

THE EVANGELICAL MINISTER JOHN NEWTON



1725

John Newton was born.

1745

During his twenties, John Newton would be captaining two Liverpool slavers and as a matter of course would be keeping detailed logs of his voyages. “During the time I was engaged in the slave trade,” he would write about the period from 1745 to 1755, “I never had the least scruple as to its lawfulness.... It is, indeed, accounted a genteel employment and is usually very profitable.”



THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

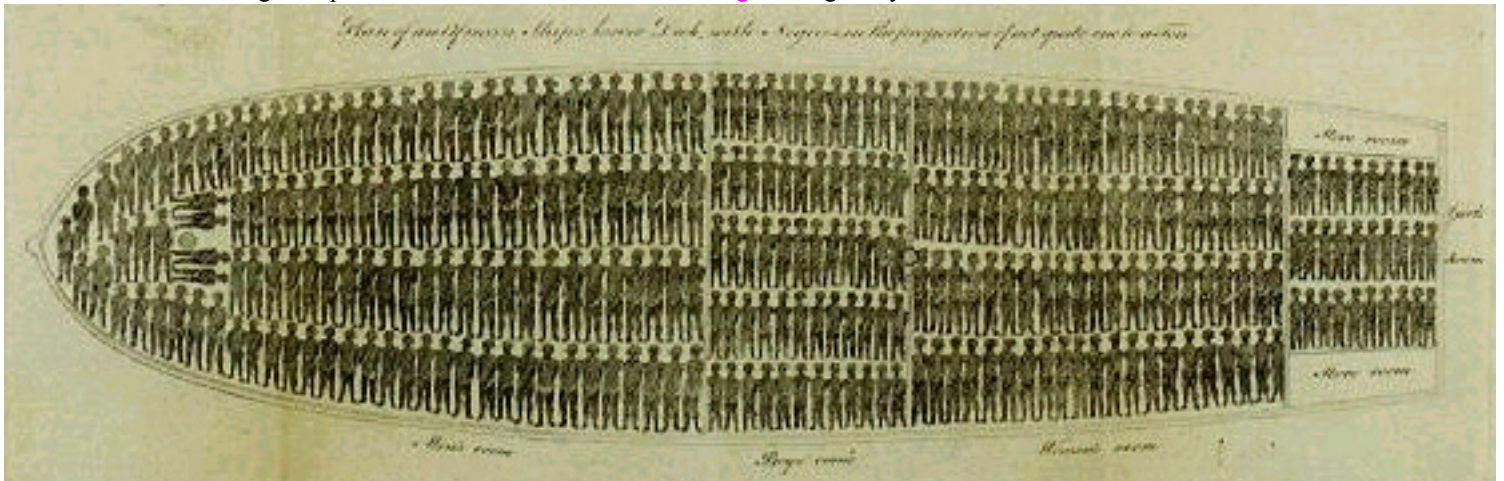
JOHN NEWTON

(It would be only in a later timeframe that captaining a negrero in the [international slave trade](#) would come to be equated with general [piracy](#). It was before he had begun to engage in this trade that Captain Newton had undergone one of those adult conversion experiences of “grace” that were being held in high value among those influenced by the Reverends John Wesley and Charles Wesley, and it seems he left the business not out of concern for his spiritual health but out of concern for his physical health. He would begin a 2d career as a landlubber Anglican priest before beginning to have doubts as to the probity of his past.)

1748



In [Rhode Island](#) harbors alone, during this year alone, it has been estimated by Alexander Boyd Hawes, some 3 [negreros](#) were being fitted out for the [international slave trade](#). If an average cargo of [slaves](#) was 109 —as we have estimated on the basis of a number of known cargos— then a total of more than 325 souls would have been being transported over the dreadful [Middle Passage](#) during this year in Rhode Island bottoms alone.



An invention important to the development of the cloth industry occurred during this year. Lewis Paul devised a carding machine. Because this development would have an impact on the demand for bales of [cotton](#) as a raw material for cloth, it would have an impact on the demand for field labor to grow this cotton, and therefore would have consequences in terms of human [slavery](#) — and in terms of the [international slave trade](#).¹

This was the year of the “grace” experience of [John Newton](#). “Amazing Grace” therefore seems a most inappropriate title for a movie about the crusade against the British slave trade. The hymn would be written by the Reverend Newton (played in Michael Apted’s film by Albert Finney) not about his belated awareness that the business in which he had been engaged was immoral, but about his famous religious “rebirth” experience years before he had become the captain of a negrero vessel. This religious experience was not what led him to abandon the slave trade, but rather, was part of the context that led him to enter upon this immoral way to make a living. The religious awakening he had experienced after a near-fatal illness and a dangerous shipwreck had caused him to seek to become a respectable person, turning away from a youth spent in general dissipation. It would be after getting right with God in this way that he would enter the slave trade and make quite a success of himself, rising to be a captain of a slaving ship and thereby winning the approval of his girlfriend’s parents for their union. He would be writing hymns as his ship lay at anchor along West African shores, collecting its cargo of black slaves. For three decades after his experience of “grace” during this year, nothing would suggest to this man that there was anything wrong with how he was earning his living. It would not be until after he had retired from the slave trade (largely it seems for reasons of health, rather than due to any spiritual uneasiness) and taken up other employment on land, that he would gradually be brought to question the

1. Bear in mind that in early periods the Southern states of the United States of America produced no significant amount of [cotton](#) fiber for export — such production not beginning until 1789. In fact, according to page 92 of Seybert’s STATISTICS, in 1784 a small parcel of cotton that had found its way from the US to Liverpool had been refused admission to England, because it was the customs agent’s opinion that this involved some sort of subterfuge: it could not have originated in the United States.

JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

rightfulness of human enslavement. In short, “Amazing Grace” is a record of the religious experience that had turned Newton toward becoming a slavetrader, rather than of any mature reflection that had turned him away from it.

Also, although the script of this movie tells a pleasant enough personal story, it displays no awareness of the historical influences that had led to the opposition to the continuance of the international slave trade. In the movie, Friend [Thomas Clarkson](#) (played in Apted’s film by Rufus Sewell), is portrayed as one who turned William Wilberforce’s anti-slavery sentiments into action, but Friend Thomas did not originate these attitudes. Nor did [Olaudah Equiano](#), himself a slavetrader (played in Apted’s film by Youssou N’Dour). The preface to his *ESSAY ON THE SLAVERY AND COMMERCE OF THE HUMAN SPECIES*, written in 1785, acknowledges the priority of the writings of New Jersey’s Friend John Woolman, whose *ESSAY ON THE KEEPING OF NEGROES* was first published in Philadelphia in 1754, and the priority of the writings of Pennsylvania’s Friend Anthony Benezet, who published a number of anti-slavery works in Philadelphia during the same period, and acknowledges the stance of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting taken in 1754 to absolutely condemn all human slavery. This was not only before either Clarkson or Wilberforce had been born, but also while a saved-by-grace John Newton was still captaining his negrero vessel in the international slave trade.

The “Amazing Grace” movie was meant to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the passing of the bill that allowed the slave trade in the British Empire, an event that constitutes its climactic scene, but the movie leaves it unclear that this legislation did nothing to abolish slavery. The best source for Wilberforce’s actual racial attitudes is Jack Gratus’s 1973 *THE GREAT WHITE LIE: SLAVERY, EMANCIPATION AND CHANGING RACIAL ATTITUDES* (Hutchinson of London). Actually he was opposed to the immediate abolition of slavery, and this opposition would allow it to persist in Jamaica and other British colonies for another 30 long years, and one is entitled to one’s ambivalence about such a track record. Wilberforce (played in Apted’s film by Ioan Gruffudd) feared that enslavement had such an impact on the mind of an enslaved person, that it could not be so readily ended: “I look to the improvement of their minds, and to the diffusion among them of those domestic charities which will render them more fit, than I fear they now are, to bear emancipation.”

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The history of slavery and the slave-trade after 1820 must be read in the light of the industrial revolution through which the civilized world passed in the first half of the nineteenth century. Between the years 1775 and 1825 occurred economic events and changes of the highest importance and widest influence. Though all branches of industry felt the impulse of this new industrial life, yet, “if we consider single industries, cotton manufacture has, during the nineteenth century, made the most magnificent and gigantic advances.”² This fact is easily explained by the remarkable series of inventions that revolutionized this industry between 1738 and 1830, including Arkwright’s, Watt’s, Compton’s, and Cartwright’s epoch-making contrivances.³ The effect which these inventions had on the manufacture of cotton goods is best illustrated by the fact that in England, the chief cotton market of the world, the consumption of raw cotton rose steadily from 13,000 bales

2. Beer, *GESCHICHTE DES WELTHANDELS IM 19^{TE} JAHRHUNDERT*, II. 67.

3. A list of these inventions most graphically illustrates this advance: —

1738, John Jay, fly-shuttle. John Wyatt, spinning by rollers.

1748, Lewis Paul, carding-machine.

1760, Robert Kay, drop-box.

1769, Richard Arkwright, water-frame and throstle. James Watt, steam-engine.

1772, James Lees, improvements on carding-machine.

1775, Richard Arkwright, series of combinations.

1779, Samuel Compton, mule.

1785, Edmund Cartwright, power-loom.

1803-4, Radcliffe and Johnson, dressing-machine.

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1818, William Eaton, self-acting frame.

1825-30, Roberts, improvements on mule.

Cf. Baines, *HISTORY OF THE COTTON MANUFACTURE*, pages 116-231; *ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*, 9th ed., article “Cotton.”

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

in 1781, to 572,000 in 1820, to 871,000 in 1830, and to 3,366,000 in 1860.⁴ Very early, therefore, came the query whence the supply of raw cotton was to come. Tentative experiments on the rich, broad fields of the Southern United States, together with the indispensable invention of Whitney's cotton-gin, soon answered this question: a new economic future was opened up to this land, and immediately the whole South began to extend its cotton culture, and more and more to throw its whole energy into this one staple.

Here it was that the fatal mistake of compromising with slavery in the beginning, and of the policy of *laissez-faire* pursued thereafter, became painfully manifest; for, instead now of a healthy, normal, economic development along proper industrial lines, we have the abnormal and fatal rise of a slave-labor large farming system, which, before it was realized, had so intertwined itself with and braced itself upon the economic forces of an industrial age, that a vast and terrible civil war was necessary to displace it. The tendencies to a patriarchal serfdom, recognizable in the age of Washington and Jefferson, began slowly but surely to disappear; and in the second quarter of the century Southern slavery was irresistibly changing from a family institution to an industrial system.

The development of Southern slavery has heretofore been viewed so exclusively from the ethical and social standpoint that we are apt to forget its close and indissoluble connection with the world's cotton market. Beginning with 1820, a little after the close of the Napoleonic wars, when the industry of cotton manufacture had begun its modern development and the South had definitely assumed her position as chief producer of raw cotton, we find the average price of cotton per pound, 8½d. From this time until 1845 the price steadily fell, until in the latter year it reached 4d.; the only exception to this fall was in the years 1832-1839, when, among other things, a strong increase in the English demand, together with an attempt of the young slave power to "corner" the market, sent the price up as high as 11d. The demand for cotton goods soon outran a crop which McCullough had pronounced "prodigious," and after 1845 the price started on a steady rise, which, except for the checks suffered during the continental revolutions and the Crimean War, continued until 1860.⁵ The steady increase in the production of cotton explains the fall in price down to 1845. In 1822 the crop was a half-million bales; in 1831, a million; in 1838, a million and a half; and in 1840-1843, two million. By this time the world's consumption of cotton goods began to increase so rapidly that, in spite of the increase in Southern crops, the price kept rising. Three million bales were gathered in 1852, three and a half million in 1856, and the remarkable crop of five million bales in 1860.⁶

Here we have data to explain largely the economic development of the South. By 1822 the large-plantation slave system had gained footing; in 1838-1839 it was able to show its power in the cotton "corner;" by the end of the next decade it had not only gained a solid economic foundation, but it had built a closed oligarchy with a political policy. The changes in price during the next few years drove out of competition many survivors of the small-farming free-labor system, and put the

4. Baines, *HISTORY OF THE COTTON MANUFACTURE*, page 215. A bale weighed from 375 lbs. to 400 lbs.

5. The prices cited are from Newmarch and Tooke, and refer to the London market. The average price in 1855-60 was about 7d.

6. From United States census reports.

JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

slave *régime* in position to dictate the policy of the nation. The zenith of the system and the first inevitable signs of decay came in the years 1850-1860, when the rising price of cotton threw the whole economic energy of the South into its cultivation, leading to a terrible consumption of soil and slaves, to a great increase in the size of plantations, and to increasing power and effrontery on the part of the slave barons. Finally, when a rising moral crusade conjoined with threatened economic disaster, the oligarchy, encouraged by the state of the cotton market, risked all on a political *coup-d'état*, which failed in the war of 1861-1865.⁷

1768

[William Cowper](#) and the ladies of the Unwin family with which he had affiliated relocated from Huntingdon to Olney in Buckinghamshire in order to enjoy the evangelical ministry of the Reverend [John Newton](#), the curate there.



1772

[John Newton](#)'s hymn "Amazing Grace," now famously sung of course by [Joan Baez](#):

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, But now am found
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear.
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home!

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess within the vail,

7. Cf. United States census reports; and Olmsted, *THE COTTON KINGDOM*.

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

A life of joy and peace!⁸

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE



Also occurring during this year was an invention important to the development of the cloth industry, and human [slavery](#): James Lees developed improvements on the carding-machine. Because this development would have an impact on the demand for bales of [cotton](#) as a raw material for cloth, it would have an impact on the demand for field labor to grow this cotton, and therefore would have consequences in terms of the [international slave trade](#).⁹

8. We do not know to what melodies this was originally sung. Eventually the melody used would be the one for the hymn “New Britain,” and would be such a successful appropriation that the original verses for that melody have been quite lost. You will note that some of Newton’s stanzas are absent in the current Joan Baez version. Also, a verse of the hymn “Jerusalem, My Happy Home” would be added by Harriet Beecher Stowe in *UNCLE TOM’S CABIN*:

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun;
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun!

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THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

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1779

William Cowper completed his revision of Homer, and wrote "The Castaway." The famous OLNEY HYMNS, on which he and the curate John Newton had been collaborating, appeared in print:



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JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

- Almighty King! Whose Wondrous Hand
- My God! Till I Received Thy Stroke
- As Birds Their Infant Brood Protect
- My Song Shall Bless the Lord of All
- By Whom Was David Taught
- My Soul Is Sad and Much Dismayed
- Bestow, Dear Lord, upon Our Youth
- The Newborn Child of Gospel Grace
- The Billows Swell, the Winds Are High
- No Strength of Nature Can Suffice
- O for a Closer Walk with God
- Breathe from the Gentle South, O Lord
- O God, Whose Favorable Eye
- O How I Love Thy Holy Word
- Dear Lord, Accept a Sinful Heart
- O Lord, My Best Desire Fulfill
- Ere God Had Built the Mountains
- Of All the Gifts Thine Hand Bestows
- Far from the World, O Lord, I Flee
- Fierce Passions Discompose the Mind
- The Saints Should Never Be Dismayed
- A Glory Gilds the Sacred Page
- The Savior Hides His Face!
- God Gives His Mercies to Be Spent
- The Savior! What a Noble Flame
- God Moves in a Mysterious Way
- Sin Enslaved Me Many Years
- God of My Life, to Thee I Call
- Sin Has Undone Our Wretched Race
- Grace, Triumphant in the Throne
- Sometimes a Light Surprises
- Gracious Lord, Our Children See
- There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood
- Hark, My Soul, It Is the Lord!
- Heal Us, Emmanuel
- This Is the Feast of Heav'nly Wine
- Hear What God the Lord Hath Spoken
- Thy Mansion Is the Christian's Heart
- His Master Taken from His Head
- Holy Lord God! I Love Thy Truth
- 'Tis My Happiness Below
- Honor and Happiness Unite
- To Jesus, the Crown of My Hope
- How Blest Thy Creature Is, O God
- To Keep the Lamp Alive
- I Was a Groveling Creature Once
- To Tell the Savior All My Wants
- I Will Praise Thee Every Day
- To Those Who Know the Lord I Speak
- Israel in Ancient Days
- Too Many, Lord, Abuse Thy Grace
- Jesus, Where'er Thy People Meet
- What Thousands Never Knew the Road!
- Jesus, Whose Blood So Freely Streamed

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

- What Various Hindrances We Meet
- Lord, My Soul with Pleasure Springs
- When Darkness Long Has Veiled My Mind
- The Lord Proclaims His Grace Abroad
- When Hagar Found the Bottle Spent
- Winter Has a Joy for Me
- The Lord Receives His Highest Praise
- Write to Sardis, Saith the Lord
- Ye Sons of Earth Prepare the Plough
- Lord, Who Hast Suffered All for Me
- The Lord Will Happiness Divine

1788

The curate [John Newton](#)'s THOUGHTS UPON THE [AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE](#).

With our ships, the great object is, to be full. When the ship is there, it is thought desirable she should take as many as possible. The cargo of a vessel of a hundred tons, or little more, is calculated to purchase from two hundred and twenty to two hundred and fifty slaves. Their lodging-rooms below the deck, which are three (for the men, the boys, and the women), besides a place for the sick, are sometimes more than five feet high, and sometimes less; and this height is divided towards the middle, for the slaves lie in two rows, one above the other, on each side of the ship, close to each other, like books upon a shelf. I have known them so close that the shelf would not, easily, contain one more. And I have known a white man sent down, among the men, to lay them in these rows to the greatest advantage, so that as little space as possible might be lost. Let it be observed, that the poor creatures, thus cramped for want of room, are likewise in irons, for the most part both hands and feet, and two together, which makes it difficult for them to turn or move, to attempt either to rise or to lie down, without hurting themselves, or each other. Nor is the motion of the ship, especially her heeling, or stoop on one side, when under sail, to be omitted; for this, as they lie athwart, or cross the ship, adds to the uncomfortableness of their lodging, especially to those who lie on the leeward or leaning side of the vessel.

Dire is the tossing, deep the groans. —

The heat and smell of these rooms, when the weather will not admit of the slaves being brought upon deck, and of having their rooms cleaned every day, would be almost insupportable to a person not accustomed to them. If the slaves and their rooms can be constantly aired, and they are not detained too long on board, perhaps there are not many who die; but the contrary is often their lot. They are kept down, by the weather, to breathe a hot and corrupted air, sometimes for a week: this added to the galling of their irons, and the despondency which seizes their spirits when thus confined, soon becomes fatal. And every morning, perhaps, more instances than one are found, of the living and the dead, like the captives of Mezentius, fastened together.

JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

Epidemical fevers and fluxes, which fill the ship with noisome and noxious effluvia, often break out, and infect the seamen likewise, and thus the oppressors, and the oppressed, fall by the same stroke. I believe, nearly one-half of the slaves on board, have, sometimes, died; and that the loss of a third part, in these circumstances, is not unusual. The ship, in which I was mate, left the coast with two hundred and eighteen slaves on board; and though we were not much affected by epidemical disorders, I find by my journal of that voyage (now before me), that we buried sixty-two on our passage to South Carolina, exclusive of those which died before we left the coast, of which I have no account.

I believe, upon an average between the more healthy, and the more sickly voyages, and including all contingencies, one fourth of the whole purchase may be allotted to the article of mortality: that is, if the English ships purchase sixty thousand slaves annually, upon the whole extent of the coast, the annual loss of lives cannot be much less than fifteen thousand.

[William Cowper](#)'s "The Negro's Complaint" — an attempt, necessarily unsatisfactory, to grasp how life must be seen when experienced from the perspective of the "ultimate other," one's victim and servant:

Forc'd from home and all its pleasures,
 Afric's coast I left forlorn;
 To increase a stranger's treasures,
 O'er the raging billows borne;
 Men from England bought and sold me,
 Paid my price in paltry gold;
 But though theirs they have enroll'd me
 Minds are never to be sold.
 Still in thought as free as ever,
 What are England's rights, I ask,
 Me from my delights to sever,
 Me to torture, me to task?
 Fleecy locks and black complexion
 Cannot forfeit nature's claim;
 Skins may differ, but affection
 Dwells in white and black the same.
 Why did all-creating Nature
 Make the plant for which we toil?
 Sighs must fan it, tears must water,
 Sweat of ours must dress the soil.
 Think, ye masters iron-hearted,
 Lolling at your jovial boards;
 Think, how many backs have smarted
 For the sweets your cane affords.
 Is there, as ye sometimes tell us,
 Is there one who reigns on high?
 Has he bid you buy and sell us,
 Speaking from his throne, the sky?
 Ask him, if your knotted scourges,
 Fetters, blood-extorting screws,
 Are the means that duty urges
 Agents of his will to use?
 Strewing yonder sea with wrecks,
 Wasting towns, plantations, meadows,
 Are the voice with which he speaks.
 He, foreseeing what vexations
 Afric's sons should undergo,
 Fix'd their tyrants' habitations
 Where his whirlwinds answer — No.
 By our blood in Afric wasted,
 Ere our necks receiv'd the chain;
 By the mis'ries which we tasted,
 Crossing in your barks the main;
 By our suff'rings since ye brought us

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

To the man-degrading mart;
 All sustain'd by patience, taught us
 Only by a broken heart:
 Deem our nation brutes no longer
 Till some reason ye shall find
 Worthier of regard and stronger
 Than the colour of our kind.
 Slaves of gold! whose sordid dealings
 Tarnish all your boasted pow'rs,
 Prove that you have human feelings,
 Ere you proudly question ours.

You've presumably gathered from the above ruminations that the poet [Cowper](#) was generally opposed to human [slavery](#). –But the devil is, as always, in the details.

Which is worse, enslavement to another human being by virtue of leg irons and handcuffs, or enslavement to Satan through an attachment to sin? For this British poet, in his poem “Charity,” clearly it would be the latter rather than the former which would constitute far the worse condition, and the conclusion to this comparison, Whitey, is as plain as the nose on your face: although it would be horrific for a black African to be enslaved to some cruel and un-Christian master who would lead him into sin and temptation, it might be on the other hand beatific, a true freeing, for that black African to be enslaved instead to some gentle and tolerant white Christian master who would only by example and by teaching be raising up that African into a true appreciation of the glories of our Christ Jesus. In fact if the black man is enslaved to a true Christian, then “one flash of heav’nly day” will “heal his heart and melt his chains away”! See, the thing is, “slaves by truth enlarg’d are doubly freed.” His service to you would be something done out not out of fear and obligation, but out of “gratitude and love,” and it would be “sweet” to him, and he would be “submissive at thy feet” out of this sweet gratitude and sweet love! For you the provident white slavemaster had delivered him “out of hopeless night.” You had bought his body — but only to give his soul light. He had previously been held fast by chains of sin and ignorance, and now you were merely binding him with chains and shackles of iron while your lips might have the opportunity to “shed instruction as the dew” and teach him “what path to shun, and what pursue.” Truly, in service to a benefactor such as you, although nominally enslaved he would be truly freed, and while not torn away from such a master, he would consider himself to be at his “best home”!

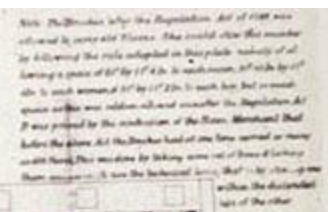
Here is a plan of each deck and the allowable “tight packing” aboard the slaver *Brookes* engaging quite properly and legally in the [international slave trade](#) under improved conditions dictated by the parliamentary Act of this year.

“EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES”: In 1788, the House of Commons voted Parliamentary inquiry. In 1791, a bill to abolish the trade was brought in by Wilberforce, and supported by him, and by Fox, and Burke, and Pitt, with the utmost ability and faithfulness; resisted by the planters, and the whole West Indian interest, and lost. During the next sixteen years, ten times, year after year, the attempt was renewed by Mr. Wilberforce, and ten times defeated by the planters. The king, and all the royal family but one, were against it. These debates are instructive, as they show on what grounds the trade was assailed and defended. Every thing generous, wise, and sprightly is sure to come to the attack. On the other part, are found cold prudence, barefaced selfishness, and silent votes. But the nation was aroused to enthusiasm. Every horrid fact became known.

Under the new limitations, the *Brookes* would be allowed to carry on its cross-Atlantic voyages only up to 454 slaves as depicted on the following screen (in the broadside collection of the Rare Book Room, Library of Congress, Portfolio 282-43, Lot 4422A; LC-US Z 62-44000).¹⁶

16. There are more images of this sort available at <<http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery>>.

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON



THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

The image “an African in Chains in a Supplicating Posture” bearing the “Am I Not a Man and a Brother?” motto was used on the cover of a London pamphlet addressed to Parliament, and on the cover of a publication about a voyage to Guinea.



In about this year, according to William Chauncey Fowler’s *LOCAL LAW IN MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT, HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED; AND THE HISTORICAL STATUS OF THE NEGRO, IN CONNECTICUT, ETC.* (Albany, 1872, and New Haven, 1875, page 125), “one or two” negrero vessels were being fitted out in Connecticut.

The [Underground Railroad](#) and the Manumission and Colonization Society of [North Carolina](#) were both tools of the Guilford County [Quakers](#). At Wells Meeting in Perquimans County, the Quaker yearly meeting was held with representatives from [North Carolina](#), South Carolina, and Georgia, and a minute was made of their progress or lack of progress against their previously agreed goal of cleaning all Quaker hands of slave holding:

As it appears that all Friends have not yet cleansed their hands of slave holding this meeting directs the inferior meetings to put the former advices of our yearly meeting in practice such who continue to hold them as slaves and hand up a report of their service to next yearly meeting to be held at Centre Meeting in Guilford County for further trial with which this meeting concurs.

The old committee was discharged and a new committee appointed made up of 24 prestigious [North Carolina Friends](#) — a lifetime commitment for each and every of them:

- Zacharias Dick

JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

- David Vestal
- Jeremiah Reynolds
- Thomas Winslow
- John Talbot
- Obediah Harris
- Jesse Coffin
- Strangeman Stanley
- John Carter
- Joseph Cloud
- John Beals
- Samuel Millikan
- Hezekiah Sanders
- Tristain Barnard
- William Coffin, Jr.
- John Hackett
- John Davis
- Samuel Chambers
- Issac Beeson
- Benjamin Coffin
- John Sanders
- Seth Coffin
- Thomas Thornborough
- William Tomlinson

W.E. Burghardt Du Bois: The slave-trade was hardly touched upon in the Congress of the Confederation, except in the ordinance respecting the capture of slaves, and on the occasion of the Quaker petition against the trade, although, during the debate on the Articles of Confederation, the counting of slaves as well as of freemen in the apportionment of taxes was urged as a measure that would check further importation of Negroes. "It is our duty," said Wilson of Pennsylvania, "to lay every discouragement on the importation of slaves; but this amendment [i.e., to count two slaves as one freeman] would give the *jus trium liberorum* to him who would import slaves."¹⁷ The matter was finally compromised by apportioning requisitions according to the value of land and buildings.

After the Articles went into operation, an ordinance in regard to the recapture of fugitive slaves provided that, if the capture was made on the sea below high-water mark, and the Negro was not claimed, he should be freed. Matthews of South Carolina demanded the yeas and nays on this proposition, with the result that only the vote of his State was recorded against it.¹⁸

On Tuesday, October 3, 1783, a deputation from the Yearly Meeting of the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware Friends asked leave to present a petition. Leave was granted the following day,¹⁹ but no further minute appears. According to the report of the Friends, the petition was against the slave-trade; and "though the Christian rectitude of the concern was by the Delegates generally acknowledged, yet not being vested with the powers of legislation, they declined promoting any public remedy against the gross national iniquity of trafficking in the persons of fellow-men."²⁰

17. Elliot, *DEBATES* (1861), I. 72-3. Cf. Article 8 of the ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION.

18. *JOURNALS OF CONGRESS*, 1781, June 25; July 18; Sept. 21, 27; November 8, 13, 30; December 4.

19. *JOURNALS OF CONGRESS*, 1782-3, pages 418-9, 425.

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON

The only legislative activity in regard to the trade during the Confederation was taken by the individual States.²¹ Before 1778 Connecticut, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia had by law stopped the further importation of slaves, and importation had practically ceased in all the New England and Middle States, including Maryland. In consequence of the revival of the slave-trade after the War, there was then a lull in State activity until 1786, when North Carolina laid a prohibitive duty, and South Carolina, a year later, began her series of temporary prohibitions. In 1787-1788 the New England States forbade the participation of their citizens in the traffic. It was this wave of legislation against the traffic which did so much to blind the nation as to the strong hold which slavery still had on the country.

1800



April 25: [William Cowper](#) died in East Dereham, Norfolk. His friend and hymn writing partner, the curate [John Newton](#), would conduct the funeral service, and the body would be buried there in East Dereham.

1807

[John Newton](#) died.

1830



Up to this point the words of the Reverend [John Newton](#)'s 1772 hymn "Amazing Grace" had been being sung to any number of different melodies. At this point, in America, the words were becoming wedded to one particular melody, that of "New Britain" in William Walker's THE SOUTHERN HARMONY.

Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, But now am found
Was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear.
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home!

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,

20. ANNALS OF CONGRESS, 1st Congress 2d session, page 1183.

21. Cf. above, Chapters ii., iii., iv.

JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease;
I shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace!²²

INTERNATIONAL SLAVE TRADE

Date	Slave-trade Abolished by
1802	Denmark
1807	Great Britain; United States
1813	Sweden
1814	Netherlands
1815	Portugal (north of the equator)
1817	Spain (north of the equator)
1818	France
1820	Spain
1829	Brazil (?)
1830	Portugal

22. A verse of the hymn “Jerusalem, My Happy Home” would be tacked into the song, by Harriet Beecher Stowe in UNCLE TOM’S CABIN:

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun;
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun!

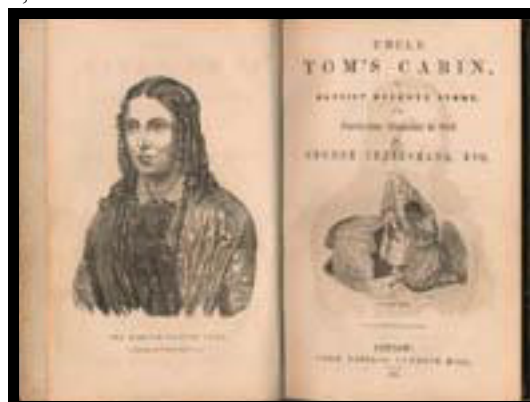
(Other of the Reverend [Newton’s](#) verses are absent in the current [Joan Baez](#) version.)

1852

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN, OR THE MAN THAT WAS A THING was issued in two bound volumes. Within the first week 10,000 copies were sold, within the first year more than 300,000, and by the beginning of the American Civil War, more than 3,000,000. In the fall, the author, Harriet Beecher Stowe, would move from Brunswick ME to Andover MA.²³



23.  Harriet Beecher Stowe. UNCLE TOM'S CABIN OR LIFE AMONG THE LOWLY. 1st edition in two volumes, 1852



JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

This is the English edition:



A character in this novel told Uncle Tom to “keep a stiff upper lip” (this idiom, now so popular among the Brits, had originated in New England in 1815).

A verse of the hymn “Jerusalem, My Happy Home” was tacked into the song, [“Amazing Grace”](#):

When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun;
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun!

(Other of the Reverend [Newton](#)’s verses are absent in the current [Joan Baez](#) version.)

1854

The SOUTHERN HARMONY hymnal attributed the tune “New Britain” –which eventually we would be using for our “Amazing Grace”– to the BAPTIST HARMONY, a collection in the American shape-note tradition.

1982

Our song [“Amazing Grace”](#) had not been in the American Protestant Episcopal HYMNAL 1940. The new edition published in this year, however, included the song, and attributed a new stanza beginning with “When we’ve been there ten thousand years...” to John Rees, suggesting that this stanza had already been being sung during the 19th Century. It provenanced the version of the “New Britain” tune used as “from VIRGINIA HARMONY, 1831; adapt. att. Edwin Othello Excell (1851-1921); harm. Austin Cole Lovelace (b. 1919).”

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

JOHN NEWTON



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"It's all now you see. Yesterday won't be over until tomorrow and tomorrow began ten thousand years ago."

- Remark by character "Garin Stevens"
in William Faulkner's INTRUDER IN THE DUST



Prepared: January 30, 2010

JOHN NEWTON

THE REVEREND JOHN NEWTON

ARRGH AUTOMATED RESearch REPORT

GENERATION HOTLINE



This stuff presumably looks to you as if it were generated by a human. Such is not the case. Instead, upon someone's request we have pulled it out of the hat of a pirate that has grown out of the shoulder of our pet parrot "Laura" (depicted above). What these chronological lists are: they are research reports compiled by ARRGH algorithms out of a database of data modules which we term the Kouroo Contexture. This is data mining. To respond to such a request for information, we merely push a button.

Commonly, the first output of the program has obvious deficiencies and so we need to go back into the data modules stored in the contexture and do a minor amount of tweaking, and then we need to punch that button again and do a recompile of the chronology – but there is nothing here that remotely resembles the ordinary “writerly” process which you know and love. As the contents of this originating contexture improve, and as the programming improves, and as funding becomes available (to date no funding whatever has been needed in the creation of this facility, the entire operation being run out of pocket change) we expect a diminished need to do such tweaking and recompiling, and we fully expect to achieve a simulation of a generous and untiring robotic research librarian. Onward and upward in this brave new world.

First come first serve. There is no charge.
Place your requests with <Kouroo@kouroo.info>.
Arrgh.