

From: Brownlee, Fambrough L
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2009 2:37 PM
To: 'Will Knott'
Subject: RE: River John Conrad and the African-American Presence

I don't know much specifically, but yes, there was a significant black presence on the Conrad farms.

Johannes Conrad was a Moravian, so had fewer slaves than his neighbors the Brooks and Glens to the south and the Harstons or Hairstons to the north, all of whom had dozens of slaves. The 1850 census shows him with fewer than a dozen, about half of them children. When he died that year, his will stated that his children could keep the slaves that he had given them, but that his own slaves were to be sold at public auction. There may be a record of that sale, but I am at home and do not have access to our research materials until I get back to the NC Room. There is much data in the census records.

I'm sure that many blacks remained in the area after emancipation. I remember, on several occasions in the 1980s, seeing Mr. Bill Conrad, who lived off of Conrad Sawmill Road, talking to his neighbor, an elderly black man. I forget his name, but they were obviously good friends, and I recall Mr. Bill saying "That's the hardest working man I've ever known."

The Moravians had a difficult time with slavery. They had no problem with people owning other people, but they did not like having to rely on slave labor, because they were afraid that it would make them lazy, and because they did not like having "outside ideas" brought into their communities. Their struggle to deal with slavery is chronicled in an excellent book, *A Separate Canaan*, by John Sensbach, who was the public historian in Old Salem in the 1990s. The book contains a number of brief slave biographies. There are slaves buried in both the Salem and Bethania Moravian God's Acres.

From: Brownlee, Fambrough L
Subject: RE: River John Conrad
To: "Will Knott"
Date: Saturday, September 12, 2009, 8:31 PM

Hi Will,

I was working from memory from home, but wound up having to come into the office anyway, so checked the slave censuses. My memory was a little off.

At his death [in 1850], Johannes Conrad had 25 slaves, 2 retired, 11 working and 12 children.

In 1860, his children and grandchildren together had 92 slaves, 2 retired, 45 working and 45 children. One of the retired slaves was 100 years old.