

The abolition of slavery 1833



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

These sources outline many different causes of the slave rebellions, some agree that the Baptist missionaries caused the rebellions but others say that Baptists only wanted to help.

Source C blatantly states that the missionaries were one of the causes of the rebellions, but the reliability of this source is tainted as it is from the House of Assembly of Jamaica. They would be inclined to blame the missionaries as they believed that the slaves were incapable of organising such a revolt.

Source B, has largely little to say, but in the 11th line it says that some whites joined in with the rebellion. This suggests that missionaries took part in this campaign and would show that they caused the slave rebellions. But this source is written in 1998 and so would be a secondary source, it also doesn't state that missionaries took part, only that whites were involved in the campaign. This makes the source unreliable and open to different interpretations.

Sources A and F say that Sam Sharpe organised the rebellions and that he could be trusted as he was head of a Baptist church. This involves the church indirectly as they taught Sharpe the fundamentals of all people being equal and that it was wrong for a people's to be oppressed. Sam then went on to organise rebellions, so these sources indirectly support the statement that the rebellion was caused by missionaries. Source A can be considered as reliable as it is an oath taken by a overseer of a plantation, which was taken in 1832, only a few weeks after the actual rebellion. But on the other hand source F is a confession from a prisoner and may have been made under duress and therefore some of the details may not be correct. But the

prisoner may not want to give away the role of the missionaries and so missed then out entirely, this makes the unreliable.

The sources D and E both suggest that the Baptist church wanted to help emancipate the slaves. A Reverend writes source D, he supports the slaves, but does not say that he had any thing to do with the rebellions and says that they did more harm then good. Source E is an oath and says that a Baptist preacher would claim their freedom from the King of England. This probably wouldn't have started a rebellion, as if they knew that they would be freed soon they would have no need to rebel. Instead it shows that the Baptists wanted to end slavery and would make an effort to do so.

Source D may be unreliable as the church would never admit to causing the rebellion and would try and distance themselves from it. Source E is reliable but doesn't show that the missionaries started the rebellion but that they only wanted to help. Word count = Part Two

How significant was the impact of slave rebellions in the British West Indies in the period 1816 to 1832 on the decision to abolish slavery in 1834? There are many things that have created slavery but also many things to abolish it. Historians have identified a number of factors that contributed to the abolition of slavery, Some were due to the actions of slaves and working class white people in Britain, where as some were due to the economical factors. In my essay I shall write about each reason and write my opinion on which one I think most important. The campaign to abolish slavery was the first popular peaceful mass protest movement of modern times.

Slave rebellion had an importance on the decision to abolish slavery, but other factors were important too such as the long term humanitarian campaign involving many middle white class people in Britain played a huge part in the abolition of slavery. Leading white abolitionists were Granville Sharpe, who helped black people fight test cases in the courts, Thomas Clarkson, who collected evidence of the cruelty of the slave trade from all over Britain and William Wilberforce, who fought for legislation at Parliament. A white middle class man by the name of Granville sharp was just one of the people to turn the public's opinion against slavery. Granville Sharp was a surgeon in east London, when he met a slave named Jonathan Strong. Strong had been whipped and badly beaten by his master David Lisle.

Sharp took him to hospital where he recovered. Strong was working as a healthy messenger boy when Lisle had him recaptured. When Sharp heard of this, he took Lisle to court to regain Strong his freedom. Sharp won the case and it got him a lot of good because of his success he took on many more cases involving slavery, and he won many. Sharpe became famous for his success in court and the defense of slaves. William Wilberforce was a highly respected MP; he played a huge part in the abolition by forming a group opposing slavery.

William Wilberforce, a politician, is among those for the abolition of slavery. Wilberforce was a well-known Quaker (Christian), the Quaker campaign led to abolish slavery. Quakers believed slavery was sinful and against Christian teachings. In 1797 12 opponents of slavery including several Quakers taught for abolition.

Because Wilberforce had power as an MP he was able to make powerful speeches in Parliament against the slave trade. Wilberforce had petitions made then collected to show in court to prove the many people against the slave trade. Wilberforce also had an ally, Thomas Clarkson, who collected information about the conditions on ships, which Wilberforce then took to court as more evidence of sinful behavior to white people. All Wilberforce's work paid off because the slave trade was later abolished in 1807.

Another humanitarian part of the campaign was a slogan; 'Am I not a man or a brother' created by Josiah Wedgwood, this saying helped abolish slavery because it made people realise that slaves are human beings and are men or brothers not cargo. He also joined with Thomas Clarkson and Granville Sharp to form the society for the abolition of the slave trade. I believe also that the feminist campaign was also a necessary factor and short term cause even though they played a small part in the campaign; they still affected the abolition of slavery as women had a role in this protesting. They helped in many ways as they organised petitions in towns and cities; the three largest petitions were organised by women and they influenced thousands of people in their own homes to not buy products made in the West Indies. Women also asked for an immediate instead of a gradual abolition, Elizabeth Heyrick published her pamphlet in 1824 on immediate not gradual abolition. In her pamphlet Heyrick argued in favour of the immediate freedom of the slaves in the British colonies.

This was different from the official policy of the anti slavery society that believed in gradual abolition. The leadership of the organisation attempted to stop information about the existence of this pamphlet and William

Wilberforce gave out instructions for leaders of the movement not to speak at women's anti-slavery societies. At the conference in May 1830, the anti-slavery society agreed to drop the words "gradual abolition" from its title. It also agreed to support Elizabeth Heyrick's plan for a new campaign to bring about immediate abolition. Anti-slavery became a truly popular campaign, involving thousands of women as well as men. White Missionaries had an importance on the decision, as they were the ones who acted as a trigger to the rebellions and were necessary as they were the ones who spread news about the humanitarian campaigns around the plantations raising the hopes of slaves leading them to rebellions.

The black slaves themselves also took upon their human rights and helped to abolish slavery, I believe it was a sufficient cause as blacks got involved in the campaign for their freedom which showed they were equal to whites in intelligence and human rights. Lots of black slaves who worked in Britain started to demand wages from their owners and to be treated like normal servants. Olaudah Equiana was a slave who in 1789 wrote his autobiography. When he was ten he was taken from his home in Africa and brought to Barbados as a slave. There he was a servant boy to a captain on a ship. Later he stayed in London where he learned to read and write and became a Christian, who bought his own freedom and wrote his autobiography on his past experiences as a slave.

This turned many people against slavery and Olaudah soon found he working with the likes of Wilberforce. He also helped slaves gain their freedom and brought cases to the public. The black slaves who worked in the sugar plantations in the West Indies, did not have the chance to go to court so they

rebelled! One of the biggest rebellions was at the British plantation of St Domingue; plantations, which were run by slaves, took up The Island. The slaves heard of the ideas of liberty and freedom, which was the basis of the French Revolution and humanitarian campaign in Britain, which was happening at the time. In 1791 they rebelled by killing the Plantation owners and set fire to the sugar crops.

Britain tried to control the situation with the help of France but a slave revolution, led by Toussant L ' Ouverture defeated them. This made the British see how badly the slaves wanted freedom. I believe that the rebellions were a catalyst to the abolishment of slavery as when slave revolts erupted in the British West Indian colonies or other colonies attacks against anti-slavery intensified, as people started to see that even slaves wished to have freedom and rights as other humans had. I believe that slave revolts were an important line of communication through which the voice of the slave moved the pens and tongues of the abolitionist. Seymour Drescher a historian believes slavery was abolished due to his explanation called econocide; slavery was also abolished because the money that was being made from it was decreasing rapidly due to the abolition of the slave trade, registration procedures and the plantation owners had to spend a lot of money taking care of slaves to make them live longer, reproduce and take care of the offspring as.

Adam Smith who was an economist and another historian said that slaves who are forced to work for free would put very little effort into there work but if they had something to be motivated by like a pay check they would want to work harder for more money, this results in better business because more

work is being done. As time went by places apart from the West Indies, started producing sugar. Places like Cuba and Jamaica made their sugar very cheap and did not have slaves to do the work. Industries in Britain wished to buy sugar at cheaper prices, which forced a lot of the British sugar plantations in the West Indies to close down, which brought reduction in demand for slaves. William supports this idea and that the government abolished slavery as it was in their interest, as there was less profit and there was an economic decline.

These were what I think the most important factors on the decision to abolish slavery in 1834, I believe that the slave rebellions had a significant part on the decision to abolish slavery but they were not the most important factor, I believe the rebellion were a catalyst as it made the attacks against anti-slavery intensify as it made people see that slaves wanted their freedom too as the other people in the world but the rebellions may not have occurred without the help of the missionaries, spreading news around and raising the hopes of slaves. The most important factor I think was the humanitarian campaign; the middle class whites like Wilberforce were very highly respected people and were the sort not to be ignored at parliament. I think especially Wilberforce because him being an MP meant that parliament would listen to what he had to say which they would not do with a working class white for example.