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Beyond the Vale: Visualizing Slavery in Craven County, North Carolina

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BEYOND THE VALE: VISUALIZING SLAVERY IN
CRAVEN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

by

MARISSA N. KINSEY

A master's capstone project submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts,
The City University of New York

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Beyond the Vale: Visualizing Slavery in Craven County, North Carolina

by

Marissa N. Kinsey

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the capstone project requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Beyond the Vale: Visualizing Slavery in Craven County, North Carolina

by

Marissa N. Kinsey

Advisor: Matthew K. Gold

Beyond the Vale is a data visualization project dedicated to the study of slavery in antebellum North Carolina. Focusing on Gooding's Township, a rural farming community in the eastern county of Craven, it is designed to address basic questions about the experiences of the county's antebellum enslaved population. These questions represent points of contention between local heritage narratives and the direct testimonies of former slaves. Where former slaves describe a complex, yet undeniably exploitative system in which they had only minimal control over their own lives, county literature echoes larger themes in North Carolina state scholarship by either overlooking slavery, or portraying it as an unfortunate, yet largely benign institution. Beyond the Vale explores the use of historical population data in resolving this discrepancy. Employing illustrative charts, webs and graphs, the project endeavors to show how such data can be extracted, compiled and reorganized to establish an interpretation of slavery that is both critical and inclusive.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I owe thanks to many people who have enabled me to complete this project. Without their patience, encouragement and assistance, *Beyond the Vale* would never have come to be. These outstanding individuals include my parents, William and Sandra Kinsey, my advisor, Professor Matthew K. Gold, and my dear friend and editor, Gretchen Spencer. Additional thank yous to Victor T. Jones at the Craven County, North Carolina Public Library and Ranita Gaskins, formerly at the Heritage Place at Lenoir Community College for their assistance in gathering primary source materials for *Beyond the Vale*; and to Anisha Thomas, Taneya Koonce and Kieron Hutley for their initial reviews. Finally, I would like to thank my great aunt, Mary Edwards Koonce, for sharing our family oral history with me; it truly changed my life.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this paper to the hundreds of African and African-American individuals held as slaves in pre-Emancipation Craven County. May their contributions and struggles be always remembered, even if many of their names have been lost.

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PROJECT MANIFEST

1. Whitepaper (.PDF File)

Beyond the Vale: Visualizing Slavery in Craven County, North Carolina report. Includes historical background and project summary.

2. Database (.CSV and .XLSX Files)

Project database containing information on the enslaved community of Gooding's Township in 1860.

3. Visualizations

A series of charts drawn from information included in the project database. Details the size and composition of the 1860 Gooding's Township enslaved and slaveholding communities.

- EnslavedSex (.PNG File)
- EnslavedAgriculture (.PNG File)
- EnslavedFemaleAges (.PNG File)
- EnslavedHousing (.PNG File)
- EnslavedMaleAges (.PNG File)
- EnslavedManufacturing (.PNG File)
- NetworkChart (.JPG File)
- SlaveholderOccupation (.PNG File)
- SlaveholderPropertyValue (.PNG File)
- SlaveholderRace (.PNG File)
- SlaveholderSex (.PNG File)

- SlaveholdingsSize (.PNG File)

4. Website

An online version of Beyond the Vale, including all visualizations. Located at <https://beyondthevale.commons.gc.cuny.edu/>.

“The aspect of North Carolina with regard to slavery, is, in some respects, less lamentable than that of Virginia. There is not only less bigotry upon the subject, and more freedom of conversation, but I saw here, in the institution, more of patriarchal character than in any other State. [...] One is forced often to question, [however], in viewing slavery in this aspect, whether humanity and the accumulation of wealth, the prosperity of the master, and the happiness and improvement of the subject, are not in some degree incompatible.”

Frederick Law Olmstead, 1856

“Marsa: that’s what she called him, so that’s what I’ll call him. He used to sell the women when they couldn’t have any more children. Grandma said that. He’d put them up on the block and they’d get sent away to another family. That’s what happened to grandma’s mother, Isariah. When they get the women, they matched them up so they could have children with the men. Marsa, he took Isariah for himself. But when she couldn’t have no more children, they put her on the block just the same. You didn’t get to see no one again after that.”

Family Oral History, 2009

1. Introduction

Beyond the Vale grew out of an assignment I received in 2009 as an undergraduate at the University of Delaware. As part of an introductory course in Women's Studies I was asked to create a matrilineal family tree. In completing this project, I discovered an ancestor named Isariah Wood, my third great grandmother. Born in the mid-1840s, Isariah was enslaved in Craven County, North Carolina for much of her early life.

Craven County is one of the most historically prominent places in North Carolina. Located on the banks of the Pamlico Sound, it is home to some of the earliest European settlements in the state. Its capital city, New Bern, served as the seat of government from about 1740 to 1792, and long stood as the state’s largest port city. New Bern’s economic success lasted well into the nineteenth century, making Craven one of the wealthiest counties in the region. This reality was largely made possible through the labor of enslaved people like Isariah.

After becoming aware of my ancestor's existence, I immediately set out to learn more about her. I was especially interested in her time as a slave. Perhaps unsurprisingly, my initial research revealed little about this part of her life. Enslaved people are notoriously difficult to trace through the historic record. Few official sources discuss the details of their lives, and even fewer mention them by name. Isariah was no exception. In light of these difficulties, I found myself growing increasingly curious about the circumstances of her enslavement. Was she held on a large plantation or on a small farm? What kind of housing did she have access to? What kinds of tasks was she assigned? What did her community look like, and where did she fit within it?

It was not until I started classes at CUNY Graduate Center that I began to pursue these questions in earnest. Many of my projects were dedicated to exploring Craven County's history, including its legacy of slavery. In the absence of specific information about Isariah, I knew that this was my best chance to learn more about her world. Unfortunately, while completing these projects I found the literature on Craven County's enslaved community to be extremely limited. Indeed, in comparison to states such as Virginia and South Carolina, very little has been written about North Carolina slavery at all.

Local heritage narratives often portray North Carolina as "a vale of humility," an idyllic space in which Southern elitism never truly took hold (Hovis 1-2). As a result, North Carolina's investment in the slave system, an institution deeply associated with wealth and power, has been significantly downplayed (Hovis 96). While it is true that North Carolina never cultivated the kind of rich plantation economy that necessitated extensive slave holdings, enslaved individuals nonetheless made up a significant proportion of the state's pre-Civil War population (Walbert). By 1860, this proportion had risen above one third, exceeding that of plantation-heavy states

such as Virginia, Arkansas, and Missouri (“Results of the 1860 Census”). Despite this fact, it is only recently that slavery has begun to feature prominently in North Carolina state scholarship.

In places like Craven County, the neglect of slavery in local scholarship has produced a very one-sided view of life within the institution. While county historians acknowledge that enslaved people sometimes had difficult experiences, they often stop short of describing the true horror of the system. In heritage and popular historical contexts it is common for slavery to receive only a passing mention. In more broad-scale histories, such as Alan D. Watson’s *A History of New Bern and Craven County*, Craven’s limited slave holdings and “lenient” slave codes are discussed in detail, while the day-to-day deprivations of enslaved life are all but ignored. Direct testimonies from individuals who were formerly held as slaves provide a more complex picture of the Craven County slave system, but these testimonies are rarely addressed by local scholars. When they are addressed, they are examined selectively, with only the more positive aspects of the narratives being included in the discussion.

There is no way to know how each enslaved person experienced life within the Craven County slave system. However, there are a variety of resources that can tell local researchers more about the circumstances of their enslavement. These resources can help researchers gain new perspectives on daily facets of enslaved life, such as work and housing, as well as major life events, such as birth, marriage, and sale. This information is important if we are to generate a more comprehensive understanding of North Carolina state history and culture.

Within the last several years, resources on Craven County history have become more accessible. Websites such as FamilySearch.org and EastCarolinaRoots.com provide census and similar forms of population data free of charge, while the local library hosts a digital collection of vital, probate, and other historical records. These types of documents often contain valuable

information regarding enslaved people. However, that information is almost always spread throughout a given record set. This makes it very difficult for researchers to locate, compile, and utilize historical documents in the study of Craven County slavery. For example, the 1860 Federal Census used in this paper contains information about hundreds of enslaved individuals, including their day-to-day tasks, housing situations and community demographics. However, this information is spread throughout several separate sections, each of which must be searched separately. This makes trends and patterns especially hard to identify.

Beyond the Vale acknowledges these issues and seeks to address them. First, the project draws attention to the ways in which the current historical narrative of enslaved life in Craven County has been left incomplete. By exploring how slavery in Craven has been consistently downplayed or ignored, it strives to emphasize the need for more in-depth research of North Carolina's enslaved past. For this reason, *Beyond the Vale* focuses heavily upon the testimonies of former slaves. Though few in number, these testimonies provide some of the most compelling evidence of the narrative's inherent flaws.

The second goal of the project is to show how such flaws can be corrected via the historical record. More specifically, *Beyond the Vale* presents one methodology by which historical information can be processed in order to make it more usable for enslaved research. For this project, I employed the 1860 Federal Census, a rich source of enslaved population data. Like most resources concerning slavery, the census contains data that is helpful but highly fragmented. This project seeks to identify a method by which such data on enslaved individuals can be brought together in a more useable format. *Beyond the Vale's* database and powerful visualizations are the result of these efforts.

2. Historical Background

Slavery was a part of life in Craven County from the earliest days of European settlement until the outbreak of the Civil War. Several of the first English colonists to establish homesteads in Craven were slave holders. One of Craven's earliest known residents, Furnifold Green, owned two slaves: a "negro woman called Fillis" and a "negro man call'd Nick" (Green 211-212). In his 1711 will, Green left these two slaves to his sons, John and James, suggesting that they were considered slaves for life (Green 211-212). This designation is important in an era where many laborers were indentured, working under contract for a number of years before being freed (Spindel). William Brice, another English settler, reportedly made use of enslaved indigenous labor, a practice that became widespread enough to eventually lead to war with local tribes (La Vere 89, 189).

The practice of slavery was not limited to Craven's handful of English settlers. When the Swiss and German founders of New Bern arrived in 1710, a number of these colonists came to own slaves as well. Baron Christoph von Graffenried, leader of the Swiss-Germans, was accompanied by two black slaves during his infamous captivity under the Tuscarora Indian tribe (La Vere 37), while John Martin Franck, another prominent Swiss-German settler, came to own over twenty slaves during his lifetime (Franck 197-200).

As there has yet to be a comprehensive survey of early Craven property records, there is no way to know how many slaves were held in the county prior to 1720, when the enslaved were first listed separately from whites in Craven's annual tax rolls. At this point, 23% of the county's taxables were enslaved people—an unusually high percentage for a relatively poor frontier settlement (Watson 43). Despite this fact, Craven's enslaved population would only grow. By the 1740s, "slaves comprised 24% of the total population, averaging 1.4 bondsmen per family in the

county” (Watson 43).

There are few accounts from this time period describing the nature of the Craven County slave system. We do not have any factual basis for determining what enslaved life was like or how enslaved people were treated on a day-to-day basis. Nonetheless, scholars have long asserted that slavery in early Craven was comparatively mild, citing evidence of enslaved residents travelling freely, buying, selling, and trading, and in some cases even living independently of their masters (Watson 158-159). The majority of this evidence is anecdotal, however, and more research is needed to determine whether or not it reflects the nature of the Craven County slave system at large.

The need for further research becomes especially exigent when one considers that there is equally compelling evidence that slavery in eighteenth-century Craven County was violent and oppressive. In January of 1778, postal inspector and travel journalist Ebenezer Harris wrote that he found in Craven “a Number of Negro Children of both sexes, entirely naked” and “a Negro Woman with nothing on her but a very ragged Petticoat” (Johnston 377). He later went on to theorize that they were never afforded proper clothing (Johnston 377). The diet of the slaves was said to be equally meager (Watson 156). Unless permitted to tend garden plots or trade with local whites, Craven County enslaved people were often left wanting (Watson 156). Many people view the cruelty of slavery only in terms of overt physical violence. However, forced dependence and foreclosed agency were no less harmful and often bred a great deal of resentment and resistance on the part of the enslaved (Watson 157).

By the dawn of the American Revolution, the practice of indentured servitude had waned and slavery had become the predominant form of labor in the county (Watson 42). “Unskilled slaves [tended crops], or blazed pine trees and collected sap—which they distilled into tar—from

the forests. Skilled slaves, as well as the growing free population in Craven, served as mechanics and carpenters on merchant vessels and farm buildings, as coopers making barrels to transport the tar, pitch, and turpentine, or as mill operators, sawing thousands of feet of lumber or grinding corn into meal” (Browning 13). In addition, slaves served as seamstresses, housekeepers, and fishermen (Browning 13).

Though whites largely depended on enslaved individuals for their labor, they did not always trust them to remain satisfied with their lower place in society. This sense of unease was substantiated in 1775, when an extensive slave conspiracy stretching into several adjacent counties was revealed (Watson 79). When “slaves and disorderly persons” were again accused of unlawful assembly in 1777, patrols were set up to police and surveil them (Watson 84). Composed mainly of poor whites, these patrols were given permission to punish slaves and free blacks alike for “misbehavior,” an allowance which further solidified the already developing racial hierarchy of the county (Browning 14). Historical documents from this period onwards portray a society in which white inhabitants were becoming increasingly convinced that “racial slavery was essential to their commerce and communal identities” (Browning 13). Though the overwhelming majority of whites did not own slaves, they nonetheless acquiesced to the system, being in large part convinced that [black] slaves should be confined to the lowest strata of society (Fenn, et. al. 246). Thus the full weight of a dominant white society, convinced of the slaves’ inferiority and prepared to use force to keep them in their place, was arrayed against slaves who attempted to question or alter their status (Fenn, et. al. 246).

This pattern of suppression continued well into the nineteenth century, when many of the “privileges” that Craven County’s slaves had previously enjoyed were violently curtailed. Legal records indicate that slaves were increasingly limited in their access to free travel, hunting,

fishing, and the trading of goods (Watson 313). There were also efforts during this time to prohibit slaves from interacting with free people of color, a series of measures that were intended to stem rising dissatisfaction among the enslaved population (Browning 14-15).

In addition to white anxieties regarding insurrection, nineteenth-century slave life in Craven was shaped by several other trends across the state and southern region. First among these was the expansion of slavery into the American Southwest. Sparked by the invention of the cotton gin, this phenomenon encouraged the mass migration and sale of slaves throughout the state, shattering countless enslaved families (Jewett and Allen 192). Over 140,000 slaves were sold or otherwise transported out of North Carolina during the antebellum period (Jewett and Allen 192). In Craven, slave traders such as Ansley Davis and John Gildersleeve advertised in local newspapers looking to purchase slaves for the southwestern market, while many slaveholding families emigrated with their slaves to states such as Missouri, Alabama, and Florida (Davis 3; Gildersleeve 2; Watson 311). This outmigration, combined with rising slave prices, caused ownership throughout the county to grow more consolidated, with wealthy planters increasing their holdings while smaller farmers were ultimately priced out (Watson 311). By 1860, slave ownership had reached record lows (Watson 311). At the same time, more slaves than ever resided on large farms and plantations (see fig. 9).

Life for Craven's nineteenth century slaves is significantly better documented than that of their eighteenth-century predecessors. This is due in large part to the WPA Slave Narratives Project, a Depression-era initiative that set out to recover the testimonies of formerly enslaved individuals living throughout the United States. Craven County is the subject of three interviews: those of Martha Allen, Harriet Rogers, and Alex Huggins. In addition, there is the testimony of William Henry Singleton, author of *Recollections of My Slavery Days*, a 1922 account of

Singleton's time on plantations throughout the South, including Craven County, the place of his birth.

These accounts of antebellum enslaved life are extremely important. They are the only testimonies regarding the Craven County slave system that come directly from those who experienced it first-hand. Though they are few in number and subject to many critiques,¹ their relevance in this respect cannot be overstated.

The narratives of Martha Allen, Hattie Rogers, Alex Huggins, and William Henry Singleton present a complex and somewhat conflicting picture of the Craven County slave system. For example, Huggins explained to his interviewer that “nobody was bein’ mean to me. No, I was’nt bein’ whipped. Don’t you know all that story ’bout slaves bein’ whipped is all BUNK” (Huggins 450). As “val’able prope’ty,” Huggins maintained that he and his family were treated well by their master (Huggins 450). Huggins would later go on to say that he “heard so much talk ’bout freedom...[he] jus’ wanted to try it” (Huggins 450). It was this desire to explore what a life of freedom could offer that inspired him to run away from his master, rather than any ill treatment.

As opposed to Huggins’ relatively benign view lies the testimony of Martha Allen, who said that her “mammy belonged ter Tom Edward Gaskin an’ she wuzn’t half fed” (Allen 14). In describing daily life on her home plantation, she stated that “de cook nussed de babies while she cooked, so dat de mammies could wuck in de fiel’s, an’ all de mammies done wuz stick de babies in at de kitchen do’ on dere way ter de fiel’s. I’s hyard mammy say dat dey went ter

¹ For a more in-depth discussion, see “The Limitations of the Slave Narrative Collection.” This essay is included as part of the Library of Congress’ digital collection entitled “Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers’ Project, 1936 to 1938.” A URL for the essay is included in the Works Cited portion of this paper.

wuck widout breakfast, an' dat when she put her baby in de kitchen she'd go by de slop bucket an' drink de slops from a long-handled gourd" (Allen 14). On the Gaskin plantation, said Allen, "de slave driver wuz bad as he could be, an' de slaves got awful beatin's" (Allen 14). Gaskin's enslaved women were also subject to more intimate forms of brutality. When Allen's mother, Harriet, denied her young master's advances, "he chunk[ed] a lightwood knot an' [hit] her on de haid wid it" (Allen 14).

Sexual exploitation was also described by Hattie Rogers and William Henry Singleton. In their interviews, both identified their fathers as close relatives of their masters. Hattie Rogers provided the following information to her interviewer: "I called my father Marse Levin. We belonged to Allen Eubanks of New Bern, N.C. and his sister's son was my father. Marster didn't care who our fathers was jest so the women had children" (Rogers 227). Rogers' mother was just fifteen at the time of her birth (Rogers 227). Similarly, William Henry Singleton's "mother was a colored woman but [his] father was the brother of [his] master. [He] was sold because there had been trouble between [his] master and his [master's] brother over [him] and as [his] presence on the plantation was continually reminding them of something they wanted to forget [his] master sold [him] to get [him] out of the way" (Singleton 1- 4). Singleton was four years old at the time of his sale (Singleton 1).

Despite these testimonies, scholars insist that slavery in Craven County remained mild throughout the antebellum period. For example, in his 1987 text, *A History of New Bern and Craven County*, historian Alan D. Watson asserts that antebellum slaves "manifested a freedom of action...that almost belied their status" (312). Watson then goes on to state that "although worked long and arduously on the farms," the treatment of enslaved people was overwhelmingly lenient (312-313). In the text, he insists that Craven's enslaved population rarely faced

punishment, even for engaging in activities that were prohibited to them (Watson 313). In Watson's view, this behavior was allowed because many slave owners considered their slaves members of the family, and respected (to an extent) their autonomy (43, 312-313).

The first-hand accounts of Allen, Rogers, Huggins, and Singleton stand in direct counterpoint to this narrative. Despite their differences, they universally portray the Craven County slave system as an institution in which enslaved people were treated as property rather than people. Their stories confirm that even when treated leniently, enslaved people were never able to overcome their chattel status. In antebellum Craven, enslaved people's lives were always dependent upon the will of their masters, who could at any time and without consequence subject them to neglectful or even violent treatment. It is imperative that we accept and understand the inherent cruelty of this system. For Craven County researchers, this means acknowledging the limitations of the current narrative and beginning to interrogate our assumptions about antebellum slavery. What was slavery really like in the years before the Civil War? Where might we look for evidence, and what might this evidence mean for our understanding of the Craven County slave system at large?

Much of the enslaved experience is ultimately unknowable. We will never understand what it felt like to live as a slave any more than we can understand what it was like to live as a yeoman farmer or a wealthy plantation owner. However, the circumstances of enslavement—how slaves were housed and worked, the structure of their communities, the ways in which they were commodified—can and should be researched. This information is indispensable in helping to contextualize historical events, long-term trends, and current attitudes. In Craven County it is also necessary to balance an otherwise biased narrative. The systematic omission and minimization of slavery in Craven County scholarship must be addressed, not only because it is

generative in an academic sense, but also because it is one of many steps in dismantling a centuries-old legacy of racial inequality.

Beyond the Vale looks to the historic record to assist in this effort. Specifically, the project explores how historical population data can be collected and organized for increased usability in antebellum enslaved research. This data, which includes information from the United States Federal Census and county marriage records, is widely available and has been relatively well-preserved. However, it is rarely used to its full potential for research on enslaved populations. This is because population data concerning the enslaved is often removed from its context, making it much less useful in the identification of large-scale trends and patterns. *Beyond the Vale* explores how such difficulties can be mitigated by rethinking the ways that historical population data is structured and used together.

3. Development

My analysis of the Craven County slave testimonies left me with pressing questions about the antebellum slave system. These questions included:

1. What kind of pre-Civil War resident owned slaves, and what was their place in society? How large were most antebellum slave holdings?
2. In the years before the Civil War, did most slaves live in their owners' houses or did they have their own dwellings? About how many slaves would have lived in a single slave dwelling?
3. What kinds of work were most antebellum slaves engaged in? For those antebellum slaves involved in agriculture, what were the most popular crops?

4. Is there evidence of slave breeding in the years leading up to the Civil War (i.e. a high proportion of children and women of childbearing age)?
5. What were the social connections between antebellum slaveholding families?
How might these connections have shaped the networks through which enslaved people were bought and sold, or able to form communities?

These questions marked “gaps” within the dominant narrative of Craven County history and culture. In order to fill these gaps, I looked to historical population data for more information. By far, the most helpful and complete data came from the 1860 Federal Census.

The 1860 Federal Census is an important resource for late-period slave research. It is one of only two censuses to enumerate enslaved people. In Craven County, it is also the only antebellum census to break down its enumerations by specific location. For each enslaved person living in Craven, the 1860 Federal Census lists their age, sex, and color, as well as their township of residence and their master’s name. It also states whether the person was a fugitive from the state, whether they were manumitted and whether they were disabled, as well as the number of slave houses they were provided. For each slave owner, it lists their township of residence, name, age, sex, color, birthplace, occupation, value of real estate, and value of personal estate. It also tells us whether they married within the previous year, if they were disabled, a pauper, or a convict, whether they were able to read and speak English, and whether they attended school within the previous year. The 1860 Census also contains information on the farming and manufacturing operations of each Craven County slaveholder, including data on what and how much they produced on a yearly basis.

Unfortunately, each of these sets of information is listed in a different section of the census. These sections are called “schedules.” Each schedule can stretch over dozens of pages,

and must be explored individually. For example, if one wants to see how many slaves a particular farmer owned, as well as the crops his farm produced, one would have to check the Slave Schedule and then the Agricultural Schedule for his name. This makes it very difficult to build a comprehensive picture of each slaveholding household and nearly impossible to identify patterns within the larger community of enslaved people and their owners.

In *Beyond the Vale*, I explore the utility of combining the information from various census schedules into a single database. The first step in this process was to select a single township on which to focus my research. My criteria for selection dictated that the township have enough enslaved individuals to form an adequate dataset, and that its characteristics reflect those of a “typical” Craven County slaveholding community in 1860. With these criteria in mind, I chose Gooding’s Township, a rural farming township located south of the Neuse River and east of Hancock’s Creek. In 1860, the majority of enslaved people in Craven County were held in rural areas like Gooding’s. Some of these areas, such as Reeves’ Township, were quite small in terms of slave holdings. Others, like North of the Neuse River Township, were large. Gooding’s falls somewhere in the lower middle, making its data sizeable yet navigable. In 1860, it was home to just over three hundred enslaved people; one of these individuals was most likely my ancestor, Isariah.

From my initial research into Isariah’s life, I was already familiar with many of Gooding’s slaveholding families. This made it easier to compile the census information into a single database. I began by gathering information from Schedule Two of the 1860 Federal Census, also known as the Slave Schedule (see fig. 1). From this part of the census, I listed the age, sex, and race of each bondsperson. I then included the number of slave dwellings provided by the slaveholder and the total number of enslaved people owned. I included this data because I

knew that it would prove helpful in answering questions regarding the size and composition of area slave holdings as well as the living situation of each enslaved person.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Enslaved Person's Age	Enslaved Person's Sex	Was Enslaved Person of Mixed Race?	Number of Slave Dwellings Provided by Slaveholder	Number of Slaves Owned by Slaveholder in 1860	
2	56	Female	No	1	42	
3	30	Male	Yes	1	42	
4	32	Male	Yes	1	42	
5	29	Female	No	1	42	
6	27	Female	No	1	42	
7	25	Female	No	1	42	
8	23	Female	No	1	42	
9	20	Male	No	1	42	
10	17	Female	Yes	1	42	
11	15	Female	Yes	1	42	

Fig. 1. Screenshot of the data transcription process. Shows data from Schedule Two of the 1860 Federal Census, also known as the Slave Schedule.

My next step was to add the first and last names of each enslaved person's owner (see fig. 2). I then gathered the owners' occupations, sexes, and races from Schedule One, the portion of the census dealing with free individuals. I also included whether the slave owner was a minor, how many free residents lived in their household, and the values of their real and personal property. This information was included in order to help determine what kind of Craven County resident owned slaves and what their place in society was.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	Enslaved Person's Age	Enslaved Person's Sex	Was Enslaved Person of Mixed Race?	Number of Slave Dwellings Provided by Slaveholder	Number of Slaves Owned by Slaveholder in 1860	Slaveholder Surname	Slaveholder Given Name	Occupation of Slaveholder	Slaveholder Sex	Slaveholder Race	Was slaveholder a minor?	Number of Free People in Household	Real Property Value of Slaveholder	Personal Property Value of Slaveholder
2	56	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
3	30	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
4	32	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
5	29	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
6	27	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
7	25	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
8	23	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
9	20	Male	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
10	17	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000
11	15	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000

Fig. 2. Screenshot of the data transcription process. Shows the addition of data from Schedule One of the 1860 Federal Census, also known as the Free Population Schedule.

Next, I gathered information from the Agricultural Schedule, or Schedule Four (see fig. 3). To do this, I looked up the name of each slaveholder who was involved in agriculture. I then listed the top crop for each slaveholder and whether or not they were involved in cotton, tobacco, or rice cultivation. This data provides a clear view of the types of work Gooding’s enslaved community was engaged in.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1	Enslaved Person's Age	Enslaved Person's Sex	Was Enslaved Person of Mixed Race?	Number of Slave Dwellings Provided by Slaveholder	Number of Slaves Owned by Slaveholder in 1860	Slaveholder Surname	Slaveholder Given Name	Occupation of Slaveholder	Slaveholder Sex	Slaveholder Race	Was slaveholder a minor?	Number of Free People in Household	Real Property Value of Slaveholder	Personal Property Value of Slaveholder	Top Crop	Cotton/Tobacco/Rice Cultivation
2	56	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
3	30	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
4	32	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
5	29	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
6	27	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
7	25	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
8	23	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
9	20	Male	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
10	17	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None
11	15	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None

Fig. 3. Screenshot of the data transcription process. Shows the addition of data from Schedule Four of the 1860 Federal Census, also known as the Agricultural Schedule.

I used the same approach when gathering data from the Manufacturing Schedule (Schedule Five) and included whether or not the slaveholder was involved in the production of timber, turpentine, or tar (see fig. 4). This gave me further information on the types of work the enslaved community performed.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1	Enslaved Person's Age	Enslaved Person's Sex	Was Enslaved Person of Mixed Race?	Number of Slave Dwellings Provided by Slaveholder	Number of Slaves Owned by Slaveholder in 1860	Slaveholder Surname	Slaveholder Given Name	Occupation of Slaveholder	Slaveholder Sex	Slaveholder Race	Was slaveholder a minor?	Number of Free People in Household	Real Property Value of Slaveholder	Personal Property Value of Slaveholder	Top Crop	Cotton/Tobacco/Rice Cultivation	Owner involved in production of Indigo, turpentine, tar, etc.
2	55	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
3	30	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
4	32	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
5	29	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
6	27	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
7	25	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
8	23	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
9	20	Male	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
10	17	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
11	15	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes

Fig. 4. Screenshot of the data transcription process. Shows the addition of data from Schedule Five of the 1860 Federal Census, also known as the Manufacturing Schedule.

My next step was to obtain information on related surnames for each slaveholder (see fig. 5). I did this by searching for each individual in the county marriage records and by reapproaching the Free Population Schedule. For married women, I noted their maiden name. For married men, I noted the maiden names of their spouses. For any family with people living in their household who did not share their surname, I listed those additional surnames. I did this in the hope that it would allow me to gain a better idea of how slaveholding families were interconnected.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
1	Enslaved Person's Age	Enslaved Person's Sex	Was Enslaved Person of Mixed Race?	Number of Slave Dwellings Provided by Slaveholder	Number of Slaves Owned by Slaveholder in 1860	Slaveholder Surname	Slaveholder Given Name	Occupation of Slaveholder	Slaveholder Sex	Slaveholder Race	Was slaveholder a minor?	Slaveholder Related Surnames 1	Slaveholder Related Surnames 2	Slaveholder Related Surnames 3	Number of Free People in Household	Real Property Value of Slaveholder	Personal Property Value of Slaveholder	Top Crop	Cotton/Tobacco/Rice Cultivation	Owner involved in production of Indigo, turpentine, tar, etc.
2	56	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
3	30	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
4	32	Male	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
5	29	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
6	27	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
7	25	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
8	23	Female	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
9	20	Male	No	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
10	17	Female	Yes	1	42	Borden	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thorpe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes

Fig. 5. Screenshot of the addition of related surnames. Shows the addition of surname-related data from Schedule One of the 1860 Federal Census, as well as from the Craven County Marriage Records Database.

My final step in building the database was to make it easily searchable by individual and by household (see fig. 6). In order to do this, I assigned each individual—both enslaved and free—a unique ID number. I then assigned each household a unique ID number. While the

inclusion of ID numbers did not have an immediate impact on my visualization project, I felt that this addition could help later researchers who might have to work with the information in the database more directly.

1	Enslaved Person ID	Household ID	Enslaved Person's Age	Enslaved Person's Sex	Was Enslaved Person of Mixed Race?	Number of Slaves Dwelling Provided by Slaveholder	Number of Slaves Owned by Slaveholder in 1860	Slaveholder ID	Slaveholder Surname	Slaveholder Given Name	Occupation of Slaveholder	Slaveholder Sex	Slaveholder Race	Was slaveholder a farmer?	Slaveholder Related Spouses 1	Slaveholder Related Spouses 2	Slaveholder Related Spouses 3	Number of Free People in Household	Real Property Value of Slaveholder	Personal Property Value of Slaveholder	Top Crop	Cotton/Tobacco/Rice Cultivation	Other products listed separately
2	GT60-CCEP-1000	GT60-8000CCH1	56	Female	No	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
3	GT60-CCEP-1001	GT60-8000CCH1	30	Male	Yes	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
4	GT60-CCEP-1002	GT60-8000CCH1	32	Male	Yes	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
5	GT60-CCEP-1003	GT60-8000CCH1	28	Female	No	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
6	GT60-CCEP-1004	GT60-8000CCH1	27	Female	No	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
7	GT60-CCEP-1005	GT60-8000CCH1	25	Female	No	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
8	GT60-CCEP-1006	GT60-8000CCH1	23	Female	No	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
9	GT60-CCEP-1007	GT60-8000CCH1	20	Male	No	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes
10	GT60-CCEP-1008	GT60-8000CCH1	17	Female	Yes	100.00%	42	GT60-8000CCH1	Boston	B F	Farmer	Male	White	No	Wynne	Thoppe	Whitehead	12	500	4000	Indian Corn	None	Yes

Fig. 6. Screenshot of the ID-assignment process. Shows how ID numbers were assigned to enslaved people and slaveholders. Also shows the assignment of Household IDs.

Overall, this process took a little over two months to complete. One of the reasons for the extended time frame is that the census is inconsistent. Individuals listed as slaveholders in Gooding's are not always listed as living in Gooding's, and vice-versa. This created confusion as to who should be included in the database and who should not. In addition, names sometimes vary from one part of the census to another. These variations are often significant, such as "Baylor" and "Ballinger" and "Lee" and "Lowe." I resolved the location inconsistencies by including both slaveholders listed as living in Gooding's and those listed as holding slaves in Gooding's in an effort to create the most complete data set possible. The name inconsistencies were resolved by carefully reviewing the details listed for each individual. This helped me to ensure that I was correctly identifying the same person in each part of the census. Examining neighboring families also assisted in this effort.

Another challenge concerned the language used in the census. Some of the terms, especially those regarding race and disability, are now considered pejorative and/or inaccurate. I changed this language in my database and reformatted the data accordingly. For example, the

original census categorizes enslaved individuals as either “black” or “mulatto.” Instead, I created a yes/no column designed to indicate whether or not the person was of mixed race.

I also wanted to ensure that enslaved people and slave holders were described as similarly as possible. This was difficult considering that the 1860 Federal Census does not list enslaved people by name. I realized that I would have to resort to using ID numbers to differentiate one individual from another. However, I did not want to create a situation in which enslaved people were identified only by numbers, while slaveholders were identified by name. I ultimately decided to assign IDs to both slaves and slaveholders. This in turn led me to create housing IDs for each individual, a unique feature which links together every person, both enslaved and free, dwelling within a given unit. If one compares both the slaveholder IDs and the housing IDs it becomes clear that multiple slaveholders often resided together. I had struggled with how to represent this in the database, and the ID assignments made the process much easier.

4. Visualizing the Data

After completing the infrastructure of *Beyond the Vale*, my next step was to create a series of visualizations. These visualizations show how population data can be analyzed in order to generate new and more critical understandings of Craven County’s antebellum slave system. While traditional tables are useful for organizing information or comparing one or two values at a time, visualizations such as charts, graphs, maps, and webs examine data sets as a whole (Few). They excel at displaying “patterns, trends, or exceptions” within a given data set and quickly and concisely communicating “the story” behind that data (Few). The goal of *Beyond the Vale* was to investigate the ways in which the story of antebellum slavery in Craven County could be told

using quantitative data. Visualizations proved an excellent means of doing this in an accessible and engaging fashion.

Google Sheets contains its own data visualization software. I created the majority of my charts using this application. In the initial stages of the project, I experimented with using Tableau, a popular piece of interactive digitalization software. However, I found the program very difficult to understand and use. This was the primary factor in my ultimate decision to use Google Sheets as my main visualization software. For example, order to create charts in Google Sheets, I only needed to select the relevant data sets and tell the program which kind of chart I wanted to make. In some cases, I had to adjust scales and titles for the charts, but the application bore the brunt of the work. This was ideal for someone like me, who has no background in digital technology. These charts, along with in-depth analyses of my findings, are available on the *Beyond the Vale* website at beyondthevale.commons.gc.cuny.edu.

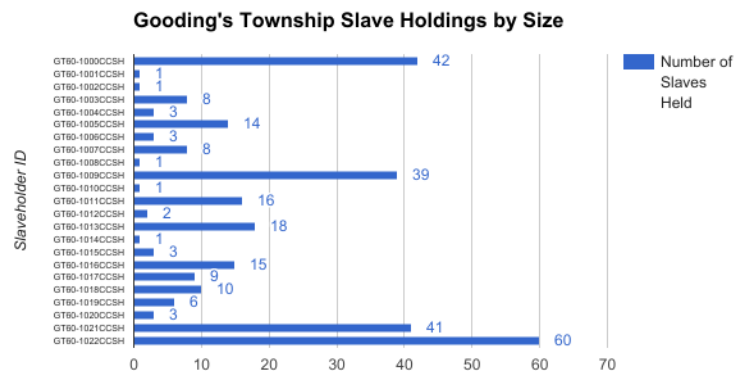


Fig. 7. A visualization showing Gooding's Township slave holdings by size.

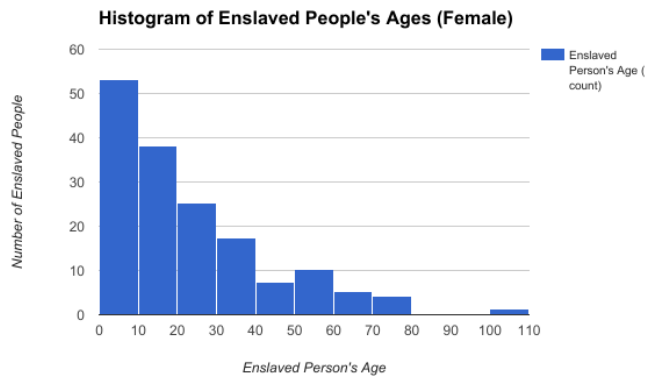


Fig. 8. A visualization showing the breakdown of ages within the male enslaved community of Gooding’s Township.

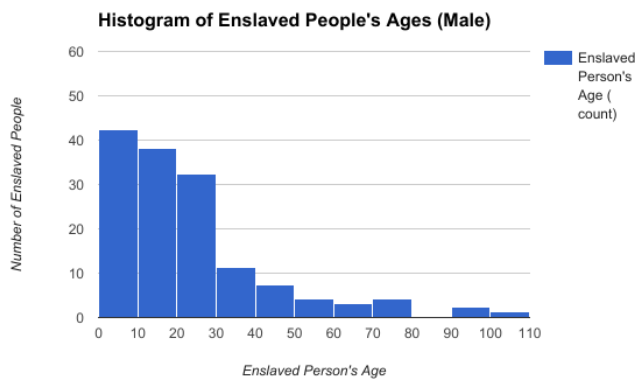


Fig. 9. A visualization showing the breakdown of ages within the female enslaved community of Gooding’s Township.

I did not use Google Sheets to create the network chart of surnames located in Figure 10. Instead I used Gephi, a piece of “open-source network analysis and visualization software” suggested to me by my advisor, Matthew K. Gold (Tools). Gephi enabled me to create a visual “web” of slaveholding and related families living in Gooding’s in 1860. The learning curve for Gephi was extremely steep. I had a lot of trouble figuring out how to use the software, even though my project was fairly simple. In the end I created a very basic chart and filled in “extras,” such as underscores, a key, and a title, using Paint. Though the final results are a bit rough, I feel

that the chart adequately conveys the information it contains. In the future, I would like to work more with Gephi and create a more nuanced version of this chart.

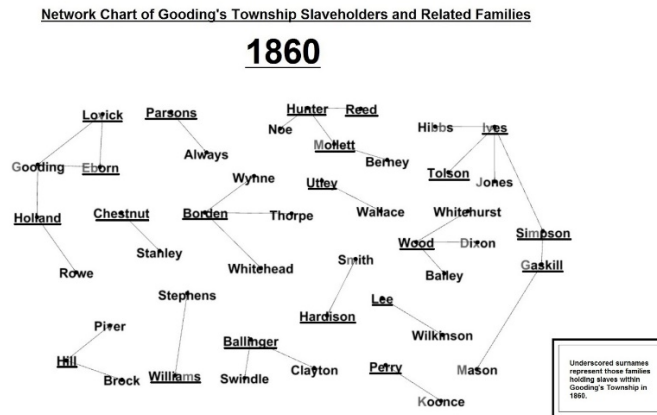


Fig. 10. Visualization showing the connections between various slaveholding and non-slaveholding families in Gooding's Township.

5. Futures

Beyond the Vale is a project that I intend to continue to work on. I plan to enroll in a doctoral program that will allow me to pursue it in an academic context, and I also hope to work on it in my spare time. My first step is to present a copy of my work to the Craven County Public Library. I hope that they will deem my visualizations informative enough to be included on their website as a digital resource for local researchers. I will also discuss the best way to preserve my original database with them. Ideally, interested parties would be able to access the database in order to make necessary changes or additions. If this is not possible using the Public Library website, I have created my own website as a permanent online home for *Beyond the Vale* (beyondthevale.commons.gc.cuny.edu). This option allows for maximum control over my own work, including the ability for myself and others to make changes to it. The biggest change I intend to make is to expand the scale of the project.

In its current iteration, *Beyond the Vale* only includes information from Gooding's Township. Going forward, I would like for it to encompass the entire county of Craven and in time, the entire state. While this goal was deemed too expansive for a master's level study, it may work well for a doctoral project, allowing me to explore regional trends and variations throughout the state. In the future, I would also like to include data from pre-1860s censuses. This would allow researchers to see how the slave system changed over time and to identify important temporally-specific characteristics or trends. Unfortunately, utilizing a broader range of census data requires tools and methodologies that I do not yet have the proficiency to employ. However, with time, I am confident that I can gain the skills necessary to process a wider variety of information.

I believe that *Beyond the Vale* is successful in proving the utility of historical population data in the study of slavery in antebellum Craven County. While resources like the 1860 Federal Census cannot tell us everything about the lives of Craven's enslaved residents, this project shows how the data they provide can be used to shed new light on aspects of the slave system that have yet to be thoroughly explored. *Beyond the Vale* provides one of the first sets of quantitative data on the study of slavery in antebellum Craven County. Hopefully, it will encourage further scholarship and facilitate the design of new and better methods of gathering and analyzing historic information on this long-neglected subject.

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