# We Honour Black History

CUPE BC
WORKERS OF COLOUR COMMITTEE

The first Black immigrants arrived in British Columbia from California in 1858. They settled in Victoria and on Salt Spring Island, but as the centre of economic power shifted, some came to Vancouver in the early 1900s.

## Black Strathcona

In the early 1900s, Black immigrants who had originally settled on Vancouver and Salt Spring islands, made their homes in Strathcona—an eastside, working-class neighbourhood. By the 1920s, the Black community included homesteaders from Alberta and railroad porters who worked at nearby railway stations. They established a neighbourhood, purchased a church, and started businesses. At its height in the 1940s, Strathcona's population was approximately 800.

**Find out more: blackstrathcona.com**

## Barbara Catherine Howard

***May 8, 1920 – January 26, 2017***

Born and raised in Vancouver (Grandview). First Black woman athlete to represent Canada in an international competition (1938 British Empire Games in Australia, at age 17). She was one of the fastest women in the world. First Black person to be hired as a teacher by the Vancouver School Board.

**Find out more: bcblackhistory.ca**
**(BC Black History Awareness Society)**

## Black settlers

On Salt Spring Island, Central School, 1929.

**Find out more: www.cbc.ca**

## Hidden history in Wellington

In the late 1800s at least 70 Black settlers lived in this mining town.

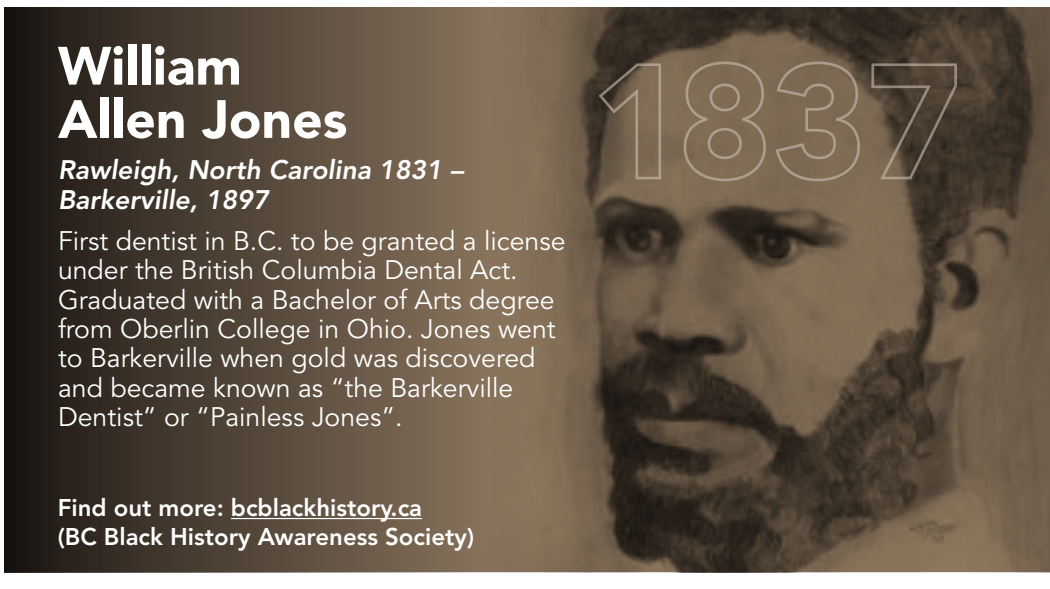
**Find out more: www.cbc.ca**

## John Robert Giscome

***Jamaica, 1832 – Victoria, 1907***

A prospector, who along with his partner McDame, joined the Cariboo Gold Rush. Giscome Portage Trail, designated as a heritage site in 1997, was designated a Protected Area and placed under the management of BC Parks in 2000. John Robert Giscome is buried at Ross Bay Cemetery in Victoria.

**Find out more: www.hublehomestead.ca**




## William Allen Jones

***Rawleigh, North Carolina 1831 – Barkerville, 1897***

First dentist in B.C. to be granted a license under the British Columbia Dental Act. Graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Oberlin College in Ohio. Jones went to Barkerville when gold was discovered and became known as "the Barkerville Dentist" or "Painless Jones".

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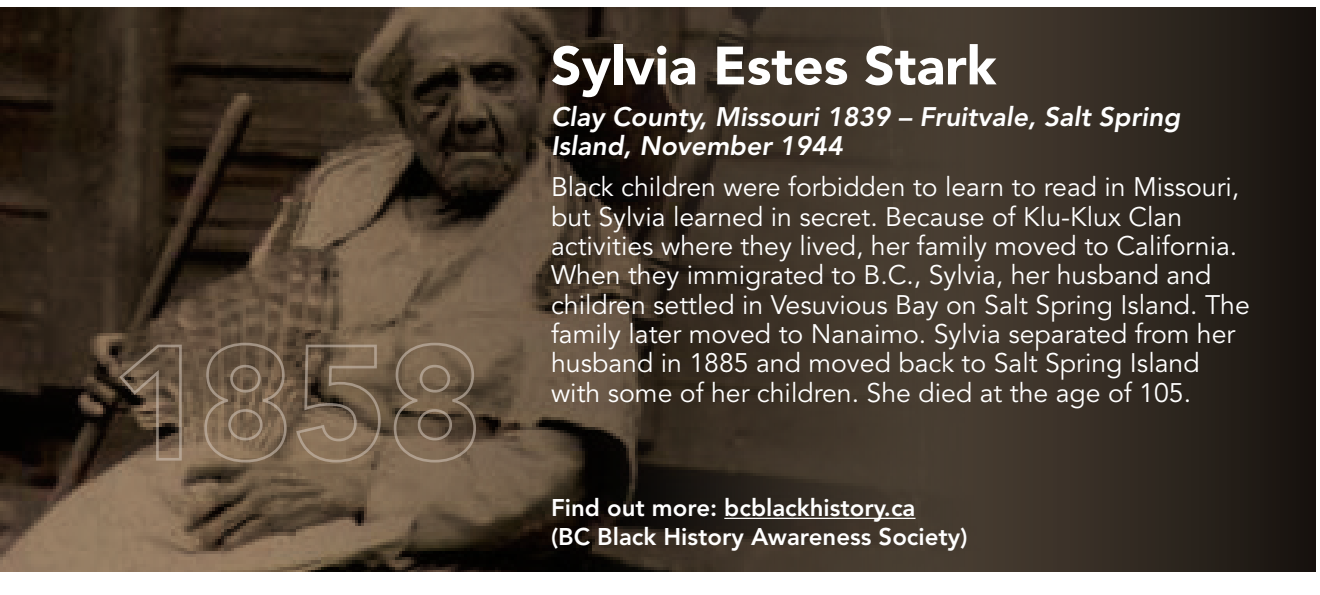


## Sylvia Estes Stark

***Clay County, Missouri 1839 – Fruitvale, Salt Spring Island, November 1944***

Black children were forbidden to learn to read in Missouri, but Sylvia learned in secret. Because of Klu-Klux Clan activities where they lived, her family moved to California. When they immigrated to B.C., Sylvia, her husband and children settled in Vesuvious Bay on Salt Spring Island. The family later moved to Nanaimo. Sylvia separated from her husband in 1885 and moved back to Salt Spring Island with some of her children. She died at the age of 105.

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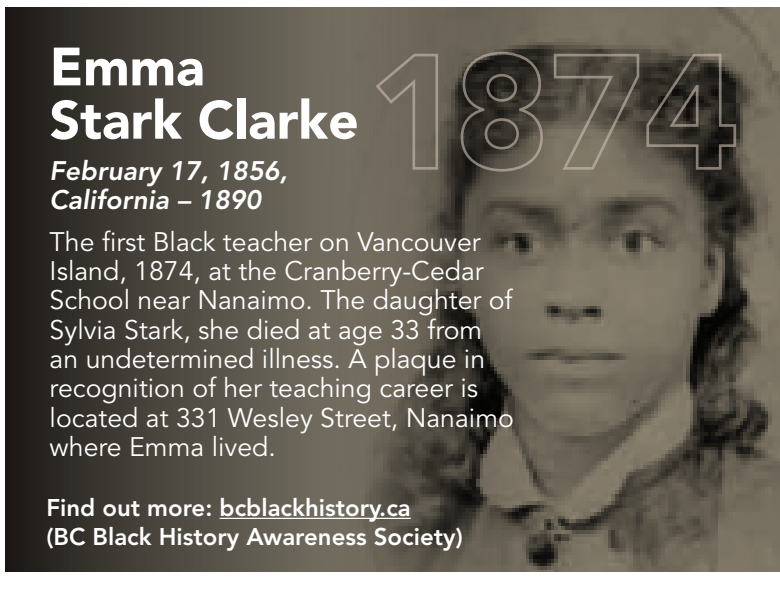


## Emma Stark Clarke

***February 17, 1856, California – 1890***

The first Black teacher on Vancouver Island, 1874, at the Cranberry-Cedar School near Nanaimo. The daughter of Sylvia Stark, she died at age 33 from an undetermined illness. A plaque in recognition of her teaching career is located at 331 Wesley Street, Nanaimo where Emma lived.

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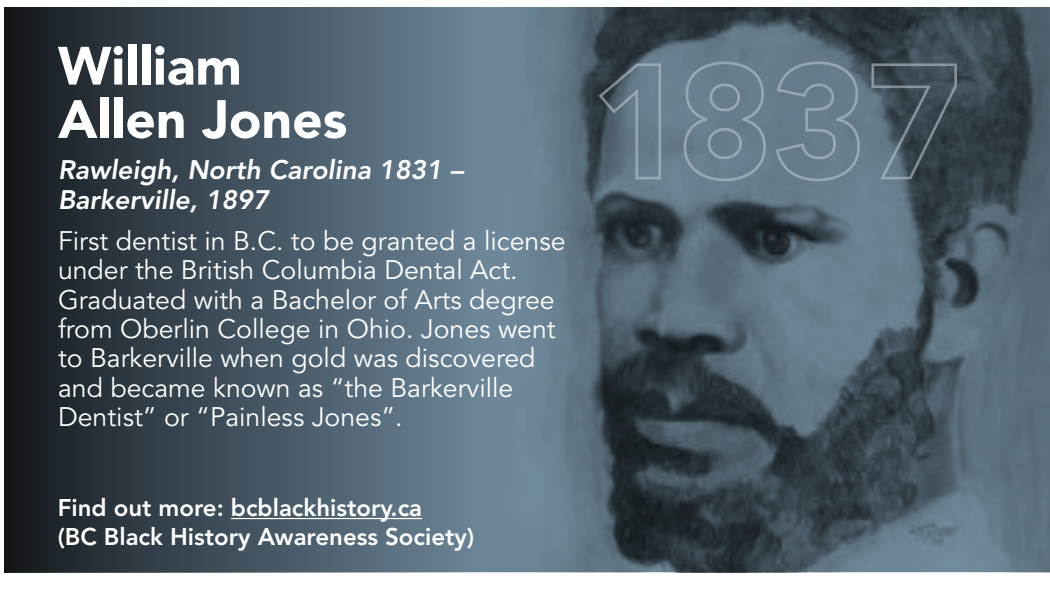


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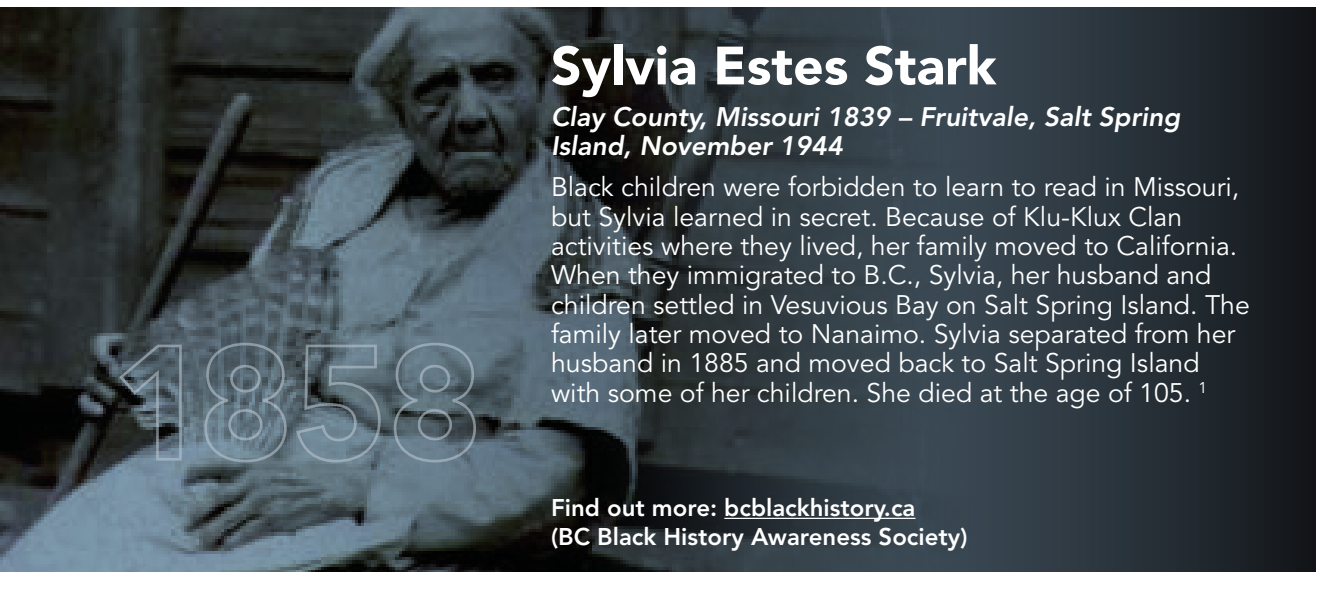


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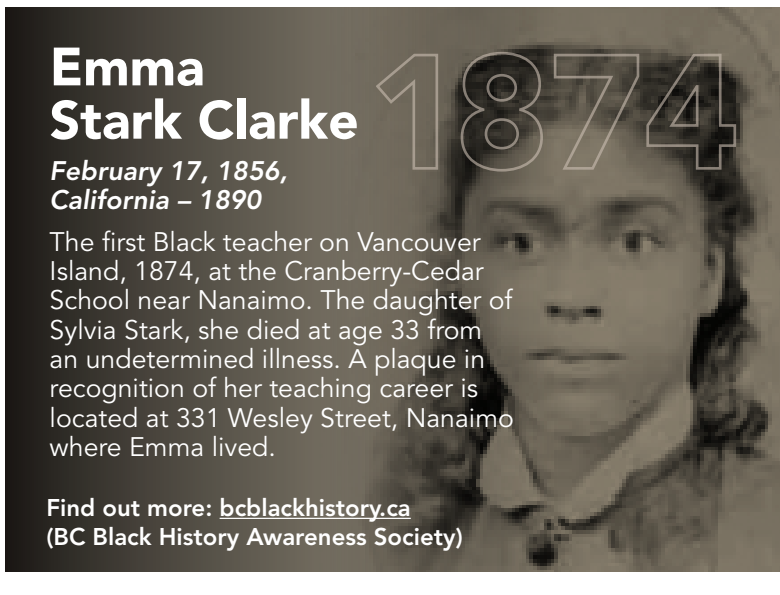


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