



NATIONAL
MARITIME MUSEUM
GREENWICH

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Black Georgian History Cards

National Curriculum Links: History and Literacy

Key stage 2
Teachers Resource

KS2



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How to use this resource

These are a set of cards sharing the achievements and contributions to Black British history from a selection of people in the Georgian period of African heritage, including mixed African heritage. Each person has a link to maritime history or has made an important journey over the sea.

What you will need

We suggest printing this resource, cutting out each card and keeping the set with the glossary sheet. Your students can use the glossary to help them learn more about the achievements of each person. See our suggestion below for ideas on how to use these cards to support crosscurricular learning for your students. At the end of this resource, we have also created a list of useful websites so you can carry out more research in class with your students.

Classroom activity ideas

Here are some ideas of how you can use these cards to support learning in the classroom:

- History – create a timeline connecting all nine stories. Carry out more research into the Georgian era and keep adding to your timeline.
- Literacy – choose one card and make a comic strip to re-tell that person's life.
- Literacy – choose one card and imagine that person was still alive. What would you want to say to them? What questions would you want to ask? Write a letter to show your ideas.
- Geography – on a world map mark where each of these people was born and where they travelled during their life. Have you been to any of the same places?
- Art – choose one card and create a portrait of that person.
- Art – choose one card and use different colours, materials and images to make a collage about that person and their life.



BLACK GEORGIANS

IGNATIUS SANCHO

1729-1780



Ignatius Sancho lived in Greenwich for much of his life and was the first known Black person to vote in a British election. Ignatius was enslaved at the age of two but had the rare opportunity to receive education. This enabled him to become an actor, composer and writer. He also owned and ran a grocery shop in London. As a financially independent male he qualified to vote. Sancho also campaigned with other abolitionists for the end of slavery.

BLACK GEORGIANS

MARY PRINCE

1788-1833



Mary Prince was born into enslavement in Bermuda and was brought to London in the 1820s by her owners, the Woods family. After years of being treated badly she tried unsuccessfully to gain her freedom. However, she did not give up and became the first Black woman to have her autobiography published in the UK. It was called *The Life of Mary Prince* and played an important part in the antislavery campaign of the 1830s.

BLACK GEORGIANS

DIDO ELIZABETH BELLE

1761-1804



Dido Belle, like her mother Maria Belle, was an enslaved African woman born in the British West Indies. Her father was Sir John Lindsay, a British naval officer who was stationed there. Her mother passed away when she was six and her father sent her to Britain where Dido was brought up at Kenwood House, now in North London, by the Lord and Lady Mansfield. She mixed with the rich and wealthy. She was taught to read, write and play music. Lord Mansfield was Britain's most powerful judge and was questioning the law of slavery. Dido married a steward (a senior servant) named John Davinier, together they had three sons and lived in London where their children went to school.

BLACK GEORGIANS

TOUSSAINT LOUVERTURE

1743-1803



Toussaint Louverture was born into enslavement but became a great military leader. He was born around 1743 in Haiti, an island in the West Indies (then known as Saint-Domingue). Although he was enslaved, he learned some French and Latin. During most of Toussaint's life, France controlled Saint-Domingue. But the enslaved people greatly outnumbered the French people living there. In 1791, the enslaved people rose up in rebellion. Toussaint formed his own rebel army and the colony eventually gained independence, becoming the state of Haiti. Toussaint's success encouraged support for the abolition of slavery in Britain.

BLACK GEORGIANS

FRANCIS BARBER

1742-1801



Francis Barber was a servant and companion to the English writer Samuel Johnson. He was born in Jamaica in 1742 and brought to Britain at the age of 15 by a plantation owner. In 1758 Francis Barber went to sea serving on a ship called HMS Stag. He lived as a free man in Staffordshire, where he became a teacher and married an English woman. His great-great-great-great grandson still lives in Staffordshire today.

BLACK GEORGIANS

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

1753-1784



Phillis Wheatley was born in West Africa in 1753. She was the first Black woman to publish a book of poetry in Britain. She was brought to America by her owners, the Wheatleys. They taught her to read and write and she published her first poem at the age of 14 in an American newspaper. Her first book of poems was published on 1 September 1773 in London. The same year, she travelled to London to promote her book and visited Greenwich.

BLACK GEORGIANS

JOHN DEMAN

1774-1847



John Deman was born in St Kitts in the West Indies. He joined the Royal Navy in 1804 and served with Admiral Nelson, including at the famous Battle of Trafalgar. John was one of many Black sailors who worked in the navy at this time. Working on board ships often offered men like him better pay and more opportunities than many jobs on land. In 1807, John became a Greenwich Pensioner (a retired sailor who lived at Greenwich Hospital). He joined other sailors who had fought for Britain and were now looked after by the government.

BLACK GEORGIANS

WILLIAM CUFFAY

1788-1870



William Cuffay was a Chartist who lived in London. William believed ordinary people should be treated equally in British law and joined the Chartist movement. He became one of its leaders, but William's radical tactics resulted in his arrest. The authorities accused him of planning a rebellion and he was deported to Tasmania in Australia. He was pardoned in 1856 but chose to stay in Tasmania, where he continued his political work.

BILLY WATERS

c.1778-1823



Billy Waters was born in America during the War of American Independence. He was a seaman in the Royal Navy and probably lost his leg as a result of falling from the topsail yard of the *Ganymede* in 1812. Unable to serve at sea, he became a London street entertainer and played the fiddle to support his family. Waters ended his days in St Giles's Workhouse, having fallen ill and been forced to pawn his fiddle. According to some accounts, he was elected 'king of the beggars' shortly before his death.

Glossary of Key Words

Abolitionist: a person or a group of people who wanted to end slavery.

Admiral Nelson: Horatio Nelson (1758-1805) was a British admiral (a senior officer in the Navy) who became famous for winning a number of sea battles against the French in the 1790s and early 1800s.

Autobiography: the story of a person's life, written by that person. **Battle of Trafalgar:** a naval battle of the Napoleonic Wars on 21 October 1805, which helped established British naval supremacy.

British Empire: describes all the places around the world that were once ruled by Britain. Built over many years, it grew to include large areas of North America, Australia, New Zealand, Asia and Africa, as well as small parts of Central and South America.

Chartism: a populist reform movement of the 1830s/1840s, which set out a manifesto called The People's Charter, aimed at increasing the rights of the working classes.

Chattel slavery: a system where one person owns another person, like an object, and controls them. Millions of people from different parts of Africa were enslaved by local slave traders and then sold to Europeans, who transported them across the Atlantic to the Americas and the Caribbean. Many enslaved people were forced to work on plantations but others were made to do different roles, including work aboard ships. They had very few or no rights. Britain was one of several European nations involved in this system, earning huge profits from it.

Enslaved/Slavery: slavery is when one person is owned by another like an object. People from different parts of Africa were taken away from their country to the Americas and the Caribbean to work on plantations to work as slaves – they were enslaved. Their rights and freedom were taken away and they were forced to stay there. They were not normally allowed to read or write. Britain was involved in this system/process.

Independence (from somebody/ something or of a country): freedom from political control by other countries.

Navy: the branch of a country's armed forces that fights on, under or over the sea. **Pardoned:** to be freed of punishment for a crime.

Parliament: the place where laws are made. **Pensioner:** someone who receives a pension, which is a regular income paid by a government because they no longer work.

People's Charter: the statement set out by followers of Chartism.

Plantation: a large area of land, especially in a hot country, where crops such as coffee, sugar, tobacco, etc. are grown. Hundreds of enslaved people were used to work on the plantations.

Rebellion: an attempt by people to use force against their government or leaders, often to bring about major political change.

Useful websites to carry out research:

[Billy Waters](#)

[Ignatius Sancho](#)

[Toussaint Louverture](#)

[Dido Elizabeth Belle](#)

[Mary Prince](#)

[William Cuffay](#)

[Frances Barber](#)

[Phillis Wheatley](#)

Find out more about the transatlantic slave trade and the abolition of slavery

[Black History 4 Schools](#)

[Understanding Slavery Initiative](#)

Find out more about Georgian Britain

[British Library](#)

[National Archives](#)

Children's books sharing Black histories

- The Kidnapped Prince: The Life of Olaudah Equiano adapted by Ann Cameron
- Nightjohn by Gary Paulsen
- Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine
- Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by Doreen Rappaport
- Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom by Carole Boston Weatherford

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