Slave Narratives

These and many additional narratives can be found at the Library of Congress site for *Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938:* http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html.

Charity Anderson

(Mobile, Alabama)

Charity Anderson, who believes she is 101 years old, was born at Bell's Landing on the Alabama River, where her owner, Leslie Johnson, operated a woodyard which supplied fuel to the river teamers, and a tavern where travelers whiled away the delays of a dubious riverboat schedule.

Rheumatic and weak, she no longer ventures from her house in Toulminville, on the outskirts of Mobile, but sits with her turbaned head and bespectacled eyes, rocking the long hours away in a creaky old chair and knitting or sewing, or just gazing into a past painted by the crackling flames in the fireplace.

"I has so much trouble gittin' up and down de steps and over de groun', I jist makes myself happy heah, cause, thank de Lawd I'se on Zion's March," is her resigned comment.

"Missy, peoples don't live now; and niggers ain't got no manners, and doan' know nothin' 'bout waitin' on folks. I kin remember de days when I was one of de house servants. Dere was six of us in de ole Massa's house—me, Sarah, Lou, Hester, Jerry and Joe. Us didn' know nothin' but good times den. My job was lookin' atter de corner table whar nothin' but de desserts set. Joe and Jerry, dey was de table boys. Dey never tetched nothin' of dere hends, but used de waiter to pass things wid.

"My ole Massa was a good man. He treated all his slaves kind, and took good here of 'em. But, honey, all de white folks ain't good to dere slaves. I's seen po' niggers 'most tore up by dogs and whupped 'til dey bled when dey didn' do lak de white folks say. But, thank de Lawd, I had good white folks and dey sho' did trus' me, too. I had charge of all de keys to de house, and I waited on de Missis and de chillun. I laid out all de clo's on Sat'dy night, and den Sunday mawnins I'd pick up all de dirty things. Dey didn' have a thing to do. Us house servants had a hard job keepin' de pickaninnies out'er de dinin' room whar ole Massa et, cause when dey would slip in and stan' by his cheer, when he finished eatin' he would fix a plate for 'em and let 'em set on the hearth.

"No ma'am, Missy, I ain't never worked in de fields. Ole massa he never planted no cotton, and I ain't seen none planted 'til after I was free. But, honey, I could sho 'nuff wash, iron and knit and weave. Sometimes I weaved six or seven yards of cloth, and do my house work too. I larnt the chillun how to weave, and wash, and iron, and knit too, and I's waited on de fo'th generation of our fambly. I jes' wish I could tell dese young chillun how to go. Iffen dey would only suffer me to talk to dem, I'd tell dem to be more 'spectful to dere mammies and to dere white folks and say 'yes ma'am' and 'no ma'am', instid of 'yes' and 'no' lak dey do now.

"All dis generation thinks of is 'musement. I never had seen a show in my whole life 'til jes' dis pas' yeah when one of dem carnival things wid de swings, and lights, and all de doin's dey have stop right in front of our house heare!

"And I ain't never been in no trouble in all my life—ain't been in no lawsuits, and I ain't been no witness even. I allus treat everybody as good as I kin, and I uses my manners as good as I knows how, and de Lawd sho' has took good keer of me. Why, when my house burnt up, de white folks helped me so dat in no time you couldn't tell I ever los' a thing.

"But, honey, de good ole days is now gone forever. De old days was really de good times. How I wish I could go back to dem days when we lived at Johnson's landing on de river, when de folks would come to ketch de steamboats and we never knowed how many to put on breakfas', dinner, or supper fo', cause de boats might be behin' times. I ain't never had to pay a fare to ride a steamboat neither. I was a good lookin' yaller gal in dem days and ride free wherever I wanted to go.

"But whut's de use dreamin' 'bout de ole times? Dey's gone, and de world is gettin' wickeder and wickeder, sin grows bolder and bolder, and 'ligion colder and colder."

George Young

(Yiekens, Tartt, Livingston, Alabama)

"De Lawd wouldn' trusted Peter wid no keys to Heaven," in the minion of George Young, of Livingston, Alabama, born into slavery ninety-one years ago. George knew the rigors of slavery under an absentee landlord and brutal overseers, according to the story he tells.

"I was born on what was knowed as de Chapman Place, five miles eas' of Livingston, on August 10th, 1846," George began his tale. My name was George Chapman an' I had five brothers, Anderson, Harrison, William, Henry an' Sam, an' three sisters, Phobe, Frances and Amelia. My mother's name was Mary Ann Chapman an' my father's name was Sam Young, says he b'longed to Mr. Chapman. Us all belonged to Governor Reuben Chapman of Alabame.

"The overseer's name was Mr. John Smith, an' anudder's name was Mr. Lawler. He was dere de year I was born, an' dey called hit "Lawler ever." Bofe of 'em was mean, but Lawler, I hear tell, was de meanes'. Dey has over three hund'ed slaves, caze dey had three plantations, one at Bolke, one in Huntsville dis yeme one. I can't say Marsa Chapman wasn't and us, caze he was all de time in Huntsville an' jes' come now an' den an' bring his family to see 'bouten' things. But de overseers was she' mean.

"I seed slaves plenty times wid iron ban's 'roun' dey ankles an' a hole in de ban' an' a iron rod faste to hit what went up de outside of der to de vais' an' fasten to another iron ban' 'roun' de waist. Dis here was to keep 'em from bendin' dey legs an' runnin' away. Dey call hit wittin' de stiff knee on you, an' hit sho' made 'em stiff! Sometimes hit made 'em aick, too, caze dey had dem iron can's so tight 'roun' de ankles, dat when dey tuck 'em off live things was under 'em, an' dat's thut give 'em fever, dey say. Us had to go out in de woods an' git May-Apple root an' mullen weed an' all sich to bile for to cyore de fever. Miss, whar was de Lord in dem days? Whut was He doin'?

"But some of 'em runned away, anyhow. My brother, Harrison, was one, an' dey sot de "nigger dogs" on him lack fox houn's run a fox today. Dey didn't run him down till 'bout night but finely dey cotched him, an' de hunters feched him to de do' an' say: "Mary Ann, here Marrison." Den dey turned de dogs loose on him agin, an' sich a scream yet never hyared. He was all bloody an' Mammy was a-hollerin', save him, Lord, save my chile, an' don' let dem dogs eat him up. Mr. Lawler said, 'De Lord ain't got nothin' do wid dis here, an' hit sho' look lack He didn't,' caze dem dogs nigh 'bout chewed Harrison up. Dem Ws hard times, sho'.

"Dey didn't larn us nothin' an' didn't 'low us to larn nothin'. Iffen dey ketch us larnin' to read an' write, dey cut us han' off. Dey didn't 'low us to go to church, neither. Sometimes us slip off an' have a little prayer meetin' by usse'ves in a ole house wid a dirt flo'. Dey'd git happy an' shout an' couldn't nobody hyar 'em, caze dey didn't make no fuss on de dirt flo', an' one stan' in de do' an' watch. Some folks put dey head in de wash pot to pray, an' pray easy, an' some-body be watchin' for de overseer. Us git whupped fer ev'ything iffen hit was public knowed.

"Us wasn't 'lowed visit nobody from place to place, an' I seed Jin Dawson, dis here same Iverson Dawson' daddy; I seed him stobbed out wid fo' stobs. Dey laid him down on his belly an' stretch his han's out on bofe sides an' tie one to one stob, an' one to de yuther. Bofe Ms feet was stretch out an' tied to dem stobs. Depldey whupped him wid a whole board whut you kiver a house wid. De darkies had to go dere in de night an' take him up in a sheet an' carry him home, but he didn't die. He was 'cused of gwine over to de neighbor's plantation at night. Nine o'clock was de las' hour us had to be closed in. Head man come out an' holler, Oh, yes! Oh, yes! Ev'ybody in an' do's locked." An' iffen you wan't, you got whupped.

"Wan't nobody 'lowed to co't. Us jes' taken up together an' go ahead, an' dat thing wan't fixed 'twel atter S'render.

"De Patterolles come frum diffe'nt places, an' de Tank'sleys, de Potts, de Cock'ells an' de Greg'rys was neighbors. I may of went to dey house an' dey claim to pertec' me playin' wid dey little nigger chillun, but iffen de Batterollers ketch me, dey claim dey wan't 'sponsible. One day, dey tuck out atter me an' I come right here in Livingston, but I was gwiner run away anyhow, 'caze I had seed ole Uncle Thornton dat mornin'. See, I was de ca'f nusser an' soon as I lef' de house I met him, an' here come de overseer, Mr. Smith. He sent atter me an' he said, 'I seed six niggers in de woods whut run away, an' asked did I see ole man Thornton. I said, 'No, I ain't seed nobody'. He said, 'Nev' mine, I make you tell a better tale'n dat in de mawnin'.' So when I vent wid de slop to dem ca'ves I got to thinkin' 'bout dat whupping so I

come right here.

"Mr. Norville had a wood-shop right 'crost de road dere by de white folks Baptis' church an' I hid in de back of hit dat night. But dey foun' me an' tuck me back. Den dey stop me from ca'f nussin' an' put me in de fiel' under de head man. I was glad of dat, 'caze I wanted to be wid de other han's, but when I foun' out how 'twas, I wanted to be back. Hit was a harder tas' den when I was nussin' ca'ves an' keepin' bem from breakin' in de fiel' an' eatin' up de crop.

"I was a good han' an' obeyed de owners an' de head man an' never had no use 'bout work. I went one time to Bennet's Station, ten miles b'low here, wid jes' seven mo' niggers from de Chapman place, an' us driv' over a thousan' head of cattle to Atlanta, Ga., an' never had no trouble. I was easy pleased, give me a piece of candy an' I'd lick hit 'twel my mouf was so'. I reckon hit was all right, but I dunno. All de nations couldn't rule jes' lack hit is now, de stronges' people mus' rule.

"Atter S'render, dey tuck a darky for de probit jedge, but dat nigger didn't know nothin' an' he couldn't rule. So den dey tuck a white man name Sanders, an' he done all right. We was under hard task-masters an' I'm glad dey sot me free, 'caze I was under burden an' boun'. But ignernancy can't rule, hit sho' can't. We is darkies, an' white folks ought to be faverable. Some speaks better words'n others, but ev'ybody ain't got de same heart, an' dat's all I knows.

"No'm, I dunno nuthin' 'bout no spirits, either, but Christ 'peered to de 'postles, didn't He, atter he been dead? An' I'se seed folks done been dead jes' as na'chel in de day as you is now. One day me an' my wife was pickin' cotton right out yonder on Mr. White's place, an' I looked up an' seed a man all dressed in black, wid a white shirt toson, his hat a-sittin' on one side, ridin' a black hoss.

"I stoop down to pick some cotton, den look up an' he was gone. I said to my wife I call her Glover but she go by two names, I said, Glover, wonder whar dat man went what was ridin' long yonder on dat pacin' hoss?' She say, 'What pacin' hoss an' what man?' I said, 'He was comin' down dat bank by dat ditch. Dey ain't no bridge dere, an' no hoss could jump hit. Glover said, "Well, I'm gwine in de house 'caze I don' feel lack pickin' cotton today. But I ain't skeered of 'em. I ets out de path plenty times to let 'em by, an' iffen you kin see'em, 'roun' 'em, Iffen you can't see 'em, den dey'll walk 'roun' you. Den dey gets too plentiful, I jes' hangs a hoss shoe upside down over e do', an' don' have no mo' trouble. But ev'ybody oughter have dat kinder-min', to honor God. He 'peered to de 'ciples atter He died, an' he said also, 'Peter, I'll give you de keys to de kingdom'. But Peter didn't have nobody's keys 'cepin' his'n. Don't you know iffen he'd of sive Peter all dem keys, dey's at heap of folks Peter gwineter keep out of dere jes' for spite? God ain't gwineter do nothin' dat foolish. Peter didn't have nobody's key 'cepin' Peter's!

Rachel Adams

(300 Odd Street Athens, Georgia)

Written by: Sadie B. Hornsby, Athens

Rachel Adams' two-room, frame house is perched on the side of a steep hill where peach trees and bamboo form dense shade. Stalks of corn at the rear of the dwelling reach almost to the roof ridge and a portion of the front yard is enclosed for a chicken yard. Stepping gingerly around the amazing number of nondescript articles scattered about the small veranda, the visitor rapped several times on the front door, but received no response. A neighbor said the old woman might be found at her son's store, but she was finally located at the home of a daughter.

Rachel came to the front door with a sandwich of hoecake and cheese in one hand and a glass of water in the other. "Dis here's Rachel Adams," she declared. "Have a seat on de porch." Rachel is tall, thin, very black, and wears glasses. Her faded pink outing wrapper was partly covered by an apron made of a heavy meal sack. Tennis shoes, worn without hose, and a man's black hat completed her outfit.

Rachel began her story by saying: "Miss, dats been sich a long time back dat I has most forgot how things went. Anyhow I was borned in Putman County 'bout two miles from Batonton, Georgia. My Ma and Pa was 'Melia and Isaac Little and, far as I knows, dey was borned and bred in dat same county. Pa, he was sold away from Ma when I was still a baby. Ma's job was to weave all de cloth for de white folks. I have wore many a dress made out of He homespun what she wove. Dere was 17 of us chillun, and I can't 'member de names of but two of 'em now - dey was John and Sarah. John was He's onliest son; all de rest of de other 16 of us was gals.

"Us lived in mud-daubed log cabins what had old stack chimblies wade out of sticks and mud. Our old home-made beds didn't have he slats or metal springs

neither. Dey used stout cords for springs. De cloth what dey made the ticks of dem old hay mattresses and pillows out of was so coarse dat it scratched as little chillun last to death, it seemed lak to us dem days. I kin still feel dem old hay mattresses under me now. Evvy time I moved at night it sounded lak de wind blowin' through dem peach trees and bamboos 'round de front of de house whar I lives now.

"Grandma Anna was 115 years old when she died. She had done wore herself out in slavery time. Grandpa, he was sold off somewhar. Both of 'em was field hands.

"Potlicker and cornbread was fed to us chillun, out of big old wooden bowls. Two or three chillun et out of de same bowl. Grown folks had meat, greens, syrup, cornbread, 'taters and de lak. 'Possums! I should say so. Dey cotch plenty of 'em and atter dey was kilt Ma would scald 'em and rub 'em in hot ashes and det clean't 'em jus' as pretty and white. OO-o-o but dey was good. Lord, Yessum! Dey used to go fishin' and rabbit huntin' too. Us jus' fotonea in game galore den, for it was de style dem days. Dere warn't no market meat in slavery days. Seemed lak to me in dem days dat ash-roasted 'taters and groundpeas was de best somepin t'eat what anybody could want. 'Course dey had a gyarden, and it had somepin of jus' about evvything what us knowed anything 'bout in de way of gyarden sass growin' in it. All de cookin' was done in dem big old open fireplaces what was fixed up special for de pots and ovens. Ashcake was most as good as 'taters cooked in de ashes, but not quite.

"Summertime, us jus' wore homespun dresses made luk-de slips dey use for underwear now. De coats what us wore over our wool dresses in winter was knowed as 'sacques' den, 'cause dey was so losse fittin'. Dey was heavy and had wool in 'em too. Marse Lewis, he had a plenty of sheep, 'cause dey was bound to have lots of warm winter clothes, and den too, dey lakked mutton to eat. Oh! dem old brogan shoes was coarse and rough. When Marse Lewis had a cow kilt dey put de hide in de tannin' vat. When de hides was ready, Uncle Ben made up de shoes. and sometimes dey let Uncle Jasper holp him if cere was many to be made all at one time. Us wore de same sort of clothes on Sunday as evvyday, only dey had to be clean and fresh when dey was put on Sunday mornin'.

"Marse Lewis Little and his wife, Miss Sallie, owned us, and Old Miss, she died long 'fore de surrender. Marse Lewis, he was right good to all his slaves; but dat overseer, he would beat us down in a minute if us didn't do to suit him. When dey give slaves tasks to do and dey warn't done in a certain time, dat old overseer would whup 'em 'bout dat. Marster never had to take none of his Niggers to court or put 'em in jails neither; him end de overseer set 'em right. Long as Miss Sallie lived de carriage driver driv her and Marse Lewis around lots, but atter she died dere warn't so much uze of de carriage. He jus' driv for marse Lewis and piddled around de yard den.

"Some slaves larnt to read and write. If dey went to meetin' dey had to go wid deir white folks 'cause dey didn't have no sep'rate churches for de Niggers 'til atter de war. On our Marster's place, slaves didn't go off to meetin' a t'all. Dey jus' went 'round to one another's houses and sung songs. Some of 'em read de Bible by heart. Once I heared a man preach what didn't know how to read one word in de Bible, and he didn't even have no Bible yit.

"De fust baptizin' I ever seed was atter I was with 'bout grown. If a slave from our place ever jined up wid a church 'fore de war was over, I never heared tell nothin' 'bout it.

"Lordy, Miss! I didn't know nothin' 'bout what a funeral was dem days. If a Nigger died dis mornin', dey sho' didn't waste no time a-puttin' him right on down in de ground dat same day. Dem coffins never had no shape to 'em; day was jus' squared pine boxes. Now warn't dat turrible?

"Slaves never went nowhar widout dem patterollers beatin' 'em up if dey didn't have no pass.

"Dere was hunderds of acres in dat dere plantation. Marse Lewis had a heap of slaves. De overseer, he had a bugle what he blowed to wake up de slaves. He blowed it long 'fore day so dat dey could eat breakfast and be out dere in de fields waitin' for de san to rise so dey could see how to wuk, and dey stayed out dar and wukked 'til black dark. When a rainy spell come and de grass get to growin' fast, dey wukked dem slaves at night, even when de moon warn't shinin'. On dem dark nights one set of slaves holt lanterns for de others to see how to chop de weeds out of de cotton and corn. Wuk was sho' tight dem days. Evvy slave had a task to de stter dey got back to dem cabins at night. Dey each one had to spin deir stint same as de 'omans, evvy night.

"Young and old washed deir clothes Sadday nights.

Dey hardly knowed what Sunday was, Dey didn't have but one day in de Christmas, and de only diff'unce dey seed dat day was dat dey give 'em some biscuits on Christmas day. New Year's Day was rail-splittin' lay. Dey was told how many rails was to be cut, and dem Niggers better split dat many or somebody was gwine to git beat up.

"I don't 'member much 'bout what us played, 'cept no way us run 'round in a ring. Us chillun was allus skeered to play in de thicket nigh de house 'cause Raw Head and Bloody Bones lived der. Dey used to skeer us out 'bout red 'taters. Dey was fine 'taters red on de outside and pretty and white on de inside, but white folks called 'em 'nigger-killers.' Dat was one of deir tricks to keep us from stealin' dem 'taters. Dere warn't nothin' wrong wid ten 'taters; dey was jus' us good and healthy as any other 'taters.

Aunt Lucy, she was de cook, and she told me dat slaves was skeered of dem 'nigger-killer' 'taters and never bothered 'em much den lak dey does de yam patches dese days. I used to think I seed ha'nts at night, but it allus turned out to be somebody dat was tryin' to skeer me.

"Bout de most fun slaves had was at dem cornshuckins. De general would git high on top of de corn pile and whoop and holler down leadin' dat cornshuckin' song 'til all de corn was done shucked. Den come de big eats, de likker, and de dancin'. cotton pickin's was big fun too, and when dey got through pickin' de cotton dey et and drunk and danced 'til dey couldn't dance no more.

"Miss, white folks jus' had to be good to sick slaves, 'cause slaves was property. For Old Marster to lose a slave, was losin' money. Dere warn't so many doctors dem days and homemade medicines was all de go. Oil and turpentine, camphor, assfiddy (asafetida), cherry bark, sweetgum bark; all dem things was used to make teas for grown folks to take for deir ailments. Red oak bark tea was give to chillun for stomach mis'ries.

"All I can ricollect 'bout de comin' of freedom was Old Marster tellin' us dat us was free as jack-rabbits and dat from den on Niggers would have to git deir own somepin t'eat. It warn't long atter dat when dem yankees, wid pretty blue clothes on come through our place and dey stole most evvything our Marster had.

Dey kilt his chickens, hogs, and cows and tuk his hosses off and sold 'em. Dat didn't look right, did it?

"My aunt give us a big weddin' feast when I married Tom Adams, and she sho' did pile up dat table wid heaps of good eatments. My weddin' dress was blue, trimmed in white. Us had six chillun nine grandchillun, and 19 great-grandchillun. One of my grandchillun is done been blind since he was three weeks old. I sont him off to de blind school and now he kin git around 'most as good as I kin. He has made his home wid me ever since his Mammy died.

"'Cordin' to my way of thinkin', Abraham Lincoln done a good thing when he sot us free. Jeff Davis, he was all right too, 'cause if him and Lincoln hadn't got to fightin' us would have been slaves to dis very day. It's mighty good to do jus' as you please, and bread and water is heaps better dan dat somepin t'eat us mad to slave for.

"I jined up wid de church 'cause I wanted to go to Heben when I dies, and if folks lives right dey sho' is gwine to have a good restin' place in de next world. Yes Mam, I sho b'lieves in 'ligion, dat I does. Now, Miss, if you ain't got nothin' else to ax me, I'se gwine home and give dat blind boy his somepin t'eat."

Willis Cofer

(548 Findley Street, Athens, Georgia)

Written by: Grace McCune, Federal Writers' Project, Athens, Georgia

Willis was enjoying the warm sunshine of an April morning as he sat on his small porch. Apparently, he was pleased because someone actually wanted to hear him talk about himself. His rheumatism had been painful ever since that last bad cold had weakened him, but he felt sure the sunshine would "draw out all the kinks." Having observed the amenities in regard to health and weather, the old man proceeded with his story:

"Eden and Calline Cofer was my pa and ma and us all lived on de big old Cofer plantation 'bout five miles from Washin'-ton, Wilkes. Pa b'longed to Marse Henry Cofer and ma and us chillun waz de property of Marse Henry's father, Marse Joe Cofer.

"I was borned in 1860, and at one time I had three brudders, but Cato and John died. My oldest brudder, Ben Cofer, is still livin' and a-preachin' de Gospel somewhar up Nawth.

"Chilluns did have de bestes' good times on our plantation, 'cause Old Marster didn't 'low 'em to do no wuk 'til dey was 12 years old. Us jus' frolicked and played 'round de yard wid de white chilluns, but us

sho' did evermore have to stay in dat yard. It was de cook's place to boss us when de other Niggers was off in de fields, and evvy time us tried to slip off, she cotch us and de way dat 'oman could burn us up wid a switch was a caution.

"Dere warn't no schools for us to go to, so us jes' played 'round. Our cook was all time feedin' us. Us had bread and milk for breakfas', and dinner was mos'ly peas and cornbread, den supper was milk and bread. Dere was so many chilluns dey fed us in a trough. Dey jes' poured de peas on de chunks of cornbread what dey had crumbled in de trough, and us had to mussel 'em out. Yessum, I said mussel. De only spoons us had was mussel shells what us got out of de branches. A little Nigger could put peas and cornbread away mighty fast wid a mussel shell.

"Boys jes' wore shirts what looked lak dresses 'til ley was 12 years old and big enough to wuk in de field. Den dey put 'em on pants made open in de back. Dem britches would look awful funny now, but dey was all us had den, and all de boys was mighty proud when dey got big enough to wear pants and go to wuk in de fields wid grown folkses. When a boy got to be a man enough to wear pants, he drawed rations and quit eatin' out of de trough.

"All de slave quarters was log cabins and little famblies had cabins wid jes' one room. Old Marster sho' did want to see lots of chilluns 'round de cabins and all de big famblies was 'lowed to live in two-room cabins. Beds for slaves was made by nailing frames, quilt out of oak or walnut planks to de sides of de cabins. Dey had two or three laigs to make 'em set right, and de mattresses was filled wid wheat straw. Dere warn't no sto'-bought stoves den, and all our cookin' was done in de fireplace. Pots was hung on iron cranes to bile and big pones of light bread was cooked in ovens on de hearth. Dat light bread and de biscuits nade out of shorts was our Sunday bread and dey sho' was good, wid our home-made butter. Us had good old corn bread for our evvyday bread, and dere ain't nothin' lak corn bread and buttermilk to make healthy Niggers. Dere wouldn't be so many old sick Niggers now if dey et corn bread evvyday and let all dis wheat bread and sto'-bought, ready-made bread alone 'cept on Sunday.

"Dere was four or five acres in Marster's big old gyarden, but den it tuk a big place to raise enough for all de slaves and white folkses too in de same gyarden. Dere was jus' de one gyarden wid plenty of cabbage, collards, turnip greens, beans, corn, peas, onions, 'taters, and jus' evvything folkses laked in de way of gyarden sass. Marster never 'lowed but one smokehouse on his place. It was plumb full of meat, and evvy slave had his weat rations weighed out reg'lar. Dere was jes' one dairy house too whar de slaves got all de milk and butter dey needed. Marster sho' did b'lieve in seeing dat his Niggers had a plenty to eat.

"Marster raised lots of chickens and de slayes raised chickens too if dey wanted to. Marster let 'em have land to wuk for deyselves, but dey had to wuk it atter dey come out of his fields. All dey made on dis land was deir own to sell and do what dey wanted to wid. Lots of 'em plowed and hoed by moonlight to make deir own crops.

"Us used to hear tell of big sales of slaves, when some times mammies would be sold away off from deir chilluns. It was awful, and dey would jes' cry and pray and beg to be 'lowed to stay together. Old Marster wouldn't do nothin' lak dat to us. He said it warn't right for de chilluns to be tuk away from deir mammies. At dem sales dey would put a Nigger on de scales and weigh him, and den de biddin' would start. If he was young and strong, de biddin' would start 'round $150 and de highest bidder got de Nigger. A good young breedin' 'oman brung $2,000 easy, 'cause all de Marsters wanted to see plenty of strong healthy chillun comin' on all de time. Cyarpenters and bricklayers and blacksmiths brung fancy prices from $3,000 to $5,000 sometimes. A Nigger what warn't no more'n jes' a good field hand brung 'bout $200.

"Dem bricklayers made all de bricks out of de red clay what dey had right dar on most all de plantations, and de blacksmith he had to make all de iron bars and cranes for de chimblies and fireplaces. He had to make de plow points too and keep de farm tools all fixed up. Sometimes at night dey slipped off de place to go out and wuk for money, a-fixin' chimblies and buildin' things, but dey better not let demselves git cotched.

"Mammy wove de cloth for our clothes and de white folkses had 'em made up. Quilts and all de bedclothes was made out of homespun cloth.

"De fus' Sadday atter Easter was allus a holiday for de slaves. Us was proud of dat day 'cause dat was de onlies' day in de year a Nigger could do 'zactly what he pleased. Dey could go huntin', fishin' or visitin', but most of 'em used it to put in a good days wuk on de land what Marster 'lowed 'em to use for deyselves.

Some of 'em come to Athens and help lay bricks on a new buildin' goin' up on Jackson Street. No Ma'am, I done forgot what buildin' it was.

"Us Niggers went to de white folkses churches. Mr. Louis Williams preached at de Baptist Church on de fust Sundays, and Meferdiss (Methodist) meetin's was on de second Sundays. Mr. Andy Bowden and Mr. Scott Cowan was two of de Meferdiss preachers. Me and pa jined de Baptis' Church. Ma was jes' a Meferdiss, but us all went to church together. Dey had de baptizin's at de pool and dere was sho' a lot of prayin' and shoutin' and singin' goin' on while de preacher done de dippin' of 'em. De onliest one of dem baptizin' songs I can ricollect now is, Whar de Healin' Water Flows. Dey waited 'til dey had a crowd ready to be baptized and den dey tuk a whole Sunday for it and had a big dinner on de ground at de church.

"De sho' 'nough big days was dem camp meetin' days. White folkses and Niggers all went to de same camp meetin's, and dey brung plenty 'long to eat - big old loafs of light bread what had been baked in de skillets. De night before dey sot it in de ovens to rise and by mawnin' it had done riz most to de top of de deep old pans. Dey piled red coals all 'round de ovens and when dat bread got done it was good 'nough for anybody. De tables was loaded wid barbecued pigs and lambs and all de fried chicken folkses could eat, and all sorts of pies and cakes was spread out wid de other goodies.

"Evvy plantation gen'ally had a barbecue and big dinner for Fourth of July, and when sev'ral white famolies went in together, dey did have high old times tryin' to see which one of 'em could git deir barbecue done and ready to eat fust. Dey jus' et and drunk all day. No Ma'am, us didn't know nuffin' 'bout what dey was celebratin' on Fourth of July, 'cept a big dinner and a good time.

"When slaves got married, de man had to ax de gal's ma and pa for her and den he had to ax de white folkses to 'low 'em to git married. De white preacher married 'em. Dey hold right hands and de preacher ax de man: 'Do you take dis gal to do de bes' you kin for her?' and if he say yes, den dey had to change hands and jump over de broomstick and dey was married. Our white folkses was all church folkses and didn't 'low no dancin' at weddin's but dey give 'em big suppers when deir slaves got married. If you married some gal on another place, you jus' got to see ner on Wednesday and Sadday nights and all de chilluns b'longed to de gal's white folkses. You had to have a pass to go den, or de patterollers was sho' to git you. Dem patterollers evermore did beat up slaves if dey cotched 'em off dey own Marster's place 'thout no pass. If Niggers could out run 'em and git on deir home lines dey was safe.

"On our place when a slave died dey washed de corpse good wid plenty of hot water and soap and wrapt it in a windin' sheet, den laid it out on de coolin' board and spread a snow white cheet over de whole business, 'til de coffin was made up. De windin' sheet was sorter lak a bed sheet made extra long. De coolin' board was made lak a ironin' board 'cept it had laigs. White folkses was laid out dat way same as Niggers. De coffins was made in a day. Dey tuk de measurin' stick and measured de head, de body, and de footses and made de coffin to fit dese measurements. If it was a man what died, dey put a suit of clothes on him before dey put him in de coffin. Dey buried de 'omans in de windin' sheets. When de Niggers got from de fields some of 'em went and dug a grave. Den ley put de coffin on de oxcart and carried it to de graveyard whar dey jus' had a burial dat day. Dey waited 'bout two months sometimes before dey preached de fun'ral sermon. For the fun'ral dey built a brush arbor in front of de white folkses church, and de white preacher preached de fun'ral sermon, and white folkses would come lissen to slave fun'rals. De song most sung at fun'rals wuz Hark from de Tomb. De reason dey had slave fun'rals so long atter de burial was to have 'em on Sunday or some other time when de crops had been laid by so de other slaves could be on hand.

"When white folkses died deir fun'rals was preached before dey was buried. Dat was de onliest diff'unce in de way dey buried de whites and de Niggers. Warn't nobody embalmed dem days and de white folkses was buried in a graveyard on de farm same as de Niggers was, and de same oxcart took 'em all to de graveyard.

"Our Marster done de overseein' at his place hisself, and he never had no hired overseer. Nobody never got a lickin' on our plantation lessen dey needed it bad, but when Marster did whup 'em dey knowed dey had been whupped. Dere warn't no fussin' and fightin' on our place and us all knowed better'n to take what didn't b'long to us, 'cause Old Marster sho' did git atter Niggers what stole. If one Nigger did kill another Nigger, dey tuk him and locked him in de jailhouse for 30

days to make his peace wid God. Evvy day de preacher would come read de Bible to him, and when de 30 days was up, den dey would hang him by de neck 'til he died. De man what done de hangin' read de Bible to de folkses what was gathered 'round dar while de murderer was a-dyin'.

"Its de devil makes folkses do bad, and dey all better change and serve God-a-Mighty, so as he kin save 'em before its too late. I b'lieve folkses 'haved better dem days dan dey does now. Marster made 'em be good 'round his place.

"When us turned Marster's watch dogs loose at night, dey warn't nothin' could come 'round dat place. Dey had to be kept chained up in de daytime. Sometimes Marster let us take his dogs and go huntin' and dey was de best 'possum trailers 'round dem parts. When dey barked up a 'simmon tree, us allus found a 'possum or two in lat tree. Sometimes atter us cotched up lots of 'em, Marster let us have a 'possum supper. Baked wid plenty of butter and 'tatoes and sprinkled over wid red pepper, dey is mighty good eatments. My mouf's jus' a-waterin' 'cause I'm thinkin' 'bout 'possums.

"Yes Ma'am, us had corn shuckin's, and dey was big old times. Evvyoody from plantations miles 'round would take time out to come. Some times de big piles of corn would make a line most a half a mile long, but when all de Niggers got at dat corn de shucks sho' would fly and it wouldn't be so long before all de wuk was done and dey would call us to supper. Dere was barbecue and chickens, jus' a plenty for all de Niggers, and corn bread made lak reg'lar light bread and sho' enough light bread too, and lots of 'tato pies and all sorts of good things.

"Atter de War was over, dey jus' turned de slaves loose widout nothin'. Some stayed on wid Old Marster and wukked for a little money and dey rations.

"Pa went down on the Hubbard place and wukked for 40 dollars a year and his rations. Ma made cloth for all de folkses 'round 'bout. Dey fotched deir thread and she wove de cloth for 50 cents a day. If us made a good crop, us was all right wid plenty of corn, peas, 'tatoes, cabbage, collards, turnip greens, all de hog meat us needed, and chickens too. Us started out widout nothin' and had to go in debt to de white folkses at fust but dat was soon paid off. I never had no chance to go to school and git book larnin'. All de time, us had to wuk in de fields.

"Ku Kluxers went 'round wid dem doughfaces on heaps after de War. De Niggers got more beatin's from 'em dan dey had ever got from deir Old Marsters. If a Nigger sassed white folkses or kilt a hoss, dem Kluxers sho' did evermore beat him up. Dey' never touched me for I stayed out of deir way, but dey whupped my pa one time for bein' off his place atter dark. When dey turned hin loose, he couldn't hardly stand up. De Yankees jus' about broke up de Ku Kluxers, but dey sho' was bad on Niggers while dey lasted.

"I was 'bout 21 years old when us married. Us never had no chillun and my wife done been daid for all dese long years, I don't know how many. I can't wuk and I jus' has to stay hyar wid my daid brother's chillun. Dey is mighty good to me, but I gits awful lonesome sometimes.

"No Ma'am, I ain't never seed but one ghost. Late one night, I was comin' by de graveyard and seed some thin' dat looked lak a dog 'ceppin' it warn't no dog. It was white and went in a grave. It skeered me so I made tracks gittin' 'way from dar in a hurry and I ain't never been 'round no more graveyards at night.

"When I passes by de old graveyard on Jackson Street, I 'members lots of folkses whats buried dar, bofe white folkses and slaves too, for den white folkses put dey slaves whar dey aimed to be buried deyselves. Dat sho' used to be a fine graveyard.

"Us all gwine to git together someday when us all leaves dis old world. I'm ready to go; jus' a-waitin' for de Lord to call me home, and I ain't skeered to face de Lord who will judge us all de same, 'cause I done tried to do right, and I ain't 'fraid to die."

Uncle Willis was tired and sent a little boy to the store for milk. As the interviewer took her departure he said: "Good-bye Missy. God bless you. Jus' put yourself in de hands of de Lord, for dey ain't no better place to be."

Scott Mitchell

As told by Scott Mitchell, a former slave:

Scott Mitchell, claims his age as somewhere in the 70's but his wool is white on the top of his head. Negroes don't whiten near as quickly as white people, evidently he is nearly 90, or there-a-bouts.

"Yes'm I 'members the Civil Wah, 'cause I wus a-livin', in Christian County whah I was bohn, right wif my masteh and mistress. Captin Hester and his wife. I was raised on a fahm right wif the, then I lef there.

"Yes, Cap'n Hester traded my mother an my sister, 'Twuz in 1861, he sent em tuh Mississippi. When they was 'way from him 'bouy two years he bot on back. Yes, he was good tuh us. I was my mistess' boy. I looked after her, on she made all uv my cloes, on she knit my socks, 'cause I was her niggah.

"Yes, I was twenty yeahs old when I was married. I members when I was a boy when they had that Civil Wah. I members theah was a brick office wheah they took on hung colohed folks. Yes, the blood was a-streamin' down. Sumtimes theah hung them by theah feet, sometimes they hung them by theah thumbs.

I cum tu Kentucky coal mines when I was 'bout twenty years old. I worked et Jenkins. I worked right here at the Davis, the R.T. Davis coal mine, on at the Bailey mine; that was a-fore Mistah Bailey died.

When I worked for Mistah Davis he provided a house in the Cutt-Off, that's ovah wheath the mine's at. We woaked frum 7 o'clock in the mawnin' til 6 'clock at night. Yes, I sure liked tuh woak for Mistah Davis. I tended fuahnaces some, too. I sure was sorry wen Mistah Davis died."

Mrs. M. S. Fayman

(Personal interview with Mrs. Fayman, at her home, Cherry Heights near Baltimore, Md.)

"I was born in St. Nazaire Parish in Louisiana, about 60 miles south of Baton Rouge, in 1850. My father and mother were Creoles, both of them were people of wealth and prestige in their day and considered very influential. My father's name was Henri de Sales and mother's maiden name, Marguerite Sanchez De Haryne. I had two brothers Henri and Jackson named after General Jackson, both of whom died quite young, leaving me the only living child. Both mother and father were born and reared in Louisiana. We lived, in a large and spacious house surrounded by flowers and situated on a farm containing about 750 acres, on which we raised pelicans for sale in the market at New Orleans.

"When I was about 5 years old I was sent to a private School in Baton Rouge, conducted by French sisters, where I stayed until I was kidnapped in 1860. At that time I did not know how to speak English; French was the language spoken in my household and by the people in the parish.

"Baton Rouge, situated on the Mississippi, was a river port and stopping place for all large river boats, especially between New Orleans and large towns and cities north. We children were taken out by the sisters after school and on Saturdays and holidays to walk. One of the places we went was the wharf. One day in June and on a Saturday a large boat was at the wharf going north on the Mississippi River. We children were there. Somehow, I was separated from the other children. I was taken up bodily by a white man, carried on the boat, put in a cabin and kept there until we got to Louisville, Kentucky, where I was taken off.

"After I arrived in Bouisville I was taken to a farm near Frankfort and installed there virtually a slave until 1864, when I escaped through the kindness of a delightful Episcopalian woman from Cincinnati, Ohio. As I could not speak English, my chores were to act as a tutor and companion for the children of Pierce Buckran Haynes, a well known slave trader and plantation owner in Kentucky. Haynes wanted his children to speak French and it was my duty to teach them. I was the private companion of 3 girls and one small boy, each day I had to talk French and write French for them. They became very proficient in French and I in the rudiments of the English language.

"I slept in the children's quarters with the Haynes' children, ate and played with them. I had all the privileges of the household accorded me with the exception of one, I never was taken off nor permitted to leave the plantation. While on the plantation I wore good clothes, similar to those of the white children. Haynes was a merciless brutal tyrant with his slaves, punishing them severely and cruelly both by the lash and in the jail on the plantation.

"The name of the plantation where I was held as a slave was called Beatrice Manor, after the wife of Haynes. It contained 8000 acres, of which more than 6000 acres were under cultivation, and having about 350 colored slaves and 5 or 6 overseers all of whom were white. The overseers were the overlords of the manor; as Haynes dealt extensively in tobacco and trading in slaves, he was away from the plantation nearly all the time. There was located on the top of the large tobacco warehouse a large bell, which was rung at sun up, twelve o'clock and at sundown, the year round. On the farm the slaves were assigned a task to do each day and in the event it was not finished they were severely whipped. While I never saw a slave whipped, I did see them afterwards, they were very badly marked and striped by the overseers who

did the whipping.

"I have been back to the farm on several occasions, the first time in 1872 when I took my father there to show him the farm, At that time it was owned by Colonel Hawkins, a Confederate Army officer.

"Let me describe the huts, these buildings were built of stone, each one about 20 feet wide, 50 feet long, 9 feet high in the rear, about 12 feet high in front, with a slanting roof of chestnut boards and with a sliding door, two windows between each door back and front about 2 x 4 feet, at each end a door and window similar to those on the side. There were ten such buildings, to each building there was another building 12 x 15 feet, this was where the cooking was done. At each end of each building there was a fire place built and used for heating purposes. In front of each building there were barrels filled with water supplied by pipes from a large spring, situated about 300 yards on the side of a hill which was very rocky, where the stones were quarried to build the buildings on the farm. On the outside near each window and door there were iron rings firmly attached to the walls, through which an iron rod was inserted and locked each end every night, making it impossible for those inside to escape.

"There was one building used as a jail, built of stone about 20x40 feet with a hip roof about 25 feet high, 2-story, On the ground in each end was a fire place; in one end a small room, which was used as office; adjoining, there was another room where the whipping was done. To reach the second story there was built on the outside, steps leading to a door, through which the female prisoners were taken to the room. All of the buildings had dirt floors.

"I do not know much about the Negroes on the plantation who were there at that time. Slaves were brought and taken away always chained together, men walking and women in ox carts. I had heard of several escapes and many were captured. One of the overseers had a pack of 6 or 8 trained blood hounds which were used to trace escaping slaves.

"Before I-close let me give you a sketch of my family tree. My grandmother was a Haitian Negress, grandfather a Frenchman. My father was a Creole.

"After returning home in 1864, I completed my high school education in New Orleans in 1870, graduated from Fisk University 1874, taught French there until 1883, married Prof. Fayman, teacher of history and English. Since then I have lived in Washington, New York, and Louisiana. For further information, write me % Y.W.C.A. (col.), Baltimore, to be forwarded".

George Washington Miller

As one may readily see, this interview was made with an educated ex-slave.

One who has served his Country as a teacher, since he was grown until three years ago. An unusual Negro.

He owns a comfortable home on the corner of a lot which was formerly owned by his "Ma" Emoline Robertson, whose career as a slave and a free negro was not as enviable as that of her son, George.

As I've heard of her she was a black "Scarlet."

Uncle George seemed pleased to talk especially when told that I would give him a copy in type.

The two enclosed interviews are in direct contrast from every view point.

I was born in Spartanburg, S.C. March 15, 1856.

My Ma's name was Emaline Hobby of Spartanburg S.C. and my Pa's name was Washington Young of same place.

I had one brother Walter Silas Miller, and two sisters,

Callie and Florence Miller, all of Spartanburg S.C.

My Ma was sold to the Youngs by the Hobbys, and a daughter married Marster Pickney Wyatt Miller, a Dr.

One peculiar thing about the family was that all the Miller men had a W in their name, each adopting the Wyatt.

W. J. Miller ex State Treasurer of Mississippi is a son of Mars Pickiney Wyatt Miller. My Mas' ole Marster.

All I know about our life happened after the Millers moved and brought us to Batesville, Panola County, Mississippi before the war. My Ma didn't come because she never could get along with Mars Miller, and he had sold her to a man named Ducket, Laurens County. How she ever got to Mississippi I just don't know. But she got to Batesville the first year after the war, and found my Pa married again.

When the Northern Army got as near as Memphis, Dr. P. W. Miller got so uneasy about the Yankees that he sent us children, the Miller and Youngs, back to S. C. in wagons trying to keep the Yankees from stealing us. There were no Railroads as all were torn up. The Dr. took us to his Mother's plantation, where we had kin. I was just old enough to help do little jobs such as

drive the sheep and cows. "Miss Sally" was good to me, and cared for us well. Not many slaves there in S. C. knew there was a war going on, and we could tell them about the raids on plantations back in Mississippi.

At Miller's place I remember they took an old horse that was so no account they turned him loose and he was back by night. To see great armies of men in uniforms was fun to us children. We craved to see it. I was always loyal to the Millers because I loved em, and I didn't want to leave, even when my Ma came for me I wouldn't have ever wanted to come to West Point except to see a train (M & O).

Like I told you at first, the Dr's brother came to S. C. for his own white children after the war. He had a wagon and three mules that he had carried back to save. One of us had died, but three of us were brought back to Panola in this wagon, along with the white folks. Among the white folks was a lawyer Mason Anderson of Spartanburg, the first lawyer I ever knew about. I understand his family is prominent in the State of Mississippi.

S. C. is an old State, you know. It's one of the colonies. I remembers when Lawyer Anderson married and came into the District. We understood he had married a well reared rich woman and we children wanted to see her. So we flocked to the big house on Anderson Plantation. To show how "rural" we little niggers were, when Miss Anderson asked about a broom, my Sister Callie didn't know what she meant. We only knew about Sedge brushes.

I had no mother, you see, but another old woman, Aunt Sara, took good care of us. We was expert with a pop-gun shooting wild cherries, and the game of marbles was popular.

We were well fed. S. C. being an old state Possums and game was scarce. There was plenty of squirrels and rabbits. Some of the slaves had gardens, but always plantation gardens. The Spring water was cool as ice water.

There's something I remember about the "big house", though I couldn't read much. On the brick chimney there was this number—1844. I learned after, that this was the year the house was built. This house was two story, colonial type.

We wore good clothes which were spun and woven on plantation and our shoes were made by plantation shoe-makers. I always attributed my rheumatism to the fact that one winter I couldn't get shoes until very late. I never did wear any short pants. Ours were long like the men. Our Mistress was mighty particular about us. In S. C. they didn't know what two-bits was. I must a had good pockets, because when I started back to Mississippi, T. W. Miller gave me a five dollar bill, which I still had when we got to Panola. We were on the road about six weeks and I had carelessly thrown my pants about at night and while in swimming (Honesty must have prevailed). Some places we traveled by was so strong with stench from battles fought and dead bodies left, we had to hold our noses.

We came right through "Warm Springs Ga.' The Youngs had overseers and drivers while the Millers' did not.

I paid some attention to the different kinds of folks because I liked to be informed. A Mr. Bill Stone who lived on Talahatchie river at Batesville, made a practice of having "Nigger hounds" to catch run away niggers.

The Miller plantation in Mississippi was about a half section. He only had three grown negro men and three or four women, but the Youngs who was the father-in-law and lived right in Panola (extinct) or present Batesville owned 80 slaves.

A plantation bell called everybody about day light and the field hands were at work from "Sun to Sun".

I never saw a slave whipped, but I've heard that 500 lashes were given for stealing or being lazy.

In S. C. I've heard of negroes who wanted money so bad, they would even shear the sheep in the winter and sell the wool. They would be whipped most of the time by Justice of Peace. They would steal corn and wheat from Neighbor plantations. You know corn and wheat in S. C. was scarce.

The talk is this in S. C. when a negro was sold—he was put on a block. Usually those sold were unruly. The children in S. C. were scared when a stranger came around, for they thought they were "speculators" and wanted to buy them. They would scatter and hide like young partridges. I saw one slave chained after I was brought back to Mississippi, because he was a runaway. He just wouldn't be whipped and he wouldn't work. Hounds couldn't track him. His old Marster Johsling "belled" him—a curiosity. The blacksmith so made the bells and attachment that it couldn't be taken off. As he walked or rode the bells would ring. The old blacksmith was name Crowder and had a shop at Batesville.

Well, yes Mam, My white folks had a "refugee"

who came out of Memphis to teach any of us who wanted to learn. I just got sick when she left us, because I did want to learn.

There was no plantation Church, but about two miles off was a Presbyterian Church called "Nazareth" that all the communities went to.

I think it is still standing, and there is a cemetery which I know has been there since the Revolution.

There were pews for the white and for the black, and often the leading negro deacon "Uncle Dik" sat in the pulpit. Everybody liked him. I remember preacher Reed, whom I thought almost was God hisself. I feel like I was almost born in a Baptist Church "Cedar Shoals" 16 miles east of

Anderson plantation for my mother carried me there from time I could toddle.

I saw baptizing after we came back to Mississippi at Panola, at "Sinners Camp Ground." The negroes and whites all went to the same church here too, and white preachers did the baptizing. His name was Middleton, a big slave owner. I remembers seeing him baptize several white and black, and my father was one of the negroes. This after being a Methodist and Presbyterian.

Most of the churches being white the Spirituals were not sung. My favorites are common hymns. Short and long meter. "Hark from the Tomb" etc.

I only remember going to two funerals and that in S. C. Old "Uncle Dick" sang "Hark from the Tomb." I've known of negroes who ran away to get to Ohio where they would be free. Our group always hoped and talked of being "free". I always listened, because I wanted to learn. "They would tell stories almost in a whisper about being "free".

The patarollers were a group of men to keep the negroes from mingling too much and agitating freedom. When caught out without a pass from place to place, they would be punished with whipping of 39 lashes according to law. Cose the slaves had to gossip "some. S. C. slaves were whole lot more sensible than Mississippi slaves, about some things.

I've heard that there was trouble sometimes between the races. A white woman in Batesville put out a report that a crowd of negroes were leaving, but on investigation it was found not true and she was run out of town.

You know colored people were mighty to run about at night and knew how to dodge the patarollers, specially in S.C.

They didn't work on Saturday afternoon. Every one had to wash up. Sundays was alright. Stay at home and play and sing, while others visited around. There was just preaching on such and such a Sunday, and one would go.

On Christmas Eve had big things fire crackers etc. Lived mighty well every day during Christmas from Dec. 25th to Jan. 1st.

July 4th was always observed.

Yes, Mam, sure I've been to corn shucking in Carolina. A person would haul corn and pile it up as high as your head and invited negroes would be there, and sing and eat. If there was 10,000 bushels of corn it would be shucked that night. All red ears would be kept.

There were two groups with a Capt., who would lead all songs. If there was any whiskey it was kept from us children.

There were dances with a fiddler and I'd follow the music. I saw one wedding in S. C. on the Young plantation. The woman came from a neighbor plantation, and Mars Young bought the woman and they were never separated. The big road was full of negroes to give her a welcome. It just seems like a dream to me. There was three or four hundred negroes in the procession.

"Houlda", the bride was made a house girl and "Ike", the groom a blacksmith. Blacksmith never went to the field except at harvest time when every available man was put into the field to save the wheat. I'm in S. C. now remember. Young had on his place two free men with grown children, all blacksmiths. I do not know whether they got wages. One man named Norton had a white wife.

We didn't believe in hants and laughed at others who were superstitious. The Miller negroes were real smart.

I've read "Harry and Guide Posts", and I know there's nothing to it. It is fallacious. We had anecdotes, but I've lost sight of most of them.

When the slaves got sick, they were taken care of by the Dr. who came promptly. You know our Marster himself was a fine Dr. Castor oil and blue mass was given more than anything else.

Some superstitious negroes wore charms, but we didn't countenance anything like that.

I was in the Carolinas when news of freedom came at the death of Lincoln. We was looking for it because the Confederates had so many backsats. I remembers about Sherman's march through Ga. Ole

Marster Miller was in Mississippi in Southern Army.

When we come back to Mississippi, we saw garrisons of soldiers on the way. Nobody knew their Status. Everything was unsettled.

A yankee advisor told our group of grown negroes to go back to their marsters and they would give them employment.

I came to West Point with my mother Emaline the first year after the war, and worked about home in her patches and helped keep boarding house. Sometimes she hired us out to chop cotton.

I started at once to school in West Point in a school room on the Cochran plantation 4 miles from town and we walked. The teacher was named John Williams.

I can tell you this about the Ku Klux. There was a notice put on my Mother's gate. There was a white man from Indiana, Glen Valley, 12 miles from Indianapolis, boarding with my Mother and teaching the negroes. On the notice was a red heart and sword run through it, showing that he must quit teaching or his life was in danger. He left and went back to Indiana. He wrote me a letter a few years ago.

One night the K. K.'s raided the town in all their regalia. We colored folks were at the church near the cemetery on that Saturday night.

We boys ran out and followed them laughing. They come by the church—Capt. Shattuck, a good Yankee, advised the negroes to behave and settle down, and believe in their own White folks.

I married Ellen Baptist, a house girl of Mrs. Baptist of West Point. We married in the home of Mrs. Tittle, a sister of Mr. Jack Baptist. Where my wife was there serving. Isaac Mosely, a colored preacher, married us right in the Tittle parlor, and Miss Hettie Morrow furnished the music. Only four colored people were there. We two, are the only ones now living who were present white or black. The year was 1871. We have had fine children, three girls and two boys, only one dead.

Two of the girls are teachers, one son, William Tell, is dead, leaving no family. Carris, married and lives in St. Louis, was a trained nurse.

George M. Jr. is a World War Veteran and lives in Toledo, Ohio.

There are grand children.

(At this point I gave Uncle George five questions which you find answered just as he wrote them)

Give me a story Uncle George.

The smallest thing become respectable when regarded as the commencement of what has advanced or advancing into magnificence the first rude settlement of our own West Point would have been an insignificant circumstance might justly have sunk into oblivion.

Mrs. Joiner, I think Mr. Lincoln was among the world's greatest Productions. While I was no enthusiastic admirer of Dr. Booker T. Washington he was among the great men of our Nation. To be frank Mr. Jefferson Davis was a good man but lacked wisdom in so great an undertaking.

What do I think about Slavery?

Well, I think slavery was one of the sins of the middle ages.

Why, I join the church because I believe it be greatest of social institutions for the World.

Of course all people should be religious. I think it was Roger Sherman who said, "It takes a great deal to be religious and still more to not be so." Therefore that is the reason I am foundly religious as is possible to be in some respects.

Patsy Mitchner

"Come right in, honey, I been empectin' come of you white folks a long time from what I dreampt an' I wants to tell you my story. You see I is umble an' perlite 'cause my white folks teached me dat way.

"Come right in, I'm not feelin' well. My husban' has been dead a long time. I cannot stan' up to talk to you so have a seat.

"I belonged to Alex Gorman, a paper man. He printed the "Spirit of the age," a newspaper. I reckon you can find it in the Museum. I reckons dey keeps all way back yonder things in dere jest to remember by. He had a lot of printers both black an' white. De slaves turned de wheels de most of de time, an' de white mens done de printin'. Dere wus a big place dug out at each side of de machine. One 'man pulled it to him an' de other pulled it to him. Dey wurked it wid de han's. It wus a big wheel. Dey didn't have no printers den like dey got now.

"De ole printin' place is standin' now. It stands in front of de laundry on Dawson Street, where a lot of red wagons stan's goin' up towards the bus station. De ole buildin' wid stairsteps to go up. Dey sot de type upstairs an' de machine wus on de groun' floor.

"Larster married Gormans twice an' dey wus both named kary. Don't know whether dey wus sisters or

not, but dey wus both Vir inia woien. So my missus name wus -ary Gorman. I do not know my age, but I wus 'bout 12 years old when wheeler's cavalry come through. Dey skeered me so much I squatted like a rat. Dey pulled clothes of de line an' stole clothes from stores on' went down to de depot an' changed clothes. Dey stole de womens drawers an' willed 'em wid things. Dey stole meat, corn an' other things an' put 'en in womens drawers, throwed 'em across dere horses bocks an' went on. You know women den wore long drawers open in front, ha! ha!

"Wheeler's cavalry tied up de legs an' front of 'em an' filled de legs an' seat full of things dey stole. Dey jest grabbed everything an' went on. Dey had a reason for leavin'; de Yankees wus at dere heels.

"Jest as soon as dey lef' de Yankees come. You know, dere wus a man here by de name of Governor Molden an' de flag wus a red an' white flag, an' when de Yankess come dere wus another flag run up.

"I want to try to tell de truth 'cause I wus teached dat way by marster an' missus.

"De flag brought peace 'cause de Yankees did not tear up de town. Dey had guards out around de houses an' dey marched back an' forth day an' night to keep everybody from robbin' de houses.

"De Yankees wid dere blue uniforms on jest kivered de town. Dey wus jest like ants. Dey played purty music on de ban' an' I liked dat. I wus fraid of 'em dough 'cause carster an' missus said dey were goin' to give us to 'em when dey come. I stayed hid mos' of de time right after de' surrender 'cause I didn't want de Yankees to ketch me. When de others lef' after de surrender I run away an' went to Rev. Louis Edwards, a nigger preacher. He sent me to my aunt at Rolesville. My Aunt wus named Patsy Lewis. I stayed dere bout three weeks when my uncle rented whur Camsron Park is now an' tended it dat year. We all come to Raleigh an' I have lived here all my life, but the three weeks I stayed at Rolesville.

"I have wurked for white folks, washin', cookin', an' wurkin' at a laundry ever since freedom come.

"I never seed my father in my life. My mother wus named Tempe Gorman. Dey would not talk to me 'bout who my father wus nor where he wus at. Mother would laf sometime when I axed her 'bout him.

"Marster treated his niggers mean sometimes. He beat my mother till de scars wus on her back, so I could see 'em.

"Dey sold my mother, sister an' brother to ole man Askew, a slave speculator, an' dey were shipped to de Mississippi bottoms in a box-car. I never heard from mother anymore.

I neoer seed my orother agin, but my sister come back to Cherlotte. She come to see me. She married an' lived dere till she died.

"In slavery time de food wus bad at marsters. It wus cooked one day for de nex', dat is de corn bread wus baked an' de neat wus biled an' you et it col' fer breakfas'. De meat wus as fat as butter an' you got the rashen an' a hunk of corn bread fer a meal. No biscuit wus seen in de slave houses. No sir, dat dey wus not. No biscuit for nighters at marsters.

"Our clothes wus bad an' our sleepin' places wus jest ounks. Our shoes had wooden cottoms on 'em.

"I heard 'em talk about patterollers so much I wus skeered so I could hardly sleep at night sometimes. I wus 'fraid dey would come an' catch me but I neber seed one in my life.

"I neber seed any slaves sold, in chains, or a jail for slaves. I neber seed a slave whupped. Marster took 'em in de back shed room to whup 'em.

"We wus not teached to read an' write. You better not be caught wid no paper in yore han' if you wus, you got de cowhide. I darsent to talk back to 'em no matter what happen'd dey would git you if you talked back to 'em.

"I married Tom Mitchner after de war. I went by de name of Patsy Gorman till I wus married. Now I goes by de name of Patsy Mitchner. My husban', Tom Mitchner, wus born a slave. My marster lived whar de bus station now is on de corner of Martin an' McDowell Streets in dat ole house dat stan's near dere now. I wus born an' bred in Raleigh an' have neber libed out of Wake County.

"Ole Dr. Jim McKee, who is dead an' gone, looked atter us when we wus sick. He give us medicine an' kep us clean out better en people is clean out now. Or. John McKee at de City Wall is his son. Dey pays no 'tention to me now; guess dey has forgotten me.

"Did you say ghosts, Lawsy, no I neber seed one but our spirits is always wonderin' aroun' eben before we dies. Spirits is wonderin' eoerywhere an' you has to look out for 'em.

"Witches is folks. I neber had a spell put on me by one, but I knowed a woman once who had a spell put on 'er, an' it hurt her feet, but a ole white man witch

doctor helped take de spell off, but I think it wus de Lord who took it off. I is a Christain an' I believes sberythin' is in his han's.

"De people is worser now den dey wus in slavery time. We need patterollers right now. 'Twould stop some uv dis stealin' an' keep a lot of folks out of de penetentiary. We need 'em right now.

"Slavery wus better for us den things is now in some cases. Niggers den didn't have no responsibility, jest wurk, obey an' eat. Now dey got to shuffle around an' live on jest what de white folks min' to give 'em.

"Slaves prayed for freedom. Den dey got it dey didn't know what to do wid it. Dey wus turned out wid nowhere to go an' nothin' to live on. Dey had no 'sperence in lookin' out for demselves an' nothin' to wurk wid an' no lan'.

"Dey made me think of de crowd onetime who prayed for rain when it wus dry in crap time. De rain fell in torrents an' kept fallin' till it was 'bout a flood. De rain frogs 'gin to holler an' callin' mo' rain an' it rained an' rained. Den de raincrow got up in a high tree an' he holler an' axed de Lord for rain. It rained till ebery little rack of cloud dat come ober brought a big shower of large drops. De fiel's wus so wet an' miry you could not go in 'em an' water wus standin' in de fiel's middle of ebery row, while de ditches in de fiel's looked like little rivers, dey wus so full of water. It begun to thunder agin in de southwest, right whar we call de "Chub hole" of de sky, whar so much rain comes from an' de clouds growed blacker an' blacker back dere.

"Den one of de mens who had been prayin' for rain up an' said, 'I tell you brothers if it don't quit rainin' eoerything goin' to be washed away.' Dey all looked at de black rain cloud In de west wid sor'ful fanes as if dey felt dey didn't know what use dey had for rain after dey got it. Den one of de brothers said to de other brothers kinder easy an' shameful like, 'Brothers don't you think we overdone dis thing?' Dats what many a slave thought 'bout prayin' for freedom.

"Before two years had passed after de surrender dere wus two out of every three slaves who wushed dey wus back wid dere marsters.

"De marsters kindness to de niggers after de war is de cause of de nigger havin' things today. Dere wus a lot of love-between marster an' slave en dar is few of us dat don't love de white folks today.

"Slavery wus a bad thing an' freedom, of de kin' we got wid nothin' to live on wus bad. Two snakes full of pisen. One lyin' wid his head pintin' north, de other wid his head pintin' south. Dere names wus slavery an' freedom. De snake called slavery lay wid his head pinted south an' de snake called freedom lay wid his head pinted north. Both bit de nigger, an' dey wus both bad."

Lou Southworth

"Lou Southworth was born a slave in Kentucky, was taken to Missouri, and then brought to Oregon as a slave in 1851. He purchased his freedom in Oregon with gold which he dug out of the Yerka and Jacksonville mines. He fought in the Rouge River Indian War, in which he was wounded. Subsequently he built a home and married. He became widely known for his hospitality and public spirit, and his happiness would have been complete but for one circumstance—his white brethren dropped his name from the church roll for playing the violin. This weighed heavily unpon his mind, and in later years, he expressed his feelings as follows:

"'The brethren wouldn't stand for my violin, which was all the company I had most of the time. They said it was full of all sorts of wicked things and that it belonged to the devil. And it hurt me a good deal when they told me that playin' a fiddle is a proceedin' unbecomin' to a Christian in the sight of the Lord. So I told them to keep me in the church with the fiddle if they could, but to turn me out if they must, for I couldn't think of parting with my old-time friend. They turned me out and I reckon my name isn't written in their books here any longer, but I somehow hope it is written in the Big Book up yonder in the land of golden harps where they arent so particular about the old man's fiddle.'

"'And I know, friends, you won't think hard of me and give me the cold shoulder for loving my fiddle these many years. I sometimes think that when you go upyonder and find my name to your surprise in the Big Book, you'll meet many a fellow who remembers the old fiddler who played 'Home Sweet Home,' "Dixie Land,' 'Arkansas Traveler,' 'Swanee River,' and other tunes for the boys who were far away from home for the first time. And some of the fellows will tell how the poor, homesick boys listened to the fiddle during the long winter evenings until they forgot their troubles so they could sleep as they had slept under their mothers' roofs at home. And they'll talk over the days when there was no society for men like us out

West: when there wasn't any Bible, and hymn books were unknown, when playin' poker and buckin' faro were the only schoolin' a fellow ever got; when whiskey ran like water and made the whites and Indians crazy; when men didn't go by their right names and didn't care what they did, and when there no law and the court was the man who carried the best sixshooter. And when they have talked over those early days, the fellows will say:

"'Where'd we all been and what'd we all done in the mines, but for Uncle Lou's fiddle, which was the most like church of anything we had? For the boys used to think the good Lord put a heap of old-time religious music into my fiddle; and the old-time religious music is good enough for the old man who's done some mighty hard work in 85 years.'

"'But I forgot the work I've done and the years I've lived when my bow comes down soft and gentle-like and the fiddle seems to sing the songs of slavery days till the air grows mellow with music and the old-time feelin' comes back, and I can hear familiar voices that are no more.

"'There are things a plain old man can't tell in words, and there are feelin's that won't fit into common everyday talk like mine. When there's plenty of rosin on the bow and the player feelin' fine, and the fiddle pours out great torrents of music that calm down till he hears the bob white's whistle and the rustlin' of the corn, and the whippoorwill and mockin' bird come to sing for him, and he forgets what he ought not to remember and he wants to make everybody glad—then it is that a plain man has feelin's he can't describe. But he knows he's happier and better, and his next day's work is easier. He has a smile and a kind word for every one he meets, and every one has a smile and a kind word for him. The world is heavenly to that man, and his feelin's are nigh on to religious.....' —J. B. Horner."

William Ballard

"I was born near Winnsboro, S.C., Fairfield County. I was twelve years old the year the Confederate war started. My father was John Ballard and my mother was Sallie Ballard. I had several brothers and sisters. We belonged to Jim Aiken, a large landowner at Winnsboro. He owned land on which the town was built. He had seven plantations. He was good to us and give us plenty to eat, and good quarters to live in. His mistress was good, too; but one of his sons, Dr. Aiken, whipped some of de niggers, lots. One time he whipped a slave for stealing. Some of his land was around four churches in Winnsboro.

"We was allowed three pounds o' meat, one quart o' molasses, grits and other things each week—plenty for us to eat.

"When freedom come, he told us we was free, and if we wanted to stay on with him, he would do the best he could for us. Most of us stayed, and after a few months, he paid wages. After eight months, some went to other places to work.

"The master's wife died and he married a daughter of Robert Gillam and moved to Greenville, S.C.

"The master always had a very big garden with plenty of vegetables. He had fifty hogs, and I helped mind the hogs. He didn't raise much cotton, but raised lots of wheat and corn. He made his own meal and flour from the mill on the creek; made home-made clothes with cards and spinning wheels.

"They cooked in wide chimneys in a kitchen which was away off from the big house. They used pots and skillets to cook with.

The hands got their rations every Monday night. They got their clothes to wear which they made on old spinning wheels, and wove them themselves.

"The master had his own tan yard and tanned his leather and made shoes for his hands.

"He had several overseers, white men, and some negro foremen. They sometimes whipped the slaves, that is the overseers. Once a nigger whipped the overseer and had to run away in the woods and live so he wouldn't get caught. The nigger foremen looked after a set of slaves on any special work. They never worked at night unless it was to bring in fodder or hay when it looked like rain was coming. On rainy days, we shucked corn and cleaned up around the place.

"We had old brick ovens, lots of 'em. Some was used to make molasses from our own sugar cane we raised.

"The master had a 'sick-house' where he took sick slaves for treatment, and kept a drug store there. They didn't use old-time cures much, like herbs and barks, except sassafras root tea for the blood.

"We didn't learn to read and write, but some learned after the war.

"My father run the blacksmith shop for the master on the place. I worked around the place. The pa-

trollers were there and we had to have a pass to get out any. The nigger children sometimes played out in the road and were chased by patrollers. The children would run into the master's place and the patrollers couldn't get them 'cause the master wouldn't let them. We had no churches for slaves, but went to the white church and set in the gallery. After freedom, niggers built 'brush harbors' on the place.

"Slaves carried news from one plantation to another by riding mules or horses. They had to be in quarters at night. I remember my mother rode side-saddle one Saturday night. I reckon she had a pass to go; she come back without being bothered.

"Some games children played was, hiding switches, marbles, and maybe others. Later on, some of de nigger boys started playing cards and got to gambling; some went to de woods to gamble.

"The old cotton gins on de farms were made of wooden screws, and it took all day to gin four bales o' cotton.

"I was one of the first trustees that helped build the first colored folks' church in the town of Greenwood. I am the only one now living. I married Alice Robinson, and had five sons and one daughter, and have five or six grandchildren.

"Abraham Lincoln. I think, was a good man; had a big reputation. Couldn't tell much about Jefferson Davias. Booker T. Washington—everybody thinks he is a great man for the colored race.

"Of course I think slavery was bad. We is free now and better off to work. I think anybody who is any count can work and live by himself.

"I joined de church when I was 17 years old, because a big preaching was going on after freedom for the colored people.

"I think everybody should join the church and do right; can't get anywhere without it, and do good."

Joseph Leonidas Star

If the poetic strain in the Dunbar Negroes of the south is an inheritance and not " just a gift from On High; Knoxville, Tennessee's aged Negro Poet,-born Joseph Leonidas Ster—but promine tly known in the community as "Lee"Star, Poet, Pelitician and Looge Man—thinks that Georgia's poetic genius Paul Lawrence Dunber,"maybe took his writin' apells" from him.

"My grandfather and Paul Larrence Dunber's grandfather was cousins. He were a much younger men than I am, for I was eighty-one years old the twenty-sixth of December, 1937. So I reckon I give it down to my kin-man. But it seem to me, that Poets is just born thataway. Po'try is nothin' but Truth anyway, and it's Truth was sets us free. And that makes me a free-born citizen both ways and every ways. I were born free. I were always happy-natured and I expect to die thataway. One of my poems is named, 'Be Satisfied!' and I say in it that if a man's got some thin' to eat, and teeth to bite, he should be satisfied. You cant take your good/with you. Old man Rockefeller, then be died here awhile back, went away from here 'thout his hot and shoes. That's the way its goin' to be with all us, no matter what our color is."

"The people 'round here calls me "Lee" Ster, and I want to tell you, Lee Star is a free-born man. But of course, things bein' as they were, both my mother and father were slaves. That is for a few years. They lived in Greenville, Tennessee. My mother. Maris Guess, was free'd before the emancipation, by the good words of her young white mistress, who told 'us all when she wes about to die, she wanted 'em to set Maria free, 'cause she didnt want her little playmate to be nobodys else's slave. They was playmates you see. My mother was eleven years old when she was freed."

"When she was about fourteen and my father Henry Dunbar wanted to marry he had to first buy his freedom. In them times a slave couldnt marry a free'd person. So he bought his freedom from his Narster Lloyd Bullen, and a good friend of Andrew Johnson, the president. My father an' him was friends too. So he bought his freedom, for just a little of somethin' I disremember what,' cause they didnt sim to make him buy his freedom high. He made good money though. He was a carpenter, blacksmith, shoe maker and knowed a lot more trades. His Master was broadhearted, and good to his slaves, and he let 'em work at anything they want to, when they was done their part of white folks chorework."

"Both my father and mother was learned in the shoe makin' trade. "ben they come to Knoxville to live, and where I was born, they had a great big shoe shop out there close to where Governor Brownlow lived. Knoxville just had three streets, two runnin'east and west and one run north and south. I well remember when Generel Burnside come to Knoxville. That was endurin' the siege of Knoxville. Before he marched his

men out to the Battle of fort Saunders, he stopped his solider band in front of our shoe shop and sereneded my mother and father. I was a little boy and I climed up on the porch bannisters and sat there and liesen' to that music."

" I remember another big man come here once when I was a boy and I served the transient trade at a little eatin' place right where the Atkin Ho-tel is now. Jeff Davis come there to eat, when he stopped over between trains. That was in 1869. No. I disremember what he ent or how he behavs. He didnt seem no different from any other man. He was nice lookin' wore a long tail coat and his boots was plenty blacked. He favored pictures of Abraham "incoln." as about middle-height and had short, dark chin-whiskers. I were very busy at the time, an' if they was any excitement I didnt know it."

"Yes. I've seen many a slave in my day. One of my boy playmates was a slave child. His name is Sam Rogan and he lives now at the County Foor arm. I make it a point not to dwell too much on slave times. I was learned different. I've had considerable schoolin', went to my fires scholl in the old First Presbyterian church. My teachers was white folks from the North. They give us our education and give us clothes and things sent down here from the North. That was just after the surrender. I did see a terrible sight once. A slave with chains on him as long as from here to the street. He was in an ole' buggy, settin' between two white men and they was passin' through Knoxville. My mother and father wouldnt lissen' to me tell' em about is when I got home. And I hope I forget everything I ever knoved or heard about slaves, and slave times."

Joseph Leonidas Star, no longer works at the shoemakers trade. He writes poetry and lives leisurely in a three room frame shanty, in a row of shabbier ones that face each other on a typical negro alleyway, that has no shade trees and no paving. "Lee's" house is the only one that does not wobble uneasily, flush with the muddy alley. His stands on a small brick foundation, a few feet behind a private hedge in front with a brick wall along the side in which he has cemented a few huge shells.

After fifty-four years residence here, a political boss in his ward, and the only Negro member of the Young White Ken's Republican League, Star's influence in his community is attested by the fact that when he "destructed", the Knoxville City Council to "please do somethin' about it, Knoxville being too big a city to keep callin' street's alleys, the City Council promptly and unanimously voted to change the name of King's Alley to Quebec Place.

When the interviewer called, Star's door was padlocked. But he appeared soon, having received word by the grape-vine system that some one "was to see him." "They told me it was the Sherriff," he laughed. He came down the long muddy alley at a lively clip. He claims he is able to walk about 20 miles each day, just to keep in condition. He wore a broad-brimmed black "derby-hat," a neatly pressed serge suit, a soiled white pleated shirt and a frazzled-anged black bow tie. His coat lapels and vest-front were adorned with badges and emblems, including his Masonic pins, a Friendship Medal, his Republican button and a silver crucifix. The Catholic Church, according to Lee, is the only one in Knoxville which permits the black man to worship under the same roof with his white brothers.

Many of Star's poems have been published in the local and state papers. He keeps a record of deaths of all citizens, and has done so for sixty years. He calls the one, which records murders and hanging, his "Doomsday Book", and "encoeched" in it he claims in an accurate date record of all such events of importance in his lifetime. His records are neatly inscribed in a printing form add very legible. His conversation is marked by grammatical "incongruinces," but he does not speak the negro dialect.

Jacob Aldrich

Jacob Aldrich, born January 10, 1860 in Terrebonne Parish, La., was the slave and grandson of Michelle Thibedoux. He lived in Terrebonne and St. Mary's Parishes until the Mississippi River flood of 1928, when he came to Beaumont. He now lives at Helbig, a suburban community. He was rather well-dressed, his hat, clothing and shoes being in good condition, and indicating that they had been taken care of. His face was brown. Deep furrows run from the corners of his mouth, extending along the sides of his nose.

"Yessir, I was born in slavery, in 1860—January de tenth. I was born in Terrebonne Parish over in Louisiana 'bout twelve miles below Houma, but I lives in Helbig now. But I ain't been dere more than nine year.

"My father's name was Alfred Aldrich, and my mother was name Isabella. I had five brothers and one

sister.

"De marster's name was Michelle Thibedoux. Dat was de same as Mitchell Thibedoux, and some of de people called him dat. He was my Gran'pa too, my mother's father. You know in dem times de women had to do what dere masters told 'em to do. If dey didn't dey pick on 'em and whip 'em. If she do what he want he stop picking on 'em and whipping 'em. Old Marster was bad 'bout dat, and his sons was bad too.

"Marster would come 'round to de cabins in de quarters. Sometime he go in one and tell de man to go outside and wait 'til he do what he want to do. Her husband had to do it and he couldn't do nothing 'bout it. Marster was tough 'bout dat. He had chil- len by his own chillen. Some of de marsters sell dere own chil- len.

"Marster was mean. He hardly ever whip 'em over dere clothes. He whip 'em on de bare skin. He make de women throw dere dress up over dere head, and make de men undress.

"He didn't give us anything much to eat, and you better not steal. If you did he beat you. He give 'em a peck of meal a week. Each family git de same whether it was a big family or a little one. He give you corn meal. Sometime dey grind up oats and dey give you dat meal. Sometimes he give 'em pork.

"My daddy was a plow hand. Mother, she work in de field with a hoe. Marster used to work 'em from 'kin to can't'. If he ax you if you could you better not say 'yes'. If you say 'yes' he say, 'come here. I git you warm.' Den he beat you. He git your back hot for you. He work de niggers right along. It take a very severe rain to bring you out de field.

"Dey didn't 'low you to go 'way from your plantation. If you go off, any 'peck' what find you catch you and whip you and carry you back. Most of dem peoples 'round dere was Creoles. Dey wasn't Frenchmen. A Frenchman is somebody what was born in

France. Some years ago dey was teaching dat in de schools. Dey make 'em cut it out. Dey say dat dey oughtn't to be learning dat foreign talk, dat it warn't right. Dey didn't have no business transacting in dat language.

"Marster live in a one-story plank house. He used to live by de S.P. Track at Shriever, but he got in debt. So he sold out and move to a smaller place. Dat was twelve year before freedom. Look to me like a man fix like he was with plenty of slaves to make his own living oughtn't have to let his place git away from him. But he gamble a lot. When he lost dat place he git de place down by Houma. Dat was a big place. I guess dere was twelve or fifteen hundred acres, swamp and all, but lot of it warn't cleared up.

"Sometime Marster punish his slaves like dis. He had two heavy plank with a hole for your neck and two little holes for your wrists. Dey had a iron strap at de end to lock it down. Dey have another for your feet. Dey give you twenty-five licks and clamp you in it. Next morning dey give you twenty-five more and tell you to git your breakfast and git to work. Dey whip you with a half-inch bull whip. When dey git through with you, you need a doctor. How you 'spect anybody to rest in dat thing? Dey too sore to work. I seen dat thing since free time. Sometime dey put salt and pepper on your back after dey whip you.

"Marster didn't look after de place hisself. He put his son to be overseer. He was all de time fooling with gals. He had as many mulatto chillens as his daddy had. He was my uncle.

"He didn't want de slave boys to have anything to do with do gals. If he see a boy talking to a gal he call him and tell him be better not let him catch him talking to dat gal no more. if he did he gwinter beat him. If any man had told me dat, dey'd had to bang me. If a white man want to talk to a white gal, I ain't not nothing to say. And if he want to talk to a cullud gal I ain't got nothing to say, but he better not tell me I can't talk to a cullud gal, 'cause if he do I gwinter knock him down. He got no business doing dat, and if a nigger knock down a white man in dam days dey hang de nigger. Dat's de way de law was made. It warn't so in some other places. In Virginny where my pa come from dey couldn't hang a nigger. But dey hang him in Louisiana where I was raise.

"When a slave man want to marry he have to see de Marster. He tell him 'yes'. and tell de gal to go with de man and dat was de way dey marry on Marster's place. Next morning her Marster ax her if her husband touch her. If he didn't, or she wouldn't let him, dat one git fifty lashes. Olf Marster fool with dem but dey mustn't kick.

"I never was 'rested. and I never 'rested nobody. I could have 'rested a man one time. One time a man took my gun,-went into my house and took it out. I could have had him 'rested but I didn't. It wouldn't done nobody no good. It wouldn't got my gun back for me.

"The slaves had plank houses 'bout thirty-six foot. It

had a 'vision (division) in the middle, and one family live in each end. Dey had wooden shutter for window and door. Dey take planks and make bunks to sleep on like in a camp. The mattress was jis' old crocus sack with hay in it. Marster give 'em a sheet and quilt. If dey hustle 'round maybe dey git another quilt. Dey had a box for a table or maybe a rough shack table like what dey have in camps. Dey was benches for 'em to sit on. He give 'em a cheap tin plate and knife and fork.

"I stay in de quarters and play 'round. Dere was 'bout twenty slaves, chillen and all. Dey had a special house for de chillen, and a old woman to take care of 'em. Lots of time dey put clabber in a trough and give de chillen a tin spoon and dey all crowd 'round de trough and eat it.

"All de light dey had at night was candles. I b'lieve dey make 'em on de place. In de cold weather dey put on a chunk of wood. When dey go to bed dey kiver it with ashes so dey have fire in de morning. I seen 'em bring a chunk of fire from one house to another in de evening so dey have fire in de morning. Dey put on a big back log sometime. Sometime if a piece of wood break in two in de night dey git up and put de ends together and kiver it up with ashes.

"De slaves clothes was made out of bed ticking. Dat was better bed ticking den what dey has now. Now if you wash bed tick it split on you, but den it last a long time. Marster bought his cloth. Dey didn't have a loom on de place to weave it. De chillen wore shirts dat come down most to dere feet. Some was jis' 'bout ready to go in de fields and go to work, but dey wore de same kind of clothes. When dey went to work dey give 'em pants.

"Marster kept three wimmin in de house for him. He sent all de way to Baltimore and bought a light one for him. She carry de keys up in de house where he live. Old Missus ain't say nothing 'tall 'bout it. Warn't no use, 'cause he a hard man.

"My pa run off one time when Marster first move to Houma. He send pa to git some hogs what got out. He tell him he better not come back 'thout dem hogs. Dat was in February. He didn't git catch 'til September. He went to Algiers or some of dem places 'round New Orleans. De way he git catch was dis—one Sunday dere was a crowd of 'em gambling. Dey raise a fuss and git put in jail. De owners of de other niggers come and git dere niggers out but dere warn't nobody to git pa out. After while a man come 'round what knowed pa. He went back and told Marster. Marster say he didn't want him, he sell him. De man ax how much he want for pa, and Marster say $1500.00. De man say dat too much so pa have to come back. Marster beat him and put him to work. He say pa owed him sixty cords of wood for de time he was off and made him work every Sunday 'til he got dat sixty cords cut.

"De usual price for a common laborer in de field was eight or nine hundred dollars. Wimmen brought two hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars. But trained slaves was worth lots more. Lots of time a marster send a slave off to work in a blacksmith shop or some other kind of shop jis' to learn a trade, den when he come back he be de mechanic for de plantation. Dey train up wimmen dat way to sew and cook and sich like.

"Old Marster was a Cath'lic. Some of de slave babies was christen in de Cath'lic Chu'ch but I warn't. My parents didn't b'lieve in it. I was baptise after freedom. I's Baptist now. I used to be a deacon.

"I don't 'member nothing 'bout soldiers. Young Marster hide out and didn't go to de war. He stay 'round with de cullud folks in de cabins and sich. He had a fine education but he rough. He had seven chillen by cullud wimmen. De white folks look down on him but dey 'fraid of him.

"In slavery times he had a uncle what was a lawyer. He tell young Marster to take boxing lessons, and he done it. It took a mighty good man to handle him.

"He had a good, a fine education but it was too nice for him. One time he got a good job keeping books, and another time a man want to pay him fifty dollars a month jis' to teach his chilluns music, but he wouldn't do neither. You know education without brains ain't worth nothing. You got to have brains. You kin cultivate 'em but you can't cultivate a empty head.

"Old Marster die before freedom come. Officers come from Houma and told us we free. Dey had what dey call Military Law. Dey had a man to see after de plantation. Dey call him de Provo' Marshal. He see if de chillen was took proper care of. If a little child ought to be nurse four times a day and he ma warn't coming in from de field but three time he tell her, "you have to come in and give dis baby he nourishment". He tell 'em how to do other things dey s'posed to do. Sometime dere mammies come in from de field and find dem chillen laying on de ground 'sleep, dey so wore out from crying for something to eat dat dey go to sleep.

"De Klu Klux dey use to range at night. I never hear

of 'em killing anybody, but many cullud man git beat 'most to death. My pa come from Virginny. He say dey call 'em patter-rollers dere.

"I used to go to de Cath'lic Chu'ch. The priest invite us to come and see how dey do things. Some of de niggers jine 'em. But I didn't, I jis' couldn't see it dat way.

"I jine de Baptist Church, 'bout forty year ago. I was some 'res 'bout thirty den. A baptist preacher marry me when I git marry. I was 'bout thirty year old. It was de third of April. I marry Mollie Williams and us raise ten chillens.

"It was jis' a quiet wedding. You couldn't have a big wedding 'cause dey was paying you fifty cents a day and de man you was working for could keep out half of dat 'til de end of de year. If you quit your job you lost de half he had. Dat was from 1875 to 1880. Den wages went up to six bits. Seventy-five cents a day and board yourself. But I went through all dat to bring up my chillens. And I don't take no back talk off of 'em now. I jis' as soon knock 'em down, and dey know it, and dey knows dey better not try it.

"Dere used to be cunjur men on de plantations. Dey go off in de woods and Marster couldn't tell 'em nothing. Marster couldn't come 'round 'em if dey didn't want him to. Dey could send you for whiskey and de man where dey sent you let you have it. He couldn't help it,-he had to. Dat hoo-doo was good for de cullud folks. You could go to a cunjur man and he could fix you up so Marster couldn't hurt you. Dey don't have dat kind of cunjur now. What dey got now ain't good like it used to be. Now you give 'em money and dey keeps it and don't do nothing for you.

"I has seen gos's. I kin see 'em in a house. Dere was one house where a man's wife die. Dere'd be a noise like everything turn over but when you go dere everything was right where it ought to be. He go and git de preacher to read de Scripture in de house. Den after dat he could stay in dere in peace. I say a gos' can't hurt you but dey kin make it uncomfortable where you is.

"After old Marster die dey used to hear de sugar mill running. When dey go to see 'bout it dere warn't nobody dere. It was old Marster's spi't. Heap of people don't b'lieve in ghos's but dey jis' as well to.

"Dey jis' sudden 'pear and dis'pear. I used to could see a woman cross de yard jis' 'bout dusk. I jis' could see her for a minute or two. I used to have a boy what could see 'em good. I can't see 'em so good. You kin feel a difference in de air when dey is 'round.

"One evening I was riding down de road. Something hit de fence and bus' through jis' like a cow went through it. I look but I couldn't see nothing. I tell de preacher 'bout it and he say it was a ghos'. Dat what I thought it were, too.

"Dere was a man what marry old Marster's daughter. Dey see him going 'round three months after he dead. Everybody say he going 'round three months after he dead. Everybody say he going 'round 'cause he ain't at rest. She go and see de priest bout it. He say it going to take three masses to git him at rest. So she pay him for dem masses and den she satisfy.

"I's been a Odd Fellow. I's held every office in de lodge 'cepting the N.G. and P.S. When de brother what hold dem office regular ain't dere, dey 'p'int me to fill 'em 'cause I qualify.

"My pa say de spec'lator or nigger trader go North and buy niggers. De niggers what give trouble dey sell to him. He say in Virginny dey wouldn't let 'em kill a slave.

"He say dere was one nigger on Mr. William Bearsland place done something and Mr. William go to whip him. Nigger had a hoe and he say if anybody try to whip him he gwinter kill 'em. Mr. William tell him to put dat hoe down, but he wouldn't. Den he git he shotgun. When de nigger still won't put de hoe down, he shoot him in de legs. Still he say he ain't gwine to be beat, dey might as well give him de other load. I think dey kill him.

"Mother tell 'bout a gal what run off. She say de gal stay with her. She never know she run off. Two men come with dogs and ask her if she where de gal was. She say, 'In de field 'cross de fence.' Dey sic de dogs on her and dey tear every rag of cloth off her.

"Marster's main business was making sugar. Sometimes he work his slaves right 'long through Sunday. Sometimes he don't 'low de fires to go down 'til he git a hundred hogshead of sugar. Den after de crop was in and de sugar made, he give 'em a week off.

"He give Christmas Day off. He give 'em a little dinner and whiskey. You got all you want at Christmas.

"Some of de folks 'round dere had what dey call 'free niggers'. Dey let dere niggers go anywhere 'thout a pass.

"I spend mos' of my time farming. I live in Terrebonne, den I move to St. Mary Parish. I left dere and come to Beaumont nine year ago. You 'member dat big

washout they had back dere in 1927? Well, when de water went down I come here.

"I think dat 'bout fix up my story."

William Coleman

I was born in Jackson, Tenn., about the year of 1853. My father's name James Coleman and mother was called Jessie, but later her name was changed to Josie. I had one half sister Jim and two half brothers, Buck and Tom. I do not remember ever hearing anything said about my grandparents.

I married several years after the war when us negroes had started wearing shoes and clothes like our white people. My wedding clothes were a pair of trousers just what you would call work trousers now and a plain work shirt with a great big bandana handkerchief around my neck.

My Maser, Willie Coleman had about 100 acres of land and about 37 slaves. He was a very good man, never believed in no foolishness of no kind and was pretty rough on his negro slaves. Mistress was a different person altogether, cause she was real good to the slaves. They did not have any children. We had one of the best homes in all the country around. It was a two-story house with 4 rooms downstairs and 2 upstairs with one door to every room. The yard had plenty of shade trees and a high plank fence all around. The house was painted inside as well as outside and everyone thought it was a very pretty home.

I was born in Jackson, Tenn., long 7 or 8 years before the war started between the states and I do not know exactly how old I am. I is listed on the pension as born in 1853. My father's name James Coleman, mother was called Jessie, but later her name was changed to Josie. Son you asked me one thing I do not know and that is where father and mother came from. We were not allowed to talk about things like that. I had one half sister Jim and one brother named Tom and one Buck, that was all my life with my family and it was not much fun cause soon as I got big enough Maser he moved me to other parts of the quarters and would not let me play or go to see my father or mother. That was the way he broke us off from our people. See, Maser he had two quarters, one for the men slaves and one for the women slaves and he would not let them stay together. Our quarters was fairly good. It was built out of planks in a long shed and one negro to the stall, it looked kind of like one of these chicken houses they build now son, covered over with boxing plank, it was real dry and warm. Yes sir, our beds they were built right on the ground in the far end of our stalls out of dry grass, moss and shucks. It it got too cold for us to stay in our stalls Maser would let us come in his house and warm and then go right back to our stalls.

No sir, I do not know as I ever heard of my grandparents, if I did I'se done forgot all about it. I'se don't think our Maser did us right cause he would not let us talk about these things as he locked us in our stalls just soon as we got our supper, would not let us have anything to do with no one, no sir.

Well son, I'se done all kinds of work as a kid during slavery such as, cut wood, chop cotton, corn, hoe in the garden. Maser he put us to work just as soon as we could follow or sling a hoe, pick cotton, pulled corn and carry in wood, water and so on for our Mistress or feed, milk the cows and just anything like that for there was some things we could not do, and he would make the older negroes do.

Well son, I might have earned money as a slave but I did not ever get it, in fact son, I did not know what money was. I often heard the older slaves talk about money and I wondered what they were talking about as I did not know what it was.

Well son, we always had plenty to eat such as it was during them trying times, cornbread grated by hand and cooked on a big flat skillet, and all they mixed it with was salt and water. Of course we had plenty of garden stuff to eat, but they did not know how to cook it like we do now. But son I believe it was lots better the way they use to cook things. Yes sir, we had possum, rabbits and fish, that fish was always my favorite dish and we always had plenty of it to eat, caught the fish out of the creeks and rivers. Well no sir, the slaves did not have their own garden. Maser he would let the slave have what he wanted them to have to eat out of his garden, as we eat from Maser's own table and just what he put there for us to eat, as Mistress she kept one of the slave women there to help her all the time with the cooking.

Son in hot weather we wore what they called shirts made out of cotton sewed by hand, but in cold weather we had woolen clothes to keep us warm cause less it was too cold we worked right on and no stop or lay off for us slaves on account of bad weather. On Sunday we had just plain white cotton clothes but they must be clean, and no shoes as we did not know what shoes

were.

Well son, it was several years after the war before I'se married and us negroes we had begin to wear shoes and clothes like our white people. My wedding clothes were a pair of trousers just what we would call work trousers now and just a plain work shirt with a great big bandana handkerchief.

Well son, my Maser Willie Coleman, he was very good man, never believed in no foolishness of no kind and was pretty rough on his negro slaves, but I'se can say one thing for Maser, he never promised us slaves a thing he did not do, cause that was one thing he would almost kill a slave for and that was telling him a lie. Mistress she was a different person altogether, cause she was real good to her slaves, bless her soul. They never had no children. Mistress she was patient with us negroes, never out of humor, but My! son, Maser he was rough on us poor slaves, we never had no pleasure when Maser was around, no sir.

Well son, Maser he had one of the best homes they were in that country all around. It was built out of boxing planks and was two stories high, had 4 rooms downstairs and two rooms upstairs and he had one door to ever room, but he had what they called then, open shutter windows. They did not have any glass in them, no sir. It was built on kind of hill with plenty of shade trees all around it and also he had a high plank fence built all around his home, and he also had his home painted on the inside as well as the outside and was real nice, cause everyone that came there or passed by would talk about what a pretty home and nice place to live.

No Maser did not have an overseer, he said they were too wasteful and that he could not afford one. Well, son, Maser had near about one hundred acres in his plantation, and I believes about 37 slaves, both old and young.

Maser woke us up every morning about 4:30 o'clock with a great large bell that hung just outside of his bed. Son I'se dressed several times out behind my quarters cause if we did not get right up when Maser rung that bell, here he come with a rawhide whip and gun buckled on him, and he would whip us all the time we were trying to dress. Maser he would work us from sun to sun or we would be in the field in the morning waiting for daylight to come, then we stayed in the field and worked just as long as we could see how. When we went to the house we had all our night work to do after dark before we got our supper, and went to bed. Well son, I'se seen the slaves whipped for nothing, but then if they did do something to be whipped for they were almost killed before Maser would quit working on them. Yes sir, if one was the least bit stubborn or even acted like he would sass Maser, he was whipped. I'se seen Maser ride up close to a slave when he was working and whip him good, cause he would be 3 or 4 feet behind the rest of the slaves One time one of the slaves was helping Mistress there in the yard and he passed too close to her as he was hurrying fast as he could, and sort of bumped into her. She never paid him no attention, but Maser saw him and he let him go on ahead and finish what he was doing then he called that poor negro to him and took him out in the pasture, tied his hands together, throwed the other end of the rope over a limb on a tree and pulled that negro's hands up in the air to where that negro had to stand on his tiptoes, and Maser he took all that negro's clothes off and whipped him with that rawhide whip until that negro was plum bloody all over. Then he left that poor negro tied there all the rest of the day and night.

When Maser did let that negro down he could not stand up or get his hands down from over his head, but that did not keep Maser from giving him another whipping as he thought the negro was putting on, but he found out he was not. Then Maser called old negro mama that he had there on the plantation to rub and work with that poor negro until she finally got him limbered up so he could move around some. Son, that was one of the sickest negroes you ever saw after that. Maser thought for more than a week he was going to die, but the old negro mama just kept working with him until she pulled him through. Maser did have to kill him after that as it made an outlaw out of him. He got to where he would not work and Maser whipping him all the time, and he would sass Maser right out. Then Maser sold him to another man and his new Maser carried him to the field and thought he would work, but no sir, he just lay his hoe down and walked right off from his new Maser and right back to his old Maser; said if he ever got a chance he was going to kill his Maser. Maser had to give that man money back, then he sold him to another man that lived in another state and just as soon as he turned him loose and thought he would be satisfied, why he just walked off from that new Maser and come right back home.

Maser had to give that mans money back as he could not keep him cause he come and got him 3 or 4 times. His old Maser done got scared of him and put him in chains, but of course, he would have to unfasten his hands in the daytime so he could work, but he never took the chains off his legs. At night he was locked in his quarters. We was all locked in at night for that matter. Then one day Maser had this negro working and he was not watching him and went to show some of the other slaves something about what he was doing and turned his back on this negro and that negro thought that was his chance, so he jumped right on Maser's back and pinned him to the ground and was trying to choke Maser and keep him from getting his gun all at the same time, but with his feet chained he could not do it. Some of us run in and started to pull him off Maser and he made us get away cause he did not want to shoot some of us when he did get his gun, which he finally did, and shot that negro off of him. He sure hated to kill one of his slaves cause they were a valuable piece of property in them days, but he had to kill that one. He just drug that negro off and throwed him in a brush pile, never even buried him. No sir, said he was not worth burying.

Well no sir, they was not exactly a jail there on the plantation for the slaves, but Maser he had our quarters fixed so he could lock us in there every night and if he wanted to punish us that way, all he had to do was lock us in our quarters and let us stay there just as long as he wanted to and we were afraid to try to get out if we could cause we knew just what Maser would do to us if we did. I have stayed in my quarters locked up 3 days at a time without a bit to eat or drink. Son I sure would get dry and hungry but all the good it would do me cause I knew Maser would'nt let me out until he got good and ready anyway.

Yes sir, I have seen a few slaves sold and auctioned off. The first thing they had to do was wash and clean up real good and take a fat greasy meat skin and run over their hands, face and also their feet, or in other words, every place that showed about their body so that they would look real fat and shiny. Then they would trot them out before their would-be buyers and let them look us over real good, just like you would a bunch of fat cows that you were going to sell on the market and try to get all you could for them. They would always take the highest bid that would be offered for a certain negro and after they would buy and gather the ones they had bought and start to leave - all the bawling and hollering it would take place. Son you have sold calves away from cows and heard them bawl for their calves 3 or 4 days afterward, thats just exactly the way of us slaves, cause we never did expect to see that son, daughter, father or mother again and if we did, it was just an accident.

Well son, the way we traveled was a foot the most of the time and if they were a pretty good bunch of us we herded in the road in front of our Maser and he would be on a horse coming on after us, of course if there were just one or two of us we rode on horse-back ahead of our Maser.

Yes sir son, I have seen slaves in chains which I'se done told you about just while ago.

Well no sir son, Maser did not learn us how to read and write, said all we was fit for was to work. No sir, the slaves did not have a church there on the plantation neither did the white folks, but the white people there joining our plantation had a church and if we got to go we went to their church, but that was very seldom as Maser said he did not believe in all that foolishness no way, and about the only times we got to go to church was when we would drive Mistress over there to church. I'se did not know any preachers, I'se don't remembers any songs or anything like that while I'se a slave. Them days we had what they called camp-meetings but it was not often that us slaves ever got to go, as Maser he said they was not no good and all them preachers was doing was to try to make a living without working for it, but still son Maser he taught us to always tell the truth and to always live a clean life, why, I do not know. As I'se get old, I'se often wondered if Maser thought he was not right. Well son they was very little news that us slaves carried from one plantation to another cause we were too afraid of our Maser and the padderrollers, cause they would sure get a negro if he was caught off his plantation without a pass.

No sir, I'se never heard of a slave trying to run away to the north cause they were all afraid to there, and if a negro was caught off his plantation without a pass it was just 39 licks from a cat-o-nine tails given to us by them padderrollers. I am telling you son all the negroes were afraid of them padderrollers cause they were sure rough on the negroes.

Well white folks, we never got to play very many games during slavery time and what we did play, why we played, wolf-over-the-river, see-saw and hide and

seek, and we played these games with the white children that would come there visiting on our plantation. No sir, I'se cannot sing any of them old songs.

You'se ask me what we done when we went to our quarters at night after our days work was done. Well son I just mostly went to bed cause I was locked in and I'se could not go no where or talk with the rest of the slaves. No sir, Maser did not work us on Saturday evening, he always gives us that day off as it was custom everybody turn their slaves loose from work that evening. Yes sir, that night we mostly always had a negro dance and we tried to have a good time cause that was the only pleasure that we did have at all. We would dance until we see it was getting daylight, then we would run to our quarters as we did not want Maser to wake up and find that we had never gone to our quarters, if he did, most likely he would give us a real good thrashing, that was why we did not want him to wake up and us still dancing. Well on Sunday when Maser would let us, after we would wake up, was to go on the creek to the best water hole that we could find and swim all the rest of the day or play in the water which Maser never did object very much, cause he wanted us to stay clean if we could. All he cared about us going to the creek was, to let his stock water alone.

Well son, Maser was pretty good to us on this Christmas day. He would always give us some kind of present and a good dinner and plenty of eggnog to drink. I don't guess Maser was so mean to us after all.

Well on New Years Day was just like all other days to us negroes cause Maser he worked us on that day just like any other day, it made no difference to him, and any other holiday us negroes did not know anything about them as Maser he did not give them to us Sunday and Christmas was all the holiday that we knew about.

Well no sir, we never did have any corn-shucking day back when we were slaves or no cotton-picking contest. Yes sir, we had lots of dances there on the plantation among the slaves and the white people.

When some of the white people there died everyone quit work to go and help bury the dead, even the slaves they dug the graves and were there to see their white people put away. We did not bury them then like we do now, as us slaves carried the corpse on their back to the graveyard, place it there in the ground and covered it over after the preacher got through with his sermon. Now son things are different from then, as we have regular trucks that do all we did then on our backs.

When one of our white people married, us negroes we waited on them and when they went to have that big supper us slaves we done all the cooking and that night they would celebrate by having a large dance, and us slave men we got out our old banjos and music boxes to play the music for them to dance by. The young people they would always have a great time when some couple got married, but when a slave died they was not much to do about it except we just dug a hole and pinned it in and dropped the dead slave in it, covered it over and went on about our business. A wedding among the slaves it would always be just a home wedding some time after we asked and begged our Maser for a certain slave woman and he would finally tell us we could have her. We would gather ourselves together and join one another at her quarters. That night the r'st of the slaves there would be allowed to come and ride us round and round on a rail until along about midnight and that was about all they was to our marriage. Oh, sometimes we would beg our Maser to let us have a preacher to marry us when we could get one without much trouble.

No sir, son I'se never seen a ghost in me life. I'se don't believes in ghost at all no sir. Son I'se remembers one time when they was one of them there panthers come to my house and you know that panther kept me in that house 3 or 4 days before it finally left. I'se never had no gun there to kill it with and I'se thought several times it was going to claw that door down and get to us anyway, but it never did, and so it finally left us alone.

When we got sick we had good care taken of us. If we was just slightly sick Maser let old negro mama doctor us but if we got real sick then Maser would get the white doctor to come to see and wait on us. I am telling you son it was many a time that us negroes would play sick so'es we would get out of working and get some rest, but Oh child! if our Maser should have found out we were playing sick he would have nearly killed us before he got through with the poor slaves. Child, guess this old negro had better tell you what you ask what some of the home remedies were that old mama give us when we were sick. She would just get her gunny sack and go to the woods and gather her medicine from such as cami weeds, red oak bark and peach tree leaves for sickness such as fevers, chills, malaria, sick stomach and so on like that. Then she would

take tree rosom, pure bee honey, onions and make what we called cough syrup. For sores sprains, bruises and so on she would take lard, poke root, turpentine and make us a good salve and it was sure enough good. Son all them old time remedies were better than any we have now. We wore such charms as rabbit-foot around our necks to keep off them diseases. That was the negro's lucky piece what I mean.

Why son, all our negro slave women they really got wise and like to have depopulated the negro race here in this old south by chewing cotton-root, and it was a long time before our Masers found out what they were doing. When he did he would almost kill a negro woman if he caught her chewing cotton-root, but still that did not do much good, they would slip and chew it in spite of all he could do about it.

Well son, I'se remembers plenty about that awful war between the states as my Maser carried me to the war with him to wait on his horses that he rode and to keep his gun oiled and cleaned up. When them there guns went to popping I'se could not hardly be still cause nearly ever times I would crawl under Maser's horse that he would leave with me. Son that was not the worst part of it, when they would stop popping he would make us slaves go and see how many boys that would be wounded and everyone we found we had to carry them back out of the firing line and wait on them the best we could, wash and feed them what we had to fix for them and while part of us seen after the wounded why the others they would have to go and dig out a long ditch, roll the dead ones in and cover them over. The way they buried them poor boys was a plum shame. I'se never do wants to see or hear tell of another war the longest day this here poor old negro lives, cause they are awful. Then after that war was over Maser he was hurt and he called me to where he was and said, "well you black—you are just as free as I am so get," but I'se begged him to give me a pass and I starts for home. When I'se get there son I'se sure glad to see my old Mistress and she let me go right on to work just like I was not free, but when Maser come home he changed everything. He told us that he could no longer work us as slaves, then we begin to wonder what us negroes was going to do, and we finally went to Maser and begged him to let us stay there and work for him and sure enough he did, so that is exactly what we done. He fed us and give us a few clothes but never no money and we had to get out the next year and hunt us a different place to stay. We hears about a railroad that they was building here in Texas and we started out foot for Texas. Boss that was the furtherest this here negro ever walked in his life, they was not cars then or any too many trains that we could ride if we had the money, and sometimes we would get 3 or 4 miles ride at a time with some farmer in his wagon. I'se sure did get a job son when I did get to Texas, but son I would travel 3 or 4 days at time that I would never see a house or nobody, and all I would have to eat when I would get that way was grass and what wild berries that I could find.

Well son, I'se married to Ida Shaw the first time, in just what we called home wedding and she run off and left me with another man.

Next time I'se married to Sally Pinn by the preacher, he married us after we rode near 30 miles horseback. Son that woman just turned to children, we'se had 19, 10 boys and 9 girls, and I'se here to tell you theys all living yet and are all farming, but you know son we'se not doing any good farming at all. Now, I don't know how many grandchildren I'se have, somewhere 'round 50, I'se done lost count of them long time ago. My wife has long time been dead.

Well son, I knows I expected a lot different from what I did get from freedom. Yes I thought sure that they would give us poor slaves some land and stock to work it with being as they was going to free us from slavery. Yes sir, they should have give us part of Maser's land as us poor old slaves we made what our Masers had. Well son, we got hell if we did not do just like the white people told us to do as we had been turned out like a bunch of cattle to live and that was sure hard on our race of people. We was not trained to do anything at all, we depended on our Masers all together when we was slaves. No sir, child, they was not any land that I'se ever heard of that was divided among the slaves, the white people would not let us have any land hardly at all. No sir, our white people did not give us any money, would not pay us hardly for our work as they did not have to, it was not any trouble for them to make us take other things beside money for our work. No sir, we was not forced to stay as servants after the war, cause we could have went where we pleased or that is, Maser tryed to make us leave him and go somewhere else and work but you know son, that was all we knew and we had rather stayed there and worked for our own white people as we did not know any other

ones that we could have worked for, and so we stayed there the first year after freedom among the negroes with our own white folks. Well son, I done the best I could after the war, mostly farm work, well I'se did work about 6 months for a railroad company, but I'se rather farm and so I get me a job on the farm soon. Our wages they was real low, we never did get more than 15 to 30 cents a day for our work.

Well son, I thinks that the old slave did get bad deal after he was turned loose, as it was really hard for us poor negroes to live an it didn't get any better until this here last war. We had to beg, steal and do little of everything to feed our family, but we'se come through it all with flying colors. We have built schools, churches and now are beginning to educate our younger race of people. They have become brighter and brighter as the years come along until we can most hold our own among our white people.

Well yes sir, I'se believes that the KKK and patterrollers had a lot to do with us getting along as well as we did, cause we were afraid to do lots of things if it had not been for them that we would have done, because they really camped on our heels all the time but they never did get after this old negro. I'se remembers some that they did whip and tare, and boss when they did get a negro he knew that he was really whipped, cause they hit him 100 licks with what we called—red heifer.

Well no sir son, I'se never did try to vote cause I'se did not care to vote no way, theys never did try to get me to vote at all. Yes sir, I'se believes that us poor negroes should be allowed more privileges in voting than we have, cause we have become brighter and brighter and further educated in the way of the world and we should be allowed to help elect our people to office now, as they really do us negroes just like they want to in the way of making us pay taxes.

Son, you asked me once what I'se done since the war, nothing but farm, that is all I knew to do as I'se could not hold these here fancy jobs. I'se wore out nearly all these here farms around here.

Well, I'se gets a small pension now from the government but still I'se have to do some other things to live as the government don't give me much pension and I'se cannot live on it.

Well son, these here young people they are really good cause they can read and write and can hold real good jobs. These a few that don't do right I'se knows that just as well as you do son, but that does not please this here negro no sir. Of course I knows these here times are real hard, I don't knows how they would have lived if it had not been for this here relief to have fed them on during all this hard time, but I'se hoping that these here hard times will soon get lots better and I'se believes they will, then our younger negroes will do still better than they are doing now, I hope so anyway.

Jack Harrison

I was owned by Cleave Harrison or was inherited by Cleave Harrison from his father at death. My father's name was Joe Grant, he was owned by General Grant, but I went by the name of my new master, cause father was death at close of war between states. I had no brothers or sisters. My mother's name was Mahalia Grant. My father and mother were captured in Africa and brought to this country and sold in bondage to the white man, and ever since we have been in bondage, cause we negroes here in the south got to do what the white man tell—if we don't hell is to pay. No sir father and mother say they don't know anything about their parents cause in that country they leaves their parents and rustle for themselves.

Yessir, I'se worked hard in the cotton field and corn field. Master he believes in everybody working hard. Nosir, I never earned any money but the master he would give us nickle and dime some time when we drive out master's place. Then we would buy candy and tobacco then he gives us whipping if we buy tobacco with money he gave us.

Master he have great big bunch of slaves and we have to cook in great big pot and skillet. We have plenty deer meat, beef, pork and honey, lots of cornbread, no biscuits. We wore loyal cloth, no shoes. Sometimes back in Kentucky when it get cold we wrap our feet in deer skin or cowhides to keep them warm. Then we wrap in woolen clothes when it gets real cold. On Sunday we have white loyal cloth.

We have good master, bless he sole and mistress. She was just white angel—they have no children when I'se freed. Master he have bout 100 acres in his plantation, seven grown slaves, three children slaves. He gets up every morning about 3:30 o'clock we always out in the field waiting for it to get light so we could see how to work. We worked every day just as long as we could see. Yessir, if we didn't work master he gives

us whipping. Boss, you know how stubbering mule is, that is the way of negro slave, he gets stubbering every once in while. Then sometime the slave he get lazy and don't want to work. Master he make slave lay over log and he whip him with cat o nine tails. Yessir, everytime they sell slave they young and womans they would holler and bawl two or three days. And sometimes the master he have to whip them before they would hush their squalling. No sir, master he say slave didn't need to learn how to read and write. Say he too thick headed. Yessir we have church on another plantation. Master he make us go to church. He saddle horse and side we would march along in front of master to church. Preacher he teach us about the child that was born in the stable, but boss, I'se don't believe that negro has sole. He more like mule, they might be mule heave for all I'se know. I'se like old preacher Moses the best, cause he always laughing with us. If we ask him question he alway have answer ready. Bless his heart. I'se remember them blessed days, cause negro have better time than they do now.

We carried news by pass. Master he give us pass, so the patter roller wouldn't get us, cause if patterroller gets hold of slave, they sure would give negro whipping. When we came from work, captain, we almost always fell in at the door on the ground, cause the quarters didn't have floor but only dirt, with moss pitted on the ground for our beds in one corner of the room. Our quarters only had two rooms built out of logs, with but two doors. One for the slave and one for the slave's master. He locks the door every night. Nossir, master give us every Saturday eve and Sunday for holiday. On Saturday night we have tin pan beating, banjo picking and negro dance all night. When master wakes up on Sunday he stops dance and makes negro go to church on Sunday.

Master he gets doctor when slave get sick or have old black mammy to see after slave cause they were too valuable to let die, or stay sick long. Boss, if you gets this here jerarulem root and makes tea that will stops fever sickness almost any kind, then you take spices ball string them on string and tie round the neck, baby will never fret when it cutting teeth.

Boss, I'se remember plenty about the war cause the north and south they splits apart. The north they wanted to free the slave but the south was stubbering they didn't want to free the slave unless the north pay them to turn the slave lose. The north and south they get in to war. Back in Kentucky where I'se born they bring all the white boy and the negro boy both in the war. I'se water and cook for the white soldiers. Boss, I'se seen them lying on the ground nearly dead holling crying, after one of them fights. They make us pick up all the dead and burn them Master he examine white soldiers that was not dead. If thought there wasnt a chance for him to get well, he take his knife and cut white soldier throat, but sometime he would shoot him, so we could pile him on fire or dig a great long ditch and pile them in it. That was terrible time all that killing for nothing.

When the war was over master he call me to his door and said you black son bitch you free, but boss he hired me to work for him at $2.50 per month. Bless his sole. I work for him long time after the war. He take real good care of this old black negro. Them days was hard for negro to get work or anything to eat after the war unless master gets it for him. They wasn't plenty work to do likes they are now. It use to be so negro could get plenty work.

I'se been married once by a preacher. I'se had 10 or 12 home wifes. Before the war closed they wouldn't let me have but one after the war closed I'se marry Susie Johnson. We have great big church wedding and plenty to eat. Dancing week we did. Susie and I have 18 children and they is all living. They is all here in Madison County save one. They is all farming except that one and he went to the war boss. When he comes back he stays in the north. I havent seen him since the war was over. Boss, I have something over 200 grand children and great grand children. I plum has lost count of them.

Yessir, I'se expecting the north give us home and bunch of stock so we could make living but they turned us out like bunch of cattle to starve and is most what we did. We had to beg and steal cause we got sore enough hungry. Master he told me most that I would have two stay with him year or two after the war cause the war burned all the fence and killed all his stock. He didnt have any thing left after the war except his home. Sometimes he would pay me then sometime he wouldnt. I'se shore did have hard time after the war but I'se gits by then bettern I do now except the government give me a little pension then. I'se do odd jobs around for the white folks.

Yessir, the Klu Klux Klan boss, they's get negro iffen they didnt do what the white folk told them. Gosh

they were plum ghost. Iffen we went to vote the KKK they gets after negro and make he leave town cause here in the south they were lots of them white ghosts. Boss, negro he could do very bad cause the KKK would get him if he did. Boss, I'se believe that we aught to be so we could vote in all the election cause the negro he have the same responsibility that the white man have. Then the negro he have become smarter and smarter more educated. Some of them have a pretty good education.

Boss, two or three years after the war closed, I'se farm, that is all the life negro know, then except to clean land. Sometimes I'se worked for wages. I'se even worked for 25cents day, but I'se had more to eat then than I do now, cause everything is plum high. The ways I get by now is by my pension, cause I'se 92 years old. I'm not able to work and this here young bunch they aint no count cause they want tell the truth. They want work hard, they want do nothing but steal.

They is plum smart cause they dont care nothing about the old slave negro. White he gone have to straten out dis here young bunch. They have no respect for old negro.

William Irving

This story of a slave born in the days of antebellum tells of life in the quarters, and some of his personal experiences and memories of the Civil War.

"I was born in Walker County, near de town of La Fayette, Georgia, in de year 1850. I was one of four chillun. My mother was a slave of Tom Martin in North Carolina. He brought her to Georgia an' sold her to Judge Easterling who later bought me.

"My father was a slave of Tom White, from whom he took his name. He was sold w'en he was a young man to Judge Easterling, de man who bought my mother, an' so they lived together an raised a fambly of four chillun, three girls, an' one boy, I was de boy.

"My first 'membrance was livin on Judge Easterlin's place, an' seeing him going in his buggy an' on horse-back to La Fayette to his office. We lived in de quarters. Dey was log cabins, built of de logs dat was cut from de big trees, an' de cracks was chinked wid clay. We lived about fifty or a hundred yards from de big house whar de Judge lived. De overseer lived between de cabins, an' de Judge's house. He was a white man, an' de Judge had him to tell us what to do an' to see dat hit was done. If de slaves did'nt work, or if dey run away, de overseer set de dogs on dem or had de patty-rolles to ketch dem.

"De patty-rollers was somthin' like w'at dey call de law here. Hit was dey business to ketch de run-a-way slaves an' others who had done something dey needed to be taken to de law for. W'en dey ketch de run-a-way nigger, dey lock him up, or de overseer whip him.

"How de slaves was treated depended on de kind of man de owner was, an' de overseer; if de owner was a good man, as a rule he saw dat de slaves was treated right, although sometimes de overseer did not always let de owner know all he did wid de slaves. W'en our white folks went to church dey always carried some of de slaves an' dey sit on de back seat at de church. We always belong to de same church de Massa's folks belong to. W'en de slaves go away from de plantation, dey takes dey passes to show dey has de permission of de owner to be away.

"De white folks raise corn, cotton, wheat, rye, barley, oats, hogs, sheep, cattle, an' fruit, an' vegetables. De hogs run wild in de woods. Dey had some wild game like dey has in Texas but not so much. But we had so many creeks an' rivers, dey was plenty of fish. De wimmen would knit, spin an' weave on de loom. Durin' de Civil War, w'en de ports was blockaded, dey had to make dey own clothes. De slave wimmen would help in de fiel's, an' plow, hoe, pick cotton, an' pile de brush for de men to burn.

"Dis is de way we was livin w'en de Civil war broke out. We was livin' a happy life, an' our Master was kind an' good to us. We never thought about any 'sonsibility of how de money was to cum from. We would have been satisfied to live dis way de rest of our lives. Our master did not trade de slaves very much; an' w'en dey traded dem, dey most always trade to some one dat live close by, or some town not very far away. He usually let de chillun stay wid dey mammy till dey was big enough to be taken away. He did not like to let us go, an' hit was w'en he needed de money bad, dat he would sell one of de slaves.

"I 'member w'en Judge Easterling took my mammy, my pappy an' myself jes fore de war, to Greensboro, an' put us on de auction block, an' sold us. De auction block was in front of de Court House. He sold my mammy to a man by de name of Lewis Lundy. I does not know who he sold my daddy to; an' he sold me to a man named David Irvin. De man I took my name from. I lived wid dis man until freedom. I worked wid

him at his shoe shop, an' helped him make shoes for de soljers. My new Master took me an' went down to Crawfordsville, Georgia whar I worked for him, an' he paid me every Saturday night. W'en freedom cum he called me an' told me I was free. An' as my mammy was old, an' needed me, I went back to Greensboro, an' stayed wid her until I married an' had a fambly of my own. Mr. Irvin paid twenty-one-hundred dollars for me, because I knew how to help him in his business, an he had a good business making shoes for de government. W'en de war cum, he makes de shoe for de rebel soljers, an' de Confederacy pays him. We made de shoes out of leather, an' he taught me how to patch dem. W'en de blockade was on, an' hit was hard to git de leather, we buy de hides, w'en dey kill de beeves for de army, an' at de markets, an' make de shoes wid hit.

"W'en I lived at Crawfordsville, I lived in a few blocks of Alexander H. Stephens, de Vice President of de Confederacy, an' I knew him well. I has made shoes for him, an' his body servant, Henry Stephens took care of his home, an' w'en Mr. Stephens was away he looked after his things an' would tell us all about his Master w'en he would git a letter. Dat is how I know so much more about de war, dan I would have.

"Alexander H. Stephens was a little man, an' old bachelor. He had a very high-pitched voice, but he was one of de smartest men dat Georgia ever sent to public office. I always knew w'en he was at home, an' I would mos' always see him. Sometimes he would tell us about de war, an' what dey was doin'. He was for States Rights first; an' dey say had a big debate wid a big man by de name of Toombs in Georgia, befo' Georgia seceded, Stephens was agin' Georgia secedin' an Toombs was for hit.

"After dis, Georgia seceded any how an Alexander Stephens went wid his State. He always put de State first, an' de day dat Georgia seceded, he cums home, an' cusses dem out for seceding but in a few days he goes back an' takes de oath to de Confederacy wid Georgia. Dis was de nineteenth of January, 1861.

"All de folks dat has studies de history of de Civil War know dat six states delegates met in Montgomery, Alabama on de 4th day of Febuary, to organize a new Confederate Government. Texas cums in an' made de seventh state, but dey did not git to Montgomery in time for dem to be represented w'en dey organized. Dey called hit de "Provisional Government of de Confederate States of America", an' dey elected Jeff Davis of Missippi de President, an' Alexander H. Stephens de Vice President, an' de folks in de little town of Crawfordsville was so proud dat all dat could git dar went to see him inaugurated.

"On de evening of Saturday de 16th of February, Mr. Davis git to Montgomery, an' Mr. Yancy presents him to de cheerin' crowd wid dese words "De man an' de hour have met", Monday was de day for de inauguration.

"W'en dey waitin', dis Monday mornin' for de inauguration, de military companies paraded all over de city. Dey was a good many military companies in de city, some was passin thro' an some was jes organized. De military guards from Colombus, Georgia puts on a drill, an dey fires de signal for de parade to start. An' here dey cums, first de infantry soljers, some was wearin red jackets, bottle green jackets, an' gray jackets den cums de calvary wid dey gleamin swords an' bayonets, an' de bands. Den cum's de President Jeff Davis, an' de Vice President, our own Alexander H. Stephens, in a carriage drawn by six beautiful gray horses. W'en dey reach de capitol dey is sworn into office by Howell Cobb of Georgia, as de President an Vice President of de Provisional Government, but after de war has been goin on for some time dey moves de capitol to Richmon' an' in a year, dey has another Inauguration. Dey calls hit now de "Permanent Government of de Confederacy."

"W'en dey has de second inauguration for de permanent government of de Confederacy, dey has hit on George Washington's birthday, de 22nd of February 1862. Dis one was in Virginia, but de folks from Alexander Stephens, an' Jeff Davis home towns was there, only more of dem dis time. De procession was a bigger one, an' more like a sure nuff inauguration. Dey marched from de House of Delegates of Virginia jes befo' noon, an' went thro de snow, across Capitol Park, to de statue of Washington whar dey had de inauguration.

"How we did wish dat we could all go from de little town de Vice President cum's from; but dey tell us 'bout dis one too, an' dis was for six years an' dey did not serve but 'bout half, an' de Confederacy was no more.

"Dis procession was headed by de Grand Marshall an' his aides, an' by de Committees dat has de arrangments of hit; den cum's President Davis, an' his new President of de Senator, an' behin' dis, cum's our little Alexander H. Stephens wid his partner, de Speaker of

de House of Representatives. Den cum's de cabinet, an' dat is all I kin think of. Us niggers does not keep up wid dem all, but we still keeps up wid Mr. Davis an' Stephens.

"I has heard dem talk 'bout Mr. Reagan from Texas since I cum's to Texas. He was de Postmaster General, an' I 'members 'bout him too, in dis way, dat durin de war, we hears de folks talkin all de time 'bout how hard hit is to buy stamps. Hit was five cents for a letter, an' den dey could not git a stamp half de time. Yer see de Yankees took de stamps an' everything dat de government at Washington had furnished de postmasters away from all de ones dat had dey offices in de Confederacy.

"Kin I tell yer 'bout any of de battles? I heard de guns firing at de battle of Chickamauga. Yer see I was helpin' ter make de shoes for de soljers, an' we went to take dem some, an' w'en we git to La Fayette, Georgia whar I used to live, not far from Chickamauga Creek, General Bragg had fallen back to LaFayette, an' was waitin for de rest of his re-enforcements to cum, is de way I 'members hit. We see de rebel cumin' to join Braggs army, an' we kin hear dem singin songs, some of dem like dis one,

"Our wagon is de very bes, de runnin' gear is good, Stuffed round de sides wid cotton, an' made of piney woods, Carolina is de driver, wid Georgia by her side, Virginia holds de flag up, while we all take a ride. Oh wait for de wagon, wait for de wagon, Wait for de wagon, an' we'll all take a ride."

"Dis was in de autumn of 1863, an' w'en de Yankees see dat Bragg has fallen back towards La Fayette, dey thin's at first he is retreatin', but he follows dem, an' dey has de battle of Chickamauga, in de valley of dis creek, dat de Indians used to call de "River of Death". Jes as de rebels had de Yankees all runnin' every which way, de Yankee General Thomas stopped dem. President Davis cum's to see why Bragg did'nt follow de Yankees w'en dey was retreatin' but no one ever did know.

"We is at our old Masters', Judge Easterling, an' w'en de rebels retreated from de battle of Lookout Mountain, he is skeered de Yankees will cum after de retreatin' rebels, an he has us to hitch up de teams to de old wagons, an' pile everything in dem, an' he refuged to Greensboro. W'en de battle of Chickamauga was goin' on for three days, we could hear de poppin' of de guns, an' de sound of de canon as dey go, boom, boom, boom, wid a stop long enough to load again w'en dey is empty. Dey sounded like de tollin of de bells.

"I kin 'member how dey camp fires shone on de mountain befo' de battle of Chattanooga. Far away, we kin see de smoke from de fires, and de fires dat light de distant hilltops as dey brightened up de whole country.

"De way de Yankees scaled old Lookout Mountain, and broke de rebels lines dat caused dem to start dey retreat, was one of de biggest things dey did. Dey own Generals was surprised dat dey goes on to de top, dey had orders, hit seemed to keep dem busy fightin whilst de Yanks in some other point was doin' dey part, but up dey went, an dey did'nt stop until dey gits to de top. I thinks hit was ole Joe Hooker dat took dis mountain, an' anyway w'en dey did, de people in de valley's thought hit was time to git out of de way of de Yankee's, an' dat is w'en Judge Easterlin' refugeed to Greensboro.

"While dey was a fightin over in Chattanooga, de folks back in Georgia was in a wrangle over keepin Hood in de state to try to stop General Shermans march on Atlanta. Seems dat Bragg or some of de Generals wanted Hood, but General Sherman on de Yankee side was doin' plenty of harm in Georgia. I kin 'member w'en his army passed by on his March to Atlanta, dey burned all de barns, an' took all de corn dey could carry an' did'nt leave de people anything, befo' dey git to Atlanta. We lived close by whar he passed on dis march.

"General Hood finally decides to go up in Tennessee to try to draw Gen. Sherman after him to git him out of Georgia, but Sherman does not follow him an' w'en he burns de city of Atlanta, dey leave hit wid de bands a playin; an' de city burnin', dey soljers singing "John Browns' Body."

"Dis was de beginning of de march through Georgia dat dey was to write de song about, "Marchin' Through Georgia". Dis is a very beautiful song but hit does not tell about de homes dat was burned, an' de cold an' de hunger.

"I jes mus' tell yer er little 'bout Hood from Texas, dat had been in Georgia, an' made his raid in Tennessee to try to draw Sherman off. Dey say he had a little success an' was camped for long time aroun Nashville, an' de Yankees finally attacked him, an' won de battle, an' he had to retreat to de Tennessee River. His soljers was ragged an' bloody dey say, an' widout food, w'en de Yankees was following dem, dey had to put de in-

fantry men in de wagon for dey feet was barefooted an' dey had to stop long enough fer dem to skin a mule or cow dat had been killed to get de hide to make dey sandals. Dey even took dey felt hats, if dey had any, to make moccasons for dey feet.

"Wid all dis, dey was so rejoiced w'en dey git back across de river dey sing a song dey made up to de tune of de "Yellow Rose of Texas." Dis was jes three days befo' Christmas, an' dey feel almos' like dey is gittin back to Texas, for most of dem was Texas boys. Dis is de song:

"And now I'm goin southward, For my heart is full of woe, I'm goin' back to Georgia, To find my Uncle Joe,

"Uncle Joe" was Joe Johnston an officer the southern soljers loved

"You may sing about your dearest maid, And sing of Rosalie, But de gallant Hood of Texas, Played Hell in Tennessee.

"Dis was Christmas, 1863. De war news was all dat we talked about. De Yankees destroyed de salt mines at Saltville, whar de Confederate salt supply was, but dey tried to caputre Fort Fisher de Fort dat guarded Cape Fear River entrance, de entrance to de port of Wilmington, whar de ships can cum an' bring supplies, but dey failed. General Butler exploded a powder ship dat was towed along by de fort but hit did'nt do any bad damage. Some more soljers for de rebels made de Yankees retreat.

"Dis was one sign of good luck for de rebels, for Wilmington was de last port open for dem to git dey supplies, an' hit was saved a little longer, an' dis gave dem somethin to be thankful for dat Christmas. De last year of de war de Confederate Government talked about lettin' de slaves fight wid dem. De slaves dat had not run away wanted to do dis. Dey claim dat de Yankees had two hundred thousand niggers fightin for dem, an' de slaves dat stayed wid dey Masters said dey had rather fight for dey Masters dan for strangers. President Davis an' some of de Governors wanted Congress to free de slaves for fightin, but some how dey never did do anything in Congress about hit. In some places dey did have dem to work on de breastworks when dey have dem whar dey could use dem. In most of de rebel army whar de young boys dat was slaves could be spared from home, dey went wid dey young master, an' cooked an' waited on dem, dey was dey body guards.

"By dis time I is back at Crawfordsville, workin' for my Master in de shoe factory, an' we hears a lot of talk about peace. Alexander Stephens is tryin' to git de Confederate Government to call a convention of de states, an' try to work out somthin' 'bout a new plan for de government. Den dey has de Hampton Roades Conference. De Confederacy send Stephens, an' two others to meet de President Lincoln, an' his Secretary Seward, but de President Lincoln would not agree to stop de war unless de Confederacy have de rebels to disband, an' free de slaves, so dat put an' end to de peace conference, an' dey jes fight on, w'en hit looked like dey was jes a waistin dey time, an' de lives of de ones in de battles, for de Yankees jes had de rebels already whipped so hit looked to mos' of de South.

"Yes, Maam, I lived thro de reconstruction days, but I had tolk yer enough, I does not believe de South would have had such a hard time in dem days if Lincoln had been living. De folks aroun' me begin to cum to Texas after de war, an' some of my neighbors tell Mr. J. R. Collier, who used to live at Mumford, Texas, about me. An' he sends me three hundred an' fifty dollars to move my family, an' cum to Texas to work for him. I cum's an' brings dem, an' works for him for a good many years on his farms. He later moved to Waco, Texas whar he died.

"I is eighty seven years old, an' had lived to see many changes in the times, an' in my own life as well as de lives of other people. I has often been homesick for Georgia, but hit has been a good place to live in Texas an' mos' of de old folks dat I knew, is done gone on to de future life. Dey is lots dat I has seen in Texas, but dat is another story.

Minnie Fulkes

I was born the twenty fifth of December and I am 77 years old. My mother was a slave and she belonged to Dick Belcher in Chesterfield County. Old Dick sold us again to Golaspe Groves, now fifteen of mother's chillun west with her having de same waster.

Honey, I don't like to talk 'bout dem times, 'cause my mother did suffer miss. You know dar was am' overseer who use to tis gather up in de barn with a rope aroun' her arms up over ber head, while she stood on a block. Soon as dey got her tied, dis block was moved an' her feet dangled, yo' know. Couldn't tech do flo'.

Dis old man, now, would start beatin' her naked 'til the blood run down her back to her heels. I took an' seed th' whips an' scare for my own self wid dese here

two eyes. ("was a whip like Dey was to use on horse) it was a piece of leather 'bout as wide as my han' fron little finger to thumb. After dey had beat my mama all dey wasted another overseer. Lord, Lord, I hate white people and de flood waters gwine drown some me. Well honey dis man would bathe her in salt and water. Don't you kno' dem places was a hurtim". Um, um.

I asked mother, what she done for 'on to beat and do her so? She said, "nothin", tother than she refused to be wife to dis man."

An' mama say, if he didn't treat her dis way a dozen times, it wasn't nary one."

Mind you, now mama's marster didn't know dis was going on. You knew, if slaves would tell, why dem overseers would kill 'em.

An' she sed dat day use to have meetings am' sing and pray an' th' el' paddy rollers would hear dem, so to keep th' sound from goin' out, slaves would put a great big iron po at the doer, an' you know some times dey would for git to put el' pot dar an' the paddy rollers would come an' horse whip every las' one of 'em, jes cause peer souls were praying to God to free 'em from dat awful bandage.

Ha! ha! ha! dar was one ol' brudder whe studied for 'em one day an' tel all de slaves how to git even wid 'em.

He tel' 'em to tie grape vines an' other wines across th' road, dem when de Paddy rollers come galantin' wid their horses runnin' so fast you see dem vises would tangle 'em up an' cause th' horses to stumble and fall. An' lots of times, badly day would break dere legs and horses too; one interval one ol' poor devil got tangled so an' do horse kept a carryin' him, 'til he fell off horse and next day a sucker was found in read whar dem vines was wind aroun' his neck so many times yes had choked him, day said, he totally dead. Serve him right 'cause dem ol' white folks treated us so mean.

Well, sometimes, you knew dey would, the others of 'em, keep going 'til dey fin' whar dis meeting was gwine on. Dey would come in and start whippin' am' beatin' the slaves unmerciful. All dis was done to keep yo' from servin' God, am' do you know some of dem devils was mean an' sinful 'nough to say. "Ef I ketch you here agin servin' God I'll boat you. You haven't time to serve God. We bought you to serve us. Us, us.

God's gwine 'rod dem wicket marsters. If hit 'taint 'em what gits hit, hits gonna fall on deir chillum.

In dem back days child, meetings was carried on jos like we de today, some—whatly. Only difference is the slave dat knowed th' most 'bout de Bible would tell and explain what God had told him in a vision (yo' young folks say, "drean") dat dis freedom would some to pass! an' den dey prayed for dis visits to come to pass, an' dere whar de paddy rollers would whip 'em ag'in.

Lord! Lord dey, pow! pow! pow! Baby, "I jes kno' I could if I knowed how to write, an' had a little learning I could put off a book on dis here situation. Yo' kno what I mean 'bout does way back questions yes is a asking me to tell yo' 'bout; as for as I can recollect in my mind.

When Graves bought us, he sold three of us an' three slaves. My brother an' sister wont down south. Mama sed to de cotton country an' too, she say, "they were made to work in th' cotton fields by their new marster, out in don white fields in th' brawlin' sun from th' time it breaked day 'till yo' couldn't see at night an', yes indeedy, an' if God isn't my right'ous judge they were given not half to eat, no not 'nough, to eat. Dey was beaten of dey ask'd for any me'".

As to marriage, when a slave wanted to marry, why he would les ask his marster to go over and ask do tother marster could he take unto himself dis certain gal for a wife. Mind you now, all de slaves dat marster called out of quarters an' ha'd make 'em line up see, stand in a row like soldiers, and de slave man is wid his marster when dis askin' is gwine on, and he pulls de gal to him he wants jes' de marster den rake both jump over broom stick an' after dey does, dey is pronounced man an' wife, both stays' wid same marsters (I mean of John Marris Sallie John stay wid his el' marster an' Sal' wid here but had privileges, you know, like married folks; an' of chillun were bean all of 'em, me matter how many, belonged to de marster whar do woman stayed.

If I made a mistake, I think it was in April when do war surrendered an' mama an' all us was turned aloose in May. Yes dat el' wench, a el' heifer, oh child, it makes my blood bile when I think 'bout it. Yes she kept mama ignrunt. Didn't tell her nothing 'bout being free 'til den in May.

Don her mistess, Miss Betsy Godsey, tel' her she was free, an' she (mama) coul' seek for her jos th' same dat she would give her something to eat an' help clothe us chillun, dat was of numa continual' to stay wid her an' work.

You sea, we didn't have nuthin' an' no whar to go, um, um, um so we all, you know, jes took on stayed 'til

we was able wid God's help to pull us salves together. Put my God it was 'ginst our will, but, baby, couldn't help ourselves.

My fathers master tel' him he could farm one haf fer th' tother an' when time rolled 'roun' for dem 'viding crops he took an' give to him his part like any honest man would do. Ah, Lord child, dem was terrible time too, ah! it makes me shudder when I think of some slaves had to stay in de woods an' git long best way dey could after freedom done him' clared; you see slaves who had mean master would rather be dar den whar dey lived. By an' by God opened a way an' dey got wid other slaves who had huts. Yes see, after th' render no white folks could keep slaves. Do ye' know even now, honey, an' dat done bin way bac' yonder, dose ol' white folks think us poor colored people is made to work an' slave for dem, look! Dey aint give you no wages worth nothin'. Gal cook all week for two an' three dollars. How can you live off it, how kiss, you his yell

My father waited an soldiers and after do s'render dey carried him on' his brother as for as Washington D.C. I think we all use to say den, "Washington City. Mist you dome heard folks talk 'bout dat city? 'Tis a grade big city, dats whar de President of dis here country stay; an' in dem days it was known as 'vidin' lin' for do North an' South. I done hear dem white folks tell all 'bout dem things, dis line. As I was tellis' you, hos brother was kept, but dey sent father has' home. Uncle Spencer was left in Prince Williams County. All his chillun ar' still dar. I don't know de name of Yankee who carried him off.

Lord, Lord, Honey, dem times toe ever sad, cause Yankees took lots of slaves away an' dey made homes, An' whole heap of families lost sight of each other. I know of a case whar after hit was ten years a brother an' sister lived side by side an' didn't know dey was blood kin.

My views 'bout de chillun is dem bas! days is dat does here chillun what is new sewin' up is too pison brason for me.

Mod jes' lemme tell you how I did I married when I was 14 years old. So help me God, I didn't knew what marriage meant. I had an idea when you loved do man, you an' he could be married an' his wife had to seek, clean up, wash, am, from fer him was all. I slept in bed he on his side an' T an miss for three months an' dis aint no lie. Miss Sue, he never got close to me 'cause mama had sed don't let no body bother yo' principle, 'cause dat was all ye' had. I 'boy my mama, an' tol' him so, and I said to go an' ask mama an' of she sed he could get close to me hit was alright. An' he an' I went to gether to see and ask mama.

Den mama said "Come here chillun and she began tellin' me to please my husband, an' 'twas my duty as a wife, dat he had married a pu'fect lady."

Dese here chillun don't think of deir principle. Run purfectly wild. Old woman too. Dey ain't all 'em true to one, but have two.

Jos what is gittin' into dis generation; is hit do worl 'comin' to an end?

Ha! ha! ha! I goin 'tel' yo' som'thim' else.

I had a young man to come to see me one evenin' an' he sed dis to me, "Miss Monre" "Let me jin my fence to your plantation."

I give him his hat. I say, "no" yo' go yo' way an' I go mine. I was through wid him, an' mind yo' I from dat da' 'til dis aint knowed what he was talkin' 'bout an' was ashamed to ask Monre; but I thought he insulted me."

I didn't never go to school. Had to work an' an working now an' when hit breaks good weather, I go fishing. And who works dat big garden out dar? No body but me."

You know I'm mother of eleven chillun, an' 'tis seven living an' four of don ded.

Elisabeth Sparks

(Interviewed at Matthews Court House, Virginia, January 13, 1937 By Claude. Anderson.)

Come in boys. Sure am glad ter see ya. You're lookin' so well. That's what I say. Fight boys! Hold em! You're doin' alright. He, I 'm so mean nothin' can hurt me. What's that! You want me to tell yer 'bout slavery days. Well I kin tell yer, but I ain't. S'all part now; so I say let 'or rest 's too awful to tell anyway. yer'rs too young to know all that talk anyway. All I'll tell yer some to put in yer bock, but I ain'ta goin' tell yer the worse.

My mistress's name was Miss Jennie Brown. Mo, I guess I'd better not tell yer. Done forgot about dat. Oh well, I'll tell yer. Some, I guess. She died 'bout four years ago. Bless her. She 'us a good woman. Course I mean she'd slap an' beat yer once in a while but she warn't me woman fur fighting fussin' an' boatin' yer all day lak some I know. She was too young when da war ended fur that. Course no while folks perfect. Her parents a little rough, Whut dat? Kin I tell yer about her parents? Lord yes! I wasn't born then but my parents told me. But

I ain't a goin' tell yer nuffin. No I ain't. Tain't no sense fur yer ta know 'bout all those mean white folks. Dey all daid now. They meany good I reckon. Leastways most of 'em got salvation on their death beds.

Tell I'll tell yer some, but I ain'ta goin' tell yer much more. Me sir. Shop Piller was my master. His el' father, he was a tough one. Lord! I've seen 'im kill 'em. He'd git the meanest overseers to put over 'em. Why I member time after he was dead when I'd peep in the closet an' jes' see his old clothes hangin' there am' jes' fly. Yessir, I'd run from them clothes an' I was jes' a little girl then. He was that way with them black folks. Is he im heaven! No, he ain't in heaven! Went past heaven. He was clerk an' was he tough! Sometimes he boat 'em until they couldn't work. Give 'em more work than they could de. They'd git beatin' if they didn't get work done. Bought my mother, a little girl, when he was married. She was a real christian am' he respected her a little. Didn't boat her so much. Course he boat her once in a while. Shop Miller was terrible. There was me and to the beatin' I saw it wif my own eyes.

Boat women! Why sure he boat women. Boat women jes' lak men. Beat women asked an' wash 'em down in brine, Same times they boat 'em so bad, they jes' wouldn't stand it an' they run away to the woods. If yer git in the woods, they wouldn't git yer. Yer could hide am' people slip yer somepin' to eat. Than he sall yer every day. After while he tell one of colored fereman tell yer some an bask. He ain'ta goin' beat yer anymore. They had colored foreman but they always have a white overseer. Foreman git yer to come back an' then he boat yer to death again.

They worked six days fum sun to sun. If they forein' wheat or other crops, they start to work long 'fo day. Usual work day began when the born blow an' stop when the horn blow. They git off jes' long 'nuf to eat at mean. Didn't have much to eat. They git some suet an' slice a bread fo' breakfas, Hell, they give the colored people an allowance every week. Fe' dinner they'd eat ash cake baked on blade of a hoe.

I lived at Seaford then an' was roun' fifteen or sixteen when my mistress married. Shop Miller lived at Springdale. I 'member jes' as well when they gave as to Jennie. We was all in a room helpin' her dress. She was soon to be married, an' she turns 'roun an' sos to us. Which of yer niggers think I'm gonna git when I git married? We all say, 'I dean knew,'An' she looks right at me an' point her finger at me like this an' said 'yer!' I was so glad. I had to make 'or believe I 'us cryin', but I was glad to go with 'or. She didn't boat. She was jes' a. young thing. Course she take a whack at me sometime. but that waren't puffin'. Her mother was a mean ol' thin'. She'd boat yer with a broom of a leather strap or anythin' she'd git her hands on.

She water make my aunt Carelise knit all day an' when she git so tired aftah dark that she'd git sleepy, she'd make 'er stas' up an kait. She work her se hard that she'd ge te sleep standin' up am' every time her haid sed an' her knees sag, the lady'd some down dress her haid with a switch. That wus Miss Jeanie's mother. She'd give the sock Jes se much meal to make bread fum am' effen she burnt it, she'd be scared to death cause they'd whup her. I 'member plenty of times the sack ask say. 'Marsa please 'occuse dis bread, hits a little too brown. 'Yessir! Boat the devil out 'er if she burn dat bread.

I went wif Miss Jennie an' worked at house. I didn't have to cook. I get permission te git married. Yer always had to git permission. White folks 'ud give yer away. Yer jump cross a broom stick tergether an' yer wus married. My husband' lived on another plantation. I slep' in my mistress's room but I ain't slep' in any bed. Nosir! I slep' on a carpet, an' ole rug, befo' the fiahplace. I had to git permission to go to church, everybody did. We set in the gallery at the white folks service in the mornin' an' in the evenin' the folk held baptise service in the gallery wif white present.

Shop went to war but not for long. We didn't see none of it, but the slaves know what the war was 'bout. After the war they tried to fool the slaves 'bout freedom an' wanted to keep 'em on a workin' but the Yankees told 'em they wus free. They sent some of the slaves to South Carolina. When the Yankees came near to keep the Yankees from gittin' 'em. Our cousin James to South Carolina. I nevah will forgit when the Yankees came through. They was takin' all the livestock an' all the men slaves back to Norfolk, wid 'em to break up the system. White folks head wus jos' goin' to keep en havin' slaves. The slaves wanted freedom, but they's scared to tell the white folks so. Anyway the Yankees wus givin' everything to the slaves. I kim heah 'em tellin' el' Missy now. Yes! give'er clothes. Let'er take anythin' she wants." They even tesk some of Miss Jennie's things an' offered 'em to me. I didn't take 'em the' cause she'd been purty nice to me. Whut tickled me wus my husban', John Sparks. He didn't want to leave

me an' ge cause he didn't knew whah they's takin' 'em nor what they's gonna do, but he wanted to be free se he played lame to keep fun goin'. He was jes' a limpin' 'round. It was all I could de to keep fun laffin'. I kin hear Miss Jennie now yellin' at than Yankees. He! who are yer to judge. I'll be the judge. If John Sparks wants to stay here, he'll stay they was gonna take 'im anyhow an' he want inside to pack an' the baby started cryin'. Se one of 'em said that as long as he had a wife an' a baby that young they guess he could stay. They tock all the horses, cove, and pigs and chickens an' anything they would use an' left. I was about nineteen when I married. I was married in 1861, my eldest boy was born in 1862 an' the fallin' of Richmond came in 1865.

Before Miss Jennis was married she was born an' lived at her old home right up the river heah. Yer kin one the place fum out side heah. On the plantation my mother was a house woman. She had to wash white folks clothes all day an' huh's after dark. Sometimes she'd be washin' clothes way up 'round midnight. Nosr, couldn't wash any nigguh's clothes in daytime. My mother lived in a big one room log house wif an' upstairs. Sometimes the white folks give yer 'bout tem cents to spond. A woman with children 'ud git 'bout half bushel of meal a weeks a childless woman 'ud git 'bout a peck an' a half of meal a week. If yer was workin', they'd give yer shoes. Children went barefooted, the yeah 'round. The men on the road got one cotton shirt an' jacket. I had five sisters an' five brothers. Might as well quit lookin' an me. I ain't gonna tell yer any more. Cain't tell yer all I know. Shop might some back an' git me. Why if I was to tell yer the really bad things, some of de daid white folks would come right up outen dere graves. Well, I'll tell somewhere, but I cain't tell all.

Once in a while they was free nigguhs come fum somewhah. They could come see yer if yer was their folks. Nigguhs used to go way off in quarters an' slip an' have meetins. They sailed it stealin' the meetin'. The children used to teach me to read. Schools! Son, there warm't no schools for niggers. Slaves want to bed when they didn't have anything to do. Most time they want to bed when they could. Sometimes the men had to shuck corn till eleven and twelve o'clock at might.

If you went out at night the paddyrole 'ud catch yer if yer was out aftah time without a pass. Mos' a the slaves was afeared to go out.

Plenty of slaves ran away. If they ketch 'em they boat 'em near to death.

But yer know day's good an' bad people every where. That's the way the white folks wus. Some had hearts; some had gizzards 'stead o' hearts.

When my mothers's master died, he called my mother an' brother Major an' get religion an' talked so party. He say he so sorry that he hadn't found the Lord before an' had muttin' gainst his colored people. He was sorry an' scared, but confessed. My mother died twenty years since then at the age of seventy-fo'. She wus very religious an' all white folks set store to 'er.

Old Massa done so much wrongness I couldn't tell yer all of it. Slave girl Betty Lilly always had good clothes an' all the privilages. She wus a favorite of his'm. But cain't tell all! God's got all! To uster sing a song when he was shippin' the slaves to sell 'em 'bout "Masea's Gwyne Soll Us Termerrer." No. I cain't sing it for yer. My husban' lived on the plantation nex' to my mistress. He lived with a bachelor master. He tell us say once when he was a pickinnany el' Marss Williams shot at 'im. He didn't shoot 'em; he jes' shoot in the air an' ol' man wus so sceered he ran home an' got in his mammy's bed. Massa Williams uster play wif 'em; then day got so bad that they'ud run an' grab 'is laigs so's he couldn't hardly walk so when he seen 'em he jes' shoots in de air. 01' Massa, he, jes' come on up ter the cabin an' may "mammy whah dat boy?" She say, in dah undah the bed. Yer done scared 'im to deaf! 01' Massa go on in an' say, Boy! That's the mattah wid yer. Boy say, yer shot me master yer shot me! Master say, Ar Gwan! — Git up an' come along. I ain't shot yer. I jes' shot an' scared yer. Hah! Heh! Heh! Yessir my ol' husban' sayed he sure was scared that day.

New yer take dat an' go. Put that in the book. Yer kis make out wif dat. I ain't a gonna tell yer me more. Nosir. The and a time is at hand anyway. 'Tain't no use ter write a book. The Bible say when it git so's yer cain't tell one season from t'other the worl's comin' to end;hers hit is se warn in wister that if feels like summer. Goodbye. Keep lookin' good an' com again.