

THE ESTATE OF WILLIAM COLLEY Senior (1754-1842)

Distribution of Slaves after his death

By his 4th great granddaughter Teresa Stokes April 2017

As mentioned in my preface to William Colley's Will, it was challenged by his descendants. Probate of William's Will was finally granted to his son and executor William W. Colley in 1844, the eldest brother of two of my third-great grandmothers: Elizabeth Durham (Durrum) and Julia Pigg. William Junior failed pay the beneficiaries their due and he was at war with them for some years. However, the slaves were distributed at this point, divided equally between four of the six Colley siblings: Elizabeth Durham, Julia Pigg, Diannah Palmore and William W. Colley. They were sorted into four groups and there was quite a bit of mathematical fiddling around with the human and monetary values to get it exactly fair. Lots were then drawn for their respective wives. You can see which lots were "won" by my third-great grandfathers James Durham and Josiah Pigg. After all that, slavery was in any case abolished exactly 21 years later. It is notable that three of the slaves named in Valentine Colley's Will appear again here in the estate of his son William Senior, namely Betty, Rose and Wyatt. The following comes from the Cumberland County, Virginia, Will Book No. 11, page 67, transcribed for us in 1994 by professional genealogist Mrs Margaret Emery. She misread Martha to be Mathew, which I have now corrected.

WILLIAM COLLEY'S DIVISION – ESTATE AGREEMENT, ETC.

WHEREAS JAMES DURRUM AND ELIZABETH his wife, JOHN PALMORE and DIANNA his wife, JOSIAH PIGG and JULIA his wife, children and distributees of WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, have this day called upon WILLIAM W. COLLEY, Executor for WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, for a division of the negroes belonging to the Estate of WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, agreeable to the Will of the said WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, to which said division and distribution of the said negroes WILLIAM W. Colley, Executor of WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, consents upon condition that the said JAMES DURRUM and ELIZABETH his wife, JOHN PALMORE and DIANNA his wife, JOSIAH PIGG and JULIA his wife will indemnify and harmless bear the said WILLIAM W. COLLEY in making distribution of the said negroes belonging to the Estate of the said WILLIAM COLLEY, by executing refunding bonds for the amount of their respective legacies under the said Will, conditioned to bear the said WILLIAM W. COLLEY harmless in making said distribution and to refund their just portions of any and all debts that may hereafter rightfully be required of the said WILLIAM W. COLLEY as executor aforesaid and also all debts or claims that may hereafter be recovered of the said WILLIAM W. COLLEY,

Executor of the said WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, and for the purpose of effecting the proper and rightful division of the said negroe slaves belonging to the Estate of the said WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, they the said JAMES DURRUM, JOHN PALMORE, and JOSIAH PIGG and the said WILLIAM W. COLLEY, Executor of the said WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, and all the parties being of lawful age have mutually agreed and selected the following gentlemen to make the said division, to wit: JOSEPH BLANTON, LEONARD B. SIMPSON, NACE FITZGERALD [Ignatius Fitzgerald (1811-64), husband of William W. Colley's daughter Martha Jane], and JOHN W. WILSON, and the said BLANTON, SIMPSON, FITZGERALD and WILSON consenting agreeable to the wish of the said parties proceeded to make the said division and distribution of the negroes agreeable to the Will of the said WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, to which division and distribution made by the said BLANTON, SIMPSON, FITZGERALD and WILSON the parties to these presents bind themselves, their heirs, executors administrators and assigns to stand to and abide as effectually as if there were no remedy whatsoever or as if the same had been done by a regular decree of the Court and the same confirmed by the Court and made perpetual, and the parties also agree that the list of negroes this day exhibited by WILLIAM W. COLLEY as the Executor of WILLIAM COLLEY are all the negroes belonging to the Estate of WILLIAM COLLEY, deceased, those mentioned in the Will having been delivered to the parties in the lifetime of the said WILLIAM COLLEY. The following is a list of the negroes and their evaluations thereto attached and to which evaluations the said JOHN PALMORE, JAMES DURRUM, JOSIAH PIGG and WILLIAM W. COLLEY unanimously consented and agreed as being the true valuation of said negroes, to wit: Peter \$400, Nancy \$325, Jack \$400, Betty \$150, Martha \$300, Woodson \$425, Mary \$175, John \$250, Lewis \$425, Jinney \$125, David \$100, Wyatt \$200, Old Rose \$00. They then proceeded to draw lots for the slaves as follows:

John P Palmore

Lot No. 1 Peter at \$500
Nancy at 320
\$820

Lot No. 1 receives from Lot No. 4 7.50
Lot No. 1 receives from Lot No. 3 7.50
Lot No. 1 receives from Lot No. 2 7.50
22.50
820.00
842.50

Josiah Pigg

Lot No. 2 Jack \$400
Betty 150
Martha 300
\$850

Lot No. 2 to pay Lot No. 1 \$7.50
850.00
-7.50
842.50

James Durham

Lot No. 3 Woodson \$425
Mary 175
John 250
\$850

Lot No. 3 to pay Lot No. 1 \$7.50
850.00
-7.50
842.50

Wm. W. Colley

Lot No. 4 Lewis \$425
Jinney 125
David 100
Wyatt 200
\$850

Lot No. 4 to pay Lot No. 1 \$7.50
850.00
-7.50
842.50

Old Rose 00

Whereupon JOHN PALMORE drew Lot No. 1 ... JOSIAH PIGG drew Lot No. 2 ...

Teste: B. B. Woodson, Clerk.