

Ellen Curry McKissack
Abt 1849-?
Enslaved at Rippa Villa

- 1849 (abt) Ellen Curry was born in Spring Hill, TN. Her mother is unknown, but her father was William Curry, a slave owned by Nathaniel Cheairs.
- 1863 December 8: Ellen's sweetheart, George McKissack, enlisted in the U.S. Army. He mustered in to Co. D, 110th US Colored Infantry. The following accounts describe her marriage to George McKissack.
"I am the daughter of soldier George McKissack and his first wife Ellen, who was Ellen Chairs before her marriage to my father. My father told me that he and my mother were married in the dining room of my mother's young mistress at Spring Hill, Tennessee."-Georgia McKissack Hobson¹

"The soldier George McKissack was a slave of my father, I remember him as a slave. He was among the first who went into the army. He came and told us good bye. He was not married at that time. After he went into the army he married a girl who belonged to the wife of Major Nat Cheairs. The girls name was Ellen....when we went up there they told us about how George McKissack came there and married Ellen. They told that he was married in the dining room at Major Cheairs and of how Sallie, the daughter of Major Chairs carried on because George was going to carry Ellen off...Ellen went off with George, followed him all around, in camp and everywhere. "-Mary McKissack²
- 1864 Ellen gave birth to first daughter Georgia McKissack about Nov or Dec of 1864. *"Mary McKissack said sister Georgia was born during Hood's raid, but sister Georgia don't want it that way and insists that she is not that old."*-Minerva McKissack Smith³
- 1865 (abt) August: Ellen gave birth to her second daughter Minerva McKissack.

"After the close of the war George and Ellen came and lived on my Father's farm. They had three girls, Georgie, Minerva and Martha. George and Ellen fought like two dogs and at last separated."-Mary McKissack
- 1868 (abt) Ellen gave birth to third daughter Martha McKissack.

¹ McKissack, George, Witness account of Georgia McKissack, US Military Pension Application, NARA,

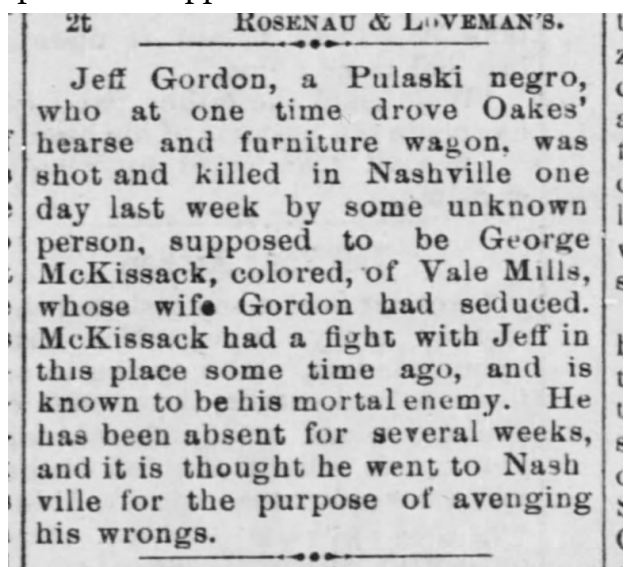
² McKissack, George, Witness account of Mary McKissack, US Military Pension Application, NARA,

³ McKissack, George, Witness account of Minerva McKissack, US Military Pension Application, NARA,

1870 June 21: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Giles County, TN showed twenty-one year old Ellen McKissack, a farm hand, and her husband George, a farmer, living with their three daughters: Georgia, 5, Minerva, 4 and Martha, 2. Neither Ellen nor George could read or write.

1878-1880 (abt) Ellen left George and moved to Nashville with Jeff Gordon, a brick mason who had previously lived in Giles County. *"They [George and Ellen] got in a raucous of some kind. It is my understanding that Ellen ran off with a man and that George shot at him a time or two. Ellen came back here afterwards and tried to get George to live with her again but he refused to do so."*-W. Pilate Lindsay⁴

April: A newspaper article appeared in the Pulaski Citizen.



2t ROSENAU & LOVEMAN'S.

Jeff Gordon, a Pulaski negro, who at one time drove Oakes' hearse and furniture wagon, was shot and killed in Nashville one day last week by some unknown person, supposed to be George McKissack, colored, of Vale Mills, whose wife Gordon had seduced. McKissack had a fight with Jeff in this place some time ago, and is known to be his mortal enemy. He has been absent for several weeks, and it is thought he went to Nashville for the purpose of avenging his wrongs.

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Jeff Gordon was shot, but not killed. He and Ellen were enumerated on the Federal Census just a couple months after the shooting incident.

June 5: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Nashville, Davidson County, TN showed Ellen Gordon, a washerwoman, living with her "husband" Jeff Gordon, a stone mason.

1890 In his U.S. Military pension George McKissack stated that his first wife Ellen Chairs had died in Florida in 1890.

1892 Ellen's father, William Curry, died. In his will he left half his property, to be

⁴ McKissack, George, Witness account of W. Pilate Lindsay, US Military Pension Application, NARA,

⁵ The Pulaski Citizen, Pulaski, TN, Thursday, 8 Apr 1880, pg. 3 (accessed newspapers.com)

shared between Ellen, and her granddaughter Julia Stanley, after his wife Margaret died. Julia was the daughter of Ellen and George's oldest daughter Georgia McKissack.

1900 June 14: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Giles County, TN showed Ellen White living with her daughter Minerva and her family.⁶

1905 *"I came here [Indianapolis] in 1905 and it was a year or two prior to that when I was talking to Mrs Wade about my mother who at that time stated mother was in Tampa, but was intending to come back and come to Tennessee, but I have never heard from her since. I heard from mother when she was living in St. Petersburg, she wrote me that she had invested some money in Tampa restaurant, but was intending to sell out and come back but never returned, and that is all I know of her."*-Minerva McKissack Smith

⁶ This is the only time the name "White" appeared on any document for Ellen.