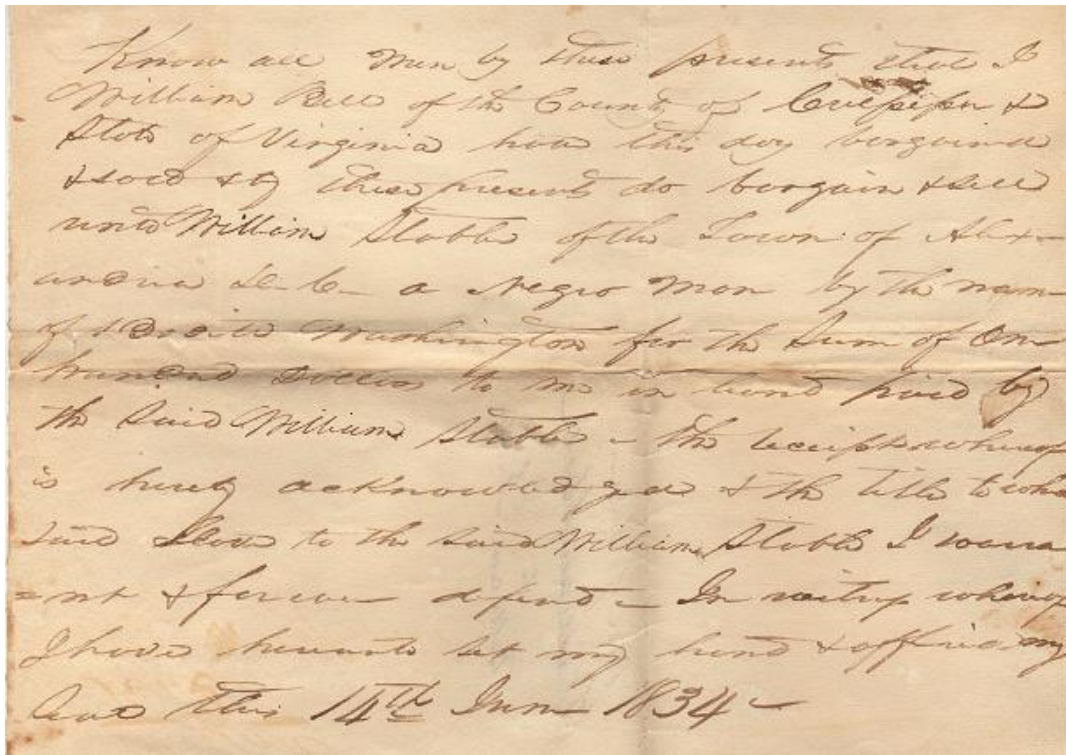


Burdett and William Henry Washington

Part of the research for 1315 Duke Street includes gathering information about the individuals and families trafficked through this property to the Deep South. Ship manifests show newborn babies through men and women in their 40s being taken from Alexandria to be sold in the markets of Natchez and New Orleans, often separated from their families. Using documents in the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum's archives alongside shipping manifests and newspaper articles, the story of Burdett Washington and his struggle to free and reunite his family underscores the horrors and challenges these families faced.

Burdett Washington, born into slavery, appears in newspaper ads, including this one to the right placed in the Alexandria Gazette on January 8, 1824. The ads are for hiring out his labor. This was a common practice, where "owners" made additional income by "hiring out" some enslaved individuals to other households. A similar ad in June 1830 notes he is a "good drayman and carpenter."

For Hire,
THE negro man, known in town by the name of **BURDIT WASHINGTON**. If not disposed of before Tuesday, the 13th inst. he will then be hired to the highest bidder for the year, at the auction store. I wish to hire for the year, or less



Know all Men by these presents that I
William Bell of the County of Culpeper &
State of Virginia have this day bargained
& sold by these presents do bargain & sell
unto William Stables of the Town of Alex-
andria do be a Negro man by the name
of Burdett Washington for the sum of one
hundred dollars to me in hand paid by
the said William Stables - the receipt whereof
is hereby acknowledged & the title to the
said slave to the said William Stables I warrant
& forever defend - In witness whereof
I have hereunto set my hand & official seal
and the 11th day of June 1834 -

Washington gained his freedom in 1834. Quaker William Stabler purchased Washington from William Bell of Culpeper, Virginia for \$100 (portion of document of sale above) and manumitted (legally freed) Washington. Stabler, an apothecary with a shop on Fairfax Street in Alexandria, was a prominent member of the local Quaker community. Quakers in Alexandria were active in helping enslaved people purchase their freedom.

Whereas I have agreed with Burdett Washington of the town of Alexandria D.C. to sell him my negro boy William Henry Washington, aged about ten years, for the sum of one hundred dollars; & the said Burdett is desirous of time for the payment of the same - Now know all men by these presents that, if the said Burdett shall, on or before the expiration of three months from the date hereof, pay me the full sum of one hundred dollars aforesaid, I hereby promise & bind myself, my heirs & assigns, to convey & transfer the said negro boy William Henry Washington, now my slave for life, to the said Burdett Washington, by a full & sufficient bill of sale & by delivery of said boy.

Witness my hand & seal this day of April 1835.

Witness
 Margaret A. Hodge
 Mary H. Jones

Seal
 Peggy Ashton
 Mary W. Jones

Once free, Burdett turned his focus to freeing other members of his family. He secured a written promise (left) from Margaret (Peggy) Ashton, which gave him three months to raise \$100 to purchase his 10-year-old son William Henry. While it's unclear precisely what happened, things did not go as hoped. The ship manifest for the *Uncas*, operated by Franklin & Armfield of 1315 Duke Street, shows young William Henry as one of 202 enslaved people arriving for sale in New Orleans. Despite this, Washington was eventually able to raise the needed funds to procure William Henry's freedom, as evidenced in a sale document dated June 29, 1835. Washington completed the process of freeing his son by manumitting William Henry in a separate document (below).

Know all men by these presents that I Burdett Washington of the City of Alexandria do for and in consideration of good and sufficient reasons me therunto moving, have emancipated and set free, and by these presents do emancipate and set free, a negro boy by the name of William Henry Washington about nine years of age. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my Seal this day of 1835

his
 Burdett Washington Seal
 make

Having secured his young son's freedom, Washington began raising money to purchase his wife and other children's freedom. Newspaper accounts from 1838-1840 from Massachusetts and New York recount Washington's testimony to church groups and Abolition Societies, describing the horror of having his children taken from him. In Nathaniel Southard's 1838 publication, "Why Work for the Slave?" the author quotes Washington's reaction to having an 18-year-old daughter taken from him to be sold away: "I have not seen or heard of her since. Oh, it hurts me every time I think of it."

While the fate of his wife and children remain unknown, records show Washington married to a woman named Maria or Mariah Miller in Washington, DC on March 16, 1844, and he is listed on the 1850 U.S. census as living with her in Ward Seven at the age of 85.

Washington's family story, with its horror of separation and the fight to care for family, captures the experience of thousands trafficked through Alexandria. Through continued research, more about these people and their lives will come to light.