

**FOR THE MEMORY OF PABLO FANQUE A NORWICH SON,
WE NAME THIS BUILDING. SO WE THANK**

**A CIRCUS-FOUNDING PIONEER BORN 1810.
FROM THE WORKHOUSE CLOSE TO HERE,**

**PRAISED IN
THE PRESS
AT AGE 11
FOR THE
HIGHEST
LEAPS
A CIRCUS
COULD SEE...**

**WITH BUT ONE
PAIR OF HORSES,
STARTED HIS OWN!**

**HE WENT TO WIGAN, TRAINED AND BRED
ON A VENUE'S CIRCUS SAND**

TO READ HIS THOUGHTS:

**THE TURNS THEY'D DO AT HIS COMMAND,
FROM THE WORKHOUSE CLOSE TO HERE,
AND OTHER FLOORS.**

**HE RULED THE
NORTH
WITH MORE
THAN TENT.
AS HE WENT
HE BUILT
AND HE
RESTORED...**

**WITH HIS OWN
ARCHITECT
AUDITORIA!**

**HE TOOK PUBS' TRADE IN EVERY TOWN,
PHILANTHROPIST TILL BANKRUPT CLOWN,**

A LEAPER'S FALL

**HE BUILT AND LEFT AN AMPHITHEATRE,
LATER NORWICH VICTORIA'S**

BOOKING HALL...

**FATE IS LIKE
THAT STATION'S
TRAINS -
ITS VECTOR
LEAVES
A TRACE
BUT RARELY
A TRACK**

**TILL A BEATLE
FINDS A POSTER
A CENTURY ON!**

Pablo Fanque (born William Darby 30 March 1810 in Norwich, England; died 4 May 1871 in Stockport, England) was an English equestrian performer and circus proprietor. His circus was the most popular in Victorian Britain for 30 years, a period that is regarded as the golden age of the circus. Since the late 20th century, Pablo Fanque has been best known from being mentioned in The Beatles' song "Being for the Benefit of Mr. Kite!" on their album Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band (1967).

Little is known about Pablo Fanque's early life. Church records suggest that he was born in 1810, one of at least five children born to

John and Mary Darby (née Stamp) of Norwich. They were believed to have resided in Ber Street. When Fanque married in 1848, he said his late father's occupation was "butler" on his marriage certificate.

Dr. John M. Turner speculates in his 2003 biography of Fanque that "his father was Indian-born and had been brought to the port of Norwich and trained as a house servant." Fanque was reportedly orphaned at a young age. Another account has Fanque born in a workhouse to a family with seven children.

Since shortly after Fanque's death in 1871, biographers have disputed his date of birth. Since 2003 biographer Turner has popularized the belief Fanque was born in 1796. The

newspaper Era records on 14 May 1871 that Fanque's coffin bore the inscription; "Aged 75 YEARS". Fanque's gravestone, located at the base of his late wife Susannah Darby's grave in Woodhouse Cemetery, Leeds (now St George's Field, part of the University of Leeds), reads; "Also the above named William Darby Pablo Fanque who died May 4th 1871 Aged 75 Years".

But Fanque's age was recorded in the 1841, 1851 and 1871 censuses of England as indicating he was born in 1810. A birth register at St. Andrews Workhouse in Norwich reports the birth of a William Darby to John Darby and Mary Stamp at the workhouse on 1. April 1810. This is the birth year on a blue

plaque commemorating Fanque's birth, which was installed by the city of Norwich near the purported location of his childhood residence.

Genealogists have noted a marriage record of John Darby and Mary Stamp on 27 March 1791, at St. Stephen's, Norwich. Records of children born to Darby and Stamp include John Richard on 4 Jul 1792, Robert on 27 Jul 1794, William on 28 Feb 1796, Mary Elizabeth on 18 Mar 1798, and William on 30 March 1810. The family has two burial records, William on 30 Apr 1797 and Mary Elizabeth on 10 Feb 1801. These indicate that the subject William was born in 1810, the second boy to have been given that name after his late brother died in 1797.