

**SOCRATIC SEMINAR RUBRIC: SLAVERY AND  
THOMAS JEFFERSON’S LEGACY**

(Please see assessment section in the lesson plan.)

<b>Conduct</b>	Demonstrates respect for learning process; has patience with differing opinions and complexity; asks peers for clarification; attempts to involve others; moves forward into new concepts; not disruptive	Generally shows composure but may display impatience with contradictory or confusing ideas; not patient while waiting to speak; comments frequently but does not encourage others to participate; attempts to move discussion forward; shows a desire to contribute responsibly	Participates verbally but shows impatience with seminar process; may make insightful comments but is either too forceful or too shy and does not contribute to the progress of seminar; tends to debate not discuss; may be unfocused due to depth/length of seminar	Displays little/no respect for the seminar process; argumentative; takes advantage of or causes distractions; uses inappropriate language; challenges individuals rather than speaking to ideas; writes personal notes
<b>Speaking</b>	Speaks to all participants; avoids talking too much; can be heard by all	Addresses majority of comments to peers; does not try to say “everything” while speaking; responds to questions voluntarily; tries to speak louder when asked to do so	Speaks directly to leader; speaks too softly and needs to be reminded; routinely lapses into slang or substandard usage; speaks only with prompting and has no sustainable point	Reluctant to speak when called on or passes; cannot be heard; shows no desire to contribute verbally
<b>Reasoning</b>	Understands questions before answering; cites evidence; provides logical and insightful comments; makes connections between ideas; resolves apparent contradictory ideas; considers others’ viewpoints not only own; avoids bad logic	Demonstrates some reflection on concept but not mastery; makes limited connections with ideas of others; ideas interesting enough that others respond to them	Limited reflection on concept; may overlook important points thus leading to faulty logic; may be accurate on minor points while missing main concept; contributes opinions that have not factual support; has some difficulty in formulating understandable comments	Makes illogical comments; says no more than “I agree”; ignores previous comments and seminar direction; uses humor to avoid serious thinking
<b>Listening</b>	Listens for opportunities to respond; does not overlook details; takes notes/writes questions; builds on discussion; points out flawed reasoning; overcomes distractions	Generally attentive and focused; responds thoughtfully to ideas/questions raised; may be too absorbed in own thoughts to hear others’ comments; may write some notes but not consistently	Responds only to ideas that are personally interesting; asks for repetition and rephrasing of questions; takes limited notes; easily distracted	Not attentive to others; exhibits negative body language; takes no notes
<b>Preparation</b>	Understands major concepts; has student prepared notes and questions	Demonstrates knowledge of facts; has highlighted printouts and prepared simple questions	Confused about key concepts; may have some printouts	Clearly unprepared; has no notes, printouts, or questions

## SELECTION ONE

From Monticello image gallery :

<http://classroom.monticello.org/kids/gallery/image/227/sale-of-monticello-ad/>

### **EXECUTOR'S SALE.**

**W**ILL be sold on the premises, on the first day of January, 1827, that well known and valuable estate called Poplar Forest, lying in the counties of Bedford and Campbell, the property of Thomas Jefferson, dec. within eight miles of Lynchburg and three of New London; also about 70 likely and valuable negroes, with stock, crops, &c. The terms of sale will be accommodating and made known previous to the day.

On the fifteenth of January, at Monticello, in the county of Albemarle; the whole of the residue of the personal property of Thomas Jefferson, dec., consisting of 130 valuable negroes, stock, crop, &c. household and kitchen furniture. The attention of the public is earnestly invited to this property. The negroes are believed to be the most valuable for their number ever offered at one time in the State of Virginia. The household furniture, many valuable historical and portrait paintings, busts of marble and plaister of distinguished individuals; one of marble of Thomas Jefferson, by Caracci, with the pedestal and truncated column on which it stands; a polygraph or copying instrument used by Thomas Jefferson, for the last twenty-five years; with various other articles curious and useful to men of business and private families. The terms of sale will be accommodating and made known previous to the day. The sales will be continued from day to day until completed. These sales being unavoidable, it is a sufficient guarantee to the public, that they will take place at the times and places appointed.

THOMAS J. RANDOLPH,

Nov. 3.

51—tds

Executor of Th. Jefferson, dec.

## SELECTION TWO

### **Last Will and Testament**

**Below is an excerpt from the transcription of Thomas Jefferson's last will and testament. You can find the entire text of the will at the Monticello website at <http://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/last-will-and-testament>.**

I give to my good, affectionate, and faithful servant Burwell his freedom, and the sum of three hundred Dollars to buy necessaries to commence his trade of painter and glazier, or to use otherwise as he pleases. I give also to my good servants John Hemings and Joe Fosset their freedom at the end of one year after my death: and to each of them respectively all the tools of their respective shops or callings: and it is my will that a comfortable log house be built for each of the three servants so emancipated on some part of my lands convenient to them with respect to the residence of their wives, and to Charlottesville and the University, where they will be mostly employed, and reasonably convenient also to the interest of the proprietor of the lands; of which houses I give the use of one, with a curtilage of an acre to each, during his life or personal occupation thereof.

I give also to John Hemings the services of his two apprentices, Madison and Eston Hemings, until their respective ages of twenty one years, at which period respectively, I give them their freedom. and I humbly and earnestly request of the legislature of Virginia a confirmation of the bequest of freedom to these servants, with permission to remain in this state where their families and connections are, as an additional instance of the favor, of which I have recieved so many other manifestations, in the course of my life, and for which I now give them my last, solemn, and dutiful thanks.

### **SELECTION 3**

*Contains the memoirs of Israel Jefferson, Madison Hemings, and Peter Fossett:*

#### **1868 MEMOIRS OF ISRAEL JEFFERSON**

"Life among the Lowly, No. 3," Pike County (Ohio) Republican, December 25, 1873.

An online copy of this work can also be found at the PBS website for the documentary, "Jefferson's Blood" at:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/jefferson/cron/1873israel.html>

I was born at Monticello, the seat of Thos. Jefferson, third President of the United States, December 25--Christmas day in the morning. The year, I suppose was 1797. My earliest recollections are the exciting events attending the preparations of Mr. Jefferson and other members of his family on their removal to Washington D.C., where he was to take upon himself the responsibilities of the Executive of the United States for four years.

My mother's name was Jane. She was a slave of Thomas Jefferson's and was born and always resided at Monticello till about five years after the death of Mr. Jefferson. She was sold, after his death, by the administrator, to a Mr. Joel Brown, and was taken to Charlottesville, where she died in 1837. She was the mother of thirteen children, all by one father, whose name was Edward Gillet. The children's names were Barnaby, Edward, Priscilla, Agnes, Richard, James, Fanny, Lucy, Gilly, Israel, Moses, Susan, and Jane--seven sons and six daughters. All these children, except myself, bore the surname of Gillett. The reason for my name being called Jefferson will appear in the proper place.

After Mr. Jefferson had left his home to assume the duties of the office of President, all became quiet again in Monticello. But as he was esteemed by both whites and blacks as a very great man, his return home, for a brief period, was a great event. His visits were frequent, and attended with considerable ceremony. It was a time looked forward to with great interest by his servants, for when he came home many of them, especially the leading ones, were sure to receive presents from his hands. He was re-elected President in 1804, and took his seat for the second term in 1805. Of course, his final term dosed in March 1809, when he was succeeded by James Madison. At that time I was upwards of twelve years of age.

About the time Mr. Jefferson took his seat as President for the second term, I began the labors of life as a waiter at the family table, and till Mr. J. died was retained in Monticello and very near his person. When about ten years of age, I was employed as postillion. Mr. Jefferson rode in a splendid carriage drawn by four horses. He called the carriage the landau. It was sort of a double chaise. When the weather was pleasant the occupants could enjoy the open air; when it was rainy, they were protected from it by the dosing of the covering, which fell back from the middle. It was splendidly ornamented with silver trimmings, and, taken altogether, was the nicest affair in those aristocratic regions. The harness was made in Paris, France, silver mounted, and quite in keeping with the elegant carriage. The horses were well matched, and of a bay color. I am now

speaking of the years of my boyhood and early manhood. My brother Gilly, being older than I was, rode the near wheel horse, while I was mounted on the near leader. In course of time, Mr. Jefferson rode less ostentatiously, and the leaders were left off. Then but one rider was needed. Sometimes brother Gilly acted as postillion; at other times I was employed. We were both retained about the person of our master as long as he lived. Mr. Jefferson died on the 4th day of July, 1826, when I was upwards of 29 years of age. His death was an affair of great moment and uncertainty to us slaves, for Mr. Jefferson provided for the freedom of 7 servants only: Sally, his chambermaid, who took the name of Hemings, her four children-- Beverly, Harriet, Madison and Eston--John Hemmings, brother to Sally, and Burrell Colburn [Burwell Colbert], an old and faithful body servant. Madison Hemings is now a resident of Ross county, Ohio, whose history you gave in the Republican of March 13, 1873. All the rest of us were sold from the auction block, by order of Jefferson Randolph, his grandson and administrator. The sale took place in 1829, three years after Mr. Jefferson's death.

I was purchased by Thomas Walker Gilmer, I married Mary Ann Colter, a slave, by whom I had four children--Taliola (a daughter), Banobo (a son), Susan and John. As they were born slaves they took the usual course of most others in the same condition of life. I do not know where they now are, if living; but the last I heard of them they were in Florida and Virginia. My wife died, and while a servant of Mr. Gilmer, I married my present wife, widow Elizabeth Randolph, who was then mother to ten children. Her maiden name was Elizabeth Farrow. Her mother was a white woman named Martha Thackey. Consequently, Elizabeth, (my present wife) was free-born. She supposes that she was born about 1793-1794. Of her ten children, only two are living-- Julia, her first born, and wife of Charles Barnett, who live on an adjoining farm, and Elizabeth, wife of Henry Lewis, who resides within one mile of us.

My wife and I have lived together about thirty-five years. We came to Cincinnati, Ohio, where we were again married in conformity to the laws of this State. At the time we were first married I was in bondage; my wife free. When my first wife died I made up my mind I would never live with another slave woman. When Governor Gilmer was elected a representative to Congress, he desired to have me go on to Washington with him. But I demurred, I did not refuse, of course, but I laid before him my objections with such earnestness that he looked me in the face with his piercing eye, as if balancing in his mind whether to be soft or severe, and said,

"Israel, you have served me well; you are a faithful servant; now what will you give me for your freedom?"

"I reckon I will give you what you paid years ago--\$500," I replied.

"How much will you give to bind the bargain?" he asked.

"Three hundred dollars," was my ready answer.

"When will you pay the remainder?"

"In one and two years."

And on these terms the bargain was concluded, and I was, for the first time, my own man, and almost free, but not quite, for it was against the laws of Virginia for a freed slave to remain in the State beyond a year and a day. Nor were the colored people not in slavery freed they were nominally so. When I came to Ohio I considered myself wholly free, and not till then.

And here let me say, that my good master, Governor Gilmer, was killed by the explosion of the gun Peacemaker, on board the Princeton, in 1842 or 1843, and had I gone to Washington with him it would have been my duty to keep very close to his person, and probably I would have been killed also, as others were.

I was bought in the name of my wife. We remained in Virginia several years on sufferance. At last we made up our minds to leave the confines of slavery and emigrate to a free State. We went to Charlottesville Court House, in Albemarle county, for my free papers. When there, the clerk, Mr. Garret, asked me what surname I would take, I hesitated, and he suggested that it should be Jefferson, because I was born at Monticello and had been a good and faithful servant to Thomas Jefferson. Besides, he said, it would give me more dignity to be called after so eminent a man. So I consented to adopt the surname Jefferson, and have been known by it ever since.

When I came to Cincinnati, I was employed as a waiter in a private house, at ten dollars a month for the first month. From that time on I received \$20, till I went on board a steamboat, where I got higher wages still. In time, I found myself in receipt of \$50 per month, regularly, and sometimes even more. I resided in Cincinnati about fourteen years, and from thence came on to the farm I am now on, in Pebble township, on Brushy Fork of Pee Pee creek. Have been here about sixteen years.

Since my residence in Ohio I have several times visited Monticello. My last visit was in the fall of 1866. Near there I found the same Jefferson Randolph, whose service as administrator I left more than forty years ago, at Monticello. He had grown old, and was outwardly surrounded by the evidence of former ease and opulence gone to decay. He was in poverty He had lost, he told me, \$80,000 in money by joining the South in rebellion against the government. Except his real estate, the rebellion stripped him of everything, save one old blind mule. He said that had he taken the advice of his sister, Mrs. Cooleridge [Ellen Coolidge], gone to New York, and remained there during the war, he could have saved the bulk of his property. But he was a rebel at heart, and chose to go with his people. Consequently, he was served as others had been--he had lost all his servants and nearly all his personal property of every kind. I went back to Virginia to find the proud and haughty Randolph in poverty at Edge Hill, within four miles of Monticello, where he was bred and born. Indeed, I then realized more than ever before, the great changes which time brings about in the affairs and circumstances of life.

Since I have been in Ohio I have learned to read and write, but my duties as a laborer would not permit me to acquire much of an education. But such as I possess I am truly thankful, and consider what education I have as a legitimate fruit of freedom.

The private life of Thomas Jefferson, from my earliest remembrances, in 1804, till the day of his death, was very familiar to me. For fourteen years I made the fire in his bedroom and private chamber, cleaned his office, dusted his books, run of errands and attended him about home. He

used to ride out to his plantations almost every fair day, when at home, but unlike most other Southern gentlemen in similar circumstances, unaccompanied by any servant. Frequently gentlemen would call upon him on business of great importance, whom I used to usher into his presence, and sometimes I would be employed in burnishing or doing some other work in the room where they were. On such occasions I used to remain; otherwise I retired and left the gentlemen to confer together alone. In those times I minded but little concerning the conversations which took place between Mr. Jefferson and his visitors. But I well recollect a conversation he had with the great and good Lafayette, when he visited this country in 1824 and 1825, as it was of personal interest to me and mine. General Lafayette and his son George Washington, remained with Mr. Jefferson six weeks, and almost every day I took them out to a drive.

On the occasion I am now about to speak of, Gen. Lafayette and George were seated in the carriage with him. The conversation turned upon the condition of colored people--the slaves. Lafayette spoke indifferently; sometimes I could scarcely understand him. But on this occasion my ears were eagerly taking in every sound that proceeded from the venerable patriot's mouth.

Lafayette remarked that he thought that the slaves ought to be free; that no man could rightly hold ownership in his brother man; that he gave his best services to and spent his money in behalf of the Americans freely because he felt that they were fighting for a great and noble principle--the freedom of mankind) that instead of all being free a portion were held in bondage (which seemed to grieve his noble heart); that it would be mutually beneficial to masters and slaves if the latter were educated, and so on. Mr. Jefferson replied that he thought the time would come when the slaves would be free, but did not indicate when or in what manner they would get their freedom. He seemed to think that the time had not then arrived. To the latter proposition of Gen. Lafayette, Mr. Jefferson in part assented. He was in favor of teaching the slaves to learn to read print; that to teach them to write would enable them to forge papers, when they could no longer be kept in subjugation.

This conversation was very gratifying to me, and I treasured it up in my heart.

I know that it was a general statement among the older servants at Monticello, that Mr. Jefferson promised his wife, on her death bed, that he would not again marry. I also know that his servant, Sally Hemmings, (mother to my old friend and former companion at Monticello, Madison Hemmings,) was employed as his chamber-maid, and that Mr. Jefferson was on the most intimate terms with her; that, in fact, she was his concubine. This I know from my intimacy with both parties, and when Madison Hemmings declares that he is a natural son of Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and that his brothers Beverly and Eston and sister Harriet are of the same parentage, I can as conscientiously confirm his statement as any other fact which I believe from circumstances but do not positively know.

I think that Mr. Jefferson was 84 years of age when he died. He was hardly ever sick, and till within two weeks of his death he walked erect without a staff or cane. He moved with the seeming alertness and sprightliness of youth.

## **1873 THE MEMOIRS OF MADISON HEMINGS**

"Life among the Lowly, No. 1," Pike County (Ohio) Republican, March 13, 1873. Madison Hemings memoirs can also be found on the Monticello/Getting The Word website at:

<http://www.monticello.org/getting-word/people/madison-hemings>

I never knew of but one white man who bore the name of Hemings; he was an Englishman and my great grandfather. He was captain of an English trading vessel which sailed between England and Williamsburg, Va., then quite a port. My great-grandmother was a fullblooded African, and possibly a native of that country. She was the property of John Wales, a Welchman. Capt. Hemings happened to be in the port of Williamsburg at the time my grandmother was born, and acknowledging her fatherhood he tried to purchase her of Mr. Wales, who would not part with the child, though he was offered an extraordinarily large price for her. She was named Elizabeth Hemings. Being thwarted in the purchase, and determined to own his own flesh and blood he resolved to take the child by force or stealth, but the knowledge of his intention coming to John Wales' ears, through leaky fellow servants of the mother, she and the child were taken into the "great house" under their master's immediate care. I have been informed that it was not the extra value of that child over other slave children that induced Mr. Wales to refuse to sell it, for slave masters then, as in later days, had no compunctions of conscience which restrained them from parting mother and child of however tender age, but he was restrained by the fact that just about that time amalgamation began, and the child was so great a curiosity that its owner desired to raise it himself that he might see its outcome. Capt. Hemings soon afterwards sailed from Williamsburg, never to return. Such is the story that comes down to me.

Elizabeth Hemings grew to womanhood in the family of John Wales, whose wife dying she (Elizabeth) was taken by the widower Wales as his concubine, by , whom she had six children--three sons and three daughters, viz: Robert, James, Peter, Critty, Sally and Thena. These children went by the name of Hemings.

Williamsburg was the capital of Virginia, and of course it was an aristocratic place, where the "bloods" of the Colony and the new State most did congregate. Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, was educated at William and Mary College, which had its seat at Williamsburg. He afterwards studied law with Geo. Wythe, and practiced law at the bar of the general court of the Colony. He was afterwards elected a member of the provincial legislature from Albemarle county. Thos. Jefferson was a visitor at the "great house" of John Wales, who had children about his own age. He formed the acquaintance of his daughter Martha (I believe that was her name, though I am not positively sure,) and intimacy sprang up between them which ripened into love, and they were married. They afterwards went to live at his country seat Monticello, and in course of time had born to them a daughter whom they named Martha. About the time she was born my mother, the second daughter of John Wales and Elizabeth Hemings was born. On the death of John Wales, my grandmother, his concubine, and her children by him fell to Martha, Thomas Jefferson's wife, and consequently became the property of Thomas Jefferson, who in the course of time became famous, and was appointed minister to France during our revolutionary troubles, or soon after independence was gained. About the time of the appointment and before he was ready to leave the country his wife died, and as soon after her

interment as he could attend to and arrange his domestic affairs in accordance with the changed circumstances of his family in consequence of this misfortune (I think not more than three weeks thereafter) he left for France, taking his eldest daughter with him. He had sons born to him, but they died in early infancy, so he then had but two children--Martha and Maria. The latter was left home, but afterwards was ordered to follow him to France. She was three years or so younger than Martha. My mother accompanied her as a body servant. When Mr. Jefferson went to France Martha was just budding into womanhood. Their stay (my mother's and Maria's) was about eighteen months. But during that time my mother became Mr. Jefferson's concubine, and when he was called back home she was **enciente** by him. He desired to bring my mother back to Virginia with him but she demurred. She was just beginning to understand the French language well, and in France she was free, while if she returned to Virginia she would be re-enslaved. So she refused to return with him. To induce her to do so he promised her extraordinary privileges, and made a solemn pledge that her children should be freed at the age of twenty-one years. In consequence of his promise, on which she implicitly relied, she returned with him to Virginia. Soon after their arrival, she gave birth to a child, of whom Thomas Jefferson was the father. It lived but a short time. She gave birth to four others, and Jefferson was the father of all of them. Their names were Beverly, Harriet, Madison (myself), and Eston--three sons and one daughter. We all became free agreeably to the treaty entered into by our parents before we were born. We all married and have raised families.

Beverly left Monticello and went to Washington as a white man. He married a white woman in Maryland, and their only child, a daughter, was not known by the white folks to have any colored blood coursing in her veins. Beverly's wife's family were people in good circumstances.

Harriet married a white man in good standing in Washington City, whose name I could give, but will not, for prudential reasons. She raised a family of children, and so far as I know they were never suspected of being tainted with African blood in the community where she lived or lives. I have not heard from her for ten years, and do not know whether she is dead or alive. She thought it to her interest, on going to Washington, to assume the role of a white woman, and by her dress and conduct as such I am not aware that her identity as Harriet Hemings of Monticello has ever been discovered.

Eston married a colored woman in Virginia, and moved from there to Ohio, and lived in Chillicothe several years. In the fall of 1852 he removed to Wisconsin, where he died a year or two afterwards. He left three children.

As to myself, I was named Madison by the wife of James Madison, who was afterwards President of the United States. Mrs. Madison happened to be at Monticello at the time of my birth, and begged the privilege of naming me, promising my mother a fine present for the honor. She consented, and Mrs. Madison dubbed me by the name I now acknowledge, but like many promises of white folks to the slaves she never gave my mother anything. I was born at my father's seat of Monticello, in Albemarle county, Va., near Charlottesville, on the 18th day of January, 1805. My very earliest recollections are of my grandmother Elizabeth Hemings. That was when I was about three years old. She was sick and upon her death bed. I was eating a piece of bread and asked if she would have some. She replied: "No, granny don't want bread any more." She shortly afterwards breathed her last. I have only a faint recollection of her.

Of my father, Thomas Jefferson, I knew more of his domestic than his public life during his life time. It is only since his death that I have learned much of the latter, except that he was considered as a foremost man in the land, and held many important trusts, including that of President. I learned to read by inducing the white children to teach me the letters and something more; what else I know of books I have picked up here and there till now I can read and write. I was almost 21 1/2 years of age when my father died on the 4th of July, 1826.

About his own home he was the quietest of men. He was hardly ever known to get angry, though sometimes he was irritated when matters went wrong, but even then he hardly ever allowed himself to be made unhappy any great length of time. Unlike Washington he had but little taste or care for agricultural pursuits. He left matters pertaining to his plantations mostly with his stewards and overseers. He always had mechanics at work for him, such as carpenters, blacksmiths, shoemakers, coopers, &c. It was his mechanics he seemed mostly to direct, and in their operations he took great interest. Almost every day of his later years he might have been seen among them. He occupied much of the time in his office engaged in correspondence and reading and writing. His general temperament was smooth and even; he was very undemonstrative. He was uniformly kind to all about him. He was not in the habit of showing partiality or fatherly affection to us children. We were the only children of his by a slave woman. He was affectionate toward his white grandchildren, of whom he had fourteen, twelve of whom lived to manhood and womanhood. His daughter Martha married Thomas Mann Randolph by whom she had thirteen children. Two died in infancy. The names of the living were Ann, Thomas Jefferson, Ellen, Cornelia, Virginia, Mary, James, Benj. Franklin, Lewis Madison, Septemia and Geo. Wythe. Thos. Jefferson Randolph was Chairman of the Democratic National Convention in Baltimore last spring which nominated Horace Greeley for the Presidency, and Geo. Wythe Randolph was Jeff. Davis' first Secretary of War in the late "unpleasantness."

Maria married John Epps, and raised one son--Francis.

My father generally enjoyed excellent health. I never knew him to have but one spell of sickness, and that was caused by a visit to the Warm Springs in 1818. Till within three weeks of his death he was hale and hearty, and at the age of 83 years walked erect and with a stately tread. I am now 68, and I well remember that he was a much smarter man physically, even at that age, than I am.

When I was fourteen years old I was put to the carpenter trade under the charge of John Hemings, the youngest son of my grandmother. His father's name was Nelson, who was an Englishman. She had seven children by white men and seven by colored men--fourteen in all. My brothers, sister Harriet and myself, were used alike. We were permitted to stay about the "great house," and only required to do such light work as going on errands. Harriet learned to spin and to weave in a little factory on the home plantation. We were free from the dread of having to be slaves all our lives long, and were measurably happy. We were always permitted to be with our mother, who was well used. It was her duty, all her life which I can remember, up to the time of father's death, to take care of his chamber and wardrobe, look after us children and do such light work as sewing, and Provision was made in the will of our father that we should be free when we arrived at the age of 21 years. We had all passed that period when he died but Eston, and he was given the remainder of his time shortly after. He and I rented a house and took mother to live with us, till her death, which event occurred in 1835

In 1834 I married Mary McCoy. Her grandmother was a slave, and lived with her master, Stephen Hughes, near Charlottesville, as his wife. She was manumitted by him, which made their children free born. Mary McCoy's mother was his daughter. I was about 28 and she 22 years of age when we married. We lived and labored together in Virginia till 1836, when we voluntarily left and came to Ohio. We settled in Pebble township, Pike County. We lived there four or five years and during my stay in the county I worked at my trade on and off for about four years. Joseph Sewell was my first employer. I built for him what is now known as Rizzleport No. 2 in Waverly. I afterwards worked for George Wolf Senior. and I did the carpenter work for the brick building now owned by John J. Kellison in which the Pike County Republican is printed. I worked for and with Micajab Hinson. I found him to be a very clever man. I also reconstructed the building on the corner of Market and Water Streets from a store to a hotel for the late Judge Jacob Row.

When we came from Virginia we brought one daughter (Sarah) with us, leaving the dust of a son in the soil near Monticello. We have born to us in this State nine children. Two are dead. The names of the living, besides Sarah, are Harriet, Mary Ann, Catharine, Jane, William Beverly, James Madison, Ellen Wales. Thomas Eston died in the Andersonville prison pen, and Julia died at home. William, James and Ellen are unmarried and live at home in Huntington township, Ross County. All the others are married and raising families. My post office address is Pee Pee, Pike County Ohio.

### **Peter Fossett's Recollections of 1898**

Published in the New York World, January 30, 1898

"ONCE THE SLAVE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. // The Rev. Mr. Fossett, of Cincinnati, Recalls the Days When Men Came from the Ends of the Earth to Consult 'the Sage of Monticello' -- Reminiscences of Jefferson, Lafayette, Madison and Monroe. (Special to the Sunday World.) Cincinnati, Jan. 29.

Found on the Monticello website at:

<http://www.monticello.org/site/plantation-and-slavery/peter-fossetts-recollections-1898>

`Jefferson was a man of sober habits, although his cellars were stocked with wines. No one ever saw him under the influence of liquor. His servants about the house were tasked. If you did your task well you were rewarded; if not, punished. Mrs. Randolph would not let any of the young ladies go anywhere with gentlemen with the exception of their brothers, unless a colored servant accompanied them. On July 4, 1826, exactly fifty years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson and Adams died. I was eleven years old.

`Sorrow came not only to the homes of two great men who had been such fast friends in life as Jefferson and Adams, but to the slaves of Thomas Jefferson. The story of my own life is like a fairy tale, and you would not believe me if I told to you the scenes enacted during my life of slavery. It passes through my mind like a dream. Born and reared as free, not knowing that I was

a slave, then suddenly, at the death of Jefferson, put upon an auction block and sold to strangers. I then commenced an eventful life.

`I was sold to Col. John R. Jones. My father was freed by the Legislature of Virginia. At the request of Mr. Jefferson, my father made an agreement with Mr. Jones that when he was able to raise the amount that Col. Jones paid for me he would give me back to my father, and he also promised to let me learn the blacksmith trade with my father as soon as I was old enough. My father then made a bargain with two sons of Col. Jones--William Jones and James Lawrence Jones--to teach me. They attended the University of Virginia.

`Mr. Jefferson allowed his grandson to teach any of his slaves who desired to learn, and Lewis Randolph first taught me how to read. When I was sold to Col. Jones I took my books along with me. One day I was kneeling before the fireplace spelling the word "baker," when Col. Jones opened the door, and I shall never forget the scene as long as I live.

`"What have you got there, sir?" were his words.

`I told him.

`"If I ever catch you with a book in your hands, thirty-and-nine lashes on your bare back." He took the book and threw it into the fire, then called up his sons and told them that if they ever taught me they would receive the same punishment. But they helped me all they could, as did his daughter Ariadne.

`Among my things was a copy-book that my father gave me, and which I kept hid in the bottom of my trunk. I used to get permission to take a bath, and by the dying embers I learned to write. The first copy was this sentence, "Art improves nature."

`Col. Jones, when he bought me, promised my father to let him have me when he could raise the money, but in 1833 he refused to let him have me on any conditions. Mrs. Jones declared that she would sooner part with one of her own children. They had become very attached to me, and then I was a very valuable servant, notwithstanding that all the time I was teaching all the people around me to read and write, and even venturing to write free passes and sending slaves away from their masters. Of course they did not know this, or they would not have thought me so valuable.

### **EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

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More advanced students may wish to read a full online text of the [Memoirs Of A Monticello Slave \(1951\)](#) which contains the narrative of Isaac Granger Jefferson.

Thomas Jefferson Portal Online Library:

<http://archive.org/details/memoirsofamontic031158mbp>