

A BRIEF HISTORY

Paulette Clark

To give a brief history of myself and family, I will commence it by saying, I was born in Louisa County, Va. on the 30th day of Sept. 1771, a few days before the first battle was fought in the revolutionary war. My father's name was John¹ Clark, and my mother's name before marriage was Ann² Paulete. They had besides myself, eight children, namely, Thomas, John, Francis, Elijah, Isjack, Edward, Sally, and Nancy. What time I lived in Louisa, I was so young, I cannot now relate any of the particulars thereof, more than that I perfectly well remember there, and hearing much talk about the war, which was going on. I can say too, I remember that while living in that County, I learned the English Alphabet pretty well; and learned to pronounce words tolerably plainly, young as I was.

But the time came for me to live in Louisa no longer. After living there till sometime in the year 1777. I then left there and came in company with my parents, brothers, and sisters, to Charlotte County and settled with them in Chicken town (Madisonville, Va.)

At this place I lived till the year 1798. I then came to Maj. Irvin's, who lived in the next County (Campbell) and boarded at his house, and taught school at Hat Creek for the term of six months. While boarding at his house I contracted a marriage with Mary Ann, one of his daughters and to the 20th day of Oct. in the same year 1798, after my school at H. C. had ended we were married. The Rev. Old Archibald McRoberts was the solemniser of the rights of matrimony between us. We moved home on the 9th day of Dec. following to a place on Turnip Creek now owned by Publias Clark. (About a mile from our home.)

While living at this place our first child was born, which was a daughter, the name Matildia. And the year 1799 was the year in which she was born.... (The day and the month of her birth is slipped my memory) But before expiration of this year, it was pleased the Lord to take her to himself. She was buried at Hat Creek; and the Rev. Old Archibald McRoberts preached her funeral sermon.

Also while living at this place our second child was born; which like unto the first was a daughter. Her we named Mary Ann after the name of the child's mother and grandmother. And she was born on the ____ day ____ of 18 ____.

During the whole of the time I lived at this place on Turnip, I employed myself in cultivating the ground of my plantation. And I had at that time no one to help me but Anaky, my negro woman. Anaky had two or three children, yet they were too young and small for the field. Maj. Irvin was so good as to turn his hands into my fields sometimes when the

1. John Clark

2. Ann

grass seemed to bid defiance to the strength of Anaky's arms and mine. But my land at this place did not yield plentifully. And I came to a conclusion to sell it, and try some other place. On coming to this conclusion; Maj. Irvin made the proposition for me and his son John to buy of S. Morris land which she had for sale lying on each side of Entry¹ Creek to which proposition we both acceded. The land on the North Western side of the Creek I purchased. After making this purchase, I sold my place on Turnip to John Hancock.

Upon the close of the year 1801, I moved, with my family to the place on Entry which I had purchased, after having first reared me up a log house, into which to go. While living at this place, Mary Ann and myself had born unto us eight children, to wit, Nancy who was born on the day _____, John Irvin that was born on the day of _____, Christopher who was born on the day _____ 1805, Sarah, who was born on the day of _____ 1809, Catherine and Susan (being twins) who were born on the _____ day of _____, O. ²Creed Taylor, who was born on the _____ day of _____.

My employment while living at this place was cultivating the ground which yielded a better supply for myself and family than the ground of my former place on Turnip. So that upon the whole we made out to get along as to living, tolerably well ...yes better than we did while working on Turnip. Before I left this place my force which I had to help me became stronger; for three of Anaky's children grew up to join her in helping me to make something to subsist upon. And Christopher, my oldest son grew large enough to plough.

I said my employment at this place was cultivating the ground yet all my own time while living here, was not thus spent; for two of the years while living here I taught school; which were the years 1805 & 1804. In 1805 I taught in a house on land then owned by Parson Jam. Hurt, & now owned by his grandson, Jas. T. Hurt. During the same year Abraham Irvin, my brother in law, was overseer: (and I will say too, every now & then while living here I would employ myself in surveying land, having learned how to survey under Jas. P. when I went to school to him).

But let me not omit saying that in less than a year after settling on this place, Mary Ann & myself took up with religion & became professor of it under the roaring of this voice of old Mr. McRoberts at Hat Creek. And shortly afterward we became members of the Church at that place which place is going on upon its 2nd century as a place where Jehovah has been worshipped.

Upon taking up with religion I dreamed a dream; which was this, I dreamed I saw a son very dirty from wallowing in the mire, and-then again saw the same son, and he was made clean from washing in water. Now I am far from laying stress on everything that is dreamed yet I will say, if I, in fact, after once being defiled with sin had been washed and made clean in water, might perhaps serve as a sort of a picture of it.

After joining the church at H. Creek, I set myself towards rendering all the service at the place as lay in my power. And then the meeting house was about to be built there, which preceeded the present meeting house at that place, Maj. Irvin and other Elders placed the subscription

1. About one mile from Hat Creek.

2. Orthodox Creed

paper in my hands for raising the money to pay for this building thereof. Publias A. Jones agreed to undertake the building it for \$100. And I bless God; that I was so successful, upon being intrusted with the subscription paper as to raise every cent & penny of the same. The house was built in the year 1810. Just before it was built and indeed before the subscription paper was placed in my hands for raising money to build it, Maj. Irvin had me ordained as an Elder in the church at this place. And nearly about the same time, I was made a magistrate in my County, so that I now had business enough to attend to from home, as well as at home. But there was a time shortly after this when it seemed as if I would have forever to lay aside the business of this life which devolved on me to attend to for I was, at this time alluded to, visited by the hand of providence with a party of rapid fit sickness which seemed indeed too much to threaten my life. And while I was overwhelmed with death-like feeling, Mrs. Irvin came to see me and brought me some preserves. And it really seemed as if this preserves was a token of recovery to me. It was so, however that I soon afterwards was sick no longer, but well and healthy, and thank the Lord for it.

But the time was approaching and at length appeared for me to live no longer on Entry. After the death of Maj. Irvin & Mrs. Irvin (his death occurring in the year 1814, & hers in the year 1816) I purchased the place whereon they had lived & died and sold my place on Entry to Parson Hurt, and reason I had for so doing: for by this time my family had so increased that necessity required a more suitable place for myself and them than the one on Entry.

On the 13th day of Nov. 1816 & after living on Entry 15 years I left Entry & moved with my family to Maj. Irvin's place,^① which I had purchased. And I have been living on the same from then till now & expect to live on the same from now till I die. On this day of Jan. in the year following 1817 Mary Ann & myself had born unto us our eleventh and last child. The same we named Ab. Irvin.^②

When I arrived at this place to live I viewed myself on the first plantation that was ever dwelt upon by white people within 35 or 40 miles of the same. And I felt (as I have done ever since) as if I were treading on consecrated ground; consecrated by its having been the dwelling place of souls that were distinguishedly eminent for Godliness for here once dwelt old Jno. Irvin & Molly his consort, who were born in Ireland. And here lived Maj. Irvin hisson and Mary Ann his consort and here once dwelt Mr. Irvin brother to Maj. Irvin and here once dwelt (for a short season) Mathew Tucker the father of Mrs. Irvin my mother-in-law. And here once dwelt one Mr. Tenant, who came from Pennsylvania, & boarded in the house of Maj. Irvin & preached at H. Creek for the term of one year. These, I suppose, were souls as worthy as any that ever were to members of the Redeemers Kingdom in this corner of it; and of whose present blessedness in heaven no doubt can be reasonably entertained. And the whisperings of

① This place the home of John Irvine founder of Hat Creek, now owned by Granddaughter of O. C. Clark (Uncle Creed) who lives in Lynchburg. This place is less than a mile from Hat Creek.

② Became a leading doctor of Lynchburg. Graddaughter, Nancy Faulkner, author of Rebel Drums and other books.

my own conscience seemed to say to me--mind what you do--be you faithful in the righteous way of the Lord, and to the various duties of you calling even as they were--yes, be you a follower of them who through faith & patience inherit the promises."

And now was the time I felt myself bound to take fresh start, & to double my diligence in going moving on in the righteous way of the Lord: and I made it my daily trust in him to lead me & guide me in those ways; while at the same time, I felt bound to double my diligence in minding my duty in my family circle, & as a provider for it, and my duty as a County magistrate--my duty as a schoolmaster (for I taught school several years after coming to this place)--my duty as a land surveyor, and my duty as an Elder & member of the church at H. Creek (which no longer had a Maj. Irvin & his father before him to manage the affair thereof--its affairs. And I humbly hope, that upon daily trusting in the Lord, he has by his holy spirit, led me & guided me in the heavenly way even till now. And upon using my best efforts in my family circle & towards providing for its support, the Lord has blessed us, even till now, with a competency of the of life to subsist upon. And upon minding my duty as County Magistrate for 30 years, this time at length appeared (which was March court 1842) for me to enter upon the sheriffality of this County; which (as providence had it) brought me \$2700. and upon minding my duty as County Magistrate and schoolmaster & land surveyor, I did (as had it) receive payment for the same. And upon using my best efforts for the church at Hat Creek, and for its prosperity, I trust I have not done so in vain.

But whether my efforts at H. Creek have been in vain or not in vain, yet the Lord has highly abundantly favored Old H. Creek & poured out his blessings within its walls & has made his & even from that time Maj. Irvin's father had the first meeting house built at this place, H. C. has never been without a respectable number of members. And from the days Old Mr. McRoberts, and before down to the present I myself every now and then have witnessed respectable accessions made to the church at that place--accessions of those who have flown to it as cloud and as doves to their windows. And Oh! it is heart refreshing to relate that Mary Ann and myself arrived to see all our children living become members thereof. My daughter was the first who professed religion & joined it; and it was in the year 1822 that she professed and joined. My daughter was the next; and she professed and joined in the year 1826. My daughter Susan was the next; and she professed and joined in 1830 & joined in 1831; My son Christ. was the next; and he professed and joined in the year 1835; and became and is yet an Elder in the church. My daughter Katherine^① was the next; and she professed and joined in the year 1835. My son Creed and Abraham were the next & they professed and joined in the year 1836. And Creed became and yet is an Elder in the church and their religious standing as members of the church is certainly good at least seems as good as that of any of the rest of the members. Surely, surely I have sufficient reason to conclude and apply the comfort to my mind that every one of them is adorned with true religion--that Jesus..^②

①. Your great-grandmother.

②. Line omitted: ...upon their trusting in him, is leading them and guiding them in the

regeneration in his own right and narrow way with the hearts of them set at variance with all ungodliness & unrighteousness against which the wrath of God is revealed from heaven. And in view of all this How ought I and they to be ready at all times to join with the Holy Palmist in saying, Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Having in the foregoing section said something of the religious standing of my children in the church I will next go on to say something of them in regard to other things.

My daughter Mary Ann, when in her 15th year (being the year 1821) married a man by the name of Nath. Mason. After marrying him she still continued to live at my house for 3 years. Her husband lived here too, who for one year tended some of the ground of my plantation and the next two years was my overseer. After this she went with her husband to live on a plantation in Char. City occupied by the Rev. Jno. S. McLean, who had employed him as an overseer on the said plantation.

After living on this place 2 years her husband was employed as an overseer by R. S. Gaines on a plantation of his in the aforesaid City (Charlotte) and she went thither with him to live. While living here it was the will of God to take her away from among the living on earth. And this occurred on the 28th of March 1838.

Her remains were brought up and interred at Hat Creek: and her funeral sermon was preached at the same place by the Rev. S. A. --the text of which was &c.

After her death the charge of her children devolved on me & Ma their grandmother till their father married again which was about three years after their mother's death. The number of children conferred to this daughter of mine were 4: their names are Mary Jane, Margaret Ann, Elizabeth Julia, and Nancy Paulette. The three last mentioned are now married and have children of their own. They profess religion and are members of the church at H. Creek; and I trust they are in the right way to lead to Zion's the land of pure delight and consecrated bowers in heaven.

The name of M. Ann's husband is George Henry and her children;-- she and they live in _____ City; the name of E. Julia's husband is Thos. Morgan; and her children; _____ and she and they live in P. Ed. City. The name of Nancy Paulette's husband is Joe Asher; and they live in this city Campbell.

NEXT OF NANCY

My daughter Nancy when in her 18th year (being in the year 1820) married a cousin of hers, Mr. P. C. ⁽¹⁾ a son of brother Jno. A few days afterwards she went with him to live on a plantation in this City, formally belonging to his father and now owned and dwelt upon by his brother Clement. After living at this place eight or nine years, her husband was employed as an overseer for Mrs. Friend on a plantation of hers in Charlotte City. To this plantation she went with him to live; and lived thereon for 3 years. She then left there and came with her husband to a place he had brought in Campbell; formally the plantation of L. M. and his widow after him. And here she has abode with her husband and family till now. She has been the mother of 10 children whose names and births are as follows, to wit: Albert

(1) Pleasant Clark.

Legrand, who was born on the ____ day of _____ 1821, Wm. F. born on the day of _____ 1822, Amanda born on the day of _____ 182 , Christ C. born on the day _____ 182 , Richard B. born on the day of _____ 182 and departed his life on the ____ day of _____ etc., Chastine born on the day of _____ 183 , C. O. born on the day of _____ 183 and departed his life on, etc., Ashbey R. born on the day of _____ 183 , M. B. born on the day of _____ 183 . All of them are professors of religion and members of the church at H. Creek except the two youngest being small. And may the Lord bless them and bring them to zion with singing everlasting joy on their heads.

As yet Nancy has but one child married; and that one is Amanda Benson who married Mr. L. Williams. Since her marriage she has become the mother of a little son born into this world. And it is a fine little human being. Its name is _____.

As to living, Nancy and husband and family have made out to get along tolerably well upon the whole. So I will leave them to thank the Lord while I have something to say concerning Sarah.

My daughter Sarah when in her 16th year (being in the year 1824) married a man from Halifax, by the name of Conoley. After marrying she and her husband took up their abode in a little house on my plantation for about 16 months. Her husband then went to be overseer for Jno. N. Marshall in Charlotte City, having her along with him. After living at Marshall place for two years, they returned to Campbell and settled on a plantation purchased of old Wm. Almond. After dwelling here not quite a year, Sarah's husband having her and two children took a trip to Halifax and abode with his father and mother for 3 or 4 months and then ⁽¹⁾ Back he came and abode with his family for a short time and betook himself to the Mississippi and the face of him has never been seen in this section of the way since. After this, 1833 Sarah and her children came to my house where she has abode ever since, excepting 3 years of the time when she and her sons dwelt on a rented place in my neighborhood. Her children have been four in number but she has but 3 now living to wit, Wm. P., Christ M. and Jno. H. Patrick Henry her youngest died in 1833 when about 13 months old and just before its father betook himself to the M. The three living children of Sarah bid fair to be promising men. W. P. the eldest lives in L. City and practices the law. And it is said of him that he is in 3 different states, V. T. & Ky. Christ M. is at present an overseer on the railroad and is pronounced to be an excellent one. Jno. Hill has been living in Lynchburg for nigh on to two years and has during the same time been performing the duties of D. S. But he will soon be employed otherwise C. & J. H. pro & are in the C at H.C. ⁽²⁾ & may the good Shepherd lead them aright. Wm. has not as yet pr & joined, but my God hasten the time. Neither of them are as yet married. If they ever marry perhaps it may be for the best for God has said it is not good for man to be alone.

But where is little Kate let me haul her over the coals next.

MY DAUGHTER CATHERINE ⁽³⁾ (There he stopped)

⁽¹⁾ Omitted. ..returned back to the same place. The next year leaving Sarah and children alone, he took a trip to Tenn. and stayed 7 or 8 months. Then back he came and abode with his family for a short season. He then dispensed with his house and plantation, and went with his family to live at B. Neal (Brookneal), a small town on Staunton. After living here for a short season he clandestinely left his family and...

⁽²⁾ professed and are in the church at Hat Creek.

⁽³⁾ Your great-grandmother.