



## Slavery sites in the UK

There are few areas in the United Kingdom that were not affected—either directly or indirectly—by the trade in enslaved Africans, whether it be the legacy of grand buildings and institutions founded on the profits of the trade, the clues to the history in place names like Jamaica Road, Tobago Street, Guinea Street, Black Boys Hill, Whiteladies Road or parish records and inscribed gravestones. Indeed, in many parts of the country, local history can provide a rich vein for the exploration of the trade during Black History Month and beyond.

David Spens was brought from the West Indies to Methil in **Fife**, Scotland. He was baptised in Wemyss Church in 1769 (1). He took his case for freedom to the Court of Session in Edinburgh claiming that since he was now a Christian he should be freed. Unfortunately, his master died before a decision could be made. Similarly, James Montgomery was baptised in his local church in **Beith** (3). He, too, took his case for emancipation to the courts. He, however, died before the case was decided.

A prominent activist in the abolition movement was Robert Wedderburn, son of a Scottish landowner and a Jamaican slave. In 1795 he travelled to his father's home at Inveresk Lodge in **East Lothian** (2) but was turned away with only some beer and a 'bent sixpence'.

In **Cumbria** (4), parish records bear witness to several Black people living in the area, many having arrived as servants. Records from St Nicholas's and St James's churches in Whitehaven and St Mary's, Carlisle document baptisms, marriages and deaths



of 'blackamoors', 'Black servants' 'Negro men' and 'Negro paupers'. In the churchyard of St Martin's Church, Bowness on Windermere, a headstone bears an inscription to the memory of Rasselas Belfield a Native of Abyssinia: A Slave by birth I left my native land/And found my Freedom on Britannia's Strand... Similarly, the grave of Samuel Ally lies in Old Kirk Braddan Church near Douglas on the **Isle of Man** (5). He was emancipated and brought to the island to work as a servant. He died there at the age of 18.

Number 1 Queen Street in **Lancaster** (6) was the home of a wealthy slave trader who

had a Black servant, John Chance. Near Lancaster, at Sunderland Point is the grave of 'Samboo' who came to England in 1736 and died soon after. There is a plaque that includes the lines: *But still he sleeps—till the awakening sounds,/Of the Archangel's trump new life impart,/Then the Great Judge his approbation founts,/Not on man's colour but his worth of heart.*

In **Liverpool** (7), coffee houses were often sites for the sale of slaves. In 1765, 'a very fine negro girl about eight



years of age, very healthy' was sold at auction at George's Coffee-house and a very large sale of 11 Africans was held at the Exchange Coffee House in Water Street in 1766.

In 1686, Lady Broughton of Marchwiel Hall near Wrexham in **Denbighshire** (8) offered a reward for

her Black boy who had been taken away 'by a Person on Horse back'.

George John Scipio Africanus was brought to England from Sierra Leone, possibly aged 3. After the death of his master he moved to **Nottingham** (9) where he married and started a successful business. On his death in 1834, he was buried in St Mary's church. Earlier this year, there was a re-dedication of his grave to mark the bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act.

Former slave Rasselas Morjan is buried at Wanlip Hall in **Leicestershire** (10) while Edward Juba, who became a servant in a house at Kirby Mallory rose to become a freeman of the city of Leicester.

At Broughton House, Kettering in **Northamptonshire** (11), a young Black servant, Charles Ignatious Sancho, is included in a portrait of the Duchess of Montague, while at Althorp House, Althorp,



Caesar Shaw, an African slave to the Spencer family can be seen in two portraits.

The writer and campaigner Olaudah Equiano was married at St Andrew's Church in Soham, **Cambridgeshire** (12) and his daughter, who died when she was four, is buried at St Andrew's Church in Chesterton. In the churchyard at St Lawrence, Oxhill, **Stratford on Avon** (13) 'lyeth the body of Myrtila, a negro slave to Mr. Thos Beauchamp of Nevis.'

In his will, the Royal Naval surveyor, Sir William Batten, made his servant, Mingo, keeper of the Harwich lighthouse in **Essex** (14).



The son of a Bugandan chief who had been enslaved, in 1880 Salim, travelled to England with a group of envoys to meet Queen Victoria. He stayed behind with a family living in the vicarage at Pavenham in **Bedfordshire** (15). He studied at the village school and went on to become a preacher.

**Gloucestershire** (16) Records Office documents show Jacob the servant of George Hanger Esq 'a moore' being baptised in Driffild in 1687 and John Prince 'a black boy lately bought into England' being apprenticed to John Trigge, Attorney at Law in Newnham on Severn in 1715. At Almondsbury there was a headstone to James Long (died 17 March 1773) and Charles Morson (died 16 Feb 1776). 'They were natives of Africa and servants to Sir James Laroche at Over [Over Court, Almondsbury], who caused this stone to be erected.' There are a

number of references to Black people in the region while the slave trade continued.

A gravestone in St Mary's Church, Watford, **Hertfordshire** (17) tells the story of George Edward



Doney who was captured from Gambia and ended up working for the Earl of Essex at Cassiobury for 44

years. The inscription reads: *Poor Edward blest the pirate bark which bore/His captive infancy from Gambia's shore/To where in willing servitude he won/Those blest rewards for every duty done//Kindness and praise, the wages of the heart;/None else to him could joy or pride impart,/And gave him, born a pagan and a slave,/A freeman's charter and a Christian's grave.*

There is a stately memorial to Nathaniel Wells in St Arvans Church in **Monmouth** (18). The son of a wealthy plantation owner and his slave, Wells became a magistrate and deputy lieutenant of the county of Monmouth. He helped to raise funds to enlarge the church and paid for the building of its octagonal tower.

Traces of **London's** (19) slavery connections can be found in a number of spots. Olaudah Equiano was baptised at St Margaret's Church, St Margaret Street in



Westminster in 1759. There is also a plaque at 73 Riding House Street in Westminster where he lived. His daughter, Joanna Vassa, was buried in Abney Park Cemetery in Stoke Newington. Fellow anti-slavery campaigner Ottobah Cugoano worked as a servant in what is now Schomberg House, 81 Pall Mall. He was baptised at St James's Church in Piccadilly in 1773. Ignatius Sancho set up a grocery business in what is now King Charles Street. He was buried in the old St Margaret's Chapel, Christchurch Gardens, Westminster. Born in Guinea, Robert Jenando, a page to the Duke of Devonshire, served him at his home, Berkeley House in Piccadilly. Frances Barber, worked as valet to Dr Samuel Johnson at 17 Gough Square, off Fleet Street.



Where Trafalgar Square now stands were once coffee shops where slaves were bought and sold. and at the Jamaica Coffee House in St

Michael's Alley, off Cornhill—now a wine house—a reward was offered in 1728 for a runaway slave named Caelia Edlyne.

In the late 18th century, a group of anti-slavery campaigners, the Clapham Sect, set up the African Academy to educate boys whom they brought from Africa. One of the Academy's buildings still exists at The Rectory Centre, Rectory Lane in Clapham Old Town.



Caesar Picton, a former slave, who ran a successful coal merchant's business lived at 52 High Street, **Kingston upon Thames**

(20) and eventually bought Picton House at 56 High Street, Thames Ditton.

Pero, servant to John Pinney, lived at what is now The Georgian House Museum in Great George Street, **Bristol** (21). There is now a bridge across the harbour named after Pero.

Scipio Africanus, servant to the Earl of Suffolk was buried in St Mary's Churchyard, Church Close, Henbury, Bristol (picture by William Avery).



The will of Thomas Locke of Devizes in **Wiltshire** (22), a plantation owner, leaves a £30 annuity to his 'black woman Mary Ann'. It seems that he had brought her from the West Indies to his family home at 17, The Market Place.



Samuel Crowther, was rescued by the British from a Portuguese slave ship and was sent to Sierra Leone. He came to England, studied at St Mary's Parochial School in Islington in London and was ordained at St Mary's Church. He was eventu-

ally consecrated as the Church of England's first African bishop in Canterbury Cathedral in **Kent** (23) in 1864.

Thomas Lewis Johnson, an emancipated slave from Virginia, moved to England with his wife to prepare for missionary work in Africa. He settled in Bournemouth, **Dorset** (24). In 1900 he became a British subject when five 'well-known citizens of Boscombe, Bournemouth, testified before a Government official' that they had known him for five years, and that they believed him 'to be worthy to be made a British subject.'

The portrait of Admiral Paul Ourry at Saltram House in **Devon** (25) includes his African servant. The wife of Sir John Quicke of Newton St Cyres, also had a Black footman called Joe Green.

In St Martin's Churchyard in Werrington in **Cornwall** (26) there are the remains of the gravestone of Paul Scipio who died in 1784: *Deposited Here/Are the Remains of Philip Scipio/Servant to the Duke of Wharton/Afterwards to Sir William Morice/An African/Whose Quality might have done Honour/To any Nation or Climate.* In the churchyard of Kenwyn Church in Truro there is a memorial stone to Joseph Emidy, a musician. Born in West Africa, he was press-ganged by the British and forced to serve as a musician. When released, he taught the piano, violin, cello and flute in Falmouth.



The 'Druro' a Liverpool ship, was wrecked in fog at Crebawethan Rock, **Isles of Scilly** (27) in 1843, long after the slave trade had been abolished in Britain. However, her cargo contained trading tokens suggesting that she may have still been involved, illegally, in slaving.

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## Resources

English Heritage list a number of British landmarks that have a link to the slave trade at **Sites of Memory** ([www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.17483](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/server/show/nav.17483)).

The National Archives' Black Presence (<http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/>) online exhibition has a selection of documents held by the Archives recording the presence of Black and Asian people in Britain for over two thousand years.

The Scottish Executive have produced **Scotland and the Slave Trade** to commemorate the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act: ([www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays/docs/Scotland%20and%20Slavery%20book.pdf](http://www.doorsopendays.org.uk/opendays/docs/Scotland%20and%20Slavery%20book.pdf)) One section looks at 'The Enslaved Who Lived in Scotland'. The National Archives of Scotland ([www.nas.gov.uk/about/061010.asp](http://www.nas.gov.uk/about/061010.asp)) has information on both the **David Spens** and **James Montgomery** cases.

Information on Robert Wedderburn can be found on the Spartacus Educational site at [www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/SLAwedderburn.htm](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/SLAwedderburn.htm).

Creative Partnerships, Cumbria have produced The Abominable Traffic ([www.creative-partnerships.com/static/the\\_abominable\\_traffic/index.html](http://www.creative-partnerships.com/static/the_abominable_traffic/index.html)), an online resource examining Cumbria's connections to the history and legacy of slavery. A Teacher's Pack pdf can be downloaded from the site.

The University of Lancashire have a website, **Commemorating Abolition** ([www.uclan.ac.uk/facs/class/cfe/ceth/abolition/project.htm](http://www.uclan.ac.uk/facs/class/cfe/ceth/abolition/project.htm)), that aims to raise public awareness of the bicentenary. Its particular focus is on the visual arts and on celebrating memorials to both victims of the slave trade and to those who helped to end it.

Merseyside Maritime Museum has a **Slavery History Trail** ([www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime/trail/trail\\_accessible.asp](http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime/trail/trail_accessible.asp)) and **Liverpool and the Slave Trade** ([www.mersey-gateway.org/server.php?show=ConNarrative.137](http://www.mersey-gateway.org/server.php?show=ConNarrative.137)) collects documents from various archives in Liverpool to tell the story of the city's relationship to the trade.

Nottingham City Council ([www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/sitemap/services/leisure\\_and\\_culture/lc-general-events-diary-2007/slavetrade/george-africanus-slavetrade.htm](http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/sitemap/services/leisure_and_culture/lc-general-events-diary-2007/slavetrade/george-africanus-slavetrade.htm)) has a display covering the life of **George Africanus** examining his working and private life and the age of slavery in which he lived. It is available for schools and community groups to borrow and display. The will of George Africanus can be seen at [www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/archives/documentofthefirstmonth/july06.htm](http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/archives/documentofthefirstmonth/july06.htm).

Leicester Council have produced a downloadable pdf about the **Juba family** at [www.leics.gov.uk/the\\_juba\\_family\\_from\\_servant\\_to\\_freeman.pdf](http://www.leics.gov.uk/the_juba_family_from_servant_to_freeman.pdf) and Leicester's Record Office has an online exhibition, **'The Long Road to Freedom' - the story of slavery and the campaign for its abolition as told through local records**, at [www.leics.gov.uk/index/community/museums/record\\_office/record\\_office\\_online\\_exhibitions.htm](http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/community/museums/record_office/record_office_online_exhibitions.htm).

**Sir William Batten's will** can be found on the National Archives website at [http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/work\\_community/transcripts/batten\\_will.htm](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/work_community/transcripts/batten_will.htm)

Further information on **Salim** is available on Bedfordshire Libraries' website at [www.galaxy.bedfordshire.gov.uk/webingres/bedfordshire/vlib/0.digitised\\_resources/salim\\_charles\\_wilson\\_article.htm](http://www.galaxy.bedfordshire.gov.uk/webingres/bedfordshire/vlib/0.digitised_resources/salim_charles_wilson_article.htm).

Gloucestershire Record Office's **References to Black & Asian People, pre-1939** can be seen at [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/utilities/action/act\\_download.cfm?mediaid=6838](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?mediaid=6838).

More information about **George Doney** is available at [www.watfordjunction.org.uk/page\\_id\\_\\_2.aspx](http://www.watfordjunction.org.uk/page_id__2.aspx).

The **St Arvans Church** website ([www.starvanschurch.org.uk/history.shtml](http://www.starvanschurch.org.uk/history.shtml)) has further information on Nathaniel Wells and his connection to the church.

The City of Westminster's online abolition trail, **On the Road to Abolition**, can be seen at [www3.westminster.gov.uk/abolition/](http://www3.westminster.gov.uk/abolition/) and **Celebrating the black presence in Westminster 1500-2000** ([www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/archives/blackpresence/](http://www.westminster.gov.uk/libraries/archives/blackpresence/)) is an online exhibition by the City of Westminster Archives Centre. Posters and a resource pack are also available.

Information on **Joanna Vassa** is available on the Abney Park Trust website at [www.abney-park.org.uk/diary](http://www.abney-park.org.uk/diary).

For more information on **Samuel Crowther**, see the **Set All Free** website at [www.setallfree.net/samuel\\_crowther.html](http://www.setallfree.net/samuel_crowther.html).

There is an electronic version of Thomas Lewis Johnson's autobiography, **Twenty-Eight Years a Slave, or the Story of My Life in Three Continents**, at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/johnson1/johnson.html>.

**Starting to trace Black History in Devon** ([www.exeter.gov.uk/media/pdf/i/c/Devon\\_Trail.pdf](http://www.exeter.gov.uk/media/pdf/i/c/Devon_Trail.pdf)) is an illustrated pdf documenting the Black presence in Devon from the 16th century.

More information on Joseph Emidy can be found at [www.blacknetworkinggroup.co.uk/joseph\\_antonia\\_emidy.htm](http://www.blacknetworkinggroup.co.uk/joseph_antonia_emidy.htm).



# The Real Histories Directory

The **Real Histories Directory** ([www.realhistories.org.uk](http://www.realhistories.org.uk)) has been created as a resource tool for teachers, parents, pupils and the wider community to support them in their teaching and learning about cultural diversity in the UK. The website helps you to locate **resources** in your and other LEAs, such as storytellers, dual language books, culturally diverse toys and relevant **events** taking place in the UK. There are also items of **news** that may be of particular interest to schools and teachers.

You can also submit resources that you would like to include in the directory free of charge by visiting the site, clicking on 'Submit an entry' and following the on-screen instructions.

As well as the varied resources available, each month a new **Topic of the Month** is added with suggestions for using the Directory in the classroom and at home.

We are interested in hearing your views on our Topics and the Real Histories website. You can email comments and suggestions to: [realhistories@runnymedetrust.org](mailto:realhistories@runnymedetrust.org).