

# Slavery & Abolition

## A Journal of Slave and Post-Slave Studies

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fsla20>

# Mapping British Public Monuments Related to Slavery

Gavin Grindon, Jennie Williams & Duncan Hay

**To cite this article:** Gavin Grindon, Jennie Williams & Duncan Hay (11 Oct 2023): Mapping British Public Monuments Related to Slavery, *Slavery & Abolition*, DOI: 10.1080/0144039X.2023.2264837

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/0144039X.2023.2264837>



© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group



Published online: 11 Oct 2023.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 159



View related articles [↗](#)



View Crossmark data [↗](#)

## Mapping British Public Monuments Related to Slavery

Gavin Grindon , Jennie Williams  and Duncan Hay 



### ABSTRACT

This article is a product of the first complete survey of British public representational monuments in the U.K. related to transatlantic slavery, available online at <https://www.britishmonumentsrelatedtoslavery.net>. Identifying over 900 monuments, it brings this survey to bear on current public and policy debates about such monuments' history, significance and meaning vis-à-vis slavery, art and heritage. Examining the monuments at scale, we identify the monuments' patterns of production and provide data-led answers to specific questions such as what Britain's most significant monumental legacies of slavery are; how enslaved people appear in British public monuments; and how this data might support rethinking these monuments.

### KEYWORDS

Monuments; statues; public art; memorials; propaganda; British art

Public monuments from the era of British slavery loom large in British public spaces and in recent renewed debates on heritage, memory and racial justice. But they are at the same time a curious site of absence and public forgetting. In St John's Graveyard in Edinburgh stands the 1887 gravestone of 'faithful servant' Malvina Wells. This small stone was to be the last British monument to slavery for 110 years until a 1997 plaque on the side of a local museum in Bristol. The twentieth century is marked by a curious lack of British monuments to slavery. None marked the 1907 and 1933 abolition centenaries. Only two even mention slavery in passing: a 1919 Abraham Lincoln statue in Manchester and a 1935 mural featuring William Wilberforce on Wandsworth town hall. But since the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM) began in 2015, many pre-1887 monuments have acquired new meanings as they became a focus for anti-racist activism. Heritage organizations, campaigners and regional public history groups variously scrambled to identify or obfuscate monuments related to slavery, sometimes re-inscribing them with graffiti or new plaques; officially or unofficially relocating them; and creating new official and unofficial public monuments to enslavers and enslaved people. Artistic projects

**CONTACT** Gavin Grindon  [BritishMonumentsRelatedToSlavery.net](mailto:BritishMonumentsRelatedToSlavery.net)  School of Philosophical, Historical and Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ, UK

This article has been corrected with minor changes. These changes do not impact the academic content of the article.

© 2023 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group

This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way. The terms on which this article has been published allow the posting of the Accepted Manuscript in a repository by the author(s) or with their consent.

such as Isaac Julien's 2022 *Once Again ... (Statues Never Die)*; 2019's collective project *All Monuments Must Fall*; Ingrid Pollard's 2019 installation using pub signs and stained glass windows *Seventeen of Sixty Eight*; or Lubaina Himid's 2011 *What are Monuments For?* reflect how 'monuments' and 'statues' have become bywords for legacies of colonialism and contentious racist hegemonies.

The academic context of such debate is increasing reflection and critique since the late 1990s in British art history, heritage and memory studies regarding colonial heritage and heritage 'from below', including the absent-presence of slavery and enslaved people as a ghostly repressed signifier.<sup>1</sup> 'Heritage' is a broad interdisciplinary term whose meaning is often contested. Here, we firstly address these monuments as 'heritage' in a plain sense, identifying them as material economic and cultural *legacies* of slavery. Secondly, many of these monuments are considered 'heritage' by official bodies in the sense of being part of a cultural canon of British architecture, art and design and, as such, as a valuable material legacy of their historical period. This notion of heritage has been a key context for public, policy and academic-curatorial debates about monuments related to slavery. Having identified material legacies, we present some preliminary critiques of cultural policy around how these monuments have been remembered and forgotten, in which we address this latter conception of 'heritage' as an expression of whiteness and coloniality that is both structural-ideological and, at times, a consciously weaponized term in cultural policy (cases of both will be examined below). Mapping these monuments throws into relief formal and informal cultural policy around heritages of slavery, as we will illustrate at multiple junctures below.

This is the first national survey of what and where the U.K.'s monuments related to slavery are. The lack of such data has hampered both academic study and public participation in heritage debates. Comparatively, in the U.S., the Southern Poverty Law Centre's 2016 report 'Whose Heritage?' mapped confederate monuments, and in making this data accessible likely played a role in supporting the widespread use of monuments as nodes for organizing and leverage-points for protests in the U.S. In the U.K., such monument protests have not been as widespread, perhaps due to a lack of data (despite crowdsourced mapping attempts such as [toppletheracists.org](http://toppletheracists.org)), even before critique was curtailed by the governments' legal and 'culture war' response to public protest and museological investigation of monuments.<sup>2</sup>

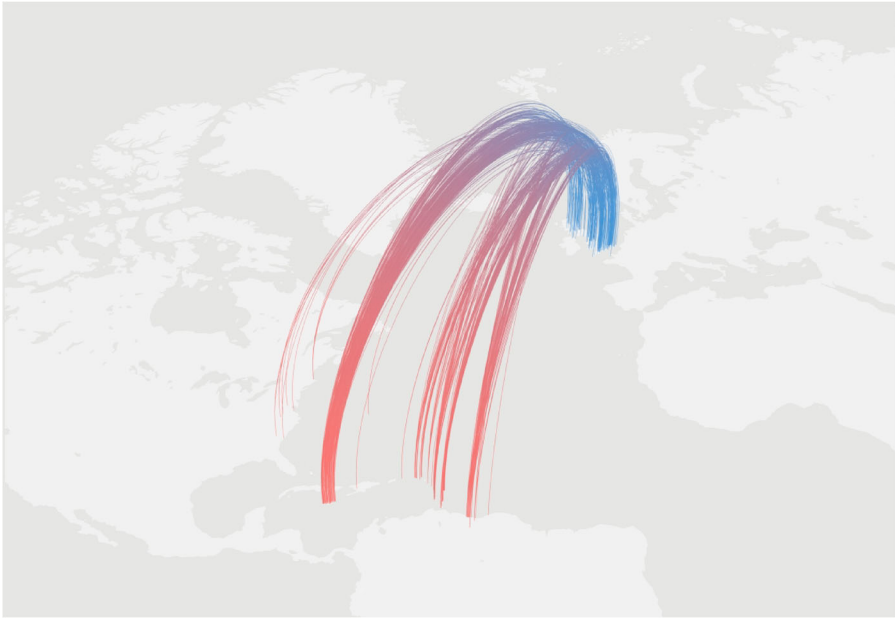
Making a database makes these monuments visible, their number and distribution tractable to analysis. There has been important prior local work by activists, heritage organizations and academics in the form of notable surveys locating slavery's cultural and monumental imprint: these have included some British cities and their monuments; colonial British monuments in the Caribbean; and images of slavery internationally.<sup>3</sup> Grassroots groups (such as Memorial 2007, Countering Colston, Nubian Jak and TTEACH) have

conducted their own public research, developed and amplified new understandings of monuments, and prompted institutional investigations.<sup>4</sup>

Directed by accountability and openness, our aim was to do the basic work of accounting and open-sourcing, but working at scale. For this, we combined methods in Natural Language Processing and Open Source Investigation, both suited to producing evidence from large data sets. Our findings are publicly explorable at [britishmonumentsrelatedtoslavery.net](http://britishmonumentsrelatedtoslavery.net).<sup>5</sup> This is an ongoing project, and here we share our principal findings. Centred on identifying primary sources, our findings are necessarily descriptive and panoramic.

Firstly, we look at the production of these monuments. We identify how the 1800s' boom in monument-making that definitively shaped the landscape of British public art – popularly described as ‘monument mania’ – was fundamentally shaped by transatlantic slavery. We also identify how white abolitionism played a notable role in monument mania in ways that still colour public memory. Secondly, we identify the principal types of monuments and their relationships. We argue that while urban statues have been for good reasons a focus of attention, they are perhaps not the most significant British monumental legacy of slavery. Thirdly, we survey patterns of how, through these monuments, enslaved people appear in public space. A contrasting pattern appears between the public monumental invisibility of enslaved people and the profusion of slaves on private neoclassical, allegorical monuments. Later, this private/public division evolved in a wave of white abolitionist monument mania, when a profusion of *public* allegorical slaves adapted these colonial myths. Lastly, we address two ways in which the data might support new understandings of these monuments. These monuments mark British space in official ways, but through this data they are rooted back to specific spaces of slavery and abolition. We map the connections of individual monuments to specific sites of plantation slavery (Figure 1) and explore the interpretation of multiple U.K. monuments as memorials to slave revolts.

The current total number of representational monuments linked to transatlantic slavery stands at 906, though there are several currently uncounted caches of additional hundreds discussed below. Their principal relations are financial links to slave-ownership and representations of slave-owners, abolitionists or enslaved people. This is a numerically small proportion of all U.K. monuments erected between 1600 and 1900, which we estimate as between 12,500 and 13,800, plus at least 1.8 m funerary monuments.<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, it attaches specific initial numbers to these significant relationships to slavery. Financially, few of these monuments are individually significant legacies of slavery (compared, for example, to country houses or universities). Art historically, few possess outstanding significance and most are derivative. Historically, it would be hard to justify many of the plaques as significant markers. For example, seventeen remember Charles II, often irreverently: ‘Charles II escaped through this gate’: ‘... hid in this barn’; ‘... stopped to take ale in



**Figure 1.** The sum of British public representational monuments' links to former plantation sites.

this inn' (none note his role in founding the Royal Africa Company). Rather, we argue that the primary significance of these monuments arises when they are seen in aggregate for the scale and patterns revealed. Seen together, they provide one more cultural index of the heritages of slavery. Our critical hope is that producing an open and accessible dataset at [britishmonumentsrelatedtoslavery.net](http://britishmonumentsrelatedtoslavery.net) may be a conceptual act of toppling in which publics can look down upon these monuments, open their interpretation, and upend their meaning. The data offers one partial way of seeing how transatlantic slavery sculpted Britain.

### Typologies and Limits

The data's timeframe begins in 1600: British colonies would soon appear in Virginia (1607 with enslaved Africans recorded from 1619) and Bermuda (1609). The data describes 'British representational public monuments'.<sup>7</sup> For an achievable survey, the project applied limits in its notions of 'public' and 'representational'. 'Public monuments' were defined as those in publicly accessible spaces. This does not necessarily include British 'public collections' of sculpture (an understanding of 'public' foregrounded in datasets such as Art.uk), which are often held in storage and exhibited occasionally in highly mediated gallery contexts. The term *representational* monuments is used specifically to exclude architectural infrastructure such as buildings or bridges, or other designed objects lacking representational aspects (e.g. ornate railings and lamp posts),

outmoded functional objects (e.g. cannons), or purely indexical representations (e.g. mile markers). The predominant types of *representational* monument in the data, which will be addressed below, include statues, plaques, funereal monuments, stained glass windows and coats of arms. Due to the paucity of data, the data exclude shop signs of the 1600s, which commonly featured images of people inferable as slaves, most removed by municipal improvement boards in the 1700s. It similarly excludes pub signs, including those representing slave-owners Thomas Picton in Newport, Porthcawl and Nantyllyon; William Beckford in Salisbury and Tewkesbury; or the blackamoor at the Green Man, Ashbourne; or the thirty extant 'Black Boy' or 'Blackamore' pubs.

The data are limited to direct economic, administrative and political links to slavery as an incipient study. It excludes monuments linked to merchants or industries that traded with plantations. Accounting for a wider concentric ring of mercantile connections to slavery among monuments would likely enlarge the dataset substantially. It excludes monuments to the foundation of colonies that became plantation-sites (e.g. monuments to the Virginia expedition or privateer George Somers); to vocal supporters of slavery without personal links (e.g. Prime Minister William Lamb); or to indentured plantation labour (e.g. sugar magnate Henry Tate's bust and tomb).

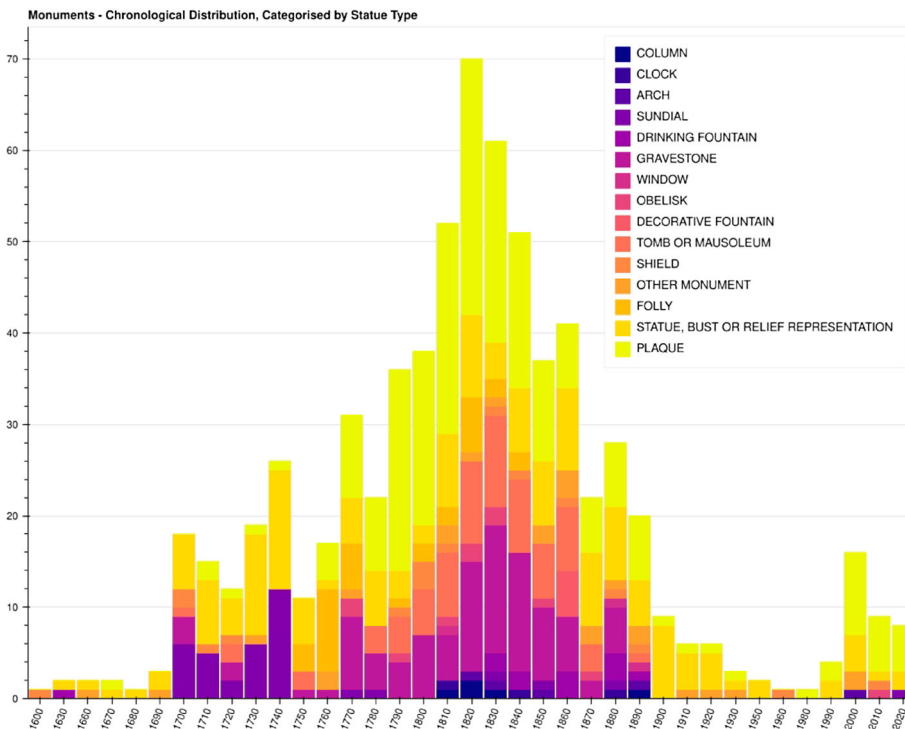
The links identified between monuments and slavery take the form of links to slave-ownership and trading, to abolitionist campaigning, and to slave revolts. Seven hundred and one monuments are linked to slave-ownership, including slave-owners; traders; immediate beneficiaries; or governmental administrators of slave-ownership. Of these, 627 are linked by their representation of such a person in words or figuration. In considering each monuments' significance, we should note they have differing degrees of proximity to slavery. Examining country houses, English Heritage graded twelve types of increasingly close involvement in slavery, which resources have not permitted us to undertake.<sup>8</sup> However, each monuments' number of plantation links gives some indication: the most-linked are the statue of Alderman William Beckford at Guildhall, but also multiple monuments to collector William Thomas Beckford; a plaque marking politician James Brydges' former Enfield house; the reconstructed Hibbert Gate in London Docklands; and funerary monuments to merchant Thomas Daniel in the Bristol area and to landowner Charles Palmer and merchant Henry Davidson in All Saints, Kingston. Different forms of significance are also revealed when we distinguish below between monuments *representing* people and monuments *erected or modified* by them.

Our analysis represents the most empirical picture presently possible, though it has significant limits. In identifying connections, we are grateful to the generosity of the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery in sharing their data. Our findings follow their data in skewing towards Caribbean plantations after 1763. There are likely additional monuments linked to (pre and post-1776) plantations in America; corporate ownership through, for example, the

Royal Africa Company; other global sites of British slave-ownership; and to British colonial governance and abetment of slavery.

## Monument Mania and Slavery

Accounts of British monuments often centre on a period of ‘monument mania’: a boom in monument production which definitively shaped the monumental landscape of the U.K. The term ‘monument mania’, coined in *The Spectator* in 1850 (possibly after Auguste Barbier’s poem, ‘La Statuomanie’), has been used to variously periodise the cult of monuments following the deaths of Nelson (1805), Pitt the younger (1806), Robert Peel (1850), the First Duke of Wellington (1852) and Prince Albert (1861).<sup>9</sup> Other bursts occur in the data representing memorials to William Ewart Gladstone, James Watt, William Wilberforce and other abolitionists. As a cross-section of all U.K. monuments, the data offer the first histogram of British monument mania in the 1800s. Lacking data on the construction date of all U.K. monuments, it is currently not possible to wholly graph monument mania. But [Figure 2](#)’s surprisingly regular bell curve evidences a clear wave which it is reasonable to suppose mirrors a larger wave of monument-making across the same period, described anecdotally by many



**Figure 2.** British slavery-related public representational monuments, by year of construction and type (excluding monuments without erection dates, which includes many post-1866 plaques).

historians. As a pathologizing term, ‘monument-mania’ tends to isolate this wave from the context of dramatic urban development, which boomed in this period notably due to both direct investment of slavery-derived wealth and because the wider ‘flow of human and financial capital from the British colonial slave-economy was a significant contributor to the remaking of Britain’s commercial and to a lesser extent industrial fabric’.<sup>10</sup> The boom in monuments is likewise tied to the interlinked appearance of new urban spaces; new transportation possibilities; casting innovations from the manufacturers Coalbrookdale, Eleanor Coade, Robinson & Cottam and others; and the diversification of several bronze foundries from cannons to statues. The clear reflection of ‘monument mania’ within the slavery-related monument data supports the inference that the 1800s’ monument mania was in significant proportion a conspicuous materialization of the fundamental underlying economic benefits to the U.K. of slavery. In the data, the wave peaks shortly after the 1807 slave trade abolition act, entering a sustained decline following the 1833 slavery abolition act. After 1837, there is a late wave of monuments related to a claim under the 1837 abolition compensation act. These monuments’ direct relations to slavery belie a wider context in which the proliferation of monuments in the 1800s should be understood as structurally linked to transatlantic slavery. However, as mostly individual luxuries, there are not the regular patterns of commissioning found in collective war memorials after 1918.

The data also reveal that the U.K.’s white abolitionist monuments form their own notable subset of monument mania. This white abolitionist monument mania is centred on a small group of parliamentarians. Dresser previously examined five of London’s notable white abolitionist monuments, arguing they tend to ‘marginalize the experience of enslaved Africans in favour of a self-congratulatory and ... nationally defensive’ celebration of white British abolitionism.<sup>11</sup> The eighty-nine additional white abolitionist monuments we identified support her thesis. Of these, thirty-four represent MPs, and fifty-two centre on members of The Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade and The Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions (both including members of ‘the Clapham Sect’). They are also weighted towards remembrance immediately following the 1833 abolition act – for example, no monument remembers the once-celebrated ‘Demerara Martyr’ John Smith of 1824, who had an unmarked grave. White abolitionism’s role in monument mania appears to set the tone for the orthodox remembrance of slavery focused on abolition as a result of white British upper and middle-class moral campaigning. Statistically, this remains the dominant tone for remembrance and heritage-making around public monuments. For example, Westminster Abbey publicly advertises its monuments to abolitionist figures, but it is also the U.K.’s densest spatial concentration of monuments related to slave-ownership. As of 2023, the site’s Historic England entry lacks any mention of them. Besides this bias towards



‘positive’ commemoration in heritage records, we find signs of white liberal boosterism. This is notable in edits to heritage records around the 2007 anniversary of abolition. The Historic Environment Scotland listing for the statue of William Mackinnon, an East India Company man involved in organizing the coolie system of indentured labour that replaced slave labour, gives him comically generous credit: ‘William McKinnon was president of the Imperial British East India Company, one of whose objectives was the elimination of the slave trade’.<sup>12</sup> English Heritage noted Anna Laetitia Barbauld’s gravestone in 2008 on the basis of a single 1791 poem positively mentioning Wilberforce. Nonetheless, one of our findings is to identify white abolitionist monuments as a national set reinforced by such listings. This set dominates intentional monumental representations of both slavery and abolition. We find a far smaller set of seventeen monuments to black abolitionists. Five are for Olaudah Equiano, including his and his daughters’ gravestones and a plaque for his daughter, and three are plaques for Ignatius Sancho. One to Robert Wedderburn is a passing reference on a plastic panel at St Marks, Kennington not mentioning his abolitionism. There are, surprisingly, none for runaway James Somerset who played a pivotal legal role in abolition (the judge in the case is celebrated in Westminster Abbey’s visitor materials). Most of the seventeen appear to have been put up in two recent waves from 2007–2011 and 2014–2023, which can be credited to grassroots campaigning. However, the biographical orientation of plaque schemes means abolition is recognized barely at all as a matter of collective or economic pressures.

Stepping back into the twentieth century, we also tracked government ‘heritage listing’ of monuments. The data on this protective legal status are evocative when trying to understand the dearth of slavery memorials from 1887–1997 with which we opened this article. In that same period, many earlier slavery-related monuments became official ‘heritage’. At least 160 of the first-listed monuments of 1948–1958 were slavery-related (those listings, of course, did not note this. Adding listed structures outside our data, the number rises). The first Ministry of Works listing of buildings in 1947–1948 coincided with the start of Windrush Caribbean immigration to the U.K., a coincidence evoking how both colonial nationalism and colonial anxiety shaped heritage policy. Just while British culture was being remade by Caribbean immigrants, in these listings heritage organizations were fixing a definition of British culture blind to its prior Caribbean debt. In this way, the first listings involve the kind of omissions required to tell a story of Imperial self-construction, which others have identified occurring at that time also in the 1951 Festival of Britain.<sup>13</sup> The listing data represent not only blindness, but anxious exclusion. In the data there are peaks in listing around 1970 and 1987 (this plausibly indicates these were, as a sample, part of wider peaks). These peaks correlate with the New Right weaponization of ‘heritage’. For example, the 1974 V&A exhibition *The Destruction of the Country House* propagandized for private

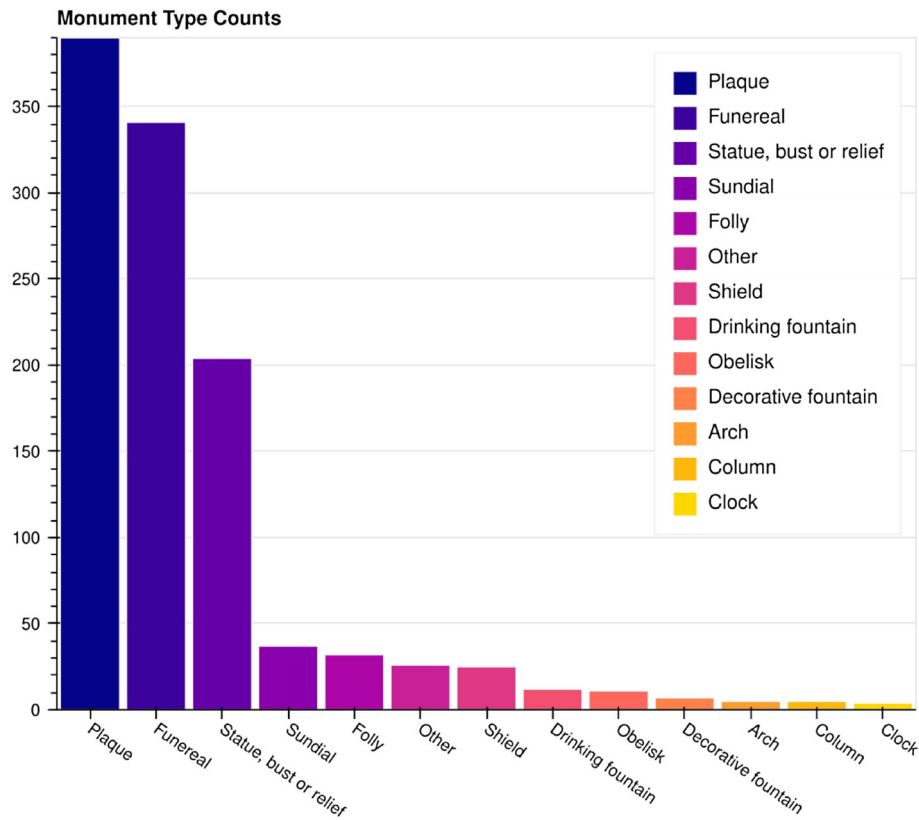
houses to be seen as ‘British heritage’. The ‘destruction’ evoked was the threat of progressive taxation on aristocratic owners, who might decide to sell. Financial breaks for estate-owners followed in the 1980–1983 National Heritage Acts. This ‘heritage’ was also understood as exclusively white, and it is suggestive that these bursts of listing correspond to increasing political and cultural self-assertion by Black communities, from the first Notting Hill Carnival through the founding of the Black Cultural Archives. There are likewise political correlations, from the Mangrove Nine case to the Handsworth, Toxteth and Brixton uprisings. If these flurries of listing made some slavery-related monuments into colonial propaganda twice over, it was still as structurally necessary in 1974 as in 1794 that slavery’s part in their making remained obscured.

### **What are the U.K.’s Most Significant Types of Monument Related to Slavery?**

Slavery-related statues, busts or reliefs have been a focus of debate, as portraits often sited in busy urban spaces, but they are not the most numerous monument-type related to slavery. Plaques are more numerous (428 v 215), while the most numerous monumental form of slavery-heritage is funerary (402 tombs, mausoleums, plaques and other memorials inside churches). However, given the project’s source data does not prioritize funerary monuments and the slave-ownership data for many small-scale owners lacks biographical information which would make correlations to funerary monuments possible, it is likely there are thousands more funerary monuments linked to slavery (indicatively, *findagrave.com* records 1.8 m in England between 1600 and 1900, while the *LBS* data counts 61,617 persons. Likewise, excluded from the data to date is Bristol Cathedral’s unreleased recent self-survey that notes over 200 buried or memorialized in its grounds had slavery connections).<sup>14</sup>

As a result, we can assert that the single largest custodians of British slavery-related monuments are British churches, predominantly the Church of England (once a major slaveholder in its own right). Five hundred and thirty-five of the monuments we identified are listed or scheduled, making national heritage bodies the second largest custodian. The diffuse regional plaque schemes are together a third major custodian (Figure 3).

In current debates, *who* is represented on specific monuments has been a central focus of significance. The wider patterns of *who* support Williams’s assertion that men involved in slave-ownership dominated local political life.<sup>15</sup> Among the cultural marks such men left on the U.K. are disproportionate monumental imprints, reflected in the highest-frequency titles and roles linked to slavery-related monuments (often overlapping): MP; military; merchant; Sir; nobility; planter; alderman, mayor; high sheriff; Reverend. More specifically, Draper estimates 3,000 absentee owners in Britain ‘distinct in their impact

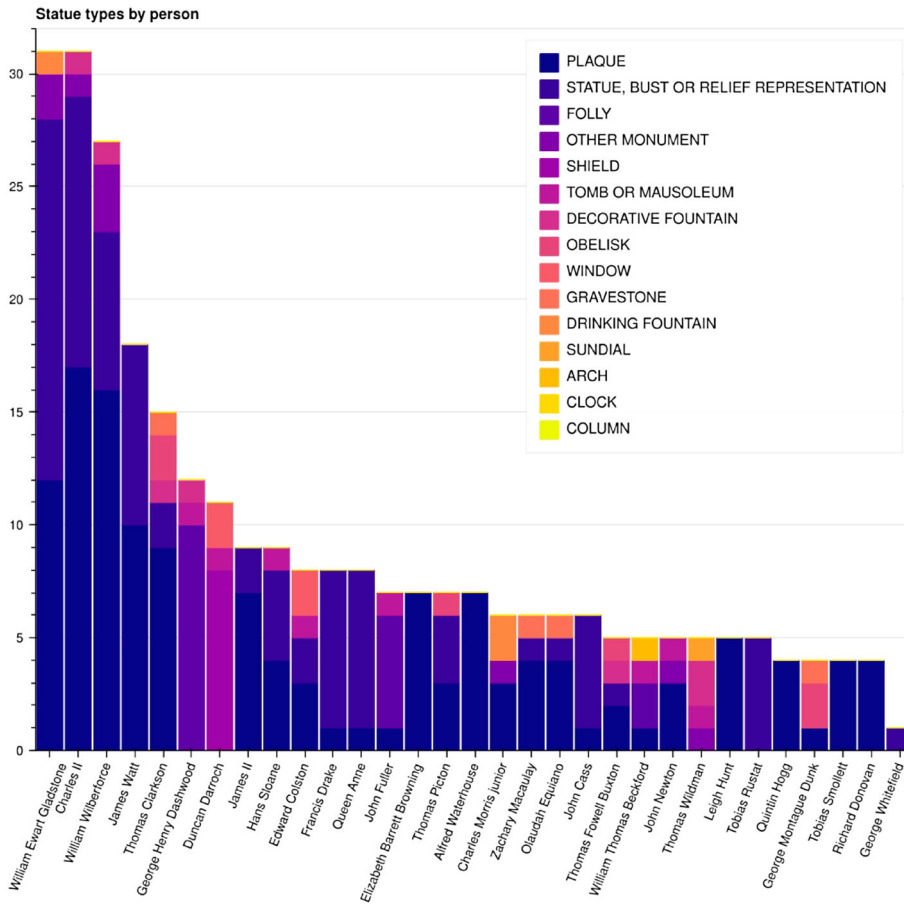


**Figure 3.** British slavery-related public representational monuments by type.

on metropolitan British society'.<sup>16</sup> Part of that impact is monumental: 395 monuments are linked to absentee or transatlantic slave-owners (Figure 4).

However, who is represented does not fully coincide with significance in terms of financial legacy or proximity. While statues or plaques represent people implicated in slave-ownership, it is rare they are erected by them. Municipal figurative monuments often lack financial proximity, erected by a community in tribute. Likewise, most plaques are highly retrospective (London's blue plaque scheme began in 1866). If we consider monuments which were erected *by* people implicated in slave-ownership in which they also most-frequently *represent themselves*, then the U.K.'s most significant slavery-related public monuments are funerary. This is likely also the case were we to count the wider circle of merchants involved in plantation trade, who Hancock and Dresser both address as a significant group through which slave wealth shaped British public spaces.<sup>17</sup> In the data, the monuments most consistently embodying merchants are church plaques.

Similarly, monumental 'follies' constitute a less symbolically significant representation of a more financially significant relationship. The thirty-two follies we identified embody larger single investments. Follies are the most frequently



**Figure 4.** British slavery-related public representational monuments by associated name.

listed and largest monuments in the data. They might be inferred to be the most expensive type of slavery-related monuments, though we lack costings. Where urban statues are an index of a moment of public feeling, if erected by popular subscription, follies to a greater extent represent personal whimsy and private wealth.

Spatial distribution is another measure of significance. Funereal monuments, for example, do not exhibit strong geographical clustering around slaving-ports, but a relatively even distribution reflecting population. As such, in geographical distribution (and in their microdifferentiation of status, form and style), the funerary monuments we identified form a collective monument to the extent to which the economy of slavery permeated British society. If follies are more likely to represent larger single investors in slave-ownership, gravestones might be regarded as monuments to distributed British middle-class investment in slave-ownership.

A focus on statues also belies a typological separation between slavery-related monuments of the country and the city. While statues and plaques



**Figure 5.** British slavery-related public representational monuments, nationally and in London.

are weighted towards London, follies, shields and sundials appear almost exclusively in the countryside, usually at former private estates. In the countryside, many such monuments contributed to the 1800s' aesthetic vogue for the picturesque in private estates as well as public parks and landscaped garden cemeteries. This relationship persists today, with at least 292 slavery-related monuments in or within 10 km of designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or National Parks.<sup>18</sup>

Today, the monuments mark how socio-economic legacies of slavery still deeply shape social space. Looking to London and laying the 2019 multiple indexes of deprivation's geographical data over monument locations, we find the least-deprived wards possess more statues and plaques related to slavery. The three boroughs with the most – City of London, Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea – also hold the highest value properties.<sup>19</sup> An inverse pattern appears vis-a-vis Black British communities. Inner London has one of the densest Black populations in the U.K. One hundred and thirty-four of London's 232 slavery-related statues and plaques are in the City of London; Westminster; Kensington and Chelsea; and Camden, all of which have a Black population of 20% or less, compared to the Greater London average (26.3%). Meanwhile, the U.K.'s most remote Northern and Western monuments are all slave memorials (Cesar Picton, Orkney; Samuel Alley, Isle of Man; 'a Young West African Boy', Scilly Isles). In sum, today the monuments tend to signify spaces of historic wealth and whiteness (Figure 5).

### **Funerary Monuments as the Predominant Monumental Heritage of Slavery**

Among monuments related to slavery, funereal monuments appear, by many criteria, as the most prominent type. But they have been little examined. Beyond their profusion, funerary monuments possess their own intensity of significance. They are the second most frequently listed (82%) after the much smaller set of follies (88%).<sup>20</sup> The single densest site of slavery-related

monuments in the U.K. is funerary: Westminster Abbey (20). Nationally, we identified seventy-six relevant mausoleums or tombs, ranging from grand structures to chest tombs; 189 plaques in churches; 28 figurative sculptures in churches; and 114 gravestones. As described above, the nature of the data means the true figures, especially for gravestones, are likely far higher.

Far from universal expressions of grief or memory, pre-1900 funerary monuments primarily asserted status.<sup>21</sup> In 1600, landed families or clergy generally received plaques marking burials inside churches. By the mid-1600s, churchyard burials with stone monuments became more common, but any monument was a notable expense – a means through which the ‘English ruling classes asserted the status and continuity of their families’.<sup>22</sup> Most of the population received mass burial through the 1700s. The post-1820 turn from churchyards to urban commercial and municipal cemeteries created a market of greater numbers of smaller plots for a growing middle class expressing status in death. Funerary monuments had their own 1800s mania in ‘an intense revival of public ceremonial for the dead. The upper and middle classes paid for elaborate funerals, made a cult of visiting the tombs of the dead, and had cliché-studded verses inscribed upon their monuments’.<sup>23</sup> This monument mania, too, followed the growth of national wealth substantially derived from slavery. The grandest mausoleums include those modelled after tombs newly excavated in the first half of the 1800s in Rome, Turkey or North Africa, such as shipowner John Allan’s in Nunhead cemetery echoing Xanthos’ Pavaya Mausoleum. Others are folly-like, such as MP John Erle-Drax’s mausoleum with a letterbox, through which he arranged to have *The Times* delivered. Post-1820, most of the London gravestones we identified are in the municipal cemeteries of Highgate, Kilburn, Nunhead, and Brompton.<sup>24</sup> Nationally, the gravestones range from simple tablets to large sculptures. Blurring personal affect with public status, the most frequent words on these funerary monuments unsurprisingly involve moral aggrandizing: ‘virtuous’, ‘good’, ‘honourable’, ‘faithful’, and ‘benevolent’. The (usually engraved) wordcount is regularly noticeably inflated – another mark of status. Gikandi describes slavery as the repressed absent centre of the 1700’s culture of taste, metaphorically a ‘secret tomb of modern subjectivity’.<sup>25</sup> These monuments fix this metaphor in stone. The many funerary monuments linked to slavery materially embody slavery’s accumulated labour, legacies of the many bodies beyond those named on their faces.

### **Propaganda, Neoclassicism and British Monumental Representations of Enslaved People**

Monument mania was a core expression of Britain’s burst of invented traditions in the 1800s.<sup>26</sup> These monuments operate in the mode of propaganda art.<sup>27</sup> As a form, they reject the concept of agency which has been important to recent

slavery studies. Their social function is expressed in designs which militate against multi-accentuality, set in stone against other constructions of their meaning. Their fundamental aesthetic dynamic is appearing as overseers. Raised on walls or plinths, to see them is to be subject *to* meaning from above, to experience denial of the right to look, something often made explicit in additional plaques which instruct how they are to be seen, lest their intended interpretation slip.<sup>28</sup> The predominant style of this high point of British propaganda art is neoclassicism.

From the late 1700s, neoclassicism's style and ideas suffused the U.K., including its networks of slavery, from slaves and servants given classical names; to classical sculptural bodies as ideals in race science; to statues in which wealthy individuals were depicted as virtuous civic leaders. Statues of planter Christopher Codrington in Oxford; King William III in Glasgow; and Charles II in Windsor depict them in Roman attire. Notable British sculptors in this style, such as Flaxman, Banks and Bacon appear in the data. There are valuable examinations of slavery vis-a-vis gentility, the picturesque and visual culture in the 1700–1800s.<sup>29</sup> However, similar reflections on neoclassicism are more scattered.<sup>30</sup> They concur, however, that neoclassicism was politically ambiguous, especially in Britain, embodying reactionary mythologizing of difficult realities as often as democratic idealism and ideas of Sensibility. Gilroy, Gikandi and others have argued Black and enslaved lives were excluded and yet allegorically enclosed in the ideas and visual culture of the period. Judging by patterns in monuments' location and representation, this critique is particularly relevant to British neoclassicism.

African people appear in British monuments of this period mostly via neoclassical allegory. Cesare Ripa's 1593 *Iconologia* influenced personifications of Africa as a woman or cherub bearing gifts.<sup>31</sup> While these allegorize colonial extraction generally, they obscured and normalized slavery and may have been understood after 1640 as representing slaves. We identified eight such personifications, mainly on pediments and entablatures of finance, trade and government buildings. Other monuments legible as slaves are 'blackamoor' heads, not least on the crests of the Royal Africa Company and the slave-traders John Hawkins or Duncan Darroch. These have an independent iconographic history from the late 1200s, but their reception likewise changed under British slavery. We identified twenty, many no longer extant. Often minor features, these heads and personifications are not well-recorded and there were and are likely more.

There are two ways in which enslaved people appear *as slaves*. In thirty-nine of a total of fifty-eight clear allegorical representations of slaves (and here we include unspecific text describing 'slaves'), they are neoclassical kneeling slaves as secondary figures (a figure perhaps first typified by Pietro Tacca's 1626 *Monument of the Four Moors*, Livorno, Italy). Of these, thirty-four are garden ornaments, mostly 1700–1740, of a blackamoor 'slave' supporting a sundial. Appearing first at Hampton Court Palace, these were reproduced

commercially.<sup>32</sup> Romanticization of slavery appears explicit in one owned by Thomas Wentworth, negotiator of the Asiento. However, most of these were originally not public monuments, but intended for enjoyment in private gardens. Discounting allegories of Africa, the lack of specific or allegorical depictions of slavery on *public* monuments in the 1700s is marked when compared to the visibility of slaves on *privately* enjoyed objects: as servants or in imagined plantation scenes from ceramics to silverware. Sundials, panels (such as the wildly orientalist 1696 plantation scenes of artist Robert Robinson, relocated in 1906 to Sir John Cass Foundation Primary School) and other monuments show slaves in public but often did not begin that way. One possible exception to this public invisibility, Francis Russell's monument of an African slave being crowned with the cap of liberty on the Temple of Liberty at Woburn Abbey, was not executed and instead appears in domestic designs for ink pots.<sup>33</sup> As such, allegorical depictions of transatlantic slavery do not appear on British *public* monuments until 1822, when they appear on monuments for white abolitionists.<sup>34</sup>

The other side of neoclassicism's political ambiguity was its embrace by radicals espousing liberty in the wake of the French revolution, and some art historians see this tone carried in some British neoclassical representations of enslaved people.<sup>35</sup> Five abolitionist monuments feature kneeling sculptural figures. Excepting slave gravestones, we found no cases in monuments before 1997 where an enslaved person, allegorical or real, is the principal subject. Gravestones aside, from 1822 to the end of the twentieth century, slaves appeared on British public monuments only when they were being abolished by white British men and then only as allegory.

The sustained ambiguities of neoclassicism run through most of these depictions of slaves. While slaves supporting sundials evoked the empire's supporting cast of labour, slaves supporting abolitionists evoke the supporting cast in the later tale of Britain's gift of emancipation. Often the Wedgewood design is adapted with the slave's chains now broken, transforming pleading into thanking, as on Westminster Abbey's Macaulay monument (a modification also found in domestic designs).<sup>36</sup> At the same time, Gibbs and Cutter both argue that some artists appropriated Eurocentric representations of slaves for more humanizing ends, and this is one way to interpret neoclassical slaves.<sup>37</sup> Thomas has argued that ideas of Sensibility informed abolitionist images of slaves, and we might also infer this to involve a repurposing of earlier slave imagery.<sup>38</sup> But these stylings remain ambiguous, bringing eroticizing as much as dignifying qualities to Black bodies. Robert Montgomery's 1809 *Poems on the Abolition of the Slave Trade* employs a title page illustrating Hercules liberating a bound Prometheus. Elizabeth Barret-Browning's poem on Hiram Powers' *The Greek Slave*, likely the most famous neoclassical sculpture of the 1800s, understood it as abolitionist, though the statue itself is far more ambiguous (it was exhibited broadly in the slave-owning South before the



American civil war and the Corcoran version was owned by a slaveowner).<sup>39</sup> The same tensions perhaps persisted in the casts of Michelangelo's dying and rebellious slaves bought in 1863 for the South Kensington Museum. In any case, British neoclassical public monuments depicting slaves do not match the greater number of such representations found in American sculpture in the second half of the 1800s, where the working bodies of enslaved people was not such a distant matter.<sup>40</sup> There appears to be a correlation between the presence of enslaved bodies and the frequency of such neoclassical representations of them. In an important sense, these representations do not show us enslaved people at all but monumentalize 'white mythology'.<sup>41</sup>

We identified thirty-eight monuments to named historical enslaved people between 1701 and 1887, all gravestones – although these were also created in a visual culture in which living Black people – of which Myers estimates 10,000 in the U.K. between 1780–1830 – free or not, were almost-universally seen allegorically as slaves and abject others.<sup>42</sup> After the 110-year gap in related monuments, over twenty more appear from 1997, with the pace accelerating very recently. These include plaques to named individuals and approaches that replace classical allegory with contemporary artistic allegory to critically engage traumatic memory, for example London's *Gilt of Cain* or Lancaster's *Captured Africans*.

One last way in which we might connect neoclassical monuments and slavery is by overlaying two international circuits: the Middle Passage and the Grand Tour (through which such aesthetics was propagated, and during which tourists might buy monumental reproductions from dealers such as Rome-based plantation owner James Byers of Tonley). Fifteen British grand tourists are implicated, one with a plaque celebrating their tour. Were we to cross-reference the thousands of names in Ingamells' *Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers to Italy 1701–1800*, we might expect to find more.<sup>43</sup> We might also bring these circuits into dialogue with the work of artists who toured colonial plantations.<sup>44</sup>

## **Heritage Here Because Heritage There: British Monuments to Plantations and Slave Revolts**

Having identified many of these monuments as related to slavery for the first time, there are two ways this data might alter the way they are understood, by remapping them in relation to plantation sites and to slave revolts. Above we have suggested that some of the monuments which present sculpted bodies or entombed bodies are also conceptually linked to the absent bodies of enslaved people. Through plantation ownership records, 514 monuments can be specifically linked to particular plantations and their accounted enslaved bodies (Figure 1). Each of these monuments which mark British domestic space are also markers of distant British heritage sites of the practice of slavery.

Mapping the monuments as dual sites of colonial heritage is particularly significant for British slavery. Transatlantic slavery's memory has been shaped very differently in Britain, compared to the U.S., because plantations were overseas and out of sight. Linking monuments to plantations may be one way to bring home a fuller picture of British heritage. Most of the linked monuments connect to plantations in Barbados and Jamaica, which held the largest British-owned slave populations. However, the others do not offer correlations to the largest or longest-running sites of British plantation. Taken as a whole, evoking these links visualizes the final leg of the triangular trade, in which commodities and surplus value are brought back to the U.K. (Figure 1). These 514 monuments are memorials illustrating the circuit of transatlantic slavery's primitive accumulation.

We might enrich monumental links to plantations through two kinds of object. Firstly, British monuments in slaveholding colonies shared makers and styles with those of the U.K. Coutu has directly examined and catalogued British slavery-related monuments in the Caribbean. While identifying networks between domestic and colonial monuments is beyond the present article, they form one trans-Atlantic set central to the colonial history of British art.<sup>45</sup> Secondly, the data allows us to identify specific intersections between the material culture of monuments and that of slave brands, which Keefer notes share a symbolic spectrum, particularly in the case of coats of arms.<sup>46</sup> For example, nine monuments are marked by the likeness or name of King James II. These stone and brass objects share their biographical testament with silver brands marking his former title, 'DY' (Duke of York), on the bodies of slaves owned by the Royal Africa Company. Likewise, we find monuments remembering the names of slaveowners William James Rhodes I, William Beckford and Joel Savell, whose names were also placed on bodies via their brands 'WRI', 'W◇B' and 'S'. As the work of mapping brands develops, we may be able to make further such links between these parallel material cultural histories.

We can also complicate these transatlantic networks of sites and objects. Harvey has argued that slavery and industrial capital do not represent a closed circuit of cause and effect, but a complex web of hybrid forms of exploitation.<sup>47</sup> This web is embodied materially – not least in the production of sugar and cotton in plantations and its domestic working-class consumption. So we should not see the monuments as a simple one-way legacy. One set of monuments evoke this complexity, linking the regulation and discipline of bodies in both plantations and in British towns. Plantation slavery and domestic philanthropy intersected in the 1700s and 1800s.<sup>48</sup> We identified sixteen monuments that were municipal gifts: drinking fountains and clock towers, nine with text celebrating their own philanthropy. Their funders are frequently figures moving from slavery investments into landowning and parliament. Monumental public improvements were bound to the invention of 'public

health' and the composition of an industrial working class.<sup>49</sup> Symbolically, they often overdetermine moral and bodily cleanliness, waste and wastefulness: 'The fear of the Lord is the fountain of life' reads the fountain placed by Maria Hawes-Ware, West India merchant's widow and compensation act claimant. These functional monuments evidence the intertwining of 'new rhythms' of industrial time and the regulation of healthy working bodies that reshaped British towns.<sup>50</sup> Wendover's 1842 'clock tower-fountain' literally conjoins these functions, built by banker and claimant Abel Smith. These monuments recall British colonialism's hybrid circuits of exploitation, and the exploitation of bodies at either end of its logistical webs, as profit extracted from Caribbean slave plantations was invested in British regional monuments purposed to the efficiency and effectiveness of the working class.

The second major way this data might alter the meaning of these monuments is to make them involuntarily remember enslaved peoples' historical agency by remapping them in relation to slave uprisings. Heritage organizations' focus on monuments linked to white abolitionism, or those Black abolitionists recuperated as 'pensive ... "respectable"'<sup>51</sup> figures, has meant the role of slave revolts preceding abolition has been neglected, monumentally. Britain has no intentional monuments remembering slave revolts such as those to be found in Port au Prince or Bridgetown. However, forty British monuments have notable connections to slave revolts. They include soldier John Gordon's plaque in St Peter's, Dorchester, which in racist language praises him for 'quelling a dangerous rebellion'. This was Tacky's revolt in Jamaica – the most significant slave rebellion in the British Caribbean of the 1700s.<sup>52</sup> Despite their colonial orientation, such monuments can be made to bring these revolts home and reveal cracks in slavery's cultural facade. Most do not mention uprisings, and the data remap them as monuments linked to slave rebellion for first time. Bussa's rebellion, the largest slave revolt in Barbados' history, appears through large funerary monuments in Bathwick to Alexander Scott, whose plantations were its site, and in Cheltenham to John Rycroft Best, involved in its suppression. Fedon's rebellion in Grenada is similarly linked to monuments to General John Hope. Two statues of army officer Colin Campbell might remind us of the 10,000 who arose in the 1823 Demerara rebellion which he opposed. A memorial in Exeter Cathedral remembers soldier Arthur Henry Irvine, dying in the failed British push to suppress the Haitian revolution. Major-General Thomas Dundas' memorial in St Paul's is a direct material product of an army of French republicans and former slaves pushing the British out of Guadeloupe. They dug up Dundas' body, feeding it to seabirds. Domestic outrage at this indignity prompted the St Paul's memorial. Two other monuments remember pirates with complex links to slavery. One is for Bartholomew Roberts, who liberated slaves from at least one ship. Seventy of his crew were identified as former slaves (his crew also set fire to a slave ship killing eighty enslaved) and fifty-two other crew were sentenced to death at

Cape Coast slave castle.<sup>53</sup> Another is for Anne Bonney and Mary Read. At their trial, their crew were charged with taking the *Neptune* whose cargo included ‘ten negroes’. It is not described whether they were freed. The crew were also convicted of fomenting revolt on the slave ship *Abingdon* prior to its arrival in Africa.<sup>54</sup> Two intentional monuments to the individual revolt of escaping slavery exist in the 1875 grave of Joseph Freeman and the 2021 plaque to Ellen And William Craft, but it is notable that here are no further monuments for the 800 + enslaved and bound people within the U.K. who escaped in the 1700s.<sup>55</sup> However, the data remap seventeen further monuments as linked to Jamaican ‘runaway slave’ adverts of the 1700s and 1800s. These adverts record escapees’ given names and occasionally details of their biography or their daring escape. Such monuments might be altered to remember the names and celebrate the agency of those who escaped the ownership of the figures named on those monuments.

Monuments related to slavery have served as leverage points for Black British movements for reparative justice and against police violence. This new meaning is a function of their earlier propaganda-function, and to some extent remakes them as heritage – internationally, legal scholars have begun considering anti-racist graffiti on monuments as implicating public rights alongside those of the initial monument.<sup>56</sup> Twenty-three monuments have been removed or modified (unofficially or officially) since the first BLM chapter appeared in the U.K. in 2015, but further research might enrich our understanding of them further by identifying monuments re-articulated as sites of protest.

In the twentieth century, the often personal and haphazardly erected monuments since 1600, among which we find these links to slavery, are quickly outnumbered by two new waves of ‘monument mania’ (though neither are usually described as such). Firstly, War Memorials Online notes only 198 war memorials to conflicts prior to 1900, to the Crimean and Boer wars (and several are principally memorials to individuals or erected much later). But from 1902 there appear 888 memorials to the Second Boer War. Such militaristic propaganda artworks today number at least 60,000. These are more often collective memorials and systematically erected. Secondly, from 1860 outdoor advertisement monuments in the U.K. ballooned, numbering 137,868 today.<sup>57</sup> These mark a technical advance: enclosing public space in concrete ways but without their particular symbolism being set in stone. Yet the smaller number of monuments related to slavery retain an extraordinarily unique, intense significance still only lightly addressed by their legal custodians, who have centred the redemptive narratives of white abolition over acknowledging slavery and its legacies, or remembering Black agency. They have much to learn from turns towards these latter emphases in Black British artistic practices from at least the 1980s and in (some) social history curatorial practices from the late 1990s.<sup>58</sup> Where more critical monumental heritage production has occurred, it

has overwhelmingly been led from below by Black communities, through contemporary art, online re-mediation, revision and removal campaigns, counter-monuments, guerrilla memorialization and strategic vandalism.<sup>59</sup> Responding to such pressure, government and institutional policy has more often been characterized by inertia and obfuscation.<sup>60</sup> Our project aimed to produce a national accounting of all these monuments and make it open and accessible, which has not universally been the approach of these monuments' custodians. We hope that this is of use to those communities who should lead the work and decision-making on how these monuments should be understood or altered.

## Notes

1. Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); Alan Rice, *Creating Memorials, Building Identities: The Politics of Memory in the Black Atlantic* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010); Paul E. Lovejoy and Vanessa S. Oiveira, eds., *Slavery Memory Citizenship* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2016); Ana Lucia Araujo, *Shadows of the Slave Past: Memory, Heritage, and Slavery* (London: Routledge, 2014); Lawrence Aje and Nicolas Gachon, eds., *Traces and Memories of Slavery in the Atlantic World* (London: Routledge, 2020); Emma Bond and Michael Morris, eds., *Scotland's Transnational Heritage: Legacies of Empire and Slavery* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2022); Itay Lotem, *The Memory of Colonialism in Britain and France* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021); Olivette Otele, 'History of Slavery, Sites of Memory, and Identity Politics in Contemporary Britain', in *A Stain on Our Past: Slavery and Memory*, ed. Abdoulaye Gueye and Johann Michel (Trenton: Africa World Press, 2018).
2. Dan Hicks, 'The UK Government Is Trying to Draw Museums into a Fake Culture War', *Guardian*, October 15, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/15/the-uk-government-is-trying-to-draw-museums-into-a-fake-culture-war>.
3. Madge Dresser, *Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in an English Provincial Port* (London: Bloomsbury, 2001); Jessica Moody, *The Persistence of Memory: Remembering Slavery in Liverpool* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020); 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); Joan Coutu, *Persuasion and Propaganda: Monuments and the Eighteenth-Century British Empire* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006); Matthew J. Smith, 'Rockstone: On Race, Politics, and Public Memorials in Jamaica', *Slavery & Abolition* 42, no. 2 (2020): 219–39; Stephan Lenik and Christer Petley, 'The Material Cultures of Slavery and Abolition in the British Caribbean', *Slavery & Abolition* 35, no. 3 (2014): 389–98; Jerome S. Handler and Annis Steiner, 'Identifying Pictorial Images of Atlantic Slavery: Three Case Studies', *Slavery & Abolition* 27, no. 1 (2006): 51–71; Laurence Brown, 'Monuments to Freedom, Monuments to Nation: The Politics of Emancipation and Remembrance in the Eastern Caribbean', *Slavery & Abolition* 23, no. 3 (2002): 93–116.
4. On such work from below, see Gavin Grindon, 'Curating with Counterpowers: Activist Curating, Museum Protest, and Institutional Liberation', *Social Text* 41, no. 2 (2023): 19–44.

5. Natural Language Processing uses machine learning to analyse human language. Open Source Investigation is the collection and analysis of public data in order to gather evidence. *Modern Deep Learning Techniques Applied to Natural Language Processing*, <https://nlpoverview.com/#1> (accessed August 14, 2023), Sam Dubberley, Alexa Koenig, and Daragh Murray, *Digital Witness: Using Open Source Information for Human Rights Investigation, Documentation and Accountability* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
6. We combined and cleaned monument datasets from Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland, Cadw, Dept for Communities NI and the PMSA to arrive at a set of 11037 representational monuments from 1600 to 1900, excluding grave-stones and tombs. We calculated the UK-wide mean statues per person per local authority. Assuming a linear relationship between population and number of statues in a local authority, we multiplied the total population by this mean, giving us an estimated undercount of  $c=2500$ . As there is variation in the number of monuments within authorities, a more conservative estimated undercount is 1800, giving us 12,800. The funerary figure is based on data from [findagrave.com](http://findagrave.com).
7. Hereafter ‘monuments’ – our typology’s further details are unpacked on the ‘about’ page at [britishmonumentsrealtedtoslavery.net](http://britishmonumentsrealtedtoslavery.net).
8. Miranda Kaufman, *English Heritage Properties 1600–1830 and Slavery Connections* (London: English Heritage, 2007).
9. ‘The Monument Mania’, *The Spectator*, August 10, 1850, 758.
10. Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, 95–118; Nicholas Draper, ‘Possessing People: Absentee Slave-Owners within British Society’, in *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership: Colonial Slavery and the Formation of Victorian Britain*, ed. Catherine Hall et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 11.
11. Madge Dresser, ‘Set in Stone? Statues and Slavery in London’, *History Workshop Journal* 64, no. 1 (2007): 162–99. 164.
12. Historic Environment Scotland, ‘Kinloch Public Park, to South of Swimming Baths, Statue of William Mackinnon: LB24899, 2009’, <http://portal.historicenvironment.scot/designation/LB24899> (accessed May 2023).
13. Jo Littler, ‘Festering Britain: The 1951 Festival of Britain, National Identity and the Representation of the Commonwealth’, in *Visual Culture and Decolonisation in Britain*, ed. Anandi Ramamurthy and Simon Faulkner (London: Routledge, 2006).
14. The Association of English Cathedrals, ‘Truth-Telling the Slave Trade at Bristol Cathedral’, <https://www.englishcathedrals.co.uk/latest-news/truth-telling-the-slave-trade-at-bristol-cathedral/> (accessed May 2023).
15. Eric Williams, *Capitalism & Slavery* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1994).
16. Draper, ‘Possessing People’, 35.
17. David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735–1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 279–382; Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, 96–118.
18. We did not include walled gardens in the data, but several have slavery links (e.g. Tregwainton and Woolverstone; Youngsbury).
19. Note that this data is unnormalised: The total number of statues per borough is unknown, so whether these boroughs’ statuary is disproportionately skewed towards slavery-related monuments is also unknown, though it is a reasonable assumption.
20. Given the cursory descriptions in listing records, we considered listed all funerary monuments in the grounds of listed churches, which may incur some overcount. Our reliance on listing records also boosts this proportion, against unknown unlisted funerary monuments.

21. Coutu, *Persuasion and Propaganda*, 30–2.
22. Nicholas Penny, *Church Monuments in Romantic England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 2.
23. Joshua Scodel, *The English Poetic Epitaph: Commemoration and Conflict from Jonson to Wordsworth* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1991), 408.
24. Reliance on listed buildings data distorts our findings – these are listed cemeteries.
25. Simon Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), x.
26. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
27. ‘Propaganda’, sometimes still used in a Eurocentric way that centres on public art in twentieth-century totalitarian states, finds more critical use in describing aspects of Western culture. For example, Jonas Staal, *Propaganda Art in the Twenty-First Century* (Massachusetts: MIT, 2019); Coutu, *Persuasion and Propaganda*.
28. Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look* (Durham: Duke, 2011).
29. Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*; Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780–1865* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000). On slavery and the picturesque, see Catherine Armstrong, ‘Forum: Slavery and Landscape’, *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 1 (2017): 1–48; Elizabeth Bohls, *Slavery and the Politics of Place* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Madge Dresser and Andrew Hann, *Slavery and the British Country House* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2013); Kathleen S. Murphy, ‘Collecting Slave Traders: James Petiver, Natural History, and the British Slave Trade’, *William and Mary Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2013): 637–70.
30. David Bindman, *Ape to Apollo: Aesthetics and the Idea of Race in the 18th Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 81–92; Cora Gilroy-Ware, *The Classical Body in Romantic Britain* (New Haven: Yale, 2020); Margaret Williamson, ‘Africa or Old Rome? Jamaican Slave Naming Revisited’, *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 1 (2017): 117–34; and (in the US context) Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 8–16.
31. Marion Romberg, ‘Continent Allegories in the Baroque Age – a Database’, *Journal* 18, no. 5 (2018). <https://www.journal18.org/issue5/continent-allegories-in-the-baroque-age-a-database/>.
32. Patrick Eyres, ed., *The Blackamoor & the Georgian Garden: New Arcadian Journal* 69/70 (2011). See also the ‘sundial supporter’ surveys in *The British Sundial Society Bulletin* (97.1, 1997; 97.2, 1997; and 19(iii), 2007).
33. John Flaxman, *Liberty Freeing a Slave, Drawing, c1802-3*. 1888,0503.53 (London: British Museum); John Flaxman, *Design for a silver ink stand, metalwork design, c1820, E.,84-1964* (London: V&A).
34. Liverpool’s 1813 Nelson monument is a possible exception. Moody argues its ambiguous chained figure was read as both an enslaved person and a prisoner of war. Moody, *The Persistence of Memory*, 240–4.
35. Gilroy-Ware, *The Classical Body in Romantic Britain*, 196–7. Hamilton meanwhile posits that the Farnese Hercules might be a source for the Wedgewood design, Cynthia S. Hamilton, ‘Hercules Subdued: The Visual Rhetoric of the Kneeling Slave’, *Slavery & Abolition* 34, no. 4 (2013): 631–52.
36. For example, John Turner, *Freed Slave, Earthenware, c1833*. C129-2003 (London: V&A); John Turner, *Jug, stoneware, c1800*. 2510-1901 (London: British Museum).

37. Jenna M. Gibbs, *Performing the Temple of Liberty: Slavery, Theater and Popular Culture in London and Philadelphia 1760–1850* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014); Martha J. Cutter, *The Illustrated Slave* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2017).
38. Sarah Thomas, *Witnessing Slavery* (New Haven: Yale, 2019), 35–57.
39. John Macneill Miller, ‘Slavish Poses: Elizabeth Barrett Browning and the Aesthetics of Abolition’, *Victorian Poetry* 52, no. 4 (2014): 637–59; Martina Droth, ‘Mapping “the Greek Slave”’, *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 15, no. 2 (2016): 20–44.
40. Charmaine A. Nelson, ‘White Marble, Black Bodies and the Fear of the Invisible Negro: Signifying Blackness in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Neoclassical Sculpture’, *RACAR* 27, no. 1–2 (2000): 87–101.
41. Wood, *Blind Memory*, 8.
42. Norma Myers, *Reconstructing the Black Past : Blacks in Britain, C. 1780–1830, Studies in Slave and Post-Slave Societies and Cultures* (London: F. Cass, 1996); Onyeka Nubia, *Blackamoors: Africans in Tudor England, Their Presence, Status and Origin* (London: Narrative Eye, 2013); 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).
43. The names and tour dates: Joseph Foster Barham I (1751); Charles Mellish (1763); William Beckford of Somerley (and his bear-leader Patrick Brydone) (1765); Henry Swinburne (1775–1780); John Vinicombe (1791); William Thomas Beckford (1780); Richard Colt Hoare (1785); Simon Richard Brissett Taylor (1801); Charles Robert Cockerell (1810–1817); Robert Johnson (1812–1814); Walter Stevenson Halliday (1814); John Irving the elder (1814); Herbert Newton Jarret V (1814). A detailed account of both Beckfords’ cultural lives vis-a-vis slavery is given in Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*, 114–27.
44. Sarah Thomas, *Witnessing Slavery* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019).
45. Jason Edwards, ‘Introduction: From the East India Company to the West Indies and Beyond: The World of British Sculpture, c1757–1947’, *Visual Culture in Britain* 11, no. 2 (2010): 147–72. 148. Coutu, *Persuasion and Propaganda* offers an appendix of British colonial monuments.
46. Katrina H.B. Keefer, ‘Marked by Fire: Brands, Slavery, and Identity’, *Slavery & Abolition* 40, no. 4 (2019): 659–81.
47. Mark Harvey, ‘Slavery, Indenture and the Development of British Industrial Capitalism’, *History Workshop Journal* 88, no. 1 (2019): 66–88.
48. Draper, ‘Possessing People’, 52–3.
49. Howard Malchow, ‘Free Water: The Public Drinking Fountain Movement and Victorian London’, *The London Journal* 4, no. 2 (1978): 181–203.
50. E. P. Thompson, ‘Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism’, *Past & Present* 38, no. 38 (1967): 56–97. 69; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981).
51. Alex and James Walvin Tyrell, ‘Whose History Is It? Memorialising Britain’s Involvement in Slavery’, in *Contested Sites: Commemoration, Memorial and Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Paul Pickering and Alex Tyrell (London: Routledge, 2004).
52. Vincent Brown, *Tacky’s Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic Slave War* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020).
53. Daniel Defoe, *A General History of the Pyrates: From Their First Rise and Settlement in the Island of Providence, to the Present Time* (London: T. Warner, 1724), 327, 261.
54. Robert Baldwin, *The Tryals of Captain John Rackam and Other Pirates* (Jamaica, 1721).



55. Runaway Slaves in Britain Database, 2015. <https://www.runaways.gla.ac.uk/database/>.
56. Sakia Jones, et al, 'Briefing Paper: Legal Regulation of Anti-Racist Graffiti on Public Statues' (Newcastle NSW, 2022).
57. Posterscope, email communication with authors (January 2022).
58. Celeste-Marie Bernier and Judie Newman, 'Public Art, Artefacts and Atlantic Slavery: Introduction', *Slavery & Abolition* 29, no. 2 (2008): 135–50; Eddie Chambers, 'Remembering the Crack of the Whip: African-Caribbean Artists in the UK Visualise Slavery', *Slavery & Abolition* 34 (2013): 293–307.
59. Beyond the UK organisations already mentioned, see [www.slaverymonuments.org](http://www.slaverymonuments.org); and 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, 2016).
60. This inertia is of a part with that of museum restitution policy. Dan Hicks, 'Opinion: UK Welcomes Restitution, Just not Anti-Colonialism', *Hyperallergic*, August 26, 2022, <https://hyperallergic.com/756241/uk-welcomes-restitution-just-not-anti-colonialism/>.

## Acknowledgements

Our thanks for advice and feedback on this article to Hardeep Dhinsa, Melissa L. Gustin, Sean Kelley, and Keith McClelland. Our thanks to Daragh Murray and the student participants in the Essex Digital Verification Unit project who refined the monument data.

## Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Notes on Contributors

**Gavin Grindon** is a senior lecturer in Art History in the School of Philosophical, Historical and Interdisciplinary Studies University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, CO4 3SQ, UK. Email: [ggrindon@essex.ac.uk](mailto:ggrindon@essex.ac.uk)

**Jennie Williams** is a PhD candidate specialising in Natural Language Processing and Machine Learning in The Bartlett Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, University College London, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 4TJ, UK. Email: [jennie.williams.20@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:jennie.williams.20@ucl.ac.uk)

**Duncan Hay** is a research fellow at the Bartlett Centre for Advanced Spatial Analysis, University College London, 90 Tottenham Court Road, London, W1T 4TJ, UK. Email: [d.hay@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:d.hay@ucl.ac.uk)

## ORCID

**Gavin Grindon**  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-5851-3333>

**Jennie Williams**  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-0720-9523>

**Duncan Hay**  <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-9781-9263>