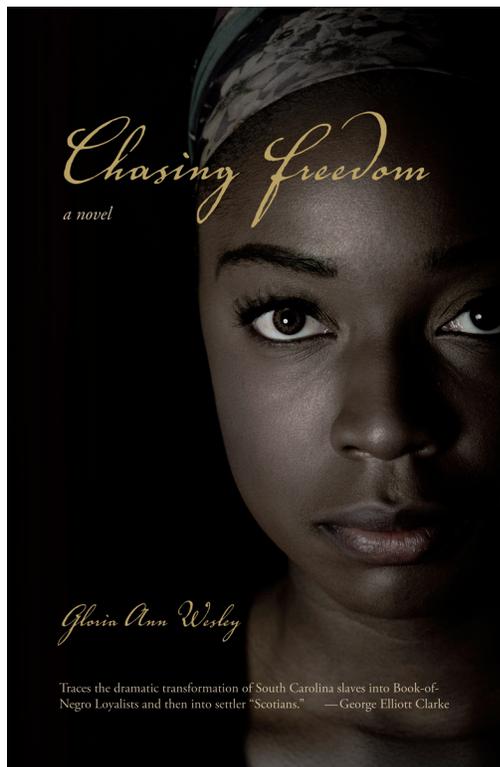


Chasing Freedom



Teacher's Guide Activities and Resources

Gloria Ann Wesley

Chasing Freedom

Publisher: Roseway Publishing, an imprint of Fernwood Publishing

ISBN: 9781552664230

Price: \$18.95

240 pages

Publication Date: 2011

Gloria Ann Wesley's new young adult novel, *If This Is Freedom*, is also available.

If This Is Freedom

"This tale brims with love, racial conflict, mystery, deception and ultimately forgiveness: it's a story for our times. Wesley's characters have compelling things to say to us. Set in the 1780's, a time when the transatlantic slave trade was rife, Sarah and Thomas invite us into their tumultuous world. As Thomas says "You can't wait on life to fulfill your dreams. You have to make them happen."

— *Sylvia D. Hamilton, Filmmaker and Writer, Producer/Director of The Little Black School House*

Publisher: Roseway Publishing, an imprint of Fernwood Publishing

ISBN: 9781552665718

Price: \$19.95

272 pages

Publication Date: 2013

fernwoodpublishing.ca/If-This-Is-Freedom/

Individual copies of *Chasing Freedom* and *If This Is Freedom* can be purchased from your local bookstore or online at:

fernwoodpublishing.ca/Chasing-Freedom/

fernwoodpublishing.ca/If-This-Is-Freedom/

For information on bulk discount sales please contact roseway@fernpub.ca

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Author: Gloria Ann Wesley

Gloria Ann Wesley's book *To My Someday Child* (1977) was the first book of poetry published by an African Nova Scotian writer. On April 5, 2007, the Nova Scotia Legislature passed a Resolution recognizing this fact and congratulating Gloria.

Gloria is a graduate of the Nova Scotia Teachers College and St. Francis Xavier University. She has over 25 years of experience in the Nova Scotia school system in various roles at the elementary, middle, senior and administrative levels. She worked in Halifax, New Glasgow, Guysborough, Monastery and Port Hawkesbury. In her role as an English Language Arts teacher, she recognized the need for African Canadian novels. This inspired her to write *Chasing Freedom*.

Her writings include *To My Someday Child* (1975), *Woman, Sing* (2002) and *Burlap and Lace* (2007). Her poetry appears in three Canadian Anthologies: *Canada in Us Now:* (1976), edited by Herald Head; *Other Voices: Writings by Blacks in Canada* (1985), edited by Lorris Elliott; and *Fire on the Water* (1992), edited by George Elliott Clarke.

Curriculum Outcomes

Teacher's Guide: Activities and Resources is designed to meet general curriculum outcomes for English Language Arts, Grades 7-9. The activities and resources will:

- provide an opportunity for students to experience young adult fiction from an African Canadian perspective;
- allow students to use the electronic network to access specific information to meet their learning needs;
- assist students in exploring, clarifying and reflecting on their own thoughts, feelings and experiences;
- encourage students to critically respond to information;
- allow students to consider a situation demonstrating sensitivity and respect;
- extend ideas and feelings through a variety of ways to represent students' learning and imaginations; and
- enable students to work independently and collaboratively using a variety of forms: writing, music, art, math and drama.

Activities

1. Drama: Enactments

- A. Divide students into two groups. In a darkened room with only a candle for light, hold a secret meeting between the groups, one expressing the pros and the other the cons of hiding a runaway slave in Birchtown. Try to reach consensus on a plan of action to deal with the issue.
- B. Allow students to create their own dialogue and enact any of the following scenes from the novel or another of their choosing:
 - Master Redmond and the other businessmen of Charles Town discussing the pros and cons of joining the American Revolution.
 - A group of abolitionists at a meeting arguing to free the slaves, while local plantation farmers object.
 - The confrontation in Roseway between Sarah and Ramsey Lewis.
 - The courtroom scene for either Fortune or Sarah Redmond being accused of a different offence with a different outcome.
 - The night Fortune left to join the American Revolution.
 - A group of five Roseway Associates discuss their demands with Governor Parr at a meeting in Halifax. (Public Library Resource: Robertson, Marion. *King's Bounty: A History of Early Shelburne*, Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 1978.)

2. Monologues

- Ask students to work alone or in pairs to create monologues to portray themselves as characters in the novel.

3. Art

- Have students create a mural to show the Redmond journey.
- Have students create individual squares that can be sewn together to make a Freedom Quilt, designed with colours and patterns that express the overall feeling of being free.
- Have students create a model of Birchtown and Port Roseway in the late 1700s.

4. Language Arts

- Ask students to research any of the topics listed under Internet Resources and find a unique way to present the information.
- Ask students to write a poem or do a spoken word performance to express
 - a) a summary of the novel,
 - b) their views about a character or event,
 - c) their feelings after reading *Chasing Freedom*.

5. Math

- Ask students to calculate the time line for the novel by producing a chart that shows
 - a) dates
 - b) seasons
 - c) distance travelled
 - d) events
 - e) places

6. Guest Speakers

Invite one of the following to come to speak to your class:

- a local museum curator
- the novel's author
- local residents who may have information or experiences to share about racism, the history of African Nova Scotians or the early settlers of your community.

Generic Questions for Fiction

The following general questions can be applied to any novel. *Use them for memoirs, biographies and histories as well.* They provide a good starting point for discussions.

1. Overall, how did you *experience the book* while reading it? Were you immediately drawn into the story — or did it take a while? Did the book intrigue, amuse, disturb, alienate or irritate you?
2. Do you find the characters *convincing*? Are they believable? Compelling? Are they fully developed as complex, emotional human beings?
3. Which characters do you *admire* or *dislike*? What are their primary characteristics?
4. What *motivates* a given character's actions? Do you think those actions are justified or ethical?
5. Do any characters *grow* or *change* during the course of the novel? If so, in what way?
6. Who in this book would you most *like to meet*? What would you ask — or say?
7. If you could *insert yourself* as a character in the book, what role would you play?
8. Is the plot *well-developed*? Is it believable? Do you feel manipulated along the way, or do events unfold naturally?
9. Is the story *plot* or *character driven*? In other words, does the plot unfold quickly or focus more on characters' inner lives?
10. Consider the *ending*. Did you expect it or were you surprised? Was it forced? Was it neatly wrapped up — or too neatly? Or was it unresolved, ending on an ambiguous note?
11. If you could *rewrite the ending*, how would you choose to end it?
12. Can you *pick out a passage* that strikes you as particularly profound or interesting—or perhaps something that sums up the central dilemma of the book?
13. Does the book *remind you of someone* — a friend, family member — or something — an event, problem — in your own life?
14. If you were to *talk to the author*, what would you want to know?
15. Have you read the *author's other books*? Can you discern a similarity—in theme, writing style, structure—between them? Or are they completely different?

Discussion Questions for *Chasing Freedom*

1. What part did the British military play in the beginning of the Black settlement in Nova Scotia in 1783?
2. Divide into small groups to generate a list of tools and provisions needed to settle in a new land. Prioritize the list of tools and provisions and explain why some items are more important and necessary.
3. Which of the tools listed would not have been invented or available to Black Loyalists as they settled on the land? What alternatives can students suggest to accomplish the work each machine or tool would have made easier or possible? What work would have been impossible or next to impossible to complete?
4. What types of shelter did people of African descent live in before building their own homes?
5. What difficulties did the Black Loyalists face when they first arrived in Nova Scotia?
6. What provisions did the settlers receive?
7. What preparations would settlers need to make in the fall for winter?
8. What industries would you start in the community to aid the new residents?
9. How did land grants affect where Black settlements were started?
10. How were land grants for white and Black Loyalists of 1783 different?
11. What did each group receive in land grants? How do you explain any differences in the distribution of land grants?
12. Who was in charge in the Black community? What title was the person given and what role did he/she play in the community?
13. How was schooling different in 1783 from today?
14. What, in your opinion, has changed, and what has remained the same, for Blacks in Nova Scotia? What evidence can you find on the Internet to support your claims?

Comprehension Questions for *Chasing Freedom*

1. *Chasing Freedom* opens with a scene of a Negro being hung and shot. How does this act set the tone for the rest of the book?
2. True-life stories of former American slaves have been recorded in Negro dialect in the *I Was a Slave* books. Below Mary Ingram speaks about slaves not having the freedom to marry. Can you translate the words spoken by slaves who learned English by listening, having no one to teach them a new language?

“Twarn’t any mai’iage ’lowed on de plantation ’twix’ some. De marster, he tell who can git mai’ied an’ who can’t. Him select de po’tly [portly = large] and p’lific womens, an’ de po’tly man, an’ use sich fo’ de breeder an’ de father of de women’s chilluns. De womens dat am selected am not ’lowed to mai’y [marry]. De chilluns dat am bo’n dat way don’t know any father. De womens have nothin’ to says ’bout de ’rangement. If she am po’tly an’ well-formed, deys fo’ced her wid de breeder. ... W’y don’ weuns refuse? Shucks, man, yous don’ know w’at yous says. De rawhide whup [whip] keeps you f’om refusin’. Ise know ’cause Ise see de young girls cryin’, an’ dey gits whupped ’cause deys stubbo’n. De ol’ nigger women ’vise de girls dat ’twarn’t no use to refuse. Dat it jus’ makes it wo’se fo’ dem.”

3. What 10 quotes you would select from the novel? Compare with others. Which were the most popular?
4. How does Sarah describe her relationship with her mother? How does it compare to her relationship with her grandmother?
5. Life is painful for Sarah, but she is determined to overcome her situation. What do you make of the author’s portrayal of race? How do Sarah and her family cope with the racial tension that permeates their lives?
6. Throughout the book, Sarah struggles with feelings of being aggressive and of holding back as her thoughts struggle with wanting to step outside her reality. What does she learn at the end of the novel about right and wrong?
7. What is the significance of the title as it relates to the Redmond family’s struggle to overcome the boundaries imposed by freedom?
8. Why do you think Gloria Wesley tells the story through several narrative points of view, including those of Sarah, Grandmother and Cecil MacLeod? What does this add to your understanding of the novel? Is there one character that you consider to be the true voice of *Chasing Freedom*? Explain.

Five Great Book Discussion Ideas

Smart discussion starters to get you off and running.

1. Ask each student to write one question on an index card and sign their name on the back of the card. Collect the cards and then pass them back out, assuring no one gets their own card. An option may be to select two questions at the beginning of class for a discussion.
2. Show and tell: Use a prompt or an object related to the story: food, apparel, music, photograph, map, etc. to stimulate thinking about an aspect of the story.
3. Pick out a **specific passage** from the book — a description, an idea, a line of dialogue — and ask students to comment on it. How does the passage reflect a character ... or the work's central meaning ... or the students' lives or personal beliefs?
4. Choose a **primary character** and ask students to comment on him or her. Students may compile this list of observations as the basis for writing a character sketch or book report. Consider character traits, motivations, how he/she affects the story's events and other characters, and revealing quotations.
5. The relationship between Sarah and Lydia Redmond is integral to the development of both parties in *Chasing Freedom*. Compare and contrast the feelings about their relationship to each other. As the story unfolds, does the grandmother change to become more receptive to her granddaughter's needs, and if so, how?

Internet Resources

Valuable Resources for Heritage Fair or African Heritage Month Projects.

(Note: Sites listed below may expire but you may be able to find similar sites.)

1. Slave Catchers in Nova Scotia

The Toronto Star, Lawrence Hill's *Book of Negroes*: <http://www.thestar.com/article/175660>

2. Slavery in Nova Scotia

a. <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/blackloyalists/story/prejudice/slaves.htm>

b. Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage: Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management: http://hrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/mwebb/slavery_in_nova_scotia.htm

3. Black People in the Military - Black Pioneers - American Revolution

a. http://www.nps.gov/revwar/unfinished_revolution/black_loyalists.html

b. <http://www.americanrevolution.org/blk.html>

c. <http://blackloyalist.com/canadiandigitalcollection/story/arrival/birchtown.htm>

4. Birchtown and Shelburne

a. *Shunpiking; The Discovery Magazine*: <http://www.shunpiking.com/bhs/puttingflesh.htm>

b. CBC Digital Collection: Birchtown:

1. <http://archives.cbc.ca/society/immigration/clips/16598/>

2. <http://www.uelac.org/PDF/loyalist.pdf>

3. http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/pm.php?id=story_line&lg=English&fl=0&ex=00000170&sl=2490&tpos=1

c. Shelburne: Libraries and Archives Canada http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/public_mikan/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=101267&rec_nbr_list=101267

d. <http://www.ns1763.ca/shelbco/birchtown.html>

5. Racism

<http://www.blackloyalist.com/canadiandigitalcollection/story/prejudice/slaves.htm>

6. Indenture

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indentured_servant

7. Religious Meetings

a. <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nineteen/nkeyinfo/aarsecretmeetings.htm>

b. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/hughes/hughes.html#hughes52>

c. http://cghs.dadeschools.net/slavery/antebellum_slavery/plantation_slave_life/diet_religion/religion.htm

8. Slavery in America

a. Most informative site on slavery: Carleton College <http://eh.net/encyclopedia/article/wahl.slavery.us>

b. <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/religiouscontent.html>

9. Nails

<http://www.appaltree.net/aba/nails.htm>

10. **Black Pioneers: N.S. Dept. of Education Learning Resources** <http://lrt2.ednet.ns.ca/PD/bea/slidegif/intro.shtml>

11. The Journey of a Slave: The Book of Negroes

Lawrence Hill: *The Book of Negroes/Someone Knows My Name*

a. http://archives.cbc.ca/arts_entertainment/literature/clips/16104/

b. http://archives.cbc.ca/arts_entertainment/literature/clips/16554/

c. http://www.blackloyalist.com/canadiandigitalcollection/documents/official/black_loyalist_directory.htm

Directory of Black Loyalists: The Book of Negroes:

http://blackloyalists.com/canadiandigitalcollection/documents/official/black_loyalists_directory.htm

12. Invasion of Charleston

<http://www.ccpl.org/content.asp?id=15752&action=detail&catID=5749&parentID=5405>

13. Colonial Times (Lots of Resources)

<http://www.history.org/Almanack/life/politics/polhdr.cfm>

14. The Lives of Slaves

a. <http://www.gwu.edu/~folklife/bighouse/panel9.html>

b. http://cghs.dade.k12.fl.us/slavery/antebellum_slavery/plantation_slave_life/diet_religion/default.htm

15. Clothing of the 1700s

a. <http://18thcenturyblog.com/fashion>

b. Slave clothing:

1. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Field_slaves

2. <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/slavery/experience/gender/feature5.html>

16. **Slavery: South Carolina Slave Laws: 1690 Code** http://www.slaveryinamerica.org/geography/slave_laws_SC.htm

17. Slaves in Nova Scotia

a. **Joshua Maugher:**

<http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=36179&query=>

b. **Advertisements:**

1. <http://ns1763.ca/roygaz/slave-ns01.html>

2. <http://www.alts.net/ns1625/slaves01.html>

3. <http://museum.gov.ns.ca/blackloyalists/18001900/Objects1800/runaway.htm>

18. Continental Uniforms

<http://www.srcalifornia.com/uniforms/uniforms.htm>

19. Aboard a Slave Ship: 1829, Eye Witness to History

<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/slaveship.htm>

20. Former Slave, Boston King

http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=2489

21. Associates of Bray

<http://www.microform.co.uk/guides/R71880.pdf>

22. Abolitionists

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aohtml/exhibit/aopart3.html>

23. Slave Papers

<http://goreanreference.50megs.com/slaves/slavepapers.html>

24. Loyalist Collection of Court Documents

<http://www.lib.unb.ca/collections/loyalist/seeOne.php?id=206&string=>

25. Slave Music: Spirituals

a. <http://www.negrospirituals.com/song.htm>

b. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negro_spirituals

26. British Coins

<http://www.24carat.co.uk/crownsstoryframe.html>

27. West African Slave Trade

a. <http://africanhistory.about.com/od/slavery/tp/TransAtlantic001.htm>

b. http://www.ngbiwm.com/Exhibits/middle_passage/Holding_Forts.htm

28. Weapons

a. http://sangam.org/taraki/articles/2006/04-30_Rifle.php?uid=1697

b. <http://notorc.blogspot.com/2006/11/guns-of-american-revolution-setting.html>

29. Slaves of Mixed-race: Mulatto

a. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_slavery_in_the_United_States#Treatment_of_slaves

b. <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/africanns/ch3.asp>

30: Charleston's African American Heritage Site (Very Good) <http://www.africanamericancharleston.com/19thcentury.html>

31. Causes of the American Revolution <http://www.history.com/encyclopedia.do?articleId=200893>

32. Promise Ring

<http://www.newsletter.kaijewels.com/meaning-promise-ring-kj-01.htm>

33. Indigo

a. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigo_plant

b. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indigo_dye

34. Slave Housing

- a. http://cghs.dade.k12.fl.us/slavery/antebellum_slavery/non_plantation_slave_life/housing.htm
- b. http://montpelier.org/explore/archaeology/enslaved_c19th.php
- c. <http://www.sciway.net/afam/slavery/houses.html>

35. Slave Families

<http://www.oah.org/pubs/magazine/family/schwartz.html>

36. Gullah Tours: Guided Tours of Plantations

<http://www.gullahtours.com/squarters.html>

37. Jumping the Broom

- a. http://www.anyiams.com/jumping_the_broom.htm
- b. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jumping_the_broom
- c. <http://www.celebrateintimateweddings.com/ceremonybroom.html>

38. Slaves Used for Breeding

- a. http://us-civil-war.suite101.com/article.cfm/slave_breeding_in_the_antebellum_south
- b. <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/USASbreeding.htm>

39. Photo of a Slave Cabin

<http://www.iwasaslave.com/what-happened.php>

40. True life stories dictated by former American slaves in Negro dialect

<http://www.iwasaslave.com/quotes-from-six-books.php>

I WAS A SLAVE: Book 4: The Breeding of Slaves

41. Slave Badges

<http://www.slavebadges.com/Badges.html>

42. Sullivan's Island

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sullivan's_Island

43. Loyalist Ships

<http://www.uelac.org/Loyalist-Ships/Loyalist-Ships.php>

44. Port Roseway, 1783

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/white/results.asp?Intro=more>

Teacher Resources

- Armstrong, Jennifer. *Steal Away to Freedom*, Toronto: Scholastic Inc., 1993. The story of Susannah and Bethlehem, who are runaways. Susannah, an orphan, wants to leave the southern plantation where her uncle lives. Bethlehem is a runaway slave. Together they run away to the freedom of a promised land. — fiction
- Clarke, Gaff Margaret. *Freedom Crossing*, New York: Scholastic Inc., 1980. US experience of slavery.
- Collier, James L. et al. *Jump Ship to Freedom*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1981. A story of slaves in the Thirteen Colonies who buy their freedom. First book of a trilogy about the Arabus family.
- Collier, James L. et al. *Who is Carrie?*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1984. Carrie, a slave, eavesdrops on a discussion between Thomas Jefferson and President Washington at the famous Fraunces Tavern in New York concerning the freedom of slaves during the American Revolution. Second book of a trilogy about the Arabus family — historical fiction.
- Collier, James L. et. al. *War Comes to Willie*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1984. The last book of a trilogy about the Arabus family and its struggle for freedom from slavery during the American Revolution — historical fiction.
- Fox, Paula. *Slave Dancer*, Toronto: Dell Publishing, 1973. Story of a young, kidnapped, white boy who played the flute for slaves during an ocean crossing from Africa to America — historical fiction.
- Hamilton, Virginia. *Many Thousand Gone: African Americans from Slavery to Freedom*, Toronto: Random House, 1993. Provides insight into the beginnings of slavery in the Thirteen Colonies — non fiction.
- Kullen, Stuart. *Days of Slavery: A History of Black People of America 1619–1863*, Minneapolis: Abdo and Daughters, 1990. Picture book about slavery in the US.
- May, Paul Charles. *Left by Themselves*, Toronto: Scholastic Inc., 1992. Two pioneer girls are trapped during a great blizzard in 1850 on a farm in Iowa. They think they are alone until they discover that a fugitive slave is hiding from slave catchers — historical fiction.
- O’Dell, Scott. *My Name Is Not Angelica*, New York: Dell Publishing, 1989. A story about slavery in the West Indies — historical fiction.
- Parker, Raymond. *Beyond the Dark Horizon*, Westphal: The Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, 1987. *Story of slavery in Nova Scotia* — historical fiction.
- Petry, Ann. *Tituba*, New York: Harper, 1964. A fictional story of Tituba, a slave who lived in Salem, Massachusetts, during the 18th century, accused of witchcraft.
- Smucker, Barbara. *Underground to Canada*, Toronto: Scholastic Inc., 1977. Story of two children who escape slavery to come to Canada via the underground railway. Students gain insight into the experience of slavery prior to the American Revolution — historical fiction.
- Sterne, Emma Gelders. *The Slave Ship*, Toronto: Scholastic Inc., n.d. The story of life aboard a slave ship and a slave uprising during transport from Africa to America — fiction.
- Yates, Elizabeth. *Amos Fortune*, n.p.: Freeman Dutton Ltd. , n.d. Story of a prince who was sold into slavery, served on a plantation, learned a trade and finally bought his freedom and the freedom of others — historical fiction.

- Archibald, Mary. *Shelburne: Home of the Loyalist*, Shelburne: Shelburne Historical Society, 1978. See especially p. 4, and p. 11-12.
- Brown, Wallace, and Hereward Senior. *Victorious in Defeat: The Loyalist in Canada, The Promised Land*, Toronto: Methuen Publications Ltd. 1984. See especially chapter 8 “The Loyalist in Canada” and “The Promised Land: Black Loyalist.”
- Canadian Authors Association. *Loyalists in Nova Scotia*, Hantsport: Lancelot Press, 1983. See especially “Early Years of Black Loyalists” by Dorrie Phillips, p. 68.
- Grant, John M. *The Immigration and Settlement of the Black Refugee of War of 1812 in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick*, Westphal: The Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, 1990. See especially chapters 1 and 2.
- Hill, Lawrence. *Trials and Triumphs: The Story of African Canadians*, Toronto: Umbrella Press, 1993.
- National Geographic*, “The Loyalist: Americans with a Difference,” 147:04, Washington DC: National Geographic Society, 1975.
- Pachai, Bridglal. *People of the Maritimes: Black Nova Scotia*, n.p.: Four East, 1987. See especially chapter 2 “The Loyalist Period,” p.7,8.
- Pachai, Bridglal. *Beneath the Clouds of the Promised Land: Volume 1*, Halifax: The Black Educators Association, 1987. See especially chapter 12.
- Pachai, Bridglal. *Beneath the Clouds of the Promised Land: Volume 2*, Halifax: The Black Educators Association, 1991. See especially chapter 1, p. 13,14.
- Robertson, Marion. *King’s Bounty: A History of Early Shelburne*, Halifax: Nova Scotia Museum, 1978.
- Walker, W. St. James. *The Black Loyalist: The Search for a Promised Land in Nova Scotia and Sierra Leone 1783-1870*, New York: African Publishing Company, 1976. See chapter 1.
- Walker, W. St. James. *The Black Identity in Nova Scotia: Community and Institutions in Historical Perspective*, n.p., n.d.
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