imperial, cultural and physical). We also outline the main sources we have used, the scope of information we have been able to include and the ways in which these sources bring their own distortions and their own limitations. Central to this is a discussion of the prosopographical approach we have taken and the ways in which we can move from a mass of individual and family biographies to a greater understanding of the significance of the universe of slave-owners as a whole.

## Conclusion

In choosing to make the database publicly available online as the Legacies of British Slave-ownership database, we are working in the tradition of recent collaborative projects, notably the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.<sup>79</sup> However, our data goes beyond the remarkable data assembled by that project because of our development of the biographical data in our prosopography. We are therefore combining a digitisation project (of the Parliamentary Papers list of awards made by the Slave Compensation Commissioners, supplemented by the Register of Claims<sup>80</sup>) with research that has the intention of capturing the imprints of individuals on British life in the mid-nineteenth century and the effect in some cases of linking those individuals to firms, families and institutions that are still identifiable today. We recognise the potential sensitivity of such links. The Legacies of British Slave-ownership project has no position on reparations and restitution, but equally we understand that there are potential implications of our work for the debates around these issues. Against this background, as historians we see our responsibilities to the descendants of the enslaved people, to the descendants of the slave-owners and to other academic and non-academic constituencies to be, first, clarity in presenting our data, so that users can understand, for example, the different contexts in which names can appear among lists of recipients of slave compensation; and, second, appropriate contextualisation of the results. In the Structure and Significance of British Caribbean Slave-ownership 1763–1833 project now underway at UCL, we are committed to achieving a greater degree of integration of the available records and data concerning the enslaved people with those of the slave-owners.

We began this Introduction by pointing to the distortions of the *ODNB*. The *ODNB* is not static, of course. By its nature, it reflects editorial decisions made in the nineteenth century as well as more recently: it is a big ship to turn. It now represents neither the way the world looked to the original compilers in the late nineteenth century nor the way it looks from today's perspective. But, at any given point, it reproduces some essential version of the place of a given thing in British life, and how the *ODNB* represents that thing is a powerful cultural force. We have argued that it cumulatively has the effect of suppressing the memory of slave-ownership in the national consciousness. The recent inclusion in the *ODNB* of Edward Huggins alongside Arthur Hodge as notorious exemplars of the cruelty of slavery indicates a recognition of the need to acknowledge slavery, and not just abolition (although neither man is described as a slave-owner).<sup>81</sup> But the task of adjusting the national

narrative cannot wait on the process of adding slave-owners one at a time or revising the ‘park’ of existing entries that elide slave-ownership. We do not maintain that the slave-owners created modern Britain, but we do not think the making of Victorian Britain can be understood without reference to those slave-owners. This volume is our attempt to accelerate that process of (re)writing slave-ownership back into British history.

## NOTES

- 1 *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn., at [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com) (hereafter, *ODNB*). A full text search for the term ‘slave owner’ in the *ODNB* returns nineteen entries (of which one is Olaudah Equiano, another is John Marrant, five are American slave-owners and one is an incidental reference in the entry for Baron Denman), and ‘slave-owner’ returns a further two (of which one is an American and one is Francis Williams). In contrast, the combination of ‘planter’ and ‘West Indies’ generates seventy-four entries (‘planter’ and ‘West Indian’ generate thirty, and ‘planter’ and ‘West India’ eighteen), ‘planter’ and ‘Jamaica’ return sixty-six, ‘proprietor’ and ‘Jamaica’ return forty-one, ‘planter’ and ‘Barbados’ return twenty-nine, while ‘merchant’ and ‘West India’ and ‘merchant’ and ‘West Indian’ return ninety-one and 117 respectively. For a discussion of the inclusiveness and limitations of the *ODNB* as whole, see Stefan Collini, ‘National lives: *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*’, in *Common Reading: Critics, Historians, Publics* (Oxford, 2008), pp. 299–316.
- 2 W. P. Courtney, rev. Jonathan Harris, ‘Dwarris, Sir Fortunatus William Lilley (1786–1860), lawyer and writer’, *ODNB*. The entry further states that he ‘was an opponent of slavery’; in fact, in common with many slave-owners by the 1820s and 1830s, he professed regret that slavery existed but opposed ‘immediate’ abolition, by which he meant abolition on any meaningful timescale, and was attacked by the *Antislavery Monthly Reporter* for this.
- 3 W. P. Courtney, rev. A. C. Howe, ‘Hankey, Thomson (1805–1893), politician and political economist’, *ODNB*.
- 4 Ian K. R. Archer ‘Storer, Anthony Morris (1746–1799), politician and collector’, *ODNB*.
- 5 J. A. Hamilton, rev. Sinead Agnew, ‘Thesiger, Frederick, first Baron Chelmsford (1794–1878), lord chancellor’, *ODNB*. Charles Thesiger, who died in 1831, had been comptroller of customs at St Vincent.
- 6 G. F. R. Barker, rev. David Eastwood, ‘Goulburn, Henry (1784–1856), politician’, *ODNB*.
- 7 Martin Russell, ‘Peyronnet, (Georgina) Frances de [née Georgina Frances Whitfield], Viscountess de Peyronnet in the French nobility (1815–95), journalist’, *ODNB*. Frances de Peyronnet was the daughter of George Whitfield, ‘a lawyer and West Indian sugar plantation proprietor’ and Georgina Pauline, née Ross, and the mother-in-law of the MP Arthur Russell.
- 8 See e.g. the *ODNB* entries for Alexander Cray Grant, who in 1841 claimed that he had been ‘cultivating his [West Indian] property at a great loss’; Frederick Marryat, who in the 1840s, ‘notwithstanding a patrimony in excess

- of half a million pounds ... seems to have been permanently short of money, owing partly to the ruin of his West India property'; Robert Wallace, who in 1846 'became embarrassed financially by the depreciation in the value of some of his West Indian estates, and deemed it prudent to resign his seat in parliament'; and Sir Alexander Grant, principal of Edinburgh University 1868–84, whose family 'in 1848–9, by the unexpected emancipation of all the slaves in the Island of Santa Cruz, without any compensation ... was impoverished'.
- 9 This tradition extends back to Eric Williams' account of the West Indians of the nineteenth century as 'an outworn interest, whose bankruptcy smells to high heaven in historical perspective'. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944; repr. London, 1964), ch. 4, at p. 211.
  - 10 See Appendix 1 for the counterexamples and possible counterexamples of John Coakeley Lettsom, James Whitehorne, William Young Ottley and Bezsing King Reece.
  - 11 E.g. Joseph Hume, who dismayed his radical colleagues by championing compensation for slave-owners, among whom his wife's brother, William Hardin Burnley, figured prominently.
  - 12 Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, ch. 4.
  - 13 Bernard Crick, 'Blair, Eric Arthur [pseud. George Orwell] (1905–1950), political writer and essayist', *ODNB*. This entry is unusual in its explicit recognition of slave-ownership, describing Charles Blair, Orwell's great-great grandfather and the founder of the family's fortune and of its transformed social position, as 'a plantation and slave owner in Jamaica'.
  - 14 David Lambert, *White Creole Culture, Politics and Identity during the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, 2005); Christer Petley, *Slaveholders in Jamaica: Colonial Society and Culture during the Era of Abolition* (London, 2009); Natalie Zacek, *Settler Society in the English Leeward Islands 1670–1776* (Cambridge, 2010); Christer Petley, 'Rethinking the fall of the planter class', *Atlantic Studies* 9 (1) (2012), 1–17.
  - 15 Will of Nathaniel Snell Chauncy, merchant of Wilson Street Finsbury Square 28 July 1856 PROB 11/2235/334.
  - 16 For difficulties of identification in an earlier period, see Kathy Chater, *Untold Stories, Black People in England and Wales during the Period of the British Slave-trade c. 1660–1807* (Manchester, 2009), pp. 24–5.
  - 17 Susanne Seymour and Sheryllyne Haggerty, *Slavery Connections of Brodsworth Hall (1600–c.1830): Final Report for English Heritage* (English Heritage, 2010), at [www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/slavery-connections-brodsworth-hall/slavery-connections-brodsworth-hall.pdf](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/slavery-connections-brodsworth-hall/slavery-connections-brodsworth-hall.pdf), accessed 31 July 2013.
  - 18 Nicholas Draper, *The Price of Emancipation. Slave-Ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 100–7.
  - 19 Julian Hoppit, 'Compulsion, compensation and property rights in Britain, 1688–1833', *Past & Present* 210 (2011), 93–128.
  - 20 Gyan Prakash, 'Terms of servitude: the colonial discourse on slavery and bondage in India', in Martin A. Klein (ed.), *Breaking the Chains. Slavery, Bondage and Emancipation in Modern Africa and Asia* (Madison WI, 1993), pp. 131–49.

- 21 Marika Sherwood, *After Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade since 1807* (London, 2007).
- 22 For the variety of forms of master and servant legislation see Douglas Hay and Paul Craven (eds.), *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955* (Chapel Hill, NC and London, 2004).
- 23 See Chapter 4.
- 24 See e.g. S. G. Checkland, *The Gladstones. A Family Biography 1764–1851* (Cambridge, 1971) and Madhavi Kale, *Fragments of Empire: Capital, Slavery, and Indian Indentured Labor Migration in the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia, 1998).
- 25 Matthew James Higgins inherited property in British Guiana from his mother Janet Higgins, who received compensation.
- 26 See Chapter 3.
- 27 See Chapter 5.
- 28 The book also includes other important theses that are not directly relevant to us here, notably that ‘slavery was not born of racism: rather, racism was a consequence of slavery’ (p. 7) and that abolition is to be understood primarily as an economic phenomenon.
- 29 Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, pp. 105–6.
- 30 *Ibid.*, p. 98.
- 31 *Ibid.*, p. 52.
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, ‘The importance of slavery and the slave trade to industrializing Britain’, *Journal of Economic History* 60 (1) (2000), 123–44. Despite a lucid laying out of the spectrum of different positions on the relationship between slavery and industrialisation at the beginning of their article, Eltis and Engerman tend to revert to demolishing the straw man that the slave-trade or slavery caused the Industrial Revolution, and move between the slave-trade and ‘the sugar industry’ as proxies for the Atlantic slave-economy. It is noteworthy that the scholars who argue for the marginal nature of slavery in the eighteenth century are exactly those who argue that in the nineteenth century slavery was profitable and expanding and that it cost Britain economically to abolish it: slavery in their perspective thus becomes *more* important, the inverse of Williams’ decline thesis.
- 34 E.g. R. P. Thomas and D. N. McCloskey, ‘Overseas trade and empire, 1700–1860’, in R. C. Floud and D. N. McCloskey (eds.), *The Economic History of Britain since 1700, Vol. I: 1700–1860* (Cambridge, 1981), pp. 87–102. For a balanced discussion of the historiography of these problems up to c. 2000, see Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660–1800* (Cambridge, 2000).
- 35 Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence. China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton and Oxford, 2000).
- 36 Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge, 2002).
- 37 Joseph Inikori, Stephen D. Behrendt, Maxine Berg *et al.*, ‘Roundtable: reviews of Joseph Inikori’s *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* with a response by Joseph Inikori’, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 15 (2) (2003), 279–361. In

- this collection, Maxine Berg rejects Inikori's use of the Import Substitution model but accepts the reinsertion of overseas trade, both Asian and Atlantic, into the history of industrialisation; for Asian connections with the slave-trade, see Maxine Berg, 'In pursuit of luxury: global history and British consumer goods in the eighteenth century', *Past & Present* 182 (2004), 85–142 and *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2005). The most sceptical contribution in Inikori *et al.*, 'Roundtable' was that of John Singleton, who developed a counterfactual argument that 'Britain's cotton industry could have managed without enslaved Africans' (p. 323).
- 38 William G. Clarence-Smith argued against Inikori and for 'autonomous technical factors' in Inikori *et al.*, 'Roundtable', but more recently there has been a return to explanations of technological change that stress its economic and commercial context; see e.g. R. C. Allen, 'Why the industrial revolution was British: commerce, induced invention and the scientific revolution', *Economic History Review* 64 (2) (2011), 357–84.
  - 39 Pat Hudson, 'Slavery, the slave trade and economic growth: a contribution to the debate', in Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper and Keith McClelland (eds.), *Emancipation and the Remaking of the British Imperial World* (Manchester, 2014), pp. 36–59.
  - 40 Nuala Zahedieh, *The Capital and the Colonies: London and the Atlantic Economy 1660–1700* (Cambridge, 2010); T. M. Devine, 'Did slavery make Scotia great?', *Britain and the World* 4 (1) (2011), 40–64.
  - 41 Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, pp. 85–97.
  - 42 Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton, 2011).
  - 43 Lowell Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean 1763–1833: A Study in Social and Economic History* (New York and London, 1928).
  - 44 Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh, PA, 1977).
  - 45 J. R. Ward, 'The profitability of sugar planting in the British West Indies, 1650–1834', *Economic History Review* 31 (2) (1978), 197–213.
  - 46 Christopher Leslie Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill, 2006), 'Introduction', esp. pp. 13–16.
  - 47 Nicholas Draper, 'The rise of a new planter class? Some countercurrents from British Guiana and Trinidad 1807–1833', *Atlantic Studies* 9 (1) (2012), 65–83.
  - 48 Paul Sweezy, *The Theory of Capitalist Development* (New York and Oxford, 1942) and Maurice Dobb, *Studies in the Development of Capitalism* (London, 1946). The major modern Marxist interpretation of slavery has been the work of Robin Blackburn: *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery 1776–1848* (London, 1988), *The Making of New World Slavery. From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492–1800* (London, 1997) and *The American Crucible. Slavery, Emancipation and Human Rights* (London, 2009).
  - 49 Among other of his writings, see David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (New York and Oxford, 1988).
  - 50 Eugene D. Genovese, *The Political Economy of Slavery: Studies in the Economy and the Society of the Slave South* (New York, 1965) and *The World the Slaveholders Made: Two Essays in Interpretation* (New York, 1969); Eugene D. Genovese and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, *Fruits of Merchant Capital: Slavery*

- and *Bourgeois Property in the Rise and Expansion of Capitalism* (New York and Oxford, 1983) and *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders' Worldview* (Cambridge, 2005).
- 51 P. J. Cain and A. G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism. Innovation and Expansion 1688–1914* (London, 1993). (A second volume covers the period 1914–90.)
- 52 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 53 His main essays have been collected as William D. Rubinstein, *Elites and the Wealthy in Modern British History* (London, 1987).
- 54 William D. Rubinstein, 'Wealth, elites and the class structure of Modern Britain', *Past & Present* 76 (1977), 99.
- 55 For Cain and Hopkins see especially M. J. Daunton, "'Gentlemanly capitalism' and British industry 1820–1914', *Past & Present* 122 (1989), 119–58; A. N. Porter, "'Gentlemanly capitalism' and empire: the British experience since 1750?', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 18 (1990), 265–95; Raymond E. Dumett (ed.), *Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Imperialism* (London, 1999). For Rubinstein, see Daunton, "'Gentlemanly capitalism'" and also F. M. L. Thompson, 'Life after death: how successful nineteenth-century businessmen disposed of their fortunes', *Economic History Review* new series 43 (1) (1990), 40–61. Rubinstein replied with 'Cutting up rich: a reply to F. M. L. Thompson', *Economic History Review* new series 45 (2) (1992), 350–61 and Thompson responded with 'Stitching it together again', *Economic History Review* new series 45 (2) (1992), 362–75.
- 56 Clare Anderson, 'After Emancipation: empires and imperial formations', in Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper and Keith McClelland (eds.), *Emancipation and the Remaking of the British Imperial World* (Manchester, 2014), pp. 113–27 is a very useful survey.
- 57 Perry Anderson, 'The figures of descent', in *English Questions* (London, 1992), pp. 121–92, at p. 20.
- 58 Bernard Cracroft, 'The analysis of the House of Commons, or indirect representation', in *Essays on Reform* (London, 1867), pp. 155–90, at 160, 173.
- 59 See, for a classic example, H. J. Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society 1780–1880* (London, 1969) or, for a Marxist view, John Saville, *1848. The British State and the Chartist Movement* (Cambridge, 1987) or his *The Consolidation of the Capitalist State, 1800–1850* (London, 1994).
- 60 See e.g. the work of Antoinette Burton, Kathleen Wilson, Mrinalini Sinha and Catherine Hall.
- 61 For discussion of some of this work see Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, 'Introduction: being at home with the empire', in Hall and Rose (eds.), *At Home with the Empire. Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 1–31. See also the Manchester University Press series *Studies in Imperialism*.
- 62 Kathleen Wilson, 'Introduction: histories, empires, modernities', in Wilson (ed.), *A New Imperial History. Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire 1660–1840* (Cambridge, 2004), pp. 1–28.
- 63 For discussion see e.g. Marcus Wood, 'Significant silence: where was slave agency in the popular imagery of 2007?' and Catherine Hall, 'Afterword: Britain 2007, problematising histories', in Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield

- (eds.), *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery* (Basingstoke, 2010), pp. 162–90 and 191–201.
- 64 See Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity. The ‘Manly Englishman’ and the ‘Effeminate Bengali’ in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester, 1995), ‘Teaching imperialism as a social formation’, *Radical History Review* 67 (1997), 175–86 and ‘Mapping the imperial social formation: a modest proposal for feminist history’ *Signs* 25 (4) (2000), 1077–82. See also, for related perspectives on imperial formations, Ann Laura Stoler, Carole McGranahan and Peter C. Perdue (eds.), *Imperial Formations* (Oxford, 2007), especially the introductory essay by Stoler and McGranahan, ‘Introduction. Refiguring Imperial Terrains’.
- 65 Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination, 1830–1867* (Cambridge, 2002).
- 66 There are many issues that arise from work on imperial social formations, including, for instance, the complexities of the model and how the different levels of it are articulated together. Part of this arises from more general problems of causality, which will not be discussed here. While much of the new imperial history has been influenced by Marxism, among other things, what has not carried over into it has been a stress upon the ultimately determining weight of the economic.
- 67 A useful survey, reflective of much mainstream thinking, is Philip Harling, *The Modern British State. An Historical Introduction* (Cambridge, 2001), ch. 3; for the Poor Law see the classic analysis in Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (1945; repr. Boston, 1957), especially part 2.
- 68 Kathleen Wilson, ‘Rethinking the colonial state: family, gender, and governmentality in eighteenth-century British frontiers’, *American Historical Review* 116 (5) (2011), 1294–1322; Zoë Laidlaw, ‘The Victorian state in its imperial contexts’, in Martin Hewitt (ed.), *The Victorian World* (London and New York, 2012), pp. 329–45.
- 69 Laidlaw, ‘Victorian state’, p. 342.
- 70 On liberalism in its imperial context see Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought* (Chicago, 1999); Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton, 2006); Catherine Hall, *Macaulay and Son. Architects of Imperial Britain* (New Haven and London, 2012).
- 71 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes. Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780–1850*, 2nd ed. (London, 2002 [1987]).
- 72 See Chapter 6 of this book.
- 73 Sabean quoted in Leonore Davidoff, *Thicker than Water. Siblings and their Relations 1780–1920* (Oxford, 2012), p. 229.
- 74 *Ibid.*
- 75 Amy Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London, 1993), p. 168; R. J. Morris, *Men, Women and Property in England* (Edinburgh, 2005), p. 263.
- 76 Hannah Young, *Gender, Power and Slave-ownership: The Case of Anna Eliza Elletson* (MA thesis, University College London, 2012). See also the forthcoming work of Cassandra Pybus.

- 77 A West India Company, founded in the mid-1820s, appears to have been still-born. The West India Dock Company was the closest to a joint-stock vehicle to invest in slavery.
- 78 Draper, *Price of Emancipation*.
- 79 [www.slavevoyages.org](http://www.slavevoyages.org).
- 80 Parliamentary Papers 1837–8 (215) XLVIII: *Accounts of Slave Compensation Claims; Records Created and Inherited by HM Treasury: Office of Registry of Colonial Slavery and Slave Compensation Commission Records*. The underlying material in the National Archives is primarily in the T71 series. A full list of relevant material in the National Archives is in Draper, *Price of Emancipation*, pp. 370–1.
- 81 David Small, ‘Huggins, Edward (1755?–1829), plantation owner’, *ODNB*; G. P. Moriarty, rev. Christopher Fyfe, ‘Hodge, Arthur (d. 1811), planter in the West Indies and murderer’, *ODNB*.