



UNIVERSITY OF
KING'S
COLLEGE • HALIFAX

Memo

To: King's Community
From: President Bill Lahey
Date: May 13, 2021
Re: The Haliburton Room

Introduction

This memo is my response to one of the recommendations I have received from the Board's Equity Committee by email on September 1, 2020.¹ The specific recommendation of the Equity Committee that I am responding to is that the classroom named the Haliburton Room, after the prominent King's graduate and writer, Thomas Chandler Haliburton, should no longer be called the Haliburton Room. This recommendation was expressed in this paragraph:

The Committee is in favour of re-naming the rooms (ie. the Haliburton room), removing monuments, etc. that honour those who supported the slave trade, were involved in the slave trade, or wrote positively about racism, engaged in anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity. The Committee recommends this happen as soon as possible.

This paragraph was part of the Committee's response to my email of July 3, in which I asked for the advice of the Committee on a range of questions, a number of which asked what the College should do in light of what we have learned about historical connections between King's and slavery through the scholarly inquiry into those connections conducted over the past several years - <https://ukings.ca/administration/public-documents/slavery-scholarly-inquiry/academic-research/>. In that email, I wrote:

¹ The recommendations received on that date are attached to this document.

One of the issues facing our community is how does the College, in light of the findings of the Inquiry, address the honouring of individuals who were shown by the findings of the Inquiry – or were known previous to the Inquiry – to be participants, beneficiaries or supporters of the enslavement of Black people? These include Thomas Chandler Haliburton, after whom the Haliburton Room (as well as the Haliburton Society) is named, and the College's founder, Charles Inglis, after whom the Inglis Professorships and (I think) some scholarships and/or graduation honours, are named.

I would like to have the committee's advice on this, procedurally and substantively. In formulating its advice, I would like the committee to consider the good work that has been done at other universities to develop principles for this kind of decision-making, including those developed at Yale University. I would also like the committee to consider the relative merits of the full range of available options, including the approach that favours removing names and the approach that favours retaining names but drawing attention to the person's full story and its legacies.

In its consideration of this question, I would like the Committee to remember that the Haliburton Society is a student society and not something that the university owns. As President of the university, I would welcome dialogue with the Society about its name but my approach to those discussions would be that the name of the Society is for the students who belong to it to decide.

The Haliburton Room is currently the classroom on the first floor of the Arts and Administration Building. This is the 4th room at the University of King's College to be named the Haliburton Room since the first Haliburton Room was named in 1891.

With an important qualification introduced below, I agree with the recommendation of the Equity Committee that Haliburton's name should be removed from this classroom. I have come to that conclusion not only by considering the recommendation of the Equity Committee but also the recent decision of the students' literary society to change its names from the Haliburton Literary Society to the UKing's Literary Society, which I discuss below. I have also considered the principles or considerations that should guide the decision on the Haliburton Room and on other questions about naming or renaming and honouring that may come forward in the future. This is important to ensure that decisions are made on a principled and consistent basis over time. It is also important to ensure adequate weight is given to all relevant factors, including not only the negative but the positive aspects of the lives of the people whose honouring by the College is challenged, and the positive association of honoured people with the lives of the members of the university community independently of their life and legacy and the reasons for which they were originally honoured.

Earlier versions of this memo were distributed at a meeting of King's faculty on Thursday March 2; to the Executive Committee of Board of Governors on Thursday March 4; and to the Board of Governors on Thursday April 1, all in 2021. In each of these meetings, I said Haliburton's name

would be removed from the classroom that is now the Haliburton Room before the end of the 2020-2021 academic year, unless objections were raised to my doing so that resulted in a contrary consensus. No objections have been raised with me.

Thomas Chandler Haliburton

Thomas Chandler Haliburton was born in 1796 at Windsor, N.S., to one of the Establishment families of American origins and Anglican faith who sought to establish themselves as an aristocracy in Nova Scotia in reaction to the American Revolution.² He graduated from the University of King's College in 1815, where his "indoctrination into the correct principles upon which the tory Anglican establishment was based was confirmed by his association with the sons of leading professional men in the Atlantic colonies who were being prepared to take their fathers' places".

He was admitted to the bar in 1820 and established a thriving practice in Annapolis Royal. In 1826 he became the MHA for the town in the provincial house of assembly. There, he generally supported rule of the province by the Lieutenant Governor and his executive council but also supported reform measures such as funding for a public school system and removal of a declaration against popery from the assembly's oath. He railed against the councillors of the Lieutenant Governors when a common schools bill he supported was disallowed. But generally, as a politician and as a writer, he was against reform and for the established tory order the University of King's College was established to serve and preserve. Two of his writings, *The Bubbles of Canada*, and *A Reply to the Report of the Earl of Durham*, both written in 1839, attempted to influence public opinion against Lord Durham's recommendations for the introduction of responsible government into British North America.

Haliburton became a judge in 1829 when he was appointed to fill the vacancy on the Inferior Court of Common Pleas caused by his father's death, after "his presence in the assembly became a nuisance to both the governing tories and the reform elements". In 1841 he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia when the Inferior Court of Common Pleas was abolished. It is written he was a conscientious, upright, and intelligent judge but not a great one, though this did not make him exceptional among the judges of Nova Scotia in his lifetime. He stood out from the rest though for "his propensity for punning and his strong sense of the lubricious". Throughout his time as a judge and beyond, Haliburton was active in business, owning a number of businesses, a gypsum quarry, wharfage, and, as president of a joint stock company, a bridge, all in Windsor.

Over the same years he established himself as a writer. His first book, *A General Description of Nova Scotia*, had been published in 1823, while his second, *An Historical Statistical Account of*

² Except where indicated otherwise, this outline of Haliburton's life, including all quotations, is taken from Fred Cogswell, "Haliburton, Thomas Chandler," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 9, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003-, accessed May 10, 2021, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/haliburton_thomas_chandler_9E.html.

Nova Scotia, appeared in 1829, the same year he became a judge. Both were directed towards settlers to Nova Scotia. He published *The Clockmaker; or, The sayings and Doings of Sam Slick, of Slickville*, in 1836, after it had been serialized in 22 newspaper instalments. *The Clockmaker, 2nd series*, was published in 1838 and *The Clockmaker, 3rd series*, was published in 1840. These were the books that established his reputation in Great Britain and the United States. They rivalled those of Dickens in popularity. By the 1970's, more than 70 editions had been published.

The other books published during Haliburton's career on the bench, in addition to the two mentioned above from 1839, were:

- *The Letter-Bag of the Great Western; or, Life in a Steamer*, 1840;
- *The Attaché; or, Sam Slick in London*, 1st ser., 1843, 2nd ser., 1844;
- *The Old Judge; or, Life in a Colony*, 1849;
- *The English in America*; 1851;
- *Traits of American Humour, by Native Authors*, 1852 [an anthology Haliburton edited];
- *Sam Slick's Wise Saws and Modern Instances; or, What He said, Did and Invented*, 1853;
- *The Americans at Home; or, Byeways, Backwoods, and Prairies*, 1854 [and anthology Haliburton edited]; and
- *Nature and Human Nature*, 1855.

In 1856, Haliburton retired from the bench and moved to England, where he had been making extended visits for some years. In 1858, he was given an honorary degree by Oxford, "the first colonial to receive that degree", signifying what he had by then become: "the only colonial in the 19th century to achieve an international reputation in literature". Haliburton was elected to the British House of Commons in 1859 and served until the conclusion of his term in 1865. He published one further book while in England – *The Season Ticket* in 1860. He died in 1865.

In *The Clockmaker*, the Squire (who is the narrator and Haliburton's alter ego) and Sam Slick (a Yankee clockmaker) travel around Nova Scotia having experiences that give Slick the opportunity to tell stories that illustrate a political point or trait and end with a maxim of wisdom that is homespun but intended to sway reader opinion on major questions of the day. Haliburton uses the conversations between Slick and the Squire – and Mr. Hopewell – to compare the Americans, the British and Nova Scotians in ways that call upon Nova Scotians to combine British traditions and institutions with North American practicality, industry, and adaptability. It has been suggested the first series, the best, was intended to stimulate Nova Scotians to self-help and industry; the second was to put down the reformers who were moving politics in Nova Scotia and England in a democratic direction; and the third was to persuade Britain to withhold responsible government from Nova Scotia.

They worked as popular literature because they blended the style of the moral essay then popular in Britain with the popularity of satirical humour based on the dialect and eccentricity of foreigners. They also blended Haliburton's classical education and his knowledge of genteel norms with his ear for and knowledge of colloquial speech and manners. His writing is said to have introduced American dialect into literature, preparing the way for *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and the broader vogue for the folk hero.

Haliburton's books were not popular in Nova Scotia during his lifetime. This changed in the late 19th century when Haliburton became a hero to a new generation of writers, like Charles G. D. Roberts at King's, who were the first nationalists in English Canadian literature.

Fred Cogswell, in 1974, wrote that there was more vaudeville humour than true humour in the work of Haliburton and that his humour was therefore of his time and place. This meant "many readers of today find the once admired dialect dated and the anecdotes not only told in a pace and form that are strange to them but dependent upon circumstances with which they are no longer concerned". It also meant there was reason to "suppose that in time more and more of Haliburton's work will pass out of the domain of 'popular' reading into the domain of literary history". However, Cogswell also wrote:

The modern reader will not lose a sense of Haliburton's imaginative energy – the almost unrivalled power of sustained comic invention which he displays in both use of language and choice of incident through thousands of pages of the Sam Slick series, with a minimum of repetition and a remarkable evenness of quality. It is true that he risks – and ultimately achieves – over-exposure, but a fraction of the invention and ingenuity displayed in these books would have made the reputation of many another writer.

As discussed above, in the 1990's, the Anti-Black racism in Haliburton's writings was brought to the fore by poet and literary scholar George Elliot Clarke, including in his book chapter "Must We Burn Haliburton?"³. It is important to note that Clarke's conclusion was that we should not. As he wrote, "to burn Haliburton would be to incinerate our own history". This was precisely because of his Anti-Black racism, manifested in his approval through his characters of slavery, as well as Clarke's assessment of Haliburton's broader conservative philosophy, and both the historical importance and the continuing consequences of both.

Clarke argued against the "obscurity" into which Haliburton had fallen. He argued that Haliburton was of historical and continuing importance for the originating expression he gave to a conservative philosophy that is an important throughout Canadian history, which Clarke identified as "Red Tory" conservatism. In Clarke's view Haliburton was an essential foundational part of this tradition and gave effective expression to its admirable and important critique of

³ Clarke, George Elliot. "Must We Burn Haliburton?" *The Haliburton Bi-centenary Chaplet*, edited by Richard A. Davies, Gaspereau Press, 1996, pp. 1-40.

liberalism, capitalism, and industrialism as they were becoming dominant forces, including in the political reforms Haliburton opposed in his writing and in his life.

Clarke also argued Haliburton is of continuing importance because “his conservatism bears a plague of racism” which “infects his ideology, it pervades his satires” and because he “lays bare, without tears or shame, the implicit ideology of white supremacy that still clouds so much of our thinking about Canadian identity”. Here, Clarke is focused on the instances of opposition to the abolition of slavery that Haliburton expresses through Sam Slick, as well as his defence through Slick of slavery and his reliance on “viciously racist depictions of blacks”, to defend his anti-abolition and pro-slavery positions. In demonstrating these points with extensive quotation from Haliburton, Clarke demonstrates the volume and virulence of the episodes of blatant racism in Haliburton’s writings.

Clarke shows that Haliburton’s opposition to abolition, as abolition in the British Empire was being accomplished, was of a piece with his opposition to other levelling reforms, including the democratisation of the constitution and of politics. He shows also that Haliburton and others who sought to preserve a hierarchical society governed by monarchs and a landed aristocracy saw the abolition of slavery as particularly threatening because, in their view, “Christian slavery” most fully approximated the social order that best accorded with their understanding of the ordained natural order. In their view, of all those unsuited for liberty, Blacks were inherently most unsuited. They were in fact, better off and happier as slaves, a view Haliburton put into the mouth of Sam Slick throughout his books. Their liberation posed the greatest threat to the *l’ancien regime* because it was, in the Haliburton perspective, the most extreme application of the ideas, values and ideals he opposed.

Did Slick and his other characters speak for Haliburton on these matters? Clarke’s interpretation says yes based on their centrality to the philosophy that imbues Haliburton’s writing and to Haliburton’s literary and philosophical project. He also draws attention to an occasion on which Haliburton expressed the underlying racism in his writing in a meeting. Moreover, the view that Haliburton was a moralist who spoke through Slick and other characters seems to otherwise be the accepted view of his work and its intentions. Why should the racist views of Slick and other characters on Black people and slavery be regarded as exceptions?

It also seems important Haliburton does not appear to have ever written anything to disassociate himself from the racism and support for slavery he put into the mouths of characters, at least not anything that was comparably strong and unambiguous. In one book written to attract settlers to Nova Scotia Haliburton said slavery’s decline “was beneficial”, and in another, one of his characters said slavery could not be justified in the abstract, was “entailed on us by our forefathers” and that “it is difficult to know how to deal with it”.⁴

⁴ In “Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Complications and Contradictions”, *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, Vol. 14, 2011 54-71, Henry Roper notes that in *An Historical and Statistical Account of the History of Nova*

Written in 1855, these words contemplate slavery's continuation as much as they do its abolition. They do not convey moral rejection of slavery in the same way other characters in multiple books give it moral approval.

Finally, Clarke's interpretation of the centrality of racism and his defence of slavery to Haliburton's work has not been challenged by other scholars; indeed, it has become part if not the dominant part of the now prevalent view of Haliburton and of the view that he is now "unteachable".⁵ Another part of this view is the understanding that the portrayal of women in *The Clockmaker* is deeply misogynistic: throughout women are portrayed as inferior beings who, like animals, must be kept under control, with violence as necessary.⁶

Clarke's understanding of Haliburton's philosophy and its connection to what Haliburton wrote on Black people and their enslavement resonates with what Karolyn Smardz Frost and David States have written in the *Scholarly Inquiry on King's and Slavery*. One of the topics they address in exploring the direct connections between King's and slavery is the prevailing philosophy, or world view, among those who founded King's and played prominent roles in its early decades, and among many families that sent their sons to King's before, during and after Haliburton attended as a student.⁷ This world view was predicated on loyalism not only to the King but to the social and political order threatened by revolutions in America and then in France and by the ideas of liberty, equality and the common dignity of humanity manifested in those revolutions and broader forces of change, reform, and modernization.

Slavery was a part of the order they sought to maintain and with a few notable exceptions, men associated with King's did not join in calls for its abolition as those calls gained momentum from the founding of their College until abolition in the British Empire happened in 1834. Over the same years, or most of them, as demonstrated by the paper written by Shirley Tillotson for the *Scholarly Inquiry*, the financial survival of King's depended on revenue that came from wealth

Scotia (1829), Haliburton wrote that the decline of slavery in Nova Scotia was "beneficial to the country", and that in *Nature and Human Nature* (1855), one of his characters says,

Slavery in the abstract is a thing that nobody approves of, or attempts to justify. We all consider it an evil – but unhappily it was entailed on us by our forefathers, and has now grown to be one of such magnitude that is difficult to know how to deal with it.

⁵ The importance and effect of Clarke's paper on the academic study and appreciation of Haliburton is described in Henry Roper, "Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Complications and Contradictions" *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, Vol. 14, 2011 54-71. The conclusion that Haliburton has become unteachable, quoted by Roper, is from Haliburton's most recent biographer, Richard Davies. Richard A. Davies, *Inventing same Slick: A Biography of Thomas Chandler Haliburton* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). Referencing a speech in *Nature and Human Nature* in which the Squire portrays southern slaves as happy and better off than their free counterparts, Roper writes, "It is hard not to hear [Haliburton's] voice in the words of the Squire".

⁶ Ruth Panofsky, "Breaking The Silence: *The Clockmaker* on Women." *The Haliburton Bi-centenary Chaplet*, edited by Richard A. Davies, Gaspereau Press, 1996, pp. 41-53.

⁷ Karolyn Smardz Frost and David Sates, Section 1: Attitudes Toward Slavery, pp. 4-7 and 24-56.

https://ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/20210211KingsSlaverySmardzFrostStates_Secured.pdf.

created by enslaved people.⁸ As also illustrated by both Tillotson and by Frost and States, many King's students of the same decades came from families that enslaved people, were heavily involved in a West Indian trade that was based on slavery or were involved in slavery in both ways.

This King's history and Clarke's reading of Haliburton seem mutually reinforcing. Seeing Haliburton in his educational milieu suggests how his education at King's may have shaped or reinforced the philosophical perspective Clarke sees in his writings, including its "plague of racism". Conversely, Haliburton's writings, as explained by Clarke, may be in part a demonstration of the conclusions of Frost and States about the ideology of the founding generations of King's and their views on slavery and the movement for its abolition.

Guiding Principles and Considerations

I have considered two sets of principles⁹: those recently articulated by Halifax's Task Force on the Commemoration of Edward Cornwallis and the Recognition and Commemoration of Indigenous History¹⁰, and those recommended to President Salovey of Yale in 2016¹¹. The Task Force Principles are as follows:

4.1. Principles

In moving towards principled recommendations on the future of the Edward Cornwallis statue, we believe that six questions need to be addressed:

- 1) Are there any prevailing patterns of opinion, arising from public engagement with the Task Force and written submissions, that can and should influence recommendations regarding the statue?
- 2) Are there exceptional elements to Cornwallis's career that can and should be given weight in assessing this historical figure's worthiness of continued public celebration?
- 3) Are there circumstances surrounding the raising of the statue itself that are relevant to considering its future?
- 4) Are there compelling broader reasons, especially in the context of the HRC's 2015 Statement of Reconciliation, to reconsider the commemoration of Cornwallis?
- 5) In the light of answers to the questions above, does continuing public commemoration of Cornwallis fit with prevailing values in 2020?
- 6) What action, therefore, should be taken by the HRM in regard to the statue?

⁸ Shirley Tillotson, How (and How Much) King's College Benefited from Slavery in the West Indies, 1789 to 1854. https://ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/202001TillotsonKingsSlaveryIndirectConnections_Secure.pdf.

⁹ I note that I have benefited from reading a memo by King's student Marlee Samson on "Naming Principles" which Marlee worked on under the supervision of former King's Equity Officer, Tanisi Pooran. In discussion to discussing the Yale Principles, Marlee also discusses those of Stanford University (<https://campusnames.stanford.edu/renaming-principles/>) and of Queen's University ([https://www.queensu.ca/principal/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.opvc2www/files/files/Building%20Name%20Advisory%20Committee%20Final%20Report%20FINAL\(1\).pdf](https://www.queensu.ca/principal/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.opvc2www/files/files/Building%20Name%20Advisory%20Committee%20Final%20Report%20FINAL(1).pdf)).

¹⁰ <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/200721rc11110.pdf>

¹¹ <https://news.yale.edu/2016/12/02/report-outlines-principles-renaming-campus-buildings>

The Yale Principles start in a different place, with two presumptions against renaming on account of changing values. The first of these is that:

There is a strong presumption against renaming a building on the basis of the values associated with its namesake. Such a renaming should be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

The second presumption is that:

The presumption against renaming is at its strongest when a building has been named for someone who made major contributions to the University.

The rationale for these presumptions, and the caution that they are only presumptions and not determinative grounds for decision, is explained as follows:

There are many reasons to honor tradition at a university. Historical names are a source of knowledge. Tradition often carries wisdom that is not immediately apparent to the current generation; no generation stands alone at the end of history with perfect moral hindsight. Moreover, names produce continuity in the symbols around which students and alumni develop bonds with the university and bonds with one another. Those bonds often help to establish lifelong connections of great value to members of the University community and to the University.

A presumption of continuity in campus names helps ensure that the University does not elide the moral complexity often associated with the lives of those who make outsized impressions on the world. Controversy has attached to countless numbers of the most important figures in modern history. For example, Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian independence leader who inspired a worldwide movement of nonviolent protest, held starkly racist views about black Africans.

The presumption against renaming would not in itself decide any such case. But it embodies the good reasons for giving continuity substantial weight. Holding all else equal, it is a virtue to appreciate the complexity of those lives that have given shape to the world in which we live. A presumption also helps to avoid the risk of undue debate over names, when time and energy may be better directed elsewhere.

In the context of this emphasis on the importance of tradition and stability and continuity in naming, the Yale Principles state that renaming can be warranted where more than one of the following questions is answered affirmatively:

1. Is a principal legacy of the namesake fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University?

2. Was the principal legacy significantly contested in the time and place in which the namesake lived?
3. Did the University, at the time of the naming, honor a namesake for reasons that are fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University?
4. Does a building [or room] whose namesake has a principal legacy fundamentally at odds with the University's mission, or which was named for reasons fundamentally at odds with the University's mission, play a substantial role in forming community at the University?

The University of King's College has not adopted either set of principles. I am therefore not bound by either of them. I also have no authority to adopt them on behalf of King's. I have had reference to them only as a source of guidance.

A major difference between them is the emphasis the Yale Principles place on reasons against renaming, whereas the Task Force Principles give much more weight to the desire for change in light of changing values. Both regard the reasons for honouring a person in the first instance as relevant to the decision of whether the honour should be ended. In different ways and to a differing degree, each seeks to ensure that decisions are based on a holistic analysis of the contributions and legacy of the person whose name or monument is in question. In the case of the Task Force, this is reflected in the question, "Are there exceptional elements to Cornwallis's career that can and should be given weight in assessing this historical figure's worthiness of continued public celebration". In the case of the Yale principles, this concern is reflected in the emphasis placed on making decisions based on the historical figures "principal legacy", as well as in the emphasis on whether that principal legacy is "fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University".

Some may say that the Yale principles are more applicable to the decisions that King's may have to make because they reflect the central concerns of universities. In particular, they emphasize universities' mission to study and understand all dimensions of history and culture, including the parts that we come to reject and that should have been rejected historically. They also emphasize the care of universities for their traditions and the importance of those traditions to the universities' identity and the bonds which generations of each university's students form with each other and their university. This concern resonates deeply with the pride of place that traditions have held in the identity of King's and in the bonds between students and between students and faculty, within and across generations and in association with those traditions.

The principles of the Task Force are closer to King's in time and space. The situation of King's is also comparable to that of Halifax in that as Halifax has adopted a Statement of Reconciliation, King's has, through Universities Canada, agreed to govern itself under University Canada's Inclusive Excellence Principles and its Principles of Indigenous Education, which are turn based on the Calls To Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Further, under the Memorandum of Agreement by which it is funded by the Province of Nova Scotia, King's is expected to create educational opportunity for Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotia students. Many efforts have been made over recent years to increase diversity and inclusion at King's and

King's is in the process of building on those efforts in developing a comprehensive "EDI action plan", as called for in University Canada's Inclusive Excellence Principles. Finally, King's has looked extensively into its historical connections to slavery and learned that the enslaved labour of Black people in the Maritimes and the Caribbean generated a significant proportion of the wealth that made its way to King's in tuition, donations, and government funding over many of its early decades.

For all these reasons, the Task Force Principles are closer to the mark for the approach King's should take, but that the concern for tradition and for focus on the principal legacy of historical figures expressed in the Yale Principles should also be considered. It is important to note however that the Task Force report, like the report from which the Yale Principles are drawn, stresses that renaming (or removing names) must not be allowed to erase history for fear that it enables or results in institutions that have ignored or underplayed difficult parts of their history doing that more effectively and completely. The Yale document is very strong on this point, saying: "When a name is altered, *there are obligations on the University* to ensure that the removal does not have the effect of erasing history". (Emphasis added)

In changing the name of the Haliburton Literary Society to the UKing's Literary Society, the members of the Society seemed to recognize this. The paper that was circulated by the Executive of the Society prior to the meeting at which the renaming of the Society was approved, contained this passage:

Sadly, even as Haliburton's views were conservative in his time, they were by no means uncommon. Unquestionably, Haliburton played an important role in developing and promoting Canadian literature on both the national and world scenes. However, the modern reader is called upon to interrogate the racism, misogyny, and justifications of domestic violence that pervade his *oeuvre*. As such, we feel it would be inappropriate for the Haliburton Society to continue to name ourselves after this man. Such a position places him, much like a statue, on a pedestal. George Elliott Clarke is correct when he asserts that to burn Haliburton is to burn our own history. Rather, the Society proposes to place Haliburton in a space where he and his work can be openly studied—and criticized—without upholding him in blind idolatry. We are not turning our backs on our lengthy history, but instead opening a new chapter where the values of our Society and the King's community may be more accurately reflected.

The reference to Dr. George Elliott Clarke is to his 1995 paper entitled, "Must We Burn Haliburton?", which was heavily relied upon by the Executive of the Literary Society in proposing the renaming of the Society.¹² It is a seminal paper in Haliburton scholarship in focusing attention on Haliburton's Anti-Black racism and his support for slavery, the centrality of those views to his writings and the importance of those writings to understanding the racism

¹² Clarke, George Elliott. "Must We Burn Haliburton?" *The Haliburton Bi-centenary Chaplet*, edited by Richard A. Davies, Gaspereau Press, 1996, pp. 1-40.

embedded in Canadian society.¹³ Clarke's answer to his question is, like that of the Society, that we should not burn Haliburton but see and understand him accurately while continuing to appreciate his talent and achievements as a formative writer in the Canadian tradition.

I agree that it is important if remove Haliburton's name from the Haliburton Room, we do not "burn Haliburton" or the College's history of honouring him. That is why I conclude that a necessary ancillary action to removing his name from the classroom is to memorialize his name and history, including the views that lead us to remove his name from a classroom, in some other prominent way. The same would apply if the decision was to keep his name on a classroom – that should only be done if the name is accompanied by a full explanation of his legacy, including the centrality and historical importance of his Anti-Black racism and, as discussed below, his view of women and the Mi'kmaq.

First, I think the history of how the status of the Haliburton Room has diminished at King's over the past four decades is relevant background. It has influenced how I have come to see the question of whether we should continue to honour him by having a classroom named after him.

Haliburton Room History

There have been four Haliburton Rooms.¹⁴ The first was created in Windsor in 1891 to respond to the request of the Haliburton Literary Society, founded in 1884, for a "club room" to be used by the Society for meetings and events, as well as by other student societies when it was not being used by the Society.

The connection between the room and the society came with King's to Halifax: what is now the Boardroom on the second floor of the Arts and Administration Building was designed by architect Andrew Cobb to be the new Haliburton Room for the Haliburton Society and the other student societies that would use it in Halifax just as they had all used the Haliburton Room in Windsor. It was described in a message to the alumni in 1928 when the new King's was still under construction as "the Haliburton Room, or Students' Common Room". The fact that the new Haliburton Room was designed by Cobb to take up a large space in a prime part of the main building of the new College indicates how important the room and the Society were to student life – and the life of the College – at the time King's moved to Halifax.¹⁵

This changed when renovations were made to the Arts and Administration Building between 1988-1991. In these renovations, the room which had been the Haliburton Room since 1930

¹³ The importance and effect of Clarke's paper on the academic study and appreciation of Haliburton is described in Henry Roper, "Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Complications and Contradictions" *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, Vol. 14, 2011 54-71.

¹⁴ The following paragraphs are based on information provided by Janet Hathaway, University Librarian and Archivist. I am grateful for Janet's assistance.

¹⁵ Foundation Year Program lectures were given in this Haliburton Room. I am advised that Sam Slick wall engravings were part of the room's décor when the room was the FYP lecture hall and that they may have been removed when the room became the Boardroom because they were deemed racist.

became a boardroom/classroom, on its way to becoming the Boardroom of today. In the same renovations, a different room on the second floor of the Arts and Administration Building which had originally been designed to be a faculty room - but that was also used for other purposes – became the third Haliburton Room. Then, in 2001, this room became the Bursar’s Office, or part of it, when that Office was relocated from the main floor of the Arts and Administration Building to the second floor. That is when the Haliburton Room became the classroom it still is on the first floor of the Arts and Administration Building. My assumption is that by then or sometime after 2001, the linkage between the room and the Haliburton Society was broken. Certainly, by 2016, the society was not meeting in the Haliburton Room but in other spaces in the College and the days when the Society had authority over the Haliburton Room were long past.

This history strongly suggests that the centrality of the Haliburton Room to King’s and the King’s community has dissipated over recent decades. The suggestion is strengthened by the absence of anything in or at the entrance to the current Haliburton Room, other than the name “Haliburton Room” at the entrance, to connect it to Haliburton. It makes one wonder if having the room called the Haliburton Room, or of having a Haliburton Room at all, is really that important anymore to the people who study, teach, work, or live at King’s. Certainly, if the idea of the current room is to remember or honour Haliburton, or keep his legacy alive, the room and its current condition is not a very impressive way of doing it. Its very separation from the Literary Society that was the rationale for its original predecessor has diminished the extent to which it can honour Haliburton as a founder of Nova Scotian and Canadian letters.

Perhaps, in light of this, it is time for King’s to retire the Haliburton Room independently of the recommendation of the Equity Committee, on the ground that the name no longer speaks to many of the people who study, teach, work, or live at King’s, at least when the grounds for continuing to recognize him are weighed against the concern others, including a large number of students, have about honouring him. My understanding is that Haliburton is no longer part of the Canadian canon, and that he is not ever or often included in modern courses on Canadian literature.¹⁶ As noted in the Yale document, universities have through their history changed the names of building – and presumably of rooms, all the time. This short sketch of the history of the King’s Haliburton Room, shows this is true at King’s as well as at Yale, and specifically of the Haliburton Room.

On the other hand, if the College decides to continue to have a Haliburton Room, it should be serious and transparent about it by having a plaque (for example) that explains who Haliburton was and that includes accurate description of his views on slavery and Black people, women, and the Mi’kmaq. This would be consistent with the Yale principles, which say, “When a name is retained, there may be obligations on the University to ensure that preservation does not have the effect of distorting history”. In light of the scholarship on Haliburton that draws

¹⁶ Haliburton’s most recent biographer wrote that “university professors now find him unteachable”; Quoted in Henry Roper, “Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Complications and Contradictions” *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, Vol. 14, 2011 54-71.

attention to and explains the significance of his abhorrent views, there is a very strong argument that this obligation would apply to a decision by King's to continue to have a classroom, or any room, called the Haliburton Room.

Conclusion on Haliburton Room

Informed by the recommendation of the Equity Committee and the decision of the Uking's Literary Society, and by the Task Force Principles and the Yale Principles, my view is that Haliburton's name should be removed from the classroom that bears it for the following reasons:

1. It has been recommended by the Committee, which includes representation from the Board, faculty, students, and staff;
2. It is my own opinion that Haliburton should no longer be honoured by having a classroom named after him because
 - a. His writings portrayed slavery as part of the correct social order that was good for society and everyone, including the enslaved, and Black people as suited for and supportive of their enslavement;
 - b. These were not incidental parts of his writings and of the political and social views they expressed, but essential and central elements of them;
 - c. As demonstrated in the report prepared for King's and Slavery – A scholarly Inquiry, by Dr. Karolyn Smardz Frost and Mr. David States, Haliburton's views on slavery were shared by many associated with King's from its founding in 1789 until well into the nineteenth century, particularly during the decades in which opposition to slavery and calls for its abolition were increasing, leading to its abolition throughout the British Empire in 1834, which Haliburton disagreed with and opposed;
3. Removing Haliburton's name from the classroom that bears it is one of the things the King's of today can do respond to and acknowledge the findings of the Scholarly Inquiry on King's and Slavery on the significant connections between King's and Slavery in history and the continuing legacies of that history at King's; and
4. Removing Haliburton's name from the classroom that bears it is an example of the kind of changes in the cultural and visual atmosphere of the College that I said in the Review of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at King's I wrote for the Board of Governors in 2020 must be made if the College is to become the equitable, diverse, and inclusive College it aspires to be, especially for BIPOC students, faculty, and staff.¹⁷

On point # 2, I would say under the Yale Principles that Haliburton's views on slavery and his Anti-Black racism, are now understood to be part of his "principal legacy", although they may

¹⁷ President's Review for the Board of Governors of the University of King's College on Exiting Initiatives, Challenge Areas and Areas Requiring Closer Examination in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (August 2020), <https://ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/PresidentsReview-09102020-1.pdf>.

not have been so understood when the literary society was named after him in 1884 and a room were named after him in 1891. For the most part, current academic interest in him seems to focus on the racism and misogyny of his writings and what they say about the culture and attitudes of his class and time and place. This makes his principal legacy “at odds with the mission of the University”.

On the other hand, the fact that Haliburton’s views, and particularly his racism, were probably shared or at least accepted by many of his King’s contemporaries and many of his readers, could be taken under the Yale principles to argue against removing his name from the Haliburton Room. This is because the principles argue against renaming where the principal legacy was not significantly contested in the time and place in which the namesake lived. As the work of Smardz and Frost suggest, Haliburton’s views on race and slavery were widely representative of the King’s of his times.¹⁸ This aligns also with the view of others, including that Haliburton’s racism was accepted by many in Nova Scotia and beyond, so much so that it was, according to Marquis, “virtually invisible to his contemporaries”.¹⁹ But since this is so, it becomes hard to be sure, in the words of another of the Yale principles, that King’s did not honour Haliburton “for reasons that are fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University”. Minimally, it seems clearer that in light of the commonality of Haliburton’s views in nineteenth century Nova Scotia that King’ honoured him either with acceptance or at least awareness of the racism that has become his lasting legacy. In that case, under the Yale principles, the case is made for bringing an end to the honouring of Haliburton.

There is however another way to look at the question. As stressed by Smardz-Frost and States, the movement for abolition of slavery in the British Empire started in the decades of the late eighteenth century when Haliburton was a boy and culminated in emancipation in 1834, by which time Haliburton was writing the books that established his reputation. The point is that Haliburton and the King’s culture he represented were opposed to a rising tide of opinion that eventually resulted in abolition of slavery in his time and place - in fact, in the year immediately before the Clockmaker series started to appear. So, his principal legacy clearly *was* “significantly contested in the time and place” in which he lived, particularly if one considers the international dimensions of his readership. And its was also contested within the King’s community of his day, and not only by those outside of King’s. As also noted by Smardz-Frost and States, the University’s first president and long-time vice-president, William Cochrane, was an abolitionist, In Nova Scotia and in America. They also note that two members of the King’s Board, both members of the judiciary, made rulings that prevented slavery from becoming further entrenched in Nova Scotia law before it was abolished throughout the British Empire. Accordingly, whether it is because his principal legacy was contested in the broader society or

¹⁸ Karolyn Smardz Frost and David Sates, Section 1: Attitudes Toward Slavery, https://ukings.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/20210211KingsSlaverySmardzFrostStates_Secured.pdf.

¹⁹ Quoted in Henry Roper, “Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Complications and Contradictions” *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, Vol. 14, 2011 54-71.

because it was widely accepted within King's and among his readers, or both, the Yale analysis points towards acceptance of the recommendation of the Equity Committee.

The decision that the Haliburton Literary Society made in August of 2020, to disassociate itself from Haliburton and his legacy by changing its name to the UKings Literary Society, reinforces this conclusion. The Society announced its decision by releasing the following statement:

Statement from the UKing's Literary Society (formerly the Haliburton Society):

On August 18th, the Haliburton Society convened to amend section 1.1 of its constitution and formally change its name. After months of research on the legacy and writings of Canadian writer Thomas Chandler Haliburton—after whom the Society has been named since 1884— students gathered to vote on whether the group should continue to adopt his name. We were especially concerned with his deplorable views on women, African-Nova Scotians, and the Mi'kmaq Nation, and worried that having him as a figurehead was no longer suitable or inviting to the student body at King's. The vote resulted in an overwhelming majority that supported the decision to rename the group as the "UKing's Literary Society" with 92% of votes (collected live in the meeting and via absentee ballot) voting in favour of the resolution.

Haliburton was an alumnus of King's, having graduated from the Windsor campus in the early 19th century. Celebrated as a master satirist, he is best known for his *Clockmaker* series and his protagonist Sam Slick. Though Haliburton's views on gender and race are sadly typical for a Tory of his time, the Society feels that he is an inappropriate figurehead, and we wish to move ahead and rename our group with an aim toward clarity, diversity, and inclusion.

For this reason, we have decided not to appoint another figurehead, but to state our purpose, loud and clear: we are a community of students who share and celebrate books and exchange our views on the written (and spoken!) word. While the Society remains proud of its deep roots in the King's community and its status as the oldest extant English-language campus literary group in both North America and the British Commonwealth, the results of the vote indicate a desire on the part of its members to create a more welcoming space, which has been our aim for the last several years. Coupled with efforts to celebrate the contemporary Canadian literary scene (through initiatives such as the *Live Poets!* Reading series, as well as diversifying our book collection in the King's College Library), we hope to be not just a "Dead Poet's Society," but one for live students and writers alike.

The relevance of the decision of what is now the UKing's Literary society to the decision of King's on the Haliburton Room is demonstrated by the room's history. As outlined above, the first Haliburton Room was created in 1891, when the College was located in Windsor. It was created in response to the desire of the Haliburton Literary Society, created in 1884, to have a "club room" for the society that could also be used by other student societies. The current

Haliburton Room, as a classroom, has no continuing connection with what was until recently the Haliburton Society. Still, given the origin of one in the other, I think the College should in 2021 follow the lead of its students, who have removed Haliburton's name from their literary society, by removing it from the room that still bears it, just as the College followed the lead of its students in 1891 by creating a Haliburton Room for a literary society students had named after Haliburton.

It is important to note that King's students did not change the name of their literary society solely because of the racist views on slavery expressed in Haliburton's writings, but also because of the "deplorable" views on women and the Mi'kmaq found in his writings. As with his views on slavery and Black people, scholarship indicates his views on women were also central to the world view his writings extolled.²⁰ The King's Scholarly Inquiry on King's and Slavery additionally shows his views on Black people and slavery were representative of the King's of his day.

As far as I know, there has been no similar scholarly analysis of where his views of the Mi'kmaq fit within his world view or his career more generally. Henry Roper has written that of a "marked contrast" between Haliburton's portrayal of Black people and his portrayal of aboriginal peoples in *Nature and Human Nature*, linking Haliburton's portrayal of aboriginal people to the "noble savage" tradition definitively expressed in Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*.²¹ That view of aboriginal people has its own problematic history and legacy. I do not have the context for considering it in relation to Haliburton that I have for considering Haliburton's views of women and Black people. So, I am less confident than the UKing's Literary Society that Haliburton's views on the Mi'kmaq should be grouped with his view on Black people and women.

But I fundamentally respect the conclusion of the UKings Literary Society that keeping Haliburton's name on the Society would interfere with its goal of making the Society more diverse and inclusive, including to indigenous people. I believe the same logic applies to the question of whether his name should remain on a King's classroom – having it there interferes with the goals of King's to become more diverse and inclusive because of his misogynistic and racist views and opinions and his promulgation of them through his work.

Competing Considerations

The Haliburton name is associated with many fond memories among generations of alumni, both from the literary society and the room, and particularly from the era when the Haliburton Society met in the purpose-built Haliburton Room. These memories have weight and

²⁰Panofsky, Ruth. "Breaking The Silence: *The Clockmaker on Women*." *The Haliburton Bi-centenary Chaplet*, edited by Richard A. Davies, Gaspereau Press, 1996, pp. 41-53.

²¹ Henry Roper, "Thomas Chandler Haliburton: Complications and Contradictions" *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society*, Vol. 14, 2011 59-60.

importance, although they are minimized to some extent by the fact that the Haliburton Room to which they attach ceased to exist in 2001.

These are the kind of consideration that the Yale principles suggest can argue for retaining a name, “when a building with a long-standing name has helped form bonds and connections”. But those principles go on to say:

“It is difficult to encourage the formation of community around a namesake with a principal legacy fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University” and that,

“Moreover, assigning students without their choice to a particular building or residential college whose namesake has a principal legacy fundamentally at odds with the mission of the University essentially requires students to form their University communities around such a name”.

The same analysis applies to requiring students to attend classes in a classroom “around such a name”.

It has to be recognized that as a graduate of King’s and as a colonial Nova Scotia, Haliburton’s literary success was a singular one: he was the first colonial of British North America to enjoy success – and his success was substantial – beyond British North America and particularly in the United Kingdom and the United States. This, together with the quality of his writings and the fact that they were thoroughly Nova Scotian, explains why King’s students, guided by Charles G D Roberts, their professor and himself to become a major figure in Canadian literature, named their literary society after him, given its originating objective to celebrate and foster Canadian literature.

Haliburton’s writings helped to define and document the identity of Nova Scotia and I think he can be called one of Nova Scotia’s cultural icons, particularly of the nineteenth century, perhaps on a par with Joseph Howe. Certainly, he created a Nova Scotia icon in the character Sam Slick. Haliburton has also been and still is part of the link between King’s and its original home of Windsor. Finally, Haliburton was a fine writer who has an important place in the history of Canadian letters and in the history of Nova Scotia, both as writer and as politician, judge and member of the Loyalist families that dominated the province – and King’s - between the 1780’s and well into the nineteenth century.

All of these points have weight and importance. Whether they outweigh the considerations for removing his name from a classroom in 2021 depends on whether the College decides that recognizing nineteenth century accomplishments and importance is more important than these considerations. I do not think they do because I defer to the conclusion of Dr. George Elliot Clarke that the defense of and apology for the enslavement of Black people as part of the natural order found in Haliburton’s books is not an unfortunate minor element of these books but part of their essential core. I also think the College must give emphasis in this decision to

what is required to make the College a more welcoming space for students, faculty, and staff from currently under-represented communities, including especially the Black community.

Avoidance of Erasure

As summarized above, both the Yale principles and those of the Cornwallis Task Force state that removal should not equate to erasure. Erasure hides the very history that leads to the removal of a name from its place of honour and the history of the honour the institution or community has given to the person (and their legacy) who has had their name removed from a building or room.

Erasure also hides the achievements and importance of the person whose name is removed from a building or room or whose portrait or statue is taken down. In a case such as that of Haliburton, erasure of his name from the King's community would deny the century of association the room named after him has had with the positive communal life of the College, and the memories people carry with them of the days when the Haliburton Room was at the centre of the life of the College.

For all these reasons, I believe Haliburton and the association of King's with him and his legacy should be memorialized in a factual and non-celebratory way at King's. This could be by a plaque or broader display that sets out an account of his connection to King's, his career and literary accomplishments, and a brief history of the Haliburton Literary Society – as the oldest student literary society in North America - and of the Haliburton Room, and their importance in the life of generations of King's students. The important thing is that the account of his career and of his writings include not only the aspects which have historically been celebrated at King's but also the aspects which have been ignored or unacknowledged, particularly his support for slavery based on Anti-Black racism and its place within his politics and his misogyny. These aspects of his career should be linked to the broader history of how Haliburton's views connect to what is now known about the historical connections between King's and slavery over decades from its foundation into the nineteenth century.

Renaming of the Room

Once the name of Haliburton is removed from the classroom that now bears it, the question arises as to whether that room should be renamed in the honour of someone else.

It is important to recognize that removing a name and naming are two different questions. This was recognized by the Task Force on the Cornwallis Statute – or in the mandate it was given. It recommended the removal of the statute and also a separate process to decide what should be done to replace it as well as to decide what to do with the statute of Cornwallis.

If the room is to be renamed, it should be renamed in a way that recognizes the long unacknowledged contributions that Black people have made to King's through their enslavement and more broadly and to the connections of King's to slavery, and the continuing legacies of that part of our history. This would be the other half of the decision to remove

Haliburton's name from the room. I also believe that if we decide to go in this direction, we must do so to the full extent possible through a process that includes voices from the African Nova Scotian community.

Equity Committee Recommendations

In response to the President's request for advisement & recommendations, July 2020

Response to Scholarly Inquiry on King's and Slavery

- Continue to increase scholarships for Black, Indigenous and racialized students
 - Explore options for tuition or application fee waivers for Black and Indigenous students
- Regular open houses at King's and off-campus locations in the community to give updates and solicit feedback on Slavery Inquiry responses.
 - Online sessions
 - Partner with community organizations to host (find ways to support that partner organization)
- The Committee is in favour of re-naming the rooms (ie. the Haliburton room), removing monuments, etc. that honour those who supported the slave trade, were involved in the slave trade, or wrote positively about racism, engaged in anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity. The Committee recommends this happen as soon as possible.
 - There is an opportunity to be a leader among Canadian, or at least Atlantic, Universities in doing so.
 - African Nova Scotian communities and Afro-Caribbeans and Black community members as a whole, should be consulted on this process.
 - The Committee believes this is a good (and relatively easy) step towards building trust.
- King's full participation in efforts to make studying with us financially accessible (tuition freeze / reduction, lobbying for grants not loans and public funding). Connections between social oppressions and financially inaccessible post-secondary education can be found in [this CFS report](#) as a start (more research can, of course, be done to augment this point). "The Federation's 2018 report explains that efforts to eradicate social inequality in our society are intimately linked to the fight for a fully publicly-funded, accessible post-secondary education system."

The 2021 Fall Conference of Universities Studying Slavery

- Invite the SSHRC grant team (NSCAD and King's Collaboration) to participate in USS
 - The NSCAD/King's team that is funding this project is supportive of this idea.
- Recruit and hire a team (that would include students) to manage and implement the King's part of the conference
- Invite and/or have an event directed at high school students and their teachers
 - This could be an opportunity to support [African Nova Scotian Freedom School](#) and invite the educators and students
- Live stream and close-caption sessions for greater accessibility
- ASL interpreters for panels and performances (interpreters need to be booked months in advance)
- Encourage the School of Journalism to hold a side event named in honour of Carrie Best
- Community relationship building: offer King's spaces free of charge to any groups involved in planning/implementation of the conference.
- Reading circles (authors present), performances and displays by artists and musicians. Students groups are willing to help with organizing the King's part of the conference.

Advice on Review of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at King's

- Change the decor in Prince Hall; for instance, remove some of the portraits of former presidents or at least rearrange them and supplement with more diverse images. The Committee recommended this work two years ago; in order to not delay this work anything further, this should be a top priority
 - Replace portraits with art by BIPOC artists
 - Art that honours Black & Indigenous historical figures
- Journalism School to follow through on its [commitments](#).

- Materials on connections between the University, slavery and its legacy as well as the statement that the University recognizes its responsibility to address its history should be readily available on the website (perhaps also as a publication).
 - Faculty should be encouraged to integrate these materials into syllabi and classroom practices