

## Slave Schedules and Cohabitation Records

Black people are often hampered in their search for their ancestry by the lack of good documents dealing with their early history. Sometimes Slaves Schedules and Cohabitation Records can be of some help.

Information on Slave Schedules can be found on the Internet by searching with Google on the phrase "Slave Schedules" (using the quotation marks). An attempt will not be made here to repeat the information that can be found in the search, but some specific sites which may be helpful will be cited as well as some general information that may be found in them. Slave schedules were made as a part of the 1850 and 1860 censuses for 16 States, namely, Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Note that not all of the States were part of the Confederacy. The 1850 schedule had columns for Slave Owner, Number of slaves, Age, Sex, Color (B=Black, M=Mulatto), Fugitive from the State, Number manumitted (freed), and deaf and dumb, blind, insane or idiotic. In addition the 1860 schedule had a column for "Slave houses". Blank forms for the 1850 schedule can be found at <http://c.ancestry.com/paf/trees/charts/1850slave.pdf> and for the 1860 schedule at [http://helpdesk.Rootsweb.com/get\\_started/charts/SlaveSchedule1860.pdf](http://helpdesk.Rootsweb.com/get_started/charts/SlaveSchedule1860.pdf). Considerable information about the schedules can be found below the forms on the pages cited and will not be repeated here. On rare occasions the given names of slaves or other information was given on the forms. To find individual entries in the 1850 schedule go to <Http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8055> and right click on "Browse this collection" on the right side of the page. Enter the State, County and Township and click on Township and you will be taken to the first page of the slave schedule for that location. From there you can scroll to find the entries you want. For example, the "southern district" of "Pittsylvania County" in "Virginia" has 81 pages. Other Internet pages which may be of interest include <http://www.webarcheology.com/html/slavsched.htm> and [http://wiki.familysearch.org/ea/United\\_States\\_Census\\_Slave\\_schedules](http://wiki.familysearch.org/ea/United_States_Census_Slave_schedules). It was normal for slaves to take the surnames of their owners. Often black people appearing in the 1870 census whose ages place them in slavery prior to emancipation can be traced back to the slave schedules.

Information on cohabitation records may be found by searching "cohabitation records" (with quotation marks) using Google. In 1866 all states were supposed to require all counties to register the marriages of freed slaves, but not all counties complied. The act for this requirement was passed by the Virginia General Assembly in February 1866 and by the North Carolina General Assembly in March 1866. A site dealing with cohabitation records is [http://wiki.familysearch.org/en/cohabitation\\_records](http://wiki.familysearch.org/en/cohabitation_records). The cohabitation records give the names of the man and the woman and the length of time that they have been cohabiting. The cohabitation schedules were the first attempt to legalize marriages of people who had been in slavery prior to their emancipation. The original documents for cohabitation records can usually be found in State archives or county records, although some can be found online.