



Diane Abbott

Born: 1953, London

Subject link: Citizenship/Politics

Diane Abbott is a leading politician in the Labour Party. In 2008, her civil liberties speech won *Spectators* award for Parliamentary Speech of the Year. Abbott is also the founder of the London Schools and the Black Child initiative, which aims to raise educational achievement levels amongst black children.

Significance: Abbott was the first black, female MP, elected in 1987 and is the longest serving black MP in British history. She is still an MP for Hackney today.



Walter Daniel John Tull
(28 April 1888 – 25 March 1918)

Subject link: PE

Walter Tull was both a professional footballer player and a soldier during World War One. After school Walter played for amateur team Clapton Football Club. He was good enough to join Tottenham Hotspur, one of London's top professional teams.

Although people commented on his cool play and accurate passing, Walter lost his place at Tottenham. He moved to Northampton Town Football Club where he was successful, playing 110 matches during his time there.

Significance: In 1916 Walter moved back to England and began training as an Officer. At this time, only a white, British-born person could be trained to be an Officer. Walter became an exception to these rules and could continue his training.



Olaudah Equiano

(c.1745-1797)

Subject link: [English \(Author\)](#)

Equiano was a slave, but he managed to buy his freedom and moved to London. There, he became involved in the movement to abolish slavery. In 1789, he published his autobiography called *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African*.

Significance: Olaudah Equiano's book about slavery is one of the earliest accounts of what it was like to be a slave and is **one of the all-time, best-selling books regarding slavery**.



Professor Frank Chinegwundoh MBE

Born: 1961, England.

Subject link: Science/Medicine

Professor Frank Chinegwundoh was the first Black British urological surgeon. Since qualifying in medicine in 1984, Chinegwundoh has dedicated his career to raising awareness of prostate cancer. For the last 20 years, he has been the chairman of the UK registered charity 'Cancer Black Care'. He was awarded an MBE in 2013 for his work in the NHS.

Significance: Chinegwundoh published the first UK data on the differences of prostate cancer between black and white men. This has helped to improve the understanding of healthcare for black men.



Mary Seacole

(1805-1881)

Subject link: Science (biology), Health and Social Care

Mary Seacole was born and grew up in Jamaica but came over to England in 1854. She asked the War Office if she could go to help wounded soldiers who were fighting in the Crimean War (1853-1856), but she wasn't allowed.

So she raised the money herself and travelled to Balaklava, Ukraine. Here, she looked after British soldiers who had been injured.

Significance: Mary Seacole raised her own funding to help British soldier's injured in war. Most people remember Florence Nightingale, who helped many people too.

However, people have campaigned to make sure that people remember everything that Mary Seacole did.

In 2016, a statue of her was built outside St Thomas' Hospital in London



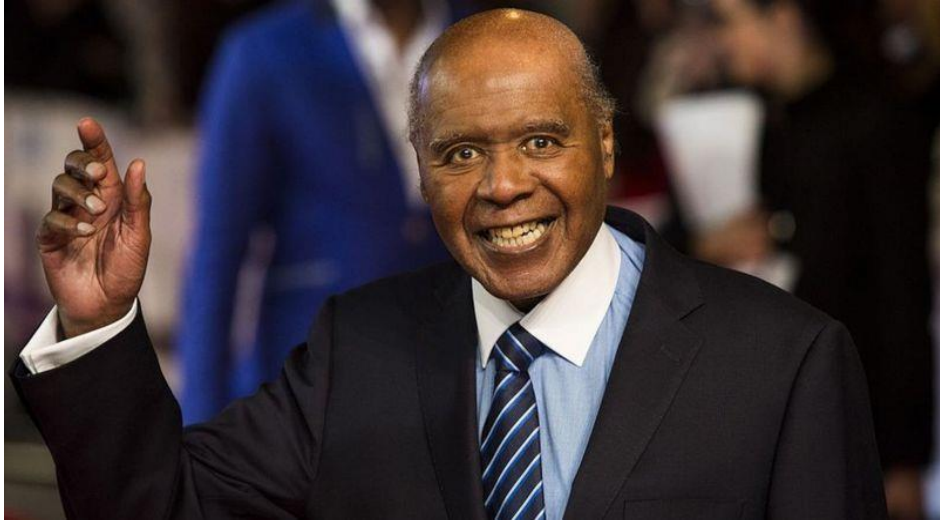
John Blanke

Subject link: Music

John Blanke came to England as one of the African attendants of Catherine of Aragon in 1501. He is one of the earliest recorded black people in England after the Roman period.

Blanke appears twice on the Westminster Tournament Roll, a contemporary manuscript that shows the procession to and from Westminster Abbey.

Significance: He is one of the earliest recorded black people in England after the Roman period.



“Every generation has a duty to fight against racism. It will find its way into our country and into our homes. Addressing this challenge is our duty if we wish to seek a happy and prosperous existence.”

Paul Stephenson, Campaigner for equal rights

**Paul Stephenson
(1937-today)
Subject link: Citizenship, Politics**

Paul Stephenson was born in England and went to a school where he was the only black child. Even though it does not feel like that long ago, at the time he was a child, being black and being English were sometimes seen as two very different things. This is what inspired him to go on to dedicate his life to stopping racial discrimination and bringing black and white communities together.

Significance: He became Bristol's first black social worker, which improved the relationship between black and white people in the city. He also spent his life leading important campaigns that made big changes in how black people were treated, and it is said that his work played a part in Britain's first Race Relations Act in 1965. This was an important law that took steps to give equal rights to black people.



**Phillis Wheatley
(1773-1884)**

Subject link: English

Phillis Wheatley became the first ever African woman to be published in Britain. She was born in West Africa and sold as a slave to an American family. Wheatley was taught to read and write and went on to write her first poem at the age of 14. She travelled to England at the age of 20 where her first volume of poetry was published.

Significance: Wheatley's work was used as evidence that enslaved people were more than capable of being intellectual and creative. As a result, she had a monumental influence on the anti-slavery movement.



**Lilian Bader
(1941-2015)**

**Subject link: Science/Health and Social
Care**

Lilian Bader was the first Black woman to work in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force in 1941. She had previously been sacked in 1939 from her job as a Canteen Assistant in the British Army because she was mixed-race. Bader eventually went on to be promoted for her excellent work in the air force.

Significance: Lilian Bader paved the way for future women of colour. Her work proved that equal opportunities should be provided for all within the British Armed Forces



Claudia Jones

(1915- 1964)

Subject link: English

Claudia Jones was a pioneering journalist and political activist. In 1958, she launched the *West Indian Gazette* – an anti-racist newspaper campaigning for social equality. That same year, she launched the famous Notting Hill Carnival in response to the Notting Hill race riots where a group of 400 white people attacked the homes of Caribbean residents.

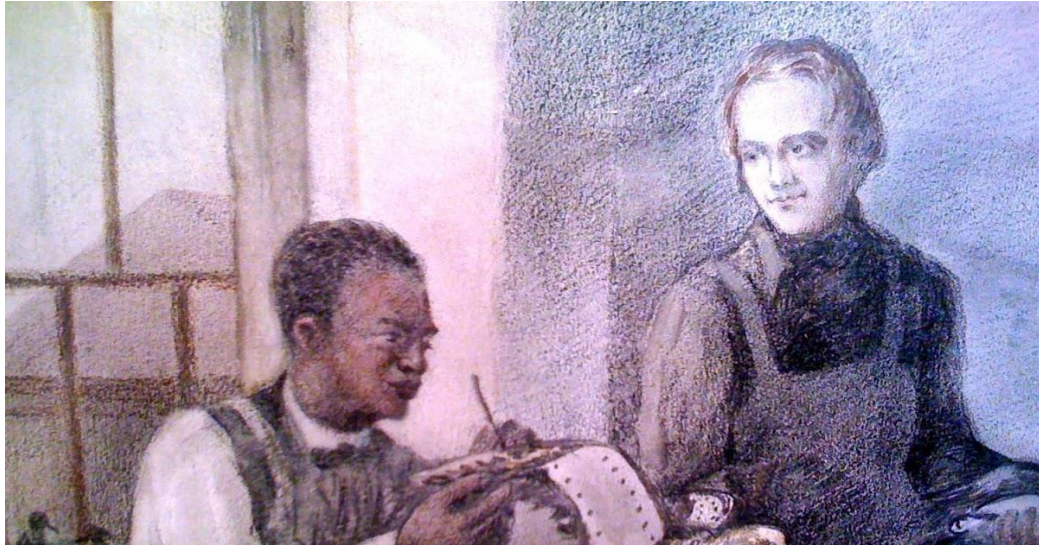
Significance: To this day, the Notting Hill Carnival annually celebrates the beauty of West Indian culture and heritage. It provides a place for people to experience and appreciate the positive influence of Caribbean culture.



**Malorie Blackman
(1962-Present)
Subject link: English**

Malorie Blackman is a children's author. She has written many books, most notably, *Noughts and Crosses*. Her book uses the setting of a fictional dystopia to explore racism. In 2020, *Noughts and Crosses* was adapted for a TV series. Her first book, *New Windmills Spring*, sold out within a week.

Significance: Malorie Blackman received an OBE for her literary work in 2008. Between 2013-2015, she served as 'Children's Laureate', a title given to a writer of children's books to celebrate outstanding achievement in their field.



John Edmonstone

(late 1700s-Unknown)

Subject link: Science (Biology)

John Edmonstone was a freed Guianese enslaved person who taught Darwin taxidermy at Edinburgh University. In 1817, Edmonstone was brought to Glasgow and gained his freedom. He moved to Edinburgh and earned a living teaching taxidermy to students at the university.

Significance: Despite the little known about Edmonstone, Darwin arguably might have never embarked on the S.S. Beagle without his mentorship.