

Biographical Profiles of William Clark's Enslaved African Americans

Researched and compiled by James J. Holmberg

Some of William Clark's enslaved people are mentioned in his letters to his brother Jonathan. Those listed are mentioned to varying degrees in both his letters to Jonathan and in amplification notes in *Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark*. Through association, a couple of Jonathan's enslaved people also are profiled. Their biographies have been compiled from both public and private sources. They are listed alphabetically.

Aleck: In Clark's letter to Jonathan of July 2, 1808, he reports that he has hired out some of the enslaved persons he brought with him upon permanently removing to St. Louis that June, and lists them by name. One of these people was Aleck, who has not been positively identified. There were two Alecks or Alexanders in the Clark household at this time. One was the son of Chloe but he only would have been about two at the time and much too young to be hired out. Chloe was given to Clark upon his marriage to Hanock's daughter Julia/Judith in January 1808. A Clark document from November 1820 regarding his father-in-law's estate lists Chloe's children as: Berry aged 17, Eleck (Aleck/Alexander) aged 14 and a cripple, Anthony aged 12, and Letty aged 10. Aleck might not have been a "cripple" in 1808 but still too young to be hired out. It is possible that he was the son of Nancy, the daughter of Old York and Rose, and half-sister of York as listed in Meriwether Lewis Clark's family record. That person is identified as Alexander, and Aleck could have been a nickname. However, this seems unlikely because he would have been under ten years old in 1808 and rather young to be hired out, unless as part of an agreement with Nancy's hire. It is possible that one of them is the Alexander listed in William Clark's April 1837 will as being given to his son William Preston Clark (this perhaps was the son of Nancy since a Nancy also was to be inherited by William P. Clark, but this is uncertain). Or it might have been a slave Clark purchased and did not inherit from his father per the terms of John Clark's 1799 will or he might have been a slave that Julia brought into the marriage that was dead or no longer with the Clark family when Clark wrote the 1820 document. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 144, 147 note 11; Meriwether Lewis Clark family record, 1853, pp. 90, 94-97; Clark statement, November 7, 1820, Clark Family Papers, Missouri Historical Society.]

Angella: Little is known about Angella. She is mentioned in Clark's December 10, 1808, letter to Jonathan regarding the estate of their late brother-in-law Charles Mynn Thruston. Angella and her two children were left to Thruston in John Clark's 1799 will. Although intended for the use of Fanny, and already in her possession either before her marriage to Thruston or upon that marriage, under the law at that time, the husband of the woman became the owner rather

than the woman even though they were clearly intended for her use and often considered the woman's. Angella and her children were in Thruston's possession in 1799 when John Clark died. In acting as the administrator for Thruston's estate, William had hired out Angella but did not remember the details. Jonathan's day book records that Angella had a child in the fall of 1803 and that she was hired out to a different person each of the three years that William was away on the expedition. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 183, 185 note 5; Jonathan Clark day book, Jonathan Clark Papers, Clark-Hite Collection, fl. 178, Filson Historical Society.]

Ben Gee/McGee: Ben was inherited by John and Benjamin O'Fallon, the grandsons of John Clark, under the terms of his 1799 will, but was under the control of William Clark, who would become his owner upon the O'Fallons reaching twenty-one years of age (1812 and 1814, respectively). Clark either acquired Ben from his nephews by late 1802 or considered him his property already since he freed Ben in December 1802. Clark did not do this in gratitude for Ben's service or for revulsion of the institution of slavery, despite stating it so when he manumitted him. Clark filed Ben's manumission document in the Jefferson County, Ky., courthouse on December 10, stating "in consideration of services rendered me and regarding perpetual involuntary servitude to be contrary to principles of natural justice." That is the only known documented enslaved person Clark freed. This was a legal maneuver using essentially boiler plate language to bring a newly freed slave into free territory – in this case Indiana – to comply with the law. One or more enslaved people might be freed but others still enslaved were sometimes also brought into free territory. At this time it wasn't unusual. The fact that the manumitted person wasn't really free was proved the next day, when Clark and Ben returned to court where Ben bound himself to Clark as a servant for thirty years. Ben was married to Venus. She was not freed, and most likely moved across the Ohio to Clarksville when Clark settled on a farm there in the spring of 1803. In exchange for indenturing himself to Clark for three decades, Ben received one dollar, all the necessities of living, and when his servitude ended on December 11, 1832, he was to receive a one-half acre lot in Clarksville, a plow, an ax, and a hoe. When Clark moved to St. Louis in June 1808 he took Ben, Venus, and other enslaved people with him. He put Ben to work on land he had purchased six miles outside of town "making hay." Venus soon joined him there. By moving into a slave territory (Upper Louisiana), Ben was again considered enslaved. In mid-1820 Ben moved to Clarksville. A letter written on June 3, to Clark (on his behalf by Samuel Gwathmey most likely) asks about his trunk being sent to him in Clarksville and mentions that he has his two other boxes. He uses the surname Gee (which sometimes also appears as McGee). In his 1853 family genealogy, Meriwether Lewis Clark lists "Old Uncle Ben" and "Old Aunt Venus," indicating that they were with the family ca. 1817 when M. Lewis Clark (b. January 1809) would have been old enough to remember them. He lists no other information other than stating they are dead. Whether Venus was alive and with Ben in 1820 isn't known; but the 1820 census for Clark Co., Ind., lists Ben McGee and two

females living next to the man renting the Clark farm on the eastern edge of Clarksville. There was a small community of Blacks living in that area known as Guinea Bottom. Why Clark released him from his indenture (or bondage), isn't known, but he did not serve the thirty-year term set forth in the 1802 document. Julia Clark died in June 1820 and perhaps Ben's situation was related to that. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 86, 99-100, 139, 141-42, 144, 167, 190, 191-92, 250, 252; Ben Gee to William Clark, June 3, 1820, Clark Family Papers, box 13, fl. 4, Missouri Historical Society; Meriwether Lewis Clark, Family Record, 1853, pp. 90, 93, Filson Historical Society.]

Chloe (also spelled Cloe): Chloe was an enslaved woman owned by Col. George Hancock brought by Julia Hancock into her marriage with William Clark that he legally owned. In his family record, Meriwether Lewis Clark listed the enslaved people and their relations that he remembered, and also provided basic information on them if he knew it. He gives no birth date for Chloe but lists "African Princess" next to born, indicating either she had been born in Africa of high birth perhaps or her mother had been the African princess. He lists her a second time, in which the reference indicates that she was the daughter of an "African negress" and Ben Finley, nephew of Uncle Ben (Gee) was her father. He also refers to her as Mammy Chloe, which usually indicates a close relationship, such as his nursemaid and nanny. Chloe almost certainly traveled west to Louisville and then St. Louis with William and Julia following their January 1808 marriage in Fincastle, Va. She was a member of the Clark party that ventured east in the fall of 1809 and returned to St. Louis in the summer of 1810. She might have been married to an enslaved man named Scott at the time, as they are mentioned together (in Clark's 1809-1810 memorandum book) as accompanying William, Julia, and their infant Meriwether Lewis Clark on that 1809-1810 trip to visit family in Kentucky and Virginia. William lists her and her son Anthony in his April 1837 will to be inherited by M. Lewis Clark. She most likely remained with the M. Lewis Clark family until her death, which Clark records as 1849 (perhaps from cholera – he records her second husband (he doesn't list a name for her first) as being Mark Wideman (not a Clark slave apparently) and that he died from cholera on May 9, 1849). He also states that Chloe had at least three children (a girl named Berry and two boys named Alexander and Anthony – there also was a child named Letty – which he provides some information on: Berry married Elisha Dickson; Anthony had the surname Symms, married a woman named Rhoda/Rhody, and died at an unspecified date near St. Louis; and Letty married a man named James Alexander. None of these spouses were Clark slaves, either. No further information is provided for Aleck/Alexander). Since Clark does not mention Scott, if he was Chloe's husband in 1809-1810, he apparently was dead or no longer with the Clarks by ca. 1820 when Clark would have remembered him or had information about him. A document dated November 7, 1820, regarding the estate of George Hancock, provides additional information. William Clark states what he owned from it, including enslaved African Americans, which included Chloe (about 33

years old, so born ca. 1787) and her children Berry (17; b. ca. 1803), Aleck (14 and a cripple; b. ca. 1806), Anthony (12; b. ca. 1808), and Letty (10; b. ca. 1810). Given these birth dates, it seems more likely that Scott (if Chloe's husband) was the father of these four children rather than Mark Wideman, whom M. Lewis Clark identified as such in his 1853 record. (Letty/Lettie and her child were to be inherited by his son George Rogers Hancock Clark.) Chloe also might have been the mother of Rachiel, the girl who drowned in the Mississippi in July 1810 on the return trip to St. Louis. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 215, 215-16 note 4, pp. 247-48 note 6; Clark Family Papers, box 14, fl. 12, Missouri Historical Society; M. Lewis Clark, Family Record, pp. 96-97.]

Cupid: In his letter to Jonathan dated December 14, 1810, William expresses concern for the "old negrows" living at the Clark farm in Clarksville, Indiana Territory. Although not mentioned by name, one of the residents might have been Cupid. She, Old York, Rose, and Harry were all listed as being over fifty years old in 1799. William states that "they must not Suffer when they have become infirm" and asks Jonathan to make sure they are provided for at William's expense. Whether they had been freed or not is not known. The bond and power of attorney books for that period apparently have not survived. There was a law that slaves older than fifty could not be freed because it was feared that they would not be able to provide for themselves and thus become a charity case and possibly suffer (as William worries), but living in Indiana, a free territory, the law there might have been different. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 251, 252-53 note 1.]

Daphny (also spelled Dafney, Daphney, and Daphne): Daphny is not mentioned by name in one of Clark's letters but is associated with his brother Edmund and a Robert Gilchrist whom he mentions in his letter of June 6, 1808. Daphny was the daughter of Rose, the wife of Old York. Old York is believed to be her stepfather. She was between twelve and fifty years old in July 1799 and had no children. She was inherited by Edmund Clark by the terms of John Clark's will. Following Edmund Clark's March 1815 death, Daphny along with her children Rose, Samuel, and Juba (not the Juba that William Clark owned), and two girls named Nancy and Harriet (or Harriot) (who are thought to be Daphny's daughters), were advertised for sale on the court house steps as part of Edmund's estate sale, along with another enslaved woman named Lucy and probably her three children (Fielding, Matilda, and John) the recently deceased Edmund owned. All the children were under thirteen years of age. Rose was purchased by Richard C. Anderson, Jr. Who purchased the others apparently was not recorded or the records are not extant, but Nancy and Harriet were the focus of a lawsuit that Dennis Fitzhugh filed in 1818 on behalf of Edmund's estate against Robert Gilchrist to have the two girls returned. Gilchrist had hired the girls from Edmund prior to the latter's March 1815 death, refused to return them, and sold them to a man named Pool/Poole in the Morganfield, Ky., area where both men lived. William Clark unsuccessfully tried to assist Fitzhugh regarding the girls' recovery given his

interest in his brother's estate. The lawsuit was successful; the jury stating the value of Nancy being \$800 and that of Harriet \$700 (by then the appraised value of the girls apparently), but Fitzhugh wasn't able to recover the girls until 1819. He then sold them to Pool for \$1,000, telling Clark in a letter dated November 16, 1819 that doing so was in the best interest of the estate, as well as Clark's. The price seems very high but more than three years had passed since the estate inventory and appraisal was performed four days after Edmund's March 11 death placed a value of \$150 on Nancy and \$120 on Harriett. Daphny was appraised for \$350. The girls' combined value was stated to be \$600 in August 1816 which was a significant increase from the March 1815 appraisal (perhaps inflation of state money?). A note in Edmund's estate file records Daphney being hired out to Gilchrist in March 1815 for four years at \$60 per year. That contract apparently was canceled if she was offered for sale at Edmund's estate sale. The information regarding the estate sale is included in Landon Jones' *William Clark and the Shaping of the West* but he doesn't cite his source. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 139 note 20; Clark Family Collection, box 14, fl. 11, Missouri Historical Society.]

Easter (also spelled Esther): This Easter was owned by Jonathan Clark. William Clark spells her name Easter, and that may be what it was, but there's a possibility that it was Esther and Easter was his spelling of her name. She is mentioned in Clark's letter of February 4, 1802, to his brother Jonathan written from Redstone Landing, Pa., while moving some of Jonathan's enslaved people and household goods to Louisville from the latter's home in Spotsylvania County, Va. Clark makes the comment that he's had little trouble regarding the slaves, and would have had none at all if "Easter prefured her Husband [James] to Frank." She is listed on Jonathan's 1811 estate inventory. She is believed to be the Easter/Esther described as being blind in one eye. Her husband was a fellow Clark slave named James [believed to be the same husband mentioned in the February 1802 letter]. In 1811 she had at least four children: Sally, Rocksey, Frank, and Charles. Jonathan's son William inherited the family [as well as an enslaved woman also named Esther] as part of the estate settlement. Jonathan was one of Jefferson County's larger slave holders. In 1803, the year following his move to Kentucky, he was taxed for 39 enslaved people. His 1811 estate inventory and appraisal list 59 enslaved people. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 40, 43 note 4.]

Easter [also spelled Easther or Esther]: This is a different person than the Easter owned by Jonathan Clark. Her husband also was named James. She is listed in John Clark's July 1799 will. She was between twelve and fifty years of age in 1799. By terms of John Clark's will, she was inherited by his grandsons John and Benjamin O'Fallon, but under the control of his executors until the O'Fallons reached twenty-one years of age. William Clark retained control of her and took her and other slaves to St. Louis with him and his bride Julia Hancock in June 1808 (as mentioned in his letter of June 6-7, 1808, to his brother Jonathan). It is possible that he acquired her from his nephews but that has not been determined. In 1799 she had no children,

but by 1808 she did, assuming Clark's reference to Easter and James's family indicates offspring. In his January 21, 1809, letter to Jonathan from St. Louis, Clark mentions the midwife attending Easter re: the birth of a child [the midwife's fee was \$6]. It is not definitely known if she was actually in labor. Clark reports that about four days earlier she "Cut a few Capers which had been repeated for Several days" to which Clark responded by giving her a "very genteel whipping" which has temporarily checked her violent disposition but now she's called for the midwife. Continuing, Clark reports that Easter and Venos have given him much trouble and he has chastised Easter three times and Venos twice, and "they appear Something better fer it." Easter and her husband James are not mentioned in Meriwether Lewis Clark's family record, indicating that he did not remember them from either his own memory or family information. This could mean that by ca. 1820 or so they were no longer with the Clarks, having been either sold, died, or Easter and perhaps children possibly turned over to one or both of the O'Fallon brothers as their property. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 131, 137 note 16, 193, 196 note 5.]

Frank: Frank is mentioned in William Clark's letter of February 4, 1802, to Jonathan, written while in route to Kentucky from Virginia. William was escorting many of Jonathan's enslaved persons and household effects to his brother's family's new home Trough Spring near his farm in Jefferson County, Ky. Clark lists the expense of buying some tools for Frank while on the trip and some difficulty due to the slave Easter preferring Frank to her husband James. Frank is listed in Jonathan's 1811 estate inventory/appraisal. He is not listed as being married (at least not to a woman owned by Jonathan). Jonathan's wife Sarah Hite Clark received Frank as part of the estate division (Jonathan died intestate). No will or estate inventory was found for Sarah Clark after her death in 1818 or in other Clark family papers that provided additional information about Frank. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 40, 43.]

Gilbert (the Elder): Gilbert was one of Jonathan Clark's enslaved persons. He almost certainly is the Gilbert mentioned in William Clark's letter of February 4, 1802, to Jonathan, written while moving many of Jonathan's slaves and household effects from Spotsylvania County, Va., to his family's new home in Jefferson County, Ky., outside Louisville. Clark notes that he purchased a coat and other items for Gilbert for \$22. This very possibly could be the Gilbert Jonathan purchased from one Daniel Johnson of Caroline County, Va., on January 20, 1802, for £136. Jonathan also owned another slave named Gilbert, noted in his December 1811 estate inventory/appraisal as Gilbert the Younger, but he is listed as a young boy which makes him an unlikely possibility to be the Gilbert mentioned in Clark's February 1802 letter. Both Gilberts are listed in the December 1811 inventory/appraisal of Jonathan's estate. Gilbert was married to Hannah (the Elder). It is not known whether Gilbert was the father of Hannah's children Alice and Maria, or if Gilbert the Younger was his and/or Hannah's child. Jonathan's January 1802 purchase of Gilbert (either the elder or younger, but the elder seems most likely) might have

been an effort to reunite a family group prior to moving to Kentucky. The elder Gilbert and Hannah and her (or their) children Alice and Maria were allotted to Eleanor Clark Temple as part of her share of her father Jonathan's estate. She and her husband Benjamin lived in Logan County, Ky., near Russellville in 1811 and the Gilbert-Hannah family unit apparently would have moved there. The younger Gilbert is described as a young boy in the inventory/appraisal and no mention is made of him being a child of Hannah or the older Gilbert. He was allotted to Jonathan Clark's son Isaac who lived at (and eventually owned) Mulberry Hill. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 40, 41-43 note 2.]

Gilbert (the Younger): Gilbert the Younger is mentioned in the bio of Gilbert the Elder as possibly being related to him, but that is not known. The Gilbert mentioned in William Clark's letter of February 4, 1802, while moving part of Jonathan's household, including most of his enslaved persons from Virginia to Kentucky, is almost certainly the elder Gilbert purchased in January 1802 from one Daniel Johnson of Caroline County, Va., in an effort to possibly reunite a family group before moving to Kentucky. In Jonathan Clark's estate inventory/appraisal of December 1811, the younger Gilbert is listed as being a young boy. Some ten years later after moving to Kentucky, he most likely would have been in his teens, and not described as a young boy. He was allotted to Jonathan's son Isaac, who lived (and eventually owned) the old Clark family farm Mulberry Hill. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 40, 41-43 note 2.]

Hannah: Hannah (the Elder) is not specifically mentioned in one of the letters, but her husband Gilbert (the Elder) is. Both were enslaved persons of Jonathan Clark and part of the group of some thirty to thirty-five enslaved persons that William Clark moved from Jonathan's Spotsylvania County, Va., farm to his Jefferson County, Ky., farm in January-February 1802. The Jefferson County, Ky. 1803 tax list records 39 slaves owned by Jonathan. How many slaves accompanied William in early 1802 to their new Kentucky residence isn't known. Some of the enslaved would have remained in Spotsylvania and accompanied Jonathan and family to Kentucky later that year once the weather was better and a house had been constructed. Also, it isn't known if Jonathan acquired more slaves once he moved to Kentucky. Hannah and Gilbert were still owned by Jonathan in November 1811 as they are listed in the estate's inventory/appraisal following his death. At that time, he owned 59 enslaved people. Hannah had two children, Alice (or Alsey) and Maria (or Mariah). It is not known whether Gilbert was the father or if the young boy listed in the inventory/appraisal listed as Gilbert the Younger was her or their child. This family group (not including the younger Gilbert) was allotted to Eleanor Clark Temple as part of her inheritance from her father's estate. If they did join the Temple family, they would have been taken to Logan County, Ky., near Russellville, where Eleanor and her husband Benjamin Temple lived. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 41-43 note 2.]

Harriet (also spelled Harriot): Harriet is not specifically mentioned in the letters but is associated with the Edmund Clark estate. Evidence indicates that Harriet and a girl named Nancy were the daughters of Daphny, who was the daughter of Rose, the wife of Old York. Brother-in-law Dennis Fitzhugh served as the state's administrator and sued Robert Gilchrist in order to recover Harriet and another enslaved female named Nancy (not the half-sister of York) who was owned by Edmund at the time of his death in March 1815. They, together with other siblings, their mother Daphny, and another mother and her children were advertised for sale on the courthouse steps on November 13, 1815, at Edmund's estate sale. All the children were listed as being under thirteen years of age. However, Harriet and Nancy were not actually there, as Gilchrist had apparently hired the girls from Edmund and was living in the Morganfield, Ky., area. He then apparently sold the girls to a man named Pool/Poole in Morganfield, despite not being their legal owner. His ownership of the girls was contested by Clark brother-in-law Dennis Fitzhugh (married to Fanny) who was the administrator of Edmund's estate. He filed suit in 1818 and the court ordered Harriet and Nancy returned. Fitzhugh recovered them by the fall of 1819. William Clark had unsuccessfully assisted in the recovery attempt while traveling east through the area in 1819. In a letter from Fitzhugh to Clark dated November 16, 1819, Fitzhugh reports that he sold Harriet and Nancy to Pool/Poole for \$1,000, that being the advantageous thing to do for the estate and also being in William's best interest. Also see the profile for Daphny for more information. [See *Dear Brother*, p. 139 note 20.]

Harry: Harry might have been one of the enslaved persons living at the Clark farm in Clarksville in December of 1810. In his letter of December 14, 1810, to his brother Jonathan, William Clark mentions not wanting the "old negrows" there to suffer, and asks Jonathan to see they are provided for and he will cover the expense. Harry was one of the slaves William Clark inherited upon the death of his father John Clark in 1799, and was listed as being over fifty years of age at that time.

James: James is mentioned in William Clark's letter to his brother Jonathan of June 6-7, 1808, while enroute from Louisville to his permanent home in St. Louis. William was bringing some of the enslaved persons he owned with him (as was Julia), and mentions that from the confluence of the Ohio and Cumberland Rivers he sent James and his wife Easter and their family and other members of the party, including York, overland with the horses, carriage and cart to Kaskaskia, Ill. From there they would continue to St. Louis. There is some uncertainty about a definite identification of James, but there is a good possibility that he is the James listed in John Clark's will inherited by William. A 1799 tax document lists James as being over fifty years of age. [A copy of the will lists an "old negro" named Jane inherited by William but that almost certainly is a misspelling and should be James based on the 1799 tax document.] By 1808 James would have been sixty or older and married to the younger Easter. She did not have any children in

1799 and Clark's reference to James and Easter's family in the June 1808 letter indicates they did by 1808. Neither he or Easter are listed in Meriwether Lewis Clark's family record which indicates they might not have been with the Clark family by ca. 1820 or so when Clark might have remembered them. Whether James had died, been sold, or freed isn't known. Easter and children legally belonged to the O'Fallon brothers per the terms of John Clark's will and by then might have been turned over to them unless William Clark had acquired them from his nephews, or might have been sold or freed (which seems doubtful). [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 131, 137 note 16.]

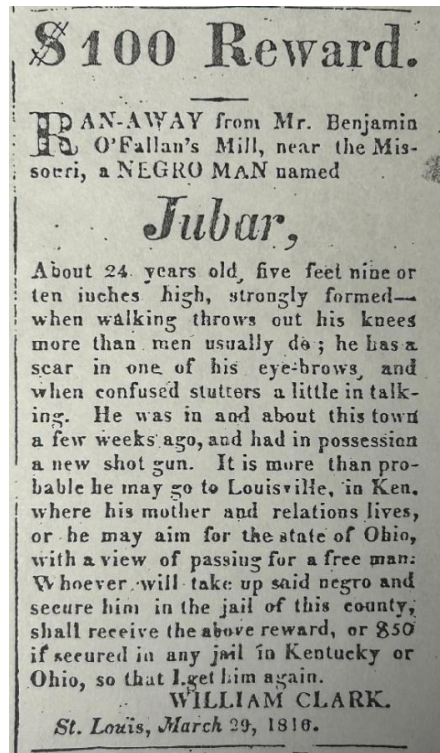
Juba (also spelled/referred to as Jubar and Jubia): Juba was inherited by William Clark by terms of John Clark's July 1799 will. He was the son of Old York and Rose. His name is African in origin. In 1799 he was under the age of twelve. An 1815 runaway slave advertisement gives his age as about 24, so he was born ca. 1791. He is first mentioned in Clark's letters to his brother Jonathan on July 21, 1808, when Clark hires out him and four other enslaved people he owns shortly after permanently settling in St. Louis. He was the full brother of Nancy and half-brother of York, Daphny, and Scipio. Like York, Scipio, Easter, and Venos, Juba was the focus of Clark's frustrations with his enslaved people, and like them, most frequently mentioned in his letters to Jonathan. Clark's March 1, 1809, letter to Jonathan mentions advertising Juba and Scipio for sale. That ad was first published in the *Missouri Gazette* of February 22, 1809. Clark goes on to report that Juba "has becom the worst fellow in town." He and a fellow slave owned by someone else broke open a desk and stole money, was whipped, ran away, and become the "greatest liar in the Territory," and Clark was determined to sell him. He wonders if he might be able to get a "tolerable price" for him in Louisville. Apparently, he couldn't, or he decided not to sell him. In 1815 Juba was working at Benjamin O'Fallon's mill near Belle Fontaine north of St. Louis when he ran away in May. O'Fallon published an ad in the *Missouri Gazette* beginning on July 22 and running to September 9, offering a \$20 reward and giving a physical description of Juba. A year later, he had not been caught but was known to be in the St. Louis area, and Clark placed an ad in the *Gazette* beginning March 30, 1816 and running to July 22, offering a \$100 reward and repeating the physical description (see the two ads below this profile). Beginning in April 1816 and running into 1817, Clark ran an ad in the Louisville *Western Courier* (and at least once in *The Louisville Correspondent* on August 5, 1816) providing the same physical description but adding Juba might be in the Louisville area since his mother (Rose) and other family (half-brother York and others) were there. If he did not go to Kentucky, Ohio was believed to be his destination. According to Landon Jones, capture was his fate. In his biography of William Clark, Jones states that Jubar was captured, sent to Louisville, and sold on the courthouse steps. No date and the source isn't given. He is not listed in Meriwether Lewis Clark's list of enslaved people in his family record, indicating that Clark did not remember him personally or the family talking about him (unless he was mistakenly listed as a man named Jupiter (with no

information) with others from that earlier period – no one named Jupiter appears in documents from that 1799-1811 period. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 139, 144, 147-48 note 11, 158, 197, 199-200 note 7, 253; *St. Louis Missouri Gazette*, February 22, 1809, July 22, 1815, March 30, 1816; *Louisville Western Courier*, June 6, 1816; Landon Jones, *William Clark and the Shaping of the West*, pp. 232, 251, 356 (note 63).]

I wish to SELL two likely NEGRO
MEN, for Cash.
WILLIAM CLARK.
St Louis, Feb 22. 18

20 DOLLARS REWARD.
Runaway on the 21st inst a negro man named JUBA, aged about 24 years, large and well built, with a scar over one of his eyes—he is very apt to stammer considerably when spoken to. Had on when he left me a new furr hat, a leather hunting shirt and grey woolen pantaloons. Any person taking and securing the said negro in any jail, or delivering him to Gov. Clark, to whom he belongs—in St Louis—or to the subscriber living at Cold Water mills, near Belle Fontaine, shall receive the above reward and all reasonable expenses paid.
Benjamin O'Fallon.
June 14th, 1815.

100 DOLLARS REWARD.
Runaway from Mr O'Fallon's mill, near the Missouri, last July, a negro man named JUBA,
about twenty four years of age, five feet nine or ten inches high, strongly formed, when walking throws out his knees more than men usually do; he has a scar in one of his eye brows, and when confused he stutters a little in talking: he was in and about this town a few weeks ago and had in his possession at that time a new shot gun. Whoever will take up the said runaway negro, and secure him in the jail of this county, shall receive the above reward.
Wm. CLARK.
March 29, 1816.



Kitt: Kitt is not mentioned in the William Clark letters but appears in one of the amplification notes. Clark acquired Kitt and several other enslaved persons from his brother George Rogers Clark in January 1800 as payment for debts the latter owed William. Kitt had been inherited by George in John Clark's July 1799 will. In it, he was described as a "yellow negro man" about 30 years old (b. ca. 1769). Although William owned Kitt, he allowed him to remain in George's service until George's death in February 1818. A document in the Clark family papers at the Missouri Historical Society grants Kitt his freedom for his faithful service to George. [See *Dear Brother*, p. 148 note 12.]

Lew (also spelled Lue and Lou): Lew is not mentioned in the William Clark letters but appears in one of the amplification notes. Clark acquired Lew and several other enslaved persons from his brother George Rogers Clark in January 1800 as payment for debts the latter owed William. Lew had been inherited by George in John Clark's July 1799 will. The 1800 transfer describes Lew as a small black man about 38 years old (b. ca. 1762). He also apparently remained with George for his benefit, but might have been staying at Jonathan Clark's farm. In May 1811 George hired Lew out to Paul Skidmore for the rest of the year to plant and tend a garden. This is believed to be the Lew that was with George during his Revolutionary War western campaigns in the Illinois country in 1778-1779 and at Fort Jefferson on the Mississippi in 1780-1781. [See *Dear Brother*, p. 148 note 12; Dennis Fitzhugh to Jonathan Clark, May 5, 1811, Jonathan Clark Papers, Clark-

Hite Collection, fl. 22; George Rogers Clark Papers, Library of Virginia, Richmond (set of negative photostats are at the Filson.)]

Lucy: Lucy is not mentioned in William Clark's letters. She apparently was owned by Charles Mynn Thruston at the time of his death in December 1800. Who had legal possession of her is not clear. Jonathan Clark, on behalf of his brother William, who was the administrator for their late brother-in-law's estate, managed her hiring out while William was away on the expedition. She was hired out to three different people, one being Edmund Clark, from 1804 to 1806.

Luke: Luke is not mentioned in the William Clark letters. He appears in the amplification note regarding the estate of Clark's late brother-in-law Charles Mynn Thruston. Thruston was killed by Luke on December 8, 1800. Luke was tried and executed. [See *Dear Brother*, p. 144, note 1.]

Nancy: Nancy was the daughter of Old York and Rose as documented by Meriwether Lewis Clark in his family record. Her known full sibling was Juba. Daphny and Scipio were half-siblings, children of Rose from a previous relationship, it is believed. York (of the Lewis and Clark Expedition) also was a half-sibling, but the son of Old York. The latter being her stepfather. Nancy was inherited by William Clark, together with her parents and brothers by the terms of John Clark's July 1799 will. She is listed as being under twelve years of age on William's 1799 tax document. She and selected others owned by Clark were taken by him to St. Louis when he and his bride Julia Hancock established their residence there in June 1808. In a letter to his brother Jonathan dated July 2, 1808 announcing their arrival in St. Louis, William reports that Nancy's child died enroute to St. Louis. (Whether Nancy was married at the time isn't known.) In his July 21, 1808 letter he reports that Nancy and four other slaves have been hired out. On January 21, 1809, he writes Jonathan reporting the birth of his son Meriwether Lewis Clark and mentions news of some of his enslaved people, including paying \$6 to the midwife for attending to Nancy. He also mentions that Nancy has given him little trouble, unlike some of his other female slaves. Her hiring out might have been long term. In October 1818 she was hired out to Charles Hempstead until June 1820 at \$10 per month. M. Lewis Clark in his family genealogy lists Nancy as being married (but doesn't provide her husband's name – perhaps he was owned by someone else) and the mother of four children: Rosella (or Rosetta), Phoebe, Harriet, and Alexander. These most likely were all born after the move to St. Louis. Only Rosella/Rosetta is listed in William Clark's April 1837 will. Whether Nancy and a couple of her children had died isn't known. M. Lewis Clark did not include that information. He does note that Alexander ran away in 1840 and became a newspaper editor in New York state. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 98 note 15, 139, 141 note 1, 158, 179-80 note 17, 191, 192 note 5, 193, 196 note 5; William Clark to Charles Hempstead, Clark Family Papers, box 13, fl. 5; Meriwether Lewis Clark Family Record.]

Nancy: This Nancy is believed to be the daughter of Daphny (the daughter of Rose but probably not Old York) and sister of Harriet. See Daphny's and Harriet's profiles for information on Nancy.

Old York: Not much is known about Old York. Initially just known as York, the "Old" qualifier was given to him when his son York (of the Lewis and Clark Expedition) grew to manhood. York was owned by John Clark and served as his body servant, just as his son York did for John's son William. When he was acquired isn't known. It is believed that Old York's wife Rose was not the mother of York of the expedition; that that union post-dated the younger York's circa 1770-1772 birth. He is believed to be the father of Nancy and Juba as listed John Clark's will and indicated in M. Lewis Clark's family record (but neither Old York or Rose are listed in the record). Old York was a trusted servant/assistant to John Clark. The latter's account book dating to the 1760s includes an entry for York as early as 1770. In late 1783, John Clark recorded giving him money and sent him to Kentucky with Jonathan Clark to prepare a homestead for the family on the outskirts of Louisville (where they would settle in March 1785). William Clark inherited Old York by terms of John Clark's July 1799 will. When he died isn't known, but it might have been prior to 1816 because only Rose is mentioned as the mother of Juba in the runaway advertisement Clark published regarding Juba beginning in the spring of that year. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 98, 139, 141, 147, 158, 253; M. Lewis Clark family record, p. 90; John Clark account book, Filson Historical Society.]

Peter: Peter is not mentioned by name in William Clark's letters but is included in an amplification note regarding his mother Venos (also spelled Venus and Venice). Ben (later known as Ben Gee or McGee) and Venos were married but it isn't known if Ben was Peter's father. By the terms of John Clark's July 1799 will, Peter was given to Edmund Clark. This might be the Peter who later was owned by Clark brother-in-law Dennis Fitzhugh (and an administrator of Edmund's estate) and apparently later by John O'Fallon. Peter was hired out in Louisville at least into the 1820s. Fitzhugh and later Charles Thruston (Fitzhugh's step son) managed the hiring out contracts. In 1827 Thruston described Peter as a fine servant who was opposed to leaving the Louisville area. [See *Dear Brother*, p. 148 note 12.]

Philes (also spelled Phyllis): Philes is mentioned in William Clark's letter of June 6-7, 1808, to his brother Jonathan. Written while traveling down the Ohio River from Louisville to his permanent home St. Louis, he visited his brother Edmund who lived briefly near the Ohio and Highland Creek in present Union County, Ky. In that letter, Clark mentions that Edmund's "girl Philes cannot live very long." Philes was not one of the enslaved persons Edmund inherited from his father in 1799 and no more information was found regarding her. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 131, 134-35 note 8.]

Priscilla (also spelled/referred to as Sillow, Sillo, Sill): Priscilla was between twelve and fifty years of age in 1799, and had one child (possibly a girl named Molly – she was under 12 in 1799). She later had a boy and a still born child as revealed in Clark’s letter of May 28, 1809. She was left in John Clark’s will to his grandsons John and Benjamin O’Fallon, but William Clark retained control or possession of her and her “present and future increase” per terms of the will and would gain legal ownership of her and her children when the O’Fallon brothers reached twenty-one years of age. In Clark’s letter to Jonathan of July 2, 1808, he reports that he has hired out most of the enslaved persons he brought with him upon permanently removing to St. Louis that June. In his July 21, 1808, letter he lists the slaves hired out. One of these people was Sillo (Priscilla). Priscilla might not have remained with Clark for long. She is not listed as one of the family slaves listed by Meriwether Lewis Clark in his family record that he remembers from his youth or knowing about. Therefore, it is possible that by circa 1820 (when M. Lewis Clark would have been eleven) she had either died, been sold, or been freed. Clark does list Molly as a family slave but provides no other information – perhaps she is the child Molly listed in William Clark’s 1799 tax list and possible daughter of Priscilla. In his letter of November 22 and 24, 1808, Clark reports that John Hinkle, who had accompanied his party to St. Louis in June of 1808, had fled town owing money; and remarks that he had hired one of his female slaves (this would have been either Priscilla or Nancy) to Hinkle as well as doing him other favors, for which Hinkle “returned us our own negrow, by Sending her home without any Clothes more than She had on” (it was a common part of hiring out agreements for the person whom hired the enslaved person to provide them with a new set of clothing upon their return). Clark mentions in his letter of January 21, 1809, that unlike some of his other female slaves, he has had “but little trouble” from Sillo. Clark continues reporting his frustrations with some of his slaves in his letter of ca. March 1, 1809, stating that Sillo is only one of three of his enslaved people that he has not been “Obliged” to physically punish. In his letter of May 28, 1809, Clark reports that “Sillow is in a Danjerous way, yesterday morning the doctor was oblige to take from her a dead Child we are all well except Sillo and her little boy he was Scaulded the other day.” [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 144, 147-48 note 11, 173, 180 note 17, 193, 197, 202, 204 note 9.]

Rachiel: In Clark’s letter of July 3, 1810, he reports that on his party’s return to St. Louis down the Ohio and up the Mississippi Rivers, “a fiew minets after [we] arrived at the Mississippi rachiel fell between the boats and Drowned.” That is the only mention of Rachiel (or Rachel) made in his letters. She almost certainly was a slave. She possibly was the daughter of Chloe and if Chloe and Scott were a couple, their daughter; or another female slave Clark owned. She is not mentioned by name in Clark’s 1809-1810 memorandum of the trip (Chloe and Scott are). Perhaps she was an additional enslaved person the Clarks received from Julia’s parents or from the Clarks; but that seems unlikely since Clark was hiring out some of his slaves because he didn’t need them. The fact that she was mentioned by name leads one to think that Rachiel was

someone Jonathan would have known by name and thus been familiar to the Clark family. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 215, 215-16 note 4, 245, 247-48 note 6.]

Robin: Robin and his family were the property of the Charles Mynn Thruston estate. William Clark was the administrator for it. While away on the expedition, his estate was managed by Jonathan Clark. His day book during the expedition years records that Robin and his family were hired out to two different people. An enslaved person named Robin is mentioned in O’Fallon-Thruston-Fitzhugh family letters in 1821 and 1823, and it is possible that this is the same Robin that was owned by the Charles Thruston estate in 1800. In April 1821 John O’Fallon reports to his stepfather Dennis Fitzhugh that he has hired Robin for one year from his brother-in-law Dr. Benjamin Farrar and sent him to Council Bluffs (a trading post and Indian agency on the Missouri where Benjamin O’Fallon was the agent). O’Fallon had removed Robin from jail where Farrar “had been obliged to commit him.” Two years later, Charles Thruston wrote his half-brother John O’Fallon that “Brother Ben’s Robin” (apparently in Louisville) is a “scoundrel” and dodged getting on a boat going to St. Louis, but “he and his dog shall be sent by the next boat.” [See Jonathan Clark Day Book, Jonathan Clark Papers, Clark-Hite Collections, fl. 178; John O’Fallon Collection, Missouri Historical Society; Charles Thruston Papers, fl. 5, Filson Historical Society.]

Rose: Rose was inherited by William Clark by the terms of John Clark’s July 1799 will. She was the wife (believed to be a second wife) of Old York. The latter was most likely a second marriage for her. Research indicates that her son Scipio (also Scippio, Seppo, or Sepp) and daughter Daphny were from a previous relationship; but her children Nancy and Juba were hers and Old York’s. York, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition is believed to have been a step son. Little else is known about Rose. She would have lived at the Clark farm Mulberry Hill on the outskirts of Louisville while John and Ann Clark resided there and after William Clark inherited the farm in 1799. When Clark moved across the Ohio to Clarksville, Ind., in the spring of 1803 she might have moved there together with other enslaved people and the recently freed but now indentured Ben. Clark makes a reference to elderly Blacks living at the farm in 1810; perhaps Rose was one of them. In 1816-1817 he advertises in the Louisville *Western Courier* and *The Louisville Correspondent* regarding the slave Juba running away from the St. Louis area and perhaps going to Louisville where his mother and other family lived. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 98 note 15, 139 note 20, 141 note 1, 147 note 11, 158 note 6, 200 note 7, 252-53 note 1, 270, 272 note 8; Louisville *Western Courier*, June 6, 1816.]

Samuel: Samuel is not mentioned by William Clark in his letters to his brother Jonathan, but is mentioned in the amplification note providing information on his mother Daphny (see Daphny’s bio). Samuel’s siblings were Rose and Juba and probably Nancy and Harriet. [See *Dear Brother*, p. 138-39 note 20.]

Scipio (also spelled/referred to as Scippio, Sippo, Seppo, Sep, Sip, Pipo): Scipio was the son of Rose, but is not believed to have been the son of Old York. Like many enslaved men, he was given a classical Greek or Roman name, in this instance that of the Roman general and statesman Scipio Africanus. He along with Juba and York are Clark's male slaves most often mentioned by him in his letters to Jonathan for causing him frustration and trouble. Scipio was inherited by Edmund Clark by the terms of John Clark's July 1799 will. He was between twelve and fifty years old at the time. Edmund Clark lived in Virginia until 1802 when he moved to Jefferson County, Ky., and it is likely that Scipio and the other enslaved people Edmund inherited remained in Kentucky under the supervision of William Clark. Edmund purchased the mill tract of Mulberry Hill from William in 1803, and surviving records document Scipio working at the mill, keeping accounts of grain ground and whiskey due (which might indicate he was perhaps in his 20s or older in 1799). It is likely this is what he was doing when William owned the mill. By mid-1807, Scipio and Edmund had had a serious falling out, and Edmund sold him. The reason for it isn't known. In a July 17-18, 1807 letter, Edmund refers to "S" (meaning Scipio it is believed) as the "vilest creature that exists on the face of the earth" and that he is "determined to ship" the "vilian." William was unaware of this and Edmund's desire for the Clark family to have nothing to do with Scipio. Perhaps thinking he was helping to reunite some of the Black Clark "family" (as often referred to by slaveholders), William purchased Scipio from a Mr. Howell (possibly Daniel Howell of Louisville). Upon learning of Edmund's opinion regarding Scipio, William expressed his dismay and together with his own trouble experienced with Scipio, tried unsuccessfully to sell him, mentioning in a letter to Jonathan his determination to do so as long as he could recoup the \$400 he paid for him (which seems a low price for an adult male slave with experience keeping accounts). William advertised "two likely NEGRO MEN" for sale in the *Missouri Gazette* in the winter and spring of 1809. Although unnamed, his letters to Jonathan identify them as Scipio and Juba. Scipio remained in Clark's possession for the next decade until committing suicide on April 18, 1819, as reported in a letter of *Missouri Gazette* editor Joseph Charless. In it, Charless accused his old friend Clark of being an "ungrateful master" who was going to send Scipio to New Orleans to be sold. Rather than suffer that dreaded fate, Scipio "shot himself through the head." Even though only ten years old at the time, the incident must have made quite an impression on young M. Lewis Clark (who was with his mother and siblings visiting family in Louisville at the time). He listed Scipio among the Clark family slaves in his 1853 family record but provided no other information. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 154, 158-59 note 6, 161, 167, 190 note 4, 192-93, 197, 199 note 7; Edmund Clark to Jonathan Clark, December 10, 1807, Jonathan Clark Papers, Clark-Hite Collection, fl. 16; Edmund Clark Papers, fl. 7, Filson Historical Society; *Missouri Gazette*, April 9, 1809; Landon Jones, *William Clark and the Shaping of the West*, pp. 171, 251, 357 (note 110); Meriwether Lewis Clark family record, 1853, p. 90.]

I wish to SELL two likely NEGRO
MEN, for Cash.
WILLIAM CLARK.
St Louis, Feb 22. 1 f

Scott: Scott is not mentioned by name in Clark's letters to Jonathan, but he and Chloe (who possibly was his wife) were members of the family party that traveled east to Kentucky and Virginia in the fall of 1809 and returned to St. Louis in the summer of 1810. Clark's 1809 journal of the trip does name them. M. Lewis Clark, in his family record, provides information about Chloe and her husband Mark Wideman, but does not mention Scott. The impression given is that Scott and Chloe were a married couple, perhaps brought into the marriage by Julia. If so, Scott was perhaps dead or no longer with the Clark family by the time M. Lewis Clark was old enough to remember those people enslaved by the Clarks. Landon Jones, in *William Clark and the Shaping of the West* states that Chloe and Scott were married and that Rachel was their child but does not cite sources that prove that. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 215, 215-16 note 4.]

Tenar (also spelled Tener, Tenor, Tanar, Tanner): Tenar was Venos's child, inherited by George Rogers Clark in John Clark's July 1799 will. Ben (later identified with the surname Gee or McGee) might have been his father since he was married to Venos, but paternity isn't known. In 1800 Tenar and his mother Venos and sibling Frankey/Franie were acquired by William Clark in compensation for the work/expenses William had done and incurred, respectively, in helping his brother with his legal and financial affairs. In 1799 Tenar was under twelve years of age. He was one of Clark's enslaved people listed in Clark's July 21, 1808 letter to his brother Jonathan as being hired out. Nothing more is known of him. He is not listed in Meriwether Lewis Clark's family record, indicating that Clark didn't remember him or heard stories about him. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 144, 147 note 11.]

Venos (also spelled Venus and Venice): Venus was one of John Clark's enslaved people inherited by George Rogers Clark by the terms of John's July 1799 will. In 1799 she was between twelve and fifty years of age. She was married to Ben [later Ben Gee or McGee]. Her children in 1799 were Peter, Frankey (also spelled Franie), and Tenar (also spelled Tener, Tanar, Tenor, or Tanner). She had at least one more child, Gilbert, after 1799, according to Meriwether Lewis Clark's family genealogy. William Clark acquired her from his brother George in January 1800 as compensation for his time and expenses devoted to George's legal and financial affairs (he acquired Lew and Kitt at the same time for the same reasons). While away on the expedition Jonathan Clark managed William's affairs, including business regarding his enslaved

people. Jonathan recorded in his day book, that in January 1805 eight yards of cloth were purchased for Venus; and that on April 22, 1805, he paid \$2 for delivery of a child. She and her family were among William's enslaved people taken to St. Louis in June 1808 when he and Julia permanently settled there. Venos worked as a cook for the family. She is named as one of his enslaved people that caused him difficulty and whom received physical punishment (see letters to Jonathan dated July 21, 1808 and January 21, 1809). In his November 22 and 24, 1808 letter to Jonathan, William reports he has settled Ben and Venos on land he had purchased six miles west of St. Louis. Whether she caused trouble or not, Clark retained her with the family long enough for his eldest son M. Lewis Clark to remember her and list her in his family genealogy. [See *Dear Brother*, pp. 100, 144, 147 note 11, 148 note 12, 167, 193; Jonathan Clark Day Book, Jonathan Clark Papers, Clark-Hite Collection, fl. 178; Meriwether Lewis Clark family record.]

York: York was born into slavery approximately 1770-1772; owned by John Clark of Caroline County, Va. His father also was named York, and served as a trusted body servant to John Clark. His birth mother is unidentified, but most likely was owned by John Clark also, since father and son both were owned by him. It is believed that Rose was York's step mother. As a boy, York was assigned to William Clark as his companion, playmate, and servant. This pairing continued into adulthood and included traveling companion. As he grew to manhood, his father became known as Old York. The Clark family moved to Jefferson County, Ky., in 1784-1785, settling on a farm on the outskirts of Louisville christened Mulberry Hill in March 1785. Here on the frontier, York grew to maturity, learning and becoming experienced in the skills necessary for frontier living and defense, including handling firearms, hunting, river and ground travel, and other skills. In 1792 when William Clark joined the army (and possibly even before when he participated in at least two militia campaigns against Native Americans) it is likely that York was with him during some of his service and travels as his servant (officers were authorized to have one and were compensated for their rations). The earliest known reference to York might be in a letter William wrote his sister Fanny on June 1, 1795, from Camp Greeneville, Ohio, while a lieutenant in the army. He references his "Boy" arriving there a few days ago. This might have been York, and would seem to indicate that he was traveling between Louisville and the Ohio frontier carrying family correspondence and other items. The level of trust, competence, and degree of independence (although York most likely would have been with a group) is evident. York was William's primary servant, running errands for Clark and conducting at least some rudimentary business tasks and supervision of Clark nephews. While the men had grown up together and had a close relationship, they never were friends. Theirs was a master-slave, owner-property relationship as proven in their post-expedition falling out and Clark's treatment of York. As long as York fulfilled his duties as a slave and obeyed Clark's orders and wishes, the relationship apparently proceeded without known difficulties, being somewhat symbiotic, relying on each other to varying degrees.

York's life, as that of so many enslaved people, might have gone largely unrecorded and unnoted except for his participation in the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1803-1806. Appointed by Thomas Jefferson to lead the undertaking, Meriwether Lewis invited his friend and former army commander to join him as co-captain on the journey. Thus was created one of the greatest exploring partnerships in history. Initially tasked with recruiting local woodsmen and hunters to supplement others already serving in the army for this exploration into the largely unknown American West, Clark set about his assignment and recruited seven of the nine recruits enlisted at the Falls of the Ohio (Lewis brought two recruits with him). In actuality, there was a tenth – York. As Clark's property, he most likely had no say in whether he would go on this trip across the West to the Pacific and back. He went where and did what his master wished. And Clark knew that York had the abilities and skills necessary for the journey, including making camp life for him and Lewis easier. York had performed these tasks on previous travels; this was just going to be the trip of all trips. And he did everything asked and expected of him on a journey that covered some 10,000 miles from the Falls of the Ohio to the Pacific and back. An additional positive not anticipated by the captains was the reaction of Native American tribes that hadn't before seen a person with black skin. The expedition journals record some of their reactions, primarily among the Arikara, Mandan, Hidatsa, Shoshone, Salish (or Flathead), and Nez Perce. His celebrity earned him the name Big Medicine [Medicine] among the Arikara, Mandan, and Hidatsa and helped successfully advance the expedition. He was believed to be more spiritually powerful than his white companions because of his uniqueness. His physical stature, strength, agility, hair (likened to that of the bison) together with his very black skin (as noted by a French-Canadian trader who met him) made him something of a sensation. And York reveled in it at first, telling some of his admirers that he'd been a wild animal that Clark had captured and semi-tamed, but that he still liked to eat little children. When Clark learned of this he ordered York to stop it, knowing that awe could turn to fear and then hostility, which could lead to violence and perhaps casualties and an end to the undertaking. But York's reaction to this attention and admiration is easily understood. From being considered inferior to his White "betters," and something of an invisible presence next to his master, to being the focus of attention and even awe was not only amazing to him but possibly gave him a different perception of his place in this world of White superiority versus Black inferiority; of one race owning the other and deciding their treatment and fate. This likely revelation would have post-expedition consequences in York and Clark's relationship and for York's life.

York, the captains, and a few other Corps of Discovery veterans along with two Indian delegations (Osage and Mandan) arrived in Louisville on November 5, 1806, just over three years since the nucleus of the Corps (captains, York, the Nine Young Men from Kentucky (as Clark dubbed them), and Lewis's Newfoundland dog Seaman) had set off down the Ohio and into history on October 26, 1803. If York thought life would return to its pre-expedition status,

or his service on the journey would be rewarded in some way, his expectations were disappointed. Living in Louisville or across the river in Clarksville, Ind., he would be near his wife and possibly children, with periodic trips of weeks or perhaps months a return to life before the expedition. Whether he expected anything in the way of a reward for his steady and important service on the journey isn't known. If Clark had promised him his freedom as a reward – as some writers have theorized – Clark would have done so. He was an honorable man and it is very unlikely he would have gone back on such a promise. York, as Clark's servant and property, received no official compensation for his service. He was an *ex officio* member and any reward he received was up to Clark. He did receive tailor made clothes and boots but nothing more than that is known, perhaps not even a thank you. The compensated members of the Corps received double pay and land grants.

No rift in the men's relationship of master and enslaved servant developed until June of 1808 when Clark relocated to St. Louis. This town on the edge of the frontier was to be his new home due to the federal positions he'd been appointed to – brigadier general of the Upper Louisiana territorial militia and chief Indian agent. To this new home he brought his bride Julia Hancock and some of his enslaved people, including York. This was a different situation than past absences from Louisville. This was a permanent relocation. And, William Clark was bringing his new wife with him. York, who was one of the few married men on the expedition, was not. In one of those many tragedies of slavery, York's wife (and possibly children) was owned by someone else. Whether Clark attempted to acquire her so that she too would be with York in St. Louis – just like Julia was with William – isn't known. She remained in Louisville and York understandably wasn't happy. By November of 1808 he was voicing his unhappiness about the separation and requesting Clark either hire him out or sell him to someone in Louisville so he could be near his wife. By December he stated he deserved to be freed for his past services, including those on the expedition. Clark disagreed and said he couldn't afford to free him and that he didn't think his services had been so great as to deserve to be freed. Perhaps for the first time in their relationship, York let his displeasure with and defiance of his master's wishes be known. Clark did allow York to visit Louisville that fall of 1808 but York overstayed the time Clark had allotted, and weeks became months. At this point an angry Clark threatened to have York sold "down the river" to New Orleans, one of the worst fates for a slave; sale to the Deep South almost assured they would never see their loved ones again and their life expectancy decreased with the nature of the work on the cotton, sugar cane, and rice plantations. However, Clark never took that final step. Perhaps he had written in anger and frustration and didn't really intend to do that or his family counseled against it. Their essentially lifelong relationship perhaps prevented this final severing. When York returned to St. Louis in the spring of 1809 his unhappiness and resentment of being there led to a further deterioration in the two men's relationship, with Clark actually meting out at least one beating. York also spent some

time in jail, but whether Clark placed him there or he was confined for another reason and Clark then got him out, isn't known (early St. Louis history includes a story of York telling tales of the expedition in St. Louis taverns in exchange for drinks so perhaps public drunkenness caused him to be jailed). In an extraordinary series of letters from William to his brother Jonathan in 1808-1809 York's experience is chronicled. York's behavior varied depending on punishment meted out apparently, and Clark reports how good it was but then later how he would be surly and uncooperative. For York's part, he refused to abandon and forget about his wife in the Louisville area and voiced his unhappiness and resentment and belief that he deserved his freedom. Clark was angry and decided to wash his hands of York. In late August he informed Jonathan that he was sending York to Wheeling as part of a boat crew and upon reaching Louisville on the return trip, he wanted him to remain there and be hired out to a severe master to hopefully teach him a lesson and convince him that life in St. Louis with him was preferable or sell him. Whether the latter threat was serious isn't known. York was not sold but he was hired out to at least unkind masters. For at least part of the time in Louisville, where he remained until at least November 1815 when the documentary evidence ends, he drove a wagon hauling freight. How much time he was able to spend with his wife and possibly children and other family isn't known. In May 1811, Clark's nephew John O'Fallon reported that York was greatly distressed and miserable, not only with his poor relationship with Clark but because his wife's owner was preparing to move to the Natchez, Miss., area (which actually might have been Nashville, Tenn.). Nothing more is known of York until Washington Irving's 1832 interview with Clark. In that discussion, the subject of York arose, and Clark reported that he had freed York and set him up in a drayage business between Nashville and Richmond (probably Tenn., southeast of Nashville), but that York was lazy, he didn't take care of the horses, the business failed, he hired himself out, and died of cholera while trying to return to him (Clark). Is this true? Clark had no reason to lie and contemporary documents prove that York had experience as a wagon driver. Clark also had Nashville connections that could have kept him informed of how York fared and his death. When would York have been freed and moved to Tennessee? If York was approximately the same age as Clark, he would have been nearing fifty years of age by 1820 to 1822. There were statutes prohibiting the manumission of slaves after age fifty, believing they were entering advanced age and wouldn't be able to support themselves and thus become charity cases. Clark's wife Julia died in June of 1820. Cholera was in the Tennessee and Kentucky region at this time, especially in 1821 and 1822. So did Clark free York by approximately 1820 as he neared fifty and perhaps related to inheritance from his late wife and her father (who died shortly after her). So was York, one of the most famous African Americans of the 19th century; the first African American known to have crossed what would become the United States from Atlantic to Pacific, consigned to an unmarked pauper's grave by circa 1822? That probably never will be known. And, why did he go south to Tennessee, deeper into slave territory, away from his family still in Louisville and his base of

support, and away from free territory just across the Ohio River once he was freed? This was truly unheard of. The conclusion points to being near his wife. If her owner moved to the Nashville area instead of Natchez, this highly unusual move is explained. York was determined to be near his wife despite all the dangers and hardships such a move presented. If this was indeed the case, York's love and loyalty to her and the sacrifice he made in losing his situation high in enslaved status by forsaking his relationship with Clark, the hardships and unhappiness that ensued, and his final tragic end in Tennessee is that of romantic legend. His determination to speak up for what he believed he deserved, his freedom and the right to be near his wife and family, and to defy his owner and suffer his wrath and alienation and the consequences elevates York to heroic status beyond his expedition experience for his resolve and courage in speaking up for what he believed he had earned and deserved despite what it cost him. [There are a variety of biographical sources on York. The new edition of *In Search of York: The Slave Who Went to the Pacific with Lewis and Clark* by Robert Betts, updated with an epilogue by James J. Holmberg is the most comprehensive and up to date source. Clark's letters in *Dear Brother* document his and York's alienation in 1808-1809, and can be viewed on the Filson's online digital resource "The First American West." Articles regarding York also are in print and online in *We Proceeded On*, the journal of the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance. These are just several useful sources for additional information on York.]