

University of
St Andrews

The University of St Andrews and the Legacies of Empire, 1700-1900

Project Report
March 2025

Executive Summary

In 2021, the Principal of the University of St Andrews commissioned a research project to investigate the ways in which the University has benefitted from, participated in, or supported, British colonialism and imperialism. The initial stimulus came from the widespread public interest in the links between British institutions and the historic Atlantic trade in enslaved persons, but the St Andrews investigation was purposefully framed to incorporate a broader perspective on transnational connections in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We sought to deepen institutional understanding, and to prompt debate about the way a modern, forward-looking institution should best respond to and reflect on these historical certainties.

We began this research project with no doubt that the University of St Andrews would prove to have benefitted from British colonialism and imperial expansion, and that these 'legacies' would have continued to help shape the institution today. The questions for us were what the nature of the links at St Andrews would turn out to be, and what chronological, geographical or other patterns we might discover

Over two years of research, this project has investigated the legacies that colonialism, empire, trade and slavery have left to the University of St Andrews, both as institution and as a community of students and staff. As well as monies received, it has investigated the personal or family connections of members of the University community. It has sought to explore how members of our community had contributed to debates about enslavement and race, or about colonialism and empire; and to discover how British colonialism shaped the culture and community of our University.

This report explains what our investigation of University people and University money has revealed about the connections between those people or funds and colonial or imperial activity (including participation in systems of unfree labour) between 1700 and 1900.

Our key findings are:

- There were people closely associated with St Andrews who were involved in expanding British colonial power overseas, and many former students of St Andrews participated in the imposition of British power on distant parts of the world, most often under the auspices of the East India Company.
- The University has derived long-term benefits from gifts and benefactions from donors associated with the ownership of or trade in enslaved people. Most prominent is the donation from James Brydges, duke of Chandos and a director of the slave-trading Royal African Company in the early 1720s. Senior figures in the eighteenth-century University had close family connections to enslavement, including principal Thomas Tullideph and principal George Hill. The University continued to receive benefactions from individuals whose business interests depended on enslaved or unfree labour (including the Guthrie brothers, George Clerk Cheape and David Baxter) until well into the late nineteenth century.
- The University has derived long-term benefits from gifts and benefactions from donors whose wealth was accrued from living and working in (or trading with) areas under British political and commercial influence. Around 10% of the modern University endowment derives from the gifts made by such donors, 1700-1900. Numerically, these gifts were most commonly associated with service to the East India Company. In terms of value, Australia was most significant, due to two late nineteenth-century donations from William Russell and (especially) David Berry, both of whom are associated with the displacement of Indigenous peoples.

- Around 16% of the students educated or examined at St Andrews in this period engaged in professions or occupations that took them overseas, as ministers, doctors, educators and colonial administrators, most often in the service of the East India Company. The University also educated students who emigrated to Australia, Canada and the USA. Overseas alumni were an important source of donations of natural history specimens, ethnographic objects, and 'oriental' manuscripts to the joint University and Literary & Philosophical Society museum in the mid- and late nineteenth century.
- Few individuals at St Andrews appear to have been publicly contributing to the scholarly debates about slavery or race. In terms of participation in public campaigns for abolition, there is some evidence of indifference (at best) towards efforts to abolish the slave trade in the early 1790s. By the late 1820s, attitudes had changed in St Andrews, as in the rest of Britain, and Thomas Chalmers was able to persuade his colleagues to petition parliament for the abolition of slavery in 1826. By the 1860s, students and staff were treating chattel slavery as a clear moral evil whose abolition (e.g. in the US) was obviously desirable.
- Many of the nineteenth-century professors had close family members in British India and elsewhere, but very few of our academic community between 1700 and 1900 had any personal experience of life beyond Europe, or of meeting people from other cultures or ethnicities.
- Just under 3% of students at St Andrews in this period had been born overseas. Almost all of these overseas-born students were from European (usually Scottish) families. In the late eighteenth century, this group included some students born in the British Atlantic world. From the early nineteenth century, there was a steady stream of students who had been born in British India, and by the second half of the nineteenth century, there were also some from Australia and Canada. After 1850, we have found evidence of some students with Indian and mixed racial ancestry coming briefly to St Andrews to be examined for M.D. degrees, as well as one student of Yoruba ancestry (West Africa).

Cite as: Aileen Fyfe, with Isabel Robinson, Tomas Vancisin, Sarah Leith and Matthew W. Ylitalo, 'The University of St Andrews and the Legacies of Empire, 1700-1900' (St Andrews, 2025), <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14975043>

Project website: <https://legacies-of-empire.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Table of Contents.....	4
1. Introduction.....	6
1.1. Why this remit?.....	6
1.2. Definitions.....	7
1.3. Project history and personnel	9
1.4. Supporting evidence and stories	10
2. The university, the town and the local economy	11
2.1. The Town	11
2.2. Transnational Connections.....	12
2.3. The University.....	13
3. Where did the University's money come from?	15
3.1. Gifts to the University	16
3.2. Donors to the University.....	17
3.3. Donors with connections to colonialism and empire.....	17
3.4. Donors whose wealth derived from enslavement	18
3.5. Donors whose wealth derived from activities in/with the colonies	24
3.6. Group donors.....	31
3.7. Looking beyond the donors.....	32
3.8. Where the money was invested.....	33
3.9. Where the money is now.....	35
4. The Academic Community: Professors, Principals and Chancellors.....	36
4.1. General features of the professoriate.....	36
4.2. Personal involvement in enslavement	37
4.3. Family involvement in enslavement.....	37
4.4. Personal experience of colonialism or empire.....	40
4.5. Family connections to colonialism and empire	41
4.6. Chancellors	44
5. Ideas & Inquiry	47
5.1. The university and abolitionism	47
5.2. The intellectual underpinning of colonialism and empire.....	50
5.3. Curriculum and student Life.....	52
5.4. Overseas missionary efforts	54

6.	Collections.....	56
6.1.	The 'Curiosities'	56
6.2.	The Literary and Philosophical Society collections.....	58
6.3.	Ancestral remains.....	61
6.4.	'Oriental' Manuscripts and Art	63
6.5.	Memorialisation of Donors and Professors.....	64
7.	Students and Alumni.....	66
7.1.	Source data.....	66
7.2.	St Andrews students, 1700-1897	67
7.3.	Students' Birth Locations.....	68
7.4.	Alumni who had careers overseas	78
8.	The legacies of empire	83
8.1.	Engagement in the expansion and administration of British colonialism	83
8.2.	Associations with, and long-term benefit from, ownership of or trade in enslaved people 83	
8.3.	Long-term benefits from British colonialism and empire.....	84
8.4.	Role in abolitionist and anti-abolitionist movements, and in the intellectual work underpinning of racism	85
8.5.	Role in the intellectual work underpinning or undermining colonialism and empire	86
8.6.	Diverse experiences in the St Andrews community	86
8.7.	Why does it matter?.....	86

1. Introduction

Families, businesses and institutions in Fife and Tayside were just as much part of the transnational networks of British commerce and industry as those elsewhere in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain. St Andrews itself did not experience the commercial expansion of some Atlantic-facing ports in the eighteenth century, nor the industrially-driven expansion of certain nineteenth-century cities, but there is no question of its long-standing connections with, and benefits from, British colonialism and imperial expansion.

We therefore began this project with no doubt that the University of St Andrews would prove to have a wide range of transnational connections in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and that colonialism, empire, trade and slavery would have left legacies to the institution and its community that continue to shape it today. The questions for us were what the nature of the links at St Andrews would turn out to be, and what chronological, geographical or other patterns we might discover.

This project was conceived against the backdrop of investigations carried out by other universities and institutions in the UK, in the light of growing public interest in the links between such institutions and the historic Atlantic trade in enslaved persons. Glasgow was the first UK university to publish such a report (2018); it has been followed by the University of Cambridge (2022), Trinity College Dublin (2022), the University of Dundee (2022), the University of Bristol (2022), the University of Aberdeen (2024) and several of the individual colleges at Oxford and Cambridge.

Each institution frames its own investigation in its own way: early examples focused tightly on enslavement and on financial benefit; more recent examples have tended to take a wider definition of 'legacy', and to include a wider variety of colonial and imperial activities. The key features of our own project are:

- Our time frame is 1700 to 1900.
- We are looking at the University's connections to British colonialism and empire, beyond Europe.
- We are investigating cultural, intellectual, and socio-political connections, as well as money.
- We have not included staff, students or donors associated with University College Dundee.

This is not a report about the history of British colonialism and imperialism, but about the University of St Andrews's involvement in, connections to, and benefits from that enterprise. There are extensive scholarly literatures on the history and impact of, among other things, international trade, the relationships between missionary activity and politics, technological transfer, nationalist and independence movements, the practices of collecting cultural and natural artefacts, as well as the horrific human cost of chattel slavery, indentured labour systems and forced relocation. Those readers who would like to learn more about these topics will find some suggested starting points on the project website.

1.1. *Why this remit?*

The first UK investigations followed a model established in the US, and focused on the legacies of racial slavery in the Atlantic world, with a particular focus on money. Given the different histories of Britain and the US in the nineteenth century – notably, the expansion of British colonial activity eastwards – we believe it is essential to take a wider remit chronologically, geographically and in terms of how we might define a 'legacy'.

The UK parliament passed legislation to abolish the slave trade in 1807, and slavery itself in 1833. However, historians have demonstrated that the legacy of money made by participation in the slave

economies (or received in government 'compensation' in the 1830s) can stretch to the end of the nineteenth century (at least) through inheritance and investment. Moreover, recent studies have also noted that British individuals and firms continued to engage with slave economies elsewhere in the world (especially in the US and Brazil) after the 1830s. Nor did the end of chattel slavery mark the end of enforced or exploitative labour practices in the British dominions. For instance, some of the sugar economies in the Caribbean and Mauritius came to rely on the bound labour of indentured workers from India and China; while the European settlement of Australia was facilitated by the use of convict labour.

We are also conscious that British colonialism was responsible for other forms of exploitation of the peoples, cultures and natural resources of other parts of the world. The harm done to the peoples of the Indian subcontinent by the ruthless search for profits by the government-backed East India Company, and later by the imposition of British rule, is now widely recognised. Campaigns to recognise Indigenous land rights have acknowledged the violence done to Indigenous peoples and their lands in Australia, Canada and the US. Recent decisions to return cultural artefacts, such as bronze sculptures looted by British military forces during the destruction of Benin City (in modern-day Nigeria) in 1897, have drawn attention to the circumstances behind the acquisition of some artefacts now in British collections. We decided at an early stage that our project should have a wider remit than the Caribbean and Atlantic world; and this decision was confirmed by preliminary research that demonstrated that it would be difficult to explain the complex global connections of some of the people involved with our University if we tried to treat the Atlantic world in isolation from the rest of the British colonial world.

We also decided early on that we would consider social and intellectual legacies, as well as financial contributions. Attempting to estimate the financial benefit to the University of participation in the slave trade, the exploitation of enslaved labour, or participation in colonialism more generally, would generate a purely economic understanding of the 'legacy' of enslavement and empire. Money certainly matters to a university, but a university is also a community of people engaged in teaching, learning and scholarship. We wanted to explore whether members of our community had contributed to debates about enslavement or race, or colonialism and empire, and what they had to say on these topics. We also wanted to investigate how colonialism might have shaped the intellectual and social community of our University, or set the tone for the sort of community St Andrews then was.

Our major areas of investigation have focused on those who donated funds to the University between 1700 and 1900 (section 3), on the senior staff and officers of the University in the same period (sections 4 and 5), and on the students and alumni (section 7).

Thanks to the work of staff and students working in/with the Museums team, we have also been able to include some illustrative case studies of the colonial connections that can found in parts of the University collections (section 6).

1.2. Definitions

1.2.1. Chronology

The decision to focus on 1700 to 1900 was made at an early stage in the project, and reflects the availability of University records: the minutes of the Senatus Academicus exist from 1697 onwards, while the coverage of the Biographical Register (the digitised record of St Andrews' students and staff) extends only to 1897. This period includes the growth and abolition of the Atlantic slave trade and the growth of the British empire; but we are aware that it ignores the period up to decolonisation in the mid-twentieth century. Our research to date indicates that there would be much of interest in the early twentieth-century story (including major donations, and the arrival of more students from India and

the Dominions), and **it is to be hoped that future research will look more closely at the University's connections to empire up to c.1950.**

1.2.2. Geography

We began this project by looking broadly for any connections between the University of St Andrews and parts of the world **beyond Europe**. We then focused on the University's connections to regions of the world affected by **British** colonial and imperial activity. We recognise that people connected to St Andrews could also have lived in, worked in or traded with places under the influence of other European powers – but that will have to be a topic for future investigation.

We have focused on areas which **were, had been, or would be British colonies**, and have kept them in focus for the entire period, regardless of changes in status. Thus, we have investigated connections to the new USA as well as to the thirteen colonies; and we have examined India in the period of East India Company rule, as well as when it came under Crown control after 1857. Areas of Africa that would later come under British rule have also been included for the entire period.

Many of the towns and localities mentioned in this Report were known to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britons by names different from those used by the local inhabitants, and/or from the names we use now. When we discuss the activities of historical actors, we follow historical practice by using the terms that would have been familiar to our actors.

We recognise that there are undoubtedly other parts of the world that experienced British political and/or commercial influence (especially in the nineteenth century). However, given the scant evidence we have so far found, we decided that connections to South and Central America, the Middle East, and China and Japan would not be a formal focus of this Report.

Our focus on connections beyond Europe means that we have also excluded **Ireland** from our discussion of empire, even though numerous Irish commentators in the late eighteenth century saw the treatment of Ireland as similar to the treatment of Bengal, and even though the Great Famine of the 1840s was frequently seen as a consequence of Ireland's long-time status as a colony.

1.2.3. 'Empire'

This report is concerned with St Andrews's historic involvement with, and benefits from, the imposition of unequal power relations by British people on peoples from other parts of the world, including the exploitation of people of African, Indian, Indigenous Australian and Canadian First Nations ancestry by Europeans. Our scope ranges from the Atlantic trade that provided enslaved Africans to labour in British colonies in the Caribbean and North America; to the profiteering of the East India Company; to the expansion of settler colonies in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Victoria, New South Wales and New Zealand; and to all the British-based commercial, mercantile and industrial enterprises that profited from the raw materials, manufactured goods or consumer markets in these places. In the title of this report, **we have for convenience shortened all of those activities to 'empire'.**

We are nonetheless acutely conscious that this shorthand runs the risk of disguising the variety of different interactions between Britons and peoples from other parts of the world, or of implying an equivalence between all of these activities that we do not intend.

We are also aware that people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries regarded these activities differently from each other, and often differently from the way we see them now. For instance, chattel slavery and the treating of individuals as property was recognised as abhorrent by many in eighteenth-century Britain, and by almost all in nineteenth-century Britain. But, while there were contemporary critics of the system of indentured labourers (usually Indians) that replaced enslaved labour in Mauritius and the Caribbean, it continued to be used until after 1900.

Some readers may be surprised that we have identified very little evidence of critiques of British empire or colonialism in St Andrews during the period covered by this report. However, for many Britons in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when turbulence, wars and crises made the future of the British state uncertain, empire seemed to be vital to national survival. It was seen as creating extensive commercial markets that could generate the revenues necessary for self-defence at a time of warfare. Many argued that empire had enabled British victories over absolutist France in the eighteenth century, and that it explained the ultimate defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte in his attempt to turn mainland Europe into a universal monarchy. 'Empire' was portrayed as a source of protection for British 'liberty'. It also seemed to be a source of 'natural' opportunities for British individuals and organisations, whose activities could be justified as a contribution to national flourishing, due to the recognised benefits that were flowing to Britain from the Empire. This means that, in contrast to the use of enslaved labour, participating in what was termed 'Colonial Service' did not carry a moral stigma in the nineteenth century. There were critics of the way in which Britain managed particular colonies, but not usually of the concept of empire itself. It is possible that extending this project beyond 1900 might have revealed more evidence of St Andrews scholars or students critiquing empire.

1.2.4. St Andrews, but not University College, Dundee

University College, Dundee was founded in 1881, and opened in 1883. In the 1890s, it was effectively a third college of the University of St Andrews, though its precise relationship with St Andrews was contested and rearranged several times until the formation of the independent University of Dundee in 1967. The University of Dundee has already begun its own exploration of its links to enslavement, and published a report on its founding donors in 2022.¹ We have not repeated this work; and for consistency, we do not include here donors in the 1890s whose gifts may have been formally given to the University of St Andrews but were explicitly intended to benefit University College Dundee; nor the professors or principals of University College. The section on students may include some Dundee-based students, because it was not straightforward to exclude them.

1.2.5. The value of money

There are several methods of evaluating the modern equivalent 'worth' of historical monetary values. We have tried to give readers a sense of the historical values by providing comparisons to, for instance, professorial salaries. We do sometimes calculate modern equivalents (e.g. in tables 3.2.1 and 3.3.1) in order to enable readers to gauge the relative values of gifts given at different points in time. When we do this, we have used the calculation tool developed by academic historians and economists at *MeasuringWorth.com*, which offers three different ways of calculating 'worths' for any historic sum. We have cited the 'relative price worth' (based on 'average prices'). This is usually the lowest estimated value, so it enables us to say that gifts to the University were certainly worth *at least* that much – but arguments could be made for putting the modern equivalents at ten-times or even twenty-times those shown here.

1.3. Project history and personnel

The Principal's Office commissioned this research project in summer 2021, and the research began in September 2021.

Oversight and academic supervision was provided by Professor Aileen Fyfe (School of History), Professor Katie Stevenson (Principal's Office, 2021-22) and Professor Lorna Milne (Principal's Office, 2022-23).

¹ Cassandra Gupta and Graham Fagan, 'University of Dundee Founders Project: Final Report,' (Dundee: University of Dundee, 2022).

The project was supported by a steering group of colleagues from across the University: Dr Andrew Edwards, Professor Richard Whatmore and Dr Akhila Yechury (School of History); Professor Emma Bond and Professor Julia Prest (School of Modern Languages); Professor Mark Harris (to 2022, Anthropology); Professor Tobias Jung (Management); and Rachel Hart, Dr Katie Eagleton (2021-22) and Dr Jessica Burdge (2022-23) of the Libraries and Museums team. We also benefitted from the sage advice of former colleague, Professor Emma Hart, now of the University of Pennsylvania.

Archival research (especially into donors) was undertaken by Dr Isabel Robinson (Research Fellow in Modern History, September 2021-December 2022). Additional research and research support was provided by Clara Tipper and Emma Hilary Gould (undergraduate StARIS interns, summer 2022, working on the professors); Dr Sarah Leith and Dr Matthew Ylitalo (research assistants, summer 2023, analysing and collating Dr Robinson's research on donors); and Tomas Vancisin (postgraduate research assistant, summer 2023, analysing data on students). Coordination and analysis of this research was undertaken by Professor Aileen Fyfe, who also drafted this Report.

We are deeply grateful to all those who have shared research and reports that had been undertaken independently of this project; and permitted material from them to be included in this Report. This includes internal University reports (e.g. on collections, on the Berry bequest) and the PhD research of Tomas Vancisin (School of Computer Science, 2023) and Conall Treen (School of History, submitted 2024).

1.4. Supporting evidence and stories

On our project website (<https://legacies-of-empire.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>), interested readers will find:

- A dozen essays exploring the stories of selected individuals (or small groups) whose lives illustrate the variety of ways in which St Andrews was entangled with British colonial and imperial activities. (These people all feature in this Report, but more briefly.)
- Biographical summaries of all donors to the University of St Andrews 1700-1900 (whether there is evidence of connections to empire or not); summaries of the uses to which their money was put (i.e. the 'funds'); and spreadsheets listing all donors and funds.
- The internal working papers from earlier stages of this research (with fuller details of methods and limitation). There are working papers from our audits of donors; professors and principals; chancellors; and students.
- Links to resources to support further research, including the *Biographical Register of the University of St Andrews, 1579-1897*; and newly-digitised archival resources such as the minutes of the University Senate from 1697 onwards.

2. The university, the town and the local economy

To understand the ways in which St Andrews was connected to colonialism, enslavement and empire, it is important to understand the nature of the town and the university in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The key themes are the small size of the town and University; the sense of decline from past glories over the period under investigation (for both town and University); and the impact of repeated royal/governmental interventions on the University (and Scottish and British universities more generally).

2.1. The Town

In mediaeval times, St Andrews had been far more important than its size would suggest, with the presence of the cathedral and its archbishop generating significant episcopal (and pilgrimage) activity in what was otherwise a small coastal town. After the Reformation, however – and even more so after the end of episcopacy in Scotland in 1690 – the role of St Andrews in the affairs of Scottish church and state declined.

The local economy had traditionally depended on fishing and agriculture, with some maritime trade along the east coast and across the North Sea to the Netherlands or into the Baltic. The 1707 Union of Scotland with England opened up new overland trade routes to the south, and gave Scots access to the English colonies in North America and the Caribbean, to the benefit of ports on the west coast. St Andrews was not well-connected by land, and its port sank into decline. In 1728, a visitor noted ‘the decay of trade’ and feared that, if something was not done soon, ‘nothing can save from ruin and desolation that ancient and once flourishing city, the metropolitan of Scotland and seat of the first University.’² Some fishing continued, but by the 1790s, grain was said to be the only export from St Andrews and its hinterland.³ A French visitor in 1799 found the town so quiet that it appeared ‘as if ravaged by the pestilence.’⁴

St Andrews did not experience the sort of industrialisation and urban growth seen in other British towns in the nineteenth century, though the town did host various craftspeople, including masons, carpenters, smiths, weavers and shoemakers.⁵ In the 1820s, only a dozen or so vessels were using the harbour, and the local manufactures consisted ‘principally of the weaving of coarse Linen, Osnaburghs, and Sail Cloth.’⁶ By the 1890s, though, the only industry was said to be ‘a small iron and brass foundry and the workshops of several makers of golf clubs and balls.’⁷ This was in sharp contrast to industrialising, expanding Dundee.

The population of St Andrews had been around 4,000 for most of the eighteenth century, and it grew to around 7,000 by 1900.⁸ The Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee Railway connected nearby Leuchars to Edinburgh in 1848, and a branch line to St Andrews opened in 1852. The onward connection to Dundee was by ferry until the Tay Bridge opened: the first, ill-fated bridge operated in 1878-79, but it

² William Douglas, *Some Historical Remarks on the City of St. Andrews in North-Britain...* (London: 1728), pp.19, 27. [thanks to R. Whatmore]

³ John Sinclair, ed. *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, 21 vols. (Edinburgh, 1791-99), vol. 13, p.192. See https://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk:443/link/osa-vol13-p208-parish-fife-st_andrews_and_st_leonards

⁴ Barthélemy Faujas de Saint-Fond, *Travels in England, Scotland, and the Hebrides* (1799), vol. 2, p.205. [thanks to R. Whatmore]

⁵ Sinclair, *Old Statistical Account*, vol. 13, p.207 (list of craftsmen)

⁶ John Wood, *Descriptive account of the principal towns in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1828), pp.324-5.

⁷ Alexander H. Millar, *Fife: Pictorial and Historical; its people, burghs, castles and mansions*, 2 vols. (Cupar, 1895), vol. 1, p.272.

⁸ Sinclair, *Old Statistical Account* vol. 13, p.203 (figures for 1755, and for 1794); and Millar, *Fife: pictorial & historical*, vol. 1, p.272 (for growth in the nineteenth century).

was not until the opening of the new bridge in 1887 that rail access between St Andrews and Dundee became easy enough for commuters, students or professors.

2.2. Transnational Connections

Despite this picture of a small town in economic decline, families and businesses in St Andrews and Fife (as well as Tayside) were just as connected to the transnational networks of British commerce and industry as those elsewhere in Britain.

Fife and Forfarshire were important areas of linen production in the eighteenth century, processing raw flax imported from the Baltic and Rotterdam. As well as white table linens, linen manufacturers in east-central Scotland produced coarse textile known as 'osnaburg' that was exported to the plantations in the Caribbean and the Chesapeake to be used as clothing for the enslaved population. From the mid-nineteenth century, Dundee textile manufacturers switched to jute, imported from Bengal and re-exported as sacks and bags that were used around the globe.⁹

Many Fife and St Andrews families had more direct links to the Caribbean economies through family members who owned or managed plantations, or who found work as doctors or ministers in the colonies. For instance, John Whyte-Melville (1797-1883) inherited estates in Dominica from a cousin, and in 1835, he received government 'compensation' when the 131 enslaved workers were freed.¹⁰

People, as well as money, moved between the Caribbean and Fife. For instance, when Dr David Dalrymple returned to Fife in 1768, he was accompanied by Manasela Embenka, an enslaved servant he had 'purchased' in Grenada. The following year, Embenka was baptised by Harry Spens, the minister of Wemyss Church (and later professor at the University), and declared his freedom under his new name of David Spens. This led to one of the key legal cases in Scots law regarding slavery.¹¹ In 1852, Petronella Hendrick (1829-1917) arrived in Burntisland from the Dutch colony of Surinam. Hendrick had been born into slavery (which was still legal in the Dutch colonies) and worked as a nurse to the children of Robert Kirke. He was obliged to arrange her freedom so she could accompany the Kirke family back to Fife, and she lived in Burntisland for the rest of her life.¹²

As well as the Caribbean, many Fife and St Andrews families had links to the East India Company. Early nineteenth-century St Andrews was said to be 'a favourite place of residence for retired officers of the army and navy, and for a class not less important, retired East Indian officials', and there were many families who had brothers or sons in active East India Company service.¹³ Some families, such as the Playfair family of St Andrews and the Low family of Clatto (Fife), had India connections running through multiple generations, and numerous University professors – including George Hill and David Brewster – had sons in India.

⁹ Sally Tuckett and Christopher A. Whatley Whatley, 'Textiles in Transition: Linen, Jute and the Dundee Region's Transnational Networks, c.1740–1880,' in *Scotland's Transnational Heritage: Legacies of Empire and Slavery*, ed. Emma Bond (Edinburgh, 2022).

¹⁰ Whyte Melville's 'compensation' claim is here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/10300>. See also Julia Prest 'The history of slavery is a local - as well as a global - issue', *Runnymede Trust* blog (13 Nov. 2018), <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/blog/the-history-of-slavery-is-a-local-as-well-as-a-global-issue>

¹¹ On the legal case, see <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/learning/slavery/dalrymple-v-spens-and-henderson-1769-70>. On Embenka/Spens, see The Spence Project, 'St Andrews, Fife, and Scottish links to Slavery', *School of History* blog (27 Oct. 2020), <https://standrewsschoolofhistory.wordpress.com/2020/10/27/the-bubble-st-andrews-fife-and-scottish-links-to-slavery/>

¹² <https://burntisland.net/hendrick-petronella.htm>

¹³ Wemyss Reid, *Memoirs and Correspondence of Lyon Playfair* (London, 1899), pp. 1–2, quoted in Luke Gartlan, 'Inventing Provinciality: St Andrews and the Global Networks of Early Victorian Photography,' *British Art Studies*, no. 23 (2022).

2.3. The University

The history of the University of St Andrews in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has to be seen against the wider history of the Scottish (and British) universities in this period.¹⁴ All universities were affected by the changing winds of political oversight. In the early eighteenth century, this oversight was largely concerned with religious and political orthodoxy. The Commissions of Visitation in 1690 and 1718 investigated loyalty to the Protestant Hanoverian succession, as well as teaching, discipline and finances. Despite some evidence of Jacobite tendencies, St Andrews found the 1718 visitation less traumatic than its predecessor, when the commissioners had dismissed almost all the masters.

In the nineteenth century, a new government attention to education in general, and to scientific and technical training in particular, drove a new round of Royal Commissions focused this time on educational reforms rather than religious or political loyalties. The University of St Andrews was visited by government commissioners in 1826, 1840, and 1876. The reports of the commissioners led to legislation – the Universities (Scotland) Acts of 1858 and 1889 – that reshaped the governance, curriculum and gender balance of all the Scottish universities, including St Andrews.¹⁵

In addition, and specific to St Andrews, there were ongoing worries about the small size of the institution, and thus its financial viability and intellectual vibrancy.

Until the early-nineteenth century, the colleges were far more important in the lives of the students of St Andrews than was the University, for it was in the colleges that the students lived, studied and slept. The main function of the University was the examination of students and the awarding of degrees, but most students came for a few years of education rather than the degree certificate. In 1700, there had been three colleges, those of St Salvator (1450), St Leonard (1512) and St Mary (1538). In 1747, St Salvator's College and St Leonard's College merged into the United College.

The colleges were also more substantial corporate entities than the University, owning more property and employing more people. In 1826, for instance, the income of the University was less than £300pa, most of which was spent on the University Library.¹⁶ In contrast, St Mary's College had an annual income of around £1,000pa, and the United College of around £3,000pa.¹⁷

The United College provided its students with a traditional education in Arts, including Latin, Greek, moral philosophy and natural philosophy, as its predecessors had done. After the 1747 merger, it had eight professors and a principal. But compared to the universities in the bustling cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, where new chairs were being created and there was a sense of new contributions being made, St Andrews was a philosophical backwater.

St Mary's College offered training in divinity, Hebrew and ecclesiastical history, usually for young men who had already completed a philosophical education and were considering entering the ministry of the Church of Scotland. It had four professors, the most senior of whom was also principal of the college.

The academic community of St Andrews was thus small by modern standards. In 1747, it comprised just 13 professors (though there were also some informal 'assistants').

¹⁴ The standard accounts of the history of the University are Ronald G. Cant, *The University of St Andrews: a short history* (St Andrews, 1992) and Norman H. Reid, *Ever to Excel: An Illustrated History of the University of St Andrews* (Edinburgh, 2011).

¹⁵ Cant, *University of St Andrews*, Part III.

¹⁶ Royal Com. on State of Universities of Scotland, 1826. *Report* (1831), p.391

¹⁷ Royal Com. on State of Universities of Scotland, 1826. *Report* (1831), p.392 (United) and p.395 (St Mary's)

There had apparently been about 300 students at St Andrews before the Hanoverian succession, but this had fallen to about 150 students by the 1720s due in part to concerns about political and religious orthodoxy, but mostly to competition from Edinburgh (the most recently-founded of the Scottish universities, but already the most popular with students).¹⁸ Numbers seem to have changed little over the course of the eighteenth century: by 1794, there were 100 students at 'the philosophy college' and 48 at 'the divinity college'.¹⁹ The students at this time were all male, and they were young: it was common to matriculate at the philosophy colleges around the age of 13-14 years.

By the early nineteenth century, the significance of the colleges was starting to wane. It was less common for students to reside in college, and the professors also preferred to live in their own houses, with their families (and perhaps take in students as paying boarders). The 1858 Act confirmed the change in the balance of power: a newly-created University Court was given financial and administrative control which meant, for instance, that the professors were now employed by the University (not the colleges). By 1863, the University of St Andrews had an annual income of about £800, generated by fees and income from an endowment of just over £15,000 (equivalent to at least £1.5m in today's terms); it also received funding from the government for academic salaries.²⁰

St Andrews still struggled with being small: by the 1870s, numbers had fallen back to just 130 students (at a time when Edinburgh had over 2,300 students, and Aberdeen had almost 700 students), and there were suggestions that St Andrews ought to be suppressed.²¹ These numbers refer to students who were physically studying in St Andrews and matriculated at one of the colleges (though they may or may not have taken a degree). There were other groups of 'students' associated with St Andrews, however: those who wished to gain medical (M.D.) degrees, and women studying for the Lady Literate in Arts (L.L.A.) qualification after 1877.²² These 'students' did not study in person at St Andrews, but they were examined and accredited by St Andrews, and were an important source of fee income.

St Mary's College still focused on the teaching of divinity, but the range of subjects offered by the United College significantly expanded. New professorships in Chemistry and Education had already been created, but the decade of reforms that followed the 1889 Act included a new range of Arts subjects (including History, English Literature and Modern Languages) as well as the creation of an entirely new Faculty of Science (with such subjects as Chemistry and Zoology). A 'conjoint' St Andrews-Dundee Medical School was established in 1898. The 1889 Act also enabled the admission of women as students for degrees. Students now tended to be a few years older than in previous centuries, arriving at university after completing a programme of secondary schooling.

The combined effect of the admission of women and the new college in Dundee increased student numbers at the University of St Andrews to just over 400 in the academic year 1899-1900.²³

¹⁸ Cant, *University of St Andrews*, p.99-100.

¹⁹ Sinclair, *Old Statistical Account*, vol. 13, p.208.

²⁰ *Reports from the Commissioners...* (1863), p. xiii.

²¹ Cant, *University of St Andrews*, pp.141-2.

²² Elisabeth Margaret Smith, 'To walk upon the grass: the impact of the University of St Andrews' Lady Literate in Arts, 1877-1892' (PhD, University of St Andrews, 2014).

²³ Reid, *Ever to excel*, p.148.

3. Where did the University's money come from?

The main sources of income for all the Scottish universities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were:

- **Student fees**, including fees paid to the University for matriculation and graduation, as well as class fees paid directly to individual professors. Section 7.2 sheds some light on the proportion of this income that may have come from families based in the colonies.
- **Crown/government grants**, including annual grants for the basic professorial salaries; one-off grants for building works (e.g. the redevelopment of United College quadrangle from 1826-44); and after 1889, a share of the annual grant of £42,000 to the Scottish universities. All funding from the British crown or government is implicated in British colonial and imperial activity, but will not be discussed further here.
- **Endowments**, which were relatively modest at the Scottish universities, compared to their ancient English counterparts. Nonetheless, the colleges and University of St Andrews did own lands that generated income; and (especially at St Mary's) they received a share of the income from the *teinds* (tithes) from certain associated parishes. Investments in stocks and shares were rare in eighteenth-century St Andrews, but became more common in the nineteenth century. Some of these 'endowments' (e.g. land, *teinds*) had originally been archiepiscopal or crown grants; others had been gifted by benefactors.²⁴

At St Andrews, the small number of students meant that the University had very limited fee income in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Fees from non-resident candidates for the M.D. degree were a useful additional income stream until the early 1860s; and fees from non-resident women taking the L.L.A. qualification were helpful after 1877. But even so, the lack of growth in student numbers (compared to other Scottish universities) meant that, by the late nineteenth century, St Andrews was more heavily reliant on state funding than the other Scottish universities: in the mid-1890s, St Andrews was receiving 49% of its income from the state grant. At that time, the average across the Scottish university sector was 41% from student fees, 40% from the state, and 19% from endowments.²⁵

Philanthropy was not a major feature of the Scottish or British university funding landscape in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but, for an institution, like St Andrews, that was almost permanently cash-strapped, a modest amount could make a big difference. The pattern and origins of philanthropic donations are likely to be distinctive to each institution.

Universities in this period did not have 'development' or 'fund-raising' offices, and it was only around the 1860s that the Scottish universities attempted more actively to seek out donors, particularly for the creation of new chairs or new buildings that would not be funded by government.²⁶ But there was nonetheless a long (Christian) tradition of charitable giving from which the University, its Colleges or its students might benefit; and universities sometimes benefitted from wealthy individuals seeking to be seen as patrons of learning. For this project, we have investigated all the (financial) philanthropic benefactions made to the University or its colleges between 1700 and 1900. (See also Working Paper A.)

²⁴ On the finances of Scottish universities, see Paul L. Robertson, 'The Finances of the University of Glasgow Before 1914,' *History of Education Quarterly* 16, no. 4 (1976): 449-78, and Robert Anderson, 'The state and university finance in modern Scotland,' *Scottish Affairs* 85, no. Autumn (2013): 29-41.

²⁵ 'University finance in modern Scotland', p.48.

²⁶ 'University finance in modern Scotland', p.46

3.1. Gifts to the University

We were able to identify 86 gifts that benefited the University and its students during the period 1700 to 1900, and these were the starting point of our investigation. They included direct gifts to the University (or its colleges) of money, stocks or land; and also the creation of financial instruments (such as mortifications and trusts) that generated year-on-year income for the benefit of the University (most often, as bursaries or scholarships for students). We have included externally-administered trusts where the donor explicitly intended to benefit the students of St Andrews.²⁷

We are defining a **'gift'** as money donated to (or dedicated to the benefit of) the University at a specific moment in time. 'Gifts' are related to, but logically distinct from, the 'funds' that form the basis of the University's historic and current accounting system. In the majority of cases, a single donor made a single gift of money for a particular purpose, and the University created a single 'fund' to manage those monies. However, sometimes, a 'gift' was divided internally into multiple 'funds' (e.g. for a bursary, and for a prize); and sometimes, multiple 'gifts' were funnelled into a single 'fund'. Focusing on 'gifts' rather than 'funds' allows us to focus on the act of giving. A full list of gifts and donors is available on our website.

As Table 3.1.1. shows, philanthropy at St Andrews followed the general trend of growth in the late nineteenth century. The University received **relatively few gifts in the eighteenth century** (just 13% of the total); **over 70% of gifts came in the second half of the nineteenth century**. It is also true that over 90% of the value was gifted after 1850, largely due to two particularly large bequests (the Taylour Thomson bequest in 1883, and the Berry bequest in 1890).

3.1.1. Table: All gifts to the University, and what their donors wished to fund

	Total Gifts	Bursaries and Scholarships	Prizes	Staff	Building	Misc	Unrestricted
1700-1800	11	5	2	1	0	3	0
1801-1850	13	11	2	1	0	0	0
1851-1900	62	34	6	4	13	4	1
Total	86	50	10	6	13	7	1

* The column totals do not sum to the 'total gifts' because some gifts were intended for more than one purpose. The Berry Bequest was unrestricted.

The vast majority of gifts were for what we might now term **'student support'**. This included bursaries (an annual stipend to go to University), scholarships (an annual stipend for those who performed well at University) and prizes (a one-off reward for performance in University exams or in some other competition).

The new academic staff positions include chairs in Medicine (1722), Chemistry (1840), Education (1876), and Anatomy (1900).²⁸ These privately-endowed chairs (plus the chair in English Literature, funded from the Berry Bequest in 1897) represent the only expansion in the professoriate at St Andrews in the 1700 to 1900 period. This contrasts both with the seventeenth century (when St Andrews had gained

²⁷ We have excluded external trusts where the stated aim was to aid students to attend 'any university' or even 'any Scottish university', because we were looking for benefactors who intended to assist St Andrews and its community.

²⁸ The other two gifts created a Gifford lecturer in natural theology (1887) and a university lectureship in botany (1891).

two *Regius* chairs as well as two privately-endowed chairs), and with the situation at the University of Glasgow (where the crown endowed five new *Regius* chairs between 1713 and 1760; and the Commissioners of 1858-63 arranged funding for three more chairs).²⁹

There are few capital projects in our list, because, for much of the period under study, the fabric of the University's colleges was the responsibility of the crown or the government. For instance, the 1826-44 rebuilding of the United College quadrangle was funded by a government grant. The capital projects that do appear on our list after 1850 are either for non-academic buildings (e.g. the restoration of St Salvador's chapel; the creation of halls of residence); or are from the period after government funding for buildings ceased (e.g. the Bute Building, created as part of the new medical school); or both (University House, the Union dining hall, University Hall for women).

3.2. Donors to the University

These 86 gifts are associated with 69 individual donors and 13 group donors (total=82 'donors'). Some donors (e.g. siblings, spouses) gave joint gifts; and two donors gave multiple gifts.

The 13 'group' donors include some local councils, school governors and similar bodies, but also those instances when public subscriptions were organised to raise funds in memory of a recently-deceased professor, or to fund the restoration of the chapel. In most of these cases, we do not know who (or how many) individual subscribers were behind the gift, but we have included separate entries for those individuals we do know about; the group entry represents the unknowns.

Table 3.2.1 shows that 78% of the individual donors were male (and of those, 39% had studied at the University of St Andrews). Most of the female donors donated after 1850, and were local to Fife or Tayside; a few had fathers or brothers who had studied at St Andrews.

3.2.1. Table: All donors to the University

	Male	Female	Un-known	Group or Institution	Total	Alumni	Family / Friends of UStA	UStA Staff or Officers
1700-1800	10	0	0	0	10	3	1	2
1801-1850	11	1	0	1	13	6	0	2
1851-1900	33	13	1	12	59	12	13	4
Total	54	14	1	13	82	21	14	8

A list of all donors is available on our project website. The three largest donors were, in ascending order, William Taylour Thomson (see section 3.5.5), the 3rd marquess of Bute (see note in section 3.3) and David Berry (section 3.5.6). Taylour Thomson and Berry both gave large single gifts in their wills, whereas Bute was one of just two repeat donors, giving three gifts during his time as Rector (1892-1898) in addition to a bequest.³⁰

3.3. Donors with connections to colonialism and empire

We then sought to discover which of our donors had derived (some part of) their wealth from activities connected with colonialism or empire. In the time available, we aimed for complete coverage rather than depth: we have performed standardised biographical checks on the people associated with every gift.

²⁹ Robertson, 'Finances of the University of Glasgow', pp.452-3, 462.

³⁰ The only other 'repeat' donor was John Gray, see section 3.4.10.

It is often difficult, if not impossible, to be sure where wealth was accrued, especially for individuals who had multiple areas of financial activity. As well as those who lived or worked in the Caribbean, India, Australia or the other colonies and dominions, and thus directly participated in colonialism, we have included British-based individuals who were involved in business activities that depended on the colonies, whether as a source of raw materials or as a market for goods. Thus, we include sugar and tobacco merchants, flax and jute manufacturers, and UK-resident owners of property or businesses in the colonies; their connection to colonialism or enslavement may be indirect, but it is clear.

The interconnectedness of the British commercial-colonial economy, and later the industrial-imperial economy, means that it can legitimately be argued that everyone who owned shares in railway or steamship companies (even those within Britain), as well as those who owned or invested in coal mines or iron works, and all those who held UK government bonds, were also enabling, supporting, and benefiting from the British colonial and imperial project. Our donors certainly include such people, from **Betsy Byers** (d.1878, née Kidd) who inherited shares in several Scottish railway companies from her husband; to the **3rd marquess of Bute**, whose family coal fields in south Wales made him one of the wealthiest men in late nineteenth-century Britain. We acknowledge this, but decided to focus on donors whose wealth – or whose core professional activity – was more closely connected to colonialism, empire or enslavement.

Our initial research identified 44 people whose histories suggested some sort of connection to empire. Of these, we are reasonably certain that **32 donors** (46% of all our known individual donors) **derived their wealth at least in part from activities that depended on British colonialism or empire**.

This **includes 10 donors** (15% of all known individual donors) **where we are reasonably certain that their wealth was at least in part derived from enslavement**, the slave trade or business activities supported by the use of enslaved labour. Half of them gave to the University after 1860, reminding us that the financial impact of enslavement continued to be felt long after it was abolished in the British empire.

There are other donors (half a dozen, in particular) about whom we have enough information to be able to say that it is possible that they had profited from empire, but we would need more information to say for sure. For instance, **Agnes Blyth** (1825-1880, née Carmichael) was the daughter of a Dundee mill wright and engineer, and wife of a Dundee mill manager. It is highly likely that her father and husband made a living from flax or jute, but we do not know.

In the discussion below, we have listed separately those donors who had clear connections to enslavement. However, our research reveals that **almost all of the donors who profited from enslavement were also involved in other forms of colonial or imperial profit-making**. For instance, the **duke of Chandos** was an investor and director of both the slave-trading Royal African Company and the East India Company; **Andrew Bell** initially profited from investments in Virginia tobacco plantations, but he significantly increased his fortune when working for the East India Company in Madras; **Edward Ellice's** family firm was involved in the Canadian fur-trade as well as the West Indian trade; and **George Clerk Cheape** was a partner in a merchant firm that did business both in the Caribbean and throughout the British sphere of influence, as were the **Guthrie brothers**.

3.4. Donors whose wealth derived from enslavement

We are listing these ten names separately in recognition of current interest in historic links to slavery and the slave trade, but as noted above, donors who had made money from enslavement had often *also* made money from a variety of other colonial investments and activities.

The names listed here demonstrate the variety of ways in which Scottish and British individuals profited from the enslavement of Africans. Only two of these donors actually spent time in the colonies, one as a tutor in Virginia (**Bell**) and the other as a missionary (later clergyman) in South Carolina (**Stuart**). Those who remained on British soil range from a wealthy Englishman who was actively involved in the direction of a slave-trading company (**Chandos**) and Scottish-London merchants with business interests in the Caribbean (**Cheape**, the **Guthries**, **Ellice**) to a Dundee linen manufacturer whose export markets were in the Caribbean, the US and Brazil (**Baxter**), and a Perthshire minister with investments in a business which exported textiles to the Caribbean (**Garvie**).

All of these donors feature on our website; and Chandos, Bell, Guthrie and Cheape are the subjects of expanded 'Stories'.

They are listed here in chronological order.

3.4.1. Table: Donors who derived (part of their) wealth from enslavement

Date of Gift	Donor	Gift Value	Worth in 2021 (at minimum)*	Purpose of Donation
1720	James Brydges, 1 st duke of Chandos (1673-1744)	£1,000	£167,000	Chair of Medicine
1809	James Stuart (1743-1809)	£1,000	£77,000	Bursary
1831	William Garvie (1742-1831)	£1,250	£121,000	Bursaries
1832	Andrew Bell (1753-1832)	£100 annually	£10,000	Bursaries
1865	James Alexander Guthrie (1823-1873) Arbuthnot Charles Guthrie (1825-1897)	£6,250	£636,000	Scholarship
1866	Edward Ellice (1810-1880)	£100	£10,000	College Hall Fund
1867	David Baxter (1793-1872)	£1,000	£94,000	Bursaries
1868	George Clerk Cheape (1801-1886)	£1,000	£96,000	Bursary
1876	Trustees of Andrew Bell	£4,000	£400,000	Chair of Education

* Our purpose in giving modern equivalents is to enable readers to gauge the value of these gifts relative to each other. There are different methods for calculating the modern equivalent of historical values (see section 1.2.5).

3.4.2. James Brydges, duke of Chandos (1673-1744)

In 1720, James Brydges, first duke of Chandos, gave £1,000 to the University of St Andrews to endow a new chair. Chandos was an investor in at least two slave-trading companies – the South Sea Company and the Royal African Company – and was active as a director of the Royal African Company from 1720 to 1725. During the period of his directorship, the company was involved both in the trade in enslaved Africans and in efforts to exploit the natural resources of Africa. Nearly 12,000 enslaved Africans involuntarily crossed the Atlantic on RAC ships in this period.³¹ Among them were 1,473 people (mostly men and boys) who were forcibly taken from the Gold Coast and Benin on a newly-commissioned ship named *Chandos*; almost 10% of them died on the journey to Jamaica.³²

Chandos made his fortune as paymaster of the army from 1705 to 1713. This enabled him to become an investor in many of the speculative money-making schemes of early eighteenth-century England,

³¹ Matthew David Mitchell, '“Legitimate commerce” in the Eighteenth Century: The Royal African Company of England Under the Duke of Chandos, 1720–1726,' *Enterprise & Society* 14, no. 3 (2013): 544-78.

³² See data on voyages #75256 (1722-23), #75258 (1723-24) and #76969 (1725-6) in *Slave Voyages Database* <https://www.slavevoyages.org/past/enslavers#>

and also to establish himself as a patron of the arts. He appears to have had no connection to the University of St Andrews until his son John visited, with his tutor, as part of a tour of Scotland. Shortly afterwards, Chandos made a gift of £1,000 to St Andrews for a new chair which, after some discussions, became the Chandos Chair of Medicine. The University showed its appreciation of Chandos by appointing him as its Chancellor in 1724, a position he held until his death.

The existence of the Chandos Chair enabled the University to award M.D. degrees, although it did not offer formal medical training until the creation of the Conjoint Medical School (with University College, Dundee) in 1898. The Chandos Chair then came to be designated as a chair of physiology, to distinguish it from the other medical chairs. It has been in abeyance since January 2020, following the retirement of the last holder.

Read more on our website: [‘James Brydges \(1673-1744\) and the Chandos Chair’](#)

3.4.3. James Stuart (1743-1809)

In his will, James Stuart left monies to various educational institutions, including bursaries at each of the Scottish universities. He has, therefore, already featured in the institutional reports from the University of Glasgow, Balliol College Oxford, and the University of Aberdeen. The University of St Andrews received £1,000 to create the James Stuart Bursaries for ‘the instruction and better education of youth’.

Born near Banff, James Stuart went to South Carolina in 1766 as a missionary with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, attempting to bring Christianity to enslaved Africans. He subsequently gained a position as rector in Georgetown and Waccamaw, South Carolina. He married Ann Alston Waties (1735-1805), a widow of ‘considerable wealth’ due to her connections to the Allston and Waties families; their rice plantations were worked by hundreds of enslaved labourers. Stuart was a Loyalist during the American Revolutionary War. Having left North America after the war, Stuart submitted a claim to the Parliamentary Commission on Loyalists’ Claims and Services in 1784, seeking ‘compensation’ for the loss of ‘A Negro Carpenter, Horses &c &c [which had been] plundered and carried off’.³³

3.4.4. William Garvie (1742-1831)

On his death, William Garvie left £1,250 to establish two bursaries at St Mary’s College. Garvie had been born in Perth, the son of a merchant. He studied in St Andrews at United College, and then St Mary’s College, from 1757 to 1766. He entered the ministry, and was minister of Aberdalgie (near Perth) from 1782 to his death. Having been pre-deceased by all his children, he left the residue of his estate to support students at St Mary’s College. The bulk of Garvie’s funds came from interest-bearing securities in the British Linen Bank. This Scottish bank had originally been the British Linen Company, and had been heavily invested in the manufacture of osnaburgs, which were exported as clothing for enslaved labourers in the Caribbean. During the early nineteenth century, the British Linen Company had transitioned to banking, and financed textile industries which continued to export products to the Caribbean.³⁴ We do not know how much Garvie knew about the investments he held, but those interest-bearing ‘heritable’ securities in the British Linen Bank financially supported and benefitted from the Atlantic trade.

³³ We thank Richard Anderson (University of Aberdeen) for advance sight of his investigations into Stuart, which go deeper than those of Stephen Mullen and Simon Newman, ‘Slavery, Abolition, and the University of Glasgow: Report and Recommendations of the University of Glasgow History of Slavery Steering Committee,’ (Glasgow, 2018) and Sebastian Raj Pender, ‘Balliol and the proceeds of slavery,’ (Oxford, 2021).

³⁴ Tuckett and Whatley, ‘Textiles in Transition: Linen, Jute and the Dundee Region’s Transnational Networks, c.1740–1880’.

3.4.5. Andrew Bell (1753-1832), and his trustees

On his death, Andrew Bell left his estate to a trust for educational purposes in St Andrews. A substantial portion of the funds was devoted to establishing and supporting a secondary school in the town, and Madras College opened in 1833. Bell also required his trustees to fund £100-worth of 'Madras Bursaries' each year, for pupils who went on to study at the University. Many years later, in 1876, the then-trustees gifted £4,000 to the University to establish the Bell Chair of Education.

Andrew Bell had been born and educated in St Andrews, studying at the university from 1768 to 1772.³⁵ He then travelled to West Point, Virginia, to take up the position of private tutor to the sons of Carter Braxton, a wealthy tobacco planter. Bell was paid 'partly in tobacco shares and bonds, accompanied by shrewd advice on commodity investment,' and he left Virginia in 1781 with assets amounting to £900 (equivalent to at least £100,000 today). The two Braxton sons came with him, and studied at St Andrews (see section 7.3.3).

Bell spent the next few years doing tutoring and teaching jobs in St Andrews and London, before becoming ordained into the Church of England. Through his Fife connections, he secured appointments as chaplain or deputy chaplain to no fewer than eight British regiments in India. He arrived in Madras in 1787, and acquired several additional roles, most notably superintendent of the Male Orphan Asylum opened by the East India Company in 1789 to cater for the illegitimate and/or orphaned sons of European officers. It was there that he developed the Madras Education System, a 'monitorial' system of education in which older pupils teach younger pupils. He left India in 1796, having increased his personal fortune to about £25,000 (equivalent to at least £2.6m today). Back in Britain, he devoted himself to promoting the use of his 'monitorial' system for teaching poor children.

The wealth that funded the Madras Bursaries and the Bell Chair of Education was derived both from the enslaved labour of Virginia tobacco plantations, and from Bell's (many) roles with the East India Company in Madras.

Read more on our website: ['Andrew Bell \(1753-1832\): Virginia, Madras and St Andrews'](#)

3.4.6. Guthrie Brothers

James Alexander Guthrie (1823-1873) and **Arbuthnot Charles Guthrie** (1825-1897) joined the family firm of Chalmers, Guthrie & Co., a London merchant firm engaged in overseas trade, especially in the Indian Ocean region and the Caribbean region. On their father's death in 1859, they inherited a portion of his £120,000 fortune, and in 1865, they gave £6,250 to the University of St Andrews to establish the Guthrie Scholarship at the University in his memory.

Their father was **David Charles Guthrie** (1788-1859).³⁶ He came from the Guthrie family of Craigie, and had studied at St Andrews from 1802 to 1804 before becoming involved in overseas trade with the firm then known as Chalmers & Guthrie of London. By the 1830s, he had been joined in business by his nephew **George Clerk Cheape** (see section 3.4.9). The firm had interests in sugar plantations in the Caribbean that relied upon the labour of enslaved persons. With the abolition of slavery, Guthrie and Cheape (jointly) received 'compensation' on behalf of trustees for estates in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as £388 in their own right for seven enslaved people in Trinidad.³⁷ The firm owned a number of ships trading to the Indian ocean, and it was one of their ships, the *Atlas*, which, in 1834, carried the first

³⁵ This account of Bell draws upon his entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [ODNB], <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1995> (from which the quote about tobacco shares comes).

³⁶ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1384147900>

³⁷ 'David Charles Guthrie', *Legacies of British Slavery* database, <http://www.depts-live.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/44278> [accessed 8th December 2021].

indentured labourers from India to Mauritius, to work five-year contracts on the sugar plantations.³⁸ This 'experiment' with 'free' labour would later be extended to the Caribbean sugar colonies, where it perpetuated systems of coerced and uncompensated labour. Chalmers & Guthrie also helped to broker deals between Mauritian sugar producers and British importers; and it would continue to find new niches in international markets until at least the end of the nineteenth century.

The Guthrie Scholarship was thus funded by money acquired in international imperial trade, at least some part of which had originally depended upon enslaved labour in the Caribbean and indentured labour in Mauritius.

Read more on our website: '[International businessmen: the firm of Chalmers & Guthrie \(1788-1897\)](#)'

3.4.7. Edward Ellice (1810-1880)

Edward Ellice (1810-1880) was an Aberdeenshire landowner, and the Liberal MP for St Andrews burgh from 1837 to 1879. His wealth came from his father (Edward Ellice, 1783-1863) and the family firm of Inglis, Ellice, & Co. This firm had developed extensive interests in the fur trade in Canada and New York state in the second half of the eighteenth century; and by the early nineteenth century had also become West India merchants. In the late 1810s and early 1820s, it owned several estates (and mortgages on others) in Jamaica, Trinidad and Grenada. Ellice *senior* went into politics, and left the firm in 1821, around the time he helped broker the merger of competing fur trading companies into the Hudson's Bay Company. He later received £1,122 in 'compensation' for 58 enslaved workers in Grenada in 1835 and may have received some share of the successful claims by other former partners of the firm. Like his father, Ellice *junior* served a stint as director of the Hudson's Bay Company, and he eventually inherited his father's estate of about £160,000.³⁹ In 1866, he agreed to invest £100 in the College Hall Company, to extend the new student hall of residence (see section 3.6).

3.4.8. David Baxter (1793-1872)

David Baxter (1793-1872) was born in Dundee, and began his business career in the 1820s working at (and later managing) the Dundee Sugar Refining Company, an enterprise that depended upon sugar grown in the Caribbean by enslaved workers. In 1837, Baxter joined his father and brothers in the family linen manufacturing firm, and by 1854, he was head of Baxter Brothers & Co. Its core products included the coarse linens widely used as clothing for enslaved labourers in the Caribbean, the USA and Brazil. The USA and Brazil continued to be major markets for Baxter Brothers in the 1850s. As the University of Dundee's *Founders Report* has argued, 'It is clear that David Baxter's immense fortune was built upon the success of Baxter Brothers & Co lucrative linen trade which relied on a market in the transatlantic colonies and the continued use of enslaved labour.'⁴⁰

David Baxter and his wife Elisabeth (*née* Montgomery, d. 1882) had no children, and he used his substantial wealth for a variety of philanthropic purposes. He bequeathed £50,000 to the Free Church of Scotland, £40,000 to the University of Edinburgh, and £20,000 to create the institution that became Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design. He also left money to his sister, Mary Ann Baxter (1801-1884), who would later give £140,000 to found University College, Dundee.⁴¹ His gift to the

³⁸ The role of the *Atlas* is remembered, for instance: https://mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/1347/Address_of_MOS_Dr_Shashi_Tharoor_at_the_event_commemorating_the_175th_anniversary_of_the_arrival_of_indentured_labourers_in_Mauritius

³⁹ On the politics and Hudson's Bay Company see ODNB entries on Edward Ellice (1810-1880), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8651>; and Edward Ellice (1783-1863) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8650>. For Caribbean connections, see <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/27776>.

⁴⁰ Gupta and Fagan, 'Dundee founders' report', p.36 (and also p.11).

⁴¹ She is also discussed in 'Dundee founders' report'.

University of St Andrews was £1,000, in 1867, to create the Baxter Bursaries and to support the College Hall Fund (see section 3.6).

3.4.9. *George Clerk Cheape (1801-1886)*

In 1868, George Clerk Cheape of Strathtyrum gave £1,000 to the University to establish the Cheape Bursary. Cheape came from a local family, but in the 1830s, he had moved to London and joined his maternal uncle David Charles Guthrie in the merchant firm, Chalmers & Guthrie. He was involved in the same business interests, and the same slavery 'compensation' claims, as Guthrie (see section 3.4.6).⁴² Cheape retired from the firm after Guthrie's death in 1859. He was a very wealthy man: his estate would be valued at £308,000 (equivalent to at least £35m today) by his own death in 1886.

3.4.10. *Donors with other connections to enslavement*

We have also identified the following donors who seem to have some connection to enslavement, but did not necessarily profit from it personally.

- Thomas Hay, 9th **earl of Kinnoull** (1710–1787, Chancellor 1765-1787) established the annual Chancellors' Prizes. They were funded personally by Kinnoull, rather than via an endowment, and the tradition was continued by later Chancellors. Kinnoull's main source of wealth was the estates he inherited in Perthshire on his father's death in 1758, in addition to his own 25-year political career.⁴³ However, one of his younger brothers was Edward Hay (1722-79), whose diplomatic career had been spent mostly in Spain and Portugal until his appointment as the governor of Barbados from 1772. As well as governing a colony dependent on the labour of enslaved Africans, Edward Hay was himself an 'owner' of enslaved people.⁴⁴ It is not clear how much contact the brothers had while Edward was in the Caribbean. There is no particular reason to believe that the Chancellor's Prizes were funded by money accrued from the slave economy, but they were funded – and awarded in person – by a man who was likely in sympathy with his brother's management of a colony dependent on enslaved labour.

Read more on our website: [‘The colonial connections of Thomas Hay, 9th earl of Kinnoull \(1710-1787\)’](#)

- **John Gray** (1724-1811) was an alumnus who donated funds for a prize in 1794, and also left money in his will to create a Gray Bursary and the Gray Chair in Chemistry (now, the Purdie Chair). As we will see in section 5.1, he wrote a treatise on the abolition of slavery. There is no evidence that Gray himself had benefited from enslavement.

Read more on our website: [‘John Gray \(1724-1811\): alumnus, donor and abolitionist?’](#)

- **James Playfair** (1738-1819, principal of United College 1800-1819) left funds in his will for the Rorie Bursary. Playfair had been a minister for most of his life, but through his children he was thoroughly connected to empire. Three sons built successful careers in India (in the medical service, and in the army); and his daughter Jean was married to a Glasgow merchant who

⁴² 'George Clerk Cheape', *Legacies of British Slavery database*, <http://www.depts-live.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/44535>.

⁴³ On Kinnoull, see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12737> and on his role as Chancellor (including the prizes), see Roger L. Emerson, *Academic Patronage in the Scottish Enlightenment: Glasgow, Edinburgh and St Andrews Universities* (Edinburgh, 2008), p.372

⁴⁴ His governorship is discussed in some detail in Ch. 12 of John Poyer's *The History of Barbados From the First Discovery of the Island, in the Year 1605, Till the Accession of Lord Seaforth, 1801* (London, 1808). His will left 'any negroes men women and children' that he might die possessed of to his second wife. See <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146665359>.

traded to Antigua, a British colony whose wealth primarily derived from enslaved labour until the 1830s.

- The **Bruce Scholarships, Bursaries and Prizes**: will be discussed in section 3.5.3, because of their strong connection to India. The donor's husband (though not her money) came from a Bristol family whose earlier generations had been involved in slave-trading.

3.5. Donors whose wealth derived from activities in/with the colonies

As we have seen, several of the donors who derived part of their wealth from enslavement in the Atlantic world also derived wealth from business activities in other parts of the world. Below, we list **22 further donors (including 3 women) whose wealth was derived from colonial or imperial activities**; brief biographies of them all can be found on the project website.

Three-quarters of these gifts were made after 1850, reflecting both the general increase in philanthropic giving in the later part of the century, but also the way in which colonial and imperial activity (especially trade) had come to be entangled with many aspects of the later Victorian British economy.

Compared to the donors discussed in section 3.4 (wealth derived from enslavement), a higher proportion of these donors (11 out of 22) had spent some part of their adult lives working or living outside Britain: eight had been in **India** (and/or worked for the East India Company overseas), two in **Australia and/or New Zealand** and one had a varied diplomatic career.

Two of the three women donors had been born in India (Bruce, Wemyss). All three had inherited funds from male relations who had East India Company or Indian connections.

Another group of donors were **manufacturers** whose firms depended on raw materials acquired through colonial enterprise. These include Tullis, Grimond, Keiller, and Scott.

The **most frequent** form of engagement with (and profiting from) empire to be seen in Table 3.5.1 involved **India**, both in the period of East India Company control and later.

In terms of the value to the University, three of the six **largest donations** were associated with **Australia** (Russell, Berry, Hay; Hay is also associated with New Zealand), and two with India (Stewart, Bruce). The sixth major donation is arguably outwith the geographical remit of this project, since it is associated with diplomatic service in **Persia and Chile** (Taylour Thomson), but it was such a large gift that it seemed appropriate to include it here.

We will look more closely at each of the six major donors below. They all gave £3,000 or more (in nineteenth-century values), which were substantial amounts of money at a time when, for instance, the average annual income of a professor at the United College in the 1840s was slightly over £340;⁴⁵ or when, in 1863, the entire endowment of the University of St Andrews was just over £15,000.⁴⁶ In the 1890s, the entire government grant to all the universities in Scotland was £42,000 annually. In this context, the gifts from William Taylour Thomson (£30,000) and David Berry (£100,000) were not merely 'large' but 'huge'.

⁴⁵ *Reports from the Commissioners... on St Andrews University* (Parliamentary Papers, 1846 vol. 23), p. x (based on figures from the five preceding years)

⁴⁶ *Reports from the Commissioners...* (1863), p. xiii.

3.5.1. Donors who made money from colonial or imperial activity (major donors highlighted)

Date of Gift	Donor	Gift Value	Worth in 2021 (at minimum)*	Empire Connection	Purpose of Donation
1766	Thomas Hay, 9 th earl of Kinnoull (1710-1787)	£100	£14,500	Political career included stint at Board of Trade and Plantations	Prize
1808	Duncan Mackay (1741-1808)	£300	£24,500	Military chaplain in India	Bursary
1828	Alexander Stewart (d.1828)	£3,000	£270,000	Military surgeon in India	Bursary
1835	John Carstairs (1758-1837)	£7 15shillings annually	£800 annually	Military surgeon in India	Prize
1837	James Menzies (c.1778-1844)	£200 annually	£19,000 annually	Glasgow merchant , trading in fish and calicos	Bursary
1861	Amy Wemyss (c.1786-1861)	6,000 rupees	£60,000	Born and died in India ; husband in Bombay Naval Service	Bursary
1865	Margaret Bruce (1788-1869)	£5,000	£509,000	Born in India ; father and adoptive uncle had East India Company ties	Bursary, Scholarship and Prize
1869	Neil Arnott (1788-1874)	£1,000	£98,000	One-time surgeon in East India Company	Prize
1875	Marianne Arnott (1801-1876)	£1,000	£100,000	Husband had been surgeon in East India Company	To augment her husband's 1869 prize
1875	John Forbes (1800-1874)	£1,500	£150,000	Heir to brother, who was briefly a tutor in India later professor of Oriental Languages	Bursaries
1876	William Tullis (1807-1883)	£700	£70,000	Paper manufacturer in Markinch (colonial raw materials)	Prize
1882	William Taylour Thomson (1813-1883)	£30,000	£3.2m	High-profile diplomatic career in Persia and Chile	Bursaries
1885	William Russell (c.1808-1885)	£5,000	£575,000	Absentee investor in land in Australia	Bursary
1889	David Berry (1795-1889)	£100,000	£11.7m	Resident landowner in Australia ; heir to brother who had been briefly in East India Company, then landowner in Australia	Unrestricted

1891	George Sutherland Simson (1823-c.1891)	Residue of his estate		Served in 5 th Madras Cavalry, India	Bursary
1895	Alexander Dick Grimond (1824-1903)	£250	£31,000	Dundee jute manufacturer	Building (University Hall)
1895	J. Martin White	£100	£12,000	Dundee linen and jute manufacturer	Building (University Hall)
1895	John Mitchell Keiller (1851-1899)	£100	£12,000	Third-generation confectioner and marmalade manufacturer (imported sugar from Caribbean)	Building (University Hall)
1896	John Hay (1840-1909)	£5,000	£615,000	New Zealand businessman, who later inherited estates in Australia	Building (University House)
1896	George Scott (d.1893)	£1,000	£123,000	Managed a Scottish-London wine and spirits merchant famous for its rum (imported sugar from Caribbean)	Scholarship
1898	Robert Smeaton (c.1845-1910)	£750	£89,000	Indian Civil Service	Bursary
1898	Ronald Crauford Monro Ferguson (1860-1934)	£25 annually	£2,900 annually	Military service in India (later, colonial politician)	Bursary

3.5.2. Alexander Stewart (d.1828)

Alexander Stewart (d. 1828) studied at St Andrews, and then trained for medicine at Edinburgh. He served as military surgeon in India c.1790-1796. He may then have gone into private medical practice; he was living in Chelsea, London at the time of his death. He was from a Perthshire family, the Stewarts of Garth, which had other far-reaching colonial connections. His brother John Stewart (d. c.1830), was the owner of the Garth Estate in Trinidad, a sugar plantation being worked by 45 enslaved people in 1828.⁴⁷ Another brother, David Stewart (1772-1829), was an army officer who served in the Caribbean and Mediterranean; and in 1829 was appointed Governor of St Lucia in the Windward Isles (but died shortly after his arrival).⁴⁸ Shortly before that, David Stewart corresponded with the University of St Andrews as executor of the will of Alexander Stewart, who had left £3,000 to fund 'as many bursaries as possible', to be called the **Garth Bursaries** in honour of his family.⁴⁹ (It funded five bursaries, later six.)

⁴⁷ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146649939> (for John Stewart) and <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/3747> (for the Garth Estate, Trinidad).

⁴⁸ David Stewart: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/26469>

⁴⁹ *List of Deeds and Documents... of Bursaries... &c... at the University of St Andrews* (HMSO, 1891) [hereafter, *List of Deeds* (1891)], p.45; and University of St Andrews archives [UStA archives], UYUC400:19.11.1828

3.5.3. Margaret Stuart Tyndall Bruce (c.1780-1869)

In 1865, Margaret Stuart Tyndall Bruce donated £5,000 to the University of St Andrews in memory of her uncle John Bruce of Grangehill and Falkland. Margaret Bruce had been born in India to an unknown Bengali mother and an unmarried Scottish father, Robert Hamilton Bruce (1751–1797). Robert Bruce was an officer in the Bengali Artillery and is recorded as dying in or near the city of Cawnpore (Kanpur), Uttar Pradesh. Margaret had been brought to Britain in 1786, where she was adopted, after her father's death, by her uncle John Hamilton Bruce (1744-1826). John Bruce had been Professor of Logic at the University of Edinburgh from 1778 to 1792, where he became part of the circle of Henry Dundas, the political manager of Scotland (and Chancellor of St Andrews). Bruce wrote reports and pamphlets for Dundas on a range of matters, most notably the East India Company, whose 'Historiographer' he became in 1793. Dundas rewarded Bruce by granting him the rights of King's Printer in Scotland, and from 1809 onwards, this made his fortune. By 1820, he was able to buy the ruins of Falkland Palace, Fife (as well as other estates). On his death, Margaret inherited around £300,000. Two years later, she married Onesiphorous Tyndall (1790-1855), a barrister of Lincoln's Inn and a member of a well-established slave-trading family from Bristol. They continued John Bruce's efforts to restore Falkland Palace, but there was sufficient wealth left for the widowed Margaret to engage in philanthropy – including the donation to the University of St Andrews in 1865.

Margaret Bruce wished to 'afford pecuniary assistance to meritorious students who desire to prosecute the studies of Divinity, Literature and Science, Law or Medicine', by creating **Bruce scholarships and bursaries**, with any residual income used to fund a **Bruce of Grangehill and Falkland Prize** 'for excellence in the study of Logic and Metaphysics'.⁵⁰

Read more on our project website: [Margaret Tyndall Bruce \(c.1780-1869\) of Falkland and India](#)

3.5.4. William Russell (c.1808-1885)

In 1885, shortly before his death, William Russell (c.1808-1885) made a gift of £5,000 to the University of St Andrews to establish the **Russell Bursary**.⁵¹ He did so in recognition of the education he and his brother James Russell (c.1809-1877) had received at St Andrews in the 1820s.⁵² The Russell brothers were born into a Fife farming family. After university, William farmed in Northamptonshire while James became a Kirkcaldy lawyer. Two other brothers, Philip and Thomas, emigrated to Australia in the 1840s, where they bought and managed (separate) estates and **merino flocks in the state of Victoria**.⁵³ From the early 1850s, William and James Russell (and another brother George, who ran the family farm in Fife) became investors in Thomas's Australian enterprise, Barunah Plains on the Hamilton Highway at Wingeel. These lands seem to have been acquired via the Australian Mortgage Land & Finance Co., and it is now widely recognized that this had involved the **displacement of the Indigenous peoples**.⁵⁴ When James Russell died in 1877, his UK estate was valued at over £16,000 and he also had Australian assets. To protect the Australian business, he left his estate to a trust managed by his partner-brothers. William Russell did the same in 1885; his estate, including both UK and Australian assets, was valued at close to £66,000.

⁵⁰ *List of Deeds* (1891), pp.63-4.

⁵¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1408426660>

⁵² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1408357340>

⁵³ P.L. Brown 'Russell, Philip (1822–1892) and Russell, Thomas (1828-1920), flock-masters and politicians' in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/russell-philip-4528>

⁵⁴ Owen Powell 'Empire and Agribusiness: the Australian Mercantile Land and Finance Company' *Queensland Historical Atlas* (2015) <https://www.qhatlas.com.au/empire-and-agribusiness-australian-mercantile-land-and-finance-company>

The Russell Bursary was awarded, through an annual competitive examination, to students intending to study Arts or Science at United College, and could be held for three years (as long as the student passed their exams each year).

3.5.5. William Taylour Thomson (1813-1883)

In his will, Sir William Taylour Thomson, CB, KCMG (1813-1883) left the massive sum of £30,000 to the University of St Andrews. It was, at that point, far and away the largest benefaction the University had ever received, equivalent to at least £3m today (and arguably much more). Thomson himself had been educated at Edinburgh University, but his brother Ronald Ferguson Thomson (1830-1888) studied at St Andrews in 1845-1846.⁵⁵

William Taylour Thomson was a career civil servant and **diplomat, initially in Persia** (for most of the period 1837-55), then in **Chile** (as Chargé d'Affaires and Consul-General, 1858-72), and then back to Tehran (from 1872-79, mostly as Consul-General). He was knighted on his retirement in 1879, when he returned to Edinburgh. He was in Persia in the run up to the Anglo-Persian war of 1856, and in Chile during the Spanish bombardment of Valparaíso in 1866. It is currently unclear how he amassed his fortune, but it seems unlikely to have been inherited from his Edinburgh lawyer father and thus presumably was acquired during his diplomatic career.

Thomson's will left the residue of his estate to the University of St Andrews, but the funds did not arrive immediately, as he had left a life-interest to his brother Ronald (and his heirs). Ronald was also a diplomat in Persia, and had succeeded his brother as Envoy Extraordinary in 1879; he was awarded an honorary LL.D. by St Andrews in 1886.

The **Taylour Thomson Bursaries** were to aid students 'of both sexes in equal numbers' and 'in the case of females to assist them as far as practicable... in qualifying themselves to enter the medical profession'. This stipulation is noteworthy, because it was written in a will of 1882, at which point St Andrews did not admit women students, nor did it have a medical school. However, by the time Taylour Thomson's funds actually reached St Andrews in the 1890s, the situation had changed. In 1895, the University was able to advertise 5 bursaries for women students intending to study medicine (including those initially studying Arts or Science), and by 1898 (when the new joint Medical School in Dundee opened) it was advertising 14 Taylour Thomson bursaries for women to study medicine.

3.5.6. David Berry (1795–1889)

[This section draws upon the substantial work done by members of the School of English in their efforts to 'Rethink the Berry Bequest'.]⁵⁶

In November 1889, the University of St Andrews received news that it could expect a benefaction that would dwarf even the Taylour Thomson bequest. The bequest of £100,000 came from David Berry (1795–1889), but the money and the desire to benefit St Andrews had originated with his elder brother Alexander Berry (1781-1873).⁵⁷ The brothers were from a farming family outside Cupar. Alexander had studied at St Andrews from 1796-1798, and then studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. He was employed as a surgeon's mate by the East India Company, and travelled around the world, visiting China, India and other places. It was, however, as a trader and landowner in Australia that Berry made his fortune.

⁵⁵ On Ronald Thomson, see <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1415146204>

⁵⁶ See 'The Berry Chair' (including sources) on <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/english/about/>

⁵⁷ On Alexander Berry: <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1366708796> and <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/berry-alexander-1773>.

By the 1820s, Alexander Berry and his business partner had established a trading base in New South Wales, Australia. Berry was given a land grant of 10,000 acres at Shoalhaven, south of Sydney, on the proviso that he maintained 100 convicts. This land was inhabited by Indigenous people and now falls within the area covered by a Native Title claim by the South Coast People. Using the (involuntary) labour of the convicts, and with the strategic assistance of some of the local people, Berry was able to create a tobacco- and timber-producing estate.⁵⁸ Berry also collected geological specimens, and is known to have acquired human remains, including a number of skulls, some of which were shipped to Edinburgh around 1820.⁵⁹ Berry's estate was developed on the land of Indigenous peoples and benefited from their knowledge of the natural environment.

In 1836, his younger brother David (and four other siblings) emigrated to New South Wales, where he took over the management of the Shoalhaven estate, enabling Alexander to spend most of his time in Sydney. David later inherited Alexander's estate, and by the time David died in 1889, his own estate was valued at an incredible £1,250,000 (at least £147m in today's terms).⁶⁰ David Berry left £100,000 to the University of St Andrews (at least £11.7m today), in some recognition for the wish expressed in an unsigned will drafted by his brother Alexander. (For the University's efforts to acquire this bequest, see section 3.7.3).

The Berry bequest arrived in instalments over two decades, because the liquidation of assets necessary to fulfil the various bequests, including that to St Andrews, could not be done immediately. It required the sale of large areas of land, and would be part of the reason for the displacement of the local Indigenous community, the Jerrinja, to the Roseby Park Mission (later Aboriginal Reserve) in the early twentieth century.⁶¹ The first instalment sent to St Andrews by the bequest's co-trustee John Hay (see section 3.5.7) was £10,000 in 1890. By 1900, the University had still received 'only' £40,000 – yet this was a vast amount compared to other gifts, and to the University's own finances.

Unlike all the other donors we have discussed, David Berry **made no stipulations** about how his bequest should be spent. This meant that the University was able to use it for a variety of purposes during the 1890s (and after): in 1893, it paid for a lectureship in French Language and Literature; in 1895, three Berry Bursaries were created (expanded by 1898 to four Arts/Sciences bursaries and twelve bursaries for students at the new Medical School); and in 1897, a new professorship in English Literature was named the Berry Chair. Berry funds were also routinely used to augment the basic salaries of all the professors, and this continued into the twentieth century.

Although the bequest was used for many different purposes, the association of the Berry name is now predominantly with the **Berry Chair of English**. This had been vacant since 2018 and, in work led by the School of English, the University has reviewed the focus of the Berry Chair and appointed a new professor, who took office in 2024 as the Berry Chair of Literature and Human Rights. The responsibilities of the professor will include leading work on colonial legacies; there will also be new associated postdoctoral and postgraduate posts, and a suite of related activities will support research

⁵⁸ Bruce Buchan and Annemarie McLaren, 'Edinburgh's Enlightenment abroad: navigating humanity as a physician, merchant, natural historian and settler-colonist,' *Intellectual History Review* 31, no. 4 (2021): 627-49.

⁵⁹ There are transcriptions of relevant correspondence and a partial list of the human remains apparently sent to Edinburgh in the following report: Organ, Michael K.: Illawarra and South Coast Aborigines 1770-1900 (1993), available at <https://ro.uow.edu.au/asdpapers/118>

⁶⁰ Estate valuations are from the entry on David Berry in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, see <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/berry-david-2983>

⁶¹ Information from presentation by Annemarie McLaren, of the University of Notre Dame (Australia), at the 'Rethinking the Berry Bequest' colloquium, St Andrews, 21-22 Sept. 2023.

into Indigenous, First Nations, colonial and postcolonial literatures and history, as well as Indigenous scholarship.

Read more on our website: '[Reflecting on the Berry Bequest \(1889\)](#)'

3.5.7. John Hay (1840-1909)

In 1896, John Hay gave £5,000 to enable the University to buy Scores Park, to become the official residence of the Principal of the University (9 the Scores, later known as University House).⁶² Hay had become well-known to the University of St Andrews over the preceding six years in his role as co-trustee of the estate of David Berry (section 3.5.6). He visited St Andrews around 1891, when he appears to have got on well with Principal Donaldson; and was awarded an honorary LL.D. in 1894.⁶³ However, the delays in the payment of the full Berry bequest – partly due to an economic downturn in New South Wales – would generate tensions between Hay and some members of the University. John Hay's personal wealth was derived initially from business ventures and colonial improvement in New Zealand; and augmented by the inheritance of part of the Berry estates in Australia.⁶⁴

John Hay was from a Fife family, but was born in New South Wales. His parents had recently emigrated, presumably because several of his father's cousins (i.e. the Berry siblings) had already settled there. However, when John's mother died soon after his birth, his father David moved to New Zealand and settled north of Auckland. When John was about 8 years old, he was sent to live with his paternal relations in Scotland. He was educated at Madras College, St Andrews until he was 15 years old, and then worked in his uncle James Hay's drapery business in St Andrews.

Around 1860, John Hay returned briefly to New Zealand, and then went to Sydney, where he worked for a drapery and soft-goods wholesaler. Around 1864, he and a cousin set up their own drapery business, Hay & Honeyman, in Auckland. At the same time, Hay was involved in various projects to develop the colony, including steam engines and mining. Successful investments in the Thames gold rush (1868-71) enabled him to give up the drapery business, and to marry Jessie Sinclair (1845-1930), the daughter of a Paisley thread manufacturer and niece of a New Zealand colonial administrator.

Hay's uncles were in contact with their Berry cousins in Australia during the 1870s, and by the early 1880s, John Hay had become friendly with the last-surviving cousin, David Berry. By 1885, John and Jessie Hay had moved to New South Wales to manage the Berry estates. On David Berry's death in 1889, John Hay inherited 80,000 acres at Coolangatta; and became co-trustee of the remaining Berry lands, which were to generate bequests to various institutions (including the University of St Andrews). Hay embarked on a programme of improvements, including land drainage, tenancy reforms, railways and a butter factory. The funds he personally gifted to St Andrews, for the purchase of University House, were transmitted by the London agent who managed the import of Hay's butter.⁶⁵ (Hay seems to have made the offer of funds to purchase Principal Donaldson's house for the University some years

⁶² The role of 'Principal of the University' was created in 1890, and the first holder was James Donaldson (1831-1915), who had been Principal of the United College since 1886. He and his wife were already living at Scores Park when Hay gave the money for the University to purchase it.

⁶³ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1385278836>

⁶⁴ 'John Hay', *Sydney Mail* (10 June 1893), p.1175 (at <https://peopleaustralia.anu.edu.au/biography/hay-sir-john-21886/text31943>); obituary, *Kiama Independent (NSW)*, (3 March 1909), p.2 (at <https://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/hay-sir-john-21886>); *Guide to the papers of the Berry, Wollstonecraft and Hay families* (State Library of New South Wales, 1993), pp.13-15 (at <https://acms.sl.nsw.gov.au/transcript/2007/D00007/berry1.pdf>); and June Robson, 'Who was John Hay and why should Berry remember him?' *Berry and District Historical Society Inc Chronograph* (Feb-March 2021), p.3-4 (at https://www.berryhistory.org.au/sub/Chronograph_2021_Feb-Mar.pdf)

⁶⁵ John Hay to James Donaldson, 7 Dec. 1896, UStA archives, ms6605.

earlier: some of the professors were aware of this offer in 1892, even though Hay later said that he had requested 'that no public reference be made to it.'⁶⁶)

3.6. Group donors

We have not been able to undertake a full examination of everyone who subscribed to the various 'group' donations. Each subscriber would have been giving relatively small amounts, joining together to raise enough funds for the stated goal. In some cases, subscription lists may reveal more evidence for connections to empire.

For instance, we do not know who subscribed to the funds raised in memory of these deceased professors, but the list probably included donors who shared the dedicatees' interests in overseas missionary activity:

- **Cook (and Macfarlan) Testimonial Prize** (1847): this fund in memory of professor George Cook was organised by his friend Duncan Macfarlan, a minister and Glasgow professor who was heavily involved in the Church of Scotland's missionary activities.
- **Tulloch Memorial Fund Scholarship** (1886): this fund commemorated principal John Tulloch, a respected senior churchman, who was known throughout Scotland for his editorship of the *Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record* in the 1860s and 1870s.

Details do survive in the University archives of (some of the) supporters of the two halls of residence created in the late nineteenth century.

- The '**College Hall**' (sometimes known as 'St Leonard's Hall') opened in 1861 on lands to the west of the old buildings of St Leonard's College. It was sufficiently successful at first that an expansion was opened in 1868. However, the expanded venture failed, and the residence closed in 1874; its building was subsequently sold, and eventually became part of St Leonards School. The funding for the initial College Hall and its expansion was managed through the formation of the **College Hall Company** (1861), so the subscribers were technically 'investors' rather than 'donors'. When Dundee linen manufacturer **David Baxter** (section 3.4.8) gave the University £1,000 for bursaries in 1867, he specifically desired that the funds should not be invested in railway shares or government bonds (as was common) but in the College Hall Company, thus aiding two causes at St Andrews at the same time. Baxter seems to have been advised that the investment would yield 4.5% dividends to fund the bursaries, but he wisely gave the University permission to re-invest the funds if it seemed expedient. Other investors included **Edward Ellice** (section 3.4.7), whose family money came from international interests including the Canadian fur trade and Caribbean sugar estates. More such connections may be revealed by further study of the other subscribers.⁶⁷
- **University Hall** was opened in 1896 to provide residential accommodation for the new wave of women students. The fund-raising had begun four years earlier. The University itself put up £2,000 from the fee income generated by L.L.A. students, and it received a £2,000 grant from the Pfeiffer Bequest Fund (established in the will of Emily Jane Pfeiffer, a philanthropist and supporter of higher education for women). The rest of the funds came from a number of smaller donations, of £25, £50 or £100. It is not straightforward to identify all of these donors (especially those with common surnames and/or non-specific addresses), but we do know that the £100 donors included Dundee jute merchant **Alexander Grimond**, and the

⁶⁶ William C. McIntosh to E.P. Ramsay, 27 Jan. 1892, UStA archives, ms30285; and Hay to Donaldson, 20 Feb. 1900, UStA archives, UYUY110T/C67.

⁶⁷ Details of subscribers can be found in the papers of J. D. Forbes, UStA archives, msdep7/.

marmalade and confectionary manufacturer, **John Keiller** (both listed in Table 3.5.1), whose businesses depended on colonial trade networks, raw materials and markets.

3.7. Looking beyond the donors

The donors themselves are not the only people associated with philanthropy who may be part of a story about St Andrews and empire.

3.7.1. Patrons and later owners of mortified lands

One group of people who are worthy of consideration are those who acted as patrons or trustees of a fund, sometimes decades or centuries after the original donation. In the case of 'presentation bursaries', patrons nominated by the donor had the power to decide who would receive the bursaries. Their decisions could in some (perhaps small) way shape the student body of St Andrews. Patrons were sometimes hereditary lairds or clan chiefs; or they might be organisations such as the Presbytery of Perth. The right of patronage sometimes came with ownership of land affected by a deed of mortification.

For instance, the **Bayne Bursaries** had been established in 1681 by John Bayne (c.1620-1681). The income was originally to come from rents mortified out of Bayne's Pitcairly estate in Fife, but from 1695, the legal responsibility was transferred to the Tulloch estate in Ross-shire. In 1762, this estate, including responsibility for the bursary, was sold by Kenneth Bayne to his cousin **Henry Davidson**, who was heavily involved with the Atlantic world, being both a part-owner of an estate in Grenada and a co-partner in the commercial firm Davidsons Barkly & Co. The Tulloch estate was then inherited by his younger brother, **Duncan Davidson**, a co-partner in the London merchant house of George Chandler, which traded in sugar from the Caribbean. The Bayne bursaries thus demonstrate how a bursary supported by mortified land could become financially entangled with enslavement a hundred years after its original creation. A century later on, the patron of the Bayne bursaries was **Ronald Craufurd Munro Ferguson** (1860-1934, later 1st viscount Novar), who had a brief military career (including service in India) before moving into politics; in 1914, he would become Governor-General of Australia.

3.7.2. Fundraisers

As noted earlier, fundraising would not become a familiar aspect of University finances until the twentieth century, but some of the principals of the later nineteenth century did begin to use their connections to solicit donations. One of the most notable was **James David Forbes** (1809-1868, principal of United College 1859-68). He claimed to have no great aptitude for finances,⁶⁸ but it surely helped that he came from a well-established Edinburgh banking family (which, as we will see, had, two generations earlier, provided financial services to various slave-owning plantation owners in the Caribbean).

When Forbes became principal, he found himself in charge of an organisation in a precarious financial state. In addition to reorganising the finances, he actively lobbied and fund-raised for his particular projects. He was clearly a very effective fund-raiser, with a useful network of family, friends and acquaintances. He seems to have been on good terms with the Chancellor, the Duke of Argyll (with whom he shared some scientific interests), and was able to persuade him to bring his political influence to bear for the benefit of St Andrews.

The **College Hall Company** (section 3.6) was one of Forbes's schemes. Another was the **restoration of St Salvador's Chapel**, which was made possible firstly by Forbes's ability to persuade the government to authorise the Board of Works to carry out (and pay for) repairs to the roof and stone-work; and

⁶⁸ JD Forbes to John Inglis, the Lord Justice Clerk, 10 April 1861, quoted in John Campbell Shairp, Peter Guthrie Tait, and A. Adams-Reilly, *Life and Letters of James David Forbes, FRS* (London, 1873), p.408.

secondly, by his ability to fund-raise for new stained glass windows. He told the Duke of Argyll in 1861 that 'there is every probability that several of the windows will be very soon filled with painted glass through private exertions. The Lord Justice-General has undertaken to fill one⁶⁹; another has been nearly subscribed for the memory of Dr [Thomas] Chalmers;⁷⁰ and two more have been undertaken.'⁷¹ Forbes probably also gave money personally, perhaps for the new seating.

3.7.3. Donor Management

The **Berry bequest** (section 3.5.6) provides a rare example of nineteenth-century University officers engaging in what would now be called cultivating donors, and rewarding those who assisted.

Alexander Berry had died in 1873 without signing a draft will that would have given a large bequest to the University of St Andrews. Senior members of the University were aware of this, and wondered how they – in Scotland – could politely persuade his brother and heir, David Berry – in Australia – to follow through on Alexander's wishes. They were able to draw upon transnational scientific networks to help with a problem acknowledged to be 'an exceedingly delicate and difficult one'. In the early 1880s, the St Andrews professors James Bell Pettigrew (professor of medicine) and William Carmichael McIntosh (professor of natural history) were developing a friendship with the curator of the Australian Museum in Sydney, Edward Pierce Ramsay (more on whom, below).

In 1883, Bell Pettigrew wrote to Ramsay about a possible approach to David Berry, explaining that he had discussed the situation with principal John Tulloch. They were unsure whether the University's approach 'to Mr David Berry should be made either through you or your friend the Hon: James Norton, or both Conjointly. Mr Norton has the advantage of knowing everything, and a word or two from him might be followed up by a donation to the University or an actual Codicil to the Will, or both.' (Norton was a lawyer, but also a keen natural historian.) Bell Pettigrew also assured Ramsay that the University was willing 'to give you a "*quid pro quo*" in return for assistance.'⁷² Ramsay received an honorary LL.D. in 1886; as did Norton in 1890; as did John Hay, the executor of the bequest (section 3.5.7), in 1894.

3.8. Where the money was invested

We did not have the resources to undertake a comprehensive audit of all the University's investments in the period 1700 to 1900, to assess the extent to which the University's investment portfolio could be seen as supporting (or depending upon) colonial and imperial activity. To do so would involve a vast exercise in historic forensic accountancy, complicated by the number of funds involved and the numerous changes in accounting practices over two centuries. Nonetheless, we have learned something about where some of the donations were invested.

Our general impression is that the University's investments portfolio followed wider trends, as the traditional reliance on land was augmented in the nineteenth century by the purchase of government bonds and railway shares.

In 1721, the University's chancellor, the (first) duke of Atholl, expressed surprise that the £1,000 promised by the duke of Chandos for 'a professor of Physick' had not yet arrived in Scotland. He suspected that it might have been delayed by the 'Calamity occasioned by the South Sea

⁶⁹ i.e. Duncan McNeil, Lord Colonsay (1793-1874; MA St Andrews 1809) <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1396511636>. Colonsay's window is still in the chapel.

⁷⁰ The Chalmers' window is now in the Wardlaw museum, <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/memorial-window-dedicated-to-thomas-chalmers/1000915>

⁷¹ Forbes to Argyll, 31 Dec. 1861, quoted in Shairp, Tait, and Adams-Reilly, *Life and letters of Forbes*, p.411. A window in memory of Jessie Playfair (wife of provost Hugh Lyon Playfair) is still in situ. See <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/about/history/st-salvators/stained-glass/>

⁷² Bell Pettigrew to E.P. Ramsay, 23 July 1883, UStA archives 'E.P. Ramsay correspondence re the Berry Bequest'.

mismanagement', which had made it difficult to trust any intermediaries with funds.⁷³ (He was referring to the South Sea Bubble, 1720, now known as the world's first financial crash). The funds clearly did arrive eventually, for in 1758, the masters of the United College were discussing whether the (second) duke of Atholl would continue to hold the funds and give them 4.5% interest, or whether instead to use the funds to purchase land from the duke of Hamilton.⁷⁴

Land was traditionally seen as a 'safe' investment option, and several donors specified that the University should use their funds to purchase land, though John Gray allowed that his bequest might be invested in 'public stocks or funds' or 'Government securities' until suitable land became available.⁷⁵ In his case, it was not until 1830 that the University used his funds, as well as those from Alexander Stewart of Garth, to purchase land at 'New Grange near St Andrews' from Captain Wemyss of Wemysshall.⁷⁶ While it is impossible currently to identify exactly which parcels of land were purchased with the Garth donation, it is safe to say that it was invested in land at The Grange, and that there is therefore at least some connection between colonial activities in India and the general area of University land that is currently being developed for staff and PG accommodation.

As share-holding became more common among the middle and professional classes, in the mid-nineteenth century, the University sometimes received gifts in this form. Thus, in 1868, George Clerk Cheape purchased stock in the Clydesdale Railway specifically for the purpose of transferring it to the University to fund the Cheap Bursary. A few years later, William Tullis similarly gifted the funds for his mathematical prizes in the form of preference stock in the North British Railway Company.⁷⁷

Cheape was one of several donors who gave the University the power to reinvest in what he regarded as responsible investments:

'parliamentary or public stocks or funds of Great Britain... or on heritable or real security in Scotland, or in the purchase of real estate in Scotland, or in the purchase of well-secured feu-duties or ground annuals payable from property in Scotland, or in the purchase or upon the security of any of the stocks, funds, or securities of the Government of India or of the Dominion of Canada..., or in or upon any debenture stocks or shares of any railway company in the East Indies guaranteed at the time of investment by the Government of India, or in or upon the preference or guaranteed stocks, debentures or debenture stocks of any railway company in Great Britain incorporated by Act of Parliament...'⁷⁸

Cheape was a highly successful businessman and his list of appropriate investments shows the continued attractiveness of land and government bonds. It also presents certain colonial investment (government bonds and railways in India, and government bonds in Canada) as equally mainstream.

In 1891, the University did indeed invest the funds for a new lectureship in Botany (from an anonymous donor) in the Scinde, Punjab and Delhi Railway. In the late 1870s, it has also invested the funds raised for an Additional Endowment in the New Zealand 4 ½% Debenture Loan (a form of government borrowing to stimulate the economic development of New Zealand after the wars of the 1860s, by funding railways, roads and immigration).

⁷³ Atholl to the rector of the University, 22 July 1721, UStA archives, UYUY232. [Thanks to Sarah Rodriguez]

⁷⁴ Minutes, 2 Feb. and 6 Feb. 1758, UStA archives, UYUC400, pp.177ff.

⁷⁵ *List of Deeds* (1891), p.39.

⁷⁶ UStA archives, UYUC616-1.

⁷⁷ *List of Deeds* (1891), p.70 (Cheape) and p.77 (Tullis)

⁷⁸ *List of Deeds* (1891), p.71.

3.9. Where the money is now

[We are very grateful to Stuart Halliday for his assistance with this section.]

We asked colleagues in the Finance team to scrutinise the funds linked to the 32 donors whose wealth was, at least partially, derived from empire (including enslavement), with a view to ascertaining how many of these funds were still active in the University.

Some of the gifts on our list have been spent on capital projects (e.g. restoration of the chapel, College Hall, University Hall) and the associated funds no longer exist.

We have been able to identify 24 associated funds that are still active in the University of St Andrews. Eleven of these funds are still independent entities. The other thirteen (including Baxter, Cheape, Simson, Stewart of Garth, Bruce, Russell and Taylour Thomson) are part of an amalgamated 'Lapsed Bursaries' fund that was created in 1961.

- The 6 active funds that can be linked to donors who derived at least part of their wealth from the slave trade or enslaved labour, have a current capital value of £1.24m, and thus account for 1% of the University's current endowment of £113.1m (as of 31 July 2022).
- The 24 active funds that can be linked to donors' wealth that was at least partly derived from colonial or imperial activities (including the 6 above) had a capital value of £4.2m and thus account for just under 4% of the University's current endowment. However, this does not include the Berry bequest.
- We were not able to identify any currently active fund in the University that is explicitly associated with the Berry bequest (despite the ongoing existence of the named Berry Chair in the School of English). A 'Berry Capital Fund' existed until the 1950s, but the funds appear to have been transferred to the general University endowment around that time. Given the size of the bequest, and the current valuation of the University's various unrestricted funds, our best guess is that the Berry funds were absorbed into the fund now known as the United College Chairs Fund. We do not know what proportion of this fund is derived from the Berry bequest. If, for the sake of argument, we let the entire United College Chairs Fund represent the Berry bequest, then the proportion of the University's current endowment that was at least partly derived from colonial or imperial activities would increase to 11%.
- The Chandos and Bell funds are still identifiable, and feed into the general salaries budget. The title of Chandos professor still exists in the Faculty of Medicine; but the title of Bell professor appears to have transferred to the University of Dundee.
- The funds for four prizes are still active, memorialising John Carstairs and Neil Arnott (East India Company surgeons), William Tullis (papermaker), and (jointly) George Cook and Duncan Macfarlan (supporters of missionary activity). (It is not clear what has happened to the Bruce Prize for Logic.)
- 39% of the capital value of the 'Lapsed Bursaries' fund is derived from funds associated with donors who made at least part of their wealth from colonial or imperial activities. Of these, the Taylour Thomson bequest is the largest contributor to that total.
- Of the identifiable and active funds that are still independent (i.e. not merged into 'Lapsed Bursaries'), the largest is the Guthrie Scholarship mortification, with a current capital value of just under £1m.

4. The Academic Community: Professors, Principals and Chancellors

The intellectual and moral culture of the University, as well as the student curriculum, was shaped by the men who ran it. On a day-to-day level, that meant the principals of the colleges, and the professors. These men were not generally donors to the University, but they left a moral and intellectual legacy for future generations.

We have investigated all 125 men who served, for varying lengths of time, as a professor or principal (or both) at the University of St Andrews between 1700 and 1900.⁷⁹ We looked at their family backgrounds, research interests and their personal experiences (if any) of the colonies. We sought to understand what these men knew of, or thought about, enslavement, colonialism and the relations between different peoples and cultures.

We have not included any of those who held the informal post of ‘assistants’, because there is no sound way of tracking the private arrangements made by elderly or infirm professors. For consistency, therefore, we have also excluded the handful of new University assistantships and lectureships that were created in the mid-1890s as part of the implementation of the 1889 Universities Act. This unfortunately entails the exclusion of the first female lecturer, **Alice Marion Umpherston** (1863-1957), who was appointed in 1896 to teach physiology to women students, and later taught at the North Indian School of Medicine and practised as a doctor in medical missions in the Punjab.⁸⁰

We have undertaken a standardised audit on every professor and principal, but not exhaustive research. In some cases, our standard checks revealed that very little is known about an individual or their family, and while it is possible that more specialised genealogical research might reveal more, there is no guarantee it would reveal information relevant to this project. In other cases, our standard checks were sufficient to reveal potential or definite colonial connections; we have followed up some of those stories, but there is undoubtedly more that could be done to establish a finer-grained picture in any future research.

We have also investigated all eight men who served as Chancellor of the University in this period. All are well-known historical figures, and their political careers (and/or their aristocratic or royal families) ensured that they can all be said to have some sort of link to colonialism and empire. We have sought to identify ways in which their political or family or financial activities may have had an impact on the University of St Andrews.

Internal reports on both of these audits – Professors and Principals (working paper B), and Chancellors (working paper C) – can be found on our project website, with more details of methods and sources used.

4.1. *General features of the professoriate*

Of the 125 men who served, for varying lengths of time, as a professor or principal (or both) at the University of St Andrews during the period of our study:

- 54 of them (43%) began their first appointment before 1800.
- Their length of service ranged from 2 years to 64 years, with a median of 21 years. Sixteen of these men served St Andrews for over 40 years.

⁷⁹ Excluding those at University College, Dundee.

⁸⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1416265516>.

- 46% of those appointed before 1800 had received their university education at St Andrews (and only there, as far as records show). Of those appointed after 1800, only 30% were solely educated at St Andrews.
- Being a professor (usually but not only at St Mary's College) could be part of a career pathway within in the Church of Scotland. In total, 49 of our individuals were licensed or ordained: that includes 48% of those appointed before 1840, but only 27% of those appointed after 1840.
- Few of our professors had experience of working at another university before coming to St Andrews, though this became slightly more common in the later nineteenth century.
- Very few senior members of our academic community had any personal experience of any societies or cultures beyond western Europe.⁸¹

4.2. *Personal involvement in enslavement*

We have identified no professors or principals who could be described as an active participant in enslavement during (or before) their employment at St Andrews.

We have identified one case where a professor participated in enslavement after leaving the University. **Gabriel Johnston** (1703-52) was professor of Hebrew & Oriental languages 1722-28, and later became governor of the colony of North Carolina 1733-52. He owned a plantation at Brompton, and in his will, he left 'considerable land and slaves'⁸²

4.3. *Family involvement in enslavement*

There were nine professors **whose families had clear connections to the slave economy**: three of these connections are via parents, three others are via grandparents, and the remaining three involve other close family members who were working in the Caribbean in the period before the abolition of slavery. Some of these men benefited from wealth acquired by their parents' or grandparents' involvement in the ownership or management of plantations, or in providing financial services to such people. And in all nine cases, these family connections – whether of parents, siblings or children – would have shaped the way our professors understood the wider world and the peoples in it.

There are other professors whose fathers and/or fathers-in-law are described as 'merchants' in Glasgow or Edinburgh. It is certainly possible that there are connections to the Virginia or West Indian trade among those merchants, but without further information, it is currently impossible to say.

4.3.1. *Professor Hugh Warrender and the South Sea Company*

Hugh Warrender (c.1707-54, professor of Hebrew & Oriental languages 1728-41) may have benefited financially from the shares **his father** (George Warrender) held in the **South Sea Company**, which worked with the Royal African Company to trade enslaved Africans to the Spanish colonies in the Americas.

4.3.2. *Principal Thomas Tullideph's brothers in Antigua*

Thomas Tullideph (1700-77, professor of Divinity 1734-39, principal of St Leonard's College 1739-47, principal of the United College, 1747-77) had **two brothers** who profited from trade in and to **Antigua**.

⁸¹ Many of the professors in very early eighteenth-century St Andrews professors had spent time in the Netherlands, either at one the Dutch universities, or in political or religious exile. Such travel was less common or necessary after c1720, and decidedly difficult during the wars with France. By the mid-nineteenth century, improved transportation connections made continental tourism easier, and some of our professors had studied at the German universities.

⁸² According to https://www.carolana.com/NC/Royal_Colony/gjohnson.html

Walter Tullideph (1702-1794) lived and worked in Antigua from 1726-57, and features in various scholarly histories of Antigua and the Leeward Islands.⁸³ He was an Edinburgh-trained doctor who also engaged in business by trading commodities sent by his brother **David** (1705?-1771) in London. He became a trusted figure among the plantation owners, taking on duties as factor or manager for absentee owners (including his brother David, who visited Antigua occasionally). On Walter's marriage (1736) he became the owner of the Tremills sugar estate, and increased its size from 127 to 571 acres by 1754, and from 63 enslaved people to 247 enslaved people; the estate was valued at £30,000 by 1757, when he returned to Scotland.⁸⁴ He bought an estate outside Dundee, and there is a street named after him in Dundee.

Walter Tullideph was active in encouraging Scots to go to Antigua. In 1736, just after his marriage, he wrote to his brother Thomas in St Andrews, asking 'if any of our nephews will study Physick [i.e. medicine] and settle as a Planter', so they could help him 'manadge [sic] my Estate and take care of my negroes'.⁸⁵ But in contrast to a similar situation at Caius College, Cambridge (where the brother of the early eighteenth-century Master was the Governor of Virginia),⁸⁶ there is currently no evidence to suggest that Walter Tullideph directed a flow of students from Antigua to St Andrews, though he may perhaps have had something to do with the two Antigua M.D. candidates in the 1740s and 1750s (see section 7.3.5). Further investigation of the surviving Tullideph papers might be fruitful.⁸⁷

4.3.3. Principal George Hill and Jamaica

For at least three years, 1798-1801, **George Hill** (1750-1819, professor of Greek 1772-78, of divinity 1778-91, and principal of St Mary's 1791-1819) was in close correspondence with **the slave-owning Taylor family of Jamaica**. He boarded the heir of that family for two years while he studied at St Andrews; and decided to send **his own eldest son** to Jamaica.

Simon Taylor (1740-1813) was a major resident slave-owner in Jamaica (1,600 enslaved men, women and children on his various sugar estates in 1792). He was one of the wealthiest men in Jamaica (and in Britain), and was active in the campaigns to defend the practice of chattel slavery.⁸⁸ His heir was his London-based nephew **Simon Richard Brissett Taylor** (1783-1815), who had already inherited his deceased father's estate (including Jamaican property). The nephew spent the academic years 1798-1800 in St Andrews, boarding with the Hill family.⁸⁹ The Taylor family letters would merit further investigation. They include correspondence between young Simon and his uncle in Jamaica (and uncle Robert in London), reporting on his experiences in St Andrews.⁹⁰

⁸³ On Walter Tullideph, see Natalie A. Zacek, *Settler Society in the English Leeward Islands, 1670-1776* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 105-110. Some of his correspondence was published in Richard B. Sheridan, 'Letters from a Sugar Plantation in Antigua, 1739-1758,' *Agricultural History* 31, no. 3 (1957): 3-23.

⁸⁴ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146640521>

⁸⁵ Walter Tullideph to Thomas Tullideph, 28 April 1736, quoted in Zacek, *Settler Society in the English Leeward Islands*, p.108.

⁸⁶ See section 4.4.2 of the University of Cambridge report, at <https://www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/history/legacies-of-enslavement/advisory-group-on-legacies-of-enslavement-final-report>

⁸⁷ Both the National Library of Scotland and the Scottish Record Office hold papers and correspondence of Walter Tullideph. The University of St Andrews holds Thomas Tullideph's common-place book.

⁸⁸ Simon Taylor: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/104876> and <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146634174>

⁸⁹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/ec34a7ebee9da8270b9234ca9749612b>

⁹⁰ The Taylor family letters are held at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London. This account is based on the detailed catalogue of the letters made for the microfilm edition by Adam Matthew http://www.ampltd.co.uk/digital_guides/plantation_life_in_the_carribean_part_1/documents/DetailedListingReels8to17.pdf

There are also letters between George Hill and the two uncles, reporting on their nephew's progress; and discussing the plans to send **John Hill** (1783-1800) to Jamaica.⁹¹ Simon Taylor informed George Hill of his son's arrival in May 1800, and of his death in October 1800. John Hill died on Simon Taylor's Holland Estate, but it is currently unknown whether he was employed there or visiting. Taylor had bought the estate in 1771; by 1804, it was described as 'a sugar estate with a cattle mill, a windmill and two watermills', and (in 1810) as having 610 enslaved people.⁹² In spring 1800 (and despite his year of medical training at Edinburgh), John Hill had apparently been given the option of working in Taylor's counting house, or becoming a planter.⁹³

Read more on our website: '[The colonial ambitions of Principal George Hill](#)'

4.3.4. Professor Robert Briggs and British Guiana

Robert Briggs (1768-1840, Chandos professor of chemistry 1811-40) had married a widow, and became stepfather to her young children. One of his **stepsons** was James Syme Struthers (1800-1858), who studied at St Andrews and then went into the ministry. He had the charge of St Andrews parish, **British Guiana** from 1826 to 1857, right through the period of emancipation and 'apprenticeship'.⁹⁴

4.3.5. Professor Arthur Connell, grandson of a Glasgow West India merchant

The paternal grandfather of **Arthur Connell** (1794-1863, professor of Chemistry 1840-62) was also called Arthur Connell (1717-75), and had been a West India merchant in Glasgow. The commercial success of Somervell, Connell & Co. had been based on multiple colonial interests, including tobacco, and the import of sugar grown by enslaved people in Jamaica.⁹⁵

4.3.6. Professor William Young Sellar and the Bahamas

William Young Sellar (1825-90, professor of Greek 1859-63) married into the Glasgow trading and banking family of Dennistoun in 1852. His **mother-in-law** Eleanor Jane Dennistoun (née Thomson) came from a family with business interests in Nassau, which may explain why her husband Alexander Dennistoun had received 'compensation' in 1837 for 25 enslaved people in the Bahamas.⁹⁶ The previous generation of the Dennistoun family had built up a successful banking and mercantile house, specialising in cotton and tobacco, and our professor's **father-in-law** continued to run this business.

4.3.7. Principal James David Forbes, grandson of a banker

The paternal grandfather of **James David Forbes** (1809-1868, principal of United College 1859-68) was William Forbes (1739-1806), a **successful Edinburgh banker** from the 1760s onwards. Forbes, Hunter & Co provided the financial backing for a variety of trading concerns, and for a while in the 1770s, managed the re-export of **Virginia tobacco** to France.⁹⁷ Our principal was the youngest son of the third generation and not actively involved in running the family business, but he would have benefited from the inherited wealth and the accumulated social capital. As we have seen (section 3.7.2), he was able to use his social and political connections to the University's favour when he undertook some of the first conscious efforts at fund-raising in the 1860s.

⁹¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386157756>

⁹² <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/3248>

⁹³ John Hill's options are mentioned in a letter George Hill to Henry Dundas, 3 May 1800, UStA archives <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/letter-from-george-hill-to-henry-dundas-concerning-john-hill/2006294>

⁹⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1413502812>

⁹⁵ Stephen Mullen, 'Glasgow, Slavery and Atlantic Commerce: An Audit of Historic Connections and Modern Legacies,' (Glasgow, 2022), p.78

⁹⁶ Mullen cites Tom Devine, *The Tobacco Lords*, p.179 for the Dennistouns. See also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Dennistoun and <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146002337>

⁹⁷ <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9848>. For tobacco, see William Forbes, *Memoirs of a Banking House* [composed c1803] (Edinburgh, 2nd edn, 1860), pp.27-8.

4.3.8. Professor Matthew Forster Heddle and his Senegalese-born half-sister

Matthew Forster Heddle (1826-1897, professor of chemistry, 1862-84) came from an Orkney family with familial and financial connections to **Senegal**. His father Robert and uncle John had both served in the Royal African Corps: his uncle John was an army surgeon from 1797 to his death in 1812; and Robert was army paymaster (and merchant) from 1804 to 1817. The Royal African Corps had originally been created from deserters and convicts (with officers from the regular regiments), but after the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, it also recruited formerly enslaved people. It was involved both in the ending of the slave trade, and in policing the lives of formerly enslaved people. Our professor grew up on an estate in Orkney that his father Robert was able to purchase due to the £90,000 fortune he had amassed in west Africa.

In addition to this financial connection, the extended Heddle family included the children fathered by Robert and John with women in Senegal. Two of his uncle John's sons were educated in Scotland, with one going on to serve in the Bombay Medical Service, and the other becoming a successful merchant trading between Sierra Leone, London and Scotland.⁹⁸ These cousins were over a decade older than our professor, and there is no indication whether he knew (of) them or not. However, surviving correspondence indicates that he did know of his Senegalese-born half sisters, particularly Emily. Robert Heddle had taken his four daughters to London for schooling, and moved them to Edinburgh in the late 1820s. Three of the girls died young. The survivor, Emily (c.1818-1894), was in regular contact with her father's second family, and sometimes visited them in Orkney. Matthew Forster Heddle, ten years her junior, resided with her for at least some of the time he attended school and university in Edinburgh.⁹⁹

Read more on our website: '[Matthew Forster Heddle \(1828-97\) and Africa](#)'

4.3.9. Professor Alleyne Nicholson and the Barbados grandparents

The paternal grandmother of (Henry) **Alleyne Nicholson** (1844-99, professor of Natural History 1875-82) came from a well-established **Barbados** plantation family (the Alleynes), and his paternal grandfather had been president of Codrington College in Barbados from 1797 to 1821. The college was supported by a plantation that used enslaved labour. The Nicholson family was already settled back in Britain by the 1830s, but links were maintained to relatives in Barbados. Our professor's younger sister visited in 1860, but we have no evidence whether Alleyne Nicholson ever did.¹⁰⁰

4.4. Personal experience of colonialism or empire

Very few of our academic community had any personal experience of life beyond Europe. We have been able to identify five professors who had spent any substantial period of their life living/working beyond Europe before coming to St Andrews.

James Simson (1740-1770, professor of medicine 1764-70) had apparently served as a naval surgeon early in his career, which probably implies overseas service.

⁹⁸ On Charles WM Heddle (1811/12-1889), see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/49291>

⁹⁹ Detailed family history is from Joan Heddle 'The family of Heddle of Cletts and Melsetter' (1972; published online by JP Morton, 2006), <http://x.heddle.com/FamilyOfHeddleOfCletts.htm>. And also Hamish H. Johnston, *Matthew Forster Heddle: mineralogist and mountaineer* (Edinburgh, 2015)

¹⁰⁰ Annie Elizabeth Nicholson, later Mrs Alexander Ireland (1842-1893) described her visit to Barbados in her memoir *Longer Flights* (published 1898). See <https://johnirelandmusicpeopleplaces.wordpress.com/2016/06/12/when-annie-went-to-barbadoes/>

William MacDonald (1797-1875, professor of civil and natural history 1850-75) had emigrated with his family to **Ontario** in 1844, before returning to Scotland to take up the chair at St Andrews.¹⁰¹

William Brown (1799-1868, professor of Biblical Criticism 1851-68) had ministered to the Church of Scotland community in Buenos Aires, **Argentina** from 1826-50, before returning to Fife to become a professor.

Thomas Purdie (1843-1916, professor of Chemistry 1885-1909) had also spent time in **Argentina**. His uncle had business interests in Spain and Spanish America, and our future professor went to Spain after finishing his schooling, and then spent seven years (1863-70) working on a cattle ranch/estate in Argentina. He then decided to go to university in St Andrews and London to study science.

Alleyne Nicholson (1844-99, professor of Natural History 1875-82) had held posts at university college, **Toronto** (1871-74), as well as Durham (1874-75), before coming to St Andrews.

We also note that **Hugh Cleghorn** (1752-1836, professor of Civil History, 1773-93) made two trips to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) on behalf of the East India Company. He had previously undertaken some foreign relations work in Switzerland for the government in the early 1790s. After resigning his professorship, he helped to arrange the transfer of Ceylon from Dutch to British control in 1795, and served as colonial secretary for a short while. He returned to Fife, and used his payment from the East India Company to buy the estate of Stravithie, just outside St Andrews.¹⁰²

Read more on our website: '[Hugh Cleghorn \(1752–1836\), slavery and Sri Lanka](#)'

4.5. Family connections to colonialism and empire

We have found many examples of senior members of the University with close family connections to colonialism and empire. The experiences of parents, siblings or children would have shaped our professors' understanding of the wider world and their attitudes to the peoples in it.

Due to the nature of the surviving sources, we know more about the activities of fathers, brothers and sons than of mothers, sisters and daughters, so the examples in this section must be seen as demonstrating the sorts of connections that our professors had, without any claim to being exhaustive.

Our professors do not tend to have come from families closely involved in international trade or commerce (though some exceptions were noted above). We do have several professors whose fathers had seen military service in the colonies, and several whose brothers had colonial careers.

The most common connection, however, arises from **the professors' children**. It is clear that many of the St Andrews professors had sons whose occupations took them overseas, often to British colonies; and at least some of their daughters married men who followed similar trajectories. This meant that **many professorial families in nineteenth-century St Andrews had at least one or two sons or daughters (and often young grandchildren) in British India; and, more rarely, in Australia or Canada**. These extended families were actively participating in British colonialism. Correspondence between these younger generations and their parents would have formed an important conduit through which information about other societies and cultures flowed to St Andrews.

¹⁰¹ This information comes from the entry on his son Godfrey, in *Album of Genealogy and Biography: Cook County Illinois* (4th edn, Chicago, 1896), pp.365-66 [thanks to Conall Treen].

¹⁰² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1372936268>

4.5.1. British India

We have found many examples of professors who had sons or daughters in India or Ceylon. The sons and sons-in-law often had positions as military officers, or civil servants – but less often as doctors or ministers despite (as section 7.4.4 will show) the prevalence of such career options among St Andrews alumni. (Many, but not all, of the sons and sons-in-law were also St Andrews alumni.)

Our earliest examples are **from the end of the eighteenth century**, though this may reflect the fact that it is easier to find information about family members for the nineteenth-century professors than for their eighteenth-century predecessors.

John Adamson (1742-1808, professor of civil history 1793-1808) had five sons, two of whom seem to have been pursuing careers in the **East Indies**: Laurence died at Calcutta in 1789, and Robert died in the East Indies in 1799.¹⁰³

Three of the sons of **James Playfair** (1738-1819, principal of United College 1800-1819) were **in India** during his time in St Andrews. George Playfair (1782-1846) was in the Army Medical service, and became chief inspector of hospitals in Bombay (married, with children, in India); William D. Playfair (1783-1852) was an officer in the East India Company army; and Hugh Lyon Playfair (1786-1861) served in the artillery branch of the EIC army in Bengal c1804-1817 (and again after his father's death, to 1834)

After the eldest son of **George Hill** died in Jamaica (see section 4.3.3), two of Hill's younger **sons went to India**.¹⁰⁴ David Hill (1786-1866) went into East India Company service sometime after his 1804 M.A., and rose to become the company's chief secretary in Madras by 1824.¹⁰⁵ Joseph Hill (1781-1811) also went into the East India Company, but in its 'maritime service'; he died at David's house in Madras.¹⁰⁶

James Hunter (1771-1845, professor of Logic, 1804-1845) had **two sons and a daughter** in India. Lt Francis J. Hunter (d.1831) and Lt Charles Hunter (d.1833) both served in **Bengal** for the East India Company's army. Their sister Jessie Hadow Hunter (1818-1845) moved to India on her marriage to George Buist, a St Andrews alumnus who had become a journalist and editor in **Bombay** (and was the nephew of professor George Buist, below).

William Ferrie (1782-1850, professor of civil history, 1808-50) had **two sons** serving in the **East India Company's armies**. Robert Ferrie (1817-46) was a lieutenant in Bengal from 1836 till his death in 1846;¹⁰⁷ and Joseph M. Ferrie (b.1816) served in Madras from 1837, but was dismissed for drunkenness in 1840.¹⁰⁸

The eldest son of **George Buist** (1779-1860, professor of Hebrew & Oriental Languages 1817-23 and then of Ecclesiastical History 1823-60) served in the **Bengal** cavalry and died in Afghanistan in 1842.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ Bare details of his children are listed in *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae: The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland*, 7 vols (Edinburgh, 1866-1928), vol 5.

<https://archive.org/details/fastiecclesiae05scot/page/236/mode/1up?view=theater> Robert was a former student of St Andrews, see <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1362903164>

¹⁰⁴ The careers of Hill's sons (and, in some cases, early deaths) are mentioned in George Cook, *The Life of the Late George Hill, D.D.* (Edinburgh, 1820), p.337 and p.350.

¹⁰⁵ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386058580>

¹⁰⁶ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386193732>

¹⁰⁷ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1379683036>

¹⁰⁸ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1379677548>

¹⁰⁹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1369951748>

Two sons of **George Cook** (c1772-1845, professor of Moral Philosophy 1828-1845) were in India: George Cook (b.1812) spent two decades as a Church of Scotland chaplain in **Bombay** from 1841;¹¹⁰ while Henry David Cook (1814-82) began his legal career with the East India Company at **Madras**, later becoming a judge at Kozhikode and Kovai, India 1857-70.¹¹¹

David Brewster (1781-1868, principal of United College, 1838-59) had **two sons in India** during his time at St Andrews: James Brewster (1812-52) was in the Indian civil service from 1832 till his death; and his younger brother David Edward Brewster (1815- after 1863) was an officer in the Indian Army. Both men married while in India.

William Macdonald had **two sons in India** (as well as a son in North America): Lorne Macdonald (d.1883) rose to major in the 34th Bengal Native Infantry, while William Macdonald (d.1884) rose to colonel in the 12th Bengal Native Infantry. Both died in India.¹¹²

Susan, daughter of **James Frederick Ferrier** (1808-1864, professor of Moral Philosophy 1845-64), married Sir Alexander Grant (1826-1884) in 1859. He came from a family who had owned enslaved people both in Jamaica and British Guiana and in the Danish West Indies until 1848. After their marriage, Susan and Alexander Grant went to **Bombay**, where he became a professor at the Elphinstone Institution and (in 1863) vice-chancellor of the University of Bombay.

Two of the daughters of **John Tulloch** (1823-1886, principal of St Mary's College, 1854-86) spent some time in **Ceylon** after their marriages.¹¹³

One of the sons of **John Birrell** (1836-1902, professor of Hebrew & Oriental Languages 1871-1902) went into **the Indian civil service** after graduation in the mid-1890s (and then went on to a diplomatic career).¹¹⁴

The only professors we have identified who themselves came from families with a recent history of service in India both came to St Andrews in the 1860s:

The father of **John Campbell Shairp** (1819-85, professor of Humanity 1861-71, and Principal of United College 1868-85) was Norman Shairp, who had served in the East India Company military from 1799 to 1816, rising to major during the wars with the French.

The father of **Oswald Home Bell** (1835-1875, professor of medicine 1863-75) was an officer in the 12th Madras Native Infantry, and later in the Indian Army. Our professor was born in Scotland, but his six siblings were all born in Madras or Penang, presumably reflecting his father's military postings.¹¹⁵

4.5.2. Australia and Canada

The administrative structures of the East India Company (and later, the Indian Civil Service) provided a relatively clear point of access to, and a structure for, many careers in India. In contrast, our professors' connections to the 'settler colonies' of Australia and Canada seem more varied and *ad hoc*.

¹¹⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1373644132>

¹¹¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1373668620>

¹¹² This information comes from the entry on their brother Godfrey, in *Album of Genealogy and Biography: Cook County Illinois* (4th edn, Chicago, 1896), pp.366.

¹¹³ Margaret Oliphant, *A memoir of the life of John Tulloch* (Edinburgh, 1888), p.311 and p.475.

¹¹⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1367111676>

¹¹⁵ John Charles Bell (b.1839) <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1366420292>

William Young Sellar was unusual among the professors in having strong connections to international trade. As well as marrying into the Dennistoun trading and banking family (see above), four of his **brothers** were merchants of various sorts. They included Robert Sellar (1828-1900), who had emigrated to **Australia** in 1853, initially working for J&A Dennistoun, and went on to set up on his own firm exporting merino wool.¹¹⁶

William MacDonald had returned to Scotland after six years in Ontario, but his son Godfrey Macdonald (1829-1910) re-emigrated to **Ontario** in 1852, and later moved to Chicago, where he became wealthy in the railroad freight business. His son (Charles Blair MacDonald, 1855-1939) would come to study with his grandfather at St Andrews in the early 1870s (and later became an eminent designer of golf courses).¹¹⁷

Alleyne Nicholson had family in **Australia**, as well as his distant cousins in Barbados. One of his **brothers** (John Henry Nicholson, 1838-1923)¹¹⁸ was a school teacher in Queensland, Australia from 1859 onwards, and an uncle (Mark Nicholson, 1818-1889)¹¹⁹ had returned to his estates in Victoria, Australia in the 1870 and 1880s.

The two eldest sons of **Alexander Ferrier Mitchell** (1822-1899, professor of Hebrew & Oriental Languages 1848-68, and of Ecclesiastical History, 1868-94) set out to emigrate to New Zealand around 1875, but the elder died in South Australia.¹²⁰ The surviving brother, Johnstone Mitchell, then settled in South **Australia**, initially as a road surveyor, then working for the local council.¹²¹

The younger brother of **Andrew Seth** (1856-1931, professor of Logic, Rhetoric & Metaphysics, 1887-91) was also an academic, and both **brothers** would eventually become professors at Edinburgh. While Andrew Seth was at St Andrews, James Seth (1860-1925) was a professor at Dalhousie college in **Nova Scotia**.

4.6. Chancellors

We also investigated the eight men who acted as Chancellor between 1700 and 1900. The Chancellor is and was the most senior officer of the University, with the power to award higher degrees. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Chancellors delegated the majority of their powers to a vice-chancellor, usually chosen from one of the college principals; and Chancellors were not, therefore, significant figures within the community on a day-to-day basis. Most Chancellors visited the University rarely if at all, although giving speeches to the professors and students came to be expected by the nineteenth century. They were all well-known figures, about whom much scholarship already exists.

Almost all of the Chancellors had family links and/or political involvement with colonial and imperial activity. Two were royal dukes with military careers who seem to have done very little for St Andrews (duke of Cumberland, duke of Cambridge), but the other six came from aristocratic families, and had significant political careers. Several were involved in war and foreign policy, including the reform of the

¹¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Sellar

¹¹⁷ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1393642788> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_B._Macdonald

¹¹⁸ <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nicholson-john-henry-4298>

¹¹⁹ <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nicholson-mark-4299>

¹²⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1399726500>

¹²¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1399673836>. The story about the emigration, and his later career, comes from 'A social at Lyndoch: Farewell to Messrs Mitchell and Springbett', *Bunyip* [a newspaper in South Australia], 13 May 1904, p.3

East India Company, and responses to the US Civil War. We have focused on ways in which their political or family or financial activities had an impact on the University of St Andrews.

Even when mostly absent, Chancellors might have influenced the University and its community as donors, as political brokers, or as patrons.

4.6.1. Chancellors as donors

The duke of **Chandos** (section 3.4.2) and the earl of **Kinnoull** (section 3.4.10) have already been discussed as donors, and both feature in our online feature stories (though note that Chandos only became Chancellor *after* his donation). All the post-Kinnoull Chancellors appear to have continued his example of providing funds for an annual or biannual ‘Chancellor’s Prize’.

4.6.2. Chancellors as political brokers

Given their political careers and connections, the Chancellors could be valuable political go-betweens for the University, and could lobby the government on the University’s behalf regarding appointments, reforms or finances. For instance, the earl of Kinnoull advised the colleges on petitioning for exemption to the window tax in the 1780s;¹²² viscount Melville helped secure the government grant that funded the reconstruction of the north wing of United College in the late 1820s, as well as presenting the University’s petition urging the abolition of slavery in 1826 (see section 5.1); and the University expressed its (posthumous) gratitude to the duke of Argyll for ‘his readiness to give the aid of his counsel and active effort whenever occasion demanded’.¹²³

It is sometimes assumed that Chancellors (especially in the eighteenth century) had some influence over professorial appointments, and thus over the intellectual shape and tone of the University community. Roger Emerson’s monograph has conclusively shown that patronage was indeed central to many academic appointments in Scotland throughout the eighteenth century; that appointments in this period were strongly influenced by a candidate’s perceived political loyalty and religious orthodoxy; and that this did shape the intellectual community of St Andrews right into the early nineteenth century.¹²⁴ However, his work does not suggest that the Chancellors of St Andrews had a very prominent role in exercising this patronage: the more important figures were the political managers of Scotland, the earl of Ilay (later 3rd duke of Argyll) in the first half of the century, and, from the mid-1770s onwards, **Henry Dundas** (1742–1811, Chancellor 1788–1811; created first viscount Melville, 1802). For almost his entire time as Chancellor of the university, Dundas held high political office and was generally rather busy in London. It is clear that Dundas was influencing appointments (albeit to varying degrees) at all the Scottish universities in the later eighteenth century, not just St Andrews.

Dundas’s involvement in both the Scots legal debate about slavery and the UK parliamentary debate about abolition of the slave trade is already well-known (see also section 5.1). In the St Andrews context, we have found more evidence of the impact of his role in the East India Company, as the next section will show.

4.6.3. Chancellors as patrons

Their family and political connections meant that Chancellors were also potentially useful as patrons, for instance for professors seeking appointments for their sons or students (or themselves) in the church, politics, or the East India Company. The most obvious example of this is **Henry Dundas**, who had begun his career as a lawyer, became an M.P., held high office, and also held a large number of

¹²² Correspondence from 1782, in the UStA archives, including UYSM110/B17/P2/19.

¹²³ Ina Erskine Campbell, ed. *George Douglas, 8th duke of Argyll, 1823–1900: autobiography and memoirs*, 2 vols. (London, 1906), vol. 2, p.588.

¹²⁴ Emerson, *Academic patronage*, especially Chs 13–17 (on St Andrews).

sinecure appointments. In 1800, he was caricatured sitting on top of a pile of such appointments, including 'Commissioner for India Affairs' as well as 'Chancellor of the University of St Andrews'.¹²⁵

Dundas is another example of someone who had political and family **interests in both the Caribbean and India**. One brother married into a plantation-owning family in **Antigua** in the 1770s; and two other brothers served in **India**: one died in Calcutta, the other in Bengal. Dundas worked with prime minister William Pitt on the reform of the East India Company's operations in India (including the India Act 1784, and the new Company charter in 1793), and he became president of the Company's new Board of Control in the 1790s. His son, **Robert Saunders Dundas** (2nd viscount Melville) would later hold the same role (1807-12), and would chair the select committee that oversaw yet more reforms in the EIC and another new charter in 1813.

Henry Dundas (and later Robert Saunders Dundas) was thus in an excellent position to dispense patronage to young (and not so young) Scots, including those associated with St Andrews. We have already seen (section 3.5.3) how Margaret Bruce's uncle, **John Bruce**, amassed a fortune from his political assistance to Henry Dundas, particularly on the East India question. It was also through Dundas's influence that professor **Hugh Cleghorn** came to work for the East India Company in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) (see section 4.4). And the surviving correspondence between Dundas and **George Hill** shows how a university professor could solicit patronage for his sons. As principal and chancellor, Hill and Dundas worked closely together, and were on cordial terms, regularly sending regards to the other's wife. As Hill's sons grew up, he sought Dundas's help and advice. At Christmas 1805, he was thanking Dundas for helping secure a position in the East India Company administration for David. In 1808, he was telling Dundas about Alexander's plans to enter the Church of Scotland. In 1810, he was seeking advice about Henry, who wished to enter the law (which had been Dundas's original profession), and he was thanking Dundas for intervening to secure Joseph a more senior berth on one of the East India Company's ships. As well as gracious thanks, Hill made a point of regularly reporting to Dundas how they – especially David – were doing, as a way of demonstrating that Dundas had been right to show trust in the Hill family.¹²⁶

Read more on our website: ['Politics, Patronage and Personal Ties: Henry Dundas \(1742-1811\) and St Andrews'](#)

¹²⁵ Isaak Cruikshank (1800) 'A flight across the herring pool' (featuring Dundas and William Pitt), CC-BY-NC-SA https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1868-0808-6899

¹²⁶ The letters are catalogued and digitised as part of the Dundas Papers, held at UStA, ms4786.

5. Ideas & Inquiry

As part of our investigations of the people of the University, we also looked for evidence about research interests, teaching or other intellectual activities within the University that might touch on enslavement, colonialism and empire. There is potential to do more in this area.

5.1. The university and abolitionism

The University of St Andrews has a chequered history of engagement with the cause of abolition of slavery. In the years around 1790, the academic community in St Andrews was notable for its lack of enthusiasm for petitions calling for the abolition of the slave trade; whereas in 1826, the University did send a petition calling for the abolition of slavery. In the late eighteenth century, its Chancellor was Henry Dundas, whose involvement in the abolition debates is still hotly contested; but in the late nineteenth century, its Chancellor was the duke of Argyll, who was notable for his public support of the abolition cause in the United States.

The University has tangential connections to two of the three early Scottish legal cases concerning slavery:

In 1769, **Henry Spens** (1714-1787), then the minister of Wemyss Church (but from 1779, professor of Divinity) baptised Manasela Embenka, an enslaved servant from Grenada, under the new name of David Spens. David Spens then declared his freedom, on the grounds he was not a 'heathen'. His 'owner', David Dalrymple, went to court to assert his claim to Spens and his services. A decision was never reached in *Dalrymple vs Spens and Henderson* (1769-70) because Dalrymple died; and so Spens was by default free.¹²⁷

In 1777, **Henry Dundas** (then Lord Advocate, and not yet Chancellor of St Andrews) was, in a private capacity, one of several advocates advising Joseph Knight in the case of *Knight vs Wedderburn*. Knight had been 'purchased' by Wedderburn in Jamaica, and had returned with him to Perthshire. He and his legal team successfully convinced the Court of Session that slavery was incompatible with Scots law.¹²⁸

The organised campaign to abolish the slave trade began in the late 1780s.¹²⁹ In 1788, a variety of organisations, communities and institutions across the UK, including many from Scotland, sent petitions to parliament calling for the abolition of the trade. Glasgow and Aberdeen universities were among those sending petitions, but the University of St Andrews did not participate. This was said by a contemporary to be due to the 'indifference' of the principal (i.e. **Joseph MacCormick**, principal of the United College) and some other academics.

In 1792, there was an even bigger wave of petitions, but again, the University of St Andrews did not send a petition. However, the presbytery of St Andrews (i.e. the local churches) wished to do so. This plan was opposed by both MacCormick, and **George Hill**, principal of St Mary's College. Iain Whyte, who has made a study of Scottish campaigns for abolition, describes Hill as the source of 'some of the most strident opposition [in Scotland] to presbytery petitions on the slave trade'.¹³⁰ In Whyte's words, Hill claimed to 'agree entirely with the spirit of the petition', but objected to petitions as a mode of

¹²⁷ On the legal case, see <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/learning/slavery/dalrymple-v-spens-and-henderson-1769-70>.

¹²⁸ On the legal case, see <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/learning/slavery/slavery-freedom-or-perpetual-servitude-the-joseph-knight-case>

¹²⁹ This discussion draws upon Iain Whyte, *Scotland and the Abolition of Black Slavery, 1756-1838* (Edinburgh, 2006).

¹³⁰ *Scotland and the abolition of black slavery*, Ch.8

influencing parliament.¹³¹ The presbytery sent the petition anyway. Whether Hill already had contacts in Jamaica in 1792 (five years before he would host Simon Taylor's nephew) is not yet known.

The House of Commons did debate William Wilberforce's bill to abolish the slave trade in 1792, and one of the M.P.s who spoke was **Henry Dundas** (now also Chancellor). It was he who moved the amendment that helped secure the first majority for abolition; however, that amendment changed the proposal from 'immediate' to 'gradual' abolition. Opinion varies as to whether Dundas should be remembered for supporting abolition, or delaying it.¹³² For **William Spalding** (1809-59, professor of Logic, Rhetoric & Metaphysics, 1845-59), writing fifty years later about the history of abolition, Dundas's 'dexterous management' of the amendment made him 'one of the most dangerous enemies of the measure'.¹³³ Despite passing in the House of Commons, in amended form, abolition was repeatedly blocked in the House of Lords, and then delayed by the wars with France. Abolition of the slave trade was finally enacted in 1807.

Whether the other senior members of the University shared MacCormick, Hill and Dundas's lack of enthusiasm for the campaign for abolition is not clear. But we might presume that, had he been in St Andrews at the time, **Hugh Cleghorn** might not have done: as we will see (in section 5.3 and [online feature story](#)), his lectures in the late 1780s seem to have been highly critical of slavery.

Others connected to the University contributed to the debates around enslavement. Alumnus and donor **John Gray** (c.1724-1811, see section 3.4.10 and online [feature story](#)) had become a political secretary in London, and wrote pamphlets on a variety of economic and political topics. In 1792, his *Essay on the Abolition, not only of the African Slave Trade, but of Slavery in the British West Indies* tried to win over the powerful West India merchants, not by moral or humanitarian arguments, but by arguing that chattel slavery was financially inefficient.

The next wave of campaigning came in the late 1820s, and the goal was complete abolition of the institution of slavery. **Thomas Chalmers** (1780-1847, professor of Moral Philosophy 1823-28) wrote a pamphlet *A Few Thoughts on the Abolition of Colonial Slavery* (1826), and instigated a petition from the *Senatus Academicus* of the University of St Andrews. **Francis Nicoll** (1770-1835, principal of United College 1819-35) differed from Chalmers on various aspect of church and university politics, but nonetheless agreed to send the petition to the Chancellor (Robert Dundas, viscount Melville) to present to parliament. A certain lack of enthusiasm may be traced in Nicoll's confession to Melville that he personally felt the petition was unnecessary, given that the campaign for abolition already appeared likely to succeed.¹³⁴

After leaving the University, Chalmers would be instrumental in the schism that created the Free Church of Scotland in 1843. While seeking funds to build new churches, the leaders of the Free Church reached out to American churches. For this reason, Chalmers would be excoriated by the US abolitionist (and formerly enslaved person) Frederick Douglass. Douglass toured and lectured in

¹³¹ Presbytery of St Andrews, Minutes, 20 Mar, 2 May 1792. NAS CH2/1132/8, cited in *Scotland and the abolition of black slavery*, Ch. 3

¹³² For instance, compare Stephen Mullen, 'Henry Dundas: A "Great Delayer" of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade', *Scottish Historical Review* 100 (2021): 218-48; and Guy Rowlands, 'Injustice & The Casting of Blame in History: The Melville Monument and Edinburgh's Confrontation with Its Imperial Past' *History Reclaimed* (15 Dec. 2021), <https://historyreclaimed.co.uk/injustice-the-casting-of-blame-in-history-the-melville-monument-and-edinburghs-confrontation-with-its-imperial-past/>

¹³³ [Spalding], 'Slavery', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (7th edn, 1842), vol. 20.

¹³⁴ On Scottish petitions in 1826, see Whyte, *Scotland and the abolition of black slavery*, Ch.6. For the letter from Nicoll to Melville, see UStA archives, <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/letter-from-francis-nicoll-to-robert-saunders-dundas-re-petition-against-slavery/2002099>

Scotland in 1846 – he spoke several times in Dundee, as well as in Leven and Kirkcaldy, but not St Andrews – and he attacked Chalmers for refusing to break off relations with churches in the American South whose ministers and members were complicit in the continuation of slavery.¹³⁵

By the 1840s, professor **William Spalding** could write about slavery in the 7th edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as if it were an obvious moral evil whose international extirpation was being led by the British. He referred to the trade in human beings as a ‘hateful commerce’, and traced some of its history from Biblical and ancient times to the transatlantic trade of recent times. Much of his article was, however, a detailed description of British efforts to abolish the slave trade, and the institution of slavery, from the 1780s to the 1830s. While certainly condemning ‘this dark blot of the civilized world’, his account was also part of a celebratory narrative that would become widespread in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Britain.¹³⁶ By presenting abolition as a morally progressive act, he overlooked those who had supported abolition on the grounds of the supposed waning economic returns of slavery. And by focusing on the passing of parliamentary legislations, he made abolition seem far more clear-cut than it was in practice. For instance, some plantation owners in British overseas colonies found ways around the ban on the slave trade in 1807, by seeking new sources of enslaved labour in the neighbouring colonies of other European powers who had yet to abolish the trade. And after emancipation in the 1830s, some plantation owners replaced enslaved labour with a system of indentured labour that involved the migration of tens of thousands of workers from India and China on binding multi-year contracts. This new form of racialised cheap labour would continue into the early twentieth century.

Spalding acknowledged that ‘the evil is not yet entirely eradicated, even where its atrocities have been most decisively condemned’ and directed his readers’ attention to those nations in which ‘no acknowledgment of error has yet been extorted.’¹³⁷ After the 1830s, British campaigners had shifted their attention to other countries, and particularly to the southern United States. From 1851, the University had as its Chancellor a senior politician who was a noted opponent of slavery in the United States and friend to US abolitionists – though there is as yet no evidence that this affected the University. George John Douglas Campbell, 8th **duke of Argyll** (1823–1900) derived some part of his wealth from his maternal grandfather, and thus from the production and sale of Virginia tobacco.¹³⁸ He later wrote that he had grown up in a home that ‘was not ... in sympathy with the abolition of negro slavery. My father's few commercial friends were generally more or less connected with West Indian property, and my father had not personally a favourable opinion of the negroes...’¹³⁹ However, the future 8th duke changed his views after his marriage to Lady Elizabeth Granville Leveson-Gower, who was a correspondent of Harriet Beecher Stowe and other US abolitionists. Under her influence, the duke later said he had come to an ‘enlightened understanding, and a thorough detestation, of negro slavery.’¹⁴⁰ The Argylls hosted visits from Stowe and American abolitionists in the 1850s (both in London and in Scotland), and when the duke was in the cabinet during the US Civil War, he was a vocal opponent of any support for the Confederacy. In 1866, their son – himself a former St Andrews student – showed the visiting Moncure Conway around St Andrews; Conway was an author and former

¹³⁵ Frederick Douglass, ‘The Free Church of Scotland and American Slavery: An Address Delivered in Dundee, Scotland, on January 30, 1846’ *Dundee Courier* (3 Feb. 1846), available at <https://glc.yale.edu/free-church-scotland-and-american-slavery>

¹³⁶ [Spalding], ‘Slavery’, in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (7th edn, 1842), vol. 20, at p.319

¹³⁷ [Spalding], ‘Slavery’, in *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (7th edn, 1842), vol. 20, at p.321

¹³⁸ [Inverary Castle] ‘Addressing our connections with historic slavery’ [n.d.] https://www.inveraray-castle.com/images/Slavery_and_the_Argylls.pdf See also, David McKenzie Robertson, *From Roucan to Riches; the rise of the Glassell Family* (Market Harborough, 2020), pp.48-9, 53-4.

¹³⁹ Campbell, *George Douglas: autobiography and memoirs*, vol. 2, p.54.

¹⁴⁰ *George Douglas: autobiography and memoirs*, vol. 2, p.55.

minister from Virginia, whose 1863 *Testimonies concerning slavery* was influential in shaping British public opinion during the US Civil War.¹⁴¹

In common with most educated commentators of the period, the professors of the late nineteenth century appear to have been opposed to slavery by default; but they were rarely required to put those principles into action. **John Tulloch** (professor of Divinity and principal of St Mary's 1854-1886) was a minister and edited the *Church of Scotland Missionary Record*. Like most other men of that stripe, he was a supporter of abolition in the US, and of the theoretical principle of the brotherhood of all humankind. But for most of his life, based in Scotland with occasional travels to continental Europe, he had little opportunity to put this into practice. In 1874, he visited the US and Canada on church business, and, while in Washington, as he later told his family, he was invited to attend a service of a 'negro congregation'. His private account makes clear that he found the whole experience deeply unsettling, both for the style of worship and for the appearance and behaviour of the members of the congregation. He closed his letter home with the remark that, 'I doubt if I had lived here, if I should have been much of an Abolitionist. They certainly look an inferior race.'¹⁴² It is an important reminder that being a supporter, in principle, of the cause of abolition of slavery did not necessarily imply a belief in equal rights, and even when it did, this did not necessarily lead, in practice, to respect or equal treatment for formerly enslaved people or their descendants.

5.2. The intellectual underpinning of colonialism and empire

We have found little evidence at St Andrews of contributions to the intellectual debates about either the theory or contemporary practice of colonialism and empire.

It seems likely that professors and students at St Andrews would have discussed the status of the American colonies, particularly during the 1770s and 1780s, but few of them seem to have written formally about it.

Shortly before being appointed to St Andrews, the Linlithgowshire minister **William Barron** (1742-1803, professor of Logic, Rhetoric & Metaphysics, 1778-1803) had written a short book, *History of the Colonisation of the Free States of Antiquity, Applied to the Present Contest Between Great Britain and her American Colonies* (1777). After over a hundred pages describing Carthaginian, Greek and Roman attitudes to colonies (and noting that in antiquity, there was no sense that paying taxes should lead to political representation), Barron spent his final 25 or so pages applying the lessons of antiquity to the situation of the American colonies. He could imagine a future in which 'the resources of America may be adequate to the plan of independence', and felt that the best policy to secure 'the attachment and emoluments of the colonies, without checking their improvements and population' would be to allow them to send representatives to parliament. He argued that it was entirely reasonable to make alterations in parliamentary representation from time to time, to adjust to changing population patterns, and pointed out that just 70 years earlier, the Act of Union had forced parliament to cope with the introduction of 'the representatives of Scotland'. Introducing American representatives as well would not, he felt 'occasion any immediate or important innovation'.¹⁴³ Barron's views clearly did not make him unsuitable for appointment to St Andrews the following year.

There can have been little first-hand knowledge available. None of the professors had been to North America themselves, so far as we know, and we have found no evidence that any had, at this time,

¹⁴¹ The visit is mentioned in *Autobiography: Memories and experiences of Moncure Daniel Conway* (1904), vol. 2, p.107.

¹⁴² Letter from Tulloch, quoted in Oliphant, *A memoir of the life of John Tulloch*, pp.293-4.

¹⁴³ On Barron, see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/66118>. Quotations from his *History of Colonisation* are from pp.146-7. The fulltext is available at https://archive.org/details/cihm_37440/page/n5/mode/1up

close family members in the American colonies (in contrast to the Caribbean). Nor were there many Americans in the student body (as section 7.3.6 will show): **Glen Drayton** (1752-1796), of South Carolina, studied at United College in 1769-1771; and ten years later, **Corbin Braxton** (b.1764) and **Carter Braxton** (b.1765), of Virginia, studied at United College 1781-1784. We know of around twenty of so former students and/or degree recipients from St Andrews who went to the American colonies before 1776 – including **James Wilson** (1742-1798, who studied at St Andrews from 1757-1762) and **Andrew Bell** (see section 3.4.5) – and they could have been conduits for news; but we do not know. James Wilson was one of the signatories of the American Declaration of Independence, as was Carter Braxton, father of the brothers who came to St Andrews in 1781. Two other signatories had received honorary degrees from St Andrews some years earlier: **Benjamin Franklin** (1706-1790, honorary LL.D. 1759) and **John Witherspoon** (1723-1794, honorary D.D. 1764).

In the nineteenth century, debates about empire turned from the US towards India – and the role of the East India Company – and, latterly, towards federation and self-determination in Canada, Australia and South Africa. As section 5.3 will show, students were certainly aware of the importance of these issues; and sections 4.4 and 4.5 have shown that there were many family connections – and sources of ideas and information – to India, in particular; but we have found little evidence of scholarly engagement by the academic staff.

For some staff, the expanding territory of the British empire was a resource for their research.

William Carmichael McIntosh (1838-1931, professor of Natural History 1882-1917) was an expert in marine zoology. His speciality was British marine zoology, but he also analysed specimens of polychaete worms collected by the staff of the HMS *Challenger* expedition in the southern hemisphere (1872). He also developed academic networks with colleagues and former students in South Africa and Australia, and used those connections to facilitate the acquisition of natural history specimens (section 6.2.2)

Read more on our project website: '[The Imperial and Scientific Networks of William C. McIntosh \(1838-1931\)](#)'.

Matthew Forster Heddle (section 4.3.8 and [online feature story](#)) spent four and a half months in Natal in 1884, using his mineralogical expertise to advise the Lisbon-Berlyn Company about possible gold mines. The consultancy role did not turn out the way he had hoped, but, after a taking the company to court, it generated a pay-out that enabled Heddle to live in St Andrews without returning to his professorial role.

John MD Meiklejohn (1836-1902, professor of Education 1877-1902) was a prolific author of textbooks, ranging from early readers to history and geography textbooks. His readers were adapted for use in Canadian schools. One of his works was *The British Empire: its Geography, Resources, Commerce, Land-Ways, and Water-Ways* (1891). For Meiklejohn, at the end of the century, it appears that 'empire' was not a concept to be analysed or critiqued, but a space offering his youthful readers 'as great opportunities as ever existed in any past age'. He intended his book to inform his readers of 'the great deeds and good and industrious lives that have been led by Englishmen and English women, and of the steady courage, thought, and enterprise in building up this Empire, that have been shown by our great ancestors', and to describe 'the vast resources and infinite variety of the different parts of the great Empire of which he is a member'.¹⁴⁴ In Meiklejohn's celebration of the rich resources and great productivity of the empire, the history of British violence and exploitation is glossed over. India, for

¹⁴⁴ Meiklejohn, *The British Empire: its Geography, Resources, Commerce, Land-Ways, and Water-Ways* (1891), quoting from the dedication to the 6th edition (1899), available at: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433016903621&view=1up&seq=8>

instance, is said to have 'been for ages the object of envy and the prey of different conquerors; until [with no mention of the East India Company]... it reposes in peace and ever-growing prosperity under the rule of Queen Victoria, empress of India.'¹⁴⁵ Similarly, Meiklejohn praises the British government's expenditure to 'provide against the terrible contingency of famine', without mentioning the mortality of the Great Famine of 1876-78.

If St Andrews professors did offer scholarly critique of the existence of, or governance of, the British empire in the nineteenth century, it will need more in-depth studies to discover; or perhaps a focus on the period after 1900.

5.3. Curriculum and student Life

In the relatively traditional curriculum of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century St Andrews – focused on classics, philosophy and divinity – there were relatively few opportunities for students to receive any formal teaching about the history or management of colonies, the rise or fall of empires, the ethics or economics of relying on enslaved (or other unfree) labour, or ethnology and anthropology.

The histories of ancient empires would have featured in the teaching of classical languages in the United College, and of divinity in St Mary's College. 'Modern' history (as distinct from 'ancient') did not appear on the curriculum until the end of the nineteenth century,¹⁴⁶ while politics and international relations did not become subjects of study until the later twentieth century.

'Oriental Languages' was part of the remit of the professor of Hebrew & Oriental Languages (at St Mary's College), but we have seen no evidence to suggest that these professors offered practical training that would be useful to those entering colonial service. Such courses were offered at the East India Company's Haileybury College, which was attended by some St Andrews graduates before entering EIC service; and at King's College London by **Duncan Forbes** (1798-1868, St Andrews alumnus, and brother of donor John Forbes), who had learned Hindustani and Persian while in India. He became professor of Oriental Languages at King's College, and the author of various dictionaries and textbooks.¹⁴⁷

Neither anthropology nor ethnology featured on the formal curriculum in the nineteenth century, and the absence of a proper medical school before the 1890s meant that there was limited teaching of human and comparative anatomy.

It might be possible to learn more about what students were taught (or learned) about empire and slavery at St Andrews through a study of surviving student lecture notes, examination papers, and degree regulations – but we have not had sufficient resources to undertake this work. An example of what such research might reveal comes from surviving notes on the 1780s lectures of professor **Hugh Cleghorn**. He understood his remit to include political economy, politics and the progress of nations.¹⁴⁸ The notes in the University archives show that he called for an end to the bondage of colliers and salters in Scotland, and also attacked slavery as an institution and especially chattel slavery, arguing the cruelty of the transportation of people from West Africa: 'for some hundred miles across the desert, chained in a ship, the first perhaps they ever saw, tossed for months on an element with which they are entirely unacquainted, exposed to uncertainty...and finally condemned in an unknown land to all the

¹⁴⁵ Meiklejohn, *British Empire*, p.123.

¹⁴⁶ The first lecturer in 'Colonial and American history' was appointed in 1929.

¹⁴⁷ Duncan Forbes: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/9823>

¹⁴⁸ Emerson, *Academic patronage*, p.477

severities of servitude... Fortune never so capriciously exerted her empire over men than when she subjected those nations of heroes to the refuse of European jails.¹⁴⁹

The University archives also contain records of some of the **student debating societies** of the nineteenth century, and these offer some insight into the extra-curricular activities and interests of the students. The Literary Society (founded 1794) and the Classical Society (founded before 1846) would merge into the current Union Debating Society in 1890. Their minute books reveal that empire and slavery were certainly among the topics considered for debate at both societies in the middle of the nineteenth century, though not always actually debated.

By far the largest proportion of topics suggested (and debated) were of a philosophical, moral or social nature: 'Is ambition a vice?'; 'Is an advocate justified in defending a man whom he knows to be guilty?'; and various questions around the nature of happiness. There are many questions about current affairs, both international and domestic, and some of these indicate some student awareness of Britain's imposition of power over its colonies in India, Canada and Australia.

For instance, in 1848/49, the Classical Society considered running a debate on whether 'the seizing of the lands of a barbarous nation by civilised men tend[s] to a good end'; and the following year, it did debate the motion 'Can a savage nation emerge unassisted from barbarism?' (answer: no). Other debates in the 1850s included 'Ought we to leave Canada and Cape Colony to shift for themselves?' (no); 'Will the Australian colonies one day secede from the mother country as the United States formerly did?' (yes); in 1857, 'Can any blame be attached to the British government for its conduct in the Indian war?' (yes); and in 1860, 'Were the Sepoys justified in rebelling against British rule?' (yes).

The phrasing of some of the motions indicates that the students were operating within a hierarchical worldview, common in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, in which some nations were seen as 'civilised' and others were 'savage' or 'barbarous'. The latter two debate topics also suggest that, at least with reference to India, British governance was not always automatically assumed to be right or just; but we know nothing about the details of the arguments presented in the debates.

There are few signs of debates directly about slavery. By this point in the century, it was an issue most often considered in relation to the southern United States, and it was particularly topical during the Civil War. Debates at the Classical Society in those years suggest that the students took the desirability of the abolition of slavery for granted, debating instead whether it ought 'to be abolished gradually or immediately?' (In 1861, they voted for 'immediately', but the following year, the answer was 'gradually'.)

Read more on our website: ['Student attitudes to slavery and empire in the mid-19th century.'](#)

Further hints of student attitudes to empire might be gleaned from their choices of Rector. From 1858, the Rector has been elected by students, and by 1900, thirteen men had held the position. Many had imperial connections through their involvement in high politics: one such was Frederick Temple Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, the Marquess of Dufferin & Ava (rector 1889-92), who had previously served as Governor General of Canada (1872-78); ambassador to the Ottoman empire (1881); and Viceroy of India (1884-88, in which role, he was involved in the annexation of Burma (now Myanmar)). Rectors had little involvement in the University community, but their election tells us something about the sorts of men admired by students at St Andrews in the late nineteenth-century. A study of the election campaigns might tell us more.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Aylwin Clark, *An Enlightened Scot: Hugh Cleghorn, 1752-1837* (Duns, 1992), p. 32. See UstA archives, msdep53.

5.4. Overseas missionary efforts

There has been much scholarly debate about the role of Christian (usually Protestant) missionaries in facilitating British colonialism, from the efforts of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (f.1701) in the American colonies, to the large overseas missionary organisations of the nineteenth century, whose ambitions extended to India, the South Pacific, China and Africa.

Support for overseas missionary work was widespread in nineteenth-century St Andrews, and perhaps earlier. Several senior figures connected with the University were active supporters of the missionary movement, while others might be assumed to be supportive, given their brothers' high-profile involvement.

As well as a brother in Barbados, Thomas Hay, **earl of Kinnoull**, Chancellor and donor (see section 3.4.10) had a brother who rose to be (Anglican) archbishop of York. Robert Hay (later Hay Drummond, 1711-1776) was involved with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and was consulted on the episcopal settlement of North America. In 1764, he wrote both *Thoughts upon the Present State of the Church of England in America*, and *Thoughts upon the Ecclesiastical Establishment in Canada*.¹⁵⁰ The earl of Kinnoull conformed to the Church of Scotland while in Scotland, and was president of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge.

Thomas Chalmers is credited with having inspired the creation of a student branch of the St Andrews University Missionary Society in the 1820s, and inspiring many students to become missionaries. One was famously **Alexander Duff** (1806-1878), who studied at United College and then St Mary's College, 1821-1829. He went to Calcutta in 1829 as the first official Church of Scotland missionary to India approved by the General Assembly.¹⁵¹ Another was **Robert Nesbit** (or Nisbet, 1803-1855), who had studied at United College and St Mary's College, 1816-1825, and had been secretary of the student society. He was ordained in 1826 as an agent of the Scottish Missionary Society, and had gone to Bombay in 1827.¹⁵²

Alexander Ferrier Mitchell (1822-99, professor of Hebrew & Oriental Languages 1848-68, and of Ecclesiastical History, 1868-94) was a prominent figure in the Church of Scotland, and particularly in its missions to the Levant after the Crimean War. He travelled to Turkey, Palestine and Syria on behalf of the Church in 1857, and convened the Church's Committee on the Mission to the Jews from 1856-75.

John Tulloch was editor of the Church of Scotland's *Home and Foreign Mission Record* (from 1862 to at least 1877), a periodical that informed its readers about – and fund-raised for – the Church of Scotland's missionary activities.

Thomas Spencer Baynes (1823-87, professor of Logic, Rhetoric & Metaphysics, 1864-87) came from a strongly Baptist family, and his **brother**, Alfred Henry Baynes, worked for over 40 years as administrator (and ultimately, general secretary) of the Baptist Missionary Society (from 1860-1906). Alfred was involved in missions to China and, from 1879, Congo.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ On Hay Drummond, see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8081>

¹⁵¹ Alexander Duff, <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1377506604> and <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8167>.

¹⁵² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1402104164>

¹⁵³ Alfred Henry Baynes <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/47624>

Wallace Martin Lindsay (1858-1937, professor of Humanity 1899-1936) came from a Free Church family, and his **brother** Thomas M. Lindsay oversaw the Free Church's foreign missions from 1886-1900, which included visiting Syria and spending a year in India.

At least some of the donors to the University shared this commitment to overseas missions, as is apparent from their other philanthropic gifts.

George Craig-Buchanan (1772-1842) was educated at the University of Edinburgh, and was the minister of Kinross from 1804 until his death. In his will, he provided for one bursar to be educated at St Mary's College, for the purpose of training for the ministry. He also left money to the Church of Scotland's missionary work in India and in the colonial churches.

William Smith (c. 1799-1872) was a chemist in St Andrews, who was active in civic life, and closely involved with the circle of early photographers and Literary & Philosophical Society members.¹⁵⁴ In religion, he was a committed Congregationalist, and actively involved in the local association of the London Missionary Society. He gave £500 to create a bursary to support a student to study first at St Andrews and then at the (Congregational) Theological Hall in Edinburgh.

Margaret Beath (c1794-1879) was from a local family, and two of her brothers had taken classes at the University.¹⁵⁵ She made substantial donations to a range of educational, charitable and religious institutions, including the London Missionary Society and the Missionary Scheme of the Free Church of Scotland; as well as £3,000 to the University of St Andrews to create the Beath Bursaries.

The fame of Alexander Duff, among others, has given St Andrews a reputation for training many missionaries. In section 7.4.4, we will show that 'religion', broadly defined, was the second most common occupational category for St Andrews alumni who went to the colonies. We have not been able to do a detailed analysis, but our impression is that this category contains relatively few missionaries, and many more 'chaplains' (e.g. of East India Company regiments) and 'ministers' (e.g. serving congregations of Scottish settlers in the Caribbean, Canada, India and Australia).

¹⁵⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1411363724>

¹⁵⁵ Alexander Beath, <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1366027892> and William Beath, <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1366035636>

6. Collections

Over the years, the University has acquired not just money and ideas, but also natural history specimens, plants (living, dried or seeds), manuscripts and cultural artefacts. Some of these were collected in imperial or colonial contexts in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and some may have been acquired in circumstances that we would now regard as unacceptable.

We have not been able to undertake a comprehensive audit either of all the items gifted to the University, or of all the items currently owned by the University. The task is immense for there are so many objects, and they are held or managed by various different units of (or associated with) the University, including the Library, Museums and Botanic Garden, as well as academic departments. The biggest challenge is that the 'provenance information' needed to do such an audit (i.e. information about where the item came from, how it was acquired, from whom, and when) is rarely (yet) included in the digital catalogue record. In some cases, such information may not have survived at all; in other cases, it may exist somewhere in the University archives but it is not easily discoverable. And if we were to start the process with the archival records, the very scant nature of the information provided can make it difficult to determine whether the object is still part of the University collections today.

In this section, we draw upon work undertaken by colleagues and students associated with the University Collections team, to offer some illustrative examples of the sorts of items that came into the collections, and the ways in which they were acquired. These examples reinforce the impression from other sections of this report, that the orientation of the University's colonial connections was towards India and Australia, more than the Atlantic world.

[The material in this section draws upon the PhD thesis of Helen Rawson, 'Treasures of the University: an examination of the identification, presentation and responses to artefacts of significance at the University of St Andrews, from 1410 to the mid-19th century; with an additional consideration of the development of the portrait collection to the early 21st century' (2010); an internal report on 'Cultural property and University Collections: update on current and future work' (Feb. 2023, by Jess Burdge, Katie Eagleton, Rachel Hart and Catriona McAra); the ongoing work of student volunteers and contract staff working with Museums staff to examine provenance information and reconcile this with existing objects; and the PhD research of Conall Treen on 'Specimens of Settler Colonialism: Collecting and Displaying Natural History at the University of St Andrews, 1838-1917' (submitted 2024).]

6.1. The 'Curiosities'

The University had no formal museum in the eighteenth century, but it did have a collection of objects – or 'curiosities' – that were displayed in the library. They do not appear to have been catalogued until they were transferred to the new museum being created by the Literary and Philosophical Society of St Andrews, in 1838 (see below). Their existence is known from contemporary travellers' accounts, from the minutes of the *Senatus Academicus* and from the list drawn up in 1838.

Helen Rawson discussed this early collection in Chapter 5 of her PhD thesis. She found no evidence of planned purchases, and described how the collection evolved 'organically, as material was offered', entirely dependent on whatever its donors found 'curious'.¹⁵⁶ Some of the natural historical, cultural and ethnographic items were locally sourced, while others came from a variety of overseas sources.

¹⁵⁶ Helen Caroline Rawson, 'Treasures of the University: an examination of the identification, presentation and responses to artefacts of significance at the University of St Andrews, from 1410 to the mid-19th century; with an additional consideration of the development of the portrait collection to the early 21st century' (PhD, University of St Andrews, 2010), p.258. The collection was also discussed in Matthew Simpson's 1999 PhD thesis and his article:

Among the donors whose names were recorded were former students, members of St Andrews families, and patrons, some of whom had subsequently lived or worked overseas (see also section 7.4). Rawson saw the objects they sent to St Andrews as representing the University's 'connections to British expansionism, prosperity and the imperial project, and the opportunities its graduates might enjoy'.¹⁵⁷ The East India Company's influence is again clear.

Those known to have donated items with colonial origins include:

Charles Graham (b.1772), who studied at United College 1785-1787. He may then have gained an M.D. at Edinburgh, and in 1792, he presented to St Andrews 'a spear of Iron wood from the Sandwich Islands'.¹⁵⁸

James Watt, 'who now resides on the Coast of Africa Superintendent of the Sugar Colony established Sierra Leona' [sic]. He sent 'A Foulah Quiver of Arrows and a Bow' in 1795.¹⁵⁹ It is not clear what his connection to the University was, though he may be related to the Henry Watt (alumnus, and son of the college gardener) who also sent specimens from Sierra Leone and Dominica.¹⁶⁰

Charles Wilkins (1749-1836), librarian to the East India Company, gave the University in 1806 a 'beautiful copy of the Kuran' that had been acquired from the library of the sultan of Mysore after his defeat at Seringapatam in 1799.¹⁶¹

Cuthbert Thornhill Glass (d.1830), who had studied at United College 1807-1810 and was the son of a former Bengal artillery officer. Glass went into the East India Company's civil service, in Calcutta, and in 1827, he sent the University 'a Burmese sabre mounted in silver' and 'two Burmese idols'.¹⁶²

David Hill (1786-1866), was the son of professor George Hill and had studied at United College 1798-1802. As we saw in section 4.6.3, his father sought Henry Dundas's help to get David into the East India Company civil service in Madras. In 1832, he sent the University 'a few Burmese manuscripts'.¹⁶³

A '**Colonel Moodie**' gave 'a pair of snow shoes used by the Cocknawaga Indians in Upper Canada' in 1834. He may have been a relative of Dr Patrick Mudie of St Andrews, several of whose sons studied at the University.¹⁶⁴

Matthew Simpson, 'You Have Not Such a One in England': St Andrews University Library as an Eighteenth-Century Mission Statement,' *Library History* 17, no. 1 (2001): 41-56

¹⁵⁷ Rawson, 'Treasures of the University', p.262.

¹⁵⁸ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1382913156> and 'Treasures of the University', p.246.

¹⁵⁹ 'Treasures of the University', p.246. It seems likely that he was James Watt (1760-95), whose 'Journal of James Watt: Expedition to Timbo, Capital of the Fula Empire in 1794' was edited for publication by Bruce L. Mouser in 1994.

¹⁶⁰ Henry Watt, <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1417740660>

¹⁶¹ Rawson, 'Treasures of the University', p.252. On Wilkins, see <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/29416>

¹⁶² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1382156516> and 'Treasures of the University', pp.245-6 and 256.

¹⁶³ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386058580> and 'Treasures of the University', p.247.

¹⁶⁴ 'Treasures of the University', p.245. Neither of the known sons seem to have been in Canada in 1834: Robert Smyth Mudie went to Australia, and later sent specimens to the L&PS; John James Mudie went to India.

6.2. The Literary and Philosophical Society collections

In 1838, the Literary and Philosophical Society (L&PS) was founded, bringing together all those interested in scientific and scholarly topics in the town and University. One of the Society's aims was the establishment of a more systematically-arranged and more extensive museum, owned jointly by the University and the Society. The University's 'curiosities' were transferred to the museum in 1838. The collections were jointly owned until 1904, when they were formally transferred to the ownership of the University. These collections then formed the core of the new Bell-Pettigrew Museum when it was opened in 1912, with the anatomical collections removed to the School of Anatomy. The collections were further dispersed in the 1960s when the scale of the museum was reduced, with archaeological, ethnographic and other collections transferring to related academic Schools or to other institutions, including the Royal Museum of Scotland (now National Museums Scotland), Fife Council and St Andrews Cathedral (now part of Historic Environment Scotland). The zoology collections remained at the Bell Pettigrew Museum and were redisplayed by Dr David R. R. Burt, a lecturer of zoology, from 1964 until 1970.

The members (and their families) and their academic and professional networks were central to the acquisition of new items and objects for the University and the Society during the nineteenth century. The minute books and accession registers of the L&PS record many of the acquisitions, though ascertaining how many of the items still remain in University ownership is not straightforward, as the accession descriptions are often rather sparse (e.g. 'beetles'). Since 2020, a project has been under way to examine provenance records for the University's museum collections, with Museum staff working with student volunteers to confirm provenance for individual objects in the collection where possible.

As part of that larger project, between February and July 2023 Museums employed a current PhD student, Conall Treen, to reconcile the provenance information uncovered through his PhD research with extant specimens on display in the Bell Pettigrew Museum, and to record this information in the collections database. Approximately 31% of the collections on display in the Bell Pettigrew Museum have so far been surveyed, and connections between specimens, archival records and provenance information (where this exists) have been recorded in a spreadsheet, to be imported into the database.

Conall Treen's PhD research has added to the ongoing work by staff and students to create a spreadsheet of the acquisitions of the L&PS from 1838 onwards. This so far includes over 2,700 items, including birds, mammals and fish; the fossils and geological collections are only partly represented in this total. Even though this work is still in progress, it is clear that, although not all of the items came from parts of the world associated with British colonial activity, many did.

New objects could arrive through donation, purchase or exchange with another museum. In the museum's first decades, it relied heavily on donations from Scots overseas, with some purchases (e.g. from ornithologist John Gould). By the 1880s, museum exchanges became more common, with the Colonial Museum, New Zealand from 1873; the Australian Museum in Sydney from 1883-1888; and the Indian Museum, Kolkata from 1883, as well as several British institutions. Some of these specimens are extant.¹⁶⁵

6.2.1. St Andrews families

There is substantial overlap between donors who were sons (or relatives) of St Andrews families, and donors who were former students of the University. They included:

¹⁶⁵ For extant specimens see respectively: Moa, *Dinornis giganteus* (BPM1817), donated by James Farmer (1823-1925) and acquired from the Colonial Museum, New Zealand in 1873; a short-nosed bandicoot, *Perameles obesula* (BPM2392) sent from Edward Pierson Ramsay, curator of the Australian Museum in 1888; and the Cassowary, *Casuaris australis* (BPM1745) presumed to be from the Imperial Museum, Kolkata and donated in 1911.

- **Thomas Erskine Dempster** (1799-1883) sent insects, butterflies and 'a valuable collection of birds from the upper district of India and the Himalaya mountains' to the L&PS in the late 1830s and early 1840s.¹⁶⁶ He and his twin brother Charles were the sons of a St Andrews merchant, and they both studied at United College 1812-1816, before going to Edinburgh for medical training. They both joined the Indian Medical Service (part of the East India Company) in 1820. Charles died in Patna in 1822, but Thomas continued to work in India until his retirement as staff surgeon in 1857.¹⁶⁷
- **George Buist** (1804–1860) was an alumnus who became a journalist and man of science in Bombay (and later an honorary graduand); he was also nephew to one St Andrews professor, and son-in-law to another.¹⁶⁸ In 1846, he sent the society 'A box filled with Indian fossils, shells & corals'; and in 1854, while on a visit back to Scotland, he personally presented fossil alligator skulls, along with a recent alligator skull for comparison.¹⁶⁹
- **James Paterson** (1807-1854) was another donor born and educated in St Andrews, studying at United College 1821-1825. He went to Calcutta as a missionary in 1831. In 1839, he sent the L&PS an eleventh-century stone stele depicting the Hindu god Shiva and his consort Parvati.¹⁷⁰ It is now part of the University collections.¹⁷¹
- **Thomas Fleming** (1805-1853) studied briefly at United College in the mid-1820s, and then became a civil engineer in Demerara (modern-day Guyana). In 1841, he sent a large collection of South American mammals, birds, snakes and insects to the L&PS.¹⁷²
- Dr **William Traill** (1818-1886), a former surgeon in the Indian Medical Service,¹⁷³ acquired specimens for the Society through his widely-dispersed family, including: in 1863, moa bones from New Zealand donated by his brother Charles Traill (1826-1891); in 1871, shark jaws from India, from his half-brother Walter Traill (1850-1924); in 1875, New Zealand bird skins from another half-brother, Arthur William Traill (1852-1936). After his death, his St Andrews-educated sons continued the family tradition of sending specimens to the L&PS: in 1888, John Traill (1851-1898)¹⁷⁴ and William Henry Traill (1861-1924)¹⁷⁵ donated a collection of Indian snakes and insects, some of which survive in the University collections.¹⁷⁶

Women were among the donors (both of local and colonial-derived items) but, as with donors of financial gifts, it is more difficult to trace the biographies of women in this period, let alone understand how the items had come into their possession. Three examples illustrate the point, while also

¹⁶⁶ Birds: minutes of the L&PS (UStA archives), vol. 1, meeting of 1 July 1839.

¹⁶⁷ Thomas: <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1376240044>; Charles: <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1376202180>

¹⁶⁸ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1369944780> and <https://doi.org/10.1093/refodnb/3892>

¹⁶⁹ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 1, meeting of 7 Nov. 1846 and meeting of 28 Jan. 1854.

¹⁷⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1403297252> See also Emma Bond, *Scotland's Transnational Heritage: Legacies of Empire and Slavery* (Edinburgh, 2022), p.11.

¹⁷¹ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/stone-stele-depicting-the-hindu-god-shiva-and-his-consort-parvati/762406>

¹⁷² See Thomas Fleming: <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1380152788>. The extant specimen the Honey guide, *Indicator indicator* (BPM1897) collected by "J. Fleming, Esq Demerara" is probably related.

¹⁷³ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1415762788>, also <https://www.bayanne.info/Shetland/getperson.php?personID=1452117&tree=ID1>.

¹⁷⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1415726284>

¹⁷⁵ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1415768268>

¹⁷⁶ Extant objects include the Horsehead Grasshopper, *Orthoptera sp.* (BPM8424)

reinforcing the ways in which the L&PS collections benefited from the family networks of both the town and University of St Andrews:

- In 1839, 'Miss Mudie' gifted an iguana and nine 'stuffed Birds from the Australian colonies, and the islands of the Pacific Ocean'.¹⁷⁷ **Jane Anne Mudie** (b.1811) was the daughter of St Andrews doctor Patrick Mudie (1780-1850).¹⁷⁸ Her brother had studied at the university in the 1820s before emigrating to King George Sound, western Australia (where he died in 1836).¹⁷⁹ The Australian and Pacific birds, however, are attributed not to him, but to an unknown 'Officer of H.M. Ship Conway', which had been stationed in the Pacific in 1837-39. 'Miss Mudie' makes only one appearance in the minutes of the L&PS – but in 1843, a 'Mrs Robert Smith' gifted 'three skins of animals from Australia'.¹⁸⁰ Jane Anne Mudie had married Robert Maidstone Smith, a doctor, in 1842. It is not clear whether these Australian specimens had been collected earlier by her brother, or came from another source.
- 'Mrs Gunn, The Manse, Dollar' appears at least three times in the minutes of the L&PS. In 1883, she gifted a saki monkey from South America.¹⁸¹ In 1890, she gifted 'Nineteen bird skins from West Indies, including Toucan, hawk, wood pecker...'.¹⁸² And the following year, in 1891, she gifted a miscellaneous set of items including a 'bracelet of fish-scales from Bermuda', 'birds tail from British Guiana' and a 'necklace of mimosa-seeds' apparently 'made by Queen Emma of the Sandwich Islands' (now Hawai'i).¹⁸³ The donor was **Harriet Gunn née Glass** (1832-1911), who had been born in India, where her father Edward Binny Glass (1800-72) was a judge in the East India Company's civil service; he came from a St Andrews family and had studied at the University in the 1810s.¹⁸⁴ Harriet's first marriage, in 1850, had been to a Royal Naval officer, George W. Boothby (1819-1868); and the birth records for their children reveal that Harriet was living in India in the 1850s and 1860s. After Boothby's early death, she moved to Britain, and married Angus Gunn, the minister of Dollar, in 1861. Harriet Gunn thus had strong connections to British India; but there is no indication how she acquired the objects from the other side of the world that she gifted to the St Andrews L&PS.
- 'Miss Farnie' appears at least twice in the L&PS minutes. In 1884, she gifted 'some minerals & fishes from South Africa', and in 1889, she gifted 'Three snakes, caterpillar, minerals, and cocoons of the silk moth' from Buenos Aires, Argentina.¹⁸⁵ The donor is probably one of the daughters of James Farnie (1799-1846), a Burntisland shipbuilder: his family moved to St Andrews after his death, and the son studied at the University in the early 1850s.¹⁸⁶ The most likely 'Miss Farnie' in the 1880s is **Isabella Gwynne Farnie** (1840-1892), who was unmarried and living in St Andrews. She may have acquired at least some of the specimens from her sister Harriet. **Harriet Dry Buist née Farnie** (1842-1900) had married William Fraser Buist (1835-1900) in 1865: he was the grandson of professor George Buist of St Andrews (and thus a cousin of George Buist of Bombay, above); he had been born in Bengal, and educated at St Andrews in

¹⁷⁷ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 1, meeting of 30 Nov. 1839.

¹⁷⁸ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1400269892>

¹⁷⁹ Robert Smyth Mudie: <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1400287740>

¹⁸⁰ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 1, meeting of 6 Nov. 1843.

¹⁸¹ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 2, meeting of 1 Dec. 1883.

¹⁸² Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 2, meeting of 22 Nov. 1890.

¹⁸³ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 2, undated meeting of Dec. 1891.

¹⁸⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1382161572>

¹⁸⁵ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 2, meetings of 29 Nov. 1884 and 17 Jan. 1889.

¹⁸⁶ Henry Brougham Farnie (1836-1889): <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1379127068>

the 1850s;¹⁸⁷ but he and his wife spent the first two decades of their marriage in Uruguay and Argentina.¹⁸⁸

6.2.2. Academic networks

Some of the items acquired in the later nineteenth century came through the academic activities and networks of the University professors, rather than St Andrews family networks. For instance:

- In early 1885, **Matthew Forster Heddle** (section 4.3.8) gave a talk to the L&PS about his recent geological consultancy trip to Natal, and presented 'two fine serpent skins one that of a python 9 ft long'.¹⁸⁹ A few months earlier, he had donated, 'A large nest of the Trapdoor Spider, A collection of Shells & Crustaceans, A Sand Smelt [and] other specimens from S. Africa'.¹⁹⁰ The extant trap-door spider nest may be from this donation.¹⁹¹
- In 1883, **William Carmichael McIntosh** (section 5.2) met the curator of the Australian Museum, Sydney, **Edward Pierson Ramsay** (1842-1916) at a fisheries conference in London.¹⁹² This began a fruitful correspondence that enabled exchanges of specimens between the St Andrews and Sydney museums. The specimens sent to St Andrews included Australian fish, molluscs, marsupials, and monotremes. The ways in which these specimens were collected – including interactions with Indigenous communities, and with unfree labourers working on colonial cattle stations – are discussed in detail in Conall Treen's PhD thesis.
- Another colleague and friend of McIntosh was **William Aitcheson Haswell** (1854-1925), of the University of Sydney, who sent marsupials, amphibians, reptiles, and a series of Australian marine specimens in the 1890s.¹⁹³

6.3. Ancestral remains

The treatment, attitude towards, and display of human remains within the University follows a pattern that was common among European institutions, but is today understood as disrespectful and distressing to many cultures around the world. It is also clear that there have been historic failures in the University's record keeping relating to human remains, such that it is currently impossible to identify the provenance of some remains, or to say with certainty when or how certain remains left the University's care. Actions are being taken to remedy this situation as far as possible (see below). In this section we attempt to give a flavour of the ways in which empire, and colonial practices and mentalities, manifested themselves in the acquisition of human remains in the period 1700-1900.

The Literary and Philosophical Society and the University of St Andrews, like other Scottish and British institutions during the period, played a role in the trade, acquisition and display of human remains. This was motivated by scientific and medical interest in anatomy and also, in the nineteenth century, by the emerging fields of ethnography and racial anthropology. By 1904, the University Museum had acquired around 140 human remains. These were mostly British but included a number of ancestral remains that had been acquired from across the globe through processes that included the unequal and involuntary trade between Indigenous peoples and the personnel of the Royal and Merchant Navy; violence or the threat of violence; and in some cases probably the disturbance and desecration of burial sites.

¹⁸⁷ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1370005044>

¹⁸⁸ Their locations can be deduced from the birth places of their children.

¹⁸⁹ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 2, meeting of 6 Feb. 1885.

¹⁹⁰ Minutes of the L&PS, vol. 2, meeting of 29 Nov. 1884.

¹⁹¹ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/trap-door-spider-nest/1011820>

¹⁹² Ramsay: <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ramsay-edward-pierson-4446>

¹⁹³ Extant specimens include the flying phalanger from Paramatta, NSW, donated in 1899 (BPM9169); and a Nautilus from Port Jackson donated in 1893 (BPM15056).

As is the case with all University collections, information about the provenance of ancestral remains (including their geographical origin, and mode of acquisition) was not always recorded, or has not always survived. The following examples reveal some of the different circumstances in which Indigenous ancestral remains travelled to St Andrews during the period of this report.

In 1838, the University Library transferred several human remains already in its possession to the new Museum. These included the teeth of a Native American [unknown donor and date], the scalp of a Native American [unknown donor and date], an Egyptian mummy [donated by a Mr Galloway in 1781], and two *Toi moko*, or preserved heads of Māori people. Of these remains, only some mummified body parts are now extant in the collection, possibly from the mummy noted here (see below).¹⁹⁴

The *Toi moko* had been obtained during the period of the Musket Wars, 1807-1837.¹⁹⁵ One was given to St Andrews around 1829 by Captain **John Dibbs** (1790-1872), who captained the colonial schooner *The Endeavour* in the Pacific in the 1820s.¹⁹⁶ The second was given in 1831 by Rear-Admiral Sir **Frederick Lewis Maitland** (1777-1839).¹⁹⁷ The Museum later acquired a third *Toi moko* from 'Dr Muir' but the date of donation and details of origin are not recorded. A chapter in Conall Treen's PhD thesis discusses 19th century museum displays, including the treatment of ancestral remains when displayed in the University Museum in St Andrews in this period.

In 1858, professor **William Macdonald** (section 4.4) exhibited to the L&PS the 'Crania of a Red Indian' (*sic*) acquired through a friend who served in the Hudson Bay Company. This skull was said to have been obtained 'with much difficulty and some risk', suggesting resistance from local First Nations communities. It is not clear whether Macdonald had obtained the skull when he was himself in Ontario in the late 1840s, or whether it came later via his son Godfrey (who had returned to Ontario in the 1850s) or other contacts. As part of Macdonald's personal collection, it is likely the skull would have been displayed for teaching within the University. However, when Macdonald's collection was transferred to the University before his death in 1875, no record was made of its contents and therefore it is not possible to confirm details of any human remains that might have been handed over.¹⁹⁸ Macdonald's collection may possibly be the origin for the two entries of 'Skull of an African' that appear in the record of the L&PS collection when it was handed over to the University in 1904: there is no evidence that these have survived.

In 1912, human remains in the Museum collection were transferred to the Anatomy Department, where they were managed alongside other human remains and specimens used for anatomical research and teaching, instead of being curated along with other museum collections. In the decades that followed, it appears that many human remains left the University's care without documentation, and as a result it is difficult – in many cases impossible – to recover information about the origins and current location of many ancestral remains, including some related to empire, that are known to have been in the University's collections in the nineteenth century.

Acknowledging the paramount importance of respectful treatment of human remains in historic collections, the University has now for a number of years been undertaking careful research to begin

¹⁹⁴ Rawson, 'Treasures of the University'. Rawson notes that it is 'possible that the mummy was fabricated out of "patches and fragments"' (p.254), on the basis of the 1784 report of Bartelemy Faujas Saint Fond, following his visit to the museum (p.241).

¹⁹⁵ See <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/new-zealands-19th-century-wars/the-musket-wars>.

¹⁹⁶ See Joanne Gwynn, *The Dibbs Family: From Scotland to Australia, 1766-2013* (Morrisville, 2013).

¹⁹⁷ Maitland: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/17824>

¹⁹⁸ William Carmichael McIntosh, *Brief sketch of the Natural History Museum of the University of St Andrews* (St Andrews, 1913), p.9.

fully documenting the human remains held today, and wherever possible to reconnect all human remains held in the University with information and records of their acquisition.

In 2016-2018, a basic inventory of the current medical and anatomical collections was created by medical students under supervision of Museums staff. This included 223 bones (mostly skulls), 4 mummified body parts,¹⁹⁹ and 258 histology slides, many of which would have come into the University after 1900. During 2022, with funding from the Scotland & Medicine group, PhD candidate Emma Black sought to reconcile this inventory with information from the ongoing Museum provenance research project, and with the list of items transferred from the University Museum a century previously. A listing of the pathology collection created earlier than this by specialist technicians, and including 708 'fluid-preserved specimens', was also reviewed. Black's report ascertained, for example, that the *Toi moko* and the teeth of the Native American, mentioned above, are no longer extant in the collection, but embalmed body parts, which are thought to be from the listed Egyptian mummy, do remain present. Black also detailed risks and recommendations on issues relating to the sensitivities (legislative and ethical) around provenance, storage and display of human remains.

This work was neither exhaustive nor definitive and shows, together with research for the *Legacies of Empire* project and ongoing provenance work by Museums staff, the extent and detailed nature of the work that remains to be done. The priority in this context is to produce a definitive overview of all human remains in the University's care, enabling the University to acknowledge people and their communities, and to take an informed approach to issues of ethical stewardship as well as potential repatriations, in line with University policies.

6.4. 'Oriental' Manuscripts and Art

Of the various items of cultural heritage in the University collections, the group of manuscripts formerly known 'oriental' manuscripts have received the most detailed provenance research, from the 1950s onwards.²⁰⁰ There are 140 manuscripts of these types in the collection today, mostly originating from Persia and India. Surviving records reveal only the name of the donor or the source of the acquisition in 46% of the cases; and 18% record no information at all on their origin. Some items were transferred to the University from other institutions (including the British Museum), but most were given by individuals with a connection to the University, or bought by the University from a variety of booksellers and dealers.

Of the group of manuscripts for which there is relatively clear provenance information (36% of the total), there are indications that some among them were accepted in the knowledge that they had been acquired in the context of war by the donor or vendor offering them to the University. For example:

- Qur'an, from the library of Tipu Sultan of Mysore taken in the aftermath of the Battle of Srirangapatna (1799) and donated to St Andrews the East India Company (see above): ms19(O)
- Items taken during the Indian Rebellion, or First War of Independence (1857-9) including two manuscripts (Works of Maghribi Shaikh and a Geographical Work) from one donor, and a Qur'an said to have been looted from Lucknow donated by descendants of colonial administrator: ms 42(O), ms 43(O), and ms18(O)

¹⁹⁹ There is also a record of 'mummified remains' being donated by Miss Leslie Melville in 1897, which could equally be the origin of the extant items.

²⁰⁰ This section was drafted by Rachel Hart.

At some point between 1884 and 1904, the University received a gift of ten Indian paintings on glass, depicting the Hindu deities, donated by Augustus Clifford Bell (1832-74) or his heirs.²⁰¹ Bell was the son of a Fife minister, and had studied at United College and St Mary's College (1846-54).²⁰² In 1860, he went to India to be a military chaplain in the Hyderabad region; and soon became minister of St Andrews's church, Madras. Claire Robinson's analysis of the paintings suggests that they were probably produced in southern India in the 1860s.²⁰³ It is not known how, where or when Bell acquired them.

6.5. Memorialisation of Donors and Professors

The University has historically honoured donors, eminent alumni and notable senior members by the naming of professorships, buildings, prizes or bursaries; by the commissioning and display of portraits; and the use or display of objects associated with them.

Work remains to be done in terms of **a comprehensively checking the way in which individuals named in this report may currently be memorialised**, for instance:

- in the naming of buildings, rooms, prizes etc;
- by the display of portraits or other objects associated with these individuals, particularly when displayed outside a museum context (where it is easier to provide contextual information and hidden narratives).

6.5.1. Donors

We have checked the names of the ten donors with some association to enslavement and of the five major donors with colonial wealth. In contrast to the oil paintings that memorialise early twentieth century donors – e.g. Andrew Carnegie and Edward S. Harkness – there appears to be very little physical memorialisation of any donors from the 1700 to 1900 period. (The building that memorialises the marquess of Bute is an exception to that rule.)

In addition to the naming of the **Chandos** Chair of Physiology, James Brydges and his gift are remembered by the inclusion of the Chandos coat of arms on the mace created for the Faculty of Medicine in 1949.²⁰⁴

In 1891, the *University Calendar* reported that a portrait (or possibly an 'enlarged photograph') of **Alexander Berry** was on display in the University Library; as was one of John Bruce of Falkland (a print of a portrait by Raeburn) presented by his niece **Margaret Tyndall Bruce** in 1866.²⁰⁵ Neither of these portraits remain in the collection today.

The University's photographic collections include portraits of the **Guthrie brothers**,²⁰⁶ and of **Edward Ellice** (and a photographic copy of an engraving of Andrew Bell), as well as portraits of many of the mid-late nineteenth-century professors. Many of these are digitised and available via the online collections database.

²⁰¹ The paintings are items ET25(1-10) and have been digitised. See <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/durga/1000949> ff.

²⁰² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1366286716>

²⁰³ Claire Robinson, 'Across the surf: a collection of Indian paintings on glass in the University of St Andrews' museum collections,' *Journal of Museum Ethnography*, no. 32 (2019): 171-93

²⁰⁴ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/mace-of-the-faculty-of-medicine/1022233>

²⁰⁵ Rawson, 'Treasures of the University', pp.165-6.

²⁰⁶ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/arbuthnot-guthrie-esq/467440> and <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/james-guthrie-esq/467868>

6.5.2. Professors

The University's collection of oil paintings includes portraits of some of the professors, principals and chancellors mentioned here.²⁰⁷ These include:

- Chancellor Thomas Hay, earl of Kinnoull, whose brother was in Barbados.²⁰⁸
- Principal George Hill, who hosted a Jamaica plantation heir, sent his eldest son to Jamaica, and had two other sons in East India Company Service.²⁰⁹
- Chancellor Robert Saunders Dundas.²¹⁰
- Professor Robert Briggs, whose stepson was a minister in the Caribbean.²¹¹
- Principal John Shairp, whose father had been in the East India Company's military.²¹² Shairp is also memorialised by a stained glass window by Henry Holiday in St Salvator's chapel.²¹³

The stained glass window commemorating professor Thomas Chalmers was originally installed in St Salvator's chapel, but is now displayed in the Wardlaw Museum.²¹⁴

The University collections include named sub-collections of mineralogical and geological specimens associated with **Matthew Forster Heddle** (many of which are Scottish or northern European). A trap door spider nest associated with Heddle also survives, but it is not currently clear how many of the natural history (or other) specimens he may have brought back from South Africa are extant in the collections.

(The University collections also contain archival papers which would support further investigation of some of these people, including papers of Thomas Tullideph, George Hill, Hugh Cleghorn and Henry and Robert Dundas.)

²⁰⁷ On the portrait collection, see Rawson, 'Treasures of the University', Ch.3, and appendix B. Current catalogue information and digital images are available via the online Collections website <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/collection/portraits/1004047>

²⁰⁸ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/portrait-of-thomas-hay-9th-earl-of-kinnoull/1001258>

²⁰⁹ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/portrait-of-george-hill/1001113>

²¹⁰ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/portrait-of-robert-saunders- Dundas-2nd-viscount-melville/1001316>

²¹¹ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/portrait-of-robert-briggs/1001321>

²¹² <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/portrait-of-john-campbell-shairp-lld/1000782>

²¹³ <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/about/history/st-salvators/stained-glass/>

²¹⁴ <https://collections.st-andrews.ac.uk/item/memorial-window-dedicated-to-thomas-chalmers/1000915> . See also Matthew Sheard, 'Reassessing a hero' (2020) <https://museumblog.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2020/10/05/reassessing-a-hero/>

7. Students and Alumni

Sheer numbers make it impossible to do for students the sort of individualised research that we could do for donors, professors and chancellors. However, the existence of the digitised *Biographical Register of the University of St Andrews*, containing records from the University's matriculation registers from 1579-1897, gives us the opportunity to generate some high-level statistics on the student body.

Analysis of the *Biographical Register* has enabled us to identify some of the **students who were born in the colonies** (though we do not know where they were brought up). These figures offer some insight into the diversity (or not) of experiences and attitudes that would have been present in the student community. They also point to another way in which the University benefited financially from colonialism, via the fees paid by the parents of students from (or associated with) the colonies.

We have also been able to identify some of the **alumni who later spent time in the colonies**, for personal or professional reasons. These figures reveal the ways in which St Andrews helped educate people who became part of the military or administrative systems underpinning empire, or who used the opportunities offered by empire to find outlets for their professional callings in medicine, religion or, occasionally, for their business skills. As we have already seen, alumni overseas (and alumni with overseas business interests) were often the source of some of the money and objects that were donated to the University of St Andrews.

7.1. Source data

This section relies on the work done by many others over the last 120 years. Between 1888 and 1905, University librarian James Maitland-Anderson transcribed and collated the matriculation registers of the University, producing a printed edition. Between 1960 and 2012, the University's Keeper of Manuscripts and Muniments, Dr Robert Smart expanded the biographical information on each individual, drawing from more than 1000 additional sources. His printed *Biographical Register* for the years 1747-1897 was published in 2004; this was followed in 2012 by the *Alphabetical Register* for 1579-1747. Between 2013 and 2016, the University's Digital Humanities and Research Computing team, led by Dr Alice Crawford, transformed Smart's 1747-1897 material into the current online text-search interface. PhD student Tomas Vancisin has worked with a copy of this database to develop more complex querying capability and visualization techniques, especially through geographical mapping. He was also able to incorporate Smart's data for 1579-1746 into the database used for his thesis on 'Rethinking Historical University Records: Provenance in Visualization and Digital Humanities Research' (2023). In summer 2023, Vancisin worked with the 'Legacies of Empire' project, using his enhanced copy of the 'Biographical Register' database to generate the visualisations and statistics in this section. For a fuller account of the creation and transformation of this resource, the types of information it contains, and the limitations of its use, see internal Working Paper D, section 1.2.

The digital *Register* is based on archival records that are not consistent or complete, and the further back in time one goes, the less information about students we have. Smart was able to enhance some of those records with biographical and career information from external sources, but some students could not be traced (at least, not by the methods available to him then).

Those responsible for each transformation of the data – from manuscript to typescript to print to text-encoded data to database – sought to verify the validity of the existing information, but each transformation potentially also introduced errors into the records. Misspelled words, errors in transcription, wrongly-placed tags during digitization, and/or incorrectly assigned coordinates during geocoding of the locations have a far-reaching impact on the information retrieval and analysis.

The geographical analysis in this section relies on the existence of 'locations' in the digital *Register* records (the incompleteness of which will be discussed below), and on Vancisin's work, during his PhD, to geocode over 10,000 of these 'locations'. The geocoding process used an automated system to assign latitude and longitude to a named 'location'. The records for Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the US were subsequently checked manually in an effort to correct the algorithm's tendency to assign certain Scottish place-names to their overseas namesake (e.g. Perth). This process also assigns 'locations' to *modern* (not historic) countries.

We have focused on countries which **were, had been, or would be British colonies**, and we have grouped the results into (sub-)continental regions. This allows us to work with larger numbers, and to avoid the confusion of name changes and border changes. Note, however, that the *regional labels refer only to areas within that region that were once, had been, or would be, British colonies – not to the entire continent/region*. (For instance, we have not run searches on areas in Africa that were under French colonial influence.)

All the visualizations that follow were developed by Tomas Vancisin. In the maps, each spot represents a location (not a student). The brightness of the spot represents the number of students from that location. If a student's birth location was not specified in any more detail than a country (e.g. India, Canada), the algorithm assigns them to a spot in the centre of the (modern) country.

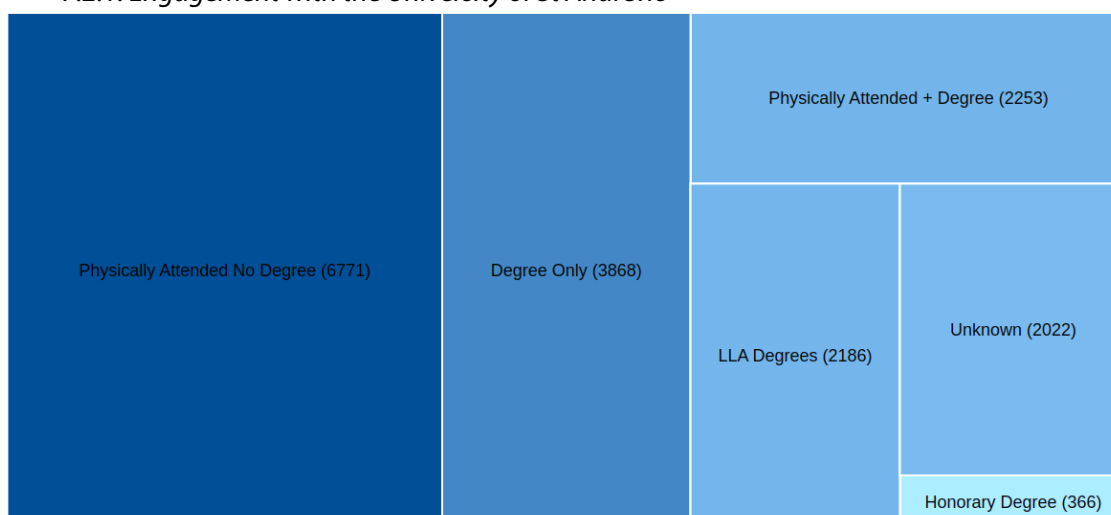
The incompleteness of the underlying data, and the existence of both false positives and false negatives, mean that the statistics and visualisations in this section must be considered as indicative rather than definitive. Nonetheless, we believe they provide a highly suggestive glimpse into the colonial connections of the historic student community at St Andrews.

7.2. St Andrews students, 1700-1897

As section 2.3 explained, the University of St Andrews was a small institution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That said, the *Biographical Register* lists 17,466 people as 'students' in the period 1700-1897. As Figure 7.2.1 shows, these individuals engaged in a variety of ways with the University as a place of teaching, examination and degree-awarding. The total includes:

- 2,253 individuals who studied at the United College and/or St Mary's College and took a degree.
- 6,771 individuals who studied at the United College and/or St Mary's College but never took a degree. Until the late nineteenth century, the education – and socialisation – associated with coming to university was, for most students, more important than the degree qualification. The *Register* reveals that 75% of the students who studied at St Andrews 1700-1897 did not – so far as the records show – take a degree.
- 3,868 individuals were awarded degrees, but we know nothing about where they studied. Some of these were medical degrees (M.D.) which, prior to the creation of the medical school in the 1890s, could be awarded either 'by testimonial' from qualified practitioners (which did not require coming to St Andrews, and was most common before 1840), or 'by examination' (which required at least a brief visit to St Andrews, usually after studying elsewhere).
- 366 individuals who were awarded honorary degrees (and had no claim to one of the other categories);
- 2,186 women who took exams towards the Lady Literate in Arts (L.L.A.) qualification. There were examination centres elsewhere in the UK, and from 1883, there were also exam centres overseas.

7.2.1. Engagement with the University of St Andrews



Of all these students, we know that 9,024 must have been physically in the town (because they attended one of the colleges); and there are another 4,234 who may perhaps have come briefly for an examination. Thus, three-quarters (13,258) of the total number of students in this period might perhaps have spent some time in St Andrews.

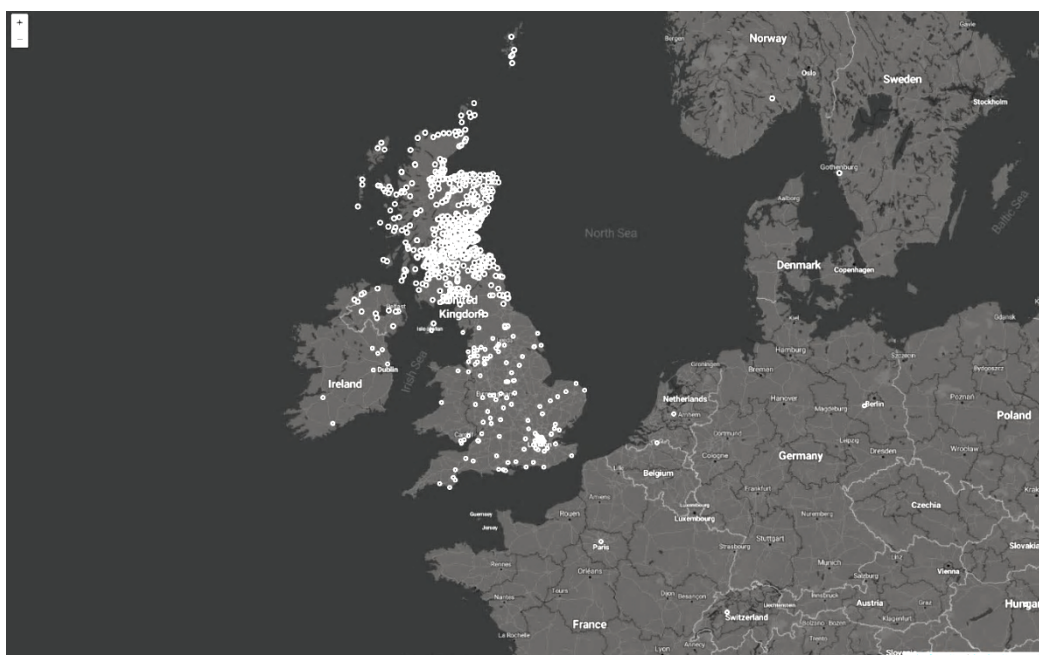
7.3. Students' Birth Locations

Only half of the students who (probably) spent some time in person in St Andrews between 1700 and 1897 **have a recorded birth location**. There are therefore many students we simply do not know about (yet).

For further problems with studying 'birth location', including incompleteness, false positives, false negatives, and the absence of any information on ethnicity – see Working Paper D, section 1.51.

7.3.1. Birth locations of St Andrews students, 1700-1897

The overwhelming majority of students were from Scotland, especially central and eastern Scotland; with smaller numbers from England (see map below), and even fewer from western Europe.



Visualisation: Birth locations of St Andrews students, 1700-1897

We have so far **identified 135 students** (including two women) **who were born in places that were at some point British colonies. 60% of these students** came to (or were examined by) St Andrews **after 1850** (see Table 7.3.2).

7.3.2. Students from regions under British influence, over time

	1700-1749	1750-1799	1800-1849	1850-1897	Total	LLA students	TOTAL
North America	1	5	7	16	29	7	36
Caribbean	2	4	9	7	22	4	26
Indian ocean	0	0	21	41	62	2	64
Australasia	0	0	1	6	7	2	9
South & East Asia	0	0	2	5	7	0	7
Africa	0	0	2	6	8	40	48
TOTAL	3	9	42	81	135	55	190

We have also identified **55 women registered for the L.L.A.** examinations who were born in the colonies. These women probably did not come to St Andrews in person – but their choice of accrediting institution says something about colonial awareness of St Andrews (and perhaps also about the absence of local higher education opportunities for women in Natal, now in South Africa).²¹⁵

These 190 students amount to 2.9% of all students with known birth locations. We could assume that a similar proportion will hold among the students whose birth locations are not known, though it may in fact be lower.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ On LLA examination centres in South Africa, see Smith, 'To walk upon the grass', pp.43 and 54.

²¹⁶ 'Birth location' is more often missing for the earlier period of our study, and fewer people were then involved in travel to or activities in the colonies.

7.3.3. Birth locations in the eighteenth century: the Atlantic World

Very few students in **eighteenth-century** St Andrews had been born in the colonies. Those who had been, were from **the British Atlantic world**. They came from South Carolina, Virginia, Jamaica, Barbados and Antigua and, as we will see in section 7.3.5, were often beneficiaries of the slave-based economies of those regions.



Visualisation: Birth Locations in the Atlantic World, 1700-1800.

7.3.4. Birth locations in the nineteenth century

By the **nineteenth century**, the pattern shifted: there were more overseas students, from more parts of the world. This included more from the Atlantic World (almost entirely Canada and the US), and also students from the **Indian ocean region** (including modern-day India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka; see section 7.3.7), and **Australia** (but not New Zealand, see section 7.3.8). There were a handful who had been born in South or East Asia (including Singapore) and Africa (but not many, other than the LLA students).



Visualisation: Birth locations in the colonies, 1800-1897 [including LLA students]

We have not been able to investigate the life histories of all of these individuals, but the research done so far (see Working Paper D, section 1.5) suggests that the vast majority of these students were from British (usually Scottish) families. Some of these families had long-term connections to, for instance, the Caribbean plantations of the eighteenth century, or (more frequently) to British India. The nineteenth-century students seem more likely to have been born in the colonies because their fathers were pursuing professional or business interests in a new area; and in at least some cases, the families had returned to Scotland before their sons were ready for university.

The awarding of M.D. degrees to a handful of students with **Indian (and in one case Yoruba) ancestry** after 1850 suggests that the professors of later nineteenth-century St Andrews were willing to award degrees to men who looked, and perhaps sounded, different from the vast majority of the student population. These men did not, however, spend long in St Andrews itself, coming only for examination. (In contrast, Elizabeth Garrett's attempt to matriculate at St Andrews in 1862 would have involved her attending classes with the other, male, students.)

There is little other evidence from this study of birth locations to suggest much ethnic diversity in the student population in St Andrews before 1900. Rather, it reveals the migration patterns of Scottish families.

We have provided lists of the students we have identified as being born in each region on our project website; and look forward to further research.

7.3.5. Caribbean / West Indies

The earliest individuals identifiable in the *Register* as having come from places that were (or would be) British colonies were from the Caribbean and were recipients of M.D. degrees. Candidates seeking the M.D. qualification 'by testimonial' were older than typical university students, and tended to be already established in their practice. The first five 'students' from the Caribbean illustrate some of the difficulties with interpreting what the early records meant to imply by saying someone is 'from' a particular place.

The first, **John Cochrane** (fl. 1714-1744, M.D. 1744) is described as 'from Kingstown, Jamaica', while the second, **Archibald Hamilton** (d.1761, M.D. 1746) is 'of Antigua'. This probably means that they were living in those locations, not necessarily that they had been born there. In Cochrane's case, we know that he had emigrated to Jamaica around 1714; and in the 1740s, sought his Edinburgh-based brother's assistance in acquiring an M.D.²¹⁷

The next three M.D. candidates 'from' the Caribbean were certainly the **sons of men closely involved in and profiting from enslaved labour**.

John Richardson (M.D. 1756, d. 1791/2) was son of a planter of Antigua;²¹⁸

Walter Caddel (b.1738, M.D. 1765) was the son of the 'treasurer of the island of Barbados. Caddel also studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, so it is possible that he came to St Andrews in person but we do not know;²¹⁹

James Verchild Markham (born c1760), was the son of a planter at Sandypoint, St Kitts. Markham is the first student from the Caribbean whom we can be sure came to St Andrews in

²¹⁷ The correspondence is discussed in Richard B. Sheridan, *Doctors and Slaves: A Medical and Demographic History of Slavery in the British West Indies, 1680–1834* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 43–44 (including the letter quoted here, from 1743). Smart's *Alphabetical Register 1579–1747* suggests the M.D. recipient John Cochrane may have later worked in South Carolina.

²¹⁸ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1406462068>

²¹⁹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1370563012>

person: he studied at United College 1775-1776 (and then went to Edinburgh, before taking a St Andrews M.D. in 1780).²²⁰

We are aware that our algorithm has missed other heirs to Caribbean plantations, including **Simon Richard Brissett Taylor** (1783-1815), who studied at St Andrews in 1798-1800 and was the heir to substantial Jamaican sugar estates;²²¹ and **William Beckford** (dates unknown), who studied at St Andrews in 1808-1810, and was described as the 'son of a rich West Indian planter'.²²² Other search routines may be able to identify more such students.

Regardless of where they were born, all these men were involved in supporting the plantation economy, whether by 'owning' enslaved labourers, or by tending to the health of planters and enslaved, or both. The University of St Andrews benefited from the fees they paid for degrees and for class attendance; and the community was shaped by their presence.

7.3.6. *British North America / Canada and the US*

The very earliest student 'from' North America was Adam Hay 'of New York' who was granted an M.D. in 1732, but about whom nothing else is known.

The earliest students from the American colonies to study in person at St Andrews appear to be:

Glen Drayton (1752-1796), who had been born in Charleston, where the Scots-born governor of South Carolina was his maternal uncle. Drayton came to Scotland for his education, first to Edinburgh and then to United College, St Andrews from 1769-1771. After returning to South Carolina, he became at some point a planter in Beaufort; served as an officer in the American Revolutionary War; married in 1781; and died impoverished.²²³

Corbin Braxton (b.1764) and **Carter Braxton** (b.1765), who studied at United College from 1781 to 1784, were the sons of Carter Braxton snr, of West Point, Virginia, a merchant and landowner (and signatory of the American Declaration of Independence). Braxton snr had extensive land-holdings, including plantations that relied on enslaved labour, as well as trading interests with the West Indian colonies. He had employed St Andrews alumnus Andrew Bell (section 3.4.5) as a tutor for his sons, which may explain their choice of university.

The first definitely **Canadian-born** students are the three **MacKichan brothers**, who studied at St Andrews in the 1850s.²²⁴ Their father, Dugald MacKichan (1801-1858), was a Glasgow-educated Church of Scotland minister who served in Nova Scotia from 1829, where his sons were born. He and his family returned to Scotland in 1845, and each of the sons came to St Andrews.

²²⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1397377756>

²²¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/ec34a7ebee9da8270b9234ca9749612b>

His entry describes him as 'son of John Taylor, F.R.S. of Lysson Hall, Jamaica' (but the digitisers did not tag 'Jamaica' as a location).

²²² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1366169948b>. He was presumably a descendent of the Beckfords of Jamaica: William Beckford (1709-1770) and his brother Richard (d.1756) inherited, and increased, huge fortunes on the island. Both have ODNB entries, but neither seems to have a legitimate son or grandson of the appropriate age.

²²³ He was accused of fathering an illegitimate child while in St Andrews, see <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1377257828>. Also JGB Bulloch, *A history of the Glen family of South Carolina and Georgia* (Washington, 1923), p.9 (for his marriage, and maternal family).

²²⁴ In addition, an Andrew Mitchell studied at United College 1794-96 and was tentatively identified by Smart as being the son of a merchant from Upper Canada. <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1399578844>

Finlay Hugh MacKichan (1832-1896) studied at United College 1851-53, then at St Mary's 1853-54. He emigrated to Australia in 1855 and became a school teacher in Melbourne.²²⁵

Alexander John MacKichan (1835-1898) studied at United College 1852-56, and then became a minister, initially in Inverness-shire, but from 1874, he ministered to the parish at Barney's River, Nova Scotia that his father had previously served.²²⁶

Peter Niel MacKichan (1837-1911) studied at United College 1853-56, and also at Aberdeen and Glasgow. He also became a minister, in Scotland.²²⁷

After the 1850s, there were two or three Canadian or American students studying at St Andrews per decade.

The first American-born woman to study in person at St Andrews seems to be **Janette Theresa Hill** (1875-after 1939). She was born in Chicago, where her Fife-born emigrant father trained for the ministry. The family returned to Fife when Janette was about six years old. Her father then spent three years studying at United College before being called to a parish in west Fife.²²⁸ Her younger brother Charles entered United College in 1894,²²⁹ and Janette followed him in 1895. Janette spent five years studying scientific and medical courses, but, perhaps due to her brother's death in 1901, did not complete her medical degree.²³⁰ In 1914, she was appointed as an assistant School Medical Officer just outside Birmingham, a post she held for at least the next twenty-five years.²³¹

7.3.7. The Indian Ocean region

So far, we have identified **64 students who were born in this region**, including 2 LLA students, and 1 woman who came to St Andrews in person. This is by far the biggest grouping of colonial-born students at St Andrews. All of these students came to St Andrews after 1800, and most did so after 1850.

As the visualisation shows, the most common birth locations were in or around the three East India Company 'presidencies' of Calcutta (Kolkata), Madras (Chennai), and Bombay (Mumbai), or generically 'India' (which explains the bright spot in central India on the map below). There are also students from the Punjab and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

²²⁵ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1395601740>

²²⁶ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1395596076>

²²⁷ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1395607676>

²²⁸ James Niven Hill (1845-1922) see <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386134324> and sources listed (especially *Fasti*, for family history).

²²⁹ Charles Thompson Hill (1878-1901), see <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386048668>

²³⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1386140428>

²³¹ This information comes from Anna Muggeridge, 'Women's engagement in politics and public life in the Black Country, 1914-1951' (PhD, University of Worcester, 2021), Appendix A.



Visualisation: birth locations in the Indian ocean region, 1800-1897

The first known students born in India were **Bazett Colvin** (1803?-1871) and his brother **John Russell Colvin** (1807-1857), who matriculated in 1818. They had been born in Calcutta, where their Scottish father was a partner in the important 'House of Agency' of Colvin, Bazett & Co (which provided capital and financial services for indigo, cotton and opium production in Bengal);²³² their mother was the daughter of a lawyer to the East India Company and had herself been born in Calcutta. The Colvin brothers were not, however, newcomers to St Andrews: they had been attending school in the town (and living with their maternal aunt) since about 1811.

After the Colvin brothers, there was a steady stream of Indian-born students coming to St Andrews. There were **six or seven every decade till about 1880**, making them the biggest group of colonial-born students. The list of surnames suggest that many were the sons of St Andrews families with multi-generational associations to the East India Company: a Dalrymple, four Playfairs, two Cleghorns and two Buists.

In contrast to the individuals 'from' the Caribbean who sought M.D. qualifications from St Andrews, most of the Indian-born students were coming in person to spend two or three years (or more) studying at the United College (though relatively few took a degree).

The exception to this rule occurred in the period **1856-1862 when at least twelve Indian-born candidates took M.D. degrees**. This period coincides both with the transfer of the governance of British India from the East India Company to the crown, thus giving its military doctors the possibility of joining the British army medical department; and also the decision, after the Crimean War, that there should be competitive examinations for candidates to join the army medical department. For this, however, they needed to have an M.D. degree. The fact that the University of St Andrews was willing to award its M.D. to externally-educated candidates who could pass an examination set by the Professor of Medicine made it an attractive option. For candidates who already had substantial medical experience, or had been trained at Madras Medical College (1835) or Grant Medical College, Bombay (1845), paying to take the St Andrews exam provided a route to a qualification that would be

²³² Colvin, Bazett & Co. is briefly mentioned in George K. McGilvary, 'The Scottish Connection with India 1725-1833,' *Études écossaises* 14 (2011): 13-31, para 34.

recognised by the British army. [However, St Andrews' apparent willingness to treat its M.D. as an income stream would be criticised by the royal commissioners who inspected the Scottish universities in the early 1860s.]

A report to parliament in 1861 about the strict application of eligibility requirements for admission to the army medical competition (which included age, marital status and physical fitness) reveals that at least three of these Indian-born St Andrews M.D.s were of Indian heritage, and two more were of mixed Indian and European ancestry. **This group are the earliest students of Indian heritage at St Andrews that we have yet identified**, although they were almost certainly here only very briefly.

Rustomjee Byramjee (1833-1913) of Bombay was awarded the M.D. in 1856, and joined the Indian medical service the following year. In the 1861 enquiry, he was described as one of three 'natives' who had recently joined the service. He served until 1875.²³³

Senjee Pulney Andy (born c.1836), of Madras, took the M.D. in 1860;²³⁴ and **Beramjee Colah Muncherjee** (or M. Beramjee, dates unknown) took his in 1861. Muncherjee was 'a Parsee from Bombay' who had trained at Grant Medical College.²³⁵ Both men were thwarted in their efforts to apply for the British army (rather than Indian) medical service by the belief that 'natives of India of native parentage' were 'unsuited for general service in the British army' (though they might be suited for service in India). **Andy** was furious at the waste of time and money he had expended in travelling to Britain to apply for a position for which he was not in fact eligible; and he received £200 in compensation from the government.²³⁶ Muncherjee tried to argue, pointing out that there were Parsee communities in places as varied as Australia, China and England – but to no avail.²³⁷

Two further St Andrews M.D. graduates had similar experiences: **Daniel Robert Thompson** (1843-1913, M.D. 1860) of Madras²³⁸ and **Henry Alexander Kidd** (died c.1899, M.D. 1861) of Calcutta. Kidd had been serving in the East India Company medical service since 1847, and was frustrated to discover that having an Indian mother made him ineligible to join the British army medical service.²³⁹ **Thompson's** case was examined in more detail. He was the son of a British army officer in India, but his mother was Anglo-Indian. He argued that 'a bare shade of native blood' did not make him unfit to be a British army doctor. A medical board agreed he was physically fit, but insisted that, as a man 'of colour with Asiatic features', he was 'constitutionally unfit' for service outside the tropics, including in the 'various northern climates' where the British army served.²⁴⁰ Thompson entered the Indian medical service instead.

²³³ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1370548860> . On his ethnicity and later career, see the Return to the House of Lords re 'India – Medical and Surgical military and naval officers' (21 June 1861), p.5.

²³⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1405086308>

²³⁵ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1401005476>.

²³⁶ See Return to the House of Lords re 'India – Medical and Surgical military and naval officers' (21 June 1861),

²³⁷ See Return to the House of Lords re 'India – Medical and Surgical military and naval officers' (21 June 1861), pp.26-30 (where his name is given as M. Beramjee).

²³⁸ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1414781420>

²³⁹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1390090884>. See Return to the House of Lords re 'India – Medical and Surgical military and naval officers' (21 June 1861), p.47.

²⁴⁰ See the Return to the House of Lords re 'India – Medical and Surgical military and naval officers' (21 June 1861), p.16 (Thompson on 'bare shade') and p.49 ('constitutionally unfit')

These men are unlikely to have spent much time in St Andrews, appearing only to sit their M.D. examinations. Nonetheless, their existence tells us that the student community of St Andrews in the late 1850s and early 1860s did occasionally include a handful of Indian and Anglo-Indian men.

The earliest known Indian student who came to St Andrews for more extended studies was **Ebenezer A R Chinnappa**, from Bangalore, who studied here from 1897-1899.

The first woman (that we know of) who was born on the Indian subcontinent was **Emily Charlotte Thomson** (1863-1955). She was born in Lahore (now Pakistan), where her father was a schools inspector. She was educated in Scotland and Europe, was licensed as a doctor in Dublin, and then spent a year at University College Dundee in 1894-95, before going on to Edinburgh. She was one of the founders of Dundee Women's Hospital in 1896.²⁴¹

The first Indian woman (that we know of) was **Rachel Benjamin Verulkar** (d.1938), of Pune, who described herself, ahead of her arrival at University Hall in autumn 1911, as 'an Indian Jewish lady' who had 'been in Government service for fourteen years' as a superintendent of a girls' school in Dacca. She originally intended to spend a year of furlough studying for the L.L.A., but eventually (after wartime interruption) took an M.A. in 1922.²⁴²

7.3.8. Australia and New Zealand

We have unsurprisingly found far fewer students coming from those parts of the world that were more recently explored and settled by the British. As yet, we have found none at all from New Zealand.

As with the students from the Caribbean, the first two Australian-born students in the *Register* were M.D. recipients. In this case, both had been born in Australia, but raised and educated in Britain from an early age. Both practised medicine in Australia after completing their medical education.

Richard Youl (1821-1897) was born in Georgetown, Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania), where his father was a minister. He was educated in England, and qualified MRCS in 1842, before getting a St Andrews MD in **1844**. He settled in Melbourne, Victoria.²⁴³

Alfred Waylen (1833-1901) was born at Point Walter in Western Australia, but educated in England from the age of about 8 years. He too had studied medicine in England before taking a St Andrews MD in **1858**, and returning to Western Australia.²⁴⁴

The first Australians who studied longer-term in St Andrews arrived in the 1870s and 1880s. They were:

William Rogers Fisher (1846-1910) was the son of a Sydney solicitor, who joined the Indian Forestry Department. During that time, he studied at various British universities, including St Andrews in 1870-1871. He later taught forestry at Cooper's Hill College, and at Oxford.²⁴⁵

Samuel Martin (1865-1883) was the son of a solicitor from Adelaide, who was sent to school in Dundee and St Andrews. He studied at the United College 1880-1883, and also took some

²⁴¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1414845340> and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emily_Thomson_\(medical_practitioner\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emily_Thomson_(medical_practitioner))

²⁴² Julie Greenhill, 'Anatomy of an enquiry, part 2: historical firsts', <https://special-collections.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/2021/04/13/anatomy-of-an-enquiry-part-2-historical-firsts/> (13 April 2021), quoting letter from Verulkar to Frances Melville, dated 31 May 1911 (UStA archives, UYUY7/Res3/1/4).

²⁴³ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1420586684> and <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/youl-richard-4900>

²⁴⁴ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1417895052> and <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/waylen-alfred-robert-4817>

²⁴⁵ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1380022060>

medical courses in Edinburgh; but he died from sunstroke in 1883, while attending an Artillery Volunteer Camp at Broughty Ferry.²⁴⁶

Frank Stanley Noble (1865-after 1939) was born in Sydney, but attended school in St Andrews. He studied at the United College 1882-1886, and then studied medicine at Edinburgh and other institutions. He became a doctor in London.²⁴⁷

We have found no Australian-born women coming to St Andrews for degrees before 1897, but we do have two L.L.A. candidates: **May Isobel Bird** (dates unknown) and **Hannah England** (dates unknown), both of whom registered in 1896, from the Girls' Grammar School, Rockhampton, Queensland. Hannah England had been a teacher at the school since 1894, and she gained her L.L.A. in 1903.²⁴⁸

7.3.9. Africa

Our algorithm only looked at people who were born in a country that – at some point in its history – was a British colony. We have not checked every African country.

We have been able to identify **6 students who were born in what is now South Africa, and 2 students born in Sierra Leone**; as well as 40 women candidates for the LLA, all of whom were from South Africa.

Of the male students, there was a mix of M.D. candidates and regular students. The first was **James John Beck** (1810-1886; possibly John James), the son of a Cape Town merchant, who spent a year at each of Edinburgh and Glasgow universities, finishing with a year at St Mary's College, St Andrews, 1832-1833. He became a minister, and served at Tygerberg, South Africa until his death.²⁴⁹

The four M.D. candidates include the first Black student (that we know of), **William Broughton Davies**:

Henry Anderson Ebdon (1824-1886, M.D. 1845) came from a 'merchant family at the Cape'. He trained as a doctor in London and returned to the Cape after taking his M.D. He then worked in the East India Company's medical service in Bengal from 1848 to 1858, before finally settling in Cape Town.²⁵⁰

William Henry Ross (1835-1912, M.D. 1858) was from Cape Town, and studied medicine in England before taking the St Andrews M.D. He returned to Cape Town.²⁵¹

William Broughton Davies (1833-1906, M.D. 1858) had been born in Sierra Leone to Yoruba parents who had formerly been enslaved. He was educated at a school run by the Church Missionary Society, from where he and two other students were sent on a scholarship to medical school in London, as part of a new (and short-lived) scheme to train 'African youths' to serve as army surgeons in West Africa. After taking his M.D. by examination in St Andrews, Davies did indeed serve in the army medical service, retiring in 1881 as Surgeon-Major. He is now recognised as one of the first two West Africans to qualify in Western medicine.²⁵²

²⁴⁶ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1397665932>

²⁴⁷ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1402187716>

²⁴⁸ For her appointment to the school, see <https://ehive.com/collections/4477/objects/473769/1-electric-telegraph-to-miss-hannah-england-from-board-2-electric-telegraph-from-miss-hannah-englan>

²⁴⁹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/debfe22fb5b34acc0544bb6aab3a70f4>

²⁵⁰ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1378254284> and *Biographical Database of Southern African Science*, http://www.s2a3.org.za/bio/Biograph_final.php?serial=831

²⁵¹ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1408151948>

²⁵² <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1375949244> and A Adeloje, 'Some early Nigerian doctors and their contribution to modern medicine in West Africa,' *Medical History* 18, no. 3 (1974): 275-

William Cooper Thomson (1829-1878, M.D. 1874) was the son of a missionary based in Sierra Leone. He himself had studied at Glasgow in the 1850s, and become a missionary in Old Calabar (now Nigeria); but later decided to train as a doctor in Liverpool and Glasgow, taking a St Andrews M.D.²⁵³

The most striking feature of the list of students generated by our algorithm is the large number of **women** born in what is now South Africa who registered for (and sometimes completed) the L.L.A. from 1885 onwards. There are few biographical details available for these women, but there were groups of candidates from Durban (8 candidates, 1885-1890) and Pietermaritzburg (9 candidates, 1890-1894), both in Natal; and from Port Elizabeth, in the Eastern Cape (6 candidates, 1895-1897).²⁵⁴ In contrast to the pattern seen with the male students, Cape Colony does not appear to have produced any L.L.A. candidates until 1896.

7.4. Alumni who had careers overseas

The *Biographical Register* holds '**career**' information for about a third of the students in our time period, where 'career' must be understood as referring to any kind of information about their adult lives beyond St Andrews. Only some of that information is tied to a geographical 'location', so we have 'career location' information for an even smaller proportion of our students than 'birth location'. [For more on the limitations and problems, see Working Paper D, section 1.6.1]

We have so far identified **720 students** whose subsequent lives involved some time spent in one of the British colonies (broadly defined). This is 5.5% of the students who probably studied in person; but just over **16%** of the group for whom we have 'career' information. If that proportion holds across the entire student cohort (including those whose 'career' information is not recorded), then there are many more alumni (perhaps another 1,700 individuals!) with colonial 'careers' waiting to be discovered.

Even on this very incomplete data, it is clear that far more St Andrews students went on to colonial 'careers' than had been born in the colonies: 95% of those who had 'careers' in the colonies had not been born there, though they may of course have had family connections. Of those who had been born in the colonies, 27% spent some or all of their career in the colonies.

Lists of alumni who had 'careers' in the colonies are available on our project website, by region, for further research.

93. On the scholarship scheme, see Pete Starling, 'Boys of colour' to be educated as army surgeons: military doctors for Sierra Leone in the 1850s,' *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 95, no. 384 (2017): 325-30.

²⁵³ <https://arts.st-andrews.ac.uk/biographical-register/data/documents/1415258412>

²⁵⁴ On LLA examination centres in South Africa, see Table 2.4, Smith, 'To walk upon the grass', pp.196-7.

7.4.1. Location of alumni careers in areas of British colonial influence, 1700-1900



Visualisation: Alumni career in areas of British colonial influence, 1700-1900.

7.4.2. Students who went on to work or live in the colonies, over time

	1700-1749	1750-1799	1800-1849	1850-1897	Total	Number of whom had been born there
North America	18	44	67	49	178	16
Caribbean	2	20	20	12	54	3
Indian ocean	2	42	138	123	305	9
Australasia	0	4	61	64	129	3
Africa	0	1	9	32	42	6
South & East Asia	0	2	2	8	12	0
TOTAL	22	113	297	288	720	37

The chronological trends are broadly similar to those seen in the 'birth location' analysis. In the early eighteenth century, St Andrews alumni who went to the colonies were most likely to go to British North America, ranging from New England to South Carolina. By the 1790s, some alumni were also going to Nova Scotia.

The plantation colonies of the Caribbean attracted some St Andrews alumni in the 1750 to 1850 period, but far more went to North America or to work for the East India Company. Throughout the nineteenth century, **British India** was clearly the destination of choice for St Andrews alumni interested in living or working in Britain's colonial territories. **Over 40% of those alumni** who went to the colonies at all (and almost 7% of all alumni for whom we have career location information) **spent some time working in India**. It is difficult to say whether this is due to patronage that was available via St Andrews (e.g. the interest of Henry Dundas, see 4.6.3); to the social capital and contacts acquired at St Andrews (where there were so many families, in both town and University, with East India Company connections); or whether it is part of the wider phenomenon of Scots seeking opportunities in India, that had been encouraged by the directors of the East India Company (many of them with

Scottish connections themselves) since the early eighteenth century and continued apace into the nineteenth century.²⁵⁵

By the end of the nineteenth century, **Australia** and New Zealand (mostly the former) had overtaken Canada and the US as destinations.

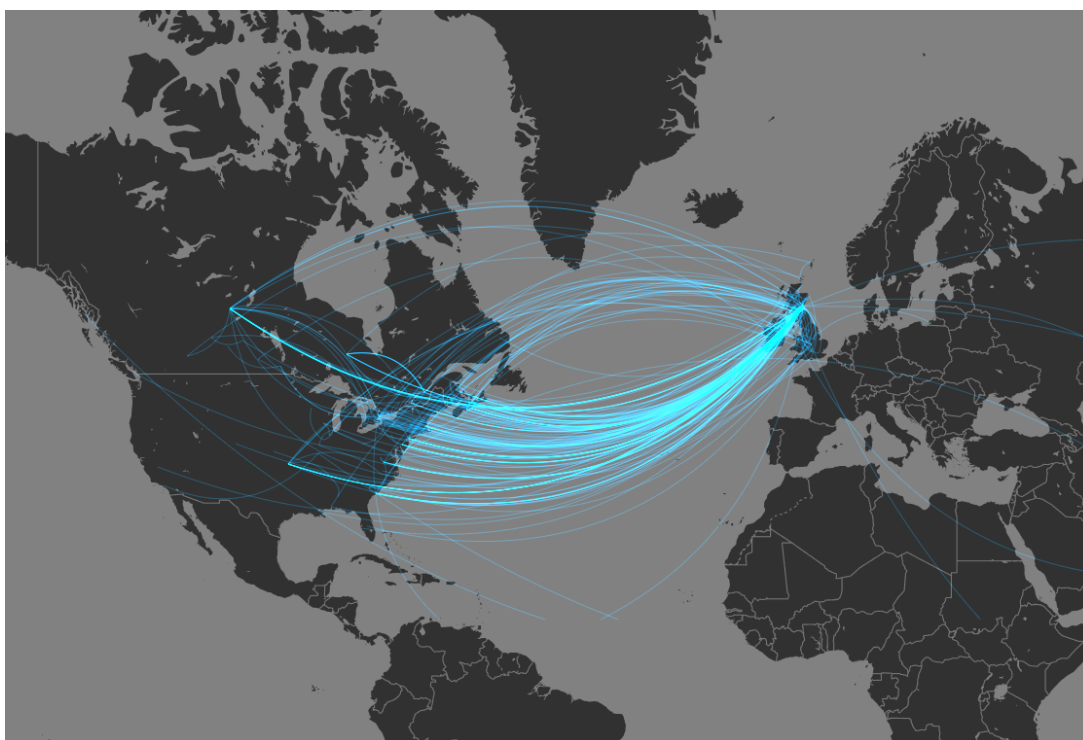
7.4.3. Career pathways

For some individuals, there is enough information in the 'career' section of their *Register* entry to be able to trace their movements over time. Did they go to India and then return to Scotland? Did they go to Canada and then to the US?

In Working Paper D, section 1.6.5, there are visualisations of the pathways taken by St Andrews alumni in each of the regions we have investigated, across the entire 1700 to 1900 period. Here, we have included only the visualisations for the two regions with the most evidence of alumni activity.

The map for **alumni in North America** shows most activity on the eastern seaboard (the two spots noticeably further west represent those alumni for whom we have only 'Canada' or 'the US' as a location). The pathways show some return migration to Britain, and a smaller amount of migration within North America.

The relative faintness of the return migration paths appears to suggest that more people went to North America than returned to Britain, suggesting long-term settlement there (or early death). But it could also arise because of the incompleteness of the data: perhaps we simply lack information about what happened later.



Visualisation 7.4.3-A: Pathways of alumni who went to North America, 1700-1900

On the pathways visualisation for India, the four brightest paths lead to the three East India Company presidencies (Calcutta, Madras, Bombay) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka). There is clear evidence of return

²⁵⁵ McGilvary, 'The Scottish Connection with India 1725–1833', para 45, has estimated that there may have been three and a half thousand Scots serving in the East Indies from 1725-1833.

migration; and much fainter, there are paths that represent just one or two alumni who went to India as well as to other places, including Singapore, Japan, and Australia.



Visualisation 7.4.3-B Pathways of alumni who went to British India, 1700 to 1900

7.4.4. Professions followed by those who went to the colonies

The *Biographical Register* career information often, but not always, includes an indication of the professions or occupations followed by the alumni, or the appointments they held. In principle, it should be possible to use this information to analyse what sorts of roles St Andrews alumni played in the various colonial settings.

However, the occupations and appointments are usually recorded with the original phrasing, without standardisation. In order to analyse occupations, we had to create a manageable number of categories (about a dozen) and manually assign the many different career descriptors in the *Register* to one of those categories. Further refinements would have been desirable, but we believe that the rough results are of some interest.

The most common occupations pursued by St Andrews alumni in a colonial setting were **medicine, religion and education**.

The medical category is the biggest category overall, due to the 200 alumni who had some form of **medical career in India**. (These were not all St Andrews M.D.s. The category includes many individuals who studied the general philosophy course at United College, and then went elsewhere – often to Edinburgh – for medical training.)

In every other colonial setting, the biggest occupational category was **religion**. (Again, these are not all St Mary's graduates, but include those who studied at United College and then went elsewhere for theological training.) As we noted earlier, our impression is that more of these individuals were ministers or chaplains serving European congregations, than were missionaries seeking to spread Christianity to other peoples.

Table 7.4.4: Professions followed by those alumni who went to the colonies

	Caribbean	North America	India	Australasia	Africa	SE Asia	Total
Medicine	21	34	200	33	9	5	302
Religion	26	95	44	64	23	5	257
Education	2	49	22	19	10		102
Government / civil service	5	13	19	9	4	2	52
Military		1	26	2	2		31
Trade	4	4	9	4			21
Legal system	2	5	11		1		19
Farming / Forestry		1	2	8			11
Politics			5	2	1		8
Other		3	2	4			9
Unknown	2	19	7	13	2	1	44

Notes: The entries in this table total 856, even though we have identified just 723 alumni who went to the colonies. There are two forms of double-counting – see Working Paper D for details.

The **Medicine** category includes all those described as doctor, surgeon, surgeon's mate, assistant surgeon, physician, or with 'medical' in their job title.

The **Religion** category includes all those described as minister, vicar, priest, missionary, bishop, chaplain, curate, among many others.

Education includes professor, teacher, tutor, schoolmaster etc.

Government includes a wide range of roles from governor-general, to civil servants, diplomats and local government officials. (Elected politicians are in **Politics**.)

8. The legacies of empire

8.1. Engagement in the expansion and administration of British colonialism

There were people closely associated with St Andrews who were involved in expanding British colonial power overseas. The chancellors of the University were almost always men with high-profile political careers who were likely to have been involved in decision-making about the colonies. For instance, Thomas Hay spoke in the Commons in favour of the new colony of Nova Scotia in the early 1750s. Henry Dundas was involved in the reforms to the East India Company's management of India in the 1780s and 1790s, and became president of the EIC's Board of Control after 1793. Robert Saunders Dundas held the same role fifteen years later. The duke of Argyll was secretary of state for India, 1868-1874. Their political careers generally kept these men distant from the day-to-day activities of St Andrews, but they were available to the University as political brokers, and they could act as patrons for professors' sons and/or alumni in search of a career.

Two former professors of the University were directly involved in colonial governance. Gabriel Johnston became governor of the colony of North Carolina, 1733-52. Hugh Cleghorn assisted the East India Company arranging the transfer of Ceylon from Dutch to British control in 1795, and was colonial secretary there until 1800.

We do not know whether the eighteenth-century University or its colleges held investments in trading companies such as the East India Company or the Levant Company, or in slave-trading companies such as the South Seas Company and the Royal African Company. In the late nineteenth century, the University did invest in government bonds to fund the colonisation of New Zealand and in Indian railway shares.

Taking a broader view, many former students of St Andrews participated in the imposition of British power on distant parts of the world, most often under the auspices of the East India Company in the late eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, and of the British Raj once direct rule was imposed on India after 1857. Alumni served in military, diplomatic and civil service roles, and as doctors and ministers supporting the people in those roles.

8.2. Associations with, and long-term benefit from, ownership of or trade in enslaved people

The University has derived long-term benefits from gifts and benefactions from donors associated with the ownership of or trade in enslaved people. Most prominent is the donation from James Brydges, duke of Chandos and a director of the slave-trading Royal African Company in the early 1720s; this donation funded the Chandos Chair of Medicine. The University also received bursary funds from James Stuart, who had owned at least one enslaved labourer while serving as a minister in South Carolina in the decade before American independence.

Senior figures in the eighteenth-century University had close family connections to enslavement. These included professor Hugh Warrender, whose father was an investor in the slave-trading South Sea Company; and principal Thomas Tullideph, who had two brothers trading in and to Antigua. Senior members demonstrated their support of the slave economies of the Caribbean by sending their sons to work there (for instance, principal George Hill and professor Robert Briggs).

Some plantation owners sent their sons or heirs to be educated at St Andrews, including James Markham of St Kitts, Carter Braxton of Virginia and Simon Taylor of Jamaica. The income they paid in fees contributed economic benefit to the University.

In the nineteenth century, the University continued to receive gifts and benefactions from individuals who had made their money from a variety of different sources, among which were business interests that depended on enslaved labour. These include ownership of Virginia tobacco shares (Andrew Bell), and those who owned businesses that bought from, sold to, or invested in enterprises dependent on enslaved labour (including the Guthrie brothers, George Clerk Cheape and David Baxter). There were also senior members of the University in the later nineteenth century who benefited from family wealth accrued at least partly from enslavement (including professor William Sellar and professor Matthew Forster Heddle). It is clear that financial benefit continued to accrue from enslavement far beyond the 1830s, potential extending up to the present day.

8.3. Long-term benefits from British colonialism and empire

Members of the academic community in St Andrews were well aware of the expansion of British colonial and trading activity. As well as those with family members in the Caribbean, many professors had sons and sons-in-law in the service of the East India Company (and later, of the British Raj). So too did many of their friends among the St Andrews and north east Fife families, some of whom had themselves been in India. Indian-born students, from Scottish families, were the largest group of overseas-born students in nineteenth-century St Andrews.

It is mostly after 1850 that we have found evidence of experience of, connections to, or awareness of Canada and Australia (and to a lesser extent, New Zealand and South Africa).

The University derived long-term benefits from gifts and benefactions from donors who had made their wealth from living and working in areas under British influence, the most significant of which were India and Australia. Around 10% of the modern University endowment derives from the gifts and benefactions made by such donors.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the University received gifts from individuals who had spent time in India, including Alexander Stewart, Amy Wemyss, Margaret Bruce and George Sutherland Simson.

It received fewer gifts associated with Australia, but those it did receive (in the late nineteenth century) were substantial. The monies gifted by William Russell and David Berry were both associated with the displacement of Indigenous peoples.

For a University that was financially struggling, all of these gifts helped. Except for the gifts to particular projects (e.g. buildings, in the late nineteenth century), the majority of the gifts were directed at student support, in the form of bursaries, scholarships and prizes.

The University educated the sons of British families overseas, some of whom settled permanently while others returned to Scotland. The biggest group of students who had been born overseas were from British families in nineteenth-century India. The income they paid in fees represents another economic benefit to the University from colonial activity.

Around 16% of the students educated or examined at St Andrews in this period engaged in professions or occupations that took them overseas, as ministers, doctors, educators and colonial administrators (and sometimes soldiers), most often in British India. Ties to St Andrews and to Scotland were an important form of social and cultural capital for those serving in the East India Company, allowing them to gain patronage and forge connections that cemented their social and professional positions. The University also educated students who emigrated to settle in Australia, Canada and the USA.

Overseas alumni and family members were an important source of donations of physical objects – including natural history specimens, ethnographic objects, ancestral remains and ‘oriental’ manuscripts

– for the University Library and for the joint University and Literary & Philosophical Society museum in the mid- and late nineteenth century. Some of these objects remain in the collections of the Library and the Museums.

8.4. Role in abolitionist and anti-abolitionist movements, and in the intellectual work underpinning of racism

Two individuals associated with St Andrews are familiar figures in the story of the abolition of slavery and the slave trade: chancellor Henry Dundas, and professor Thomas Chalmers. It is likely that there were other individuals at St Andrews who were writing about slavery or race during this period, but we have not as yet been able to investigate this intellectual approach as fully as it deserves.

There is little evidence for widespread condemnation of slavery in the 1790s. Professor Hugh Cleghorn spoke against slavery in his lectures, but the opposition of principal Joseph MacCormick of the United College and principal George Hill of St Mary's College to a petition for the abolition of the slave trade suggests at least apathy, if not outright opposition to abolitionism, among the most senior members. Hill's friendship with Dundas, his willingness to host the heir of a wealthy Jamaica plantation owner, and his willingness to send his eldest son to Jamaica are all suggestive of a man who was not in any rush to disrupt the Caribbean plantation economies.

By the late 1820s, attitudes had changed in St Andrews, as in the rest of Britain. The slave trade had been abolished, and the abolition of slavery itself was looking increasingly likely. Chalmers was able to persuade his professorial colleagues to send a petition in 1826, and by the 1840s, professor William Spalding could write about slavery in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as if it were an obvious moral evil whose international extirpation was now being led by the British. The students, too, seem by this time to have taken for granted the desirability of abolition: student debates in 1861 and 1862 debated whether slavery in the US ought 'to be abolished gradually or immediately?'

Throughout the second half of the century, the University had as its chancellor the duke of Argyll who was, with his wife, a noted supporter of abolition in the US; they corresponded with and hosted visiting abolitionists. The professors of this period appear to have been opposed to slavery by default, but were rarely required to put those principles into action. John Tulloch's experience in Washington in the 1870s reminds us that being a supporter of abolition did not necessarily imply a belief in equal rights, and even when it did, this did not necessarily lead, in practice, to respect or equal treatment for formerly enslaved people or their descendants.

We have found little evidence prior to 1900 of St Andrews professors contributing to scholarly debates about race, anthropology or human evolution.²⁵⁶ William Spalding's much-reprinted textbook *A History of English Literature* (1853) presented a Christian-infused view of society (and literature) progressing over time. Discussions at the Literary & Philosophical Society in the mid-nineteenth century suggest that some of the professors and townspeople of St Andrews were interested in the contemporary debates about the physical differences (e.g. in skull shape) between humans from different parts of the world, that became part of 'racial anthropology'.

²⁵⁶ D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson's concerted efforts to develop an anthropological teaching collection after moving to St Andrews (in 1917) would deserve attention in any future extension of this research.

8.5. Role in the intellectual work underpinning or undermining colonialism and empire

St Andrews undoubtedly provided an education for men who would go on to administer, work in or trade with distant areas of the world under British influence. The question arises, what they might have learned at St Andrews about the history, theory or practice of colonialism or empire.

The histories of ancient empires would have featured in the teaching of classical languages in the United College, and of divinity in St Mary's College. There was, however, no obvious place in the curriculum to address more contemporary issues, such as the future of the American colonies or the role of the East India Company vis-à-vis the British state. It would take a detailed study of surviving lecture notes (from professors and student notebooks) to uncover what might have been said by professors on these topics. Judging by their published writings, few of the professors were actively engaged in questioning colonial or imperial governance. In the 1770s, William Barron used his classical expertise to compare the North American colonies to ancient empires. By the 1890s, John Meiklejohn's textbooks took a triumphalist tone that glossed over Britain's acquisition of power in the colonies, and presented the empire as a source of opportunities for his young readers.

8.6. Diverse experiences in the St Andrews community

Very few members among our academic community between 1700 and 1900 had any personal experience of life beyond Europe, or of people from other cultures or ethnicities. Many of the nineteenth-century professors had family members in India and elsewhere, but Matthew Forster Heddle may be unique in having a half-sister whose mother was of mixed racial ancestry.

Just under 3% of students at St Andrews in this period had been born overseas. Almost all of these students were from European families who were active participants in colonialism. Their experiences would have extended awareness of other cultures in the St Andrews community, but would not have added to its racial diversity. In the late eighteenth century, the University had some students born in North America and the Caribbean. From the early nineteenth century, there was a steady stream of students who had been born in India, and by the second half of the nineteenth century, there were also some from Australia and Canada.

After 1850, we have found evidence of some students with Indian and mixed racial ancestry coming briefly to St Andrews to be examined for M.D. degrees, as well as one student of Yoruba ancestry (West Africa). We believe it was only at the turn of the twentieth century that Indian students began to come to St Andrews for a full degree course.

8.7. Why does it matter?

Each university will have its own story to tell of its connections to, and benefits from, British colonialism, enslavement, empire and global trade. The details of the stories will differ, but together, they are already showing how British universities gained long-term benefits from wealth acquired from the trade in, or ownership of, enslaved people, and also from wealth and artefacts acquired through the imposition of British political and commercial power on different parts of the world. The stories are also demonstrating how universities helped to educate students from families who had benefited from colonialism, as well as students who would themselves become part of the military or administrative systems underpinning empire, or who used the opportunities offered by empire to find profitable outlets for their professional or business skills.

Some universities began to investigate their history because certain elements of that history – such as the nature of the local economy, or the identity of key donors – were already well-known. The St Andrews investigation has had a different trajectory. We have been trying to discover the ways in

which we – as institution and as community – have benefitted from British colonialism, enslavement, empire and global trade, and to acknowledge our place in those entangled networks. Our research has confirmed our starting assumption that St Andrews was just as connected to colonialism and empire as the rest of Britain. The impact has been felt throughout its history.

Our focus on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries made a good starting place for this investigation. We now believe that even more of interest will emerge if we pursue the study into the mid-twentieth century, where there are certainly more donors, and we might find more evidence of intellectual engagement with debates about empire and decolonisation or civil and human rights, and potentially more evidence of international, racial and ethnic (as well as gender) diversity in the staff and student community.

Acknowledging our place in broader histories of imperialism, colonialism, and enslavement is a crucial part of our institutional commitment to create an inclusive and equal environment for our entire community. As a modern university, we care about inequalities, and we know that some groups are more privileged than others, especially in an educational setting. Studying our own history enables us to see how we have benefited from the unequal power relations created by British colonialism and empire, and helps us both to understand the institution and community we now belong to, and to shape our values and activities for the future. Rather than offer a definitive statement on history, legacy, and inequality, we hope this report will inspire conversation and reflection, stimulate further research, and inform future action.

Cite as: Aileen Fyfe, with Isabel Robinson, Tomas Vancisin, Sarah Leith and Matthew W. Ylitalo, 'The University of St Andrews and the Legacies of Empire, 1700-1900' (St Andrews, 2025), <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14975043>

Copyright © The Author(s), 2025. This is an Open Access work, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction for non-commercial purposes, provided the original work is properly cited.

