

Marka R. Miller

CHRONOLOGY: SLAVE LIFE AT FORTY ACRES, SO FAR AS IS KNOWN.....

- ca. 1742: "Peg" is born, somewhere.
- 1754: The ca. 12-year-old "Peg" comes to live at Forty Acres
- 1755: There are 18 slaves in Hadley over the age of sixteen (obviously this doesn't include Peg, or girls and boys like her).
- 1756: Moses Porter's inventory includes a man, Zebulon, valued at 53/6/8, and a girl, probably "Peg," valued at 33/6/8. (are Zebulon and Zebedee, the son of Arthur and Joan Prutt, confused in the records? When was Zeb Prutt purchased? Deeds of Moses Porter and Charles Phelps should be checked in Springfield.)
- 1750s: According to Judd, "Hadley" Vol 3, p. 75, the household around this time also includes an African-American woman called "Mrs. Pidkin."
- 1761: ca. 25 June, Roseanna is born, to the now-19-year-old Peg, and a father who is as yet unknown. When was Zeb sold? Could be found in deeds in Springfield.
- 1765: ca. 2 May 1765, Phillis is born, to the now-23-year-old Peg, and a father who is as yet unknown. Zeb Prutt seems like a good candidate, depending on when he was bought and sold. Another good candidate is "Pomp," who belonged to Jon Warner (see below).
- 1765: Twenty slaves in Hadley over the age of sixteen. This number now includes Peg, but not her two children.
- 1767: 7 Feb: Zeb Prutt, whom Elizabeth Pitkin Porter ^{previously} sold to Oliver Warner for \$50.00 (find deed?), ran away. He is eventually returned.
- 1769: 16 November: Margaret "Peg" Gregory marries Ralph Way Jr. Though this "Peg" also works for a time for the Phelps household (see for ex. 5 May 1771), she appears (since she is married from 1769 to at least 1775) not to be the same "Peg" as the woman who has lived since 1754 in the Porter household, who marries Jon Warner's "Pomp" in 1772.
- 1770: 13 March: receipt for Caesar, which Charles Phelps bought from William Williams of New Marlborough for 66/13s. Caesar is about 18-years-old. (note the Vermont tie re: Peg, too.)
- 1771: 26 May; failed attempt to sell Caesar.
- 1772: 28 March: "this day our Peg who has lived with us near 18 years of her own account left us and two children (presumably 11-year-old Roseanna and 8-year-old Phillis) was sold to a Capt. Fay of Bennington with a negro man from the town (probably Jon Warner's "Pomp;" in May of 1771, Josiah Pierce records that Pomp and Peg desired to be published. Pierce thought that both masters consented, but then Warner denied consent, forbid the marriage, so Pierce omitted publishing) for the sake of being his wife." Perhaps this man was the father of her daughters, and their plan was to work in Vermont until they could purchase their freedom, too. (I do not have the citation, but I

do recall a disparaging passage from Elizabeth Phelps' correspondence suggesting that she thought that all this effort to facilitate two slaves' marrying was pretty silly).

might be worth reading letter to EPPH around this time
(in fact above all the "major" deaths, sales)

- 1773: 7 March: "our Negro Caesar killed a poor Lame horse -- ours -- tis a frown in providence, m ay we suitably regret it."
- 1775: 16 April: "little Phillis" -- ten years old, has died. In her illness, she was treated by Dr. Crouch (there is probably a fair record of this -- as well as any debts incurred in other instances for the treatment of slaves at Forty Acres -- in his account books at the Forbes) and Dr. Mather of Northampton (who another source says usually declined to treat children; maybe he did the Phelps' a favor by seeing her, or I guess he could have declined, too -- EPP only says she took her there). By some strange twist of fate, Roseanna, then just fourteen, gives birth the same day (before the midwife can arrive), and the infant child is also named Phillis, in honor of her sister. The father of this child is unknown, but Caesar has been in the household for five years, and is about twenty-three.
- 1776: 25 Feb: Charles takes Caesar to Boston, and left him. (then what happens? not sure.)
- 1776: 11 May: Rose takes her daughter Phillis in to see "Mrs Dickinson," because they fear she has the "rickets," (defined in my dictionary as "a disease of the skeletal system, chiefly of children, resulting from a deficiency of calcium salts or vitamin D in the diet, or from lack of sunlight, and characterized by a softening and often bending of the bones.")
- 1778: 8 March: "Peg" returns from Vermont. Charles Phelps has a receipt for her, from Stephen (F?)ay of Bennington, VT, for L20, dated March 6, 1778.
- 1781: 11 March: Rose dies, age twenty. Leaves daughter, Phillis, age six.
- 1782: 3 Feb: "Thursday my husband and I up to Mr Abrams's at Muddy Brook, he a seventh son--we took Phillis with us -- think she has a Kings Evil" (again, my dictionary defines as "scrofula," or tuberculosis of the lymphatic glands, esp. of the neck, characterized by the enlargement and degeneration of the glands").
24 February: "this day my Husband carried Phillis up to a part of Deerfield to Dr Abrams to be stroked for her Kings evil."
3 March: Phillis brought home.
This is the fourth doctor who has treated Phillis.
- 1782: 9 June: "our Peg left us ... gone off free."
- 1783: 26 January: my husband and I went to Capt Cooks with Phillis to a new doctor," her fifth.
- 1783: 20 April: Peg returns to care for her granddaughter, Phillis.
4 May: Phillis, just a few days beyond her eighth birthday, dies. Her funeral is at Captain Porter's. The reason for this is not clear. Why not up at Forty Acres? Since her mother is dead, could this be some clue about her father's identity?
- 1785: Hadley Town Records record that a Caesar [looks like: Prene?] of Hadley and Polly [Leonard?] of Colchester (now res. Hadley) either married or published banns on 3 Dec 1785, while a Caesar Aberdeen (then of Deerfield) and Phillis Lotus of Hadley married (or published banns) 8 march 1788. Could either be Phelps' Caesar?

Yikes! Sunny!

1792:

9 April: "our old Peg died." She lived at Ralph Way's. This is accd. to Judd. But is it Margaret Gregory Way? She obviously would live @ Ralph Way's (after his divorce from Lois, for adultery w/ Porter's man Boston!!!) But I don't see how these could be the same. Maybe Judd was confused. I checked the diary for this date, + OPP doesn't make this statement here, so I'm not sure off-hand where it's from.