

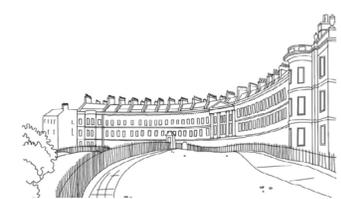
1 Bath Abbey



11 No 17 The Circus, Bath BA1 2ET



2 5 Terrace Walk, Bath BA1 1LN



13 1 Lansdown Crescent, Bath BA1 5EX



3 Pulteney Bridge



15 Lansdown Tower known as Beckford's Tower, Lansdown Rd. Bath BA1 9BH



6 Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney St. Bathwick, Bath BA2 4DB



16 Locksbrook Cemetery, 5 Cedric Road, Bath, BA1 3PD



9 Lady Huntingdon's Chapel The Paragon, The Vineyards, Bath BA1 5NA



17 13 Queen Square



10 Assembly Rooms, Bennett St. Bath BA1 2QH



18 27 Green Park Buildings Bath BA1 1HZ

## A Walk Through Bath's Uncomfortable Past

Bath, a UNESCO world heritage site, is better known for its Georgian splendour than its association with transatlantic slavery. While Bristol and other harbour cities were directly involved in the trade of enslaved Africans and the products of West Indian plantations, Bath's connection with wealthy slave owners who enjoyed the Georgian spa city's leisure and contributed to funding many of the city's grandiose building projects has remained largely ignored.

This walk through Bath's uncomfortable past invites you to discover the city's complex links to transatlantic slavery as we guide you through the untold stories of the people who were involved in this system. Their stories represent a departure from the dominant narrative of white male abolitionists to a more transparent reflection of society during this time. It tells stories across gender and race of both slave owners and abolitionists who lived in Bath or visited the city from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. The walk highlights the impact Afro-descendants had on abolition, both via the protests they led in the Caribbean and their anti-slavery activism through art and public speaking. This project does not claim to tell an all-encompassing narrative of transatlantic slavery in Bath, since these legacies are influenced by a multitude of intertwined individual stories. Rather, we offer insight into the lives of some of the many Bath residents and visitors who were involved in creating or dismantling this system.

Colonial slavery shaped modern Britain and we all still live with its legacies. From 1625, when the first colonies of the British Empire were set up in the West Indies until the time of abolition in 1833, the British had transported an estimated 3.1 million Africans to their colonies in the Caribbean and beyond. Although Britain banned the trade of enslaved people in 1807, emancipation was not immediate. As the UCL Legacies of British Slave-ownership project (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>) has revealed, not all Britons involved in enslavement

were powerful landowners. Some of them were ordinary citizens who owned small shares in plantations, 40% of which were women. When the Slavery Abolition Act was finally passed in 1833, there were 46,000 slave-owners in Britain to whom the government distributed £20m to compensate their loss. This sum made up 40% of the total government expenditure for 1834 and is the equivalent of £17bn today. The formerly enslaved labourers received no compensation and were forced to work for four more years following abolition under the rule of 'apprenticeship'. They often remained bound to sugar estates for even longer as there were few other work opportunities in the Caribbean.

This walk seeks to bring these statistics to life by situating them within Bath's architectural and demographic contexts. The map was created in 2020-21 by a team of students and academics involved in the VIP Co-Creation project at the University of Bath, with the aim to promote critical reflection about Bath's history. It encourages walkers to reflect on their understanding of the multiple legacies of colonial slavery in the city, including physical legacies manifested in the architecture of domestic residences, country houses, and public monuments; cultural legacies encapsulated in art objects and collections, philanthropism or cultural institutions; and linked to economic development through the redeployment of 'slave wealth' into other forms of investment.

We hope that you find the walk insightful and will share your reflections with us through an online survey:

<https://bathreg.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/!walk-baths-uncomfortable-past>

For more information, you can contact us and follow us:

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Email: [Walkbathsuncomfortablepast@gmail.com](mailto:Walkbathsuncomfortablepast@gmail.com)

balls, concerts and social functions. Famous visitors included King George III, Jane Austen, violin virtuoso George Bridgetower (1789), and anti-slavery campaigner Olaudah Equiano (1793).

**11 The Circus** is a ring of elegant townhouses designed by architect John Wood the Elder in 1754 and completed by his son in 1768. The painter Thomas Gainsborough lived in No. 17 between 1758 and 1774, using part of its space as his portrait studio.

**12** In the 1830s, at least three of the houses in **Park Street** (No. 9, 26 and 34) were owned or occupied by individuals who lodged claims for compensation following the abolition of slavery in 1833. One of these is Nathaniel Wells (1779-1852), Sheriff of Monmouthshire, who was of mixed African/Welsh heritage.

**13 Lansdown Crescent** was designed by John Palmer and constructed between 1789 and 1793. It comprises 20 houses, each originally having four floors including servants' quarters in the basement. No. 18, 19 and 20 were owned by William Beckford, and No. 1 was occupied by James Heywood Markland, who died there in 1866.

**15** William Beckford bought No. 19 Lansdown Crescent in 1822. Later he also acquired No. 18 and 20 and all the land between his home and the top Lansdown hill where he created a garden over half a mile in length and built **Beckford's Tower**, a neo-classical folly. The tower was home to his great collections of books, furniture and art.

**16 Locksbrook Cemetery** is a municipal cemetery located in Lower Weston which occupies 12 acres. It opened in 1864, originally serving the parishes of Walcot, Weston and St Saviour's. Annie Jane Elwin (Mummu), one of Bath's once enslaved residents, is buried there.

**17 Queen Square** was the first speculative development in Bath. Designed by John Wood the Elder. It included a thoughtfully designed central garden for parading. The Woods contributed to raising city's stylish status through grand building projects funded by landowners, churchmen and entrepreneurs whose wealth was to a great extent derived from slavery. Jane Austen lived at No. 13.

**18** The plans of **Green Park** were laid in 1799 by John Palmer. It was completed in 1808. Jane Austen lived at No. 27 in 1805.



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The first record of a black person in Bath dates back to 1681 through the church records of **Francis Hooper**, a blackmore. Church records are the main source for finding out about black people in Bath through the recordings of a person's skin colour. 'Coffee' place of residence, 'Bath' or occupation, 'Butler'. In the eighteenth century, it was not uncommon to see black people in Bath, considering the close proximity of both Bristol and London, where 10,000-20,000 black people lived. A black servant, often a young page or handmaid, was seen as a status symbol, adorning the houses of the well-to-do. Their experiences and legal statuses varied enormously. Some, like John Rippon, lived comfortably and rose to prominence like the Westminster shopkeeper, letrist and composer Ignatius Sancho (see illustration), the coal merchant and property owner Peter Picton in Kingston-upon-Thames and the Nottingham-based George Africanus, who ran a servants' register in the city. Plantation owners from the Americas and the Caribbean came to Bath to retire on their profits or to attend the spa and brought with them their retinues.



**Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791)** was an English religious leader and philanthropist. She married Theophilus Hastings, the 9th Earl of Huntingdon, in 1728 and had seven children with him. She spent time curing herself in Bath and was living a life of luxury. In 1739, she converted to Methodism and spent over £100,000 on schools, hospitals, missionary work in America and the construction of 64 chapels in England and Wales, including the one built in Bath in 1765, which today houses The Museum of Bath Architecture. She had an interest in the colonies, including issues related to Native Americans. She promoted the writings and freedom of formerly enslaved Africans who espoused religious views compatible with her own, like Olaudah Equiano. She was one of many religious benefactors and philanthropic abolitionists to financially support Equiano's autobiography, although it is likely that they never met. Paradoxically, she also became a slave owner in 1770 after the death of her chaplain George Whitefield, who owned estates in Georgia and South Carolina. On Whitefield's advice, she bought additional enslaved labourers for the benefit of her orphanage.



**The painter Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788)** settled in Bath with his wife Margaret, a duke's daughter, in 1759. Although he preferred to paint landscapes, over the 16 years he spent in the city he built a reputation as a top society portraitist. He earned huge sums painting aristocrats, politicians, landowners, doctors, performers and wealthy plantation owners like George Byam (whose portrait can be seen at the Holburne museum) and their families. Gainsborough first rented a townhouse in Abbey Street which he filled with lodgers to meet the rent. His sister, Mary, set up a millinery shop next door and encouraged her clients to view the latest portraits in an adjoining gallery. As the studio thrived, the Gainsboroughs and their daughters, Molly and Peggy, moved to Lansdown and eventually to No. 17 The Circus. Gainsborough was an easy-going and empathetic artist, but he was also known for his temper tantrums and foul language. In 1774, he moved to London where he became a founding member of the Royal Academy in 1768 and received commissions from King George III and Queen Charlotte in 1777.



**Sir William Pulteney, 5th Baronet, born Johnstone (1729-1805)** was a Scottish advocate, landowner and politician who gained his wealth from his first marriage to Frances Pulteney, the heiress of the 1st Earl of Bath. William Pulteney pursued the development of his estates in London and Bath, building a bridge across the River Avon to unite the centre of Bath with the Bathwick Estate where he lived. Known now as Pulteney bridge, it was inspired by the Ponte Vecchio in Florence. As a politician and MP between 1768 and 1805, Pulteney took an interest in East India affairs, speculation and property development. From his own investments and inheritance from his brother James Johnstone, he became a slave and plantation owner in the West Indies. He also invested in land in New York state where the town of Haveretta was named after his daughter Henrietta Laura Pulteney (1766-1808). Her portrait by Angelica Kauffman (1777) is displayed in the Holburne museum. Pulteney became the Present Proprietor in Tobago in 1773 and bought land in Dominica shortly after its seizure by Britain in 1763. He was reputedly the wealthiest man in Great Britain.



**George Byam (1734-1779)** was the son of Edward Byam (1663-1741), a wealthy plantation owner and Lieutenant Governor of Antigua (1715-1741) and Lydia Thomas, the widow of Samuel Martin, who wrote a popular essay about sugar plantation management. Born in Antigua, Byam married in 1760 to Louisa Bathurst, the daughter of a Tory MP whose family had interests in the West Indies as well as in the Royal Africa Society. The couple had their portrait painted by Thomas Gainsborough, before Byam returned to his plantation in Antigua while his wife remained in Surrey. The portrait shows the Byams as a loving couple quietly strolling through a poetic eighteenth-century English landscape. A few years later, on the occasion of another visit to Bath, the Byams's eldest daughter Selina (1760-1846) was added to the painting while Gainsborough updated the colour of Louisa's dress. The Byam plantation was one of the largest on the island, with 366 acres worked by 132 enslaved labourers.



**Olaudah Equiano c. 1745 - 31 March 1797** was born in Benin as the son of an Igbo eminence. Kidnapped as a child, he was taken to Barbados and sold to a Navy Officer, Michael Henry Pascal, who trained him in seamanship, and reading and writing. Later, he was sold again to a Quaker merchant, Robert King, who encouraged him to engage in profitable trading and proposed him to become his business partner after Equiano purchased his freedom in 1766. Equiano travelled broadly to Africa, the Arctic and Central America before he settled in London and became a leader of the British abolitionist movement and a member of the abolitionist group Sons of Africa. In 1789, he published his autobiography depicting the horrors of the trade. He toured Britain, campaigning for abolition and spoke at a large number of meetings, including in Bath in 1793. His book went through nine editions in his lifetime and helped gain passage of the British Slave Trade Act 1807. Equiano married an English woman named Susannah Cullen in 1792 and they had two daughters. He died in Westminster in 1797.



**Hannah More (1745-1833)** was born and raised in Bristol, as the daughter of a school master. She began writing and publishing as a teenager. Her first play, *The Inflexible Captive*, was staged in Bath in 1775. In the early years of her career, she taught along with her sisters at the family-run school. However, her true passion remained writing and social reform. In 1787 she befriended William Wilberforce, who shared her belief in social reform and commitment to evangelical Christianity, and encouraged him to take up the campaign for abolition rather than gradual abolition. She contributed to the abolition society through her writing, for example, her poem *Slavery*: a poem, one of the most important anti-slavery literary pieces during this time. With her sister Martha, she established several schools for the poor and women from the 1780s. In her later life, she dedicated her time to religious writing. She died in 1833, one month after the Slavery Abolition Act was passed, leaving more than £30,000 (equivalent to about £2,000,000) to charities and religious societies.



**William Beckford (1760-1844)** was an English novelist and travel writer, art collector and plantation owner. In 1781, at the age of ten, he inherited a large fortune derived from the work of enslaved people, accumulated by his father, who had served twice as Lord Mayor of London. This inheritance consisting of £1 million in cash, an estate in Wiltshire and several sugar plantations in Jamaica, initiated a lifetime of lavish spending. It allowed Beckford to indulge his interests in art, build eccentric buildings like Fonthill Abbey, take music lessons from Mozart, and write various pieces including the Gothic novel *Wathek* (1786). He served as an MP and followed West Indian affairs, but never set foot in the West Indies. In his later years he moved to Bath, where he built Lansdown Tower. He purchased several properties around Lansdown Crescent; these were numbers 20, 19, and 18, which he left empty for privacy. In undertaking his eccentric extravaganzas as a builder and collector he managed to dissipate his fortune, which was estimated by his contemporaries to an income of £100,000 a year. Only £80,000 of his capital remained at his death.



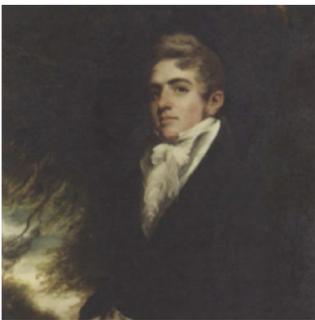
**Jane Austen (1775-1817)** resided in Bath between 1799 to 1806 at four different addresses, 13 Queens Square, 4 Sydney Place, her principal domicile in the city, 27 Green Park Buildings and 25 Gay Street. She had cousins who settled in the West Indies, and an uncle who married an heiress to an estate in Barbados. Her younger brother Charles married the daughter of the former attorney general of Bermuda. Her father, Reverend George Austen, became a trustee of an Antigua plantation, owned by James Langford Nibbs, who was also godfather to Jane's brother James. Austen's other brother, Sir Francis, was sanctioned to stop English vessels enforcing the 1807 Abolition Act and his letters report his disgust and revulsion for both the trade and the entire slave system. These multiple connections would ultimately result in Austen having intimate knowledge of the social and economic realities of the Caribbean's plantation societies, which she used in her novels *Mansfield Park* (1811-1813), *Emma* (1814-1815), and *Persuasion* (1815-1816). These novels, written in the decade after the 1807 Abolition Act, reflect Jane Austen's distaste for slavery and the abolitionist climate of the time.



**George Augustus Polgreen Bridgetower (1778-1860)**, an Afro-European violin virtuoso, born in Poland to a musician father of West Indian descent and a German-Polish mother. He performed from the age of seven and his father took him on tours to Paris, Bristol and Bath. He took the city by storm with 550 guests attending his first concert at the Assembly Rooms on 5 December. In London he played at the Drury Lane Theatre. He performed before King George III, and the Prince of Wales took him under his patronage and gave him the opportunity to learn from the finest musicians in London. Over the next decade, Bridgetower would play almost 50 public concerts with leading orchestras and musicians. He visited Vienna in 1803, and Beethoven wrote his Kreutzer sonata originally for him. In 1811, he received a master's degree in music from Cambridge University and became a member of the Royal Philharmonic Society. In 1816, he married Mary Leake, they had two daughters. Little is known about Bridgetower's later years, at some point, he seems to have stopped performing, making his living as a piano teacher in Rome and Paris.



**Nathaniel Wells (1779-1852)** was born in St Kitts. He was the son of William Wells, from Cardiff, who owned three sugar plantations on St Kitts, and Juggy, an enslaved house servant. In 1783, Nathaniel was baptised and declared free. He was sent to England to study so that he could attend Oxford University. In 1794, William Wells died, and Nathaniel inherited his three sugar plantations and £120,000. After the abolition of slavery in the colonies, Wells was awarded £1400 in relation to 86 enslaved persons on the Fabies and Ottoms sugar estates on St Kitts. He became an integral part of Monmouthshire high society, being appointed as the Justice of the Peace in 1806. In 1818 he became Britain's first black sheriff, Sheriff of Monmouthshire. He even served as St Arvan's church warden from 1804-1843. He was the second individual of African descent to hold a commission in the British Armed Forces after John Perkins of the Royal Navy. He married Harriet Este in London but settled in Bath where he died in 1852 at 9 Park Street, Lansdown, Bath.



**James Heywood Markland (1788-1864)** lived at 1 Lansdown Crescent in Bath from 1841 till his death. He was a parliamentary agent in the West Indies and as the Treasurer of a Church of England missionary organisation, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, he was awarded £8,558 (about £755,000 today) in for the 410 enslaved labourers that the Society owned on the Codrington estate in Barbados. He was the most important figure on the Literary Committee of the London Society of West India Planters and Merchants in the 1820s, which was an organisation that aimed to increase the publicity for pro-slavery causes with pamphlets, publishers, newspapers and journalists. He authored texts on archaeological themes and the condition of churches. Markland was ideally placed to procure for West Indian plantation owners the services of booksellers and publishers. He was also literary agent for pro-slavery authors such as A.C. Carmichael and Henry Nelson Coleridge, who was the nephew and editor of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The first window west of the North transept in Bath Abbey was filled with glass to his memory.



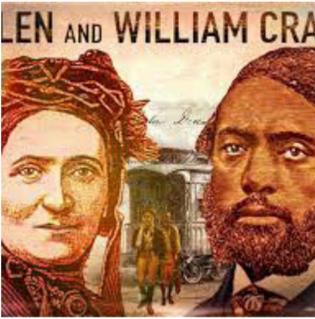
**James Holder Alleyne (1790 - 1842)** was born in Barbados to a powerful family of sugar estate owners. He was son of John Foster Alleyne (1762-1823), brother of Charles Thomas Alleyne and a member of HM's Council for St James Barbados. He married Elizabeth Mary Lowe James in 1815 and the couple resided in Clifton, near Bristol. In 1822, Alleyne is listed as the owner of 118 enslaved labourers and 204 acres of land. Records show that he owned the Reids Bay estate and additionally bought two more estates, Swan's and Gregg Farm and The Spa plantation. In 1834, he claimed compensation for 739 enslaved people in Barbados and received £16,617, while his brother, resident of 2 Littlefield Place, Bristol, received £18,128 for 865 enslaved labourers in Barbados. Alleyne died on 2nd July 1842 in Cheltenham, Gloucestershire. His memorial can be found in the north transept of Bath Abbey, which is known for having more funerary monuments for traders, planters and merchants from Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, Bermuda and Grenada than in any other final resting place in Great Britain.



**Alexander Scott (1790-1858)**, was an Anglican clergyman who lived at 18 Great Pulteney Street in Bath with his Barbados born wife, Anna Maria Elcock. Scott owned the Bayley and Wiltshire estates in Barbados. He was also a trustee on Thubau's Estate in Antigua. From these plantations he derived a fortune of £120,000. In 1816, a rebellion took place in Barbados, led by an African-born ranger Bussa, a driver at the Bailey Plantation. Respected by both enslaved workers and planters, Bussa led the group of 400 enslaved people wanting to obtain their freedom after the 1807 Act for the Abolishment of the Slave Trade. This rebellion was one of three major uprisings that took place in the British West Indies between 1807 and general emancipation in 1838, the other two being the rebellions in Demerara-Essequibo in 1823 and Jamaica in 1831. The uprising was accompanied by a propaganda campaign orchestrated by three free literate black men, Cain Davis, Roach and Richard Sarjeant, who shared information across Barbados. The rebellion was suppressed within 3 days by the local militia and British imperial troops, which included black enslaved soldiers. Today Bussa is remembered as a National Hero of Barbados.



**Emma Sophia Sturge**, née Mundy, was a Quaker engaged in the anti-slavery movement who supported the boycott of the products of slavery. She was born in Bath in 1825. Her father had a butcher shop at 5 Orange Grove. She married Thomas Sturge, nephew of the abolitionist Joseph Sturge, who became interested in the plight of the enslaved labourers in Jamaica and wrote a number of books pressing for immediate and full emancipation in British territories. In 1850 the couple moved to America with their four children but after Thomas was killed in 1852 by a falling tree, Emma returned to Bath. In 1853 she opened an anti-slavery depot selling 'free labour' cottons and linen. Her business thrived for six years in central Bath, first at 2 Pulteney Bodge and then at 5 Terrace Walk. There was another anti-slavery depot at 14 Orange Grove. One of Emma's three daughters, Ellen, opened a school for ladies at the same address. Emma became a member of the Society of Friends in 1868 and she became an overseer of the Melksham meeting. She died in 1895 and is buried, with Ellen, in Melksham.



**Ellen Craft (1826-1890)** and **William Craft (1824-1900)** were a couple of anti-slavery campaigners who were born and enslaved in Macon, Georgia. They used the earnings of William, who was hired out in town as a carpenter, to escape to Philadelphia in December 1848. Ellen crossed the boundaries of race, class, gender, and physical ability by passing as a white male planter, with William posing as her personal servant. Their daring escape was widely publicised. They featured in public lectures to gain support in the struggle to end slavery. As prominent fugitives, they were also easy targets for slave catchers. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, they emigrated to England and lived there for nearly two decades raising five children. The Crafts delivered a speech in Bath at the Friends' Meeting House, Lower Borough Walls, in July 1856. In 1860 they published *Running a Thousand Miles for Freedom*, a compelling narrative that reached wide audiences in Great Britain and the United States. In 1868, they returned to the US and opened an agricultural school in Georgia. They worked at the school and its farm until 1890.



**Sarah Parker Remond (1826-1894)** was an African American human rights activist, suffragette, and physician who got involved in public speaking and became an accomplished orator capable of holding the crowd's attention. After touring the Northern and Southern States with her speeches, she travelled to Britain in 1858 to raise funds for the construction of churches and schools in Black communities. When white male abolitionist speakers represented the norm, she used the novelty of being a young black female orator to influence British society to put pressure on the United States to abolish slavery. Remond was not afraid to break taboos by addressing the sexual exploitation of enslaved women. She encountered more resistance when she campaigned for women's rights and when she sought support for the conederate states during the US Civil War (1861-1865) which led to a cotton famine. In October 1859 she enrolled in Bedford College as the first black student. In 1866 she graduated as a nurse from University College London and in travelled to Florence, Italy where at the age of 42 she qualified as an obstetrician. She later married a painter from Sardinia.



**Annie Jane Elwin (Mummu) (1838 or 1841-1866)** was rescued as a child from a vessel carrying enslaved people and placed in the school of the Church Missionary Society at Charlotte, Sierra Leone. Marks on her forehead attested that she was a princess in her country of origin. Hearing impaired from birth, she was invited to Bath at the age of 15 to receive an education free of charge at the Bath Institution for the Blind and Deaf and Dumb at 8-9 Walcot Parade, founded in 1843. She remained at the institution for five years. Her teachers praised her intelligence, affectionate nature, and rapid progress. At her own desire, she was baptised on 29th December 1857 and received the name of Annie Jane Elwin. For a short time, she worked for the Church Missionary College in Islington, but she returned to Bath, and remained at the Institution until she died after a short illness, in May 1866, at the age of 25. Her grave is at Locksbrook Cemetery, Bath. She appears in the 1861 census as a servant, under her adopted name.