



*'...back in the woods,
where nobody goes, unless they go on purpose'*

The Historical Landscape of Miller Grove,
a Free Ante Bellum African American Community in
Southern Illinois

*by
Mary R. McCorrie and Heather Carey
U.S. Forest Service
Shawnee National Forest*

John Von Trompe

“...he has bought a place seven miles up the creek, here, back in the woods, where nobody goes, unless they go on purpose; and it's a place that isn't found in a hurry.”

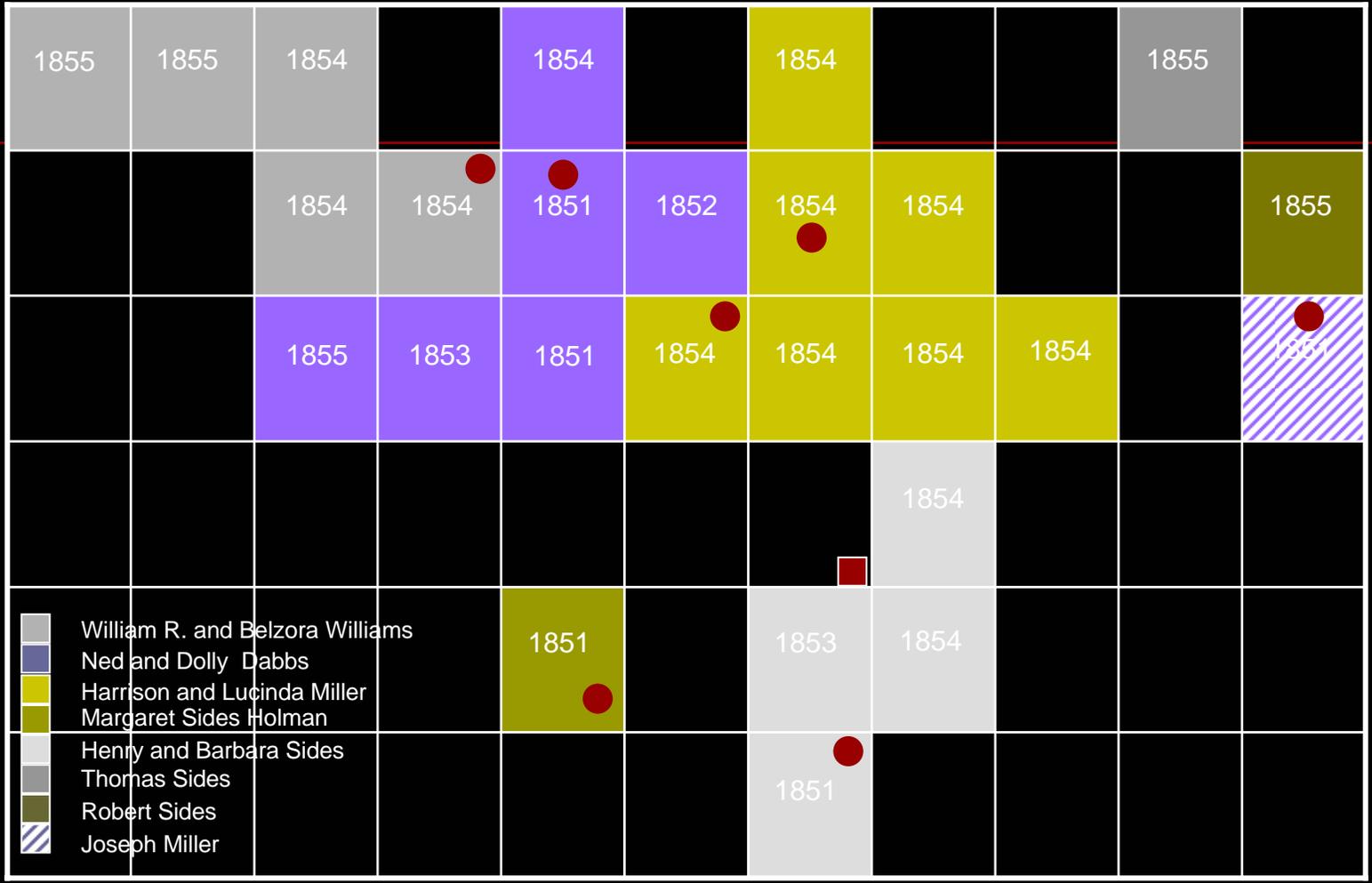
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1853





Pope County, IL

GLO Land Ownership



● Farmstead ■ Cemetery



Table 1. Population of Miller Grove

Year	1850	1900	1920
Number of Families	7	20	8
Population	32	108	21



Abby Gill Miller and her daughters

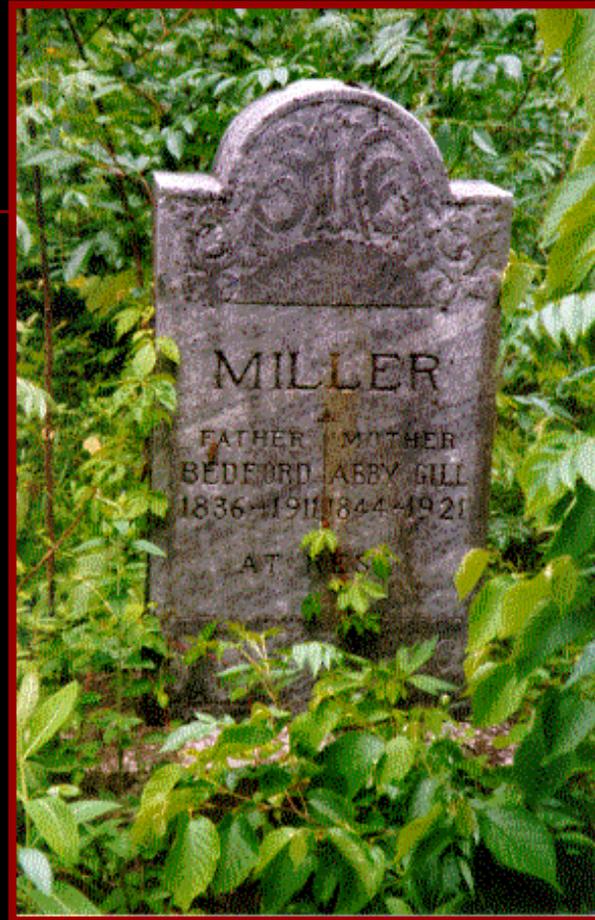


Fannie Miller McClure

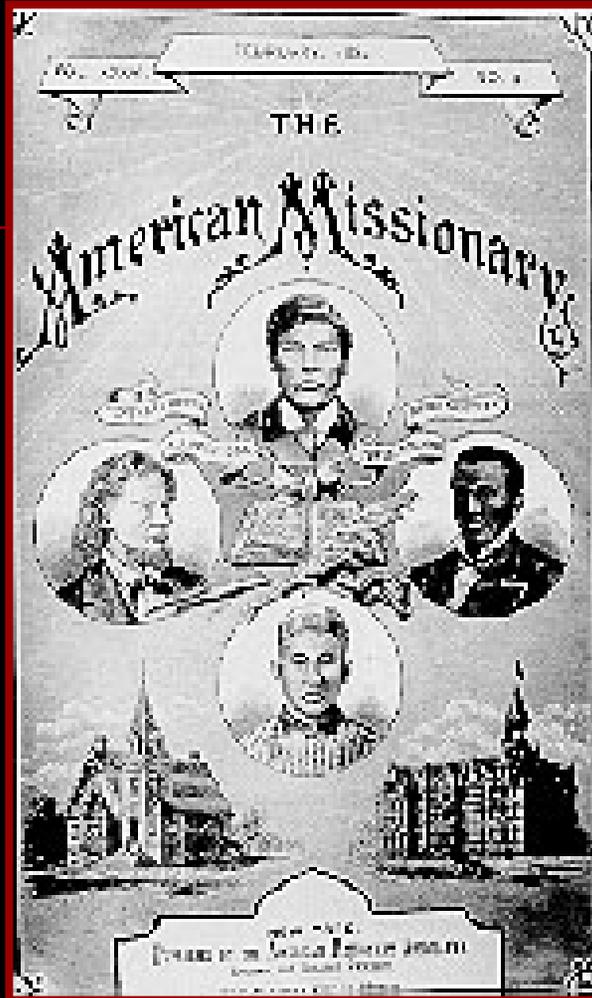


Shawnee National Forest

Mt. Gilead African Methodist Episcopal Church



Miller Grove Cemetery



At home, Chestnut Bluff, near
 Broad Oak, Pope Co, Ill., June 1st 1857.
 Mr S. S. Jocelyn, Dear Bro,
 In consequence of circumstances in the domes-
 tic circle, our Colportage operations, have been
 considerably shorn, of what it would have
 been, had our affairs been otherwise, within
 the Months of April & May. So much so, that
 the first regular Monthly report, closes with
 the close of May.
 Under the circumstances of seeing, & conversing
 with so many, not at their homes, the accurate
 number of families visited, have not been strictly
 registered.
 Of the Books, on hands, a few only have been
 sold, & the Tracts & Documents on hands, a hand-
 ful only, remains, our labours being chiefly, when
 these silent, yet powerful, messengers, had been
 exerting an influence, for the last 18 Months,
 which my pen cannot portray to your mind.
 One individual, whose Brother, & Brother-in-law, with
 their families, were among the Kansas sufferers, af-
 ter having a lengthy conversation, on the great
 wrong of Slavery, & complaining Slavery, with some
 soil, progression, said, "It only remains, for
 a few Jamesseilers to locate here, to give
 this portion of the state a stimulus, to
 move on, & to make this, an important por-
 tion of the state."
 In a conversation with one, who has had
 good opportunity to test the difference, be-
 tween Slave, & Free labour, said, "An ima-
 ginary line, dividing Missouri, from Iowa, has
 also, the influence of dividing the land, of the

A letter from James West



Hayes Creek Canyon located north of Miller Grove.

1850 Farmland

1860 Farmland

Name	Improved	Unimproved	Improved	Unimproved
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Ned Dabbs	12	60	25	215
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Henry Sides	30	60	40	120
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Harrison Miller	16	20	60	380
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Sanko Ellison	20	60	---	---
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Bedford Miller	---	---	20	20
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Robert Sides	---	---	24	20
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Charles Dabbs	---	---	25	175
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Riley Williams	---	---	50	190
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Sam Singleton	---	---	10	30
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W.J. Williams	---	---	100	276
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Thos. A. Williams	---	---	25	75
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James Dabbs	---	---	25	55
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Total Miller Grove	78	200	404	1556
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Pope County	15,629	30,808	30,100	83,518
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Mean Farm Size	92 Acres		146 Acres	
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1870 Farmland

1880 Farmland

Name	Improved	Woodland	Tilled	Meadow	Woodland
Jerry Shepherd	100	220	---	---	---
Harrison Miller	70	170			
Bedford Miller	35	45	40	5	40
Robert Sides	10	30	15	---	---
Henry Miller	30	50			
Riley Williams	120	190	250	50	300
John Sides	---	---	15	---	---
Franklin Sides	---	---	17	3	18
Ben. Dimnery	---	---	9	---	---
Total Miller Grove	365	705	346	58	358
Pope County	55,980	87,754	91,955	13,134	87,728
Mean Farm Size	130 Acres		102 Acres		

UNCLE
TOM'S
CABIN

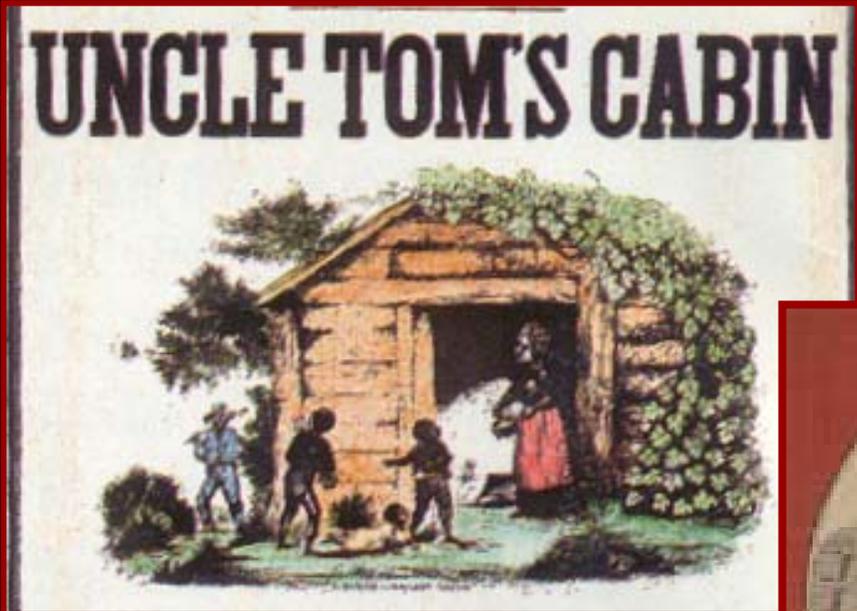


HARRIET
BEECHER
STOWE



Eliza Harris, heroine of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and her son Harry.

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN



UNCLE TOM'S CABIN



UNCLE TOM'S CABIN



A NORTH-SIDE VIEW OF SLAVERY.

THE REFUGEE:

OR THE

NARRATIVES OF FUGITIVE SLAVES IN CANADA.

RELATED BY THEMSELVES,

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF THE HISTORY AND CONDITION OF THE
COLORED POPULATION OF UPPER CANADA.

BY

BENJAMIN DREW.

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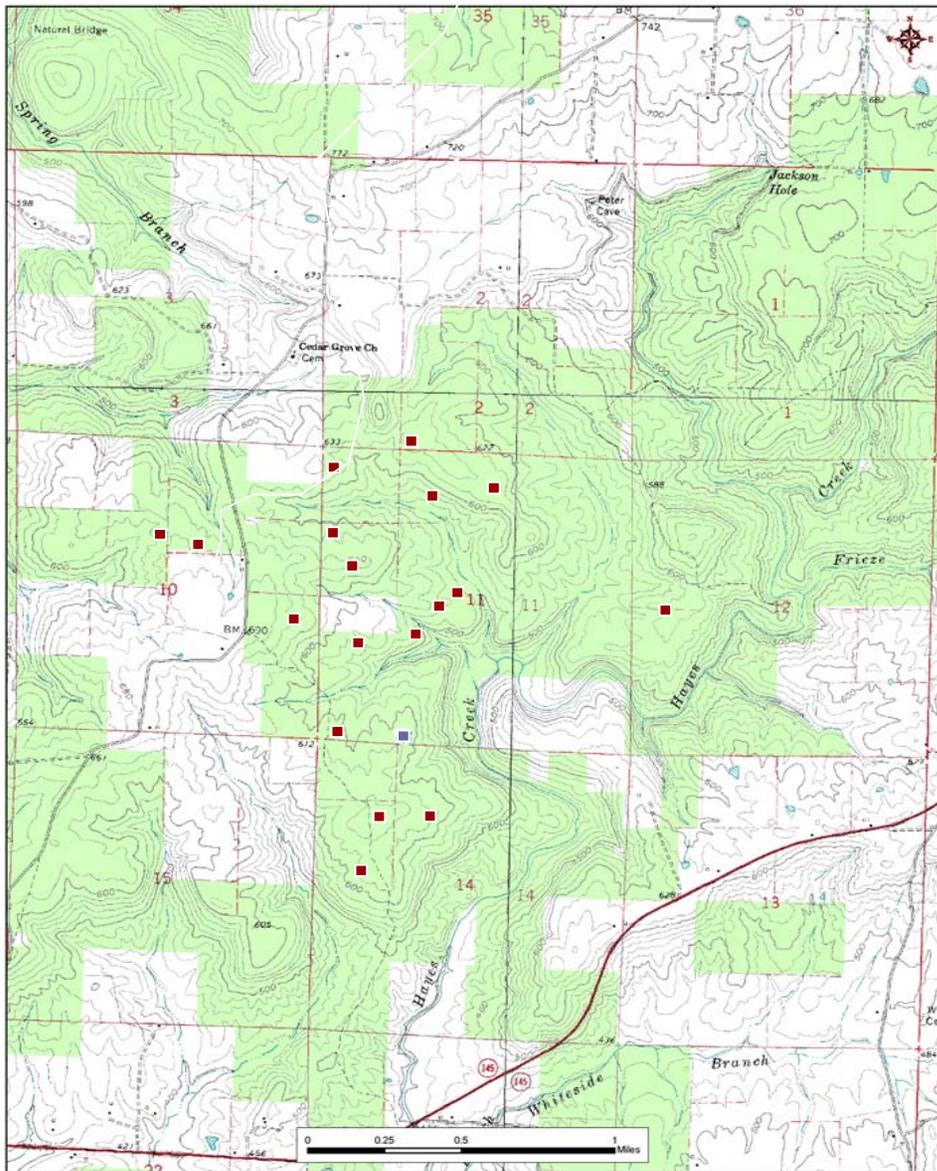
Agricultural Products



- Hogs
- Cows
- Sheep
- Chickens
- Oxen
- Horses and mules

- Tobacco
- Corn
- Wheat
- Fruit trees





Location of farmsteads
associated with Miller
Grove

