

Diversity Built Britain

Celebrating Black British History



Diversity Built Britain Black British History Teachers' Notes

Key Stage 3 older and higher ability students

Ask students to research someone they find inspiring who champions diversity, either a historical or contemporary figure, and make their own fact file about this person using the fact file template activity sheet. Students can then present their fact files to the rest of the class.

Key Stage 2 younger or lower ability students

Select a few of the people from the fact files and read out their profiles to the class, explaining any difficult words or concepts. Put your students into small groups and give them the make your own poster activity sheet. Ask them to choose a person who champions diversity and make a poster about this person. Students can then present their posters to the rest of the class.



Introduction

These fact files contain fascinating stories and accounts of important and often inspirational black people who have had an impact on Britain throughout time, illustrating that our society has been diverse throughout our history.

The activity sheets in this resource will help you think about the achievements of these people and the impact they have had on British society.





We would like to thank the West India Committee for supporting and contributing to this education pack.

Their informed understanding of black British history has added immeasurably to the pack and grounded it in an understanding of the vital role black people have made to building Britain as it is today.





Founded in the City of London in 1735, the West India Committee is the oldest body representative of the Commonwealth. The original members of the West India Committee were the sugar merchants of London and the planters of the Caribbean whose interests were largely aligned with the pro-slavery movement that prevailed at the time, two opposing groups forced together by circumstance. The West India Committee swiftly evolved over time to become a modern charity dedicated to improving the welfare of the people of the Caribbean and the societies in which they live.

Milestones in the history of The West India Committee include campaigning for the now infamous voyage of HMS Bounty in 1767 that led to the creation of the British Overseas Territory of Pitcairn; introducing preventative policing in London by founding the Thames River Police in 1798, the longest continuously serving police force in the world; opening West India Quay in 1802; campaigning for the Royal Navy to patrol and intercept slave ships along the African coast; being granted a Royal Charter in 1904; supporting West Indian servicemen and servicewomen during the world wars; and raising funds to build a hospital on the island of Anguilla.

The Committee is a consulting NGO to UNESCO on heritage and the charity's library and archive are inscribed as a UNESCO Memory of the World, containing rare and unique material on Caribbean history that forms the basis of its work to educate people about the long and intertwined history of Britain and the Caribbean from the first arrival of Europeans in the Caribbean to the present day.

westindiacommittee.org

CELEBRATING BRITISH DIVERSITY



Celebrating Black British History

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To find out more about these key figures in black British history, visit out interactive map at royalmint.com/black-history-month



Fact Files

The following resource is an introduction to key moments and significant figures from black British history.

CELEBRATING BRITISH DIVERSITY



Africans are the Oldest Humans

All human beings are descended from the ancient ancestors of mankind who lived in Africa. Our species, *Homo sapiens*, first emerged more than 260,000 years ago but there were previously other human species, such as *Homo neanderthalensis*, the Neanderthals. Before the different human species emerged, there were many earlier species that were ancestors of humans, whose fossils have been found in eastern Africa. Over thousands of years, people slowly migrated across the world. *Homo sapiens* probably first left Africa between 70,000 and 60,000 years ago due to a sudden cooling in the Earth's temperature, forming different races, tribes, kingdoms and empires. All of us can trace our ancestry back to Africa and all modern humans have DNA inherited from a single female, known as the 'mitochondrial Eve', although this does not mean she was the only woman alive at the time.

The Severan Dynasty, 193–235

Britain was ruled as part of the Roman Empire by a dynasty originating North Africa, starting with Septimius Severus, born in modern-day Libya. He grew up in Africa and became a lawyer and then a senator at 18. Septimius Severus died in what is now called York, and is the only Roman Emperor to die in Britain. A briefly reigning usurper, Macrinus, and his co-emperor and son Diadumenian, were also from North Africa. Septimius Severus is the only Roman Emperor to die in Britain and the Historia Augusta says that he had an encounter shortly before he died with one of his African legionnaires, referred to as 'Ethiopian', a catch-all term which was applied to people of sub-Saharan origin. He was followed by his son, Caracalla, whose mother was from the Roman province of Syria. His successors, Elagabal and Severus Alexander, were also from aristocratic Syrian families, from the city now known as Homs.





The skeleton of a woman was found at Beachy Head, Sussex, who lived in the first half of the second century AD. She is believed to be of sub-Saharan African origin and, if so, would be the first person of sub-Saharan origin known in Britain. This is particularly interesting for historians and archaeologists as while North Africa was part of the Roman Empire, sub-Saharan Africa was not. Her remains were first discovered in the 1950s, but her origins were not realised until the twenty-first century. It appears that she was around 30 years old when she died and ate a diet of fish and vegetables. It also appears from tests to her remains that she grew up in south-eastern England, which means she must have arrived at a very young age or was born to African parents in England.

https://museumcrush.org/the-mystery-of-beachy-head-lady-a-roman-african-from-eastbourne/#gallery-1



Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus (circa 207–253)

Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus was another Roman Emperor of African origin, who ruled for three months. He is believed to have been born in Djerba, an island off the coast of modern-day Tunisia, Northern Africa, to a Berber family. He was proclaimed Emperor by the troops he commanded while serving as Governor of the Roman province of Moesia. He marched to Rome and overthrew Emperor Trebonianus Gallus. However, he was killed by his own troops, who panicked on the arrival of an army commanded by Valerian, who became the next Emperor.

Numerus Maurorum Aurelianorum circa 250

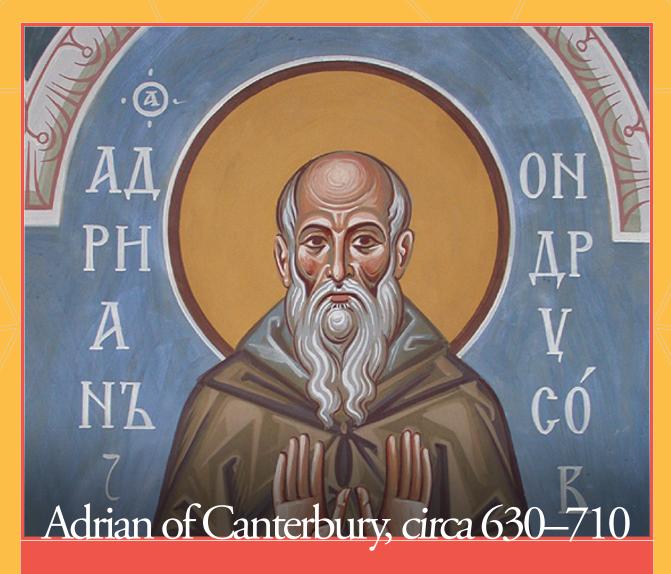
A unit of Roman soldiers of African origin, known as Numerus Maurorum Aurelianorum, was stationed at Hadrian's Wall that divided Scotland from England in the second half of the third century. They were recruited from the Berber people of Mauretania, now present-day Morocco and West Algeria. Near the western end of Hadrian's Wall, an altar has been discovered, dedicated to Jupiter by their commander, Caelius Vibianus, that is dated 253–258.

The 'Ivory Bangle Lady' (Fourth Centry)

The 'Ivory Bangle Lady' was a wealthy lady of North African descent, who died in York during the second half of the fourth century. Her remains were discovered in 1901 but modern facial reconstruction techniques revealed her origin to be African. An inscription found with her remains indicates that she was Christian and other items found with her, including the ivory bangles for which she is named, indicate that she was of quite a high status.

https://www.yorkshiremuseum.org.uk/collections/collections-highlights/ivory-bangle-lady/





Adrian (or Hadrian) of Canterbury is believed to be of Berber origin from North Africa, but at a young age, fled with his family to Naples, Italy, in the face of the Arab invasions of North Africa. He was asked by the Pope to become Archbishop of Canterbury but he turned down the role, feeling that he was unworthy. He travelled to Canterbury, with Theodore of Tarsus who became the Archbishop instead, and became the Abbot of St. Augustine's monastery in Canterbury. He was later regarded as a saint when his tomb became reputed as a site of miracles.

https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-adrian-of-canterbury/

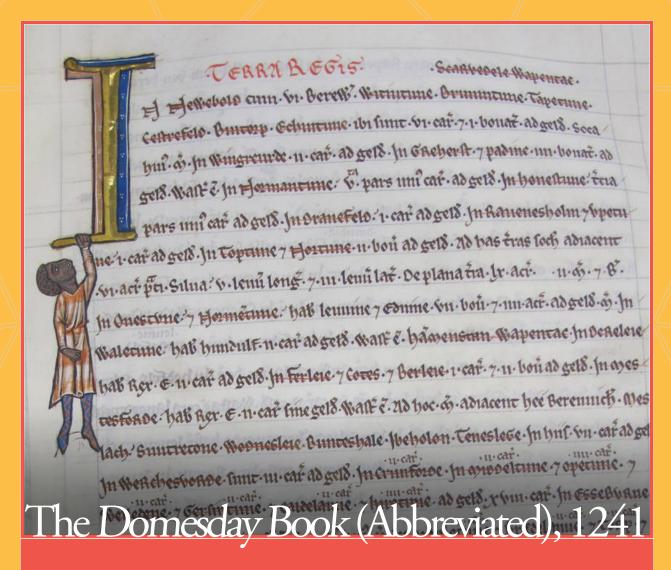




A skeleton was found in Ipswich by archaeologists in a series of digs between 1993 and 2006. Tests showed that it belonged to a man from Tunis in North Africa who lived around the late 1200s. Records suggest that he may have been brought to Britain by crusaders Richard de Clare and Robert Tiptoft in 1272 as one of four men from the region. Although he may have been brought over as a prisoner of the Crusade, his burial suggests he eventually had a better life, being a large strong man and apparently well fed. The location of his grave within the Greyfriars monastery graveyard also suggests that he died as a Christian friar, as in theory only friars were allowed to be buried in such places. He may very well have been receiving medical care at the monastery, as he had a spinal condition. Nine other African skeletons have been found in this cemetery of people who came from sub-Saharan Africa. They too may have been prisoners of the Crusades but may also have been visitors to England, with some historians believing they may have been Crusaders themselves.

https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/the-ipswich-man





An image of a black man appears in an abbreviated copy of the Domesday Book that was published in 1241, almost two centuries after the Domesday Book was first published. The Domesday Book was originally compiled by William the Conqueror to determine who owned what in his new kingdom, how much property was worth and what people owed in military service, tax and rent. The information in the Domesday Book served as guide to land ownership in England for several centuries to come, and this abbreviated version was to help tax collectors. The image of the African man was in respect of the entry for Derbyshire. His dress indicates that he represents a labourer, and suggests that Africans were present and may have worked in Derbyshire in the thirteenth century. This is the first known image of a black person in Britain.

https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/oms/an-african-presence-in-the-thirteenth-century



The Domesday Book

From what you have read about this interesting book, write as many things as you can below.

Compiled

What does this illustration show us?

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1086

Why is this important?



'Of Ane Blak-Moir' (1508)

'Of Ane Blak-Moir' is a poem in Scots by William Dunbar, a poet at the Court of King James IV of Scotland, and refers to a black lady at a tournament. Records indicate that James IV of Scotland employed two black sisters known as Elen and Margaret More who waited upon his queen and were known as the More Lasses, the term 'More' meaning black and 'Lasses' meaning girls. They probably first arrived in Scotland as slaves in 1504 and quickly assumed a relativley privileged position, living in Dunfermline Palace and Edinburgh Castle. Elen eventually became the lady recorded in Dunbar's poem, where she was enthroned as the Queen of Beauty at a tournament in 1507, the winner of which would win a kiss and an embrace from her.

https://www.medievalists.net/2019/02/elen-more-the-moorish-lass-in-james-ivs-court/

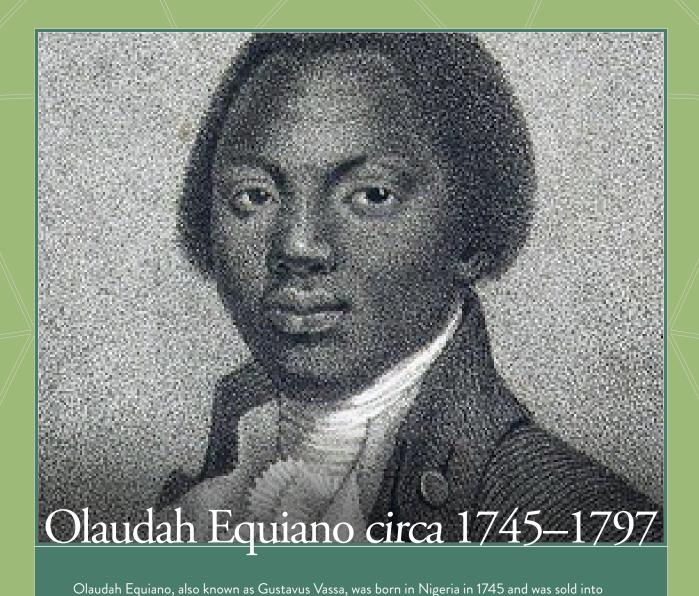




John Blanke was employed as a trumpeter at the courts of both King Henry VII and Henry VIII. He possibly first arrived in Britain in 1501 as one of the African attendants of Catherine of Aragon, who was married to Henry VII's first son, Arthur. He later played at the funeral of Henry VII and was later employed by Henry VIII, playing at his coronation, earning 8 pence a day. John Blanke is illustrated in the Westminster Tournament Roll and wrote to the King requesting a pay rise to 16 pence a day, indicating that he was educated. The wording of the petition indicates that he desired a pay rise as other trumpeters earned more than him, despite him doing the same job, and the King appears to have approve his petition. The last record of him is in 1512, where the King ordered that he might be given a wedding gift of some violet-coloured clothing as well as a bonnet and a hat, indicating that he got married, and he does not appear in the next list of royal trumpeters in 1514.

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/early_times/blanke.htm





slavery in the Caribbean at the age of 11. He arrived in Britain for the first time in 1757, and converted to Christianity. He bought his own freedom in 1766 and returned to Britain a year later, before travelling the world for the next 20 years. Upon his third arrival in Britain, he joined the abolitionist movement that lobbied for the end of the slave trade. He wrote a book about his life that became a bestseller in Britain where he gained his freedom. His autobiography, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, published in 1789, became a key text for the abolitionist movement, and his book was very powerful as it detailed the horrors of slavery in the words of a former slave. He joined a list of several other prominent black writers in Britain at the time, including Ukasaw Gronniosaw, Ignatius Sancho,

Mary Prince and Phillis Wheatley. Equiano later married an Englishwoman, Susanna Cullen, and

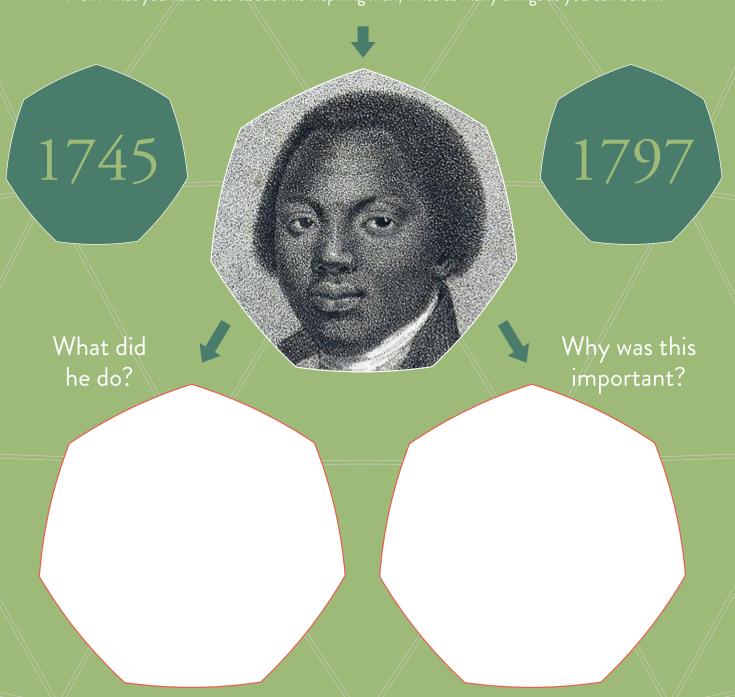
https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/equiano_olaudah.shtml

had two daughters, before dying in 1797.



Olaudah Equiano

From what you have read about this inspiring man, write as many things as you can below.



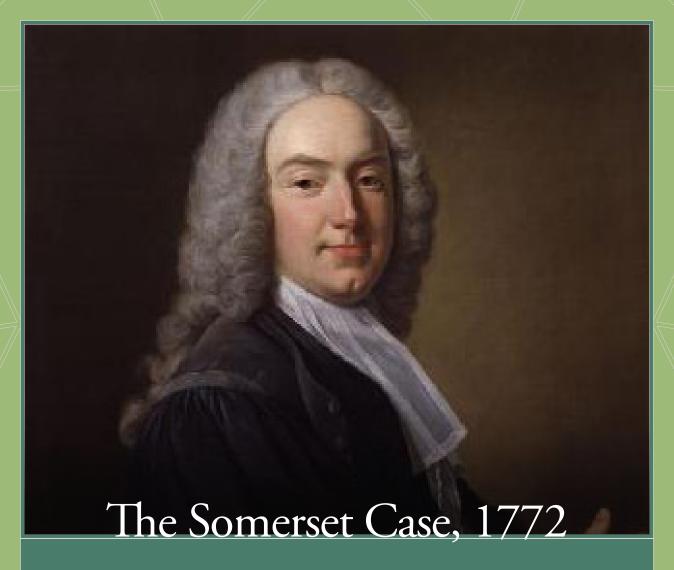


Bill Richmond, 1763–1829

Bill Richmond was born in Staten Island, New York, but lived the majority of his life in England. He was a successful boxer and came to England, where the Duke of Northumberland arranged for him to be freed and paid for him to attend school in Richmond, Yorkshire. He married an Englishwoman called Mary in Wakefield and had a big family. Being well dressed, educated and self-confident, Bill Richmond suffered a lot of jealousy and hate from many, but he was celebrated by the upper classes, and his skill as a boxer wowed King George IV who invited him to be an usher at his coronation in Westminster Abbey. He taught Lord Byron, the famous English poet, to box, as well as Frederick William III, King of Prussia, and was so fit, even when elderly, that an artist referred to him as a study for sculpture. Bill Richmond bought a pub in Trafalgar Square where he lived until his death in 1829. He also trained the famous black boxer Tom Molineaux.

https://www.blackhistorymonth.org.uk/article/section/sporting-heroes/bill-richmond-the-pioneering-pugilist/





Lord Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench, rules in a case, regarding a slave called James Somerset, who ran away from his master in Britain, that he couldn't be forcibly repatriated from England to Virginia. Mansfield ruled that slavery had never been authorised in England by either statute or common law, and thus did not legally exist. The Somerset case gave confidence to those who opposed slavery and then went on to fight for it to be abolished throughout the world. Lord Mansfield had his own links to slavery in that his his grand-niece, Dido Elizabeth Belle, was the daughter of his nephew, Sir John Lindsay, and a West Indian slave. Lord Mansfield raised Dido at Kenwood House, his home in London, where a famous portrait was painted of Dido and her white cousin. In 2013, a film named Belle was released about her life.

https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/blackhistory/rights/slave_free.htm



The Somerset Case

From what you have read about this judgement write as many things as you can below.

Judgement

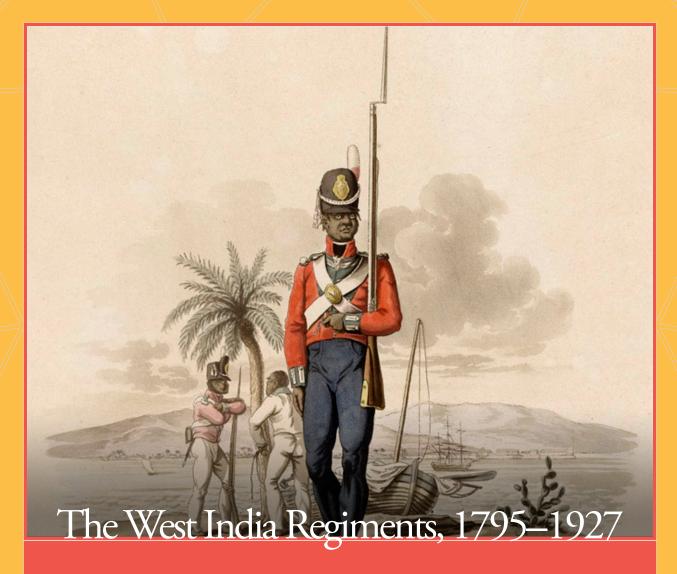
What did you learn about the case?



1772

Why do you think this was important?





The West India Regiments were established in 1795 and were the first corps of the regular British Army composed of black soldiers, although all the officers in the regiment were white. At first, the regiments were largely composed of men bought as slaves but, once purchased, the army treated them like any other soldier, insisting that the act of serving as soldiers made them free. They also fought to protect their rights from those who wished to make them subject to the slave laws of the Caribbean until they were declared free men in 1807. The West India Regiments served with distinction in the Napoleonic Wars in the Caribbean and were noted on several occasions for their bravery. Throughout the nineteenth century, they served in the Caribbean and West Africa, which were both regarded as dangerous postings. The West India Regiments continued to exist until 1927. Amongst their number were Samuel Hodge of Tortola in the British Virgin Islands and William Gordon of Jamaica, two recipients of the Victoria Cross, Britain's highest award for gallantry.

https://www.nam.ac.uk/explore/slaves-red-coats-west-india-regiment



The Thames River Police, 1798

The Thames River Police was founded in 1798 as an initiative between the West India Committee and the British government, to protect the ships that arrived from the Caribbean on the River Thames, which were popular targets for thieves due to the valuable goods. The Thames River Police were the first successful police force based on preventing crime, rather than reacting to it, serving as a model to the Metropolitan Police created in 1828 by Sir Robert Peel. In 1839, the Thames River Police merged with the Metropolitan Police and still protect the River Thames today as the Marine Policing Unit. They are recognised as the oldest continuously serving police force in the world.

Britain's First Known Black Policeman, 1838

Robert Branford was born in the late 1810s in Suffolk and is known to have been of mixed race. In 1838, he joined the Metropolitan Police's 'M' Division, based in Southwark. He rose through the ranks, being promoted from a constable to a sergeant in 1846, being made an inspector in 1851, and then rising to become 'M' Division's superintendent in 1856. Branford retired in 1866 and it is clear that he was well respected by his colleagues, even if they used language to refer to him that would not be acceptable today. Although he is the only officer of black heritage we know of at this time, the sources that refer to him raise the possibility that there were others, as he was referred to as the only superintendent of mixed race, rather than the only police officer. He died in 1869 in Little Waldingfield, Suffolk.

https://westindiacommittee.org/historyheritageculture/projects/thamesriverpolice/





Mary Seacole was born in Jamaica to a Scottish father who was a soldier and a Jamaican mother. She became experienced in the tradition of West Indian Doctoresses, learning many of her skills from her mother who tended to British military personnel. Having travelled around the Caribbean and Central America, where she tended to the sick, Mary Seacole made her way to Britain and volunteered to serve as a nurse in Crimea, where Britain was fighting Russia in the Crimean War. Although her offer was refused by the authorities, she travelled to Eastern Europe of her own volition to care for British troops. She opened the British Hotel there and provided food, drink and limited medical care for her guests, in the finest traditions of West Indian medicine and hospitality. She was awarded the British Crimean Medal for her services. When she returned to Britain, she found herself bankrupt and destitute but many important public figures, including army officers who had commanded troops in the Crimean War, raised money for her, including holding a benefit festival in July 1857. She continued to work as a doctoress and nurse, and also published an autobiography, the Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands, providing her own account of her life.

https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/seacole_mary.shtml



Mary Seacole

From what you have read about this inspiring woman, write as many things as you can below.

1805

What did she do?

1881

Why was this important?



First World War, 1914–1918

Men and women from Britain's colonies, including those in Africa and the Caribbean, volunteered to serve in the British military en masse. In 1915, more than 16,000 West Indians formed a new regiment known as the British West India Regiment (BWIR) thanks to the personal intervention of King George V, who convinced the War Office to accept these volunteers. All the men of the BWIR were volunteers and they were hailed in the British press as 'Huge and Mighty Men of Valour.' The BWIR's 1st, 2nd and 5th Battalions served in Egypt and Palestine against the Ottoman Empire, taking part in the advance towards Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley. The other BWIR battalions served in labour units on the Western Front in Europe, undertaking difficult work, carrying ammunition and other supplies often under heavy enemy fire, which they took great pride in, referring to themselves as the King George Steam Engine. However, despite their admirable service, at the end of the war they found themselves subjected to racist treatment at Cimino Camp in Taranto, Italy, and mutinied against it. Although they were escorted home under armed guard, they were welcomed as heroes.

Those who served in other regiments personally payed to get to Britain to support the 'Mother Country', which is how Britain was regarded by the people were lived in British colonies throughout the world. For the first time, men of non-European heritage are allowed to serve as officers in the British Army, including men such as David Louis Clemetson, Walter Tull and Allan Noel Minns, who were all of Afro-Caribbean heritage.

https://westindiacommittee.org/historyheritageculture/projects/caribbeansgreatwar/

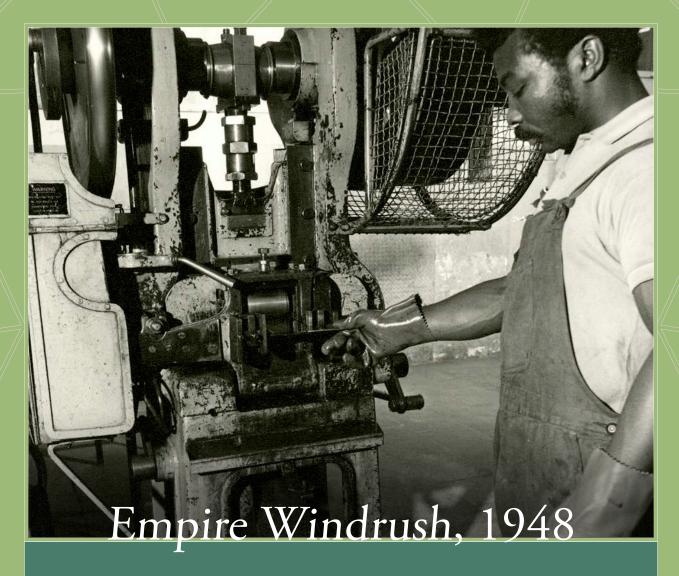


Second World War, 1939–1945

Still very much aware of the inequalities that black people suffered during the First World War, fewer black men and women volunteered to serve in the Second World War. Ten thousand people travelled from the Caribbean to Britain to join the army, including some who served in the Caribbean regiment, and they were joined by servicemen and servicewomen from Africa. Many black men served in the Royal Air force (RAF), which was highly dangerous, acting not only as ground crew but as pilots as well. Several West Indian sailors also served in the Merchant Navy, being responsible for bringing vital supplies to Britain, including food. Some even took part in the dangerous Arctic convoys, which took supplies from Britain to its Russian allies, through extreme cold and weather, past the German navy and air force. Several of these servicemen and servicewomen would return to Britain from the Caribbean as part of the Windrush generation.

The King's African Rifles, a regiment composed of men from Britain's African colonies, saw service in Somaliland, Abyssinia, Kenya, Madagascar and Burma, while many black women served in the Women's Auxiliary Territorial Service. Here they engaged in a wide array of non-combatant roles, serving as drivers, clerks and orderlies. Later in the war, many of these women were also employed in anti-aircraft gun crews and the military police.





In 1948, three years after end of the Second World War, a ship called Empire Windrush arrived at Tilbury Docks from Jamaica, the largest of the British islands in the Caribbean, carrying the first wave of a new generation of migrants from the Caribbean to Britain. Many had served there in the military, returning to Britain at the invitation of the UK government, to help rebuild the 'Mother Country' that had been badly damaged in the conflict. To encourage this, the 1948 British Nationality Act that granted citizenship in the UK to all members of the Commonwealth.

Others followed later, including large numbers of Africans. Together they helped to create and build the NHS, public transport and many other public services and private companies. They became known as the Windrush generation, taking the name of the first ship that brought large numbers of black people to Britain.

The worker in this photograph was employed at The Royal Mint after arriving in Britain from the Caribbean.





Between 1948 and 1952, 1,000 to 2,000 people entered the country each year. This was followed by ever increasing numbers until 1957, when 42,000 migrants from mainly black Commonwealth countries, with the majority being from the Caribbean, arrived in Britain. The majority of these were from the Caribbean. Over the next two years these numbers decreased by almost a half but in 1960, 58,000 people arrived. In 1961, this figure increased to 136,400 and, according to the national population census that year, there were just over 161,000 people born in the Caribbean living in England and Wales, with more than 90,000 of these being men. The large number of people arriving in 1961 is explained by the impending 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which restricted how easily Commonwealth migrants could arrive in Britain. Many faced discrimination when they arrived and were often only able to obtain jobs that required less skill and experience than they possessed. The vast majority persevered and made new lives in Britain, contributing hugely to the life and development of the country.

The worker in this photograph was employed at The Royal Mint after arriving in Britain from the Caribbean.

https://www.bl.uk/windrush



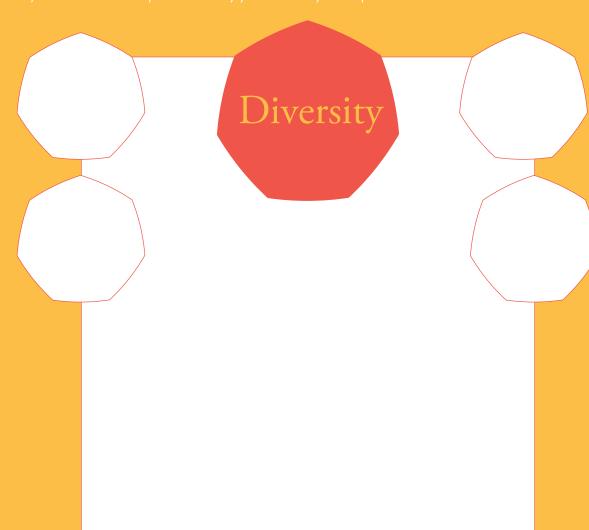
Post-Windrush

Since this mass migration following the Second World War, the Windrush generation and their descendants have contributed to the life, culture and development of Britain in many ways. Some have established distinguished careers in journalism, music entertainment, science, literature and politics, and others have become leading sportsmen and sportswomen, representing Britain at international events.



Design a Poster

Design a poster for your class to celebrate either someone from the fact files in this pack, or someone who represents diversity to you. Use pictures, key words and facts to help teach your class about this person and why you think they are important.

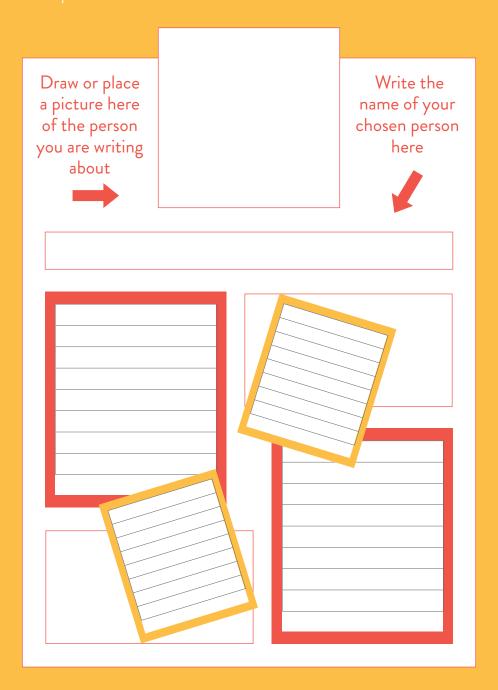


CELEBRATING BRITISH DIVERSITY



Make your Fact File

Think of a person who represents diversity to you. This can be either someone from history or who is alive now. Find out as much as you can about this person and what they have achieved. Write a fact file for this person to teach others about them.





Medals of Honour

The centuries-old requirement to produce coins as accurately as possible, with skills handed down from generation to generation, has given The Royal Mint a highly talented workforce. During both world wars this was recognised by the War Office, resulting in requests for assistance with high-precision work, such as making dial sights, gauges and automatic balances to weigh cartridges.



Over the years, medal making has also played an important role at The Royal Mint, linking the organisation with significant moments in national and international history. In addition to producing a wide range of fascinating military and commemorative medals, honouring inspiring people, The Royal Mint was proud to produce the winning medals for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.







Olympic and Paralympic Medals

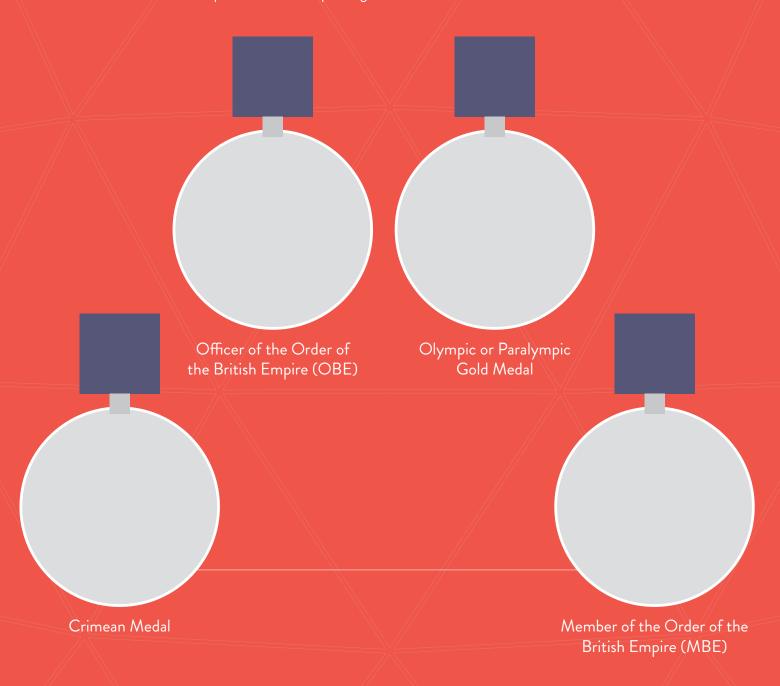
Even with a history of more than 1,100 years, there is always the opportunity to achieve something for the first time. In readiness for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, The Royal Mint struck all 4,700 medals. At over 76 millimetres in diameter they were the largest, and the heaviest, Summer Games medals ever produced. They were so large, in fact, that a new press, nicknamed 'Colossus', had to be installed to strike them. Each medal took ten hours to make with 22 individual processes. It was an incredible achievement and everyone involved felt a huge sense of pride in being part of the Games.





Medals of Honour

Below are some of the medals that have been given to people over the years. Many of these medals have been awarded to black British individuals, one of whom was Mary Seacole, who received the Crimean Medal for her work. We want you find people who have received particular medals for their work, and why, and write them in the spaces of the corresponding medal below.





Discover More

The Royal Mint Museum has one of the finest collections of coins and related material in the world. It is a collection about how money is made and how The Royal Mint has evolved over the last 1,100 years.

You can discover more at:

royalmintmuseum.org.uk

The Royal Mint Museum, Llantrisant, Pontyclun, CF72 8YT, United Kingdom

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For more inspiration and information, and to find out more about our 1,100-year history, visit

royalmint.com

