

# People from Africa

Other people came to the Bahamas. They were people from Africa. They did not want to come. They were called **slaves** (someone who is forced to work and is not paid).

The slaves lived on the continent of Africa. They were happy, free people. They had been taken from their homes and families by cruel people. Chains were placed around their necks and ankles.



The **journey** from Africa was long. They were frightened and sad because many of them were separated from their family members. They knew that they would never see their family members again, or see the wonderful African sunsets or run across the grassy **savannahs**. Congo Town and in Andros and Fox Hill were named after regions in West Africa. That is one way the slaves remembered where they came from.

The slaves had no freedom and had to do what their masters told them to do. The slaves from West and Central Africa lived and worked on large farms called **plantations**.

Many, many Africans died on the long journey to our islands. They were killed if they tried to escape. The Africans had to do all the hard work. They would be beaten or killed if they refused. They had to work all day and were never paid.

Here is a picture of the ruins of some of the houses in which they lived.



Much later, other Africans on their way to Cuba were freed from slavery by English ships. They also came to The Bahamas. The people from West and Central Africa brought with them many of their traditions, or things that they did while in Africa.

One of these traditions was their way of preparing food. From Nigeria they brought dodo (fried plantains) and from The Gambia superkanja (okra soup).



*Junkanoo festival*

Another tradition was saving money by asue. Our most popular cultural heritage festival, Junkanoo, is a West African tradition. The costumes and musical instruments used in junkanoo are similar to those used in celebrations in West and Central Africa.

After many years people from many different nations around the world realised that slavery was wrong. These people were called abolitionists (people who wanted to end slavery).

The African people in the Bahamas struggled to free themselves. They won freedom in 1834. It was called emancipation. Emancipation Day is celebrated every year on the first Monday in August.



*A traditional West or Central African celebration*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Match the words in Column A with its definition in Column B.**

<u>COLUMN A</u>	<u>COLUMN B</u>
A. dodo	_____ Emancipation
B. superkanja	_____ large farms
C. slaves	_____ a long trip
D. asue	_____ fried plantains
E. Plantations	_____ something that we do that has been handed down by our ancestors
F. Freedom	_____ People who wanted to end slavery
G. ruins	_____ a money saving tradition
H. journey	_____ the remains of a building that has been destroyed
I. abolitionists	_____ Okra soup
J. traditions	_____ Someone who is forced to work and not paid