

What is the connection?



Picton castle



Parrot



Coal

What is the connection?

1. Wales
2. Picton Castle
3. Parrot
4. Coal

Cesar Picton



Cesar Picton (c.1755-1836) was a successful businessman and coal merchant who, for much of his life, lived in London. But Cesar came to Britain as a slave. In circa 1755, Cesar was born into a Muslim family in Senegal, but was brought to Picton Castle in Pembrokeshire, belonging to Sir John Philipps, baronet and MP for Pembrokeshire, by Captain Parr on 8 November 1761. Philipps travelled back to his second home in London and wrote in his journal about "a Black Boy from Senegal given to me by Capt. Parr, also a paraquet and a foreign Duck". Cesar was christened in London on Sunday 6 December 1761.

In June 1762, Cesar was taken to Picton Castle where he trained in household work and was educated. He never became a servant as Sir John's only surviving son already had a servant. Cesar was treated very well by the family and was accepted as one of their own. Lady Philipps died when he was about 33, and left him the large sum of £100 in her will. He also received legacies from her daughters on their deaths

Picton Castle



In June 1762, Cesar was taken to Picton Castle where he trained in household work and was educated. He never became a servant as Sir John's only surviving son already had a servant. Cesar was treated very well by the family and was accepted as one of their own. Lady Philipps died when he was about 33, and left him the large sum of £100 in her will. He also received legacies from her daughters on their deaths.

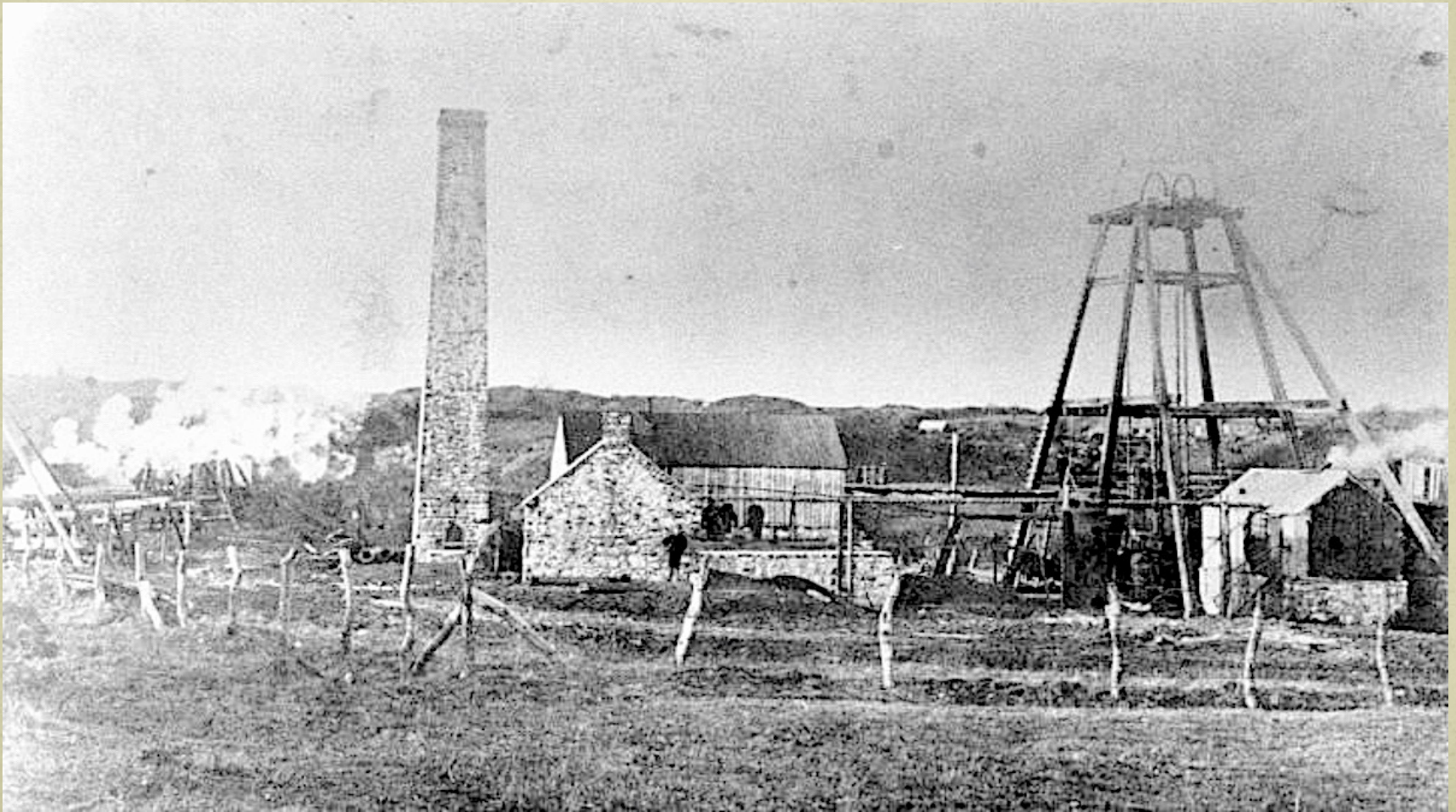
Black Servants in Britain

1700's



- The lines between slavery and those of a favoured Black servant in Britain in the eighteenth century are blurred. Slavery was legal in Britain until 1772, and many Africans brought to this country found themselves working as butlers or servants in wealthy households. After this date, Black people had to be treated as free; free to earn their own living or be paid wages as a servant in the household where they had been resident. Some were treated well, given an education, wages, and sometimes received an inheritance, and their duties were not always hard. The Philipps family seem to have accepted Cesar as simply another young member of their family household. Black children were viewed as exotic and often a high society talking point. It was fashionable to treat African boys in a certain way; they were given rich clothing and Sir John bought a 'velvet Turban for black boy' for 10s 6d. Two centuries earlier, Elizabeth I began the trend by dressing her own Black court musicians and page-boy in elaborate and exotic costumes. Painters from the Renaissance period onwards would often give the same treatment to Black subjects, or paint European nobility and gentry with their richly-dressed Black page-boy or servant.

Pembrokeshire Coal



Given the considerable amount of money Cesar had received from Mrs Phillips will this gave him a great deal of independence. In his early 30's Cesar Picton's life completely changed. He set himself up in business, becoming a coal merchant in Kingston, London. Much of his money had to be spent in the outlay of the business, such as rent on his work premises and £10 to the Kingston Corporation so he could trade. This was a hefty sum, but towns and cities needed coal for domestic and industrial uses. It was a secure and profitable business. Pembrokeshire, where the Phillips estate was located, was famous for a high-quality anthracite coal that burnt cleanly. Cesar used the Picton family's connections to start a coal merchant business, coming in at the higher end of the market. In that area of Kinston there would have been the households who demanded and could afford such clean coal

Legacy



Cesar Picton was successful in business and became rich. While this was in contrast to the majority of black people in Britain at the time, some did achieve status and prosperity, for example writer and abolitionist Olaudah Equiano and Mayfair shopkeeper Ignatius Sancho. Other successful black businessmen worked as publicans and lodging-house keepers, providing some evidence of black upward social mobility.

Picton left a portrait of himself in his will (along with several other paintings), but its whereabouts is not known. It emerged in 2007 that the portrait of Picton depicted in a mural of Kingston's history, commissioned by the Council, was actually of either Olaudah Equiano or Ignatius Sancho. He is not known to have married, and all his bequests were to friends. Although Picton lived through the main period of the British abolitionist movement, no involvement by him is known.

We can see Picton's physical "footprints." Picton House is on the High Street in Kingston upon Thames still survives and is still one of the largest properties there. We have the records and documents of his life, the business transactions, tax payments, and the parish records. The spot where he was buried in the church is marked with a plaque that simply says "CP 1836."

Film



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDuH8Ewe2HE&t=169s>