

Black Confederates of the Civil War from Fairfield County

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Kelly Miller

Company F of the Twelfth South Carolina Volunteers, Gregg's Brigade, raised primarily in Fairfield District, included John C. Bell and David L. Glenn, both of whom were attended throughout the Civil War by body servants. Twenty-six year old John C. Bell was the son of Thomas R. Bell, a Fairfield District planter, and Eliza Bell, a native of Ireland. In 1860 John Bell had a farm of his own, valued at \$3,700, and personal property valued at \$10,350. Second Lieutenant Bell's body servant was Kelly Miller, a thirty-one year-old 'free black' who had been born in Fairfield District. Kelly Miller, called 'Big Kelly' in the community of free Blacks in which he resided, also served as body servant to 2nd Lieutenant Joel A. Beard of Company F, a thirty year old Fairfield District blacksmith.

In 1860 Kelly Miller, who never learned to read or write, was working as a mechanic and owned personal property valued at \$150. As a freeman, Big Kelly had the choice, as other enslaved body servants did not, to serve the Confederacy. His decision to accompany two soldiers to a war which was fought, many would argue, to maintain slavery in the South, was based to a degree on possible repercussions to his family. His wife, Elizabeth Roberts Miller, who was enslaved to Laban C. Chappell, and their five young children would not "suffer repercussions from being misinterpreted as northern sympathizers or overly ambitious black people" while Big Kelly was away supporting the Confederacy. [Jones, Ida E. *The Heart of the Race Problem: The Life of Kelly Miller*. Littleton, Massachusetts: Tapestry Press, Ltd., 2011, 15.]

Returning home to Fairfield County from Appomattox Court House in April of 1865, Kelly Miller met for the first time twenty-two month old Kelly Miller, Junior, who had been born on the 18th of July 1863. (Kelly Miller, Junior was conceived in October of 1862 when his father accompanied Lieutenant John C. Bell home on sick furlough.) Big Kelly's family had endured many trials during his absence, including a visit by General Sherman's troops after leaving Columbia in a smoldering ruin. Sherman's left flank marched through Fairfield County and the plantation of Laban Chappell where several soldiers took an interest in sixteen-month-old Kelly, as they "fondled [him] on their knees and asked [Kelly's mother] to let them take [him] North where they would make [him] stand on [his] head." [Jones, Ida E. *The Heart of the Race Problem*, 13.]

As soon as was humanly possible, Big Kelly had the family and their personal belongings packed up and loaded on a wagon and moved from their cabin on the Laban Chappell property to the 'free settlement' five miles away where his mother and siblings lived. There Mr. Miller built their new home – a three room cabin. Big Kelly "hewed trees, drew the logs into suitable sizes, and crafted shingles. Big Kelly raised the rafters and built the chimney with his hands... He also made convenient and comely furniture and farm tools. Big Kelly built a kitchen and outhouse, which served as a stable, corn crib, and cotton house." [Jones, Ida E. *The Heart of the Race Problem*, 27.]

Once the family was settled in at their new home, farming was the business at hand for the Millers. And although, or perhaps because, he himself was illiterate, Mr. Miller determined that his children would learn to read and write. For four months each year, July to August and January to February, when there was no farm work to be done by the children, they attended the one-room schoolhouse built and run by a relative, Joseph Thompson. It was here that young Kelly's inquisitiveness and interest in learning first developed. As soon as the novice teachers at the school had taught the child all they knew, he was accepted to Fairfield Institute in the county seat of Winnsboro. Kelly attended this grade school for black children from 1878 to 1880. Founded in 1869 by the Northern Presbyterian Church, the school's mission was to educate its students primarily to be teachers and ministers. In 1880 the gifted seventeen year old, with a train ticket and a scholarship provided by the New England Missionary Society, continued his studies at Howard University in the District of Columbia. Throughout his course of studies at Howard University, Kelly Miller worked a job, and when he graduated the young man returned to Fairfield County and the family he had not seen for six years. [Jones, Ida E. *The Heart of the Race Problem*, 44. Stimpert, James. "Hopkins History." *The Gazette Online* (The Newspaper of the Johns Hopkins University), Volume 30, Number 17 (January 16, 2001).]

Kelly Miller recognized the sacrifice his parents had made to send him to college, and as a 'Thank You' gift he purchased, with his savings, the property on which Big Kelly had built their cabin and farmed. The property, "one hundred acres more or less, generally known as the Kelly Miller Place," was purchased on the 1st of December 1886 for \$800, which was paid in cash. After two weeks visiting with his family, the student returned north, where he became the first African-American student to attend Johns Hopkins University when he began post-graduate studies in mathematics there in 1887. After two years, unable to meet the financial requirements to complete his studies at Johns Hopkins, in large part because of the expenditure for the property he had purchased his parents, Kelly Miller took a position on the faculty at Howard University, where he remained for the duration of his academic career. [Kelly Miller File, Fairfield County Genealogical Research Room, Winnsboro, South Carolina.]

Big Kelly Miller died in 1927, at the age of ninety-seven. His namesake returned to South Carolina briefly to make the funeral arrangements and see his father buried. On the day of the funeral a neighbor, a Confederate veteran, visited the Miller home and asked to drive the family to the burial service. He told Kelly that he and Mr. Miller had been "the only survivors of the old regiment and that [Big Kelly] was regarded as a comrade, the same as the other soldiers." The veteran then asked if he might place a Confederate flag – the Stars and Bars – on the coffin. "After hasty reflection in a critical situation, Miller consented to the man's request, although, he confessed, not without some misgivings. As the funeral procession passed by his house he alighted for a moment to go in and find the Confederate flag. He returned shortly with a Union flag instead, stating that he could not locate the stars and bars, but, he added this is perhaps better since the stars and stripes now wave over all of us, to which [Mr. Miller] responded with a silent nod, though with a loud inward, Amen. So it happened that when [his] father's coffin was taken from the hearse it was covered with the stars and stripes, placed there by this Confederate veteran." [Jones, Ida E. *The Heart of the Race Problem*, 33.]

John Pollack

Twenty-four year-old David L. Glenn, the son of a Fairfield District planter, enlisted as a private and was accompanied by twenty-one year-old John Pollack, who was most likely a slave owned by David Glenn's father. After the war John Pollack married, and he and his wife Mary were the parents of ten children. By 1930 John Pollock was widowed and living with a daughter and son-in-law in Brooklyn, New York.

Ed Boulware

Daniel P. Boulware was the son of Alben and Regina Boulware. Following his father's death in the early 1850s he inherited, equally with his six siblings and mother, property and slaves of Alben Boulware's estate. When South Carolina seceded from the Union, Daniel (called 'Pink' by family and friends) was managing his own farm, valued at \$1,200; his personal property, which included slaves, was valued at \$5,500.

In December of 1861, nineteen year old Daniel Boulware enlisted as a private with Company B of the Seventeenth South Carolina Infantry. He took with him as body servant Ed Boulware, most likely one of the slaves he had inherited from his father's estate. Private Boulware was captured by General McClellan's army after the battle of Sharpsburg in September of 1862, was paroled and exchanged and returned to his regiment just months later. He was killed by sharpshooters in July of 1864 in the trenches surrounding Petersburg. It was most likely Ed Boulware who informed Pink's widow, Susan Addie Fowler Boulware, of the details of her late husband's death and burial in Virginia.

Zacharias Brown

Zacharias Brown was around sixteen years old when he accompanied twenty-one year old Private Robert F. Cameron as body servant. Private Cameron enlisted in Company B of the Fourth South Carolina Cavalry in September of 1863. In May of 1864 Private Cameron was wounded, most likely during either the battle of the Wilderness or of Spotsylvania Court House. Zack Brown stayed with his soldier when he was sent to a hospital, and it was there they parted ways when Private Cameron was captured by the enemy. Zack was most likely making his way home to Fairfield District as Robert Brown

was being transferred to Elmira Prison in New York. On the 23rd of December Private Robert F. Cameron died of pneumonia and was buried in the Elmira Prison cemetery.

Zach Brown married Lucy Buckson, with whom he had several children. The couple remained in Fairfield County where Mr. Brown farmed and preached, and raised several grandchildren. Following his death on June 1, 1934 Mr. Brown was buried at Sweet Prospect Cemetery.

Henry Davis

John Woodward Lyles was one month shy of his eighteenth birthday when he enlisted in August of 1863 as a private in Company K, First Regiment South Carolina Cavalry. He was accompanied throughout the war (until his surrender on the 26th of April 1865 at Greensboro, North Carolina) by eighteen year old Henry Davis.

By 1870 Henry Davis and his new wife, Ella, were working as farm laborers in their native Fairfield County. After raising children of their own, they raised several grandchildren.

Sam Egleston

Sam Egleston served for nearly the entirety of the war as body servant to Private John W. Coleman of Company C, Sixth South Carolina Cavalry (Aiken's Regiment of Partisan Rangers). It most likely fell to Sam to inform the Coleman family that their son had been captured at Stoney Creek on the 1st of December 1864. Private John Coleman was held at Point Lookout Prison in Maryland until his parole and exchange the following February.

Alex Leitner

Alex Leitner was born on a plantation near New Hope A.R.P. Church around 1843 to Sarah and Bill Leitner. Bill Leitner was the property of John P. Brice; his wife, and all of their children, belonged to Robin (probably Robert) Brice. Sarah Leitner's responsibilities on the Brice plantation included tending to the cows, milking them, and churning the milk for butter. When Alex and his brother Ben were old enough, they assisted their mother. In order for Bill Leitner to visit his wife and children, he was required to have a pass or risk being arrested by patrollers, which happened on at least one occasion.

Alex Leitner served as body servant to Butler Estes of the 3rd Battalion from April of 1863 until his surrender at Appomattox Court House. After the war Alex and his wife Betty (who married in December of 1869) worked as farm laborers and raised their one child in Fairfield County. They also raised a nephew, a niece, and several grandchildren.

Alex Leitner died on March 11, 1926. He was buried at the Chalmers graveyard in the Fairfield County community of Woodward.

Hiram Moore

Hiram Moore entered service as a body servant to Captain Mike Moore in 1862; both men served until the surrender of the Confederacy in 1865.

John Young

John Young served for two and a half years as body servant to Isaac Young of Company B, Fourth Regiment South Carolina Infantry.

Andy Marion

Andy Marion, a slave whose father was originally from Virginia and whose mother was from South Carolina, was born in 1844. The family was owned by William Brice of Fairfield County. Sometime before the war, William Brice purchased property in Mississippi, and when it came time to move his family and slaves to their new home, the slaves were transported by wagons and steamboats, all the while chained together. Not long after the start of the war, William Brice returned with family and slaves to South Carolina where, accompanied by Andy, he fought for the Confederacy. On occasion, Andy was close enough to the battlefield to witness the fighting.

In 1875 Andy Marion married his first wife, Sara Halsey, with whom he had three children. After her death, he married Harriet Daniels, with whom he had three more children. After the death of

Harriet, Andy took Millie Gladden as his third wife. After seventeen years of marriage, Millie died, and years after Andy Marion married for the final time, a widow named Jane.

Name Unknown

Amie Lumpkin was a twelve year old slave on the plantation of John Mobley when her father left Fairfield District to serve as a body servant during the war. Amie and her mother remained in their cabin on the plantation, where the mother often cried, wondering how her husband was faring. One day, the women were told that the body servant had died. Shortly after, Amie's mother also died, leaving her an orphan by the time Sherman's troops passed through Fairfield County in 1865.

Isaiah Moore

Thomas W. Brice and his eight siblings grew up in relative comfort at the home of their parents, Dr. Walter and Martha Emeline Brice, in the Fairfield District community of Woodward. Thomas grew up around the family slaves, including Isaiah Moore. "The two grew up hunting, fishing and playing together. Theirs was a bond of love, and it did not end until death separated them." [McDonald, Bill. "Fleshing out Isaiah's saga," *The State*. Concord Presbyterian Church, Vertical File, Fairfield County Chapter, South Carolina Genealogical Society, Winnsboro, South Carolina.]

Five of the Brice boys served in Confederate service, including twenty-year old Thomas who enlisted in June of 1861 as a private with Company C of Colonel John Bratton's Sixth Regiment South Carolina Infantry. Private Brice was accompanied by nineteen year old Isaiah Moore who served as body servant for the duration of the war. Just months after his enlistment, Private Brice was promoted to sergeant, and in January of 1863 to lieutenant. When Thomas Brice received a furlough in June of that year, he and Isaiah Moore were able to visit their families in Woodward. They returned to their regiment in July.

The battle of Campbell's Station took place on November 16, 1863 as part of the Knoxville Campaign. The Confederate Forces in East Tennessee, under the command of Lieutenant General James Longstreet, were ordered to attack Major General Ambrose E. Burnside (Department of the Ohio) and prevent him from taking Knoxville, Tennessee. Longstreet's 15,000 troops, including Brigadier General John Bratton's brigade, marched northeast toward Knoxville along the East Tennessee-Virginia Railroad; marching parallel to them, on the opposite side of the train tracks, were Burnside's 20,000 men. Burnside's troops were in the lead, and several times Longstreet's Confederates attacked the rearguard of the Federal troops in an attempt to get Burnside to turn and fight. At the small community of Campbell's Station the armies finally faced each other in battle. Casualties among the Carolina troops were 124 killed and wounded. Among the wounded was Lieutenant Thomas Brice who had been shot in the face and lost an eye. As the Confederates retreated, they were forced to abandon the injured who were unable to walk or ride a horse. When some of the soldiers from Company C returned to their campsite, Isaiah was told what had happened, and where Lieutenant Brice had been left. Isaiah took a horse and returning to the battlefield, found Thomas Brice, put him on the horse and "carried him to a safe place." [Ibid.]

Isaiah Moore remained with Lieutenant Brice at the hospital where he was treated until stable enough to return home to convalesce. Back in Woodward at the family plantation, Isaiah continued to care for Thomas until he was well enough to continue his service to the Confederacy. In January of 1865 Lieutenant Brice, wearing a black eye-patch, was assigned to enrolling duty in South Carolina, where he remained until the Confederacy surrendered and the war ended.

The strong bond that was established between Thomas Brice and Isaiah Moore during their youth developed even stronger during the war years, and lasted the remainder of their lives. After the war Thomas Brice married, and he and his wife Nancy raised a family. Isaiah Moore, who worked on the farm of Thomas Brice, also married and raised a family of thirteen children: Charity, Dave, Solomon, Fortune, Charlie, Brice, Haley, Fannie, Sarah, Frances, Mary, Margaret, and Teeta Moore.

Thomas W. Brice died on October 14, 1908, and was buried in Woodward's Concord Presbyterian Church cemetery. The aging Isaiah was taken care of in his later years by Thomas' son, Thomas, Junior, who visited the former slave every day during Isaiah's last days. In 1917, knowing that his own death was approaching, Isaiah Moore asked that he be buried, not at the nearby all-Black, Red

Hill Baptist Church cemetery, but at the Concord Presbyterian Church cemetery, as close to his friend as possible. Mr. Moore had been a member of the Concord church for more than fifty years, and his request was taken under consideration by the church elders. Although the cemetery was segregated, the elders took into consideration the extremely close relationship between the two men who had served in a war together. It was decided, following Isaiah Moore's death on the 22nd of December, that he would be buried adjacent to Thomas Brice, but just outside the fence which enclosed the all-white cemetery.

The story of the friendship between Brice and Moore was one that members of the Concord Presbyterian Church recounted often through the ensuing decades, and around 1984 the church members, by a unanimous judgment, decided that the time had come to embrace Isaiah Moore and the sacrifices he had made, not only to Thomas Brice, but to the Woodward community as well. The black wrought-iron fence which enclosed the cemetery and separated the two friends was expanded to incorporate the grave of Isaiah Moore.

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