Black History Resource List

Details of archives and rare books held at Cadbury Research Library: Special Collections

This is a guide to Black History related archives and rare books held at the Cadbury Research Library.

Items in this list have been found using our catalogues and indexes, or suggested by staff members/researchers, but it is not exhaustive. Particularly relating to the issue of slavery, we have many more archive documents available for research, but there are too many to list in this guide so we have tried to highlight key documents. If you come across other sources during the course of your research you think should be included, we would be pleased to hear about them.

You can search our archive catalogue and our book catalogue online. Our main website gives visitor information should you wish to consult any of the items we hold.

The National Archives also has compiled a useful guide intended as an introduction to the key records relating to the history the British Empire and Commonwealth held at The National Archives, Kew and at other archives in the UK.

Archives listed in this guide are by or about peoples of African and Caribbean descent. Please be aware that historic documents or older books may use terminology or images that we would consider offensive today.
Archives held at the Cadbury Research Library

Birmingham Black Oral History Project
This collection comprises copies of recordings and transcripts of interviews, of post war black immigrants to Birmingham which were carried out by the Birmingham Black Oral History Project between 1990 and 1992. We only hold a small proportion of what was created for the project, and some of what we hold is currently closed to researchers. The majority of the recordings are at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.
Reference: DA6

British Cotton Growing Association
Founded in 1902 in order to promote the growth and cultivation of cotton within the British Empire. This collection includes, for example the travel diaries (with maps and photographs) of Sir William Himbury who visited all the major cotton growing countries in the course of his work, 1904-1938. In 1925, for example, he made a five month tour, as General Manager, of the cotton growing areas of India, Uganda, the Sudan and Egypt.
Reference: BCGA

Burtt, Joseph
This collection contains photocopies of a set of typescript copy letters from Joseph Burtt to William Cadbury written during a visit to Africa on behalf of Cadbury Brothers, 1905-1907. Joseph Burtt had been hired by William Cadbury on behalf of the chocolate firm Cadbury Brothers Limited to determine if the cocoa it was purchasing from the Portuguese West African colony of Sao Tome and Principe had been harvested by slave labourers from Angola. Burtt's letters to Cadbury record his observations during his six months in Sao Tome and Principe, and his year in Angola, and provide an insight into British and Portuguese attitudes at that time towards work, slavery, and race.
Reference: MS857 (See also entry for the Cadbury papers)

Cadbury Papers
Business, legal and other papers of Cadbury's relating mainly the Cocoa trade in West Africa from about 1900 to 1960. This collection includes papers, including personal papers of William A Cadbury, relating to his campaign against slavery in the Portuguese West African Islands of San Tome and Principe, and to the court case which Cadbury's brought a libel case against the 'Standard' newspaper (following the publication of an article accusing Cadbury's of using slave labour to produce their coca in San Tome). Specific items include W. A. Cadbury's journal, with letters, photographs, documents and maps, of a visit to West Africa, 1908-1909; and a
volume of letters, presscuttings and photographs relating to Jeronimo Paiva de Carvalho and Alfredo da Silva and slavery in Portuguese West Africa, 1911-1913. Reference: CADBURY (See also entry for Burtt, Joseph)

**Chamberlain, Joseph**
The Cadbury Research Library has a significant number of collections of papers of politicians of the 19th and 20th centuries. Perhaps the most noteworthy in the context of international black history are the personal and political papers of Joseph Chamberlain who served as Secretary of State for the Colonies 1895-1902 and was primarily responsible for British policy during the Boer War. The collection also includes papers relating to his visit to South Africa in 1902 as well as small amount of material relating to slavery in Zanzibar in the later 1890s. Reference: JC

**Church Missionary Society Archive**
The Cadbury Research Library holds the extensive archives of the Church Missionary Society which was founded in 1799. It recruited and sent missionaries to Africa, India, China, Japan, the West Indies, the Middle East, New Zealand and elsewhere but also recruited native missionaries.

The CMS archive includes extensive sequences of letters, reports, printed papers, diaries, minutes, maps, plans and other records arising from the Society's work overseas and in the UK. The papers cover a broad range of topics as, in addition to evangelical work, the missionaries were actively involved in educational, medical and literary work and recorded observations of local customs, culture, trade and events. For example, there is much regarding slavery and the slave trade in the West Africa Mission; an illustrated account of the arrival of electric telegraph and railway in Punjbaj, 1865 (CMS/Z 45); early photographs and paintings of schools, hospitals and church buildings; correspondence concerning compulsory labour in Kenya during World War Two (G3/A5/1 sub file 8), and correspondence and papers of native born mission workers.

The early letters from missionaries in the papers from the West Africa Mission – which are catalogued in some detail - include a number of references to slavery and slave traders. To give a few examples:

Reference: CMS/C A1 E1/11 [17] Letter from Renner to Pratt: 26 April 1805: He gives an account of a slave, a skilled blacksmith, who has returned from America through lack of work there, escaped on arrival in the Colony, and is now well employed.


Reference: CMS/C A1 E1/100 [126] Letter from Renner to Pratt: 24 March 1807: he rejoices to hear of the abolition of the slave trade. "Most of the slave traders shake like leaves".
Reference: CMS/C A1 E4/40 Letter from Wenzel to Pratt: 14 November 1814: Writes the destructive raid on the slavers has done the mission more harm than the slave trade by arousing native hostility.


Dr. John Ludwig Krapf’s manuscript ‘A memoir on the East African slave trade’, 1853 (CMS/C AS O16/L79).

The account of the boyhood enslavement and release, dated 1837 of, probably, the most famous of the CMS’s black missionaries, Samuel Ajayi Crowther who was subsequently commissioned by the CMS to set up the Niger Mission and was the first African Bishop in the Anglican Church (CMS/C A1/O79/2).

One specific item in the Venn Family Papers (CMS/ACC81 T11) - includes a lease of Triall plantation (300 acres), ‘negroes’, cattle, stock and effects in Hanover, Jamaica; includes a list of slaves giving names and value, 1762.

Within the CMS archive there are numerous translations, often of the Bible, into many different languages. For example, translations of parts of the Old and New Testaments by Dr John Krapf, CMS missionary, linguist and traveller include translations of Acts to Revelation into Kiswahili (Swahili), a language of East and Central Africa, (ref: CMS/MS 11); translations of Genesis, Romans and Mark into Galla, a language of south and eastern Ethiopia and Kenya (since the 1974 Ethiopian Revolution, known as ‘Oromo’), (ref: CMS/MS 22).

Coleridge-Taylor, Avril Gwendolyn
Avril Coleridge-Taylor (pianist, conductor and composer, 1903-1998) was once described as a ‘Brilliant daughter of a brilliant father’, Jonah Barrington, Daily Graphic, London. We hold publicity leaflets about Avril by the London based music management agency, Ibb and Tillett, c 1953, and letter from Avril to the publisher, Dennis Dobson, 1978. In just a few paragraphs Avril Coleridge-Taylor conveys a sense of her experience of being black, and of being a woman in a male-dominated profession and the child of a celebrated parent.
See also entries for her parents Samuel and Jessie Coleridge-Taylor
Reference: MS860/5/1/16

Coleridge-Taylor, Samuel and Jessie
We hold several letters, newscuttings, receipts, legal documents and programmes relating to the composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912), and his wife Jessie Coleridge-Taylor.
References: MS33/4/1/3-4, MS33/5/5, MS107/36, and MS798 (not yet catalogued).
See also entry in printed book section of this guide, and entries for their daughter
Avril Coleridge-Taylor. Images related to Samuel Coleridge-Taylor can be found on our Flickr page

Crowther, Samuel Adjai

We hold lots of records within the Church Missionary Society (CMS) archive related to, or by Samuel ‘Adjai’ Crowther, first African Anglican bishop, missionary and linguist (1812-1891). Below are just a few examples. See also entries in the printed book section of this guide, and images on our Flickr page

Letter from Crowther to CMS, London, written whilst he was a student at Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone 1837. He gives a vivid account of his childhood capture into slavery and the months up to his release
Reference: CMS/B/OMS/C A1 O79

Extracts from Crowther’s journal of an expedition to the Niger 1854. Here he compares the Doma and Yoruba languages with an English translation, and other letters dated 1844-1857 Reference: CMS/B/OMS/C A2 031/1-131

Biographies of Samuel Adjai Crowther published by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), late 19th-early 20th century
Reference: CMS/H/H5 E2

CMS pamphlet The Right Rev. S. A. Crowther
Reference CMS/H H5/E2

CMS minutes, 12 January 1892, recording Crowther’s death
Reference: CMS/G C 1/56

Genealogical notes giving the descendants of Bishop Samuel Adjai Crowther
Reference: CMS/ACC1011

Garrison, William Lloyd

William Lloyd Garrison, 1805-1879, was an American anti-slavery campaign leader. A letter dated 1855 from Garrison thanks Harriet Martineau for her help and support with the anti-slavery cause. Other letters from Garrison to Martineau dated 1867 reveal his joy in seeing 'the utter abolition of the American slave system'. Also held are letters dated 1866-1867 about Garrison and his campaign fund.
Reference: HM/349; HMM/B/1/9 and LAdd/2439-2442.

Hall, William

Private journal of William Hall as master on HMS Morgiana under Captain Knight off the West Coast of Africa, 1822. The entries record Hall’s experiences as part of the naval squadron under the command of Commodore Sir Robert Mends which was charged, under various treaties, with suppressing the traffic in slaves by British subjects and by subjects of the Kings of Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands. These entries include descriptions of encounters with slaving vessels. Reference: MS27
Hansberry, Lorraine
Press and magazine cuttings of reviews of 'A Raisin in the Sun' by Lorraine Hansberry. With members of the cast and cast lists; includes programme, photographs, brief biographies of members of the cast and typescript. Dated 1959.
Reference: MS38/603

Hughes, Langston
Press and magazine cuttings of reviews of 'Simply Heaven' by Langston Hughes, based on the authors novel 'Simple takes a Wife'; with photographs and illustrations of members of the cast and cast list; includes programme with cast list and typescript. Dated 1957-1958.
Reference: MS38/4218

Martineau, Harriet
This collection comprises correspondence, literary manuscripts and other papers to and from Harriet Martineau (1802-1876), writer.

It includes a substantial quantity of her correspondence with contemporary authors and writers, politicians, journalists and other public figures. The letters document her activities and contributions as a social and political commentator, journalist and literary writer and as a feminist intellectual and contain a wealth of information about her philosophies and concerning such issues as women's rights, improved access to health and education, better working conditions and practices, and emancipation and abolition of slavery.
References: HM, HMLAdd, and HMM

Mosley, Oswald
The papers of Oswald Mosley include materials relating to his position and the Union Movements post-war policy towards immigration in the 1950s and 1960s. We also have a collection of publications of post-war British Fascist movements dating from the late 1960s up to 1993 which address similar political issues.
References: OMN and OMD

National Athletics Archive
This archive includes images of many black athletes, including Jack London, the first black athlete to win Olympic medals for Great Britain in 1928, and Emmanuel McDonald Bailey. Also a scrapbook titled '1936' featuring Jesse Owens.
References: ATH/AAA/3/3/1/1/71, ATH/ERLP/6/1/3, and ATH/DR/5/2

Robeson, Paul
We hold many items relating to Paul Robeson, singer and actor. They include programmes for plays; newscuttings; concert details; cast lists; publicity photographs. Search our archive catalogue www.calmview.bham.ac.uk for further details.
Sierra Leone
We hold several archive collections relating to the slave trade in Sierra Leone:

Commission dated 1810 to examine and seize slave ships. Reference: MS503

Extract of a journal dated 1807 by Thomas Ludlam, Governor of Sierra Leone, detailing the arrest of an American slave ship. Reference: MS504

Journal of Richard Warburton Lytton of Knebworth House, 1786. He mentions letters from, and meetings with, his friend Granville Sharp, the anti-slavery campaigner and makes reference to the work of the committee for the settlement of freed slaves established in Sierra Leone. MS695

Swanzy Henry Valentine L
Correspondence of Henry Valentine Leonard Swanzy, editor and broadcaster, principally relating to his work as editor and producer of the BBC [British Broadcasting Corporation] radio programme 'Caribbean Voices', a literary programme which ran between 1945 and 1958. The programme, which was broadcast back to the West Indies, featured poems, stories and other literary material by West Indian writers and provided an important and rare opportunity for writers of West Indian poetry and fiction to have their work publicised. Reference: MS42
University of Birmingham Archive

Papers of University staff
The Department holds papers of a number of former University staff including scientists, historians, linguists, economists and mathematicians. These include, for example, the papers of two former members of staff of Centre for West African Studies: those of Marion Johnson (US26) relate to West African history and culture including the slave trade, textiles, trade, economy, 1970-1986; and Dr Robert Bradbury’s collection (US3) relates to his field tours in Benin he undertook between 1951 and 1961 and his research on language, culture and folk-lore in this area of Southern Nigeria.

We also hold the papers of Janet Mendelsohn (USS100) which largely comprise photographs taken in the Balsall Heath area of Birmingham during the mid 1960s, and capture the everyday lives and experiences of residents including black and Asian migrants to the city.

University archives
The records of the University and its predecessors provide an important resource relating to the contribution presence of black and Asian students. Student registers for Mason Science College, the University’s predecessor, for example, record the admission of international students from the 1880s, and George Edalji, the son of the vicar of Great Wyrley in Staffordshire, who was of Indian descent. Edalji studied at Mason College in the 1890s before attending law school and becoming a solicitor. The University offered degrees in Mining and Metallurgy, which were studied by a high proportion of students from India and China. Commerce subjects were also popular with international students from the early 20th century, and group photographs reveal the ethnic diversity of the students on these degree courses.

The archives include copies of student magazines and newspapers published since the 1880s and these and the records of the Guild of Students are a valuable source of information for the study of the experiences of black and Asian students at Birmingham, including articles about student societies, incidents of racial discrimination, and political activism of student groups tackling racism. The student newspaper, ‘Redbrick’, also covers events outside the University including, for example, the visit of Malcolm X to Birmingham in 1965.

The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies archive catalogued at UB/CCCS could also be a useful research source, as some of the stencilled occasional papers deal with issues relating to racism and immigration in the 1970s and 1980s.

University of Birmingham Staff Papers: Stuart Hall Archive, catalogued at US121. Stuart McPhail Hall (1932-2014), born Jamaica. Cultural theorist and political commentator. Professional and political archive of Stuart Hall containing material relating to his activities as editor of the Universities and Left Review and the New Left Review in the 1950s and early 1960s; his involvement with CND during its first
wave in the early 1960s; his role as a member and Director of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham from 1964 to 1979; his teaching work at the Open University after he left Birmingham in 1979; and his wide-ranging research interests following his retirement from the Open University in 1997, until the end of his life. The archive contains a substantial quantity of annotated drafts and published copies of Stuart Hall’s writings on a wide range of subjects, spanning the period from the 1950s to the 2010s, as well as correspondence; course materials; interview transcripts; recordings; and ephemera

YMCA

The National Council of YMCAs of England and Wales was formed in 1880 and its records reflect the changing focus of its work with young people. For example, it has worked with the troops in both world wars at home and abroad (including Africa and India) and the YMCA, with the International Hospitality League, also ran a “Hostel for Coloured Soldiers & Sailors” in the First World War. Its traditional hostels, particularly from the 1950s, were used by overseas students. The collection also includes a substantial amount relating to the international YMCA movement. The national journal, for example, from the late 19th century up to the 1920s contains information and articles about YMCAs across the world. The collection also includes publications and papers of the World Alliance and YMCAs in countries around the world.

Reference: YMCA

Several World War One photographs in the YMCA archive feature black soldiers. YMCA/K/1/13/65 London; YMCA/K/1/21/123 and YMCA/K/1/21/124 are group photos of soldiers from the West Indies, photos taken at Sussex-Surrey Division, Seaford. YMCA/K/1/21/125 is a photo of soldiers from Jamaica, c 1916. Accompanying article featured the same photograph with the uncomfortable headline reflecting some attitudes of its time “Jamaican Negro troops fraternising with White Comrades in our Seaford Hut”.

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Printed books held at Cadbury Research Library

- Armistead, Wilson
  A tribute for the negro: being a vindication of the moral, intellectual, and religious capabilities of the coloured portion of mankind: with particular reference to the African race / illustrated by numerous biographical sketches, facts, anecdotes, etc. and many superior portraits and engravings
  Manchester : William Irwin... [et al], 1848
  Cadbury Research Library: HT 1581

- Birmingham Musical Festival, 1900
  Signed copy of a compilation volume of programmes. Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s signature can be seen [1st page in the centre] alongside that of Sir Edward Elgar. Coleridge-Taylor’s ‘Song of Hiawatha’ is listed as being performed 3 October 1900.
  Cadbury Research Library: r DA 690.B6M9 (signed copy edition)

- Crowther, Samuel Adjai
  We hold lots of books or pamphlets related to, or by Samuel ‘Adjai’ Crowther (c 1806-1891) first African Anglican bishop, missionary and linguist. Below are just a few examples. See also entries in the archive section.

  Page, Jesse
  Samuel Crowther: the slave boy who became Bishop of the Niger
  Cadbury Research Library BV3625.N5

  Paper read by Crowther before the Royal Geographical Society
  11 June 1877
  Cadbury Research Library r p DT 360

  A grammar and vocabulary of the Nupe language by Samuel Crowther
  London: Church Missionary House, 1864
  Cadbury Research Library r PL 8577

- Douglass, Frederick (edited by John Lobb)
  The life and times of Frederick Douglass : from 1817-1882
  London, 1882
  Cadbury Research Library E449.D7
• Equiano, Olaudah
  The interesting narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano: or Gustavus Vassa, the African / written by himself.
  London, 1793
  Cadbury Research Library: HT 869

• Gronniosaw, James Albert Ukawsaw
  A narrative of the most remarkable particulars in the life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African prince / as related by himself. It was the first Slave narrative in the English language. Published in Bath in 1772, it gives a vivid account of Gronniosaw's life, from his capture in Africa through slavery to a life of poverty in Colchester and Kidderminster.
  Cadbury Research Library: r p CT2750.G6A1

• Lynch, Bohun
  The prize ring
  London, 1925
  Cadbury Research Library: q GV1127.E6

• Sancho, Ignatius 1729-1780
  Letters of the late Ignatius Sancho, an African: in two volumes: to which are prefixed, memoirs of his life....
  London, J. Nichols, 1782
  Cadbury Research Library: HT 869.S3

• Taunton, Ethelred 1857-1907
  The English black monks of St. Benedict: a sketch of their history from the coming of St. Augustine to the present day.
  London: John C. Nimmo, 1897
  Cadbury Research Library Store: BX3016 (need to order in advance)

• Washington, Booker T.
  Up from slavery: an autobiography
  New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1901
  Cadbury Research Library: E185.97.W3

• Washington, Booker T.
  Tuskegee: its people, their ideals and achievements / edited by Booker T. Washington
  New York: D. Appleton, 1905
  Cadbury Research Library: LC 2851.T82

• Washington, Booker T.
  The Negro in Business
  New York: Hertel, Jenkins & Co., 1907
  Cadbury Research Library: E185.8
• Wheatley, Phillis
  Poems and letters / edited by Chas. Fred Heartman
  New York, 1915
  Cadbury Research Library: PS866.W5A6

• *Wheatley, Phillis* (by Heartman)
  A critical attempt, and a biography of her writings / by Chas. Fred Heartman
  New York, 1915
  Cadbury Research Library: PS866.W5Z5