

THE ROUTON SLAVE FAMILY

From

The Routons of Paris and Henry County, Tennessee

by Stephanie Routon Tayloe

When Philip Routon came to Henry County, Tennessee in the 1820's, they brought with them a slave family. The slaves were treated so well that they chose to stay on the Routon Place until the 1920's.

Mr. Dick Routon remembers as a child being brought to see his grandfather, Mr. John Routon, and playing with the black children he was told were descendants of the Routon Slave Family, well over half a century after Emancipation.

A story my cousin, Vera Routon, told me was, when she was a small child in the 1880's playing in the yard of her grandmother,

Mary Catherine Routon, through the back woods appeared an aged black woman and a younger black woman. Ma Routon ran out to greet the old woman, calling her "Aunt Harriet Routon." Ma was so happy to see "Aunt Harriet" that she invited her into her kitchen and waited on her herself. The two women talked of days long ago when "Aunt Arriet" had been a young girl on the Routon Place, and of her former mistress, Mary Fuqua. When the old black woman left, in a broken voice she told them, "Let Jesus be your doctor and friend".

Philip Routon died in 1838. An inventory of his estate listed the following slaves and their worth:

One Negro man, Tom, worth \$500

One Negro woman, Mary, worth \$400

Sarah Ann worth \$500

Tom \$500

Chana \$500

Duey \$300

Benan \$250

Jane \$200

Jeraldiane \$100

Harriet \$150

The following slaves were sold:

Chaney to George Broach - \$350

Sarah Ann to Johnson Martin - \$300

Mary Routon kept Lucy and a lame boy, Tom. Judging from her worth, Harriet was about eight to ten years old, in 1838.