

Diana Johnson searching for her parents Jack and Hannah Hellard

Diana Johnson placed this ad in *The Christian Recorder* in 1898. Published by the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church, *The Christian Recorder* is the oldest continuously published African American newspaper in the United States. Although the AME church published the newspaper, much of its content focused on secular issues that affected the African American community.

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) 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.

I desire to find the whereabouts of my people. I was born in North Carolina, Rowan County, five miles from Matville and twelve miles from Saulsbury. My parents were Jack and Hannah Hellard; they belonged to George and Catherine Hellard; I had one brother and two sisters. Brother John was sold to William Golden, who brought him to Alabama; he was then sold to a speculator named Heway. Sister Jency married Harry Galloway; Sister Flora belonged to Jessie Hellard and was sold for debt. The last time heard from, mother had married again to one Benjamin Garner. They had three children, Ben, Milas, Calvin and Lucy Garner. Was sold from mother in 1839 to Bill Haden, who brought me to Alexandria in 1840 and from there to Texas in 1841. My name was Diana Hellard; it is now Diana Johnson. Any information concerning any of the above named persons will be thankfully received. Address, Mrs. Diana Johnson, Galiad, Galiad, Co., Texas.

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