

Recd 11 October.

The State of Maryland, Prince Georges County &c.

Be it Remembered, that on this Eleventh day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty one, Thomas Bowie of Bladensburg, in the County and State aforesaid, personally appears before the undersigned, a Justice of the Peace in the State and County aforesaid, who deposes and saith, that on the Evening of the 24<sup>th</sup> day of August 1814, subsequent to the Battle of Bladensburg, his negro man, calling himself Jerry Covington, aged about twenty one years at that time, and about five feet six or eight inches high, of dark complexion and short woolly hair, did appear from his farm and plantation laying about half a mile north of Bladensburg, and it is believed went of with the British army upon their return to Benedict upon the Potomac, under what circumstances this Deponent does not know, but taking into consideration the general good conduct, and knowing well his warm attachment to his mother and a numerous family of brothers and sisters at this time living, this Deponent has always, and still does, believe, that no fraud or improper reasons were made use of to induce and entice him away, that this Deponent has never been able to learn with any kind of certainty what his situation with the British army was during the short time which they occupied the Village, but has every reason to believe that he was confined with several other Blacks in a house appropriated to that purpose upon the occasion already aforesaid to, and forcibly carried away by some of the British soldiers or noncommissioned officers.

This Deponent further states, that on the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 1814, his mulatto man, calling himself William Best, a half brother of the aforesaid Jerry, about the same stature and two years older, of a tolerably fair complexion, his hair much inclined to that of a white man, departed from his plantation about four miles north of Upper Marlborough, and was seen amongst the British soldiers then stationed at that place, when then voluntarily or otherwise this Deponent cannot say, that he this Deponent learnt subsequently from a black man (who knew them both very well and who informed this Deponent that he was compelled to go down with the British army upon their return from the capture of Washington and made his escape from that place) that he see both William

Blacks 21 - 23 - 24 - 25 -

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and Jerry at that place; that they informed him that they were much  
distressed at their situation and desired great anxiety to make  
their escape also, and return home with him; that when he saw  
them last they were engaged with the British soldiers in driving  
the water side a parcel of cattle to be put on board the British  
flat, that he afterwards understood they were carried on board with  
the cattle, and was thus induced an opportunity of escape, and  
their return home; that he, the Dep't. has never heard of them  
in <sup>any</sup> manner or form since, and whether they were in the possession  
of the British army at any place within the jurisdiction of the  
United States at the time of the signing or exchange of the ratifi-  
cation of the Treaty of Ghent, this Dep't. is entirely unable  
to say, being, after the Battle of Bladensburg far removed from  
the scene of war, but does not entertain a doubt but they  
were with the Army until its final evacuation of the United  
States, unless some accident may have befallen them.  
This Dep't. further states that he in no manner of doubt, but  
the aforesaid slaves, if offered for sale would have readily  
and without any difficulty, have bought him One thousand  
dollars the <sup>at the time referred to</sup> ~~two~~ he has no hesitation in saying, that if in his  
possessions at this time, ~~would~~ as on the times in respect  
to money matters, he would not take for them One thousand  
dollars, or any thing like that sum.

Sworn before  
Thomas Ferral

And at the same time and place appears also Humphrey B. &  
John Bowie, sons of the Dep't. and Edw. L. Boteler all  
of Bladensburg and of lawful age, who depose and say that  
they know quite well the above described Slaves, that they did  
disappear at the times above referred to, that they know and  
believe the facts and circumstances relative to them to be  
perfectly correct and true, and are quite satisfied that the  
valuation set upon them by the Dep't. is very moderate  
and considerably under their value at this time and at  
all times since their elopement, or disappearance.

Sworn before  
Thomas Ferral

Further at the same time and place appeared Rachel Deakins  
the Widow of Guy Deakins deceased, who was in the year 1814  
Coudrota, or manager for the Dep't. within named, on his plan-  
tation north of Upper Marlborough, and made Oath on the Holy  
Gospels that she well recollects William, calling himself William  
Bolt, a labourer under the direction of her late husband, that  
he disappeared from the plantation already referred to, on or  
about the night of the 25<sup>th</sup> of Aug: 1814, and that her opinion  
standing was that he had joined the British Army then at  
Marlborough or rather a part of it, and what circumstances  
she knows not, and believes all the facts and circumstances  
set forth by the Dep't. in respect to both William & Jerry,  
both of whom she knows well, to be perfectly correct and true.

Sworn to before  
Thomas Ferral

Maryland Prince Georges County Jct.  
I here by Certify that Thomas Ferral  
gentleman before whom the foregoing affidavits  
appear to have been made and who has thereto  
subscribed his name was at the time of so doing  
one of the Justices of the Peace and for said  
County duly Commissioned and sworn

In Testimony whereof I have  
hereto subscribed my name and  
and affixed the Seal of Prince  
Georges County Court this  
fifteenth day of September  
Eighteen hundred and twenty one  
Aquilla Beall Secy of P<sup>l</sup> C<sup>o</sup>