

**SLAVERY CONNECTIONS OF BOLSOVER CASTLE  
(1600-c.1830)**

**FINAL REPORT for ENGLISH HERITAGE**

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## List of Abbreviations

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| BL    | British Library   |
| CO    | Colonial Office   |
| LivRO | Liverpool Record Office                                       |
| MSCUN | Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham |
| NA    | Nottinghamshire Archives                                      |
| NLJ   | National Library of Jamaica                                   |
| NMM   | National Maritime Museum                                      |
| RAC   | Royal African Company   |
| TNA   | The National Archives   |
| UWI   | University of West Indies                                     |

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## 1) Introduction

This report was commissioned by English Heritage in November 2008 and research was carried out from December 2008 to September 2009 with a budget of £5000. The following six objectives were addressed in the research:

1) to establish the slavery and colonial connections of the case study property and its owners, including their wider families;

2) to assess the relative importance of slave-generated wealth to the owners and how this changed over time;

3) to establish how slave-generated wealth was used in relation to the property and within the wider British economy and to establish if/how the wealth of property in Britain contributed in turn to the development of slavery-based investments in the colonial and slavery environment;

4) to identify and evaluate any evidence of slavery-related designs at the property;

5) to assess any evidence of a black presence within the household;

6) to assess any responses to abolition from owners of the property, their families and any other figures associated with them.

While we have attempted to give an overview of the slavery and colonial connections of Bolsover Castle, the availability of extant material, accessibility (particularly for Caribbean properties) and funding constraints have meant that we have had to focus on certain key periods, issues and individuals connected with the property. This has facilitated focussed and meaningful/cost-effective research which also fits with current historiographical debates. The key areas of focus are:

i) Henry Bentinck (1682-1726), first duke of Portland, an active trader in South Sea Company stock, colonial governor and slave plantation owner. The first duke

of Portland is particularly interesting as his losses through trading in South Sea Company stock had significant negative impacts on the Portland family finances for three generations, and by implication for the management of Bolsover under the dukes of Portland;

ii) William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck (1738-1809), third duke of Portland, manager/owner of Bolsover from 1762-1795, and a prominent politician, petitioned as prime minister by Granville Sharp over the *Zong* case, and involved in debates over slavery and colonial management while at the Home Office in the 1790s;

iii) the wider networks of connection within the Bentinck and Harley families with slavery-based systems through plantation ownership, colonial service and abolition activities, focusing particularly on Sir Robert Harley (1626-1673), great uncle to the second earl of Oxford, the Counts Bentinck, Dutch cousins of the third and fourth dukes of Portland, and Lord William Bentinck (1774-1839), second son of the third duke of Portland.

The report is structured to address the key objectives of the research as commissioned by English Heritage. Section 2 provides an overview of the owners of Bolsover Castle, their involvement with and uses of the property and their slavery connections which are explored in more detail in the remainder of the report. The following sections address each of the six objectives in turn. The report ends with a concluding section and raises issues for further research.

## **2) Overview of owners, their use of Bolsover and their slavery and colonial connections (see Table 1)**

Bolsover Castle was substantially reconstructed in the 17th century (from 1612 to 1666) under the ownership of Sir Charles Cavendish (1553-1617) and his son William Cavendish (1593-1676), first duke of Newcastle (see Figure 1a).<sup>1</sup> Charles Cavendish secured a lease (from the early 17th century), then ownership of the property from Gilbert, earl of Shrewsbury in August 1613 and began rebuilding almost immediately. Charles Cavendish is buried in Bolsover church.<sup>2</sup> We have found no evidence of slavery or colonial connections for either Charles Cavendish or his son William, though William seems to have employed black grooms in the 1650s and these are considered in Section 7 below. This is not that surprising as slavery was not engaged in to a large extent by the British until after the so-called Sugar Revolution in the mid 17th century, and the Royal African Company (RAC) only received its charter in 1672.<sup>3</sup> Riden and Fowkes report Bolsover Castle was used 'occasionally' in the early 17th century and 'quite often' in the 1670s after the building work was finished, but not much occupied after the death of William's son Henry, second duke of Newcastle in 1691. Welbeck (c.6 miles away) was always the main residence of the family during the period of British slavery. Bolsover has been described as a 'pleasure palace' for Charles and William Cavendish, a place of retreat from the rounds of daily estate life. The main uses of the Castle in the 17th century were for day visits particularly related to riding, short stays and entertainments, including the famous royal visit of 1634. Nonetheless, the fact that William Cavendish built a substantial family chapel at Bolsover church in 1618 and took the title of baron Cavendish of Bolsover (not Welbeck) in 1620, perhaps indicates a preference for Bolsover.

In the late 1620s, William Cavendish extended his Bolsover estates through purchases in Bolsover parish (Oxcroft) and in Clowne (Romeley) and Staveley

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<sup>1</sup> Lucy Worsley, 'The "Artisan Mannerist" Style in British Sculpture: a Bawdy Fountain at Bolsover Castle', *Renaissance Studies*, 19:1 (2005), 83-108.

<sup>2</sup> A. S. Turberville, *A History of Welbeck Abbey and its Owners. I: 1539-1755* (London, 1938), 40, 41.

<sup>3</sup> For a survey of the 'sugar revolution debate see B. W. Higman, 'The Sugar Revolution', *Economic History Review*, New Ser., 53:2 (2000), 213-36; For more on the Royal African Company see K. G. Davies, *The Royal African Company* (London, 1957).

(Woodthorpe) parishes just north of Bolsover. A 1641 estimate calculates his income at £22,393 a year, over half deriving from properties in Nottinghamshire (£6,229 – 27.8 per cent) and Derbyshire (£6,129 – 27.4 per cent) with the remainder from Staffordshire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Yorkshire and Northumberland property. Bolsover (including the Oxcroft, Romeley and Woodthorpe lands) yielded just £846, less than 3 per cent of the total rental income.<sup>4</sup> Investigation (using published and unpublished sources and a review of archive catalogues and documents of the sources of finance used in the building campaign) suggests there were no obvious links during the building phase with money from slavery-based enterprises.<sup>5</sup> However, the Venus fountain dates from this period and the black *putti* are assessed below as a potential example of 17th century slave iconography (see Section 6). There are also a number of indications that black servants were employed by William Cavendish and his family which are discussed below in Section 7. However, Cavendish's loyalty to the king during the Civil War and interregnum was estimated by his wife, Margaret, to have lost her husband nearly £1 million in revenues from land and he borrowed extensively during his period of exile from his brother, Charles, a range of Royalist connections (including the queen mother and the duke of Buckingham) as well as creditors in Antwerp.<sup>6</sup> These sources of borrowing during his exile warrant further examination. It would appear that the Cavendish estates continued to be indebted as William Cavendish's son, Henry, second duke of Newcastle, died leaving an outstanding mortgage debt of £80,000.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Philip Riden and Dudley Fowkes, *Bolsover: Castle, Town and Colliery* (Chichester, 2008), 72-74 (quotations); 53, 69, 70, 73; 56, 72; 57, citing Margaret Newcastle, *The Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle* (London, n.d. [1907], ed. C. H. Firth), 75-77.

<sup>5</sup> Newcastle, *Life of William Cavendish*; Riden and Fowkes, *Bolsover*; Lucy Worsley, *Bolsover Castle* (English Heritage, 2000); Lucy Worsley, 'The Architectural Patronage of William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle, 1593-1676', Unpublished DPhil thesis (University of Sussex, 2001); Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham (MSCUN) Pw1/624/1-3, Accounts and notes concerning repairs at Bolsover Castle, 1667; MSCUN Pw1/669, Draft letter by Andrew Clayton to William, duke of Newcastle unsigned, about building work at Welbeck and Bolsover, n.d.; Nottinghamshire Archives (NA) DD4P/70/1, Accounts of timber and tiles lead to Bolsover, n.d.

<sup>6</sup> Lynn Hulse, 'Cavendish, William, first duke of Newcastle upon Tyne (bap. 1593, d. 1676)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2006 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4946, accessed 10 Oct 2009]; Newcastle, *Life of William Cavendish*.

<sup>7</sup> P. R. Seddon, 'Holles, John, duke of Newcastle upon Tyne (1662-1711)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13556, accessed 8 Oct 2009].

The debts on the Newcastle estates were paid off by duke Henry's wealthy son-in-law, John Holles, fourth earl of Clare, husband of Newcastle's heir, Margaret Cavendish who ceded certain rights over her inheritance in an agreement of 1693.<sup>8</sup> Holles was an extremely wealthy man, in Bishop Burnet's view "the richest subject that had been in England for some ages".<sup>9</sup> He inherited estates in Nottinghamshire and London (from his father) and in southern England (from the unmarried third baron Holles) and, through his marriage to Margaret Cavendish, the Newcastle properties in the east midlands (including Bolsover) and Northumberland, although duke Henry's will leaving all his estates to his third daughter Margaret was challenged until about 1694. Holles augmented these properties by large-scale land purchases in Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire. He is gauged to have been 'an informed and careful steward of his estates' and held a series of political offices, of importance nationally (notably lord privy seal from 1705), and locally. Robert Harley, first earl of Oxford, was a key political ally from the early eighteenth century. Duke John's wealth at death was estimated at £200,000 with an income of £40,000 a year. His main residence was first Haughton, then Welbeck, where he indulged his interest in horses and hunting, especially after he was made Lord Warden of Sherwood Forest in around 1710. It is in relation to these interests that he may have employed a black horn player (see below Section 7). Indeed, hunting was the cause of duke John's death, which followed a fall from his horse whilst out stag hunting.<sup>10</sup> Bolsover Castle was kept furnished during duke John's term, and at least until the death of Margaret Cavendish in 1716, though an inventory of 1717 suggests it was only sparsely furnished.<sup>11</sup>

The marriage in 1713 of their daughter, Henrietta Cavendish-Holles (1694-1755), 'heir to one of the greatest estates in England', with a reputed fortune of £500,000, to Edward Harley (1689-1741), second earl of Oxford, highlights further the connection to one of the leading players in the establishment of the South Sea Company. This was the first earl of Oxford, Robert Harley (1661-

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<sup>8</sup> Seddon, 'Holles, John'; Turberville, *History of Welbeck, I*, 225.

<sup>9</sup> *Bishop Burnet's History*, ed. Burnet and Burnet, 2.579, cited in Seddon, 'Holles, John'.

<sup>10</sup> Seddon, 'Holles, John' (quotation); Turberville, *History of Welbeck, I*, 260, 265.

<sup>11</sup> P. A. Faulkner, *Bolsover Castle Derbyshire*, Department of the Environment (London, 1972), 20; 1717 inventory cited in Worsley, 'Architectural Patronage', Vol.2, 45.

1724), a friend and political ally of her father (see Figure 1b).<sup>12</sup> This aspect may be worth further investigation (see below Section 9). We have also found evidence that Sir Robert Harley, the great uncle of the second earl of Oxford had an interest in plantations in Barbados, Antigua and Surinam, as well as connections with other slave trading companies (see below Section 3). During her widowhood, Henrietta actively enhanced the nearby family seat of Welbeck at the expense of Bolsover, notoriously taking lead and other materials from Bolsover to construct the Harley wing, part of a large scheme of estate improvements she undertook at Welbeck in the 1740s and 1750s. She also moved pictures and furniture from Bolsover to Welbeck.<sup>13</sup> It is possible that such measures were taken for reasons of economy. The second earl of Oxford was significantly indebted, leading to the sale of Wimpole House (Cambridgeshire) in 1740 and by the time of his death he had reportedly 'squandered' £400,000, leaving £100,000 to his heirs.<sup>14</sup> While no information is provided in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* on the Countess's wealth at death, during her widowhood she sold much of the vast Harley collection to help raise funds though it sold at a lower than expected price, perhaps because it was realised she was keen to sell.<sup>15</sup> Again as the first earl started the Harley collection there may be slavery links worth further investigation here. An interesting angle could be if the failure of the South Sea venture contributed to declining family finances and the need to source materials from Bolsover to enhance Welbeck. Although Riden and Fowkes report that Bolsover Castle was from the early eighteenth century 'neglected and parts of the building became ruinous', it was still used for excursions and tea parties.<sup>16</sup> Worsley also argues that the Countess repaired Bolsover during her widowhood, with Goulding citing repair costs of over £500 in

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<sup>12</sup> Riden and Fowkes, *Bolsover*, 70 (quotation); David Stoker, 'Harley, Edward, second earl of Oxford and Mortimer (1689–1741)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004, online ed., 2005) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12337>, accessed 25 Jun 2009].

<sup>13</sup> Turberville, *History of Welbeck, I*; Worsley, 'The "Artisan Mannerist" Style in British Sculpture'; Riden and Fowkes, *Bolsover*, 70.

<sup>14</sup> Stoker, 'Harley, Edward' (quotation).

<sup>15</sup> Worsley, 'Architectural Patronage' and Lucy Worsley, 'Harley, Henrietta Cavendish, countess of Oxford and Mortimer (1694–1755)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, Sept 2004; online ed., Jan 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/53530>, accessed 27 May 2009]; Stoker, 'Harley, Edward'; Turberville, *History of Welbeck, I*.

<sup>16</sup> Riden and Fowkes, *Bolsover*, 53 (quotation); R. W. Goulding, *Bolsover Castle* (Louth, 1922 ed.), 15.

1751, which included repairs to the roofs of the Castle, riding school and stables.<sup>17</sup> Lady Oxford also invested in new fireplaces and luxury furnishings, including mahogany chairs.<sup>18</sup> Her interest in Bolsover is also revealed through her erection of a commemorative memorial to her Cavendish ancestors in Bolsover Church in 1727 (see Figure 2).

Henrietta's daughter, Margaret Cavendish Harley (1715-1785) married into the Bentinck family (marrying the second duke of Portland in 1734) and as an heiress took Bolsover Castle and its estate into the control of the dukes of Portland where it remained beyond the end of the slavery period (see Figure 1c). Although she does not appear to have had the vast fortune of her mother, her dowry of £20,000 alone constituted about half the total value of the second duke of Portland's estates. In addition her mother's will left her an annual sum of £12,000 a year while the remainder of Lady Oxford's estates were left to Margaret's son the future third duke of Portland.<sup>19</sup> The second duke's father, Henry (1682-1726), first duke of Portland, was a colonial governor (of Jamaica), owned a pen there and speculated heavily in South Sea Company stock (see below Section 3).

Margaret held Bolsover and other Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Northumberland and Marylebone estates until her death in 1785, though as she preferred the Portland family seat of Bulstrode she allowed the third duke, Henry (1738-1809) to live at Welbeck from 1762 and to manage her surrounding estates.<sup>20</sup> Again, evidence suggests that Bolsover continued to be used by the family at this time, for example for excursions and as stables. During the 1770s payments were made for the horses stabled at Bolsover and for hay-making there.<sup>21</sup> Upon his marriage to the Scottish heiress, Henrietta Scott in 1795, Lord Titchfield (later

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<sup>17</sup> Worsley, 'Harley, Henrietta'; Goulding, *Bolsover Castle*, 16; NA DD4P/70/2-16, Accounts and receipts to countess of Oxford for repairs and/or alterations to Bolsover Castle, 1750-1751.

<sup>18</sup> NA DD4P/70/8,14, Bill of Thos Cooper on Bolsover Acct, 1751.

<sup>19</sup> Pat Rogers, 'Bentinck, Margaret Cavendish [Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley], duchess of Portland (1715–1785)'. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2006) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/40752>, accessed 25 Jun 2009]; Worsley, 'The "Artisan Mannerist" Style in British Sculpture', 146.

<sup>20</sup> David Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland: Politics and Party in the Age of George III* (Basingstoke, Hants, 2003), 60.

<sup>21</sup> MSCUN PI E12/1/5/1-2, Mr Carter for expenses about Bolsover Castle, 1774 and 1776; MSCUN PI E12/1/5/2, Mr Carter's accounts to His Grace the duke of Portland, 1779-80.

the fourth duke of Portland) became tenant of the Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire estates, a move which suited the third duke for whom the family seat at Bulstrode, Buckinghamshire was more convenient to his political career.<sup>22</sup> After a short early period as prime minister in 1783, during which time he was petitioned over the *Zong* case by Granville Sharp (see Section 8), the third duke was Secretary of State for the Home Department from 1794 to 1801, which gave him charge of colonial affairs, and prime minister again from 1807 to 1809. He died heavily in debt, owing around £520,000.<sup>23</sup> William (1768-1854), the fourth duke, who was regularly resident at Welbeck, chose to be buried in the family vault of Bolsover church. He restored his family's fortunes through marriage to an heiress, land sales, debt repayments and the development of the Marylebone estate in London and estimated his income at £104,000 a year in 1844. Though he had an early political career he was not especially active but instead had a keen interest in agriculture, ships and race horses.<sup>24</sup>

During the third and fourth dukes' regimes there was ongoing and active management of the Bolsover estate. A parliamentary enclosure act of 1777, with an award in 1780, enclosed open fields and common land totalling 1,592 acres, 557 of which were allocated to the third duke of Portland. New farms were created on the former common and moorland, further land exchanges were made in 1792 and by 1804, when the Portland property in Bolsover totalled 1,312 acres, farm sizes had increased. In the early 19th century the Castle was let to the vicar of Bolsover.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Turberville, *History of Welbeck, II*, 306, 316.

<sup>23</sup> David Wilkinson, 'Bentinck, William Henry Cavendish Cavendish -, third duke of Portland (1738-1809), prime minister', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2162>, accessed 21 Feb 2009].

<sup>24</sup> Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland*, 62; Turberville, *History of Welbeck, II*, 347.

<sup>25</sup> Riden and Fowkes, *Bolsover*, 70, 97.

### **3) The slavery and colonial connections of owners of Bolsover Castle, and their wider families**

There is no evidence of large-scale generation of income from slave-based enterprises by the immediate owners of Bolsover Castle, either from the slave trade or slavery.<sup>26</sup> However, there is evidence that wider family members did own or have an interest in slave-based property (see Figures 1a, 1b and 1c). The examples are: i) Sir Robert Harley, great uncle of the second earl of Oxford (husband of Henrietta Cavendish-Holles Harley); ii) the first duke of Portland (father-in-law of Margaret Cavendish Harley Bentinck); iii) the Counts Bentinck (1820s and 1830s) (distant cousins of the third and fourth dukes of Portland); iv) Lord William Bentinck (second son of the third duke of Portland); v) Lady Lucy Bentinck (daughter of the fourth duke of Portland). There is also evidence of investment in colonial ventures with slave trading elements, most notably the South Sea Company and the Royal African Company. Three main connections have been found here: i) Sir Robert Harley; ii) the first duke of Portland and iii) the first and second earls of Oxford. Unfortunately time has prevented investigation of the latter in the archives. Finally there is evidence in the wider family of involvement in, and financial gain from, colonial office. The examples here are: i) Sir Robert Harley; ii) the first duke of Portland; iii) Lord William Bentinck; iv) Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville; and v) the Counts Bentinck and their Dutch relations. This consideration of the wider family illustrates how slavery and colonial connections permeated through landed families during the period of British slavery. These three areas are dealt with separately below.

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<sup>26</sup> All persons encountered in the course of this research were checked against David Eltis *et. al.*, Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database – D. Eltis *et. al.*, <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/database/search.faces>. This records all the owners of slave-trading vessels throughout the era of the slave trade, but very few connections were found. This is not to say that those persons were not involved in providing goods or finance for the slave trade, but that they did not invest in slave-trade vessels.

## ***a) Plantation ownership***

### *i) Sir Robert Harley (1626-1673)*

Sir Robert Harley, great uncle of the second earl of Oxford, was involved in property development and ownership in Barbados, Surinam and Antigua. He was closely associated in these ventures with William Byam, founder of a planter family in Antigua, and Francis, Lord Willoughby, both of whom held colonial office as did Harley himself (see below). These interests appear to date from the 1660s. Harley also appears to have owned a ship, the *Royal Katherine* of London which in 1662 shipped three cargoes. The first was co-owned by Harley, Francis, Lord Willoughby and William Parker. The second was sent to Colonel Byham [Byam] probably in Surinam and the third to a Mr Henry Feake in Barbados.<sup>27</sup> A series of accounts in Nottinghamshire Archives deal with Harley's Barbados properties from 1663-65, and later correspondence suggests he held these estates until the 1670s, though he seems to have sold them prior to his death to pay off his debts.<sup>28</sup> Correspondence to Harley in the 1660s and 1670s, from John and James Walwyn, members of an established Herefordshire family, the latter based in Barbados, confirms his interest in sugar plantations and that Harley was in Barbados in the 1660s, in relation to his colonial duties.<sup>29</sup> In 1666 Walwyn reports that sugar, cotton and wood had been shipped to Bristol, though it appears that the factor handling the sugar, one Parris, was in financial trouble and he doubted Harley would receive money for his produce. The wood, consisting of 70 logs, 14 of which are identified as 'Barmods Seador [Barbados cedar]' and 18 of 'Barmodos Seador Plankes' [Barbados cedar planks], was shipped via a Bristol merchant, Mr Wm Hayman who Walwyn reported 'will Deliver them to you on yr order and will give you acct of the Charge of them'. Relations with other Bristol merchants were not so good, Walwyn reporting we 'have soo bad a Report amongst the Bristol men that Capt Samuel Norris did tell me that if I Consigned it to him hee would not Carry it'. This problem perhaps

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<sup>27</sup> NA DD/P/6/9/18, Account of Sir Robert Harley's ship the *Royal Katherine*, London, 1662 [catalogue description].

<sup>28</sup> NA DD/P/6/1/22/22, Sir Robert Harley's Barbados accounts, 1663-65 [not consulted directly]; MSCUN Pw2 Hy 222, Letter from Ja Walwyn, Barbados to Sir Robert Harley concerning sugar, 3 Apl 1666; MSCUN Pw2 Hy 218, Letter from John Walwyn to Sir Robert Harley, 21 Jan 1668; MSCUN Pw2 Hy 223, Letter from Walwyn concerning sugar to Sir Robert Harley, Brampton-Bryan, 7 Jul 1670.

<sup>29</sup> Charles J. Robinson, *A History of the Mansions and Manors of Herefordshire* (Herefordshire, 2001 ed.) 233-31. Our thanks to David Whitehead for this reference.

stemmed from a dispute over payment between a Mr Stappells and Harley for '2 negros' which Stappells claimed he had offered at a 'favour for 17:10 Sterling' but Harley had paid only £7 10s. The enslaved Africans in question were 'sent to Partorgona' [Patagonia]. The Bristol merchant Hayman was acting as Harley's consignee for both sugar and wood in 1670. Cargoes of 7 butts (12,022lb) of 'Miesse Suger' and 4 butts (6507lb) of sugar, plus '2 Loggs of Hocklewood weighing 290 lb made up in Canvas' were shipped on 'The Robert of Bristol', and Walwyn 'desired Mr Hayman to take care of them for you, and give you acct of them'.<sup>30</sup>

Despite this trading activity Harley was facing financial problems in the early 1670s.<sup>31</sup> These may relate to the loss of property in Surinam when it was ceded to the Dutch in 1667 and disruption to new property developed subsequently in Antigua. A 1663 agreement refers to the creation of a 40 acre plantation to grow plantains, yams, cassava, potatoes, sugar cane and corn in the vicinity of Taurarica. Col William Byam and Captain George Strange, then in Surinam, were to 'fall, cleare and plant' the land 'all cleane and well planted' while Harley was responsible for delivering the enslaved African workforce. The agreement made was for him to 'pay ye said persons [Byam and Strange] in able Negros, to the Valew [value] of Thirty thre[e] Thousand pounds of merchantable Muscovado Suger' by the following February, with the earlier delivery of 'Foure able young Negros, two men and two women at Taurarica [?]' by the end of July 1663.<sup>32</sup>

Byam left Surinam following the ceding of the colony to the Dutch in 1667, stating in 1668, 'I have deserted our unfortunate colony of Surinam, war and pestilence having almost consumed it. As it is to revert to the Dutch I have with great loss removed to Antigua, where I am hewing a new fortune out of wild

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<sup>30</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 222, Letter from Ja Walwyn, Barbados to Sir Robert Harley concerning sugar, 3 Apl 1666.

<sup>31</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 70, Letter from Sir E Harley to W Bradford, London, 12 Jan 1672. [catalogue entry]; MSCUN Pw2 Hy 80, Letter from R Davies, Ludlow, Shropshire, to Sir E Harley, Brompton [Brampton Bryan] Herefordshire; 9 Jun 1680 [catalogue entry].

<sup>32</sup> NA DD/P/6/1/22/20, Agreement for creating a plantation in Jamaica, 18 Feb 1662/3. Transcription on Nottinghamshire County Council website which gives Jamaica as the location though Surinam is much more likely. <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/agreementforplantation.pdf> [accessed 12 Oct 2009]

woods'.<sup>33</sup> An undated letter (probably from the mid-late 1660s) to Harley from Byam (listed as Col W Bryan) indicates that the latter is inspecting property in which they both have an interest. The implication is that Byam has recently sailed from Surinam from which he reports 'a short and pleasant passage hither, not full 7 Dayes'. It is possible that Aphra Behn was on this voyage as Byam reports placing 'the faire shouperdass [shepherdess]' and companion on a fully laden ship for London and her biographer reports she had been staying on Sir Robert Harley's plantation in Surinam and was acquainted with Byam.<sup>34</sup> Although the island is not named, the mention of estates at St Johns and Parham suggest it is Antigua and this fits with the known movements of Byam at this time.<sup>35</sup> The St Johns property is reported as 'in very good order, and fully planted according to agreement', although there has been some damage from another person's cattle escaping 'amongst ye Corne'. Byam also recounts that he is in negotiation with one Buckley to manage the St Johns plantation. Finding a reliable and competent manager was a critical task for absentee landowners. Here Byam reports his belief that Buckley will be 'very Carefull [sic] active and industrious', perhaps because he is 'a Creioll [sic] and Experienced man'. Byam has proposed terms related to an expected output of £6000 of sugar per annum but he reports Buckley thinks this too little and that he is unwillingly to work for a share. The implication is that sugar and corn were grown at St Johns, and probably cattle were kept there too. Byam also states he will order 'a parsell of Silke grasse to bee planted', since 'it is like to bee a good Comodity [sic] for Negros are Sould [sic] by order of ye Royal Company for itt'.<sup>36</sup>

Securing adequate labour to work the plantations was obviously also highly important to owners, particularly in the early days of a colony when clearing land was heavy work. Although Antigua was first settled by the British in 1632 its development was slow until the 1660s when there was a movement of time-expired servants and wealthier men from Barbados, as well as those, such as

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<sup>33</sup> Letter, cited in Richard B. Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1974), 191.

<sup>34</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 221, Copy of letter from Col Wm Bryan [Byam] to Sir R Harley, n.d. (but c.1647-73 adult lifespan of Harley); Janet Todd, 'Behn, Aphra (1640?-1689)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/1961>, accessed 25 Oct 2009]. The companion was probably George Marten.

<sup>35</sup> Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 191.

<sup>36</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 221, Copy of letter from Col Wm Bryan [Byam] to Sir R Harley, n.d.

Byam, fleeing from Surinam.<sup>37</sup> Byam reports to Harley that he has already sent '5 negros' to another property, Satisfaction. The third property at Parham appears to have been a pen as Byam reports cattle being kept there.<sup>38</sup> These Antiguan properties may themselves have been affected by the late 1667 invasions by the French, in which around 1,500 enslaved Africans were captured or killed, leaving the planters at an estimated loss of £40,000. By 1670 Byam was governor of the colony and he went on to found a leading planter dynasty there.<sup>39</sup>

Sir Robert Harley successfully petitioned Charles II for a pension, citing his loss of property in Surinam, his ill-treatment by Lord Willoughby in taking away his colonial position in 1764, his ill-health and service to the Crown as grounds. Harley died in 1673 aged 47 and just three years after his marriage, without issue. His brother, Sir Edward Harley (1624-1700) paid debts for him in the 1670s and he sold most of his property to relieve the remainder.<sup>40</sup> His manager, James Walwyn, was seemingly more successful, having retired to his family seat of Longworth in Herefordshire where he died in 1704, his will directing 'Profits from plantations to be sent to England and consigned to Francis EYLES & Company'.<sup>41</sup>

*ii) Henry Bentinck (1682-1726), first duke of Portland*

There is clear evidence that the first duke of Portland became the owner of plantation land and enslaved Africans when he went to Jamaica as governor in 1722. Following his financial losses during the South Sea 'Bubble' the first duke sought to improve his prospects in the West Indies (see below). Portland took up the governorship of Jamaica in 1722 principally to avoid his creditors. However, his behaviour on arrival gives a clue as to his character. As soon as he arrived

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<sup>37</sup> Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 185, 191.

<sup>38</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 221, Copy of letter from Col Wm Bryan [Byam] to Sir R Harley, n.d.

<sup>39</sup> Sheridan, *Sugar and Slavery*, 187-89.

<sup>40</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 70, Letter from Sir E Harley to W Bradford, at the three Black Lyons in Fetter Lane, London, 12 Jan 1672 [catalogue entry]; MSCUN Pw2 Hy 85, Letter from J Edwards to Sir E Harley, 6 Jan 1673 [catalogue entry]; Basil Duke Henning, *The History of Parliament. The House of Commons 1660-1690, II, Members C-L* (London, 1983), 497-98.

<sup>41</sup> From Wills of Herefordshire site. <http://www.genuki.org.uk/big/eng/HEF/ProbateRecords/WillsW.html> [accessed 19 Oct 2009]. Our thanks to Charles Watkins for this reference.

there in January 1722, he purchased a pen and mortgaged it for £1700.<sup>42</sup> It seems that perhaps speculating was in his nature. He was obviously hoping to expand, and benefit from, his land in Jamaica. His will left his wife Elizabeth 'for ever all the Lands & Negroes of which I shall die seized of or any Wise entitled to within this Island [Jamaica]'. Furthermore it appears that Portland regarded this Jamaican property investment very much as a revenue raising venture as he requested that his wife 'sell the same as soon as may be after my Decease & apply the money arising thereby to the Payment of my Debts in Ease of my other Estate'. However, it would appear that the venture did not pay off as the value of these and indeed his whole estate were not large enough for Elizabeth to be able to leave her children large legacies befitting her station.<sup>43</sup> (For more on the first duke of Portland's involvement in the South Sea 'Bubble' see below.)

### *iii) The Counts Bentinck*

A prominent branch of the Bentinck family – the Counts Bentinck of The Hague – owned property in the Caribbean (see Figure 1c). This was probably related to the family's close involvement in colonial affairs in the colony (see below). Evidence from the Draper database reveals that Charles Anthony Ferdinand Bentinck (1792-1864 and later fourth Count Bentinck) and his brother, Henry John Bentinck (1796-1878), both of Wilton Place, petitioned unsuccessfully for the compensation for 266 slaves on La Bonne Intention plantation, located in the Demerara region of the colony of British Guiana (see Figure 3). An award of £13,378 13s 7d was made but this was given to Daniel Willink of Liverpool, a merchant to whom the Bentincks owed £33,000 on two mortgages (of £10,065 17s 6d and £29,287 9s 1d). Willink was also the Dutch Consul in Liverpool and the son of an Amsterdam merchant who had strong links with both Barings of London and Hopes of Amsterdam. The matter was settled by Willink taking both the compensation and having the rest of his mortgage money paid back by the Bentincks who appeared to wish to retain ownership of the property despite their

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<sup>42</sup> MSCUN PI F2/7/27, Memorandum on the State of the Duke of Portland's lands in Jamaica, n.d. (post 1726).

<sup>43</sup> MSCUN PI F2/7/26, Copies of the wills of Henry first duke of Portland (dated 2 Jul 1726) and Elizabeth duchess of Portland (dated 27 Jul 1734).

losses, perhaps with the hope that profits would improve again post-emancipation to the levels seen in the prosperous years of 1796-1802.<sup>44</sup>

Now part of Guyana on the north coast of South America, Demerara had originally been a Dutch colony, with settlement beginning in the 1580s. The colony changed hands six times between 1780 and 1803 during the American and French revolutionary wars. The British captured the colony in 1781, then it was held by the French from 1782 to 1784 when it returned to Dutch authority. It was taken again by the British in 1796, during the Revolutionary wars with France, and following a brief period back in Dutch hands during the Peace of Amiens between 1802 and 1803, it was officially ceded to the British in 1814, forming part of the British colony of Demerara-Essequibo. This was joined with Berbice in 1831 to form British Guiana.<sup>45</sup>

The earliest definite reference found to ownership of this property by the Bentincks was in a catalogue description for a document dated 21 February 1829 which notes the transfer of power of attorney from William Frederick Christian Bentinck (1787-1855 and third Count Bentinck) based in The Hague, to his brother Charles Anthony Ferdinand Bentinck (1792-1864 and later fourth Count Bentinck) in respect to the management of La Bonne Intention, a plantation in Demerara.<sup>46</sup> However, it is highly possible that the property belonged to Henry William Bentinck (1765-1820), uncle of the third Count Bentinck, during the period he was governor of the colony from 1806 to 1812 (see below). He also owned property in Berbice whilst governor there between 1814 and 1820 (see below) and was one of a number of Berbice planters who became insolvent due

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<sup>44</sup> Draper database, T71/885 and 1256; Stanley Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise in Britain: from the Industrial Revolution to World War I* (Cambridge, 1992), 87; E. V. da Costa, *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood: the Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823* (New York, 1997 ed.), 20.

<sup>45</sup> James Rodway, *History of British Guiana*, 3 vols (Georgetown, 1891-94), Vol.1, 3; da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 20.

<sup>46</sup> University of West Indies (UWI) (Mona) MS 1824, Transfer of power of attorney from William Frederick Christian Bentinck, The Hague, to Charles Anthony Ferdinand Bentinck in respect to the management of La Bonne Intention, a plantation in Demerara [catalogue entry]. However, it is likely that materials in The National Archive (TNA) Colonial Office (CO) collection for Demerara would shed further light on the ownership of La Bonne Intention.

to the declining profitability of cotton in the colony in the early 19th century when he 'was compelled to arrange with his creditors'<sup>47</sup>.

The connection with Daniel Willink is confirmed in two letters of 1835 to Lt Col C Bentinck of New Lodge, Gatton, Reigate and 1 St James Place London, in which Willink is described as a Shipping Agent of Liverpool. These letters elaborate further on Caribbean property and produce, though the plantation in question is not mentioned by name.<sup>48</sup> From the first letter (24 Aug 1835) it appears that Charles Bentinck had just returned from a 'West Indian trip' and had been actively corresponding with Willink on estate matters. Willink also reports the safe arrival of '21 Hhds Sugar' on the ship *Miranda*, noting 'they are of Much better quality & I hope to obtain 59/ for them'. In the second letter (31 Oct 1835) Willink reports back to Bentinck on instructions he has obviously received in relation to the estate, stating 'In conformity with your directions I have Shipped 45 Hhds Coals to Mr Dauchet [presumably the manager] for the Use of the Estate on board the Catherine Capt Bibby to sail early next week'. This indicates a close interest from Charles Bentinck in plantation management and the use of steam power there, a common development in Demerara from 1807 though rarer in older colonies such as Barbados.<sup>49</sup> Once again Willink gives an update on the arrival of produce and its expected value: 'The 15 Hhds Sugar per Mary are not yet all landed. Our Market is very firm and no fear of a decline. As the Easterly Winds have Set in We may have a long Spell of them, which Will prevent the Elizabeth from having such a quick voyage homewards'.<sup>50</sup> Planters, whether in the West Indies or Britain had long relied on merchant houses in Britain, especially Liverpool. Mercantile houses in Britain arranged for sales of West Indian produce, shipments of essential supplies in return, organised insurance and often dealt as bankers as well and these connections had been developed in Demerara during the prosperous years of British occupation between 1796 and 1802, alongside further British colonization.<sup>51</sup> For example,

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<sup>47</sup> Rodway, *History of British Guiana*, Vol.2, 276.

<sup>48</sup> National Library of Jamaica (NLJ) MS 790, Letters from Daniel Willink to Lt Col C Bentinck, 24 Aug and 31 Oct 1835. There do not appear to be any surviving records for Willink in the Liverpool archives.

<sup>49</sup> B. W. Higman, *Slave Populations of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1995 ed.), 166.

<sup>50</sup> NLJ MS 790, Letter from Daniel Willink to Lt Col C Bentinck, 31 Oct 1835.

<sup>51</sup> Da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 20.

exports from La Bonne Intention had been coming in via Liverpool from at least 1804, although the ownership of the property in this earlier period is less clear. At that time Samuel Sandbach, of McInroy, Sandbach, McBean & Co, was receiving goods and arranging insurance for goods shipped from the estate. The main produce in the early 19th century was coffee and cotton and there are indications that the plantation was already in debt:

'You will cover with Insurance at the same time sixteen Bales of Cotton and fifty Bags of Coffee which Mr Lamaison ships from Plant<sup>a</sup> La Bonne Intention, on board the Caldicot Castle. The Proceeds of which to be placed to our Credit. They are Meant as Payment of two Bills of Exchange & an Amount which we have against that Estate.'<sup>52</sup>

Lamaison had arrived in Demerara in 1802, accompanying the new governor of the colony, Antony Meertens, an appointee of the Dutch Batavian Republic, and acting as Vice President of the Courts. Meertens and the Dutch had poor relations with the English and under strict enforcement of the terms of the Peace of Amiens (which allowed British settlers three years to leave) set about expelling British planters and prohibiting exports from the colony to British possessions. Despite his association with Meertens, Lamaison appears to have survived and was probably the owner of La Bonne Intention when the British recaptured the colony in 1803, and by 1804 at least had established trading connections with Liverpool merchants. In 1808 he travelled to Britain, although it is unclear if he returned to Demerara.<sup>53</sup> Both the precariousness of the trade during wartime and the need for good staff in the West Indies are revealed in the correspondence concerning the estate at this time. In 1804 William McBean in Demerara wrote to Samuel Sandbach that there were reports that the *Caldicot Castle* amongst others had been captured and taken to Guadaloupe. The situation was all the more serious as McBean 'found that thro' the mistake of one of the young men here Mr Lamaison had only got Bills of Lading for the 50 Bags

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<sup>52</sup> Liverpool Record Office (LivRO), 920 PAR IV 1/1/8, Wm McBean, Demerary, to Samuel Sandbach, Liverpool, 4 Feb 1804. This was an interesting merchant house, having bases in Grenada, Demerara, Liverpool, London and Glasgow at this point in time.

<sup>53</sup> Rodway, *History of British Guiana*, Vol.2, 158, 160; Thomas Staunton Saint Claire, *A Residence in the West Indies and America, with a Narrative of the Expedition to the Island of Walcheren* (London, 1834), 221-22.

of Coffee shipped from L'Bonne Intention'. The rest of the cargo was therefore uninsured.<sup>54</sup>

Demerara experienced enslaved African rebellion under British rule in 1823, the first major uprising in the area since the Berbice insurrection of 1762-1763. The cause of the 1823 rebellion has been attributed to rumours amongst the enslaved Africans that the British parliament had voted for emancipation, with John Smith, a member of the London Missionary Society, blamed by the planters for inciting the enslaved people. Smith was imprisoned, tried and found guilty, and though he was later granted mercy he died before his death sentence could be rescinded. The rebellion and Smith's death only accentuated the British emancipation movement.<sup>55</sup>

Around 9,000 enslaved people were said to have been involved in the Demerara rebellion and the governor estimated 255 were killed or wounded in fighting, while few whites suffered in this way. Violent punishments followed, with summary trials and public executions in front of other enslaved people on a range of estates and in the capital Georgetown, resulting in over 33 deaths.<sup>56</sup> La Bonne Intention itself was the site of a well-publicised hanging of the body of an enslaved African accused of taking part in the insurrection. Joshua Bryant, a resident and artist of Demerara for 15 years, in 1824 published an *Account of an insurrection of the negro slaves in the colony of Demerara, which broke out on the 18th of August, 1823*. Prominent in this *Account* was a plate depicting the punishments of enslaved Africans identified as leaders of the uprising, and as the caption suggests drawn with chilling accuracy from life, 'Five of the culprits in chains, as they appeared on the 20th September 1823' (see Figure 4). The four quarters show the bodies (or body parts) of named enslaved Africans who were killed in the fighting or executed in the aftermath and displayed on the plantation sites to which they 'belonged'. The placement of such displays amongst fellow, known enslaved people, constituted a harsh reminder of planter authority in the context of everyday plantation life. These are estate landscapes of extreme colonial and disciplinary power. Quarter 3 is particularly striking in its

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<sup>54</sup> LivRO 920 PAR IV I/1/10, Wm McBean, Demerara, to Samuel Sandbach, Liverpool, 11 Apl 1804.

<sup>55</sup> da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*.

<sup>56</sup> da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 222-24, 243.

juxtapositioning of the barbaric execution displays, in this case the roadway is flanked by severed heads, and the clearly detailed plantation works in a carefully composed scene. The upper right caption shows the body of an enslaved African named Lindor hanging in chains from a gibbet with La Bonne Intention estate and its works in the distance.<sup>57</sup> A further account of the trials following the insurrection makes clear that Lindor did indeed 'belong' to La Bonne Intention. Bryant's publication also includes a map which shows the location of La Bonne Intention along the coast of the colony. The property, like its neighbours, is elongated in shape and is serviced by the main road. The map shows the most important locations in relation to the 1823 rebellion, even marking the sites of execution displays with a small cross (see Figure 3).<sup>58</sup>

Unusually, the accounts of the enslaved Africans allegedly involved in the uprising are also recorded in a report printed by A Stevenson at the *Guiana Chronicle* (1824) and previously published in that newspaper. Stevenson, however, is far from a sympathetic commentator for the enslaved Africans. In his *Preface*, he hopes that the trial accounts,

'will prove an useful addition to the library of the Colonist – while the facts which they disclose, and the information they afford, illustrative of the character, habits, and morals of a peculiar class of people, at present labouring under the delusion of unrestricted rights, and at this moment, as for some time past, the object of so much, and so general a, concern, - may render them not uninstrutive occupants of the shelves of the reading community at large.'

Seven enslaved Africans associated with La Bonne Intention were tried as insurgents (see Table 2). All were men and several performed key roles on the estate in terms of responsibility (driver) and skills (head-cooper, carpenter and

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<sup>57</sup> It was typical for no surname to be given for enslaved people. Where a surname existed it was often the name of the owner of the plantation (and enslaved person). Likewise occupations were not listed in the trial information in contrast to whites who were always identified by full name and occupation (da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 235-36).

<sup>58</sup> Joshua Bryant, *Account of an Insurrection of the Negro Slaves in the Colony of Demerara, which broke out on the 18th of August, 1823* (Georgetown, Demerara and London, 1824). The plate is no. 12 located between pp.88-89 of the London version; Stevenson, A, *Report of the Trials of the Insurgent Negroes before a General Court-martial, held at Georgetown, Demerara, On the 25th August, 1823, And Continued by Adjournment, until the 11th of October following* (Georgetown, Demerara, 1824).

boatman), positions which often signified leading figures in enslaved African society.<sup>59</sup> Those accused from La Bonne Intention pleaded not guilty, as did all the other enslaved people tried. From the account it would appear that the trials heard evidence from the manager and overseers and allowed cross-examination as well as statements by the accused. Da Costa, drawing on the Colonial Office records, reports mock or summary trials on the plantations and verdicts irreconcilable with the evidence in the official trials which were held as a show of due process in the colonial negotiation of British justice:

'Their solution was to keep the appearance of legality, but bend the procedures in such a way that they managed to transform the trials into a show of force rather than a search for truth. ... The truth was always with the accuser.'<sup>60</sup>

Nonetheless she does highlight as striking that enslaved people were allowed to testify in court in relation to this issue, though other colonial legislatures had in the 1820s also made moves to allow such testimony for and against other enslaved people or in cases where no other witness was available.

Of the executed enslaved Africans from La Bonne Intention, the field worker Pickle was condemned for striking Donald Reid, an overseer on the plantation, on the nose with the flat blade of a cutlass. Lindor, a carpenter on the estate, was condemned as a ringleader by the evidence of Nicholas Gerard Toolan, manager of La Bonne Intention. Toolan claimed that Lindor had directed that his dwelling house be fired and that he was later disarmed by him:

'the people under the house went to the megas-house, and each brought a handful of trash to put under my house. When I heard the Prisoner Lindor give orders to put fire to it, I spoke to him not to do so, but there was no help; he gave me no answer, but kept crying out, Put fire, put fire. I saw him at the time: I spoke to him at the time he was so calling out; he belongs to our estate; he

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<sup>59</sup> Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, New York, 1982), 45

<sup>60</sup> da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 223-38; 234 and 238 (quotations); Stevenson, *Report of the Trials*, 100, 121.

was not more than eight paces from me at the time; I could see him clearly, as I see him now; he was standing with his face to me, as he spoke to me.’<sup>61</sup>

Lindor did not cross-examine Toolan, or either of the two overseers, Donald Reid and Frederick John Stalschneid, who also gave evidence (though April his fellow defendant did question Toolan). However, he did make a statement in his own defence:

‘When the war came, I was entirely ignorant of it. I saw every body running towards the manager’s house, and I ran with them, and immediately afterwards saw a fire put to a heap of trash behind the negro-house. I went with others to put that fire out, and, on my return towards the house, when I reached the kitchen-door, I heard the manager, Mr Toolan, calling for me; and, when he called, I was so tired from running, I could not answer him. After that, the manager proceeded towards Baron Van Grovestein’s, and April and myself followed him; I had nothing in my hands. When I overtook Mr Toolan, he gave me one of the pistols, and gave April another; Mr Toolan said, he wanted to drink water, and, after he had drank water, they took him into the sick-house, but I had no hand in taking him there.’<sup>62</sup>

Lindor and Pickle were executed, with seven others of the condemned, on Friday 12th September 1823 on a gallows set up on the Parade Ground in the Cumingsburg district of Georgetown. This set of executions was reportedly watched by sixty other prisoners and four of the bodies were displayed, hanging in chains, as represented by Bryant, on the public road adjacent to the plantations to which they ‘belonged’ (see Figure 3).<sup>63</sup>

The families of the Counts Bentinck and the Portlands were certainly close (see Figure 1c for family tree). The fourth Duke finished his education in The Hague in 1786-87, part of a Grand Tour of northern Europe and in 1771 the third duke sent William Speechly, who he had recently appointed as his gardener at Welbeck, to the Netherlands. There, under the patronage of William (1704-74),

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<sup>61</sup> Stevenson, *Report of the Trials*, 121, 100 (quotation).

<sup>62</sup> Lindor’s defence as quoted in Stevenson, *Report of the Trials*, 102-3.

<sup>63</sup> da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 242-43, 366.

first Count Bentinck, he was able to visit all the principal gardens of Leyden, Harlem and Amsterdam. Letters from Count Bentinck reflect on the visit and are part of a much larger correspondence between the two men.<sup>64</sup> There are also letters to the third duke of Portland from Count Henry W Bentinck, writing from Martinique in 1795 and Governor W Bentinck writing in relation to his colonial office in St Vincent.<sup>65</sup> Later, there is a considerable family correspondence from both Charles Anthony Ferdinand Bentinck and his mother, Lady Jemima Bentinck, dealing mainly with the compensation claims of Charles' father, John C Bentinck (1763-1833) for raising a regiment during the Revolutionary Wars but also other family matters.<sup>66</sup> While the third Count appears to have lived in The Hague, both Charles A F Bentinck and his mother lived for a considerable time in England, in London and Gatton, Surrey.<sup>67</sup>

*iv) Lord William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck (1774-1839)*

Lord William Bentinck, second son of the third duke of Portland, had associations with slave-based property as he was involved in a counterclaim for slave compensation for the L'amitie estate in Trinidad.<sup>68</sup> Little has been uncovered about this property or its enslaved African workforce except that the estate appears to have been held by the Montalemberts, a French émigré family with whom the third duke of Portland as well as Lord William had connections, and compensation was awarded for 46 enslaved people. In 1808, Major Montalembert (Marc Rene) petitioned the third duke for a decision on the wartime accounts of his father, Baron Montalembert, probably in relation to St Domingue, a dispute which had seemingly been running for years, with earlier

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<sup>64</sup> Turberville, *History of Welbeck, II*, 206; MSCUN PwF 8443, Letter from William Speechly to third duke of Portland, 14 May 1771; MSCUN PwF 1255, Letter from Count Bentinck to third duke of Portland, 3 May 1771; MSCUN PwF 1256/1-2, Letter from Count Bentinck to third duke of Portland, 17 May 1771.

<sup>65</sup> MSCUN PwF 671, Letter from Heinrich W Bentinck, Martinique to third duke of Portland, 18 Jul 1795 [catalogue description]; MSCUN PwF 670, Letter from Heinrich W Bentinck, St Pierre, Martinique to third duke of Portland, 7 Aug 1795 [catalogue description]; MSCUN PIC 52/25, Letter from Governor W Bentinck, London to third duke of Portland, 30 Jun 1801.

<sup>66</sup> MSCUN PwH 51-69, Letters from Charles Anthony Ferdinand Bentinck to fourth duke of Portland, 1820-1821; MSCUN PwF 10057-69, Letters from third duke of Portland to Lady Jemima Bentinck, 1803-1809; MSCUN PwH 2812-15, Letters from fourth duke of Portland to Lady Jemima Bentinck, 1809-1829.

<sup>67</sup> Surrey Record Office 2205/3/4, Probate of will of Lady Jemima Helena Bentinck of Nutwood Lodge, Gatton, 16 Jul 1840 [catalogue description].

<sup>68</sup> T71/894, Trinidad # 1684, Draper database.

correspondence on the matter.<sup>69</sup> Major Montalembert was on active service himself during the war years, and in 1814 Lord Charles Somerset petitioned Lord William Bentinck on his behalf in relation to a new commission, reporting that Montalembert, by then Lieutenant Colonel, was concerned that he had not fought in the Peninsula War. When Montalembert applied to the army for a commission and had 'mentioned there he was known to You in India' he was told 'that if recommended by You – he wd be appointed immediately'.<sup>70</sup> Lord William was obviously an important patron and Somerset's letter included another from Montalembert himself, requesting to serve under Lord William and reminding him of 'the Interest You took in my Military Career, when recommended to you by General Jarry, on my Arrival at Madras'.<sup>71</sup> Later in 1822 the relationship between Montalembert and Lord William took on a stronger financial dimension when the latter became a trustee (with Fulke Greville Howard) of the indentures of settlement originally made in relation to Montalembert's 1809 marriage to Elizabeth Rosee Forbes.<sup>72</sup> Elizabeth was the daughter of James Forbes of Stanmore in Middlesex, an East India Company man and writer who spent over 20 years in India and the east and who reportedly was the first person to introduce Hindu sculptures to England, integrating them into his grounds at Stanmore.<sup>73</sup> It is on the basis of this involvement and the trust fund of £14,842 6s 3d per cent reduced Bank annuities (sold in 1823 for £10,260) that Lord William, Charles Fulke Greville Howard and John Dalton of Peckham counterclaimed against the L'amitie estate as incumbrancers. They were seeking a share of £2,411 compensation for 46 enslaved people on the L'amitie estate in Trinidad. The compensation was awarded to Charles Forbes (1810-1870), Count de Montalembert, and James Arthur Marcus Montalembert, the sons of the then

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<sup>69</sup> MSCUN PwF 6931, Letter from Major Montalembert, Ramsgate, to third duke of Portland, 20 Jul 1808.

<sup>70</sup> MSCUN Pw Jd 4992, Letter from Lord Charles Somerset, Brighton, to Lord William Bentinck, 19 Sep 1813.

<sup>71</sup> MSCUN Pw Jd 4993, Letter from Lt Colonel Montalembert, Brighton, to 'His Excellency Lord William Bentinck', 20 Sep 1813.

<sup>72</sup> NA DD4P/36/8 Draft deed poll, assignment 1) Eliz. Rosse, widow of Marc Rene, Count de Montalembert and 2) Chas. Forbes, Count de Montalembert, 16 Jul 1835; NA DD4P/36/9, Deed poll 1) Eliz. Rosse, Dowager Countess de Montalembert, Chas. Forbes, Count de Montalembert, Jas. Arthur Marcus de Montalembert and 2) John Dalton, esq. trustees, Wm. Hen. Cavendish Bentinck trustees, Fulk Greville Howard trustees, 1 Sep 1835.

<sup>73</sup> T. F. T. Baker, and A. P. Pugh (eds.), *A History of the County of Middlesex*. Victoria County History, Vol.5 (London, 1976), 88-96; M. Oliphant, *Memoir of Count de Montalembert* 2 vols, (Edinburgh, 1872), Vol.1, 4.

deceased Marc Rene Montalembert. No other material has been found to link Lord William Bentinck with the ownership of property in the Caribbean, although he famously held colonial office in India (see below).

*v) Lady Lucy Cavendish-Bentinck (d. 1899)*

The marriage of Lucy Cavendish-Bentinck, daughter of the fourth duke of Portland, in 1828 to Charles Augustus Ellis (1799-1868), sixth Baron Howard de Walden established a connection with an old Jamaican family and strong pro-slavery interest. Lord Howard de Walden's father, Charles Rose Ellis (1771-1845), Lord Seaford (from 1826) was a substantial slave property owner in Jamaica and was regarded as "perpetual chairman of the West Indian body" in the House of Commons. Ellis senior inherited property worth around £20,000 a year in 1782 but by his death in 1845 his fortune had shrunk to £20,000 in total. Declining sugar prices and the devastation of the 1831/32 insurrection, during which enslaved Africans burnt down the buildings at his Montpelier and Shettleworth estates, weakened his financial and proprietorial position.<sup>74</sup> Evidence from the Draper database indicates that Seaford held five Jamaican properties at the time of emancipation, three plantations (Old and New Montpelier in St James and Ellis Caymanas in St Catherine) and two pens (Crawle Pen in St Catherine and Shettlewood Pen in Hanover). He was also an owner of enslaved Africans on a large-scale, holding 1,018 people for whom he received compensation of £18,127 0s 8d. Furthermore he counterclaimed on three additional estates (Newry, Green Castle and Nutfield in St Mary parish), contesting in these cases with the London merchants, Joseph Timperon and Joseph Dobinson. These properties had belonged to Seaford's heavily indebted brother, Charles, who had mortgaged them to Timperon and Dobinson and had also borrowed money against them from Seaford himself. While the compensation on these estates went to Timperon and Dobson, Compensation Commission files suggest Seaford made a deal with them and acquired a share of this compensation too, while

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<sup>74</sup> H. M. Stephens, 'Ellis, Charles Rose, first Baron Seaford (1771–1845)', rev. H. C. G. Matthew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8688>, accessed 22 Oct 2009] (quotation citation); H. M. Stephens, 'Ellis, Charles Augustus, sixth Baron Howard de Walden and second Baron Seaford (1799–1868)', rev. H. C. G. Matthew, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/8687>, accessed 14 Jul 2009]; B. W. Higman, *Montpelier, Jamaica: A Plantation Community in Slavery and Freedom, 1739-1912* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1998).

Butler states that Seaford also shared compensation with his nephew on a further two estates.<sup>75</sup> Detailed studies of the New and Old Montpelier estates and Ellis Caymanas, a small sugar plantation located in the marshy coastal plains four miles to the east of Spanish Town, confirm all three properties were retained by the Ellis family well beyond emancipation. Lord Howard de Walden visited in the late 1840s with an eye to estate 'improvements'. Plans were drawn up, steam introduced (albeit reluctantly) and Lord Howard de Walden himself drafted a booklet of *General Instructions for Montpelier and Ellis Caymanas Estates in Jamaica* (1852).<sup>76</sup> The Montpelier estates and Shettlewood Pen and their enslaved African workforce were also described in James Hakewill's *Picturesque Tour of Jamaica* (1825) which includes a colour plate of the properties. Hakewill estimates the estates covered around 10,000 acres, with only about 1000 acres laid down to sugar cane and that 'actually kept in cultivation has latterly been considerably diminished'. He states there were about 900 enslaved Africans and gives a favourable impression of their situation, describing their ownership of 100 'breeding cows' and extensive provision grounds. The plate itself is a landscape view looking out across the estate buildings to the mountains. It shows grazing, cane and woodlands and the enslaved African village is included 'shaded and partly concealed by groves of cocoa-nut trees and plantations' beyond the works. When Charles Augustus Ellis (the second Lord Seaford) died in 1868, his fortune had declined to under £2,000.<sup>77</sup>

## **b) Colonial trading**

### *i) Sir Robert Harley (1626-1673)*

There are suggestions in Byam's letter to Harley cited above that both were involved with organisations which traded in slaves. Byam seems to have had

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<sup>75</sup> Information from the Draper database and personal correspondence from Nick Draper; Kathleen Mary Butler, *The Economics of Emancipation: Jamaica & Barbados, 1823-1843* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1995), 49-50. Our thanks to Nick Draper for this reference.

<sup>76</sup> B. W. Higman, *Montpelier, Jamaica: A Plantation Community in Slavery and Freedom, 1739-1912* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1998); B. W. Higman, *Jamaica Surveyed: Plantation Maps and Plans of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1988), 151-58.

<sup>77</sup> James Hakewill, *Picturesque Tour of Jamaica* (London, 1825); Stephens, rev Matthew, 'Ellis, Charles Augustus'.

good connections, claiming 'The Royal Company advise mee to informe them what negros the Colony will annually take off, and wee shall bee Certainly Supplied'.<sup>78</sup> Connections with agents for the British Royal African Company (RAC) and its predecessors were important whilst it had a monopoly on the slave trade, although in truth the Company was not that successful in protecting its monopoly.<sup>79</sup> It always faced stiff competition with the slave traders of other nations on the African coast, and independent slave traders, or interlopers as the RAC liked to call them, were never completely shut out of the trade. The RAC eventually had to cede its monopoly in 1698 after which time the so-called 'interlopers' were legally allowed to trade in slaves, paying the Royal African Company 10 per cent for the privilege, for which they became known as the '10 per centers'.<sup>80</sup> It would appear that Byam was being groomed as an agent for this company in Antigua.<sup>81</sup>

A letter of 1652 from John Blake to the members of 'the Company' from the Unitan River, Gambao [Gambia] (which although not addressed to Harley is amongst his papers) also suggests an involvement with slave trading ventures. Blake was a member of the English Guinea Company which by the 1650s was becoming involved in slave trading, principally to supply Barbados. However, in this case the trade in question was for 'about some nine thousand hides', 'Coote' or 'clon' and wax, core trading products of the company. The letter highlights the extreme dangers of such ventures in terms of disease, Blake reporting virtually all his crew had been sick, exclaiming, 'I never saw men dye so sudainly [suddenly] in my life', with at least 23 dead including the first and second mates and boatswain.<sup>82</sup> Harley was certainly involved in trading enslaved people to other planters within Barbados. An account of 1663/64 outlines sales of 23

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<sup>78</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 221, Copy of letter from Col Wm Bryan [Byam] to Sir R Harley, n.d.

<sup>79</sup> The RAC had a variety of predecessors, including: 'Charter to Senegal Adventurers' (1588); 'Governor and Company of Adventurers trading to Gynney and Bynney' [Guinea and Benin] (1618); 'Royal Adventurers into Africa' (1660). Davies, *The Royal African Company*, 39-43.

<sup>80</sup> Davies, *The Royal African Company*, 125-33.

<sup>81</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 221, Copy of letter from Col Wm Bryan [Byam] to Sir R Harley, n.d.

<sup>82</sup> MSCUN Pw2 Hy 214, Letter from John Blake to the members of the Company from the Unitan River, Gambao, 15 Feb 1652; Basil Davidson, *The African Slave Trade* (Oxford, 1961), 104; P. E. H. Hair and R. Law, 'The English in Western Africa to 1700', in William Roger Louis, ed., *The Oxford History of the British Empire: the Origins of Empire* (Oxford, 1998), 251-55.

people, 18 of African descent, five indigenous, most of whom were traded for sugar.<sup>83</sup>

*ii) Henry (1682-1726), first duke of Portland and the South Sea scheme*

One event that had a big impact on the financial fortunes of the Portland family was the first duke's heavy involvement in the South Sea scheme. Portland was 'financially strapped' and it has been suggested that he sought to revive his fortunes through the scheme.<sup>84</sup> In fact, the opposite occurred. There is also the possibility that he was pressurized into supporting the scheme. This is because although there was much concern and controversy over the scheme in early 1720, it went ahead because it had strong elite backing. This included the King as governor of the Company. The Royal family invested in 40,000 shares, with Stanhope and Sunderland having 4,000 shares each. Indeed, the peerage, senior judiciary, MPs and the country and urban elite were the main initial investors. Around three quarters of the Commons and Lords invested in the scheme.<sup>85</sup> Women also invested in the company, including the duchess of Portland.<sup>86</sup> Therefore, Portland may have had little choice but to support the scheme.

The joint-stock South Sea Company was founded in 1711 and 'was a marvellous synthesis of finance, commerce and foreign policy'.<sup>87</sup> The idea was to monopolise the trading rights to South America and make trading profits. England won the *Asiento* (contract to deliver slaves to Spanish colonies) in 1713. Using Royal African Company ships the South Sea Company delivered slaves to Vera Cruz, Cartagena, Panama, Havana and various South American Ports.<sup>88</sup> Whilst the company was heavily involved in slave trading, it was also very important in

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<sup>83</sup> NA DD/P6/1/22/22, Slave Account, 19 Mar 1663/64. Transcription on <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/archives/exhibitions/africancaribbeanheritage/slavery/commodities.htm> [accessed 12 Oct 2009]

<sup>84</sup> Julian Hoppit, 'The Myths of the South Sea Bubble', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), 148. Portland had earlier invested in £10,000 of stock in the New East India Company in 1698, see J. V. Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England 1660-1914* (Oxford, 1986), 80.

<sup>85</sup> Dickson, quoted in Hoppit, 'Myths', 149-50.

<sup>86</sup> John Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble* (London, 1960), 132.

<sup>87</sup> Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble*, 53.

<sup>88</sup> England held the *Asiento* until 1748 – though it effectively ceased in 1730 with the outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear. Kenneth Morgan, *Slavery and the British Empire* (Oxford, 2007), 59.

helping to finance the Tory government debt after nearly twenty years of warfare. This was why the government supported the speculative selling of shares of the Company, the lure being increasing prices of the stock, rather than income from dividends. An early futures market!

The scheme worked well at first. Share prices rose from 150 to about 950 between January and June 1720, but had fallen back to 200 by October 1720.<sup>89</sup> The 'bubble' had burst.<sup>90</sup> The first three subscriptions were controlled by the South Sea Company's directors, but a huge secondary market developed around the first three issues (14 April, 29 April and 17 June). It has not been possible to tell (as at October 2009) whether Portland was one of the initial distributors. However, his records show that as of 13 April 1720 Charles Otway of London, Esqr, was to give Portland £6,400 lawful money when the books opened in return for £2,000 worth of capital. Portland was therefore already involved in the futures market of South Sea stock even before the first issue on 14 April 1720.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, Portland was heavily involved in this early futures market. During the summer of 1720 Portland was involved in deals for over 130,900 shares.<sup>92</sup> Portland had considerable resources to play with. In 1709 he had inherited from his father properties in Westminster, Essex, Norfolk, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Cumberland, Sussex and elsewhere valued at £850,000. This fortune was augmented by his earlier marriage in 1704 to Lady Elizabeth Noel, 'eldest daughter and co-heir of Wriothesley Baptist Noel', second earl of Gainsborough, whose inheritance included the lordship of Titchfield.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Hoppitt, 'Myths', 141-65, 143.

<sup>90</sup> The South Sea 'bubble' story has centred around blind speculation, social mobility and consequent economic dislocation. However, the term was not used until around 1771, and it was known originally as the South Sea Scheme - see Hoppitt, 'Myths', 163; Peter Garber argues that linking the bubble with terms such as 'irrational exuberance' and 'herding' is misleading, and that the South Sea Bubble, the Tulip Mania and the Mississippi Bubble reflected normal pricing behaviour in a market economy and all involved 'financial manipulations, monetary creation, and government connivance on a scale that was not matched again until this century, but which have now become commonplace. Peter M. Garber, *Famous First Bubbles: The Fundamentals of Early Manias* (Cambridge, Mass, 2000), 2-6, 13-14.

<sup>91</sup> MSCUN PI F2/6/111-134, Bundle of agreements for the purchase of South Sea stock by the duke of Portland, 13 Apl 1720-23 Aug 1720.

<sup>92</sup> MSCUN PI F2/6/178, Series of accounts etc, relating to purchases and sales of South Sea stock by the duke of Portland, 1720-1721.

<sup>93</sup> Turberville, *History of Welbeck, II*, 14-15, quotation, 15.

Portland also continued to invest in the scheme when the prices started to collapse in the late summer of 1720. By this point this may have been more in desperation than duty or hope. It would appear that he used the South Sea stock he owned in order to borrow money from others – perhaps at first to buy more stock, and later – to pay off the debts relating to purchases on earlier issues he was involved in.<sup>94</sup> Portland also used his position in order to coerce people into his South Sea Company deals. In approaching the Edwins, whom he hoped would lend him money against South Sea stock, Portland's agent argued that the duke was a 'person of great Honour, and would be very punctuall[sic] in complying with his Obligations'. Nor was Portland above emotional blackmail. In a later meeting with the Edwins he begged him not to sell the stock at low prices 'with Tears on his face'.<sup>95</sup> At other times he could be quite threatening; 'This is to give you Notice not to dispose any part of the said stock so deposited with you as aforsd[sic] to any Person or Persons on any Pretence Whatsoever without first having my Consent in writing as you will be answerable for the same'.<sup>96</sup> However, he reneged on many of these contracts, especially those with Caswell, Edwin and Meres, and many of these were still going through the courts in 1738.<sup>97</sup>

The first duke of Portland was therefore heavily involved in the South Sea scheme. However, it would appear that he was not a 'greater fool'; that is, one of those caught up in the excitement and promise of the scheme with no understanding of the repercussions.<sup>98</sup> He was not blindly playing the market foolishly expecting it to keep rising. It is possible that he may have been partly coerced as an elite member of Parliament, but he may also have seen it as a way to help build his fortune. Unfortunately it seems only to have made his financial position worse. It does appear, however, that he tried to take others for greater fools. He played on his status, reputation and honour in order to coerce people into his ventures.

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<sup>94</sup> MSCUN PI F2/6/310, List of South Sea stock bought by the duke of Portland in 1720, or contracted to be bought by him, 1720-1741.

<sup>95</sup> MSCUN PI F2/6/210, Series of cases for the opinion of counsel ..., 20 Sep 1720.

<sup>96</sup> MSCUN PI F2/6/135/2, Portland to Messrs Turner Caswell & Co., 20 Mar 1721.

<sup>97</sup> MSCUN PI F2/6/222-225, Pleas in Caswall v Duke of Portland, 1738.

<sup>98</sup> Peter Temin and Hans-Joachim Voth, 'Riding the South Sea Bubble', *American Economic Review*, 94:5 (2004), 1654-68, *passim*.

There is no doubt that in contrast to Portland, some people did make a fortune. For example, Hoare's bank made a profit of £19,355 between February and mid-September 1720.<sup>99</sup> However, they were bankers and merchants and arguably had far more financial acumen than Portland. Portland certainly tried hard to make money from the scheme as is obvious from his machinations even when he seemed aware of the impending problems later in the summer. However, a hint at the pressure he may have been under is given in August 1720, when he argued that he could not pay Mr Meres the money he owed him because the stock was already falling and if he was seen to sell the price would fall still further.<sup>100</sup> Whether Portland was looking after the Company's and State's interest, or his own, we shall never know. Whatever his motives, the family fortunes paid heavily. When Margaret Cavendish Harley married the second duke of Portland in 1734, his estates were valued at only around £40,000, revealing the extent of losses made over less than 30 years. Indeed John Carswell argues that 'The Duke of Portland's investments brought the family King William had made one of the richest in England very near bankruptcy, and prevented it from playing an influential part in affairs for nearly two generations.'<sup>101</sup>

### ***c) Colonial service***

#### *i) Sir Robert Harley (1626-1673)*

Under the patronage of Francis, Lord Willoughby, who was at the time general and governor of Barbados and Carybe, Harley was appointed as keeper of the seals of the same islands in 1663. This was a short appointment, however, as he fell out with Willoughby and he returned to Britain in 1664.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Temin and Voth, 'Riding the South Sea Bubble', 1658. Beckett also highlights how some other landowners, such as Lord Gower and Lord Cowper, did gain from South Sea Company investments, see Beckett, *Aristocracy in England*, 81-82.

<sup>100</sup> MSCUN PwB 53, A narrative of all that hath been transacted by his grace the duke of Portland, or on his behalf with Sr John Meres, 8 Dec 1721.

<sup>101</sup> Rogers, 'Bentinck, Margaret'; Carswell, *The South Sea Bubble*, 104.

<sup>102</sup> NA DD/P/6/1/22/21, Commission of appointment, Francis, Lord Willoughby, General and Governor of Barbadoes and the Carybe Islands appoints Sir Robert Harley keeper of the seals of Barbadoes and the Carybe Islands, 18 Jun 1663 [catalogue entry].

Willoughby was governor of Barbados in 1650-52 and again in the 1660s. He also became commander in chief of the Leeward Islands in 1664. He died in office in 1667, drowning in a hurricane while *en route* to St Christopher's to engage the French. Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies*,

*ii) Henry Bentinck (1682-1726), first duke of Portland*

Henry Bentinck, first duke of Portland was governor of Jamaica from 1722 to 1726. Portland parish in Jamaica was created by his order. His uptake of this position has been related to his heavy investments and recommendations in relation to the South Sea Company and the indebtedness this caused him as discussed above. He had a short tenure, dying in office after only four years at the early age of 44. It is unclear how far he benefited from the appointment though it was a convenient move to avoid his creditors in England and to raise capital through mortgages on new colonial property (see above).<sup>103</sup>

*iii) Lord William Bentinck (1774-1839)*

Lord William Bentinck, second son of the third duke of Portland, was governor of Madras from 1803 to 1807 and governor general of Bengal from 1828 to 1835. Lord William, a younger son with no fortune due to the indebtedness of the family, was secured his position in Madras by his father in 1802. It yielded a salary of £15,000 a year and he speculated that if he stayed in post until 1810 he would amass “a fortune of between £50,000 and £60,000”. By June 1807 when he lost the position he calculated his net savings in India at around £20,000. Later Lord William described India “as a great estate, of which I am the chief agent, whose principal business is to improve the condition of the tenantry and to raise the revenues”.<sup>104</sup>

*iv) Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville (1794-1865)*

The third duke of Portland secured the sinecure secretaryship of Jamaica for his grandson Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville though he never visited the island and left a salaried official to undertake business there.<sup>105</sup>

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1624-1713 (Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1972), 80, 123-24; Henning, *History of Parliament*, 497-98.

<sup>103</sup> Turberville, *History of Welbeck*, II, 15.

<sup>104</sup> John Rosselli, *Lord William Bentinck. The Making of a Liberal Imperialist 1774-1839* (London, 1974), 89 (cites first quotation); MSCUN PwH 249/1-5, Letter from Lord W H Cavendish Bentinck, Fort St George, Madras, India, to fourth duke of Portland, 6 Sep 1805; *Correspondence of ... Bentinck*, 1.333, cited in Douglas M. Peers, ‘Bentinck, Lord William Henry Cavendish - [known as Lord William Bentinck] (1774–1839)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2008) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2161>, accessed 4 Aug 2009] (cites second quotation).

<sup>105</sup> Charles C. F. Greville, *The Greville Diaries* 2 vols (London, 1927); Christopher Hibbert, ‘Greville, Charles Cavendish Fulke’ (1794–1865). *Oxford Dictionary of National*

v) *The Counts Bentinck and their Dutch relations*

There were also a number of colonial service connections in the Count Bentinck family (see Figure 1c). The first Count Bentinck, William (1704-74), was the patron of Demerara at The Hague. In this role he was lobbied for compensation by the Gedney Clarkes for their part in the defence of the colony during the 1763 slave rebellion. The Clarkes were introduced to Count Bentinck by Robert Douglas, whose family owned the Weilburg plantation in Demerara from around 1765, and who himself had earlier slaving connections. He had married into a 'prominent Dutch family' and was second in command of an expedition sent from Holland to quell the 1763 uprising. He has also been described as a 'friend and protégé' of Count Bentinck.<sup>106</sup>

Henry William Bentinck (1765-1820), grandson of the first Count Bentinck (and uncle of the third Count) held a number of colonial offices in the Caribbean. Rodway reports, nonetheless, that while born in Holland he had spent a considerable part of his life in Britain and was known in Demerara as a relative of the (third) duke of Portland. His first known colonial appointment was as governor of St Vincent between 1802 and 1806. Following on from this office he acted as governor of Demerara between 1806 and 1812 and prior to leaving England was reportedly given a 'very elegant entertainment ... at the Freemason's Tavern, London, by the merchants and planters of the colony resident there'. He seems to have been popular with the planters in Demerara, where he was already known.<sup>107</sup> It is likely he held property there himself (see above) and actively represented the interests of the planters to the earl of Liverpool as Secretary for War and the Colonies and his successor, earl Bathurst. His term of office ended when he delayed enacting the British government's ruling against the Demerara Court of Policy's measures banning meetings of enslaved people at night. Bentinck had regained sufficient favour with the British government to be appointed governor of nearby Berbice in 1814. He is described

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*Biography* (Oxford, 2004; online ed., 2008)

[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11515>, accessed 20 Oct 2009].

<sup>106</sup> S. D. Smith, *Slavery, Family and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648-1834* (Cambridge, 2006), 117 (first quotation), citing reference to Douglas in Eltis *et al.*, 1999; B. Blair, 'Wolfert Simon van Hoogenheim in the Berbice Slave Revolt of 1763-1764', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde*, 140:1 (1984), 56-76, 67 (second quotation).

<sup>107</sup> Rodway, *History of British Guiana*, Vol.2, 179 (quotation)-180.

by the historian Rodway as the colony's 'most influential Governor', a position he held until his death in office on 1st November 1820, the 'painful intelligence' of which was reported in a letter from C A F Bentinck to the fourth duke of Portland.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> da Costa, *Crowns of Glory*, 29; Rodway, *History of British Guiana*, Vol.2, 198, 276 (first quotation); MSCUN PwH 62, Letter from Major C A F Bentinck to fourth duke of Portland, 20 Dec 1820 (second quotation).

#### **4) The relative importance of slave-generated wealth to the owners of Bolsover and how this changed over time**

There is little evidence to suggest that slave-generated wealth made a significant positive contribution to the finances of the owners of Bolsover Castle or funded its development. However, there is some evidence that losses made by the first duke of Portland through his speculations in South Sea Company stock led to a diminution of the Portland fortunes for several generations and that this may have had a significant *negative* impact on the management of Bolsover Castle when it came into possession of the third duke of Portland. While he spent a considerable amount of money on the refurbishment of his nearby seat at Welbeck, only small amounts were spent at Bolsover.

#### **5) How slave-generated wealth was used in relation to Bolsover and within the wider British economy and if/how the wealth of the owners' properties in Britain contributed in turn to the development of slavery-based investments in the colonial and slavery environment**

We did not find any evidence of the use of slave-generated wealth in relation to the development of Bolsover Castle or any evidence of its direct owners using such sources of wealth in the wider British economy. Similarly no evidence has been found of the use of wealth generated through the Bolsover estate to fund slavery-based investments.

## 6) Evidence of slavery-related designs at Bolsover Castle

A review of the secondary literature, building designs and building archives and a site visit survey revealed two cases of black figures incorporated in the design of Bolsover Castle with potential associations with slavery (see below). No other evidence of slavery-related designs was found there although the presence of mahogany furniture may suggest a link with slave-based systems.

*i) Black figures in the Star Chamber* (see Figure 5).

These were discovered on a site visit. No commentary has been found on these in the sources consulted on Bolsover. They may warrant further investigation.

*ii) The black putti of the Venus Fountain* (see Figure 6)

The most obvious example of a potential slave-related design at Bolsover is the black *putti* of the Venus Fountain. According to Worsley the fountain dates to the period of William Cavendish and was under construction in the 1630s. However, an analysis of a range of relevant published literature and images of the site in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries has failed to throw much light on the iconography of the black *putti*. Indeed, it is notable that the in-depth study of the architectural style of the fountain by Worsley fails even to mention the blackness of the 'urinating *putti*' let alone comment on their iconography.<sup>109</sup>

Indeed, there is some doubt over their origins. They do not appear on the earliest known view of the fountain, dated by Girouard to the 1630s, though this drawing has a number of other recognised inaccuracies and may have been made while work was in progress. However, they are also absent from a plate which was published in 1658 as part of William Cavendish's *La Méthode Nouvelle et Invention Extraordinaire de Dresser Les Chevaux*. This shows the Venus Fountain in its garden but without the *putti*, perhaps unsurprising as the

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<sup>109</sup> Examples consulted include: Mark Girouard, 'Early Drawings of Bolsover Castle', *Architectural History*, 27 (1984), 510-18; T. Mowl, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Style* (London, 1993); T. Raylor, "'Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue": William Cavendish, Ben Jonson and Decorative Scheme of Bolsover Castle', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 52, 2 (1999), 402-39; Riden and Fowkes, *Bolsover*; Worsley, *Bolsover Castle*; Worsley, 'Architectural Patronage'; Worsley, 'The "Artisan Mannerist" Style in British Sculpture', 84 (quotation); and William Bray, *Sketch of a Tour into Derbyshire and Yorkshire* (London, 1778 and 1783 eds); Samuel Pegge, *Sketch of the History of Bolsover and Peak Castles, the County of Derby* (London, 1785).

drawings for the plates were made in Antwerp and the backgrounds based on the Renishaw drawings themselves made between 1628 and 1634. Neither do they appear on Hayman Rooke's sketch and account of the fountain included in Pegge's (1785) *Sketch of the History of Bolsover and Peak Castles, the County of Derby* (dedicated to the third duke of Portland) although this may be explained by the considerable decay of several of the fountain's sculptures at this date.<sup>110</sup> This omission is confirmed by Sheppard who notes that while it appears the fountain had survived 'largely intact' at the time of Rooke's engraving, the *putti* were one missing element. Sheppard also suggests that the fountain did not function fully from the Civil War, when some of the pipe-work was stolen, until the later 19th century when a water supply was reinstated. Unfortunately, Sheppard provides no reference to earlier evidence of the origin or existence of the black *putti* and no detail on their restoration.<sup>111</sup> Other work by Sheppard on the Fountain Garden gives no further detail on the fountain and gives no indication of specific planting schemes. It would appear, nonetheless, that the *putti* were added some time after 1658 (the date of William Cavendish's plate) and well before 1785 (the date of Rooke's sketch). It is probable that they were either part of William Cavendish's post-Restoration works or one of the changes made in the garden in 1681 when Henry, second duke of Newcastle paid his gardener £3 for work there.<sup>112</sup> However, close inspection of the *putti* suggests they do not display ethnic African attributes (see Figure 7). The choice of black stone may therefore have been related more to the overall design effect of the fountain and there may not be a direct allusion to race.

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<sup>110</sup> Girouard, 'Early Drawings of Bolsover Castle'; Worsley, 'The "Artisan Mannerist" Style in British Sculpture', 84; William Cavendish, *La Méthode Nouvelle et Invention Extraordinaire de Dresser Les Chevaux* (Antwerp, 1658); Karen Hearn and Lucy Worsley, 'Catalogue entry 32', in Ben van Beneden and Nora de Poorter (eds) *Royalist Refugees William and Margaret Cavendish in the Rubens House 1648-1660* (Antwerp, 2006), 150; Pegge, *Sketch of the History of Bolsover*, plate facing 23.

<sup>111</sup> Richard Sheppard, *Bolsover Castle: Archaeological Investigation of the Venus Fountain and its Water Supply*. Trent and Peak and Archaeological Unit (Unpublished report for English Heritage, 2002), 2 (quotation), 16.

<sup>112</sup> Richard Sheppard, *Bolsover Castle: Archaeological Watching Briefs in the Fountain Garden, Autumn 1999*. Trent and Peak and Archaeological Unit (Unpublished report for English Heritage, 2000); Worsley, 'Architectural Patronage', 35. It may be worthwhile exploring further English Heritage documents relating to the fountain, eg Worsley (1999) and Welford (n.d.), Brookes (1998) to gain firmer evidence of when the black *putti* were added.

### *iii) Mahogany furniture*

While Lady Oxford is mainly associated with the decline of Bolsover at the expense of Welbeck (see Section 2) she did invest in new luxury furnishings for the Castle, principally in mahogany, a wood associated with slave-based colonial production and environmental degradation. Furniture made from mahogany became fashionable in Europe from the 1720s and reached the height of its popularity between 1725 and 1825. Before 1760 supplies were still forthcoming from the West Indian islands but as trees were cut and land cleared for sugar plantations in particular a shift occurred to sourcing wood from the Bay of Honduras and the Mosquito Coast controlled by Spain. Mahogany extraction required more labour than other woods as the trees were large and mahogany had to be transported to market intact to realise a reasonable return. The workforce was usually enslaved Africans.<sup>113</sup> A bill of October 1751 for various luxury furnishings bought for Bolsover totalled £42 5s, and included '2 Mahogany Dumb waiters in the Pillor Parlour' at a cost of £4 4s; '22 Mahogany back Stool Chairs in Check Cases at 22s Each' costing a total of £24 4s; and 'a Mahogany Close Stool & pan the Seat cover'd with Leather' costing £1 11s 6d. The implication is that these pieces were new made though no indication is given of their maker or the origin of the wood.<sup>114</sup> The same items appear in an inventory of furniture at Bolsover Castle belonging to the third duke of Portland in 1770. The list included '14 Mahogany Chairs', 'Two Mahogany Dumb Waiters' in the Pillar Parlour, 'Twelve Mahogany Chairs, with Check Covers' in the Star Chamber, 'Ten Mahogany Chairs with Check Covers' in the Marble Room and a 'Mahogany Close Stool' in the chamber above.<sup>115</sup> Mahogany furniture thus remained a prominent feature of Bolsover Castle during the eighteenth century, despite the property's relative neglect.

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<sup>113</sup> Michael A. Camille, 'Historical Geography of the Belizean Logwood Trade', *Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers*, 22 (1996), 77-85. Accessed via <http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/clag/yearbook1996/camille.htm> [accessed 10 Oct 2009]; Jennifer L. Anderson, 'Nature's Currency, The Atlantic Mahogany Trade and the Commodification of Nature in the Eighteenth Century', *Early American Studies* (Spring 2004), 47-80.

<sup>114</sup> NA DD4P/70/8,14, Bill of Thos Cooper on Bolsover Acct, 1751.

<sup>115</sup> MSCUN PwF 3842, List of furniture belonging to the duke of Portland at Bolsover Castle, Oct 1770.

## 7) Evidence of a black presence within the household at Bolsover Castle

We pursued a number of strategies to check for any black presence within the household at Bolsover Castle. These included a review of secondary sources (e.g. by using indexes); a search for keywords (e.g. 'slave' and 'negro/e' in the archive listings at Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Archives; checking for and consultation of documentation produced by Nottinghamshire Archives and Nottinghamshire County Council on black history; and checking any other archival material consulted on Bolsover Castle for evidence of a black presence.<sup>116</sup> This process yielded evidence on four possible associations, three of which relate to the period of ownership by William Cavendish, and one to that of John Holles.

### *i) a 'singing-boy'*

It is claimed that William Cavendish (1593-1676) bought 'a chorister, or 'singing-boy' for the sum of £50' in early life. This purchase was made at the same time as Cavendish bought a horse (also for £50) and a dog (for £2) and the original source implies this took place before Cavendish was 20 years old, but adds no further details. This would place the event around or before 1613, coinciding with the time that his father, Charles Cavendish, leased and acquired Bolsover. The purchase may have occurred whilst Cavendish was at St John's College Cambridge where he went in 1608. There do not appear to be any surviving lists of servants at Bolsover for this period in Nottinghamshire Archives or MSCUN to shed further light on this person.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> A Nottinghamshire County Council Libraries Information Leaflet on *Black and Asian History* (2003) highlights the presence of two black figures in Nottinghamshire during the period of British slavery: John Americanus, described as 'a blackmoore', baptised in Newark in 1645; and George Africanus, a freed slave who came to Britain from Sierra Leone and was a well known citizen of Nottingham in the early nineteenth century. Africanus is the subject of a more detailed leaflet published by Nottinghamshire Archives and Local Studies in 1999. We also accessed the Nottinghamshire County Council website on African Caribbean heritage

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/archives/exhibitions/africancaribbeanheritage/africancaribbeanpresence/>; and the Black community history pages by Dr Denise Amos <http://www.nottsheritagegateway.org.uk/people/blackcommunity.htm>;

<sup>117</sup> Turberville, *History of Welbeck, I*, 44 (first quotation); Newcastle, *Life of William Cavendish*, 105; Hulse, 'Cavendish, William'.

ii) 'my Lady's Moor'

Firth's edition of Margaret Cavendish's *Life of William, Duke of Newcastle*, includes in a footnote an extract from a letter by Sir Charles Cotterell. In this Cotterell describes an entertainment at William Cavendish's house in Antwerp attended by the royal family in exile and other European royals and aristocrats in 1658. After the dancing he recounts that 'my Lady's Moor, dressed in feathers, came in and sang a song of the same author's, [Newcastle's] set and taught him by Nich. Lanier'. While black people were often referred to as 'moors' in the 17th century the term could also be applied to distinguish any who were not Christian, Jewish or European. Therefore the person referred to here may have been black but could also have been Asian, Arabic, Native American or Muslim and was not necessarily an African. No reference to this person was found in the listing of servants paid by the marquis of Newcastle in 1661.<sup>118</sup>

iii) the black grooms

Evidence from three 17th century paintings suggests that black grooms were employed by William Cavendish. Two mid-17th century paintings, part of a series by the Dutch artist Abraham Van Diepenbeeck, depict black grooms in the setting of William Cavendish's nearby property of Welbeck Abbey, Nottinghamshire. These are included as engraved plates in Cavendish's lavishly illustrated, *La Méthode Nouvelle et Invention Extraordinaire de Dresser les Chevaux* (1658) which contains forty plates by Clouet, de Jode, and Vorsterman, made after drawings by Van Diepenbeeck. These drawings were produced in Antwerp in the 1650s and use was probably made of earlier paintings of Welbeck to create the detailed backgrounds.<sup>119</sup>

The plates showing the black grooms are part of a number of views of grooms holding horses either in front of buildings at Welbeck (the House, Stables and Riding School) or in the landscape. The grooms are not named in any of the

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<sup>118</sup> Newcastle, *Life of William Cavendish*, 63; Anthony Gerard Barthelemy, *Black Face, Maligned Race: The Representation of Blacks in English Drama from Shakespeare to Southerne* (Louisiana, 1987), x; MSCUN Pw1/670, List of servants paid by the marquis of Newcastle, Michaelmas 1661.

<sup>119</sup> Hearn and Worsley, 'Catalogue entry 32', report the use of earlier paintings for the plates which included views of Bolsover Castle and we have thus assumed this was also the case for those showing Welbeck.

plates though the location at Welbeck and the name and type of horse is given (in French).<sup>120</sup> Horses were a great interest to Cavendish and he was an acknowledged expert in horsemanship or manège. Plate 6 shows the stallion 'Paragon un Barbe' held by a black groom in the foreground, in front of the Welbeck House apartments. Plate 8 shows the same black groom in the foreground, holding the horse/stallion 'Mackomilia un Turke', this time in front of the Riding School at Welbeck, completed by Cavendish to the designs of John Smithson in about 1622.<sup>121</sup> Cavendish's interest in horses also led to him creating 'a 5-mile racetrack at Welbeck' and 'holding meetings six times a year in which his neighbours competed for a silver cup'. The grooms and stallions were accommodated in the nearby stables, with the grooms 'expected to accompany these sometimes vicious beasts at all times'.<sup>122</sup>

The production of the book was a costly 'vanity press' venture with the printing alone costing Cavendish in excess of £1,300. He also spent considerable sums on purchasing eight horses while in Antwerp. Thus both the horses and the book scheme involved Cavendish in further borrowing at a time when he was in exile and strapped for cash. Such ventures were, however, important in the construction of aristocratic identity, both horses and books serving 'as beautiful, costly and collectible commodities, and therefore as powerful tools in terms of representation and image building in the glittering aristocratic world'.<sup>123</sup> That black grooms were included in the book's illustrations and associated with the valuable stallions through equestrian art - equestrian portraiture being a common form of representing social status at this time - fits with the interpretation of black figures in eighteenth century art as exotic servants,

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<sup>120</sup> We are grateful to the English Heritage team working on the restoration of the stables at Bolsover Castle for drawing our attention to these paintings. Cavendish, *La Méthode Nouvelle*, plate numbers 6 and 8 (cited in reprinted 1743 edition); Lucy Worsley, Ursula Harting and Marika Keblusck, 'Horsemanship', in Ben Van Beneden and Nora de Poorter (eds), *Royalist Refugees William and Margaret Cavendish in the Rubens House 1648-1660* (Antwerp, 2006), 37-54; Hulse, 'Cavendish, William'.

<sup>121</sup> Stephen Daniels, 'Miniature Matlock: Cresswell Crags, George Stubbs and 18th – Century Landscape Taste', *The British Art Journal*, IX, 2 (2008), 79-85; Ben van Beneden and Nora de Poorter (eds), *Royalist Refugees William and Margaret Cavendish in the Rubens House 1648-1660* (Antwerp, 2006); Hulse, 'Cavendish, William'; Worsley *et al.*, 'Horsemanship', 40.

<sup>122</sup> Hulse, 'Cavendish, William' (first and second quotations); Worsley *et al.*, 'Horsemanship', 40 (third quotation).

<sup>123</sup> Newcastle, *Life of William Cavendish*, 51-52; Worsley *et al.*, 'Horsemanship', 46-47 (quotation).

whose employment conveyed prestige on their employers. Rather than sugar or tea, the exotic products with which the black grooms are associated in these plates are horses from the Barbary Coast of north Africa and Turkey or Turkestan in central Asia. While white grooms were also depicted there is evidence of a matching of the black grooms with horses from beyond Europe and the white grooms with horses of European origin, from Spain (plate 7), Naples (plate 9) and Russia (plate 10) respectively. Both the white and black grooms appear well dressed, though the black groom in plate 8 is particularly elegant. All wear shoes and leggings except the black groom in plate 6 who appears bare-legged above the mid-calf and possibly bare-footed.<sup>124</sup>

A further small oil painting dated between around 1665 and 1676 and attributed to A Sijmons, also includes images of two black grooms. Entitled *Five of William Cavendish's Manège Horses*, it shows the five (named) horses and their (unnamed) grooms and is thought to be derived from the engravings in Cavendish's earlier book. Here, however, there is no obvious pairing of black grooms with horses beyond Europe, one black groom holding a Barbary horse, the other a horse from Spain. All grooms appear well dressed in a similar style.<sup>125</sup>

The listing of servants paid by the marquis of Newcastle in 1661 does include the names of several grooms and their wages:

'To Jo<sup>n</sup>. Lamming ye groom of ye Soare [?] 'great' crossed out] stable' £2

'To Richards ye Groome of ye Padnage [?]' £3 10s

'To W<sup>m</sup> Goldin [?] ye groome of ye great stable' £3

'To Edward Mauds ye other groome here [?]' £4

However, the names give no clue as to whether any of these men were the black grooms depicted in the paintings of Welbeck. Indeed, as the paintings were

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<sup>124</sup> Worsley *et al.*, 'Horsemanship', 48 –these authors do not, however, comment specifically on the black grooms; Beth Fowkes Tobin, *Picturing Imperial Power: Colonial Subjects in Eighteenth-Century British Painting* (Durham and London, 1999), 27-55.

<sup>125</sup> Once again there is no specific commentary on the black grooms in Karen Hearn, 'Catalogue entry 79', in Ben Van Beneden and Nora de Poorter (eds), *Royalist Refugees William and Margaret Cavendish in the Rubens House 1648-1660* (Antwerp, 2006), 233.

made in Antwerp it may be that the black grooms were employed there and did not return to England with Cavendish. George Stubbs later drew on the Cavendish equestrian engravings when creating his oil painting of *The 3rd Duke of Portland riding out past the Riding School at Welbeck Abbey*, exhibited in 1767. There are no black grooms shown in this painting.<sup>126</sup>

*iv) the 'negroe' horn player*

Some correspondence of June 1711 suggests that John Holles, duke of Newcastle, may have employed a black horn player in his establishment at Welbeck. Writing from the army of the duke of Marlborough at Camp de Warde in northern France, via William Wenham, the duke's secretary, Col Sutton in the first of two letters hints that Newcastle has asked him to secure a French horn player:

'The Prince of Hesse has promised me to endeavour the procuring a man that blows the French horn, and I will also sollicite Count Vehsin [?] who conievnds [sic] the Palatines and keeps hounds as soon as he joins the army'.

The reference to hounds and Sutton's earlier pledge of good wishes to the duke when he soon 'enters the pleasure of the Forest' to hunt stags, suggests the man would play a role in this activity. A further letter from Sutton a few days later, confirms the Prince of Hesse has been successful in his search 'having found a Person very well qualified for your Grace's service'. The person in question is reported as 'a Negro' who 'belong'd to the late Emperor' and who is 'esteem'd the best picqueur [sic] and French Horn in the world'. The reference to the person as a 'picqueur' [piqueur], a French technical term for a master of hounds, confirms the anticipated role of the man. Securing his services should not be a problem according to the Prince of Hesse, who Sutton reports 'believes he will make no difficulty of accepting your Graces offers provided he be allow'd his charges from Vienna into England'. Nonetheless, Sutton appeared reluctant to proceed without explicit instructions from the duke, 'but that I may not commit an Error in this affair, shou'd be glad your Grace wou'd please to order

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<sup>126</sup> MSCUN Pw1/670, List of servants paid by the marquis of Newcastle, Michaelmas 1661; Daniels, 'Miniature Matlock', 82.

Wm. Wenman to send me your Graces instructions at large *for the man has an extraordinary carecter* [sic – emphasis added].<sup>127</sup>

While a later letter reveals that the duke offered him a ‘relocation package’, his food and lodgings and ‘a Coat every summer such as the other huntsmen have who blow the Brass horne’, it is unclear whether Newcastle did employ the black horn player.<sup>128</sup> The listings of the servants of the duke and duchess from around this time contain no explicit references to horn players nor any obviously African names, although hornmen ‘Wentsal Phenalt’ and ‘Joseph Leivers’ were listed as employees of the duke of Portland before and in 1767, probably at Welbeck. Indeed the appointment may have been thwarted by the death of duke John, just a month after Sutton’s letter, on 15 July 1711, ironically following a fall from his horse whilst out stag hunting.<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> NA DD4P/64/20/7, Letter from R Sutton to Wm Wenman, 1 Jun 1711; NA DD4P/64/20/7, Letter from R Sutton/Col Sutton to Wm Wenman, 11 Jun 1711 Camp at Warde.

<sup>128</sup> Information from <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/archives/exhibitions/africancaribbeanheritage/africancaribbeanpresence/hornplayer.htm> [accessed 12 Oct 2009]

<sup>129</sup> MSCUN Pw2 607-611, Servants of John and Margaret, duke & duchess of Newcastle, 1710, 1711-12, 1713, 1716; MSCUN PwF 9815 and PwF 9816, Account of wages paid [probably at Welbeck], 19 Feb 1767; Seddon, ‘Holles, John’.

## **8) An assessment of responses to abolition from owners of Bolsover, their families and any other figures associated with them**

Two notable examples are discussed here: the third duke of Portland; and Lord William Bentinck. Lord George Bentinck was actively involved in Caribbean colonial affairs following abolition but this aspect has not been followed up due to time and resource constraints.

### *i) William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck (1738-1809), third duke of Portland, and the abolition of slavery*

The earlier English Heritage report by Kaufmann (2007) identified an association of the third duke of Portland with a key event in the abolition debate, the *Zong* massacre. Portland was petitioned over the case by Granville Sharp in his brief period as Prime Minister from 2 April to 18 December 1783. The *Zong* case horrified the British public and James Walvin has recently argued that this event was, although terrible, rather helpful to abolitionists at the time by providing a focus for their cause.<sup>130</sup> However, the case was considered not in the light of murder, but in terms of property. The case centred around an insurance claim. Captain Collingwood of the *Zong* (a Dutch prize), having missed Jamaica in 1781, was running out of water. He made 'a cold calculation' to throw many sick enslaved Africans overboard in order to protect the rest – and thereby his profits.<sup>131</sup> The human cargo was insured after all, at £30 each. However, Collingwood's actions were judged 'excessive'; it was deemed that the water supply situation was not serious, and therefore overthrowing the Africans had not been 'necessary'. The underwriters were therefore not liable to pay compensation.<sup>132</sup> At this point in time, enslaved Africans were deemed property, and therefore it is not surprising that the case was dealt with in this way. Indeed, thinking about abolition in this manner was perhaps normal for the elite.

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<sup>130</sup> Miranda Kaufmann, *English Heritage Properties 1600-1830 and Slavery Connections* (London, 2007); James Walvin, 'The Massacre on the Slave Ship ZONG: Abolition and Public Sensibility, 1782-1783', Public Lecture, University of Nottingham, 26 Nov 2008.

<sup>131</sup> Anita Rupprecht, 'Excessive Memories: Slavery, Insurance and Resistance', *History Workshop Journal*, 64 (2007), 13.

<sup>132</sup> Rupprecht, 'Excessive Memories', 14.

James Oldham argues that decisions made in the Somerset case were also far more concerned with property than race.<sup>133</sup>

Portland was petitioned due to his office, with Sharp indicating his earlier petition to Lord North while prime minister at the start of his letter:

'My Lord

In the Year 1772, when Lord North was his Majesty's first Minister; I stated, in a Letter to his Lordship, some unquestionable proofs of the necessity of abolishing Slavery in the Colonies, & of putting a Stop to the Slave Trade.'

Neither did Sharp necessarily expect a response from Portland as he regarded the Admiralty as the proper authority to deal with the matter. Instead he sent Portland 'the Copy of a Letter, which I sent to the Lords of the Admiralty, in the beginning of the present Month, with an Account of the Murder of 132 Negro Slaves on board the Ship Zong or Zurg, a Liverpool Trader' along with the 'original Vouchers'. He also reported having received no answer yet from the Admiralty and may have been seeking to motivate Portland to prompt action from them. Sharp also set out to warn Portland from a moral viewpoint as he reported warning Lord North previously:

'[I] only wish, by the horrible example related in the inclosed [sic] Papers, to warn your Grace, that there is an absolute necessity to abolish the Slave Trade, & the West India Slavery; & that 'to be in power, & to neglect (as Life [& I may add, the tenure of Office] is very uncertain) - even a day in endeavouring to put a Stop to such monstrous injustice & abandoned Wickedness must necessarily endanger a Man's eternal Welfare, be he ever so great in temporal dignity or Office'.

This was my Warning to Lord North eleven Years ago.'<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> James Oldham, 'New Light on Mansfield and Slavery', *Journal of British Studies*, 27:1 (1988), 45-68. Krikler agrees with this argument based on the fact that Mansfield looked after and was very fond of the mixed-race girl Dido, who was part of his household. See Jeremy Krikler, 'The Zong and the Lord Chief Justice', *History Workshop Journal*, 64 (2007), 29-47.

<sup>134</sup> National Maritime Museum (NMM) REC/19, Documents relating to the case of the ship Zong, 1783, 111- 14.

Portland, a staunch anti-abolitionist and defender of the rights of property, made no response. Given the tone of Sharp's warning and his reference to the insecurity of office of which Portland was acutely aware, it is unsurprising that Portland did not reply. Furthermore, his biographer, Wilkinson, implies this was a typical response by Portland to the issue and that throughout his political career he made no attempts to enter into public argument on slavery. While this is not unexpected, as Portland rarely made speeches on any topics in the Lords despite his important role in national politics, more surprising is a dearth of evidence in Portland's private correspondence 'of any detailed defence of slavery'. Portland tended to discuss issues much more extensively in private than in public speeches and one might have expected to find a more detailed engagement with the slavery debate in his private correspondence, especially as Portland was Home Secretary from 1794 to 1801 under Pitt and so in charge of home affairs, Ireland, Scotland and the colonies. Wilkinson again notes:

'It can only be assumed that he upheld pragmatic British interests and the property rights of slave-owners. If his sense of common humanity was ever touched by the plight of slaves, he managed to subdue those sentiments most effectively'.<sup>135</sup>

Our own examination of the MSCUN archives and the Liverpool Papers confirms this general view of Portland.<sup>136</sup> His son, Lord Titchfield, later the fourth duke, also had an objection to abolition, indicating in a draft letter to his father his refusal of an offer of a peerage from Grenville's administration in 1806 due to his objection to their 'unanimous' views on the 'Abolition of the Slave Trade (and the repeal of the Test Act) on which I could not conscientiously support them'. As it is implied that the third duke had petitioned Grenville for this honour for his son, he was either a more flexible politician and did not anticipate that the pro-Abolition stance of Grenville's administration would be a concern to him, or he himself had moderated his views.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland*, 70 (both quotations).

<sup>136</sup> British Library (BL) Liverpool Papers, Add. 38310, 38311, 38191, 38243, 38416, 38566.

<sup>137</sup> MSCUN PwH 3339, Draft of letter from marquis of Titchfield to third duke of Portland, Mar 1806.

Sharpe's petition was not, however, the only attempt made to influence Portland over the slavery debate or slave-related colonial affairs more broadly. Also during his period as Prime Minister in 1783, Portland received a petition from Denys Rolle, a colonist, for presentation to George III. Rolle had recently lost his extensive plantation lands and substantial enslaved African workforce in West Florida, which he estimated were worth £28,488, when the colony was ceded to Spain and was seeking compensatory land grants in the Bahamas.<sup>138</sup> Later during his period at the Home Office from 1794 to 1801, Portland received further petitions. These included a 'Memorial of the West India Planters & Merchants ... on the subject of the Defence of the Colonies and the exactions said to have been committed upon the Inhabitants of the Captured Islands by the Forces employed there' from Gilbert Francklyn in 1794, and a 'Memorial of the Agents in behalf of the principal Inhabitants and Proprietors in the Island of Martinique', presented in early 1795 by George Woodford Thellusson following the French invasion of that island.<sup>139</sup> Portland also sought information from knowledgeable sources on matters such as the use of black troops, health and wartime intelligence. Here he was particularly indebted to Gilbert Francklyn, a Caribbean planter, and previously a plantation manager for the Lascelles in Tobago and possibly Jamaica, and an active anti-abolitionist and propagandist for the West India Committee (several pamphlets), and Sir John Dalrymple.<sup>140</sup>

Portland was also lobbied by pro-abolition pamphleteers. In 1801 he was sent a pamphlet by David Barclay, a prominent London-based Quaker banker, brewer, merchant and anti-slavery advocate, who wished 'to revive a Subject, which, seems to be forgotten; or abandoned by some of the most zealous of its

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<sup>138</sup> MSCUN PIC 49/7/1-2, Copy memorial from Denys Rolle to George III and sent to third duke of Portland, 10 Sep 1783.

<sup>139</sup> MSCUN, PwF 3974, Letter from Gilb Francklyn to third duke of Portland, 30 Aug 1794; MSCUN PwF 3975/1-2, Memorial of the West India planters and merchants sent by G Francklin to third duke of Portland, 28 Aug 1794; MSCUN PwF 8680, Letter from G W Thellusson, London, to third duke of Portland, 30 Jan 1795; MSCUN PwF 8682 [enclosed in PwF 8680], Memorial 'of the Agents in behalf of the principal inhabitants and Proprietors in the Island of Martinique' to third duke of Portland, n.d.

<sup>140</sup> Smith, *Slavery, Family and Gentry Capitalism*, 237; Gilbert Francklyn, *Observations, Occasioned by the Attempts Made in England to Effect the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1788; reprinted London, 1789); David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770-1789* (Oxford, 1999), 382.

Advocates', the freeing of slaves.<sup>141</sup> Barclay and his brother John, had unintentionally come into possession of Unity Valley Pen, St Anne's, Jamaica and its 32 slaves, during the early 1790s in a similar manner to many other merchants, 'in consequence of a debt due to them from a correspondent in Jamaica'. The pamphlet recounts his story of freeing his plantation slaves and facilitating their new lives through their resettlement in Philadelphia where 'in consequence of his former mercantile concerns' he had 'a numerous and respectable acquaintance', with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.<sup>142</sup> Again, there is no indication that Portland responded to this correspondence.

An interesting angle from which to examine the third duke of Portland's engagement with slavery debates is through his attitudes towards property. We think that links can be made between his attitudes towards his personal finances and property, his Whig principles and debates over abolition (enslaved Africans of course being treated as chattels within the trans-Atlantic context). These arguments are supported by investigation of sources relating to Portland's involvement in colonial affairs in particular.

Portland's adherence to the Lockean principle of property rights, asserted by the Whig supporters of William III at the time of the 1688 Revolution, can be seen in his defence of his own property rights.<sup>143</sup> This is most notable in two disputes over his claim to title of former Crown lands, one in relation to Sherwood Forest, and the more famous case in Cumberland and Westmoreland with Sir James Lowther. The latter dispute became much more than a private squabble between two landowners over former Crown lands in the Forest of Inglewood and the Socage of Carlisle.<sup>144</sup> Portland was a rising Rockinghamite Whig and Lowther, the

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<sup>141</sup> Jacob M. Price, 'Barclay, David' (1729–1809), rev. Hannah, Leslie, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37150>, accessed 15 Mar 2009]; MSCUN PIC 36/7, Letter from David Barclay to third duke of Portland, 26 May 1801 (quotation).

<sup>142</sup> MSCUN PIC 36/8, Printed pamphlet written by David Barclay and sent to third duke of Portland entitled, *An Account of the Emancipation of the Slaves of Unity Valley Pen, in Jamaica* (London, 1801), 5 (first quotation), 6 (second quotation).

<sup>143</sup> The great-grandfather of the third duke, Hans William Bentinck (1649-1709), was part of William III's force and was created earl of Portland in 1689 in light of this service,

<sup>144</sup> House of Commons, 'The Fourteenth Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Enquire into the State and Condition of the Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues of the

Tory son-in-law of Lord Bute, close advisor to George III. Both were keen to secure political influence in the run-up to the 1768 elections. When Lowther's legal advisers discovered a 'technical flaw' in the original grants made by the Crown to Portland's family and the Treasury subsequently granted Lowther lease of these lands, the case became a touchstone for the Whig party in debates over the influence of the Crown and the sanctity of private property. Reflecting back on the events of 1688, Portland's Whig party supporters celebrated him as a revolutionary hero, just as his ancestor the first earl of Portland, a supporter of William III, had been. Conversely Lowther, Bute and George III were cast as representatives of excessive royal influence.<sup>145</sup> Portland spent at least £20,000 disputing the election and the long legal battle to reclaim his lands (and defend his principles over property) which lasted nearly 10 years, was so costly to him in his already precarious financial state, that he had to sell off all his property in the north-west.<sup>146</sup>

Portland was Secretary of State for Home Affairs from 1794 to 1801 and in this capacity the governors of the West Indies corresponded with him concerning day to day affairs in the colonies and others such as merchants in Britain wrote to him asking for his intervention. A good example of this is in relation to the problems following the Grenadian rebellion of 1795 and 1796. One major issue was the confiscation of slaves on the plantations of the rebellious French. Confiscated slaves were being sold by commissioners appointed for this purpose. However, traders in Britain (including some in Liverpool) were owed lots of money from these estates and they approached Portland to intervene. These merchants were arguing that they had serious debts owed them from the estates of the rebels, and that the commissioners were flooding the market with

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Crown, and to Sell or Alienate Fee Farm and other Unimproveable Rents', *House of Commons Journal*, 48 (1793), 467-56; Brian Bonsall, *Sir James Lowther and Cumberland and Westmorland Elections, 1754-75* (New York, 1960), 85.

<sup>145</sup> Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland*, 23 (quotation); Susanne Seymour, 'Eighteenth Century Parkland 'Improvement' on the Dukeries' Estates of North Nottinghamshire', Unpublished PhD thesis (University of Nottingham, 1988), 152.

<sup>146</sup> Wilkinson, 'Bentinck, William'; Wilkinson, *The Duke of Portland*, 24, 61, in which he estimates Portland's annual income before 1785 at around £9000, rising to £17,000 after the death of his mother. Wilkinson regards this as 'a woefully inadequate annual income' for a leading duke (and cites the incomes of duke of Devonshire and marquis of Rockingham at around £40,000 a year). In the later years of his life Portland was paying £32,690 a year in interest and annuities and died in 1809 with debts of £520,000.

these slaves thereby lowering the prices unnecessarily.<sup>147</sup> The language used concerns rights in property (debts) and the property itself (slaves). This links with one of the major themes in abolition debates (both contemporary and by historians), economics.<sup>148</sup> Merchants in Britain and planters in the West Indies used the argument that the slave trade and slavery were incredibly important to the British economy. The merchants also demonstrated that they had huge debts owing to them from the planters, whilst the planters whined about their indebted estates. Both groups played the 'nationalism' card in arguing that the government had asked them to invest their property for the expansion of the British state, and in return the British state should protect their property. Liverpool's merchants were especially vocal in this respect. It is therefore interesting that Portland pledged to follow the line taken by Charles Jenkinson, Lord Liverpool regarding the Slave Trade Carrying Act in 1799.<sup>149</sup> A commercial man, Lord Liverpool had strong links with the slave trading port of Liverpool and Liverpool merchants had lobbied him extensively in 1788 during the run up to the Dolben's Act of that year.<sup>150</sup> In following Lord Liverpool therefore, it is not surprising that Portland had an anti-abolitionist stance. But slaves were also property at this time and were chattels to be bought and sold, passed on at law. Therefore, morality and economics were not the only issues regarding abolition: property was also at stake. Indeed, people of Portland's class were often more interested in property than in morality and race. As noted above, both the *Zong* and *Somerset* cases were concerned with property. Indeed, in 1799 Portland was far more concerned with keeping the peace in Grenada than the welfare of the slaves. Governor Green was quick to mollify the duke following the murder of a white man by one of his slaves. He wrote that the murder had nothing to do with any intended overthrow of government or opposition to white authority. He added that the troops and people in general were very healthy.<sup>151</sup> In April Portland replied that 'I have great satisfaction in observing a continuance of the

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<sup>147</sup> TNA CO 101/34 and 35, Letter folders with correspondence to and from Portland, 1795-96 and 1797.

<sup>148</sup> The other central themes are: morals (absent here), competition with other states (impolitics), security (both in terms of French attack and slave rebellion). John R. Oldfield, *Popular Politics & British Anti-Slavery* (London, 1998); Roger Anstey and Paul E. H. Hair, *Liverpool, the African Slave Trade and Abolition* (Liverpool, 1976).

<sup>149</sup> Jenkinson was President of the Board of Trade 1786-1805, made Lord Hawkesbury in 1791 and promoted earl of Liverpool in 1796.

<sup>150</sup> BL Liverpool Papers, Add. 38310, 38311, 38191, 38243, 38416, 38566.

<sup>151</sup> TNA CO 101/36, Governor Green to Portland, 18 Jan 1799.

same good order, Tranquility and Prosperity, which Grenada has enjoyed under your Government'.<sup>152</sup>

Portland was also involved with the Sierra Leone project in 1799. Apart from being concerned over the public expense of this project - the costs for buildings alone during the first year were estimated at £5,445 15s 7d - Portland was again worried about public order and authority.<sup>153</sup> Therefore we find Mr Gray, acting governor of Freetown writing that it was a very bad idea to allow maroons into the colony:

'We are deterred from any thought of this kind, from the very turbulent disposition of our present Settlers, and the natural disposition which arises in our minds, that the Maroons either are already, or by mixing with them might turn out men of a similar cast'.<sup>154</sup>

He added it would cost even more money to keep them in order and that the maroons should be strictly dealt with. In fact, Grey and his Council thought it best to keep the Africans who were to be settled quite separate, and recommended the Bananas Island, as opposed to the mainland, as the site of the colony.<sup>155</sup> Note the racist point of view, assuming that all people of African descent were warlike, or likely to dissent. Portland was far more concerned with property and authority than morality, and it seems therefore that there is a useful line of enquiry linking abolition debates with Portland's attitudes towards property.

#### *ii) Lord William Bentinck (1774-1839) and the promotion of abolition*

Another dimension of the slavery networks of the Bentinck family was the association of Lord and Lady William Bentinck with the abolitionist movement and wider humanitarian networks. In this regard there is clear evidence of links between Lord William and his wife and the Gurneys, William Roscoe and Thomas

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<sup>152</sup> TNA CO 101/36, Portland to Governor Green, 29 Apr 1799.

<sup>153</sup> TNA CO 267/10, Estimate of expense of buildings for the maroon settlement, 10 Jun 1799. See also Suzanne Schwarz, 'Commerce, Civilization and Christianity: The Development of the Sierra Leone Company', in David Richardson, Suzanne Schwarz and Anthony Tibbles (eds.), *Liverpool and Atlantic Slavery* (Liverpool, 2007), 252-76.

<sup>154</sup> TNA CO 267/10, Grey to Portland, 6 May 1799.

<sup>155</sup> TNA CO 267/10, Governor and Council to Portland, 10 Jun 1799.

Fowell Buxton.<sup>156</sup> It was through his wife's family that sometime after 1808 Lord William came to know Joseph John Gurney, the Norwich Quaker banker and brother of Elizabeth Fry. The relationship also had a financial dimension as Lord William had a bank account with Gurney, Birkbeck & Co from at least 1814, through which he secured loans for the development of his North Lynn estates.<sup>157</sup> Correspondence from Gurney to Lord William in October 1825 indicates an expected visit from the Bentincks to his Norfolk residence, Earlham, and encloses draft resolutions on the abolition of slavery drawn up by the Norwich Anti-Slavery Society, with the hope that Lord William would promote them in parliament.<sup>158</sup> Lord William's biographer, Rosselli describes this stay as 'something of an event' with Bentinck moving the abolition resolutions at a public dinner, and concludes, 'For a duke's younger son to do this marked a real commitment'. He reports Gurney's opinion of Lord William as "'a man of excellent sense and great integrity of purpose'".<sup>159</sup> In his annotated almanac, Lord William describes the visit to 'Joseph John Gurney – a quaker near Norwich' where he reports he was 'very much pleased with things – high hospitality' and confirms his attendance at the slavery meeting at Earlham. There is no evidence, however, of Lord William himself presenting material to parliament on this issue.<sup>160</sup>

Another of Gurneys' sisters married the anti-slavery reformer Thomas Fowell Buxton (1786-1845), who became joint leader (with William Wilberforce) of the anti-slavery movement in parliament in the early 1820s. Buxton presented a motion in the House of Commons for the abolition of slavery in May 1823. Based in Norfolk at Cromer Hall in the 1820s, Buxton was also present at the meeting at Earlham in 1825, to provide 'all necessary information' after the resolutions

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<sup>156</sup> LivRO 920 ROS 278, William Roscoe to Lady Bentinck, Toxteth Park, 3 Jul 1822.

<sup>157</sup> Rosselli, *Lord William Bentinck*, 62; MSCUN Pw Jd 5936/1 and 2, Nov 1813-Feb 1814. Lord William Bentinck's account with Gurneys 1 Dec 1813-1 Feb 1814; MSCUN Pw Je 344-48. Correspondence between Gurneys, Birkbeck & Co. and Lord William Bentinck, 1817-1824.

<sup>158</sup> MSCUN Pw Je 349, Correspondence from Joseph John Gurney to Lord William Bentinck, 13 Oct 1825; MSCUN Pw Je 350. Copy of resolutions passed on the slavery issue, c. Oct 1825.

<sup>159</sup> Rosselli, *Lord William Bentinck*, 62 (cites quotation by Gurney).

<sup>160</sup> MSCUN Pw Je 1078, Annotated Almanack of Lord William Bentinck, 19 and 20 Oct 1825 (quotation). A check was made of Hansard in relation to Lord William Bentinck. See <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/>

had been moved and so would have met Bentinck.<sup>161</sup> Earlier in 1824 Bentinck had received some proposed plans for the abolition of slavery, authored by Buxton, although it is uncertain whether they were sent directly by him.<sup>162</sup> Issues such as the slave trade, slavery, suttee, treatment of indigenous peoples and penal reform were linked by Buxton (and others) in trans-imperial networks of humanitarianism which crossed and connected a range of places. Lord William's role in the abolition of suttee in India during his time as governor general, and his less emphasised role in the abolition of slavery, reveals him as an aristocratic player in these networks.<sup>163</sup> Buxton himself was full of praise for Bentinck when news arrived of his banning of suttee in India in 1830:

'He [Buxton] replied, that from the time he heard that Lord William Bentinck was appointed to the government of India, he entertained no doubt that whatever could be safely done towards the abolition of the practice the noble Lord would endeavour to effect. This confidence had not been misplaced. It would not become him to pronounce a panegyric on that noble person, but he was sure, if any man possessed the moral courage to achieve so great a victory over prejudices, in the cause of humanity, it was Lord W. Bentinck.'<sup>164</sup>

However his views of Bentinck may have changed in the 1836 when his involvement in the sale of Vernon House in London to Lord William led to a legal dispute between them.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>161</sup> Blouet, O. M., 'Buxton, Sir Thomas Fowell, first baronet (1786–1845)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, Sept 2004; online ed., Oct 2007) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4247>, accessed 26 March 2009 ]; MSCUN Pw Je 349, Correspondence from Joseph John Gurney to Lord William Bentinck, 13 Oct 1825 (quotation).

<sup>162</sup> MSCUN Pw Je 1026/1-8. Plan for Abolition of Slavery, Feb 1824 and Improved Plan for the Abolition of Slavery, Feb 1824.

<sup>163</sup> Alan Lester, 'Colonial Networks, Australian Humanitarianism and the History Wars', *Geographical Research*, 44, 3 (2006), 232, 235; Rosselli, *Lord William Bentinck*. The practice of suttee typically involved the burning or burying alive of women alongside their dead husbands. See Dorothy K. Stein, 'Women to Burn: Suttee as Normative Institution', *Signs*, 4, 2 (1978), 253-68.

<sup>164</sup> *HC Deb 16 March 1830 Vol.23 c390*. [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1830/mar/16/suttees#S2V0023P0\\_18300316\\_HOC\\_67](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1830/mar/16/suttees#S2V0023P0_18300316_HOC_67) [accessed 9 Oct 2009]

<sup>165</sup> MSCUN PI F8/7/1/1, Conveyance of Vernon House, London to Lord William Bentinck, Jun 1836; MSCUN PI F8/7/2/1, Bill of complaint in Buxton v Bentinck, in Chancery, 16 Apl, 1836.

## ***9) Conclusions and potential for future additional lines of research***

From the preceding analysis of the slavery connections of Bolsover Castle a number of conclusions can be drawn. Firstly this case study shows the breadth and variety of connections of the owners and their wider families with slave-based enterprises and debates over slavery. While there is little evidence of ownership of plantations by direct owners of Bolsover Castle, there is considerable evidence of plantation ownership in their wider families. There is more evidence, perhaps surprisingly given the lack of plantation ownership, of the employment of black servants by the owners of Bolsover, though these servants seem more connected to Welbeck Abbey and Antwerp than Bolsover directly. Evidence of slave-related designs at Bolsover seems very limited, though paintings of the black grooms were displayed at Welbeck Abbey and mahogany furniture was prominent at Bolsover in the eighteenth century. There is also evidence of significant involvement in debates over the abolition of slavery within the Portland family, with both pro- and anti-abolition views apparent. This demonstrates that even within families, views over such controversial subjects could be divergent.

In contrast to many conventional accounts, this case study reveals how speculation in both colonial property and trading could have very negative financial impacts on British country houses. Management of Bolsover Castle in the eighteenth century in particular, seems to have been impacted negatively by the first duke of Portland's costly speculation in the South Sea Company, which reduced his family's fortunes for two generations.

As highlighted in the Introduction, it has not been possible to examine in detail all aspects of slavery connections in the course of this project. Below we highlight areas which may merit further consideration:

### *i) The origins of Sir William Cavendish's wealth*

Due to his active redevelopment of Bolsover Castle it may be worthwhile to undertake further investigation into Sir William's Cavendish's finances after the Civil War, including the borrowing undertaken while he was in exile in Antwerp. (1644-1660), a major trading centre.

*ii) Colonial investments: the South Sea Company and the Harleys*

The Harley connection with the South Sea Company warrants further investigation. This would complement the work completed on the first duke of Portland and help in further establishing the impacts of the South Sea Company on family finances and property management, and the extent to which the first duke was pressurized or not into being involved.

*iii) Checking of parish registers for Bolsover and Welbeck for evidence of a black presence.*

This may yield relevant information depending on the level of detail provided and whether blackness is identified. Other studies of this type (for example in Suffolk) have yielded useful information.

*iv) Further work on colonial property*

The Colonial Office papers for Demerara, Berbice and St Vincent may throw further light on the Counts Bentinck's colonial properties.

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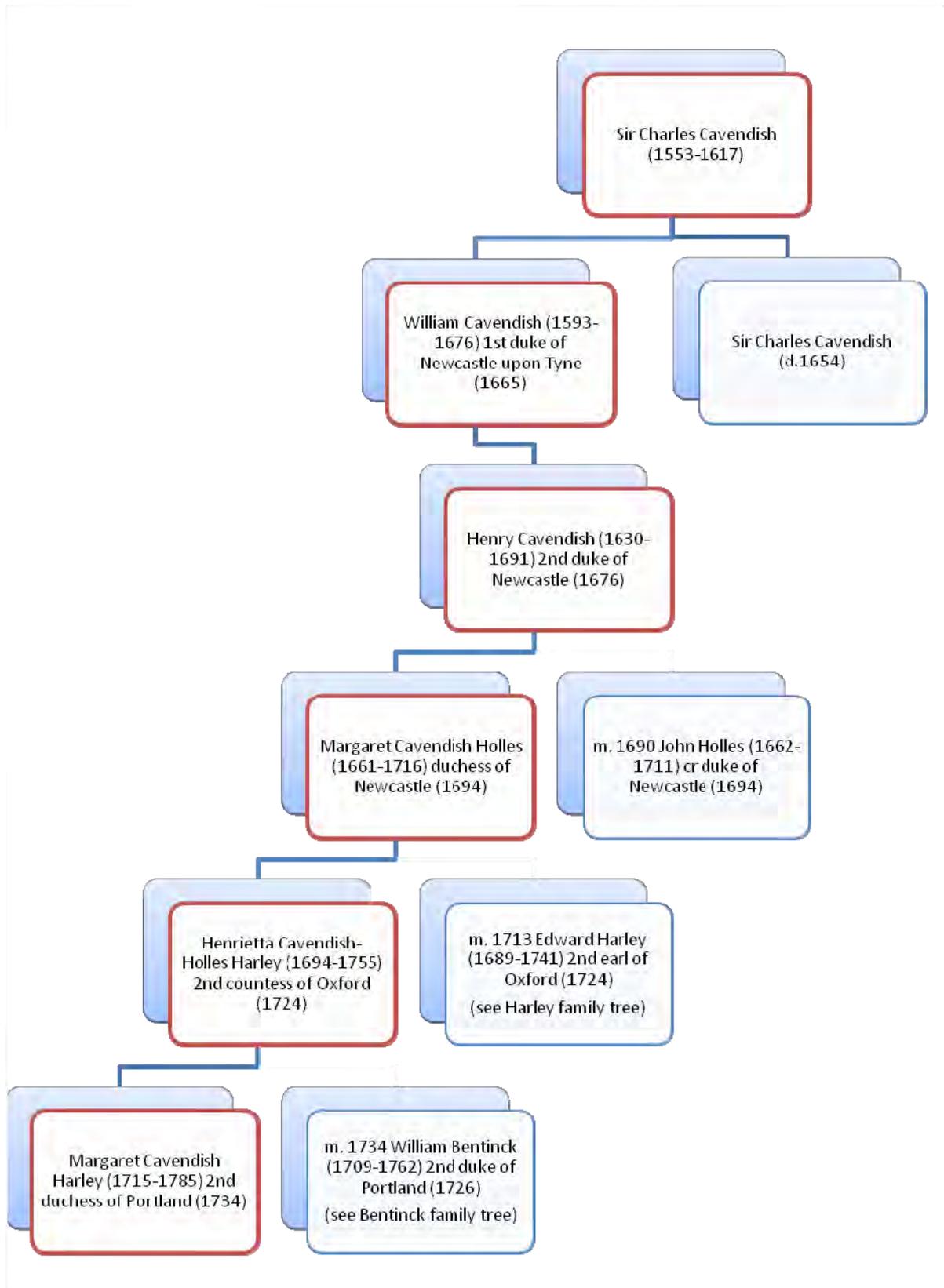


Figure 1a: Cavendish family tree

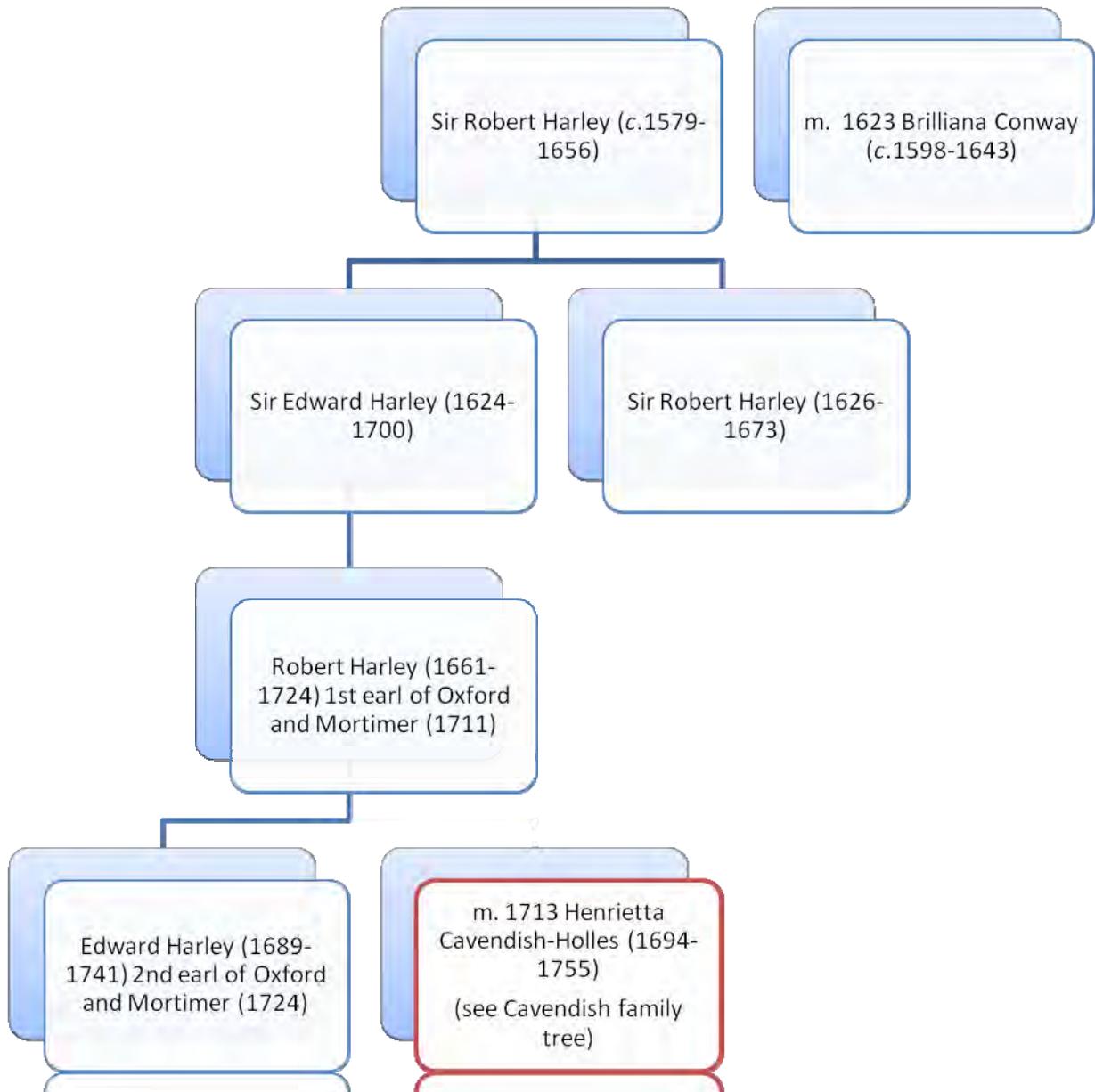


Figure 1b: Harley family tree

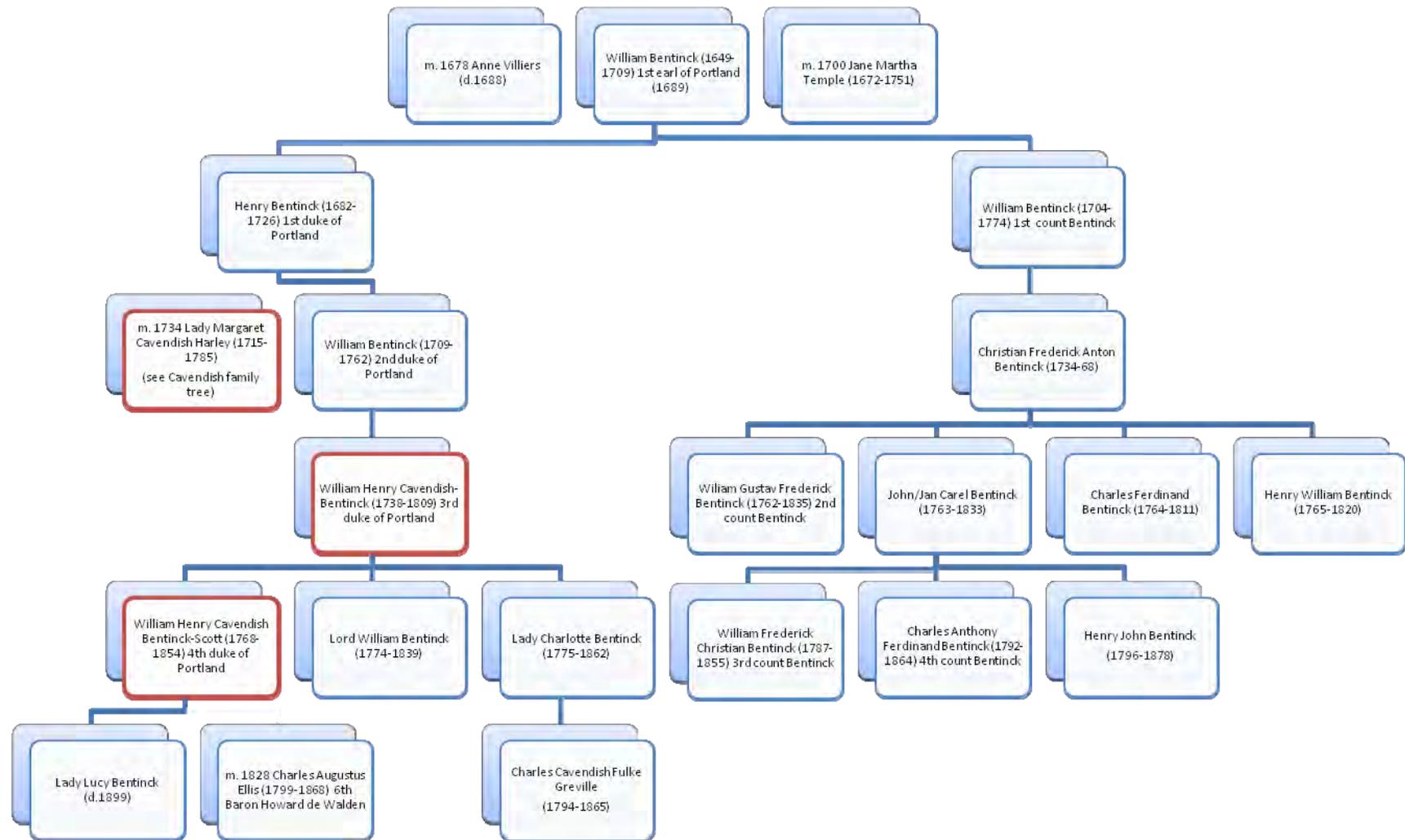
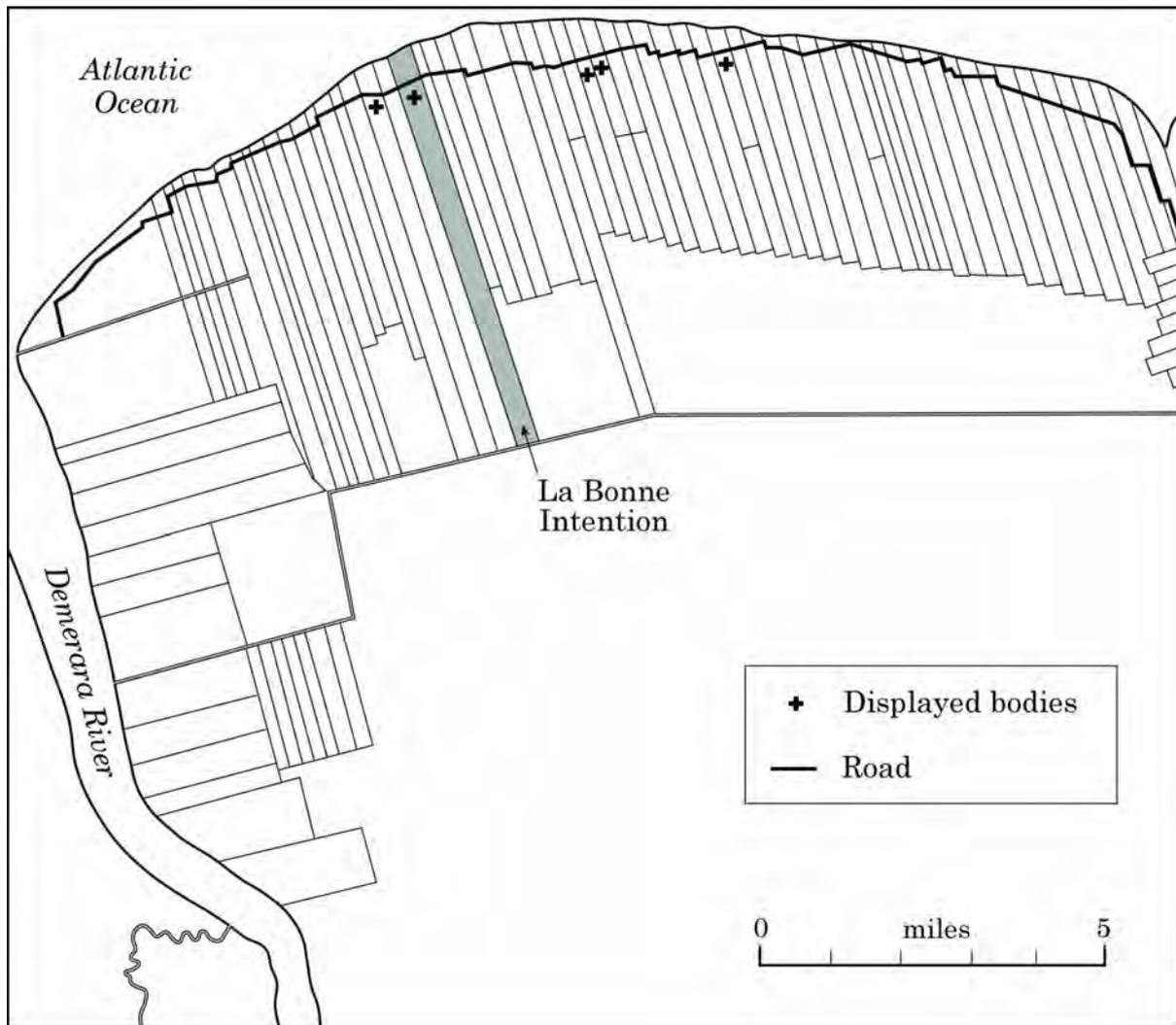


Figure 1c: Bentinck family tree

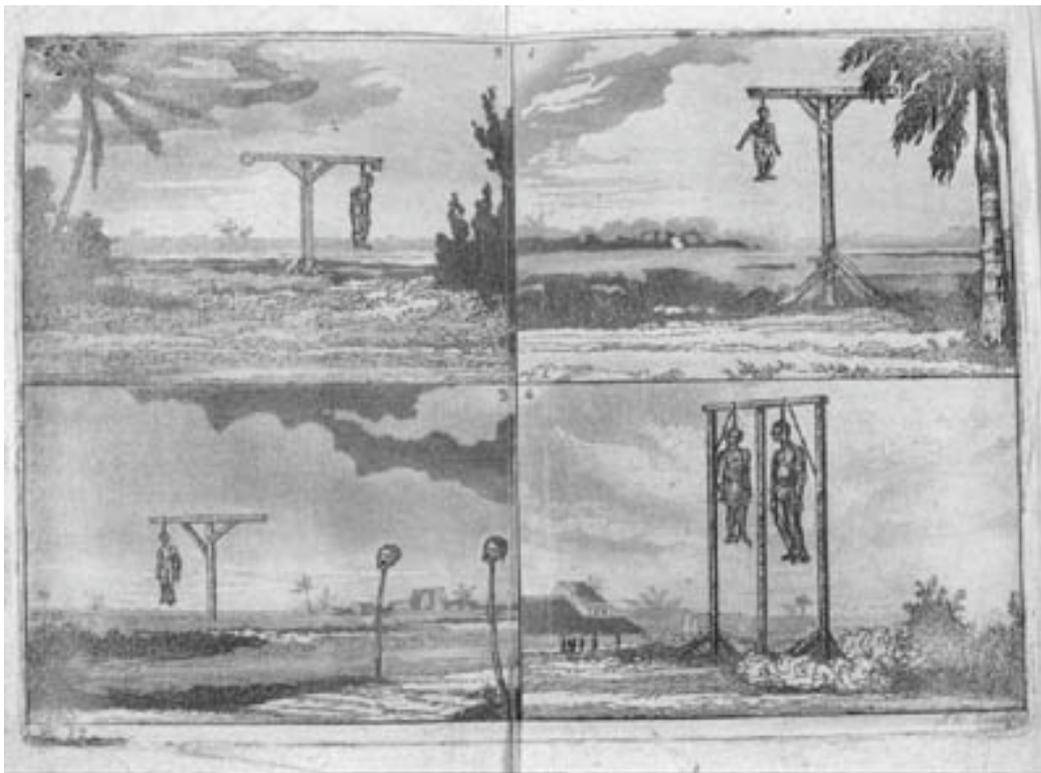


Figure 2: Cavendish monuments erected in 1727 by the countess of Oxford in Bolsover Church, 2009. EH copyright.



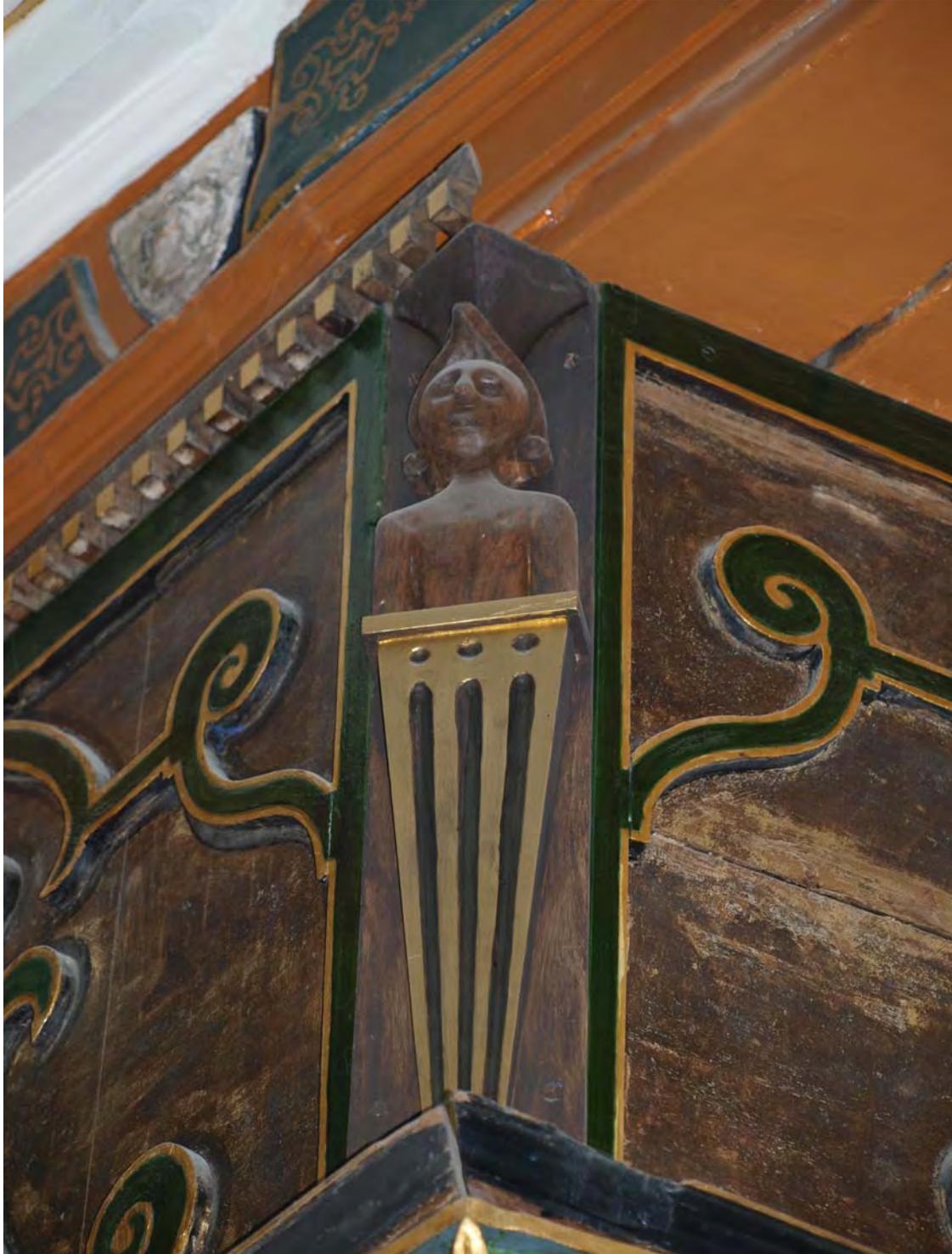
**Figure 3: Map of northern part of Demerara, 1823**

Source: Information from Joshua Byrant, *Account of an Insurrection of the Negro Slaves in the Colony of Demerara* (London, 1824), Plate 1



**Figure 4: The punishment of slaves in the Demerara insurrection, 1823**

Source: Joshua Byrant, *Account of an Insurrection of the Negro Slaves in the Colony of Demerara* (London, 1824), with caption 'Five of the culprits in chains, as they appeared on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September 1823', Plate 12 [between pp.80-81]. Image Reference BRLIB-1, as shown on [www.slaveryimages.org](http://www.slaveryimages.org), sponsored by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the University of Virginia Library.



**Figure 5: An example of the black figures in the Star Chamber, Bolsover Castle, 2009. EH copyright.**



**Figure 6: The Venus Fountain, Bolsover Castle, 2009, EH copyright.**



Figure 7: An example of the black *putti*, Venus Fountain, Bolsover Castle, 2009. EH copyright.

| Owner  | Dates                      | Title and date   | Dates of ownership   |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| Gilbert Talbot   | d.1616                     | 7th earl of Shrewsbury (1590)  | 1590-1613  |
| Charles Cavendish  | 1553-1617                  |  | 1613-1617 (leased from 1608 or 1601 <sup>166</sup> )   |
| William Cavendish  | 1593-1676                  | 1st earl (1628), 1st marquess (1643) and 1st duke of Newcastle upon Tyne (1665)  | 1617-1676 (except during Civil War & Interregnum 1644-1660)  |
| Henry Cavendish  | 1630-1691                  | 2nd duke of Newcastle (1676)   | 1676-1691  |
| Margaret Cavendish<br>Holles<br>m (1690)<br>John Holles                    | 1661-1716<br><br>1662-1711 | duchess of Newcastle (1694)<br><br>4th earl (1689) and 1st marquess (1684) of Clare and created duke of Newcastle (1694) | 1691-1711<br><br>1691-1711   |
| Henrietta Cavendish-<br>Holles Harley<br><br>m (1713)<br><br>Edward Harley | 1694-1755<br><br>1689-1741 | 2nd countess of Oxford (1724)<br><br>2nd earl of Oxford and Mortimer (1724)  | 1719-1755 (1st duke of Newcastle under Lyme, Thomas Pelham, held these 1711-19 under terms of Holles's will, later contested successfully – Seddon, 2004)<br>1719-1741 |
| Margaret Cavendish<br>Harley<br>m (1734)<br>William Bentinck               | 1715-1785<br><br>1709-1762 | 2nd duchess of Portland (1734)<br><br>2nd duke of Portland (1726)  | 1755-1785  |
| William Henry Cavendish-<br>Bentinck                                       | 1738-1809                  | 3rd duke of Portland (1762)  | 1785-1809 (tenant from 1762)   |
| William Henry Cavendish<br>Bentinck-Scott                                  | 1768-1854                  | 4th duke of Portland (1809)  | 1809-1854 (tenant from 1795)   |

**Table 1: Owners of Bolsover Castle during the period of British slavery**

<sup>166</sup> A lease of 20 Dec 1600 between Shrewsbury and Cavendish suggests an earlier arrangement: NA 157 DD/P/50/69.

| Accused | Occupation        | Sentence             | Outcome     |
|---------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| April   | "a boatman"       | Death                | Respited    |
| Lindor  | "a carpenter"     | Death                | "in chains" |
| David   | "a creole driver" | Death                | Respited    |
| Pickle  | "a field negro"   | Death                | "executed"  |
| Profit  | Field worker      | Death                | Respited    |
| Philip  | "head-cooper"     | Death                | Respited    |
| David   | n/k               | No sentence recorded |             |
| Jack    | n/k               | Death                | Respited    |

**Table 2: List of enslaved Africans from La Bonne Intention accused of insurgency following the 1823 Demerara Rebellion**

Source: Stevenson, A .(ed.) *Report of the Trials of the Insurgent Negroes ... held at Georgetown, Demerara, on the 25th August, 1823* (Georgetown, 1824), 101, 121, 238-39.

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