



NED CLARK

Several years of genealogy research established that the Clarks originated in the southern state of Virginia and were slaves on the Hairston Plantation. The Hairston family (pronounced Harston by the white Hairstons) was the wealthiest white plantation and slave owners of their time, collectively owning over 10,000 slaves in a 200-year period. David Hairston (born circa 1783) and his wife Susan Hairston (born circa 1800) together with their son Ned Hairston (born circa 1817) were included among those slaves. This is their genealogy and the beginning of documented Clark lineage, all of which began in the state of Virginia in the township of Martinsville, Henry County, Virginia.

David and Susan Hairston were the parents of Ned Hairston. Ned Hairston's surname changed when he was sold at least three times with the last slave owner being a wealthy Virginia merchant named William Thomas Clark - this is where the surname Clark originated from. Ned chose to retain the surname of his last slave holder after emancipation in 1865. Ned's wife was named Patsy - she too was a slave, and to this union 9 children were born – Carr; Thomas; Henry; Patsey; Edward; John; William; Benjamin; and Sallie Ann. The only child not born into slavery was the youngest daughter Sallie Ann who was born in 1866. Sadly, Sallie Ann died shortly after birth. Edward Clark, the father of Pete Clark was born a slave in Martinsville, Virginia in 1850. Edward was barely a year old when he was sold at auction in one lot together with his mother Patsy, father Ned, and the rest of his family to the highest bidder, William T. Clark.

After emancipation Edward Clark met and married Fannie Porter, also born in Virginia and they moved to Jacksonville, Telfair County, Georgia. It is not known why Edward left his family and moved from Virginia to Jacksonville, Georgia, perhaps the notion of making money planting and cultivating cotton. Many ex-slaves left Virginia and traveled to Georgia for the very same reason – the promise of making a great life farming cotton, a crop that they were distinctly familiar with farming as slaves. Unfortunately, many were disillusioned as this was never the case. Edward leased acreage in Telfair County and worked as a sharecropper. To the union of Edward and Fannie eight children were born – Ellen; Eddie (aka Edd); Peter (aka Pete); Henry; Nellie; Dodge; Missouri; and Robert.

Peter (“Pete”) Clark (born 1876) was the 5th child of Edward and Fannie Porter-Clark. Peter married Beulah Collins (born 1885) of Jacksonville, Georgia and to this union 13 children were born – Lovett; Otis; Louis; George; Sam; Lizzie Mae; Moses; Ollie Mae; Maxcel; Eddie Lee; Mattie Bell; Robert; and Rebecca.

Beulah Collins-Clark died on February 2, 1925, in Telfair County, Jacksonville, Georgia. Beulah was 37 years old when she died and was buried in Jacksonville, Georgia.

When Pete's health began to deteriorate, he relocated to Chester, Pennsylvania where some of his children were living and he was later hospitalized due to his declining health. Peter Clark died on October 15, 1942, in Chester, Delaware County, Pennsylvania. He was 65 years old. Records indicate that his body was returned to Jacksonville, Georgia for burial.

Peter Clark was known to be a loving husband, and hardworking father that provided for his wife and 13 children through a most turbulent time in the history of Georgia and this country. We honor them by cherishing their legacy forever.

****More detailed information about the history of the Ned Clark family can be found in the book currently being finalized by author Gwen Clark titled *What's My Name?***