***BBC History Magazine*, February 2013**

In the section on events in February, there is a great painting of Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr on a bus. Under ‘The BBC Story’, a pic from the 1978 ‘children’s drama’ called *Grange Hill*, with three young boys, the one in the centre a ‘Black’ child, sitting eating what looks like chips out of newspaper ’ ags’. This was a ‘children’s drama …set in a mixed comprehensive school in London…’ (p.11).

The report, ‘**Mariners set sail for the Bronze Age’** reports on ‘Britain’s first reconstructed, seagoing prehistoric boat’. What was new was the move from ‘animal-skin boats’ to ones built from wooden planks. It is built ‘on a 4,000 year old craft excavated on the Humber estuary’. But didn’t Egyptian have plank-built boats? So this might have been ‘European’ mariners following in the footsteps of the Egyptians.

The article **’20 battles that shaped Britain’**, includes:

‘Brilliant leadership thwarts the Sikhs: the battle of Aliwal, Punjab, 1846’. (p.12) This was the defeat of a Sikh army invading British-held territory. ‘British veterans of Waterloo who also fought at Aliwal described the fighting as being as tough as that with the French in 1851’. (p.23)

Another entry on ‘A heroic stand in the Zulu War: the defence of Rorke’s Drift, Natal, January 1879’. This was ‘one of the few redeeming features of the Zulu War’. (I must ask: ‘redeeming’ for whom?) ‘For 12 hours the Zulus mounted assaults on the makeshift barriers, but were kept at bay. Finally they retired… General Chelmsford was forced to regroup, but the Zulus missed the opportunity to expel the invaders. The British finally defeated them at the battle of Ulundi on 4 July 1879’.

In the sections on the battle of El Alamein, 1942, D-Day in Normandy and the Japanese in Burma there is no mention of Indian and African troops or Black GIs.

The article by Martin Pugh, ‘**A matter of faith**…10 key moments from history that both help explain contemporary tensions and offer cause for optimism’, might be of use to teachers. And in his article **‘A familiar tragedy’**, William Dalrymple takes us back to Britain’s first invasion of Afghanistan in 1839.

I wish I had been her to listen to this. In BBC 3 radio program ‘**Saturday Classics’** Bettany Hughes asked listeners to ‘imagine the world these ancients were inhabiting’… The program featured ‘tunes inspired by stories from Greece, Rome and Egypt… Ancient music has embedded itself in the western classical tradition…. When the Ottomans took over Constantinople, their marching-band tunes…influenced Mozart among others’.

There is an advertisement for a **BBC History Magazine Event**, ‘Talking Tudor’, to which researchers on ‘Blacks’ in Britain the Tudor period have not been invited to contribute.

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