

1834, much of his estate went to his sister, nieces, and nephew. These were: his sister Elizabeth Isham, wife of Henry of Roane County; niece Nancy Carmichael of Knox County; niece Elizabeth Copeland of Knox County; nephew Thomas Bell of Knox County; nieces Nancy Kincaid, Elizabeth Larkins, and Mary Gibbons, all of Hawkins County, and all daughters of his sister Sarah Gibbons; and niece Rebecca Maury of Knox County, daughter of his brother William Bell, deceased.

Several of his slaves were to be sold: Lucy (aged about 55), Elijah (45), Black Jack (30), Yellow Jack (27), Harry (25), Alexander (23), and Ned (19).

However, according to the third item of his will, "Whereas my Slave Sophia on or about the month of October 1832, contracted for her freedom and that of her children, towit, Mary aged eight years, Sam aged five years, Granville aged four years, and Claiborne aged two years - And whereas the said Sophia has in good faith fulfilled the said contract on her part, the services and consideration money for which is hereby acknowledged to be received. I do by these presents manumit, discharge, and forever set free at my death the said Sophia and her aforesaid children. ...I do will and direct that my Executors after my death shall proceed as the laws of the state of Tennessee in that behalf provides to petition the County Court of Rhea or such other court or jurisdiction as may be prescribed by the Statutes of said state for the fulfillment and execution of my will in the emancipation of the said Sophia & her children..."

Further, for Sophia's maintenance, and to prevent her from becoming a county charge, Robert Bell placed one of his real properties in trust for her for the rest of her life, the proceeds of which to be used for her support. In addition to that income, she was to receive \$33.33 per year for the next six years, as well as a cow, calf, feather bed and furniture.

Another real property he placed in trust for Sophia's daughter, Mary, the "rents and profits thereof...to raise and maintain the said Mary...and have her educated so far in english literature as shall be prescribed by my Executors in writing...and registered in the registers office of the county of Rhea." That trust was to terminate on 01 Jan 1850 and the property to be Mary's forever.

As to the three boys, Sam, Granville, and Claiborne, they were to be "apprenticed to fit and proper persons to learn useful and honorable mechanical trades..."

However, a setback to this emancipation directive occurred when, on 05 May 1835, executors John Locke and Thomas J. Campbell reported they were prevented from emancipating the slaves "by the fiat of the Circuit Judge of the 7th Circuit of the State of Tennessee." Resolution is not found in this volume.

\*\*Richard and Blackstone Waterhouse, executors of Richard G. Waterhouse's will, reported with their first inventory (page 101) that, "This return has been postponed from time to time on account of the litigated condition of the estate which will be necessary to state here is still much the same condition there being weighty suits relative to said property in the different courts in this State." Your editor remembers in the 1970s his descendants were still in court over the estate. Who knows, perhaps they are to this day. ##

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