

# LEGACIES OF BRITISH SLAVE-OWNERSHIP

## WANDSWORTH AND SLAVERY (2)



### Antiguan slave-owners

The Antiguan slave-owner Archibald Cochran owned and lived in North House on Putney Hill until his death in 1814. In his will - which he called 'a disposition of those bounties which God has blessed me with' - he left the North Sound estate in Antigua to Daniel [Byam] Mathew of Weymouth Street and the Willoughby estate to Daniel's brother George. In a series of 14 codicils, he made new bequests, including £1000 to Mrs Boyd, the wife of the banker Walter Boyd from whom he had purchased North House, and £50 to the poor of the parish of Putney.

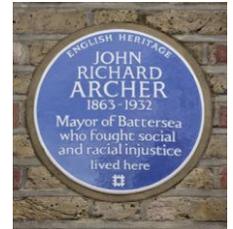
Above right: 'View in Old North Sound, Antigua' by J. Johnson (1827)  
Right: North House, Putney Hill, drawn by Edward Hassell in 1826



### The African presence

The African presence in Britain pre-dates and post-dates the centuries of slavery. The lives of many men and women of African descent remain unmarked, perhaps to an even greater extent than the lives of the mass of people as a whole. We know, for example, nothing about the 'christian negro servant' left £10 by Dame Anne Bromley in 1625, the first recorded person of African descent in the area. In other cases we do know more about their life stories. John Archer, born the son of a Barbadian ship's steward and an Irish catholic mother in Liverpool in 1863, was not the first mayor of African descent in Britain (Allen Glaser Minns, a Bahamian doctor, had been elected mayor of Thetford in Norfolk in 1904) but he was the first in London, serving as Mayor of Battersea in 1913-1914. He was later a pioneer of Labour organising in Battersea, and was elected a councillor in Nine Elms, remaining active until his death in 1932. In 2010 Nubian Jak Community Trust mounted a plaque on the building where his photographer's shop had been on Battersea Park Rd and in November 2013 English Heritage placed a plaque on his home at 55 Brynmaer Rd.

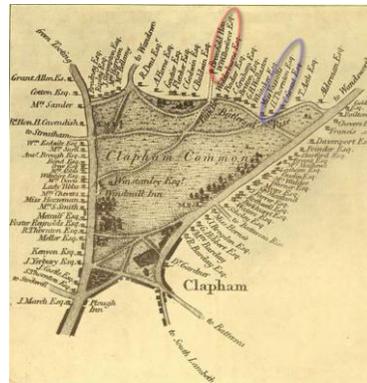
Above right: Stamp honouring John Richard Archer, part of Royal Mail's 'Great Britons' series in 2013  
Right: blue plaque commemorating the house of John Richard Archer at 55 Brynmaer Road



### Abolitionist neighbours

Clapham (part of Wandsworth until 1964) is celebrated as the centre of the 'Clapham sect', abolitionist activists (including William Wilberforce) who strove for the end of the slave-trade between 1787 and 1807. But William Wilberforce and his colleagues lived apparently harmoniously alongside slave-owners around Clapham Common: the two groups shared a common church and common leisure and recreation areas. George Hibbert, MP and agent for Jamaica, was one of the principal London West India merchants of his generation, associated with family members who were leading slave-factors in Jamaica, and together with his partners a major mortgagee of estates and enslaved people. Another Clapham resident active in the slave-economy was David Wedderburn Webster, again a London West India merchant. Members of the Wedderburn family had left Scotland for Jamaica after the failure of the 1745 Jacobite rebellions, and built a London merchant firm to handle the finance and trade in produce.

Left: 'Perambulation of Clapham Common' from C. Smith, *The Chronicles of Clapham Common* (1929)  
Circled in red and blue are the abolitionists William Wilberforce and Henry Thorton. Wedderburn is immediately to the right of Wilberforce. George Hibbert is fourth from bottom on the right hand side



### Merchants

John Alexander Hankey was a London West India merchant who lived between 1846 and 1852, after the end of slavery, at The Cedars, Roehampton. He was the son of John Peter Hankey, a major slave-owner in Grenada, and in the 1830s was a beneficiary of the compensation for several estates on Grenada with over 1000 enslaved people on them.

Far left: The Cedars, Roehampton  
Left: John Alexander Hankey (1804-1881)