

**TINY  
TRACES**

**African & Asian  
Children at London's  
Foundling Hospital**

## PREFACE

In 2013, shortly after joining the Foundling Museum, I was asked to give a talk about Joseph Highmore's portrait of Thomas Emerson, which hangs over the fireplace in the Picture Gallery. Knowing nothing about the sitter, other than he was the Foundling Hospital's biggest donor, I found myself immersed in the story of sugar refining in Britain and tea, coffee and chocolate drinking in Georgian society, which enabled men like Emerson to amass vast fortunes linked to Britain's sugar-producing colonies and the Transatlantic slave trade. However, aside from one small mother-of-pearl token that references Jamaica, which was left by a mother with her baby in or after 1757, there seemed to be nothing that directly linked the global world of empire beyond the Hospital's doors and the children within.

For the next five years, anyone exploring the Hospital's hundreds of feet of archive kept their eyes peeled for references to children of colour. Occasional, tantalising fragments emerged, but it was thanks to Maxine Berg, Professor of History at the University of Warwick, that our curiosity and ambition were realised through a collaborative PhD. I am immensely grateful to Maxine and her colleagues for their support of this landmark project; to the Museum's extended family of archive sleuths, particularly Janette Bright and Gillian Clark, for their continued help; to the academics who contributed their wisdom and insight; and to Dr Caroline Bressey for her invaluable help in shaping the exhibition's themes. Our thanks also go to artists Zarina Bhimji, Hew Locke, Shanti Panchal, Alexis Peskine, Deborah Roberts and Kehinde Wiley, and their galleries and lenders, for bringing their rich, questioning and contemporary vision to our shared historical imagining. Finally, I would like to thank Hannah Dennett for her painstaking and meticulous research. *Tiny Traces* is an important first step in a journey that we hope will involve many other voices and perspectives, and deepen our understanding of the Foundling Hospital in relation to Britain's wider national story.

Caro Howell, MBE  
Director

## UNCOVERING AFRICAN AND ASIAN LIVES

When I began this project, the Museum was already aware of the presence of several African and Asian children who had been taken into the Foundling Hospital during the eighteenth century. 'Black Peggy' was a fourteen-year-old girl who had recently arrived from Bengal when she petitioned to have her daughter admitted in 1793. Her baby became foundling number 18142 and was named Jane Williams. The story of Black Peggy has been told before in the Museum's displays but its discovery was accidental, uncovered in the process of other research. We knew there must be similar stories waiting to be 'found' in the vast archives of the Foundling Hospital, especially from a period of British history which witnessed the rapid expansion of colonisation across the world. By the end of the eighteenth century there were an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Black individuals living in Britain, as well as a growing Indian population largely arriving with returning East India Company officials. Many were domestic servants, but others were sailors working the empire's trading routes, or children of white colonists and African women, sent to be educated in Britain. Given this presence, we believed that some of the women of the African and Asian diasporas, and women engaged in relationships with African and Asian men, would have sought help from the Foundling Hospital.

The challenge was how to identify African and Asian children in the records. There was no official policy to record children's ethnicities when they were taken into the Hospital, so I knew I would need to look for any mention of the places of origin of parents, or references to the skin colour of children amongst other information

relating to foundlings. This gave me two sets of documents as starting points; the billets and the petitions.

In the early years of the Hospital, billets (forms) were completed for each child on their admission, which included the date, the unique identification number given to the child, their sex and the clothes they were wearing. On each form is a section 'Marks on the Body' under which any identifying marks on a child were noted. For example one child had a club foot and others were recorded as a twin to another child being admitted. This part of the billets provided the first clues to identifying African and Asian foundlings. Many of the forms are now too fragile to handle but thankfully researchers Janette Bright and Gillian Clark had previously studied all the billets as part of their work on the tokens left with children by their parents. They found references to the colour of infants' skin written under 'Marks on the Body'. Language which is no longer used or acceptable, words such as 'tawny', 'a negro' and 'mulatto', suggests that these children were not white. Such terms were frequently employed during the eighteenth century to describe someone of African or Asian heritage. Therefore they are a strong indicator that a child being admitted into the Hospital was African or Asian.

The petitions from mothers to have their children admitted into the Hospital also provided another starting point for my research. These focus on the mothers and the circumstances surrounding their pregnancies and delivery, often including the names and addresses of referees or previous employers. Many were annotated by the Governors, adding more details

about a mother's situation after enquiries were made to verify the eligibility of her case. Here, I discovered mothers who had recently arrived in London from India and the West Indies, and references to fathers described as 'Black', as men 'of Colour' and one said to be 'a slave'. These were all indicators that the children born to the mothers were possibly African and Asian, so I turned to the admission books to discover the names and identification numbers of the babies received from these mothers. This also told me where their infants were sent to be nursed, the names of their nurses and if they had died in infancy or lived to be apprenticed.

Using the identification number for each child, I was also able to search further records in the archives to try and trace their time in the Foundling Hospital. This included looking through correspondence from inspectors overseeing the foundlings whilst at nurse for mentions of the children, and anything which might confirm their ethnicities. I also researched the nurses who acted as foster mothers to gain a sense of the family life and communities these foundlings would possibly have experienced. Sadly, most of the identified children died in infancy or in young childhood, and this illustrates the high child mortality rates among all the foundlings, and in wider society at the time.

For those African and Asian children who survived their childhood, the apprenticeship records held the next pieces of the puzzle. I used these to discover the types of employment the foundlings were trained to do and the names of their apprenticeship masters and mistresses. In doing so, it highlighted the possible challenges faced by African and Asian children beyond the walls of the Foundling Hospital, and anxieties that the Governors may have had about placing the children with appropriate masters and mistresses.

After foundlings were apprenticed they tend

to disappear from the records, unless there was a problem with their apprenticeship or a complaint made against them.

Therefore, discovering anything about the lives of African and Asian foundlings in their teenage years and beyond was always going to prove difficult. I turned to records of other organisations and official agencies, as well as newspaper archives and genealogical databases to search the names of those foundlings who were apprenticed. Incredibly, I had a hit for Fanny Kenyon in the Old Bailey court records, and from this I was able to trace her life until the age of about nineteen, when she disappears from view. Similarly in her research, Janette Bright discovered the foundling Thomas Jacox on the *Runaway Slaves in Britain* database, revealing that at the age of fourteen he absconded from his master, though what became of him afterwards is unknown. I took the same approach when researching the mothers, and, if known, the fathers of the children. Thanks to the expertise of Margaret Makepeace, lead curator of the East India Company records at the British Library, it was possible to trace two Asian mothers after they had their children admitted into the Hospital. This revealed that they both returned to India in the service of English families. The absence of further information about the other apprentices and parents reflects the lack of sources relating to the labouring classes of eighteenth-century society, who rarely left traces of their lives behind unless they came into contact with officialdom.

The exhibition today is the result of three years of research and the children included represent a selection of those who have so far been identified as African or Asian. There will certainly be others waiting to be uncovered in the archives, for which the current digitisation project will prove helpful for accessing documents previously unavailable to researchers. It's also important to highlight that because there was no policy to record the ethnicity of children received into the Hospital, some

African and Asian children may never have been referred to in terms of the colour of their skin, and therefore will remain hidden in the archives. For those included here, I have taken the traces of their lives to help create a picture of the experiences of African and Asian children as foundlings, and in life beyond the Hospital. Their stories add to a fuller understanding of the history of the Foundling Hospital and the diverse experiences of children in its care,

whilst setting the charity within the wider context of eighteenth-century London and the British Empire. Though we cannot hear the voices of the children and their parents directly, their experiences as found within the Hospital's archives give us an important window into the lives of the African and Asian diasporas in Britain in this period.

Hannah Dennett,  
Exhibition curator

## CHILDREN'S BIOGRAPHIES

### **No. 75 July Green**

Foundling number 75, a male infant, was admitted to the Foundling Hospital in May 1741 at about one week old. His billet noted that he was 'of a very tawny complexion' and it appears that his mother was a woman of colour called Julie Green who was part of the Duke of Montagu's household. Montagu, a Governor of the institution, named the baby July Green. After being nursed in Egham and Staines, July returned to the Hospital aged four years. Having survived catching small pox and later measles, July died of consumption on 26 April 1747, aged six years.

### **No. 165 Miles Cooke**

Miles Cooke was about two months old when he was received into the Foundling Hospital on 9 December 1743. His billet includes a note that 'This Child was of a dark olive complexion like a Moor has long black hair'. During his time in the Hospital, Miles survived catching the measles, and was apprenticed at the age of eleven into sea service with Francis Thwaite, a mariner. He was bound to serve his master until the age of twenty-four years, and was to be paid five pounds a year for the last three years of the apprenticeship.

### **No. 6324 Noah Watkins**

Noah Watkins's billet noted that he was 'a tawny child' when he was admitted to the Foundling Hospital on 16 November 1757. He was sent to be nursed by Mary Norton in Twyford, Berkshire. A letter from Inspector Hughes to the Governors revealed the horrific details surrounding the little boy's death on 10 December 1758. Noah had been removed from Mary Norton after he 'received such a contusion under its breast almost big eno' to thrust the fist into'. Hughes stated that Noah's wound was neglected by Norton because Noah was 'a black'. Noah died from his injury.

### **No. 7766 Cesar Candour**

On 18 March 1758, 'a black child' was admitted as foundling number 7766. The male infant was named Cesar Candour and sent to be nursed in Midgham, Berkshire. The inspector for the area, Mrs Poyntz, had previously written to the Governors asking if the children under her care could be given the same surname, Candour, so that she would know them and be able to assist them in the future. Unusually, the Governors agreed and Cesar was one of more than twenty children who were named 'Candour'. Cesar Candour died within two months, on 13 May 1758, of a fever.

### **No. 8058 James Moor**

The billet for foundling number 8058, admitted on 10 April 1758, noted the male infant was a 'A negro'. He was christened James Moor. James was sent to be nursed by Esther Bevet at Warmfield-cum-Heath, Yorkshire under the supervision of Lady Dalston. In January 1759, Lady Dalston wrote to the Governors informing them that 'the Black [James Moor] ...is very sickly'. This was followed by a letter on 19 February in which she wrote that James had died despite having received the attention of a doctor and 'every assistance as much as if he had been my own child'.

### **No. 10125 Mary Lamas**

Foundling Mary Lamas was admitted into the Foundling Hospital on 12 October 1758. Having survived infancy and catching small pox in early childhood, Mary was apprenticed aged ten, in January 1768. Her apprentice master was William Frankling, a cook on a ship in the West India trade. Both Mary and William are referred to as 'Black' in the Governors' Committee Minutes. This raises the questions, would the Governors have been willing to apprentice a white child to this Black master? And was William's petition for an apprentice only considered because Mary, a child of colour, could be placed with him?

### **No. 10871 Thomas Jacox**

Thomas Jacox was admitted into the Foundling Hospital on 16 December 1758 and was sent to be nursed at the Westerham Branch Hospital. He returned to the London Hospital aged six years and was apprenticed in October 1766. On 21 August 1772, the Daily Advertiser printed an advertisement appealing for information concerning the whereabouts of 'Thomas Jaycocks, a tawny Boy' as he had run away from his master, George Flower. A reward of five shillings was offered for the return of Thomas to his master or the Foundling Hospital. We do not know if Thomas was ever found.

### **No. 16796 Robert Poole**

Diana Buxar's petition to the Foundling Hospital Governors stated she had arrived in England from Bengal in 1772 as servant to a Mrs Williams, and had recently given birth to a son. Her baby was christened Robert Poole when he was admitted on 6 March 1773, but sadly he died a month later whilst at nurse in Horsell, Surrey. East India Company records show that Mrs Williams set sail to return to Bengal in January 1775 with a 'Black servant named Diana', which suggests Diana was able to return to India with her mistress after her son was admitted.

### **No. 16851 Christopher Rowland**

Christopher Rowland was one month old when his mother, Lucy Strange, had him received into the Foundling Hospital in December 1773. Lucy's petition stated that she was born in the East Indies and had been sent to England by her master, with the care of his child. On the voyage she was 'debauched' and became pregnant. She did not speak English and did not know the name of the father of her child, so could provide no further information about the circumstances of her pregnancy. Needing to return to her master in the East Indies in a few weeks, and having no means by which to support her son, she turned to the Foundling Hospital for assistance. On his admission, Christopher was sent to be nursed by Amy Bunel at Chalfont St Peter in Buckinghamshire. Christopher died at nurse on 21 March 1774.

**No. 17342 Ann Watson**

Martha of Calcutta petitioned the Foundling Hospital in May 1778, having given birth to a 'mulatto' girl, and the infant became foundling number 17342, Ann Watson. Martha later married William Green of Barbados, and in 1786 returned to petition the Hospital to reclaim her daughter. The family planned to travel to Sierra Leone as part of the government plans to create a new colony there for Black people living in Britain at the time. The Foundling Hospital granted the petition, and Ann was reunited with her mother, but we do not know if they did indeed leave Britain for Sierra Leone.

**No. 17611 Jane Eyre**

Henrietta Dislie arrived in England from Antigua in 1780, in the service of the family of Captain Grenadiere. Her petition to the Foundling Hospital stated that she had had a relationship with a European clerk to a bookkeeper in Antigua, and having failed to inform her master that she was pregnant, was delivered of a 'mulato Child' on the passage to England. Henrietta's daughter was admitted into the Hospital on 15 November 1780 aged 10 weeks and christened Jane Eyre. She was sent to be nursed by Mary Ankin in Odiham, Hampshire, where she sadly died a year later.

**No. 18143 Thomas Trowbridge**

Mary Carne was 18 years old when she petitioned to have her male infant received into the Foundling Hospital in 1798. Whilst at a school in Mitcham where she was learning the skills of domestic service, Mary became pregnant by 'a Negro boy of fifteen years of age', described as a slave in the household. Mary's son became foundling number 18463, Thomas Trowbridge, and was sent to be nursed at East Peckham, Kent. Sadly, Thomas died at 10 months, having been treated by the local doctor and been 'under the care of an exceeding good nurse', Jane Richards.

**No. 18992 Jane Friend**

Jane Blake was working as a servant to Mrs Garraway of Cadogan Place when she began a relationship with fellow servant Charles Chelsea, described as 'a Black'. On discovering she was pregnant both Jane and Charles left the household, and later Charles fled London altogether. Jane was delivered of a daughter on 2 August 1811 but did not petition the Foundling Hospital until June 1812. This suggests Jane had some financial assistance which allowed her to care for her daughter for ten months, but that this ended. Jane and Charles's daughter became foundling number 18992, Jane Friend, who died aged 7 in April 1819.

## FANNY KENYON

On 16 June 1804, a female infant aged six weeks was admitted into London's Foundling Hospital. Her mother was Susannah Wright, an unmarried domestic servant who had had a relationship with a fellow servant, George Clark. On discovering Susannah was pregnant, George promised to marry her and they left their positions at Knock Hill House, in Dumfriesshire, Scotland to come to London. Having found lodgings in Quebec Street, Marylebone, George then promptly deserted Susannah in about the fifth month of her pregnancy. After the birth of her child, Susannah was unable to support both herself and her baby daughter, so she petitioned the Foundling Hospital to receive the child into its care. What brought her petition to our attention were some additional comments which noted that George Clark was 'a Man of Colour'.<sup>1</sup>

Both Susannah Wright and George Clarke were employed by Mr Francis Lascelles. Susannah had been working in the household for eight years, and George had joined sometime in 1803 as a gentleman's servant. Francis Lascelles was a member of the extended Lascelles family of Yorkshire. They were one of the wealthiest families in Britain at this time, having made their fortune from their Caribbean plantations, which produced sugar using the labour of enslaved peoples. It is possible, therefore, that George had originally come to Scotland from one of the Lascelles' plantations. We don't know what happened to Susannah or George after their contact with the Foundling Hospital, but it is likely that Susannah found work again as a servant. She believed that George had gone to Liverpool, so he may have left Britain on a ship sailing to the Caribbean or America. Their baby girl became foundling number 18757 and was christened Fanny Kenyon.

Fanny was sent to be nursed by Elizabeth Collins in the village of Hadlow, Kent. It seems that Elizabeth was married to Richard and they had eight children at the time Fanny came to live with them. Hadlow was a rural parish so it is likely that Richard Collins was an agricultural labourer and that Elizabeth became a wet nurse to help supplement the family's income. This would have been a crowded, noisy home, with lots of older children for Fanny to play with, in which she would have spent the first four years of her life before being returned to the Foundling Hospital.

Little is recorded of Fanny's time back at the Hospital but she would have had lessons in basic arithmetic and reading, as well as learning needlework, knitting, spinning and household work, in preparation for being apprenticed. Aged ten, Fanny was apprenticed into domestic service in 1814. She was younger than the usual age foundlings were apprenticed but the governors had received a letter from a Miss Eliza Mackenzie which stated:

'I want a little girl to assist my maid in household business, ... my chief reason for fixing on Fanny Kenyon, was knowing the prejudices against Children of her colour, and thinking that in my small family, I could bring her up to be usefull to herself, without her suffering the many mortifications she would be liable to in many families ...'<sup>2</sup>

As part of the Governors' consideration of Miss Mackenzie's request, they received a report from the Hospital's school mistress, in which she wrote that:

'Fanny is an excellent child, of good capacity & none in the house of her age reads or works better'.<sup>3</sup>



We can see that Fanny was a bright young girl who had been given the same opportunities within the Hospital as her white peers. However, the letter from Miss Mackenzie is the first indication that life for Fanny beyond the Hospital might not be as straightforward as that of her fellow foundlings, because of the colour of her skin.

The apprenticeship indentures reveal that Fanny stayed in Miss Mackenzie's household for about four years, when her apprenticeship was transferred to Mr John Preston of King Street, Westminster. This was the start of several moves from one master to another, staying for a few months with each one, until she went into the service of Mr Glaskin of Hackney in the autumn of 1822.

Here her story takes an unexpected turn as we discover references to Fanny not in the archives of the Foundling Hospital, but in the records of the Old Bailey. It appears Fanny decided to leave after only five weeks in the service of Mr Glaskin, but suspicious of her behaviour, Mr Glaskin discovered she had stolen some purses. Fanny appeared in court in October 1822, was found guilty of grand larceny (theft) and sentenced to three months imprisonment. One newspaper reported that Mr Glaskin himself appealed to the magistrate to show Fanny leniency, but he was told 'the law must take its course'.<sup>4</sup>

Homeless and unemployed after serving her prison sentence, Fanny next appears in the records of the Refuge for the Destitute in Hackney. The Refuge was founded in 1804 to assist former prisoners with clothing, shelter and work training, and Fanny was admitted in February 1823. However, her name soon came to the attention of the governors after a conversation with the Superintendent in which Fanny declared it was useless for her to remain in the Refuge, having being told she would not be recommended for service because she had

previously been found guilty of theft. She also wished to return to the house of her former employer, as 'she had several articles of clothing at the Glaskins, where she had lived as servant and wishes to be at liberty to enquire after.'<sup>5</sup> Despite being imprisoned for stealing from Mr Glaskin, Fanny wanted to retrieve some clothes she had left at his residence!

In the following weeks, Fanny's name was mentioned on two more occasions, as staff complained about her behaviour. She was clearly frustrated by her time in the Refuge and she wanted to pursue her own living arrangements, but the outcome of this is unknown as it is here that the trail goes cold. Where did she go after she left the Refuge? Did she find work as a domestic servant? Did she eventually marry and have a family of her own? Sadly, these are questions we might never be able to answer, but the twenty years of her life that it has been possible to uncover offer us a valuable glimpse into the lived experiences of African and Asian children taken into London's Foundling Hospital during the long eighteenth century.

1 A/FH/A/08/001/002, Petitions, LMA.

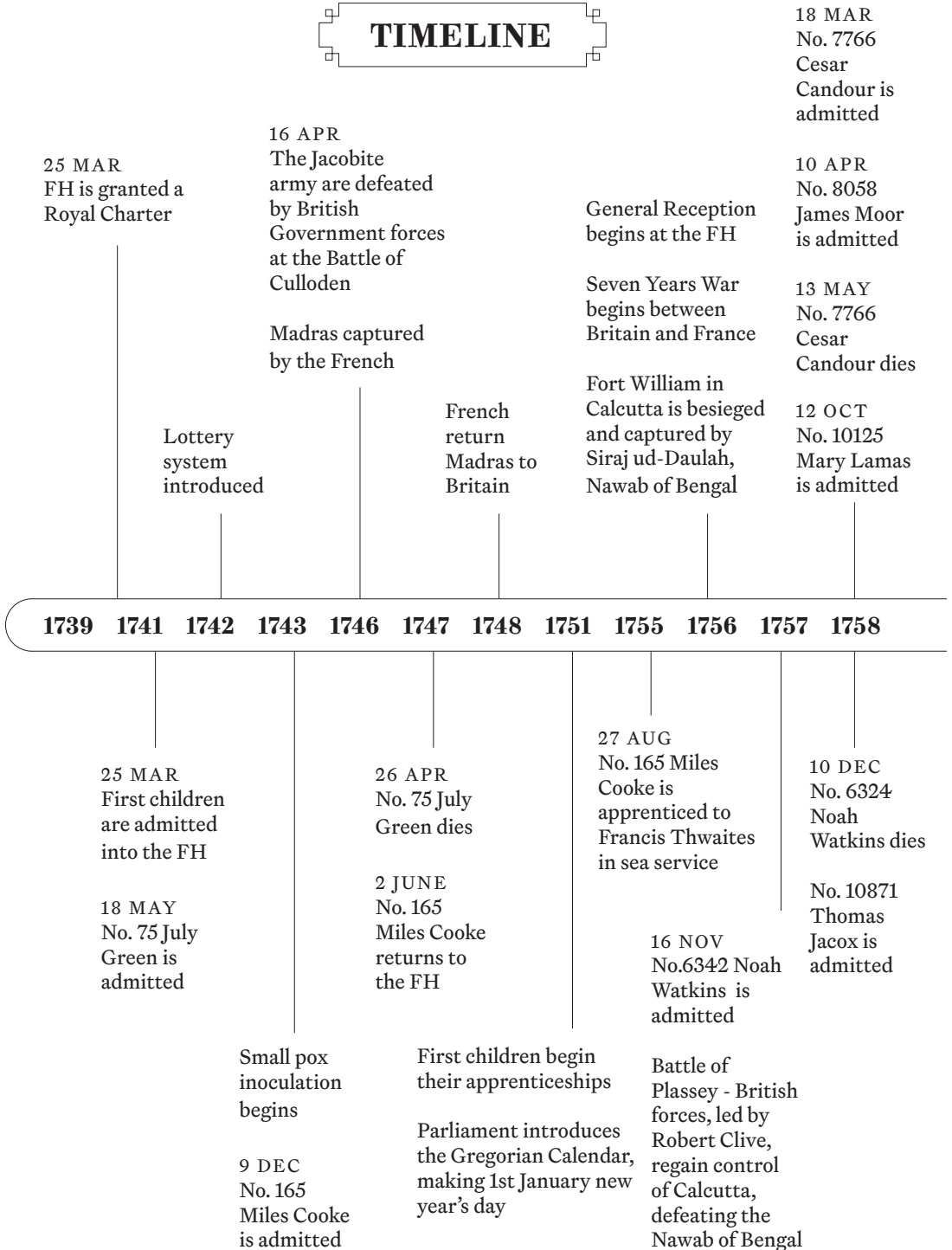
2 A/FH/K/02/032, General Committee Minutes, 09.03.1814, LMA.

3 A/FH/A/06/001/072/010, Correspondence J, 1814, LMA.

4 Morning Herald (London), 22.10.1822, British Newspaper Archive .

5 D/S/4/6 Committee Minutes, 25.01.1823, Hackney Archive.

# TIMELINE



19 FEB  
No. 8058  
James Moor  
dies

The British  
Museum is  
founded

Admissions  
restart

5 OCT  
No. 10125  
Mary Lamas  
returns to  
FH

No. 10871  
Thomas Jacox  
is apprenticed  
to George  
Flowers, a  
wharfinger

21 AUG  
Newspaper  
advertisement is  
published offering  
a reward for the  
return of runaway  
apprentice No. 10871  
Thomas Jacox

Warren Hastings  
is appointed first  
Governor-General of  
British India

The Great  
Famine of  
Bengal kills  
over 10  
million people

6 MAR  
No. 16796  
Robert Poole  
is admitted

18 APR  
No. 16769  
Robert Poole  
dies

1 DEC  
No. 16851  
Christopher  
Rowland  
is admitted

1759 1760 1763 1764 1766 1768 1769 1770 1772 1773 1774 1775

General  
Reception ends  
and almost all  
admissions  
cease

George III  
succeeds his  
father George  
II

Tacky's  
Uprising - this  
is the largest  
uprising of  
enslaved  
people in  
18th century  
Jamaica

No. 10871  
Thomas  
Jacox  
returns to  
the FH

27 JAN  
No. 10125  
Mary  
Lamas is  
apprenticed  
to William  
Frankling, a  
Black ship's  
cook in the  
West India  
Trade

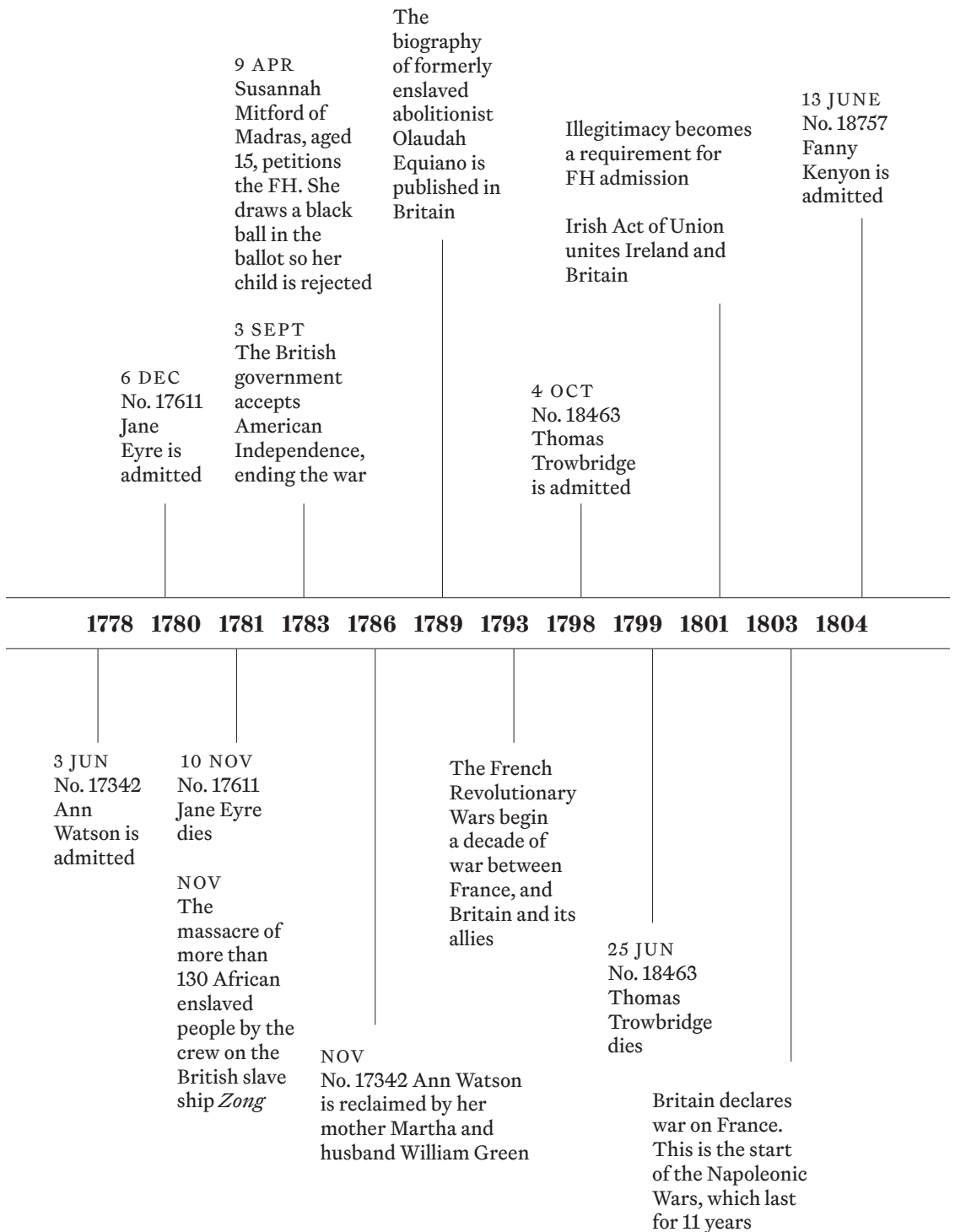
Lord North is appointed  
Prime Minister

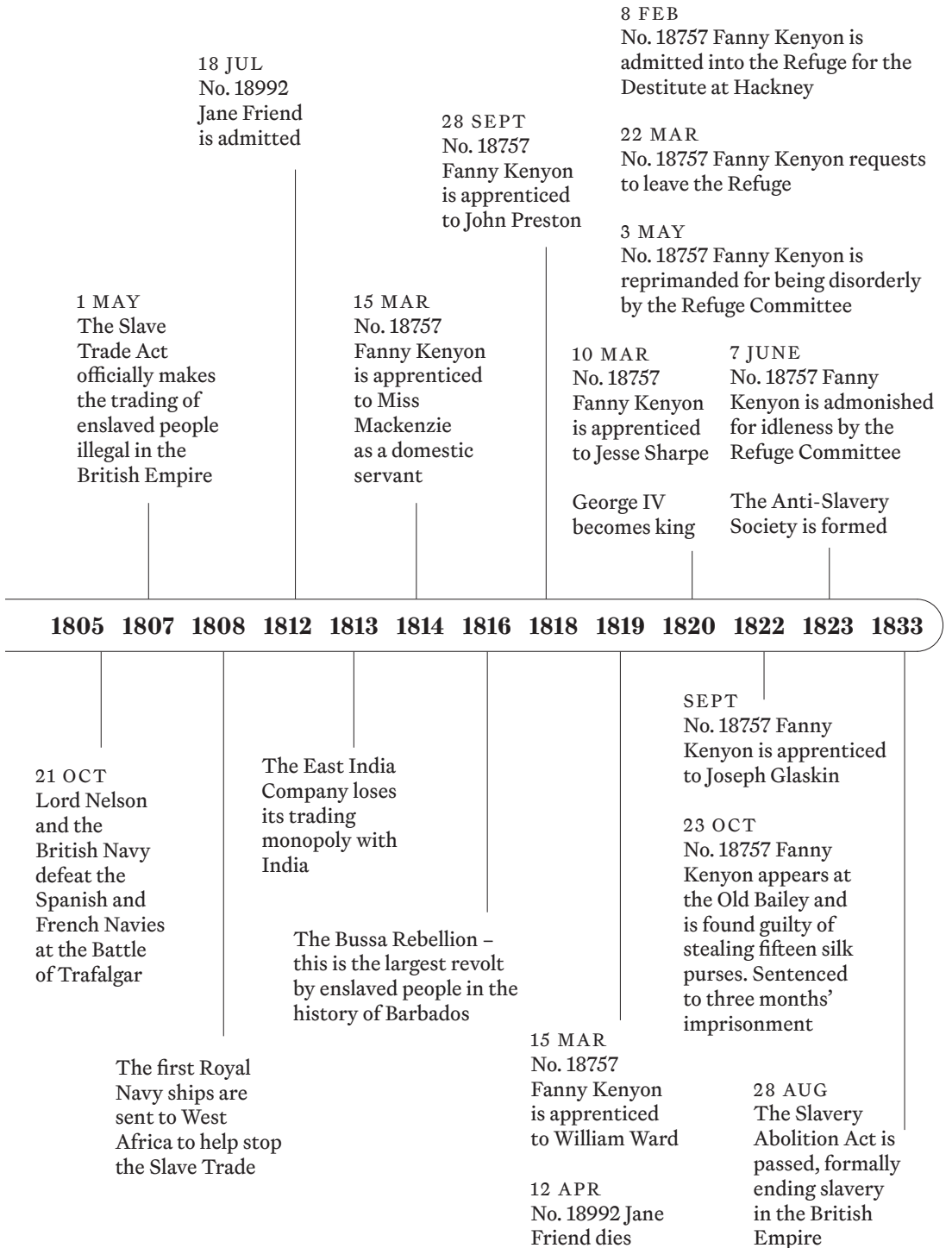
Captain James Cook claims  
New South Wales for Britain

MAY  
The judgement  
in the case of the  
enslaved African  
James Somerset is  
delivered by Lord  
Mansfield.  
The case argued  
that the law in  
England did not  
recognise slavery,  
therefore slavery  
was unlawful

APR  
American  
War of  
Independence  
begins  
between  
American  
patriots,  
supported by  
France, and  
Britain

21 MAR  
No. 16851  
Christopher  
Rowland dies





# GOVERNORS

## The Foundling Hospital Governors

Governors of the Foundling Hospital were mainly wealthy, professional men who oversaw the running of the charity and also contributed to it financially. The wealth of many of the Governors had roots in Britain's colonial activities. The seizure and exploitation of territories and peoples across the globe provided opportunities for individuals to make their fortunes through trade, political roles, ownership of plantations and investments, particularly in trading companies. The Royal Africa Company held a monopoly over English trade along the west coast of Africa, which included purchasing and transporting enslaved Africans across the Atlantic to the Caribbean. The South Sea Company had exclusive rights of trade to the Spanish Indies, and later a monopoly to supply enslaved Africans to the islands in the 'South Seas' and South America. The East India Company held a monopoly over trade with the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, and eventually came to rule large areas of India. The Governors highlighted in the exhibition were involved in, and financially benefitted from these colonial activities in various ways. Underpinning this world of opportunity was the labour of millions of enslaved African peoples.

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### **Allen Bathurst, 1st Earl Bathurst (1684–1775)**

Godfrey Kneller, c.1700

© Sotheby's

Appointed Governor on 17 October 1739

Inherited wealth and the family estate of Cirencester Park in 1704. His father held senior roles in the Royal Africa Company and the East India Company, amassing wealth from trading in commodities such as gold and spices, and from slavery.

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### **Thomas Coram (c.1668–1751)**

William Hogarth, 1740

© Coram in the care of the Foundling Museum, London

Appointed Governor on 17 October 1739

Growing up in Lyme Regis, Coram would have seen goods arriving such as sugar and tobacco produced by enslaved Africans on plantations in British America and the West Indies. By 1693, he was living in America, near Boston, and had a ship building business. Returning to England, Coram became a trustee for the new colony of Georgia, probably voting on the decision to ban bringing enslaved Africans to the colony, later reversed. He proposed educational schemes for Native American children. He also promoted the expansion of colonial trade. One argument in Coram's campaign to set up the Foundling Hospital was that the boys would serve their country in the 'Sea services', which maintained Britain's power.



### **Sir Abraham Elton, 2nd Baronet (1679–1742)**

Attributed to Jonathan Richardson the elder

© National Trust Images/John Hammond

Appointed Governor on 17 October 1739

A merchant, sheriff and later mayor of Bristol, MP for Taunton and Bristol. Invested directly in slave ships with his brothers, reportedly owned plantations in Jamaica and was involved in the Bristol sugar refining industry. Inherited Clevedon Court in Somerset.

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### **Thomas Emerson**

Thomas Highmore, c.1731

© Coram in the care of the Foundling Museum, London

Appointed Governor on 26 December 1739

Left £12,000 to the Foundling Hospital in his will, roughly two million pounds today. A partner in Fellowes, Houlditch and Emerson, with several 'sugar houses' across London. Semi-processed sugar was imported from British colonies in America and the West Indies, where it was produced by enslaved Africans, and refined in Britain.

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### **John Gore (c.1689–1763)**

Circle Of Michael Dahl, c.1717

© Titan Fine Art

Appointed Governor on 17 October 1739

John Gore was a merchant who held extensive government contracts and was a leading government financier. He was one of the original directors of the South Sea Company, and MP for Greater Grimsby from 1747-1761.

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### **John Montagu, 2nd Duke of Montagu (1690–1749)**

Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1709

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Appointed Governor on 17 October 1739

In June 1722, Montagu was granted the islands of St Lucia and St Vincent in the West Indies and appointed governor and captain-general. His attempt to colonise the islands failed due to lack of support from the British Navy and resistance from the French. Montagu is known for supporting the education of Ignatius Sancho, a formerly enslaved African, later employed by his widow. Sancho went on to campaign against slavery, and also established his own grocery business in Westminster. Another black woman, the mother of founding number 75, July Green, also lived in the Montagu household.



### **Micajah Perry (1694-1753)**

William Hoare

© The McEwan Gallery

Appointed Governor 17 October 1739

Vice President 1739-1741

Inherited the leading English tobacco-import business with his brother in 1721. Tobacco was produced by enslaved peoples on plantations in North America and the West Indies. Supported the interests of tobacco merchants in parliamentary debates and frequently consulted by the Government's Board of Trade. MP for the City of London from 1721 to 1741, Lord Mayor in 1738.

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### **Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753)**

Stephen Slaughter, 1736

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Appointed Governor on 17 October 1739

A successful physician, who promoted inoculation against smallpox. Sloane advised the Foundling Hospital in its early years, and served as doctor to the children. Previously, he was physician to Jamaica's colonial governor and worked as a doctor on plantations. He married Elizabeth Langley Rose, an heiress to Jamaican sugar plantations worked by enslaved people. An avid collector from around the world, his more than 71,000 items became the foundations of the British Museum, the Natural History Museum and the British Library. The profits from his wife's plantations in Jamaica contributed significantly to his ability to amass such a vast collection.

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### **Sir Matthew Decker 1st Baronet (1679-1749)**

Theodorus Netscher, poss. 1720

© The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Appointed Governor on 26 December 1739

Dutch-born linen merchant Decker came to London in 1702. One of the original governors of the South Sea Company from 1719-1722, assistant to the Royal Africa Company, and deputy chairman and chairman of the East India Company between 1720 and 1732. MP for Bishop's Castle in Shropshire. Known as the first man to grow pineapples in England.

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### **Beeston Long (1710-1785)**

William Owen

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Appointed Governor on 26 March 1740

A London West India merchant, partner in Drake & Long with fellow Foundling Hospital governor Roger Drake, trading largely with Jamaica. The firm held mortgages for some plantations, including their enslaved workers, from the 1760s. The Long family do not appear to have owned estates or enslaved people directly.





### **John Thornton (1720-1790)**

Thomas Gainsborough

Courtesy of SCAD Museum of Art,  
Permanent Collection Gift of Dr. Earle W Newton

Appointed Governor on 26 March 1746

Vice president 1769-1770

Thornton's father, also a Hospital Governor, was a Baltic merchant and a partner in a sugar refining business in Hull. John inherited these business interests and around £100,000. He married Lucy Watson, the sole heiress of his father's business partner. Both became committed Evangelicals. Thornton joined the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, with fellow Foundling Hospital Governor Jonas Hanway. At death, his estate was worth about £600,000.

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### **Edward Payne (1716-1794)**

Arthur Devis © Bank of England

Appointed Governor on 10 May 1749

Governor of the Bank of England 1771-1773. A partner, with his nephew, in Edward and Rene Payne Co., a West India and General merchant business. They reportedly purchased a coffee plantation in St Dominica in 1776. Appear to have been involved with estates in Grenada. Possibly had a financial interest in the cargo of 313 slaves carried on the ship *Marlborough* in 1772-73.

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### **George Frederick Handel (1685-1759)**

School of Thomas Hudson

© Gerald Coke Handel Foundation

Appointed Governor on 9 June 1750

George Frederic Handel was one of the eighteenth century's greatest composers, and also notably generous in giving to charities. He gave regular benefit performances of *Messiah* in the Foundling Hospital chapel, which raised significant sums of money. Handel had stocks in the Royal Africa Company and the South Sea Company, however recent research suggests that this was a method of payment that he cashed in very quickly. From 1744 onwards, as he prospered he held South Sea Company stock as an investment.

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### **Francis Fauquier (1703-1768)**

Richard Wilson, 1757

© The Foundling Museum, London

Appointed Governor on 27 March 1751

Born in London. Inherited £15,000 in stocks and annuities on the death of his father, a French Huguenot financier. Became a director of the South Sea Company in 1751. Appointed lieutenant-governor of Virginia in 1758, served as acting governor from 1758 until his death in 1768.



## **William Legge, 2nd Earl of Dartmouth (1731-1801)**

Joshua Reynolds, 1757

© Coram in the care of the Foundling Museum, London

Appointed Governor on 8 May 1751

Vice President 1755-1802

Married Frances Nicholls, one of the wealthiest heiresses in the country, in 1755. Appointed Secretary of State for the Colonial Department at the outbreak of the American War of Independence in 1772, which saw an increase in money flowing through his bank accounts. Known as the subject of Phyllis Wheatly's poem *To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth* which called on him to remember the plight of enslaved Africans and help them achieve freedom. A large donor and leading trustee for a fund to establish a school in Connecticut to educate and convert Native Americans. Also instrumental in the acceptance of John Newton, former slave trader and author of *Amazing Grace*, for Anglican ministry.

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## **Frederick, Lord North (1732-1792)**

Nathaniel Dance-Holland bet 1773-1774

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Appointed Governor on 8 May 1751

President in 1771

Lord North held various in Government before becoming Prime Minister from 1770 to 1782. During his period in office the Government passed the Tea Act which allowed the East India Company to sell its tea directly to the colonies, cutting out the influential colonial merchants. Opposition to the Act led to what became known as the Boston Tea Party in December 1773, and ultimately to the American War of Independence. Britain's defeat and subsequent surrender of its American colonies forced North out of office, and he is largely remembered as the Prime Minister 'who lost America'.

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## **Edwin Lascelles, 1st Baron Harewood (1713-1795)**

Joshua Reynolds

Reproduced by courtesy of the Harewood House Trust

Appointed Governor on 8 May 1754

The Lascelles were a prominent Yorkshire family, whose history of plantation ownership in the Caribbean, and trading in sugar and enslaved people dated back to the mid-seventeenth century. Edwin and his brother Daniel inherited their father's West Indian business interests, including sugar trading firm Lascelles and Maxwell. With his wealth, Edwin built Harewood House, still home to the Lascelles family. He was MP for various Yorkshire constituencies between 1744 and 1790. Daniel was also a Governor of the Foundling Hospital, appointed on 14 May 1755. He was a partner in Lascelles and Maxwell and an MP for Northallerton, Yorkshire.



### **Rose Fuller (1708-1777)**

Artist unknown

© the copyright holder

Appointed Governor on 12 May 1756

Son of John Fuller MP and Elizabeth Rose, who brought a large fortune from sugar plantations in Jamaica into the marriage. In 1733, Rose was sent to manage the family's sugar plantations and the enslaved people working them. Rose was elected to the Jamaican Assembly in 1735, and called to the Council in 1739. He returned to England in 1755, becoming MP for New Romney the following year. On his death, he owned 290 enslaved people, valued at £17,985 in Jamaican currency.

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### **Jonas Hanway (1712-1786)**

James Northcote

© National Portrait Gallery, London

Appointed Governor on 12 May 1756

Vice President 1772-1787

Merchant, writer and philanthropist. After an apprenticeship in Lisbon, joined the Russia Company as a junior partner and spent several years in Russia before continuing in London from 1750 until 1764. Hanway was concerned about increasing Britain's fighting manpower. He saw the Foundling Hospital as a means to do this. He was instrumental in setting up the Marine Society in 1756, clothing poor men and boys in order for them to join the Royal Navy. He also campaigned for poor children's welfare, leading to an Act in 1767 requiring London parishes to send infants to rural nurses. With fellow Hospital Governors General Robert Melville, Henry and Samuel Thornton, Hanway joined the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor in 1786. First helping distressed people of African and Asian origin in London, the charity later supported emigration to the new-established colony of Sierra Leone.

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### **Sir William James, 1st Baronet (1721-1783)**

Joshua Reynolds, 1784

© National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

Appointed Governor on 28 June 1758

Born a farmer or miller's son in Pembrokeshire, Wales, and went to sea as a boy. Entered the East India Company's navy in about 1747, rising to commodore of its Bombay Marine Navy. In 1755 and 1756, he led expeditions against the Angria family, Indian admirals in the Maratha navy. His success has been credited as key for the East India Company (EIC) in establishing naval supremacy in India. Returned to England in 1759, with a fortune from private commerce and prize money. Purchased Park Farm Place at Eltham, Kent. Elected a director of the EIC in 1768 and later deputy chairman and chairman. MP for West Looe from 1774.



### **Henry Dawkins (1728-1814)**

Maurice-Quentin de La Tour, c.1750

Bequeathed by Charles Bridger Orme Clarke, 1940

© The National Gallery, London

Appointed Governor on 7 February 1759

Born in Jamaica to a wealthy family owning 25,000 acres of land in ten plantations and livestock farms, with 1400 enslaved people. After Oxford University, returned to Jamaica in 1745. Elected a member of the Jamaica Assembly. His two brothers died young, and he inherited their share of his father's estate, making him one of the island's largest land owners. Returned to Britain in 1759. Elected MP for Southampton in 1760 and then for Chippingham and Hindon. As an absentee plantation owner, he continued to purchase enslaved Africans until the 1790s. Member of the Society of West India Planters and Merchants who opposed the campaign for the abolition of the slave trade.

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### **Thomas Dundas (1741-1820)**

Pompeo Batoni, 1764

The Zetland Collection

Appointed Governor on 28 March 1770

Thomas Dundas' inheritance was worth £900,000 as the only son of Sir Lawrence Dundas, the 'Nabob of the North'. Sir Lawrence built the family's immense fortune as an army contractor, making an estimated profit of between £600,000 and £800,000 from the Seven Years' War. He also acquired two plantations in the West Indies. On the death of his father, Thomas became MP for Richmond, Yorkshire in 1763 and then for Stirlingshire from 1768 to 1794. He owned Dougalson Estate in Grenada, which in 1820 had 205 enslaved people.

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### **General Robert Melville**

Henry Raeburn, c. 1794-1800

National Galleries of Scotland. Purchased 1958

Appointed Governor on 1 July 1772

Served in the West Indies during the Seven Years War (1756-63), during which time he was appointed lieutenant-governor of Guadeloupe, and later temporary governor of the island. In 1764, became governor of the Ceded Islands (Grenada, the Grenadines, Tobago, Dominica and St Vincent), a position he held for seven years before resigning. In 1770, Melville owned Melville Hall (Dominica) and Carnbee (Tobago) plantations, as well as land, houses and enslaved people in Grenada, worth a total of over £45,000. Later travelled extensively around Europe, pursuing his interest in Roman history.



### **Henry Thornton (1760-1815)**

James Ward, after John Hoppner, 1802  
© National Portrait Gallery, London  
Appointed Governor on 27 June 1787

One of the third generation of the Thornton family to be a Governor at the Foundling Hospital. Like his brother Samuel, Henry was a merchant, banker and philanthropist. Henry inherited £40,000 from his father, and used this to grow his banking firm Down, Thornton and Free into one of London's largest. MP for Southwark from 1782 to 1815, he was regarded by his fellows as an authority on all financial matters. Like his cousin William Wilberforce, Henry was part of the evangelical Clapham Sect and actively supported the abolition of slavery. He is thought to have given between £2,000 and £9,000 a year to charity.

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### **Samuel Thornton (1754-1838)**

Karl Anton Hickel  
© Bank of England  
Appointed Governor on 26 February 1798

Samuel Thornton, Henry's brother, headed up the family businesses in Hull, continuing his father John Thornton's Baltic trade and sugar refinery partnership. He became a director, and later governor, of the Bank of England. MP for Hull in 1784 then Surrey in 1807, he was known as an informed and often influential speaker in the House of Commons on commerce and business. He supported his cousin William Wilberforce's campaign against the slave trade and was involved in numerous philanthropic activities in London.

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### **William Wilberforce (1759-1833)**

Karl Anton Hickel, 1794  
© Wilberforce House Museum/Bridgeman Images  
Appointed Governor on 25 March 1799

In 1733, William's grandfather joined the Thorntons (related to fellow governors Samuel and Henry Thornton) and others to found a sugar house. He left William a substantial legacy of £10,000. After studying at St John's College, Cambridge, he entered politics and was elected MP for Hull in 1780. In 1785, he became an evangelical and member of the Clapham Sect, pledging his life to the service of God. Among many social campaigns, he is most famous for his involvement in the parliamentary campaign for the abolition of the slave trade. The trade officially ended with the passing of the Slave Trade Act in 1807. Afterwards, he continued to work for the abolition of slavery, dying one month before passage of the Slavery Abolition Act in August 1833. It is important to acknowledge that much of his income came from profits in a trade fuelled by the millions of enslaved peoples he wanted to see freed.



### **Thomas Baring (1772-1848)**

George Engleheart, 1803

Courtesy Cleveland Museum of Art

Appointed Governor on 30 March 1803

Son of Harriet and Sir Francis Baring, the founder of the merchant bank, Barings Bank. From 1790 to 1798, he worked for the East India Company. Baring became a partner in Baring Brothers & Co in 1804, but withdrew in 1809. He inherited his father's baronetcy and estates the following year. Later elected MP for High Wycombe and Hampshire.

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### **John Fuller (1757-1834)**

Unknown artist, before 1834

© Royal Institution/Bridgeman Images

Appointed Governor on 27 June 1810

Nephew to Foundling Hospital Governor Rose Fuller, who left him a Sussex estate and two Jamaican plantations. An MP from 1780-1812, he was a staunch supporter of slavery, claiming in one debate that West Indian slaves lived in better conditions than many people in England. Described by a contemporary as 'wild, gay, rich [and] loud', he was also known as 'Mad Jack' Fuller. He generously supported the arts and science.

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### **Sir John Jackson (1763-1820)**

Unknown artist

© The Trustees of the British Museum

Appointed Governor on 26 June 1811

Born in Kingston, Jamaica, to John Jackson, a surgeon from Yorktown, Virginia, and his wife Hannah Coverley. Jackson was an East India merchant, in partnership with John Petty Muspratt, and was a director of the East India Company for several periods after 1807. In 1806, he became MP for Dover until his death.

Sources consulted:

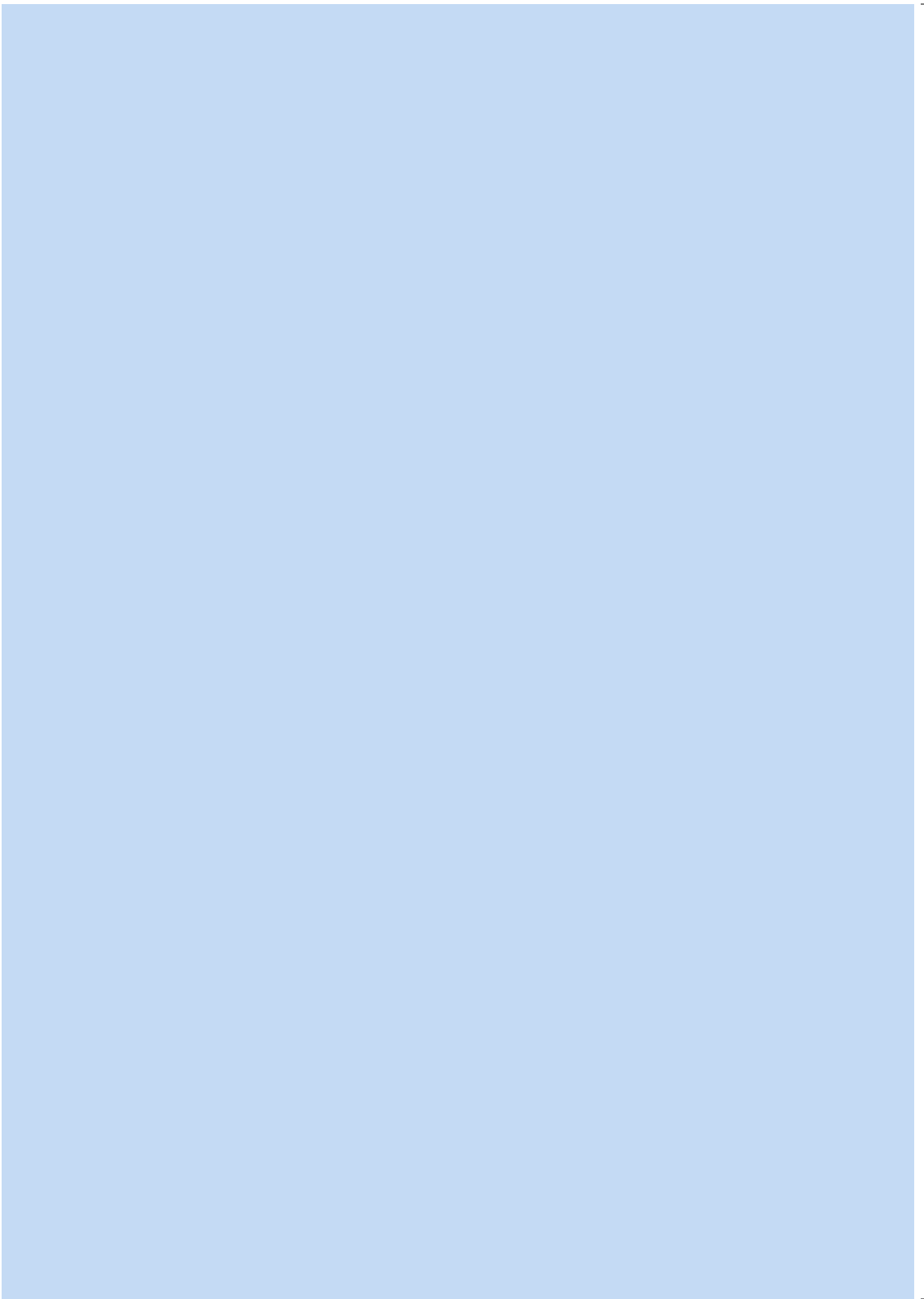
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Legacies of British Slavery database

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography





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