

Slave Trade was legal in Canada. People of African descent were brought to Upper and Lower Canada to be used as slaves. Some big names of Canadian slaves include Sophia, Henry, Peggy and Dorinda. They all have very different stories with equal meaning. There are also names such as Grisley, Martian, Osgoode and Simcoe who were fighting for change in the way slaves were treated. Although they were enslaved they were still people, searching for their freedom to take back their own lives.

Slave trade was legal in Canada. "Both English and French laws defined slaves as chattel and under the full authority of their owners"

(https://moodle.tru.ca/pluginfile.php/843260/mod_resource/content/1/Acts_of_resistance_Black_men.pdf, Pg.8). African Canadians were all enslaved. They were deemed as property and were sold and traded like furniture or land.

Sophia Pooley was born to slave parents in New York. At a very young age Sophia and her sister were sold to a chief in Niagara. The girls were brought to a reserve in Upper Canada. Mohawk leader Joseph Brant owned over thirty slaves. On the reserve Sophia hunted with the chief's children. She was bought at age seven and sold when she was twelve. Joseph Brant's third wife abused Sophia. "She attributed the scar over her eye and other injuries to Brant's third wife, a "barbarous creature" who beat her and cut her with a knife" (http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/slavery/sophia_pooley.aspx). After finding out about the abuse the chief punished his wife and sold Sophia to an Englishman in Ancaster for a hundred dollars. Sophia had a more privileged life than most slaves. The Mohawk chief treated her like his own child, although she still suffered abuse and was traded like property. "She recalled that Joseph Brant punished his wife, saying: "you know I adopted her as one of the family, and now you are trying to put all the work on her" (http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/slavery/sophia_pooley.aspx).

Henry Lewis escaped from his owners in Upper Canada. He fled to Schenectady, New York. After his escape he wrote his former owner in Upper Canada asking to buy his freedom. He claimed the reason he left was because his owner's wife vexed him. "the reason why I left your house is this your [Jarvis' wife Hannah] vexed me to so high a degree that it was far beyond the power of man to support it is true and I will say in all company that I always lived as well in your house as I should wish" (http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/slavery/henry_lewis.aspx). Henry was a brave man. Punishments for running away were brutal and could even lead to death. I view his letter as a cocky

response he had escaped and there was little no chance that his owner would go retrieve him, but he still wrote back to them asking to buy his own freedom. It was a very bold move on Henry's part.

Peggy was a fighting woman. She challenged her owners. Her owners made an attempt to sell Peggy as she was difficult to manage due to her protests and non-submissive ways. "My Slave Peggy, whom you were so good to promise to assist in getting rid of, ... is now at large, being not permitted by my Sister to enter this House, and shows a disposition at Times to be very troublesome, which may perhaps compel me to commit her again to Prison"

(<http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/slavery/peggy.aspx>). Peggy's owners wanted to get rid of her as quickly as they could. As no one would buy her, Peggy's owner put an ad in the paper stating that other owners could not employ her as she was still under his ownership. Peggy was a brave woman who resisted her slavery. She was protesting the way she was treated which led to her and her owners facing difficulties.

Dorinda Baker was the property of Robert Gray in Upper Canada. The new slave act had been instituted so Dorinda's three children would eventually be freed at the age of 25. Gray stated in his will that if he passed that Dorinda and her children would be set free. He also left them money and property and would purchase the rights to Dorinda's mother so that the family could be reunited. "I could not avoid doing this act, the opportunity seemed to have been thrown in my way by providence and I could not resist it (http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/explore/online/slavery/dorinda_baker.aspx). Later that year Gray drowned in a shipwreck and Dorinda and her family were free. Gray although having owned slaves did a very generous thing at the time. By granting Dorinda and her family freedom they were able to pursue humane lives.

Chloe Cooley had no rights. She was deemed as property and was sold across the border. Men took her away on a boat and tied her up once she was sold. "Every, forced the said Negro girl into it... and carried the boat across the river; that the said Negro girl was taken and delivered to a man upon the bank of the river by (Vrooman), that she screamed violently and made resistance, but was tied up in the same manner..."(https://moodle.tru.ca/pluginfile.php/843260/mod_resource/content/1/Acts_of_resistance_Black_men_.pdf, Pg. 9). After witnessing this event Grisley and Martian wanted to see change.

Grisley and Martin were two black men who wanted to see change. Martian was a retired war veteran who fought alongside the British and was gearing up to protest the un humane acts of slavery. Simcoe and Osgoode were members of parliament who saw these events unfolding. Martian had brought the treatment of Cooley to their attention. "After serval amendments, on 9 July 1793, at the second sitting of Parliament, the bill that Osgoode had drafted to prohibit the importation of slaves in Upper Canada was made law"

(https://moodle.tru.ca/pluginfile.php/843260/mod_resource/content/1/Acts_of_resistance_Black_men.pdf, pg. 12).

There are many African Canadian slaves that have left a great impact on Canadian History names such as, Sophia, and Henry. Slave trade was a legal act which is a horrible part of Canadian history. People such as Grisley and Martian wanted to influence change on these inhumane acts. All of these events helped lead the way to the well-deserved freedom of slaves.