

Chloe Cooley

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

With no record of birth, death, family, or connections it might be hard to understand Chloe Cooley's importance to Black history in Canada. What we do know is that as an enslaved woman from Upper Canada, Ms. Cooley's actions of defiance against her owner was what likely sparked a change in anti-slavery legislation (Government of Canada, n.d.). It began with her owner Sgt. Adam Vrooman attempting to forcibly take her across Niagara River to New York State to be sold. Two men, a Black loyalist named Peter Martin and a white man named William Grisley who were witnesses to the altercation reported it to Lt-Gen. John Graves Simcoe. This led Lt-Gen. Simcoe to anti-slavery legislation in Upper Canada and the Act to Limit Slavery in Upper Canada was created in 1793. It was the first legislation to put restrictions on the slave trade in the British Colonies.

Reference

Government of Canada. (2022, February 3). *Noteworthy historical figures: Chloe Cooley*. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/black-history-month/black-canadians.html>

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