



# **The Doctor's Slaves: Samuel Mudd, Slavery, and The Lincoln Assassination**

*Robert K Summers*

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Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, one of eight persons convicted in the 1865 Abraham Lincoln assassination trial, was a tobacco farmer as well as a physician. He owned nine slaves to help run his farm. Their names were Elzee Eglent, Richard Washington, Melvina Washington, Frank Washington, Rachel Spencer, Milo Simms, Mary Simms, Lettie Hall, and Louisa Cristie. After the Civil War started, some of Dr. Mudd's slaves ran away to Washington, D.C., where slavery was abolished in 1862, or joined the Union Army, which began enlisting former slaves in 1863. Others left the farm after the State of Maryland abolished slavery in November 1864. Three of Dr. Mudd's slaves remained on the farm after emancipation and were still there at the time of the 1870 federal census.

Not much is known about the slaves' lives before the Lincoln assassination since no records were kept of slaves' births, marriages, deaths, or other events in their lives. The first record of Dr. Mudd's slaves appears in the 1860 Federal Slave Schedule where his first five slaves were enumerated. Most of what we know about Dr. Mudd's slaves comes from their testimony at the Abraham Lincoln conspiracy trial.

After emancipation and the trial, the lives of most of Dr. Mudd's former slaves faded once again from public view. However, research for this book uncovered very interesting information about some of their post-slavery lives, and is reported in this book.

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