

# Managing a plantation: Property

COMMENTARY AND SIDEBAR NOTES BY L. MAREN WOOD

Cameron Family Papers, Collection # 133, Series 2.1.1 Box 88 Folder 2012. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## As you read...

This is a list of plantation property that needed to be inspected by the owner, Duncan Cameron. The Camerons were one of the most wealthy families in North Carolina. You can learn more about Duncan Cameron (see <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-antebellum/5387>) from the biography in the sidebar of "Managing a plantation: Accounts."

The property and animals listed here are only a fraction of the total number on the property. Examining this type of information helps us to understand the enormous wealth of the Cameron family, as well as the amount of work that went into running a successful plantation.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What types of objects needed to be examined?
2. How many animals at each plantation needed attention?
3. Why do you suppose Cameron wanted to keep track of this type of information? Why do you suppose he wanted to look at this property himself, instead of assigning it to an overseer?
4. What kinds of property did Cameron *not* list on this page?

1844

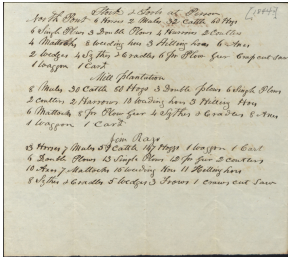


Figure 1. Duncan Cameron kept this list of property needing his personal inspection.

**STOCK 2 LOOK AT PERSON**

North Point 6 Horses 2 Mules 32 cattle 60 hogs  
6 Single Plows 3 double Plows 4 Harrows<sup>1</sup> 2 Coulters<sup>2</sup>  
4 Mattocks<sup>3</sup> 8 weeding hoes 4 Hilling hoes 6 axes  
2 Wedges 4 scythes<sup>4</sup> 2 cradles<sup>5</sup> 6 pr plow geer<sup>6</sup> grape cut saw<sup>7</sup>  
1 waggon 1 cart

**MILL PLANTATION**

8 Mules 30 cattle 80 Hogs 3 double plows 6 single plows  
2 coulters, 2 harrows 10 weeding hoes 3 hilling hoes  
6 Mattocks 8 for Plow geer 4 scythes 2 cradles 8 axes  
1 waggon 1 cart

**JIM RAYS**

3 Horses 7 mules 59 cattle 147 hoggs 1 waggon 1 cart  
6 double plows 13 single plows 10 per geer 2 coulters  
10 axes 7 mattock 15 weeding hoes 11 hilling hoes  
8 scythes 2 cradles 5 wedges 3 trows<sup>8</sup> 1 craws cut saw

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Notes

1. A *harrow* is a heavy frame of timber set with iron teeth, which is dragged over plowed land to break up clumps of soil.
2. A *coulter* is a blade that is attached to a plow and cuts the ground vertically.
3. A *mattock* is similar to a pick, but it has a blade on one end and a chisel on the other. It is used for cutting up hard ground.
4. A *scythe* is a tool used for cutting grass or grain. It has a long neck, a handle half way down, and a curved blade. A person would swing the scythe up into the air and then sweep it through the grass or grain in a long stroke.
5. A grain *cradle* is a light wooden frame with a row of long curved teeth parallel to the blade that can be attached to a scythe. It is used to catch corn or other grain that has been cut by the scythe.
6. Plow gear, the bridle and reins used to attach an animal to a plow.

7. A grape cut saw would have been a saw used in a vineyard to cut grape vines.
8. A *trow* is a type of boat, usually with a flat low bottom, is used to transport goods.

## About the author

### L. MAREN WOOD

Maren Wood is a research associate with LEARN NC's North Carolina History Digital Textbook Project. She is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, having received a B.A. from the University of Lethbridge (Alberta, Canada) and an M.A. in British History from Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada). Her dissertation is titled *Dangerous Liaisons: Narratives of Sexual Danger in the Anglo-American North, 1750 to 1820*.

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### Figure 1 (page 2)

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