



Kamala Harris's Ancestors Owned Slaves, Her Father Says

Presidential hopeful's Jamaican father wrote about his slave-holding ancestor



Kamala Harris speaks on stage at 2019 ESSENCE Festival / Getty Images for ESSENCE

[Brent Scher](#) - JULY 9, 2019 4:30 PM

Sen. Kamala Harris (D., Calif.) is the descendant of an Irishman who owned a slave plantation in Jamaica, according to her father's [lengthy ancestral summary](#) of his side of the family.

Donald Harris, a Stanford University economics professor, revealed in 2018 that his grandmother was a descendant of Hamilton Brown, the namesake of [Brown's Town](#) in northern Jamaica.

"My roots go back, within my lifetime, to my paternal grandmother Miss Chrishy (née Christiana Brown, descendant of Hamilton Brown who is on record as plantation and slave owner and founder of Brown's Town)," he wrote in a post for *Jamaica Global*.

Hamilton Brown built the town's local Anglican Church, which is where Prof. Harris says his grandfather is buried. It is also where he himself was baptized and confirmed.

A [research archive](#) of Jamaican records indicate that at one point in 1817, Hamilton Brown owned scores of slaves. The majority were brought in from Africa, though he also owned many Creole slaves.

The Harris campaign has not commented on her father's claims. It did not respond to a request for comment.

NBC News [reported](#) on Monday that Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's two great-great-grandfathers owned at least 14 slaves between the two of them in Alabama. The report tied McConnell's ancestry to his position on government reparations for slavery, which he opposes.

McConnell responded to the report on Tuesday by comparing his stance to former president Barack Obama, who opposed reparations while acknowledging that some of his ancestors owned slaves.

"You know, I find myself once again in the same position as President Obama," McConnell said. "We both oppose reparations, and we both are the descendants of slaveholders."

Harris has yet to take a definitive position on reparations for slavery. When the California senator was asked in February whether she supports "some form of reparations for black people," she said she did, but was unclear on how exactly it would be paid out.

"We have to be honest that people in this country do not start from the same place or have access to the same opportunities," Harris [said](#). "I'm serious about taking an approach that would change policies and structures and make real investments in black communities."

A few weeks later she distanced her position from explicit payments to the descendants of slaves, saying she views policies aimed at lifting up the poor, such as her tax credit to low-income families, as reparations.

"If you look at the reality of who will benefit from certain policies, when you take into account that they are not starting on equal footing, it will directly benefit black children, black families, black homeowners because the disparities are so significant," Harris said.

She later told NPR that reparations "means different things to different people."

"I think that the word, the term reparations, it means different things to different people," Harris said. "But what I mean by it is that we need to study the effects of generations of discrimination

and institutional racism and determine what can be done, in terms of intervention, to correct course."

Harris has not commented on her distant slaveowner ancestry in Jamaica. Her father earlier this year said his daughter's ancestors would be "[turning in their grave](#)" if they heard her stereotype the island's people as "pot-smoking joy seekers."



Brent Scher is a staff writer for the Washington Free Beacon. He graduated from the University of Virginia, where he studied foreign affairs and politics. Prior to joining the Beacon, he worked for WTOP and the American Enterprise Institute's Political Corner. Brent is originally from New York City and now lives in Washington, D.C.

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KAMALA HARRIS' JAMAICAN HERITAGE – UPDATED – 14.01.2019

by [Jamaica Global](#) January 13, 2019



This article was updated on 14/01/2019

Any notion that California Senator Kamala Harris does not know much about, or underplays her Jamaican heritage was dispelled on a recent visit to South Florida, home to over 100,000 Jamaicans. In Miami for a fund-raiser in support of Senator Bill Nelson, she and sister Maya rubbed shoulders and posed for photos with a number of prominent Jamaican Americans,

including Mayor of the City of Miramar Wayne Messam and City of Miramar Commissioner Winston Barnes among others.

In a Facebook post after the event, Barnes effused:

‘.....very special lady and as Jamaican as they come...when I asked her where her dad was from, she says St Ann’s Bay, so I ask, what you know about St Ann’s Bay .the response?’ “How you mean man? I know there growing up.”

That’s no practiced response!



*Senator Kamala Harris and sister Maya(center) pose with fellow Jamaican – Americans in Miami
(Photo Courtesy of Commissioner Winston Barnes)*

As the presidential buzz continues to grow around the possible candidacy of California Senator Kamala Harris, interest is also growing around her little-known Jamaican heritage. Harris has been quoted as saying she is not ruling out a bid for the Democratic nomination for the 2020 presidential election but as her stocks continue to rise the last Washington

Post quarterly ranking of July 10, saw her being elevated from #4 to #3 among the possible contenders. The prospect of a woman of Jamaican heritage occupying the White House must lead a curious nation to ask: how much of an influence did her early upbringing by her Jamaican father have on the formation of her character and current world view? In this open and revealing article Donald Harris reflects on the ‘Jamaicanness’ of his daughter Kamala.

Reflections of a Jamaican Father

By

Donald J. Harris

As a child growing up in Jamaica, I often heard it said, by my parents and family friends: “membra whe yu cum fram”. To this day, I continue to retain the deep social awareness and strong sense of identity which that grassroots Jamaican philosophy fed in me. As a father, I naturally sought to develop the same sensibility in my two daughters. Born and bred in America, Kamala was the first in line to have it planted. Maya came two years later and had the advantage of an older sibling as mentor. It is for them to say truthfully now, not me, what if anything of value they carried from that early experience into adulthood. My one big regret is that they did not come to know very well the two most influential women in my life: “Miss Chrishy” and “Miss Iris” (as everybody called them). This is, in many ways, a story about these women and the heritage they gave us.

My roots go back, within my lifetime, to my paternal grandmother Miss Chrishy (née Christiana Brown, descendant of Hamilton Brown who is on record as plantation and slave owner and founder of Brown’s Town) and to my maternal grandmother Miss Iris (née Iris Finegan, farmer and educator, from Aenon Town and Inverness, ancestry unknown to me). The Harris name comes from my paternal grandfather Joseph Alexander Harris, land-owner and agricultural ‘produce’ exporter (mostly pimento or all-spice), who died in 1939 one year after I was born and is buried in the church yard of the magnificent Anglican Church which Hamilton Brown built in Brown’s Town (and where, as a child, I learned the catechism, was baptized and confirmed, and served as an acolyte).

Both of my grandmothers had the strongest influence on my early upbringing (“not to exclude, of course, the influence of my dear mother “Miss Beryl” and loving father “Maas Oscar”).

Miss Chrishy was the disciplinarian, reserved and stern in look, firm with ‘the strap’, but capable of the most endearing and genuine acts of love, affection, and care.



Miss Chrishy dressed up in her usual finery, standing in front of the home at Orange Hill, St Ann parish where I spent my early years

She sparked my interest in economics and politics simply by my observing and listening to her in her daily routine.

She owned and operated the popular 'dry-goods store' on the busy main street leading away from the famous market in the centre of Brown's Town. Every day after school, I would go to her shop to wait for the drive home to Orange Hill after she closed the shop. It was here that she was in her groove, while engaged in lively and sometimes intense conversation with all who came into the shop about issues of the day.

Business was front and centre for her, a profession and a family tradition that she embodied and carried with purpose, commitment, pride, and dignity (next to her devotion to the church that, as she often said, her ancestor built). She never paid much attention to the business of the farm at Orange Hill. Her sons took care of that side of the family business. Her constant focus was on issues that affected her business of buying and selling imported 'dry goods' as well as the cost of living, issues that required understanding and keeping up with the news – a task which she pursued with gusto. She was also fully in charge of 'domestic affairs' in our home and, of course, had raised eight children of her own at an earlier age.

There was a daily diet of politics as well. She was a great admirer of 'Busta' (Sir William Alexander Bustamante, then Chief Minister in the colonial government and leader of the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP). She claimed, with conviction and pride, to be a "Labourite" (as members of the JLP were called) and for the interesting reason that, as she argued, "labour is at the heart of everything in life". Little did I know then, what I learned later in studying economics, that my grandmother was espousing her independently discovered version of a Labour Theory of Value!

Her philanthropic side shone through every Easter and Christmas when she had my sister Enid and me package bun and cheese (a favourite Jamaican Easter fare) and other goodies in little boxes that we carried and delivered to families living in the area around our home. She died in 1951 at the age of 62. Her departure left me, then only fourteen, with a deep sense of sadness and loss.

Miss Iris, mother of eight children too, was the sweetest and gentlest person one could meet, but underneath it was a tough farming woman who ran the cane farm at Thatch Walk (near Aenon Town) jointly owned with her husband "Mr. Christie". She was always ready to go to church on Sunday to preach and teach about the "Revelations" she saw approaching the world at that time (during and after World War II) in accord with the Bible.

I spent summers with her, roaming around the cane field, fascinated by the mechanical operation of cane 'juicing' by the old method (a wooden pole extended out from the grinding machine and tied to a mule walking round and round to grind the cane), and eager to drink a cup of the juice caught directly from the juice flowing into the vat to be boiled and crystallized as 'raw sugar'. No Coke or Pepsi could beat the taste of that fresh cane juice!

It was a joy and a learning experience for me to hang out with the workers on the cane farm, see them wield a 'cutlass' (the machete) with such flourish and finesse, listen to their stories of exploits (some too x-rated for me to repeat), and sit with them as they prepared their meal by putting

everything in one big 'Dutch' pot, cooking it over an open fire in the field and serving it out on a big banana leaf for all of us to eat sitting there.

Looking back now I can say, with certainty and all due credit to Miss Iris, that it was this early intimate exposure to operation of the sugar industry at the local level of small-scale production with family labour and free wage-labour, coupled with my growing curiosity about how these things came to be, that led me, once I started reading about the history of Jamaica, to a closer study of the sugar industry. I came then to understand its origin as a system of global production and commerce, based on slave labour, with Jamaica as a key component of that system from its very start.

Miss Iris died in 1981 at the grand old age of 93 and I grieved over the loss of someone so dear and close to me. She is shown here in photo (taken by me in 1966), just back from church, proudly holding in her lap little Kamala, and confident in her firm prediction even then of the future achievements of her great-granddaughter (after giving her 'blessings' by making a cross with her finger on the child's forehead).



Miss Iris with great Granddaughter Kamala

From the start, I strived to retrace for my children the path on which I had traveled: from Miss Judah's primary school at Top Road in Brown's Town to Park School 'Elementary' just around the

corner, to Titchfield High in Port Antonio, to University College of the West Indies (UCWI) then to Berkeley where Kamala was born, to Illinois where Maya was born, and subsequently to Cambridge University, Wisconsin, Yale, and Stanford.

Throughout this retracing, my message to them, from the lessons I had learned along the way, was that the sky is the limit on what one can achieve with effort and determination and that, in this process, it is important not to lose sight of those who get left behind by social neglect or abuse and lack of access to resources or 'privilege'; also not to get 'swell-headed' (a favourite expression and command of Miss Chrishy); and that it is important to 'give back' with service to some greater cause than oneself.

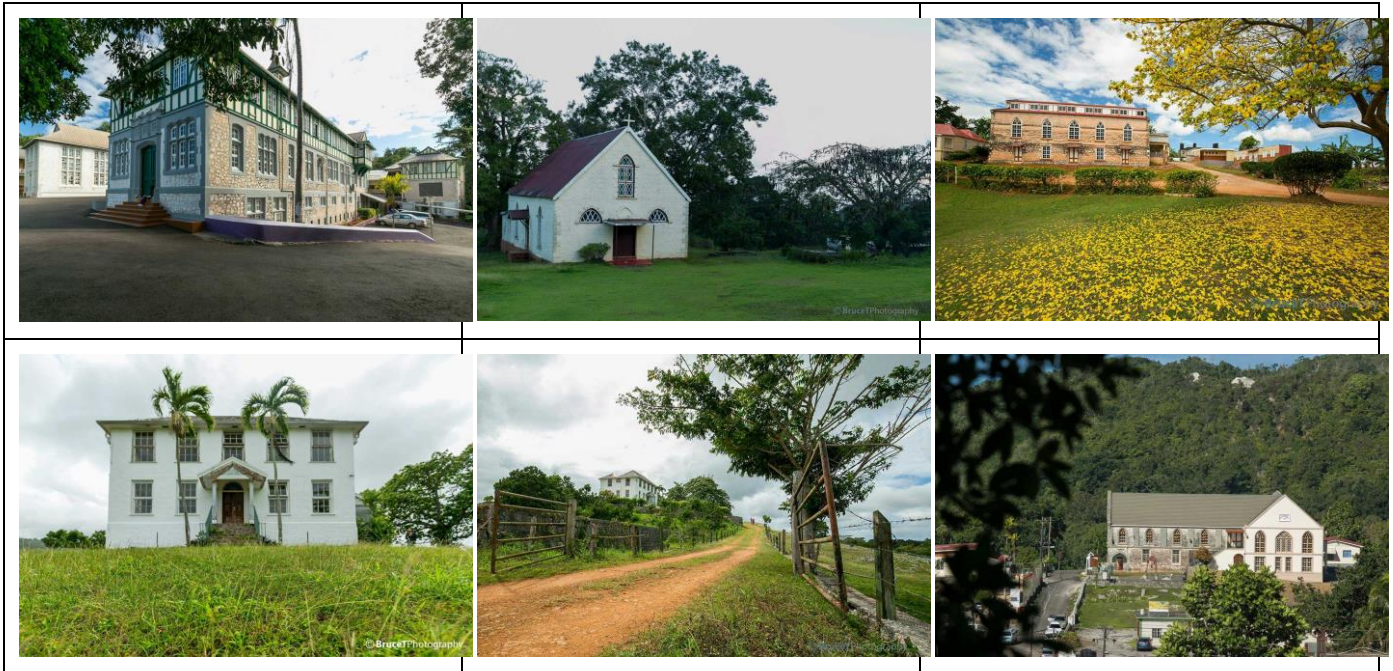
DONALD HARRIS

Experiencing their Jamaican heritage

In their early years, I tried to convey this message in very concrete terms, through frequent visits to Jamaica and engaging life there in all its richness and complexity. In Brown's Town, we walked the streets during 'market day', chatted up the 'higglers' in the market and were rewarded with plenty of 'brawta' (Jamaican word for bonus offerings) in naseberries, mangoes and guinep after each purchase. We checked out the location of the old Park School which had become transformed into Brown's Town Comprehensive High School, strolled into St. Mark's Church and graveyard, and traversed the road up the hill to Orange Hill where my uncle Newton had taken over the family property and started a limestone mining and brick producing operation in addition to the cattle, grass, fruit and pimento farming of earlier times.

Images of Brown's Town courtesy of Bruce T Photography





We drove up to Thatch Walk and worked our way, with lots of cuts and bruises, through the same cane fields where Miss Iris had run a thriving business in the 'good ole days' of sugar and, a long time before, had probably been part of a slave plantation. We played around on the lovely white sand of the beach at Dry Harbour and in the forceful but soothing waters of the world famous Dunns River Falls.

In Kingston, we visited the campus of the former UCWI, today The University of the West Indies ranked in the top 5% of world universities (in my role then as member of the faculty) to view its remarkable physical setting in the misty morning light, the buildings comfortably spread out over the vast lands of the Mona Commons and against the imposing backdrop of the Blue Mountains. In Port Antonio we visited my high school alma mater at Titchfield, still sitting there (as a powerful symbol of the privileged system of education that existed before the progressive reforms of the Manley era) at the end of the little peninsula overlooking Navy Island and in the historic setting of an ancient battery and cannons pointed out to sea to defend the harbour. We trekked over to the ruins at 'Folly', and to the 'Blue Hole', and took a swim at the exquisite little beach tucked away in a little cove at Fairy Hill.



Map of Jamaica

f course, in later years, when they were more mature to understand, I would also try to explain to them the contradictions of economic and social life in a 'poor' country, like the striking juxtaposition of extreme poverty and extreme wealth, while working hard myself with the government of Jamaica to design a plan and appropriate policies to do something about those conditions. The [National Industrial Policy](#) promulgated by the Government of Jamaica in 1996 and the [Growth Inducement Strategy](#) of 2011 were the outcome of that continued effort.

Now, far away in the diaspora in 2018, one of the most vivid and fondest memories I have of that early period with my children is of the visit we made in 1970 to Orange Hill. We trudged through the cow dung and rusted iron gates, up-hill and down-hill, along narrow unkempt paths, to the very end of the family property, all in my eagerness to show to the girls the terrain over which I had wandered daily for hours as a boy (with Miss Chrishy hollering in the distance: "yu better cum home now, bwoy, or else!").

Upon reaching the top of a little hill that opened much of that terrain to our full view, Kamala, ever the adventurous and assertive one, suddenly broke from the pack, leaving behind Maya the more cautious one, and took off like a gazelle in Serengeti, leaping over rocks and shrubs and fallen branches, in utter joy and unleashed curiosity, to explore that same enticing terrain. I quickly followed her with my trusted *Canon Super Eight* movie camera to record the moment (in my usual role as cameraman for every occasion). I couldn't help thinking there and then: What a moment of exciting *rediscovery* being handed over from one generation to another!

This early phase of interaction with my children came to an abrupt halt in 1972 when, after a hard-fought custody battle in the family court of Oakland, California, the context of the relationship was placed within arbitrary limits imposed by a court-ordered divorce settlement based on the false assumption by the State of California that fathers cannot handle parenting (especially in the case of this father, "a neegroe from da eyelans" was the Yankee stereotype, who might just end up eating his children for breakfast!). Nevertheless, I persisted, never giving up on my love for my children or reneging on my responsibilities as their father.

So, here we are now

All grown up now, Kamala is carving a way for herself in America and Meena is doing the same by her own route (as is her mother Maya). Not to be ignored is little Amara, the first of my two great-granddaughters.



In this Photo I am holding her lovingly and joyfully in my lap, and having there perhaps the same thoughts and expectations about her as Miss Iris might have had about little Kamala on that day, half a century ago, when she held her in her lap. Thus, the cycle continues.

The cycle of history repeats itself in remarkable ways, small and large, across the generations of us Jamaicans, though we may be scattered around in the diaspora and far away from home where it all started. It is up to each generation to play its part, using well the legacy it inherits from the previous generation, so as to leave behind something of value for those who follow.

Donald J. Harris

Professor of Economics, Emeritus, Stanford University, Stanford, California

September 26, 2018

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Kamala Harris Fact File

- **Born October 20, 1964**
- **Graduated from Howard University and Hastings Law School UCLA**
- **Elected 32nd Attorney General in California (2011-2017) – First black woman to be so elected**
- **Elected US Senator in California in 2017 – First ever Female Senator of Jamaican descent; first black Senator in California and second black woman to be elected to the US Senate**
- **Dubbed by the media as “the female Obama”, President Obama once described her as being not only brilliant, dedicated and tough but (who) “also happens to be, by far, the best looking Attorney General in the country.”**
- **Fights for middle class families; children; education; environmental protection; seniors and immigrant communities**
- **Has been President Trump’s most strident critic inside and outside the Senate**
- **Made current US Attorney General Sessions complain that her persistent questioning at his Senate confirmation hearings “made him nervous”.**

- **Led the campaign against the confirmation of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh immediately his nomination was announced**

Notable Kamala Harris quotes

“In order to find balance, I feel very strongly about two things in particular in terms of routine; Work out and eat well”

And this to young women:

“You’ve got to work out. It has nothing to do with your weight. It’s about your mind.”

TRACKING KAMALA HARRIS ALL THE WAY TO THE WHITE HOUSE

She may not have formally declared her intention to make a bid for the Democratic Party nomination for the 2020 Presidential election but this week, Kamala Harris gave the clearest indication yet that she intends to throw her hat into the ring as a contender. **Latest reports set the date as January 21, Martin Luther King Day.**

She not only began the week by launching a book tour and media blitz to herald the publication of her second book ***The Truths We Hold: An American Journey***, she also boldly declared on ABC’s show “The View” that the US was “absolutely” ready for a woman of colour to be President. Ms. Harris was clearly NOT referring to Elizabeth Warren who recently announced that she was launching an exploratory committee to run for the White House. As the only woman of colour in the picture, Kamala Harris must have been referring to herself. At the same time, she was clever enough to deflect any direct reference to herself by suggesting to her interviewer that she was referring to the sophistication of the American public in making the right choice based on a candidate’s abilities rather than gender or colour. As for the timing of the publication of her book, John Diaz of the *San Francisco Chronicle* observes:



“ The release of the book on the cusp of her expected plunge into the 2020 presidential race is no coincidence”. Diaz continues: “ A pre-candidacy memoir is essential not only to introduce oneself to the relatively limited pool of voters who do their own due diligence, but to provide a baseline of facts and a suggested narrative for commentators and profile writers who will be shaping public perceptions about the contenders.” He is convinced she has begun her run for 2020.

And in a review of the book for NPR, Daniele Kurtzleben says Harris presents herself as a potentially formidable candidate which is to say she efficiently makes her case like the prosecutor she is.

But if action speaks louder than words there are other clear signs that Harris is preparing herself for a run at the nomination. She recently closed down her state campaign committee “Harris for Governor 2026” and although observers are convinced that she had no real intention to enter the California gubernatorial race at any stage, she is strategically redistributing funds collected to various state organizations in advance of

California's state caucus which has been brought forward to March. In 2018, she was very active in travelling to crucial primary states like Florida, Iowa and South Carolina to help boost Democratic party candidates running in mid-term elections and her Political Action Committee (PAC) raised over \$2.4 million in support of candidates.



Kamala Harris

There are still nagging questions that the latest Harris memoir fails to answer. As her reviewer says the book “reads as a memoir –but-not-really. Harris does tell her life story but she uses it as a vehicle for telling us what she really wants us to know about her”. Apparently there is much ado about her growing up and relationship with her mother. Jamaicans will be anxious to find out what she has to say about her Jamaican heritage and her relationship with her father!

See Also: A JAMAICAN ON THE WAY TO THE WHITE HOUSE AS KAMALA HARRIS FORMALLY DECLARES HER CANDIDACY

See Also: TRACKING KAMALA HARRIS ALL THE WAY TO THE WHITE HOUSE

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Brown's Town



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Brown's Town - 6 miles south of [Discovery Bay](#)

A visit to Brown's Town in St. Ann is a great way to see a genuine Jamaican market town. Brown's Town is one of the most important and biggest inland town in St Ann, it market attracts farmers and vendors from all over the surrounding Blue Harbour Mountains and further afield. It is best to visit on market days (Wednesday, Friday or Saturday) to see the town at its liveliest.

In addition to the market, Brown's Town is famous for its range of educational institutions. The Brown's Town Community College offers tertiary courses from the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the University of Technology (UTech) and three well regarded secondary schools.

Hamilton Brown

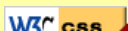
Brown's Town is named after its founder, Hamilton Brown. Hamilton Brown was an eccentric Irishman who owned a lot of land in rural St. Ann Parish. Although Brown was well respected in his community he also made a lot of enemies

One of Brown's contributions to the town was to finance the construction of the St Mark's Anglican Church. However, he abhorred the work of the Baptists and missionaries and is alleged to have orchestrated the burning-down of Baptist churches and free slave villages.

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St. Ann Parish



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Discovery Bay



Brown's Town

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EXCERPTS FROM THE SLAVE REGISTERS

NATIONAL ARCHIVES, LONDON

CONTRIBUTED by Jeanne A. Smith, MD

The National Archives in London, (also known as the Public Record Office), is the repository for numerous records concerning the West Indies, and Jamaica in particular. These records include wills, manumissions, correspondence, proclamations, slave registers and other transactions. I had the opportunity recently to visit the archives and review a small portion of the myriad records which they have. My interest was in tracing my ancestors back to the slavery days thus I was particularly interested in the Slave registers (T71 series).

I also looked at the Colonial Office correspondence related to apprenticeships, (the compulsory period of service which followed the abolition of slavery in 1834) and found in CO137/231-232 a series entitled "Despatches Apprentices 1838". The proclamation which follows advises the former slaves that the period of apprenticeship would end in 1838 instead of 1840. Readers of the history of slavery in the West Indies know that many of the islands did not enforce the requirement for an apprenticeship, considering it impractical and unenforceable. The Jamaican planters insisted on an apprenticeship period, but soon discovered that it was unmanageable, and thus the legislation to end the apprenticeship in August 1838, although one would never know from this proclamation that there had been any problems¹.

A complete catalogue of Public Record Office holdings, plus information on getting to and using this wonderful facility can be found at www.PRO.gov.uk

¹ Hart Richard, *Slaves who Abolished Slavery, Blacks in Rebellion* University of the West Indies Press 1985

JAMAICA, ss

A P R O C L A M A T I O N

By his Excellency Sir LIONEL SMITH, Knight commander of the most honorable military order of the Bath, Knight grand cross of the Royal Hanoverian order, a Lieutenant-General in her Majesty's land forces, and Colonel of the Fortieth Regiment of Foot, Captain-General, Governor-in-chief, and Commander of the forces in and over Her Majesty's Island of Jamaica, and other territories thereon depending in America, Chancellor and Vice-Admiral of the same.

PRAEDIAL APPRENTICES

IN a few days more you will all become FREE LABOURERS the legislature of the island having relinquished the remaining two years of your apprenticeship

The 1st of August next is the happy day when you will become free under the same laws as other freemen whether white, black or coloured.

I, your GOVERNOR give you joy of this great blessing.

Remember that in freedom you will have to depend on your own exertions for your livelihood, and to maintain and bring up your families, You will work for such wages as you can agree upon with your employers.

It is their interest to treat you fairly

It is your interest to be civil, respectful, and industrious.

Where you can agree and continue happy with your old masters, I strongly recommend you to remain on those properties on which you have been born, and where your parents are buried.

But you must not mistake, in supposing that your present houses, gardens, or provision grounds, are your own property

They belong to the proprietors of the estates, and you will have to pay rent for them in money or labor, according as you and your employers may agree together.

Idle people who will not take employment, but go wandering about the country, will be taken up as vagrants, and punished in the same manner as they are in England.

The ministers of religion have been kind friends to you; listen to them; they will keep you out of troubles and difficulties.

Recollect what is expected of you by the people of England, who have paid such a large price for your liberty.

They not only expect that you will behave yourselves as THE QUEEN'S good Subjects, by obeying the laws, as I am happy to say you always have done as apprentices; but that the prosperity of the island will be increased by your willing labour greatly beyond what it ever was in slavery. Be honest towards all men; Be kind to your wives and children spare your wives from heavy field work as much as you can; make them attend to their duties at home, in bringing up your children, and in taking care of your stock; above all, make your children attend divine service and school.

If you follow this advice, you will, under God's blessing be happy and prosperous.

Given under my hand and seal at arms, at St Jago de La Vega, this ninth day of July in the First year of her majesty's reign, Annoque Domini, 1838

LIONEL SMITH

By his Excellency's command

C. H. DARLING, Sec

The British Parliament abolished the slave trade in 1807². But soon recognized that transport of slaves from Africa to the Americas was still continuing. In an effort to enforce the prohibition on importation/purchase of new slaves, the slave registration system was devised. Beginning in 1817 plantation owners were required to list by name, color, age, place of birth all slaves on their plantation³. In subsequent years, (1823, 1826, 1829, 1832 and 1834), the reports consisted mainly of births, deaths, runaways and manumissions.

Unfortunately, most registers which I have seen list the vast majority of slaves by a single (first) name only, do not recognize marriages at all, and give mother's name (never father's) only for children. Generally, surnames do not appear and must have been obtained only when freedom, or perhaps baptism occurred. African refers to born in Africa, and creole refers to born in Jamaica. In the colour column, most individuals are listed as Negro, or

Black. There are a few Mulattos, and Sambos. The other categories (Octaroon, Quadroon, etc.) do not appear to have been used much, if at all.

These records are difficult to use by themselves. But if used together with manumission records, early baptism and marriage records, other records, and even the wills of plantation owners it may be possible to find some of one's ancestors.

The four slave registers which follow are for the year 1817 for plantations in the parish of Saint Ann owned by Hamilton Brown (2), Sarah Duncan (1), and Angus Campbell (1). Hamilton Brown owned several plantations over the years 1817 to about 1845. According to the 1818 Almanac which can be found on this site, (Jamaican Family Search), he was the owner of Minard (128 slaves) which he must have acquired from its previous owner (John Bailie) in 1815 or later. The number of slaves on this estate approximates the number of slaves in one of the registers attributed to his ownership (124 slaves). The other register (86 slaves) cannot be assigned to any estate, although he is listed in Almanacs for subsequent years as owning several, (Antrim, Grier Park, Colliston, Little River, Retirement and Unity Valley).

Angus Campbell owned Lime-Tree Garden with James Campbell according to the 1809 Almanac. By the time of publication of the 1815 Almanac James had died and Angus is listed as having 39 slaves.

This fits well with the 1817 slave register report which lists 40 slaves. He apparently dies by 1818 when the Almanac lists his estate as including another piece of property, Cottage, with 15 slaves.

All four returns were found in T71/43

An index to the returns is in T71/43

² Williams, Eric, "From Columbus to Castro The History of the Carribean." Random House, New York, 1970

³Grannum, Guy, "Tracing Your West Indian Ancestors." Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, London, 2002

PAGE 88

Jamaica SS

A return of slaves in the parish of Saint Ann in the possession of Hamilton Brown as owner on the 28th day of June 1n the year of our lord 1817

NAMES				
Names of all Males to precede names of females	Colour	Age	African or creole	Remarks
<u>MALES</u>				
1 Apollo	Negro	45	African	-
2 Jein	Negro	40	African	-
3 Sambo	Negro	40	African	-
4 Cicero	Negro	30	African	-
5 St???e	Negro	45	African	-
6 Chance	Negro	44	African	-

7 Clendin	Negro	42	African	-
8 Jamaica	Negro	32	African	-
9 Apollo	Negro	32	African	-
10 Montague	Negro	38	African	-
11 Jack	Negro	30	African	-
12 Mark	Negro	32	African	-
13 Ned	Negro	36	African	-
14 Sharper	Negro	40	African	-
15 Ceasar	Negro	38	African	-
16 John	Negro	30	African	-
17 Charles	Negro	35	African	-
18 Oxford	Negro	35	African	-
19 Hannibal	Negro	32	African	-
20 ??ill	Negro	30	African	-
21 Dick	Negro	35	African	-
22 Duke	Negro	32	African	-
23 Nelson	Negro	34	African	-
24 Robert	Negro	30	African	-
25 George	Negro	35	African	-
26 Prince	Negro	40	African	-
27 Henry	Negro	38	African	-
28 Hamilton	Negro	28	African	4
29 Tom Jack	Negro	40	African	-
30 Neal	Negro	34	African	-
31 Luke	Negro	28	African	-
32 Bel	Negro	25	African	-
33 ?????	Negro	33	African	-
34-39 missing	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	PAGE 89	-
40 Charles	Negro	16	Creole	-
41 London	Negro	11	Creole	-
42 Nelson	Negro	10	Creole	son of Juddy
43 Jamaica	Negro	10	Creole	son of Evey
44 ?Seny	Negro	8	Creole	son of Juddy
45 Virgil	Negro	8	Creole	son of Love
46 Tom	Negro	4	Creole	son of Juddy
47 Joab	Negro	3	Creole	son of Lucky
48 Harper	Negro	3	Creole	son of Love
49 Jack	Negro	2	Creole	son of Lucy
50 James	Negro	2	Creole	son of Tamer
51 Sambo	Negro	2	Creole	son of Evey

52 Dick	Negro	1	Creole	son of Nanny
53 Charles	Negro	1	Creole	son of Nelly
54 Hugh	Negro	5mos	Creole	son of Maria
55 Sam	Negro	4mos	Creole	son of Gift
56 George	Negro	6mos	Creole	son of Flance
FEMALES	-	-	-	-
1 Pheba	Negro	50	African	-
2 Love	Negro	42	African	-
3 Juddy	Negro	40	African	-
4 ?Floramel ?Meromel	Negro	40	African	-
5 Flora	Negro	38	African	-
6 Lucy	Negro	40	African	-
7 Maria	Negro	40	African	-
8 Laura	Negro	30	African	-
9 Evey	Negro	30	African	5
10 Olive	Negro		African	-
11 Lucky	Negro	28	African	-
12 Venus	Negro	32	African	-
13 Rachel	Negro	30	African	-
14 ?Betsy	Negro	27	African	-
15 Juliet	Negro	48	African	-
16 Hellen	Negro	40	African	-
17 Nanny	Negro	27	African	-
18 Nelly	Negro	28	African	-
19 Gift	Negro	25	African	-
20 Jeane	Negro	33	African	-
21 Milly	Negro	32	African	-
22 Industry	Negro	13	Creole	-
23 Margaret	Negro	10	Creole	Daughter of Juddy
24 Nancy	Negro	4	Creole	Daughter of Tamer
25 Mary	-	4	Creole	Daughter of Evey
-	-	-	PAGE 90	-
26 Peggy	Negro	3	Creole	Daughter of Flora
27 Sarah	Negro	2	Creole	Daughter of Nanny
28 ? Hanna	Negro	6mos	Creole	Daughter of Tamer
29 Hellen	Negro	5mos	Creole	Daughter of Milly
30 Nelly	Negro	2	Creole	Daughter of ?Floramel ? Meromel

Females 30

Total 86 Eighty Six

I Hamilton Brown do swear that the above list and return consisting of two sheets is a true perfect and complete list and return, to the best of my knowledge and belief in every particular therein mentioned of all and every slaves possessed by me as owner, considered as most permanently settled, worked and employed in the Parish of Saint Ann on the twenty Eight day of June One thousand Eight Hundred and Seventeen without fraud, deceit or evasion So help me God.

Sworn before me this twenty fourth day of September 1817

Hamilton George

J. Gordon

Jamaica SS

A Return of Slaves in the Parish of Saint Ann in the possession of Hamilton Brown as Owner on the 28th day of June in the year of our Lord 1817

PAGE 851

Names Names of all males to precede names of females	Colour	Age	African or Creole	Remarks
<u>MALES</u>	-	-	-	-
1 Sam	Negro	48	Creole	-
2 Ceasor	Negro	58	African	Runaway since Oct 1815
3 Quashy	Negro	58	Creole	-
4 Ned	Negro	50	African	-
5 Jack	Negro	40	Creole	-
6 Robert	Negro	40	Creole	Son of Salmon
7 Ceasor	Negro	38	Creole	Son of Salinda
8 London	Negro	38	Creole	-
9 Nero	Negro	36	Creole	-
10 London	Negro	34	Creole	-
11 Cuffey	Negro	32	Creole	Son of Sarah
12 Harry	Negro	35	Creole	-
13 Primus	Negro	30	Creole	-
-	-	-	Page 852	-
14 Allick	Negro	24	Creole	Son of Bennaba
15 Stepney	Negro	22	Creole	Son of Yalba
16 ? Juno	Negro	20	Creole	Son of Sinny

17 Tom	Negro	19	Creole	-
18 Sam	Negro	15	Creole	Son of Bennaba
19 Henry	Negro	14	Creole	Son of Bennaba
20 Hampshire	Negro	12	Creole	Son of Charlott
21 Smart	Negro	12	Creole	Son of Yalba
22 Edward	Negro	12	Creole	Son of Bennaba
23 John	Negro	12	Creole	Son of Catherine
24 Jack	Negro	12	Creole	-
25 Jimmy	Negro	12	Creole	Son of Venus
26 ?Smith	Negro	11	Creole	Son of Jenny
27 George	Negro	12	Creole	Son of Hannah
28 William	Negro	11	Creole	Son of Chloe 7
29 Joseph	Negro	10	Creole	Son of Venus
30 Lincoln	Negro	10	Creole	Son of Quasheba
31 George	Sambo	9 1/2	Creole	Son of Catherine
32 Patrick	Negro	8 1/2	Creole	Son of Bennaba
33 Lee	Negro	7 1/2	Creole	Son of Jenny
34 Richard	Negro	7 1/2	Creole	Son of Quasheba
35 Reston	Negro	7	Creole	Son of Hannah
36 John Trail	Negro	7	Creole	Son of Phemus
37 Richard	Negro	6 1/2	Creole	Son of Catharine
38 Frederick	Negro	6	Creole	Son of Chloe
39 Thomas	Negro	6	Creole	Son of Nanny
40 Milton	Negro	5	Creole	Son of Charlotte
41 Miller	Negro	5 1/2	Creole	Son of Phemus
42 Stephen	Negro	3 1/2	Creole	Son of Dido
43 Adam	Negro	3	Creole	Son of Charlotte
44 Rodney	Negro	2 3/4	Creole	Son of Parthenia
45 Robert	Sambo	2 1/2	Creole	Son of Dolly
46 York	Negro	2	Creole	Son of Nancy
47 William	Quadroon	1 3/4	Creole	Son of Pennie
48 Frank	Negro	1 3/4	Creole	Son of ?Tenefor
49 Edmond	Negro	4 mo	Creole	Son of Charlotte
50 Robin	Negro	1 mo	Creole	Son of Phemus
FEMALES	-	-	PAGE 853	-
1 Dido	Negro	60	African	-
2 Salinda	Negro	60	African	-
3 Fanny	Negro	50	African	-
-	-	-	PAGE	-
4 ?Haeni	Negro	46	Creole	-

5 Yelba	Negro	46	Creole	-
6 Sarah	Negro	44	Creole	-
7 Minimy	Negro	42	Creole	-
8 Phillis	Negro	42	Creole	-
9 Bessy	Negro	42	Creole	-
10 Dolly	Negro	40	Creole	8
11 Chloe	Negro	40	Creole	Runaway since 18 April
12 Jenny	Negro	40	Creole	-
13 Hannah	Negro	38	Creole	-
14 Charlotte	Negro	38	Creole	-
15 Nancy	Negro	38	Creole	-
16 Phema	Negro	36	Creole	-
17 Catherine	Negro	34	Creole	-
18 Kate	Negro	32	Creole	-
19 Benneba	Negro	32	Creole	-
20 Nelly	Negro	32	Creole	-
21 Venus	Negro	32	Creole	-
22 Dolly	Mulatto	32	Creole	-
23 Rose	Negro	30	Creole	-
24 Parthenia	Negro	28	Creole	-
25 Daphne	Negro	27	Creole	-
26 Wannica	Negro	27	Creole	-
27 Dido	Negro	23	Creole	Daughter of Chloe
28 Jane	Mulatto	25	Creole	Daughter of Chloe
29 Sally	Negro	24	Creole	Daughter of Sarah
30 Betty	Negro	24	Creole	Daughter of Charlotte
31 Violet	Negro	22	Creole	-
32 Quasheba	Negro	30	Creole	Daughter of Fanny
33 Lucinda	Negro	26	Creole	Daughter of Nanny
34 Sabina	Negro	20	Creole	Daughter of Yalba
35 Chloe	Negro	18	Creole	Daughter of Chloe
36 Queen	Negro	17	Creole	Daughter of Chloe
37 Charlotte	Negro	17	Creole	Daughter of Hannah
38 Dorinda	Negro	17	Creole	-
39 Peggy	Negro	15	Creole	Daughter of Nancy
40 Mimba	Negro	15	Creole	Daughter of Jenny
41 ??annica	Negro	14	Creole	-
42 Patience	Negro	13	Creole	-
43 Frances	Sambo	13	Creole	-
44 Nelly	Negro	13	Creole	Daughter of Sarah 9
-	-	-	PAGE 854	-

45 Nelly	Sambo	13	Creole	daughter of Kate
46 Emma	Negro	15	Creole	-
47 Harriet	Negro	15	Creole	Daughter of Charlott
48 ?Elinor	Negro	9	Creole	Daughter of Hannah
49 ?Nanny	Negro	8	Creole	Daughter of Chloe
50 Phebe	Negro	5 3/4	Creole	Daughter of Yelba
51 Mary Ann	Negro	5	Creole	Daughter of Nancy
52 ??	Negro	5	Creole	Daughter of Rose
53 Julie	Negro	5	Creole	Daughter of Parthenia
54 Eliza	Negro	8 1/2	Creole	Daughter of Charlott
55 Priscilla	Negro	8	Creole	Daughter of Nellie
56 Sarah	Negro	8 1/2	Creole	Daughter of Quasheba
57 ?Dancy	Sambo	8 1/2	Creole	-
58 ??	Quadroon	?	Creole	Daughter of Jane
59 Diana	Negro	4 3/4	Creole	Daughter of Rose
60 Lizabeth	Sambo	4 3/4	Creole	-
61 Nelly	Negro	4	Creole	Daughter of Chloe
62 Eliza	Sambo	4	Creole	Daughter of Daphne
63 Kelly	Negro	4	Creole	Daughter of Hannah
64 Harriet	Negro	3 3/4	Creole	Daughter of Quasheba
65 Nancy	Negro	2 1/2	Creole	Daughter of Catherine
66 Christmas	Sambo	2 1/4	Creole	Daughter of ?Wannica
67 Louisa	Negro	1 3/4	Creole	Daughter of Dido
68 Gracey	Negro	1 3/4	Creole	Daughter of Hannah
69 Eleanor	Negro	1 3/4	Creole	Daughter of Jenny
70 Sylvia	Negro	1	Creole	Daughter of Quasheba
71 Caroline	Negro	4m	Creole	Daughter of Parthenia
72 Libby	Quadroon	11m	Creole	Daughter of Dolly
73 ?Kelly	Negro	30	African	-
74 ???	Negro	42	Creole	-

Males 50; Females 74; Total 124 One Hundred and twenty four

I Hamilton Brown do swear that the above list and return consisting of two sheets is a true perfect and complete list and return, to the best of my knowledge and belief in every particular therein mentioned of all and every slaves possessed by me as owner, considered as most permanently settled, worked and employed in the Parish of Saint Ann on the Twenty Eight day of June One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventeen without fraud, deceit or evasion So help me God. Sworn before me this twenty fourth day of September 1817. Hamilton George

J. Gordon

Jamaica SS

A Return of slaves in the Parish of St Ann in the possession of Angus Campbell as Owner on the 2^d Day of June in the year of our Lord 1817

NAMES	Colour	Age	African or Creole	Remarks
Names of all males to precede names of females				
<u>MALES</u>	-	-	PAGE 192	-
1 Angus	Negro	35	African	-
2 Adam	Negro	40	African	-
3 Ben	Negro	35	African	-
4 Billy	Negro	18	African	-
5 Cupid	Negro	23	African	-
6 Cuffee	Negro	14	Creole	Son of Louisa
7 Wood	Negro	35	African	-
8 King	Negro	3	Creole	Son of Damsel
9 Hiram	Negro	40	African	-
10 Nelson	Negro	9	Creole	son of Louisa
-	-	-	PAGE !93	-
11 Quaco	Negro	45	African	-
12 Sam	Negro	27	African	-
13 Sandy	Negro	26	African	-
14 Samie	Negro	40	African	-
15 Sambo	Negro	25	African	-
16 Richard	Negro	30	African	-
17 Remus	Negro	17	Creole	Son of Helen
18 Rodney	Negro	4	Creole	Son of Charlotte
19 William	Negro	30	African	-
20 Boatswain	Negro	2	Creole	Son of ?Herlen
<u>FEMALES</u>	-	-	-	-
1 Charlotte	Negro	35	African	-
2 Maria	Negro	32	African	-
3 Helen	Negro	35	African	-
4 Rose	Negro	40	African	-
5 ?	Negro	40	African	-
6 Clarinda	Negro	20	African	-
7 Caroline	Negro	20	African	11
8 Susan	Negro	17	Creole	Daughter of Charlotte
9 Amelia	Negro	9	Creole	Daughter of Charlotte
10 Serena	mulatto	9	Creole	Daughter of Helen
11 Jenny	Negro	4	Creole	Daughter of Helen
12 Nelly	Negro	4	Creole	Daughter of Louisa

13 Sarah	Negro	3	Creole	Daughter of Louisa
14 Venus	Negro	12	Creole	Daughter of Maria
15 Eliza	Negro	10	Creole	Daughter of Maria
16 Rosanna	Negro	5	Creole	Daughter of Maria
17 Phillis	Negro	2	Creole	Daughter of Maria
18 Princess	Negro	8 mo	Creole	Daughter of Clarendon
19 Louisa	Negro	35	African	-
20 Rachel	Negro	3 mo	creole	Daughter of Louisa

Males 20 Twenty

Females 20 Twenty

Total 40 Forty

Jamaica SS

A Return of slaves in the parish of Saint Ann in possession of Sarah Duncan Sen~ as proprietress on the 28th day of June in the year of our Lord 1817

NAMES Names of all males to precede names of females	Colour	Age	African or Creole	Remarks
<u>MALES</u>		-	Page 347	-
Hamlet	Black	50	African	-
Brutus	ditto	45	ditto	-
Dublin	ditto	28	ditto	-
Hector	ditto	26	ditto	-
Hamlet	ditto	14	creole	Amy Wickham's son
Robert	ditto	10	ditto	Amy Wickham's son
Edwin	ditto	8	ditto	Amy Wickham's son
Page	ditto	5	ditto	Fanny's son
Strephon	ditto	3	ditto	Fanny's son
Bluker	ditto	2 mo	ditto	Fanny's son
Allick	ditto	20	ditto	Jessey's son
Hylas	ditto	17	ditto	Jessey's son
Cupid	ditto	12	ditto	Jessey's son
Adam	ditto	10	ditto	Pamela's son
Colin	ditto	7	ditto	Pamela's son
Wellington	ditto	2	ditto	Pamela's son
Shandy	ditto	8	ditto	motherless
-	-	-	Page 348	-
Wellington	Black	1	Creole	Eliza Gordon's son

William Thomas	ditto	6	ditto	Manners's son
John Thomas	ditto	3	ditto	Manners's son
FEMALES	-	-	-	-
Amy Wickham	Black	44	African	-
Fanny	ditto	22	creole	Amy Wickham's daughter
Maria	ditto	20	ditto	Amy Wickham's daughter
Sidney	ditto	16	ditto	Amy Wickham's daughter
Sarah Johnston	ditto	12	ditto	Amy Wickham's daughter
Yarrice	ditto	8	ditto	Amy Wickham's daughter
Clarinder	ditto	6	ditto	Amy Wickham's daughter
Eliza Gordon	ditto	18	ditto	-
Leah	ditto	13	ditto	-
Agnes	ditto	4	ditto	13
Emili	ditto	4	ditto	Pamela's daughter
Nany	ditto	19	ditto	-
Jenny	ditto	3	ditto	Nancy's daughter
Lilly	ditto	1	ditto	Nancy's daughter
Jessey	ditto	38	African	-
Pamela	ditto	30	ditto	-
Manners	ditto	32	ditto	-
Eliza Thomas	ditto	12	creole	Manners' daughter
Frances Thomas	ditto	9	ditto	Manners' daughter
Mirah	ditto	1	ditto	Manners' daughter
Elcy	ditto	33	African	-
Rose Thomas	ditto	12	creole	Elcy's daughter
Susan Thomas	ditto	9	ditto	Elcy's daughter
O. Jean	ditto	6	ditto	Elcy's daughter
Phillis	ditto	3	ditto	Elcy's daughter

Males 21 Twenty One

Females 25 Twenty five

Total 46 Forty Six

I Robert Duncan son of Sarah Duncan Senr~ do swear that the above list and return consisting of one sheet is a true perfect and complete list and return to the best of my knowledge and belief in every particular therein mentioned of all and every slave and slaves possessed by her as proprietress considered as most permanently

settled, worked or employed in the parish of Saint Ann on the twenty eighth day of June, One thousand eight hundred and seventeen, without fraud, deceit, or evasion.

Sworn before me this sixteenth day of July 1817, So help me God

Robert Duncan

John Chrystie

NOTE: On the Return of Sarah Duncan, JamaicanFamilySearch added Pamela's 3 sons and corrected the spelling of 5 names, in August 2012.

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[CONGRESS](#)

Sen. Mitch McConnell's great-great-grandfathers owned 14 slaves, bringing reparations issue close to home

McConnell has opposed paying reparations to descendants of slaves, though census records show his family, like many others, benefited from their labor.



Sen. Mitch McConnell Chelsea Stahl / NBC News; Getty Images

July 8, 2019, 5:38 PM EDT

By Corky Siemaszko

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who said recently he opposes paying government reparations to the descendants of American slaves, has a family history deeply entwined in the issue: Two of his great-great-grandfathers were slave owners, U.S. census records show.

The two great-great-grandfathers, James McConnell and Richard Daley, owned a total of at least 14 slaves in Limestone County, Alabama – all but two of them female, according to the county “Slave Schedules” in the 1850 and 1860 censuses.

The details about McConnell’s ancestors, discovered by NBC News through a search of ancestry and census records, came in the wake of recent hearings on reparations before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. Asked about the reparations issue, McConnell, R-Ky., [said he was opposed](#) to the idea, arguing it would be hard to figure out whom to compensate.

“I don’t think reparations for something that happened 150 years ago, when none of us currently living are responsible, is a good idea,” he said June 18, a day before the House reparations hearing. “We’ve tried to deal with our original sin of slavery by fighting a civil war, by passing landmark civil rights legislation. We’ve elected an African American president.”



[Mitch McConnell on slavery reparations: 'None of us currently living are responsible'](#)

JUNE 18, 2019 01:08

NBC News, in several phone calls and emails to McConnell's office, asked if the senator was aware that his great-great-grandfathers were slave owners. The office did not respond to those requests.

Slavery experts have stressed that descendants of slave owners should not be held personally responsible for the deeds of their forebears. But they have also argued that the families that descended from slave owners, like McConnell's, are likely to have benefited from the labor of slaves that propped up farm families in earlier generations – a point made by many reparations supporters, who have said that descendants of slaves were never compensated for the economic benefit their forebears made to white families.

“Smaller farms and plantations still benefited enormously from the unpaid labor of enslaved people, which likely helped them build multigenerational wealth,” said Chuck Collins, senior scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies, a liberal think tank in Washington.

The McConnells, Daleys go way back

The 1850 and 1860 Limestone County, Alabama, censuses.

The 1850 census

The 1860 census

The McConnells and the Daleys lived in the same county, according to the 1860 census.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Collins' assertion is supported by research done by two American professors and one Danish college professor, who found that the Southern slave owners were able to rebound more rapidly economically than non-slave owners after the Civil War.

"We see recovery for the sons of both small and large slaveholders, as well as in the counties that specialized in non-plantation crops," wrote the authors of "[The Intergenerational Effects Of A Large Wealth Shock: White Southerners After The Civil War](#)," a study published by the National Bureau of Economic Research, the nation's leading nonprofit economic research organization.

No news articles were found in which McConnell has previously spoken of his ancestors being slave owners. And in his 2016 memoir, "The Long Game," he wrote that he was descended from "a long line of hardworking and often colorful McConnells," but did not mention that any of them owned slaves. He did mention another James McConnell – apparently the father of the slave-owning James McConnell – who he said came from Ireland in the 1760s and fought for the colonies in the American Revolution.

As a legislator, McConnell has generally been [supportive of civil rights measures](#), and said his parents, whom he has described as "very enlightened Southerners," opposed the rampant segregation that surrounded his family in northern Alabama. He has said his hero is Sen. John Sherman Cooper, a Kentucky Republican who died in 1991, best known for breaking the filibuster against the 1964 Civil Rights Act that had been led by other Southern senators.

However, like most Republicans, he [supported the narrowing of the Voting Rights Act](#) by the Supreme Court in 2013, and has also been an advocate for strong voter ID laws. Both positions have been criticized by current civil rights leaders for making it more difficult for minorities to vote.

The 1850 and 1860 census slave schedules

The U. S. Census Bureau used to count slaves and who owned them.

The 1850 census

Richard Daley owned five slaves, four of whom escaped, according to this document.

The 1860 census

All but one of Richard Daley's five slaves and all of James McConnell's four slaves escaped, according to this document.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In the 1850 census, his great-great-grandfather Richard Daley owned five female slaves ranging in age from 2 to 22. Four are classified as “mulatto” – a now-offensive term for mixed-race people. Their ages were 2, 4, 18 and 20. One 22-year-old slave was identified as black. None of them are named in the document.

Little is known about the four female slaves listed in the 1860 census who were owned by another of McConnell's great-great-grandfathers, James McConnell. They are identified in the records only by their ages, which were 1, 3, 4 and 25, and by their race – “mulatto.”

Richard Daley, in that same census, owned five slaves, three females and two males.

Two of those females, ages 30 and 11, were classified as mulatto, according to the records. The other woman, who was 39, was listed as black. Both males, one who was either 10 or 12 years old and one who was 7, were listed as mulatto. None are identified by name.

It appears from the records that most of the McConnell and Daley family slaves managed to run away. The 1860 census slave schedule indicates that prior to the census count, all of James McConnell's slaves escaped, as did all but one of Daley's slaves.

In the 1850 census, four of Daley's five slaves were also marked as having escaped, so it appears that he acquired additional slaves between 1850 and 1860.

“There were a lot more runaways, including some gone for years, than many historians have believed,” said Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, a pioneering historian who has spent much of her life [gathering records about slaves](#). “The enslaved in the Deep South escaped into the wilderness including swamps, by boat to Cuba or the North, Midwest and Canada, and some headed south to Mexico.”

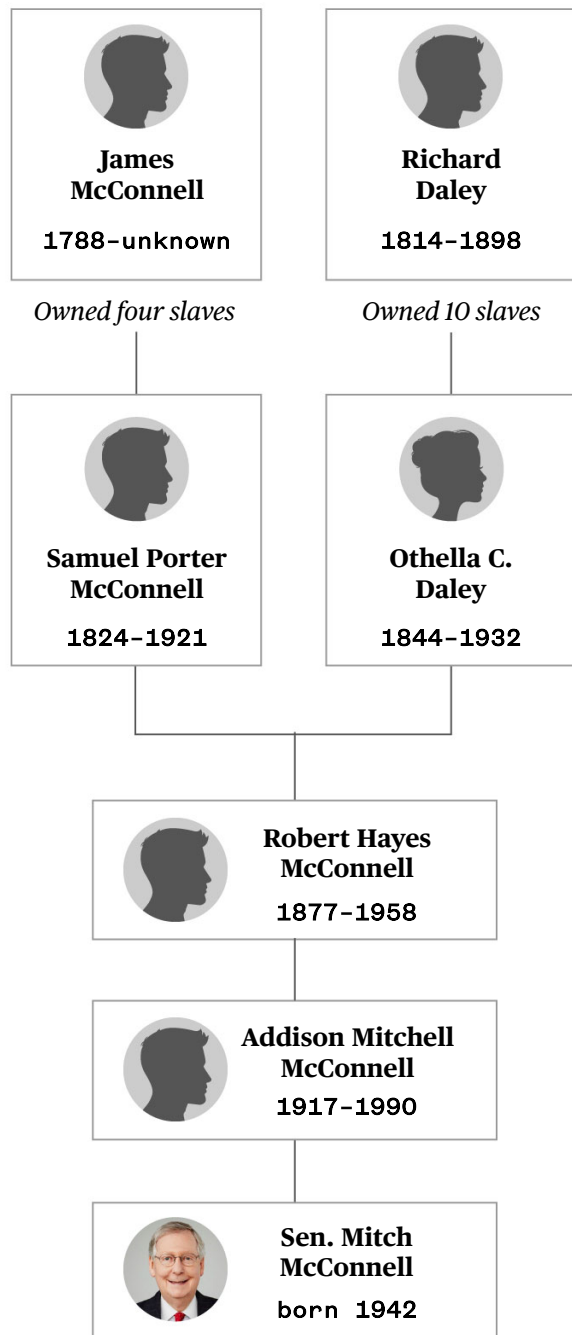
Hall is a co-founder of “[Slave Biographies](#): The Atlantic Database Network,” an online project that describes itself as a “database of information on the identities of enslaved people in the Atlantic World.”

Even if they had not run away, tracking down the descendants of slaves who worked the smaller holdings can be hard because record-keeping in rural places like northern Alabama was hit-or-miss, Tony Burrough, a Chicago-based African American genealogist, said.

“Identifying the descendants and finding them would be a complicated project, and what I mean by that is that it would take a lot of work, searching for all kinds of records that might include the names of the enslaved people,” Burroughs said. “It is very rare that the story of who enslaved a person gets passed down from generation to generation. There is the assumption that somebody with the same surname owned their ancestors, but that doesn’t always hold true.” In cases where better records were kept, however, it has been possible to track down the descendants of slaves.

Slave owners in the family

Sen. Mitch McConnell is four generations removed from slave owners on his father's side.



Source: Genealogy and census records. Photo courtesy of Sen. McConnell's office

Graphic: Nigel Chiwaya / NBC News

NBC News was able to build a McConnell family tree by locating obituaries of his predecessors, by searching through online genealogical websites like Ancestry.com, and by tracking down his memoir and news articles in which the senator spoke about his relatives and his family's deep roots in northern Alabama. In addition, members of the McConnell family have built and posted a [separate online family tree](#), which supports the genealogical trace performed by NBC News.

These family trees do not themselves show slave ownership, but the names, dates and locations of the great-great-grandfathers match precisely with the slave ownership records in the 1850 and 1860 censuses. There was no one else with the same names as the two slave owners, James McConnell and Richard Daley, listed in the two censuses for Limestone County.

McConnell is now closely identified with Kentucky as its best-known politician, but he was born Feb. 20, 1942, in Sheffield, Alabama. Generations of his family had lived in and around Limestone County, which is west of Huntsville and just south of the Tennessee border.

From ages 5 to 8, McConnell lived in a rented bungalow in Athens, Alabama, as he has [recounted](#). His paternal grandparents are buried in the Athens City Cemetery. And he has spoken proudly in the past about his north Alabama roots.

In [a Dec. 28, 2014, interview with The News Courier](#), a daily newspaper published in Athens that covers Limestone County, McConnell described his ancestry in detail.

“My great-grandfather was a circuit-riding Cumberland Presbyterian minister,” the senator told the paper. “We still have his original saddle in my wife’s and my archives in Louisville.”

The senator related the same story in his memoir. “My dad’s grandfather was a circuit-riding Calvinist preacher who sermonized at a different church every Sunday, carrying his Bible in the saddlebags I still have,” he wrote.

McConnell was talking about [the Rev. Samuel Porter McConnell](#), who lived from 1844 to 1921, and was married to Othella Daley, according to a marriage record on Ancestry.com. The minister was the son of James McConnell, the slave owner, according to [Alabama death records](#).

Othella Daley, Sen. McConnell’s great-grandmother (whose maiden name was spelled Daily or Daly in some records) was the daughter of Richard Daley, the slave owner. She appears in an 1850 census record from Limestone County, which identifies her (under the first name Offillia) as a 1-year-old member of Daley’s household.

She and the Rev. McConnell were the parents of the senator’s grandfather, Robert McConnell, owner of the McConnell Service Funeral Home in Athens, according [to death records and an April 17, 1958 obituary](#) in the Huntsville Times.

“My grandfather, Robert Hayes McConnell, went into business with his brother, Add, and bought what became McConnell funeral home, which still carries the name,” the senator told The News Courier. Robert Hayes McConnell’s son, Addison Mitchell McConnell, was Sen. McConnell’s father. (The senator’s first name, like his father’s, is Addison.)

Historians say that contemporary Americans can learn from slave owner genealogies how many families directly or indirectly benefited from the labor of generations of slaves.

“No one is seeking to judge anyone’s ancestors,” said Seth Rockman, a history professor at Brown University and co-editor of “Slavery’s Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development.”

“The whole conversation is about the American economic system as a whole, and the degree to which the debasement of African-descended people created the structures through which other Americans were able to prosper,” he said.

Louis Cain, professor emeritus at Loyola University Chicago and an expert on the economics of slavery, said more Americans have been stained by slavery than they realize.

“I suspect with the mobility of the American population in the 20th and 21st centuries, most of us have ancestors that owned slaves, including many individuals who did not arrive until well after the Civil War,” Cain said. “The

responsibility for what happened was collective, not individual.”



Corky Siemaszko

Corky Siemaszko is a senior writer at NBC News Digital.

Helen Kwong contributed.



Liberal Donors' Dream Agenda Taking Form in 2020 Campaigns

Harris and Warren get behind reparations in race to the far left



Elizabeth Warren, Kamala Harris / Getty Images

Brent Scher - FEBRUARY 25, 2019 5:00 AM

"It's 2022 and we are celebrating policy victories across the nation: Medicare for All and Free College, and next on the agenda is Reparations," read a flyer distributed at the secretive Democracy Alliance donor conference last April, outlining a dream agenda they hoped the party could embrace by 2022.

Eight months later, things appear to be moving ahead of schedule.

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Omar Questions the Patriotism of American-Born Citizens

Anti-Semitic Rep. Ilhan Omar Boasts of Berating Jewish Trump Official

Hastings (D) Maxed Out Girlfriend's Salary for 7th Straight Year

Both universal healthcare and free college, considered outlandish by even Democrats when Bernie Sanders proposed them in 2016, are already supported by a majority of the party's 2020 candidates.

The idea of race-based government reparations—a proposal opposed by both Sanders and former president Barack Obama—is now being embraced by 2020 frontrunners Kamala Harris and Elizabeth Warren.

Harris, asked during an interview last week whether she supports "some form of reparations for black people," said she did.

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"We have to be honest that people in this country do not start from the same place or have access to the same opportunities," Harris said. "I'm serious about taking an approach that would change policies and structures and make real investments in black communities."

Not to be outpaced, Warren came out this week in favor of reparations, saying there need to be "systemic, structural changes" to address "the dark history of slavery and government-sanctioned discrimination in this country."

The *New York Times* says the embrace of reparations by Harris and Warren "signals just how quickly prominent Democrats have expanded their political imagination after decades of dominance by the Clintons and Mr. Obama."

Polling over the years has shown reparations to be unpopular.

A Rasmussen Reports *poll* last year of 1,000 likely voters found 70 percent opposed reparations to black Americans who can prove they are descended from slaves. A Marist *poll* conducted in 2016 found that 68 percent opposed reparations to descendants of slaves, and 72 percent opposed reparations to African Americans in general.

Neither Harris nor Warren has laid out exactly how they envision reparations being paid.

The only Democratic nominee with a plan for that is Marianne Williamson, a spiritual guru, who tells the *Washington Post* she would form a \$100 billion government fund that would be disseminated to black Americans through a "panel of black leaders across fields."

Obama explained in an interview towards the end of his presidency that the case for reparations was easy to make as a "theoretical argument," but wouldn't be practical.

"Theoretically, you can make, obviously, a powerful argument that centuries of slavery, Jim Crow, discrimination are the primary cause for all those gaps," Obama *said*. "It is easy to make that theoretical argument. But as a practical matter, it is hard to think of any society in human history in which a majority population has said that as a consequence of historic wrongs, we are now going to take a big chunk of the nation's resources over a long period of time to make that right."

Sanders *said in 2016* that he viewed reparations as both unrealistic and "very divisive."

Georgia Democrat Stacey Abrams, who was the featured guest at the 2018 Democracy Alliance event where the flyer on reparations was distributed, [declined](#) to take a position on the policy, saying it wasn't discussed at the event.

Both Democratic National Committee chairman Tom Perez and former Virginia governor Terry McAuliffe were also at the event. Neither the DNC nor McAuliffe, who is viewed as a 2020 contender, responded to requests for comment on reparations.

This entry was posted in [Politics](#) and tagged [Elizabeth Warren](#), [Kamala Harris](#). Bookmark the [permalink](#).



Brent Scher is a staff writer for the Washington Free Beacon. He graduated from the University of Virginia, where he studied foreign affairs and politics. Prior to joining the Beacon, he worked for WTOP and the American Enterprise Institute's Political Corner. Brent is originally from New York City and now lives in Washington, D.C.

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Kamala Harris's Jamaican Ancestors 'Turning in Their Grave,' Her Father Says



Brent Scher - FEBRUARY 19, 2019 10:47 AM

Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris's new embrace of smoking marijuana didn't go well back in Jamaica, where her father said her ancestors would be "turning in their grave" after hearing her stereotype the island's people as "pot-smoking joy seekers."

Harris cited her Jamaican heritage last week when she admitted to smoking marijuana. The California senator scoffed at claims that she opposes legalizing the drug by **saying**, "Half my family is from Jamaica, are you kidding me?" She said she supports legalization because smoking "gives a lot of people joy, and we need more joy."

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Her father Donald Harris, who came to the United States from Jamaica in pursuit of a graduate degree in economics, took issue with his daughter's use of the drug stereotype as she runs for president.

"My dear departed grandmothers, as well as my deceased parents, must be turning in their grave right now to see their family's name, reputation and proud Jamaican identity being connected, in any way, jokingly or not with the fraudulent stereotype of a pot-smoking joy seeker and in the pursuit of identity politics," he said in a statement to **Jamaica Global** that gained attention in the United States over the weekend.

"Speaking for myself and my immediate Jamaican family, we wish to categorically dissociate ourselves from this travesty," he said.

Harris Supports Legalizing Marijuana, Admits to Using It in the Past



Harris has taken heat stateside for her new stance on legalized marijuana, which she openly opposed as California's attorney general, when she **locked up over 1,500** individuals for marijuana-related crimes. She has been **accused of lying** about the timing of her marijuana use, which she says she only tried in college.

This entry was posted in **Politics** and tagged **2020 Election**, **Drugs**, **Kamala Harris**, **Marijuana**. Bookmark the **permalink**.



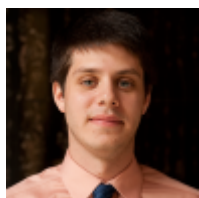
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