



# *I made this jar*

*Verses by Dave — an enslaved African American potter in South Carolina — inscribed on his ceramic vessels, 1830s-early 1860s*

Born around 1800 in South Carolina, the enslaved man named Dave produced ceramic vessels in the pottery factories of several slave-owning families in Edgefield County, South Carolina, from his early teens until emancipation, after which he took the last name Drake and lived until ca. 1870. The verses below, on twenty-seven pots, comprise all the known verses composed by Dave and inscribed on his vessels.

*Put every bit all between  
surely this jar will hold 14*

12 July 1834

*Horses, mules and hogs-  
all our cows is in the bogs-  
there they shall ever stay  
till the buzzards take them away*

29 March 1836

*A better thing I never saw  
When I shot off the lions jaw*

9 November 1836

*Ladys & gentlemens shoes  
Sell all you can & nothing you'll loose*

29 January 1840

*Give me silver or; either gold  
though they are dangerous; to our soul*

27 July 1840

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

31 July 1840

*Another trick is worst than this  
Dearest Miss, spare me a kiss*

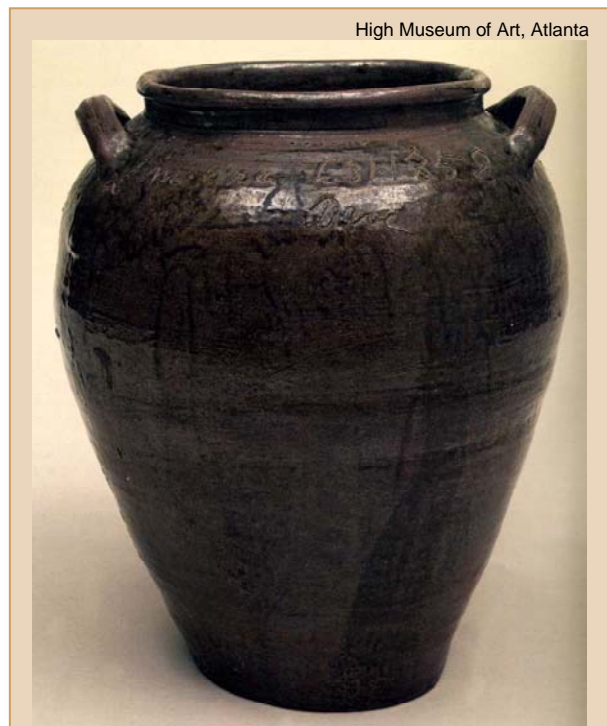
26 August 1840

*I wonder where is all my relations  
Friendship to all - and every nation*

16 August 1857

*I made this jar for cash  
thought its called lucre trash*

22 August 1857



High Museum of Art, Atlanta

Dave [Drake], storage jar, alkaline-glazed stoneware  
(H: 22"; Cir: 60"), 1838



L.m. March 31, 1858 / Dave

On the reverse:  
*I made this for our Sott /  
It will never never rott*

*A pretty little girl on a virge  
volca[n]ic mountain, how they burge*  
24 August 1857

*Making this jar: I had all thoughts  
Lads & gentlemen: never out walks*  
30 January 1858

*If you don't listen at the bible  
you will be lost*  
25 March 1859

*I made this for our Sott  
it will never – never – rott*  
31 March 1858

*This noble jar will hold 20  
fill it with silver then you'll have plenty*  
8 April 1858

*A very large jar which has four handles  
pack it full of fresh meat - then light candles*  
12 April 1858

*When you fill this jar with pork or beef  
Scot will be there to get a peace*

on the other side reads a dedication:

*This jar is to Mr. Seglir  
who keeps the bar in orangeburg  
for Mr. Edwards a gentle man  
who formly kept Mr Thos bacons horses*  
21 April, 1858

*The sun, moon and – stars  
in the west are plenty of – bears*  
29 July 1858

*I saw a leppard & a lions face  
than I felt the need of – grace*  
3 November 1858

*When Noble Dr. Landrum is dead  
May Guardian angels visit his bed*  
14 April 1859

*Hive is eighteen; hundred + fifty nine  
unto you all I fill in — cline*  
18 April 1859

*Good for lard or holding fresh meats  
blest we were, when Peter saw the folded sheets*  
3 May 1859

*Made at Stoney Bluff  
for making lard enuff*  
13 May 1859

*Great & noble jar  
hold sheep goat and bear*  
13 May 1859

*The forth of July is surely come  
to blow the fife = and beat the drum*  
4 July 1859

*I saw a leopard & a lions face  
then I felt, the need of grace*  
7 August 1860

*A noble jar for pork or beef  
then carry it a round to the indian chief*  
9 November 1860

*I – made this Jar all of cross  
If you don't repent, you will be lost*  
3 May 1862

