

LEGACIES OF BRITISH SLAVE-OWNERSHIP

MANCHESTER AND SLAVERY [2]

The Gregs

The Greg family originated in Ayr, Scotland, but **John Greg I (1693–1783)** settled in Belfast in 1715.

With his younger son **Thomas Greg (1718–1796)**, he was involved in provisioning the plantations. Thomas went into partnership with Wadell Cunningham (1728/9–1797), a prosperous New York merchant and fellow Irishman. They were involved in privateering during the Seven Years' War.

The men invested in land and plantations in Dominica. Thomas Greg married Catherine Greg, née Henderson, a St. Vincent heiress, and inherited Cane Garden estate.

John Greg's eldest son, **John Greg II (1716–1795)**, was resident in Dominica from 1765 and was the first Government Commissioner responsible for the sale of land following the island's secession to the British in 1763. He owned Hertford and Hillsborough sugar estates. His brother **Thomas Greg I (1718–1796)** also owned an estate in Dominica, in partnership with Wadell Cunningham.

This adjoined Hertford and was called Belfast. Enslaved people on Hillsborough plantation rose up during the Second Maroon War in 1814. Their punishments were brutal and included both execution and transportation.

Thomas Greg II (1752–1832) and **Samuel Greg (1758–1834)**, the sixth and ninth sons of Thomas Greg I (1718–1796) were also connected to the slavery business. The two men inherited the estates in Dominica in 1819. As well as this direct link to plantation-ownership the brothers had multiple links to

the wider slavery business. Thomas Greg married Margaret Hibbert and was an insurance underwriter for Lloyds. He provided services to the Hibbert family West India merchant house in London. Samuel Greg established a mill at Styal which used slave-produced cotton. His success made the family one of the great names of Manchester in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

Quarry Bank Mill at Styal, Cheshire, established by Samuel Greg in 1784

List of Slaves belonging to Cane Garden Estate in the Island of St Vincent March 27 th 1817 Brought by Mrs C. Greg				
List of Male Slaves belonging to Cane Garden Estate				
Name	Colour	Employment	Age	Country
Abraham	Brown	Houseman	60 & 15	Carib.
James	Brown	D.	55 & 10	
John	Brown	D.	55 & 10	
Cesar	Middle	D.	48 & 22	
Tom	Brown	D.	44 & 10	
Hannah	Brown	D.	41 & 12	
Jessie	Brown	D.	38 & 10	
Sophia	Brown	D.	36 & 10	
Anna	Brown	D.	36 & 10	
Eliza	Brown	Labourer	36 & 10	

List of slaves on Cane Garden estate in St Vincent, 1817 the property of Catherine Greg.

The Marklands

The Markland family provide an example of the interconnectedness of manufacturing and the slave economy in Manchester. **Robert Markland I (c.1747–1828)** was a check and fustian manufacturer and heir to an estate at Pemberton, near Wigan. His brother Edward was part of the partnership Markland, Cookson and Fawcett, the owners of the largest cotton mill in Leeds. He married **Elizabeth Hibbert (1753–1838)** in 1776. The couple resided at Mabfield just outside of Manchester. Two of their sons became involved in the West India trade.

Robert Markland II (c.1782–1825) formed a slave-trading partnership with Simon Taylor, the richest man in Jamaica, and the Hibberts. Markland was responsible for the Hibberts' plantations after they left the island until his own departure from Jamaica in 1808.

Robert's younger brother **James Heywood Markland (1788–1864)** became an important proslavery lobbyist. Having trained as a solicitor in Manchester, he moved to London and joined the legal partnership Markland and Wright. The firm acted as solicitors for the Society of West India Planters and Merchants. James Heywood Markland was awarded compensation with John Nembhard Hibbert and Thomas Hibbert for Great Valley Sugar estate, Coventry Pen and Albion estate in Jamaica as trustee and executor of Robert Hibbert (1750–1835).



Image © Jcantrout

Codrington College Barbados, formerly the Codrington plantation belonging to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The compensation for enslaved people on this estate was awarded to James Heywood Markland as treasurer of the Society.

R. MARKLAND, Jun. Esq.
Jan 29. In his 42d year, Robert Markland, jun. esq. formerly of the Island of Jamaica, the second surviving son of Robert Markland, esq. of Mabfield, near Manchester. His sound understanding and cultivated mind, his gentle and conciliating manners, his generous and benevolent heart, and his pure and spotless integrity, secured to him through life, the respect and esteem of all who knew him.

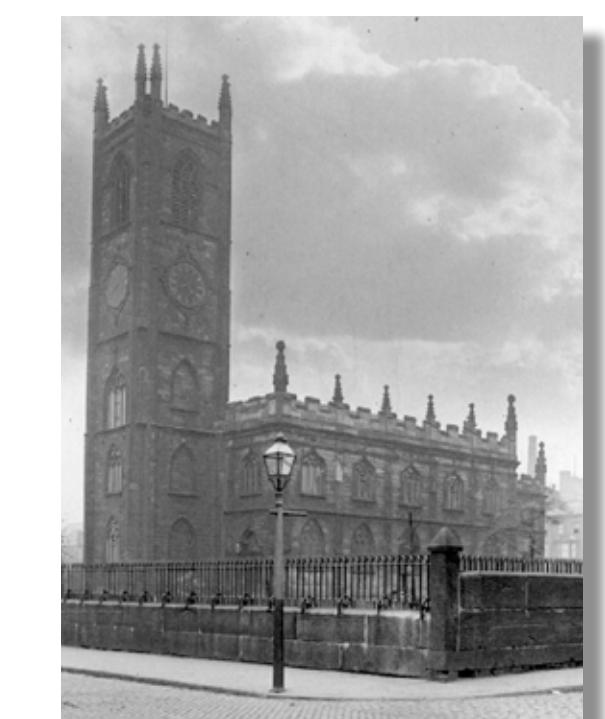
The obituary of Robert Markland junior from *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1825), p.185

Eleanora Atherton

Eleanora Atherton (1782–1870), "a quiet and unostentatious philanthropist", was an heiress who improved the lives of countless people in Manchester through her charitable giving. "In the 1860s, in her old age, she was a familiar figure in Manchester, carried round the streets by her old retainers in a sedan chair." Less well-known is that her wealth derived in part from the Jamaican plantations she inherited from her uncles Edward and William Atherton. In 1836 she was awarded £3,409 16s 7d for her share in the 726 enslaved people on Green Park and Spring Vale Pen in Jamaica. It's unclear how she reconciled knowledge of the plight of the enslaved people she 'owned' and whose labour she exploited with the compassion she felt for the poor of Manchester.

Eleanora Atherton lived most of her adult life at 23 Quay Street and at the family seat of Kersall Cell in Salford. Between 1838 and 1870 she donated c. £100,000 to good causes, focusing on religious charities and those associated with children and the elderly.

She donated £5,000 to the Manchester Ragged and Industrial Schools and supported medical institutions such as St Mary's Hospital and the dispensary. She funded the building of the Holy Trinity Church in Hulme at a cost of £18,000, gave £5,000 to St John's Church (since demolished and now the site of St John's Gardens), and with her relative Col. Clowes she donated the land for the building of St Paul's Church in Kersal. She paid for the building of almshouses in Prescot with a donation of £10,000, financed the restoration of the Jesus Chapel in Manchester Cathedral and supported the rebuilding of the cathedral's tower in 1868. Eleanora Atherton is just one of thousands of women who owned enslaved people and the impact of her slave-ownership is still seen in the built environment today.



St John's Church, Manchester, c. 1900.
The church was demolished in 1931 and is now the site of St John's Gardens.



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Jamaica, 1832 A RETURN OF SLAVES in the Parish of Saint James according to William Peatt Litt and Heirs of Edward Atherton Esq. on the Twelfth day of June in the year of our Lord 1832.						
NAMES.	COLOUR.	AGE.	SEXES ON CREST.	REMARKS.	INCREASE, and cause thereof.	DECREASE, and cause thereof.
James Taylor	Brown	4 years 2 months	Male	dead	By Birth	
James Lovell	Brown	1 year 2 months	Female	dead	By Birth	

A list of slaves in the possession of William Carey as attorney to William Peatt Litt and Heirs of Edward Atherton Esq. on Spring Vale Pen in 1832.