Silent Voices-

Documenting the Enslaved People of the Patton Plantation
Brazoria County & West Columbia
The Patton Plantation
Plantation Ownership Overview

- Martin Varner (1824 – 1834)
- Columbus Patton (1834 – 1856)
- Patton Estate (1854 – 1869)
- (Patton heirs) (1869 – 1870)
- (Commercial owners) (1870-1901)
- The Hogg Family (1901 – 1958)
  - Governor James Hogg (1901- 1906)
  - Hogg heirs (1906- 1949)
  - Ima Hogg (1949 – 1958)
## Agricultural Census Records

### 1850 – Columbus Patton
- 800 acres improved
- 20,000 acres unimproved
- $18,000 cash value of farm
- $14,300 cash value of implements
- 120 horses
- 30 asses/mules
- 75 milk cows
- 60 working oxen
- 2,500 head other cattle
- 100 swine
- $12,350 value of livestock
- $1,500 value of animals slaughtered
- 7,000 bushels corn
- 20 bushels irish potatoes
- 12,000 bushels sweet potatoes
- 780 lbs butter
- 9 tons hay
- 240 hogshead sugar
- 22,000 gallons molasses
- 0 bales cotton

### 1860 – Columbus Patton Estate
- 575 acres improved
- 9,689 acres unimproved
- $55,000 value of farm
- $16,000 value of implements
- 20 horses
- 50 asses/mule
- 35 milk cows
- 10 working oxen
- 2,400 head other cattle
- no swine listed
- $19,300 value of livestock
- $1,335 value of animals slaughtered
- 3,000 bushels corn
- 200 bushels irish potatoes
- (illegible) bushels sweet potatoes
- no butter listed
- 5 tons hay
- 83 hogshead sugar
- 6,800 gallons molasses
- 44 bales cotton
- 75 bushels peas/beans
Slave Quarters Archeology
The Patton Plantation in WPA Narratives

- Two plantation-related narratives
  - Sarah Ford
  - Anthony Christopher
- 12 enslaved individuals named in narratives, some with personal or occupational descriptions
Patton Probate & Court Records

• Probate inventories dated 1840, 1854, and 1857
• Court reports from estate administrator
  – Names
  – Family ties
  – Medical visits/treatments
• Estate leasing/indenture records
• Payments for goods produced
• Post-emancipation wage rolls, 1866-69
Record Comparisons

• Individuals mentioned in WPA narrative who can be connected to other records
• 1867 voter registration list
• 1875 tax roll
• 1880 census listings
  – Number of individuals
  – Number of households
  – Individuals who list Africa as birthplace
Medical Visits & Treatments in the Plantation Probate Records

• Records for 14 years between 1851 and 1865
• Notations of doctor visits, treatments, and medications listed by patient name
• Over 353 treatment dates, over 175 individuals, over $2,230 expenses
• Treatments included- tooth extractions, infant delivery, lancing/sewing/bandaging wounds, amputations, venereal disease treatments
The Enigma of Rachel-

“...iffen a bird fly up in de sky it mus' come down sometime...”

• Rachel mentioned in Sarah Ford WPA narrative
• Rachel’s presence in Columbus Patton Will 1853
• Rachel in Patton probate files
• March 1857 the will is contested by Patton heirs
  – Testimonies
  – April 1857 agreement of heirs to settlement
  – Rachel store purchases 1857-59
• 1860 Move to Cincinnati and subsequent payments through 1867
• 1867 Relocation back to Brazoria County
• 1880 census record
The Loose Ends-

• Columbus Patton’s will lists a bequest of $5000 to be invested and paid with interest to “my dutch boy, Henry Patton” when he is 21. Who is Henry Patton?

• Rachel Patton purchases a “fine muslin dress for the dutch girl” on her store account in 1859. Who is the ‘dutch girl’?

• Anthony Christopher's WPA narrative references to Charles Patton's household.
Conclusion-