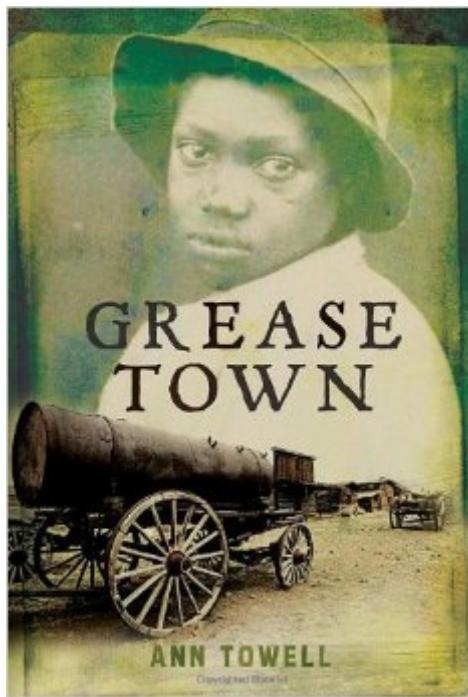


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# Grease Town



## **Synopsis**

A heartbreakingly moving history of prejudice, family ties, and the loss of innocence. When twelve-year-old Titus Sullivan decides to run away to join his Uncle Amos and older brother, Lem, he finds an alien and exciting world in Oil Springs, the first Canadian oil boomtown of the 19th century. The Enniskillen swamp is slick with oil, and it takes enterprising folk to plumb its depths. The adventurers who work there are a tough lot of individuals. In this hard world, Titus becomes friends with a young black boy, the child of slaves who came to Canada on the Underground Railroad. When tragedy strikes in the form of a race riot, Titus's loyalties are tested as he struggles to deal with the terrible fallout. Though the characters are fictitious, the novel is based on a race riot that occurred in Oil Springs, Ontario, on March 20, 1863. *Grease Town* is historical fiction at its finest.

## **Book Information**

Hardcover: 240 pages

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Product Dimensions: 5.6 x 0.8 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars See all reviews (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #4,319,859 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #94 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > Canada #1017 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Prejudice & Racism

## **Customer Reviews**

Reason for Reading: I'll pretty much read any juvenile/YA Canadian historical fiction on topics which are new or interesting to me. Summary: Loosely based on a true incident in the Sarnia area of Ontario, Canada, this book tells the story of an oil boom town, the people who fled there and focuses on the friendship between a white boy and a black boy. The book's main historical event is a race riot which left the blacks homeless and very little actual information survives of it today. Comments: I really enjoyed this book aimed at pre-teen children set during the 1860s. The descriptions of an oil boom town and both the shady and eccentric characters it attracted are wonderfully described. The atmosphere is not unlike that of the Goldrush towns. What makes Oil Springs different is that it is populated by both whites and escaped American black slaves. The

author shows how the practice of the times, paying the blacks less money than the whites, became easy fodder for insurgents to come in and stir up dangerous feelings with the less desirable characters in town. While not only describing the horrifying results of a senseless race riot the author also shows how easy it is for someone determined enough, in this case a pair of American bounty hunters, to create a mob mentality and control it by preying on their insecurities. Very insightful and at a level that the targeted audience will understand. The narrative voice is very intriguing and works very well, also. At first the narrative seems to cross over the line and speak directly to the reader, which is a little unsettling but then the reader realizes that the narrator is not speaking to them.

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