

# SLAVE COMPENSATION ACT 1837 | THE ENSLAVED RECEIVED NOTHING!

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## ABOLITION OF SLAVE TRADE ACT

The British parliament passed the Abolition of Slave Trade Act In 1807, and with a stroke of a pen, outlawed the trading of slaves from Africa to the British colonies.

In 1819 the Office for the Registry of Colonial Slaves was established in London with the task of receiving copies of the slave registers kept by the colonies.

*'In 1833, Britain used 40% of its national budget to buy freedom for all slaves in the Empire. Britain borrowed such a large sum of money for the Slavery Abolition Act that it wasn't paid off until 2014. This means that living British citizens helped pay for the ending of the slave trade with their taxes'.*

Information Rights Unit

## THE SLAVE COMPENSATION ACT 1837

The Slave Compensation Act 1837 was signed into law on 23 December 1837. Meanwhile, the Slave Compensation Commission went on to process some 46,000 claims.

## SLAVE OWNER'S BONANZA

For example, Langford Lovell, was an absentee slave owner and author of *Letter to a Friend-Relative to the Present State of the Island of Dominica* owned an estate in Londonderry, Dominica with 222 slaves. He was awarded 4,306 pounds 17

shillings and 7 pennies in slave compensation in 1837, the equivalent of £4 million 945 thousand 499 hundred pounds, and 6 pence in today's money.

To put it in another perspective, £100 in 1837 is worth £11,484.66.

## BIGGEST SINGLE PAYOUT

“The biggest single payout went to James Blair an MP who had homes in Marylebone, central London, and Scotland. He was awarded £83,530, the equivalent of £65 million in 2013 for the 1,598 slaves he owned on the plantation that he had inherited in British Guyana,” according to the Independent edition of Sunday 24 February 2013.

When you consider that slave owners had enjoyed generations of free labour, amassing mind-boggling amounts of wealth for themselves and descendants. When you consider that many of these slave owners, whether resident in the new world or absentee, possessed or had interests in more than one estate, and sometimes dozens of estates, which could several hundred, thousands of slaves acquired by purchase, inheritance, or forfeiture, in the case of agents and attorneys of the reign of Terror which was the plantation slave-labour-based societies.

A female slave owner in Dominica, called Eleanor Lucy Green, who owned just one enslaved person in 1837, was awarded the princely sum of £19 5s 8d. The equivalent of £2,248.70 calculated at the 2021 rate of inflation.

**The enslaved received nothing**



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