

The Guion Network: Enslaved Families of New Bern, North Carolina (Journal Summary)

Kellie M. Farrish

Founder & Principal Genealogist, Reparative Genealogy®

Executive Summary

Your journal documents a multi-generational Guion/Manly/Haywood/Williams/Pugh network centered in New Bern (Craven Co.) with extensions into Indian Woods/adjacent tracts (Bertie & Edgecombe Cos.). The core enslavers analyzed are Isaac (var. Issac) Guion, Isaac Lee Guion, John W(illiams) Guion, John Amos Guion, and their kin/associates. Across probate, deeds/bills of sale, trust deeds, and runaway notices, the journal identifies dozens of enslaved people by personal name (with ages, valuations, and kinship markers in several cases). Multiple names reappear after emancipation in 1870/1880 census entries, strongly suggesting survivorship into freedom and potential surname adoption “Guion/Guyon.”

Method Snapshot

Collation of probate inventory (1842, John W. Guion); bills of sale/gifts/trust deeds (1786–1832); runaway notices (early 1800s); and a will naming an enslaved woman and “all her children.” Reconstruction-era linkage via 1870/1880 population schedules to reveal likely formerly enslaved Guion households. Contextual timelines for urban enslavement in New Bern and political aftermath (1898).

I. Roster of Enslaved Individuals Named in the Journal

(Organized by record group; original spellings preserved; variant/uncertain readings noted.)

A) John W. Guion Probate Inventory (1842)

George (61), Frank (61), Ned (54), Joe (56), Jesse (56), Frank (young) (44), Daniel (31), Kit (35), Bob (37), Bill (39), Ben (child of Nanny) (20), Moses (child of Nanny) (11), Stephen (child

of Ferebee) (8), Cisero (child of Eliza) (5), Hannah (aged 71), Nanny (59), Eliza (26), Harriet (child of Eliza) (3), Louisa (daughter of Nanny) (23) and children Charles (7 months) and Owen (5), Clarissa (25), Esther (15), Fanny (child of Ferebee) (17), Hannah (child of Sukey) (10), Frances (11), Sukey (40), Adaline (child of Sukey) (~8?), Julia (child of Sukey) (4½), Hetty (child of Sukey) (12), Watts (child of Sukey) (10), Jane (child of Sukey) (15), Becky (60).

Note: This single inventory is unusually informative for kinship clusters (e.g., Nanny with adult daughter Louisa and grandchildren Charles and Owen; Eliza with children Harriet and Cisero; Sukey with a cohort of children), enabling multi-generational reconstruction.

B) Wills & Bequests

Mary Guion's will: "my negro slave woman, Esther, and all the children of said Esther," bequeathed to Alexander Henderson Guion. ("Esther" aligns with one named in the 1842 inventory.)

C) Deeds, Bills of Sale, Gifts (1786–1805)

Shadrack (about 12), Dinah, Rose (daughter of Venus), Quam, Boston (about 15), Sall (possibly Sarah), Beck and infant Mary, Charles, Titus, Nancy, Harriet, Milly (two individuals), Moses, Marindy, Betty, Elsy, Loudon, Sukey, Charles (infant), Hannah, Eliza, Little Sam, Scipio, Abby, Delia, Lucinda, Joney, Harry, America.

D) Runaway/Notice Items (early 19th c.)

Peter ("formerly the property of Dr. Guion"), Will (about 23), Hardy (about 19).

II. Reconstruction-Era Individuals Likely Connected (1870–1880)

Lovier/Lovey Guion, Lucinda Jones with Lucretia Guion and William H. Guion, Frank Guion with Esther, Edward Guion, Moses Guyon, Mary Guion. These persons likely represent formerly enslaved Guion-connected households and are crucial for descendant tracing.

III. Evidence Synthesis & Linkage Hypotheses

1. Parent-Child Clusters: Nanny's line (Nanny, Louisa, Ben, Moses), Eliza's line (Eliza, Harriet, Cisero), and Sukey's cohort (Jane, Hetty, Watts, Hannah, Adaline, Julia, Charles).

2. Re-identifications: Ned ≈ Edward Guion (gardener), Frank ≈ Frank/Francis Guion (elder), Esther possibly linked across both records.

3. Urban Enslavement Signature: Ward 4–6 households with mulatto children reflect pre-war coercion; names match maternal lines.

4. Transfers & Collateral: Late-18th-c. sales/gifts show movement among Guion kin, mapping wealth and legal control.

IV. Places & Properties (for mapping)

New Bern town lots and “Saunders place” near Jimmy’s Creek/Trent Road, aligning with later Black neighborhoods such as Long Wharf and Greater Duffyfield.

V. Gaps & Targeted Next Steps

1. Resolve ambiguous readings (Sall/Fillis).
 2. Locate Cohabitation Register entries (1866).
 3. Search for Freedmen’s Bureau labor contracts and Freedman’s Bank records for matching names.
 4. Build forward-trees for matriarchs Nanny, Sukey, and Eliza.
-

VI. Deliverables for Phase II

- **Ledger of Named Individuals** (Name | Age | Kin | Source | Proposed 1870 Identity | Confidence).
 - **Property Dossier:** map “Saunders place” with 1870 neighborhoods.
 - **Cohabitation & Labor-Contract List:** ready for archive search.
-

VII. Contextual Takeaways

The Guion network reflects **urban, professional-class enslavement** typical of New Bern, tied to civic elites who evolved into Reconstruction-era political figures. The journal captures continuity from enslavement to early Jim Crow structures and the roots of Black community survival.

Appendix: Alphabetical List of Enslaved Individuals

Abby, Adaline, America, Ben, Becky, Betty, Bill, Bob, Boston, Charles (infant), Cisero, Clarissa, Daniel, Delia, Dinah, Eliza, Elsy, Esther, Fanny, Frances, Frank, George, Hannah (aged and child), Harriet, Harry, Hetty, Jane, Jesse, Joe, Joney, Julia, Kit, Louisa, Loudon, Marindy, Mary, Milly (2), Moses, Nancy, Nanny, Ned, Peter, Quam, Rose, Sall/Sarah?, Scipio, Shadrack, Stephen, Sukey, Titus, Watts, Will, Fillis?.

Digitally signed and verified by Kellie M. Farrish
Founder & Principal Genealogist, Reparative Genealogy®

All citations conform to Elizabeth Shown Mills, Evidence Explained, 4th ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2023).
