

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## Remembering Princella Garrett

### Healing from slavery past

BY M. LINDA JARAMILLO

We know just a little bit about Princella Garrett. We know that she was an African woman enslaved by a plantation owner in North Carolina over a century ago. We know that she was one of 60 persons owned by Mason L. Wiggins. This we know only because she is listed in an 1857 deed of sale in which she is called Cinderilla.

Princella Garrett's name does not appear on the U.S. Census Rolls of 1850 or 1860 – there she is known only as a black female, age 60. A few years later at the presumed age of 66, she was sold once again to Francis Marion Garrett and John Joseph Garrett. An 1863 deed of sale proves it.

What we now know is that she lived on plantation land that is now Franklinton Center at Bricks in eastern North Carolina. From all accounts, we can assume that she worked dawn to dark in the kitchen to prepare meals. We can surmise that she was also expected to work in the fields when her cooking and cleaning was done. Based on written records, we now know that she lived in one of the slave cottages in times not so long ago.

We do not know if she was a mother or a grandmother. We do not know if she was a sister or an aunt. We do not know if she was born on this soil of a mother who was forced to leave her homeland. Maybe Ms. Princella Garrett was already born when she was brought across the great seas from her homeland – we simply do not know. We know that she lived a long life filled with change and strife.

We can only imagine what Ms. Garrett must

have experienced. We can only imagine what went through her mind as she was liberated from the chains of slavery only to find that this nation was not ready to truly release her from bondage. For what followed were state laws that limited her from going to school. What followed were oppressive conditions that kept her from getting a job that paid fair wages. What followed was a society that would not accept her into neighborhoods with decent housing.

What we do know for sure is that she is one among the cloud of witnesses and saints that worked the soil to produce an agricultural economy that sustained this nation. We know that she must have been a resilient woman because she could not have survived otherwise. What we must know is that she was a distin-

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guished elder among her clan.

Each year during Black History Month, we are reminded of the thousands of distinguished persons who were and are significant to the formation of our society and culture.

This year, I will remember the name of Ms. Princella Garrett who was 80 years old before her name finally appeared in the 1870 Census Rolls of the country. She will live in my memory for a long time to come.

M. Linda Jaramillo is the executive minister for Justice Ministries in the United Church of Christ.

### Public Sale of Negroes,

By RICHARD CLAGETT.

On Tuesday, March 5th, 1833 at 1:00 P. M. the following Slaves will be sold at Potters Mart, in Charleston, S. C.

Miscellaneous Lots of Negroes, mostly house servants, some for field work.

Conditions: 1/2 cash, balance by bond, bearing interest from date of sale. Payable in one to two years to be secured by a mortgage of the Negroes, and appraised personal security. Auctioneer will pay for the papers.

A valuable Negro woman, accustomed to all kinds of house work. Is a good plain cook, and excellent dairy maid, washes and irons. She has four children, one a girl about 13 years of age, another 7, a boy about 5, and an infant 11 months old. 2 of the children will be sold with mother, the others separately, if it best suits the purchaser.

A very valuable Blacksmith, wife and daughters; the Smith is in the prime of life, and a perfect master at his trade. His wife about 27 years old, and his daughters 12 and 10 years old have been brought up as house servants, and as such are very valuable. Also for sale 2 likely young negro wenches, one of whom is 16 the other 13, both of whom have been taught and accustomed to the duties of house servants. The 16 year old wench has one eye.

A likely yellow girl about 17 or 18 years old, has been accustomed to all kinds of house and garden work. She is sold for no fault. Sound as a dollar.

House servants: The owner of a family described herein, would sell them for a good price only, they are offered for no fault whatever, but because they can be done without, and money is needed, He has been offered \$1250. They consist of a man 30 to 33 years old, who has been raised in a genteel Virginia family as house servant, Carriage driver etc., in all which he excels. His wife a likely wench of 25 to 30 raised in like manner, as chamber maid, seamstress, nurse etc., their two children, girls of 12 and 4 or 5. They are bright mulattoes, of mild tractable dispositions, unassuming manners, and of genteel appearance and well worthy the notice of a gentleman of fortune needing such.

Also 14 Negro Wenches ranging from 16 to 25 years of age, all sound and capable of doing a good days work in the house or field.

A legal notice advertises the "Public Sale of Negroes" in 1833 in Charleston, S.C.

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As we reflect and celebrate the accomplishments of African Americans, we also recognize there's work to be done in our own communities and with young people.

We believe our community will be a better place if adults get involved in lifting up our youth. Through mentorship, we believe our young people will succeed and pass it on to the next generation.

For more information on how you can help make it better together with the Trail Blazers, visit [trailblazers.com/makeitbetter](http://trailblazers.com/makeitbetter)

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