

Slavery, Family, and Gentry Capitalism in the British Atlantic: The World of the Lascelles, 1648-1834

(Cambridge Studies in Economic History - Second Series)

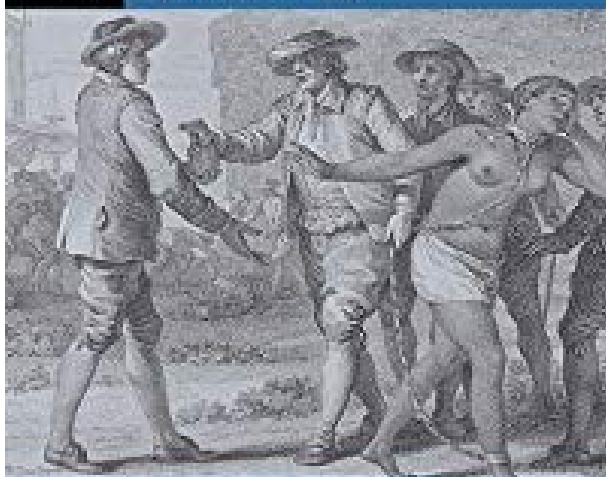
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S. D. Smith

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