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My Best Genealogy Tips: Finding Formerly Enslaved Ancestors by Robin R. Foster



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1. Georgia resources

- Research Wiki: [Georgia, United States Genealogy • FamilySearch](#)
- Research Wiki: [Fulton County, Georgia Genealogy • FamilySearch](#)
- Research Wiki: [African American Resources for Georgia • FamilySearch](#)

2. Grandma, Ora Nelms Foster, Hands Off the Baton to Me

- I decided to interview my uncle (Robert Foster 1919-1990)
- This what I discovered from the interview
 - They had been enslaved
 - Ora's parents were Henderson and Lucy Nelms
 - They were owned by brothers, so they had same last names
 - The brothers had come from North Carolina

3. Finding Henderson and Luck Nelms in DeSoto County, Mississippi

- My father (Robert Foster (1938 – 1988) wrote Ora Nelms Foster's (1895-1971) obituary
 - He had her born on 1900
 - She was born in Walls, Mississippi
 - She married James Foster in 1916
- Looking for Ora Nelms Foster
 - Found her in the 1920 Census in Bolivar, Poinsett County, Arkansas
 - Next, I found her on the 1910 Census in DeSoto County, Mississippi
 - She was on the 1900 Census in Shelby County, Tennessee

4. Buck Nelms (B. 1830) is the Lucy Nelms' (1856-1929) Father

- I could not look for Grandma Ora in 1880
Grandma Ora was born in 1895
I looked for Lucy Nelms (1856-1929), Grandma Ora's mother
I found Lucy Nelms at home with Buck Nelms (B. 1830) in 1870 Census
Then, I found Buck Nelms in the 1880 Census, but Lucy Nelms was not there
- Buck Nelms journey from North Carolina to Mississippi

I found an account of Charles G. Nelms and Eben Nelms leaving North Carolina
They had the enslaved traveling with them to DeSoto County, Mississippi
Charles died during the Civil War

5. Researching the Nelms Family in DeSoto County Courthouse in Mississippi

- I discovered Eben Nelms listed among inscriptions in DeSoto County, Mississippi
He had come from Anson County, Mississippi
He was born 21 December 1817, and died 16 July 1902
- Library of Virginia
Genealogy of Presley Nelms and descendants, Eben, Charles, and Presley
It confirmed that they were born and migrated from Anson County, North Carolina

6. Getting to Anson County Historical Society in North Carolina

- *"Presley Nelms, Jr., his ancestors, and descendants in America from Nov. 25, 1652, to present,"* assembled by Ruth Nelms Hooker on 19 September 1946.
On page 32, three Nelms brothers, the sons Presley Nelms Jr. of Anson County, North Carolina
Given property upon Presley's death
They migrated upon his death
- Presley Nelms Jr. left a will in 1841
He freed the entire black Nelms family
Named David, Lucy, Charlotte

7. Finding Lucy Nelms (B. 1805), Mother of Buck Nelms

- The Anson County Historical Society assists me in finding Lucy Nelms (B. 1850)
On the page are Buck Nelms in 1880. On next page is Lucy Bradford.
Lucy Bradford is Lucy Nelms. She was married to Sam Bradford before Henderson Nelms.
- What about the other Nelms next door to Lucy Bradford?
Next door to Lucy Bradford is Lucy Nelms (B. 1805) the Lucy from Presley's will.
Lucy Nelms (B. 1805) is Ed Nelms and Buck Nelms' mother
Buck Nelms named his daughter, Lucy Bradford, or Lucy Nelms (1856-1929) after Lucy Nelms (B. 1805)

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8. No Coincidence

- One experience
- Two experience