

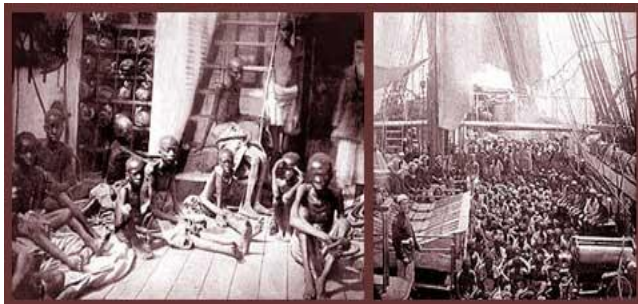
Panel 9 The Royal Navy and anti slavery patrols

In 1808, the British West Africa Squadron was established at Sierra Leone, West Africa to suppress illegal slave trading by British citizens. From 1810 until 1865 nearly 150,000 people were freed by anti slavery patrols, many were taken to Freetown, Sierra Leone.

In 1819 and 1820, the first locally built ships deployed to Africa to undertake anti slavery patrols – HMS *Thistle* built by Ross of Rochester sailed for West Africa and HMS *Menai* built by Brindley of Frindsbury sailed for Mauritius in East Africa. The anti slavery activities of the Royal Navy were extended, when in 1849, the Sheerness Dockyard built HMS *Cormorant* and the Chatham Dockyard built HMS *Hydra* became the first Medway built ships to deploy to the coast of South America to undertake anti slavery patrols. The following year - 1850 – saw the Sheerness built HMS *Vestal* sail for anti slavery duties off North America.

The Chatham built HMS *Alecto* worked on anti slavery patrols as part of the West African Squadron. As a steam ship, *Alecto* was able to outpace the slaving ships.

1 .& 2.



1. Severely emaciated boys and young men from East Africa are pictured on the lower deck of the Royal Naval ship HMS *Daphne*. They were taken on board from a dhow.

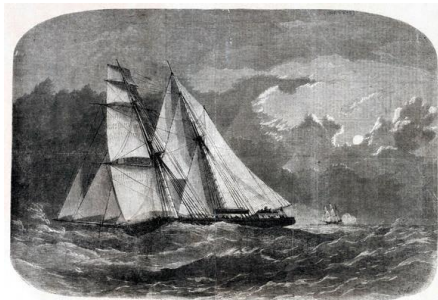
Courtesy: © The National Archives

2.

Upper deck of sailing ship crowded with people including children. [Daphne not CB]

Courtesy: © The National Archives

3.



Night Chase of the Brigantine Slaver *Windward* by HM Steam-Sloop *Alecto*, c. 1845

Courtesy: © National Maritime Museum, London

Panel 10 **HMS London at Zanzibar and anti slavery patrols**

The Chatham built ship HMS London served as the Station Depot ship for the East Indies Station at Zanzibar from 1874-1883.

1.



Steam Pinnace from HMS London chasing a Slave Dhow, 1881

Courtesy: © Illustrated London News

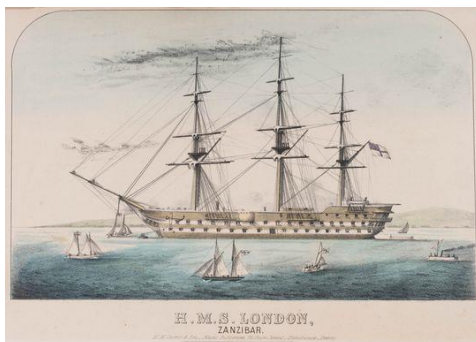
2.



Cargo of newly released Slaves on board HMS London

Courtesy: © National Maritime Museum, London

3.



HMS London, Zanzibar

Courtesy: © National Maritime Museum, London

**Panel II Black and Ethnic Minorities in the Medway Towns during
the early to mid 19th Century**

The most celebrated member of the black and ethnic minorities to live in the Medway Towns during the 19th Century was Sarah Forbes Bonetta (c. 1842-1880). She came to Britain in 1850 from Dahomey (now Benin) with a British naval commander to whom she had been gifted as a captive. Sarah was named after the naval commander, Captain Frederick E. Forbes, and after the ship he commanded, the *Bonetta*. Queen Victoria became Sarah's godmother.

From 1855, Sarah lived with the Schön family in Gillingham. Reverend James Frederick Schön was a retired missionary and had worked in Africa from 1832-1847. He was the Chaplain to the Melville (naval) hospital. He was also a treasurer of St. Mark's Church, Gillingham and lived with his family at Palm Cottage, Canterbury Street, Gillingham. Reverend Schön played an important role regarding the numbers of African and Black visitors who stayed with Schön and contributed to local society.

I.



Sarah Forbes Bonetta, 1856

William Bambridge

albumen print, The Royal Collection

Courtesy: © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II