CROYDON RADICAL HISTORY NETWORK

Newsletter No. 3 - April 2015

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NETWORK EVENTS IN CROYDON HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Heritage Open Day Stall Saturday 20 June in North End with Agenda Services, History & Social Action Publications and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Network.

Croydon’s Slavery Links and the black presence. Two talks by Nick Draper (Legacies of British Slave-ownership project) and Sean Creighton (Croydon Radical History Network). Monday 22 June. 7pm. Terrace Lounge, Fairfield Halls, Croydon.

Croydon’s Labour movement 1880s-1900s. Talk by Sean Creighton (Croydon Radical History Network). Tuesday 23 June. 7pm. Ruskin House, 23 Coombe Rd, CR0 1BD.

John Lilburne and the Struggle for Democracy. Talk by John Rees (Levellers Association). Organised by Croydon on the development of ideas for democracy to commemorate the 400th anniversary of ‘Free born’ John Lilburne, a leader of the Levellers in the English Civil War and Revolution. Wednesday 24 June. 7pm. Ruskin House. 23 Coombe Rd, CR0 1BD.

Ancestral Voices - Olaudah Equiano and Black Emancipation. Matthews Yard, Surrey St, CR0 1FF. Saturday 27 June. 2-5pm.
2-3pm. Brycchan Carey: Olaudah Equiano and the Black Abolitionists: An Overview
3-4pm. Arthur Torrington: The Life and Times of Ignatius Sancho
4-5pm. Anti-slavery readings

Sunday 28 June, 2-5 & 7.30-10pm
2pm-3pm. Cugoano & Equiano
Martin Hoyles. Cugoano Against Slavery
Arthur Torrington. Olaudah Equiano, Haiti and Emancipation
3pm-4pm - Play. Olaudah Equiano, The Enslaved African
4.20-5pm. Q&A with Adam Tulloch, Writer and Director
7.30-8.30pm. Equiano, Haiti & the Wars with France
Arthur Torrington. Olaudah Equiano, Haiti and Emancipation
Sean Creighton. Black Soldiers and Sailors in the Wars with France
8.30pm-9.30pm. Play - see above
9.30pm. Discussion of play - see above

EDITORIAL

One of the most appreciated events co-sponsored by the Network in last June’s Croydon Heritage Festival was Nick Draper’s talk on Croydon and slavery. It was reviewed by Ann Giles (a Tory supporter) in Croydon Citizen: http://thecroydoncitizen.com/culture/croydon-heritage-festival-review-talk-croydons-slavery-connections.

Given the interest and the additional information still being found Nick will be speaking again in this year’s Festival.

Across the range of my activities I have continued to promote the Network and also to publicly discuss heritage aspects of modern day Croydon.

Industrial Heritage of the Wandle: http://thecroydoncitizen.com/history/wandle-industrial-heritage-volunteering-opportunities
Croydon in 1914: http://thecroydoncitizen.com/history/croydon-like-1914
Council’s compromise of heritage: http://thecroydoncitizen.com/culture/council-admits-croydons-heritage-significantly-compromised

The Network was co-sponsor with Kwaku of British Black Music of the African History+@ Croydon event on 22 November: http://thecroydoncitizen.com/culture/event-preview-african-history-croydon-saturday-22nd-november-matthews-yard. Part of the outcome of this - the discussion of the problem of racism today has been fed into wider debates in Croydon and into the work of Kwaku’s Look How Far project.

I was able to promote the Network at the event organised by Nia Reynolds of Black Stock films launching her book When I Came to England: An Oral History of Life in 1950s and 1960s Britain, I was able to give a brief talk about work on British Black History.

The Network co-sponsored with Agenda Services:

- The film shows on 4 and 18 March on Black British Civil Rights at David Lean Cinema: Divided by Race; United by War & Looking for Claudia Jones
- Various events in this year’s Heritage Festival (see below).

I have completed transcribing Michael Tichelar’s dissertation on the labour movement from the 1880s to 1914. This is now available as a PDF with a copy deposited with Local Studies. Croydon material on the reaction to the 1887 Trafalgar Square ‘riots’ is contained in my chapter in the book on riots sponsored by the London Socialist Historians group to be published soon.

As material from research builds up a series subject notes will be prepared. The first on Croydon’s Suffragettes is now available.

The overlap with the Samuel Coleridge-Taylor Network continues.

- I will be leading a walk in the Croydon Heritage Festival.
- I will be speaking about the composer’s life and work at the Friends of Grangewood Museum in Sutton in October.

NEWS SNIPPETS

British Pathe films of Croydon. There are several films made by Pathe from the 1930s to 1960s on the archive website. e.g. Churchill campaigning in North Croydon 1948 http://www.britishpathe.com/video/churchill-election-campaigning/query/Churchill+Croydon

Historic Croydon. This is a Facebook group started by Andrew Kennedy stimulated by his concern about the historic building facades in North End posed by the Westfield/Hammerson scheme.

Whitgift Area CPO Inquiry

Andrew’s submitted evidence on the facades to the Whitgift Centre CPO Inquiry. In my evidence I drew the Inspector’s attention to the admission of the Council is its Sustainability Review last year that it had been neglectful of protecting the historic built environment. Both sets of evidence can be accessed at http://www.persona.uk.com/Whitgift/E-OP-Proofs.htm.

SOUTH NORWOOD RADICAL HISTORY NOTES

Friendly Societies 1860s


New Unionism 1889-92

March 1890 the members of the Gas Workers & General Labourers Union processed from South Norwood to a meeting on waste land in Handcroft Rd, W. Croydon.

In 1891 J. A. Edwards polled 180 votes out of 6,700 in South Norwood,

In August 1891 the Bricklayers demonstrated at Duppas Hill with Will Thorne as principal speaker.

On 19 September 1891 4,000 marched from South Norwood to Duppas Hill to raise money to help carpenters and joiners on strike and locked out in London. Crowds lined the streets. Speakers included J. Robinson, and James Chapman (bricklayer).
Socialist Activity 1894

Open air meetings were a favourite method of putting the socialist case in this period. On 9 June 1894 an open air meeting on Duppas Hill saw Keir Hardie address c.500 people. The collection raised 11s.8d. The following week saw Bernard Shaw, the Fabian playwright, with a collection of 10s. 8d. In October outdoor meetings were held on the corner of George and High Sts, while indoor ones were held with James Ramsay MacDonald at South Norwood and Hyndman at West Croydon.

Journal 1898

Coming Day was a monthly journal edited by John Page Hopps at Oak Tree House, South Norwood Hill. (The Labour Annual 1898. p. 146. Further information about Hopps can be seen at www.le.ac.uk/litandphil/presidents/1886.html

Land Nationalisation Campaigning 1901

April 20-23 1901. ‘The League ran yellow vans going round the country campaigning. The first meeting using new Van No 3. was parked near Croydon Town Hall, chaired by H. Sidey, a member of Croydon School Board. ‘There was a large audience, and a good start was made.’ An afternoon meeting was held at Duppas Hill, and an evening one near the Town Hall with Cllrs A. Gore and S. Stranks presided Muggeridge spoke at Duppas Hill. Monday 22 saw a meeting at Thornton Heath with Rev. J. Page Hopps in the chair and T. Jarvise speaking. On Tuesday 23 April W. Copleston presided at a meeting at the South Norwood Tram Terminus. ‘At each of the meetings much interest was displayed and our literature found many readers’ The reporter said that ‘I am hopeful that the Croydon meetings have made a good start was made.’ An afternoon meeting was held at Duppas Hill, and an evening one near the Town Hall with Cllrs A. Gore and S. Stranks presided Muggeridge spoke at Duppas Hill. Monday 22 saw a meeting at Thornton Heath with Rev. J. Page Hopps in the chair and T. Jarvise speaking. On Tuesday 23

Workers’ Educational Association 1913-14

‘The Croydon branch is arranging a Literature class at South Norwood, which is to be led by Mr. W. Hughes Jones. The Lambeth branch hopes to form a class in West Norwood. ‘South Norwood Brotherhood Institute. A social evening of the SNBI concluded a very successful . W. E. A. class in English Literature. Mr Van Wyck Brooks, the tutor, who is leaving England shortly, was the recipient of a small present as a parting gift and token of appreciation from the members of the class. Some discussion took place in regard to next season’s work, It is hoped to have a University tutorial class in Economics and Political History. Short speeches by Mr. T. S. Somerville, Mr, Van W.B., Mr. Councillor Cosedge, and Mr. John Powell concluded the evening.

THE BATTLE FOR SUNDAY OPENING AT CRYSTAL PALACE

The Index to the National Reformer 1867-1874, compiled by Detlev Mares, Institute of History, Darmstadt University of Technology, has two interesting entries relating to Crystal Palace.

- 1868-05-10: NR 302 (Reports of Meetings) National Sunday League exclusion of 700 people; Langley and others of the Council to give an address; address condemning church for impediments and pressure on railway directors against artisans’ Sunday excursions; announced: gathering of Crystal Palace Shareholders, who are members and friends of this League, and Bands in the Victoria and Battersea Parks will soon start the season.

- 1868-07-05: NR 011 A Free Sunday or Not? Sabbatarians have demanded ballot to elected as directors to the Crystal Palace Company Sir Charles Fox and E. P. Young in place of Ionides and Ogilvy; all liberal shareholders called to attend to vote against the “bigots”.

When the Crystal Palace was moved to Sydenham in 1852 its owners proposed opening it on Sunday afternoons. They were prevented from doing so by supporters of entertainment facilities being shut - Sabbatarians. There were many tracts for and against:

- The New Crystal Palace and the Christian Sabbath by J. Weir (1852)

- The Crystal Palace and the Christian Sabbath: a solemn protest against the introduction of national Sabbath
**desecration in England**, by Robert Newstead (1852)

- **The Sabbath, the Crystal Palace, and the People** by James Baldwin Brown (1853)
- **Sabbath made for man, or, Defence of the Crystal Palace** by John Rose Butlin (1853)
- Lord Brougham defended CP’s Sunday opening in a speech in the House of Lord on 23 May 1853 ([http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1853/may/27/crystal-palace-sydemen](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1853/may/27/crystal-palace-sydemen))

**National Sunday League**

In June and July 1854 workers had demonstrated in Hyde Park against an Act of Parliament restricting Sunday drinking hours. In 1855 a bill restricting Sunday trading was presented to Parliament, leading to working class demonstrations in Hyde Park. One of those involved Robert Morrell, a goldsmith and jeweller, founded the National Sunday League to campaign for the Palace and museums to be open on Sunday. By the end of the first year it had 1,622 subscriptions, and 151 donations. The League reprinted as a tract an article from the Jewish Chronicle, *The National Sunday League to obtain the opening of the British Museum, Crystal Palace … on Sunday afternoon*. Reprinted from the Jewish Chronicle … December 21st, 1855’. In 1858 it published the *Sabbatarian Clergy and the Crystal Palace and The People’s Sunday*, the latter by Henry J Slack. It ran its own journal *National Sunday League Record* and then *The Free Sunday Advocate and National Sunday League Record*. One of the supporters of the League was William Lovett, the Chartist leader. It was not until 1896 that Parliament eventually voted for Sunday afternoon opening of national museums and galleries.

Note: The Crystal Palace shareholders meeting discussed *The Sunday Question* in 1857. (*Croydon Chronicle*. 22 August 1857. p.3)

**FELLOWS OF THE ROYAL ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON**

Alfred Russel Wallace, the co-discover of evolution, who lived in Croydon for a while (see Newsletter ???) was living in at Broadstone, Wimborne, Dorset in 1909/10. He had become a Fellow of the Entomological Society of London in 1863. The following members living in Croydon are listed in the Society’s Transactions for 1910.

1899 Bedwell, Ernest C. Bonnicot. The Grove, Coulsdon, Surrey. (1875-1945)
1852 Boyd, Thomas. Woodvale Lodge, South Norwood Hill, S.E. (1829-1913)
1880 Cansdale, W. D. Sunny Bank, South Norwood, S.E.
1875 Distant, William Lucas. Shannon-lodge, Selhurst-road, South Norwood, S.E.
1906 Hall, Arthur. 7 Park Lane Mansions, Croydon
1898 Russell, A. Wilverley, Dale Rd, Purley
1902 Sharp, W. E. 9 Queen’s Rd, South Norwood, S.E.
1905 Sheldon, W. George. Youlgrave, South Croydon. (1859-1943)
1900 Shepheard-Walwyn, H.W. Dalwhinnie, Kenley, Surrey. Author of books such as *Nature's Riddles or The Battle of the Beasts* (1903); *Pictures From Nature's Garden. Stories From Life in Wood and Field* (John Long, 1907), and *Nature's Conjuring Tricks*.

Note: The birth and death dates come from the Google book *A Dictionary of Entomology* (CABI, 2011; but those without dates are on pages not reproduced.)

William Lucas Distant (1845-1922) was the son of a whaler and for several years worked in a tannery. He worked in South Africa in the 1890s and returned to England in 1896 as there is a letter from him dated 31 December from Lower Addiscombe. He became editor of *The Zoologist* in 1897. He worked from 1899 to 1920 at the Natural History Museum. Letters in the Natural History Museum show him living at the following addresses in the Croydon area:

- Steine House, Selhurst Road, South Norwood, London, United Kingdom (letters 1902-1906)
- Shannon Lodge, Selhurst Road, South Norwood, London, United Kingdom (letters 1910-1913)
- Glenside, 170 Birchanger Road, South Norwood (letter 13)

**CROYDON NEWSPAPERS**

Croydon’s newspapers have many reports of activities relating to aspects of Croydon’s radical history. Here are some notes to illustrate this.

**Croydon and Country Pictorial**

This journal at Croydon Local Studies is well worth looking for lots of in-depth profiles on local leading Councillors, Aldermen and businessmen, and news of cultural activities. It includes details e.g. about
Croydon Citizen

There is an incomplete set of this labour movement newspaper. The condition is very poor and I have had to suggest it be looked at to conserve, given it contains plenty of news about the labour movement which is not in the main local newspapers. It also contains reports on matters such as:

- Coleridge-Taylor and the String Players (May 25 1907. p. 5; 1 June, p.5)
- Workers’ Educational Association (1 June, p. 6)

Croydon Advertiser 1905

18 February: National Union of Women Workers, Christian Endeavour, Christian Social Union
4 March: Croydon Parliament, Christian Endeavour, Croydon Social Union, labour meeting at Town, Croydon Pleasant Sunday Afternoon at West Croydon Tabernacle, AND Free Church Council

Croydon Chronicle, Guardian and Times 1913

The Sweating System

‘The speaker at the North End Brotherhood last Sunday afternoon was Mr James. J. Mallon, the General Secretary of the Anti-Sweating League.

“The influx of poor aliens from the continent to our large cities, and their willingness to work for low wages as also the necessitous circumstances of numbers of women workers. Have allowed unscrupulous employers to force upon employees, more especially those doing work at their own houses, conditions of labour and wages quite inadequate for daily ants.” These, it is said, are the causes of the sweating system. The remedy in the opinion of the Anti-Sweating League is to be found in the Trades Boards, established by the Trade Boards Act of 1909.

Mr. J. J. Mallon, after a brief definition of what was meant by sweating proceeded to cite instances within his own personal knowledge. In East End he had spoken to one poor old woman who had started work at the age of seven, who had never had a holiday, and who was now looking forward to the workhouse as the only place in which to die. She filled the backs of brushes with bristles, and was paid at the rate of 61/2d. per thousand holes.

Another woman finished trousers at the rate of 1d., 11/2d., or 11/3d. per pair and could earn 3s. 6d. to 4s. per week. Fiord her one room she paid 2s. 6d. per week and as she was not cursed with a large appetite she could make ends meet. “Some days,” she had told him, “goes without.” The case of the factory girls was not much better. In one tin box factory, a hard and dangerous kind of work, the girls were paid 10s. per week and being threatened with a reduction of wages of 6s. d. per week they struck. It was found by careful figures that a girl could not possibly live on less than 8s. a week. In Suffolk the employers did not propose to pay them even that. The lace workers in Nottingham were so broken in spirit three or four years ago that it seemed hopeless to attempt anything for them. Often those women would sit up working all night and for their labour would get 31/2d. or 4d. There were some 700 middle women who farmed out the work and who was now looking forward to the workhouse as the only place in which to die. She filled the backs of brushes with bristles, and was paid at the rate of 61/2d. per thousand holes.

Land Values Rating. Talk by R. L. Outhwaite (MP) at Croydon. (Croydon Times. 2 April 1913, p. 5)
Redemption of Labour League Conference advert. (ditto. p. 4)
Thornton Heath Parliament. (ditto. p. 6)
Croydon Esperanto Society. (ditto p. 8)
Labour on the Council (Muggeridge & Cosedge. ditto. p. 15)
North End Brotherhood. Talk by J. J. Mallon on The Sweating System’ (Croydon Guardian. 5 April 1913. p. 1)
Mr Outhwaite MP in Croydon (ditto. p. 4)
The Sweating System (Croydon Chronicle. 5 April 1913. p. 11 - see below)
‘REDEMPTION OF LABOUR LEAGUE. The first of a series of four addresses on the land problem and gold currency will be given by Mr. Charles F. Lamble at eight p.m.. Mr Edwin Wrench will preside. The title of the lecture is “Fundamentals.”’ (Croydon Guardian. 5 April 1913. p. 16)
Guardians Election (Croydon Times. 9 April 1913. p. 5)
ILP Social at Thornton Heath. (ditto p. 8)
‘An Account of Stewardship’. Meeting Croydon Trade and Labour Representation Committee Conference, (ditto)
Advert. Adult School Hall. 14 April. Trade Union Meeting. Mrs. Despard ad J. J. Mallon. ’Concert and Dramatic Sketch by Laundry Workers.’ (ditto)
Mr Allison elected to Board of Guardians. Treasurer ASRS. President of Croydon Trades and Labour Representation Committee. (ditto)
matchbox), were paid at the rate of 13/4d. and 2d. per gross and they had to buy their own paste, tie up the boxes in brown paper, and carry them back to the factory. In spite of the competition in the match trade these women were now able to get 3d. per gross. The chain makers of Cradley Heath near Birmingham were now getting 70%, 80%, 90% and 100% more than formerly and had formed a great trades union of their own which was able to enforce the Trades Board rate and would be able in time to enforce a still higher wage.

*(Croydon Chronicle. 5 April 1913. p. 11)*

**THE ELIOTS - QUAKERS WITH CROYDON LINKS**

In ‘History of Friends in Croydon Transcribed and edited (re-phrased but not cut) by David Parlett, from “a retrospect compiled by George Percy Harris from researches by Agnes Lindsay Waldmayer” [sic - Waldmeyer?]’ on the South London Quakers website, a John Eliot is noted as one of the Trustees of the original Quaker meeting house in Croydon from 1731. In 1761 he left a legacy for the upkeep of the house and the burial ground. While the article says he died in 1751 this may be a misprint for 1762.

http://southlondonquakers.org.uk/sutton/history/misc/History%20of%20Friends%20in%20Croydon.pdf

The Eliot family in the 18th and early 19thC were a Quaker business family with Croydon connections. Born in St. Austell in Cornwall, John Eliot the First (1683-1762) became a Falmouth and then London merchant. He had a house on Bartholomew Lane in the City and a country house in Croydon. His son John the Second (1707-1735) married Mariabella, whose father Peter Briggins, was a ‘wealthy tobacco merchant’. According to the notes to their papers at London Metropolitan Archives ‘They attended the Change, Lloyd’s and Child’s and Jonathan’s and other Coffee Houses, and dealt with a variety of business including trade overseas in cotton and duck cloth and Cornish time and invested in ...merchant shipping ventures’ to Europe. The West Country business interests were retained and country estates invested in near Liskard, Devon and in Dorset. These interests were often looked after by John the Third (1735-1813). John the First died in Croydon in 1762. His daughter Mariabella married Robert Howard, a metal and tin-plate worker in Old St, where he built up a large works. Having liaised with A. Argand, the Swiss inventor of the standard oil lamp, he developed his own, but financially supported Argand and his daughter ‘in their old age). John the Third’s daughter Mariabella (1769-1852) married Luke (1772-1864), one of Robert’s sons, in 1796. Luke was ‘a scientist of some note’ and eventually inherited most of the Eliot property. He set up a chemical manufacturing business at Plaistow ‘later moved to Stratford’. He was ‘a member of Askesian Society and elected a fellow of the Royal Society in 1821. He made detailed studies of meteorology and clouds. As Quakers the Eliots, the Howards and Peter Briggins mainly attended the meeting near Bartholomew Close, but ‘also went to Croydon and other places.’ Robert wrote a tract ‘refuting rumours that Quakers were hoarding corn during the shortage at the time of the French Wars’. Luke served on many Friends philanthropic committees.’

The employers were finding that instead of the Trade Boards crippling their industries they were invigorating them. With higher wages the employers got a better output. A great work had been done in the least there or four years and he (the speaker) looked forward to the gatherings like the North End Brotherhood to put pressure upon the Government when the occasion arose.’

The elder Mariabella died on 1 January 1769 and is buried at Croydon.

The collection of papers at LMA is substantial, and it will take some time to go through all the family property, settlements, probates etc papers to piece together the land ownership in Croydon. (LMA. Howard and Eliot Families. ACC/1017)

A study of the Eliots by a later descendent published in 1895 suggests that John I shows that he traded with the West Indies and South America as well as Europe. (p.2). In 1747 he made ‘a profit of £1,472 on woollen goods sent to the Spanish Indies’, and later there was a voyage to Vera Cruz and Buenos Ayres. He was also a ships insurance underwriter.

John I was buried on 26 May 1735. He was carried from his house in a horse hearse and 6 horses to Croydon to be buried in the Friends Burying Ground.’ He was worth n. £100,000. John Ill’s inheritance from his grandfather included the Farleigh estate near Croydon, while his aunts had the use of the Croydon house during the rest of their lives.

John II helped Nicholas Burtt, a Quaker shopkeeper in Croydon with his business difficulties in 1762. (p. 76)

On the 5th of December, 1763, “Aunt Lambert” followed her father to the grave, leaving no descendants, and on the 3rd April, 1766, Frances Eliot died unmarried (both were buried at Croydon) Of the other two Aunts, one, Rebecca, married Sir John Bridger, and lived till 1803, and the other, Mary, died unmarried in 1794. (She also was buried at Croydon.)

Under date of 27th of 3mo. 1788, John Eliot’s Cousin, Richard T. How, writes enclosing a copy of a letter received by his father from the Bishop of Carlisle on the subject of the Slave trade.’
When a mob came to attack the Howard works as part of alleged anti-corn hoarding by Quakers the workforce beat them off.


More detail about Luke can be found
http://www.quakersintheworld.org/quakers-in-

MORIE INFORMATION ON BLACK PEOPLE IN THE CROYDON AREA

Lewis the ‘African Mesmerist’ gave a lecture in the Lower Hall on Crown Lane. “The audience was not very numerous, and but few persons came forward to be acted upon, and over those Mr. Lewis had but little power, sending a few to sleep, but operating successfully on a little boy. In justice to Mr. Lewis it should be mentioned, that he conducted his experiments in a fair and straightforward manner, clearly showing that to the science alone he was willing to trust.” There was singing by Mr and Mrs Brady. (Croydon Chronicle. 15 March 1856)

Mary Webb

Mary Webb was in Britain in 1856/7 doing readings from Uncle Tom’s Cabin. She came to Croydon at the end of December 1856. The Croydon Chronicle report states:

‘On Tuesday evening last, Mrs. Mary E. Webb, (a coloured native of Philadelphia,) gave a dramatic reading of an arranged version of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” dramatized especially for her by the eminent authoress, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. It will be remembered that this lady gave her entertainment in the month of July last, at Stafford House, St. James’s, the residence of the Duchess of Sutherland, when she was patronised by the Earl of Shaftesbury, The Hon. W. Cowper, Lord Wensleydale, and a numerous audience chiefly composed of ladies of the aristocracy. Mrs. Webb is the daughter of a Spanish gentleman and a female slave in Virginia. Last Tuesday the reading comprised the most celebrated dialogues and incidents in the popular novel, which were read in a clear voice, while her imposing appearance and lady-like demeanour won the approbation of all who had the pleasure of hearing her. There was something in the manner in which the passionate story of Cassy was told, which brought down great applause; but we admired the Methodist Hymn, sung in the hoarse negro voice of Uncle Tom:-

“I see a band of spirits bright,
That taste the glories there;
They all are robed in spotless white,
And conquering palms they bear.”

Then answered, in the sweetest voice imaginable, little Eva:-

“They are all robed in spotless white,
And conquering palms they bear.”

This part was truly affecting - a mixture of solemnity and pathos. The characters of Sam, Topsy, and Aunt Chloe, were greeted with outbursts of laughter, which told for the audience how well they were appreciated. But the death of Uncle Tom was the most solemn, and the affecting manner in which the lady rendered the conversation of George and Uncle Tom, brought tears from the audience, which did honour to the many hearts that shed them; it was irresistible; and pocket handkerchiefs were in great demand, especially among the fair sex.’ (31 January 1857. p. 1)

Jeff Green, a prominent independent British Black History historian, tells me that in July 1856 the ‘Duchess of Sutherland in July 1856 presented a reading from The Christian Slave (based on Harriet Beecher Stowe’s novel Uncle Tom’s Cabin) by Mrs Mary E. Webb “a mulatto, the daughter of a fugitive slave” who had given readings in Massachusetts and was now in England. This high society event had tickets costing half a guinea. The Daily News reported there was ‘not much to strike the observer’ but the second part showed Mary Webb’s dramatic power with ‘a mixture of solemnity and pathos quite indescribable’ and the hall was nearly filled although high society’s summertime retreat abroad or to the country had started. Mary Webb’s husband Frank wrote The Garies and their Friends which Routledge published in London in 1857, a pioneering novel with an introduction by Lord Brougham and Stowe’s preface. The review in the Morning Post (6 October 1857) was two columns long. The Webbs settled in Jamaica, where Frank Webb worked for the Post Office, a position obtained through the Duke of Argyll (son-in-law of Queen Victoria).’

More about Mary Webb can be found at:
http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/uncletom/xiaslav/xshp.html and
https://getd.libs.uga.edu/pdfs/letostak_ellen_j_200408_ma.pdf

Lisa Merrill, Professor at Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York will be discussing Mary Webb in an article in Theatre Survey this May.

Mattie Lawrence. As research continues into this member of the Fisk Jubilee Singers in the 1880s Jeff Green is posting the latest information on his entry on her at: [http://www.jeffreygreen.co.uk/143-marion-mattie-lawrence-jubilee-singer-in-england-1890-1907-work-in-progress](http://www.jeffreygreen.co.uk/143-marion-mattie-lawrence-jubilee-singer-in-england-1890-1907-work-in-progress)

Chular, Indian Eye Doctor


His advertisement in the *Croydon Chronicle* states: ‘Cures all diseases of the eye. And performs operations which are almost painless, without the aid of chloroform or ether, at the above address. Dr. Chular has practised as a surgeon and oculist in the Punjab(sic), India, for many years, and his operations and treatment have invariably been crowned with success. His father, grandfather, and great grandfather and ancestors for many generations have practised as eye doctors in India, and have handed down to him the secrets which they have discovered in many years practice. Dr. Chular left India for a tour some three years ago since, passing ten months in Italy, and twelve months in France, where he administered relief to hundreds of patients, who came to him suffering various diseases of the eye; he had been practising in Brighton for the last ten months, where he has published testimonials which show his efforts in curing diseases of the eye, and that he has met with great success. The testimonials below have been given in Croydon, which speak for themselves.

Indian Eye Doctor. Chular, 66 Wellesley Rd, Croydon. Mrs. Philips, of 62 Wellesley-road, eye cured after gradual loss of sight for seven years, until quite blind in one eye. Elizabeth Histed, of 9 Tamworth-place, Croydon, bad eye three years-cured. Caroline Dawson, of 122 Westfield-road, Croydon, had a bad eye for one month-cured.’

1st West Indies Regiment Band photo. (Photo and note. *Crystal Palace Magazine* September 1905)

Frederick Kameka

‘At the Croydon County Bench on Thursday, before Mr. Wickham Noakes (in the chair) and Ald. R. M. Chart, *Frederick Kameka*, 43, described as a coffee planter, of no fixed address and a subject of Jamaica, was charged with begging from house to house in Dale-road, Coulsdon, the previous day. - P.-c 501 W said that at 2.30 the previous afternoon he saw prisoner calling form house and house, and at one house witness heard him ask for tea or coffee. Prior to that prisoner came up and told him that he proposed to steal a loaf of bread from a baker’s cart, but witness advised him not to do so. - Prisoner, who made a rambling, half-intelligible statement, was remanded in custody for a week.’ (*Croydon Chronicle* 12 April 1913. p.3)

Mrs A R Motley a Jamaican was in the Workhouse in January 1914

West India Court at Colonial and Imperial Exhibition 1915. (*Crystal Palace Magazine*. July 1915).

Doris Wood. Black child aged 10 was one of 6 children supported by the Women’s League and Auxiliary Fund in the Mission of Hope. (*Photo of her and 3 others in 22nd Annual Report of the Mission of Hope*. 1925). The Mission was in South Croydon.

Hannah Louise Grahame of Spa Hill, Upper Norwood, was bound over not to attend her church for one year due to her ‘monomania’. (*Norwood News*. 8 November 1929)


Colour Bar to be opposed. Talk at Fellowship of Reconciliation Ramble. (*Croydon Advertiser*. 26 July 1930)

Albert Huie, Jamaican artist. In previous notes I have put together on Croydon’s black history I mentioned the Jamaican artist George Huie, but could find nothing about him. I have been advised that the local press report recorded his name in error and he was likely to have been Albert Huie, whose obituary can be seen at: [http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2010/mar/17/albert-huie-obituary](http://www.theguardian.com/theguardian/2010/mar/17/albert-huie-obituary)