

Kresen Kernow guide to sources related to Africa

This guide is part of a project to identify key collections and items in our collections relating to Black histories and Cornwall's links to the British Empire and colonialism. This is a significant piece of work, designed to make it easier to find items and to reveal previously hidden histories. The project will be wide ranging, and has already considered what our collections reveal about Cornish connections to the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Caribbean (find out more here: <https://kresenkernow.org/our-collections/collections-guides/black-histories/>). This guide highlights sources relating to Cornwall's interactions with Africa.

This document is designed to be an introduction to the types of sources we hold which may be of use in your research. It is not a comprehensive list. We strongly recommend searching our catalogues using the key terms below in order to discover the full range of documents.

Key search terms: Africa, individual place/people/event names, Black history, Barbary pirates, missionaries, colonial, colonialism

Records tagged with these terms are those with the greatest relevance to the history of these places and themes. We have also included key published sources in this introductory guide.

Please note: We recognise that our catalogue contains some terms which are offensive, and some whose meaning has changed over time. Such terms exist within some original records and have been retained to inform users of the nature and content of the sources concerned. They do not reflect the views of the Archives and Cornish Studies Service. We apologise for any offence that our inclusion of these words may cause.

People of African heritage in Cornwall

Several of our parish registers include references to people who were likely of African heritage. Some of these people reached Cornwall's shores through the Transatlantic Slave Trade (see the guide mentioned above). We have less information about others, and identifying them involves familiarity with archaic and often offensive terminology. People mentioned include:

P236/1/1 – Burial of Maria, daughter of “Emmanuel The Moor” [Emmanueli Mauris Anglice in the original Latin], August 18 1611, plus two other references to Emmanuel's family, in the parish register for Truro St Mary

P99/1/1 – Baptism of Constance, the “base child of a blackamore ye reputed father John the servant of John Langford”, St Keverne, January 1605

Black Tudors: the untold story by Miranda Kaufmann, 2017

Barbary piracy

One of the earliest interactions between Cornish people and Africa was likely through Barbary piracy. Barbary pirates or corsairs operated out of ports in North Africa, including Salé and Algiers. Merchant ships were raided, with the main purpose being to take captives for the Ottoman and North African trades in enslaved people. The Kresen Kernow archives include references to ransoms needing to be paid and church collections for the release of captives.

AP/B/698 - Will of John Batten, mariner, of Fowey, 1626, records that he had been captured by pirates

P63/1/1 – Falmouth parish register, 1663-1735, includes collections for named individuals being enslaved in “Algeere, Sally and Turkey”

P50/7/2 - Petition of captive John Bolithoe for collections towards ransom for his release, 1679. Bolithoe was recorded as "now captive in Sallye"

P64/1/1 – Feock parish register, 1671-1724, includes a reference in 1700 to "Redemption of English Captives at Machanes under ye Emperor of Fez and Morocco”

White gold: the extraordinary story of Thomas Pellow and North Africa's one million European slaves by Giles Milton, 2004

Pirates of Barbary: corsairs, conquests, captivity in 17th century Mediterranean by Adrian Tinniswood, 2010

The Barbary Pirates, 15th-17th century by Angus Konstam, 2016

Geography, travel and exploration

Explorer Richard Lander, who followed the course of the Niger River, has been celebrated in Cornwall, although his legacy poses some challenging questions today. Kresen Kernow is also home to more general journals and publications about travelling in Africa, and the continent’s geography, etc.

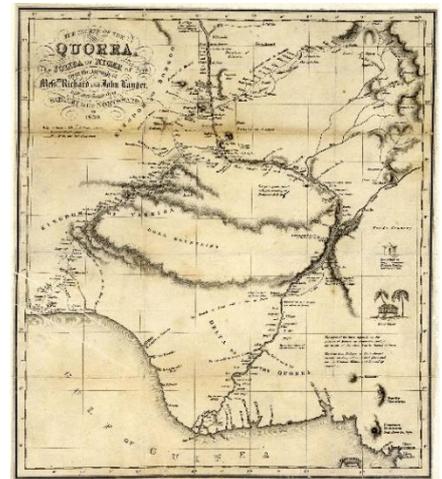
Richard Lander

X170 – collection of items relating to Richard Lander and his brother John, including photos, a map, official documents and letter written by John Lander while in “Katinga” [possibly Katanga].

Journal of an expedition to explore the course and termination of the Niger: with a narrative of a voyage down that river to its termination by Richard and John Lander, three volumes, 1832-1833

The Niger journal of Richard and John Lander edited by Robin Hallett, 1965

The Indomitable Servant by Mercedes Mackay, 1978 (biography of Richard Lander)



General travel

EN/2628 – letter book from John Davies Enys, including Egypt, 1857-58, includes some sketches

PV/19 – manuscript travel journal of Arthur Pendarves Vivian covering Algeria and Spain, 1861

PV/24-25 – manuscript travel journals of Arthur Pendarves Vivian while in Egypt, 1871

WS/34, 36, 43 - diaries of Henry Harcourt Williams including visits to Africa

Egypt, the Soudan and Central Africa: with explorations from Khartoum on the White Nile to the regions of the Equator: being sketches from sixteen years' travel by John Petherick, 1861

Travels in Central Africa, and explorations of the Western Nile tributaries by John and Katherine Petherick, two volumes, 1869

A new sea and an old land: being papers suggested by a visit to Egypt at the end of 1869 by William George Hamley, 1871

British Empire and colonialism

Cornish people played a part in Europe's 'Scramble for Africa' and were involved in colonial projects across the continent. Cornish people perhaps had the most impact – and vice versa – in South Africa (see section below) but Cornish businesses and industries reached into other corners of Africa through various colonial projects and activities.

Industry

As Cornwall's best-known industry, it was perhaps inevitable that Cornish mining skills and companies reached African shores. The archive collections include:

HB/D5/1 - map of mining areas, Ghana, 1900

X1234/P/19-20 - engine plans for Nanwe mine, Nigeria, 1900-1950

CH/30/1 – various reports on mining in Ghana and South Africa, 1907-1911

HB/A34/1 - map of mining areas, Nigeria, 1912

Camborne's famed Holman Brothers company made mining equipment which was exported all over the world. *From Holman Brothers to Compair: the story of Camborne's engineering history* by Clive Carter and Peter Joseph, 2012, includes a chapter about their work in South Africa.

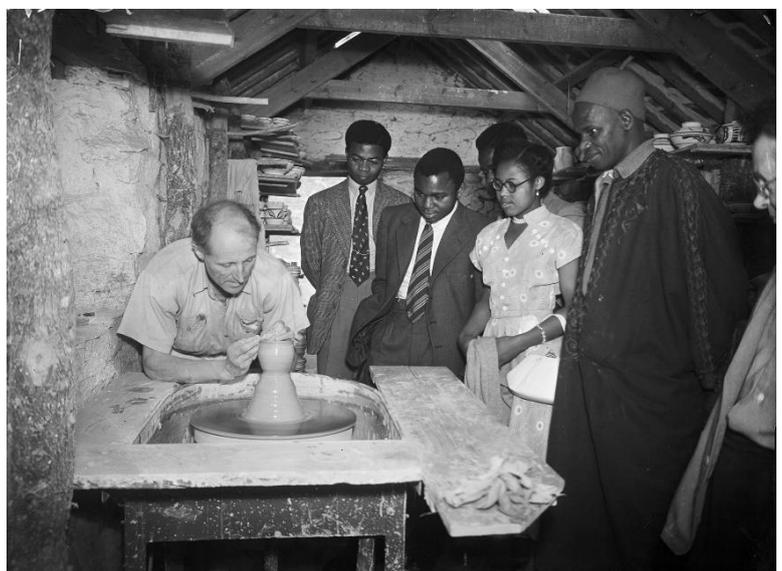
Colonial projects

Potter Michael Cardew (1901-1983), who trained with Bernard Leach and set up a pottery in Wenford Bridge, was appointed by the Colonial Office to establish a pottery in Ghana (although he became a fierce critic of British overseas policies) and later worked in Nigeria among other places. The links he established between Africa and Cornwall are demonstrated by a series of George Ellis photos in our collections.

GE/2/E/23414-23419 - Photographs taken at Wenford Bridge pottery, 1952 (not currently listed on catalogue)

A pioneer potter: an autobiography by Michael Cardew, 1988

The last sane man: Michael Cardew, modern pots, colonialism and counterculture by Tanya Harrod, 2012



Camborne School of Mines

Camborne Mining School was established in 1888 and later merged with the Redruth and Penzance Mining Schools to form the School of Metalliferous Mining, later renamed Camborne School of Mines. Students came from all over the world to train at the school and many graduates found employment in mining areas across the globe.

Camborne School of Mines collection (CSM) – mostly uncatalogued but includes letters including from and about students, some of whom were from overseas and others whose fathers were posted overseas, usually as part of colonial work. Admission registers, which are useful for identifying where students came from, are held in the Archives and Special Collections, Falmouth University and University of Exeter Penryn Campus.

Camborne School of Mines: the history of mining education in Cornwall, by Lawrence P.S. Piper, 2013, includes references to the school's relationship with Africa, giving examples of the number of students from overseas and the destination of students on completion of their courses.

Miscellaneous

GN/T/1/112-120 - Letters written by Crosbie Garstin while working on a cattle ranch in Botswana, 1912

South Africa

Although Cornish miners were working in the Cape colony from decades earlier, when Cornish mining collapsed in the mid/late 19th century tens of thousands of miners flocked to South Africa. By the turn of the 20th century it has been argued that Cornwall's economy was dependent on money flowing back from South Africa, which caused enough tension that it has been identified as one of the many causes of the Second Boer War. This presence has inevitably made itself felt in the archive and library collections at Kresen Kernow.

Mining

Cornish people mostly – although not exclusively – migrated to South Africa to work in the mines, searching for diamonds or gold.

X955/1-2 – Cornish mining engineer Jervis Veale compiled two photo albums of his travels to inspect mine workings, primarily in Africa. These albums show typical colonial scenes of picnics and cricket matches, including one of arch-colonialist, Cecil Rhodes. Some photographs also relate to the Matabele Rebellion in southern Africa in 1896, including the siege of Bulawayo.



X410/25-29 – This collection includes correspondence sent from South Africa to mine captain, William James, in Redruth, 1888-1917. It includes more than twenty letters from Francis Oats, who managed Cecil Rhodes' famous De Beers mine in South Africa, and later became an MP there.

X410/54 - Journal of London and South African Diamond Mining Company, 1881-1887, which includes a list of names of miners, daily production, injuries and notes on machinery at the 'Old De Beers mine'.

AD825/5 – Diary of Tom Bickle, written while touring 26 mines in South Africa, by Tom Bickle, 1889, includes sketches.

Cornish pioneers in South Africa: 'Gold and diamonds, copper and blood' by Richard Dawe, 1998

Cornish immigrants to South Africa: the Cousin Jacks' contribution to the development of mining and commerce, 1820-1920 by G B Dickason, 1978

From a dark stream: the story of Cornwall's amazing people and their impact on the world by Henry Cecil Blackwell, 1986 (pages 126-159 cover South Africa)

Articles:

Cornish Nightingale: Fanny Moody of Redruth by Donald Bray in *Cornish Life*, volume 5, number 1, 1978

The incredible Ookiep Copper Mine: its riches, its railway and its Cornish Engines by Kenneth Browne in *The Journal of the Trevithick Society*, number 11, 1984

The profits of death: a comparative study on miners' phthisis in Cornwall and the Transvaal, 1876-1918 by Gillian Burke and Peter Richardson in *Journal of South African Studies*, Volume 4, number 2, 1978

Boer War

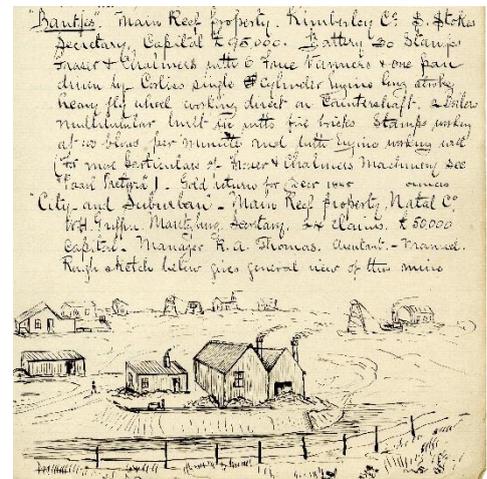
Coming at a time when parts of South Africa were occupied by thousands of Cornish miners, the prospect of the Second Boer War was very worrying. Cornwall was divided in its feelings towards the conflict, and many of the men working there returned to Cornwall as war broke out. Emily Hobhouse (born 1860 in St Ives) made an extraordinary humanitarian contribution during the conflict, travelling to South Africa and campaigning against the British concentration camps which housed thousands of Boer women and children in appalling conditions.

That bloody woman: the turbulent life of Emily Hobhouse by John Hall, 2008

Emily Hobhouse and the reports on the concentration camps during the Boer War, 1899-1902: two different perspectives by Birgit Susanne Seibold, 2011

Compassionate Englishwoman: Emily Hobhouse in the Boer War by Robert Eales, 2014

'One and All: a history of the Duke of Cornwall Light Infantry' by Hugo White, 2006, includes a section on Africa 1881 to 1914, pages 163 to 168 focus on the Boer War



Cornishmen serving in the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902 (extracted from records held at The National Archive) compiled by Malcolm Webster, 2010

Miscellaneous

AD1087/1 – Diary of John Polglase, South Africa, 1878-1880. Polglase's diary records daily life in Durban, as well as unrest with the Boers, the Zulus and British military action and troop movements.

The ruin of Zululand: an account of British doings since the invasion of 1879 by Frances Ellen Colenso [daughter of Bishop Colenso, mentioned below], two volumes, 1884-1885

Missionaries

Missionaries are sent from religious groups to promote their faith and perform "ministries of service", such as education. They also helped further colonial projects and the expansion of European empires in Africa. Our archive and library collections contain references to well-known Cornish missionaries.

John William Colenso (1814-1883)

Colenso became Bishop of Natal in 1853 and is remembered as a controversial figure. He became fluent in the Zulu language and published translated texts, including the New Testament. He was called *Sobantu* by the Zulus ('the father of his people') but was unpopular and condemned by fellow bishops for his unorthodox religious views.

Several key publications tell Colenso's story.

Ten Weeks in Natal: a journal of a first tour of visitation among the colonists and Zulu Kafirs of Natal by John William Colenso, 1855

The heretic: a study of the life of John William Colenso, 1814-1883 by Jeff Guy, 1983

The controversial Colensos by A.L. Rowse, 1989

Other missionaries

MR collection – includes information on overseas missions (mainly 20th century) within the Methodist collections. There may be more within the earlier general minutes and accounts from these collections, as well as within the correspondence series.

Life of Thomas H. Carthew, Missionary to East Africa by Joseph Kirsop, 1897

The Life of George Grenfell: Congo missionary and explorer by George Hawker, 1909

Samuel Symons: missionary to The Gambia 1842-1844 by Elaine Horner, 2003

The Life of Thomas Truscott: Missionary to Sierra Leone by Joseph Kirsop, 1890

Mendiland memories: reflections and anticipations by William Vivian, 1926

A Woman's Wanderings the World Over by Lucy Broad, 1909 (includes Africa)