**The Slaves of Upper Canada and their Resistance**

The slaves of Upper Canada had many different categories of resistance stemming from individual resistant, where slaves would break tools, damage livestock, talk back to their owners, or temporary marronnage; and there would be collective resistance. Individual resistance would pose any long term effects on the slavery trade, but the more radical of the two, collective resistance, posed a much larger threat. The collective resistance of this time period could range from self-emancipation, to revolts and rebellions.

In the early years of Canada, the French slave code, the Code Noir, were enforced with respect to the slaves and their owners. These codes had defined the slaves as ‘chattels’ in which their owner had full authority over them. Slaves that acted out of order were brought in front of the courts, where a ruling would be made to have them legally murdered. Given these harsh laws enacted by the French, the slaves weren’t completely without power. The slaves did have the power to protest and rebel, they did have the capacity to fight back against their owners and masters, although this could result in the death of many of them.

Chloe Cooley an enslaved black woman in Upper Canada, was captured and thrown into a boat to be taken to the United States. As she resisted the capturing, Peter Martin, a than free black man, had witnessed her struggles, and brought a witness, a white man known as William Grisley, in front of a court to testify his sightings. A significant member of the hearing was Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe. Simcoe was a strong supporter of the abolition of slavery and he used the story of Chloe Cooley as a catalyst in his argument against slavery. This would eventually introduce the Act to Limit Slavery in Upper Canada in 1793.

Sophia Pooley was a young black girl who was born a slave in Fishkill, New York. She was bought at a young age by Mohawk chieftain Joseph Brant, where she was then brought to Brant’s Mohawk reserve in Upper Canada. Pooley was adopted to be a part of the Brant family, although Joseph had a history of savagely beating his wife. Pooley stayed with the family until she was 12, at that time she was sold to an Englishman in Ancaster.

Henry Lewis was a slave who lived with his owner in Newark, Upper Canada before he escaped to New York, where he would later write to his former owner and request to buy his own freedom.

Peggy was a slave whose owners were trying to sell her but weren’t able to find a proper suitor. It was later revealed that the advertisements for Peggy’s sale was a deliberate ploy by her as an act of resistance, as an act to escape from Peter Russel and his family.

Dorinda Baker was doomed to live her entire life as a slave, as well as her children until the age of 25. However in her owner Robert Gray’s will, he would leave the Baker family with a large sum of money and property, as well as purchasing the freedom of Dorinda’s mother Lavine. Later in the same year that the will was written, Robert Gray was found drowned in a shipwreck, leaving Dorinda and her family in freedom.