

## THE ANGLO-AMERICAN DISPUTE ABOUT THE 1906 TRIAL OF DANIEL FLICKINGER WILBERFORCE FOR CANNIBALISM

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**Abstract:** The accusation of cannibalism against the African born, American educated, Church of the United Brethren in Christ missionary, and Paramount Chief of the Imperri in Sierra Leone, Daniel Flickinger Wilberforce, has long fascinated scholars from multiple academic disciplines including anthropology, colonial and postcolonial literature, history, and missiology. Despite such attention, the current paper contemplates a hitherto unconsidered aspect of the 1906 Wilberforce trial: his status as a naturalised American citizen. In this context, the Wilberforce trial quickly became the centre of an Anglo-American fracas concerning both its location and its perception of fairness towards a foreign national, which thereby challenged the dignity of British colonial rule in Sierra Leone. This paper therefore focusses upon the high-policy sensitivities within London, which went all the way to the very top of the British Foreign Office, as the British establishment wrestled with American perceptions of British fair play, justice, and colonialism, during the early years of the twentieth century.

**Keywords:** Lord Elgin; Raymond Dougherty; Sir Edward Grey; Leslie Probyn; Whitelaw Reid; Daniel Flickinger Wilberforce; cannibalism; Sierra Leone

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