

George Waters Letter (January 23, 1832)

Best-Effort Transcription and Historical Analysis

Best-Effort Transcription (Page 1)

Genl. Coffin

Sir,

About ten years ago I settled my plantation on the west side of the Chattahoochee in sight of my descent from the Cherokee, inasmuch as my farm of houses was about twenty [unclear] below my buildings, and extends my farm above my buildings about half a mile, the whole extent of my farm runs along the river about one mile and a half, taking in about six hundred acres of land of various qualities.

My fence was constructed for a three-fold purpose:

1st. To keep my stock from the river.

2nd. That I might have the opportunity of opening land for cultivation as I might require.

3rd. For the purpose of enclosing a field in the bend of the river.

About two or three years ago certain persons, viz. Miller, Green, A. Hambleton, Webb, J. Hambleton, Slayton and Coleman, trespassed upon my rights by clearing land within my enclosure and planting the same for two or three years without a rail around their fields and altogether protected by my fence.

By this unlawful trespass I have been narrowed in my plantation enclosure, and as I work upwards of twenty hands I can cultivate fully three hundred acres of land. By these trespasses I have been unable to cultivate more than one hundred and fifty or sixty acres.

The former Agent (Col. Sandford) notified the aforementioned persons, so soon as they gathered their last year's crops, to give me peaceable possession of all the lands cleared and claimed unjustly by them to me, but now taking ...

[The letter continues onto a subsequent page not provided here.]

Historical Analysis

This letter, dated January 23, 1832, was written by George Waters to General Coffin, a federal Cherokee agent. The document appears to be a formal complaint concerning land use, fencing, cultivation rights, and alleged trespassing on property located along the Chattahoochee River during the final years before Cherokee Removal.

Key observations:

- George Waters describes a plantation of approximately 600 acres.
- He states that he had occupied and improved the property for roughly ten years.
- The letter references approximately twenty enslaved laborers (“hands”) working the plantation.
- Waters argues that neighboring individuals cleared and farmed land within his enclosure without authorization.
- He claims those actions reduced the amount of land available for his own cultivation.
- The letter references Col. Sandford, a Cherokee agent, suggesting the dispute involved lands within or adjacent to Cherokee territory.
- The document provides direct evidence of George Waters' land claims in North Georgia prior to the Trail of Tears era.

Relevance to Macedonia Cemetery Research:

This letter is important because it places George Waters on the Chattahoochee River in 1832 and demonstrates the existence of a substantial plantation operation worked by enslaved laborers. Later probate records, wills, and estate documents identify enslaved families connected to the Waters estate, including individuals who would become part of the Macedonia community story.

When combined with George Waters' will, probate records, and the 1855 court actions involving emancipation and Liberia colonization, the letter helps establish a documentary timeline connecting the Waters plantation, enslaved families, and descendants associated with Macedonia Church and Cemetery.