

Silver Spoons, Spinning Wheels, and Oxen

Slavery, wills, auctions, and pictures, lots of pictures (!) are all issues addressed by recent changes and additions to the Historic Elk Landing web site.

In the winter of 1806, Zebulon Hollingsworth drew up manumission papers for one of his slaves, "Jane, or Jenny." She was 13 years old at the time. Her manumission/freedom was contingent upon her completing an apprenticeship when she turned 28 years old in 1821. According to the manumission papers, "Jane" was apprenticed to Zebulon Hollingsworth's daughter, Margaret who was married to William Couch of New Castle County, Delaware.

How much was a spinning wheel worth at auction in 1814? How about a chest of drawers, a desk, bed sheets, or even oxen? Did you know that Cecil County farmers used oxen to plow their fields 200 years ago? Those are just some of the facts you'll learn as well as the types of items that were up for auction upon the death of Mary Hollingsworth of Elk Landing in the fall of 1814. How do we know all this? Because we have a list of all auctioned items, their cost, and who bought them. Better still, we're sharing that list on our web site for you to check out and recite at your next party. Well, it's not that exciting, but this single list gives us an idea of what and how many items a fairly well off farming family owned in the first quarter of the 19th century in Elkton, Maryland. In some cases the list even tells us where the item was kept in the Hollingsworth House which still stands along the banks of the Little Elk Creek.

When Zebulon Hollingsworth died in 1763, he owned, among other things, 6 silver tea spoons which he claimed to be worth 30 shillings. With the price of silver these days, they are probably worth a lot more! Anyway, Zebulon willed these spoons to his daughter, Elizabeth. Find out what else he willed to his family and friends by checking out his last will and testament which we posted on our web site under History, click on Time Line, then "1763." Mary Hollingsworth's auction list is also available on the Time Line under "1814."

But that's not all the additions to our web site. We've updated our events calendar with information about our traditional Ghost Hunts in October which is being expanded to two evenings to accommodate the demand.

Finally, pictures of recent events were added, including Thomas Jefferson at our Independence Day celebration, the British Invasion Auto Show, the Memorial Day militia encampment, and the Paranormal Fair. Just go to our web site at www.elklanding.org All of the additions are listed at the top of the screen under July 30th.