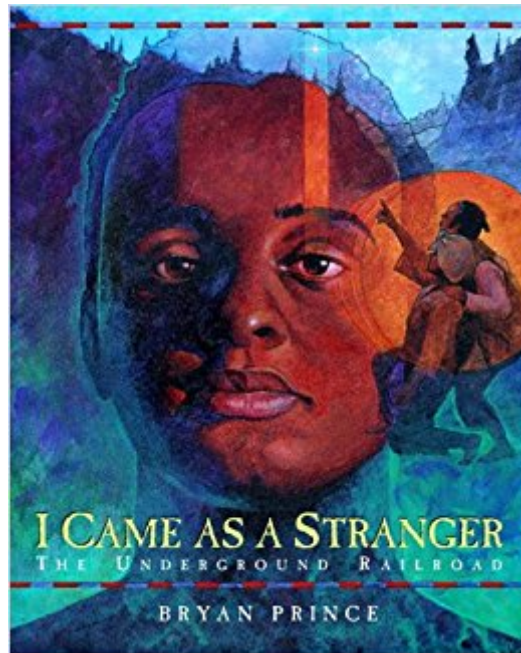




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I Came As A Stranger: The Underground Railroad



Synopsis

Honor Book for the Society of School Librarians International
Best Book Award
Social Studies, Grades 7-12
Winner of 2005 Children's Nautilus Book Awards (Non-fiction)
Prior to abolition in 1865, as many as 40,000 men, women, and children made the perilous trip north to freedom in Canada with the help of the Underground Railroad. It was neither underground nor was it a railroad, and was most remarkable for its lack of formal organization, so cloaked in secrecy that few facts were recorded while it ran. The story of the Underground Railroad is one of suffering and of bravery, and is not only one of escape from slavery but of beginnings: of people who carved out a new life for themselves in perilous, difficult circumstances. In *I Came as a Stranger*, Bryan Prince, a descendent of slaves, describes the people who made their way to Canada and the life that awaited them. From Uncle Tom's Cabin in Dresden, Ontario to Harriet Tubman's Canadian base of operations in St. Catharines, the communities founded by former slaves soon produced businessmen, educators, and writers. Yet danger was present in the form of bounty hunters and prejudice. Complemented by archival photos, *I Came as a Stranger* is an important addition to North American history.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

Grade 5 Up
Written from a Canadian perspective, this book fills in gaps left by other titles. Beginning with the slave trade as far back as the 1500s, it gives readers a brief history of events leading up to slavery in the United States and Canada. Stories about actual people involved and

many black-and-white photographs and reproductions make the account come alive. Short chapters carry readers through each aspect of the history, introducing both slaves and abolitionists along the way. Through actual narratives and letters written in the late 1800s, the author tells stories of men and women wishing to be free. Where many books end with slaves escaping to Canada, Prince continues to tell the story of life after freedom. The final chapter, "Tracing Their Steps Today," gives information on related sites that can be visited today; photographs are included with each listing. Some readers might find the quoted narratives, written as they were in the 1800s, difficult to understand if reading the book from cover to cover. While the suggested titles for further information may be difficult to locate, the index, time line, and multiple illustrations make the book useful for reports and as a source for general information about black history. — Denise Moore, O'Gorman Junior High School, Sioux Falls, SD Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Gr. 7-12. Many Underground Railroad stories end as fugitive slaves reach freedom in Canada, and this important account, sponsored by 11 of Ontario's historic museums and heritage sites, fills in what happened when the runaways got there. Readers will find stories about famous leaders—including Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, John Brown, and Levi Coffin—but best are the testimonies from ordinary people who escaped. In fact, Prince is careful not to romanticize the rescuers; instead, he focuses on the brave runaways and the huge role they played in their own escapes. The adventures are thrilling, the family reunions heartrending, but Prince shows that the runaways also experienced prejudice, even abuse. The detailed general narrative is sometimes disjointed, but the slaves' testimonies and the captioned photos will grab readers, and the full chapter notes will help students find out more about the exciting historical sites to visit across the border. Hazel Rochman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

what is hidden in this book is information about how to join with other like minded people. I was indeed surprised

Highly recommended, Bryan Prince's *I Came As A Stranger: The Underground Railroad* is a fascinating history and site guide to the American Underground Railroad, a pre-Civil War secret organization of conspirators who risked life and freedom to help fugitive slaves make the perilous journey to the freedom in Canada. Black-and-white illustrations, and compelling testimony make *I Came As A Stranger* an educational and uplifting read for young readers of all ages.

"I Came as a Stranger" is an excellent introduction to the history of the Underground Railroad, valid from both the Canadian and the American POV. Short, snappy, interesting, never declines to the level of dreary textbookism. (I made that word up.) I liked it very much.

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