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HISTORY MATTERS

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PRESENTING THE HISTORY OF AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN PEOPLE IN BRITAIN

CONTENTS

Part 1: Editorial and Announcements

Part 2: Articles and Documents

Part 3: Reviews

PART 1: EDITORIAL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

EDITORIAL: WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN 2022 HISTORY MATTERS JOURNAL

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to the *Journal's* contents. We began this *Journal* back in Autumn 2020, with the aim of providing a digital space for people to share information and ideas relating to the history of African and Caribbean people in Britain, and encourage more research in this area. So it is with great pleasure that we present our sixth overall issue of the *Journal*, with new and exciting contributions from both emerging researchers, and veterans of the field. Thanks must be given to members of the *Journal's* Editorial Working Group, and to our honorary member Marika Sherwood. We are always striving to improve and expand the *Journal* step by step, but its success continues to depends on your support. If you have suggestions, or constructive criticisms, please send them to us. If you come across historic documents as well as other interesting historical material, or you have begun working on a new area of research, let us know so that this information can be shared via the *Journal*. We are particularly interested in presenting shorter articles, as well as pictures, photos and other visual forms of information. As always, we are particularly interested in showcasing the work of young researchers.

In connection, we must also make it clear that this is not a strictly academic *Journal*. The *History Matters Journal* intends to showcase an inclusive and accessible range of research work.We are keen to hear from people who are conducting original research, whether within the academe, at a grassroots community level, or as a personal interest. So, if you are working on an aspect of history relating to African and Caribbean people in Britain, please do get in touch via: histmatters@gmail.com

IN MEMORY OF HARRY GOULBOURNE, 1948-2022

This Autumn 2022 History Matters Journal is dedicated to the memory of Professor Harry Goulbourne. Earlier this year, in April 2022, Goulbourne passed away at the age of 73. He was a leading scholar, and one of the first Black professors in the UK. Like so many, we at History Matters were deeply saddened to hear of his passing. We are also extremely grateful for his life's work, vast literary contributions and for his warm, generous spirit and encouragement of fellow researchers.

The fifth of seven children, Goulbourne was born in Clarendon, Jamaica, in 1948. His mother worked as a market trader, and his father was a small-scale farmer and tailor. Goulbourne migrated to Camberwell, south London, in 1959, to join his parents who had arrived some years earlier. His experience of school, like many Caribbean children at the time, was worlds apart from the schooling he'd received in Jamaica. There, he had been regarded by his teachers as a talented student. Whereas in his two English schools, Crawford Primary in Camberwell, and Peckham Manor Comprehensive, he had to physically defend himself on the playground, and in the classroom was grossly underestimated by his teachers:

> "I'm surprised that I was not classified as ESN, as so many children of Caribbean backgrounds were. Perhaps this was because the system of education in London in those years was based on unseen examinations, and in these I often puzzled my teachers by performing well". **[1]**

Goulbourne first became interested in politics, history and social sciences in Secondary School, having come

across texts such as Marx and Engels' *The Communist Manifesto,* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. While undertaking his undergraduate degree at Lancaster University, Goulbourne became more interested in Marxist philosophy, and historical movements for change such as the Civil Rights movement, as well as Black Power philosophy. **[2]** Between the late 1960s and early 1970s, he became involved in Black community activism more practically:

> "Slowly we got pulled into the whole Black Power Movement, and it was from then that one's activism started. And within that, of course, the reading of Marxism". **[3]**

Alongside political and cultural activist John La Rose and others, Goulbourne set up a group called Contemporary Blacks, of which there's little documentation of. In addition, they also formed a Summer School to provide cultural and educational opportunities for Black youth outside of the discriminatory British school system. In 1970, he joined the Black Unity and Freedom Party (BUFP), a political organisation based in London and Manchester, and part of Britain's constellation of Black Power groups. The BUFP was heavily inspired by Marxism and Leninism, and the models of Maoist China and Socialist Cuba. Goulbourne was integral to documenting the historical significance of the BUFP, sharing his first hand reflections as a

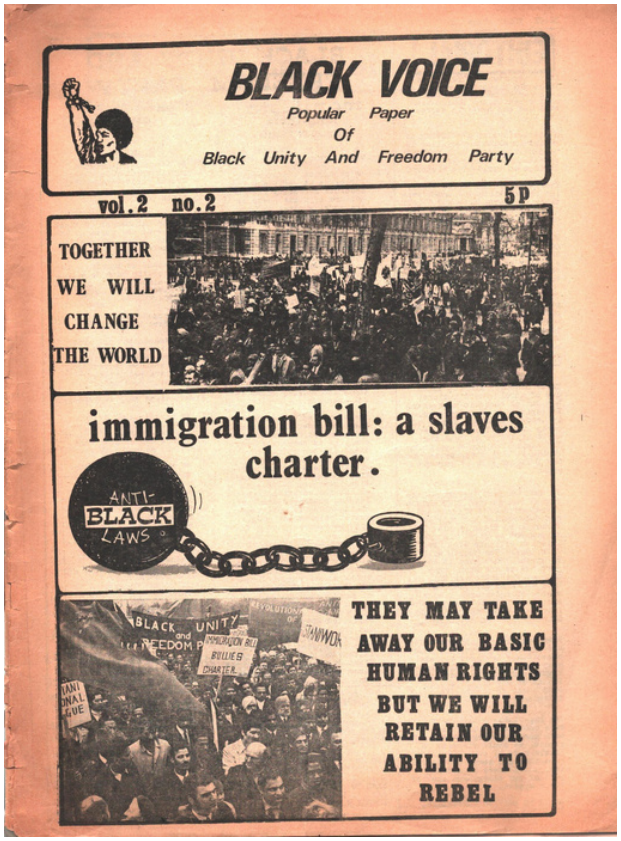
Professor Harry Goulbourne, Photograph: Eamonn Mccabe

former member, as well as penning an analysis on the BUFP's development over its active years. **[4]** The BUFP was also an early proponent of the women's liberation movement and Black Feminism. In his reflections on the BUFP, as with his work in general, Goulbourne was attentive to how ideas of gender shape the society we live in, as well as race and class. **[5]**

In his youth, Goulbourne wished to pursue an academic career. He boiled this ambition down to two key factors:

> "I think it was fear of working in a factory (following members of my family, who'd moved from being Jamaican small landowners to industrial workers in England) that threw me into a life that I'd hoped would be governed by reason. Other times I'm inclined to think it was a combination of the love of myths, storytelling, and fears of the afterlife and the hopes of salvation offered by the 'fire and brimstone' kind of Christianity into which I was born that stoked a hunger for an explanation of what Sartre called 'being and nothingness'". **[6]**

After graduating with a history degree in 1971, Goulbourne studied for a doctorate at Sussex University. Then, from 1978 he worked as a Politics Lecturer at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, which had an international reputation for hosting a number of revolutionary activists and intellectuals.



BUFP's *Black Voice* newsletter, vol. 2, no. 2

Goulbourne returned to the Caribbean in 1980 to work as a Senior Lecturer in Politics and subsequently Dean of the faculty of Social Sciences at the University of the West Indies. His academic work then led him back to Britain, as Principal Research Fellow at the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations at the University of Warwick from 1986-1994, Director of research for Social Sciences and Arts at the University of Gloucester (1994-98) and Chair of Sociology at London South Bank University. During his time at South Bank, Goulbourne founded and directed the Race and Ethnicity Research Unit. His prolific career, spanning across several continents, helped

greatly to elevate historical, sociological and political studies of Black identities and experiences.

See below a list of publications edited, authored or co-authored by the late, great Professor Harry Goulbourne:

-
- Teachers, Education and Politics (Macmillan Caribbean, 1988)
- Ethnicity and Nationalism in Post-Imperial Britain (Cambridge University Press, 1991)
- Race Relations in Britain Since 1945 - Social History in Perspective (Bloomsbury, 1998)
- Race and Ethnicity: Critical Concepts in Sociology (Routledge, 2001)
- WCS: Caribbean Families in Britain (Macmillan Caribbean, 2001)
- Caribbean Transnational Experience (Pluto Press, 2002)
- Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)
- Transnational Families: Ethnicities, Identities and Social Capital - Relationships and Resources (London: Taylor and Francis, 2009)
- Migrant Bwoy (Oxford Publishing Press, 2022)

NOTES:

1. Harry Goulbourne, "Feature Essay: The books that inspired Harry Goulbourne: "Fanon's Black Skin, White Masks suggested that I attended to the question of who I was". LSE Blog, April 22nd, 2012.
2. Glen Munro, 'Ja-born UK Scholar Harry Goulbourne passes', Jamaica Gleaner, July 9th 2022.
3. Goulbourne, 'Pioneers of Social Research, 1996-2018' interview series, UK Data Service.
4. Goulbourne, 'Africa and the Caribbean in Caribbean consciousness and action in Britain', in David Nicholls Memorial Lectures: David Nicholls Memorial Trust, No. 2, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000).
5. Ibid.
6. LSE blog.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: MRES: THE HISTORY OF AFRICA AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

UNIVERSITY OF CHICHESTER

The MRes in the History of Africa and the African Diaspora is a unique and exciting programme, and the first of its kind to be delivered completely online. On this course you can explore the historical relationships between Africa and its diaspora in the modern period by conducting your own supervised research in this important field.

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- Develop into a specialist historian with the ability to carry out your own supervised research, whilst honing your analytical and written skills.
- Learn directly by the only professor of the History of Africa and the African diaspora in Britain, Professor Hakim Adi, a leading internationally recognised scholar in the field.
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PART 2: ARTICLES AND DOCUMENTS

BASA AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM: A HISTORY

MARIKA SHERWOOD

As the struggles to change the school curriculum is ongoing, and sometimes even extended to universities, I thought I should give you an account of all that BASA (and I) tried to do to press the government to make it inclusive. From 1991 we argued/campaigned that the history of Africa and people of African and Indian origins/descent in the UK had to be included in the history taught in schools. We should recognise the *history* of this ongoing struggle for inclusion. But as you may not know much about BASA and the range of its work, or about my own attempts to influence the curriculum, that is where I should start – with introductions.

BASA: a brief introduction

In 1991 Professor Shula Marks offered me a desk as an honorary (i.e, unpaid) Research Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICS, School of Advanced Studies, Univ. of London). **[1]** So I had a free library card, and much more importantly, permission to use a room for monthly seminars on 'Blacks in Britain'. These began almost immediately. Many came to contribute, to listen, to learn. So I think I probably met just about everyone interested in this history. With Hakim Adi, then working on his PhD, **[2]** I called a meeting to discuss forming an organisation to promote such research and to campaign on education issues. We formed the Association for the Study of African, Caribbean and Asian Culture and History in Britain (ASACACHIB).

We explained our mission in the first issue of our Newsletter (September 1991): 'We would like to establish a network of organisations and individuals to foster the exchange of information, support each other and to provide a forum for discussion and planning future events… We intend to explore the

possibility of developing community-based workshops… To explore ways of encouraging the media and schools and colleges to give more coverage…. To attempt to encourage bookshops to increase their holdings of relevant books and pamphlets'. **[3]**

The content of this first Newsletter indicates what they would always contain: the dates/titles of the seminars at ICS, and then summaries; 'Some members' research interests'; 'Forthcoming events'; 'Recent publications of interest'; 'Older publications still available'; 'Research requests'; 'Local History Societies'. Issue 2, December 1991, also has a list of 'ASACACHIB Activities', and two history articles. The back page became 'Historical figures' – these biographies were then in all issues. Issue 3 (May 1992), begins with an 'Editorial', which asks for support for a proposed national conference. There is a report of 'The African presence in the United Kingdom' conference organised by the Royal African Society and the African Studies Association. Joan Grant, the reporter, notes that 'there were very few "Black" people at the conference' (pp.5-6). Issue 4 ((Sept. 1992) includes two obituaries: on Professor Paul Edwards, the author of some books on Africans here; and on Kath Locke, a local activist in Manchester. Issue 10 (September 1994) includes the first 'Historical document'. We also began to receive notices, and publicise meetings by local organisation and findings in local parish records. I edited the *Newsletter*, arranged its printing and postage. My brother did the page-setting.So the Newsletter only had to raise enough money for printing and postage.

We did our best to make the *Newsletter* easily accessible by keeping the price down: on the cover: 'Price in UK bookshops: £1.00'. For 1992/3 the subscription rate for the three annual issues was '£5.00 for institutions and the employed; £3.00 for unemployed, low-waged and students; £8.00 outside the UK'. Ofcourse over the years the price increased – as did the range of content and the number of articles and the number of pages per


Black and Asian Studies Association

Newsletter 34

September 1992

Here lieth the Body of SCIPIO AFRICANUS Negro Servant to ye Right Honourable Charles William Earl of Suffolk and Bradon who died ye 21st December 1720 Aged 18 Years

Henbury, near Bristol

Contents

ISSN 0969-4722

Price in UK bookshops: £1.50

BASA Newsletter 34

issue. The September 2001 issue was 40 pages; the 'bookshop' price was increased to £1.25; subscriptions for institutions became £10 and there were moderate increases for all others. The number of subscribers went up and up, and began to include local libraries, as well as local history organisations. Going through some issues now, I think the Newsletter was very very important in spreading news, information, et al and thus encouraging more research. So it can be a very important source for anyone researching 'Black' activism.

We set up committees to deal with issues of importance to us – not only the curriculum, which I will report in the next article. For example, we contributed to the establishment of what is now International Slavery Museum in Liverpool, and worked with a number of museums regarding their exhibitions. We held annual conferences: for example there is a poster on my wall for 'BASA Conference Black Peoples in Britain: local histories', held in Nottingham in October 1993. Another example: 'Education Conference', was held in October 2008 in association with Northampton University. 'The aim was to promote inclusive education, which draws upon Black History research and resources, involving parents and community groups as well as teachers and pupils.' **[4]** Of course, there are reports of all BASA conferences, meetings and correspondence in the *Newsletter*.

BASA Newsletter 44

At the June 2001 AGM, Hakim Adi replaced me as BASA's Secretary and I remained the Editor of the *Newsletter* supported by an Editorial Board. **[5]** Shelley Goffe-Caldiera took over as Editor in 2007, but stepped down when she ran out of sufficient free time. **[6]** Kathy Chater took over, published issues 57 – 59 (July 2010 – March 2011). Then, without consultation, she moved the *Newsletter* to the web and stopped publishing it on paper. The last (online) issue was #63 for July 2012.

I thought it would be helpful to give you a glimpse of the range of material covered in the *Newsletter*, by listing the contents of just one issue - #33.

Newsletter 33, April 2002

Editorial:
By Marika Sherwood: Eg '….What does diversity mean?.... it means anything but racial/ethnic diversity and certainly does not address issues of racial discrimination….looks good in propaganda….'

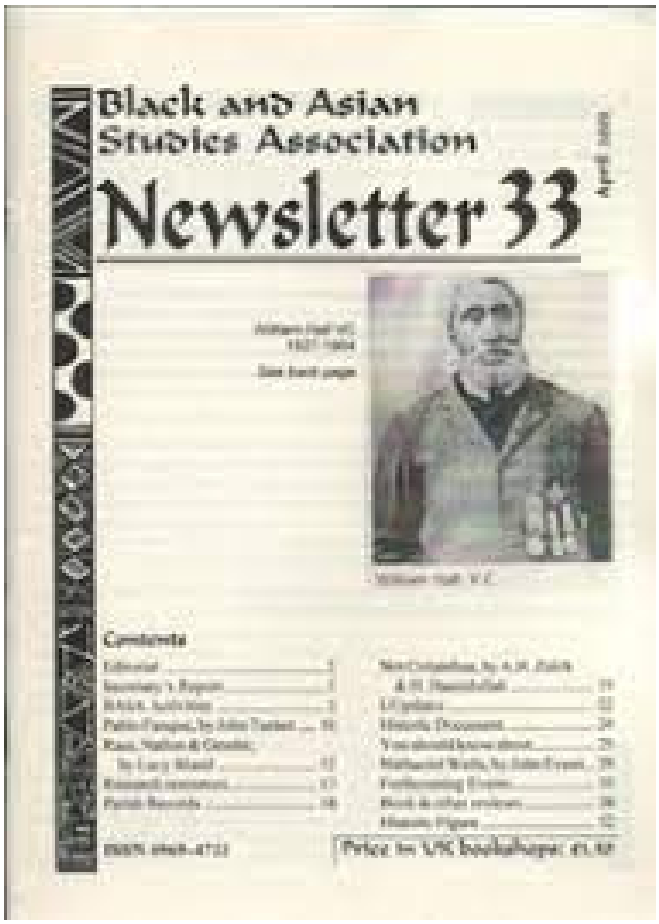
Secretary's report:
By Marika Sherwood: 9 reports. Eg 'We have written to the Culture Minister..'; 'We are continuing our contribution to the World War I project at the PRO'; 'We are still awaiting the promised copy of the guidance to Ofsted inspectors of the teaching of "Citizenship" in schools'; Correspondence with the Cabinet Office's Social Exclusion Unit..' (pp.3-4)

BASA sub-committees and other BASA Activities Reports:
By the BASA Research Resources Working Party; from Caz Bressey of the Management Committee re the National Portrait Gallery; from John Ellis, re National Army Museum; from Sean Creighton, 'who represents us on various committees'. (pp. 5-9)

Research Resources:
By Clare Cathercole & David Shaw (compilers) The Slave Trade, Canterbury Sources 3, Canterbury Cathedral 2001. (p. 17)

Parish records:
Six reports, eg from Madge Dresser, Salisbury Cathedral burials register: 'Matthias the Morian, 22 February 1601/2'; from James Turtle, Gloucestershire Record Office: Littledean gaol register: '10 December 1888, Robert Allen McCall, a cook & baker of South Africa, complexion 'black'. Theft of valuables to value of £6.10s. Committed to Assizes for trial. Sentenced to 6 months imprisonment.' (p. 18)

Updates on previous articles:
'Cumbrian Slave Trade'; 'Zulu Choir in Britain', with a pic of the choir. (pp.22-23


Black and Asian Studies Association
Newsletter 33
Contents

BASA Newsletter 33

Historic Document:
'Colour bar must go', Sunday Express, 20 Sept 1942; Roy Porter, London: A social History. (pp.24-5)

You should know about:
Thirteen entries; eg 'Pakistani Welfare Association'; 'Goan Overseas Digest '; 'Mary Seacole Research Centre. (pp.25- 28)

Four articles:
John Turner, 'Pablo Fanque: Black showman of the North', (pp. 10-11); Lucy Bland, 'Race, nation and gender in inter-war Britain', (pp.12-17); M. Hamidullah & AH. Zuick, 'Not Columbus: 1492: the year Columbus discovered America – but the Muslims had discovered America six centuries before', (pp.19-21; this is a copy of an article in Trends, 5/1, c.1993); John Evans, 'Nathaniel Wells of Monmouthshire and St.Kitts: from slave to sheriff,' (pp.29 -34).

Two poems:
'What is Freedom?' by 13 year old Panna Begum (p.11) and 'We Black People of the World' by 12 year old Leticia Bondjanga (p.28).

Forthcoming Events:
20 events are listed from 20 April to 8-10 July, in London, Manchester, Oxford. Eg '20 April, North West Labour History Group conference: 'Manchester in the 1960s' - includes 'Malcolm X in Manchester and Sheffield'; 11 May, Unofficial and Official Histories Conference, Ruskin College, Oxford – three BASA contributors. (pp.35-37)

Book and other reviews
Five books are reviewed, e.g. Imtiaz Dharker, *I Speak for the Devil* (Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 2001); David Parker & Miri Song (eds), *Rethinking 'Mixed Race'* (Pluto Press, 2001). (pp. 38-44). Three books on education issues, eg , Lance Lewis & Helen Coxall, 'Ways of making Key Stage 2 History culturally inclusive', *Primary History* #29, Oct.2001; Chris Searle, *An Exclusive Education. Race, class and exclusion in British schools*, (Lawrence & Wishart, 2001). Then three Pamphlets, eg George Barnsby, The Great Indian Famine (pp.44-45). Seven reports on Journals/articles', e.g. Kathy Chater, 'Black ancestors', Ancestors 4, Oct/Nov.2001; Peter Jones, 'An emperor's dream', BBC History, April 2002. (pp.38-49).

The second last page is an advertisement for BASA Conference Black and Asian Pioneers of Stage, Screen and Sport, London, Saturday 18 May 2002, at Camden Town Hall.

The Historic figure on the back page is 'William Hall, VC', by Maureen Jowitt.

A very brief introduction to Marika Sherwood, her research and publications.

When I arrived in the UK in 1965, I taught in a range of schools. The curricula at all levels was as empty about the histories of the 'Black' pupils in my classes, as it was in the

schools and university I had attended in Sydney, Australia, about the indigenous peoples there. So Australia was just there for the British to take over – and then after WWII for immigrants, like me from Europe! (We were not, of course, taught that Britain had dumped thousands of prisoners/convicts there.) As I knew nothing about my students' homelands, that is about Britain's colonies in the Caribbean, or in Africa, I searched local libraries. Found almost nothing, so searched bookshops – again almost nothing. I met with many of my students' parents to ask about their histories. I had to learn and to begin to understand what my Black pupils were facing!

After all, as I had had some schooling in Hungary before we emigrated, I knew some of my history, my culture, and had a native language to speak and books in Magyar to read. So I had some idea about who I was. **[7]** Teaching in the very racially and socially discriminatory schools in London made me realise how important this was for me.So I thought the school curricula in England should include:

- An introduction to the indigenous peoples of Australia and New Zealand
- an introduction to the cultures, languages, religions, political systems of Africa, and the Americas before the arrival of Europeans;
- the effect of Europeans in/on those areas;
- how multi-cultural Britain has always been;
- at least a glimpse of the derivation of the England's wealth.

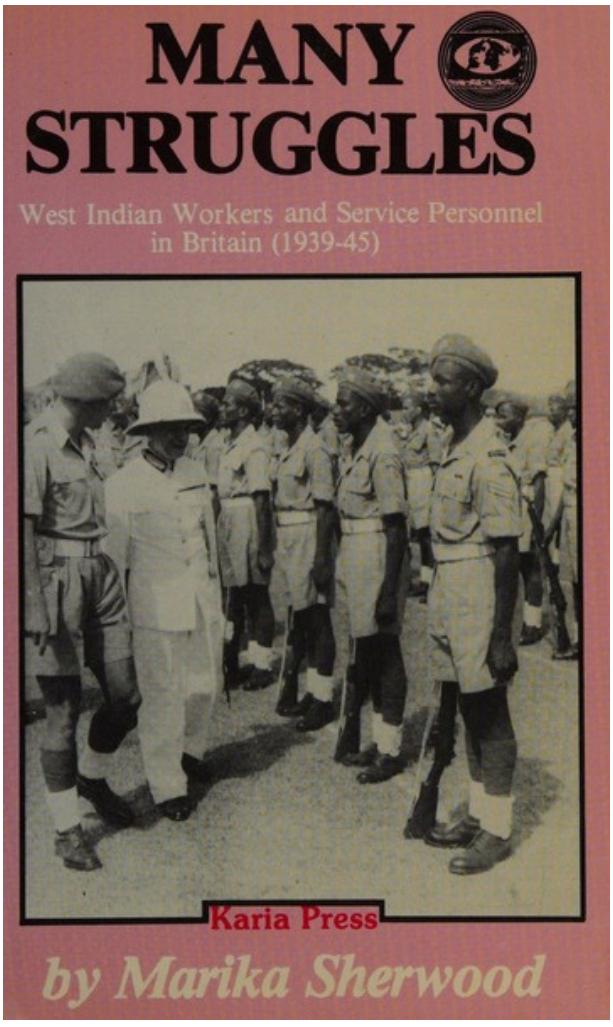
Marika Sherwood, in her lecture 'All we don't know about World War 1 in Africa', 2017

But I could not find a way of incorporating any of this to what I had to teach in a Comprehensive school in North London, except in some 'after hours' voluntary 'classes'; I was soon stopped running these.

As even many years later there were still almost no books on the history of Africa and Black Peoples in Britain in local libraries, I asked my new colleague/friend Colin Prescod to get some research done. He told me to 'just get on with it!' **[8]** I had not had any training in how to conduct research, but I could not say 'No'. So I began researching. My first two published books were *The British Honduran Forestry Unit in Scotland* (OC Publishers, London, 1982) and *Many Struggles - West Indian Workers and Service Personnel in Britain 1939-1945* (Karia Press, London 1985). (These were small Black-owned publishing companies.) Many articles and books followed, perhaps most importantly articles in the weekly Black newspaper, *The Voice*, in 1990 and 1991.

In 1992 I had some books published for school use: incredibly I had been asked by Bob Rees from Heinemann to work with him on Black Peoples of the Americas: Study Units, and Black Peoples of the Americas: Resource Pack. I felt I needed to add to these, so I self-published (as Savannah Press) *Black Peoples in the Americas - a handbook for teachers*, in the same year. It was not until 1999 that I had another book published for school use: Martin Spafford, a BASA colleague and school history teacher, and I produced *Whose Freedom were Africans, Caribbeans and Indians fighting for in World War II?*. It was published by Savannah Press 'in association with the Black and Asian Studies Association, and with initial support from the Historical Association'.

I was a very busy woman as BASA's very active secretary and with the research for the many articles and books I had published. It was when I



Many Struggles: West Indian Workers and Service Personnel in Britain (1939-45), by Marika Sherwood

was researching what was published as 'Manchester, Liverpool and Slavery', that I realised that there was nothing in the curricula about the conditions faced by 'White' workers in England in the 19th century; so I would now add this to the school curricula.

This is the end of the 'introductions'. Now I shall work on reporting the history of the struggles to change the school curriculum, which must continue...

Marika Sherwood is a pioneering Historian, author, and activist, who has written extensively on the history of African and Caribbean people in Britain. Sherwood co-founded the Black and Asian Studies Association (BASA), and is the former editor of the BASA newsletter.

NOTES:

1. She certainly tried, but was unable to offer me more.
2. Published as West Africans in Britain 1900-1960 (Lawrence & Wishart, 1998)
3. *ASACACHIB Newsletter*, no.1, September 1991, p. 2.
4. The report of this conference is in *BASA Newsletter* #52, September 2008, p.4. See also http//nectar northampton.ac.uk and https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/past-events/black-and-asian-studies-association-educational-conference.
5. There is a report of the AGM and all the office-holders, in *BASA Newsletter 31*, September 2001, p.3.
6. 2007 was the year of my 70th birthday.
7. I tell more of this story in 'Why and how that Black Lives Matter became important to me', History Matters Journal, Vol, 1, No. 1, (Autumn 2020).
8. I was then working as a Student Counsellor at the Polytechnic of North London; Colin was a Sr Lecturer there. He introduced me to the Institute of Race Relations; I attended meetings there and began to read the journal Race & Class. Thank you, dear Colin, for teaching me so much and for your patience with ignorant me.

RESEARCHING BLACK HISTORY IN THE COMMUNIST PARTY RECORDS

CLAUDIA TOMLINSON

The history of struggles against imperialism, colonialism, and racial capitalism has been closely associated with Communist movements since the 1920s. Those researching the history of Africa and the African diaspora will want to uncover the rich original documents relating to the major themes, individuals, events, movements, and activities of Black liberation movements in archives containing documents on Communism. The history of Africa and its diaspora is an underdeveloped part of British history, and analysis of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) provides significant information on the range of activities and debates in this field. The relationship between Communism and Pan-Africanism is also evidenced among these archival records. There are many archives in Britain, perhaps as many as fifty, that include records on the theme of Communism and Black radicalism, and this article is not intended to be an exhaustive overview, but to highlight a small number of the key repositories. Communism and anti-imperialism in Africa and the West Indies are a major area of discourse in Black British history, and the Marxism.org website is an important archive for this history. **[1]** Here, records relating to Communism and African or African diaspora intellectuals and independence movement leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah, Chris Hani, Samora Machel, Nyerere, Cabral, Fanon, Walter Rodney and George Padmore can be located.

The Labour History Archive is housed at the People's History Museum in Manchester, within walking distance from Manchester Piccadilly station. It includes the documents of the Communist Party, including those from Moscow, as well as those in the CPGB. Records prior to 1930 are held on microfilm.

The starting point is to search the archives online catalogue, and terms such as 'West Indies' or 'Africa' will yield large results. There are a number of research guides including some covering Chartism, the Miners Strike, LGBT collections and the British Union of Fascists. There is no guide on Black history, which is a significant gap given the centrality of the CPGB's commitment to anti-colonialism, anti-imperialism and anti-racism. Access is appointment based at the time of writing and prior registration is also required. The archivists have expert knowledge of the subject, and it is a good idea to provide them with details of your field of study in advance, as well as the documents you think you might need to look at. It may well be that they are able to steer you towards records you have not identified in your search. Records are ordered by email once they have been identified in the catalogue. This archive contains important records about CPGB Black activists such as Billy Strachan, and Peter Blackman, and the movements they were involved in such as the West Indies committee, and a plethora of other key individuals, debates, publications, correspondence, and pamphlets.

A related archive, also located in Manchester, is the Working-Class Movement Library. **[3]** It has a large stock of secondary sources, so it is useful for those looking for books on working class movements relating to Africa, the Caribbean, and the diaspora in Britain. There is also an online catalogue and searches will point to the availability of secondary and archival records relating to the search term.

Records relating to Black women who were either members of the Communist Party or who shared these perspectives can be searched in all the major archives described in this article, and some of the smaller, Black-led archives in the UK not discussed. For example, some editions of West Indian Gazette & Afro-Asian Caribbean News, the newspaper produced by Claudia Jones, are housed at the London University, London School of Economics, The Women's Library. **[4]** This catalogue also holds a number of secondary resources relating to Claudia Jones, aTrinidadian born activist who was a major figure in the Communist Party of the USA and to a lesser degree in the CPGB. The records of Dorothy Kuya, 1932 – 2013, a leading and influential member of the CPBG, and community activist based in Liverpool, are also available for research. **[5]**

Historian Evan Smith hosts an archive of radical online collections and archives. **[6]** This provision is a digitised record of radical literature from around the world, and includes radical Black literature. It contains newspapers, photographs, pamphlets, correspondence, and flyers from around the world. Of interest to Black British history, the site has a section on 'Black radicalism'. This includes

Black Voice, the monthly paper of the Black Union and Freedom Party (BUFP) in the People's History Museum in Manchester

records of the Black Liberation Front, the Black Panther Party, and the *Negro Worker*. The BLF section includes an extensive article entitled 'Independent radical black politics: looking at the BUFP & BLF'. There is a separate section entitled 'Britain' with many pieces of Communist, socialist, and radical literature.

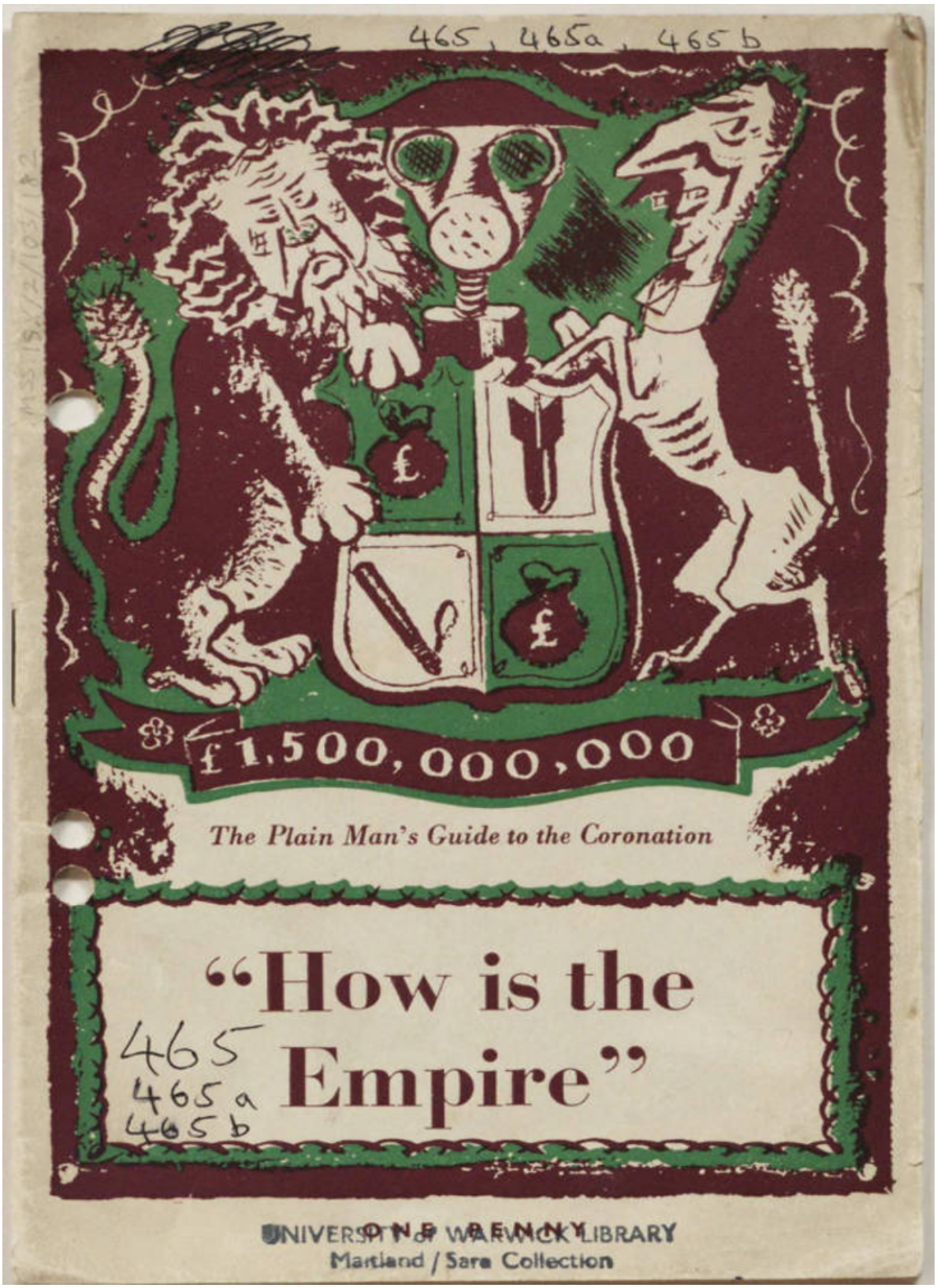
The National Archives is also useful to search, and although it doesn't hold major records of the Communist Party, it does hold records of many individuals, events and movements relating to Black and colonial era Communist radicals. For example, there are extensive records on Cheddi and Janet Jagan, and movements relating to Black and colonial era Communist radicals. For example, there are extensive records on Cheddi and Janet Jagan, leaders of British Guiana, viewed by Britain as dangerously aligned to Communist views. Their records include the debates, activities, and themes central to Communism and colonialism in British Guiana, the West Indies, Britain, India, and the parts of Latin America. **[7]** The records of Peter Blackman, poet, former priest from Barbados and worker for the CPGB, between 1950 and 1954, are available as a free digital download from the National Archives website. **[8]** They are declassified records of the British secret services held about Blackman.

A number of universities hold collections that are important for the study of Communism and Black radicalism, and the Modern Records Centre at the University of Warwick, is a key research site. Those interested in the origins of early trade union movements in the West Indies will find records from those movements. There are also records on the Colonial Development Advisory Committee, and how trade unions agitated for improved welfare provision in various colonial countries. The records of the British trade unions and the TUC are also

available, and showcase various debates on their engagement with Caribbean trade unions, many of whom were sympathetic to Communism, but also affiliated with the British trade unions. The collections are helpfully organised under a number of themes including Race, Ethnicity, and Migration in Modern Britain, which incorporates West Indian Migration from 1948 to 1958, 1980s uprisings or 'riots', and race and policing. Another important module is Britain, Empire and Migration, which contains a record of the anti-Semitic and anti-Black activism and literature including the ideas of Oswald Mosely, the Fascist and anti-Black immigration politician. It also contains some editions of International African opinion, the journal of the International African Service Bureau (IASB), the Pan-African and Marxist influenced movement through the political thought of C.L.R James and George Padmore. Both of these modules have many digitised documents such as correspondence, reports, pamphlets and flyers for protest meetings, campaigns and actions. An example of flyer is 'The plain man's guide to the coronation, how is the Empire', an anti-colonial publication by the Communist Party of Great Britain. **[9]**

The Institute of Commonwealth Studies Library at Senate House has extensive records on Communism and its confrontation with colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism globally. **[10]** It holds the personal archives of prominent individuals such as Billy Strachan. It holds the records of Caribbean trade unions and political parties, with particular reference to how they connected with organisations, and movements in Britain to promote the cause of anti-colonialism. It holds an almost complete set of the West Indies Committee of the CPGB, and includes the important April 1951 special edition featuring the article by R. Palme Dutt (theoretician for the Communist Party) 'The Communist Programme and the British Empire', addressing questions raised by West Indians about the British Road to Communism, the CP's new planned programme that gave rise to questions of perceived agency of post-colonial nations.

This brief overview is suggestive of the extensive sources of original documents about Black British history and Communism available in Britain for in-person consultation, as well as digital access. They are of interest to scholars and the general reader and will prove equally useful for the development of academic and educational resources.They are also accessible for individuals and community organisations seeking a deeper understanding of the origins of the many of the race issues still at large in contemporary Britain.



'The plain man's guide to the coronation. How is the Empire'

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CLAUDIA JONES & BLACK RADICALISM IN BRITAIN

TIONNE PARRIS

In recent decades, Claudia Jones has finally been acknowledged by the British State for her contributions to the history of British activism. Although she was acknowledged on a stamp in 2008 by the Royal Mail in a series titled 'Women of Distinction', this item interestingly framed her as a "civil rights activist" – which whilst not incorrect – does not capture the full spectrum of her politics, and in fact dulls the many peaks of her radical life journey. To understand how she came to inspire and support generations of young Black people in Britain, we must understand how she became the woman she was when she stepped off the train at Victoria Station in London, 1955.

"Women Of Distinction (2008)", 500Years.Royalmailgroup.com

Jones began her life as a political activist when she enrolled in the Young Communist League, and she went on to join the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) in 1936. Like many fellow activists, she was inspired by the defence the Party and its major activists rallied around the case of the Scottsboro Boys, in a campaign which had gained national attention. From the mid-30s, she quickly rose through the ranks of the CPUSA, and as well as her practical commitment to the Party, Jones was a leading theoretician.

Her formulation of the 'triple oppression' faced by Black women emphasised the centrality of Black women to the fight for equal rights and justice in America – and she would later expand this view to include all women in struggles across the globe throughout the 20th Century. **[1]** She was also part of a dynamic network of Black radicals and, in particular, Black radical women. Historian Minkah Makalani expands on the veracity of her political development, stating that Jones followed the intellectual pattern of a whole host of Black radicals like CLR James:

"…Du Bois and James, at least, never rejected Marxism; James saw himself extending its contours and analyses—an intellectual biography mirroring that of African diasporic activist-intellectuals such as Amílcar Cabral, Claudia Jones, Louise Thompson Patterson, Aimé Césaire, and Frantz Fanon." **[2]**

As a member of the CPUSA, Jones was certainly a Communist, but her application of Marxism was fluid and thrust towards improving the conditions of Black people across the US and beyond. However, anti-communism was rife throughout the 1940s, building to fever pitch in the 1950s, and Claudia was swept up in the dragnet of McCarthyism. She was arrested in 1948 for a speech given on International Women's Day, and in 1953 convicted under the Smith Act, where she was sentenced to one year and a day in prison and a $200 fine. Mistreated in prison and denied appropriate medical care, she suffered heart ailments and had failing health for the rest of her life as a result. There was much protest around her imprisonment, led by other Communists like William Patterson, who campaigned for her to be freed as a result of her ongoing medical conditions. **[3]** Eventually, the US Government and Jones compromised, and she was deported in 1955 under the Walter McCarran Act, using her status as an immigrant as the final nail in the coffin and ending any chance of her continuing her activism in America. Despite being a native of Trinidad and having spent all of her adolescence and adult life in America, Jones was deported to Britain. She was refused deportation to Trinidad because officials worried she would be a galvanising force amongst the native population. It was agreed that she would be less of a risk in Britain, and she was considered less able to stir up radical protests in the United Kingdom. However, she was clearly underestimated.

Historian Marika Sherwood writes that Jones was shunned by the official body of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB) despite her lengthy experience as an organiser. **[4]** The CPGB had not yet reckoned with the complex issue of race in Britain, and perhaps were unwilling to open Pandora's box by elevating Claudia, a known 'race woman', to the upper echelons of the Party. **[5]** This was probably not the welcome she expected after her lengthy ordeal in

the US, but ever resilient, she started her own organisations to continue her work. In the first work published on Claudia Jones, Buzz Johnson's *I Think of My Mother: Notes on the Life and Times of Claudia Jones*, Johnson wrote that "In addition to editing the newspaper (The West Indian Gazette and Afro-Asian Caribbean News), she was an active community organiser in the Notting Hill riots, Brixton, Camden, and other areas of Black settlement and work." **[6]** Johnson also identified in Claudia's writing, the main concerns that the West Indian Community grappled with:

"1.) The constant pressure and concern with daily problems of survival;
2.) The groping in their own minds for the fundamental significance of their national identity; and
3.) The lack of an organised perspective for a progressive, united West Indies at home." **[7]**

In deconstructing and outlining these concerns, Claudia Jones set to work to help fix these problems.

Building Networks:

Jones became enveloped in a Black British movement that was further galvanised by her presence, joining a generation who had already begun the struggle against the British State at home and abroad. Jones, who had already cut her teeth alongside staunch anti-imperialist protestors in the US, immediately began collaborating with fellow Black activists whom Colin Prescod detailed as having come "out of the militant anti-colonial political cultures to see off Empire", who "questioned the racist-imperialism at the core of Great Britain's success story." **[8]** Claudia had arrived at a time of great strife in Britain for Black communities, and her activism reflects this. In the case of the Notting Hill riots in 1958, Donald Hinds expressed Claudia's impact on the community:

"There must have been many who remembered her courageous leadership during the racial disturbances at Notting Hill in 1958. Those were the nights of the long knives, when frightened people of colour surveyed the shattered windows of their homes or counted the bruises on their bodies. To people who had never before encountered racial conflicts, Claudia Jones was able to console and prevent what some people thought would turn into a stampede of selling out and returning to the countries of origin. She had been through all this before in the United States of America." **[9]**

As Hinds highlights, she had already formulated some ideas on how to combat racism in America, so she was able to adapt her training from the CPUSA and apply her wisdom to good use on British soil. Claudia organised around many causes, and importantly she did so in community with Black British activists. Although she contributed greatly to organising, she was not a lone force. Amy Ashwood

Garvey was an established activist in Britain who, amongst others, helped to orient Claudia to life in Britain, and they went on to collaborate in several organisations. In addition to this new family of activists, Claudia nurtured her ongoing international connections and invited many of her Communist and Communist affiliated comrades from the US to join in the struggle – women like Eslanda Robeson and Shirley Graham Du Bois made many appearances in support of Jones's work in Britain. **[10]** Jones nurtured, and was nurtured by, the community she joined, and she encouraged their participation in a more radical response to British racism.

On 17th May 1959, Antiguan migrant Kelso Cochrane was murdered by a gang of white racists in Notting Hill, London. In response, Jones and her friends in London - including Amy Ashwood Garvey - formed the Interracial Friendship Coordinating Council. The IRFCC wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister, saying "coloured citizens of the UK have lost confidence in the ability of the law enforcing agencies to protect them." **[11]** A few days following the murder, Eslanda Robeson, and others, spoke at a memorial meeting in London. On 1st June, a vigil was held at 10 Downing Street. One attendant, Frances Ezzrecco said: "We want to know who will stop talking and do something." **[12]**

A protest in Whitehall in 1959 demanded justice over the killing of Kelso Cochrane, 32, in west London

The IRFCC went on to sponsor Cochrane's funeral held on 6th June 1959. The murder of Cochrane was just one in a string of racist incidents across London, but the outcry following his death was an opportunity for the Black community to unify. Women like Claudia Jones, Amy Ashwood Garvey, Pearl Prescod and Eslanda Robeson all supported this particular cause and Cochrane's funeral was attended by over 1,000 people as a result of the sustained protest around his death. Cochrane was further memorialised in Claudia Jones's newspaper, The West Indian Gazette, and an article titled 'One Year Ago' showed continued support of Cochrane's family, and of his legacy:

"Hammersmith and Kensington Traders Council in cooperation with the IFRCC: a gravestone is to be placed at Kelso Cochranes grave. Total cost will be £60 so article [sic] requests donations to be sent to the WIG." **[13]**

This excerpt highlights that Jones and others at *The West Indian Gazette* would not forget Cochrane and in fact rallied funds from the Black community and the local council to create a permanent fixture in memoriam. Cochrane, it is clear, had become the martyr of a grassroots campaign that aimed to shed light on the difficulties that Black migrants faced in Britain. They demanded change.

The West Indian Gazette

The West Indian Gazette and Afro-Asian Caribbean News (commonly referred to as the 'WIG') is perhaps Jones's most enduring legacy. Jones employed a skilled team of writers and built the organisation from the ground up, although it was always propped up on very financially shaky foundations. Despite this, Imaobong D. Umoren writes that the WIG Office in Brixton became "…home to an expanding West Indian population", and "acted as an advice bureau for Black people as well as a discussion forum for visiting Black political figures, such as Norman Manley and Martin Luther King Jr." **[14]**

In the 9 years she lived in Britain, Jones worked tirelessly to buttress and celebrate unity amongst Black communities and the Notting Hill Carnival, which is often attributed to her, was first advertised in the WIG. As well as advertising events, news and popular culture of the time, Jones also publicised struggles against the Colour Bar and housing discrimination. It became a forum for what Kennetta Perry has termed "the most powerful centrifuge of Black British culture, community and political life in postwar Britain." **[15]** For example, in a 1961 article, Jones wrote a scathing response to the devastating shortcomings of the Conservative Government and their attention (or lack thereof) to housing issues:

"Regards housing, it is not the immigrant who causes the shortage

but the failure of a Tory government to then build them, the infamous Rent Act, and the diverting of funds for peoples social needs to the programme to build H-bombs and to keep up the huge and unnecessary campaigns against people seeking freedom from the foulness of imperialist-colonialism." **[16]**

Jones's invocation of 'imperialist colonialism' highlighted another concern of hers, stemming from past organising in the US – which in the 1930s and 40s saw waves of protest against fascism under Franco in Spain, Mussolini in Ethiopia and Hitler in Germany. The WIG was a hub for information about events and political upheaval across the world, and it paid particular attention to anti-colonial struggles across Africa.

In the 1960s, Jones rallied protests against South African Apartheid, a move which also dated back to her own alliances in America during the early 1950s, for example with the Sojourners for Truth & Justice who sought alliances with Black women in South Africa. **[17]** The West Indian Gazette's founder and her US affiliates continued to attend international events across its lifespan. For example,

Claudia Jones at the offices of the *West Indian Gazette*, 1962

Claudia Jones and Eslanda Robeson both attended the gathering of the All-Africa Women's Freedom Movement at an event in London. A similar gathering of the Conference of Women of Africa and African Descent (CWAAD), held at the University College of Ghana, was covered in the West Indian Gazette. Reportage of the event quoted Kwame Nkrumah, stating that: "Describing the glorious part Ghanaian women have played in the struggle for African independence, Dr Nkrumah opening the conference urged women to realise that the men alone cannot complete the gigantic task in the African crusade for freedom." **[18]** Claudia herself also consistently wrote in support of the growing dissent across the African continent:

"There is a need for sustained exposure of the colonialist and imperialist tactics and continued support to the Congolese people and their government in this critical struggle for the consolidation of their independence." **[19]**

Her approach was consistently multi-pronged, tackling issues domestically in Britain whilst linking these struggles internationally. As the 1960s unravelled, she continued to support the unfolding US Civil Rights Movement – in which she would undeniably have been a key activist had she not been deported. In response to the March on Washington in the US, Claudia organised her own march in solidarity from London in 1963. As well as this, attention in the WIG also turned to the developing Black Power Movement as the 1960s progressed. US writer Julian Mayfield covered the Freedom Riders and Robert F. Williams, as well as the world travels of MLK. **[20]** The Gazette functioned as an important forum for Black Brits to remain engaged with a militantly pan-Africanist lens, emphasising their shared struggle with Black people across the Globe who were similarly engaged with struggles against State oppression.

After lengthy heart problems which were exacerbated by her imprisonment almost a decade earlier, Claudia Jones died on the 24th Dec. 1964. In her untimely death Black British history was altered

Malcolm X holds a copy of the WIG issued Dec 1964 - Jan 1965

significantly when sadly Malcolm X missed a planned visit with her in early 1965. After decades of activism, Claudia Jones was not alive to witness the development of the Civil Rights Movement as it blossomed into the Black Power Movement. It is no secret that she would certainly have admired the tenacity of the young activists in both the United States and in Britain, as they emerged in the years after her death.

When she was first deported, her long-time friend and fellow activist Paul Robeson said: "Claudia Jones belongs to us, to America, and the reactionaries in power who have ordered her deportation have thereby delivered a grievous blow against the best interests of our country..." **[21]** However, as Claudia Jones established a life for herself in Britain, she actively worked against reactionaries' blows and transcended borders with her activism, whilst strengthening the Black communities in Britain through her presence here. Ultimately, Jones's life was exemplified by her service to Black communities across the world, and her dedication is emphasised in her very own assessment of Black history's tradition:

"The very core of all Negro History is radicalism against conformity to chattel slavery, radicalism against the betrayal of the demands of reconstruction, radicalism in relation to non-acceptance of the status quo." **[22]**

Claudia Jones was truly a radical woman, and all of her contributions, and the networks she built throughout her life show this. Jones deserves a much more honest recognition of her life and her work, one that does not shy away from her political affiliations and gives just credit to the movements she was a part of. She is a part of the rich tapestry of Black radicalism across the world, and a titanic figure in Black British – and British history more generally.

Tionne Parris is a PhD History student at the University of Hertfordshire. Parris specialises in African American protest history,with emphasis on the U.S. Black Power Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Her PhD research focuses on Black Radical Women (namely Communist and Communist affiliated activists) of the mid-20thCentury in the U.S and the long-term impact of their activism on the Black Power Movement. Parris is also a coordinator of the Young Historians Project, and a member of History Matters.

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THE KU KLUX KLAN IN THE MIDLANDS: PART I

RUBEN E. DARRELL

This short series was inspired by research found in the course of researching for YHP's upcoming project 'Housing Black Britain'. Whilst this project aims to chart the development of Black Housing Associations, initiatives, and hostels, the following series explores the terror enacted upon black people in Birmingham, where the British Ku Klux Klan attacked black people and their homes. We believe that this chapter of British history is little-known, and so I have collected much of his research into the KKK thus far, and will explore their impact on black and brown communities throughout Britain. Readers should be warned that this series includes racist ephithets and discussion of potentially life-threatening violence.

Part 1: Beginnings of the Klan and their activities in & around Birmingham

In 1965, during the year that Malcolm X would come to Birmingham, the city saw another American import to the British political landscape - the Ku Klux Klan. It is little known today that Britain's Ku Klux Klan made their first ever public appearance in a Birmingham pub in June of that year. Their Chief Spokesperson, 27 year old George Newey, addressed the room full of journalists and Klan members saying:

"This meeting here... is to form the Birmingham branch of the KKK. Greetings Klansmen, Greetings Klanswomen." **[1]**

The thoughts that are immediately evoked when one hears the words "Birmingham" and "Ku Klux Klan" put together are likely to be those of hooded men who speak with Southern drawls in American states like Alabama. But, it was

Birmingham, England, in the West Midlands where, British British Klansmen and women spoke with Brummie accents and did not quite fit into the archetypal image of a racist Klan member.

This iteration of the Klan first came to the Housing Black Britain group's attention when a short clip about a cross burning incident at a home on Albert Road, Handsworth, was found. Albert Road, coincidentally, is where Amy Ashwood Garvey (a prominent Pan-African activist and another figure important to the group's research), is reported to have lived fifteen years earlier. **[2]** Ruby Henry, a black woman who lived with her husband, Larklan Henry, and their children was interviewed in the news clip and identified as the victim. **[3]**

At around 11:30pm Mrs Henry was made aware of an issue when she heard a "...big shout that the front is on fire", from a motorist passing by and, upon seeing the "blazing" door she realised that there was "a cross" on it. **[4]** While her husband tried to remove the burning cross, she rushed to get some water to temper the flame. Despite living at this house for four years, she said after the incident, "I don't think I'll stop here any longer", as she was "terrified" that it was "going to happen again." **[5]** The attack had clearly frightened her and it forced her to send her two children, only toddlers at the time, away to live with friends for their safety. Although, at this point in 1965 there were only tentative reports of "a secret Ku Klux Klan in the Midlands", residents of the street shown in the interview, in particular the black residents, mostly believed it to be the work of the KKK.

The Albert Road attack demonstrates one facet of the difficulties black people faced not just in getting accommodation itself

Ruby Henry being interviewed by the reporter Reg Harcout after the attack on her home

but also, in the racism that could be endured even in the comfort of one's own home. Instances of racist graffiti and attacks on black homes were all too common at the time in Birmingham. Such incidents, for example in 1962 on a Smethwick road, an area neighbouring Handsworth, the words "Get out N***rs" were written on a street wall, helped build a climate of racial hatred in the area that culminated in the election of the infamous racist Peter Griffiths to Parliament in 1964. This atmosphere of hate, in part, led to the subsequent formation of the Klan in 1965. **[6]** The racial tension of the time in Smethwick and its surrounding areas had a lasting psychological impact so strong that one African-Caribbean elder recalling the period said that "when it does come into my mind I kill it out." **[7]** The emergence of a Birmingham Ku Klux Klan, unsurprisingly, could "hardly of... [been] expected to improve race relations" and most certainly did not ease tensions. **[8]** Four years before they formally announced their presence to the world, over 100 posters appeared on Albert Street that bore the "flaming cross symbol of the secret society", many of which were found on "the homes of coloured people." **[9]** This, again, illustrates the racist abuse and intimidation indicative of the place and period while showing how the homes of Birmingham's black community were a vehicle for the stoking of both hate and fear.

Racist graffiti painted on the front wall of a terraced house in Smethwick, 1962

The Henry family's fiery cross was the second in a string of cross burning attacks that targeted the homes of Black people & it had happened soon after the 'Leamington incident' which was the first. There were at least six such incidents; including one in Leamington, three in Birmingham and two in London. The fears surrounding these attacks were so pronounced that an Indian born "immigrant leader" and Birmingham's first councillor of Asian descent, Dr Dhani Prem, warned that the Klan were being "taken too lightly" - as the police refused to acknowledge the group's existence. **[10]** Instead they blamed it on "hooliganism". **[11]** Prem, however, believed it did exist - "There is a danger", he said due to police inaction, "that some hot-heads among the immigrants may take the law into their own hands." **[12]**

Jagmohan Joshi of the Indian Worker's Association (the group that had invited Malcolm X to Smethwick) called for a "fight back" in the wake of Leamington burning cross incident, declaring that - "We are not afraid even of physical violence." **[13]** Although, he later believed his remarks had been "misinterpreted" and that "...there are many ways of hitting back. If violence is used, we will use every lawful means to combat it." **[14]** Using the language of self-defense, perhaps inspired by Malcolm X directly, Joshi advocated that the attacked communities present a united front. A few months later, at a West Indian conference in Birmingham, delegates announced their intention "...to form a national organisation to protect themselves from "Ku Klux Klan incidents." **[15]** The conference encouraged West Indians in Britain:

"...to mobilise in self-defence against the threat of the Ku Klux Klan who throw burning crosses into the homes of coloured people, since the authorities responsible for the protection of the community have shown a reluctance to do so." **[16]**

Joshi's plans to "fight back" would be fully realised, in 1968, when a meeting in Leamington Spa gathered "Fifty Indians, Pakistanis and West Indians" who would go on to found the Black People's Alliance. **[17]** In an act of defiance against the KKK's attempts to intimidate the community, it was formed in the very same house "where a Ku Klux Klan-style fiery cross" had been "nailed to the door" in 1965. **[18]** Joshi, upon setting up this "militant force", declared: "We shall defend ourselves in every way possible if our families are attacked." **[19]** Joshi and the Indian Worker's Association "subscribe[d] to the political definition of blackness that connected… Asians' struggles with those of immigrants from the Caribbean." **[20]** This organising principle, in the face of the KKK, who saw no distinction between Asians and West Indians (as both were targeted), would be a much needed unifying factor in the midst of intense division.

In contrast to this protective community activism, the aforementioned inaugural public meeting of the Klan took place, and George Newey, the Klan's spokesman, formally requested an alliance with their American counterparts and progenitors, the Imperial Wizard Bob Shelton's Ku Klux Klan. Shelton, who claimed to have been "anticipating, very shortly, having a subsidiary movement... in Britain", was keen to get involved. **[21]** It was said that he led the "most dangerous and violent Klan organisation in modern history." **[22]** Up until 1987, Shelton was the head of the United Klans of America, and was readily complicit in violence against the US's black community. For example, in 1981 Shelton presided over the Klan when the lynching of a black teenager called Michael Donald happened, and was held legally responsible when Donald's mother successfully sued the Klan to the sum of $7 million in 1987. **[23]**

It is worth noting that, during 1963 in the American city of Birmingham, the infamous 16th Baptist Street Church bombings took place. This happened just two years prior to the emergence of Birmingham's English Klan and four black girls were brutally murdered in the Deep South. The men who would later be convicted for their murders were members of Shelton's United Klan's of America.

However George Newey would, on behalf of the Birmingham KKK, deny any involvement in the unfolding string of attacks both around and at the heart of Birmingham. He, despite wishing to partner with their undeniably and blatantly violent American namesake, quite outrageously claimed that they intended "to achieve our aims purely by peaceful means - I repeat, by peaceful means." **[24]** Newey audibly sighed before he said the following - as though he did not quite believe it himself:

"Our argument is not with the n****r in the street but [with] the pigs who have brought them over here." **[25]**

Newey had some more choice words regarding black people. He advocated for black people's repatriation as he believed them to be "nothing but a scourge on the good land." **[26]** He blamed supposedly puppeteering "Jewish masters" as ultimately responsible for the "silent black invasion which consists of the scum and the throw-outs of their stinking black countries." **[27]**

Despite their vitriolic rhetoric, the Klan often seemed quite clownish. Their membership boasted a range of 125 subscription paying members to "400 vowed members... ready to operate." **[28]** However, only 16 showed up to the Chapel Pub meeting on June 12th before they were "ignominiously", and quite comically, thrown out by the pub landlord who had not been aware of the true purpose of their meeting. **[29]** As one might gather from this

incident, the Klan may not actually have been representative of the wider public sentiments at this time.

In comparison to some of the United States' Klan leaders, Newey, himself, could hardly be described as charismatic. Despite being their Chief Spokesperson, he often stuttered and stumbled his way through his remarks and from the little footage there of him was no stranger to blunder. For instance their Deputy, 21 year old, John Richards, claimed that they did "not intend [on] wearing hoods or having initiation ceremonies." **[30]** However, Newey would directly contradict him in saying that they would in fact wear "Hoods and, er, the same regalia as the KK [sic] in America." **[31]** He made it clear that although "the law, specifically, says that we cannot dress up in public but, er, for private meetings, in private, I think we will, yes." **[32]** When asked if he hated 'coloured people', Newey responded that he didn't "...no. I just hat-, er, dislike their presence for being in this country." **[33]** This, I think, is a laughable distinction. In the same clip Newey, again, couldn't seem to pronounce the word "Marxist" correctly, and yet he held strong to the belief they were the people behind much of the nation's turmoil. As the self-declared representatives of the "Great British race who have repelled all invaders for a thousand years with blood and courage", Newey vowed to put a stop to the Labour Party who, as he claimed, had "pledged to make Britain a Communist satellite country. Yet this seems to have been an enemy they could barely appear to name accurately. Guyanese novelist and activist Jan Carew, when interviewed in response, aptly stated that "...the ladies and gentlemen [of the KKK] weren't particularly splendid examples of the super-race." **[34]**

George Newey (standing) addressing the meeting. Seated to his left is his Deputy John Richards

Carew would further say, ostensibly on behalf of "Britain's coloured community", that "we are not worried by this specific aberration" of the KKK. **[35]** However bumbling and idiotic the Birmingham Klan may have appeared, as Carew rightly highlights, they were still a genuine threat and his comments, as a whole, fall into a similarly dismissive tone taken towards them by many at the time. Establishment figures seem to have attempted to give "assurance[s]" that while "Klan crosses are burning in Britain… the people responsible are just a 'lunatic fringe'." **[36]** The KKK were often referred to as a bizarre and "fanatical minority." **[37]** One commentator warned of "the risk of playing it too cool" in regards to these attacks as he believed that others had been "so anxious not to accept any idea that a British Ku Klux Klan may exist that they have… played down this dastardly business." **[38]** The combination of Police inaction and feigned ignorance coupled with Government spokespeople attempting to play down the significance of "Britain's edition of the White US terrorist organisation," placed immigrant communities between a rock and a hard place. **[39]**

Despite indications from some that fanatical terrorists were not of major concern, another element to the threat the Klan posed, was that they were not simply a "Birmingham branch of the KKK", or a copy-cat collection of racists, but they were also a Birmingham branch of British fascism. **[40]** The majority were also former members of Colin Jordan's openly Neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement and much of their rhetoric was adopted virtually wholesale from Jordan. These "Rebel British Nazis" split from Jordan's movement to form "militant

Author and activist Jan Carew speaking about the British Klan

branches of the Ku Klux Klan" after disagreements with their leader, who was known as World Fuhrer. **[41]** In light of this, there should be no question of the potential danger (never mind the actual danger of 1965) posed by the Birmingham Klan. Even their fascist forefathers did not take them lightly, albeit for malign reasons, as shown by the wife of Colin Jordan (the niece of Christian Dior) who while "speaking for her husband" said that any NSM member that joined the splinter group would be "immediately expelled." **[42]** The threat of the Birmingham Ku Klux Klan, their membership and their terrorism would outlive the year of their public inception.

Furthermore, despite Carew's claim that black people were not fearful of the Klan it is quite clear that "fears.. [were] growing among the coloured community in the city" as evidenced by the words of the victim of this terror, Ruby Henry, or the actions and words of the various political figures and groups like the West Indian Conference, the Indian Workers Association and Dr. Dhani Prem. **[43]** Carew outlined the historical specificity of the origins of the American Klan and claimed that there was "no parallel situation here." **[44]** Instead, he emphasized the issue of the "colour… discrimination" in Britain. **[45]** Although, the Colour Bar was certainly a pressing issue of the time, it belittles the significance of the very real physical terror enacted by this Klan sect on ordinary black people. I think that to dismiss their greater potential threat so crudely does harm. It is not possible nor logical to separate, so simplistically, these two forms of racism, as in Colour Bar discrimination and the acts of racist terrorists, and I think it undermines, by needlessly comparing the two, the significance of one versus the other.

The Birmingham KKK seems to have, after reaching their zenith in June 1965, with their flurry of fiery crosses and their June 12th meeting, quite quickly ceased operating. One of the major reasons for this is likely to be that prominent Klan members were by October appearing in court "accused of offences connected with a Ku Klux Klan type cross-burning." **[46]** However, they were accused, not of being responsible for any of the cross attacks themselves (that targeted black people) but for the vague charge "of aiding and abetting two other people of wearing a uniform signifying a political association." **[47]** After a police raid on a Klan cross burning ceremony just outside of Rugby found the "men… wore white hooded robes with a black cross over the heart", charges were brought forth and three were sentenced to three months in prison with various fines being dished out to others. **[48]**

While government spokespeople, the Police, the media and even the anti-Colour Bar activist Jan Carew had played down the existence of the KKK by so often claiming that they were simply fanatical and

disorganised hooligans. The trial found, what should've been obvious much earlier, that in light of the "totality of the evidence and the statements made… [it] indicates a political organisation and indeed the promotion of political objectives." **[49]** The Birmingham Klan, now at death's door, was finally able to have its cloak shredded by someone in authority and be called what it really was - a political organisation. Carew's explanation of the rise of the American KKK was articulately put, and while he has been proved right in the sense that the Birmingham Klan did end in failure, the idea that a group of violent extremists was not a threat, in my eyes, was a great miscalculation. As I will explore in part two, the threat of the British KKK would unfold in a range of violent attacks, and their impact and legacy must be discussed further.

Note*: I would like to thank the Young Historians Project as since I have become a member, less than a year ago, I have been able to engage in history in a more formalised way - learning the art of researching, interviewing and various new skills. Without this support, I would never of been able to get this far, in so many regards, but notably, I would not have been able to produce this piece of history, my first. I would like to thank YHP's coordinators, past and present. In particular, I would like to thank Tionne Parris who has spent much of her time, reading through earlier drafts of this piece and providing guidance, critique and teaching through this process.*

Ruben E. Darrell is a researcher at the Young Historians Project. He is interested in the history of African people and the African diaspora, and is currently uncovering the history of the Ku Klux Klan in the Midlands between 1957-1978. Further pieces will appear on the YHP website regarding this topic.

NOTES:

1. ITN Reports, 16 June 1965
2. *Birmingham Gazette*, 18 February 1950
3. ATV Today, 10 June 1961 - Notably the reporter, in trying to find out the reason for the attack, asked Ruby Henry whether her husband had any political ties that might have motivated it - but interestingly they did not ask this of Ms. Henry herself!
4. ATV Today, 10 June 1965
5. Birmingham Library, 'Cuttings on Race issues in the West Midlands' - MS 2141/A/7/13
6. *Birmingham Mail*, Malcolm X Gallery, 16 February 2015 - The KKK declared their support for Peter Griffiths in their June 12th meeting. Griffiths was likened to a Klansman in Parliament by the future leader of the Labour Party, Michael Foot MP, who refused to withdraw the "charge of racialist propaganda against [Griffiths]… since everybody knows that he does it." The KKK also declared support for a 'colourful' local MP, who is now rather historically obscure, named Gerald Nabarro who had in 1963, asked a live radio audience: "How would you feel if your daughter wanted to marry a big buck n*****r with the prospect of coffee coloured grandchildren?"
7. Negotiating memories: Elderly Caribbeans remembering the racist 1964 general elections in Smethwick, West Midlands by Adaora Aligbe
8. ITN Reports, KKK in Britain, 16 June 1965
9. *The Birmingham Post*, November 20 1961
10. *The Birmingham Post,* 15 June 1965
11. Birmingham Library, Cuttings on Race issues in the West Midlands MS 2141/A/7/13
12. *The Birmingham Post*, 15 June 1965 - Prem was positively fearful of more militant immigrant activism.
13. Express News Service, 8 June 1965
14. *Daily Mirror*, June 10 1965
15. *The Birmingham Post*, August 16 1965
16. Ibid
17. *Daily Mirror, April 29 1968*
18. Ibid
19. Ibid
20. Rosalind Eleanor Wild, 'Black was the Colour of our Fight', p. 214
21. *ITN Reports, 16 June 1965*
22. "THE 1980 LYNCHING OF MICHAEL DONALD", Hezakya News and Film. The quote is from Morris Dees who co-founded the Southern Poverty Law Centre and was the lawyer of the mother of Michael Donald.
23. Beulah Mae Donald vs United States Klans of America INC. judgement. Donald's victory is said to have destroyed the last vestiges of the already decaying UKA. Robert Shelton said in a 1994 interview that "The Klan will never return… The Klan is my belief, my religion. But… The Klan is gone. Forever."

NOTES:

24. ITN Reports, 16 June 1965 - Shelton made similar claims about his own Klan sect's supposed peaceability.
25. ITN Reports, 16 June 1965
26. Ibid
27. Ibid
28. Birmingham Library, 'Cuttings on Race issues in the West Midlands', MS 2141/A/7/13
29. *The Birmingham Post*, 14 June 1965
30. ITN Reports, 16 June 1965
31. Ibid
32. Ibid
33. Ibid
34. Ibid
35. Ibid
36. *County times and Gazette*, 18 June 1965
37. *The Birmingham Post*, 9 June 1965
38. *The Birmingham Post*, 16 June "THE RISK OF PLAYING IT TOO COOL" by W.E Hall
39. *Express News Service*, June 8 1965
40. ITN Reports, 16 June 1965
41. MS 2141/A/7/13
42. Ibid
43. ITN Reports, 16 June 1965
44. Ibid.
45. Ibid.
46. Leamington Spa Courier, 8 October 1965
47. Ibid
48. Ibid
49. *Burton Daily Mail*, 7 October 1965

SAMUEL JULES CELESTINE EDWARDS – A BLACK RADICAL IN EDWARDIAN BRITAIN

DANNY THOMPSON

As a student on the MRes History of Africa and the African Diaspora degree at the University of Chichester I chose an exploration of Ethiopianism in Britain as my dissertation subject. Ethiopianism was a nineteenth century global African nationalist movement driven by an African Christian imperative. In my research, I discovered Ethiopianist radicals resident in Britain who made important contributions to anti-colonial, anti-racist, and evolving Pan-African movements. One figure who stood out in particular was Samuel Jules Celestine Edwards (1858 – 1894). Celestine Edwards was a newspaper editor, author, advocate, and public speaker. The example of Edwards' activist life to provide us with a portrait of Ethiopianist activism in Britain in the 1890s.

S.J. Celestine Edwards

Born in Dominica in 1858 to parents who were formerly enslaved, he was

sent to Antigua for his education. He was enrolled in a Methodist school under the tutelage of Rev Henry Mason Joseph, who was to have a major influence on Edwards. Rev Joseph went on to be a notable anti-slavery and anti-colonialism campaigner in his own right, working in the U.S. and presenting at the Pan African Conference in London in 1900.

Celestine Edwards' journey to England was a complicated route. He left Dominica aged 12 and travelled to ports in North and South America, and later in Europe as a sailor. He arrived in Edinburgh, Scotland, in the late 1870s, then moved to Sunderland in 1880. Whilst working as a labourer, he was also a lay preacher for the Primitive Methodists, a fundamentalist Methodist group, and a speaker for the Good Templars, a Quaker temperance society. Both organisations reflected Edwards' prime concerns at that time. The Primitive Methodists advocated a simpler, more sincere Methodist practice, while the Temperance Society advocated against the sale and consumption of alcohol. Edwards spoke out against Britain flooding its African territories, particularly South Africa, with cheap and poisonous alcohol, reaping huge profits while committing huge damage to those communities. After failing to obtain a post as a missionary, he moved to London as a paid lecturer for the Christian Evidence Society (CES). In London he received a diploma in Theology and undertook medical studies at the London Hospital in Whitechapel. During his time living in Sunderland and later London, he developed a reputation as a passionate and fluent public speaker who at his height addressed audiences of over twelve hundred people. He travelled to Plymouth, Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, and Edinburgh, mostly on behalf of the CES. **[1]**

In 1892 he founded and was the editor for Lux, a monthly newspaper in support of the CES. This made him the first black editor [RB1] [dt2] [RB3] of a national publication in Britain. In 1893 he founded another newspaper, Fraternity, of which he was its editor. Fraternity was the publication of the Society for the Recognition of the Brotherhood of Man (SRBM) and a successor to their previous publication Anti-Caste which was produced by Catherine Impey. Catherine Impey was an English quaker who had engaged in anti-slavery campaigns and publicised issues of racial prejudice in both the U.S. and Britain. She had links with Afro-American Abolitionists and Anti-Lynching campaigners Ida B. Wells and Frederick Douglass. In 1893 Impey arranged a UK lecture tour for Ida B. Wells where she spoke of her anti-lynching campaign. Impey invited Celestine Edwards to join Ida B. Wells. Edwards paid Wells' tour expenses and arranged for the publication of her lectures in Fraternity newspaper under the title 'United States Atrocities'. While editor of these two publications he brought

to them a level of anti-racist and anti-colonialist proselytising not seen in national print before. Under his leadership Lux and Fraternity published a series of articles highlighting and attacking a range of issues relating to racism, colonialism, the conditions of peoples under its rule, and the behaviour and attitudes of the colonists themselves. The newspapers also contained listings for his public speeches.

Celestine Edwards journey through these different religious organisations was not only a result of his own beliefs but a series of necessary alliances made in order to promote his message to as wide an audience as possible, and receive payment. The African community in Britain, although significant in number, was not yet large enough or organised enough to create its own anti-racist anti-colonial institutions. In the U.S. black churches such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AMEC) and the African Methodist Episcopal of Zion (AMEZ) grew out of large, segregated communities and provided an independent space where abolitionists and Ethiopianists could gather and transmit their messages directly to their communities.

Edwards like many activists in the UK during this period had to speak through UK liberal predominantly religious organisations. In his public speeches for CES though the main subject was temperance he would use those opportunities to share experiences of his life in the West Indies and the hardship of post

LUX

THE NEGRO RACE.

An Appeal for Justice and Right for the Negro Race by the Editor of "LUX."

CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE SOCIETY (EAST LONDON BRANCH)

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101, CAMBERWELL ROAD, S.E.

Lectures.

1893.

January 15th—
Rev. E. M. McCLURE, M.A., F.L.S.
Subject: "Why does God allow suffering?"

January 22nd—
Col. FARQUHARSON
Subject: "Mackay of Uganda."

January 29th—
Rev. T. T. WATERMAN, B.A.
Subject: "The Gospels not cunningly devised Fables."

February 5th—
Mr. H. W. MENGEDOHT.
Subject: "Egypt 1000 years before Christ."

February 12th, 19th, & 26th—
Mr. M. MEEKLE.
Subject: "History of the English Bible."

KNITTER KNITS

LUX

Vol. I. No. 24. JANUARY 14, 1893.

Our Conviction.

Celestine Edwards, 'The Negro Race: an Appeal for Justice and Right for the Negro Race', *Lux*, 1893

emancipation life for Africans in general. In November 1894 he told an audience in Newcastle:

> "My ancestors proudly trod the sands of the African continent; but from their homes and friends were dragged into the slave mart and sold to the planters of the West Indies... The very thought that my race should have been so grievously wronged is almost more than I can bear... Of the conditions of my people today I but tarry to say that by diligence, thought, and care they have been given the lie to many a false prophet who, prior to their Emancipation, sought to convince the world that the black man was in all respects unfit for freedom.... Their position... today is one over which I proudly rejoice. To their future I look with confidence". **[2]**

Celestine Edwards was a fervent anti-secularist. He subscribed to Ethiopianism's vision of an African Christian nation and initially believed this could be attained through education and reform of the colonial system. His faith in the system and in the ability of the English to change their 'Anglo-Saxon' nature soon waned. He advocated Ethiopianism's belief in Africans being agents of their own destiny, proven by their glorious past and a providential faith in a glorious future. This future he argued would be attained with or without Britain's help. He believed Christian faith and commitment were essential to the success of the abolitionist and anti-colonial movements in the face of the rampant commercialism engaged in and promoted by secularists.

An analysis of Edwards' articles in Lux reveals his Ethiopianist's credentials and fearless radicalism. For example, in the August 1892 issue, he cites statistics for the drink trade to Africa and identified it as evil as the commercially inspired slave trade. Britain was flooding Southern Africa with cheap and in some cases, poisonous alcohol. In the following issue in September, he published the article 'Christianity and Progress' where he challenged the European secular notion that it was the enlightened rationalism of the French Revolution that was responsible for the abolition of slavery. He argued it was the efforts of enslaved Africans themselves that was the dominant factor. He cited the Haitian Revolution where enslaved Africans overthrew the former French colony as proof of this. The article was his response to the prevailing view that British intervention in African affairs was justified by the humanitarian motive of bringing enlightenment to the uncivilised masses. In the December issue, he wrote an article entitled 'This World-ism', associating imperialism with "secularism, materialism, murder, plot, greed, incautious ambition, cupidity, lies, and caprice"; and cites these as the true motivations for invading a country and "turning loose upon an indiscipline horde the weapons of civilisation".**[3]**

Fraternity published letters from African American abolitionists, African Nationalists, and Caribbean writers. As well as criticisms of colonialism, he also published celebrations of the successes of people of colour. Primarily heralding stories of 'Coloured Inventors, Scientists, and Good Businessmen' mainly from the U.S and Britain, highlighting heartening stories of everyday heroism and conviviality. *Fraternity* had its origins as Anti-Caste, an abolitionist journal with connections to the liberal Quaker movement in the U.S. When Edwards took over its editorship *Fraternity* magazine's primary concern was racial prejudice in the U.S. It contrasted British tolerance and humanitarianism with American racism. In Edwardian Britain, this perspective was seen as a necessary tactic by African activists to get English liberals on their side, and Edwards, for a while, played this tactic. Despite this concession, *Lux* and *Fraternity* were the most radical publications of their day and set the standard for a Pan-African press in the U.K.

In 1891, Edwards published his book From Slavery to A Bishopric, a biography of African American Bishop Walter Hawkins. Bishop Hawkins was an enslaved African who escaped his captors and fled to Canada where he received an education. He eventually became the Bishop of the British Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada. In his preface, Edwards said of this work:

By following Walter Hawkins from a slave farm to a Bishopric, we shall see how Providence has provided every man with the means – if he will use them – to improve his position in the world; the young Negro will see that while he may so utilise his opportunities that he shall command respect… what Bishop Hawkins has done in one direction, millions may do in other ways". **[4]**

He also used the book to detail the horrors of slavery. In the Chapter entitled 'Life of A Slave' he wrote:

> "The results of the institution of slavery was… to encourage a tyrannical spirit in the masters – cast a stigma upon free labour and at once degraded and dehumanised the Negro. It is true that there were instances of sympathy between some masters and slaves, but unfortunately, it was more than outweighed by a long series of the most atrocious acts of cruelty, which were practised in Africa, on the voyages to America, and on the plantation". **[5]**

Referring to the attitudes of enslaved Africans he wrote:

> "An irrepressible desire for freedom which no danger or power could restrain, no hardship deterred, and no bloodhound could alarm. This desire haunted them day and night; they talked

> about it to each other in confidence; they knew that the system which bound them was unjust as it was cruel, and that they ought to strive, as a duty to themselves and their children, to escape from it". **[6]**

This chapter was partly in response to Liverpool slave trader James Spence's popular book 'American Union' where Edwards defended the "natural inequalities of race". Also, Celestine Edwards quotes from the autobiography of Frederick Douglas and from George Washington Williams' 'History of the Negro Race in America' (1883) the first history of slavery by an African American. He used these works to describe the life of an enslaved African to English audiences.

Celestine Edwards attacked the idea that Black people belonged to a different species inferior to Europeans. The Victorian era had seen the rise of 'Scientific Racism' where scientists and anthropologists made spurious 'scientific' claims to prove Black inferiority and White Superiority. He used his medical training and knowledge of Darwin's theory of natural selection to demonstrate human capacity for development. According to Edwards:

> "evolutionary theory rested upon human unity and equality in origin, and the potential for progressive development under appropriate conditions. The problem was the history of slavery and of modern imperialism denied Africans and their New World descendants' opportunities to progress". **[7]**

This evolutionary stance set him apart from other contributors to Lux as many followed the Biblical Genesis interpretation of origin.
Some of his most vociferous articles in *Lux* and *Fraternity* were attacks on current efforts of colonial expansion. In 1893, Cecil Rhodes and the British South Africa Company began the first Matebele war. In what became Rhodesia and later Zimbabwe the armed forces of Cecil Rhodes and the British South Africa Company made use of the Maxim gun to mow down the Ndebele warriors of King Logenbula. In January 1894, Edwards wrote an article 'Murder will Out' mocking the celebrations in Cape Town over Rhodes conquest of the Matebele, the deadly use of machine guns, and the missionaries who supported Rhodes' war'. He wrote of it as "a war made for the express benefit of dividend-mongers". **[8]** In 1894 the British were trying to expand into Uganda. The British claimed it was a humanitarian decision to stop the Islamic slave trade present in Uganda. Edwards claimed these motives as false and an attempt to fool the people of Uganda. He wrote the British presence in Uganda "would only bring more blood and additional injustice… the religion-monger is to be detested as an enemy of mankind". **[9]**

He cited Rhodes barbarous actions in Southern Africa as proof of Britain's real motives and ambitions. He poured scorn on the missionaries

supporting these colonial wars. He claimed the native peoples, far from being savages, could clearly see the contradictions between the Christianity preached to them and the colonial actions against them. **[10]**

Due to his frustration with the slow pace of English anti-racists he departed from the norm of not criticising those who gave him a platform to speak. As early as 1889 he'd addressed the annual meeting of the Aborigines Protection Society. In attendance were MPs, explorers, missionaries, and humanitarians. In his address he issued a warning that the treatment of Africans by the British would plant a rebellious seed for future actions by those Africans and their descendants.

The prophetic and providential nature of his warning also mirrored the Ethiopianist perspective and was a theme Edwards returned to several times in his articles. Two months later in the February edition he wrote of a time to come when Africans would speak and act for themselves. And that the theft of their lands and destruction of their cultures would be reckoned with.

The range of Celestine Edwards attacks on slavery and colonialism showed his grasp of the historical and philosophical aspects of the oppression of Africans. It also reveals him as a visionary in the causes he identified and chose to support. He challenged the twenty million pounds offered in compensation to British slaveowners at the Abolition of slavery in 1834, asking why twenty million was not given to the slaves themselves. This is the beginnings of the call for reparations made by Pan-Africanists well into the twentieth century and the formation of the Reparations movement itself.

Edwards' vision went beyond issues of race and embraced class struggle. In 1893 Edwards addressed a Trade Union march in Portsmouth. An audience of three thousand including members of the Boilermakers' Society, the General Labourers Amalgamated Union, coppersmiths, bricklayers, joiners, plasters, dockers, railway workers, stone masons, iron founders, and insurance agents. In his speech he proposed a motion for the meeting to push for the improved conditions of workers and the placement of labour representatives on all local governing bodies.

Celestine Edwards blue plaque, Sunderland City Council

He encouraged the Trade Unionists to better educate themselves through regular meetings so they could discuss "the vital questions which lay at the very root of happiness and peace". **[11]** He also argued that only once workers had settled their petty differences could they conduct a peaceful war against the capitalists. His appearance at Trade Union events reveals his understanding of the connection between Racial and Worker oppression, both at the hands of Capitalists.

In the October 1893 issue of *Fraternity* he published in a set of articles called 'The Angel of History'. These articles were a study of what he termed 'Anglo-Saxonism culture'. This was an attempt to examine the specific nature of English racial oppression in comparison with other national forms in the 'New World'. He compared British and American colonists with French and Spanish colonialists in the West Indies and South America. He found that the British and American practices were more aggressive than the French or Spanish. Whether true or not his was the first study of this nature published by an African in Britain and paved the way for later comparative studies'. **[12]**

Edwards' articles and speeches in *Lux* and *Fraternity* represent a body of Ethiopianist philosophy never before printed and distributed in Britain. His proselytising for an African Christian nation. His belief in providence. His acknowledgement of Africa's glorious history and providential belief in a divinely delivered future. His activism for African self-direction economically, politically, and spiritually. As the first Black editor of nationally distributed Newspaper, he set a high standard for black radicalism. A standard that would later be taken up by Duse Mohammad editor of *The African Times & Orient Review*, Britain's first independent black newspaper in 1912. Celestine Edwards' work is firmly in the tradition of earlier Ethiopianists David Walker and Edward Blyden. His firm anti-secularism stance differentiates him from those two but his analysis of post enslavement, his scientific deconstruction of racism and colonialism places him squarely in that tradition. His was a battle between the eternal forces of good and evil in the material and spiritual world where providentially African people, the force of good, would rise again.

As Celestine Edwards' health deteriorated Robert V. Allen took over editing duties on the newspaper. In May 1894 Edwards sailed for Dominica where he died 25th July 1894 at the age of thirty-four. *Fraternity* published his final article in their May 1894 edition. Under the leadership of R.V. Allen a 'Celestine Edwards Memorial Fund' was set up. Allen also became keeper of Edwards archives and continued to publish his work.

Though he worked mainly in isolation from other African activists in Britain, S.J. Celestine Edwards

produced a body of work and set out an Ethiopianist philosophy that marks him out as major theorist in the evolution of Pan-Africanism in Britain. An evolution whose theoretical lineage can be seen in The African Association and Pan-African Conference of 1900 and well into the twentieth century.

Danny Thompson is a recent MRes graduate from Chichester University and an incoming PhD African History student at the University of Chichester. His research explores the role of Ethiopianism in the Pan African movement in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century. His book 'Ethiopianism; The Forgotten Movement' will be available in August 2022 from his website https://www.evolvingcreatives.com

NOTES:

1. D.A. Lorimer, 'Legacies of slavery and race, religion, and empires', in *Slavery & Abolition*, Vol 39, No 4 (2018), p.734.
2. R.V. Allen 'Celestine Edwards; his life, work, and death', in *Lux*, (2nd November, 1894) p. 213.
3. S.J.Celestine Edwards, 'This World-ism', in *Lux*, (3rd December, 1892)
4. Celestine Edwards, *From Slavery to Bishopric* (London: John Kensit 1891) p.xiii
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. 'Legacies of slavery and race, religion, and empires', p.740.
8. Ibid p.740
9. Ibid p. 738
10. Ibid
11. *Portsmouth Evening News,* 14th August 1893. p.2
12. Edwards, 'The Angel of History', in *Fraternity,* (October, 1893).

JOHN ARCHER: THE FIRST BLACK MAYOR OF LONDON

ARISTA AJIDELE

Politics and diplomacy have always been important in history, especially when it comes to early modern, modern and contemporary history. Politics and diplomacy are also important when discussing European history. But the role of Black people in politics is not to be underestimated. As early as the 16th century, archival evidence in England unveiled the important role of Black diplomats when it came to European wars and affairs such as the Spanish Armada. **[1]** Black people have continued to play an important role in politics, especially in Britain, but it has been overshadowed by the legacy of colonialization and slavery. In this article, I will briefly explore John Archer, a Black British politician and the first Black Mayor of London, who overcame the racism and prejudice that came with being a Black man, and had a significant impact on radical and labour politics.

Royal Mail 1st Class Ceremonial Stamp featuring John Archer, April 2013

A founding member of the British Labour Party, Archer was born on 8 June 1863 in Lancashire, Liverpool, according to a 1921 Census, and lived there throughout his childhood - 3 Blake Street. **[2]** His father was a ship steward from

Barbados, whilst his mother, Mary Theresa Burns, was Irish born and Catholic. **[3]**

John's political interest began in 1900, where he went to a Pan African Conference held in London, as an elected representative. **[4]** This inspired him to join the Battersea Labour League, which, at the time, was one of the first Labour political movements in Britain. **[5]** In 1906, Archer was elected to the Wandsworth Union Board of Guardian. During his tenure as a board member, he successfully campaigned for a minimum wage increase to 32 shillings a week for workers, **[6]** which would be around £1.60 today. He lost this seat three years later, but would eventually regain it in 1912. **[7]**

In the same year that he regained his seat, he commenced his campaign for mayor. However, this campaign would be faced with several controversies. Archer faced harsh criticism and racial discrimination; for example, members of the press would publish reports questioning his citizenship and racial background, saying that he looked Indian or Burmese. **[8]** Some reports even suspected that he did not have British nationality. **[9]** Nevertheless, on 10 November 1913, Archer was elected Mayor of Battersea by his councillors by 1 vote (40 to 39). **[10]** This made him Britain's second mayor of African descent and the first in London. **[11]** Battersea was known for its radical politics. But, despite radical politics, the appointment of a Black man in a senior public office in London was seen as a 'landmark' moment in politics – his election was far from welcoming. Archer, taking note of this, commented the following upon his successful election campaign:

"My election tonight means a new era. You have made history tonight. For the first time in the history of the English nation a man of colour has been elected as mayor of an English borough.

"That will go forth to the coloured nations of the world and they will look to Battersea and say Battersea has done many things in the past, but the greatest thing it has done has been to show that it has no racial prejudice and that it recognises a man for the work he has done." **[12]**

During his one term as mayor (November 1913 – November 1914), he strongly opposed unemployment cuts and sending unemployed youth to the workhouses. **[13]** However he also commented on the hate mail he received during his tenure as mayor, highlighting the racism he faced whilst holding a high position of power in London politics, and how he had to overcome that racism and prejudice he faced during his tenure as mayor:

"Do you know that I have had letters since I have been Mayor calling my [Irish] mother some of the foulest names that it is possible for a mother to be called. I have been made to feel my position more than any man who

has ever occupied this chair, not because I am a member of the council, but because I am a man of colour. Am I not a man, the same as any other man? Have I not got feelings the same as any other?" **[14]**

After his term, he remained active in politics, being the founding president of the African Progress Union, which aimed to advance African interests and ideas, in 1918. **[15]** At his presidential address to the inaugural meeting of the African Progress Union, he remarked the following:

"I greatly dislike' bringing coals to Newcastle, and in addressing you tonight, as one born in England, I fear that is what I am doing, but I take courage, from the fact I will not accept second place with any here for love of my race. I am, and always will be, a race man. That feeling was born in me when quite a little boy in my natal city Liverpool. A famous company of American Negroes were playing that soul-stirring Negro tragedy 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'. I saw the play, and from that day the seeds of resentment were planted within me that have resulted in making me the race-man I am. Too long, much too long, has the Negro race suffered...

Hence I say we who were born under British rule and are of the Negro race here still need reparation to be made to us. We are the ones to show resentment, if it should be shown. We, the offspring of those islands are the ones to bear malice, if it should be borne. How have we shown this resentment? How have we borne this malice? Look in France and Flanders, and we get the answer. When England was in dire need, African, American and West Indian Negroes forgot injustice, forgot wrongs; forgot insults, and hastened to the nation's call. How have they been requited?" **[16]**

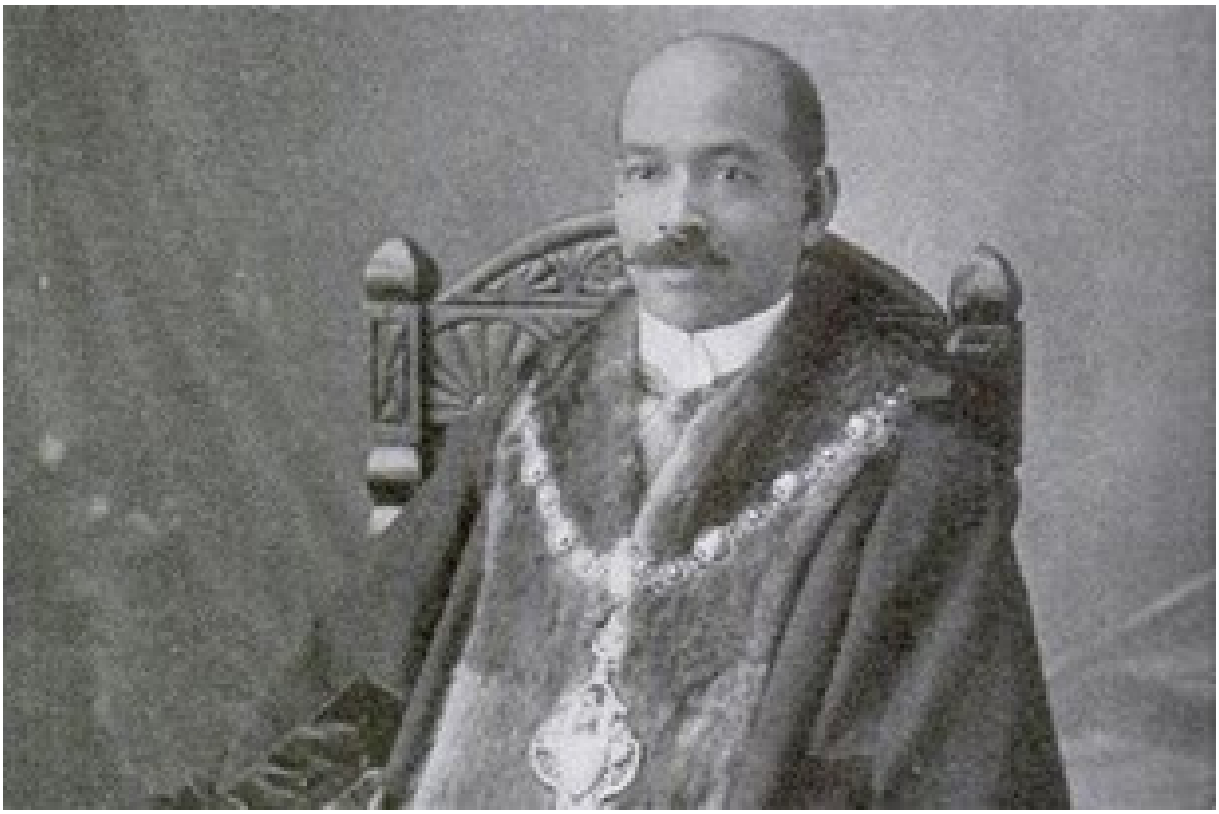
Archer became the British delegate to the Pan – African Congress in Paris a year after he founded the Union. In 1921, he chaired the Pan – African Congresses in London, and became the Labour Party secretary election agent for Shapuril Saklatrala, who was an Indian communist activist in North Battersea, from 1922 to 1924. **[17]** Interestingly, in his 1921 Census, it is noted that he worked as a freelance photographer from his own home, and had no other occupations. **[18]**

Blue Plaque dedicated to John Archer in Camden, London, by the Nubian Jak Community Trust, 2006

John Archer died on Thursday 14th July 1932 at St. James Hospital in Battersea at the age of 69. However, his legacy still lives on to this very day. In 2013, 100 years after his election as mayor, English Heritage installed a blue plaque at his house at *55* Brynmaer Road. **[19]** That same year, he was featured on a Royal Mail Commemorative Stamp. **[20]** More recently, High View School was renamed the John Archer Academy in his honour. **[21]**

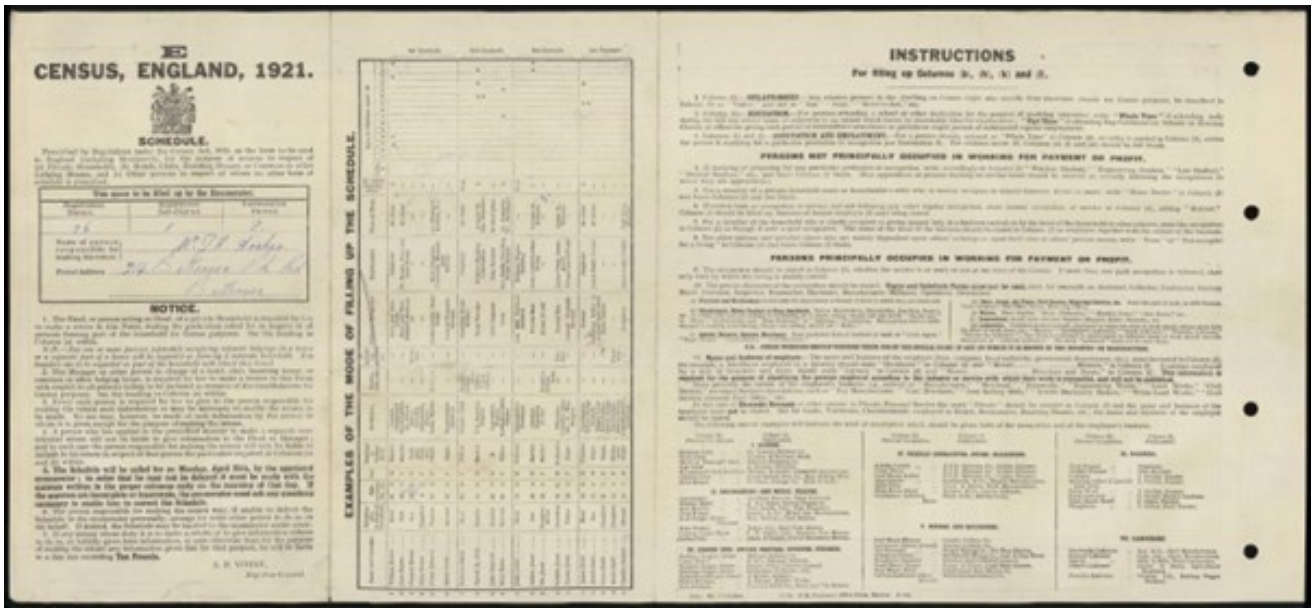
John Archer can be seen as a pioneer for Black activism in British and local politics, highlighting that Black people, despite dire race relations and prejudice, have a place in British politics and can hold positions of power to push for and make radical changes in our society. Researching him has made me more aware of the significance of Black politicians in Britain in influencing and pushing for 'radical' ideas such as banning youth employment in the factories and increasing wages for the working class.

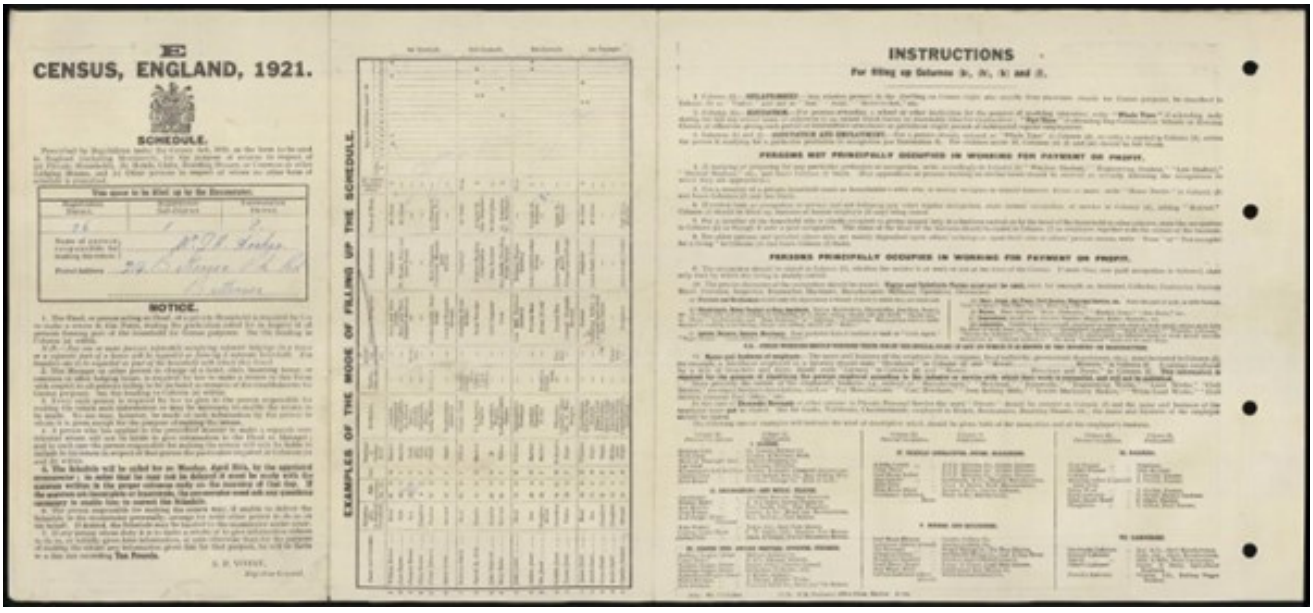
Perhaps one of the more striking things I found about researching John Archer was his involvement in the international community, especially Pan – Africanism and communism, two political ideas that he advocated throughout the early days of his political career, and his later life after his tenure as mayor, making me more appreciative on how his political career impacted the international community. All in all, John Archer was



John Archer in his mayoral robes, published in NAACP magazine The Crisis in March 1914

really interesting to research about, broadening my knowledge on the history of Black Radical Thought and Black British History in general. Seeing him being more celebrated and commemorated in the 21st century should be seen as how his work as mayor impacted others, and how he is still someone to look up to today.





John Archer's 1921 Census

Arista Ajidele is a History undergraduate student at Queen Mary University of London, and a volunteer for the Young Historians Project. Alongside researching Black British history, her interests include International History and the History of Globalisation with an emphasis on the Americans and the Caribbean

NOTES:

1. *History Today*, (January 2022), Vol 72 Issue 1, p. 78
2. Ibid.
3. Black Heroes Foundation, 'John Richard Archer', accessed 30/03/2022.
4. Ray Costello, 'John Archer', at: University of Liverpool 'Black Atlantic', accessed 30/03/2022.
5. Penny Corfield, 'History of Battersea Labour Party', Accessed 30/03/2022.
6. Still We Rise, 'John Archer', accessed 30/03/2022
7. Samuel Momodu, 'John Richard Archer (1863 – 1932)', 15/08/2022
8. Still We Rise, 'John Archer'.
9. Lavender Hill: Supporting Lavender Hill, 'John Archer, Battersea's groundbreaking mayor, may be honoured with a statue on Lavender Hill', 3rd January 2022, accessed 15/08/2022
10. Ibid.
11. Still We Rise, 'John Archer'.
12. Lavender Hill: Supporting Lavender Hill, 'John Archer, Battersea's groundbreaking mayor...'
13. Still We Rise
14. Lavender Hill
15. Still We Rise
16. Costello, 'John Archer'.
17. Still We Rise.
18. 1921 census, National Archives
19. English Heritage, 'Archer, John Richard (1863 – 1932)', accessed 15/08/2022.
20. Postal Heritage, 'Great Britons', 16 April 2013, accessed 15/08/2022.
21. Lavender Hill.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES: RECORDS IN FOCUS

KEVIN SEARLE

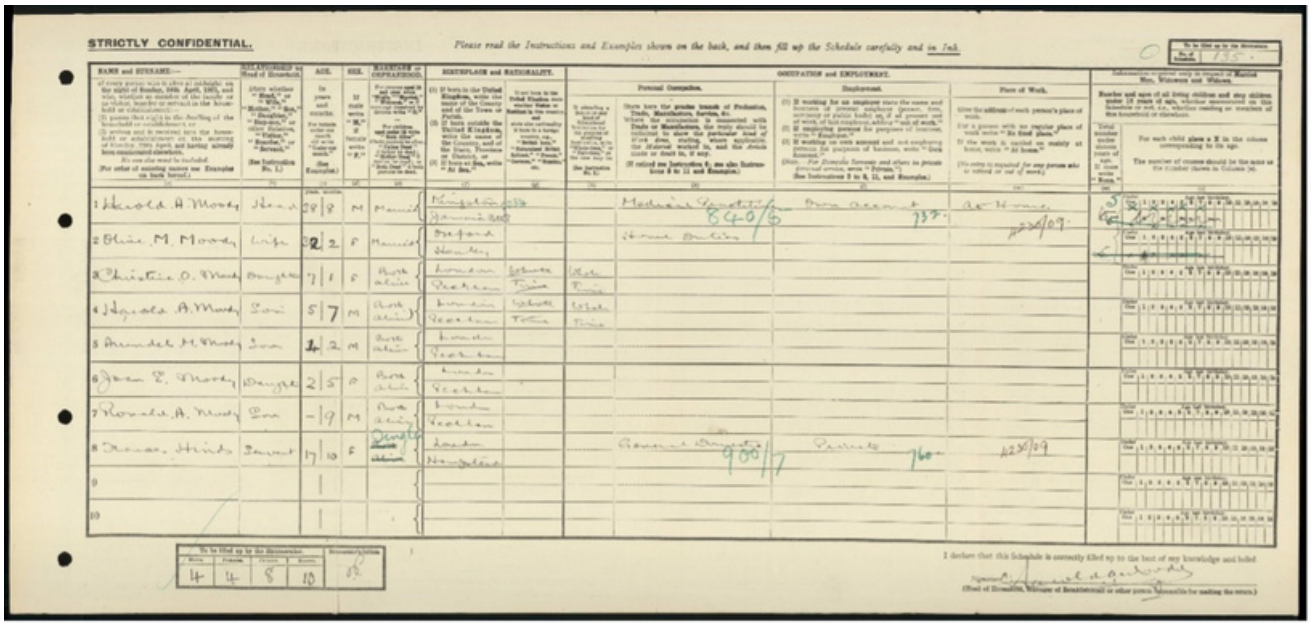
For this edition of Records in Focus, we return to The National Archives, the official archive of the UK government, to look at arguably the biggest archival release of the year: the 1921 Census.

Occupying around 1.6 linear kilometres of shelving, the 1921 Census is physically the biggest archival release of the year, as well as figuratively, as the next UK census won't be released for another three decades. UK censuses are usually taken every ten years and remain closed for a further 100. The 1931 Census of England and Wales however was destroyed in a fire, and the 1941 Census wasn't taken owing to the Second World War. **[1]** Thus, the next census release will be the 1951 Census, in 2052.

The census is a key resource for researching the period and provides a valuable insight into Black communities in Britain at the time.

It is however important to note that ethnicity was not formally recorded in census data until 1991, and therefore it is not possible to search using this criteria. **[2]** It is however possible to search by place of birth although given the multicultural (albeit racially-stratified) nature of the colonies this won't necessarily narrow searches down to Black Britons. **[3]** Officially, almost 38 million people were enumerated in the 1921 Census. Of these, more than 1.2 million (or 3.4 per cent) of citizens were born overseas, with 9,024 born in the West Indies, and 1,906 in Britain's West African colonies. **[4]** The children and grandchildren of migrants born in Britain are not however included in these figures, as they will have been listed as being British-born.

The census shows relatively well-known figures such as the physician and anti-racist campaigner, Dr Harold Moody, who founded the League of Coloured People, in 1931. His personal occupation is given as a 'medical practitioner' and he can be seen with his wife Olive and five children, as well as a servant, testifying to his social class position, and hinting at the existence of a small Black middle class at the time:



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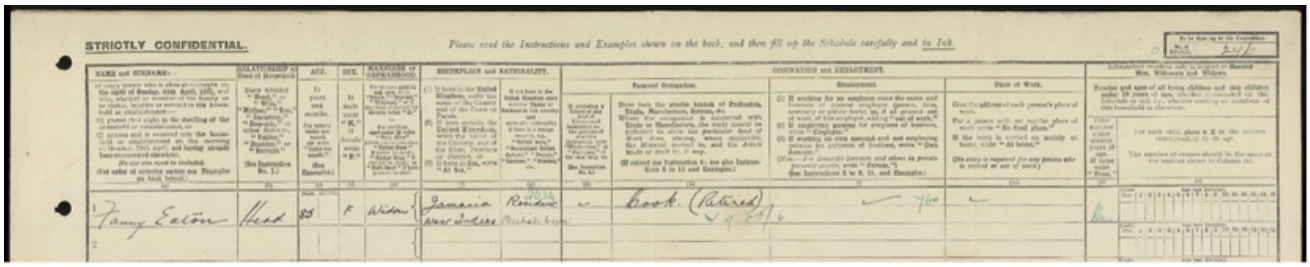
Harold Moody, on the 1921 census

Another relatively well-known figure is Fanny Eaton, best known for her work as a model for pre-Raphaelite artists, but listed as a retired cook, and living alone in Hanwell, Middlesex, at 85 years old:



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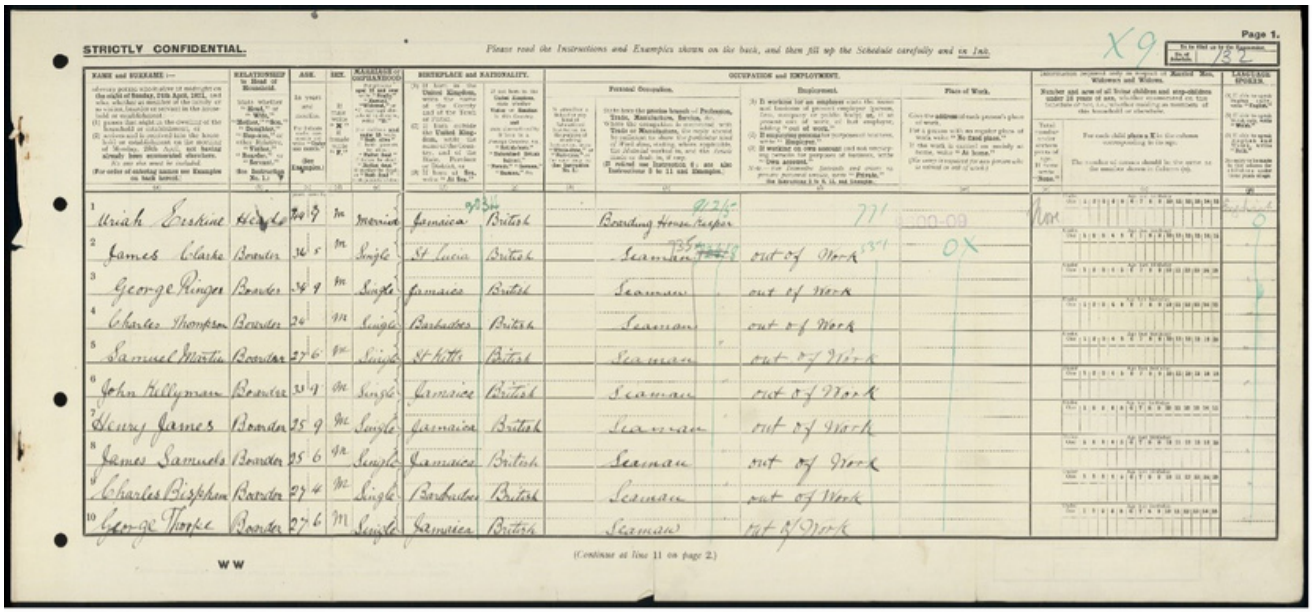
Fanny Eaton, on the 1921 census

The census also highlights the particularly multicultural nature of Britain's seaport towns. This entry, for instance, for 36 & 37 Maria Street, in Butetown, Cardiff, shows a boarding house with a 44 year old, Mr Uriah Erskine from Jamaica, described as the 'Boarding House Keeper.' The document also lists a number of 'out of work' seamen from different Caribbean Islands staying there (below). This certainly highlights the difficulties of finding employment at the time, and in the wake of the 1919 anti-Black riots in the city, where Black people were ironically blamed for 'keeping white seamen out of work.'**[5]**



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Page 1.

	NAME and SURNAME	RELATIONSHIP to Head of Household	AGE	SEX	MARRIAGE or CIVIL PARTNERSHIP	BIRTHPLACE and NATIONALITY	OCCUPATION and EMPLOYMENT					
							Personal Occupation	Employment	Place of Work			
1	Uriah Erskine	Head	44	M	Married	Jamaica	Britsh	Boarding House Keeper				
2	James Clarke	Boarder	36	M	Single	St Lucia	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
3	George Ringer	Boarder	34	M	Single	Jamaica	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
4	Charles Thompson	Boarder	26	M	Single	Barbadoes	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
5	Samuel Martin	Boarder	27	M	Single	St Kitts	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
6	John Kellyman	Boarder	31	M	Single	Jamaica	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
7	Henry James	Boarder	25	M	Single	Jamaica	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
8	James Samuels	Boarder	25	M	Single	Jamaica	British	Seaman	out of Work			
9	Charles Bispham	Boarder	27	M	Single	Barbadoes	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			
10	George Thorpe	Boarder	27	M	Single	Jamaica	Britsh	Seaman	out of Work			

(Continue at line 11 on page 2.)

Mr Uriah Erskine and 'out of work' Caribbean seamen of the Boarding House on Maria Street, Cardiff, 1921 census

The 1921 Census, as well as earlier censuses, are available on the Find My Past website and can be viewed at The National Archives in Kew for free. Jessamy Carlson's blog, Researching Black history in the 1921 Census and The National Archives' research guide, Census Records, both provide useful introductions to navigating the records.

Kevin Searle works as a records specialist at The National Archives. His most recent publication is the chapter, 'Before Notting Hill: The Causeway Green "rioting" of 1949', in the book, *Black British History: New Perspectives*

NOTES:

1. There is no evidence to suggest that this was intentional, unlike, for instance, the destruction and disappearing of records relating to the British Empire seen during 'Operation Legacy' (for more information, see Cobain, *The History Thieves: Secrets, Lies and the Shaping of a Modern Nation,* (London: Portobello Books, 2016).
2. Owen Charlie, "'Mixed Race' in Official Statistics", in David Parker and Miri Song, *Rethinking Mixed Race* (London: Pluto, 2001).
3. For a more detailed discussion, see: Jessamy Carlson, 'Researching Black British History in the 1921 census', National Archives blog, 1st October 2022.
4. 22,990 people are given as being born in South Africa, 3,474 born in Egypt, and 3,037, born in Britain's "other African colonies". For more information, see: Find My Past, 'Diversity and diaspora in the 1921 Census', (accessed: 7 September, 2020).
5. Ron Ramdin, *The Making of the Black Working Class in Britain,* (London: Verso, 2017), p. 75.

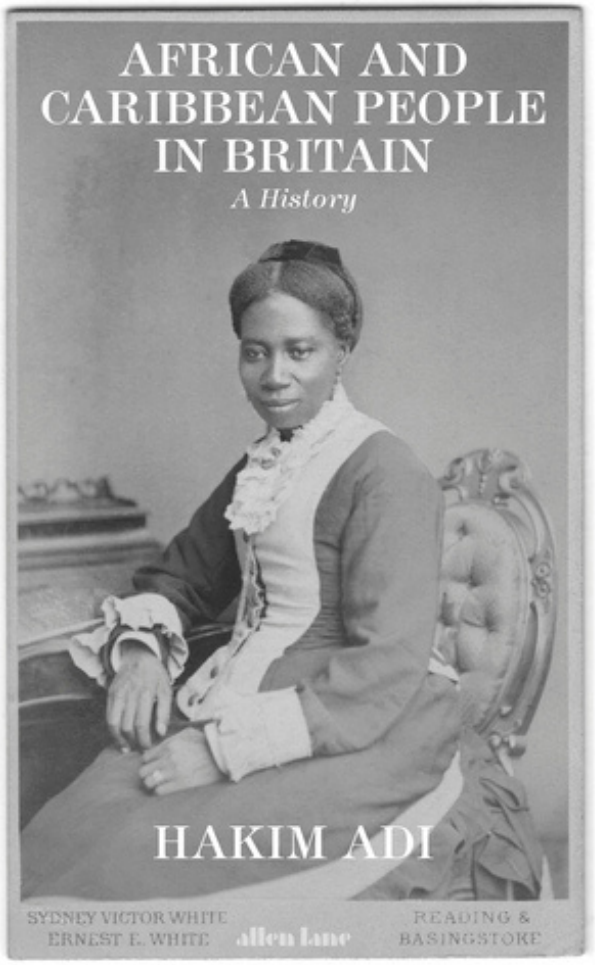
PART 3: REVIEWS

AFRICAN AND CARIBBEAN PEOPLE IN BRITAIN: A HISTORY

HAKIM ADI (ALLEN LANE, 2022)

MONTAZ MARCHE

Hakim Adi delivers a sophisticated and streamlined juggernaut of a monograph, focusing on the histories of African and Caribbean people, organisations, and events in Britain, and made this book accessible to all learners and lovers of history. Uniquely, *African and Caribbean People in Britain: A History* calls upon a wealth of source materials from personal archives, archaeology, oral history, and historiography to examine the threads of African and Caribbean presence, either independently or together, and shows how these threads weave into British history from the Roman period to the present day.



The book, formulated into a seamless chronology, positions itself within a history of 'Black British' historiography, particularly highlighting the influence of African

and Caribbean writers such as Eric Williams and Follarin Shyllon. Adi also emphasises how today's research is still tackling similar problems of the past, i.e., the exclusionary nature of British history.

In his engagement with 2000 years of African and Caribbean presence in Britain, Adi amalgamates old and more recent research across several epochs to provide far-reaching histories. These histories include the early African presence (with a special section on the Medieval period), the beginnings of the Transatlantic Slave trade, the African presence in the eighteenth century, and African liberation from enslavement, both in the metropole and colonies and African presence in Edwardian and Victorian Britain.

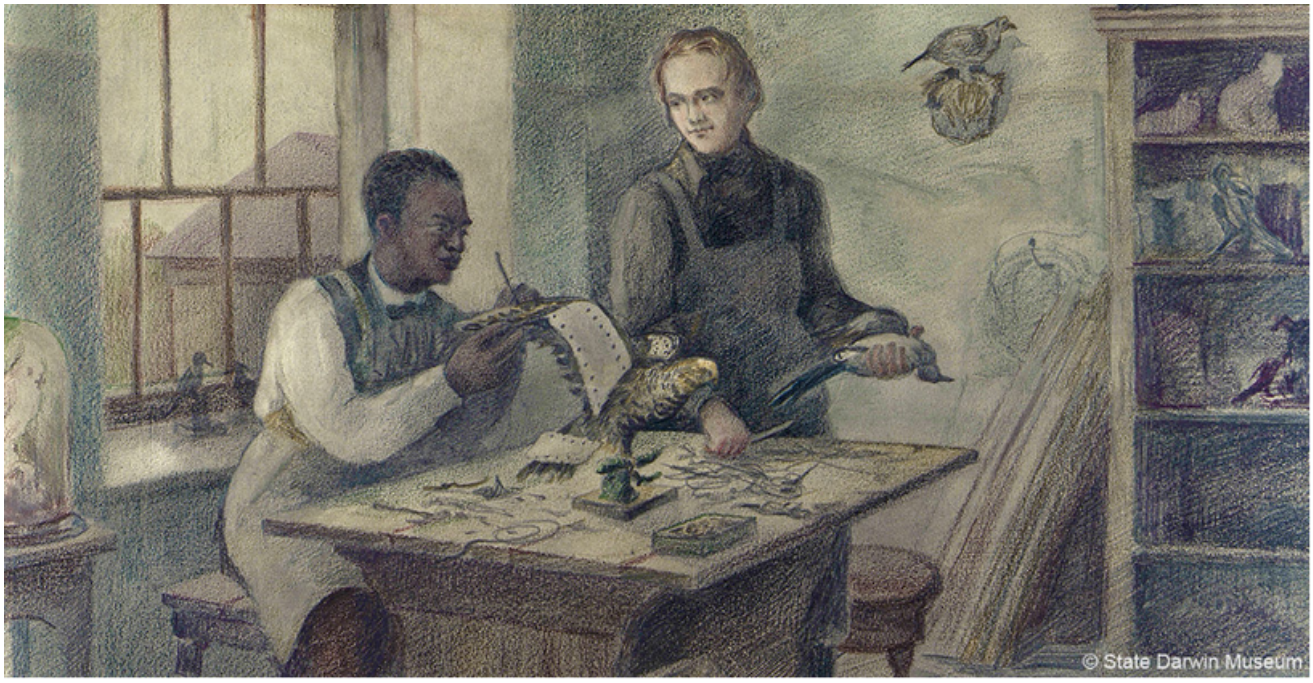
Adi also recounts an essential chronology of African Caribbean politics and liberation, including Ethiopianism of the late nineteenth-century/the early 1900s, the Pan African movement of the interwar periods, Black Liberation movements of the post-war period and political engagement right up to the year 2021. Adi devoted sections within these themes to evaluating regional histories, including Cardiff, Birmingham, Nottingham, Liverpool, Hull, and Glasgow, epitomising the focus on Britain as a whole. Moreover, throughout, Adi engages with notable historiographical debates and demystifies popular culture myths, for example, evaluating the 'African presence in Britain before the English', African and Caribbean migration before 1948 and African and Caribbean people/ experiences in healthcare and education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Crucially, Adi conjoins the history of the early presence and the 20th century with a recent history of the African diaspora in Britain, bridging a disconnect between periods of history relating to African Caribbean presence, i.e., the classical, early modern, modern and the present. This section notably includes the development of the African Caribbean population in Britain, the emergence of Black history in mainstream popular culture (Black History Month), thorough narratives of the Stephen Lawrence case, the Windrush Scandal, and the Black Lives Matters Movements. Finally, Adi evaluates the recent calls for reparations and decolonising the national curriculum whilst celebrating community initiatives promoting education and historical research for young people of African heritage, many of which Adi founded and spearheads himself.

Adi's work carefully reflects his book's title, focusing mainly on people, the individual stories of African and Caribbean people across periods. He accentuates biographies of underrepresented or mythologised individuals/organisations such as Sara Baartman, 'The Hottentot Venus', Charles Darwin's tutor, John Edmonstone, political writer Duse Mohamed Ali, the West African

Students Union, and the League of Coloured People. Adi adopts a 360-degree lens into the diversity of individual African and Caribbean lives lived in Britain that expanded across several industries. For example, in chapter 6, 'War, Riot and Resistance:' 1897-1919', Adi outlines men and women of African heritage who were munitions workers, prisoners of war, conscientious objectors, and medical staff alongside soldiers. Additionally, Adi's writing demonstrates how interconnected these histories are by structuring the flow of the chronology through individuals enveloping their individual stories into the linear narrative of African and Caribbean presence in Britain with his concise and eloquent writing style.

Adi works to interweave conversations of the past and present. Initially and throughout, Adi writes 'African and Caribbean People…' with a socio-political astuteness. For example, he rejects the terms 'Black' or 'Black British', recognising the debates on this contentious terminology and acknowledging the "specific geographical, cultural heritage, based upon… places of origin" and how "this should not be denied to those of African and Caribbean heritage" who have impacted British history." For example, when discussing early African presence, Adi roots his discussion of the contextual history of African presence and the new research acquired through new techniques such as DNA analysis and



'Artist's impression of John Edmonstone teaching Darwin to preserve birds' featured in John Edmonstone: the man who taught Darwin taxidermy, Natural History Museum

bioarchaeology, with an overview of contemporary reception to ideas of the early African presence in Britain. He outlines how some critics describe such research (and the teaching of such research) as "disturbing and dangerous". His reflections on history writing, e.g. ‘how the lines between Britishness and Englishness need to be rethought in the writing of British history’, highlights how Adi situates this book in the present for the future writers of history. Thus, 'African and Caribbean People…' stems beyond a historical publication and makes its socio-political statements.

Yet the structure of this comprehensive recollection of African and Caribbean lives in Britain makes it impossible to disguise the absences in this history. Despite providing a rich section on Medieval African presence, two-thirds of the book focuses on the accounts of the 20th century and beyond. Furthermore, despite its attentive focus on women's, class, cultural and regional histories, there are many untapped wells, particularly LGBTQA+ histories or the 20th/21st-century histories of ‘Black British’ people in music, arts, culture, sport, and STEM. Indeed, though community/academic engagements have brought many histories to light, the book highlights the collective advances still needed to get these histories to public consciousness and create a “full picture of Britain’s history”; undoubtedly a task for more than one man. Standing at 520 pages (without references), Adi has already produced an ambitious undertaking; any more would likely overwhelm or alienate; thus, a wise limit was set.

Nevertheless, Adi has produced the most complete published history of African and Caribbean people in Britain for all audiences since Peter Fryer's Staying Power. This conscientious telling of British history characterises the diverse, multi-centred chronology of African and Caribbean landmarks, crises, progress, organisations, communities, and, most importantly, individual experiences in Britain. Adi's writing of this history bears a social, cultural, and political consciousness reflective of the varieties and nuances within the African and Caribbean populations, respectively and collectively. He proves that we can lose so much by categorising and collecting of African and Caribbean histories solely under the classification 'Black'.’

Montaz Marché is a PhD researcher at the University of Birmingham,focusing on black women in eighteenth-century Britain. She is passionate about researching and expanding awareness of black British and gender history within the academy and beyond

NOTES:

1. Hakim Adi, *African and Caribbean People in Britain: A History*, (Great Britain, Allen Lame, 2022), p.vii.
2. Ibid., p. 1
3. Adi., p.520.

A HIDDEN HISTORY: AFRICAN WOMEN AND THE BRITISH HEALTH SERVICE

YOUNG HISTORIANS PROJECT (2022)

FRANKIE CHAPPELL

The eBook by the Young Historians Project (YHP) was launched as part of 'A Hidden History: African Women and the British Health Service, 1930-2000'. YHP consists of young people aged 16 to 25 who work on historical research and oral history interviews, both developing their own skills as historians and producing invaluable resources on histories which deserve more attention. During 2019 I was a member of YHP and had the pleasure of taking part in two of the interviews included in the eBook, and some of the historical research. I was so excited to delve into the final products three years later, and it was extremely satisfying to see the fruits of what I know was a huge amount of work from the team.

The eBook itself is 175 pages long and comprises: an introduction; a section on 'historical women'; extracts from

interviews with 34 women from various African countries with experiences working in British healthcare; and closing poetic remarks.

Thorough archival research allowed the inclusion of intimate details from African women health workers' lives in the early 20th century. For example, the story of Oreoluwa Green, whose life story is given colour through the description of her turn as Portia in a Lagos production of The Merchant of Venice and her potential involvement in a court dispute through her attempt to marry Dr Oguntola Sapara, a man seen as a medical pioneer in Nigeria (pp.4-5). The project's scope also enables important parallels to be drawn between the colonial and 'post'-colonial contexts of Britain's relationship with various African countries, and as such with the individual women highlighted.

The extensive interviews included in the publication demonstrate how wide-ranging this project's scope is. There are women from across Africa, with experiences in healthcare across the UK, and from a variety of professions including doctors, nurses, researchers, lecturers, pharmacists, technicians, mental health specialists and more. The women's voices are placed at the forefront, with the extracts largely speaking for themselves without interruption, but formatted in ways which draw out the key themes and messages.

While the history of African women in the British healthcare system is in itself understudied, this project also brought up other themes which have potential for future research. One example is the prevalence of fostering of, largely, West African children to white British families while their parents studied in Britain. Esther Adi says that 'the whole story of private fostering is not really told at all, to be honest; the damage it does on both sides' (p.59).

Given my own interest in women of colour's activism in the 20th century, I was also particularly struck by the instances of activism amongst the women included. Readers of this journal may be familiar with the work of Dr Harold Moody, a medical doctor and founder of the League of Coloured Peoples, but this eBook highlights the much lesser-known efforts of women such as Irene Ighodaro, a trained gynaecologist who co-founded the Society for the Cultural Advancement of Africa and the West African Women's Association and made significant contributions to the West African Students' Union (WASU) (pp.20-22).

Of the women interviewed, Glynis Neslen was part of Brixton Black Women's Group (p.77) and Dame Elizabeth Anionwu dedicated her time to activism advocating for people with sickle cell and thalassaemia (p.56). The history of health activism in Black communities, particularly among Black women, is

understudied but slowly growing. The information in this eBook has huge potential to be a springboard for further research around this. In the current context of greater attention being given to racialised health disparities, particularly in Britain, these histories could not be more pertinent for informing how we might organise going forward.

The eBook is intended as a teaching tool. Its informative and easily accessible further reading suggestions, searchable pdf format and clear layout have the potential to spark the research journeys of students or independent readers of various ages. It could inform teaching in subjects from History to Citizenship. The questions at the end of each interview help to put the experiences of these women into a broader context and connect them up so that readers can spot patterns and make inferences, as well as connect the information to action and change, which can be affected in the present and the future. The guiding questions are clearly targeted at school-age learners, but the knowledge and leads provided, especially by the original archival research, have the potential to inspire further research in readers of all ages. The closing poetic remarks will likely inspire further creative responses to these histories.

Overall, YHP succeeds in bringing to the forefront some incredible feats by a range of individual women, as well as painting a vivid general picture of the role of women from Africa and of African descent in building and maintaining the British healthcare system. In so doing, the eBook brings up broader themes, including colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism in 20th century Britain, labour history, women's activism, and how these intertwine. While the eBook centres on the women's experiences, other resources on the website, such as the interactive map, timeline and key themes, place these in a wider social and political context.

Frankie Chappell is a PhD researcher at UCL's Institute of the Americas. Her working thesis title is 'Autonomy and Solidarity: The Intellectual and Activist World of Black Women for Wages for Housework, 1970s-2000s'. She is passionate about radical and community-focused archival and historical projects.

NOTES:

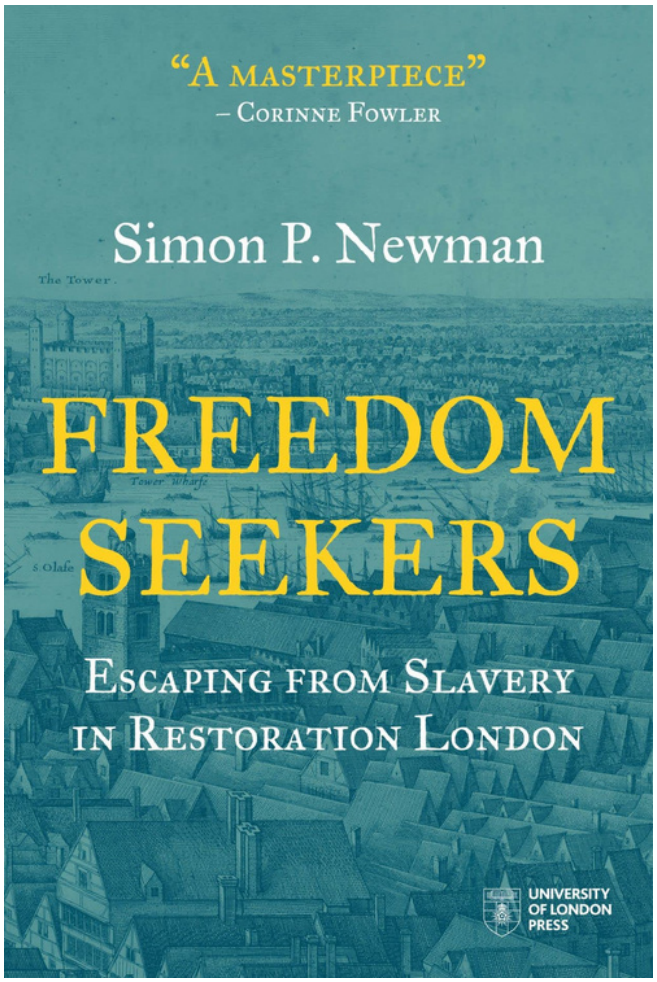
1. 'Harold Moody', The Open University, *Making Britain,* accessed 20/08/2022.
2. See: Grace Redhead and Jesse Olszynko-Gryn, 'Radical Object: The Black Report, History Workshop', accessed 24/08/2022; Kariima Ali, 'The uncaring arm of the state: The Black British women's movement and mental health activism in the archives', accessed 24/08/2022.

FREEDOM SEEKERS: ESCAPING FROM SLAVERY IN RESTORATION LONDON

SIMON P. NEWMAN (UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS, 2022)

ANNABELLE GILMORE

Freedom Seekers is a concise and thoughtfully considered book that uses the limited archival evidence available to develop a rich understanding of seventeenth-century Black and South Asian freedom seekers in London using runaway newspaper advertisements. Notably, Newman is very careful in his use of language, recognising the power of language and its potential to reintroduce racist and prejudice assumptions even when this is not intended. With considerate attention, he chooses to use words and phrases such as 'freedom seeker' and 'elope' to describe the actions and status of the Black and South Asian people found in the archive, as opposed to 'runaway' or 'escape'. This deliberate manoeuvre is intended to give agency to these figures, instead of the focusing on the White-biased opinion that is dictated in the advertisements.



Whilst giving agency to his subjects is his intention, the difficulty in achieving it is something he makes a point of discussing with the reader. As many historians studying the early modern era can attest, the point of view of historical texts is so often from the White gaze. This challenge arises for Newman, who often provides paragraphs of detail for the many enslavers placing the advertisements, whilst the advertisement in question often does not reach a hundred words when describing the Black and South Asian freedom seekers. Newman recognises this flaw within his work remarking that the 'historical archive privileges enslavers over the enslaved'. **[1]** However, he uses these known details to build a considered narrative of the freedom seekers in a similar vein to Marisa Fuentes and Saidiya Hartman. For example, this is seen in Chapter Thirteen, describing the potential lives of David Sugarr and Henry Mundy, who were seeking freedom from colonial planters. Newman speculates that they experienced crossing the Middle Passage and potentially plantation slavery before asserting their choice to elope in London. He is able to make these suggestions, and for the reader to understand them, based upon presenting and analysing the archival evidence of the White enslaver.

Newman has clearly considered the structure of the book, first ensuring that the reader has all the background knowledge in place before discussing the freedom seekers at length. This involves providing a thorough breakdown of Restoration London, highlighting that whilst People of Colour were a minority, they were unremarkable enough that eloping was a possibility. Secondly, he emphasises the significance of coffee houses and the Royal Exchange as centres for aiding the growing print media. These institutions and early newspapers were essential in advertising to recapture freedom seekers and providing what is now known about the freedom seekers. Newman uses a wealth of statistical data to build a picture of Black and South Asian people in London, whilst highlighting that the newspaper advertisements are merely a snapshot of their lives.

The rest of the book flows smoothly from chapter to chapter, collating statistical numbers into short chapters that provide the much-desired human element. Each chapter opens as a case study with a newspaper advertisement for the freedom seeker, giving their name and description before discussing the theme of the chapter, which range from boys, female freedom seekers, country marks (patterns of scars for cultural and ceremonial purposes), and Thames-side maritime communities.

Whilst some of these are predominantly descriptive of the advertisements and the freedom seekers, Newman is able to provide a theme throughout the book that depicts the agency and determination of these freedom seekers.

He is also able to use moments to pivot into analysing systems that led to the development of racialised slavery, such as in the case of Quashy who was an apprentice cooper but "belonged" to the Royal African Company. Newman uses this opportunity to detail the role of the Royal African company and slavery, and the circular nature of gold; used to pay for captured Africans but also as a reward to re-capture freedom seekers in London. In doing so, he highlights the many interconnected systems that the freedom seekers were fighting against when eloping. Newman manages to provide the reader with a significant number of examples of freedom seekers in restoration London and carefully gives life to them from very little information. This development from White-biased advertisement to fully realised individuals with agency and purpose beyond their enslavers, gives *Freedom Seekers* a story-like quality without compromising the thoroughly well-researched and detailed historical analysis of Black and South Asian people in restoration London.

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NOTES:

Simon P. Newman, *Freedom Seekers*, (University of London Press, 2022), p. 185