

ANNE “KNOWN AS NANCY”

~1762, Maryland & New Brunswick

RAN AWAY

FROM the subscriber living at the Nashwaakhsis, in the county of York, between the 15th and 21st days of this instant July, the following bound Negro slaves, viz. ISAAC about 30 years old, born on Long Island near New-York, had on when he went away, a short blue coat, round hat and white trowsers. BEN, about 35 years old, had on a Devonshire kersey jacket lined with Scotch plad, corduroy breeches, and round hat. FLORA, a Wench about 27 years old, much pitted with the small-pox, she had on a white cotton jacket and petticoat. Also NANCY about 24 years old, who took with her a Negro child about four years old called LIDGE. The four last mentioned Negroes were born in Maryland, and lately brought to this country.

ALL persons are hereby forbid to harbour any of the above Negroes, and all masters of vessels are forbid to take any of them on board their vessel as they shall answer the consequences. A REWARD of TWO GUINEAS, will be paid for each of the men, and SIX DOLLARS for each Negro woman, by Mr THOMAS JENNINGS, if taken and deliver'd to him at the city of Saint John, at York Point, and if taken any where else and deliver'd to the said JENNINGS, or to the subscriber in York County, the like reward with all reasonable charges will be paid by the said JENNINGS or the subscriber.

CALEB JONES.

24th JUNE, 1786.

SUED FOR HER FREEDOM

“Nancy” was allegedly born to an African enslaved women in Maryland but was brought to New Brunswick in 1785 with Captain Caleb Jones, slave owner. “Nancy” ran away from his estate in Nashwaaksis, New Brunswick sometime around 1786, along with her four-year-old son and five other enslaved people. After recapture, “Nancy” went to court to sue Jones for her freedom, represented by well-known lawyers Ward Chipman and Samuel Denny Street. Her suit was ultimately unsuccessful, and she was forced back into enslavement for fifteen years. “Nancy’s” case was brought before the Supreme Court of New Brunswick in 1800, where it reached an ineffective split-decision. At the time, there was no existing New Brunswick legislation on slavery, meaning the court could not prove the legal existence of slavery as an institution, nor could it prove “Nancy’s” freedom. The trial of “Nancy” vs. Capt. Caleb Jones played a significant role in the future of abolition in New Brunswick and marked an unofficial decline in the popularity of slavery in the province. The details of “Nancy’s” life following her trial, or the lives of the other enslaved people she escaped with, remain unknown.