

All God's Children: The Enslaved and Their Owners
Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church (1801-1829)
Jessamine County, Kentucky

Syllabus

Key Points:

1. Reflecting upon personal growth as a researcher:

Revisiting earlier work helps us recognize our progress as family researchers and see how we have honed our skills over time.

2. Looking over what's been overlooked:

How many times have we overlooked a record set such as church histories because we believe they could not possibly apply to our ancestors (i.e., the notion that, "our people come from small, rural congregations who did not keep records")?

3. Interpreting historical records:

- Ask questions. (How were the enslaved people in the Church minutes referred to?)
- Extract information from original records and build tables to quantify and analyze facts.
- Look for patterns in the records. (How many "women of colour" were members of the Church? Were they free or enslaved? How do we know?)
- Appreciate the similarities and differences among people. (What roles did men and women play in the Church?)

4. Finding history in the details.

Records such as Church minutes prior to the Civil War may yield surprising details about the lives of Americans of both African and European descent. Members of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church are referred to in the minutes by name—regardless of race, gender or status—although enslaved persons were identified only by their first names and the names of their enslavers. Events in the individual lives of congregants, such as baptism or exclusion from the Church—regardless of race, gender or status—reflect the history of family, Church and country.

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Some Useful Resources

Artwork and Photos:

Cave Hill Cemetery. Louisville, KY. Photo by R.E.H., licensed under CC BY 2.5, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/> . *Find A Grave*. <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/73354/cave-hill-cemetery> accessed : 1 April 2023. photo cropped.

Craig, Elijah. Woodcut by Unknown artist - <http://theundershepherdsobservations.blogspot.com/>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4502941> accessed : 4 April 2023.

Craig, Mary "Polly" Hawkins. *Find-A-Grave*, memorial 580296118. Image added by R.C. Kato. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/58029618/mary-craig>.

Cummings, Jim. "*The Women Who Carried the Water.*" Graphic Enterprises, *Pioneer Times USA*. 2007. Photo file #P8153509a. https://www.graphicenterprises.net/html/women_of_bryan_station.html accessed : March 20, 2023. Photo courtesy of Kathy Cummings.

Murton, Stephanie. *Carved Wooden Pews in Church in Sunshine*. Stock photo ID:1061315930. Upload date: November 04, 2018, <https://www.istockphoto.com/photo/interior-of-old-church-with-carved-wooden-pews-gm1061315930-283713040> accessed : March 14, 2023.

Nagel & Weingartner. *The Women of Bryant's Station KY, Supplying the Garrison with Water*. Bryant's Station. 1851. Library of Congress. In the Public Domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bryant%27s_station.jpg accessed : 24 February 2023.

Churches:

Minutes:

The 1962 translation of the early minutes (1801-1829) of the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Jessamine Co, KY, is a roadmap to understanding the original minutes for that time period:

Thompson, John T. (Pastor) and Barbara Dixon (Secretary), transcribers, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. Transcription 1962, *Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, 1801-1829, Book 1*. Images from *FamilySearch*. FamilySearch International, 2014. <https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/records/item/49543-redirect> accessed : 14 February 2023.

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Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Records, 1801-1963, 1801-1946 (bulk dates) (Jessamine County, Ky). OCLC #1365630. University of Kentucky Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, Microfilm (M-237). 1st Volume of Minutes 1801-1829 (1830), microfilm images 933-1055. pdf digitally downloaded.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Records, 1801-1963, 1801-1946 (bulk dates) (Jessamine County, Ky). OCLC #1365630. University of Kentucky Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, Microfilm (M-237). 1801 Constitution and Covenant of the Regular Baptist Church of Christ at Mount Pleasant, Jessamine County, KY, microfilm images 229 et seq.; and 2nd Volume of Minutes 1830-1867, microfilm images 231, et seq. Original is property of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church and was microfilmed with permission by the University of Kentucky Libraries, Microfilm Center, October, 1965.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Records, 1801-1963, 1801-1946 (bulk dates) (Jessamine County, Ky). OCLC #1365630. University of Kentucky Libraries, Special Collections Research Center, Microfilm (M-237). Exclusion of Mason Singleton, August-September, 1849, microfilm image 320. Original is property of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church and was microfilmed with permission by the University of Kentucky Libraries, Microfilm Center.

The Travelling Church (1781):

Duncan, Samuel M. "Notice of Col. Wm. Price." *The Climax* [newspaper], vol. X, no. 17, p. 1, Richmond, Madison County, Kentucky, 30 Sept 30, 1896; imaged by *Chronicling America*, Library of Congress (<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn86069161/1896-09-30/ed-1/seq-1/#date1=01%2F01%2F1770&index=2&date2=12%2F31%2F1963&searchType=advanced&language=&sequence=0&words=church+traveling&proxdistance=5&state=Kentucky&rows=20&ortext=&proxtext=&phrasertext=traveling+church&andtext=&dateFilterType=range&page=1> : 15 March 2023).

"Elijah Craig." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License No. 4.0 (CC SA 4.0); (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elijah_Craig : 8 February 2024).

"Peter Durrett." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License No. 4.0 (CC SA 4.0); (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Durrett : 8 February 2024).

Ranck, George Washington. *The Travelling Church: An Account of the Baptist Exodus From Virginia to Kentucky In 1781 Under the Leadership of Rev. Lewis Craig and Captain William Ellis*. Press of Baptist Book Concern, Louisville, KY, 1891; *Baptist History Homepage*, "The Travelling Church." Editor Jim Duvall. (<http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/travel.church.html> : 31 March 2023).

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Ranck. *The Traveling Church: An Account of the Baptist Exodus from Virginia to Kentucky in 1781 Under the Leadership of Rev. Lewis Craig and Captain William Ellis*. Editor Kyle McDanell. 2015. [publisher, place not given]. Available on Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/Traveling-Church-Virginia-Kentucky-Leadership/dp/1519578318/ref=sr_1_1?crid=1RWJ7U0STTJCO&keywords=traveling+church&qid=1680271064&sprefix=traveling+church%2Caps%2C131&sr=8-1

"The Travelling Church." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, Inc. Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License No. 4.0 (CC SA 4.0); (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Travelling_Church : 8 February 2024).

Other Church References:

Bradley, J. N. *History of Great Crossings Baptist Church, Elkhorn Association Minutes, 1876*. *Baptist History Homepage*. <http://baptisthistoryhomepage.com/ky.scott.grt.crong.bradly.html> accessed : 3 April 2023.

First African Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky. "About Us: Our History, 1790-Present." Website. <https://www.fabclex.org/our-history> accessed: 31 March 2023.

Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church. "Mt. Pleasant: The History." Website. <https://mtpleasantbaptistchurch1.snappages.site/about> accessed 31 March 2023.

National Park Service. "First African Baptist Church." *A National Register of Historic Places Travel Itinerary*. <https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/lexington/fab.htm> accessed : 31 March 2023.

Pope, Richard. *The Journey, A Brief History of the South Elkhorn Christian Church. 1983, Lexington, KY*. <https://www.southelkhorncc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/TheJourney.pdf> accessed : 28 February 2023. p. 54.

Travis Peak Church of Christ. Singleton Bend Road and Hwy. 1431, Travis County, Texas.¹ <http://www.travispeakchurchofchrist.com/wordpress1/index.php/contact-us/> accessed : 5 April 2023.

¹ Additional information regarding the website's reference to Mason Singleton [Jr.]: Both Mason Singleton (1805-1892) and James Davidson (1795-1873) were on the 1860 census in Burnet Co., TX. Mason's daughter Frances Fannie Lucy Singleton married James's son Felix Grundy Davidson in 1861 in Burnet County. Travis Peak (formerly Post Oak Bend) is near the county-line of Burnet and Travis Counties. Mason Singleton is on the 1870 census in Travis County, although his residence likely did not change. Mason appears on the 1867 Voter Registration list in Burnet County. Waller Singleton referenced on the website is the son of Mason Singleton.

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History:

Bryan's Station:

A seven-minute video:

KET - Kentucky Educational Television. *The Women of Bryan's Station*. Video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU5PB2LTrcY&themeRefresh=1>

accessed : 31 March 2023.

Cummings, Kathy, Jim Cummings. "Bryan Station." *Pioneer Times USA*. 15 August 2007. https://www.graphicenterprises.net/html/bryan_station.html accessed : 2 April 2023.

Cummings. "The Women of Bryan Station." *Pioneer Times USA*. 2003-2012. https://www.graphicenterprises.net/html/women_of_bryan_station.html accessed : 2 April 2023.

Terry, Sam. "The Women of Bryan's Station." *Sam Terry's Kentucky Blog*. 15 August 2022.

<https://samterryskentucky.com/f/the-women-of-bryans-station> accessed: 31 March 2023.

Maps:

Filson, John, Approximately, Henry D Pursell, and Ternon Rook. *This map of Kentucke, drawn from actual observations, is inscribed with the most perfect respect, to the Honorable the Congress of the United States of America; and to his Excellcy. George Washington, late Commander in Chief of their Army. [PhiladElphia, 1784]* Map. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/gm72003144/> accessed 31 March 2023.

Hewitt, E. A, and George Washington Hewitt. *Topographical map of the counties of Bourbon, Fayette, Clark, Jessamine, and Woodford, Kentucky from actual surveys*. New York: Smith, Gallup & Co, 1861. Map. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2011588004/> accessed : 31 March 2023.

Jessamine County, Kentucky, estate of Richard Lafon, division of lands, will book D, pp. 178-180, 19 April 1829; imaged, *Ancestry.com, Kentucky, U.S., Wills and Probate Records, 1774-1989* [database on-line],

https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/9066/images/004818850_00121?src=&backlabel=Return accessed : 3 April 2023; digital images 121-122.

Melish, John, Samuel Harrison, George Murray, and Draper Murray. *United States of America*. Philadelphia: Murray, Draper, Fairman & Co, 1818. Map. Library of Congress.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2002621136/> accessed : 31 March 2023.

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National Park Service. Cumberland Gap National Historic Park KY, TN, VA. "Plan Your Visit." *Route of the Historic Wilderness Road Map*.

<https://www.nps.gov/cuga/planyourvisit/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=1014498> accessed : 31 March 2023.

O.N. Snow & Co, and Thomas Crow & Co. *New county map of Virginia*. New York: O.N. Snow & Co, 1861. Map. Library of Congress. <https://www.loc.gov/item/lva0000091/> accessed : 31 March 2023.

Other Sources:

1810 US census, Jessamine Co., Ky., population schedule, Thomas Haydon household; imaged, *Ancestry.com*

(<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/684156:7613?tid=&pid=&queryId=b0d85378-dadc-4758-8afd-b6d65d9737f2&phsrc=FIP1&phstart=successSource> : 27 January 2024); citing NARA publication M252, roll 7, p. 45.

Elijah Craig Bourbon. "The Life and Legacy of Elijah Craig." website.

(https://elijahcraig.com/our-history?gclid=EAlalQobChMI6MPmp_He_QIVkhXUAR1xnghYEAAYASABEgL_-D_BwE : 2 April 2023).

National Register of Historic Places. [Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Interior], National Park Service, *Keene Springs Hotel*, Keene, Jessamine County, Kentucky, National Register Reference Number 84001636. External link, (<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/123847516> : 4 April 2023).

Among the books on the shelves of the Clayton Library, Houston, Texas, accessed in person in the fall, 1992:

Kentucky Society, Daughters of the Colonial Wars, 1941-1950. *Kentucky Pioneers and Their Descendants*, Roberts Printing Co., Frankfort, Ky., undated; will, Mason Singleton [Sr.], 27 July 1833, pp. 225-226; citing Jessamine Co., Ky., will book D, p. 410. Also will, Edmond Singleton, May 1814, pp. 223-224; citing Jessamine Co., Ky., will book B, pp. 152-153.

Special Thanks:

Special thanks to Pastor Jay Webb of the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Keene, Jessamine, Kentucky, for allowing us to use the minutes images, the 1962 translation of the minutes and other Church records for *All God's Children*. Without the availability of the remarkable records of the Church and the stewardship exercised by Pastor Webb and his predecessors to preserve their history, this program would not have been possible. We are eternally grateful to the Church and their leadership.

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Special thanks also to the Clayton Library of Houston without which I would not be here today. Among my earliest genealogical activities was in 1992 copying the Will of Mason Singleton from a book on the shelf at Clayton. Some thirty years later, found among those copied pages was a copy of the Will of Edmund Singleton, whose story is among those recounted in *All God's Children*. My friendship with Clayton has come full-circle—it gave me so much in 1992, and it continues to give me so much today. Thank you!

Janet Miller
janmiller1541@icloud.com
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