

# From The Baobab Tree



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## In the Planters House:

### Three Generations of Servants to George Washington's Family

By Anita Wills

A slave graveyard containing 156 bodies has been uncovered at Wakefield Plantation in Virginia. Those buried there are Africa's sons and daughters, slaves who were owned by George Washington's father Augustine Washington Sr. Slavery is the part of history that America does not want to discuss. Yet how did the majority of African Americans arrive here, if not by slave ships? Europe imported a race of people to breed as inferior to the white race. Many mixed raced, "colored" or 'mulattos sentenced to servitude by the church parishes. The Churches statements of racism still ring true in our society today.

Although George Washington moved away from Wakefield at a young age, he often returned to stay and on visit. "...George Washington lived, from his birth to his removal to Mount Vernon in 1748; first, three years at Wakefield (Popes' Creek); the next few years at Epsewasson; the next four years on the Strother-Washington farm, in King George County; next, about two-and-one-half years again at Wakefield; next, about two-and-one half years again on the Strother-Washington place."

Some of the many servants and slaves in the Washington household were my ancestors. Sue was a servant of Augustine Sr., and her daughter Mary Bowden were born at Wakefield (Popes Creek) in Westmoreland Co., when Augustine Senior owned the prop-



Anita Wills

erty. Mary was born about 1729 when Augustine Sr. owned Wakefield [1720-1740]. Patty Bowden was born about 1749 when Augustine Jr. owned it 1740(?) - 1762. Patty was inherited by Elizabeth Washington and Alexander Spotswood upon their marriage. They moved 35 miles to Fredericksburg. Patty continued to live in Spotsylvania County until her death in 1830. Patty was known as Patty, "Free Patty", "Patsy" and "Martha" by those in the Washington household. She was the third generation born as servants to the prominent Washington family. At least one of Mary and Patty's parents were white and the other Negro. Whether the father was white or black or vice versa is not yet clear. The status of the women during that period suggest that their mother was white. However, there is just as much evidence that the father was white. The answer may be in the slave graveyard.

**Excerpt of Augustine Washington Jr. Will:**  
*"WASHINGTON, AUGUSTINE, 18 Sept. 1758; 25 May 1762. "To my daughter Betty a Negro child named Mary Daughter of Sue and another named Betty Daughter of Judy." (p.132).*

At one point Mary Bowden ran away and was taken to court by Augustine Washington Jr. She was gone for five months and Augustine spent a great deal of tobacco looking for her. When she was found he took her to court. Mary put up no defense, possibly knowing that her word had no weight against a white man.

### **Augustine Washington vs. Mary Bowden for services:**

*"Augustine Washington gent., bringing before this court his mulatto servant woman named (continued on page 2)*

## Are You Listening?

By Shirley Evans

Did you know that many African Americans are racially mixed with Native Americans? Many runaway slaves found sanctuary with Indian tribes. Indians enslaved some African Americans and African Americans enslaved some Native Americans.

The most notable alliances were African Americans with the Seminoles in Florida and the Cherokee, Creeks, Choctaws, and Chickasaws in North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi and Oklahoma.

Years ago, my mother told me that her grandmother Phylis, was part Indian. Of course, I didn't pay much attention. But on December 19, 1998, my ears were opened. For on that day Don "Little Cloud" Davenport (Seminole/Creek/Chickasaw/Sudanese), Zenobia Emby-Nimmer (Black/Cherokee) and Bonita Roxie Aleja Sizemore (Seminole/Choctaw/Cherokee, with African ancestors from Mali and Sudan), co-founders of the Black Native American Association, spoke of their Black Native lineage.

After their presentation, I wanted to know to what tribe my great grandmother was connected. However, a call to my mom was not helpful. Living in Florida, one would assume that Phylis was part Seminole, but records uncovered so far, show that she

was born in Florida and her parents were born in South Carolina.

Because I was not paying attention, I missed a golden opportunity to question my grandfather about his Indian heritage. So, I will literally have to start from scratch to determine if there is any Native American relationship. A task that must be done if I am to get an accurate picture of my family's ancestry.

One of the best sources to document ties of African and Native Americans is the United States Government. The Government had to determine all individuals who were tribal members and their eligibility for benefits from the Federal Government. Of course, the most interesting source is an oral history from a lively older relative.

Open your ears and listen, you can hear all kinds of tidbits that may be beneficial in your genealogical research.

*Shirley Evans is a member of the African American Genealogical Society of Northern California and can be reached by e-mail at Saevans4@msn.com*

### Three Generations of Servants to George Washington's Family (continued from page 1)

*Mary Bowden, for absenting herself from her master's service five months and he making oath that he hath expended one hundred and eighty pounds of tobacco in taking her up and there so. Mary having nothing to say in her own defense. It is therefore ordered that she do serve her ?? master his heirs or assignees, after her time for indenture is expired. One year two weeks and five days for her absent time and expenses."*

The indentured servitude that Sue, Mary and Patty were under was no different than slavery. They could be sold, whipped and or imprisoned. If they had any children the children

were also born into servitude. Sue, Mary and Patty were house servants and were listed on Augustine Washington's inventory as worth no more than \$30 each. The field slaves were listed at as much as \$800 a piece since many were skilled craftsmen. The servant could also have time added on as with Mary and Patty. Although Patty was to be free when 31 she did not receive her freedom until she was 52 years of age. During and after her servitude Patty bore several children, Ann, Milly, William, Leroy, Patty Jr., Samuel and Delphia to name a few. (continued on page 3)

There are two local Genealogy Software User's Groups available for anyone needing help with their software:

**BAY AREA ROOTS USER'S GROUP (BARUG):** BARUG supports the "Ultimate Family Tree" program. Meetings are held quarterly on the 3rd Saturday of Jan, Apr, Jul and Oct - 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the LDS Temple Building, Oakland, CA. Membership dues: \$10 per year. They distribute a newsletter and hold special classes and workshops. The Contact person is Judy Lanphear at [jlanphear@csuhayward.edu](mailto:jlanphear@csuhayward.edu).

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA TMG User's Group:** This group supports "The Master Genealogist." I don't have much information yet, but I know they meet the second Saturday of each month in Oakland. I will obtain and post additional information later on the web site.

**FAMILY TREE MAKER:** I have not heard of a user's group for FTM. The program is so easy to use I doubt a user's group would be necessary. However, there is a significant FTM support site at: <http://www.familytreemaker.com/5winfaq.html>.

And, a little food for thought . . . if there is enough interest we can start our own software user's group within AAGSNC.

**Jim Neal,**  
**AAGSNC Webmaster**

CBS plans miniseries on

Jefferson's affair

By Jenny Hontz

HOLLYWOOD (Variety) - While Washington focuses on the impeachment trial of President Bill Clinton, CBS is developing a miniseries about the relationship between Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, and his slave mistress Sally Hemings. The four-hour project will be based on Fawn Brodie's 1974 book "Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History," which ignited a heated debate for alleging that the rumored Jefferson-Hemings affair in fact occurred, spanning both of Jefferson's terms in office and resulting in as many as five children.

DNA evidence offering the first scientific link between descendants of Hemings and then-President Jefferson was recently published in the British journal Nature, lending credibility to Brodie's claims.

The miniseries, which has no target airdate yet, will be told from Hemings' point of view. But its producer Craig Anderson hopes it will also shed new light on Jefferson, who wrote in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal, even as he himself owned slaves.

Reuters/Variety

**Three Generations of Servants to George Washington's Family**  
(continued from page 2)

The older of her children were by a Col. Gabriel, who was a white man. The younger children, Leroy, William, Patty Jr. and Samuel were by her slave husband James Jackson. James Jackson was a slave to Charles Yates and was freed upon Mr. Yates death. Patty Jackson was the matriarch of the Jackson's in Fredericksburg.

**According to some laws passed by Virginia regarding slavery and servitude:**

1691- *The Assembly prohibited the manumission of slaves unless they were transported out of the colony.*

1733- *It also prohibited interracial marriages and ordered the illegitimate, mixed-race children of white women bound out for 30 years; [Laws of Virginia: XIII ...] "if a free Christian white woman shall have such bastard child by a Negro, or mulatto, for every such*

**1999 AAGSNC Newsletter Publication Schedule**

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Deadline for Articles</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>
1st	January 25	February 6
2nd	April 26	May 1
3rd	July 26	August 7
4th	October 25	November 6

**MEETINGS**

The African American Genealogical Society of Northern California meets on the third Saturday of each month at the *Oakland Public Library, Diamond Branch, 3565 Fruitvale Ave., Oakland, CA.* Meeting time is 1:30 pm. until 3:30 pm.

The next meeting will be held on:

**February 20, 1999**

Denise Griggs, a Sacramento Genealogist, was the subject of a recent article in the Sacramento Bee entitled, "African Americans find roots, self-discovery online." Ms. Griggs will share her story with AAGSNC members.

**Interesting WEB Sites**

Web Site: [http://www.rootsweb.com/~uslookup/\(put in your state\).html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~uslookup/(put in your state).html)  
e.g. for VA - <http://www.rootsweb.com/~uslookup/va.html>  
This is a better address for census look-ups: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~uslookup>. Gives the whole picture of that web site.

Contributed by Kay Smith

*offense, she shall, within one month after her delivery of such bastard child, pay to the church-wardens for the time being, or the parish wherein such child shall be born for the use of the said parish, fifteen pounds current money of Virginia, or be by them sold for five years to the use aforesaid; and in both the said cases, the church-wardens shall bind the said child to be a servant until it shall be of thirty one years of age [please note that these race based laws came from the church {Anglican, Church of England, Episcopalian and Catholic}.]*

**Freedom Papers-Patty Bowden-Jackson & Daughter Delphia:**

*"I do certify that the bearer of this a molatto woman by the name of Delphia, is the daughter of free Patty who as a servant of Mr. Yates (?) by the name of*  
(continued on page 6)

## **From the President's Desk**

The quality and content of the research programs and membership services generated from our small, but growing organization increasingly amaze me. In two short years our membership roster has increased seven fold. As the membership has increased, the influx of new ideas and technologies has added to our ability fulfill our stated genealogical research, service and education goals.

If you like the programs that you have been a part of during the past year, and the first part of 1999; and would like to see those carried forward, your continued support and participation is greatly needed.

**For those who have not renewed their membership, please take a few minutes to submit your membership renewal form.** The form is incorporated into page five of this newsletter.

This promises to be very exciting year, so please view the web site and future newsletter issues for upcoming informative and fun events.

*Raniz G. Smith*  
President, AAGSNC

## **MEMBERSHIP CORNER**

### ***WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS***

Gerald and Lunecia Baxter  
Kristen McCannon  
Jackie D. Stewart  
Karen Francisco  
Kashan Robinson  
Allisa White  
Madison Harvey Jr.  
Chinita Trotter

### ***THE LIFE MEMBERSHIP CLUB CONTINUES TO GROW!***

Rev. Adolph Kelly  
Thom Allison  
Shirley Evans  
Electra Kimble Price  
Karim Aldridge-Rand  
Charles L. Robinson  
Sarah A. Robinson

#### **JANUARY**

12 Michelle LeDoux	25 Minnette Murphy
14 Kristen McCannon	25 Melvin Stewart
23 Anita Debro	31 Mary Frances Taylor
24 Ramona Williams	

#### **February**

2 Cynthia Grady	17 Kathryn Smith
9 Jennifer Duhon	21 Electra Price
9 Lee Loche	

#### **March**

4 Cassandra Parker-Floyd	21 Muslimah Salaam
4 Michele Wms-Smith	28 Claude Clark
12 Antoinette Livramento	

## **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS**



**African American Genealogical Society  
of Northern California  
P. O. Box 27485  
Oakland, CA 94602-0985**

**Mailing  
Address  
Goes  
Here**

**In This issue: 'In the Planters house:  
Three Generations of Servants to George Washington's Family'  
By guest columnist Anita Walls**

**From The Baobab Tree**

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**A Special  
"Thank you" to member George Smith for his donation to help with postage expenses.**

**Three Generations of Servants to George Washington's Family  
(continued from page 3)**

*James for a husband. That the said Patty was and raised on the Estate of Gen. Augustine Washington and given to Mrs. Spotswood, consort of Alexander Spotswood an act arranged by law, as a servant to serve to Thirty-one years of age - at which period I discharged her-and not wishing to have female Negroes entitled to freedom among my slaves, and to reward Patty for her faithful services I gave her this girl, then a child-who from under my hand I pronounce to be a free woman. Signed Alexander Spotswood, August 11, 1801."*

The last documentation on Patty was her manumission papers [1820] in Fredericksburg. She was than 71 years of age and her "Free Negro Registry" papers stated that she was: "A Dark Mulatto who was born free." Patty Bowden died about 1830, leaving property to her son Samuel Jackson.

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**Saturday, April 17, 1999,  
9:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m.**

Anita Wills, Genealogy Columnist for the AAGSNC Web Site, will hold a Genealogy Workshop through Cal State University Hayward's Extended and Continuing Education Program. The workshop will be held on the Cal State Hayward campus.

**Saturday, June 5, 1999,  
9:00 a.m to 1:00 p.m.**

Anita Wills, Genealogy Columnist for the AAGSNC Web Site, will hold a Genealogy Workshop through Cal State University Hayward's Extended and Continuing Education Program. The workshop will be held on the Cal State Hayward campus. Watch this space for additional information.