

Diana Johnson searching for her parents Jack and Hannah Hellard and siblings

The *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* is a white-owned newspaper that began publication in the 1840s. Diana Johnson placed at least four ads in three different newspapers over the span of five years looking for her parents and family members. Each ad contains different information (including the spelling of her name and Rowan County, NC) and provides historians incredible insight into how her family was torn apart through the domestic slave trade and her quest, that likely spanned decades, to put it back together.

SLAVERY DAYS.

Texas Woman Tells a Story of the
Breaking Up of Her Family—Letter
to County Clerk Wende.

County Clerk Otto H. Wende this morning received the following letter, which vividly recalls the days of slavery:

January 13, 1900.

I desire to find my people. I was born in North Carolina, Roman county, five miles from Maxville and twelve miles from Saulsbury. My father was Jack Hellard. Mother was Hannah Hellard. Brother was John Hellard. Sisters were Jency and Flora Hellard. Brother John was sold from the Hellard estate to William Golden and George Tar in partnership. Tar sold out his part to Golden, who sold Brother John to a speculator named Bob Hemay. Sister Jency married Harry Galloway. Flora was sold for debt. Mother married again to one Benjamin Garner. They had one girl and two boys. The girl was Lucy Garner. She belonged to Catherine Kellar. The boys were Ben and Milas Calvin Garner. I was sold from mother in 1840 to Ala Bam Bill Haden, who brought me to Alabama and from there to Texas, 1841. My name was Diana Hellard. It is now Diana Johnson. Any information concerning any of the above-named persons will be very thankfully received.

Mrs. Diana Johnson,
Edna, Jackson County, Texas,
Care of Miss Lucy H. Johnson.

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