UNIVERSITY OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

This is a peer-reviewed, final published version of the following document and is licensed under Creative Commons: Attribution 4.0 license:

Kinghorn, Alice ORCID logoORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-5156-206X (2024) The Rev. John Stainsby and the 'diffusion of Gospel truth' in Early Nineteenth-Century Jamaica. Studies in Church History, 60. pp. 363-386. doi:10.1017/stc.2024.14

Official URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14
EPrint URI: https://eprints.glos.ac.uk/id/eprint/14177

Disclaimer

The University of Gloucestershire has obtained warranties from all depositors as to their title in the material deposited and as to their right to deposit such material.

The University of Gloucestershire makes no representation or warranties of commercial utility, title, or fitness for a particular purpose or any other warranty, express or implied in respect of any material deposited.

The University of Gloucestershire makes no representation that the use of the materials will not infringe any patent, copyright, trademark or other property or proprietary rights.

The University of Gloucestershire accepts no liability for any infringement of intellectual property rights in any material deposited but will remove such material from public view pending investigation in the event of an allegation of any such infringement.

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR TEXT.

The Rev. John Stainsby and the 'diffusion of Gospel truth' in Early Nineteenth-Century Jamaica

Alice Kinghorn*
University of Gloucester

First dispatched to Jamaica in 1818 by The Conversion Society, the Rev. John Stainsby became a prominent figure on the island. This article examines his intense involvement in Anglican missionary affairs to reveal how dishonesties and concealment of belief were used to expand Anglican missions in the Caribbean. Firstly, this article examines two key sites of contention between missionaries and the plantocracy – Sunday markets and baptism – where Stainsby used deception to reconcile his religious duties and colonial law. Secondly, it considers the motivations and actions of The Conversion Society and the Church Missionary Society more generally, including the heavily censored material used for religious instruction. Finally, it examines Stainsby as an enslaver, and considers the religious justifications used to support enslavement by many resident Anglican clergymen in the early nineteenth century.

Introduction

In an account entitled *The West Indies in 1837,* Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey depicted an Anglican clergyman whom they considered to have atypical sympathies: 'one of those who has ever manifested a sympathy with the oppressed, and is consequently, together with other estimable clergymen of the establishment, deemed "worse than a Baptist".'[1] The subject of their account, the Rev. John Stainsby (1782–1854), held his position as an Anglican incumbent in Jamaica for over thirty years.[2] Working with enslaved

* E-mail: alicekinghorn@live.co.uk. Quotation in title from: Birmingham, CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/079/3, Rev. John Stainsby to Rev. Josiah Pratt, 25 May 1824, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.

[1] Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey, *The West Indies in 1837* (London, 1838), 236.

[2] Hope Maslerton Waddell, *Twenty-Nine Years in the West Indies and Central Africa* (London, 1863), 104. On account of his 'evangelical piety' and 'sympathy with the

Studies in Church History 60 (2024), 363–386 © The Author(s), 2024. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the Ecclesiastical History Society. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.
doi: 10.1017/stc.2024.14

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

people and witnessing their transition to apprenticeship and freedom, it was in Jamaica that Stainsby's 'sympathies' took root.[3] In view of this, Stainsby's listing in the *Legacies of British Slavery Database* is perhaps unexpected. Together with his wife, he is recorded as having received £646 18*s*. 1*d*. in compensation for the freeing of thirty-six enslaved people in 1836.[4] The entry observes this apparent contradiction, describing Stainsby's slave-ownership as 'striking' because 'he was renowned as prominent campaigner for the improvement in conditions of the enslaved and for their religious instruction'.[5]

This article argues an alternative view. It suggests that Stainsby's enslaver status was not antithetical to his dedication to religious instruction and conversion in the Caribbean. Rather, it demonstrates how 'sympathizing' Anglican missionaries in the Caribbean, such as Stainsby, had to abstain from the issue of emancipation in order to maintain good relations with the plantocracy and thus further their missionary calling. In doing so, it argues that such missionaries became an integral part of the British Government's movement, throughout the 1820s, for the amelioration of the conditions of enslaved people. This focused assessment of Stainsby's intense involvement in Anglican missionary affairs in Jamaica reveals how dishonesties and concealed beliefs advanced the expansion of Anglican missions in the Caribbean.

With the exception of Adam Thomas's assessment of a slander case – to which Stainsby and another missionary named Samuel Oughton were parties – Stainsby's influence in Jamaica has largely gone unobserved.[6] By contrast, Anglican missionary activity during the period of amelioration has seen a recent surge of interest, which has served to nuance and complicate current understandings of relationships between missionaries and enslaved people.[7] In *Agency of the*

oppressed,' Stainsby was described as having to endure 'much obloquy and persecution': Henry Richard, *Memoirs of Joseph Sturge* (London, 1865), 154.

[3] 'Sympathies' are attributed scare quotes due to the problematic attitudes which Anglican clergymen held in encouraging conversion and instruction.

[4] 'Rev. John Stainsby', *Legacies of British Slavery Database*, online at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/14414>, accessed 31 October 2022.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Adam Thomas, '"Outcasts from the world": Same-Sex Sexuality, Authority, and Belonging in Post-Emancipation Jamaica', *Slavery & Abolition* 40 (2019), 423–47.

[7] Christa Dierksheide, *Amelioration and Empire: Progress and Slavery in the Plantation Americas* (Charlottesville, VA, 2014); Trevor Burnard and Kit Candlin, 'Sir John

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Enslaved, Daive Dunkley examined the baptisms and religious instruction of enslaved people under the established Church of England and its missionary agencies, including the Church Missionary Society (CMS). He argued that the creation of the missionary education system 'was an indication of the power of slave freedom'.[8] Dunkley considered how Anglican missionaries aligned with the plantocracy, and posited that enslaved people maintained agency and autonomy in missionary interactions.[9] Anglican clergy in the Anglophone Caribbean more widely have been approached mainly through the study of resident clergy and their relations with enslavers. In an evaluation of breaches of the social norms of slave society, Matthew Strickland explored the actions of William Marshall Harte, an Anglican clergyman in Barbados, who was fined for preaching material that might 'hinder the enslaver-enslaved power dynamic.'[10] Strickland situates arguments surrounding Harte's actions in the wider context of amelioration through religious instruction sought by the British government in the 1820s.[11] By considering how Stainsby traversed these complex and important enslaver-enslaved dynamics, this article builds on Strickland's analysis. It demonstrates that the complexities of amelioration resulted in tensions as

Gladstone and the Debate Over the Amelioration of Slavery in the British West Indies in the 1820s,' *JBS* 57 (2018), 760–82. Michael Taylor examines amelioration in the West India Interest's defence of slavery in: Michael Taylor, *The Interest: How the British Establishment Resisted the Abolition of Slavery* (London, 2020), 125–40.

[8] Daive Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved: Jamaica and the Culture of Freedom in the Atlantic World* (Lanham, MD, 2013), 10.

[9] Scholarship on the Church of England's pro-slavery actions focuses mainly on the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (SPG), including Travis Glasson's review of the SPG's participation in slavery in North America and the Caribbean: see Travis Glasson, *Mastering Christianity: Missionary Anglicanism and Slavery in the Atlantic World* (New York, 2012), 199–232. On the 'planter-clergy nexus', see David Lambert, *White Creole Culture: Politics and Identity during the Age of Abolition* (Cambridge, 2005), 19. For early colonial development of the Church of England, see Katherine Gerbner, *Christian Slavery: Conversion and Race in the Protestant Atlantic World* (Philadelphia, PA, 2018).

[10] Matthew Blake Strickland, '"The Protection of Slaves and Other Property": An Anglican Minister, Criminal Charges, and White Planters' Fear of Emancipation in Barbados', *Journal of Caribbean History* 5 (2021), 151–75, at 151. For more biographical approaches to this topic, see Sue Thomas, 'William Dawes in Antigua', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 12 (2011), unpaginated, and Mary Turner, 'The Bishop of Jamaica and Slave Instruction', *JEH* 26 (1975), 363–78.

[11] Strickland, '"The Protection of Slaves"', 154–5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

missionaries deceived others about their beliefs to align with ameliorative, Christian incentives.

Anna Johnston has examined missionary texts more generally, arguing that they are propagandist in nature because they were written to 'ensure an on-going supply of donated funds'.[12] In their writings, missionaries enforced 'colonial visions' by emphasizing the notion of the 'heathen' to justify their conversion attempts.[13] This article draws on Johnston's analysis by examining missionary correspondence, whilst considering the motivations of the writer, alongside published education materials and colonial slave registers, to understand Stainsby's influence in nineteenth-century Jamaica. It firstly examines two key sites of contention between religious instruction and the planter class – Sunday markets and baptism – showing that Stainsby used deception to reconcile his religious duties and colonial law. It then considers the motivations and actions of The Conversion Society and the CMS more generally, discussing the material provided to missionaries to support their educational mission. Finally, it explores Stainsby's role as an enslaver. Through consideration of Stainsby's attitudes towards his own slave-ownership, it points to Stainsby's assimilation into the plantocracy. Overall, it argues that Stainsby engaged in acts of hypocrisy and suppression to avoid curtailing the growth of mission and, in so doing, perpetuated a form of pro-slavery Christianity that was used by himself and the societies who employed him.[14]

Ordination and Mission

John Stainsby was born in 1782 in Low Coniscliffe, County Durham. Little is known about his life prior to his ordination, although we can gather that he remained single until then.[15] He was ordained deacon on 17 May 1818 and priested on 30 August the same year, with a view to becoming a missionary for the

[12] See Anna Johnston, *Missionary Writing and Empire, 1800–1860* (Cambridge, 2003), 7–11.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Unlike the Society's first missionary, James Curtin, Stainsby's actions generally aligned with the Society's views.
[15] In 1818, Stainsby recorded that he had been advised to 'take a partner': see London, LPL, FP Howley 40, 265, Stainsby to the Bishop of London, 3 August 1818, Low Coniscliffe, County Durham.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of the British West India Negro Slaves.[16] The Society was a rejuvenation of the Christian Faith Society, originally founded in 1691 from assets left by the natural philosopher Robert Boyle.[17] The charity experienced a partial suspension of income during the American War of Independence (1775–83), which encouraged its trustees to find an alternative use for the income flowing from Boyle's Brafferton estate in Yorkshire. The alternative which was found was The Conversion Society, which was reconstituted in 1794 under the presidency of the then bishop of London, Beilby Porteus, until his death in 1809. Samuel Hinds, the future bishop of Norwich, became its president in 1809, until his resignation in 1822.[18] The Society's first stationed missionary was the Rev. James Curtin, who remained the principal missionary in the Caribbean until Stainsby's arrival in Jamaica in 1818.[19]

Stainsby was evidently eager to start his new position, making an inquiry to the bishop of London, by now William Howley, as to when his mission for The Conversion Society would begin. In his letter, he wrote:

> As many weeks have passed over since my ordination, and as the time of my proposed departure from my native country across the Atlantic to communicate those blessings to our fellow subjects, the Negroes, which God's eternal son came down to this our World to reveal and work out for sinful man, I hope I may be pardoned the liberty I now take in writing to your Lordship to enquire if anything further has been settled respecting me by the 'Society for the Conversion of Negro slaves in the British West India Islands.' I rather expected to hear from Mr Porteus previous to this, but have not.[20]

[16] London, London Metropolitan Archives [hereafter: LMA], Diocese of London Act Book, MS 9532A/2, 130, 133–4; ibid., Curates Licences MS 10300/2, 27.

[17] See Herbert L. Ganter, 'Some Notes on the Charity of the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq. of the City of London, Deceased', *William and Mary College Quarterly* 15 (1935), 207–28; 'Christian Faith Society - Borthwick Catalogue', online at: <https://borthcat.york.ac.uk/index.php/christian-faith-society>, accessed 31 October 2022.

[18] LPL, CFS F/1/ 1, Samuel Hinds to Thomas Porteus, 29 April 1822, Barbados.

[19] On James Curtin's role in The Conversion Society, see Alice Kinghorn and Hilary M. Carey, 'The History of James Curtin: Catholic Priest, Protestant Missionary, and Pariah of British Proslavery, 1765–1845', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 24 (2023), unpaginated; LPL, CFS F/1/ 3, Rev. James Curtin to Rev. D. Barrett, 4 September 1822, Antigua.

[20] LPL, FP Howley 40, 265–6, John Stainsby to the bishop of London, Charles Blomfield, 3 August 1818, Low Coniscliffe, County Durham. 'Porteus' refers to the

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Stainsby did not have long to wait. On 20 October 1818, he was appointed by Howley as 'a missionary in the Island of Jamaica to which [he was] duly appointed by the Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negro Slaves in the British West India Islands.'[21] This was reported in the 1818 *Missionary Register,* which also noted that Stainsby was to be paid the yearly stipend 'allowed by the Society.'[22] His first appearance in the Society's payment books was in November 1818 when he was paid £50 for the 'expense of his passage and in advance and in part of his salary.'[23] He was then paid £100 annually in quarterly instalments until 1823, when his annual salary increased to £115.[24] On Stainsby's arrival in Jamaica, a 'resident' clergyman, the Rev. John McCammon Trew, wrote to The Conversion Society that Stainsby 'came too late for the curacy of this parish [St Thomas in the East],' but assured the Society that Stainsby would still be able to 'further the ends of conversion among the slaves'.[25] Crucially, from 1820, Stainsby also maintained a relationship with the Church Missionary Society (CMS), and eventually became secretary for its Jamaican auxiliary in 1829.[26] Stainsby's bilateral positioning within

nephew of Beilby Porteus, Thomas Porteus, who had an influential administerial role in The Conversion Society.

[21] LMA, Diocese of London Act Book, MS 9532A/2, 130, 133, 134.

[22] Church Missionary Society, *The Missionary Register for 1818 Containing the Principal Transactions of the Various Institutions for Propagating the Gospel with The Proceedings at Large of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1818), 420.

[23] LMA, Curates Licences MS 10300/2, 27; Kew, TNA, C 110/88.

[24] TNA, C 110/88; LPL, FP Howley 2, 361, John McCammon Trew to The Conversion Society, 13 June 1823, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.

[25] 'Resident' clergy refers to those permanently stationed in the Caribbean. LPL, FP Howley 2, 145, John McCammon Trew to The Conversion Society, 13 January 1819, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.

[26] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/079/6a, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 16 March 1829, Papine Estate, Jamaica. Adam Thomas stated that Stainsby was a missionary for the Church Missionary Society: Thomas, '"Outcasts from the world"', 423. Whilst Stainsby did have a relationship with the CMS, it was The Conversion Society that originally paid for his missionary position. The new missionaries and their salaries are also mentioned in *The Christian Herald* (London, 1819), 300. On the foundation of the CMS, see Gareth Atkins, 'Wilberforce and His Milieux: The Worlds of Anglican Evangelicalism, *c.*1780–1830' (PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2009); and Elizabeth Elbourne, 'The Anglican Missionary Impulse,' in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor, eds, *Church of England, c.1689–c.1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), 247–64.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

both The Conversion Society and the CMS was unique to him, with most missionaries retaining associations with either one or the other.[27] Stainsby ratified his affiliation with the CMS in 1824, when he wrote to its secretary, the Rev. Josiah Pratt, confirming his mission of the 'diffusion of the Gospel truth in these parts of the world.'[28] Stainsby's employment by The Conversion Society and association with the CMS made him a central Anglican missionary in Jamaica.

Sunday Markets and Baptism

Stainsby's colonial mission in Jamaica began during a period of intense political turmoil in Britain. In 1823, Britain's foreign secretary, George Canning, introduced a number of resolutions that called for the amelioration of enslavement in the West Indies. Abolitionists such as William Wilberforce and Thomas Buxton hoped these measures could lead to the emancipation of enslaved people in the colonies.[29] However, Canning carefully refrained from suggesting that amelioration could lead to emancipation. By balancing the 'well-being of the slaves themselves, with the safety of the colonies,' he kept the West India Interest's support, and encouraged MPs to vote for these resolutions and support their implementation.[30] Canning's resolutions included measures to advance 'civilisation' amongst enslaved populations, such as abolishing the use of the whip for females, protecting enslaved peoples' rights to own property, and removing certain restrictions on manumission.[31]

Underlying the arguments for amelioration were calls for religious instruction amongst enslaved populations as a means of fostering 'improvement'. As demonstrated by Dunkley and Strickland, the

[27] Stainsby reported to both societies. He was also close friends with the Rev. John McCammon Trew, whose frosty relationship with The Conversion Society resulted in the creation of the Jamaican Auxiliary of the Church Missionary Society.

[28] CRL CMS/B/OMS CW/079/3, Stainsby to Rev. Josiah Pratt, 25 May 1824, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.

[29] HC Deb. (2nd series), 15 May 1823 (vol. 9, col. 273). These measures had been set out by The Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery Throughout the British Dominions.

[30] The West India Interest were bankers, merchants and MPs with interests in transatlantic slavery. They represented views of the plantocracy in Parliament. See Michael Taylor, *The Interest,* 63.

[31] HC Deb. (2nd series), 16 March 1824 (vol. 10, cols 1091–198).

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

belief that religious instruction and conversion to Christianity were necessary to the implementation of amelioration policies meant that Anglican missionary societies became central to the cause of amelioration.[32] Dunkley, Glasson and Gerbner have demonstrated that missionaries relied on the support of resident planters in the Caribbean for physical access to their plantations in order to carry out religious instruction.[33] These studies have also suggested that enslavers supported Anglican missionaries financially as a way to ensure control over the type of religious instruction given, although analysis of this financial support has received less attention.[34] As such, Anglican missionaries had to navigate their relations with planters, even when this challenged the missionaries' principles.

When sending missionaries to the Caribbean, both the CMS and The Conversion Society explicitly told their candidates not to embroil themselves in local political affairs. The Conversion Society's first pamphlet, issued in 1795 and entitled *Instructions for Missionaries to the West-India Islands*, specified that missionaries 'must be careful to give no offence either to the Governor, to the Legislature to the Planters, the Clergy, or any other class of persons on the island … not interfering in the commercial or political affairs of the island.'[35] The CMS had similar guidelines and attitudes.[36] However, this led to internal difficulties for missionaries, and one such challenge came when Stainsby openly confronted the custom of Sunday markets.

Sunday markets were an integral part of the informal economy in Jamaica. At these markets, enslaved people sold surplus crops from their provision grounds, such as potatoes, ackee, yams, plantains, beans, peas, guavas and other dried roots.[37] By the late eighteenth

[32] Strickland, '"The Protection of Slaves"', 154–5.

[33] On early access restrictions, see Gerbner, *Christian Slavery,* 30–1; Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved,* 121–5. On the SPG and planter hostility, see Glasson, *Mastering Christianity,* 97–9.

[34] Dunkley has examined the financial support provided by planters to the Jamaican Auxiliary of the Church Missionary Society: Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved,* 67. This article builds on Dunkley's analysis, by considering the financial support of The Conversion Society and the Church Missionary Society more generally.

[35] Philanthropic Society, *Instructions for Missionaries to the West-India Islands* (London, 1795), 3.

[36] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/079, Stainsby to Rev. Josiah Pratt, 1 February 1821, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.

[37] Provision grounds were sections of land allocated to enslaved people for growing food provisions or keeping livestock. John McAleer, 'Alison Blyth and Slavery in Nineteenth-

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

century, Sunday markets in Kingston saw the participation of an estimated 10,000 enslaved people.[38] However, since these markets involved working on the Sabbath, Sunday markets became a site of contention. Glasson argues that, particularly in the early nineteenth century, new metropolitan campaigners and missionaries to the Caribbean failed to appreciate either the work schedule established on Caribbean plantations, or the fact that enslaved people wished to attend Sunday markets.[39] Missionaries from most denominations objected to markets, and John McAleer has argued that such objections were expected 'from the average missionary,' who would instead encourage enslaved people to attend church and school on Sundays.[40]

The plantocracy of Jamaica proved resistant. They encouraged enslaved people either to carry out additional labour or to attend Sunday markets to sell goods from their provision grounds, and appreciated the problems that would entail from a ban of markets.[41] Alison Charles Carmichael, a Scotswoman resident in Jamaica, considered Sunday markets a 'nuisance', but also viewed them as a custom 'which were it abolished other worse consequences might follow.'[42] Similarly, writing in 1825, the English geologist and enslaver Henry Thomas De La Beche observed:

> No slave can be compelled to labour in Jamaica on Sunday, but to restrain them from doing so on their own account, would be considered by them as an act of great tyranny, and the practice cannot be prevented until they have received some religious impression of its impropriety.[43]

This would eventually come to a head for Antiguans in March 1831. Following a ban placed on Sunday markets, enslaved people resisted:

Century Jamaica', in Hilary M. Carey, ed., *Empires of Religion* (Basingstoke, 2008), 199–221, at 213.

[38] Gad Heuman, *The Caribbean: A Brief History,* 2nd edn (London, 2014; first publ. 2006), 42.

[39] Glasson, *Mastering Christianity,* 157.

[40] McAleer, 'Alison Blyth and Slavery', 212.

[41] Marshall K. Woodville, 'Provision Ground and Plantation Labour in Four Winward Islands: Competition for Resources During Slavery', *Slavery & Abolition* 12 (1991), 48–67, at 49.

[42] Quoted in Beth Fowkes Tobin, '"And there raise yams": Slaves' Gardens in the Writings of West India Plantocrats', *Eighteenth-Century Life* 23 (1999), 164–73.

[43] Henry Thomas De La Beche, *Notes on the Present Condition of the Negroes in Jamaica* (London, 1825), 47.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

firstly, by ignoring the ban and secondly, by stirring revolt across two parishes.[44] Indeed, as Carmichael demonstrates, throughout the 1820s, the plantocracy recognized the need for Sunday markets, particularly if they were not willing to offer enslaved people another day off other than Sundays.[45] This became a tense issue between the plantocracy and missionaries.

John Stainsby's main concern was the importance of religious instruction on the Sabbath.[46] Consequently, as early as 1820, Stainsby wrote to Josiah Pratt, Secretary of the CMS, observing that Sunday markets must end if a 'school for slaves [were to] succeed to any extent'.[47] Stainsby maintained that Sunday markets would be 'the ruin of all efforts'.[48] Writing again in 1824, together with the Rev. John Matthew Trew, Stainsby pleaded the need to 'abolish the bane of Colonial Improvement: Sunday markets.'[49] Such opinions resulted in severe criticism from the plantocracy, with a slander case against Stainsby forcing him to retract his beliefs and principles.

Indeed, in 1824, Stainsby was accused by one Captain Ferrier of being 'in the habit of telling the [slaves] when [he] met them on Sundays going to market with provisions – that they should not go on that day, but that their masters should give them another day for this purpose.'[50] It was suggested that Stainsby had angered the planter in question. The allegation caused 'great injury' to Stainsby, and he made fervent attempts to deny it: writing two letters to the captain renouncing the claim, and visiting the estate to 'explain the

[44] See David Barry Gaspar, 'Slavery, Amelioration, and Sunday Markets in Antigua, 1823–1831', *Slavery & Abolition* 9 (1988), 1–21.
[45] Mary Prince wrote on the internal conflict of attending Sunday markets without another day allocated in *The History of Mary Prince*, ed. Thomas Pringle, 3rd edn (London, 1831; first publ. 1831), 16.
[46] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/O79/7, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 31 July 1830, St John's, Jamaica; CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/O79/8, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 10 June 1830, Manchester, Jamaica. Stainsby writes about the Sabbath on both occasions.
[47] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/079, Stainsby to Rev. Josiah Pratt, 1 February 1821, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.
[48] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW079/1, Stainsby to Rev. Josiah Pratt, 11 December 1820, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.
[49] Church Missionary Society, *The Missionary Register for 1824 Containing the Principal Transactions of the Various Institutions for Propagating the Gospel with The Proceedings at Large of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1824), 89.
[50] LPL, CFS/F/1,104, Stainsby to The Conversion Society, Jamaica, 9 July 1824, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

misunderstanding'. Stainsby reported back to The Conversion Society that the estate's overseer understood and believed Stainsby, calling it 'nonsense'.[51] Whilst the veracity of the allegation is unknown, should it be true, it suggests that Stainsby possessed a wider understanding of the Sunday market system, and an appreciation for how integral that system was to the enslaved economy.[52] At the same time, Stainsby's palpable desperation to clear his name by retracting the strong views about Sunday markets he had expressed in his correspondence demonstrates the genuine importance that Anglican missionaries and their societies placed on good relations with planters.

A similar situation transpired in relation to baptism law in Jamaica.[53] The baptism of enslaved people had long been a contentious issue, and Dunkley has established that it was central to the Church of England's aims, particularly following the decision of the Jamaica House of Assembly to embark on a general pursuit of the 'mass baptism' of enslaved people from 1797.[54] Stainsby took issue with this approach, writing to The Conversion Society in 1823 of his grave concern that Jamaican law encouraged the baptism of all enslaved people regardless of 'any course of religious instruction'.[55] Stainsby argued that an enslaved person would leave the church 'in the same state of ignorance as when he entered it'.[56] Similarly, Stainsby critiqued the clergy's motivations for converting enslaved people, reporting to the CMS that he had noticed a lack of 'pious clergymen' since moving to the parish, and claimed that '"I am waiting for promotion to a benefice" [seemed] to be the general

[51] Ibid.
[52] McAleer, 'Alison Blyth and Slavery', 214. This argument is informed by McAleer's analysis of Alison Blyth, who was critical of Sunday markets, but sympathized with enslaved people as 'poor creatures' who should be offered another market day.
[53] Dunkley notes this was significantly sooner than Canning's 1823 proposals. On the development of baptism laws in Jamaica, see Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved,* 121–6, Nicholas M. Beasley, 'Domestic Rituals: Marriage and Baptism in the British Plantation Colonies, 1650–1780', *Anglican and Episcopal History* 76 (2007), 327–57; and Travis Glasson '"Baptism doth not bestow Freedom": Missionary Anglicanism, Slavery and the Yorke-Talbot Opinion, 1701–30', *William and Mary Quarterly* 67 (2010), 279–318.
[54] Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved,* 121. For a general account of the Sunday market system, see Heuman, *The Caribbean,* 41–3.
[55] LPL, CFS/F/1, 46, Stainsby to Rev. Barrett, 29 October 1823, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.
[56] Ibid.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

sentiment, and not "I am striving more than they all to convert souls."'[57]

Yet despite his criticisms, Stainsby continued to baptize large numbers of enslaved people. The following year, in 1824, he baptized 242 enslaved people, twice as many as any other Anglican curate working for The Conversion Society in Jamaica.[58] Stainsby's apparent hypocrisy in criticizing 'inappropriate' baptism on the one hand, and carrying these out on the other, was reflected more widely. The Rev. Richard Bickell, another clergyman stationed in Jamaica admitted:

> I am almost ashamed to confess, that in Kingston, I myself baptised nearly 1000 in the space of six months, with little or no examination; for being only [a] curate, I considered that my refusal to admit them in their ignorant state would considerably lessen the rector's income, there being a fee of two shillings and six pence for every slave baptised.[59]

As Bickell suggests, the reason for 'mass baptism' was to some extent financial.[60] Throughout the 1820s, rectors' incomes were partly dependent on the number of baptisms they performed. In addition, Jamaican island law fined any clergyman five pounds if he refused to 'baptize any Negro or other Slave that presents himself,' regardless of 'suitability' for conversion.[61]

Alongside financial motivations, campaigns for mass baptism were underpinned by the belief that enslaved people were unchristian, and thus uncivilized. In *Civilising Subjects,* Catherine Hall argued that racial hierarchies were central to the missionary enterprise more generally, due to the view that African people needed salvation.[62] Both the CMS and The Conversion Society in the 1820s were central in providing 'evidence' of an association between Christianity and civility, justifying the amelioration mission. Descriptions of 'savagery'

[57] CRL, C/W/079/137, Stainsby to the Secretary, Josiah Pratt, 11 April 1823, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.
[58] Church Missionary Society, *The Missionary Register for 1824,* 89.
[59] Richard Bickell, *The West Indies as They are: Or, A Real Picture of Slavery: But More Particularly as it Exists in the Island of Jamaica, In Three Parts, With Notes* (London, 1825), 91.
[60] On 'mass baptism', see Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved,* 121.
[61] *Miscellaneous Papers: Ionian Islands; Slaves in the Colonies, Session 27 January–10 June 1818,* Parliamentary Papers 1818, vol. 17, 178–9.
[62] Hall, *Civilising Subjects*, 97.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

were commonplace in both the *Missionary Register* and in the annual reports of The Conversion Society.[63] Thus, a combination of financial, practical and racist beliefs contextualized the motivations of John Stainsby as a missionary. Although Stainsby held strong beliefs on both Sunday markets and the practice of baptism in Jamaica, he suppressed these to appease planters, to ensure personal financial stability, and to contribute to the 'successes' of the mission. Stainsby was keen to attest to his own contribution to the mission: for instance, after his implication in the Sunday market rumour, he wrote to assure the CMS that he was a 'simple member of the Gospel who has done much good.'[64]

Missionary Reliance on Planters

The motivations of Stainsby and the missionary societies in appeasing the plantocracy were predominantly financial, but also practical, in that missionaries could only gain physical access to enslaved people on plantations with the planters' goodwill.[65] Indeed, Strickland has demonstrated that enslavers held strict criteria on the missionaries they would allow access to plantations. William Marshall Harte, an Anglican clergyman in Barbados, was fined for preaching material that might 'hinder the enslaver-enslaved power dynamic,' by discussing topics that breached the social norms of the system of slavery.[66] Thus, missionaries could not have a viable religious mission to enslaved people without the consent of enslavers. This was exacerbated by Anglican missionaries' financial reliance on planters. Following Canning's resolutions, the Standing Committee of the West India Planters and Merchants of the City of London resolved that 'the extension of the means of Religious Instruction, is the best and surest foundation for the improvement of the civil as well

[63] In the 1826 Missionary Register, the word 'heathen' appears over one hundred times: *The Missionary Register for 1826 Containing the Principal Transactions of the Various Institutions for Propagating the Gospel: with The Proceedings at Large of the Church Missionary Society* (London, 1826).
[64] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW079/4, Stainsby to Rev. Josiah Pratt, 13 June 1825, St Thomas in the East, Jamaica.
[65] HC Deb. (2nd series), 16 March 1824 (vol. 10, cols 1091–198).
[66] Matthew Blake Strickland, '"The Protection of Slaves and Other Property": An Anglican Minister, Criminal Charges, and White Planters' Fear of Emancipation in Barbados', *Journal of Caribbean History* 5 (2021), 151–75, at 154–5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

as the moral condition of the Negroes in the West India Colonies.'[67] The committee praised The Conversion Society 'for their exertions in engaging Clergymen of the Established Church, to cooperate with the Clergy of the Colonies in promoting the object of their Institution.'[68] Subsequently, the committee offered a contribution of £1,000 to the Society, accompanied by donations from associations in Liverpool and Glasgow of £100.[69] The Conversion Society sought to 'secure an immediate application of the contributions' – that is, use of this money – by increasing the number of its clergy.[70]

The Conversion Society stressed its need for the support of the plantocracy. The 1823 report recognized that 'where the right of the Master over the services of the Slave is absolute, it is next to impossible to attempt the work of conversion on the latter without the aid of the former.'[71] Moreover, the Society promoted itself at the Colonial Associations in London in order to collect subscriptions and donations.[72] This initiative was successful, and by 1824, the Society's governors included prominent planters such as Henry Goulburn, Henry William Martin Bart, George Hibbert and Charles Rose Ellis. Their support generated a sense of 'satisfaction' that the Society 'had the support of the highest rank in both Church and state; as well as by several of the most considerable of the West India Proprietors.'[73]

Moreover, an analysis of subscribers and donors to The Conversion Society in the 1824 annual report demonstrates that fundraising efforts in 1823 had targeted and successfully gained the support of those invested in slavery more widely. By cross-referencing annual subscribers and one-time donors to the Conversion Society with the *Legacies of British Slavery Database,* the strong involvement of these individuals in transatlantic enslavement is revealed. Half (108

[67] The Conversion Society, *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negroe Slaves in the British West India Islands, from July to December 1823* (London, 1824), 7.
[68] Ibid. 7.
[69] Katie Donington, *The Bonds of Family: Slavery, Commerce and Culture in the British Atlantic World* (Manchester, 2019), 140.
[70] The Conversion Society, *Report of the Incorporated Society,* 9.
[71] Ibid. 6.
[72] Ibid. 39.
[73] The Conversion Society, *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negro Slaves in the British West India Islands for the Year 1824* (London, 1825), 6.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

out of 215) of all donors and subscribers had connections to transatlantic slavery. The majority of these were either merchants or enslavers (42/108 were West India merchants, and 84/108 were enslavers).[74] The Conversion Society thus saw a significant level of financial support from merchants, enslavers and those with other connections to transatlantic slavery. While donors could have faith that, as an Anglican society, it would not 'corrupt the minds' of enslaved people, the Society's reliance on donors' financial aid also incentivized it against acting in opposition to enslavers' interests, perpetuating its own form of a pro-slavery Christianity.[75]

Support from the plantocracy became similarly central to the CMS in Jamaica. In an attempt to increase and monitor religious instruction in the Caribbean, George Canning's proposals had resulted in the establishing of two bishoprics in the Anglophone Caribbean in 1824.[76] Christopher Lipscombe was appointed to Jamaica; William Hart Coleridge to Barbados.[77] The bishops were expected to coordinate the work of clergy and missionaries across the Caribbean in policies of religious education and, ultimately, to supervise them.[78] However, their introduction, and their attempts to exercise control over the type of religious instruction given, caused conflict with missionaries employed by both The Conversion Society and the CMS.[79] Olwyn Blouet has argued that, generally, 'Lipscombe was reluctant to promote slave education.'[80] This was because he was 'primarily concerned with the status of the

[74] The names of donors and subscribers are taken from The Conversion Society, *Report of the Incorporated Society for the Conversion and Religious Instruction of Negro Slaves, July to December 1823* (London, 1824), 63–76. The names were entered into the *Legacies of British Slavery Database*. Once a reference was found, the *type* of appearance in the database was noted (owner, joint-owner, tenant-for life, etc.) These categories are listed on the *Legacies of British Slavery* website, at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/>, accessed 27 October 2022. The author is grateful to Keith McClelland (UCL) for his assistance in designing the database to compile this information.

[75] HL Deb. (2nd series), 16 March 1824 (vol. 10, col. 10467).

[76] Auxiliaries were also founded in St Kitts and Nevis, but no subscription records remain: Turner, 'The Bishop of Jamaica', 366.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Olwyn. M. Blouet, 'Earning and Learning in the British West Indies: An Image of Freedom in the Pre-Emancipation Decade, 1823–1833', *HistJ* 34 (1991), 391–409, at 395.

[79] James Curtin, the first missionary for The Conversion Society, frequently complained of Lipscombe's abandonment of him: LPL, FP Howley 3, 1–24, 31–4.

[80] Blouet, 'Slavery and Freedom', 630.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Church.'[81] Emphasis was placed on building churches, and in 1826 he consecrated the first new church built in Jamaica since his arrival.[82] By 1831, there were forty-six churches in Jamaica and seven chapels.[83] The focus on church-building, rather than providing religious instruction directly, meant that Lipscombe had a difficult relationship with missionaries. For example, from 1823, curates sent by the CMS were instructed to avoid any involvement in internal political matters due to Lipscombe's aim of keeping missionaries 'in strict subordination to the established clergy'.[84] Lipscombe refused to license multiple CMS catechists, seeing them as a threat to his authority in the Caribbean.[85] Stainsby noticed this and reported that the CMS were 'at present in bad odour with the Government here.' This again was due to tensions between 'the committee and the bishop.'[86]

This conflict eventually resulted in the creation of an auxiliary committee of the CMS, known as the Jamaican Auxiliary for the Church Missionary Society (JCMS), of which Stainsby became secretary.[87] In a letter written in July 1828 to Dandeson Coates, Assistant Secretary of the CMS (1828–30), James Wildman, a wealthy enslaver, discussed the need for extra funds to support new catechists and assistants.[88] He wrote:

> That it would be a most beneficial arrangement if a 'Jamaica Fund' were formed by the Society and by its several auxiliaries in Great Britain as it is highly probable that besides persons who support the Church Missionary Society, many West Indians and those who do not enter into the views of the Society would readily contribute to the amelioration of the spiritual slavery of the negro.[89]

[81] Turner, 'The Bishop of Jamaica', 369.
[82] Ellis, *The Diocese of Jamaica,* 65.
[83] TNA, CO 137/270, Comparative View of the Ecclesiastical Establishment, 1 Jan. 1831.
[84] Turner, 'The Bishop of Jamaica', 374.
[85] Ibid.
[86] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/O79/7, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 31 July 1830, St John's, Jamaica.
[87] By 1827, Stainsby's salary had increased to £215 annually from The Conversion Society; however, this is the last recorded salary for him: York, BIA, CFS/6 1827.
[88] Dandeson Coates became secretary for the CMS in 1830. For more on the JCMS, see Dunkley, *Agency of the Enslaved,* 53–94.
[89] CRL, CMS/B/OMS/CW/091, James Beckford Wildman to Dandeson Coates, 18 July 1828.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

To encourage donations from British auxiliaries to the 'Jamaica Fund' for the provision of ministers, schoolmasters and catechists, the Rev. John McCammon Trew produced a pamphlet entitled 'A Few Simple Facts for the Friends of the Negro.'[90] Printed in Bristol, it sought to convince the British public to donate to the Jamaican Auxiliary of CMS.[91] The pamphlet sought to tap into appeals for amelioration by highlighting the supposed 'domestic tranquillity' of enslaved people following the Society's implementation of religious education.[92] It endeavoured to show 'the practical benefits likely to result both to the Master and to the Slave from the dissemination of Christianity among the latter.'[93] This openly identified the main target audience of the pamphlet as enslavers. In its final paragraphs the pamphlet asked:

> Is it not a duty incumbent on every Christian, but more especially in every West Indian Proprietor, as well as on every individual who participates in the least degree in any temporal advantage resulting from the labour of the slave, to assist in bringing him into a state of salvation through the Gospel? Surely it is.[94]

In both fundraising attempts, the JCMS exploited desires for amelioration by promoting to proprietors the perceived 'practical and spiritual benefits' of religious instruction.[95] By 1829, of the twenty-six leading members of the JCMS, twenty-one were enslavers, including the president, James Wildman, and the vice-presidents, the Rev. John McCammon Trew, William Stirling, William Stothert, Arthur Foulks, Archibald Sterling and James Miller.[96] John Stainsby was a secretary for the auxiliary alongside William Taylor and Richard Quarrell. Hence, by the late 1820s, both The Conversion Society and the JCMS relied on the financial support of the plantocracy, and also on their support in terms of access to allow them to carry out their missions. Accordingly, missionaries such as Stainsby became

[90] Ibid.
[91] Church Missionary Society, *A Few Simple Facts for the Friends of the Negro* (Bristol, 1828).
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] *Proceedings of the Jamaica Auxiliary Church Missionary Society, 1828 & 1829, Containing the first Report of the Committee* (Kingston, Jamaica, 1830), 3–7.
[96] Ibid.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

even more inclined to align themselves with the plantocracy's vision of a Christian slave-society.

Censored Missionary Material

Due to the missionary societies' reliance on support from the West India Interest, material used in the instruction of enslaved people was heavily censored. It consisted of Scripture redacted by Anglican missionary societies to render it 'suitable' for enslaved people's consumption and acceptable to enslavers. Clergy, catechists and teachers could only read or teach from books which the bishop of Jamaica had approved.[97] Stainsby frequently wrote to both the CMS and The Conversion Society requesting such approved books,[98] which included 'Child's First Books,' sermons and spelling books.[99] In a letter to the CMS in 1829, Stainsby reported that the bishop of Jamaica had granted CMS catechists the authority to 'read prayers according to the rubric of formal service,' while clergy could only teach from books given approval by the bishop which were 'authorized writings of the Church,' including, for example, William Marshall Harte's lectures.[100] Indeed, in 1830, Stainsby recommended to the CMS that, to correspond with the bishop of Jamaica's wishes, Robert Dallas's instruction on an estate in Spanish Town should be 'oral only', due to the fears associated with a literate enslaved population.[101] Similarly, the CMS provided a prayer 'to be used every morning on a plantation' by enslaved people, which they stated had been 'recommended by the Bishop.'[102] The prayer echoed sentiments of enslavers and overseers, including a criticism of 'precious time

[97] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW079/6, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 16 May 1829, Papine Estate, Jamaica.
[98] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW079/8, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 10 June 1830, Manchester, Jamaica.
[99] LPL, CFS/G/3, 74. This list also included 'Harte's Lectures'. In 1826, both Stainsby and Lipscombe had fifty copies of *Harte's Lectures* sent to them. They were written by William Marshall Harte, a clergyman stationed in Barbados, and first published in 1822. Harte eventually became embroiled in a controversy over the content of his preaching. See Strickland, 'The Protection of Slaves', 163–4.
[100] CRL, CMS/B/OMS, CW/079/6, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 16 March 1829, Papine Estate, Jamaica.
[101] CRL, CMS/B/OMS CW/O79/9, Stainsby to Dandeson Coates, 24 August 1830, St John's, Jamaica. Emphasis original.
[102] CRL, CW/011/2, Original papers, 1827.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

misspent' and a focus on an 'all-seeing God'.[103] As articulated in this prayer, the motivations of Anglican missionary societies appeared synonymous with those of the planters.

The most provocative learning tool for the plantocracy, however, was the Bible. John Coffey has demonstrated planters' fears regarding literacy and freedom, that if enslaved people could read the Bible then passages that did not support enslavement and which upheld total equality could be learnt and understood.[104] As early as 1807, The Conversion Society fostered a resolution to this problem by commissioning 'The Slave Bible', a version which was designed to be used exclusively by missionaries to teach enslaved people about Christianity and to encourage conversion. Under the guidance of Beilby Porteus, the Bible was edited down for 'simplicity' and Porteus gathered select portions of Scripture which 'related to the duties of slaves towards their masters.'[105]

The Slave Bible eradicated crucial passages. This included Galatians 3: 28–9: 'There is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' [AV].[106] In this attempt to eliminate all verses that could potentially 'result in rebellion,' around ninety per cent of the Old Testament and fifty per cent of the New Testament was removed. Psalms from the Authorized Version of the Bible, which 'expressed hopes for God's delivery from oppression,' were absent. In the Old Testament, the Book of Exodus excluded the story of the Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt, but did include the delivery of the Ten Commandments.[107] The Slave Bible promoted an 'Exhortation to Obedience.'[108]

[103] Ibid.
[104] Kazim Bacchus, 'Education and Society Among the Non-whites in the West Indies Prior to Emancipation', *History of Education* 19 (1990), 85–104, at 95. Compare also John Coffey, '"A bad and dangerous book"? The Biblical Identity Politics of the Demerara Slave Rebellion', in Gareth Atkins, Shinjini Das and Brian H. Murray, eds, *Chosen Peoples: The Bible, Race and Empire in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Manchester, 2020), 29–54; and Inge Dornan, 'Conversion and Curriculum: Nonconformist Missionaries and the British and Foreign School Society in the British West Indies, Africa and India, 1800–50,' in Morwenna Ludlow, Charlotte Methuen and Andrew Spicer, eds, *Churches and Education*, SCH 55 (Cambridge, 2019), 410–25.
[105] The Conversion Society, *The Negro Bible – The Slave Bible – Select Parts of the Holy Bible for the Use of the Negro Slaves of the British West India Islands,* ed. Joseph Lumpkin (Blountsville, AL, 2019), vii.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Ibid. viii.
[108] Ashleigh Elser, 'Reformations in Reading: Short Bibles and the Aesthetics of Abridgement,' *Journal of Religion & Society* 18 (2019), 119–34, at 128.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

According to Peter Cruchley, the Slave Bible represents The Conversion Society's attempt to 'save without changing.'[109] The text certainly represents a remarkable example of the Church of England's overt manipulation of Scripture to appease planters. This, alongside the material permitted and recommended by the CMS and The Conversion Society, ensured that they were appropriate for enslavers' model of religious instruction in the 1820s. By censoring material provided for use by enslaved people, and restricting literate instruction, missionaries bowed to planters' fears of a literate enslaved population.[110]

Stainsby as an Enslaver

It has been seen that Stainsby engaged in hypocrisy and dissimulation to appease the plantocracy and the Anglican missionary societies who employed him, and that he, to some extent, recognized his own insincerity. However, there was one aspect of Stainsby's life in which he would not have been considered insincere: his position as an enslaver. Anglican missionaries who owned enslaved people were not considered hypocritical by either residents or the church. Like at least thirty clergymen resident in the British Caribbean and another fifteen 'transatlantic' clergymen who spent time on both sides of the Atlantic, Stainsby was actively involved in buying and selling enslaved people.[111]

Stainsby became the owner of the enslaved people registered to him through his second marriage to Catherine King in 1821, who, since at least 1817, had been the registered owner of Somerset Hall in St Dorothy, Jamaica.[112] Somerset Hall had functioned in the eighteenth century as a sugar and rum estate, but by 1821 the estate was split into three parts, and King (and subsequently Stainsby) probably held livestock and a small number of provisions. The other two sections of Somerset Hall were owned by Catherine King's brother, Joseph King.[113]

[109] Peter Cruchley, 'Ecce Homo…? Beholding Mission's White Gaze', *Practical Theology* 15 (2022), 64–77.
[110] Bacchus, 'Education and Society', 88.
[111] Information from *Legacies of British Slavery Database*.
[112] TNA, Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves and Slave Compensation Commission, T 71/13; LPL, FP Howley 40, Stainsby to the bishop of London, Charles Blomfield, 3 August 1818, Low Coniscliffe, County Durham.
[113] John Smith, *Map of Jamaica* (London, 1844), David Rumsey Map Collection, online at: <https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/detail/RUMSEY~8~1~2777~270050:

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

An examination of colonial slave registers for Jamaica during this period makes evident both the shift in ownership from Catherine King to Stainsby, and Stainsby's later management of enslaved people. In the 1817 and 1820 registers, at least seventeen enslaved people were registered to Catherine King.[114] After her marriage to Stainsby in 1821, Stainsby became their listed owner. Between 1821 and 1823, two men, two women and two children were purchased by Stainsby, and one child, named Kitty, was born on the estate.[115] The purchased enslaved people included a family, Elizabeth (listed as Bess) with her two children, four-year-old Richard and two-year-old Bob. The same year, another family owned by Stainsby, forty-six-year-old Jenny and her four daughters, were sold to an estate in St Thomas in the East.[116] Hence, in the period immediately following Stainsby's acquiring ownership of the estate, he carried out multiple sales and purchases.

Between 1823 and 1829, another two children were born into slavery on Stainsby's estate. Stainsby sold Richard (Elizabeth's child, now aged ten) and purchased two men, William, a sixty-year-old 'African', and Charles, a twenty-year-old creole.[117] Subsequently, from 1829 to 1832, Stainsby purchased a twenty-four-year-old man named Paul Peterson, a thirteen-year-old boy named Richard, and a nine-year-old boy named John Thomas from an estate in Manchester.[118] It is likely that thirteen-year-old Richard was the same child whom Stainsby had sold three years prior. In this period, Stainsby also purchased three young women: Sarah, Fanny and Margaret; Sarah subsequently gave birth to a son, Joseph Thomas.[119] By 1832, twenty-five enslaved people were registered to Stainsby.

Between 1832 and emancipation in 1834, Stainsby purchased another eleven enslaved people, meaning that on 14 March 1836,

Map-Of-Jamaica=>, accessed 31 October 2022; 'Somerset Hill', *Legacies of British Slavery Database*, online at: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/estate/view/12679>, accessed 31 October 2022.

[114] TNA, Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves, T71/13, 48; T71/14, 126.

[115] TNA, Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves, T 71/15, 147.

[116] Ibid.

[117] TNA, Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves, T 71/16; T 71/17, 136.

[118] TNA, Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves, T 71/18, 386.

[119] Ibid.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

he received £646 18*s*. 6*d*. in compensation for thirty-six enslaved people registered to the St Dorothy estate.[120] During this period, Stainsby also apprenticed men, women and children following 1834, including Jane Stainsby and Sophia Stainsby, both about thirteen-years-old, who were listed as Stainsby's apprentices in December 1837.[121] Due to the number of people he enslaved and the nature of the land, it is likely that Stainsby's enslaved people were 'domestics' who carried out domestic chores, such as laundry and cooking, and tended a small amount of livestock, which was relatively typical for members of the middling class such as Stainsby.[122]

Since Stainsby did not write about his slave-ownership in letters or correspondence, we do not know how much influence his wife Catherine continued to have. It is necessary to look to other sources to consider how Anglican missionaries justified slave-ownership. The primary justification was the perceived differences between physical and spiritual freedom. At the formation of The Conversion Society's Bermuda branch meeting in 1829, Archdeacon Aubrey Spencer spoke of the compatibility of Christianity and slavery. Spencer stated that 'of course' he was against slavery, but that the evil was too difficult to eradicate, and thus mitigation of conditions through amelioration was sufficient.[123] Indeed, Spencer noted that even if he could eradicate slavery in a breath, he 'would not' because of enslaved people's 'present state of mental degradation,' which meant that 'liberty would be to [an enslaved person], instead of a boon and a blessing, a burden and a curse.'[124] Religious instruction could free enslaved people spiritually, thus mitigating the need for physical emancipation.

[120] TNA, Office of Registry of Colonial Slaves and Slave Compensation Commission, T71/857. The names of the enslaved people purchased in this period are unknown.
[121] *Slave Trade: Copy of the Report of Hall Pringle and Alexander Campbell, Esquires, Associate Justices of the Peace, Relatives to Certain Atrocities of Slave Trades* (House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, Paper 157, 1839), 4.
[122] Somerset Hall was not listed as a 'pen' or 'plantation'. Georgia Fox outlines the differences between 'pens' and 'plantations' in Colonial Slave Registers in Georgia L. Fox, 'The Great House', in eadem, ed., *An Archaeology and History of a Caribbean Sugar Plantation on Antigua* (Gainesville, FL, 2020), 16–32, at 29.
[123] The Conversion Society, *Report of the Incorporated Society for The Conversion and Religious Instruction and Education of the Negro Slaves in the British West India Islands for the year 1829* (London, 1829), 81–2.
[124] Ibid.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Similarly, the CMS emphasized the importance of spiritual freedom over physical freedom. During the final years of colonial slavery, the Bath auxiliary of the CMS in Britain stated that 'we trust that God designs that the deliverance of their bodies from the bonds of slavery shall be the fore runner of a deliverance which is *far more important*, the rescue of their souls from the bondage of sin and the service of Satan.'[125] Hence, Stainsby and other slave-owning Anglican missionaries would not have seen themselves as hypocrites. Firstly, because the enslavement of domestic workers was typical for the middling population in Jamaica. Secondly, they were confident that they were providing 'spiritual freedom,' which was, in their belief, superior to physical freedom.

Conclusion

Stainsby was employed by, and in correspondence with, the CMS until it withdrew from Jamaica in 1849, and he remained in Jamaica until his death in 1854.[126] In Hanover parish church, a plaque is dedicated to his memory. The memorial tablet was funded by subscriptions of the congregation who 'treasured his memory and deplored his loss.'[127] Back in Britain, Stainsby's obituary in the *Staffordshire Sentinel* recorded that 'finding Jamaica groaning under the terrible system of slavery, he took a decided part in mixing with the oppressed [slaves], whose souls it was his object to seek and save.'[128] Indeed, Stainsby's most important objective was to convert and instruct enslaved people under the guidance of the two missionary societies by which he was employed. As such, he carefully navigated plantation society in Jamaica to avoid antagonizing enslavers and stifling the mission's growth and success, and it is for his 'soul saving' that Stainsby is remembered on both sides of the Atlantic.

By consistently working to appease the plantocracy alongside the objectives of the CMS and The Conversion Society, Stainsby's actions can be defined by hypocrisy and suppression. He was required

[125] Taunton, Somerset Archives, D/P/langp/2/9/2, Minutes of the Mid-Somerset Branch of the CMS. Emphasis original.
[126] CRL, CMS/B/OMS, CWO79/15-20.
[127] Chris Bodden, 'The Historic St Mary's', *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 28 September 2013, online at: <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20130928/lead/lead7.html>, accessed 31 October 2022.
[128] *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 28 January 1854, 5.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press

to use manipulated religious material designed to restrict notions of equality and freedom, with a view to diminishing the risk of uprisings and emancipation. This included the heavily edited Slave Bible, and texts specifically written to promote obedience and servitude. Similarly, he was expected to refrain from political opinion, even when this went against his own beliefs. He frequently baptized more enslaved people than any other cleric in Jamaica despite his reservations that enslaved people were not 'ready'. Yet an element of Stainsby's life which evaded any need for his deception and avoided any claim of hypocrisy at the time was his slave-ownership. His position as an enslaver aligned completely, both with the middling population of Jamaica, and with the expectations of the Church of England, and as such, he was never questioned nor challenged on it. Stainsby was just one of many clergymen and missionaries who bought and sold enslaved people in Jamaica and across the Caribbean. Such analysis opens up further avenues for research and historical understanding: into an aspect of the Church of England's involvement in transatlantic enslavement that went far beyond religious instruction, extending to a form of pro-slavery Christianity that was carefully navigated by missionaries in the early nineteenth century.

https://doi.org/10.1017/stc.2024.14 Published online by Cambridge University Press