

Lohkay

Lohkay inspired many others to resist by not giving up. Lohkay fled from a plantation on Sint Maarten. The price she paid for it was high – her breast was cut off. Lohkay fled again and managed to survive on her own in the hills.

Her perseverance was an example for many generations on the islands of Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba. In 1848 all enslaved people of the Diamond Plantation fled to the French part of Sint Maarten, where slavery had been abolished earlier that year. After that, the Dutch plantation owners had no choice but to declare the remaining inhabitants free. This was well before the laws of 1860 and 1863, which abolished slavery in the Dutch colonies. In most regions, abolition was followed by years of forced labor. This raises questions about the concept of freedom: Is freedom established by a law, or piece of paper? Or is freedom exercised in spite of one's circumstances?

Machete, after 1845

Plate Sherd with inscription: "*Bring more cane to mill Negro*", found on Statia, c. 1750-1800.

Beads that according to oral tradition in Sint Eustatius were thrown in the ocean to mark emancipation, 18th and 19th centuries.

View of Philipsburg (Sint Maarten) facing out to sea, showing how near the other islands were that were already free from slavery

Samuel Fahlberg, 1822.

Act for the abolition of slavery in the Dutch Antilles, enacted in 1863.

Act for the abolition of slavery in the Dutch East Indies, enacted in 1860.