

# Moments in Canadian Black History

Grades 4-8

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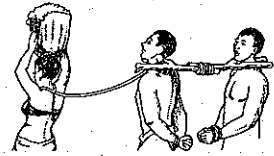
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## Slaves of Loyalists in Nova Scotia

After the American Revolution, many people who had stayed loyal to the British government fled the United States. They came north to the British colonies, which had not rebelled. Many of these people were slaves who had fought in the British Army and had been freed. Others were slave owners who brought their slaves with them.

Nova Scotia had a long history of slavery, but there had never been a large number of them. The land was not good for farming, so the big farms that used many slaves in the southern colonies did not exist in Nova Scotia. A lot of what people do is decided by how they can make money. Because there was no good way to make a lot of money using slaves in Nova Scotia, there were not many slaves.

When a large number of Loyalists came to Nova Scotia, many of them brought their slaves with them. These Black people were often called servants instead of slaves, but were not allowed to go free, no matter what they were called.

While it did not happen often, there seemed to be no law in Nova Scotia against terrible punishments for slaves. One man in Truro had a slave who ran away several times. The man punished the slave so brutally that the slave died. The people of the town complained that the treatment was cruel and vicious, but the man did not have to face a court for what he did.

The indenture system was a close cousin to slavery, but also included white people. Indentured servants were temporary slaves and could be punished as though they were slaves. They would sign papers saying that they would work for a period of time, often several years, and get their freedom at the end.

Sometimes masters would trick Black people who couldn't read by promising a short term as a servant, but writing a much longer contract. One woman signed a 39 year indenture.

Usually there was supposed to be a payment of some kind at the end of the contract. Sometimes masters would find some way of releasing their servants from the contract just before the time was up so that they would not have to pay the money that was due when the contract was finished.

Some slaves and servants had no choice but to sign a contract that would allow their master to beat them and force them to do things. Some people would sign contracts as a way of supporting themselves because they were poor. People who were very hungry may have felt they had no other choice. Sometimes a court would sentence people as indentured servants as a punishment; because the court system was a reflection of the racist society, and many of the free Black Loyalists in Nova Scotia never received the land that they were promised for their military service, most indentured servants were Black.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Slaves of Loyalists

There were few \_\_\_\_\_ in Nova Scotia before the 1780s because the \_\_\_\_\_ was not good for farming. People could make the most \_\_\_\_\_ from owning slaves when the slaves worked on large \_\_\_\_\_.

In the 1780s, people who had been loyal to \_\_\_\_\_ came to Nova Scotia to be safe from the \_\_\_\_\_ who had won the American Revolution. Many of these \_\_\_\_\_ brought their slaves with them.

When these \_\_\_\_\_ were brought to \_\_\_\_\_ they were often called servants, but they were still not allowed to go free. While people in Nova Scotia did not like it when slaves were punished, \_\_\_\_\_ who did terrible things to their slaves rarely faced justice in a \_\_\_\_\_.

Indentured \_\_\_\_\_ were like slaves, except that their \_\_\_\_\_ were supposed to free them eventually. They had \_\_\_\_\_ that set a \_\_\_\_\_ for their \_\_\_\_\_, and they were often supposed to get money or \_\_\_\_\_ at the end of their term. Poor people would sometimes sign \_\_\_\_\_ to become indentured servants so that they would have someone to feed them and give them a \_\_\_\_\_ to live, and they would get some \_\_\_\_\_ in the end. Most Black \_\_\_\_\_ in Nova Scotia lived in \_\_\_\_\_, so most indentured servants were also Black people.

Some wealthy people would trick poor people, who often had little \_\_\_\_\_ and could not read, into signing a contract that was much longer than the servant thought it was going to be. Many \_\_\_\_\_ also tried to get out of paying the money at the end of the contract's \_\_\_\_\_.

freedom	slaves	money	money	farms
rebels	masters	Loyalists	slaves	owners
servants	people	Great Britain	contracts	contracts
soil	scoundrels	court	date	land
term	place	education	Nova Scotia	poverty

**Research:**

Describe the living conditions of indentured servants of European descent.

Discuss the differences and/or similarities between "indentured" and "slavery". Make a comparison between the living conditions of each group.

## Rose Fortune

Rose Fortune started her own business at a time when very few women were that independent, and not many Black people were able to support themselves in that way.

Rose was born in Virginia, in the American south, during the American Revolution. She was born to slaves, but she and her family escaped to Nova Scotia as Loyalists. They probably received their freedom by helping the British in the war. They had to leave the United States as refugees when their side lost the war. The family may have come with their previous owners in the hopes of getting land from the government in Nova Scotia. They probably arrived in Annapolis Royal in 1783 when Rose was ten years old.



At a time when most women would have been working indoors or raising their children, Rose began a business transporting luggage and other cargo to and from sailboats and hotels or homes around the docks. Rose met the boats when they came in and helped the travellers by carting their things in a wheelbarrow. She carried anything from suitcases to large trunks.

Until the early 1900s, Annapolis Royal was a stopping point for sailboats on the important shipping route between Europe, the United States and the West Indies. There was a lot of traffic in the harbour to keep Rose busy.

Rose dressed for comfort and in a way that helped her get her job done. She had to wear some men's clothing, such as men's boots, because things designed for women were not functional.

As she became well known, she began offering other services. Her work was centred around the docks, because most things were transported by ship, but she would carry things all over town. She also offered a wake-up service. She went around to the inns and made sure that travellers were awake in time to get on to their boats before the ships left the harbour.

Seeing a need to keep order where she worked, Rose appointed herself to be the police force in town. She kept the port under control. She may have been the first policewoman in Canada. One of Rose's strategies was to impose a curfew, a time when people were not supposed to be out on the streets, and enforce it by going around the town and sending people home.

Rose lived to be 90 years old, another rare thing in her time. One of her descendants, Daurene Lewis, also went beyond what was usual in her time by becoming the first Black female mayor in North America. Some of Rose's other descendants still work in the trucking business.

The Association of Black Law Enforcers has created a scholarship program and named it in Rose's honour.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rose Fortune

For each question, write one complete sentence relating to the information in the fact sheet. Use the words provided in any order and add your own to make the sentence make sense. The first one is done as an example.

1. ship                      late                      home

**Rose woke people up at home so they would not be late getting to their ship.**

2. escape                      slaves                      help

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. wheelbarrow                      suitcase                      carry

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. street                      hotel                      service

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. stone                      under                      sleep

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. police                      first                      self                      order

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. dock                      sail                      busy                      deck

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. business                      move                      hard                      around

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. dress                      style                      work                      wear                      boots

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Research:

Describe the police force in larger centres like Halifax, Toronto or Montreal in the early 1800s.