



Introduction

For the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, a research programme was established by the Trust's Learning Services. The researchers investigated links between the slave trade and NTS places and, from this, a travelling display was created. The display toured several NTS sites in the West of Scotland, as well as conferences and local libraries. The first section is the on-line version of this travelling display.

The second section provides more in-depth information about an African man (and ex-slave) who lived and worked at Culzean in the 18th century.



Left - Brodick Castle & Estate. Right - Beckford Collection - Silver and ceramic goose dish

Brodick Castle: The Sugar Fortune

The fine Beckford Collection of furniture, silver and china displayed at Brodick Castle, on the Isle of Arran, once belonged to William Beckford, owner of several sugar plantations in the West Indies. His family was one of the first to settle in Jamaica. It rose from modest beginnings to become one of the richest families in Europe.

In 1810, his daughter Susan Beckford married the 10th Duke of Hamilton; they lived mainly at Hamilton Palace in Lanarkshire but also stayed at their other home, Brodick Castle

Family Fortunes

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Duchess of Hamilton

Susan Beckford married Alexander, 10th Duke of Hamilton. Her father, William, died in 1844. Susan inherited his estate and collections.

William Beckford was the last in a line of rich men. He inherited a fortune made from the Jamaican sugar plantations and built Fonthill Abbey in Wiltshire to house his collections and impress visitors. The cost was so great that he fell into debt. He sold the Abbey and bought property in Bath where he continued his life as a gentleman. He never visited his plantations.

Susan's grandfather, William 'Sugar Cane' Beckford (1709-70), was born in Jamaica and lived in Britain – and was reputed to be Britain's first millionaire. He owned 22,000 acres in Jamaica.

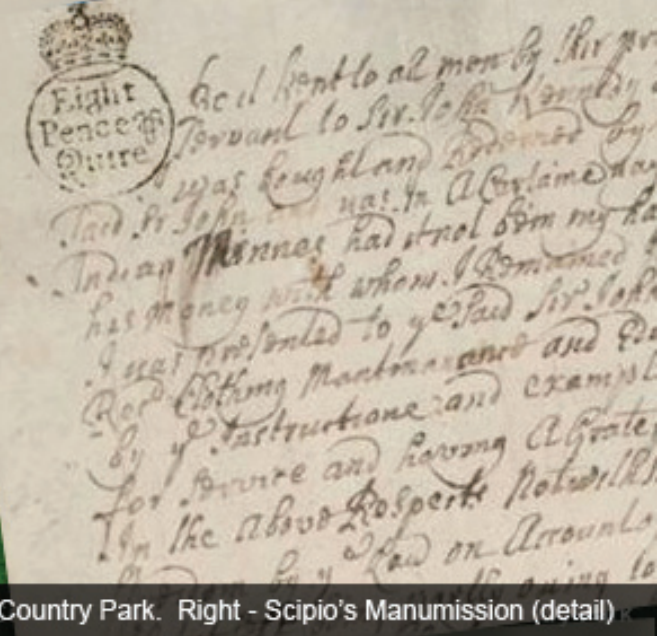
Her great-grandfather, Peter Beckford (1672-1735), also born in Jamaica, was said to be the richest man in Europe: by 1700; he owned 24 plantations where 1,500 enslaved people worked.

Great-great-grandfather Peter Beckford the Elder (1643-1710) arrived in Jamaica shortly after it became an English colony and took jobs as a hunter and horse catcher. When he died, he owned 11 estates, 24 plantations and around 1200 slaves. His fortune was estimated at £250 million (modern value).

Great-great-great-grandfather Thomas Beckford started as a clothworker and slopseller (he sold ready-made clothes to poorer people) in London but was later knighted. Pepys mentions him in his diary. His brother was a trader in Jamaica from 1659.



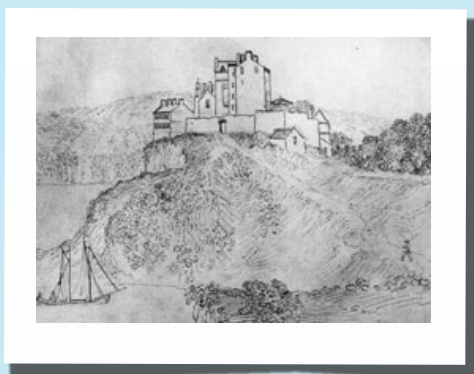
Duke of Hamilton



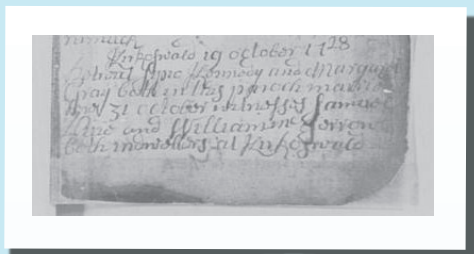
Left - Culzean Castle & Country Park. Right - Scipio's Manumission (detail)

Culzean Castle: An African Scot

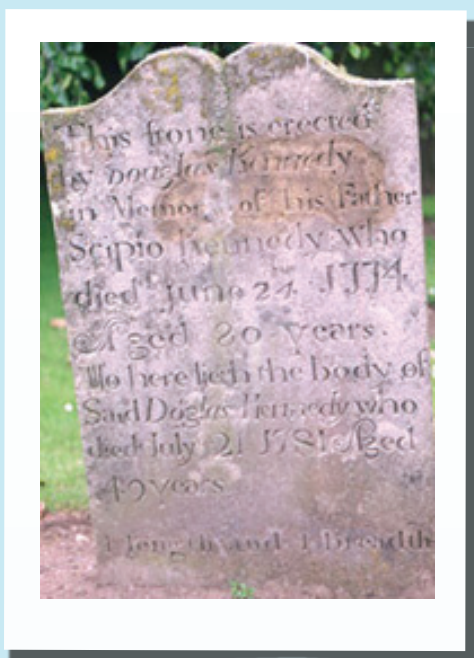
Scipio Kennedy from 'Guinea' lived at Culzean Castle, Ayrshire, from 1710 – first as a slave and then as a paid servant. He married a local woman and they had several children. He may well have descendants. He died aged about 80 years old and is buried in Ayrshire.



Culzean tower house - Adam drawing, pre1777



Marriage - extract of parish register



Scipio's Gravestone

Early life

Scipio was taken from his home in Africa when he was about six years old. He was going to be sent to the West Indies but was bought by Captain Andrew Douglas. In 1705, his daughter Jean married John Kennedy and Scipio was 'was presented' to them. Scipio moved to Culzean Castle when Sir John became 8th Earl of Cassillis and inherited the property.

Freedom and marriage

In 1725, Scipio was given his freedom. He was then around 28 years old. According to the manumission (document of freedom), he had received 'clothing, maintenance and education with more than ordinary kindness' and, as would have been expected of him, he had become a Christian.

Scipio chose to remain with the Kennedy family and, in 1728, married Margaret Gray. They had at least eight children. Their children were given Scottish first names and used their father's slave-surname of Kennedy. The two sons were called Douglas and John Kennedy.

A home in Ayrshire

On an estate map created in the 1750s, there is an area designated 'Scipio's' – it shows evidence of buildings surrounded by some land. It would seem that Scipio Kennedy and his family had their own home in the grounds of Culzean.

The will

In Lady Jean's will, dated 1751, she left her estate to her second surviving son. (Her eldest inherited Culzean.) She gave £40 sterling to her eldest son and 20 guineas to each daughter. Her three grandchildren shared £40 between them. Finally, Lady Jean gave 'to Scipio Kennedy my old servant the sum of ten pounds sterling.' Clearly Scipio was seen as a special person.

Scipio's grave

When Scipio died, on 24 June 1774, he was buried in Kirkoswald church yard, a few miles from Culzean. His son Douglas erected a gravestone – and later, Douglas and his wife, Jean Ballantine, were also buried there.



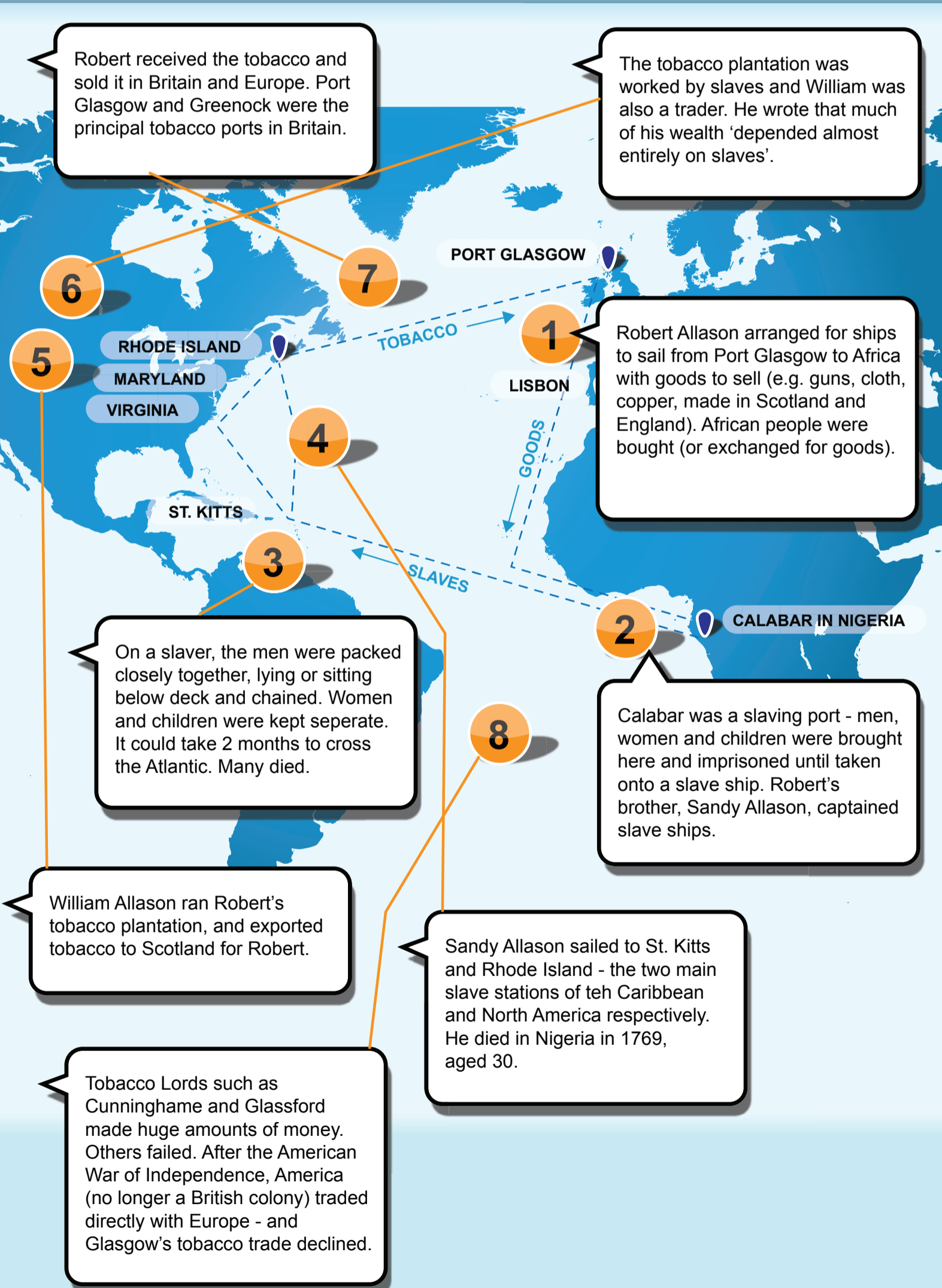
Left - Greenbank House & Gardens Right - Tobacco ships at Port Glasgow

Greenbank House: Tobacco and Slaves

Robert Allason began his working life as a baker then, on moving to Port Glasgow, started trading goods and finally became a tobacco merchant. He and his brothers, Sandy and William, traded in tobacco and slaves. His brothers placed themselves at key points of the 'triangular trade'. Robert also had connections in Liverpool and London.

In 1760, Robert created his own tobacco company with William. By 1765, he owned a Glasgow mansion and built a new country villa, outside of Glasgow, called Greenbank House. However, the American War of Independence (1775-83) disrupted his business and, by 1780, he was owed around £10,000 (worth almost £1million today) which he never received. Robert went bankrupt and lost Greenbank.

The Allason Brothers and the Triangular Trade





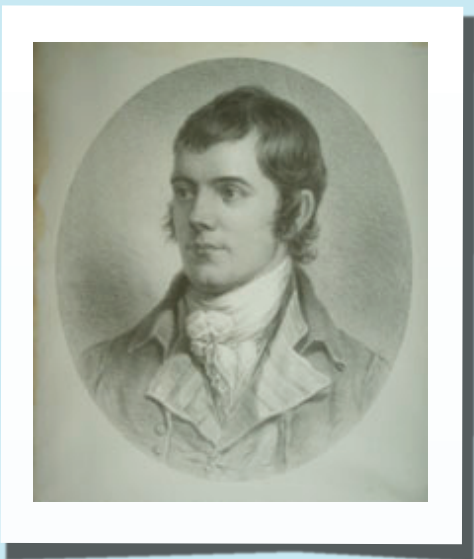
Cutting sugar cane © North Carolina University

The Plantations: Something in the air

During the 1700s, many Scots went to the plantations in the West Indies and eastern America, including:

- Younger sons of the gentry who were unlikely to inherit
- Those who had supported the Jacobite rebellion and were out of favour
- People escaping from poverty and the class system

Some become plantations owners, others were book-keepers, overseers, doctors, ministers and tradespeople. The plantations produced raw materials suitable for a warm climate, particularly sugar, tobacco and cotton.



Robert Burns

A Peculiar Quality

The new arrivals may have had the best intentions – to seek their fortune or improve their lives - but they soon became part of a barbaric system. On reaching the plantations, they encountered the enslaved people.

When Zachary Macaulay became an assistant manager on a Jamaican plantation, he was shocked by the plight of the slaves but then became 'callous and indifferent'. A leading abolitionist in later years, Macaulay joined the slave trade system because, on the plantations, this was the normal way of life.

He wrote home: 'The air of this island has some peculiar quality in it, for no sooner does a person set foot on it than his former ways of thinking are entirely changed... You would hardly know (me)... were you to view me in a field of canes...cursing and bawling (and hear) ...the noise of the whip resounding on their shoulders, and the cries of the poor wretches...'

Robert Burns

In 1787, Burns intended to escape the daily grind of his life by going to Jamaica. In a letter to Dr. John Moore, he pictured himself as 'a poor Negro driver'. Soon after this, his newly published book of poems turned him into a celebrity. Burns stayed in Scotland and married Jean Armour.

An Appraisal of the Estates, Plantations in the Parish of Westmorland, and Island of Jamaica, belonging to the Right Honorable Company, viz. of Glasgow, Glasgow & River & Interiors of Port Royal, viz. all the Negroes of the above said Islands and Slaves of Belonging thereto

1	Boyle	Driver	Black	90
2	Stewart	"	Black	100
3	Thompson	"	Youngly	150
4	Wright	"	Black	110
5	Tom	Black & Copper	Black	100
6	Jill	"	Black	90
7	John	"	Black	90
8	John	"	Youngly	150
9	John	"	"	120
10	John	"	"	140
11	John	"	"	140
12	John	"	"	70
13	John	"	"	110
14	John	"	"	60
15	John	"	"	100
16	John	"	"	70
17	John	"	"	140
18	John	"	"	110
19	John	"	"	120
20	John	"	"	30
21	John	"	"	50
22	John	"	"	140
23	John	"	"	150
24	John	"	"	140
25	John	"	"	80
26	John	"	"	70
27	John	"	"	70
28	John	"	"	80
29	John	"	"	100
30	John	"	"	30
31	John	"	"	70
32	John	"	"	80
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35	John	"	"	90
36	John	"	"	90
37	John	"	"	90
38	John	"	"	40
39	John	"	"	80
40	John	"	"	70
41	John	"	"	60
42	John	"	"	110
43	John	"	"	90
44	John	"	"	180
45	John	"	"	180
46	John	"	"	60
47	John	"	"	100

Glasgow, Dec 1 1787

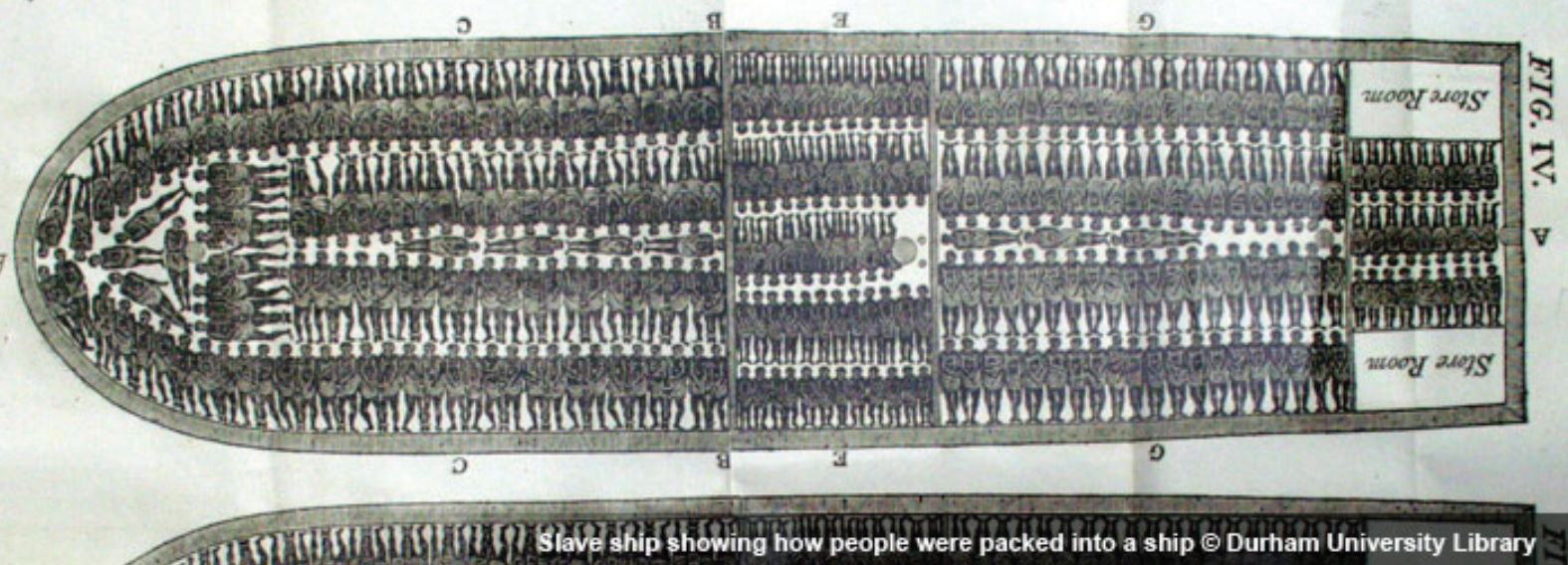
List of Enslaved Men - detail
Glasgow City Archives and Special Collections

List of Enslaved Men

deceased of Boyd Porter
the Negroe & other Slaves
Belonging thereto

1	Charles		
2	Di		
3	Wungo		
4	Johny		
5	Tom	Black & Copper	

⊕ Roll your mouse over the above list to see the detail in close up.



Live Cargo: A state of war

Millions of Africans were taken from their own countries and forced to work in the West Indies or in America. The slave trade dehumanised people – first making them into commodities and then slaves.

Olaudah Equiano was an enslaved African who bought his freedom. He lived in England and travelled round Britain campaigning against the slave trade. He wrote a book about his experiences which was widely read.

Equiano said: *'When you make men slaves you deprive them of half their virtue, you set them in your own conduct an example of fraud, rapine and cruelty, and compel them to live with you in a state of war ...'*



Slave ship enlarged detail

The slave ship

Olaudah Equiano: *'... the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us ... the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died ...'*

William Allason to brother Robert Allason, of Greenbank House: *'... There is a good deal of money made here by buying Negroes from off ships in quantity ... after keeping them for a few weeks from £25 to £50 is common ... I will draw on you for £500 and divide the profits.'*

On reaching land

Olaudah Equiano: *'It is very common, particularly in St Kitts, for the slaves to be branded with the initial letters of their master's name; and a load of heavy iron hooks hung about their necks ... often instruments of torture ... [are used, such as the] ... iron muzzle, thumb-screws, etc.'*

William Allason to Robert Allason: *'My property tho in land and slaves I expect will with ease enable me to slide through life ...'*



Child's neck collar - David Livingstone collection



Detail - Anti-slavery pamphlet

Abolition: Morals and money

The Abolition of the Slave Trade Act, which banned the sale of slaves in the British Empire, was passed in 1807. Plantation owners could no longer work enslaved people to death and then buy more. Some slaving ships continued to trade illegally and the British Navy began to police the seas.

The supporters of Abolition then campaigned against slavery and, in 1833, it was declared illegal in the British Empire. In the end, moral beliefs and financial considerations brought about the end of the Slave Trade.

For and Against in Scotland

The issue of slavery divided Scots. There were debates, newspaper articles and petitions for both sides. Powerful companies such as Glasgow's West India Association supported the slave owners.

In 1788 Reverend Walker of Edinburgh organised one of the first anti-slave trade petitions in Britain. (He is portrayed as the skater in a painting in the National Galleries of Scotland.) The doctor, James Ramsay, and William Dickson and Zachary Macaulay were all leading campaigners, using their experience of plantation life to argue against slavery. People from all walks of life supported Abolition, including ministers, lairds, weavers and miners.

African campaigners

Legal challenges by the enslaved Africans David Spens and Joseph Knight (who were each brought to Scotland from the West Indies) led to a ruling, in 1778, that slavery could not exist in Scotland and therefore all people on Scottish soil were free. But the slave trade continued.

Across Britain freed slaves spoke about the cruelty of the slave trade system. Ottobah Cugoano and Olaudah Equiano wrote influential books, and both toured Britain giving lectures. Equiano worked with Wilberforce and Clarkson – and should be portrayed alongside them.

African slaves on the plantations also fought for their freedom using passive resistance (working slowly) and planned rebellion. They risked reprisals of torture and death. Some plantations were destroyed and people killed. Groups of escaped slaves lived in inaccessible areas. The constant unrest meant fewer profits for the owners.

Women campaigners

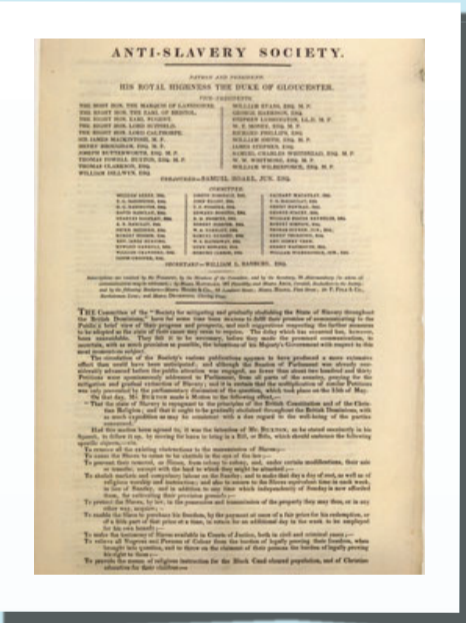
Many women joined the campaign – even though they couldn't vote. They used their influence rather than political clout. Lady Margaret Middleton talked to her powerful political friends, and supported Wilberforce. Some wrote stories and poems. The novelist Hannah More, in England, published 'Slavery, A Poem' in 1788, about an enslaved woman who was separated from her children.

Women and their families boycotted sugar from the West Indies (using sugar from the East Indies instead) – over a quarter of a million British people joined the boycott.

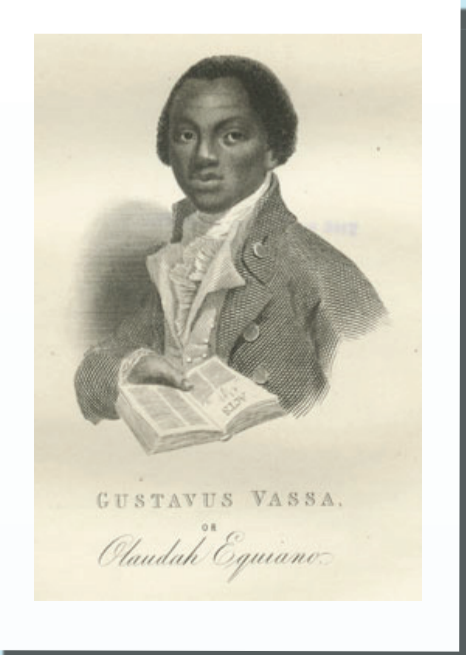
Women also took to wearing the Wedgwood jewellery depicting a kneeling slave, with the inscription 'Am I not a man and a brother?' (or, less known, 'Am I not a woman and a sister?'). During the second campaign between 1807 and 1833, more women started their own abolition groups.



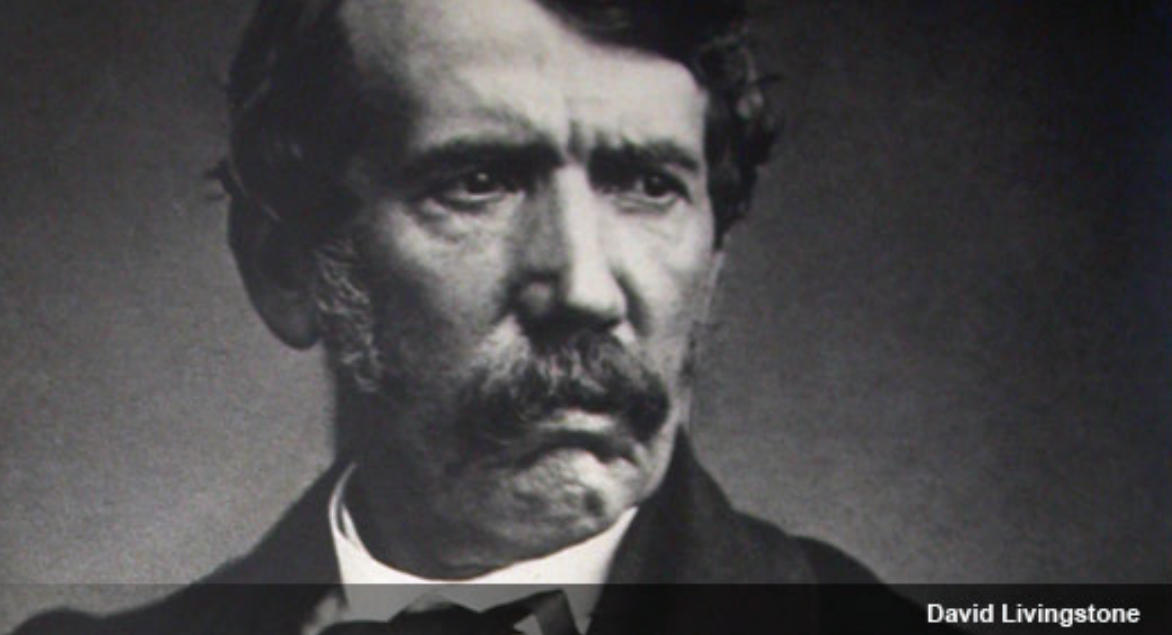
Anti-slave trade medallion



Anti-slave trade pamphlet



Olaudah Equiano



David Livingstone

David Livingstone: The East African Slave Trade

West and East African Slave Trades

The triangular (or transatlantic) trade involved Britain, West Africa, the West Indies and (pre-independent) North America. The British slave trade was stopped in 1807 but an East African slave trade continued, with the Arab traders. The main slave market was in Zanzibar.



David Livingstone Centre - Shuttle Row



Tenement - interior - where Livingstone was born and grew up



Slaves abandoned

Livingstone's Abolition Campaign

David Livingstone (1813-73) spent much of his life campaigning against the slave trade based in East Africa.

He first came into contact with the East African slave trade as a missionary in the 1840s. Appalled at the treatment of the enslaved people, he began sending eye-witness accounts of its horrors back to Britain. His reports were influential, causing great concern in Britain.

The East African slave trade centred round the slave markets on Zanzibar island and other ports along the coast. Captured Africans were sold here and sent to work as slaves on spice plantations in the Arabian peninsular and Indian Ocean Islands.

This trade was smaller than the transatlantic one. Even so, an estimated 2 million people were sold through the markets. Many more never reached the markets but died on the forced march from their homes in the interior to the coast.

Livingstone believed in 'Commerce and Christianity'. He felt that a profitable trade in goods would replace the need to trade in people and that, if they became Christians, Africans would not support slavery.

In 1871, Livingstone's report of the Nyangwe massacre – when slave traders fired into a crowded market and 400 people were killed – shocked the British public. The British Government put pressure on the Sultan of Zanzibar and he closed the slave market in 1873, just six weeks after Livingstone's death. This ended the legal trade in slaves on the East Coast of Africa.



Acknowledgements

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- Travelling display designed by David Roberts, studio sp limited, Edinburgh