



## ***The History of Refugees in Gloucestershire***

***'Pupils need to know that events in the past are connected to related events at the time and have a legacy, often lasting until today.'***

Mary Myatt (The Curriculum—Gallimaufry to coherence)

***'The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future.'***

Theodore Roosevelt



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# Slavery in Gloucestershire - activity ideas

## ***Activity 1: The history of Slavery (information sheets)***

Get the students to read the information about slavery during the different time periods, highlighting key facts.

Get them to think about

- What is slavery? What does it mean?
- Do we have slavery today?
- How has slavery changed throughout history?
- Are there any key similarities during the different time periods?
- Are there any key differences during the different time periods?

## ***Activity 2: Slavery in Gloucestershire during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century (information sheets)***

Get the students to read the information about slavery in Gloucestershire during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, highlighting key facts.

Get them to think about

- What are some of the key things we can find out about slavery in Gloucestershire?
- What evidence do we have that there was slavery in Gloucestershire?
- What evidence do we have that some people were against slavery in Gloucestershire?

## ***Activity 3: Slavery in Gloucestershire – compare to modern-day ‘rights of a child’ (Historical evidence worksheet)***

Get the students to read the extract from the article written by the Gloucester Journal regarding what happened to some slaves in the West Indies.

Address the key questions of:

- What does this article tell us?
- Do you think the person who wrote this article was for or against slavery?
- Is this article reliable? How do you know?
- How does this article make you feel?
- If you read this article in a newspaper today would it encourage you to take action? (compare to modern-day slavery and use as an opportunity to discuss how we can help stop this happening - <https://www.unseenuk.org/>).

- Look at the Rights of a child and use as a discussion point for modern-day rights as set out by the UN.

***Activity 4: Case Study – George Whitefield (Information sheets)***

Get the students to read the case study about George Whitefield (not the part about his links to slavery).

Get them to think about:

- What do we now know about George Whitefield?
- Do we think he was a good person? Why?

Next, get them to read the information about George Whitefield's links to slavery and talk about whether their opinion about him has changed now that they have read some more information about his links to slavery.

Consider the positive and negatives aspects regarding George Whitefield's links to slavery and try to get the students to think about attitudes and behaviours at different times in history.

Get the children to write a balanced report about George Whitefield and slavery, coming up with their own conclusion on whether they think his opinions about slaves and the fact that he owned slaves was ok.

# The history of slavery in Gloucestershire

Slavery has been going on in the world for as long as we can remember, all the way back to early civilisation.

A slave is a person who is:

- owned or controlled by someone
- treated as something that can be bought and sold
- physically constrained or who has restrictions in place to restrict their freedom of movement
- forced to work through mental or physical threat

Romans:

Slavery played an important role in society and the economy as slaves provided much of the manual labour and also worked as slaves in homes. Some slaves were very skilled and had professions such as accountants. Slaves were considered property under Roman law and had no legal personhood. Most slaves would never be freed. Over time, slaves did gain the right to file complaints against their masters. Any slaves who escaped would be hunted down and returned. History suggests that in many cases poor people would sell their children to rich neighbours in times of hardship.

Anglo-Saxons:

A slave was a person who was the property of another person. They were thought of as objects rather than people and could be bought and sold. Several people in a village could be slaves, they probably lived in small houses and there would have been several slaves in one room. Most slaves worked in the fields looking after crops and animals. They didn't get any wages although more skilled slaves, like craftsmen, might. Saxon owners could do what they liked with their slaves. They were allowed to beat them or even kill them if they wanted to (King Alfred later put a stop to this). In some areas, slaves could claim compensation (money) if they were treated badly. Most slaves in Saxon kingdoms were British, they were usually the families of soldiers killed in battle or peasants from raided villages. Slaves could be freed in an owner's will.

Vikings:

The Vikings kept slaves and would often take slaves back to their countries after raids, from countries including Britain. The punishment for crimes such as murder and theft was slavery too. Slaves were often traded for other products.

### Normans:

According to the Domesday book written at this time in 1086 over 10% of England's population were slaves. In 1102 the Church council of London issued a decree saying "Let no one dare hereafter to engage in the infamous business, prevalent in England, of selling men like animals." The council had no powers and no law was valid unless signed by the King/Queen. According to historian John Gillingham, by about 1200 slavery in the British Isles was non-existent. William the Conqueror clamped down on "that shameful trading whereby heretofore men used in England to be sold like brute beasts."

### Georgians:

The ownership of enslaved Africans was common in Gloucestershire during this time period. In several areas in Gloucestershire including Littledean baptism and burial records have been found using terms such as 'black slave' and 'black negroe'. Records show that in the early 1800s slaves were still arriving into Gloucestershire. In Stroud, records show that on the 7<sup>th</sup> May 1801 William Ellis, son of Qualquay Assedew, 'a Negro of Guinea', aged 12 years, was baptised. Many slaves experienced hardship, some even turning to crime. In March 1849 John Collins, a sailor from Antigua (aged 19) was sentenced to two months of hard labour for larceny. Historical records show details of the lives, achievements and contributions slaves and migrants made to British society by numerous native African people. These achievements and contributions range from politics and medicine to sport and entertainment.

It was not until 1807 that Britain saw the 'Abolition of the Slave Trade Act' which made it illegal to buy and sell slaves in Britain's colonies of Africa, the Caribbean, North America and India. However, it was not until 1833 that slavery was abolished throughout the British Empire. When this happened, immediate freedom was granted to slaves under the age of six. Any other slaves had to serve an apprenticeship of between four and six years.

# Slaves during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

Enslavement during the 18<sup>th</sup> Century was carried out on a previously unknown scale. The transatlantic slave trade enforced the removal of African men, women and children from their homeland to America. The trade flourished with the growing need for labour to work on plantations of tobacco, coffee, cotton and sugar. All major European powers were involved in the slave trade and although Britain did not start the slave trade by the 18<sup>th</sup> century it had come to dominate it.

We find out a lot about the past from documents and images. Gloucestershire parish records from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century contain several references to local people being taken as slaves at this time.

The churchwardens of Mickleton record payments of money made to help a man called John Mansden:

**“his father and brother being in slavery under the Turcke” 1651** (source Gloucester archives).

The transatlantic slave trade affected many aspects of life in Gloucestershire. Many people benefitted from the goods (such as tobacco and sugar) that were readily available and even benefitted financially through trade.

There are known to have been many black people in Gloucestershire during this time period. Some of them would have been brought to England from the West Indies by their owners, probably to act as personal slaves.

Opposition to the slave trade started in London with a few individuals such as Granville Sharp. By the 1790s, the issue was of national concern and many people from Gloucestershire became involved in the argument (both for and against slavery).

The Quakers are a group of people who believe that there is something of God in everybody and that each human being is of unique worth. This is why Quakers value all people equally and oppose anything that may harm or threaten them. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Quakers in Cirencester played an active role in trying to abolish slavery. For example, in 1787 they wrote a letter to Earl Bathurst and their MPs about another petition against the slave trade.

In March 1806 a group of people from Tewkesbury wanted their MP (Christopher Bethel Cordrington) to vote against the African slave trade, calling it a 'national disgrace'. This MP was from a wealthy family who were known to have connections with the slave trade.

The Gloucester Journal wrote a long and descriptive article about the awful things that were happening in the West Indies, published in two parts over a fortnight.

**17 and 24 March 1806: Atrocities in the West Indies- murder of a pregnant female Negro and the torching of a Negro boy. A witness to the murder said 'he (Mr Hall-the murderer) ought to be hanged, for he never saw a more unprovoked, and that he would certainly carry him before a magistrate. Hall's reply is very remarkable "For what? For killing a Negro!!" ...Negroes are regarded by their white-skinned oppressors as an inferior order of beings.' Also makes the comment that it is a strange state of society for murder not to be seen as a felonious act.**

**Entry regarding the boy 'a fire was put to the hole where the boy lay, who, when he began to be torched, ran from his hiding place...two white men fired at the boy several times with shot...pelted with stones...(the men) ordered the Negroes to dig a grave...as soon as the grave was dug he was thrown into it and covered over, and as is believed while yet alive . . . . ' (source Gloucester Archives)**

After the slave trade was abolished in 1807, many people in Gloucester fought to bring an end to slavery itself. The Quakers were really important in this with fundraising and organising petitions. The Anti-Slavery Society was active in trying to educate people through lectures in Dursley, Tetbury and Thornbury.

When slavery was finally abolished in British Colonies by an Act of Parliament in 1833, an important supporter of Anti-Slavery built a commemorative arch at the entrance of his estate in Paganhill, Stroud. The arch was inscribed with "God gave freedom, may glory be given to God". It now forms part of Archway School and features in the school logo.



# Case study George Whitefield (1714 –1770)

George Whitefield was passionate about inspiring people about God in creative ways. He was born in 1714 at the Bell Inn in Southgate Street, Gloucester, just down the road from St Mary de Crypt and went to school at the Crypt School.

When he was young George realised that he loved to act and he was in fact very good at it. When he became a preacher he would often act out bible stories in exciting ways, this contributed to him been known as one of the greatest preachers of all time.

George was very clever and got a place to study at Oxford University. It was very expensive to be at university so he got a job as a 'servitor' (a servant) for the wealthier students. Whilst at Oxford University he became good friends with two brothers called Charles and John Wesley. George, Charles and John worked together to establish Methodism (a Christian denomination).

George was ordained in Gloucester Cathedral and he preached his first sermon in St Mary de Crypt Church on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1736. He adopted the practice of preaching in the open-air and was vital in encouraging John Wesley to do so for the first time. In 1739 he preached on Minchinhampton Common and it is thought that more than 20,000 people came to listen to him.

Throughout his life, he raised funds to establish the Bethesda orphanage - the oldest extant charity in North America.

In an age when crossing the Atlantic Ocean was a long and hazardous journey, he visited America seven times and had a key role in the evangelical revivals known as the Great Awakening of 1740. He preached outdoors nearly every day for months to large crowds as he travelled through the colonies, from New England to Georgia.

It is estimated that throughout his life, he preached more than 18,000 sermons, to perhaps 10 million hearers. He portrayed the lives of biblical characters with a realism no one had seen before. He cried, he danced, he screamed. Among the enthralled was David Garrick, then the most famous actor in Britain. "*I would give a hundred guineas,*" he said, "*if I could say 'Oh' like Mr Whitefield.*"

# George Whitefield and Slavery

Whitefield lived in a time when many landowners in the American colonies, and elsewhere in the British Empire, kept slaves. He was shocked at how badly the slaves were treated. He told the landowners that they should educate their slaves and treat them well. He preached to slaves and told them that they were loved by God and could be saved, just like every other human being. Many slaves became Christian after hearing Whitefield preach.

However, Whitefield did not speak out against slavery. In fact, he owned slaves of his own at the orphanage he set up in Georgia. He campaigned successfully to make slavery legal in Georgia because he believed that it was not possible to run big farms without slave labour. When he died, he left fifty slaves in his will, along with his property, to his patroness, the Countess of Huntingdon.

About ten years after Whitefield's death, William Wilberforce started a campaign to abolish the slave trade. It was finally successful in 1807, though slavery itself was not abolished in the British Empire until 1833. Slavery continued in America until 1865 when the slave-owning Confederates in the South lost the American Civil War.

Slavery still exists in different forms around the world today.

# Slavery today

The first laws to abolish slavery were in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it has also been outlawed in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

1948 – Universal declaration of human rights

1956 – United Nations convention.

Although slavery has been abolished in almost all countries the reality is that it still happens today. In 2007, at least 12 million people were living in slavery (UN International Labour Organisation).

Modern day slavery affects men, women and children of all races. It includes:

- Slavery enforced because of your ethnic group
- Forced labour – a person offers work in exchange for a loan but loses control over their conditions of work and the amount they get paid. Their original debt often gets increased and can be passed on to family members to pay
- People can end up in all kinds of jobs where they are enslaved and this includes forced labour, domestic servants, drug production and selling and farm work
- Child labour
- People trafficking
- Migrant workers

GARAS has worked with men and women and children who have been in these situations in this country.

Several years ago the police did a raid on a cannabis farm and found a young person who had been left there. He was very scared and didn't know who he could trust. Eventually he was helped by social services.

Another time a woman came for help at GARAS, she had been brought to the UK on a false story and when she arrived she was taken straight to a big house where she was made to be their servant. She couldn't leave and they kept her passport. She only got out when the family had to suddenly leave the country and couldn't take her with them.

## Historical evidence

The Gloucester Journal wrote a long and descriptive article about the awful things that were happening in the West Indies, published in two parts over a fortnight.

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### **Think about:**

What does this article tell us?

Do you think the person who wrote this article for or against slavery?

Is this article reliable? How do you know?

How does this article make you feel?

### **Further information/Useful websites:**

The following links provide additional information, lessons plans, images, documents etc. Please be aware it is the responsibility of the person using these links to check that the content is appropriate for their students and GARAS will not be held responsible for any content that is deemed unsuitable.

- Historic England - Case studies, lesson plans, teaching resources, images, documents etc.: <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/education/heritage-schools/>
- A History of the County of Gloucester: Volume 4, the City of Gloucester (detailed information, images, maps):  
<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol4>
- Gloucester Archives – Case studies, lesson plans, teaching resources, images, documents etc.:  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/>
- Gloucester Civic Trust – information, videos etc.  
<https://www.gloucestercivictrust.org/>
- BBC – Slavery in Gloucester:  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire/content/articles/2007/02/19/slavery\\_gloucs\\_feature.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire/content/articles/2007/02/19/slavery_gloucs_feature.shtml)
- BBC – Slavery in Gloucester:  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire/untold\\_stories/african/slavery.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire/untold_stories/african/slavery.shtml)
- Gloucestershire Live: Slavery in Gloucester:  
<https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/cheltenham-news/hundreds-people-gloucestershire-benefited-slave-4211358>
- Cotswold Archaeology – Excavating Roman Gloucester  
<https://cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/community/discover-the-past/archaeology-in-your-area/gloscat/>
- Gloucestershire Archaeology – Information, research, projects:  
<https://www.glosarch.org.uk/index.html>
- Know your place – interactive maps over various time periods (including overlay option)  
<http://www.kypwest.org.uk/tag/gloucestershire/>
- Ben Uri Collection - Teaching resources and lessons plans that explore themes of identity and portraiture  
<https://benuri.org/schoolsandfamilies/>