

New Mary Seacole Photograph

A previously unknown photograph and a rare signature of Jamaican-born nursing hero, Mary Seacole, have been unearthed at one of England's oldest private schools, Winchester College.

The photograph will be used to support the fundraising efforts of the Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal (MSMSA). A release from the Statue Appeal said that while Winchester College retains the copyright of the image, it has allowed the MSMSA sole use in order to raise funds for the project. A specially designed postcard has been produced by the MSMSA, and will be available for sale to help finance the memorial, at a site donated by and located on the grounds of St. Thomas' Hospital, facing the Houses of Parliament in London. Dr. Geoffrey Day, the current Fellows' and Eccles Librarian at Winchester College, discovered the photograph earlier this year. It was in an elegant private campaign scrapbook, compiled by former Coldstream guards officer, Ely Duodecimus Wigram (1802-1869). In 1916, it was presented to the Library of Winchester College by the then Headmaster. The photograph of Mary Seacole is full face with a wealth of detail, including her hairstyle and the lace edging on her clothes. There is also a signature of her, which is extremely rare. The shortlisted artist who will design the memorial for Mary Seacole should be named this month. In May, the names of the two finalists from the selection process were announced. The Statue Appeal, which is supported by the Jamaican High Commission in London, has so far raised £100,000 but still needs to raise another £400,000 to build and maintain the Memorial. The Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal was set up in November 2003 to create a permanent reminder of the 19th century Jamaican nurse, who is known in the UK as a hero of the Crimean War.