



Diocese of Bristol
 †TRANSFORMING CHURCH.
 TOGETHER.

TRAIL OF REMEMBRANCE



UNCOVERING BRISTOL'S CONNECTION TO TRANSATLANTIC CHATTEL SLAVERY

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| 1 OSTRICH PUB, GUINEA STREET | 5 BRISTOL CATHEDRAL |
| 2 ST MARY REDCLIFFE CHURCH | 6 THE OLD BANK, CORN STREET |
| 3 THE HOLE IN THE WALL PUB, QUEEN SQUARE | 7 ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH |
| 4 PERO'S BRIDGE | 8 BY THE PLINTH OF THE FORMER EDWARD COLSTON STATUE |

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'The Bristol Slave Trade Trail' written by Madge Dresser, Caletta Jordan and Doreen Taylor and published by BRISTOL CITY MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY
 'Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in an English Provincial Port' by Madge Dresser (2001)

1

Guinea Street was once home to several prominent slave traders who benefited from its prime location by the harbour. The name 'Guinea Street' reflects a time when European traders used 'Guinea' to broadly refer to West Africa, a region deeply exploited through the transatlantic trade. The Ostrich Pub, established in 1745, likely served as a gathering spot for sailors and possibly for recruiting crew members for slave ships.

2

Saint Mary Redcliffe has stood as a place of worship for over 800 years. However, like many historic sites in Bristol, St Mary Redcliffe has a complex and often troubling connection to Transatlantic Chattel Slavery. Among its memorials, you'll find names like William Challoner, who participated in 13 slaving voyages and Philip John Miles, a landowner, banker, Tory MP and slave owner, who was also Bristol's first millionaire. In recent years, St Mary Redcliffe has taken steps to confront this uncomfortable legacy. One of the ways is through the installation of their new stained-glass windows, "Who is My Neighbour?" – serving as a reflection on the past while encouraging a vision of a more inclusive and just future.

3

Bristol's significance as a port dates back to the 13th century, growing immensely by the 17th and 18th centuries. The city played a central role in the triangular trade, which involved shipping enslaved people from Africa to the Americas and the Caribbean. The Hole in the Wall Pub's spy house highlights how local press gangs helped fill crews for these ships. Queen Square reveals the wealth accumulated through this trade, with buildings like Number 29, once owned by Nathaniel Day, who petitioned against a proposed tax on enslaved people and became Bristol's mayor in 1737.

4

Pero's Bridge, named after Pero Jones, a man enslaved in Bristol in the late 18th century, serves as a modern tribute to the city's painful history. Relatively few enslaved people arrived in Britain, so Pero would have been visible in the city. His presence here is a stark reminder of the city's involvement in the slave trade - there is no evidence that he was ever freed, and is assumed he remained enslaved in Bristol until the day he died in 1798. The bridge, dedicated in 1998, symbolises our acknowledgment of this history and honours those affected by the trade.

5

Bristol Cathedral stands as one of the city's most historic places of worship, tracing its origins back over 900 years. Its grand architecture and rich history tell many stories, yet some of these are tied to the darker chapters of the past, particularly Transatlantic Chattel Slavery that contributed to the wealth and development of the cathedral itself. In recent years, the cathedral has taken significant steps to confront this legacy.

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Research conducted by the cathedral uncovered that between 1670 and 1900, roughly 200 of those buried or memorialised within its grounds had direct connections to Transatlantic Chattel Slavery. This reality has prompted the cathedral to launch the "All God's Children" exhibition – to share the stories of those memorialised within its walls and their ties to this history.

6

The Old Bank was the first bank established in the city of Bristol in 1750. The bank's origins trace back to the 18th century when it was founded by wealthy tradesmen, many of whom were involved in Transatlantic chattel slavery. Bristol's prosperity was deeply tied to industries like glassmaking and sugar refining, which were fuelled by enslaved labour. The bank played a crucial role in managing and profiting from this trade, contributing to Bristol's economy.

7

St Stephen's Church stood right by Bristol harbour for centuries until the river Frome was covered over in the 1890s. It is said that the west doors of the church were opened to bless ships moored outside before they departed. As the harbour church, St Stephen's has been closely connected with Bristol's seafaring and merchant history, and therefore slavery. Within the church are several memorials to people directly connected with Transatlantic Chattel Slavery, including an agent of 14 slaving voyages, slave ship owners, and the wife of a slave ship captain. St Stephen's also has connections with the abolitionist movement, through 18th century Rector Revd Josiah Tucker. In 2011 an artwork was installed in St Stephen's to speak into these elements of the church's history. The Bristol Reconciliation Reredos comprises four boldly-coloured relief panels by Graeme Mortimer Evelyn, set behind the altar, which explore themes of hope and healing.

8

The plinth of the former Edward Colston statue is a site of immense historical and socio-political significance. It once held the statue of Edward Colston, a British merchant and deputy governor of the Royal African Company, a key player in the Transatlantic Chattel Slavery. While Colston's philanthropy contributed to Bristol's development, his wealth was built on human suffering. As part of the Royal African Company, he played a central role in the brutal enslavement and transportation of approximately 84,000 Africans, more than any other organisation involved in the Atlantic slave trade.

For 125 years, Bristol honoured Colston with a statue on this plinth in the heart of the city. Efforts to remove the statue or even attach a plaque acknowledging this dark history were unsuccessful. However, on June 7 2020, following the murder of George Floyd, Black Lives Matter protesters toppled the statue and threw it into Bristol Harbour in a powerful act of resistance. Today, the statue has been recovered and is exhibited in the M-Shed Museum. The display provides context for the protest, with first-hand accounts from those involved, and places Colston's statue within the larger narrative of the fight against racial injustice over the last 400 years, both in Bristol and around the world.

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