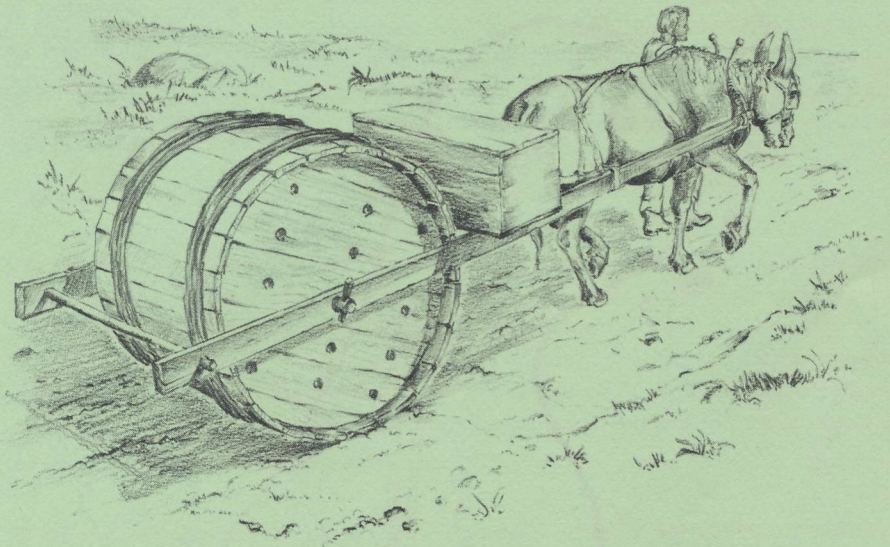


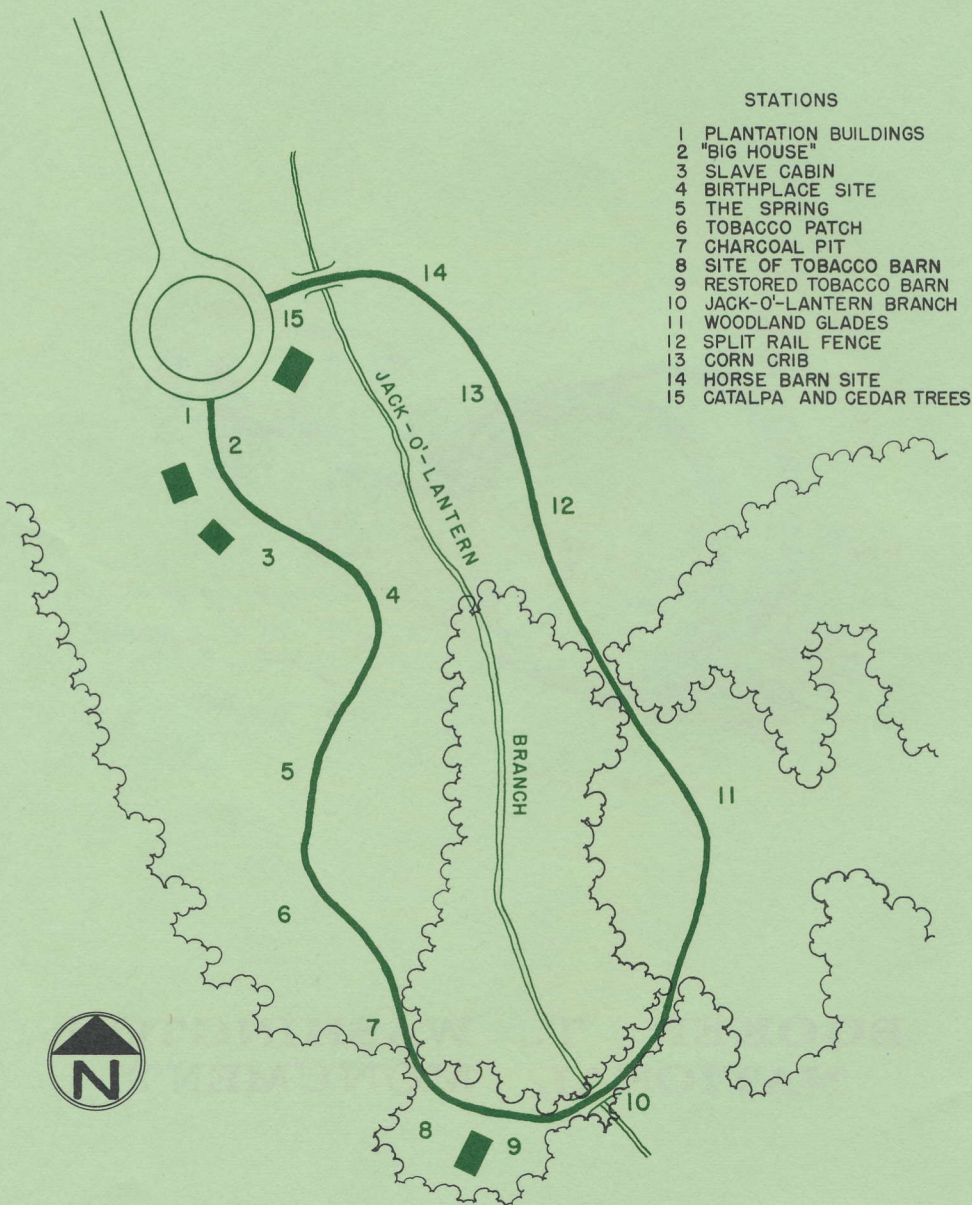
ROLL ROAD TRAIL



BOOKER T.
NATIONAL

WASHINGTON
MONUMENT

ROLL ROAD TRAIL



THE ROLL ROAD TRAIL

Thirty minutes spent walking this ½-mile trail and viewing the exhibits will give you an idea of what life was like here on the Burroughs plantation in the 1850's and '60's. The trail follows part of an old plantation road along which hogsheads of tobacco were rolled. In his childhood days Booker T. Washington worked and played along this road.

Numbered stakes along the trail correspond to the numbers on the map and in the margin of the following text:

STOP 1—THESE THREE PAINTINGS BY SIDNEY KING represent plantation buildings of Booker T. Washington's day. The one at the right is the artist's concept of the slave cabin which stood on the hill to your right beside the Roll Road, which is shown in the background. It was a 16-by-30-foot, double-room cabin. The cow barn in the center painting and the corn crib at the left also stood on the hill near the slave cabin.

An 1861 inventory of James Burroughs' estate listed the following livestock:

1 bell cow and calf	\$12.00
4 yearlings	20.00
3 cows and calves	36.00
1 Muly cow, whitish	10.00

The corn crib was closely related to one of Booker's jobs. In *Up From Slavery*, he wrote:

During the time I spent in slavery, I was not large enough to be of much service. Still I was occupied most of the time

One of his duties was taking corn to be ground at the mill about three miles away.



This work I always dreaded . . . in some way . . . on these trips the corn would shift . . . and would fall off the horse, and often I would fall with it. As I was not strong enough to reload the corn upon the horse, I would have to wait, sometimes for hours, until a chance passerby came along who would help me out of my trouble.

The corn crib was about 10 by 14 feet.

NOTE: These paintings have been placed at this location temporarily. Eventually, the Roll Road Trail will be extended and each painting will be placed at the site which it depicts. (Under the National Park Service's MISSION 66 program further developments are planned for the Monument area. These include extension of the Roll Road Trail and construction of a new Visitor Center.)

STOP 2—HERE IN THE "BIG HOUSE" LIVED JAMES BURROUGHS, his wife Elizabeth, and their fourteen children. This house, in its plainness and simplicity, was much more typical of Southern plantation houses than was the oft-pictured white-columned mansion. The Burroughs house burned to the ground in December, 1950.

Washington wrote:

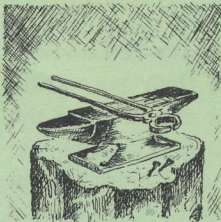
When I had grown to sufficient size, I was required to go to the "big house" at meal times to fan the flies from the table by means of a large set of paper fans operated by a pulley.

During his 1908 visit to the plantation, Washington picked a rose from a bush in front of the house and placed it at the graveyard (beside the entrance road) where his master and "Marse" Billy are buried.

STOP 3—SEVERAL SLAVE CABINS were on the plantation. This one is a replica which was constructed on the site of the cabin in which Booker lived with his mother and sister during his early boyhood days. The chimney base and the stone walk are the only parts of the original cabin that remain. Although Booker's own description of his birthplace was used in constructing the interior, this is not the exact place where he was born.

STOP 4—THIS IS THE SITE WHERE BOOKER WAS BORN, April 5, 1856. It was identified as the birthplace site by Grover and Peter Robertson, sons of John B. Robertson who bought the plantation from the Burroughs. In 1893 only the chimney of the original cabin remained. No photographs of the birthplace cabin are known to exist.

STOP 5—FROM HERE YOU SEE THE SPRING AND THE SITE OF THE BLACKSMITH SHOP. One of Booker's jobs was carrying water from the spring to the house and to the workers in the fields. This spring was the source of water for the plantation. Springs also served as coolers for milk and butter. The blacksmith shop stood at the stake to your left and probably contained a small forge for home repairs. In keeping with the plantations' attempt to be self-sufficient, most plantations had their own smithies. A large blacksmith shop was available at Hales Ford, just a mile and a half away.



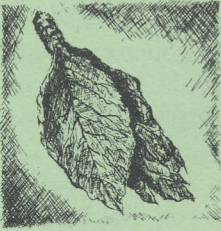
STOP 6—TOBACCO WAS RAISED ON THE PLANTATION in patches much larger than this one. The seed was sowed in hot-beds late in January or early February. Around the first of May the seedlings were transplanted. The patch was cultivated and kept free of weeds until it was time for topping. Topping time was determined by the number of leaves the farmer wanted to remain on the stalk; nine, eleven, or thirteen were the usual numbers. If he wanted eleven leaves, he would pinch the top out of the plant when it had produced that many. Topping kept the plant from producing more leaves and caused the existing ones to broaden out and become larger. The harvest began around the middle of August, depending upon the weather.

STOP 7—THE CHARCOAL PIT, as you see, was not actually a pit; it was just called that. In burning the wood, one of the important jobs was to make sure the logs stayed covered with dirt so that no air could enter, except through openings at the bottom. Booker and the other children may have assisted in this task.

The charcoal was then burned in the tobacco barn to cure the tobacco.

STOP 8—THIS IS THE SITE OF ONE OF THE ORIGINAL TOBACCO BARNs used by the Burroughs. It was made of hewn logs. The tobacco barn at your next stop is of more recent construction, though some of the upper logs are from the original barn.

STOP 9—IN HARVESTING TOBACCO IN THE 1860's the stalk was split part way down and then cut off below the split. Stalks were hung on sticks and the sticks, in turn, were laid across poles such as those you see in the barn. When the barn was filled, the tobacco was "fired" to cure it. After the tobacco cured properly, and on a day that was damp enough to keep them from being brittle, the leaves were pulled from the stalk and packed tightly into hogsheads. Hickory poles were then used to bind the hogshead and a sweep was fixed to it so that a horse or an ox could pull it. Thus it was rolled to market.



STOP 10—WE HAVE NAMED THIS LITTLE STREAM THE JACK-O'-LANTERN BRANCH. The Robertson children, who moved here with their parents in 1893, often saw the will-o'-the-wisp which originated near the head of the branch. They called it a jack-o-lantern. The ghostly light the children saw moving frequently on warm, damp nights is the same kind of elusive light which appears over some areas of marshy ground. Supposedly, it is caused by the combustion of marsh gas.

STOP 11—IN BOOKER'S DAY, wild turkeys, rabbits, squirrels, opossums, raccoons, skunks, and occasionally deer found shelter in these woodland glades. Today, all of these animals, except for the turkeys, are still present at times.



Young Booker probably never went on a deer hunt or joined in a wild turkey shoot. It is doubtful that he ever shot a rabbit or even went 'possum hunting. But at times his mother, who was the plantation cook, must have cleaned and prepared many of the game animals for the Burroughs' table.

STOP 12—THE ONLY KIND OF FENCE USED in the 1860's, and until quite recently in the mountainous sections of this area, was made of rails split from oak or chestnut. These rails lasted thirty to forty years. The ones you see are chestnut.

NOTE: If you have your camera along, this is a point from which you may get a good shot of the slave cabin.

STOP 13—CORN FOR MASTER, SLAVE, AND LIVESTOCK was one of the most important crops raised on the plantation.

Corn cribs were built off the ground and with openings between the logs so air could circulate through the corn and keep it from spoiling. According to the Robertsons, Booker had his playhouse under this crib.

STOP 14—ANOTHER OF BOOKER'S TASKS—one that was common for slave boys—was riding behind his mistress when she went calling. He took care of the horses while the ladies visited.

There were three horses on the plantation in 1861: "One bay mare, one sorrel horse and one bay horse."

STOP 15—THIS CATALPA TREE AND THE JUNIPER (locally called cedar), as well as the white oaks at the springs, the stone walk and chimney base at the slave cabin, and the graveyard are the only things still existing that were here when Booker was a slave.



Archeological excavations revealed the chimney base at the slave cabin and provided the information needed to locate the exact site on which to reconstruct the cabin. Borings indicate that the juniper dates from a half century before Booker was born.

We hope your walk along the Roll Road Trail has made your visit to Booker T. Washington National Monument more enjoyable. If you desire more information on Booker T. Washington, you may purchase a paperback copy of his autobiography, *Up From Slavery*, on sale in the office.



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