In Duty Bound: Men, Women, and the State in Upper Canada, 1783-1841 (Carleton Library Series)

J.K. Johnson

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In Duty Bound is an unprecedented look at Upper Canada's forgotten people and the ways in which their lives were by necessity bound in a mutual relationship of duty and obligation to the Upper Canadian state. This neglected area of Canada's history has been preserved, in part, in the form of personal petitions submitted to the lieutenant-governor and legislature for land, government jobs, pensions, pardons and the lessening of court sentences, for compensation for damages done by, or work done for, the state, and for relief. Using these and other previously unexamined government records, J.K. Johnson illustrates that, popular knowledge aside, Upper Canada was not simply a land of self-sufficient farmers and artisans and that many had to turn to and rely on the state for their livelihoods. The major themes of Upper Canada's history, from war and rebellion to immigration and settlement, are well-documented. In Duty Bound fleshes out the lives of ordinary people in Upper Canada and clarifies how several branches of government worked for, or against, the interests of the population.

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