

*Mrs. Mary Seacole*

THE EDITOR: Sir,—In your issue of the 5th instant you reproduce two letters referring to Mrs Seacole, from the "Sunday Times" (London) of January the 16th. The writer of one of these letters tells that he has in his possession a little book entitled "Mrs Seacole" written by herself. I do not know whether the information I am about to give is recorded in that book. At the time when a bronze bust of Mary Seacole was placed in the Institute of Jamaica I remember the late Mr. Frank Cundall making reference in an article in the "Gleaner" to this interesting woman. Mr Cundall thought she possibly belonged to Kingston. Not so long after, while on a visit to Kingston, I had the opportunity of passing on to Mr. Cundall, verbally, that Mary Seacole originally came from Haughton near Lacovia, in St. Elizabeth she being then a young woman went to Black River and lived for some time in a stone building on the sea coast, since demolished by hurricanes, at Beach Pen a part of Fullerwood Pen—within half a mile of the Town. At Black River she became famed in the making of cakes and patties. Later she left Black River for Kingston where she also carried on, only on a much larger scale. This information was given me, at the time Mr. Cundall's article appeared, by a much respected merchant of Black River, now also passed on to his long rest. Mary Seacole was well known to this gentleman. From Kingston she was taken to England from where she went out to the Crimea and was one of the first to enter Sebastopol after the fall of that town. It is interesting to note that "She shipped herself and a quantity of provisions including many cases of Champagne to the Crimea where she opened a hotel that would serve as a place of refreshment and rest for the troops". She nobly rendered help and assistance to the sick and the dying soldiers of the Empire. Mary Seacole of Houghton and Black River did make history for Jamaica.

I am, etc.,

"S. F."

Black River, February 7th. 1938.