

Robert Sutherland (born 1830 in Jamaica and died June 2, 1878, in Walkerton)

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Image illustrated by Veronica Rojas Marquez, Fashion Arts advanced diploma student. Instagram: @veronicarojasm.

Robert Sutherland is known as the first graduate of colour at a Canadian university and the first Black man to study and practice law in North America (Queen's University, n.d.). Mr. Sutherland came to Canada to study at Queen's University in 1849. A skilled academic he won numerous prizes and awards. Upon graduating with honours, he was called to the bar in 1855 and served as a lawyer in Kitchener and then in Walkerton. Never married when Mr. Sutherland died he left his estate to Queen's University. This key donation allowed Queen's University to remain separate from the University of Toronto, after a bank collapse left the school in a financial crisis. One of the most important endowments in the university's history, there are many awards and bursaries named after Mr. Sutherland, along with a campus building (Robert Sutherland Hall) to honour his legacy.

Reference

Queen's University. (n.d.). *Sutherland, Robert (c.1830-1878)*. Queen's Encyclopedia. CBC Radio Canada.

<https://www.queensu.ca/encyclopedia/s/sutherland-robert-c>

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