

## Chapter 1

I was born in **Tuckahoe**, near **Hillsborough**, and about twelve miles from **Easton**, in **Talbot County, Maryland**. I have no **accurate knowledge** of my **age**, **never having seen any authentic record containing** it. By far the **larger** part of the **slaves** know as **little** of their **ages** as **horses** know of theirs, and it is the wish of most **masters** **within** my **knowledge** to **keep** their **slaves** thus **ignorant**. I do not **remember** to have **ever** met a **slave** who could tell of his **birthday**. They **seldom** come **nearer** to it than **planting-time**, **harvest-time**, **cherry-time**, **spring-time**, or **fall-time**. A want of **information concerning** my **own** was a source of **unhappiness** to me **even during childhood**. The **white children** could tell their **ages**. I could not tell why I ought to be **deprived** of the **same privilege**. I was not **allowed** to **make any inquiries** of my **master concerning** it. He **deemed** all such **inquiries** on the part of a **slave** **improper** and **impertinent**, and **evidence** of a **restless spirit**. The **nearest estimate** I can give **makes me now between twenty-seven and twenty-eight years of age**. I come to this, from **hearing** my **master say**, **sometime during 1835**, I was **about seventeen years old**.

My **mother** was named **Harriet Bailey**. She was the **daughter** of **Isaac** and **Betsey Bailey**, both **colored**, and quite dark. My **mother** was of a **darker complexion** than **either** my **grandmother** or **grandfather**.