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OLAUDAH EQUIANO



Who was Olaudah Equiano?



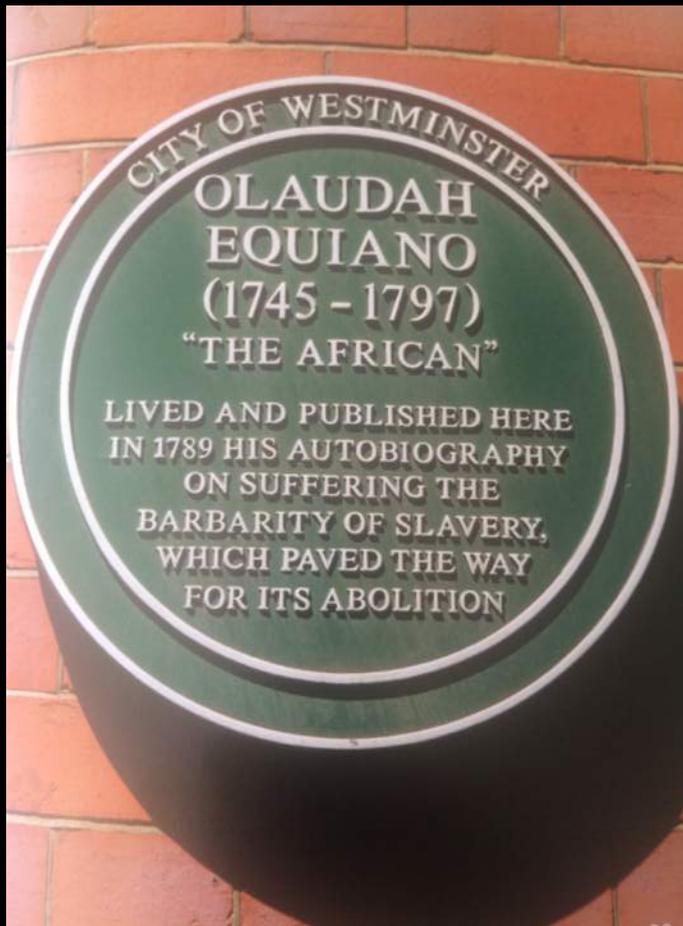
Olaudah Equiano was born in 1745 in Africa, in a place that's now called Nigeria. Equiano played an important role in the fight for the abolition of the slave trade.

Having lived as an enslaved African himself, he had first hand experience of what the conditions of slavery were like and wanted to do something to change this.

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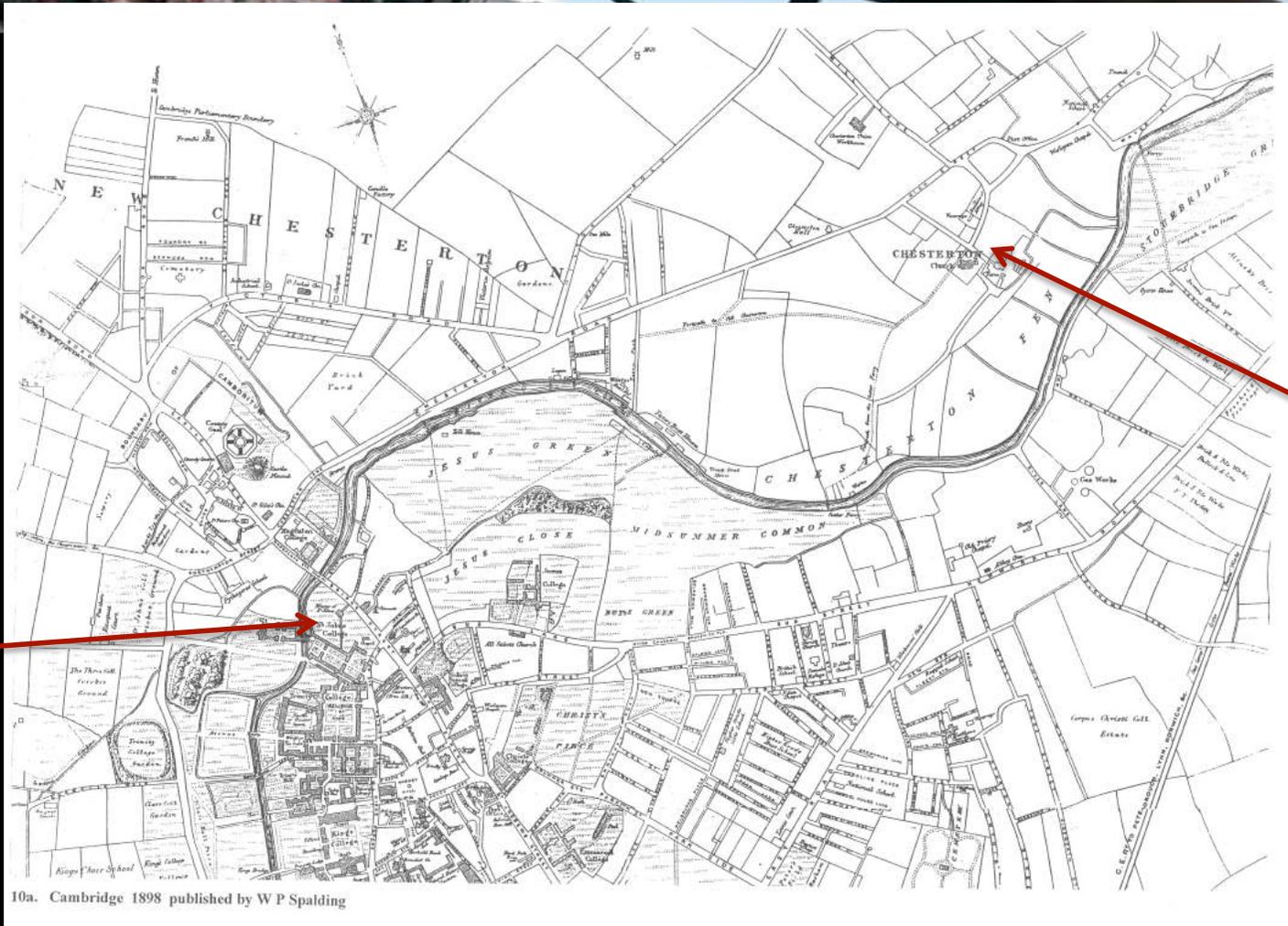
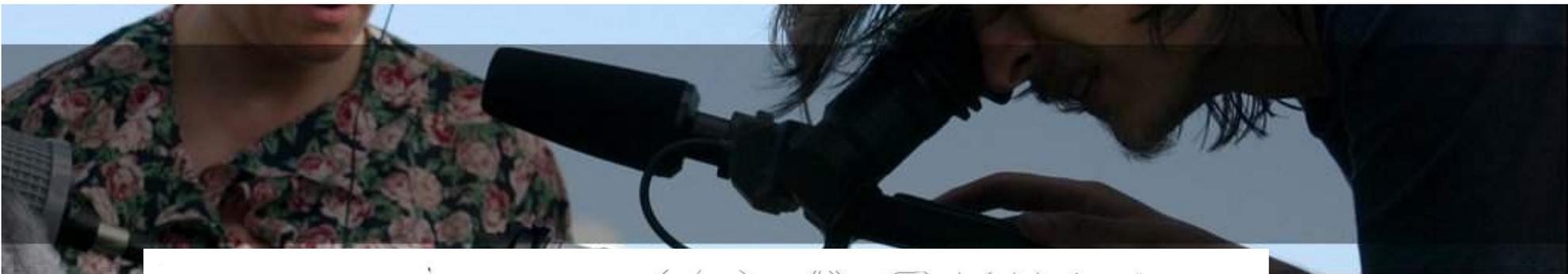
Equiano and the Fight for Freedom



This plaque was put up in Westminster in London, to commemorate Equiano's life and the autobiography he wrote and published about his experience as an enslaved African, which led to slavery eventually being abolished.

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Needs
Arrows to
St. John's
And Chesterton
adding

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How did Equiano end up in Cambridgeshire?



Equiano came to live in Cambridgeshire much later in his life, when he married his wife Susanna Cullen in Soham in 1792. They had two children, Anna Maria and Joanna. Anna Maria's grave is in the grounds of St. Andrew's Church in Chesterton, Cambridge.

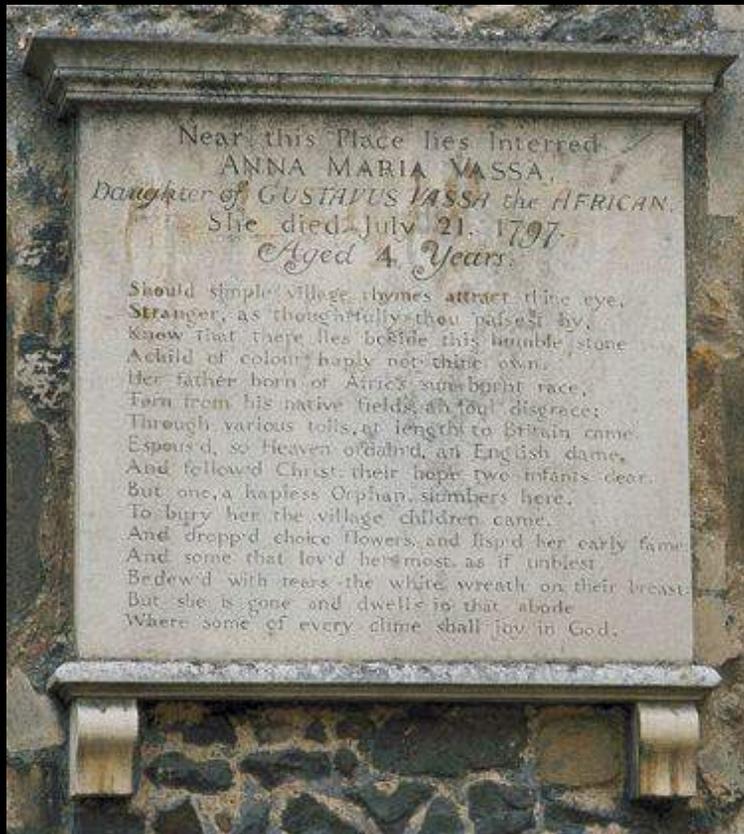
This portrait of Equiano is on the cover of his autobiography, which he wrote to tell people about the horrors of the reality of slavery.

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Equiano's Daughter's Grave at St. Andrew's Church, Chesterton

The plaque is engraved with the words:



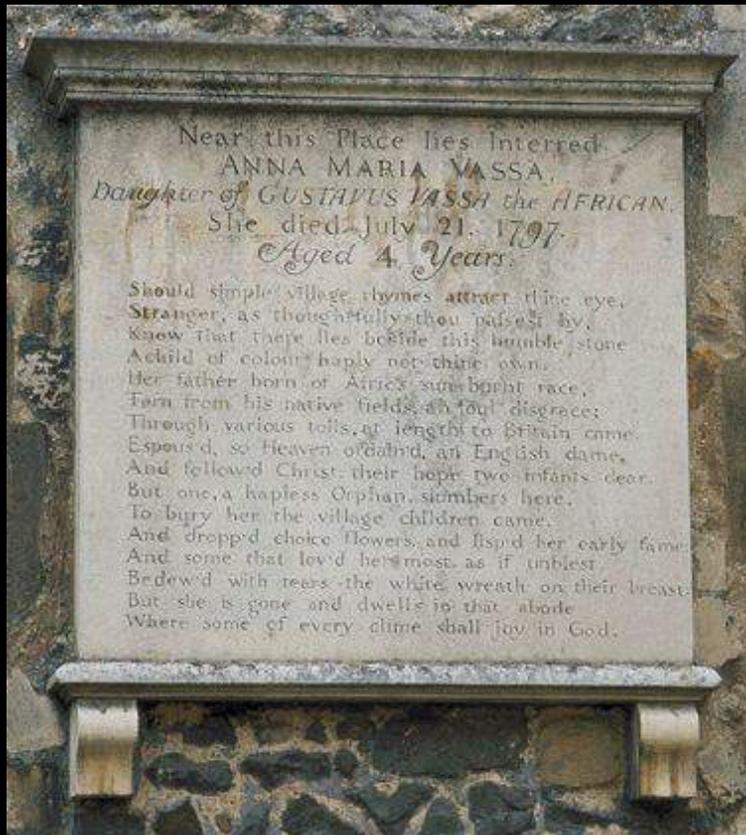
Near this Place lies Interred
ANNA MARIA VASSA
Daughter of **GUSTAVUS VASSA** the **AFRICAN**
She died July 21 1797
Aged 4 Years

Should simple village rhymes attract thine eye,
Stranger, as thoughtfully thou passest by,
Knew that there lies beside this humble stone
A child of colour haply not thine own.
Her father born of Africa's sun-burnt race,
Torn from his native fields, ah foul disgrace:
Through various toils, at length to Britain came,
Espous'd, so Heaven ordain'd, an English dame,
And follow'd Christ; their hope two infants dear.
But one, a hapless Orphan, slumbers here.
To bury her the village children came,
And dropp'd choice flowers, and lisp'd her early fame;
And some that lov'd her most, as if unblest,
Bedew'd with tears the white wreath on their breast;
But she is gone and dwells in that abode,
Where some of every clime shall joy in God.

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What's in a Name?...



Anna Maria Vassa, sadly died at the very young age 4 years old, from a measles epidemic. She was given the surname Vassa, after her father's adopted name. He father had also died that year, 4 months before her, in March 1797.

FACTOID!

Olaudah Equiano was given the name Gustavus Vassa after his owner when he became an enslaved African, as you weren't allowed to keep your own name. This is why you can't see the name Equiano anywhere on the plaque.

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Forced to leave his country...

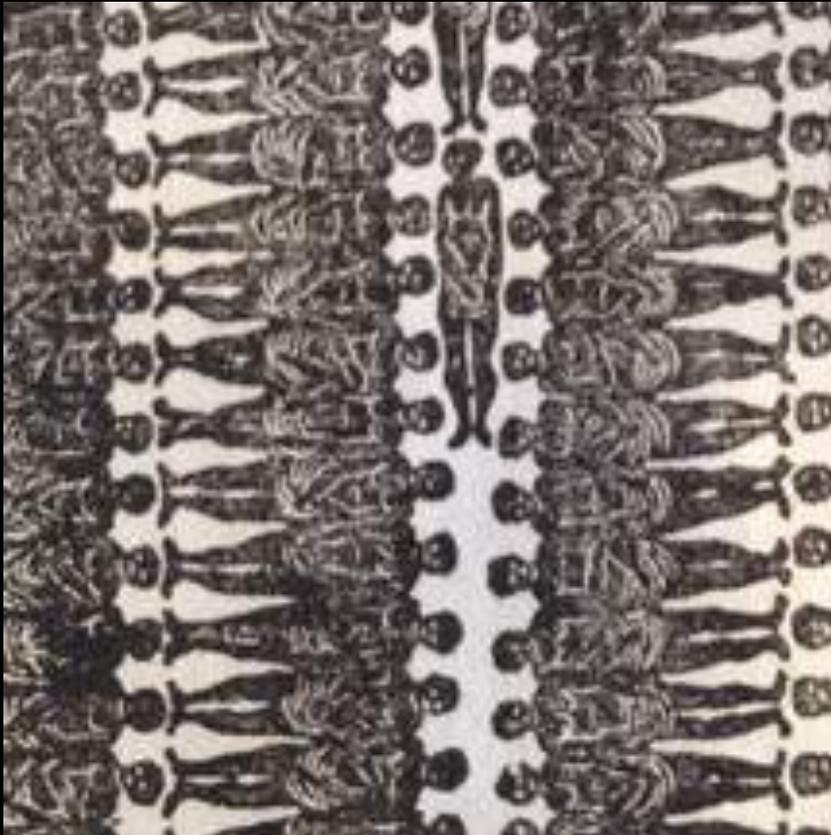


Olaudah Equanio was born in Nigeria, but was forced to leave his home and board a slave boat to North America when he was only 11.

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Forced to leave his country...



This picture shows a small section of a plan of the Brookes slave ship from 1788 which was used to transport enslaved Africans from Africa across the Atlantic Sea. Which shows the kind of cramped conditions Equiano would have faced on his journey across the Atlantic Ocean.

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Inja Checks Out the Evidence in St. John's College Library



This picture shows Inja taking a close look at some of the documents about the slave trade in St. John's College library, including the plan of the Brooks ship from 1788 (from the previous picture).

These documents were very important as they were used part of the evidence for why slavery should be abolished and helped lead to the abolishment of slavery in the UK in 1807.

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Video of Inja at St John's College



The Slave Trade

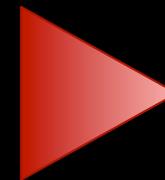
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Inja with Sing! Community Choir who performed in the 'Freedom' recording



To listen to the original track click here:



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'Freedom' Song Lyrics

Some live for freedom some die for freedom
Some fight for freedom some lie for freedom
Some cry for freedom some try for freedom
Some say that we ain't free till the whole worlds
free

Some walk for freedom some ride for freedom
Some run for freedom some hide from freedom
Some spy for freedom some write for freedom
Some say that we ain't free till the whole worlds
free

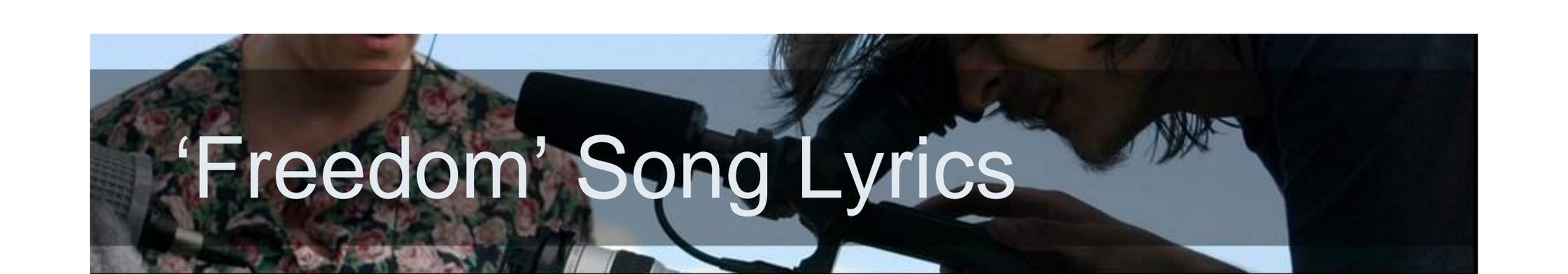


'Freedom' Song Lyrics

We all have a right to
freedom

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'Freedom' Song Lyrics

Just imagine being a kid
Chilling at home with your sis at your crib
Next thing kidnappers break in
Capture you both so you'll never see your kin
Separate you then ship abroad
To a place that's an unknown shore
Then you're sold at a price
Someone owns your life
And you'll never see freedom no more

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'Freedom' Song Lyrics

Then a captain buys you and you sail with the
tide
Seeing the whole world wide
Given a wage that's minimum not high
But enough to buy your freedom in time
On that day when you've got funds
Your name's yours for the right sum
It's Equiano by the setting sun
Once papers signed your freedom comes, then



'Freedom' Song Lyrics

Go from slave to author
To protestor in one semester
Plant the seed the to get slavery ended
And go against the grain of freedoms ember
From essays to decades as activists
These grounds here produced the catalyst
To trading in slaves as an active wish
To demolishing the routes cos they had to give

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'Freedom' Song Lyrics

But I can be free just like all of us
These real life stories paved the way
Enthralled in history to this day
There's many out there that's still enslaved
Do you fight for them or just work for you
Do you care at all or just care for you
Do you use their ways to keep slavery true
Whether mind over body or in anything you do

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'Freedom' Song Lyrics

I know who I am, you know bout you
No identity crisis here to view
I know my past and my parts are used
I'm part of a parcel that defends truth
And these truths are free like we all should be
Whether woman, man, child, all human beings
To the people fighting
I hope one day that
I can help you all to be free.

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'Freedom' Song Lyrics

Cos they had to give
Once word spread
Of how were slaves treated the trade would
end
Cos the work of men that worked to defend
Those exported, exploited, and bent
All started here in Cambridge
That's why I'm proud but still trouble breeds
One street down I was chased by three
For the colour of my skin like I can't be free



'Freedom' Song Lyrics

We all have a right to
freedom

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Web Resources available at:

www.creatingmycambridge.com/history-stories/equiano-clarkson-abolition

The screenshot shows the Historyworks website interface. At the top left is the 'history works' logo. To its right is a navigation menu with links: Home, About, Events, Histories, Songs/Creative, Photography, and How-to/Lesson Plans. Below the navigation is a large banner for 'CREATING MY CAMBRIDGE' featuring a photo of people at a table. Underneath the banner is a paragraph of text: "Creating My Cambridge" is a project to share historical sources about Cambridge's people and places, past and present. It uses histories to inspire creativity and cultures of belonging. The aim is to give voice to school pupils, singers, musicians, poets, rappers, storytellers, film-makers and composers. Historyworks is working with top poets like Michael Rosen & witty lyricists like CBC's *Horrible Histories* song writers, organizing workshops and events to help young people get creative. Do use these resources and contribute subjects and creative pieces. All Welcome!

Below the text are two video thumbnails. The first is titled "From History to Creativity: Michael Rosen demonstrates artistic practice and roars at the Fitzwilliam Museum" and has a duration of 05:45. The second is titled "Creating My Cambridge - Body Percussion" and has a duration of 03:11. Both videos are hosted on Vimeo. At the bottom of the page are four categories with corresponding images: "HISTORY STORIES & SOURCES" (a stone lion), "SONGS, RAPS, POEMS AND CREATIVE STUFF" (a young girl singing), "HOW-TO FILM GUIDES AND LESSON PLANS" (a group of people), and "PHOTOGRAPHY" (a young girl).

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Other Resources available:

Books

Olaudah Equiano- From Slavery to Freedom,
by Paul Thomas, Collins Big Cat

Slavery to Freedom, by James Walvin, The Pitkin Guide

Equiano's Daughter- The Life and Times of Joanna Vassa,
by Angelina Osbourne, Momentum Arts

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