

Information Sheet

R **Armstrong, William.**
732 **Sworn testimony, 1825.**
 One folder.

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This is a holograph transcript of sworn testimony by William Armstrong in a civil suit in St. Francois County, Missouri, between John McKee, plaintiff, and William Alexander, defendant, concerning the condition of a female slave and her child.

The question raised by the suit appears to have been whether William Alexander sold to John McKee a “negro woman” (and her child) who was already in poor condition, or whether the condition was due to subsequent mistreatment at the hands of McKee. William Armstrong, the sworn witness, lived at McKee’s house at the time of the alleged events.

Under questioning by McKee, Armstrong testified that “it was not more than two or three weeks” after McKee acquired her before “the negro complained that she was not able to work.” At this juncture Alexander asked Armstrong whether the slave had been “whipped while she was in the possession of McKee.” To this Armstrong responded that “she may have been whipped, I think I heard [*sic*] that she was whipped once.” When asked by McKee whether he believed that “she was injured by beating or whipping,” Armstrong replied, “I do not.” Pressing forward, McKee asked Armstrong whether he thought “the negro or her child looked like they were healthy and sound when they came to my house.” To this Armstrong answered, “I did not think they looked healthy and I observed to Mrs. McKee that they were a poor chance.”

This testimony was sworn to and given before Richard Murphy, Justice of the Peace, on 11 November 1825 and filed for record on 1 December 1825.

r794

26 June 2001

Susan Roller

Purchase

Index Cards

Alexander, William.
Armstrong, William.
McKee, John.
Murphy, Richard.
Saint Francois County (Mo.).
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Slavery—Missouri—Saint Francois County.