

The 1850 Scott County, Tennessee, Slave Schedules

by Paula Gammell

1850 and 1860 Federal Slave Schedules exist for every corresponding East Tennessee county. They were taken at the same time, and keyed to, the Federal Population Schedules.

Typically the information given starts with the slave owner's name, then each slave of theirs is listed separately, by age, sex, and whether black or mulatto...but not by name.

There is one exception: Scott County in 1850.

In 1850 Scott County had been in existence less than a year; population was under 2,000: 1,905 whites, no free blacks, and 37 slaves.

Those 37 slaves have names! They are:

Thomas Chambers:	Carline	22	F	b			
David	40	M	m	Noah	21	M	m
Carline	33	F	b	Betty	21	F	b
Henry	8	M	b	Brseal	16	M	m
Love	6	F	b	Isaac	13	M	m
Carline	3	F	b	Jacob	13	M	m
David	7/12	M	b	Green	9	M	m
				Dan	6	M	m
Joseph Ryan:	Milly	4	F	m			
Spence	16	M	b	Mary	1	F	b
Frank	12	M	b	Patterson	4	F	m
				Hugh	4	M	m
Robert Ross:	Sary	23	F	m			
Relda	35	F	b	Dick	2/12	M	m
Jack	3	M	b	Phariba	17	F	m
Sam	1/12	M	b				
				John Potter:			
James Angel:	Betty	15	F	b			
Lucy	25	F	b				
Isaac	9	M	b	Edison Baker:			
				Love	22	F	b
James L. Chitwood:	Temp	10	F	b			
Dolly	39	F	b	Sinda	7	F	b
				Sal	1	F	b
Jane Buttrum:							
Milly	50	F	b	Jacob Lafevers:			
Susan	40	F	m	Jess	50	M	b

Now fast forward 20 years to the 1870 census. Can we take that 1850 information and use it to make the connection between slaves in 1850 and free persons in 1870?

Well...maybe.

Among the several slaves owned by Jane Buttram in 1850 were 21-year-old Betty and 50-year-old Milly. In 1870 Elizabeth Buttram, aged 38, heads a household that includes Milla Buttram, aged 75. Same people?

In 1850 Jane Buttram had a slave Noah, 21 years old. In 1870 is 41-year-old Noah Buttram. Same person?

In 1850 Jane Buttram had a slave Susan, 40 years old. In 1870 is 70-year-old Susan Buttram, a domestic servant in the Hinch(?) Redman's household. Same person?

In 1850 John Potter had one slave, 15-year-old Betty. In 1870 is 35-year-old Elizabeth Potter. Same person?

Admittedly, every detail is not a perfect match. Ages don't match up precisely; some are listed as mulatto in one census and black in the other census, and so forth. Nevertheless, I think the answers to the above questions are: probably, probably, probably, and probably.

Consider it from this angle: what are the chances that all these black and mulatto Buttrams, Potters, and others (there's more; I didn't list every one) who appear in 1870 *weren't* slaves and *didn't* take their masters' surnames upon emancipation? I think the chances of that are slim.

Of course this is not *proof* – but its a great place to start!

Ah, if only other enumerators had likewise listed slaves' names...