

# THE PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL MAGAZINE

Before 1948 called  
*Publications of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania*

---

Volume 46

Number 4

Fall/Winter 2010

---

Patricia Law Hatcher, FASG, FGSP, *Editor*

Sandra M. Hewlett, CG, *Proofreader*

©2010 by the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, 2207 Chestnut Street,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

*The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* (ISSN 0882-3685) is published twice per annum (Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter). Nonmember subscriptions are sold by volume only (4 issues), \$45.00; foreign subscriptions, \$53.00; single issues, \$12.00 each; back issues, contact the Society office. The Society does not assume liability for statements of fact or of opinion made by contributors.

## THE AFRICAN AMERICAN TRUMAN FAMILY OF FAYETTE COUNTY

*Tony Burroughs\**

The majority of African American genealogists have ancestors from the South. Ninety-two percent of the Black population lived in the South in 1860.<sup>1</sup> Most thinking about African American research focuses on slavery and its post-Civil War ramifications. However, genealogists with African American ancestors in northern states must pursue a different research path, particularly if those ancestors were free prior to the Civil War. A case in point is the Truman family of Fayette County.

### ORAL HISTORY

Reports of strong oral history in the African American community are greatly exaggerated. There was very little oral history about the Truman family and no memory of slavery passed down from generation to generation. The author's mother, Mary Ellen (Brooks) Burroughs, was interviewed in 1975. She was born in Pittsburgh but knew little of her grandparents. Jim Truman of Pittsburgh, a first cousin to Lydia (Terrell) Brooks (Mary Ellen's mother), was raised with his grandparents, David Henry and Anna Vice (Smothers) Truman. He was most helpful, providing detailed information in an oral history, but as far as he could remember, he never heard of any ancestors being enslaved, and neither had any other relative interviewed.

### CENSUS RESEARCH

Whether slave or free, African American research generally follows paths similar to research of white families from the present back through the 1870 census, with an understanding that due to racism, segregation, prejudice, and differences in history and culture, additional ethnic records need to be researched, such as *Who's Who in Colored America*, records from the Freedmen's Bureau and the Freedman's Bank, etc.

---

\* Tony Burroughs ([www.tonyburroughs.com](http://www.tonyburroughs.com)) is the author of *Black Roots: A Beginners Guide to Tracing the African American Family Tree* and a great-great-great-grandson of David Truman, through his son Samuel.

<sup>1</sup> Campbell Gibson and Kay Jung, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Census Statistics on Population Totals by Race, 1790 to 1990, and by Hispanic Origin, 1970 to 1990, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States* (online at [census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html](http://census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0056/twps0056.html)).

Because Pennsylvania and the New England states abolished slavery much earlier than the Emancipation Proclamation, which was issued in 1863, many African Americans with northern roots can trace their families prior to 1870 on census schedules.

It was soon discovered that the Truman family were free Blacks prior to the Civil War. They could be traced to 1810 in Fayette County using census records. The progenitor of the family in Fayette County was a David Truman. The 1790 and 1800 censuses for Fayette County show no African American Truman families. The 1810, 1820, and 1830 censuses<sup>2</sup> show that David was born between 1775 and 1794.

- 1810, Washington Township, Fayette County, David Trueman (negro). All other free persons, except Indians, not taxed: 6<sup>3</sup>
- 1820, Washington Township, Fayette County, David Truman. 3 persons employed in agriculture, free colored: 3 males under 14, 2 males 14-25, 1 male 26-44 [born 1775-1794], 2 females under 14, 1 female 26-44<sup>4</sup>
- 1830, Washington Township, Fayette County, David Truman *or* Trueman. free whites: 1 female under 5, 1 female 20-29; free colored: 1 male 10-23, 1 male 36-54 [born 1775-1794], 2 females under 10, 3 females 10-23, 1 female 36-54<sup>5</sup>

#### ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania was the first state to abolish slavery. On 1 March 1780 the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed the "Pennsylvania Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery."<sup>6</sup> The act called for owners to register their slaves by 1 November 1780, but it did not free them. They were slaves for

<sup>2</sup> By 1840 David was apparently deceased (see Genealogical Summary).

<sup>3</sup> David Trueman household, 1810 US Census, Washington Township, Fayette County, page 1016½ (NARA M252, roll 54). Ronald Vern Jackson and Gary Ronald Teeple, *Pennsylvania 1810 Census Index* (Bountiful, Utah: Accelerated Indexing Systems, 1976), 284, lists David Truman in Saltlick Township, Fayette County, rather than Washington Township, an error repeated in other published sources. Census microfilm shows that the census page was divided into two townships, Saltlick and Washington. A squiggly line was drawn across the middle of the page to separate the two townships, which was missed by the census indexer.

<sup>4</sup> David Trueman [indexed on Ancestry as Ineman] household, 1820 US Census, Washington Township, Fayette County, page 703 [116 stamped] (NARA M33, roll 103).

<sup>5</sup> David Truman household, 1830 US Census, Washington Township, Fayette County, page 250 (NARA M19, roll 162). Noted historian Carter G. Woodson published a list of free African Americans in the 1830 census, which included a David Freeman in Washington Township, Fayette County, but no David Truman (Carter G. Woodson, *Free Negro Heads of Families in the United States in 1830: Together with Brief Treatment of the Free Negro* [Washington: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1925], 138). Examination of the census microfilm confirmed that the name was David Truman or Trueman, not David Freeman.

<sup>6</sup> For the full text see "Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, 1780," *Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine* 44(2006):229-34; also *Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania from 1682-1801* (Harrisburg: the state, 1896), 10:67-73.

life. Persons born after 1780 would be slaves until they reached twenty-eight years of age, at which time they would become free.

On 13 April 1782 the General Assembly amended the abolition act after the border between Pennsylvania and Virginia was settled.<sup>7</sup> Slave owners living in some parts of Westmoreland and Washington counties (and Fayette the next year) had been in the Youghiogheny, Monongahela, or Ohio counties of Virginia, so they had not registered their slaves in Pennsylvania. This act required them to do so.

Some slave owners abused the act by temporarily moving their pregnant slave women out of state so the slave baby would not be born in Pennsylvania (therefore enslaved only until age 28). The General Assembly addressed this abuse on 29 March 1788 with another amendment, disallowing this practice.<sup>8</sup> Many cases went to court. Abstracts of some of the court cases have been published, but none were found that applied to this Truman family.<sup>9</sup>

The Fayette County slave registrations (1788-1826),<sup>10</sup> the Westmoreland County slave registrations (1780-1782),<sup>11</sup> and the Washington County slave registrations (1782-1851)<sup>12</sup> were searched. No Trumans who owned slaves are listed.

#### EARLY THEORIES

Theories were developed hypothesizing why and how the African American Trumans got to Fayette County, with research possibilities for each.

The first theory was that the Trumans earned their freedom by fighting in the Revolutionary War. This is how many blacks became free in northern states.<sup>13</sup> However, a check of Revolutionary War records and three

---

<sup>7</sup> "An Act to redress certain grievances within the counties of Westmoreland and Washington" (*Statutes of Pennsylvania* [note 6], 10:462-64).

<sup>8</sup> "An Act to explain and amend an Act entitled, 'An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery'" (*Statutes of Pennsylvania* [note 6], 13:52-56).

<sup>9</sup> Helen Tunnicliff Catterall, *Judicial Cases Concerning American Slavery and the Negro* (originally published in 1926; reprinted New York: Octagon Books, Inc., 1968).

<sup>10</sup> "Birth Returns for Negroes & Mulattoes, 1788-1826, Fayette County Office of Prothonotary" (Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission [PHMC], Harrisburg, microfilmed 1979; new microfilming 1997 [filings are not identical]).

<sup>11</sup> George Dallas Albert, *History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1882), 447-50. The originals of the Westmoreland slave registrations are not extant.

<sup>12</sup> "Negro Register 1782-1851, Washington County Recorder of Deeds" (PHMC, microfilmed 1979). Green County was established in 1796; their early slave registrations are in Washington County.

<sup>13</sup> Rhode Island passed a law giving freedom to any slave who served in the war (Eric G. Grundset, *Forgotten Patriots—African American and American Indian Patriots of the Revolutionary War: A Guide to Service, Sources, and Studies* [Washington: National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 2008], 192; also John Russell Bartlett, *Records of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England* [Providence: Cooke, Jackson, & Co., 1863], 8[1776-1779]:359). Connecticut

books listing African Americans who served in the Revolutionary War included no Trumans who served from any colony.<sup>14</sup>

Another theory was that the Trumans were slaves who migrated from Virginia, which bordered Pennsylvania before West Virginia became a state in 1863 and had a sizable free Black population, but nothing related was found.

A third theory was that the African American Trumans were in some way associated with the white Trumans of Fayette County. Brothers Morris and Joseph Truman appeared to come to Fayette County around the same time the African American Trumans arrived. Both Black and white Trumans first appeared in Fayette County on the 1810 census. Morris and Joseph Truman were Quakers and lived in Brownsville and Bridgeport, adjacent towns in Fayette County. David Truman lived in Newell, five miles from Brownsville. The Terrells and the Smothers, who married into the Black Truman family, lived in Brownsville and Bridgeport. Morris and Joseph Truman were traced through census records, city directories, and county history,<sup>15</sup> and were found to have migrated from the Philadelphia area. Neither slaves nor free Blacks were listed in their household on any census or other record.

A fourth theory was that the early Trumans might be Quakers. David Henry and Anna Vice (Smothers) Truman both died in 1916 and were buried in Brownsville Quaker Cemetery. The Society of Friends records were researched at the Friends Historical Library at Swarthmore College in Swarthmore. These included the original records for the Redstone Meeting in Fayette County. Many other records were researched, including histories, card files, vertical files, Truman manuscripts, Sharpless manuscripts, monthly meetings, and manumission records. Quakers owned slaves but began manumitting them after 1747 when John Woolman, a New Jersey Quaker, traveled the South preaching against slave-

---

passed a law encouraging slave owners to free their slaves to serve as substitutes for them (Grundset, *Forgotten Patriots*, 257; also Charles L. Hoadly, *The Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut from October, 1772, to April 1775, Inclusive* [Hartford: Case, Lockwood & Brainard Co., 1887], 491). Some towns in Massachusetts offered freedom when recruiting slaves (Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961], 53).

<sup>14</sup> Debra L. Newman, *List of Black Servicemen Compiled from the War Department Collection of Revolutionary War Records* (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1974), Special List 36; Robert Ewell Greene, *Black Courage 1775-1783: Documentation of Black Participation in the American Revolution* (Washington: National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1984); and Grundset, *Forgotten Patriots* (note 13), which is the most comprehensive, listing 6,611 African Americans and Native American Indians. Revolutionary War records do not indicate race, so there is still a slim possibility an African American with the surname Truman could have served in the war. However, searches of the Pension Index, Rejected Pensions, Bounty Land Grants, and Ancestry.com did not show any Trumans from western Pennsylvania.

<sup>15</sup> Franklin Ellis, *History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of Its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1882).

holding.<sup>16</sup> No evidence was found of Black Trumans in the Quaker records, and none of the white Trumans owned slaves, intermarried with Blacks, or had any associations with Blacks. It was learned that the Quaker cemetery was the only cemetery near Newell, and it also buried non-Quakers. So the two Truman families, one white and one Black, appeared not to be related. It was merely a coincidence they lived in the same township and county, a few miles from each other.

### NEIGHBORHOOD THEORY

The next step was to apply the “neighborhood theory.” Families often migrated with and settled near families from “back home.” The five neighbors listed above and below David Truman on the census records for 1810, 1820, and 1830 in Washington Township in Fayette County were:

<i>1810 Census</i>	<i>1820 Census</i>	<i>1830 Census</i>
John Swertyell	John Stewart	Dolay Dowell
Samuel Jobs	Robert Montgomery	Anna Clifton
Charles Norcross	Peter Paterson	Andrew Dugan
Michael Skilling	Hugh McDonnell	Neil Dugan
Samuel Davidson	James Elliott	Thomas Barton
<i>David Trueman</i>	<i>David Truman</i>	<i>David Truman</i>
Robert Laughlin	Christian Tarr	John Tarr
Joseph Noble	Samuel Brackenridge	James Elliott
Thomas Tibelse	Henry Gaines	Rebecca Mansfield
William Palmer	James Wells	James McCannas
James Martin	John Worley	Thomas Layton

It can be difficult to tell what route a census taker took, but there is very little continuity in names, suggesting that many of these neighbors and/or David Truman, who did not own land, were transient tenants. Tenant farmers often moved to where they could find work.

All free Blacks in Fayette County and all white households that included Blacks, slave or free, were identified. Blacks were identified in nine townships: Bullskin, Franklin, George’s, German, Menallen, Springhill, Tyrone, Union, and Washington.

Most Blacks resided in Washington Township. The Truman family lived in the northwest corner of Washington Township, along the Monongahela River when they first appeared in Fayette County in the 1810 census. They remained in the township (or Jefferson, created from Washington in 1840) for the next hundred years. Research focused in Washington Township.

Fourteen white families were identified in Washington Township on the 1790 census who owned slaves or had free Blacks living in their

<sup>16</sup> Ellen Thomas Berry and David Allen Berry, *Our Quaker Ancestors: Finding Them in Quaker Records* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Company, 1987), 40-41.

household, of whom Margaret Hutton was the largest slave holder, owning twenty-four slaves:

Samuel Burns	3 slaves	
Ann Burges	4 slaves	
Edward Cook	11 slaves	
William Goe	9 slaves	
Margaret Hutton	24 slaves	7 free persons
Daniel Hervey	1 slave	
Thomas Kyle	1 slave	
James Lynch	3 slaves	
Robert Lyon	1 slave	
Elinor Moorehead	2 slaves	
Richard Noble	4 slaves	4 free persons
Peter Paterson	2 slaves	
John Patterson	2 slaves	
Levi Stevens	1 slave	

The process was repeated for the 1800 and 1810 Washington Township censuses, noting all free Black heads-of-household and white families with slaves or free blacks in their household. This gave a fairly good grasp of key people in the African American community of Washington Township.

#### SURNAMES

Even though African Americans living in the North were free for most of the antebellum period, many of them (or their ancestors) had early roots in the South. Techniques for researching southern slaves were applied to researching Blacks in the North.

Historian Herbert Gutman tracked names of former slaves versus former slave owners in his *Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*.<sup>17</sup> The percentage of former slaves with the same name as the former slave owner after the Civil War was surprising. After slavery the vast majority did not use the surname of their last slave owner according to Gutman's statistics. The author has conducted a study on data from Gutman's research and combined it with his own, which has shown only 15% of former slaves went by the surname of their former owner after the Civil War. What if this were true for earlier freed Blacks? What if the ancestor's name were different than what we thought? Perhaps the focus on *Truman* was throwing off the research.

<sup>17</sup> Herbert G. Gutman, "Somebody Knew My Name," chapter 6 in *The Black Family from Slavery to Freedom* (New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 230-56.

## DISCOVERIES AND ANALYSIS

Vital records indicate the Trumans intermarried with Terrell, Goe, Simpson, and Smothers families (see Genealogical Summary for vital events), some of whom fought in the Civil War and the War of 1812.

The mother of Anna Vice (Smothers) Truman (David's granddaughter-in-law) is listed on her death certificate as Charlotte Simpson. Thomas Simpson (Negro) and Edward Simpson (mulatto) were free Blacks listed on the 1810 census in Washington Township in Fayette County.<sup>18</sup> It was thought Thomas or Edward could be Charlotte Simpson's father. A published will abstract of the 1795 will of Margaret Hutton mentioning Edward Simpson provided a breakthrough.<sup>19</sup> The will was ordered from the Fayette County courthouse. There were several differences between the abstract and the recorded will, plus much additional information in the recorded copy.<sup>20</sup>

Margaret (Goe) Hutton was the largest slave holder in Fayette County. The Goe family migrated to Fayette County from Prince George's County, Maryland, with twenty to thirty slaves in 1773.<sup>21</sup> Her 12 February 1795 will lists twenty-six slaves by name, gender, and age, sometimes with additional details (*emphasis added*):<sup>22</sup>

- Old Jeremiah a Negro man slave aged upward of fifty years
- *Edward Simpson a Mullatto man slave* aged upward of thirty six years a carpenter has children
- William a Negro man slave aged thirty six years
- Old Catherine a Negro woman slave aged upward of fifty three years
- Old Rachel a Negro woman slave aged about fifty two years . . . her daughter Alice . . . Old Jeremiah's children by Old Rachel are Benjamin & Leah
- Hannah a Negro woman slave aged forty years . . . her daughter Anna and her son William
- Sarah a Mulatto woman slave aged thirty-two years . . . her two sons viz Henry Fitz Edward and Charles David each under 18, one to be a tailor and the other to be a shoemaker
- Tobias a Negro man slave aged upward of forty one years
- Isaac a negro man slave aged upward of twenty nine years

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Simpson household, 1810 US Census, Washington Township, Fayette County, page 223; Edward Simpson household, Redstone Township, Brownsville, Fayette County, page 974½ (NARA M252, roll 54).

<sup>19</sup> *LaFayette: The History and Genealogy of Fayette County, Pennsylvania*, vol. 2 #2(July 1982): 6-7, transcribing Fayette County Wills I1:112.

<sup>20</sup> There are three versions of the will at the courthouse: the original (folded in an envelope and fragile), a recorded copy in the will book, and a rerecording of the will book.

<sup>21</sup> Ellis, *Fayette County* (note 15), 2:629; Jacob Bowman, "Some Historical Notes of South-West Pennsylvania," *Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine* 10(1927):54-55; Robert Shotwell Goe, *The Goe Family* (Baltimore: the author, 1968), B-1; and Melvin B. Goe, *The Goe Family, 1702-1978, Ten Generations in America* (Centralia, Mo.: the author, 1978), 2.

<sup>22</sup> Margaret Hutton will, recorded copy, Fayette County Wills I1:112-18.



- Philimona a negro man slave aged nearly twenty seven years
- Abram a Negro lad slave aged upwards of eighteen years and his half sister Cassandra a Negro girl slave aged fifteen years
- Terrementa a Negro woman slave aged upward of twenty three has children
- Alice aged twenty two years
- Henriette aged upward of twenty one years and young Rachel aged upwards of eighteen years
- *David, a mulatto lad slave* aged upward of 14 years shall be sold out until the first day of January A.D. one thousand eight hundred and six. (but special care must be taken that within that space of time said mulatto David shall be taught to read pretty well + write a legible hand, and cypher so far as to be perfect in the Rule of Reduction) at the expiration of which time he said Mulatto David shall go out free with eight dollars in hand.
- Savannah [*sic*, Susannah].<sup>23</sup> a Negro woman slave aged upward of thirty two years (if my property at the time of my decease shall be sold or hired out as my property for the space of time to commence when above said Isaacs time Commences at the expiration of said space or term of two years the said Savanna [*sic*] shall go out free together with her youngest living child and at the same time ~~and at the same time~~ is hereby entitled to claim and receive from the hands of my after named Executors (or whom soever they shall Judge fit to appoint and Authorize for that purpose) the same loom reeds and [?lynirs/lyiers] which she now works withal. one year provision (as above specified for the first named seven Negro Mulatto slaves) one good linnen wheel, ten pounds of Good heckled flax one middle sized iron pot with hooks one Iron skillet one pound cow & calf and two shoats the live stock to be delivered in May next ensuing and the same is to be understood respecting the other above named nine Negro and Mulatto slaves . . .

“David a mulatto lad slave” stuck out. Several pieces of circumstantial evidence point to this David being the David Truman who first appeared as a free Negro on the 1810 census.

- Both persons have the first name David.
- If correct, it associates David Truman and Edward Simpson. Anna Smothers, born in 1855, daughter of Oliver Perry and Charlotte (Simpson) Smothers, married David Henry<sup>3</sup> Truman (*Samuel*<sup>2</sup>, *David*<sup>1</sup>) [see Genealogical Summary].
- David, “aged more than 14 years”<sup>24</sup> in 1795, would have been born in 1781 or earlier, but likely about 1781, consistent with the 1775-94 birth years of the censuses.
- David of the will was freed in 1806. David Truman first appears on the 1810 census. No other David Truman identified as Negro, black, or mulatto is found in Fayette County.

If the David of the will is the David Truman from the 1810 census, then

---

<sup>23</sup> Her name is spelled Savannah only in the recorded will. It is Susanna in the original will; in the Westmoreland County 1782 slave registrations (note 11). On 20 September 1790 Margaret Hutton registered slaves Daniel born 27 June 1790 (twin) and Ester born 27 June 1790 (twin) born to her slave Susanna in Fayette County. (Birth Returns for Negroes & Mulattoes, 1788-1826, Fayette County Office of Prothonotary; PHMC, microfilmed, 1979; new filming, 1997.)

<sup>24</sup> When ages are given like this, they are usually close, except for the elderly.

Hutton's 1795 will is the instrument that provided for the Truman family's freedom. David was freed in 1806 (at age about twenty-five; three years earlier than provided by the emancipation act).

David received special consideration over other slaves owned by Margaret Hutton—to be taught to read and write. David was a mulatto (Edward Simpson and Sarah also are listed in the will as mulattos), suggesting a possible blood connection with the Hutton family, although the interracial connection could have come from another family. David's white ancestry could have been through a parent, a grandparent, or even further back (although his mother cannot have been white; if so he would have been born free and not called a slave in Margaret Hutton's will).

One item that speaks against this theory is that David is not found in any of the slave registrations in Westmoreland, Washington, or Fayette counties.

The will of Hezekiah Magruder of Fayette County, written 14 May 1787, states "I . . . bequeth to my honored Mother-in-law Mrs. Margaret Hutton all the rest of my personal estate whatsoever such as slaves, servants stock household furniture and every other kind of denomination whatsoever . . ." <sup>25</sup> The probate inventory does not survive. However, a listing of names and ages of sixteen slaves owned by Hezekiah Magruder is in the 1782 Westmoreland County Negro Register, as are nine slaves owned by Margaret Hutton. <sup>26</sup> Eleven of Magruder's sixteen slaves and eight of Margaret's nine slaves are matches to slaves in Margaret's will. Margaret Hutton also registered the births of ten slaves in Fayette County, some names of which match those in her will and others of which were likely the unnamed children in the will.

#### Registered births of Margaret Hutton's slaves

- Benjamin born 1 Jan 1781 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered Jan 1789]
- Leah born 26 May 1783 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered Jan 1789]
- Jeremiah born 30 Dec 1783 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered Jan 1789]
- Anna born 10 May 1786 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered Jan 1789]
- Henry Fitz Edward born 10 March 1788 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered 4 Jan 1789]
- Charles born 17 Sept 1785 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered 4 Jan 1789]
- Priscilla born 29 Dec 1783 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered 4 Jan 1789]

<sup>25</sup> Hezekiah Magruder will, Fayette County Wills 1:50. Margaret Hutton was his executrix.

<sup>26</sup> The original Washington County slave registration list does not survive. Fayette County was formed from Westmoreland in 1783. Owners who lived in what became Fayette had registered their slaves in Westmoreland County. This list is published in George Dallas Albert, *History of the County of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania, with Biographical Sketches of Many of its Pioneers and Prominent Men* (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1882), 447–50 ("Appendix A: A List of Negro and Mulatto Slaves"). Hezekiah McGruder's slaves, registered on 10 October 1782, are listed at 448–49. On the same date relatives of McGruder, namely Margaret Hutton, William Goe, John Goe, and Richard Noble, registered their slaves (449–50).

- Robert born 25 Dec 1785 registered 23 Sept 1788 [reregistered 4 Jan 1789]
- Rebecca & Jamima born 30 Jun 1788 registered 23 Sept 1788 [Rebecca, but not Jamima, was reregistered 4 Jan 1789]<sup>27</sup>

There is no David among the 1782 slaves owned by Magruder, Hutton, Goe, Noble, or others, although Margaret's will indicates he was born by 1781.

An analysis of records related to the slaves owned by Margaret Hutton produces the following overview. Those marked with an asterisk are not named in her 1795 will.<sup>28</sup>

#### Margaret Hutton's Slaves in Birth Order

Old Catherine	1742	
Old Rachel	1743	HM
Old Jeremiah	1745	
Tobias	1754	HM
Hannah	1755	HM-RH
William	1759	HM
Edward Simpson	1759	mother Old Catherine; HM-RH
Thomas Simpson*	1762	manumitted in 1792 <sup>29</sup>
Sarah	1763	mulatto
Susannah	1763	
Alice	est 1763	mother Old Rachel
Isaac	1766	
Philimona	1768	
Terrementa	1772	HM-RH
Alice	1773	HM
Henriette	1774	
Abram	1777	Cassandra's half brother; HM
Rachel	1777	
Cassandra	1780	Abram's half sister; HM
David	1781	mulatto lad slave
Benjamin	1 Jan 1781	parents Old Rachel/Old Jeremiah; HM
Henry Fitz Edward	10 Mar 1783	mother Sarah
Leah	26 May 1783	parents Old Rachel/Old Jeremiah; HM-RH
Priscilla*	29 Dec 1783	mother Susannah
Charles David	17 Sept 1785	mother Sarah
Robert *	25 Dec 1785	mother Susannah
Anna	10 May 1786	mother Hannah
Rebecca*	30 June 1788	mother Susannah
Jamima*	30 June 1788	mother Susannah
Daniel*	27 June 1790	mother Susannah
Ester*	27 June 1790	mother Susannah
William	3 July 1790	mother Hannah
Dinah*	27 June 1791	mother Henriette

<sup>27</sup> "Birth Returns for Negroes & Mulattoes, 1788-1826," Fayette County Office of Prothonotary (PHMC).

<sup>28</sup> The children of Susannah are mentioned in the will, but not named. Elizabeth has not been identified.

<sup>29</sup> Fayette County Deeds A:373.

Elizabeth*	17 Aug 1791	
Charity*	9 April 1795	mother Minley
George*	1 Oct 1796	

HM = inherited from Hezekiah Magruder in 1787.

RH = Magruder inherited from his wife Mary, who inherited them from her father, Richard Hutton in 1772.<sup>30</sup>

## MARYLAND

There was still no connection identified between the surname Truman and the Hutton or Goe families. Since the Goe family migrated to Fayette County from Prince George's County, Maryland, in 1773, the research turned to Maryland.

- Surnames in the 1790 census were searched to see if there were any Trumans in Maryland. Four Truman heads-of-household were in Maryland in 1790.<sup>31</sup>
- Genealogical newsletters were researched.<sup>32</sup>
- A genealogical article was found that links three families—Dents, Magruders (sometimes McGruder), and (white) Trumans.<sup>33</sup> It mentions that Hezekiah Magruder married Mary Hutton, Margaret's daughter, adding the possibility of connecting Margaret Hutton's family to a Truman family through a Magruder family. If true, it means slaves were passed through three families instead of two.

Freed slaves sometimes used a surname of a much earlier ancestor or owner. Had the slaves who had been transferred from the Magruders to the Huttons earlier been transferred from the Trumans to the Magruders? Two Truman wills for a husband and wife in Prince George's County were located, neither of which mentioned Magruders as heirs.

- Will of Henry Truman, 30 September 1755<sup>34</sup>
- Will of Ann Truman, 6 April 1760<sup>35</sup>

However, an examination of the probate documents indicated a Hezekiah Magruder was one of the largest creditors on Henry Truman's 1758

---

<sup>30</sup> Richard Hutton's will, written 13 August 1772, probated 27 August 1772, Prince George's County, Maryland, Orphans' Court, wills for Upper Marlboro Court, 1 T:39 (FHL #14,279).

<sup>31</sup> *Surnames in the 1790 United States Census* (Orting, Wash.: The Researchers Bookshelf; reprinted from *A Population of Census Growth*, USGPO, 1909), 40.

<sup>32</sup> *Truman Tribute: A Quarterly Family Magazine of Genealogical and Historical Materials on: Truman, Trueman, Treuman, and Variant Spellings* 3:2(Summer 1984): 35-37.

<sup>33</sup> Alexander H. Bell, "Dent, Magruder, Trueman Family Notes" *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* 25(1937):104-11.

<sup>34</sup> Henry Truman will, Prince George's County, Maryland, Wills 1:484 (Register of Wills).

<sup>35</sup> Ann Truman will, Prince George's County, Maryland, Wills 1:515 (Register of Wills).

inventory,<sup>36</sup> hence Magruder may have acquired the slaves through settling the estate.

This further strengthens the circumstantial evidence that David Truman was the David listed in Margaret Hutton's 1795 will.

#### GENEALOGICAL SUMMARY

1. **DAVID<sup>1</sup> TRUMAN** was born after 1775 (1820, 1830 censuses), likely about 1781 (Margaret Hutton's will), in Pennsylvania,<sup>37</sup> probably in [then] Westmoreland County. He died between the 1830 and 1840 censuses<sup>38</sup> likely in Jefferson Township, Fayette County.

*Children of David<sup>1</sup> Truman:*<sup>39</sup>

- i. possible son, born between 1795 and 1806 (1820 census).

---

<sup>36</sup> Henry Truman estate, Prince George's County, Maryland, Inventory Accounts, G.S. #1, 1758, page 170 (Upper Marlboro Court).

<sup>37</sup> Census entries for David<sup>2</sup> and Lydia<sup>2</sup> consistently report both parents born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>38</sup> David Truman household, 1830 US Census (note 5). David Truman household, 1840 US Census, Jefferson Township, Fayette County, page 460, line 11 (NARA M704, roll 281); no male listed as 55-99 (born 1731-1785). The entry is for the son David, listed as 24-35, with an apparent wife 24-35, boy under 10, girl under 10, and a woman 36-54.

<sup>39</sup> There are no documents stating that these are children of David Truman. However, there is very strong circumstantial evidence that this is correct: (1) The age and locality fit. (2) David was residing in Samuel's household in 1850 and 1860; David's household in 1880 includes a widow Mary, listed as his sister-in-law. (3) David Truman mentions his sister Lydia Simpson in a newspaper interview ("A Venerable Colored Man," clipping from an unidentified Pennsylvania newspaper, circa 1898).

David Truman household, 1820 US Census (note 4) includes 3 males and 2 females under 14 and 2 males 14-25, in addition to David and a woman of an age to be his wife, suggesting possibly an additional four unidentified children. David Truman household, 1830 US Census (note 5) includes, in addition to David and a woman of an age to be his wife, 1 male and 3 females 10-23, plus 2 females under 10. Because there were only two daughters in 1820 and there are two young girls, this suggests a blended household, with a young couple residing with David, although another daughter, born soon after 1820 would not be unlikely. In the newspaper interview David<sup>2</sup> says he was bound out at age 5 to David Wells, but there are no slaves or free blacks in Wells' household in 1820 or 1830 (David Wells household, 1820 US Census Redstone Township, Fayette County, page 119, line 5 [NARA M33, roll 103]; David Wells household, 1830 US Census, Brownsville, Fayette County, page 216, line 8 [NARA M19, roll 162]). If other children were also bound out, they would not necessarily have been enumerated in the household of David<sup>1</sup>, so it cannot be assumed that these unidentified possible children died young.

Specific localities of birth are derived from the residences of David<sup>1</sup>.

There appears to be another free African American Truman family in Fayette County during this time. Jesse Truman is head of household on the 1840 US Census in Fayette County. The census indicates Jesse Truman was born between 1740 and 1785. That would place him in the same age category of David Truman, who was born in 1781. It is not known if these two African American Truman families are related. There is no Jesse listed on Margaret Hutton's 1795 will, or any Jesse born between 1740 and 1758 listed on any of the Westmoreland County or Fayette County slave registrations.

- 2 ii. **SAMUEL<sup>2</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1803–1808 in Perry Township, Fayette County; died in May 1870 in Jefferson Township, Fayette County; married by say 1836 in Fayette County **MARY GOE**.
- 3 iii. **DAVID<sup>2</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1810–1813 in Jefferson Township, Fayette County; died 27 March 1903 in Elizabeth, Allegheny County.
- 4 iv. **LYDIA/LIDA/LETTIE<sup>2</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1817–1824 in Fayette County; died 31 October 1900 in Bridgeport, Fayette County; married by say 1841 **TURNER SIMPSON**.
- v. possible son, born between 1806 and 1820 (1820 census).
- vi. possible son, born between 1806 and 1820 (1820 census).
- vii. possible daughter, born between 1806 and 1820 (1820 census).

2. **SAMUEL<sup>2</sup> TRUMAN** (*David<sup>1</sup>*) was born about 1803 (1870 mortality schedule) or 1805 (1850 census) or 1808 (1860 census) in Perry Township, Fayette County. He died of consumption in May 1870 in Jefferson Township, Fayette County.<sup>40</sup> He married by say 1836 (child born about 1837) in Fayette County **MARY GOE**,<sup>41</sup> who was born about 1813 (1860 census) or 1820 in Fayette County (1850 census) and died after the 1880 census. They resided in Washington Township in 1840<sup>42</sup> Samuel's brother and nephew were living with them in Jefferson Township in 1850<sup>43</sup> and in Perry Township in 1860.<sup>44</sup> Soon after Samuel's death in 1870, Mary, her sons Samuel and David, her niece Susan and her family, and her brother-in-law David were listed together in Jefferson Township.<sup>45</sup> In 1880 widow Mary was living with her widowed brother-in-law David Truman, next door to her son David Henry Truman and his family in Jefferson Township.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Samuel Truman entry, 1870 US Census Mortality Schedule, Fayette County, Jefferson Township, sheet 1, line 7 (NARA M1838, roll 6): age 67, black, laborer, resident of household #170 (see note 45).

<sup>41</sup> Her surname is from the death certificate of her son David (note 49).

<sup>42</sup> Samuel Truman household, 1840 US Census, Washington Township, Fayette County, page 234 left, next to bottom line (NARA M704, roll 234): male and female 24–35, female under 10.

<sup>43</sup> Samuel Truman household, 1850 US Census, Jefferson Township, Fayette County, page 276B, #90/90 (NARA M432, roll 780): Samuel, 45, labourer; Mary, 30; Mary E., 13; Rachel, 3; Samuel, 1; David Truman, 40, laborer; George, 10; all black, all born in Fayette County.

<sup>44</sup> Samuel Truman household, 1860 US Census, Perry Township, Fayette County, page 22, #170/161 (NARA M653, roll 1110): Samuel, 52, laborer, \$75 personal property; Mary, 47; Samuel, 12; David, 6; David Truman, 49, laborer, \$50 personal property; George, 22, laborer; all mulatto, all born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>45</sup> David Freeman household, 1870 US Census, Jefferson Township, Fayette County, pages 23–24, #170/170 (NARA M593, roll 1342): David Freeman [*sic*], 60, laborer; Mary Freeman, 54; Samuel Freeman, 21, laborer; David Freeman, 17, laborer; David Holmes, 36, laborer; Susan Holmes, 26; Mary Holmes, 8; Rachel Holmes, 3; Mary Holmes, 18; all black, all born in Pennsylvania. The census clearly says Freeman, apparently an enumerator error.

<sup>46</sup> David Truman and David H. Truman households, 1880 US Census, Jefferson Township, Fayette County, ED 43, sheet 261C, #24/25 and #25/26 (NARA T9, roll

*Children of Samuel<sup>2</sup> and Mary (Goe) Truman:*<sup>47</sup>

- i. **MARY E.<sup>3</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1837 (1850 census) in Fayette County.
- ii. **RACHEL<sup>3</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1847 (1850 census) in Jefferson Township, Fayette County.
- iii. **SAMUEL<sup>3</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1848 (1860 census) or 1849 (1850 census) in Jefferson Township, Fayette County.
- iv. **DAVID HENRY<sup>3</sup> TRUMAN**,<sup>48</sup> born 2 May 1853 in Jefferson Township, Fayette County; died 31 March 1916 in Newell, Fayette County, age 62 (death certificate); buried 2 April 1916 in the Quaker Cemetery, Fayette County,<sup>49</sup> married by say 1872 (child born in 1873) or about 1873 (1900 census) **ANNA VICE SMOTHERS**,<sup>50</sup> who was born 1 January 1855 in Pennsylvania (1900 census), daughter of Oliver Perry Smothers and Charlotte Simpson, died 18 February 1916 in Newell, Fayette County, and was buried 2 April 1916 in the Quaker Cemetery, Fayette County.<sup>51</sup> In 1880 the family was in Jefferson Township, living next to David's mother.<sup>52</sup> They were in Jefferson Township, Allegheny County [*sic*],<sup>53</sup> in 1900<sup>54</sup> and in Jefferson Township, Fayette County, in 1910.<sup>55</sup>

3. **DAVID<sup>2</sup> TRUMAN** (*David*<sup>1</sup>) was born about 1810 (1850 census) or 1811 (1860 census) or 1813 (1870 census) in Jefferson Township, Fayette County.<sup>56</sup> He died 27 March 1903 in Elizabeth, Allegheny County.<sup>57</sup> He

---

1130): David, 67, head, widowed, farm laborer; Mary, 67, sister-in-law, widowed; David H. Truman, 27, head, farm laborer; Annie, 25, wife; Mary, 7, daughter; Oliver, 5, son; William, 3, son; Louie, 1/3, February, daughter; all black, all born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>47</sup> Children in the Samuel Truman household in 1850 (note 43) and 1860 (note 44), suggesting they are the children of Samuel and Mary. Specific localities of birth are derived from residences of Samuel.

<sup>48</sup> Middle name from interview by the author with Roxie Bell (Terrell) Phillips, granddaughter of David Henry Truman, 28 June 1976 in West Middlesex, Pennsylvania.

<sup>49</sup> David Truman death certificate, Pennsylvania, 1916, #8855: includes names of parents.

<sup>50</sup> Middle name from interview with Roxie Bell (Terrell) Phillips (note 48).

<sup>51</sup> Annie V. Truman death certificate, Pennsylvania, 1916, #7875: includes names of parents.

<sup>52</sup> David H. Truman household, 1880 US Census (note 46).

<sup>53</sup> Allegheny County does not have a Jefferson Township; Jefferson Township is in Fayette County; it is unclear why the enumerator filled in the sheets this way.

<sup>54</sup> David H. Truman household, 1900 US Census, 3rd Precinct, Jefferson Township, Allegheny County, ED 408, sheets 4A-4B (NARA T623, roll 1368): David H., May 1853, farmer, married 27 years; Annie V., January 1855, 8 children, 7 living; William H., December 1877, farm laborer; Luella, February 1880, servant; Hannah C., October 1881; Tamson B., February 1884; Olivia A., August 1887; all black, all born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>55</sup> David H. Truman household, 1910 US Census, Jefferson Township, Fayette County, ED 41, sheet 6A (NARA T624, roll 1345): David H., 55; Anna V., wife, 55; Oulia A., daughter, 22; all mulatto; all born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>56</sup> The newspaper article referenced in note 57 states he was 107 when he died (i.e., born about 1796). Ages for the elderly and at death were often exaggerated (more so as they grew older) due to poor memory, the respect given great old age, and a combination of the two. His age as given in 1850-1870 place his birth about 1810-1813, totally consistent with his first appearance as a head of household with two apparent children in 1840, which places his birth between 1805 and 1816 (note 38).

married by say 1837 (two children under 10 in 1840 census), wife unknown, who died probably by 1850. In 1850 and 1860 David and his son George were residing with Samuel Truman. In 1870 and 1880 Samuel's widow Mary was residing with David.<sup>58</sup>

*Child of David<sup>2</sup> Truman:*

- i. **GEORGE<sup>3</sup> TRUMAN**, born about 1838 (1860 census) or 1840 (1850 census) in Fayette County.
- ii. probable daughter, born by 1840 census.

4. **LYDIA/LIDA/LETTIE<sup>2</sup> TRUMAN** (*David<sup>1</sup>*) was born about 1817 (obituary) or May 1820 (1900 census) or 1820 (1860 census) or 1824 (1850 census) in Fayette County. Lida Simpson died 31 October 1900 in Bridgeport, Fayette County, age 83 (obituary), and was buried 1 November 1900 in Greenlane Cemetery, Brownsville, Fayette County.<sup>59</sup> She married by 1840 (child born about 1841) or about 1838 (1900 census) **TURNER SIMPSON**, who was born in Fayette County about 1815 and died after the 1860 census. They were living in Brownsville, Fayette County, in 1840<sup>60</sup> and 1850<sup>61</sup> and in Redstone Township in 1860.<sup>62</sup> In 1900 Lettie Simpson, "aunt" [*sic*], was living with her daughter Susan and her husband in Jefferson Township.<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> "David Truman of Jefferson Township Is No More," *Daily News Standard*, Uniontown, 30 March 1903, page 1. It does not mention his wife or child.

<sup>58</sup> Samuel Truman household, 1850 US Census (note 43); Samuel Truman household, 1860 US Census (note 44); David Truman household, 1870 US Census (note 45); David Truman household, 1880 US Census (note 46).

In 1860 there is a David Truman, 49, black, domestic, \$10 personal property in the Josiah Hedges household, 1860 US Census, East Liberty, Dunbar Township, Fayette County, page 76, #568/524 (NARA M653, roll 1110), and in 1870 there is a David Truman, 55, black, works on farm, in the J. W. Francis household, 1870 US Census, Perry Township, Fayette County, page 34, #238/246 (NARA M593, roll 1343). It is unclear if David was enumerated twice in either census because he had hired out as a farm laborer.

<sup>59</sup> "Lida Simpson," *Brownsville Clipper*, Brownsville, 1 November 1900. Marlene Bransom, "Greenlane Cemetery Transcription" ([pagenweb.org/~fayette/cemetery/green\\_lane.html](http://pagenweb.org/~fayette/cemetery/green_lane.html)). The author has visited cemetery.

<sup>60</sup> Turner Simpson household, 1840 US Census, Brownsville, Fayette County, page 211, line 4 (NARA M704, roll 211): male 24-34, female under 10, female 10-23.

<sup>61</sup> Turner Simpson household, 1850 US Census, Brownsville, Fayette County, page 315B, #647/675 (NARA M432, roll 780): Turner, 35; Lydia, 26; Rachel, 9; Susan, 8; Prissy, 5; Nancy, 3; John, 1; all mulatto, born in Fayette County, Pennsylvania.

<sup>62</sup> Minor Simpson household, 1860 US Census, Redstone Township, Fayette County, pages 688-89, #196/196 (NARA M653, roll 1109): Minor, 45, coal digger, \$50 personal property; Lydia, 40; Rachel, 20; Susan, 16; Priscilla, 13; Nancy, 12; Jesse, 5; Jane, 4; James, 1; all mulatto, born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>63</sup> David Holmes household, 1900 US Census, Jefferson Township, Fayette County, ED 33, sheet 10A, #139/159 (NARA T623, roll 1410): David Holmes, December 1840; Susan Holmes, March 1841; Mary J. Holmes, December 1862, married; Lousa J. Brown, November 1878, married; Edward R. Brown, son-in-law, July 1870; Lettie Simpson, aunt, May 1820, widowed; married 62 years, 4 of 9 children surviving.



*Children of Turner and Lydia<sup>2</sup> (Truman) Simpson.*<sup>64</sup>

- i. **RACHEL<sup>3</sup> SIMPSON**, born about 1840 (1860 census) or 1841 (1850 census), but possibly before the 1840 census, in Fayette County.
- ii. **SUSANNA/SUSAN SIMPSON**, born in March 1841 (1900 census) or 1842 (1850 census) or 1844 (1860, 1870 censuses) in Fayette County; died 14 October 1910 in Jefferson Township, Fayette County; married 24 August 1860 in Pennsylvania (pension) **DAVID T. HOLMES**, son of Samuel Holmes (pension), who was born in Pennsylvania about 1834 (1870 census). They were living in Jefferson Township, Fayette County, in 1870,<sup>65</sup> 1880,<sup>66</sup> and 1900.<sup>67</sup> He served in the Civil War and had a pension.<sup>68</sup>
- iii. **PRISCILLA/PRISSY SIMPSON**, born about 1845 (1850 census) or 1847 (1860 census) in Brownsville, Fayette County.
- iv. **NANCY SIMPSON**, born about 1847 (1850 census) or 1848 (1860 census) in Brownsville, Fayette County.
- v. **JOHN SIMPSON**, born about 1849 in Brownsville, Fayette County; died before 1860.
- vi. child, died before 1860.
- vii. **JESSE SIMPSON**, born about 1855 in Brownsville, Fayette County.
- viii. **JANE SIMPSON**, born about 1856 in Brownsville, Fayette County.
- ix. **JAMES SIMPSON**, born about 1859 in Brownsville, Fayette County.

---

<sup>64</sup> From 1850 and 1860 censuses. In 1900 Lettie is said to have had 9 children, 4 still living. The unidentified child is placed in the gap between child v and vii, but could have been born after 1860 and died before 1870, or could have been the child in the 1840 census and died before 1850.

<sup>65</sup> David Freeman household, 1870 US Census (note 45).

<sup>66</sup> David T. Holmes household, 1880 US Census, North Strabane Township, Washington County, ED 258, sheet 394C (NARA T9, roll 1201): David T., 40, black; Susan, 40, mulatto; Rachel, 14, black; Louise J., David E., 2, twins, black; Mary E., daughter, 23 [*sic*], black, all born in Pennsylvania.

<sup>67</sup> David Holmes household, 1900 US Census (note 63).

<sup>68</sup> David T. Holmes, Co. E., 32nd USCT, Invalid Certificate #609292 (Civil War and Later Pension Files, Department of Veteran Affairs, NARA RG15).