

slavery here!



## What does this mean?

The act of slavery means taking away an individual's freedom and his or her human rights. It means exploiting people, against their will, taking away their dignity and forcing them to work for little or no pay and in bad conditions. A slave might be bound (literally) in chains, or a yoke (like cattle). Slaves are made to work beyond reasonable limits to the point of physical and mental exhaustion. Being a slave means that you are looked down upon, scorned, by others. To enslave someone means that you control them. Essentially slavery is about exploiting people for financial gain.

Here means both in this location – in this case in Stockton and the Tees Valley – and also now, at this moment in time. The word is also used to indicate an offer of something to somebody and may be used to introduce or draw attention to a topic. In other words, here is an exhibition about slavery – come and have a closer look.

### **slavery** (*noun*)

bondage · captivity · chains · confinement · custody · detention · duress · enslavement · imprisonment · incarceration · internment · obedience · restraint · serfdom · servitude · subjugation · thrall · vassalage · yoke

### **to enslave** (*verb*)

bind · dominate · enchain · enthrall · subjugate · yoke

### **a slave** (*noun*)

bondservant · drudge · scullion · serf · servant · skivvy · vassal

### **to slave** (*verb*)

drudge · grind · skivvy · slog · toil · work one's finger to the bone

### **here** (*adverb*)

in this place · at this time · at this point · now

Sources: Collins Thesaurus, Microsoft Dictionary, Wikipedia



cotton  
slave ships  
incarceration



# slavery here!



This year, 2007, is the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Act of Parliament that abolished the Slave Trade. The Act ended the capture, transportation and enforced labour of hundreds of thousands of African people who worked on cotton, sugar, tea and tobacco plantations in the British colonies in America and the Caribbean.

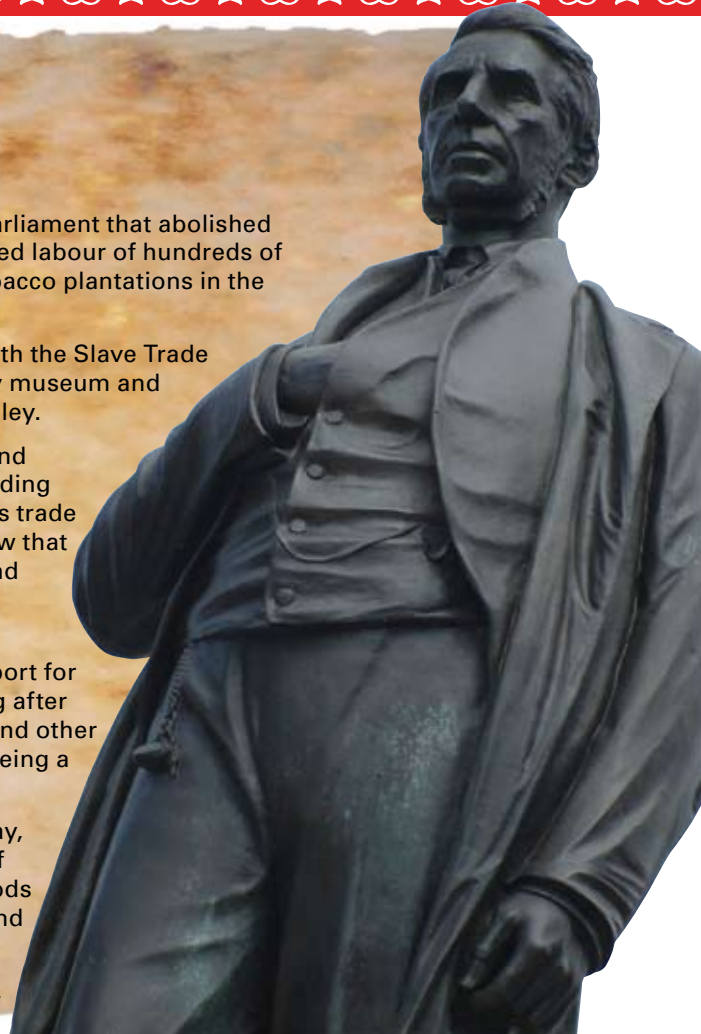
The **slavery here!** exhibition tells the story of this area's connection with the Slave Trade both past and present. It is the culmination of a sixth month project by museum and archive staff with communities and schoolchildren across the Tees Valley.

A team of volunteers from the African community in Middlesbrough and Stockton has hunted through archives to reveal the forgotten slave trading activities that brought sugar to homes in Darlington and Stockton. This trade lined the pockets of merchant families living on the Tees. We now know that Stockton had its own Sugar House, a refinery, that processed sugar and molasses shipped from the Caribbean via London.

**slavery here!** also recreates the fight of local campaigners Dr Robert Jackson and the Pease family in their own words. Jackson rallied support for the abolition and the Pease family continued to fight for the cause long after slavery had officially ended. Elizabeth Pease fought to boycott sugar and other slave-traded goods, while Jackson who had first-hand experience of being a doctor in Jamaica, petitioned the House of Commons.

The second part of the exhibition explores how slavery still exists today, here and now, in the Tees Valley. Modern day slavery takes the form of exploited workers, human trafficking, the sex trade and the sale of goods produced through unfair trade. This story is told through film and sound recordings of Tees Valley workers and residents.

Darlington Quaker Joseph Pease campaigned to abolish slavery.





# Stockton Sugar House

Sugar, one of the primary products of the colonial plantations in America and the Caribbean, first involved Stockton people in the slave trade. Stockton was an important port. We know from shipping registers that ships carrying both refined sugar and molasses were sailing here from London between 1766 and 1794.

Back then the car park near Thistle Green on the riverside in Stockton was the site of a sugar refinery. It was the only sugar house between Hull and Newcastle and supplied the whole of the North East of England. The refinery was sold after just 10 years on 26 October 1790, possibly because of pressure by local abolition campaigners. (The building may have been purchased by the Pease family. Edward Pease junior was in business there between 1824 and 1836). The sugar house building (pictured here) later became a granary and warehouse. It was demolished in 1929.

Imports of molasses to Stockton had stopped by 1793, but demand for sugar was still increasing. In 1794 1510 tons of sugar (more than 1.5 million bags) passed through the port. That's a lot of sugar lumps! Sugar was sold in cone-shaped loaves. People used nippers or shears to cut the sugar into smaller pieces. Then, as now, sugar was used to sweeten tea and coffee. By 1700 (as a direct result of the use of slave labour) sugar was cheap enough for everyone to afford it. That means that our great-great-great-great-great grandparents directly supported the slave trade.

Sources: Brewster, John (1829) *History of Stockton upon Tees*.  
Stockton-on-Tees: Patrick & Shotton, p. 200  
Picture Stockton website



# Abolition



Although guilty of supporting slavery through investments, coal exports, transporting and consuming slave-produced goods, people in the Tees Valley turned against slavery.

Dr Robert Jackson, a GP in Stockton was a key local figure in the fight to abolish slavery. The Pease family in Darlington campaigned long after Parliament passed the Abolition of Slavery Act in 1807, because slave trading persisted.

Robert Jackson had lived and practised medicine in Jamaica between 1774 and 1778. There he witnessed the brutal punishment of slaves by both men and women. Slaves were regularly tied up and whipped, or put into stocks. Jackson saw a slave whipped to death. He also saw a man have his leg cut off as a punishment for running away. Jackson reported stories of men being castrated and pregnant women being whipped.

In 1792 Jackson recounted his experiences (published by the Newcastle Courant) to the House of Commons Committee on Slave Trade. He also led a petition supported by 181 inhabitants of Stockton. In the same year, the famous freed African slave Olaudah Equiano visited Stockton as part of the national campaign tour. Some 519 petitions were lodged and the House passed a Bill *"that the trade carried on by British subjects for the purpose of securing slaves from Africa ought to be gradually abolished"*.

The Slave Trade could have been abolished then, but the House of Lords blocked the Bill. War with France delayed the passing of the Act for another 15 years. Abolition did not officially come into effect until 1834.



confinement to restraint

The Anti-Slavery Society Convention, 1840 (includes Thomas Binney (Benny); Sir John by Benjamin Robert Haydon © National Portrait Gallery, London



Olaudah Equiano, renamed Gustavus Vassa - slave, author and abolitionist.

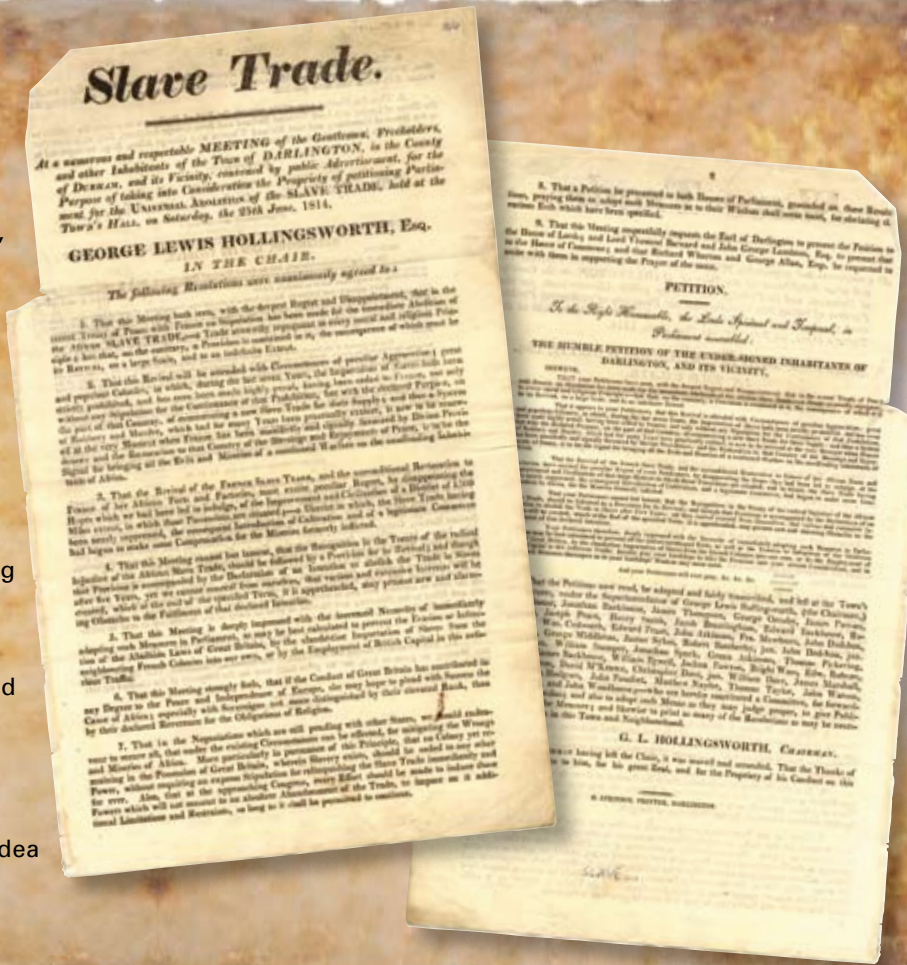
# After Abolition

Campaign meetings continued in the Tees Valley after the so-called abolition of slavery.

In the 1820s and 1830s, Elizabeth Pease (1803-1866), became the leader of the 'Women's Abolition of Slavery Society in Darlington'. Despite not having the vote, women played an important role in the anti-slavery campaign because they controlled the purchase of goods such as sugar and clothes. In 1838, Elizabeth published an 'Address to the Women of Great Britain'.

Joseph Pease (1799-1872), MP for South Durham from 1832-41, used his position to speak out against the slave trade. The recently renovated statue of Joseph Pease in Darlington shows slaves celebrating their freedom. Both Elizabeth and Joseph appear in a painting by artist Benjamin Robert Haydon (on display at the National Portrait Gallery in London) which records a convention in 1840 of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

Slavery continued in America until 1863 and during that period many towns, including Darlington, Hartlepool, the newly built Middlesbrough and Stockton promoted Free Labour Associations. The idea was similar to the Fair Trade campaign today.



**watch here!**

**'Humanity can be divided into two: the masters and the slaves'**

Through a series of interviews, the film tells the story of historical and current day slavery. It explores what slavery means and how slavery impacts on life here today. It questions why slavery happens and what can be done.

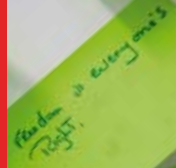
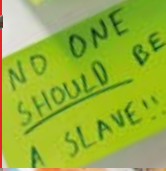
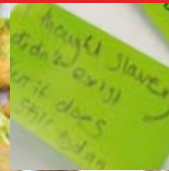
The footage has been filmed over the last six months. It shows **slavery here!** project volunteers researching archives and sharing their thoughts and feelings about slavery. The film features interviews with Barnardos, Stop the Traffik and Cleveland Police about human trafficking and prostitution in the area.

The film lasts about 10 minutes. An extended version of the film is available for loan as part of the slavery resource box.

*"Quilt designs carried hidden messages"*

*"Slaves were used for petty things like tobacco"*

*"Freedom is everyone's right"*





## Workshops and teaching resources

More than 1000 people in schools and community venues across the Tees Valley have participated in slavery here! in some 50 workshops and activities. These events stimulated debates about slavery in the past and in the world today.

Workshop participants have also enjoyed a taste of African culture – crafts, food and music. Newtown Community Centre users have designed and stitched a commemorative quilt, written and performed a play and learned African drumming.

The **slavery here!** resource box is available on loan from Stockton Museum Service. It contains information about and replica objects from the so-called 'triangular trade' that operated between Europe, Africa and the Americas. The items – which may be handled – include handcuffs, manacles, a yoke, an iron neck ring, a monkey fist, manillas, a sugar cone, sugar nippers, cotton burrs, a tea brick, tobacco twist and tobacco hank.

*"I thought slavery didn't exist any more, but it still does today"*

*"Many people supported slavery"*

*"Slavery is all about money"*

*"You can be creative (music, drama, crafts) even when you are enslaved"*







Today, workers on sugar, tea and coffee plantations in developing countries are not slaves, but many farmers and workers are exploited. As a result they struggle to provide for their families. Poor market access and unfair trade rules often mean that the price they get for their crop does not cover the cost of production.

FAIRTRADE is a rapidly growing international movement which seeks to guarantee a better deal for farmers and workers in the developing world. A product that is fair-trade certified carries a label, the FAIRTRADE mark.

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**Try before you buy with our FAIRTRADE lucky dip.**

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## Exhibition credits

This exhibition has been made possible through the enthusiasm and diligence of the following people and organisations:

**Hilaire Agnama**, Karibu

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