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After 1833: British Entanglement with Brazilian Slavery

Joseph Mulhern

Thesis Submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University
of Durham for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

Department of History

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Abbreviations

Archives:

AN	Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
APEB	Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Brazil
APHRC	Arquivo Público e Histórico do Município de Rio Claro, São Paulo, Brazil
BN	Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
BOLSA	Bank of London and South America Archive, UCL Special Collections, London
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library, London
RBMSCD	Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University, USA
TNA	The National Archives, London

Publications / Resources:

ASR	<i>Anti-Slavery Reporter</i>
LBS	Legacies of British Slave-Ownership database
PP	<i>Parliamentary Papers</i>

Organisations:

BFASS	British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society
LBB	London and Brazilian Bank
NLBB	New London and Brazilian Bank

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Abstract

In the context of renewed academic and public interest in Britain's relationship with slavery in the post-emancipation era, this thesis looks beyond the political borders of the British empire to Brazil, where individual Britons and British enterprises continued to own and invest in slave property for long periods after 1833. In fact, the last vestiges of Britain's entanglement with slavery in the Americas were only extinguished upon abolition in Brazil in 1888. Though this fact has been recognised by historians, much of what we know relates to the use of slave labour in the British-owned mines of Minas Gerais. This thesis explores the material basis of this entanglement outside of these exclaves, exposing British slaveholding in a variety of rural and urban contexts. The exploitation of slave labour is only part of the story. British banks and other creditors were also deeply entangled in the form of mortgages secured by human collateral. Though financial entanglement can appear innocuous in the abstract, this thesis pieces together fragmentary evidence of their potential for devastating consequences on the lives of the enslaved.

Restoring these overlooked British connections with Brazilian slavery is surely a worthwhile cause in its own right. Nevertheless, this thesis is also concerned with what the persistence of this entanglement, over the course of over half a century, can tell us about the limits of anti-slavery policy and legislation. The failure of the state to curb even the most obvious complicit practices cannot solely be attributed to the practical difficulties of investigating allegations and enforcing British law across political borders. Rather, ambivalence codified in legislation and embodied in British officials also facilitated the types of entanglement discussed here.

Introduction

In February 1888, just three months before the abolition of slavery in Brazil, Irishman Richard Gumbleton Daunt made one last and unsuccessful attempt in the courts of Rio de Janeiro to secure the return of his fugitive slave, Godofredo. Under the guidance of members of the *Confederação Abolicionista*, Godofredo had escaped his master's residence in Campinas and travelled to Rio de Janeiro where he found refuge in a community of other escaped slaves in the *Quilombo do Leblon*, on the outskirts of the city. Perhaps recognising the inevitability of abolition, the judge dismissed the case on a legal technicality, leaving Godofredo free and his former master, a self-proclaimed pro-slavery advocate, embittered and irate.¹ Just under a year earlier, enslaved labourers on a coffee plantation some 100km from Campinas had been less successful in winning their freedom. Eager to placate his workforce during a period of heightened slave resistance in the region, the Baron de Grão-Mogol promised to liberate his 70 remaining slaves after a maximum period of five years. According to the Baron, their immediate emancipation was not possible due to their status as human collateral for a mortgage the Baron owed to the New London and Brazilian Bank.² While such cases had become rare occurrences by this period, both Daunt's slaveholding and the bank's slave mortgage are important reminders that Britons' – and hence Britain's – exploitative relationship with slavery did not end with the

¹ E. Silva, *As camélias do Leblon e a abolição da escravatura: uma investigação de história cultural* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003) p.112. For a record of the legal proceedings see Ricardo Gumbleton Damites [sic] (Autor) vs. José de Seixas Magalhães (Réu), 1887, AN, Acervo Judiciário, Processo n. 1320, caixa 1039, galeria A. See also *O Paiz*, 13 February 1887, for a report on a speech made by Gumbleton Daunt in which he references the escape of Godofredo, the on-going court case and his pro-slavery views. For more on the life and career of Daunt since his arrival in Brazil in 1843, see A.G. García Alaniz, 'Dr. Ricardo Gumbleton Daunt: O Médico, o Homem e a Cidade (Campinas 1843-1893)' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1999).

² W. Dean, *Rio Claro: A Brazilian Plantation System, 1820-1920* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972), p. 144.

Emancipation Act of 1833 nor any other piece of British anti-slavery legislation. Though this fact has been well recognised in important studies of the British-owned goldmines of Minas Gerais, the material basis of this entanglement has hitherto remained overlooked outside of this sector. This thesis explores the extent and diversity of this entanglement with a specific focus on British slaveholding in non-mining contexts and slave mortgages. By placing this entanglement within the historical and legislative context of British anti-slavery, this thesis explains why it was only abolition in Brazil itself which finally brought an end to the last vestiges of over two-and-a-half centuries of Britain's relationship with slavery in the Americas.

This introductory chapter outlines the scope of the thesis by defining important terminology in addition to the chronological and conceptual limits of this research. The following section will discuss the major bodies of literature with which this project intersects. While recognising the varying contributions each of these literatures has made to the topic at hand, the case will be made for the need for further research on both the materiality of British entanglement with Brazilian slavery and our understanding of the extent to which the British state was willing, and indeed capable, of curbing these complicit practices. The penultimate section will discuss the methodological approach to researching a topic that has suffered a process of elision and distortion, while the final section explains the structure of the thesis.

Chronology, definitions and conceptual boundaries:

The chronology of this thesis begins in 1833 with the Emancipation Act and ends in 1888 following the abolition of slavery in Brazil. Though the Act did not bring an end to slavery in all territories of the British empire, such as India and parts of Africa, it was after the passing of this legislation, and especially after the end of apprenticeship in 1838, that Britain came to define itself as what Richard Huzzey has termed as an ‘anti-slavery nation’. Rather than entering into decline following emancipation, anti-slavery pride permeated British culture and society, becoming a central tenet of national identity.³ Anti-slavery also remained a powerful force in politics, shaping the foreign policy of successive Victorian governments who attempted to persuade and coerce their foreign counterparts to follow Britain’s example. Though this process had begun gradually after the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, it was after the settling of British emancipation that, as Huzzey remarks, this “anti-slavery state” passed through adolescence into its prime.⁴ A question at the heart of this thesis is how entanglement with Brazilian slavery was reconciled with a foreign policy and wider national identity so clearly opposed to the institution’s existence. Part of the answer to this lies in the definition of anti-slavery as a pluralistic ideology that captures the various, and at times contradictory, ways in which opposition to slavery was expressed and, importantly, put into practice.⁵ An important element of this

³ R. Huzzey, *Freedom Burning: Anti-Slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012) pp. 5-20.

⁴ *Ibid* p. 40.

⁵ *Ibid* p. 8.

heterogeneity within anti-slavery concerned the difference of opinion over how foreign slaveries should be combatted and ultimately defeated. While abolitionists, defined here as active civil society campaigners and often members of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, called for immediate emancipation of slaves across the Americas, the ‘anti-slavery state’ preferred to tackle the root of the problem, the international slave trade, rather than its branches in sovereign foreign territories. As we shall observe in Chapter I, these alternate visions for global slavery’s ultimate demise had important repercussions on the state’s handling of the types of entanglement under consideration in this study.

This leaves the important definition of what is meant by the term entanglement. In a recent journal article on ‘German entanglements with transatlantic slavery’ Heike Raphael-Hernandez and Pia Wiegink suggest a broad range of practices as evidence of German participation in and profiteering from the slave trade and slavery.⁶ At one end of this spectrum are the relatively small numbers of Germans who were directly involved in the enslavement of Africans and their descendants as slave traders and slaveholders.⁷ One step removed were the merchant banks and manufacturers who financed and supplied foreign slave systems. Further removed but still entangled, the authors argue, were the German intellectuals and travel writers whose failure to condemn the institution laid the ideological groundwork for later colonial expansion in Africa.⁸

⁶ H. Raphael-Hernandez, P. Wiegink, ‘German entanglements with transatlantic slavery: An introduction’, *Atlantic Studies*, 14:4, (2017) pp. 419-435.

⁷ *Ibid* p. 422.

⁸ *Ibid* pp. 425-428.

British entanglement with transatlantic slavery can also be understood in similar, though greatly amplified, terms. The economic component of this entanglement occurred across a broad spectrum that includes the role of British subjects and enterprises as slaveholders and investors in slave-property overseas; the financing, supply and facilitation of slaving voyages to and from Africa; the raising of foreign loans on London's capital markets, the type of which provided affordable credit and stability to slaveholding governments such as Brazil's; and finally, the consumption of slave-grown produce such as sugar and cotton. Though not negating the importance of the other areas to Britain's wider economic contribution to the maintenance of foreign slaveries, this thesis is interested specifically in entanglement in the form of investments in Brazilian slave-property, with a specific focus on the two areas represented by Gumbleton Daunt and the New London and Brazilian Bank. The former concerns slaveholding in its most literal sense, where British subjects exploited the labour of enslaved people in Brazil. Slaveholding, as opposed to slave-owning, is the preferred terminology as it covers those who exploited the labour of slaves they hired from others, in addition to British subjects and enterprises that owned their own slaves. The latter concerns British involvement, mostly as creditors but not always, in transactions in which enslaved people were used as collateral.

The rationale behind this focus on slaveholding and slave mortgages to the exclusion of other forms of entanglement is as follows. Firstly, along with the supply and finance of the slave trade, these links were eventually understood as complicit practices by the anti-slavery state which hesitantly legislated against them in 1843. Consumption of slave-grown produce and portfolio investment in slave economies were abstract connections that were never brought within the jurisdiction of the state. Though the

former agitated a great deal of anti-slavery opinion on both sides of the debate around the repeal of the sugar duties, the state never assumed responsibility for its prevention.⁹ The decision to focus specifically on British investments in Brazilian slavery rather than complicity in the slave trade to Brazil was driven by historiographical and methodological considerations. Though discussed elsewhere, it is worth noting here that in relative terms, British complicity in the slave trade has received greater attention from historians than the types of involvement in slavery under consideration in this thesis. Though both forms of entanglement present similar methodological problems, the illegal nature of the slave trade to Brazil means a limited pool of sources are available to historians interested in the material basis of British involvement. Given this is an area which has received a fair amount of scholarly attention, based on limited source material, it was decided to focus on overlooked aspects of British entanglement with Brazilian slavery. Indeed, the original contribution of this thesis in the area of British slaveholding and financial investments in slave property, will no doubt complement previous work on the slave trade and provide us with a more complete picture of Britain's complex relationship with slavery following abolition in its own empire.

Literature Review:

Britain's continued relationship with slavery in the post-emancipation period has been the focus of renewed interest both in academic and public history during the last

⁹ The mobilisation of anti-slavery opinion on both sides of this debate supports Huzzey's characterisation of anti-slavery as a heterogeneous concept. For further discussion of this debate see R. Huzzey, 'Free Trade, Free Labour, and Slave Sugar in Victorian Britain' *Historical Journal*, 53.2 (2010), pp. 359-379.

decade or so. At the forefront of this resurgence has been UCL's *Legacies of British Slave-ownership* (LBS) project.¹⁰ This academic project, which in turn provided the basis for a 2015 BAFTA award-winning BBC documentary, analysed records of the Slave Compensation Commission to explore the varied and complex legacies left by former slave-owners and the £20 million-pound pay-out they received after emancipation.¹¹ The project was itself a response to a wider debate around the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave-trade in 2007 and the perception that much of the public memorialisation of this anniversary had been dominated by narratives of self-congratulation, which served to displace a sense of national responsibility for Britain's central and long-term involvement in colonial slavery.¹² In an effort to adjust these narratives to reflect the reality of individual and national collusion, the project's organisers sought to '(re)write slave-ownership back into British history.'¹³ Inspired by both the aims and outcomes of the LBS project, this thesis is a logical extension of this process. To fully understand the continued presence and significance of slavery to Britain in this post-emancipation period, we must also look beyond the metropole and the political boundaries of its empire to the British subjects and enterprises that continued to hold and invest in slave-property in foreign territories, long after 1833.

¹⁰ C. Hall, N. Draper, et al (eds.), *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership: Colonial Slavery and the Formation of Victorian Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). See also, Legacies of British Slave-Ownership database (hereafter LBS). [<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/> accessed 12/08/18].

¹¹ *Britain's Forgotten Slave-owners*, 2015, BBC Two [TV]. It is important to note that the project built on the analysis of slave compensation records in N. Draper, *The Price of Emancipation: Slave-Ownership, Compensation and British Society at the End of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹² C. Hall, N. Draper, et al (eds.), *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership*, p. 17.

¹³ *Ibid* p. 27.

In exploring the impact of British slave-ownership on the metropole, the LBS project entered into a highly contested and controversial historiographical territory with its origins in Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery*. Since its publication over 70 years ago historians have cyclically debated William's central thesis that colonial slavery financed the beginnings of the industrial capitalism that ultimately destroyed it.¹⁴ One of the key controversies of Williams' economic materialism is that it relegates the role of humanitarian ideology in the ending of colonial slavery, insisting that anti-slavery was a consequence of an economic sector already in crisis.¹⁵ In a similar vein to the LBS project, this thesis, beginning at William's endpoint, cannot hope to respond to the controversy surrounding the causes of British emancipation. Nevertheless, this research does speak to ongoing historiographical conversations about the relationship between capitalism and slavery outside of the British colonial experience during the nineteenth century. Over the last decade, a younger generation of scholars have sought to position slavery at the heart of American economic development. For this group, working with the concept of 'slavery's capitalism', slavery in the U.S. South was not an archaic institution isolated from the growth of industrial and financial capitalism in the North. Rather slavery was integrated with and indeed central to this process.¹⁶ As Sven Beckert's *Empire of Cotton* argues, this was a process with transnational dimensions. In his global history of this commodity, Beckert shows how the industrial

¹⁴ E. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994) p. 210.

¹⁵ E. Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* pp. 179-196. This aspect of Williams' thesis has come under sustained criticism from authors such as Seymour Drescher who argues that the West Indian economy was still profitable and that abolition in fact constituted 'Econocide'. See S. Drescher, *Econocide. British Slavery in the Era of Abolition* (Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1977).

¹⁶ S. Beckert and S Rockman (eds.), *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016) pp. 1-27. See also, E. Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014).

capitalism of Europe was intimately linked with and indeed had its origins in the ‘war capitalism’ of the Americas, a system based on land appropriation and the violence of slavery.¹⁷ In the nineteenth century this created a new kind of slavery, a ‘second slavery’, which as an integrated component of global capitalism, flourished in the commodity producing zones of the Americas.¹⁸ Working in conversation with the concepts of ‘second slavery’ and ‘slavery’s capitalism’, over the past decade historians in Brazil have also sought to understand the role of Brazil’s slave-economy in the development of global capitalism. For authors such as Rafael Marquese and Tâmis Parron, the rise and fall of Brazil’s second slavery, based on coffee production, was inseparable in political and economic terms from the fate of the institution in the United States.¹⁹ Not only was the U.S a powerful pro-slavery ally until the Civil War, it was also the largest consumer market for Brazilian coffee.²⁰ Though not a coffee-drinking nation, Britain played an important role in this process as the centre of global trade and finance. While this thesis will not attempt to trace the macroeconomic trends favoured by global historians, its analysis of the entanglement of British credit with Brazilian coffee production on a micro-level in particular will certainly be of interest to their research.

While the material basis of British entanglement with slavery is itself a worthy subject of research, perhaps more interesting is what it can tell us about British anti-slavery.

¹⁷ S. Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2015) pp. xv-xvi.

¹⁸ The term ‘second slavery’ was coined by Dale Tomich. See D. Tomich, *Through the Prism of Slavery: Labor, Capital, and World Economy* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004) pp. 56-71.

¹⁹ R. Marquese and T. Parron, ‘Internacional escravista: a política da Segunda Escravidão’ *Topoi*, 12.23 (2011) pp. 97-117; T. Parron, ‘A Política da Escravidão na Era da Liberdade: Estados Unidos, Brasil e Cuba, 1787-1846’ (Unpublished PhD thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2015).

²⁰ R. Marquese, ‘Estados Unidos, Segunda Escravidão e a Economia Cafeeira do Império do Brasil’ *Almanack*, 5 (2013) pp. 51-60.

Much of the work in this area has focused on popular anti-slavery activity in the period leading up to emancipation in the West Indies. Within this body of literature, authors have sought to reclaim the importance of the mobilisation of anti-slavery public opinion in the face of Williams' theory of economic determinism.²¹ After emancipation and the end of apprenticeship, the attention of some British abolitionists turned to ridding the whole world of slavery, with various veterans of the earlier campaign reconvening to form the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society (BFASS) in 1839. In Chapter I we will observe how this group achieved some moderate success in affecting the government's anti-slavery policy in the early 1840s. However, the BFASS were less successful in their opposition of the repeal of the sugar duties in 1846. The inability of this group to mobilise popular support and even to maintain a united front has been identified by Howard Temperley as a symptom of the decline in public interest in the anti-slavery movement.²² Echoing this notion of decline, David Turley's study also stresses the organisational failures of abolitionist groups and their inability to rally popular support in the 1840s and 1850s.²³ However, as Huzzey suggests, assessing British anti-slavery through the prism of abolitionist societies distorts the pervasiveness of anti-slavery sentiment throughout British political and popular culture.²⁴ Elsewhere Huzzey demonstrates the extent to which this was

²¹ See R. Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade and British Abolition, 1760-1810* (London: Macmillan, 1975); S. Drescher, *Capitalism and Antislavery: British Mobilization in Comparative Perspective* (London: Macmillan, 1986); S. Drescher, 'Whose Abolition? Popular Pressure and the Ending of the British Slave Trade', *Past & Present*, 143 (1994) pp. 136-166; J. Oldfield, *Popular Politics and British Anti-Slavery. The Mobilisation of Public Opinion Against the Slave Trade, 1787-1807* (London, Frank Cass, 1998); C.L. Brown, *Moral Capital: Foundations of British Abolitionism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

²² H. Temperley, *British Antislavery, 1833-1870* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972) p. 166.

²³ D. Turley, *The Culture of English Antislavery, 1780-1860* (London: Routledge, 1991) pp. 100-104.

²⁴ R. Huzzey, *Freedom Burning* p. 7.

translated into the foreign policy of the ‘anti-slavery state’. Adopting the concept of a ‘moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities’, Huzzey shows that while the state assumed responsibility for some issues, others were left to the consciences of individuals. While correctly identifying that different forms of British complicity in foreign slaveries fell within this jurisdiction, Huzzey does not adequately explain the legislative context of this policy objective.²⁵

Other studies have been more successful in this respect. David Eltis’ work on the suppression of the slave trade includes a discussion of legislation which aimed to curb British involvement in the illegal slave trade. Though aware of the pivotal 1843 legislation that was enacted in an effort to prevent the expansion of British slaveholding, Eltis has little to say on its implementation on foreign shores.²⁶ More recently historians interested in British anti-slavery in the post-emancipation period have provided further detail in respect of this legislation. Chris Evans’ case study of slaveholding in British-owned mines in Brazil and Cuba discusses the formulation of the 1843 Act in Parliament and argues that concessions adopted before its enactment rendered it ineffective.²⁷ The groundwork laid by Evans in his discussion of British mining companies immediately before and after the law’s enactment has proved essential to the analysis in Chapter I. Whereas Evans’ research provides a snapshot specifically related to the mining industry, Joseph Kelly’s recent thesis looks beyond this sector and places a greater focus on the anti-slavery discourse of those British

²⁵ R. Huzzey, ‘The moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities’ *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 22 (2012) pp. 111-139, especially pp. 125-1127.

²⁶ D. Eltis, *Economic growth and the ending of the transatlantic slave trade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987) pp. 82-84.

²⁷ C. Evans, ‘Brazilian Gold, Cuban Copper and the Final Frontier of British Anti-Slavery’, *Slavery & Abolition* 34.1 (2013), pp. 118-134.

subjects entangled with the slave trade and foreign slaveries. While other chapters of Kelly's research break important new ground their treatment of the 1843 bill and British slaveholding and other investments in slavery in non-British colonies such as Cuba, St. Croix and Suriname, his analysis of these forms of entanglement in Brazil is restricted to the mining companies.²⁸ In its discussion of the British state's policy towards issue of British slaveholding over a longer term and beyond the mining sector in Brazil, this thesis addresses the void between both these important contributions to the literature.

The nineteenth century has been described as Brazil's 'British century'.²⁹ This characterisation reflects the important, at times predominant, role that Britain played in the political and economic life of Brazil since even before its birth as an independent nation in 1822. Undoubtedly, the two themes that dominated Anglo-Brazilian relations during this period were on the one hand, the suppression of the slave trade and its corollary, slavery, and on the other, the expansion of British trade and investment into the Brazilian market. Indeed, it would be these two priorities that Britain pressed for in the form of bilateral treaties from the Brazilian authorities as recompense for its role in securing the international recognition that the newly independent nation so urgently required. After a series of tense and lengthy discussions, negotiations produced the 1826 convention to bring an end to the slave trade by 1830, and the 1827

²⁸ J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-Slavery in the Age of Capital, c. 1830-1888' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Liverpool, 2017).

²⁹ O. Marshall, *Brazil in British and Irish Archives* (Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, 2008) p. xi.

commercial treaty to guarantee favourable access to Brazil's market for British products.³⁰

The overwhelming importance of these two themes has been well established in the literature concerning Anglo-Brazilian relations during this century. Leslie Bethell's seminal study of the abolition of the Brazilian slave trade has shown how Britain's efforts to suppress the illegal traffic both dominated and damaged relations between both countries for half a century.³¹ Though British anti-slavery was at its most intense until the effective suppression of the slave trade in 1850, Britain's active role only came to an end following the repeal of the Aberdeen Act in 1869. In fact, the unresolved question of the liberated Africans and the related issue of the illegal status of slaves imported after 1831 were the basis for the acrimonious 'Christie Affair' (1863-1865) that resulted in the severing of diplomatic relations between the two countries.³² Though Britain's anti-slavery role became much more of a watching brief

³⁰ Both of these treaties were the heirs of previous agreements that the British had exacted from the Portuguese following the transfer of the Portuguese court in 1808. For a discussion of this context see L. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade. Britain Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807-1869* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970) pp. 27-61. A.K. Manchester, *British Preeminence in Brazil: Its Rise and Decline* (New York: Octagon Books, 1964) pp. 186-219.

³¹ L. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade*. Bethell's traditional interpretation, stressing the importance of increased British naval pressure and improved capacity of the Brazilian cabinet to undertake these measures, has been challenged by revisionists who posit other factors such as concern over slave resistance and epidemics. For a review of the historiographical debate on this issue, see J.D. Needell, 'The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Historiography, Slave Agency and Statesmanship', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 33.4, (2001) pp. 681-711.

³² Ostensibly the result of a diplomatic disagreement over compensation for damaged British vessels and the treatment of British sailors, historians have argued that the real cause was the British Minister, William D. Christie's frustrations over the slavery question. R. Graham, 'Brasil-Inglaterra' in S.B. de Holanda. (Org.) *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira, Tomo II, Vol. 6* (São Paulo: DIFEL, 1972) pp. 141-152. On British policy concerning liberated Africans in Brazil, see B. Mamigonian, 'To Be a Liberated African in Brazil: Labour and Citizenship in the Nineteenth Century' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Waterloo, 2002); R. Conrad, 'Neither Slave nor Free: The Emancipados of Brazil, 1818-1868', *Hispanic American Historical Review* 53.1 (1973), pp. 50-70; J.L. Nelson, 'Liberated Africans in the Atlantic World: The Courts of Mixed Commission in Havana and Rio de Janeiro 1819-1871' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leeds, 2015).

following the repeal of the Aberdeen Act, the question of slavery's abolition and Brazil's transition to free labour still did occasionally provoke British action in the institution's final decades.³³

The literature has also recognized Britain's preeminent position in Brazil's economic affairs throughout the century. Alan K. Manchester's classic discussion of the topic traces this dominance from Britain's unequal economic relationship with Portugal up until competition from the U.S. and Germany began to challenge Britain's primacy in the early decades of the twentieth century.³⁴ Though Britain's favourable terms ended with the expiration of the commercial treaty in 1844, the second half of the nineteenth century would in fact witness the rapid expansion of British trade and investment in Brazil. In addition to its continued but gradually declining dominance of the country's import-export market, the turn of the midcentury also witnessed an increase of British investment in range of sectors linked to Brazil's physical and commercial infrastructure, including railways, public works and banking institutions.³⁵

In spite of the existence of bodies of literature which separately deal with Britain's significant anti-slavery and commercial roles in Brazil, there are has been surprisingly

³³ For instance, British diplomats quietly foiled the plans of some Brazilians to import indentured plantation labour from China and India. On Britain's 'behind-the-scenes' role with regard to Chinese labour, see J. Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil, 1808 to the Present* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013) pp. 49-50. Concerning Indian labour, see J. Mulhern, 'Mauá's Indians: An Experiment in Indian "coolie" Labour in Brazil, 1876-1878' (Unpublished MA dissertation, King's College London, 2013).

³⁴ A.K. Manchester, *British Preeminence in Brazil*

³⁵ See M. Paiva Abreu, 'British business in Brazil: maturity and demise (1850-1950)', *Rev. Bras. Econ.* 54.4 (2000) pp. 383-413; R. Graham, *Britain and the onset of modernization in Brazil 1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972). This expansion of British investment in Brazil was part of a wider trend in Latin America from the 1860s onwards, see R. Miller, *Britain and Latin America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries* (London: Longman, 1993) pp. 119-147.

little scholarly investigation at the confluence of these two major themes of Anglo-Brazilian relations during the nineteenth century. Indeed, there are only a small number of studies that attempt to make any connection between British investments in an economy dominated by slavery and the British state's sustained efforts to rid the world of the institution. The following section will survey the existing literature at this intersection of Anglo-Brazilian relations to show that while important work has addressed the issue of British entanglement in the slave trade and mining industry, outside of these sectors the material basis of this relationship has only been addressed on a piecemeal basis.

An important work that attempts to connect these two strands of British interest in Brazil is Richard Graham's classic treatment of Britain's 'modernising' role from the turn of the mid-century. Graham sees evidence of Britain's progressive influence on Brazil in a wide range of fields including trade and investment, culture and intellectual thought, and politics and diplomacy.³⁶ In a chapter on the slave trade and slavery, Graham stresses the centrality of Britain's role in the abolition of both. Graham cites not only diplomatic pressure and the influence of abolitionist societies on Brazil's nascent campaign, or 'direct aid', but all of Britain's wider influence 'that tended to transform the economic and social structure of the country.'³⁷ For the author, this included, amongst other things, the crucial role played by British capital and expertise in the expansion of the Brazil's railways and nascent industrial sector, as well a strong British influence amongst the small group of Brazilians he identifies as

³⁶ R. Graham, *Britain and the onset of modernization in Brazil*.

³⁷ *Ibid* p. 186.

‘entrepreneurs.’³⁸ In spite of his meticulous overview of the British presence across Brazilian political, social and economic life, Graham has surprisingly little to say about British slaveholding, never mind other investments in slave property. In the few lines on the issue, Graham makes references to the notorious use of slave labour by the St. John Del Rey Mining Co. but fails to expand on the issue.³⁹ In the following section we will observe that while historians have since expanded on this case study and the wider issue of slavery in British-owned mines, entanglement beyond this sector remains largely unexplored.

Before addressing the literature on slaveholding in the extractive industry it is important to briefly consider another body of literature that challenges the view of the British as agents of ‘modernisation’ in Brazil. Although admittedly falling outside of Graham’s periodisation, studies of the slave trade and its suppression have clearly identified the important role played by the British in the illegal slave trade to Brazil from 1830 to 1850. Though direct participation in the trade remained largely the realm of Luso-Brazilian ‘principals’, historians such as David Eltis, Robert Conrad and Luís Henrique Tavares have each identified the crucial ancillary roles played by British merchants in the illegal traffic.⁴⁰ It is Eltis’ work that goes the furthest in attempting to quantify the material contribution of the British to the trade. For the author, the illegal traffic was the mainstay of all British trade with Brazil.⁴¹ This bold claim is

³⁸ See *Ibid* Chapters 3, 5 and 7.

³⁹ *Ibid* pp. 184-185.

⁴⁰ D. Eltis, ‘The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade’, *Economic History Review* (1979), pp. 211–27; L.H. Tavares, *Comércio Proibido de Escravos* (São Paulo: Atica, 1988) pp. 76-79, 129-134; R. Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade to Brazil* (Louisiana State University Press, 1986) pp. 130-132.

⁴¹ D. Eltis, ‘The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade’ p. 226.

based on the author's calculation that a minimum of 90% of all manufactured goods used in the slave trade to Brazil (and Cuba) were British.⁴² British merchants in cities such as Rio de Janeiro and Salvador played a crucial role in funnelling goods manufactured in the factories of Glasgow, Liverpool and London into the hands of Brazil's human traffickers. Crucially, as Eltis stresses, the sale of these goods was also inseparable from credit. The competitive advantage of British merchants over local and other foreign counterparts was their ability to offer cheap credit at the long terms slave traders required to complete their return journeys to Africa.⁴³ Though far from as materially significant as the supply and financing of slaving voyages, without going into any great detail, Eltis also identifies British investment 'in plantations or projects employing slave labour.'⁴⁴ It is precisely this type of entanglement which this thesis seeks to explore.

Since Graham published his monograph in 1972, the subject of British slaveholding in the goldmines of Minas Gerais has attracted significant attention from scholars with interests in business history, British anti-slavery, Brazilian slavery, as well as the country's nascent abolitionist campaign. Marshall Eakin's authoritative business history of the St. John del Rey Mining Company charts the operations of this British enterprise at Morro Velho from its establishment in 1830 until its demise in the 1960s.⁴⁵ Unlike Graham, Eakin does not shy away from the fact that slaves comprised the majority of the mine's labour force until the early 1880s. Eakin expertly shows

⁴² *Ibid* p. 219.

⁴³ *Ibid* p. 220-221.

⁴⁴ *Ibid* p. 213.

⁴⁵ M. Eakin *A British Enterprise in Brazil: The St. John d'el Rey Mining Company and the Morro Velho Gold Mine, 1830-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989).

how this British company does not fit within Graham's model of the British as a progressive influence, promoting abolition and the adoption of free labour.⁴⁶ Instead, the St. John Del Rey was at once the largest individual slaveholder in Minas Gerais and undoubtedly one of the most successful foreign investments in Brazil. It was this compatibility between industrial capitalism and slavery that attracted the attention of other historians such as Douglas Cole Libby.⁴⁷ Other studies have given greater attention to labour relations and the systems of discipline, ritual and reward that the British instituted to control an enslaved workforce that at its peak in the late 1860s constituted some 1700 individuals.⁴⁸ The use of slave labour by a British company did not escape the attention of contemporary observers. Although its labour practices had suffered criticism in earlier decades, it was in 1879 that it became the subject of sustained international scandal. After becoming aware of the fact that the British company had illegally kept some 385 hired labourers enslaved following the expiration of their contract, abolitionist Joaquim Nabuco exposed the case and in doing so kickstarted his own campaign for the end of slavery. This international scandal and its importance to the beginnings of Brazil's abolitionist campaign has since attracted the attention of historians.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibid* pp. 36-37.

⁴⁷ D.C. Libby, *Trabalho escravo e capital estrangeiro no Brasil: o caso de Morro Velho* (Belo Horizonte: Editora Itatiaia, 1984).

⁴⁸ M. Childs, 'Master-Slave Rituals of Power at a Gold Mine in Nineteenth-Century Brazil', *History Workshop Journal*, 53 (2002) pp. 43-72. See also, D.B. Alves, 'Ernst Hasenclever em Gongo-Soco: exploração inglesa nas minas de ouro em Minas Gerais no século XIX.' *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos*, 22.1 (2013), pp. 1-18.

⁴⁹ M. Childs, 'A Case of "Great Unstablenss": A British Slaveholder and Brazilian Abolition.' *Historian* 60.4 (1998) pp. 717-740. C.J. Campbell, 'Making Abolition Brazilian: British Law and Brazilian Abolitionists in Nineteenth-Century Minas Gerais and Pernambuco.' *Slavery & Abolition* 36.3 (2015) pp. 521-543.

Beyond the mining exclaves of Minas Gerais, much less is known about the material basis of British entanglement with Brazilian slavery. It is not the case that the extractive industry was the exception to the rule. The mining companies may have been the largest individual British slaveholders, but as Chapter II demonstrates, at the mid-century at least, their collective labour force only accounted for half of the total number British-held slaves in Brazil. This figure, of course, does not take into account the many hundreds of enslaved people held under mortgage by individual British creditors or banking institutions. The underlying reason for this knowledge gap is part methodological, part historiographical. While the former will be discussed in more detail later, this section will consider the fragmentary treatment of British entanglement with slavery in non-mining contexts across a variety of literatures.

Although pioneering in their own right, the handful of social histories of the British in Brazil in the nineteenth century do not systematically examine the relationship between these communities and slavery. Gilberto Freyre's classic study of 'the English in Brazil' makes fleeting and anecdotal references to British slave-ownership from his extensive research of newspapers and travel literature.⁵⁰ Elizete da Silva's research into the Anglican and Baptist congregations in Bahia dedicates more attention to the ambiguous attitudes and practices which she observed in these communities. In a survey of wills and inventories da Silva was able to identify a handful of British slave-owners; information which ties in with the well-known presence of British-held slaves in the Malês Revolt of 1835.⁵¹ Perhaps more interesting than these individual

⁵⁰ G. Freyre, *The English in Brazil*, (Oxford: Boulevard Books, 2011) p.154 and p.211.

⁵¹ E. da Silva, 'Cidadãos de outra pátria: Anglicanos e batistas na Bahia' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 1998) pp. 148-149. On the Malê Revolt, see J.J. Reis, *Slave rebellion in Brazil: the Muslim uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1993).

cases of material entanglement is da Silva's reading of the Church of England's reluctance to interfere with the slaveholding practices of its parishioners in Bahia.⁵² Louise Guenther's vivid portrayal of the British merchant community in the same province is the most successful attempt in a social history to trace British entanglement with slavery. Though much of the chapter dedicated to the subject deals with complicity in the slave trade, Guenther exposes the presence of slaves in the domestic life of British merchants in Salvador in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁵³ Though these social histories provide telling glimpses of entanglement, their contribution is limited to case studies of domestic slavery in specific geographic locations. Rather than a result of neglect, these limitations stem from both methodological restraints and more importantly, the fact that the social histories of other British communities in Brazil remain to be written. While not an attempt to undertake this task, in its study of British slaveholding on plantations, farms and in a range of urban contexts, this thesis enhances our understanding of an important facet of the history of these communities.

Few answers can be found in the vast literature concerned with Brazilian slavery, either.⁵⁴ This is of little surprise owing to the fact that British-held slaves represented a tiny proportion of Brazil's total slave population. British interests in more general terms do appear in this literature particularly concerning its aforementioned role in the

⁵² *Ibid* pp. 150-160. The Church's position is discussed in further detail in Chapter I.

⁵³ L. Guenther, *British merchants in nineteenth-century Brazil: business, culture, and identity in Bahia, 1808-50*. (Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, 2004) pp. 54-59 and pp. 74-75.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of the major debates in the historiography of Brazilian slavery, see R. Slenes, 'Brazil' in R.L. Paquette and M.M. Smith (eds.) *Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) pp. 111-133.

abolition of the slave trade and links between abolitionist groups in both countries.⁵⁵ Labour histories of British-owned slave enterprises have largely been limited to the mining sector, although an emerging body of literature on railway construction has identified the presence of slave labourers in this industry.⁵⁶ The relative absence of specific concern in the Brazilian slavery literature for evidence of British entanglement, does not, of course, negate its importance to this thesis. Literature on the social, economic and political aspects of Brazilian slavery provide the context to understand the world in which these British subjects and enterprises operated. As such, this diverse body of work will be drawn upon throughout the thesis.

In a similar vein, the literature examining the basis of the business and economic relationship between both countries has been preoccupied with other concerns. Again, with the exception of Eakin's study of the Morro Velho mine, analysis of the social implications of British trade and investment for a long period has been marginalised by other concerns. In the post-war years until the 1980s much of the debate focused on the related theories of dependency and informal imperialism, whereas more recent studies have focused on less controversial topics such as the management and corporate structure of British businesses in the region.⁵⁷ So, while the role of British

⁵⁵ On the connections between British and Brazilian abolitionist groups see, L. Bethell, J.M. de Carvalho, *Joaquim Nabuco, British Abolitionists, and the End of Slavery in Brazil: Correspondence, 1880-1905* (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2009). On even earlier links see H. Ré, '“Missão nos Brasis”: a BFASS e a organização de uma missão abolicionista secreta ao Brasil no início da década de 1840' *Revista de História*, 174 (2016), pp. 69-100; H. Ré, 'Uma missão abolicionista britânica no Brasil e as relações entre a British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society e a Sociedade contra o Tráfico de Africanos e Promotora da Colonização e Civilização dos Indígenas' *Almanack*, 15 (2017) pp. 293-317.

⁵⁶ M.L. Lamounier, *Ferrovias e Mercado de Trabalho no Brasil do Século XIX* (São Paulo: Edusp, 2012) pp. 155-172; R.S. Souza, *Trabalhadores dos Trilhos: Imigrantes e nacionais livres, libertos e escravos na construção da primeira ferrovia baiana, 1858-1863* (Campinas: Editora Unicamp, 2015).

⁵⁷ A historiographical essay on the debates in this field can be found in R. Miller, 'Informal Empire in Latin America' in A. Low (ed.), *The Oxford History of the British Empire, Vol. 5, Historiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) pp. 437-449.

merchants in Brazil and Latin America more widely has been hotly debated by proponents and critics of dependency theory, very little is known about their entanglement with slavery, outside of the slave trade.⁵⁸ The same can be said about the social implications of the lending practices of the British joint-stock banks that arrived in Brazil in the 1860s. A reasonable amount has been written on the structure, operations and economic performance of these financial institutions but there has been very little interest in their direct and indirect connections to Brazilian slavery. David Joslin's classic account of the London and Brazilian Bank makes mention of the 'trials' the bank faced financing coffee production but the author is not aware or neglects to mention that human collateral was used to secure this credit.⁵⁹ Likewise, Charles Jones' discussion of the same bank and the 'mortgage traps' it found itself in, does not mention the nature of the property involved.⁶⁰ Indeed, the bank's resultant ownership of the *Angélica* coffee plantation and its use of slave labour has also largely been overlooked. The final three chapters of this thesis critically engage with this void in the literature to show that British non-banking and banking credit was frequently exposed to varying degrees of entanglement with slavery.

⁵⁸ Eugene Ridings, a proponent of dependency theory, emphasises the predominance of British merchants in the import export trade to the exclusion of national actors and to the detriment of the region's economic development, see E. Ridings, 'Foreign Predominance among Overseas Traders in Nineteenth Century Latin America.' *Latin American Research Review*, 20.2 (1985). D.C.M Platt, a longtime critic of the theory, rejected Ridings argument about the predominance of British merchants. His argument is summarised in D.C.M Platt, 'Wicked Foreign Merchants and Macho Entrepreneurs: Shall we grow up now?' *Latin American Research Review*, 21.3 (1986), pp. 151-153. Riding offered a response to these criticisms, E. Ridings, 'Wicked Foreign Merchants and Macho Entrepreneurs: Shall we grow up now?: Reply' *Latin American Research Review*, 21.3 (1986), pp. 154-156..

⁵⁹ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America. To Commemorate the Centenary in 1962 of the Bank of London & South America Limited* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963) p. 163.

⁶⁰ C. Jones, 'Commercial Banks and Mortgage Companies', in D.C.M Platt (ed.), *Business Imperialism in Latin America* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977). The bank's relationship with slavery is similarly underexplored in C.G. Guimarães, 'Foreign direct investment in imperial Brazil and the activities of British and Portuguese banks. Colonial banking versus imperial banking?' in H. Bonin and N. Valério, *Colonial and Imperial Banking History* (Oxford: Routledge, 2016) pp. 36-62.

The various gaps in the secondary literature relating to both this type of entanglement and British slaveholding in non-mining contexts leave ample room for research into these questions. Likewise, the disconnected discussions of official attitudes towards this entanglement across time and sector in both major bodies of literature on nineteenth century Anglo-Brazilian relations are surely an indication that this is a worthwhile exercise. The following section will discuss the types of methods employed and sources consulted in order to achieve this end.

Methodology:

As Michel-Rolph Trouillot reminds us, ‘any historical narrative is a particular bundle of silences.’⁶¹ This observation is particularly pertinent to the study of slavery, where the production of sources, curation of archives and the telling of history has been in the hands of slave masters and their accomplices. To a great extent, the voices of the enslaved have been silenced and distorted in this process. While the same cannot be said for the voices of slave-owners during the period of legal slavery, the picture becomes more complicated after 1833. As the organisers of the LBS project have stressed using the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as a case in point, in the post-emancipation period slave-ownership underwent a process of elision to the point that it became virtually invisible in British history.⁶² This section explains how this problematises the research at hand and offers an alternative approach to help us

⁶¹ M-R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2015) p. 27.

⁶² C. Hall, N. Draper, et al (eds.), *Legacies of British Slave-Ownership*, p. 1.

interpret the silences that punctuate the sources that have been most typically consulted in studies of Anglo-Brazilian relations.

British diplomatic correspondence, and particularly that of the Foreign Office's Slave Trade Department, FO84, is a rich source base that has been well-trodden by many historians of Brazilian slavery, British anti-slavery and wider Anglo-Brazilian relations. This voluminous correspondence was the written record produced by Britain's official anti-slavery network in Brazil, consisting of ambassadors, consuls, and mixed commission judges. The correspondence remitted by these officials included reports concerning the administration of Britain's suppression system, ongoing treaty negotiations, the status of anti-slavery sentiment in Brazil and the state of the slave-trade.⁶³ Indeed, the reach of this network, bolstered by the use of paid in-country informants, meant that the Foreign Office was often far better informed than local governments. The unrivalled coverage of this correspondence is the reason that FO84 has been cherished by so many historians. Indeed, its despatches and reports, have proved invaluable for the research into certain aspects of the types of British entanglement under consideration in this thesis. Chapter II, for example, would have been impossible without the use of an overlooked census of British slaveholders in Brazil. Nevertheless, without negating its importance, its use comes with some important caveats.

Though the archival ethnography of FO84 remains to be written, it seems clear that it is punctuated by silences on the issue of British entanglement with Brazilian slavery.

⁶³ On the role of the Slave Trade Department and the anti-slavery network which fed into it, see R. Huzzey, *Freedom Burning* pp. 43-51.

Trouillot suggests that silence enters historical production at four crucial moments: the making of sources, the assembly of archives, the construction of narratives and the moment of retrospective significance.⁶⁴ Whereas the authors of the LBS project argue that the elision of slave-ownership in British history occurred primarily at the final two stages of this process, the silences that problematise our research were produced at the moment the sources were created.

‘[A] subject dangerous and difficult in the extreme’ is how Reverend Charles Grenfell Nicolay described the slaveholding of his compatriots in Bahia in 1861.⁶⁵ Recently-arrived, the chaplain was very much perturbed by the practices of British members of his congregation in the city of Salvador. Of equal concern to Nicolay was the passivity of the local British consul upon whose help he could not count to scrutinise what the Reverend regarded as dubious legal titles held by British slaveholders in the city. Positive evidence of an official choosing not to act is rare, but such traces hint to the likely occurrence of similar cases and help to explain the silences which in FO84 are the rule rather than the exception. The reasons for this are developed further in Chapter I, but it is worthwhile noting here that the British officials writing reports to be remitted to London often had competing loyalties and responsibilities, beyond their anti-slavery duties. Often these were difficult to reconcile, and it is at these moments that silences were produced. The apparent frequency of these silences means that, though valuable, diplomatic and consular correspondence can only provide us with a fragmented account of the materiality of British entanglement with Brazilian slavery.

⁶⁴ M-R. Trouillot, *Silencing the Past* p. 27.

⁶⁵ Reverend C.G. Nicolay to the Bishop of St. Helena, exact date unknown (late 1860 or early 1861), Lambeth Palace Library (hereafter LPL), Tait 424, ff. 96-97.

Another collection of sources often consulted by those interested in the British in Brazil are the accounts of the many foreign travellers who encountered these communities throughout the nineteenth century.⁶⁶ In particular, travel writing provides a window into the private lives, personal relationships and daily routines of these individuals. For this reason, these narratives have provided an important basis for the few social histories of the British in Brazil, especially Guenther's innovative study of the British merchant community in 19th century Bahia.⁶⁷ As noted previously, Guenther's work offers glimpses of British slaveholding in domestic contexts without going into a great deal of detail. While claiming that evidence of the practice is abundant, Guenther makes a point to note its conspicuous absence, except for Maria Graham's oft-cited account of her time in Brazil in the early 1820s, in much of the published British travel narratives of Brazil.⁶⁸ Guenther attributes this absence to the performative role of these narratives to reproduce perceptions of moral superiority and a collective identity distinct from the local population.⁶⁹ Projecting perceptions of oneself through contrasts with otherness was not unique to British writers but appears widely in European narratives of Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth-century.⁷⁰ While the travel literature consulted in Chapter II shows the absence of slaveholding in British

⁶⁶ For an annotated bibliography of British and Irish travel accounts of Brazil, see L. Bethell, *Brazil by British and Irish Authors* (Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, 2003).

⁶⁷ L. Guenther, *British merchants in nineteenth-century Brazil*

⁶⁸ L. Guenther, 'Merchants, Abolitionists and Slave Traders: Brazilian Perceptions of the British in Bahia, 1808-1850' in H. Kraay (ed.) *Negotiating Identities in Modern Latin America* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007) pp. 104-105.

⁶⁹ *Ibid* p. 105. The construction of this identity as morally superior, even as slaveholders, is discussed in further detail in Chapter II.

⁷⁰ V.C. Gagliardo, 'A construção do Rio de Janeiro na literatura de viagem oitocentista', *Almanack*, 12, (2016) pp. 159-160.

travel writing to be somewhat overstated, Guenther's wider point remains valid. As Tim Youngs notes, travel writing is an ideological undertaking that is 'influenced, if not determined, by its authors' gender, class, age, nationality and education.'⁷¹ As we have seen, Britain's national identity and moral superiority was partly built on its collective rejection of slavery, it is therefore of little surprise that writers imbued in this ideology chose to gloss over the issue of slaveholding. In this sense, British slaveholding in Brazil underwent the same process of elision as colonial slavery in the post-emancipation era.

The limitations of these traditional sources in their coverage of British entanglement with slavery mean that we require an alternate approach. Of course, this does not mean a complete rejection of official correspondence or travel writing. It means that their fragmented narratives must be supplemented from elsewhere. At this point we can look to the strengths of the scholarly work on the British mining industry in Brazil. This literature has benefitted enormously from the wealth of extant archival material that some of these companies deposited, though this varies significantly by institution. One of the reasons that the St. John Del Rey Company has received such thorough attention is owing to the enormous collection of institutional records from the nineteenth century that are held in archives in the United States and Brazil.⁷² Moreover, owing to their formation as joint-stock companies and their accountability to their shareholders, these businesses produced annual reports and summaries of shareholder meetings were often published in the business press. As Kelly's work on the Imperial

⁷¹ T. Young, 'Introduction' in T. Young (ed.), *Travel Writing in the Nineteenth Century: Filling in the Blank Spaces* (London: Anthem Press, 2006) p. 2.

⁷² Many of these records are held at the Nettie Lee Benson Library, University of Texas, while others remained in Brazil at the Centro de Memória, in Morro Velho, Nova Lima.

Brazilian Mining Company shows, even in the absence of private correspondence, these sources can prove to be extremely valuable to the research of the material basis of British entanglement with slavery.⁷³

Not all joint-stock companies left such replete source material. Fortunately for our purposes, the archives of the London and Brazilian Bank (after 1871, the New London and Brazilian Bank), remain largely intact.⁷⁴ Like the St. John Del Rey Company this can be partly attributed to the bank's institutional longevity. In 1923, Lloyds Bank acquired a controlling stake in the business, which then operated under the name of the Bank of London and South America (BOLSA) for much of the 20th century. After a series of restructurings, in 1986 Lloyds absorbed their South American operations into its UK-based business.⁷⁵ Though this material has been consulted by business historians interested in various aspects of the bank's operations, its value for the study of this British company's deep entanglement with Brazilian slavery has been overlooked. Though the collection of private correspondence between the bank's headquarters in London and its branch managers in Brazil offers unrivalled insight into the portfolio of slave mortgages it held (Chapter IV) and the use of slave labour on its coffee plantation (Chapter V), it is not without its limitations. Firstly, neither complete accounts nor correspondence to and from the *Angélica* plantation have survived. In spite of these gaps in coverage, it has been possible to trace information regarding the management of this property from the summary reports of shareholder

⁷³ J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' pp. 205-246.

⁷⁴ Most of the private correspondence is held by UCL Special Collections as part of their Bank of London and South America archive. A much smaller amount of material, including published annual reports and HR records are still held by Lloyds Banking Group.

⁷⁵ 'Bank of London and South America' [<https://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/Our-Group/our-heritage/our-history/lloyds-bank-international/bank-of-london--south-america-bolsa/> last accessed 23/09/2018].

meetings, published in the *The Bankers' Magazine*, *Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest* and other local sources. However, the use of these reports to fill in the gaps in the bank's private correspondence presents its own particular problems. While the bank's employees regularly referred in their private correspondence to unnamed slaves as collateral security for outstanding debts or as sources of plantation labour, the silence maintained around these matters in public is almost deafening. Instead, the reports of shareholder meetings refer euphemistically to 'estates' and generically to 'labour'. The process of elision identified by Hall, Draper et al also played out in meeting rooms in the square mile and in the columns of the financial press.

Of course, institutional records of joint-stock companies are not the last word on the material basis of their connections to slavery. There are a variety of local sources which, though widely consulted by historians of Brazilian slavery, have largely been overlooked by those concerned with British activity in Brazil. Of particular interest to this study, especially to Chapters III and IV, are *escrituras*, notary deeds which publicly registered a whole host of transactions, and records of judicial proceedings involving disputes over slave property. The benefit of these documents, though often written in complex legalese, is that the material basis of the entanglement is not obscured by the layers of elision and euphemism found in British-authored sources. Moreover, it is through these Brazilian documents that we are afforded details, though only at the most basic level, of the enslaved people who formed the basis of many of these transactions.

Though the specific limitations of using *escrituras* as evidence for the entanglement of British credit with Brazilian slavery will be addressed in Chapter III, it is worth noting here that both the *escrituras* and judicial cases consulted throughout the course of this research have a heavy bias towards Rio de Janeiro, to the exclusion of other important centres of British activity including Bahia and Pernambuco. Although it would of course be preferential to analyse data relating to other important British communities in Brazil, the decision to focus limited time and financial resources on Rio de Janeiro was taken firstly because of the political and economic importance of the city as Brazil's imperial capital, which included it being home to highest court in the empire, the *Supremo Tribunal de Justiça*. It was in this forum that some of the London and Brazilian Bank's disputes over slave property were heard. Secondly, Rio de Janeiro was home to Brazil's largest British community, who were largely attracted by the economic opportunities of the port's burgeoning import-export trade; an expansion fueled by the expanding coffee region in the city's hinterland. In sum, research in Rio de Janeiro as opposed to another region in Brazil, presented the greatest scope for discovering the material basis of British entanglement with slavery. By engaging more critically with traditional sources, while at the same time consulting others that have been hitherto overlooked in studies of this type, this thesis will present a more complete picture of the material basis of British entanglement slavery and a more nuanced understanding of British anti-slavery policy in Brazil.

Structure:

The main body of this thesis consists of five chapters. The first discusses the historical and legislative context of British anti-slavery policy concerning British complicity in

foreign slaveries, with a focus on the Brazilian context. This discussion is sub-divided into three chronological sections that mirror the development of this policy. From an absence of an official position in the 1830s, by the 1840s abolitionist scrutiny pressured the state to adopt a more expansive interpretation of complicity. The legislative outcome of this was the 1843 Act, a law that brought slaveholding within the state's jurisdiction but did so in an incomplete fashion. Slaveholding interests, led by mining companies and merchant bankers, successfully lobbied for concessions that legitimised all slave property in British hands before its enactment and allowed for the future exploitation of slave labour in various ways. In spite of its limitations, the decade or so after the law's enactment witnessed the peak of official interest in British entanglement with slavery. However, the effective suppression of the slave trade signalled the gradual dissipation of this interest and during the last three decades of Brazilian slavery, British officials showed very little appetite to meddle in the private lives and business interests of British slaveholders. Ambivalent legislation and ambivalent enforcement defined this aspect of British anti-slavery policy throughout the period in question.

The second chapter takes advantage of an overlooked census taken of British slaveholding in 1848-49, during the peak period of official interest into these practices. With a focus on those Britons who largely escaped the attention of contemporary abolitionists and modern historians, this chapter portrays the extent and diversity of British slaveholding in a new light. Outside of the well-known mining sector, Britons exploited slave labour on plantations, in urban enterprise and in domestic contexts. Using the census data as a point of departure, this chapter discusses the routes to slaveholding, trends after the turn of the century, in addition to the ways Britons both

justified their slaveholding and found ways of circumventing Britain's already limited legislation.

The third and fourth chapters take the concept of entanglement beyond slaveholding in its literal sense to consider how slaves in Brazil were financially exploited by British capital. Each chapter uses judicial records to trace the entanglement of British finance and credit with Brazilian slavery. Chapter III focuses on the mostly informal mercantile credit networks in Rio de Janeiro in the 1830s and 1840s which show the participation of British subjects as debtors and creditors in transactions involving slaves as collateral, both in urban and rural contexts. Chapter IV adopts a similar approach to British actors in a credit market in the process of formalisation following the mid-century. It focuses mainly on the establishment of British joint-stock banks in Brazil and brings to light how the London and Brazilian Bank ended up financing coffee plantations in the West of São Paulo through a mortgage portfolio containing many hundreds of slaves. An examination of the foreclosure of a handful of these mortgages makes clear that this form of investment could, and indeed did have devastating impacts on the lives of enslaved people.

The fifth chapter is primarily a labour history of an extensive British owned coffee plantation Rio Claro, São Paulo in the 1870s. It explores the overlooked case study of the London and Brazilian Bank's administration of the *Angélica* estate following foreclosure on the mortgage of their biggest debtor, Vergueiro e Cia. Using detailed archival research in Brazil and the UK, this chapter will explain the reasons, anti-slavery related and otherwise, behind the bank's ambitious but ultimately flawed experiment in exclusively free labour plantation agriculture. Following the failure of

this model, the bank turned to the use of hired gangs of slave labourers. While British legislation was ill-equipped to prevent this exploitation, the fear of potential investor unrest in the metropole encouraged the bank to intentionally obfuscate its links to slavery. This thesis attempts to reclaim the history of British entanglement from beneath the layers of this type of elision and obfuscation. The concluding chapter discusses the success of this undertaking, its limitations and the potential for future research based on a similar approach elsewhere. It ends by discussing the implications for research of this nature in modern-day Britain, a society that has not yet fully come to terms with its challenging historical relationship with global slavery.

Chapter I: The British ‘anti-slavery state’ and British slaveholding in Brazil

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the historical and legislative contexts which allowed British slaveholding and other investments in slave-property in Brazil to persist for so long after emancipation in Britain’s own colonies. The chapter will be divided into three chronological sections that mirror the shifting boundaries of what Huzzey has called the ‘moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities.’¹ Huzzey suggests that while the anti-slavery sentiment which pervaded Victorian Britain’s national identity was translated into an expansive foreign policy of slave trade suppression, the British state did not assume the same responsibility for foreign slaveries. This chapter will show that, consistent with this delineation, the responsibility assumed by the anti-slavery state for British slaveholding in Brazil was tied to the responsibility it assumed for slave trade suppression. British slaveholding was brought within the frontiers of anti-slavery’s moral geography as a function of its complicit role on the demand side of a burgeoning illegal trade and not as a constituent part of a foreign slavery.

Part I will show that this expansive shift did not occur immediately and during the early years of Britain’s campaign to end the slave trade to Brazil, including the decade after it was declared illegal by international treaty (1830) and Brazilian law (1831), attitudes to British complicity in the slave trade as a whole remained ambivalent. While the prevention of some forms of British involvement in the slave trade were limited by weak investigative and enforcement mechanisms, in a decade in which

¹ R. Huzzey, ‘The moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities.’ pp. 111-139.

Britain was still resolving the slavery question in its own empire, the anti-slavery state showed little appetite to interfere with British slaveholding in Brazil. In fact, not only were these practices rarely condemned, they were tacitly, and at times explicitly, supported by British officials based in Brazil's port cities. During the 1840s, the decade under consideration in Part II, British investments in Brazilian slavery were brought within the state's jurisdiction in the context of an unrelenting illegal trade and growing criticism of British attempts to suppress it. Following the end of apprenticeship in 1838, both the suppression strategy adopted by the anti-slavery state and allegations of British involvement in the illegal trade came under increased scrutiny in parliament and civil society. As part of this process, abolitionists pressured the government to adopt a more expansive interpretation of complicity which included slaveholding. The major development during this decade was the passing of Lord Brougham's bill for the 'more effectual suppression of the slave-trade' in 1843. A decade after the Emancipation Act, British slaveholding in foreign territories was finally brought within the boundaries of the moral geography of anti-slavery responsibilities. However, important concessions granted to slaveholders during the bill's debate meant its absorption into the jurisdiction of the anti-slavery state was only partial. Despite earnest attempts to implement its provisions throughout the rest of the decade, the Act's enduring legacy was one of compromise that legitimised the various forms of British exploitation of slave labour that continued well into the second half of the nineteenth century. Though the legislation was invoked sporadically after the turn of the century, its proactive employment by anti-slavery officials subsided with the end of the illegal slave trade. With its practical and symbolical links to the trade severed, British slaveholding was once again treated as a constituent part of Brazilian slavery and as such there was very little official appetite to meddle in the labour

practices or investments of H.M. subjects. In Part III, we will observe that during this later period, 1850 until abolition in 1888, investigations were almost purely reactionary, with officials adopting a ‘clean-hands’ policy in line with Britain’s continued, albeit largely passive, anti-slavery position in Brazil.

Part 1: 1826 – 1840

In January 1826, Robert Hesketh, British Consul in Maranhão, wrote to George Canning regarding the administration of property belonging to the British hospital in the port-city of São Luís.² Owing to a lack of funds the hospital had closed at the end of the previous year and the consul was in the process of winding up its affairs. In addition to an inventory including furniture and medical equipment, Hesketh informed the Foreign Secretary that the hospital owned two slaves, originally purchased using the Contribution Fund and now in the charge of the hospital’s doctor while Hesketh awaited instructions regarding their fate. In reply, John Bidwell, under instruction from the Foreign Secretary, ordered the ‘immediate and complete emancipation’ of Jozé and Raimundo.³ With no indication that they had been imported illegally under current slave-trade treaties, it is likely that Canning’s decision was at least in part motivated by a wider desire to protect Britain’s reputation as moral arbiter on slave trade abolition.⁴ With negotiations for a treaty to completely prohibit the trade at a

² Robert Hesketh to George Canning, 2 January 1826, TNA FO 13/30 cited in I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil: The Hesketh Brothers Abroad* (Scotforth Books, 2009) pp. 98-99.

³ John Bidwell to Robert Hesketh, 15 July 1826, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1826-27* (Class B), P.P. 011 p.121

⁴ Indeed, in the following year a Brazilian Deputy, Raimundo José da Cunha Matos, denounced the conflict of interest he saw between British slave-trade suppression and British slaveholding in Brazil. In addition to British merchants and mining companies, Matos made specific reference to ‘consuls, ambassadors and ministers’ of foreign countries. See *Diário da Câmara dos Deputados à Assembleia Geral Legislativa do Império do Brasil*, Vol. 2 (1827) p. 547. For more on national reputation and slave trade abolition in the Atlantic, see M. Mason, ‘Keeping up Appearances: The International

crucial juncture, it would not be appropriate for official funds to be used to promote a trade which Britain had been campaigning against since even before Brazil's independence in 1822.

While the case constitutes an early recognition of British slaveholding's potential for reputational damage, it was the use of official funds which brought the fate of Jozé and Raimundo within Canning's purview. It would be another decade and a half before policymakers made a concerted effort to bring the wider principle of British slaveholding within the jurisdiction of the anti-slavery state. The purpose of this section is to re-examine British anti-slavery policy in this intervening period, particularly during the first decade of the illegal trade from 1830, to help explain why the example of Canning's intervention in the Maranhão case would not be replicated in the private interests of British subjects during a period otherwise characterised by intense anti-slavery activity. Though the British Legation has accurately been described as '[having] virtually assumed the role of an abolitionist society in Brazil' during the 1830s, very little of its work concerned the monitoring of British involvement in the illegal trade.⁵ While the role, albeit largely symbolic, of British slaveholding in promoting the illegal trade was recognised by two of Britain's most important agents of anti-slavery in Brazil, this issue received even less official attention. With the question of slavery not fully resolved in Britain's own empire during most of the period under consideration, slaveholding was simply not a matter of concern to most British officials. In fact, British institutions in Brazil tacitly

Politics of Slave Trade Abolition in the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World' *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 66:4 (2009), pp. 809-832.

⁵ Quotation from L. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* in the context of the legation's constant pressure on the Brazilian government to enforce the law of 1831, see p. 85.

supported slaveholding within the British community, British officials fraternised openly with slaveholders, and some even owned slaves themselves. Moreover, even on the rare occasion that British slaveholding was officially reported, it was fatalistically acknowledged that little could be done to prevent it. It was in these circumstances that British subjects and enterprises of various kinds were able to trade and invest in slaves, including those who had been illegally imported after 1830, without fear of censure by Britain's anti-slavery officials in Brazil.

The focus of British anti-slavery in Brazil in the 1830s

The focus of British anti-slavery activity in the 1830s was concentrated in the administration of the suppression system and diplomatic negotiations regarding the treaty which underpinned it. Throughout the decade, British diplomats were locked in ultimately unsuccessful negotiations with the Brazilian authorities regarding the enforcement and strengthening of the Anglo-Brazilian treaty of 1826. From as early as 1827 Britain had sought the addition of an equipment clause which would extend the powers of British cruisers, enabling the capture of not just vessels with slaves on board but also those fitted out for the traffic. Although not as pressing as the need for an Anglo-Portuguese treaty to prevent the abuse of the Portuguese flag, diplomats regularly petitioned the Brazilian authorities for an equipment clause until Palmerston took unilateral action on both issues in late 1839.⁶ In addition to the negotiation of specific additional clauses, the British legation expended a significant amount of energy urging the Brazilian government to honour its obligations as per the

⁶ For a discussion of both the equipment clause see L. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* pp. 111-112. Also, A.K. Manchester, *British Preeminence* p. 226.

international treaty and its own legislation of 1831. An essential component of this diplomatic pressure was the intelligence, often supplied by a network of paid informants, which British officials amassed on the state of the illegal trade across the country.⁷ While, as Bethell notes, successive Brazilian governments ‘were blind to the vast illegal importations and deaf to British protests against it,’ intelligence shared between branches of what Huzzey has termed Britain’s ‘global anti-slavery network’ was undoubtedly useful in coordinating its own suppression system.⁸ A central component of this system was the Mixed Commission Court in Rio which, in spite of the imperfect coverage of Britain’s treaty agreements, adjudicated twenty-eight vessels captured by the Royal Navy during the 1830s.⁹ The trials of these vessels were complex, required a great deal of administration and could last for several months.¹⁰ The fate of the Africans onboard these vessels became a highly contested issue which would only be resolved following the Christie Affair (1863-1865). While British concerns for these liberated Africans, or *emancipados*, evolved over the decades alongside changing attitudes to slave trade suppression and colonial labour policies, in the 1830s they related to an insistence that these Africans were allowed to serve their apprenticeships in Brazil, rather than be ‘re-exported’ as per the 1831 law, and that the Brazilian authorities should do more to prevent the abuses which plagued the

⁷ D. Eltis, *Economic Growth* p. 112. For a discussion on the sources of British intelligence, see L. Bethell, *The Abolition* pp. 310-11 and J.L. Nelson, “Liberated Africans” pp. 154-162.

⁸ L. Bethell, *The Abolition* p. 86. On the global anti-slavery network, see R. Huzzey, *Freedom Burning* pp. 43-50.

⁹ J.L. Nelson, “Liberated Africans” Appendix B.

¹⁰ Between November 1833 and April 1838, cases lasted an average of 135 days See L. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* p. 143. For the operation of the Mixed Commission courts in Rio de Janeiro and Havana, see J.L. Nelson, “Liberated Africans” pp. 46-62.

system.¹¹ British anti-slavery in the 1830s, then, was primarily concerned with bilateral negotiations to enhance the suppression system and did not, for reasons we will explore, permeate the private affairs of its subjects in Brazil.

British anti-slavery and British complicity in the slave trade

The British anti-slavery state began to assume responsibility for the prevention of British complicity in the slave trade even before the Abolition Act banned the British traffic in 1807. A year previously, Parliament had prohibited the advancing of credit and the intentional supply of goods to foreign slave traders. This legislation was restricted to transactions made on British territory until geographic limitations were removed by the Slave Trade Laws Consolidation Act of 1824. As its title suggests, this Act amalgamated eleven existing pieces of legislation which individually targeted both the direct participation and indirect involvement of British subjects in the slave trade.¹² In a similar vein to the Anglo-Brazilian treaty, prohibition did not necessarily signal suppression and while British subjects seldom participated in the trade as ‘principals’ – vessel owners, captains or crew – they were complicit in other ways. Indeed, as discussed in the Introduction, historians have since identified the prevalence of British involvement as suppliers, creditors and facilitators of the illegal trade throughout the 1830s and 1840s. Despite the ubiquity of these practices and their potential illegality in British law, there was no serious investigation, never mind criminal proceedings, undertaken into any individual or firm connected to the

¹¹ B. Mamigonian, “To Be a Liberated African in Brazil’ Ch. 4. On Britain’s insistence against the re-exportation of emancipados, see Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Fox, 5 June 1833 in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1833 (Class B)*, P.P. 471 pp. 94-95.

¹² D. Eltis, *Economic Growth* p. 83.

Brazilian slave trade during the 1830s. In a decade during which British officials appealed vigorously to Brazilian authorities to adhere to the letter and spirit of the law, their inaction and relative silence on the alleged impropriety of their compatriots is striking and requires further explanation.

Though the issue of British complicity was only tentatively addressed on a handful of occasions in the volumes of official slave trade correspondence during the 1830s, its very presence makes clear that inertia did not stem from a state of ignorance. An analysis of these infrequent references also suggests that it would be inaccurate to attribute inaction to systemic duplicity, as Marika Sherwood has done.¹³ A more nuanced explanation can be found in what Eltis has termed the ‘ambivalence of suppression,’ or the uneasy balancing of the ideological mainstays of British politics - the rule of law, respect for property and *laissez-faire* - with the need to enforce suppression.¹⁴ One of the manifestations of this ambivalence is the 1824 Act itself, which attempted to balance the protection of legitimate trade and a respect for due legal process with a desire to prohibit British participation in foreign slave trades. The solution, inherited from the 1806 law, was to set a high bar of evidence to prove criminality. As we shall see, the addition of this requirement to already relatively weak investigative mechanisms made the legislation practically unenforceable in the cases of ancillary involvement that characterised British complicity in the illegal Brazilian slave trade.

¹³ M. Sherwood, *After Abolition: Britain and the Slave Trade since 1807* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007) Chapter 4.

¹⁴ D. Eltis, *Economic Growth*, Chapter 7, especially pp. 102-114.

In spite of the unrivalled quality of British intelligence on the trade, the collection of evidence that would hold up in a court of law proved problematic. The case of Alexander Parry, a rare example of direct involvement in the trade, illustrates this point perfectly. In July 1835, Parry, a sailor from Aberdeen, requested the assistance of John Robillard, vice-consul at Bahia, in the recovery of wages owed following his service on the Spanish schooner *Manoelita*.¹⁵ Everything about the voyage aroused strong suspicions of the illegal slave trade; its voyage from Havana to Bahia via the coast of Africa, its initial cargo of rum and tobacco, the inflated wages promised to Parry (280 silver dollars for fourth months' work), and lastly, the identity of its consignee as 'a notorious owner of slave vessels.'¹⁶ Robillard's suspicions were well founded; according to the Slave Voyages database, the *Manoelita* had in fact landed 325 slaves on the Bahian coast just a few months earlier.¹⁷ Nevertheless, with Parry having signed an affidavit attesting to the legal nature of the voyage, Robillard did not believe his circumstantial evidence was sufficient to prove criminality and ironically, not only did the vice consul let Parry on his way, he also helped him recover the wages he was owed from the vessel's master.

The collection of robust evidence in cases of alleged indirect involvement in the trade was even more complicated owing to a stipulation in the 1824 Act which required that the accused had to have supplied goods or credit 'knowingly and willfully' in order to

¹⁵ John H. Robillard to Viscount Palmerston, 28 September 1835, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1835 (Class B), P.P 006, p. 101.

¹⁶ Robillard identifies the consignee as 'Andrea Pinto da Silve, a Mulato.' This is probably a reference to the well-known slave trader, André Pinto da Silveira. See P. Verger, *Trade Relations Between the Bight of Benin and Bahia from the 17th to 19th Century* (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1976) p. 405.

¹⁷ Voyages Database ID 3061, 'Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database' [www.slavevoyages.org accessed 10/07/2018]

be found guilty.¹⁸ The practical complexities which these words produced can be observed in allegations made, and then shortly afterwards retracted, by the British Mixed Commissioners in Rio. Without identifying those involved, George Jackson and Frederick Grigg informed Palmerston of ‘the indirect, if it should not rather be called the direct, interest which British merchants and British capital, in Brazil, derive from the Slave Trade.’ British merchants with connections to commission houses in Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester supplied slaving voyages with goods specifically intended for the African market and did so, the Commissioners believed, on conditional terms – ‘[the slave trader’s] debt to be acquitted, in part or in whole, according as the adventure may ultimately prove successful or otherwise.’¹⁹ In what appeared to be a clear-cut case of complicity, Palmerston was keen to see the perpetrators brought to justice and responded in February 1839 asking Jackson and Grigg to gather as much intelligence as possible, ‘with a view to facilitate the identification and prosecution’ of those involved. In their reply however, while reaffirming the central role British merchants played as the suppliers of ‘coast goods’ on credit, the Commissioners declined to take their accusations any further, claiming their statements had given a ‘greater latitude’ than they had intended.²⁰ A disclaimer they included in their initial report is helpful in attributing at least part of their hesitation to a lack of sufficient evidence. They stated that while ‘[they had] been assured’ of the prevalence of these practices, they would not ‘undertake to vouch for

¹⁸ ‘Slave Trade Act 1824’ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo4/5/113/contents/enacted> [last accessed 23/02/2018]

¹⁹ H.M Commissioners to Viscount Palmerston, 14 July 1838, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1838-39 (Class A)*, *P.P.* 180, pp. 169-171.

²⁰ H.M Commissioners to Viscount Palmerston, 6 May 1839, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade: 1839-40 (Class A)* *P.P.* 265, pp. 218-219.

[this] as a fact.’²¹ Like Robillard in Bahia, the Commissioners had plenty of circumstantial evidence but nothing near what would be required to bring a criminal case against those involved.

Though the ambivalence codified in British anti-slavery legislation was an important factor in the cautious approach adopted by most officials when dealing with allegations of British complicity, it was not the only one. Ambivalence of suppression was also embodied in the multi-layered responsibilities of most British officials in Brazil. While most British functionaries performed an anti-slavery role, they also had a range of other responsibilities. Diplomats and consular representatives had an important role in the protection and promotion of Britain’s significant commercial interests in Brazil.²² This responsibility for the growth of British trade and investment undoubtedly influenced the way officials handled allegations of British complicity in the slave trade. Diplomats and consuls were well aware of the types of connections between British merchants and slave traders described by the Commissioners. However, as long as it remained nearly impossible to legally distinguish between legitimate trade and the intentional supply of slaving voyages, officials were even more reluctant than their Mixed Commission colleagues to disrupt trade and tarnish reputations. The difficulty in reconciling the protection of legitimate trade with anti-slavery responsibilities can be clearly observed in an unusually candid dispatch written by the British Chargé d’Affaires to the Foreign Secretary in May 1839. Amongst other

²¹ H.M Commissioners to Viscount Palmerston, 14 July 1838, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1838-39 (Class A)*, P.P. 180, pp. 169-171.

²² The British Legation represented commercial interests to the central government in Rio, whereas consuls in Brazil’s major port-cities did the same before provincial authorities. Consular representatives also provided vital services to the British merchant community to facilitate trade and investment. On the role of British consuls during this period see C.M Platt, *The Cinderella Service* pp. 16-21.

highly sensitive matters relating to slave trade suppression, Ouseley informed Palmerston of the widespread support the illegal trade found among British residents in Rio. He regretted that ‘very many, nay most of our countrymen in Brazil are, more or less openly, advocates and supporters of the slave trade’ and that some merchants had openly expressed their hope that the author of a bill to repeal Brazil’s slave trade law, Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcellos, would soon return to office. Ouseley stressed that this support was far more than just ideological however, citing the example of ‘one of the principal English merchants’ who had recently brazenly declared to a member of the Legation that he could provide intelligence which would lead to the capture of many slaving vessels, but would only be convinced to do so if Ouseley, or the British government, could guarantee the £30,000 to £50,000 debt owed to him by the slave traders. Though the case appeared to be a clear-cut example of complicity, Ouseley was hesitant to extend moral responsibility to the merchants involved as ‘even with the best intentions it is difficult to avoid indirect connection with that trade, as goods of the same sorts as those acquired on the coast of Africa, are used here in the interior.’²³ Given the difficulty in distinguishing legal from illegal commerce, any investigation of complicity was as unlikely to succeed legally as it was likely to damage both legitimate trade and Britain’s reputation. With these odds in mind, pragmatists such as Ouseley, unlike more zealous officials such as Richard Robert Madden in Cuba, handled allegations of complicity with extreme caution.²⁴ The fact that the case was taken no further by Palmerston suggests that the Foreign Secretary concurred with Ouseley’s judgement to let sleeping dogs lie.

²³ Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 21 May 1839, in TNA, FO 84/286. Kelly’s research has shown how British merchants were able to defend their involvement in the slave trade by adopting similar arguments. See J. Kelly ‘The Problem of Anti-slavery’ pp. 158-160.

²⁴ See D. R. Murray, ‘Richard Robert Madden: His Career as a Slavery Abolitionist’, *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 61:241 (1972), pp. 41-53.

While individual officials and authorities in London showed some appetite to investigate allegations of complicity during the 1830s, their efforts were curtailed by the ambivalence codified in British anti-slavery legislation. The difficulty to prove criminal intent resulted in the cautious treatment of allegations of complicity by pragmatic officials wary of the potential damage to the legitimate trade with which the illegal slave trade was entangled. The overall result was that aside from occasional pecuniary losses following the seizure of slaving vessels, British anti-slavery had little impact on the involvement of British merchants in the Brazilian slave trade during the 1830s.

The anti-slavery state and British slaveholding in the 1830s

Throughout the 1830s British residents in Brazil routinely exploited slave labour and openly traded and invested in slave-property. In urban centres, slaves were employed in roles such as domestic servants, porters and manual labourers in British households and commercial establishments. In the interior of various Brazilian provinces, slaves were bought to work British-owned sugar and coffee plantations, and slave labour predominated in the British joint-stock goldmines of Minas Gerais.²⁵ Whereas the supply and financing of slaving voyages was carried on under at least the nominal threat of official and legal sanction, British subjects and enterprises openly exploited slave labour and publicly traded in slave-property in the certainty that British anti-slavery policy posed no risk to their investments. In this section, a review of this policy

²⁵ Chapter II discusses British slaveholding in further detail, whereas Chapter III addresses other types of investment in slave-property during this period.

and an examination of the ‘on-the-ground’ relationship between slavery and British officials will show that not only did British slaveholding exist outside the moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities in the 1830s but that, in another manifestation of ambivalent suppression, British officials and institutions tacitly, and at times explicitly, supported the exploitation of the institution driving the demand for the illicit trade.

In spite of its prevalence within British expatriate communities, the subject of slaveholding was only very infrequently broached by British officials in their correspondence to London. In the most part, this relative silence can be attributed to the fact that slaveholding in foreign territories was not legally contentious in the same way as other forms of complicity the slave trade. British slaveholding outside its own empire was not included in the Emancipation Act of 1833, nor had it been explicitly addressed in the Slave Trade Consolidation Act of 1824.²⁶ The lack of clear provision for slaveholding in British anti-slavery legislation meant that it could be treated as legally distinct from the slave trade. This was the case for the majority of British officials in Brazil who found little reason to include it in their despatches. A notable exception to this general rule were the Mixed Commissioners who wrote on the subject on a handful of occasions throughout the first decade of the illegal trade. While Jackson and Grigg acknowledged the legal distinction between slaveholding and the slave trade, they also recognised what abolitionists and historians would later argue – that slaveholding and the supply and financing of slave voyages were two sides of the

²⁶ D. Eltis, *Economic Growth* p. 83. The expanded interpretation of the 1824 legislation adopted by some prominent abolitionists in the early 1840s will be addressed in Part II of this chapter.

same coin of British complicity in the illegal trade.²⁷ In a letter of March 1835, the Commissioners brought the Duke of Wellington's attention to the fact that,

a very considerable number of the slaves imported into Brazil are in fact employed in establishments conducted and supported by British agents and capital and that many individuals, claiming British protection, and owning allegiance to His Majesty, are openly seen, under the present system, buying and selling slaves.

In an early expression of an attitude which would resurface in debates on the issue in the ensuing decades, Jackson and Grigg's concern was not with slaveholding per se, rather the transactions which drove the demand for the illegal importation of Africans. They argued that British subjects who were 'in any way concerned in the sale, purchase or hiring of a slave...[were] to all intents and purposes promoting the traffic.' Adopting a similar, albeit expanded, interpretation of the logic used by Canning in the Maranhão case, the Commissioners believed that this type of involvement was a matter 'immediately affecting [Britain's] national character,' and represented an inconsistency which was not lost on Brazilian observers, who often expressed 'incredulity... as to [Britain's] sincerity in wishing to see the commerce altogether done away with.'²⁸ In a series of letters to Viscount Palmerston in 1838-1839, Jackson and Grigg once again stressed the large amount of British capital invested in slave property in Brazil, asking rhetorically: 'With what, but slave labour, are the works, originating in British capital and enterprise, carried on in this country?'²⁹ Crucially,

²⁷ The association of slaveholding as another form of complicity in the slave trade made by abolitionists in the 1840s will be addressed in Part II of this chapter. Eltis regards British slaveholding as one part of the British contribution to the slave trade, see D. Eltis, 'The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade' p. 213.

²⁸ H.M Commissioners to Duke of Wellington, 24 March 1835 in Correspondence on Slave Trade: 1835 (Class A), *P.P.* 005, pp. 256-260. [Nb. The date at the top of the letter in the printed publication has been erroneously transcribed as 24 March 1834]

²⁹ H.M Commissioners to Viscount Palmerston, 14 July 1838, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1838-39 (Class A), *P.P.* 180, pp. 169-171.

they also made an explicit connection between this capital and the enslavement of Africans illegally imported into Brazil, adding that a case brought to Palmerston's attention, involving a British subject who had purchased a slave imported after 7 November 1831, was 'by no means...a solitary one.' The Commissioners' fatalistic admission that there was 'nothing to prevent any British subject from buying or selling slaves in Brazil' was recognition that slaveholding in foreign territories existed beyond the frontiers of British anti-slavery's moral geography.³⁰ Britain's jurisdiction was the high seas and its responsibilities for the fate of enslaved Africans once they reached foreign soil were limited to those liberated by the Mixed Commission. Nevertheless, the absence of any instructions, or even acknowledgement, from London on the subject suggests that the anti-slavery state was prepared to tolerate British involvement in the illegal enslavement of Africans in favour of disrupting the many significant investments which depended directly and indirectly on that labour.

Manifestations of the ambivalence of British suppression were not limited to the passive tolerance of government officials in London; they can also be observed in 'on-the-ground' interactions between British agents and Brazilian slavery. While most, though not all, functionaries publicly echoed the anti-slavery sentiments which permeated British national identity following the Emancipation Act, in practice, some continued to exploit slave labour for their own benefit. This even applied to the most vocal critics of British slaveholding, the Mixed Commissioners, who proved unable to practise what they preached. H.M. Arbitrator, Frederick Grigg admitted to hiring slaves as household servants and justified his actions by stressing both the scarcity and

³⁰ H.M Commissioners to Viscount Palmerston, 6 May 1839, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade: 1839-40 (Class A) P.P.* 265, pp. 218-219.

cost of employing free labour.³¹ Sir George Jackson, though he did not own or hire slaves, was lampooned in the Brazilian press for his employment of Africans liberated under the auspices of the Mixed Commission.³² This ‘extremely injudicious conduct’ was sharply criticised by H.M. Chargé d’Affaires, William Gore Ouseley, in a series of private letters to the Foreign Office between 1838-1839. Ouseley was dismayed firstly by the fact that Jackson had not only ignored Palmerston’s instructions to refrain from employing liberated Africans but had since applied to hire more.³³ Secondly, though Jackson had justified the employment of three Africans by the ‘proper care’ they received in his service, Ouseley’s letters are replete with allegations of the mistreatment the *emancipados* had suffered in Jackson’s household. In fact, the Mixed Commission judge had previously told Ouseley that he believed ‘the only way to manage blacks was to “lash them well,”’ and on more than one occasion, Jackson’s servants had sought refuge at the Chargé d’Affaires residence following mistreatment.³⁴ Though Ouseley kept the allegations of misconduct to his private correspondence with Palmerston, he mentioned that the Brazilian Foreign Minister, Lopes da Gama, was fully aware of a previous case where Jackson’s conduct had ‘proved to have been most shameful’ towards a female liberated African in his service.³⁵ This very public scandal, in addition to other allegations that he had received

³¹ Mr. Grigg to Viscount Palmerston, 31 October 1840, in Correspondence on Slave Trade: 1841 (Class A), P.P. 402, pp. 287-288.

³² For coverage of the scandal in the Brazilian press, see *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 16 July 1839, copied and translated in Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 10 December 1839, in TNA FO 84/288.

³³ Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 10 December 1839, in TNA FO 84/288. For the instructions to which Ouseley refers, see Viscount Palmerston to Sir G. Jackson, 8 May 1839, in Correspondence on Slave Trade: 1839-40 (Class A) (Further Series), P.P. 188 p. 145.

³⁴ Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 26 September 1838, in TNA, FO 84/254; Mr. Ouseley to Mr. Bandinel, 18 September 1839, in TNA, FO 84/287.

³⁵ Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 10 December 1839, in TNA, FO 84/288.

bribes from slave dealers, certainly influenced the decision to transfer Jackson to a far less critical role as Commission judge in Surinam.³⁶

Though there is no indication that H.M. Legation employed slave labour, consuls Henry A. Cowper in Pará and Robert Hesketh in Rio de Janeiro, also hired slaves as domestic servants.³⁷ The latter, who employed three slaves alongside seven free black servants, presented the hiring of slaves as somehow less pernicious than owning them outright. The consul justified his actions by arguing that although each hired slave cost him one third more than the wage of a freeman, he had found it difficult to keep enough of the latter in his service for any length of time. To reinforce his defence based on the necessity of slavery, Hesketh echoed what Grigg had also told the Foreign Secretary:

It is almost needless to observe that in this country of slave labour, no provisions can be had, no articles of dress made, no dwellings repaired, nor any hired conveyances, or portorage made use of, without employing slaves.³⁸

Other consular representatives owned slaves outright, often through their merchant business which they continued alongside their official duties. Robert Hesketh's younger brother, John, vice-consul (1824-1835) and consul (1836-1838) in Pará owned at least five slaves on his death in 1838, whereas William Wilson, who held the vice-consulship in Maranhão intermittently from the late 1830s and early 1840s,

³⁶ The Chargé d'Affaires and British naval officers suspected that Jackson's ruling in the case of the release of the *Recuperadora* was influenced by bribes he was alleged to have received. See Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 20 October 1839, in TNA, FO 84/288. See also, L. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* pp. 211-212

³⁷ Mr. Cowper to Viscount Palmerston, 12 November 1840, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1841 (Class B), *P.P.* 403 p. 746.

³⁸ Mr. Hesketh to Viscount Palmerston, 12 December 1840, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1841 (Class B), *P.P.* 403 p. 731.

freed his last slave in 1843.³⁹ The large-scale slaveholding of William Whitaker, vice-consul in Santos (1818-1856) raised questions about his character and suitability for any anti-slavery duties. Although the role was an unpaid position, Whitaker was expected to perform the same duties, when required, as other British consuls in Brazil. Although slave trade suppression seemingly did not represent much, if any, of his consular work in the first decade of the illegal trade, in 1839, on a return to England, he offered to directly report to the Foreign Secretary on the state of the slave trade to Brazil. Upon hearing Whitaker's plans, the British Chargé d'Affaires wrote a private note to Palmerston in which he advised caution. While he had 'no reason to doubt Mr. Whitaker's perfect knowledge of that business in all its branches,' Ouseley raised doubts about the vice-consul's intentions. 'I wish that it was equally certain that he is free from all interest in that trade directly or indirectly,' Ouseley continued, citing Whitaker's thirty-year residence and his ownership of plantations in Brazil.⁴⁰ Whitaker had purchased a sugar plantation in the interior of São Paulo as early as 1830 and by the late 1840s it was still being worked by around 35-40 slaves.⁴¹ Ouseley also had concerns about Whitaker's association with José da Costa Carvalho (future Marquês de Monte Alegre) with whom he was travelling. A former regent (1831-1835), Carvalho had offered to communicate confidentially to Palmerston during his time in Europe but Ouseley also doubted his true intentions, suggesting that the Brazilian had been 'either directly engaged in slave trade speculations or had at least

³⁹ Five slaves were listed in Hesketh's will, see I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil* p. 209. On Wilson's slaveholding see Mr. Corbett to Viscount Palmerston, 21 December 1848, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B), *P.P* 1128 p. 128.

⁴⁰ Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 21 May 1839, in TNA, FO 84/286.

⁴¹ William Whitaker's slaveholding will be discussed in further detail in Chapter II.

connived whilst Regent at such business.⁴² Both Whitaker and Carvalho, the Chargé d’Affaire concluded, irrespective of the ‘plans they propose, or the story they may tell,’ should be treated with appropriate scepticism. Despite the concerns raised by Britain’s most senior diplomat in Brazil, Whitaker’s slaveholding had not caused a public scandal in the same way as Sir George Jackson and he retained his position without further comment.

Aside from their own interest in the exploitation of slave labour, British officials in Brazil also recognised their compatriots’ right to slave property and afforded it their protection, without scrutinising its legality. For instance, British consuls routinely administered the estates of deceased British slave-owners. In the event of any disputes, such as the case of John Dickenson’s estate, interested parties could seek adjudication by the British Conservatorial Court (*Juiz Conservador da Nação Britanica*). The Conservatorial Court was a privileged forum for British subjects in Brazil and had been established following the opening of Brazil’s ports in 1808. It was reaffirmed by the commercial treaty with the independent nation in 1827 and lasted until that treaty’s expiration in 1844. Though the court operated within Brazilian law, its judge was nominated by the British merchant community and could only be removed with the approval of the British Minister. Its British character did not preclude the Conservatorial Court from ordering the public sale of slaves and in May 1838 it enforced the auction of the slaves listed in Dickenson’s will.⁴³ The court also ordered similar sales in commercial disputes as a way for creditors to recover debt. For

⁴² Mr. Ouseley to Viscount Palmerston, 21 May 1839, in FO 84/286. For Costa Carvalho’s involvement in slave trade negotiations, see L. Bethell, *The Abolition* p. 248.

⁴³ The British consul wrote an account of the case ten years later, see Mr. Hesketh to Viscount Palmerston, 22 March 1848, in TNA, FO 13/260

example, the commercial house Maxwell, Wright & Co. were beneficiaries of the proceeds arising from the sale of their debtors' slaves and other assets on at least three occasions during the 1830s.⁴⁴ The existence of a privileged legal forum which could seize slave property in favour of its British patrons is surely one of the most flagrant examples of the dissonance which existed between British commercial ambitions and anti-slavery objectives in Brazil.

The overriding commitment to protect British property even extended to British-owned slaves at sea. In August 1835, as the violence of the Cabanagem Rebellion once again approached the city limits of Belém, Pará, vice-consul John Hesketh called for the intervention of the *HMS Racehorse*, a British sloop which had arrived in the port some months earlier to guarantee the lives and property of the city's small British community. Initially, Commander Sir James Everard Home ordered his marines ashore to occupy British property along the river but after learning of the impending arrival of a large force of insurgents, a full evacuation of British subjects and other foreigners was called. In the haste to embark, much property was left to the mercy of the rebels, however, it appears that various slaves accompanied their British masters on their journey to safety in the neighbouring province of Maranhão.⁴⁵ Inventories drawn up by Hesketh show that Mr. Philips brought Lazáro, Francisco, Luiz and João Dover aboard the *Racehorse*, and the vice-consul himself was joined by Catarina and Cristina. In total, 16 enslaved individuals were taken onboard and evacuated from the city. Perhaps appreciating the impropriety embarking slaves on a Royal Navy vessel,

⁴⁴ see A. dos Santos Ribeiro, 'A firma Maxwell, Wright & Co no comércio do império do Brasil c. 1827- c. 1850' (Unpublished MA thesis, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2014) pp. 93-94.

⁴⁵ For an account of British perspectives on the Cabanagem Rebellion, see I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil* pp.157-182.

Hesketh referred to them euphemistically as ‘servants’ initially, before using the word ‘slaves’ later in the document.⁴⁶ Though little else is known about the fate of these individuals, it can be surmised that unlike occasional cases of fugitive slaves from foreign owners who found refuge and their freedom on British warships, they remained in bondage during and after their enforced exile in Maranhão.⁴⁷ There seems little doubt that the Royal Navy’s complicity in the upholding of their enslavement was entirely related to the nationality of their masters.

A second case involving a British warship, although less clear cut in terms of irregularity of conduct, is illustrative of the extent to which British residents could be certain that British anti-slavery policy would not interfere with their slaveholding during the 1830s. In May 1839, the Mixed Commissioners informed Palmerston that they had learned through a ‘casual conversation’ with Commander Smyth of the *HMS Grecian* that he had recently boarded a small Brazilian vessel carrying 70 to 80 slaves ‘under the charge of an Englishman’ and bound for the estate of a British merchant called Platt.⁴⁸ While not versed in the full particulars of the case, the Commissioners believed that Smyth had let the vessel on its way on the basis that the slaves on board did not appear to be ‘new blacks’ imported recently from Africa.⁴⁹ Unusually, the Commander had not formally notified the Commissioners of the incident and had since

⁴⁶ Letter Book VC John Hesketh, Pará, Biblioteca Nacional, Manuscritos, 10-04-009, ff. 128-132.

⁴⁷ R. Huzzey, ‘The moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities.’ p.131. Though we cannot be sure, the Catharina brought onboard with John Hesketh may be the same enslaved individual listed in an inventory following Hesketh’s death. See I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil* pp. 315-316.

⁴⁸ William Platt of the commercial house Platt & Reid had diverse business interests including an extensive sugar plantation in the Campos region of Rio de Janeiro province. His slaveholding is explored further in Chapter II.

⁴⁹ H.M Commissioners to Viscount Palmerston, 31 May 1839, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade: 1839-40 (Class A) P.P.* 265, pp. 228-229.

declined to furnish them with a report, despite having verbally agreed to do so. One interpretation of this hesitance is that Smyth was aware of the potential illegality of Platt and the unnamed Englishman's participation in the internal slave trade. Indeed, as early as 1825 a circular, based on the advice of the King's Advocate and issued to consuls in Brazil, had warned of the illegality of British participation in the coastwise slave trade.⁵⁰ Speaking in the House of Lords in 1842, Lord Brougham expanded on this interpretation, citing the case of Platt's slaves as a specific example of an offence under the 1824 Act.⁵¹ The fact that British subjects were free to even transport their slaves under the proverbial nose of the Royal Navy is testament to the prevalence in the 1830s of an attitude which regarded British slaveholding as a separate issue to other types of complicity in the slave trade.

Slaveholding within British communities was not just the 'necessary evil' argued by the likes of Robert Hesketh and Frederick Grigg, it was a socially acceptable norm. Aside for their own slaveholding, British officials reinforced its acceptability by fraternising and even rewarding those compatriots whose exploitation of slave labour went well beyond what the consul and commissioner regarded as a domestic necessity. Those Britons who had joined the planter class so often derided by anti-slavery agents were able to retain a guise of respectability and importance in the eyes of British officials in Brazil. One such individual and his agricultural estate was held in particularly high regard. George March owned in excess of 100 slaves which he

⁵⁰ Mr. Chamberlain to Mr. Canning, 8 August 1825, Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1825-26 (Class B) *P.P.* 004, p. 61. However, it is important to note that this referred to British merchant vessels.

⁵¹ *Hansard*, HL Deb 2 August 1842 vol 65 c. 942. Lord Brougham argued that after 1824 the legal coastwise trade in slaves was restricted to British colonies, hence the seaborne transport of Platt's slaves, irrespective of whether they had been brought from Africa, was illegal.

employed on an extensive property in the mountain range which surrounds the city of Rio de Janeiro.⁵² Located within just a few day's travel from the city, the property became a favourite holiday destination for foreign merchants hoping to escape Rio's oppressive summer climate. Members of the British Legation were no exception. In December 1827, British Minister Robert Gordon and his secretaries spent time on March's estate and in 1837, March received the visit of the mission's then second-in-command, William Gore Ouseley, who recorded his visit by producing one of the few extant images of March's property.⁵³ Later in his career, Ouseley wrote scathingly about European slave-owners in Brazil, commenting:

It is a startling and deplorable fact, and one that is calculated to lower our opinion of human nature, to witness the rapid adoption, by those Europeans who leave their own country animated with the best and most generous principles respecting their fellow-creatures, of the maxims and practices of hardened slave-holders.⁵⁴

It is impossible to say whether Ouseley held these views before he visited March's estate but they are similar to the concerns he expressed privately to Palmerston about William Whitaker's slaveholding in 1839. What is certain is that Ouseley, like most of his colleagues, officially treated British slaveholding as a distinct entity from the slave trade, despite the high probability that George March was a beneficiary of the illegal trade (see Part II). In addition to emphasising respectability through open association, on one important occasion the British Legation made a very public distinction between British slaveholding and that of their Brazilian counterparts. In his study of the distribution of Africans liberated from the *Flor de Loanda*, Pedro Ramos

⁵² March's slaveholding will be explored further in Chapter II.

⁵³ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis à sombra do Dedo de Deus, 1700-1900: da fazenda March a Teresópolis* (MEC, Rio de Janeiro, 1970) p. 38 and p. 60.

⁵⁴ W.G. Ouseley, *Notes on the slave-trade with remarks on the measures adopted for its suppression* (London: John Rodwell, 1850) pp. 44-45.

argues that allocation of these apprentices to a core group of trusted British subjects was linked to a belief in the moral superiority of their compatriots, irrespective of their slaveholding practices.⁵⁵ Two of this core group, Martha Moke and Robert Coats, were plantation owners. Despite the high probability that labour regimes and treatment on their estates were analogous to conditions on neighbouring properties, in the eyes of the Legation, Moke's and Coats' nationality set them apart as somehow more benevolent and trustworthy than their Brazilian neighbours.⁵⁶

While it is clear that anti-slavery officials in Brazil recognised the link between slaveholding and other forms of British complicity in the slave trade, the former remained outside the moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities during the 1830s. Though the overall impact – or lack thereof - of anti-slavery policy on both these forms of complicity was similar, the absence of legislation dealing specifically with slaveholding meant that it was treated in a completely different fashion and separate to the supply and financing of slaving voyages. Not only was slaveholding outside the remit of Britain's anti-slavery officials, some of the very same people tacitly, and at times explicitly, supported the practice through their own exploitation of slave labour, their protection of slave property and their close association with British slave masters. The authorities in London also showed no ambition to sever this relationship. The preference of the Foreign Office was to quietly maintain the status quo with the least amount of disruption to trade and minimal damage to reputation. Though its prevention in practical terms would undoubtedly have been complex, the

⁵⁵ P. Ramos, 'Homens de confiança: moral, antiescravidão e abolicionismo inglês na supressão do tráfico brasileiro de escravos' (Unpublished MA Dissertation, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2016).

⁵⁶ The slaveholding of both these individuals will be discussed in Chapter II.

authorities chose to remain silent when informed of British involvement in the illegal enslavement of Africans in Brazil. Even in cases where there was a precedent set for intervention by London, Palmerston chose not to take a position on the slaveholding of vice-consul Whitaker. Only the public scandal and unwanted attention surrounding Sir George Jackson's conflict of interest and abuse of liberated Africans was enough to force Palmerston's hand. As long as British slaveholding managed to avoid similar scandal, there was no appetite to upset the applecart. However, this equilibrium only endured in the general absence of external scrutiny. After the resolution of the slavery question in the British empire in 1838, new interest groups began to question the inconsistencies in policy that had been tolerated by the anti-slavery state. As we will see in the following section, an increased level of scrutiny in the 1840s played an important role in the partial absorption of slaveholding in foreign territories into the moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities.

Part II - 1840-1850: Extending the frontiers of anti-slavery responsibilities

While Britain's efforts to suppress the illegal Brazilian trade had consumed tremendous amounts of diplomatic and naval energy during the 1830s, in the metropole these exertions largely remained background noise to the ongoing campaigns to end slavery (1833) and the subsequent apprenticeship system (1838) in Britain's own colonies. With the resolution of the slavery question, the suppression of foreign slave trades came into much sharper focus in both parliament and civil society. As an increasingly coercive suppression system proved unable to bring an end to the flourishing and adaptive illegal trade to Brazil and Cuba, both the state's overall strategy and its failure to prevent British complicity came under growing criticism during the 1840s. Though the anti-slavery state's obstinate response to calls to dismantle the suppression system has been well developed in the historiography of the suppression of the slave trade, how it handled the criticism of British complicity, and slaveholding in particular, has received less scholarly attention and thus warrants further analysis.⁵⁷

This section will explore how the scrutiny which accompanied the internationalisation of British abolitionism in the 1840s was partly translated into official anti-slavery policy. The adoption of a more expansive interpretation of what constituted complicity in the form of new legislation in 1843 brought British slaveholding in Brazil within the jurisdiction of the anti-slavery state for the first time. Nevertheless, its absorption

⁵⁷ Opposition to forcible naval suppression began in the late 1830s but gathered momentum following the passing of the *Aberdeen Act* in 1845. Successive governments vehemently defended the suppression system and eventually defeated the anti-coercionist movement in Parliament in March 1850. This victory emboldened Palmerston to authorise the yet more aggressive naval suppression which preceded the effective abolition of the trade by Brazil later that year. See R. Huzzey, *Freedom Burning* pp. 113-124. See L. Bethell, *The Abolition*, Chapter 11.

into the moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities was only partial. Like its legislative predecessors, the 1843 Slave Trade Act reflected the ambivalence of suppression, as policymakers sought to reconcile a desire to prevent British subjects from promoting the illegal traffic with their commitment to respect for property and the protection of legitimate British trade and investment. The result, however well-intentioned and earnestly implemented, was a compromise that both legitimised the ownership of slaves bought before the bill's enactment and contained sufficient ambiguities to allow the future exploitation of slave labour and other forms of investment in slave property.

The internationalisation of British abolitionism and slaveholding abroad

Though the short-lived Society for the Universal Abolition of Slavery and the Slave Trade held similar ambitions as early as 1834, the internationalisation of British abolitionism began in earnest in 1839 with the emergence of two anti-slavery societies with global objectives.⁵⁸ In June of that year, the Society for the Extinction of Slavery and the Civilisation of Africa was established by Thomas Fowell Buxton, who believed that slavery should be tackled at the supply end by promoting legitimate trade and Christianity in Africa.⁵⁹ Though primarily an exposition of these views, Buxton's *The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy*, published in 1840, also highlighted the connection between British commerce and the illegal trade in slaves to Brazil and Cuba. Drawing on published Foreign Office correspondence, including that of

⁵⁸ H. Temperley, *British Antislavery* p. xii.

⁵⁹ Buxton used the society as a vehicle to promote his civilising expedition up the Niger river. See, H. Temperley, *White dreams, black Africa: the antislavery expedition to the river Niger* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991)

Commissioners Jackson and Grigg in Rio, Buxton showed a key awareness of the re-export of British manufactures in Brazil and Cuba for use on the African coast.⁶⁰ Though, as Kelly has shown, Buxton did not condemn the supplying of the slave trade in this way, *The African Slave Trade and Its Remedy* still played an important role in publicising these connections to a wider audience.⁶¹

It would be the campaigning of another anti-slavery society, though, which would be of greater relevance to the anti-slavery state's campaign to end the Brazilian slave trade. In contrast to Buxton's focus on Africa, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS), established in 1839, believed the solution lay in the New World. The BFASS affirmed that 'so long as slavery exists, there is no reasonable prospect of the annihilation of the slave trade' and so favoured the promotion of the universal abolition of slavery in the Americas and elsewhere.⁶² This should be achieved, they believed, not through the violent means which their Quaker membership repudiated, but by convincing the remaining slave states of the evils of the institution.⁶³ Unlike Buxton, adherents of the BFASS were horrified by British connections to the trade and played a crucial role in drawing the attention of the wider public and the government to the issue. Key to the formation of the BFASS's position on the subject

⁶⁰ T. F. Buxton, *The Slave Trade and its Remedy* (London: John Murray, 1840). For an example of Buxton's direct use of diplomatic correspondence see *Ibid* pp. 55-56.

⁶¹ J.G. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' pp. 79-81.

⁶² British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, *First annual report of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society for the abolition of slavery and the slave-trade throughout the world: presented to the general meeting held in Exeter Hall, on Wednesday, June 24th, 1840* (London: Johnston and Barrett, 1840) p. 5.

⁶³ H. Temperley, *British Antislavery 1833-1870*; J. Heartfield, *The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. A History, 1838-1956* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016)

was David Turnbull's *Travels in the West*, published in 1840.⁶⁴ The travel narrative, based on the Scotsman's experiences in Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1838-1839 contains a scathing critique of British involvement in the slave trade. As Kelly has noted, *Travels in the West* played a central role in the dissemination of information about the movement of British goods into the slave trade.⁶⁵ Turnbull also exposed the slaveholding practices of British subjects in Cuba, finding to his 'great regret' that a British-owned copper mine employed over 450 slaves.⁶⁶ Special criticism, though, was reserved for those British officials who exploited slave labour. Turnbull charged those British officials who employed slaves, or that of liberated Africans in specific reference to Sir George Jackson, with undermining their own government's suppression campaign.⁶⁷ Turnbull's account soon attracted the attention of the BFASS, to whom the Scotsman readily associated himself by participating in the World Anti-Slavery Convention in June 1840.⁶⁸ It would be during this meeting that Turnbull's observations played an important role in the formulation of the society's position on British involvement in the slave trade.

The Convention was the first major action of the BFASS as it sought to gather support and set the agenda of its campaign to internationalise British abolitionism. Amongst the many and varied topics covered during the 12-day conference was the issue of British complicity in the slave trade. The committee established to discuss the matter

⁶⁴ D. Turnbull, *Travels in the West: Cuba; with Notices of Porto Rico, and the Slave Trade* (London: Longman, Orme, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1840)

⁶⁵ J. G. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' p. 75.

⁶⁶ D. Turnbull, *Travels in the West* pp. 8-9.

⁶⁷ *Ibid* pp. 77-76.

⁶⁸ J. G. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' p. 78.

included Turnbull and the findings it presented on 22 June owed much to his account of his time in Cuba. Indeed, on British involvement in the supply and financing of the trade, the committee's report directly quoted *Travel's in the West*.⁶⁹ Their findings also reflected the more expansive interpretation of complicity adopted by Turnbull and other likeminded abolitionists. In addition to the manufacturers and merchants who supplied and financed the trade, the committee also extended moral responsibility to British slaveholders in foreign territories. Echoing the position adopted by H.M. Commissioners in Rio as early as 1835, the committee referred to the British-owned goldmines of Minas Gerais, and by extension their UK-based shareholders, as 'the purchasers of the victims of the traffic.'⁷⁰ In a similar vein, another delegate reasoned on an earlier occasion that in Cuba 'because no slave-holder can keep up a sufficient number of labourers by natural increase, he must be an annual purchaser in the slave-market, and consequently every slave-holder is a slave-dealer.'⁷¹ The position of the BFASS was left in no doubt; all forms of complicity in the slave trade, including slaveholding and other forms of investment in slave property, were to be condemned as not only morally reprehensible but 'a flagrant dishonour to the British name, and an outrageous inconsistency with the avowed desire, the strenuous endeavours and the costly sacrifices of Great Britain, for the suppression thereof.'⁷²

⁶⁹ BFASS, *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention, called by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and Held in London, from Friday, June 12th, to Tuesday, June 23rd, 1840* (London: 1841), p. 516.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 518.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p. 264.

⁷² *Ibid* p. 518.

While three years would elapse before the anti-slavery state adopted, with concessions, the expansive interpretation of British complicity proposed by abolitionists in 1840, the World Anti-Slavery Convention did have one more immediate impact on a small but symbolically important segment of British slaveholding abroad. A motion, initially proposed by William Forster and J.T. Price, but seemingly based on a suggestion outlined by Turnbull in *Travels in the West*, called for the prohibition of slaveholding by British functionaries abroad.⁷³ The subsequent memorial addressed to the Foreign Secretary, Viscount Palmerston, stated the Convention's 'surprise and regret' that British officials in Brazil, Cuba and other countries openly employ slave labour in their homes, as well as in mines and on sugar plantations. The 'holding, hiring, buying, or selling of slaves in foreign countries,' the memorial continued, 'is an example which gives countenance to the perpetuation of slavery, and to the continuance of the clandestine importation of slaves.'⁷⁴ Palmerston, who had chosen not to act when privately informed of vice-consul's Whitaker's slaveholding just a year earlier, changed tack in the face of overwhelming public criticism. Two months after its adoption at the Convention, the Foreign Secretary forwarded the memorial in full to consuls and commissioners in Brazil and Cuba, with a covering note informing officials that the government concurred with its sentiments and 'especially in the opinion, that it would be unfitting that any Officer, holding an appointment under the British Crown, should either directly hold or be interested in slave property.'⁷⁵ Interestingly, the memorial was not initially sent to officials in

⁷³ *Ibid* p. 264; D. Turnbull, *Travels in the West*, p. 77.

⁷⁴ BFASS, *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention*, (1841) pp. 461-462

⁷⁵ Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Hesketh, 24 August 1840, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1840 (Class B) P.P.* 331, pp. 197-198.

slave-holding territories which were not beneficiaries of the international slave trade, such as the United States, Peru or Uruguay.⁷⁶ The prioritising of Brazil and Cuba in this way was symptomatic of the interest the state developed in British slaveholding over the next decade. The exploitation of slave labour would be combatted in so far as it contributed to the practical and symbolic promotion of the illegal slave trade and not as a constituent part of foreign slavery.

Though the BFASS would later praise the efficacy of Palmerston's circular, it is clear that his instructions were not followed to the letter in all cases nor was its application followed up with any real vigour by Palmerston or his successor at the Foreign Office, the Earl of Aberdeen.⁷⁷ In the Brazilian case, some officials such as consuls Hesketh in Rio and Cowper in Pará replied immediately to the circular, indicating that they had or would soon be discharging hired slaves from their domestic service.⁷⁸ Frederick Grigg replied admitting he employed hired slaves in his household but refrained from committing to their release.⁷⁹ Still others either acknowledged the despatch without referring to whether they held slaves or simply neglected to reply.⁸⁰ It is not clear

⁷⁶ Palmerston re-circulated the memorial again on 8 May 1841, this time to consuls in all slave-holding territories including the United States, various South American republics and the Ottoman Empire. See for example, Circular to British Consuls in the United States, 8 May 1841, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1841 (Class D) *P.P.* 405 p. 317. This wider circulation was directly linked to an attempt by Palmerston to convince other powers to prohibit slaveholding amongst their own functionaries abroad. See for example, Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Aston, 11 May 1841, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1841 (Class B) *P.P.* 403 pp. 72-73.

⁷⁷ BFASS, *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention called by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and Held in London, from Tuesday, June 13th, to Tuesday, June 20th, 1843* (London: John Snow, 1843) p. 22.

⁷⁸ Mr. Cowper to Viscount Palmerston, 12 November 1840, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1841 (Class B), *P.P.* 403 p. 746. Mr. Hesketh to Viscount Palmerston, 12 December 1840, in *Ibid* p. 731.

⁷⁹ Mr. Grigg to Viscount Palmerston, 31 October 1840, in Correspondence Slave Trade: 1841 (Class A), *P.P.* 402, pp. 287-288.

⁸⁰ The consul in Maranhão, Edward Moon, replied without giving details of his personal circumstances, see Mr. Moon to Viscount Palmerston, 4 December 1840, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1841 (Class B), *P.P.* 403 p. 741. Likewise, Edward Porter in Bahia, see Mr. Porter to Viscount

whether it was an intentional omission, a clerical oversight or whether Palmerston interpreted British functionaries as only those in salaried positions, but it appears that William Whitaker was not forwarded the circular. Either way, the vice-consul's slaveholding was not called into question again, even as he began to perform more anti-slavery duties throughout the decade. Indeed, it is more than likely that a report written by Whitaker on sugar production and slave labour in São Paulo in 1848 was based directly on his own experience of plantation ownership in the region.⁸¹ In a similar vein, slaveholding did not preclude Henry Dickenson, a plantation owner described by his successor as a 'violent defender of slavery', from briefly holding the office of vice-consul in Pará from 1841-1842.⁸² The necessity of filling the position and Dickenson's previous experience in the role appears to have taken precedence over a strict adherence to the instructions issued a year previously. Though the circulation of the memorial demonstrates that Palmerston was receptive to the expansive interpretation of complicity adopted by the BFASS, its practical application was undoubtedly imperfect. As we shall see, the inability of the anti-slavery state to effectively police the slaveholding of its own representatives was a forewarning of similar issues British authorities would encounter in their attempts to enforce the restrictions on British slaveholding provided for by the 1843 Act.

Now that the state had accepted in principle the expansive interpretation of complicity proposed by the abolitionists, the BFASS saw an opportunity to press for the

Palmerston, 21 October 1840, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1840 (Class B) P.P.* 331, p. 221. No reply was located from the consulate in Pernambuco.

⁸¹ 'Report on Sugar Production in São Paulo, 20 April 1848' Mr. Westwood to Viscount Palmerston, 12 May 1848, Enclosure 1, TNA, FO 13/260.

⁸² I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil* p. 187.

government to address the wider issue of British slaveholding. The society's many veterans of previous abolitionist campaigns realised that accurate and up-to-date information was essential to generate the public outrage and political support that would result in new legislation or a change in policy. Turnbull's *Travels in the West* and the Scotsman's recent appointment as British consul in Havana meant the society were and could count on being fairly well informed about the slave trade and slavery in Cuba, as well as British involvement therein.⁸³ Brazil, however, remained a less well-known entity. The BFASS had appreciated this even before the Convention, having some months earlier discretely sponsored a fact-finding mission to the country. Husband and wife, George and Charlotte Pilkington, arrived in Rio de Janeiro in February 1840 and during their year-long stay in the country were tasked with relaying information on the state of slavery and the slave trade in Brazil, as well as collecting commercial data on Brazil's trade. They were also asked to assess the strength of abolitionist feeling in Brazil and establish links with individuals or groups who could act as correspondents for the society.⁸⁴

Although investigating British complicity was not one of their explicit instructions, it is clear from George Pilkington's letters and other writings that British links to slavery and the slave trade left a marked impression. The Irishman's correspondence arrived too late to be used at the Convention but it was published in the society's journal, the *Anti-Slavery Reporter (ASR)*. Three of the first four letters written following his return from Brazil in early 1841 outlined in detail the author's condemnation of the role

⁸³ M. Llorca-Jaña, 'Turnbull, David (1793?–1851)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, online edn*, (Oxford University Press, 2009)

⁸⁴ H. A. Ré, "'Missão nos Brasis'" p. 73.

British residents in Brazil played in the promotion of slavery and the illegal slave trade.⁸⁵ In addition to exposing these practices to a metropolitan audience through the *ASR*, Pilkington also directly appealed to the British residents in Brazil. In *An Address to the English Residents in the Brazilian Empire*, a pamphlet published in English and Portuguese in Rio de Janeiro in 1841, Pilkington urged his countrymen to emancipate their slaves. Not only was slaveholding un-Christian, morally abhorrent, and ‘against the English principle,’ crucially the Irishman also argued that it was illegal under British law and had been since 1808.⁸⁶

Though Pilkington’s rationale represented the most extreme interpretation of existing legislation, his questioning of not just the morality but legality of British slaveholding in Brazil and elsewhere was consistent with the consensus forming within the BFASS on the issue. Their position, informed by the intelligence accrued by abolitionists such as Pilkington and, as Kelly has shown, scandal arising from shareholder meetings of Brazilian mining companies, was formalised in 1842 when the society entrusted the anti-slavery parliamentarian Lord Henry Brougham with a petition urging government action on British slaveholding abroad.⁸⁷ The petition, presented to the House of Lords on 2 August, expanded on the logic of the society’s memorial of two years previous

⁸⁵ *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (hereafter *ASR*), 2.15 (Jul 1841), pp. 163-164; *Ibid* 2.17 (Aug 1841), pp. 179-180; *Ibid*, 2.18 (Sep 1841), pp. 185-186. The content of Pilkington’s letters will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter II.

⁸⁶ G. Pilkington, *An Address to the English Residents in the Brazilian Empire* (Rio de Janeiro: Laemmert, 1841) pp. 15-16. Pilkington’s argument was based on a broad interpretation of the 1807 *Abolition Act* which established 1 March 1808 as the cut-off date for legal importations of slaves into British colonies. See ‘An Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade’ <http://www.esp.org/foundations/freedom/holdings/slave-trade-act-1807.pdf> [last accessed 18/04/2018] p. 4.

⁸⁷ On the emancipation scandal of the Imperial Brazilian Mining Association, see J. Kelly, ‘The Problem of Anti-slavery’ pp. 219-234. On Henry Brougham’s earlier career and links to the BFASS, see J. Heartfield, *The British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society* pp. 30-32.

by arguing that slaveholding abroad was not just against British principles and harmful to the nation's reputation, but was also 'in defiance of the laws, of Great Britain.'⁸⁸

Citing the examples of mining companies and plantation owners in Brazil and Cuba, the petitioners urged the government to

assert the authority of the existing laws against the slave-trade, or should they be inadequate, to extend the provisions thereof, so as to bring to just punishment, all the subjects of this country who may be guilty of such a crime.⁸⁹

The presentation of the petition was followed by an impassioned speech by Lord Brougham in which he referenced a series of cases, drawn from parliamentary blue books and intelligence accrued by the BFASS, to emphasise the need for the government to adopt the abolitionists' expansive interpretation of complicity. Echoing a similar argument to that proposed by Pilkington, Brougham suggested that the purchase and sale of slaves by British subjects in foreign territories had been illegal since the passing of the 1824 Consolidated Slave Trade Act.⁹⁰ With that in mind, Brougham proposed that the government pass 'an act declaratory of the true intent' of the 1824 legislation in order to remove any ambiguity with regards to the illegality of future transactions in slave property on foreign shores.⁹¹ Nevertheless, despite the cordial support the suggestion received from the government benches and as the Earl of Ripon saw it, Brougham's 'great knowledge of the subject,' we shall see that the

⁸⁸ BFASS, *Fourth annual report of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society for the abolition of slavery and the slave-trade throughout the world : presented to the general meeting held in Exeter Hall, on Wednesday, June 21st, 1843* (London: 1843) p. 102

⁸⁹ *Ibid* p. 102

⁹⁰ *Hansard*, HL Deb 2 August 1842 vol 65 c. 942. In support of this interpretation, Brougham directly referenced the case of William Platt's slaves, discussed elsewhere in this chapter.

⁹¹ *Hansard*, HL Deb 2 August 1842 vol 65 cc. 951-952.

bill proposed in the following parliamentary session would inherit the ambivalence of its legislative predecessors.⁹²

1843 Slave Trade Act

After having been introduced for debate in early July of the following year, what became known as Lord Brougham's bill passed into law on 24 August 1843 as An Act for the More Effectual Suppression of the Slave Trade. For the first-time slaveholding, and other forms of investment in foreign slave property, were incorporated into the moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities. However, as this section will show, its absorption into jurisdiction of the anti-slavery state was both partial and practically problematic. Concessions adopted during the bill's debate resulted in legislation which legitimised existing slave-ownership and allowed for the future exploitation of slave labour under different guises. As such, the law failed to live up to the expectations of its abolitionist sponsors and although it was earnestly implemented by officials in Brazil, its relevance to British anti-slavery policy there soon waned following the effective suppression of the illegal trade in 1850-51.

Though the 1843 Act is significant in that it represents the only incursion by the state into the slaveholding practices of its subjects residing abroad, it was not intended, as some abolitionists might have hoped, to sever the links between British capital and foreign slaveries. The aim of the legislation, consistent with the anti-slavery state's delineation between the slave trade and foreign slavery, was to suppress 'certain

⁹² *Hansard*, HL Deb 2 August 1842 vol 65 c. 952.

Practices tending to promote and encourage [the Slave Trade].⁹³ As with previous legislation aimed at curtailing British complicity in the slave trade, the Act once again reflected the ‘ambivalence of suppression’ discussed elsewhere in this chapter. This ambivalence was encoded into the legislation in the form of a series of concessions adopted during debates on the bill’s provisions in the House of Lords. The first major compromise was that though British subjects were now prohibited ‘to deal or trade in, purchase, sell, barter, or transfer’ slaves, the law was not to be applied retroactively.⁹⁴ Despite Lord Brougham’s conviction that these transactions on foreign soil had been illegal since 1824, as Evans has noted, the enforced emancipation of slaves purchased after this date, without compensation, would be a direct affront to the respect for property ingrained in British political culture.⁹⁵ By outlawing only future transactions in slaves, the Act legitimised all British-held slave property acquired before 1 November 1843, a compromise which Kelly has argued was consistent with the process of emancipation in the British Empire. The fact that the Emancipation Act (1833) had ended slavery by compensating slave owners for the loss of their property meant that Brougham, to the disappointment of some of his fellow abolitionists, could not have hoped to declare all British-owned slave property as illegitimate.⁹⁶ The crucial repercussion of this decision in the Brazilian context was that it legitimised British ownership of Africans who had been illegally imported into the country as per international treaty (1830) and Brazilian law (1831). This, in spite of the fact that

⁹³ ‘An Act for the More Effectual Suppression of the Slave Trade’ (1843). See http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1843/98/pdfs/ukpga_18430098_en.pdf [last accessed 18/04/2018] p. 982.

⁹⁴ ‘An Act for the More Effectual Suppression of the Slave Trade’ (1843)

⁹⁵ C. Evans, ‘Brazilian Gold’ p. 128.

⁹⁶ J. Kelly, ‘The Problem of Anti-Slavery’ p. 153.

British mining operations and plantation owners had been clearly identified as beneficiaries of the contraband trade. It is interesting to note that this legitimisation occurred well before Brazilian slave-owners would employ the Eusébio law of 1850 to defend their own rights to illegally imported slave property.⁹⁷

Brougham's decision not to push for the emancipation of slaves purchased since 1824 was an important victory for all British slaveholders but especially for the mining companies who collectively owned some 2000 slaves.⁹⁸ As Evans has noted, these companies were not simply passive beneficiaries of this decision; they had in fact lobbied for the right to what they regarded as their legally obtained property. The pressure they exerted through political allies in the House of Commons, such as Viscount Sandon and Lord Ashburton, was crucial in the winning of further concessions, including the removal of a clause which stipulated the inspection and registration of labourers at British-owned mines.⁹⁹ Of wider significance beyond their mining operations though was the success of their lobbying activities in guaranteeing access to the future exploitation of slave labour. While they would be prohibited from purchasing any more slaves, British subjects and enterprises were not prevented from

⁹⁷ The authority of the 1850 law was a central tenant used in the defence of the institution during the 'politics of slavery in the post-contraband era,' see. T. Parron, 'A Política de Escravidão no Império do Brasil' (Unpublished MA dissertation, Universidade de São Paulo, 2009), pp. 232-233. Also, S. Chalhoub, *A Força da Escravidão: Ilegalidade e Costume no Brasil Oitocentista* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2012), especially Chapter 5.

⁹⁸ George Pilkington estimated that five mining companies owned a total of 2078 in 1841. See *ASR*, 2.15 (Jul 1841) pp. 163-164. He was likely referring to the Imperial Brazilian Mining Association (Gongo Soco), St. John Del Rey Mining Company (Morro Velho), Brazilian Company Ltd (Cata Branca), National Brazilian Mining Association (Cocais) and the Serra da Candonga Gold Mining Company, Ltd (Serra da Candonga). See M. Eakin, *A British Enterprise in Brazil* p. 17.

⁹⁹ C. Evans, 'Brazilian Gold' pp. 125-126.

hiring slaves from other slaveholders.¹⁰⁰ Whereas other concessions permitted the acquisition of slaves through marriage and inheritance. In Chapter II we will discuss how both of these concessions were taken advantage of by British slaveholders in Brazil after 1843.

It was not just mining companies who lobbied to defend their interest in slave property during the debate over the Brougham's 1843 bill. Kelly has identified the presence of Alexander Baring, the Lord Ashburton, and his son-in-law Humphrey Mildmay MP as essential to the protection of other forms of investment in slave property, beyond the concept of traditional slaveholding. The former, a retired founding member of the powerful merchant bank Barings Bros., and the latter, an active partner in the same institution, spoke against clauses in the bill which threatened the practice of extending credit secured by slave property.¹⁰¹ Barings were deeply engaged with credit economy of the Atlantic world, including the slaveholding territories of the American South, Cuba and Brazil. The financing of the production and export of commodities in these regions, usually through third-party commission agents, occasionally exposed the bank to slave-ownership through the foreclosure of mortgages partly or fully collateralised by human beings. Indeed, credit relations with slaveholders had resulted in Barings becoming a beneficiary of compensation after emancipation in the British Empire.¹⁰² Outside the British Empire the bank had acquired two sugar plantations and 272 slaves in St. Croix, in the Danish West Indies, and would also acquire land

¹⁰⁰ For a discussion on the role of the St. John del Rey Mining Company objections to the prohibition of hiring, see J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-Slavery' p. 193 and pp. 199-200. See also, C. Evans, 'Brazilian Gold' pp. 126-127.

¹⁰¹ see J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-Slavery' pp. 173-190.

¹⁰² N. Draper, *The Price of Emancipation* p. 248

and slaves in Cuba in the early 1840s.¹⁰³ Whereas the foreclosure on these debts was a relatively rare occurrence, the practice of extending credit secured by land and the slaves attached to those estates was, according to Mildmay, part of doing business ‘with any country between Virginia and Brazils.’¹⁰⁴ Parties interested in the legitimisation of slaveholding through mortgages echoed the defence of other British slave-owners by stressing the legality of the practice in the territories concerned and argued, as the MP John Dennistoun did, that any prohibition would no doubt damage British trade to the benefit of foreign competitors.¹⁰⁵ Once again, the protection of British property rights and of legitimate trade were cast as obligations on an equal footing with Britain’s anti-slavery objectives.

In a similar vein to traditional slave owners, the property rights of holders of slave mortgages were legitimised by Lord Brougham’s Act. Responding to queries raised during the second reading of the bill, the Attorney General made clear that the legislation would not threaten the rights of creditors to foreclose on existing debts secured by slave property.¹⁰⁶ The provisions of the legislation relating to future transactions though were left in a more ambiguous state. While the inclusion of a clause taken ad verbatim from the 1824 Act declaring unlawful the lending or

¹⁰³ On St. Croix, see L. Brown, ‘The Slavery Connections of Northington Grange’ (English Heritage, 2010) <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/slavery-connections-northington-grange/slavery-connections-northington-grange.pdf> [last accessed 25/04/2018] pp. 65-73. On Cuba, see I. Roldan de Montaud, ‘Baring Brothers and the Cuban Plantation Economy, 1814-1870’, in A. Leonard and D. Pretel (eds), *The Caribbean and the Atlantic World Economy: Circuits of Trade, Money and Knowledge, 1650-1914* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015) pp. 238-262. Both cases are examined in the context of parliamentary debates about Brougham’s bill in J. Kelly, ‘The Problem of Anti-Slavery’ pp. 173-190.

¹⁰⁴ *Hansard*, HC Deb 18 August 1843 vol 71 c. 936.

¹⁰⁵ *Hansard*, HC Deb 18 August 1843 vol 71 c. 952.

¹⁰⁶ *Hansard*, HC Deb 18 August 1843 vol 71 c. 951.

advancing of capital to be employed in the slave trade appeared to prohibit future slave mortgages, lawmakers were still uncertain under what circumstances, if any, slave mortgages would be permitted following the passing of the bill.¹⁰⁷ A statement made by Benjamin Hawes MP criticising the ‘very material alterations and modifications’ made during the previous two readings of the bill encapsulates the lack of clarity in the legislation:

It was said that in no case could slaves be held under this bill except where they could now be legally held under the existing law, and that no mortgages or other transactions in reference to property in slaves could take place except in the case of such legal holdings; but legal holdings were not defined in the bill...¹⁰⁸

The bill passed in the same session without addressing the points of ambiguity raised by the MP for Lambeth. Nevertheless, two test cases remitted by consuls in Brazil would eventually provide some clarity on the legislation’s provisions regarding slave mortgages. In January 1846, Beverley Newcomen, consul in Paraíba, wrote to the Earl of Aberdeen about two British subjects involved in transactions which he was convinced were prohibited by the Act. Newcomen recounted how he had been ‘accidentally witness’ to the embarkation on a small fishing vessel of a female slave who had recently been acquired by Richard Rogers in payment of debt. Rogers, himself in debt to a Mr. Gibson, was in the process of transferring the unnamed individual to his creditor in the neighbouring province of Pernambuco.¹⁰⁹ Some five months later in Pernambuco, Henry A. Cowper wrote to the Foreign Secretary with far less conviction than his counterpart in Paraíba about

¹⁰⁷ ‘An Act for the More Effectual Suppression of the Slave Trade’ (1843). See http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1843/98/pdfs/ukpga_18430098_en.pdf [last accessed 18/04/2018] p. 982.

¹⁰⁸ *Hansard*, HC Deb 22 August 1843 vol 71 cc. 1002-1004.

¹⁰⁹ Mr. Newcomen to Earl of Aberdeen, 24 January 1846, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846* (Class B), *P.P* 855 p. 279.

a similar case involving a British merchant house in the city. The ambiguities identified by Hawes had left Cowper unsure whether George Kenworthy & Co. had violated the Act's provisions by successfully enforcing a court ordered auction of seized assets, including two unnamed slaves, belonging to the firm's debtor.¹¹⁰ In the intervening period between the two cases, the first had been sent to the Treasury for the opinion of William Rothery, an expert adviser on slave trade legislation.¹¹¹ Rothery's view was clear; both Rogers and Gibson were '*prima facie* criminally guilty' as the receipt of slaves for the payment of debt was no different to other transactions prohibited by the 1843 law.¹¹² Specific advice about the case of George Kenworthy & Co. has not been located, but the principle of the case was included in a circular sent by Palmerston to all consular staff in slaveholding countries in March 1847. The instructions made clear that both taking possession or the transferal of slaves in lieu of payment was illegal and this included 'slaves seized in execution for debts due to British subjects.'¹¹³ Palmerston's last point confirmed that causation of a slave sale, as opposed to physically taking possession of a slave in lieu of debt, was enough to place British subjects in contravention of the law. While making no reference to the legality of the practice of extending credit secured by human collateral, the instructions informed by these test cases established that it was illegal under the 1843 Act to recover debts secured by slave property. Elsewhere in this thesis we will observe that while this provision may have had a

¹¹⁰ Mr. Cowper to Earl of Aberdeen, 2 June 1846, in *Ibid* p. 300.

¹¹¹ G.C. Boase, 'Rothery, Henry Cadogan (1817–1888), wreck commissioner.' *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, online edn*, (Oxford University Press, 2004)

¹¹² Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Newcomen, 24 July 1846, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class B), *P.P.* 855 pp. 280-282.

¹¹³ Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Crawford (Circular), 19 March 1847, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1847-March 1848 (Class B), *P.P.* 974 p. 34.

short-term impact on the lending practices of British creditors (Chapter III), it had faded into relative obscurity by the arrival of the London and Brazilian Bank in the 1860s (Chapter IV).

1843-1850: The implementation of the 1843 Act and inherited ambivalence.

This dissipation of the Act's impact on the practices of British residents and enterprises in Brazil is undoubtedly a symptom of the receding interest officials had in the enforcement of the legislation following the suppression of the illegal slave trade in 1850. This observation, along with the fact that some of the bill's abolitionist sponsors soon washed their hands of it, has led Evans to characterise the 1843 Act as a 'legislative orphan' that was 'soon forgotten.'¹¹⁴ While this largely bears true in the second half of the century it does obscure the fact that the years following its enactment were the high-point of official interest in the slaveholding practices of the British in Brazil. In this section we will observe how attempts were made to implement the new law and that slaveholding was investigated at the highest level. Nevertheless, in spite of this piqued interest, both the new legislation and those charged with its implementation inherited the ambivalence of suppression which characterised the preceding decade.

Though the 1843 Act was disavowed by abolitionists who argued that the concessions adopted had actually rendered the legislation 'pro-slavery in principle', the anti-slavery state was quick to promote awareness of the new law to British

¹¹⁴ C. Evans, 'Brazilian Gold' p. 127.

subjects abroad.¹¹⁵ Copies of the Act were included in a circular of 31 December 1843 addressed to British consular agents in countries and territories where slavery existed.¹¹⁶ The Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Aberdeen, instructed consuls to display the Act in their offices and to ‘take the proper measures for making its purport known to British residents’ in their respective consular districts. Consuls were also charged with reporting any potential violations of the new legislation to the Foreign Office.¹¹⁷ It is difficult to say how much was down to the efforts of individual consuls, but as we shall observe in Chapter II there is ample evidence that British residents in Brazil were aware of the legislation in the years which followed its enactment.

As noted in the discussion of the Act’s provisions for slave mortgages, some consuls did write to the Foreign Secretary regarding possible infractions of the legislation by British subjects in Brazil. The aforementioned investigations of consuls Newcomen and Cowper show that at least some officials earnestly attempted to implement the legislation. Moreover, both instances were taken seriously by authorities in London who sought the advice of the Law Officers, whose legal interpretation provided the basis for the circular which Palmerston sent to British consuls on the matter in March 1847.¹¹⁸ That the centre of British anti-slavery policy

¹¹⁵ Members of the BFASS also adopted a view that the Act was now ‘pro-slavery in principle.’ See C. Evans, ‘Brazilian Gold’ p. 126. Similarly, in Parliament, Benjamin Hawes MP argued that Act was ‘entirely distinct’ from the measure originally proposed by Lord Brougham to the extent that he believed its effect would be to increase the slave trade. See *Hansard*, HC Deb 22 August 1843 vol. 71 cc. 1002-1004.

¹¹⁶ Earl Aberdeen to Mr. Crawford (Circular), 31 December 1843, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1843 (Class B)*, P.P. 574, pp. 66-67.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid* p. 66.

¹¹⁸ Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Crawford (Circular), 19 March 1847, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1847-March 1848 (Class B)*, P.P. 974 p. 34.

was invested in the expansive interpretation of complicity codified in the 1843 Act is further demonstrated by two measures taken by Palmerston following his return to the Foreign Office in mid-1846.

The first step taken by Palmerston was to prohibit consuls from administering the estates of deceased slave owners. This directive of November 1846 was circulated to all British consulates in slaveholding territories and was prompted initially by a query sent to the Foreign Secretary in August of the same year by Edmund Molyneux, consul in Savannah, Georgia. Though Molyneux saw nothing in the 1843 Act that prohibited him from receiving and remitting to England the proceeds of the sale of the slaves, he did question whether this type of involvement would place an official 'at variance with Her Majesty's Government, on the subject of slavery.'¹¹⁹ The circular directive confirmed that in Palmerston's view, the administration of estates containing slave property brought consuls into conflict with both the spirit of Britain's global anti-slavery efforts and the legislation which underpinned them. For the Foreign Secretary, the decision to prohibit this practice was a natural extension of the directive of May 1841 which forbade slaveholding by British officials. Like the earlier measure, this attempt to further restrict interaction between British agents and foreign slavery was undoubtedly driven by Palmerston's desire to protect Britain's reputation as moral arbiter on the question of anti-slavery. The 1843 Act added further legal substance to this effort, as shown by Palmerston's reasoning that the directive would prevent consuls from falling foul

¹¹⁹ Mr. Molyneux to Viscount Palmerston, 22 August 1846, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class D)*, P.P 857, p. 157.

of the legislation's provisions regarding the purchase and sale of slaves after 1843.¹²⁰

The second indication that Palmerston in particular was serious about the expansive interpretation of complicity that the Act represented was his decision to commission a census of British slaveholding in Brazil in late 1848. This census has been overlooked in the literature, despite the data it contains providing an unrivalled snapshot of British slave-ownership in a foreign territory in the post-abolition era. This data will be discussed in much further detail in Chapter II. Nevertheless, it is worth making a few comments on the context and reasons for its commissioning. The original text of Lord Palmerston's dispatch of 18 September 1848 was brief and not particularly revealing:

I have to desire that you will transmit to me, for the information of HMG, a list of all British subjects within the district of your Consulate, who are owners of slaves, distinguishing those who have domestic slaves and those who have slaves employed in agriculture or in mining.¹²¹

However, when the text and its intended recipients are considered in the historical context of British anti-slavery policy, Palmerston's intentions become more apparent. The dispatch was sent to all British consular officials in Brazil, Cuba and Puerto Rico. This makes it immediately clear that Palmerston was not interested in British

¹²⁰ Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Crawford (Circular), 11 November 1846, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class B)*, *P.P.* 855, p. 64.

¹²¹ Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Crawford, 18 Sept 1848, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B)* *P.P.* 1128 p. 278. Though this example is addressed to the British consul in Havana, 'a similar despatch was addressed under the same date to HM Consuls at Santiago de Cuba and Porto Rico [sic], and to HM Consuls at Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, Maranham [sic], Para, Paraiba, Pernambuco, and Rio Grande in Brazil.'

slaveholding in all foreign slave economies, only those that maintained an illegal trade in Africans. Despite an intensification in British efforts to suppress the transatlantic trade since the beginning of the decade, by 1848 the flows of Africans continued largely unabated and the trade to Brazil in particular had reached peak proportions. In spite of the greater powers granted to the Royal Navy's anti-slavery cruisers by the Aberdeen Act of 1845, the number of Africans imported illegally had increased significantly.¹²² Although Palmerston stuck steadfastly to naval suppression as the best way to end the illegal slave trade, these coercive methods were coming under increasing pressure from a cross-party coalition led by the radical Gateshead MP William Hutt. By February 1848 Hutt had succeeded in gaining approval for a select committee to investigate a system which he believed to not only be ineffective, but illegal and immoral.¹²³ Although mainly a forum to discuss the future of the naval suppression system, the Committee also discussed the slave trade more generally and it is likely that the slaveholding census was part of Palmerston's efforts to prepare himself for this enquiry. Indeed, as an opposition MP in 1843, Palmerston had spoken in favour of Lord Brougham's bill, voicing the embarrassment he felt when foreign governments had pointed out that British slaveowners were upholding slavery in other parts of the world.

But when the British Government, in pursuance of enactments by the legislature, endeavoured to obtain the consent of the Governments of other countries to co-operate and make sacrifices in a commercial point of view for the purpose of putting an end to slavery, it was but too likely to have the remonstrance met by that which was calculated to bring up a blush in a Minister's face. "How can you, who, with all your laws upon the subject, cannot prevent your own merchants from employing their capital in the maintenance

¹²² Indeed, for the three years up to and including the passing of the Aberdeen Bill imports had averaged around 28,000 per year but jumped to 52395 in 1846, 61731 in 1847 and peaked at 61757 in 1848. Figures extracted from Transatlantic Slave Trade Database, [www.slavevoyages.org, accessed 18/04/2018]

¹²³ See R. Huzzey, *Freedom Burning*, pp. 113-124.

of slavery, from buying slaves and dealing in them as property, require us to induce our subjects to give up a traffic in which so large a portion of our property and population has been engaged, without restriction for many years?¹²⁴

As consumers of the illegal slave trade, the actions of some British slaveholders in Brazil were undermining the government's anti-slavery battle in the Atlantic; a battle in which, by the time of Palmerston's return to government, Britain was losing ground and whose tactics were now under significant pressure at home. In this context a census of British slave-owners, as possible beneficiaries of the illegal trade, can be seen as part of Palmerston's wider preparation to defend the government's position and its anti-slavery methods in front of Hutt's 1848 Committee. The commissioning of the census undoubtedly represented the peak of official interest in British slaveholding in Brazil. However, as we shall observe in the Part III of this chapter, the suppression of the slave trade to Brazil meant that the information collected in this exercise soon lost its relevance, as the appetite to interfere with the slaveholding of British subjects dissipated following the realisation of the state's primary anti-slavery objective in Brazil.

The interest and action taken by the Foreign Secretary in the question of British slaveholding certainly dispels any notion of the systemic duplicity alluded to by Sherwood.¹²⁵ That being said, there is also no doubt that the legislation and its implementation during this period exhibited many of the same limitations which had characterised its legislative predecessor. Firstly, as with the 1824 Act, investigative and enforcement mechanisms remained relatively weak. Beverly

¹²⁴See *Hansard*, H.C. Deb. 18 August 1843, vol. 71, cc. 945-946.

¹²⁵ M. Sherwood, *After Abolition* Ch. 4.

Newcomen stressed this in his correspondence with the Foreign Office in 1846. The consul argued that as processes for the registration of slaves in Brazil were inconsistent and easily avoided, any British resident wishing to conceal their transactions would face little difficulty. Moreover, the cooperation of the Brazilian authorities could not be counted on by British consuls wishing to access this information. For this reason, in Newcomen's opinion, it was 'difficult for Her Majesty's Consuls, although personally convinced of the parties whom they deem it their duty to denounce, to furnish Her Majesty's Government with such evidence as might enable them to bring to trial'.¹²⁶ As the consul explicitly stated, the 1843 law had inherited the same issue as the 1824 Act in respect of the difficulty faced by those charged with its implementation. In Newcomen's opinion, the only effective way to implement the bill would be to afford consuls similar powers to the registrars in Britain's own colonies appointed under the provisions of the 1824 law.¹²⁷ This advice was not acted upon and, though legal specialists deemed the British subjects involved to be 'prima facie guilty', it appears that those accused by consuls Newcomen and Cowper never faced justice. Once again, the implementation of legislation across political borders proved practically problematic for the anti-slavery state.

As Newcomen alluded to, and as discussed more widely in Chapter II, British subjects resorted to a range of strategies to 'carry on with impunity the illegal receipt and transfer of slaves'.¹²⁸ It is therefore somewhat surprising that there were not

¹²⁶ Mr. Newcomen to Earl of Aberdeen, 24 January 1846, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class B)*, P.P 855 p. 279.

¹²⁷ *Ibid* p. 279.

¹²⁸ *Ibid* p. 279.

more investigations, even if just on an initial basis, into possible infractions of the 1843 Act. There are indications that practical problems relating to the collection of sufficient evidence were not the only limiting aspect of the law's implementation. It is also probable that lingering attitudes of ambivalence to this now expanded interpretation of complicity contributed to this end. Although positive evidence to explain this type of silence is difficult to ascertain, two case studies from the period analysed here show why this was likely the case.

The first, although not directly related to slaveholding, concerns a rare written admission that the British Minister in Rio intended to delay, at best, or neglect, at worst, to report information to the Foreign Office which strongly suggested systemic levels of complicity in the slave trade amongst the British mercantile body in Rio de Janeiro. In addition to the scrutiny provided by abolitionists at home, Britain also faced criticism from foreign governments who queried the dissonance between its anti-slavery position and its inability to prevent the complicity of its own subjects in the slave trade and slavery. A vocal proponent of this position was the American President, John Tyler, who addressed the issue of British complicity in a speech in Congress in early 1845 on the subject of the abuse of the American flag in the illegal trade to Brazil. Based on intelligence from Henry Wise, the U.S. Minister in Rio, Tyler argued that British merchants were 'deeply implicated in this inhumane traffic' as the suppliers of coast goods and brokers and financiers of slaving voyages. The President also accused the British of using suppression of a veil for the securing of cheap labour.¹²⁹ Though it was the second allegation which

¹²⁹J. Tyler, 'Special Message', 20 February 1845, in G. Peters, J. T. Woolley (eds), *The American Presidency Project* (Santa Barbara: University of California). [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=67459>, accessed 18/08/2018]. For a discussion of this

particularly irked the British authorities, the former provoked an internal audit of previous Foreign Office investigations into British complicity in the illegal trade.¹³⁰ Tyler's public criticism also unsettled British merchants in Brazil, concerned that they would be caught up in any subsequent investigations into their links to the traffic. Kelly has shown this in the case of Carruthers, de Castro & Co., a Manchester firm with a branch house in Rio de Janeiro.¹³¹ As Henry Wise had specifically mentioned the case of the *Agnes*, an American vessel accused of supplying the slave trade with goods supplied by the firm, Carruthers felt compelled to defend their actions. In addition to lobbying through the Manchester Commercial Association, the firm also secured an audience with the Earl of Aberdeen in August 1845. Erroneously believing that the Foreign Secretary had initiated an investigation into the case, Carruthers' representatives in Rio remonstrated with the British consul, Robert Hesketh. In attempting to justify their own business affairs, Carruthers brought attention to the commercial relationship between a large part of the British mercantile body in the city and the notorious Portuguese slave trader, Manoel Pinto da Fonseca.¹³² In a letter of 8th October 1845, Carruthers confirmed that it was Fonseca who had placed the order for the goods on the *Agnes* and that as he was 'one of the most extensive general merchants of this market' they '[could]

speech in the context of American involvement in the illegal trade, see L. Marques, *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas, 1776-1867* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016) p. 160.

¹³⁰ 'List of Allegations of British Involvement in the Slave Trade', 29 Apr 1845, TNA, FO 84/616, cited in J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' p. 150.

¹³¹ J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' pp. 151-155. The mercantile activities of this branch house, Carruthers & Bros, will be discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

¹³² Manoel Pinto da Fonseca's notoriety was such that his name appeared first on a 'List of the Principal Slave-Dealers at Rio de Janeiro, 1845' that Hesketh sent to the Foreign Secretary. See Mr. Hesketh and Mr. Grigg to Earl of Aberdeen, 11 March 1846, Enclosure 4, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class A), *P.P.* 854 p. 191.

not conceive that any British establishment here would refuse to take and order from him.¹³³ To add further weight to this argument, Carruthers enclosed a declaration, signed by 21 British merchant houses, in support of Fonseca as:

[A] large proprietor, one of the most extensive general merchants in this market, and who enjoys, and has enjoys for many years past, unbounded credit here from his well known means to meet his responsibilities, and his correctness in doing so.¹³⁴

There is no doubt that the signatories were well aware that Fonseca's extensive business and his solid creditworthiness was rooted in the slave trade. Though we have seen that British officials had been aware of these types of connections since the previous decade, this document provided a particular conundrum from the British Minister at Rio, Hamilton Hamilton. Britain's principal anti-slavery agent in Brazil, who in the same month had initiated treaty negotiations with Brazil following the Aberdeen Act, did not conceal the conflict he recognised between his dual anti-slavery and commercial role. Writing to Hesketh on the subject of the declaration, Hamilton stated that he believed it to be 'a very injudicious document' and that 'so long as [he] was able to avoid it, [he would] decline to place it officially in the hands of Her Majesty's Government.'¹³⁵ When he eventually did so, some six months later, Hamilton was remarkably candid, telling the Foreign Secretary that the delay was essentially due to the strength of the evidence:

¹³³ Carruthers and Co. to Mr. Hesketh, 8 October 1845, encl. 3 in Mr. Hamilton to Earl Aberdeen, 16 April 1846, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class B)*, P.P. 855 p. 159.

¹³⁴ 'Declaration of British Merchants at Rio de Janeiro', 15 September 1845, encl. 4 in Mr. Hamilton to Earl Aberdeen, 16 April 1846, in *Ibid* p. 159. See also R. Conrad, *World of Sorrow* pp. 130-132.; L. Tavares, *O Comércio Proibido* pp. 131-132.

¹³⁵ Mr. Hamilton to Mr. Hesketh, 15 October 1845, encl. 7 in Mr. Hamilton to Earl Aberdeen, 16 April 1846, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class B)*, P.P. 855.

There is not one individual among the subscribers [of the declaration] who can be accounted ignorant that the considerable property held by Senhor Fonseca, [sic] is the fruit exclusively of his extensive Slave Trade speculations.¹³⁶

Even with such compelling evidence, it is far from certain that any of the firms involved would have been found guilty. The acquittal of Pedro Zulueta only a few years previously had shown both the high bar of evidence required under the 1824 Act and the ability of merchants to successfully resist efforts for them to assume moral responsibility for the actions of their foreign counterparts.¹³⁷ This latter defence would be repeated by Carruthers and it likely played a role in Hamilton's reluctance to remit evidence that would damage the reputation of British commerce in Brazil without bringing any complicit parties to justice. For the most part, evidence for the ambivalence of British suppression has to be inferred from the silences in the diplomatic correspondence; this case is unique in that the British Minister explicitly stated his motivation for withholding the transmission to evidence to London. While this case relates specifically to complicity in the Atlantic slave trade rather than the sale or purchase of slaves in Brazil, it begs the question whether the silences of officials other than Newcomen and Cowper can be part explained by similar motivations. British officials in Brazil had a dual responsibility for the prosperity of their countrymen and the suppression of slavery; in the socio-economic context of Brazil, the reconciliation of these two aims was easier said than done.

Another case study of the same period clearly shows how ambivalence continued to condition the on-the-ground relationship between anti-slavery officials and British slaveholding after 1843. The diplomatic incident known in Brazil as *A Questão March*

¹³⁶ Mr. Hamilton to Earl Aberdeen, 16 April 1846, in *Ibid* p. 157.

¹³⁷ J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' pp. 111-113.

was recorded in a series of high-level correspondence between authorities in Britain and Brazil and was published in the Brazilian Foreign Ministry's annual report for 1846.¹³⁸ The dispute has been cited by historians such as Alan Manchester as part of wider discussions about negotiations around the renewal of the Anglo-Brazilian Commercial Treaty.¹³⁹ Whilst it is undoubtedly a significant test case in this process, the 'March Question' also demonstrates how the ambivalence of suppression was both codified in the 1843 Act and remained embodied in the dual role of British consuls in Brazil.

The 'March Question' occurred in the aftermath of the death in early 1845 of the same George March discussed in Part I of this Chapter.¹⁴⁰ Although his son later noted that his death at age 60 had been unexpected, March had prepared a will and had nominated three British subjects as executors; John Fielding, John Prince James and his old friend and business associate, Richard Heath. March had also nominated his two young sons, Jorge and Guilherme Taylor March as his heirs.¹⁴¹ As had been customary in previous cases of deceased British subjects, Robert Hesketh, as British consul, authorised the liquidation of March's estate by the executors, under his supervision. However, six months later, with the process of liquidation well under way, the Brazilian authorities determined that Hesketh and the three nominated executors had no right to interfere

¹³⁸ *Relatório dos negócios estrangeiros*, 1846, Annex, Nos. 90-97

¹³⁹ A.K. Manchester, *British Preeminence in Brazil* p. 299 n. 56.

¹⁴⁰ According to historian Gilberto Ferrez, George March died on 25 March 1845, see G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 84.

¹⁴¹ About March's unexpected death, see an interview with Guilherme Taylor March in *Jornal de Commercio* 19 September 1908. March's executors and instructions recounted by the British Consul in a letter to the British Minister, see Robert Hesketh to Hamilton Hamilton, 30 September 1845, in *Relatório dos negócios estrangeiros*, 1846, Annex, No. 90.

in what was the jurisdiction of the *Juiz de Órfãos* in Nova Friburgo. The Brazilian government outlined its position in a letter to the British Minister in Rio, stating that as the will left by the deceased had not conformed to the ‘required formalities’ according to Brazilian law, it had been determined that March died intestate. Moreover, as his sons were both Brazilian-born minors, it was the state’s responsibility alone to appoint a ward and executor.¹⁴² The Brazilian government’s legal case was strong; the Anglo-Brazilian commercial treaty which had allowed for the intervention of the British consul had expired in 1844 and from that point on the administration of all estates would be subject to the Brazilian inheritance law, no. 160, of 9 May 1842.¹⁴³ The British authorities in Rio and in London, as well as the Brazilian Association of Liverpool, expressed their grave concern that the decision to implement this law would undermine the property rights of British subjects in Brazil and according to the British Minister, eventually threaten the withdrawal of great quantities of British capital from the country. What makes this case especially interesting to our study is the nature of part of the property being contested; in addition to an extensive rural estate, March was the owner of a considerable number of slaves.¹⁴⁴ In order to defend the wider principle of future British prosperity in Brazil, it would first be necessary for officials to first protect British slave property, a part of which, as we shall see, was held on an uncertain legal basis.

¹⁴² Barão de Cayrú to Mr. Hamilton, 3 June 1846, in *Relatório dos negócios estrangeiros*, 1846, Annex, No. 95.

¹⁴³ Antonio Paulino Limpo de Abreu to Mr. Hamilton, 26 November 1845, in *Relatório dos negócios estrangeiros*, 1846, Annex, No. 92.

¹⁴⁴ Mr. Hamilton, to Antonio Paulino Limpo de Abreu, 2 April 1846, in *Relatório dos negócios estrangeiros*, 1847, Annex, No. 93.

Having been ‘strongly ensured’ by the Brazilian Foreign Minister for his unilateral decisions during the six months since March’s death, Hesketh wrote a letter to Hamilton, justifying his actions.¹⁴⁵ His first point was that it had always been normal procedure to protect the property of deceased British subjects in his consular district. Importantly though, he made a distinction that because of the nature of the property, a *fazenda* with slaves, his intervention was particularly pertinent. Hesketh argued that he was compelled to act swiftly in order to restore order to ‘the state of anarchy in which the fazenda had fallen just two days following the death of its owner,’ stating that Mr. Heath’s life had already been put in great danger by ‘an armed and robust black owned by the fazenda.’¹⁴⁶ Once order had been restored, Hesketh then set about balancing the books of the estate by authorising the sale of assets in order to pay debts to creditors. Crucially, these assets were enslaved people. The auction of 17 of March’s slaves was advertised by Rio-based auctioneer J. Bouis for 26 June 1845. The advert stated that the slaves were being sold without a reserve and in the presence of one of the estate’s administrators. Unfortunately, the advert does not offer much insight into the slaves themselves, other than that they included four family units and three individuals named João, Amaro and Anna.¹⁴⁷ The notice for the second sale of a further 47 slaves, advertised to take place on 24 September 1845 provides more detailed information.¹⁴⁸ Firstly, in conformity with Robert Hesketh’s testimony, the slaves were due to be sold to pay debts owed to creditors in Macaé. Secondly, the

¹⁴⁵ Mr. Hesketh to Mr. Hamilton, 8 June 1846, in *Relatório dos negócios estrangeiros*, 1847, Annex, No. 96.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ *Jornal do Commercio*, 25 June 1845.

¹⁴⁸ *Jornal do Commercio*, 24 September 1845.

advert lists the names, ages, professions, and crucially whether the slave was a Brazilian-born ‘*crioulo*’ or had been imported from Africa. Of the 47 individuals listed, 25 were born in Africa, 15 in Brazil and another 7 were listed without an origin. In relation to the latter category, it is possible that these individuals were also African. As Chalhoub notes, ‘the contraband slave trade meant that thousands of slaveowners were continuously making false claims about the legality of their slave property.’¹⁴⁹ The omission of the origins of these slaves, half of whom were children younger than 12 years old may well have been deliberate. This may have also been the case with three Africans listed without ages. The scale of the clandestine trade and prevalence of illegal enslavement means that it is also reasonable to suppose that some of the remaining 22 Africans had also been imported since the 1831 law. The presence of numerous adolescent and young adult African slaves (see Table 1) ties in well with what is known about the demographics of the illegal trade, in spite of the fact that at 16 years old, the youngest, Benedicto Angola, was – perhaps conveniently - just old enough to have been imported legally.¹⁵⁰

The ‘March Question’ illustrates two interesting points about the ambivalence of British suppression. Firstly, until Palmerston prohibited the practice in 1846, the same British agents working to end the international trade were also responsible, even expected, to take an active role in the sale of enslaved people, some of whom were likely imported illegally. This leads on to the more important point that the 1843 Act,

¹⁴⁹ S. Chalhoub, ‘Illegal Enslavement and the Precariousness of Freedom in Nineteenth-century Brazil’ in C. Morris, J.D. Garrigus (eds.) *Assumed Identities: The Meanings of Race in the Atlantic World* (Arlington: Texas A&M University Press, 2010) p. 106. On the various fraudulent methods adopted by owners of illegally enslaved Africans and the blind eye of the authorities on the issue, see S. Chalhoub, *A Força da Escravidão*, Chapter 4.

¹⁵⁰ See C. Valencia Villa, M. Florentino, ‘Abolicionismo Inglês e Tráfico de Crianças Escravizadas para o Brasil, 1810-1850’ *História*, 35 (2016), pp. 1-20.

in not being applied retroactively, undoubtedly legitimised the illegal slaveholding of British subjects. Though the 1843 Act brought British slaveholding within the frontiers of the state's moral geography of anti-slavery responsibilities, this process was marked by the ambivalence in legislation and the conflicting responsibilities of Britain's officials in Brazil. Nevertheless, this was the high-watermark of official interest in the slaveholding of British subjects. As we shall observe in the final section of this chapter, following the effective suppression of the illegal slave trade this interest would dissipate relatively quickly.

Table 1.1: Slaves of African and no stated origin owned by George March and included in auction notice of 24 September 1845.¹⁵¹

Name	Origin	Age	Profession(s)
Leopoldina	Not stated	8	Domestic Servant
Joanna	Not stated	12	Domestic Servant
Honorio	Not stated	12	Page
Benedicto	Angola	16	House and Fieldhand
Francisco	Africa (nação)	18	Fieldhand
Maria	Angola	18	Cook
Honorio	Cabinda	18	Fieldhand
Roberto	Not stated	18	Domestic Servant / Stablemaster
Joanna	Not stated	18	Seamstress / Laundress
Agostinho	Angola	20	Polisher
Benedicto	Benin	20	House and Fieldhand
Rosa	Mozambique	20	Greengrocer / Cook
Ignacio	Angola	22	Tailor
Vicente	Mozambique	22	Fieldhand
João	Mozambique	22	Stonemason
Joaquim	Cabinda	24	Barber
Mathilde	Gulf of Guinea (Mina)	24	Seamstress / Cook
João	Not stated	24	Butcher
Caetano	Mozambique	25	House and Fieldhand
Manoel	Angola	26	Tailor
Simão	Mozambique	26	Coachman
Luiz	Cabinda	30	Fisherman / Rower
Joaquim	Cassange (Angola)	30	Fieldhand
José	São Tomé	30	Fieldhand
Antonio	Not stated	30	Fieldhand
Domingos	Mozambique	35	Fieldhand
Josefa	Calabar	40	Domestic Servant
Fernando	Angola	45	Fieldhand
Antonio	Africa (nação)	50	Domestic Servant
José	Africa (nação)	-	Carpenter
Catharina	Angola	-	Laundress
Maria	Gulf of Guinea (Mina)	-	Cook / Laundress / Greengrocer

¹⁵¹ Information extracted from advert in *Jornal do Commercio*, 24 September 1845. Translation by author.

Part III: 1850 – 1888

Palmerston's census marked a peak of active state interest in British subjects owning slaves in Brazil. This final section will analyse British anti-slavery policy during the final four decades of Brazilian slavery to show that there were two major factors that help explain this recession of interest. Firstly, the 1843 Act had established the legal boundaries for Britain's jurisdiction in this matter. While the prohibition of future transactions in slaves remained in force, the Act had also legitimised the majority of British-held slave property and allowed for continued exploitation by other means. Though British subjects who strayed from these concessions were liable to investigation, the implementation of the Act's legacy provisions was conditioned by a second crucial factor. Official interest in British slaveholding and other forms of investment in Brazilian slavery had always been tied to a responsibility for slave trade suppression. The state had been briefly concerned with slaveholding in the sense that it represented, tangibly and symbolically, a driver for the illegal slave trade and not as a constituent element of Brazilian slavery. Once this link was severed following effective suppression in 1850-1851, official concern dissipated accordingly. In relative terms, Britain's anti-slavery agents in Brazil now had a watching brief, one of moral suasion rather than active suppression of slavery. This meant that there was very little appetite to interfere in the private lives or commercial interests of their countrymen unless absolutely necessary.

The decline in official interest was more of a waning than an immediate cessation. Although the benefit of hindsight allows us to place the effective suppression of the slave trade at 1850-1851 following the practical application of Brazil's second anti-slave trade law, this was not immediately clear to British officials. Throughout the

1850s and even beyond, British officials continued to monitor the threat of a resuscitation of the illegal trade, with even the most unlikely rumours followed up through official channels.¹⁵² During this decade and into the early 1860s, British officials in Rio also continued to compel the Brazilian government to satisfy their demands on the unresolved issue of the liberated Africans. An extension to these specific requests was the unofficial pressure, especially during William D. Christie's time as Minister in Rio (1859-1863), on the wider question of the fate of African slaves imported illegally into Brazil after 1831. Indeed, historians have argued that these related questions were the real cause of the so-called 'Christie Affair', which resulted in the severance of diplomatic relations between both countries.¹⁵³ It was in this context of these residual anti-slavery concerns that there were a handful of investigations in possible violations of the 1843 Act, some of which resulted in minor victories for the abolitionists who retained an interest in the issue of British slaveholding. Nevertheless, as we shall observe, these cases again exposed deficiencies in the legislation and it was also during this period that the limits of any future official anti-slavery interference in British investment were definitively set.

¹⁵² Though these efforts were mostly concentrated in the 1850s, rumours of plans to resurrect the illegal trade continued into the early 1870s at least. A notable example that caught the attention of British officials was the perceived threat posed by Confederate immigrants to Brazil following the U.S. Civil War. On one occasion between late 1869 and early 1870 in particular, British officials took considerable interest in the movements of a U.S citizen called Captain Forrest, supposedly a brother of the Confederate general, Nathan Bedford Forrest. Though not appropriate for discussion here, this case study deserves further historical investigation. For a selection of related correspondence see, Mr. Bushby to Mr. Buckley-Mathew, 20 October 1869, in TNA, FO 128/92; Mr. Bushby to Mr. Buckley-Mathew, 23 April 1870, in TNA, FO 128/95; Mr. Buckley-Mathew to Mr. Blow, 3 May 1870, in TNA, FO 128/94.

¹⁵³ Ostensibly the result of a diplomatic disagreement over compensation for damaged British vessels and the treatment of British sailors, historians have argued that the real cause was the British Minister, William D. Christie's frustrations over the slavery question. See R. Graham, 'Brasil-Inglaterra' pp. 142-145.

One of the first cases of a potential violation of the 1843 Act during this period was remitted to the Foreign Office by the diligent consul Cowper at Pernambuco. His concern related to the use of slave labour on the construction of the first British-owned line, the Recife and São Francisco Railway.¹⁵⁴ As Cowper made clear in his dispatch to the Foreign Secretary, the Earl of Clarendon, the line's own prospectus explicitly stated that 'the Company binds itself not to possess slaves and not to employ in the work of construction other than free people.'¹⁵⁵ This declaration was in fact a reproduction of a Brazilian decree of 1852, which prohibited the use of slave labour on the nation's new railway lines.¹⁵⁶ Cowper discovered that contractors employed by the company, Englishmen named Gardner and Lowden, had exploited a loophole in the law which only prohibited the owner of the line, and not contractors, from using slave labour.¹⁵⁷ Although not mentioned explicitly by Cowper, by hiring slaves from local owners, the contractors had also taken advantage of the concession lobbyists had won during the reading of the 1843 bill. Gardner and Lowden may have been acting in contravention of the spirit of both pieces of legislation, but there was little Cowper or Clarendon could legally do, other than exert informal pressure through other channels. In the end, following guarantees from the line's new contractors that they would not employ slaves and from the President of the Province that he would penalise the company if they did so, Cowper and Clarendon appeared satisfied and allowed the

¹⁵⁴ On the history of this line see W. Edmundson, *The Great Western of Brazil Railway* (Oxford: Mainline & Maritime, 2016).

¹⁵⁵ Mr. Cowper to Earl Clarendon, 15 April 1856, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, April 1856-March 1857 (Class B), *P.P* 2282, p. 234.

¹⁵⁶ On the prohibition of slave labour in railway construction see M.L. Lamounier, *Ferrovias e Mercado de Trabalho no Brasil* pp. 159-161.

¹⁵⁷ Mr. Cowper to Earl Clarendon, 16 August 1856, Correspondence on Slave Trade, April 1856-March 1857 (Class B), *P.P* 2282, pp. 242-244.

matter to drop.¹⁵⁸ While this may have represented a minor anti-slavery victory in this case, it again underlines the ambivalence built in to the 1843 Act which allowed the future exploitation of slave labour under various circumstances. This fact was alluded to by the line's managing director, Edward de Mornay, who insisted on company's legal right to employ slaves in future. It is not clear whether construction of this line continued on the basis of free labour, but recent research has shown that contractors of other British-owned lines would go on to exercise this right and there was little the anti-slavery state could do to prevent them.¹⁵⁹

In spite of the legislation's limitations, abolitionists in Britain continued to call for its implementation as and when they received any relevant intelligence. On one of these occasions, the slaveholding of Samuel Vines, British consul in Pará, was called into question by the BFASS.¹⁶⁰ It turned out that Vines, sensing the impropriety of the matter, had already written to Clarendon to seek his approval on the subject. In his letter of July 1855, the consul did not deny that he had recently purchased two boys called Jacinto and Ildefonso and a girl called Elena from a British subject called Alexander Dickson. However, he believed his actions were justified by the unique circumstances in which he found himself. Firstly, in the same way Hesketh had acted in the 'March Question', he aimed to protect Dickson's legitimate property from Brazilian justice following the death of Dickson's Brazilian wife. Secondly, believing

¹⁵⁸ Mr. Cowper to Earl Clarendon, 14 January 1857 in *Ibid* pp. 258-259; Earl Clarendon to Mr. Cowper, 28 February 1857 in *Ibid* p. 259.

¹⁵⁹ R.S. Souza, *Trabalhadores dos Trilhos* pp. 31-32.

¹⁶⁰ For the correspondence between the BFASS and the Foreign Office, see *ASR*, 3.11 (Nov.1855) pp. 250-251. Interestingly, the BFASS had received the intelligence from Archibald Campbell in Pará, himself a large-scale slaveholder. Rather than motivated by altruism, it appears Campbell resented the fact the Vines had disregarded a law that he had to abide by. See *Treze de Maio*, 2 August 1855. Campbell's slaveholding is discussed in more detail in Chapter III.

the three slaves too young to be freed immediately, Dickson and Vines agreed for the slaves to be taken into the latter's care on the condition that the boys were manumitted at 21 or 25 years and Elena at 18 years of age.¹⁶¹ After consulting with the government's solicitors and after having received a letter from the BFASS on the same issue, Clarendon responded to Vines making clear that however 'benevolent and praiseworthy' the motive, that the purchase of slaves had been illegal. Interestingly, Clarendon seemed confused about the provisions of the 1843 Act, stating that it 'absolutely forbids British subjects to own or hold slaves under any circumstances.'¹⁶² Perhaps this erroneous interpretation is an early indication that the legislation's relevance to the work of the anti-slavery state was starting to wane. There were other inconsistencies in Clarendon's response. While he chastised Vines for his conduct, he did not threaten him or Dickson with criminal prosecution, stating only that 'a repetition of such an act will not be lightly passed over.'¹⁶³ Moreover, in the course of Vines' correspondence it became clear that a fourth slave, Lazaro, had been sold by Dickson on similar terms to a British merchant house, Singlehurst, Miller & Co., yet it appears no action was taken in this case.¹⁶⁴ Again, perhaps this leniency was a product of an increasing ambivalence towards slaveholding as an official concern following the suppression of the slave trade. Moreover, Clarendon only instructed Vines to free the slaves in question after the Foreign Secretary's initial response was queried by Louis Chamerovzow, Secretary of the BFASS.¹⁶⁵ While the instruction to

¹⁶¹ Mr. Vines to Earl Clarendon, 30 July 1855, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, April 1855-March 1856 (Class B), P.P. 0.2.* pp. 224-230.

¹⁶² Earl Clarendon to Mr. Vines, 12 October 1855, in *Ibid* p. 230.

¹⁶³ *Ibid* p. 230.

¹⁶⁴ Mr. Vines to Earl Clarendon, 30 July 1855, Enclosure 6 in *Ibid* p. 230.

¹⁶⁵ Eight days elapsed between Clarendon's initial reply and his instructions to free the slaves in question, see Earl Clarendon to Mr. Vines, 20 October 1855, in *Ibid* p. 230. In the meantime, the

manumit these three individuals represented a small victory for the Society, Clarendon's handling of the case is also surely an indication that the state viewed the issue of British slaveholding with less urgency than it had during the previous decade.¹⁶⁶

While the state would act, albeit inconsistently, in the case of obvious infractions such as Vines' purchase of slaves, its response to another allegation in the same year once again exposed British legislation as ill-equipped to deal with other types of entanglement, even those that the in words of the British consul at Bahia 'create such a powerful interest in the preservation of slavery that it must ultimately defeat its so much wished-for extinction.'¹⁶⁷ Consul Morgan was referring broadly to slave life insurance and specifically to the involvement of a British subject, Thomas Giolma, in the management of the Previdência insurance company's recently established branch at Bahia. Morgan was clearly aware of the distinction that separated the slave trade from Britain's position of non-interference in slavery, so he set about framing his case against Giolma as an accusation of complicity in the slave trade. The Previdência company, established in 1854 by French merchants Carlos Le Blon and Estevão Bernard, offered annual insurance policies against the natural death of slaves between

BFASS had written to the Foreign Secretary suggesting that Jacinto, Ildefonso and Elena should be freed. See *ASR*, 3.11 (Nov.1855) pp. 250-251.

¹⁶⁶ In fact, it is not clear if the individuals in question were granted their freedom. In a letter of January 1856. Vines confirmed that Elena would be free at 18 and said nothing more about the boys other than that they had been delivered Dickon's father-in-law by way of the Brazilian authorities. See Mr. Vines to Earl Clarendon, 1 January 1856, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade*, April 1855-March 1856 (Class B), *P.P.* 0.2. pp. 233-234.

¹⁶⁷ Mr. Morgan to Earl Clarendon, 10 October 1856, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade*, April 1856-March 1857 (Class B), *P.P.* 2282 pp. 215-217.

the ages of 12 and 45.¹⁶⁸ Though not a specialist insurer against maritime risk, the company's decision to establish branches in Bahia, under the direction of Giolma, and in Pernambuco, to be managed by another British subject, Charles Nathan, was partly to take advantage of the growing slave trade between the provinces of the northeast and southeast of the country. Though Giolma insisted it was not for a policy against maritime risk, the company charged a premium of one percent for the transport of slaves from one province to another.¹⁶⁹ It was on this basis that Morgan framed his allegation, believing Giolma's involvement in this aspect of the business to be in contravention of the prohibitions against insuring slaving voyages, as outlined in the 1824 Act and reiterated in the 1843 law.¹⁷⁰ However, the Law Officers of the Crown were unconvinced by Morgan's argument, stating that the Acts referred to by the consul referred to 'the insurance of adventures in slaves and not in terms against insurance effected on their lives'.¹⁷¹ For this reason, Giolma could not be found criminally liable, even though Clarendon agreed with Morgan that Giolma was 'acting against the spirit of the statute.'¹⁷² The legal limits of official interference had been defined and now the slave trade to Brazil had ceased, there was no ambition to push for an extension to these powers.

¹⁶⁸ For the company's articles of association, see C. Le Blon and E. Estevão, *Estatutos da companhia de seguros contra a mortalidade dos escravos: Previdência* (Rio de Janeiro, Typ. G. Leuzinger, 1854) [available at <http://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/bitstream/handle/id/242376/000093980.pdf?sequence=1> accessed 14/08/2018]. On the slave insurance industry in Rio de Janeiro, see A.J.F. Payar, 'A Escravidão entre os seguros: as seguradoras na província do Rio de Janeiro, 1831-1888' (Unpublished MA thesis, Universidade de São Paulo, 2012).

¹⁶⁹ Mr. Giolma to Mr. Morgan, Correspondence on Slave Trade, April 1856-March 1857 (Class B), P.P. 2282 pp. 216-217.

¹⁷⁰ Mr. Morgan to Mr. Giolma, 10 October 1856, in *Ibid* p. 216.

¹⁷¹ Earl Clarendon to Mr. Morgan, 27 January 1857, in *Ibid* pp. 219-220.

¹⁷² *Ibid* p. 220.

In spite of these notable, albeit largely frustrated, efforts to implement the provisions of the 1843 Act, evidence once again suggests that some British officials in Brazil remained silent on other possible violations of this law. A rare critical voice to break this silence was that of Reverend Charles Grenfell Nicolay, a firebrand clergyman who arrived in Bahia in 1858 to assume direction of the British community's Church of St. George.¹⁷³ Only a short time after his arrival, Nicolay was shocked to discover that not only were there a number of slaveholders within his congregation, but that some may have acquired this property illegally after 1843. After initially writing to the Bishop of London on the issue, Nicolay was directed to request guidance from the Bishop of St. Helena.¹⁷⁴ In this memorandum, the Reverend outlined his key concerns of what he called a 'subject dangerous and difficult in the extreme.'¹⁷⁵ Despite his objections on moral grounds, Nicolay reluctantly acknowledged that some British slaveholding was legal; a recognition of the 1843 Act's non-retroactive application. However, in his next two points the clergyman clearly challenged the legality of a portion of British held-slaves in the city. According to Nicolay, there were British residents who purchased slaves irrespective of the legislation and there were those who adopted alternative strategies in order to circumvent the law, including by 'titles which no one cares to dispute'.¹⁷⁶ The Reverend later made clear that he included the consul, John Morgan, in this category of 'no one', lamenting that he could not count

¹⁷³ For a biography of Nicolay, see P.E. Playford and I. Pridmore, 'Nicolay, Charles Grenfell (1815–1897)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1974) [<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/nicolay-charles-grenfell-4302/text6969> accessed 20/08/2018]. On the Protestant community in Bahia, see E da Silva, 'Cidadãos de outra pátria: Anglicanos e batistas na Bahia'

¹⁷⁴ E da Silva, 'Cidadãos de outra pátria: Anglicanos e batistas na Bahia' pp. 154-155.

¹⁷⁵ Reverend C.G. Nicolay to the Bishop of St. Helena, exact date unknown (late 1860 or early 1861), LPL, Tait 424, ff. 96-97.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid* f. 97. These strategies are discussed in greater detail in Chapter II.

on his help in this matter. Given his conduct in the Giolma case four years previous, rather than a case of active complicity, we can view Morgan's failure to act more as a passive resignation of his own weak agency and the limits of the 1843 Act. As other cases had shown, robust evidence was hard to come by; even if a British subject was deemed to be guilty, if they remained in Brazil they would not face justice; finally, as he himself had seen in the Giolma case, the Foreign Office showed little urgency for their consuls to investigate these matters following the suppression of the slave trade. Reverend Nicolay, newly-arrived and without any of this baggage, was not content with passive resignation or tolerant pragmatism; he wanted action and in a second letter to Lambeth Palace he proposed excluding the offending members of his congregation from communion.¹⁷⁷ The Bishop of London's return mirrored consul Morgan's position on the matter, in that he refused to condemn those involved or take the investigation any further. The Bishop's guidance that Nicolay should find a 'peaceful settlement' through 'personal communication and by persuasion' rather than 'exclusion from the Lord's table' suggests he too was in favour of letting sleeping dogs lie.¹⁷⁸

If there was a British official in Brazil who did not let sleeping dogs lie, it was the arrogant maverick of a diplomat, William D. Christie.¹⁷⁹ After all, his refusal to give up the question of the post-1831 Africans – a valid point but not an issue on which he had official instructions from London – was arguably the underlying cause of the

¹⁷⁷ Reverend C.G. Nicolay to the Bishop of London, 11 June 1861, LPL, Tait 424, ff. 107-108.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid* ff. 107-108.

¹⁷⁹ In addition to arrogant, Graham describes Christie as 'at times sarcastic, sophist, and full of false accusations'. See R. Graham, 'Os fundamentos da ruptura de relações diplomáticas entre o Brasil e a Grã-Bretanha em 1863: "A questão Christie."' *Revista de História*, 24.49 (1962), p. 121.

eponymous Affair and the severing of diplomatic relations.¹⁸⁰ In contrast to his intransigence towards the Brazilian government, it appears that Christie was indeed willing to take a more tolerant view of the slaveholding of his countrymen. There are three reasons that support this interpretation. Firstly, despite the fact that Reverend Nicolay wrote to him on the issue of slaveholding in Bahia, it appears that no further action, in a formal sense at least, was taken on the matter.¹⁸¹ The second point concerns the impropriety of British mining companies in their dealings with their enslaved labour force. It is the case that Christie showed some concern for the fate of 400 slaves of now defunct Imperial Brazilian Mining Company. Their sale had been initially postponed in 1859 after questions were raised over its legality under the 1843 Act; a fact which appeared to be confirmed when their proposed buyer failed in his attempt to push the sale through the English courts.¹⁸² However, only a year later, this decision was overturned on appeal and Christie was left in doubt about whether he should take further action so wrote to Lord Russell for guidance.¹⁸³ By the time the Foreign Secretary's advice, that the sale was illegal, reached Christie, it had already occurred.¹⁸⁴ After learning that Santos proposed to lease the slaves to a British mining company, the St. John Del Rey, Christie's attitude noticeably softened. Despite the

¹⁸⁰ In correspondence with London, Christie acknowledged that he had not received instructions on the wider issue of the post-1831 Africans but had raised it with the Brazilian government nevertheless. See Mr. Christie to Lord Russell, 27 May 1861, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1861* (Class B), *P.P.* 2959, pp. 44-46. Also, Mr. Christie to Lord Russell, 24 June 1861, in *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁸¹ Nicolay wrote a joint letter with unnamed representatives of a 'British mercantile house who used a Brazilian proxy to purchase slaves used in their establishment. This case is discussed in Chapter II.

¹⁸² In his treatment of the case, Kelly characterises it as an anti-slavery victory, though he appears unaware of the decision having been overturned on appeal and that the slaves were indeed sold to Santos. See J. Kelly 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' p. 201.

¹⁸³ Mr. Christie to Lord Russell, 24 September 1860, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, April 1860-March 1861* (Class B) *P.P.* 2823-1, pp. 53-54.

¹⁸⁴ Lord Russell to Mr. Christie, 8 December 1860, in *Ibid.*, p. 55.

fact that an illegal sale of slaves had taken place, Christie, later with the tacit support of Russell, chose not to take the matter any further.¹⁸⁵ It seems that both men preferred to avoid the controversy that any further action might entail. However, that would not ring true in the case of the St. John Del Rey Company's illegal enslavement of 385 labourers it had hired from the defunct Brazilian National Company. As referenced in the Introduction, the failure to free these slaves at the end of their 14-year term in 1859 was, in 1879, scandalised by Brazilian abolitionist, Joaquim Nabuco. Christie had been aware of strong allegations of impropriety as early as 1860, yet seemingly chose not to push the issue, citing a lack of available evidence.¹⁸⁶ This brings us to the point of illegal enslavement more generally. British mining companies had long been accused of having purchased Africans brought into Brazil after 1831.¹⁸⁷ Although Christie brought similar cases he had found in Rio's newspaper columns to the attention of the Brazilian Foreign Minister, once again he failed to broach the issue with the St. John Del Rey company. In truth, British officials had little room to manoeuvre in the wider case of post-1831 Africans in British ownership. The 1843 Act had legitimised any slaves bought before its enactment, whether legally obtained or otherwise. Nevertheless, Christie's passivity in other cases is evidence that even the most zealous anti-slavery official could hold ambivalent attitudes when it came to the slaveholding of their countrymen.

¹⁸⁵ Christie stated that he would warn the agents of the British mining companies, but this referred to their future conduct and not the recent sale to Santos. See Mr. Christie to Lord Russell, 24 January 1861, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1861 (Class B)*, *P.P.* 2959, p.

¹⁸⁶ Mr. Christie to Lord Russell, 24 December 1860, in *Ibid* p. 33.

¹⁸⁷ George Pilkington alerted British readers to this fact in 1841. See *ASR*, 2.17 (Aug 1841) pp. 179-180.

The period between the end of the ‘Christie Affair’ in 1865 and Brazilian abolition in 1888 saw very little political will to interfere in the slaveholding interests of British subjects in Brazil. The repeal of the Aberdeen Act was symbolical acknowledgement of a fact long-observed by British officials in Brazil; the illegal slave trade had been effectively suppressed and there was little chance of its resuscitation. It was also after the Christie Affair that the anti-slavery state made explicitly clear its intention to limit its role to a watching brief. On his arrival in Brazil, the newly appointed British Minister was advised by the Earl of Clarendon to refrain from ‘enter[ing] upon former matters of controversy connected with this question.’¹⁸⁸ Though the Foreign Secretary was referring specifically to the *emancipados* question, his advice should be understood in the wider context of Stephen Lushington’s *Slave Instructions* of the same year which made a clear distinction between the slave trade, ‘which Great Britain is determined to put down, and the system of domestic slavery, with which she does not claim to interfere.’¹⁸⁹ The state’s interest in British slaveholding in Brazil had always been tied to its efforts to suppress the slave trade. Now that this link had been severed once and for all, there was less appetite than there had ever been to interfere in a question that had been largely resolved in 1843 anyway. Indeed, as we observed, it would take the agitation of Nabuco and not any anti-slavery official to expose the illegal practices of the St. John Del Rey company. Only when Nabuco had realised the scandal Christie had earlier hoped to avoid, did the Foreign Office condemn the company. Even then, the only punishment it faced on the part of the British

¹⁸⁸ Earl Clarendon to Mr. Thornton, 25 November 1865, in Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1865 (Class B) *P.P.* 3635-I p. 12.

¹⁸⁹ See *Hansard* HC Deb. 22 February 1876, vol. 227 c. 755. Lushington’s *Instructions* were quoted verbatim by Gathorne Hardy MP during debates over the controversial Fugitive Slave Circulars which instructed British naval commanders to refrain from obstructing the capture of slaves seeking refuge on their vessels. See R. Huzzey ‘The moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities.’ pp. 131-132.

government was the withdrawal of diplomatic support for a reduction in gold taxes.¹⁹⁰

After the state's reluctant involvement in this controversy, there is no record of any further official interference or investigation into the slaveholding or investments in slave property.¹⁹¹

Concluding remarks

The anti-slavery state's policy concerning British complicity in Brazilian slavery was characterized by ambivalence; a product of its attempts to reconcile its anti-slavery objectives with ambitions for the expansion of British trade and investment. This chapter has shown how this ambivalence was codified in legislation and physically embodied by British officials in Brazil over three distinct periods. In the first decade after emancipation in the West Indies, British investments in Brazilian slavery continued without fear of reprehension by the state, in spite of the fact that British enterprises and individuals were consumers of the illegal traffic that successive British governments were determined to extinguish. The most visible manifestation of ambivalence during this period was the slaveholding of various British officials in Brazil. Under pressure from abolitionists to adopt their expansive interpretation of complicity, the government enacted the 1843 Act and for the first time British slaveholding and other investments in slave property were brought within the moral geography of British anti-slavery responsibilities. However, the Act inherited the

¹⁹⁰ M. Eakin, *A British Enterprise in Brazil* pp. 84-85; M. Childs, 'A Case of "Great Unstablensness"' p. 736.

¹⁹¹ Parallel to the St. John Del Rey case, British officials briefly probed the legality of slaves in the possession of Mrs. Cowie, a Scottish widow in Recife. Inspired by Nabuco's tactics, her right to own slaves had been questioned by abolitionists in this city. This case is explored in further detail by C. Campbell, 'Making Abolition Brazilian' pp. 521-543.

ambivalence of its legislative predecessors. On the one hand, it recognized that there was something inherently wrong with British investment in slavery, though only as this pertained to the promotion of the slave trade. On the other, it legitimised all slave property in British hands up to this point, without scrutinising its legality under international and Brazilian law, whilst also leaving open the possibility for future exploitation through a variety of workarounds, including hiring. The limited ambitions of the 1843 Act can be attributed to the state's upholding of the traditions of emancipation in the West Indies, as well as the commercial lobby's success in defending their right to slave labour.

Even though attempts were made to implement the law during the peak period of official interest in British slaveholding, its effectiveness was hamstrung by two major issues. Firstly, the practicality of investigating with limited resources and enforcing British law across political borders proved problematic. Secondly, its implementation suffered from the ambivalence of some British officials who struggled to reconcile their role as both anti-slavery agents and guarantors of the prosperity of British trade and investment. It was these moments that produced the silences and elision that punctuate the historical record. During the gradual dissipation of official interest in the issue following the suppression of the slave trade, ambivalent attitudes lingered on and it took Brazilian abolitionists, not the anti-slavery state, to expose the illegal slaveholding of British investors. In the end as the case of Richard Gumbleton Daunt makes clear, it would be slave resistance and Brazil's own abolition which finally extinguished the last vestiges of this exploitative relationship.

Chapter II - Silent Beneficiaries: British Slaveholding Beyond Brazilian Mines

The British-owned goldmining companies of Minas Gerais were amongst the most vocal opponents of Lord Brougham's bill to legislate against British slaveholding in foreign territories. As we observed in the previous chapter, through the lobbying of their parliamentary representatives, these companies managed to obtain important concessions during the bill's reading. As a result, the final legislation neither dispossessed them of the slaves they already owned nor prevented them from exploiting hired slave labour in the future. These companies were undoubtedly the single largest beneficiaries of the lobbying they themselves commissioned. However, there were a whole host of other British slaveholders who took no part in these activities yet benefitted from the same concessions. Unlike enterprises such as the St. John Del Rey Mining Company, very little is known about the silent beneficiaries who exploited slave labour in a variety of urban and rural contexts. The purpose of this chapter is to shine new light on this diverse group who, despite collectively owning nearly half of all British-held slaves, have largely escaped the attention of both contemporary abolitionists and modern historians.

A more in-depth study of this group is possible owing to the identification of previously overlooked quantitative data in the form of a Brazil-wide British slaveholding census commissioned in 1848 by the then Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston. Although not without its limitations, this data offers unparalleled insights into the extent and diversity of British slaveholding in Brazil. In addition to allowing an analysis of the sectoral and geographic distribution of British slaveholding at the turn of the mid-nineteenth century, the data also provides a starting point to consult

other sources which offer new perspectives into the social history of these British slave-owners and to a lesser extent those enslaved by British masters. By consulting a range of sources indicated by other social histories of the British in Brazil, we can discuss the different origins of and avenues to slaveholding amongst British residents, in addition to trends over time. Finally, a better understanding of the extent and diversity of British slaveholding in Brazil offers an opportunity to reconsider the limitations of British anti-slavery policy, as well as the inconsistencies inherent in Britain's identity as an anti-slavery nation.

ii. Origins and Collection of the Data

As we observed in Chapter I, Palmerston's census of 1848-1849 was commissioned at the peak of official interest in the question of British slaveholding and other investment in Brazilian slave property. In order to best analyse the valuable information in this census, it is important to discuss how the data was collected and then presented to the Foreign Secretary. Doing so will allow us to consider possible inconsistencies in the census' coverage and subsequent limitations of the overall data. The first point to make is that this census was only collected once. So, whilst its coverage and detail are unparalleled, the data is only representative of short period between December 1848 and March 1849.¹⁹² Although this means that the data cannot be used in isolation to discuss trends of British slaveholding, the information it contains can be cross-referenced with other primary and secondary sources in an

¹⁹² The first returns were sent from Maranhão and Bahia on 21 December 1848 and the last return is dated 17 March 1849.

attempt to widen the window of observation to the decades either side of the mid-century.

The second observation concerning the collection and the presentation of the data relates to the seven British consular districts in Brazil and the officials in charge of collecting information on British slaveholding within these regions. Figure 1 shows the Brazilian provinces which had official British representation in the form of a consul or acting consul in the case of Rio de Janeiro. The primary role of British consuls was the protection and promotion of British commercial interests, as well as to cater for the social and religious welfare of the British community.¹⁹³ In addition, officials in Rio de Janeiro, Bahia and Pernambuco also expended considerable energies in anti-slave trade activities before 1850.

¹⁹³ On the role of consuls in this period see D.C.M.Platt, *Cinderella Service: British Consuls since 1825* (London: Longman, 1971) pp. 16-21. On their anti-slavery duties see D. Eltis, *Economic Growth* pp. 111-112.

Figure 2.1: British Consular Districts in Brazil, 1848-1849.¹⁹⁴



¹⁹⁴ Figure 2.1 uses a modern map to represent British consular districts in the mid 19th century. Although there are important differences between the states of the modern Republic and the provinces of the Empire of Brazil, the borders of the modern map can be considered analogous to those of the then provinces.

The British communities in these regions were small, largely composed of merchants linked to the import-export trade and were concentrated in the major port cities which also served as provincial capitals. Reliable population statistics for these communities are scarce. Guenther estimates that there were between 120 and 150 British subjects residing in Bahia at the mid-century and a British visitor in Pernambuco in the early 1850s had heard that the community numbered over 300.¹⁹⁵ Although there are no figures for the mid-century, a visitor to Rio de Janeiro in 1825 estimated the British population to be around 600 and census figures from 1872 show 966 British subjects living in the urban and rural parishes of the city.¹⁹⁶ Somewhere between these two figures is likely a best guess. The smaller communities at Maranhão, Pará and Rio Grande do Sul probably did not number many more than 50 individuals each and it is unlikely that Paraíba had in excess of a handful of British residents.¹⁹⁷

Drawn primarily from the resident merchant body, consuls would have been well acquainted with most British subjects in the port cities where they were based. Nevertheless, the districts they were in charge of were geographically vast and although there were few British subjects living in the interior of these regions, there is evidence that the coverage of the census did not extend to some of these isolated individuals. The example of the consular district of Rio de Janeiro is particularly illustrative of this point. This district not only included the city of Rio de Janeiro (*município neutro*) and Rio de Janeiro province but also incorporated the neighbouring

¹⁹⁵ L. Guenther, *British Merchants in nineteenth-century Brazil* p. 62.; C. B. Mansfield, *Paraguay, Brazil, and the Plate: Letters written in 1852-1853* (Cambridge: Macmillan, 1861) p.74.

¹⁹⁶ Geyer, P.F., (ed.) *Diários do Almirante Graham Eden Hammond* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora JB, 1984) p. 24; L.C.Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro' (PhD Thesis, University of London, 1988) p. 466.

¹⁹⁷ In 1826, the British community in Maranhão and Pará numbered 57 and 45 respectively. See I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil* p. 84 and p. 133.

provinces of Minas Gerais and São Paulo. Acting Consul Westwood's return includes British slaveowners from all these regions including the mines of Minas Gerais and a sugar planter in São Paulo but omits known examples such as John Rudge, owner of plantations in both Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and British-owned foundries in the Campos region of Rio de Janeiro.¹⁹⁸ It is therefore plausible that there are similar omissions, albeit probably small in number, of other British slave owners in the interior who left no trace in the historical record.

The varying competency of individual consuls and the stringency, or lack thereof, of their methods of data collection also contribute to inconsistencies in coverage of the nationwide census. The returns were not completed on a standardised form and across the different districts there is a wide range in the level of detail submitted. The most detailed return was from H. Augustus Cowper, British Consul at Pernambuco, a district which included the Brazilian provinces of Pernambuco and Alagoas. The information is presented in tabular form and includes a fair amount of detail about both the slave-owners and their slaves. In addition to the name of the individual or firm, Cowper also lists twenty different professions or business areas including merchants, engineers, doctors, planters, publicans and stable keepers. In terms of the slaves they employed, the table includes three sectors of activity: domestic, agriculture and foundry. The Consul also recorded the number of male and female slaves in each sectoral category as well as a section for observations on individual slaveowners. One

¹⁹⁸ Both John Rudge's properties in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo were called Morumbi. For details on Rudge's property in Rio de Janeiro, see E.D. Cardoso, 'O Capital Imobiliário e a Produção de Espaços Diferenciados no Rio de Janeiro: o Grajaú' *Revista Brasileira da Geografia*, 51.1 (1989) pp. 92-93. In São Paulo, Rudge used slave labour to produce tea on his Morumbi estate, see D. Kidder and J. Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians: Portrayed in historical sketches* (Philadelphia: Childs and Peterson, 1857) p. 421. British owned foundries are discussed in further detail in the 'Urban Slaveholding' section of this chapter.

such observation makes clear that Cowper had contacted all 46 individuals or firms specifically on this matter.¹⁹⁹ We know that Consul R. Falconer Corbett at Maranhão had a similar approach as he enclosed a copy of the survey he sent to all British subjects in his district.²⁰⁰ As a result, the slaveholding census from this district has a similar level of detail to Pernambuco. The same can be said of Edward Porter's return from Bahia and John Morgan's from Rio Grande do Sul.²⁰¹

At the opposite end of the scale in terms of detail are the returns from Pará and Paraíba. Consul Beverly Newcomen's reply from Paraíba lists three British slaveowners in his province, but does not provide the number of slaves, only to add that all three British subjects employed their slaves in both domestic and agricultural contexts. When it comes to analyse the data, these entries will be considered as one slave per owner as it has not been possible to obtain more accurate figures from other sources.²⁰² Similarly, the return from Richard Ryan in Pará only consists of one paragraph which explains the trouble he had faced acquiring the relevant data from British subjects in his district. One planter made a return of 35 slaves but as 11 of the 13 individuals he addressed on the matter had not replied, he goes on to estimate that one British subject

¹⁹⁹ Mr. Cowper to Viscount Palmerston, 21 December 1848, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B), P.P.*, 1128, pp. 139-140 (Hereafter referred to as *Census Return – Pernambuco*).

²⁰⁰ Mr. Corbett to Viscount Palmerston 21 December 1848, in *Ibid* pp. 128-131 (Hereafter referred to as *Census Return – Maranhão*)

²⁰¹ Mr. Porter to Viscount Palmerston, 16 February 1849, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B), P.P.*, 1291 p. 107 (Hereafter referred to as *Census Return – Bahia*); Consul Morgan to Viscount Palmerston, in *Ibid* p. 165 (Hereafter referred to as *Census Return – Rio Grande do Sul*).

²⁰² This is almost definitely an underestimate but with no way of verifying exact numbers this was deemed the fairest estimate. See Mr. Newcomen to Viscount Palmerston, 30 November 1848, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B), P.P.*, 1291 p. 131 (Hereafter referred to as *Census Return – Paraíba*).

held between 50 and 60 slaves and the rest held approximately 20 between them.²⁰³ Ryan makes clear his belief that this lack of cooperation was intentional on the part of these British slaveowners. The same issue is also noted by the Consuls at Pernambuco and Maranhão. The reasons for such reluctance is not stated explicitly, but it is possibly related to a fear on the part of some British slaveowners that they could be accused of contravening British slave trade legislation. As we observed in Chapter I, the 1840s was the peak period of official interest in British slaveholding and only two years previously the transactions of British residents in Paraíba and Pernambuco had been investigated for potentially breaching the provisions of the 1843 Act. Whatever the reason, their reluctance forced Consuls to make estimations which inevitably affects accuracy of the overall data.

The census return from the consular district of Rio de Janeiro presents its own particular idiosyncrasies and as it was the region with both the largest British community and British-held slave population it deserves special mention. Of all seven returns, the census compiled by Acting Consul John J.C Westwood provides the most information about British slaveholders. In addition to the name of the individual or enterprise and their area of business, Westwood's tabular return also includes their 'place of residence.' This will prove particularly useful to our analysis as 15 out of the 16 entries completed by Westwood concern establishments outside the confines of the city of Rio de Janeiro.²⁰⁴ These include three British mining companies in Minas

²⁰³ Consul Ryan to Viscount Palmerston, 17 March 1849 in *Ibid* p.127 (Hereafter referred to as Census Return – Pará).

²⁰⁴ This includes two entries for coffee plantations in Tijuca. Although Tijuca is well within the confines of the modern city of Rio de Janeiro, Westwood describes it as being '12 miles from the city.' See Mr. Westwood to Viscount Palmerston, 28 December 1848, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B), P.P.*, 1128, p. 152 (Hereafter referred to as Census Return – Rio de Janeiro).

Gerais as well as various plantations and other agricultural concerns. The one entry relating to British slaveholding in the city of Rio de Janeiro is a grouping of ‘about sixty British subjects owners and managing British commercial houses and other establishments.’²⁰⁵ Unfortunately for our purposes, unlike his counterparts in Bahia, Pernambuco, Maranhão and Rio Grande do Sul, Westwood did not list the names of these individual establishments and more importantly their collective slaveholding was given as an estimate. Estimates, rather than accurate figures, also account for eight of the other 15 entries in the Acting Consul’s return. This suggests that in the majority of cases individual slave owners were either not directly consulted or did not provide the information requested. Either way, these estimations reduce confidence in the overall accuracy of Westwood’s return. While a similar issue in Pará only affects a small proportion of the countrywide survey, the consular district of Rio de Janeiro accounts for around three quarters of all British slaveholding in 1848. In order to mitigate for these possible inaccuracies, wherever possible, the data in all consular returns will be cross referenced with other available source material.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid*

iii. Analysis of the data

According to Palmerston's census of 1848 the number of slaves held by British masters totaled approximately 3400 individuals.²⁰⁶ Though this number is clearly a tiny proportion of the two million or more slaves in Brazil at the mid-nineteenth century, it represents more than double the estimate given by Viscount Sandon in the House of Commons just five years earlier.²⁰⁷ Like other contemporary discussions of British slave-ownership abroad, it is likely that Sandon's estimate was based largely on what was known about British mining companies. Using the data in the 1848 census, this section will analyse the facets of British slaveholding in Brazil which seemingly appeared less readily in the minds of politicians and anti-slavery campaigners in Britain. The analysis will bring to light the diversity of geographic, sectoral and demographic distribution of the unknown half of British slaveholding in Brazil. In turn, this offers new perspectives on the complex and often inconsistent relationship between anti-slavery identity and foreign policy forged on metropolitan shores and the business interests and everyday lives of British subjects abroad.

Perhaps the most unsurprising finding of the census is that British slaveholding is present across all seven consular districts. As Robert Conrad notes, slavery in Brazil was of 'extraordinary economic and social importance even in non-coffee areas.'²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ In cases where returns gave estimates between two numbers, a mid-point was used for this total. For example, Consul Westwood estimates the number of slaves to be held by the National Brazilian Mining Company at '300 to 400.' A total of 350 was taken. Likewise, the figure for the grouping of 60 establishments in Rio de Janeiro 'who employ domestic Slaves, averaging from 3 to 6 to each establishment' was taken at 4.5. In the case of Paraíba where the number of slaves was omitted, a figure of one slave per individual was used.

²⁰⁷ On population estimates, see R. Graham, '1850-1870', in ed. L. Bethell (ed.) *Brazil Empire and Republic, 1822-1930* (Vol. 3) (Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 113. For Viscount Sandon's estimate of British slaveholding in Brazil see *Hansard*, H.C. Deb., 18 August 1843, vol. 71 c. 947.

²⁰⁸ R. Conrad, *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery, 1850-1888* (University of California Press, 1972) p. 5.

All of Brazil's major exports relied to some extent on slave labour and slaves were also used in production for the domestic market. Moreover, in the first half of the nineteenth century in particular, slaves were prevalent in urban centres and were employed in a wide range of professions.²⁰⁹ What Conrad calls the 'omnipresence of slavery' is represented in the demographic data for Brazilian provinces covered by British consular districts in 1854 (see Table 1). Whilst the table reflects the concentration of slavery in the coffee producing southeast of the country - a trend which would intensify in the following decades - it also shows significant slave populations in all provinces which had British consular representation.

Table 2.1: Estimates of free and slave populations in Brazilian provinces covered by British consular districts in 1854.²¹⁰

Consular District	Province	Free Population		Slave Population		Total Population
		Number	%	Number	%	
Bahia	Bahia	904,615	82.24	195,385	17.76	1,100,000
Maranhão	Maranhão	262,177	72.83	98,823	27.17	360,000
Pará	Pará	173,750	83.78	33,650	16.22	207,400
Paraíba	Paraíba	187,767	89.71	21,533	10.29	209,300
Pernambuco	Pernambuco	780,422	82.15	169,578	17.85	950,000
	Alagoas	170,175	83.34	34,025	16.66	204,200
Rio de Janeiro	Neutral Municipality (Corte)	103,294	68.06	48,482	31.94	151,776
	Rio de Janeiro	524,206	50.01	524,018	49.99	1,048,224
	Minas Gerais	966,419	74.34	333,581	25.66	1,300,000
Rio Grande do Sul	São Paulo	379,379	75.88	120,621	24.12	500,000
	Rio Grande do Sul	150,802	74.91	61,148	30.38	201,300

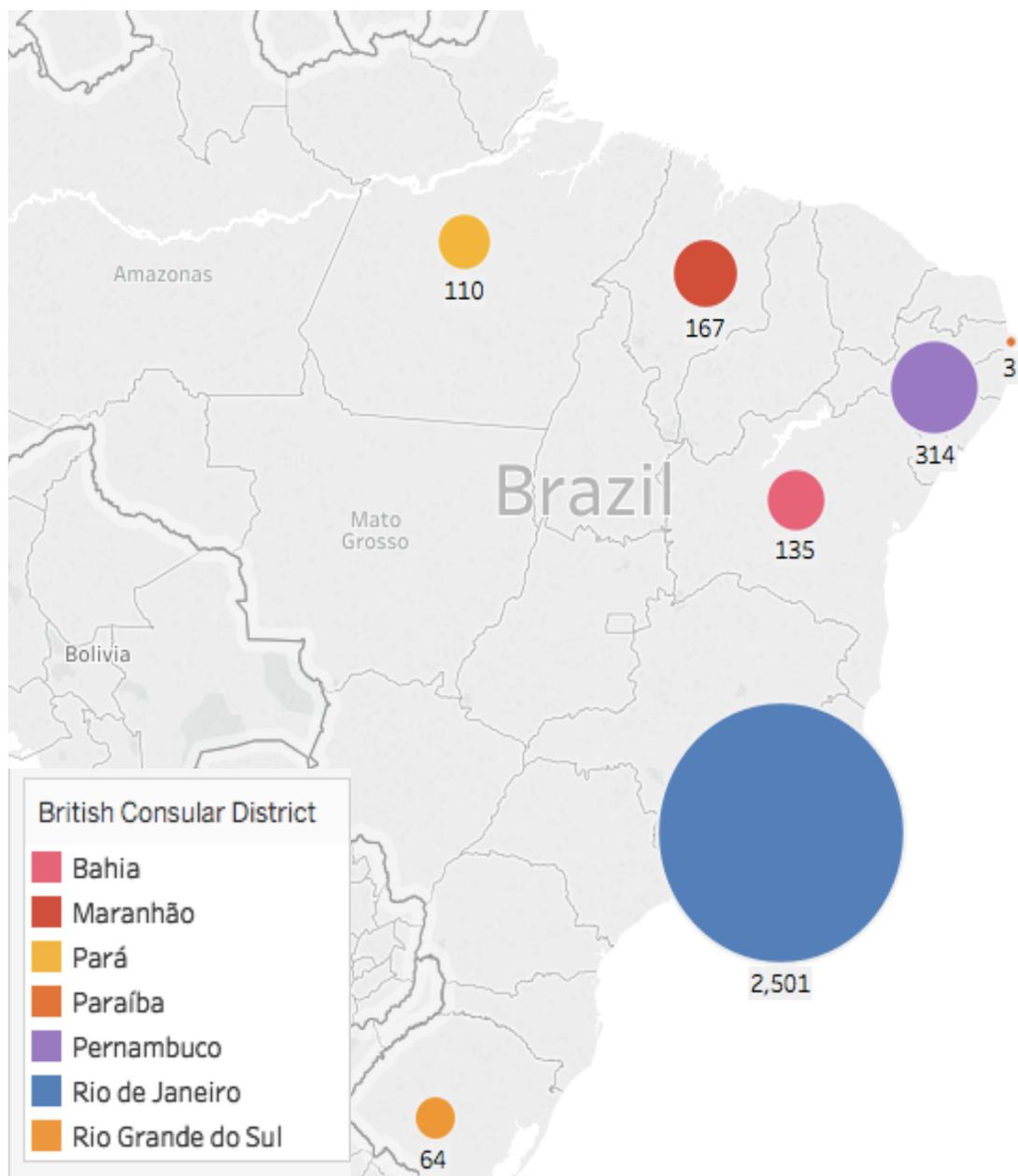
²⁰⁹ Discussed in a section in this chapter on urban slaveholding.

²¹⁰ Compiled using data from T. R. Botelho, 'População e espaço nacional no Brasil do século XIX,' *Cadernos de História* 7.8 (2005) p. 78.

iii.a Regional distribution of British slaveholding

Figure 3 shows the geographic distribution of British-held slaves in Brazil across the seven consular districts. Whilst this distribution does not correlate precisely with the data in table 1, it does show an overwhelming concentration of slaves employed by British masters in the Rio de Janeiro consular district. 2501 slaves, 76% of the nationwide total, resided in the three provinces of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Minas Gerais, as well as the *município neutro* (city of Rio de Janeiro). There are various factors which explain this high concentration. Significantly, this region, or the province of Minas Gerais specifically, was home to three British mining companies who employed 50% of all the slaves covered by the 1848 census. Nevertheless, even without the 1650 slaves of the St John Del Rey, Imperial Brazilian and National Brazilian companies, the Rio de Janeiro region still accounts for more than the combined total of the six other consular districts. One reason for this is straightforward; as Brazil's political and commercial capital, the city of Rio de Janeiro was home to Brazil's largest British community. Perhaps unsurprisingly the biggest community also accounted for the largest number of individual slaveholders. This is represented in Figure 4, a visualisation of all non-mining entries included in the consular returns. Each quadrant represents an individual slave-owner and the size of the quadrangle represents the number of slaves held by the individual concerned. The entries have then been grouped by colour to represent consular district. The graphic shows that not only did the Rio de Janeiro region contain the most slaves it also was home to more individual British slave owners than any other region.

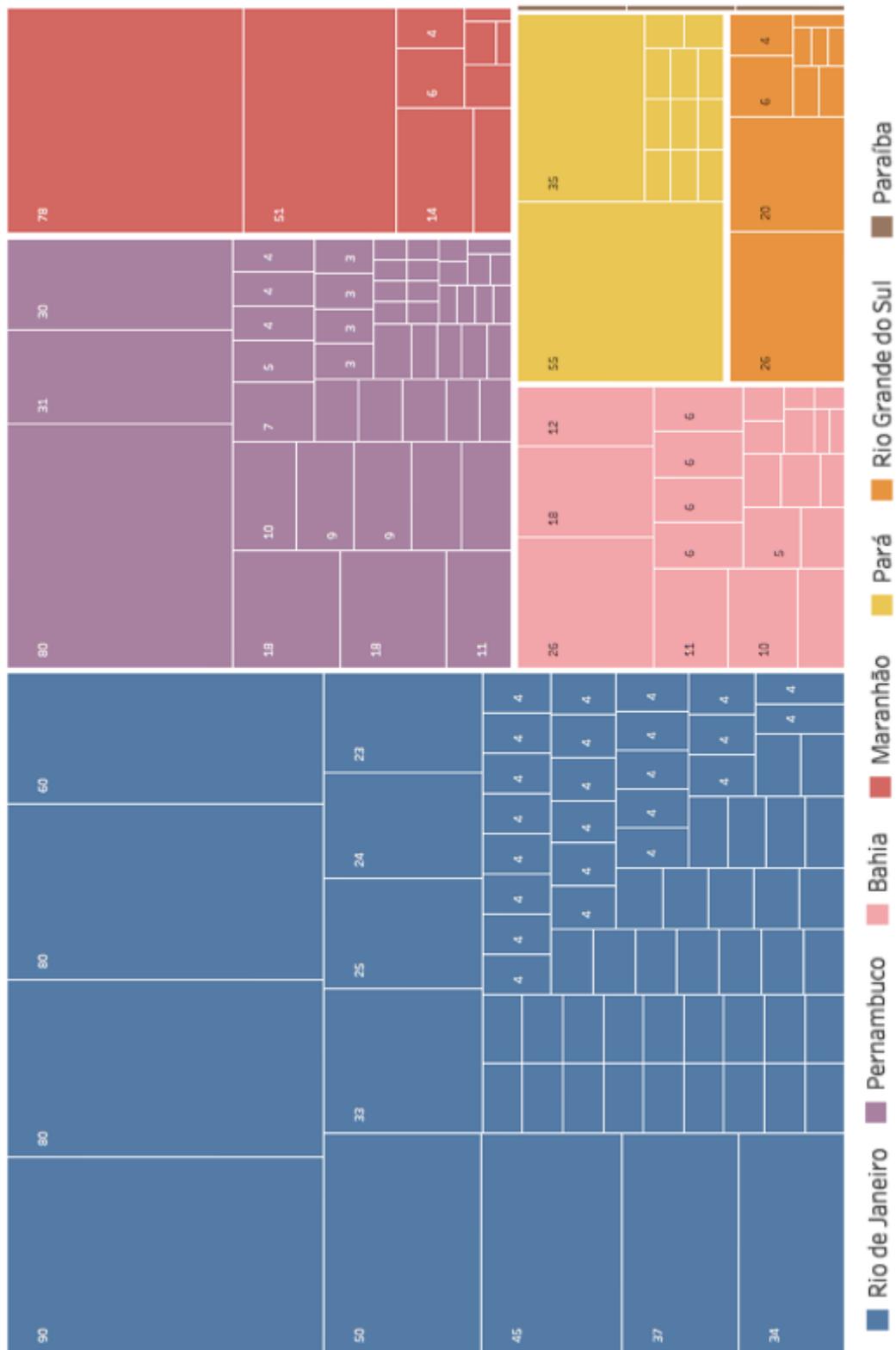
Figure 2.2: Geographic Distribution of British Slaveholding, 1848-1849.



While the aforementioned doubts over population sizes make it impossible to calculate a ratio of slaves to British residents, the data visualised in Figure 4 shows that the two largest communities, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco respectively, were home to the greatest number of individual slaveholders and slaves owned. However, this correlation does not appear across the rest of the consular districts. The figure for Maranhão, for example, is slightly larger than Bahia, despite the latter having a much larger British community. This case can be explained by the presence of large-scale slaveholders responsible for a high percentage of total slaves. In fact, across all consular districts, twenty-two medium and large-scale slaveholders, i.e. those possessing between 20 to 49 and 50 to 99 slaves respectively, held 62% of the total number of non-mining British-owned slaves with the remaining 38% split between 157 small- (5 to 19) and micro-scale (1 to 4) proprietors.²¹¹ While all regions aside from Paraíba were home to at least one British subject with 20 slaves or more, it is the concentration of medium and large-scale owners in Rio de Janeiro which accounts for the region's overrepresentation in the nationwide figures. The concentration of slaveholding within a small group of individuals is strongly related to the economic activities of these British subjects, with all but two of them involved in agricultural production. The reasons for this will be discussed in the following sections which analyse the sectoral distribution of British held slaves in agricultural and urban contexts.

²¹¹ The categorisation of Brazilian slaveowners by the number of slaves owned is proposed by Ricardo Salles in his study of Vassouras. See R. Salles, *E o Vale Era o Escravo: Vassouras, Século XIX. Senhores e Escravos no Coração do Império*. (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2008) pp. 155-171.

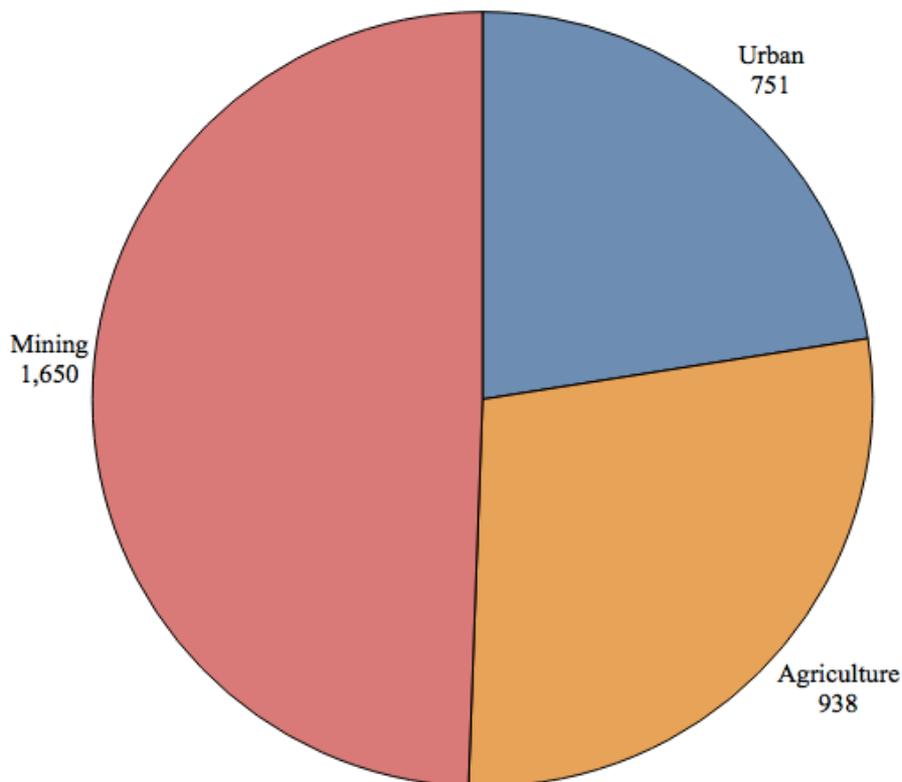
Figure 2.3: Non-mining slaveowners categorised by number of slaves and consular district.



iii.b Sectoral distribution of British slaveholding

As Figure 2.4 indicates, when considered together, the agricultural and urban sectors represent just over half of all British slaveholding recorded in the 1848 census, yet unlike the mining sector very little is known about them. Each following subsection will use the census data to survey the extent of slaveholding in each sector and, where the historical record permits, this analysis will be complemented with qualitative research into individual case studies.

Figure 2.4: Sectoral distribution of British Slaveholding



First though, it is important to make a number of points about the categorisation employed. To a large degree, the chosen categories were informed by the language used in the consular returns. In most cases entries were recorded using these exact terms or similar vocabulary, for example *predial* for agricultural. Though the returns referred to slaves employed in cities as ‘domestics’, these individuals have been placed in a broader ‘urban’ category to better reflect the varied roles many performed outside British households. In other instances, the relevant categories for individual slaveowners were determined by their respective professions, for example planter, farmer and so on. This method was used in cases such as Rio de Janeiro where the consul did not categorise by industry. The one case where no profession was listed, that of slaveowner Archibald Campbell in Pará, it was possible to determine the most suitable category by cross-referencing with other primary sources. Whilst categorising by the occupation of the slaveholder is the most appropriate alternative in cases where the returns do not itemise by slave profession, we will observe in the following sections that it does not adequately account for a considerable blurring between the agricultural and urban sectors.

iii.b.i Agriculture

According to the census, 938 slaves were employed by 25 British masters on agricultural establishments across Brazil. From the outset it should be stated that while a few of these establishments were of regional importance, overall British participation in Brazilian agriculture as a whole is negligible. Nevertheless, this section will argue that their existence at all is symbolic of the disconnect between British policy and the business interests of its subjects abroad. Prominent members

of the British merchant community and even a British vice-consul became part of the very same Brazilian planter class whose economic interests drove and whose socio-political influence defended the illegal slave trade in defiance of increasing British pressure.²¹² Circumstantial evidence suggests that at least some of the 900 slaves working on British-owned agricultural establishments were imported illegally under both Anglo-Brazilian treaty obligations and Brazilian law. As observed in Chapter I, while British diplomats and consuls implicated Brazilian planters, amongst others, in their investigations, the very same agents of British anti-slavery policy seemingly turned a blind eye towards similar involvement by their countrymen. Lastly, in addition to new perspectives on this facet of British anti-slavery, case studies of British-owned agricultural establishments in Brazil also offer new insights into the social implications of this overlooked aspect of British investment in Brazil.

This section adopts the use of ‘agricultural establishment’ as an umbrella term to reflect the wide variation in size and type of operation - from small semi-rural farms with a handful of slaves, to large specialised establishments supplying the domestic market and, lastly, to plantation complexes with up to 90 slaves producing typical cash crops, such as sugar and coffee, for export. Figure 6 shows that 10 of the 25 British subjects with agricultural interests were micro- and small-scale slaveowners, i.e. possessing 19 slaves or less. The occupations listed by consuls and biographical information found in other sources suggest that, in the majority of these cases, agricultural production was not necessarily the primary economic interest of this group of individuals. Though that may have been the case for smallholders George Blandy

²¹² Tâmis Parron has termed this alliance ‘the politics of slavery in Brazil.’ See T. Parron, *A política da escravidão no Império do Brasil, 1826-1865* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2011) Also, J. Needell, *The Party of Order: Conservatives, the State, and Slavery in the Brazilian Monarchy, 1831-1871* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

of Bahia and Richard R. Noble of Pernambuco, both listed as ‘planters,’ others had different professions. For example, Robert Landell of Rio Grande do Sul census was a doctor who led vaccination programmes in Porto Alegre, whereas William Wilson of Maranhão and Thomas Messiter of Rio Grande do Sul were merchants of long standing in their respective provinces.²¹³ In Bahia, Henry S. Marback was a listed by the consul as a ‘ship-chandler’ [sic] though subsequent research has shown his firm had diverse interests, including the illegal transatlantic slave trade.²¹⁴ The background of Richard Rogers, a British merchant in the small port of Paraíba, gives us an idea of the types of small agricultural establishments owned by the British residents elsewhere. In 1839, the American missionary, Daniel Kidder, visited Paraíba and stayed for a short time at the *sítio* of an Englishman he called ‘Mr. R.’ Kidder describes the estate as being ‘a farm in the city’ with a ‘large and airy house’ surrounded by an orchard, a yard of cows, a vegetable garden, fine springs and ‘many coffee trees.’²¹⁵ Although Kidder does not make reference to labour, it is very likely this estate on which Rogers employed the undefined number of slaves recorded by Consul Newcomen in 1848. Although this *sítio* has long disappeared, its legacy lives on in the leafy neighbourhood of Roger in the modern city of João Pessoa, Paraíba.

²¹³ On Dr. Landell see J.C. de Miranda Castro, *Relatório do vice-presidente da Província de São Pedro de Rio Grande do Sul* (Porto Alegre: Typ. Porto-Alegrense, 1848) Table 17; William Wilson was one third of the the firm Hesketh, Wilson & Co. See, *London Gazette*, 27 March 1827; According to Census Return – Rio Grande do Sul, Messiter had lived in Brazil for over 30 years by 1848.

²¹⁴ P. Verger, *Fluxo e refluxo do tráfico de escravos entre o Golfo do Benin e a Bahia de Todos os Santos, dos séculos XVII a XIX* (São Paulo: Editora Corrupio, 1987) pp. 453-355.

²¹⁵ D. Kidder, *Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil: Embracing Historical and Geographical Notices of the Empire and its Several Provinces, Volume II* (Philadelphia: Sorin & Ball, 1845) pp. 183-184

Kidder mentions that this type of an estate known in Paraíba as a *sítio* was known in Bahia as a *roça* and a *chácara* in Rio de Janeiro. Travel accounts of Rio de Janeiro in this period by the likes of Maria Graham and Charles Bunbury describe the *chácaras* of the suburban neighbourhoods of Laranjeiras, Catete and Botafogo, as well as the semi-rural districts of Engenho Novo and Tijuca, as being home to the city's elite including its British residents.²¹⁶ Kidder describes a *chácara* owned by an affluent Portuguese as resembling a 'miniature plantation' possessing 8 or 9 slaves.²¹⁷

The most well-known of these British country estates was probably that of Scotsman, Joseph Maxwell in Andaraí Grande, some 10km from the centre of the city. Maxwell had amassed a great fortune in trade between the United States and Brazil, and his firm, Maxwell, Wright & Co. were known to have maintained significant interests in the illegal slave trade.²¹⁸ Regular visitors to Maxwell's country estate included the young emperor, Dom Pedro II and the future Visconde do Rio Branco, who described the property as 'an immense plain, on which stands a superb building whose grandeur competes only with the steep mountains which surround it.'²¹⁹

²¹⁶ L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' p. 33.

²¹⁷ D. Kidder *Sketches of Residence and Travels in Brazil: Embracing Historical and Geographical Notices of the Empire and its Several Provinces, Volume 1* (Philadelphia: Sorin & Ball, 1845) p. 158.

²¹⁸ See A. dos Santos Ribeiro, 'A firma Maxwell Wright & Co. no comércio do império do Brasil (c. 1827- c. 1850)' (Unpublished MA Dissertation, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2014), in particular p. 88. Maxwell's entanglement in the slave-economy is also discussed in Chapter III of this thesis.

²¹⁹ B. Gerson, *História das Ruas do Rio de Janeiro*, 6th ed, (Rio de Janeiro: Bem-Te-Vi, 2015) p. 400. Translation by author.

Figure 2.5: British proprietors with slaves employed in agriculture



Interestingly, neighbouring properties to Maxwell were well-established plantations, such as *Fazenda do Macaco* which had been gifted to Duchess of Bragança after her marriage to Dom Pedro I.²²⁰ Another, the *Fazenda Morumbi*, had been purchased by Maxwell's English son-in-law, John Rudge in 1845.²²¹ While there is no evidence to suggest that Maxwell's estate was anything like the neighbouring plantations, in an interview with Gilberto Freyre in 1921, one of Maxwell's nieces described growing up on her uncle's property in a 'solid mansion' surrounded by a 'great number of slaves...of all types.'²²² Maxwell's slaveholding did not feature specifically in the census data; neither did that of other British merchants who owned *chácaras* in Rio de Janeiro. The residential nature of these estates, as well as the likely mixed professions of the slaves attached to them, meant that the less-than-meticulous Consul Westwood included them all in a non-itemised domestic entry.

The blurring of categories in the context of these country estates can best be observed in the case of Thomas Carroll of Pernambuco. He is listed in Consul Cowper's return as owning ten domestic slaves, yet his profession is given as 'gentleman farmer,' meaning that he farmed primarily for status, deriving his main income from other sources. In a report of British merchant houses in Pernambuco in 1842 John Carroll & Co. is listed as a 'victualers'.²²³ Newspaper reports of import manifests support the

²²⁰ L. Rose, *Vila Isabel de rua em rua*, (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Rio, 2005) p. 20.

²²¹ Joseph Maxwell had acted as proxy in the purchase of this estate from the Viscondessa d'Alcantra. See E.D. Cardoso, 'O Capital Imobiliário' pp. 92-93.

²²² G. Freyre, *Tempo de aprendiz: artigos publicados em jornais na adolescência e na primeira mocidade do autor, 1918-1926, Vol. I*, (Instituição Brasileira de Difusão Cultural, 1979) pp. 175-176.

²²³ Mr. H.A. Cowper to Lord Palmerston, 28 November 1848, TNA, FO 13/260.

view that as early as the late 1820s, Carroll's main source of income was derived from selling imported foodstuffs.²²⁴ The same list from 1848 includes this business in the name of his son, John Carroll Jr, which seems to suggest that Carroll was, by that point, concentrating his efforts on the management of his estate on the outskirts of the city.²²⁵ Carroll had owned the *sítio* at Manguinhos since the late 1820s, which in the mid-1830s was described as being about 4 acres in size and planted with lime, orange, and breadfruit trees as well as coconut palms and coffee bushes.²²⁶ Although for sale and runaway-slave newspaper adverts placed by Carroll in the 1840s indicate that he employed a variety of domestic slaves, another advert for an overseer (*feitor*) who understood the grafting of orange trees indicates that slave labour was also used on his estate.²²⁷

The example of John Carroll and his evolution from merchant to farmer is also indicative of the origins of many of the British owners of agricultural establishments with 20 slaves or more. In the Rio de Janeiro consular district William Platt, George March, Robert Coates, and William Whitaker were all merchants or had been in the past.²²⁸ The same is true for Archibald Campbell in Pará and Wellstood & Co. in

²²⁴ *Diário de Pernambuco*, 1830-1850.

²²⁵ Mr. Cowper to Viscount Palmerston, 28 November 1848, TNA, FO 13/260.

²²⁶ *Diario de Pernambuco*, 10 February 1835; *Diario de Pernambuco*, 23 February 1835.

²²⁷ Advert for the sale of two slaves, a laundress and a shoemaker, *Diario de Pernambuco* 2 August 1843. Notice that Manoel Caçange, a butcher, has runaway, *Diario de Pernambuco*, 12 September 1844 For overseer advert see *Diario de Pernambuco* 2 June 1846.

²²⁸ Platt and March are both feature separately in a list of English merchants in Rio de Janeiro in 1816, see 'Almanaque do Rio de Janeiro de 1816', *Revista do IHGB* 268 (1965) pp. 272-275. Coates (as part of the firm Coates Mackay & Co. is listed in a similar directory for 1827, see *Almanak do Rio de Janeiro do Anno 1827*, (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Imperial e Nacional, 1827) p. 169.

Maranhão.²²⁹ Of the others from whom we have reliable biographical information, at least two were medical doctors, Dr. George Reid and Dr. McCormack in Rio de Janeiro, whereas another two, Charles de Mornay of Pernambuco and Robert Falconer of Bahia, were engineers.²³⁰ The following section will attempt to explain how and why this group of merchants and professionals left the hubs of British activity in Brazil's port cities to establish agricultural establishments with large numbers of slaves in the interior. Where the sources permit, individual case studies will be analysed to show why the economic activity of this group exposed the inconsistencies in British anti-slavery policy as it was administered 'on the ground.'

While Guenther noted the limited nature of intermarriage in the British community in Bahia, within this small group of large-scale agricultural slave-owners unions with Brazilian women were common.²³¹ In some cases, it is not clear whether the marriage had anything to do with their status as slave-holders. For example, it is not clear whether William Platt's marriage to Luiza Eugênia de Carvalho was linked in any way to his coffee plantation and 90 slaves in Ilha Grande, which by the time of the census was in the hands of his heirs. In a similar vein, it is unclear whether William

²²⁹ On the commercial activity of Archibald and James Campbell, see H.L. Maw, *Journal of a Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic: Crossing the Andes in the Northern Provinces of Peru, and Descending the River Marañon Or Amazon* (London: John Murray, 1829) p. 380; the merchant firm Wellstood & Co arrived in Maranhão as Wellstood & Bingham around the year 1812, see *J. de Viveiros, História do Comércio do Maranhão: 1612-1895* (São Luís: Associação Comercial do Maranhão, 1954) p. 122.

²³⁰ 'Dr. George Reid, Deceased' *London Gazette*, 22 November 1870 p. 5195. McCormack is listed as a doctor resident on Ilha Grande in 1847, see *Almanak Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial do Rio de Janeiro para o Anno 1847* (Rio de Janeiro: Laemmert, 1847) p. 68. On Charles de Mornay's long career in the northeast of Brazil, see F.R.A. de Barros, *ABC das Alagoas: dicionário biobibliográfico, histórico e geográfico de Alagoas* (Brasília: Senado Federal, 2005) p. 304. On Falconer, see *O Crepúsculo*, 10 December 1845 p. 144.

²³¹ The author does note that intermarriage may have occurred more frequently than shown in the sources she consulted. See, L. Guenther, *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* p. 68-69

Whitaker's marriage to Angela da Costa Aguiar had any effect on his ownership of a sugar plantation and between 35 and 40 slaves in São Paulo. However, the subsequent marriages of their Brazilian-born offspring into rich landholding families, such as the Vergueiro and Souza Queiroz clans, resulted in the Whitakers and Platts holding important political positions in West of São Paulo from the 1860s onwards.²³² Jeffrey Needell has noted the importance of marriage as a strategy for social ascension in Imperial Brazil, commenting that unions between the planter class and merchants were the most enduring method to join wealth with socio-political power. Planters married their daughters to merchants or merchants' sons in order to acquire capital for investment and influence in the ports through which their produce passed. Similarly, merchants married into planter families in order to 'integrate into the established, protected, and prestigious landholding class.'²³³

In other cases, there is more explicit evidence that marriages into powerful, landholding families had a direct impact on the status of British residents as slaveholders. Archibald Campbell had been a merchant in Pará since as early as 1828 and according to the explorer Henry Lister Maw, he and his brother James ran one of the most important commercial houses in the port of Belém.²³⁴ At some point between the visits of Maw in 1828 and 1845, Campbell had married Mariana Leocádia da Silva Pombo, the sister of the Barão de Jaguarari. The Silva Pombo family were extensive

²³² Guilherme Platt married Maria Izabel Vergueiro Bonamy. He settled in Rio Claro where he became a town councillor (*vereador*). See *Almanak de S. João de Rio Claro para 1873*, facsimile, (São Paulo: Convênio IMESP/DAESP, 1981) p. 6. On the exploits of various generations of the Aguiar Whitaker family, see E. A Whitaker, *A Família Aguiar Whitaker* (São Paulo: Ed. do Autor, 1950).

²³³ J. Needell, *The Party of Order* p. 24.

²³⁴ H.L. Maw, *Journal of a Passage* p. 380.

landholders in Pará and by the visit of amateur naturalists George and Emma Smith to Pará in 1845, Campbell had taken possession of Ilha Mexiana, a 1500km² island in the mouth of the river Amazon. Smith notes that Campbell also owned another property called *Cajueiro* on the opposite island of Marajó.²³⁵ In 1847, the British consul confirmed Campbell also owned a pottery and 80 slaves on yet another estate to the south of Belem called *Fazenda Tautau*. Consul Vines credited the ownership of this property to Campbell's marriage to a 'rich Brazilian,' daughter of a 'large slave-owner.'²³⁶

A survey of local newspaper reports indicates that the three properties were owned by the firm Campbell & Pombo, an association between Campbell and his brother-in-law, João Florencio Henriques da Silva Pombo.²³⁷ The firm had business interests in cattle ranching as described by Emma Smith who, on a visit to Mexiana in 1845, witnessed cattle running wild on the island being caught by 'blacks with a lasso.'²³⁸ Interestingly during the retreat of the British community from Pará during the Cabanagem Rebellion in 1835, Archibald Campbell was accompanied only by one male slave named Belchior.²³⁹ Under a decade later, Campbell was part-owner of various extensive rural

²³⁵ Emma Juliana Smith to Sophie Smith, Pará, 27th January 1845, Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843–1845, Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University (hereafter RBMSCD).

²³⁶ See I. Sargen, *Our Men in Brazil* pp. 152-153.

²³⁷ The firm as owners of Ilha Mexianna, see *Treze de Maio* 16 May 1854; the firm as owners of *Fazenda Cajueiro*, see *Treze de Maio*, 13 May 1854; the firm as owners of *Fazenda Tautau*, see *Treze de Maio* 24 October 1854. The firm also owned a warehouse and butchers in the city, see *Treze de Maio* 22 July 1854.

²³⁸ Emma Juliana Smith to Sophie Smith, Pará, 27th January 1845, Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843–1845, RBMSCD.

²³⁹ Letter Book VC John Hesketh, Pará, 1835-1836, BN, Manuscritos, MSS 10-04-009, f. 130. The escape of the British community from Pará is discussed in Chapter I.

estates and, in 1848, his slave-holding was estimated at between 50 and 60. Whilst the exact arrangement of Campbell's marriage into the Silva Pombo family remains a mystery, there is no doubt that this union resulted in his further integration in the regional slave-economy.

Other cases of marriage resulting in slave-ownership are even more clear-cut. The British consuls in Rio Grande do Sul, Pernambuco and Maranhão each made references to British subjects in their districts who had married Brazilian wives and became slave-owners. While Consul Morgan in Rio Grande do Sul did not record any further information about Benjamin Aveline's and William Barker's slave-holding as they were considered only part-owners, his counterparts in Pernambuco and Maranhão did so with annotations of the specific circumstances. In Maranhão, Consul Corbett noted that the 51 slaves associated with the entry of Augustus Garcia were 'in right of his wife.' The same observation was made for the 14 slaves listed in William Wilson's entry.²⁴⁰ In the case of Pernambuco, consul Cowper noted that two British residents had made returns for 'slaves [as] belonging to their wives, having been received as marriage dowry.'²⁴¹ In the early 1840s British engineer and railway surveyor Charles de Mornay married Isabel Carolina de Carvalho, whose dowry included her family's sugar plantation (*engenho*) in the province of Alagoas as well as the 80 slaves attached to it. Whilst the property legally remained his wife's, in the context of Brazil's patriarchal society, de Mornay was its *de facto* owner - a reality reflected by his listing

²⁴⁰ Census Return - Maranhão

²⁴¹ Census Return – Pernambuco.

in the 1883 Almanack of Alagoas as the *Senhor de Engenho* (owner) of the *Jenipapo* sugar plantation.²⁴²

The case of the only female agricultural slaveholder named in the census also appears to be the result of a marriage. According to the acting-consul Westwood, Mrs. Moke was the owner of 80 slaves on a coffee plantation in Tijuca. Martha Moke (né Matherson) was the English wife of Dutchman Charles Alexander von Moke, who is often credited as being one of the pioneers of coffee production in Brazil.²⁴³ Though the early success of the *Nassau* plantation is attributed to her husband, there are a number of factors which indicate Mrs. Moke's involvement went beyond a passive role. Firstly, as well as being listed in the census by Westwood, she is also specifically named in a subsection entitled 'An English lady's plantation' by George Pilkington in a letter to the *ASR* in September 1841.²⁴⁴ Pilkington also re-published an advert which Mrs. Moke had placed in a newspaper for a runaway slave and there are further examples of adverts instructing caught slaves to be returned to her specifically.²⁴⁵ One such advert from as far back as 1833 states that a 40 year-old slave, Lucas Congo, had escaped from Mrs. Moke's Fazenda ('*a fazenda da Sra. Moke.*')²⁴⁶ Given that her

²⁴² *Almanak Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial do Império do Brazil para 1883, vol. 3* (Rio de Janeiro, H. Laemmert, 1883) p. 94.

²⁴³ G. Ferrez, *Pioneiros da cultura do café na era da independência*, (Rio de Janeiro: IHGB, 1972) pp. 60-61.

²⁴⁴ *ASR*, 2.18 (Sept. 1841) pp.185-186.

²⁴⁵ *Jornal do Commercio* 12 February 1840; *Jornal do Commercio* 22 July 1842.

²⁴⁶ *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 13 August 1833.

husband lived until 1852, these factors indicate that Mrs. Moke had some level of private financial involvement in the *Nassau* plantation and the slaves attached to it.²⁴⁷

Although all of the aforementioned marriages seem to have taken place before the enactment of the Slave Trade Act in November 1843, even if they had not, slave-ownership in this form was perfectly legal. Clause VI of the legislation is very clear that slave-ownership through marriage was exempt from the global ban on British subjects dealing in slaves.²⁴⁸ Another exemption contained in the legislation was the inheriting of slaves. The ‘heirs of Mr. Patt (sic)’ and the ‘heirs of Dr. McCormack’ are explicit examples of slaveholding by inheritance but there are other cases where British subjects were bequeathed agricultural establishments and slave property. A well-known example of this is Lewis William Lecesne, who had inherited the *St. Louis* coffee plantation from his French father via his Anglo-American mother in 1824.²⁴⁹ Like the neighbouring *Nassau* estate owned by the Moke’s, the Lecesne plantation had been a pioneering site in the first wave of coffee production in Brazil. Rafael Marquese notes how the coffee plantations in the Tijuca hills had been strongly influenced by knowledge and production techniques which reached Brazil from Saint-Domingue, via Cuba, in the decades following the arrival of the Portuguese court in

²⁴⁷ The exact date of Charles Alexander von Moke’s death is not certain, but there was an auction announced for the sale of the deceased’s personal effects in December 1852. See *Diario do Rio de Janeiro* 3 December 1852.

²⁴⁸ see Office of Public Sector Information, ‘Slave Trade Act 1843’, The UK Statute Law Database, <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Vict/6-7/98> [accessed 16 July 2016]

²⁴⁹ *Hobkirk, LeCesne, Selby story: written in 1881 by Frances Mary Hobkirk, 1881 in Tasmania, and addressed to her daughter, Louisa Hobkirk Fooks* (n.d.) <http://www.hobkirk.org/hobkirk/HobkirkPhotos/Hobkirk.JF.westminster/HobkirkFrancesMaryLecesne1881.letter.re.typed.doc> [accessed 4 August 2018] This document clarifies that Lewis William and his sister became guardians of the British Minister in Rio upon the death of their parents.

Rio in 1808.²⁵⁰ Louis William's father, François Lecesne was the physical embodiment of this knowledge transfer. Following revolution in Saint-Domingue, Lecesne had fled to Cuba where he applied his expertise and remaining fortune in coffee plantations but upon Napoleon's invasion of Spain, he was again forced to move on. After a period of time spent in France, Britain and the U.S., Lecesne found his way to Rio de Janeiro, where in 1816 he established a plantation of 60,000 coffee bushes using techniques developed by Pierre-Joseph Laborie in Saint-Domingue.²⁵¹ Although the dynamic centre of Brazilian coffee production had long since moved to the Paraíba Valley, in 1848 Louis William Lecesne was still recorded in the census as owning 35 slaves.

The afterlife of the Lecesne plantation is a useful example of how the legality of the transferal of slave property through family relations could be used to allow British subjects to bypass British legislation long after 1843. In 1853, Lecesne sold the *St. Louis* estate to fellow British subject Henry Greenwood who just two years later sold the property to the Scottish homeopathic doctor and railway entrepreneur, Thomas Cochrane.²⁵² Using some of the compensation money he had received from the government from his failed efforts to organise Brazil's first railway, Cochrane purchased Lecesne's former plantation in 1855. Whilst we do not have all the details of that transaction, Aroldo de Azevedo informs us that, crucially, the purchase was made in the name of his wife.²⁵³ It is likely that part of the initial purchase included

²⁵⁰ R. Marquese, 'Luso-Brazilian Enlightenment and the circulation of Caribbean slavery-related knowledge: the establishment of the Brazilian coffee culture from a comparative perspective', *História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos*, 16.4 (2009), pp. 870-871.

²⁵¹ *Ibid* p. 870.

²⁵² G. Ferrez, *Pioneiros da cultura do café* p. 62.

²⁵³ A. de Azevedo, *Os Cochranes do Brasil* (São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1965) p. 83.

slave property, as upon the deaths of the couple in 1873, 10 of their 21 field slaves were attached to the estate.²⁵⁴ Moreover, upon the *partilha* (division of assets), it became clear that all of the slaves, and indeed most of their property, were registered in the name of his wife.²⁵⁵ The circumstantial evidence of this case points to a strategy which allowed British subjects to stay on the right side of the 1843 Act whilst still exploiting slave labour. It is also possible that this strategy could provide a partial explanation for the distinct lack of a recognisable British presence in the records of slave sale records, observed by Guenther in Bahia and by my own research in notary records in Rio de Janeiro.²⁵⁶

De Azevedo reasons that Thomas Cochrane's decision to invest some of his compensation money in the old Lesence estate was in order to 'secure the future of his family.'²⁵⁷ Though Cochrane's slaveholding is not captured in the 1848 census, his decision to invest in land and slaves is representative of other British slave-owners for whom agricultural production was one of a range of possible investment opportunities for surplus capital they had accumulated in the import-export trade or elsewhere. While others invested into areas such as the slave trade, mining, public works, banking or simply remitted any surplus wealth back home, a handful of other British merchants viewed their direct participation in agricultural production as a viable and worthwhile investment opportunity. It seems that the majority of these cases involved British merchants who had been established in Brazil for a significant period and had made

²⁵⁴ *Ibid* p. 85.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid* p. 102.

²⁵⁶ L. Guenther, *British Merchants in nineteenth-century Brazil*, p. 54.

²⁵⁷ A. de Azevedo, *Os Cochranes do Brasil*, p. 83.

their fortune exploiting the very favourable commercial terms secured for British trade enshrined in the treaties of 1808 and 1827 (expired 1842). One firm, Wellstood & Co. arrived in Maranhão no later than 1812 under the name of Wellstood & Bingham and by 1821 were owners of a sugar plantation called *Camacaóca* from whence the slaves Manuel Jorge, Bonifácio and Luís had escaped in November of that year.²⁵⁸ The plantation may have even been in British hands before this date as its establishment is attributed in later documents to a Royal Navy officer called Henry Heatherly.²⁵⁹ Though very little information concerning the British-owned *Camacaóca* estate remains, it was certainly of some regional importance as the first plantation with a steam-powered mill in the whole of the province.²⁶⁰ It appears that Wellstood & Bingham managed the plantation alongside their merchant house, through which they sold the produce of their estate.²⁶¹ The census entry for this plantation with 78 slaves suggests that by 1848 the firm now known as Wellstood & Co. had come into difficulty and the *Camacaóca* estate had been foreclosed on by an unknown creditor.

Though Patrick Lennon does not feature in the census data, Charles Darwin's brief account of his encounter with this merchant-cum-plantation-owner is particularly illustrative of mercantile investment in agriculture. On a visit to Macaé in April 1832, the renowned naturalist encountered this 'regular Irishman' who had resided in Brazil over 20 years. Darwin recounts that Lennon had made a large fortune by selling

²⁵⁸ J. de Viveiros, *História do Comércio do Maranhão*, p.122 and *O Conciliador*, 23 February 1822 cited in J. de Viveiros, *História do Comércio do Maranhão*, p. 366.

²⁵⁹ C.A Marques, *Diccionario historico-geographico da provincia do Maranhão* (Maranhão: Typ. do Farias, 1870) p. 131.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid* p.131.

²⁶¹ Wellstood & Bingham advertised the sale of sugar and rum in local papers. See *Farol Maranhense*, 5 August 1828.

‘spectacles, Thermometers &c &c’ and in around 1824 had ‘purchased a tract of forest country on the Macae (sic) & put an English agent over it.’²⁶² Lennon’s estate was two and a half miles long and was worked by an undetermined number of slaves under the stewardship of a Mr Cowper.²⁶³ It is not clear whether Lennon maintained his absentee ownership of the plantation until his death in 1846, but this case is useful to indicate the limitations of the census data in capturing the possible fluctuating extent of British plantation ownership in Brazil.²⁶⁴ The census does show that in 1848 there were at least two other British owned coffee plantations in the Macaé region - Robert Lawrie’s with around 80 slaves and Dr. George Reid’s with 60. Darwin makes mention of the former, stating that Lawrie had married ‘a handsome Brazilian lady, daughter of a large landed proprietor’ and that his father-in-law owned a plantation at Socêgo (sic), only a day’s ride from Lennon’s estate.²⁶⁵ As we shall see in the following section, this small cluster of British plantation ownership in Rio de Janeiro was not unique to Macaé.

George March and other British pioneers in the Serra dos Orgãos

George March’s ownership of a large agricultural establishment in the Serra dos Orgãos mountains exhibits similar characteristics to the investment made by Lennon in Brazil’s agricultural economy. Significantly though, the contemporary importance of March’s establishment as a centre of specialised production, an area of interest for

²⁶² R.D. Keynes (ed.), *Charles Darwin's Beagle diary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988) p. 52.

²⁶³ *Ibid* p. 58. It is not clear whether this Mr. Cowper was any relation to the future British consul in Pernambuco

²⁶⁴ The exact date of Lennon’s death is unknown, but the public sale of part of the deceased property on 21 October 1846 suggests he died around that time. See *Jornal do Commercio*, 19 October 1846.

²⁶⁵ R.D. Keynes, (ed.), *Charles Darwin's Beagle diary* p. 52. and pp. 56-57.

foreign naturalists and a summer vacation destination of the British community in Rio means that it is the establishment which left the greatest imprint in the historical record. Notably, the record of interactions of British officials with this large-scale slave-owner allow a unique insight into the relationship between the enforcers of British anti-slavery policy in Brazil and their fellow countrymen who had invested significant sums into slave property, at least a part of which had been imported illegally under the Anglo-Brazilian Treaty of 1826 and/or the Brazilian law of 1831.

Before analysing these interactions and what they say about the ambivalence inherent in British anti-slavery policy in Brazil, it is important to consider the origins of what was at a time one of the most important and certainly the best known British investment in Brazilian agriculture. The 1848 census entry for George March, a farm owner with 34 slaves belies the grand scale of the *Fazenda do March* up until just a few years prior to the commissioning of the census. The ‘Mr. George March’ listed by acting-consul Westwood was in fact the son of the founder of the vast agricultural establishment which covered much of what is now the modern city of Teresópolis. Like Patrick Lennon, George March senior, a British subject who had been born and educated in Lisbon, had arrived shortly after the opening of Brazil’s ports to foreign trade. In partnership with his brother Thomas, March established an import firm which dealt in a diverse variety of British manufacturers and other products such as steel, iron, wheat and coal.²⁶⁶ Although the firm March & Irmãos continued operations until at least 1838, George March had already begun his search for investment opportunities elsewhere. While his attempt to establish a mining company in the 1820s would

²⁶⁶ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis*. Many of the travel accounts to follow were consulted following a reading of Ferrez’s study.

ultimately end in failure, his earlier investment in agriculture would be a lot more successful.²⁶⁷

In 1818, March leased four *sesmarias*, an area of around 70 square kilometres which contained virgin forest, pastures, rivers and waterfalls.²⁶⁸ Over the following years visitors, mainly foreigners, described the establishment March had created in the mountains. Their accounts would be of a different type of establishment to other British plantation owners in Rio de Janeiro who produced coffee for export, as March focused his efforts almost entirely on production for the domestic market. On a visit in 1828, Irish clergyman Richard Walsh described an estate measuring 16 miles in length and five or six miles wide, a great deal of which had been cleared of virgin forest and replaced by pasture for horses, mules, cattle, sheep and pigs, as well as plantations of indian corn.²⁶⁹ The English botanist George Gardner visited March's establishment in 1836 and in addition to the pastures for livestock, described smaller farms for French beans and potatoes and orchards and gardens which produced all manner of European fruits and vegetables in large quantities. These items were highly valued by Rio's foreign population and were sent weekly to the city for sale.²⁷⁰ Aside from a wide range of produce and livestock for the domestic market, March also

²⁶⁷ For documents relating to the failed mining company, see 'Requerimento a S.M.I. solicitando licença para formar uma companhia de mineração com capitais ingleses', 1828-1829, BN, Manuscritos, C-0640,014; 'Carta a José Clemente Pereira sobre a exploração de minerais e metais nas províncias de Mato Grosso, Goiás e Minas Gerais', 1829, BN, Manuscritos, I-47,26,003.

²⁶⁸ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 35.

²⁶⁹ R. Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, vol. II (London: Frederick Westley and A.H. Davis, 1830) pp. 372-374.

²⁷⁰ G. Gardner, *Travels in the interior of Brazil, principally through the northern provinces, and the gold and diamond districts, during the years 1836-1841* (London: Reeve, Benham & Reeve, 1849) p. 35. See also similar information contained in an interview with George March's son, Guilherme Taylor March, in *Jornal do Commercio* 19 September 1908.

unsuccessfully attempted to grow coffee on his estate. In partnership with his estate manager, Richard Heath, March purchased the neighbouring *Constância* plantation from the Swiss Johann de Luze in August 1838.²⁷¹ According to Gardner, the Swiss had encountered difficulties in producing a mature crop and had sold his plantation in order to reinvest in more promising lands in the Paraíba Valley. Gardner attributed this difficulty to the altitude of the plantation and noted that March also faced similar issues, stating that although the coffee bushes grew well, the fruit never ripened properly.²⁷² An anonymous watercolour discovered by the historian Gilberto Ferrez also suggests that March had a tea plantation on his grounds.²⁷³

The British community not only valued March's *fazenda* because of the home comforts it produced, but also because of its cooler location in the mountains. The farm regularly received British residents in Rio seeking to escape the hot and humid summer months in the city. Using the unpublished diaries of British merchant Edward Winnie Fry, Ferrez notes that as early as 1826, March had built small residences for his compatriots. Fry noted the presence of prominent Rio merchants such as William Harrison, Joseph Tully, and Robert Nielson Tennent, amongst others.²⁷⁴ Still others such as the 'debilitated Mr. Anderson,' as described by the U.S. Naval Doctor Gustavus Horner in 1842, came to the estate hoping the 'purity of the airs' would cure them of their ailments.²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 89.

²⁷² G. Gardner, *Travels in the interior of Brazil* p. 45 and G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 89.

²⁷³ 'Estampa 9' anonymous from the album *The Brazils*, 'Mr. March's house from beyond the tea plantation.' in G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 36.

²⁷⁴ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* pp. 54-60.

²⁷⁵ G.R.B. Horner, *Medical Topography of Brazil and Uruguay* (Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1845) p. 225.

In addition to the Serra dos Órgãos' summer visitors, some British subjects were more permanent fixtures in the region. In close proximity to March's property were other British slaveowners with agricultural establishments - some of whom feature in the census and some who do not. Richard Heath bought out George March's share in the *Constância* plantation in October 1844 and by the time of the census in 1848 he was the owner of 25 slaves. His census entry, as well as other travel accounts from the period, indicate that he had given up on coffee growing by this point and had instead modelled the estate on March's property, with fruit and vegetable gardens and outhouses for guests.²⁷⁶ Another plantation in the region was owned by the brothers Constantine and Albert Fischer. The property called *Soledade* features in the census under Constantine's name, who was the owner of 45 slaves according to acting-consul Westwood. The Fischer brothers were Swiss by birth, but as they received a pension from the British government, following service as officers in the British army, they were considered British subjects.²⁷⁷ Indeed, on a visit to the area in 1856, British reverend Hamlet Clark referred to Albert 'Fisher' as an Englishman and following his death, Clark read the 'English Burial Service' at the funeral.²⁷⁸ Westwood describes the nature of their business as 'farming', but travel accounts suggest that he may have been mistaken. Hamlet Clark and Daniel Kidder both visited *Soledade* and describe

²⁷⁶ The nature of Heath's business is described as 'farming' by Westwood. See Census Return – Rio de Janeiro. See also G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 90.

²⁷⁷ For an account of the Fischers' service in the Watteville regiment in Canada during the War of 1812, see A. D'Andrea, 'Fischer e Outros Pioneiros de Teresópolis', *Revista Amnesia*, 29 (2014) pp. 7-14.

²⁷⁸ H. Clark, *Letters Home from Spain, Algeria, and Brazil, During Past Entomological Rambles* (London: John Van Voorst, 1867) p. 130.

the property as a coffee plantation.²⁷⁹ The case of Vice-Admiral John Taylor, owner of the *Piedade* coffee plantation, was the opposite of that of the Fischer brothers. Though he was born in Great Britain and served in the Royal Navy, his decision to serve in the Brazilian Navy seems to have been the reason why acting-consul Westwood did not include him in the census return. Taylor's service in the War of Independence alongside Thomas Cochrane earned him great favour in Brazil and was rewarded by a *sesmaria* of land to the south of March's property. On his death in 1855, Taylor's plantation had 120,000 coffee bushes (including 40,000 immature bushes) and 40 slaves.²⁸⁰

Of all the British slaveholders in the Serra dos Órgãos region, no individual held more people in bondage than George March. Although his heir would feature in the 1848 census with a still considerable 34 slaves, the extent George March's slave-ownership before his death in 1845 was significantly greater. Throughout the decades, visitors to the *Fazenda do March* made estimates as to the number of slaves on the property. All give numbers of 100 or more - Walsh estimated 100 on his visit in 1828²⁸¹, Moore thought as high as 170 in 1831,²⁸² in 1836 Gardner estimated 100,²⁸³ and in 1841 March's nephew gave a figure of 130.²⁸⁴ As noted in Chapter I, the presence of such a large number of British-held slaves was no secret to the British authorities in Rio de

²⁷⁹ *Ibid* p.128 and D. Kidder and J. Fletcher, *Brazil and the Brazilians* p. 287.

²⁸⁰ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 50.

²⁸¹ R. Walsh, *Notices of Brazil* p. 372.

²⁸² J.W. Moore, *The Revolution of 1831* p. 19.

²⁸³ G. Gardner, *Travels in the interior of Brazil* p. 36.

²⁸⁴ G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 72.

Janeiro. George March, and later Richard Heath, would have been well known to the British community in Rio due to the popularity of their properties as summer resorts. In the year the census was commissioned, 1848, British Minister Lord Howden spent time at Richard Heath's property in the company of the Captain of the HMS Comus.²⁸⁵

The presence of large numbers of slaves on the metaphorical doorstep of Britain's anti-slavery operations in Brazil is not necessarily an accusation that George March, or indeed other British plantation owners in Brazil, had broken any British laws. After all, emancipation in the British Empire had not been fully resolved until 1838 and British slave ownership abroad would only be regulated in 1843. Nevertheless, it is likely that British plantation owners were purchasing illegally imported Africans, as defined by international treaties and Brazilian Law of 1826 and 1831 respectively. George Pilkington made this accusation about an unnamed British planter in letters he sent to the BFASS in 1841, stating that:

the proprietor of one of these [English plantations] is on such good terms with the slavers, that they occasionally land their cargo of human beings on his estate, which being on the seaside, offers a convenient receptacle for them.²⁸⁶

The coastal location of this particular plantation owner makes it clear that Pilkington was more than likely accusing one of the British planters in either Ilha Grande (McCormack, Platt), Macaé (Lawrie, Reid) or Itaguaí (Coates) - all locations which received clandestine slave importations after 1831.²⁸⁷ Although Pilkington did not

²⁸⁵ R. Elwes, *A Sketcher's Tour Around the World* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1854) p. 34.

²⁸⁶ *ASR*, 2.18 (Sept. 1841) pp. 185-186.

²⁸⁷ A 'list of slave merchants residing at Rio de Janeiro' submitted by Robert Hesketh to the 1850 Select Committee contains a number of individuals in provincial ports such as Macaé, Ilha Grande and Mangaratiba (near Itaguaí). See Mr. Hesketh to Viscount Palmerston, 14 March 1850, encl. 3, Select Committee of House of Lords to consider best Means for Final Extinction of African Slave Trade, Report, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, Index, *P.P.* 53 (1850) p. 239.

implicate March in this sort of activity, we observed in Chapter I that March owned a number of young African slaves who were probably imported into Brazil illegally.

George March's journey to slaveholding is representative of the majority of the 25 British owners of agricultural establishments identified in the census. Unlike foreign colonies close to the British Caribbean, such as Cuba, Suriname and the Danish West Indies, there is no evidence of a migration of colonial slaveholders to Brazil following British emancipation in 1833.²⁸⁸ Instead, these slaveholders initially arrived in Brazil for other purposes, mostly as merchants but also as professionals such as doctors and engineers. We have seen how some of this group, merchant-cum-planters such as William Platt and Henry S. Marback, were allegedly involved in the illegal slave trade as well. For most of these individuals, agriculture, particularly coffee and sugar production, represented an investment opportunity for the excess capital they had acquired in trade or the exercise of their profession. Some, such as March, then made these investments their primary source of income, whilst others such as Thomas Carroll maintained smaller properties whilst continuing their main line of business. For others, slaveholding was a by-product of their social relationships. Some, such as Archibald Campbell, expanded their slaveholding significantly following marriages into the families of local elites, while William Lescene inherited his plantation and slaves from his French father.

The collective slaveholding of these British investors in the rural economy represented a tiny proportion of the total number of enslaved people working on plantations and

²⁸⁸ On British slaveholding in Suriname and St. Croix see J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' pp. 156-173. On the migration of British slaveowners in Cuba in the post emancipation era see D. Eltis, 'The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade' p. 213.

other types of agricultural establishments across Brazil. Indeed, the 25 individuals recorded in the census data were a small, though prominent, minority within the wider British population living in Brazil. Nevertheless, it is easy to imagine why this group in particular would have been a source of the type of embarrassment Palmerston had described when foreign governments brought his attention to British slaveholding abroad. A handful of these British subjects were owners of the large coffee, and to a lesser extent, sugar plantations which drove the demand for the illegal slave trade throughout the 1830s and 1840s. Rather than their importance in actually stoking demand for the trade, these slaveholders were symbolically problematic, especially since the 1843 Act had been unable to remove this British presence from Brazil's most dynamic and slave-labour-dependent sector.

Urban Slaveholding

In the previous section we observed how inconsistencies in the collection of the census data mean that a significant number of slaves employed in tasks not related to agriculture might be included in the that category. Likewise, there were slaves working on semi-rural *chácaras* who were categorised as domestic, owing to their masters' primary location and profession. Whilst acknowledging the fluidity between these two categories, this section will discuss slaveholding in urban contexts, where British masters held some 750 slaves. We will observe that slaveholding was a feature across all the major British communities in Brazil and was present at all levels of society, from affluent merchants and business owners to lowly artisans, laundresses and stable keepers.

Before analysing this data, it is important to note that clearly not all British residents living in Brazilian cities were slaveholders. Though the majority of the census returns only include information on those who owned slaves, Consul Corbett's reply from Maranhão includes the replies from a handful of individuals and firms positively confirming that they did not own slaves.²⁸⁹ However, Corbett's inclusion of the replies of non-slaveholders is an exception to the rule. Given these inconsistencies in data collection and the lack of precise population data for Brazil's British communities, it is impossible to assert the ratio of slaveholders to non-slaveholders. Moreover, as acting consul Westwood's reply from Rio suggests, it is clear that some British residents not listed in the census hired slaves from other owners. That being said, there was almost certainly a minority of individuals who rejected slaveholding on the grounds of morality and a perceived duty to uphold the anti-slavery identity of their mother country. As discussed in Chapter I, George Pilkington, the abolitionist who spent a year in Brazil on a fact-finding mission for the BFASS in 1840-1841, was the most vocal critic of British slaveholding in Brazil.²⁹⁰ In his letters home recounting the prevalence of slaveholding amongst his countrymen, Pilkington makes a fleeting reference to one British resident who chastised a compatriot for flogging his slave, stating that 'an Englishman has no right to hold slaves, much less to punish them.'²⁹¹ Despite the publication of a pamphlet imploring British residents to free their slaves on these grounds, as we shall observe, the census data indicates that his plea largely

²⁸⁹ Messrs Moon & Co., Henderson & Co. and Thomas Gilroy sent replies of this nature. Although 'William Henderson of Liverpool' does appear in the consul's return as the owner of one slave. See Census Return – Maranhão.

²⁹⁰ For a discussion of Pilkington's time in Brazil and the aims of his visit, see H. Ré, "'Missão nos Brasis'" pp. 69-100.

²⁹¹ *ASR*, 2.18 (Sep 1841), pp. 185-186.

fell on deaf ears as slaveholding remained a prominent and routine feature amongst the British in urban areas at the end of the 1840s.²⁹²

The prevalence of slaveholding was not unique to the British community, of course. Rather it reflected slavery's predominance as an economic and social institution in their host country. In general terms, source material on specific British slaveholders in urban contexts is even more scarce than information regarding their rural counterparts. Nevertheless, by analysing the census data within the context of urban life in Brazil during this period, we can begin to understand the reasons why British subjects employed slave labour and the diversity of roles and occupations their slaves performed. Before the end of the illegal trade, slaves were abundant in Brazil's major cities and slaveholding was a feature in all but the very poorest strata of society.²⁹³ Though Luiz Carlos Soares' categorisation of urban slave-ownership in this period is based on inventories of residents of Rio de Janeiro alone, it is still useful in helping us identify slaveholding at all levels of the British communities in port-cities across Brazil.²⁹⁴ Using total slave-ownership as an indication of an individual's social status, Soares proposes three broad categories. The first group, owners of between one and five slaves, included individuals employed in the 'humblest' occupations, as well as some members of the 'liberal professions.' The second strata consists of individuals in more 'comfortable circumstances', who owned between six and ten slaves. The last

²⁹² G. Pilkington, *An Address to the English Residents in the Brazilian Empire*

²⁹³ R. Conrad, *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery* p.6. See also, D.T. Graden, *From Slavery to Freedom in Brazil: Bahia, 1835-1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006) pp. 21-22. See also, L.C. Soares, *Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro* pp. 96-97.

²⁹⁴ L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 94-118. Katia M. de Queirós Mattoso's analysis of inventories draws similar conclusions about the presence of slaveholding at all levels of society in Bahia. See K. M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil, 1550-1888* (New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1986) pp. 61-63.

category is the 'wealthiest strata' composed of individuals who owned over ten slaves.²⁹⁵ Using the census returns that itemise the slaveholding of all individuals - Bahia, Maranhão, Pernambuco and Rio Grande do Sul - Figure 7 clearly shows that most city-based British slaveholders fall within this first category.²⁹⁶

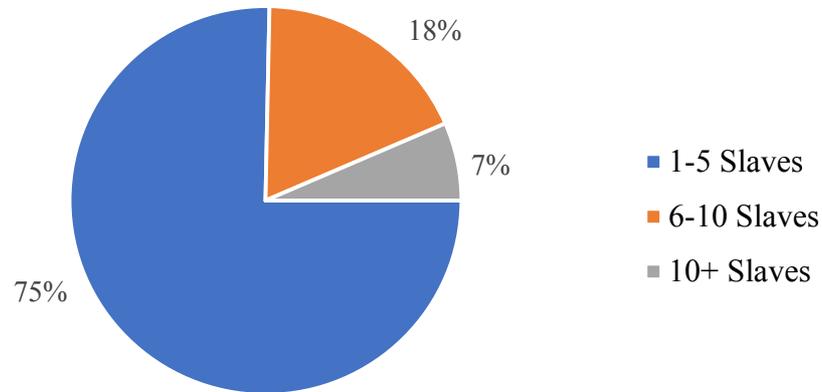
An analysis of the two census returns which list slaveholder profession, in Bahia and Pernambuco suggests that while a person's occupation and wealth had a bearing on their ability to own slaves, we should be cautious in any attempt use total slaveholding to determine social hierarchies within Brazil's British communities. Guenther has shown that British residents in Bahia arrived with their own conceptions of class distinctions and their community was stratified by the prestige of their occupation. At the top of this social hierarchy were the most successful wholesale merchants and their families, followed by professionals such as doctors and diplomats. Below these were the less successful merchants and at the bottom were the unmarried clerks who worked in these firms. Outside of this structure were a small number of retailers, engineers and working-class immigrants.²⁹⁷

²⁹⁵ L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 100-104.

²⁹⁶ This graph shows strictly urban slaveholders and therefore does not include any slaveholders who were listed as having any agricultural interests. The returns which do not itemise all slaveholders - Rio de Janeiro, Pará and Paraíba - were disregarded. Though Rio de Janeiro has not been included, the acting consul's estimate of an average of between three and six slaves per each of the 60 British establishments in the city confirms the trend that most British slaveholders in urban areas owned small numbers of slaves.

²⁹⁷ L. Guenther, *British merchants in nineteenth-century Brazil* p. 5.

Figure 2.6 Urban Slaveholders by Total Number of Slaves Owned



While slaveholding was present at all levels of this hierarchy, the census data suggests it cannot be used as a positive indicator of social class in the same way as Soares has done in his study of Rio de Janeiro. While we find holders of the least prestigious professions amongst the first category, owning one to five slaves, also present are those occupying a more elevated position in the social hierarchy of the small expatriate communities. Those with the humblest occupations in this group include a laundress, a stable keeper, two publicans and a variety of artisans such as a shoemaker, tinsmiths and a cabinet maker. A number of liberal professionals such engineers and doctors were also owners of a small number of slaves. However, also present in this group are various reputable merchants. Moreover, while merchants account for just over half of British residents in Bahia and Pernambuco who owned 6-10 slaves, also present in this category are holders of apparently less prestigious occupations such as a shopkeeper, baker, tailor and clerk. Though the largest slaveholders, with ten or more slaves, were all wealthy merchants and one foundry owner, the makeup of the other two categories

is a lot more mixed. In sum, we can say that while the largest individual slaveholders were mostly wealthy merchants, not all wealthy merchants were large slaveholders.

The professions and business activities of these British slaveholders can also give us an insight into the types of labour they extorted from their slaves. In the context of low levels of immigration and the distain for physical work held by many of the free population, slaves performed much of the manual and some skilled labour in the city. Mary Karasch's and Luiz Carlos Soares' studies of urban slavery in Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth century have shown the enormous diversity of occupations they performed.²⁹⁸ Their presence was ubiquitous in the domestic life of the city, where slaves were employed in all manner of household tasks.²⁹⁹ There is no doubt that many of the slaves listed as 'domestic' in the census were performing these duties. We can surmise that many British subjects justified this slaveholding as a necessity in the absence of free servants, in the same way as Robert Hesketh and Frederick Grigg had done to Palmerston in 1840.³⁰⁰ In the homes of the most affluent British residents, such as Richard Latham of Bahia or Thomas Messiter of Rio Grande, who owned twelve and thirteen 'domestics' respectively, slaves would probably have performed specialised roles. Whereas the single slaves owned by the likes of A. Short, a publican in Pernambuco or Joshua Gunton, a sexton of the British church in the same city, would have performed a range of domestic duties.³⁰¹

²⁹⁸ M. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) pp. 185-213. L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 145-248.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid* pp. 207-210.

³⁰⁰ The slaveholding of British officials is discussed in Chapter I.

³⁰¹ On the specialisation and non-specialisation of domestic slave roles, see M. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro* pp. 207-209.

Many domestic slaves, especially those whose masters owned only one or two slaves, would have had to perform these duties alongside whatever occupation they held in the business premises of their owners. For those owned by British wholesale merchants, it is likely that portering was one of their central roles outside of the home. In the absence of draft animals, slaves were essential to the movement of goods and people in Brazilian cities in the first half of the nineteenth century.³⁰² Indeed, a British visitor to Brazil in 1844 expressed her incredulity that abolitionists in Britain wanted to deny British merchants the slave labour which was so essential to the movement of their goods in Brazil's ports. Referring to the recently passed 1843 Act, Emma Juliana Smith remarked:

Talking of slaves puts me in mind what an impossible law they have been making in England not only to prevent the English holding slaves but even making use of them!!! Why all our Brazil trade would at once cease, not a case of sugar, or a bale of cotton would be able to be lifted from the ground or put on board a ship and the condition of the slaves not one atom improved.³⁰³ (emphasis in original)

The presence of artisans and craftsmen amongst the slaveholders listed in the census suggests that some British-held slaves had more skilled occupations. The slaves owned by Thomas Purcell, a cabinet maker in Pernambuco or Bernard Byrne, a tinplate worker in Bahia may well have been apprentices in their masters' trade. Though rare, other slaves were employed in larger workshops and factories owned by British subjects. For example, Augustus Gibson employed 23 slaves in a soap factory situated

³⁰² *Ibid* pp. 188-192; R. Conrad, *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery* p. 7.

³⁰³ Letter 29, Emma Juliana Smith to Miss Gray, Pernambuco, 14 May 1844, in Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843-1845, RBMSCD.

on the Ilha do Governador island in Rio de Janeiro. Not a great deal else is known about this establishment, other than it began operations in 1834.³⁰⁴ Given its establishment after the law of 1831 and Karasch's assertion that slaves in these types of operations were principally African males, it is entirely plausible that some of the factory's workforce had been imported illegally.³⁰⁵ Slightly more information is available concerning the use of slave labour by Christopher Starr in his foundry called Aurora in Pernambuco. Arriving in Pernambuco around the time of Independence, Starr first tried his hand at the construction of a mechanised cotton mill. After that enterprise failed, in 1829 the Scotsman opened an ironworks that would eventually attain regional importance through its manufacture of steam engines for sugar mills in the area.³⁰⁶ The census entry for Starr shows that in 1848 a total of 28 male slaves were employed in the foundry. A commercial report written by the same British consul a month before the census gives us an idea of the foundry's total workforce; 35 British foundrymen and 42 free Brazilians laboured alongside Starr's slaves.³⁰⁷ The same document also makes clear that Starr was not the only British subject in the city to employ slaves and free national and foreign labour in an ironworks. A smaller establishment owned by Messrs. Bowman and McCallum employed eight British

³⁰⁴ L.C. Soares, 'A Indústria na Sociedade Escravista: as Origens da Crescimento Manufatureiro na Região Fluminense em Meados do Século XIX (1840-1860)', in T. Szmrecsányi, J.R. do Amaral Lapa (orgs.) *História Econômica da Independência e do Império* (São Paulo: Edusp/Hucitec, 2002) p. 284.

³⁰⁵ M. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* p. 197.

³⁰⁶ For the history of Starr's foundry, see P.M. Souto Maior, *Nos Caminhos de Ferro: Construções e Manufaturas no Recife (1830-1920)*, (Recife: Companhia Editora de Pernambuco, 2015) chapter 9. See also, R. Graham, *Britain and the Onset of Modernization in Brazil* p. 142.

³⁰⁷ There is a discrepancy between the commercial report and the census concerning the size and status of Starr's slaveholding. The report states that 20 hired slaves were employed in the foundry whereas the census entry lists Starr as owning 31 slaves, 28 of whom worked in the ironworks. See Mr. Cowper to Viscount Palmerston, 29 November 1848, TNA, FO 13/260.

foundrymen, 25 free Brazilians and 12 slaves.³⁰⁸ Though Bowman featured in the census as an owner of one slave, the commercial report states that those employed in the ironworks were hired; a further example of how a census of slave-ownership does not show the true extent of British slaveholding.

Moreover, although not reflected in the census data, British ironworks were not restricted to Pernambuco, with other known examples in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro. In the former province in 1859, Dom Pedro II visited a foundry owned by two British engineers called Cameron and Smith, though it appears they did not employ any enslaved labour.³⁰⁹ However, in the 1850s three British foundries used slaves alongside free labourers in the sugar-producing Campos region of Rio de Janeiro. Like the establishments of Starr and Cameron & Smith, the ironworks owned by Alexander Davidson, John MacTavish and Roberts produced steam engines and other parts for sugar mills. All three relied on slave labour to some extent; 22 slaves were employed in Davidson's establishment and seven each in the other two foundries.³¹⁰ Of Davidson's slaves, four were iron smelters, two bronze casters, and six blacksmiths.³¹¹ These skilled roles confirm Soares' affirmation that slaves regularly performed specialised labour in industrial contexts and were not merely tools for brute force.³¹² The presence of specialised slave labour is also apparent in the largest privately-owned ironworks in the country, the Ponte D'Areia complex in Niterói. In 1857 this

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ R. Graham, *Britain and the Onset of Modernization in Brazil* p. 142.

³¹⁰ G. de Beauclair, *Raízes da Indústria Brasileira* (Rio de Janeiro: Studio F&S, 1992) pp. 120-121.

³¹¹ B.P. Momesso, 'Indústria e Trabalho no Século XIX: O Estabelecimento da Fundação e Máquinas de Ponte D'Areia' (Unpublished MA thesis, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2007) p. 100.

³¹² L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 204-205.

establishment employed 162 slaves alongside 505 free national and foreign workers.³¹³ Although by this point its operations had been expanded substantially under the ownership of the Baron de Mauá, the ironworks had been originally founded by the British merchant Charles Coleman who, in 1846, sold the property along with 28 slaves to its new owner for a total of 60:000\$000.³¹⁴ Though these British-owned establishments were few in number, their very presence shows that, like the larger scale example of mining, British technology and capital was not always transitioning from agrarian slavery to free-labour industry in a linear fashion.

In her study of slavery in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Karasch stresses the importance of slaves as far more than just a source of labour; they were status symbols and sources of wealth and capital.³¹⁵ On the first point, though we have seen how slave-ownership may not have been recognised as a sign of social status in the same way within British communities, it is possible that some British subjects drew prestige from the size of their slaveholding. This may have been true for those who were less socially dependent on the British community, such as Joseph Maxwell, or for those who had naturalised as Brazilians, such as Mr. Stepples Snr., an owner of five slaves in Pernambuco who ‘declined any longer being considered a British subject.’³¹⁶ Whereas a British

³¹³ J.M. Pereira da Silva, *Relatório apresentado à Assembléia Legislativa da província do Rio de Janeiro na 2ª sessão da 12ª legislatura pelo Vice-presidente* (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Laemmert, 1857) p. 60. On the use of specialised slave labour in Ponte D’Areia, see B.P. Momesso, ‘Indústria e Trabalho no Século XIX’ pp. 93-103.

³¹⁴ I. E. de Souza, *Autobiografia. “Exposição aos credores e ao público” seguida de “O meio circulante do Brasil”*. 2.a edição prefaciada e anotada por Claudio Ganns, acompanhada de indicações genealógicas, históricas e bibliográficas e de 30 gravuras fora do texto (Rio de Janeiro: Zelio Valverde, 1943) p. 102.

³¹⁵ M. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* pp. 185-186.

³¹⁶ Little else is known about this individual save that he was in the ‘Brazilian Service’ at the time of the census. See Mr. Cowper to Viscount Palmerston, 21 December 1849, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade* (Class B), 1848-1849, p. 140.

resident's slaveholding did not distinguish his social class in the same way as a Brazilian, its prevalence in the census shows that at the very least, the ownership of slaves did not have a negative impact on a member's position in the social hierarchy of British communities in Brazil.

Concerning slaves as a source of wealth and capital to their owners, Karasch highlights the use of slave property as security for loans and as dowries upon marriage. As we shall observe in chapter 3, British merchants did occasionally offer their slaves as human collateral for debts and loans. As for dowries, we have seen how marriage facilitated rural slaveholding, but it was also present in urban areas. There are various examples in the census returns of British men who had become slaveholders through marriage into local families. In Pernambuco, Consul Cowper noted that Henry Gibson's nine slaves and Edward H.J. Fox's four slaves had been received following their marriages to local women. Similarly, the British consul in Maranhão noted that William Wilson's 14 slaves 'were in the right of his wife.'³¹⁷ In Rio Grande do Sul, consul Morgan decided against enumerating the slaves held through marriage by Benjamin Aveline and William Barker as he did not regard them as 'absolute owners.'³¹⁸ The fact that this information is included in the returns is an indication that these men were seeking to justify their slaveholding under the provisions of the 1843 Act which permitted ownership through inheritance or marriage. In doing so, they declared their exploitation of slave labour to be passive and not a fault of their own making.

³¹⁷ Census Return – Maranhão.

³¹⁸ Census Return – Rio Grande do Sul.

In addition to their value as property from which equity could be released or transferred, slaves created wealth for their owners. Masters often rented out or apprenticed their slaves to a whole host of employers, including artisans, tradesmen and factory owners.³¹⁹ Emma Juliana Smith observed that the apprenticing of their slaves was common amongst English owners looking to recoup their initial outlay at which point, according to the writer, they would be freed.³²⁰ Aside from their day jobs, the slaves referred to by Smith would presumably perform domestic duties in British householders. *Escravos de ganho*, or money-earning slaves, would have been a common sight in Brazilian cities at the time the census was commissioned. In order to sell their labour around the city, these slaves were afforded a greater degree of autonomy than most, with some living independently of their masters.³²¹ As Soares has shown, in Rio de Janeiro these slaves found employment in a whole range of sectors, paying a fixed rate of their wages to their owners.³²² One of the most visible occupations of *escravos de ganho* was as pedlars of all sorts of foodstuffs, clothes, household items and other wares. We can easily imagine that the slaves owned by British shopkeepers such as Albert H. Curry (six slaves) and Mary Ann Sullivan (two slaves) in Bahia were involved in such activities. Masters at all levels of society lived on the earnings of their slaves. For some poorer slaveholders though, the earnings of

³¹⁹ L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' p. 171.

³²⁰ Letter 29, Emma Juliana Smith to Miss Gray, Pernambuco, 14 May 1844, in Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843-1845.

³²¹ H.S. Klein and F.V. Luna, *Slavery in Brazil* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) p. 110.

³²² *Escravos de ganho* worked in a whole host of itinerant trades including street hawking, the transport of all types of goods, people and waste and as barbers, musicians, fisherman, stall-holders, prostitutes and beggars. See L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 173-188. See also, M. Karasch, *Slave Life in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1850* pp. 206-207.

their few slaves were often their only reliable source of income.³²³ This may have been particularly true in the case of F.H. Mitchell (four slaves) in Alagoas and Ellen Adamson (two slaves) in Bahia who were the only British slaveholders in these consular districts without a listed profession.

As Guenther's study of their community Bahia has shown, most British made a conscious and collective effort to distinguish themselves from a host society which they regarded as morally and culturally inferior.³²⁴ They conserved many traditions of their homeland including the practice of their religion, social rituals and their pastimes. They even strictly maintained an outwardly stereotypically 'British' appearance despite its unsuitability to tropical climes.³²⁵ As well as keeping a distance from their Brazilian hosts in a social sense, they often also removed themselves geographically, preferring to live away from their places of work in the centre of town.³²⁶ However, as the census shows, slaveholding was clearly one of the Brazilian customs exempt from this general rule. As we shall discuss in the following section, in adopting this Brazilian practice, British residents found ways of reconciling their slaveholding with their own conceptions of moral and cultural superiority.

³²³ L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 100-101.

³²⁴ L. Guenther, *British Merchants in nineteenth-century Brazil* pp. 111-123.

³²⁵ *Ibid* pp. 61-80

³²⁶ On the British community in the Vitória suburb of Salvador, Bahia see *Ibid* pp. 70-72. As noted in the section about *chácaras*, this was the case in other cities.

The Myth of the Benevolent British Slaveholder

Justifications for British slaveholding in foreign territories after 1833 rested on three central pillars: property rights, necessity and moral superiority.³²⁷ All three of these had their roots in the ‘anti-abolitionist’ arguments employed by the West India interest in defence of colonial slavery after 1807.³²⁸ In Chapter I we observed how lobbyists successfully invoked their property rights in order to keep hold of slaves they had purchased before 1843 and the necessity justification in order to remove a clause prohibiting the hiring of slaves from Lord Brougham’s draft bill. A third defence, based on conceptions of moral superiority, argued that British slaveholders were more benevolent than their foreign counterparts. Proponents of this position argued that slaves benefitted morally from their paternalistic British masters who protected them from the perils of re-enslavement until they were deemed ready for their freedom. The use of this argument has been well documented in research on the British mining industry in Brazil.³²⁹ As we shall observe, other British slaveholders, the silent beneficiaries of the 1843 Act, echoed the very same rhetoric. Using contemporary sources and literature on Brazilian slavery, this section will argue that the benevolent British master was a myth perpetuated primarily by this very same group in order to

³²⁷ J. Kelly ‘The Problem of Anti-Slavery’ p. 154.

³²⁸ For a discussion of the strategies and rhetoric employed by this group in their defence of slavery after 1807, see P.E. Dumas, *Pro-Slavery Britain: Fighting for Slavery in an Era of Abolition* (New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2016) pp. 143-162.

³²⁹ This argument was used by directors of the Imperial Brazilian Mining Association to quell a shareholder backlash over the company’s slaveholding in 1841, see J. Kelly ‘The Problem of Anti-Slavery’ pp. 226-232. Managers of the St. John Del Rey Mining Company also pointed to their paternalistic and apparently benevolent treatment of their slaves in the aftermath of the Cata Branca scandal in 1879. See M. Childs, ‘Master-Slave Rituals’ p. 64.

reconcile their conceptions of moral and cultural superiority with the prevalence of slaveholding in their communities.

The image of the benevolent British slaveholder was in fact constructed upon a similar myth which characterised Brazilian slavery as a more humane institution than its Anglo-American counterparts in particular. For proponents of this proslavery viewpoint, Brazilian paternalism mitigated the cruelties witnessed in other slave systems, creating a benign institution that was beneficial to both master and the enslaved.³³⁰ To the disbelief of George Pilkington, British residents in Brazil largely subscribed to this position. The abolitionist wrote to the BFASS:

It is surprising to me that the English residents in Brazil, who are generally the apologists of the system, can entertain the belief that the slaves there are better treated than those of any other nation.³³¹

Not only did Britons believe in the benevolence of Brazilian slavery, they ‘consider[ed] themselves the best of slave-masters’ added the abolitionist in another letter to the society.³³² The same visitor who expressed her concern about the ‘impossible law’ of 1843 echoed these views about the superiority of the benevolent British slaveholder. Evoking the trope of the ‘grateful slave’ that had been used by proslavery advocates in the British empire, Emma Juliana Smith informed her sister that she had recently come across a slave on bended knee in front of one of her countrymen pleading to be purchased, adding that ‘the unfortunates themselves are

³³⁰ L. Aidoo, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power and Violence in Brazilian History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018) pp. 17-18. See also E. Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* pp. 136-137.

³³¹ *ASR*, 2.16 (Aug 1841) p. 173.

³³² *ASR*, 2.17 (Aug 1841), p. 179.

always delighted to be bought by an Englishman.³³³ The author then reinforced the image of the humanitarian British slaveholder by adding ‘the English too nearly always free their blacks if well behaved, and able to maintain themselves otherwise it would be no act of kindness’.³³⁴ This characterisation is juxtaposed with Smith’s portrayal of Brazilians in the same letter as being ‘sank deep in every vice and crime except drunkenness.’³³⁵ In the census returns one slaveholder in Rio Grande do Sul, Holland, Davies & Co. was so sure of the benefits of British ownership that they added their four slaves were the ‘same as free, never to be sold again into servitude.’³³⁶

Credence in the exceptionalism of Brazilian slavery as a benign institution endured well into the twentieth century, in large part due to its usefulness in providing the basis of the construction of a national narrative that painted Brazil as a racial ‘democracy’.³³⁷ Historians from the school of São Paulo played an important role in critiquing both of these narratives, with Emília Viotti da Costa asserting that the characterisation of Brazilian slavery as benign was a myth ‘created by a slaveholding society to defend a system which that society regarded as indispensable.’³³⁸ For Viotti da Costa, just because Brazilian masters employed positive incentives as a form of

³³³ Letter 29, Emma Juliana Smith to Miss Gray, Pernambuco, 14 May 1844, in Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843-1845, RBMSCD. On the use of ‘the grateful slave’ trope by pro-slavery advocates, see P.E. Dumas *Pro-Slavery Britain* pp. 102-103. For a literary history of the term, see G. Boulukos, *The Grateful Slave: The Emergence of Race in Eighteenth-Century British and American Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

³³⁴ Letter 29, Emma Juliana Smith to Miss Gray, Pernambuco, 14 May 1844, in Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843-1845, RBMSCD (emphasis in original).

³³⁵ *Ibid* (emphasis in original).

³³⁶ Census Return – Rio Grande do Sul.

³³⁷ L. Aidoo, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power and Violence in Brazilian History* pp. 21-25; E. Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* p. 243.

³³⁸ E. Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* p. 137.

social control, ‘this should not blind us to the ultimate violence of a system which made slaves the property of their masters - a property that could be bought and sold and whose fate depended on the master’s whim.’³³⁹ Violence was an essential feature of a system in which physical punishment was a universally accepted, both in society and by law, as a method of coercion.³⁴⁰

Despite their attempts to create an identity apart from their Brazilian counterparts, British slaveholders did not exist in a vacuum; they were agents in the same violent system. George Pilkington was keen to reinforce this point to his abolitionist readership in Britain. In a series of letters, he provided evidence, based on things he had witnessed and interviews with his countrymen, to dispel any notion that the British were the most benevolent masters in an already benign institution. Starting with the mining industry and alluding to a control system based around positive incentives, Pilkington acknowledged that British managers occasionally deviated from the ‘severity’ that was the ‘inseparable companion’ of largescale slaveholding.³⁴¹ Nevertheless, Pilkington made absolutely clear that this system, based on incremental rewards eventually leading to manumission, co-existed alongside physical punishments. The employees he interviewed made no attempt to hide this fact, with one telling Pilkington ““we feed them well, clothe them well, and flog them well.””³⁴² The most regular form of punishment was the use of the *palmatória*, a wooden paddle

³³⁹ *Ibid* p. 137.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid* pp. 137-138. For a similar interpretation see R. Conrad, *Children of God’s Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil*, 2. ed. (Pennsylvania University Press, 1995) pp. 287-288.

³⁴¹ *ASR*, 2.17 (Aug 1841), p. 179. This ritualised method of social control is discussed in detail in M. Childs, ‘Master-Slave Rituals’.

³⁴² *ASR*, 2.17 (Aug 1841), p. 179.

with holes to reduce air resistance that was commonly used by Brazilian slaveholders. Slaves at the mines would be struck on the palms by the instrument up to four dozen times. For more serious incidents, slaves were punished by flogging after which they usually required medical attention.³⁴³ For persistent offenders, particularly runaways, slaves were placed in irons and as a last resort ‘bad characters’ were sold ‘out of the province’, effectively meaning that the individual was ‘transported for life.’³⁴⁴ Pilkington finished his letter by concluding that positive incentives used to control the enslaved labour force at British mines were ‘at best, but an attempt to gild over a vicious and life-destroying system.’³⁴⁵

These forms of punishment were not limited to slaves owned by the mining companies. In a separate letter, Pilkington attributed similar behaviour to British slaveholders in rural and urban areas. Referring to an unnamed English planter, believed to be George March, Pilkington contrasts his reputation as a ‘polished gentleman’ with his notoriety as a ‘master-like slave-owner.’³⁴⁶ This plantation owner reportedly seldom resorted to flogging but when he did ‘he [laid] it on so severely as to terrify all his slaves.’ On one occasion when this punishment did not deter the persistent escape of one of his slaves, he resolved to burn the offender’s cheek with a hot iron.³⁴⁷ In this case the characterisation of the benevolent British slaveholder is not

³⁴³ *Ibid* p. 179.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid* p. 180. On the use of corporal punishment, irons and the sale of ‘problem’ slaves by the St. John Del Rey Mining Company, see M. Eakin, *A British Enterprise in Brazil* pp. 198-199.

³⁴⁵ *ASR*, 2.17 (Aug 1841), p. 180.

³⁴⁶ Pilkington is more than likely referring to George March as the ‘English planter, who resides on the mountains, and receives convalescents and others for change of air.’ See *ASR*, 2.18 (Sept. 1841), p. 185.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid* p. 185.

only undermined by the planter's cruelty, but his slave's resistance surely dispels any notion of the 'grateful black' that was part of the same myth. Many forms of resistance employed by British-held slaves have not registered in the historical record, but cases of escape are not uncommon. Pilkington's letter included a transcription of a runaway slave advert placed in the local paper by Mrs. Moke.³⁴⁸ Other instances of escape can be found in the newspapers of the period.³⁴⁹

Cruelty at the hands of British masters was also suffered by slaves employed in the city. Pilkington alleged that one unfortunate individual was murdered by an English overseer in a British mercantile house in Rio de Janeiro. After a disagreement, a 'Mr. Richard' – almost certainly Richard Heath – struck a slave with a rolling pin over the head before hurling him down the stairs. To discourage an enslaved witness from reporting the murder, the overseer first 'bribed [him] by kindness to conceal it' before eventually administering a 'severe flogging.'³⁵⁰ Like their Brazilian counterparts, the apparent benevolence shown by British masters was conditional, a control mechanism which was ultimately underpinned by violence.

Another form of violence committed against the enslaved by their British masters was sexual assault and rape. Lamonte Aidoo's recent study has shown how sexual violence was a key feature of master/mistress-slave relations throughout the history of Brazilian

³⁴⁸ *Ibid* p. 185.

³⁴⁹ For example, an unnamed English resident in Itaipú, Rio de Janeiro advertised for the return of two escaped African slaves, Samuel and Luiz. *Jornal do Commercio*, 7-8 June 1839. Vincente and Ignacio escaped from the *chácara* of the 'Englishman Lekok' in 1849, *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 19 June 1849. Amaro, slave of the 'Englishman Thomaz' of Marianna, Minas Gerais, was arrested in Petrópolis, *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 15 March 1852. Bartholdo, a slave of the 'Englishman Wirck' was arrested in similar circumstances in São Paulo, *Correio Paulistano* 27 April 1876.

³⁵⁰ Pilkington goes on to describe various other cases of urban British slaveholders disciplining their slaves in a cruel fashion. See *Ibid* pp. 185-186.

slavery.³⁵¹ Though omitted by Pilkington, other sources reveal glimpses of British actors in this form of exploitation. During Darwin's visit to the plantation of Patrick Lennon in April 1832, the naturalist observed a tense argument between the property's owner and his British overseer, Mr. Cowper. Seemingly in an act of spite, Lennon threatened to remove all the women and children from the estate and send them for sale in Rio de Janeiro. Included in this group was 'an illegitimate mulatto child to whom Mr. Cowper was much attached' and whom Lennon threatened to sell at a public auction.³⁵² Irrespective of his emotional connection to the child, there is no doubt that this child was the product of the rape of his enslaved mother. Though not recognised in the same terms then as now, in a system based on violence in which a slave is not the owner of their own body, sexual relations with a master or his proxy cannot be described as consensual.³⁵³

Sexual exploitation of enslaved women was also present in the other cluster of British plantation ownership in Rio de Janeiro. Following in the footsteps of many a foreign traveller in the region, in early 1844 Melchior-Honoré Yvan, a French doctor, visited the vast agricultural establishment owned by George March. Whilst in the mountains he chanced upon a property owned by an Englishman called 'Braone' (probably a corruption of Brown). There, his new acquaintance introduced the Frenchman to two black female adolescents, probably African, one around eighteen years old and the

³⁵¹ L. Aidoo, *Slavery Unseen: Sex, Power and Violence in Brazilian History*

³⁵² R.D. Keynes (ed.), *Charles Darwin's Beagle Diary* p. 58.

³⁵³ Sexual violence against slave women has been obscured by romanticised terms such as 'concubine' and 'mistress'. For Andrea Livesey, writing in the context of the Antebellum South, 'sexual slavery' is a more appropriate term to describe the spectrum of sexual violence committed against enslaved women. See A. Livesey, 'Race, Slavery and the Language of Sexual Violence in Louise Picquet, *The Octoroon*' (forthcoming 2018) p. 7. My thanks to the author for generously sharing this article prior to publication.

other even younger still.³⁵⁴ Much to the surprise and hilarity of the doctor, the Englishman introduced both young women as ‘Madame Braone’, insisting that he had married both. Growing concerned about the sinful state of this polygamous individual, Yvan asked whether his host considered himself a Christian, to which Braone replied that in London or Paris he was, but in Brazil he was ‘a patriarch.’ Asked whether he understood the responsibility of that role, the Englishman, confirming the enslaved status of the women, unhooked a whip from the back of the door and said he was well aware.³⁵⁵ If Yvan needed any further indication that Broane was in a sexual relationship with these women, it was at this point that he saw five or six ‘brown’ children in another room. Broane claimed to have the best interests of his offspring at heart, proudly asserting that once he has three more young boys, he was going to leave them his whole property and emigrate to Sydney.³⁵⁶ Nevertheless, like Mr. Cowper’s illegitimate child, there is little doubt that Broane’s children were the result of rape.

Sexual violence apart, acts of physical cruelty administered by British slaveholders were, according to Pilkington, ‘generally known and openly talked of.’ However, ‘as a palliative,’ British slaveholders would defend their reputation by claiming that manumission was common amongst their community.³⁵⁷ On investigating this assertion, Pilkington found that there while individual cases may well exist, ‘it is no

³⁵⁴ Yvan believed them to be African women owing to their facial scars. M. H. Yvan, *De France en Chine* (Paris: Librairie de L. Hachette, 1855) p. 65.

³⁵⁵ *Ibid* p. 66.

³⁵⁶ *Ibid* p. 66.

³⁵⁷ *ASR*, 2.18 (Sept. 1841) p. 186. A similar claim was also made by Emma J. Smith in a letter to her sister. See Emma Juliana Smith to Miss Gray, Pernambuco, 14 May 1844, Letter 29, in Emma Juliana and John P. Smith Letterbook, 1843-1845, RBMSCD.

means a matter of frequent occurrence.³⁵⁸ Unfortunately, it has not been possible to corroborate this claim from other sources. Manumission as a reward for good behaviour was, of course, a common method employed by mining companies as a method to reduce social conflict amongst their large enslaved work force. Between 1834 and 1882, the St. John Del Rey company voluntarily freed some 278 slaves, an average of just under six slaves per year. Though as Eakin duly notes, nearly 450 died while still enslaved by the company.³⁵⁹ There is evidence of British owners freeing their slaves in other contexts, but the sources do not permit us to say whether manumission occurred with any greater frequency than it did in Brazil more generally. A small number of *cartas de alforria* (freedom letters) located in the State Archive of Bahia relate to slaves manumitted by British masters in the second-half of the nineteenth century. Some individuals, such as Richard Latham's slaves Luiz da França (1855) and Miguel Africano (1860), appear have been freed on unconditional terms.³⁶⁰ However, others paid their owners for their freedom; Latham and James Hogg received 400 mil réis before freeing Nicolão Nago in 1859, while Dr. George E. Fairbanks liberated his African slave, Mathildes Calabar upon receipt of 300 mil-réis in the same year.³⁶¹ Though only a small number of wills made by British slaveholders were located during this research, they show that for some slaves, even the death of their masters did not signal their freedom. James Kenny, an Irish merchant

³⁵⁸ *ASR*, 2.18 (Sept. 1841) p. 186.

³⁵⁹ M. Eakin *A British Enterprise in Brazil* pp. 202-204.

³⁶⁰ Carta de Liberdade - crioulo Luiz da França x Ricardo Lathan, 22 May 1855, Arquivo do Estado da Bahia (hereafter APEB), Judiciário, Escrituras, Livro 320, f. 66r. Carta de Liberdade - Miguel Africano x Ricardo Lathan, 2 July 1860, APEB, Judiciário, Escrituras, Livro 364, f. 44.

³⁶¹ Carta de Liberdade – Nicolão Nago x Ricardo Lathan, Digo Hogg, 22 June 1859, APEB, Judiciário, Escrituras, Livro 346, f. 37; Carta de Liberdade – Mathildes Africana, George Edward Fairbanks, 12 May 1859, APEB, Judiciário, Escrituras Livro 342, f. 72v.

in Rio de Janeiro, had very different plans for each of the two African slaves mentioned in his will of 1847. One, a boy named José Congo, would be freed after a period of five years, during which time he would serve an apprenticeship. Of the other, João Cabinda, Kenny stated that

[he] has given me so much trouble and annoyance for the last five years, I do not give him his freedom. I have watched him in illness and treated him with kindness for all this he has shown ingratitude and other indications of a bad negro.³⁶²

In this case, freedom was only conferred, conditionally at that, on slaves who reflected the supposed British benevolence back to their masters. Slaves, of course, were valuable property which could be bequeathed to an individual's heirs, a practice which appears to have happened with some frequency in the British community. For instance, at least four individuals in the return for Rio de Janeiro had inherited large numbers of slaves from deceased relatives.³⁶³ While British residents in Brazil did occasionally free their slaves without condition, they did so when it was convenient to them and there is little evidence, other than their own declarations, to indicate that having a British master increased a slave's chances of emancipation.

The image of paternal British masters granting freedom to their grateful slaves is also significantly undermined by the fact that Britons were known to have been involved in illegal enslavement. Putting aside the clear evidence of the purchase and possession of illegally imported Africans, there is evidence that some British subjects ignored the

³⁶² Will of James Kenny, 1847, in TNA, FO 128/49 (loose papers).

³⁶³ These are the unnamed heirs of Dr. McCormack and Mr. Platt, Mr. Lesecene and Mr. George March. See Census Return – Rio de Janeiro.

legal freedoms of former slaves. The most notorious case of this was the deceitful actions of the St. John del Rey Mining Co., who intentionally denied the freedom of 385 slaves hired from the defunct Cata Branca mine. As Matt Childs and others have shown, when it was discovered in 1879 that the company should have freed them twenty years earlier, Brazilian abolitionists created a scandal that would be the first cause célèbre of their nascent campaign.³⁶⁴ However, Pilkington draws our attention to a less well-known case of illegal enslavement by British residents in Brazil. Quoting a former employee of a mining company, the abolitionist alleged that upon freeing their slaves for the purpose of taking them on journeys to England, some British residents had been known to re-enslave their free servants when returning to Brazil. Pilkington then claimed to personally know of a shocking case of re-enslavement committed by an English wine merchant in Rio de Janeiro.³⁶⁵

Pilkington may have been referring to the injustice committed by Arthur Moss against his former slave John Eden, a case which was eventually referred to the Earl of Aberdeen and the government's solicitors. In a transcribed statement, John Eden recounted that he had been a slave in Brazil and eventually became the property of Arthur Moss or the firm Charles Tross & Co. After nine years in his ownership, Moss freed Eden in the British consul's office and took him as a free servant back to England. After spending a year there, both men returned to Brazil in March 1836 and soon afterwards, Moss fraudulently sold Eden back into slavery. Eden spent around a year in Minas Gerais before his new master brought him back to the capital where he was able to seek the protection of the British consul. Nevertheless, after a period as a

³⁶⁴ M. Childs, 'A Case of "Great Unstableness"'; M. Eakin, *A British Enterprise in Brazil* p. 36.

³⁶⁵ *ASR*, 2.18 (Sept. 1841), p. 186.

wage labourer in a British commercial house and then onboard a steam vessel, Eden was captured by a *capitão do mato* (slave catcher) who once again brought him back to Moss' residence. From there he was put in irons and sent to prison where he was put to hard labour for six months. Following this, Moss sold him illegally for a second time to a Brazilian in Nitérois and only after four months was he able to once again seek the protection of the British authorities in Rio who allowed him to seek refuge on the HMS Crescent.³⁶⁶ Upon learning of Eden's case in early 1843, Lord Aberdeen consulted the law officers to ascertain whether Moss could be prosecuted by the government for violation of British anti-slavery legislation. Despite the clear and multiple injustices committed against Eden, the government's solicitors determined Moss was not liable to criminal proceedings for violating the slave trade laws. Though Aberdeen offered to 'afford facilities' to Eden in any case he may wish to take up against Moss (presumably in Brazil), the inability to prosecute under British law is yet another example of the limited scope of British anti-slavery during the 1830s and early 1840s.³⁶⁷ John Eden was the victim, on more than one occasion, of what Sidney Chalhoub has called the 'precariousness of freedom' experienced by black people in nineteenth century Brazil.³⁶⁸ Just as their Brazilian counterparts did, British slaveholders took advantage of the type of institutional and political engineering that blurred boundaries between freedom and captivity and facilitated the illegal enslavement of many Africans and Brazilians during this period.

³⁶⁶ Mr. Hamilton to Earl Aberdeen, 20 April 1843, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade (Class B)*, 1844, P.P, 574, pp. 231-232.

³⁶⁷ Earl Aberdeen to Mr. Hamilton, 2 August 1843, in *Ibid* pp. 241-242.

³⁶⁸ S. Chalhoub, 'Illegal Enslavement'. See also, S. Chalhoub, *A Força da Escravidão*, particularly chapter 4.

The myth of the benevolent master was a common defence of the institution in an era of abolition. It featured in the rhetoric of slaveholders in Britain's colonies and in nineteenth-century Brazil. The British residents listed in the 1848 census were no different. In their case, this positive stereotype was perpetuated in order to defend a practice which they regarded as essential while still upholding a collective perception of moral superiority over their host society. A superiority which ironically was part built upon their own government's projection as Britain as the world's moral arbiter on anti-slavery. The evidence considered in this section serves to undermine the self-identification of the British as Brazil's most benevolent slave masters. It may have been the case that there were British residents who, comparatively speaking, subjected their slaves to less physical and emotional cruelty, but there were clearly a significant number who were violent, abusive and vindictive. More importantly, as Pilkington and the literature on Brazilian slavery remind us, even the most humanitarian masters were complicit in an exploitative system which was ultimately based on violence and brutality.

British slaveholding in the second-half of the nineteenth century.

Any discussion of British slaveholding in the second half of the nineteenth century is limited by the availability of source material. While the census data has proved crucial in painting a picture of British slaveholding at the mid-century, no other exercise of this nature was attempted in the following decades. As we observed in chapter 1, following the effective suppression of the Brazilian slave trade in 1850-1851, official interest in British slaveholding dissipated rapidly. Although abolitionists such as the

BFASS continued to take an interest in what they regarded as the hypocrisy of British slaveholding abroad, their ability to create a public scandal was much reduced by the fact that the majority of slave property held by their countrymen had been legitimised by the 1843 Act. The fact that government officials and abolitionist groups largely stopped writing about British slaveholders means we must rely on a range of patchy sources in the second half of the decade. Of course, the largest individual British slaveholders in Brazil, the mining companies, are an exception to this rule. Their structure as joint stock companies meant they reported to their British-based directors and shareholders about the labour force employed in their operations. Moreover, the scandal created by the illegal enslavement of the Cata Branca labourers by the St. John Del Rey Company produced a range of contemporary reports and other source material. By and large, however, this is not the case for other British slaveholders, the trace of many of whom is lost after the 1848 census. Nevertheless, by analysing the disparate sources which refer to some of these individuals in the context of modern studies on both the demographics of Brazilian slavery and the character of British investment in that country, it is still possible to give a broad assessment on the evolution of British slaveholding in non-mining contexts in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Though impossible to quantify, we can surmise that British slaveholding entered into numerical decline after the mid-century. Though one slaveholder, the St. John Del Rey Company, would significantly expand its enslaved workforce in the 1850s and 1860s, this was an exception to the general trend.³⁶⁹ In fact, part of that business's growth in

³⁶⁹ M. Eakin, *British Enterprise* p. 34.

slaveholding was made possible by the demise of other British mining companies, such as the Imperial Brazilian, from whom the St. John Del Rey hired large numbers of labourers. This meant that the overall number of slaves working in British-owned mines never exceeded much over the total recorded in the 1848 census.³⁷⁰ Though far less information exists on slaveholding in agricultural and urban contexts, the evidence that is available strongly suggests that the decline in these sectors was even more pronounced than in the mining industry. As we shall observe, the underlying cause of this was the significant structural changes in Brazil's economy following the effective abolition in the slave trade in 1850-1851. A diversification of investment opportunities and the regional concentration of slavery in the decades that followed had considerable implications for the overall size and make-up of British slaveholding in Brazil. Although of secondary importance, we will also see how British anti-slavery legislation complicated the proliferation of slaveholding despite its characterisation as a long-forgotten dead-letter.

The turn of the mid-century signalled the beginning of a process of diversification in Brazil's economy. This occurred both in spite and because of the suppression of the illegal slave trade in 1850-1851. The continued expansion of Brazil's coffee industry on the basis of large slave-worked estates had been bolstered by the Land Law (*Lei das Terras*) of 1850 and the significant internal slave trade which replaced the international traffic.³⁷¹ In turn, this growth placed increasing demands on Brazil's

³⁷⁰ At its peak the company owned or hired a total of around 1700 slaves, some 50 more than the total recorded in the census. See M. Childs, "A Case of "Great Unstablenss" p. 722.

³⁷¹ On the *Lei das Terras*, see E.V. da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Ch. 4*. On the strong prospects for slave-worked coffee plantations in this period see R. Marquese, 'Capitalismo, Escravidão e a Economia Cafeeira do Brasil no Longo Século XIX' *Saeculum – Revista de História*, 29 (2013) pp. 301-303.

strained physical and financial infrastructure. These demands were met in part by the deployment of large amounts of capital, hitherto employed in the illegal trade, into a range of sectors connected to the burgeoning import-export complex. This investment into areas such as banking, trading houses, transport and public works was facilitated by the creation of a new Commercial Code (1850). The code replaced centuries-old colonial legislation and established the rules and procedures under which this type of economic activity took place. Thus, Brazil's growing and newly regulated economy presented a range of new investment opportunities beyond the traditional deployment of excess capital in land and slave property.

British investors were attracted to this diversifying economy, especially in sectors which required large levels of financing and technical expertise, such as railway and public works construction. Of course, these sectors were not immune from entanglement with slavery. Though not usually directly owned or employed by the railway companies, slave labour was occasionally sub-contracted in the construction of British-owned railway lines in Brazil.³⁷² Moreover, despite the scarcity of source material relating to the workforce of British public works companies, slaves were certainly employed by the Rio de Janeiro Gas Company during the 1870s.³⁷³ As we

³⁷² See Chapter I.

³⁷³ The Rio de Janeiro Gas Company was established in London in 1865 for the purpose of purchasing the property and concession owned by A Companhia de Iluminação a Gas do Rio de Janeiro, which had been in operation since 1851 under the control of the Baron de Mauá. Though the contract between these two companies makes no specific mention of the transferal of slave labour, newspaper articles in this period refer to the imprisonment of slaves employed by the gas works. It is likely that some of the 70 slaves employed by Mauá's company were subsequently hired by the British firm. For examples of these references, see 'Prisões' *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 19 October 1870, 22 July 1873, 15 November 1873, 31 October 1875, 16 October 1876. On the establishment of the company and the contract of transferal of various types of non-slave property, see 'An Agreement between the Baron de Mauá and the Rio de Janeiro Gas Company Limited', 1865, in TNA, BT 31/1064/1912C pp. 44-47. See also, M. de Azevedo, *Rio de Janeiro: sua história, monumentos, homens notáveis, usos e curiosidades* (Rio de Janeiro: B.L. Garnier, 1877) pp. 327-341; I. E. de Souza, *Exposição do Visconde de Mauá aos credores de Mauá & C e ao Publico* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Villeneuve, 1878) pp. 12-15.

shall observe in Chapters IV and V, British banks were also exposed to Brazilian slavery through the acceptance of human collateral as security for debts. In spite of these important instances of entanglement, these new areas of investment help explain why there was not a second wave of British investment in Brazilian agriculture to replace the first generation of plantation owners captured by the census data. Though some of these properties continued in the hands of their British owners or Anglo-Brazilian heirs, there is little evidence for new investment in this sector, with the exception of *Angélica* estate (Chapter V), in the second-half of the century.³⁷⁴ After the mid-century, British merchants who may have considered investing their excess capital in agriculture during the 1820s, 1830s and even 1840s, now opted for less risky ventures such as shares in British-owned railways, banks and public works. British agricultural slaveholders, an already small group in the 1848 census, became an even rarer species in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Though individual urban slave-owners are even more difficult to track than their rural counterparts, we can fairly safely assume that British slaveholding in Brazil's cities also entered into decline during the same period. Studies of urban slavery have highlighted the changing demographics in Brazilian cities in the second half of the century. Soares has observed a considerable negative shift in the pattern of slave-ownership in the city of Rio de Janeiro, whereas Mattoso noted a similar decline in

³⁷⁴ Most of the British-owned plantations disappear from the historical record after the census. However, some of these slaveholders and their heirs continue to feature in regional almanacks in the following decades. For example, Charles de Mornay was still listed as the owner of the Jenipapo engenho in Alagoas in 1883. See *Almanak Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial do Império do Brasil para 1883*, vol. 3 (Rio de Janeiro, H. Laemmert, 1883) p. 94. Similarly, Roberto de Figueiredo Lawrie and Roberto de Figueiredo Reid, heirs of Robert Lawrie and George Reid respectively, continued to own plantations in Macaé. See *Almanak Administrativo, Mercantil e Industrial da Corte e Provincia do Rio de Janeiro inclusive a cidade de Santos, da Provincia de S. Paulo para o anno de 1875*, vol. 2 (Rio de Janeiro: Eduardo & Henrique Laemmert, 1875) p. 158.

the city of Salvador, Bahia.³⁷⁵ The principal reasons for this are two-fold. Firstly, the diversification of the economy after 1850 offered new investment opportunities for capital that in earlier decades would have been used to purchase slaves.³⁷⁶ City dwellers were not only purchasing fewer slaves; following the end of the transatlantic trade, elevated prices saw large numbers of urban slaves sold to agricultural producers, in particular the expanding coffee regions in the southeast of the country.³⁷⁷ In the case of Rio de Janeiro, a decrease in the enslaved workforce was counterbalanced by an influx of Portuguese immigrants who performed many of the roles previously held by slaves.³⁷⁸ There is no evidence to suggest that British slaveholding in Brazil's cities would differ from this broader demographic shift. Indeed, Richard Burton, writing in 1869, remarked that British subjects in Brazil's cities were able to hire free servants instead of slaves.³⁷⁹ While data is impossible to obtain, perhaps the decline in slave labour in Christopher Starr's foundry, 28 in 1848 to 10 in 1859, is representative of the downward trend in the slaveholding by British residents in Brazil's cities.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁵ See. L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' pp. 105-112; K. M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil* pp. 61-63.

³⁷⁶ Mattoso noted that a decrease in slave-ownership in Salvador by the 1870s was accompanied by an increase in capital invested in urban real estate, shares and government bonds. See K. M. de Queirós Mattoso, *To Be a Slave in Brazil* p. 61.

³⁷⁷ On the internal slave trade see R.W. Slenes, 'The Brazilian Internal Slave Trade, 1850-1888: Regional Economies, Slave Experience and the Politics of a Peculiar Market', in W. Johnson (ed.), *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) pp. 325-353. In the case of the city of Rio de Janeiro, see L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' p. 105.

³⁷⁸ L.C. Soares, 'Urban Slavery in Rio de Janeiro' p. 105.

³⁷⁹ R. Burton, *The Highlands of Brazil, vol I*, (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1869) p. 272.

³⁸⁰ The first figure is taken from the census data and the second from a diary entry made by Dom Pedro II during a visit to the foundry, see Dom Pedro II, *Viagem a Pernambuco em 1859. Cópia, introdução e notas de Guilherme Auler*. (Recife: Arquivo Público Estadual, 1959) p. 69.

Although not as central as the diversification of investment opportunities or wider trends in the demographics of Brazilian slavery, we should not completely dismiss the impact of the 1843 Act on British slaveholding in the second half of the nineteenth century. Evans has correctly characterised this piece of legislation as ineffective; much to the disappointment of its abolitionist sponsors, it respected the property rights of British subjects to slaves purchased before its enactment and did not outlaw the future exploitation of slave labour through hiring.³⁸¹ However, the same author's assertion that the act was 'soon forgotten' belies the strategies adopted by British subjects in the subsequent decades to evade or circumvent its provisions. As Evans himself notes, the St. John Del Rey Mining Company hired slaves not just because it was a quick and cost-effective way of adding to their workforce in times of need, but because it kept them on the right side of the 1843 Act.³⁸² Indeed, Kelly has highlighted the fact that the company initially proceeded cautiously, seeking legal opinions in England and Brazil on the question of slave hiring.³⁸³ As we shall observe in Chapter V, the London and Brazilian Bank hired slaves to work its coffee plantation, knowing that any purchase would constitute a violation of the legislation. In both the case of the mining companies and the bank, there was a direct connection between the decision to hire slaves and a desire to remain on the right side of the law. With this in mind, we can surmise that other British subjects, the merchants listed in the return for Rio de Janeiro, who hired slaves after 1843 were driven, at least in part, by similar motivations.³⁸⁴

³⁸¹ C. Evans, 'Brazilian Gold' pp. 126-127.

³⁸² *Ibid* p. 126.

³⁸³ J. Kelly 'The Problem of Anti-Slavery' p. 200.

³⁸⁴ Census Return – Rio de Janeiro.

Hiring was the most common method employed to circumvent the spirit and letter of British anti-slavery legislation, but it was not the only one. As we observed in Chapter I, in 1861 the recently-arrived chaplain in Bahia complained that an unnamed British mercantile house in that city had purchased slaves by proxy. The slaves were nominally the property of a Brazilian clerk employed by the firm, but this individual had no control over them, was not in possession of the slaves' papers and never actually paid any money for their purchase; 'his name as a cover could be for any other changed at the pleasure of the firm.'³⁸⁵ Some four years later, vice-consul William Wilson in Maranhão reported that the German manager of the Montes Aureos Mining Company had purchased slaves in his name to allow this short-lived British firm to exploit their labour without falling foul of the 1843 Act.³⁸⁶ As discussed in the case of Thomas Cochrane earlier in this chapter, it is also possible that proxy purchases of slaves were made in the name of the Brazilian wives of British subjects for the same reason.

Another strategy, or at the very least a defence, employed by British slaveholders after 1843 was naturalisation as a Brazilian subject. We have observed how a Mr. Stepples in Pernambuco refused to be acknowledged as a British subject during the collection of the census data there. Likewise, we have seen how the exclusion of John Taylor from the Rio de Janeiro return may well have been linked to his naturalisation as a Brazilian subject. In 1861, when challenged about his slaveholding by a particularly

³⁸⁵ Reverend C.G. Nicolay to the Bishop of London, 11 June 1861, LPL, Tait 424, ff. 104-106.

³⁸⁶ Mr. Wilson to Mr. Blandy (and enclosures), 28 March 1865, TNA, FO 84/1244 ff. 236-251. See also, Mr. Layard to Consul Blandy, 7 June 1865, in *Ibid* ff. 194-195. For a brief history of this company see D. Cleary, *Anatomy of the Amazon Gold Rush*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990) pp. 36-38. See also, I. E. de Souza, *Exposição do Visconde de Mauá* p. 49.

zealous British consul at Rio, John McGinty argued that his adoption of Brazilian citizenship meant he was ‘at perfect liberty to purchase or sell a slave.’³⁸⁷ McGinty, like Taylor and Stepples, was in the service of the Brazilian navy so this profession, rather than circumventing British legislation, was likely his primary motivation for naturalisation. Nevertheless, McGinty’s reply to consul Vereker clearly shows that he perceived slaveholding to be a collateral benefit to the renunciation of his allegiance to the British crown. This was not restricted to Brazil; Kelly has shown how British subjects in Suriname were prepared to adopt foreign citizenship in order to protect their slaveholding from interference by the authorities after 1843.³⁸⁸ Slaveholding was of such importance to some British subjects that they were prepared to forgo their nationality in its defence.

Though the 1843 Act proved ineffective at preventing those that really wanted to from exploiting slave labour, there were also cases where its presence on the statute books and in public consciousness did hinder the proliferation of British slaveholding by some joint-stock companies. While its exact provisions may not have been well-known, that British subjects could not purchase new slaves was understood to the extent that at least three companies in industries synonymous with slavery publicly resolved to operate with free labour. Two mining companies established in London in 1861, the East del Rey and the Montes Aureos, both committed to using free labour, with the prospectus of the latter stating that ‘no slaves will be held by the Company or their servants.’³⁸⁹ Likewise, as we shall see in Chapter V, the Brazilian Coffee Estates

³⁸⁷ Mr. Vereker to Earl Russell, 9 December 1861, Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1862 (Class B), P.P, 3160 pp. 127-128.

³⁸⁸ J. Kelly, ‘The Problem of Anti-slavery’ pp. 167-169.

³⁸⁹ *Daily News*, 19 Dec 1861, cited in J. Kelly, ‘The Problem of Anti-slavery’ p. 202.

Company of 1872, also publicly committed to a free labour operation. In these three cases it was not simply a desire to stay on the right side of the law that influenced their labour policy, but a realisation that an association with slavery would make these companies impossible to sell to British investors. Of course, in spite of these public declarations, the Montes Aureos and the bank behind the Coffee Estates Company would ultimately find ways to exploit slave labour during their short-lived operations. Nevertheless, the 1843 law and its incorporation into British anti-slavery identity is at least partly responsible for the lack of new joint-stock slaveholders in mining and agriculture in the second half of the nineteenth-century. In this sense, the Act did not ultimately prevent the new exploitation of slave labour, but it did complicate it.

Concluding remarks:

This chapter has shown that British slaveholding was far more diverse across geography and sector than acknowledged by the literature. Beyond the mines of Minas Gerais, there were a similar collective total of slaves employed by silent beneficiaries of the 1843 Act in a whole range of agricultural and urban contexts. While numerically insignificant in the wider Brazilian context, the prevalence of slaveholding in British expat communities has important implications for our understanding of the limits of British anti-slavery. Anti-slavery may have pervaded the national identity of Victorian Britain, but as this chapter has clearly shown, it did not travel well when it encountered the social and economic realities of Brazil's slaveholding empire. As much as British masters may have protested to the contrary, on the whole, they employed their slaves in similar contexts and treated them in much the same fashion as their Brazilian counterparts. That the British anti-slavery state could not rely on nor enforce their

subjects to embody the same virtues they impressed upon foreign governments, is testament to legislation and policy that was both limited in scope and ill-equipped in practical terms. As we shall see in the following chapters, this not only applied to British slaveholding for labour in mines, agriculture, and urban enterprise, but also in the case of financial entanglement with Brazilian slavery.

Chapter III: British Merchant Credit and Brazilian Slavery, 1830-1850.

Lord Brougham's 1843 legislation was not only a threat to British subjects who employed slaves in goldmines, on plantations, in workshops and their own households. As we observed in Chapter I, lobbying alongside those representing traditional slaveholders during the bill's debate were a handful of MPs intent on nullifying the threat they believed the legislation would pose to Britain's significant commercial relations in territories where slavery prevailed. At the crux of the matter were elements of the proposed legislation that aimed to restrict credit relations between British merchants and foreign slave-owners. According to the lobby's parliamentary representatives Humphrey Mildmay MP and Lord Ashburton, the extension of credit secured by slave property and the occasional requirement to foreclose on these debts was part and parcel of doing business in 'any country from Virginia to [the] Brazils'. As such, any attempt to interfere with these practices would undoubtedly be damaging to British trade in these regions.¹ The efforts by Mildmay and Ashburton to protect what they regarded as legitimate trade were grounded in their own experience as partners of Baring Bros., a powerful merchant bank whose credit relations with slaveholders resulted in it becoming a beneficiary of British slave compensation and the owner of plantations and slaves in both Cuba and the Danish West Indies.² Though Barings did not become a slaveholder in Brazil, we have observed elsewhere that other

¹ *Hansard*, HC Deb 18 August 1843 vol 71 c. 936.

² On St. Croix, see L. Brown, 'The Slavery Connections of Northington Grange' (English Heritage, 2010) [<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/slavery-connections-northington-grange/slavery-connections-northington-grange.pdf>] [last accessed 25/04/2018] pp. 65-73. On Cuba, see I. Roldan de Montaud, 'Baring Brothers and the Cuban Plantation Economy, 1814-1870', in A. Leonard and D. Pretel (eds), *The Caribbean and the Atlantic World Economy: Circuits of Trade, Money and Knowledge, 1650-1914* (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015) pp. 238-262. Both cases are examined in the context of parliamentary debates about Brougham's bill in J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-Slavery' pp. 173-190.

British merchants in places such as Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco and Paraíba did foreclose on debts secured by human collateral.³ Though these cases are evidence of the credit relations in Brazil that the Baring's commercial lobby sought to defend, the fact remains that very little is known about British involvement in slave mortgages and similar transactions identified by the 1843 bill's sponsors as another form of British complicity in the promotion of the illegal slave trade.

The purpose of this chapter, then, is to survey the relationship between British merchant credit and Brazilian slavery during the two decades of the contraband trade and to determine whether the anti-slavery legislation introduced in 1843 had any noticeable impact on the way British merchants conducted their business in the years following its enactment. This survey, based on an analysis of publicly recorded slave mortgages involving British merchants in the city of Rio de Janeiro, reveals that British merchants were financially entangled with Brazilian slavery in a variety of ways; both as creditors and debtors, with Brazilians and within their own community, and in rural as well as urban contexts. While slave mortgages involving British subjects were not particularly prevalent, during the 1830s they were openly and routinely conducted in the context of minimal scrutiny that characterised British anti-slavery attitudes towards British slaveholding in this decade. Anti-slavery legislation did seem to have an immediate, if short term, impact in the sense that it does not appear to have been brazenly ignored. Nevertheless, as happened in the case of slaveholding, legislation could not prevent this form of financial entanglement with Brazilian slavery; determined creditors found ways to observe the letter of the law without abandoning their investments.

³ Discussed in Chapter I, Part II.

As stressed in the Introduction, the historiography of the British in Brazil has not adequately addressed the relationship between these communities and slavery. This includes the entanglement of British merchant credit and human property. One aspect of this financial connection has, of course, been well developed in the literature; historians of the slave trade and its abolition have described the important role that British merchants played as suppliers, facilitators and financiers of illegal slave voyages.⁴ Although involving many of the same actors, these links to the contraband trade were not the credit relations that the 1843 Act was designed to target specifically, nor what the lobby organised by Baring Bros. sought to protect. Rather than credit relations with slave traders, Ashburton and Mildmay defended the right of British merchants to extend credit and recover debts in territories where dealers commonly offered human beings as collateral. The major reason that historians of the slave trade and anti-slavery have overlooked these connections is that they constituted a minor theatre of the state's attempt to prevent British complicity. Unlike the types of direct and indirect connections with slave traders – legislated against as early as 1806 – official concern surrounding the promotion of the trade through investments in domestic slavery only gathered traction in the early 1840s and had largely dissipated by the turn of the midcentury.

Credit relations with slaveholders have also been largely overlooked by the business history literature concerning the British firms involved in these transactions. While recognising the connections between British merchants and the illegal slave trade, the

⁴ D. Eltis, 'The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade' pp. 219–221; L.H. Tavares, *Comércio Proibido de Escravos* pp. 76-79, 129-134; R. Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade to Brazil*, pp.130-132.

primary focus of these studies has tended to be the structure, organisation and networks of individual firms.⁵ Whereas others have been more concerned with the collective performance of the British commercial body as evidence for or against dependency theory.⁶ The absence of research on the financial connections between British merchants and domestic slavery is also partly explained by the fact that the British were not direct financiers of the most dynamic sector of Brazil's slave economy; British credit circulated primarily within the import-export complex and generally only reached the agricultural sector indirectly.⁷ Nevertheless, as the lobbyists against the 1843 bill were aware, there were a whole myriad of ways that British credit could be exposed to slavery in a country whose economy was so dominated by the institution. Understanding the processes involved in the entanglement between British credit and domestic slavery is a worthy exercise on its own, but perhaps what is more important is what it can tell us about the limits of British anti-slavery policy on foreign shores.

Another factor contributing to the scarcity of information on British credit relations with slaveholders has to do with the availability of source material. Firstly, as this form of complicity was only a policy concern for a short period, it only features briefly

⁵ See C.G Guimarães, 'O Comércio Inglês no Império brasileiro: a atuação da firma inglesa Carruthers & Co, 1824-1854', in *Anais do Seminário Interno do CEO/PRONEX Nação e Cidadania no Império: Novos Horizontes*, (2006); C.G Guimarães, *A Presença Inglesa nas Finanças e no Comércio no Brasil Imperial: Os casos da Sociedade Bancária Mauá, MacGregor & Cia (1854-1866) e da firm inglesa Samuel Phillips & Cia (1808-1840)* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2012) pp. 221-252.

⁶ See Introduction.

⁷ British merchants were the last step in the marketing chain of Brazilian coffee. They were an important source of international credit in the economy, as emphasised by work on their role in the slave trade, see D. Eltis, 'The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade' pp. 220-222. Nevertheless, in general terms they did not lend directly to plantation owners, a role dominated by Luso-Brazilian coffee factors, see J. Sweigart, 'Financing and marketing Brazilian export agriculture: the coffee factor 1850-1888.' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Texas, 1980).

in the official F.O. correspondence and abolitionist writings upon which historians of the slave trade have relied. Secondly, unlike the British joint-stock banks of later decades that left published annual reports, recorded shareholder meetings and archived correspondence, British merchant houses operating in the first half of the century left far fewer traces of their activity in the historical record.⁸ The general absence of records relating to the firms in question is further complicated by the commercial activities which British merchants were involved in. Most ‘English houses’ operating in Brazilian port cities during the 1830s and 1840s were involved in the import of British manufactures and the export of Brazilian commodities, such as coffee and sugar.⁹ As Eltis has noted in his study of the involvement of these firms in the illegal trade, the import and sale of British goods in Brazil was almost inseparable from credit.¹⁰ These transactions were based on the circulation of different types of commercial paper that although not formally regulated until the passing of the Commercial Code in 1850, were widely accepted in a system characterised by informal and personalistic credit relations.¹¹ Crucially, in the absence of surviving accounts and ledgers, transactions of this nature left little trace in the historical record.

⁸ An exception to this general rule is Robert Greenhill’s study of the firm of E. Johnston & Co, which drew on correspondence in private collections. See R. Greenhill ‘E. Johnston: 150 Anos em Café’ in E. Bacha & R. Greenhill (eds.) *150 Anos de Café* (Rio de Janeiro: Marcelino Martins & E. Johnston, 1992) pp. 137-280.

⁹ Of 48 ‘English houses’ in Rio de Janeiro included in a consular register of 1848, 37 were listed as ‘general merchants’ while a further 5 were described as ‘merchants’ alongside another activity such as auctioneering. The remaining firms included one banking house and brokerage firms. See: Mr. Westwood to Viscount Palmerston, 28 December 1848, in TNA FO 13/260.

¹⁰ D. Eltis, ‘The British contribution to the nineteenth century slave trade’ p. 220.

¹¹ A. Hanley, *Native Capital: Financial Institutions and Economic Development in São Paulo, Brazil, 1850-1920* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005) pp. 31-32.

While the majority of British activity in the Brazilian credit market remains invisible to the historian, some transactions were publicly recorded in notarial offices in the form of *escrituras*. These contracts recorded various types of transactions including the purchase, sale, transfer of property, probate inventories and even marriages and divorce. Importantly for our study, these notarial records also contain *escrituras de dívida e hipoteca* (debt and mortgage deeds). These were a form of public contract between two or more parties which generally followed a standardised format containing information about the debtor and creditor, the basic agreement between them (amount loaned, repayment terms) and importantly a description of any property offered as security for the loan, including human collateral.¹² The information contained in these deeds, although not without limitations, provides a unique opportunity to better understand the business activities of the British in Rio de Janeiro and trace the types of transactions which the parliamentary lobbyists sought to defend. Moreover, in cases involving slave mortgages, they also offer an opportunity to begin to piece together the social implications and the human stories behind British investment in Brazil's slave economy.

Whilst the findings of this chapter will bring to light new empirical evidence concerning the entanglement of British mercantile capital and Brazilian slavery, it is worth making two brief points about the limitations of the methodology employed. One relates to the historical intangibility of financial transactions in the context of the practices and conditions of the Brazilian credit market in the first half of the nineteenth century. Although this source base can undoubtedly provide a window into the

¹² For the format and information typically contained in a deed of this type, see J.J. Ryan, 'Credit Where Credit is Due: Lending and Borrowing in Rio de Janeiro, 1820-1900' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of California, 2007) pp. 42-49.

entanglement of British credit and slavery in the absence of other sources, it should be recognized that they only represent a small proportion of all credit transactions involving British merchants. This fact restricts the types of conclusions that can be drawn from such data. Despite having been inspired by Bonnie Martin's use of similar documents to understand the role that slave mortgages played in the economy of the U.S. South, this research cannot hope to make similar conclusions about the overall importance of British credit to slavery in Rio de Janeiro and its surrounding region.¹³

As alluded to previously, the slave mortgages identified in a survey of *escrituras de dívida e hipoteca* do not record every time that a lender extended credit to a slaveowner directly or indirectly. As this chapter will show, they occur most commonly in three scenarios. Firstly, when a debtor missed a payment deadline that originated in a commercial transaction. In this circumstance, one option open to the creditor was to agree to an extension, where the debtor offered his property as security in the event of further defaults on the loan. It is important to note that not all creditors pursued this course of action; if he was unwilling to extend the deadline for payment, he could take his debtor to court. These legal processes, which for British subjects were conducted until 1844 under the auspices of the British Conservatorial Court, could result in the seizure and sale of slave property. These cases are not considered in this chapter.¹⁴

The second scenario involves the contracting of a purchase-money mortgage, where

¹³ B. Martin, 'Slavery's Invisible Engine: Mortgaging Human Property' *Journal of Southern History* 76 (2010) pp. 817-866.

¹⁴ I had initially hoped to use court records to complement the mortgage deeds analysed here but was unable to locate sufficient numbers of cases to consult. Although a small number of processes are held at the Arquivo Nacional in Rio de Janeiro, I have since discovered that other documents relating to the British Conservatorial Court may be held at the Arquivo da Justiça in the same city. If located and in good condition, these documents represent an important, and thus far overlooked, source for research on the British in Brazil in the first half of the nineteenth century.

the buyer wished to purchase a property including slaves but could not afford the cash price so instead made a down payment and mortgaged the property to the seller as security for future instalments. The last scenario for the contracting of a slave mortgage was for an equity loan, where a debtor released equity in their slave property in order to raise funds for whatever purpose.

The second methodological limitation relates to the geographic focus and gaps in coverage of the sample used. Firstly, due to the availability of readily accessible data, the sample used in this study is limited to deeds registered in notary offices in Rio de Janeiro included in the database of Brazil's National Archive. It should also be noted, however, that this sample is limited by gaps in coverage on the database. For example, of the four notarial offices in existence in the 1830 - 1850, the records of Second (*Segundo Ofício de Notas*) and Fourth (*Quarto Ofício de Notas*) are not held by the Brazilian National Archive and are not included in the sample. Moreover, not all of the deed books from the First and Third notarial offices have been included in the Archive's database.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the fact that the First *Ofício* in particular has a fairly complete dataset is important as it was located in the commercial district near the port, where most British merchants maintained their offices and warehouses. Lastly, as the database contains no information about the nationality of the contracting parties, cases involving British subjects had to be identified by unsystematically scanning the database for 'English-looking' names and then cross-referencing these names with other sources to confirm their nationality. Human error, both of the compiler of the database – transcription errors with English names are common – and

¹⁵ For coverage of the Brazilian National Archive's 'Ofícios de Notas da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro' database see <http://www.arquivonacional.gov.br/acervos-mais-consultados-titulo/oficio-de-notas.html> [Last accessed 8/11/2016]. Gaps for the time period concerned are negligible for the First (Primeiro Ofício de Notas) but the Third only contains data from 17/02/1844.

my own in scanning lists, mean that entries are likely to have been overlooked. In spite of the limitations of this methodology and in the absence of other sources, a survey of these mortgage contracts provides important glimpses of the entanglement of British credit and Brazilian slavery in the context of British anti-slavery policy.

British merchants and mortgage deeds 1830-1850

Before discussing the individual case studies found in Rio de Janeiro's notary office records, it is worthwhile noting that those British merchants partaking in transactions involving human collateral were replicating a long-held practice in both the context of Brazil and the pre-emancipation British Empire. Studies of credit markets in the British Atlantic during the long eighteenth century have described a mature and complex credit system involving planters, local merchants, commission houses and bankers in Britain.¹⁶ Although scholars disagree over the relative importance of local, short-term commercial credit or longer-term metropole financing, it is clear that the use of slave property as collateral for financial transactions was a routine and legal practice in the British colonies before the Emancipation Act of 1833.¹⁷ Using the Slave Compensation Commission records, Nicholas Draper and the *LBS Project* have clearly demonstrated that at the time of emancipation ten London banking houses and a whole host of merchants from across Britain – including Baring Bros. – had claims in the

¹⁶ R. Pares, 'Merchants and Planters,' *Economic History Review Supplement 4* (1960) pp. 1-91; S.D Smith, 'Merchants and Planters Revisited,' *Economic History Review*, new ser., 55 (2002), pp. 434-65; D. Hancock, "'Capital and Credit with Approved Security:' Financial Markets in Montserrat and South Carolina, 1748-1775,' *Business and Economic History*, 23 (1994), pp. 61-84.

¹⁷ The practice was legally formalised under the Colonial Debts Act (1732) in which slaves were defined as personal property and thus could be used as security for debts. See S.D. Smith 'Merchants and Planters Revisited,' p. 455.

compensation process following loans they had made against slaves in British colonial possessions.¹⁸

Despite a certain ambiguity about slaves in Brazilian law, giving them the status of being simultaneously both ‘thing’ and ‘person’, their use as property to guarantee a loan saw them treated as *bens semoventes* – semi-moveable objects in the same way as livestock.¹⁹ In their respective studies on the agricultural credit in Rio de Janeiro province and non-bank lending in the city of Rio de Janeiro, both Joseph Sweigart and Joseph Ryan have shown that slaves were routinely offered as guarantees for loans in these intimately linked credit markets.²⁰ Given the types of loans that Rio’s notary offices recorded and known the size of the slave population - estimated at 43% and 41% of the city’s total in 1838 and 1849 respectively - Ryan’s findings that it was ‘individual slaves, used as domestic servants within the city’ which made up the bulk of slave collateral in the first half of the 19th century is not surprising.²¹ Perhaps more surprising is his finding that slaves were ‘not used all that frequently to secure credit,’ appearing in 18% of the loans which listed collateral between 1820-1890 in his sample. As a proportion of total value of credit secured, Ryan does note that slave collateral was at its most important in 1830 (in his decennially sampled data), representing 18%. So, while it was at its most significant during the period under consideration in this chapter, the overall importance of human collateral was still marginal in comparison to urban property for example, which in the 1830 and 1840 decennial represented 58%

¹⁸ N. Draper, *The Price of Emancipation*, Chapter 7; *UCL Legacies of Slave Ownership*, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/> [last accessed 6th May 2015]

¹⁹ K. Grinberg, *Código civil e cidadania*. (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2001) pp. 52-53

²⁰ J. E. Sweigart, *Financing and marketing Brazilian export agriculture* p. 123.

²¹ J. Ryan, ‘Credit Where Credit is Due: Lending and Borrowing in Rio de Janeiro, 1820-1900’, p. 46

and 49% of all credit secured.²² In spite of its relative infrequency, it was the possibility and legality of the collateralisation of slave property in Brazil which the likes of Ashburton and Mildmay were defending.

Given Ryan's findings about the relative importance of other types of property offered as collateral, it is perhaps worthwhile making some comments on those mortgages identified in our survey that were secured by non-slave property, in so far as they give us an insight into the commercial activity and social relations of members of the British community in Rio de Janeiro. Given the majority of the British involved in transactions located in the notary records during this period were merchants linked to the import-export complex, it is not surprising that many of the mortgage deeds in question arose from an initial transaction involving commercial paper and that merchants would often offer their commercial or residential properties as security for repayment. For instance, in April 1845 Brazilian debtor Reinaldo José Carneira agreed that following the expiration of two commercial bills totalling 12 contos, he would mortgage his two-storey house on Rua da Violas to John LeCoq, a merchant from the Channel Islands with extensive interests in the coffee trade.²³ Due to the common practice of discounting amongst the commercial community, deeds sometimes involved more than two parties. In December 1837 British firms Naylor Brothers and Francis Le Breton signed a deed to confirm that American merchant James Birkhead had paid off the mortgage, guaranteed by commercial property, which

²² Ryan admits that his classification of types of collateral mean slaves are occasionally grouped with other types of property are thus systematically underrepresented. See *Ibid* pp. 122-124.

²³ Reinaldo José Carneira x João LeCoq, 16/04/1845, AN, 3o Ofício de notas, book 196, f.18

he had first agreed in June of the same year for 17 contos.²⁴ The British were not always the creditors in these urban property mortgages. For example, in December 1847 British merchant and sugar planter William Whitaker agreed to mortgage a house in Santos, São Paulo, following his failure to repay eight contos of credit which João Duarte Lisboa Serra, future President of the Bank of Brazil, had extended to him.²⁵

On the few occasions the deeds do not have their origins in merchant bills, they were for equity loans where credit was offered to allow the borrower to expand their operations. For example, in April 1838, James Birkhead contracted a 12-month loan worth 16 contos from Baring Brothers of London, through their Rio based agent, Henry Bellamy Webb. The loan was guaranteed by his *chácara* in Engenho Velho, a semi-rural district on the outskirts of the city. Though this mortgage did not contain human collateral, it shows that Barings were active, however marginally, in Rio de Janeiro's credit market - a business environment where, as their partner Humphrey Mildmay argued in parliament, exposure to slavery was perfectly possible.²⁶ In April 1848, British merchant James Hartley also raised an equity loan with the infamous slave trafficker José Bernardino de Sá.²⁷ As well as commercial property near the port, Hartley offered as security his cotton textile factory in Andaraí.²⁸ Although urban

²⁴ Naylor Irmãos, Francisco Le Breton x Diogo Birkhead, 14/12/1837, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 243, f. 60r.

²⁵ Guilherme Whitaker x João Duarte Lisboa, 01/12/1837, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 258, f. 32.

²⁶ Diogo Birkhead x Baring Irmãos e Cia. de Londres, 10/04/1838, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 244, f. 28r.

²⁷ Joaquim Diogo Hartley x José Bernardino de Sá, 29/04/1848, AN, 3o Ofício de notas, book 201, f. 53.

²⁸ Interestingly, this loan came only seven months after Hartley had successfully raised 100 contos in government finance for the very same establishment. See Senado Federal, Decreto nº 491, 28/09/1847. <http://legis.senado.gov.br/legislacao/ListaTextoIntegral.action?id=64892&norma=80800> [last accessed 13/11/2016]

property was predominant – whether houses, a factory or even a saw mill – on one occasion rural *fazendas* (plantations) were accepted as security in a purchase-money mortgage by British creditors. In February 1840 a group of British merchants including David Stevenson and Henry Burn, the latter as administrator the estate of the late Alexander Milne, sold a plantation called *Serparagui* only to then take the very same estate as security over five years for 75% of the 10 contos (£1292) purchase price agreed with José Narcizo Coelho.²⁹ However, it seems that Coelho struggled to pay the amount in full and some nine years later the plantation was put up for public auction to satisfy Coelho's debt to Stevenson.³⁰ No slaves were identified as part of this transaction but this case adds further weight to the observation made in Chapter II that British plantation ownership was more common than had previously been recognised.

British Merchants and Human Collateral: 1830 - 1850

Of the loans guaranteed by slave property a very similar picture emerges of lending - and indeed borrowing - within and outside the British community, on the basis of commercial bills, equity loans and purchase-money mortgages. Moreover, as all but one of the mortgages concerned were collateralised only in part by slaves, they can also be categorised into urban and rural contexts. In terms of loans collateralised by human and some sort of urban property, again we can observe a mixture of commercial, residential and personal assets. For example, on various occasions Joseph Maxwell

²⁹ David Stevenson, Henrique Burn x José Narcizo Coelho, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 246, ff. 51-52r.

³⁰ *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 25 January 1849.

was involved in slave mortgages arranged with small business owners in the city.³¹ Maxwell was a founder partner of the firm Maxwell, Wright & Company whose main area of activity was in the export of coffee to the US and the importation of mid-Atlantic flour on the return journey.³² The sale on credit of this import to bakers in the city is the reason Maxwell appears in the notary records. In June 1836, following his failure to pay the one conto (£160) owed for a consignment of flour, Francisco José Pinheiro Braga mortgaged his two bakeries, equipment and four African slaves, João Congo, João Inhambane, Elias Moçambique and Paulo Benguela, to Maxwell.³³ Almost a decade to the day later, Maxwell's firm agreed a mortgage with Arnaldo Pinto de Castro who in very similar circumstances offered his bakery plus 16 slaves, all of African origin, as collateral for the 10 contos (£1122) he owed for the purchase of flour.³⁴ Although these are the only occasions he appears as slave mortgagee in the notary records concerned, Alan dos Santos Ribeiro's research has shown that on at least two other occasions in 1834 and 1836 Maxwell, Wright & Co. brought debtors before the British Conservatorial Court (*Conservatoria Inglesa*) in Rio where the judge ordered for their assets including slaves to be sold at auction to pay the outstanding debt.³⁵

³¹ Joseph Maxwell's country estate is discussed in more detail in Chapter II.

³² For more information on the diverse activities of this Anglo-American firm, including in the illegal slave trade, see A. dos Santos Ribeiro, 'A firma Maxwell Wright & Co. no comércio do império do Brasil (c. 1827- c. 1850)' See also L. Jarnagin, *Atlantic Crossings: A Confluence of Transatlantic Networks: Elites, Capitalism, and Confederate Migration to Brazil* (University of Alabama, 2008) p. 112.

³³ Francisco José Pinheiro Braga x José Maxwell, 04/06/1836, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 241, ff. 83r-84.

³⁴ Arnaldo Pinto de Castro x Maxwell, Wright & Cia, 17/06/1846, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 256, ff. 56r-57.

³⁵ A. dos Santos Ribeiro, 'A firma Maxwell Wright & Co.' p. 93. While Maxwell Wright & Co. has often been considered as a U.S. in the literature, it is clear that it was willing to exploit its British connections when this meant taking advantage of the privileged forum of the British Conservatorial Court.

On other occasions British residents in Rio were debtors in these transactions and offered their slaves as collateral for money owed. In November 1838, following the expiration of a private credit instrument worth a considerable 31 contos (£3261) British merchant Richard Foster mortgaged all of his property to his creditor José Alves Corrêa. There is scant record of Foster's activities in the 1830s, but port entries and departures published in the *Jornal do Commercio* in the 1840s show him linked to the Rio de la Plata as well as Brazilian coastal trade.³⁶ The size of his debt as well as the inventory of mortgaged property show the importance of his firm as a going concern. In addition to 14 slaves and their six children, Foster mortgaged his commercial offices near the port as well as two country estates in the semi-rural Engenho Velho district which neighboured the properties of other affluent merchants such as the American Birkhead.³⁷ In another case involving household slaves and domestic property, in April 1845 the Marquess de São João da Palma was able to release 14 contos (£1483) worth of equity from her personal property, including some 20 slaves, in a mortgage with the Scotsman, Dr. Thomas Cochrane.³⁸

The economic importance of Rio de Janeiro meant that it was also on occasion the source of credit for commercial ventures outside its immediate vicinity. The next case study we will analyse concerns a sugar refinery that received large amounts of credit guaranteed by human collateral by two different British merchants. These transactions

³⁶ *Jornal do Commercio*, 2 January 1843 shows Englishman Ricardo Foster as having departed for Buenos Aires and Montevideo on 30 December 1842.

³⁷ Ricardo Foster x José Alves Correa, 14/11/1838, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 244, ff. 111-112.

³⁸ Marquesa de São João da Palma x Thomas Cochrane, 05/04/1845, AN, 3o Ofício de Notas, book 196, ff. 37v-38.

will be used to highlight the highly personal nature of Brazil's credit market of the first half of the nineteenth century and to show how British credit networks were not just limited to Atlantic facing urban centres, but at times extended directly into the rural economy. On 11th August 1837, David Stevenson, who may have already been the owner of the *Serparagui* plantation by this point, arrived at First Notary Office to sign a mortgage deed with two other foreign merchants. In the document Frederico Fomm and Augusto Millet recognised that they were Stevenson's debtors to the considerable sum of 40 contos (£4926) and in collateral they offered their sugar refinery in the port city of Santos, São Paulo, along with the 25 slaves who worked in that establishment.³⁹ A document registered in the same notary office almost two years later declared that the outstanding debt had been satisfactorily cleared.⁴⁰ However, in February 1840 Fomm and Millet returned to the same office to register another mortgage agreement, this time with British merchant Dr. Henry Coates. Once more, they were debtors to the tune of 40 contos and again they offered the same property as collateral, although by this time their slave labour force had grown to 32. Importantly however, the size of the debt and collateral offered in guarantee were not the only similarities between the two mortgage deeds signed by Millet and Fomm. Both documents state that the owners of the refinery had initially received credit in the form of commercial paper (*letras aceitas*) by another British merchant firm called Platt & Reid. The association of this firm suggests that this flow of credit - from Stevenson and Coates to Fomm and Millet by way of Platt & Reid – may have been associated

³⁹ Frederico Fomm and Augusto Millet x David Stevenson, 11 August 1837, AN, 1o Oficio de Notas, book 242, ff. 142-142r. Their sugar refinery had been in operation since at least October 1835 when they petitioned the customs house for privileges regarding the importation of the refinery's equipment. See *O Paulista Official*, 29 October 1835.

⁴⁰ Frederico Fomm and Augusto Millet x David Stevenson, 13 May 1839, AN, 1o Oficio de Notas, book 245 ff. 46-46r.

with the first, but ultimately unsuccessful, attempt to construct Brazil's first railway. Fomm was the partner in the Santos firm of Casa Aguiar Viúva e Filhos, which along with Platt & Reid had been granted concessions by the São Paulo provincial government in 1836 and 1838 for the construction of a railway connecting Santos with the sugar producing regions of the interior.⁴¹ It is therefore plausible that Platt & Reid originally intended to employ the capital in this ultimately fruitless endeavour.

A mortgage deed in the notary records from June 1837 is helpful in tracing this initial loan. Two months before he signed the mortgage deed with Fomm and Millet, David Stevenson agreed another mortgage with William Platt of the firm Platt & Reid.⁴² It is fair to say that Stevenson probably knew Platt, perhaps through their mutual association with Alexander Milne.⁴³ This familiarity between both parties is likely the reason that Stevenson felt comfortable enough to loan Platt 50 contos (£6157) which the latter stated was to shore up his merchant house. However, Platt did not offer any of his firm's property as collateral, instead he mortgaged his sugar plantation called *Fazendinha* near the city of Campos. The use of the Portuguese diminutive '-inha' was somewhat ironic as it was a substantial estate worked by 200 slaves, who were also mortgaged to Stevenson. Unfortunately, the document does not give more details about these people aside to say that their number contained adults and children of both sexes. British involvement in an equity loan of this type and size is certainly unusual; in general terms, British credit only reached plantation owners through third party

⁴¹ M.L. Lamounier, *Ferrovias e Mercado de Trabalho* p. 157.

⁴² Guilherme Platt x David Stevenson, 08/06/1837, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 242, ff. 100r-101r.

⁴³ Platt had been part of the firm Platt, Reid and Milne. References to this firm can be found in o *Jornal do Commercio* between 1828 and 1832. For example, see *Ibid* 01/02/1828 and 27/12/1832.

factors or commission agents.⁴⁴ Moreover, this type of transaction was not typical of the credit relations lobbyists were seeking to defend. Nevertheless, its existence shows there were exceptions, and in this case of considerable monetary value, to this generalisation. The involvement of David Stevenson as creditor in a number of these mortgages also allows us to make a comment about ambivalent attitudes towards anti-slavery during the 1830s and early 1840s. Stevenson was not a regular merchant, he was a lawyer who throughout this period represented Royal Navy captors as their proctor in the Mixed Commission court. He also acted as an ‘unofficial legal adviser’ to the British legation on slave trade questions and his reports on treaty negotiations were occasionally sent *ad verbatim* to London.⁴⁵ The dissonance between his public role in support of slave trade suppression and his private investments is reflective of the restricted view of complicity that characterised British anti-slavery policy before 1843.

While William Platt’s mortgage is certainly the largest in terms of value and human collateral involved, the records present a handful of other occasions where British credit made its way directly to a rural slave owner. In the case of the mortgage agreed between the British firm Carruthers & Bros. and Luis Manoel Pereira we again observe the most common reason for British parties to publicly record a debt owed - the expiration of commercial paper. In July 1832 following non-payment of two bills worth just under 9.5 contos, Pereira entered into a mortgage agreement with his creditor offering as collateral his plantation situated in Guapiaçu, some 120km from the city of Rio, along with the eight African slaves who worked the estate. No record

⁴⁴ J. E. Sweigart, ‘Financing and marketing Brazilian export agriculture’ p. 128.

⁴⁵ L. Bethell, *The Abolition* p. 158 n.1 and p. 242.

has been found of Pereira's profession other than as a planter, but more is known about his British creditor. Cumbrian brothers Richard and Isaac established Carruthers & Co. sometime around 1829, and throughout the 1830s and 1840s they established a reputation among the most important importers and wholesalers of English manufactures and cotton goods. Carlos Gabriel Guimarães and Luis Tavares have linked this trade as well as their close association to traffickers such as the Baron de Ubá, José Ignácio Tavares and Manoel Pinto da Fonseca to participation in the illegal slave trade as suppliers of goods and credit.⁴⁶ Whether connected to the legal or illicit branches of their business, Ashburton and Mildmay had defended the commercial transaction where this debt originated.

The final two examples of rural slave mortgages involve purchase-money loans originating in British plantation ownership. In October 1833 the British firm Naylor Bros. and merchant Richard Bancroft decided to sell their plantation located in Suruí, Rio de Janeiro, along with the 19 slaves attached to their estate. They had been in possession of the property since 1821 following a ruling in the British Conservatorial Court which awarded them their debtors property. Although nothing else is known about the original debt, the journey of these merchants to land and slave ownership seems to share the same characteristics as Barings' foreclosure on estates in Cuba. The sale price was ten contos (£1558), two (£312) for the land and eight (£1246) for the slaves. As the purchaser, Luiz Pires Garcia was only able to pay two contos in cash up front, Naylor Bros and Bancroft agreed to a three-year payment plan secured by the

⁴⁶ C.G Guimarães, 'O Comércio Inglês no Império brasileiro: a atuação da firma inglesa Carruthers & Co, 1824-1854' p. 14. See also, L.H.Tavares, *Comércio Proibido*, pp. 131-132; R. Conrad, *World of Sorrow* pp. 131-132.

19 slaves as well as the Garcia's other plantation.⁴⁷ A deed from just under three and a half years later indicates that Garcia had been unable to pay his creditors who instead of foreclosing decided to restructure the mortgage, this time including 30 slaves. Interestingly, the slaves were described as '*todos de nação*' meaning they were all African in origin rather than Brazilian born.⁴⁸ The likelihood is that some of these 30 – like many slaves included in these mortgage contracts – had been imported illegally as per international treaty and Brazilian law. Upon his death in 1839, Garcia's estate was still in seven contos worth of debt to his British creditors who decided to sell and transfer the mortgage to a third party, Bento José Velozo.⁴⁹ It is probable that it made more business sense to Naylor Bros and Bancroft to transfer the mortgage given the legal uncertainties and costs of foreclosing on rural mortgages in 19th century Brazil.⁵⁰

The final slave mortgage under consideration is unique in the sense that the only property offered as collateral for the loan were the debtor's slaves. The mortgage deed signed by George Harvey and his countryman John Denby was the formalisation of a contract which the pair had already agreed verbally. In October 1846, Harvey, owner of a plantation called *Jacaré* in Itaípu, contracted an equity loan from export merchant Denby to the value of 13 contos payable over four years. The only security listed in the deed were eight slaves, who in the event of their death or escape, could be replaced

⁴⁷ Naylor Irmãos and Ricardo Bancroft x Luiz Pires Garcia, 21/10/1833, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 239, ff. 17v-18v.

⁴⁸ Luiz Pires Garcia x Naylor Irmãos and Ricardo Bancroft, 09/03/1837, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 242, ff. 47-47v.

⁴⁹ Naylor Irmãos and Ricardo Bancroft and Bento José Velozo, 10/04/1839, AN, 1o Ofício de Notas, book 245 f. 17v.

⁵⁰ J. E. Sweigart, *Financing and marketing Brazilian export agriculture*. p.125.

by any other slaves attached to Harvey's estate.⁵¹ The second unique characteristic of this loan agreement is the latest example of a British contracted slave mortgage in our survey and one of only three identified following the enactment of 1843 Slave Trade Act. While the small size and unsystematic nature of the survey does not allow us to draw definitive conclusions, the following section will consider whether this legislation changed how British creditors approached transactions involving human collateral after 1843.

The impact of anti-slavery legislation on British slave mortgages

In Chapter II we observed that though Lord Brougham's Act did not prevent the continued exploitation of slave labour, the law did modify how most British subjects did so. The most common strategy, adopted by mining companies, was to hire labourers from other slaveholders on lengthy contracts. Others purchased slaves in the names of their non-British wives or employees and at least one British resident defended his right to slave property through his naturalisation as a Brazilian subject. Though much less information exists about attitudes to slave mortgages in a post-1843 context, this section will draw on glimpses of evidence from the notary records and other narrative sources to suggest that anti-slavery legislation also influenced, in the short-term at least, the way British subjects dealt with debts secured by human collateral.

The first indication of the impact of the 1843 law on financial transactions involving British subjects is contained in a consular report condemning the practice of

⁵¹ Jorge Harvey x João Denby, 20/10/1846, AN, 3o Oficio de Notas, book 199, ff. 90-90r.

transferring slaves in lieu of payment for debts. In January 1846 in a note to the Foreign Secretary, the British consul in Paraíba lamented that ‘every expedient is resorted to by British subjects for the purpose of enabling them to carry on with impunity the illegal receipt and transfer of slaves.’⁵² British merchants, in this consular district at least, were aware of the Act’s provisions and had responded by finding ways to circumvent them, rather than desisting from the practices now made illegal. As we observed in Chapter I, it was as a result of this case in Paraíba and another in Pernambuco that Palmerston issued a circular in 1847 to clarify the illegality that the foreclosure on debts secured by human collateral, in so far as they caused the sale or transfer of slaves.

The account of two British visitors to Rio de Janeiro in 1852 suggests that their compatriots there were also aware of the implications of the circular. Following their audience with Dom Pedro II, Quaker abolitionists John Candler and William Burgess spent eight days in the Tijuca mountains. As discussed in Chapter II, this region had witnessed some of the earliest cultivation of coffee in Rio de Janeiro and was still home to various slave-worked plantations, including a handful owned by British families. Though some of estates that the pair visited were still productive and profitable, others were showing signs of soil degradation and had become a financial burden for their owners. One ‘candid slave-owner,’ whose thirty-six-year-old coffee bushes were now in a state of decay, had decided to cut his losses and planned to try his luck in Australia.⁵³ The planter had sold some of his slaves but the remaining thirty

⁵² Mr. Newcomen to Earl of Aberdeen, 24 January 1846, in *Correspondence with Foreign Powers on Slave Trade, 1846 (Class B)*, P.P 855 p. 279.

⁵³ It is possible that this unnamed plantation owner was in fact Lewis William Lecesene, whose slaveholding is discussed in Chapter I. His Tijuca plantation with around 50,000 coffee bushes was advertised for sale some months after Candler and Burgess had visited the region. See *Jornal do*

were mortgaged along with the land to an English merchant. Though the creditor was ‘resolved to foreclose,’ Candler and Burgess inform us that ‘English law’ complicated the recovery of the debt in question.⁵⁴ While the unnamed merchant was cautious not to fall foul of its provisions, he was also not prepared to abandon his investment because of anti-slavery legislation. Instead of foreclosing directly and risking attracting the unwanted attention of British officials, the merchant planned to ‘shift the whole estate, by some Brazilian stratagem, to other shoulders.’⁵⁵ Just as British subjects found ways to continue to exploit new slave labour after 1843, others continued to be able to earn interest on and then liquidate their investments in slave property whilst staying on the right side of anti-slavery legislation.

It is not clear what particular type of Brazilian ‘stratagem’ was employed by the merchant and how it impacted the thirty enslaved individuals whose lives were part collateral for the debt. However, a case identified in the notary records provides an indication of the type of strategy that British creditors could adopt to protect their investments while adhering to the letter of the law. In February 1851 Hugh and Maria Hutton met with the creditors of the bankrupt Anglo-American firm Coleman, Hutton & Co. in the third notary office of Rio de Janeiro.⁵⁶ The purpose of the meeting was so that the couple’s creditors – two British merchant houses, Carruthers & Co. and Hobkirk, Weetman & Co., as well as an individual called Manuel Maria Bregaro. –

Commercio, 4 May 1853. Moreover, though Lescesne seemingly did not follow them, his sister Mary Frances, her husband John Peter Hobkirk and their children did emigrate to Australia in 1852. See J.F. Hobkirk, *Reminiscences of J.F. Hobkirk* (Hobart: Examiner Office, 1904).

⁵⁴ J. Candler and W. Burgess, *Narrative* p. 21.

⁵⁵ *Ibid* p. 21.

⁵⁶ The firm was composed of Charles Coleman, Hugh Hutton, both British subjects, and John Gardner, a U.S. citizen.

could obtain legal recognition that the Huttons accepted legal liability for the defunct firm's debts.⁵⁷ Hugh and Maria signed two mortgage deeds in which they listed personal property that could be seized and auctioned in the event that the liquidation of the firm's assets did not cover the amount of debt owed. One contract, signed by the couple and the three creditors, included their house and *chácara* in Botafogo and an agricultural estate called Sant'Anna de Paquequer in the Serra dos Órgãos mountains, valued together at 52 contos (£6311).⁵⁸ The other deed was between the Huttons and a certain Ireneu Evangelista de Souza, the future Baron and Viscount Mauá, to whom the couple mortgaged their eight slaves to the value of four contos.⁵⁹ It is important to recognize that de Souza was not exactly a distinct creditor in this case; he was managing partner of Carruthers & Co. and had no doubt signed the firm's name on the other deed. The separation of slave and non-slave assets in this way can be interpreted as a strategy by the Brazilian de Souza to protect his British firm from violating anti-slavery legislation in the event that all of the Huttons' assets needed to be seized.⁶⁰ The registration of the mortgage deed in the name of a Brazilian representative is not too dissimilar to the strategy adopted by those British subjects

⁵⁷ Interestingly, all three creditors had previously been implicated in the illegal slave trade in the 1840s. On Carruthers & Co. and Hobkirk, Weetman & Co. see R. Conrad, *World of Sorrow* pp. 131-132 and L.H. Tavares, *Comércio Proibido* p. 138. Bregaro was an associate of Rio's most notorious slave-trade, Manoel Pinto da Fonseca, see J.H. Rodrigues, *Brazil and Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965) p.181

⁵⁸ Hugh Hutton – Manuel Maria Bregaro, Carruthers & Co, Hobkirk & Weetman, 04/02/1851, AN, 3o Ofício de Notas, Book 206, ff. 106-106v. On the acquisition of the *fazenda* in the Serra dos Orgãos, see G. Ferrez, *Colonização de Teresópolis* p. 94.

⁵⁹ Hugh Hutton – Ireneu Evangelista de Souza, 04/02/1851, AN, 3o Ofício de Notas, Book 206, ff. 105v-106.

⁶⁰ In the end it appears that only their house and land in Botafogo were sold to settle the debt. For the auction listing of the property see, *Jornal de Commercio*, 19 September 1851. In an "Exposition" detailing the particulars of the firm's liquidation, Hugh Hutton mentions that his house was seized as it his most valuable asset. See *Jornal do Commercio*, 23 September 1852 (Supplement).

who registered their slaves in the names of their Brazilian wives or employees. Like those slaveholders, de Souza and Carruthers, as well as the unnamed English creditor of the Tijuca plantation, were able to find ways to observe the letter of the law, if not its spirit.

Concluding remarks

The records analysed in this chapter enable us to trace the diverse circumstances in which British merchant credit became entangled with Brazilian slavery. Examples from Rio de Janeiro's notary offices have shown that British subjects contracted slave mortgages in a variety of circumstances; as a result of commercial transactions, equity loans and purchase-money mortgages, and in urban and rural contexts. While the practice may not have been particularly widespread the important point to make is that it was, as the parliamentarian lobbyists argued, part and parcel of doing almost any type of business in Brazil's slave economy. British subjects accepted, and indeed sometimes offered, human collateral as security for credit, they earned interest on these loans and when their debtors defaulted, they occasionally foreclosed on that collateral, taking ownership of slaves or enforcing their sale.

The nature of our survey makes it impossible to draw any definitive conclusions as to whether British subjects avoided entering into slave mortgages because of the 1843 Act or whether the scarcity of cases should be attributed to another cause. What can be asserted with a greater degree of certainty is that those who wished to contract slave mortgages were able to find ways and means to stay on the right side of the law without having to abandon their investments. In the same way that this ambivalent piece of

legislation had failed to impede Britons from exploiting new slave labour after 1843, it was also unable to prevent the entanglement of British credit and Brazilian slavery. As we shall see in the following chapters, this entanglement would continue, albeit it in the form of joint-stock banking rather than mercantile credit networks, until the abolition of slavery in 1888.

Chapter IV: British Banking and Human Collateral

For the New London and Brazilian Bank, the Baron de Grão-Mogol's mortgage, guaranteed by '80 strong negroes', was the last remnant of an entanglement with slavery which had begun shortly after the bank's establishment in 1862 and would only end on the eve of abolition in Brazil.¹ The purpose of this chapter is to trace this complex relationship between British banking and Brazilian slavery in the second half of the nineteenth century. Using the bank's own archive as well as a variety of notarial and judicial records in Brazil, the chapter will discuss how a commercial bank, established with ambitions to finance trade and infrastructure, ended up entangled in Brazil's agricultural economy as the holder of a portfolio of rural mortgages and eventually, as the owner of an extensive coffee plantation.

These overlooked connections to the most dynamic sector of Brazil's economy also offer an opportunity to reflect on the limits placed on Britain's anti-slavery objectives following the suppression of the slave trade. By the time the bank arrived in Brazil, the anti-slavery state's brief interest in slave mortgages had been and gone. While credit relations with plantation owners were not viewed as desirable from a business perspective, the bank showed little concern that this activity could result in it violating British anti-slavery legislation. In this sense, decades after British mortgagees were compensated following abolition in the Caribbean, the London and Brazilian Bank continued the long-held practice of treating enslaved people as collateral assets against whom money could be lent, interest charged and as property that, if required, could be seized and sold to settle debts.

¹ Rio de Janeiro branch to London HQ, 30 April 1881, BOLSA G18/5.

The post-1850 credit market and the expansion of commercial banking in Brazil

At the turn of the mid-century a number of important legislative changes coincided with auspicious economic conditions to stimulate the expansion of the commercial banking sector in Brazil. Buoyed by an upswing in global commodity prices after 1848, Brazil's coffee industry was in rude health in the 1850s. The continued expansion of the coffee economy on the basis of large, slave-worked estates had been consolidated with the passing of the Land Law (*Lei das Terras*) in 1850 and in spite of the end of the slave trade, coffee planters in the country's southeast were still able to find sufficient labour through the internal trade to take work their estates.² The growth of coffee production and the accompanying expansion in international trade led to a marked increase in commercial activity, especially in Rio de Janeiro where large amounts of capital hitherto employed in the slave trade were redeployed in the import-export complex; in trading houses, coffee factorages and infrastructure projects. All of this activity was conducted on the basis of the new Commercial Code (*Código Comercial*) of 1850 which replaced centuries-old colonial legislation and established the rules and procedures under which financial transactions could take place.³ The Code also provided the legal framework for the creation of banking institutions whose investors were keen to take advantage of the increased credit demands of the expanding import-export sector. In Rio de Janeiro thirteen of these establishments,

² On the *Lei das Terras*, see E.V. da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths & Histories* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), Ch. 4. On the strong prospects for slave-worked coffee plantations in this period see R. Marquese, 'Capitalismo, Escravidão e a Economia Cafeeira do Brasil no Longo Século XIX' *Saeculum – Revista de História*, 29 (2013) pp. 301-303.

³ A. Hanley, *Native Capital: Financial Institutions and Economic Development in São Paulo, Brazil, 1850-1920* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2005) pp. 30-31.

including joint-stock banks and private banking houses were founded in the 1850s alone.⁴

By the early 1860s Brazil's commercial banking sector had caught the attention of investors in Britain. Brazil's macroeconomic stability and the growth of British trade and investment there presented opportunities which bankers in the City of London were keen to exploit.⁵ This coincided with changes to legislation in both countries that favoured the entrance of British banks into the Brazilian market. In Britain, the liberalisation of company law with respect to joint-stock banks from 1857 stimulated a boom in the establishment of British overseas banks in the city of London.⁶ Whereas in Brazil, as Guimarães notes, the banking reforms of the Impediments Law (*Lei dos Entraves*) of 1860 favoured British interests with regard to the convertibility of currency whilst at the same time it placed restrictions on the operations of existing banks.⁷ In May 1862 the London and Brazilian Bank was incorporated in London and by February of the following year it had opened its doors for business in Rio de Janeiro.

⁴ See Table 14, C.G. Guimaraes, *A Presença Inglesa* p. 180. These included two incarnations of the *Banco do Brasil* (1851-1853 and 1853-), *Banco Rural e Hipotecário do Rio de Janeiro* (1853) and the *Banco Comercial e Agrícola* (1857), as well as the transatlantic banking partnership, *Mauá, Macgregor e Cia*. For more on the banking policy at the turn of the mid-century and the creation of these banks, see A.A. Villela, 'The Political Economy of Money and Banking in Brazil, 1850-1870' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, LSE, 1999) Ch. 2 & 3.

⁵ Up until the early 1870s, Britain supplied half of Brazil's imports and despite losing ground to U.S and German competition, it still remained the chief supplier of goods to Brazil by the turn of the 20th century. By 1871 the British share of Brazilian exports stood at around 40% and although Britain would be of decreasing importance as an export market, British merchants played a key role in the reexport of Brazilian produce to Europe and the United States. Moreover, Britain was 'practically the only supplier of capital' to Brazil during this period' which saw the beginnings of a surge in British foreign direct investment in Brazil in sectors such as railways and public works. See, M. de Paiva Abreu, 'British business in Brazil' pp. 389-392.

⁶ P.L. Cottrell, 'The Coalescence of a Cluster of Corporate International Banks, 1855-1875', in G. Jones (ed.), *Banks and Money: International and Comparative Finance in History* (London: Frank Cass, 1991) p. 32.

⁷ For a discussion of the reforms, see C. G. Guimarães, *A Presença* pp. 197-203.

It was soon followed in July of the same year by the Brazilian and Portuguese Bank (later the English Bank of Rio de Janeiro) whose early history, according to the Joslin's classic account of history of both institutions, was 'much less eventful and spectacular' than its older competitor. Part of the reason for this is that this younger institution managed to remain far less exposed to credit relations with the rural economy than the London and Brazilian Bank. It is the turbulent early operations of the latter and its entanglement with slavery which constitute the major focus of this chapter.

The role of commercial banks

Before discussing the establishment and operation of the London and Brazilian Bank in greater detail, it is important to understand the credit market it entered and the role of commercial banks in the decades following the mid-century. These banks were primarily involved in the provision of short-term credit to facilitate trade. The most common method adopted by these banks for extending credit was through discounting commercial paper, a long-held practice which had recently been regulated in the Commercial Code. This form of lending based on a future commercial transaction was essential to facilitate trade in a largely illiquid economy. These three-way transactions involved the bank purchasing short-term loans from other creditors, typically export merchants and urban traders, to whom the bank advanced cash to the value of the bill minus a commission fee. The bank would then keep hold of the bill until its maturity,

usually after 60 or 90 days, at which time they would collect payment from the original drawer.⁸

Commercial banks were not, as a general rule, directly involved in longer-term mortgage lending to agricultural producers. These banks regarded the provision of credit to coffee planters as high-risk and avoided it except in exceptional circumstances.⁹ They viewed it as undesirable for three major reasons: the lengthy repayment terms required by the lender, the unsatisfactory nature of collateral offered as security for loans and the difficulties creditors faced foreclosing on this type of property in the event of non-payment.¹⁰ In an effort to encourage lending to the agricultural sector, the government passed a Mortgage Law (*Lei Hipotecário*) in 1864 and dedicated mortgage lending began with the opening of a mortgage department within the Banco do Brasil in 1866. A few specialised mortgage banks followed but even then, access to their loans was restricted to the most creditworthy of coffee planters.¹¹ In sum, the extension of credit at long terms and at low interest rates to coffee planters did not represent a good investment for commercial banks who preferred lower risk alternatives with higher short-term profits.

⁸ For a discussion of discounting and other forms of short-term credit provision, see A. Hanley, *Native Capital* pp. 33-37. Also, W. Summerhill, *Inglorious Revolution: Political Institutions, Sovereign Debt, and Financial Underdevelopment in Imperial Brazil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015) pp. 186-187.

⁹ J. Sweigart, 'Financing and Marketing Brazilian Export Agriculture' pp. 125-126.

¹⁰ R.L. Marcondes, *A Arte de Acumular na Economic Cafeteira: A Vale do Paraíba, Século XIX* (Lorena: Stiliano, 1998) pp. 222-224.

¹¹ W. Summerhill, *Inglorious Revolution* p. 188. Renato Leite Marcondes study of mortgage finance in the Paulista Paraíba Valley arrives at a similar conclusion. See R.L. Marcondes, 'O Financiamento hipotecário no vale do Paraíba Paulista (1865-1887)' *Rev. Bras. Econ.* 56.1 (2002) pp. 147-170.

Though commercial banks rarely lent directly to agricultural producers, their credit did reach the rural economy through the hands of intermediaries. As shown in Figure 4.1, credit from commercial banks flowed through at least one middleman before reaching plantation owners. As Sweigart has demonstrated, the *comisário* or coffee factor played a crucial role in connecting the agricultural economy to the urban credit market.¹² Coffee factors were the elite of Rio's merchant community who provided a range of financial and marketing services to plantation owners in the interior, to whom they were often linked by ties of marriage and kinship.¹³ The factor received consignments of crop and provided the first link in a complex marketing chain that extended to the industrialised world. He also shipped foodstuffs, manufactures and luxury goods to plantations in the interior, and some coffee factors also played an important role in the internal slave trade.¹⁴ Crucially, in an illiquid economy with only a nascent commercial banking sector, the coffee factor provided a range of financial services to the planter. These included the payment of taxes, insurance and other debts and most importantly they were, for the vast majority of planters, their principal source of credit.¹⁵ Factors drew this credit from a number of sources including the sackers and exporters who had purchased their client's crop. As Figure 4.1 demonstrates, factors could also access credit from private banking houses or directly from

¹² J. Sweigart, 'Financing and Marketing Brazilian Export Agriculture' p.5.

¹³ On the social relations between coffee factors and plantation owners, see *Ibid* Ch. 3. Stanley Stein also observed this coalescence between planters and factors in his study of the coffee economy in Vassouras, highlighting the Teixeira Leite family in particular, see S. J. Stein, *Vassouras, a Brazilian Coffee County, 1850-1900: the Roles of Planter and Slave in a Plantation Society*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) pp. 18-19.

¹⁴ J. Sweigart, 'Financing and Marketing Brazilian Export Agriculture' Ch. 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, Ch. 4

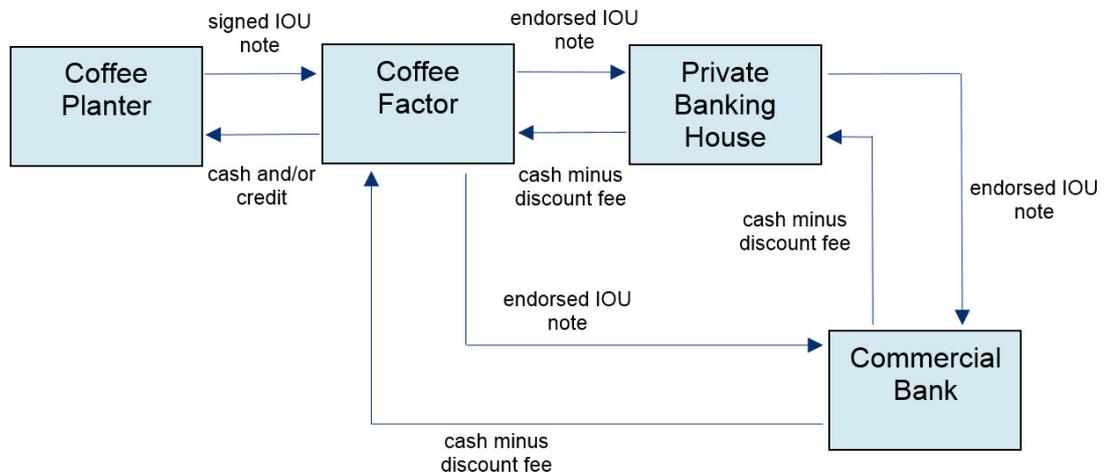
commercial banks, who could be more confident in the creditworthiness of this financial middleman than his client in the interior.¹⁶

Similar to commercial transactions between merchants, this flow of credit was based on discounting bills. The planter, in need of money, would agree terms with his factor and sign a bill which stipulated its value, interest rate and repayment terms. His agent would endorse the bill with his own signature and discount it at a bank where he would receive a cash advance, minus a commission fee.¹⁷ If discounted at a private banking house, the holder would then repeat the process at a commercial bank. These credit flows often remain largely invisible to the historian when payment terms were met. However, as we shall see in the case of the London and Brazilian Bank, when one or more of the entities in this credit pipeline ran into financial difficulties, the connections are exposed in the form of mortgage contracts and legal disputes. It is also in these circumstances that this British bank became significantly entangled in the rural economy and with the slave labour that underpinned it. However, before examining this, it is important to show how British capital flowed through another, non-British bank.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 117-120. Joseph Ryan highlights the importance of private banking houses as a second intermediary, funnelling credit from commercial banks to coffee factors. See. J. Ryan, 'Credit Where Credit is Due' pp. 69-72.

¹⁷ Endorsed drafts would often require a second signature of a reputable merchant or private banking house before being discounted at a commercial bank. See J. Sweigart, 'Financing and Marketing Brazilian Export Agriculture' pp. 120-121.

Figure 4.1: Credit Flows from Commercial Banks to the Rural Economy¹⁸



Mauá MacGregor & Co.

Although the main focus of this chapter is the London and Brazilian Bank's entanglement with slavery, it is important to note that this bank does not represent the first British presence in the post-1850 credit market. While not a joint-stock bank registered in London, Mauá, MacGregor & Co. (1854-1866) was a 'foreign-partnered bank' based in Rio with a branch in London.¹⁹ Its founder, the Baron de Mauá, was managing partner of Carruthers & Co. and another of the controlling partners, Alexander Donald MacGregor was a British broker based in Rio. The partner nominated to oversee its operations in London, José Henrique Reynell de Castro was an old acquaintance of Mauá and partner in the Manchester firm Carruthers, de Castro

¹⁸ This diagram is based on Figure 4.4 in J. Sweigart, 'Financing and Marketing Brazilian Export Agriculture' p. 119.

¹⁹ The term, 'foreign-partnered bank,' used by Summerhill reflects the transatlantic operations of this establishment. See W. Summerhill, *Inglorious Revolution* p. 197. The establishment, operations and eventual demise of this bank are discussed in detail in C.G. Guimarães, *A Presença Inglesa* pp. 57-219.

& Co.²⁰ Guimarães has also identified a strong presence of British merchants amongst the bank's shareholders, drawing a connection between some of these firms and British complicity in the slave trade.²¹

Like other commercial banks founded in the 1850s, Mauá, MacGregor & Co. was established primarily to capture the business of expanding trade and infrastructure projects and not as a mortgage-lender to agricultural producers.²² Nevertheless, a survey of deeds registered by the firm in notarial offices in Rio de Janeiro demonstrate that this type of banking could occasionally expose lenders to slave mortgages and the possibility of foreclosure on human collateral. On two instances identified, a breakdown in the credit flow shown in Figure 1 resulted in the bank having to deal directly with planters. In one case, Manoel Rendon de Souza Frazão mortgaged his two coffee plantations in Estrela along with 47 slaves for a debt of 52 contos to the bank. Souza Frazão had originally loaned the money from the firm of A. J. Domingues Ferreira who had then discounted the planter's acceptances in Mauá, MacGregor & Co.²³ When this intermediary went bankrupt in 1859, the bank was forced to deal directly with Souza Frazão.²⁴ On another occasion it was the death of the middleman which left the bank exposed to direct contact with an agricultural producer. The deceased,

²⁰ For more information on the controlling partners and the management structure of this bank, see C.G. Guimarães, *A Presença Inglesa* pp. 147-152.

²¹ *Ibid* pp. 153-161.

²² *Ibid* p. 175.

²³ Manoel Rendon de Souza Frazão x Mauá, MacGregor & Cia, 07/05/1860 AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 280, ff. 67v – 68; Manoel Rendon de Souza Frazão x Mauá, MacGregor & Cia, 21/06/1860, AN, 3o Ofício de notas, book 232, ff. 79v-80.

²⁴ This mortgage was a small part of wider legal dispute with the administrators of the bankrupt firm, A.J. Domingues Ferreira. The bank ended up losing the battle and suffered losses of 500 contos as a result. See C. G. Guimarães, *A Presença Inglesa* p. 200.

Major João Luís da Costa had discounted bills in the bank which had been originally drawn by Major Joaquim José Antunes. The latter was now liable for the debt of 28 contos for which he offered his sugar plantation in Itaboraí and 51 slaves as security.²⁵ Both these cases show the mechanism through which British capital could eventually find its way to Brazil's slave-based agricultural sector.

Other slave mortgages involving Mauá, MacGregor & Co. were the result of credit relations with those behind infrastructure projects or industrial enterprises. One such individual was Francisco José de Mello Souza whose firm owed a debt to the bank of the considerable sum of 1286 contos as a result of a number of expired bills and a current account of 400 contos. Aside from being a director of recently formed Banco Comercial e Agrícola, Mello Souza also owned a tannery in São Christóvão and it was this 'vast establishment' and 134 slaves that he offered the bank as collateral for his debt.²⁶ This mortgage deed may be the beginning of the unhappy relationship Mauá would go on to have with the Companhia de Curtumes, an enterprise that the Baron would later recall as being 'one of the greatest financial disasters' he was ever involved in.²⁷ A mortgage deed signed just after the bank began operations in late 1854 is perhaps another example of Mauá using the bank as a vehicle to finance large projects. The bank provided an equity loan of 70 contos over six months to Joaquim Francisco Alves Branco Muniz Barreto, who offered his newspaper business, the *Correio*

²⁵ Major Joaquim José Antunes x Mauá, MacGregor & Cia, 25/01/1866, AN, 3o Ofício de notas, book 247, ff. 90-90v.

²⁶ Mello Souza & Cia. x Mauá, MacGregor & Cia, 31/10/1860, AN, 3o Ofício de notas, book 234, ff. 27v - 29v. On the Banco Comercial e Agrícola, see C.G. Guimarães, 'O Banco Commercial e Agrícola no Império do Brasil: o estudo de caso de um banco comercial e emissor (1858-1862)' *Saeculum – Revista de História*, (2013) p. 231-259.

²⁷ I. E. de Souza, *Exposição do Visconde de Mauá aos Credores de Mauá & C e ao Publico* (Rio de Janeiro: J. Villeneuve, 1878) p. 47.

Mercantil and a plantation and 32 slaves as collateral.²⁸ It is likely that this loan was related to the concession granted to Muniz Barreto in December of the previous year for the construction of a railway from Salvador to Juazeiro, Bahia.²⁹ Mauá briefly mentioned this enterprise in his ‘Exposição,’ adding that the loan he made to a ‘yet another friend’ was eventually repaid when the concession was bought by a British company.³⁰ The use of the bank to loan money to the Baron’s friends reflects the continued importance of personal relationships in Rio de Janeiro’s credit market during this period.³¹ Whereas Muniz Barreto’s multiple interests in agriculture, publishing and infrastructure are representative of the blurred divisions between the rural and urban elite, a factor we will return to in the study of the London and Brazilian Bank.³² The final case identified in the notarial records is another example of both of these characteristics. In August 1859 Mauá, MacGregor & Co. signed a deed with Antonio de Souza Ribeiro and his wife which identified the couple as owing 1235 contos to the bank.³³ Mauá would later claim that he entered into this mortgage, secured by urban and rural properties and an undefined number of slaves, at the behest

²⁸ The endorsers of the bill, Francisco Octaviano d’Almeida Rosa and José Custodio Alves Branco Moreira Barreto also offered unspecified property as security. Joaquim Francisco Alves Branco Muniz Barreto x Mauá, MacGregor & Cia, 25/01/1866, AN, 3o Oficio de notas, book 214, ff. 14v-15v.

²⁹ See Senado Federal, Decreto n.1299 [<http://legis.senado.leg.br/legislacao/PublicacaoSigen.action?id=392032&tipoDocumento=DEC-n&tipoTexto=PUB> last accessed 10/06/2018]

³⁰ The value of the total loan claimed by Mauá is much larger than the amount mentioned in this particular mortgage deed. See, I. E. de Souza, *Exposição* p. 44.

³¹ According to Guimarães, commercial banks of this era showed a preference for doing business with their own shareholders, C.G. Guimarães, ‘O Banco Commercial e Agrícola no Império do Brasil’ p. 258.

³² On the coalescence of commerce and agriculture, see J. Sweigart, ‘Finance and Marketing’, Ch. 3.

³³ Antonio de Souza Ribeiro x Mauá, MacGregor & Cia, 25/01/1866, AN, 3o Oficio de notas, book 227, ff. 141-143.

of the bank's lawyer.³⁴ The 'vast loan' had been granted, claimed the Baron, to allow Souza Ribeiro to settle the outstanding claims on the inheritance of his in-laws, the Viscount and Viscountess de Vila Nova do Minho.³⁵ The debtors' failure to repay the mortgage resulted in just under a decade of litigation, at the end of which time the Baron, as representative of now defunct bank, took possession of some seized property including three plantations.³⁶

It is not clear how many, if any of the slaves attached to these three properties were seized as a result of the foreclosure on this mortgage. The point of interest from this and other cases explored here is that Mauá, MacGregor & Co. accepted human collateral as security for loans. Of course, this occasional practice was nothing unique for commercial banks operating in an economy where slave labour predominated; even in cases of the financing of infrastructure or industry, the bank was exposed to the possibility of foreclosure on slave property. These cases do, however, stand in contrast to the caution that the Baron de Mauá had shown when negotiating a mortgage including slaves on behalf of Carruthers & Co.³⁷ After all, despite its strong links to Britain and the presence of British partners and shareholders, Mauá, MacGregor & Co.

³⁴ I. E. de Souza, *Exposição* pp. 155-157.

³⁵ The late Viscount was José Bernardino de Sá, one of the most active slave traders of the 1840s. In 1860, Antônio de Souza Ribeiro re-opened a claim for compensation for what he regarded as the illegal seizure of vessels consigned to his father-in-law by British cruisers acting under the Aberdeen Act. See A.E. de Biase Albuquerque, Relatório final de atividades relacionadas ao projeto "Navios negreiros e negociantes de escravos atuantes em Pernambuco, 1831-1855." (2012) [http://estatico.cnpq.br/portal/premios/2012/ic/pdf/ganhadores/aline_albuquerque_2012.pdf last accessed 10/06/2018]

³⁶ E. da Silva et al., *Mauá: o desafio inovador numa sociedade arcaica* (Brasília: Fundação Ulysses Guimarães, 2013) p. 208 n. 176. Nb. This publication reproduces the text of Mauá's *Exposição* with the annotations of Cláudio Ganns from C. Ganns, *Visconde de Mauá – Autobiografia* (Rio de Janeiro: Zélio Valverde, Livreiro-editor, 1942).

³⁷ Discussed in Chapter III.

was still a Brazilian bank and therefore had little need to worry about British anti-slavery legislation. That would not be the case for the London and Brazilian Bank, whose British identity was in no doubt. Their decades-long entanglement with slavery will be discussed in the following section.

The London and Brazilian Bank

Recognising the opportunities for commercial banking in Brazil, on 1 May 1862 a group of investors met in the offices of Messrs. Robert Benson & Co. to discuss the formation of the London and Brazilian Bank.³⁸ A little over two weeks later, a board of directors drawn from a mixture of city financiers and merchants incorporated the bank. Of the latter, Liverpool merchants Edward Moon and Edward Johnston had longstanding commercial connections in Brazil. Johnston first arrived in Brazil shortly after independence and his eponymous firm, active from 1842, was by 1870 the second largest exporter of Brazilian coffee.³⁹ Less is known about Moon, except that he represented Liverpool's Brazilian Association in 1841 and may have been connected to the house of William Moon & Co. which operated in Maranhão and Rio de Janeiro.⁴⁰ According to Joslin another board member, W.F. Scholefield, was also a Brazilian merchant.⁴¹ Amongst the bankers on the board was Pascoe C. Glyn whose family bank has been described as the 'midwife to British corporate overseas banking.'

³⁸ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* p. 64.

³⁹ On Edward Johnston & Co. see See R. Greenhill 'E. Johnston: 150 Anos em Café'.

⁴⁰ First Report of the Commissioners for Inquiry into the Collection and Management of the Revenue, 1842. Appendix E, *P.P.* 400 p. 23. William Moon & Co. featured in the slaveholding census discussed in Chapter II.

⁴¹ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* p. 65.

having been involved in the creation of three other ‘Anglo-international’ banks, such as the Ottoman Bank.⁴² Glyn, Mills & Co were also bankers to the railway industry and held the accounts of some of the recently established Brazilian railways.⁴³ The Brazilian connections, if any, of other board members are less clear, though Dutch financier Henri-Louis Bischoffsheim had been involved in raising foreign loans in Latin America.⁴⁴

Interestingly, at least two of the ten board members were former slave owners in the British Empire and a third was the direct descendant of a claimant.⁴⁵ According to the *Legacies of Slave Ownership* database, John Bloxam Elin was awarded compensation for emancipated slaves in four separate claims in Jamaica, including from his own plantation, Wakefield. Aside from the London and Brazilian Bank, Elin went on to invest extensively in colonial and foreign banks as well as various British railways.⁴⁶ Likewise, John White Cater, of the merchant bank Robert Benson & Co and the ‘leading spirit’ in support of the bank’s creation, was an awardee of at least five claims in Jamaica where he owned a coffee plantation.⁴⁷ Cater became chairman in 1862 and

⁴² P.L. Cottrell, ‘The Coalescence of a Cluster of Corporate International Banks, 1855-1875’ pp. 31-33.

⁴³ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* p. 65.

⁴⁴ P. Thane, ‘Bischoffsheim, Henri Louis (1829–1908)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn, (Oxford University Press, 2004) [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/38343>, accessed 5 May 2015].

⁴⁵ Board member Philip Charles Cavan, though not a slaveholder himself was the son of a compensation awardee, John Cavan. See ‘Philip Charles Cavan’ [<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/601442442> last accessed 13/06/2018]

⁴⁶ Elin also acted as a trustee or executor in four further claims and was unsuccessful in another. See ‘John Bloxam Elin’ [<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/17590> last accessed 13/06/2018]

⁴⁷ ‘John White Cater’ [<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/15548> last accessed 13/06/2018]; ‘John White Cater’ [<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/43007> last accessed 13/06/2018]; It is unclear whether the entry associated with John W. Cater is the same individual, see ‘John W. Cater’ [<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/21880>] [last accessed 13/06/2018]. When chairman of the bank during the transfer of the *Angélica* estate to the bank, Cater professed to being ‘an old coffee

somewhat ironically, in over two decades in that role, oversaw of the bank's costly and bitter legal disputes with coffee producers in São Paulo. Though Brazil may not have witnessed the same migration of former slaveholders from British colonies as did Cuba and Surinam, the presence of compensation awardees on the board of a bank which would become embroiled with slavery reinforces the argument that Britain's legacy with slavery did not end with emancipation in its own colonies.

Despite the slaveholding past of its chairman and the expectations of Brazil's ruling elite, the London and Brazilian Bank's intention when it first opened for business in February 1863 was not to invest directly in slave-worked coffee plantations.⁴⁸ As Guimarães has noted, the bank was established as a discount and deposit bank which privileged short-term lending to import-export businesses.⁴⁹ Like other commercial banks this lending was based on the discounting of commercial paper such as letters of exchange and merchant bills, though the London and Brazilian Bank's guidelines for this practice were more prudent than their Brazilian competitors.⁵⁰ This conservative approach is reflected in the bank's 'Instructions for the Management of the Affairs of the Bank at Rio de Janeiro' which stressed that discounting should be restricted to paper with terms of no longer than three months; that bills should be

planter.' See 'New London and Brazilian Bank' *Daily News* 28 September 1872. On Cater's role in the creation of the bank, see D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* p. 65.

⁴⁸ On the expectations of local elites in Brazil and Argentina upon the arrival of British banks, see C. Jones, 'Commercial Banks and Mortgage Companies' pp. 36-40.

⁴⁹ C.G Guimarães, 'O Estado Imperial brasileiro e os bancos estrangeiros: o caso do London and Brazilian Bank (1862 – 1871)' in *XXVI Simpósio Nacional de História – ANPUH – 50 anos*. (São Paulo: ANPUH, 2011) [http://www.snh2011.anpuh.org/resources/anais/14/1298818435_ARQUIVO_TextoLBBnovo.pdf last accessed 14/06/2017].

⁵⁰ A.A. Villela, 'The Political Economy of Money and Banking in Brazil, 1850-1870' Ch.4 p. 17.

endorsed by two reputable names; that the renewal of discounted paper be discouraged as much as possible and that officials should refrain from lending too large an amount which depended on the security of one firm, irrespective of their reputation. Moreover, if goods were offered as security, no advance was to exceed two-thirds of their market value. Finally, to stress the bank's intention to not deal directly with planters, under no circumstances were advances to be made on growing crops.⁵¹ As we shall see, managers in Rio did not always strictly observe these conservative guidelines, especially in the early years of the bank's operation. In general terms, it was as a result of these episodes of divergence that the bank became entangled with slavery.

The difficulties the bank faced during the 1860s which eventually led to its reconstruction as the New London and Brazilian Bank in 1872 have been acknowledged in business histories of British banking in Brazil. Guimarães in particular has stressed the detrimental effects emanating from the Souto Crisis of 1864, the failure of Overend Gurney in London in 1866 and the impact of an expensive war with Paraguay (1864-1870).⁵² However, the practical operation of the bank under these testing macroeconomic conditions has been less well developed in the literature. In particular this literature fails to address how the bank's entanglement with agricultural production, and thereby with slavery, contributed to its difficulties in its early years of operation. Charles Jones notes that the London and Brazilian Bank had

⁵¹ London and Brazilian Bank, *Instructions for the Management of the Affairs of the Bank at Rio de Janeiro* (London: W.F. Mitchem, n.d) in BOLSA G37/1 pp. 13-15. Nb. This handbook is marked 'proof' and contains a number of amendments made in pencil suggesting it was printed before the bank opened for business in Brazil. One comment in parenthesis changes the wording of a clause regarding renewals of discounted bills from 'should be discouraged' to 'are prohibited unless under very special circumstances.'

⁵² C.G Guimarães, 'O Estado Imperial brasileiro e os bancos estrangeiros' pp. 12-20. Joslin also mentions these difficult economic conditions. See D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* pp. 71-72.

fallen into a 'mortgage trap, locking up large amounts of capital to the detriment of its business and profits,' though he fails to develop on this point, citing a lack of available sources.⁵³ Joslin develops on the idea of 'locked-up' capital and on a few occasions mentions the 'Angelica estate,' referring to it as 'one of the bank's major encumbrances from the early years,' which 'served as a reminder of the perils of Brazilian banking.'⁵⁴ Nevertheless, he fails to explore the origins of this account in any great depth, claiming 'just what happened cannot now be accurately reconstructed.'⁵⁵ The most complete evaluation of this particular case is provided by Levy and Saes, though the focus of these authors is the case study as evidence of foreign lending to Brazilian agriculture and not the wider issue of slave mortgages.⁵⁶ The account which resulted in the seizure of the *Angélica* plantation was no doubt the most important in terms of value and the number of slaves held under mortgage, however it is not the only one. An analysis of overlooked records such as mortgage deeds and court cases, alongside traditional business history sources, not only permits a more detailed understanding of this major case study, but also presents new evidence of this bank's varied forms of entanglement with Brazilian slavery.

This section will analyse three case studies to show that the Bank not only held this type of human collateral intermittently from shortly after its establishment in Brazil in 1862 until 1888, but that on occasion it legally enforced the seizure and sale of enslaved people to settle outstanding debts. These are the Gavião Ribeiro Gavião and

⁵³ C. Jones, 'Commercial Banks and Mortgage Companies' p. 38.

⁵⁴ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* p. 73, p. 76, p. 159.

⁵⁵ *Ibid* p. 73.

⁵⁶ M.B. Levy, F.A.M Saes, 'Dívida externa brasileira 1850-1913: empréstimos públicos e privados', *História Econômica & História de Empresas* 4.1 (2001) pp. 52-58.

related Vergueiro debts (1866-1881), valued at 230:000\$000 (£200,000) in 1871; the Baron de Turvo default (1867-1870) valued at around (£8,000) in 1869; and the debt of Lourenço Gomes e Cia (1877-1878) valued at 1:437\$325 (£122) in 1878.⁵⁷ The main criteria used for selecting the three case studies was the availability of extant source material, but correspondence in the bank's archive and reports of shareholder meetings suggest that the first two examples represent two of the three major cases of 'locked-up' capital during the early operations of the bank.⁵⁸ Unfortunately, source material was not available to fully analyse the other major case cited by the bank's chairman in 1870.⁵⁹ The three individual case studies analysed here are all similar in that they resulted in the bank's entanglement with slavery. However, in their diversity they show a number of different routes to exposure to slave property; from credit relations with private banking houses, the discounting of planter drafts, and even as a result of orthodox commercial banking with a merchant firm as clients. In all of these scenarios we will observe that though the bank may have viewed slave mortgages and

⁵⁷ Average annual exchange rates, mil-réis to pound sterling taken from N. Leff, *Underdevelopment and development in Brazil, Volume 1: Economic Structure and Change, 1822-1947* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1980) p. 247

⁵⁸ At the half-yearly shareholders meeting on 18 July 1870 the Chairman stated talked of three major accounts which the bank was attempting to liquidate. The Chairman does not name those involved but it is possible to infer to what he is referring using the values and other contextual information. The first of over £200,000 for which the bank held 'a collateral lien' refers to the Vergueiro debt. The third debt he mentions, 'of a much smaller amount,' about which the courts had ruled in the bank's favour concerns Baron de Turvo. There is another debt, 'of between £30,000 and £40,000' which I believe to refers to the mortgage of Antônio Alves da Silva Pinto agreed in June 1866. This debt of 300 contos corresponds to the value referred to in the shareholder meeting. The bank's correspondence shows that this debt remained unpaid in 1870. See *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 30 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1870) p. 679.

⁵⁹ The original mortgage contract was located in notary office records in Rio de Janeiro on 30/06/1866. At that time the debt stood at 300 owing to a current account Antônio Alves da Silva Pinto had with the bank. Many urban properties were offered as collateral. See Antônio Alves da Silva Pinto x London and Brazilian Bank, 30.06/1866, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 298, ff. 26v-28. Unfortunately records of the lengthy court case which followed upon death of Silva Pinto were unavailable for public consultation at the Arquivo Nacional during the time of this research. For the document in question, see Os Administradores da Massa Falida de Silva Pinto Melo & Cia vs. London and Brazilian Bank, 1869-1870, AN, Acervo Judiciário, Supremo Tribunal da Justiça, BU.0.RCI.1106.

their occasional foreclosure as undesirable, it was because they were a risky investment and not because it brought their banking practices into conflict with British anti-slavery legislation.

Case Study I Part I: Gavião Ribeiro Gavião / Vergueiro e Cia Debts.

The first case study to be considered undoubtedly represents the most important and varied example of the London and Brazilian Bank's entanglement with Brazilian slavery. Beginning with the extension of an unusually large line of credit to Gavião Ribeiro Gavião, a private banking house in São Paulo in 1863, it would take until abolition in 1888 for the Bank to rid itself of its association with slavery. It was this account which resulted in the bank taking ownership of a large coffee plantation, which after a decade it sold to the Baron Grão-Mogol on a purchase-money mortgage which included the buyer's 80 slaves. Although the *Angélica* plantation was the only property seized by the bank, this account involved a diverse asset portfolio, including mortgages and planter bills guaranteed by upwards of 800 slaves owned by representatives of the political and socio-economic elite of Brazil's fastest growing province. Moreover, the difficulties in liquidating this significant account played an important role in the decision to reconstruct the bank as the New London and Brazilian Bank in 1872. Fortunately for the historian, the sheer size of the sums loaned as well as the status of the elites involved, means that, in the absence of complete detailed accounts, it is still possible to piece together a coherent narrative from a variety of extant sources to explain the importance of this case study.

In December 1863 the managers of the recently established London and Brazilian Bank accepted a request by the banking house, Gavião Ribeiro Gavião to open a current account in their Rio branch with a line of credit (*linha de crédito*) to the value of 1500 contos de réis (1500:000\$000) for the ‘purposes of conducting their mercantile business.’⁶⁰ In addition to interests in coffee factorage and exporting, Gavião Ribeiro Gavião had been operating from the beginning of the decade as one of the province’s most important private banking houses.⁶¹ Although the London-based board and shareholders would ultimately chastise the bank’s managers in Rio for not obeying the principles of orthodox commercial banking, an understanding of the economic context of São Paulo province may provide an insight into their managers’ logic in making what turned out to be a high risk transaction.⁶² In extending credit to an entity which was largest financier of São Paulo’s agriculture, the Bank’s managers were betting on the future of Brazil’s most dynamic province. According to Dean, from the 1850s onwards the West of São Paulo was Brazil’s fastest growing region in terms of population and wealth.⁶³ In 1860 work began on the British owned São Paulo Railway which would quicken the expansion of coffee production into the fertile lands of the New West (to the north of Campinas) and by around 1870 São Paulo province surpassed Rio de Janeiro in coffee production.⁶⁴ Although some planters in the region

⁶⁰ New London and Brazilian Bank vs. Barão Souza Querioz, 1873-1878. AN, Acervo Judiciário, Supremo Tribunal da Justiça, BU.0.RCI.3016 (hereafter known as NLBB vs. BSQ, 1878) f. 30v. Souza Queiroz had initially represented the London and Brazilian Bank in its negotiations with Gavião Ribeiro Gavião but they had since accused him of negligence. This case relates to the bank’s effort to sue for damages.

⁶¹ A. Hanley, *Native Capital* p. 39.

⁶² *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 29 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1869) pp.171-173. As a result of these lock-ups and other losses on the exchange, the directors decided to replace Mr. Crewse as the Rio branch manager with Mr. Gordon. See *Ibid* p. 168.

⁶³ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. xi.

⁶⁴ A. Hanley, *Native Capital* p. 39.

had flirted with experiments with free labour in the 1840s and 1850s, the expansion of coffee in this region was based largely on a buoyant internal slave trade. In fact, the Bank's new clients, Gavião Ribeiro Gavião, were heavily involved in this lucrative trade with the major partner, Bernardo Avelino Gavião Peixoto 'one of the great slave merchants, active in the interprovincial purchase and sale of slaves, principally involving transactions between the northeast and southeast of the country.'⁶⁵ Despite the effect the American Civil War had on coffee prices, all in all, when the Rio bank authorised the loan in late 1863, the future of São Paulo's agriculture and thus its financiers seemed assured.

Nevertheless, while São Paulo would go on to become the dynamic centre of Brazil's coffee industry, some of its financiers would suffer the effects of banking crisis which began in Rio de Janeiro in September 1864 before emanating across the country.⁶⁶ The liquidity crisis caused by the collapse of the private banking house of A. J. Souto was then exacerbated by inflation and credit squeeze caused by the Paraguayan War which began two months later and continued until 1870.⁶⁷ The chairman of the London and Brazilian Bank would later refer to this unfavourable economic climate as 'the adverse circumstances which have recently prevailed in connection with banking in Brazil.'⁶⁸

⁶⁵ M.A.R Ribeiro, C. de Campos, 'História da riqueza na economia cafeeira brasileira: a família Arruda Botelho. 1854-1901' in *II Congreso Latinoamericano de Historia Económica* (2010) [http://www.economia.unam.mx/cladhe/registro/ponencias/440_abstract.doc last accessed 15/06/2018] p.13.

⁶⁶ J.F Normano, *Brazil: A Study of Economic Types* (New York: Biblo & Tannen Publishers, 1968) p. 175.

⁶⁷ C.G Guimarães, 'O Estado Imperial brasileiro e os bancos estrangeiros' pp. 10-13.

⁶⁸ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 28 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1868) p. 116.

With this macroeconomic context in mind, the loan made to Gavião Ribeiro Gavião which was not necessarily risk-laden in 1863, by as early as mid-1865 represented a serious liability to the bank. The major problem was the type of collateral that the *Paulista* firm offered as security for their line of credit. To the later frustration of the bank's directors and shareholders, its managers in Rio had opened the account with only promissory notes of the firm Vergueiro & Cia as guarantee.⁶⁹ Though the bank would later demand further collateral from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião, the decision to accept what was essentially the transferal of third-party debt would prove to be a terrible business decision when Vergueiro & Cia entered administration in September 1865.⁷⁰

Vergueiro & Cia was formed in 1846 by Senator Nicolau Pereira de Campos Vergueiro and is best known in the literature for its leader's pioneering but ultimately largely unsuccessful efforts to introduce European immigrant labour on the family's coffee plantations, *Ibicaba* and *Angélica*, in São Paulo.⁷¹ According to Levy and Saes, Nicolau Vergueiro's commercial ventures were more important to the firm than his estates. In addition to contracts with the government for the introduction of immigrants, Vergueiro & Cia had an import-export business in the port of Santos and held interests in road construction, mule transport and the slave trade.⁷² Upon Nicolau Vergueiro's

⁶⁹ This initial agreement of 3rd December 1863 was referred to in a mortgage agreement between Bernardo Gavião Peixoto and the London and Brazilian Bank in May of the following year. See Bernardo Gavião Peixoto x London and Brazilian Bank, 02/05/1864, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 291, ff. 75-76.

⁷⁰ F.A.M. Saes, *Crédito e Bancos no Desenvolvimento da Economia Paulista 1850-1930* (São Paulo: USP, 1996) p. 74.

⁷¹ E. Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* pp. 100-103

⁷² M.B. Levy, F.A.M Saes, 'Dívida externa brasileira 1850-1913' pp. 52-54.

death in 1859 his son José took over management of Vergueiro & Cia and it was under his leadership that the firm established credit relations with Gavião Ribeiro Gavião. As with many financial transactions during this period, this relationship was based on family and social connections as well as business ties. Both families represented the *Paulista* elite and were interlinked through José Vergueiro's marriage to Dona Maria Umbelina, the sister of Bernardo Avelino Gavião Peixoto.⁷³ These interrelationships represent a coalescence of regional elites who simultaneously performed the role of planter, merchant and banker and at the same time exerted the political power to protect their interests and prosperity.

The combined reputation, political power, apparent economic solidity and interrelationships of the Gavião and Vergueiro firms might have given the appearance of a low risk investment in 1863. However, as the Souto crisis had shown, even the biggest firms were vulnerable to collapse and, in the aftermath of 1864, Vergueiro would become a case in point. As early as 31 January 1865 the warning signs of Vergueiro's problems became apparent to all. In a letter to the Emperor of Brazil, Vergueiro e Cia requested a loan of 2200:000\$000 (£229,166) over three years guaranteed by the company's plantations and slave workforce, as well as its urban properties in São Paulo. A condition for the loan was that the company would cease all commercial activities and focus exclusively on agriculture. In reply, the Bank of Brazil stated they would be unable to accede to the request, but as a compromise Bernardo de Souza Franco (later Visconde Souza Franco), the President of Rio de Janeiro, intervened and stated that a loan of 1000:000\$000 (£104,167) would be made

⁷³ C.E Marcondes de Moura, *Vida cotidiana em São Paulo no século XIX: memórias, depoimentos, evocações* (São Paulo: UNESP, 1999) p. 263.

available to avoid the potential ruinous consequences of Vergueiro e Cia's bankruptcy. Souza Franco worried that if Vergueiro e Cia suspended its payments, it would seriously threaten the solvency of the province's largest banking house, Gavião Ribeiro Gavião and the São Paulo branch of the Banco do Brasil. The knock-on effect of this would be 'a tremendous commercial crisis in the province, and the ruin of its agriculture' and that government intervention would save the province from a 'fatal catastrophe.'⁷⁴

The government loan of 23 June 1865 was not enough to prevent Vergueiro & Cia from entering into what was termed a *concordata judicial*, a type of court-approved voluntary administration, following an agreement with the company's creditors. The assessment of the firm's accounts as part of this process show the national and global reach of its business interests. In addition to all manner of clients in his home province and in Brazil's capital, Vergueiro maintained links with banking houses and commercial firms in cities such as Lisbon, Amsterdam, Hamburg and London.⁷⁵ Moreover, the accounts show the enormous value of his coffee plantations, *Ibicaba* and *Angélica* which all told (land, coffee bushes, slaves, animals and machinery) were valued at 1724:470\$000 (£174,189) and 1777:350\$000 (£185,141) respectively.⁷⁶ As the holder of the firm's promissory notes, the London and Brazilian Bank now had the right to assume Vergueiro's debt with Gavião Ribeiro Gavião which in January 1866 was valued at 1619:151\$315 (£168,661) and guaranteed by the mortgages of the

⁷⁴ F.A.M. Saes, *Crédito e Bancos* p. 74.

⁷⁵ London and Brazilian Bank vs. José Vergueiro, 1875-1877, AN, Acervo Judiciário, Relação do Rio de Janeiro (hereafter known as LBB vs. Vergueiro, 1875-1877) ff. 230-237.

⁷⁶ *Ibid* f. 230.

Ibicaba and *Angélica* plantations as well as 400 slaves, in addition to urban properties in Santos, Limeira and Rio Claro.⁷⁷ On 28th March 1866 Gavião Ribeiro Gavião officially transferred their rights as creditors to the London and Brazilian Bank.⁷⁸ If Vergueiro's debt remained unpaid after a grace period of five years, the bank would be able to foreclose on this mortgage.

It was not until the following year that the Bank's London board became aware of locked-up capital resulting, in the chairman's opinion, from the managers in Rio de Janeiro '[having] not pursued the business on which banking principles with which we have advocated.'⁷⁹ In an effort to ascertain the value of the collateral and assist the Rio branch with recoveries, the Board sent their London secretary, John Beaton, on a special mission to Brazil in early 1868. The Board reported that while there, Beaton visited Vergueiro's property in São Paulo and reported favourably about the value of the collateral and the 'honourable and energetic character' of their debtor.⁸⁰ Given the grace period contained in the *concordata*, the bank would have to rely on José Vergueiro's word that the debt would be cleared using proceeds from the coffee harvests of his estates, which Beaton conservatively estimated as being worth £75,000 per year.⁸¹

⁷⁷ *Ibid* ff. 113-119.

⁷⁸ *Ibid* f. 170.

⁷⁹ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 27 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1867) p. 164.

⁸⁰ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 29 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1869) p. 168.

⁸¹ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 28 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1868) p. 116.

Vergueiro did not keep his word and by 1870 the bank had not received any of the installments promised by their debtor. Beaton was once again sent to Brazil to see if the account could be settled without recourse to legal action, as foreclosure on debts secured by land and slaves was expensive and laden with risk.⁸² The frustrations that the bank had faced in a drawn-out legal case against the Baron de Turvo certainly influenced their decision to pursue a friendly arrangement with Vergueiro. In relation to another account, the bank's London manager remarked in July 1869:

What are we to do in case the present negotiations fall through, and no remittances come forward is a matter of grave consideration. Legal proceedings would we fear only do harm. The result of legal action in these cases is very aptly illustrated by the Baron de Turvo's sale!⁸³

On 6 February 1871 both parties agreed a private accord (*convênio particular*) which would see Vergueiro's debt of nearly 1792 contos liquidated over the course of the next four years. 1000 contos was to be cleared with the transfer of Vergueiro's plantation, *Angélica*, in Rio Claro. Crucially, the 134 slaves attached to this estate were not included in the deed which detailed this payment in kind (*dação em pagamento*).⁸⁴ There is no indication as to whether Vergueiro was willing to include these people in the transfer of *Angélica*, but even if the bank did forgo their right to the slaves, there is little evidence to suggest that anti-slavery motives influenced the bank's decision. After all, the bank had only recently enforced the seizure and sale of the Baron de Turvo's slaves and still held other mortgages secured by slave property.⁸⁵

⁸² On the risks of foreclosure and particularly the issue of forced adjudication, see J. Sweigart, 'Financing and Marketing Brazilian Export Agriculture' pp. 192-194.

⁸³ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 2 July 1869, BOLSA G1/2.

⁸⁴ LBB vs. Vergueiro, 1875-1877 ff. 171-171v.

⁸⁵ To be discussed in following sections of this chapter.

Indeed, under the second half of the February 1871 agreement, which established a repayment schedule for the remaining 792 conto balance, the bank accepted as collateral the *Ibicaba* plantation and the slaves that worked it.⁸⁶ Though the slaves continued under mortgage to the bank, a clause in the agreement gave Vergueiro the right to remortgage his slaves plus a property called *Itaporanga* in order to raise funds to clear the payment installments he had agreed with the bank. By June 1871 Vergueiro raised 200 contos in mortgage finance from the coffee factorage firm Furquim, Lahmeyer & Cia. and on the 26th of that month the bank signed a public contract acknowledging the transfer of this part of the mortgage to this firm. However, in the event that Furquim, Lahmeyer & Cia. seized Vergueiro's slaves or they were removed from the plantation for whatever reason, the bank retained the right to immediately foreclose on the lien they held over the rest of the *Ibicaba* estate. Moreover, although the bank ceded its rights as first mortgagee over the slaves and *Itaporanga*, the contract stipulated that in the event Vergueiro failed to pay on time, the whole arrangement would be null and void and the agreement would revert to the terms agreed under the March 1866 mortgage.⁸⁷ The transferal of the slave mortgage made business sense to the bank. It received a significant down payment without the risk of leaving *Ibicaba* without the labour force it required. At this point the bank was still confident in Vergueiro's willingness and ability to pay the remaining balance of 592 contos (see table 1) using the proceeds of *Ibicaba*'s annual coffee harvest.

⁸⁶ *Ibid* f. 185v.

⁸⁷ London and Brazilian Bank x Vergueiro & Cia, Furquim Lahmeyer & Cia, 26/06/1871, AN, 1o Oficio de notas, book 316, ff. 136v-141.

Table 4.1: Vergueiro & Cia Repayment Schedule to London and Brazilian Bank (1871)⁸⁸

Instalment due date	Amount (contos de réis)
31 July 1872	136:875\$000
31 July 1873	144:375\$000
31 July 1874	151:875\$000
31 July 1875	159:375\$000
Total:	592:000\$000

Despite the assurances he gave the bank, Vergueiro did not keep to the terms of their agreement. Though he made three separate payments in July 1873 (30 contos), December 1873 (40 contos) and January 1874 (100 contos), by the end of 1874 Vergueiro's debt with the bank stood at a significant 427 contos. A fire on *Ibicaba*, failed harvests and heavy rains were put forward by Vergueiro in his defence but by December 1874 the bank's directors had grown tired of their debtor's excuses, especially considering Vergueiro had managed to pay off the mortgage that Furquim Lahmeyer & Cia. held over *Itaporanga* and his slaves.⁸⁹ The consistent failure to adhere to their agreement meant Vergueiro had, according to the bank's London secretary, 'forfeited the last atom of any confidence' the board had in his willingness to clear his debts.⁹⁰ After consulting a trio of legal experts as to their right to foreclose on the *Ibicaba* plantation and its enslaved workforce, the bank initiated a legal suit

⁸⁸ These figures relate to four acceptances of 125 contos plus interest at 6% per annum. For a history of the debt from the perspective of John Beaton, see *Jornal do Commercio*, 1 May 1877.

⁸⁹ For José Vergueiro's account of the debt and response to Beaton's publication, see *Jornal do Commercio*, 29 May 1877.

⁹⁰ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 23 November 1874, BOLSA G1/2. For the recission of this mortgage worth 495 contos see Furquim Lahmeyer & Cia x Vergueiro & Cia, 22/11/1873, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 334, ff. 49v-50.

against Vergueiro & Cia. Although the eminent lawyer José Tomás Nabuco de Araújo Filho affirmed the bank's 'undoubted' right over the whole estate and slaves, it appears a lack of consensus on the issue influenced the bank's decision to concentrate their efforts on the seizure of *Ibicaba*'s current and future coffee crop.⁹¹ The suit was filed in early 1875 and by May of that year the court had ordered that *Ibicaba* be placed under the administration of a third-party agent (*depositário*) to ensure the remittance of the estate's produce to the bank. Wielding his significant regional influence, José Vergueiro, or the 'Sovereign of Ibicaba' as he was nicknamed by the bank's Rio manager, employed a number of legal and extra-legal measures to protect his property.⁹² During a bitter and protracted battle in court, the bank accused their debtor of withholding the vital slave labour needed to work the estate and of inducing 'illegal practices' amongst the local judiciary.⁹³ On his part, Vergueiro, playing on the fears of the slaveholding elite, publicly complained that the bank's 'tempestuous and imprudent' decision to attempt to seize *Ibicaba* had destabilised the local region and fomented a 'spirit of insubordination and rebellion' amongst his slaves.⁹⁴ After unsuccessfully appealing for the British minister's intervention in the face of 'extraordinary feats of the Judges' in Limeira, the bank admitted defeat in their efforts to legally impose repayment on Vergueiro.⁹⁵ In November 1878, through the mediation of British railway engineer Daniel M. Fox, the bank once again privately agreed to a staggered repayment plan. In a letter of the 29th of that month, Vergueiro

⁹¹ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 18 November 1874, BOLSA G1/2.

⁹² Rio de Janeiro branch to London HQ, 17 April 1875, BOLSA G18/2.

⁹³ *Ibid*; Rio de Janeiro branch to London HQ, 29 March 1875, BOLSA G18/2.

⁹⁴ *Jornal do Commercio*, 9 July 1877.

⁹⁵ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 18 August 1877, BOLSA G2/5; M.B. Levy, F.A.M Saes, 'Dívida externa brasileira 1850-1913' p. 57.

agreed to repay the outstanding balance of 350 contos in six instalments over a period of two years. On the bank's part, the agreement authorised Vergueiro to raise capital through the sale of all or part of his plantation, which remained under mortgage to the bank.⁹⁶

Table 4.2: Vergueiro & Cia Repayment Schedule to London and Brazilian Bank (1878)⁹⁷

Instalment due date	Amount
1 January 1879	50:000\$000
1 May 1879	50:000\$000
1 September 1879	50:000\$000
1 January 1880	50:000\$000
1 May 1880	50:000\$000
1 September 1880	50:000\$000
Total:	350:000\$000

Despite Vergueiro's assurances, his debt to the bank was not liquidated until 1887, over two decades since the bank initially inherited his account from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião.⁹⁸ Though the bank did not attempt to foreclose on Vergueiro's slaves during this whole ordeal, this decision cannot be attributed to a desire to adhere to British anti-slavery legislation. After all, the issue was put under serious consideration at the time the bank initially launched judicial proceedings. Instead, this decision was more

⁹⁶ London and Brazilian Bank vs. José Vergueiro, 1877-1878, Juíz Municipal de Limeira, ff. 345-347v. At the time of research this document was stored in a temporary archive facility in the city of Limeira, São Paulo. I am grateful to José Eduardo Heflinger Jr. for allowing me access to this archive.

⁹⁷ *Ibid* ff. 345-347v.

⁹⁸ On 8th December 1887, the bank's London secretary sent a message to the manager in Rio congratulating him that the Vergueiro account had finally been closed. See M.B. Levy, F.A.M Saes, 'Dívida externa brasileira 1850-1913' p. 57.

likely influenced by the fact that their legal claim to *Ibicaba*'s crop was more clearly defined in their June 1871 mortgage and a belief that the sale of the seized coffee harvest would raise sufficient funds to clear Vergueiro's debt. Moreover, after their recent experience with the Baron de Turvo, there was little appetite to foreclose on slave property when other options remained viable. Though the seizure and sale of enslaved people was not pursued by the bank on this particular occasion, the fact that it remained an option, however remote, is testament to the bank's disregard or ignorance of the 1843 Act.

Case Study I Part II: Remaining Gavião Ribeiro Gavião Debt

Although the primary purpose of John Beaton's visit to Brazil in 1868 was to shore up uncertainties regarding the Vergueiro e Cia debt, he also had an important task to perform regarding the line of credit which remained active on the current account opened by Gavião Ribeiro Gavião in December 1863. Following the administration of Vergueiro e Cia, the promissory notes became invalid as security and given the economic climate of the on-going Paraguayan War, Beaton decided to demand further guarantees from Gavião. At this point the only other collateral on the account, which was added in March 1864, were urban mortgages on seven properties in São Paulo valued at 505:000\$000 (£56,299).⁹⁹ As was the case with Vergueiro e Cia, Beaton once again accepted guarantees which would expose the Bank to closer contact with Brazilian slavery. Table 4.3 shows two types of security transferred to the Bank by Gavião. The first are five mortgages of rural properties in São Paulo, included in which are 425 slaves. The second type involves the transfer of discounted bills, likely in the

⁹⁹ NLBB vs BSQ, 1873-1878 ff. 30-33.

form of planter drafts, which essentially meant the transferal of plantation debt from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião to the bank.

The transferred rural mortgages and discounted planter bills may not have caused the bank anywhere near as much frustration as Vergueiro had, but they were still far from straightforward. The transferal of four of the rural mortgages was envisaged by Beaton as a short-term measure; once the bank had been paid at the expiry of three planter drafts, the mortgages of José Maria de Cardoso Vasconcellos, José Maria Gavião Peixoto and both in the name of Antônio Pereira Pinto would be transferred back to Gavião Ribeiro Gavião.¹⁰⁰ In the end, these rural mortgages were quickly removed from the bank's balance sheet but not in the way it had intended. An error made by the bank's power of attorney, the Baron de Souza Queiroz, resulted in the bank losing its claim to these mortgages in spite of the fact that Gavião Ribeiro Gavião was still in debt to the bank's London headquarters.¹⁰¹ In contrast, at least two of these accounts remained on the books as locked-up capital for longer than the bank had planned. The mortgage of João Tobias d'Aguiar and the discounted acceptance of Francisco Teixeira Vilela warrant further comment.

¹⁰⁰ Rio de Janeiro branch to Gavião Ribeiro Gavião, 30th March 1868, BOLSA G5/1.

¹⁰¹ The bank sued Souza Queiroz for negligence in an attempt to recoup the outstanding balance of £5000 which they were now unable to claim from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião. See NLBB vs BSQ, 1873-1878, especially f. 1 and ff. 20-22.

Table 4.3: Asset Portfolio Transferred from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião to London and Brazilian Bank (1863-1868)¹⁰²

Name of debtor	Date of Transfer	Type	Value (contos de réis)	Location/ Name of Property	No of Slaves
Vergueiro e Cia (1)	02/12/1863	Promissory Note/ Mortgage (after March 1866)	1619:150\$313	Rio Claro / Angélica (SP)	133
Vergueiro e Cia (2)				Limeira / Ibicaba (SP)	283
Gavião Ribeiro Gavião	02/03/1864	Mortgage (Urban)	505:000\$000	São Paulo (Capital)	0
José Maria de Cardoso de Vasconcellos	25/04/1868	Mortgage (Rural)	24:439\$900	Mogi Mirim (SP) / Fazenda Bem Fica	24
José Maria Gavião Peixoto	25/04/1868	Mortgage (Rural)	105:952\$310	São Carlos do Pinhal (SP)	36
Antônio Pereira Pinto (1)	25/04/1868	Mortgage (Rural)	154:750\$000	Atibaia (SP)	30
Antônio Pereira Pinto (2)	25/04/1868	Mortgage (Rural)	38:737\$107	Araraquara / Fazenda São Joaquim (SP)	35
João Tobias d'Aguiar	30/05/1868	Mortgage (Rural)	unknown	Rio das Pedras	300
Francisco Teixeira Vilela	28/03/1868	Planter Bill	200:000\$000	Campinas	<i>not listed</i>
Camillo José Pires	28/03/1868	Planter Bill	77:257\$360	Belém de Jundiá (SP)	<i>not listed</i>
Manoel Antonio Gurjão Cotrim	28/03/1868	Planter Bill	52:670\$200	Mogi Mirim (SP)	<i>not listed</i>

¹⁰² For the transfer of the Vergueiro account, see LBB vs. Vergueiro, 1875-1877 ff. 70-87. For the urban mortgage of March 1864, see NLBB vs BSQ, 1873-1878, ff. 30-33. The transfer of mortgages and bills in is detailed in a letter to Gavião Ribeiro Gavião on 28/03/1864. From Rio de Janeiro branch to Gavião Ribeiro Gavião, 30th March 1868, BOLSA G5/1. A copy of the deed of transfer can be found in BSQ, 1873-1878, ff. 24-28. This deed does not include the mortgage of João Tobias d'Aguiar which was transferred to the bank on 30/05/1868. This contract is cited in London and Brazilian Bank x Antonio Aguiar de Barros, 28/02/1871, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 313, ff. 132v-133.

Like Vergueiro and Gavião Peixoto, João Tobias d'Aguiar came from a prominent *Paulista* family. His father, Brigadeiro Rafael Tobias d'Aguiar was an important figure in the Liberal Revolution in São Paulo in 1842 and a key *capitalista*, or financier, in the province. In this sense he was similar to the fathers of both José Vergueiro and Bernardo Gavião Peixoto and it is little surprise that their sons continued to operate in the same social and commercial networks.¹⁰³ The mortgage Gavião Ribeiro Gavião held over d'Aguiar's two coffee plantations and 300 slaves was transferred in May 1868 and it appears the bank began to demand payment from their new debtor not long afterwards.¹⁰⁴ After receiving remittances in October 1868 and October 1869, by early 1870 the bank's London secretary began to voice his frustration at the delays on this account.¹⁰⁵ By March of that year London approved the Rio branch's decision to initiate foreclosure on d'Aguiar's mortgage but that advice does not seem to have been acted upon.¹⁰⁶ Instead, both parties found another way to settle the account and in February 1871 the bank transferred its claim to the mortgage, now worth 65 contos, to Antônio Aguiar de Barros, the future Marquis de Itú and brother-in-law to João Tobias.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ E. Hörner, 'A luta já não é hoje a mesma: as articulações políticas no cenário provincial paulista, 1838-1842.' *Almanack Braziliense* 5 (2007): pp. 67-85.

¹⁰⁴ D'Aguiar's mortgage was transferred separately from the other four from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião and therefore does not appear in the records relating to the bank's case against Souza Queiroz. Nevertheless, as noted above, the transferal of the mortgage is cited in London and Brazilian Bank x Antonio Aguiar de Barros, 28/02/1871, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 313, ff. 132v-133.

¹⁰⁵ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 23 October 1868, BOLSA G1/1(a); London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 7 October 1869, BOLSA G1/2; London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 8 February 1870, BOLSA G1/3(a).

¹⁰⁶ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 19 March 1870, BOLSA G1/3(a).

¹⁰⁷ London and Brazilian Bank x Antonio Aguiar de Barros, 28/02/1871, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 313, ff. 132v-133.

It appears that the bank adopted a similar approach with the debt of Francisco Teixeira Vilela, whose relationship with Gavião Ribeiro Gavião give us a possible insight into what sort of ‘mercantile business’ the London and Brazilian Bank’s credit had been used for. In the year previous to the transfer of Vilela’s acceptance to the bank, this Campinas-based coffee planter had made a one-time purchase of 186 slaves from Gavião Ribeiro Gavião who had in turn acquired them from Carmelite monks in the province of Paraná.¹⁰⁸ It is possible that Vilela’s acceptance, originally drawn in October 1867 with a validity of six-months was connected to this transaction in human property. The bank’s correspondence makes clear that Vilela failed to pay the 200 contos he owed on the expiry of the bill on 30th April 1868.¹⁰⁹ A mortgage deed from 1871 suggests that in the intermittent period the bank had renewed Vilela’s bill with the endorsement of the firm Teixeira Leite & Sobrinhos. With this coffee factorage now in liquidation, the bank moved to publicly register the 130 conto debt which Vilela still owed them.¹¹⁰ Vilela mortgaged his coffee plantation, Santa Maria, and 288 slaves but as Maria Ribeiro has shown, the London and Brazilian bank was just one of many creditors with a claim over the same assets.¹¹¹ In the case of a highly indebted planter with multiple mortgage claims over the same collateral, the bank was left with little room for movement. With no further trace of this debt located, it is

¹⁰⁸ M.A.R. Ribeiro, ‘Riqueza e endividamento na economia de plantation açucareira e cafeeira: a família Teixeira Vilela-Teixeira Nogueira, Campinas, São Paulo, século XIX.’ *Estudos Econômicos* 45.5 (2015) pp. 551-552.

¹⁰⁹ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 23 December 1868, BOLSA G1/1(a).

¹¹⁰ London and Brazilian Bank x Francisco Teixeira Vilella, 24/08/1871, AN, 1o Ofício de notas, book 316, ff. 136v – 141.

¹¹¹ M.A.R. Ribeiro, ‘Riqueza e endividamento na economia de plantation açucareira e cafeeira’ p. 555.

plausible that the bank followed the example of Vilela's many other creditors, including Banco Mauá & Cia and Gavião Ribeiro Gavião in transferring their claim to the Banco Rural e Hipotecário do Rio de Janeiro in the following years.¹¹²

Rural mortgages were not an asset the London and Brazilian Bank wanted to see on its balance sheet. Its experience liquidating the debt originating in Gavião Ribeiro Gavião has shown that this was for good reason. In the case of the mortgages considered here, the bank was either able to transfer them back to their original holders or in the cases of João Tobias d'Aguiar and Francisco Teixeira Vilela shift the liability to third parties. However, as two next case studies clearly demonstrate, in the event that this option was not available, the London and Brazilian Bank would pursue the seizure and sale of slave property to settle outstanding accounts.

Case Study II: Baron de Turvo Debt (1867-1870)

In July 1867 the managers of the London and Brazilian Bank in Rio de Janeiro made a decision that would not only have an impact on their balance sheet, but also on the lives of 106 enslaved people who had been offered as collateral by their indebted owner. Its credit relations with the Baron de Turvo are clear evidence that, if deemed necessary, the bank was willing to press for the seizure and sale of slaves, an act which was a clear violation of the 1843 legislation. In fact, as alluded to earlier, it was the difficulties encountered in this case, and not concern for British law, that would inform the bank's future handling of debts secured by human collateral.

¹¹² *Ibid* pp. 555-557.

On 4th July 1867 the bank discounted a bill signed by the Baron de Turvo and endorsed by Antônio Tavares Guerra e Cia to the value of 86:740\$089.¹¹³ As explained previously, discounting was the most common form of short-term lending performed by commercial banks such as the London and Brazilian. However, for a number of reasons the decision to discount this particular bill ran contrary to the conservative lending guidelines which the bank had advocated upon its establishment some four years earlier. Firstly, the six-month repayment period stipulated on the Baron's acceptance was double the maximum 90-day term outlined in the bank's 'Instructions' handbook.¹¹⁴ Moreover, when it expired without payment, the bill was renewed for a further six months; a practice which was also strongly discouraged in the bank's own guidelines.¹¹⁵ The second and most important issue though concerned the Baron de Turvo himself. José Gomes de Souza Portugal was an important coffee planter in the Barra Mansa and Piraí regions of the Paraíba valley. Aside from his plantation ownership, he also served as an alderman, national guard officer and as provincial deputy for Rio de Janeiro.¹¹⁶ Notwithstanding the Baron's elevated social and political standing, he does not appear to have been involved in any of the types of commercial activity which the bank typically financed. In fact, the bill specifically mentioned that the reason it was being drawn was for the purpose of 'supplying [the Baron de Turvo's] plantation.'¹¹⁷ Whereas the bank's dealings with Gavião Ribeiro Gavião could at least

¹¹³ London and Brazilian Bank vs. Barão de Turvo, 1867-1870, AN, Acervo Judiciário, Supremo Tribunal da Justiça (hereafter referred to as LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870) ff. 5v-6.

¹¹⁴ London and Brazilian Bank, *Instructions for the Management of the Affairs of the Bank at Rio de Janeiro* p. 13.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid* p. 13; LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870) ff. 5v-6.

¹¹⁶ E. Pang, *In Pursuit of Honor and Power: Noblemen of the Southern Cross in 19th century Brazil* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988) p. 167.

¹¹⁷ LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 f. 6.

be explained in part by the diversified business interests of that firm, credit relations with the Baron de Turvo are more difficult to reconcile with the form of orthodox commercial banking advocated at its establishment. The decision to extend credit to the Baron, via his coffee factor Antônio Tavares Guerra e Cia, is a further example of what the chairman would later refer to as ‘mismanagement in Rio during the early days of the institution.’¹¹⁸

Following the expiry of the renewed note, the bank began legal proceedings against the coffee planter in August 1868.¹¹⁹ After an initial hearing in the capital, the case was sent to the Baron’s home district of Piraí, where on 7th November 1868 the judge ruled in favour of the bank.¹²⁰ With payment still not forthcoming, on 16th March 1869 the courts ordered a *penhora judicial*, a lien or attachment order, over the debtor’s assets to the value of the original loan plus interest, 96:712\$006.¹²¹ Two days later, in compliance with that order, the Baron de Turvo nominated 106 slaves, amongst whom were married couples and family groups with children as young as one year old.¹²² After a series of unsuccessful protests on the part of the Baron and his children, the judge ordered the public auction of the slaves to take place at the gates of his own residence on 2nd June. At this point the bank’s entanglement with slavery, usually

¹¹⁸ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 31 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1871) p. 138.

¹¹⁹ LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 f. 4.

¹²⁰ *Ibid* f. 17.

¹²¹ *Ibid* f. 35-35v.

¹²² *Ibid* f. 36-37v.

concealed in account ledgers and private correspondence, was made public with the auction advertised in the capital's major newspaper over a number of days.¹²³

Much to the bank's frustration, just two days before the sale, the agent (*depositário*) in charge of bringing the slaves to auction wrote to the judge claiming that there had been a mass exodus from the Baron's *Boa Liga* plantation and only 29 of the nominated slaves remained on the property.¹²⁴ Although possibly an act of slave resistance, there is likely truth in the bank's allegation that, in a similar vein to Vergueiro, the Baron exerted all his influence on local officials to corroborate his claim of escaped slaves in order to delay the public sale.¹²⁵ The sale was indeed delayed and, after another series of protests and counterclaims by other creditors, the public auction of 103 slaves was rescheduled for 23rd September 1869.¹²⁶ This time the slaves were brought to auction but for reasons that are not quite clear, only 30 were sold.¹²⁷ For all the London and Brazilian Bank's entanglement with slave mortgages during its early operations, this was the first time it clearly violated the provisions of the 1843 Act by causing the sale of slave property in order to recover debt.

¹²³ The public auction was advertised in the newspaper over a number of days. For example, see *Jornal do Commercio*, 23 May 1869.

¹²⁴ LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 ff. 89-89v.

¹²⁵ The bank's lawyer claimed that the slaves were still working on *Boa Liga*. See LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 f. 101.

¹²⁶ The reduced number of slaves was due to the death of three individuals in the intermittent period. See LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 ff. 129-131. The auction was once more advertised in Rio's newspapers. See *Jornal do Commercio*, 21 September 1869.

¹²⁷ LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 ff. 207-210.

In the meantime the Baron de Turvo continued to appeal and on 18 November 1869 the judge overturned the original sentence against him.¹²⁸ This decision left the bank perplexed and irate in equal measure, with the London secretary later commenting that Brazilian law ‘seems to favour every description of delay and annoyance.’¹²⁹ The following month, while awaiting the verdict of their counterappeal in Brazil’s highest court, *Supremo Tribunal de Justiça*, the bank’s chairman relayed a similar message about the quality of Brazilian justice, commenting that,

A third claim, of a much smaller amount, had also been given in favour of the bank, the court having decided that so far as the law was concerned the bank was right, **but law and justice did not seem always to run together**; and although the law had declared that they were entitled to recover they had not yet received the money.¹³⁰ [emphasis mine]

It was around this time that the bank considered the possibility of attempting to settle the account out of court. Echoing the approach that they would eventually adopt with Vergueiro, the Rio branch were asked whether they could not compel the Baron to pay through the influence of ‘some mutual friends.’¹³¹ Though it appears that this proved fruitless, in November 1870, the *Supremo Tribunal* ruled in the bank’s favour and ordered the suit be sent back to the court in Pirai.¹³² Unfortunately, after this point references to the case in the bank’s correspondence dry up, making it impossible to

¹²⁸ *Ibid* ff. 292-293.

¹²⁹ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 2 June 1870, BOLSA G1/3(a).

¹³⁰ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 30 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1870) p. 679.

¹³¹ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 30 March 1870, BOLSA G1/3(a).

¹³² LBB vs. Turvo, 1869-1870 ff.3-3v.

say whether this debt was eventually liquidated and if this was achieved through the sale of the Baron's slaves.

Further research may still cast light onto the eventual resolution of this account and the fate of the enslaved people whose lives became inadvertently caught up in this transaction.¹³³ Nevertheless, what is abundantly clear from the sources available is that while the bank viewed foreclosure on human collateral as undesirable, this had nothing to do with a fear of falling foul of British anti-slavery legislation or a moral objection to this business practice. Instead, it was a business decision based on the risks involved in attempting to recover debts guaranteed by land and slaves. A comment by the bank's London secretary encapsulates this sentiment, with his reference to 'other property' a euphemism for slaves:

In our opinion it is high time that some declaration is made of the insecurity of advancing money in Brazil except in the discount of [merchant] bills, the law offering little or no security in mortgages whether of land or other property, leaving you at your debtor's sense of honour.¹³⁴

While the bank remained entangled with rural slavery until emancipation, it did not attempt to foreclose on any of the residual rural mortgages it held; the frustrating experience with the Baron de Turvo certainly contributed to the bank's future preference for finding alternative solutions. Nevertheless, as the next case study will demonstrate, the seizure and sale of enslaved people remained an option even after the crisis-hit years of its early operations.

¹³³ Since the time of research, it has been suggested that the *Arquivo Público de Pirai* may hold material related to this case. I am grateful to Prof. Ricardo Salles for bringing this to my attention.

¹³⁴ London HQ to Rio de Janeiro branch, 8 November 1869, BOLSA G1/2.

Case Study III: Lourenço Gomes e Cia (1877-1878)

By the late 1870s the New London and Brazilian Bank had emerged from the crisis years of its predecessor bank and was undergoing a period of expansion and prosperity.¹³⁵ Though it still held the troublesome Vergueiro account and still owned the *Angélica* plantation, conservative banking and increased oversight from London meant the bank avoided falling into the ‘mortgage trap’ from which the London and Brazilian Bank had suffered from in the previous decade.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, as this case study shows, although seemingly rare, even the most orthodox banking with merchant firms could lead to entanglement with slavery.

In October 1877 the bank once again found themselves in court pursuing the seizure and sale of slave property in order to recover an outstanding debt. This time they were not foreclosing on the account of one Brazil’s slave-owning elite, but a small merchant firm called Lourenço Gomes e Cia.¹³⁷ The firm had failed to pay a *letra de cambio*, or bill of exchange, within its 60-day term. The bill was valued at 1:207\$140 and had been drawn to pay a firm in Hamburg.¹³⁸ A short court case found in the Bank’s favour and the commercial firm was given 24 hours to pay 1:437\$325, the original bill plus

¹³⁵ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* pp. 77-79.

¹³⁶ A conservative policy of high reserves and stable deposits meant the bank emerged relatively unscathed from the 1875 which saw the closure of two of its rivals, the Banco Mauá and the Deutsche Brasilianische Bank. See *Ibid* pp. 77-79.

¹³⁷ New London and Brazilian Bank vs. Lourenço Gomes e Cia, AN, Acervo Judiciário, Juízo Especial do Comercio da 2a Vara, 1877-1878 (Hereafter referred to as NLBB vs LGC, 1877-1878); *Jornal do Commercio (Rio de Janeiro)* 25 March 1877 lists Lourenço Gomes e Cia as merchants of articles such as tea, wax and tobacco.

¹³⁸ NLBB vs LGC, 1877-1878 f. 8.

interest.¹³⁹ After this period had elapsed, the judge ordered an attachment order, *penhora*, be declared which would force Lourenço Gomes e Cia to nominate assets for public sale. In what appears to be a unique case involving the bank, their debtor offered their 38-year-old slave, Paulo, a boxmaker, in payment.¹⁴⁰ As with the Baron de Turvo case, there is no indication that the bank had any moral or legal issue with this and on 25 May 1878 the judge ordered Paulo to be detained in the municipal depository.¹⁴¹ Lourenço Gomes & Cia immediately launched a series of legal protests which were again rejected by the judge.¹⁴² Unfortunately, the court case ends with a request by the debtors to have an appeal heard in a superior tribunal and no record of that case could be located in the judicial archives nor in newspaper reports. For this reason, it is not possible to determine whether Paulo was eventually sold to pay his owner's debt to the bank. Nevertheless, the conclusion of the court case did at least show that the bank was willing to enforce Paulo's sale as a matter of course. To the bank the liquidation of outstanding debts, even of relatively insignificant values such as that owed by Lourenço Gomes & Cia, was more important than the impact this decision could have on the lives of people like Paulo. Moreover, this case also serves to highlight the disregard or ignorance the bank had for the 1843 Act which had clearly prohibited British subjects from the foreclosure on human collateral.

¹³⁹ *Ibid*, ff. 20-21.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid* ff. 24-27. A survey of other court cases involving the bank and indebted merchant firms during this period did not involve slave property.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid* f. 28.

¹⁴² *Ibid* ff. 33v-34.

Concluding remarks

By using a source base that has been typically overlooked by business historians, this chapter has shed light on the entanglement of British banking and Brazilian slavery in the second half of the nineteenth-century. While the London and Brazilian Bank arrived without the intention of directly financing coffee production, their credit relations with intermediaries such as private banking houses and coffee factorages resulted in direct exposure to human collateral. Capital locked up in land and slaves became a serious problem for the bank in the context of unfavourable economic conditions in the first decade of its operation. The account of Gavião Ribeiro Gavião involved a significant injection of capital into a region that was becoming Brazil's most important coffee producer. An analysis of the portfolio of mortgages and planter drafts transferred to the bank showed that its line of credit reached the plantations of some of São Paulo's elite and was likely used to finance the internal slave trade. This account and the credit extended to the Baron de Turvo challenge the characterisation of British banks as being cautious and conservative lenders, certainly in the London and Brazilian Bank's early years. Even when the bank truly adhered to these orthodox banking principles in later decades, the third case study of the Lourenço Gomes & Cia debt, demonstrates that even short-term, cautious lending could result in entanglement with slavery.

This entanglement was viewed as undesirable not because it placed the bank in conflict with British anti-slavery legislation, but because it represented risky business. As the Vergueiro case showed, it could result in the long-term immobilisation of capital as

well as expensive and ineffective legal proceedings. Whereas the Baron de Turvo case opened the bank's eyes to the perils of foreclosing on slave property. The fact that the bank even contemplated foreclosure is evidence that it felt under no threat of censure by British officials in Brazil. It is difficult to say whether this was a blatant disregard or ignorance of the provision of the 1843 Act which forbade the foreclosure on debts secured by slave property. What appears clearer is a lack of appetite on the part of British officials to interfere in the affairs of a significant British investor in Brazil. Though much of the bank's entanglement remained hidden from public view, the notoriety of the Vergueiro account and the public advertisement of the auction of the Baron de Turvo's slaves indicate that British officials were likely aware to some extent. The end of the slave trade had greatly reduced the relevance of the 1843 Act and official interest in slave mortgages and other forms of financial entanglement had dissipated by the time the London and Brazilian Bank was established in 1862. Nevertheless, while the bank showed little fear of reprehension in Brazil, it appears they were more cautious when broaching the subject with their shareholders and the wider public. Despite the fact that the 'lock-ups' were a constant discussion topic in shareholder meetings, the fact that the bank held mortgages secured by slave property and had attempted to seize the Baron de Turvo's slaves was never mentioned in the published reports. As we shall see in the next chapter, this caution to disclose the bank's relationship with slavery in Brazil continued throughout their administration of the *Angélica* coffee plantation.

Chapter V: The London and Brazilian Bank's Administration of the *Angélica* Plantation.

On 3rd July 1871 the *Angélica* estate was signed over to the London and Brazilian Bank by their debtors, Vergueiro e Cia.¹ This British bank was now in possession of an extensive plantation just to the north of the town of Rio Claro in the mature coffee-producing region of the west of São Paulo province. Much like its credit relations with plantation owners, the bank's ten-year experience as a coffee producer would be beset with frustration as it struggled to reconcile an adherence to British anti-slavery identity with a regional labour market dominated by slavery. Despite the previous scholarly characterisation of the bank's administration as an experiment in free labour, this chapter will show that the London and Brazilian Bank's entanglement with slavery extended to the use of enslaved labourers on its own coffee plantation.

The London and Brazilian Bank's decade-long experience as owners of the *Angélica* estate has largely been overlooked in the literature. In spite of its importance during the institution's early years, business historians have shown very little interest in this facet of the bank's operations.² Though Joslin's classic study acknowledges the burden the estate placed on the bank, the author provides very little information about its management, only to add that the bank attempted to recruit German labour in

¹ A transcription of the original contract signed in Santos can be found in LBB vs. Vergueiro, 1875-1877, pp. 169-172.

² Discussion of the *Angélica* plantation does not feature in Guimarães' or Jones' study of the bank. See C.G Guimarães, 'O Estado Imperial brasileiro e os bancos estrangeiros: o caso do London and Brazilian Bank (1862 – 1871)'; C. Jones, 'Commercial Banks and Mortgage Companies'. The plantation is mentioned in passing in B.R. de Magalhães, 'Investimentos ingleses no Brasil e o Banco Londrino e Brasileiro', *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Políticos*, 49 (1979) p. 245.

Hamburg.³ Levy and Saes go into more detail about *Angélica* under the bank's administration, noting the difficulties it faced managing an agricultural property in Brazil's interior and the failed attempts to sell the estate to a third-party.⁴ The authors also mention the bank's commitment to a 'totally free labour force,' though unlike the rest of their observations gleaned from the bank's archives, this appears to be based exclusively Warren Dean's seminal study of plantation agriculture in Rio Claro. Dean briefly observes the 'extraordinary novelty' of the bank's use of an 'entirely free labour force' and the failure of this experiment due to the incompetency of the estate's English managers.⁵ Despite the author's observation that 'only two or three other free plantations existed in the province [of São Paulo],' no labour history of this experiment has been attempted since.⁶ Using the bank's archive in addition to local sources, this chapter will explain the reasons, anti-slavery related and otherwise, behind the bank's short-lived attempt to run the estate exclusively using free labour from a variety of both domestic and international sources. As we shall observe, it was during the bank's attempts to mitigate the financial burden of this failed experiment that its managers resorted to the use of gangs of hired slaves.

³ D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America* p. 76 and p. 159.

⁴ M.B. Levy, F.A.M Saes, 'Dívida externa brasileira 1850-1913' p. 57.

⁵ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* pp. 117-118.

⁶ Brief references to *Angélica* under British-ownership have appeared since but are based on Dean's observations. For example, see V. Stolcke, *Coffee Planters Workers and Wives: Class Conflict and Gender Relations on São Paulo Plantations* (London: Macmillan, 1988) p. 254, n. 53.

Part I: Transferal of the Estate and its Early Operations

With the transferal of the estate the bank had inherited one of the jewels in the crown of ‘the Sovereign of Ibicaba.’ While not as developed and with a far smaller productive area than *Ibicaba*, *Angélica* was still a substantial property covering 130km² and containing 300,000 coffee bushes and a cotton plantation. Only a small portion of the estate, around 3km², was planted with the rest containing ‘extensive woods’ and other virgin land watered by two rivers.⁷ While the transferal of an agricultural property as payment in lieu of cash was far from ideal from the bank’s perspective, its managers and board were quick to recognise the potential to recoup what Vergueiro owed them and more through *Angélica*’s coffee production. In a shareholder meeting held around a year after the transfer, the bank’s chairman declared that in his opinion as ‘an old coffee planter’ the estate was ‘a very valuable property.’⁸ Cater would have been aware that in the year before *Angélica* came into the bank’s hands, it had produced 5660 cwt, or approximately 290 tonnes, of coffee.⁹ The transferal occurred at a time of elevated global coffee prices and transport costs to the port at Santos would soon be reduced with the opening of a railway line to Campinas (some 90km from Rio Claro) in 1872.¹⁰ The *Angélica* property clearly had the potential to become a profitable asset in the bank’s hands but its future success would ultimately rest on whether its British owners could find sufficient labour to work it.

⁷ Taken from an 1872 description of the plantation in the prospectus for the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, Limited. See *The Examiner*, 13 April 1872. This company will be discussed in Section II.

⁸ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 32 (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1872) p. 879.

⁹ ‘Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, Limited’ *The Examiner*, 13 April 1872.

¹⁰ B.R. de Magalhães, ‘Investimentos ingleses no Brasil’ p. 245.

The harvest of 1870 had been collected by 130 or so slaves attached to the property and the remnants of the European immigrant colony established by the Vergueiro family in the 1850s.¹¹ Though the latter would remain on *Angélica*, as we observed in the previous chapter, Vergueiro's slaves were excluded from the July 1871 deed.¹² It is likely that the bank had already committed to free labour, for reasons discussed later, but this decision was not immediately so clear cut. During the negotiations with José Vergueiro during the final months of 1870, John Beaton had at least contemplated using slave labour on the plantation. In a letter to Vergueiro of 13th December 1870, Beaton outlined a draft proposal which, in addition to the transferal of *Angélica*, included a clause stipulating the hire of around 45 slaves 'for not less than two years at wages to be agreed upon.'¹³ Vergueiro's replies have not survived, so it is not clear whether he rejected this particular clause, or if the bank had a change of heart. Nevertheless, it shows that the bank was not averse to taking advantage of a loophole in the 1843 Act which allowed British subjects to continue to exploit slave labour through hiring instead of outright purchase. The bank would return to this strategy in the final years of its administration of *Angélica*.

Even though the bank did not hire any slaves from Vergueiro, it seems that the labour force on the plantation was not entirely free during the first year of its administration under its new British owners. Following the transfer, the estate was placed under the

¹¹ A European immigrant colony was established on *Angélica* in 1855. See. W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 94.

¹² The European immigrants would remain on *Angélica* but their debts were still payable to Vergueiro & Cia. See LBB vs. Vergueiro, 1875-1877, f. 172.

¹³ J. Beaton to J. Vergueiro, 13 December 1870, BOLSA G5/1, ff. 62-63.

management of Carlos Koch, a German who had been a director of immigrant colony at *Ibicaba* and had since acquired his own coffee plantation in the region.¹⁴ His management and poor record keeping attracted the criticism of the bank's London secretary and by July 1872 Koch had broken his agreement and left the property.¹⁵ The German left without settling the credit account he had with the bank, which London requested their Rio manager to follow up, writing 'The debt of Mr. Coch is we observe 2:186\$000 which must include the value of the slaves he purchased...'¹⁶ Given the average price of a young male slave in Rio Claro in 1872 was 1:920\$000, we can surmise that the slaves referred to were no more than two or three individuals and were probably purchased by Koch for domestic service rather than to work in the field.¹⁷ Irrespective of the duties these slaves performed, their purchase by an employee of the a British bank, using its funds was surely sailing close to the wind in terms of the 1843 Act.

The bank's correspondence provides little indication of the labour used on the plantation during its first year of operation. A list of instructions sent to Mr. Whitaker, Koch's proposed replacement, in December 1872 does make clear that an undefined number of colonists were certainly still tending to the coffee bushes allocated to them

¹⁴ See W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 121; *Relatório apresentado ao Ministério da Agricultura, Commercio e Obras Públicas por João Pedro Carvalho de Moraes em execução das instruções de 17 de março último* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1870) p. 33. The first reference to Koch in the bank's correspondence is from January 1872, see London HQ to Rio branch, 22 January 1872, BOLSA G1/5. Nb. Koch's name is anglicised to Coch in the bank's correspondence.

¹⁵ London HQ to Rio branch, 29 May 1872, BOLSA G1/5; London HQ to Rio branch, 19 July 1872, BOLSA G1/5.

¹⁶ London HQ to Rio branch, 20 September 1872, BOLSA G1/5.

¹⁷ For the average price of male slaves, aged 15-29 in Rio Claro, 1843-1887, see Table 3.4 in W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 55.

during Vergueiro's time.¹⁸ John Gordon, the Rio branch's manager requested that Whitaker, the son of the British vice-consul-cum-planter discussed in Chapter 1, check the condition of the coffee bushes 'under charge of the colonists, and also those cultivated by the Fazenda.'¹⁹ The latter half of this reference suggests the bank's administrator had been paying for other labourers to tend to coffee bushes. A rare transcription of the plantation's accounts by the bank's London secretary states that a monthly average of 2:926\$254 had been spent 'working the Fazenda.'²⁰ There is no evidence to suggest that part of this disbursement had been used to hire slaves and it could well be true that it was spent on the wages of free Brazilian labourers, *camaradas*, who as we will see in a following section, were present in fairly considerable numbers on the plantation.

Section II: The Brazilian Coffee Estates Company and a public commitment to free labour.

Whether or not hired slaves were used on the plantation during the first year of British ownership, in April 1872 the bank made a public commitment to free labour. From the few references to the plantation in the bank's correspondence during their first year of ownership, it is clear that the estate's administration had been problematic. London headquarters, who by this period had taken over more control of the Rio branch's business, complained frequently about the lack of accounts and other information from

¹⁸ The plantation had been under the temporary control of another German, J. Ernst Lorey following Koch's departure. See Mr. Gordon to J. Ernst Lorey, 28 December 1872, BOLSA G5/1.

¹⁹ Mr. Gordon to Mr. Whitaker, 28 December 1872, BOLSA G5/1.

²⁰ London HQ to Rio branch, 8 May 1872, BOLSA G1/5.

the estate.²¹ Given the practical difficulties of running an estate in the interior of São Paulo from not just the Rio branch but the far more distant London office, the bank decided to attempt to sell the property. However, instead of placing the property back on the open market the Bank's management opted to establish a third-party company to purchase and administer the estate. On 12th April 1872 the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company was incorporated in London with the aim of raising £250,000 in initial capital in 25,000 shares at £10 each.²² As well as retaining a 20% stake in the new company, the New London and Brazilian Bank was also represented on two of the six seats at the board; John Beaton, the bank's manager in London and William Freer Schönfeld, a board member of the bank. The remaining four seats were occupied by John James Aubertin, the former superintendent of the San Paulo Railway, the most successful British railway in Latin America;²³ Lt. Gen. Sir G. St. Patrick, a veteran of the East India Company; Henry Roman Uthhoff of Messrs. Fesser, Uthhoff & Co. of London and Henry Drenkhahn, a merchant formerly based in Rio and now in Hamburg.²⁴

The stated purpose of the company was the 'purchase and working of coffee and cotton estates in Brazil' and it had ambitious plans for *Angélica*, which it had arranged to

²¹ On London's increased vigilance over the bank's business in Brazil after the mismanagement of the 1860s at Rio, see D. Joslin, *A Century of Banking in Latin America*, p. 76. For London's complaints about the lack of information from the estate see, London HQ to Rio branch, 22 January 1872, BOLSA G1/5; London HQ to Rio branch, 8 May 1872, BOLSA G1/5.

²² *Brazilian Coffee Estates Company: Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association* (London: 1872) in TNA, BT 31/1709/6186. See also 'Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, Limited' *The Examiner*, 13 April 1872.

²³ R. Graham, *Britain and the Modernisation of Brazil* p. 60

²⁴ 'Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, Limited' *The Examiner*, 13 April 1872.

purchase for £126,000.²⁵ Under the company's management, land planted with coffee bushes would be expanded tenfold, from around 3km² to just over 30km². The company projected that once these bushes had reached maturity, the coffee crop from *Angélica* would reach over 4,500 tonnes, more than fifteen-times the size of the harvest from 1870. This incredible expansion would be made possible by the equally ambitious plans the company had for the estate's labour force. In addition to purchasing the property, the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company would also acquire the privileges of a contract recently agreed between the bank's John Beaton and the Brazilian government for 'for the purpose of encouraging European Emigration to Brazil, in view of the abolition of slave labour throughout the Empire.'²⁶ Under the terms of the contract of 6th September 1871, the company committed to import 10,000 immigrants from Northern Europe over a period of five years.

Table 5.1: Immigration Schedule stipulated in John Beaton's Immigration Contract²⁷

End of Year	Number of Immigrants
1872	750
1873	1250
1874	2000
1875	3000
1876	3000
Total:	10000

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid*

²⁷ *Brazilian Coffee Estates Company: Memorandum of Association* p. 45.

These plans represented the new company's, and indeed the bank's, commitment to the exclusive use of free labour on the plantation. Though the plans were also guided by Brazilian immigration policy and free labour experiments that had taken place previously on *Angélica*, as well as neighbouring *Paulista* plantations, there is no doubt that anti-slavery considerations were crucial in the formation of the company's plans for *Angélica's* labour force. As British mining companies in Brazil had shown, the 1843 Act did not prohibit British subjects from hiring slaves from other owners. Indeed, companies such as the St. John Del Rey Gold Mining Co. had exploited this loophole to employ slaves on contracts longer than the average life expectancy of an enslaved miner.²⁸ Legally speaking, the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company could have followed the same path. The real issue was the impossibility of raising large amounts of capital for the formation of a new slaveholding company in anti-slavery Britain. As Kelly has observed, mining companies formed in the 1860s had realised this. The Montes Aureos Company, incorporated in 1862 for the purposes of gold mining in the north-eastern province of Maranhão, explicitly declared in its prospectus that 'no slaves will be held by the Company or its servants.'²⁹ In a sector as equally dominated by slavery, the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company had to publicly declare its allegiance to free labour in order to have any chance at attracting the investment it needed to begin operations. Investor opinion, rather than anti-slavery legislation, had a greater bearing on the company's labour policy.

²⁸ C. Evans, 'Brazilian Gold' p. 127.

²⁹ *Daily News*, 19 Dec 1861, cited in J. Kelly, 'The Problem of Anti-slavery' p. 202. Though as we observed in Chapter II, this short-lived enterprise did attempt to circumvent the 1843 Act and purchased slaves to be employed its operations.

Questions concerning the future of slavery and Brazil's transition towards free labour also encouraged the company's commitment to the use of free labour on *Angélica*. Though slavery continued to predominate in the coffee sector of Brazil's south-eastern provinces, the national crisis of the institution had already begun around 1865. The loss of a political and ideological pro-slavery ally after the end of the U.S. Civil War, the increasing regional concentration of slave labour and ensuing episodes of slave resistance, as well as the end of the Paraguayan War in 1870 created a shift in national attitudes which would lead to the passing of the Law of the Free Womb (*Lei de Ventre Livre*) of September 1871.³⁰ This legislation signalled the eventual extinction of Brazilian slavery by declaring that no more slaves would be born in Brazil; the structural limit of the institution was now set at the lifespan of the remaining 1.5 million or so enslaved people registered in the 1872 census.³¹ It was these circumstances that the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company's prospectus referred to when it talked of the 'abolition of slavery throughout the Empire.'³²

In reality, the abolition of slavery would take another seventeen years and in the decade following the Law of the Free Womb it would be the coffee planters of São Paulo who would most take advantage of slavery's last gasp. High coffee prices

³⁰ R. Marquese, 'Capitalismo, Escravidão e a Economia Cafeeira do Brasil no Longo Século XIX' p. 306. See also R. Salles, *E O Vale Era O Escravo* (Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Civilização Brasileira, 2008) pp. 68-69.

³¹ The freedom of the children born to enslaved mothers was not immediate. The law obligated masters to care of these minors until the age of eight at which point they were given the choice of receiving compensation from the state or the labour of these *ingênuos* until the age of 21. Conrad has shown that the vast majority of slaveholders opted for the second option and 'the great majority of surviving children undoubtedly remained, in conformity with the law, in a state of de facto slavery until they were freed along with the slaves on May 13, 1888.' See R. Conrad, *The Destruction of Brazilian Slavery* p. 116.

³² 'Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, Limited' *The Examiner*, 13 April 1872.

throughout the 1870s allowed these planters to purchase labourers in the inter- and intraprovincial slave trade.³³ In Rio Claro, the enslaved population continued to increase in this way almost until abolition.³⁴ Nevertheless, in the same year of the transferal of *Angélica* to the bank, a small number of planters in the region turned once again to immigration schemes. In March 1871, after a period of slave unrest in the *Paulista* West, the provincial government authorised a fund of 600 contos for loans to assist planters interested in importing labourers from Europe. This modest initiative aimed to revive the experiments with European immigrant colonies which had been pioneered most famously by Vergueiro & Cia on *Ibicaba* and *Angélica* during the 1840s and 1850s.³⁵ Though these earlier schemes had ultimately failed, the organisers of the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company may well have been encouraged that important planters in Rio Claro such as the Baron of Porto Feliz and the Baron of Araraquara had moved to establish European immigrant colonies.³⁶

In specifying the origin of potential immigrants as ‘agriculturalists and farm labourers from the North of Europe’, the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, as with previous schemes, was responding to the Brazilian government’s immigration policy.³⁷ Since

³³ Slenes estimates that between 1872 and 1881, between 94,900 and 99,900 slaves entered coffee-growing regions of the centre-south. For these estimates and a discussion of the internal slave trade, see R.W.Slenes, ‘The Brazilian Internal Slave Trade, 1850-1888: Regional Economies, Slave Experience and the Politics of a Peculiar Market’, in W. Johnson (ed.), *The Chattel Principle: Internal Slave Trades in the Americas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) pp. 325-353.

³⁴ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 51.

³⁵ For a discussion of these schemes see *Ibid* pp. 88-123; E.V. da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* pp. 100-124.

³⁶ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 117. The important distinction being, however, that these neighbouring plantations would continue to exploit slave alongside free labour.

³⁷ See Article 2 of Beaton’s contract, in *Brazilian Coffee Estates Company: Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association* p. 45.

the country's independence, Brazilian policymakers had shown a preference for immigration from northern and central Europe. This inclination was strongly conditioned by pseudoscience which placed white Europeans at the pinnacle of a racial hierarchy and black Africans at the bottom.³⁸ Brazil's white elite, imbued with this ideology, viewed European immigration as a means to dilute the pronounced African heritage that centuries of the slave trade had bequeathed on their new nation. For much of the nineteenth-century Germans in particular were idealised as the perfect immigrant by this elite. As Jeffrey Lesser notes, Germans 'seemed indisputably white. They were farmers. They had a reputation for working hard.'³⁹ Immigration schemes from government-sponsored small-holder colonies to the private and subsidised sharecropping experiments pioneered by the Vergueiros had all targeted German-speaking immigrants.⁴⁰ In the years preceding John Beaton's contract, a small number of schemes had also begun to target British and Irish agricultural labourers. Though always few in number, immigrants from the British Isles were the third-largest nationality group entering Rio de Janeiro between 1864-1873.⁴¹ By committing to establish emigrant recruitment agencies in 'England and Germany (particularly Alsace)' the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company was replicating the efforts of both the state and private enterprise to promote northern European immigration to Brazil.⁴² As

³⁸ J. Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil* pp. 11-13.

³⁹ *Ibid* p. 52.

⁴⁰ Immigration schemes involving German-speakers from 1822-1870 are summarised in *Ibid* pp. 24-44.

⁴¹ Behind Italians and Portuguese. See O. Marshall, *English, Irish and Irish-American Pioneer Settlers in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, University of Oxford, 2005) p. 21.

⁴² See Article 3 of Beaton's contract, in *Brazilian Coffee Estates Company: Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association* p. 46.

we shall observe, like many of schemes that proceeded theirs, this British-led attempt to attract European immigrants to Brazil would end in failure.

Section III: Free-labour experiments under the bank's direction

The first major hurdle the bank faced in supplying the *Angélica* estate with European labour was the failure of the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company to raise sufficient capital. In late May 1872 the bank's London secretary informed Rio of the disappointing news. Nevertheless, he stated that he was still sanguine about raising enough investment to import a reduced number of immigrants on a modified contract.⁴³ Despite remaining hopeful of resurrecting the company, at the bank's annual meeting in October 1873 the chairman informed shareholders that the scheme had collapsed.⁴⁴ Though the bank cited delays in the modification of their contract with the Brazilian government, the initial failure of the company to raise sufficient capital was at least in part related to the far from favourable image that emigration schemes to Brazil had amongst Europeans, and Germans in particular, in the early 1870s. In deciding to keep hold of the estate and procure German labour at its own expense, the bank would soon encounter the problematic practical realities of promoting emigration to Brazil.

⁴³ London HQ to Rio branch, 29 May 1872, BOLSA G1/5. For the company's proposal to reduce the number of immigrants by half to 5000, see 'Special Resolution', 28 June 1872, in TNA, BT 31/1709/6186.

⁴⁴ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 33 (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1873) p. 1023.

Though published in the month following the initial failure of the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company to attract sufficient capital, Constantine Phipps's report *Emigration to Brazil* of June 1872 reflected many of the concerns held about Brazil as a suitable host for European labourers.⁴⁵ Phipps, second secretary at the British legation in Rio de Janeiro, wrote the report in response to the increased attention emigration schemes to Brazil had garnered in Britain since the late 1860s.⁴⁶ The author was very critical of the opportunities and protection available to European immigrants in Brazil and he concluded his report by discouraging prospective British emigrants from considering it as an option.⁴⁷

As the most recent agreement between a British agent and the Brazilian government, Phipps devoted special attention to John Beaton's contract. His major criticisms were two-fold. Firstly, he argued that it would be difficult for an immigrant family to pay off their debt to the company in the stipulated period of four years.⁴⁸ The capacity of indentured labourers to pay off their debts has been a point of contention in the literature. While Viotti da Costa's analysis of the sharecropping contracts paints a pessimistic picture, Dean's study of the same schemes suggests that a typical immigrant family was able to free itself of debt within a reasonable period.⁴⁹ Beaton's contract differed from these previous experiments in that instead of sharing the net

⁴⁵ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil. Presented to Both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty, June 1872* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1872).

⁴⁶ On the activity of Brazilian agents in England and Ireland during this period see O. Marshall, *English, Irish and Irish-American Pioneer Settlers*

⁴⁷ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* pp. 26-27.

⁴⁸ *Ibid* p. 24.

⁴⁹ E. Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* pp. 118-121; W. Dean, *Rio Claro* pp. 104-109.

profit with the planter, immigrants were to be paid a fixed rate (\$600 per alquiere) for the coffee they produced. Indeed, other planters in the region had moved to these 'por ajuste' or piecemeal contracts after abandoning sharecropping.⁵⁰ Phipps conceded that there were some advantages to this fixed rate payment system. Rather than the colonists having to wait to see what their share of the profits would be following the transport and sale of the crop, under Beaton's contract the colonists' accounts would be credited immediately following the harvest. This would remove the lack of transparency and the allegations of deceit on the part of planters which had plagued older sharecropping contracts.⁵¹ Nevertheless, basing his calculations on those of the experienced German consul, Phipps concluded that annual earnings of 1:290\$000 per family would not be sufficient to cover yearly expenses of 1:010\$000 plus their debt upon arrival of 750\$000 over the four-year period. Immigrants would then be burdened with the purchase their house, land and trees at prices up to 800\$000 (if purchased within four years) or 1:000\$000 (if purchased afterwards). In the likely event they had been unable to save the amount required to purchase their land, they could also rent it from the company for 100\$00 per year.⁵² Unfortunately, owing to a lack of data about the immigrants contracted by the bank and their debts, this chapter is unable to posit whether indebtedness was a factor in the failure of this particular experiment in European indentured labour.

⁵⁰ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* pp. 115-116.

⁵¹ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 15. Disputes arising from the calculation of earnings are discussed in W. Dean, *Rio Claro* pp. 95-97.

⁵² C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 24. For the terms of the contract see *Brazilian Coffee Estates Company: Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association* pp. 47-48.

Phipps' second major objection to Beaton's agreement with the government also applied to what he saw as a deficiency in all immigrant labour contracts in Brazil. All contracts entered into by foreign workers were governed by the *Locação de Serviços* law of 1837 which in Phipps' view afforded the immigrant little protection, placing them 'utterly at the mercy of their employers and of the local authorities.'⁵³ Under this law, a worker fired for just cause - including illness, drunkenness or 'any injury done to the safety or honour of his employer or his family' - was obliged to immediately pay what he owed to the contractor. If unable, he could be sent to labour on public works or to jail for up to two years. Any worker who absconded could be seized and forced to labour on public works until he had earned twice what he owed his employer.⁵⁴ As Dean points out, this might mean the equivalent of a life sentence for the condemned and destitution for his family.⁵⁵ Phipps was scathing of such 'cruel provisions' and invoked anti-slavery language in his critique, claiming immigrants could easily 'find [themselves] in the position of a slave' in the hands of an unjust contractor.⁵⁶ For the author, while it remained unrepealed, this law would 'act as an insuperable bar to any Brazilian immigration schemes succeeding in England of receiving the sanction of Her Majesty's Emigration Commissioners.'⁵⁷

⁵³ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 10. As Dean points out, their employers and the local authorities were often one and the same. For a short discussion of this law, see W. Dean, *Rio Claro* pp. 96-97.

⁵⁴ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 9.

⁵⁵ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 96.

⁵⁶ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 10.

⁵⁷ *Ibid* p. 22.

While it would take another three years and the abject failure of the British colonies in Paraná for the Commissioners to formally advise against emigration to Brazil, authorities in many German states had acted sooner.⁵⁸ Phipps noted that his collaborator, Mr. Haupt, the German consul in Brazil, had reacted with surprise when learning that Beaton was hoping to recruit labour in Germany.⁵⁹ Due to the treatment of immigrants on *Paulista* plantations, Prussia had severely restricted emigration to Brazil as early as 1859 and by 1871 recruitment activities in the whole of Germany were limited to the cities of Hamburg and Bremen.⁶⁰ Moreover, the consul added that economic conditions in Germany were such that he expected emigration even to the United States to decrease, rendering it ‘highly improbable that any number of Germans will emigrate to Brazil.’⁶¹

Though Beaton’s contract was no longer valid following the collapse of the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company, the bank nevertheless attempted to recruit emigrants in Germany at their own expense. They soon realised that the German consul’s pessimistic forecast would prove correct. After despatching their first consignment of some 30 immigrants from Hamburg in the autumn of 1873, the bank’s chairman admitted to shareholders that ‘owing, unfortunately, to what had recently been said

⁵⁸ J. Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil* p. 44. See also, ‘Caution to Emigrants: Government Emigration Board, United Kingdom, 1876’, in *Ibid* pp. 56-57. On the failure of British immigration to Brazil, see O. Marshall, *English, Irish and Irish-American Pioneer Settlers*, especially Ch. 8.

⁵⁹ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 22.

⁶⁰ Lesser notes all German states applied a ban on emigration to Brazil following unification in 1871. However, Haupt’s comments and the bank’s future recruitment show that this ban did not apply to Hamburg and Bremen. See J. Lesser, *Immigration, Ethnicity, and National Identity in Brazil* p. 44; C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 23.

⁶¹ C. Phipps, *Report by Mr. Phipps on Emigration to Brazil* p. 22.

about emigration to the Brazils, great difficulty was experienced in getting emigrants.⁶² Privately the bank's officials had been aware of this problem since as early as August 1872 when they lamented over the role that Phipps' report had played in increasing prejudice against emigration to Brazil.⁶³ In spite of these difficulties the bank managed to recruit another 172 Germans who arrived in Brazil in late December 1873.⁶⁴ In the following year the bank attempted to despatch more emigrants from Germany but, as the chairman told the shareholders, their plans were thwarted when the Prussian authorities prevented their departure.⁶⁵ Aside from two families sent from Bremen via London in June 1874, it appears the bank were unable to supply the plantation with any more European labour after this decision.⁶⁶ A total of 214 European immigrants sent by the bank between 1873-1874 fell well short of the 1200 families which the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company had envisaged eventually working *Angélica* and was still a distance from Beaton's projections for 750 individuals by the end of 1872.⁶⁷ As we shall see, the bank's attempts to make do with

⁶² *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 33 p. 1023.

⁶³ London HQ to Rio branch, 2 August 1872, BOLSA G1/5.

⁶⁴ This figure is taken from the report of the President of the Province of São Paulo, see *Relatório apresentado à Assembléa Legislativa Provincial de S. Paulo pelo presidente da provincia, o exm. sr. dr. João Theodoro Xavier em 5 de fevereiro de 1874*. (S. Paulo: Typ. Americana, 1874) p. 15. Correspondence in the bank's own archive, written shortly before the departure of this group, makes reference to only 151 emigrants, composed of '86 adults, 50 children and 15 infants.' See London HQ to Rio branch, 19 November 1873, BOLSA G2/1.

⁶⁵ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 34 (London: Waterlow and Sons, 1874) p. 921.

⁶⁶ These two families were composed of 11 individuals. See London HQ to Rio branch, 23 June 1874, BOLSA G2/2.

⁶⁷ Figures taken from statistics published in reports by the President of São Paulo. See *Relatório apresentado à Assembléa Legislativa Provincial de S. Paulo (1874)* p. 15; *Relatório apresentado à Assembléa Legislativa Provincial de S. Paulo pelo exm. sr. dr. João Theodoro Xavier, presidente da provincia, no dia 14 de fevereiro de 1875*. (S. Paulo: 1875) p. 87. A contemporary English-language guidebook on Brazil puts the number of German's imported by the bank at 500, but the bank's correspondence nor published shareholder meetings corroborate a number this high. See M.G. Mulhall and E.T. Mulhall, *Handbook of Brazil* (Buenos Aires, 1877) p. 228. On the company's projections for the size of their labour force, see *The Examiner*, 13 April 1872.

this labour force would be significantly disrupted by unrest amongst the colonists and the competing interests of neighbouring plantation owners.

The deterioration of relations with the plantation's labourers and the local planter elite appears to have begun in earnest under the management of Alexander Scott Blacklaw, who arrived on *Angélica* around the same time as the first group of German immigrants in late 1873. After an initial two years beset with problems, the bank hoped that this Scotsman, 'a first-class coffee-planter, a man of considerable experience', would be able to turn around the fortunes of the *Angélica* estate.⁶⁸ Blacklaw's experience was not in Brazil, but on plantations in the British colony of Ceylon, where coffee production, based primarily on indentured Indian labour, had undergone significant expansion since the 1850s.⁶⁹ In appointing this outsider, the bank clearly hoped that Blacklaw would be able to reproduce the successes of Ceylon with indentured European labour in São Paulo.

In spite of the faith shown by the bank's management in Blacklaw, his administration of the plantation was not a successful one. G.A Crüwell, a friend of Blacklaw's from Ceylon who visited the estate in early 1876, candidly declared that the colonist system on *Angélica* as a failure.⁷⁰ Echoing the complaints of other planters who had

⁶⁸ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 33 p. 1023.

⁶⁹ R. Wenzlhuemer, *From Coffee to Tea Cultivation in Ceylon, 1880-1900: An Economic and Social History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) pp. 60-61.

⁷⁰ G.A. Cruwell and A.S. Blacklaw, *Brazil as a Coffee-growing Country: its Capabilities, the Mode of Cultivation and Prospects for Extension* (Colombo: AMJ Ferguson, 1878) p. 60.

experimented with European labour, Crüwell was quick to blame the unsuitability and dishonesty of these immigrants.⁷¹ Blacklaw toed a similar line:

Mr Blacklaw was at first inclined to believe, after three years of experience, in the possibility of their labour being a succedaneum of slave labour for coffee estates in Brazil. Later experience, however, has changed his opinion owing to the general prevalence of coffee stealing among them and their general disinclination to repay advances, and he says that as regards coffee cultivation they have been proved no use, and that everyone who has tried them has lost money by them.⁷²

However, heeding Dean's word of caution in giving these claims undue credit, it appears more likely that the failure of the German colony lay, at least in part, with the inability of the British managers to deal with the immigrants and other workers on a contractual basis without resorting to violence and intimidation.⁷³ While corporal punishment had been a complaint of European labourers on other *Paulista* plantations, it is perhaps more plausible that violence and intimidation under Blacklaw's administration reflected the labour regimes which he had overseen in Ceylon.⁷⁴

The bank's own correspondence, newspaper reports and local judicial records give an insight into a tumultuous and dangerous environment on the plantation during this period. Even before Blacklaw's arrival, all was not well on *Angélica*. According to a

⁷¹ *Ibid* pp. 63-64.

⁷² *Anglo-Brazilian Times*, 7 September 1878

⁷³ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 110.

⁷⁴ A Swiss consular agent complained of immigrants suffering corporal punishment at the hands of overseers on a visit to *Ibicaba* in 1865. See E. Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire* pp. 120-121. Whippings and assaults were a method of labour control on coffee plantations in Ceylon, see R. Kurian, 'Labour, Race and Gender on the Coffee Plantations in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), 1834-1880' in W.G. Clarence-Smith and S. Topik (eds), *The Global Coffee Economy in Africa, Asia and Latin America, 1500-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) p. 188.

local newspaper, his predecessor, Adolph Philipson, had enraged 300-400 local tradesmen in August 1873. After engaging their services for the construction of various building – likely houses for the arriving colonists, Philipson left the estate without paying the workers, who then threatened to destroy the fruits of their considerable labour.⁷⁵ ‘This fact would have caused many deaths’, reported the same newspaper some time later, if it had not been for the intervention of two local gentleman, Joaquim Teixeira das Neves and Dr. Fonseca.⁷⁶ One scandal then followed another as the following month a Prussian immigrant, Otto Scheer, was found murdered on the grounds of the estate.⁷⁷ Although it is unclear whether Blacklaw had arrived by then, it is clear that the business of the plantation was in some state of disorder just two years into the Bank’s tenure.

The woes of the plantation continued in 1874 with Blacklaw’s arrival seeming to coincide with a period of serious unrest. In March 1874, a local newspaper published an extraordinary series of allegations against the British managers of the plantation, starting:

Fazenda Angelica: A sorry tale follows. From that we know, either the London and Brazilian Bank takes serious measures relative to the administration of this very important plantation, or all of it will go awry.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *Correio Paulistano*, 13 August 1873.

⁷⁶ *Correio Paulistano*, 8 March 1874.

⁷⁷ *Diário de São Paulo*, 23 September 1873.

⁷⁸ *Correio Paulistano*, 8 March 1874.

The article then describes how the unrest and murder of the previous year were followed by a mass expulsion of 110 people from the estate who had been brought to the plantation by its previous owner. According to the author 54 of these people were fit for labour on the coffee plantation and that there now remained no-one to do nor direct the important work of coffee labour. Although it says no more about these people, the wider context provides a possible reason why such an expulsion would take place. The dates roughly coincide with the arrival of just over 200 German immigrants who would require accommodation. It is perhaps the case that the 110 people expelled to make room for the immigrants were *agregados* or *moradores* - free, poor Brazilians who entered into sharecropping agreements in lieu of rent and who were often tolerated by landowners for political reasons.⁷⁹ Given the Bank was not involved in politics in the same way as local elites, it is plausible that they were expelled as the administrator could see no reason to continue supporting them.

The mass expulsion of these *agregados* was followed by allegations of mistreatment on the part of the British administrators towards the German immigrants. In July 1874 the President of the province called for an investigation into the treatment of the colonists after having been informed of the use of ‘physical punishments condemned by [Brazilian] law, and even threatening the safety of said colonists’ by their British managers.⁸⁰ The German consular representative in Campinas also demanded information about the affairs of his countrymen on *Angélica*.⁸¹ The President’s

⁷⁹ See P. Eisenberg, ‘O homem esquecido: o trabalhador livre nacional no século XIX: sugestões para uma pesquisa’ in P. Eisenberg (ed) *Homens esquecidos: escravos e trabalhadores livres no Brasil - séculos XVIII e XIX* (Campinas, Unicamp, 1989) pp. 225-227.

⁸⁰ Letter by João Theodoro Xavier, 8 July 1874, transcribed in *Arquivo Público e Histórico de Rio Claro* (hereafter APHRC), Livro de Atas da Câmara Municipal de Rio Claro, Vol. 8, Book 9, Session 16 July 1874.

⁸¹ *Correio Paulistano* 11 July 1874.

allegations were likely based on information from the town's chief of police who had been obliged to visit *Angélica* two months previously:

Chief of Police - his excellency is seriously preoccupied with the affair at the Angélica plantation and it is good that it is thus so as to avoid lamenting great woe and losses. Just today the police of [Rio Claro] prevented a formidable act of disorder which had been planned; from what we have been informed, sooner or later there will be unrest which could be avoided by the dismissal of the two employees who take great pride in treating the colonists in a barbarous and improper manner.⁸²

Given the strength of José Vergueiro's influence in the province, there is the potential that allegations against the bank were exaggerated by his political allies in order to tarnish the bank's image during the on-going embittered legal battle between both parties. Nevertheless, in this case the bank's correspondence and Crüwell's sympathetic account suggest that Blacklaw and his subordinates regarded physical violence and intimidation as part and parcel of labour relations on the plantation. In the words of his friend, Blacklaw was 'in the proud position of being the terror of the province' having 'defeated over and over again the crimp as well as the dishonest colonist.' For Crüwell 'there [was] nothing too black in the world that is not found in our Ceylon friend.'⁸³ The bank's London secretary showed himself to support an intimidating, if not violent, relationship between managers and these 'dishonest colonists.' On hearing that one of the first arrivals to the estate had absconded, he wrote:

We trust the deserter was made an example of in order to deter others from following his lead, for it will not be at all reassuring to know that the people have it in their power to decline their engagements after our expense in shipping them.⁸⁴

⁸² *Correio Paulistano*, 5 May 1874.

⁸³ G.A. Cruwell and A.S. Blacklaw, *Brazil as a Coffee-growing Country* p. 64.

⁸⁴ London HQ to Rio branch, 8 December 1873, BOLSA G2/1.

Moreover, Dean's characterisation of the 'English managers' as 'drunken incompetents who brutalised the workers' appears to hold at least some truth in that the bank ended up dismissing a superintendent called Stewart for drunkenness.⁸⁵ There is no evidence to suggest that Stewart had been violent towards any of the estate's labourers, but another manager, James Duirs died after a violent altercation with a Brazilian labourer in late 1875.⁸⁶

Violence was also one of the responses adopted by Blacklaw and his subordinates against neighbouring planters who the bank accused of fomenting unrest amongst the recently arrived colonists. In an environment in which labour was scarce and expensive, the purpose of these neighbours was to 'crimp' colonists or convince them to leave *Angélica* with the promise of better opportunities elsewhere. This was a major problem for the bank, with the chairman admitting in the annual general meeting of 1874 that twelve families of the recently arrived cohort had been 'inveigled away.'⁸⁷ Though shareholders were told that due to their conduct these families were 'no loss', based on a four-person family, this group represented nearly a quarter of all the European immigrants the bank had managed to recruit. Local court records indicate that Blacklaw brought a criminal case against two former employees, Carlos Koch and a Belgian called Carlos Held, who he accused of forcefully entering *Angélica* armed with guns and forcing fifteen colonists and their families to leave with them to the

⁸⁵ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 118; London HQ to Rio branch, 23 April 1875, BOLSA G2/3.

⁸⁶ *Correio Paulistano*, 5 January 1876; Duirs death certificate states that he died as the result of a puncture wound to the abdomen, see 'Certidão de Óbito, James Duirs', 18 December 1875, APHRC.

⁸⁷ *The Bankers' Magazine, Journal of the Money Market and Commercial Digest*, vol. 34 p. 921

plantation owned by Silvério Rodrigues Jordão in Limeira.⁸⁸ On another occasion, the estate's managers took justice into their own hands. In February 1874, João Hilsdorf, another planter in the region, was caught allegedly inducing Germans to leave the plantation.⁸⁹ Upon finding him, two British managers, 'induced him to go into the house and there thrashed him.'⁹⁰ For their part in the crime, James Duirs and Mr. Merriweather were eventually sentenced to twelve-months imprisonment in August 1875.⁹¹ While the bank's London secretary was not pleased with the notoriety the case brought, nor the 'enticing' of Hilsdorf into the house, he agreed that if Hilsdorf was crimping 'he ought to have been sent out of the colony and if abusive, corrected (!)'⁹² As with the labour force, violence was viewed as an acceptable form social relations on this British-owned plantation.

Rather than simply a desire to procure much needed labour, the bank blamed the incursions of Hilsdorf and Koch, as well as other episodes of instability, on the powerful regional influence of José Vergueiro. The bank's London secretary viewed their debtor 'as the real actor, the others being mere puppets in his hands.'⁹³ It was not just Vergueiro, he believed that the estate had been subject to 'annoyances and outrages of all kinds' because 'the Fazenda [was] in the hands of foreigners.'⁹⁴ Rather

⁸⁸ Alexander Scott Blacklaw x Carlos Cach, Carlos Held, 1874, APHRC, Cartório Criminal, Processo n° 001/1874.

⁸⁹ Hilsdorf is listed as a coffee and cotton planter in Rio Claro. See *Almanak de S. João de Rio Claro para 1873*, facsimile, (São Paulo: Convênio IMESP/DAESP, 1981) pp. 28-29.

⁹⁰ Rio branch to London HQ, 14 March 1874, BOLSA G18/2.

⁹¹ Rio branch to London HQ, 23 August 1875, BOLSA G18/2.

⁹² London HQ to Rio branch, 9 April 1874, BOLSA G2/2.

⁹³ London HQ to Rio branch, 18 August 1874, BOLSA G2/2. See also, London HQ to Rio branch, 18 September 1875, BOLSA G2/3.

⁹⁴ London HQ to Rio branch, 15 April 1876, BOLSA G2/4(a).

than its foreign ownership per se, it was the bank's experiment with an exclusively free labour force on one of the region's most important plantations which may have caused anxiety amongst its neighbours. In the 1870s, wealth in the region was still predominately linked to the exploitation of slave labour. The potential of a successful free labour experiment, especially in the hands of the British, was a threat to the basis and expansion of this wealth. Irrespective of the extent to which the bank's claims held true, the fact remains that their administration of the plantation until Crüwell declared the colony a failure in early 1876 was a volatile, and at times, violent environment. Whether this was the major contributing factor behind the experiment's failure cannot be proven. Nevertheless, these conditions were surely not conducive to the flourishing of a successful labour regime which had already been strained by immigration restrictions and desertion.

Section IV: Other Free Labour Solutions

At the earliest signs that the bank's plans for a European colony would be thwarted by German immigration restrictions in mid-1874, its London secretary sent instructions to Rio to sell the estate piecemeal in order to 'relieve the bank of this great responsibility and liability.'⁹⁵ Ironically one of the reasons it was unable to realise a sale was because potential buyers were put off by the presence of the colonists and their debts. Indeed, one interested purchaser, 'a fazendeiro with 300-400 slaves...expressed his determination not to have anything to do with colonists.'⁹⁶ While the bank quietly attempted to sell the *Angélica* through intermediaries such as

⁹⁵ London HQ to Rio branch, 8 July 1874, BOLSA G2/2.

⁹⁶ Rio branch to London HQ, 23 August 1875, BOLSA G18/2.

the Banco do Brasil, Blacklaw continued to manage coffee production on the estate, which by June 1875 was operating with a debt of around 400 contos.⁹⁷

An undefined number of colonists continued to provide part of the labour but the manager had already begun to look for other solutions. As mentioned previously, large numbers of free Brazilians lived on the estate's grounds and in the surrounding area. Though these transient workers remain far less visible in the historical record than their immigrant counterparts, their presence on *Angélica* during the bank's tenure can be glimpsed in local court records. For example, Salvador José de Freitas and Francisco Justinano Barboza, labourers on the estate and originating from Ouro Fino in Minas were witnesses at the trial of Carlos Koch and Carlos Held.⁹⁸ Despite their numerical presence, Blacklaw was quick to dismiss these *camaradas* as a viable solution for plantation labour:

[The Camarada] will submit to no regular discipline, only works when he likes, however much his absence may inconvenience his employer, is very difficult to obtain, and seldom can be got unless under heavy advance.⁹⁹

Blacklaw's friend G.A. Crüwell was equally dismissive of these labourers, likening the *camaradas* to the Sinhalese population in Ceylon. Both groups 'come to work when it pleases them and do away when to them it seemeth advisable to do so.'¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ London HQ to Rio branch, 19 August 1875, BOLSA G2/3; London HQ to Rio branch, 9 September 1875, BOLSA G2/3.

⁹⁸ Alexander Scott Blacklaw x Carlos Cach, Carlos Held, 1874, APHRC, Cartório Criminal, Processo nº 001/1874 ff. 23-26.

⁹⁹ *Anglo-Brazilian Times*, 7 September 1878.

¹⁰⁰ Crüwell does concede that this 'independent, proud and vindictive' class of labour are 'very useful, chiefly in the management of cattle, horses and mules, as cart drivers, and so on.' G.A. Cruwell and A.S. Blacklaw, *Brazil as a Coffee-growing Country* p. 64. On the roles played by the Sinhalese on

Camaradas were itinerant labourers who were most typically employed on plantations in dangerous work such as the clearing of land where the planter did not want to risk his investment in a slave or indentured immigrant.¹⁰¹ Some also worked on plantations on longer term contracts but due to the harsh labour conditions degraded by slavery and the availability of alternative survival strategies many others were reluctant to submit to the type of labour regimes demanded by plantation owners.

Following the collapse of the European colony scheme and his inability to attract sufficient numbers of free local workers for the length of contract required, Blacklaw began to look further afield for a solution to the labour shortage. Like his friend Crüwell, Blacklaw was convinced that Brazil had much to gain in following Ceylon's example to import Indian indentured immigrants, known as 'coolies,' as a transitory solution to the perceived labour shortage on Brazil's plantations.¹⁰² In fact, Blacklaw made a high-profile case for this type of temporary labour migration at the Agricultural Congress of 1878 in Rio de Janeiro, a five-day conference which convened the south-east's landed elite to discuss the future of Brazil's most important economic sector. Invited as a special guest by the Minister of Agriculture, Blacklaw opened the final day's proceedings with a detailed and impassioned defence of the benefits of Indian indentured labour. Based on his experience on coffee plantations in Ceylon and his study of labour transitions in other areas of the British Empire such as Mauritius and Jamaica, Blacklaw affirmed to the assembled planter elite that:

coffee plantations in Ceylon, see R. Kurian, 'Labour, Race and Gender on the Coffee Plantations in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), 1834-1880' p. 177.

¹⁰¹ P. Eisenberg, 'O Homem Esquecido' p. 228.

¹⁰² On Crüwell's belief in the benefits of 'cooly' labour in Brazil, see G.A. Cruwell and A.S. Blacklaw, *Brazil as a Coffee-growing Country* p. 65.

[the Indian] is therefore, the race which, with more advantages than whites, suits [Brazilian] agriculture; it is this race which we need for service on our plantations.¹⁰³

Many of the Congress' delegates would have been intrigued with what Blacklaw had to say; Asian, principally Chinese, indentured labour was a transitory solution under serious consideration by a significant minority of those in attendance, including the Minister of Agriculture, João Lins de Vieira Cansanção Sinimbu.¹⁰⁴

Blacklaw was likely unaware, but around the same time he was extolling the benefits of Indian labour, British officials were in the process of closing off the possibility of this indentured migration flow. Though most Brazilian proponents of 'Asiatic' labour had focused on resurrecting the failed Chinese immigration schemes of the past, the Viscount de Mauá, a self-proclaimed Anglophile, looked to labour transitions in the British Empire for a solution. In 1876, taking advantage of a legal loophole, he contracted and imported 186 Indians from the island of Mauritius to work on his sugar plantation in Macaé, Rio de Janeiro.¹⁰⁵ On the collapse of this scheme after Mauá's bankruptcy, British officials in Rio organised the repatriation of the labourers and denounced the scheme on anti-slavery terms. The colonial government in Mauritius then proceeded to close the legal loophole which had allowed their recruitment in the

¹⁰³ *Congresso Agrícola do Rio de Janeiro [1878]* Anais. ed. fac-similar (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Casa de Rui Barbosa, 1988) p. 258.

¹⁰⁴ On Sinimbu's support of Chinese labour see J. Lesser, *Negotiating National Identity: Immigrants, Minorities, and the Struggle for Ethnicity in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999) pp. 25-29.

¹⁰⁵ J. Mulhern, 'Mauá's Indians: An Experiment in Indian "coolie" Labour in Brazil, 1876-1878' (Unpublished MA dissertation, King's College London, 2013)

first place, thus extinguishing the possibility of Blacklaw's proposals ever being practically adopted.

Though Indian indentured labour would not provide the solution to the shortage of labour on *Angélica* or any other Brazilian plantation, Blacklaw was involved in another scheme based on similar long-distance migration flows. Like the migration of indentured Tamils from southern India to Ceylon, the flows of *retirante* migrants from the northeastern province of Ceará to São Paulo, a distance of over 2000km, were initiated by the onset of severe hardships in their homelands. In his speech at the Agricultural Congress, Blacklaw drew a direct comparison between the famine in southern India in the early 1840s that kickstarted seasonal migration to Ceylon's coffee plantations and the droughts which had initiated the exodus of the Cearenses in 1877-1878.¹⁰⁶ It is not clear whether these similarities were purely coincidental or if indeed Blacklaw had played a part in advising the central government on this subsidised flow of migrants. Either way, Blacklaw and the *Angélica* plantation were amongst the largest single beneficiaries of Cearense labour. Dean estimates that some 3000 *retirantes* settled in the *Paulista* West during 1877-1878 and that 600 of those were contracted by the manager of *Angélica*.¹⁰⁷ However, Paulo Cesar Gonçalves' estimate of at least 278, based on the colonist registration records in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, is closer to the 300 stated by Blacklaw in a letter published in a

¹⁰⁶ *Congresso Agrícola do Rio de Janeiro [1878]* p. 259.

¹⁰⁷ W. Dean, *Rio Claro* p. 118.

newspaper in July 1878.¹⁰⁸ The passage of the *retirantes* from Ceará to São Paulo was subsidised by the central government, whereas

Sr. Scoth (sic) Blacklaw, bringing to the Angélica plantation owned by the Banco Inglez the Cearenses listed below, commits himself to give a house to each head of family and to pay the work of each person according to the price agreed with them.¹⁰⁹

Gonçalves observes that on other plantations in the region, the Cearenses were employed in the planting and care of immature coffee trees during an initial four-year period. This ancillary role had often been associated with other free Brazilian labourers on *Paulista* plantations.¹¹⁰ However, the 300 migrants contracted by Blacklaw were involved directly in coffee harvesting, a role typically performed by slaves on most plantations.¹¹¹ Though Blacklaw declared himself to be happy with the work of the migrants shortly after their arrival, a lack of source material makes it impossible to say whether this form of labour proved more successful over the longer-term than previous experiments with European immigrants and local *camaradas*. The bank's London secretary was far from optimistic, predicting that the Cearenses would inevitably be tempted away by the bank's hostile neighbours.¹¹² Nevertheless, for the sake of the bank's prosperity he sincerely hoped that 'this new form of labour may prove an exception to our past experience of the commodity "free labour"!' ¹¹³ As we

¹⁰⁸ *Jornal do Commercio*, 27 July 1878; P.C. Gonçalves, 'Procuram-se braços para a lavoura: imigrantes e retirantes na economia cafeeira paulista no final do Oitocentos' *Revista Brasileira de História*, São Paulo, 34.67 (2014) pp. 295-296.

¹⁰⁹ Livro de Registro de Colonos, 1878 (RJ). AN, Série Agricultura: Terras Públicas e Colonização. IA6, cited in P.C. Gonçalves, 'Procuram-se braços para a lavoura' p. 296.

¹¹⁰ P.C. Gonçalves, 'Procuram-se braços para a lavoura' pp. 294-295.

¹¹¹ *Jornal de Commercio*, 27 July 1878.

¹¹² London HQ to Rio branch, 24 June 1878, BOLSA G2/6.

¹¹³ London HQ to Rio branch, 3 July 1878, BOLSA G2/6.

shall observe in the following section, by the time the Cearense migrants arrived on *Angélica*, Blacklaw with the support of his superiors in Rio and London, had already given up hope of running an exclusively free labour operation. As on other plantations in the region, the arriving *retirantes* would begin their work alongside gangs of enslaved labourers.

Section V: Slave Labour

The date on which the bank quietly abandoned their commitment to the exclusive use of free labour is not clear. In a court document of March 1875, the bank's lawyer was keen to impress on the judge that the *Angélica* was 'the only establishment in this county which employs only free labour, completely rejecting slave labour.'¹¹⁴ Almost a year later, writing from *Angélica* on 6th February 1876, Crüwell stated that 'slaves may not be employed on this property for certain reasons' - an allusion to the bank's earlier commitment and possibly to the provisions of the 1843 Act.¹¹⁵ However, in a letter dated just five days later the same author seems to suggest that hired slave labour had indeed been employed on *Angélica*. Discussing the failure of the European colony and the frustrations encountered in dealing with free Brazilian labour, Crüwell lists a third labour source: gangs of slaves owned by Confederate immigrants who settled in Brazil following the end of the Civil War. These Americans, owners of ten to a dozen slaves, as well as mules and ploughs, performed contract work on plantations. Importantly, 'he also hires his slaves, and if that be preferred at a daily rate of pay'

¹¹⁴ Alexandre Scott Blacklaw x Carlos Coch, Carlos Helder, 1875, APHRC, Cartório Criminal, Processo nº 013/1875 f. 68.

¹¹⁵ G.A. Cruwell and A.S. Blacklaw, *Brazil as a Coffee-growing Country* p. 60.

Crüwell added. Here he suggests that Blackwell had either contracted the American or hired his gangs of slaves:

With this sort of labour the European planter who does not wish to employ slaves, or who is prevented employing them, such as the Englishman, without losing his nationality, must work...¹¹⁶

The author seems to be referring to the three forms of labour he listed, European immigrant, *camarada* and hired gangs of slaves. Crüwell appears to draw a distinction between the use of hired slaves and the purchase of their own. His reference to the Englishman being prevented without losing his nationality is an allusion to the provisions of the 1843 which made the same legal distinction between the hiring of somebody else's slaves and the ownership of slaves purchased after its enactment.

Whether or not slaves had been employed on the plantation before or during Crüwell's stay in early 1876, the presence of enslaved workers on *Angélica* is clearer cut by 1877. In an intriguing note to the bank's Rio branch in January 1877, the London secretary stated:

Angélica: This advice is noted, we of course are not in a position to act in this matter but must leave it for decision on your side. The advance however is a risk which should be duly considered as in the event of death or sickness it would be lost.¹¹⁷

Frustratingly, the original advice sent from Rio could not be located in the bank's correspondence. Nevertheless, the reference to the loss of an advance on 'death or sickness' suggests that the writer could well have been referring to hired slaves. This

¹¹⁶ *Ibid* p. 64.

¹¹⁷ London HQ to Rio branch, 18 January 1877, BOLSA G2/5.

suspicion is confirmed by the following advert which appeared the in *Diário de São Paulo* during the month of May 1877:

The Fazenda Angélica...requires slaves for hire of both sexes for service on the same plantation. Good treatment and moderate workload guaranteed. Well paid and part payment in advance. To respond and for further information please contact A.S Blacklaw.¹¹⁸

That Blacklaw had managed to procure hired slaves from the adverts placed in May 1877 was confirmed in the following month by José Vergueiro. In an article criticising the bank's attempt to seize his *Ibicaba* plantation, Vergueiro lampooned the bank for the use of slave labour on *Angélica*, portraying its managers, and the British more generally, as hypocrites of the highest order:

But the behaviour of these men seems hardly logical. These men, who should remember the violence exercised against Brazil because of slavery, when their government insulted the Brazilian nation, and their agents brutally entered our ports, disrespecting the authorities; and now forgetting all of this, and the sublime philanthropy that the *English* showed, and now it is these *English* who employ *slave labour* on their plantation at Angélica. Does English philanthropy only exist when it involves the interests and rights of others and not their own?¹¹⁹ (emphasis in original)

The use of slave labour on the plantation was now seemingly common knowledge in Brazil to the extent that Blacklaw referred to it in an article for the English-language *Anglo-Brazilian Times* newspaper in September 1878. Commenting on the high costs of slave labour, the plantation's administrator mentioned that he had been paying £3,12s,0d for the monthly hire of each slave. Unfortunately, as with all references to slave labour encountered throughout this research, the author does not detail how many were hired at any one time or whether their presence was permanent or seasonal. The final mention of slave labour on *Angélica* occurred around the time the bank

¹¹⁸ *Diario de São Paulo*, 20 May 1877, 22 May 1887 and 25 May 1877.

¹¹⁹ *Correio Paulistano*, 13 June 1877.

finally found a suitable purchaser for the estate, after half a decade of attempts to sell the property. Just a month before the sale of *Angélica* to the Baron de Grão-Mogol in April 1881, John Beaton sent the following instructions to the Rio branch:

Blacklaw: We have no time to write this gentleman tonight but please inform him that he must obtain without delay the further labour required for the estate: free labour is uncertain and difficult to domicile, he had better look after the hire of slaves even if he has to make an advance against them.¹²⁰ (emphasis in original)

Then, in the aftermath of the sale at the end of the following month, Beaton asked the Rio manager about the arrangements being made for the hired slaves.¹²¹ The costs incurred for paying off the contracts of these slaves were ‘heavy’ in Beaton’s opinion, at 7:070\$000.¹²² However, because this figure also included payments made to colonists it is impossible, again, to estimate the number of slaves on the property.¹²³ What this correspondence does unequivocally tell us, however, is that the use of slave labour was sanctioned by management in London and was not simply a case of a rogue administrator acting alone.

London’s awareness is a crucial point. Not because it proves complicity in a crime – hiring was not illegal under the 1843 Act – but because it makes clear that the bank was intentionally less than transparent with their British shareholders. Summaries of the bank’s annual shareholder meetings between the years 1877-1880, when slave labour was certainly employed intermittently at least, either make no reference to slavery

¹²⁰ London HQ to Rio branch, 10 March 1881, BOLSA G2/9.

¹²¹ London HQ to Rio branch, 29 April 1881, BOLSA G2/9.

¹²² London HQ to Rio branch, 31 August 1881, BOLSA G2/9.

¹²³ Rio branch to London HQ, 29 September 1881 BOLSA G18/5.

or explicitly state that despite labour shortages ‘the Bank could not own slaves’ (1879) or ‘being an English company the Bank could not employ slaves’ (1880).¹²⁴ In spite of these disingenuous statements distancing the bank from slavery, announcing the sale of the property at the 1881 shareholders’ meeting, the chairman performed an about-turn declaring:

The Angelica estate had been sold on advantageous terms, and the bank now had not a single slave in its employment. Some slight disadvantage had, no doubt, arisen in the way of a difficulty in getting cheap labour.¹²⁵

Despite no crime having been committed, the bank’s management clearly regarded direct association with the use of slave labour as having the potential for reputational damage. The directors would surely have been well aware of the recent scandal which had rocked the St. John Del Rey Mining Company and would have been keen to avoid similar consequences. Of course, the charges against the mining company, of the illegal enslavement of the Cata Branca miners, were more serious than the bank’s legal use of hired slave labour.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, Vergueiro’s cry of hypocrisy in 1877 had already given the bank an indication of the criticism they might face if their entanglement with slavery were to become known to shareholders or the abolitionist press. As it was, with the plantation sold, the bank was happy to declare it had severed its connection, at least in its most direct sense, to Brazilian slavery.

Concluding remarks:

¹²⁴ *The Morning Post* 15 October 1879; *The Morning Post* 16 October 1880.

¹²⁵ *The Morning Post* 15 October 1881.

¹²⁶ See M. Childs, ‘A Case of “Great Unstablenss”’

This chapter has shown that what had long been characterised as British experiment in free labour on a *Paulista* plantation was only part of the truth. The London and Brazilian Bank did attempt to run the estate with a completely free labour force for around four years from the failed launch of the Brazilian Coffee Estates Company in 1872. There is no doubt that British anti-slavery legislation and identity had an important impact on the administration of this plantation. Firstly, legislation restricted its managers from purchasing slaves and working the property in the same way as the vast majority of plantations in the region. Of course, they could hire slaves without violating this law but the prospect of raising large sums of capital in anti-slavery Britain encouraged them to pursue an exclusively free labour model. An analysis of the labour relations on the plantation suggests that this experiment failed for similar reasons to those on other Brazilian plantations around this period. In other words, an identification with British anti-slavery ideals did not necessarily lead to improved conditions for free workers.

Upon the collapse of this model and with the estate becoming an increasing financial burden, the bank considered other coerced forms of labour. In an attempt to transfer his global experience of post-slavery labour solutions to Brazil, the estate's manager briefly lobbied for Indian indentured labour. Though this plan did not bear fruit, it appears Blacklaw played an important role in the Cearense scheme, which shared some similarities with the seasonal migration flows of indentured labourers to Ceylon. Meanwhile, the bank had abandoned its earlier rejection of slavery without violating British anti-slavery legislation. From 1877, if not earlier, hired slave labour was present on the plantation, at least intermittently, until its sale in 1881. While aware that they were not breaking the law of 1843, the bank's management were careful to

avoid divulging their entanglement with slavery to shareholders of the wider public in Britain. The bank felt it had more to fear from trial by public opinion than from the threat of anti-slavery legislation. In fact, their success in avoiding scandal, achieved through elision and obfuscation, is one of the reasons that this important case study has gone overlooked for so long. British anti-slavery had its limits and the bank was able to exploit this in the pursuit of profit in Brazil.

Conclusion

This thesis set out with a dual purpose. Firstly, it aimed to explore the extent and diversity of British entanglement with slavery beyond the mining sector. In this sense, it hoped to reaffirm Brazil's relevance to our historical understanding of Britain's relationship with global slavery. While, to borrow a term from the organisers of the *LBS Project*, the 're-inscribing' of this entanglement onto British history is a worthy cause in its own right, this thesis was also concerned with the reasons why this exploitative relationship was severed only by Brazilian emancipation rather than Britain's own anti-slavery legislation. The purpose of this concluding chapter is to firstly provide a summary of the main findings of this research, stressing their original contribution of knowledge to existing scholarship in this area. The second section will discuss the potential to transpose the approach taken by this thesis onto regions and slave-economies outside the Brazilian context. A final section will then reflect on why the findings of this thesis and its wider approach to a historical problem might have some relevance for contemporary debates.

Findings:

Research into this theme began on the premise that the economic relationship between individual Britons and Brazilian slavery extended beyond the slaveholding in its literal sense. Findings accrued from a wide, albeit fragmented, source base justify the use of the concept 'entanglement' to describe the broad spectrum and multi-layered nature of this relationship. While it is true that a focus on slaveholding alone would not have captured this complexity, this is not to negate its importance as the most immediately visible aspect of these entangled interests. Following the location of a crucial but

hitherto overlooked source in the form of Palmerston's census of 1848, this thesis has identified a diversity and extent to British slaveholding in Brazil that previous scholarship, with its focus on the mining sector, had not fully appreciated. An analysis of the data showed that, at the mid-century at least, an equal number of slaves were employed by British masters in agriculture and urban enterprise as in the goldmines of Minas Gerais. Though the census information no doubt represented an underestimation, it is true that British slaveholding is negligible when compared to Brazil's total slave population. That being said, the findings do show that slaveholding was a fairly common practice at all levels of the small British expatriate communities in Brazil. It is also worth noting that despite their lack of critical mass, some British slave-worked enterprises were of regional or even national importance.

Though the patchy coverage of available sources makes it difficult to talk about trends, it appears reasonable to suggest that the total number of British-held slaves decreased gradually over the course of the second half of the century. This can be attributed to various causes including the shifting demography of Brazilian slavery as well as changing patterns of British investment. In spite of this overall downward trend, it was still possible to trace the presence of slave labour in the types of industries identified by Graham as the agents of the supposed modernisation process which ultimately brought an end to slavery in Brazil.¹ So while there were a significant minority of British subjects who were engaged in plantation agriculture, slaves were also employed by Britons in sectors such as railway construction, gas factories and other industrial settings. Complementing the better-known case of the mining industry,

¹ R. Graham, *Britain and the onset of modernization in Brazil*

these examples challenge the notion that industrial capitalism, with Britain at its centre, was physically and temporally separated from slavery.

At the beginning of this research it was suggested that a sole focus on slaveholding in its literal sense would belie the multi-faceted connections between British investment and slavery. The findings of research into mercantile credit networks and banking finance prove that to be the case. The nature of the Brazilian credit market, and how transactions were recorded, means that much of this financial entanglement remains invisible to the modern historian. Nevertheless, by piecing together the fragmentary evidence found in notarial offices and judicial records, we have been able to ascertain that, while it might not have been a widespread practice, the acceptance and potential foreclosure on human collateral was a routine part of doing business in Brazil. Given their role as general importers and suppliers for both the illegal traffic and legitimate trade, it is perhaps not surprising that this was found to be in the case in British merchant credit networks of the 1830s and 1840s. Nevertheless, the material basis of these transactions had been neglected in favour of other historiographical concerns.

Entanglement with Brazilian slavery was also a defining feature in the early operations of a British joint-stock bank, one of the symbols of modern financial capitalism. It has long been understood that British capital eventually reached Brazilian agricultural producers but the extent of the London and Brazilian Bank's entanglement with slavery had been almost completely overlooked by business historians whose interests lie in other aspects of the bank's operations. The bank was responsible for a significant injection of capital into Brazil's most dynamic coffee-producing zone. These transactions initiated a deep and for the bank, frustrating, relationship with slavery that

would drag on until the eve of abolition in Brazil. Though at times these types of investments negatively affected the bank's balance sheet, their impact on the lives of those enslaved individuals offered unknowingly as security could be devastating. Indeed, it is regrettable that the source material did not allow us to trace the fate of those, such as the slaves sold as part of the bank's dispute with the Baron de Turvo, whose lives were irreparably altered by a bank manager's decision to accept them as human collateral.

To a large extent British entanglement with Brazilian slavery persisted until 1888 because the British state proved incapable, and to an extent unwilling, to regulate British business activity across political borders. While it is true that in 1843 the state legislated against the types of entanglement considered here, it did so by assuming limited liability. As discussions at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in 1840 showed, opposition to slavery could create limitless responsibilities. To the disappointment of many abolitionists, the British state restricted its liability to the suppression of activities that could be directly linked to the promotion of the illegal slave trade, rather than the abstract notion of curtailing all British entanglement with slavery. Even then, the law enacted in 1843 was decidedly ambivalent, a characteristic that Eltis has identified as present throughout Britain's wider campaign against the slave trade.² At the heart of the ambivalence codified into this legislation was the difficulty faced by the state in reconciling other key tenets of Victorian political culture with its anti-slavery ambitions. Though it proscribed the buying and selling of slaves in an attempt to sever British links to the buoyant illegal traffic, at the same time it was not applied retroactively. The respect of property rights, and especially with regard to the

² D. Eltis, *Economic growth*, Chapter 7.

traditions of British emancipation, clashed with anti-slavery to produce a law that legitimised slave property already held by Britons at the time of its enactment. In this sense, the law at once absolved British subjects of the historic crime of illegally enslaving Africans imported after the trade was prohibited by international treaty in 1830 or by Brazilian law in 1831. Moreover, in addition to allowing Britons to retain the slaves they already owned, the 1843 Act left open the possibility of the future exploitation of new slave labour through other means, such as hiring. In this case the state assumed liability for the suppression of direct promotion of the slave trade while mitigating any potential damage to British trade and investment in Brazil's slave-economy. As observed throughout this thesis, the state can be considered successful in this respect. Though the 1843 Act did modify the behaviour of some British investors, it never prevented Britons from ultimately exploiting the labour and market value of the enslaved.

While the limited scope of this legislation has been recently recognised by historians, the novel approach of this thesis was to trace its implementation in Brazil over a longer period than isolated case studies of the mining industry.³ There is no doubt that the application of the 1843 Act's provisions was hamstrung by a combination of Brazil's vast geography and the Foreign Office's fairly limited resources. However, a critical reading of diplomatic correspondence suggests that ambivalent attitudes held by British officials in Brazil also hindered the law's implementation. Anti-slavery duties were just one priority amongst many that some diplomats and consuls found difficult to reconcile in the performance of their role. As we observed in the case of William D. Christie, even the most zealous anti-slavery officials were known to occasionally

³ Especially, C. Evans, 'Brazilian Gold' and J. Kelly 'The Problem of Anti-slavery'.

turn a blind eye to allegations of impropriety in order to save face and protect British prosperity. Understanding that ambivalence was embodied in British diplomats and consuls provides a more nuanced picture of the practical operations of Britain's global anti-slavery network. Outside our immediate area of interest, it also reminds us that we should be cautious when generalising about the official mind of the state. As we have seen, the implementation of official policy was influenced by local conditions, competing priorities and individual judgment.

Ambivalent officials more often than not remained silent on the issue of British entanglement with slavery. Though we observed the effective and vocal lobbying activities of British slaveholders during the reading of the 1843 bill, outside of these peaks of controversy, those who maintained economic interests in Brazilian slave labour often employed a rhetoric of silence, elision and obfuscation to mask their links to the institution. As we saw with the case of the London Brazilian Bank, even when their entanglement with slave mortgages brought them within the limited provisions of the 1843 Act, of greater concern was restricting the transmission of knowledge to shareholders and the wider public in Britain. British slaveholders in Brazil were aware that whether illegal or not, their actions would be deemed unacceptable in a society partly defined by its collective rejection of slavery. Nevertheless, the fact that so many Britons, in the words of George Pilkington, 'breathed the miasma of slavery', suggests that an opposition to slavery in the abstract often did not travel well when faced with the social and economic realities of life in Brazil.⁴

⁴ G. Pilkington, *An Address* p. 17.

Beyond Brazil?

Though this thesis offers a comprehensive overview of various aspects of British entanglement with Brazilian slavery, there is still work to be done to fully understand this complex relationship. Limited time and financial resources meant that very little archival research was undertaken outside of Rio de Janeiro. If the data from Palmerston's census is a fair gauge, we can expect that the entanglement in regions outside Brazil's southeast is less concentrated. Nevertheless, as Chapter II shows, there are certainly pockets of interest, especially in the country's northeast. Beyond slaveholding, there is also more work that could be undertaken into the regional branch operations of Brazil's two British banks, in port-cities such as Santos, Salvador and Recife.

Of equal interest and perhaps more pressing urgency is the need to understand British entanglement in other slave economies following emancipation in the West Indies. Although an appraisal of local source material would need to be conducted, there are encouraging indications that the methodology employed in this thesis could bear fruit if transposed onto other regions of the Americas. The presence of British slaveholders and the entanglement of British banking and mining companies with slavery in Cuba is not unknown in the historiography. Chris Evans' history of British-owned mining enterprises at El Cobre has identified that slave labour was crucial to their operations.⁵ Moreover, as discussed in Chapter I of this thesis, Kelly and Roldan de Montaud have

⁵ In 1841, a total of 728 slaves were employed by the Consolidated Cobre and Santiago mining companies. See C. Evans, 'El Cobre: Cuban Ore and the Globalization of Swansea Copper, 1830-1870', *Welsh History Review*, 27:1 (2014), p. 123.

established that the merchant bank Barings & Co. had taken ownership of land and slaves in Cuba in the early 1840s.⁶ Nevertheless, in much the same way as the Brazilian case, non-institutional slaveholders have thus far been written out of this history. However, that does not necessarily have to be the case. Palmerston also commissioned a census of British slaveholding in Cuba and Puerto Rico, which in a similar vein to its Brazilian counterpart, appears to have been overlooked in the literature. While not as detailed as their Brazilian equivalents, and sadly lacking the numbers of slaves owned, returns from British consuls in Havana, Santiago de Cuba and Puerto Rico list 70 individual Britons or British enterprises who employed slaves in a variety of urban and agricultural projects.⁷ Much in the same way that Palmerston's slave census provided an impetus for further investigation using Brazilian archives, these sources offer an interesting point of departure to deepen our understanding of British entanglement with Cuban slavery. Given the islands' proximity to the British Caribbean, the first stage of a potential project might be to cross reference the names in the census with the LBS database.

Venezuela would appear to be a less conventional choice than Cuba. Unlike both Cuba and Brazil, slavery in Venezuela had been far less central to the nation's economy before it was finally abolished in 1854.⁸ Moreover, as a relatively small market, the country appears less readily in the imagination when considering British trade and investment in Latin America. Finally, given that Palmerston's interest in British

⁶ See Chapter I

⁷ Mr. Crawford to Lord Palmerston, 31 December 1848, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B), P.P.*, 1128 pp. 303-304; Mr. Forbes to Lord Palmerston, 16 December 1848, in *Ibid* p. 320; Mr. Lindegren to Lord Palmerston, 4 December 1848, in *Ibid* pp. 327-328.

⁸ R. Blackburn, *The Overthrow of Colonial Slavery, 1776-1848*, (London: Verso, 1988) pp. 363-365.

slaveholding was tied exclusively to its links to the illegal slave trade, the Foreign Secretary did not commission a similar census for Venezuela, where the traffic had long since disappeared.⁹ Nevertheless, and in spite of a lack of official instructions, an eager acting-consul by the name of Joseph Riddel composed his own short census, which he sent to the Foreign Secretary anyway.¹⁰ In this case, nine of the ten slaveholders listed by Riddel, were proprietors of sizeable coffee, cocoa or sugar plantations. Though this is of interest in its own right, one case warrants particular attention here owing to its similarity to themes explored in this thesis and their implications for current-day debates. Amongst the British plantation owners was a British bank; Riddel informed the Foreign Secretary that in 1844 the Colonial Bank's branch at Caracas had become the owner of a coffee estate in the surrounding province. The acting-consul added that the *Villegas* plantation and an unidentified number of slaves had been acquired by this British bank in much the same way as the London and Brazilian Bank took possession of *Angélica*. In this case an unnamed debtor had mortgaged their estate in 1842 to the bank who foreclosed on the property in lieu of repayment.¹¹ On one level the case is of interest as it provides further material evidence of the particular financial route to slave-ownership so vigorously defended by Mildmay and Ashburton in the face of the 1843 bill. However, as discussed in the following section, the Colonial Bank's status as an institutional slaveholder has interesting implications for current and highly contested debates in modern society.

⁹ Venezuela abolished the slave trade in 1811 see H. Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade: 1440-1870* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997) p. 577.

¹⁰ J. Riddel to Lord Palmerston, 18 May 1849, in *Correspondence on Slave Trade, 1848-49 (Class B)*, P.P, 1291, pp. 435-437.

¹¹ *Ibid* p. 437.

Modern-day relevance

Many of the Britons identified in this thesis as being entangled with Brazilian slavery in some way only appear as glimpses in the historical record. The legacy of their investments in slavery are hard to trace and most of them will remain lost to generations past. However institutional slaveholders, such as the London and Brazilian and Colonial banks have a very tangible link to the present. Both are in fact predecessor institutions of two of the UK's major high-street banks. The London and Brazilian Bank was subsumed by Lloyds, whereas as the Colonial Bank was absorbed by Barclays in the early twentieth century.¹² The scope of this thesis is not to offer recommendations or prescribe what action should be taken by these modern institutions to address, or indeed redress their inherited historical entanglement with slavery. Nevertheless, the evidence is stark: both of these institutions exploited the labour and financial market value of enslaved people in countries where the legacies of historical slavery are still very much a present-day problem.

It should be noted that the last decade has witnessed a significant upswing in academic and public interest in the institutional legacies of slavery. In the UK, this owes much to the work of *LBS Project* in tracing the connections between modern day institutions and British colonial slavery. Indeed, Draper has identified predecessor banks of both Lloyds and Barclays as beneficiaries of slave compensation.¹³ Elsewhere, reflecting

¹² On Lloyds, see Lloyds, 'Bank of London and South America' <https://www.lloydsbankinggroup.com/Our-Group/our-heritage/our-history/lloyds-bank-international/bank-of-london--south-america-bolsa/> [last accessed 23/09/2018]. On Barclays, see Barclays, 'Barclays' Historical Structure' https://www.home.barclays/content/dam/barclayspublic/docs/AboutUs/History-in-Detail/Barclays-History_Hi-Res.pdf [last accessed 23/09/2018].

¹³ N. Draper, *The Price of Emancipation* pp. 244-246.

trends in the *Universities Studying Slavery* movement in the United States, the University of Glasgow became the first British academic institution to publish a report on its economic links to historical slavery.¹⁴ With the University of Bristol a member of the same network, it is perhaps only a matter of time before other British institutions follow Glasgow's lead.

Whether or not modern banking institutions make the decision to publish similar reports is far less certain. Following Draper's revelations in 2010 there is little evidence to suggest that implicated institutions will move in that direction. In fact, three years earlier Barclays had rebuffed accusations levelled against them of historical complicity in the slave trade via a predecessor institution, Heywoods Bank. In doing so, Barclays stressed its abolitionist heritage though the Quaker movement.¹⁵ The crucial difference in the cases highlighted in this conclusion is that they occurred in the post-emancipation period, at a time when Britain had collectively rejected slavery. This point brings us back to a key concept underpinning this thesis; while this rejection may have been true in the abstract, its practical application and the realities of profit-making in Brazil, and elsewhere, proved markedly different. This thesis urges contemporary Britain's collective memory to think not just in abstract terms, but to reflect on the complexities and inconsistencies in the nation's anti-slavery history.

¹⁴ S. Mullen, S. Newman, 'Slavery, Abolition and Glasgow University: report and recommendations of the University of Glasgow History of Slavery Steering Committee (2018) https://www.gla.ac.uk/media/media_607547_en.pdf [last accessed 27/09/2018]; See also 'Universities Studying Slavery' <http://slavery.virginia.edu/universities-studying-slavery/> [last accessed 27/09/2018]

¹⁵ *The Observer*, 1 April 2007, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2007/apr/01/theobserver.observerbusiness1> [last accessed 27/09/2018]

Appendix 1: Slave Census Returns 1848-1849

Rio de Janeiro

Name of Person or Establishment	Number of slaves	Place of Residence	Nature of Business
São João de Rey Mining Company	About 900	Morro Velho, Minas Gerais	Gold Mine
Imperial Brazilian Mining Association	About 400	Gongo Soco, Minas Gerais	Gold Mine
National Brazilian Mining Association	300 to 400	Cocais, Minas Gerais	Gold Mine
Mr. Richard Heath	25	Constancia, Organ Mountains	Farming
Mr. Constantine Fisher	45	Constancia, Organ Mountains	Farming
Mr. August Gibson	23	Island of Governador, Rio Bay	Soap Boiler
Mr. Robert Coates	24	Selenas	Farming
Mr. William Whitaker	35 to 40	São Paulo	Sugar Planter
Mr. Lescene	35 to 40	Tijuca, Rio	Coffee Planter
Mrs. Moke	80	Tijuca, Rio	Coffee Planter
Mr. George March	34	Organ Mountains	Farming
Mr. Robert Laurie	About 80	Macaé	Coffee Planter
Dr. George Reid	About 60	St. Antonio, Macaé	Coffee Planter
Heirs of Dr. McCormack	About 50	Ilha Grande	Coffee Planter
Heirs of Mr. Platt	About 90	Boa Vista, Ilha Grande	Coffee Planter
60 other commercial houses and other establishments	120 to 360	Rio de Janeiro	Merchant Houses

Pernambuco

Name of Person or Establishment	Total	Location	Nature of Business
McCalmont & Co.	4	Pernambuco	Merchants
James Crabtree & Co.	1	Pernambuco	Merchants
Russell, Mellors & Co.	4	Pernambuco	Merchants
Jas. Corkshott & Co.	2	Pernambuco	Merchants
Johnston, Pater & Co.	18	Pernambuco	Merchants
George Kenworthy & Co.	1	Pernambuco	Merchants
Joseph Latham	3	Pernambuco	Merchants
Frederick Youle	7	Pernambuco	Merchants
Augustus S. Corbett	8	Pernambuco	Merchants
Nicholas Hartery	18	Pernambuco	Merchants
John Mathews	11	Pernambuco	Merchants
Henry Gibson	9	Pernambuco	Merchants
John Stewart	3	Pernambuco	Merchants
Edward H. J. Fox	4	Pernambuco	Merchants
Jones, Paton & Co.	2	Pernambuco	Merchants
William Collins Cox	3	Pernambuco	Merchants
Dr. Arbuckle	1	Pernambuco	Physician
William May	3	Pernambuco	Surgeon
Edward de Mornay	1	Pernambuco	Civil Engineer
D. W. Bowman	1	Pernambuco	Engineer
Christopher Starr	31	Pernambuco	Domestic / Foundry
Veitch Bravott & Co.	1	Pernambuco	Chemists
John Carroll	10	Pernambuco	Gentleman Farmer
John Dowsley	3	Pernambuco	Ship Chandler
Thomas Dowsley	3	Pernambuco	Ship Chandler
Mr. Scott	1	Pernambuco	Engineer
Mr. Jones	3	Pernambuco	Engineer
John Wilson	1	Pernambuco	Shoemaker
A. Short	1	Pernambuco	Publican

Cont.			
M.F. Braga	1	Pernambuco	Clerk
W.H. Stepples	8	Pernambuco	Clerk
Mr. Stepples, senior.	5	Pernambuco	Brazilian Service
Joshua Gunston	1	Pernambuco	Sexton
John Donnelly	1	Pernambuco	Tailor
David Evans	2	Pernambuco	Stable Keeper
George Francis	1	Pernambuco	Publican
Richard R. Noble	4	Pernambuco	Cotton Plantation
William Raymond	1	Pernambuco	Ship Chandler
M. Middleton	1	Pernambuco	Laundress
William Purcell	9	Pernambuco	Baker
Thomas Purcell	1	Pernambuco	Cabinet Maker
James Burnett	1	Alagoas	Merchant
Arthur McHardy	2	Alagoas	Physician
Krukenberg & Dennis	4	Alagoas	Merchant
F.H. Mitchell	4	Alagoas	Unknown
Charles de Mornay	80	Alagoas	Sugar Planter
Dr. Berkhead	30	Alagoas	Sugar Planter

Maranhão

Name of Person or Establishment	Total
John Clarke	3
Bingham & Co.	4
Ryder, Gunston & Co.	2
T. B. Gunston	1
Henry Season	6
Ignacio Viega	4
Execs. Wellstood & Co.	78
Augustus Garcia	51
William Wilson	14
William Henderson	1

Bahia

Name of Person or Establishment	Total	Nature of Business
Edward Lane	1	Merchant
Richard Latham	12	Merchant
G.H. Pasche	1	Merchant
John Andrews	5	Merchant
Johnson Bielby	3	Merchant
Alexander Fraser	1	Clerk
Ellen Adamson	2	-
G.E. Fairbanks	6	Physician
John O'Dwyer	7	Tailor
Isaac Anizalak	6	Merchant
Albert H. Curry	6	Shopkeeper
Edward P. Wilson	10	Merchant
Edward Jones	6	Merchant
William Byrn	2	Tinsmith
John MacNair	3	Merchant
James Dwyer	4	Merchant
Matthew Falconer	26	Planter
Henry S. Marback	12	Ship-Chandler
Louis Barbet	2	Boarding House Keeper
George Blandy	11	Planter
Mary Ann Sullivan	2	Shopkeeper
Bernard Byrne	1	Tin-plate worker

Pará

Name of Person or Establishment	Total	Location	Nature of Business
Archibald Campbell	50 to 60	Pará	Unknown
Henry Dickenson	35	Pará	Unknown
Others	20	Pará	Unknown

Paraíba

Name of Person or Establishment	Total	Location
Carlile Holmes	unknown	Paraíba
Edward Power	unknown	Paraíba
Richard Rogers	unknown	Paraíba

Rio Grande do Sul

Name of Person or Establishment	Total	Location
Mr. Thomas Messiter	20	Rio Grande
Mr. Holland Davies & Co	2	Rio Grande
Mr. James Law	1	Rio Grande
Mr John Wilson	1	Rio Grande
Mr. James Donovan	6	Rio Grande
Mr. James Vaughan	2	Pelotas
Dr. Robert Landell	21	Porto Alegre
Mr. George Taylor	1	Porto Alegre
Mr. Holland Davies & Co	2	Porto Alegre
Mr. James Baxter	1	Porto Alegre
Mr. William Stone	2	Porto Alegre

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