



Past and Present
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Did you know?

Woodhouse is the final resting place of Britain's first black circus owner.

Pablo Fanque was the stage name of William Darby, a famous Victorian performer and entrepreneur who, as far as history records, was Britain's first black circus owner. He was much loved in Yorkshire, performing many times in Leeds at sites around the city and its outskirts. In 1846, he packed out Woodhouse Moor for the Repeal of the Corn Laws celebrations. The show was a huge spectacular, celebrating an event that made food more affordable for the working classes.

On his death, his body was brought to Leeds General Cemetery in Woodhouse. The newspapers report that a crowd of 10,000 people lined the streets of the city to say farewell.

The Beatles' song 'Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite', on the 1967 album *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, was inspired by a poster for Pablo Fanque's circus, which Lennon discovered in a Sevenoaks antique shop.

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To find out more about Pablo and his illustrious career, scan the QR code >

