

There had been a handful of slaves among the first wave of settlers on the Town Branch; James Masterson had brought slaves. Those in the east that held large numbers of slaves were reluctant to come to the frontier as each slave was an investment the owner did not wish to lose. They knew slaves were killed and captured by the Indians; they might even have purchased slaves from the Indians. Then too, Indians might kill the slave-owners and their families.

One slave owner who debated the morality of taking his sizeable slave band to Kentucky was John Breckenridge. He debated with himself; should he send a white overseer and a band of slaves to Kentucky ahead of his coming so that they could clear the land and build cabins for the white family to live in until they could build a large mansion? He thought about the morality of sending slaves ahead but the lure of cheap land in Kentucky overcame his feelings of morality and he sent the slaves ahead.

The Scottish Ornithologist Alexander Wilson was searching for birds that were not yet known to science when he came to Lexington in 1810. Just outside of town he found a new bird which he named the Kentucky Warbler; the only bird in America that officially bears the name of a state. He witnessed the auctioning of a Black woman and her young son and entered the event in his diary:

"Horses selling by auction, Negro woman sold the same way: My reflections while standing by and hearing her cried: Three hundred and twenty-five dollars for this woman and boy! Going! Going! Going! Woman and boy afterwards weep. Dammed, Dammed slavery."

Wilson's view of slavery wasn't widely held in Lexington and the numbers of slaves ballooned as merchants and factory owners felt slavery and the auctioning of slaves was a good thing. They felt that their slaves were treated well and were content with their lives. The slaves hid their feelings and held opposite views of their treatment.

The first tannery that produced leather was right outside of Patterson's Blockhouse. In the years of Lexington's growth numerous sets of stinking tanning vats operated at the tan yards along Town Branch including one ran by Joseph Logan. The twelve year old slave Milton Clarke worked for Logan. Milton said of Logan, "He was a tall, lank, grey eyed, hard hearted, cruel wretch; coarse, vulgar, debauched, corrupt and corrupting; but in good stead in the Episcopalian Church. We were always protected, however, from any great hardships during the life of his first wife."

The mother of Milton was 'Letty' who had eight children. When the owner of Letty, and her children, Samuel Campbell died his slaves were to be auctioned off. Campbell

was Milton's white grandfather. Judith Logan, wife of Joseph, did not want to see the family slaves sold and told her brothers and sisters, 'Letty is our half-sister, and you know it; father never intended they should be sold.' Her protest was disregarded, and the auctioneer was ordered to proceed. My Mother, and her infant son, Cyrus, about one year old, were put up and sold for \$500! Sisters and brothers selling their own sister and her children."

"It was my misfortune, with my mother, brother Cyrus, and sister Delia to fall into the hands of Aunt Judith," who protected them for two years till she died. Joseph Logan then married Judith's sister Minerva Campbell who Milton said, "She was half a fool, besides being under witted."

"When I was about twelve years old, I was put to work grinding bark for the tannery. Not understanding the business, I did not make such progress Logan thought I should make. Many a severe beating was the consequence. At one time the shoulder of the horse (used to grind the bark) was very sore, and Logan complained I did not take good care of him. I tried to defend myself as well as I could, but his final argument was the thumping of my head against the post. Kings have the last argument and so do slaveholders."

"I took the horse into the stable, and as I had no one else to talk with, I held quite a dialogue with Old Dobbin. Unluckily for me, Logan was hid in another stall, to hear his servant curse him. I told the horse, 'Master complains that I don't grind bark enough; complains that I work you too hard; don't feed you enough; and now you old rascal you know that is a lie, the whole of it; I have given you fifteen ears of corn three times a day, and that is enough for any horse; Caesar says that is enough, and Moses (both men were fellow slaves) say that is enough; now eat your corn and grow fat.'"

"At the end of this apostrophe, I gave the old horse three cuts to the face, and told him to walk up and eat the corn. I then stepped out into the floor and threw fifteen ears more, and said, 'See if the old man will think that is enough.'"

"Scarcely had the words passed my lips, when I heard a rustling in the next stall, and Joe Logan was before me, taller than I ever saw him before, and savage as a cannibal. I made for the door, but he shut it upon me, and caught me by one leg. He began kicking and cuffing, till in my despair, I seized him, like a young bear, by the leg, with my teeth, and, with all tearing and wrenching, he could not get me off. He called one of his white workmen from the tan yard and just as he came in, Logan had his knife out, and was about to cut my throat. The man spoke, and told him not to do that. They tied me and gave me three hundred lashes; my back was peeled from my shoulders to my heels."

"Mother was in the house, and heard my screams but did not dare come near me.

Logan left me weltering in my own blood; mother then came and took me up, and carried me into her own room. About eight o'clock that evening Logan came and asked mother if I was alive or dead. She told him I was alive. I laid there four weeks, before I went out the door. Let fathers and mothers think what it would be to see a child whipped to the very door of death, and not permitted to say a word in their behalf. Words can never tell what I suffered. I shuddered at the countenance of Joseph Logan for many months after. The recollection now makes me shudder, as I go back to that bitter day."

Kentucky's great historian, Dr. Thomas Clark, said that for thirty years the chant of the auctioneer, Dutchman Jerry Delph, was heard on Cheapside beside the court house. The bull-voiced Delph sold droves of horses, mules and slaves making himself rich in the process. Dr. Clark calls the slave auctioneers bestial as they displayed the helpless slave girls. On one occasion the bidding on a lovely slave girl was lagging so the auctioneer reached down and pulled up her dress. She wasn't wearing any underwear. This would happen with some regularly and drew no criticism from the men but once a carriage filled with wealthy white women passed and they were upset at this "disgraceful" act. The disgraceful act continued but not when white women were present.

The auctioneer Dr. Clark referred to as Bestial is buried in the Lexington Cemetery. Jerry Delph's grave has a tall; imposing gravestone and when I saw it the inscription on it was very readable. There is no mention on it of him being a slave auctioneer.

Those seeking to sell their slaves brought them to town and housed them in "Slave Jails." James Matthews Slave Jail had high plastered walls topped with spikes to prevent escape. L.C. Robards Slave Jail on Mechanics Alley sold a "Common run" of slaves. Common run probably meant he kept and sold field hands and household workers. These slaves were kept in vermin-infested slave pens or 'coops' set on damp brick floors with barred windows near the roof and had heavy iron-grated doors. Robards advertized his jail would, "keep negroes by the day or the week for anyone wishing to confine them in jail other purposes."

Other purposes often meant brutal treatment was applied to a slave. In her 'Freedom By Any Means' Betty DeRamus said, "Some slaveholders claimed that runaway slaves suffered from 'drapetomania', a disease that nineteenth-century psychiatrists insisted gave slaves an uncontrolled urge to run away from their masters, answer disrespectfully and refuse to work. The only cure for this disease was said to be severe whippings and hard labor, which "sent vitalized blood to the brain."

An elderly woman I once knew told me that two of her great-uncles had been 'negro-whippers. She said that they were paid 13 ½ cents for each whipping. She was very ashamed of being related to these men and made me promise not to use her name.

The slave dealer Robards had slaves whipped in his slave jail. He conducted the selling of common slaves in a two story log house, the slave pens were in back of the house. His jail stood where the Opera House does now on Main and Short Streets. The Todd family lived several houses down from the jail. Young Mary Todd was said to have helped the family cook, 'Mammy' feed runaway slaves. I don't think she was against slavery. She was just a young girl who like many children enjoyed doing something she knew would have upset her parents if they knew.

The Todd home was torn down and the bricks salvaged from the home were used to build the two-story brick gatehouse at the Catholic Cemetery opposite the Lexington Cemetery. When Mary returned to visit Lexington with her husband and children she stayed at her Grandmother Parker's home on Short Street. There is a story, some historians doubt it, but I've read it that says while on the porch of the home Lincoln could hear the slaves being whipped.

There was a second home where Robards sold slaves on the opposite side of Short Street from the Parker House. This was a two-story brick home with a narrow door flanked by a window on each side. The second story had two windows placed close together on one side and a single window on the other. The windows had bars on them. The inside of the home was nicely furnished. This is where Robards sold 'Fancy Women.' Prospective buyers were ushered into a parlor and seated with appropriate drinks and then young, attractive and light-skinned slave women who were nicely dressed entered the parlor one at a time. If Robards thought a man might buy one of the girls the man was told "to try her out."

A congressman from Illinois, and a friend of Lincoln, once came to Robards, he said he was there just to see "this dreadful practice." He reported that one of the Fancy Girls sold for \$2,500. This house would later be the site of an African-American Church and is now a low one-story building.

Women who didn't meet the Fancy Woman status; that meant they were too old, less attractive and too black, were 'Sold Downriver.' In 1854 Robards sold Delphia, an eighteen year old mulatto, after warranting her as, "sound in mind and body and a slave for life." The young girl died enroute to Natchez of, "Ni---r Consumption" and Robards was sued. He would be sued many times for his shady dealings involving sick or diseased slaves. Those slaves known to be sick could not be passed off as "Sound" and so they were sold for as little as two or three dollars. Sugar planters in Louisiana bought diseased slaves and worked them for two or three weeks before they died.

The Robards Jail was said to be a "rendezvous for a gang of kidnappers and n---r thieves." Kidnapping of Free Blacks was carried out in many Northern states and Kentucky too. Robards brother Alfred kidnapped Blacks in Ohio but sold them not in

Lexington but in Pikeville in eastern Kentucky. The kidnapping of Blacks was said to be the result of the belief in white superiority. Its biggest appeal was to the lower white class, "as well as some inferior magistrates and constables" who were open to bribes. There were high profits in Black kidnapping.

In 1850 Robards "trusted n-----r agent" James McMillian and his gang were paid six hundred dollars to kidnap a Free Woman of Color, Arain Belle and her four year old daughter Melissa. The gang broke into Arain's Mason County home and took her and her daughter to Robards Jail. White friends of Arain charged Robards with, running her off to some of the Southern States to sell her into slavery." They were right as Robards had sold her to a Sugar Planter for \$850. Kentucky exported seventy-five thousand slaves between 1830 and 1860.

The tricky Robards had slipped Arain and her daughter onto the steamboat, 'The Sea Gull' below Frankfort but Arain's white friends learned where she was and took her off the boat. This set-back did not stop Robards from dealing in stolen slaves. The city of Lexington had inspectors that visited the slave jails and always found there was nothing wrong at the jails. However in 1855 seven kidnapped Black children were found in Robards jail. Decent people claimed that they "despised slave dealers." But they did business with them. Slavery could not have operated without the slave dealers.

A common trick was for white men, not slave dealers, to lease a young child from their owner and then after selling them to a slave dealer claim that the child had run off or had been stolen. Kidnapped Blacks, adults and children were physically abused and terrorized to make them say they were slaves when questioned.

The Still brothers of Philadelphia were Free Blacks. Six year old Peter and eight year old Levin were playing near their home when it began to grow late and their mother hadn't come home. The worried brothers went looking for their mother and encountered a white stranger in a carriage. He told them he would take them to their mother and they went with him. He brought them to Lexington and sold them to the Gist family. Entering the kitchen the stranger pointed to the Black cook and said, "There's your mother." The boys tried telling people they were not slaves but after several beatings they learned to keep silent.

In 1817 the elderly Nathaniel Gist and two of his nephews were moving to Alabama and were taking some of their slaves with them. The slave couple Frank and his wife Peggy tried keeping up a brave appearance upon leaving. Peter and Levin had never been apart and before the caravan left stood shaking each other's hands the longest time trying to be as cheerful as the older slaves. Levin went to Alabama and disappeared from history. Peter was hired to a tobacco factory where the owner beat him severely. Peter ran away to his masters home and was given a week to recover. His master

refused to renew Peter's contract at the tobacco factory. Peter would buy his freedom, become active in uplifting Blacks, and would return to Philadelphia after forty years.

To his credit John Breckenridge, after he had sent his slaves to Kentucky, refused to sell his surplus slaves; there by breaking up families, instead he leased them out. He leased young boys to work in Peter January's rope walk. Four young boys Breckenridge leased brought a cash payment to him. However the two smallest boys had to work free for one year and then January would pay for their labor the second year.

The Morgan brothers, who will be in a later chapter, bought slaves for the use in their factories and leased them out to steamboat owners; working on the steamboats was a dangerous job for steamboats had a reputation for boiler explosions killing passengers and crews. One of the Morgan slaves was said not to have liked being leased out and ran away. He returned for a visit thirty years after running away. John Hunt Morgan once lent Robards six thousand dollars for a slave deal. He had to sue to get his money back. There is no historical record of John Hunt Morgan owning a slave jail, however:

Union soldiers during the Civil War captured the Rebel 'Wash' Noble and several of his comrades and brought them to Lexington. Wash said, "They delivered us to the guard, and the guard put a guard over us in John Morgan's negro jail. That is what the Yankee's called it. We stayed there that night. It was a right, nasty place where they kept the Confederate prisoners. It was so filthy my modesty keeps me from writing how it was."

There were Kentuckians who favored a gradual emancipation for the slaves. Under this plan slaves born after 1850, were to be free, the males at the age of twenty-eight, and the females at twenty-five. The last three years of the slaves earnings before being freed would go into a fund to send them to Africa. There were freed slaves that did go to Liberia but most chose to stay in Kentucky which was their home and the home of all their families and friends who were still enslaved.

A distant cousin of Henry Clay, Cassius Marcellus Clay, came to Lexington to fight against slavery. Cassius began the True American newspaper published at 6 North Mill Street about 100 feet from Main Street. He urged a Constitutional Convention be held where he would push the freeing of slaves. Slave-owners tried countering his urging the freeing of slaves by saying they had a "Right" to own slaves. Cassius reminded them that slaves had rights too.

One article Cassius wrote provoked a furious response. He proposed the radical idea of freeing female slaves. "I would say that every female slave, born after a certain day and year, should be freed at the age of 21." His paper then advised slave owning women to, "Put away your slaves---if you want to drink, go to the pump or spring and get it; if to

bathe, prepare your own bath, or plunge in the running stream; make your own beds, sweep your own rooms; wash your own clothes---throw away your corsets and nature will form your bustles." He added that then, "You will have full chests, glossy hair, rosy complexions, velvet skins, rounded limbs, graceful toures (torsos?), eyes of alternate fire, sweet tempers, good husbands, long lives of honeymoons, and-no divorces."

There were threats against Cassius and his paper and Cassius filled his office with pistols and other weapons. There was no move made against him or the office until he was sick in bed. The "Committee of Sixty", led by Henry Clay's son James Clay, formed a mob and broke into the True American Office and destroyed the printing press.

The combative Cassius was against the War with Mexico as he felt that would bring more slave states into the Union. But being a Kentuckian he could not stay away from a fight and he began recruiting a company in the yard of his mansion. His critics accused him of recruiting men by plying them with whiskey but this is how soldiers were recruited at the time. He had to borrow money to provide his troops with horses and equipment before setting off for Texas.

In a letter home he wrote "Texas is a miserable country. The eastern part is pine and hickory and sandy-the western prairie, muddy, quicksands and mesquite-the whole state not worth six cents an acre, as the climate is warm and sticky and enervating and must ever be inhabited by a semi-civilized and degenerate people." He was right.

Word came back telling of how sickness ravaged the soldiers there. Cassius would write, "I have been fortunate so far as to have lost not a single man; though half my company is unfit for service, and several have been discharged." Black men went to war as servants in most of the Indian wars, the War of 1812, both wars with Mexico and the looming Civil War. "The negro man who went as Clay's servant passed through here yesterday with two(men from) Madison (County) returning home on account of illness."

The Mexican Cavalry overwhelmed Cassius force at Encarnicon, Mexico the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 1847. A letter from Patrick Boyle to Brutus Clay said, "Your brother Casies Clay is taken Prisoner By the Mexicans. But they are giving him good treatment, as I am told. I have heard from there lately. Buy a young man that Cum from there. And young Henry Clay (Jr.) got killed."

The death of his oldest son h<sup>✓✓</sup> Henry Clay doubly hard as he had been against the War with Mexico. He learned of the death of his son in an unusual manner. J. Winston Coleman wrote, "Homing or carrier pigeons were bred by the Post Office. Army and navy to transport important messages---not only were these pigeons used by the government, but stage coach owners derived a steady income from them; and for many

years the largest 'pigeon loft' in the country was located in the top of the old stage barn on Limestone Street in Lexington. In this 'loft' were rows of cages marked, Washington, Knoxville, Zanesville, Cincinnati, Nashville and other cities, indicating the 'loft' to which the bird would return when released. The birds were hauled back to Lexington with no charge by the stagecoaches."

"During the Mexican War, 'Carrier pigeons brought the news of the Battle of Buena Vista to Lexington, word of the death of Colonels McKee and Henry Clay Jr. and the capture of Cassius Clay."

The rumors spread over Lexington that soon Cassius would return and plans were made to welcome him home. One of the members of the Committee Sixty who had stormed the True American Office worked hard to be the Grand Marshall in the public reception for Cassius. Even slave-owners were willing to overlook Cassius speaking out and publishing articles about ending slavery as he was a war hero.

Old court records are filled with stories of slaves that poisoned or attempted to poison their owners or the children of their owners. Just two of these cases were:

"Gissilly (received death penalty) 1849 for putting glass in food of master's family."

"Harriet C. house servant-death penalty for poisoning her owner's coffee."

All slave owners were aware of slave poisonings and were quick to react at the least suspicion of poisoning. In 1843 Cassius Clay Jr. fell ill and the little boy's grandfather, Dr. Elisha Warfield, rushed in and labored for three weeks to save him but the boy died. Cassius owned slaves and immediately suspected Emily, the boys Black Nanny of harming the boy.

The indictment against Emily stated that Emily, "Fenolionously, sinfully and of her malice aforethought attempted to kill and murder Cassius Clay (Jr.)" and, "did then and there put mix and mingle a deadly poison called arsenic, to wit. Five grains thereof in a certain quantity of milk, to wit, half a pint and then and there, by reason of persuasion, threats and force induce the said Cassius Clay, an infant of tender years, to drink and swallow a great quantity of poison aforesaid, with the evil intent", that the boy would die.

After what seemed an "incredible delay" at the trial, the pro-slavery jury brought in a verdict of not guilty. Many at the time thought that the not guilty verdict was a means of striking out at Cassius for advocating freedom for slaves. This would have meant that an all white, pro-slavery jury set free a Black woman who killed a white child. This seems unlikely. It might have been the jury thought Emily hadn't poisoned the boy.

Emily had 'persuaded' a child to drink milk; something parents and nannies do every day. By drinking the milk the child fell ill with Milk Sickness. The pioneer Doctor Daniel Drake made a study of Milk Sickness which was caused when people drank milk from cows that had eaten certain weeds like White Root, Jimmy Weed or Rayless Golden Rod. After drinking the affected milk people developed irregular respiration, cold clammy skin, subnormal temperature, constipation and bloated abdomen. The last stages brought on, "weakness and prostration of the voluntary muscles; then came nausea" and "soon a comatose condition with periods of agonizing pain."

The poison in the weed the cows ate was Temetol and the symptoms it caused were the same as Arsenic. There are still no certain antidotes for the poison. Milk Sickness is what killed Abraham Lincoln's mother.

Convinced his child had been poisoned Cassius vindictively sold Emily's mother Rachel and her brother Solomon before Emily's trial; and after the trial he sold Emily downriver, a slaves' worse nightmare. When anti-slavery groups asked Cassius why he sold the three slaves he curtly responded that, "I never at any time sold a slave, except for crime or their own desire." He claimed he sold the three slaves because, "Rachel was an abortionist, Emily a murderess and Solomon a rouge."

The majority of slaves sold was done so between private parties; not by slave dealers. In cases of bankruptcy or to settle debts the sheriff supervised sales at the town's auction block which stood near the 'Whipping Post' just a short distance from the court house at the southeast corner of Cheapside and Main Street. The whipping post was used to punish criminals and not to 'Break' slaves. In time the city was ashamed of what had happened at the whipping post and replaced it with a water fountain. Recently they were ashamed at having a slave auction block at Cheapside and changed the name from Cheapside to that of a successful Black businessman named Tandy.

One of the leading advocates for sending ex-slaves to Africa was Henry Clay who had a six hundred acre estate out on the Richmond Road, and was named Ashland for the Ash trees that grew there. The home he lived in was so poorly built that his son James had to tear it down and rebuilt it after his father passed away. The home is open for daily tours. I love the spacious brick walled garden there with its herbs and flowers. Once we went to the garden and a lovely woman, dressed in an anti-bellum gown, sat on a stone bench presenting a portrait of a long gone time.

On the far edge of the grounds at Ashland is a large garden of Double Peonies. The staff at Ashland says the largest numbers of calls they receive comes in the spring when people ask, "Are the Peonies blooming yet?" Coming from all parts of the state photographers encircle the peonies and artists set up their easels to paint the multi-colored flowers.

His duties in Washington kept Henry Clay away from his estate and his wife Lucreita actually ran the farm. She sold 30 gallons of milk a day, plus eggs and butter to the Phoenix Hotel. In 1814 the New Englander Amos Kendall came to Ashland to tutor the Clay children. Kendall would say that the thirteen year old Theodore and twelve year old Thomas's education had been badly neglected and the two boys were almost ungovernable.

When Kendall tried to discipline Thomas the boy fought like a tiger calling Kendall, "A damned Yankee rascal!" On one occasion Kendall wrote, "Yesterday Mrs. Clay being absent Thomas got into a mighty rage with some of the negroes, and threatened and exerted all his little power to kill them." Thomas would be 'committed' to a mental institution for a time. On another occasion Kendall wrote, "Hearing a great noise in the kitchen, I went in and found Theodore swearing in a great rage with a knife drawn in attitude to stab one of the big negroes."

The field hands at Ashland had a work chant that ended with:

"I'd rather co't (court) a yallar gal,

"dan work for Henry Clay."

Quoting Eric Brooks, "America's Great Compromiser, Henry Clay, owned enslaved people his whole life and never wavered from that. This brings new truth to his story." Henry Clay seems to have owned at least fifty slaves; some of whom he leased to home builders in the city.

There would be countless ads in the papers seeking the return of runaway slaves. There would be a description of the slave and a money amount to be paid for the return of the slave. One of Lexington's early settlers, the distiller Robert Sanders, "offered a reward of 20 pounds or 100 gallons of prime whiskey" for the return of the slave.

One of Henry Clay's runaway slaves was Lewis Richardson who had fled to Canada in 1846. He told "I am free from American slavery, after wearing the galling chains on my limbs 53 years 9 of which it has been my unhappy lot to be the slave of Henry Clay. It has been said of some, that Clay's slaves had rather live with him than be free, but I had rather this day, have a millstone tied to my neck, and be sunk to the bottom of the Detroit River, than to go back to Ashland and be his slave for life."

Richardson had fled after Ashland's overseer had stripped off his shirt and lashed him 150 times. He told that, "During the 9 years living with Mr. Clay he has not given me a hat or cap to wear, nor a stitch of bed clothes, except one small coarse blanket. Yet he has said publically his slaves were 'fat and sleek.' But I say if they are, it is not because they are well used by him. They have nothing but coarse bread and meat to eat, and not

enough of that. They are allowanced each week. For each field hand is allowed one peck of coarse corn meal and meat in proportion, and no vegetables of any kind. Such is the treatment Henry Clay's slaves receive from him."

The Staff at today's Ashland have released the following information. They said that the "Exploitation and rape of enslaved women by their owners" was very common. In my research I found the State of Kentucky had laws on the books which could result in the death penalty of white men for the rape of white women. Needles to say Black men who raped white women always received the Death Penalty, if they lived long enough for a trial. There was no law at that time against the rape of Black slave women.

One slave woman was Charlotte Dupuy "who was purchased by Clay for \$450 dollars after she married Aaron Dupuy, who was already Ashland chattel (property). Charlotte Dupuy traveled with the family to Washington, D.C., and there she sued Clay for her freedom because her mother had been born free. She lost her case and stayed enslaved by the Clay's along with her children Charles and Mary Ann."

Phoebe Moore, "was bought by Henry Clay, and according to her obituary, claimed to have two children by Clay."

The daughter of Charlotte, Mary Ann Dupuy, "had a mixed race child named Henry. DNA evidence does not exist to prove these connections but present day Ashland staff is still looking. They said this kind of sexual exploitation "was more the rule than the exception."

The fourteen year old slave Lewis Hayden was sitting on a fence when General Lafayette came to Lexington in 1825. Lafayette was being escorted by mounted soldiers and it was an impressive procession. Lafayette was riding in a fine coach and when he came abreast of Lewis he spotted the young boy and while seated bowed at the waist towards Lewis; who would say, "I dated my hatred of slavery from that date." He had reason for his hatred.

His mother, who was mostly of Indian and white heritage, had given birth to eight children, each of which was fathered by a different man. When she refused to submit to the sexual demands of yet another white man she was savagely beaten. Lewis said his mother was committed after 'going crazy' and when he went to see her he was frightened by her ravings.

Slave owners feared that if slaves were educated they would raise up, kill their masters and "outrage" their wives. There were laws in many southern states prohibiting teaching slaves to read and write. Lewis was a wagon maker who used his spare time to

cut fire wood which he sold to pay for evening and Sunday lessons in reading and writing from another slave. He wrote his first words in the sand and later practiced writing on scraps of paper he picked up off the floor of the courthouse. He would later conduct a night school of 30 for Blacks.

The same year Lafayette had bowed to him the Rev. Adam Rankin was returning to Pennsylvania and as that was a Free State he had to dispose of his slaves. Rankin sold each of Lewis' brothers and sisters to a different master. Lewis said, "I never saw anything in Kentucky which made me suppose ministers or professors of religion considered it anymore wrong to separate the family's of slaves than a litter of pigs." In fact he had heard Rankin say from the pulpit, "There was no more harm in separating a family of slaves by sale than to separate any domestic animal." Lewis was traded to his new master for a carriage and a pair of horses.

Lewis met and fell in love with Esther Harvey, the slave of Joseph Harvey, a merchant. The couple had two children together but the second one died shortly after birth. When Joseph Harvey died Esther and her son was sold to Henry Clay to cover Harvey's debts. A month after her sale Esther came running to Lewis crying. She had been sold to a hated slave dealer.

Lewis went to Henry Clay and asked why he had sold his wife and child. Clay haughtily replied, "He had them and he sold him." This comment is one more reason why I dislike Henry Clay.

Lewis never saw his wife and child again. Decades later he would say, "I've got one child buried in Kentucky and that grave is pleasant to think of. I've got another sold nobody knows where and that I can never bear to think of."

Lewis would be employed at the Phoenix Hotel from which two Northern abolitionists, Delia Webster and Calvin Fairbanks, would help him escape on the Underground Railroad. Lewis made it to freedom but the two abolitionists would be arrested and sent to prison. Delia Webster received a light sentence and after being seen riding around the streets in a carriage with the prison warren was soon released. Calvin Fairbanks drew a fifteen year sentence and never rode with the prison warren.

In his years of confinement Calvin counted the lashes that struck his back; they would total 40,000. He came out of prison a broken man.

Slave owners did not tolerate anyone trying to free their slaves and reacted savagely to keep their slaves. They would even fight a war to keep them. This war, at least that part of it that touched Lexington is told of in the next chapter.

The first African slaves entered this county thirteen years before the famed Pilgrims. They were seen as an uncivilized people who worshipped animals and unseen spirits. However, many of these slaves came from areas that were heavily Muslim and like the Christians believed in One God. Most slave-owners never knew or cared what their slaves believed for they weren't Christian. The Church had long taught that Christians could not own other Christians as slaves so they enslaved Pagans.

Africans were seen as little better than animals and some thought the Blacks lacked a soul. The Frenchman Monesquien attempted to explain this attitude toward the Black slaves as early as 1748. "It is impossible for us to suppose these creatures to be men, because, allowing them to be men, a suspicion would follow that we are selves are not Christian."

There was no effort made to convert these pagans to Christianity until the churches convinced themselves that Christians could own other Christians; this took close to two hundred years. The captive slaves saw their masters worshipping and they began to adopt Christian beliefs but they knew their masters did not want the slaves to become Christians so they conducted secret services in the woods.

In 'One Grain of Salt' Dr. L.H. McIntyre writes of 'The Invisible Church' as slaves "strove diligently not to be seen." Many religious gatherings were broken up and the slaves attending were punished. So there arose "Black religious music, depicting their actions, intent and feelings (sometimes not so noble) were sung in a religious ceremony whilst hoeing rows of tobacco or picking cotton. Some evenings, as the main house entertained elegantly, field hands were known to have worshipped with Indians in some secluded spot. The night worshippers' consciences were cleared the following day by a house slave who sang, "Way down yonder, by myself, and I couldn't hear nobody pray."

The Baptists were the first church to preach to the slaves, this was before they too accepted slavery. As the slaves accepted Christianity the slave owners saw that Christianity could be used to control the slaves. White preachers used Bible verses to tell slaves that they should obey their masters; God demanded it. Slaves too began to preach to Black congregations but white men monitored their preaching to block any ideas of freedom. Free Blacks and slaves did indeed seek to build a community outside of the one the whites dominated. They did this by starting their own churches.

The slave Peter Durett, known as "The Old Captain" was converted in 1758, baptized in a white church, and began going door to door in Virginia exhorting the Christian message. He was brought to Kentucky in 1785 and was a member of a white church, "At the head of Boone's Creek." When this church folded Durett and his wife were hired out

by their owner and came to Lexington.

The woods were still being cleared and the threat of Indian attack still lingered in the pioneers minds when Durett began preaching. The white pioneer John Maxwell met Durett and the pair remained life-long friends. Maxwell gave Durett a lot on which to build a church from the 1,000 acres he owned. These 1,000 acres is now the central part of the University of Kentucky.

Durett started the First Baptist Church, the third African-American church in the United States. The church would move first to a 'Cotton Factory', then to near 'Patterson's Stone Quarry', and on to "Castleman's Bagging Factory' before landing at today's site. When Durett died London Ferrell, said to be the grandson of an African King, sought to become the pastor of the church. A committee of white men met and determined that there was no reason a Free Black man could not be ordained and allowed to preach so Ferrell stepped into the pastorate. "he was only one of three Lexington clergymen who had determined to stay behind to minister to the dying during the merciless cholera epidemic of 1833."

William Pratt wrote of Ferrell, "his influence was more potent to keep order among the blacks than the police force of the city. The 'Quality Negroes' of Lexington were said to belong to his church." His congregation was composed mainly of house servants of the wealthiest white families. These household slaves looked down on the Irish in the slum of 'Irishtown' who didn't own slaves and called them, "Poor White Trash."

Slaves could not legally marry but Ferrell performed hundreds of marriages. In August of 1835 Ferrell officiated at the ceremony uniting Jane Wales and Lewis Sanders at the Todd Home (now the Mary Todd Lincoln Home on West Main). Jane Wales is thought to have been the Todd housekeeper. Understanding the conditions of slavery where one of the married couples could be sold 'Downriver' Ferrell pronounced couples married until parted by 'death or distance.'

There is a picture of huge crowd of Blacks gathered around the pond next to the city's Workhouse attending a Baptism. It may have been here that Ferrell baptized 200 people at one time after a meeting he had held. Pratt said of Ferrell, "He worked in public education, ministered equally to black and white Kentuckians. And yet his name is remembered by almost no one in this town. There is not statutory to his bravery and goodness, no headstone marking the place where we might remember his works and words." There are lots of reasons why that might be, but one reason is probably the most obvious:"

"London Ferrell was black."



































