

MOTHER OF MANKIND

by Banji Alexander



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Alkebulan

Alkebulan means mother of mankind
and was Africa's original name.

There under the World History Tree sits Black History Month, unwaveringly
“It’s almost that time of year again when focus turns to me”

Descendants of Alkebulan, the mother of mankind
The spotlight beams like stars on heights achieved, unsung at times

So, shall we proceed down the rabbit hole on this illuminating stroll?
Exploring places far and wide and names you ought to know



King Ezana



Queen Amanirenas



Mansa Musa

We'll visit Ancient Egypt, the Kingdom of Kush too
Benin Empire, Songhai, the Kingdom of Aksum
Glistening gold from Mansa Musa, inscriptions on Ezana's Stone
Rowing on the River Nile past Queen Amanirenas' throne

So, shall we proceed down the rabbit hole on this utmost compelling stroll?
Exploring places far and wide and names you ought to know



Benin Empire



We happened upon a fine lady in York,
her sumptuousness rivalled a king's
Held a berry-blue flask and a mirror made from glass,
her ears adorned with yellow earrings
And although her identity was abstruse,
her exquisiteness was admired all the same
Her ivory and jet bangles, and silver pendant valuables
gave the Ivory Bangle Lady her name



The Ivory Bangle Lady



We met a tiptop trumpeter trumpeting,
thrilling in a Tudor court
He was skilfully shrewd when his shillings were short,
he petitioned with a riveting result
King Henry said, "Yes, pay him more, double wages for the young moor!"
Such musical splendour, John Blanke, encore!
'Twas a pretty patterned turban he wore

So, shall we proceed down the rabbit hole on this at times heart-wrenching stroll?
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John Blanke





Olaudah Equiano

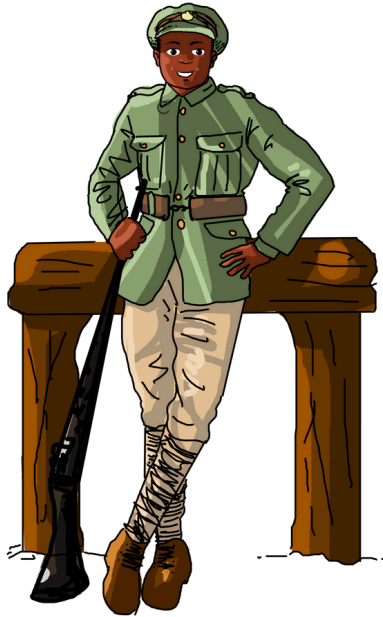
Alas, an iniquitous twist of fate saw pirates subjugate
Alkebulan's freedom was at stake as massacres like Zong altered the landscape
And 'twas an uphill battle to escape those ills,
Sons of Africa pushed with unwavering zeal
Strengthened by Equiano's quill,
emancipation sparked the onerous journey to rebuild



There's a sailor's hat floating lonely at sea,
it belongs to the young Charles Wootton
A headstone for his grave and some flowers we laid
to ensure he is never forgotten

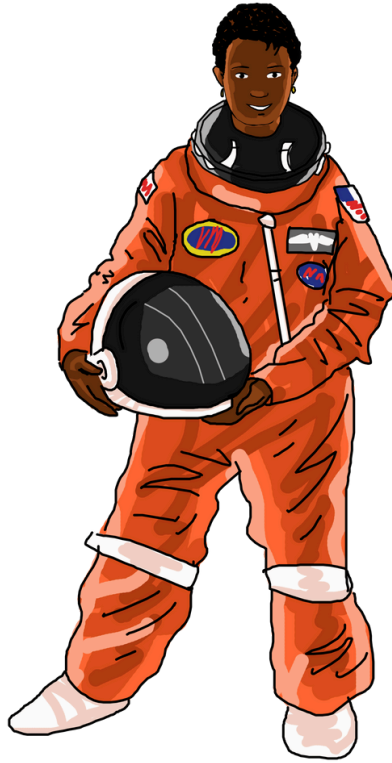
And for the British West Indies Regiment, we'll fire the military guns
We'll beat on the drums to salute their unsung contributions in World War One

So, shall we proceed down the rabbit hole on this brave, inspiring stroll?
Exploring places far and wide and names you ought to know



British West Indies Regiment





Mae Jemison

Whatever your aspirations may be, there's inspiration within Black history
A majestic and rich tapestry, there's no shortage of variety
So, be the architects of the future, like Sir David Adjaye
Reach for the stars like Mae Jemison and build like Dangote





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