



CANADIAN WAR
MUSEUM
-
MUSÉE CANADIEN
DE LA GUERRE

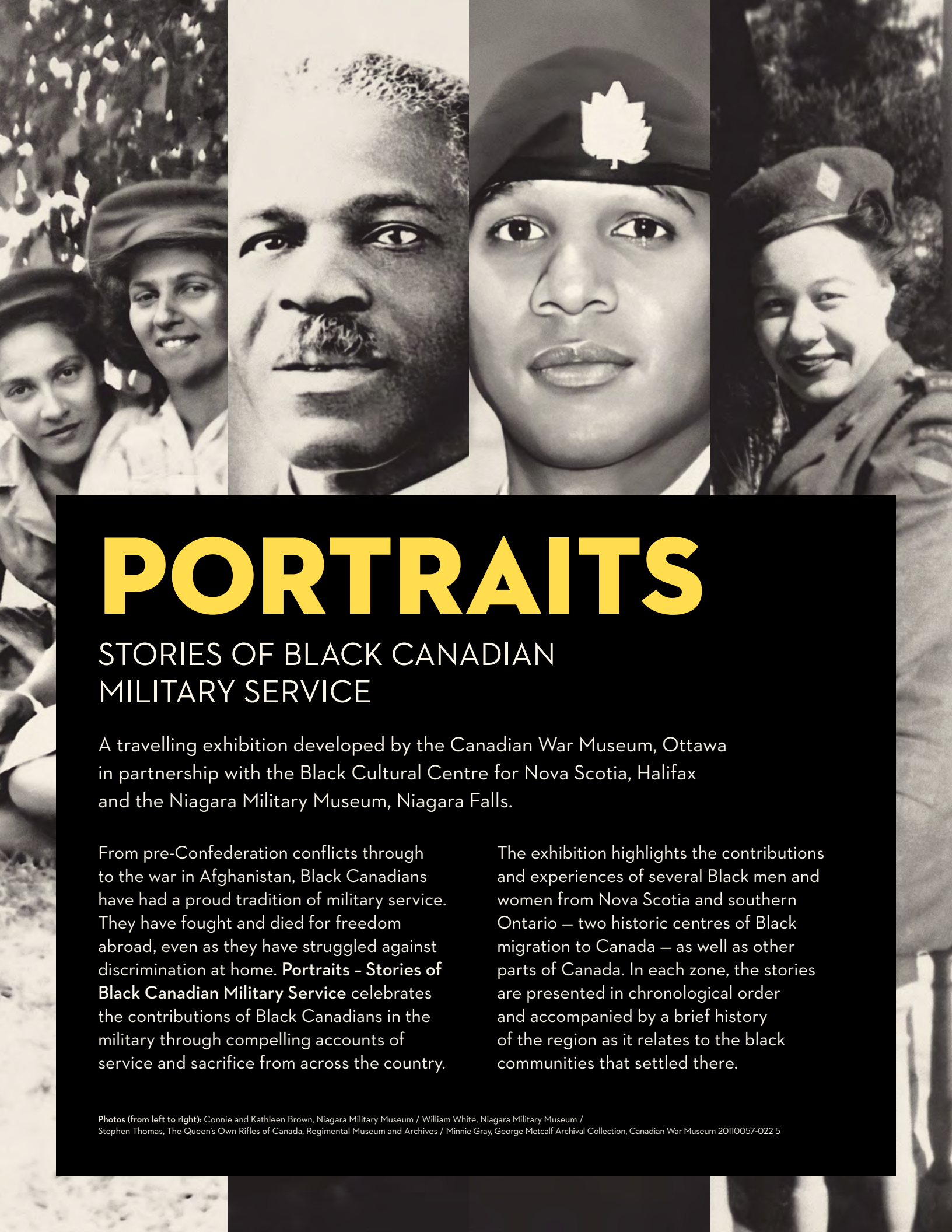
PORTRAITS

STORIES OF BLACK CANADIAN
MILITARY SERVICE



**A TRAVELLING EXHIBITION
BY THE CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM**

Canada



PORTRAITS

STORIES OF BLACK CANADIAN MILITARY SERVICE

A travelling exhibition developed by the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa in partnership with the Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, Halifax and the Niagara Military Museum, Niagara Falls.

From pre-Confederation conflicts through to the war in Afghanistan, Black Canadians have had a proud tradition of military service. They have fought and died for freedom abroad, even as they have struggled against discrimination at home. **Portraits – Stories of Black Canadian Military Service** celebrates the contributions of Black Canadians in the military through compelling accounts of service and sacrifice from across the country.

The exhibition highlights the contributions and experiences of several Black men and women from Nova Scotia and southern Ontario – two historic centres of Black migration to Canada – as well as other parts of Canada. In each zone, the stories are presented in chronological order and accompanied by a brief history of the region as it relates to the black communities that settled there.

Photos (from left to right): Connie and Kathleen Brown, Niagara Military Museum / William White, Niagara Military Museum / Stephen Thomas, The Queen's Own Rifles of Canada, Regimental Museum and Archives / Minnie Gray, George Metcalf Archival Collection, Canadian War Museum 20110057-022,5

THEME ZONES

Key conflicts

An introductory visual timeline from pre-Confederation through to the war in Afghanistan.



Members of the No. 2 Construction Battalion at work
Lt.-Col. D.H. Sutherland Collection, River John, Nova Scotia



The 104th (New Brunswick) Regiment of Foot
Painted by Robert John Marrion, 1971
Beaverbrook Collection of War Art
Canadian War Museum 19810948-008

Southern Ontario: Communities Born of Refuge

This zone familiarizes visitors with military units and individuals, including the Coloured Corps, a militia of Black volunteers formed during the War of 1812, and Connie and Kathleen Brown, twin sisters who served in the Canadian Women's Army Corps and the Royal Canadian Air Force Women's Division during the Second World War.



Connie and Kathleen Brown attending a veterans' reunion
Niagara Military Museum

Nova Scotia: Communities Born of Conflict

In this zone, visitors may recognize the story of William Hall, one of Canada's first recipients of the Victoria Cross. They might also recognize the story of the No. 2 Construction Battalion, a segregated military unit that served in the First World War and received a formal apology from the Canadian government in 2022. Stories of less well-known Canadians will inspire learning opportunities.



Cecilia Butler working in a munitions factory, 1943
National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque /
Library and Archives Canada / e000761869



William John Chandler
Niagara Military Museum



Canadian Peacekeepers in Haiti, 2013
Department of National Defence, IS2013-2002-058

Canada: Communities from Coast to Coast

Stories featured in this zone include that of the Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps, Canada's first Black military unit west of Ontario, and that of Sergeant Eva Roy, who joined the Canadian Women's Army Corps in 1944, and worked in canteens at home and abroad during the Second World War.



CONTENT

Graphic panels printed on fabric and mounted on free-standing structures. No artifacts or objects are included. To add a local dimension to the exhibition, host museums can supplement the presentation with content and objects from their collections.

REQUIRED EXHIBITION SPACE

- 85 m² (900 sq. ft.)

AVAILABILITY

- 2025–2028

LOAN FEE

- Available upon request

ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL

- Promotional materials
- Installation instructions

CONSERVATION AND SECURITY

- Must be displayed indoors.
- 24-hour electronic or human surveillance.
- Human surveillance during the unloading and loading of crates.
- Human surveillance during the installation and dismantling of the exhibition.

CONTACT

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