

DATED INSCRIPTIONS

Concatination

JUNE 12, 1834. FOR REUBEN DRAKE AND
JASPER GIBBS AT POTTERSVILLE
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
19.5 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

This single word is the first known inscription by Dave other than production marks and dates. Usually spelled with an "e" rather than an "i" at its midpoint, it means a linking together, as the pieces of a chain are linked. It is tempting to think that Dave used it to refer to bondage, but it may be that its attraction lay in its intriguing five-syllable structure. Mastery of words of multiple syllables was one of the goals of Webster's blue-back speller, which helped many slaves learn to read.

*put every bit all between
surely this Jar will hold 14*

JULY 12, 1834. FOR REUBEN DRAKE
AND JASPER GIBBS AT POTTERSVILLE
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES; 19.3 INCHES TALL
SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM, COLUMBIA, S.C.

This is Dave's first known verse. It gives instructions for packing meat into the fourteen-gallon jar on which it is written. The words are crowded against one handle of the jar, perhaps indicating that Dave had not yet learned how to center them on the shoulder of a piece. One of the words, "bit," is raised above the others, apparently because he forgot it on the first run-through and had to add it later. This poem contains Dave's first known use of the word "Jar." He would employ it often in the future, always beginning it with a capital letter.

*horses mules and hogs —
all our cows is in the bogs —
there they shall ever stay
till the buzzards take them away ==*

MARCH 29, 1836. PROBABLY AT POTTERSVILLE
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
16.1 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Dave wrote this fully realized quatrain only a few weeks after many of his Pottersville companions were taken by Reuben Drake to Louisiana. Dave was left behind, probably because he had recently lost one of his legs in a railway accident. He was as powerless to follow the route to the West as if he were stuck "in the bogs." This may account for the poem's general sense of dejection.

catination

APRIL 12, 1836. PROBABLY AT POTTERSVILLE
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
14.5 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Early in my research, I heard of a Dave pot with a inscription that included the word "coronation." I was later told of another vessel whose inscription read "gatination." Ultimately, I learned that these pots were one and the same and that neither of the readings was correct. The pot in question was auctioned at Charlton Hall Galleries in September 2000, with the inscription recorded in the catalog as "canitation." According to the person who sold the pot, however, the correct word was "catination." Though I have not been able to examine the inscription, the "Concatination" jar of June 12, 1834, which subsequently came to light, supports this last reading.

*a better thing, I never saw
when I shot off the lions jaw*

NOVEMBER 9, 1836, POSSIBLY FOR REV. JOHN LANDRUM
AT HORSE CREEK
JUG WITH TWO LOOP HANDLES; 17.5 INCHES TALL
HIGH MUSEUM OF ART, ATLANTA, GA.

This cryptic inscription may refer to the sixth chapter of the Book of Daniel, in which Daniel, having been cast into a den of lions, was saved from death by an angel, who firmly closed the lions' mouths. The Bible uses the word "shut" to describe the angel's actions, which in plantation retellings could have changed to Dave's "shot."

*Ladys & gentlemen's Shoes ==
sell all you can : & nothing you'll loose . x*

JANUARY 29, 1840, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
JUG WITH TWO LOOP HANDLES
17.2 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

This inscription appears to be a rousing endorsement for the shoe business. It is written on the first known poem pot to also carry the name of Lewis Miles. Here, Dave refers to him as "L. Miles"; on the many pots that followed, he would also use "Lm" or "Mr. Miles" or "Mr. L. Miles." Though the final word in the couplet is "loose," Dave probably intended it to be "lose," so it would rhyme with "shoes." I have not examined the inscription; this version of it is based on a careful transcription by the owner.

*whats better than Kissing --
while we both are at fishing*

FEBRUARY 10, 1840, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO LUG HANDLES
15 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

For years this jar sat on a living room television set, its significance and value unrecognized. One night, while watching *Antiques Roadshow* on that same set, the owner saw a Dave jug and realized for the first time what he had. Charlton Hall Galleries sold it for him at auction on December 11, 2004, for \$135,000—a record at the time. The final word in the first line of the inscription was quoted in the auction catalog as "wishing," but careful comparison with the poem that ends "spare me a Kiss," which Dave wrote just six months later, shows it to be "Kissing."

*Give me silver or; either Gold ==
though they are dangerous; to our Soul ==*

JUNE 27, 1840, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
14.5 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Enslaved artisans were often allowed to work on their own time and pocket whatever money they made. In this couplet and in one written on August 22, 1857, Dave asks payment for the jar he has made. In both verses, he makes clear that he is aware of the evil that money can bring with it. In a third, less conflicted inscription, written on May 17, 1852, he simply announces, "cash wanted."

*Dave belongs to Mr. Miles /
when the oven bakes & the pot biles ///*

JULY 31, 1840, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
15.1 INCHES TALL; THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM, CHARLESTON, S.C.

This poem describes Dave's situation as a pottery slave of Lewis Miles. The second line presents a picture not only of the kitchen on the Miles plantation but the pottery at both of which an oven "baked" and pots "boiled."

Edgefield District

AUGUST 25, 1840, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
STORAGE JAR, 15.7 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

This inscription, which I have not seen, is one of only two that include the word "Edgefield." The other, a message of farewell that Dave wrote for Milton Miles, is undated.

*another trick is worst than this +
Dearest miss: spare me a Kiss +*

AUGUST 26, 1840, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
15.2 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

This amorous couplet was written six months after Dave's poem about kissing while fishing, from February 10, 1840. He was thirty-nine years old when he made these inscriptions and apparently very much interested in someone at his new home on Horse Creek.

not counted

MAY 16, 1843, FOR LEWIS MILES AT HORSE CREEK
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
27.7 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Though these two short words probably convey only simple production

writing them, Dave entered a period of silence, in which, as far as anyone has discovered, he made no inscriptions of any kind on his pots. This lasted approximately six years, during which he was purchased by Franklin Landrum. He did not resume writing until he was once more owned by Lewis Miles.

just a mammoth Jar [illegible] for I not [illegible]

OCTOBER 17, 1850, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO HANDLES
24 INCHES TALL; CURRENT OWNER UNKNOWN

The first inscription that Dave is known to have written after his silent period, other than names and dates, survives only in part. Though I have not seen it, a former owner of the jar on which it appears told me that a very heavy glaze covers the words, which are lightly carved into the clay, leaving most of them unreadable. The sole documentation of the inscription is a listing in the Harmer Rooke Galleries auction catalog of January 26, 1994 (Absentee Auction 56: Important American Stoneware). The catalog rendered it all in capital letters; I have quoted it in upper and lower case, giving an initial capital to the word "jar," as Dave did in all other known cases.

cash wanted

MAY 17, 1852, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
PRESERVE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
16.1 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

In this short message, Dave states plainly that he (or perhaps Lewis Miles) wants money for his pottery. Compare his directness with the more equivocal context in which he offers his work for sale on June 27,

*Lm says this handle
will crack*

JUNE 28, 1854. FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
JUG WITH ONE LOOP HANDLE
HEIGHT UNKNOWN; PRIVATE COLLECTION

In June 1854, Lewis Miles apparently told Dave that the handle on the jug he had just made was not sturdy enough. To let posterity be the judge, Dave recorded his owner's opinion in this inscription, which he wrote vertically on the side of the jug in question. More than 150 years later, the handle is still intact. In 2001, hundreds of thousands of television viewers became acquainted with Dave's work for the first time when they saw this piece on *Antiques Roadshow*, in a segment taped in Charleston. The young woman who presented it on the show had bought the jug at an estate sale for sixty dollars but afterward in the parking lot had sold it to a man who offered her a hundred dollars for it. Her mother, hearing what had happened, sent her running after him to undo the deal. Garrison Stradling, who examined the jug for the *Roadshow*, called her "one lucky Charlestonian." He appraised the jug at six thousand dollars, which was probably low even then.

for Mr. John Monday

JULY 6, 1857. FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
21.7 INCHES TALL; MCKISSICK MUSEUM, COLUMBIA, S.C.

The large and exceedingly fine storage vessel on which this inscription appears was probably made for John W. Mundy, who owned a large plantation in Edgefield District. Perhaps playing with words, Dave wrote the buyer's name as "monday" which was, in fact, the day of the

*I wonder where is all my relation
friendship to all — and, every nation*

AUGUST 16, 1857. FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
19 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

In this, Dave's most personal poem, he wonders openly about distant family members. He was apparently separated from his kinfolk three times during his life: in his youth, when he became the property of Harvey Drake; in 1836, when Reuben Drake took his other slaves to Louisiana; and in 1847, when Rev. John Landrum's estate was broken up. Here, years after these events, Dave seems to still be burdened by them.

*I made this Jar = for cash —
though its called = lucre Trash //*

AUGUST 22, 1857. FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO LUG HANDLES
19 INCHES TALL; MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, MASS.

Dave was probably familiar with the word "lucre," meaning money or riches, from the expression "filthy lucre." It comes from 1 Timothy 3:8, in which Paul advises that men aspiring to be deacons of the church must be "grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre." Compare this inscription with those of June 27, 1840, and May 17, 1852.

*a pretty little Girl, on a virge
Volcaic mountain, how they burge*

AUGUST 24, 1857. FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

Wealthy Southerners often visited the great classical ruins of Europe, including those of Pompeii. They brought back tales of the eruption of Vesuvius, stories that were doubtless overheard and repeated in the slave community. Dave uses the imagery of a volcano here to describe a young girl on the verge of maturity.

Making this Jar = I had all thoughts

Lads & gentlemen = never out walks

JANUARY 30, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

20.6 INCHES TALL; CURRENT OWNER UNKNOWN

The message of this enigmatic poem may be similar to that of the couplet Dave wrote on February 29, 1840: People always need shoes.

I made this for our, sott

it will x never — nver, rolt

MARCH 31, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO HANDLES

22 INCHES TALL; HIGH MUSEUM OF ART, ATLANTA, GA.

Porter Steve Ferrell contends that "sott" refers here to the fermented mash that is part of the beer-making process. My alternative speculation is that it may be a misspelling of the name "Scott," which Dave includes in a poem written only three weeks after this one, on April 21, 1858. The wording for this inscription, which I have not seen, is taken from a transcription made when the High Museum acquired the jar.

This noble Jar = will hold, 20

APRIL 8, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

23 INCHES TALL; CURRENT OWNER UNKNOWN

In the uneasy years leading up to the Civil War, Lewis Miles told Dave to make a small jar for him each month, so that he could bury a bit of gold or silver in it. This couplet, written during the same period but on a far larger jar, may be a reference to that practice. I have found only one photograph that shows this inscription, in the Harmer Rooke catalog of the sale of Georgeanna Greer's collection of stoneware (November 18, 1992, and January 13, 1993). The latter part of the second line is difficult to make out in the photo, leaving it unclear whether or not Dave added any marks at the end of the poem.

A very large Jar = which has 4 handles =

pack it full of fresh meats — then light = candles —

APRIL 12, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH FOUR SLAB HANDLES

24.5 INCHES HIGH; PRIVATE COLLECTION, ON LOAN

TO ATLANTA HISTORY CENTER, ATLANTA, GA.

Dave's larger jars were extremely heavy, requiring more than the usual two handles for lifting. This one, as he tells us, had four handles. After a jar had been filled with salted meat, it could be sealed with candle wax, a process that Dave may be referring to in the final words of this poem.

when you fill this Jar with pork or beef

Scot will be there; to Get a peace, —

On the opposite side:

*this Jar is to Mr Segler who keeps the bar in orangeburg
for Mr Edwards a Gentle man — who formly kept*

APRIL 21, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

23.6 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

There is a couplet on one side of this jar and a dedication on the other. In both inscriptions, Dave seems to be giving words double meanings. He suggests in the couplet that Scot, who is probably Scott Miles, another pottery worker, will find "peace" in a "piece" of meat. (See the poem of March 31, 1858, which is perhaps about Scott, as well.) In the dedication, he honors Mr. Edwards as a "Gentle man," which may also refer to his job as a groom: Taming or calming a horse, often by stroking, is known as "gentling."⁴

the sun moon and — stars —
in the west are a plenty of — bears —

JULY 29, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

20.2 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

In these two lines, Dave expresses his wonder at the contents of the sky above him. The bears to which he is referring may be those that are represented in the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor. He makes his rhyme work by pronouncing "bears" as "bars." Dave scholar Samuel J. Hardman has recently pointed out the existence of the "a" in the second line of the verse, which had managed to escape the notice of transcribers ever since the jar first came to light.

I saw a leppard, & a lions face,
then I felt the need of — Grace.

NOVEMBER 3, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

22.4 INCHES TALL; MUSEUM OF EARLY SOUTHERN DECORATIVE ART

There are several possible sources for the imagery in this poem. Traveling circuses with menageries of wild animals often came through the Edgefield area in Dave's time; a fantastic beast, called the Gyascutus, also once visited the county to thrash behind a curtain in a hoax that terrified and delighted the population. Because Dave wrote this verse during the buildup to the Civil War, however, it may be that he is referring instead to beasts such as those that heralded the Day of Judgement in the Book of Daniel, Chapter 7. Dave repeats this verse on August 7, 1860, when the Great Fear that came after John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry had seized the South.⁵

nineteen days before Christmas Eve
lots of people after it's over, how they will grieve

DECEMBER 6, 1858, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

APPROXIMATELY 20.5 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

When Steve Ferrell posted all known Dave poems on his Old Edgefield Pottery Web site, the owners of this previously undocumented pot sent him a photograph of it to show that there was at least one inscription that hadn't yet been counted. They sent it on December 6, the same day and month on which it was written. The extreme beginning and end of each line are not visible in the photo, so there may be additional marks that form part of the poem. Dave wrote another holiday poem on July 4, 1859.

Mark and
— Dave —

MARCH 10, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF

STORAGE JAR WITH TWO LUG HANDLES

15 INCHES TALL; NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY

Though this is technically a signature, I am including it here because of its significance. Mark, who was apparently Dave's helper on the day the jar was made, was probably Mark Jones, whom the 1870 federal census shows living in Dave's household, along with his family. It's possible that Mark's wife, Caroline, was Dave's daughter, making Mark his son-in-law.

I made this out of number, & cross "
if you do not lisen at the bible you'll be lost —

MARCH 25, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

21 INCHES TALL; MADISON-MORGAN CULTURAL CENTER, MADISON, GA.

For years, the opening line of this couplet was inadvertently omitted in lists of Dave's inscriptions. With it in place, the verse can be clearly seen as an early draft of his last known poem, written three years later on May 3, 1862. Dave ends this version with a flourish by drawing a serpentine mark down the shoulder of the jar and fitting "you'll be" into it on a lower line, probably because he had run out of room for what he had left to write.

Over noble Dr. Landrum's head
May guardian angels visit his bed

APRIL 14, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
ABOUT 15-GALLON CAPACITY; CURRENT OWNER UNKNOWN

In about 1997, Dr. John Burrison, author of *Brothers in Clay: The Story of Georgia Folk Pottery*, was invited to see this jar in the home of its owner, who lived in eastern Georgia. Although the light was poor in the storage room in which it was housed, Burrison was able to carefully note down its inscription and approximate capacity. He planned to return within a

abouts. Other collectors also may have seen the pot before the owner's death, for a different version of the inscription was reported to Jill Koverman, who listed it in the catalog for the 1998 McKissick Museum show of Dave's work: *When Noble Dr. Landrum is dead / May Guardian angels visit his bed*. Both versions clearly refer to the death of Dr. Abner Landrum, Dave's early mentor, who died in Columbia on April 3, 1859, just eleven days before this jar was made. The imagery of guardian angels probably comes from John 20:11 and 12, in which Mary looks into the empty tomb of Christ and "seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain."

here is eighteen hundred & fifty nine
unto you all I fell in , cline "

APRIL 18, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
19.5 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Because this jar was long unavailable to researchers, extravagant rumors arose about what its inscription said. I was told it spoke of Dave falling in something, perhaps in love. Some claimed it began with the word "Hive," a reference to Abner Landrum's newspaper. When I was given the opportunity to examine the inscription, I read it instead as Dave marking the year of Dr. Landrum's death and sending his condolences to all those in mourning for him. Perhaps to show the extent of his emotion, he inserted an inordinately long space after "in"—room enough for a slow sigh—before ending with "cline."

Good for lard — or holding — fresh meats ==
blest we were — when peter saw the folded sheets

MAY 3, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES

Some scholars have read this poem as a reference to Acts 10:10-16, in which God gives Peter permission to eat any kind of meat, even that considered "unclean." My alternative suggestion is that Dave may again have been referring to the recent death of Dr. Abner Landrum. If so, his imagery would come from John 20:6-7, in which Peter discovers that the tomb of Jesus is empty but for the linen his body had been wrapped in and the napkin that was about his head, which was "wrapped together in a place by itself." Jesus, as Peter later comes to understand, had risen from the dead. Dave is writing nine days after Easter, when thoughts of resurrection for Dr. Landrum might still be vivid in his mind.⁶

•
*Great & Noble Jar
hold Sheep goat or bear*

MAY 13, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH FOUR SLAB HANDLES
25.7 INCHES TALL; THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM, CHARLESTON, S.C.

Dave made two enormous jars on May 13, 1859, of which this is one. He shared credit with another pottery slave, Baddler, by signing them with both their names. As he had done in his poem of July 29, 1858, Dave pronounced "bear" as "bar" to create a rhyme. The ending of the inscription was originally transcribed incorrectly as "and bear," and it has consistently been quoted that way until now. Cinda Baldwin used the powerful opening line of this couplet for the title of her book on the traditional stoneware of South Carolina.

•
*made at stoney bluff,
for making or adgin enuff*

MAY 13, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH FOUR SLAB HANDLES

The poem on this, Dave's tallest jar, opens with a reference to Stony Bluff, Lewis Miles's pottery manufactory. The jumbled lettering of the second line, however, has always made the meaning of the inscription a mystery. When the jar was first exhibited at the Charleston Museum in 1919, the baffled staff actually invited visitors to aid them in reading the line. For years it was thought to say "for making lard enuff," even though that left several letters unaccounted for. I think the curved mark mistaken for the first letter in "lard" may actually be an insertion device for "or," which is then followed by the word "ageing," spelled "adgin." If my reading is correct, Dave would be referring here to the process for curing meat.

•
*the south of July — is Surely come —
to blow the fife — and beat the drum //*

JULY 4, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
24 INCHES TALL; ATLANTA HISTORY CENTER, ATLANTA, GA.

Because drums could be employed as a means of communication during insurrections, slaves were not allowed to use them. Dave's mention of them here has led some observers to wonder whether his poem might have a subversive message. Because nothing else in his story suggests that he was an agitator for revolt, it seems likely that his words were meant only to mark an enjoyable holiday.⁷

•
Rev. W. A. Lawton

JULY 19, 1859, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
JUG WITH TWO LOOP HANDLES
16.2 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

This jug was probably made as a gift for Rev. Winborn Asa Lawton

Landrum, daughter of Rev. John Landrum and sister of Lewis Miles's wife, Mary. The current owner of the piece tells me that a second, almost identical jug, inscribed with the same name and date, is in another private collection.

*I Saw a leopard, & a lions face ==
then I felt, the need of Grace ==*

AUGUST 7, 1860, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
16.7 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Here, Dave appears to be reporting a frightening vision filled with beasts similar to those described in the Book of Daniel, Chapter 7. Because a mood of foreboding was strong in the black and the white communities of Edgefield at the time he was writing, Dave may have considered such images predictive of disasters to come. He inscribed this same poem earlier, on November 3, 1858, with several differences in spelling and punctuation.

*A noble Jar . for pork or beef --
then carry it . a round to the indian chief ///*

NOVEMBER 9, 1860, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
21.5 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

At the time Dave wrote this, Native Americans still hunted wild animals in the Carolina mountains. Lewis Miles could have traded jars for hides for his tannery, providing Dave with the subject for his poem.

I, made this Jar, all of cross

MAY 3, 1862, FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES; 20 INCHES TALL
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY,
SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

This is Dave's last known poem, written in the midst of the Civil War. It is based on an earlier, more irregular verse of March 25, 1859. Both are warnings, but this one, with its terrible word "repent," rings more strongly. It is inscribed on what Jill Koverman calls Dave's "most perfectly formed vessel."

UNDATED INSCRIPTIONS

New
X

UNDATED, POSSIBLY FOR
REV. JOHN LANDRUM AT HORSE CREEK
JUG WITH ONE LOOP HANDLE; 8.8 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Dave is thought to have made this unsigned jug during the period he worked for Rev. John Landrum. The word "New" on its shoulder would have been accurate for only a short time, because he made thousands of pots during his lifetime. The "X" below it is probably a production mark.⁸

*Think of me when
far away Rosa D G Never
Mr Milton Miles
Edgefield*

UNDATED, PROBABLY FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
15.3 INCHES TALL; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Milton Miles, the eldest son of Lewis Miles, must have asked Dave to write this romantic message. Rosa, to whom it is addressed, may be

into the Wever family. Rosa's home, the Pine House, one of the grandest houses of the area, was only a short ride on horseback from Stony Bluff, where the Mileses lived. My Wever grandmother, annoyed whenever the family name was pronounced "Weaver," as it often was, always firmly corrected the speaker: "Wever," she would say, "as in *never*." It may be that this was a standard rejoinder even in Rosa's time, and that the surname "Never," which Milton had Dave write here, was a gentle joke.

H. Panzerbieter

Groceries

King & Columbia

Charleston

S.C.

UNDATED, PROBABLY FOR LEWIS MILES AT STONY BLUFF
STORAGE JAR WITH TWO SLAB HANDLES
12.6 INCHES TALL; THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM, CHARLESTON, S.C.

This inscription, containing the name and address of a grocer in Charleston, is evidence of the wide-ranging clientele for Edgefield pottery. A second jar with a similar inscription was auctioned at Charlton Hall Galleries on March 30, 2008, for \$45,000. A jug in a private collection also heralds the grocer's name and location.

... γ my chic ...

UNDATED, FOR REV. JOHN LANDRUM
SHERDS; THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM, CHARLESTON, S.C.

A photo in the Laura Bragg Papers at the Charleston Museum Archives shows a group of pottery sherds. One sherd, positioned so its outer sur-

face can be seen, bears this inscription, which appears to be by Dave. Sherds in a similar photo, kept in the same envelope, are noted to be "from scrap heap of pottery of the Rev. John Landrum," indicating that they were probably gathered during one of Miss Bragg's research trips to the upstate.

April 18

UNDATED, PROBABLY FOR HARVEY OR
REUBEN DRAKE AT POTTERSVILLE
MOLDED BRICK; PRIVATE COLLECTION

Terry and Steve Ferrell found this brick on land that they own at the site of Pottersville. It is inscribed with "April 18" in what appears to be Dave's hand. While molding the brick, he may have used its smooth surface as a "slate" for practicing his writing. If so, it is the only known inscription by Dave that is not on a piece of pottery.

RUMORED INSCRIPTIONS

A noble Jar

For lard or tar

Though several people have told me about this inscription, I have not seen it. It is said to be dated February 20, 1858.

Ponderosity

An archival reference to this single-word inscription was reported in 1976 to John Michael Vlach, who included it in a section on Dave in *The Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts*. However, I have not been able to locate the original reference or anyone who has seen the inscription.