

## **Elementary and Junior H.S. Students #1792 Project Resources and Lesson Starters**

### **Background**

The 15 Ships to Sierra Leone project (#1792Project) is a community project that has grown out of a Nocturne Project entitled "[Message in a Bottle- 15 Ships to Sierra Leone.](#)"

Resources and information about this journey are available at the Black Loyalist site in [Nova Scotia](#) and in [New Brunswick](#). that include Thomas Clarkson's [journal](#) and the journals of [Black Loyalists](#) Boston King and David George that can spark the imagination and interest .

Here are the names of the 15 Ships to Sierra Leone: the Betsey, the Mary, the Eleanor, the Felicity, the Morning Star, the Venus, the Sierra Leone, the Beaver, the Brothers, the Prince William Fleury, the Prince William, the Catherine, the Lucretia, the Somerset and the Parr have their stories.

The following lesson starters can be an idea for sparking many more ideas in your students' imaginations!

### **LESSON STARTERS**

#### **Happy Birthday Freetown**

As part of the project we have also engaged politicians. Towns and municipalities in Nova Scotia have written and shared proclamations. The Mayor of Halifax has been invited to Sierra Leone by Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyarr. Make a card for the anniversary of the arrival of the ships. Make another one for your local mayor to send to Freetown, Sierra Leone. What is your congratulatory message?

#### **What is in a name?**

Just as we recognize the departure of the 15 ships, Freetown recognizes the arrival. Nova Scotians who are Black Loyalists founded a city and named the city Freetown. If you could choose a name for your city what would it be? What does this name mean to you? Write about this to a student who is your age in Freetown.

#### **My Ship is Bound for the High Seas of Learning**

Which ship would you choose for your journey? Draw a picture, label it and describe where your 'quarters' are and what you have packed for the journey.

#### **A Gift for Washington**

There are so many interesting historical details and connections of this journey. Here in Nova Scotia we send a Christmas Tree to Boston as a thank you for the help we received during the Halifax Explosion. Henry Washington was one of the self-liberated slaves that came to Canada having escaped from George Washington's plantation. This is a direct historical connection to the birth of the USA. What could we send to Washington to commemorate the history of the 15 Ships to Sierra Leone?

#### **It's a Tea Party**

Each ship has a story, but they may be difficult to find. One of the ships, the Eleanor had another important date - she was one of the 'Boston Tea Party' ships. Read about the Boston Tea Party - was it really a party?

### **Sea Voyages**

Newcomers to Nova Scotia often arrived on ships, and refugees today had perilous journeys to reach better lives for their families. Have you been on a ship? Write about your experience and compare a modern day vessel to a sailing ship in 1792. Do you know anyone in your family that has taken a journey by ship? Interview them. Arrival by airplane would be very different- can you describe the different?

### **Listen to Me Now**

How far would your travel if you had a complaint? Thomas Peters went to England to let the British Government know that they had broken their promises to the Black Loyalists. He wrote a petition and had to work on the ship to pay for his ticket. Nothing stopped him.

### **What's for Breakfast?**

Everyday, breakfast and supper was the same: Bill of Fare Daily Breakfast 4 oz Rice or 8 oz Indian meal with 1/2 Gill of Molasses or 1/2 oz of Brown Sugar. If you could choose three things for breakfast, what would they be?

### **What's for Lunch on the Morning Star?**

Lunch on the journey was 1 lb Salt Fish & 1 oz butter with 2 lbs Potatoes 4 day in the week 1 lb Beef or 3/4 lb Pork with 1/2 Pint Pease on Pork days & 1 lb Bread with Turnips on Beef Days—3 days in the week— Create a recipe using the items.

### **Mnemonic of the Ships**

Create a Mnemonic: Mnemonic" just means memory too. Can you create a mnemonic for the names of the ships to Sierra Leone? PS: Names of the ships: Eleanor, Beaver, Brothers, Mary, Catherine, Lucretia, Venus, Sierra Leone, Morning Star, Felicity, Prince William Henry, Prince Fleury, Parr, Somerset, Betsey

### **Sambro Light**

People from Preston travelled on the Eleanor and Clarkson travelled on the Lucretia. They passed the Sambro Light. A lighthouse was erected on Sambro Island, to the south-east of Halifax, in 1759. Imagine that you are the lighthouse keepers son or daughter watching the fleet pass by in the heavy rain and sleet on January 16, 1792. What are you thinking?

### **Sailing, Sailing**

Sails have names. The Topgallant is one of the sails. Draw a barque and label the sails.

### **January 28, 1792 Pooped**

Clarkson wrote this 230 years ago. What did he mean?

“Strong gales with rain in Main Topsail—Close reefed the Fore Topsail—A heavy sea from N W—At midnight was pooped by a heavy sea Stove in the dead lights, furlled the Fore sail and scudded under the Close reefed Fore topsail.” John Clarkson

### **There She Blows**

On February 12th, several whales were seen from the ships. What kind of whales would be in the Atlantic in the winter season? What other marine life do you think they saw?

### **Winging With the Waves**

Do you think there were any birds around the ships? Can you find any birds that migrate across the ocean? Can you compare the time of flight of a bird to the travel time of a ship?

### **Overboard**

February 25. The woollen clothes were thrown overboard and new clothes were distributed including shirts made from linen, called Osnaburg. [Look at tREv](#) clothing design. The letters stand for Trust, Respect, Educate and Value. Design a logo for the Black Loyalist clothing.

### **Fixing things...**

John Clarkson was a white Englishman who organised the sea voyage to Sierra Leone. He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 11. He was able to organise this trip when he was in his 20's. He was against slavery, but most white people benefited financially. What should be done to repair the unfair advantages people still have?

### **R is for Reparations**

The land given to the Black Loyalists and settlers was often in poor locations and had poor soil. Map the locations of the 50 plus communities of Afrikan Descendants in Nova Scotia. Are there still land issues? How can we repair these situations?

### **David George: Family and Community**

David George lived in Birch Town and in 1784, he was listed as a farmer forty years of age. His wife Phillis was then 25, and their children, Jesse, David, and Jane were then 10, 7, and 1, respectively. He preached at Shelburne, Birch Town, Ragged Islands, Saint John, and Fredericton. In 1792 he sailed to Sierra Leone, and he introduced the Baptist Church to Africa. What could you write in a letter to Jesse or Jane or David about your ancestors?

### **Petitions for Change**

The Black Loyalists arrived in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick between 1782 and 1785. On August 21, 1784, Thomas Peters drafted a petition to Governor Parr because they still hadn't received their land. Petitions are still written. If you could change something, what would you petition for? Is there something that needs fixing now?

### **Who is steering the ship?**

On March 7 some of the ships arrived and Clarkson wrote: "In working the Lucretia into Harbour the Catherine ran on board us, and carried away our Bowsprit, I immediately made the signal to anchor." Write about seeing land from the Lucretia and then crashing into the Catherine.

### **Babies on Board**

March 8 In the evening the Morning Star was the only vessel missing. She was fitted for pregnant women. She arrived safe and three babies had been born on the journey. Name them and imagine who they grew up to be!

## **Turtle Soup**

On March 16, 1792 there was a special dinner. A Turtle of 40 lbs weight was caught and cooked. Write a poem in memory of that poor turtle. What turtles are native to Sierra Leone? Are turtles endangered in Nova Scotia?

## **Interesting Facts about the Journey - There are many more**

1. When the ships left, a fever broke out and 67 people died before they reached Sierra Leone. Clarkson nearly died of the fever.
2. Just before the ships arrived, a storm scattered the fleet. The first ship arrived on February 28th and the last one arrived on March 9th. Describe how you would feel when you saw the land for the first time after so many days on the ocean.
3. The oldest person on this journey was a woman. She was 104 years old, stolen from her home in Africa. She wanted to go back. Imagine how brave she was to risk another sea journey after being locked in a slave ship the first time. Write her a happy birthday card for her 105th birthday as a free woman in Sierra Leone. She travelled on the Eleanor.
4. One of the promises the Sierra Leone company made to the Black Loyalists was protection from re-enslavement. They passed a slave ship on the journey.
5. On October 12, Black Loyalists decided to join the voyage. They were the first ones that said they wanted to leave Nova Scotia. Clarkson wrote, "Their situation seemed extremely bad from the poorness of the soil..." What grows locally where you leave. What foods would you miss the most?
6. The Lucretia, whose master was Jonathan Coffin, was one of the ships hired to convey the blacks to Sierra Leone. She was owned by Daniel Starbuck, a former Nantucketer, who was a Dartmouth whaler.
7. From Clarkson's Journal: It is not in my power to describe the scandalous and shameful conduct shewn to the free Blacks by many of white people in both provinces and although Government allowed to many of them from 60 to 100 acres of land, the greatest part have never been in possession of more than one or two acres, and they have so completely worked the land up that it will not yield half crops—
8. Encounters with Mi'gmaq : Survival and help depended on these encounters Clarkson wrote: " the Micmack Indians who have settled themselves in this neighbourhood—This Nation or People are now very much reduced in numbers and subsist upon the flesh of such animals as they kill in their excursions and chiefly consist of Bears, Lynxes or Tiger Cats and Moose, Deer, Cariboes, Foxes, Pole Cats, Ermines, the furs of these animals which are found in great numbers they sell in order to purchase fire arms with their necessary appendages powder and shot—" References are made to being cheated by white Loyalists in Shelburne and also a description of a canoe in Clarkson's journal.
9. 28th October. Clarkson's journal:...this afternoon a Black slave who came to me in order to resign his wife and family who were free. With tears streaming down his cheeks he said, that though this separation would be as death to himself, yet he had come to a resolution of signing them up for ever, convinced as he was, that such a measure would ultimately tend to render their situation more comfortable and happy—He said he was regardless of himself or of the cruelties he might endure...Much more he said, which is impossible to convey in language adequate to our feelings on this occasion.... And then there is Lydia Jackson...

