

“To Make and Save Money”: Medicine, Sugar and Slavery in 18th century Jamaica

Biography:

Alastair Learmont is an historian and PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh where he is currently undertaking research into Scotland's links with slavery during the 18th and early 19th centuries. His thesis examines the experiences of two Selkirk born doctors, William and James Chisholme, who sought to “make and save money” in Jamaica immediately prior to British abolition of the slave trade in 1807.

Alastair graduated in classics from the University of Bristol in 1986, and was called to the Scottish Bar in 1993. For many years he worked as a criminal prosecutor, before pursuing cultural and historical research at the University of Edinburgh where he was awarded ESRC funding and was the recipient of a McFarlane Scholarship. In 2014, he graduated MSc (with Distinction) in 18th Century Cultures and MSc (by research) in Economic History in 2016. Alastair speaks regularly at historical and cultural societies. As an adult educator, he has devised a number of Edinburgh based courses for the National Galleries of Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, and the University of Edinburgh; these have included Literary Walks, New Town Walks and History Through Portraits. His recent work includes *Inside Out*, a programme of talk/walks for the National Galleries of Scotland, and *Scotland and Slavery* at the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Life Long Learning. Alastair has a particular interest in the Scottish Borders where he has researched and led over one hundred day walks, many of which have had a cultural slant.