

JAMES AND KISIAH JOLLY

James and Kisiah Jolly had ten children: Barney, Meredy, Jesse, Fertherston, Thomas, Hood, Betsey, Folly, Arraner and D. L.

James Jolly saw the light of day, April 9, 1776, in Dinwiddy County, on Big Stanley creek, Virginia. He moved to Chatham County, North Carolina, December 16, 1797, and thence to Rutherford County, December 12, 1803. These dates come from a scrap of his Bible. It is said that he kept a diary, but it has been destroyed long since. He was a farmer, and with his children and two slaves, George and Myra, lived on eight hundred acres of land near Broad river in Cleveland County. The wench brought forth about twenty negroes [see below] who contributed only their just share to the labor on the farm.

My grandfather lived in a time when fish and game were plentiful. It was easy to keep stock because pea-vines grew abundantly everywhere in sufficient quantities to keep all stock fat and sleek. Consequently, much time for hunting and fishing was afforded. So kept a rack on his house with a dozen or more poles ready for fishing. Too, it was easy enough to go out into the woods, kill a deer, throw it over the shoulders and go home with plenty of meat.

Oftentimes has he taken me with him about four o'clock. We would arrive at the fishing hole near Alum Mountain, where he would hoe corn until about an hour before sunset, when he would say, "Now, let's catch some fish."

In a short while I would want to know if he had a bite. He replied by telling me to keep still, that he would not catch any fish if I talked, Then pretty soon he would jerk out a three-pounder, then another, and on until dusk when he would say that he had enough and would then go home. Those fish were fit to set before a king the next morning. With a good coffee they went down like muscadines falling into a river.

Alum Mountain has a very interesting history in connection with it. From its rock alum runs and drips. Somehow the place affects the needle of a compass in a strange way so that it points into the mountain and stands still. During the Revolution it was the abode of a Tory who made shoes, evidence by the scraps of leather still to be seen there.

My grandfather was a great walker. He told me that he often walked the ten miles from his place to Shelby in two hours. I do not remember ever seeing him on a horse, but I know that he did ride horseback because he twice visited in Virginia.

He was honest and square in his dealings with his fellow men, a good farmer and had his smokehouse ever well stocked. In the latter part of his life he raised much stock. He was fond of games and often amused himself pitching silver dollars, a game which is now seldom played.

Kisiah, his wife, was [also] a Jolly, and was of Dutch-Irish extraction as was her husband. Their parents had come from Ireland. She did her part well. In the evening she led the girls in carding and spinning the cotton from which the boys picked the seeds. This was continued until eleven o'clock, when everybody went to bed. From the yarn thus made was woven the cloth which went into their clothing.

The boys had shoes called brogans while the girls had a pair of home-made shoes, made from leather tanned at home. When they started to church Sunday morning, the shoes were in their hands.

Just before getting to the church, they sat down on a log, brushed the dust from their foot and legs, and put the shoes on before going to the house. If, perchance, their beaux did not come back home with them they pulled the shoes off when they reached the log again. In that way men and women were made that could stand the rigors and discomforts of pioneer life.

The conditions of life today are vastly different from that day. Our people wear fine clothing, costly shoes and ride in automobiles.



LIST OF JAMES AND KISIAH JOLLY'S NEGROES

Daddy Manse, George and Myra were the first three. Joel, Sambo, Beckey, Dick, Top, Lebo, Freer, Comebo, Betsey, Lucrecia and Gilbert were the children of Myra and George. At the time for Freedom in 1863 there were three grandchildren: Clementine, Scottie and Cindy, the mother of Mun and Beckey.

Here are appended the years of birth: Joe, 1835; Sambo, 1837; Becky, 1839; Dick, 1842; Cindy, 1844; Lebo, 1846; Freer, Combo, 1848; Betsey, 1850; Lucrecia, 1852; Gilbert, 1854; Clementine 1852; Scottie, 1854.

I am glad to say that this family of negroes has continued to lead useful lives. They deserve credit for continuing to live with my grandmother after the Emancipation Proclamation. She had always treated them well and they showed their gratitude by staying with her to the bitter end of the Civil War.

