

Introduction

Bath Abbey, like other churches, benefited from the British Empire by accepting payments for monuments from people who made their fortunes from the Empire. Some of the monuments you see today were paid for from the profits of slavery and Empire.

The Church of England as a whole benefited due to its ownership of plantations, including the Codrington Estate on Barbados. This was through its missionary arm, the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

Since the tragic murder of George Floyd in America in May 2020, and the Black Lives Matter protests against racism, Bath Abbey has pledged to address its history, learn from it and help others to do so too. These are the ongoing steps we are taking towards sharing this history:

- consulting with local BAME communities on the next steps in acknowledging the Abbey's connections
- researching links with the British Empire by Archive and Learning staff and volunteers
- making our research publicly accessible
- developing school workshops
- working with other heritage organisations in Bath to tell the city's full history

A prayer to end racism

Human exploitation and racial prejudice, most emphatically, do not belong just to the past. Let us pray and commit afresh in our own day, to pursue justice and an end to all racism:

Good and Gracious God, who loves and delights in all people, we stand in awe before You, knowing that the spark of life within each person on earth is the spark of Your divine life. Differences among cultures and races are multicoloured manifestations of Your Light.

May our hearts and minds be open to celebrate similarities and differences among our sisters and brothers.

We place our hopes for racial harmony in our committed action and in Your Presence in our Neighbour.

May all peoples live in Peace.

Amen

Acknowledgement

This leaflet has been created thanks to the research of the Abbey's Archive volunteers and the guidance of its Oversight group.

For further information on the Abbey's continuing work on this subject, please visit www.bathabbey.org/anti-racism/.

www.bathabbey.org



Monuments, Empire & Slavery

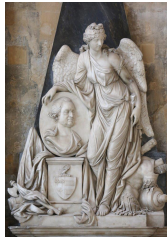
Information on selected memorials which reveal the Abbey's links to colonialism and the transatlantic slave trade

www.bathabbey.org



Information on selected memorials

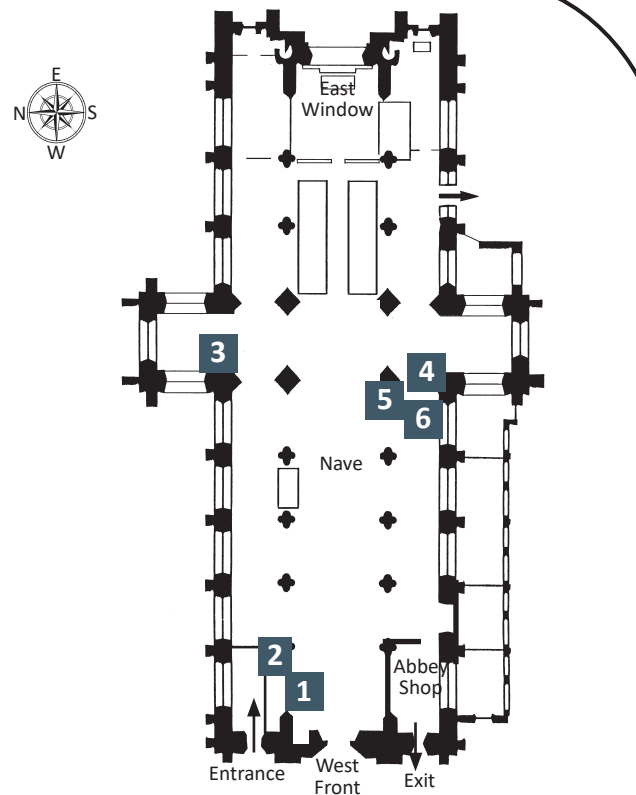
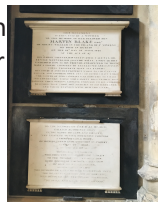
1 Alexander Champion (died 1793) joined the British East India Company in 1768 and was promoted to Commander-in-Chief in January 1774. He was in charge of the British Indian Army and in April 1774 he led a war against the Rohillas (Afghan Highlanders) at Miranpur Katra. The war was authorised by Warren Hastings, Governor-General, 1772-1785. In November that year, Champion retired to Southampton and also Bath, at 29, Royal Crescent. In 1786, he was a witness in the 7 year trial of Hastings for corruption. Champion spoke against him, but Hastings was eventually acquitted.



2 (Baron) George Gavin Browne Mill (1748-1842) was a Scottish doctor who worked in Bath. His friend from Bath, David Mill, left him a fortune, and he took the additional surname Mill "out of grateful respect to and in compliance with the desire of his friend". He became physician to King Louis XVIII of France, who granted him a Barony. Mill (died 1804) made his money from estates in Tobago and in Carriacou in Grenada. Browne Mill owned the Grand Bay Estate in Grenada, where the freedom of 183 enslaved people earned him £4,640 compensation (about £315,000 at today's rates) and Dunbarton Estate in St Ann's, Jamaica, where the freedom of 194 enslaved people earned him £2,956 (£201,000). The enslaved people received no payment.



3 Martin and Cecilia Blake Their family owned the Mount William plantation on the West Indian island of St Vincent. When Martin died aged 27 in 1826 in Dublin, his sister Cecilia inherited the plantation. After the abolition of the slave trade in 1834, she received £5,052 compensation for the freedom of around 200 enslaved people (about £343,000 at today's rates). After Cecilia's death in 1838, this money was inherited by their mother Lydia, who lived at 21, Royal Crescent. She erected the memorials in Bath Abbey.



4 James Heywood Markland (1788-1864) and his partners owned four sugar plantations in Jamaica and Barbados. They were each paid over £25,000 (about £1,700,000 at today's rates) by the British government to compensate for the freedom of over 400 enslaved people. As a lawyer, Markland also handled the compensation for the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the missionary arm of the Church of England. He gave money towards this window in Bath Abbey when he was the Treasurer of the Society. Markland was an agent who defended the interests of West Indian plantation owners in Parliament. He supported many Bath charities as a donor and committee member. He lived with his family at 1, Lansdown Crescent.

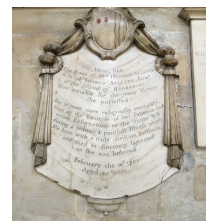


5 Sir William Baker (1705-1770) was Director of the East India Company (1741-1753) and Governor of the Hudson Bay Company (1760-1770), two of the most powerful companies which helped to establish the British Empire's colonies in India and Canada. The Hudson Bay Company governed large parts of North America, with its lucrative fur trade, for almost three centuries. The East India Company controlled half of the world's trade during the mid-1700s and early 1800s in goods like cotton, silk, indigo dye, salt, spices, tea, and opium. From the mid-1700s, the Company and its military ruled large areas of India. In 1858, the British Crown took direct control of India in the form of the new British Raj.



Baker's monument shows a female representing London (Baker's birthplace) at the centre of the empire. She holds a cornucopia (a horn overflowing with exotic fruits and flowers) and is given textiles, ivory, and incense by a man wearing a turban, and a beaver (representing the fur trade) by an indigenous Canadian man.

6 Hannah Alleyne (c.1727-1762) was born in Barbados to a plantation owning family and married Thomas Alleyne who owned Rock Hall plantation. His family dominated the island for several generations through inter-marriage.



Hannah's son John Alleyne (1747-1777) was influenced by the American Founding Father Benjamin Franklin, who was a family friend. John Alleyne became an abolitionist lawyer in a landmark case called the Mansfield judgment. His team successfully defended an enslaved man called James Somerset who had been re-captured on British soil. Hannah was buried in Bath Abbey.