



BLACK HISTORY TRAIL OF LINCOLN



Welcome to Lincoln's First Black History Trail

Lincoln's Black History Trail is a reminder that this city has always been diverse and multicultural.

There are eight stops on the trail; they are numbered in sequence but the stops can be visited in any order. The trail will take under an hour; we hope you enjoy it and share your experiences on social media. There is more detail about the characters featured on the trail on the Reimagining Lincolnshire blogsite here:



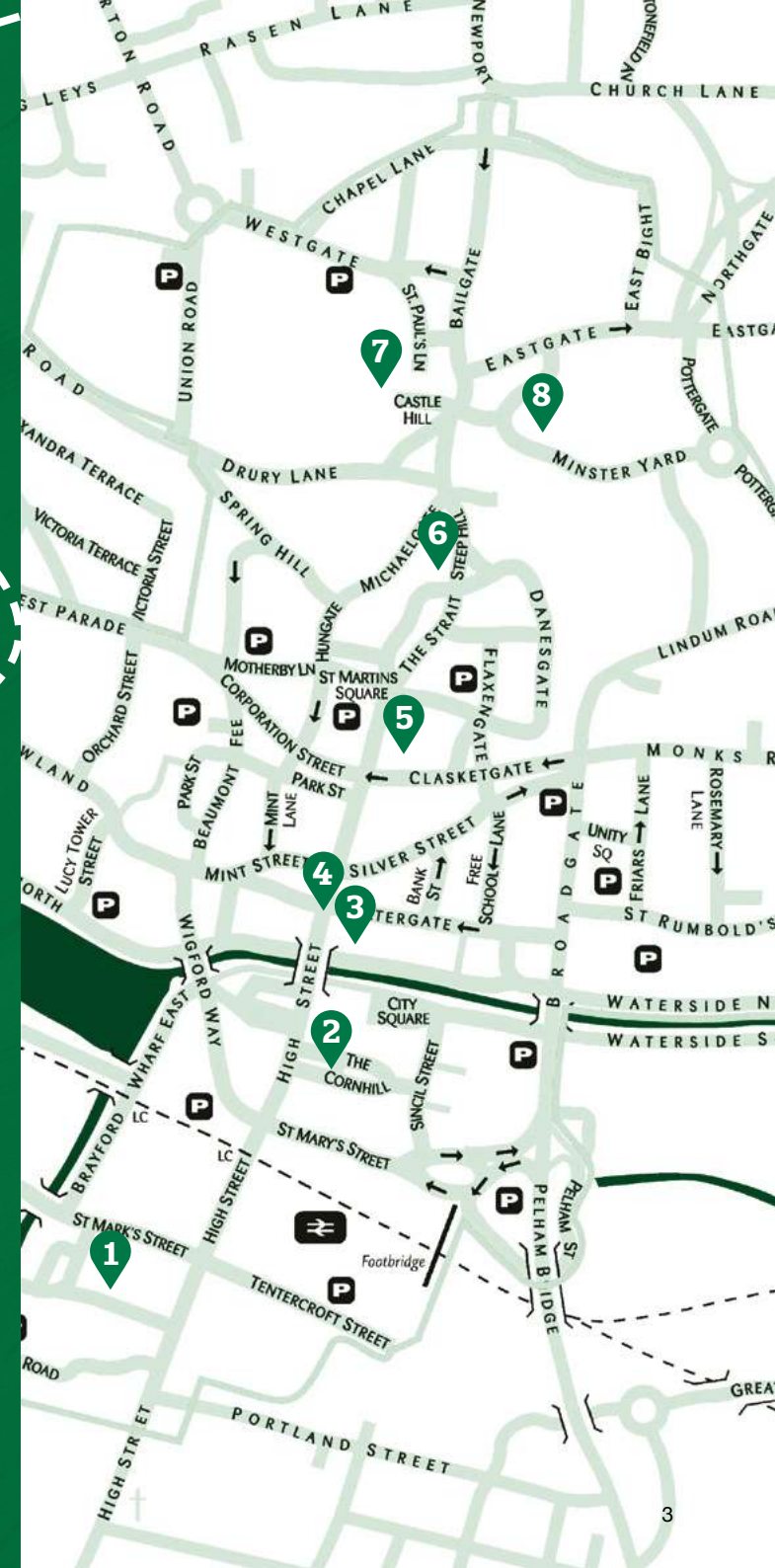
Jimi Hendrix at the amusement park Gröna Lund in Stockholm, Sweden, May 24, 1967. He played in Lincoln in the same year.

© Wikicommons



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St. Mary le Wigford

The story of Peter Bishop reminds us that there were black people living in Lincoln in the early 1800s.

Peter was born in Barbados and served as a drummer in the 69th Lincolnshire regiment. We know of at least two other black soldiers in the regiment in the early 19th century, Charles Arundell and William Booth. On discharge after Waterloo, Peter fell on hard times in Lincoln. His wife Ann died in 1826 and was buried at St. Mary le Wigford. He remarried Martha, a local woman of colour. Peter, Martha and their young son are all buried in Lincoln.

Lincoln City FC's ground is at Sincil Bank. This was the first club in the English league to hire two black players, Jonnie Walker in 1899 and Willie Clarke in 1909.

Along Wigford Way is Siemens, which started life in the 19th century as Ruston's. Ruston's exported machinery all over the world and people from all over came to Lincoln to learn how to maintain the machinery.

Also nearby is an area of Lincoln called St Mark's. St Mark was born in Egypt. As well as authoring one of the Gospels, he was the first bishop of Alexandria.

PROMINENT FOOTBALLERS.



W. CLARKE

Willie Clarke in the 1907 Taddy Tobacco Co. 'Prominent Footballers' cigarette card series.

© Wikicommons



Lincoln City Football Club and Lincoln City Foundation are committed to the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion and eliminating discrimination in all its forms [and to] creating an inclusive environment that promotes dignity and respect and enables all sections of the community to feel welcome."

Lincoln City Foundation



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Cornhill

Lincoln had connections with transatlantic slavery. Local slave-owning families were compensated for losses when slavery ended.

Cornhill is associated with the abolitionist movement and other global movements for social reform. Several formerly enslaved people and those whose families were enslaved visited Lincoln and addressed huge audiences at Cornhill: Isaac Dikerson in 1894; Hallie Quinn Brown in 1895; and Rev. John Henry Hector, 'Black Knight of the Temperance movement' in 1895 and 1897.

Support for abolition here was strong. The Usher Gallery holds a small trinket box dating to the early 19th century, picturing the abolitionist symbol on its lid.



Isaac Dikerson, a singer with the Fisk Jubilee Singers, spoke at Cornhill in 1894. He is photographed here with the players (third from left).

© Library of Congress via Picryl.com



Hallie Quinn Brown

© Library of Congress via Picryl.com



Billy Strachan, right, with members of his crew, 1945.

© IBCC Digital Archive



Ralph Ottey, 99, with his war medal.

© Heather Hughes



Ralph Ottey (bottom left) of Boston, Lincs. was a Caribbean volunteer for the RAF 617 Dambuster Squadron. Photographed with other volunteers.

© Ralph Ottey



Waterside

During the Second World War, people from all over the world came to serve in this region.

There is a plaque on the entrance to Waterside Shopping Centre about the Saracen's Head. The Saracen's Head was a popular club for RAF officers, one of whom was Jamaican Billy Strachan. He became one of the very few black pilots in the RAF, serving at nearby RAF Fiskerton. Around 5,000 black Caribbean personnel served in this region as ground staff. They patronised dancehalls and cinemas in the city when off duty.

I'm just a down to earth black mayor says Ralph

A COHSE member has been elected the first black Mayor of Lincoln. Ralph Toofany is an Enrolled nurse and a COHSE steward and has been a member of the union for 25 years. Mr Toofany said: "I'm a down to earth Mayor and I always will be."

He plans to dedicate his time to fundraising for people with mental illness, and hopes to raise £20,000 for a minibus. He describes his philosophy as: "Trying to get people together. Life is too short. We need to forget the past and get people together and talk over our problems." Mr Toofany is the first Mauritian to be elected Mayor anywhere in the world outside Mauritius.



ABOVE: (left) Ralph Toofany, Mayor of Lincoln, and (right) Hector MacKenzie, General Secretary of COHSE. Hector MacKenzie is a member of honour at a civic lunch.



Photo: Lincolnshire Echo



Stonebow

The Guildhall is the civic centre of Lincoln.

Ralph Toofany served the city as a councillor from the 1980s and became Lincoln's first black Mayor in 1992. A nurse from Mauritius, Ralph was one of thousands of Caribbean, African and Asian healthcare workers who came to staff the NHS on its founding in 1948. In 2000, he became Lincoln's first black Sheriff.



Ralph Toofany in his mayoral robes, 1992.

© Ralph Toofany

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Clasketgate

We'll use Theatre Royal, one of Lincoln's oldest theatres, to tell the story of black entertainers in Lincoln.

Ira Aldridge was one of the most famous Shakespearean actors of his generation. His acting career began in New York but he moved to the UK in the 1820s. He appeared at this theatre in 1842 and 1849 to warm reviews. Carlos Trower was a tightrope walker who thrilled crowds in Lincoln in the 1860s. 'Delmonico' appeared here with lions and tigers in 1870. One hundred years later, Chuck Berry and Jimi Hendrix both performed at the ABC Cinema, where Waterside is now.

Ira Aldridge as Aaron in Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus.

© Library of Congress



Jimi Hendrix Promotional photo for The Jimi Hendrix Experience.

© Warner/Reprise Records



Chuck Berry circa 1958.

© Billboard, page 59, 25/10/1972

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Steep Hill

Lincoln's connections to Africa stretch back at least 2,000 years to Roman times.

Septimius Severus was the first African-born Roman Emperor, born in Leptis Magna in North Africa, in what is today Libya. In the late first century CE, Severus ordered that Lindum Colonia (Roman Lincoln) should have stone walls to replace the wooden fortifications. Thanks to him we can still see traces of the walls today. There were people of African heritage living in Roman Lincoln, as evidenced in the DNA tests of human remains found on the route of the Eastern bypass.

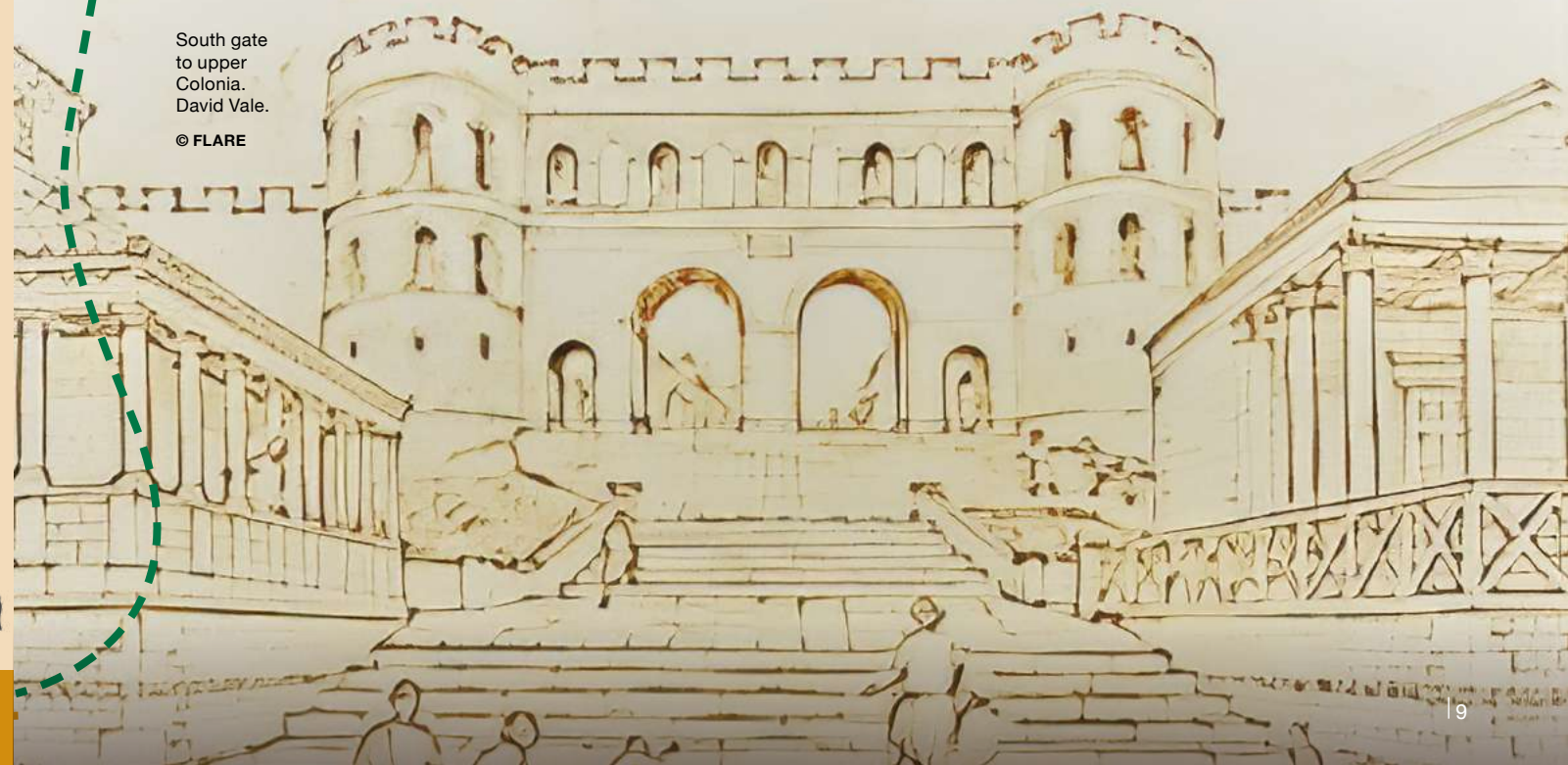
Tondo showing Septimius Severus (top right), with his family, circa 199-200 CE.

© Carole Raddato / Flickr



South gate to upper Colonia. David Vale.

© FLARE



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Castle Hill

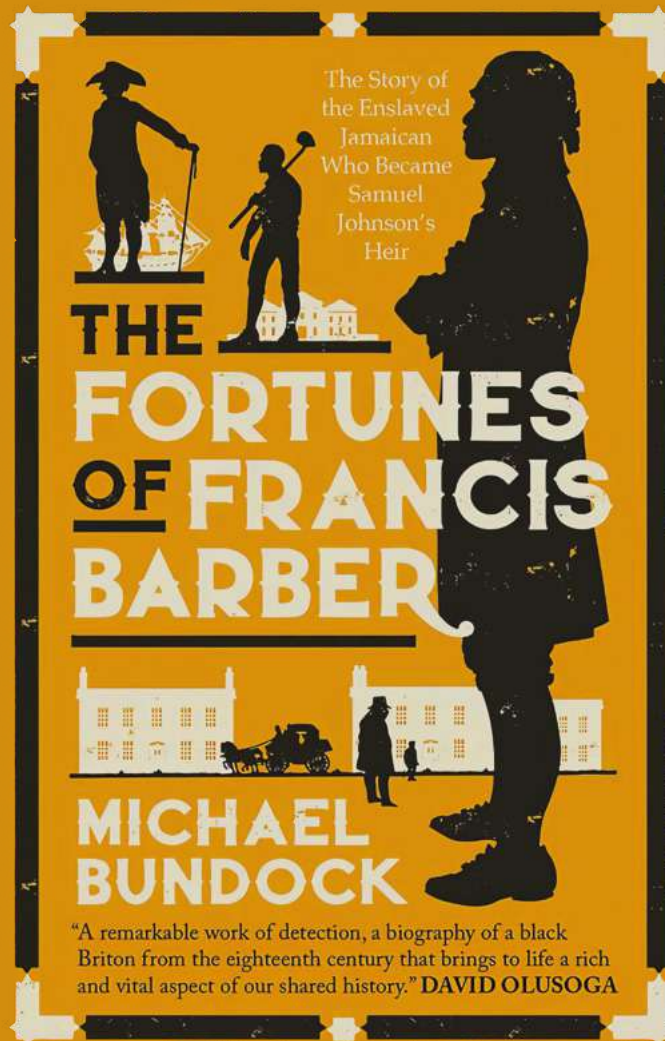
Francis Barber achieved fame in the 18th century as the servant and heir of Samuel Johnson, author of the first English dictionary.

Barber was born into slavery on a Jamaican estate belonging to Colonel Richard Bathurst. In the 1850s, Bathurst returned to his English home in The Close, Lincoln, bringing Barber with him. It is highly possible that Barber was baptised in St Mary Magdalene Church. Barber's enslavement was ended by a clause in Bathurst's will. He attended school in Yorkshire before joining Johnson's household.



Plaque memorialising Francis Barber.

© Mick Sinclair / Alamy Stock Photo

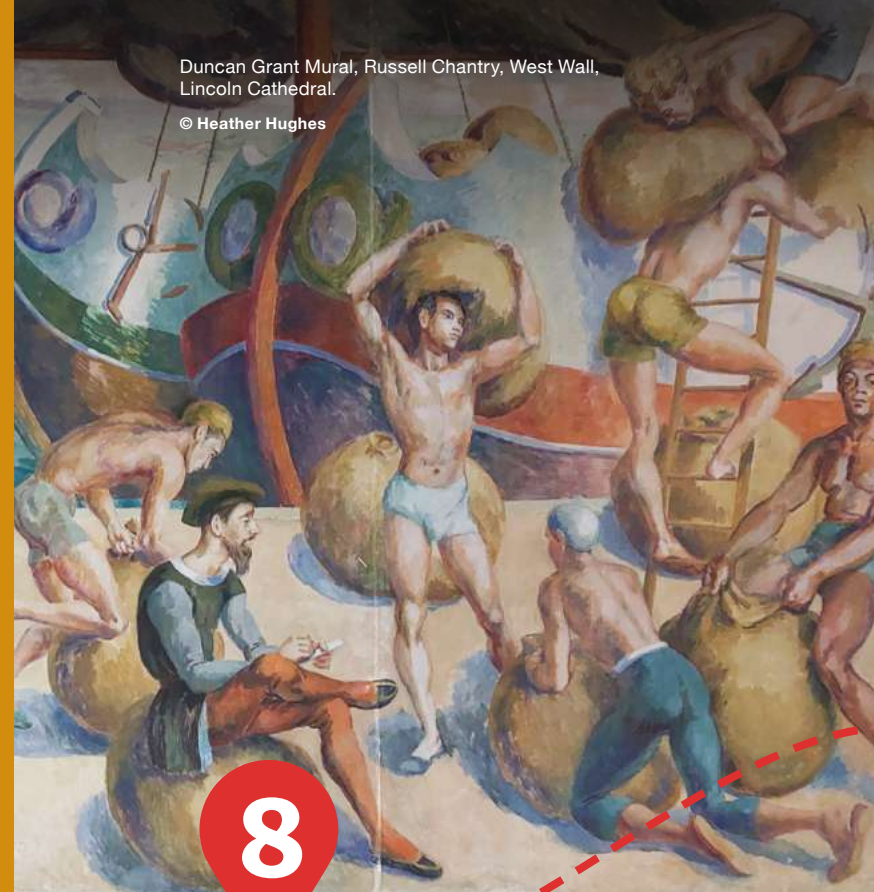


A book telling the story of Francis Barber's life, written by Michael Bundoock.

© Publisher: Yale University Press

Duncan Grant Mural, Russell Chantry, West Wall, Lincoln Cathedral.

© Heather Hughes



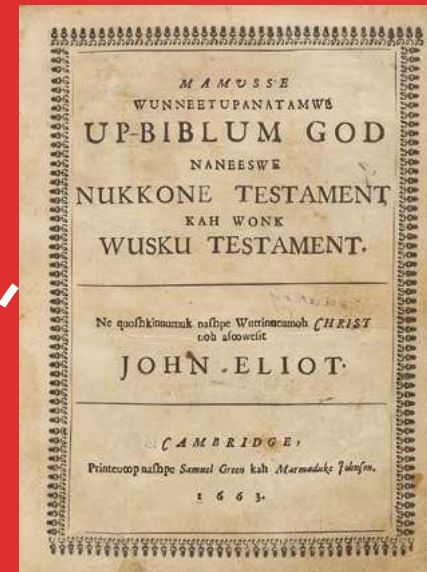
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Lincoln Cathedral

The Cathedral Library holds the so-called **Massachusetts Bible**, the first Bible to be published in an indigenous language in British North America.

The Russell Chantry walls are adorned with a mural by Duncan Grant. It features a black figure, modelled on Grant's friend Patrick Nelson, a Jamaican veteran of the Second World War.

There is a sculpture of Nelson Mandela's head on the southwest turret of the Cathedral, installed in 2013. It is next to the head of an unknown African man.



Title page from Mamusse wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God naneeswe Nukkone Testament kah wonk Wusku Testament, Cambridge, MA: 1663, by John Eliot.

© Wikicommons, Houghton Library, Harvard University



Nelson Mandela memorialised on Lincoln Cathedral.

© Lincoln Cathedral Twitter



About Reimagining Lincolnshire

We are a public history project based at the University of Lincoln. We work with many external partners to reveal Lincolnshire's diverse history and the story of its connections to the wider world. We are interested in the many stories that have been neglected because of people's colour/ancestry, gender and sexuality. If you would like to know more, or have stories to share, please get in touch using the following QR Code:



About Eleanor Glanville Institute

The Eleanor Glanville Institute (EGI), based at the University of Lincoln, is a leading EDI institute offering international excellence. Our research challenges social exclusion and inequality and builds evidence to argue for transformative change. Our sector-leading approach to contemporary EDI is founded on the need to ask questions, to challenge, to seek solutions, to look for evidence of change, and to measure impact. Our research transforms policy and EDI practice across businesses, organisations and government, leading to greater productivity, creativity, and positive social impact.

