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Primary Source: Stagville Plantation Expenses Records [1]

The Cameron family of Orange County was one of antebellum North Carolina's wealthiest families and among its most prolific enslavers.

Duncan Cameron was born in Mecklenburg County, Virginia, in 1788. As a young man, Duncan studied law and set up a practice in Martinsville, Virginia. Duncan chose to invest the money he made from practicing law in land and the enslavement of others, and he was a moderately wealthy man when he married. In 1803, Duncan Cameron married Rebecca Bennehan, whose father owned the Stagville plantation, located near Durham, North Carolina. Upon his marriage to Rebecca, Duncan's property was merged with the Benneham's estate.

In 1807, Duncan's father-in-law gave him land next to the Stagville plantation, which Duncan called Farintosh, and the Camerons moved to their new home in 1810. Throughout his lifetime, Duncan continued to accumulate land and enslave more people, and he also served as a judge on the Superior Court circuit.

The is is one page of an account book kept by Duncan Cameron. It is a list of money he owed to one company, and he would have done business with several merchants.

You might not be able to tell what all of the numbers mean or to identify all of the different products, but you can get a sense of the amount of money it took to run a plantation. You'll also see that Cameron purchased items not only for running the plantation but for his family and home. Much of a planter's business with other men depended on his reputation, and so it was important to him not only to make money but to display his wealth and show his success — just as it is for many people today. Because a plantation was both home and business, a plantation owner had to think not only about agriculture, but also about what clothes he and his family wore and the types of dishes that were used in their home. Running a plantation was more than a business — it was a way of life.

Duncan Cameron Esq
In Account with Andrew Kevan & Brothers
Interest to 31st July 1842

Month	Day		Mo:	Ds	Interest	
1841						
Sept.	29	Leather, Bagging, Sugar & C per bill	6	2	$4.94	$162.79
October	6	Cash paid R.R. fot goods	9	25	.34	6.82
	26	Butter & Mackerel per bill	5	5	.75	29.00
	30	acceptance your draft 30 [word] favor Denvey, due 24. 30 Nov?	8	1	20.08	500
November	1	Bagging & rope per bill	5	—	1.42	57.35
	2	Cash paid R.R. for Butter & Mackerel	8	29	04	1.20
	10	di -- di -- di Sundries	8	21	.35	8.23
	11	recg & fong 3 packages from Philadelphia	8	20	.04	1.20
	13	Bagging, ropes, Glass & Putty	4	18	1.98	86.00
	15	Cash Paid Reed & Parsons For 1 Wardrobe, Boxing & c	8	16	3.20	75.00
	16	di -- di--- R R fot 3 boxes ...	8	15	.14	4.08
	24	di -- di -- di -- Sundries & for 5 pds Negro blankets	8	7	4.61	112.32
	26	Apples, Hats, Caps, nails, coppers, tea, & oysters	4	5	2.38	114.18
	27	Cash paid freight. 2 Boxes from Philadelphia	8	4	.04	1.00
	29	Expensses on 1 box clothing from N. York Fot C Manly collected by you	8	2	.08	2.00
December	7	Bagging, rope, leather & C per bill	3	24	3.15	165.63
	"	Cash paid for 3 pds blankets	7	24	1.60	40.62
	8	di -- di -- A A. for oysters, nails, Hats, & C	7	23	.19	5.28
	10	di -- di -- freight 5 boxes plants &1 bumble bees from Philadelphia	7	21	.18	4.69
	13	3 Doz Cards per bill	3	18	.30	14.34
	15	Cash for plants, bees, Bagging Rope & C	7	16	.53	14.32
	16	di -- di & fot. from Phila on 1 box	7	15	.04	1.20
		receiving and fong 7 packages a 1/6	7	15	.07	1.75
1842						
January	5	E Crowder S inst. on bonds, collected by you $255.00				
	"	this amt ordered by you to be transfered to Cr J O Bonneham 1260.00	6	25	51.76	1515.00
	7	Cash paid your draft favor Mrs. Sean W Lyme	6	24	1.70	50.00
	13	di -- di -- R Rd fot 1 box from Mrs Lyme	6	18	.03	.70
	18	di -- di -- Mrs Poland for 2 Bonnetts	6	13	.48	15.00
	"	Nails, Leather, Cutting knives, $ waggon boxes per bill	2	13	.80	66.44
	20	Cash paid for 1 hard ware from Richd 50c	6	11	.03	1.00
	24	Candles, Sugar & mould boards per bill	2	7	.64	57.28
	26	Cash paid R Rd fot nails, leather, hrd ware & 1 Box	6	5	.31	9.66
February	3	di -- di -- di -- mould board & C	5	28	.08	3.07
	8	Plaster, Clover Seed & orchard grass seed	1	21	.57	65.21
	15	Cash paid fot 1 Box from Balt. 50c , recg & fong same 50	5	16	.03	1.00
		Carried forward ...			102. 91	3195.81

Primary Source Citation:

Cameron Family Papers # 133. Series 2.1.1. Box 88, Folder 2008. Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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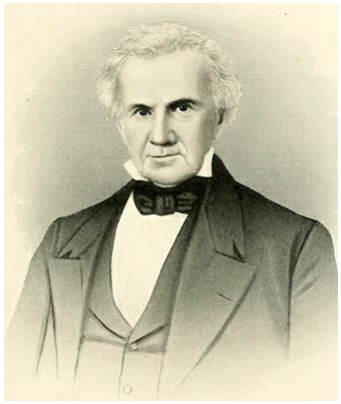
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Duncan Cameron

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- Plantation Records: Property [16]
- Plantation Records: Names of Enslaved People [17]

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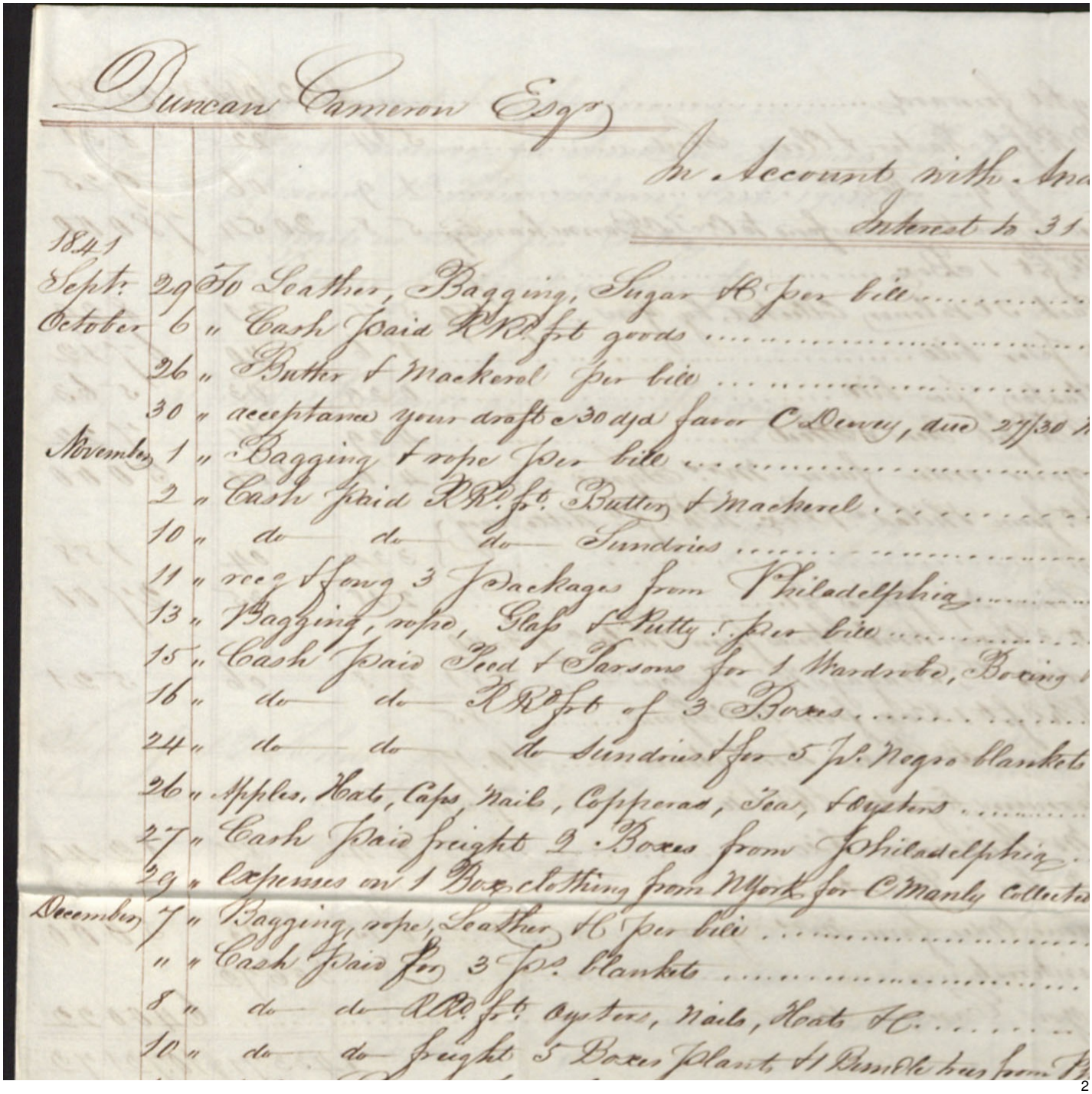

Duncan Cameron Esqr

In Account with Ano

Interest to 31

1841

Sept. 29 To Leather, Bagging, Sugar &c per bill

October 6 " Cash paid R.R. fr goods

26 " Butter & Mackerel per bill

30 " acceptance your draft 30 dys favr C Dewey, due 27/30

November 1 " Bagging & rope per bill

2 " Cash paid R.R. fr Butter & Mackerel

10 " do do do Sundries

11 " rec'd & forw'd 3 Packages from Philadelphia

13 " Bagging, rope, Glass & Putty &c per bill

15 " Cash paid Peed & Parsons for 1 Wardrobe, Boxing

16 " do do R.R. fr of 3 Boxes

24 " do do do Sundries & for 5 pr. Negro blankets

26 " Apples, Hats, Caps, Nails, Copperas, Teas, & oysters

27 " Cash paid freight 2 Boxes from Philadelphia

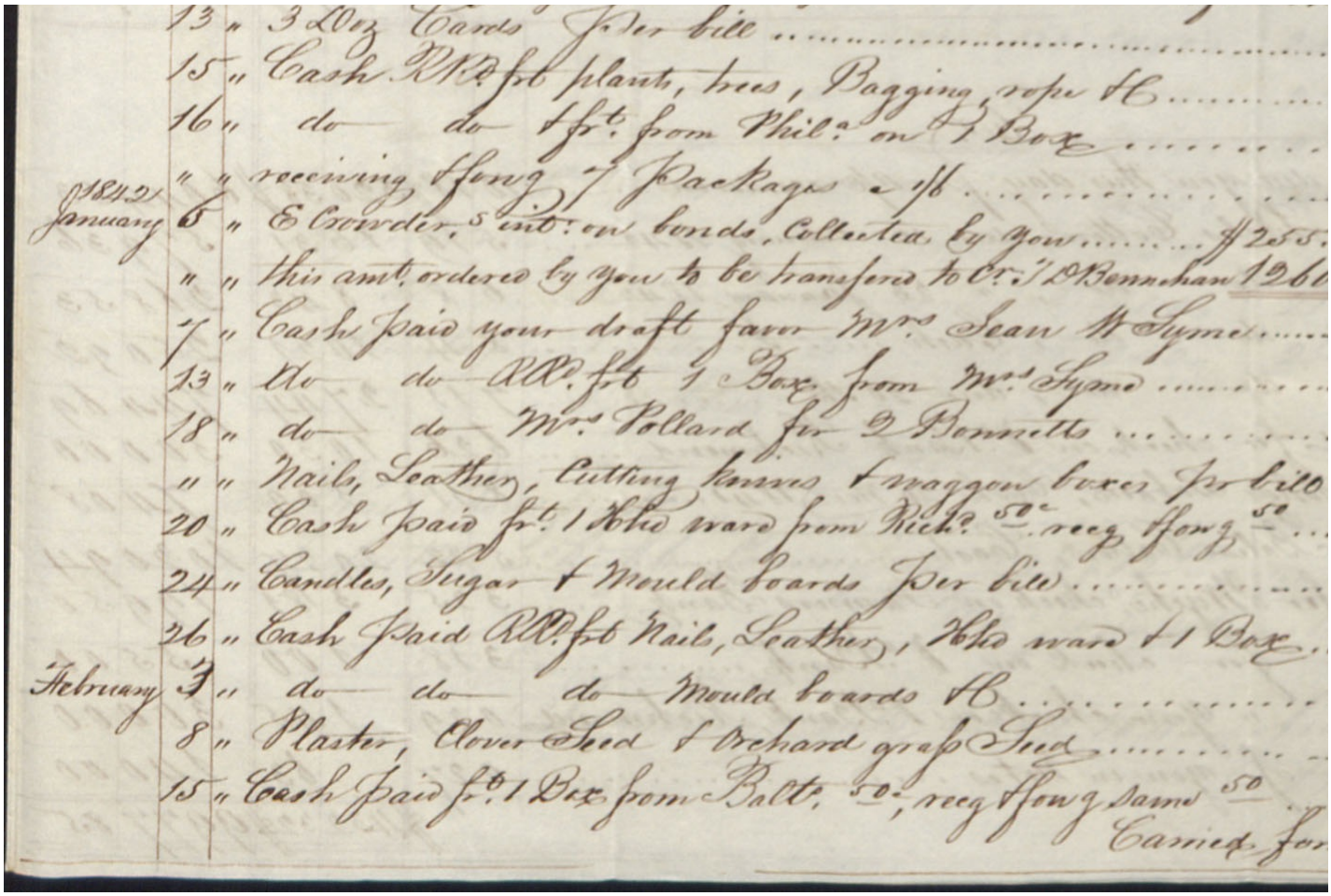
29 " expenses on 1 Box clothing from N York for C Manly Collector

December 7 " Bagging, rope, Leather &c per bill

" " Cash paid for 3 prs. Blankets

8 " do do R.R. fr oysters, Nails, Hats &c

10 " do do freight 5 Boxes plants & Bundle hoes from P



[18]A page from Duncan Cameron's account books dated July 31, 1892.

3 January 2018

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