

Black Lives Matter graffiti on base of Melville Monument

Grffiti including the words 'George Floyd' and BLM has been written on the base of the Melville statue in St Andrew Square.

The controversial statue commemorates Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville, a Conservative politician who as Secretary of State for the Home Department delayed the abolishment of the slave trade.

In 1806, Dundas was impeached for the misuse of public funds and although found not guilty he never held office again.



Henry Dundas grafitti cleaning. Photo: Martin P. McAdam
www.martinmcadam.com

A petition has now been started to remove the 150 ft high monument.

A petition on [change.org](https://www.change.org) reads: “The reason for this is to rectify his fallacious reputation and denounce his involvement in the slave trade during the 18th century.

“He was solely responsible for delaying the abolition of slavery in 1792, causing another 15 years of people being kidnapped, shipped to, and enslaved in Britain from which he directly benefited from.

“The statue in St Andrew’s Square and various streets named after him falsely glorify Henry Dundas and suggest that he has a respectable legacy and should be idolised – this is not the case.”

Hundreds of people have now signed the petition while demanding that a number of street names dedicated to the controversial politician are renamed.

One suggestion is that the nearby Dundas Street should be named after Joseph Knight – a Scottish-Jamaican slave who won a case in 1778 to free himself by proving that slavery was not recognised under Scots law.

City of Edinburgh Council leader Adam McVey yesterday confirmed a plaque will be added to the Melville Monument outlining Henry Dundas’ ties to the slave trade

On Sunday, Black Lives Matter protesters in Bristol tore down a prominent city-centre statue of former slave-owner and philanthropist Edward Colston and threw it into the harbour.

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