

George Peabody and Slavery

Commissioned by the Peabody Institute
Johns Hopkins University

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October 2023

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Executive summary of research by Anne-Marie Angelo

George Peabody's early life and business ventures (1795-1837)

- Records have not revealed that George Peabody enslaved people directly as an individual. Peabody did share ownership of enslaved people through his later banking investments.
- While in Baltimore, George Peabody developed many indirect connections to slavery. He formed business co-partnerships with at least two enslavers.
- Peabody and Riggs' business traded mainly in goods made from cotton that had been harvested by enslaved people, as well as other goods that enslaved people produced, including tobacco, sugar, and coffee.
- Peabody earned multiple streams of income from enslavers as both customers and business partners, even after leaving Baltimore, as he maintained his business presence there.
- Through their unfree labor, enslaved people contributed significantly to the wealth that Peabody earned in Baltimore.
- Peabody ran his business and may have lived at the Old Congress Hall. The Hall's owner enslaved people who lived on the property.
- No members of George Peabody's immediate family were found to have enslaved people directly. Free Black people worked in the homes of two of Peabody's immediate family members.
- At least five of Peabody's second cousins were enslavers, including one with whom Peabody did business.

George Peabody's banking career (1837-1869)

- Peabody worked as a merchant banker in London from 1837 to 1869. He became the primary banker for British-based customers investing money in the U.S. In this role, Peabody had both direct and indirect links to slavery.
- A considerable portion of Peabody's merchant banking wealth was earned from the labors and lives of enslaved people in the U.S., and, to a much lesser extent, enslaved people in Brazil.
- From the late 1830s to mid-1850s, Peabody conducted substantial business in cotton. He traded with several plantation banks and merchants in New Orleans, which was at the time the capital of the domestic slave trade, and other southern cities, and with many cotton merchants in Liverpool, England.

Investments

- As a shareholder in two banks that used an estimated 21,000 enslaved people as collateral, and which came to own 1,300 enslaved individuals through defaults on debts, Peabody was a partial owner of enslaved people. He therefore has direct links to slavery through his banking business.

- These banks, and at least six others with which Peabody traded, used enslaved people as collateral against credit. This credit was primarily provided to plantation owners and other enslavers.
- Peabody held stock in insurance companies and served on the board of directors of an insurance company that insured enslaved people and enslaved-produced goods.
- Peabody was named as a party in a court case in Virginia that included enslaved people as a means of recovering debt.

Shipping and trade

- In the 1840s and 1850s, George Peabody conducted business dealings with at least 96 companies in Liverpool, England. Liverpool was the global leader in the trade of enslaved-produced cotton in this period.
- From the mid-1830s through the late 1850s, Peabody conducted business with at least 15 companies in New Orleans and one company in nearby Natchez, Mississippi. During this period New Orleans was the headquarters of the domestic slave trade.
- Peabody oversaw the shipping and trade of many enslaved-produced goods including cotton, tobacco, turpentine, coffee, wheat, flour, and corn.

Peabody Institute

- This study examined the individual relationships with slavery of the first trustees of the Peabody Institute. Their enslaving practices serve as a proxy for understanding the early years of the Institute's relationship to African Americans and slavery.
- Nine of the 24 founding trustees of the Institute were enslavers in the 1850s, and therefore may have enslaved people at the time of the Institute's founding in 1857. An additional eight trustees had enslaved people prior to 1850.
- All 24 of the founding trustees had free people of color working as servants in their homes.
- Enslaved labor may have been used in the construction of the Institute, as six of the Institute's builders and service providers were enslavers in the 1850s.
- An African American family from Baltimore lived at the Institute in 1871.

George Peabody and the Civil War

- George Peabody supported the preservation of the Union, though not necessarily for abolitionist reasons.
- Peabody was heavily concerned with protecting his financial investments, and those of his customers and colleagues, in the U.S. South and other parts of the Americas.
- Peabody called for the Institute to remain neutral around the issue of sectionalism that led to the U.S. Civil War.
- The trustees were divided in opinion around the Civil War, with as many as half supporting the Confederacy.
- One trustee, Severn Teackle Wallis, was imprisoned for 14 months for his support of the Confederacy.

- Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and others excoriated Peabody for not having taken a public stance in favor of abolitionism, or in support of President Lincoln.

George Peabody's legacies

- The Peabody Education Fund racially discriminated in its allocation of funding to schools, providing only 6.5% of its funding to schools for Black children.
- The fund successfully opposed a Civil Rights Bill that would have integrated schools nationwide after the Civil War.
- Peabody was noted as a friend of the South, celebrated by agriculturalists, businesspeople, and former Confederate officers.
- Peabody fathered a daughter whom he did not widely acknowledge, with a woman whom he did not marry. He did not provide for his daughter in his will.

I. Introduction

Following the Johns Hopkins University's announcement in December 2020 that Johns Hopkins personally had enslaved people, the Peabody Institute commissioned independent research into the life and work of merchant banker, philanthropist, and Institute founder George Peabody (1795-1869) and his possible connections to slavery.¹ This report constitutes a record of the findings from this research. It includes sections on [Peabody's early life and business ventures](#); [Peabody's banking career](#); [the Peabody Institute](#); [Peabody and the Civil War](#); and [Peabody's legacies](#).

Born in Massachusetts, George Peabody moved to Washington, D.C., and then Baltimore, where he lived and worked as a dry goods merchant from 1815 to 1837. In 1837, he moved to London, where he began working as a merchant banker. He spent much of the rest of his life in London until his death in 1869, outside of occasional return trips to the United States.

This report examines both direct and indirect links to the institution of transatlantic slavery. A direct link refers to involvement in slavery by trading or owning enslaved African-descended people. An indirect link is defined by involvement with financing aspects of the slave

¹ Martha S. Jones, "Johns Hopkins and Slaveholding: Preliminary Findings," 8 December 2020, *Hard Histories at Hopkins*, available online: <https://hardhistory.jhu.edu/assets/uploads/sites/8/2020/12/Hard.Histories.12.8.20.pdf>.

economy or supplying or manufacturing goods made by enslaved people of African descent.² Sources examined include population and slave census returns, vital records, property deeds, tax assessments, manumission records, freedom papers, wills, estate inventories, family histories, city directories, chancery court cases, banking records, newspapers, and correspondence.

II. George Peabody's early life and business ventures (1795-1837)

Key findings:

- Records have not revealed that George Peabody enslaved people directly as an individual. Peabody did share ownership of enslaved people through his later banking investments (see [section III](#)).
- While in Baltimore, George Peabody developed many indirect connections to slavery. He formed business co-partnerships with at least two enslavers.
- Peabody and Riggs' business traded mainly in goods made from cotton that had been harvested by enslaved people, as well as other goods that enslaved people produced, including tobacco, sugar, and coffee.
- Peabody earned multiple streams of income from enslavers as both customers and business partners, even after leaving Baltimore, as he maintained his business presence there.
- Through their unfree labor, enslaved people contributed significantly to the wealth that Peabody earned in Baltimore.
- Peabody ran his business from, and may have lived in, the Old Congress Hall. The Hall's owner enslaved people who lived on the property.

² This report follows the terminology that Cassandra Gooptar introduces in the Taylor Report. The Taylor Report is part I of a recent investigation into *The Guardian* UK newspaper's founders' connections to transatlantic slavery. Cassandra Gooptar, *The Taylor Report*, Part I of *The Scott Trust Legacies of Enslavement Report*, 11 December 2020, 11, available online: <https://www.hull.ac.uk/research/institutes/wilberforce/the-scott-trust-legacies-of-enslavement-report>.

- No members of George Peabody’s immediate family were found to have enslaved people directly. Free Black people worked in the homes of two of Peabody’s immediate family members.
- At least five of Peabody’s second cousins were enslavers, including one with whom Peabody did business.

Peabody’s early life, 1795-1815

George Peabody, founder of the Peabody Institute, was born in Danvers, Massachusetts, in 1795. He was the third of eight children born to Judith Dodge and Thomas Peabody, a farmer and leatherworker.³ After a short formal education, George Peabody started working at the age of eleven. He began as an apprentice in a grocery store, then he moved to Newburyport, Massachusetts, where he worked in his brother David’s dry goods shop.

According to one of George’s biographers, when his brother David’s shop closed following a fire in 1811, George moved to Georgetown, Washington, D.C., with his uncle John Peabody, where they engaged in business together.⁴ While in Georgetown, a free Black female aged 14 to 25 lived and worked in John Peabody’s home, which George may have also occupied.⁵

However, newspaper sources also reveal that Peabody ran his own business trading in cotton as early as 1812, which indicates that he had an independent desire to earn profits from enslaved-produced goods. From September 1812 until at least October 1813, Peabody worked as an independent proprietor on Bridge Street in Georgetown, advertising in his name alone his sale

³ Charles M. Endicott, William S. Peabody, and Benjamin Frank, *A genealogy of the Peabody family* (Boston: D. Clapp & son, 1867), 25-26; Jeanne Koles, Label for George Peabody House, available online: <http://jeannekolesconsulting.com/PDFs/GeorgePeabodyHouseLabel.pdf>.

⁴ Muriel Hidy, *George Peabody: Merchant and Financier, 1829-1854* (New York: Arno Press, 1978), 5-6.

⁵ 1820 U.S. Census, Georgetown, Washington, District of Columbia, s.v. “John Peabody.” There were 3 men in George’s age range who lived in John’s house in 1820.

of dry goods and clothing including cotton fabrics produced in England.⁶ He imported 22 packages of merchandise from England via New York in September 1812.⁷

In July 1812, Peabody paid personal property tax on \$400 (\$9,400 in 2021) of non-real estate property. Personal property was rarely enumerated further in this set of tax records. This \$400 might have been Peabody's dry goods company materials, a horse, or enslaved people. There is no evidence to indicate specifically which of these it might have been, though there are details of Peabody having traveled on horseback through Virginia and other nearby states during this period.⁸

Peabody served as an artillery soldier in the War of 1812. During the war, he met Elisha Riggs (1779-1853), from Montgomery County, Maryland. Riggs was an experienced merchant who invited Peabody to work with him in Georgetown.⁹ In 1814 the two men entered into a partnership as wholesale dry goods merchants, with Riggs providing the capital to start the business and Peabody as the junior partner.¹⁰ In January 1815, they advertised the opening of

⁶ Several advertisements of goods for sale by George Peabody, without any business partners listed, appeared in the Washington, D.C. newspapers *The Courier*; *Federal Republican & Commercial Gazette*; and *The Spirit of Seventy-Six* from September 1812 to October 1813. See, e.g., "Advertisement," *The Courier* 24 October 1812, 1; "George Peabody," *The Spirit of Seventy-six [Georgetown, District of Columbia]* 1 October 1813, 4. For details of the fabrics Peabody traded in, see, e.g. "George Peabody, Bridge Street," *Federal, Republican and Commercial Gazette* 25 November 1812, 4.

⁷ "Abstract of Merchandize entered last Week at the Custom-House," *Hope's Philadelphia Price-Current, and Commercial Record* 7 September 1812, 2.

⁸ Assessment of Real & Personal Property, 1808-12; Roll 8, Records of the City of Georgetown (D.C.), 1800-79; National Archives Microfilm Publications no. 605, 117, s.v. "George Peabody," 169; Hidy, *George Peabody*, 6.

⁹ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 6.

Elisha Riggs had been trading in Georgetown since at least February 1807. In that month, Georgetown College purchased calico from Riggs on the same day that it hired an enslaved woman from a former Jesuit priest.

Georgetown University Archives, "Georgetown College hires a slave from Charles Boarman, a former Jesuit, February 1807," *Georgetown Slavery Archive*, accessed May 23, 2023,

<https://slaveryarchive.georgetown.edu/items/show/249>.

¹⁰ John Beverley Riggs, *The Riggs Family of Maryland: A Genealogical and Historical Record including a study of the several families in England* (Baltimore, MD: The Lord Baltimore Press, 1939), 322; "Business Career," George Peabody House Museum History, available online: <https://peabodymuseums.com/george-peabody-house-museum/history/>.

their business.¹¹ The two ran a store on Bridge Street in Georgetown that sold textiles, fabrics, clothing, and yarn.¹²

Peabody's life in Baltimore, 1815-1837

In 1815, shortly after Elisha Riggs and George Peabody began working together, the two moved their business to the port city of Baltimore, in order to import textiles and other goods from European producers more easily.¹³ There they established Riggs, Peabody & Co. (RP&C) as a dry goods importer, a partnership that lasted until 1829.¹⁴ From 1815 to at least 1822, the business was located on Baltimore Street, which was the city's main business district and a key site of the slave trade.¹⁵

Searches of the Georgetown and Baltimore property tax records and the U.S. Census records have not revealed any evidence that George Peabody owned or held enslaved people. This does not entirely rule out the possibility, however, as the available evidence is incomplete. Crucially, for the period in which Peabody lived in Baltimore (1815-1837), the chattel records, a key source for studying the history of slavery, are not publicly available.¹⁶

¹¹ [Washington, D.C.] *Daily National Intelligencer*, 11 January 1815.

Riggs was also in a dry goods business partnership with C.P. Beeding in Georgetown and Baltimore. In the same January 1815 article above, Riggs and Peabody announced that had bought out Beeding's remaining Georgetown dry goods.

¹² Elisha Riggs paid tax on two properties on Bridge Street in Old Town, Georgetown in 1813. Respectively, Assessment of Real & Personal Property, 1813-18; Roll 9, Records of the City of Georgetown (D.C.), 1800-79; National Archives Microfilm Publications no. 605, 117, s.v. "Elisha Riggs"; "Riggs & Peabody" advertisement, *Daily National Intelligencer*, May 12, 1815.

¹³ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 6. In August 1815, Riggs and Beeding announced that they had disbanded their Baltimore business and that they intended to move to Baltimore within the next month. "Notice," [*Baltimore*] *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 16 August 1815, 3; "Notice," *Daily National Intelligencer*, 5 August 1815, 1.

¹⁴ The following locations have been found for RP&C's business address: October 1815-1819: 215 ½ Baltimore Street; 1822: 208 Baltimore Street; September 1833: 201 Baltimore Street. Respectively, *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* 13 October 1815, 4; Samuel Jackson, ed. *The Baltimore directory, corrected up to June, 1819* (Baltimore: Matchett, 1819); *The Baltimore directory for 1822 & '23* (Baltimore: R.J. Matchett, 1822), 234; "Arica Tin," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 30 September 1833, 1.

¹⁵ Anne Sarah Rubin, "Slave Streets, Free Streets: Buying, Selling, and Hiring Enslaved Workers on Baltimore Street," *Visualizing Early Baltimore*, <https://earlybaltimore.org/ssfs/baltimore-st>.

Evidence exists to suggest that George Peabody had also previously spent time in Baltimore, as he had mail left in the post office there in October 1812. "List of letters remaining in the Post Office, Baltimore, October 1, 1812," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 3 October 1812, 5.

¹⁶ These records have either gone missing from the archives and/or been destroyed. See Maryland State Archives, "Baltimore County Chattel Records," available online: <http://guide.msa.maryland.gov/pages/viewer.aspx?page=bachattel>.

Peabody's Baltimore residence does not appear in any city directories, tax records, or U.S. Census records; however, sources indicate that he may have lived in Old Congress Hall. At the opening of the Peabody Institute in 1866, Peabody recalled having run his early Baltimore business out of the Old Congress Hall, which was an inn located at the corner of Baltimore and S. Liberty Streets.¹⁷ Originally called the Fite House, after its owner Henry Fite, the Second Continental Congress had met there in 1776-1777. Old Congress Hall was run by George Reinecker, the husband of Elizabeth Fite Reinecker, Henry Fite's daughter.¹⁸

Other sources corroborate Peabody's memory that he and Riggs had a business relationship with the Reinecker family. From 1815 to 1819, Riggs, Peabody & Co.'s business address in Baltimore was 215½ Baltimore Street. John Reinecker, George Reinecker's son, also worked as a merchant out of the same address, up until his premature death in August 1815.¹⁹ It seems likely that Riggs, Peabody & Co. took over the premises that John Reinecker's business had occupied soon after his death.

Riggs and Peabody's Old Congress Hall office shared its premises with enslaved people. George Reinecker enslaved at least four different people in Old Congress Hall between 1810 and 1820, during the time that Riggs and Peabody ran their business from there. In 1810, Reinecker enslaved two people at that location.²⁰ In 1818, he enslaved two girls: Susan (age 17) and Mary

¹⁷ George Peabody in "Inauguration of the Peabody Institute," *Daily National Intelligencer*, 27 Oct 1866, 2. See s.v. "Riggs and Peabody," Samuel Jackson, *The Baltimore Directory* (Baltimore: Matchett's, 1819).

Peabody may have moved out of Baltimore city center by 1830. That year, he purchased property at the corner of Franklin and Charles Streets in the city (currently the location of the Pope John Paul II Garden.) In the property deed, Peabody is listed as living in Baltimore County, as opposed to the city, where the sellers are listed as living. See Deed Leonard Jarvis and Henry P. Sumner to George Peabody and State of Maryland Trustees, April 24, 1830, 309-311, in Baltimore County Court (Land Records), WG 204, CE66/254, Maryland State Archives (hereafter MSA).

¹⁸ S.v. "George Reinicker," Jackson, *Baltimore Directory* (1819); Elizabeth Mitchell Stephenson Fite, *The biographical and genealogical records of the Fite families in the United States* (New York: The Greenwich Printing Company, 1907), 106-107; "Congress Hall, Baltimore and Sharp Streets, 1776," Baltimore City Life Museum Collection, CC2941, Maryland Center for History and Culture, <https://www.mdhistory.org/resources/congress-hall-baltimore-and-sharp-streets-1776/>.

¹⁹ James Lakin, ed. *The Baltimore Directory and Register for 1814-15* (J.C. O'Reilly, 1814), 161, s.v. "Reinicker, John"; Catherine Granger, "Johann George Reinecker," *Rootsweb.com*, updated 2019, <https://wc.rootsweb.com/trees/117544/I14439/johanngeorge-reinecker/individual>, s.v. "John Reinecker," last accessed October 7, 2022.

²⁰ 1810 U.S. Census, Ward 1, Baltimore, s.v. "Geo Reencker." The ages and genders of enslaved people were not specified in the 1810 census.

(age 15).²¹ In 1820, Reinecker enslaved two other people, a girl under age 14 and a male aged 14 to 25.²²

For at least some of his time in Baltimore, Peabody lived in the vicinity of the Old Congress Hall, and perhaps in it. The Old Congress Hall operated as an inn, and there are rumors that he resided there. Fellow merchant James Granger recalled having been a boarder with George Peabody in Baltimore. Though the exact location where they stayed is unknown, Granger also ran a dry goods store on Baltimore Street near Old Congress Hall.²³ Given that Peabody often traveled to visit customers and business contacts, an inn would have made a practical housing choice for his itinerant lifestyle. In addition, the 1820 census reveals that there were three white males between the ages of 14 and 25 living in George Reinecker's home at the time, yet Reinecker only had one son in that age range.²⁴ George Peabody was 25 years old that year, so he could have been one of these three men. Regardless of whether Peabody lived in the hall, he certainly lived near it. An 1825 newspaper article identified Peabody as one of a group of citizens living in the 9th Ward who had attended a neighborhood meeting.²⁵ The 9th Ward includes part of the block on which the Old Congress Hall was located.²⁶

Riggs, Peabody & Co. and slavery

The Riggs, Peabody & Co. business had an indirect link to the slave economy. Most of their business years involved importing and selling enslaved-produced cotton goods.²⁷ In 1815, for example, RP&C advertised in the *Baltimore Patriot* newspaper that they had received a

²¹ Baltimore City Property Tax Records, BRG4-1-11, 1818, 1st Ward, p. 19, s.v. "George Reinecker," Baltimore City Archives (hereafter BCA).

²² 1820 U.S. Census, Ward 10, Baltimore, s.v. "Ge Reinecker."

In addition, the Fite family biography refers to the refurbishment of chairs used by the Continental Congress into settees for enslaved people that were used in the kitchen. See Fite, *The biographical and genealogical records*, 118.

²³ James N. Granger, *Launcelot Granger of Newbury, Mass., and Suffield, Conn.: A genealogical history* (Hartford, Conn.: Press of the Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1893), 196; James Lakin, *The Baltimore Directory and Register for 1814-15* (Baltimore: J.C. O'Reilly, 1814), 93, s.v. "James Granger."

²⁴ 1820 U.S. Census, Ward 10, Baltimore, s.v. "Ge Reinecker."

Edward Reinecker, born 1803, was the only one of Reinecker's three sons who were alive at that time, "Johann George Reinecker."

²⁵ "Ninth Ward," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, January 17, 1825, 3.

²⁶ Ward location determined using Baltimore City Archives, "Wards," available online: <https://msa.maryland.gov/bca/wards/>.

²⁷ A letter from Elisha Riggs to merchants William & James Brown & Co. in Liverpool refers to "certain cotton goods" he intended to import. Elisha Riggs to Wm & Jas. Brown & Co., 15 November 1827, in Folder 1, Box 5, Riggs family papers, 1763-1945, MSS37895 (hereafter Riggs Papers), Library of Congress (hereafter LOC), p. 260. Orders for linen, chintz and silk also appear in this folder, 6 May 1828, p. 323-324.

shipment of cloths, blankets, velvet, baizes (wool), and other textiles from Liverpool.²⁸ In a letter to Peabody that year, Elisha Riggs also wrote that he was “quite satisfied with the sale of cotton” by their firm.²⁹

Liverpool was the center of the cotton import industry in Britain. That city received raw cotton, the majority of which in the nineteenth century was harvested by enslaved people in the southern United States. Workers in Lancashire transformed that cotton into textile goods, which merchants then exported to businesses like RP&C.³⁰

In addition to their import business, RP&C also traded in coffee, tobacco, flour, and raw cotton, all of which were produced predominantly by enslaved people in the Americas in the early nineteenth century.³¹ These earnings enabled the business to eventually open branches in New York and Philadelphia.

Riggs and Peabody’s business had enslavers as customers. Peabody traveled on horseback collecting debts from customers across states, including the slave states of Maryland and Virginia.³² In late 1822 and early 1823, Peabody toured Virginia by horseback, visiting customers including William Grigsby in Fauquier County, who had 26 enslaved people living and working on his farm in 1820.³³

Riggs and Peabody received goods from ships that also transported enslaved people. In September 1818, Riggs & Peabody received goods in Baltimore from the ship *Franklin*, which had arrived from Liverpool.³⁴ In 1819, the *Franklin* transported 46 enslaved people from Baltimore to New Orleans.³⁵

²⁸ “Riggs & Peabody” advertisement, *Baltimore Patriot*, December 13, 1815.

²⁹ Riggs to Peabody, 13 July 1815, Box 39, Folder 6: “Elisha Riggs, Sr., 1815-1838,” George Peabody Papers (hereafter GPP), Peabody Essex Museum (hereafter PEM).

³⁰ The U.S. was the single largest supplier of cotton to the British market by 1802. Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism*. (London: Penguin, 2015), 104.

³¹ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 6-7. In 1815, Riggs maintained an account with Burrill & Cahoon that included upland cotton and flour.

³² Hidy, *George Peabody*, 7.

³³ George Peabody to Elisha Riggs, 18 January 1823, Riggs, Peabody & Co., Folder 7, Box 281, Riggs Papers, LOC; 1820 U.S. Census, Fauquier, Virginia, p. 60, s.v. “Grigsby, William.”

³⁴ “Riggs & Peabody,” *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 22 September 1818.

³⁵ IMNO, Franklin, 11-27-1819.: *National Archives and Records Administration* (Washington, DC) - Slave Manifests of Coastwise Vessels Filed at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1807-1860, Inward Series, v. Microfilm Serial M1895, RG 36, *Slave Voyages, Intra-American Slave Trade Database*, available online: <https://www.slavevoyages.org/american/database>.

In March 1822, Elisha's nephew Samuel Riggs (1800-1852) joined the business. Elisha Riggs and Peabody then became equal partners in the business, with Samuel Riggs as the junior partner.³⁶

In 1824, Peabody and Elisha Riggs were among a handful of creditors who sued enslaver William Dudley Digges for debts owed to them; Digges' property Chillum Castle Manor was auctioned to repay those debts.³⁷ In an 1825 court case, Digges was in possession of thirty-three enslaved people.³⁸

In 1829, Elisha Riggs withdrew from the firm and left Baltimore for New York, where he established himself as a banker.³⁹ RP&C was dissolved and the business became Peabody, Riggs & Co. (PR&C), with a partnership among George Peabody, Samuel Riggs, and George's brother, Jeremiah Dodge Peabody.⁴⁰ George Peabody was senior partner.

During the 1830s and early 1840s, George Peabody remained a partner in the firm. He was an active partner until 1843, and a partner only in name from 1843 to 1845.⁴¹ During that time Peabody, Riggs & Co. continued to earn wealth from enslaved-produced goods. In 1837, for example, the ship *Eliza Ann* arrived in Baltimore from Liverpool with dry goods for the company.⁴² For a brief period, George Peabody also had a dry goods firm with Edward Pittman. More research is needed to ascertain the reasons behind this dual firm.⁴³

In 1845, Peabody, Riggs & Co. were co-creditors in a Virginia court case with a Baltimore merchant named Royston Betts, in which an attempt was made to repossess or sell 10

³⁶ "Riggs & Peabody," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 20 March 1822; Hidy, *George Peabody*, Appendix A, 371; Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 236.

³⁷ "Marshal's Sale," *Daily National Intelligencer* 24 August 1824, 1.

³⁸ Elizabeth Digges Carroll, Jane Digges Fitzgerald, and William Carroll v. William Dudley Diggs, Chancery Court, Prince George's County, Maryland, 11 July 1825, Schweningen Collection, p. 98, M11017, Maryland State Archives, *Digital Library on American Slavery: Race and Slavery Petitions*, available online: <http://dlas.uncg.edu/petitions/petition/20982212/>.

³⁹ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 323.

In 1837, Riggs was elected to the board of Farmers Loan & Trust in New York. Further research is needed to ascertain whether this bank had connections to slavery.

⁴⁰ "Notice," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 27 January 1829, 3.

⁴¹ Hidy, Appendix A, *George Peabody*, 371.

⁴² "Arrived," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser*, 14 March 1837, 2.

⁴³ "Co-partnership" between George Peabody and Edw. Pittman in Baltimore, 9 February 1837, as announced in *Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 10 March 1837, 3.

enslaved people to repay Betts' debts. It is not clear whether Betts eventually repaid PR&C the \$1,357.84 he owed them using profits earned from the sale of enslaved people.⁴⁴

Peabody's relationship with the Riggs family

George Peabody maintained a life-long personal and professional relationship with the Riggs family. Riggs family biographer John Beverley Riggs described it as "the intimate association of the Riggs family with Mr. Peabody for nearly sixty years."⁴⁵ Peabody was in business with Elisha Riggs for fifteen years (1814-1829) and with Elisha's nephew Samuel Riggs for twenty-three years (1822-1845).⁴⁶ Peabody also served as godfather to one of Elisha Riggs' sons, Lawrason Riggs (1814-1884).⁴⁷

After Peabody left Baltimore and became a banker in London, he continued to have close ties with the Riggs family. In 1838, Peabody opened a joint stock account with Riggs, in which Riggs purchased stocks in the U.S. that Peabody sold in the U.K. Peabody's joint stock account with Riggs was the largest of all his accounts of that nature.⁴⁸ Elisha Riggs sent Peabody securities to sell on the British market.⁴⁹ In 1838, he sponsored George Washington Riggs (the younger, 1813-1881), son of Elisha Riggs, on a trip to England to value dry goods and learn about European markets. In 1840, George Washington Riggs co-founded Corcoran & Riggs Bank in Washington, D.C., with which Peabody traded extensively.⁵⁰ In 1839, George Peabody and Samuel Riggs added two people to their importing partnership business, Henry T. Jenkins and George's cousin Adolphus W. Peabody.⁵¹

In addition, George Peabody's uncle John Peabody maintained a close relationship with the Riggs family. When Elisha Riggs' brother Romulus Riggs and George Gaither auctioned off

⁴⁴ Northumberland County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1759-1980, John R. Ricards and Dandrige Cox et. al vs Royston Betts and Wife et. al, 1845-017, Local Government Records Collection, Northumberland Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

⁴⁵ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 331.

⁴⁶ Hidy, Appendix A, *George Peabody*, 371.

⁴⁷ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 335. Lawrason's son, also named Lawrason Riggs (1861-1940), would serve as president of the Peabody Institute Board of Trustees from 1917 to 1937.

⁴⁸ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 147.

⁴⁹ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 8.

⁵⁰ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 328.

⁵¹ "Articles of co-partnership," September 1, 1839, Folder 3, Box 141, Riggs Papers, LOC.

the contents of their goods store on Bridge Street in Baltimore in 1818, John Peabody served as the auctioneer.⁵²

The Riggs family and slavery

While Peabody and Elisha Riggs worked together, Elisha Riggs enslaved at least two people, with whom it is likely Peabody also interacted. In 1823, Riggs owned one enslaved person, John, age 22, and held on loan or rental another enslaved person, Daphne, age 28, who belonged to Welford.⁵³ In 1825 and 1826, Elisha Riggs enslaved at least two people.⁵⁴

Elisha Riggs' nephew Samuel Riggs, who joined the company in 1822, was also an enslaver. In 1825 and 1827, he borrowed or rented a person enslaved by Mr. Levering.⁵⁵ He also had two free Black people working in his home in 1830—a female aged 10 to 23 and a female aged 36 to 54.⁵⁶ In 1840, three free Black people served in his home—a male aged 24 to 35, a female aged 10 to 23, and a female aged 24 to 35.⁵⁷ In 1850, he enslaved three males, aged 40, 20, and 15.⁵⁸ Four people of color also served in his home that year—Jos Palmer, a Black man aged 42, a coachman; Charles Palmer, a Black man aged 22, a laborer; Margaret Palmer, a mixed-race woman aged 33; and Ann Palmer, a mixed-race woman aged 44.⁵⁹

George Peabody also received partial income from the profits of the mercantile firm R. & E. Riggs & Co. (also known as Riggs, Rockhill & Co. of Philadelphia from 1824-1825), in

⁵² “Advertisement,” *Alexandria Herald*, 6 April 1818, 3.

⁵³ Baltimore City Tax Assessor Records, BRG4-2, 1823, 9th Ward, p. 282, s.v. “Elisha Riggs,” BCA.

Welford may well have been Robert R. Welford (Wilford) of Baltimore, who was identified as having one female slave aged 14 to 25 in the 1820 census, among the 5 people whom he enslaved. 1820 Census, Ward 8, Baltimore, s.v. “Robert R. Welford.” This is the only listing of an enslaver with this surname in Baltimore for the 1820 census.

The practice of renting or borrowing enslaved people was very common in Maryland, much more common than the buying or selling of enslaved people. Barbara Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland During the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985), 27.

⁵⁴ Riggs paid city property tax for “slaves” in those years, with no number of enslaved people listed in the record. Respectively, City Tax Assessor Records, BRG4-2, 1825, p. 185, s.v. “Elisha Riggs,” BCA; City Tax Assessor Records, BRG4-2, 1826, p. 183, s.v. “Elisha Riggs,” BCA.

The only property that Riggs & Peabody paid tax on in 1825 was a horse. City Tax Assessor Records, BRG4-2, 1825, p. 185, s.v. “Riggs & Peabody,” BCA.

⁵⁵ City Tax Assessor Records, BRG4-2, 1825, p. 184, BCA; City Tax Assessor Records, BRG4-2, 1827, p. 185, BCA.

⁵⁶ 1830 U.S. Census, Ward 9, Baltimore, s.v. “Saml Riggs.”

⁵⁷ 1840 U.S. Census, Ward 10, Baltimore, s.v. “Saml Riggs.”

⁵⁸ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 19, Baltimore, MD, s.v. “Saml Riggs.”

⁵⁹ 1850 U.S. Census, Ward 19, Baltimore, MD, s.v. “Saml Riggs.”

which he and Elisha Riggs were co-partners with Elisha's brother Romulus Riggs.⁶⁰ In 1812, Romulus Riggs served as an agent for the Powhatan Cotton Manufacturing Company, and he traded in cotton in Georgetown.⁶¹ He was also an enslaver. In 1811, while based in Washington, Romulus purchased enslaved man Ignatius M. Diggs from Charles Perrie of Prince George's County, Maryland.⁶² In 1820, he enslaved two people in Georgetown, Washington, D.C, a female aged 14 through 25 and a boy under age 14. He also had a free colored person, a girl under age 14, in his home.⁶³

Romulus Riggs was also the co-defendant in the lawsuit to recover a debt using the sale of an enslaved person, Daphne.⁶⁴ In 1824, U.S. marshal and enslaver Tench Ringgold seized Daphne, whom the Barron family had enslaved and announced her sale in order to satisfy a debt that the Barron family owed to Romulus Riggs.⁶⁵ It is possible that this person was the same Daphne whom Elisha Riggs had enslaved in 1823.

Elisha Riggs' son George Washington Riggs, whom Peabody hosted in London, was also an enslaver. In 1860, Riggs enslaved one male aged 40 and one female aged 23.⁶⁶

Elisha Riggs had grown up in an enslaving family.⁶⁷ Elisha was born in a house known as "Pleasant Hill" on the Riggs' family plantation "Bordley's Choice."⁶⁸ In 1790, when Elisha was

⁶⁰ Establishment of the co-partnership of Riggs, Rockhill & Co., among Romulus Riggs, John Rockhill, Elisha Riggs of New York and George Peabody of Baltimore, 2 October 1824, announced in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser [Philadelphia]* 5 October 1824, 3. In 1825, the co-partnership changed to Romulus Riggs, Elisha Riggs, and George Peabody. 31 August 1825, announced in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser [Philadelphia]* 2 September 1825, 3; Hidy, *George Peabody*, 7.

⁶¹ "Advertisement," *Federal Republican and Commercial Gazette [Georgetown, District of Columbia]* 28 August 1812, 3.

⁶² Bill of sale for Ignatius M. Diggs, April 14, 1811, Prince George's County Court (Chattel Papers) Maryland State Archives (hereafter MSA) MSA C1174, 1810-1817; C1174-7; 40233-188.

⁶³ 1820 U.S. Census, Georgetown, Washington, D.C., s.v. "Romulus Riggs."

⁶⁴ Petition of Calbeck Barron, Thomas Barron, and William H. Barron, vs. George R. Gaither and Romulus Riggs, petition #20482406, RG 21, folder 20, National Archives and Records Administration, as cited in Race and Slavery Petitions Project, *Digital Library on American Slavery*, <http://dlas.uncg.edu/petitions/petition/20482406/>.

⁶⁵ "Marshall's Sale," *Daily National Intelligencer*, February 11, 1824, 2.

⁶⁶ 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 1, Washington, D.C., s.v. "Geo W. Riggs."

⁶⁷ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 321.

While Elisha Riggs lived in Georgetown, his brother George W. Riggs (the elder) also lived there. Around 1807, George enslaved "1 Negroe Girle," according to Georgetown tax records. Assessment of Real & Personal Property, 1800-07; Roll 7, Records of the City of Georgetown (D.C.), 1800-79; National Archives Microfilm Publications no. 605, s.v. "George Washington Riggs."

⁶⁸ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 154, 318.

eleven years old, his father Samuel Riggs (1740-1814) enslaved 10 people on the property.⁶⁹ Samuel Riggs had been born on the plantation “Riggs Hills” in Anne Arundel County.⁷⁰

Peabody visits cotton merchants in England

In 1827, Peabody went on his first business trip to England. His preparations for this trip reveal that he had amassed significant wealth since he had started working with the Riggs family.⁷¹ He prepared a will that indicated his assets were worth \$85,000 (\$2.7 million, 2021.)⁷² Given that Peabody began his life in a poor family, and possessed only \$400 in property when living in Georgetown in 1812 (above), most of this wealth was earned through his work with the Riggs family. By the time he left Baltimore in 1837, Peabody’s assets had increased to \$322,000 (\$10.5 million).⁷³

On November 1, 1827, he departed for Liverpool, where he met with the Brown Brothers, Baltimore bankers who were establishing their firm in Liverpool and New York.⁷⁴ The Brown Brothers hosted Peabody during this trip to England, receiving and forwarding his mail and bills to him.⁷⁵ Peabody moved between Liverpool, where cotton was imported, and Manchester, where it was manufactured into goods.

Brown Brothers imported U.S. cotton and exported cotton goods. They worked with U.S.-based merchants who took orders for U.S. cotton, which was harvested by enslaved people and transported to Liverpool. By the 1820s, the Brown Brothers were “among the largest cotton traders between the United States and Liverpool,” according to historian Sven Beckert.⁷⁶ It is

⁶⁹ 1790 U.S. Census, Montgomery County, Maryland, s.v. “Samuel Riggs.” Samuel Riggs also enslaved ten people in 1800. 1800 U.S. Census, District 1, Montgomery County, s.v. “Samuel Riggs.”

⁷⁰ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 153.

⁷¹ Franklin Parker, *George Peabody: A Biography* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1971), 17-18; Hidy, *George Peabody*, 7.

⁷² Estimates of present-day value have been calculated using the most conservative estimate, the Relative Price Worth (RPW) index for 2021, through the online calculator “Measuring Worth.” Measuring Worth (<https://www.measuringworth.com>), as cited in Goopar, *The Taylor Report*, part I, 12.

⁷³ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 71.

⁷⁴ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 7; Parker, *George Peabody*, 18.

Peabody is listed as one of the passengers on board the ship *Florida* heading from New York to Liverpool in *The Albion* Vol. 6, no. 21 (3 November 1827): 167.

⁷⁵ Elisha Riggs to George Peabody, 31 March 1828, p. 311, Folder 1, Box 5, Riggs Papers, LOC.

⁷⁶ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 217-218.

estimated that by the 1830s, the Brown Brothers earned \$400,000 a year in profit from the work of enslaved laborers, the equivalent today of roughly \$14 million per year.

Peabody and Riggs had likely first met the Browns in Baltimore, as Alexander Brown had founded a linen business in the city in 1800. Alexander Brown had sent his son William to Liverpool in 1810 to open the business there. RP&C had also opened an account with Brown Brothers, to import cotton goods from Liverpool to Baltimore.⁷⁷

The Peabody family, enslaving, and free Black domestic servants

At least five of George Peabody's second cousins were enslavers, including one with whom George Peabody worked. Several of his more distant third and fourth cousins also enslaved people; one of them encouraged Peabody's work in the cotton business.⁷⁸ Born in Massachusetts in 1806, Herbert Cheever Peabody, George's second cousin, moved to Mobile, Alabama, where he worked as a cotton factor, also known as a cotton broker.⁷⁹ In 1850, Herbert enslaved eight people in Mobile, Alabama. He enslaved one mixed-race female, age 30; three mixed-race males, aged 8, 10, and 30; two Black girls, aged 6 and 9; and two Black boys, aged 9

⁷⁷ Elisha Riggs to Wm & Jas Brown & Co., 15 November 1827, p. 261, Folder 1, Box 5, Riggs Papers, LOC.

⁷⁸ Second, third, and fourth cousin relationships derived from Selim H. Peabody, *Peabody genealogy* (Boston: Charles H. Pope, 1909), 49 (s.v. "George Peabody"); 202 (s.v. "Herbert Cheever Peabody"); 91 (s.v. "Nathaniel Jordan Peabody"); 197 (s.v. "Erastus Peabody"); 140-141 (s.v. "Nathaniel Prentice Peabody"); 142 (s.v. "William Peabody"); 142-143 (s.v. "Charles Alfred Peabody").

Preliminary research indicates that at least three of Peabody's fourth cousins were enslavers: brothers Charles Alfred Peabody and William Peabody, and their cousin Nathaniel Prentice Peabody.

Charles A. Peabody enslaved 6 people in Russell County, Alabama in 1850, 4 females, aged 1, 2, 18, and 20; and 2 males, both aged 19. He enslaved 13 people in Russell in 1860: 6 females, aged 6 months, 8, 10, 20, 20, and 28; and 7 males, aged 1, 4, 7, 18, 18, 18, and 19. Respectively, 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Russell, Alabama, s.v. "Charles Peabody" and 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Southern Division, Russell, Alabama, s.v. "Charles A. Peabody."

Charles moved to Alabama to pursue farming and horticulture after 1837. He co-founded and edited the monthly journal *Soil of the South*, and he served as the horticultural editor of *American Cotton Planter*. See "Charles A. Peabody Collection (MC 294)," Columbus State University, available online:

<https://www.columbusstate.edu/archives/findingaids/mc294.php>.

William Peabody enslaved 1 female, age 35, in Decatur County, Georgia in 1850. 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, District 22, Decatur, Georgia, s.v. "Wm Peabody." His residence of Bainbridge, Georgia, as cited in *Peabody genealogy* at p. 142, was in Decatur County.

Nathaniel P. Peabody enslaved 4 people in Marlboro, South Carolina in 1860, 2 males, aged 1 and 18, and 2 females, aged 3 and 18. 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Marlboro, South Carolina, s.v. "N P Peabody." His residence of Bennettsville, South Carolina, as cited in *Peabody genealogy* at p. 141, was in Marlboro County.

⁷⁹ Finding aid to Herbert C. Peabody papers, 1845-1859, Collection Number: 03676-z, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, available online: <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/03676/>.

and 15.⁸⁰ George maintained a relationship with Herbert, hosting him on multiple occasions in London and exchanging correspondence.⁸¹

Four of George's other second cousins were also enslavers. Born in Georgia in 1827, Nathaniel J. Peabody enslaved eight people in 1850: four females, aged 6, 28, 40, and 55; and four males, aged 12, 25, 31, and 35.⁸² George's second cousin Erastus Peabody, born in New Hampshire, enslaved one female, aged 20 in New Orleans, Louisiana in 1850.⁸³ In 1860, Erastus' widow Olivia Ann Sentell Peabody enslaved one female, age 40, in New Orleans.⁸⁴ Another of George's second cousins-in-law, Elizabeth Jordan Peabody, widow of John Peabody (b. Massachusetts), enslaved 12 people in Columbus, Georgia, in 1860: six females, aged 5, 24, 26, 40, 40, and 69; and six males, aged 2, 5, 18, 23, and 14.⁸⁵

George Peabody's third cousin, Mary Smith, was an enslaver who invested in George's business and encouraged him in the cotton trade. In 1822, Mary wrote to George from Alexandria, Virginia. Her letter included the postscript, "Remember the Cotton and watch without ceasing."⁸⁶ Mary invested approximately \$3,000 in Peabody, Riggs & Co. in 1830.⁸⁷ Prior to that, Mary had invested small sums of money personally with George, which she mentioned in a letter to him in 1825.⁸⁸ In 1820, Mary had enslaved two people, a girl under age 14 and a female aged 14 to 26.⁸⁹

Two of George Peabody's brothers employed free Black people in their homes. David Peabody (1790-1841) had worked briefly with George in Baltimore. David and his brother Jeremiah Dodge Peabody (1805-1877) both moved to Zanesville, Ohio, after having worked with George in Baltimore. In 1840, a free Black female aged 10 to 24 worked in David's home.⁹⁰ In 1860, Mary J. Barnett, a Black girl aged 13, lived and worked in Jeremiah's home. Barnett had

⁸⁰ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Mobile, Alabama, s.v. "H.C. Peabody."

⁸¹ Finding aid to Herbert C. Peabody papers.

⁸² 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Muscogee, Columbus, Georgia, s.v. "Nat Peabody."

⁸³ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Municipality 3, Ward 1, New Orleans, Louisiana, s.v. "Erastus Peabody."

⁸⁴ 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 8, New Orleans, Louisiana, s.v. "Widow Olivia Peabody."

⁸⁵ 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Muscogee, Columbus, Georgia, s.v. "Elizebeth Peabody."

⁸⁶ Mary Smith to George Peabody, 29 November 1822, Folder 1, Box 192, GPP, PEM. Emphasis in the original.

⁸⁷ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 48.

⁸⁸ Mary Smith to George Peabody, 4 December 1825, Folder 1, Box 192, GPP, PEM.

⁸⁹ 1820 U.S. Census, Alexandria, District of Columbia, s.v. "Mary Smith."

⁹⁰ 1840 U.S. Census, Zanes, Muskingum, Ohio, s.v. "David Peabody."

been born in Kentucky.⁹¹ In 1870, Mary Cooper, a 40-year-old mixed-race woman, also lived and worked in Jeremiah Peabody's home. Cooper had been born in Maryland.⁹² Given that Jeremiah had previously lived and worked in Baltimore, Cooper may have come from the city. Her year of birth and state of birth match that of a free Black woman named Mary Cooper in Baltimore, who had worked as a washerwoman.⁹³

George Peabody's uncle John may have been involved in slavery. In 1828, John Peabody requested George's help in purchasing a share in a ship that traveled among port cities associated with slavery. John wrote to George from aboard the ship *Richmond*, which was docked in Norfolk, Virginia, and headed for Charleston, South Carolina, and then Liverpool, England. He notified his nephew that he had commanded the ship for one voyage, and that the captain wished to name him as successor.

Mining

In 1834, while he was still living in Baltimore, George Peabody purchased 300 acres of land in Zanesville, Ohio.⁹⁴ This purchase took place prior to George's brothers David and Jeremiah Dodge moving to Ohio. The land that George Peabody purchased had been owned by the Dillon family, who had come from the Little Falls area of Baltimore County to settle in Ohio. On the land, Quaker missionary Moses Dillon (1747-1839) led a steelmaking business.⁹⁵ He established the "first iron furnace and foundry west of the Allegheny Mountains" there, as well as a gristmill and two sawmills that had employed as many as 150 men.⁹⁶ The foundry also provided material for the construction of the Ohio-Erie Canal, which had been completed in 1832, just prior to Peabody's purchase. Though the evidence does not clearly reveal why

⁹¹ 1860 U.S. Census, Falls, Muskingum, Ohio, s.v. "J.D. Peabody."

⁹² 1870 U.S. Census, Falls, Muskingum, Ohio, s.v. "Jeremiah Dodge Peabody."

⁹³ Cooper's birth year and state of birth are an exact match for the 1870 census record for her in Jeremiah D. Peabody's home. 1860 U.S. Census, Ward 14, Baltimore, s.v. "Mary Cooper."

⁹⁴ Muskingum County, Ohio, Deed Book P: 33-34; Isaac Dillon to George Peabody, 15 September 1834; Moses Dillon to George Peabody, 16 September 1834; Charles B. Goddard to George Peabody, 15 September 1834; Muskingum County (Ohio) Recorder; microfilm 900186, *Family History Library*, available online: <https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/262228?availability=Family%20History%20Library>.

⁹⁵ Dana Fellows, "Moses Dillon: Early Pioneer in Steelmaking," *Northwestern Steel & Wire Co.* 28 November 2011, available online: <https://www.nwsw.info/?p=65>.

⁹⁶ "Moses Dillon," *Find A Grave*, available online: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/169934930/moses-dillon>.

Peabody purchased this land, the land's use suggests that he may have wanted to start his own steelmaking company or invest in Dillon's mills and steelmaking business.

It is unknown whether enslaved labor was used at Dillon's mills and iron furnace and foundry, but people of color worked as servants in the home of at least one member of the Dillon family. Although the state of Ohio officially prohibited slavery, up until 1841 it was legal for owners of enslaved people to bring them into Ohio and continue to enslave them there.⁹⁷ In 1820, Moses Dillon's son John Dillon, who took over the family business after his father's death, had one free girl of color, aged under 14, living in his home.⁹⁸ In 1860, John Dillon lived in a household where a mixed-race man, Jackson Jehew, age 18, worked as a servant.⁹⁹

III. Peabody's banking career (1837-1869)

Key findings:

- Peabody worked as a merchant banker in London from 1837 to 1869. He became the primary banker for British-based customers investing money in the U.S. In this role, Peabody had both direct and indirect links to slavery.
- A considerable portion of Peabody's merchant banking wealth was earned from the labors and lives of enslaved people in the U.S., and, to a much lesser extent, enslaved people in Brazil.
- From the late 1830s to mid-1850s, Peabody conducted substantial business in cotton. He traded with several plantation banks and merchants in New Orleans, which was at the time the capital of the domestic slave trade, and in other Southern cities. He also traded with many cotton merchants in Liverpool, England.
- Peabody earned multiple streams of income from enslaved people's labor, including through investment banking, funding the shipping of enslaved-produced goods, issuing

⁹⁷ Greg Hand, "Ohio was not home-free for runaway slaves," *Cincinnati Magazine*, 28 February 2016, available online: <https://www.cincinnati.com/citywiseblog/cincinnati-curiosities-runaway-slaves/>.

⁹⁸ 1820 U.S. Census, Zanesville, Muskingum, Ohio, s.v. "John Dillon."

⁹⁹ 1860 U.S. Census, Zanesville, Muskingum, Ohio, s.v. "John Dillon."

circular letters of credit to enslavers, investing in insurance companies, purchasing public bonds, waging lawsuits seeking to recover enslaved people, and investing in railroads.

Investments:

- Peabody has direct links to slavery through his investment banking business. As a shareholder in two plantation banks that used an estimated 21,000 enslaved people as collateral, and which came to own 1,300 enslaved individuals through defaults on debts, Peabody was a partial owner of enslaved people.
- These banks, and at least six others with which Peabody traded, used enslaved people as collateral against credit. This credit was primarily provided to plantation owners and other enslavers.
- Peabody held stock in insurance companies and served on the board of directors of an insurance company that insured enslaved people and enslaved-produced goods.
- Peabody was named as a party in a court case in Virginia that included enslaved people as a means of recovering debt.

Shipping and trade:

- In the 1840s and 1850s, George Peabody conducted business dealings with at least 96 companies in Liverpool, England. Liverpool was the global leader in the trade of enslaved-produced cotton in this period.
- From the mid-1830s through the late 1850s, Peabody conducted business with at least 15 companies in New Orleans and one company in nearby Natchez, Mississippi. During this period New Orleans was the headquarters of the domestic slave trade.
- Peabody oversaw the shipping and trade of many enslaved-produced goods including cotton, tobacco, turpentine, coffee, wheat, flour, and corn.

Peabody as leading banker of American securities in Europe, 1837-1864

In 1837, George Peabody moved to London, where he traded as a merchant banker. In this role, he purchased and sold investments, especially American stocks and bonds; loaned credit to others, especially that which facilitated the shipment of goods between the U.S. and

England; and helped Americans secure credit in England. In 1851, Peabody formally incorporated the bank under the name George Peabody & Co. In 1854, he made J.S. Morgan a partner in the firm, which renamed itself Peabody, Morgan & Co., and in 1864, Peabody retired, and the firm became J.S. Morgan & Co.¹⁰⁰

In the nineteenth century, London emerged as the headquarters for the financing of global trade, and George Peabody was at the center of this growth. The city experienced a huge expansion in overseas trade in the first two-thirds of the century, particularly around the exporting of cotton goods.¹⁰¹ Numerous foreign merchants and bankers filled the city, attracted by its economic opportunities. Among the merchant banks from abroad to set up its offices in London, Peabody became well-known, and particularly as the banker with whom to purchase and sell U.S. investments. Historians have described Peabody as “the most notable” of bankers from abroad to move to London in the nineteenth century, and as “the major London specialist [in U.S. securities] through the period.”¹⁰² JPMorgan Chase, the modern-day firm for which Peabody’s bank was a predecessor, has also been called George Peabody & Co.¹⁰³ While Peabody’s bank was smaller than some other London merchant banks, it was the one most closely associated with doing business with the United States.

Many aspects of the global business coming out of London during this period were intertwined with slavery. Slavery apologist David Christy noted in his book *Cotton is King* in 1855 that “slavery is not an isolated system, but is so mingled with the business of the world, that it derives facilities from the most innocent transactions.”¹⁰⁴ Likewise, many major and minor business activities that Peabody undertook during this period had connections to slavery.

¹⁰⁰ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 359.

¹⁰¹ Youssef Cassis, *Capitals of Capital: A History of International Financial Centres, 1780-2005*, trans. Jacqueline Collier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 21.

¹⁰² Cassis, *Capitals of Capital*, 23; Stanley Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), 92.

¹⁰³ “History of Our Firm,” [n.d.], JPMorgan Chase, available at <https://www.jpmorganchase.com/about/our-history>, accessed June 14, 2023.

¹⁰⁴ David Christy, *Cotton is King: Or, the Culture of Cotton, and its Relation to Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce* (Cincinnati: Moore, Wiltach, Keys & Co., 1855), 36, as quoted in Kathryn Susan Boodry, “The Common Thread: Slavery, Cotton and Atlantic Finance from the Louisiana Purchase to Reconstruction.” (PhD dissertation, Harvard University, 2014), 168.

Investment in plantation banks that owned enslaved people and/or used enslaved people as mortgage collateral

From the mid-1840s through the 1850s, Peabody provided extensive credit for southern plantation owners. He invested in private plantation banks, a type of bank that emerged first in Louisiana in the late 1820s and 1830s to serve plantation owners and other enslavers. The banks extended credit to individuals so that they could maintain, purchase, and grow plantations and other land; pay for shipments of enslaved-produced goods; purchase enslaved people; and enforce their labor. Although these banks were privately run, Louisiana and other respective states acted as a guarantor for the banks, thereby reducing risk for investors.¹⁰⁵

Through a debt instrument that was introduced in 1828, enslavers could also monetize, or calculate and trade in the monetary value of, enslaved people. Historian Ed Baptist has called this practice “systematic collateralization.”¹⁰⁶ Indeed, during this period, banks began to accept enslaved people as collateral against loans and as parts of loans they accepted from third parties. Many banks also helped underwrite the sale of enslaved people, by using enslaved people as the collateral for their own sales. These banks also sold enslaved people when they foreclosed on people who failed to fulfill debts.¹⁰⁷

Peabody’s investments in Louisiana

Peabody invested heavily in the New Orleans economy, which was at the time the center of the domestic slave trade. Like other merchant bankers, Peabody traded on the profits that could be made from the planting season. He regularly corresponded with U.S. bankers and commissioning merchants about the state of the cotton market and securities in New Orleans.

From this correspondence and his account records, we learn that Peabody invested in six Louisiana banks during this period, all of which used enslaved people as collateral against debts.¹⁰⁸ The Bank of Louisiana, Citizens’ Bank, Canal Bank, Consolidated Association of

¹⁰⁵ David K. Thomson, “Not Worth the Paper They Were Printed On: Louisiana’s state debt default of 1843,” *64 Parishes* May 2023, available online: <https://64parishes.org/not-worth-the-paper-they-were-printed-on>.

¹⁰⁶ Edward E. Baptist, “Toxic Debt, Liar Loans, Collateralized and Securitized Human Beings, and the Panic of 1873,” in *Capitalism Takes Command: The Social Transformation of Nineteenth-Century America*, eds. Michael Zakim and Gary J. Kornblith (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 69-92, 69.

¹⁰⁷ Sharon Murphy, “Introduction,” *Banking on Slavery: Financing Southern Expansion in the Antebellum United States* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2023).

¹⁰⁸ Ledger, Volume 48: London securities, 1847-49, GPP, PEM.

Planters of Louisiana (CAPL), New Orleans Gas Light & Banking Company (NOGLBC), and Union Bank have all been identified as banks that used enslaved people as collateral against debts.¹⁰⁹

Southern bankers' inhumane use of enslaved people as collateral was a widespread practice in the antebellum era. Historian Bonnie Martin estimates that 88% of loans that were secured with mortgages in Louisiana used enslaved people as collateral.¹¹⁰ She maintains that hundreds of millions of dollars of capital was secured using enslaved humans as property. While the rate was particularly high in Louisiana, historian Caitlin Rosenthal estimates that approximately 40% of mortgages across the south in the colonial era and nineteenth century also secured collateral through the mortgaging of enslaved people.¹¹¹

At least two of the Louisiana banks in which Peabody invested owned enslaved people outright; therefore, Peabody held partial ownership of enslaved people. In 2005, JPMorgan Chase Bank (JPMC) disclosed that it had significant involvement in slavery, and Peabody has several direct connections to this announcement.¹¹² JPMC revealed this information to comply with a Chicago law that requires businesses who work in that city to disclose past involvement in slavery. In 2021, JPMC also updated its disclosure with more information, and we rely on this update here.

Between 1831 and 1865, JPMorgan Chase's predecessor banks Citizens' Bank and Canal Bank in Louisiana accepted approximately 21,000 enslaved people as collateral for loans.¹¹³ In addition, the two banks assumed ownership of approximately 1,300 enslaved people through foreclosures on debts. Given that Peabody was an investor in both Canal Bank and Citizens'

¹⁰⁹ Evidence of Peabody's investments in these banks includes Bank of Louisiana, Canal Bank, CAPL, Citizens Bank, and Union Bank: Ledger Volume 48, Stocks & bonds, 1847-49, GPP, PEM; NOGLBC: Ledger Volume 49, London securities, 1847-49, GPP, PEM.

On the identification of these banks with the use of enslaved people as collateral, see Murphy, *Banking on Slavery*, esp. Chapter 4: "Pushing Financial Boundaries with Traditional Banks" and Chapter 5: "Reimagining Banking for a Slave Economy"; David K. Thompson, "Not Worth the Paper They Were Printed On: Louisiana's state debt default of 1843," *64 Parishes* May 2023, available online: <https://64parishes.org/not-worth-the-paper-they-were-printed-on>.

¹¹⁰ Bonnie Martin, "Slavery's Invisible Engine: Mortgaging Human Property," *Journal of Southern History* 76, 4 (2010): 817-866, 840-41, as cited in Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 114.

¹¹¹ Caitlin Rosenthal, *Accounting for Slavery* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018), 134.

¹¹² David Teather, "Bank admits it owned slaves," *The Guardian* 22 January 2005.

¹¹³ JPMorgan Chase & Co., "City of Chicago Economic Disclosure Statement and Affidavit," 2021 (hereafter Chase Disclosure), 22.

Bank, he was a partial owner of these enslaved people, both those who were mortgaged to the bank and those whom the bank owned.

JPMorgan Chase made Peabody's connection to its predecessor banks explicit. It reported in 2021, "J. Pierpont Morgan, Sr. was associated with George Peabody & Company and J.S. Morgan & Company (the 'Peabody Firms') before he founded Drexel Morgan & Company, which ultimately became part of JPMorgan Chase."¹¹⁴ It also disclaimed, "Records indicate that the Peabody Firms had customers that appear to have used enslaved individuals."

Peabody was also a partial owner of 75 of the 272 enslaved people that Georgetown University had sold to Henry Johnson in 1838. In 1844, Johnson renegotiated the terms of his purchase with Georgetown. In his correspondence, Johnson noted that he had mortgaged 75 of the enslaved people he had purchased to the following banks: 25 enslaved people to Citizens' Bank in 1839, 12 to Bank of Louisiana in 1841, and 38 to Union Bank of Louisiana in 1843.¹¹⁵ All three banks were entities in which Peabody invested. In 1843, Peabody held at least \$8,000 (\$340,000) in Bank of Louisiana bonds; at least \$16,000 (\$681,000) in Union Bank of Louisiana bonds; and Citizens' Bank bonds of an unknown amount.¹¹⁶

Peabody was aware that he was investing his money to help plantation owners access credit for enslaving. For example, A&J Dennistown & Co. noted in an 1847 letter to Peabody that the owning of Consolidated and Citizens' Bank coupons would support planters paying up their "curtailments."¹¹⁷

Peabody also invested in entities outside Louisiana that had connections to slavery. He issued credit to, purchased notes issued by, and maintained accounts by correspondence with cities, banks, companies, and individuals connected to slavery. These included the Merchants'

¹¹⁴ Chase Disclosure, 21.

¹¹⁵ "Henry Johnson renegotiates the terms of sale, February 17, 1844," Maryland Province Archives, *Georgetown Slavery Archive*, available online: <http://slaveryarchive.georgetown.edu/items/show/63>.

¹¹⁶ Peabody instructed James Robb of New Orleans to sell \$16,000 of his Union Bank Bonds in October 1843. Robb to Peabody, 2 October 1843, in Folder 11, Box 144, "James Robb, 1843-1844," GPP, PEM. In June 1843, Peabody also asked Robert Saunderson of New Orleans to sell some of his Bank of Louisiana bonds. Saunderson sold \$8,000 of these bonds. Saunderson to Peabody, 17 June 1843, Folder 6, Box 47, "Robert Saunderson, 1843-1844," GPP, PEM. On Peabody's Citizens' Bank investments, see e.g., Robb & Hoge to Peabody, 3 October 1843, in Folder 3, Box 47, "Robb & Hoge, 1843-1845," GPP, PEM.

¹¹⁷ A&J Dennistown & Co. to George Peabody, 18 September 1847, Folder 2, Box 17, GPP, PEM.

Bank of Baltimore, the Mississippi Planters' Bank, and the Second Bank of the United States.¹¹⁸ At the time that Peabody left Baltimore for London in 1837, his largest stock investment was with Merchants' Bank of Baltimore. He had invested \$36,000 (\$982,000 in 2021) in the bank between 1835 and 1837 and had earned \$2,700 (\$78,900) from this investment in 1837.¹¹⁹

Through these investments, Peabody profited doubly from enslaved people and their unfree labor. That is, as a merchant Peabody earned profits by trading in the goods that enslaved people produced. And as an investor in the above banks, he earned profits from the mortgaging of enslaved people, which increased the value of his stocks and bonds in these banks.

Case study: Edmond J. Forstall

The JPMC disclosure revealed a relationship between Louisiana banker, plantation owner, and sugar refiner Edmond J. Forstall and Citizens' Bank. In the 1850 census, Forstall enslaved 129 people.¹²⁰ According to the JPMC disclosure, in 1843 Forstall mortgaged the plantation "Grand Terre" and 53 enslaved people to Citizens' Bank.¹²¹

This project reveals Peabody's link to Forstall. In addition to Peabody's investment in Citizens' Bank, Peabody also employed Forstall as a local agent for his investments in Louisiana. Forstall was one of a few local enslavers and traders in the south whom Peabody employed to act as his representatives for investments in their respective areas. They also included William Cochran of Natchez, Mississippi, and James Robb, President of the New Orleans Gas Light and Banking Company, both of whom were enslavers.¹²²

In November 1849, Peabody opened an investment account with Forstall in the amount of \$50,000 (\$1.8 million), which Forstall invested in southern securities at Peabody's direction and

¹¹⁸ Mississippi Planters' Bank: A & J Dennistown to Peabody, 20 May 1848, Folder 2, Box 17, GPP, PEM; Second Bank of the U.S.: Volume 49, "London Securities," 1847-49. Mississippi Planters' Bank and Merchants' Bank of Baltimore are identified as having connections to slavery in Attachment 1 to Attachment B, Chase Disclosure, 10. On the Second Bank of the US's connections to slavery, see Sharon A. Murphy, "The Financialization of Slavery by the First and Second Banks of the United States," *Journal of Southern History* 87, 3 (2021): 385-426.

¹¹⁹ Compiled from Table 2 in Hidy, *George Peabody*, 71. In 1853, Johns Hopkins would become President of Merchants' Bank, a position he held until his death in 1873.

¹²⁰ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Eastern District, St. James, Louisiana, s.v. "Edm J. Forstall."

¹²¹ Citizens' Bank Minute Book No. 5: 1843/08/03, Tulane University, as cited in JPMorgan Chase & Co., Attachment 3 to Attachment B, Chase Disclosure.

¹²² 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Natchez, Adams, Mississippi, s.v. "W. M. W. Cochran"; 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, New Orleans, Louisiana, s.v. "James Robb."

with Forstall's advice.¹²³ Historian Sven Beckert has noted that Forstall became "fabulously rich" from slavery.¹²⁴ In addition to Forstall's connection to Citizens' Bank, he was also one of the founders of and the president of the CAPL Bank, in which Peabody also invested.¹²⁵ The fact that Peabody chose to invest heavily with Forstall suggests that Peabody was looking to share in that success.

Peabody's investment earnings from slavery: A case study of 1847-1848

Through a detailed examination of Peabody's investments ledger for fiscal year 1847-1848, we can begin to understand the extent to which he profited from enslaved people's economic contributions through his investment banking alone. In one fiscal year, Peabody earned £8,896.33 (\$1.25 million) in net profit solely from his investments in Louisiana banks' stocks and bonds.¹²⁶ He also profited £3,693.25 (\$520,000) from investments in the banks of other enslaving states (Maryland, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky) that year. When this amount is combined with his Louisiana profits, Peabody earned £12,589.58 (\$1.77 million) in one year alone from his investments in states where enslaved people labored. Of all the southern banks in which Peabody held investments that year, he earned the greatest profit from the shares and bonds he held with the Bank of Louisiana, £2,735.71 (\$385,000).

To help put these figures in perspective, Peabody's 1847-1848 earnings from Louisiana property banks can be compared with the capital that these banks were chartered with when they were founded in the late 1820s and early 1830s. Respectively, the CAPL was chartered with capital of \$2.5 million (\$83.2 million), Union Bank with \$7 million (\$233 million), and Citizens' Bank with \$12 million (\$399 million).¹²⁷ Given that Peabody earned \$1.77 million in profits from banks in enslaving economies in 1847-1848, he earned 2% of the founding capitalization of the entire CAPL bank in just one year. It is important to reiterate that this figure is his investments alone; it does not include his work as a merchant providing direct credit to enslavers, selling enslaved-produced goods, or financing the shipping of such goods.

¹²³ Letter from E.J. Forstall to George Peabody, 24 March 1849, Box 22, Folder 7: "Business Correspondence, American. Edmund J. Forstall, 1850," GPP, PEM.

¹²⁴ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 205.

¹²⁵ Murphy, *Banking on Slavery*, 569.

¹²⁶ All statistics in this paragraph compiled and calculated by author from data appearing in: Volume 48, Series III: "Peabody London Securities, 1847-49," GPP, PEM.

¹²⁷ Thompson, "Not Worth the Paper."

Similarly, historian Muriel Hidy has examined Peabody's gains on securities for fiscal year 1844 to 1845, and her findings underscore the notion that Peabody earned significant portions of his wealth from Louisiana. Of the £9,137.35 (\$1.27 million) that Peabody gained on all his investments that year, by far his single largest gain was in Louisiana state bonds (£2,693.82, \$375,000), which more than doubled his second largest gain, which was in Maryland stocks and bonds (£1,217.59, \$170,000.) Peabody's total gain that year from public bonds and shares in the southern enslaving states of Louisiana, Maryland, Virginia, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, and Kentucky; and the city of New Orleans was £5,402.96 (\$753,000).

Liverpool and Peabody's facilitation of the trade in enslaved-produced cotton

In addition to his investments in the U.S., Peabody facilitated the trade in enslaved-produced cotton through his work with Liverpool cotton brokers.¹²⁸ Cotton brokers sold cotton that merchants like Peabody helped import, and they purchased cotton for spinners to weave textiles with.¹²⁹ The U.S. was the dominant exporter of cotton bound for Liverpool. By the late 1850s, U.S.-grown cotton accounted for 77% of the 800 million pounds of cotton consumed in Britain.¹³⁰ And cotton dominated the U.S. export market. By 1861, raw cotton was 61% of the value of all U.S. products exported overseas. To meet the demand for this highly profitable and exploitative industry, the enslaved population of the U.S. increased from 700,000 people in 1790 to over 3 million by 1850.¹³¹ Peabody participated in many aspects of the Liverpool cotton trade: fundraising, trading, insuring, and shipping.

Peabody conducted business dealings with at least 96 companies in Liverpool, mainly in the late 1840s and early 1850s.¹³² Some of these companies were transnational banking firms, such as Brown & Co., later known as Brown, Shipley & Co. Others were cotton traders who imported cotton harvested by enslaved people, had it woven in Lancashire mills, and exported it to the United States and Europe. Historian Sven Beckert notes that by 1860, there were 322

¹²⁸ Boodry, "The Common Thread," 167.

¹²⁹ Nigel Hall, "Liverpool's Cotton Brokers," *Liverpool Cotton*, 2020, available online: <https://www.liverpoolcotton.com/cotton-brokers.html>.

¹³⁰ Sven Beckert, "Empire of Cotton," *The Atlantic*, 12 December 2014, as quoted in Taylor Report, Part II, 44.

¹³¹ Gene Dattel, *Cotton and Race in the Making of America: The Human Costs of Economic Power*, Ukraine, Ivan R. Dec 2009. The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, "Eli Whitney's Patent for the Cotton Gin"; Digital Public Library of America, "Cotton Gin and the Expansion of Slavery," as cited in Taylor Report, Part II, 45.

¹³² Data compiled from finding aid to the George Peabody Papers, MSS181, Phillips Library, PEM. Peabody also worked with Liverpool merchants as early as 1815 in his dry goods business.

cotton brokers working in Liverpool.¹³³ Thus Peabody worked with nearly a third of all the cotton brokers in Liverpool, and perhaps even more, given that many of the 96 firms with whom he corresponded had multiple family members as traders, who would have helped make up the 322 brokers in the city at that time.

For example, Peabody offered credit to Liverpool cotton traders Washington Jackson & Sons, who traded with the U.S.'s wealthiest cotton planter. In 1851, Peabody sold Washington Jackson & Sons a loan of \$20,000 (\$731,000), for which they offered collateral of \$90,000 in stock with the Second Bank of the United States.¹³⁴ Washington Jackson & Sons also sold the crops of Stephen Duncan.¹³⁵ Duncan became the wealthiest cotton planter in the U.S., and he enslaved the second largest number of people in the United States, over 2,200.¹³⁶

In addition, between 1851 and 1853, Peabody traded with Fraser, Trenholm & Co., of Liverpool. During the Civil War, Fraser Trenholm raised funds for and built warships for the Confederacy and helped with blockade running to evade Union ships.¹³⁷ In blockade running, lightweight steam ships built in Scotland and England clandestinely avoided Union ships as they exported guns into Southern states in exchange for cotton for the British textile industry.

Peabody also traded with several members of the Cotton Brokers' Association, Liverpool's trade society for cotton brokers, including George Holt, the Cotton Brokers' Association first president.¹³⁸ According to a letter Holt wrote in 1845, he saw Peabody as a strong potential investor in the cotton market. Holt offered Peabody a preferential status in terms of fee payment, which the cotton trader noted he had only offered to one other favored bank,

¹³³ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 208.

¹³⁴ Washington Jackson & Co. to Peabody, 23 October 1851, Folder 4, Box 157, GPP, PEM.

¹³⁵ Harold D. Woodman, *King Cotton and His Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South, 1800-1925* (Washington, D.C.: Beard Books, 1990), 44 and 160.

¹³⁶ Martha Jane Brazy, "Stephen Duncan," *Mississippi Encyclopedia*, 19 April 2018, available online: <https://mississippiencyclopedia.org/entries/stephen-duncan/>.

¹³⁷ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, 528n41.

¹³⁸ Membership List, 2 April 1841, and Minutes, 22 January 1842, in Minute Book, Cotton Brokers' Association Papers, 1842-51, 380 Cot/1/2/1, Liverpool Record Office; Michael Aldous and Christopher Coyle, "The Liverpool Cotton Brokers Association and the Crowning of King Cotton, 1811-1900: Examining the Role of a Private Order Institution in Global Trade," *Business History Review* 95 (2021): 671-702, 678.

Brown & Shipley.¹³⁹ The Browns were the leader among U.S. merchant banks that helped transport cotton on credit between the U.S. and the U.K.¹⁴⁰

Peabody's views of cotton factors

The providing of capital to planters in the U.S. south was done through local cotton factors, who procured cotton from plantation owners and sold it to merchants who shipped it overseas. Peabody distrusted cotton factors and saw them as inferior businesspeople, which suggests that he wished to remain far removed from the day-to-day aspects of slavery. In 1845, he wrote to James Robb claiming that “Cotton speculators... are a class of people most dangerous to trust as all our experience and observation can testify.”¹⁴¹ He saw cotton factors as risky investment partners, telling Robb that, “In most cases the exchange your house has sent me accompanied by Bills of Lading have been on houses of this description and who could not have borne heavy losses.” Here, Peabody indicated that he did not wish to deal directly with cotton factors, whose financial stability was often in constant fluctuation

Given that Peabody expressed this risk aversion to cotton factors, his choice to continue to invest in cotton through the mid-1850s might therefore be seen as a calculated risk to capitalize on the cotton market's potential for enormous profit, and therefore to further exploit the labor of enslaved people.

Bills of lading

Peabody also profited from enslaved people's labors by loaning money directly to planters and manufacturers that enabled them to ship their goods across the Atlantic.¹⁴² He did this through bills of lading, which were receipts for consignments made by shippers who exported their goods and products overseas. Peabody collected the bills of lading for shipments he advanced money for, and he would earn repayment and interest when the goods were delivered.

¹³⁹ Holt & Co. to Peabody, 18 April 1845, in Folder 5, Box 110, GPP, PEM.

¹⁴⁰ Boodry, “The Common Thread,” 78-79.

¹⁴¹ George Peabody to James Robb, 3 July 1845, in Folder 3, Box 47, GPP, PEM.

¹⁴² For more on the chain of business relations that drove the market in cotton in the mid-nineteenth century, see Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, esp. Chapter 8, “Making Cotton Global.”

Between mid-October and late December 1853, for example, Peabody collected bills of lading on 10,263 bales of cotton. Cotton factors shipped this raw cotton from New Orleans; Savannah, Georgia; Mobile, Alabama; and New York City to Liverpool.¹⁴³

Placing this figure in wider context, in 1850 Liverpool cotton traders imported 1,084,644 bales of cotton from the United States and 1,749,300 bales of cotton in total, with the U.S. making up 62% of all the cotton imported into Liverpool that year.¹⁴⁴ Using those 1850 figures, the 10,263 bales of cotton that Peabody helped ship between October and December 1853 made up 1% of the U.S.'s total cotton exports to Liverpool per year.

Over the same late 1853 period, Peabody also advanced capital for the shipping of enslaved-produced wheat, tobacco, flour, corn, and coffee. He helped ship 40,126 barrels of flour and 57,405 bushels of wheat during this period.¹⁴⁵

Several of the ships that Peabody accepted consignments on in this period were actively involved in the domestic slave trade. For example, the ship *Powhattan* transported 170 barrels of flour from Philadelphia to London in November 1853 on a bill of lading that Peabody held.¹⁴⁶ *Powhattan* had made seven journeys involving enslaved people in 1853, in which it had transported 21 enslaved people from Pensacola, Florida, to New Orleans.¹⁴⁷ In fact, two weeks before the *Powhattan* collected the flour cargo from Philadelphia to deliver to London that November, the ship was used to transport one enslaved person from Pensacola to New Orleans.¹⁴⁸

Over the same late 1853 period, Peabody also advanced money for a Rio de Janeiro to New York shipment of 3,263 bags of enslaved-produced coffee, weighing 160 pounds each, from Maxwell, Wright & Co.¹⁴⁹ An Anglo-American firm, Maxwell, Wright & Co. was the “leading

¹⁴³ Data compiled by author from Folder 3, Box 182, “Bills of Lading, 1853,” GPP, PEM.

¹⁴⁴ Table 1, “Receipts of Cotton at Liverpool and Total British Imports of Cotton 1820-1850 (in Bales),” 23, in David M. Williams, “Liverpool Merchants and the Cotton Trade,” in Lars U. Scholl, ed. *Merchants and Mariners: Selected Maritime Writings of David M. Williams* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 19-52. 1850 has been used for the calculation as it is the nearest year for which statistics of bales imported into Liverpool have been located.

¹⁴⁵ Data compiled by author from Folder 3, Box 182, GPP, PEM.

¹⁴⁶ Folder 3, Box 182, GPP, PEM.

¹⁴⁷ Data compiled from search results for “*Powhattan*,” Intra-American Slave Trade Database, *Slave Voyages*, available online: <https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyages/nNvalppC>.

¹⁴⁸ IMNO, *Powhattan*, 11-5-1853: National Archives and Records Administration (Washington, DC) - Slave Manifests of Coastwise Vessels Filed at New Orleans, Louisiana, 1807-1860, Inward Series, v. Microfilm Serial M1895, RG 36, voyage ID 133376, *Slave Voyages*.

¹⁴⁹ Data compiled by author from Folder 3, Box 182, “Bills of Lading, 1853,” GPP, PEM.

commission house of Rio de Janeiro,” and the chief exporter of enslaved-produced coffee in Brazil as well as a trader in enslaved-produced flour.¹⁵⁰ Between 1854 and 1855, they exported 1.5 million bags of coffee.¹⁵¹ Maxwell, Wright & Co. also participated in the contraband slave trade, selling 17 slave ships in Rio in the 1840s, after the legal slave trade had been outlawed in both the U.K. and the U.S.¹⁵² Maxwell, Wright & Co. principal William H. DeCourcy Wright, one of the firm’s six partners, came from a merchant-planter elite Maryland family.¹⁵³ In 1857, DeCourcy Wright would become a Peabody Institute trustee.

Circular letters of credit

Peabody also advanced credit to enslavers and other businesspeople who visited the U.K. by providing them with circular letters of credit. These letters were a guarantee from Peabody to U.K. merchants that he would pay for any goods the letter holder wished to purchase and then collect the money from the letter holder directly himself. We might perhaps think of these as an early form of credit card with Peabody as the card issuer.

In 1852-1853, Peabody issued circular letters of credit to 31 men who were visiting the U.K. from enslaving states in the U.S. These included Benjamin Roach of Natchez, who enslaved 78 people in 1850.¹⁵⁴ Peabody issued Roach a letter worth £1,000 (\$152,000) in credit.¹⁵⁵ Peabody gave John Summerfield McKinney of Georgetown, who enslaved one person in 1850, £280 (\$42,500) in credit.¹⁵⁶ He also gave Richard R. Sessions of Columbia, Arkansas, a letter worth £300 (\$45,500) in credit. Sessions enslaved 40 people in 1850.¹⁵⁷

Peabody also issued a circular letter of credit for £240 (\$36,400) to Professor John B. Lindsley of the University of Nashville, Tennessee, in 1852-1853. In 1860, Lindsley enslaved

¹⁵⁰ Alan dos Santos Ribeiro, “‘The leading commission house of Rio de Janeiro’: os negócios da Maxwell, Wright & Co. (c. 1827-c. 1850),” *Tiempo & economía*, 8: 2 (2021), 48-74. See also Daniel B. Rood, “Sweetness and Debasement: Flour and Coffee in the Richmond-Rio Circuit,” *The Reinvention of Atlantic Slavery: Technology, Labor, Race, and Capitalism in the Greater Caribbean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 121-147.

¹⁵¹ Laura Jarnagin, *A Confluence of Transatlantic Networks: Elites, Capitalism, and Confederate Migration to Brazil* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2008), 136.

¹⁵² Leonardo Marques, “The contraband slave trade to Brazil and the dynamics of US participation,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 47 (2015): 659-684, 671.

¹⁵³ Jarnagin, *A Confluence of Transatlantic Networks*, 119-120.

¹⁵⁴ 1850 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, Washington, MS, s.v. “Benj Roach.”

¹⁵⁵ All circular letters in this section are from Box 182, Folder 1: “Circular letters of credit, 1852-53,” GPP, PEM.

¹⁵⁶ 1850 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, Washington Ward 2, Washington, District of Columbia, s.v. “J McKinney.”

¹⁵⁷ 1850 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, Louisiana, Chicot, Arkansas, s.v. “Richard R Sessions.”

nine people.¹⁵⁸ During the Civil War, Lindsey oversaw Confederate hospitals in Nashville.¹⁵⁹ Following the Civil War, Lindsley successfully petitioned the Peabody Education Fund to establish a normal school, or teachers' college, at the university. Today this institution is the Peabody College of Education and Human Development at Vanderbilt University.

Case study: Peabody's acceptance of debt from a bank using enslaved people as collateral

From 1848 to 1850, Peabody was directly involved in a transaction involving the use of enslaved people as collateral. In 1848, Peabody purchased a complex loan debt from London bankers Kraeuther & Mieville.¹⁶⁰ The debt was underwritten with collateral from four sources: the Bank of the United States, General Charles F. Mercer of Virginia, Florida territorial bonds, and the Union Bank of Florida. As Peabody set out to collect the collateral on the debt in 1849, Colonel John G. Gamble, President of the Union Bank of Tallahassee, Florida, made him an offer. Gamble was a large plantation owner and enslaver, and he had become well known for his risky practice of allowing planters to obtain credit at up to two-thirds of the total value of their real estate and the people they enslaved.¹⁶¹ Gamble himself owed considerable debts to the bank, and he had mortgaged many of the people he enslaved to it.

Gamble asked Peabody if he could buy the debt back from him, so that he could release the enslaved people whom he had mortgaged to the bank. "I am desirous of releasing from mortgage lien of the Union Bank, my Negroes..." Gamble wrote.¹⁶² Gamble wanted to release those enslaved people from their status as collateral so that he and his sons could enslave them in another location. He explained that he wanted them released "for the purpose of working a sugar plantation in East Florida, in partnership with my sons to whom also I wish to give a portion of the Negroes, as an outfit."

Gamble clarified that he could not pay Peabody in cash for this debt, due to a recent fire on his plantation. "I cannot now spare any money towards the purchase, because of the destruction of our Sugar works, machinery and crop by fire in January last, the rebuilding of

¹⁵⁸ 1860 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, Nashville, Davidson, TN, s.v. "John B Lindsley."

¹⁵⁹ Sara Harwell, "John Berrien Lindsley," *Tennessee Encyclopedia*, 2017, available online: <https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entries/john-berrien-lindsley/>.

¹⁶⁰ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 277-279.

¹⁶¹ S. Matthew Litteral, "An Archaeological Investigation of Enslavement at Gamble Plantation." M.A. thesis, University of South Florida, 2019, 9.

¹⁶² John G. Gamble to Peabody, 8 May 1849, Box 141, Folder 2, Riggs Papers, LOC.

which will require more money than I now have on hand.” Gamble insisted, nonetheless, that he wanted the enslaved people released from the mortgage so that he and his sons could profit from their unfree labor in a new business venture. “But the release of the Slaves from the lien of the Bank is important as connected with the arrangement between me and my sons.”

In lieu of having cash for his offer to buy the debt, Gamble instead offered Peabody another mortgage of 120 enslaved people. Gamble offered Peabody 40 cents on the dollar for a portion of the debt, but lacking the cash to make this payment, he offered to “cause the payment to be secured by mortgage of One hundred and twenty prime slaves.”¹⁶³

The fact that Peabody had already purchased Union Bank collateral, and that Gamble had mortgaged people whom he enslaved to the bank, indicates that Peabody not only invested in banks that mortgaged enslaved people, but he also dealt directly in the collateralization of enslaved people. In reply to Gamble’s offer, Peabody declined, stating, “unless I can do much better I shall exercise patience and stand as I am.”¹⁶⁴ Peabody also reported “feeling assured that I shall ultimately realize from the collaterals the entire Claim.” Given that the people whom Gamble enslaved were mortgaged to the bank, Peabody already had the ability to sell or repossess these enslaved people should Gamble default on the debt.

Although Peabody declined Gamble’s offer, he ultimately profited from Gamble’s use of enslaved people as collateral. Within two months of Gamble’s May 1849 offer, Peabody sold some of the collateral to another buyer who has not yet been identified.¹⁶⁵ In December 1850, Peabody’s partner John Cryder, acting as his attorney, sold the remaining Union Bank bonds Peabody held back to Gamble.¹⁶⁶ In return, Gamble sold Peabody the Florida Territory bonds as well as some of the Union Bank’s debts, which may also have included the use of other enslaved people as collateral.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ Gamble to Peabody, 8 May 1849.

¹⁶⁴ Peabody to Gamble, 15 June 1849, Box 141, Folder 2, Riggs Papers, LOC.

¹⁶⁵ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 279.

¹⁶⁶ Gamble, letter of receipt from John Cryder, attorney of George Peabody, 4 December 1850, Folder 1, Box 23, GPP, PEM. The sale also included General Mercer’s cash collateral.

¹⁶⁷ Note of receipt by John G. Gamble for John Cryder, attorney for George Peabody, 4 December 1850, Folder 1, Box 23, GPP, PEM.

Peabody's investments in the public bonds of enslaving territories

In addition to his securities investments, Peabody also purchased and sold the public bonds of enslaving cities and states; this was another indirect connection to slavery. In this practice, Peabody supported localities and states whose economies were centered on the unfree labor performed by enslaved people.

Peabody held public bonds in New Orleans and at least 10 enslaving states: Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Texas, South Carolina, and Louisiana.¹⁶⁸ Peabody earned gains on each of these enslaving states' economies, such as in 1844-1845, when he earned gains on bonds to Southern states totaling £5,673.10 (\$210,000). Louisiana was the site of his largest gain, at £2,693.82 (\$99,600). In 1847, the places in which Peabody held the greatest amount of public bonds were Maryland, Louisiana, and the city of New Orleans.¹⁶⁹

Peabody also sold these bonds on the London market, earning profits there from these enslaving economies. Between August 1839 and January 1840, for instance, Peabody sold £565,500 (\$70.7 million, 2021) of Maryland bonds in London.¹⁷⁰ In 1843, he personally held \$250,000 (\$10.6 million) in Maryland bonds.¹⁷¹

Peabody's connections to *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857)

Peabody also had business dealings with the enslaving defendant in the 1857 *Dred Scott v. Sandford* Supreme Court case, which denied the Constitutional rights of U.S. citizenship to African Americans. *Scott v. Sandford* has been seen as enabling the extension of slavery throughout the states acquired in the Louisiana Purchase and stoking the flames of sectionalism that led to the Civil War. The decision has also been noted as a case of judicial activism on behalf of the pro-slavery U.S. Supreme Court of the time.¹⁷² Peabody had worked closely with John F.A. Sanford (misspelled as Sandford in court documents), the businessman and enslaver who

¹⁶⁸ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 173 and 272.

¹⁶⁹ "American Securities," 72, Ledger Volume 49, GPP, PEM.

¹⁷⁰ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 166.

¹⁷¹ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 280.

¹⁷² Robert Cook, *Civil War America: Making a Nation, 1848-1877* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2003), 101-103.

was the successful litigant in the case. In addition, Reverdy Johnson, the lawyer who represented Sanford in the *Dred Scott* case, also represented Peabody in several efforts to recover debts.¹⁷³

In 1851, Peabody had partnered with Sanford through the firm Choteau, Merle, and Sanford of St. Louis for the sale of British iron for use in U.S. railroads.¹⁷⁴ Sanford's 1857 obituary noted that he had partnered with Peabody in business, making \$600,000 (\$21.9 million in 2021) in a deal with Peabody on one year's importation of British iron, which was mainly used for railroads.¹⁷⁵ Through this partnership, Peabody also worked with fur trader Pierre Choteau of St. Louis, who enslaved 15 people in 1850.¹⁷⁶

Peabody and court cases involving enslaved people

Peabody was named as a party in at least one Virginia court case which used enslaved people as collateral against debts. In 1845, George Peabody, Samuel Riggs, Harry Jenkins, and the firm of Peabody, Riggs & Co. were named among a group of plaintiffs in a Northumberland County, Virginia, Chancery court case, *John R. Ricards et al. vs. Royston Betts et al.*¹⁷⁷ The plaintiffs were creditors of Betts' and they sought to recover to their debts. Over 10 enslaved people were named in the suit. Peabody was named in a further 12 Virginia Chancery cases between 1834 and 1870. No enslaved people were identified in the court's list of named individuals for these cases, but unnamed enslaved people may have appeared in the supporting documents.

Peabody also appeared as a party in a Maryland Chancery court case with a bank that had known connections to slavery. In an 1842 Maryland Chancery mortgage foreclosure case, Merchants' Bank of Baltimore sued Samuel Hoffman, et al. Peabody and Samuel Riggs were among the named defendants, as were future Peabody Institute trustees Charles J.M. Eaton and

¹⁷³ See, e.g., *George Peabody, et. al. vs. John Easter, of Jno.*, as reported in "Baltimore County Court," *The Sun*, March 28, 1844.

Reverdy Johnson's son, Reverdy Johnson Jr., served on the Board of Trustees of the Peabody Institute in the 1860s.

¹⁷⁴ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 332.

¹⁷⁵ "John F.A. Sanford," *New York Tribune* 7 May 1857; "An Old Trapper Gone," *The [New Orleans] Times-Picayune* 15 May 1857.

The family name Sanford was misspelled in a transcription of the case as Sandford. That error was kept in the case name.

¹⁷⁶ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 3, St. Louis, Missouri, s.v. "Pierre Choteau."

¹⁷⁷ Northumberland County (Va.) Chancery Causes, 1759-1980. John R. Ricards et al. vs. Royston Betts, et al., 1845-017, Local Government Records Collection, Northumberland Court Records. The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Samuel Owings Hoffman. Though the Chancery Court's finding does not indicate whether the mortgage included enslaved people, it is the case that Merchants' Bank used enslaved people as collateral, so it is possible.¹⁷⁸

Insuring the trades in enslaved people and enslaved-produced goods

Another of Peabody's indirect connections to slavery was through the insurance market. In the 1840s, Peabody held securities in the American Life Insurance and Trust Company. American Life Insurance wrote life insurance policies on enslaved people, meaning enslavers would receive a return on their investment should the people whom they enslaved perish or become physically unable to perform labor.¹⁷⁹ In 1841, Peabody held \$8,000 (\$287,000) in American Life securities.¹⁸⁰ He earned yearly dividends from this investment, such as in 1844-1845, when he earned £122.82 (\$17,100).¹⁸¹

Peabody also held a leadership role with an insurance firm that may have benefited from slavery. In 1849, Peabody was elected to the Board of Directors of Alliance Marine Insurance in London.¹⁸² Alliance Marine may have issued policies to insure the shipping of enslaved-produced goods; this is an area for further research. The company had been founded in 1824 to break up the monopoly of Lloyd's Insurance, another London insurance firm that had insured the transport of African captives to their enslavement in the Americas. In 1833, Alliance Marine's founder Nathan M. Rothschild had loaned the British government £15 million to help compensate former British enslavers for the abolition of slavery.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁸ *Merchants Bank of Baltimore v. Samuel Hoffman et al.*, MSA S512-12-9405, 1/38/5/, Chancery Record 159, p. 630, Maryland State Archives. While the court's opinion document did not disclose whether the mortgage involved the use of enslaved people, a review of the evidence presented in the case might reveal this with greater certainty.

¹⁷⁹ Daina Ramey Berry, "'Broad is de Road dat Leadster Death': Human Capital and Enslaved Mortality," in Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, eds. *Slavery's Capitalism: A New History of American Economic Development* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 146-162, 347n33. Historian Daina Ramey Berry has pointed out that American Life had a clause that nullified the policy in cases where the enslaved person committed suicide.

¹⁸⁰ "List of stockholders of the American Life Insurance and Trust Company," 1841, in BRG 32-1-9 (1840-1841), Register, Baltimore City Archives.

¹⁸¹ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 272.

¹⁸² Richard James Shepherd, Superintendent, Alliance Marine, 18 December 1849, *The Gazette*, 3866.

¹⁸³ Kris Manjappa, "When will Britain face up to its crimes against humanity?" *The Guardian*, 29 March 2018; s.v. "Nathan Mayer Rothschild," *Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery (LBS)* database, available online: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/2146631430>.

Peabody's work with railroads and canals, and their connections to slavery and segregation

Peabody had investments beyond plantation slavery that also drew profits from enslaved people's labor. The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was founded in 1827 as the nation's first commercial passenger railroad. The railroad commenced building in 1828 using the labor of enslaved and free African American men.¹⁸⁴ Peabody was one of the railroad's early investors, purchasing \$10,000 (\$280,000) worth of stock in 1827.¹⁸⁵ He also served as one of three commissioners who sold Baltimore and Ohio railroad bonds on behalf of the Maryland Legislature abroad.

In addition, Peabody served as an overseas finance agent for the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal, which was constructed using enslaved labor. The canal, which eventually connected Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland, was built from 1828 to 1850.¹⁸⁶ In 1829, the C&O purchased 100 enslaved people to build the canal.¹⁸⁷ In 1838, the C&O hired Peabody as its agent in England.¹⁸⁸

Peabody also served as president of the railroad that was one of the first to segregate African American and white passengers, and which had the first known usage of the term "Jim Crow" to refer to its segregated passenger car. From 1836 to 1842, Peabody was the president of the Eastern Railroad of East Boston, Massachusetts, which connected Boston to Salem, Massachusetts, and later the New Hampshire border.¹⁸⁹ When the railroad opened that year, it was one of the first railroads in the country, along with two others in Massachusetts, to segregate Black passengers in a separate car from white passengers. In 1841, the "Negro car" on the segregated Massachusetts railroads became widely known as the "Jim Crow car." The use of

¹⁸⁴ "A Lasting Legacy: Baltimore's African American History," [n.d.] *Baltimore National Heritage Area*, available online: <https://www.explorebaltimore.org/city-history/a-brief-overview-of-baltimores-african-american-history>; George Peabody to Thomas Swan, 20 December 1852, Folder 1, Box 197, GPP, PEM.

¹⁸⁵ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 145.

¹⁸⁶ "Chesapeake and Ohio Canal," *The Sun*, 22 February 1840.

¹⁸⁷ Eugene Scheel, "Historic C&O," *The Washington Post*, July 10, 2003.

¹⁸⁸ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 152.

¹⁸⁹ Francis C. Bradlee, *The Eastern Railroad: A Historical Accounting of Early Railroading in Eastern New England* (Salem, Mass.: The Essex Institute, 1917), 16, 25.

“Jim Crow” to refer to African American passenger cars in Massachusetts was the first use of the term “Jim Crow” on railroads anywhere in the country.¹⁹⁰

IV. Peabody Institute (1857-)

Key findings:

- This study examined the individual relationships with slavery of the first trustees of the Peabody Institute. Their enslaving practices serve as a proxy for understanding the early years of the Institute’s relationship to African Americans and slavery.
- Nine of the 24 founding trustees of the Institute were enslavers in the 1850s, and therefore may have enslaved people at the time of the Institute’s founding in 1857. An additional eight trustees had enslaved people prior to 1850.
- All 24 of the founding trustees had free people of color working as servants in their homes.
- Enslaved labor may have been used in the construction of the Institute, as six of the Institute’s builders and service providers were enslavers in the 1850s.
- An African American family from Baltimore lived at the Institute in 1871.

Founding trustees and slavery

In a letter dated February 12, 1857, George Peabody outlined his intentions for what would become the Peabody Institute, and he invited 25 white men to meet at Baltimore’s Athenaeum Building on February 19. Twenty-four of the selected men accepted Peabody’s invitation. Together, they formed an elite group of Baltimoreans: merchants, bankers, politicians, attorneys, railroad magnates, and a Unitarian minister. Many of them had previously done business with Peabody.

Peabody asked the assembled group to “constitute forever a Board of Trustees... for the accomplishment, preservation and supervision of the purposes for which the Institute is to be

¹⁹⁰ Louis Ruches, “Jim Crow Railroads in Massachusetts,” *American Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1956): 61-75, 62.

established.”¹⁹¹ He placed \$300,000 (~\$10.7 million, 2021) at the Board’s disposal and granted them “full and exclusive power to whatsoever you may deem advisable, for the foundation, organization and management of the proposed Institute.” Peabody indicated his trust in these individuals, and his desire for them to run the Institute, stating, “the details proper to [the Institute’s] organization and government and its future control and conduct, I submit entirely to your judgment and discretion, and the perpetuity of that control I confide to you, and your successors.”

Given that Peabody vested full power in the governance of the Institute in his hand-selected Board of Trustees, the relationship between the founding trustees and slavery is significant to this study. The trustees’ connections to slavery combined with their governance powers offer a proxy for understanding the Institute’s relationship to the nineteenth-century Black Baltimore community and the Institute’s exclusion of that community. They also index the treatment of Black people by those who were involved in governing and setting the priorities of the Institute in its first decades. In addition, they offer a proxy for understanding Peabody’s vision for the Institute and its relationship to African Americans.

An examination of the census and manumission records for each trustee reveals that Peabody did not exclude prospective trustees based on their enslaving status, and that he placed the founding of the Institute in the hands of people who chose to enslave. At least 17 of the 24 founding members of the Institute’s Board of Trustees, whom Peabody hand-selected, enslaved people in Maryland in the 1800s. Nine of these 17 trustees enslaved people in the 1850s, the decade that the Institute was founded. In total, Peabody Institute trustees enslaved perhaps as many as 36 African Americans in the 1850s.

It was especially unusual in Baltimore to enslave people in the 1850s. The overwhelming majority of Black people who lived in Baltimore at mid-century were free people of color. In 1850, only 10% of Baltimore’s Black population remained enslaved, and by 1860, three years

¹⁹¹ Manuscript letter by George Peabody founding the Peabody Institute, 1857 February 12, Box: 1, item: 1. Peabody Institute founding documents, PIRG-01. Peabody Archives, Arthur Friedheim Library, Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University.

after the Institute was founded, only 8% were enslaved.¹⁹² By 1860, Baltimore enslavers made up only 1% of the city's population.¹⁹³

In addition, all 24 of the founding trustees had free Black servants living and working in their homes in 1850. Broadly speaking, domestic workers held vulnerable status relative to their employers. As historian Seth Rockman has pointed out, domestic servants “[had] to operate on the shifting terrain of employers’ fickle preferences and summary judgements.”¹⁹⁴

While it was a fairly common practice among people of considerable means in mid-nineteenth century Baltimore to hire white or Black domestic servants, the fact that every trustee hired Black people as servants suggests a view of Black racial subservience among the trustee body. Many white Baltimore householders also held racist views of free Black people as a class. Their sentiments resembled those of noted Maryland colonization advocate Robert Goodloe Harper, who described free Black people as an “idle, worthless, and thievish race.”¹⁹⁵ Female domestic servants were particularly vulnerable. They were often young and physically small. They were therefore susceptible to physical intimidation and “presumed to be sexually available in the intimate settings of the household.”¹⁹⁶

Given that the trustees enslaved perhaps as many as 30 people at the time of the Institute's opening, and that every trustee employed free people of color as domestic servants, African Americans, enslaved and free, served trustees. Enslaved and free African Americans may have provided labor in service of trustee meetings, committee meetings, the Institute's staff, and/or the maintenance of the Institute property, though no direct evidence supporting this has appeared yet.

¹⁹² Percentage derived from cross-referenced U.S. census statistics in LaTasha Clarissa Gatling, “Living on the line between slavery and freedom: Prince George's County and Baltimore City, Maryland, 1830-1865,” M.A. thesis, Morgan State University, 2005, 36; and Claudia Dale Goldin, *Urban Slavery in the American South, 1820-1860: A Quantitative History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), 52-53.

¹⁹³ Felipe González, Guillermo Marshall, and Suresh Naidu, “Start-up nation? Slave wealth and entrepreneurship in Civil War Maryland,” *The Journal of Economic History* 77, no. 2 (2017): 373-405, 377.

¹⁹⁴ Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 105.

¹⁹⁵ Robert Goodloe Harper, as quoted in Rockman, *Scraping By*, 121.

¹⁹⁶ Rockman, *Scraping By*, 118.

On his visit to Baltimore in 1857 to deliver the founding letter, Peabody stayed at Barnum's Hotel.¹⁹⁷ Barnum's was a center of the slave trade in Baltimore, with the sale of an enslaved person, Arthur Burns, happening there as late as 1855.¹⁹⁸

Case study: Thomas Swann

Trustee Thomas Swann served as president of Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, mayor of Baltimore, governor of Maryland, and as a congressman for Maryland. In 1840, he inherited his father's plantation, "Morven Park," in Leesburg, Virginia. Swann enslaved 60 people there, making him one of the largest enslavers in Loudon County.¹⁹⁹ In 1850, the decade that the Institute opened, he also enslaved 11 people in Baltimore, whom he shared ownership of with Richard Dorsey. According to the Census record, they manumitted nine of those enslaved people.²⁰⁰ Swann maintained ownership of Morven Park until his death in 1883.

Case study: William H.D.C. Wright

Trustee William H.D.C. Wright was the U.S. Consul in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the co-founder of Maxwell, Wright & Co., the aforementioned American commercial house in Rio and Brazil's chief exporter of enslaved-produced coffee. Maxwell, Wright & Co. was in business correspondence with George Peabody between 1850 and 1856.²⁰¹ In addition, Maxwell, Wright & Co. were involved in the contraband slave trade from the 1830s to mid-1850s. They were "one of the merchant houses responsible for chartering and selling U.S. vessels to slave traders in Brazil" after the slave trade was outlawed in the U.S. in 1808.²⁰² Wright owned the plantation

¹⁹⁷ "George Peabody, Esq.," *Easton [Md.] Gazette* 31 January 1857, 2.

¹⁹⁸ *Baltimore Sun* 28 February 1855, as quoted in Richard F. Messick, "Site of Barnum's Hotel," *Baltimore Heritage* available online: <https://explore.baltimoreheritage.org/items/show/709>.

¹⁹⁹ Aimee Robertson, "The Swann Family: Builders of Morven Park," *Bulletin of Loudon County Historical Society* (2004): 8-21, 13.

²⁰⁰ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. "Thomas Swann & Richard Dorsey."

²⁰¹ Further research is needed into this correspondence to determine the nature of their interactions and possible trade. See Folders 6-7, Box 33, GPP, PEM.

²⁰² Leonardo Marques, "The United States and the Contraband Slave Trade to Brazil, 1831-1856," *The United States and the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the Americas* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2016), 139-184, 139.

“Blakeford” in Queen Anne’s County, where in 1850 he enslaved 13 people. He also owned property in Baltimore, where he enslaved three people in 1850 and five in 1860.²⁰³

Case study: William Mayhew

William Mayhew, the first president of the Peabody Institute Board of Trustees and the president of the National Farmers and Planters' Bank of Baltimore, was an enslaver. Mayhew was a long-time friend of George Peabody’s.²⁰⁴ Mayhew enslaved one female, age 10-23, in 1830. In 1850, five free Black people worked as servants in his home.²⁰⁵

Mayhew left money in his will to two of those five servants on the condition that they continue to serve him for life. In his will, Mayhew instructed his son William E. Mayhew, Jr. and George N. Eaton to create a trust of \$2,000. This money was to be divided into \$1,000 (roughly \$271,000 in 2021) each:

For the benefit of my Servant Frisby Richards and... the benefit of my Servant Lloyd Clarke, both freemen, provided they shall respectively continue to be my Servants as long as I live, to be invested for the benefit of my said Servants, respectively, in such manner as my said Trustees or Trustee shall deem best.²⁰⁶

Although the significant amount of money Mayhew left for Richards and Clarke reveals some beneficence on his part, this can also be understood as a mechanism of delayed wages. By promising Richards and Clarke wages that they could only receive after his death and conditioning it on their working for him for the rest of his life, Mayhew discouraged them from seeking employment elsewhere regardless of their working conditions in his home. Mayhew could also take away those delayed wages at will if his feelings and opinions toward Richards or Clarke changed later in his life. Likewise, the fact that Mayhew instructed his executors to invest the money for Richards and Clarke as they deemed best introduced the risk that some of the

²⁰³ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, District 5, Queen Anne’s, Maryland, s.v. “Wm H D C Wright;” 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. “Wm H D C Wright;” 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, District 5, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. “W H D C Wright;” William H. DeCourcy Wright obituary, *The Sun*, 26 March 1864, as transcribed in William Henry DeCourcy Wright (1795 - 1864), *Wikitree*, 2019, available online: <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Wright-38256>.

²⁰⁴ [*New Orleans*] *Daily Picayune*, 19 May 1857.

²⁰⁵ Respectively, 1830 U.S. Census, Ward 7, Baltimore, s.v. “Wm E. Mayhew;” 1850 U.S. Census, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. “Wm E. Mathew.”

²⁰⁶ Clause 14, Will of William E. Mayhew, 18 November 1856, Hampden County Probate Court, Massachusetts, case 7444, 1860.

money could be lost if the investment declined in value. It also took away Richards' and Clarke's agency to make decisions about their own money.

The Peabody Institute's land and slavery

The Institute was built on land that had previously belonged to Colonel John Eager Howard (1752-1827), a former Maryland governor. Howard was a large landowner in Baltimore, part of the Maryland planter elite, and an enslaver.²⁰⁷ It is possible that enslaved people once worked the land upon which the Institute now lies.

In 1857, the Institute trustees purchased this land from the following three individuals, who had come to own it after Howard's death in 1827.²⁰⁸ All three had direct connections to slavery:

- **John Eager Howard** (1828-1911): The grandson of Colonel Howard, above.²⁰⁹ This John Eager Howard captained the Maryland Second Regiment for the Confederacy in the Civil War. The Peabody Institute purchased land from Howard for \$41,930.10 (\$23.2 million in property value, 2021).²¹⁰ At the time of the sale, Howard was living with his parents in Baltimore, where his father enslaved two people in their home in 1860, a man, age 22, and a woman, age 21.²¹¹ In addition, the family employed three free women as domestic servants: Sarah Taylor, age 40, free Black woman, worked as a cook; Betsy

²⁰⁷ Howard paid \$2,673 in property taxes for enslaved people in 1822. John Eager Howard, city property tax, 1822, 110, in BRG4-1-14, Upper District, BCA.

²⁰⁸ Howard, John E. to William E. Mayhew &c, assignment of lot on Mount Vernon Place, 1857, liber 129, f. 545, as indexed at 263; Pennington, Josias & Wf to William E. Mayhew &c, deed to lot on Mount Vernon Place, 1857, liber 129, f. 546, as indexed at 435; May, Henry & Wf to William E. Mayhew &c Tr., deed to lot on Mount Vernon Place, 1857, Liber 131, f. 109, as indexed at 346; all in Land Records, Grantor Index, Baltimore City, Superior Court, (Land Records, Grantor Index), 1851-1982, CE167, MSA.

²⁰⁹ "Capt. Howard's Funeral," *The Sun*, 16 August 1911, 7; "John Eager Howard," *Find A Grave*, available online: <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/98863730/john-eager-howard>. He was also the grandson of Francis Scott Key, author of the "Star Spangled Banner."

²¹⁰ The purchase amounts paid to each of these landowners can be found in 1 October 1857, 72, in Trustees' Minutes, vol. 1, Peabody Institute Board of Trustees records, PIRG-02, Peabody Archives, Arthur Friedheim Library, Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. John E. Howard, assignment of lot to William E. Mayhew and Co., Liber E.D., no. 129, folio 545, 1857, as indexed in Baltimore City Superior Court (Land Records, Grantor Index), p. 0263, MSA-CE167-5, MSA.

For the Peabody Institute property values in this section, I am using a less conservative measure of worth called "relative wealth" to refer to the economic status or relative "prestige wealth" that these landowners had. See "Relative Wealth," *Measuring Worth*, available online:

https://www.measuringworth.com/dollarvaluetoday/result.php?year=1857&amount=&transaction_type=WEALTH.

²¹¹ 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. "Charles Howard."

Waters, age 27, free mixed-race woman, worked as a chambermaid; and Grace Whittington, age 60, free mixed-race woman, worked as a washwoman.²¹²

- **Josias Pennington:** The Peabody Institute purchased land from Pennington for \$25,000 (\$13.9 million in property value, 2021). Pennington was also an Institute trustee. Pennington’s father had been a plantation owner in Reisterstown, Maryland. In 1830, Pennington had enslaved one man, aged 24 to 35.²¹³ In 1860, Pennington employed five free Black domestic servants in his home: Jenkins Baily (39, female); Ann Gross (42, female); Henry Jones (23, male); James Driggetts (40, male); and George E. Tailor (13, male).²¹⁴
- **Henry May:** The Peabody Institute purchased land from May for \$28,350 (\$15.7 million in property value, 2021). In 1860, May employed four free servants of color in his home: Thomas Bolton (male, 35, Black); Christena Berry (75, female, Black); Sallie Berry (30, female, Black); and Amelia Green (female, 21, mixed race.)²¹⁵ While he was a congressman representing Maryland, May visited Baltimore in 1861 to consult with the Confederacy. He was sanctioned by President Lincoln and imprisoned on accusation of treason.²¹⁶

The Peabody Institute’s construction and slavery

Guided by the recommendations of a trustee subcommittee known as the Building Committee, the trustees selected the architects and builders who designed and constructed the Institute.²¹⁷ Enslaving status did not prevent a company from securing a contract to help build the Institute. At least five of the men whose companies helped build the Institute were enslavers.

²¹² 1860 U.S. Census, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. “Charles Howard” and “John E. Howard.”

²¹³ 1830 U.S. Census, Ward 7, Baltimore, s.v. “Josias Pennington.”

²¹⁴ 1860 U.S. Census, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. “Josiah Pennington.” Minor name discrepancies such as this (“Josiah” for “Josias”) are very common, especially with the transcription of 19th century handwriting. Records have been cross-referenced by location and age.

²¹⁵ 1860 U.S. Census, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. “Henry May.”

²¹⁶ Obituary for Henry May, *The Sun* 26 September 1866, 2, as quoted in “Henry May (1816-1866),” *Wikitree* available online: <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/May-7397>.

²¹⁷ Names of builders compiled from Trustees’ Minutes, Vols. 1-2; Building Committee Minutes, Subseries 11: Building Committee, 1854-1877, Series D: Committees, PIRG-02; Folder 11, “Notes on construction of West Building,” Subseries 11, Series D, PIRG-02.

Therefore, enslaved people may have helped build the Institute. Specifically, enslaved people may have worked on the foundation stonework and the construction of the Institute, as well as provided domestic labor for the Institute’s contractors:

- John B. Emery, who did the **foundation stonework**, enslaved three people in 1850: one boy, age 10; one girl, age 13; and one woman, age 22.²¹⁸
- James Crawford Neilson, a prominent architect who collaborated with architect Edmund Lind on the **construction of the Institute**, enslaved one woman, age 55, in 1850 and enslaved five people in 1860: one woman, age 21; two boys, ages 14 and 16, respectively; and two girls, ages 3 and 8 months, respectively.²¹⁹
- Alexander Packie, responsible for the **Institute’s marble work**, enslaved one woman, Fanny Lockerman, whom he manumitted in 1860.²²⁰
- Owen Bouldin, who **conducted the survey** of the land on which the Peabody Institute was built, enslaved a woman, age 24, and a girl, age 5, in 1850.²²¹

²¹⁸ Respectively, 1850 U.S. Census, Slave Schedules, Ward 16, Baltimore, MD, s.v. “John B. Emery;” 1860 U.S. Census, Slave Schedules, Ward 16, Baltimore, MD, s.v. “John B. Emrey.”

²¹⁹ 1860 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, 5th Dublin District, Harford County, Maryland, s.v. “James Neilson.” Neilson maintained two residences, one in Baltimore and one at Deer Creek in Harford County. The people whom Neilson enslaved appear on the census for Harford County, though Neilson may have moved them to Baltimore at any point. On Neilson’s role in the Institute’s construction, “Architect Biographies: Niernsee, John Rudolph,” Baltimore Architecture Foundation, available online: <https://aiabaltimore.org/baltimore-architecture-foundation/resources/architect-biographies/john-rudolph-niernsee/>.

²²⁰ Deed of Manumission, 22 May 1860, Liber GES, no. 24, folio 208, MSA.

Franny Lockerman filed for her Certificate of Freedom in 1863. See Certificate of Freedom of Fanny Lockerman, 7 February 1863, Baltimore City Superior Court, C 165-2, MSA.

²²¹ “The Peabody Institute,” *The Sun*, 15 June 1857, 1; 1850 U.S. Census, Slave Schedules, Ward 8, Baltimore, s.v. “Owen Bouldin.”

- John S. Waters, who **printed the Institute’s stationery** enslaved a girl, Haga, age 10 in 1847, whom he purchased from his father Freeborn Waters that year.²²² Freeborn Waters sold 17 enslaved people that year, including Haga.²²³
- Robert Golder, of Golder & Son, **who hung the Institute’s wallpaper**, likely inherited one enslaved person upon the death of his father Archibald Golder in 1858. Archibald had enslaved one woman, age 30, in 1850, while Robert lived with him.²²⁴

If any of the enslaved people above were involved in the *construction* of the Peabody Institute, it would likely have been the boys whom James Crawford Neilson enslaved and/or the boy whom John B. Emery enslaved, as women and girls would not have been expected to conduct construction labor. Further examination of the records of Neilson’s architecture firm Niernsee and Neilson could help determine whether that company used enslaved labor in construction. That said, the other enslaved people listed here may well have provided *domestic services* or other forms of labor during the Institute’s construction process.

Institute insurance policy

At a meeting on April 4, 1861, eight days before the Civil War would begin, the trustees decided to purchase an insurance policy for the Institute. The company they chose to purchase from was led by pre-eminent British figures in the slavery economy. The trustees decided to take out a perpetual policy of \$10,000 (\$2.5 million, 2021) with the Liverpool and London Insurance Company (LLIC).²²⁵ Among the 21 chairmen, deputy chairmen, and directors of LLIC were William Earle (the younger), James Aspinall Tobin, and Matthew Forster. Earle was a major English slave trader, and the co-owner of the plantations “Utile” and “Paisible” in British

²²² Bill of sale for Haga, January 6, 1847, Freeborn Waters to James Waters, Anne Arundel County Court (Chattel Records, 1845-1851), C49-3, MSA, 154.

²²³ Chattel records for Freeborn Waters, Anne Arundel County, 1847, in *Legacy of Slavery in Maryland*, available online: <http://slavery2.msa.maryland.gov>.

Through his wife Mary Worthington Fite, John S. Waters is also the brother-in-law of George Reinecker, Peabody’s likely landlord in Baltimore, which further supports the connections between the Reineckers and Peabody. See “James S. Waters,” *Geneanet*, available online:

<https://gw.geneanet.org/djline09071945?lang=en&p=james+s.&n=waters>.

²²⁴ 1850 U.S. Census – Slave Schedules, Ward 13, Baltimore, s.v. “Archibald Golder.” There are no records in the *Maryland Slavery Database* of Archibald Golder having manumitted the enslaved woman.

²²⁵ April 4, 1861, 59, in Trustees’ Minutes, Vol. 2.

Guiana.²²⁶ Tobin, a slave trader, and the mayor of Liverpool in 1819-1820, captained six slave ship voyages and was listed as the owner of enslaved people in 10 slaving voyages.²²⁷ The chairman of the LLIC in 1859 was British merchant Matthew Forster. Forster's firm, Forster & Smith, were "pre-eminent" slave traders on the West Coast of Africa, according to historian Marika Sherwood, including during the period of the illegal trade in slavery after the U.K.'s abolition of the slave trade in 1807.²²⁸

An African American family lives at the Peabody Institute after the Civil War

In 1871, Daniel Williams and Martha Williams, an African American family, lived at the Peabody Academy, which was the original name for the Conservatory of the Peabody Institute. The city directory listed Daniel as living at 51 Mount Vernon Place, and Martha shared the same address in her correspondence with the Freedmen's Bureau that year.²²⁹ 51 Mount Vernon Place was listed in the city directory that year as the address of the Peabody Academy of Music.²³⁰ Martha Williams worked as a washerwoman.²³¹ Daniel Williams worked as a waiter. The reasons why they lived in the Institute are not readily apparent; they may have provided domestic services to the Institute's staff and trustees, but further research is needed to ascertain this. They appear to have lived in the Institute for only one year.

Like Martha, Daniel had also been widowed; the two married in 1867. In 1872, Daniel and Martha Williams appear to have moved out of the Peabody Institute to Orchard Street in Baltimore. They lived on Orchard Street until at least 1910, when Daniel was 80 years old and Martha 84.²³²

²²⁶ "William Earle the younger," *LBS* database, available online: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/44514>.

²²⁷ "Sir John Tobin," *LBS* database, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/person/view/42424>.

²²⁸ Marika Sherwood, "'Legitimate' Traders, the Building of Empires, and the Long-Term After-Effects in Africa," in Toby Green, ed. *Brokers of Change: Atlantic Commerce and Cultures in Pre-Colonial Western Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 378-404, 378, 385.

²²⁹ *Woods' Baltimore Directory* (Baltimore: John W. Woods, 1871), 752, s.v. "Daniel Williams"; "Martha Williams," 28 April 1871, Records of the field offices for the states of Maryland and Delaware, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1872, roll 37, M1906, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

²³⁰ *Woods' Baltimore Directory* (Baltimore: John W. Woods, 1871), 840, s.v. "Peabody Academy."

²³¹ Baltimore City, Court of Common Pleas (Marriage Index, Male), 1851-1885, CM 205-22, Maryland State Archives, s.v. "Williams, Daniel."

²³² *Woods' Baltimore City Directory* (Baltimore: John W. Woods, 1872), 777-778, s.v. "Daniel Williams" and "Martha Williams;" U.S. Census 1910, Ward 17, Baltimore, s.v. "Daniel Williams" and "Martha Williams."

The Williams' family's residence at Peabody came to light through the records of the Freedmen's Bureau. In April 1871, Martha Williams filed a complaint about her late first husband Isaac Crawford's Civil War soldier's pension, and she listed "Peabody Institute" as her residence.²³³ Crawford had fought for the Union as part of the 39th Regiment of the U.S. Colored Troops.²³⁴ Two weeks after he left home in 1863, Martha had given birth to their daughter Mary Catharine Crawford.²³⁵ Isaac passed away in 1866, and as his minor child Mary Catharine was eligible to receive his pension.

Daniel Williams may have also previously worked in the boarding house where trustee William C. Shaw lived in 1860. A free Black man named Daniel Williams of the same age worked as a waiter in that house that year.²³⁶

V. George Peabody and the Civil War

Key findings:

- George Peabody supported the preservation of the Union, though not necessarily for abolitionist reasons.
- Peabody was heavily concerned with protecting his financial investments, and those of his customers and colleagues, in the U.S. South and other parts of the Americas.
- Peabody called for the Institute to remain neutral around the issue of sectionalism that led to the U.S. Civil War.
- The trustees were divided in opinion around the Civil War, with as many as half supporting the Confederacy.
- One trustee was imprisoned for 14 months for his support of the Confederacy.

²³³ "Isaac Crawford" and "Martha Williams," 28 April 1871, Records of the field offices for the states of Maryland and Delaware, Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1865-1872, roll 37, M1906, NARA.

²³⁴ "Isaih Crawford," 39th Regiment, United States Colored Infantry, M589, Roll 20, "Soldiers and Sailors Database," National Park Service, available online: <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers.htm#sort=score+desc>.

²³⁵ Isaac Crawford, 04 Dec 1865, in Pension, Baltimore, Maryland, United States, NARA microfilm publication M1906, Records of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, 1861-1880, RG 105, roll 33, NARA.

²³⁶ 1860 U.S. Census, Ward 11, Baltimore, s.v. "Daniel Williams," in same residence as "William C. Shaw."

- Abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and others excoriated George Peabody for not having taken a public stance in favor of abolitionism, or in support of President Lincoln.

Peabody's efforts to protect investments in the Civil War

George Peabody opposed the breakout of the Civil War, though not for abolitionist reasons; rather, Peabody's primary motivation in the war seems to have been the preservation of the Union to protect the financial investments that he and his European customers and colleagues had made in U.S. securities. He wanted to keep the Union intact, which would protect his business interests and help preserve American credit abroad.²³⁷ But he also wanted to maintain the status quo, which in effect meant the continuance of slavery. Publicly, Peabody argued that both Confederates and Union supporters had held problematic extremist views.

Peabody never made a public statement in support of abolition, nor has evidence appeared that suggested he voiced his support for the Union publicly before the war. His most important statement about the war, particularly for the purposes of this report, came in his address at the Institute's opening in 1866. Peabody noted that he felt charity for the South, and that if he and the audience had been born in the South they might also have seceded over slavery. In his public address at the Institute's inauguration, Peabody declared his affinity for the South:

But none the less could I fail to feel charity for the South: to remember that political opinion is far more a matter of birth and education than of calm and unbiased reason and sober thought. *Even you and I, my friends, had we been born at the South, born to the feelings, beliefs, and, perhaps, prejudices of Southern men, might have taken the same course which was adopted by the South, and have cast in our lot with those who fought, as all must admit, so bravely for what they believed to be their rights... I blamed, and shall always blame, the instigators of strife and sowers of dissension, both at the North and at the South.*²³⁸

In placing blame on both North and South in the year after the war had ended, Peabody refused to take a stance on the question of slavery's abolition and indeed indicated that he too might have supported the cause of slavery had he been born in the South. In this speech, he also remained

²³⁷ Howard C. Perkins, *Northern Editorials on Secession, Vol. 1* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1964), 236.

²³⁸ *The Peabody Institute of the City of Baltimore: The Founder's Letters and the Papers Relating to Its Dedication and Its History Up to the 1st January, 1868* (Baltimore: W. K. Boyle, 1868), 96, emphasis added.

silent as to whether there was any potential for African Americans in Reconstruction-era Baltimore to participate in the activities of the Institute.

Peabody's speech also echoed the ideas of the Lost Cause, the racist mythology that emerged after the war in which many southerners and allies argued that the war had been a noble contest between two competing ideals and ways of life, and in so doing, silenced questions about slavery. In claiming that he and others might have made the choice to fight for the Confederacy had they been "born to the feelings, beliefs, and perhaps, prejudices of Southern men," who fought "bravely for what they believed to be their rights," Peabody effectively referenced the Southern "way of life," which was a "coded phrase representing the desire to preserve white supremacy and the economic value of slavery," according to J. Michael Martinez.²³⁹ In effect, even after abolition, Peabody equivocated and failed to take a stand against slavery..

In addition, friends of Peabody's noted that he failed to take a public position on the Union cause until the war was already underway. New York Republican Thurlow Weed, a supporter of Peabody's, acknowledged that Peabody only started to support to the Union late in 1861 after some convincing, despite the war having started in April and the battles of Sumter, Bull Run, and Port Royal having already taken place. In a letter reprinted in the *New York Times* in 1869, Weed detailed a meeting he had with Peabody in London in December 1861. Having explained "the true causes of the war" to Peabody, Weed recalled that Peabody gave a few reasons why he was only just coming to support the North. Peabody, according to Weed, claimed he had had a great deal of contact with pro-slavery Americans, had lived in the South, and that he had rejected both abolitionists and pro-slavery campaigners as extreme.

[Peabody] replied that he now acknowledged that the side of the North was stronger than he had regarded it; that for several months his conversations had been with Americans who presented the question in a widely different aspect; that the business years of his American life, had been passed in Georgetown and Baltimore; that **his sympathies, while in England, had not been with the abolitionists**; and that during the many years of excitement upon the subject of slavery, he **had regarded the ultras of the North and the South as equally mischievous**; and that this view of the

²³⁹ J. Michael Martinez, Review of John Reeves, *The Lost Indictment of Robert E. Lee: The Forgotten Case against an American Icon* (Lanham: Roman & Littlefield, 2018), *The Journal of American History* (2020): 754-55, 754.

question had led him to regard extreme men of both sections as enemies to the Union; but, he added... **if he were at home, he should stand by the government**, and that whatever he could do then and there for the Union cause, he would do cheerfully.²⁴⁰

Massachusetts inventor Charles Wilson Felt also argued that Peabody did not side with the Union until he knew it was winning, and that Weed had been too forgiving of Peabody in his criticism of him. Felt claimed that Peabody did not actually show much enthusiasm for the Union until he learned of its coming victory in the Battle of Fort Donelson in February 1862. “No other condition other than success ever made George Peabody the friend of the North,” he claimed.²⁴¹

Felt recounted that in the course of a brief meeting with Peabody in late 1861, he was “astonished and mortified” to hear Peabody say, “I do not see how [the war] can be settled unless Mr. Davis gives up what Mr. Lincoln says he is fighting for – the forts the South has taken – and then separate.”²⁴² Here, Peabody envisioned that Davis would return federally owned forts located in the South to the Union, and then the seceded Southern states could leave entirely. Peabody, according to Felt, also believed that the U.S. would rely on funding from the U.K. to support the war. Peabody refused to support this. “You can’t carry on the war without coming over here for money,” Felt alleged Peabody said, “and you won’t get a shilling.” He added that Peabody had turned down noted abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe’s desire for a meeting. “Stowe was over here, but I would not go to see her, though I was invited, and now she writes that this is our war. Such things don’t go down over here.”²⁴³

In addition, an anonymous reader of *The Independent* newspaper corroborated the view that Peabody opposed the existence of the Civil War, and they argued that Peabody did not truly support either side. Writing in September 1869 while Peabody was still alive, the author claimed, “To the commencement of hostilities on the part of the North, even after the attack on Sumter, [Peabody] was bitterly opposed; he heard of Union victories without enthusiasm, and Confederate barbarities without credence.” The author laid out clearly Peabody’s ire for the war

²⁴⁰ Thurlow Weed, letter to the *Commercial Advertiser*, reprinted in “The Late George Peabody: A Vindication of His Course During the War,” *New York Times*, 23 Dec 1869, 2.

²⁴¹ Charles Wilson Felt, letter to the [*Manchester*] *Guardian*, 8 Jan 1870, reprinted in “Mr. Peabody’s Patriotism,” *The [New York] Evening Post*, 31 Jan 1870.

²⁴² *Ibid.*

²⁴³ Peabody, as quoted in *ibid.*

itself, claiming, “there was probably never a day from April 1861 to April 1865, when, had it been in his power, he would have hesitated to put an end to the war.”²⁴⁴

By the time war broke out in April 1861, Peabody had been living in the U.K. for almost 24 years. Though he might have claimed for this reason that it was not his war, he remained so heavily invested in the U.S. economy that the outcome of the war was likely to have a significant impact on his business and wealth. In addition, he did not stop investing in the Confederate states during the war. In 1862, he purchased 149 of 300 bonds that a Mr. Swisher had brought to England from Texas. Texas had seceded in the year prior.²⁴⁵

Only a week before the war’s first shots were fired, Peabody did take a position, albeit privately: he opposed the Union’s proposed use of coercion to keep the Confederate states from seceding. He wrote to Prime Minister Lord Palmerston, warning him of the dangers he saw should the U.K. choose to side with the Confederacy.²⁴⁶ From a subsequent letter that Palmerston then wrote to Lord Russell, the U.K. foreign secretary, about Peabody’s letter, it appears that Peabody had warned PM Palmerston that the Confederacy might try to extend slavery and revive the slave trade. “The question raised by Mr Peabody’s communication,” Palmerston wrote to Russell, “is a serious and important one underlining a prospect of great difficulty and evil. It is natural that Americans belonging to the Northern States and who are anxious to prevent good relations between Europe and the Southern Confederation should try to impress upon us the possibility that the Southern Confederation will endeavor to extend slavery and revive Slave Trade.”²⁴⁷

Palmerston’s summary of Peabody’s message does not explicitly indicate that Peabody supported abolition; rather, Palmerston suggests that as a concerned northerner, Peabody was attempting to keep the Confederacy from establishing slavery elsewhere. At the time that Palmerston received this letter, the Confederacy was attempting to gain support from Britain and France. The Confederacy believed that Britain’s economic reliance on what the secessionist states called “King Cotton” would force both Britain and France to side with it. But in fact, most

²⁴⁴ “Recollections of George Peabody,” *The Independent*, 9 Sept 1869, 4.

²⁴⁵ William Whatley Pierson, Jr. “Texas versus White, IV,” *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1915): 142-158, 147.

²⁴⁶ Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister to Lord Russell, Foreign Secretary, “Memo on Mr. Peabody’s comm.,” 14 April 1861, in PRO 30/22/21, 464-467, National Archives, UK.

²⁴⁷ Palmerston to Russell, 14 April 1861, PRO 30/22/21, 464.

Anglo-American banks, including Peabody's, had moved on from cotton to focus on other crops.²⁴⁸

A month after Palmerston received Peabody's letter, the Palmerston government declared a position of Strict Neutrality, refusing to officially support either side in the war. In so doing, Britain acknowledged the rights of the Confederacy to secede, and Palmerston's government "granted the Confederacy equal status with the Union, which amounted to quasi-recognition of Southern independence," according to historian Kathryn Boodry.²⁴⁹ This recognition of the Confederacy's legitimacy enabled secessionists to legally purchase arms in and secure loans from foreign countries.

While anti-slavery sentiment may have played some role in Peabody's letter and Palmerston's later declaration of Britain's neutrality, capitalism was likely the decisive factor behind these positions. As Boodry has pointed out, official positions of neutrality presented the least risk for banks and foreign countries, as they balanced the importance of cotton with the many financial risks that came with such a stance.²⁵⁰ For example, a report estimated that reopening the slave trade would reduce the values of enslaved people by half, and in the eyes of bankers like Peabody, this would have potentially led to a great decrease in the values of his ongoing investments.²⁵¹

Indeed, Anglo-American bankers like Peabody wanted to avoid official relations with the Confederacy for a few reasons. Bankers like Peabody did not want to hold enslaved people as collateral.²⁵² They viewed enslaved people as collateral they could not easily do anything with if they recovered them for debt repayment; that is, U.K.-based bankers could not directly employ enslaved people as they did not live in the U.S.

Some of Peabody's other actions during this period also suggest financial calculations behind his letter to the prime minister. The bankers of the City of London had extensive investments in Mexico, and Peabody had Mexican War debt.²⁵³ These investments were at risk

²⁴⁸ Boodry, "The Common Thread," 172.

²⁴⁹ Boodry, "The Common Thread," 183.

²⁵⁰ Boodry, "The Common Thread," 206-207.

²⁵¹ Boodry, "The Common Thread," 171.

²⁵² Boodry, "The Common Thread," 189.

²⁵³ A.G. Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 215; Hidy, *George Peabody*, 289-290.

by the possibility of the slave trade being revived. The U.K. had promised to treat enslaving ships as hostile. The revival of the slave trade could lead to great hostility in the market and the possibility that Mexico would repudiate, or refuse to pay, its debts, therefore defaulting on them.

Peabody's disdain for repudiation, and therefore the loss of his investments, had been at the forefront of his mind for years. In the Panic of 1837, many southern states had refused to pay back their bond debts to foreign creditors. This repudiation led to a loss to the reputation of American securities abroad. Peabody and other Anglo-American bankers had suffered considerably from this loss. In January 1843, Peabody published a letter in a number of American newspapers "containing the strongest condemnation of the dishonest conduct of those State Legislatures in the United States who have disowned their public debts, and refused to provide for the interest," according to an article in the *Leeds Mercury*.²⁵⁴ "Mr. Peabody," the author went on, "declares that this conduct has entirely destroyed the public credit of the United States in Europe."

Peabody also made his concerns known about the effects the war might have on banking in another letter he wrote that month to the *Boston Courier*. In that letter, he discussed the possibility that the federal government was considering the use of force to coerce the Southern states into remaining in the Union.²⁵⁵ Peabody explained that if the federal government were to use force, this might result in the Southern states repudiating their debts, which would lead to a heavy downgrading of the status of American credit abroad.²⁵⁶

A response in the anti-slavery *Cleveland Morning Leader* pointed out that Peabody might have opposed the coercion policy out of an effort to protect his own investment in the South. The article's author noted that Peabody owned \$800,000 (\$438 million, 2021) of 8% bonds of a Mississippi railroad. If Mississippi felt coerced, the author argued, the state might quickly repudiate all its debts. This would cause Peabody a massive loss of investment and potential income, as this would also have a knock-on effect on his ability to attract future investors.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁴ "American Repudiation," *Leeds [U.K.] Mercury*, 28 January 1843, 5.

²⁵⁵ On the policy of coercion, see Pekka Pohjankoski, "Federal Coercion and National Constitutional Identity in the United States 1776-1861," *American Journal of Legal History* 56, no. 3 (2016): 326-358, 350-356.

²⁵⁶ "George Peabody's letter," *Cleveland Morning Leader*, 5 April 1861, 2, in *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress, available online:

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83035143/1861-04-05/ed-1/seq-2/>.

²⁵⁷ "George Peabody's letter."

Peabody's ongoing concerns about repudiation also appeared in his correspondence with Mississippi-based cotton factor William M.W. Cochran. In a letter to Peabody in 1851, Cochran made prescient reference to the potential connection between repudiation and the Civil War. Cochran wrote that he doubted that the Planters Bank Bonds that Peabody held in that state would be repaid. Rather than face repayment of its debts, the state was beginning to talk about secession, Cochran warned. "There is no talk now of making any provision for the payment of Planters Bank Bonds: the question of ultimate secession from the Union is the one that now engages the politicians of the State."²⁵⁸

Peabody had previously made clear his hatred of repudiation in a letter that he wrote to attorney J.J. Speed that appeared in a Baltimore newspaper in 1842. There, Peabody decried Mississippi and Indiana's recent repudiation of their debts. He claimed that repudiation by those two states had ruined foreign trust in U.S. investments and credit:

In the short space of a few months, [repudiation] destroyed that noble character for patriotism and honour which our country has sustained for more than fifty years; and, in Europe, our once proud Republic is only referred to now in derision, or spoken of to be compared unfavorably with their own forms of government. The principle adopted in some of the States, of repudiating honest debts, is reprobated in this country, in France, and in Holland, by all parties, and in all societies... The reverses of fortune here caused by repudiation and non-payment of interest by several of the states are, therefore, widespread, and in many cases truly distressing... Not a house in Europe will venture to take, or encourage the taking of any American loan. It is 'Repudiation' which has done all the mischief—the antagonist of honour and credit.²⁵⁹

Peabody's friendship with and financial support for Confederate General Robert E. Lee

Peabody formed a friendship with General Robert E. Lee that involved mutual admiration and financial support for Lee's charitable causes. Lee led the Confederacy in the Civil War in an attempt to preserve slavery in the South. He enslaved several people himself, and he managed his father-in-law's plantation of 200 enslaved people.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ Cochran to Peabody, 26 June 1851, in Box 11, Folder 10, GPP, PEM.

²⁵⁹ Letter from George Peabody to J.J. Speed, 28 November 1842, as reprinted in "American Stocks—Repudiation," *American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* 28 December 1842.

²⁶⁰ John Reeves, as quoted in Arijeta Lajka, "Gen Robert E. Lee owned slaves," *AP News* 12 June 2020, available online: <https://apnews.com/article/archive-fact-checking-9009420680>.

In the summer of 1869, Peabody traveled to Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, for respite from illness. While there, he met with a group of men who included Lee and South Carolina Governor William Aiken, Jr., who had enslaved over 700 people. They discussed the plans for the Peabody Education Fund. Following the meeting, Peabody, along with banker William Corcoran, made a modest donation (\$100) to the Episcopal church in Lexington where Lee was a member of the vestry.²⁶¹ Peabody also later donated \$60,000 (\$1.3 million, 2021) in Virginia state bonds to Washington College in Lexington, Virginia (today's Washington and Lee College), "as a mark of his respect for General Lee," the *Macon Telegraph* reported.²⁶²

Peabody also reportedly asked Lee to send a picture of himself to be hung in the Peabody Institute Library in Peabody, Massachusetts, as a "friend of its founder." In a letter to F. Poole, the secretary of the Peabody Institute (Massachusetts), Lee wrote, "In compliance with your request, I send a photograph of myself, the last that has been taken, and shall feel [sic] honoured in its being placed among the 'friends' of Mr. Peabody."²⁶³

Baltimore, the Peabody Institute, and the Civil War

When it came to the Civil War, the opinions and responses of Baltimoreans were volatile. Many people had "a strong and explosive secessionist bent," and mob violence was common.²⁶⁴ Many other Baltimoreans sought to maintain what historian Barbara Fields has called a "middle ground" between slavery and freedom.²⁶⁵ This group of "border-state compromisers" tried to somehow embrace both Southern rights and the preservation of the Union.²⁶⁶ Indeed, as historian Matthew Crenson has revealed, many Baltimoreans had a "general determination to talk their way around the issue of slavery."²⁶⁷

²⁶¹ R.E. Lee to Mary Lee, 14 August 1869, in Robert E. Lee, Jr., *Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee* (New York: Doubleday, 1904), available online: <https://leefamilyarchive.org/papers/books/recollections/20.html>, Lee Family Digital Archive (hereafter LFDA).

²⁶² "Letter from Greenbrier, West Virginia, Springs," *Macon [Ga.] Telegraph*, 3 Sept. 1869.

²⁶³ Letter from Robert E. Lee to Poole, 25 September 1869, in Lee, Jr., *Recollections and Letters*, LFDA.

²⁶⁴ Arnold Blumberg, "Ben Butler's draconian move to keep Maryland in the Union also saved Washington," *Military History* 21, no. 4 (2004): 24, 80; 24.

²⁶⁵ Fields, *Slavery and Freedom*, 92.

²⁶⁶ Fields, *Slavery and Freedom*, 94.

²⁶⁷ Matthew A. Crenson, *Baltimore: A Political History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2017), 236.

As a state, Maryland also trod the middle ground. It remained neutral and never officially seceded, but as a whole Maryland was “dangerously pro-South.”²⁶⁸ The state was anti-abolition, voting less than 5 percent for Lincoln in 1860. The legislature also refused Lincoln’s offer of concession in 1862, which would have emancipated enslaved people and in return offered compensation to enslavers.²⁶⁹ In 1870, Maryland was one of seven states that voted in the first instance to reject the Fifteenth Amendment guaranteeing the right to vote to African American men.

Peabody’s political intent for the Institute

Peabody stated that he wanted the Institute in Baltimore to remain apolitical regarding the rising divisions around slavery in the U.S. that had created sectionalism. In his first letter to the Institute trustees in 1857, Peabody expressed his wish:

That the Institute I have proposed to you, *shall always be strictly guarded against the possibility of being made a theater for the dissemination or discussion of sectarian theology or party politics; that it shall never minister in any manner whatever, to political dissension*, to infidelity, to visionary theories of a pretended philosophy which may be aimed at the subversion of the approved morals of society; *that it shall never lend its influence to the propagation of opinions tending to create or encourage sectional jealousies in our happy country, or which may lead to the alienation of the people of one State or Section of the Union from those of another.*²⁷⁰

Here, Peabody made clear that he did not want any discussion of party politics or sectionalism to take place at the Institute, nor did he want any expressions of political dissent to take place within its walls. Given that Peabody’s overall goal was the preservation of the Union, to preserve foreign investment in the country, his direction to the trustees here reveals that he called for his namesake organization to fall in line with that motivation.

²⁶⁸ Blumberg, “Ben Butler’s draconian move.”

²⁶⁹ González, Marshall, and Naidu, “Start-up Nation?,” 378.

²⁷⁰ Manuscript letter by George Peabody founding the Peabody Institute, 1857 February 12, Box: 1, item: 1. Peabody Institute founding documents, PIRG-01. Peabody Archives, Arthur Friedheim Library, Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. Emphasis added.

Secessionist sentiment among some of the trustees

The trustees were divided on the Civil War. Within the body, there was significant support for the cause of the Confederacy, with nearly half of the trustees reportedly supporting the South and slavery. The Confederate-leaning newspaper *Memphis Daily Appeal* alleged in 1863 that the Institute could not be opened because of secession. The reporter claimed that 11 of the 25 trustees held secessionist viewpoints.²⁷¹

Some trustees who supported the Union urged national compromise rather than the abolition of slavery. In late 1860 John Pendleton Kennedy, president of the Board of Trustees, wrote an essay in which he argued against secession.²⁷² Kennedy was a former congressman, a former secretary of the navy, and a close friend of Peabody's. In his essay, Kennedy called for compromise and cited taxation rather than slavery as the main reason why South Carolina had seceded, the first state to do so.²⁷³ At the time of the war, Kennedy was a Unionist, a party that favored compromise and again did not publicly call for abolition. He had previously, however, been a member of the Know-Nothing Party, which was an anti-immigrant, xenophobic, nativist party.

Despite their colleague Kennedy's having defected to the Unionist Party, Peabody Institute trustees Thomas Swann and Severn Teackle Wallis remained Know-Nothings until the party dissolved in 1860. At the start of the war in 1861, Wallis was a member of the Maryland Legislature and was arrested by the Union for his strong support for Southern secession. Along with several other Baltimoreans, Wallis was imprisoned at Fort Monroe for 14 months.²⁷⁴

Swann supported the Union but heavily favored slavery. As governor of Maryland after the war, he supported a practice whereby judges could sentence Black people convicted of petty crimes to terms of slavery for offenses such as the theft of a one-dollar wallet or a pig worth three dollars.²⁷⁵ Both Kennedy and Swann gave their public support for emancipation in 1863,

²⁷¹ *Memphis Daily Appeal*, June 20, 1863, 1.

²⁷² Kennedy was elected President in April 1860. [n.d.] April 1860, 39, Trustees' Minutes, Vol. 2.

²⁷³ Crenson, *Baltimore*, 235-236.

²⁷⁴ Eli Pousson, "Severn Teackle Wallis Statue: The Municipal Art Society's Memorial to a Maryland Lawyer," *Baltimore Heritage*, last updated May 2019, available online: <https://explore.baltimoreheritage.org/items/show/629>. Wallis was imprisoned along with Henry May, one of the owners of the land on which the Peabody Institute was built. Bernard C. Steiner, "Severn Teackle Wallis: First Paper," *The Sewanee Review* 15, no. 1 (1907): 58-74, 70.

²⁷⁵ Fields, *Slavery and Freedom*, 152.

but this was seen as coming late in the war, when emancipation was already well on its way to being guaranteed.²⁷⁶

Abolitionists' criticisms of George Peabody

Prominent abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison and his associates publicly excoriated Peabody in 1869-1870. Their criticisms reveal that antebellum abolitionists had not seen Peabody as an ally for their cause. Garrison emphasized that Peabody's charitable giving had primarily been in benefit to the South.

Garrison believed Peabody supported the South much more than the North, and as a result he did nothing to help those who had been enslaved. "His sympathies in his own country were much more strongly with a pro-slavery South than with an anti-slavery North; and he carried his feelings in that direction almost to the verge of the Rebellion," he wrote in 1870.²⁷⁷ Garrison argued that Peabody did nothing in his considerable power as a public figure in the U.S. and the U.K., and as a wealthy businessperson for enslaved people. "He took no interest in any effort, religious or political, having in view the liberation of those in bondage, or the restriction of slavery to its original limits." Here Garrison indicated that he would have taken note if Peabody had favored even restricting slavery without abolishing it. Garrison also pointed out that Peabody "was willing to have peace on any conditions that would have been satisfactory to the Slave Power... for he appears to have had no moral sensibility in regard to that 'sum of all villainies.'"

In an earlier 1857 speech, abolitionist Rev. T.W. Higginson had also intimated that Peabody had celebrated cotton—and therefore slavery—as offering the firmest financial footing in the world. Higginson argued that "Slave Power... has ruled as easily its Northern creditors and its Northern debtors, the power that at this moment stands with all the patronage of the greatest nation in the world in its clutches, and upon the firmest financial basis in the world - so George Peabody says - of cotton beneath its feet... Why, slavery is king; king *de facto*."²⁷⁸

In an article called "Mr. Peabody and the South," written while Peabody was still alive, Garrison accused him of being sympathetic toward the South and slavery and of earning his

²⁷⁶ Fields, *Slavery and Freedom*, 129, 136.

²⁷⁷ Wm. Lloyd Garrison, "Honored Beyond His Deserts," *The Independent (New York)*, 10 February 1870, 1.

²⁷⁸ "Speech of Rev T.W. Higginson," reprinted in *The Liberator* (Boston), 22 May 1857, 1.

wealth from “the misfortune of his native land.”²⁷⁹ In Garrison’s view, Peabody was with the South during the abolitionist struggle and never came out against slavery. He had steered away from criticizing enslavers to maintain slavery while also preserving the Union.

In a letter to his friend, the author John Greenleaf Whittier, Garrison stated, “Mr. Peabody always sympathized with the slaveholders of the South as against the abolitionists and deprecated all agitation of the subject of slavery.”²⁸⁰ He also made clear that Peabody had not taken a public position in favor of President Lincoln when he could have. “During the rebellion, he gave no hearty support to Mr. Lincoln in England, and, provided the Union could have been preserved by letting the South have her own way, would have gone for any compromise to that end,” Garrison wrote.

Garrison also critiqued Peabody’s decision to create the Peabody Institute in Baltimore at the time that Maryland was a slave state. The Institute was Peabody’s first major public donation, and it was made, Garrison pointed out, “at a time when that state was rotten with treason.”²⁸¹ Garrison argued that the donation was ill-timed, and that it encouraged Maryland to continue its “factious course” because of Peabody’s support.

Garrison also pointed out that “in the hight [sic] of our national troubles, when the treasury was empty and the credit of the Government seriously impaired,” many other Americans traveling and living overseas sent donations as well as encouraging words to the Union, but Peabody did not.

Garrison contextualized Peabody’s stay at Sulphur Springs, claiming that Peabody celebrated the group who welcomed him there as heroes. Calling Sulphur Springs “the favorite resort of the elite of rebeldom,” Garrison said that Peabody talked of his “cordial esteem and regard for the high honor, integrity, and heroism of the Southern people.”

In November 1869 Peabody passed away, and in an article three months later, Garrison said that Peabody had been “honored beyond his deserts” at his funeral. He accused Peabody of

²⁷⁹ William Lloyd Garrison, “Mr. Peabody and the South,” *The Independent (New York)*, 19 August 1869, 1.

²⁸⁰ William Lloyd Garrison to John Greenleaf Whittier, 21 January 1868, Roxbury, Mass., Anti-Slavery Collection, Boston Public Library, *Digital Commonwealth*, available online: <https://ark.digitalcommonwealth.org/ark:/50959/cv43s191j>.

²⁸¹ Garrison, “Mr. Peabody and the South.”

having “the strangest conservative tendencies, and ever careful to avoid whatever might interfere with his worldly interests, or subject him even temporarily to popular disesteem.”²⁸²

VI. Peabody’s legacies

Key findings:

- The Peabody Education Fund racially discriminated in its allocation of funding to schools, providing only 6.5% of its funding to schools for Black children.
- The fund successfully opposed a Civil Rights Bill that would have integrated schools nationwide after the Civil War.
- Peabody was noted as a friend of the South, celebrated by agriculturalists, businesspeople, and former Confederate officers.
- Peabody fathered a daughter whom he did not widely acknowledge, with a woman whom he did not marry. He did not provide for his daughter in his will.

Peabody Education Fund

In 1867, Peabody donated \$2,000,000 (\$37.8 million, 2021) to establish the Peabody Education Fund (PEF).²⁸³ He favored the expansion of elementary school education to as many children in the south as possible, and he made no race-based conditions in his terms establishing the fund. In fact, he stated that the funds should “be distributed among the entire population, without other distinction than their needs and the opportunities of usefulness to them.”²⁸⁴ Despite this statement, however, historians and education scholars have maintained that the Fund helped foster the development of segregated schools and inferior education for Black children in the south.²⁸⁵

Like he had done with the Peabody Institute, Peabody selected the Fund’s first Board of Trustees. In 1867, he appointed five southerners and fifteen northerners to the board, and he

²⁸² Garrison, “Honored Beyond His Deserts,” *The Independent*, 10 Feb 1870, 1.

²⁸³ “Local Matters,” *The Sun*, 21 January 1869.

²⁸⁴ Peabody, as quoted in Earle E. West, “The Peabody Education Fund and Negro Education, 1867-1880,” *History of Education Quarterly* 6, no. 2 (1966): 3-21, 4.

²⁸⁵ West, “The Peabody Education Fund,” 3-4; William P. Vaughn, “Partners in Segregation: Barnabas Sears and the Peabody Fund,” *Civil War History* 10, no. 3 (1964): 260-274.

appointed Robert C. Winthrop of Massachusetts as its chairman.²⁸⁶ Southern members included Governor William Aiken of South Carolina, William A. Graham of North Carolina, George Washington Riggs of Washington D.C., Edward Bradford of Louisiana, and George Eaton of Maryland. Northern members included Union General Ulysses S. Grant. The trustees selected the Fund's first General Agent, Rev. Dr. Barnas Sears, a Massachusetts professor and theologian.²⁸⁷

Along with the trustees, Sears administered the PEF from 1867 until his death in 1880. During this time, Sears oversaw the distribution of roughly \$1.2 million (\$22.7 million) to southern schools. Of this sum, only \$75,750 (\$1.4 million), or about 6.5% of the PEF's money, went toward schools that were specifically designated for Black children.²⁸⁸

Indeed, as historian William P. Vaughn has established, Sears and the trustees racially discriminated in how much money the Fund gave to Black schools versus white schools.²⁸⁹ The trustees funded Black schools at only two-thirds the rate that they funded schools with white students. This racially discriminatory funding practice helped foster a culture wherein white schools were supported to the detriment of Black schools.

Personally, General Agent Sears opposed integrated schools, and in his role, he worked to persuade others of this view.²⁹⁰ He justified segregated schools in a letter he wrote to Winthrop in 1869, claiming that Black schools simply needed less funding than white schools. "It costs less to maintain schools for the colored children than the white," Sears explained. Vaughn notes that this policy fostered a sense of "rapport among Sears, the trustees, and those southerners who opposed any action which might suggest racial equality."²⁹¹

Sears also used his power to try to encourage ardent integrationist and fellow Massachusettsan Thomas W. Conway, Louisiana superintendent of education, to segregate Louisiana's schools or else not to expect any money from the Peabody Fund.²⁹² Meanwhile *De Bow's Review*, a champion of southern life under slavery, commended Peabody's efforts, and those of his "excellent selection of agents to carry out his trusts."²⁹³

²⁸⁶ Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 261.

²⁸⁷ Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 261.

²⁸⁸ West, "The Peabody Education Fund," 4.

²⁸⁹ Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 263-264.

²⁹⁰ Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 266.

²⁹¹ Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 263-264.

²⁹² Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 267-268.

²⁹³ *De Bow's Review*, XL (1869), 909, as quoted in Vaughn, "Partners in Segregation," 268.

While publicly Sears refused to take a stand on integrated schools, in private he referred to them as a “curse” because he did not believe white people would attend or support them.²⁹⁴ Instead he supported segregationist schools. Sears wrote to Louisiana superintendent Conway in 1870, arguing that Louisiana schools were organized in such a way that large numbers of white people refused to send their children to them. Therefore, Sears argued, the fund had to support white children’s segregated learning. He explained:

We ourselves raise no questions about mixed schools. We simply take the fact that white children do not generally attend them, without passing any judgement on the propriety or impropriety of their course. We wish to promote universal education to aid whole communities, if possible. If that cannot be, on account of peculiar circumstances, we must give preference to those whose education is neglected. It is well known that we are helping the white children in Louisiana, as being the more destitute, from the fact of their unwillingness to attend mixed schools. We should give the preference to colored children, were they in like circumstances.²⁹⁵

In return, Conway complained about the Peabody Fund, claiming that white children whose parents refused to allow them to attend integrated public schools were not “destitute,” as the Peabody Fund claimed.

Sears based his refusal to aid integrated school systems in the belief that white families refused to send their children to such schools, and therefore that integrated schools were detrimental to the future of public education. For example, when the University of South Carolina integrated in 1873-1874, Sears cut PEF funding to the university from \$1,000 to \$200.²⁹⁶

Sears also represented the Peabody Fund in successfully opposing Senator Charles Sumner’s Civil Rights Bill, proposed to Congress in 1874. The bill would have required integrated schools across the country. Sears claimed that the bill would destroy the work of the Peabody Fund over the previous six years, “and leave us without a promising field of action by taking away public schools and leaving nothing in their places.”²⁹⁷ He undertook a campaign to prove to the bill’s supporters that if integrated schools were a requirement, it would cause the

²⁹⁴ Vaughn, “Partners in Segregation,” 267.

²⁹⁵ Sears, 1870, as quoted in Vaughn, “Partners in Segregation,” 269.

²⁹⁶ Vaughn, “Partners in Segregation,” 270.

²⁹⁷ Sears to Winthrop, 8 January 1874, Curry Papers, as quoted in Vaughn, 271.

destruction of southern public schools, claiming that integrated schools would be a “grand provision for the education of the whole colored population, chiefly at the expense of others.”²⁹⁸

In February 1875, the House removed the integrated school requirement from the bill. The Peabody Fund trustees overwhelmingly supported Sears’s efforts, unanimously declaring in a report that compulsory integrated schools would be very harmful to children, and that Black students would suffer the most as a result.²⁹⁹ As Vaughn summarizes, Sears’s significance is hard to overstate. “A Northern educator of experience and prestige, he lent his own considerable energies and the vast resources of the Peabody Fund to perpetuating a policy of racial segregation in the Southern schools.”³⁰⁰

In an 1880 special report to Congress, the PEF Trustees indicated that they supported the education of Black children; however, their endorsement was justified by a racist concern that Black people were unable to appropriately exercise their Constitutional rights as U.S. voters.³⁰¹ The PEF Trustees explained that over a half million African American voters were “from illiteracy... notoriously incompetent to the intelligent discharge of the public duties intrusted [sic] to them.”³⁰² The report noted “the evils likely to ensue from intrusting [sic] political power to ignorant and incompetent hands.”³⁰³ Such an “infusion of so large an element of ignorance into the constituent body must be a source of weakness to our system of government.”³⁰⁴ In effect, the PEF Trustees’ argument that African American voters “in the mass [were] incapable of discreetly exercising” their suffrage rights supported the racist belief of the time that voting rights for Black people should be limited based on literacy.³⁰⁵ Further research is needed to understand the impact of this report, but its presentation to Congress in 1880 may have bolstered ideas about limiting voting rights to those African Americans who could pass literacy tests, which were problematic in both their existence and eventual design.

²⁹⁸ Sears, 1874, as quoted in Vaughn, 273.

²⁹⁹ Vaughn, 273.

³⁰⁰ Vaughn, 274.

³⁰¹ Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund, *Memorial of the Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund with the Report of their Committee on the Education of the Colored Population of the United States* (Cambridge, MA: University Press, John Wilson & Son, 1880).

³⁰² Trustees of the PEF, *Memorial of the Trustees*, 15.

³⁰³ Trustees of the PEF, *Memorial of the Trustees*, 15.

³⁰⁴ Trustees of the PEF, *Memorial of the Trustees*, 18.

³⁰⁵ Trustees of the PEF, *Memorial of the Trustees*, 19.

Peabody's reputation as a friend of the south

In his later life and posthumously, Peabody developed a wide public reputation as a friend of the U.S. south. In 1857, on the motion of Colonel Anthony Kimmell, a Maryland farmer, the National Agricultural Society made Peabody an honorary member.³⁰⁶ In 1850, Kimmell enslaved at least nine people on his family farm Linganore in Frederick County, Maryland.³⁰⁷ It has been reported elsewhere that Kimmell may have enslaved as many as 100 people.³⁰⁸ In addition, in 1867, the Charleston Board of Trade invited Peabody to its annual banquet.³⁰⁹ Also that year, the people of Fort Smith, Arkansas, held a public celebration to thank Peabody “for his late contribution in aid of education in the South.”³¹⁰ So widespread was Peabody's popularity among southerners that Riggs family biographer John Beverley Riggs felt the need to remind readers that Peabody had in fact donated funds to places outside the south. Riggs noted that Peabody “lent assistance not only to a war-torn South, but to education and culture in other parts of the United States as well.”³¹¹

In the aftermath of Peabody's death, former Confederate leaders and enslavers also paid tribute to him. In early 1870, the Peabody Institute in Massachusetts invited Washington College (Virginia)'s rector and trustees to attend Peabody's U.S. funeral. The trustees responded with a written tribute to Peabody. They also noted that they would send four people to his funeral, all of whom had been enslavers and had ties to the Confederacy: the president of the college, Confederate General Robert E. Lee; Confederate Colonel Bolivar Christian; Confederate Major T.J. Kirkpatrick; and enslaver and inventor Cyrus McCormick, who traveled Europe with his wife during the war raising money for the Confederacy.³¹²

³⁰⁶ “The National Agricultural Society,” *Easton Gazette*, 24 January 1857, 1.

³⁰⁷ 1850 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, District 8, Frederick, MD, s.v. “Anthony Kimmell.”

³⁰⁸ Ann Leberherz, Mary Margrabe, and Sarah Drenning, *Pre-1800 Houses of Frederick County, Maryland (MD)*, Vol. 3: *Mount Pleasant to Woodville* (Woodsboro, MD: Locks Hill Press, 2002), as quoted by Linda Nolan Layman, “Re: Maryland Kimmel's,” 3 July 2013, *Genealogy.com*, available online: <https://www.genealogy.com/forum/surnames/topics/kimmel/572/>.

³⁰⁹ *New Orleans Crescent*, 10 April 1867, 1.

³¹⁰ *New Orleans Crescent*, 11 April 1867, 4.

³¹¹ Riggs, *The Riggs Family*, 331.

³¹² “The Peabody Funeral,” *New York Tribune*, 21 Jan 1870, 2.

In an 1883 speech in the Tennessee legislature, A.M. Looney hailed Peabody as a hero for the South. In racist language that invoked the Lost Cause mythology, Looney proclaimed:

In those dark and gloomy days of reconstruction—when a hundred thousand of the best, the most intelligent and patriotic Tennesseans were disenfranchised, the heel of their former slaves set upon their necks, those necks that had never bowed before save unto their God. . . At this fearful crisis, the deepest, darkest hour of our woe, the great, heaven-inspired heart of George Peabody, from his home in the great city of London, came gushing out to us, encircling us in its warm and genial philanthropy the widows and orphans of our glorious martyrs. . . His was the first generous recognition, the first act of substantial sympathy extended to a vanquished and impoverished though a brave and gallant people. His munificent and patriotic benefactions to the South, at the time and under the circumstances surrounding her, marks him as the greatest philanthropist of the nineteenth century, and registers him among the few—the immortal names that were not born to die.³¹³

Here, Looney suggested that Peabody’s philanthropic contributions to the South alone had earned him the status of greatest philanthropist of the century, and that he had been the first to recognize the philanthropic needs of white southerners in the aftermath of the War.

Peabody’s child and criticisms of his character

The widespread praise for Peabody’s beneficence, in his later life and after his death, can be juxtaposed with a little-known aspect of his life: his fathering of at least one child, a daughter, out of wedlock, and his failure to include her in his will. A biographer of Peabody explains that there is circumstantial evidence that Peabody fathered a child with a woman, allegedly in Brighton, England. According to a statement that J.S. Morgan’s grandson, J. Pierpont Morgan Jr., wrote in 1940, long after Peabody’s 1869 death, Peabody had a mistress “who lived, I believe, at

Lee’s enslaving status was established above. For the others: 1850 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, District 12, Clarke, VA, s.v. “Cyrus J. Land McCormick”; 1860 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, District 2, Hart, KY, s.v. “S B Buckner”; 1860 U.S. Census - Slave Schedules, Eastern District, Campbell, VA, s.v. “Thomas Kirkpatrick.” McCormick was credited with inventing the mechanical reaper. However, recent studies have maintained that a person whom McCormick enslaved, Jo Anderson, was responsible for the intellectual property of the invention, but they did not receive credit or compensation for this, save for a small cabin and small annual gifts that McCormick gave to Anderson after the Civil War. Ryan Dukeman, “Endowed Professorships,” *Princeton & Slavery*, available online: <https://slavery.princeton.edu/stories/endowed-professorships#423>.

³¹³ Hon. A.M. Looney, [n.d., March 1883?], as quoted in *Peabody Institute*, 29.

Brighton.”³¹⁴ Peabody supported her financially, Morgan reported, as much as £2,000 at a time. In his will Peabody left nothing to the woman because, according to Morgan, “he had so adequately provided for her during her life.” Morgan reported that the woman had a daughter “who was Mr. Peabody’s daughter,” and that “from time to time both Mr. J.S. Morgan and my Father had applications from the daughter asking for help, all her dowry having been lost by her husband, who was not a very satisfactory person.”

This project’s research in the Liverpool Archives has revealed the existence of a daughter, who seems likely to have been the one whom Morgan wrote about above. In September 1883, Exeter’s Member of Parliament (MP) E. Johnson wrote to Sir Edward Henry Stanley, the Earl of Derby and Secretary of State for the Colonies, in his role as chairman of the Peabody Trust Fund. The Peabody Trust Fund was a U.K. charitable trust for the housing of the poor that Peabody had established in 1862. Writing on behalf of a group of the late Peabody’s friends—Sir Curtis M. Lampson, Sir Edward Watkin, J.S. Morgan, C.C. Gooch, and Peter Reed—MP Johnson requested Lord Derby’s help with the “case of Mrs. F. Thomas of Exeter,” whom they indicated was the mother of Peabody’s daughter. According to Johnson, Thomas’s husband had gone bankrupt. Johnson had been able to secure household furniture for her from her husband’s estate, but she needed funds to support herself and her children.

Johnson requested Lord Derby’s help with raising these funds; in so doing, Johnson made clear that he was also motivated in part by a desire to preserve Peabody’s positive public reputation. Johnson proposed:

To raise by subscription a fund sufficient to place [Mrs. Thomas and her children] beyond further pecuniary anxiety and thereby remove what might be viewed as a reflection on the name of our great Philanthropist, who (as your Lordship is, I presume aware) was prevented by his sudden illness and death from completing arrangements for securing a suitable income to his daughter.³¹⁵

No evidence has been found to corroborate Johnson’s claim that Peabody was only prevented from setting up a fund for his daughter due to sudden illness. Johnson asked Lord Derby to assist in any way he could with setting up the fund.

³¹⁴ Statement by J. Pierpont Morgan, Jr., 1940, as quoted in Parker, *The life of George Peabody*, 33.

³¹⁵ E. Johnson to Lord Derby, 28 September 1883, 920 DER (15)/43/19/78a/1, in Papers of Edward Henry Stanley, 15th Earl of Derby (hereafter Derby papers), Liverpool Record Office.

Lord Derby declined to help. In his reply, he indicated that although he had been one of the trustees of the Peabody Fund for twenty years, he had “never heard until lately of Mr. Peabody’s illegitimate *children*, and I cannot admit that they have any personal claim on me.”³¹⁶ Derby’s use of the word *children* suggests that perhaps Mrs. Thomas’s daughter was not the only child whom Peabody had fathered. Lord Derby carried on saying, “I am afraid that therefore I must decline to help in raising a fund for Mrs. Thomas.”

Further research into Mrs. Thomas’s 1883 case, and specifically the fact of her husband’s bankruptcy, has led to the likely uncovering of her name—Mary Ann Pickford Thomas—and that of her husband—Frederick Thomas. Frederick’s bankruptcy was announced in the local newspapers in Devon, on the south coast of England, where Exeter is the county town. Mary Ann had had one daughter, Louise Sophia Pickford, in 1853 in Newington, London, who was likely Peabody’s daughter. Mary Ann Pickford did not marry Frederick Thomas until 1871, after George Peabody’s death.³¹⁷ While we have not yet uncovered evidence that definitively confirms George Peabody as the father, the connection via the Thomas name; MP Johnson’s constituency in Devon; and his letter pointing out to the Earl of Derby that Peabody had had an illegitimate daughter with Thomas are a strong indication of the connection.

The existence of a child whom Peabody did not include in his will and, it seems, did not publicly acknowledge, raises questions about his character. If Peabody’s daughter was in fact Louise Sophia Pickford, born in 1853, then Peabody would have had 16 years to set up a fund for her before his passing in 1869. In addition, it also calls into question his friends’ efforts to protect his reputation in the aftermath of his passing.

In the summer of 1869, which would become the last summer of Peabody’s life, an anonymous article in the *Cleveland Daily Herald* laid plain other criticisms that some had of Peabody. The author argued firstly that Peabody had traded in the U.S.’s misfortune. “We are willing to admit the generosity and good sense of George Peabody in giving away during his life a respectable portion of the vast fortune he has amassed, and which he has no possible use for,” the author acknowledged, “though we cannot forget that a considerable part of this fortune was

³¹⁶ Lord Derby to E. Johnson, 7 October 1883, 920 DER (15)/43/19/78a/2, Derby Papers, LRO. Emphasis added.

³¹⁷ General Register Office, *England & Wales, Civil Registration Birth Index, 1837-1915*, Vol. 1d, 185, s.v. “Louise Sophia Pickford.”

acquired by trading in the misfortunes of his native land.”³¹⁸ Here the author may have been referring to the fact that Peabody traded in slavery, and/or that he had dealt heavily in American securities during a period of deep recession in the 1840s, when the value of those securities had steeply declined.³¹⁹

The author also claimed that Peabody did not make real sacrifices in giving his money away, especially as some of his donations were in securities that were worth little in the current market:

His donations of vast sums have been, in many instances, gifts of stocks and bonds that have paid no interest and are practically without value in the market... They may be good someday long after Mr. Peabody's death, but at present they merely served to distend his pocketbook or fill a pigeon-hole in his safe, and could be given away without impairing his income a dollar.³²⁰

Finally, the author compared Peabody to another philanthropist of the time whom they believed had made a similar gift with far less fanfare. After describing Birmingham, U.K., manufacturer Josiah Mason’s construction of almshouses and an orphanage in that city, the author closed with a sarcastic view of the achievements of Peabody’s poor housing trust in London: “[Mason’s] entire gift is thus 10,000 pounds more than that of Mr. Peabody to the poor of London, is instantly available, and will reach and benefit the class for which it was designed. But it has all been done so quietly that the name of Mr. Mason has not been trumpeted to the world, and the Queen has neither written him an autograph letter nor sent him her portrait.” The anonymous author seemed to think that Peabody had received greater public praise than he deserved for his philanthropic efforts.

VII. Conclusion

George Peabody has often been called the founder of American philanthropy. Despite his status as the first American known and celebrated for charitable giving, the existence of many educational and cultural institutions that bear his name, and his lifetime having been in the nineteenth century, to date no study has examined the sources of his wealth and their possible

³¹⁸ “Peabody Eclipsed.” *Cleveland Daily Herald*, 25 August 1869.

³¹⁹ Hidy, *George Peabody*, 263.

³²⁰ “Peabody Eclipsed.”

connections to slavery This study therefore presents the first of what might be several examinations into Peabody's life and legacies in connection to slavery.

This report reveals that Peabody pursued a career in which he profited in many ways from the labors and lives of enslaved African diasporic people. He was comfortable earning independent wealth from slavery starting at the age of seventeen, and he later worked closely with and earned income from enslavers. Later as a merchant banker, Peabody not only profited from the traffic in human beings, he also made and facilitated financial transfers that fueled and furthered that trade, particularly during the era of the domestic U.S. slave trade. Through his additional efforts to foster and increase the transatlantic trade in enslaved-produced goods, Peabody provided significant resources that enabled the U.S. slave society to thrive and for U.K. capitalists to accrue significant wealth from the labors of enslaved peoples in the Americas. Peabody was celebrated in the south, and he maintained close connections with men who fought for the continuation of slavery. In his later life, Peabody was also excoriated by abolitionist activists, which suggests that Peabody did not seek to end the reviled institution from which he benefited, even when many people united in opposition to it. With this knowledge, the institutions that bear his name can make informed, material changes that benefit African American students, prospective students, clients, faculty, and staff.

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1800
Montgomery County, MD

1810
Baltimore, MD

1820
Alexandria, DC
Baltimore, MD
Fauquier, VA
Zanesville, OH
Washington, DC

1830
Baltimore, MD

1840
Baltimore, MD
Zanesville, OH

1850

Baltimore, MD

1860

Baltimore, MD
Zanesville, OH

1870

Muskingum, OH

U.S. Census - Slave Schedules

1850

Baltimore, MD
Clarke, VA
Columbus, GA
Frederick, MD
Louisiana, AR
Mobile, AL
Natchez, MS
New Orleans, LA
Queen Anne's, MD
Russell, AL
St. James, LA
St. Louis, MO
Washington, MS

1860

Baltimore, MD
Campbell, VA
Columbus, GA
Decatur, GA
Harford County, MD
Hart, KY
Marlboro, SC
Nashville, TN
New Orleans, LA
Russell, AL

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