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FEATURE: LEGACIES OF SLAVE OWNERSHIP

The Restructuring of the British Empire and the Colonization of Australia, 1832–8

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Drawing attention to a comprehensive shift in the British Empire’s governance and geography in the mid 1830s, this article introduces the context for the three articles that follow in this feature. One of that shift’s most significant manifestations was a rapid escalation in the colonization of Australia. The shift as a whole was related in part to the ending of slavery in the Caribbean, the Cape and Mauritius, upon which the following articles concentrate, but it also encompassed the restructuring of the East India Company. A reformed British parliament, together with the main offices of imperial governance – the Colonial Office, the East India Company Directors, and their overseeing Board of Control – managed simultaneous transitions in the western and eastern halves of the Empire in a concentrated burst of legislative activity between 1833 and 1838. The result was a new template for the governance of a more liberal British Empire. Throughout this transition, parliament attempted to protect interests already invested in imperial projects, not least by facilitating a surge in the colonization of Indigenous peoples in Australia and elsewhere.

Imperial historians have long acknowledged the migration of the British Empire’s centre of gravity, broadly from the West to the East Indies between the 1770s and the 1830s, as a result of the loss of the American colonies, the acquisition of colonies seized from the French, Dutch and Spanish during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and the expansion of East India Company territories in India.¹ This half century of transition created what Christopher Bayly called the Second British Empire.² However, much of the governmental restructuring necessary to complete and maintain the shift was concentrated in just a few years of intense and accelerated reform at its end, between 1833 and 1838. Within that five-year period, a newly reformed British parliament and government instructed a reoriented Colonial Office and a restructured East India Company to engender the political, economic and spatial pattern of a
revised empire. This second empire would be founded on (heavily qualified) free labour, freer trade and the promotion of free settler colonialism. In response, these offices stitched the Crown Colonies of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, the Company-governed territories of India and the settler colonies of the southern hemisphere more tightly together. British stakeholders were accorded greater facility to mobilize across these disparate components, generating a revised geographical pivot for the Empire as a whole.

Despite the intensity and reach of the governmental and geographical changes that were concentrated in the mid 1830s, they have seldom been analysed holistically. Historians of Britain have noted the overall effect of the 1832 Reform Act in opening governance to representatives of more commercially and industrially-minded electors with a preference for free trade.iii Historians of that portion of Empire administered by the Colonial Office have begun to track the reorientation of people, capital and interest from the former slave-holding Caribbean colonies to Australia after the Abolition of Slavery Act in 1833, and the payment of compensation to former slave owners from 1834 – a project which this feature furthers.iv Historians of colonial India have charted the transition of the East India Company in these same years. As the new parliament was passing the Abolition of Slavery Act, the Company’s directors were obliged by the terms of a new charter to abandon all revenue from commerce and focus exclusively on governance and rent extraction.v Historians of the settler colonies, meanwhile, tend to focus on Edward Gibbon Wakefield’s influence and the new government’s support for British emigration, manifested in the South Australia Colonization Act in 1834.vi Rarely has the concurrence of these phenomena, dealing with the west, east and south of the British Empire, been noted, and more rarely still has there been a holistic account of the connections between them and their combined effect.vii

Alongside its implications for the colonization of Australia, a further, significant, feature of these years of managed transition is worthy of particular attention. Throughout the restructuring of Empire that they occasioned, parliament sought to compensate or guarantee a return on existing stakeholders’ investments. The Legacies of British Slave Ownership database, developed at University College London, has exposed the slave owners who received compensation from 1834 to scrutiny, and it provides a vital resource for this collection of essays.viii But the guaranteed dividends for East India Company shareholders, negotiated at the same time that slave owners’
compensation was agreed, is less well known outside the Indian historiography. The new government’s safeguarding of stakeholders in Empire is easily overlooked if we examine each facet of the mid 1830s transition in isolation. So too, is its provision of opportunities for new investments, including in government-backed Australian colonization.

Both West India planters and East India Company nabobs were identified with the Old Corruption of the borough system that the 1832 Reform Act swept away. A number of families, including the Shiells analysed by Ann Curthoys in this collection, lost fortunes invested in the West Indies after the abolition of the slave trade, and then of slavery itself. Following the loss of the East India Company’s trading monopoly between Britain and India with its 1813 charter renewal, a period of volatility saw a number of its investors lose out too. However, the compensatory mechanisms overseen by the Colonial Office, the Board of Control and the Treasury during the mid 1830s transition helped secure the passage of other slave owners, traders and shareholders into the Second British Empire, by and large with status and wealth intact.

Following exploratory work by Catherine Hall, Nick Draper, Keith McLelland, Kate Donington and Rachel Lang, the analyses of Jane Lydon, Ann Curthoys and Emma Christopher which follow in this feature all explore different dimensions of this imperial transition’s most significant spatial manifestation: a reorientation of people, investment and expertise from the former slave-holding colonies of the Caribbean to intensified colonization of Australia. Jane Lydon reveals the extent to which Wakefieldian colonization schemes were indebted to reflections on the ending of slavery in the Caribbean; Ann Curthoys weaves together experiences of political activism, slave ownership and convictism in the lives of individual family members who became settlers, and Emma Christopher uncovers dense and multifarious connections between experiences of slavery in the West Indies, the development of the South Sea Islander labour trade, and the cultivation of sugar.

Much empirical work still needs to be done to flesh out the broader imperial transition of which these reorientations were components, but we hope to set the scene in this article. We also indicate how trajectories from Company-governed India joined up with those from the Caribbean and Britain to effect accelerated colonization in Australia from the 1830s.
REFORMING GOVERNANCE AT HOME AND IN THE EMPIRE

The passage of the Reform Act in 1832 marked the culmination of a sustained campaign by workers (including Ann Curthoys’s ancestor, John Burkinshaw, whom she tracks in her article in this feature), demanding parliamentary reform and the extension of the franchise. It also followed years of vigorous debate among Tory and Whig elites about the extent of electoral representation necessary to ward off more violent, revolutionary change. As Thomas Ertman notes, however, ‘when reform did come, it was not as a result’ solely ‘of a long and continuous build-up of pressure’, but rather a conjunction of developments at home and overseas in 1830 and 1831. These included deepening economic distress and agrarian unrest, parliamentarians’ fear of contagion from the 1830 revolutions in France and Belgium, and recent precedents for overturning seemingly immutable exclusions, with repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts and Catholic emancipation. Together, these contingencies ‘rendered the idea of a complete reshaping of the previously inviolate House of Commons imaginable and even inevitable’ in 1831. xi The new Whig Prime Minster, Earl Grey’s declared intention in seeing through the new bill for parliamentary reform was far from radical. It was to do ‘as much as is necessary to secure to the people a due influence in that great council in which they are more particularly represented … guarding and limiting it, at the same time, by a prudent care not to disturb too violently, by any extensive changes, the established principles and practice of the constitution’. xii

The Representation of the People Act was approved by Parliament and received royal assent on 7 June 1832. Over fifty English boroughs lost all of their seats as a result, some lost half and forty-two new boroughs were granted Members of Parliament, some of them two Members. The county electorate in England increased by about one third and a uniform borough franchise was introduced, based on ownership or occupation of a dwelling worth £10 in annual rent. The franchise as a whole grew only to a limited extent, from 3.2 percent to 4.7 percent of the total population, but more important was the new momentum behind liberal reformist interests. Although the number of seats controlled by a single landed aristocrat fell from 276 to about forty-one by 1840, it was not a simply a matter of owners of land being supplanted by owners of capital. Rather, the new parliament better represented the ‘rapid economic changes in the 1830s that intensified landowner diversification into non-agricultural ventures’. xiii The first election after the passing of the Act was
held in December 1832 and it gave Grey’s government 483 of 658 seats and a clearer mandate to support the interests of propertied electors in commerce and manufacture as well as land.

The new parliament was greatly energized, its pace of legislation remarkable, and its reach far more global than is often appreciated. The parliamentary sessions of 1833 and 1834 were frantic, with ‘Whigs and Tories rallying together against the threat from below’ and, as Peter Mandler puts it, ‘groping towards the “Victorian Compromise” of moderate Liberalism’.xiv The almost immediate passage of the Factory Act of 1833 limiting the working hours of children, the New Poor Law of 1834 providing workhouse relief for able-bodied men, and the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 allowing borough councils to be elected by all adult male ratepayers, are well known to historians of Britain. It was the weakening of the West India interest through the loss of the pocket boroughs and the support for the Anti-Slavery Society from around two hundred of the new MPs, securing the long awaited passage of the Antislavery Act, which is best known to historians of the crown colonies.xv At the same time the new parliament renewed the East India Company’s charter at the price of terminating its commercial activities.

The previous renewal of the Company’s twenty-year charter, in 1813, had pushed it away from being a commercial, towards more of a governmental, entity, but the Company had retained its monopoly on the trade, mainly in opium and cotton, between India and China and across the East Indies.xvi The 1833 renewal would remove that vestigial monopoly, opening up the China and East Indies trade to new competitors. As Miles Taylor has shown, the campaign to open up this remaining monopoly ‘was one of the initial stimuli in mobilizing manufacturing opinion in favour of parliamentary reform in the ports and especially in the cotton districts of the northwest from 1829 onwards’.xvii In Liverpool, the East India Association had supported free trade candidates in 1830 and 1831, who continued to campaign for the right of all British manufacturers to access Chinese markets in particular, using whichever merchant companies they liked. Just as the raft of new antislavery MPs in 1832 made the difference in finally passing the Antislavery bill, these free-trade supporters’ accession to parliament swung the balance against the East India Company’s remaining monopoly.

Under the terms of its 1833 charter renewal, the East India Company was obliged to give up trading altogether, repay long term loans, and award compensation and
pensions to former employees in its trading arm. Considering the abolition of slavery and the dissolution of the East India Company’s commercial role at the same time prompted Thomas Babington Macaulay, the Board of Control’s secretary and its spokesman in the House of Commons, to write to his sister:

The Niggers in one hemisphere
The Brahmins in the other
Disturb my dinner and my sleep
With ‘Ain’t I a man and a brother’?

In July 1833 Macaulay explained to MPs why the Company was being allowed to continue governing India after it had ceased to be a trading concern. In part, he confessed, it was because of the lack of any better alternative when parliamentary business was so frantic and the understaffed Colonial Office so focused on emancipation. There simply was not enough time on the parliamentary calendar, nor Commons expertise on India, to establish a new branch of government which might supplant Company authority in the 1833–34 session. Besides, he continued, barring the Company from its governing and rent-raising function as well as its commerce, would mean winding it up altogether, and this would be infinitely more fraught than it might first appear.

It was one thing to compensate creditors and employees of the Company’s former trading branch, but disentangling the accrued investments behind the entire company edifice would be almost impossible. So ‘entangled together in inextricable complication’ were the Company’s ‘mercantile and political transactions’, Macaulay cautioned, that his predecessor as Board of Control Secretary, Thomas Hyde Villers had been brought to an early death by the prolonged strain of trying to distinguish them. ‘The existence of such a body as this gigantic corporation – this political monster of two natures – subject in one hemisphere, sovereign in another – had never been contemplated by the Legislators or Judges of former ages.’ Winding up such a behemoth with justice to its stockholders, directors and employees would be enough ‘to exercise all the ingenuity of all the lawyers in the kingdom for twenty years’.

Rather than being dissolved as its commercial activities ceased, then, the Company would transition to become the British government’s proxy government of India.
In June–July 1833 parliament was preoccupied with the issue of compensation for vested interests both in the case of slave owners in the West Indies and shareholders facing the loss of profits from commerce in the East. Liberal reform was required of Britain’s imperial governance, just as much as of its governance at home, but in both cases reform was a prophylactic against more revolutionary change. In the imperial sphere, the interests of the tens of thousands of slave owners and some 1,700 East India Company shareholders – between them representing a significant proportion of both moderately and extravagantly propertied British families – would be safeguarded as far as possible.xxxi

COMPENSATING STAKEHOLDERS

By the time the evangelical Permanent Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office, James Stephen, devoted his weekend to drafting the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833, it was clear that antislavery activists would have to concede on certain issues to obtain parliament’s assent.xxxii Alongside a further period of ‘apprenticeship’ for formerly enslaved people, which was designed to keep them bonded to former owners for a further four or six years, depending on their domestic or agricultural status, the price of ‘freedom’ was government compensation, not for the formerly enslaved, but for their owners.xxxiii The rate, set by commissioners in London, would vary according to the colony and the estimated productivity of each enslaved person. Enslaved people were worth the most in Honduras, where owners were paid £195 per slave, and least in Bahamas, where a slave was deemed worth only £35. The amount required in total, for some 800,000 enslaved people, was vast. At £20 million it equated to some forty percent of annual Treasury revenue – a sum equivalent to that which bailed out the UK banks during the 2008 financial crisis. Rather than increasing taxation to pay off the slave owners, the Treasury raised a loan through the issue of new government securities.xxxiv The new Chancellor, Thomas Spring Rice, invited potential bidders for the contract to raise it. Baring Brothers & Co., Reid, Irving & Co. and Ricardo, Maubert and Melville all expressed interest but then withdrew from competition, leaving a syndicate led by Nathan Mayer Rothschild and Moses Montefiore as the sole bidder.xxxv Parliament agreed a loan of £15 million for the Caribbean slave owners, with a further £5 million raised later for those in the Cape Colony (largely of Dutch descent) and Mauritius (of largely French and creole descent).xxxvi
While the new parliament was agreeing to these terms of compensation for slave owners it was also considering the fate of East India Company shareholders under the terms of the charter renewal. Any opposition that the shareholders and directors (those with 4,000 or more shares) may have mounted to the loss of revenue from trade was swiftly deflected by Macaulay’s promise that they would continue to receive an annual dividend of 10 ½ per cent. This was ‘precisely the same dividend which they have been receiving for forty years, and which they have expected to receive permanently’. Rather than being derived in part from trade, the shareholders’ dividends would from now on be extracted exclusively from the rent paid by the Company’s Indian subjects in return for the privilege of being governed by it, and from the profits of the Company-grown opium sold in China. Between 1834 and 1837 the dividends paid to the roughly 2,000 Company proprietors continued to amount to over £600,000, per annum.xxvii

PROMOTING EMIGRATION
At the same time that James Stephen was seeking to manage the transition from slavery to apprenticeship, the Cabinet expected him to help effect a large-scale demographic transfer, from an apparently overpopulated Britain to the colonies of settlement in North America, southern Africa and Australia. Concurrent with the antislavery campaign, the Rev. Thomas Malthus had been warning of British overpopulation for the last forty years. Famously, he had argued that population growth tends to outpace its means of subsistence. Checks on growth through disease, famine, war or birth control were only partial remedies. His concerns had become more pressing in the wake of victory in the Napoleonic War, which threw former servicemen onto an oversupplied labour market and fuelled agrarian unrest. Malthus’s musings had always placed Britain within its imperial context. Whilst believing himself that it would be unjust for Europeans to exterminate indigenous peoples, it was easy to make an association between an overabundance of people in Britain and the acquisition of new territories overseas.xviii

During the 1820s Malthusianism had influenced a number of government-backed colonial emigration schemes. One of their early progenitors was Robert Wilmot Horton, Stephen’s predecessor as Permanent Under-secretary for War and the Colonies between 1821 and 1828. A frequent interlocutor with Malthus, he had combined imperial administration with shaping public debate over population and
emigration. Wilmot Horton had proposed government-assisted emigration as ‘a safety-valve’, by which excess population could be redistributed across the British Empire, with ‘millions added to those who speak the English language, and carry with them… the sympathies of their native country’. The Poor Law Report of 1834, would pick up on some of these ideas, describing emigration as ‘one of the most innocent palliatives of the evils of the present system’. Jane Lydon’s ensuing article outlines Wilmot Horton’s continuing contribution to the emerging connections between the end of slavery and the colonization of Australia. By 1833, in the midst of widespread foreboding about labour shortages in the post-emancipation plantation colonies, Wilmot Horton’s successor, Stephen, had yet more reason to link the oversupply of labour in British Isles with the needs of the empire overseas.

By then, Wilmot Horton’s role as a major theorizer of emigration had been usurped by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who thought of Wilmot Horton as ‘an ignorant and meddling pretender in political economy’. Seizing the opportunity of the reformed parliament, Wakefield was pressing ahead with plans for the new colony in South Australia, and achieved passage of the necessary bill in 1834. During the following year he chaired the first meeting of the New Zealand Association, which would later become the New Zealand Company. The parliamentary bill that Wakefield drafted following the meeting, seeking permission to colonize New Zealand too, proved unpopular with both the Colonial Office and the Church Missionary Society, which had missionaries among the Māori. They baulked at the ‘unlimited power’ that Wakefield’s directors proposed to wield in New Zealand, just as the Colonial Office had done in the case of South Australia. Wakefield was undeterred and the association engaged in a bout of intensive lobbying and rebranding until 1840.

Despite the tension between Wakefield’s more utilitarian, and Stephen’s more evangelical, visions of settler colonialism, after 1832, Stephen was obliged by government to accede to plans for more ‘systematic’ colonization. In 1834 he appointed the well-connected Thomas Elliot to oversee emigration schemes to Australia. Elliot’s role was to mediate between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Australian colonial governors, so as to marry up British emigration imperatives with sponsorship schemes funded by the governors’ sale of Aboriginal peoples’ land. Elliot’s was no easy task, with sometimes quite different ideas of the ideal emigrant at sending and receiving ends. Rather than ‘the overspill from British poor houses’, Australian governors tended to require ‘vigorous and efficient labour
calculated to elevate the character of our own industrial population’. Having tested his capacity to reconcile these demands, by 1838, Elliot was promoted to head the colonial land and emigration commissioners, ‘one of the most successful agencies of the new state bureaucracy’, who operated across all of the new settler colonies.

In 1828, only about 4,500 free emigrants had arrived in New South Wales, whose predominantly convict and emancipist population numbered 36,500. By 1840, thanks in no small part to Elliot’s co-ordination, over 50,000 Britons had emigrated to the Australian colonies as a whole. The majority of emigrants comprising this invasion were not the sort of people who benefited from compensation payments, new trade opportunities or guaranteed dividends. However, the land sales which funded their migration and their opportunities for employment in Australia, were bolstered by those who were.

As Ann Curthoys and Emma Christopher demonstrate in different ways in their ensuing articles, the structural transition of the mid 1830s was both a governmental and an intimate, familial, affair. By way of further exemplification, we turn next to a few of the individuals whose stakes in empire shifted along with the broader mid-1830s transition in governance: Charles Prinsep, who invested in Western Australia from India; Jacob and Joseph Barrow Montefiore, who reoriented investments from Britain and the Caribbean to South Australia, New South Wales and New Zealand, and Celia Scott and Edward Learmonth, who reinvested from slave ownership and Indian trade, respectively, to become ‘pioneer’ squatters in the Port Phillip District.

Given their differing degrees of wealth and their varying previous engagements with Australasia, the compensation funds provided from 1834 were of varying relative significance to these individuals. What was more important than the funds themselves was the broader reorientation of British colonial expertise, resources and interest of which they were a part. We make no claim that this selection of people was representative, by class, ethnicity, religion or gender, of the broader mass of Britons colonizing Australia but, along, we suspect, with many others deserving of further research, they shared a conditioning by, and a contribution to, the imperial restructuring of the mid 1830s which enabled its accelerated colonization.

INVESTING IN AUSTRALIA

Charles Robert Prinsep’s family had a ‘heritage going back to the Hastings era of the East India Company in Calcutta, to positions of influence in London business
networks and society, and continuing involvement in other colonies throughout the British imperial world, the Indian army and civil service, and the Royal Navy’. xxxvi Like many other Company officials, his father, John, had utilized the London-based agency houses to repatriate a generous salary, then invested it through associated agencies in India to develop private ventures under the cover of the Company’s monopoly. He had developed Prinsep, Saunders and Co. to import Indian indigo, chintz and copper to London and also acted as agent for commercial concerns in the Cape, Mauritius, the Australian colonies and Sierra Leone. Having developed sugar cultivation in India, John Prinsep had joined the lobby from the East Indies against slavery in the West after his return to London. In a series of pamphlets he argued that ‘the Jamaican sugar trade … was entirely underwritten by the “detestable traffick”’ in slave labour, whereas the Indian sugar trade could provide a more economical industry based on ‘mild and liberal principles of government over the natives’. xxxvii With his own competitive advantage established under its auspices, by 1813, Charles’ father was lobbying for the end of the Company’s monopoly.

Encouraged into the law by his father, Charles became standing counsel to the Company government and acting advocate-general of Bengal. xxxviii His legal practice in Calcutta enabled him to accumulate further funds to invest in passenger shipping and trading ventures between India, Singapore and Van Diemen’s Land. In Singapore, administered by the Bengal Presidency within which he worked, he funded a nutmeg plantation and invested in a joint-stock company to build a harbour and dockyard. In 1829 he visited and bought land in Van Diemen’s Land, envisaging it as a place where he and his family might settle after his career in India. After the 1833 charter renewal, however, he decided to direct his next major commercial investment to the new Australian colony at Swan River.

The Swan River colony had been brought about by the lobbying of the naval officer James Stirling, who had previously been instructed to establish a naval base in the Torres Strait, and whose brother Edward was a senior East India Company official in Calcutta. Persuading the Colonial Office in 1828 that a British establishment on Australia’s west coast was necessary to forestall any French presence, Stirling also saw the site as a much better trading outlet for India than the ports at Sydney and Hobart. Together with his brother, he believed that it could become a magnet for Company men to redirect investment from Calcutta. In the first instance, James and Edward Stirling called upon Edward’s friend and the brothers’ relation by marriage,
Ross Donnelly Mangles for help. Mangles was both a senior official in the Bengal revenue department and a Company shareholder.xxxix With Mangles investing and Stirling promising that the colony would pay its own way, Under-Secretary, R. W. Hay and New South Wales’ Governor, Ralph Darling, gave their assent and the first settlers arrived at the Swan River in February 1829.xl

Beyond his land in Van Diemen’s Land, Charles Prinsep had shown little interest in Australia as a site for significant investment until 1833. The loss of the East India Company’s remaining monopoly on the Indian Ocean and South China Sea trade persuaded investors like Prinsep ‘to diversify their holdings and business interests’;xxxiii Charles’s son Henry told of how he became interested in Western Australia as an outlet in 1835. James Stirling ‘happened to arrive in Calcutta, and my father, hearing of it, invited him to his house … Of course there was much talk of Australia, and Admiral Stirling by the end of the evening had persuaded my father that Swan River was far more advantageous as a theatre of operations than Port Phillip’, where John Batman had just negotiated his treaty with the Wurundjeri. As Allbrook notes, ‘this whimsical account of Stirling’s intervention in Charles Prinsep’s plans hints at the growing interest in India in the potential of Australia as a place to invest, particularly after … the East India Company’s … charter renewals of 1813 and 1833’.;xli

By 1837, Prinsep had recruited other British and Indian investors, including Edward Stirling, the shipping magnate Dwarkanath Tagore and Mangles, to invest in an Australian Association of Bengal ‘for the purpose of transferring investments from Calcutta to Australia’.xlii Utilizing the new technology of steam shipping, they would fuel settler expansion in Australia and integrate it with the Company’s new economy of governance and rent extraction in India. By 1840, William Hutt, brother of the Swan River settlement’s new Governor, John Hutt,, Wakefield and Mangles had established the Western Australia Company to purchase land and establish a settlement named Australind, so as to appeal to more Company investors.

In the meantime, in 1838, Prinsep sent a former East India Company soldier and experienced manager of Indian labour, to establish a stud farm in Western Australia which would supply cavalry mounts to the Indian army and beef for the local colonists. Together with thirteen Britons the ship carried one ‘Chinaman and 37 Lascars’ to work the farm on the western bank of the Leschenault Estuary. Prinsep named the estate, described by one visitor as a ‘droll sort of East India establishment’, Belvidere, after his home in Calcutta.;xliiv By 1850, still never having actually visited it,
he was employing Indian workers on contracts of indenture as a cheap and controllable workforce on his 23,000 acres.

As Emma Christopher shows in her article in this feature, by the late 1840s sugar barons in northern New South Wales and Queensland, some of whom were the next generation of former slave-owning families, were drawing upon Caribbean precedents to secure their labour supply. The ‘trade’ in Pacific Islanders was, she argues, Caribbean slavery’s ‘illegitimate offspring’. Prinsep’s own precedent was the parallel recruitment of Indian workers on contracts of indenture, which had been developed in Mauritius and since expanded to supply post-emancipation labour deficits in Ceylon and the Caribbean. As Christopher points out, this ‘global movement of so-called “cooler” labour’, sponsored by slave owners like John Gladstone (the future Prime Minister William Ewart’s father), was also part of ‘the context within which the Pacific labour trade played out’. The families recruited under indenture were often drawn from the ranks of India’s own enslaved population, which the 1833 Abolition Act had omitted to free, and which the Board of Control had effectively abandoned when it renewed the Company’s charter.\textsuperscript{xlv}

In the meantime, some of those who were compensated by the 1833 Act for the loss of their enslaved workforce in the Caribbean were founding Australia’s latest colony. Nick Draper has noted the role of George Fife Angas in facilitating transfers of much of the capital required to colonize South Australia. Angas was one of a number of beneficiaries who did not directly own slaves, but acted as agents claiming compensation on behalf of those who did. Based in London, he collected compensation of some £7,000 on behalf of slave owners in Honduras, where, as we have seen, the highest value was placed on each enslaved person.\textsuperscript{xlvi} In May 1835 he became a member of the South Australian Colonization Commission, Wakefield’s lobby for a systematically planned colony designed, as Jane Lydon shows, to surpass the limitations of the Swan River settlement in a post-abolition age.\textsuperscript{xlvii}

Under the terms of the 1834 Act, authority in the new colony would be divided between the South Australian Colonization Commission and the governor. In consultation with Elliot’s department, the Commission would manage emigration and the sale of land, while the governor would assume all the other functions of government. When the Commission struggled to fulfil the government-set prerequisite of £35,000 of colonial land sales before the first emigrants could be transported, it was Angas who ‘came to the rescue by offering to form a joint-stock
With two partners, he bought two-thirds of the unsold land, transferring it all to the South Australian Company from 1836. His own trading company then equipped and sent out two whalers, a store ship and a coastal trader to help get the settlement established, with the cost of crews and labourers charged to the Commission’s emigration fund. In 1840 the South Australian Company paid its first dividend only because Angas had saved its bank from competition for four years.

Angas’s investments in South Australia were mirrored by those of two brothers whose family had a hand in the raising of compensation funds in the first place. Jacob and Joseph Barrow Montefiore were cousins of the more famous Moses Montefiore, the financier, Jewish community leader, relative by marriage, and stockbroker to Nathan Mayer Rothschild. When the Treasury was instructed to raise the loan to pay out the slave owners in 1833, the contract was signed by Rothschild and Montefiore. Moses’ cousins Jacob and Joseph were awarded £386 as trustees for the children of John Taylor in Barbados, although they were unsuccessful on another joint claim for £514. These sums were trivial in the context of the brothers’ existing wealth, but after the Abolition Act, they became influential vectors of capital, financial expertise and cultural and political influence between the Caribbean, Britain and Australia.

Having left Barbados to be educated in England, Jacob acted as a shipping agent and representative of Rothschild, specializing in the purchase of wool and tallow from New South Wales. With a branch run by his brother Joseph Barrow in Sydney, the firm was already well established by 1833. In that year, however, Jacob decided to partner with Angas in the South Australia scheme. A plaque in the South Australian Library indicates the significance for the incipient colony of Jacob Montefiore’s decision to become a member of the Commission’s Board and invest – alongside Angas, Robert Torrens (the chairman), John Pirie (deputy chairman) and William Hutt – in the Commission’s work. Although he visited Australia only twice, in 1843 and 1852, Montefiore Hill, ‘on which some of the finest residences in North Adelaide now stand’ is named in his honour.

Moses Montefiore continued to own shares in the East India Company and business interests in India, and Jacob left Adelaide after his first visit heading for Madras. At a farewell dinner, he declared to the South Australian settlers who had welcomed him so heartily, that:
Having been one of the first whose humble … efforts aided in the formation of your infant Colony, I hope I do not lay myself open to the charge of improper pride in expressing my extreme gratification at the success that has attended your exertions in the raising of an antipodean home … and at the boundless prospect of wealth that shines forth in the dim future … you will ere long, I am persuaded, prove one of the most successful of the Australian Colonies … Whilst there is none in England to represent you, and not one to advocate your cause, need I say how happy I shall esteem myself if my humble services can at any time prove of avail in forwarding your interests, advancing your prosperity, and promoting your welfare.lvi

Jacob’s brother, Joseph Montefiore’s, investment in Australian colonization was of a more personal nature. After leaving Barbados he had been articled to a firm of London tea brokers, and in 1826 he had paid £1,500 to become one of the twelve ‘Jew brokers’ permitted to operate in the City of London stock exchange. Pre-empting the settler surge of the 1830s, and abandoning his interests in the West Indies, he had already emigrated to New South Wales in 1828, in order to invest some £10,000 in the merino wool industry, horses, cattle and the cultivation of medicinal drugs. He applied for a grant of 5,000 acres, telling the new Colonial Secretary George Murray: ‘I have resided many years in the West Indies and am familiar with its products, my views will be extended to their cultivation, should the soil promise a favourable result’.lviii Recommended by the Treasury as a ‘most respectable’ and valuable acquisition for the colony, Joseph arrived in Sydney in February 1829 with his wife Rebecca, née Mocatta, and their two children, a business partner, David Ribeiro Furtado and his wife, and his brother-in-law George Mocatta. They established the firm J. B. Montefiore & Co., with an office in O’Connell Street, as a branch of Jacob’s London enterprise.lviii

Although he was an established Australian settler and businessman by 1833, Joseph nevertheless responded to the restructuring of the mid 1830s, lobbying the New South Wales government to take advantage of new opportunities for investment and upscaling his own stake in colonization. First, he became one of the sponsors of the Forbes Act of 1834, which advocated interest rates free from statutory limits in order to encourage the flow of new capital into New South Wales. ‘Restrict the rate of interest’, he warned a sub-committee of the Legislative Council, ‘and you at once
destroy the stamina of the colony’. By 1838 he had bought 12,502 acres of Wiradjuri land, including a farm adjacent to the Nanima mission station, near the frontier of settlement in the Wellington Valley. A township at the confluence of the Bell and the Macquarie Rivers, now a suburb of Wellington, was named Montefiores after both Joseph and Jacob.

From his office in Sydney, Joseph next purchased blocks of land freshly appropriated from Kulin people in the rapidly colonized Port Phillip District. Meanwhile he continued to import from, and export to, India. In 1836, when New South Wales faced a shortage of grain, he undertook a contract for the government to ship 20,000 bushels, obtained through the family’s contacts in Calcutta, which, he claimed, saved colonists from starvation. By the mid 1840s he had relocated to the colony which his brother had helped to found, settling in Adelaide with his wife, nine daughters and two sons, two servants, ‘a harp, a piano and 300 packages’. There, he set up a new business with his nephew Eliezer Levi Montefiore as importers and shipping agents; invested heavily in copper mines and served on the board of a number of mining companies. He became a member of the stock exchange, a committee member of the Adelaide Chamber of Commerce and an original trustee of the Savings Bank.

Joseph Montefiore’s investment in the Port Philip District was a response to the opening of new opportunities as imperial governance was restructured, rather than a result of the money received as compensation for the loss of enslaved people in the Caribbean. For Celia Scott and her husband Andrew, the compensation funds constituted a far more significant proportion of the family’s assets. Celia King had been born in Boston, Massachusetts, the daughter of a merchant trading between the Caribbean colonies and Port Glasgow, and Ann Bird, whose family were planters in Tobago. She had settled in Scotland after marrying Andrew Scott in 1821. Although Andrew’s father was Laird of Quernsley East and Larchgrove, his family was of the middling sort rather than particularly wealthy. Andrew had trained in law but was unsuccessful in establishing a practice, so after marrying Celia he went into business with her brother, Thomas King. Based in Glasgow, the two men struggled to run a trading business with Madeira for ten years without sufficient funds to be assured of solvency. When Thomas died the business debts were Andrew’s responsibility. The executors made a claim on the will, demanding that compound interest be paid on the amount owed.
It must have come as some relief for the Scotts that, following the 1833 Abolition Act, Celia received a share of nearly £4,000 in compensation for 107 enslaved people at the Sherwood Park estate in Tobago, bequeathed by Thomas Bird, her maternal grandfather. It seems to have been the prompt for the couple to emigrate to Australia ‘with the prospect of advancing the interest’ of the family, as one of their sons, Andrew Junior later wrote.\textsuperscript{lxxviii} Celia and Andrew’s thoughts of emigration coincided with the land rush in the Port Phillip District, where hundreds of British invaders were responding to the explorer Thomas Mitchell’s glowing accounts of ‘Australia felix’, published in Sydney (1839), while others were arriving via the ports, pushing inland to claim ‘runs’ before rival immigrants or governmental interference could pre-empt them.\textsuperscript{lxix} Melbourne was becoming a base for the disembarkation of sheep and cattle, and a ‘spring board for the penetration of the interior’ to those moving across the Bass Strait from Van Diemen’s Land as well as overland from New South Wales. As squatters appropriated land at the rapidly advancing frontier, they then reconnoitred the country further ahead, either to occupy it themselves or to provide advice for others – an activity from which the Scott family would benefit.\textsuperscript{lxx} Responding to Colonial Office directives to try to contain and order the invasion, Governor Gipps complained in 1840 that ‘as well might it be attempted to confine the Arabs of the desert within a circle’.\textsuperscript{lxxi}

A substantial minority of these invading settlers were Scottish. In 1837 the government scheme established by Elliott’s emigration department, whereby Australian land sales would fund relocation from England and Ireland, was extended to Scotland.\textsuperscript{lxiii} ‘There appeared a host of books … about the colonies of Australia as suitable places for Scottish emigration.’\textsuperscript{lxiii} Although they were not especially wealthy, having to sell possessions to finance the voyage and also borrowing money to purchase stock and framing equipment once in the colony, the compensation money seems at least to have enabled Celia and her husband to organize and finance their own emigration as a family group, taking two indentured labourers along with them and avoiding the need to rely on government sponsorship.\textsuperscript{lxxiv}

The family’s transition from Caribbean interests through Glasgow trade to squatting in Australia was greatly facilitated by virtue of their membership of a more diverse Scottish diaspora. The Scotts were among 1,644 other Scottish colonists arriving in the Port Phillip District in 1838 and the seventy-five per cent of ‘pioneer’ settlers of the Western District who were Scottish.\textsuperscript{lxxv} As the Glasgow Argus assured
such emigrants, in Port Phillip, they ‘will find themselves, from the outset, to all intents in a Scottish rural Parish. There will be no violent change to habits of life; the training of the children in the ways of the forefathers will be cared for’.\textsuperscript{lxxvi} \textit{The Port Phillip Gazette} noted how the nascent Scottish settler community sought out arrivals on the ships docking in Melbourne so as ‘to render whatever assistance was necessary to settle new Scots arriving in the colony’.\textsuperscript{lxxvii}

Upon their own arrival, Andrew borrowed money from a fellow Scot to purchase a mare in Geelong and proceeded inland to look for a run.\textsuperscript{lxviii} Finding the best runs of the Western District already occupied by squatters, he fell back on the advice of other Scots befriended in Melbourne, and headed northward to the Goulburn and Campapsie, a copy of the Squatters Act in hand, finally to claim a station at Mount Buninyong. Purchasing it with a loan in September 1839, he stocked it initially with a small herd of cattle.\textsuperscript{lxxx} Here the family joined the ‘little Glasgow’ that had already been established on Wathaurung people’s territory. New Scottish arrivals subsequently surrounded them, including Celia’s friend and neighbour, Katherine, who had married into the Kirkland family, which owned a sugar refinery in Britain.\textsuperscript{lxxxi} Sir John Kirkland, Katherine’s husband’s grandfather, had also received compensation, for thirty-four enslaved people on the Enfield estate in Jamaica.\textsuperscript{lxxxi} Celia Scott’s sister Maria Fleming invested her share of the family’s compensation inheritance in Australia too, running a station in Walgett, New South Wales.\textsuperscript{lxxxii} In Victoria, Celia Scott is still remembered as ‘the first and for some time the only white woman in the Buninyong locality’.\textsuperscript{lxxxiii}

Despite the Scott’s compensation funds apparently being insufficient to finance the purchase and stocking of their new land on top of their emigration, they were of the right class and, perhaps just as importantly, the right nationality, to borrow the extra funds. Of course their enterprise was greatly facilitated by the fact that, during the transition of the mid late 1830s, the British and colonial governments allowed them to ‘take up’ land that belonged to Aboriginal people without paying them, and at a minimal price, whilst providing the means of violence to prevent Aboriginal people dislodging them.

Among the fellow Scots who helped Celia’s family to establish themselves in the Buninyong district were the men who claimed to have been the first squatters there, the brothers Thomas and Somerville Learmonth. They are our final, brief, example of individuals responding to, and helping to effect, the concentrated restructuring of
Empire in the 1830s. The Learmonth brothers’ trajectory into Port Phillip was not via the Caribbean, but from India via Van Diemen’s Land. Their father, Thomas Learmonth, had left the family’s bankrupted estate at Parkhall in Scotland, for military service in the East India Company’s Bengal army while his brother, John, emulated the Prinseps, trading under the Company’s auspices in Calcutta until he had accumulated enough wealth to buy the Scottish estate back again. Having sold his Company commission to engage in trade from Calcutta, Thomas relocated to Van Diemen’s Land on the advice of two friends who had also made the transition from Company soldier to independent trader: Charles Swanston, who now ran the Derwent Bank in Hobart to attract further investment from India, and George Mercer, who reinvested in the colony from Scotland in 1833, and would shortly own land adjacent to the Scotts’ in the Port Phillip District.\textsuperscript{lixxxiv}

By May 1835 Thomas Learmonth was established as a merchant in Hobart. Two of his other sons followed in his footsteps, into the East India Company army. However, Thomas and Somerville headed across the Bass Strait as squatters the following April. By 1837 they were recognized as the first land owners in Buninyong and were able to offer Celia and Andrew Scott advice and support when they arrived the following year.\textsuperscript{lixxxv} No doubt some of this advice concerned relations with the Aboriginal people whose land they had just appropriated. One of the nearby settlers from the Scottish Highlands, Niel Black, recorded that the earliest squatters had counselled him, as a ‘new chum’, that if he was to establish himself, he should be prepared to slaughter natives ‘without remorse’. Black decided to take up a run where more than thirty-five Wathaurung men, women and children had already been massacred, since he could be confident that the ‘poor creatures are now terror stricken and will be easily managed’.\textsuperscript{lixxxvi}

CONCLUSION

As the following articles in this feature amply demonstrate, ‘[o]nce the Caribbean was no longer a place to make a fortune, descendants of slave-owners chose Australia as the next frontier of empire’.\textsuperscript{lixxvii} This does not mean that it was necessarily the funds received in compensation for the loss of enslaved human property that as such effected the surge of colonization there during the 1830s. It is likely that the compensation funds invested by former slave owners in Australia were dwarfed by the scale of aggregate investments that intensified its colonization in these years.\textsuperscript{lixxxviii}
Although compensation funds could make a difference in certain cases such as the Scotts’, they were insignificant compared to those which families like the Montefiores, Prinseps and Learmonths already had at their disposal. As we have indicated, these funds had been generated through trade and rent extraction under the auspices of the East India Company as much as through the long history of British slave ownership in the Caribbean. What was more significant in effecting the founding of new colonies and the extension of established ones in Australia during the 1830s was the broader restructuring of the British Empire, of which compensation for former slave owners and guaranteed dividends for Company shareholders were a part.

Initiated by the loss of the American colonies, the acquisition of new ones in the Indian Ocean, and the territorial gains of the Company in India, this restructuring accelerated, and was underpinned, after the 1832 Reform Act, when Britain’s rising commercial and manufacturing interests held more of stake in governance alongside more established landed interests. Both domestic and imperial governance was rapidly reoriented in the next few years as slavery was (by no means universally) replaced by free labour, as monopoly was supplanted by free trade (albeit selectively, given the Company’s continuing domination of opium production), and as new opportunities were found for Britain’s ‘overspill’ in the colonies of settlement. Propertied families of different financial and social standing such as the Prinseps, Learmonths, Montefiores and Scotts, even if they did not benefit significantly from the compensation or dividends offered up at the end of this restructuring, reoriented themselves accordingly, from prior interests in India and the Caribbean, to help effect the surge of settler colonialism in Australia marking its culmination.

Considered together, this article and the three that follow in this feature, indicate that historians of Australia should no longer think of its colonization other than as a component of the accelerated completion of the entire British imperial assemblage’s restructuring. Historians of settler colonialism more broadly, we suggest, need to be looking across both the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans as well as back to Britain. At the same time, if imperial historians, more interested in a holistic understanding of the British Empire, are better to understand the transition from its first to its second manifestations, they need to look beyond its West and East Indies components to the southern hemisphere. The further attention of all of these historians to the burst of concentrated restructuring, in Britain and in all parts of the empire, propelled by a reformed British Parliament in the mid 1830s, would be welcome. It was through this
rapid transition, and the managed safeguarding of the older Empire’s vested interests, we would argue, that a second, more sustainable and expanded, liberal Empire was made possible.

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**NOTES AND REFERENCES**

This article is dedicated to the memory of our late, inspirational colleague, Tracey Banivanua Mar. It stems from a research project in which she and the authors were engaged in the last months before she passed away. The version originally submitted in January 2018 bore her name as co-author, even though its submission was posthumous. That version was substantially revised before final acceptance and this article is quite different in a number of ways. We struggled with the dilemma of whether to attach her name as posthumous co-author of this version, wishing on the one hand to acknowledge her initial shaping of the research agenda, and on the other to avoid publishing in her name without having been able to consult with her on its contents. Our decision has been to recognize her inspiration here, and to dedicate this article to her, without attempting to speak for her.


vi An Act to empower His Majesty to erect South Australia into a British Province or Provinces and to provide for the Colonization and Government thereof: https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.hol_00567-000056. See for example, James Belich, Replenishing the Earth: the Settler Revolution and the Rise Of The Angloworld, Oxford, 2011; Bain Attwood, Empire and the Making of Native Title: Sovereignty, Property and Indigenous People, Cambridge, 2020, and the article by Jane Lydon in this issue.

vii The closest to such a holistic account is Miles Taylor’s, ‘Empire and Parliamentary Reform: the 1832 Reform Act Revisited’, in Burns and Innes, Rethinking the Age of Reform, pp. 295–311. Pointing out that ‘it is odd that the imperial dimension of the 1832 Reform Act has been altogether ignored by historians’,
Taylor examines the debates which led up to the passing of the Reform Act, focusing especially on the connections between ending slavery, reforming the governance of Irish Catholics and East India Company Charter renewal. Catherine Hall also indicates her awareness of the interconnections between these momentous changes in her analysis of Thomas Babington Macaulay, whose work for the East India Company and in parliament encompassed them: *Macaulay and Son: Architects of Imperial Britain*, New Haven, 2012.

viii *Legacies of British Slave-ownership*: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/

x Catherine Hall, ‘Writing History, Making “Race”: Slave-owners and their Stories’, *Australian Historical Studies* 47: 3, 2016, pp. 365–80; Draper, *Price of Emancipation*; Hall, McClelland, Draper, Donington and Lang, *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership*. All four articles in this feature were initially presented as papers at the ‘Legacies of British Slave Ownership and the Colonization of Australia’ workshop hosted by La Trobe University in March 2018. The authors are indebted to Clare Corbould and Susannah Radstone for convening a prior network discussion at Monash University. See also C. J. Coventry, *Links in the Chain: Before/Now* Vol. 1: No. 1 [2019], The Collaborative Research Centre In Australian History, Federation University Australia./ 27. what is the publication? I can’t find this online- Before/Now is the title of the publication, I think.


In fact its monopoly was already widely circumvented as American merchants bought wool and cloth from British manufacturers for importation to China.


For the Directors’ attempts to negotiate these terms, see ‘Copy of Correspondence Between the Directors of the East India Company and the Board of Control Respecting the East India Charter’, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers online, 1833-014326_01-08; and ‘Papers respecting the negotiation with His Majesty's Ministers on the subject of the East India Company's charter and the government of His Majesty's Indian territories for a further term…’, 1833, British Library, IOR/V/27/220/11.


Hansard, 10 July 1833 vol. 19, cols 479–550.

In 1834 some three hundred families both owned enslaved people and had close personal or financial connections with the Company: Christopher Jeppesen, ‘East meets West: Exploring the Connections between Britain, the Caribbean and the East India Company, c.1757–1857’, in *Britain's History and Memory of Transatlantic Slavery*, ed. Katie Donington, Ryan Hanley, and Jessica Moody, Liverpool, 2016, pp. 102–28. For the list of Company shareholders at the time of charter renewal, see *The East India Registry and Directory*, London, 1833.

This, apparently, was one of only two times in his life when the workaholic Stephen felt obliged to toil on a Sabbath: Paul Knaplund, *James Stephen and the British Colonial System: 1813–1847*, Madison, 1953.

For the Colonial Office’s transimperial management of the apprenticeship period, see Kate Boehme, Alan Lester and Peter Mitchell, ‘Reforming Everywhere and All at Once: Transitioning to Free Labor across the British Empire, 1837–1838’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 60, 2018, pp. 688–718.
The loan was rolled over into the Government’s gilt programme and was ultimately redeemed on 1 February 2015, as part of the Government’s decision to modernize the gilt portfolio by redeeming all remaining undated gilts:

We will return to Moses’s cousins Jacob and Joseph Barrow Montefiore below. The Montefiore family also owned shares in the East India Company in 1833.

Draper, Price of Emancipation.

‘Accounts Respecting the Annual Territorial Revenues and Disbursements of the East India Company for the years 1833/4, 1834/5 and 1835/6’, House of Commons Parliamentary Papers Online, 1839-018481_01-26.


R. N. Ghosh, ‘Malthus on Emigration and Colonization: Letters to Wilmot Horton’, Economica, New Series, 30: 117, 1963, p. 47. Malthus told Wilmot Horton of his concern that the character of such people might not be conducive to the building of new societies, and his schemes would never be implemented in full, but they did influence the 1834 Poor Law Act’s encouragement of ratepayers to fund emigration of the local poor.


The Spectator 4, 1831, p. 207. By 1833 Wilmot Horton himself had accepted the governorship of Ceylon, reporting to his previous mentee at the Colonial Office, James Stephen. By encouraging the employment of indentured labourers from India there, he would exercise a more direct power over demographic redistribution – albeit of a different kind. See Alan Lester, Kate Boehme and Peter Mitchell, Ruling the World: Freedom, Civilization and Liberalism in the British Empire, Cambridge, forthcoming.

Elliot came from a well-connected Scottish family and had spent six years in India following his father's appointment as governor of Madras in 1814. He believed that growing up with a father who had extensive experience in both the West and East
Indies had taught him ‘liberality’. He was prominent not just in political, but also in literary circles: friends with John Stuart Mill, Thomas Carlyle and William Makepeace Thackeray, who described Elliot’s house in London as his favourite place. M. Ray, ‘Elliot, Sir Thomas Frederick (1808–1880), civil servant’, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2008, retrieved 18 March 2019:


xxxiv We say ‘new settler colonies’ here because the much older Caribbean slavery-based colonies were also built on a form of settler colonialism, with dispossession of the indigenous population a foundation of their colonial development. See Melanie Newton, ‘“Returns to a Native Land?” Indigeneity and Decolonisation in the Anglophone Caribbean’, Small Axe 41, 2013, pp. 108–22.

xxxv The department would assist nearly half of the British emigrants who settled in Australia during the nineteenth century: Richards, ‘How Did Poor People Emigrate’, p. 251. By then the settler rebellions in Lower and Upper Canada in 1837–8 had also set in train a process of settler self-governance: see Lester, Boehme and Mitchell, Ruling the World.

xxxvi Malcolm Allbrook, Henry Prinsep's Empire: Framing a Distant Colony, Canberra, 2014., p. 7. cut DOI ?

xxxvii Allbrook, Henry Prinsep's Empire, p. 50.


xxxix He would go on to become chairman of the Company Directors during the Indian Uprising of 1857: Lester, Boehme and Mitchell, Ruling the World.

xl See the article in this issue by Lydon.

xli Allbrook, Henry Prinsep's Empire.
Charles’ brother Thoby served in India with Macaulay, who adopted the job of Law Member of the Governor-General’s Supreme Council after he had renegotiated the Company’s charter in 1834. Thoby found working with the great man the ‘most trying’ period of his Indian career: Allbrook, *Henry Prinsep's Empire* p. 38.

The East India Registry, 1833; Allbrook, *Henry Prinsep's Empire*, p. 120.


Draper, *Price of Emancipation*, p. 242. Angas’s life embodied many of the apparent paradoxes through which the emancipation of enslaved people in the Caribbean came to be linked to the dispossession of Indigenous peoples. Apprenticed at fifteen to his father’s Newcastle-based firm, which bought mahogany felled by enslaved people in Honduras and sold it in Britain and continental Europe, he had a puritanical upbringing and became a founding member of Exeter Hall, strongly associated with the antislavery movement: Anonymous, ‘Angas, George Fife (1789–1879)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/angas-george-fife-1707/text1855, published first in hardcopy 1966, accessed online 14 June 2018. In unpublished pilot study Georgina Arnott points out that further research into Angas’s Honduras ventures is necessary to flesh out his connection with the slave owners on whose behalf he claimed compensation, and its relative importance for his wealth.

See Bain Attwood, ‘Returning to the Past: the South Australian Colonization Commission, the Colonial Office and Aboriginal Title’, *Journal of Legal History* 34: 1, p. 55.


Draper, *Price of Emancipation*, pp. 108–9. A Moses Montefiore would appear to have been joint absentee owner of the sugar plantation, Springfield Pen in Jamaica, from 1820–3, on which sixteen enslaved people were retained. David Castello and Hyman Levy, the co-owners, were Kingston merchants. The Legacies of British Slave Ownership team is undertaking more work on this entry given its importance, but it seems at this stage more likely that the co-owner of Springfield was Moses Eliezer Montefiore the brother of Jacob Barrow and Joseph Montefiore, rather than Moses Montefiore the philanthropist: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/19765

lii https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/claim/view/3150; https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/claim/view/1450


lv ‘The Late Mr. Jacob Montefiore’, p. 20.

lvi ‘Mr Jacob Montefiore’, *South Australian Register*, 30 Aug. 1843, p. 2. See also ‘Public Dinner to Mr Jacob Montefiore’, *South Australian Register*, 3 June 1843, p. 3.

lvii Although Montefiore listed Rothschild as his referee and funder, Murray was able to grant him only 2,500 acres, but requested the Governor to extend the grant: Lazarus Morris Goldman, *The Jews in Victoria in the Nineteenth Century*, Melbourne, 1954, p. 29.

lviii Joseph was also interested in New Zealand, where a distant relative, John Israel Montefiore, had established himself as one of the traders in the Bay of Islands. Joseph was there in in 1830 with ‘some intention of forming extensive mercantile establishments throughout the [South] island’, when he transferred to the brig *Elizabeth*, immediately after its English Captain Stewart returned to Kapiti with the triumphant Māori chief Te Rauparaha and his captive Tama-i-hara-nui on board.
Stewart’s complicity in the ensuing murder of Tama-i-hara-nui and his family played a significant role in shocking Buxton’s House of Commons Select Committee on Aborigines into recommending that colonization of New Zealand be prohibited to all but missionaries in 1837. However, Montefiore, who continued to employ a trading agent in Poverty Bay, testified to the House of Lords Committee on New Zealand that Stewart’s behaviour was uncharacteristic of the British presence in the islands. His evidence reinforced the Committee’s recommendation to extend British sovereignty there: ‘Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords Appointed to Enquire into the Present State of the Islands of New Zealand and the Expediency of Regulating the Settlement of British Subjects Therein’, 1838, pp. 52–9.

lix As previous note.

lx Montefiore was dismissive of the Wiradjuri on the mission station, comparing them unfavourably to the Māori: ‘they are just like so many beasts of the field; they come and sleep on my land tonight, and go to another farm tomorrow night; they live on a few slugs or caterpillars, or any thing’: Ibid., p. 69. Following devastation from smallpox which had killed around a third of the Aboriginal people in the Wellington Valley four years beforehand, and wary of continuing attempts by missionaries to take away and ‘civilize’ their children, the maximum number of people who gathered at the station in 1837–8 was eighty. Between February and April 1838, when a corroboree was in preparation, the camp moved four times, within a radius of 1.5 miles from the mission, seldom staying more than three nights in the same locality. ‘This gives a picture of the qualified nature of Wiradjuri relationships to the mission: they used it, but were not absorbed by it, in an active response to the challenges which intensifying European occupation and contact introduced’: Michael Pearson, ‘Seen through different eyes’, PhD thesis, Department Archaeology and Anthropology, ANU, 1981, pp. 71–6. See also Jessie Mitchell, In Good Faith? Governing Indigenous Australia through God, Charity and Empire, 1825–1855, Canberra, 2011.


lxiv Getzler, ‘Montefiore, Joseph Barrow (1803–1893)’. 
lxxvi Edinburgh Magazine and Miscellany 88, August 1821, p. 190.


lxxviii Andrew Scott, ‘Statement of the Genealogy of the Scott Family to be Placed under the Foundation Stone Laid this 1st Day of February 1889, at Yuulong, Scotsburn, Boninyong’: Scott papers, 1961.0006, Box 1, item 1/1, University of Melbourne Archives, p. 1.


lxxxi Quoted Powell, *The Public Lands*, p. 25.


lxxvii *Port Phillip Gazette*, 8 May 1839.

lxxviii Scott, ‘Statement of the genealogy of the Scott family’, p. 2.
Lake, *The Land They Learnt to Love*, 75.

Katherine Kirkland’s ‘Life in the Bush’ was published in *Chambers’ Miscellany*, 1845. In it she describes a welcoming ceremony held by around 100 Wathaurong, meeting the women and children, and women’s food-getting and childcare practices: Curthoys, ‘Conflicts of Interest’, p. 103; Dawson, *In the Eye of the Beholder*.

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/46477.

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/46766.


Quoted in Curthoys, ‘Conflicts of Interest’, p. 103.


Our thanks to Nick Draper on this point. For an indication of that scale, see Belich, *Replenishing the Earth*.

Abstract:
Analysing a comprehensive shift in the governance of the British Empire in the mid 1830s, this article introduces the context for the following three articles in the Feature, ‘Legacies of Slave Ownership’. This shift included the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean, upon which these articles concentrate, but also the restructuring of the East India Company. A reformed British parliament introduced transitions in the western
and eastern halves of the Empire in a concentrated burst of legislation between 1833 and 1838. While vested interests were protected, not least by facilitating a surge in the colonization of Australia, the transition produced the template of a liberal Empire.