

## Some Eighteenth-Century Residents of Queen Square and their connections to the Atlantic slave trade

### Abraham Elton II

Abraham Elton II (1679-1742) inherited the largest house on the Square from his father Abraham I, the founder of an impressive mercantile empire in the city. His son, who invested in at least three slaving voyages, had investments in the slave colonies of Maryland and Virginia and replaced his father as MP for Bristol in 1727. He also supplied copper sheathing for African ships, copper rods for trading on the African coast and copper vats used for processing gunpowder. His brothers Jacob and Isaac were also involved in slave-trading.

### John Anderson

He owned a number of slavers and directly managed some 66 voyages between 1764 and 1797 including the *King George*, which in 1764 shipped 280 Africans from the Windward and Cape coasts to Kingston, Jamaica.

### Isaac Hobhouse

A leading slave-trader in the city, he managed 44 slaving voyages before 1747 and partnered James Laroche in several slaving ventures. Hobhouse sold plantation produce in Bristol and oversaw the education of the children of his West Indian clients sent to England. By 1760 he lived on the Square and also had property in Clifton, then a fashionable village near Bristol.

### James Laroche

Bristol's most important slaving agent in this period, who managed some 132 slaving voyages between 1728 and 1769. The 360 slaves who were carried aboard his ship the *Loango* from Angola and delivered to South Carolina in 1737 included 40 children.

### Joseph Jefferis

From a prominent merchant family, both he and his brother William, the city's leading Carolina merchant in the first half of the century, were slave-traders. Joseph Jefferis was mayor of Bristol in 1724 as well as organizing 14 slaving ventures by 1729. His ship the *Pearle*, which he co-owned with his brother, William Swymmer Jr and others, delivered 355 slaves to Barbados and South Carolina in 1728.

### Woodes Rogers

A famous privateer, he was amongst the first to let a plot in the Square and to build 'a substantial mansion house' there. He invested in slaving ships and ended his days as Governor of the Bahamas, which had a slave regime. One of his Bristol-born sons was an official of the Royal African Company.

### Thomas Freke

From an established merchant family, he managed 14 slaving voyages before his death in 1730 including the *John and Betty*, which embarked from Guinea in 1729 with 250 slaves and delivered 158 to Kingston, 11 of whom died on arrival. Two other members of the Freke family were also slave-traders in Bristol, as was his brother-in-law John Brickdale.

### Henry Bright

He served as a factor in Jamaica and returned to Bristol in 1746 to marry Sarah Meyler, the daughter of his former employer (Richard Meyler, an African and West Indian merchant). Bright's shipping interests included a substantial interest in the African and Carolina trades. He also traded directly in slaves.

### Other residents

John Becher	John Gresley
John Day	Abel Grant
Nathaniel Day	Thomas Harris
Nathaniel Foy	

**Figure 13** The background is from a detail of Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, *The North West Prospect of the City of Bristol*, 1734. Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery. The information is taken in part from David Richardson, *Bristol, Africa and the Slave Trade to the Americas*, vols 1 and 2.