# Beyond Abolition: Challenging the “un-visibility” of enslavement-associated commerce in England and New England.

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# Abstract

This research analyses 48 heritage sites in England and New England, which offered narratives of transatlantic slavery in 2018–2019. Building on previous critiques of public memory of slavery, I focus on highlighting the economic connections of what I term enslavement-associated commerce (EAC). Researching sites in England and New England enabled a transnational comparison between two regions that both profited from enslavement, but largely at a geographic distance. I argue that changing our focus of vision from sites of enslavement to sites of EAC reveals the widespread spectral traces, impact, and importance of slavery to both England and New England. In both regions the analysed sites of intervention participate in the act of challenging the "un-visibility" of EAC, which was buried beneath abolition, as part of what I call the defenders of liberty heritage narrative (DOLHN). Conscious of this context, this thesis draws on decades of historical literature to undertake in-depth analysis of the scope of narratives offered, across the 48 case studies. These include museums, memorials, historic houses and cotton mills. I investigate whether the interventions within these sites effectively acknowledge the impact of EAC, and consequently its relevance to the heritage narratives of England and New England. While collectively they do reveal the importance of EAC, there are recurring limitations in the narratives, including a predominant focus on individual wealthy enslavers and ports. Moving forward, I encourage the development of more complex narratives of EAC, which better recognise the contribution of enslaved labourers to modern capitalism.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Introduction

In 2018, a few months into researching the memory of transatlantic slavery, I stood in Bristol, England, face to face with a bronze statue of Edward Colston. The Victorian statue stood beneath Colston Tower, near Colston Hall on Colston Street, which all bear the same man's name. In June 2020, after the completion of my research trips, the world watched as the same statue was dramatically thrown into the river by Black Lives Matter protestors. Edward Colston (1636–1721), was a Bristol born slave trader and philanthropist.[1] His statue, erected in 1895, became – as Madge Dresser described it – a "symbolic lightening rod for highly charged attitudes about race, history and public memory" within the city.[2] The statue's removal followed years of discussion and several temporary unofficial art interventions, and sparked both consciousness and backlash.[3] Only days after Colston's forceful removal, local authorities in London removed a statue of Robert Milligan from outside the Museum of London Docklands, which I had also visited.[4] Across the Atlantic Ocean, summer 2020 saw a statue of Christopher Columbus beheaded in Boston, while the state of Rhode Island removed reference to "plantations" in its official name.[5] These events,

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[1] Kenneth Morgan, *Edward Colston and Bristol* (Bristol: Bristol Branch of the Historical Association Local History Pamphlets, 1999), 1–4.
[2] Madge Dresser, "Remembering Slavery and Abolition in Bristol," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 30, no. 2 (2009): 225.
[3] For further details see: Olivette Otele, "The Guerrilla Arts in Brexit Bristol," in *Embers of Empire in Brexit Britain*, eds. Stuart Ward and Astrid Rasch (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 133–141.
[4] Josh Halliday and Martin Belam, "UK protests: statue of 18th-century slave owner Robert Milligan taken down in London — as it happened," *The Guardian*, 9 June 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2020/jun/09/uk-protests-black-lives-matter-colston-statue-rhodes-live.
[5] Sophie Lewis, "Rhode Island moves to change state's official name due to slavery connotations," *CBS News*, 24 June 2020, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/rhode-island-name-change-providence-plantations-slavery-connotations/.

across the globe, followed a resurgence of Black Lives Matter protests in May 2020, after the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

The debates around statues and slavery memory have not been confined to academics and museums but have engaged the publics and the governments of both the USA and the UK. Reflecting political disagreements about the importance of slavery in US history, in January 2021, President Trump's *1776 Commission* was dissolved by President Biden, just days after publishing a contentious report on the nation's founding history.[6] In the same month, the UK government also introduced a new policy of "retain and explain" with legal protections against the removal of historical statues, plaques and monuments without consultation and planning permission.[7] These events can be understood as part of wider "culture wars" over how the past is remembered.[8]

This thesis captures a temporal moment – between April 2018 and October 2019 – before the explosion of public interest in memory of slavery, thus preserving a record of interventions that existed prior to 2020. Events in the intervening period have not fundamentally altered this project, and this work is not a direct commentary on these recent socio-political events. Instead, the thesis offers a close analysis of existing heritage interventions and frames them within considerations of the wider environment.

The core research question of this thesis asked: in 2018–2019 did the interpreted tangible heritage of England or New England acknowledge that enslavement-associated commerce impacted these regions significantly and is therefore a relevant part of the dominant heritage narrative? The following close analysis reveals that there are widespread individual limitations at

[6] The 1776 commission report can be viewed online (https://1776-commission-report.com/).
[7] UK Government, "Press release: New legal protection for England's heritage," 17 January 2021, https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-legal-protection-for-england-s-heritage.
[8] Katie Donington, "Relics of Empire? Colonialism and Culture Wars," in *Embers of Empire in Brexit Britain*, eds. Stuart Ward and Astrid Rasch (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 121–131.

the sites but that when considered collectively, in this thesis, the interventions do reveal the impact of enslavement-associated commerce. Throughout, this thesis intertwines scholarly analysis with suggestions for the heritage sector, as the academic research is inherently enmeshed with its potential practical application. This project illuminates the breadth of existing interventions while highlighting that there remains much to be done to fully explore how England and New England profited from enslavement-associated commerce.

This chapter outlines core decisions which were made during the research, as well as defining central concepts that were developed and utilised within the thesis. Reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis, I draw on various fields and disciplines, including history, geography, American studies, heritage studies, museum studies and memory studies. It begins by offering arguments for why sites should challenge the "un-visibility" of this history. The following sections then explain two key research decisions: firstly, to focus on the economic history of slavery, and secondly, to undertake a transnational comparison between England and New England. The second half of Chapter 1 focuses on key terms and scholarship. One section defines "enslavement-associated commerce" (EAC) and outlines key historical literature. Central concepts from memory studies – including palimpsests, spectral traces and "un-visibility" – are then outlined before another section illuminates key works on public memory of slavery. The final section, before the brief conclusion, discusses visitor resistance under a frame which I phrase as the "defenders of liberty heritage narrative" (DOLHN). This research is concerned with analysing heritage interventions which challenge the "un-visibility" of EAC, under the DOLHN. To reinstate this history in the heritage narratives of England and New England the interventions must look beyond abolition, both temporally and metaphorically, through empirical evidence, some of which is compiled within this thesis.

Chapter 1 establishes key concepts and terms which are used throughout the thesis, and grounds them in existing literatures. From there, Chapter 2 introduces the methodology and case studies for this thesis. I undertook research trips across England and New England to examine where the relevant interventions occurred, what detail they provided and how they achieved this. Chapter 3 engages with debates of spatiality to address the importance of the placement of the interventions. It identifies palimpsestic places and objects across the regions that contain spectral traces of EAC. Chapter 4 examines details within the interventions which relate to the nature of EAC, while Chapter 5 focuses on who was included in those narratives. This analysis identifies that several interventions reproduced a narrow focus on individual slave traders and plantation owners who profited directly in former slave trading ports. Instead, this thesis encourages engagement with the banality of EAC, in which economic connections to enslavement were commonplace, as well as consideration of an elongated timeline and broader geographic scope. This reveals the importance of EAC and why it should be considered as a relevant part of the dominant heritage narrative. Chapter 6 closes by drawing together conclusions, reflections and recommendations. While critique runs throughout the thesis, it highlights that the sites analysed in depth are forerunners in challenging the "un-visibility" of EAC in England and New England.

## Why challenge "un-visibility"?

This chapter is bookended with acknowledgements of debates over, and resistance to, remembering slavery. The contentions reflect that, as Ana Lucia Araujo recognises, "public memory of slavery is a permanent battleground."[9] Before delving into details of the history and memory, and key concepts and terms, this section outlines several arguments for why it is worth

[9] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory: Engaging the Past* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 69.

challenging the "un-visibility" of EAC through highlighting the potential value of more complex and challenging narratives.

The first argument for engaging in such narratives is that they are more accurate. Focused on Britain, Michael Taylor writes that this is "not flagrant revisionism or a national bout of self-loathing; instead, it will be a just and necessary corrective to centuries of self-congratulation" for which "previous 'histories' of slavery must shoulder the blame."[10] This thesis builds on decades of historical research that has rediscovered details about the history and importance of transatlantic slavery, that were omitted from previous histories and public memory. Furthermore, as a seminal report from Brown University, published in 2006, highlighted, "if there is a single common element in all exercises in retrospective justice it is truth telling. […] The first task is to create a clear historical record of events and to inscribe that record in the collective memory of the relevant institution or nation."[11] Challenging the "un-visibility" of EAC forms a more accurate and thorough history and does greater historical justice to the enslaved human beings.

Looking at the present day, Julia Rose recognises that "difficult history interpretations can upset the political status quo in a community or for society at large, and sway public opinion on current issues" and as such they can "serve as tools for improving lives and society."[12] As well as being more historically accurate, improving commemoration of transatlantic slavery may facilitate more developed conversations about the racial legacy of slavery, as well as wider contemporary issues including modern slavery. While this thesis focuses on economics, more expansive narratives of transatlantic slavery allow for discussion of the origins of racism. As Eric Williams, a

[10] Michael Taylor, *The Interest: How the British Establishment Resisted the Abolition of Slavery* (London: The Bodley Head, 2020), 309.
[11] Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, *Slavery and Justice* (October 2006), 44. https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/documents/SlaveryAndJustice.pdf
[12] Julia Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History at Museums and Historic Sites* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 34, 62.

key historian for this thesis, noted, anti-black racism was a "consequence of slavery" while the concept of a "white race" developed simultaneously.[13] However, this is not widely understood. As James Baldwin famously wrote in 1963, white Americans were "trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it."[14]

Interwoven with the contemporary racial legacy is the erasure of the contribution of non-White people. Challenging this, the history of EAC highlights the contribution of enslaved Africans to the history of England and New England. As Alan Rice writes, "following the money" of slavery makes visible that "a crucial portion of the money came from the backs of black labour" thus showing "that they were crucial to the making of Lancashire and Britain, despite denials."[15] This thesis similarly highlights the importance of enslaved labourers to New England. When discussing England these revelations must be situated within wider erasure of people who lived in the former colonies, across the globe. In his recently acclaimed *Empireland,* Satham Sanghera argues that "if we don't confront the reality of what happened in British empire, we will never be able to work out who we are or who we want to be."[16] Accepting the importance of imperial connections challenges the myth that non-White people did not contribute to or were not tied to Britain before the mid-twentieth century.[17] A better understanding of both the historical origins of racism

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[13] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944), 7. For discussion of the "white race" see: Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race, Volume Two: The Origin of Racial Oppression in Anglo-America* (London: Verso, 1997).
[14] James Baldwin, "My Dungeon Shook: Letter to my Nephew on the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Emancipation," in *The Fire Next Time* (London: Michael Joseph, 1963), 20.
[15] Alan Rice, "Ghostly Presences, Servants and Runaways: Lancaster's Emerging Black Histories and their Memorialization 1687–1865," in *Britain's Black Past*, ed. Gretchen H. Gerzina (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 192.
[16] Satham Sanghera, *Empireland: How Imperialism Has Shaped Modern Britain* (Penguin: London, 2021), 206.
[17] Ibid., 74–76.

and the historical contribution of the enslaved, as well as wider non-White peoples, may help disrupt contemporary racism and improve society, on both sides of the Atlantic.

While the principle of learning from the past is contested, it is often prescribed to by heritage sites. This belief also offers another reason to challenge the "un-visibility" of the fact that enslavement was part of an interwoven web of commerce which contributed to early capitalism: it may provide a useful comparator for contemporary exploitation through modern slavery. It is estimated that some forty million people are still enslaved, and scholars do attempt to offer lessons from historical slavery, and abolition.[18] Furthermore, the wider exploitative nature of capitalism has become a critical issue for many world leaders, business bosses and investors focusing on sustainable development and concerned with "Environmental, Social, and Governance" (ESG) issues. While some lessons from history may be uncomfortable – such as the compensation for plantation owners and the use of indentured labourers – accurate "interpretations of difficult histories can provide learners with valuable opportunities for authentic experiences and fact finding."[19] This thesis highlights sites that were working to enable those authentic fact-finding experiences before the events of summer 2020. The following sections explain key research decisions and concepts that shape this work.

[18] For recent scholarship on learning from historical slavery for contemporary slavery see: Kevin Bales and Zoe Trodd, eds., *The Antislavery Usable Past: History's Lessons for How We End Slavery Today* (Nottingham: The Rights Lab, 2020); David Wilkins, "Understanding Historical Slavery, Its Legacies, and Its Lessons for Combating Modern-Day Slavery and Human Trafficking," in *The Palgrave International Handbook of Human Trafficking,* eds. John Winterdyk and Jackie Jones (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).
[19] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 60.

## Focusing on economics and commerce

The interest in the economic connections, in this project, was borne from extensive analysis of existing literature, particularly the analysis of the 2007 bicentenary, and the *Legacies of British slave-ownership* (LBS) research undertaken by the team at UCL. This section details this work that had a significant impact on my chosen research focus. Firstly, the 2007 bicentenary of the abolition of the British Slave Trade was a pivotal moment in slavery commemoration and it attracted considerable academic analysis.[20] A common criticism of the bicentenary was that it was a "Wilberfest" which celebrated white abolitionists while neglecting black agency or slavery's racial legacy. My initial visits to English museums did not support these criticisms but after those visits, I was particularly drawn to the question of whether these sites made clear that slavery and the slave trade impacted Britain. This query emerged from the bicentenary criticisms.

2007 presented a moment when, as Douglas Hamilton observed, transatlantic slavery could be shown as "part of a British past, and not simply something that happened to other people 4,500 miles away."[21] However, there was disagreement as to whether it did. In his 2012 reflections, Geoffrey Cubitt argued there was "a new focus on the importance and diversity of economic connections, not just to the slave trade itself, but to the larger complex of trading relationships that had slavery as its core."[22] He concluded that "it is simply harder now than it was before 2007 for members of British society to behave as if abolitionism were the only point of

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[20] For examples of 2007 commentary see: Anthony Tibbles, "Facing Slavery's Past: The Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 29, no. 2 (2008): 293–303; "Remembering Slave Trade Abolitions: Reflections on 2007 in International Perspective," Special issue, *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 30, no. 2 (2009): 161–388; Laurajane Smith, Geoffrey Cubitt, Ross Wilson and Kalliopi Fouseki, eds., *Presenting Enslavement and Abolition in Museums: Ambiguous Engagements* (London: Routledge, 2011).
[21] Douglas Hamilton, "Representing Slavery in British Museums: The Challenges of 2007," in *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery,* ed. Cora Kaplan and John Oldfield (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 134.
[22] Geoffrey Cubitt, "Museums and Slavery in Britain: The Bicentenary of 1807," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory*, 171.

contact between slavery and the nation's history," and that 2007 events helped "to make slavery visible as part of Britain's historical landscape and as a factor to be reckoned with in the working out of national identity."[23] With Laurajane Smith and Ross Wilson, Cubitt also highlighted that interventions across the country meant that "Britain's involvement with slavery was [no longer] confined to the great port cities."[24] Separately, James Walvin argued that – following decades of historical work – "there was a growing appreciation, among large numbers of people […] that the enslaved Atlantic was central not merely to the Americas or Africa – but to Britain itself."[25]

On the other hand, John Beech contended in 2007 that "what is missing still from UK presentations of slavery heritage is the unequivocal message - the slave trade took place here!"[26] This was a development of his 2001 argument that "the positive direct and indirect economic impacts on broad swathes of white British society" needed to be better remembered, alongside the "negative impacts on the black Caribbean, American and British peoples."[27] Katherine Prior also reflected that "there is a way to go before the transatlantic slave-trade becomes a standard chapter in the public's reading of British history."[28] Despite the mixed conclusions on 2007, I was interested to investigate which statements were more true of interventions in 2018–2019.

After I had completed my research trips, in 2020, John Oldfield and Mary Wills published an article analysing the *Remembering 1807* database of 2007 activity, which argues that

[23] Ibid., 173– 174.
[24] Geoffrey Cubitt, Laurajane Smith and Ross Wilson, "Introduction: Anxiety and Ambiguity in the Representation of Dissonant History," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 10.
[25] James Walvin, "The Slave Trade, Abolition and Public Memory," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Societ*y, Sixth Series, 19 (2009): 147.
[26] John Beech, "A step forwards or a step sideways?: Some personal reflections of how the presentation of slavery has (and hasn't) changed in the last few years," *1807 - The Abolition of Slavery: The abolition of the slave trade* (2007). http://www.history.ac.uk/1807commemorated/exhibitions/museums/step.html.
[27] John G. Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery Heritage in the United Kingdom," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 104.
[28] Katherine Prior, "Commemorating Slavery 2007: A personal view from inside the Museums," *History Workshop Journal* 64 (2007): 201.

interventions did consider the vast profits and wealth generated.[29] However, of the over 300 bicentenary commemorations on the database, the vast majority were temporary.[30] Harewood House and Quarry Bank Mill had temporary displays, that are discussed by Oldfield and Wills, but were not in place during my research. Their article did also highlight that since 2007 "shifting the narrative to Britain's association with the business of slavery" has been developed by projects including the LBS database and the *Global Cotton Connections* project.[31] The former is discussed in the following pages while the work of the latter is analysed within the thesis.

In 2009 researchers at UCL began tracing the money from the 1830s compensation and building the *Legacies of British slave-ownership* (LBS) database that highlights the commercial, cultural, historical, imperial, physical and political legacies of slavery in a freely available online format.[32] The project built on the work of Nick Draper, who published *The Price of Emancipation* (2010) from his PhD thesis.[33] His study of the emancipation compensation records revealed that "large-scale slave-ownership or financial exposure to slavery permeated sections of the Anglican rural gentry class, while small-scale slave-holding was common in a number of urban centres of polite society."[34] Draper was supervised by Catherine Hall, who had previously worked highlighting that with the British empire, British history "has been one of connections across the globe," during

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[29] John Oldfield and Mary Wills, "Remembering 1807: Lessons from the Archives," *History Workshop Journal* 90 (2020): 255–258.
[30] Anti-Slavery Useable Past, "Remembering 1807," n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. http://www.antislavery.ac.uk/solr-search?facet=collection:%22Remembering+1807%22.
[31] Oldfield and Wills, "Remembering 1807," 255–258.
[32] Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/.
[33] Nick Draper, *The Price of Emancipation: Slave-Ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[34] Ibid., 3.

which "everyday lives were infused with an imperial presence."[35] The database their team created highlighted the impact of emancipation on Britain itself, thus bringing enslavement home.

Hall explained that working as a consultant in 2007 clarified "the extent to which Britain's involvement in slavery had been marginalized and forgotten, something that happened 'over there', was not part of 'here.'"[36] Alongside the database, they released the connected study, *Colonial Slavery and the Formation of Victorian Britain* (2014), within which they highlight that "around one in six of the wealthiest non-landed Britons of the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century had been embroiled in the slave-economy."[37] This work has disrupted the perception that, unlike the descendants of the enslaved, "the wealthy descendants of slave-owners […] do not have to constantly carry an explicit relationship to the trade itself."[38] This was intentional as the authors explained that it "appeared critical to us to trace those legacies of slave-ownership in Britain, because they are so largely hidden and yet so real and so formative."[39] Hall has situated the LBS project as part of a "collaborative effort" to "place the slave trade and slavery of the New World properly back into British and European history."[40] Another post-2007 example of this work was the 2013 English Heritage publication on *Slavery and the British Country House.*[41] This thesis furthers this effort, in both England and New England.

[35] Catherine Hall and Sonya Rose, "Introduction: being at home with the Empire," in *At Home with The Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World,* eds. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1–5.
[36] Catherine Hall, "Thinking Reflexively: Opening 'Blind Eyes," *Past & Present* 234, no. 1 (2017): 261.
[37] Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper, Keith McClelland, Katie Donington and Rachel Lang, *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership: Colonial Slavery and the Formation of Victorian Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 48–49.
[38] Raimi Gbadamosi, "Maybe There Was Something to Celebrate," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 222.
[39] Hall et al., *Legacies,* 250.
[40] Catherine Hall, "Gendering Property, Racing Capital," *History Workshop Journal* 78, no. 1 (2014): 24–25.
[41] Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann, eds., *Slavery and the British Country House* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2013).

Additional scholarship from historians, geographers and public memory scholars is drawn out in the subsequent sections. The final work highlighted here, within the explanation of the economic focus, is Graham Dann and A.V. Seaton's *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism* (2001).[42] Written before the bicentenary, A.V. Seaton made two statements of particular interest. Firstly, that "economic history is difficult to animate […] since it operates back-stage" and secondly that there were "scant traces" of slavery away from plantations.[43] On the first argument, this thesis acknowledges that "neutralized sanitized histories of economics" are problematic and it critiques over-simplified tools employed at heritage sites, such as triangular trade diagrams and excessive use of text.[44] However, I argue that EAC can be better animated and that its difficulty lies instead in attempting to quantify the collective impact of EAC on either England or New England.

The animation of EAC also rests, in part, on challenging the idea that there are few traces of slavery in England or New England. Seaton made the claim that slavery was a "phantom industry that leaves scant traces" amongst a section on the "problem of physical evidence."[45] In a 2012 volume, Cubitt again echoed the claim that there is a "relative absence" of sites of memory for slavery in regions which lack large scale plantations.[46] However, this thesis demonstrates that, in both England and New England: changing the focus of vision from sites of enslavement to sites of enslavement-associated commerce reveals a multitude of sites of memory of transatlantic slavery. Chapter 2 outlines the case studies in depth, but I found 48 interventions acknowledging EAC, and those interpreted sites represent just a fraction of potential sites of memory. The wealth

[42] Graham M.S. Dann and A.V. Seaton, eds., *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
[43] A.V. Seaton, "Sources of Slavery – Destinations of Slavery: The Silences and Disclosures of Slavery Heritage in the UK and US," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 116–117.
[44] Jessica Moody, *The Persistence of Memory: Remembering Slavery in Liverpool, 'Slaving Capital of the World'* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020), 256.
[45] Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 116–117.
[46] Cubitt, "Museums and Slavery," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory*, 161.

of traces unearthed meant the thesis could have focused on England alone. However, from the outset, my research looked to undertake a transnational analysis. The following section outlines why New England was selected.

## A transnational comparison between England and New England

A transatlantic, transnational comparison has been central from the beginning of this project, and illuminates that since the 1990s, the struggles around commemoration have been a "genuinely transnational phenomenon."[47] It also follows the lead of Ana Lucia Araujo who argues that "only a transnational approach, combining history and memory, can consider the complexities of an inhuman system that interconnected three continents for more than three hundred years."[48] A transnational comparison also facilitates more complex reflections on what Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge termed the "scales of heritage" which are explored in depth in Chapter 4.[49] Despite the transnational similarities drawn out in this thesis, the research found that global links were rarely acknowledged within interventions, reflecting the continued domination of national narratives despite "the adjustment of traditional notions of heritage."[50] The particular transnational comparison – of England and New England – emerged from scoping histories and sites across the Atlantic and selecting two regions with several comparable connections.

[47] Douglas Hamilton, Kate Hodgson and Joel Quirk, "Introduction: Slavery, Memory and Identity: National Representations and Global Legacies," in *Slavery, Memory and Identity: National Representations and Global Legacies*, eds. Douglas Hamilton, Kate Hodgson and Joel Quirk (London: Routledge, 2012), 1–2.
[48] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Reparations for Slavery and the Slave Trade: A Transnational and Comparative History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 6.
[49] Brian Graham, G. J. Ashworth and J.E. Tunbridge, *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy* (London: Arnold, 2000), 183–184.
[50] B.J. Graham, G.J. Ashworth and J.E. Tunbridge, "Decennial reflections on a Geography of Heritage (2000)," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 19, no. 4 (2013): 369.

Both regions are part of larger nation-states and therefore, the comparison is technically transregional, but they sit within national narratives and therefore this thesis views them as transnational. More complicatedly, England is recognised as a country but not as a nation-state member of the United Nations, as it is part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UK). The UK is complex and home to diverse identities and mythological collective histories, and thus I have focused on sites within England solely. Regarding work on slavery in the other countries of the UK, Chris Evans and Marian Gwyn have written on slavery's links to Wales.[51] Considerations of Scottish memory of slavery can also be found within the work of Michael Morris.[52] However, the separation in the UK is not neat as this thesis does use "Britain" and "British" while focusing on England. This reflects that the English "found their identity as constructors of Great Britain, creators of the British Empire."[53] This imperial identity is returned to with discussion of the above geographic scales of heritage.

To complement the analysis of English sites, I selected New England for numerous historic and contemporary reasons, which complemented the focus on the economic impact of enslavement. Until 1776 it had a shared history with England during the period of the establishment of transatlantic slavery, with "New England" being a used term from 1616.[54] Today New England consists of six US states – Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont – covering slightly more land mass than England, but with a smaller population. The states are commonly understood as presenting a broadly cohesive unit, and the

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[51] Chris Evans, *Slave Wales: The Welsh and Atlantic Slavery, 1660-1850* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010); Marian Gwyn, "Wales and the memorialisation of slavery in 2007," *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* 9, no. 3 (2012): 299–318.
[52] Michael Morris, *Scotland and the Caribbean, c. 1740–1833* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
[53] Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), ix.
[54] John Smith, *A Description of New England* (London: 1616), quoted in Joseph A. Conforti, *Imagining New England: Explorations of Regional Identity from the Pilgrims to the Mid-Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 14.

phrase "New England" is still used. New England is an example that – as Joseph Conforti observes – "regions are not only concrete geographic domains but also conceptual places."[55] While I originally considered sites across the wider Northern USA, New England was selected as a coherent region of comparable size to England.

Another important historic similarity is that these regions lacked the large-scale plantation slavery of the US South or Caribbean and are not imagined as lands of enslavement. Yet, even following emancipation laws, in the first US census in 1790, 3,763 of the nearly 700,000 enslaved Africans in the United States were in New England.[56] As gradual emancipation took effect, fewer enslaved people were listed on each census thereafter, though small numbers remained until 1840. The number of people enslaved in England is more unclear, but in 1772 Granville Sharp estimated there to be around 15,000 black servants.[57] Whether they were enslaved or free is largely unknown, but by putting debates around legal technicalities over the existence of chattel slavery in England to one side, we can accept that "there were individuals who were regarded by their masters as slaves."[58] Many of these, as James Walvin highlights, were brought back from the colonies.[59] In recent years the *Runaway Slaves in Eighteenth-Century Britain* project has created a database of over eight hundred newspaper advertisements seeking escaped enslaved people, further challenging the false perception there was no historical enslaved black presence in

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[55] Conforti, *Imagining New England,* 1.
[56] W.S. Rossiter, "XIV: Statistics of Slaves," in *A Century of Population Growth: From the first Census of the United States to the twelfth, 1790-1900* (1909), 133. https://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennial/documents/00165897ch14.pdf.
[57] Kathleen Chater, *Untold Histories: Black People in England and Wales during the Period of the British Slave Trade, c.1660-1807* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 25.
[58] Ibid., 95.
[59] James Walvin, *Black Ivory: Slavery in the British Empire,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 11.

Britain.[60] However, the numbers of locally enslaved people was small compared to the plantation colonies.

Two other important historic similarities are that the regions were significantly involved in the slave trade, and that they developed early cotton textile industries that relied on plantation labour. The *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade* (TAST) database has records of over 30,000 slaving voyages. While the trade was begun by Spanish and Portuguese traders, over 10,000 of the total slaving voyages – carrying over three million enslaved human beings – began in England.[61] In comparison, only some 1,700 slaving voyages originated in North America, but with over 1,000 of those starting from New England. Rhode Island alone was responsible for over 940 of those voyages, and consequently "Rhode Island's distinction lay not in slavery but in the leading role that the colony and state played in the transatlantic slave trade."[62] While dwarfed by England's figures, the region was disproportionately involved in the slave trade from the United States.

As well as these historical similarities, contemporary England and New England have small Black populations, in part because of the low numbers of locally enslaved people. On the 2011 census, 86 percent of people in England, and Wales, were White, while only 3.3 percent of the population were Black.[63] Nationally across the USA roughly 13 percent of the population are Black. However, New England has a smaller proportional Black community, with only Connecticut having a Black population of more than 10 percent, and the figure being less than 2 percent in Maine,

[60] The database can be viewed online (https://www.runaways.gla.ac.uk/).
[61] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database.
[62] Brown University, *Slavery and Justice,* 10.
[63] UK Government, "Population of England and Wales," (2011), Last modified 7 August 2020, https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/population-of-england-and-wales/latest.

New Hampshire and Vermont. In comparison the former slave-holding southern states have Black populations of between 20 and 40 percent.[64]

To summarise, England and New England provide an interesting transnational comparison because they are wealthy, predominantly White areas that profited from slavery but largely at a distance from enslavement itself. Ana Lucia Araujo's recent publications have included some analysis of sites in both regions, and these are discussed further later; however, to my knowledge, no other study has analysed sites solely in England and New England.[65] This thesis draws out many similarities, but also highlights differences, such as the exploration of the locally enslaved people in New England and narratives that centre on the different commodities of sugar and cotton. Through my research I realised they were similar in another way: they had both buried the history and legacies of slavery beneath an abolitionist narrative in what I term a "defenders of liberty heritage narrative" (DOLHN). Before exploring that frame, and other concepts from memory studies, the following section outlines the economic history which has been buried, which is referred to as "enslavement-associated commerce" (EAC).

## Defining "enslavement-associated commerce" (EAC)

The study of historical transatlantic African chattel slavery has produced a wealth of academic material that this thesis builds upon in the analysis of heritage interventions. This section provides a brief outline of key historical literature and explains my use of the phrase

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[64] United States Census Bureau, "Black or African American alone," Quick Facts, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/RHI225219. State specific data provided by searching through the available map function.
[65] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory: Engaging the Past* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020); Ana Lucia Araujo, *Museums and Atlantic Slavery* (London: Routledge, 2021).

enslavement-associated commerce (EAC), which was coined in this research to reflect the expansive economic connections to enslavement. Details of EAC are further drawn out from the interventions, particularly in Chapter 4. As Jim Downs notes, it is "difficult to work towards public displays and monuments of slavery since historians of slavery continually debate the causes of slavery, its effects, its main actors and events."[66] From those debates this section draws out two particular points: firstly, that EAC contributed to the development of capitalism, wealth and the built environment in England and New England, and secondly, that EAC did not end when slavery was abolished in either region.

The underpinning historical foundation of this thesis is that race-based enslaved labour continued for centuries because the transportation of human beings, for enslaved labour, was perceived as being financially worthwhile for numerous stakeholders, across an interwoven global economy. From this foundation I analysed the narratives presented at heritage sites to consider whether interventions highlight that EAC impacted England and New England significantly, and that therefore it is a relevant part of the heritage narrative. I found that when considered collectively these interventions can be argued to do so, but the historical complexities of EAC are largely understated at individual sites, thus understating the importance of enslaved labour.

In total it is estimated that over twelve million enslaved Africans were trafficked across the Atlantic in slaving ships, from the early 1500s through to the 1860s.[67] In the Americas they cultivated crops, including tobacco, sugar and cotton, which are further explored in Chapter 4. The lived experience of enslaved Africans is not the focus of this thesis, but they are central to the wider EAC narrative which includes, but also expands beyond, the slaving ships and the

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[66] Jim Downs, "Picturing Slavery: The Perils and Promise of Representations of Slavery in the United States, the Bahamas and England," in *Slavery, Memory and Identity: National Representations and Global Legacies*, eds. Douglas Hamilton, Kate Hodgson and Joel Quirk (London: Routledge, 2012), 78.
[67] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.

plantations, to which they were transported. EAC describes a web of economic involvement that generated vast wealth through commerce associated with transatlantic enslaved labour. As Seaton writes, it was "not just a limited circuit of cruel exploitation, but a widely dispersed network of interlocking economic, social and cultural relationships."[68] The focus of this thesis is the economic interconnections.

In attempts to encompass this wider involvement scholars have used various phrases including terms that neglect wider global connections by referring to a transatlantic, or Atlantic, economy. Others more vaguely refer to "the Slavery Business."[69] Similarly, in her book on the northern US state of Rhode Island, Christy Clark-Pujara uses the term the "business of slavery," which she defines as "all economic activity that was directly related to the maintenance of slaveholding in the Americas."[70] In earlier work on New England, Ronald Bailey used the "slave(ry) trade" to encompass "the slave trade and slavery-related commerce."[71] Whilst these phrases allude to the fact that transatlantic slavery was central to wider commerce, this thesis uses the term enslavement-associated commerce. My phrasing consciously uses "enslavement" rather than slavery to linguistically highlight that at the centre of this narrative were enslaved human beings, who have been "un-visibilised," and enslavers who practiced and profited from enslavement. The term "associated commerce" is intended to be expansive to cover the many direct and indirect economic connections, as well as allowing for the inclusion of wider neglected geographies beyond the Atlantic, including Asia. It encompasses not only trades in enslaved human beings, but

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[68] Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 111.
[69] John Charlton, *Hidden Chains: The Slavery Business and North East England 1600-1865* (Newcastle: Tyne Bridge Publishing, 2008); Catherine Hall, "The Slavery Business and the Making of "Race" in Britain and the Caribbean," in "Atlantic Slavery and the Making of the Modern World," eds. Ibrahima Thiaw and Deborah L. Mack, supplement, *Current Anthropology* 61, no. S22 (2020): S172–S182.
[70] Christy Clark-Pujara, *Dark Work: The Business of Slavery in Rhode Island* (New York: New York University Press, 2016), 2.
[71] Ronald Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade and the Development of Capitalism in the United States: The Textile Industry in New England," *Social Science History* 14, no. 3 (1990): 373–414.

various further connected trades which supplied goods and services to plantations or for barter for enslaved Africans, as well as feeding domestic and industrial demand for goods cultivated by enslaved labourers.

In comparison to the literature on British involvement in slavery there are fewer studies of New England. However, the above work of Clark-Pujara and Bailey reveals a "renaissance" – as Jared Ross Hardesty phrases it – of scholars building on previous work exploring EAC in New England.[72] In 1928 Charles W. Taussig discussed a triangular slave trade in *Rum, Romance and Rebellion,* before Lorenzo Johnston Greene drew attention to the locally enslaved population in his 1942 book.[73] The triangular trade – a concept that will be critiqued in Chapter 4 – received further attention following the Civil Rights movement.[74] Yet, Bailey's 1990 article, "The Slave(ry) Trade and the Development of Capitalism in the United States," highlighted that there was still a belief that "only the South benefited directly and substantially from slavery," which he attempted to challenge.[75] Shortly after, Joanne Pope Melish published *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and Race in New England* (1998).[76] Since then, the 2010s saw numerous publications that highlighted slavery in New England, as well as connections to wider EAC.[77] In her 2014 book,

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[72] Jared Ross Hardesty, "Review: New Histories of New England Slavery," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 74, no. 3 (2017): 542–547.
[73] Charles W. Taussig, *Rum, Romance and Rebellion* (London: Jarrolds, 1928) cited in B.W. Higman, *Writing West Indian Histories* (London: Macmillan Education, 1999), 188; Lorenzo Johnston Greene, *The Negro in Colonial New England, 1620–1776* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942).
[74] Gilman M. Ostrander, "The Making of the Triangular Trade Myth," *William and Mary Quarterly* 30, no. 4 (1973): 635–644; Clifford Lindsey Alderman, *Rum, Slaves and Molasses: The Story of New England's Triangular Trade* (Folkestone: Bailey Brothers and Swiften, 1974); Jay Coughtry, *The Notorious Triangle: Rhode Island and the African Slave Trade 1700–1807* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1981).
[75] Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 387.
[76] Joanne Pope Melish, *Disowning Slavery: Gradual Emancipation and Race in New England, 1780-1860* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).
[77] Cynthia Mestad Johnson, *James DeWolf and the Rhode Island Slave Trade* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014); Margaret Ellen Newell, *Brethren by Nature: New England Indians, Colonists, and the Origins of American Slavery* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015); Clark-Pujara, *Dark Work*; Wendy Warren, *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America* (New York: Liveright, 2016); Jared Ross Hardesty, *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2019).

Cynthia Mestad Johnson argues that the "true similarities" between the northern and southern USA "become apparent through the scrutiny of economics" as both "benefitted financially from the slave trade at the expense of the African race."[78] This thesis focuses on how this scrutiny of economics can be animated at heritage sites.

The recent interest in slavery in New England also mirrors a wider American interest in the connection between slavery and the development of capitalism in the United States, which grew from a 2011 conference on *Slavery's Capitalism*.[79] In the ambitiously titled *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism* Sven Beckert argues that "slavery, colonialism, and forced labour, among other forms of violence, were not aberrations in the history of capitalism, but were at its very core."[80] Of particular interest to this thesis is the role of New England in slavery's capitalism in the United States. Edward Baptist reminds readers that "the Northern economy's industrial sector was built on the backs of enslaved people."[81] In his aforementioned 1990 article, Ronald Bailey had previously highlighted that "one of the great travesties in the study of U.S. history is the suggestion that only the South benefited directly and substantially from slavery."[82]

This American-centred literature emphasises predominantly the nineteenth century cotton textile industry, in which southern plantations supplied raw materials to cotton mills in the North and in Europe. Gene Dattel refers to cotton as "the oil of the nineteenth century."[83] Brian Schoen similarly notes that "like sugar before it and oil after it, cotton's growth, manufacture, and sale

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[78] Johnson, *James DeWolf,* 129.
[79] For example: Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism* (London: Penguin, 2014); Edward E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014); Calvin Schermerhorn*, The Business of Slavery and the Rise of American Capitalism, 1815-1860* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).
[80] Beckert, *Empire of Cotton,* 441.
[81] Baptist, *The Half,* 322.
[82] Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 387.
[83] Gene Dattel, "Cotton, the Oil of the Nineteenth Century," *The International Economy* 24, no. 1 (2010): 60-63.

defined an era in world economic history."[84] Schoen continues that cotton "served as the major commodity trade of the early nineteenth century and observers credited it with sparking (or at least greatly accelerating) industrial revolutions in Western Europe and the United States."[85] Similarly, Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman highlight that "in the decades between the American Revolution and the Civil War, slavery – as a source of the cotton that fed Rhode Island's mills, as a source of wealth that filled New York's banks, as a source of the markets that inspired Massachusetts manufacturers – provided indispensable to national economic development."[86] Bailey similarly wrote that "the commercial and industrial activity related to the slave(ry) trade were essential ingredients in the process of industrialization in the United States, particularly in textiles."[87]

Similar debates around the contribution of slavery to the growth of capitalism and industrialisation have existed in Britain for decades. Foundational to these is Eric Williams' seminal *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), in which Williams argued, nearly eighty years ago, that slaving and enslaved labour underpinned an expansive trade network from which Britain profited.[88] Discussion of this has been well-established by scholars thereafter, and consequently the recent American-focused work has been accused of being oddly disconnected from, and twisting, the work of Williams.[89] Likely in response to the criticism, in a co-edited volume published two years after *Empire of Cotton,* Beckert protests that "Williams's British story is often universalized to assert

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[84] Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric of Union: Cotton, Federal Politics, and the Global Origins of the Civil War* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2009), 2.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, "Introduction. Slavery's Capitalism," in *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development,* eds. Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 26.
[87] Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 374.
[88] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1944).
[89] H. Reuben Neptune, "Throwin' Scholarly Shade: Eric Williams in the New Histories of Capitalism and Slavery," *Journal of the Early Republic* 39, no. 2 (2019): 299–326.

that nothing new remains to be discovered about slavery's centrality to American capitalism."[90] Furthermore, Bailey did connect his work to Williams in a 1994 article, titled "The Other Side of Slavery," which linked the textile industry in New England to that in Britain, as this thesis does.[91]

The importance of slavery to the industrial revolutions, on both sides of the Atlantic, is debated and difficult to quantify. Scholars such as Knick Harley, argue that Britain's industrialisation can be traced to "product markets developed well before the Black Death [in the 1300s]," and raise scepticism over whether the "absence of slavery would have had a devastating impact on the cotton industry of the industrial revolution."[92] Despite such challenges, scholars continue to highlight the connection between enslaved labour and industrialisation. Joseph Inikori is one of the most famous authors on this subject, for those focused on Britain.[93] Inikori notes that the emphasis on slavery's "evilness has tended to crowd out from the literature studies focused on demonstrating the significant contribution of Atlantic slavery to the rise of the capitalist global economy, a far more difficult subject to deal with conceptually and empirically than its morality."[94] This statement alludes to the fundamental issue of EAC: it is incredibly hard to quantify its impact with one coherent financial figure for either England or New England, despite the swelling literature. As John Charlton claims, "it is impossible to quantify the wealth made from colonial slavery and its relationship with the economic and industrial development of Britain, but the sums

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[90] Beckert and Rockman, "Introduction," in Beckert and Rockman, *Slavery's Capitalism,* 4.
[91] Ronald Bailey, "The Other Side of Slavery: Black Labor, Cotton, and Textile Industrialization in Great Britain and the United States," *Agricultural History* 68, no. 2 (1994): 44.
[92] Knick Harley, "British and European Industrialization," in *Cambridge History of Capitalism: Vol I: The Rise of Capitalism: From Ancient Origins to 1848*, eds. Larry Neal and Jeffrey G. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 504; Knick Harley, "Slavery, the British Atlantic Economy and the Industrial Revolution," *The Caribbean and the Atlantic World Economy: Circuits of Trade, Money and Knowledge, 1650-1914,* eds. Adrian Leonard and David Pretel (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 179.
[93] Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[94] Joseph E. Inikori, "Atlantic Slavery and the Rise of the Capitalist Global Economy," in "Atlantic Slavery and the Making of the Modern World," eds. Ibrahima Thiaw and Deborah L. Mack, supplement, *Current Anthropology* 61, no. S22 (2020): S169.

were clearly enormous."[95] The details within this thesis form a more specific picture of widespread involvement and profits but cannot offer a figure.

In 2018 Klas Rönnbäck attempted to calculate the economic importance of the slavery to the British economy during the eighteenth century. He estimated that while the "Triangular Trade" accounted for around 5 percent of British GDP, by the end of the eighteenth century, when he included the wider "American plantation complex" and "dependent industries," EAC accounted for an estimated 11 percent of British GDP. Therefore, as Rönnbäck concludes, "activities of this magnitude can hardly be dismissed as marginal to the British economy at the time."[96] Rönnbäck's article is highly valuable as an attempt to quantify EAC, and it reveals the importance of looking beyond the Triangular Trade. However, it has a temporal window, focuses solely on Britain, and offers only estimates.

In Britain, Williams also sparked a colossal debate about abolition. Within the interventions I analysed, a panel titled "A Question of Economics?" at the Museum of London Docklands engaged directly with debates about the abolition of slavery. The text stated that: "In Britain the abolition of the slave trade and slavery have been celebrated as moral triumphs. However, in the mid-1900s the Caribbean historians CLR James and Eric Williams argued that economic motives were crucial to abolition and that a number of commercial and manufacturing interests viewed slavery as hampering the development of capitalism."[97] The panel did not engage with the challenge to this decline theory by Seymour Drescher in *Econocide* (1977).[98] Why Britain abolished slavery has long been a point of intense historical contention – which Pepijn Brandon describes as

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[95] Charlton, *Hidden Chains,* 156.
[96] Klas Rönnbäck, "On the economic importance of the slave plantation complex to the British economy during the eighteenth century: a value-added approach," *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 2 (2018): 327.
[97] Display, "A Question of Economics," MOLD.
[98] Seymour Drescher, *Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977).

"one of the largest historiographic minefields of the past century" – and this thesis does not look to contribute to these debates.[99] It is however worth noting that James Walvin argued in 2011 that "Drescher's case has established a new orthodoxy," concerning the thriving slave trade before abolition, as is supported by the data on the TAST database.[100]

The debates over the profitability of the slave trade again reflect the wider issue that economic historians look to quantify fragments of EAC. As a result, as Gavin Wright notes, the "parallel debate[s] about slavery and economic development" in Britain and America have had "almost no connection to each other."[101] In their contribution to the debates over the role of slavery in Britain's industrial revolution, David Eltis and Stanley Engerman argue that "while slavery had important long-run economic implications, it did not by itself cause the British Industrial Revolution. It certainly 'helped' that Revolution along, but its role was no greater than that of many other economic activities." However, their focus is on the "West Indian sugar economy" and they present "textiles" as a separate industry.[102] Chapter 4 reveals how this division manifests in heritage interventions, where there are separate focuses on Caribbean sugar or American cotton rather than viewing them as part of one expansive system that relied on enslaved labour.

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[99] Pepijn Brandon, "Rethinking capitalism and slavery: New perspectives from American debates," *TSEG – The Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 12, no. 4 (2015): 122. For further samples of the debates see: David Beck Ryden, *West Indian Slavery and British Abolition, 1783-1807* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Seymour Drescher, "Antislavery Debates: Tides of Historiography in Slavery and Antislavery," *European Review* 19, no. 1 (2011): 131–148.

[100] James Walvin, "Why Did the British Abolish the Slave Trade? Econocide Revisited," *Slavery & Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 32, no. 4 (2011): 585.

[101] Gavin Wright, "Slavery and Anglo-American capitalism revisited," *The Economic History Review* 73, no. 2 (2020): 353.

[102] David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman, "The Importance of Slavery and the Slave Trade to Industrializing Britain," *The Journal of Economic History* 60, no. 1 (2000): 140–141.

Despite the disagreements and disconnections, when viewed collectively, these historical debates reveal a fundamental point for this thesis: EAC made money and that is why enslavement expanded and persisted. Work from both sides of the Atlantic connects to that of Kenneth Pomeranz, who stresses that it was "abolishing the land constraint" – through the colonisation of the Americas and the subsequent introduction of slavery to provide the labour force, which in turn required supplying – that allowed the development of the capitalist modern economies we see today.[103] Focusing on Britain, Michael Taylor observes that by the late seventeenth century, enslavement was part of a legally sanctioned system that saw human suffering intertwined with "complex market economics, of supply and demand."[104] Within that, Padraic Scanlan argues, in *Slave Empire: How Slavery Built Modern Britain* (2020), that Williams was right because he reminded the world that the point in slavery "was not cruelty for its own sake" but because it "made money for slaveholders."[105] This thesis explores how EAC also created wider profits. This highlights that, as well as being race-based, and having a continuing racial legacy, Transatlantic African chattel slavery was different because the suffering of the enslaved was interwoven with the profits that could be made from it. Neglecting this reality does disservice to those who were enslaved.

The second vitally important detail about EAC was that it did not end with abolition in England and New England, and as such we must look temporally beyond those dates. Scanlan notes that "long after the abolition of colonial slavery, Britain was still entangled in global slavery."[106] The same was also true of New England, and the cotton industries in both regions, kept them reliant on supply from plantations until the abolition of slavery in the US South in the

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[103] Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 264–297.
[104] Taylor, *The Interest,* 16.
[105] Padraic X. Scanlan, *Slave Empire: How Slavery Built Modern Britain* (London: Robinson, 2020), 3.
[106] Ibid., 336.

1860s. Before exploring these ongoing connections further, it is worth briefly noting when slavery was abolished in the regions.

In New England, abolition occurred at a state level. In 1771 Vermont enacted immediate emancipation and "within a few years of the Revolution, all New England states took steps to free their slaves."[107] These actions followed petitions from the enslaved and their fight for freedom during the American Revolution.[108] Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island had enacted at least gradual emancipation by 1784, while New Hampshire acted at the end of 1780s.[109] On slave trading, state legislatures were passed before the US government abolished the slave trade in 1808. Taylor cites these actions by Northern US states as one of the reasons why myths around British abolition "could not be further from the truth, not least because it is a simple matter of record that Britain was not the first nation to do so."[110]

In March 1807 the British Parliament passed the Abolition Act which abolished Britain's Transatlantic Slave Trade, three weeks after the decision of the American Congress, though the latter's Act did not come into effect until 1808.[111] The 1833 Emancipation Act came into effect in 1834, introducing apprenticeships for the enslaved while paying £20 million in compensation to the plantation owners for their loss of property. As Taylor notes, "until the banking rescue package of 2008 it remained the largest specific payout in British history."[112] The aforementioned LBS project and database help trace this compensation and reinforces Williams' basic premise in the

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[107] James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, *In Hope of Liberty: Culture, Community and Protest among Northern Free Blacks, 1700-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 73.
[108] Ibid., 59–61.
[109] Ibid., 72–73.
[110] Taylor, *The Interest,* 273–274.
[111] Philip D. Morgan, "Ending the Slave Trade: A Caribbean and Atlantic Context," in *Abolitionism and Imperialism in Britain, Africa and the* Atlantic, ed. Derek R. Peterson (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2010), 102–103.
[112] Taylor, *The Interest,* 275.

finding that "it is clear from the evidence of the financial and commercial legacies that the slave economy was not trivial to Britain."[113]

Unlike other studies that focus on slavery memory, this thesis contains several cotton industry sites as case studies as they were key sites of EAC. While established in the late eighteenth-century, as Chapter 2 outlines, the English cotton industry boomed in the nineteenth century, and after emancipation in 1834. Furthermore, with Slater Mill – the first water-powered cotton spinning mill in North America – opening in 1793, New England's cotton story followed the abolition of slavery in the Northern states. On both sides of the Atlantic, cotton continued involvement with enslavement beyond abolition.

As well as being "the oil of the nineteenth century," Giorgio Riello also refers to cotton as the "fabric that made the modern world" with global connections, that Chapter 4 explores.[114] Amongst those connections was raw cotton supply from plantations, which used enslaved labour, in South America and the Caribbean, and then more famously from the US South. Dale Tomich and Michael Zeuske argue that "the U.S. South provided over 75% of world raw material supply from 1830 until the U.S. Civil War […] fuelling industrialization in Great Britain, the United States, and Europe."[115] As Scanlan notes, "Britain, the antislavery empire, depended on American cotton. […] At the peak of the trade, nearly one out of five Britons depended on the cotton supply for their livelihood."[116] This trade led Williams to conclude that British capitalists' attitudes to slavery were "relative not absolute."[117]

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[113] Hall, "The Slavery Business," Thiaw and Mack, "Atlantic Slavery," S174.
[114] Dattel, "Cotton, the Oil," 60-63; Giorgio Riello, *Cotton: The Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[115] Dale Tomich and Michael Zeuske, "Introduction, the Second Slavery: Mass Slavery, World-Economy, and Comparative Microhistories," *Review* 31, no. 2 (2008): 92.
[116] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 352.
[117] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 169.

Richard Huzzey describes it as "selective blindness" in which the "moral geography" of abolitionists did not expand to the US South.[118] To further reinforce the argument that Britain took a "relative" approach to enslavement, Britain did not abolish slavery in the territories of the East India Company in the 1833 Abolition Act.[119] Additionally, consumer items such as sugar and coffee also continued to be imported from slave societies in Cuba and Brazil, as Williams noted.[120] Tomich and Zeuske have described the mid-nineteenth century period – when the US provided raw cotton, Cuba became the world's leading sugar producer, and Brazil dominated coffee production – as "second slavery."[121] Slavery was abolished in the US South in 1865, in Cuba in 1886 and in Brazil in 1888. This thesis engages with connections to these wider regions but found them largely neglected in the heritage interventions.

EAC situates enslaved labourers from the 1500s to the 1880s in a network of interconnected trade for which they cultivated cotton, sugar and other products. This thesis draws together the work of several historians to highlight that enslavement persisted for centuries because of the profits and wealth it created, as well as racist attitudes. Given the above history, it is reasonable to state that EAC is a relevant part of the heritage narrative of both England and New England. However, the following sections outline how this history has been "un-visibilised."

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[118] Richard Huzzey, "The Moral Geography of British Anti-Slavery Responsibilities," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* Sixth Series, 22 (2012): 133.

[119] Slavery in India was 'delegalised' by the British Government in 1843, but the Act did not emancipate enslaved people. Slave-holding became an illegal offence in India in 1860. For further details see: Andrea Major, *Slavery, Abolitionism and Empire in India, 1771-1843* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012).

[120] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 169.

[121] Tomich and Zeuske, "Introduction," 91–100.

## Palimpsestic spaces and "un-visibilised" spectral traces

As well as being grounded in historical literature, this thesis builds on the work of geographers and memory scholars. My research underscores the power of palimpsestic physical space drawing on the long established "mutually constitutive" link between memory and physical spaces.[122] This section begins by exploring the closely connected foundational concepts that tangible heritage can be very powerful because physical sites of memory can utilise palimpsestic memory to include EAC at existing sites. The second half of this section discusses the concept of haunting and spectral traces before closing with discussion of "un-visibility."

The primary sources in this thesis are physical sites where interpretive interventions have taken place. The exact details are laid out in Chapter 2. I am conscious that within heritage studies, "heritage" is understood as encompassing more than tangible heritage sites, which are preserved and framed through wider intangible discourse.[123] However, as Callaghan argues, the traditional "inherent tangibility of heritage" can be harnessed to reimagine "the heritage narratives that are told through these 'things'."[124] Accepting that – as Graham et al. highlight – "heritage is inherently a spatial phenomenon," this thesis focuses on the "mnemonic power of space" that has been developed since Edward Soja's work on the "socio-spatial dialectic."[125] Spatiality is particularly

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[122] Owen J. Dwyer and Derek H. Alderman, "Memorial landscapes: Analytic questions and metaphors," *GeoJournal* 73, no. 3 (2008): 165.
[123] For discussion of intangible heritage see: Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006); Graham et al., "Decennial reflections," 367.
[124] David Ian Callaghan, "'That's not who I was the last time I was here.' A diverse heritage and England's heritage: mutual partners or mutually exclusive?" (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2015), 21.
[125] Graham et al., *A Geography of Heritage,* 256; Monica Juneja, "Architectural Memory between Representation and Practice: Rethinking Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire*," in *Memory, History, and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. Indra Sengupta (London: German Historical Institute London, 2009), 19–20; Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 76–93.

central to Chapter 3, which identifies that John Beech's concept of "maritimisation" is also applicable to New England.[126]

The case studies are not just physical sites, but sites of memory. Pierre Nora famously introduced the term *lieux de mémoire* – which has been translated to sites or realms of memory – in the late twentieth century.[127] While sites of memory do not always need to be physical, they often are. This thesis demonstrates that while there may be a "relative absence […] of obvious *lieux de mémoire*" of slavery, in England and New England, EAC has left numerous traces.[128] Altering the focus of vision towards sites of enslavement-associated commerce, rather than enslavement itself, reveals sites of EAC memory to be widespread.

These sites of memory are also palimpsestic and have the potential to host palimpsestic memories. As Michel de Certeau wrote, in the 1980s, "place is a palimpsest."[129] Palimpsests are altered objects which still contain visible traces of its previous state. In their volume *Traces and Memories of Slavery in the Atlantic World* (2020), Lawrence Aje and Nicolas Gachon identify palimpsestic memory as a key concept in the emergence of memory studies.[130] Max Silverman developed the concept of "palimpsestic memory" from Freud's "mystic writing pad."[131] Silverman explains that within palimpsestic memory "one layer of traces can be seen through, and is

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[126] Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 103.
[127] Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past,* ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996–98). Nora originally published *Lieux de mémoire* in seven volumes in French (1984–92).
[128] Cubitt, "Museums and Slavery," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory*, 161.
[129] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* Translated by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 202.
[130] Lawrence Aje and Nicolas Gachon, "Introduction," in *Traces and Memories of Slavery in the Atlantic World,* eds. Lawrence Aje and Nicolas Gachon (New York: Routledge, 2020), 1.
[131] Max Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory: The Holocaust and Colonialism in French and Francophone Fiction and Film* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013). He built on: Sigmund Freud, "A Note upon the "Mystic Writing Pad" (1925)" in *General Psychological Theory* (1963).

transformed by, another."[132] Connectedly, Jessica Moody writes about the "layering" of myths and places within the context of slavery memory in Liverpool.[133] It should be noted that, the UK government policy of "retain and explain" inherently speaks to the palimpsestic nature of the built heritage which is explored in this thesis. However, this research is not intended to support claims that nothing should ever be removed, but rather that seemingly irrelevant objects can be used to illuminate the shadow of EAC.

Drawing together these concepts, this thesis focuses on physical sites of memory to emphasise that "the modern world is an extraordinary palimpsest" in which "Atlantic slavery has imprinted deep scars in landscapes."[134] This thesis refers to these scars as spectral traces, which can be made visible by adding a palimpsestic layer within interventions. This terminology speaks to previous literature on spectrality and haunting within memory studies. De Certeau wrote that "there is no place that is not haunted by many different spirits hidden there in silence."[135] In *The New Berlin* (2005), Karen Till writes that sites of memory "give a shape to felt absences […] that haunt contemporary society."[136] Till also elaborates that those places are "haunted by past structures of meaning and material presences from other times and lives," echoing the concept of palimpsestic memory.[137] The idea of haunting has developed to use the phraseology "spectral" following the publication of Jacques Derrida's *Specters of Marx* (1993).[138] In *Spectral Spaces and*

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[132] Silverman, *Palimpsestic Memory,* 1.
[133] Moody, *The Persistence of Memory,* 219–231.
[134] Ibrahima Thiaw and Deborah L. Mac, "Atlantic Slavery and the Making of the Modern World: Experiences, Representations, and Legacies. An Introduction to Supplement 22," in "Atlantic Slavery and the Making of the Modern World," eds. Ibrahima Thiaw and Deborah L. Mack, supplement, *Current Anthropology* 61, no. S22 (2020): S152.
[135] de Certeau, *The Practice,* 108.
[136] Karen E. Till, *The New Berlin: Memory, Politics, Place* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 9.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: the State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994).

*Hauntings* (2017) Christina Lee situates this work within "a wider cultural interest in 'geographies of absence,'" as did Till.[139] However, as Avery Gordon observed in *Ghostly Matters*, "that which appears to be not there is often a seething presence."[140] Gordon built on the work of Toni Morrison, who argued in 1988 that "invisible things are not necessarily 'not-there.'"[141]

While there are physical sites of memory, the traces of EAC have not been dominant but are instead haunting shadows, because they were "un-visibilised." This thesis highlights interventions which speak to these spectral traces, and challenge this "un-visibility," which is the last term defined in this section. Jim Downs wrote that "invisibility might be the most ubiquitous if haunting artefact of slavery."[142] However, this thesis uses "un-visibility" to reflect that the perceived absence of EAC comes from concealment, and to indicate more strongly the seething presence EAC still has.

The term "un-visible" appears to have first been used in 1981 by Ralph Ellison, in a new introduction to his 1952 novel *Invisible Man*, which explored the African American experience. He wrote that "despite the bland assertions of sociologists, 'high visibility' actually rendered one un-visible."[143] In *African Diasporic Aesthetic Practice* (2015), Krista Thompson elaborates that "un-visibility describes the state of not being seen or not being recognized, as well as the 'moral blindness' toward the 'predicament of blacks.'"[144] While this thesis does not focus on the racial

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[139] Christina Lee, "Introduction: Locating Spectres," in *Spectral Spaces and Hauntings: the Affects of Absence,* ed. Christina Lee (New York: Routledge, 2017), 5.
[140] Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 8.
[141] Toni Morrison, "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature" (lecture, University of Michigan, 7 October 1988), 136, https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_documents/a-to-z/m/morrison90.pdf.
[142] Downs, "Picturing Slavery," in Hamilton et al.,*Slavery, Memory and Identity,* 87.
[143] Ralph Ellison, "Author's Introduction" (November 1981) in *The Invisible Man* (London: Penguin, 1952/1981), xxxiii.
[144] Krista Thompson, *Shine: The Visual Economy of Light in African Diasporic Aesthetic Practice* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015), 40.

legacy of slavery, it recognises that racial inequalities are central to the ongoing relevance of transatlantic slavery. Following Lubaina Himid's transmutation of invisible to "invisibilised" in a 2003 interview with Alan Rice as a way "to foreground the active nature of Western civilisation's assault on African Atlantic contributions," this thesis characterises enslavement-associated commerce, and the enslaved, as "un-visibilised" in dominant heritage narratives.[145]

This thesis illuminates how "un-visibility" is not binary and narratives can be, and are, partially concealed within interventions. Furthermore, the seething presence of EAC is more visible to some than others. It must be acknowledged that, to quote Moody, communities of people of African-descent "remember all too well because they have to."[146] Reflecting this, Shawn Sobers has commented that, as a Black British man, "slavery and Empire is present" when he visits sites.[147] Kevin Dalton Johnson similarly explains that "myself, and many other black people, do not necessarily need something physical in order to remember, because we live it every day [...] Outside of the black perspective, inside the white community, it's very easy to forget."[148] While EAC has been "un-visibilised" in the dominant heritage narrative, its seething presence is felt more strongly by some – particularly the descendants of the enslaved – than others. While conscious of this, the following section outlines further central literature, which speaks to the "un-visibility" of slavery within public memory.

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[145] Alan Rice, "Tracing slavery and abolition's routes and viewing inside the invisible: the monumental landscape and the African Atlantic," *Atlantic studies: Global Currents* 8, no. 2 (2011): 268.
[146] Moody, *The Persistence of Memory,* 260.
[147] Shawn Sobers, "Colonial Complexity in the British Landscape: An African-centric autoethnography," in *The Routledge Handbook of Memory and Place and Place,* eds. Sarah DeNardi, Hilary Orange, Steven High and Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto (London: Routledge, 2019), 44.
[148] Quoted in: Alan Rice, "Naming the money and unveiling the crime: contemporary British artists and the memorialization of slavery and abolition," *Patterns of Prejudice* 42, no. 3–4 (2007): 331.

## Researching public memory of transatlantic slavery

This thesis contributes to scholarly work which focuses on public memory of transatlantic slavery, of which there has been a growth in recent decades. Many of these use, and develop, concepts and terms that are all used within this work, including visibility, hauntings and spectral traces. The aforementioned LBS project led to the publication of *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin'* (2016). Edited by Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley and Jessica Moody, this study identified further sites and narratives, and speaks to the haunting presence of slavery.[149] In her 2020 book on *Remembering Slavery in Liverpool* Moody notes that there is "a shadowed presence" of slavery.[150] Alan Rice, who focuses on North-West England, also writes of "developing consciousness of the haunting ghost of slavery."[151] In a 2020 chapter, Rice draws attention to what he calls the "ghostly shadow underpinning the city" of Lancaster, because of the vast EAC wealth within the city.[152] As Rice highlights "the ghostly presence of blackness" is "sensed through these investments with money made off the back of black labour."[153] After all, this was "a business whose profits returned, but whose bodies, broken and mutilated, remained elsewhere."[154] The work of Moody and Rice reflects increasing scholarly interest in public history in recent decades. Work noted previously in the discussion of the economic focus – Dann and Seaton's 2001 volume on slavery and contested heritage, the work on the 2007 bicentenary activity, and the LBS project – should also be situated within this field. More

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[149] Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley and Jessica Moody, eds., *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery: Local Nuances of a 'National Sin'* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016).
[150] Moody, *The Persistence of Memory,* 2.
[151] Alan Rice and Joanna Kardux, "Confronting the Ghostly Legacies of Slavery: The Politics of Black Bodies, Embodied Memories and Memorial Landscapes," *Atlantic Studies: Global Currents* 9, no. 3 (2012): 255.
[152] Rice, "Ghostly Presences," in Gerzina, *Britain's Black Past*, 190.
[153] Ibid., 191.
[154] Rice and Kardux, "Confronting the Ghostly Legacies," 249.

broadly, Horton and Horton and Kowalseki Wallace also wrote on public memory of slavery on both sides of the Atlantic in 2006.[155]

Another key scholar within the field of the study of memory of slavery is Ana Lucia Araujo. Reflecting the use of spectrality and visibility within the field, she titled her 2014 book *Shadows of the Slave* Past, in which she dedicated a chapter to "Invisible Sites of Slave Labour" in the US South and Brazil.[156] Her 2020 publication *Slavery in the Age of Memory* is referenced at several points within this thesis.[157] In April 2021, during the final months of this thesis, Araujo's *Museums and Atlantic Slavery* was published. One of the sections focuses on "wealth and refinement" and she critiques the International Slavery Museum, Museum of London Docklands, Georgian House Museum and John Brown House Museum which are also discussed in this thesis.[158] Having examined further sites, the findings of this thesis support Araujo's statement that most sites "were not always successful in conveying the complexities of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade."[159] However, while the findings often agree that existing interventions "were not successful in connecting lavish objects and valuable artworks to the fortune made" from EAC, I challenge any perception that the "limitations of the institutions' existing collections" should be accepted as an excuse not to discuss EAC.[160] As this thesis demonstrates, England and New England are full of spectral traces of EAC that can be drawn forward with effective interventions, and the same palimpsestic object can be used to tell engaging and complex narratives. While building on

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[155] James Oliver Horton and Lois E. Horton, eds., *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).
[156] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Shadows of the Slave Past: Memory, Heritage, and Slavery* (London: Routledge, 2014), 113–145.
[157] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory: Engaging the Past* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).
[158] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Museums and Atlantic Slavery* (London: Routledge, 2021), 14–41.
[159] Ibid., 2.
[160] Ibid., 37, 108.

Araujo's work, this thesis also examines further sites, including those connected to the cotton industry.

In New England, the growing historical literature has similarly been accompanied by more work on public memory, since Brown University published a seminal report on *Slavery and Justice* in 2006.[161] In 2008, a documentary film entitled *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North,* which followed descendants of the infamous Rhode Island slave trading DeWolf family, was released.[162] The group also published a book on *Inheriting the Trade*, and helped establish the *Tracing Center* in 2009 to "create greater awareness" and "inspire acknowledgement, dialogue and active response to this history and its many legacies."[163] Connectedly, in 2015 Kristin Gallas and James DeWolf Perry published another book on *Interpreting Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites,* which foregrounded several North-Eastern heritage sites and is often referenced in this work.[164] Despite the growth of work on making slavery visible in both England and New England, actual sites of memory in both regions have not been analysed in depth together prior to this thesis.

While offering a unique comparative breadth study of England and New England, this thesis builds on existing ideas from the previous literature. Throughout, I support Donington et al.'s statement that the history of transatlantic slavery "is not 'black history.' It is everyone's

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[161] Brown University Steering Committee on Slavery and Justice, *Slavery and Justice* (October 2006). https://www.brown.edu/Research/Slavery_Justice/documents/SlaveryAndJustice.pdf
[162] Katrina Browne, dir., *Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North* (2008). It premiered at the Sundance Film Festival before airing nationally in the USA on PBS.
[163] Thomas Norman DeWolf, *Inheriting the Trade: A Northern Family Confronts Its Legacy as the Largest Slave-Trading Dynasty in U.S.*(Boston: Beacon Press, 2008); Tracing Center, "About," n.d. Accessed 4 May 2021, http://www.tracingcenter.org/about/.
[164] Kristin L. Gallas and James DeWolf Perry, eds., *Interpreting Slavery at Museums and Historic Sites* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

history."[165] Building on the work of Alan Rice and Jessica Moody, Chapter 5 particularly explores the "banality" of involvement in EAC for people in England and New England.[166] The phrase "banality" reminds us that EAC was ordinary, commonplace and legal, for centuries. It also speaks to previous work concerning the widespread "implicit" or "indirect" involvement in slavery, beyond plantation owners and slave traders.[167] Connectedly, this thesis also highlights that not everyone involved profited from EAC. Instead, I employ Michael Rothberg's concepts of "multidirectional memory," and "implicated subjects," when discussing cotton mill workers in Chapter 5.[168] As Barbara Little comments the concept of "'White history' obscures our common bonds of pain," and this thesis illuminates the histories of interracial interconnection.[169]

Donington et al. also identified that Britain underwent an "organised forgetting," or an "un-remembering" of slavery.[170] They highlight that "forgetting, in the context of public memory, however, is not a passive act," reflecting the previous work of David Lowenthal that erasure from history and heritage is "mainly deliberate, purposeful and regulated."[171] The phraseology "un-

[165] Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley and Jessica Moody, "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 2.
[166] Rice, "Naming the money," 330; Jessica Moody and Stephen Small, "Slavery and Public History at the Big House: Remembering and Forgetting at American Plantation Museums and British Country Houses," *Journal of Global Slavery* 4, no. 1 (2019): 55.
[167] "Implicit" was used in: Sheryllynne Haggerty and Susanne Seymour, "Property, power and authority: the implicit and explicit slavery connections of Bolsover Castle and Brodsworth Hall in the 18th century," in Dresser and Hann, *Slavery and the British Country House,* 78–90. "Indirect" was used in: Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 387; Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 104; Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 121.
[168] Michael Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009); Michael Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject: Beyond Victims and Perpetrators* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019).
[169] Barbara J. Little, "Violence, silence and the four truths: towards healing, in U.S.-American historical memory," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 25, no. 7 (2019): 638.
[170] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 10.
[171] Ibid., 9; David Lowenthal, "Preface," in *The Art of Forgetting*, eds. Adrian Forty and Susanne Küchler (Oxford: Berg, 1999), xi.

remembering" also fits with "un-visibility" which is similarly actively created. This thesis frames the "un-remembering" of slavery, as part of the DOLHN.

## Navigating resistance under the "defenders of liberty heritage narrative" (DOLHN)

This final section, in Chapter 1, explains the DOLHN in more depth, and offers it as a frame for understanding resistance to EAC, before stressing the importance of empirical evidence for combatting visitor apathy. British-focused scholars have identified two pillars of "un-remembering": perceived geographical distance from slavery and the abolitionist focus. Firstly, the belief that "it didn't happen here" has allowed for a "distancing of the mind."[172] This is linked to perceived "topographical absence."[173] Secondly, the myth that slavery happened elsewhere has facilitated the noted "persistent submergence" of slavery beneath abolition.[174] As stressed earlier, this thesis challenges the idea that there are scant sites of memory of slavery, by changing the focus of vision from sites of enslavement to sites of EAC. The cotton industry sites, in particular, remind us of the continuation of EAC beyond the dates of abolition, thus further damaging the DOLHN. While this thesis, and the previous work outlined above, disrupts these pillars, they are well established.

This thesis uses "heritage narrative" to refer to a collective narrative reinforced by and reflected in tangible heritage. Conversely, the case studies are tangible segments and manifestations of heritage narratives. The examination of heritage narratives is a subset of wider

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[172] Hall, "Gendering Property," 24–25; Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 10.
[173] Cubitt, "Museums and Slavery," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory*, 161.
[174] Ibid., 162.

narrative analysis.[175] In the 1990s, the term "heritage narrative" was defined by Jeffrey C. Bridger, an American rural sociologist, as being synonymous with "community myths," and similar to "community typifications."[176] Building on his work Alison Alkon says that "heritage narratives are stories about the character of a place and its people."[177] The phrase "heritage narrative" is also commonly used by scholars focused on the memory of slavery.[178]

Heritage narratives are "selective representations of the past" and "never politically neutral."[179] That selection is contested as heritage is "an economic resource" with a "crucial socio-political function," which produces "inextricably political" tangible sites.[180] Heritage narratives are also a "form of constitutive rhetoric" which "create an audience to whom appeals can be made."[181] Consequently, "heritage narratives, which define the identity of a community, can have a profound impact on political decisions."[182] These heritage narratives, alongside similar school education curricula, have been used as tools for cohesive identity formation within what Benedict Anderson famously termed the "imagined communities" of nation-states.[183] Consequently,

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[175] H. Russell Bernard, Amber Wutich and Gery W. Ryan*, Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches*. 2nd ed. (London: SAGE, 2017), 290–291.
[176] Jeffrey C. Bridger, "Community stories and their relevance to planning," *Applied Behavioral Science Review* 5, no. 1 (1997): 79,; Jeffrey C. Bridger, "Community Imagery and the Built Environment," *The Sociological Quarterly* 37, no. 3 (1996): 356.
[177] Alison Hope Alkon, "Place, Stories and Consequences: Heritage Narratives and the Control of Erosion on Lake County, California, Vineyards," *Organization & Environment* 17, no. 2 (2004): 148.
[178] For example see: Rebecca Casbeard, "Slavery Heritage in Bristol: History, memory and forgetting," *Annals of Leisure Research* 13, no. 1–2 (2010): 144; Stefanie Benjamin and Derek Alderman, "Performing a different narrative: museum theater and the memory-work of producing and managing slavery heritage at southern plantation museums," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 24, no. 3 (2018): 271–272.
[179] Bridger, "Community Imagery," 355–356. For more on the selectivity of heritage see: Graham M.S. Dann and A.V. Seaton, "Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 26.
[180] Graham et al., *A Geography of Heritage,* 17; Fiona Cameron, "Moral lessons and reforming agendas: history museums, science museums, contentious topics and contemporary societies," in *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed,* eds. Simon J. Knell, Suzanne Macleod and Sheila Watson (London: Routledge, 2007), 333.
[181] Bridger, "Community Imagery," 355.
[182] Bernard et al.*, Analyzing Qualitative Data,* 291.
[183] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

challenging them poses the risk of disrupting social cohesion. Roshi Naidoo argues that during 2007, "the notion of slavery as a basic component shaping these islands' history and national culture had to be contained."[184] This was because, as Donington et al. note, slavery is seen as threatening the "fragile bonds that give meaning to a unified and unifying vision of 'Britishness'."[185] The DOLHN is the central aspect of that notion of Britishness that slavery disrupts, but this transnational research discovered it was not unique to England, as it was also evident in New England. As interventions on both sides of the Atlantic must navigate very similar narratives, it further reinforces the validity of international co-operation.

The DOLHN, which is visible in both England and New England, co-exists with other different heritage narratives and is constructed from forgetting certain difficult histories while celebrating others, the most obvious of which is the Allied defeat of Nazi Germany. Amongst the narratives that are buried for the DOLHN to be cohesive is EAC, both in the sense of the contribution of slavery before abolition and continued enslavement-associated trade after abolition. The DOLHN is not new in either region, and rather was established for centuries, before being challenged in recent decades.

The mythology of a virtuous British commitment to liberty has been established since the early 1800s and led to the projection of "imperial benevolence and paternalistic philanthropy."[186] After abolition, "the nation indulged itself in a feast of self-congratulations" in which, until the late twentieth century, only abolition – and not slavery – was discussed in British school classrooms

[184] Roshi Naidoo, "High Anxiety: 2007 and Institutional Neuroses," in in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 53.
[185] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 2.
[186] Marcus Wood, *The Horrible Gift of Freedom: Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 94. For more on British liberty mythology see: Joanna de Groot, *Empire and History Writing in Britain c.1750-2012* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 67–85.

and museums.[187] For nearly two centuries, British abolitionism "consistently overshadowed her lengthy previous record as a dominant slaving nation."[188] The persistence of this belief is highlighted by the need for publications like Michael Taylor's *The Interest: How the British Establishment Resisted the Abolition of Slavery* (2020), which observes that "abolition has figured as the triumph of British justice and morality" while directly challenging the mythology of abolition.[189] Padraic Scanlan's *Slave Empire: How Slavery Built Modern Britain* (2020) also highlights how Britain became the "self-appointed avenger of freedom and liberalism throughout the world" in which "antislavery politics were taken as proof that Britain *deserved* to have an empire."[190] This occurred concurrently with erasing the ways in which slavery shaped England, as well as ongoing EAC – including the importation of cotton – and building a larger empire. This celebration of abolition, and liberty, was also echoed in New England.

In the eighteenth-century, New Englanders were at the "forefront of the Revolutionary ''Defence'' of liberty" which led to American independence from Britain.[191] There is an undeniable irony in the DOLHN of New England being centred around breaking free of the British empire, which was similarly promoting itself as a defender of liberty. Joseph Conforti highlights how in the early 1800s, New Englanders began retrospectively remembering the "pilgrims" of the 1600s with a "new, politicized meaning" in which they were "imagined as the pioneers of civil and religious liberty in America."[192] At the same time, they went through a process of "disowning slavery" during the period of gradual emancipation, as Joanne Pope Melish explored in her 1998

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[187] Jack Gratus, *The Great White Lie: Slavery, Emancipation and Changing Racial Attitudes* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1973), 125–126; Wood, *The Horrible Gift,* 91; Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 10.
[188] Cubitt, "Museums and Slavery," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory*, 162.
[189] Taylor, *The Interest,* xiii.
[190] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 335, 372.
[191] Conforti, *Imagining New England,* 112.
[192] Ibid., 180.

publication.[193] Araujo similarly notes that "nineteenth century, history books, textbooks, documentary films, and popular narratives traditionally described the region as the realm of abolitionists."[194] Through this, New England's "earliest relationship to slavery was quickly forgotten."[195] The Civil War of the 1860s further reinforced the DOLHN, with Confronti highlighting that New England's free, and white, "regional perception […] rested on the counterimage of an indulgent, enslaved, Africanized South."[196] This mythology, argues Cynthia Mestad Johnson, "absolved the North from any responsibility for slavery."[197] Consequently, for centuries New Englanders enjoyed a sense of moral superiority over the South.[198]

The sense of pride and superiority, grounded in the DOLHN, is central to understanding resistance. Slavery was known to be jarring to white visitors' years before the debates of 2020. This is because EAC – including the wealth created and its longevity – creates cognitive dissonance with the DOLHN. Leon Festinger developed the theory of cognitive dissonance in the 1950s to describe when humans try to "actively reduce dissonant information" because it causes "psychological discomfort."[199] Building on this, in their volume on *Interpreting Slavery*, Gallas and DeWolf Perry highlighted what they term the "Learning Crisis" when visitors are confronted with difficult slavery history, which centres on "conflicting narratives at the core of identity."[200] As the DOLHN celebrates abolition, in both England and New England, EAC is not just uncomfortable because of the cruelty and violence, but because it challenges positive identities in these regions.

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[193] Melish, *Disowning Slavery.*
[194] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 32.
[195] Warren, *New England Bound,* 250.
[196] Conforti, *Imagining New England,* 200.
[197] Johnson, *James DeWolf,* 13.
[198] Melish, *Disowning Slavery*, 3; Katherine D. Kane, "Institutional Change at Northern Historic Sites: Telling Slavery's Story in the Land of Abolition," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 47.
[199] Leon Festinger, *The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), 1–3.
[200] Kristin L. Gallas, and James DeWolf Perry, "Comprehensive Content and Contested Historical Narratives," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 10–12.

Visitors are also known to be resistant because of apathy where "the learner might imagine that the history is not relevant to him or her."[201] The heritage interpretation case study analysis of this thesis reveals a problematic widespread focus on individuals, in both England and New England, which promotes a "public understanding" of "'involvement' in slavery as meaning only the direct buying, selling, or owning of human beings."[202] While easier to tolerate within the DOLHN, Donington et al. note that this focus allows most white visitors to "reject any sense of themselves as implicated subjects."[203] Reflecting this, on her study of visitor reactions to bicentenary exhibits, Laurajane Smith observed that "most white British respondents tended to emotionally insulate or disengage themselves from the exhibitions" and used "strategies that distanced individuals from the exhibition and its content."[204] These observations shaped the research question of whether EAC is made visible and relevant to audiences, and throughout this thesis encourages the use of varied narratives to highlight the widespread importance of enslaved labour.

However, apathy and overt resistance is to be expected, under the DOLHN. Rather than being avoided, this should be navigated. In her *Interpreting Difficult History at Museums and Historic Sites* (2016), Julia Rose offers a valuable guide to emotional navigation. Rose suggests a "commemorative museum pedagogy" (CMP), which features "The 5Rs: Reception, Resistance, Repetition, Reflection, Reconsideration."[205] Within this resistance is viewed as natural and framed as something which can lead to reflection and reconsideration. Rose is clear that resistance offers

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[201] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 42.
[202] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 65.
[203] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 1.
[204] Laurajane Smith, "'Man's inhumanity to man' and other platitudes of avoidance and misrecognition: an analysis of visitor responses to exhibitions marking the 1807 bicentenary," *Museum and Society* 8, no. 3 (2010): 197–198.
[205] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 78–93.

"great potential to be learning moments."[206] Similarly Little comments that "where there is conflict – where the counter-spheres are making themselves heard – there is opportunity."[207]

One aspect of navigating resistance is offering complex narratives, for the audiences who are willing to engage, that can substantiate the claim that EAC is relevant to them, thus dismantling apathy. To promote this, this thesis builds a collection of historical evidence, or what Rose calls the "Real."[208] This is part of the "CMP toolbox," along with "The Face" and "Narratives." The "Real" is the "rich empirical evidence", or the "content that has the potential to provide validation for the history being recalled." Smith has also called for the development of "resources" that "may help to challenge the strategies of disengagement and avoidance."[209] The focus on historical details rather than emotions is not intended to argue that interpreters should present the historical details as "these are the facts."[210] This thesis does however offer an empirical resource on the importance of EAC, with the details drawn from existing sites of intervention and the critique built from interweaving historical arguments, which can help inform emotionally sensitive interpretations.

## Conclusion

This chapter has introduced key decisions, concepts and literatures for this thesis. After introducing my central research question, I outlined arguments for why sites should challenge the "un-visibility" of EAC. The following sections then explained the focus on economics and the transnational comparison between England and New England. The second half of the chapter has

[206] Ibid., 84.
[207] Little, "Violence," 637.
[208] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 108–116.
[209] Smith, "'Man's inhumanity to man,'" 209.
[210] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 79.

provided definitions and grounded the work in existing scholarship from history, geography and memory studies. I build on previous work and terms to discuss "un-visibilised" spectral traces and palimpsestic spaces, as well as defining my own terms: "enslavement-associated commerce" (EAC) and the "defenders of liberty heritage narrative" (DOLHN). The following analysis focuses on interventions which challenged the "un-visibility" of EAC between 2018 and 2019. The details serve as evidence of the "Real" which substantiates the relevance of EAC to both England and New England. Before the in-depth analysis, Chapter 2 outlines the case studies for this thesis.

# Chapter 2: Methodology and case studies

## Introduction

This chapter on methodology and case studies has four core sections. The first section introduces my methodology and identifies challenges with it. The second section guides the reader through my research trips and case studies. The third section situates the 48 case study sites I centre within surrounding "un-visibility" as well as the ongoing changing environment, as public memory of slavery is fluid. The fourth section discusses why the interventions which challenge "un-visibility" were created, within the limitations of the methodology which focuses on what is visible to the majority of visitors.

## Methodology and challenges

This research involved identifying heritage sites where slavery was acknowledged, undertaking in-depth visits and inter-site comparisons. My research broadly followed the "heritagescape as method," as developed by archaeologist Mary-Catherine Garden.[1] This involved initial "intra site" examinations, with intensive notes and photographs, before "inter site" analysis.[2] The intra site critique included "exhibit analysis" which is also a familiar methodology of qualitative research within museum studies, but is not rigidly codified.[3] It constitutes a sensory survey of available data within a space, which is largely provided visually but may also be provided through audio or other senses. I also expanded the practice of exhibit analysis to sites including

[1] Mary-Catherine Elizabeth Garden, "The Heritagescape: Exploring the Phenomenon of the Heritage Site" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2004), 51; Mary-Catherine E. Garden, "The Heritagescape: Looking at Landscapes of the Past," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 12, no. 5 (2006): 398.
[2] Garden, "The Heritagescape: Exploring," 50.
[3] Patricia Leavy, *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 343–348.

historic houses, cotton mills and cityscape memorials. The following pages discuss my identification of sites, the methodology of my research trips – including what heritage outputs I centred – and the following analysis. It closes by recognising methodological challenges.

The case study sites were overwhelmingly identified through a scoping survey of online content, to select sites which either had well-known links to slavery or where online content suggested discussions of slavery or the slave trade at the sites. During site visits I also explored the surrounding landscape and developed networks that enabled me to expand my case study list. Furthermore, historic houses in England are so numerous, that to make the visits manageable I contacted the two largest managing bodies of publicly open houses: English Heritage and the National Trust.[4] English Heritage directed me to Kenwood House and Marble Hill House, both in Greater London. The National Trust directed me to Dyrham Park near Bristol, Speke Hall near Liverpool and Snowshill Manor in Gloucestershire. This thesis does not claim to be a comprehensive survey of all heritage locations engaging with their connections to slavery. In addition to the sites visited, Whitehaven's Rum Story would likely have been an interesting addition to discussion of trade in slavery reliant produce. Similarly, Longfellow House-Washington's Headquarters National Historic Site, in Massachusetts, may also have been of interest as it was built by a plantation owner John Vassall II and later purchased by the cotton pioneer Nathan Appleton for his son-in-law.[5] While I am conscious there will be other sites, the following critique of 48 interventions enabled me to complete detailed thematic analysis.

[4] (Andrew Hann, English Heritage Properties Historians' Team Leader, email to author, January 10, 2019); (Claire Pascolini-Campbell, National Trust Research Manager, email to author, January 15 2019).
[5] "Vassall-Craigie-Longfellow House," Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/physical/view/1995968217; Peter Temin, "The Industrialisation of New England, 1830-1880," in *Engines of Enterprise: An Economic History of New England,* ed. Peter Temin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), 147.

Stephanie Moser recognises that factors such as location, subject and layout should all be considered when analysing interpretation at sites.[6] This reflects that what is visible – from the words, objects and placement – is curated and "the arrangement of objects creates a syntax similar to the order of words in a sentence."[7] Conscious of this, the material was read as a text, a concept which is borrowed from geographers.[8] Focusing on what was permanently available to most visitors also facilitated the production of broadly replicable and comparable research trips and field notes. At every site, and their surroundings, I spent several hours – and usually a day for the larger sites – taking expansive observational field notes, covering these factors, as well as photographs that could be returned to for later re-assessment, as Garden recommends.[9] These original images support my analysis throughout the following chapters, and were all taken by me.[10]

My research trips attempted to capture what could be seen, heard and felt by any standard visitor on any given day during the 2018–2019 period. For this reason, I focused overwhelmingly on permanent physical interventions, or at least those intended to remain in place for a significant duration, rather than temporary exhibitions, such as those used by many sites in 2007. Within the spaces, I did not deeply examine offerings such as educational programmes, themed gift shops or separate visitor guides that had to be additionally purchased, as not all visitors will engage with them. This thesis also involves minimal engagement with online material, supported by Callaghan's argument that interpretations "cannot influence 'the heritage' if they are restricted

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[6] Stephanie Moser, "THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAIL: Museum Displays and the Creation of Knowledge," *Museum Anthropology* 33, no. 1 (2010): 22-32.
[7] Bettina M. Carbonell, "The syntax of objects and the representation of history: speaking of *Slavery in New York*," *History and Theory* 48, no. 2 (2009): 127.
[8] James S. Duncan, *The City as Text: The Politics of Landscape Interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Owen J. Dwyer and Derek H. Alderman, "Memorial landscapes: Analytic questions and metaphors," *GeoJournal* 73, no. 3 (2008): 169–171.
[9] Garden, "The Heritagescape: Exploring," 56.
[10] They are labelled as PTBA meaning "Photo Taken By Author."

only to ‘cyberspace.’”[11] Connectedly, this is not a study of available potential tours, and I only took guided tours when they were compulsory to visit Slater Mill and certain historic houses in New England. This disrupted my attempts to view material that was the same on any given day, particularly when my presence appeared to impact the tours, as I was ethically bound to answer why I was there. I have noted where I suspect this happened, but largely got the impression that the tours were quite standardised.

Moser also discusses the importance of audience for interventions, and the influence potential visitors have on displays.[12] Four early 2018 site visits were complemented by informative semi-structured interviews with connected professionals; details of these are provided in Appendix 2. However, these privileged access interviews disrupted the focus on what is physically visible to visitors and presented replicability issues. Therefore, while used sparingly, these provided useful early context, particularly on New England. As this thesis did not explore concealed intentions, or the wider offerings of sites, the reflections on the ambitiousness of these interventions are limited to comments on the physical end-products available to visitors. This thesis also frames discussion around engaging resistant, predominantly white, visitors. I am, however, conscious that sites may be intentionally designed as commemorative spaces for the African diaspora and highlighting any wider relevance to white visitors may be of little interest. While this chapter offers brief comments on what is alluded to regarding intent within the interventions, the impact of audiences warrants further research.

As Garden recommends, my research trips were “unashamedly located at the site level.”[13] My work followed Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace’s observation that the “the physical act of moving

[11] Callaghan, “‘That’s not who,” 310.
[12] Moser, "THE DEVIL,” 30.
[13] Garden, “The Heritagescape: Looking,” 399.

from place to place […] echoes the mental act of piecing together the fragments of a narrative that gradually becomes clearer."[14] This connects to psychologist Philip T. Smith's comparison of memory with a "jigsaw puzzle" where "coherent memory can be synthesised from a set of partially coherent memory fragments" when they are felt to authentically fit together.[15] My research trips allowed me to piece together fragmentary details from existing interventions, to further substantiate the argument that EAC is a relevant part of the heritage narrative of England and New England. While this jigsaw formed informally in my mind during the research trips, after the trips ended in October 2019, I examined similarities and differences between the sites in depth. This analysis was complemented with inter-disciplinary secondary reading, as outlined in Chapter 1.

This thesis looks to challenge "un-visibility" but I am aware of critiques of visuality, such as bell hooks' famous work on the "oppositional gaze."[16] Furthermore, in *Blind Memory* Marcus Wood provides a critique specifically of the problematic popular visual imagery of enslaved people.[17] Additionally, this thesis also discusses other sensory devices including sounds and smells. Nevertheless, visibility is a commonly used concept in the field of slavery memory.[18] This reflects that, as Emma Waterton and Steve Watson recognise, "the processes that constitute meaning, that frame, reveal and construct the past that we see around us, are essentially visual. Our

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[14] Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace, *The British Slave Trade and Public Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 57.
[15] Philip T. Smith, "A jigsaw puzzle theory of memory," *Memory* 8, no. 4 (2000): 245–264.
[16] bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 115–131.
[17] Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780-1865* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).
[18] For examples of discussion of visibility of slavery see: Derek H. Alderman and E. Arnold Modlin, "(In)Visibility of the Enslaved Within Online Plantation Tourism Marketing: a Textual Analysis of North Carolina Websites," *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* 25, no. 3–4 (2008): 265–281; Rice, "Tracing slavery," 253–274; Ana Lucia Araujo, ed., *Politics of Memory: Making Slavery Visible in the Public Space* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

connections with the past are largely tangible […] and it is visual culture that lends these objects the means of representation and achievement of meaning."[19]

I am also conscious that the physical interpretation provided at each site is just one element of the "hermeneutical triangle" of memory, as Wulf Kansteiner phrased it.[20] Building on this, Stephen Heathorn comments that "objects do not speak for themselves" because there is a "dialogue between the object itself, its makers, and its consumers."[21] As Tony Schirato and Jen Webb phrase it, "possible readings depend on the content of the text, who reads it and where it is read: in short, its cultural context."[22] Chapter 1 outlines the cultural context of the DOLHN, Chapter 3 discusses where interventions were, and Chapters 4 and 5 focus on content. However, I can only read from one perspective: mine. It must be acknowledged, that my own knowledge, ideology and motivation for visiting these sites influences my reading, which may differ to others. Below I briefly examine my own positionality, and as I am conscious of this, my analysis highlights where the information on EAC is not explicit and tries to avoid excessive conjecture.

This research was undertaken under inter-disciplinary supervision within an American Studies department in an English university, building on my previous studies in history and museum studies. My positionality as a British person is likely reflected throughout, while practically this made accessing English sites easier. All site visits also began with a preliminary

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[19] Emma Waterton and Steve Watson, "Introduction: A Visual Heritage," in *Culture, Heritage and Representation: Perspectives on Visuality and the Past*, eds. Emma Waterton and Steve Watson (London: Routledge, 2010), 2.
[20] Wulf Kansteiner, "Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies," *History and Theory* 41, no. 2 (2002): 180.
[21] Stephen Heathorn, "The Absent Site of Memory: The Kanpur Memorial Well and the 1957 Centenary Commemorations of the Indian 'Mutiny'," in *Memory, History, and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. Indra Sengupta (London: German Historical Institute London, 2009), 76–77.
[22] Tony Schirato and Jen Webb, "Inside/Outside: Ways of Seeing the World," in *Culture, Heritage and Representation: Perspectives on Visuality and the Past*, eds. Emma Waterton and Steve Watson (London: Routledge, 2010), 23.

walking survey to familiarise myself with the surroundings, some of which were physically or symbolically – in the case of sites of power – difficult to access. I was comfortable accessing these as a white middle-class British student, who is descended from generations of working- and middle-class white Britons. Throughout this research I have repeatedly been asked by friends and family what transatlantic slavery has to do with me, or them. To my knowledge, my direct relations were not involved in plantation ownership or slaving voyages, though the wider profits and produce of EAC will have touched their lives. During my PhD, I discovered that the village I grew up in was built around an eighteenth-century cotton mill. More widely, I am an "implicated subject" in the racial legacies of slavery, as I have "structurally" inherited the "cultural capital of whiteness, if not financial capital itself."[23] Access to my case studies was comfortable and easy in part because of this. This thesis' interest in the unawareness and distancing of the white majority, also follows my personal experience of realising this history while studying as an undergraduate in England's fourth largest slaving port, Lancaster, and volunteering in my summers at my local stately home, Harewood House, which was built off plantation profits.

Chapter 3 discusses acceptance within visitor studies that observers do not pay attention to every detail within an intervention, however the analysis in this thesis rests on attempts to capture that detail. To achieve that I remained much longer than other visitors, to the extent it often appeared odd enough for staff to question me. In this sense my research trips were unlike more 'normal' casual visits. Furthermore, despite my efforts, the sites identified were overwhelmingly visited once, and therefore certain details may have been missed. However, if this is the case, given the considerable time spent at each site, this would suggest that the placement of that information is continuing to promote "un-visibility," as Chapter 3 also explores.

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[23] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject,* 67.

Additionally, the visits to London and Liverpool were repeated to mitigate against overlooking material and allow for the refinement of the thesis focus onto the economic impact of slavery. In summary, this thesis followed a methodology of visual analysis of heritage sites on an intra and then inter site level which, despite potential critiques, enabled the development of thematic analysis. The following section outlines the case studies more deeply.

## Introducing the case study sites

My primary data comes from numerous research trips between April 2018 and October 2019. In total I visited over fifty heritage sites of interest. The following section notes a few sites where "un-visibility" persisted, but as I found 48 case study sites with visible interventions challenging this, I chose to centre these in the in-depth analysis in Chapters 3 to 5. In total, I discuss 25 different sites in England and 23 in New England, some of which – such as large museums – host several interventions. Chapter 3 maps their geographic locations which cover 16 different towns or cities in England, and 11 towns or cities in New England. Appendix 1 offers a full table of the 48 case study sites, with details including form and titles. The forms varied from signage and memorials in public space, to brief labels and whole exhibits across various sites including historic houses and cotton mills. Not every detail within larger galleries was relevant to the analysis and sub-locations are noted where relevant. Where more than a few elements of a host site are relevant and analysed, these are marked as "IIF" (Identified in footnotes) in the table, with further details provided in the footnotes. The case studies are divided between England and New England and are sorted alphabetically, firstly by the "town/city" and secondly by "site" so that groupings can be easily identified.

The date I visited each site, in terms of year and month – between April 2018 and October 2019 – is also recorded. For practical reasons, the sites in New England were visited on a research trip in July 2018, while the English sites were visited more disparately over the research period. Consequently, my research trips captured sites at a moment in time within this frame, and thus the analysis is presented in the past tense. To complement the Appendix, the following pages re-trace my steps and briefly discuss the recent creation of several of the interventions.

My research trips began with pilot visits to large English museum exhibits to assess them in relation to the criticisms raised in 2007. In April 2018 I visited the International Slavery Museum (ISM) in Liverpool, and the Museum of London Docklands (MOLD) and National Maritime Museum (NMM) in London. I re-visited these three sites in spring 2019 after I had refined my focus, and all feature heavily in the analysis. The remaining sites were visited once for this research. In April 2018 I visited multiple sites in Bristol, England: the Georgian House Museum, M Shed and areas of the cityscape including the Colston statue. In June 2018 I visited Cromford Mills to inform my comparison to cotton sites in the USA.

In July 2018 I spent three weeks in New England, between Boston and Rhode Island visiting relevant sites. Within Boston I followed the Freedom Trail to visit Faneuil Hall, and in the process found information boards of interest at Granary Burying Ground and King's Chapel. I also visited the Museum of African American History in Boston but did not find references to EAC. Just across the river, and within the Boston Metro Area, I visited Royall House and Slave Quarters and the Harvard Law School Memorial. From Boston I explored further into Massachusetts with visits to Lowell for Boott Cotton Mills and Worcester for Worcester Art Museum. I also ventured north to Portsmouth New Hampshire, where I visited Moffatt-Ladd House and followed a Black Heritage Trail to sites including Strawberry Banke Museum and the Portsmouth African Burying Ground. Of

these sites, the signage within King's Chapel in Boston, the labels at Worcester Art Museum and the exhibit at Boott Cotton Mills proved particularly fruitful for this thesis' analysis.

In Rhode Island, I visited Providence, Bristol and Newport. In Newport, I found little on slavery at the Museum of Newport History, but I was taken by Keith Stokes, a local historian and Vice President of the 1696 Heritage Group, to the public library where the *In Silent Witness* memorial was installed, and further sites of local enslavement, discussed in Chapter 5. After my visit, in August 2018 a sign was unveiled declaring the intention to create that new slave trade memorial in Newport, that I did not see. Separately, from summer 2019 the Rhode Island Slave History Medallions Project installed cityscape interventions across the state to highlight their links to the slave trade, but these were not present during my visit.[24] While visiting Bristol, RI, I found other harbour signage of interest near the historic house Linden Place, which I had gone to visit.

In Providence I visited Stephen Hopkins House, John Brown House Museum and the Brown University Memorial, the latter two of which are of particular interest. Within Providence I also met with Elon Cook of the Center for Reconciliation and had the opportunity to study their temporary panels. Except for these panels, the analysis focuses on permanent interventions. They were included because they were erected as a forerunner for a proposed museum, being developed in Providence, Rhode Island, and because New England lacked a purpose-built slavery museum or large exhibit. From Providence, I travelled to nearby Pawtucket to visit Slater Mill, and to New London, Connecticut to visit Hempsted Houses. While in New London, I visited the Customs House Maritime Museum which had an exhibit on *The Amistad* – the slaving ship which was host to a famous revolt in 1839 – but did not explore EAC.

[24] Details on both these projects can be found online (http://newportmiddlepassage.org/monument/; https://rishm.org/).

Back in England, my next trip was to Newstead Abbey in September 2018. Following a winter of reflection, I completed my primary research between March and October 2019. I returned to Liverpool in March and explored the ISM and its surrounding cityscape. In April, while re-visiting the large London exhibits I explored the *Gilt of Cain* memorial and the space outside the MOLD, including an information board near Hibbert Gate. Within the MOLD, I observed the fascinating temporary exhibit on “Slavery, Culture & Collecting” that was installed for a year from September 2018, but due to its impermanence it is not explored in depth in this thesis.[25] In April 2019 I also visited the Science and Industry Museum and People’s History Museum in central Manchester to view displays connected to cotton history, and the Wilberforce House Museum in Hull which has substantial exhibits on slavery. In June 2019 I discovered a small display of relevance at Lowther Castle in Cumbria.

In July 2019 I re-visited London again, though less fruitfully. Outside the centre, I explored Kenwood House as recommended, though Marble Hill House was closed for renovations. I also visited the National Portrait Gallery, the British Museum and the Bank of England Museum and found very little. Soon after I visited Oxford to see a plaque on the Codrington Library of All Souls College, as well as the National Trust’s recommended sites of Dyrham Park near Bristol, Snowshill Manor in Gloucestershire and Speke Hall near Liverpool, but again found little of use. The last of my July trips was to Lancaster, where I had studied as an undergraduate. I surveyed the exhibitions at the Lancaster Maritime Museum, Lancaster City Museum, and Judges’ Lodgings Museum, as well as re-visiting the *Captured Africans* memorial, which was of particular interest. My primary research concluded in October 2019 with the discovery of displays at Belper North Mill

[25] A record of this exhibit is online (https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/museum-london-docklands/whats-on/exhibitions/slavery-culture-and-collecting).

near Derby, a planned and fruitful trip to Quarry Bank Mill in Cheshire, and finally a visit to Harewood House in Yorkshire, where I previously volunteered.

Appendix 1 contains the date I visited each site of intervention, but it does not record when they were first created, or if they were updated in between. This reflects that while scholars recognise that heritage is a "constantly evolving process of accommodation, adjustment and contestation," most sites betray "little or no trace" of their reinterpretations, and therefore feel "timeless" to visitors.[26] The interventions visible in 2018 and 2019 were created at a specific temporal point, but at most sites it was difficult to establish, without intensive secondary research or interviews, when or why they were established. The limited details provided within the space on why they were created are outlined in a separate section below. Here, while acknowledging this detail is rarely provided for visitors at sites, it is noted that the sites collectively reflect the emergence of diverse sites of memory for transatlantic slavery in the past thirty years.

During the 1990s, "public debates on the memory of slavery and the African colonial past emerged in Europe, Africa, and the Americas."[27] Amidst that climate, Britain's first slavery exhibit opened in 1994 at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool, and there were also exhibits in Bristol and Lancaster in the 1990s.[28] In 2001 Newport, Rhode Island, installed its *In Silent Witness* memorial and in 2005 Lancaster installed its *Captured Africans* memorial. The scholarly importance of the 2007 bicentenary in England to this thesis has already been outlined. Alongside

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[26] Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 126; Juneja, "Architectural Memory," in Sengupta, *Memory, History, and Colonialism,* 19–20.
[27] Ana Lucia Araujo, *Public Memory of Slavery: Victims and Perpetrators in the South Atlantic* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010), 50. For more detail see: Ana Lucia Araujo, *Reparations for Slavery and the Slave Trade: A Transnational and Comparative History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).
[28] For discussion of the 1990s activity see: Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 85–105; Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 107–129; Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 11.

temporary interventions, the bicentenary sparked the creation of several of the permanent large English sites. The ISM opened in Liverpool, Wilberforce House Museum in Hull re-opened, new permanent galleries were installed at the NMM in Greenwich and the MOLD. London's *Gilt of Cain* memorial was unveiled shortly after in 2008, and while M Shed did not open until 2011 it built on previous exhibits.

This thesis also includes several sites that emerged in the 2010s. In New England, the Brown slavery memorial was unveiled in 2014, while the memorial plaque was installed at Harvard Law in 2017 following the "Royall Must Fall" campaign."[29] The Center for Reconciliation in Providence was also only founded in 2015, and Worcester Art Museum installed the labels of interest to this thesis in 2018.[30] Despite this activity, New England has not yet created a museum dedicated to slavery comparable to the ISM, and thus the temporary panels from the Center for Reconciliation are discussed in this thesis.

In England, Oxford University All Souls College commissioned their interpretative plaque on the Codrington library in 2017.[31] The relevant interventions at Cromford Mills and Newstead Abbey were installed between 2016 and 2018.[32] During my visit in April 2019 the Science and Industry Museum in Manchester featured text saying that they "are working to develop how we

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[29] "Martin Puryear Slavery Memorial," Brown University Public Art, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.brown.edu/about/public-art/martin-puryear-slavery-memorial; Liz Mineo, "At Law School, honor for the enslaved," *The Harvard Gazette,* 6 September 2017, https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/09/harvard-law-school-plaque-honors-those-enslaved-by-royall-family/.

[30] Center for Reconciliation Rhode Island, "Our Mission," n.d. Accessed 4 May 2021, https://cfrri.org/our-mission/; Eli Hill, "A museum in New England is adding wall labels next to portraits of individuals who profited from the slave trade," *Artsy,* 12 June 2018, https://www.artsy.net/news/artsy-editorial-museum-new-england-adding-wall-labels-portraits-individuals-profited-slave-trade.

[31] Camilla Turner, "Oxford college commissions slavery plaque amid student pressure over benefactor's colonial links," *The Telegraph*, 20 December 2017, https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/2017/12/20/oxford-college-commissions-slavery-plaque-amid-student-pressure/.

[32] For details see the Legacy Makers website (https://legacymakers.home.blog/links/).

reveal the links between Manchester and the transatlantic slave trade in the museum."[33] The gallery was updated in 2018 but appeared consciously incomplete on its discussion of slavery in 2019. Nearby Quarry Bank Mill's displays were also seemingly installed as part of refurbishment in 2018.[34] These dates reveal that significant activity has taken place in recent years, though these dates are rarely clearly acknowledged at the sites. This "un-visibility" of creation and motivation is discussed further below, while the following section focuses on sites where the history of EAC remained "un-visible."

## Researching a changing environment with persistent "un-visibility"

I visited over fifty sites and found interventions with details of EAC at 48. The analysis focuses on those sites that do at least partially attempt to challenge the "un-visibility" of this history in England and New England. I am nevertheless conscious that this remained a widespread problem in 2018–2019, and the following pages briefly outline examples of "un-visibility" I encountered during my research. I am also aware that events in 2020 sparked changes, some of which are also noted alongside the following discussions of absence. These sites of "un-visibility" do not feature in the core analysis and therefore are not in Appendix 1 and are instead referenced solely within the footnotes.

Of the selected sites I could view I found slavery conspicuously absent from Speke Hall, the Bank of England Museum, the displays on the founding of the British Museum, and the statue of Robert Milligan at West India Quay. Speke Hall and the Bank of England are identified within the

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[33] Display, "Manchester: Made of Cotton," Science and Industry.
[34] These dates are inferred from online promotional materials (https://www.scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk/about-us/press-office/new-look-textiles-gallery; https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/quarry-bank/features/transforming-the-mill).

ISM, as will be discussed, but links to slavery are not clearly acknowledged at their own sites. The British Museum had a brief display, within the Enlightenment Gallery, that mentioned the slave trade which noted that "powerful African kingdoms" sold enslaved people to Europeans.[35] In July 2019, there was nothing in the displays on Sir Hans Sloane – whose collection founded the museum – that acknowledged that his wife was heiress to sugar plantations or that he collected in the Caribbean.[36] By August 2020, after my research period, the British Museum had remedied their previous neglect of Sloane's links, as they moved his bust into a new display on Empire and Collecting that engaged with legacies of slavery.[37] Also in London an 1813 statue of Robert Milligan – a man with family connections to plantations and Deputy Chairman of the West India Dock Company – stood without any external mention of these links.[38] Instead a plaque praised his "genius, perseverance and guardian care."[39] Previous temporary interventions were not in place during my research window.[40] The statue was quietly removed in summer 2020.

I also encountered "un-visibility" of EAC across the cityscapes. The spectral traces of enslavers were particularly clear to me in English port cities, but similar traces will exist across New England. For example, in Queen's Square in Bristol, on houses 33-35, there was an official blue plaque acknowledging Woodes Rogers (1679-1732) as a "Great Seaman. Circumnavigator.

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[35] Text label, "Trade and Discovery: Africa," Case 24, *Room 1: Enlightenment Gallery* (The British Museum, London. July 2019).
[36] Sloane was mentioned in "The Age of Curiosity" text panel in *Room 2* and his bust was located in the centre of the *Room 1* but neither interpretation mentioned slavery (The British Museum, London. July 2019). For discussion of his Caribbean connections see: Susan Dwyer Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges: Slavery and the Transformation of English Society, 1640-1700* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 66.
[37] Rebecca Speare-Cole, "British Museum moves bust of slave-owning founding father Sir Hans Sloane," *Evening Standard,* 25 August 2020, https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/british-museum-founding-father-bust-slaver-removes-a4532321.html.
[38] "Robert Milligan," Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146645741.
[39] Statue of Robert Milligan, Outside the MOLD (Canary Wharf, London. April 2019).
[40] For discussion of 2008-2011 intervention see: Ana Lucia Araujo, "Transnational Memory of Slave Merchants: Making the Perpetrators Visible in the Public Space," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory,* 30.

Colonial Governor."[41] There was no explicit acknowledgement that he was a slave trader who in later life was the Governor of the Bahamas. Similarly, in Liverpool, within the ISM visitors could learn that The Bluecoat School was established by Bryan Blundell (1675-1756) who was involved in the slave trade.[42] However, the board outside the physical site – which is approximately half a mile from the museum – simply informed passers-by that Blundell was a "master mariner."[43] Walking tour guides, where they are available, may be able to illuminate information like this, but for the vast majority of people traversing these parts of the cityscape such links to enslavement remain entirely buried. In Liverpool, Europe's largest slave trading port, there is no public memorial to transatlantic slavery, as Araujo and Moody noted in their 2020 books.[44] Jessica Moody's book offers reflections on the wider memory of slavery in Liverpool and builds on her thesis argument that in this absence "the debate is the memorial."[45]

The above examples reveal how enslavers' EAC was buried beneath their achievements, reflecting the celebratory nature of heritage narratives. Debates on both sides of the Atlantic could be seen during my research period over two enslavers in particular: Edward Colston and Peter Faneuil. Within her transnational work, Araujo comments on both these debates.[46] These were individual wealthy men, and Chapter 5 outlines that others like them dominate the narratives of EAC. During my research I observed both the Colston statue and Faneuil Hall, but neither are analysed in depth in the thesis, which instead centres on sites that challenged the "un-

[41] Plaque for "Woodes Rogers" on 33-35 Queen's Square (Bristol, UK. April 2018).
[42] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[43] Information pillar, "Bluecoat," Church Alley (Liverpool. March 2019).
[44] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 87; Moody, *The Persistence of Memory,* 217.
[45] Jessica Moody, "The Memory of Slavery in Liverpool in Public Discourse from the Nineteenth Century to the Present Day" (PhD diss., University of York, 2014), 356.
[46] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 73–79; 92–93.

visibility" of EAC, rather than those continuing the banal tolerance of commemorating enslavers. My observations are however briefly noted here.

Chapter 1 noted that Colston's Victorian statue in Bristol was dramatically removed from its plinth. When I visited in 2018 a temporary plaque had been attached by the artist Will Coles which identified Bristol's link to the slave trade. It was removed by Bristol City Council leaving only the Victorian plaque which praised him as "one of the most virtuous and wise sons of their city."[47] Conversations continued about wording on a new plaque and in the intervening months the statue was left elevated on a plinth, until it was forcibly removed. As of summer 2021, the statue was displayed in M Shed.

In Boston, Faneuil Hall has been standing since the 1740s. In 2018 it hosted the National Park Service visitor centre, in which I located one information column that acknowledged that "this building was constructed by Peter Faneuil, a wealthy merchant who profited greatly from the slave trade."[48] Given the briefness of this acknowledgement, and its placement amongst commercial stalls where many people would not stop and read, it remained a site of overwhelming "un-visibility" within the space. Furthermore, more people gathered outside around the surrounding Faneuil Hall Marketplace. On the exterior of the Hall building itself there was a small plaque, from 1930, which named Peter Faneuil (1700–1743) but only described the site as the "Cradle of Liberty."[49] This name was gained because it hosted numerous speeches during the American Revolution, reflecting the DOLHN. During my visit in 2018 I saw no evidence of protests

[47] Statue of Edward Colston, Pedestrianised area near St Augustine's Parade (Bristol, UK. April 2018).
[48] Information Column, "Freedom, The Price of Liberty," National Park Service visitor centre, Faneuil Hall (Boston, MA. July 2018).
[49] Exterior Plaque, Faneuil Hall, Merchants Row (Boston, MA. July 2018).

over renaming the building because of Faneuil's involvement with EAC, or a proposal for a memorial outside the Hall.[50] As of summer 2021, the Hall had not been renamed.

Against this backdrop of "un-visibility" the following analysis focuses on sites which partially acknowledged EAC in 2018–2019, some of which have since also seen changes. In November 2020, All Souls College in Oxford decided to stop using the name "the Codrington Library" because Codrington was a plantation owner, but I am unsure if the plaque has been altered.[51] I also believe a board acknowledging the Wade families' plantations was added at Snowshill Manor and, in response to the pandemic, Harewood House introduced a new Digital House Guide. The guide acknowledges "there is a long way to go" but begins with discussion of EAC and tells visitors they are committed to tackling its legacies.[52] While I encourage developments such as the guide at Harewood, my analysis focuses on how I found the interventions.

While the events of 2020, outlined at the beginning of Chapter 1, will influence any potential impact of this thesis, my research also highlights that many interventions were not reactionary, as Chapter 6 further explores. During my research trips, Dyrham Park, a National Trust property, was undergoing updates and Marble Hill House, an English Heritage property, was closed for renovations, with both sites declaring they would acknowledge EAC. In England, in September 2020, three months after Colston's removal, the National Trust published an interim report on its connections to slavery and colonialism, causing a furore in the media.[53] It needs

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[50] Christopher Gavin, "The NAACP said it opposes a Faneuil Hall memorial for slave trade victims. Now, the artist says he'll take it out of Boston," *Boston.com,* 18 July 2019, https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2019/07/18/faneuil-hall-memorial-slave-trade-victims/.
[51] The college's press release is available online (https://www.asc.ox.ac.uk/news/all-souls-college-and-codrington-legacy).
[52] The Harewood guide can be viewed online (https://harewood.org/explore/digitalguide/).
[53] Sally-Anne Huxtable, Corinne Fowler, Christo Kefalas and Emma Slocombe eds., *Interim Report on the Connections between Colonialism and Properties now in the Care of the National Trust, Including Links with*

noting that it clearly states within the document that research began for the report in 2019, and built on work from the Colonial Countryside project.[54] A Historic England audit on "The Transatlantic Slave Economy and England's Built Environment" was also released in September 2020 and followed work that had begun in April 2020.[55] These reports reflect the ongoing evolution of challenges to the "un-visibility" of slavery, despite its persistence.

## Why were the interventions that challenge the "un-visibility" of EAC created?

The interventions examined in the following chapters are the results of moments when "groups or associations with concerted political agendas obtain enough support to officially validate their views in the public space."[56] Consequently, one of the original research sub-questions was why these interventions occurred, and whether their origins are clear to passers-by and casual visitors on any given day. However, the methodology of focusing on what is visible at the sites gave limited answers as to why they were created at all, and even less on why details on EAC were included beyond that EAC is viewed as part of a comprehensive story of enslavement. These limited details reflect that interventions often "have the appearance of being objective and value-free."[57] As James Duncan wrote in 1990, "by becoming part of the everyday, the taken-for-granted, the objective, and the natural, the landscape masks the artifice and ideological nature of its form and content."[58] The potential ideological motivations for interventions are returned to in

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*Historic Slavery* (September 2020), https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/addressing-the-histories-of-slavery-and-colonialism-at-the-national-trust

[54] Ibid., 60.

[55] Mary Wills and Madge Dresser, *The Impact of Transatlantic Slavery on England's Built Environment: A Research Audit*, September 2020, https://research.historicengland.org.uk/Report.aspx?i=16784

[56] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 95.

[57] Derek H. Alderman, "Surrogation and the politics of remembering slavery in Savannah, Georgia (USA)," *Journal of Historical Geography* 36, no. 1 (2010): 94.

[58] Duncan, *City as Text,* 19.

Chapter 6, while this section offers brief insight into what the interventions themselves say about why they were created.

Neither Slater Mill nor Boott Cotton Mill in New England explicitly stated why they included coverage of slavery. Furthermore, in 2016 Beckert and Rockman noted that "the slave-labor origins of cotton now figure more prominently" at both New England sites, but as with many of the sites the date from which this became true is not clear.[59] Similarly, in England, Belper North Mill, Quarry Bank Mill and the People's History Museum gave no explicit statement on why slavery was included. Several of the smaller, and therefore more concise, memorial interventions into public space – such as the Harvard Law memorial or the Oxford plaque – also offered no explicit acknowledgement of the rationale for their creation within the space. By revealing little about their, inevitably contested origins, they appear objective and timeless, with perceived intent left only to individual conjecture.

Also common was acknowledgement of authorship, if only briefly, but without much detail on those authors, artists and funders. For example, Newport's *In Silent Witness* memorial was identified as a "Gift of the Parkos Family and of the Sculptor, William Paul Haas" in written text.[60] Similarly, in the Granary Burying Ground in Boston the boards acknowledged "Renovation Funding provided in part by the Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts 2002" – offering a date – and "Thomas M. Menino, Mayor" at the top.[61] Details on these people, and their motivations, as well as who provided access to these spaces, were unclear. In London, the information board at Hibbert Gate carried the name of Canary Wharf Group PLC., a development management group which has been responsible for developing the area now known as Canary

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[59] Beckert and Rockman, "Introduction," in Beckert and Rockman, *Slavery's Capitalism,* 8.
[60] Accompanying text panel, *In Silent Witness*.
[61] Top of information boards, Granary Burying Ground.

Wharf, London's second financial centre along with the City of London. The board explained they built the replica of the gate in 2000, and a detail on the board suggested it was installed with this information in September 2015, some fifteen years later, without explaining why.[62]

Perhaps reflecting the perceived complexity of the subject, academic advisors were visibly thanked in acknowledgement boards at the beginning of the relevant exhibits at the MOLD, the NMM, and at Georgian House Museum in a panel dating the intervention to 1997, without mentioning a 2018 update.[63] At the ISM handheld boards also acknowledged academic authors within the space.[64] At the John Brown House, within the slave trade focused *Sally* exhibit, a panel explained that "for the past year, a group of Brown students has explored the relationship of some of our university's early benefactors to the transatlantic slave trade."[65] The exhibit was not dated, however the 2006 Brown report suggested that the exhibit, which it discusses, was created at a similar time.[66] These acknowledgements say nothing of why the host site welcomed the interventions.

Another group of acknowledged contributors are African diaspora groups, particularly with the interventions at Newstead Abbey and Cromford Mills created by the *Slave Trade Legacies* (STL) – now *Legacy Makers* – group. They are "interventionist" sites, co-developed by "community groups who have not allowed civic pride to gloss over uncomfortable historical facts."[67] In the

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[62] Information board, "The main 'Hibbert' Gate," West India Quay. Up the right hand side of the board it reads: "Design Paul & Linda Anthony, Ravenshaw Studios Limited. 11 September 2015."
[63] Text panel, "Thank you," John Pinney, GHM.
[64] Information boards, "Liverpool and the Atlantic World" and "Liverpool, slavery and the trade in enslaved Africans between 1807 and the 1880s," Authored by Sheryllynne Haggerty and Marika Sherwood, Enslavement, ISM.
[65] Display panel, "The Sally Ventures Into The Future," Sally, JBH.
[66] Brown University, *Slavery and Justice,* 4–5.
[67] Alan Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 16; Alan Rice, "The History of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Heritage from Below in Action: Guerrilla Memorialisation in the Era of Bicentennial Commemoration," in *Heritage from Below,* ed. Iain J.M. Robertson (London: Routledge, 2012), 210.

sense that they are political interventions which combat the "wilful amnesia" of EAC, all the case studies may be "guerrilla memorialisations," to use Alan Rice's term.[68] In his discussions Rice centres co-operative community involvement, and as the methodology for this thesis does not focus on the production of the sites this particular terminology is not centred. My research also views the end products of the creative activity as part of the heritage narrative, rather than viewing heritage as a "dry historical record."[69]

At the end of the *Blood Sugar* film at Newstead Abbey visitors were told that: "This film has been made by the Nottingham Slave Trade Legacies volunteers. We are a mainly African Caribbean group working to gain acknowledgement of the contribution of our enslaved ancestors in British heritage sites."[70] Their desire to gain acknowledgement for their ancestors is explicit within the space, but it is unclear at the site why Newstead Abbey's management allowed this external intervention. At Cromford Mills, the external authorship of the display which covers slavery, "Global Cotton Connections" (GCC), is also highlighted. Text explains that "Nottingham Slave Trade Legacies and Sheffield South Asian groups have worked to uncover the roles of the British Empire and the slave trade in creating wealth in the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. The groups have used historical evidence to identify and acknowledge the parts that their ancestors played in building Britain's cotton textile industry."[71] Again, for the group, the interventions are a form of reparative justice for their ancestors, through acknowledging their "un-visibilised" contribution.

Privileged access to this group, as well as online secondary materials, provides an impression of the contestations, evolutions and compromise involved in this intervention.

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[68] Rice, *Creating Memorials,* 13–14.
[69] Ibid., 37.
[70] Film, *Blood Sugar*, Discover, Newstead Abbey. The film can be viewed on Youtube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eos2yZxuYmY).
[71] Text panel, "Global Cotton Connections," GCC, Cromford.

However, for visitors to the site this is hidden, unlike the group's authorship.[72] Projects like this, and visible authorship, provide the opportunity for people from the African diaspora to embed their voices within spaces of slavery commemoration. The content of these interventions also highlights how EAC is "everyone's history," by connecting many people and places, and may engage more diverse audiences. However, visible Black authorship may encourage White visitors to believe this history is not relevant to them, thereby feeding white visitor apathy. Connectedly, Stevens and Sumartojo have claimed that *Gilt of Cain* conveys "the guilt of perpetrators," as it was commissioned by the City of London, and the memorial's vital placement is explored in Chapter 3.[73] However, the accompanying board says that the project was "initiated by Black British Heritage" before acknowledging who commissioned it, thus placing more emphasis on that group.

The existing literature notes that the 2007 permanent installations, at the ISM, the MOLD, the NMM and Wilberforce House Museum were created through consultation not just with academics but with African-Caribbean communities.[74] However, there is little acknowledgment of this, reflecting a tradition of largely invisible curatorship, which contributes to the perception that museums are timeless and neutral spaces. As Leanne Munroe puts it, in M Shed in Bristol, "the curator is silent to let the voices of the enslavers speak," while other sites attempt to prioritise the voices of the enslaved.[75] Where curators, and wider creators, are made visible it is worth

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[72] Clare Dalton, "Illustrating a Point," *Interpretation Journal: Association for Heritage Interpretation* 22, no. 1 (2017): 13–14, https://ahi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/journal-22-1.pdf; For further details see the Legacy Makers website (https://legacymakers.home.blog/links/).
[73] Quentin Stevens and Shanti Sumartojo, "Memorial planning in London," *Journal of Urban Design* 20, no. 5 (2015): 630–631.
[74] Kalliopi Fouseki, "'Community voices, curatorial choices': community consultation for the 1807 exhibitions," *Museum and Society* 8, no. 3 (2010): 180–192.
[75] Leanne Munroe, "Negotiating memories and silences: Museum narratives of transatlantic slavery in England," in *Beyond Memory: Silence and the Aesthetics of Remembrance*, eds. Alexandre Dessingue and Jay Winter (London: Routledge, 2016), 184.

considering what potential impact that acknowledgement may have on visitor readings and their reasonings for why the interventions have been installed.

Chapter 1 introduced arguments for including more complex histories of enslavement. The physical display at Cromford Mills also featured audio recordings, which offer further explanations as to why this history is included. On one recording Vivinne Bramwell, from the Slave Trade Legacies group, recalls, as a child, seeing no representation or recognition of the contribution of the enslaved labourers, and wanting to reveal this hidden history and include Black representation.[76] On the same recording Susanne Seymour, one of the group's contributing academics, explained that the GCC work was trying to promote "new and diverse understandings of the cotton story" and to do "reparative history."[77] Another recording offers insight into why the host site included this intervention, as the Arkwright Society's Head of Heritage explained that they wanted to include unheard voices and encourage visitors to consider wider perspectives.[78]

In Providence, Rhode Island, the Brown University memorial was created following the pivotal 2006 report which made eight recommendations – the third of which was "memorialization."[79] Acknowledgement that "in 2003 Brown President Ruth J. Simmons initiated a study of this aspect of the university's history," features on the plinth accompanying the memorial within the space, which is detailed in Chapter 3.[80] As at All Souls' College in Oxford – which launched an annual scholarship for Caribbean students – the memorial is part of a broader reparative action.[81] This thesis is concerned with tangible heritage interventions but recognises that these should take place amongst wider reparatory actions, yet such programmes are not

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[76] Audio station, "Number 5," GCC, Cromford.
[77] Audio station, "Number 5," GCC, Cromford.
[78] Audio station, "Number 6," GCC, Cromford.
[79] Brown University, *Slavery and Justice,* 83–87.
[80] Brown Slavery Memorial.
[81] Taylor, *The Interest,* 305.

recognised within the space. At Brown, it is also not made explicit that Ruth J. Simmons was the first African American President of an Ivy League institution, or that the designer – Martin Puryear – was also African American, perhaps avoiding any false perception that this is just a history of concern for the African diaspora.

Reparatory justice is interwoven with the ongoing racial legacy of enslavement, which was mentioned within the displays at the ISM, M Shed, MOLD and the Center for Reconciliation in Rhode Island. At the ISM, the entire third section of the museum was dedicated to legacies of slavery, including racism and inequality. At M Shed there was a focus on legacy in the centre of the slavery exhibit and interactive encouragement to reflect on that. At the MOLD there was information on negative representations of black people, racial divisions and contemporary anti-racism, as well as the legacy that "we all benefit from the commercial and material success developed on that historical base."[82] For New England's Center for Reconciliation the implied reasoning lies in its title – reconciliation – which reflects that it was established as an initiative of the Episcopal Church. Whether this motivation will be visible in a future permanent museum remains to be seen, but it was very visible in the temporary panels. The last panel was titled "Continuing Legacies of Our History of White Supremacy", which asked "What Can We Do About It?" and described "an Episcopal journey to racial healing, reconciliation and justice."[83] These displays do not just highlight the negative racial legacy for the black community, but also white supremacy. However, they do not explicitly state these as reasons why slavery must be remembered; rather visitors are left to make the implicit link.

Another less frequently acknowledged rationale for these interventions was that this history has been "un-visibilised." By acknowledging the previous omissions these sites draw

[82] Text panel, "Legacies," MOLD.
[83] Display panel, "Continuing Legacies of Our History of White Supremacy," CFR.

attention to their own selective nature. For example, at Worcester Art Museum, in Massachusetts, the introductory panel explained that "this tragic history has long been overlooked in our galleries. To address this omission, we have added special labels."[84] Similarly, the ISM made it clear to visitors as they enter that "this story has been neglected by too many for too long."[85] At the Lancaster Maritime Museum "The Slave Trade Legacy" board explained that "the people of Lancaster are committed to raising awareness of this uncomfortable part of the city's history," including through the creation of the nearby *Captured Africans* memorial.[86] The plaque outside, which accompanied the memorial, stated that it was "developed as part of the Slave Trade Arts Memorial Project (STAMP) an extensive arts education outreach programme."[87] Within the space, however, it did not explicitly state that the project was "interested in embedding memorialization of slavery in the city," as Rice has written.[88] At the MOLD the first section featured a video that stresses to Londoners that "This is your history," potentially directly disrupting visitor apathy from the outset.[89]

[84] Text panel, "America's Peculiar Institution," WAM.
[85] Introductory Wall, ISM.
[86] Display panel, "The Slave Trade Legacy," Slave Trade, LMM.
[87] Plaque accompanying *Captured Africans*.
[88] Rice, "Naming the money," 325.
[89] Display, "Africans in London," MOLD.

At M Shed, positioned around the top of the circular exhibit were quotes from visitors to a previous exhibit on the subject of slavery within Bristol Industrial Museum from 2000 to 2006. While these quotes were not uniform in their opinions, the inclusion of this visitor feedback provided a sense of why M Shed included this subject when it opened in 2011. One example is: "We cannot be responsible for our past, but we should learn from it" **(Figure 2.1)**. One panel within King's Chapel in Boston also made it clear that they were "actively working" on this history and stated that "in order to understand the present and fight for social justice, we must understand our past."[90] Brief engagements within the interventions concerning the issue of contemporary supply chains and modern slavery are discussed in Chapter 5, while the ISM often hosts exhibits on modern slavery. However, in comparison to the racial legacy any relevance to contemporary slavery is more rarely implied as a justification for the displays.

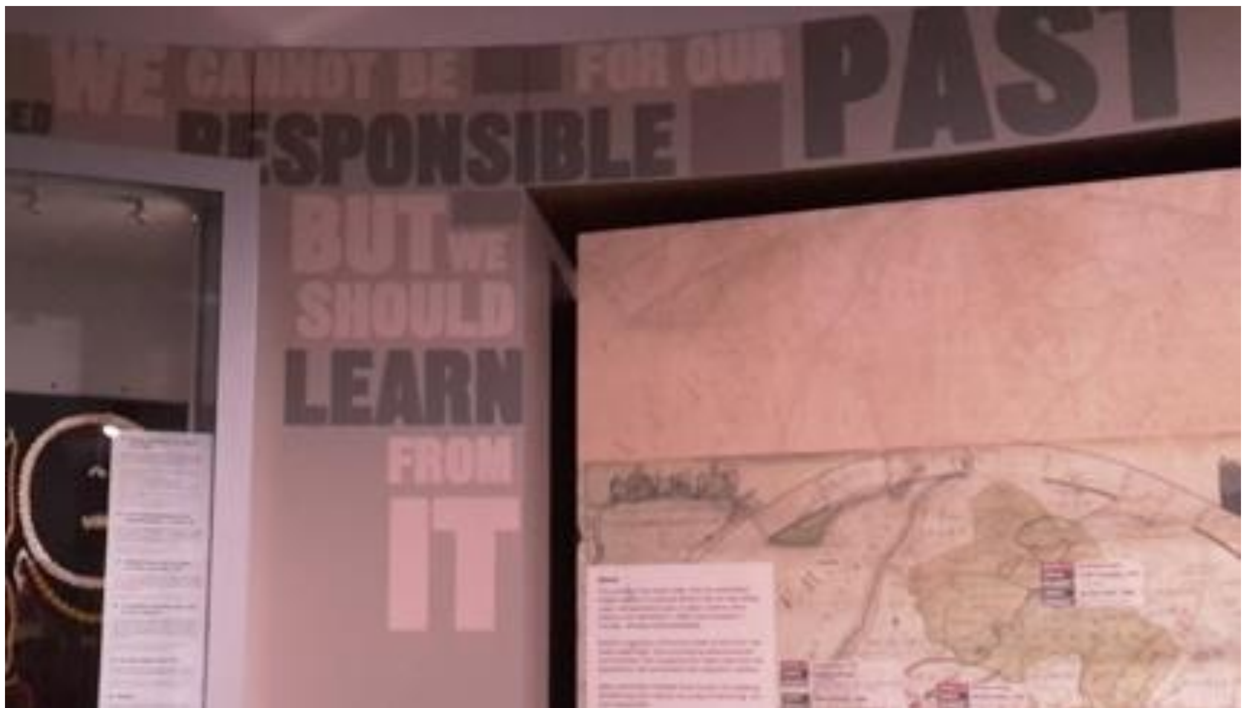


**Figure 2.1.** Former visitor quotes within M Shed exhibit. PTBA (April 2018).

[90] Information board, "Slavery and King's Chapel: Tied to the Trade," King's Chapel.

The final rationale for the inclusion of slavery history identified during these research trips was external pressure. Kane identifies that pressure was placed on Linden Place by the Brown report and the release of the 2008 *Traces of the Trade* film which featured the house, however this was not directly acknowledged during my visit.[91] On the other hand the guide at Hempsted Houses explicitly cited the publication of *For Adam's Sake* (2013), which highlighted Adam Jackson's story through Joshua Hempsted's diaries, as sparking their intervention.[92] The Harvard Law memorial and Oxford plaque made no reference to student protests, but they may have applied pressure. Yet, it is worth noting that Royall House and Slave Quarters discussed slavery before the "Royall Must Fall" campaign at Harvard Law.

Despite the brief reasonings for remembering slavery more broadly, the sites did not offer further discussion of why they included details on EAC, except that it is a constituent part of a truthful, comprehensive narrative and a twin legacy alongside racial inequality. As Royall House put it, the "site bears witness to intertwined stories of wealth and bondage."[93] As will become apparent, when viewed collectively the details of how England and New England profited from EAC can be seen as evidence for an argument for financial reparations. However, no site actively campaigned for these, perhaps reflecting their navigation of visitor resistance. The ISM was the only site to clearly acknowledge that "since the mid-1960s there has been a call for reparations by sections of the African Diaspora."[94] It does not offer an explicit comment on the museum's position on financial reparations. However, its placement after exhibits on global inequalities and racism implies that they support them. While reasonings and intentions were not explored deeply within the spaces, this section has identified some visible authorship as well as clear

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[91] Kane, "Institutional Change," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 51–52.
[92] Allegra Di Bonaventura, *For Adam's Sake: A Family Saga in Colonial New England* (New York: Liveright, 2013).
[93] Text panel, "Royall House & Slave Quarters," Royall House.
[94] Text panel, "The Reparations Movement," Legacy, ISM.

acknowledgements of the racial legacy of slavery, which is a vital argument for its importance. Building on the vagueness within sites as to why they discuss EAC, Chapter 6 encourages sites to be "more explicit and public facing in their activism," as Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham proposes.[95]

## Conclusion

This chapter began by introducing the methodology and the case studies and outlined the research trips I have undertaken. The third section situated these within a surrounding "un-visibility" as well as the ongoing changing environment, especially following summer 2020. The final section has discussed what was visible as to why the interventions which challenge "un-visibility" were created. Due to the methodology reflections on this are limited, but one key motivation is the racial legacy of slavery. This thesis operates from the premise that white audiences would be less resistant to discussions of racism if they understood the relevance of EAC to their own histories. Chapters 3 to 5 draw out details from 48 sites across New England and England, which collectively do the work of illuminating the importance of EAC.

[95] Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham, "Beyond gallery walls and performance halls: five essential steps museums and other cultural institutions must take to center people, communities, and cultivate effective social change," *Museums & Social Issues: A Journal of Reflective Discourse* 13, no. 1 (2018): 6–7.

# Chapter 3: Spaces with EAC spectral traces

## Introduction

This chapter builds on the outline of case studies in Chapter 2 by focusing on where the sites are located. While Chapter 4 explores further historical geographies of involvement within the web of EAC, the discussions of spatiality in this chapter are focused on sites within England and New England. This research reveals that when the lens of vision is changed from exploring sites of enslavement to sites of EAC, the built landscapes of England and New England become filled with palimpsestic objects containing spectral traces of wealth from enslaved labour. There are many more sites with "un-visible" un-interpreted spectral traces, but even when focusing on sites with heritage interventions, I found 48 of those on both sides of the Atlantic.

This chapter works on the premise that observers' analysis begins with considering where they are when they encounter interventions. Chapter 1 noted that geographers and memory studies scholars have identified a powerful link between physical space and memory, and that sites – from museums to streets – can be read as texts. In his work on the city as text, James Duncan stresses that intertextuality is at the heart of the question of how landscapes encode information and that "the context of any text is other texts," meaning that sites must be read in relation to their surrounding environment.[1] The space that EAC interventions occupy, and other narratives which exist in that space, contribute to their meaning as texts.

The first half of the chapter focuses on placement on a broader regional scale. It begins by outlining how "maritimisation" continues to persist on a regional level, while highlighting inland sites that challenge it. Several of the inland sites are powerful and yet problematic palimpsests,

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[1] Duncan, *City as Text,* 4.

such as English country houses, where EAC is difficult to embed but if done so effectively, the interventions not only challenge “maritimisation” of slavery but disrupt further narratives and mythologies of the host spaces. From this, the later sections of the chapter look at sites more locally and focus on placement within the host spaces. Building on the understanding from existing visitor studies that observers are likely to “graze” exhibits or overlook interventions completely, this thesis is particularly concerned with how to animate EAC history in interesting and engaging ways to catch visitors’ attention. To do this, I critique existing strategies including the use of text, diagrams, and art. The analysis highlights that for all forms of intervention, placement is vital, both practically and symbolically, and reveals that, as “un-visibility” is not binary, poor placement can undermine good content. Furthermore, the perceived importance of the EAC narrative will be influenced by how much space is granted to the interventions, and whether that space is central or marginal. Drawing together the previous sections, the chapter closes by focusing on interventions in public space, which interact symbolically with their surroundings and engage passers-by. Memorials particularly serve as strong cases where spectral traces can be drawn out of the existing palimpsestic landscape by a strategically placed intervention, and how powerfully disruptive these can be. Before exploring this more complex spatial symbolism, this chapter presents a series of maps highlighting the geographic distribution of the case studies in this thesis.

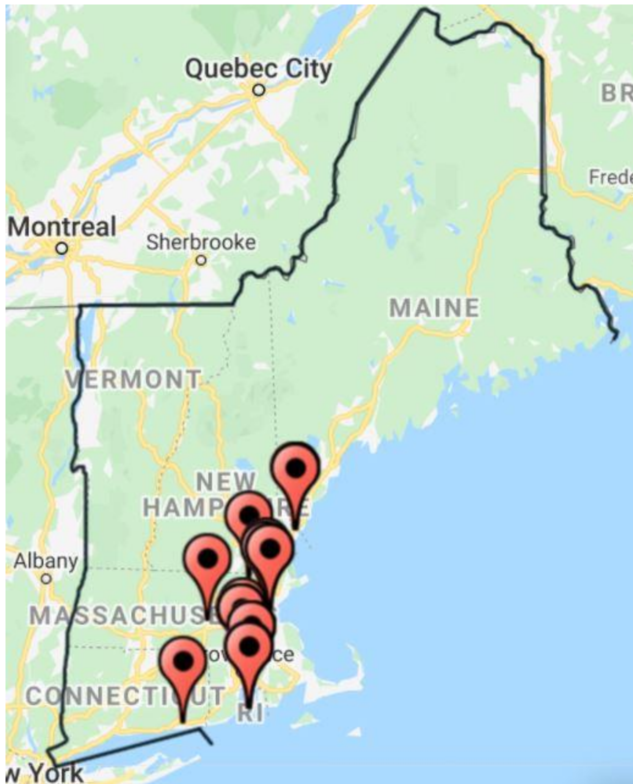


**Figure 3.1.** Sites in New England. Map made by author, with borders with Canada and New York state, on Scribblemaps.com.

**Figure 3.2.** Sites in England. Map made by author, with borders with Scotland and Wales, on Scribblemaps.com.

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show the geographic distribution of sites of intervention examined in New England and England. In England, the sites were distributed across the country, perhaps reflecting the practical ease in undertaking several trips within my base country. Nevertheless, even in England, I was not aware of permanent sites of interest in the southwest beyond Bristol or in the east of the country, except for in Hull. Similarly, in New England, I was not aware of sites of interest in Vermont or Maine that make up a substantial portion of the region. Figures 3.3–3.5 show the named sites I visited in New England **(Figure 3.3)**, northern England **(Figure 3.4)** and southern England **(Figure 3.5)**. In places where multiple sites were visited just the town or city is labelled on these maps. These were Portsmouth, Boston, Providence, Bristol and Newport in New

England, and Lancaster, Manchester, Bristol and London in England. The particularly fruitful visits, which will be referenced frequently in this thesis, are highlighted green on the labelling.

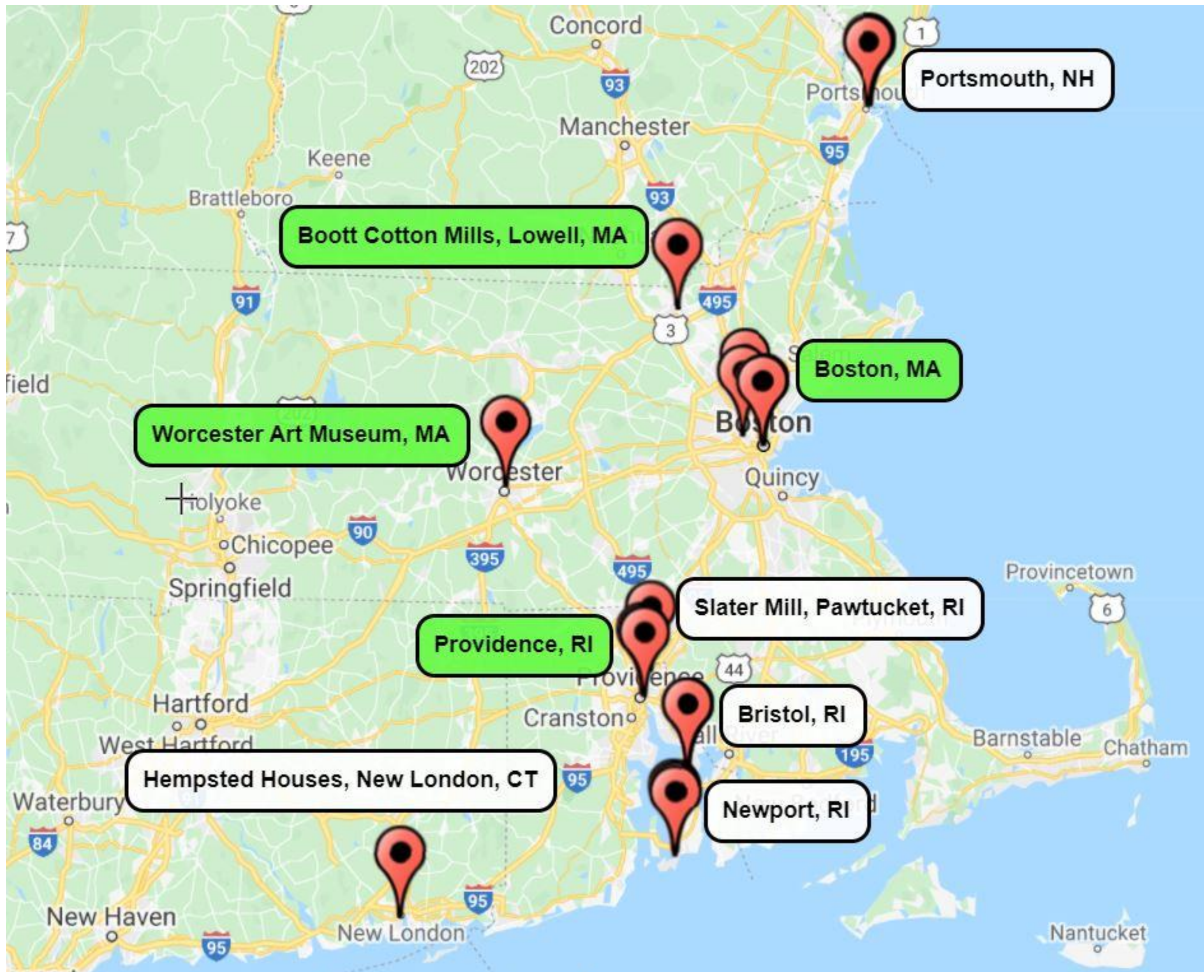


**Figure 3.3.** Labelled sites in New England. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

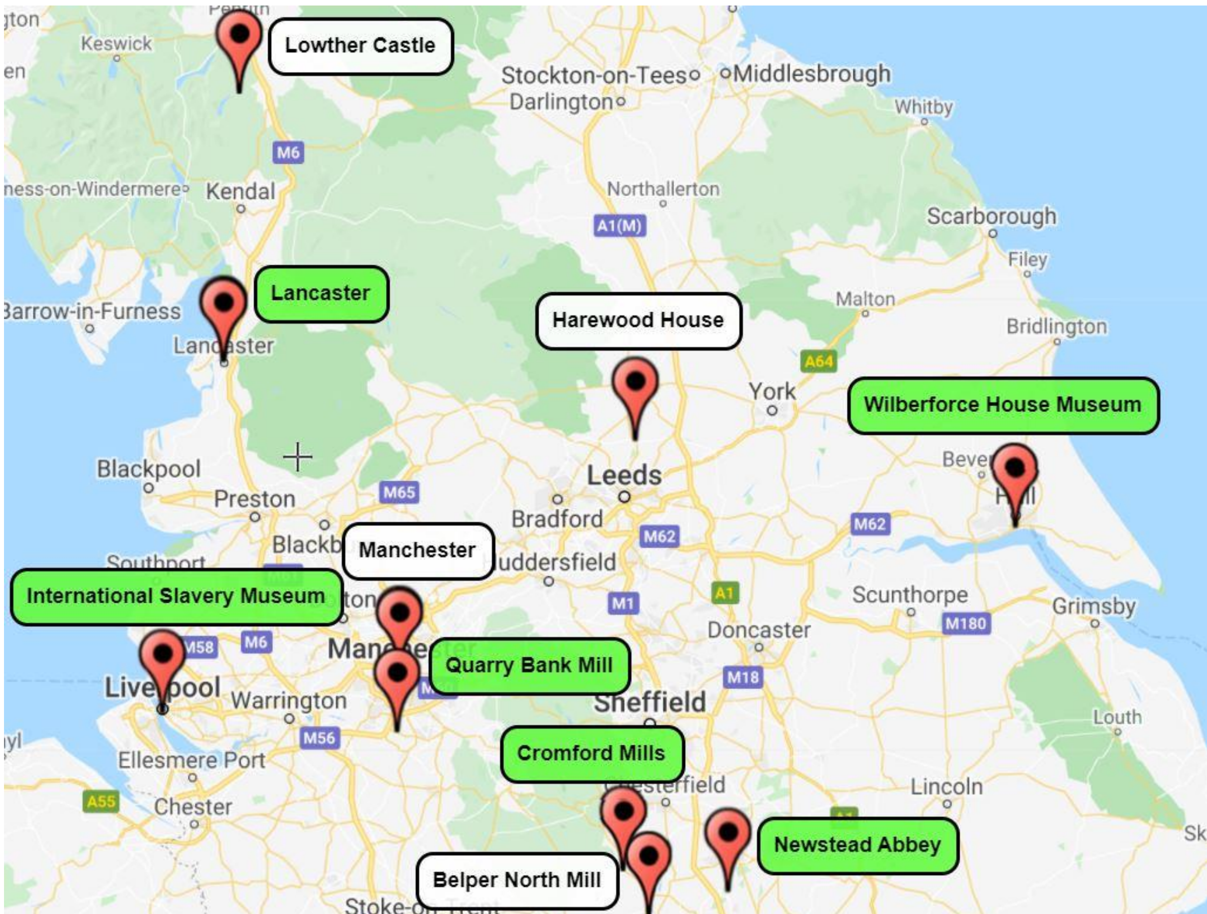


**Figure 3.4.** Labelled sites in northern England. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

**Figure 3.5.** Labelled sites in southern England. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

## Challenging persisting "Maritimisation"

In 2001 John Beech coined the term "maritimisation" to critique the positioning of heritage displays covering slavery in a maritime context, which he argued leads to "two uncomfortable conclusions."[2] The first of these is that "it effectively defines slavery as essentially the slave trade, and thus locates it firmly in the past, something temporally distant." The second is that "it defines slavery as a maritime activity" and "the slave trade as a subset of transport," which he compares to Holocaust memory being "placed in a railway museum simply on the basis that trains were used to transport victims to the concentration camps." Engagement with his critical concept of "maritimisation" runs throughout this thesis, which highlights that EAC involved many more people and places than just a few individuals in ports. Nevertheless, this section begins by observing that "maritimisation" through placement remains prevalent, before highlighting sites that challenge this.

Figures 3.4 and 3.5 – marking sites nearly two decades after Beech's critique – create an illusion that "maritimisation" is no longer an issue in England. However, they do not illustrate the scale and scope of the interventions, as in reality the inland interventions were overwhelmingly much smaller. Chapter 1 noted Cubitt et al.'s claim that with the commemorations in 2007, "Britain's involvement with slavery was [no longer] confined to the great port cities."[3] However, in 2016 Moody argued that "the history of transatlantic slavery has been maritimised on 'national' scales across Britain and Europe, through the geographical restriction of memory work to coasts and ports."[4] While this thesis highlights inland sites, the permanent purpose-built museum

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[2] Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 103.
[3] Cubitt et al., "Introduction," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 10.
[4] Jessica Moody, "Liverpool's Local Tints: Drowning Memory and 'Maritimising' Slavery in a Seaport City," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 151.

exhibits, which focus on slavery, in England are found in the coastal cities of London, Bristol, Liverpool, Lancaster and Hull. Consequently, even before they arrive and receive a more comprehensive narrative, visitors must travel to the coast, thus implying it was only the port cities that were deeply impacted. Furthermore, with the exception of Hull, the cities hosting large slavery museum galleries were the four largest historic slaving ports in England. This placement of key sites reflects and promotes the emphasis on slave trading within the heritage narrative, in which – thorough "maritimisation" – EAC is defined narrowly "as essentially the slave trade," rather than the wider expansive web this thesis explores.[5]

The largest galleries are situated in Liverpool and London. Nearly 5,000 slaving voyages departed Liverpool, while over 3,000 departed the capital city.[6] The ISM in Liverpool was the only museum dedicated to the subject of slavery in England and it offered some of the largest galleries on the topic in terms of square footage. Araujo provides an outline of the ISM, which opened in 2007 and was "two and half times bigger" than the previous 1994 gallery on the same site.[7] In London, the MOLD's *London, Sugar and Slavery* gallery – which also opened in 2007 – was of a similar substantial size to the ISM. Also in Greater London, the NMM *Atlantic Worlds* gallery, also opened it 2007; while this gallery dedicated slightly less space than the ISM or MOLD to the subject, this thesis also references part of the NMM's *Tudor and Stuart Seafarers* gallery, which opened in September 2018.

Wilberforce House Museum in Hull also offered substantial exhibits of slavery. Located on the River Hull, and a few hundred metres from the east coast Humber estuary, it was again a

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[5] Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 103.
[6] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database.
[7] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 114–120.

maritime location, though Hull was not a former historic slaving port. The museum originally opened in the early twentieth century to commemorate the birthplace of the famous abolitionist William Wilberforce, but it was renovated for 2007 and as Wood comments it is "no longer a shrine to Wilberforce."[8] Returning to the English slave trading ports, further, albeit smaller, sites were also located in Bristol and Lancaster. Over 2,000 slaving voyages departed the former, while Lancaster was the fourth largest English slaving port, but with only 125 slaving voyages departing the city.[9] In Bristol, adding to an existing exhibit at the Georgian House Museum, M Shed opened in 2011 with an exhibit on Transatlantic Slavery within the Bristol Places, Life and People gallery. Interventions within Lancaster included the *Captured Africans* memorial and displays at the Lancaster Maritime Museum.

The "maritimisation" created by situating interventions in these former slave trading ports is further accentuated by the fact that Lancaster Maritime Museum, M Shed, the MOLD and the ISM are located immediately on tidal rivers and docks, while the NMM is some 200 metres from the River Thames. Additionally, Lancaster Maritime Museum and the NMM feature the word "Maritime" in their titles while the ISM is housed with the Merseyside Maritime Museum. Therefore, before accessing any of the content of these large exhibits, transatlantic slavery has been placed in the minds of visitors as a distant maritime activity. Due to their form and sheer size, the museum galleries offer more depth and breadth than other interventions, as will be seen in the subsequent chapters. However, the fact that these details are housed within maritime settings will influence the interpretation of visitors, and the publics who may know of these sites, from a distance, but do not visit them.

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[8] Wood, *The Horrible Gift,* 337.
[9] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.

Figures 3.1 and 3.3 also highlight that Beech's "maritimisation" was also strongly visible in New England, as the vast majority of sites – of all sizes – were located along the coast from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, to New London, Connecticut. Furthermore, Rhode Island, where several interventions were situated, is nicknamed the "Ocean State" and Newport, Bristol and Providence are all located near ocean inlets **(Figure 3.6)**. Slater Mill was situated in Pawtucket, at the north of Narragansett Bay – New England's largest estuary – and the south of the Blackstone River that runs to Worcester, Massachusetts. Similarly, in Greater Boston, the Harvard Law memorial and Royall House and Slave Quarters were a few miles from the coast but were both situated near rivers, and within a wider coastal city area **(Figure 3.7)**.

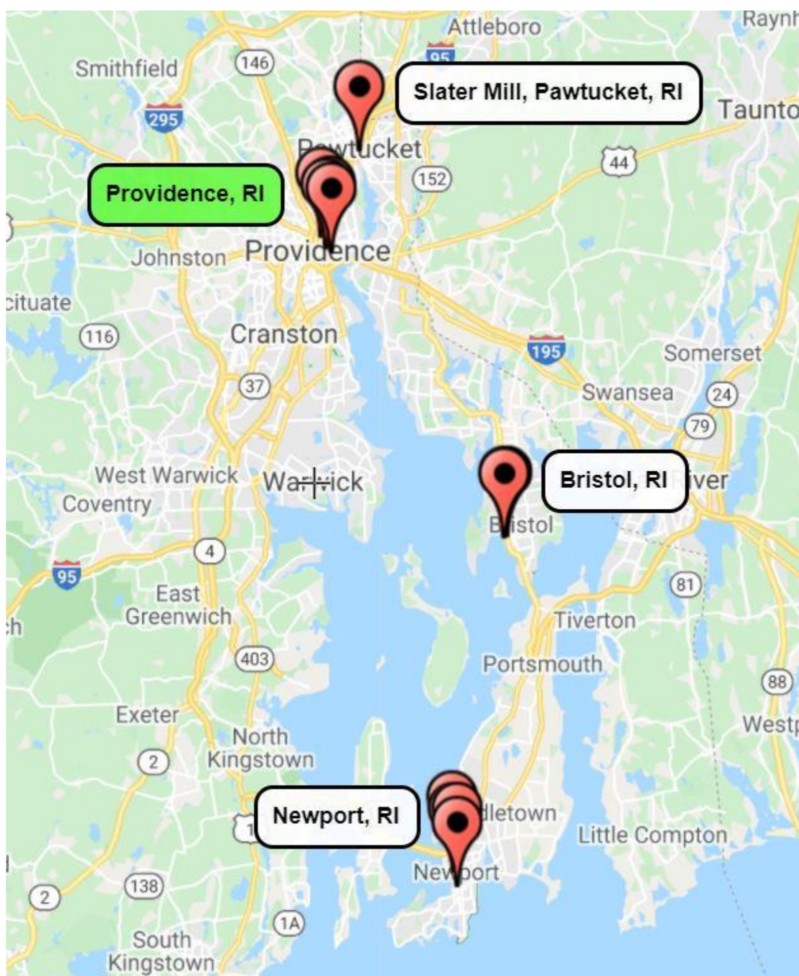


**Figure 3.6.** Labelled sites in Rhode Island. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

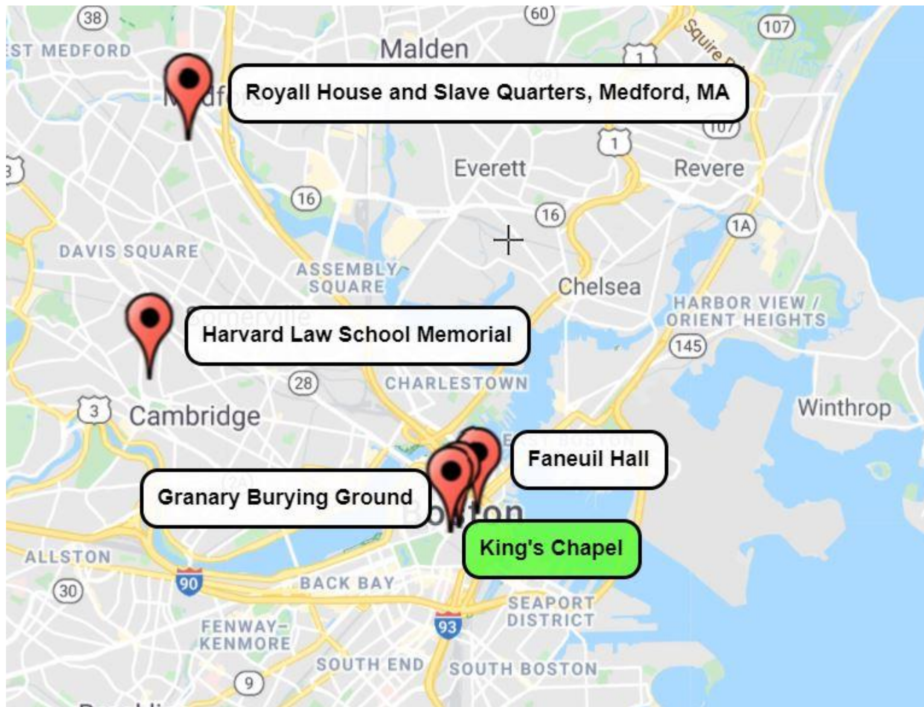


**Figure 3.7.** Labelled sites in Greater Boston. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

Figure 3.3 demonstrates that only Boott Cotton Mills in Lowell and Worcester Art Museum – situated some forty miles inland – disrupted this "maritimisation" in New England. The labels in Worcester were added in the late 2010s, at the same time as interventions were made inland, in England, at the Codrington Library at Oxford University, around Manchester and across the Peak District at Derbyshire cotton industry sites and Newstead Abbey, Nottinghamshire. This recent work has disrupted the "maritimisation," and while they are largely smaller interventions, their placement highlights that EAC did not just impact the ports.

The following pages focus on the inland English sites, as they are more numerous than the two in New England. The majority of these interventions are either connected to the cotton industry, as cotton mills or industrial museum galleries, or English country houses. Both types of sites have associated mythologies that are disrupted by the interventions which use the palimpsestic nature of their host sites – and the objects they contain – to draw out spectral traces of EAC and demonstrate that it impacted everywhere, including in England's "green and pleasant"

countryside. In one sense it is hard to challenge "maritimisation" on an island such as Britain. Nevertheless, the activity around the Peak District should be considered as such, as Manchester is some thirty miles from the West coast and Sheffield is over fifty miles from the East coast, with Derbyshire being centrally landlocked **(Figure 3.8).** Consequently, visitors will not approach the sites with a maritime framing.

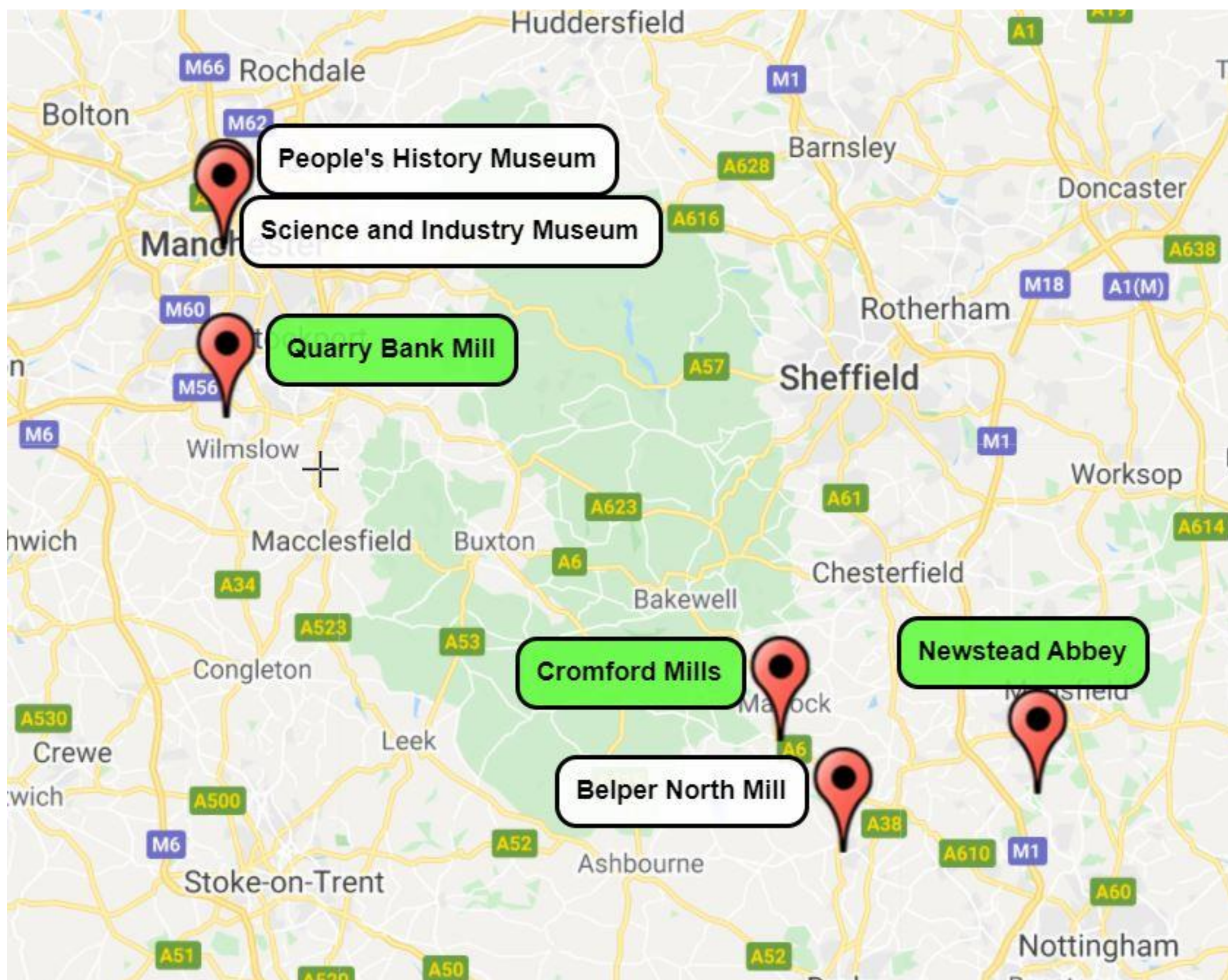


**Figure 3.8.** Labelled sites around the Peak District in northern England. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

This thesis considers two former cotton mills within Derbyshire's Derwent Valley – Cromford Mills and Belper North Mill – as well as Quarry Bank Mill near Manchester. The Science and Industry Museum and People's History Museum are located within the city centre of Manchester, which dominated cotton production in the nineteenth century. The Nottingham

based Slave Trade Legacies group also installed a film at nearby Newstead Abbey, which was one of the most significant interventions in a country house and further disrupts the "maritimisation." The inland geographic placement of these interventions provides the first element of the narrative for any visitors, who would encounter EAC not just in ports.

Furthermore, the placement of slavery into an industrial setting will influence visitors' understanding of the importance of enslaved labour to industrialisation. This is perhaps particularly true at cotton mills, including the five in this thesis, as Robert Allen recognises that "so many people have equated the Industrial Revolution to the cotton industry" because of the incredible growth of the industry from the end of eighteenth-century.[10] The mills are palimpsestic objects which contain spectral traces, but they also have separate overarching narratives, mythologies and "cultures of display."[11] Or, to put this another way, EAC is fitted into different existing narratives depending on its setting. The five cotton mills in this thesis had been re-purposed as part of "industrial archaeology," which records and preserves "industrial monuments."[12] This field developed in the mid-twentieth century and contributed to Robert Hewison's famous critique of the heritage sector as nostalgic within a period of economic decline.[13] Reflecting the perceived importance of the cotton industry in English and New England history, many of the mills were preserved, unlike sugar refineries and rum distilleries. While not saved with this intention, they now offer valuable palimpsestic sites of memory for understanding this enslavement-associated industry. Within these sites industrial archaeology shapes the

[10] Robert C. Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 213.
[11] Emma Barker, ed., *Contemporary Cultures of Display* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
[12] R. Angus Buchanan, "History and Heritage: The Development of Industrial Archaeology in Britain," *The Public Historian* 11, no. 1 (1989): 6.
[13] Robert Hewison*, The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (London: Methuen, 1987).

narrative, with an increased focus on industrial production and machinery, and EAC is placed within an industrial heritage, which is imagined as a working class – and largely white – space.

The English countryside more broadly is closely connected to the complex identity that is "Englishness," particularly as it is perceived as a "white landscape."[14] Consequently, as Neal writes, "English rurality has developed around the politics of (invisible) whiteness."[15] The connected idea of rural racism has been written on for decades.[16] The title of Corinne Fowler's unfairly attacked *Green Unpleasant Land* (2020) draws directly on the traditional national hymn *Jerasulem* which speaks of England's "green and pleasant land."[17] Like Fowler's work, the inclusion of EAC within this rural space not only challenges "maritimisation" but disrupts any perceived separation of white English identity from the histories of empire. The cotton mills – or "dark satanic mills" as they feature in the hymn – present a valuable opportunity for mapping a multidirectional memory between the white mill workers and enslaved Africans, as Chapter 5 explores in depth.

The perception that the countyside is proportionately whiter than urban areas is reflected in census data. According to the 2011 English census, while over twenty percent of the White population lived in rural locations, only two percent of the Black population – which is significantly smaller in total – lived outside urban locations.[18] Over ninety percent of all ethnic minority people lived in urban locations, with less than seven percent of either "Mixed White/Black African" or

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[14] Sarah Neal, *Rural Identities: Ethnicity and Community in the Contemporary English Countryside* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 2–3; Julian Agyeman, "Black People in a White Landscape: Social and Environmental Justice," *Built Environment* 16, no. 3 (1990): 232–236.

[15] Sarah Neal, "Rural landscapes, representations and racism: examining multicultural citizenship and policy-making in the English countryside," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25, no. 3 (2002): 444.

[16] Neil Chakraborti, Jon Garland, and Benjamin Bowling, *Rural Racism* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[17] Corinne Fowler, *Green Unpleasant Land: Creative Responses to Rural England's Colonial Connections* (Leeds: Peepal Tree Press, 2020).

[18] UK Government, "Regional ethnic diversity: 5. Ethic groups by type of location (urban or rural)" (2011), Last modified 7 August 2020. https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/uk-population-by-ethnicity/national-and-regional-populations/regional-ethnic-diversity/latest#ethnic-groups-by-type-of-location-urban-or-rural.

"Mixed White/Black Caribbean" living in a rural location. Similarly, while the introduction noted that no New England state has a Black population of more than 13 percent, focusing on the urban Providence and Pawtucket areas of Rhode Island this figure is over 16 percent, and Boston City has a Black population of over 25 percent.[19] This is not to say that urban visitors, of any ethnicity, do not venture to the countryside or that these are exclusively white spaces to feed the "urban-as-multicultural and rural-as-monocultural dialectic."[20] However, these rural locations are proportionately whiter, and may therefore perhaps be expected to tell white stories. Therefore, situating EAC in these spaces can be extremely powerful in challenging the mythology that transatlantic slavery is black history. Instead, inland sites reveal how this was everyone's history, everywhere.

## Powerful and problematic palimpsests

The above discussion reveals how host sites of intervention are not just physical places but symbolic spaces. Across the other sites, including the historic cityscape and docklands, there are spectral traces which had been "un-visibilised" to many white visitors prior to physical acknowledgments. This thesis shows that these sites should be viewed as palimpsestic historical objects from which alternative histories can be drawn. While at no site was the whole building reinterpreted and animated as a palimpsestic object – such as through projections onto the walls – the host setting of any intervention contributes to the narrative. At the NMM, the grandeur of the building creates an overarching narrative of imperial power within the Empire framework. Other

[19] United States Census Bureau, "Rhode Island: Black or African American alone," Quick Facts, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/map/RI/RHI225219; United States Census Bureau, "Massachusetts: Black or African American alone," Quick Facts, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/map/MA/RHI225219.

[20] Kye Askins, "Crossing divides: Ethnicity and rurality," *Journal of Rural Studies* 25, no. 4 (2009): 366.

interventions' interpretations directly drew out the spectral traces of their host sites. The Center for Reconciliation was created by the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island and one of the panels housed within the Cathedral of St John stressed that "Churches also benefited from the Slavery Business," highlighting their role in EAC.[21] Munroe notes that at the MOLD "the history and feel of the building itself [a former warehouse] directed the narrative to focus on the production of sugar,"[22] and visitors were told within the gallery that "the sugar and rum they carried back was stored where you are standing now."[23] An adjoining restaurant downstairs was also named "Rum & Sugar" but given that the restaurant could be visited from the quayside without understanding the history, it may contribute to the "un-visibility" of EAC on the cityscape. While historical buildings and objects have palimpsestic potential these can remain "un-visible" if action is not taken to draw out the spectral traces.

The following pages focus on another type of site that is situated in rural England: the country house. The mythology of English country houses makes them prime sites of resistance to slavery narratives – as witnessed with the 2020 National Trust report – but conversely, they also have huge potential to become sites of powerful interventions. They not only disrupt "maritimisation" but also the wider mythologies about the whiteness of English identity and the power of the upper classes. These extensive palimpsestic sites are peppered across the countryside, with spectral traces waiting to be drawn out by work such as the Colonial Countryside or the Slave Trade Legacies projects. However, as these houses contain spectral traces of centuries of narratives, EAC is often buried beneath other layers which are given more attention.

[21] Display panel, "Churches also benefited from the Slavery Business," CFR.
[22] Leanne Munroe, "Constructing affective narratives in transatlantic slavery museums in the UK," *Heritage, Affect and Emotion: Politics, practices and infrastructures*, eds. Divya P. Tolia-Kelly, Emma Waterton and Steve Watson (London: Routledge, 2016), 125.
[23] Text within display, "Triangle Trade," MOLD.

Consequently, in 2018 and 2019 it remained true that, as Moody comments, "the public history of slavery at British country houses is woefully under-developed."[24]

Despite the internal limitations, the placement of an intervention in such a house can be extremely powerful. Returning to the issue of "maritimisation," across New England, the other historic houses in this thesis from Portsmouth to New London are in coastal locations **(Figure 3.3)**. In contrast "maritimisation" is challenged by the inland distribution of Dyrham Park, Snowshill Manor **(Figure 3.5)**, Newstead Abbey, Harewood House and Lowther Castle **(Figure 3.4)** in England. Their geographic location disrupts the mythology that EAC only impacted ports and therefore breaks down rural "un-visibility."

It needs stressing that not all the historic houses examined in this thesis are English country houses. Historic houses more broadly can be seen as "a species of museum," and often feature exhibits.[25] This is the case at the John Brown House Museum in Providence and the Georgian House Museum in Bristol, England. Despite being over 3000 miles apart, both are town houses within historic slave trading ports and have exhibits on their occupants' involvement in slavery and the slave trade. None of the New England case studies were rural country houses and they do not match sites such as Harewood House or Dyrham Park **(Figure 3.9)** for size and grandeur. As Barker acknowledges, "the country house is notable because it is not simply a site of display, but arguably at least, a work of art in its own right."[26] These grand houses are accompanied by expansive

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[24] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 49.
[25] Linda Young, "Is There a Museum in the House? Historic Houses as a Species of Museum," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 22, no. 1 (2007): 59–77.
[26] Emma Barker, "Heritage and the Country House," in Barker, *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, 200.

landscaped gardens from which EAC was entirely "un-visible" as historical interpretation is rarely situated outside the walls of the building.

**Figure 3.9.** Front exterior of Dyrham Park. PTBA (July 2019).

Moody and Small, like Anthony Tibbles before them, draw a transnational comparison between English country houses and southern plantation houses that were "built and furnished on the profits of slavery."[27] Moody focuses on the above Dyrham Park. These comparisons speak to the various scholarly works on slavery memory in plantation houses in the US South.[28] However, unlike plantations, English country houses have been historically absolved from involvement in

[27] Anthony Tibbles, "Facing Slavery's Past: The Bicentenary of the Abolition of the British Slave Trade," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 29, no. 2 (2008): 295.
[28] For a sample of plantation literature see: David L. Butler, "Whitewashing plantations: The commodification and social creation of a slave-free Antebellum South," *International Journal of Hospitality* 2, no. 3 –4 (2001): 163–175; Derek H. Alderman and E. Arnold Modlin, "(In)Visibility of the Enslaved Within Online Plantation Tourism Marketing: a Textual Analysis of North Carolina Websites," *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* 25, no. 3–4 (2008): 265–281; Penny Carter, David L. Butler and Derek H. Alderman, "The house that story built: The place of slavery in plantation museum narratives," *The Professional Geographer* 66, no. 4 (2014): 547–557; Stefanie Benjamin and Derek Alderman, "Performing a different narrative: museum theater and the memory-work of producing and managing slavery heritage at southern plantation museums," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 24, no. 3 (2018): 271–272; E. Arnold Modlin Jr., Stephen P. Hanna, Perry L. Carter, Amy E. Potter, Candace Forbes Bright and Derek H. Alderman, "Can Plantation Museums Do Full Justice to the Story of the Enslaved? A Discussion of Problems, Possibilities, and the Place of Memory," *GeoHumanities* 4, no. 2 (2018): 335–359.

slavery by the belief that "Britain's connections to its slavery empire are separated by large distances."[29] On the contrary, this thesis argues that by changing the lens of vision to sites of EAC, rather than enslavement, these houses become key slavery heritage sites.

Yet, these grand houses are not just symbolically empty vessels that have been omitted from slavery memory because of geographic distance. Rather, while historic houses are a "global phenomenon," there is a particular "cult of the country house" in Britain.[30] As Peter Mandler writes, the estates and gardens are considered the "quintessence of Englishness" reflecting the long-established connection between heritage and nationalism.[31] However, there is a maelstrom of debate as to what Englishness entails, and consequently as Laurajane Smith notes, the country houses "reside within a web of tensions about what it means to be British and, more specifically, English."[32]

Historically, as Moody notes, "the British country house is a symbol of a particular articulation (and celebration) of national identity," which has developed since World War Two, and which relies "on their presentation as national sites of pride against which stories of slavery sit uncomfortably, or more accurately, do not sit at all."[33] These sites "signify the 'success' of the elite dominant class, and present largely romanticized, sanitized historical narratives," which focus on fixtures and the occupants' power.[34] The DOLHN is one of those sanitized narratives which feeds national pride, and it sits comfortably within these sites.

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[29] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 36.
[30] Barker, "Heritage," in Barker, *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, 204–205.
[31] Peter Mandler, *The Fall and Rise of the Stately Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
[32] Laurajane Smith, *Uses of Heritage* (London: Routledge, 2006), 122.
[33] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 49.
[34] Ibid., 35.

On the other hand, Ian Baucom argues that country houses signify "both Englishness and empire."[35] Reinforcing this, Chapter 1 noted developments in historical research into the links of English historic houses and enslavement, including English Heritage's *Slavery and the British Country House* and the LBS database, which lists over 400 records of houses, estates and gardens across Britain connected to British Slave Ownership.[36] In *Country Houses and the British Empire* – which includes a chapter on West Indian planters – Barczewski argues that "it is undeniable that the slave trade funded the purchase of a significant number of country houses."[37] When considering the breadth of involvement in EAC, which is explored in Chapter 5, it becomes apparent that English history is global history. Consequently, understanding the contribution of EAC amongst other narratives such as that of the empire in India, reveals a global and diverse Englishness. However, this is not a narrative revealed at the English country houses I visited.

Palimpsestic historical objects have several layers of history. At historic houses it is common for several periods of history to co-exist across the site, while other narratives are omitted. Across the English country houses, EAC was never the prominent narrative layer, and it was often almost entirely buried, despite occupants of Lowther Castle, Snowshill Manor, Newstead Abbey and Harewood House profiting from plantation ownership. Unlike the other historic houses, Lowther Castle in Cumbria is today a ruined façade, which housed an exhibition on *The Story of Lowther* that opened in 2017. The exhibits spanned nearly 1000 years of history across a few rooms, thus offering little space for discussion of plantation ownership in the eighteenth-century which featured in only one brief display.

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[35] Ian Baucom, *Out of Place: Englishness, Empire, and the Locations of Identity* (Princeton University Press, 1999), 166.
[36] Dresser and Hann, *Slavery and the British Country* House; Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/.
[37] Stephanie Barczewski, *Country Houses and the British Empire, 1700-1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 69–89, 25.

In contrast, Snowshill Manor, in Gloucestershire, is less old. It is a twentieth-century home, where the interpretation focuses on the unlabelled eclectic collection of Charles Paget Wade (1883–1956). Only a small book outside the main house noted that "his grandfather, Solomon Abraham Wade, had acquired sugar cane plantations on St. Kitts in the West Indies. These provided the Wade family with a fortune."[38] Solomon (1806-1881), who was originally a goods supplier to St. Kitts before acquiring sugar plantations, features on the LBS database as the recipient of compensation for nine enslaved labourers on St. Kitts.[39] The database also notes that Charles "inherited a substantial interest in the family sugar estates, enabling him to devote the rest of his life to his own pursuits." However, the connection between the slavery-related Wade family "fortune" and Charles' later ability to collect the objects within the house was not made explicit on the site, and within the main house there was no recognition of what facilitated the collection.

Newstead Abbey, in Nottinghamshire, was founded as a monastic house in the twelfth century. It predominantly focused however on the occupancy of the famous poet Lord Byron who lived at the house for only six years between 1808 and 1814. Young commented in her 2007 article that "Newstead Abbey could be classified as a generic stately home museum, but in the aura of Byron, it is irresistible to view it primarily as a monument to the great man, even at the expense of prior and subsequent inhabitants."[40] The interventions of interest to this thesis highlight that in 1818 Byron sold the house to his friend Lieutenant Colonial Thomas Wildman, who was compensated over £4,500 for the emancipation of 241 enslaved people on the Quebec plantation,

[38] Book, Snowshill.
[39] "Solomon Abraham Wade," Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/26074.
[40] Young, "Is There a Museum in the House?"65.

Jamaica, in the 1830s.[41] Observant visitors were told by an information stand within the Grand Drawing Room that "Wildman had inherited a huge fortune, which he spent on restoring and extending Newstead."[42] An additional information card further explained that "his father had owned the Quebec sugar plantation in Jamaica. The plantation was worked by over 300 enslaved Africans at a time and made the Wildman family a huge fortune. Thomas spent the whole of this fortune on purchasing and renovating Newstead."[43] An additional guide, that could be purchased on entry, repeated that "Wildman had inherited a large fortune from plantations owned by his family in Jamaica and between 1818 and 1850 he spent much of it on the repair and restoration of Newstead."[44]

Another downstairs display within the cloisters on "Discover Newstead," contained a panel that explained Byron sold his home to "his school friend Thomas Wildman. Wildman's fortune, made by the work of enslaved Africans, is poured into Newstead's crumbling walls."[45] The importance of enslaved Africans was reinforced by the nearby *Blood Sugar* film which explicitly ties Wildman's wealth to enslaved labour.[46] The placement of this exhibit is discussed further below. Here it needs noting that these interventions were relatively small within the large site. As Shawn Sobers – who worked on the *Blood Sugar* film – comments: "by the time Wildman purchased the property, Byron was so famous that Wildman could rebuild the property to become a museum celebrating the life and work of the great poet. Byron has no known connections with slavery (other than selling his house to Wildman), and the conceit of polite society was

[41] "Lieut.-Col. Thomas Wildman," Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/18594.
[42] Text on information stand, "The Grand Drawing Room," Newstead Abbey.
[43] Text handout, "The Grand Drawing Room," Newstead Abbey.
[44] Text in guide, Newstead Abbey.
[45] Text panel, "A Home Reborn," Discover, Newstead Abbey.
[46] Film, *Blood Sugar*, Discover, Newstead Abbey.

maintained, with the violence behind the money hidden across the Atlantic."[47] The continued focus on Byron perpetuates this, while EAC is the less visible – though not "un-visible" – narrative on the palimpsest.

Harewood House, in Yorkshire, was built in the 1700s by the Lascelles family who had accumulated a fortune from the plantation economy, and continued to own sugar plantations until the 1970s and still own the house.[48] Harewood is the house that "stands in the literature" for properties built from "West India money," and it was pictured within the ISM display on the "Economic Benefits of Slavery."[49] In 2008, Anthony Tibbles acknowledged that "Harewood has done more than most country houses" in terms of exploring its links to slavery.[50] In the 1990s, the Harewood House Trust initiated research that led to publications by Walvin and Smith as well as the creation of the online Harewood West Indian Archive.[51] Smith concluded that "conversations are beginning to take place about slavery; scenes from history, long obscured, are at last becoming visible."[52] However, following commemorations in 2007, Tibbles commented that "they have yet to follow it up in any meaningful way that would have a significant impact on the average visitor."[53] This remained the case, on the state floor, a decade later when I visited in 2019. The grand state floor displays the house's historic grandeur, particularly the Robert Adam interiors and

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[47] Sobers, "Colonial Complexity," in DeNardi et al. *The Routledge Handbook,* 45.
[48] S.D. Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648-1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 352.
[49] Hall et al., *Legacies,* 58; Photograph of Harewood House on Text panel, "Economics Benefits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[50] Tibbles, "Facing Slavery's Past," 295.
[51] James Walvin, "The Colonial Origins of English Wealth: The Harewoods of Yorkshire," *The Journal of Caribbean History* 39, no. 1 (2005): 38–53; S.D. Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648-1834* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); "Lascelles - Harewood West Indian Archive," University of York Borthwick Institute for Archives, Last modified 19 October 2015. https://borthcat.york.ac.uk/index.php/lascelles.
[52] Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism,* 358.
[53] Tibbles, "Facing Slavery's Past," 295.

Thomas Chippendale furniture, including pieces made of mahogany. What was lacking within this space was recognition of the importance of EAC.

The English country houses I visited continued to provide under-developed EAC narratives. This reflects the sanitized mythology around these sites. As Smith notes, in an echo of Jane Austin, "it is a truth universally acknowledged that a country house not in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a heritage tourist."[54] While Kane highlights that in the northern US, "incorporating slavery interpretation has brought a higher public profile and increases in audience and revenue," and Graft argues that many visitors are ready and willing to encounter this history, their analyses did not focus on English country houses.[55] It is important to distinguish between acknowledging that a house was home to a small number of enslaved servants and more expansive acknowledgement of the wealth generated from EAC. In England, in 2007 Smith found that "the house museum, Harewood House, recorded slightly higher levels of disengagement and confrontation than the other museums."[56] This reflects her previous findings that only 4.8 percent of visitors to country houses went for education.[57] Nevertheless, English country houses have the potential to be exceptionally powerful host settings for EAC interventions.

The first half of this chapter focused on spatial placement on a macro scale and connected symbolism at heritage sites. The first section outlined where in the regions the interventions are and how their locations perpetuate and challenge "maritimisation," which persists particularly in New England. It then explored the symbolic space of the countryside, and cotton mills and historic houses within it. It highlighted that host buildings are powerful palimpsests, but that English

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[54] Smith, *Uses of Heritage,* 115.
[55] Kane, "Institutional Change," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 58; Conny Graft, "Visitors Are Ready, Are We?" in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 71–83.
[56] Smith, "'Man's inhumanity to man,'" 198.
[57] Smith, *Uses of Heritage,* 139. These findings were based on qualitative questions given to 454 visitors to six English country houses in 2004.

country houses are problematic sites that often bury EAC beneath other layers of history. As with the macro scale, the specific placement of these interventions will influence how they are read. Observers will consider how much space is given to EAC, as well as the spatial relations of interventions to their surroundings and potential meanings. The remaining sections of this chapter build on this argument, while highlighting the need to catch the attention of visitors and passers-by. If the placement of interventions hinders observer engagement, EAC will remain "un-visible" as the complex details in Chapters 4 and 5 will never be discovered.

## Engaging grazing visitors or perpetuating "un-visibility" through placement

This section focuses on internal placement of EAC interventions within host museums, galleries, houses, and mills. Previous literature on visitor studies has strongly influenced this analysis, including the vital understanding that visitors usually "graze" rather than studying every detail of exhibits.[58] Psychologist Stephen Bitgood has written extensively on visitor attention, including the familiar adage within museum studies of "museum fatigue," where visitors stop paying attention after spending too long in galleries.[59] While the degree to which visitors ignore and bypass elements of exhibitions continues to be discussed and analysed, there is a general understanding that visitors will not take in everything. Beverely Serrell calculated that "it appears typical for diligent visitors [who she describes as people who stopped at more than half of the available elements within an exhibit] to make up less than one-third of the exhibition's

[58] V&A Museum, "Gallery text at the V&A Ten Point Guide" (September 2013), 13. http://www.vam.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/238077/Gallery-Text-at-the-V-and-A-Ten-Point-Guide-Aug-2013.pdf.

[59] For example see: Stephen Bitgood, "Museum Fatigue: A Critical Review," *Visitor Studies* 12, no. 2 (2009): 93–111; Stephen Bitgood, *Attention and Value: Keys to Understanding Museum Visitors* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2013).

audience."[60] Instead visitors "skip elements" and "few exhibitions are thoroughly used."[61] The belief that visitors will not notice or absorb every element of substantial interventions underpins the interest in how to animate EAC. Placement is a key aspect of this. As Bitgood notes, "a poorly placed exhibit object may be given no attention because it is not detected as a result of its placement or because of distracting effects from other objects."[62] All of this speaks to the idea that "un-visibility" is not binary, and that stories can be acknowledged while being hidden.

The following pages focus on placement within large purpose-built slavery museum galleries, before exploring placement at wider sites. The large galleries featured more stories than the economic histories which were the focus of my research, but slavery was central to the overall narratives. As Cubitt observes, the large permanent English exhibitions from 2007 "covered a certain common territory, typically presenting a general account of transatlantic slavery's history (usually embedded in a broader description of the "triangular trade"), an evocation of the horrors of enslaved experience (and especially the ordeal of the Middle Passage), a narrative of abolitionism (and perhaps of slave resistance), and a reading off to the legacies."[63] Wilson reflected that "the standardisation of much of the museum output for 2007 represents a specific cultural response to 'managing' the violent history and present-day repercussions."[64] This standardisation was discernible at the MOLD and Wilberforce House, with details on EAC peppered throughout. Aspects of interest for this thesis were particularly centred at the MOLD around four connected displays, which were situated as visitors enter the large exhibition room,

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[60] Beverly Serrell, "Paying Attention: The Duration and Allocation of Visitors' Time in Museum Exhibitions," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 40, no. 2 (1997): 117.
[61] Ibid., 118–120.
[62] Bitgood, *Attention and Value,* 157.
[63] Cubitt, "Museums and Slavery," in Araujo, *Politics of Memory*, 161.
[64] Ross Wilson, "Rethinking 1807: museums, knowledge and expertise," *Museum and Society* 8, no. 3 (2010): 176.

from "Wealth of Sugar" round to "Triangle Trade."[65] At M Shed a small circular exhibit covered many of the same topics, as did the displays at Lancaster Maritime Museum, but these focused more on local people, as explored in Chapter 5. While specific details will likely be by-passed at all these sites, those that are observed are intrinsically situated within narratives about slavery in these galleries.

The standardisation was also clear at the ISM which had three galleries covering: Life in West Africa, Enslavement and the Middle Passage, and Legacies. As Araujo comments, "The second gallery 'Enslavement and the Middle Passage' is the central and most robust space" in the ISM.[66] It is within this space that the vast majority of details from the ISM discussed in this thesis are located, including a specific display on the "Economic Benefits of Slavery" **(Figure 3.10)**.[67] The introductory text to this section explained that it covered "the story of how the transatlantic slave trade operated," "what happened to enslaved Africans" and "how Europeans have benefited from slavery."[68] The first and final points are of particular interest to this thesis, which focuses on how EAC brought the profits back to England and New England. While Chapter 4 situates this regional involvement in a global web, the thesis cannot explore all of these interconnected narratives. It must be recognised though that central to the global narrative of EAC were the enslaved people and the plantations they laboured on, which were "centres of enslaved labour and engines of the slave empire."[69] In *The Plantation Machine* (2016), Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus explain that "the plantation was a great success because it was a precursor to the industrial factory in its management of labor, its harvesting of resources, and its scale of capital investment and

[65] Displays, "Wealth of Sugar," "West India Docks," "London the Slave Port," and "Triangle Trade," MOLD.
[66] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 116.
[67] Display, "Economics Benefits of Slavery" and "Tropical Goods and the Rise of Consumer Society," Enslavement, ISM.
[68] Text panel, "Enslavement and Middle Passage," Enslavement, ISM.
[69] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 9. Scanlan has a chapter on "The Plantation": 63–104.

output."[70] The plantations in the Caribbean and North and South America are economic enterprises at the core of EAC, but the geographic focus of this thesis means discussion of them is limited. The ISM does however dedicate space in their central gallery to explaining that the plantations were brutal factories, as well as the enslaved experience. Placing the EAC connections in England alongside such displays situates them within one interconnected narrative.

**Figure 3.10.** The "Economic Benefits of Slavery" display case within the ISM. PTBA (March 2019).

[70] Trevor Burnard and John Garrigus, *The Plantation Machine: Atlantic Capitalism in French Saint-Domingue and British Jamaica* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 20.

Amongst the other large English museums, the NMM *Atlantic Worlds* gallery was notably different as slavery was one subject amongst several, such as naval battles and whaling. This reflects that EAC was part of a wider banal web of trade and activity, rather than some hidden criminal activity. This framing also situated slavery within a wider narrative which reveals that "the Caribbean during the sugar boom was a war zone."[71] Through this placement it was implied that "profits provoked wars," but the cycle of slavery, war and conquest outlined by Scanlan was not explicitly explored.[72] This different framing was also still a maritime one and may have been confusing to visitors.

Of the EAC museum elements of interest to this thesis, the MOLD's "Wealth of Sugar" display and the connected displays in that corner, are the most striking in terms of placement. As visitors pass from the introductory rooms to the main exhibition space, it is the first display they encounter **(Figure 3.11)**. The large glass display, containing various pieces of tableware, will be returned to in the subsequent chapters. Here, it should be noted that the tableware both catches attention and visually situates the narrative of consumerism in the space.

[71] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 25.
[72] Ibid., 47.

**Figure 3.11.** The "Wealth of Sugar" display and connected displays at MOLD. PTBA (April 2019).

While the museum galleries offer different frames for the details of EAC, enslavement is central to them all. In contrast, at wider sites visitors may not be expecting information about slavery. This is problematic as Antón et al. found that visitor attention levels may be lower "if the content is not anticipated."[73] Therefore, placement is even more vital at sites such as historic houses and cotton mills. Yet with the smaller interventions, in contrast to the large galleries, transatlantic slavery – never mind details of wider EAC – can often be missed. The details missed by being led around by a guide at the historic houses in New England are unknown, while

[73] Carmen Antón, Carmen Camarero and María-José Garrido, "A journey through the museum: Visit factors that prevent or further visitor satiation," *Annals of Tourism Research* 73 (2018): 58.

immersion in the spaces of other sites allowed me to observe what may likely go unnoticed by grazing visitors.

At the Georgian House Museum, the slavery exhibit is in an optional upstairs room. Araujo is highly critical of this placement, which she refers to as an “isolated initiative that segregates slavery in one room of the house that remains disconnected from the rest of the property.”[74] While I did encounter brief acknowledgements elsewhere in the house, such as at the house entrance and within rooms, the placement at the Georgian House Museum is undoubtedly problematic, and yet familiar. Particularly at English country houses acknowledgements of EAC are much more tokenistic and easier to miss.

Snowshill Manor’s only acknowledgement of the Wade’s plantation wealth came in a written book, in a room many visitors may not enter.[75] Dyrham Park was undergoing renovations when I visited in July 2019, but temporary signage within the house told visitors that the exhibition space would change to explore “the BIG stories” of the seventeenth-century, “including globalisation, slavery and religious intolerance.”[76] What role will be played by the pair of decorative stands which depict chained black African men, discussed by Moody, is of future interest.[77] When I visited, these stands were stored away, largely under cover, in a room only accessible with a guide during the renovations.

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[74] Araujo, *Museums and Atlantic Slavery,* 32.
[75] Book, Snowshill.
[76] Temporary text panel, “Exhibition gallery,” Dyrham.
[77] Moody and Small, “Slavery and Public History,” 58–60.

At Newstead Abbey, some detail was provided in the "Grand Drawing Room," renovated by the enslaver Wildman. The film *Blood Sugar*, which highlights Wildman's link to sugar plantation wealth, was not however situated within the main rooms. Shawn Sobers, who helped produce the film, wrote that "the film is now screened on a monitor in a new room at the entrance to Newstead Abbey, designed to give an overview of the whole property at the start of a visit."[78] If placed at the beginning, as Sobers suggests, the film would frame the whole experience of the site for visitors who would understand that enslavement-associated wealth funded its renovation. However, when I visited, the film was situated within the "Discover Newstead" display in the cloisters, near the end of the visitor route. The film was optional and only two seats were provided to view it **(Figure 3.12)**. This meant that the film could only retrospectively frame the whole site. Furthermore, the placement at the end of the visitor route is particularly concerning as Zıraman and Imamoğlu's recent research confirmed that "visitors seem less willing to spare time and energy as they proceed toward the end of their visits […] particularly if it implies getting further away from the exit."[79] Tired visitors must detour from the exit route to watch this film, thus increasing the likelihood it is bypassed. This is

**Figure 3.12.** The Newstead films installed in the cloisters. PTBA (September 2018).

[78] Sobers, "Colonial Complexity," in DeNardi et al. *The Routledge Handbook,* 46.
[79] Ayça Turgay Zıraman and Çağrı Imamoğlu, "Visitor Attention in Exhibitions: The Impact of Exhibit Objects' Ordinal Position, Relative Size, and Proximity to Larger Objects," *Environment and Behavior* 52, no. 4 (2020): 363.

even more problematic when considering that this is a historic house setting where the content may not be anticipated, as discussed previously.

At Harewood House, in 2019, acknowledgement of EAC was only visible within the "Below Stairs" sections, while visitors were left to enjoy the fixtures and fittings of the state floor undisrupted. Two small interactive screens offered text that, in one sentence acknowledged how "Lascelles hoped that this new country house would reflect his vast wealth, based on the family's business in the Barbados sugar plantations, impress his contemporaries and enhance his political and social status."[80] Plantations were mentioned, but enslavement was not explicitly acknowledged. While Barbados was mentioned in the first instance, it was not acknowledged that the family also owned plantations on Jamaica, Grenada and Tobago.[81] Henry Lascelles, the 2nd Earl of Harewood (1767-1841), was compensated over £25,000 for 1277 enslaved people on six estates – four in Barbados and two in Jamaica – in the 1830s.[82] The brief acknowledgement also followed details on famous architects, designers and craftsmen, and the screens are situated within a downstairs corridor that many will pass through without reflection. Even if they do stop, the order of the text means that grazing visitors may never reach this acknowledgement. Within the Still Room, a small corner display on "The origins of sugar at Harewood" focused on consumed sugar, rather than saying Harewood House itself was built from the wealth from sugar plantations worked by enslaved African labourers. Harewood made digital changes to this narrative in 2020, but what changes will take place within the space are unknown.

The placement of EAC within the cloisters and basements reflects the separation of some histories into these physically subaltern spaces. Barker observed in 1999 that the National Trust

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[80] Interactive Screen, "More about the house," Harewood.
[81] Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism,* 183.
[82] Ibid., 251–252.

had deflected criticism that they were “packaging and prettifying the past” through “the hugely popular opening up of kitchens and other below-stairs.”[83] Reflecting this trend, Smith’s 2004 study of country house visitors reported that that 20.9% wanted “more information about the servants, estate workers or slaves” – in a rather strange grouping.[84] However, as Tibbles commented in 2008, while “country houses have recognised the public interest in the ‘below stairs’ areas and the wider social fabric that needs to be reflected, they have generally avoided the origins of wealth that allowed for the creation of these impressive piles and their contents.”[85] Enslavement is treated as a “below stairs” story, where narratives of hard labour and ordinary people are kept separate from the elite family upstairs. This may be logical in a New England house that focuses on enslaved servants, a common feature which Chapter 5 discusses. However, English country houses’ slavery connections are more typically made through EAC rather than enslaved servants, and the houses themselves are palimpsestic objects bearing the spectral traces of geographically distant enslaved labour that helped build and renovate them. Therefore, the placement of EAC “below stairs” is misplaced, and the interventions should be sustained throughout the sites.

[83] Barker, “Heritage,” in Barker, *Contemporary Cultures of Display*, 205–206.
[84] Smith, *Uses of Heritage,* 155.
[85] Tibbles, “Facing Slavery's Past,” 295.

At Kenwood House, in London, much of the detail relevant to this thesis was provided within the beautiful Robert Adam library. This placement, within a family room, reflects that the narrative of Kenwood is not that EAC built the site, but that interpretation focuses on perceived anti-slavery connections and the biracial woman who lived in the house, Dido Belle. While the intervention was within the library, of particular interest was a small book on a small desk – on "Lord Mansfield, Slavery and the Law" – that can be easily bypassed **(Figure 3.13).** The book sat near more text that asks visitors: "Dido Belle and her uncle Lord Mansfield enjoyed this fine room together. Did family influence his legal rulings? See what you think from the evidence here."[86] On the right of the table were a collection of extracts from documents referring to Dido Belle's experience, and a copy of Wedgwood's anti-slavery medallion "Am I Not a Man And a Brother?" with the problematic image of a kneeling enslaved man. In the centre there were copies of two books: a grey one on "The Library" which has information as in the other rooms on the interiors, and the second blue one on "Lord Mansfield, Slavery and the Law." The details discussed in Chapter 5 rely on visitors reading this small book rather than being drawn to more eye-catching

**Figure 3.13.** Kenwood House's library with the table. PTBA (July 2019).

[86] Text on table, Library, Kenwood.

features of the room such as the ornate ceiling. Put simply, while in purpose-built galleries transatlantic slavery is the dominant subject, smaller interventions position it as an optional extra.

## Strategies for visually animating EAC

The interventions utilised different strategies to animate the spectral traces of EAC, and the following analysis should be framed under recognition of visitors grazing behaviour. Importantly, the book at Kenwood alludes to a wider issue across my case studies: an over reliance on written text to convey details of EAC. This is a problem in terms of accessibility as visitors must be able to read text, meaning in these cases that they must be literate English readers without severe visual impairment. Furthermore, many visitors who can read are unlikely to want to read masses of small text. The V&A Gallery text guide bluntly makes the point that: "Visitors have come to look at objects, not to read books on the wall. They are tired, they are standing up, and they might well be craning over someone's shoulder."[87] Nevertheless, across these sites, text – often broken up with 2D images – is extremely common, providing essentially illustrated books on walls. For example, at Wilberforce House 2D images include those of a cotton mill and of Pinney's Georgian House in Bristol.[88] The images speak to external palimpsestic buildings – in the pictured mill and house – but may also allude to a perceived absence of useable objects within the collection. The images offer narrative details to visitors with prior knowledge but cannot be properly understood without reading the accompanying text. The choice of words within the written text is also problematic at some sites. After the British bicentenary it was highlighted that "there has been pressure to replace the term 'slave' with 'enslaved African' because the term

[87] V&A Museum, "Gallery text," 9.
[88] Images within display panels, "Trade and Industry" and "Managing a Plantation," Slavery, WH.

'slave' has 'a tendency to replicate the assumptions about enslaved people that were a feature of transatlantic slavery itself."[89] However, Stephen Hopkins House, John Brown House, Harewood House, Kenwood House and Lowther Castle all used the term "slave" within their interpretations.

The most substantial EAC interventions at historic houses were found at the John Brown House in Providence and the Georgian House Museum in Bristol. Alongside guides within the houses, both feature exhibits installed at the end of the house visit. Both exhibits were essentially books on walls, with few objects, and the detail in these exhibits would be better distributed around the houses, where visitors would repeatedly encounter them. The *Sally* exhibit **(Figure 3.14)** did feature some enslavement related objects, such as leg irons, in a small display case in the centre of the room. However, these are awkwardly detached from the panels on the walls.[90] Similarly, the *Slavery and John Pinney* exhibit **(Figure 3.15)** did not comment on the table which was the only non-panel object in the room.[91] The fact that these interventions existed in family homes situates historical occupants within EAC, but many of the interesting details will likely be missed by having books on walls.

[89] Cubitt et al., "Introduction," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 5–6.
[90] Sally, JBH.
[91] John Pinney, GHM.

**Figure 3.14.** The *Sally* exhibit at the John Brown House. PTBA (July 2018).

**Figure 3.15.** The *Slavery and John Pinney* exhibit at the Georgian House. PTBA (April 2018).

Written text can also be better used than as panels of small text. It can utilise space like any other object, and the size of text influences the likelihood of it being seen by grazing visitors or passers-by. At the Lancaster Maritime Museum, an extract from William Cowper's poem *Pity the Poor Africans (1788)* was displayed.[92] The poem finishes with the line: "I pity them greatly but I must be mum, For how could we do without sugar and rum?" and offers a means of critiquing consumerism through primary material. However, it was unfortunately just small text on a cupboard door, and likely to be missed.[93] At the People's History Museum in Manchester, EAC featured only briefly in a display on the "Industrial Revolution" **(Figure 3.16)**. Within that display, the varied sizes of text drew visitors' attention to the introduction to the Industrial Revolution and that "Manchester grew rich on cotton from slave plantations," as well as a large quote claiming that "We are all guilty" which is explored in Chapter 5. The smaller text, between the statements at the People's History Museum, repeated that "Empire, enslaved peoples and cotton made Britain wealthy in the 19th century." It was only within yet smaller text that the British dates of the abolition of slavery featured within the label for the problematically passive image of a kneeling enslaved man. This reflects that British abolition is largely irrelevant to the nineteenth century cotton story of Manchester, and thus visitors are enabled to graze past this detail. They are nevertheless noted, while the 1865 date of abolition in the US South is not, despite the region's importance in the cotton story.

[92] Text of poem, Slave Trade, LMM.
[93] I believe this exact quote features in the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C. display on "Making of the Atlantic World" but I have not visited myself.

**Figure 3.16.** "Industrial Revolution" display at The People's History Museum. PTBA (April 2019).

Large text was also used effectively at the beginning of the gallery at the MOLD where a clear visual title explained the following content: *London, sugar & slavery* **(Figure 3.17)**. The large and simple 2D black and white words provided a striking and succinct visual introduction to the key themes of the gallery. The prominent “Wealth of Sugar” display **(Figure 3.11)** as visitors entered the second space reinforced the focus on sugar, which is discussed in Chapter 4. To the left of the gallery title was a table of slave trading ships that departed from London, which worked as a visual aid, but still relied on text.

**Figure 3.17.** *London, sugar & slavery* gallery entrance at MOLD. PTBA (April 2019).

While visitors may graze a portion of the other details provided, Roger Bennett reasserted in 2019 that **"**regardless of museum size, it is known that relatively few visitors to museums actually read textual object labels."[94] Bitgood also notes that visitors are particularly "reluctant to read long labels or labels with small lettering."[95] While scholars highlight that it is difficult to observe when and what a visitor is reading, the idea that "people don't read labels" is "a part of museum folklore."[96] This must be considered, particularly at art galleries where the details largely lie in optional labels. The following discussion compares the narratives created within two spaces at the National Portrait Gallery (NPG) in London and Worcester Art Museum in Massachusetts, the two art analysed galleries in this thesis.

At the NPG, a panel introduced Room 20 as dedicated to *The Road to Reform* and explained that amongst a climate of reform and following the Great Reform Act of 1832, "the reformers triumphed in 1833 when Britain abolished slavery in the colonies." Taylor describes the newly elected Parliament of 1833 as "avowedly anti-slavery."[97] The NPG panel finished by telling visitors that "the struggle for worldwide abolition continued and is fervently celebrated in Haydon's *The Anti-Slavery Society Convention, 1840*."[98] The referenced painting to commemorate the event was by far the largest painting within *The Road to Reform* room, thus drawing visitors' attention towards it, even if they do not read the introductory panel. Reflecting the reliance on text for details, it was accompanied by its own text panel that begins a narrative with the formation of the Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1787, noting that "while popular

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[94] Roger Bennett, "Object Label Quality and Label Readership in Small Museums," *International Journal of Arts Management* 21, no. 3 (2019): 42.
[95] Bitgood, *Attention and Value,* 136.
[96] Paulette M. McManus, "Oh, Yes, They Do: How Museum Visitors Read Labels and Interact with Exhibit Text," *Curator: The Museum Journal* 32, no. 3 (1989): 174.
[97] Taylor, *The Interest,* 248.
[98] Text panel, "Road to Reform," Room 20, NPG.

feeling was on their side, slavery was crucial to Britain's economy."[99] This brief statement offered no quantification as to how "crucial" slavery was economically or the strength and volume of "popular feeling" against it. It instead continued by recognising the British abolition dates of 1807 and 1833 before explaining that "this monumental painting records the 1840 convention of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS), established to promote worldwide abolition." Scanlan begins the conclusion of *Slave Empire* with discussion of the 1840 Convention to demonstrate that slavery did not end in 1833.[100] However, at the NPG, the continued British connections to EAC, particularly through the cotton industry, are buried beneath the abolitionist narrative. To visually reinforce the perception that this is a space for abolitionists, the painting was surrounded by portraits of figures such as William Wilberforce. These figures were all framed as radical reformers, with abolition presented unrealistically as a clean break.

In the centre of this same NPG room were busts, one of which was of George Granville Leveson-Gower. The accompanying text noted that his "investments included the Bridgewater Canal and a one-fifth stake in the Manchester and Liverpool Railway," both of which were valuable infrastructure links in the North West.[101] There was no mention of the booming cotton industry that tied Liverpool and Manchester together, and relied on plantations until the 1860s, so the text did not challenge the narrative of British abolition as an end point within the space. Discussion of the role of the Manchester and Liverpool railway in EAC was also absent at the Science and Industry Museum, despite the Liverpool Road terminus in Manchester hosting the museum, highlighting how spectral traces in several host buildings remain "un-visible." These palimpsestic objects are not used to disrupt the temporal demarcation created by the celebration of

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[99] Text panel, "The Anti-Slavery Society Convention 1840," Room 20, NPG.
[100] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 331–334.
[101] Text label, "George Granville Leveson-Gower 1st Duke of Sutherland," Room 20, NPG.

emancipation in 1833, and unlike at the People's History Museum, where the abolition dates are very small, the DOLHN narrative was central to The *Road to Reform* gallery at the NPG.

More broadly, further individual labels at the NPG relevant to this thesis were difficult to identify and easily missed. In contrast the Worcester Art Museum used colour to draw particular attention to their slavery related labels, which were installed in the Early American Portraits Gallery in 2018. When I visited, 11 of the 29 portraits had new accompanying labels. These labels were darker in colour and sat alongside older labels focused on artists. A new panel – titled "America's Peculiar Institution" – was the same colour and offered details on the slavery history.[102] The darker panel and labels created a colour-coding effect **(Figure 3.18)**. In this gallery, having read the panel, visitors could glance around the space and see that roughly half the portraits have connections to enslavement, the exact details of which are given in the individual portrait labels. Given the understanding that visitors are unlikely to read all individual labels this is an effective means of embedding the narrative of enslavement visually in the space.

**Figure 3.18.** The "America's Peculiar Institution" with connected purple labels. PTBA (July 2018).

[102] Text panel, "America's Peculiar Institution," WAM.

In 2003, Rice claimed that “museums play a large part in fighting amnesia, but this does not mean they are prime sites for memorialization. They are fixed, mainly non-interactive sites.”[103] The details in this thesis make an argument for the positive contribution of museums as a form, highlighting their inherent depth. On the other hand, the above recognition concerning the overuse of text challenges the idea that museums may have developed into more interactive or immersive spaces in the intervening decades. Additionally, while interactive screens were used in relation to themes of the “Profits of Slavery” at the ISM and “London the slave port” at the MOLD both devices provided further reading opportunities on the subjects to maximise the density of detail within the space.[104] At Newstead Abbey film was utilised, but this is rare for EAC history, and its problematic placement is highlighted above. These examples do however reflect the move away from purely written text, which follows an understanding that “larger, three-dimensional, multi-sensory, and dynamic objects tend to attract and hold visitor attention more successfully.”[105] Chapter 6 will return to how rarely multi-sensory and dynamic installations are used to discuss EAC. The following pages highlight more common static visual aids which occupy a significant amount of space and are designed to attract visitors’ attention and animate details of EAC within their host sites. These include large-scale images of enslaved labourers in cotton museums, smaller images that highlight either global or local connections – analysis of which is developed in Chapter 4 – and contemporary art.

Above it was noted that visitors may be less engaged with details when the EAC content is unexpected, such as at cotton mills, which historically relied on enslaved labourers picking the raw cotton many miles away. However, at Boott Cotton Mills, Quarry Bank Mill and Cromford Mills

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[103] Alan Rice, *Radical Narratives of the Black Atlantic* (London: Continuum, 2003), 203.
[104] Interactive Screen, “Profits of Slavery,” Enslavement, ISM; Interactive Screen, “London the slave port,” MOLD.
[105] Zıraman and Imamoğlu, “Visitor Attention,” 346.

images of enslaved labourers were visible as visitors enter the sites, rather than later in their visit. Zıraman and Imamoğlu's recent research confirmed the belief that when an object is large, there is an "instant increase in attention."[106] All three of these interventions occupied significant space and are therefore more likely to catch visitors' attention than small images, such as those seen at Belper North Mill.[107] Once their attention is caught just a glance can transfer the message that enslaved labourers contributed to this history. Both Boott Cotton Mill and Quarry Bank Mill used large eye-catching images of enslaved labourers to introduce the topic to visitors **(Figures 3.19 & 3.20)**. In both cases these large images were situated on visitors' right as they first enter the space, thus visually embedding enslaved labourers within the narrative. Those with prior knowledge will be reminded of the link, and this might influence their reading of the site, while those curious or confused as to why the image is included can find answers behind the display panel.

**Figure 3.19.** Display on "Plantation Economy" at Boott Cotton Mills. PTBA (July 2018).

[106] Ibid., 363.
[107] Images on display panel, "Growing Cotton," Belper.

**Figure 3.20.** Image of enslaved labourers – from Richard Barfoot, *Progress of Cotton* (1840) – at Quarry Bank Mill. PTBA (October 2019).

The economic history of EAC is not just hard to animate because it is imagined to be a dull collection of figures, and focusing on this aspect risks returning to "bland detailing of commercial operation" which promotes a "wilful amnesia" or the "bland euphemistic linguistic currency" which replaces the horrors of enslavement.[108] The experience of enslaved people should be central to any comprehensive intervention, but while Chapter 5 touches on representations of the enslaved, plantation life is beyond the geographic focus of this thesis. It is nevertheless worth noting that large images of enslaved people, which situate their labour clearly in a space, should be carefully selected. Neither of the above images depict the violence or brutality of slavery which

[108] Rice and Kardux, "Confronting the Ghostly Legacies," 249; Wood, *The Horrible Gift,* 91.

is touched on in the displays behind them, reflecting traditional plantation imagery. If visitors have a false belief in benign enslavement and are not drawn to look behind the images, these aspects will remain “un-visible.” At both Boott and Quarry Bank the displays on slavery were situated behind the images, and in this sense the images can be seen as offering a content warning rather than guaranteeing that an accurate history of enslavement is embedded within the space.

Rather than use a historical image, Cromford Mills used a black and white mural which was developed through the Global Cotton Connections project and involved the STL group.[109] The mural offered a strong visual narrative on the connections between enslaved cotton pickers, local mill workers and Indian weavers, which is explored further in Chapter 5. The mural was designed to “occupy a prominent place within the Gateway site and be visible to anyone who entered.”[110] However, it was partially “un-visible” within the visitor centre. As I entered the space, the mural was obscured by a translucent glass wall **(Figure 3.21)**, which celebrated “key players” including the cotton entrepreneurs Richard Arkwright and Jedediah Strutt. Mirroring history, these great white men were concealing the narratives of the labourers, but the latter’s’ haunting presence was felt as the glass was translucent rather than opaque. The labourers also became fully visible when viewed from the walkway which cut between the glass and mural wall, reflecting how the angle, and personal lens, of the viewer impacts what is visible. To varying degrees, all three of these large images situate enslaved labour within the physical space of cotton mills, where visitors may not be expecting this content, but they will find it hard to ignore.

[109] Mural, “Global Cotton Workers,” GCC, Cromford.
[110] Dalton, “Illustrating a Point,” 14.

**Figure 3.21.** The mural at Cromford viewed through the "Key Players" wall. PTBA (June 2018).

Further details of the sites' narratives of EAC can also be introduced to the space through imagery. The highly problematic recurring images of a triangular slave trade are perhaps the most common example of this, and they are critiqued in depth in Chapter 4. Alongside text, Cromford Mills also used several further large eye-catching images that reinforced the geographic narrative that cotton was a global commodity. Two maps within the "Global Cotton Connections" display visually illuminated where raw cotton was supplied from in two periods, including the importance of South America **(Figure 3.22)**. This earlier timeframe disrupts preconceptions that the US South supplied all cotton and creates a visual understanding that enslavement was widespread across the Americas, but visually this relies on visitors knowing where people were enslaved if they do not read the text below the maps.

**Figure 3.22.** “1804-1817” raw cotton supply map at Cromford. PTBA (June 2018).

Another image that succinctly condensed international connections, at least with the Caribbean, was the "Web of Profit" diagram at the Center for Reconciliation. It illustrated that EAC was a web of interconnection, while closer inspection encouraged understanding that New England slave traders, investors and suppliers were connected to Caribbean sugar planters **(Figure 3.23)**.[111] Further details were included in even smaller text. Unfortunately, considering the above statements about visitor attention and installation size, this diagram was overly small. It would ideally be made larger with similar diagrams developed at other sites.

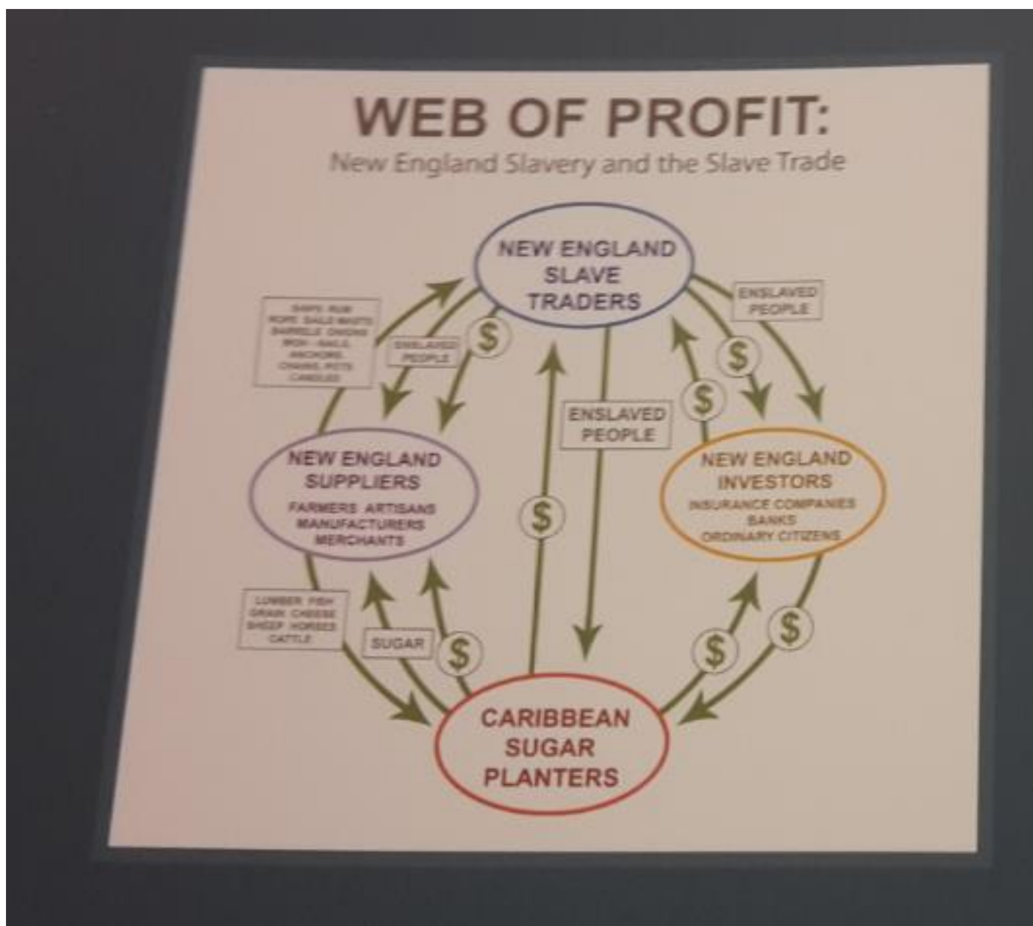


**Figure 3.23.** "Web of Profit" on Center for Reconciliation's "New England Slavery was Profitable" panel. PTBA (July 2018).

[111] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.

In contrast to text and diagrams, this research found that, within internal spaces, contemporary art, and visual culture, was rarely used to explore details of EAC. However, where art was used, its placement again significantly impacts its reading. The Legacy section of the ISM featured several pieces of artwork, including *UK Diaspora* by Kimathi Donkor.[112] Celeste-Marie Bernier has analysed Donkor's ten-part work.[113] Of particular interest was the piece *I Give You*, situated at the top of *UK Diaspora*, which consists of coins arranged in the shape of the portrait of Queen Elizabeth II, as on present British coinage, framed by nails **(Figure 3.24)**. As placed within the ISM, this piece offered a statement – even at a glance – that British wealth, particularly that of the elite, is intertwined with the history of transatlantic slavery. Bernier further highlights that the "monarch's emblems of wealth, empire, and nationhood—her crown and jewellery—are rendered in brown-colored coins of little value, while her skin tone comes to life via silver coins of far greater monetary weight," thus offering a commentary on the inherited privilege of whiteness.[114] The placement within the ISM, which has displays on the racial legacy of slavery, contributed to this interpretation.

**Figure 3.24.** The top section of *UK Diaspora*. PTBA (March 2019).

[112] Kimanthi Donkor, *UK Diaspora,* Legacy, ISM.
[113] Celeste-Marie Bernier, "Tracing Transatlantic Slavery: In Kimathi Donkor's *UK Diaspora*," *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 41 (2017): 108-124.
[114] Ibid., 118.

Elsewhere in the Legacy section of the ISM the large display of street names – including the famous Penny Lane – was likely to catch visitors' attention **(Figure 3.25)**. The accompanying text panel on "Reminders of Slavery" confirmed that "many streets are named after merchants involved in the trade."[115] However, even without reading, given its placement within the ISM visitors will also assume from the context that the streets are connected to slavery. In her recent publication, Araujo finds this display particularly praiseworthy, and she writes that it is "certainly the most successful in exemplifying how the profits of the trade left important marks in Liverpool."[116] This installation was not just large and striking, and therefore likely to catch grazing visitors' attention, but the lower street signs could also be touched and moved, making it a multi-sensory experience.

**Figure 3.25.** ISM's street sign display. PTBA (March 2019).

[115] Text panel, "Reminders of Slavery," Legacy, ISM.
[116] Araujo, *Museums and Atlantic Slavery,* 20.

At the MOLD, a board on legacies explained that "our urban landscape with its galleries, museums and monumental buildings bears witness to the millions who sweated, both here and around the world, to make it the great city it is."[117] Similarly at the Lancaster Maritime Museum, text highlighted that "Georgian buildings remain from this period, a visible reminder and marker of a darker aspect of the city's history."[118] However, the reliance on text makes these vital acknowledgements more likely to be missed, despite the palimpsest potential of both host sites.

At M Shed it was similarly made clear that "the profits of the slave trade and the associated trades helped to build Bristol as we see today."[119] Yet, this text accompanied a labelled map of properties in Bristol. This map was installed in 2011 from research by Madge Dresser, and predates the LBS database, but serves as an example of how the database can be visualised.[120] The map occupied a whole panel, and even without being studied it made the point that EAC impacted many local sites, as the map is situated within a display on the Transatlantic Slave Trade. If studied, it highlighted not only those involved in direct slave trading but other connections such as brass and copper works and banking **(Figure 3.26)**. All of these installations offer more engaging ways of animating the history of EAC, while these final examples allude to one of the most underused palimpsestic objects: the cityscapes of England and New England.

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[117] Text panel, "Legacies," MOLD.
[118] Display panel, "The Slave Trade Legacy," Slave Trade, LMM.
[119] Accompanying text panel, Map of Bristol properties, M Shed.
[120] (Sue Giles, Senior Curator at Bristol Museums, Interview with author, 16 April 2018).

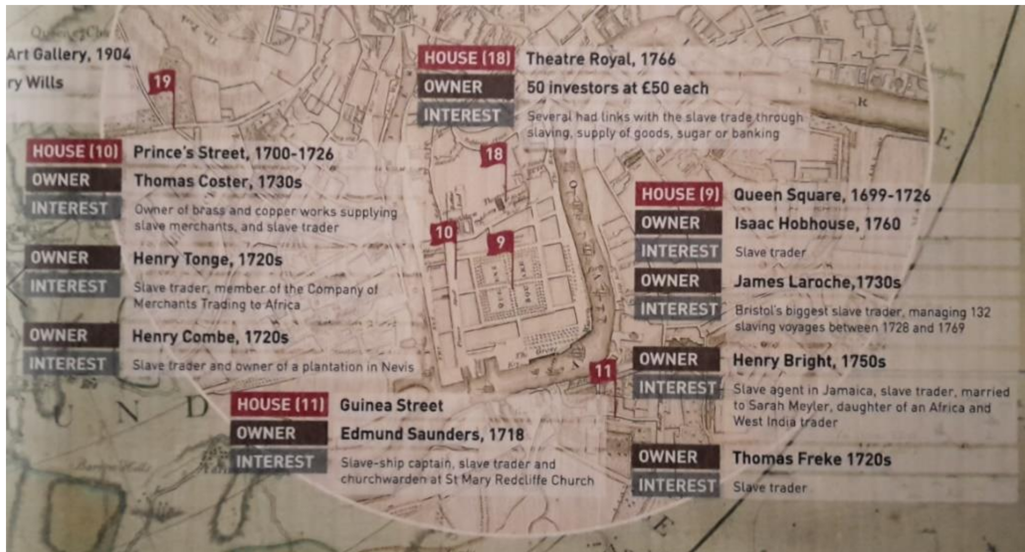


**Figure 3.26.** Close-up of Queen's Square on M Shed's map of properties. PTBA (April 2018).

## Illuminating EAC in public space

The final section in this chapter is concerned with EAC interventions in public space. These interventions included purpose-built memorials, plaques, and informative signage and boards which all draw out the spectral traces of the built landscape that surrounds them. The majority of these interventions were also situated within the port towns and cities, thus collectively reinforcing "maritimisation." Due to their succinct nature, they offered limited details, as is explored in the following chapters. While some were internal, those placed outdoors were also exposed to potential vandalism as well as weather damage, as I found with a largely unreadable sign in Bristol, Rhode Island. Building on the above discussion, the following analysis is also framed by consideration that the first challenge of interventions in public space is to get people to stop and look at them. While museum visitors are known to "graze," cityscape passers-by may not engage at all, and the vast majority who do will encounter the site unexpectedly.

Rice argues that "the everyday nature of the encounter with the public work of art is key to its quiet effectiveness."[121] However, as Winter discusses, there is a risk that interventions in public space are "white noise in stone" as "for them to see it, someone had to point it out, and others had to organize acts of remembrance around it. Without such an effort, sites of memory vanish into thin air and stay there."[122] Similarly, while Robert Musil claimed that "there is nothing in this world as invisible as a monument," Werner Fenz argued in 1989 that Nazi monuments "are certainly not invisible, especially because our historical consciousness no longer allows complacency concerning the Nazi era."[123] This reflects that there is usually a spectrum of awareness about memorials and monuments, where some are barely noticed, and others – such as the Colston statue – become hyper-visible because of heightened consciousness. The basic fact that slavery commemoration is granted any public space at all shows the shifting consciousness of the twenty-first century, in which it is seen as a relevant piece of the cultural identities of at least some of the occupants of England and New England.[124] These cultural identities are shaped through various means that also contribute to any history's visibility, including education and media attention which are not explored in this thesis. Instead, this section is concerned with how striking and engaging public memorials are, and how they interact with their surroundings, building on Duncan's idea of the intertextuality of landscapes.

[121] Rice, "Naming the money," 327.
[122] Jay Winter, "Sites of Memory and the Shadow of War," in *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook,* eds. Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2008), 73.
[123] Werner Fenz and Maria-Regina Kecht, "The Monument Is Invisible, the Sign Visible," *October* 48 (1989): 75–78.
[124] For the relation between monuments and cultural identity see: Nuala C. Johnson, "Mapping monuments: the shaping of public space and cultural identities," *Visual Communication* 1, no. 3 (2002): 293–298.

Bernier and Newman claim that in "successful memorials to slavery," artistic structures offer a "dramatic and interactive element, converting objects into performances."[125] The following memorials, to various degrees, used art to engage audiences and animate history, while others chose only to use text. In Newport, William P. Haas' *In Silent Witness* (2001) was situated in the public library entrance. While this was an internal space it is a public space, used overwhelmingly by local people. The artwork visually situated the imagery of a transatlantic slaving ship within the space **(Figure 3.27)**, before a visitor reads the accompanying text. This reflected that Newport was heavily involved in trafficking enslaved people.[126] Keith Stokes, a local resident involved in the memorial installation, also stressed that it is "an entire wall memorial piece of art that has pieces from Guinea and from Ghana and the Yoruba people of Nigeria," reflecting the different cultures of West Africa.[127] An accompanying text panel further elaborated on both Newport's involvement in the slave trade and the different cultures of people who were enslaved.

**Figure 3.27.** *In Silent Witness* memorial in Newport Public Library. PTBA (July 2018).

[125] Celeste-Marie Bernier and Judie Newman, "Public Art, Artefacts and Atlantic Slavery: Introduction," in *Public Art, Memorials and Atlantic Slavery,* eds. Celeste-Marie Bernier and Judie Newman (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), 5.

[126] According to the TAST database, of the 1697 total Slaving Voyages that originated in Mainland North America, 945 began in Rhode Island. Of those 235 departed from Newport – more than any other named Rhode Island port. That number though is not an accurate reflection, because 605 are listed as originating in "Rhode Island, Port Unspecified," but 439 of those ships were registered in Newport. In total 659 of the 1697 voyages were on ships registered in Newport – or roughly 40 per cent. See: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.

[127] (Keith Stokes, Vice President of the 1696 Heritage Group, Interview with author, 24 July 2018).

However, the key elements, were visually embedded within this public space by the large artwork without requiring any reading of text.

Some thirty miles north, was Martin Puryear's *Slavery Memorial* (2014) in Providence on the Brown University campus. The two-part memorial consisted of a sculpture and a nearby informative stone plinth. The sculpture element showed the top of a ball, or dome, seemingly embedded in the ground, with a broken chain emerging from it **(Figure 3.28).** Brown's website – which is not referenced within the space – explains that: "Reminiscent of a ball and chain, the dome also represents the weight of history still half buried, while the reflected sky symbolizes hope for the future."[128] The ball and chain is a "recognizable symbol of enslavement," which is likely to spark connected thoughts in observers.[129] Its "half buried" design also alludes to the fact that this was "un-visibilised" history that is emerging into consciousness. However, without pre-existing consciousness, or looking online, the artwork may be interpreted differently. Details on the piece, and Brown University's links to EAC, were installed in text on a plinth that was strategically situated next to the path on which observers were likely to stand. While these details were not provided within the artistic installation, the parts worked together with the eye-catching and familiar symbolic sculpture drawing visitors' attention, and the plinth explaining the context more clearly.

[128] "Martin Puryear Slavery Memorial," Brown University Public Art, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.brown.edu/about/public-art/martin-puryear-slavery-memorial.
[129] Ibid.

**Figure 3.28.** Brown's *Slavery Memorial* viewed from the path. PTBA (July 2018).

In comparison to the Brown Memorial, Kevin Dalton Johnson's *Captured Africans* (2005) memorial **(Figure 3.29)** was much more visually explicit on the subject of EAC, as Chapter 4 details. Rice, who worked on this memorial in Lancaster, describes it as a "guerrilla memorialisation" that embedded "slavery in the city."[130] He explicitly argues that "exhibiting the slave trade in a public space, away from its usual relegation to an often tired museum gallery, enables its full historical and contemporary implications to be teased out."[131] While more depth is often found in museum galleries, the power of placement within the cityscape contributes to the narrative, and speaks to wider audiences. As *Captured Africans* was situated just a few metres from the river in a port city it continues to feed the narrative of "maritimisation." On the other hand, Rice consciously notes that "the committee and the artist felt it was more important that the memorial was close to the

[130] Rice, "Naming the money," 325.
[131] Ibid., 329.

water that enabled the trade than in the town centre where it would have been dwarfed by buildings and, in part at least, decontextualized."[132] This issue of being dwarfed, or buried by powerful surroundings, is particularly acute on university campuses that not only house large buildings but are symbolic sites of elite power.

**Figure 3.29.** *Captured Africans*. PTBA (July 2019).

[132] Ibid., 329 (Footnote 15).

The three university campuses with EAC interventions explored in this thesis are not just universities but top-ranking, long-established, elite institutions. The University of Oxford is widely accepted to be amongst the top two universities in the UK, along with Cambridge, while Brown University and Harvard University are Ivy League schools. Acknowledging EAC within such institutions disrupts these sites of power, as with installations at country houses, and they can be extremely powerful. However, at all three sites, the EAC interventions were difficult to find and small in relation to their surroundings, while the installations at Harvard Law and All Souls College Oxford appeared geared towards students rather than the wider public.

Brown's memorial was located near the edge of the campus, on the Front Green rather than the main College Green on the other side of University Hall **(Figure 3.30).** This made it more accessible to the publics, and also prevented it from being entirely surrounded by the significantly larger grand buildings of the campus. The memorial was, nevertheless, dwarfed by the buildings that sat behind it. The same is true of the Harvard Law slavery memorial plaque, which was particularly difficult to locate within the elite campus. The plaque was embedded in a stone outside the Caspersen Student Center at the north end of Langdell Hall **(Figure 3.31)**. The nearby benches suggest students may stop and observe the plaque, though the benches could be better situated to encourage this engagement. The plaque's placement – and the inscribed words "may we pursue the highest ideals of law and justice in their memory" – highlighted that it was mainly intended for those studying at Harvard Law, not the publics.[133]

[133] Harvard Slavery Plaque.

**Figure 3.30.** Brown's *Slavery Memorial*, adjacent to University Hall. PTBA (July 2018).

**Figure 3.31.** Harvard Law's memorial plaque (bottom left), embedded in stone on the edge of a plaza outside the Caspersen Student Center at the north end of Langdell Hall. PTBA (July 2018).

In England, the plaque on the former Codrington Library in Oxford appeared similarly placed for students and staff. Both plaques also relied on observers' reading text and are not visually engaging. The Oxford plaque faced the readers' door for the library, from Catte Street, so that users of the library encountered it. The plaque simply read: "In memory of those who worked in slavery on the Codrington Plantations in the West Indies."[134] If observers know the connection the plaque's placement uses the building walls as a palimpsestic object. However, to work effectively it relies on those viewing it knowing that Codrington donated to the college, which seems increasingly unlikely after they chose not to use the name Codrington library from 2020. Furthermore, by secluding this plaque into a portioned off section dedicated to library entry, the college confined its recognition of connection to EAC to the library building, and not the whole college – or University.

The plaque's placement within the interior of an elite college also makes it highly likely that many passers-by will never see it, thus maintaining the "un-visibility" of EAC at historic institutions. It could have been placed on an exterior wall of the library that all visitors can walk up to, including the one that faces the busy Radcliffe Square. Instead, for visitors it was situated behind a locked gate off the North Quadrangle of All Souls College **(Figure 3.32)**. From the Quadrangle, the text was large enough

**Figure 3.32.** The Oxford plaque viewed through the gate. PTBA (July 2019).

[134] Oxford plaque.

to be read through the gate, but it was literally, as well as symbolically, behind a locked gate and concealed within symbolically, and often literally, inaccessible walls. The Oxford plaque could only be visited by outsiders during a two-hour period, and to do so visitors must be interested in, and comfortable with, entering the elite space of the college grounds.[135]

This reflects a wider issue that several case studies were not easily accessible, or at least required a level of comfort to enter that being a white researcher afforded. Another barrier is that the historic houses and cotton mills on both sides of the Atlantic largely charged an entry fee. The Center for Reconciliation panels were the only case studies I needed to organise access to, at the Cathedral in Providence in July 2018, though they formed a travelling exhibit at other times. Collectively, these practical barriers perpetuate the "un-visibility" of EAC. The exceptions to this were the museums which were both easy to locate and free to access, which is common in England.

King's Chapel in Boston was also freely accessible, and the boards introduced to the site in 2017 are an example of effective placement. Within King's Chapel's the twenty-four boards were displayed around the church with four exploring "Slavery and King's Chapel." They had sub-titles on "African American Congregants," "Industry Interwoven with Slavery," "The Struggle to End Slavery" and "Tied to the Trade." The last of these was placed at eye-level upon a historical memorial to Samuel Vassall (c.1586-1667) **(Figure 3.33)**. The text explained that "several of the most prominent families in 18$^{th}$-century King's Chapel – the Apthorps, Royalls and Vassalls – held substantial numbers of enslaved people in their Massachusetts homes, and owned brutal sugar plantations in the Caribbean."[136] Its placement thus recontextualised the adjoining memorial to a

[135] Visitors were allowed within the North Quadrangle from 2-4pm on weekdays and Sundays when the college was open in 2019.
[136] Information board, "Slavery and King's Chapel: Tied to the Trade," King's Chapel.

member of the Vassall family. Nearby “The Struggle to End Slavery” board was placed alongside a US Civil War memorial and was similarly speaking to existing objects within the space. The large boards were more visible than small labels, as they physically occupied more space.

**Figure 3.33.** The “Tied to the Trade” board on a memorial to Samuel Vassall in King’s Chapel. PTBA (July 2018).

King's Chapel was, like Newport's library, technically indoors but it was also a public space. Furthermore, it was much more likely to have large numbers of visitors as it was one of the sites of Boston's Freedom Trail. Faneuil Hall and Granary Burying Ground also featured on the trail, with the latter being only 100 metres from King's Chapel on Tremont Street. The Freedom Trail is a 2.5-mile walking route around several of Boston's most famous historic sites, with a particular focus on independence, or freedom, from Britain, thus feeding into the DOLHN. The Trail's official website explains that it "is a world-renowned, signature tourist experience attracting over 4 million people annually."[137] Rather than being separated out as "black history," the enslavement connections at Granary Burying Ground and King's Chapel were embedded within this narrative, and interestingly provide a significant challenge to the DOLHN that the Trail promotes. The proximity of these sites therefore reinforces the recurring message that slavery is part of Boston's history. The King's Chapel interpretation also noted that Isaac Royall Jr. bequeathed land to Harvard to establish the Law School and that Royall's house is open as a museum, speaking to other case studies within Greater Boston **(Figure 3.7)**.[138]

Walking trails are not explored in depth in this thesis, as the majority take the form of a guided tour or a separate paper trail. However, it is worth noting that these trails work to draw together relevant palimpsestic sites within a walkable distance of each other, thus highlighting the volume of spectral traces. The large English slave trading ports – Liverpool, London, Bristol and Lancaster – have, or have had, slave trade trails. In Providence, the Center for Reconciliation offered walking tours around multiple relevant sites. In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a Black Heritage Trail was introduced in 2017, following the unveiling of the African Burying Ground. One of the physical markers of that trail is discussed in Chapter 5 as it offered a permanent

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[137] The Freedom Trail, "About," n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.thefreedomtrail.org/about.
[138] Information board, "A Pew of One's Own, Isaac Royall Jr.," King's Chapel.

intervention into physical space. Boston also offers a Black History Trail, in which enslavement is one of the many histories covered.

Trails are effective in raising consciousness and avoiding interventions becoming "white noise in stone" as people fly by. Even without trails, geographic grouping of interventions also reinforces the message that EAC impacted a place and increases the likelihood observers will see something about this history. For example, Brown's memorial in Providence was also within a few hundred metres of two historic houses that discuss EAC – Stephen Hopkins House and John Brown House – as well as near to the Center for Reconciliation **(Figure 3.34).**

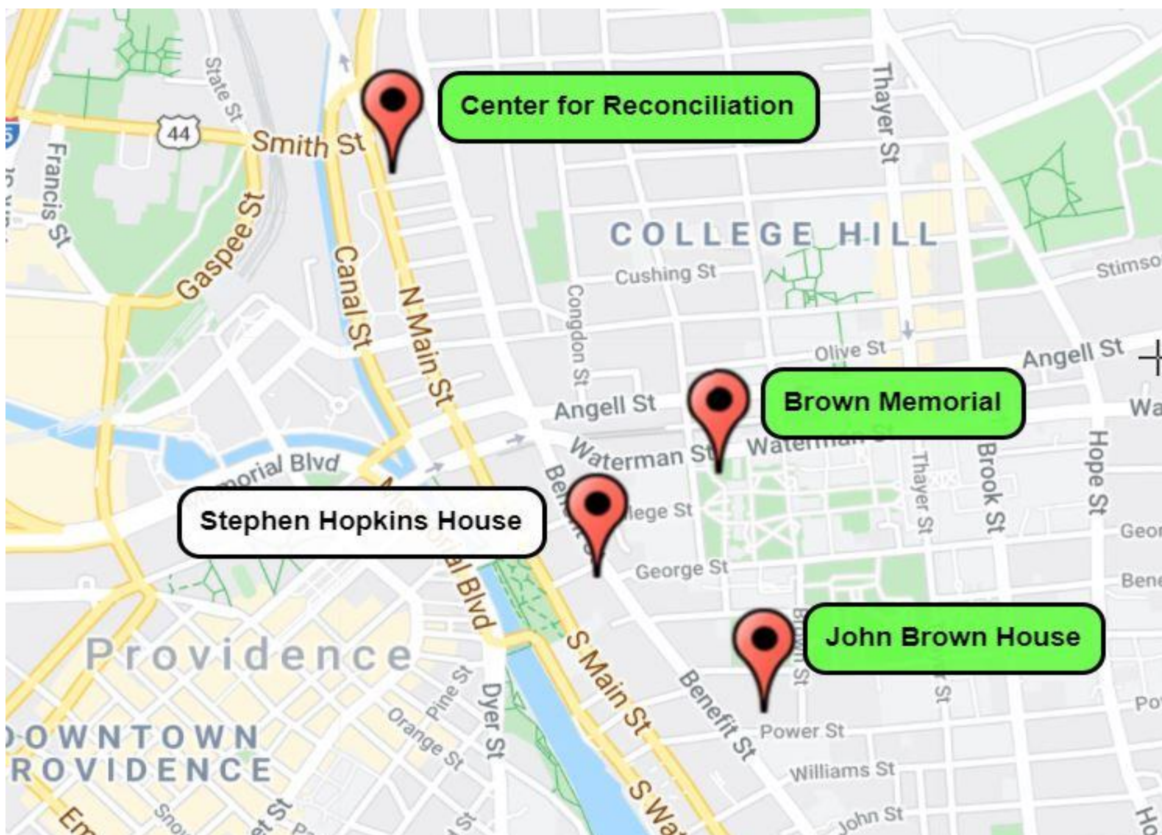


**Figure 3.34.** Labelled sites in Providence to highlight proximity. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

The interpretation at the houses also drew attention back to Brown University. At the John Brown House, visitors were told by both the written and audio guides about the family's connections to Brown University, and slavery. The end of the written introduction highlighted that "to this day, there are many still-standing buildings and namesakes in operation that are testament to the family's prominence in the city."[139] In the small exhibit upstairs at Stephen Hopkins House there was an image of Brown University's University Hall, which connected to further information explaining that "tangible evidence of slavery exists all around us, including in the buildings and edifices their labor helped create, such as University Hall on Brown's campus."[140] This grouping meant that the Slavery Memorial was not alone in attempting to recontextualise Brown University, and parts of Providence's cityscape. Further south in Rhode Island, both Linden Place and external signage discussed EAC in Bristol, and multiple public sites drew out connections in central Newport. In England, in Lancaster, the *Captured Africans* memorial was located some 200 metres along St George's Quay from the Lancaster Maritime Museum, which noted the memorial in their exhibits. There were also multiple sites that acknowledged EAC in the English ports of Bristol, and London, though particularly in the latter they were spread out. Where interventions are grouped together in coastal locations they may perpetuate "maritimisation," but they all collectively reinforce the message that EAC impacted the town or city, even if some individual sites are missed.

This section closes with a commentary on the *Gilt of Cain* memorial (2008). This intervention is included in depth in this chapter because its spatial placement is central to its narrative. Vitally, the memorial sits in the City of London, reflecting the importance of finance to EAC. As Nick Draper argues, there was "a widespread, engrained but sometimes 'thin' presence of

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[139] Text in guide, "1&2 Introduction at Front Door," Written, JBH.

[140] Text panel, "Where can we find evidence today about African Americans during Stephen Hopkins' time?" Upstairs, SHH.

the slave economy" within the City of London by 1800.[141] He carefully distinguishes that "there are no serious grounds for arguing that the City was 'built on slavery'" but that the "slave economy *was* pervasive" as a stream of wealth creation.[142] Draper's work confirms the appropriateness of London having a slavery memorial within this financial centre, however the memorial itself could have been clearer on this narrative.

The *Gilt of Cain* memorial consisted of many granite columns gathered around a podium, which are engraved with words from the Black British poet Lemn Sissay. It was larger than the other cityscape memorial interventions and interferes with used space to encourage its own observation **(Figure 3.35)**. It did not just catch the eye but physically disrupted walkers. Rice offers a detailed analysis of the memorial and concludes that it is "magnificent" and "works against wholesale amnesia."[143] Yet while Rice argues that the "multiplicity of the memorial is one of its main strengths," he recognises it is an "ambiguous visual landscape."[144] Conscious of the methodological intent to record what others are likely to see, the following brief comments are acutely aware of the various interpretations that may be taken from the site and that its ambiguity may also be received as making it incomprehensible. Details of the memorial are however worth considering before returning to its placement.

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[141] Nick Draper, "The City of London and slavery: evidence from the first dock companies, 1795–1800," *Economic History Review* 61, no. 2 (2008): 461.
[142] Ibid., 459–460.
[143] Rice, "Tracing slavery," 266.
[144] Ibid., 262, 264.

**Figure 3.35.** The *Gilt of Cain*. PTBA (April 2019).

Several potential interpretations of the *Gilt of Cain* were alluded to in the accompanying information board.[145] The first paragraph stated that the memorial "commemorates the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade," reflecting its erection in the wake of the 2007 bicentenary. Stressing the abolitionist focus, the final word from Sissay's poem inscribed on the podium was "Wilberforce" **(Figure 3.36)**. The second paragraph on the board continued to explain that the former churchyard site in which it was located "has a strong historical connection with the abolitionist movement." The third paragraph of the accompanying board then explained that "the podium calls to mind an ecclesiastic pulpit or slave auctioneer's stance, whilst the columns evoke

[145] Accompanying text panel, *Gilt of Cain.*

stems of sugar cane and are positioned to suggest an anonymous crowd or congregation gathered to listen to a speaker." While sugar cane and the auction block may symbolise enslavement more broadly the explanation lacked an explicit link to EAC, as the economic importance of sugar cane was not developed on the panel.

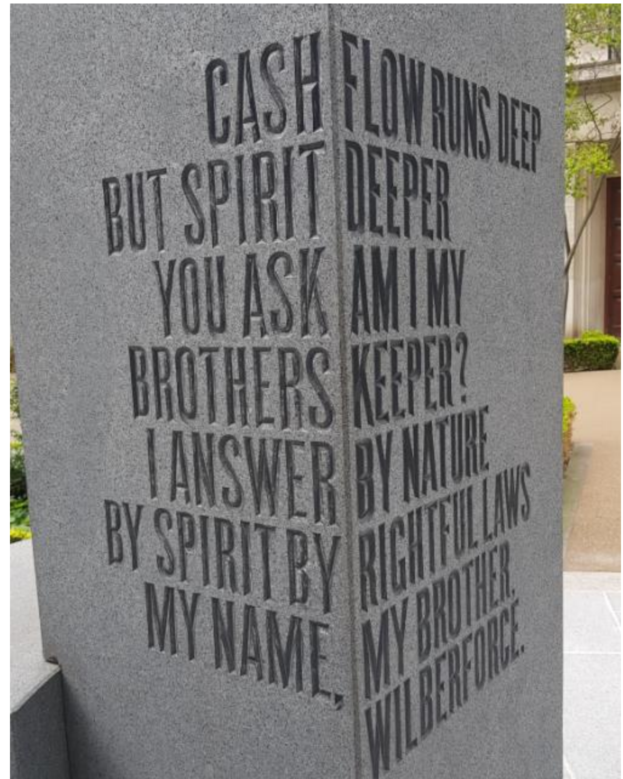


**Figure 3.36.** The final lines of Sissay's poem engraved on the podium of the *Gilt of Cain* memorial. PTBA (April 2019).

The fourth paragraph revealed that Sissay's engraved poem featured the "coded language of City's stock exchange trading floor" but not why. The accompanying panel then featured the written poem in full, which was also inscribed onto the physical memorial. The poem includes lines such as "the traders buy ships, beneath the slaves" – which was engraved on an outlying pillar – and "cash flow runs deep" which featured on the above podium. Additionally, for Rice the symbolism of the memorial begins with its title, *Gilt of Cain*, and its "homophonic closeness to 'Guilt of Cane,' which indicts a city whose greed for commodities has led to the human rights abuse of the slave trade."[146] This financial aspect of the memorial is of particular interest to this thesis and is amplified by its placement within the City of London.

[146] Rice, "Tracing slavery," 263.

The site of St. Mary Woolnoth Church in Fen Court may be an abolitionist site, but the positioning was "paradoxical" because on a larger scale it sat at the heart of the financial district of the City of London.[147] Within 100 metres of the sculpture was the famous Lloyd's building, which was constructed in the 1980s and houses Lloyds of London insurers who apologised for their role in the slave trade in 2020. Bearing this in mind, the placement of this sculpture can be read as a radical "guerrilla memorialisation," but this history was not made explicit. The content and placement, nevertheless, challenged the narrative of the symbolic site of power that is the City of London. Sites of power were also challenged by the interventions at Oxford University, Brown University and Harvard Law. These elite institutions, similar to historic houses, are disrupted by these interventions.

As with the university installations, *Gilt of Cain* was overshadowed, but this time by huge modern skyscrapers. It is not solely cityscape interventions that can be obscured by larger objects, but the size of cityscape surroundings amplifies this overshadowing. For the *Gilt of Cain*, this is a consequence of placing the memorial in the centre of the City of London. Furthermore, its "guerrilla" nature is amplified as it refuses to be buried. Instead, the pillars of the memorial mirrored the skyscrapers around them and rose up to disrupt the ability of people to walk freely through the space **(Figure 3.37).** This memorial highlighted that, rather than avoiding grand surroundings that may physically and symbolically dwarf an intervention, locations with spectral traces can be utilised to physically disrupt the "un-visibility."

[147] Ibid., 260.

**Figure 3.37.** The top of *Gilt of Cain* looking upwards. PTBA (April 2019).

Furthermore, on a citywide scale, the *Gilt of Cain*, challenged “maritimisation.” While the large galleries at the MOLD and NMM were located in the docklands, the *Gilt of Cain* memorial was situated further into the centre of London, along with the National Portrait Gallery with its limited interventions **(Figure 3.38)**. As Moody observes in her work on Liverpool, sites can exist within a maritime port but not necessarily contribute wholly to the distancing of “maritimisation” on a city scale.[148] This is particularly true within the huge cosmopolitan city of London, where the docklands feel distanced from the centre. At present there is no substantial museum to slavery within the centre of the city, despite recent proposals. The Museum of London is looking to open a larger site in Smithfield in the City of London, which is “understood to open up new opportunities to showcase a broader range of Caribbean histories.”[149] While this move would allow a museum to build on the power of placement within central London, it would lose the palimpsestic object that is the West India Quay where the MOLD is currently situated. This reflects that all potential settings have different benefits and pitfalls, but interventions should aim to utilise a carefully selected site and animate the spectral traces within the existing palimpsestic landscape.

[148] Moody, “Liverpool’s Local Tints: Drowning Memory and ‘Maritimising’ Slavery,” in Donington et al., *Britain’s History and Memory,* 150–171

[149] Melissa Bennett and Kristy Warren, “Looking back and facing forwards: ten years of the London, Sugar & Slavery gallery,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 63 (2019): 99.

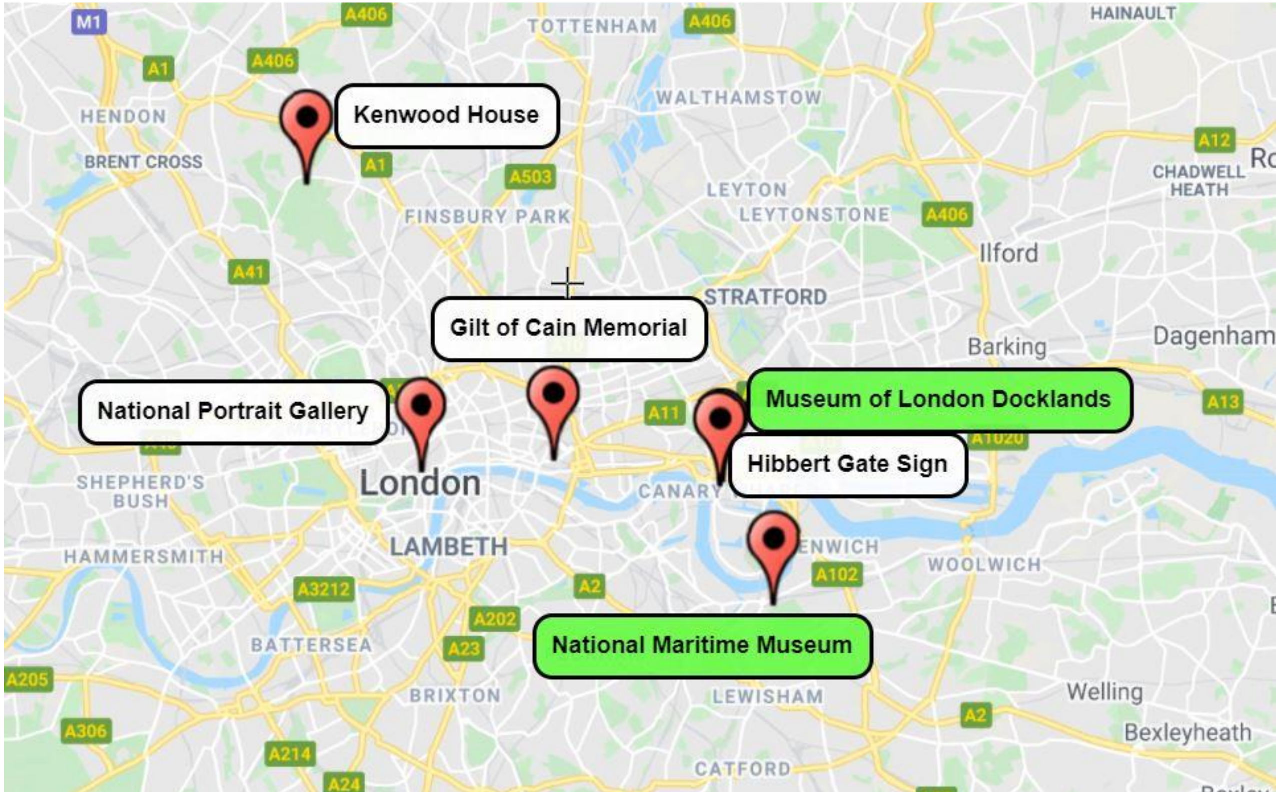


**Figure 3.38.** Labelled sites in Greater London. Map made by author on Scribblemaps.com.

## Conclusion

This chapter highlights the multitude of spaces with interpreted EAC spectral traces, where visitors and passers-by encounter interventions that challenge the "un-visibility" of EAC, and how intervention placement informs their interpretation. It has demonstrated that "maritimisation" still persists across New England, and through the large museum exhibits in England. This is partially challenged by limited interventions at inland cotton mills and historic houses, with English country houses being particularly problematic palimpsests but with a powerful potential to disrupt existing mythologies and challenge white visitor apathy. The second half of this chapter focused on the role of placement to engage the attention of "grazing" museum visitors and busy passers-by. It critiqued an overreliance on text, while highlighting how it can be better used through

differing text sizes or colour-coding, such as that seen at Worcester Art Museum. It also highlighted problems with "un-visibility" persisting through placement particularly at English country houses and elite universities. The final section on interventions in public space drew together several of the considerations on the symbolic power of different spaces and the need to engage observers. The *Gilt of Cain* memorial has a particularly disruptive placement within the centre of power that is the City of London but the memorial itself is visually ambiguous.

This analysis has demonstrated how the placement of any intervention is a vital choice for any planners. Simply, unseen narratives will have no impact. Furthermore, where the intervention is located in the region, what surrounds it, and how it interacts with its surroundings will influence observers, whose attention needs grabbing. The host buildings, and their contextual surroundings, contribute to the narratives. They are not only part of the substance of the interventions, but their existence dismantles the belief that there are "scant traces" of slavery in England and New England.[150] Through the lens of EAC, the vast spectral traces of enslavement that have been "un-visibilised" in England and New England become apparent. The next two chapters explore the details of EAC that can be observed, which substantiate the "Real" – as Rose phrases it – of EAC.[151] These histories explain how so many traces have been left.

[150] Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 116–117.
[151] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 108–116.

# Chapter 4: Substantiating enslavement-associated commerce

## Introduction

This thesis draws on the work of various historians to offer the term enslavement-associated commerce (EAC) to describe the web of economic connections to enslavement. From this more expansive understanding, this chapter analyses the scope of narratives of EAC offered within existing interventions, while Chapter 5 focuses on who features in these narratives. As Alan Rice notes, “the problem with memorialising the slave trade and its abolition adequately […] is that its tentacles spread far and wide and its legacy is often a mere trace that is difficult to comprehend, let alone visualise 200 years after.”[1] The complex history drawn out in this chapter has been formed by drawing together the substantiating details of the “Real” from the 48 case study interventions to form a “jigsaw puzzle” of EAC.[2] The primary concern here is not to offer a comprehensive outline of the nature of EAC, but to examine what details were provided to visitors and observers. Individually, many sites, and particularly brief cityscape interventions, did not offer expansive explanations of EAC, or the transatlantic slave trade, and relied on observer’s prior knowledge. Without such details the impact of the interventions will be diminished. On the other hand, one intervention that did offer a visually explicit and concise summary of several key aspects of EAC was the *Captured Africans* memorial in Lancaster, which was created by Kevin Dalton Johnson, in co-operation with Rice and others, in 2005.[3]

[1] Rice, “Tracing slavery,” 254.
[2] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 108–116; Smith, “A jigsaw puzzle,” 245–264.
[3] *Captured Africans.*

The *Captured Africans* memorial highlighted that EAC "was not cruelty for its own sake" but for the sake of wealth, or rather for the chance of vast profits, while visually illuminating several further key elements.[4] The side of the memorial listed slaving ships while the base featured an image of a triangle across the Atlantic, with figures of enslaved people. Above this were six acrylic slabs which were labelled with large writing on either side. The lowest was marked "slaves" – with the image of a packed slaving ship inset – reflecting how the lives and labour of the enslaved are the foundation of the trade. Above were the words "sugar," "mahogany," "rum" and "cotton" highlighting the main products cultivated by enslaved labourers. The top slab was visually distinct as it was golden in colour and had coins inset **(Figure 4.1)**. Visually it symbolised the word "wealth" that was inscribed on it. Situated at the top of the memorial the golden slab alluded to the historical reality that enslavement persisted because the products cultivated by enslaved people generated wealth. Moving beyond what is visualised on the memorial, this chapter highlights a systemic web of profit which stretched far beyond direct slave trading and plantation ownership. The memorial demonstrates however how several key ideas can be placed clearly in a relatively small space, without using much text.

[4] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 3.

**Figure 4.1.** The top of *Captured Africans*. PTBA (July 2019).

This chapter has four core sections which analyse the scope of narratives provided across the other interventions. It begins by outlining the "web of profit" associated with enslavement – which the above golden slab alludes to – and the wider industries in England and New England that were part of EAC. Secondly, it identifies triangular trade diagrams as key representations of EAC and evaluates this approach; while recognising that these include acknowledgements of key commodities that were traded, it argues there is a need for more complex trade networks to be presented. The focus on EAC commodities is central to the third section on the different national nuances evident in England and New England. In the former the focus was predominantly on sugar, while rum and cotton were centred in New England. Within the English sites, I identify what I refer to as an Atlantic imperial lens, which focuses on the Caribbean. This, while being geographically broader than a focus on England, cannot be understood as truly transnational since its vision beyond the British Isles remains focused on the former British empire, reflecting a historical imperial lens.

The third section also considers neglected commodities and argues that two particularly deserve more attention: mahogany, as it has left permanent spectral traces across both the regions, and cotton, particularly in England where it challenges the temporal demarcation between slavery and abolition. Building on this, the fourth section highlights the limited evidence of recognition of the wider global interconnections of EAC and argues for the need for greater understanding of EAC as a global interconnected web of activity, rather than within nationally divided narratives. Together, the analysis substantiates the importance of EAC to England, New England, and the world.

## Revealing the "web of profit" associated with enslavement

To understand transatlantic slavery's persistence, it is vital to understand that EAC generated profits and wealth. This section outlines that those profits were made through the web of EAC, which included widespread industries. However, while this thesis encourages understanding of the wider web of EAC, it is important to remember that this web of commerce and profit rested on a foundation of the legal trafficking of enslaved people, as expressed in the *Captured Africans* memorial. This section begins by noting acknowledgements of the slave trade while situating it as a risky financial prospect. The remainder of this section then discusses the "web of profit" more broadly.

Britain and the United States did not make transatlantic slave trading illegal until 1807–1808, whereafter enslaved labour continued legally under their jurisdictions for decades. Chapter 1 noted that both England and New England played a disproportionately large role in the transportation of over twelve million enslaved Africans to the Americas. Consequently, and understandably, the slave trade itself was central to several of the interventions. In New England, in Providence, a Center for Reconciliation panel noted that Rhode Island dominated the North American slave trade, and that "based mostly in Newport before the Revolution and in Bristol afterward, Rhode Island boats […] carried an estimated 107,000 Africans to the New World."[5] The Museum of Newport History, acknowledged local enslavement and that "nearly half of the families in Newport owned at least one slave" and that there was large scale rum production and sugar-making in the city.[6] However, the town's heavy involvement in the slave trade was not explored in any depth, reflecting ongoing "un-visibility."

[5] Display panel, "The Atlantic Slave Trade: Buying and Selling Human Beings," CFR.
[6] Text panels, "Slavery" and "Business of Craftsmanship," MONH.

In England, direct involvement in slave trading was highlighted across the purpose-built museum exhibits, which – as Chapter 3 discussed – were overwhelmingly located in ports from which the slaving ships departed. The MOLD stressed that "during the 1700s Britain was the leading slave-trading nation."[7] Also in London, multiple text panels at the NMM provided the huge figure that 3.4 million enslaved Africans were transported on British ships.[8] Interactive screens in the ISM highlighted that Great Britain "was the leading slave-trading nation during the period 1700-1807. Overall British ships were responsible for about 28% of the trade."[9] The screens also acknowledged slave trading ports in Britain, Denmark, Netherlands, France, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, Cuba and the US.[10] These acknowledgements of the scale of slave trading did not typically make it clear, in isolation, that the slave trade generated profits. A rare example of a specific statement about profits was found at the Lancaster Maritime Museum, where it was spelt out that "one successful voyage could make a man's fortune."[11]

However, that fortune was not guaranteed, and both plantations and slave trading carried financial risks for the owners and backers. Text at the MOLD told visitors that "many planters made huge profits while others fell heavily into debt," but more commonly this aspect of EAC history was under-explored at sites in England.[12] While conscious that both the enslaved human beings, and their enslavers on ships and plantations, risked disease, violence and death, the following pages highlight the accompanying financial risk. For those wanting to profit from EAC at a distance, by the later eighteenth-century the slave trade particularly was understood to be a high risk, high reward endeavour. Understanding this reminds us of the banal involvement in the

[7] Display, "Triangle Trade," MOLD.
[8] Text panels, "Africa and Enslavement" and "The Middle Passage," Atlantic, NMM.
[9] Large screen with maps, Enslavement, ISM.
[10] Large screen with maps, Enslavement, ISM.
[11] Display panel, "Lancaster and the Slave Trade," Slave Trade, LMM.
[12] Display, "Caribbean Plantations," MOLD.

trafficking and exploitation of human beings as legal businesses. The following pages focus on acknowledgement of this through one particular failed New England voyage.

The John Brown House (JBH) had an exhibit dedicated to a failed slaving voyage: the *Sally*. Discussion of slave trading was not exclusively reserved for this exhibit. Rather, both the written guide and audio tour offered at JBH discussed the slave trade when viewing a "Slave Platter" which the label explained depicted Cape Coast Castle, "one of the largest slave-trading ports on the Gulf of Guinea."[13] Within the *Sally* exhibit it was also stated that while approximately half a million enslaved people were transported to mainland North America, "vastly larger numbers were borne to the sugar colonies of the Caribbean and Central and South America; Brazil alone imported over four million Africans."[14] This understates the number of enslaved people transported to Brazil which is thought to be over 5.5 million, according to the TAST database.[15] Nevertheless, the panel made it clear that "the slave trade was history's first genuinely global industry. Ships from Spain, Portugal, England, France, Holland, and Denmark, as well as from North America, plied the African coast, filling their holds with captives."[16] The majority of the exhibit however focused on one failed voyage.

The *Sally* exhibit explained to visitors that in the 1760s the ship was plagued with disease and faced a rebellion and that consequently "109 of the 196 Africans taken captive perished during the torturous Middle Passage."[17] As a result "the [Brown] brothers lost about $9,000 – $12,000 in the ill-fated venture. The tremendous failure of the *Sally* caused the brothers to re-examine their involvement in the slave trade. All except for John never again participated directly

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[13] Text label, "Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast of Africa," JBH.
[14] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Sally, JBH.
[15] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. They estimate 5.53 million people disembarked in Brazil and 472,381 in Mainland North America.
[16] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Sally, JBH.
[17] Text in guide, "19 Sally Gallery," Written, JBH.

in the traffic."[18] The voyage is framed as a financial disaster, as well as a tragic loss of human life. A panel which reflected on the other brothers' choice to withdraw from slave trading stated that "their decision seems to have been motivated more by economic than moral considerations [...] they had good reason to conclude that slave trading was too risky an investment."[19]

Yet as the introduction to the exhibit reminded visitors, "the profits to be made from a successful voyage were spectacular" and so John persisted.[20] He went on to be successful enough to, in the 1780s, build the house that hosts the museum. As Haggerty explains, "the slave trade was a risky business, and the diversification of trade helped to mitigate that risk."[21] The written guide at JBH told visitors that "the Browns rose to power through many different business operations [...] These included land speculation, goods manufacturing, the slave trade and the China trade."[22] This was not explicitly discussed as mitigating the risks of the slave trade, and the complex commercial decisions of the family could be further developed.

The story of the *Sally* was not unique. Within the kitchen at the Moffatt-Ladd House, in Portsmouth, NH, the guide also noted that Samuel Moffatt engaged in at least one failed slaving voyage, but little detail was provided.[23] In both cases, the men with these failed slaving voyages went on to be rich and powerful enough to be remembered. These New England examples do not undermine the point that overall EAC, and the trafficking of human beings, created great profit and wealth. Instead, they remind us that for all the wealth we can quantify and trace – of those

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[18] Text in guide, "19 Sally Gallery," Written, JBH.
[19] Display panel, "Responses to the Sally," Sally, JBH.
[20] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Sally, JBH.
[21] Sheryllynne Haggerty, "Liverpool, the slave trade and the British-Atlantic empire, c.1750-75," in *The empire in one city? Liverpool's Inconvenient Imperial Past*, eds. Sheryllynne Haggerty, Anthony Webster and Nicholas J. White (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), 29. For more on risk see: Sheryllynne Haggerty, "Perceptions not Profits: Risk and Risk Management in the Liverpool Slave Trade," *Business History* 51, no. 6 (2009): 817–834.
[22] Text in guide, "1&2 Introduction at Front Door," Written, JBH.
[23] Tour, Moffatt-Ladd.

who succeeded in accruing profit through EAC – there are many others who failed but who had no objection to participating in the web of activity that relied on enslavement, reflecting the banality of the EAC explored in Chapter 5.

Despite the risks, the argument that EAC could be, and was sometimes, incredibly profitable, was evident across several interventions. Within the *Sally* exhibit, visitors were told that "such were the profits to be earned from sugar production that planters found it economical to work slaves to death and replace them with fresh imports," linking the brutality of slavery with high potential profits.[24] Also in Rhode Island, the text accompanying *In Silent Witness,* in Newport, told readers that the "slave trade was a systematic international enterprise, rationalized by the pursuit of efficiency and profit" with a "ruthless disregard of human worth and dignity."[25] Similarly, the NMM's *Tudor and Stuart* gallery *Trade* display explained that while "some commodities were obtained at high human cost […] These trading ventures were so profitable, however, that few people in England questioned their methods."[26]

Wilberforce House also described "the Transatlantic Slave Trade" as a "profit driven system" at the beginning of its exhibits.[27] Visitors were later reminded that "profit was the motive that drove the business."[28] In their final exhibits Wilberforce House repeated again that through EAC "millions of pounds were made" and that consequently abolition was a struggle because "Britain relied on slavery for the enormous wealth that it generated from the trade in slaves and

[24] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Sally, JBH.
[25] Accompanying text panel, *In Silent Witness*. There were also handouts with the same text.
[26] Text panel, "Trade," Tudor, NMM.
[27] Display, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Slavery, WH.
[28] Display, "The Triangular Trade," Slavery, WH.

related products."[29] At the MOLD the "Wealth of Sugar" display also told people that "profits from plantation products and the sale of enslaved people created vast wealth in Britain."[30]

One of the Center for Reconciliation's temporary panels, which was bluntly titled "New England Slavery was Profitable," made clear that slavery "generated immense profits."[31] As Chapter 3 discussed, the New England-Caribbean corner of EAC was effectively visualised in the "web of profit" diagram on this panel **(Figure 3.23)**. It highlighted various connections between slave traders, sugar planters, investors, and suppliers. From this it becomes clear that, as discussed by Wendy Warren, "slavery was only 'marginal to commerce' in seventeenth-century New England if the region is examined in isolation."[32] While my thesis is focused on England and New England, this chapter offers insight into the web of interwoven global connections of EAC and stresses the importance of looking beyond national borders. However, the majority of insights into the web of EAC at the interventions focused on local fragments of this story. On that local scale, they revealed both the wider connected industries which generated associated produce and profits, as well as where those profits were disseminated.

In England, at M Shed, it was explained that "Bristol's business community made profits from the slave trade itself, from processing slave-produced commodities, from supplying the slave trade and the plantations, and as bankers and plantation owners."[33] At the nearby Georgian House it was noted that "people in the city supplied the trade goods, built and crewed ships, financed and insured voyages, bought and refined sugar, and Bristol gained from the wealth of slave traders and planters who lived here."[34] At Lancaster Maritime Museum it was similarly noted that EAC

[29] Display, "Wealth and Opposition," Abolition, WH.
[30] Display, "Wealth of Sugar," MOLD.
[31] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.
[32] Warren, *New England Bound,* 51.
[33] Accompanying text panel, Map of Bristol properties, M Shed.
[34] Display panel, "Bristol and Slavery," John Pinney, GHM.

created local jobs in mahogany furniture making, sugar refining and textiles, as well as direct trading.[35]

As Chapter 3 noted, Wilberforce House partially challenged the narrative of "maritimisation" through its placement in a non-slave trading port, and further details in its interpretation disrupted the focus on those ports. The museum contained Georgian houses built in 1757 for James Hamilton. A downstairs exhibit on "History of the House" noted that Hamilton "imported tar that was produced on the slave plantations" in North America, thus challenging the perception that people in this east coast English city were not involved in EAC.[36] Upstairs further inland links were noted, including that Birmingham "boomed as the demand for guns, chains and padlocks increased" and that "Lancashire's cotton industry" relied on cotton from plantations.[37] Consequently, large bold text stated that "Britain's rise as the world's first industrial nation was directly helped by transatlantic slavery."[38] It was also repeated elsewhere that "wealth generated by slavery supported British industrialisation."[39] This bold statement speaks to the historic work of Williams and Inikori, as well as the recent US-focused work outlined in Chapter 1.

Considering how slave trading interacted with the wider web of EAC, the *Sally* exhibit, at the JBH, also featured a panel on "Outfitting a Slave Ship" which highlighted that it "engaged the energies of the entire community" including "local sail lofts and rope walks," caulkers, coopers and carpenters.[40] At the nearby Stephen Hopkins House, text also highlighted that "American colonists depended on slavery to provide income (in the form of wages for building and outfitting slave

[35] Display panel, "Trade and Industry," LMM.
[36] Text panel, "Georgian Houses," History of the House, WH.
[37] Display, "Trade and Industry," Slavery, WH.
[38] Display, "Trade and Industry," Slavery, WH.
[39] Display, "Plantation Life," Slavery, WH.
[40] Display panel, "Outfitting a Slave Ship," Sally, JBH.

vessels or return on an investment in a slaving voyage)."[41] At the JBH, it was noted that the *Sally* also carried thirty boxes of spermaceti candles, and that the Brown family had their own spermaceti candle factory.[42] What was not developed within the exhibit was that Rhode Island and Massachusetts were, following the growth of the whaling industry, key suppliers of whale oil and spermaceti candles to West Indian plantations where they not only lit houses but enabled "continue[d] working in the fields long after sunset."[43] Spermaceti candles provided a brighter light than tallow, and were less vulnerable to melting in sunlight.

Highlighting the interwoven nature of commercial decisions, the *Sally* exhibit also noted that "the family needed capital for its new iron furnace."[44] Though the voyage failed this highlighted the family's intended circulation of slave trading profits into wider society, as they did as early benefactors of the College of Rhode Island, which became Brown University. On the Brown University Slavery Memorial, Clark-Pujara writes that it does not go far enough as what it fails to *"*express is that without slaveholding and the Atlantic and West Indian slave trades, Brown, like the other Ivy League universities, would not exist."[45] While conscious of avoiding counterfactual histories, it is true that EAC happened and that many industries and institutions relied upon enslaved labour.

Universities were also not the only institution to profit from EAC; rather other examples included churches. The Center for Reconciliation's origins lie within the institution of the church, which was centred in their local narrative. Within the interpretation it was noted that "many of

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[41] Text panel, "Whether or not Hopkins' contemporaries owned slaves, they were dependent economically and socially on their labor. Are the same issues still relevant today?" Upstairs, SHH.
[42] Display panel, "Outfitting a Slave Ship," Sally, JBH.
[43] Peter Pellizzari, "Supplying Slavery: Jamaica, North America, and British intra-imperial trade, 1752–1769," *Slavery and Abolition* 41, no. 3 (2020): 13.
[44] Display panel, "Brown Brothers," Sally, JBH.
[45] Clark-Pujara, *Dark Work* 153.

the ministers and parishioners who founded and supported Anglican churches in colonial New England were slave owners, investors in the slave trade, or slave ship captains."[46] The concern for the site here was not the people as individuals, as Chapter 5 explores, but as members of the church. At King's Chapel – another church setting – it was noted that "the institution of slavery was central to the wealth and growth not only of church members, but of King's Chapel itself. The vast majority of early ministers and parishioners either owned slaves or worked in professions such as merchants, shipbuilders and rum distillers that linked their wealth to enslavement."[47] This statement on parishioners highlights the various enslavement-associated industries through which people profited.

Brown University and the churches are examples of physical palimpsestic sites with spectral traces which interventions make visible. Tracing the profits from EAC is central to understanding which sites and stories are linked to enslavement. In England, the LBS database explores the reality that, as Scanlan notes, "the fortunes made by slavery survived abolition […] Slaveholders used the compensation fund as a source of liquid money, which many reinvested in factories, mines, roads and railways across Britain and its growing colonial empire."[48] However, the exact destination, as well as quantity, of the profits of EAC can be difficult to trace. This was reflected at the MOLD where visitors were told that "an incalculable proportion of London's wealth, business and buildings was founded on the profits from slavery."[49] Such vague statements may be accurate, but they do not help substantiate the "Real" evidence of EAC's impact.

The ISM was created in 2007 before the online LBS database was created. Nevertheless, the ISM's display titled "Economic benefits of slavery," explained that "the profits from slavery

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[46] Display panel, "Churches also benefited from the Slavery Business," CFR.
[47] Information board, "Slavery and King's Chapel: Tied to the Trade," King's Chapel.
[48] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 4.
[49] Display, "London the slave port," MOLD.

helped change the industrial and economic landscape of Britain and other parts of Western Europe. As the transatlantic slave trade was growing, Britain was undergoing a transformation into the First Industrial Nation."[50] Subsequent text highlighted that demand for plantation produce created industrial change and that as well as building grand houses those who amassed "vast personal fortunes" invested in "other enterprises, such as iron, coal and banking."

An accompanying screen provided specific examples of the "Profits of Slavery," within the ISM. It had four sub-section options of: Houses, Banks, Industry and Charity.[51] The historic houses identified include Harewood House, which was also pictured in the main display.[52] The Beckfords' Fonthill Abbey was included too, and the MOLD's "Wealth of Sugar" display also featured an image of the Abbey when noting that "for some individuals [the profits] led to extravagant displays of affluence."[53] The Abbey is no longer standing. The charity section on the ISM screen similarly drew out palimpsestic sites with traces of EAC: the Bluecoat School in Liverpool, All Souls College Codrington Library in Oxford and Colston's Almhouses in Bristol.[54] Revealing academic influence, the majority of examples given on the screen were discussed in Williams' 1944 seminal work.[55] While All Souls College added a plaque at the beginning of this research project, I found no references to slavery at the other sites. The bankers and investors will be returned to in subsequent chapters, but it is vital to note that EAC was financially backed.

Profits from EAC also contributed to other industries; the ISM screen noted slate mining, coal, iron and the connected railways.[56] It did not discuss the cotton industry, which relied on raw

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[50] Text panel, "Economic Benefits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[51] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[52] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[53] Display, "Wealth of Sugar," MOLD.
[54] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[55] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 85–102.
[56] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.

material supplies from enslaved-worked plantations, though text in the display case noted that "the cotton industry powered technological innovation and industrial development."[57] At Cromford Mills the circularity of finance was also briefly alluded to when it was noted that "merchants, banks, plantation owners and the expanding British cotton industry effectively combined to finance the African slave trade."[58]

This section has outlined the expansive and complicated nature of EAC, which has generated decades of scholarship on this "web of profit," as the Center for Reconciliation phrases it. EAC had the potential to create great profits, but it was also risky, not least because it relied on the enslavement of human beings. Where profits were generated, some contributed to physical sites which contain present day spectral traces, but further wealth passed into industries and investments. Understanding that EAC was a profit generating system with widespread banal involvement, and not just "cruelty for its own sake" is central to comprehending why it thrived and persisted.[59] The above examples highlight that some of this narrative is explored at the sites of intervention, but most of the above information relies on visitors reading text, an activity which the last chapter problematised. The next section critiques the much simpler narrative of EAC portrayed by a recurring visual image: the triangular trade. This simple diagram perpetuates the focus on slave trading – the abolition of which is greatly celebrated in the DOLHN – and obscures wider EAC.

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[57] Text panel, "Economic Benefits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[58] Text panel, "Cotton Connections," GCC, Cromford.
[59] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 3.

## The complex trade networks beyond the triangular trade

The large engaging visual message often provided within the space at sites, particularly at large English museums, is of a triangular trade. This section evidences and examines the prevalence of triangular trade diagrams. It then synthesises historical arguments and evidence to appeal for this imagery to be superseded by more complex representations. This is necessary as the above wider web of EAC is made "un-visible" beneath this simplification which minimises the importance and relevance of enslaved labour to the history of England and New England. Embedded within the discussion of the more complex trade networks are acknowledgements of key products of enslaved labour, such as sugar and cotton, which the following section builds upon.

As noted above, the base of the Lancaster *Captured Africans* memorial featured an image of a triangular trade between Europe, Africa and the Americas **(Figure 4.2)**. Small images of the same triangular trade were used in the display at Cromford Mills, at Lancaster Maritime Museum, and within the Georgian House Museum in Bristol **(Figure 4.3)**.[60] The display on slavery at Quarry

**Figure 4.2.** The base of *Captured Africans*. PTBA (July 2019).

**Figure 4.3.** Diagram on the "Bristol and Slavery" panel at the Georgian House. PTBA (April 2018).

[60] Display panel, "Ancestors' Voices," GCC, Cromford; Display panel, "Trade and Industry," LMM; Display panel, "Bristol and Slavery," John Pinney, GHM.

Bank Mill also included a description of a slaving ship which travelled between Liverpool, Africa and the Caribbean before it "completed the triangle."[61]

The previous chapter highlighted the value of large attention-catching devices in engaging audiences and therefore communicating EAC; however triangular trade diagrams are problematic as they over-simplify EAC history to grazing visitors. The MOLD had a display titled "Triangle Trade" which featured a very simplistic image, with unlabelled arrows connecting Britain, West Africa and the Caribbean.[62] London and the Caribbean were the only labelled destinations, reflecting the narrative focus on London and sugar. At Wilberforce House there was another display titled "The Triangular Trade" featuring a similar image. The triangle was central to the side room on trade and faced visitors as they first entered the room. "Manufactured Goods," "Enslaved Africans" and "Raw Materials (sugar, cotton, tobacco)" were clearly labelled along with the continents and the "The Caribbean Islands" **(Figure 4.4)**.[63] The origin and destination of each arrow reflects that the geographic narrative focus was Britain, West Africa and the Caribbean as they by-pass the South American coast including British Guiana.

[61] Display, "How did Samuel Greg profit from slavery?" Quarry Bank. The third panel discusses the triangular trade.
[62] Display, "Triangle Trade," MOLD.
[63] Display, "The Triangular Trade," Slavery, WH.

**Figure 4.4.** "The Triangular Trade" diagram at Wilberforce House. PTBA (April 2019).

At M Shed they referred to the triangular trade as "The Great Circuit," and their illustration formed part of the exterior of their exhibit (**Figure 4.5)**. This image provided further details on what was traded on each leg of the triangle by creating the lines through words, such as cloth to Africa and sugar returning from the Americas. The large ships noted the volume of slaving voyages out of Bristol, how many enslaved Africans they carried, and also that there were 20 sugar refineries in Bristol in 1760, thus speaking to wider EAC.[64] These triangles offer succinct concepts, but they are problematically simplistic and static.

[64] Exterior illustration, "Bristol and the Transatlantic Slave Trade," M Shed.

Figure 4.5. M Shed's external "Bristol and the transatlantic slave trade" diagram. PTBA (April 2018).

Visually, the triangle motif was particularly prominent at the Lancaster Maritime Museum. In addition to the small triangular diagrams embedded within their displays, as visitors walk upstairs towards the main exhibitions on slavery, the words "The Triangle Trade" literally hung above the relevant displays **(Figure 4.6)**.[65] On the underside of the exhibit's lowered ceiling was their own triangle, which reflects the local focus by having the three points labelled as Africa, the West Indies and then Lancaster **(Figure 4.7)**. The impact is that the triangular trade hangs over what is discussed beneath even when it is not directly referenced, such as in a panel on "Making Money" which stated that "the growth of marine trade in the Georgian period brought many opportunities with sugar, rum, tobacco, cotton, mahogany and dye-stuffs all being imported."[66] What was not made clear is that not everything arrived via a triangular voyage.

[65] Exhibit, "The Triangle Trade," LMM.
[66] Text panel, "Making Money," LMM.

**Figure 4.6.** "The Triangle Trade" overhanging "Lancaster's Golden Age" at Lancaster Maritime Museum. PTBA (July 2019).

**Figure 4.7.** The underside with the triangle at Lancaster Maritime Museum. PTBA (July 2019).

While particularly dominant in England, a different triangular trade was also visible in New England. At JBH it was noted that Rhode Islanders dominated North America's "Triangle Trade" – between themselves, Africa and the Caribbean – in the 1700s, and the *Sally* exhibit focused on one triangular voyage.[67] At the nearby Stephen Hopkins House, the guide described the New England "Triangular Trade," using an A3 illustration of the *Sanderson* voyage, which sailed from Newport in 1753 to illustrate the trade.[68] The image was placed upon a chair in the centre of the room as a cue for all guides. The commonality with these triangles is that in both England and New England, the trade in enslaved people from West Africa to the Caribbean provided "the base of the triangle."[69] On both sides of the Atlantic, these triangles are a recurring representational device in school textbooks, and museums and memorials, because of their "diagrammatic simplicity."[70] As Morgan notes schoolchildren are taught, when slavery is covered, that "the slave trade […]

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[67] Recorded guide, "Track 5," Audio, JBH.
[68] Tour, SHH.
[69] Higman, *Writing West Indian,* 189.
[70] Ostrander, "The Making of the Triangular Trade Myth," 642.

operated in a triangular way."[71] However, the very existence of two similar but different overlapping triangles alludes to a more complex historical reality.

This thesis does not argue that a triangular trade in the Atlantic did not exist, but rather that these triangles were part of several interwoven trades that formed a more complex geography of exchange. It also acknowledges that the slave trade triangle is a recognised abstract idea which illustrates enslavement-dependent trade between three continents, and that such triangles have become powerful "shorthand" explanations for the transatlantic slave trade and slavery.[72] However, while the triangles reflect a "basic underlying structure," and powerfully highlight goods produced by enslaved labourers in the Caribbean, they are overly simple.[73] As Ogborn observes, "it is certainly not the case that all ships engaged in Atlantic trade sailed all legs of this triangular course like some nightmarish and never-ending merry-go-round."[74] The consequence of this simplicity is not just misinformation, but also that the triangles understate the importance of enslaved labour to global commerce. The current understanding of a triangular trade developed from the early twentieth century is mapped by Higman in his discussion of models and metaphors in *Writing West Indian Histories*.[75] Higman notes that despite challenges "the idea was not easily exterminated."[76]

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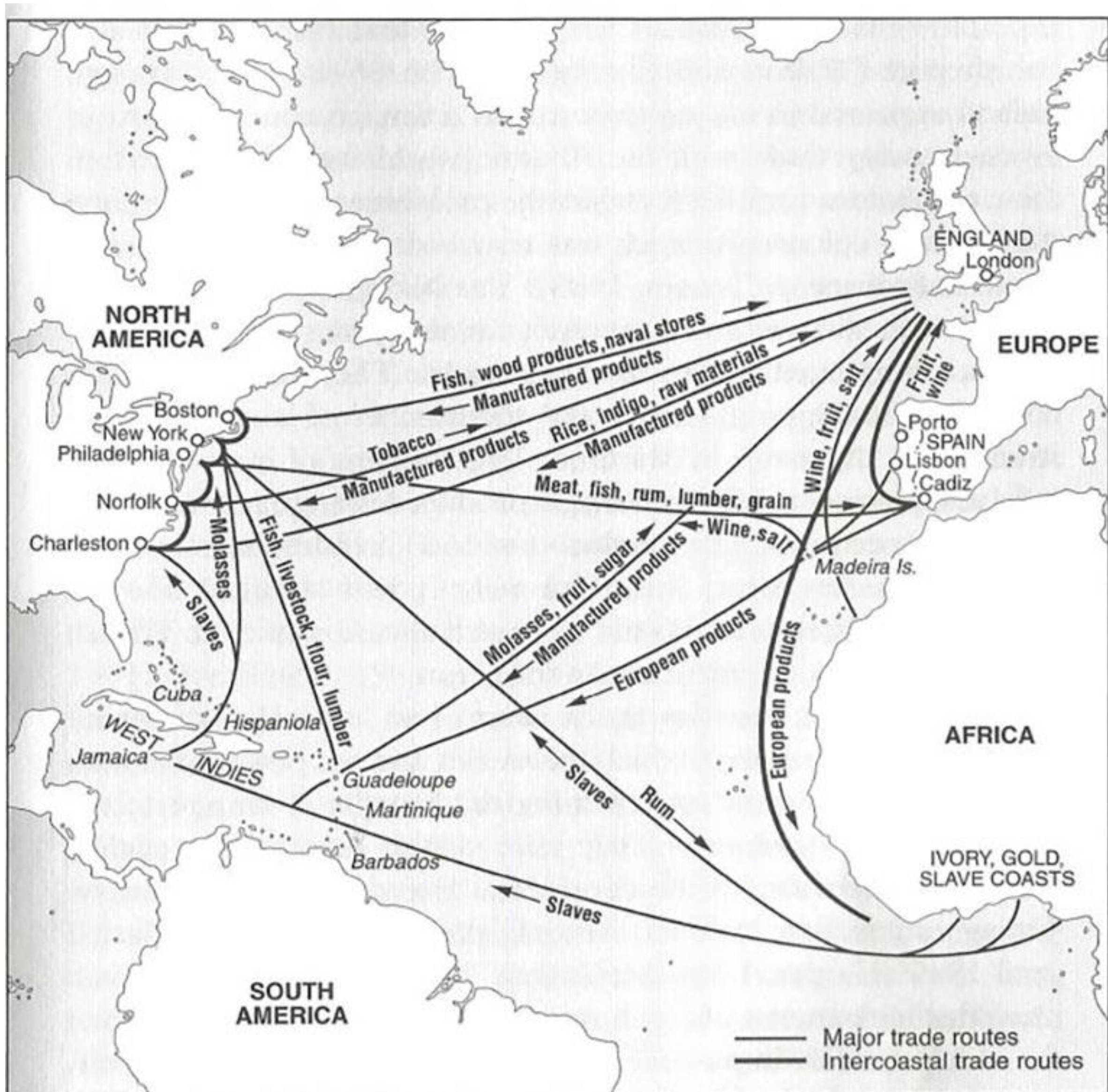
[71] Kenneth Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 128–129.
[72] Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy 1660–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9.
[73] Miles Ogborn, *Britain and the World 1550–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 116.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Higman, *Writing West Indian,* 188–191.
[76] Ibid., 190.




*Map 3* Shipping routes in the Atlantic Ocean, c. 1750

**Figure 4.8.** Kenneth Morgan's diagram of "Shipping routes in the Atlantic Ocean, c. 1750." Used with permission of Cambridge University Press.

Kenneth Morgan's "Shipping routes in the Atlantic Ocean, c. 1750" **(Figure 4.8)** is very useful as a visual depiction of the more complex narrative of Atlantic trade.[77] Morgan's diagram includes twenty labels indicating traded commodities, three of which are labelled "slaves" while two further arrows, labelled "European products" and "Rum," are also directed to the West African coast. Within his diagram both the British and North American triangles can be seen. However, the remaining EAC depicted in this diagram is less immediately explicit in its connection to enslavement. Morgan's diagram reflects Ogborn's observation that, "considering all the movements of goods and people in the Atlantic world means that the basic triangle soon becomes overlain by a more complex pattern of exchanges."[78]

One element that Morgan includes which was not explored in depth by any of my case study sites was the Intra-American slave trade. The recently introduced "Intra-American" database, which is provided alongside the TAST database, notes that there were over 11,000 intra-American voyages between 1550 and 1841, including hundreds after 1807.[79] These were Atlantic slave trades wherein the enslaved people were not taken from Africa, but rather from other areas of the Americas. Their experience further disrupts the concept of a triangular trade.

Despite its limitations, the concept of triangular trade facilitates discussion of what was traded within EAC. Alongside, certain recurring palimpsestic objects are used to discuss trade between Europe and Africa, for enslaved people. These include beads, glassware, guns and metal manillas which were displayed at the Lancaster Maritime Museum and MOLD.[80] At M Shed they noted that manufactured "trade goods" taken to Africa included brassware, glassware, beads and

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[77] Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade,* 13.
[78] Ogborn, *Britain and the World,* 116.
[79] Intra-American Slave Trade Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://slavevoyages.org/american/database.
[80] Exhibit, "The Triangle Trade," LMM.

alcohol, echoing the words on the "Great Circuit" diagram.[81] At Wilberforce House, "Trade and Industry" displays also highlighted that brass, copper and cowrie shells were traded in Africa.[82] This display was near their triangle, which was accompanied by a table with columns labelled as the outward, middle and homeward passages and examples of what was traded **(Figure 4.9)**.[83] The "outward passage" corresponded to the arrow labelled on their triangle as "manufactured goods" and they listed the following examples: guns, cowrie shells, ammunition, alcohol, manillas, manufactured cloth, brass and copper ware and silks imported from Asia.[84] The majority of these products were manufactured in England, but the acknowledgement of these histories, and specific geographic origins, is limited and often in small text. For example, a small board at the ISM acknowledged that various exports originated in the British hinterlands including textiles from Lancashire, Birmingham metal ware, Sheffield steel and Cheshire salt.[85] These inland production industries warrant further attention in both England and New England.

**Trade Goods**

| Outward Passage<br>Europe to West Africa | Middle Passage<br>West Africa to the Americas and Caribbean | Homeward Passage<br>Americas and Caribbean to Britain and Europe |
|---|---|---|
| • Guns | • Enslaved Men | • Sugar |
| • Cowrie shells | • Enslaved Women | • Rum |
| • Ammunition | • Enslaved children | • Rice |
| • Alcohol | • Indigo | • Coffee |
| • Manillas | | • Tobacco |
| • Manufactured Cloth | | • Cotton |
| • Brass and Copper ware | | |
| • Silks imported from Asia | | |

**Figure 4.9.** "Trade Goods" table at Wilberforce House. PTBA (April 2019).

[81] Display, "People managing slavery," M Shed; Exterior illustration, "Bristol and the Transatlantic Slave Trade," M Shed.
[82] Display, "Trade and Industry," Slavery, WH.
[83] Display, "The Triangular Trade," Slavery, WH.
[84] Display, "The Triangular Trade," Slavery, WH.
[85] Information board, "Liverpool and the Atlantic World," Authored by Sheryllynne Haggerty, Enslavement, ISM.

However, to do so would enhance attention on Europeans trading with Africans on the African coast. The involvement of African traders cannot be dismissed in a comprehensive narrative, but the framing of this information is delicate, especially when considering the racial and power legacies of enslavement. The introduction noted that one of the deflecting arguments of visitors, according to Smith, was that "the Africans were party to it."[86] As a consequence Munroe highlights that "the curators of the ISM were aware of the evasive, silencing tactic of the 'Africans sold their own' argument" and thus minimised space given to it.[87] They "elided one element of the story in order to avoid the silencing of the wider story through disengagement and dismissal."[88] At the British Museum the brief acknowledgement mentioned in Chapter 2 did the opposite. The MOLD displays attempted to navigate this by acknowledging directly that "many African people and states fiercely resisted the trade, but others cooperated and profited from it."[89]

While avoiding African histories may negate visitors distancing techniques, it also neglects suppliers' involvement in this corner of EAC. Furthermore, while there is usually at least some acknowledgment of different African ethnicities, cultures and societies within the broader exhibits, inland activity within the African continent is not reflected in the triangles. This may reinforce a homogeneous view of Africa and African people that underpinned the practice of enslavement. There is no visualisation of the capture, trade and journeys of enslaved people towards the West African coast before they were sold to the European traders. Visitors are not shown that the majority of those enslaved people who were supplied to the Americas "originated in a belt approximately two hundred miles deep along the west coast of Africa" as Thomas and

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[86] Laurajane Smith, "Affect and Registers of Engagement: Navigating Emotional Responses to Dissonant Heritages," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 268.
[87] Munroe, "Negotiating memories," in Dessingue and Winter, *Beyond Memory,* 183.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Display, "Transatlantic Slave Trade," MOLD.

Bean argue.[90] Sitwell more recently acknowledged that "outside West Africa, vast regions of West Central and Central Africa exported millions of slaves into the transatlantic slave trade."[91] Ogborn also offers a map of the complex trans-Saharan trade routes.[92] While slavery already existed within the African continent, some states and individuals became "fishers of men," who were provided with an "intensified economic incentive" by increasing European demand.[93] There was not in-depth discussion in the case study sites of what Whatley describes as "a self-perpetuating gun-slave cycle, a cycle that generated explosive growth in both slave exports and conflict among Africans."[94] These internal journeys and tensions are not depicted within the current triangles which create an illusion that those enslaved all originated from the western coastal region. The interior of the African continent is just one of several wider geographies neglected by these triangles. This chapter alludes to several corners of the spatial web of EAC by exploring its expansive nature. However, the thesis focus is predominantly on connections related to England and New England.

The neglect of the African continent does nonetheless return us to the issue of "maritimisation." As Moody notes, "the national public memory of Britain's involvement in transatlantic slavery has been framed by a maritime-themed lens; it is confined to the activities and movement of ships across the Atlantic Ocean, having broken memorial ties with more land-based operations and consequences."[95] The triangles focus on maritime trade and visually the ocean dominates the space. However, as Chapter 1 noted, Rönnbäck estimates, in his work

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[90] Robert Paul Thomas and Richard Nelson Bean, "The Fishers of Men: The Profits of the Slave Trade," *The Journal of Economic History* 34, no. 4 (1974): 901.
[91] Sean Sitwell, *Slavery and Slaving in African History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 52.
[92] Ogborn, *Britain and the World,* 123.
[93] Thomas and Bean, "The Fishers of Men," 885–914.
[94] Warren C. Whatley, "The gun-slave hypothesis and the 18th century British slave trade," *Explorations in Economic History* 67 (2018): 103.
[95] Moody, "Liverpool's Local Tints: Drowning Memory and 'Maritimising' Slavery," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 150.

focused on Britain, that the fiscal importance of EAC doubles when we do not just consider the "Triangular Trade" but wider "dependent industries."[96] Connected trade and commerce on all the continents have been falsely disconnected from the transatlantic slave trade in public memory. The lens of EAC attempts to reconnect them.

The basic point that triangular diagrams do capture is that enslaved people were taken from Africa to cultivate crops to meet industrial and consumer demand in overwhelmingly white populated areas such as England and New England. As the ISM told visitors, "the transatlantic slave trade happened because Europeans needed workers for their colonies in the Americas."[97] They needed such a large number of labourers because of the demand for what was grown. The following pages focus on what the interventions said about what was produced by enslaved labourers in the Americas.

Above it was noted that Lancaster's *Captured Africans* connected sugar, mahogany, rum and cotton to enslaved people and wealth. MOLD discussed the trade of sugar, rum, tobacco and coffee.[98] Quarry Bank Mill discussed, unsurprisingly, cotton but also sugar, coffee and tobacco.[99] M Shed's "Great Circuit" diagram identified sugar, rum, tobacco, rice, indigo, timber, pepper, ivory, and gold as returning from the Americas, but not cotton.[100] Timber, pepper, ivory and gold were also transported from Africa to the Americas, alongside enslaved people, according to the "Great Circuit" diagram.

[96] Rönnbäck, "On the economic importance," 327.
[97] Text panel, "Why Slavery?" Enslavement, ISM.
[98] Display, "Triangle Trade," MOLD.
[99] Display, "Triangle Trade," MOLD.
[100] Exterior illustration, "Bristol and the Transatlantic Slave Trade," M Shed.

The NMM embedded six products and industries at the centre of Atlantic trade: sugar, coffee, tobacco, cotton and textiles, metals and metalwork and fishing **(Figure 4.10)**.[101] Each of the six sections displayed the raw crop or product, with the cultivated product or connected wares. The accompanying text, and 2D image, then described the process and uses. Visually, it was the most attention-grabbing section of the *Atlantic Worlds* gallery, and it literally placed these products at the centre of Atlantic trade as it sat in the middle of the gallery. The accompanying text of four of these sections explicitly mentioned the enslaved, while visitors may deduce this connection for coffee and metals from their placement alongside the others; especially as the coffee text explains that "growing demand prompted the setting-up of coffee plantations in European colonies in south-east Asia and the Americas."[102] There was also a nearby display on coffee shops that further connects coffee with consumerism, a theme explored in Chapter 5.

**Figure 4.10.** Table centre of NMM's *Atlantic Worlds* gallery. PTBA (April 2019).

[101] Central table, Atlantic, NMM.
[102] Text label, "Coffee," Central table, Atlantic, NMM.

At Wilberforce House, the “raw materials” listed as returning on the “homeward passage” to Britain and Europe were sugar, rum, rice, coffee, tobacco and cotton.[103] These six goods featured again in the exhibit on “Plantation Life.”[104] Visitors were encouraged to smell covered coffee, tobacco and rum, while rice, cotton and sugar were also displayed in small glass boxes **(Figure 4.11)**. Similarly, within the NMM’s new *Tudor and Stuart* gallery, the display on “Trade” featured various crops and products, and visitors were again encouraged to smell tobacco.[105] These interventions offered a more sensory experience and may encourage visitor engagement. A sensory device was again used at Lancaster Maritime Museum, where coffee, tobacco and rum were displayed to be smelt.[106] It also featured sugar, a wine barrel – with a tonnage book noting wine being imported from West Indies – a bag of raw cotton, a “tobacco man” and a mahogany grandfather clock.[107] Elsewhere within the museum the display mentioned that “sugar, rum and molasses became increasingly important, together with coffee, spices, cotton and timber,

**Figure 4.11.** Crop display within Wilberforce House’s “Plantation Life” exhibit. PTBA (April 2019).

[103] Display, “The Triangular Trade,” Slavery, WH.
[104] Display, “Plantation Life,” Slavery, WH.
[105] Jars with scent, “Trade,” Tudor, NMM.
[106] Boxes with scent, Slave Trade, LMM.
[107] Slave Trade, LMM. The “Tobacco Man” label explained that the wooden figures date to the early seventeenth century, when they were “placed on countertops to represent tobacco companies” and “were depicted as stereotypical Native American men or women.”

especially mahogany."[108] The same panel on "Trade and Industry" noted the development of cabinetmaking in the town "using Caribbean mahogany."[109]

Of the goods listed above, sugar, rum and cotton received the most regular attention. Before discussing them in more depth, the following pages draw attention to the importance of mahogany, the fourth product on *Captured Africans*. This wood has the potential to highlight various elements of EAC and, unlike the consumer products such as sugar, it left spectral traces of enslaved labour in furniture and buildings in both England and New England. However, outside of Lancaster, mahogany was largely ignored.

In addition to being on the memorial in Lancaster, mahogany was mentioned at Lancaster City Museum, the Judges' Lodgings Museum and at Lancaster Maritime Museum. The City Museum featured a quote from Charles Dickens' *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* (1857) in which he wrote that mahogany has "retrospective quality into itself, and to show the visitor, in the depth of its grain, through all its polish, the hue of the wretched slaves who groaned long ago under old Lancaster merchants."[110] This rich quote speaks to the spectral traces of mahogany, and the town, but only featured in small text and therefore is likely to be missed.

At the Judges' Lodgings Museum several rooms were dedicated to Gillows furniture, which was famously produced in the city, but slavery was "un-visible" in this exhibit, despite the furniture being made largely of mahogany. Other labels in the site did briefly acknowledge that Gillows received mahogany from the West Indies to make the furniture.[111] At the Lancaster Maritime Museum mahogany featured in a display of imported tropical woods.[112] The grandfather

[108] Display panel, "Trade and Industry," LMM.
[109] Display panel, "Trade and Industry," LMM.
[110] Display panel, "Lancaster's Golden Age," Lancaster City Museum.
[111] Text labels, "Chamber Barrel Organ" and "Lady's Workbox," Judges' Lodgings.
[112] Exhibit, "The Triangle Trade," LMM.

clock at the museum was also accompanied by a label that explained that it was made by Gillows of Lancaster and that Robert Gillow imported mahogany, rum and sugar, mainly from Barbados and Antigua. It also continued that “the Gillow company’s role in the Slave Trade [meaning direct slave trading] is not well documented. However, it is known that in 1756 they bought a slaving vessel” and that other vessels were used for slave trading.[113] The clock was placed within a room dedicated to Lancaster and the slave trade, and thus visitors would immediately see a connection to slavery. They were, however, unlikely to do this at the Judges’ Lodgings Museum. What was missing was an explicit statement that the raw mahogany was extracted by enslaved people “from the depths of tropical rainforests,” at times of the year when labour could be diverted from sugar production.[114] While this may be implied when mahogany is listed alongside cotton, rum and sugar, it is not made clear that enslaved labourers harvested the wood.

While many of the other crops enslaved labourers cultivated were for transient consumption, mahogany is built into the fabric of historic sites themselves. These spectral traces are particularly conspicuously “un-visible” in eighteenth and nineteenth century homes.[115] As Tibbles wrote, “we all marvel at the magnificence of Georgian mahogany furniture and the skills of the craftsmen who made it but fail to consider where the wood came from and the people responsible for producing it.”[116] Instead, as Anderson notes, “the exquisite craftsmanship invested in them largely obscures their connections to nature, to slavery, and to imperialism.”[117]

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[113] Text label, “Grandfather clock,” Slave Trade, LMM.

[114] Jennifer L. Anderson, “Nature’s Currency: The Atlantic Mahogany Trade and the Commodification of Nature in the Eighteenth Century,” *Early American Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 2, no. 1 (2004): 72; Adam Bowett, “The English Mahogany Trade 1700 -1793” (PhD diss., Brunel University, 1996), 199.

[115] In 2019 Nostell Priory in Yorkshire had an “Interior Worlds” exhibition on Thomas Chippendale’s furniture at the site. Within that the National Trust, who manage the site, commissioned a short film on mahogany by Zodwa Nyoni which told “the perilous journey of mahogany, Chippendale’s material of choice, and its relationship with the transatlantic slave trade.” (https://www.zodwanyoni.com/mahogany). I became aware of this temporary intervention after my research period and therefore it is not included.

[116] Tibbles, “Facing Slavery's Past,” 295.

[117] Anderson, “Nature’s Currency,” 78.

Interventions and acknowledgements would challenge this, and highlight the historical interconnectedness. For example, Harewood House's library included grand mahogany bookcases **(Figure 4.12)**. As Bowett comments, Edwin Lascelles used his West Indian generated wealth to furnish his house with West Indian woods including mahogany; this was "more than symbolic. It was a manifestation of the direct commercial links between mahogany, West Indian trade and the economic development of 18th-century England."[118] The lack of acknowledgement of mahogany furniture and furnishings, as part of EAC, is one example of how slavery interpretation at historic houses, on both sides of the Atlantic, has been "woefully under-developed."[119]

**Figure 4.12.** Mahogany bookcases in "The Main Library" at Harewood House. PTBA (October 2019).

[118] Bowett, "The English Mahogany," vi.
[119] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 49.

The other site to briefly acknowledge mahogany was the ISM, which displayed a mahogany knife box and chair and told visitors it was "originally called Jamaica wood."[120] This reflects that Jamaican sources dominated early imports of mahogany.[121] However, as demand increased – from New England as well as England – mahogany was imported from across the Americas, including Spanish colonies.[122] These global connections are just one element of mahogany's own interesting narrative within EAC.

Mahogany is prevalent because from the mid-1700s into the nineteenth century the wood was "the most fashionable furniture material" in both North America and England, and the furniture pieces were "emblems of refinement."[123] However, prior to becoming a luxury wood, mahogany was ballast. At the beginning of the eighteenth-century, there were more returning ships than there was freight, particularly in years where low amounts of sugar or tobacco were produced. Therefore, at the shippers' request, the British government introduced the 1721 Naval Stores Act, a protectionist mercantilist piece of legislation which removed import duties from timber arriving from the British Atlantic colonies. From the 1720s mahogany was then used as a heavy material to fill the Atlantic trading ships.[124] The mahogany story also further undermines the problematic triangular narrative. Building on Melinda Elder's work, Bowett highlights that "the bulk of mahogany reaching these shores did so on vessels concerned only in the two-way trade between Great Britain and the West Indies, or between Great Britain and North America."[125] The trade in mahogany was part of a government protected predominantly bilateral trade with the

[120] Text panel, "Tropical woods," Enslavement, ISM.
[121] Bowett, "The English Mahogany," 67-151.
[122] Ibid., 113–125.
[123] Anderson, "Nature's Currency," 49, 72.
[124] Bowett, "The English Mahogany," 21–23.
[125] Ibid., 197. He references: Melinda Elder, *The Slave Trade and the Economic Development of 18th Century Lancaster* (Keele: Keele University Press, 1992), 170–182.

Caribbean that relied on enslaved labour. This unfairly neglected product of EAC is just one specific example of the importance of bilateral rather than triangular trade.

As Haggerty notes in her work on Liverpool, “Atlantic trade was far more complex and interdependent” than the simple triangular image suggests, and she highlights the “propensity of bilateral” trade.[126] In his discussion of Bristol, England, Morgan also states that “bilateral trading vessels […] took the lion's share of return cargoes in tropical produce” in the late eighteenth century, while slaving vessels returned with bills of exchange as remittance.[127] Bilateral trade was prominent because those trading vessels could time their arrival, to coincide particularly with the harvesting of sugar at the beginning of the year, and furthermore they benefitted from the protection of sailing in fleets, and convoys during wartime. In addition to “timing and space,” the triangular and bilateral “symbiotic trades made perfect sense” because “it would have proved impossible for food to be delivered to the West Indies on the same vessels as those delivering slaves.”[128] This bilateral trade highlights the expanse of EAC beyond the triangular trade. The supply ships also allude to the “extraordinary violence” and horror of the slave trade itself, in which slaving ships were so gruesome that they were followed by sharks.[129] Not only could the slaving vessels not carry enough to meet the necessary volume required to supply food for the plantation population; they were also too unhygienic to carry foodstuffs.

EAC consisted of several overlapping bilateral and multi-faceted trades, as illustrated by Morgan’s diagram above **(Figure 4.8).** Some of the larger English sites acknowledged bilateral

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[126] Haggerty, “Liverpool,” in Haggerty et al., *The empire,* 19, 26.
[127] Kenneth Morgan, “Remittance Procedures in the Eighteenth-Century British Slave Trade,” *Business History Review* 79 (2005): 722.
[128] Haggerty, “Liverpool,” in Haggerty et al., *The empire,* 26.
[129] Marcus Rediker, “History from below the water line: Sharks and the Atlantic slave trade,” *Atlantic Studies* 5, no. 2 (2018): 285–286.

trade with the Americas, including on a small diagram at Lancaster Maritime Museum.[130] Beneath the MOLD's triangle the museum displayed an extract of "Rates of freight to the West Indies," for which the accompanying label explained that "almost everything that was needed for the plantation had to be imported from Britain."[131] There was no mention of the supply trade for New England or wider North America. Furthermore, this detail may be missed if visitors are grazing – unlike the large diagram – and even if visitors do read this label they may understandably assume that all plantation supplies were first taken to Africa then transported with the enslaved Africans, because that is what the triangle suggests.

The bilateral trade was most clearly stressed at the NMM in the *Atlantic Worlds* gallery. Here, the panel on "British Trade and Empire, 1688-1815" explained that Britain established colonies in North America and the Caribbean, which "exported sugar, tobacco and cotton" while "they imported manufactured goods, such as woollen cloth and metal wares."[132] Nearby was a diagram titled "Atlantic Trade System, 1768-72" **(Figure 4.13).**[133] Amongst the labelled arrows, you could still make out a triangle with "manufactured goods" going to Africa and "enslaved people" heading to the Americas. However, it recognised that Britain sent "manufactured goods" to North America and the Caribbean as well as importing goods. It should be noted here that it is not entirely clear on the diagram that enslaved people were also taken to North America to cultivate those crops as that arrow ends at the Caribbean. It did, however, note the bilateral trade between the Caribbean and North America, and more specifically the Northeast in which "rum and sugar" travelled north and "rice, flour, grain, fish and timber" were supplied to the islands. While this

[130] Display panel, "Lancaster and the Slave Trade," Slave Trade, LMM.
[131] Text label, "Rates of freight to the West Indies, 1803," MOLD.
[132] Text panel, "British Trade and Empire, 1688-1815," Atlantic, NMM.
[133] Illustrated map, "Atlantic Trade System, 1768-72," Atlantic, NMM.

diagram may appear more confusing to visitors than a simple triangle, it provides a clearer illustration of the Atlantic trade of EAC.

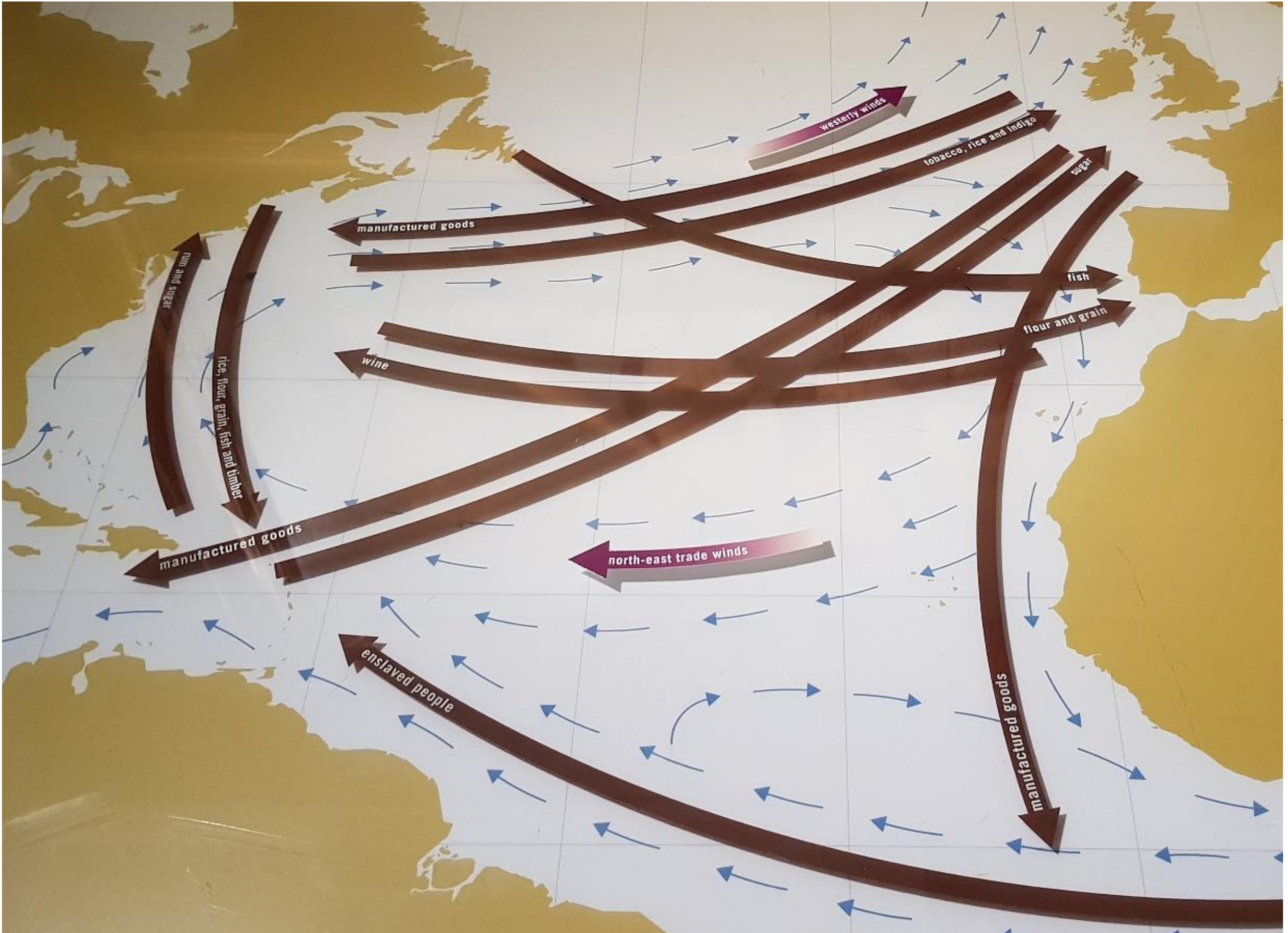


**Figure 4.13.** "Atlantic Trade System, 1768-72" diagram at NMM. PTBA (April 2019).

Unfortunately, the diagram was set into a table, rather than being designed to grab attention on a wall. It sat beneath a portrait of *The Ann* **(Figure 4.14)**.[134] The accompanying label also noted bilateral trade in that she "was not a slave ship but carried plantation stores and supplies to the colonies of the West Indies. She returned carrying Caribbean produce, like sugar, rum, and cotton, to Liverpool."[135] Similarly, the MOLD exhibit began with a ship portrait of *The Thomas King* which the label explained was a "West Indiaman and was used to import Demerara sugar from the slave plantations of the Caribbean."[136] The use of images of ships can be seen as perpetuating "maritimisation" since it highlights maritime activity, but where these paintings are utilised, the full complexities of such maritime activity should be discussed. This NMM diagram highlights why, when discussing EAC Atlantic trade, one triangle is overly simplistic as multi-lateral trades carried various goods around the Atlantic. The following sections highlight how interventions in both England and New England offer local or national fragments of the global web of EAC, that expanded beyond their borders and beyond the Atlantic itself.

**Figure 4.14.** *The Ann* above the "Atlantic Trade System, 1768-72" table at NMM. PTBA (April 2019).

[134] Illustrated map, "Atlantic Trade System, 1768-72," Atlantic, NMM.
[135] Text label, "The Ann off Birkenhead," Atlantic, NMM.
[136] Text label, "The Thomas King entering the London Dock," MOLD.

## Connecting fragments of EAC

From the outset this research looked to test Graham et al.'s premise that the national scale of heritage was "so all-pervasive" that "sub-national heritages" and "supra-national heritages" must "refer to the national scale."[137] Looking at the history and memory of EAC in two different nations allowed me to identify vast similarities, but also observe that these are rarely drawn out by the sites themselves. While several sites offered spectral traces of interwoven "local, national, imperial and transnational" stories, the transnational is widely neglected in favour of the others.[138] Donington et al. write about "local nuances of a 'national sin.'"[139] Similarly, Araujo "exposes the nuanced national approaches," through her comparison of the ISM with slavery exhibits in France and Washington D.C.[140] This research found numerous examples of local and national nuances, while acknowledgement of transnational global links were rarer. These are addressed separately in the following section. Collectively the case studies form fragments of a much larger picture, that becomes visible when pieced together like a jigsaw. However, individually, the existing interventions often lacked the capacity to situate their own nuance within the vastly complex web of interconnectedness. Instead, they offered fragments that pose little threat to the wider DOLHN when the scale and importance of EAC are not understood. Therefore, this thesis argues these fragments should be situated within more complex global narratives.

Across the sites', locally focused narratives were used to access the complex system of EAC. For example, Lancaster's focus on mahogany is an example of local nuance, and the greater attention given to the wood reflects that Gillows is a well-known furniture producer with an

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[137] Graham et al., *A Geography of Heritage,* 183–184.
[138] Chris Jeppesen, "East Meets West: Exploring the Connections between Britain, the Caribbean and the East India Company, c. 1757–1857," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 113.
[139] Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory.*
[140] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 127.

existing local historical narrative. This is another way in which EAC is fitted in to existing narratives, as previously discussed. There was a similar local focus in Bristol at M Shed and at the Georgian House Museum which stressed that the city played "a major part in transatlantic slavery and benefitted at every stage."[141] Even within large English galleries this focus was evident, as the MOLD's L*ondon, Sugar and Slavery* gallery title highlights. Further text explained that "behind the growth of London as a centre of finance and commerce from the 1700s onwards lay one of the great crimes against humanity."[142] Of the displays particularly relevant to this thesis, one explored "London the slave port" and another more narrowly focused on the "West India Docks" which were described as the "physical manifestation of London's corner of the Triangle Trade."[143] Within this context, wider details were presented within the frame of reference to London. For example, the displays acknowledged the "Brazilian ports of Rio de Janeiro and Bahia" but only when discussing that "London was the fourth biggest slaving port in the world."[144] While lacking a large purpose-built slavery museum, the smaller interventions in New England also focused overwhelmingly on local connections, either of the specific site or wider city or state. To a degree, this is to be expected of any heritage site that wants to explain why this history is relevant within that space. However, there were notable different dominant national narratives in England and New England that influenced the commodities that received attention. These differences are explored in depth in this section before attempting to situate them within a more global narrative.

Chapter 1 noted how English identity and history is wrapped up with Britain's imperial past. Consequently, English historical narratives have a much broader geographic scale than just English soil on the island of Great Britain. This was evident at several case study sites where a

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[141] Display panel, "Bristol and Slavery," John Pinney, GHM.
[142] Display, "Introduction," MOLD.
[143] Display, "West India Docks," MOLD.
[144] Display, "London the slave port," MOLD.

simple national scale of heritage was superseded by what I call an imperial scale, or more specifically an Atlantic imperial scale which neglects the wider Empire. In opposition to this, Chris Jeppesen has drawn attention to "the intricate networks woven by individuals, families and firms between the Atlantic and Indian Ocean worlds," including those involved in both plantation ownership and the East India Company.[145] The links between the Atlantic world and Asia are returned to in the final section. Here attention is drawn to the vital link Jeppesen highlights between the "process of selective remembering" of the empire and the "impression of two separate empires, one in North America and another in Asia."[146] Challenging this division also counters the previous erasure which has contributed to the "un-visibility" of both histories. As well as neglecting Asia, within this lens, the focus is also particularly on the Caribbean and reflects a view of the British empire at its zenith in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as is explored further in the discussion of the neglect of the USA.

The focus on the Atlantic Empire is made most clear at the NMM, which had a display on the "War for an Atlantic Empire, 1756-63," focusing on the Seven Years War between Britain and France. The text explained that "because of their economic importance, Britain also attacked France's major centres of sugar production in the West Indies."[147] This reveals both the museum's narrative focus on the British empire, and the "economic importance" of the sugar islands in the Caribbean. It also neatly summarises the wider focus across English interventions: sugar cultivated within the British Atlantic Empire.

Few other English sites so explicitly presented the British empire as their frame, and both the ISM and Wilberforce House broadly explained that "Europeans" owned plantations.[148]

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[145] Jeppesen, "East Meets West," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 103.
[146] Ibid., 105.
[147] Display, "War for an Atlantic Empire, 1756-63," Atlantic, NMM.
[148] Display, "Plantation Life," Slavery: Plantation Life, WH; Text panel, "Why Slavery?" Enslavement, ISM.

However, the details referred to British imperial possessions. Wilberforce House, for example, discussed Nevis, Antigua and Jamaica. Similarly, at M Shed the exterior diagram of the "Great Circuit" only labelled the British Caribbean islands of Barbados, Nevis and Jamaica.[149] When looking beyond London, the MOLD told visitors that "London merchants were at the heart of the British colonisation of the West Indies, where they introduced the cultivation of highly profitable sugar for export."[150] Here colonisation is a euphemism for imperialism and Empire. The NMM as an institution remembers the maritime history of an island nation that built the world's largest empire. Reflecting this focus, the *Atlantic Gallery* featured the aforementioned display on "British Trade and Empire, 1688-1815" which stressed that "the 'empire of the seas' generated wealth that gradually changed the British economy."[151] More broadly, the British empire offers the overarching geographic perimeter for the narrative of EAC in English museums.

This Atlantic imperial lens is clearly reflected in the recurring, problematic temporal framing which ends the narrative in the 1830s. At the MOLD, 1807 and 1833 were provided as the relevant abolition dates, and in addition to those dates the NMM also had a display on "After 1807: The Royal Navy and Suppression of the Slave Trade."[152] The inclusion of this positive history reflects the desire for "pride and comfort" and it fits within the DOLHN.[153] At the ISM, both British abolition dates were embedded within a larger international timeline, and 1833 was provided as the date for abolition in the "British colonies."[154] Similarly, at Wilberforce House, on a timeline of "International Abolition of Transatlantic Slavery" – which begins in 1807 – 1833was again the date given for abolition in "British colonies."[155] Abolition before 1807, such as through the Haitian

[149] Exterior illustration, "Bristol and the Transatlantic Slave Trade," M Shed.
[150] Display, "Caribbean Plantations," MOLD.
[151] Text panel, "British Trade and Empire, 1688-1815," Atlantic, NMM.
[152] Display, "After 1807: The Royal Navy and Suppression of the Slave Trade," Atlantic, NMM.
[153] Smith, "'Man's inhumanity to man,'" 195.
[154] Timeline, Legacy, ISM.
[155] Timeline, "International Abolition of Transatlantic Slavery," Abolition, WH.

Revolution, is neglected while abolition in the USA and Brazil is noted as coming later. What was not explored in any depth at sites that operate under the DOLHN is continued involvement in EAC beyond the dates of abolition. At the ISM, details on ongoing investment and connections to slavery through to the 1880s were discussed on a small hand-held board but many visitors would not find it.[156]

The continued trade with the US South for raw materials for the cotton textile industry is discussed further in the next section. Here it is worth highlighting the near complete neglect of trade with Cuba or Brazil, which fall outside the Atlantic imperial lens for English museums. While the ISM and MOLD briefly noted the volume of slave trading to Brazil, along with the JBH, there was no exploration of trade with these countries who did not abolish slavery until the 1880s. In the NMM's "The Capture of Havana, 1762" display, Cuba was only addressed within the frame of imperial wars in the eighteenth-century.[157] Elsewhere, Wilberforce House briefly noted that "some think that competition from Cuba and Brazil, who produced sugar more cheaply, played an important part in the decline of sugar production in the British Caribbean," but without discussion of the role of these countries beyond British abolition, which would disrupt the DOLHN.[158]

In New England, the JBH also noted the continued trade in enslaved people beyond American abolition, without discussing any connections to the region. The *Sally* exhibit claimed that after Britain and the US passed bills to formally abolish the Atlantic slave trade in 1807, "the trafficking of slaves to Brazil and the Caribbean continued virtually unabated for another half century."[159] While there were challenges, and some trades were illegal, the TAST database reveals

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[156] Information board, "Liverpool, slavery and the trade in enslaved Africans between 1807 and the 1880s," Authored by Marika Sherwood, Enslavement, ISM.
[157] Display, "Capture of Havana, 1762," Atlantic, NMM.
[158] Text panel, "White Gold," Slavery, WH.
[159] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Sally, JBH.

that over 2.5 million enslaved Africans disembarked transatlantic slaving ships in Brazil and the Spanish Americas after 1807, while others were transported through the intra-American trade.[160] This acknowledgement moves the narrative temporally beyond 1807, but it supports the DOLHN by suggesting abolition was the finite end-point of involvement in EAC for people in New England. Chapter 5 uses another New England example to refute this by highlighting that George DeWolf of Linden Place moved to his Cuban sugar plantation in 1825, revealing transnational connections between New England and Cuba. However, as this narrative stretches beyond the national frame it was under-developed at the heritage site.

More widely in New England, sugar received only passing discussion. At the Moffatt-Ladd House in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, nothing was said of the sugar loaf displayed in the kitchen in another example of persisting "un-visibility." Upstairs within the house the guide drew attention to the fact that in the nursery window a child had scratched "sugar (spelt shuger) is sweet" but nothing was said about where the sugar came from.[161] This was in stark contrast to sites across England, where sugar was presented as the central commodity within the narrative of EAC. As James Walvin wrote, in the NMM-produced-book which accompanied their British slave trade abolition bicentenary work, "if a single commodity was responsible for this enforced migration of millions of Africans to the Americas it was sugar."[162]

Several of the sites of intervention made acknowledgement of sugar plantation ownership. In New England, Royall House and Slave Quarters briefly acknowledged plantation ownership in Antigua under the British empire, while the DeWolfs connection to Cuba was under-

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[160] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.
[161] Tour, Moffatt-Ladd.
[162] James Walvin, "Slavery, Mass Consumption and the Dynamics of the Atlantic World: An Overview," in *Representing Slavery: Art, Artefacts and Archives in the Collections of the National Maritime Museum,* eds. Douglas Hamilton and Robert J. Blyth (Aldershot: Lund Humphries, 2007), 22.

acknowledged. More broadly, this type of link was less explored than in England, where it was commonly made particularly at historic houses, and through the Codrington plaque in Oxford. The individual family links to islands such as Barbados, Jamaica, Nevis and St Kitts are discussed further in Chapter 5, but, through the families, Caribbean plantations were an extension of British narratives. Walvin has recently written on *How Sugar Corrupted the World* from the time of slavery through to contemporary obesity.[163] The *Blood Sugar* film at Newstead Abbey, where Wildman gained his wealth from sugar plantations, similarly highlighted the historic violence involved in sugar cultivation and the modern problem of diabetes. The film asked observers: "how many sugar-coated prescriptions must we be fed, exposing Wildman's involvement from the Caribbean to Newstead."[164] It was sugar cultivation that fuelled the spectral traces in several of these sites.

As noted, the Lascelles family of Harewood House also owned sugar plantations, but the text on "the origins of sugar at Harewood" focused on the cultivation of sugar more broadly. The text explained that "sugar was grown and extracted from the sugar cane on West Indian plantations, using slaves to grow, cut and process it" and that it was "a particularly expensive commodity."[165] The remaining text undermined the focus on sugar plantations in the West Indies by describing sugar "being grown here in the walled garden" and abolitionist William Wilberforce's visit to that garden. The choice to give so much space to this more comfortable narrative highlighted the continued "un-visibility" of EAC, under the DOLHN. Accentuating this, the small sugar loaf and accompanying text were tucked in the corner of the "below stairs" Still Room

[163] James Walvin, *How Sugar Corrupted the World: From Slavery to Obesity* (London: Robinson, 2017).
[164] Film, *Blood Sugar*, Discover, Newstead Abbey.
[165] Text label, "The Origins of Sugar at Harewood," Harewood.

**(Figure 4.15)**. Across English museums, sugar loaves, or cones, are frequently utilised as palimpsestic objects.

**Figure 4.15.** Sugar display in the Harewood House Still Room. PTBA (October 2019).

At the Georgian House Museum, it was made clear that the site "was home for the family and office for Pinney's sugar business."[166] The dining table was set for dessert and visitors were reminded that "all sweetmeats depended on sugar and the increasing demand for these delicacies fuelled the sugar trade, which depended on slavery."[167] Downstairs in the larder there was another sugar cone, which was much larger than the one at Harewood. Accompanying text explained that "sugar was one of Bristol's most important imports (the Pinney's money came from their sugar-growing and importing business)" and that the refining process created solid "sugar

[166] Entrance board, "The Georgian House Museum," GHM.
[167] Room card, "The Dessert Course," GHM.

cones" from which lumps were broken off using sugar cutters.[168] These sugar cutters, or nippers, are also very common objects in museum displays on sugar in England, alluding to its consumption.

Within the MOLD's *London, Sugar and Slavery* gallery there was an unsurprising focus on sugar. This was reflected in a board dedicated to sugar cane which led towards the installation on the "wealth of sugar."[169] The displays featured a large cone of processed sugar with sugar nippers, as well as a sugar loaf mould in the "Caribbean plantations" display.[170] Across London, at the NMM, small sugar loaves were displayed within the coffee house display, with sugar nippers.[171] At M Shed in Bristol a sugar loaf featured in a display on "People profiting from slavery."[172] At the ISM it was made explicitly clear that "sugar was the most important of the raw materials brought back" and there was a model of a sugar plantation in the gallery.[173] Accordingly, a sugar loaf, and associated tableware, was presented at the centre of the display on the economic benefits of slavery and the rise of consumer society **(Figure 4.16)**.[174]

**Figure 4.16.** Sugar loaf and tableware at the ISM. PTBA (March 2019).

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[168] Text panel, "The Larder," GHM.
[169] Display, "Wealth of Sugar," MOLD.
[170] Display, "Wealth of Sugar," MOLD; Display, "Caribbean Plantations," MOLD.
[171] Display, Coffee shop, Atlantic, NMM.
[172] Display, "People profiting from slavery," M Shed.
[173] Text label, "Sugar," Enslavement, ISM.
[174] Display, "Economic Benefits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.

At the Lancaster Maritime Museum two large sugar cones were displayed. One was a replica that was part of Sue Flowers' *One Tenth* 2007 exhibit, and nearby text explained that she laid out 55 such cones in the shape of the infamous slave ships.[175] Another older cone was accompanied by a label that explained that "eighteenth-century society began to get a taste for all things sweet with the arrival of sugar from the West Indian plantations."[176] The end of that label noted that "in Lancaster, Sugar House Alley still exists. This was the location of a sugar refinery."[177] Reflecting the "un-visibility" of slavery in the cityscape, that alley is also home to Lancaster University Student Union's nightclub named the Sugarhouse, or just Sugar. For thousands of undergraduates – including initially myself – the origin of the name went unrecognised, or at least undiscussed, until the Student Union committed to changing the name in the wake of events in summer 2020.

Wilberforce House did not have a large sugar loaf, but rather granulated sugar was displayed amongst other crops. Despite acknowledging other produce, sugar was central within the "Plantation Life" room, including a re-creation of a sugar plantation, images of sugar plantations on the window blinds and a metallic sugar cane sculpture in the corner. Within that room, text explained that "by the late 18th century the British were one of the economic leaders of large-scale Caribbean agriculture and industry. Sugar was in high demand in Britain and considered by those who produced it to be 'white gold.'"[178] Wilberforce House also expressed that "sugar, as a crop, was brought to the Caribbean and grown for profit" while only briefly noting that "in North

[175] Text label, "Replica sugar cones from 'One Tenth,'" Slave Trade, LMM.
[176] Text label, "Sugar cone," Slave Trade, LMM.
[177] Text label, "Sugar cone," Slave Trade, LMM.
[178] Text panel, "White Gold," Slavery, WH.

America slaves also grew tobacco, rice and cotton."[179] This reflects a more general neglect of the North American colonies.

Broadly, the Atlantic imperial lens largely ignored North America, despite the Thirteen Colonies being part of the British Atlantic world until 1776. The focus on the British Caribbean within this framework is worth further consideration. It may reflect that the large English museums consulted with members of the British African-Caribbean community before 2007. However, researchers found that those consulted – who were limited in number – often "did not feel listened to" as the museums had pre-determined aims and content for the exhibitions.[180] Furthermore, the same focus at historic houses and within smaller interventions reflected the impression that Caribbean history is not viewed as a transnational story but as an extension of a British national story, and that it is plantation ownership on the islands that is considered the relevant aspect of EAC within England. This stance reflects the 1848 view, of English philosopher John Stuart Mill, that the West India colonies "cannot be regarded as countries, with productive capital of their own" but that they "are the place where England finds it convenient to carry on the production of sugar, coffee, and a few other tropical commodities." Mill continued that "all the capital employed is English capital" and that "trade with the West Indies is therefore hardly to be considered as external trade."[181] He wrote shortly after emancipation but reflected the imperial view of the West Indies as a geographic extension of England, where tropical commodities could be grown.

[179] Display, "Plantation Life," Slavery, WH.
[180] Laurajane Smith and Kalliopi Fouseki, "The Role of Museums as 'Places of Social Justice': Community Consultation and the 1807 Bicentenary," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 105.
[181] John Stuart Mill, *The Principles of Political Economy* (Kitchener, Ontario: Batoche Books, 1848/2001), 803.

The neglect of North America likely reflects that the Atlantic imperial lens is preserving an imperial view from the nineteenth or early twentieth century, when the British empire was most established. Since “the zenith of Britain's imperial power was after the abolition of slavery” – itself over fifty years after the loss of the American colonies – stories of the British empire can be told without any mention of the potentially nationally embarrassing reminder of the American Revolution.[182] Furthermore, New England’s, and the United States’, proud anti-British DOLHN around American independence does not fit into England’s own DOLHN.

As well as neglecting wider geographies, the dominant focus on the former British Caribbean leads to sugar dominating the English narrative of EAC, reflecting an important product but concealing others. According to Mitchell and Deane’s statistics, sugar was the most significant British import in terms of value consistently throughout the 1700s and into the 1800s.[183] From the end of the American War of Independence over £2 million worth of sugar was imported with the value rising to over £6 million by the time of emancipation fifty years later. In the interim, however, it was surpassed in value by raw cotton imports in the 1820s, and by 1833 over £10 million worth of raw cotton was being imported. The dominance of sugar and the British Caribbean limits potential understanding of the importance of EAC and promotes an inaccurate temporal conclusion of this association in the 1830s. The importance of cotton is returned to below, while the following pages focus on the neglect of the United States in English commemorations and the different national narratives within New England.

The prominent exception to this neglect was the NMM’s complex “Atlantic Trade System, 1768-72” diagram discussed above **(Figure 4.13)**, which presented a moment in time before

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[182] Seaton, “Sources of Slavery,” in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 120.
[183] “Overseas Trade 4: Official Values of Principal Imports – England & Wales 1700-1791, Great Britain 1792-1829 and United Kingdom 1826-56,” in B.R. Mitchell and Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 285–292.

American independence and therefore the trade it depicts with the Thirteen colonies is part of British history. More commonly, the North American colonies were neglected at English sites in favour of the British Caribbean sugar colonies. The above triangles also reveal this focus with arrows from Africa usually terminating in the Caribbean, making enslaved labour in other areas of the Americas "un-visible." At Wilberforce House Museum **(Figure 4.4)** the arrow went over the historical colony of British Guiana in northern South America, and at M Shed **(Figure 4.5)** a small second arrow suggested some enslaved people were delivered to the area around Florida, but the return trade in the triangle appeared to be originating from the Caribbean. To fully highlight the importance of EAC it must be made visually clear that enslaved labourers worked across the Americas cultivating various products.

The English focus on sugar plantations in the Caribbean can be understood as an extension of the national narrative through an Atlantic imperial lens which exists as a legacy of Britain's imperial viewpoint. Conversely, the idea of the colonial period is a familiar delineator of time in the US, and was used in multiple interventions. For example, Sign 5 in the Granary Burying Ground explained that "Massachusetts' colonial economy depended on the Atlantic Trade between Britain, the West Indies, Africa and the American colonies."[184] The phrase "colonial New England" also featured in two of the Center for Reconciliation's panels.[185] Chapter 5 will also discuss occupants of certain New England historic houses and how within their existing narratives those loyal to Britain are easier to critique than signatories of the Declaration of Independence. For New England, the colonial period covered the majority of time when slavery was legally permitted on their soil. With this in mind, the evocation of the British empire may be a means of distancing New

[184] Information board, "5. Seventeenth Century Burials," Granary Burying Ground.
[185] Display panels, "New England Slavery was Profitable" and "Churches also benefited from the Slavery Business," CFR.

Englanders from their involvement with enslavement under British rule, which they so fervently celebrate breaking free from. However, EAC did not cease with independence.

Eric Kimball claims that "the standard narrative of New Englanders' involvement in slavery begins too late, by emphasizing cotton textile mills, and this framework hides the earlier and persistent involvement with the plantation complex based in the Caribbean."[186] Several of the interventions I found attempted to challenge this, but cotton did receive more attention than in English museums. The other commodity that featured strongly in the New England EAC narrative was not sugar, but rum. While the molasses used to make the rum were a by-product of sugar cultivation, the different centered commodities reflect that while in England ownership of sugar plantations is perceived as being the central link to EAC, New England's infamous connection is for its disproportionate involvement in North American slave trading. England's focus on sugar fits within an Atlantic imperial geographic lens, while New England's story remains more nationally focused. These nuanced fragments also reflect what was most valued within the different regions' perceived triangles with Africa and the Caribbean. Independently these fragments neglect the wider web of profit, and they understate the importance of enslaved labour across these interwoven industries.

While briefly noted in England, rum received far less attention than sugar. It is not completely ignored: for example, the Georgian House Museum observed that "enslaved people produced sugar and rum for the European and American markets."[187] At the Judges' Lodgings Museum there was also brief mention of "best Jamaica Rum."[188] However, New England sites –

[186] Eric Kimball, "'What have we do with slavery?' New Englanders and the Slave Economies of the West Indies," in *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development*, eds. Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 193.
[187] Display panel, "Bristol and Slavery," John Pinney, GHM.
[188] Text label, "Chamber Barrel Organ," Judges' Lodgings.

and particularly those in Rhode Island – focused more on the commodity of rum. The focus on rum reflects that there was a "predominance of rum distilleries in New England," which relied on supply from plantations.[189] In fact, "by 1770, Rhode Island alone had more than thirty distilleries making rum from molasses."[190] The text accompanying the *In Silent Witness* memorial described how Newport, RI, produced "rum to be traded for slaves in Africa, who were sold for cash and molasses. The molasses were then brought back to Newport for the production of more rum and the continuance of the 'triangle trade.'"[191] Depending on prior knowledge, some visitors in New England may see "triangle trade" and "slave trade" as interchangeable synonyms, or some understanding may be lost. Similarly, the guide at Stephen Hopkins House described the same rum-based triangular trade. At the nearby JBH, both the written and audio guides, and the *Sally* exhibit, explained that this trade from New England was built on rum exports to Africa.[192] Furthering this, the *Sally* exhibit highlighted that the ship departed for Africa carrying 17,274 gallons of rum.[193] All of these sites reflected Rhode Island's commemorative focus on the triangular slave trade. King's Chapel more broadly stated that "rum distillers" were a profession which "linked their wealth to enslavement."[194]

The Center for Reconciliation's "Slavery was Profitable" panel did acknowledge "Caribbean Sugar Planters" and rum within their "Web of Profit" but there was a whole section of a panel dedicated to "New England's Cotton Kingdom."[195] It noted that locally "as with the slave trade, the textile industry supported a host of other businesses: machine tool companies, insurance

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[189] Pellizzari, "Supplying Slavery," 17.
[190] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 32.
[191] Accompanying text panel, *In Silent Witness*.
[192] Text in guide, "6 Slave Platter & Moses Brown Portrait," Written, JBH.
[193] Display panels, "Forgotten History: Rhode Island and the Slave Trade" and "Outfitting a Slave Ship," Sally, JBH.
[194] Information board, "Slavery and King's Chapel: Tied to the Trade," King's Chapel.
[195] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.

companies, banks and all the businesses that served the growing population of mill workers."[196] Within a national lens, it also highlighted that New England both depended on slave-cultivated cotton from the South, and the Southern markets for so-called "Negro cloth."

Chapter 3 explored how EAC can be placed within and disrupt existing heritage narratives and mythologies. One of these myths is the idea that slavery was "America's Peculiar Institution," a phrase which has been commonplace since the decades before the American Civil War.[197] This phrase may be interpreted as meaning that it was unusual, whereas involvement was banal, or that it was unique to America, while African chattel slavery existed across the Americas. As Bailey writes, EAC was "far from peculiar" in either sense.[198] My thesis further dismantles this myth by emphasising EAC's transnational connections. However, at New England sites slavery in the USA dominated the narratives.

Most notably, at Worcester Art Museum the text panel was titled "America's Peculiar Institution" and it featured abolition dates in Massachusetts in 1783 and in the US in 1865 to reinforce this national focus.[199] This framing neglected international involvement and therefore reduced understanding of the scope of enslavement. The isolating of slavery as uniquely American, and early American at that, was further reinforced by only installing these labels in the Early American Portraits gallery at Worcester Art Museum. In the European Gallery there was a large portrait of "Mr and Mrs James Dunlop" with James Dunlop (1782-1844) identified as a "tobacco merchant and insurance broker of Scottish descent."[200] There was no mention of

[196] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.
[197] The phrase was used by John C. Calhoun and other Southern leaders of the 1800s. See: Gary L. Williams, "Embracing Racism: Understanding Its Pervasiveness & Persistence," *Multicultural Education* 20, no. 1 (2012): 42.
[198] Bailey, "The Other Side of Slavery," 44.
[199] Text panel, "America's Peculiar Institution," WAM.
[200] Text label, "Mr and Mrs James Dunlop," European Galleries, WAM.

enslaved labourers cultivating the tobacco. Instead, slavery was isolated as a problem of early Americans, thus limiting recognition of the interconnectedness, and possibly causing American visitors to feel their history is disproportionately shamed. The idea of guilt will be returned to in Chapter 5.

At Boott Cotton Mills in Massachusetts the national frame was also dominant in its presentation of the cotton story, reflecting that the host town of Lowell is a National Historic Park. In particular, the American Civil War in the 1860s was centred rather than the American War of Independence, as the town was established in the 1820s. The display on "the plantation economy" described "what Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts called an 'unholy union… between the lords of the lash [Southern cotton planters] and the lords of the loom [Northern textile mill owners].'"[201] This was further developed in an optional film within the exhibit which explored different opinions on the question of whether industrialisation was good for America. The film re-emphasised Sumner's statement of the union between the lash and the loom and stressed that the American Civil War tested it.[202] This context is important if visitors realise, as Americans may be more likely to do, that Charles Sumner was an abolitionist Massachusetts Senator from 1851 to 1874.

The focus on the Civil War in the Northern cotton mill was unsurprising as it is a seminal event in American history, and "the Civil War has never receded into the remote past in American life."[203] However, it was restricted to a national story, despite Dattel arguing that the US South was overly confident in the economic strength cotton gave them.[204] It was international trade, as

[201] Display, "Plantation Economy," Boott.
[202] Film, *Wheels of Change: The First Century of American Industry*, Boott.
[203] Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh, "Introduction," in *Memory of the Civil War in American Culture*, eds. Alice Fahs and Joan Waugh (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, 2004), 1.
[204] Dattel, "Cotton, the Oil," 60–63.

well as trade to the northern mills, that gave the South wealth and confidence. Schoen similarly argues that "'King Cotton' affirmed slaveholders' central place in the larger global economy" and that "cotton had been, or so they thought in 1860, an asset strong enough to win European partners and defeat northern enemies."[205] However, this international lens was not explored. Connectedly, the American Civil War is barely discussed in England, as it does not fit within the Caribbean-focused Atlantic imperial scale. At the ISM there was a pillar within the "Legacy" section with a brief panel on the US Civil War, it was discussed on the timeline within that section. Details on British support for the Confederates were also provided on an additional handheld board at the ISM.[206] However, the Civil War was not explored at the sites in Manchester, despite the city's heavy reliance on cotton from the US South by the mid-1800s, which formed an "interdependent" interest between the newly independent USA and Britain.[207]

Despite the lack of a comparable large New England slavery museum this research discovered marked differences in the fragments of EAC offered within existing interventions. This reflects that, while local stories were used to access the narratives of EAC, the national – or expanded Caribbean-focused Atlantic imperial lens for England – dominated the overarching lens in terms of geographic scale. In England, the predominant fragment of EAC given attention was sugar production in British Caribbean colonies, which fits into the English national scale of heritage when recognising the nineteenth century Atlantic imperial lens. On the other hand, rum and cotton received more attention in New England reflecting the concentration on either the North American triangular trade or the later nineteenth century King Cotton in the South and the free

[205] Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric,* 2, 269.
[206] Text panel, "Liverpool and the American Civil War," Legacy, ISM; Information board, "Liverpool, slavery and the trade in enslaved Africans between 1807 and the 1880s," Authored by Marika Sherwood, Enslavement, ISM.
[207] Schoen, *The Fragile Fabric,* 23–60.

North. The result is that visitors receive a fragment of the much larger jigsaw of EAC, which only becomes visible when interventions are viewed collectively.

Furthermore, in both regions, the stories of sugar or rum were rarely presented as fragments of EAC with equal emphasis. Highlighting this division of narrative in England, cotton featured as the core commodity, almost exclusively at the former cotton mills and connected industrial museums in Manchester. This reflects divisions in historical scholarship between those focused on the eighteenth century Caribbean-centred sugar economy and the nineteenth century cotton industry that relied on the US South, as outlined in Chapter 1. However, this thesis argues that the cotton industry should be viewed as an intertwined fragment of EAC along with the sugar plantation economy.

One example of this connection being made was at Quarry Bank Mill where sugar plantation ownership was presented alongside the cotton industry and the transatlantic slave trade in the same small three-panel display **(Figure 4.17)**, rather than choosing one fragment. While more expansive, this reflected that the Greg family, who opened the mill, also owned sugar plantations. These links were acknowledged in the first panel, the third described a triangular slaving voyage, and the middle featured two quotes from formerly enslaved black abolitionists – Ottobah Cugoano and Frederick Douglass – to highlight the horror of enslavement.[208] This centred formerly enslaved voices, along with the large image of enslaved labourers on the other side of these panels discussed in Chapter 3. Its placement, in a cotton mill and near a display on raw

[208] Display, "How did Samuel Greg profit from slavery?" Quarry Bank.

cotton supplies, interlaced the cotton story with this history. More commonly, in existing interventions, sugar and cotton, were not discussed in equal depth.

**Figure 4.17.** The panels on slavery at Quarry Bank Mill. PTBA (October 2019).

Furthermore, while there were similarities in the narratives of museums, historic houses and cityscape interventions, cotton industry sites offered a different perspective on EAC. Part of this was that cotton products were manufactured on an industrial scale. The consumption of cotton in clothing or furnishings were not explored in depth at the sites which operated within the frame of industrial archaeology, which centres production and machinery. Within this framework, enslaved labour was positioned as the first stage of an industrial production narrative. In his work

on Scotland, Michael Morris contrasts luxury items like sugar that are "squandered through consumption" with the industrial production of cotton. He highlights that the various processes from planting and harvesting to selling and wearing cloth "speaks more to networks of labour, exploitation and profit in the circulation of materials under a global capitalist system."[209] Cotton is a useful commodity for highlighting how enslaved labour contributed to the global capitalist system, but none of the sites used this as an access point to provide a much more expansive narrative about all the economic connections. Instead, while no site was wholly dedicated to exploring how enslaved labour underpinned the cotton industry, the mills and industrial museums offered insight into a different fragment of EAC.

The cotton industry is also of particular interest to this thesis because at its peak in the nineteenth century it pushes the narrative beyond the temporal demarcations of abolition in both England and New England. It needs noting that the Derwent Valley Mills – including Cromford and Belper – emerged from the 1770s as the first water-powered industrial scale cotton mills in the world, and Quarry Bank Mill also first opened in 1784. However, the New England cotton mills were established after the American Revolution and Manchester emerged as the global centre of the cotton industry in the nineteenth century. Therefore, the narrative of a booming cotton industry, interwoven with EAC, in the mid-1800s disrupts the mythology of the DOLHN which celebrates abolition. The supply of cotton from plantations in the US South until the 1860s is an uncomfortable detail for either region to situate within their DOLHN, as discussed below, and in English sites particularly these links are "un-visible" behind a pre-abolition focus on sugar.

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[209] Michael Morris, "The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Improvement: David Dale, Robert Owen and New Lanark Cotton," in *Cultures of Improvement in Scottish Romanticism 1707-1840*, eds. Alex Benchimol and Gerard Lee (London: Routledge, 2018), 112.

The following section further explores how cotton was a "global commodity."[210] Supply of cotton from plantations across the Americas is one of the transnational narratives highlighted alongside further details that substantiate the argument that EAC should be situated within a global frame, rather than the national and local scale which was prominent in heritage sites in England and New England. The next section helps situate the interventions discussed throughout the thesis within a global historical network of interconnection.

## The global interconnections of EAC

This thesis was interested as to whether heritage sites in England and New England acknowledged transnational links but found the dominance of the national lens. While interested in the wider transnational web, I was particularly alert to whether the interventions acknowledged links between my regions of study, but I found very few examples of this. The exception was within the New England cotton industry. In contrast, the English sites – including the mills and industrial museums focused on the cotton industry – did not acknowledge the smaller cotton industry in New England. It was not considered relevant to the heritage narrative, and there was a preferred focus on local relevance. For example, at the Science and Industry Museum the main display of interest was titled "Manchester: Made of Cotton."[211] This focus on Manchester itself, within the national and local lens, also reflected a neglect of the origins of the cotton. The demonstrators in the Science and Industry Museum's Textile Gallery mentioned that cotton grew on plants in areas where there was more sun than Manchester, but enslaved labour was not

[210] Riello, *Cotton,* 149.
[211] Display, "Manchester: Made of Cotton," Science and Industry.

mentioned, nor were countries of origin confirmed.[212] Cotton supply is returned to below, while here we focus on links between England and New England.

At Boott Cotton Mills it was bluntly stated that "the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution was in England."[213] The exhibition floor upstairs at the site – titled "Lowell: Visions of Industrial America" – began with a text panel that explained "textile production played a key role in the emergence of the Industrial Revolution, bringing together diverse elements" including "*cotton* grown in the Southern states; *money* from wealthy Northern merchants" and "technical *expertise* from British and American mechanics."[214] Specifically, the industry developed from Samuel Slater (1768-1835), who established Slater Mill in 1793.

In 2018, Slater Mill was situated within the Blackstone River Valley National Historic Park, which had a visitor centre just across from the mill in Pawtucket. The visitor centre explained that "in 1789, he secretly sailed to America […] he was breaking British law and risking his life, since it was forbidden in that country to export any knowledge of textile technology or process."[215] On the tour of the mill itself the guide discussed "Slater the Traitor" and while the presence of a British visitor – myself – may have encouraged particular amusement at this nickname, my impression was that this was a standard point of discussion.[216] At Boott Cotton Mills, a board on "Early Mills" discussing British industry, also featured an image of the Lancashire cotton industry and noted that "an important breakthrough occurred when Samuel Slater – a British mechanic – emigrated from England."[217]

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[212] I observed this twice in demonstrations within the Textile Gallery in April 2019.
[213] Text panel, "Industry Emerges," Boott.
[214] Text panel, "The Dawn of an Era: 1790-1823," Boott.
[215] Display panel, "Slater Mill: The Birth of the Industrial Revolution," Blackstone Valley.
[216] Tour, Slater Mill.
[217] Display panel, "Early Mills," Boott.

The industrial cotton industries on both sides of the Atlantic were born out of Derbyshire, following the establishment of Cromford Mills in 1771, but this connection between the two regions is only briefly noted in New England and almost entirely ignored in England. Samuel Slater grew up and was trained in Belper in the Derbyshire Derwent Valley before travelling to Rhode Island. The only brief acknowledgement of Slater in Derbyshire was at Cromford Mills where a map noted that in "1790 the traitor Samuel Slater established the first cotton mill in America."[218] The mill was not built until 1793, though Slater was hired in 1790, and backed by Moses Brown, a point which Chapter 5 returns to.[219]

More broadly, Boott Cotton Mills noted that the English textile industry "provided many Southern planters with a new source of income."[220] They explained that "enslaved Africans, planted, harvested and loaded cotton onto ships bound for textile mills in England and New England."[221] The display recognised England not only as the home of Samuel Slater but as another destination for the cotton into the nineteenth century, thereby providing a wider impression of EAC. What was not discussed was that Francis Cabot Lowell, who founded the host town, visited Britain for inspiration.[222] Nor was it clearly noted within the site that Kirk Boott – "superintendent of several mills in Lowell and the prime architect of the city's internal organization" – was the son of a family who emigrated from Derbyshire, and was educated in England.[223] The emergence of

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[218] Map, "What was happening elsewhere in the world during the lifetime of Sir Richard Arkwright?" Cromford.
[219] Brown University, *Slavery and Justice,* 26.
[220] Display, "Plantation Economy," Boott.
[221] Display, "Plantation Economy," Boott.
[222] Chaim M. Rosenberg, *The Life And Times of Francis Cabot Lowell, 1775-1817* (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2011), 150–164.
[223] Temin, "The Industrialisation of New England," in Temin, *Engines of Enterprise,* 122; National Park Service, "Kirk Boott," Last modified 8 November 2018.
https://www.nps.gov/lowe/learn/historyculture/kirk-boott.htm

the cotton industry in New England is an inherently transnational story that highlights the continued connections to Britain after American Independence, and it could be further developed.

In his 1994 article Bailey protested that “too many people treat the history of cotton textile industrialization as if the source of cotton was the moon.”[224] Chapter 1 noted that historians recognise that the cotton industry relied “almost totally on African peoples in the Americas from its formative years in the eighteenth century to its maturity in the middle of the nineteenth.”[225] Both Boott, as noted above, and Slater Mill noted that their cotton came from plantations in the US South. While this sits within their national narrative, it disrupts the mythology of a free North, disconnected from the slave-holding South, with recent scholarly work highlighting that “the Northern economy’s industrial sector was built on the backs of enslaved people.”[226] Acknowledging cotton supply from plantations in New England disrupts the DOLHN but it does not disrupt the dominance of the national scale of heritage.

On the other hand, in England it does both. According to Mitchell and Deane’s *Statistics,* between 1835 and 1860 Britain imported 18.8 billion lbs of raw cotton, approximately 80 percent of which came from the United States of America.[227] For this period slavery was abolished in the British Caribbean but this cotton continued to be picked by enslaved people in the US South before the American Civil War. Acknowledging this is uncomfortable within the DOLHN, but there were brief acknowledgements of this trade. The Science and Industry Museum displays did offer other some, albeit rather confusing, information on raw cotton supplies. Raw cotton samples

[224] Bailey, “The Other Side of Slavery,” 35.
[225] Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution,* 77.
[226] Baptist, *The Half,* 322.
[227] “Textiles 3: Raw Cotton Imports in Total and from the U.S.A., and Re-exports – United Kingdom 1815-1938,” in B.R. Mitchell and Phyllis Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 180–181. In total, Britain imported 18,808 million lbs, and 14,883 million lbs came from the USA, which calculates at 79.13%.

showed that it grew "around the world" but text explained that "enslaved people forced to grow cotton on plantations in the southern states of America met Manchester's demand for plentiful and affordable raw cotton."[228] Nearby, further text stated that raw cotton was "often grown and picked by slaves in the United States of America or West Indies" and then shipped to Liverpool.[229] At the other museum sites, the pillar in the ISM on the American Civil War began by explaining that "cotton was Liverpool's most important trade from the 1830s" and that raw cotton was "produced by slave labour in the southern American states."[230] At the NMM the section on cotton and textiles stressed that "by 1804, the United States overtook the Caribbean as Britain's leading cotton supplier. Raw cotton, from plantations using enslaved labour, was shipped to Lancashire. By 1840, 60% of the world's cotton cloth was produced there."[231] The final line highlights that the cotton industry that relied on enslaved labour was not a minor chapter in British, or global, trade and history.

By 1815 roughly half of raw cotton imports into Britain were coming from the USA.[232] However, before the US South dominated the market, cotton supply offers a more expanded global narrative. Cotton was imported into England throughout the 1700s, though in relatively small volumes.[233] Much of the earlier supply came from countries and regions which used enslaved labour. Following Williams, Inikori claims that "cotton imports into England in the eighteenth century came almost entirely from the British Caribbean."[234] Draper more recently similarly identified "the slave-colonies of the West Indies, especially Grenada and British Guiana"

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[228] Display, "Manchester: Made of Cotton," Science and Industry.
[229] Text panel, "Blowing Room," Science and Industry.
[230] Text panel, "Liverpool and the American Civil War," Legacy, ISM.
[231] Text label, "Cotton & Textiles," Central table, Atlantic, NMM.
[232] "Textiles 3: Raw Cotton Imports" in Mitchell and Deane, *Abstract,* 180–181.
[233] "Textiles 1: Raw Cotton Imports and Re-exports – Great Britain 1697-1819," in Mitchell and Deane, *Abstract,* 177–179.
[234] Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution,* 376. Williams looks at "cotton manufacture" in *Capitalism and Slavery*, 68–73.

as the original source of raw cotton for Britain.[235] However, Haggerty presents a more global story and explains that before 1780 most cotton arriving in Liverpool “came from the Levant, some small amounts came from the West Indies, and after 1781, Brazil. A little came from India via the East India Company, but this was never very successful because the very short staple was not suitable for the new industrial processes.”[236] Quarry Bank Mill had a display on raw cotton supply near the discussed panels on slavery and the slave trade. Within it, text explained that cotton “thrives in tropical parts of the world’” and that “during the Industrial Revolution, merchants shipped cotton into Britain from Brazil, the West Indies and America where it grew on slave plantations.”[237]

At Cromford Mills, within the old, and free, visitor centre introduction, small text explained that “the cotton used here probably came from the eastern Mediterranean including Egypt and later the West Indies and Brazil where it was grown and harvested by enslaved labour. Other sources included the Middle East, India and the United States, whose slave grown cotton dominated the UK market by the 1850s.”[238] The global supplies of raw cotton were explored in most depth in the aptly named “Global Cotton Connections” display at Cromford Mills **(Figure 4.18)**. Text noted that “by 1860 the southern states supplied 80% of Britain’s cotton imports,” but detailed maps illuminated the regions of origin in “1794-1803” and “1804-1817.”[239] Before proceeding it is worth focusing on the point that the supply of cotton received more attention at the eighteenth-century mills – of Cromford and Quarry Bank – than in the museums focused on nineteenth century Manchester. The maps within the new Cromford display ended in 1817, before

[235] Hall et al., *Legacies,* 88.
[236] Sheryllynne Haggerty, “What’s in a price? The American raw cotton market in Liverpool and the Anglo-American War,” *Business History* 61, no. 6 (2019): 946.
[237] Display, "What’s so special about cotton?" Quarry Bank.
[238] Text panel, “The Cotton Bale,” Cromford Mills Story.
[239] Maps of cotton supply, GCC, Cromford.

British emancipation, and they were situated within the accepted period of slavery, while later EAC disrupts the DOLHN.

**Figure 4.18.** "Global Cotton Connections" display at Cromford Mills, featuring two maps on raw cotton supply. PTBA (June 2018).

For 1794-1803 the maps illustrated that c.73% came from South America, c.23% came from the West Indies and c.4% came from North America. For 1804-1817, c.62% came from South America, c.17% came from the West Indies, c.13.7% came from North America, c.6.6% came from the Indian Sub-Continent, c.0.9% came from the Mediterranean.[240] These figures show the importance of South America, but grazing visitors may not know that millions of people were

[240] Maps of cotton supply, GCC, Cromford.

enslaved on the continent. However, the text below stressed that "Cotton used in the Derwent Valley, including at Cromford Mills, came from across the globe. […] The vital raw material was provided mainly by enslaved workers labouring in areas such as the southern states of America, the West Indies and Brazil."[241] These details within the space provide "evidence of deep connections between the Atlantic slave economy and the growth of cotton spinning in the Derwent Valley."[242]

The text below the maps also explained that the "data relates to the Strutts' raw cotton supplies" and that it was taken from "Fitton and Wadsworth (1958)" and "mapped as part of the Global Cotton Connections project (2014-15)."[243] While Cromford Mills was established by Richard Arkwright, in partnership with Jedediah Strutt, Belper North Mill was built by the Strutts. While the 1958 Fitton and Wadsworth book was on sale within the Belper North Mill shop, text on *Growing Cotton* claimed that "it is difficult to uncover exactly where the Strutts' cotton supplies came from." It continued that "initially Jedediah was purchasing cotton in London and later from Liverpool. The finest cotton came from the West Indies and Egypt, although much of the cotton spun at Belper came from America."[244] The supply of cotton from across the world, revealed most clearly at Cromford Mills, highlights how EAC is a narrative of global trade.

The trade in textiles on the African coast also presents an opportunity for exploration of more global links as cottons were a "staple product for European markets and for consumers in the Americas and in West Africa."[245] More broadly less attention was given to the consumers of

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[241] Text, Maps of cotton supply, GCC, Cromford.
[242] Susanne Seymour, Lowri Jones and Julia Feuer-Cotter, "The global connections of cotton in the Derwent Valley mills in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries," in *The Industrial Revolution: Cromford, The Derwent Valley and the Wider World*, ed. Chris Wrigley (Cromford: Arkwright Society, 2015), 165.
[243] Text, Maps of cotton supply, GCC, Cromford. Cromford displays on the bags of cotton imported by Strutts visualise a table in R.S. Fitton and A.P. Wadsworth, *The Strutts and the Arkwrights 1758-1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), 273.
[244] Display panel, "Growing Cotton," Belper.
[245] Riello, *Cotton,* 92.

cotton, domestically and abroad, but there was some acknowledgement of this. The most prominent example was again in the "Global Cotton Connections" display at Cromford which featured a section on "Ancestors' Voices" exploring enslavement, alongside another on South Asian cotton connections. This placement, if read together, speaks to the interconnection and highlights that it is "myopic to see Atlantic trades as separable" from those in Asia.[246] However, while adjoining, they could be read separately, and this sense of connection may have been more effective if they were interwoven.

These two histories sit with the aforementioned maps under the title, "Global Cotton Connections," which highlighted the wider geographic lens. The Global Cotton Connections project also informed the development of the mural visualising these connections, which was introduced in Chapter 3 and is further explored in the following chapter. Within the Cromford Mills visitor centre there was also a separate large map which explains "what was happening elsewhere in the world" including events in Russia and Australia.[247] It is here that Samuel Slater was mentioned, alongside facts about the American and French Revolutions, the slave trade and its abolition. Unlike the New England mills which are part of National Parks, Cromford Mills is part of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site. In their piece on the Global Cotton Connections project Seymour, Jones and Feuer-Cotter argue that "without a global perspective understanding of such sites is diminished, partial and in danger of alienating the global publics a World Heritage Site seeks to engage."[248] While World Heritage Sites may be imagined as having more global connections, their management will also be more interested in these links than at national sites. At all interventions, these global links are vital for understanding the scale and importance of EAC.

[246] Ibid., 159.
[247] Map, "What was happening elsewhere in the world during the lifetime of Sir Richard Arkwright?" Cromford.
[248] Seymour et al., "The global connections," in Wrigley, *The Industrial Revolution,* 166.

At Cromford, the section on South Asia noted that "India was the world's leading cotton cloth producer" before the mill opened in the 1770s. It continued that "British colonial expansion brought India's high quality and vibrant cotton fabrics to the British market and they were key items in the transatlantic slave trade. Later colonial trade policies protected the growing British cotton industry, contributing to a decline in spinning and weaving in India."[249] Elsewhere at English sites there was also acknowledgement of the decline of the Indian cotton industry. At Belper it was noted that "there is a direct link between the destruction of the cotton trade in India, the growth of slavery in America and the export of cotton fibre to the British textile industry."[250] The Science and Industry Museum displayed a painting of an East Indiaman ship, with a label that noted that "India's skilled makers struggled to compete with Manchester's mass-produced cotton goods and thousands lost their livelihoods."[251] This ship was displayed near to the discussion of slavery, but the text only explained that the East India Company "sold the cloth around the world."[252] The exchange of Indian cottons to purchase enslaved Africans was not discussed.

At Lancaster Maritime Museum cotton was displayed with metal manillas and beads, and visitors were told that cotton both came from plantations and processed fabrics were exchanged for enslaved Africans.[253] Separately, as noted, raw cotton was also displayed alongside wine, tobacco and sugar. Wilberforce House also began one of its panels on "Trade and Industry" with an image of a cotton mill. The accompanying text highlighted that "Britain's rise as the world's first industrial nation was directly helped by transatlantic slavery. Demand for textiles used to buy slaves in Africa helped to promote Lancashire's cotton industry."[254] These sites still omitted Indian

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[249] Display, "Spinning a Yarn, Weaving a Story," GCC, Cromford.
[250] Display panel, "Growing Cotton," Belper.
[251] Display, "Manchester: Made of Cotton," Science and Industry.
[252] Display, "Manchester: Made of Cotton," Science and Industry.
[253] Exhibit, "The Triangle Trade," LMM.
[254] Display, "Trade and Industry," Slavery, WH.

textiles from discussion of the trade with Africa. Yet, the "East India textile component of the trade" was "so important."[255]

The Portuguese were trading Indian cottons in Africa from the 1580s.[256] Indian cottons were also used by English traders prior to the development of Britain's own industrial cotton industry, through import substitution industrialisation as the Indian imports were replaced with domestic cotton products.[257] England, like other European nations, prohibited the import and wearing of Asian textiles in the Calico Acts (1702 and 1721), which "ended up being a protectionist measure that facilitated processes of substitution."[258] Nevertheless, outside of England itself, "in the 1740s, at the peak of their popularity, Asian cottons accounted for up to 60 per cent of all textiles exported to Africa."[259] This illustrates that trade systems were much more complex, both geographically and commercially, than those suggested by a basic triangle. As Riello notes "no Indian or Asia trader was directly trading" in West Africa, and instead they were involved in "indirect trade to the Atlantic, either through Europe or through a series of intermediaries in East and North Africa."[260] For example by the 1790s, following the repeal of the Calico Acts, "a quarter of all cottons imported [by the English East India Company] from India into the port of London found their way to African consumers" – reflecting the scale of this trade.[261] Riello also highlights that vast amounts of Indian cotton goods were provided to plantations in the Caribbean and South

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[255] Herbert S. Klein, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 88–89.
[256] Riello, *Cotton,* 137.
[257] Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution,* 10, 365; Giorgio Riello, "The globalisation of cotton textiles: Indian cottons, Europe and the Atlantic World, 1600–1850," in *The Spinning World: A Global History of Cotton Textiles 1200–1850*, eds. Georgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 274.
[258] Riello, *Cotton,* 118–124.
[259] Ibid., 139.
[260] Riello, "The globalisation," in Riello and Parthasarathi*, The Spinning World,* 283.
[261] Riello, *Cotton,* 148.

America, and that again many cottons were re-exported from Europe, further complicating trade routes.[262]

Cotton was not the only commodity within EAC to venture beyond the Atlantic. Rather, EAC should be understood as global, or as the JBH describes it as “history’s first genuinely global industry.”[263] However, the narrower local and national focuses outlined above more commonly dominated the narrative. The ISM contains the world “International” in its title, but while the Liverpool based museum recognised international slaving ports, more space was dedicated to acknowledging that its host city was the “capital of the transatlantic slave trade” as well as wider national links.[264] If read, a small handheld board at the ISM on “Liverpool and the Atlantic World” did explain that as well as trading in Africa and the Caribbean, merchants traded in flour from Pennsylvania, rice and tobacco from the American South, Newfoundland fish, Chinese silk and tea, Mediterranean fruit and wines and Asian spices.[265] This board described this web of trade as one of “inter-dependence” and provided a much more expansive global narrative than that found in the triangles.[266]

Within the *Atlantic Gallery* at the NMM, the diagram of Atlantic trade **(Figure 4.13)** did acknowledge trade with Southern Europe, stretching the narrative beyond the imperial lens but remaining within the Atlantic. Elsewhere within that gallery it was highlighted that trade linked “producers with consumers on four continents,” as well as noting that Atlantic fish was sent to the Portuguese colony of Macau in Asia.[267] This text alludes to the historical network of trade in which

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[262] Ibid., 142–149.
[263] Display panel, “The Transatlantic Slave Trade,” Sally, JBH.
[264] Display panel, “Liverpool: capital of the transatlantic slave trade,” Enslavement, ISM.
[265] Information board, “Liverpool and the Atlantic World,” Authored by Sheryllynne Haggerty, Enslavement, ISM.
[266] Information board, “Liverpool and the Atlantic World,” Authored by Sheryllynne Haggerty, Enslavement, ISM.
[267] Text panel, “British Trade and Empire, 1688-1815,” Atlantic, NMM; Central table, Atlantic, NMM.

"the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean trades were not separate."[268] This trade was part of what Jeppesen describes as an "interconnected, global project."[269] EAC should be situated within this wider web of global connections.

In 2018 the NMM opened the *Tudor and Stuart Seafarers* gallery which included a visual challenge to the common English focus on the Atlantic imperial lens. Within the gallery, a display on "Trade" described the transatlantic slave trade and stated that enslaved people produced "luxuries such as sugar and tobacco" on plantations.[270] This information was next to a map which was titled "Important Sea Trade Routes 1500-1700" **(Figure 4.19)**.[271] This visual diagram situated the trade in enslaved people within the wider web of EAC.

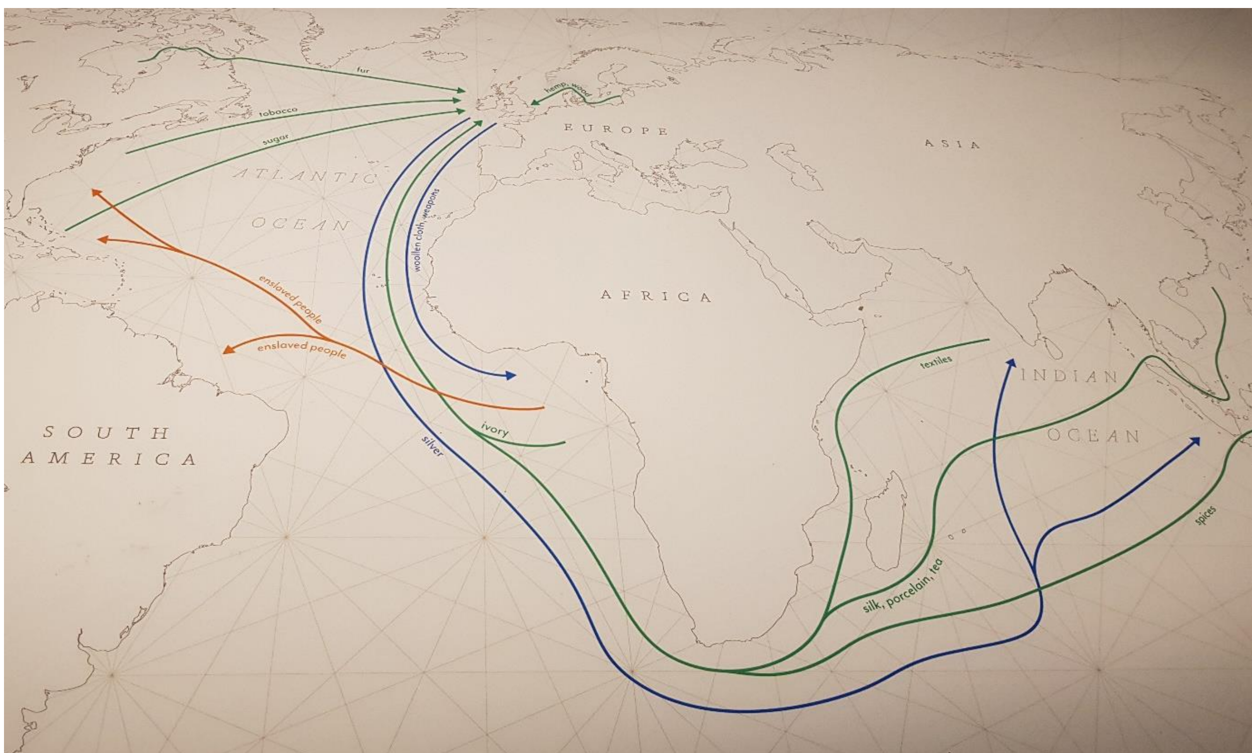


**Figure 4.19.** Diagram of "Important Sea Trade Routes 1500-1700" at NMM. PTBA (April 2019).

[268] Riello, *Cotton,* 148.
[269] Jeppesen, "East Meets West," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 106.
[270] Text panel, "The beginning of the transatlantic slave trade," Tudor, NMM.
[271] Map, "Important Sea Trade Routes 1500-1700," Tudor, NMM.

In this diagram Britain remained the focus, with the majority of arrows pointing to or from the island, and an Atlantic triangle was visible. The movement of enslaved people was marked by a labelled orange line from Africa, which split to more accurately identify destinations in northern South America, the Caribbean and North America, unlike in their *Atlantic Worlds* gallery. The triangle was completed with green lines, marking imports including sugar and tobacco, and a blue line to Africa which highlighted the export of woollen cloth and weapons. Further green lines noted that fur was imported from North America, hemp and wood from Northern Europe and ivory from Africa alongside this. The brief link to Baltic trade illustrates Haggerty's claim that "the importance of the slave trade can be fully understood only as a component of a wider system of trading activity linking the continental colonies (later the US), to the trades with the Baltic and the Mediterranean."[272] Exploration of connections to trade within the Mediterranean, beyond the Iberian Peninsula, were yet to be visualised. Additionally, a blue line noted the exportation of silver eastwards, while green lines highlighted that silk, textiles, tea, porcelain and spices were being imported from India and China in particular. The diagram only labelled the transportation of enslaved Africans in orange. It was the only trade route shown that does not clearly come from or go to Britain, and thus may be criticised for not showing slaving ships departing Britain. However, in treating all other trades equally – as blue and green exports and imports – the triangle is not isolated as a unique trade. Rather, this map serves as an example of how to situate the slave trade, and enslaved labour within a wide web of trade. It visually alludes to the interconnection of trades, albeit without exploring them deeply.

This new map at the NMM and the "Global Cotton Connections" display at Cromford were installed shortly before this research was undertaken and may reflect the emergence of a global

[272] Haggerty, "Liverpool," in Haggerty et al., *The empire,* 29.

view of EAC. The dominant existing narratives, however, remained the local and national fragments. When viewed individually, rather than collectively as they are in this thesis, these understate the importance of EAC.

## Conclusion

This chapter has drawn details from existing interventions and interlaced them with scholarly work to piece together a "jigsaw" of what EAC was, while critiquing the scope of the interventions themselves. Throughout it has shown that individually the sites offer only fragments of the larger EAC narrative. It highlighted that the recurring key message of interventions, including the *Captured Africans* memorial and the triangular trade diagrams, was that enslaved people cultivated products which were brought back to England and New England and created wealth there. Building from this, this chapter has outlined further complex details of EAC.

The first two sections highlighted that EAC involved a "web of profit" which involved several interconnected trades, thus appealing for the prominent triangle trade diagrams to be superseded. The third section of the chapter revealed that while English sites often provide a fragment which focuses on sugar plantation in the British Caribbean, under an Atlantic imperial lens, in New England the focus on rum and cotton fits into a more national narrative. Since the English-based imperial lens can be viewed as a geographic extension of the national, my research supports Graham et al.'s belief that the national scale of heritage dominates. [273] The fourth and final section challenged this, however, by focusing on cotton as an industrial global commodity, and particularly the recent intervention on "Global Cotton Connections" at Cromford Mills.

[273] Graham et al., *A Geography of Heritage,* 183–184.

Beyond this the nineteenth century cotton industry, which boomed while relying on cotton from enslaved labourers in the US South until the 1860s, should be further elaborated in heritage sites, but this offers a more direct challenge to the DOLHN by challenging the temporal demarcations of abolition.

Despite the vast similarities between England and New England when viewed together, the connections drawn out in this chapter are rarely made at heritage sites, and instead the interventions offer separated fragments of EAC. As a by-product of the analysis, this chapter offers details of the "Real" of EAC, which could influence future installations. It has drawn attention to neglected histories – including mahogany which offers physical spectral traces of EAC – and geographies, including the Indian Ocean and inland activity on various continents. This more complex narrative of EAC questions the DOLHN by challenging the image of transatlantic slavery as a sole triangular trade that ended with abolition. However, where triangular trade diagrams persist, the heritage narrative of EAC remains one of an isolated cruel trade rather than an expansive global network that was a highly relevant chapter of England and New England history. The next chapter builds on this analysis to explore widespread banal involvement in the web of EAC, which further explains why there are vast spectral traces for our contemporary interpretation.

# Chapter 5: EAC as "everyone's history"

## Introduction

Building from the previous analysis, this chapter highlights that thousands of different people were involved, in various ways, in the complex web of EAC. While Chapter 4 identified connections across the globe, this chapter focuses overwhelmingly on people in England and New England. This reflects the focus of the thesis, challenges the perception that EAC only involved people thousands of miles away, and is guided by the foci of the interventions. Within that frame, this chapter answers two questions: firstly, who was involved in EAC, and secondly how were they involved. As with Chapter 4, it builds from what sites present to visitors to explore further narratives. It reveals that alongside a common narrow narrative about what EAC was, there is a limited picture of who was involved, and how, at several heritage sites.

Between the introduction and conclusion, this chapter explores eight different narratives of the people interwoven with EAC. This chapter begins by centring the enslaved human beings from whom EAC thrived. It acknowledges first those enslaved in the wider Americas and notes that they are the one group of people beyond England and New England that featured in the nationally or locally focused narratives of interventions. The second section then focuses on locally enslaved people and notes that their acknowledgement was more common in New England, where sites of enslavement challenged the DOLHN by revealing slavery in the north but left wider EAC underexplored. The enslaved labourers' involvement in EAC also reminds us that not everyone implicated in EAC profited, or had a choice, and that instead many suffered.

The third section introduces the banality of white involvement in EAC in England and New England. Building from the work of Moody and Rice, the concept of banality reminds us that EAC

was ordinary and commonplace, and that, until it was abolished, enslavement was legal. As Draper comments, "there is little evidence that slave-owners were *systematically* subject to social sanction," even on the eve of emancipation, and their compensation.[1] On the contrary, rather than being castigated as villains, those who profited often held positions of power. Connectedly, the fourth section highlights that those enslavers who gained great wealth dominate the EAC narratives, as a consequence of having the power and wealth to leave connected objects. Consequently, the majority of sites centre those directly involved through slave trading or plantation ownership.

However, as Donington et al. observed in a British context, "the perception that it was only wealthy white male plantocrats who benefitted from slavery has enabled broad swathes of the public to reject any sense of themselves as implicated subjects."[2] To counter this, the second half of the chapter focuses on connections beyond the enslaved and their enslavers. This challenges the belief that "'ordinary'" families were "free from the taint" of involvement in EAC.[3] Building on the concept of banal involvement, the fifth section observes that at cotton industry sites, the 'great men' avoid association with EAC through a heritage narrative focus on technological developments – notably Eli Whitney's cotton gin – but I argue that they were implicated. This discussion leads to a sixth section on wider connected industries such as banking. The final two sections build on the work of Michael Rothberg to discuss "implicated subject[s]" and "multidirectional memory."[4] I discuss the concept of guilt, and the role of consumers, before promoting multidirectional memory between the descendants of the enslaved and mill workers, which may reduce visitor resistance.

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[1] Draper, *The Price of Emancipation,* 272.
[2] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 1.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*; Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory.*

The chapter outlines that there is a predominant focus on the 'great men' of history rather than the nameless thousands of others who were involved. This may be a consequence of the material evidence available, but it limits understanding of the expansive scope of EAC. Throughout, it is stressed that while stories of individual villains may be easier to place within the DOLHN, they do not facilitate a wider understanding of EAC or encourage visitor reflection on the banality of white involvement. Instead, exploration of these wider narratives reveal how slavery is "everyone's history."[5] Revealing these historical interconnections demonstrates how EAC is a relevant part of the heritage narratives of both England and New England and reveals why there are so many spectral traces of EAC in these regions.

## The people beyond England and New England

My research trips focused on the details available on people who lived within England and New England and their connections to EAC. However, it is worth briefly noting that I encountered very little discussion of the wider multitude of human beings involved within the global web of EAC – across the Americas, Africa and Asia – outlined in Chapter 4, with the exception of the Indian weavers acknowledged at Cromford Mills. This reflected the local and national foci of the interventions and will not assist global visitors in recognising that this history is relevant to them. The one group of people who were largely situated on distant soil but who are recognised as central to the narrative within the interventions were the enslaved men, women and children of African descent. It needs noting here, as Chapter 1 explained, that Africans were enslaved in England and New England, and this is explored in the next section. However, the majority of enslaved people who were forced to contribute to EAC were enslaved in the Caribbean, US South

[5] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 2.

or South America. This chapter begins by centring those millions of people to illuminate that not all people involved profited. Rather the profits of others rested on the exploitation of enslaved African people, whose labour helped create the wealth and associated fabric of England and New England.

During my research I observed that the larger English museums – such as the ISM, MOLD and Wilberforce House – offered displays that explored enslaved lives in the Caribbean, as well as life in West Africa before enslavement. These featured different presentations of the enslaved including as victims and resisters. However, perhaps conscious of replicating enslavers' focus on productivity, their contributions to EAC were not centred in the large exhibits. The *Blood Sugar* film at Newstead Abbey did effectively combine the violence of enslavement with the wealth the practice created, but the micro-details of the volumes of sugar cultivated or its value did not feature.

Other scholars, such as Ana Lucia Araujo, present a more specific critique of the commemorations of the enslaved themselves. For example, of the Georgian House Museum Araujo writes that: "intended to acknowledge the crucial role of slavery in building Pinney's wealth, the decontextualized list of names is rather an inventory of first names and unnamed individuals that can hardly pay homage to men, women, and children who lived in slavery."[6] The following pages of this chapter are conscious of the complexities and sensitivities of attempting to respectfully pay homage to the enslaved. They focus specifically on difficult primary material from the period of enslavement in the form of plantation accounts which problematically preserve the enslavers' perspective. These objects also demonstrate the administrative banality of enslavement, and offer spectral traces of both the enslavers and enslaved people in which "their

[6] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 53.

bodies, their children – every aspect of their lives – were reckoned according to the system of profit and loss."[7]

At Quarry Bank Mill, and Lowther Castle plantation accounts were displayed centrally in the small exhibits. At Quarry Bank text on the panel detailed Greg's plantation ownership and explained that "in 1830, records show 146 men, women and even children were enslaved on the Dominica plantation, controlled using whips and forced to toil in gangs."[8] An abstract from "The Greg family slave plantation journal, 1830" was displayed beneath in a glass cabinet. The page displayed was partially completed. The final section of the abstract was filled with the number of acres of cane cut and a livestock account, but the central produce account – with columns for sugar, rum and molasses – was blank. Why it was historically incomplete is unknown, but this omission meant the document disconnected the labour from the produce. Above this omission was a record of enslaved African people, labelled as "negroes", which listed 146 people by their role on the plantation, divided into men, women, boys, girls and children **(Figure 5.1)**. It showed that there were 76 "in the field" while others worked in roles including servants, coopers, and nurses. The enslaved people were unnamed and defined by their work.

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[7] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 79.
[8] Display, "How did Samuel Greg profit from slavery?" Quarry Bank.

| NEGROES. | MEN. | WOMEN. | BOYS. | GIRLS. | CHILDREN. | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| IN THE FIELD, | 24 | 41 | 6 | 5 | | 76 |
| ABOUT THE WORKS, | " | " | " | " | " | " |
| ON DIFFERENT JOBS, | 8 | " | " | " | " | " |
| HOUSE SERVANTS, | " | 2 | 1 | " | " | 3 |
| COOPERS, | 4 | " | " | " | " | 4 |
| CARPENTERS, | 3 | " | " | " | " | 3 |
| MASONS, | 1 | " | " | " | " | 1 |
| BOATMEN, | " | " | " | " | " | " |
| WATCHMEN, | 4 | " | " | " | " | 4 |
| NURSES, | " | 4 | " | " | " | 4 |
| PREGNANT WOMEN, | " | " | " | " | " | " |
| IN THE HOSPITAL, | 2 | 3 | " | " | " | 5 |
| IN THE YAW HOUSE, | " | " | " | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| INVALIDS AND AGED, | 1 | 6 | " | " | " | 7 |
| CHILDREN UNDER TWELVE YEARS, | " | " | " | " | " | 30 |
| ABSENT. | | | | | | |
| | 27 | 56 | 7 | 6 | 30 | 126 |

**Figure 5.1.** Close up of list of "Negroes" within the "The Greg family slave plantation journal, 1830" displayed at Quarry Bank Mill. PTBA (October 2019).

At Lowther Castle, a plantation book was the central object in a small display that discussed the Lowthers' ownership of land in Barbados **(Figure 5.2)**.[9] Displaying such historical documents like this is not common in other historic houses and likely reflects that this site hosted exhibits not period rooms. The book was displayed in front of a text panel which included a second reproduced page of "plantation accounts" and an inventory of "negroes, cattle, horses" from December 1766. It was difficult to decipher, but the account highlighted provisions and utensils provided to the plantation, and that sugar and rum were being produced. In the inventory the enslaved men, women, boys and girls were named alongside their jobs. While this may suggest acknowledgement of the humanity of the enslaved by enslavers, it also allowed for identification and specification of the enslaved as different assets. The animals listed – such as bulls and oxen – were also named. The displayed original plantation book was of a similar stock inventory but from January 1724. The pages shown named 161 men, boys, women and girls, before listing unnamed cattle. Alongside these was a record that in 1723 the plantation produced "15289 ½ Gallons & ½ a Pint" of rum. All of this detail was available to a studious visitor in reasonably accessible handwriting, given that these are 18th-century records. However, more of this detail could be included within the reproduced text above.

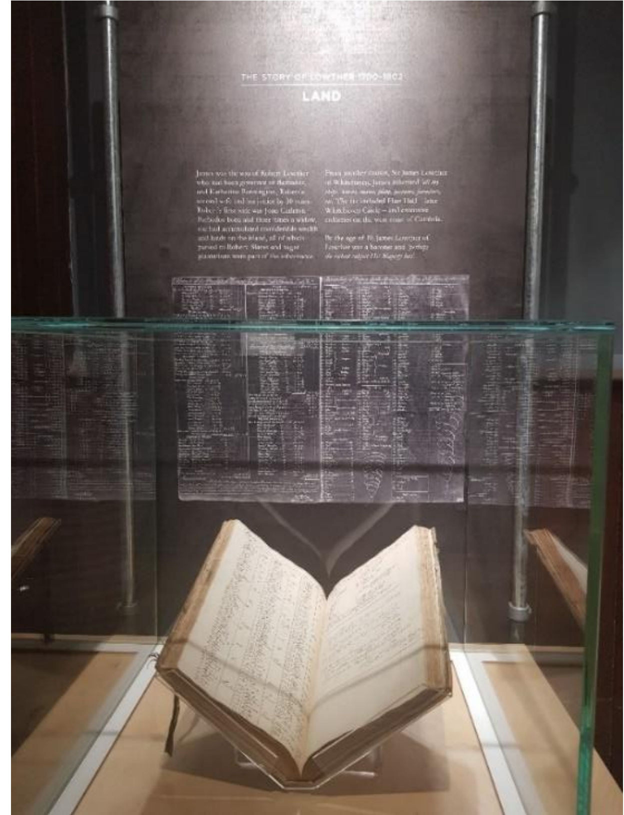


**Figure 5.2.** "Land" display at Lowther Castle featuring book. PTBA (June 2019).

[9] Display, "Land," The Story of Lowther 1700-1802.

In their discussion of the shift towards the terminology of enslaved people, Cubitt et al. note that "the term 'slave' has a tendency to replicate the assumptions about enslaved people that were a feature of transatlantic slavery itself" which facilitated their listing "alongside animals in the stock inventories of Caribbean plantations."[10] The display of these historical objects is unquestionably difficult when human beings are listed alongside cattle, and even more so when the viewpoint of the enslavers – which facilitated that practice – was not challenged explicitly within the space. Furthermore, these small displays did not explore the lived experience of enslaved humans. Therefore, the use of these plantation accounts as central objects can be challenged at Lowther Castle or Quarry Bank Mill.

However, these troubling historical documents should not be dismissed outright as unusably dehumanising. Instead, they can be powerful palimpsests if the traces of enslavers' views are drawn out and challenged in the interpretation. As Scanlan highlights, "enslaved people faced impossible, heart-breaking choices within a system that used their humanity as a weapon against them. To deny these intellectual and moral complexities does a different kind of injustice to the memory of the enslaved."[11] Similarly, Walter Johnson noted in his recent challenge to the idea of dehumanisation that "slavery depended upon the human capacities of enslaved people" including reproduction, sentience and intelligence.[12] The attempts to confine human beings to the same columns as cattle were resisted by the enslaved themselves and should continue to be challenged, as their humanity made them a different type of asset that was treated differently. However, these plantation documents – produced by enslavers and containing spectral traces of their

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[10] Cubitt et al., "Introduction," in Smith et al., *Presenting Enslavement,* 5–6.
[11] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 10.
[12] Walter Johnson, "To Remake the World: Slavery, Racial Capitalism, and Justice," *Boston Review: A Political and Literary Forum,* 20 February 2018, http://bostonreview.net/forum/walter-johnson-to-remake-the-world.

attitudes – are very poor tools for animating the lived experiences of enslaved African people, from their own perspective.

Yet, these accounts do not just contain traces of the dehumanising racism of enslavers, but also of their view – and the view of EAC or capitalism more broadly – that was concerned with the labour of enslaved African people. At Quarry Bank Mill their jobs were listed without their names while the books at Lowther Castle included names but in accounts that tied them to the production of sugar and rum. These documents are not alien historical records, but rather financial accounts not dissimilar to ones that still exist today, and they reflect the banality of enslavement. They also contain spectral traces of those who penned them and the plantation managers, who are largely "un-visible" in the narratives. They speak to the brutal reality that EAC thrived because it created profit, as Chapter 4 discussed. As Scanlan observes, "Atlantic slavery combined the old cruelties of other forms of enslavement with the brutal logic of a commodities market" and the documents speak to how economics underpinned the suffering the books do not record.[13] As Eric Williams acknowledged, during transatlantic slavery "a racial twist" was "given to what is basically an economic phenomenon."[14]

These documents are difficult to view because they present plantations as economically valuable factories with carefully monitored accounts, but this cruel banality is vital for understanding this history. The inclusion of details on work and production are central to this and were not always present in the historical documents. At Cromford Mills there was an extract from a register of enslaved people from 1825, in which one of the enslaved people – York – was identified as an ancestor of members of the Slave Trade Legacies group.[15] This list offers more

[13] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 18.
[14] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 7.
[15] Display panel, "Ancestors' Voices," GCC, Cromford.

human details, including that one man named William had run away and that two bore cuts on their faces. However, this historical document also does not contain the same traces of the brutal banality of EAC. The narrative focus of any interpretation will shape the documents used, but here it has been noted that – when challenged within the interpretation – disturbing plantation accounts could act as powerful palimpsests in an intervention. The following section continues the focus on enslaved labourers but returns to England and New England's soil.

## The locally enslaved

Chapter 1 acknowledged that while it was more common in New England, until abolition after American Independence, Africans were enslaved on British soil as well. Yet, in England, the narrative focus was predominantly on large scale enslavement in the British Caribbean. While museums acknowledged formerly enslaved black abolitionists, African enslavement was largely situated as being overseas. This omission was challenged at the Georgian House Museum in Bristol, where the upstairs exhibit discussed two black "servants" of the Pinney family. One was Fanny Coker (1767-1820) who was freed as a child and continued to work as Mrs Pinney's maid.[16] The other was Pero Jones (1753?-1798) who was born into slavery and bought by Pinney when he was 12 years old. The board in the exhibit highlighted that Pero had many skills as a manservant and barber who "also learnt to pull teeth" as well as "lending money" and "buying and selling items for trade."[17] However, unlike Fanny, "Pero was enslaved and only received irregular payments and tips" until his death in 1798.[18] Pero is also commemorated in Bristol through *Pero's Bridge* which was erected in 1999, but the accompanying cityscape plaque, unlike the exhibit,

[16] Display panel, "Frances (Fanny) Coker (1767-1820)," John Pinney, GHM.
[17] Display panel, "Pero Jones (1753?-1798)," John Pinney, GHM.
[18] Display panel, "Pero Jones (1753?-1798)," John Pinney, GHM.

lacked detail about Pero's economic contribution. These named individuals are humanised, and Pero's work is discussed but, apart from being within a display that also discussed wider EAC, their labour was explored separately from the wider web of commerce. This separation was also common in New England, where interventions focused on the human experiences of the enslaved rather than their contribution to EAC. Yet, sites across New England, and particularly historic houses, often did not advance beyond acknowledging the existence of locally enslaved Africans. This challenged the process of "un-remembering," and the mythology that slavery was a Southern institution in the United States and the DOLHN, but limited exploration of wider narratives.

Before proceeding, it is worth noting ambiguity as to where commemorated enslaved people laboured in certain interventions. At Brown University, in Providence, the Slavery Memorial plinth explained that it "recognizes Brown University's connection to the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the work of Africans and African-Americans, enslaved and free, who helped build our University, Rhode Island, and the nation."[19] Yet the memorial did not clearly indicate where the people who helped build the University were enslaved. Furthermore, the plinth confusingly acknowledged "enslaved and free" Africans and African-Americans, thus diluting the focus on slavery. Reference to those enslaved elsewhere, such as on sugar plantations in the Caribbean which fed Rhode Island's rum trade, can also be inferred if you have relevant prior knowledge but this wider understanding of EAC was not clear at the memorial. Similarly, Harvard Law's plaque simply read "in honor of the enslaved whose labor created wealth that made possible the

[19] Brown Slavery Memorial.

founding of Harvard Law School" **(Figure 5.3).**[20] It did not tell observers where those enslaved people laboured, and instead focuses on the wealth created. This ambiguity may allow for an expansive reading including all connected networks of enslavement, but there is no guidance to provide the base information.

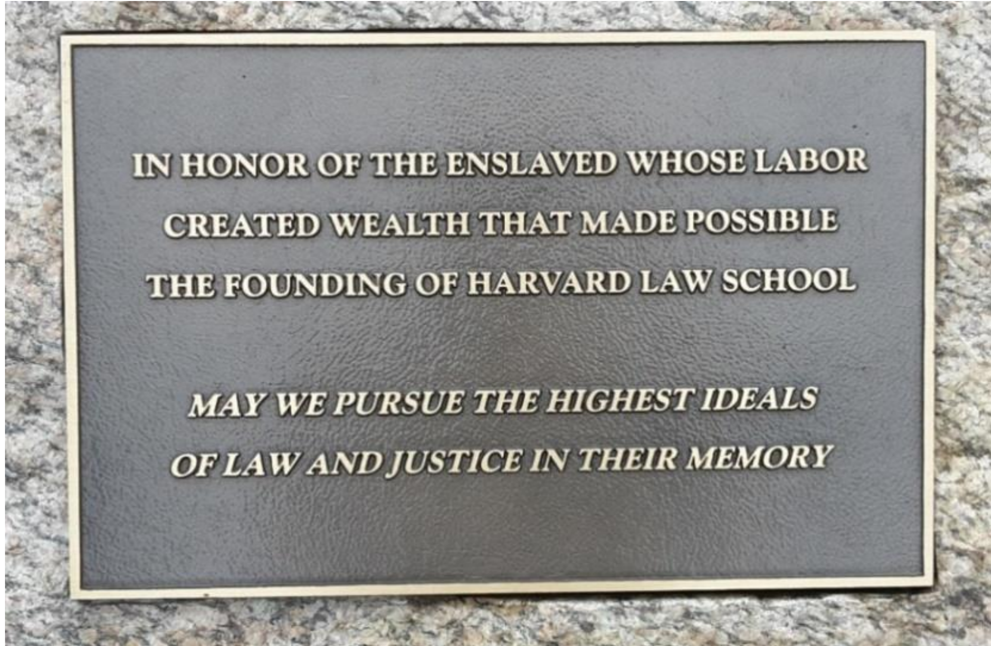


**Figure 5.3.** Text on the plaque of Harvard Law's memorial. PTBA (July 2018).

While the above memorial does not acknowledge it, Harvard Law was founded by Isaac Royall Jr. who lived at Royall House and Slave Quarters which is "believed to be the only remaining freestanding slave quarters in the northern United States."[21] Reflecting the house's importance to the memory of slavery in New England, Jared Ross Hardesty's recent book on enslaved lives in New England begins by focusing on the site.[22] In 2015 Katherine Kane argued that Royall House had "become a leader in the interpretation of northern slavery" but she was critical that "the house tour itself remains primarily focused on the elite family and their home and possessions. With one exception, enslaved individuals are not present."[23] By the time of my visit in 2018 the

[20] Harvard Slavery Plaque.
[21] Text panel, "Royall House & Slave Quarters," Royall House.
[22] Hardesty, *Black Lives,* xiii.
[23] Kane, "Institutional Change," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 55–56.

locally enslaved were embedded in the house tour itself, as well as the panels displayed within the Slave Quarters building, and signage in the gardens.[24] Panels noted that "for nearly four decades, the family's lavish lifestyle and the operations of their working farm depended on the labor of enslaved Africans, many of whom came with the family from Antigua."[25] The introductory board also acknowledged that "in 1737, Isaac Royall Sr. returned to his native New England after amassing a fortune on the Caribbean island of Antigua."[26] Similarly, the house tour began with a brief mention of his life in Antigua and involvement in sugar and slave trading.[27] Yet much less attention was paid to this early, overseas wealth creation and enslavement, unlike in similar cases of returning landholders in England. Instead, the narrative prioritised the local story of the site, and those enslaved there. Royall House and Slave Quarters is a potential site of memory for understanding wider EAC, but it instead focuses on its role as a site of memory for enslavement, challenging the myth that there were no large "slave quarters" in New England under the DOLHN.

Despite this focus, Araujo criticised a panel of nearly sixty names of enslaved people who lived at Royall House. She wrote that "although it gives bondspeople an individual identity this kind of representation does not provide a deeper look into the trajectory of these individuals."[28] She continued that "despite honouring the enslaved by recognizing their work in the Royall's property, the setting is not intended to disrupt the overall framework of white supremacy." This speaks to how something can be partially "un-visible," and this thesis is particularly interested in the recurring trope where the presence of the enslaved is acknowledged and yet their contribution is not deeply explored.

[24] Tour, Royall House.
[25] Text panel, "Royall House & Slave Quarters," Royall House.
[26] Text panel, "Royall House & Slave Quarters," Royall House.
[27] Tour, Royall House.
[28] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 55.

The majority of New England historic houses I visited focused on locally enslaved workers. While acknowledging wider trade, in Providence, the John Brown House Museum audio tour briefly mentioned that John Brown had enslaved servants at another house.[29] At the nearby Stephen Hopkins House, the tour acknowledged that Hopkins also owned enslaved servants on the site, and upstairs visitors were shown their bedroom, but little detail was provided.[30] Questions in the upstairs exhibit also highlighted Stephen Hopkins' local slaveholding. [31] More widely, local enslavement was noted without any acknowledgement of wider EAC. Furthermore, on an individual level there was limited acknowledgement that "enslaved men and women were skilled tradespeople, domestic servants, and laborers, participants in the global maritime and commercial trades of the northern colonies."[32]

Several sites offered personal stories of enslaved individuals without exploring these details. At the Hempsted Houses in Connecticut – in southern New England – it was highlighted that the middle-class family had enslaved servants, including one man in particular, Adam Jackson.[33] In Portsmouth, New Hampshire – the most northerly location in New England discussed within this thesis – several sites briefly drew attention to the neglected history of local enslavement, including Chase House at Strawberry Banke Museum, and at the Warner House.[34] Another Portsmouth site was the Moffatt-Ladd House, which had to be visited with a tour guide. The guide acknowledged that enslaved servants worked in the house through two life-sized figurines in the kitchen and the story of enslaved servant, Prince, who signed a petition for their

[29] Recorded guide, "Track 7.3," Audio, JBH.
[30] Tour, SHH.
[31] Upstairs, SHH.
[32] Kane, "Institutional Change," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 48.
[33] Tour, Hempsted Houses.
[34] Information board, "Childbirth in the nineteenth century," Chase House, Strawberry Banke Museum; Tour, Warner House.

freedom.[35] On my tour, Prince was discussed when viewing a portrait of William Whipple – an occupant of the house – and Prince's petition was displayed in the attic with copies available as visitors left. Yet I was told little more than that Prince was enslaved and signed the petition. Any wider EAC was also "un-visible," and when viewing portraits downstairs, I was told by the guide that Samuel Moffatt travelled to the West Indies but not why. Returning to petitions, these artefacts contain spectral traces of the agency and wishes of the enslaved themselves and suggest they played an important role in abolition in the New England states.[36] Royall House also displayed a petition from an enslaved woman named Belinda Sutton, which is discussed by Hardesty.[37] These petitions made by enslaved people could be further emphasised by the sites and may include a potential transnational link. Indeed, Seymour Drescher argues that the *Somerset case* decision "stimulated" petitions against slavery across the Atlantic.[38]

Away from historic houses, several of the Worcester Art Museum labels identified that local sitters in the museum's portraiture owned between one and four enslaved people.[39] Similarly  the Museum of Newport History observed that "nearly half of the families in Newport owned at least one slave."[40] Signage in Granary Burying Ground, in Boston, also noted that "most houses in Boston had one or two slaves."[41] The burying ground however did not focus on the literal burial of enslaved bodies on New England soil, unlike the Portsmouth African Burying Ground, which was unveiled in 2015, or "God's Little Acre" Colonial African Burial Ground in Newport. Accompanying the Colonial African Burial Ground was a large sign – situated so that it

[35] Tour, Moffatt-Ladd.
[36] Horton and Horton, *In Hope of Liberty,* 72; Chernom M. Sesay, "The Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts," *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2014): 99–131.
[37] Hardesty, *Black Lives,* xiv–xv.
[38] Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 109.
[39] Portrait labels, WAM.
[40] Text panel, "Slavery," LMM.
[41] Information board, "5. Seventeenth Century Burials," Granary Burying Ground.

was visible from a passing main road – which stated that it was the resting place of "African enslaved and free persons of color who contributed greatly to the commerce, social and religious life of Colonial Newport."[42] This made it explicitly clear that enslaved people contributed to commerce but did not explore how.

In Newport local historian Keith Stokes also took me to visit the Touro Synagogue which had installed exhibits on local history, including the prominent Jewish slave trader Aaron Lopez. A panel within the Synagogue highlighted that enslaved labourers worked in "specialized trades such as stone-cutting, rum distilling, and carpentry, as well as in domestic and manual labour" in Newport.[43] It then focused on Duchess Quamino, an enslaved woman who was "famous for her baking skills" and "became known as 'the Pastry Queen of Rhode Island'," as the text explained.[44] It continued to recount that Quamino bought her own freedom through proceeds from the sale of her baked goods, demonstrating that she had a substantial local commercial role.

In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, the new Black Heritage Trail provided evidence of physical markers of the enslaved on the cityscape. Notably one board in Prescott Park highlighted particularly the economic contributions of the locally enslaved. Titled "Black Yankees and the Sea," it explained that "ships brought black children and adults directly from Africa and from the West Indies or southern colonies. These 'servants' worked in Portsmouth houses, craft shops, farms, and at sea."[45] The word "servants" was placed in quotation marks, thus questioning the term. This brief installation offered more of an explanation of the contribution of enslaved people than the

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[42] Roadside sign, "'God's Little Acre' Colonial African Burial Ground," Farewell Street, Newport, RI.
[43] Text panel, "1772 Market Day," Touro.
[44] Text panel, "1772 Market Day," Touro.
[45] Trail Marker, "Black Yankees and the Sea," BHT Portsmouth.

houses in the local area, but, like the installations in Newport, it did not embed this within a wider system of EAC.

The Center for Reconciliation also highlighted that "by the mid-1750s, about 11,000 enslaved Africans were dispersed throughout New England."[46] Text continued to explain that local enslaved people undertook skilled and unskilled work, which contributed to the economy. This included working "in dairies making cheese for the provisioning trades to the slave societies of the West Indies."[47] As well as acknowledging their local contribution, this statement also connected their labour to the wider system of EAC as they produced supply goods for the Caribbean. This underscores that some people were involved with, and implicated in, EAC without choice.

The recurring focus on locally enslaved Africans as domestic "servants" in New England was the most acute difference between the narratives in the regions, with only the Georgian House in England also discussing this history. For the New England sites, many of the historic houses were sites of memory of enslavement more broadly and not just EAC. By highlighting enslavement in the north, this history alone presents a significant challenge to the existing DOLHN. There may therefore be reluctance to explore the wider histories that question this comfortable northern mythology. The same focus on sites of enslavement has also allowed England to direct attention to the Caribbean over sites of EAC and enslavement in Britain. Even where local enslavement was recognised there was limited discussion of the contribution of the enslaved to EAC, reflecting a different angle on how enslavement is not embedded within the wider web of EAC. This contrasts with the previous plantation accounts which reveal how enslavement was part of a banal system

[46] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.
[47] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.

of production, commerce and profit. The following section explores the banal involvement of those who profited off the laboured of enslaved Africans further.

## "Anglo-Saxon banality"

The concept of banality draws attention to the historical reality that for centuries the enslavement of Africans was accepted and normalised by large portions of white society. As Chapter 1 noted, Moody and Rice have also applied the concept to slavery memory. Moody aligns her use of banality with Hannah Arendt's work on the Holocaust, and explains that: "there was a banal 'evil' behind the management of systems of enslavement […] a mundane, normalized, everyday, administrative inhumanity performed through the careers of civil servants of the British empire."[48] While conscious that many of those who did the work of EAC are nameless in history, the following sections draw attention to the web of involvement which involved many more of these mundane roles, and not just the "dramatic stories" of plantation owners, and managers, and slave traders.[49]

Rice also mentions banality, in his discussion of *Captured Africans*, when he writes that "the names of the ships' captains are listed in all their Anglo-Saxon banality. Many of them are traditional Lancashire surnames that viewers might well share."[50] These names are listed on a metallic side of the memorial along with the names of ships and the number of enslaved Africans forcibly trafficked **(Figure 5.4).** Rice refers to James Young's work on Holocaust memorials to argue that the use of "uncannily familiar names" is haunting for visitors and "counteract[s] complacency

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[48] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 55.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Rice, "Naming the money," 330.

about the historic responsibility of white Lancastrians for the trade that helped to produce the city's wealth."[51] The memorial speaks to not only spectral traces in the physical city, but potentially to those in the observers' themselves, who may have the same names or know others who do. Furthermore, the list of ordinary, rather than famous names, also reveals that not all slave traders became "citizens of note."[52] Together, the impact of this banal list of names is to illuminate that ship captains were not exceptional villains, or commemorated heroes, but instead ordinary people at a particular point in time.

**Figure 5.4.** The side of *Captured Africans*. PTBA (July 2019).

The listed names – such as "Richard Millerson" or "Thomas Paley" – appear likely to be Anglo-Saxon, but there is nothing which confirms this. Instead, white faces can also be used to highlight that EAC is not just black history. As discussed in Chapter 1, in *Interpreting Difficult History* Rose identifies that in representations "the face" personalises stories, while "the real" provides the narrative evidence and "the narrative ties the face and the real together."[53] Using portraits promotes a problematically individualistic narrative, which is explored further in the next

[51] Ibid., 331.
[52] Ibid., 330.
[53] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 117.

section, but it also gives people involved in EAC faces. Furthermore, portraiture challenges white complacency. As the Program Manager at the Center for Reconciliation explained: “when you look around you see a lot of white faces in this exhibit. And what we’re trying to do is actually turn the lens back and say actually we do want the white community to examine their history and think more deeply about how are your ancestors involved in, either directly in slavery or slave trading or in a what I sometimes call a slavery adjacent industry.”[54] This disrupts the “self-indulgent sense of superiority” that white visitors may be allowed to feel if they are not made to “interrogate one’s own implication.”[55]

Araujo has written that in the ISM paintings are used to “illustrate the economic benefits,” and I observed this across the case studies.[56] Human portraits in particular were utilised as palimpsestic objects across several sites including at the NPG at Worcester Art Museum, where portraiture was inherently central to the collections. The new labels at Worcester Art Museum drew attention to several of the sitters’ links to slavery, thus recontextualising the portraits themselves.[57] While rarer, alongside a portrait of William Beckford in the NPG, the sitter was identified in a small label as “the son of a famous Lord Mayor of London and heir to a West Indian slave fortune.”[58] Elsewhere, the MOLD acknowledged George Hibbert, as the West India Dock Company’s first chairman and a “slave owner” who “led the campaign against the abolition of the slave trade.”[59] A large portrait of Hibbert was displayed in the main gallery with information for

[54] (Elon Cook, Program Manager at the Center for Reconciliation, Interview with author, 30 July 2018).
[55] Silke Arnold-de Simine, *Mediating Memory in the Museum: Empathy, Trauma, Nostalgia* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 113.
[56] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 117.
[57] Portrait labels, WAM.
[58] Text label, “William Beckford 1760-1844,” Room 12, NPG.
[59] Display, “West India Docks,” MOLD.

adults, for children and in braille, which explained that he "was a highly successful West India merchant and slave owner with a large number of plantations in Jamaica." [60]

Sir John Hawkins (1532–1595) was noted in text at Wilberforce House to have commanded the "the first known English slave trading voyages."[61] In a more engaging piece of interpretation, his portrait hung in the Atlantic Gallery of the NMM next to a panel on "Africa and Enslavement" **(Figure 5.5).** The label explained that he was "a merchant and celebrated naval commander, including against the Spanish Armada. He was also the first English man active in the transatlantic slave trade."[62] The placement of his portrait reinforces that while he was a "celebrated naval commander" – in a golden frame – he was also involved in EAC, thus revealing another layer within this palimpsestic object. In another example, at Newstead Abbey, while recontextualization did not take place within the space itself where Wildman's portrait hangs, the *Blood Sugar* film had a close-up frame of the portrait while the voice-over, from descendants of the enslaved, strongly states: "You are wealthy because of me."[63]

**Figure 5.5.** Sir John Hawkins' portrait in the NMM. PTBA (April 2019).

[60] Text label, "George Hibbert (1757-1827)," MOLD.
[61] Display, "The Triangular Trade," Slavery, WH.
[62] Text label, "Sir John Hawkins, 1532-95," Atlantic, NMM.
[63] Film, *Blood Sugar*, Discover, Newstead Abbey.

The creation of these portraits reflects that all their sitters gained enough wealth and prestige to leave material evidence. However, adding the layer of EAC was an interpretive choice of the heritage sites, and some chose not to. At Harewood House EAC remained "un-visible" within the Cinnamon Drawing Room, which was filled with portraits. In the centre, above the fireplace, was a portrait of Edwin Lascelles by renowned artist Joshua Reynolds **(Figure 5.6)**. The room handout explained that he "was the man who built Harewood House" after inheriting the estate in 1753. To Edwin's left was a portrait of Edward Lascelles, who the handout explained was the "father of the 1st Earl of Harewood" who inherited the house from his cousin Edwin. The origin of their wealth was not discussed. The handout then continued to explain that Edward was "depicted in this portrait in front of a fleet of ships, representing his business abroad."[64] More specifically, as Smith notes, Edward "stands proudly in front of his West India ship."[65] Yet no reference was made to slavery or where his "business abroad" took place, even though it was so important to the sitter that he and the artist chose to include ships. This lack of acknowledgement fits with the "romanticized, sanitized historical narratives" of English country houses that were critiqued in Chapter 3.[66]

[64] Room card, "The Cinnamon Drawing Room," Harewood.
[65] Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism,* 89.
[66] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 35.

**Figure 5.6.** Portraits of Edwin (right) and Edward(left) Lascelles at Harewood House. PTBA (October 2019).

The interpretation of names and faces will shape whether observers' note a connection to EAC, but the above examples demonstrate that either can be used to access the concept of "Anglo-Saxon banality." The issue with using portraiture, however, is that the narrative focuses on the elite families who were painted, rather than wider population in England and New England, and thus the majority of visitors will be able to dismiss personal implication. This consideration should frame the following critique of the predominant focus on wealthy plantation owners and slave traders.

## The dominance of direct enslavers in EAC narratives

Across the museums, historic houses and cityscape signage, the most common narratives of who was involved in EAC focused on individual families, and particularly individual white men, who were directly involved in plantation ownership or slave trading. While the purpose-built memorials covered in this thesis tended not to have this individualistic focus, the majority of interventions focused on powerful wealthy white men, while other histories, such as female plantation ownership, were under-explored. This undoubtedly reflects that these perceived 'great men' left material evidence and have historically been seen as worthy of commemoration in different forms, including statues. However, this limited narrative gives the false impression that only a few people were involved in EAC, and that involvement only included a binary of enslaved victims and enslaving villains, with the latter able to be dismissed as exceptional and the systemic and banal nature of involvement overlooked.

The debates about powerful men have become popular news, from the "Rhodes Must Fall" campaign, to debates over Confederate statues and Colston's removal. The introduction noted particularly the debates around Edward Colston and Peter Faneuil, both of whom were individual

men who were directly involved in enslavement. At Granary Burying Ground in Boston information boards provided details about the individuals buried there, including African Americans and key historical figures such as Samuel Adams. Amongst them, one sign identified Peter Faneuil (1700-1743) as a "West Indies merchant and slave trader" before going on to recognise that he "built Faneuil Hall and was known for his charitable deeds."[67] As this thesis explores beyond the men directly involved in EAC, Colston and Faneuil are not examined in depth, but there are clear similarities in how their involvement was buried beneath philanthropy.

Across the sites, the names of enslavers were preserved. The Oxford library plaque was dedicated to the "memory of those who worked in slavery" and specifically those who worked on the "Codrington Plantations in the West Indies," yet it is only Codrington who was named in any form.[68] This allows the narrative to be narrowed onto his plantation ownership, rather than embracing any wider university involvement. Amongst the interventions, in some cases the individual men named were identified as being doubly involved in both slave trading and plantation ownership. At Granary Burying Ground in Boston a sign identified two merchants – Hugh Hall and David Greenough – who both "imported and sold slaves and owned plantations in the West Indies."[69] Similarly, the board near Hibbert's Gate in London noted that Hibbert was "linked with the slave trade" and "owned a number of slaves."[70]

This board claimed that while "the Main Gate, or 'Hibbert Gate' as it was sometimes known, was meant to be a memorial to the man – the replica in no way represents support for slavery."[71] No further detailed explanation is provided for why Canary Wharf PLC. built a replica of

[67] Information board, "7. Huguenots, Women, and Tories," Granary Burying Ground.
[68] Oxford plaque.
[69] Information board, "5. Seventeenth Century Burials," Granary Burying Ground.
[70] Information board, "The main 'Hibbert' Gate," West India Quay.
[71] Information board, "The main 'Hibbert' Gate," West India Quay.

the original gate. The board went on to inaccurately claim that "this reprehensible trade was banned in the UK in 1791." While Wilberforce's first parliamentary Bill to abolish the slave trade failed in 1791, the British slave trade was not abolished until 1807, which is vitally important as West India Docks did not even open until 1802. Furthermore, ownership of enslaved people in the British Caribbean continued until the 1830s, when George Hibbert received over £60,000 in compensation.[72] This factual inaccuracy was deeply concerning as observers without prior knowledge would not question this, and there is an established trust that such signage will be accurate. Given this, in June 2019, I informed them of this inaccuracy.[73] Beyond remedying the 1791 date, this signage could expand its scope beyond Hibbert, or reflect on the reference to the Hibbert family's "Manchester cotton origins."[74]

In Lancaster, the Judges' Lodgings mentioned the Rawlinson family, and a portrait label acknowledged that original portraits of Thomas Hutton Rawlinson and his wife Mary were displayed at the Lancaster Maritime Museum. It further explained that Mary was the daughter of a family who "were the owners of plantations in the West Indies and were active participants in the Slave Trade."[75] Another nearby panel explained Thomas' "fortunes had been vastly increased through his involvement with the slave trade."[76] Thomas and Mary's son, Abraham Rawlinson (1738-1803), was MP for Lancaster from 1780 to 1790, and was presented with a "fine silver cup and cover" which was also displayed. The label explained that "the splendid trophy is a fitting gesture of thanks from the rich merchants of Lancaster – almost all of whom were directly or

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[72] "George Hibbert," Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/16791.
The £60,000 was awarded as compensation for 19 Jamaican estates where nearly 3500 people were enslaved.
[73] I contacted Canary Wharf PLC. They replied that would "look into getting this changed" (15 June 2019).
[74] Hall et al., *Legacies,* 215.
[75] Text Label, "Portrait of Mary Rawlinson (1715-1786)," Judges' Lodgings.
[76] Text Label, "Gillows Bookcase," Judges Lodgings.

indirectly involved in the Slave Trade – to a man who was a model of his profession'."[77] As Rice commented in his discussion of how the Judges' Lodging's Museum is "haunted by the legacy of transatlantic slavery," as an MP Abraham "represented diligently the slaveholding interest."[78] He consistently defended slavery and therefore it is unsurprising that the merchants were thankful, but this historical viewpoint could have been challenged within the interpretation.

Historic houses, as Laurajane Smith writes, are an "explicit statement about the status and power of the family within," and overwhelmingly the houses' former owner-occupants remain the narrative focus.[79] As Otele phrases it, they "are within and outside public memory" because they are often public spaces that tell family stories and are often still privately owned.[80] This was the case at all the historic houses visited during this research, and the connections to EAC centred on their occupants' involvement. This "individualism" within historic houses has been critiqued for decades since Hewison's influential work, but is particularly problematic for this thesis as it limits understanding of EAC.[81] As noted in Chapter 3, the sites rarely explicitly stated that individual wealth generation built or renovated the physical houses. Instead, the narrative focused on the lives of individuals.

An exception to this was the Georgian House Museum, in Bristol, where an exhibit panel clearly stated that Pinney had the house built between 1788 and 1791 "with profits from his plantations on the West Indian island of Nevis."[82] Such an explicit statement was however missing

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[77] Text Label, "Rawlinson commemorative silver cup and cover, 1791," Judges Lodgings.
[78] Alan Rice, "Revealing Histories, Dialogising Collections: Museums and Galleries in North West England Commemorating the Abolition of the Slave Trade," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 30, no. 2 (2009): 303.
[79] Smith, *Uses of Heritage,* 119.
[80] Olivette Otele, "History of Slavery, Sites of Memory, and Identity Politics in Contemporary Britain," in *A Stain On Our Past: Slavery and* Memory, eds. Abdoulaye Gueye and Johann Michel (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2018), 197.
[81] Hewison*, The Heritage Industry,* 53.
[82] Display panel, "Bristol and Slavery," John Pinney, GHM.

downstairs. Visitors were told by the first panel, at the entrance, that Pinney was a “wealthy West India merchant” who inherited “debt-laden sugar plantations on the island of Nevis in the Caribbean.”[83] Within the upstairs exhibit the site also quantified the wealth John Pinney gained. Visitors were firstly told that “in 1783 Pinney returned to England, leaving the plantations in the hands of managers. He was now worth about £70,000 [equivalent to almost £7.6 million in 2017].”[84] The equivalency was provided within the exhibit text, which continued to explain that he later sold the Mountravers estate, and most of its enslaved workforce, to Edward Huggins, a man with a “reputation for cruelty” in 1808 for “£35,650 [worth about £2.5 million in 2017].”[85] This statement reflects the focus on plantation ownership over Pinney’s other businesses. After highlighting the sale, the panel continued that “when John Pinney died in 1818, his fortune was worth about £340,000 [equivalent to nearly £23 million].”[86] After his death it was explained that the Pinney’s were “still involved in a number of plantations” and were compensated “at least £29,000 [about £2.5 million] and thousands more indirectly.” There was no further exploration of this indirect compensation in the display. Overall, these details were valuable, but they again focused on one family’s involvement.

In New England, the narratives of historic houses again focused on their occupants, and there is no better example of the individualistic focus of narratives than the DeWolf family of Rhode Island, who were identified in Chapter 1 for their 2008 film and subsequent work. In *Slavery in the Age of Memory*, Araujo discusses the DeWolf family’s work but not physical sites that commemorate this history.[87] The historical DeWolf family were based in Bristol, Rhode Island, which is situated between Providence and Newport, and they were “Rhode Island’s most

[83] Entrance board, “The Georgian House Museum,” GHM.
[84] Display panel, “John Pinney (1740-1818),” John Pinney, GHM.
[85] Display panel, “Moving and Selling,” John Pinney, GHM.
[86] Display panel, “Moving and Selling,” John Pinney, GHM.
[87] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 32–36.

dominant slave-trading family."[88] The infamous family are thought to have transported more than 12,000 enslaved Africans across the Atlantic.[89] In July 2018 I found two information boards of interest in the town. One near the Tavern was severely weather beaten, but a very determined reader could decipher that it was about the DeWolfs' involvement in "the slave trade" and "sugar and coffee plantations." Unfortunately, its illegibility makes full analysis impossible. The other board titled the "Historic Thames Street Landing" began by explaining that "James and William De Wolf […] constructed in 1797 what was to become DeWolf's Wharf." The last sentences, though notably not the first, explained that "it became a center for finance, foreign trade, and merchandizing, all activities which contributed to the wealth and architectural legacy of Bristol. Slaving and rum production through the triangle trade produced a large amount of income in this period."[90] These boards were situated a short walk from Linden Place, a historic house.

Linden Place was built by George DeWolf, who "is said to have built the mansion with the profits from a single year of his illegal slave-trading."[91] In 2015, Kane wrote that Linden Place represents "New England's deep involvement in the transatlantic slave trade" yet "any connection of the mansion or the DeWolf family to slavery is scarcely visible to the average visitor."[92] I found this to be largely true in 2018, though there was some limited acknowledgement in readable materials. The introduction to the self-guided tour booklet explained that "Linden Place was built in 1810 by George DeWolf. When the sea was America's highway, the DeWolf family ruled along with the Browns of Providence, and as with the Brown family, the DeWolfs made their money in the slave trade."[93] Another handout on the "Story of Linden Place" explained that the DeWolf

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[88] Clark-Pujara, *Dark Work*, 2.
[89] Kane, "Institutional Change," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 50.
[90] Information board, "Historic Thames Street Landing," State Street, Bristol, RI.
[91] Kane, "Institutional Change," in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 50.
[92] Ibid., 52.
[93] Text in guide, Linden Place.

family was established after Simeon Potter, "a Bristol privateer and slave trader, was visiting his sugar plantation on the island of Guadeloupe," met Mark Anthony DeWolf in the West Indies and married his sister.[94] Their sons "went off to sea to make their fortunes, and under the tutelage of Uncle Simeon, they entered the slave trade, privateering, and rum distilling."[95]

The handout continued to explain briefly that after building the house George went bankrupt, when his "investments went sour, his sugarcane crop in Cuba failed, and he lost two ships with full cargoes of captive Africans," thus reflecting how financially dependent he was on EAC. He left Bristol in December 1825, and "sailed to Cuba to live on their plantation."[96] Reflecting the local focus, instead of providing any further detail on Cuba, the narrative in the text returned to Bristol and the local reaction to his departure. Within the house itself, on the dining room table, there was also an image of Theodora DeWolf Colt – one of George's children – who "spent the next several years at her family's sugar plantation in Cuba" before returning to Linden Place after her marriage.[97] The existence of a plantation in Cuba was acknowledged, but it was not explained how the family came to be plantation owners in a Spanish-colony, or how Uncle Simeon had owned a plantation in the French-colony of Guadeloupe. Nor was it made clear that Cuba did not abolish slavery until the 1880s. Furthermore, the Brown report recognises that the DeWolf's slave trading and plantation ownership were connected as the "primary destination" of their slaving voyages was Cuba "where the family owned its own sugar plantation."[98] On the TAST database, of the 101 transatlantic slaving voyages – where the vessel was at least partially owned by one or more of the D'Wolf (as DeWolf is spelt on the database) family – 51 voyages list Havana as their

[94] Text in leaflet, "The Story of Linden Place," Linden Place.
[95] Text in leaflet, "The Story of Linden Place," Linden Place.
[96] Text in leaflet, "The Story of Linden Place," Linden Place.
[97] Text panel, "Theodora DeWolf Colt (1820-1901)," Linden Place.
[98] Brown University, *Slavery and Justice,* 10.

principal place of landing.[99] Acknowledging this link to Cuba, or to Guadeloupe, requires a move beyond the national lens outlined in Chapter 4.

Unlike Linden Place, many other New England houses – such as the Moffatt-Ladd House – carried family surnames and others commemorated full names. This was the case at the Stephen Hopkins House and the nearby John Brown House, in Providence. Chapter 4 noted that "the Browns rose to power through many different business operations" including slave trading.[100] The Brown family of Providence are prominent figures in New England's memory of EAC, like the DeWolfs not least because they supported Brown University, which centuries later in 2006 released its seminal report on its links to enslavement. The *Sally* exhibit continued a family focus as this ship's voyage was the "last slaving venture that all the Brown brothers […] participated in together."[101] Moving briefly away from the family, the *Sally* exhibit identified Esek Hopkins as the master of the voyage.[102] However at his brother's house – the nearby Stephen Hopkins House – Esek was described evasively as simply a "commander of the American navy during the Revolution, and later a trustee of Brown University." This detail was provided in relation to a painting of *Sea Captains in Surinam* but very little was said about the "African slaves" in the painting.[103]

Stephen Hopkins (1707–1785) was a signatory of the Declaration of Independence and the house displayed his 1766 pamphlet on *Rights of the Colonies Examined,* which states that "Liberty is the greatest blessing that men enjoy, and slavery is the heaviest curse that human nature is capable of." Interpretation questioned how he could write such a statement yet own enslaved people, asking "why did Hopkins express himself in one way, and act in another?"[104] The

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[99] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.
[100] Text in guide, "1&2 Introduction at Front Door," Written, JBH.
[101] Text in guide, "19 Sally Gallery," Written, JBH.
[102] Display panel, "Esek Hopkins, Master of the Sally," Sally, JBH.
[103] Text label, "Sea Captains Carousing in Surinam, c. 1752-1758," Upstairs, SHH.
[104] Text panel, "What did the words slavery and freedom mean to Stephen Hopkins?" Upstairs, SHH.

Declaration of Independence solidified this contradiction, and was famously penned by Thomas Jefferson who “personified the paradox of the new and emerging United States.”[105] Yet this national narrative was not explored at the site, and instead the focus remained local and specifically on Stephen Hopkins himself. William Whipple (1730–1785), the former master of the above Prince, also signed the Declaration of Independence and lived in Moffatt-Ladd House. When I visited both these sites this detail was proudly displayed on banners outside, speaking to the power of the DOLHN. Notably, slavery and EAC were not deeply explored at these sites. In contrast, the aforementioned Royall House and Slave Quarters centred the locally enslaved people in their narrative. In informal conversations with staff at the site it was made clear that Isaac Royall Jr. (1719-1781) was an easier figure to critique because he was loyal to the British and fled to England during the Revolutionary War. The fact that a heritage site, which Kane describes as the “leader in the interpretation of northern slavery,” was home to a man who was on the wrong side of American history, reflects that his personal story presents less of a challenge to the DOLHN.[106]

Away from Royall House, Royall is not named at the Harvard Law School memorial, but his name was central to the “Royall Must Fall” campaign that preceded it. Outside the Royall House in Medford, Royall was also named on street signage dating from 1930.[107] In addition, at King’s Chapel in central Boston he had “A Pew of One’s Own” board. As the name implies, these boards discussed wealthy parishioners and thus had an individualistic focus. His explained that the Royalls “were among the wealthiest people in Boston prior to the American Revolution. […] Royall was the largest slaveowner and one of the largest importers of enslaved people in Massachusetts.”[108] It

[105] Horton and Horton, *Slavery and Public History,* vii–xiv.
[106] Kane, “Institutional Change,” in Gallas and DeWolf Perry, *Interpreting Slavery*, 55–56.
[107] Roadside sign, “Royall House,” Main Street, Medford, MA.
[108] Information board, “A Pew of One’s Own: Isaac Royall Jr.” King’s Chapel.

continued to outline that Royall bequeathed land to Harvard to establish the Law School and that Royall's house was open as a museum, thus connecting the sites, as discussed in Chapter 3.

At King's Chapel the detailed information on EAC was largely contained within the "Tied to the Trade" board. While later acknowledging wider links, it began by explaining that "as a major commercial center, Colonial Boston was centered on and driven by the slave trade." This suggests that "the Trade" the board's title referred to is direct slave trading.[109] The text later explained that "several of the most prominent families in the 18th-century King's Chapel – the Apthorps, Royalls and Vassalls – held substantial numbers of enslaved people in their Massachusetts homes, and owned brutal sugar plantations in the Caribbean." It identified specific families and continued to clarify that Charles Apthorp was "a prominent slave trader" and "the largest individual donor to the church's current building", and that Isaac Royall was amongst "the largest slaveholders in Massachusetts." Another board on "Industry Interwoven with Slavery" explained that "Notable King's Chapel families profiting from the cotton textile industry included the Appletons and the Lowells."[110] These panels acknowledged wider links, but specific examples centred on famous rich families, and particularly powerful wealthy white men.

Collectively the interventions create a sense that only a few individuals directly profited from EAC, and that therefore they can be villainised. In some cases, this felt very explicit. At Lowther Castle, visitors were told that in 1751 the Lowther estates were inherited by James Lowther (1736-1802), a man who "history remembers as wicked Jimmy."[111] The point that he was known as "Wicked Jimmy" was repeated several times within the space, and text below his portrait noted that he was also called "Tyrant of the North" and that "he could explode with

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[109] Information board, "Slavery and King's Chapel: Tied to the Trade," King's Chapel.
[110] Information board, "Slavery and King's Chapel: Industry Interwoven with Slavery," King's Chapel.
[111] Text panel, "Lowther Hall: Ablaze," The Story of Lowther 1700-1802.

rage."[112] Another display titled "Land" featured the aforementioned plantation book, and text explained that James was son of the governor of Barbados, Robert Lowther, but there was nothing more about Robert.[113] Instead slavery was confined to this corner of the narrative, and in contrast to "Wicked Jimmy" the next room discussed "William the Good," who visitors were told was a friend of William Wilberforce.[114]

Generally, the large museum exhibits in England did not have the same problematic focus on individuals involved directly in slave trading and holding, as seen in the cityscape or historic houses. Nevertheless, individual narratives were explored. For example, at the ISM, Richard Watt (1724-1796) was called "Liverpool's Dick Whittington" and his Speke Hall was pictured.[115] It was explained that he made his fortune in Jamaica, and there was a neighbouring portrait of a ship – *The Watt* – which "made regular voyages to Jamaica bringing back slave-grown sugar, rum and woods used for making dyes."[116] Beneath in a pull-out drawer was a list of named enslaved Africans whom the Watt family owned in Jamaica in 1814. This small display used text, images and historic objects to concisely recontextualise Speke Hall for local visitors who may be familiar with the site, by focusing on the story of Richard Watt. However, in terms of the importance of placement outlined in Chapter 3, Araujo rightly notes that as "the wall panel is located in an unnoticed corner, inattentive visitors can certainly miss this connection that could highlight the tangible dimensions of the wealth created by the slave trade that remain visible in the city."[117]

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[112] Text panel, "Wicked Jimmy, Tyrant of the North, Jimmy Graspall, Earl of Toadstool," The Story of Lowther 1700-1802.
[113] Display, "Land," The Story of Lowther 1700-1802.
[114] Text panels, "William the Good" and "A Great Victorian," The Story of Lowther 1802-1882.
[115] Text panel, "Liverpool's Dick Whittington," Enslavement, ISM.
[116] Text label, "The Watt," Enslavement, ISM.
[117] Araujo, *Museums and Atlantic Slavery,* 17.

Another man, Dodshon Foster, featured several times in the Lancaster Maritime Museum, including alongside text which reminded visitors that "some Lancaster merchants were heavily involved in the evil slave trade with West Africa."[118] Contributing to the idea of "evil" involvement, the Lancaster Maritime Museum included notes on Sue Flowers' *One Tenth* 2007 exhibit, which highlighted that Foster was "criminalized."[119] Villainising men who were directly involved in slave trading or plantation ownership has a role to play in the narrative, especially in the cases of known sadists such as Thomas Thistlewood, but centring these men also detracts from widespread involvement in EAC. It also has the potential to undermine visitors' understanding of the "systemic cruelty of a capitalist logic," as Silke Arnold-de Simine argues. She continues that, in "empathic" installations, "visitors might be tempted to attribute these crimes simply to individual cruelty and blend out the political decisions, economic interests, or ideological motifs that created and still create the framework in which individual cruelty can thrive."[120] The stories of individual villains may be easier to place within the DOLHN, but they do not facilitate a wider understanding of EAC or encourage visitor reflection on the banality of white involvement. The following sections explore narratives which would encourage such contemplation, while outlining the breadth of implication in EAC, from powerful mill owners to bankers, to sugar consumers and cotton mill workers. Their profit, power and choice varied greatly but all were embroiled in the web of EAC.

[118] Display panel, "Lancaster's Golden Age," Lancaster City Museum.

[119] Sue Flowers, *One Tenth* (2007). Book displayed in Slave Trade, LMM. For further details on Flowers' installation see: Rice, "Revealing Histories," 302–303.

[120] Silke Arnold-de Simine, "The "Moving" Image: Empathy and Projection in the International Slavery Museum, Liverpool," *Journal of Educational Media, Memory & Society* 4, no. 2 (2012): 37.

## The men and machines of the cotton industry

Moses Brown of Slater Mill was involved in slave trading, with the *Sally*, and the Greg family of Quarry Bank Mill owned sugar plantations. Beyond those direct links, other individuals became wealthy from the cotton industry, which must be considered as part of EAC because it relied on supply from enslaved-worked plantations until the 1860s. However, while the white faces of the 'great men' of the cotton industry featured within displays at cotton industry sites, they were not explicitly placed within the narrative of EAC. Instead, it was a machine – Eli Whitney's cotton gin – that bore the burden of connection to slavery, while these men, and their mills and inventions, did not. Consequently, at the interventions, these men were not clearly marked as involved in EAC, but they should be as they profited from it. The end of this chapter discusses the implication of the cotton mill workers who did not profit like the owners of, and investors in, the mills.

At cotton industry sites, EAC was situated within narratives of industrial archaeology which celebrates technological advancements. Thus, there was a recurring dominant focus on machinery across the majority of sites. The exception to this was the People's History Museum in Manchester, which as the name suggests focused on social history. The machinery at the other sites was often loudly run to entertain and educate visitors, but few of the machines were connected to enslavement. Slater Mill's tour covered a pre-industrial house, an 1810 Mill and finally the original Slater Mill, and focused largely on the machinery and process of production.[121] Slavery did not feature prominently on the tour, though raw cotton production in the US South was mentioned in both the garden where cotton is now grown and in the original mill, with a cotton gin. At Boott Cotton Mills the ground floor was dedicated to running machinery, and

[121] Tour, Slater Mill.

machines took up floors of space at Quarry Bank Mill. At both sites the exhibits on slavery were separate from the large machinery rooms. At the Science and Industry Museum a display on slavery acknowledged that enslaved people were "forced to grow cotton" and Manchester's "wealth and success depended on this system of human exploitation."[122] However, it was possible to view the central machinery within the Textile gallery without viewing this display. Slavery was physically separated from the wondrous machinery of the industrial revolution. Across the sites, on both sides of the Atlantic, one machine in particular was, however, used as the access point for the discussion of slavery: Eli Whitney's cotton gin.

At Slater Mill the tour guide stood next to a cotton gin and noted the machine would never have been in the North but instead would have been used by enslaved people in the South to de-seed cotton.[123] The guide also stated that the gin perpetuated slavery. Similarly, visitors to Boott Cotton Mill were told that "following the invention of the cotton gin in 1793, cotton fields spread across the Deep South and slavery expanded."[124] Across the Atlantic, at Belper North Mill, amongst a table with a map of global cotton production and a slaving ship diagram, there was also an image of Whitney's 1793 cotton gin. Similarly, Cromford Mill pictured the gin in the introductory timeline and included its invention on a map of key global events.[125] The Cotton Connections display text then explained that "the invention of the Cotton Gin by Eli Whitney in the United States in 1793 allowed the removal of seeds in the raw cotton. This meant more cotton could be exported at a competitive price."[126] In Manchester, The Science and Industry Museum also displayed a model cotton gin and noted that its invention in 1793 "resulted in a million more

[122] Display, "Manchester: Made of Cotton," Science and Industry.
[123] Tour, Slater Mill.
[124] Display, "Plantation Economy," Boott.
[125] Images above 1700s timeline, Cromford; Map, "What was happening elsewhere in the world during the lifetime of Sir Richard Arkwright?" Cromford.
[126] Text panel, "Cotton Connections," GCC, Cromford.

enslaved people being forced to grow cotton in the United States of America" **(Figure 5.7)**.[127] However, the small object itself would struggle to compete for attention with the loud, dramatic, eye-catching looms which visitors would likely be drawn to.

**Figure 5.7.** The model cotton gin displayed at the Science and Industry Museum. PTBA (April 2019).

The centring of a machine rather than people transfers the burden of slavery from humans to an inanimate object. In this narrative it was a machine that perpetuated enslavement, not those who owned mills or worked in the industry. Another issue with the focus on Whitney's cotton gin is that this historical narrative has been challenged by Angela Lakwete who explains that gins existed before Eli Whitney patented a new type of gin – the "saw gin" – in 1793 to 1794.[128] She explains that "during the Civil War, the idea that the saw gin was the first cotton gin gained currency. […] After the war, popular writers and academics alike increasingly assumed that Eli

[127] Text label, "Cotton Gin," Science and Industry.
[128] Angela Lakwete, *Inventing the Cotton Gin: Machine and Myth in Antebellum America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003), 47–71. The patent was awarded on 14th March 1794, retroactive to 6th November 1793.

Whitney's was the first gin."[129] Lakwete also comments that while the perception that cotton gins appeared in the 1790s facilitated false separation between the colonial past and the new USA, more accurately, "continuity […] marked the history of cotton and the gin in America."[130] As Chapter 4 discussed, the cotton industry in New England sustained interconnections between England and the United States following American independence, but these links are under-explored within a national framework.

The importance of machinery in history has long been understood. For example, in *Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) Engels wrote that "the history of the proletariat in England begins with the second half of the last century, with the invention of the steam-engine and of machinery for working cotton."[131] Industrial archaeology has preserved the machines as "relic[s] of an obsolete phase of an industry."[132] This rests on an acceptance of the "commemorative power of machines," as Ben Russell phrases it, that has developed since the nineteenth century.[133] Cossons writes that "these early attempts at capturing the stuff of industrialization were in part antiquarian and, consciously or unconsciously, driven by myth and the need to create and perpetuate a myth – of the engineer as hero."[134] The machinery can be argued to have preserved Whitney's memory, but while his name featured, his face did not and he was not centred in the narrative. Rather, in museums Whitney's new type of cotton gin superseded not only those before it but the man himself. Eli Whitney's absence felt particularly

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[129] Ibid., 186.
[130] Ibid., 71.
[131] Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, Translated by Florence Wischewetzky (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1845/1887), 1.
[132] Buchanan, "History and Heritage,"7.
[133] Ben Russell, "Preserving the Dust: The Role of Machines in Commemorating the Industrial Revolution," *History and Memory* 26, no. 2 (2014): 123–126.
[134] Neil Cossons, "Industrial Archaeology: The Challenge of the Evidence," *The Antiquaries Journal* 87 (2007): 20.

notable in New England, where he was born and studied.[135] In this case, questions of who was involved in EAC were largely buried beneath Whitney's cotton gin. This was not the case for the aforementioned cotton founding fathers, Samuel Slater and Richard Arkwright. Yet, unlike plantation owners or slave traders neither was directly critiqued for their involvement in EAC.

In New England Samuel Slater (1768-1835) was identified as the "Father of the American Industrial Revolution."[136] Consequently, both Slater Mill and Boott Cotton Mills housed portraits of Samuel Slater. In England, Sir Richard Arkwright (1732-1792) left considerable material evidence, and portraits of the man hung in both the Science and Industry Museum – as Arkwright established mills in Manchester later in life – and Cromford Mills, alongside portraits of the Strutt family. Arkwright built Cromford Mills, and the main attraction within the new Visitor Centre was a projected film titled, "The Arkwright Experience," in which Arkwright spoke almost entirely about himself. In the older exhibits he was also promoted as the "father of the factory system" who "created the blueprint for modern factory production" at Cromford.[137] This celebration is to be expected at a site which is owned by the Arkwright Society, that preserves his memory. Furthermore, it is part of the Derwent Valley World Heritage Site which celebrates that "the modern factory owes its origins to the mills at Cromford, where Richard Arkwright's inventions were first put into industrial-scale production."[138]

Arkwright's inventions are not, however, placed explicitly within a narrative of EAC, despite the growth in demand for cotton which followed. As Knick Harley writes, "although cotton textiles became the British factory industry par excellence in the nineteenth century, it was small until

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[135] Whitney was born in Massachusetts and studied at Yale. Lakwete, *Inventing the Cotton Gin,* 53.
[136] Display panel, "Slater Mill: The Birth of the Industrial Revolution," Blackstone Valley.
[137] Display panel, "The Father of the Factory System," Cromford Mills Story.
[138] UNESCO World Heritage List: Derwent Valley Mills, n.d. Accessed 4 May 2021. https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1030/

after Arkwright's innovations."[139] After James Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny in the mid-1760s, "he was quickly followed by Richard Arkwright who perfected roller spinning" and developed the Water Frame.[140] It was his Water Frame – which he patented in 1769 – that makes Arkwright arguably "the most famous entrepreneur of the Industrial Revolution."[141] After Arkwright's first mill at Cromford, the second, which opened in 1776, is described by Robert Allen as "the prototype for cotton mills throughout Britain and the world."[142] The older free visitor centre at Cromford noted that amongst the sites that "copied" his "methods and technology" was Slater Mill.[143]

The British inventions of the industrial revolution, including the steam engine, spinning jenny and water frame, have led scholars such as Allen to argue that "there was only one route to the twentieth century – and it traversed northern Britain."[144] However, this nationalistic narrative disconnects the machinery from cotton supply from the Americas, and the cotton gins that helped process it. Furthermore, Lakwete observes that "the mechanization of yarn spinning in Britain in the eighteenth century drove the expansion of cotton production and the invention of more efficient gins in the British North American colonies."[145] In this understanding, Arkwright's Water Frame, alongside other inventions, drove the need for cotton gin development that led to Whitney's new gin. Therefore, if the cotton gin is associated with slavery, so should be Arkwright's machinery and the man himself. Regardless of any personal attitudes, cotton industry sites need to further engage with how the advances in machinery demanded more raw cotton from slavery

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[139] Harley, "Slavery, the British Atlantic," in Leonard and Pretel, *The Caribbean,* 179.
[140] Allen, *The British Industrial Revolution,* 183–184.
[141] Ibid., 195–196.
[142] Ibid., 202.
[143] Display panel, "The Growth of an Empire," Cromford Mills Story.
[144] R. C. Allen, "Why the Industrial Revolution was British: Commerce, Induced Revolution, and the Scientific Revolution," *Economic History Review* 64, no. 2 (2011): 382.
[145] Lakwete, *Inventing the Cotton Gin,* 31.

plantations. Yet, at the sites the narratives of these men were preserved as 'great men' of the industrial revolution, rather than as figures who created a booming industry that relied on enslaved labour in the Americas.

## The wider industries of EAC

The implication of cotton magnates in EAC through their reliance on supply from plantations using enslaved labour alludes to expansive banal involvement in EAC. While often distanced from the human suffering of slaving ships and plantations, there were many more people and industries connected into this web. History has preserved few of their names, while many more remain nameless. This section explores further groups of connected people through wider banal industries of EAC, including shipbuilding, insurance and banking. Some of these were touched upon in interventions, but these wider connections were largely under-explored.

Within the *Sally* exhibit, at the JBH, it was acknowledged that "much of the wealth of the modern West flows, directly or indirectly, from the transatlantic slave trade."[146] However, the focus was on the one ship and the Brown family apart from the panel on "Outfitting a Slave Ship" which clarified that the voyage "engaged the energies of the entire community."[147] Connectedly, the nearby Center for Reconciliation supported their "Web of Profit" diagram with statements that: "nearly every family in colonial New England was involved in slavery in some way," and that "lumbermen, shipbuilders and associated tradesmen, coopers, carpenters, blacksmiths, distillers, merchants and farmers – all produced or sold goods that supplied the slave trade."[148]

[146] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Sally, JBH.
[147] Display panel, "Outfitting a Slave Ship," Sally, JBH.
[148] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.

Similarly, the locally focused museums in Lancaster and Bristol, in England, highlighted the involvement of local labourers. At Lancaster Maritime Museum, a panel titled "Slavery" stressed that "it was practically impossible to avoid goods which involved slavery."[149] Elsewhere, further text explained that "everyone in Lancaster benefited: the captain and his crew, retailers who sold provisions for the voyage and goods to be traded in Africa, shipbuilders, sailcloth makers, rope makers and especially the merchants."[150] At M Shed, in Bristol, the "Bristol and the transatlantic slave trade" exhibit was situated within a corner of the "People" gallery which was dedicated to the lives of local people. As Sue Giles, of Bristol Museums, stressed "everyone in the city almost, was somehow contributing to the trade, and the idea really was that we're trying to show Bristol's role, and not just blame Colston, who takes all the blame."[151] Reflecting this, a label for rum decanters explicitly stated that "imported slave-produced commodities created jobs. In Bristol, there were sugar refineries, snuff makers and tobacconists. Local potteries and glassworks supplied the fine houses of the city with elegant containers."[152] While these locally focused narratives provide a limited window into the expanse of EAC, they do provide detail on widespread local involvement.

Individualised narratives were more common, but these complexities also further reveal the banality of involvement in EAC. At Worcester Art Museum, two of the eleven new labels provided examples of expansive personal connections with EAC. One explained that Russell Sturgis (1750-1826) had a brother-in-law, James Perkins, who established a business in Santo Domingo "which traded in flour, horses and slaves."[153] Likewise, Rebecca Orne (1748-1818) was painted as a child and it was explained that her father was wealthy Salem merchant Timothy Orne (1717-1767)

[149] Text panel, "Slavery," LMM.
[150] Display panel, "Lancaster and the Slave Trade," Slave Trade, LMM.
[151] (Sue Giles, Senior Curator at Bristol Museums, Interview with author, 16 April 2018).
[152] Text label, "04 Rum decanters, about 1785-1810," Consumers, M Shed.
[153] Text label, "Russell Sturgis (1750-1826)," WAM.

"who owned more than fifty vessels that sailed to the West Indies and Europe, carrying fish, cloth, wine, rum, brandy, grains, molasses, and slaves."[154] These connections involved trade out of ports and it was not made clear how or if the trade in enslaved people was connected to the others activities, but rather it was presented as one of many diversified trades.

In her 2019 discussion of banal administration, Moody specifically examined Dyrham Park – which was renovated by William Blaythwayt (c.1649-1717) – as her main case study.[155] Blaythwayt worked as the Surveyor and Auditor General of Plantation Revenues, meaning "he was responsible for overseeing the financial contributions of British colonies including Virginia, Jamaica and Barbados" all of which were heavily reliant on enslaved African labourers. Despite this role, Moody concluded that "Blathwayt's colonial connections through his career have not yet been systematically integrated into the public history narratives of the property's interpretation."[156] This remained the case when I visited in 2019. Blathwayt's administrative role was, however, similar to under-explored EAC narratives at many other sites.

Kenwood House was home to Lord Mansfield and his great-niece Dido Elizabeth Belle (1761-1804), and they dominated the narrative. While Bressey wrote that "few of the disruptions it [the 2007 bicentenary] created had been incorporated into the overarching narrative of the estate," the house contained several spectral traces of slavery when I visited in 2019, including through Dido.[157] She featured in a portrait with her white cousin, and information explained that "it is a rare example of an 18th-century portrait of a black woman" and that "Dido's father was Mansfield's nephew, Sir John Lindsay. He met her mother Maria Bell, a slave, when sailing in the

[154] Text label, "Rebecca Orne (1748-1818)," WAM.
[155] Moody and Small, "Slavery and Public History," 56–62.
[156] Ibid., 57.
[157] Caroline Bressey, "Contesting the political legacy of slavery in England's country houses: a case study of Kenwood House and Osborne House," in Dresser and Hann, *Slavery and the British Country House,* 116.

West Indies. Their daughter was raised as part of the family at Kenwood."[158] The audio tour, which was accessible through a downloadable app, also had a feature on Dido's precarious situation as a mixed-race woman. There was no detail on Maria Bell or her relationship with Lindsay.

Beyond Dido, Kenwood House celebrated being home to Lord Mansfield who is famous for the 1772 Somerset case in which he ruled James Somerset could not be forcefully returned to enslavement in the colonies in "the opening act of the antislavery drama" in England.[159] Details of several of his rulings could be found in a "Lord Mansfield, Slavery and the Law" book, which was situated in the Library.[160] Following a timeline the book began by explaining that as Lord Chief Justice from 1756 to 1788, Mansfield presided over "many cases relating to commercial interests in the slave trade, and the legal status of slaves in England" when "Britain's slave trade was then at its height, with great wealth built upon the labour of enslaved Africans." The third paragraph claimed that "Lord Mansfield's personal conduct, including towards his great-niece Dido Belle, alongside his rulings, suggests that he was personally torn between revulsion against slavery, and a deep reluctance to set aside existing law." This thesis is not concerned with personal feeling but rather establishing the banality of EAC during Mansfield's life. The book also described two cases as "relating to commercial interests in the slave trade." These were the *Zong* (1783), which "led to a change in insurance policy," and *Jones v Schmoll* (1785), which was described as being "based purely on the insurance issues."[161] Both cases saw British backers of slaving voyages making financial claims following the deaths of enslaved Africans, and they illustrate how Mansfield's

[158] Text panel, "Dido Elizabeth Belle (c.1761-1804) and Lady Elizabeth Murrary (1760-1825)," Kenwood.
[159] David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1823* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999/1975), 280.
[160] Book, Kenwood.
[161] Ibid.

prestigious personal career relied on cases related to the banality of slavery, but these links were not deeply explored at the site.

The *Zong* case has received scholarly attention, which notes that Mansfield stated that slavery was "odious" and that the famous *Zong* case "shocks one very much."[162] However, the enslaved people discussed in the *Zong* case were treated as cargo throughout by Mansfield as he asserted "that insurance law defined slaves as commodities and not human beings."[163] Mansfield has been criticised for using dehumanising language, particularly for claiming that "it made no difference whether the cargo thrown overboard was a cargo of slaves or horses."[164] Furthermore, in his discussion of the capital accumulation and insurance industry that haunt the *Zong*, Ian Baucom wrote that the ledger books were haunted by "another wounded, suffering human body incessantly attended by an equal sign and a monetary equivalent."[165] This directly speaks to the earlier discussion of plantation accounts, which reveal the dehumanising and brutal capitalist logic of EAC, that was also prevalent in these cases. Arvind argues that Mansfield did not pursue murder charges for the *Zong*, or debate the humanity of the chattel cargo, because of pragmatism since "the slave trade could not have survived such a ruling" and "the consequences of a broader decision […] could have been very severe for the British economy."[166] Hasian similarly suggests

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[162] TT Arvind, "'Though it Shocks One Very Much': Formalism and Pragmatism in the *Zong* and *Bancoult*," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 31, no. 1 (2012): 116, 139, 143.
[163] Anita Rupprecht, "'A Limited Sort of Property': History, Memory and the Slave Ship *Zong*," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies* 29, no. 2 (2008): 274.
[164] Arvind, "'Though it Shocks,'" 116–119; Marouf Hasian Jr., "Domesticated Abolitionism, the 'Human Cargo' of the *Zong*, and the British Legal Usage of Dehumanizing Rhetoric, 1783–1807" *Western Journal of Communication* 76, no. 5 (2012): 514.
[165] Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005), 7.
[166] Arvind, "'Though it Shocks,'" 141.

that Mansfield realised that "many British merchants (and other subjects) would have suffered economic hardship if all these insurance disputes were transmuted into murder investigations."[167]

Arvind also goes further and argues that Mansfield was "a product of his times" in which lawyers "closely identified themselves with the emerging commercial sector, and defended it against those who sought to encroach on commercial liberty."[168] Here again, the idea of liberty appears but not the liberty of the enslaved. This 'great' man's career thrived on formalising "English commercial law."[169] Several of his cases were specifically maritime cases and contributed to the web of EAC. These legal rulings also interlace with insurance history and, as Taylor estimates, "in the 1790s, some 63 per cent of capital in the marine insurance industry was invested in West Indian trade."[170] At Kenwood House Mansfield's life was not used as an access point to these wider histories, and instead he was framed as an anti-slavery advocate with a biracial family member.

As well as the legal and insurance industries, enslavement was supported by financiers, investors and bankers. While Chapter 4 touched on the risks of slave trading, these financial histories were under-developed within the interventions, and will be returned to in Chapter 6. One man who financially supported EAC was Moses Brown of Rhode Island, who as with Lord Mansfield was a complex individual. Within the *Sally* exhibit at the JBH, it was noted that while John Brown continued slave trading his brother Moses "emerged as one of the new nation's most ardent abolitionists."[171] However, elsewhere in the house – where his portrait is displayed – it was noted that despite his abolitionism, Moses was the main financial backer of the Slater Cotton Mill,

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[167] Hasian, "Domesticated Abolitionism," 515.
[168] Arvind, "'Though it Shocks,'" 146.
[169] Ibid., 142.
[170] Taylor, *The Interest,* 305.
[171] Display panel, "The Brown Brothers Debate the Trade," Sally, JBH.

a detail which was also acknowledged at the mill.[172] As the seminal Brown report highlighted, "in effect, Moses Brown, in seeking to disentangle Rhode Islanders from one aspect of slavery, ensured their more thorough entanglement in another" as the mill relied on plantations for supply.[173] This seeming disconnect was not unique to Moses Brown, and that individuals could be both involved in EAC and be abolitionists highlights the historic complexity. At Belper North Mill in Derbyshire, it was explained that "although there is no doubt the Strutts bought cotton from plantations in the West Indies, in 1792 they supported a petition to parliament for the abolition of the slave trade."[174] Others, like Samuel Greg of Quarry Bank, "had no objection to owning people" on sugar plantations, or using raw cotton grown by other enslaved people.[175]

As with Moses Brown, movement from one aspect of EAC to another – particularly the cotton industry – also featured in other histories. Chapter 4 discussed the under-explored transnational links of Francis Cabot Lowell and Kirk Boott at Boott Cotton Mills in Lowell, Massachusetts. Exploring New England's links to EAC, Bailey in 1990 focused on both Slater Mill and Lowell because they were the sites created by "two specific entrepreneurial families considered critical to the development of textile manufacturing: the Brown family-Slater group of Rhode Island and Francis Cabot Lowell and the Boston Associates."[176] He argued that "the textile industry was financed by a relatively small group of wealthy merchants with capital derived especially from trade connected to the slave trade and slavery."[177] Bailey unearthed direct and indirect links with the slave(ry) trade from the families of several of the Boston Associates.[178] For

[172] Text in guide, "6 Slave Platter & Moses Brown Portrait," Written, JBH.
[173] Brown University, *Slavery and Justice,* 26.
[174] Display panel, "Growing Cotton," Belper.
[175] Display, "How did Samuel Greg profit from slavery?" Quarry Bank.
[176] Bailey, "The Slave(ry) Trade," 390.
[177] Ibid., 396.
[178] Ibid., 398.

example, Lowell traded in rum as a merchant, and in 1801 he purchased a rum distillery.[179] This was not discussed at the site. On the other hand, the Georgian House noted that "John Pinney's son Charles invested money in the Great Western Cotton Factory, which used cotton produced by enslaved labour on Southern plantations in America," but also that "John Pinney's granddaughter Anna Maria campaigned against slavery in the US."[180] Charles Pinney (1793-1867) was "a major recipient of compensation on St Kitts and Nevis, primarily as mortgagee," and that wealth supported his investment in the Great Western Cotton Company which opened in 1838.[181] These narratives of investment from slave traders and plantation owners in the EAC of the cotton industry require further development.

The Pinney's wealth was also not originally generated from plantation ownership alone. Rather the site interpretation explained that when he returned to England John Pinney set up Pinney & Tobin with a fellow sugar planter, James Tobin, and "they acted as agents for other plantation owners, sending out equipment and supplies and selling their own and others' sugar cargoes in England."[182] Building on this, the upstairs exhibit explained that "Pinney and Tobin opposed the abolition of the slave trade, arguing that it would harm the British economy in general and Bristol's in particular."[183] However, while acknowleding this wider involvement, the overarching focus at the Georgian House Museum was on Pinney's direct plantation ownership, rather than his connected business activities. As Forestier highlights, Tobin and Pinney used their contacts as former planters to develop their business as agents but this strategy also meant that

[179] Rosenberg, *The Life And Times,* 81–84.
[180] Display panel, "Moving and Selling," John Pinney, GHM.
[181] "Charles Pinney," Legacies of British Slave-Ownership Database, n.d. Accessed 16 March 2021. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/25863.
[182] Room card, "John Pinney," GHM.
[183] Display panel, "Moving and Selling," John Pinney, GHM.

they struggled to expand their business beyond Nevis.[184] As a result they ended up with a "snug little business and safe" rather than "an extensive one."[185] Morgan's table of "leading sugar importers at Bristol, 1728-1800" lists Tobin & Pinney as 36th between 1785 and 1798, and Tobin, Pinney & Tobin as 50th between 1796 and 1800.[186] This detail reveals many other local businesses that could be further explored at Bristol's heritage sites.

Financing plantation ownership was also underexplored at Harewood House where, like Pinney, the Lascelles were not just plantation owners. In fact, between 1759 and 1771, when the house was being built, "neither Edwin Lascelles nor his brother Daniel possessed a single slave or acre in the West Indies."[187] Instead, from the 1730s they provided loans to other planters and they were "one of the greatest financiers of the West-Indian plantocracy" before they became large-scale planters themselves.[188] These more complex connections highlight the web of funds and network of contacts that supported plantation ownership. Moving beyond the individualistic narrative, the Lascelles are also known to have been connected to the Vassalls of Boston, who were mentioned in King's Chapel.[189] Similarly, in Barbados in the 1700s, Henry Lascelles (1690-1753) and Robert Lowther (1681-1745) were acquainted and connected, however neither Harewood House nor Lowther Castle connect them.[190]

Looking beyond these individual roles, several of the museums also contained broader brief statements about the importance of finance. In New England, the Center for Reconciliation explained that banks and insurance companies were capitalized with profits from the slave

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[184] Albane Forestier, "Risk, kinship and personal relationships in late eighteenth-century West Indian trade: The commercial network of Tobin & Pinney," *Business History* 52, no. 6 (2010): 912–931.
[185] Ibid., 927. Quoting a letter to James Tobin from 1793.
[186] Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade,* 194–195.
[187] Smith, *Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism,* 177.
[188] Ibid., 182–183.
[189] Ibid., 11-42.
[190] Ibid., 59–69.

trade.[191] In England, the NMM noted more broadly that "merchants supplied most of the capital and credit that drove trade networks, linking producers with consumers on four continents."[192] The MOLD also acknowledged that London merchants "were helped by being part of a close commercial network that meant that banks, insurance companies, shipbuilders and brokers all participated in and benefited from the trade."[193] These statements reveal that EAC reached beyond a few elites and allude to the widespread banal involvement in this web of finance. Banks were also one of the four sections covered in the ISM's "Profits of slavery" screen along with historic houses, industry and charity. The banks identified were Thomas Leyland and Heywoods in Liverpool and the Bank of England.[194] Williams' 1944 work included the Heywoods and Leylands banks in Liverpool.[195] The screen also explained that the Bank of England "acted as bankers to many of the West Indian planters and merchants in the slave trade."[196] At Wilberforce House Museum visitors were told that "profits from the slave trade benefited institutions such as the Bank of England and the National Gallery."[197] As noted, I found EAC "un-visible" at the Bank of England museum in 2019.

The MOLD went beyond recognising individual historical beneficiaries to note that, "it was not only bankers, shippers and insurers who grew rich off the back of enslaved labour. Today we all benefit from the commercial and material success developed on that historical base."[198] This may be understood as supporting financial reparations but is not explicit as such. What this

[191] Display panel, "New England Slavery was Profitable," CFR.
[192] Text panel, "British Trade and Empire, 1688-1815," Atlantic, NMM.
[193] Display, "London the slave port," MOLD.
[194] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[195] Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 98–102.
[196] Interactive Screen, "Profits of Slavery," Enslavement, ISM.
[197] Display panel, "The Transatlantic Slave Trade," Slavery, WH.
[198] Text panel, "Legacies," MOLD.

statement does clearly do is encourage visitors to interrogate their own implication and connections. This idea is explored in the following sections.

## The question of guilt and implication

This section focuses particularly on the statement drawn out from the People's History Museum in Chapter 3: "We are all guilty." The full quotation linked an image of a kneeling enslaved man and cotton mill workers and read: "We are all guilty—we ought all to plead guilty, and not to exculpate ourselves by throwing the blame on others" **(Figure 5.8).**[199] Curiously the words "all," "plead" and "throwing" were largest in the display for reasons that were unclear. Focusing on the beginning of the statement, it is reasonable to assume that the statement that "we are all guilty" will frequently increase visitor resistance, and the following pages critique this claim.

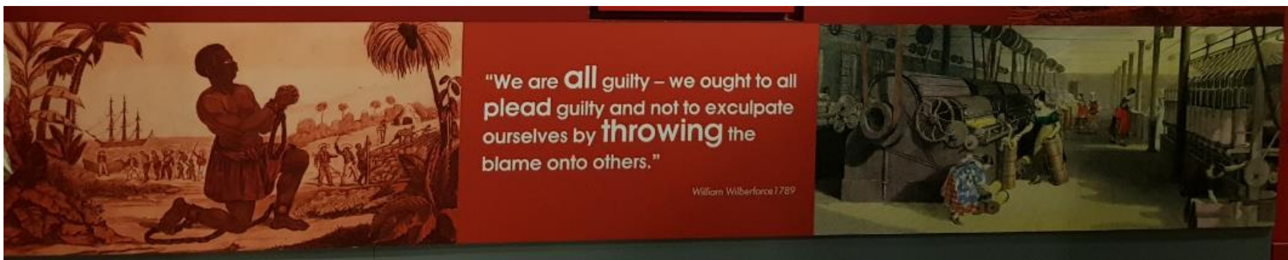


**Figure 5.8.** Close up of the base of the "Industrial Revolution" display at the People's History Museum. PTBA (April 2019).

The statement raises questions as to who the "we" that bear the guilt were, or are. Rothberg's *The Implicated Subject* (2019) argues that those who benefit from the "cultural capital of whiteness" are "collectively responsible for the legacies" of slavery "without being criminally guilty."[200] In that context visitors who benefit from "white privilege" bear some implication and

[199] Display, "Industrial Revolution," People's History.
[200] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*, 67–83.

responsibility for slavery. However, Rothberg does not discuss in depth the white contemporaries of the enslaved or whether he views mill workers as implicated. Yet he does define that "implicated subjects occupy positions aligned with power and privilege without being themselves direct agents of harm; they continue to inhabit, inherit, or benefit from regimes of domination but do not originate or control such regimes."[201] Therefore, he suggests that responsibility comes from power, and choice, and there is a fair argument that ordinary mill workers had very little choice in their involvement. Rather, in this understanding, the "we" referred to exists beyond the enslaved or mill workers pictured in the image above. Agnostic memory highlights the importance of the "historical context," and further examination of the quote suggests that the "we" were the elite.[202]

The quote was attributed to William Wilberforce in 1789, without further discussion of the context, within the display. Separate research – that most visitors will not undertake – reveals that the quote comes from a speech delivered by Wilberforce to the House of Commons, which was an extremely elite institution. Wilberforce stated that:

> I mean not to accuse anyone, but to take the shame upon myself, in common, indeed, with the whole parliament of Great Britain, for having suffered this horrid trade to be carried on under their authority. We are all guilty—we ought all to plead guilty, and not to exculpate ourselves by throwing the blame on others; and I therefore deprecate every kind of reflection against the various descriptions of people who are more immediately involved in this wretched business.[203]

[201] Ibid., 1.
[202] Anna Cento Bull and Hans Lauge Hansen, "On agonistic memory," *Memory Studies* 9, no. 4 (2015): 400.
[203] William Wilberforce (London, 1789). A transcript of the speech features in the Appendix of: Brycchan Carey, "William Wilberforce's Sentimental Rhetoric: Parliamentary Reportage and the Abolition Speech of 1789," *The Age of Johnson: A Scholarly Annual* 14 (2003): 298-303.

Wilberforce resists focusing on those "more immediately involved in this wretched business" – such as slave traders and plantation owners – and sees more widespread "guilt." The context reveals that Wilberforce was accusing all those in parliament, with the power and privilege to act against slavery, of being guilty. He did not place the "guilt" on cotton industry labourers, but without this wider context the interpretation in the space was ambiguous. This may, however, be intentional as a way of challenging visitors' complacency and disengagement. Building on these considerations – and bearing in mind the necessity of choice for implication and guilt in EAC – the following pages consider consumers of luxury goods, while the final section focuses on industrial labourers.

Chapter 4 explained that the web of EAC thrived because of demand for products cultivated by enslaved people. Cotton was an industrial product but most examples – such as sugar and tobacco – were luxury consumer goods. The large English museums often contained displays that engaged with consumerism, however consumer products – particularly sugar – were given more attention than the consumers themselves. The ISM had a display titled "Tropical Goods and the Rise of Consumer Society" that included sugar, coffee, tobacco, dyes, chocolate and mahogany, as well as domestic servants.[204] The NMM had a coffee shop display featuring sugar nippers, a tobacco pipe and a coffee pot in front of an image of a coffee shop.[205] M Shed also had a display entitled "Consumers" which featured snuff boxes and pipes, a rum decanter, teawares and sugar nippers.[206] Within that exhibit, the sugar loaf was not placed in the consumers display but rather in a display on "People profiting from slavery," where it was explained that sugar refiners worked in the city.[207]

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[204] Display, "Tropical Goods and the Rise of Consumer Society," Enslavement, ISM.
[205] Display, Coffee shop, Atlantic, NMM.
[206] Display, "Consumers," M Shed.
[207] Display, "People profiting from slavery," M Shed.

The MOLD's display on the "Wealth of Sugar" **(Figure 5.9)** also had an impressive collection of delicate tableware and accompanying objects such as sugar nippers. Within the display case the first label explained that "the wealth created by sugar led to the production of a rich range of tableware – much of which was associated with the consumption of sugar-related products."[208] More so than the historical sugar loaves and nippers, the teacups which continue to be familiar may more immediately be associated with consumer behaviour. The placement of tableware within these purpose-built museum galleries provided a context that could easily be understood by only reading the titles of the displays, and they succinctly visually connected enslavement and historical consumerism. Tableware could also be utilised as palimpsestic objects in historic houses, though it was rarely reinterpreted in situ. Lowther Castle contained a silver cup, and the accompanying label noted that, "Robert Lowther […] inherited significant holdings of sugar and slaves in Barbados."[209] However, Lowther had small museum exhibits rather than period rooms.

**Figure 5.9.** MOLD's display on the "Wealth of Sugar." PTBA (April 2019).

[208] Display, "Wealth of Sugar," MOLD.
[209] Text label, "8. Two-handled silver gilt cup," The Story of Lowther 1700-1802.

While historical consumerism was acknowledged at certain sites, fewer still made permanent links to contemporary consumerism or modern slavery, although the ISM has hosted exhibits on the subject. Chapter 1 outlined that understanding historical EAC may inform contemporary ESG issues and particularly modern slavery. At some sites there were appeals for visitors to consider this connection. At Stephen Hopkins House a card within the upstairs display explained that Hopkins' contemporaries were "dependent economically and socially" on enslaved labour and asked: "are the same issues relevant today?" Inside it questioned whether Hopkins thought about the source of his rum and continued that "While it is easy to pass judgment, we should consider how our choices might impact the independence of others." It continued to ask: "Do you know where your sneakers and jeans come from and who makes them? Is it possible to disconnect ourselves from a modern labor system that exploits the labor of others?"[210] This intervention connected EAC's history to contemporary consumers but did not explicitly reference modern slavery. It nevertheless challenged any "self-indulgent sense of superiority" over people of the past when we understand EAC to be a web similar to our supply chains today.[211]

At the John Brown House the exhibit also acknowledged that "confronting the *Sally* also compelled us to reflect anew on our own times" as "human trafficking continues to flourish all over the world." It continued to ask visitors "in what injustices are we complicit? What might future generations say about us?"[212] The exhibit did not differentiate between the legally sanctioned historical EAC and criminal contemporary slavery, but it alluded to the idea of complicit involvement, not just in enslavement but in other issues, such as global warming, which future generations may judge us for. While separate from the historic interpretation, displays on the

[210] Text panel, "Whether or not Hopkins' contemporaries owned slaves, they were dependent economically and socially on their labor. Are the same issues still relevant today?" Upstairs, SHH.
[211] Arnold-de Simine, *Mediating Memory*, 113.
[212] Display panel, "The Sally Ventures Into The Future," Sally, JBH.

contemporary textile industry at Boott Cotton Mills also told visitors that “some companies are beginning to provide information about work conditions, due to consumer demands. To learn more, ask store managers, consult company websites or annual reports, and contact labor organizations.”[213] This highlighted the importance of consumer power.

The power of consumers in ethical capitalism can be traced to abolition and remains a contemporary campaign strategy.[214] Within this history, Lawrence Glickman notes the transnational connection whereby “free produce” activists in the United States in the 1820s and 1830s adopted the strategies used in Britain in the 1790s, but my case studies did not explore this.[215] This thesis uses the sugar boycotts in particular as a way of illuminating who was involved in EAC and their collective power to influence EAC.

At the Georgian House Museum visitors were told that “in 1791, abolitionists called for a boycott of slave-produced sugar. They had some success but not in the Pinney house.”[216] A newspaper from 1791 with an anti-slavery message was displayed on the kitchen table however, potentially confusing visitors as to the Pinneys’ viewpoint. At the MOLD, within their displays on abolition, there was a collection of contemporary and historic sugar bowls. An accompanying label for an 1825 sugar bowl explained that it depicts an enslaved woman, reflecting “women’s growing involvement in the [abolition] campaign” while “on the reverse, a slogan urges people to boycott slave-produced sugar.”[217]

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[213] Panel, “Behind the Label,” *Beyond New England*, Boott.
[214] Bronwen Everill, *Not Made by Slaves: Ethical Capitalism in the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).
[215] Lawrence B. Glickman, “"Buy for the Sake of the Slave": Abolitionism and the Origins of American Consumer Activism,” *American Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2004): 889–912.
[216] Room card, “The Dessert Course,” GHM.
[217] Text label, “Sugar bowl, 1825,” MOLD.

Wilberforce House Museum had a full display on the Sugar Boycott which explained that "the public's refusal to buy sugar produced on plantations in the Caribbean was one of the first national boycotts in British history. People stopped buying slave produced sugar after the Government failed to pass the Abolition of the Slave Trade Bill in Parliament in 1791."[218] Smaller text explained that "it is estimated that between 300,000 and 400,000 people refused to buy sugar" despite Britain's "sweet tooth." It also made the connection that "similarly, some people today refuse to buy certain brands of food or clothes because they believe that the workers making them are exploited." This sat alongside a display on "Women and Anti-Slavery" which Cubitt notes, "juxtaposes the contribution of white female abolitionists like Hannah More and Elizabeth Heyrick with that of enslaved women themselves."[219]

Elizabeth Heyrick was "a wealthy Quaker activist and one of the founding members of the Anti-Slavery Society" who "publicly rejected gradualism, even as the Society officially embraced it."[220] Her campaign for abstention from West India Sugar is described, by Taylor, as "economic warfare" in which "by striking at the planters' domestic market, Heyrick and Britain's women were seeking to undermine one of the most common defences of slavery: that the slave system was essential to the prosperity of the British Empire."[221] In her 1824 pamphlet arguing for immediate emancipation Heyrick appealed to individual readers that "the perpetuation of slavery" was "a question in which we are all implicated." [222] Heyrick argued that "we are all guilty (with shame and

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[218] Display, "Sugar Boycott," Abolition, WH.
[219] Geoffrey Cubitt, "Lines of resistance: evoking and configuring the theme of resistance in museum displays in Britain around the bicentenary of 1807," *Museum & Society* 8, no. 3 (2010), 157.
[220] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 253. For further details see: Claire Midgley, "The Dissenting Voice of Elizabeth Heyrick: An Exploration of the Links Between Gender, Religious Dissent, and Anti-Slavery Radicalism," in *Women, Dissent, and Anti-Slavery in Britain and America, 1790–1865*, eds. Elizabeth J. Clapp and Julie Roy Jeffrey (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
[221] Taylor, *The Interest,* 122–123.
[222] Elizabeth Heyrick, *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition, Or, An Inquiry Into the Shortest, Safest, and Most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery* (London: Hatchard, 1824), 4.

compunction let us admit the opprobrious truth) of supporting and perpetuating slavery" as "we furnish the stimulant to all this injustice, rapacity, and cruelty, by purchasing its produce." She continued that "the whole nation must now divide itself into the *active supporters* and the *active opposers* of slavery." By the 1833 election, Taylor writes that even abolitionists marvelled at the "velocity with which anti-slavery principles spread through the nation" and calls Heyrick's impact "astounding."[223] Heyrick notably used the same phrase as Wilberforce some thirty years earlier, when she told consumers of sugar that "we are all guilty," thus highlighting the implication of consumers.

In 2012 Richard Huzzey wrote of the "moral geography of British Anti-Slavery responsibilities" and that while abolitionists boycotted Caribbean sugar, Britain's cotton industry was booming drawing on cotton from the USA. He argued that "their sense of moral responsibility, was attuned to the political geography of the British Empire, rather than simply the physical breadth of the Atlantic Ocean."[224] This illuminates that the Atlantic imperial view of Britain discussed in Chapter 4 has been present since the time of slavery and abolition, along with the separation of the sugar and cotton industries which this thesis challenges under the lens of EAC. When evoking guilt, Wilberforce and Heyrick were also not just focused on the British empire, but on people with power in parliament and consumers with the power of choice. Sugar was a luxury, though popular, commodity that people could boycott. On the other hand, the industrial cotton mills made the nation, and a few individuals, rich, but many of those who worked in them suffered to generate profits for others. Guilt is an unhelpful concept when considering the mill workers of England and New England, and such discussions will likely spark increased resistance in their descendants. The following section instead encourages multidirectional memory between those

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[223] Taylor, *The Interest,* 249, 104.
[224] Huzzey, 'The Moral Geography," 138–139.

workers and the enslaved. This approach moves the narrative beyond focusing on a few villainised men who were "guilty," to underscore the widespread nature of EAC.

## Multidirectional memory with cotton mill workers

Chapter 4 outlined that the commodities of EAC are central to the heritage narratives, but they displace the nameless people who manufactured and consumed them. Amongst those involved in EAC were the cotton mill workers of England and New England, who had also historically been buried beneath the narratives of the men who profited from their hard labour. This section encourages multidirectional memory between these workers and the enslaved labourers, and the descendants of both. This connection moves beyond the narrative of a few evil villains and highlights the complex interconnected nature of EAC. Michael Rothberg coined "multidirectional memory" in his work on Holocaust memory and postcolonial studies, and presents it as "an ethical vision based on commitment to uncovering historical relatedness" through the "cross-referencing, and borrowing" of the memories of others.[225] Stef Craps has similarly written of "cross-traumatic affiliation" between different groups.[226] My argument is not that the experiences of enslavement and nineteenth-century working-class conditions were the same but that they were interwoven. Multidirectional juxtapositions may also encourage the development of a "prosthetic memory" – to use Landsberg's term – of slavery for white visitors, by

[225] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* 29, 3.
[226] Stef Craps, *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bonds* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 72–88.

connecting slavery to the history they more naturally identify as their own.[227] Such juxtapositions also reflect the interconnected nature of EAC historically.

Cromford Mills and the People's History Museum, in Manchester, contained installations which can be read as promoting multidirectional memory. While I did not see such displays in New England, similar transracial connections could be made. Chapter 3 introduced the black and white mural that was installed at Cromford Mills, through the Global Cotton Connections project.[228] The exhibit connected enslaved labourers and south Asian weavers while the mural also directly entwined them with English mill workers. The workers' placement, behind a glass wall of the 'great men' of the Derwent Valley meant that they provided a palimpsestic layer, but the men remained foregrounded. At the People's History Museum, India was not mentioned. However, the "Industrial Revolution" display featured slavery and British mill workers alongside each other, with images visually linking them at the bottom of the display with the statement that "We Are All Guilty" **(Figure 5.8)**.[229] At the People's History Museum the workers, rather than machinery, were the focus, reflecting that the site is concerned with people's history. While text explained that Manchester "grew rich on cotton plantations in the Americas" it was the placement of the information amongst displays on working-class conditions and Peterloo that situates enslavement within a multidirectional narrative.

The People's History Museum offered socialist narratives more broadly, with the Main Gallery One beginning with a section on "Revolution," which explicitly highlighted the "abuse of power" by a corrupt "few rich men." Within this frame, the visual juxtaposition of white workers and enslaved Africans can be interpreted as promoting transnational socialism, or proletarian

[227] Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
[228] Mural, "Global Cotton Workers," GCC, Cromford.
[229] Display, "Industrial Revolution," People's History.

internationalism. The concept of solidarity between different oppressed labourers, around the globe, has been familiar since the development of Marxism in the nineteenth century, and continues to the present day.[230] These acknowledgements of interconnection reveal "related exploitations" that have been obscured by the "myth of white solidarity," as Cedric Robinson writes in *Black Marxism.*[231]

Scholars and practitioners within slavery memory studies have also recognised the potential of drawing out these interconnections. In 2002, sixteen years before this research began, Lubaina Himid offered a temporary installation – titled *Cotton.com* – that connected the workers of Manchester and enslaved labourers. Himid explained that "it's not about competing to say who had it worse, the working class British or the slaves. No, all of us are part of the same rip-off/forms of exploitation."[232] Similarly, Morris argues that multidirectional memory allows for an exploration of an "Atlantic working class" rather than "playing commoners off against the enslaved."[233]

However, Rothberg himself recognises the challenges in establishing multidirectional memory. While he challenges the traditional idea of "collective memory as *competitive* memory - as a zero-sum struggle over scarce resources," he acknowledges that "memory competition does exist and sometimes overrides other possibilities for thinking about the relation between different histories."[234] Reflecting the increased historical interest in subaltern lives, recent work on the lived experience of the industrial revolution highlights that people – including children – worked long

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[230] David Roediger, "Making Solidarity Uneasy: Cautions on a Keyword from Black Lives Matter to the Past," *American Quarterly* 68, no. 2 (2016): 223–248.
[231] Cedric J. Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 80.
[232] Rice, *Creating Memorials,* 89.
[233] Michael Morris, "Multidirectional Memory, Many-Headed Hydras and Glasgow," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 199.
[234] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 3–10.

hours doing work that was often dangerous.[235] This interest produced more acknowledgement of these narratives within the heritage sector, including in historic houses that have opened below stairs areas. However, the previous neglect of these narratives will likely contribute to feelings of memory competition, or a "suffering competition," as is it sometimes phrased.

Furthermore, contestations and divisions have been presented between the English working classes and enslaved labourers since before abolition. Donington et al. note that the rejection of implication by "'ordinary'" white people falls back on "hierarchies of suffering rooted in eighteenth-century pro-slavery discourse."[236] Scanlan refers to campaigns for "people who reformers were beginning to call 'factory slaves'" and that "for generations, slaveholders had made comparisons in bad faith between enslaved people and poor Britons."[237] Taylor similarly notes that the radicals attacked abolitionists for focusing on enslaved Africans rather than factory children.[238] Notably 1833 saw both the Slavery Abolition Act and Factories Act passed in a period of great reform. The legacy of "zero-sum struggle over scarce" political attention – to rephrase Rothberg's work – however continues to haunt the representations of this history.

Multidirectional memory "acknowledges how remembrance both cuts across and binds together diverse spatial, temporal, and cultural sites."[239] As well as encouraging national multidirectional interconnection, it also facilitates discussion of historical global links that reveal this transnational viewpoint is not a contemporary projection. Most notably, the English city of Manchester had a statue of Abraham Lincoln, which was being moved when I visited in 2019. As

[235] Emma Griffin, *Liberty's Dawn: A People's History of the Industrial Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013); Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[236] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 1.
[237] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 250.
[238] Taylor, *The Interest,* 244.
[239] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* 11.

Rice explains, the statue represents a moment in the 1860s when "working-class whites in Manchester dramatically juxtaposed their exploitation against that of those black slaves who had produced the cotton bales they worked on, not in a competition to see who was most heinously exploited but in a transatlantic gesture of solidarity."[240] It should be recognised that the American Civil War received various responses in England, and not all in the cotton town of Manchester supported the Union.[241] Yet as Scanlan notes, "the cotton famine [created by the Civil War] brought home how closely Britain and the United States were connected. For many factory workers, it also illustrated the way plantations and factories – the slave empire and liberalism's 'free labour' – entwined around each other."[242] Furthermore, it is true that thousands of working-class Mancunians supported Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in their "Address to Lincoln" and that he replied praising their "sublime Christian heroism."[243] His response was engraved on the statue and connects the working-class mill workers with the enslaved. Unfortunately, the museums visited did not engage with this transnational and transracial moment of interconnection.

While Cromford Mills and the People's History Museum have begun to engage with multidirectional memory, these juxtapositions should be replicated elsewhere. Rather than focusing on narratives of wealth individual men, who may seem isolated and irrelevant, the story of cotton mill workers highlights how implication in EAC was widespread. While many workers lacked the choices of more powerful figures, their solidarity in the American Civil War offers an

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[240] Alan Rice, "THE COTTON THAT CONNECTS, THE CLOTH THAT BINDS: Manchester's Civil War, Abe's statue, and Lubaina Himid's transnational polemic," *Atlantic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2007): 300.
[241] R. J. M. Blackett, *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001); Duncan Campbell, *English Public Opinion and the American Civil War* (Rochester: The Boydell Press, 2003).
[242] Scanlan, *Slave Empire,* 369.
[243] Rice, "THE COTTON," 298.

insight into a transnational consciousness that is rarely explored under the DOLHN, which ends involvement in EAC with abolition.

## Conclusion

This chapter has substantiated the claim that EAC is "everyone's history" by revealing how EAC's web of activity involved many different people in numerous ways.[244] It began by acknowledging the contribution of enslaved people both further afield and in New England and England. While local enslavement receives more acknowledgement in New England – and this was a key transnational difference – this was rarely situated within the wider web of EAC. The centre of the chapter focused on banal white involvement from plantation owners and slave traders to cotton mill owners and bankers. These connections reveal how EAC was an accepted and legal series of trades. The final sections explored concepts of guilt, implication and multidirectional memory with particular reference to sugar consumers and cotton mill workers.

The breadth of different people's involvement in EAC became visible when viewing the sites collectively. However, several of the discussed narratives were under-developed within the interventions. The more common focus was on individual wealthy men who could be villainised and separated from the wider DOLHN. However, the more accurate vast web of involvement substantiates the claim that EAC is a relevant chapter of England and New England's heritage narrative and explains how this complex history left so many spectral traces behind. It may not have involved everyone everywhere, but it involved someone in most places and in the slaving ports it involved nearly everyone. Chapter 6 builds on the previous analysis to offer reflections and

[244] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 2.

recommendations on ways in which these complexities could be further developed to better "animate" EAC.[245]

[245] Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 116.

# Chapter 6: Conclusions, reflections and recommendations

## Introduction

This final chapter draws together the main thesis conclusions from earlier chapters, while offering scholarly reflections and recommendations for the heritage sector. The core research question of this thesis asked: in 2018–2019 did the interpreted tangible heritage of England or New England acknowledge that enslavement-associated commerce impacted these regions significantly and is therefore a relevant part of the dominant heritage narrative? To answer this question, this thesis has examined the locations and details of existing physical heritage interventions, visited between April 2018 and October 2019. I conclude that while partial "un-visibility" remains the norm, the multiple heritage interventions, when considered collectively in this thesis, reveal the impact of enslavement-associated commerce (EAC) and consequently its importance. However, the heritage sites exist largely in isolation from one another, or in small geographic groupings in towns such as Providence, Rhode Island. The limitations in content mean that individually many of the sites fail to highlight the full scope, impact and relevance of EAC.

Chapter 1 introduced the origins and key concepts of this project, while Chapter 2 presented my methodology and case studies. I visited over fifty sites, but having found some continuing "un-visibility," the close analysis in Chapters 3 to 5 centred on 48 transnational interventions which acknowledged EAC. While the primary case studies occasionally overlapped with previous academic analysis by scholars such as Alan Rice, Ana Lucia Araujo and Jessica Moody, my visits to, and photographs of, the interventions facilitated a unique breadth of coverage of the history of EAC which is visible to visitors at heritage sites in England and New England.

This chapter concurrently offers conclusions on the academic contributions, of this thesis, and recommendations to the heritage sector, as the academic research is inherently enmeshed with its potential practical application. The following section highlights key sites, terms and context. It stresses that the heritage interventions in this thesis should be viewed as forerunners in challenging the "un-visibility" of EAC, beneath the DOLHN. Further sections pull key conclusions from the chapters by highlighting the power of placement at heritage sites, the need to view EAC in a transnational context and the importance of banality of involvement. The latter half of the chapter then encourages the heritage sector to better utilise contemporary visual culture and to explore further stories of finance. The chapter closes with reflections on the interventions, and what may follow, after the events of 2020.

## Key sites, terms and context

Despite my comprehensive critique, the 48 case study interventions, in this thesis, must be considered as forerunners for heritage sites considering adding or developing interpretation around transatlantic slavery in England or New England. This chapter highlights specific reflections and recommendations drawn from analysis of these sites. While details are explored further below, particularly illuminating installations for EAC included: the Center for Reconciliation panels in Providence, RI, the *Captured Africans* memorial in Lancaster, the work by the Slave Trade Legacies group at Newstead Abbey and Cromford Mills and the large galleries at the ISM, NMM and MOLD, where large purpose-built museums offered more expansive narratives.

This thesis has utilised two new key terms: enslavement-associated commerce (EAC) and the defenders of liberty heritage narrative (DOLHN). Details of transatlantic slavery, and the economics around enslavement, have been researched by historians for almost a century and a

wealth of literature has been produced. From this body of scholarship, I chose EAC as a term to centre enslaved labour within my focus on the economic connections. Scholars have recognised however that this history has been "un-visibilised" – as I choose to phrase it – through a process of "un-remembering."[1] In recent decades work, such as that of the LBS database project, has unearthed histories and sites of memory, and this thesis is situated within that "collaborative effort."[2]

Through close analysis of the 48 sites, and reference to various historians' work, I have pieced together many fragments of the "jigsaw puzzle" of EAC, yet this thesis does not claim to present a comprehensive picture of all possible stories of EAC.[3] Rather, the research reveals examples of the "Real," as Julia Rose calls it, or the "empirical evidence."[4] Moving forward, staff and volunteers will have knowledge of their own histories and collections, within which further fragments of EAC may be unearthed. As a general principle, all sites focused on histories from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries should be curious as to whether they have a narrative to explore about EAC. From there, sites should consider why they want to include EAC, and the ethics of their reasoning. Research will identify nuanced stories to access the wider complex narrative of EAC. The final stage is to invest reasonably in installations which draw on the research in engaging ways which enable people to comprehend these histories.

However, the transnational comparison between England and New England allowed me to identify that both regions had "un-visibilised" EAC beneath their own, very similar, DOLHN. This rests on a celebration of abolition and the perception that slavery happened at a distance and did not impact the regions. Highlighting continued EAC activity after emancipation, particularly within

[1] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 10.
[2] Hall, "Gendering Property," 24–25.
[3] Smith, "A jigsaw puzzle," 245–264.
[4] Rose, *Interpreting Difficult History,* 108–116.

the cotton industry, disrupts the DOLHN. This thesis also presents evidence that EAC had widespread impacts, despite England and New England's geographic distance from enslavement. This thesis challenges A.V. Seaton's argument that the two regions have only "scant traces" of slavery (interpreted and "un-visible") and connectedly offers ways to "animate" the economic history of EAC which reveals the impact and traces.[5] My research found that by altering the lens of vision from sites of enslavement to sites of enslavement-associated commerce, a multitude of sites become visible. The 48 interventions analysed, which provide some EAC interpretation, constitute just a portion of the total sites with traces of EAC. However, the lack of interpretation elsewhere leaves these traces largely "un-visible." Nevertheless, the widespread spectral traces allude to the impact of EAC, highlighting its relevance to the history and heritage of England or New England. Throughout, this thesis demonstrates the palimpsestic nature of sites and objects that contain those spectral traces of EAC, and therefore argues that the heritage sector's traditional reliance on tangible objects does not leave it incapable of telling this story, as interpretation can be adapted.

Nevertheless, Douglas Hamilton notes that "it is almost inevitable that representing slavery in a museum [or any heritage site] will annoy someone."[6] As heritage sites rely on both funding and visitors, they may wish to avoid such irritation. However, following 2020 sites may now believe they cannot neglect slavery and avoid such annoyance. This thesis argues that resistance occurs because the details of EAC clash with the DOLHN, which historically "un-visibilised" the importance of slavery. Against this context, limited interventions – such as a plaque noting one plantation owner, or a small triangular trade display focused on slave traders in ports – conceal

[5] Seaton, "Sources of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 116–117.
[6] Hamilton, "Representing Slavery in British Museums," in Kaplan and Oldfield, *Imagining Transatlantic Slavery,* 134.

the expansive banality of EAC. Consequently, such limited interventions do little to challenge visitor apathy and the perceived irrelevance of transatlantic slavery. On the other hand, comprehensive and complex narratives of EAC better reveal the importance of enslaved labour to modern capitalism. This framing substantiates and justifies the existence of such interventions to visitors who can be expected to experience passing resistance due to cognitive dissonance. Resistance is returned to in the closing reflections of this chapter, after highlighting key conclusions from the preceding chapters.

The following sections draw out key arguments from Chapters 3, 4 and 5, with embedded evaluation of specific interventions. These form three core conclusions: firstly, that placement is an extremely powerful factor in any intervention, secondly, that to understand EAC's importance it must be understood through a transnational lens, and thirdly, that the banality of involvement in EAC should be made visible. These conclusions are also presented as future recommendations for the heritage sector.

## The power of placement

Chapter 3 revealed that first and foremost, where to place an intervention is the most important decision, as if any intervention remains "un-visible" and hidden, it will have no impact whatsoever. Placement also contains meaning that contributes to, or deflect from, the received narrative of EAC. On a regional scale, problematic "maritimisation" persists in New England and with the larger purpose-built museums in England.[7] However, Worcester Art Museum, inland

[7] Beech, "The Marketing of Slavery," in Dann and Seaton, *Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism,* 103.

cotton mills and English country houses disrupt this limited spatial narrative by animating spectral traces of EAC within the existing palimpsestic landscape.

Placing an intervention in an English country house can disrupt dominant mythologies. However, scholars recognise that this type of site sees increased visitor resistance and I found these houses were problematic palimpsests with complex, many-layered histories in which EAC remained barely visible. Installations in optional separate rooms or at the end of visit routes – as at Harewood House, Newstead Abbey or the Georgian House Museum – can easily be missed and their placement can be interpreted as consciously hiding away and downplaying this history. Curators and creators of interventions must ask how much space they believe EAC deserves and consider the quality of that space in terms of placement. Concurrently, the temporal permanence of interventions requires consideration. As well as carefully selecting the quality of the space utilised, site planners should consider how much time they believe EAC deserves, and whether a temporary display is acceptable. While temporary interventions can alter which spectral traces are visible, methodologically this thesis chose to focus on permanent interventions in 2018–2019 and did not focus on temporary displays or artwork. This reflects a belief that EAC deserves a permanent place within the heritage narratives of England and New England.

The Codrington library and Harvard Law plaques were difficult to locate but situated within sites of power, at elite university campuses, thus challenging reverence for the sites. Public sculptures particularly interact with their surroundings, and the placement of the *Gilt of Cain* in the City of London, a long-term centre of global finance, is very powerful and helps to avoid relegating slavery to the urban docklands. When picking a location, it must be considered whether the symbolic placement outplays the practical risk of being so overshadowed that an intervention is missed in its surroundings. The *Gilt of Cain* disrupted the space people walk through to demand

attention by rising up into its grand surroundings rather than being buried by them. It was however ambiguous in its meaning. With public memorials, the striking nature and explicit messaging of a sculpture should combine with public consciousness of the histories they commemorate, to avoid becoming “white noise in stone.”[8] This public consciousness may develop from events, media attention and education or, as discussed in this thesis, by grouping sites together so that EAC is repeatedly encountered.

Within sites, it is also known that museum visitors “graze” and therefore engaging them is vital. The boards at King’s Chapel and the “Wealth of Sugar” display at the MOLD were well placed so that visitors were likely to notice them, if not study them. On the other hand, books on walls, especially in side rooms – such as those at the John Brown House and the Georgian House Museum – should be avoided, as should small text labels. Instead, more visually and emotionally engaging interventions should be created. At sites where slavery may not be expected, large images were used to visually embed enslavement in the narrative, as seen at both Boott Cotton Mills and Quarry Bank Mill. Large eye-catching visual diagrams were used particularly effectively at Cromford Mills, but the recurring triangular trade diagrams were identified as problematic, as discussed in depth in Chapter 4. The Center for Reconciliation’s “Web of Profit” diagram was very interesting in terms of content but should be expanded to become more eye-catching, and potentially interactive, for visitors. Worcester Art Museum’s use of colour coding, to connect their new labels and demonstrate that several portraits had connections to enslavement, was also very effective and should be replicated.

[8] Winter, “Sites of Memory,” in Erll and Nünning, *Cultural Memory Studies,* 73.

## Viewing EAC in a transnational context

This project began from a belief in the importance of a transnational approach for understanding transatlantic slavery. It offers an in-depth transnational comparison of a unique data set of 48 transatlantic sites of EAC intervention in England and New England. I have identified various similarities, including the DOLHN, as well as differences including the use of purpose-built museum galleries in England and focus on local enslavement in New England. The omission of a purpose-built slavery museum in New England reflects and perpetuates the “un-visibility” of EAC there. Given the content of the exhibition at the Center for Reconciliation, there is no doubt that with funding they could further explore the complexities of EAC and how New England profited from it. Nevertheless, this absence during my research contributed to a weighting towards greater use of English case studies. This tendency was reinforced by the research being undertaken by a British researcher, immersed in British national mythologies and based in England, where physical research trips could be dispersed. Nevertheless, I believe this thesis does present a unique detailed transnational comparison and that the reflections will be of use to sites in England or New England, or other predominantly white regions where slavery is imagined as having little impact. Furthermore, undertaking the research reinforced the argument that the importance of EAC can only be fully understood when viewed in a transnational context, however this was rarely done at the sites investigated.

Wider transnational interconnections were explored in Chapter 4, which focused on the scope of narratives around what EAC was. It noted that smaller or briefer interventions, such as cityscape signs, did not offer expansive explanations and relied on observer’s prior knowledge. In contrast, Lancaster’s *Captured Africans* memorial was used as an example that offers a visually explicit and concise summary of EAC, while the Center for Reconciliation panels and large English

museum galleries gave space to explaining the web of profit of EAC. One of the key recommendations from Chapter 4 was that simple triangular trade diagrams should be superseded by more complex representations. These triangular diagrams are enmeshed with the narrow focus on ports, discussed in Chapter 3, and the focus on slave traders and plantation owners, discussed in Chapter 5. Together, they offer only a limited narrative of EAC. In contrast, the galleries at the NMM offered examples of diagrams showing complex Atlantic trade and global trade with Asia.

The analysis found that interventions focused on regional or national fragments of the EAC narrative, rather than transnational stories. At the individual interventions in England, I overwhelmingly found an Atlantic Imperial lens which centred on sugar while in New England there was an American national lens that imagined slavery as "America's peculiar institution" and focused on rum and cotton. Since the imperial lens can be viewed as a geographic extension of the national in Britain, my research supports Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge's belief that the national "scale of heritage" dominates, while local stories were also important.[9] The commodities centred in the interventions were intertwined with the dominance of the national scale. It is only when pieced together, within this thesis, that the fragments presented form the wider picture of EAC. I argue that the sites themselves should establish more transnational links and that the nuanced fragments at specific sites should be situated within an interconnected story.

Looking beyond sugar and cotton, sites in both regions should pay more attention to mahogany which has left permanent spectral traces built into the furniture and fastenings of many buildings, including historic houses. In England more attention also needs to be paid to crops beyond sugar, including the industrial product cotton that pushes beyond the temporal demarcation of English and New England abolition. At present, cotton is only discussed in depth in

[9] Graham et al., *A Geography of Heritage,* 183–184.

England at cotton mills, and the potential global narrative was best acknowledged at Cromford Mills, which discussed global cotton supply and Asian weavers. Furthermore, despite the similarities drawn out in this thesis, comparisons between England and New England were rarely made at the sites themselves. The brief transnational acknowledgement I did observe, between sites in the regions, was that New England's cotton industry had its roots in England's Derwent Valley. The lack of transnational interconnection demonstrates that both sets of interventions offered limited narratives with EAC remaining partially "un-visible" because sites only explored fragments of these networks.

Moving forward, I am aware of the proposed future work of the Global Curatorial Project – including Brown University, the ISM and The Legacies of British Slave Ownership Project at UCL – which may challenge this lack of transnational engagement.[10] Following this practice of international co-operation, I would suggest that sites should establish transnational networks. This is because EAC is most often fitted into existing narratives and mythologies that differ greatly between types of locations, such as historic houses and cotton mills. At the latter, on both sites of the Atlantic, the cotton gin bears the burden of slavery in the tradition of industrial archaeology, and Boott Cotton Mill could work with Quarry Bank or Cromford Mills to discuss how to advance the narrative of EAC. Similarly, while every site has unique nuances there were more similarities between specific site types across the two regions (such as the John Brown House in Providence and the Georgian House in Bristol) than with other types of sites within the respective region. The national lens stifles the realisation of transnational similarities and potential co-operation. I would encourage transnational networking between sites that are navigating the DOLHN, especially as building these transnational interconnections would echo the web of activity underpinning EAC.

[10] Details of this project are available online (https://cssj.brown.edu/work-center/public-humanities-projects/global-curatorial-project).

## Promoting understanding of banal involvement

Chapter 5 highlights the breadth and banality of involvement in EAC, and substantiates the claim that EAC is "everyone's history," and should not be seen as a peculiar and irrelevant chapter in England or New England's history.[11] I used the term "banality," following Alan Rice and Jessica Moody, to highlight that EAC was commonplace and ordinary for centuries. At the centre of EAC are the enslaved men, women and children, and many sites did acknowledge their presence briefly, without discussing wider global networks of involvement. Yet details of their lives were either omitted from the sites of EAC intervention or explored in separate displays, as at the large English museums. Beyond the millions enslaved on plantations, sites in New England often focused on locally enslaved people, while only the Georgian House Museum in Bristol, England, explored this history. These personal stories should be used as an access point to understand the wider networks of EAC, rather than being the sole acknowledgment or overwhelming focus, and the economic contributions of the locally enslaved should be better noted to embed their enslavement in the wider history.

Objects of particular interest to this thesis were the account books for plantations, which note the economic contribution of the enslaved and contain spectral traces of the banal administration of plantations. These books are emotionally difficult to view because they present plantations as economically valuable factories with carefully monitored accounts that list enslaved people as property, but this cruel banality is vital to understanding this history. They have great palimpsestic potential for telling EAC's history but should not be used as central objects in displays that do not challenge the dehumanising enslaver view recorded in the books, such as at Lowther Castle and Quarry Bank Mill.

[11] Donington et al., "Introduction," in Donington et al., *Britain's History and Memory,* 2.

On both sides of the Atlantic I found that the enslavers – wealthy white men who owned plantations or slave voyages – overwhelmingly dominated the narratives. These stories particularly dominated cityscape interventions and historic house narratives. These enslavers often had wider connections to supporting industries within EAC, but these connections were under-acknowledged at the sites that focused on direct involvement in enslavement. Amongst these industries were rope making and rum distilling, which were acknowledged in particular at Bristol's M Shed and Lancaster Maritime Museum, with their local narrative focus. The cotton industry however was only largely discussed at cotton mills, reflecting the misleading division between the histories of the sugar plantation economy and the later cotton industry.

Chapter 5 also built on the work of Michael Rothberg to encourage wider consideration of "implicated subjects" and to promote "multidirectional memory" between the enslaved and white mill workers who both suffered for the profits of others.[12] This model was adopted at Cromford Mills and the People's History Museum and could help to navigate visitor resistance by revealing interconnections. Additionally, histories of consumers, and the sugar boycott highlight how the history of EAC can enable discussion of contemporary consumer power. The nature of individuals' implication varied greatly but EAC did not just include the enslaved and their enslavers, and abolitionists and binary opponents; rather, many more administrators, financiers, manufacturers and consumers were involved. However, these narratives were largely under-developed at the sites of intervention and very few contemporary links were made.

The following sections offer broader reflections and recommendations that emerged from my research. The first is that contemporary visual culture should be better utilised to tell EAC narratives, rather than relying on text. The following section then highlights further narratives of

[12] Rothberg, *The Implicated Subject*; Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory.*

finance worth exploration, as investment and profit were central to EAC. The thesis then closes with reflections in the wake of events in 2020.

## Using visual culture

Araujo argues that "visual arts carry on as one of the most complex and probably the most comprehensive instrument to engage with the various dimensions of the slave past," and that "art offers a rich, complex, and nuanced alternative to the typical ways of memorializing slavery."[13] However, this research found that artistic responses were underused in EAC interventions. This section recaps uses of contemporary art encountered during my research, online and through reading, while arguing for the use of permanent artistic interventions when animating EAC.

Chapter 3 noted examples of permanent artistic interventions, including public memorials, that animate aspects of EAC. One example was Kimathi Donkor's *UK Diaspora*, at the ISM, which included reworked portraits of Queen Elizabeth I and her sailors Hawkins and Drake, as well as the aforementioned image of Queen Elizabeth II.[14] While galleries would not allow defacing of the original artwork, images such as portraits of Elizabeth I are so familiar that they can be recontextualised through reproductions. Such art can be powerfully affective as well as more eye-catching than a small label. When I visited the ISM in 2018 both Richard Benjamin, Head of the ISM, and Jean-Francois Manicom, Acting Curator, stressed their belief in the importance of

[13] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 159–179.
[14] Bernier, "Tracing Transatlantic Slavery," 118.

working with contemporary artists, and the site keeps art on display for many years within the Legacy gallery.[15]

Importantly, contemporary art can disrupt the problematic historical power relations and assumptions engrained in historical objects, such as plantation account books. This was highlighted in the contemporary mural at Cromford Mills that centred and connected various cotton workers. However, the placement of the workers behind the 'great men' factory owners of the Derwent Valley, suggested the latter's continuing dominance in the heritage narrative. In another example of utilised art, Tony Forbes' 1999 painting *Sold Down the River* was displayed on the exterior of M Shed's slavery exhibit. Accompanying text described it as "self-portrait" showing a Black man chained by the Colston statue, which stands on skulls.[16] This artwork provided a commentary on Colston's commemorative legacy and slavery's racial legacy but was situated physically outside the main historical display. How, or if, it interacts in future with the toppled statue in possession of Bristol Museums remains to be seen.

Artistic interventions can also be more engaging emotionally, and films or music offer a multi-sensory experience, which contemporary heritage sites increasingly look to offer.[17] During my research I encountered some artistic interventions that used sound, alongside visual imagery, to animate this past. Araujo notes that as well as art and sculpture the ISM has a short artistic video installed: *Whip it Good* (2014).[18] The recurring sound in the film is of a whip cracking which speaks to the brutality of slavery. Likewise in New England, Keith Stokes shared a film of images

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[15] (Richard Benjamin, Head of International Slavery Museum, Interview with author, 3 April 2018); (Jean-Francois Manicom, Acting Curator of the International Slavery Museum, Museum Tour, 3 April 2018).
[16] Tony Forbes, Sold Down the River (1999) and accompanying artists statement, exterior of exhibit, "Bristol and the Transatlantic Slave Trade," M Shed.
[17] Nina Levent and Alvaro Pascual-Leone, eds. *The Multisensory Museum: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Touch, Sound, Smell, Memory, and Space* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).
[18] Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory,* 176. The film is also available online (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6oeYO87vtU).

from God's Little Acre burial ground in Newport with a music soundtrack that was intensely powerful in remembering the lives, and deaths, of enslaved children in particular. These films are examples of how contemporary visual culture is more commonly utilised to commemorate the enslaved experience and to animate descendants' emotions, as artistic interventions are used as empathic responses to trauma.[19]

Leanne Munroe considers sites such as the ISM and M Shed as "memorial museums" which are "associated with a 'trauma' and are dedicated to forwarding the remembrance of that event."[20] Chapter 2 noted how the intended audience will impact the tone and focus of any interpretation. However, where sites want to encourage white visitors to "interrogate one's own implication and complicity," focusing on the trauma of the enslaved, rather than the system of profit that thrived upon it, may facilitate disengagement.[21] These films commemorating the enslaved experience are intensely powerful pieces, but as Arnold de-Simine notes, the use of multisensory films as "empathic devices" does not challenge white visitors' apathy, distancing or implicit sense of superiority.[22]

However, films can combine a sense of the violence and trauma of slavery with the wealth it created, rather than separating EAC from the enslaved experience as often occurs in static displays. This was achieved most impressively in the *Blood Sugar* film installed at Newstead Abbey by the Slave Trade Legacies group, which has been discussed in depth in this thesis. The film features an emotive poem co-created by the group to remind visitors of the suffering connected to sugar cultivation. In terms of EAC, the film connected the enslaved experience to the building –

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[19] Jill Bennett, *Empathic Vision, Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).
[20] Munroe, "Negotiating memories," in Dessingue and Winter, *Beyond Memory,* 179–183.
[21] Arnold-de Simine, *Mediating Memory*, 113.
[22] Arnold-de Simine, "The "Moving" Image," 23–40.

Newstead Abbey – that was renovated through the wealth gained from their labour. While it could be better placed, the film is installed within the site itself, and on YouTube. Similarly, in 2019, another short film was created that focused on Penrhyn Castle in Wales, beyond my regions of study. As part of the Colonial Countryside Project, Peter Kalu wrote the poem – titled *Bluebird* – which his daughter Naomi transformed into a song with a piano accompaniment. The poem speaks to objects within the house, pulling on their palimpsestic nature, but even when viewed away from the sites the emotive film reminds us that "no sugar can taste sweet, when you hear the cane from which it was beat."[23]

Another installation that spoke to the spectral traces of EAC were the short films created by Victoria Adukwei Bulley for the Victoria and Albert Museum (VAM) in London. Entitled *A Series of Unfortunate Inheritances*, these films were displayed briefly at the site in 2018 and have a digital afterlife through the VAM's website – somewhat buried under "Opening the Cabinet of Curiosities Part II."[24] In the black and white films Bulley provides an eerie poetic voiceover which speaks to the collection, and its founders, while she walks through the museum holding certain objects. In the fifth film, "We, the Dead," Bulley presses her ear to the building's grand interior which whispers the names of the enslaved dead. When installed this work would make the building and its collection speak of the numerous spectral connections to slavery within the space, but again it was a temporary installation.

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[23] The *Bluebird* film can be viewed online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Zy2EVuETRc; For further details see Peter Kalu, "Kalu Bluebird music video: some background," n.d. Accessed 23 June 2021, http://www.peterkalu.com/uncategorized/kalu-bluebird-music-video-some-background/.

[24] V&A Museum, "Opening the Cabinet of Curiosities Part II," n.d. Accessed 23 June 2021, https://www.vam.ac.uk/research/projects/opening-the-cabinet-of-curiosities-part-ii.

The final cinematic piece I observed was not installed in a physical space at all, at least as of September 2019, but I viewed it instead while at a conference.[25] The work by Judith Ricketts presented the British data from the *TAST* database, but rather than a static list of emotionless numbers, the data moved and was displayed over a ghostly soundscape. The work literally animated the data, and similar work could be commissioned for the facts and figures that were stored in the historical accounts of the time and have been compiled more recently in databases. The lived experiences of those made "un-visible" beneath those cold figures should also be drawn out through animated installations, but they should not be treated as separate narratives. Remembering the power of placement, the resulting multisensory films and artworks should be displayed prominently as a means of conveying the importance of EAC to grazing visitors.

As noted, the permanence of contemporary artistic interventions also warrants consideration. While Chapter 5 briefly mentioned Lubaina Himid's *Cotton.com* (2002), my research did not involve viewing any of the interventions by the renowned Black British artist. I am nevertheless conscious that Himid's work *Naming the Money* (2004) and *Swallow Hard: Lancaster Dinner Service* (2007) would have been of great interest for considering how art can be used to animate EAC.[26] These works also however highlight that many contemporary artistic interventions are temporary, with artists being paid for individual works, while historic objects are viewed as permanent. Connectedly, I am conscious that limited commissions may be given to respectfully engage with the trauma of enslavement, over other proposals. However, as the above films reveal, the trauma and the wealth it created are intertwined, and the "zero-sum struggle over scarce

[25] Judith Ricketts, presented as part of workshop at *Empire and the New Museum Paradigm: Shifting representations of museums and art galleries in the UK* (University of Sussex/ Royal Pavilion & Museums, 16-17 September 2019).

[26] For details see: Celeste-Marie Bernier, Hannah Durkin, Lubaina Himid and Alan Rice, *Inside the invisible: Memorialising Slavery and Freedom in the Life and Works of Lubaina Himid* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019).

resources [including funding for artistic commissions]" that is found within competitive memory should be challenged by using a multidirectional perspective.[27]

## Telling the stories of finance

Throughout this thesis has offered suggestions on how to animate the economic history of EAC. In every narrative researched there were human stories, whose suffering and prosperity were bound together by the wealth created by EAC. The enslaving plantation owners and slave traders who made immediate and direct profits dominated the narratives, but they were also supported by webs of banking and financiers. In 2015, Nicholas Radburn demonstrated that Britain's transatlantic slave trade was "a 'wheel' of commerce 'kept in motion' by the supply of credit."[28] Late in 2020, he helped launch a new British-focused project investigating "6,500 investors in the slave trade."[29] As with the LBS database of compensation records it will provide insight into another corner of EAC related finance and wealth. While there is further work to be done in understanding these connections, Radburn's work helps remind us that slavery, and the slave trade, were financially backed enterprises which appealed to investors, who looked to mitigate risk, as discussed in Chapter 4. The following pages outline two different histories which feature banking: firstly, that of James DeWolf and secondly, of the South Sea Bubble. Both these narratives warrant further investigation at heritage sites.

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[27] Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory* 3.
[28] Nicholas Radburn, "Keeping 'the wheel in motion': Trans-Atlantic Credit Terms, Slave Prices, and the Geography of Slavery in the British Americas, 1755–1807," *The Journal of Economic History* 75, no. 3 (2015): 689.
[29] Details of this project can be found online (https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/news/lancaster-university-historians-will-lead-1-million-project-on-slave-trade-impact).

While I am critical of the simple triangular trade diagrams and a focus on individual men directly involved in slave trading, the story of James DeWolf (1764-1837) – uncle of George of Linden Place – should be better discussed to understand the businesses that supported slave trading in New England. The handout on the "Story of Linden Place" explained that "'Captain Jim' DeWolf, became the richest man in New England, and the second richest in the United States" and served as a US Senator in the 1820s.[30] While Cynthia Mestad Johnson's 2014 book *James DeWolf and the Rhode Island Slave Trade* was on sale at Linden Place, his story was not discussed in depth, even though "James DeWolf begrudgingly paid part of his nephew's debt so he would not lose his magnificent home."[31]

Mestad Johnson notes that James DeWolf "has not been held accountable" or "given a prominent place in United States history."[32] Yet her book contains details outlining his individual investment across various corners of EAC. James DeWolf had a "clear vision of how each point of the triangle could benefit him personally, establishing a vertically integrated empire with business enterprises at each port."[33] In summary, he owned rum distilleries in Bristol, RI, which provided his slaving ships with supplies that were sold for enslaved Africans, who were often transported to his own coffee and sugar plantations in Cuba, where the ships collected more slavery-cultivated sugar and molasses for the rum distilleries.[34] Mestad Johnson includes a chapter on James DeWolf's trade after 1808 – when the United States made slave trading illegal – which centred on Cuba where slavery continued until the 1880s.[35] Outside of the triangular trade imagery, he also

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[30] Text in leaflet, "The Story of Linden Place," Linden Place.
[31] Cynthia Mestad Johnson, *James DeWolf and the Rhode Island Slave Trade* (Charleston: The History Press, 2014), 19.
[32] Ibid., 130.
[33] Ibid., 49.
[34] Ibid., 46–57.
[35] Ibid., 115–126.

generated some of his wealth from "local textile mills," which again relied on plantation cotton.[36] James DeWolf was more than just an infamous slave trader; instead, he personified the integrated EAC network, which made him incredibly wealthy. Furthermore, just as plantation owners held positions of power in England, DeWolf was elected as a state Senator in the 1820s, reflecting that his continued and partially illegal EAC – even after abolition – did not cause his social or political excommunication.

The story of James DeWolf would allow sites in New England to access many narratives of EAC, including the transnational connections with Cuba, and these should be further pursued. DeWolf was also a banker and, with his brother William, he founded the Bank of Bristol in Rhode Island in 1797.[37] Mestad Johnson notes that this was part of a movement where "bankers, creditors and insurance agents began to emerge to support the rapidly growing shipbuilding and slaving industry."[38] Investigation of who invested in his bank, or with the other banks, would provide access to a web of those involved in EAC. Another temporal moment which would enable exploration of investors was the 1720 South Sea Bubble.

In brief, the South Sea Company, established in 1711, received the *Asiento* in 1713 which granted it a monopoly over the transportation of enslaved Africans to the Spanish Americas, an aspect which expands the EAC narrative beyond Britain's Atlantic imperial lens. Slave trading was not the sole business of the Company, which was a "quasi-public company with a guaranteed income from the state," but it is part of this history.[39] Frenzied speculation in 1720 formed a "Bubble" which then popped in one of the most famous financial crashes in history. Sean Moore

[36] Ibid., 46.
[37] Ibid., 51.
[38] Ibid., 46.
[39] Helen J. Paul, *The South Sea Bubble: An Economic History of Its Origins and Consequences* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011), 54. See full book for further details.

argues that "speculators in the slave trade thought that this asset could only go up in value given that the Atlantic economy was centrally dependent on slave labor and bought South Sea stock on the basis of this barbaric confidence."[40] Wennerlind, in his discussion of recognised risk factors for investors, stresses that "the lack of recognition of either the slaves' mortality or their rebelliousness highlights credit's general capacity to obfuscate its underlying social reality", which he calls "credit fetishism."[41] However, increasingly, as noted in Chapter 4, slave traders knew the business was risky but the potential profits were so great that they kept trading and diversifying to protect their own finances. On the other hand, Kristen Beale highlights the importance of Quakers in Pennsylvania getting caught in the South Sea Bubble to the development of their ethical investing, in which they refused to partake in the slave trade.[42]

To mark the 300th anniversary of the South Sea Company, Baker Library at Harvard Business School launched a research portal and virtual exhibit, after the pandemic disrupted plans for a physical exhibition.[43] The second part of the virtual exhibit focused on "The South Sea Company and the Slave Trade," which made it clear that "the debt-equity scheme and stock certificates of the South Sea Company counted on a human asset – that of labor carried out by enslaved persons."[44] Those promoting the exhibition noted that it was one of the largest collections of materials relating to the SSC, with the "exception of those in the British Museum," which did not notably mark the occasion.[45] Scholars also reflected on its importance, including

[40] Sean Moore, "Exorcising the Ghosts of Racial Capitalism from the South Sea Bubble: Pent-up Racist Liquidity and the Recent Four-Year Stock Surge," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 54, no. 1 (2020): 2.
[41] Carl Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit: The English Financial Revolution, 1620-1720* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 199.
[42] Kristen Beales, "Commercial Theologies and the Problem of Bubbles: The Pennsylvania Land Company and the Quaker Debate on Financial Ethics," *Eighteenth-century studies* 54, no. 1 (2020): 121–141.
[43] Melissa Banta and Laura Linard, "The South Sea Bubble Collection at Baker Library, Harvard Business School," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 54, no. 1 (2020): 24.
[44] The virtual exhibit can be viewed online (https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/south-sea-bubble/feature/the-south-sea-company-and-the-slave-trade).
[45] Banta and Linard, "The South Sea Bubble Collection," 23.

Moore's argument that "bailing out racist investors in slavery became the norm" in 1720 and that "central banking owes its origins and survival to investments in slavery."[46] Wennerlind similarly argues that the South Sea Company "contributed substantially to the Financial Revolution by expanding the scale and transforming the configuration of public finance."[47]

The Bank of England Museum in London made brief reference to the South Sea Bubble, but it focused on its role in buying national debt and did not mention slavery. While I believe the Bank of England is now investigating its links to slavery further, the South Sea Bubble was an under-explored narrative across the sites, even when slavery was discussed. Chapter 2 also noted that Marble Hill House is believed to be adding details about slavery during its renovations. Amongst their connections to slavery was that Henrietta Howard invested in the South Sea Company, as did the future King George II, to whom she was mistress. That George gave her stocks in the Company – which continued to trade in enslaved people after peace was re-established with Spain after 1720 – was recognised in previous research undertaken for English Heritage.[48] These stories of powerful investors in EAC, including the King himself, illustrate the banality of involvement in the early eighteenth century. It will be of interest to see if this is explored in the new interpretation, as an access route to the financial complexities of EAC. Finance, profit, wealth, capital and credit sat at the centre of EAC. Remembering that serves as an eerie reminder that transatlantic slavery was not a long-lost past, but rather an early chapter in modern capitalism, with continued contemporary relevance.

[46] Moore, "Exorcising the Ghosts," 2.
[47] Wennerlind, *Casualties of Credit,* 202.
[48] Laurence Brown, "Atlantic slavery and classical culture at Marble Hill and Northington Grange," in Dresser and Hann, *Slavery and the British Country House,* 89–92.

## Closing reflections

In 2012, John Oldfield observed that "museums have emerged as key sites of memory in relation to transatlantic slavery" since the "radical reappraisal of the role of museums" in the 1980s.[49] Having encountered such statements about the changing role and nature of museums, and heritage more broadly, this research began with the intention of considering how radical and far-reaching the heritage site interventions were. However, Chapter 2 noted that the physical sites revealed little about their own creation, and this thesis has not engaged with debates about intangible heritage and the nature of heritage itself more widely. Nevertheless, returning briefly to these considerations felt more necessary considering the climate surrounding the write-up period outlined in Chapter 1. In the wake of recent public debates, this thesis closes with two connected reflections. Firstly, I outline how the existing interventions were not reactionary or promoting radical anti-national agendas. Secondly, I close by arguing that since resistance is inevitable sites should be more explicit in what they want observers to learn and consider.

While the events of 2020 sparked some changes, or acceleration in changes, the work of making slavery visible in heritage sites has been a slow, decades-long process. This thesis specifically captures a picture of nearly fifty interventions as they were in 2018–2019, on the eve of that recent explosion of consciousness and backlash, which were quietly working to challenge the "un-visibility" of EAC. Interventions that have followed should therefore not be viewed as purely reactive to the socio-political environment.

Connectedly, this thesis has outlined how, in terms of specific historic content, individual sites were not drastically radical interventions. While the creation of several of the sites – often

[49] John Richard Oldfield, "Repairing Historical Wrongs: Public History and Transatlantic Slavery," *Social & Legal Studies* 21, no. 2 (2012): 249.

nearly twenty years ago – was a radical disruption to the narrative, their individual historical content was not as far-reaching and comprehensive as to fully establish why EAC is so important. While the heritage interventions are not nationalistic celebrations, the continuation of the national lens, rather than transnational engagement, does not suggest radical change in that respect. The limited narratives outlined in this thesis may make slavery more comfortable to acknowledge, against the context of the DOLHN, but minimising EAC undermines our understanding of the importance of enslaved labour and interconnected global history.

The DOLHN is recognised as the frame that interventions must navigate in both England and New England. Within this, it is difficult for sites to acknowledge details such as the compensation of British plantation owners and continued EAC after temporal abolition because they directly disrupt the mythology of collective abolitionist self-congratulation and continuing notions of cultural superiority. No intervention offered such a drastic attack on the DOLHN as the *1619 Project*. As the project originated outside of New England and produced educational resources rather than a heritage site, the *1619 Project* is not a case study in this thesis. However, it was notable that no site I visited contained statements, such as those made by the project, which argues that "our founding ideals of liberty and equality were false" and that the US was founded on "a lie."[50]

Reflecting a less binary history, a comprehensive narrative containing more accurate details of EAC will not make abolition "un-visible." While the debates around the exact motivations of abolitionists, and the state, to challenge the status quo are not explored here, this thesis has highlighted the widespread banal acceptance of EAC for centuries before abolitionism

[50] Nikole Hannah-Jones, "Our Founding Ideals of Liberty and Equality Were False When They Were Written. Black Americans Fought to Make Them True. Without This Struggle, America Would Have No Democracy at All," The 1619 Project special issue of *The New York Times Magazine*, 18 August 2019, 16.

developed in the late 1700s. Therefore, as Taylor concludes, "abolition should be remembered as a 'great' moment" for exactly the reason that abolitionists "confronted and eventually defeated an extraordinarily powerful enemy."[51] Fewer descendants will be able to claim the campaigns and rebellions against slavery as their own, but re-framing abolition as a struggle against an accepted norm, rather than a collective epiphany, also facilitates more useful comparisons with EAC and modern slavery, and other ESG issues that embroil investors and consumers.

Araujo concludes her 2021 book by encouraging meditation about whether museums can "transform themselves into instruments of social change" rather than "perpetuating racism and white supremacy."[52] Chapter 2 noted that large museums do include some discussion of the legacy of racism. This thesis would also encourage similar meditations at sites around key debates, such as reparations, modern slavery, and our implication in climate change. When viewed collectively, the details of how England and New England profited from EAC can be viewed as evidence for an argument for financial reparations. However, no site explicitly argues for these. Instead, alongside potentially implicit support, the interventions act as a form of cultural reparations in themselves. Chapter 5 also noted that permanent discussions of modern slavery, consumer activism – such as through boycotts – or wider contemporary ESG issues were very sparse. The ISM has a substantial "Legacy" section which explores the continued and contemporary legacies of enslavement, but these are separated from the history exhibits and some displays on contemporary slavery have been temporary. Overall, I found very few explicit statements on any of the connected contemporary issues within the interventions, suggesting they are not as radical as their critics may imagine.

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[51] Taylor, *The Interest,* 311.
[52] Araujo, *Museums and Atlantic Slavery,* 111.

Some sites may choose to keep implicit messaging because interpretation designed to "influence the attitudes or behaviour of their audiences" has been criticised as "interpreganda."[53] Other sites may intentionally have a wide "Zone of Tolerance" about potential interpretations and claim they wish to present historical information neutrally.[54] However, in the wake of 2020 this claim will seem more dubious than ever to visitors when the subject matter is transatlantic slavery. Reflecting this, in March 2021 the Director of Kew Gardens, near London, stated that "there is no acceptable neutral position" on the histories of colonialism and slavery and that "to stay silent is to be complicit."[55] This speaks to the growth of the "Museums Are Not Neutral" campaign since 2017, from which Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham appeals that, to "cultivate effective social change," sites should "become more explicit and public facing in their activism."[56]

Attempts to appear neutral on the history of EAC are futile because the context of the DOLHN means that the details cause cognitive dissonance and are therefore interpreted as partisan. This jarring will occur regardless of any contemporary moralising messaging, such as supporting financial reparations or consumer boycotts. Therefore, I would encourage interventions to be explicit about what they want visitors to consider and their motivations for including EAC. Offering detailed complex historical narratives, through engaging interventions, will facilitate conversations on these contemporary issues for interested observers. Given the present consciousness of the subject of transatlantic slavery, this in-depth exploration of EAC's complex

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[53] Sam H. Ham, *Interpretation: Making a Difference on Purpose* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 2013), 163– 164.
[54] Ibid., 149–171.
[55] Nazia Parveen, "Kew Gardens director hits back at claims it is 'growing woke'," *The Guardian,* 18 March 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/science/2021/mar/18/kew-gardens-director-hits-back-at-claims-it-is-growing-woke.
[56] Johnson-Cunningham, "Beyond gallery walls," 6–7.

history and why it remains relevant and embedded, must be the next step in establishing EAC to the heritage narratives of England and New England.

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# Appendix 1: Table of case study sites referenced

**IIF means Identified in Footnote. For more details see Chapter 2.*

**England case studies**

| End of footnote reference | Form | Title | Sub-location/ Gallery | Site | Town/ City | Visited |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Belper | Display panel | "Growing Cotton" | Introductory displays | Belper North Mill | Belper, Derbyshire, UK | 2019, October |
| John Pinney, GHM | Display panels | IIF* | *Slavery and John Pinney* exhibit | Georgian House Museum | Bristol, UK | 2018, April |
| GHM | Entrance boards, room cards and text panels | IIF | | Georgian House Museum | Bristol, UK | 2018, April |
| M Shed | IIF | IIF | *Bristol and the Transatlantic Slave Trade* in *Places, Life and People* | M Shed | Bristol, UK | 2018, April |
| Book, Snowshill | Book | *Book of Wade* | One of the external rooms after the main house | Snowshill Manor | Broadway, Gloucestershire, UK | 2019, July |
| Dyrham | Temporary text panel | "Exhibition Gallery" | Displayed on ground floor of the House | Dyrham Park | Chippenham, Gloucestershire, UK | 2019, July (House under renovation) |
| Cromford Mills Story | Display panels | IIF | *The Cromford Mills Story* | Cromford Mills | Cromford, Derbyshire, UK | 2018, June |
| Cromford | Map and images | IIF | *Visitor Centre @Building 17* | Cromford Mills | Cromford, Derbyshire, UK | 2018, June |
| GCC, Cromford | IIF | *Global Cotton Connections* | *Visitor Centre @Building 17* | Cromford Mills | Cromford, Derbyshire, UK | 2018, June |

| Atlantic, NMM | IIF | IIF | *The Atlantic gallery: Slavery, Trade, Empire* | National Maritime Museum | Greenwich, London, UK | 2019, April |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tudor, NMM | IIF | IIF | *Trade* display in *Pigott Family Gallery: Tudor and Stuart Seafarers* | National Maritime Museum | Greenwich, London, UK | 2019, April |
| Slavery, WH | IIF | IIF | *Slavery* exhibition rooms | Wilberforce House Museum | Hull, UK | 2019, April |
| Abolition, WH | IIF | IIF | *Abolition* exhibition rooms | Wilberforce House Museum | Hull, UK | 2019, April |
| History of the House, WH | Text panel | "Georgian Houses" | *History of the House* | Wilberforce House Museum | Hull, UK | 2019, April |
| Judges' Lodgings | Text panels and labels | IIF | | Judges' Lodgings Museum | Lancaster, UK | 2019, July |
| Lancaster City Museum | Display panel | *"Lancaster's Golden Age"* | Upstairs exhibits | Lancaster City Museum | Lancaster, UK | 2019, July |
| LMM | IIF | IIF | Throughout | Lancaster Maritime Museum | Lancaster, UK | 2019, July |
| Slave Trade, LMM | IIF | IIF | *Lancaster and the Slave Trade* room | Lancaster Maritime Museum | Lancaster, UK | 2019, July |
| *Captured Africans* | Memorial sculpture with text panel | *Captured Africans* | At Damside Street end | St George's Quay | Lancaster, UK | 2019, July |
| Harewood | Interactive Screen, room cards and text labels | IIF | | Harewood House | Leeds, UK | 2019, October |
| Enslavement, ISM | IIF | IIF | *Enslavement and Middle Passage* gallery | International Slavery Museum | Liverpool, UK | 2019, March |

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| Legacy, ISM | IIF | IIF | *Legacy* gallery | International Slavery Museum | Liverpool, UK | 2019, March |
| *Gilt of Cain* | Memorial sculpture with text panel | *Gilt of Cain* | | Fen Court | London, UK | 2019, April |
| Kenwood | Text panels | IIF | | Kenwood House | London, UK | 2019, July |
| Book, Kenwood | Book | *Lord Mansfield, Slavery and the Law* | The Library | Kenwood House | London, UK | 2019, July |
| Room 20, NPG | Text panels and labels | IIF | *Room 20: Road to Reform* | National Portrait Gallery | London, UK | 2019, July |
| Room 12, NPG | Text label | "William Beckford 1760-1844" | *Room 12: The Arts in the later Eighteenth Century* | National Portrait Gallery | London, UK | 2019, July |
| West India Quay | Outside information board | "The Main 'Hibbert' Gate" | North West corner of the Quay by the Gate | West India Quay | London, UK | 2019, April |
| MOLD | IIF | IIF | *London, Sugar & Slavery* gallery | Museum of London Docklands | London, UK | 2019, April |
| People's History | Display | "Industrial Revolution" | *Main Gallery One* | People's History Museum | Manchester, UK | 2019, April |
| Science and Industry | Displays, text panels and labels | IIF | *Textile Gallery* | Science and Industry Museum | Manchester, UK | 2019, April |
| Oxford Plaque | Plaque | | On the [former] Codrington Library college near Catte Street | All Souls College, Oxford | Oxford, UK | 2019, July |
| The Story of Lowther 1700-1802 | Displays, text panels and labels | IIF | *The Story of Lowther 1700-1802* | Lowther Castle | Penrith, Cumbria, UK | 2019, June |

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| The Story of Lowther 1802-1882 | Text panels | IIF | *The Story of Lowther 1802-1882* | Lowther Castle | Penrith, Cumbria, UK | 2019, June |
| Newstead Abbey | Self-guided written guidebook | | Given on entry | Newstead Abbey | Ravenshead, Nottinghamshire, UK | 2018, September |
| Newstead Abbey | Room card and information stand | "The Grand Drawing Room" | The Grand Drawing Room | Newstead Abbey | Ravenshead, Nottinghamshire, UK | 2018, September |
| Discover, Newstead Abbey | Text panel | "A Home Reborn" | *Discover Newstead* exhibit in cloisters | Newstead Abbey | Ravenshead, Nottinghamshire, UK | 2018, September |
| Discover, Newstead Abbey | Film | *Blood Sugar* | *Discover Newstead* exhibit in cloisters | Newstead Abbey | Ravenshead, Nottinghamshire, UK | 2018, September |
| Quarry Bank | IIF | IIF | Introductory displays | Quarry Bank Mill | Styal, Cheshire, UK | 2019, October |

**New England case studies**

| End of footnote reference | Form | Title | Sub-location/ Gallery | Site | Town/ City | Visited |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Granary Burying Ground | Outside information boards | IIF | | Granary Burying Ground | Boston, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| King's Chapel | Information boards | IIF | | King's Chapel | Boston, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| State Street, Bristol, RI | Outside Information Board | "Historic Thames Street Landing" | Car park at State Street and Thames St | State St | Bristol, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Linden Place | Self-guided written guidebook | | Given on entry | Linden Place | Bristol, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Linden Place | Text panel | "Theodora DeWolf Colt (1820-1901)" | On dining table | Linden Place | Bristol, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Linden Place | Written Leaflet | *The Story of Linden Place* | Picked up in the first North Parlors | Linden Place | Bristol, RI, USA | 2018, July |

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| Harvard Slavery Plaque | Plaque in stone | | Between Langdell Hall and Caspersen Student Center | Harvard Law Campus | Cambridge, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| Boott | IIF | IIF | *Lowell: Visions of Industrial America* exhibition | Boott Cotton Mills | Lowell, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| Main Street, Medford, MA | Roadside sign | "Royall House" | Main Street outside Royall House and Slave Quarters | Royall House and Slave Quarters | Medford, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| Royall House | Text panel | "Royall House & Slave Quarters" | Entrance area | Royall House and Slave Quarters | Medford, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| Tour, Royall House | Guided tour | | | Royall House and Slave Quarters | Medford, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| Tour, Hempsted Houses | Guided tour | | | Hempsted Houses | New London, CT, USA | 2018, July |
| MONH | Text panels | IIF | Early history displays | Museum of Newport History | Newport, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Farewell Street, Newport, RI | Roadside sign | "'God's Little Acre' Colonial African Burial Ground" | Farewell Street near the Common Burying Ground | "God's Little Acre" Colonial African Burial Ground | Newport, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| *In Silent Witness* | Memorial sculpture with text panel | *In Silent Witness* | Public entrance | Newport Public Library | Newport, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Touro | Text panel | "1772 Market Day" | Upstairs displays | Touro Synagogue | Newport, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Tour, Slater Mill | Guided tour | | | Slater Mill | Pawtucket, RI, USA | 2018, July |

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| Blackstone Valley | Display panel | "Slater Mill: The Birth of the Industrial Revolution" | | Blackstone Valley Visitor Center | Pawtucket, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Strawberry Banke Museum | Information board | "Childbirth in the nineteenth century" | Chase House | Strawberry Banke Museum | Portsmouth, NH, USA | 2018, July |
| BHT Portsmouth | Trail marker | "Black Yankees and the Sea" | Prescott Park, on the New Hampshire Black Heritage Trail | Prescott Park | Portsmouth, NH, USA | 2018, July |
| Tour, Moffatt-Ladd | Guided tour | | | Moffatt-Ladd House | Portsmouth, NH, USA | 2018, July |
| Tour, Warner House | Guided tour | | | Warner House | Portsmouth, NH, USA | 2018, July |
| CFR | Temporary display panels | IIF | Displayed within Cathedral of St. John | Center for Reconciliation | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Brown Slavery Memorial | Memorial sculpture with text plinth | *Slavery Memorial* | Front Green | Brown University Campus | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| JBH | Text label | "Cape Coast Castle on the Gold Coast of Africa" | Below staircase near Front Door | John Brown House Museum | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Written, JBH | Self-guided written guidebook | IIF | Given on entry | John Brown House Museum | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Audio, JBH | Self-guided audio guidebook | IIF | Given on entry | John Brown House Museum | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |

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| Sally, JBH | Display panels | IIF | *Sally Gallery* | John Brown House Museum | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Upstairs, SHH | Text panels and label | IIF | Upstairs exhibit | Stephen Hopkins House | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| Tour, SHH | Guided tour | | | Stephen Hopkins House | Providence, RI, USA | 2018, July |
| WAM | Text panel and portrait labels | IIF | *Early American Portraits Gallery* | Worcester Art Museum | Worcester, MA, USA | 2018, July |
| European Galleries, WAM | Text label | "Mr and Mrs James Dunlop" | *European Galleries* | Worcester Art Museum | Worcester, MA, USA | 2018, July |

# Appendix 2: Interviews

Richard Benjamin, Head of International Slavery Museum, Interview with author, 3 April 2018.

Jean-Francois Manicom, Acting Curator of the International Slavery Museum, Museum Tour, 3 April 2018.

Sue Giles, Senior Curator at Bristol Museums, Interview with author, 16 April 2018.

Keith Stokes, Vice President of the 1696 Heritage Group, Interview with author, 24 July 2018.

Elon Cook, Program Manager at the Center for Reconciliation, Interview with author, 30 July 2018.