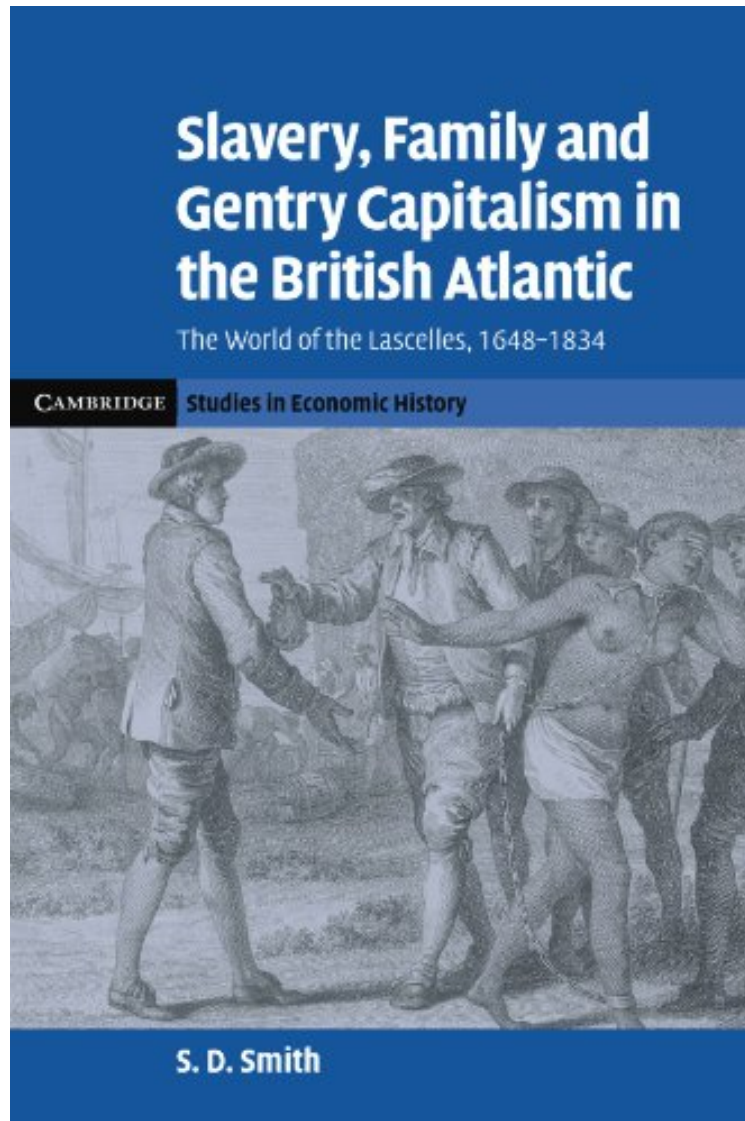


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Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648-1834 (Cambridge Studies in Economic History - Second Series)

S. D. Smith

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World of the Lascelles, 1648-1834 (Cambridge Studies in Economic History - Second Series):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Informative. By James Drescher This unusual book reads much like a doctoral thesis so it is not what I would call "a joy". It is thoroughly researched but could have said more about the slaves who created the wealth that built "Harewood House" -- a truly immense treasure house of Britain (Yorkshire).

From the mid-seventeenth century to the 1830s, successful gentry capitalists created an extensive business empire centered on slavery in the West Indies, but inter-linked with North America, Africa, and Europe. S. D. Smith examines the formation of this British Atlantic World from the perspective of Yorkshire aristocratic families who invested in the West Indies. At the heart of the book lies a case study of the plantation-owning Lascelles and the commercial and cultural network they created with their associates. The Lascelles exhibited high levels of business innovation and were accomplished risk-takers, overcoming daunting obstacles to make fortunes out of the New World. Dr Smith shows how the family raised themselves first to super-merchant status and then to aristocratic pre-eminence. He also explores the tragic consequences for enslaved Africans with chapters devoted to the slave populations and interracial relations. This widely researched book sheds new light on the networks and the culture of imperialism.

"Smith says important and suggestive things about institutional business deficiencies in Atlantic commerce that should be taken up by scholars exploring nineteenth century West Indian decline. His study is the best study of a merchant-planter family since Richard Pares' investigations, including one on the Lascelles family, over a half century ago. He engages actively with the influential arguments Pares made concerning what we might call the "Adam Smith" problem." -Trevor Burnard, University of Sussex, EH-NET "It is a remarkable achievement. Anyone who wants a thoughtful introduction to Britain's transatlantic trade when the sugar and slave trades were at their miserable peak, or who wants to consider how a merchant family could thrive in that chancy world, will find this a fascinating read." - James Robertson, H-Atlantic "The author of this study infuses old-fashioned Namierite genealogy into the latest scholarship on Atlantic slavery to come up with one of the most compelling and detailed accounts of the commercial webs and families behind the horrors of the Middle Passage and beyond it." -Charles H. Ford, Norfolk State University, The Historian "S. D. Smith's wise investigation of three generations of the Lascelles family, later barons and then earls of Harewood, presents an unusual and salutary perspective on the history of both the English landed elite and the British Atlantic world over two centuries. [...] it is straight-forward in the entirely compelling case it makes for, and the example it provides of, conceiving the history of the British transatlantic nexus as broadly as possible." -James Rosenheim, Texas AM University, American Historical "Smith's book is a thoroughly researched, wide-ranging, and surprisingly accessible economic history of the vast transatlantic business empire created by the Lascelles and other gentry capitalists during the 18th century." -Brooke N. Newman, The Journal of African American History About the Author S. D. Smith is Senior Lecturer in History at the University of York. He has previously edited *An Exact and Industrious Tradesman: the Letter Book of Joseph Symson of Kendal* (2002).