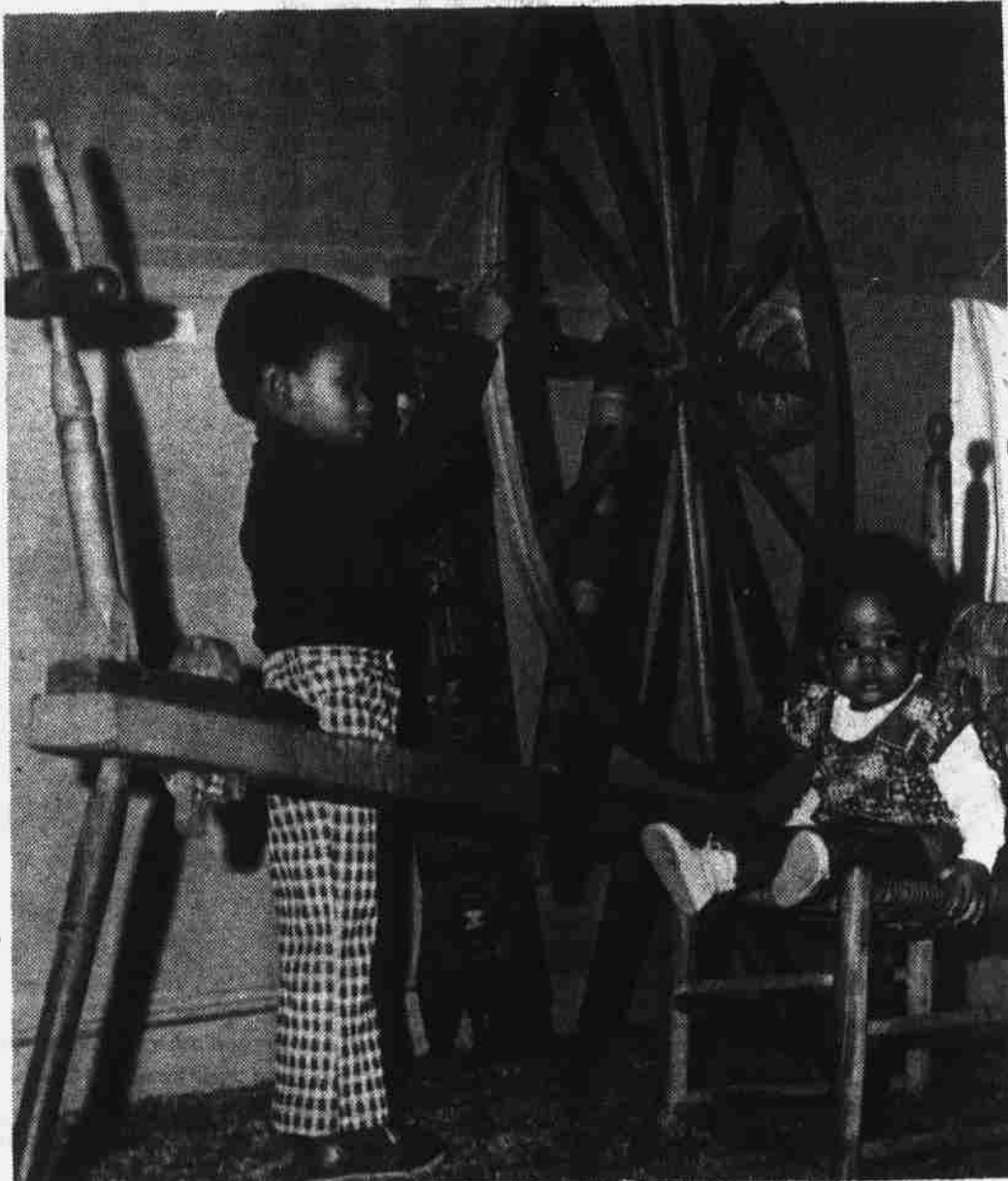




At the afternoon session of the Patricia Hearst trial, the prosecution called two Black women and one Black man who Miss Hearst had testified previously were brought in off the street to the house where she was held shortly after the kidnaping and introduced to her by Donald DeFreeze. The three witnesses - shown at their press conference with their lawyers, Jemella Muntaz, (T-L), Ronald Tate, (C) and Retinah X, attorneys Anne Cumings, (L-L) and Susan Jordan - all refused to testify about the meeting with Miss Hearst, claiming the Fifth Amendment. UPI

100-Year-Old Spinning Wheel Hides Intriguing Slave Trade

by Richard Moore



THE OLD AND THE NEW— Little Ivan and Christina Smyre of Greensboro play with their great great grandmother's spinning wheel. The wheel is 100 years old. (Photo by Dick Moore)

GREENSBORO—If a 100-year-old spinning wheel could talk, it would probably tell a fascinating tale involving some Greensboro residents.

The narrative, involving six generations of blacks in North Carolina, was uncovered this week during a tour of the African Heritage Center at A&T State University.

The well-preserved spinning wheel is on display in the center for Black History Week, but its story begins in 1876 when the wheel was presented to Susan Hall Bright, a 16-year-old ex-slave bride.

"I wanted the story told because it seems like some blacks don't know their families have lived in America, contributed much," said Miss Jean Bright, one of Susan's surviving grand-daughters. "I want the world to know that we helped to make America what it is."

Susan Hall had been born in 1860, one of the two daughters of a slave woman who lived in the area around Morganton, N. C.

When the Civil War broke out, Susan's master rode off to battle on a fine horse and never returned. The slave mistress then decided to sell the two little girls, but she kept the mother.

She also kept the names and addresses of the children's buyers, and gave this information to her slave.

"As soon as word got around that the slaves had been freed after the war," said Miss Bright,

"the slave mother announced to her mistress that she was going to find her daughters."

Miss Bright's grandmother then began walking and showing the names and addresses to all she met. She accumulated more information and directions, and according to Miss Bright's father, was given food, shelter and sometimes a ride along the way.

Family members today aren't sure how far the ex-slave's journey took her, but many believe it was as far away as the Georgia or East Tennessee lines.

It was Susan herself who recounted the reunion with her mother many years later.

"One day when I was five or six years old, I was picking up stovewood to carry into the kitchen. That was one of my jobs. I looked up to see a tall woman looking at me and smiling."

The woman volunteered to assist her in carrying the wood into the house, and later revealed that she was Susan's mother. She later found her other daughter and returned home with them.

Miss Bright remembers that both her grandmothers and the slave mistresses lived to be among the oldest persons in the community. Susan died in 1928 at the age of 65.

It was in 1876 when Susan was 16 and just married, that her mother presented her the spinning wheel as a wedding present.