

BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2009

Setting the truth free

IGNATIUS SANCHO

(1729 - 1780)

Ignatius Sancho was born on a slave ship in 1729 and because of this, his exact date of birth is unknown. He was of African origin but his earliest memories were of Greenwich, near London, where he was forced to work as a child slave.

He was a composer, actor and writer and is the first known Black Briton to vote in a British election. He gained fame in his time as "the extraordinary Negro" and to 18th century British abolitionists he became a symbol of the humanity of Africans and immorality of the slave trade.

Ignatius died from the effects of gout on 14 December 1780 and became the first African to be given an obituary in the British press.

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