

Canady Hale, Free Woman of Color

In 1820, Henry, Joseph and Elizabeth Hale, siblings, emancipated seventeen slaves, including Canady and her children, Richard, Elizabeth 'Betsy', Malinda, Dorcus and Hannah¹. Canady was born around 1792, most likely, born into slavery.

Joseph Hale penned his will in 1817, giving his brother, Henry title to their land and giving the slaves their freedom. In 1820, Henry's will indicate that the slaves had been liberated at the July session of County Court and they had been given 610 acres of land². Both wills were proven at the January term of County Court, 1822.

Thomas Hale, another of the slaves freed by the Hales, deeded 100 acres of his land to Canady in 1829³. It's unclear if Thomas and Canady were related, but it's very likely that they were. In 1835, she sold to James Gray, 51 ½ acres for one hundred dollars⁴. Loyd Ford, Jr. bought from her in 1845, 12 ½ acres for five dollars⁵.

The early Tax Records of Washington County, Tennessee list her during the years 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1848 and 1849 in District 12.

In August of 1843, Canady joined the Buffalo Ridge Baptist Church. The entry reads, "The Church of Christ at Buffalo Ridge met according to adjournment and [after] worship proceeded to business. 1. A door was opened for the reception of members. Rec'd. Brother Jeremiah Chase, Canda Hale of color, Chanty Ellis of col. Matilda Hale of col..."

Canady wrote a will⁶ on 21 Jun 1845 and gave to her son, Richard, 12 ½ acres of land that he had already received and that had been laid off to him. To her daughter Elizabeth, she willed 12 ½ acres of land joining Richard's property. The rest of her heirs, Malinday, Sarah, Hannah, Jerdan Elbert, Jane and two grandchildren, Samuel Franklin and Dorcas Ann, who were children of her daughter, Dorcus received the rest of her land and all personal property. Son, Jerdan Elbert was named as Executor. The will was presented for probate on 2 Jul 1849 in Washington County Quarterly Court⁷.

The 1850 census of Washington County lists several of Canady's heirs—children and grandchildren—free persons of color⁸.

Sources:

¹Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Book 5, July term, 1820, page 161-62, Washington Co, TN.

²Goldene Fillers Burgner, Washington County, Tennessee Wills, 1777—1872. 1983. Southern Historical Press, Inc.

³Washington County, Tennessee Deed Book 19, page 19-20.

⁴Washington County, Tennessee Deed Book 20, page 194-195.

⁵Washington County, Tennessee Deed Book 31, page 261.

⁶Copies of Early Wills, 1773-1885, Book D-I, Section H, page 77-78, Washington Co. TN.

⁷Minutes, Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, Book 15, July term, 1849, page 193, Washington Co, TN.

⁸1850 U.S. Census, Washington County, Tennessee, population schedule, 4th Subdivision, E District, page 224, dwelling 1701, family 1737.