

African American Daily Life at Clermont

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African American Daily Life at Clermont is a theme worthy of scholars and the general public. It has a substantial value in the preservation and interpretation of Clermont. It is evident that African Americans were present at Clermont by viewing the residual slave quarters. The fact that African Americans were present and played a role in Clermont's history is documented in Clermont's archives. The presence is further supported by documents from other repositories in Clark and Frederick Counties that contain vital, land and probate records. Federal and state records including the United States Free, Slave, and Agriculture Census, and community oral histories also support the presence of African Americans at Clermont. The theme, African American Daily Life at Clermont, will be studied for its value in interpreting Clermont by reviewing several of the resources. The existence and impact of African Americans are noted in the archival holdings commencing in the era of American Slavery and extending through Segregation. One should find it easy, as did I, to conclude that the enslaved African American population of Clermont maintained a constant and increasing value in its daily operation. Clermont cannot be accurately interpreted without extensive efforts to interpret the African American presence and the intricate laws that governed their daily lives from slavery to freedom.

The history of Clermont is noteworthy as the laws of our nation and the institution of slavery are explored and expose the foundation of the Clermont saga. Individuals will be able to visit this historic site, benefit from living history interpretations, and attend and participate in workshops, seminars, and forums reviewing slavery and its economic impact on Clermont and its owners and the transition from slavery to freedom. The inclusion and network with the Josephine City Community will enhance the interpretation of slavery to freedom and offer a great benefit to scholars and the general public for exploring the Jim Crow Era of Clark County.

Clermont's paper trail of documents is instrumental in the research and interpretation of the property. These archival documents open avenues for academic study, research and interpretation. The ability to assess the activities of daily life at Clermont hinges on identifying the residents of color both free and enslaved. Identifying these African Americans is somewhat challenging and often goes incomplete because of the sensitive nature of the history due to the institution of slavery. Lifelong servitude, based on the status of one's mother free or indentured at the time of the child's birth, was the underpinning for the Institution of Slavery in Virginia. Clermont's owners were accustomed to the institution, its practices, and the laws governing slavery. With the changes in the ownership of Clermont, the archives and county records reveal, a new work force of enslaved people having an opportunity to be introduced to the grounds and duties required to maintain this working farm. The research, study and interpretation of Clermont will benefit many in the understanding of this local property, the land owners and the free and enslaved people of color. Clermont has an opportunity of bridging neighboring counties to extend the interpretation since it has history recorded in both Frederick and Clark Counties. This gives a great opportunity for joint ventures in furthering this effort and networking with Lord Fairfax Community College and Shenandoah University.

Building on the archival foundation will reflect other historic sites such as Monticello and Mount Vernon. In 1993 Monticello's Getting Word Project began with the purpose to locate and record the oral histories of the descendant of Monticello's enslaved families documented in Jefferson's Farm Account Book and other archives. This project served to expand the understanding of life at Monticello. The Thomas Jefferson Foundation and the Robert H. Smith International Center for Jefferson Studies offer multiple research opportunities.¹ Mount

Vernon's venue too offers enrichment in the subject of the African American experience. Mount Vernon's staff lectures include topics regarding slavery and daily life.ⁱⁱ They each have a site for interpretation and a foundation of archival files inclusive of African Americans. The utilization of the archives served as a base upon which to build and generate opportunities for broad-spectrum outreach that could benefit to the public. Therefore the inclusion and interpretation of the African Americans at Clermont will expand and enrich the visitors experience and offer supplemental themes for public forums.

Documents spanning nearly one hundred years reveal the presence of enslaved people in connection with Clermont. In reviewing the ownership of Clermont we find the presence of African Americans commencing with Edward Snickers the third owner, who purchased three enslaved African Americans: an unnamed girl for 63 pounds, Robin, a man, for 90 pounds and Jacob, a boy, for 50 pounds from the estate sale of Taliaferro Stribling, on May 25, 1775.ⁱⁱⁱ Tracking the ownership of Clermont enables one to document the names and presences of the enslaved people there and their historical significance. E. Snickers moves to a nearby property in 1783 and his son William marries Frances Washington and they resided at Clermont. E. Snickers dies in 1790 leaving 62 slaves in Loudoun and Frederick Counties and his wife, Elizabeth Taliaferro Snickers dies at Clermont in 1799.^{iv} E. Snicker's son William inherits Clermont and the following enslaved people: Jerry (a ferryman), Sall with her two children: Peg and Harry, Tom (a ferryman), Flora, Dick, Bob, Manuel, Tom (a wagoner), Robin (a blacksmith with his tools), Will, Sampson, Simon, Juliet, Jack, Walker, Jack (house servant), Peter, Nat, Ned, Jerry (the son of Sarah), Sarah, Cupid and Moses.^v From this will one notes Edward Snicker's bequest to William tells the names of the people, of a family unit and their trades. In

1803, William sold part of his inheritance, to his niece Elizabeth Alexander and her husband James Ware, which included the ferry crossing. Elizabeth and her sister Sarah Snickers Alexander like William inherited property from their father's estate. The following slaves were to be divided between Elizabeth and Sarah: Jim, Winney, George, Lucy, Doll, Jenó, Charles, Nan and her five children: Jim, Charles, Matilda, Jo and Bill. Elizabeth's individual inheritance also included slaves: Aga, Jacob, Betty, Pallas, Jess, Jerry (son of Pallas) Frances and her child Jim of Prince William.^{vi} The laws of Virginia addressed the condition and status of Negroes, mulattos and Indian slaves. In 1705 slaves were deemed real estate, therefore, their ownership descended unto the heirs and widows of the owners. With the 1748 Ordinance their status was declared personal property.^{vii} These public records demonstrate the African American's presence and legal status among the owners of Clermont and warrant as topic for Scholarship.

Documenting the family lineage and marriages of the owners of Clermont and the legal status' of the enslaved people will illuminate inheritance and transfers of enslaved people through family lines. Researching property transfers assist in providing vital details in obtaining the names and additional information of those enslaved by the owners of Clermont. Therefore, it is necessary to explore resources beyond Clermont's archives and the immediate property owners to assist in revealing the invisible people of color. Elizabeth Snickers marries Thomas Stribling in 1788. On March 4, 1797 a transaction for the 389 acres between William Snickers and Thomas Stribling for 1,500 pounds was recorded. Thomas purchased an additional 20 acres from Warner Washington, Jr. Thomas Stribling's father Taliaferro dies leaving the following heirs: Francis, Taliaferro, Ann, Thomas, William and John.^{viii} Taliaferro's Inventory of property includes the following slaves and their value: Ned (60 pounds), Robin (90 pounds), Mary (15

pounds), Melford (40 pounds), Anthony (50 pounds), Hannah (80 pounds), Clary (10 pounds), Sampson (20 pounds), Jude (30 pounds), Lemon (30 pounds), Jacob (45 pounds), Lucy (60 pounds), Rose (60 pounds), Agg (20 pounds), Nann (30 pounds), Solomon (40 pounds), Solomon (40 pounds), Aaron (65 pounds), Ben (70 pounds), Flora (75 pounds), and Isaac (55 pounds).^{ix} Upon the death of Taliaferro's son Taliaferro an inventory of his slaves is recorded in September 1784 which included the following people and their estimated value: Floro (60 pounds), Robin (30 pounds), Millie (20 pounds), Lucy (15 pounds), Larry (40 pounds) and Milford (70 pounds).^x Transactions again transpired between Thomas Stribling and William Snickers between 1818 and December 14, 1819 when William regained ownership of Clermont for \$5,000.00 and purchased an additional 75 acres from Francis Stribling son of Taliaferro which later becomes Josephine City. On April 20, 1819, William Snickers sold 444 acres, inclusive of Clermont to Dawson McCormick for \$31,020.00.^{xi} It is an accomplishment not a trivial task to name those who are nameless in the records and revealing the invisible people of color. It is a very meaningful task which requires a wealth of knowledge in how and where to research in addition to the understanding that all people have the right to at least be identified by name even if you were an enslaved African American of this era.

Religious Practices during Slavery and African American Slave Holders of Frederick/Clark Counties are two topics that will be beneficial to the understanding of the African Americans of this era. African Americans free and enslaved had many obstacles to hurdle. For example the 1691 Act to the Virginia Assembly "*an act for suppressing outlying slaves covering divers subjects...*" discourages the emancipation of people. Hence, it required the newly emancipated person(s) to leave the commonwealth within six months or be subject to

re-enslavement.^{xii} During Dawson's ownership of Clermont we find surviving minutes from the fourth meeting of Buck Marsh Corresponding Meeting of the Baptist Brethren of Colour. This religious meeting was prior to the 1832 Act to the Virginia Assembly entitled "*an act reducing into one the several acts concerning slaves, free Negroes, and mulattoes and for other purposes,*" it is enacted that no slave, free Negro or mulatto shall preach, or hold any meeting for religious purposes either day or night;..."^{xiii} The meeting was held at the Winchester Meeting-House in Frederick County, Virginia on Whitsunday (seventh Sunday after Easter celebrating the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles) and Monday June 7th and 8th, 1829. According to the minutes eight of the ten churches holding membership to the Association were represented by their ministers and messengers and contributions totaled \$4.50. The meeting yielded the membership of the Upperville Church.^{xiv} Who were these men attending this meeting? Were they free or enslaved? Where their others attending besides the men of Colour? Let's take a brief look at one the representatives: Thomas Whiting, a free man of colour from Berryville, represented Buck Marsh Church. According the 1820 census his household of eight contained three free and five enslaved people of colour.^{xv} Who were the three free people and five enslaved in Whiting's house? Were they family members? Is this an example of family members being kept within the family living within the restrictions of the law as slave and slaveholder? Did Nat Turner's rebellion influence the 1832 Act? As one looks at the daily lives of African Americans during slavery questions such as these often arise and open avenues for additional research and public forums.

Continual research into the family lineage of the owners of Clermont discloses additional inherited human property. Dr. John McCormick, grandfather of the 1819 Clermont owner, was a

physician who emigrated from Ireland about 1725 to Pennsylvania and the Shenandoah Valley about 1730.^{xvi} Dr. McCormick's probated will records his wife inheriting two enslaved people Fermore, a man and Cloe, a woman and upon the death of his wife his son James inherited Fermore and McCormick's other sons William, George and Andrew inherited Cloe.^{xvii} Dawson McCormick, the 1819 owner of Clermont marries Flordina Milton daughter of John Milton and Ann Stribling Milton, a relative to Thomas Stribling (sister or niece). Flordina bore Dawson three children: Edward, William and Ann.^{xviii} Upon Dawson's death his inventory and appraisal of slaves of August 12, 1834 records: Lucinda (\$300.00), Fanny (\$300.00), Maria (\$200.00), Sarah (\$175.00), Rose (\$250), Tom (\$150.00), John (\$80.00), James Jones (\$450.00), Bob (\$325.00), Samuel Thompson (\$250.00), Jim Lee (\$500.00), Nat Morris (\$500.00), Lorenzo (\$450.00), Caty (\$75.00), Molly (\$250.00), Juda (\$300.00) and William (\$500.00).^{xix} In 1836 in the executor's account, Samuel McCormick is paid for boarding a sick slave named Katy. The company Kennon and Deahl were also paid for making her coffin.^{xx} Flordina's family was also participants in the institution of slavery. Florinda's father, John Milton's executor's account references the sale of Isaac for \$600.00 and expenses for a coffin for slave Daniel, and domestic cotton for clothes for other unnamed enslaved people.^{xxi} Upon Florinda's death her son Edward McCormick inherits Clermont. Edward marries Mary Stribling in 1847 and she died in 1853 and in 1856 he marries Ellen Jett.^{xxii} The inheritance of human property and documented accounts of the owners of Clermont increases the integrity in interpreting Clermont and the daily lives of its residents.

Archival documents generated during Edward's ownership of Clermont disclose the presence of African Americans enslaved, hired and free. The emancipation of the enslaved

continues to raise questions within the community. In 1836, the same year that Clark County is formed from Frederick, concern for the increase of free people of color is noted. On December 31st, a petition of twenty-eight white residents of Frederick asserting the “partial emancipation of slaves is the greatest evil facing residents of the state... Those who hold slaves and wish to emancipate should be permitted to do so by hiring them out until they have earned enough for their own removal; or owners should cast lots and sell other slaves to pay for the removal of those they wish to free. Free people of color who remain in the state contrary to law should revert as slaves to the heirs of their emancipators.”^{xxiii} The archives of Clermont continue to document the presence of African Americans and the daily activities of this working farm.

The history of Clermont will be enhanced by utilizing the archival files by abstracting and compiling references to and names of people associated with Clermont. Often documents only refer to servants and slaves as a hold, not as named individuals making their presence appear insignificant. In November of 1835 fifty cents was charged for making shoes for an unnamed servant, on January 25, 1836, \$3.66 was charged for medical services for servants and on January 18, 1839, \$16.00 was charged for medical care for slaves. Several charges for midwife fees were incurred during this time; hence, increasing the slave population and estate value, and expenses for hiring labor is also documented.^{xxiv} An account between Edward McCormick and George West reveals unnamed laborers working at an average wages of \$1.00 per day per hand and \$.75 per day for Hodge a local blacksmith from March 1848 to January 1849.^{xxv} The labor force though often unidentified was essential in this working farm. This archival page showing actual accounts for day labor supports the fact that additional labor was necessary and utilized beyond the household residents in order to maintain the farm and increase

its produce. Cost incurred for the maintenance of the labor force identified as servants, slaves and hires is noted and definitely merit additional analysis.

Supplement labor is also documented in the archives of Clermont as we visit the hire contracts. The contracts for labor include the name of the person being hired, a hire date with specific dollar amount payable to the slave owner, and often additional stipulations of clothing and taxes are included. The 1849, unsigned contract for \$70.00 bound the writer of the document and his/her heirs to pay Thomas McCormick and his heirs for the hire of Sam Robinson and his wife Jane and her children for one year paying their taxes and furnishing them and their children with usual and customary clothing.^{xxvi} Edward McCormick's receipt for the hire of Ned, Bob, and Anthony for the year of 1848 for one hundred ninety dollars was signed by Taliaferro Stribling June 1, 1849.^{xxvii} A receipt from Mary Stribling in the amount \$387.00 itemized the farm rental for \$310.00, the hire of Ned for \$65.00 and a white cow for \$12.00 for the year of 1850.^{xxviii} Another contract for Ned in 1852 provided customary clothing for him, the payment of his taxes for the hire year and \$70.00 payable to the slave holder.^{xxix} Hire practices, clothing and taxes are added topics of concentration for further investigation.

Edward McCormick's account with Dr. S.S. Neill for medical services is a great addition in documenting life at Clermont and the African American presence. This account not only gives names but dates and type of treatment given. On February 12, 1851 Charles had a tooth extracted, and unnamed child had their fingers amputated. The record documents several visits and treatment with medications given to John, Mollie, Rose, Judy and her child, Jim Lee, Noke and Nat. Josephine was seen and treated several times with the last entry documenting the

delivery of her unnamed child.^{xxx} Another surviving record documents charges for shoes and boots by Kable and Cooley between 1854 and 1855. Boots were made for Bob, John, Charles Nat, Bob Page and shoes were made for an unnamed black woman, Aaron, William, Mary, Mollie and Sam.^{xxxi} These names of the enslaved in these documents mirror some of those in the Dawson's McCormick's inventory and appraisal of 1834. It is necessary to constantly utilize all resources available to document the presence of the African Americans in hope of learning of their daily existence and activities at Clermont. Having access to a searchable database will allow the cross referencing of documents and the ability to track individuals. This is a vital tool and will benefit actual and virtual visitors seeking to learn more of the daily lives of those at Clermont.

The United States Federal Census allows the researcher the ability to assess Edward McCormick and his neighbors in 1850. Edward is residing in dwelling #87 where he is listed as a 25 year old farmer having real estate valued at \$19,632.00 his household includes three females 23 year old Mary E., 2 year old Florinda, and a 70 years old black female named Nancy Thomson and Joseph Gooman a 17 years old labourer. Immediately questions concerning Nancy Thomson are raised. Was she born free or emancipated? Is Thomson her married or maiden name? Is she a mother, if so was she free when she gave birth and who are they? Why is she in this household? This is just one example how one document with a name can lead to other areas of research needs for a more inclusive interpretation of this often invisible and overlooked history. Living in dwelling # 88 we find Mary E. Stribling a 49 year old farmer with real estate valuing \$8,460.00. Cyrus McCormick a ,45 year old farmer and physician, was living in dwelling #89 his real estate value was \$37,215.00; also in the same dwelling was 60 year old

farmer Samuel McCormick and his real estate valued \$37,793.00, John Johnson a 22 year old laborer and a 45 year old driver named Ebin Frost were also in his dwelling. In dwelling # 90 we find William D. McGuire, a 40 year old farmer and physician, and his real estate was valued at \$18,050.00.^{xxxii} According to the 1850 Slave Schedule of Clark County, Edward McCormick had a total of 20 enslaved people, 11 female and 9 males, Mary E. McCormick enslaved one male and five females, Cyrus and Samuel together had 31 enslaved people and William D. McGuire a total of 15 people.^{xxxiii} Another question arises: were the McCormick neighbors living on Clermont property or adjacent tracks of land? Complete family lines of the families residing in and around Clermont add a stronger understanding of the area and interactions hence developing an enhanced interpretation of Clermont and the multiple themes related to African American Daily Life at Clermont. Interactions hence develop an enhanced interpretation of Clermont and the multiple themes related to African American Daily Life at Clermont.

The letters, housed in Clermont's archives, also enrich the understanding and concerns of the inhabitants of Clermont. The 1855 letters chronicles James Lee. We first find mention of a Jim Lee as part of the estate of Edward's father Dawson McCormick in 1836, he is valued at \$500.00; later in 1851 we know he received medical care. The letter dated August 17th from James Spinks on behalf of Joseph Bruin, sets the stage: Edward McCormick sent a man to be sold to Joseph Bruin by a Mr. Jackson. This slave who is to be sold begins to complain. Bruin is not interested in purchasing him and believes it best to consider sending him to Richmond to the Firm of Dickerson-Hill & Co.^{xxxiv} According to the August 23rd letter Edward requested M.M. Lewis to visit Bruin and Milton regarding the sale of the Negro man. Both Bruin and Milton were indifferent to buying or setting a fixed price for this enslaved male, they doubt if he will

sell in Richmond. Lewis states it is obvious he doesn't want to be sold for he complains about being broken down and in bad health, therefore he feels Bruin and Milton will not give a fair price for the sale. He encourages Edward accept the amount offered for him if you can get it, for Lewis feels it is more than Bruin and Milton are offering for the sale of the Negro man.^{xxxv} On August 29th Spinks writes Edward again on behalf of Bruin, "now is as good a time as any to send him to Richmond" but questioned if he would sell in Richmond for \$400.00 which is considered a dud sale. Spinks also informs Edward that he believed the Negro may have the dysentery as he is unable to keep his food down as he often throws up after eating. Spinks writes if you are able get \$600.00 for him, don't send him to Richmond.^{xxxvi} On September 10th James Spinks sends a letter to Mr. McCormick enclosing a copy of the runaway advertisement of Jim who ran away the previous Friday. Bruin request Mr. McCormick to inform him if Jim returns to his neighborhood and desired to have Jim returned to him; Bruin says he had favored him and he now realized his complaints must have been false.^{xxxvii} These letters are direct accounts of the institution of slavery at Clermont and it reveals many aspects which may be at the focus of future forums at Clermont. It also gives Clermont the opportunity to submit an application to the National Park Service for the Network to Freedom Program.^{xxxviii}

Many runaway slave advertisements include vital information to aid in the capture and return of the runaway, but today we are able to utilize the same information to learn more of the parties involved. We learn of their location at the time of their elopement, their physical description, trades, family, communities, their last sightings and proposed routes. On September 7th Joseph Bruin advertised in the Alexandria Gazette for the reward of runaway James Lee, who escaped at 9 o'clock, he is 35 or 40 years old, dark copper color 5' 6" or 7" high, hair very short,

beard long, teeth bad, some out in the front, heavy set, no clothes but pants and shirt all cotton. I will give \$100.00 for his return to me at Alexandria or secured in any jail. He came from Edward McCormick near Berryville Clark County, Virginia.^{xxxix} The search continues for Jim Lee as well as the concern for reimbursement for his value. The September 28th letter from M. M. Lewis to Edward addresses the continued search for the runaway. Lewis had spoken with Bruin and the runaway captured in Aldie turned out not to be Jim, but belonged to a man near town. Bruin heard Jim was somewhere in Loudoun and on his way home where he thinks he is probably at his wife's. Bruin informs Lewis he is not legally bound for Lee's value that a similar case had been decided which resulted in releasing the trading firm from any such obligations; but that if the man was lost the firm would be willing to pay his value which would be estimated by competent traders rather than the law. And if he is captured the firm would be bound to pay the hundred dollars offered for him as a reward. He further stated that he would have been unwilling to give more than \$300 dollars but now would give six.^{xl} Concern over the liability for the value of the runaway is addressed in this letter which confirms the need for additional scholarship on this topic.

The Slavery and African American Daily Life at Clermont remains an essential component in interpreting Clermont. Letters continue to document the mindsets and priorities of the families of Clermont. The institution of slavery brought with it monetary rewards to the owners and often raised levels of concern and conscience. The Nov 15th letter from Kate Stribling in St. Louis, sister of Edward's first wife, addresses the sale of Glenowen slaves Ned, Jack and Bob: "Your letter of the 30th was received last night and gave us both pleasure and pain. Pleasure to hear from you and the dear little darlings were enjoying health, and pain at the

conduct of those two servants, which could only be equaled by our surprise; for we would all have suspected anyone else sooner than Ned for anything of that kind, indeed mother still says she thinks he must have been put up to it by someone. We regret Jack's fate particularly on his mother's account; she has so frequently expressed the greatest desire to have him out here and particularly since Alse's death; remarking always "If I only had Jack here I would be satisfied." As to Ned mother says you can have him at \$725 that she cannot bear to think of his being sold to a trader as he has always been so faithful, and she is sure has been led off by bad advice. She would have let you have him long ago, but as she had promised them she would not part with him while she lived, she would not violate that promise. Now that they have acted thus, she can with a clear conscience dispose of them. She thinks it is likely this will put Bob in the notion, and desires that you will see Wm. Clevenger before the holidays and know of him whether or not he will buy him. He offered \$700 last summer, but you remember her price was \$800. She says you must get the most you can for him; but she would rather take less from Clevenger than anyone else because she thinks Bob would prefer belonging to him. You are there however and can judge from circumstances and what would be the best course and will act accordingly. Mother will add a few lines to this and give you any further instructions she may think of. Signed your attached sister, Kate". On the same paper Mary Stribling writes, "the contents of your letter caused me a sleepless night and this morning I am quite unnerved. I have told Kate what to say in reference to the servants and wish you to act as your judgment directs. I am better satisfied to take \$725 for Ned than \$1,000 or \$1,200 under the circumstances poor Jack I am truly sorry for him. Dina will be so distressed, I have not told her and will not yet, unless asked about it. I am afraid Jim Lee has corrupted them, did they get him, he was by nature a corrupt man. I wrote to you and Flora, Cat Neile and Sally S. last week-hope you have received it.

Signed yours affectionately, M. Stribling.”^{xli} On March 10, 1856 another reward for the return of James Lee is posted by Joseph Bruin, an update to the prior posting is noted: he is very humble in his looks and conversations, but is fond of liquor and sometimes gets drunk, and is a notorious thief, James is about 38 years of age, but looks older, he will aim to pass as a freeman, he has been seen in Clarke, Jefferson, Loudoun counties and was seen near Harpers Ferry about Christmas.^{xlii} On March 13, 1856 Kate write another letter to Edward addressing the sale of Bob to Clevenger and the hire of Bob and Jack. It also mentions monies being donated to assist in building a church.^{xliii} These archives document a small portion of daily life of people connected to the McCormick family. The real history of Clermont cannot be told without all of the available information concerning the lives of all who made prosperous. By 1860 Edward’s real estate value increased to \$36,000 and his personal property to \$23,985.00 ^{xliv} with an increase of enslaved people to 28 with 3 houses/quarters.^{xlv} McCormick’s working farm known as Clermont generated crops of wheat, corn and oats and the livestock included horses, oxen, cows, cattle, sheep and swine.

Clermont’s archives continue after slavery into reconstruction as a receipt from Josephine Williams for making a shirt for Dr. Taylor Stribling for \$1.00 survives. The document dated November 30, 1867 reveals Josephine’s mark witnessed by Flora McCormick.^{xlvi} On January 1869 another receipt reveals payment to Cyrus and Susan Thornley for nine weeks of work.^{xlvii} Surviving documents during the reconstruction era gives another platform for interpretation and public forum gives. The door opens into 1870 when Edward McCormick dies leaving Clermont to Ellen L. McCormick. A deed filed September 30, 1870, records the deed of bargain and sale and plat of Josephine City. Ellen L. McCormick widow of Edward, acting as the executrix of his

will, is the grantor of this transaction the grantee are: Charles Miles, Charles Johnson, Josephine Williams, Philip Williams, George Williams, Wilson Lovett, George Carter, Catharine Taylor, Jacob Jackson, Morgan Coxer, Daniel Carter, Presley Jenkins, Reason Harrison, George Fields, Richard Stephenson, Thomas Laws, Peter Lovett, George W. Carter, Tobias Carter, Elzey Wilson, Lee Moore, Nelson Reid and George G. Potter.^{xlviii} With the purchase of these lots and the recording of the transactions Josephine City is established. Utilizing the deed and plat provides the Clermont Historic Trust an opportunity to support the Josephine Community. Support might be in the areas of fundraising, an event venue for genealogical workshops, oral history projects, educational outreach as well as assistance with the ongoing quest of the Josephine School Museum to learn of the person, for the purpose to learn of the person, for whom Josephine City was named. Could it be named for Josephine Williams who, in 1867, made a shirt for Dr. Stribling, and is this the same Josephine Williams who purchased lots one and two?

The oral history of the Josephine Community is time sensitive and a priority. Dee Dee Liggins, a descendant of the Josephine City Land Holders, is interested in the preservation and interpretation of Josephine City. She introduced me to two community members with some known connection to Clermont prior to the 1950's. She introduced me first to Mrs. Viola Roberts whose sister Ada Clay worked for the owners of Clermont the McCormick/Beardsall Family. She stated her sister stayed in the small house across from the big house. Rufus Bell ran the farm and stayed in the tenant house across the field. Ada's husband worked for Bell on the farm. During this time Viola attended the Training School and her teacher was Georgia Carter. She states she did not have an oral or written family history of Clermont or Josephine City.^{xlix}

Later that June day I was taken to the home of Ms. Geneva Brown Jackson to inquire of her knowledge of Clermont. Ms. Jackson, a pleasant woman was busy baking preparing for a local event. I inquired of her childhood memories of Josephine City, Berryville and Clermont. She informed me that she came from White Post to Warren County, and doesn't have a family oral or written history of Clermont or Josephine City. However she did inform me of being employed for a period of time and residing at Clermont. She remembers she was in the 9th grade and living in the tenant house on the grounds of Clermont. She stated she worked for the Beardsall family and her duties included preparing breakfast and dinner.¹ Oral histories however small will shed additional information relative to the interpretation of Clermont.

The Clermont Historic Trust affords a great opportunity for all people to visit and study the operation of this property and those who purchased, built, and maintained its daily activities. This property although surveyed by the young George Washington, is free from housing any of the more well-known founding fathers of America; therefore, it allows visitors to view ordinary property owners without being influenced by fame and fortune. During the period of slavery, we find the enslaved of Clermont having a constant value in its daily operation. Further study of the African American Daily Life at Clermont will be a catalyst for public forum and interpretation. The same value and need for their presence at Clermont must be a vital part of this property. The study of the inhabitants of this property will reveal typical people of this era and will lend itself friendly to those seeking a better understanding of roles and endurance of the once enslaved people of Clermont and the transition into reconstruction and the settlement of Josephine City.

Endnotes

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- ⁱ Dianne Swann-Wright, Lucia Stanton, and Beverly Gray, *About the Getting Word Project « Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*, Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Inc., Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, section goes here, accessed June 20, 2011, <http://www.monticello.org/site/plantation-and-slavery/about-getting-word-project>.
- ⁱⁱ Mary V. Thompson, "They Appear to Live Comfortable Together": Private Life of the Mount Vernon Slaves" (lecture, Slavery in the Age of Washington, Mount Vernon, Mount Vernon, November 3, 1994), accessed June 7, 2011, <http://www.mountvernon.org/pdf/they%20appear%20to%20live%20comfortable%20together.pdf>.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Estate Sale of Taliaferro Stribling May 15, 1775 filed March 4, 1785 Frederick County, Virginia Will Book 5, page 68 Frederick County Circuit Court.
- ^{iv} David Edwards and Joanna Evans (May 1, 2005). *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Clermont PDF (890 KB)*. National Park Service
- ^v Will of Edward Snickers June 18, 1790 filed June 4, 1791 Frederick County, Virginia Will Book 5, page 296 Frederick County Circuit Court
- ^{vi} Will of Edward Snickers June 18, 1790 filed June 4, 1791 Frederick County, Virginia Will Book 5, page 296 Frederick County Circuit Court
- ^{vii} June Purcell Guild, Karen Hughes. White, and Joan W. Peters, "Chapters 2 & 3, Servants and Slaves in the Sixteen & Seventeen Hundreds," in *Black Laws of Virginia: a Summary of the Legislative Acts of Virginia concerning Negroes from Earliest times to the Present* (Lovettsville, VA: Willow Bend Books, 1996), 48, 55
- ^{viii} Will of Taliaferro Stribling September 7, 1774 filed October 4, 1774 Frederick County, Virginia Will book 4, page 295 Frederick County Circuit Court
- ^{ix} Inventory of Taliaferro Stribling "n.d." filed 1775 Frederick County, Virginia Will Book 4, page 306 Fredrick County Circuit Court
- ^x Inventory of Taliaferro Stribling September 28, 1784 filed October 5, 1784 Frederick County, Virginia Will Book 5, page 48 Frederick County Circuit Court
- ^{xi} David Edwards and Joanna Evans (May 1, 2005). *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Clermont PDF (890 KB)*. National Park Service
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^{xiv} Jonathan Robinson, comp., *Minutes of the Buck Marsh Corresponding Meeting of Baptist Brethren of Colour*, Fourth Meeting June 7, 1829 (S. H. Davis, Printer, 1829), 1-4.

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^{xvii} Frederick County, Virginia Will Book , page

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