

**Voices of the Owned,
From the WPA Slave Narratives**

selected and edited by Richard Seltzer with the help of Simon (his AI partner)

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All royalties from this book go to the Penn Center in South Carolina, a charity dedicated to preserving the history and culture of American slaves.

Preface

The authors of this book—too many to list—are former slaves, speaking seventy years after the Civil War. Their words were recorded by government interviewers during the Great Depression.

In the Afterword, I explain how this book came to be.

At first, you may find the dialect difficult to read. The spellings were created by interviewers trying to capture the sound and rhythm of spoken language. The speakers themselves didn't write this way, and most had been denied the opportunity to learn to read or write, often under threat of severe punishment if they tried.

If the words feel unfamiliar, try reading them slowly, or even aloud. Often the meaning becomes clearer when heard rather than seen.

After a short while, many readers find that what first seemed like a barrier becomes something else—a way of hearing individual voices more distinctly.

Epigraph

"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."—George Young, Alabama

"The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."—Thucydides

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Part One

Julia Woodberry, Marion, South Carolina, age 73

transcribed by Annie Ruth Davis

First Interview

"Come in, child. Dis ain' nobody talkin' to you from behind dat door but Julia Woodberry. De door unlatch. Just turn de handle en' come right in here whe' you can warm yourself by de stove.

"My mother, she was a freeborn woman. She come from off de sea beach in our own country. She told me she was born on de sea beach en' her parents was Chee Indians. When dey stole her en' her brother John, dey come dere in dese big old covered wagons en' dey stuffed dem way back up in dere en' carried dem off.

"She say, she was a big girl when dey run her down en' caught her. Her en' her brother John was out playin' one day, near their sea beach home; en' first thing dey know, dere come one of dem big old covered wagons dere. Say, dey never know what to think till dey see dis white man gettin' down off de wagon en' start makin' for dem; en' dey get scared cause dey been learn' white man won' no friend.

"Say, dey broke en' run, but de man come right after dem en' grabbed dem up wid his hands en' stuffed dem way back up in de covered wagon en' drove off. She say she was runnin' hard as she could from de man.

"My mother say, dey cried en' cried, but dat never do no good. No, mam, de lawyer Phillips stole her. He didn' buy her 'cause she told me dey brought dem right on to his home en' put dem out dere. Her en' her brother John were made house servants in de big house, en' dey went from one to de other in de Phillips' family till after freedom come here.

"Ma, she say dat she fared good, en' dey didn' ill treat her no time, but wouldn' never allow dem to get out de family. Cose she had to put de white people chillun to bed at night en' den she could go to parties cross Catfish much as she wanted to, but she would have to be back in time to cook dat breakfast next mornin'. You see, dey was house servants en' dey stayed right dere in de lawyer Phillips' house all de time.

"She didn' have no word 'bout if she liked de white folks livin' or no when she first come dere. You know, when you in Rome, you has to do as Rome do. Reckon dat de way de poor creature took it.

"My God, my God, child, I couldn' never forget my old mother's face. She bore a round countenance all de time wid dese high cheek bones en' straight hair. I talkin' out of her now. Yes, mam, can see Ma face dere fore my eyes right now.

"You know, de Indians, dey got curious ways. My mother, she wouldn't never take a thing from nobody, en' she was sharp to pick a fight. Anybody make her mad, she would leave away from dem en' dey wouldn't see her no more in a month or two.

"Well, child, dat 'bout all I can know to speak bout dis mornin'. You see, some days I can get my 'membrance back better den I can on another day. I gwine get my mind fixed up wid a heap to tell you de next time you come here; en' if you ain't come back, I gwine try en' get round dere to your house. God bless you, honey."

Second Interview

"Oh, my God a mercy, child, dat been a time when dat shake come here. I sho' remember all 'bout dat 'cause I been a grown woman de year dat earthquake come here. [1886]

"We had all just been get over wid us supper en' little things dat night. I had washed Auntie en' Mr. Rowell's feet for dem to lie down, en' dere come such a sketch of clouds from over in dat direction dat I never know what to make of it. Auntie en' Mr. Rowell never know what to make of it neither.

"I remember, I run out to help my sister dat been out to de paddlin' block; en', honey, you ain't never live to see no black cloud like dat been. I washed a piece through en', den I left off en' went back in de house en' set down by de fire to dry my feet. I set dere awhile en' seems like somethin' just speak right out de fire 'bout dat time, en' tell me to move my feet, dat I was in bad shape. En', child, it de truth of mercy, dere come a big clog of dirt out dat chimney en' drap [drop] right down in de spot whe' my foot was.

"I run to Auntie en' Mr. Rowell to see could dey tell what dat was, but dey been in just as much darkness as I been. I look up en' seems like de loft had lowered itself en' could hear a roarin' for miles en' miles 'bout dere. En' could hear de people hollerin' every which a way. Yes, mam, could hear dem hollerin' for miles and miles for miles on top of miles.

"My God, dem people was scared to lie down dat night. Such a prayin' en' a shoutin' as everybody do dat night, I ain't never see' de like 'fore den. Ain't see de like since den neither.

"Next mornin', I go to work for de white folks en' dey all go off dat mornin'. I tell you, I was scared 'bout to death in dat big house by myself.

"I remember, I left out de house en' been out in de 'tatoe patch grabblin' 'tatoes right along; en' when I raise up, dat thing was comin' down dat 'tatoe row just a whirlin' en' a makin' right for me. Yes, mam, I been so scared. I ain't see whe' I is grow a bit since de shake. I tell you, I thought it was de Jedgment.

"Den we hear dere was gwine be another earthquake, but de people get on dey knees en'

dey stay on dey knees, en' it never come here dat time. Dat one was in another state, so dey tell me.

"I hear talk dat all de Earth caved in, en' you could see de people down dere, but couldn' nobody get dem. Some people say dat been de devil do dat, but I tell dem de devil ain' had no such power. De Lord been de power dat bring dat shake here."

"Oh, Lord, de people sho' fared better in dat day en' time den dey do dese days. Cose dey didn' have a heap of different kind of trashy things like dey have dese days, but dey had a plenty to eat en' a plenty to wear all de time. Everything was better in dem times, too. De rations eat better en' de cloth wear better, too, in dem days den dey do now.

"You see, mostly, de people would make dey own provisions at home. White folks would raise abundance of hogs en' cows to run all dey big plantation from one year to de other. Wouldn' never clear out of meat no time 'cause de stock been let loose to run at large in dem days. De most dat dey bought was dey sugar en' dey coffee. But dem what was industrious en' smart, dey made most dey victuals at home.

"Made dey own rice en' winnowed it right dere home. Oh, dey had one of dese pestle en' mortar to beat it out. Yes, mam, de pestle been big at one end en' little at de other end. Den dey would raise turkeys en' geese en' chickens en' dere wasn' no end to de birds en' squirrels en' rabbits en' fish in dat day en' time. Dat is, dem what cared for demselves, dey had all dem things. Cose dere was some den like dere be now dat been too lazy to work, en' dey hand was empty all de time. I remember, dem poor buckras [white people] would just go 'bout from one house to another en' catch somethin' here, dere, en' yonder."

"Den de people never wore none of dese kind of clothes like de people wear dese days neither. When a person got a dress den, dey made it demselves, en' dey made dey own underskirts den, too. You see, all dese underskirts en' bloomers like de people does buy dese days, dey didn' have nothin' like dat den.

"Used to put 10 yard in a dress en' 10 yards in a underskirt en' would tuck dem clean up to dey waist. En', child, when dey would iron dat dress, it would stand up in de floor just like dere been somebody in it.

"When I say 'iron', I talkin' 'bout de people would iron den, too. Yes, mam, when I come along, de people been take time to iron dey garments right. Oh, dey clothes would be just as slick as glass. Won' a wrinkle nowhe' 'bout dem.

"Another thing, dey used to have dese dove-colored linen dusters dat dey would wear over dey dress when dey would ride to church. Den when dey went in de church, dey would pull

dem off en' put dem on again when dey started home. Dey was made sort of like a coat suit, except dey was a little fuller en' would come clean down to de tail of de dress. You see, dey was meant to protect de dress while dey was gwine along de road.

"De world sho' gwine worser dese days, honey. Oh, Lord, de people worser. Yes, mam, dey worser. Dey ain' got de mother wit. Dey weaker en' dey wiser, but dey ain' got de mother wit. Can' set down en' talk to de people dese days, en' dey take dat what you got to say ain' like dey used to.

"En de people don' take de time to teach de chillun to know good things like dey used to, en dat how-come dey have more time to get in so much of devilment dese days. Yes, mam, de people used to have more chillun en' dey raised dem, too. Chillun know more den grown people do dese days. People used to know how to carry demselves en' take care of demselves more den dey do now. Seems like, de people more rattlin' en' brazen den what dey used to be."

Third Interview

"I didn' live in slavery time, but I can speak 'bout what I used to hear my auntie en' my mammy en' my grandmammy talk 'bout what happen in dey day. My mammy, she been broke her leg long time 'fore freedom come here. En' I remember she tell me often times, say, 'Julia, you didn' lack much of comin' here a slavery child.' Honey, I mean she been in de family way right sharp 'fore freedom come here.

"My mammy, she was raise right down dere to de other side de jail to de 'Cedars'. You know dere whe' all dem cedars round dat house what 'bout to fall down. She belong to de lawyer Phillips dere, en' he wouldn' never allow her to get out de family. She had been a free woman 'fore he had stole her off de sea beach to be his house woman. Yes, mam, stole my mammy en' uncle John, too, off de sea beach. Uncle John went back after freedom come here. My mammy, she been raise' from just a child to be de house woman dere to de lawyer Phillips, en' she never didn' know nothin' bout choppin' cotton till her last baby been 'bout knee high.

"I remember how my mammy used to tell me 'bout dat de colored people won' allowed to go from one plantation to another widout dey had a 'mit [permit] from dey Massa. Yes, mam, all de niggers had to have dat strip somewhat 'bout dem to keep from gettin' a beatin'. Couldn' leave dey home widout showin' dat 'mit from dey Massa.

"You see, de nigger men would want to go to see dey wives, en' dey would have to get a 'mit from dey Massa to visit dem. Cose dey wouldn' live together cause dey wives would be here, dere en' yonder.

"It been like dis—sometimes de white folks would sell de wife of one of dey niggers way from dey husband. En' den another time, dey would sell de husband way from dey wife. Yes, mam, white folks had dese guard, call 'patroller', all bout de country to catch en' whip dem niggers dat been prowls 'bout widout dat strip from dey Massa.

"I remember I hear talk dey say, 'Patroller, Patroller, let nigger pass.' Dey would say dat if de nigger had de strip wid dem. En' if dey didn' have it, dey say, 'Patroller, Patroller, cut nigger slash.'

"Child, I tell you dat been a day to speak 'bout. When I come along, de women never vote, white nor colored. En' it been years since I see a colored person vote. But I remember dey been gwine to vote in dat day en' time just like dey was gwine to a show. Oh, honey, de road would be full of dem. Dey had to vote. Remember, way back dere, everybody would be singin' en' a dancin' when dey had de election:

'Hancock ride de big gray horse,

Hampton ride de mule,

Hancocks got elected,

Buckras all turn fool.

Buggety, buggety, buggety etc.'

"White en black was all in a row dere dancin' all night long. Ain' made no exception.

"I hear talk dat when freedom come here, de niggers was just turn loose to make dey livin' de best way dey could. Say dat some of de white folks give dey niggers somethin' to go on, en' some of dem didn' spare dem nothin'.

"Dey tell me old Sherman didn' come through dis section of de country, but he sent somebody to divide out de things like so much corn en' so much meat to de colored people.

"Now, I talkin' 'bout dat what I hear de old people say. Put everything in Ben Thompson hand to deal out de colored people share to dem. Yes, mam, he was de one had de chair. Talk 'bout Sherman give Ben Thompson de chair, sayin' what I hear de old people say. I don' know exactly how it was, it been so long since de old people talk wid me. Dat it, it been so long till God knows, I forgot.

"Well, I used to know a heap of dem songs dat I hear my auntie en' my grandmammy sing dere home when I was comin' up. Let me see, child, dey was natural born song too.

'I got somethin' to tell you,
Bow-hoo, oo-hoo, oo-hoo.
I got somethin' to tell you,
Bow-hoo, oo-hoo, oo-hoo.
In a bow-hoo, oo-oo-hoo.

'Way cross de ocean,
'Mongst all dem nation,
Massa Jesus promise me,
He gwine come by en' by,
He gwine come by en' by.

'Dere many miles round me,
De Virgin be so bold,
To think dat her son, Jesus,
Could write widout a pen,
Could write widout a pen.

'De very next blessin' dat Mary had,
She had de blessin' of two,
To think dat her son, Jesus,
Could bring de crooked to straight,
Could bring de crooked to straight.'

"Dat was my auntie's grandmother Eve piece way back yonder in slavery time. Dat was her piece.

"It just like I tellin' you, dat been a day to speak 'bout. I remember when dey used to spin en' weave all de cloth right dere home. Yes, mam, I wore many a wove dress to church. Dey would get dis here indigo en' all kind of old bark out de woods en' boil it in de pot wid de yarn en' make de prettiest kind of colors. Den dey would take dat colored yarn en' weave all kind of pretty streaks in de cloth. Dey would know just as good how many yards of dat thread it would take to make so much of cloth.

"Yes, mam, I know dere been better livin' long time ago den dere be now. Know it cause I didn' never have no worryations no time when I was comin' up. My God, child, I couldn' make a support today if I know my neck had to be hung on de gallows. No, mam, dis here a sin-cussed world de people livin' in dis day en' time."

Fourth Interview

"No, mam, I ain' thought 'bout nothin' no more to tell you. Death been in de family en' seems like I just been so worried up wid my daughter sick in de house dere wid de straw fever. De doctor, he say it de fever en' dat all we know. But it acts like de straw fever all up en' down. I tell dem chillun dere de other night dat I would have to go back en' get my mind fixed up wid somethin' to speak bout 'fore you come here another time. Yes, mam, have to get my mind together somewhe' or another.

"I been born down dere in Britton's Neck, but most my days was lived up to Mr. Jim Brown's place to Centenary. My father, he was name Friday Woodberry en' my mother, she come from off de sea beach in slavery time, so she told me. Say dat her old Massa stole her en' her brother John, too, from off de sea beach. When freedom come here, her brother John went back to de sea beach, but my mother say dat she won' in no shape to go back. She went from family to family till after freedom was declared en' her white folks wouldn' never have her ill-treated neither en' wouldn' never let nobody else have her no time.

"When she was let loose from de white people, she went to Britton's Neck wid a colored woman. You see, she was a stranger to de country 'bout dere fore freedom come, en' she been know dat woman en' dat how-come she went wid her. I mean she didn' know de people 'bout dere cause de white folks didn' allow dey colored people to go 'bout much in slavery time. Couldn' go nowhe' widout dey had a ticket wid dem. She stayed dere in Britton's Neck till Pa died en' den she come back up here to Marion to live, but her white people was scattered all 'bout den.

"No, mam, I ain' never marry cause you had to court on de sly in dat day en' time. I was learned to work by de old, old slavery way. Yes, mam, if I never did a thing right, my dress was over my head en' I was whipped right dere. I was engaged by letter, but dey kept me

under dey foot so close till I never didn' slip de hay. I remember, I was stayin' dere wid Mary Jane Rowell en' she kept me cowed down so worser, I never couldn' do nothin'.

"I tell you, I been a grown girl dere when I leave Mary Jane Rowell's house en' go to cookin' 'en a washin' for Miss Louise Brown. Yes, child, I love Miss Louise Brown to dis very day 'cause she been just like a mother to me. Yes, mam, Miss Brown was just as good to me as she could be.

"Mr. Jim Brown, he give me a house dere on his plantation to live in just to do de house work to de big house, but seems like de other colored people on de plantation would be tryin' to down me most all de time cause I was workin' ahead of dem. I know I would go dere to work many a mornin' cryin', from what dem niggers been mouthin' bout me, en' Miss Brown would cry right along wid me.

"I tell you, Miss Brown was a tender-hearted woman, so to speak 'bout. I tell Miss Brown, 'Carolina say I stole a towel off de line.' En' Miss Brown say, 'Julia, if dere a towel gone off dat line, I know whe' it gone.'

"No, child, I ain' never think 'bout to lay no shame on dese hands. White folks been used to leave money all 'bout whe' I bresh [brush] en' dust; en' I ain' never had no mind to touch it no time.

"Yes, mam, I been through a day since I come here. Erelong I move out Mary Jane Rowell's house, I been in white people house. If it ain' one class, it another. De very day dat Dr. Dibble been pronounce me to de hospital, dey come after me to wait on a woman.

"Oh, I tell you, it de God truth, I has done every kind of work in my life. Me en' my three chillun dere run a farm just like a man. Why, honey, you ain' know I had three girls? Yes, mam, dem chillun been born en' bred right dere in de country to Centenary.

"I hear people talkin' 'bout dat thing call conjurin', but I don' know what to say dat is. It somethin' I don' believe in. Don' never take up no time wid dat cause it de devil's work. Dat de olden talk, en' I don' think nothin' bout dat. Don' want nobody round me dat believes in it neither. Don' believe in it. Don' believe in it cause dat en' God spirit don' go together.

"I hear talk dat been belong to de devil; but I was so small, I couldn' realize much what to think 'cause dat what you hear in dem days, you better been hear passin'. No, mam, dey knock chillun down in dat day en' time dat dey see standin' up lookin' in dey eyes to hear.

"I has heard people say dat dey could see spirits, but I don' put no mind to dat no time. I believe dat just a imagination; 'cause when God get ready to take you out dis world, you is gone en' you gone forever. Don' believe in no hereafter neither cause dey say I been born

wid veil over my face en' if anybody could see spirits, I ought to could.

"I know I has stayed in houses dat people say was hanted plenty times, en' I got to see my first hant yet. Yes, mam, I do believe in de Bible. If I hadn' believed in de Bible, I wouldn' been saved.

"Dere obliged to be a hereafter accordin' to de Bible. I can' read, but I talkin' what I hear de people say. Dat a infidel what don' believe dere a hereafter.

"How come I know all dat, I was raise up wid de old people. Come along right behind de old race, en' I would be dere listenin' widout no ears en seein' widout no eyes. Yes, mam, I took what I hear in, lady, en' I ain' been just now come here. I been here a time. Dat de reason I done wid de world. God knows I is done. I is done.

"I recollects, way back yonder, Pa would sing:

'Dey ain' had no eyes for to see,

Dey ain' had no teeth for to eat,

En' dey had to let de corncake go,

Whe' all de good niggers go.'"

"Dat was my father's piece dat he used to sing in slavery time. I can remember back more den I can forward."

Indians as Slaves and Slave Owners

Slavery didn't belong to one people alone.

Anna Baker, Aberdeen, Mississippi, age 80

"I don't recollect what my ma's mammy an' pappy was named, but I know dat her pappy was a full blooded Injun. (I guess dat is where I gits my brown color.) Her mammy was a full blooded African though, a great big woman.

"I recollect a tale my mammy tol' me 'bout my gran'pa. When he took up wid my gran'mammy, de white man what owned her say, 'If you want to stay wid her, I'll give you a home if you'll work for me lak de Niggers do.' He 'greed, 'cause he thought a heap o' his Black Woman. (Dat's what he called her.)

"Ever'thing was all right 'til one o' dem uppity overseers tried to act smart. He say he gwine a-beat him. My gran'pappy went home dat night an' barred de door. When de overseer an' some o' his frien's come after him, he say he aint gwine a-open dat door. Dey say if he don't dey gwine a-break it in. He tell 'em to go 'head.

"Whilst dey was a-breakin' in, he filled a shovel full o' red hot coals; an' when dey come in, he th'owed it at 'em. Den whilst dey was a-hollerin', he run away. He ain't never been seen again to dis good day. I'se hear'd since den dat white folks learnt dat if dey started to whip a Injun dey'd better kill him right den or else he might git dem."

Joseph Samuel Badgett, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 72

"My mother had Indian in her. She would fight. She was the pet of the people. When she was out, the pateroles [Patrollers] would whip her because she didn't have a pass. She has showed me scars that were on her even till the day that she died. She was whipped because she was out without a pass. She could have had a pass any time for the asking, but she was too proud to ask. She never wanted to do things by permission."

Phoebe Banks, Muskogee, Oklahoma, age 78

- Uncle Jacob say he killed many a man during the war, and showed me the musket and sword he used to fight with. He said he didn't shoot the women and children--just whack their heads off with the sword, and almost could I see the blood dripping from the point!

"I was born October 17, 1860, on Mose Perryman's place," Phoebe Banks said.

"That was up the Arkansas River where the Creek Indian town of Sodom used to be."

Her mother, Eldee, belonged to Perryman, a well-known Creek Indian whose younger brother Legus was made the big chief of the Creeks in 1887. Her father, William McIntosh, belonged to another powerful Creek family named McIntosh. The family had twelve children.

Oklahoma wasn't yet a state. It was "Indian Territory."

"The Perryman slave cabins was all alike--just two-room log cabins, with a fireplace where mother do the cooking for us children at night after she get through working in the Master's house. Mother was the house girl--cooking, waiting on the table, cleaning the house, spinning the yarn, knitting some of the winter clothes, taking care of the mistress girl, washing the clothes--yes, she was always busy and worked mighty hard all the time, while them Indians wouldn't hardly do nothing for themselves.

"On the McIntosh plantation, my daddy said there was a big number of slaves and lots of slave children. The slave men work in the fields, chopping cotton, raising corn, cutting rails for the fences, building log cabins and fireplaces. One time when father was cutting down a tree it fell on him and after that he was only strong enough to rub down the horses and do light work around the yard. He got to be a good horse trainer and long time after slavery he helped to train horses for the Free Fairs around the country, and I suppose the first money he ever earned was made that way.

"Lots of the slave owners didn't want their slaves to learn reading and writing, but the Perrymans didn't care; they even helped the younger slaves with that stuff. Mother said her master didn't care much what the slaves do; he was so lazy he didn't care for nothing.

"They tell me about the war times, and that's all I remember of it. Before the War was over some of the Perryman slaves and some from the McIntosh place fix up to run away from their masters. My father and my uncle, Jacob Perryman, was some of the fixers. Some of the other Creeks was friendly to the North and was fixing to get away up there. That's the ones my daddy and uncle was fixing to join, for they was afraid their masters would take up and move to Texas before they could get away.

"Then long before morning lighten the sky, the men hurry and sling the camp kettles across the pack horses, tie the littlest children to the horses backs and get on the move farther into the mountains. They kept moving fast as they could, but the wagons made it mighty slow in the brush and the lowland swamps, so just about the time they ready to ford another creek, the Indian soldiers catch up and the fighting begin all over again.

"Dead all over the hills when we get away. Some of the Negroes shot and wounded so bad the blood run down the saddle skirts, and some fall off their horses miles from the battle ground, and lay still on the ground.

"Daddy and Uncle Jacob keep our family together somehow and head across the line into Kansas. We all get to Fort Scott where there was a big army camp. Daddy work in the blacksmith shop, and Uncle Jacob join with the Northern soldiers to fight against the South. He come through the war and live to tell me about the fighting he been in.

"He went with the soldiers down around Fort Gibson where they fight the Indians who stayed with the South. Uncle Jacob say he killed many a man during the war, and showed me the musket and sword he used to fight with. He said he didn't shoot the women and children--just whack their heads off with the sword, and almost could I see the blood dripping from the point! It made me scared at his stories.

"The captain of this company want his men to be brave and not get scared, so before the fighting start he put out a tub of white liquor (corn whiskey) and steam them up so's they'd be mean enough to whip their grannie! The soldiers do lots of riding and the saddle-sores get so bad they grease their body every night with snake oil so's they could keep going on.

"Uncle Jacob said the biggest battle was at Honey Springs [1863]. That was down near Elk Creek, close by Checotah, below Rentiersville, Oklahoma. He said it was the most terrible fighting he seen, but the Union soldiers whipped them and went back into Fort Gibson. The Rebels was chased all over the country and couldn't find each other for a long time, the way he tell it."

After the war the family settled at Fort Gibson.

Phoebe later married Tom Banks. The child she raised wasn't her own by birth. "I found him on my doorstep when he was about three weeks old," she said. "I raised him like he was my own blood." He went to the manual training school at Tullahassee, Oklahoma. The education he got "get him a teacher job, where he is now."

Lucinda Davis, Tulsa, Oklahoma about 89

- When a man find one his women—his wife or one of his daughters—been to de woods, he catch her and beat her and cut off de rim of her ears!

"I belong to a full-blood Creek Indian and I didn't know nothing but Creek talk long after de Civil War. My mistress was part white and knowed English talk, but she never did talk it because none of de people talked it. I heard it sometime, but it sound like whole lot of wild

shoat [young pigs] in de cedar brake scared at something.

"I don't know where I been born. Nobody never did tell me. But my mammy and pappy git me after de War and I know den whose child I is. De men at de Creek Agency help 'em git me, I reckon, maybe.

"When I was a little girl, and I belong to old Tuskaya-hiniha. I don't know if he have a white name. Maybe he have another Indian name, too, because Tuskaya-hiniha mean 'head man warrior' in Creek, but dat what everybody call him and dat what de family call him, too.

"He had a purty good size farm, jest a little bit to de north of de wagon depot houses on de old road at Honey Springs." [That was about two miles south of the Elk River and twenty-five miles south of Fort Gibson.]

"My Mistress' name was Nancy. Her pappy name was Lott, and he was purty near white, maybe all white. Dey have two chillun, but only one, Luwina, stayed on de place. Her husband was dead. She had a little baby boy. Dat de reason old Master buy me, to look after de little baby boy.

"Before de War, old Master had 'bout as many slaves as I got fingers, but I can't recollect de names. Dey call all de slaves 'Istilusti.' Dat mean 'black man.'

"Old man Tuskaya-hiniha was near 'bout blind before de War, and 'bout time of de War he go plumb blind and have to set on de long seat under de brush shelter of de house all de time. Sometime I lead him around de yard a little, but not very much. Dat about de time all de slave begin to slip out and run off.

"My own pappy was name Stephany. I think he take dat name 'cause when he little his mammy call him *Istifani*. Dat mean a skeleton. He was a skinny man. He belong to de Grayson family and I think his master name George. Dey big people in de Creek, and with de white folks too. My mammy name was Serena and she belong to some of de Gouge family. Dey was big people in de Upper Creek, and one de biggest men of the Gouge was named Hopoethleyoholo. He was a big man. He went to de North in de War and died up in Kansas, I think. Dey say when he was a little boy he was called *Hopoethli*, which mean "good little boy." When he was grown up, he made big speeches and they called him *Yoholo*, which meant "loud whooper."

"Dat de way de Creek made de name for young boys and big men. If he make lots of jokes dey call him *Hadjo*. If he is a good leader, dey call him *Imala*. And if he kind of mean dey sometime call him *Fixigo*."

"My mammy and pappy belong to two masters, but dey live together on a place. Dat de way de Creek slaves do lots of times. Dey work patches and give de masters most all dey make, but dey have some for demselves. Dey didn't have to stay on de master's place and work like I hear de slaves of de white people and de Cherokee and Choctaw people say dey had to do.

"Maybe my pappy and mammy run off and git free, or maybe dey buy demselves out, but anyway dey move away and my mammy's master sell me to old man Tuskaya-hiniha when I was jest a little gal. All I have to do is stay at de house and mind de baby, called *Istidji*—*little man*."

The master had "a good log house and a brush shelter in front like all de houses had. "Only it had de dirt for de flo' and brush for de roof. Dey cook everything out in de yard in big pots, and dey eat out in de yard, too.

"Dat was sho' good stuff to eat, and it make you fat too! Roast de green corn on de ears in de ashes, and scrape off some and fry it! Grind de dry corn or pound it up and make ash cake. Den bile de greens—all kinds of greens from out in de woods—and chop up de pork and de deer meat, or de wild turkey meat; maybe all of dem, in de big pot at de same time! Fish too, and de big turtle dat lay out on de bank!

"Dey always have a pot full of *sofki* settin' right inside de house, and anybody eat when dey feel hungry. Anybody come on a visit, always give 'em some of de *sofki*. Ef dey don't take none, de old man git mad, too! When you make de *sofki* you pound up de corn real fine, den pour in de water an dreem it off to git all de little skin from off'n de grain. Den you let de grits soak and den bile it and let it stand. Sometime you put in some pounded hickory nut meats. Dat make it real good.

"Dat place was on de big road, what we called de road to Texas, but it go all de way up to de North, too. De traders stop at Honey Springs, and old Master trade corn for what he want. He git some purty checkedy cloth one time, and everybody git a dress or a shirt made off'n it. I have dat dress 'till I git too big for it.

"Everybody dress up fine when dey is a funeral. Dey take me along to mind de baby at two-three funerals, but I don't know who it is dat die. De Creek sho' take on when somebody die! Long in de night you wake up and hear a gun go off, way off yonder somewhar. Den it go again, and den again, jest as fast as dey can ram de load in.

"When somebody die, de men go out in de yard and let de people know dat way. Den dey jest go back in de house and don't even touch de dead person till somebody git dar what has de right to touch de dead.

"When somebody bad sick dey build a fire in de house, even in de summer, and don't let it die down till dat person git well or die. When dey die, dey let de fire go out.

"In de morning everybody dress up fine and go to de house whar de dead is and stand around in de yard outside de house and don't go in. Pretty soon along come somebody what got a right to handle de dead and dey go in. Dey has to drink de red root and purge good before dey touch de body. When dey git de body ready, dey come out and all go to de graveyard, mostly de family graveyard, right on de place or at some of de kinfolkses.

"When dey git to de grave somebody shoots a gun at de north, den de west, den de south, and den de east. Iffen dey had four guns dey used 'em.

Den dey put de body down in de grave and put some extra clothes in with it and some food and a cup of coffee, maybe. Den dey takes strips of elm bark and lays dem over de body till it all covered up, and den throw in de dirt.

"When de last dirt throwed on, everybody must clap dey hands and smile, but you sho' hadn't better step on any of de new dirt around de grave, because dat bring sickness right along wid you back to your own house.

"Jest soon as de grave filled up, dey built a little shelter over it wid poles like a pig pen and cover it over wid elm bark to keep de rain from soaking down in de new dirt.

"Den everybody go back to de house and de family go in and scatter some kind of medicine 'round de place and build a new fire. Sometimes dey feed everybody befo' dey all leave for home.

"Every time dey have a funeral dey always a lot of de people say, 'Didn't you hear de *stikini* squalling in de night?' De *stikini* is de screech owl. He suppose to tell when anybody going to die. I hear lots of Creek people say dey hear de screech owl close to de house, and sho' nuff somebody in de family die soon.

"When de big battle come at our place at Honey Springs dey jest git through having de green corn busk [harvest festival] . Dat was jest a little busk. Dey wasn't enough men around to have a good one. But I seen lots of big ones. Ones whar dey had all de different kinds of dances. De chicken dance is de *Tolosabanga*, and de *Stifanibanga* is de one whar dey make lak dey is skeletons and raw heads coming to git you. In de *Hadjobanga* dey all dance crazy and everybody make up funny songs to sing wid de dance, and everybody whoop and laugh all de time.

"De worse one was de drunk dance. Dey dance ever whichaway, de men and de women together, and dey wrassle and hug and carry on awful! De good people don't dance dat one.

Everybody sing about going to somebody else's house and sleeping wid dem, and shout things like, 'We is all drunk, and we don't know what we doing, and we ain't doing wrong 'cause we is all drunk.' Sometime de bad ones leave and go to de woods, too!

"Dat kind of doing make de good people mad, and sometime dey have killings about it. When a man find one his women—his wife or one of his daughters—been to de woods, he catch her and beat her and cut off de rim of her ears!

"I was combing somebody's hair one time, and when I lift it up off'n her ears de rims were cut right off'n 'em! But she was a married woman, so maybe it happen when she was a young gal and got into it at one of dem drunk dances.

"I never forgit de day dat battle of de Civil War happen at Honey Springs! Old Master jest had de green corn all in, and us had been having a time gitting it in, too—jest de women, 'cause de men slaves had all slipped off and left. My uncle Abe done got up a bunch and gone to de North wid dem to fight, but I didn't know den whar he went. He was in dat same battle. After de War, dey called him Abe Colonel.

"We had a big tree in de yard, and a grape vine swing in it for de little baby *Istidji*. I was swinging him in de morning befo' de sun up. De house set in a little patch of woods wid de field in de back, and on de north side was a little open space, like a kind of prairie. I was swinging de baby, and all at once I seen somebody riding dis way 'cross dat prairie--jest coming a-kiting and a-laying flat out on his hoss. When he see de house he begin to give de war whoop, "Eya-a-a-a-he-ah!" When he git close to de house he holler to git out de way 'cause dey gwine be a big fight, and old Master start rapping wid his cane and yelling to git some grub and blankets in de wagon right now!

"We leave everything setting right whar it is, 'cepting putting out de fire and grabbing all de pots and kettles. Some de nigger women run to git de mules and de wagon and some start gitting meat and corn out of de place whar we done hid it to keep de scouters from finding it befo' now. All de time we gitting ready to travel we hear dat boy on dat horse going on down de big Texas road hollering. "Eya-a-a-he-he-hah!"

"Den jest as we starting to leave, here come something across dat little prairie, sho' nuff! We know dey is Indians de way dey is riding, and de way dey is all strung out. Dey had a flag, and it was all red and had a big criss-cross on it dat look lak a saw horse. De man carry it, and de horse rear back when de wind whip it, and it flap all 'round de horse's head and de horse pitch lak he know something going happen, sho!

"'Bout dat time it turn dark and begin to rain, and we git out to de big road and de rain come down hard. It rain so hard dat we have to stop de wagon and set dar. Den long come more

soldiers dan I ever see' befo'. Dey all white men, I think, and dey have on brown clothes dyed wid walnut and butternut; and old Master say dey Confederate soldiers. Dey dragging some big guns on wheels, and most de men slopping 'long in de rain on foot.

"Den we hear de fighting up to de north 'long about what de river is, and de guns sound lak horses loping 'cross a plank bridge way off somewhar. De head men start hollering and some de horses start rearing and de soldiers start trotting faster up de road. We can't git out on de road so we jest strike off through de prairie and make for a creek dat got high banks and a place on it we call Rocky Cliff.

"We git in a big cave in dat cliff, and spend de whole day and dat night in dar, and listen to de battle going on.

"Dat place was about half-a-mile from de wagon depot at Honey Springs, and a little east of it. We can hear de guns going all day, and in de evening here come de South side making for a getaway. Dey come riding and running by whar we is, and it don't make no difference how much de head men hollers at 'em, dey can't make dat bunch slow up and stop.

"After while, here come de Yankees, right after 'em, and dey goes on into Honey Springs ,and pretty soon we see dey is burning de wagon depot and de houses.

"De next morning we goes back to de our house and find de soldiers ain't hurt nothing much. De hogs is whar dey is in de pen, and de chickens come cackling 'round too. Dem soldiers going so fast dey didn't have no time to stop and take nothing, I reckon.

"Den long come lots of de Yankee soldiers going back to de North, and dey looks purty wore out, but dey is laughing and joshing and going on.

"Old Master pack up de wagon wid everything he can carry den, and we strike out down de big road to git out de way of any more war, if dey going be any.

"Dat old Texas road jest crowded wid wagons! Everybody doing de same thing we is, and de rains done made de road so muddy and de soldiers done torn up de mud so bad dat de wagons git stuck all de time.

"De people all moving along in bunches, and every little while one bunch of wagons come up wid another bunch all stuck in de mud, and dey put all de horses and mules on together and pull em out, and den dey go on together awhile.

"After while we come to Canadian Town. South soldiers got in dar ahead of us and took up all de houses to sleep in. And dey was singing at de camp. I couldn't understand what dey sing, and I asked a Creek man what dey say, and he tell me dey sing, "I wish I was in Dixie,

look away, look away."

"I ask him whar dat is, and he laugh and talk to de soldiers, and dey all laugh, and make me mad.

"De next morning we leave dat town and git to de big river. De rain make de river rise. I never see so much water! Dey got some boats we put de stuff on, and float de wagons and swim de mules and finally git across, but it look lak we gwine all drown.

"Most de folks say dey going to Boggy Depot and around Fort Washita, but old Master strike off by hisself and go way down in de bottom somewhar to live. Dey been some kind of fighting all around dar, 'cause we camp in houses and cabins all de time and nobody live in any of 'em. Look like de people all git away quick, 'cause all de stuff was in de houses.

"Dem Indian soldiers jest quit de army and lots went scouting in little bunches and took everything dey find. Iffen somebody try to stop, dem dey git killed.

"Sometime we find graves in de yard whar somebody jest been buried fresh. One house had some dead people in it when old Mistress poke her head in it. We git away from dar, and no mistake!

"By and by we find a little cabin and stop and stay. I was de only slave by den. All de others done slip out and run off. We stay dar two year I reckon, 'cause we make two little crop of corn. For meat a man name Mr. Walker who was wid us went out in de woods and shoot de wild hogs. And dey was lots of fish in de holes whar he could sicken 'em wid buck root and catch 'em wid his hands.

"I don't know when de War quit off, and when I git free, but I stayed wid old man Tuskaya-hiniha long time after I was free. I was jest a little girl, and he didn't know whar to send me to, anyways.

"One day three men rid up and talk to de old man awhile in English talk. Den he called me and tell me to go wid dem to find my own family. He jest laugh and slap my behind and set me up on de horse in front of one de men and dey take me off and leave my good checkedy dress at de house!

"Before long we git to dat Canadian river again. De men tied me on de horse so I can't fall off. Dar was all dat water, and dey ain't no boat, and dey ain't no bridge, and we jest swim de horses. I knowed sho' I was going to be gone dat time, but we git across.

"When we come to de Creek Agency, dar is my pappy and my mammy to claim me. I live wid dem in de Verdigris bottom above Fort Gibson till I is grown, and dey is both dead. Den I

marries Anderson Davis at Gibson Station, and we git our allotments on de Verdigris east and south of Tulsa close to Broken Arrow.

"I had lots of children, but only two is alive now. My boy Anderson got in a mess and went to dat McAlester prison, but he got to be a trusty and dey let him marry a good woman dat got lots of property dar, and dey living all right now.

"When my old man die, I come to live here wid Josephine. I'se blind now and can't see nothing, and all de noises in de town pesters me. And de children is all so ill mannered, too. Dey jest holler at you all de time! Dey don't mind you neither!

"When I could see and had my own younguns, I could set in de corner and tell 'em what to do; and iffen dey didn't do it right, I could whack 'em on de head, 'cause dey was raised de old Creek way, and dey know de old folks know de best!"

Frank Berry, Jacksonville, Florida, born 1858

Frank Berry claimed to be a grandson of Osceola (1804-1838), last fighting chief of the Seminole tribe. During the Seminole War, Frank's grandmother, a slave serving as a nurse at Tampa Bay, was captured by the Indians and became the squaw of Ocoola. She was later re-captured by her owners.

According to Frank, Indians often captured slave women or helped them escape and almost always intermarried with them. Indians were credited with inciting uprisings and wholesale escapes of slaves.

Frank's mother was a slave of the Hearnises of Alachua County in Florida.

Country frolics [dances] were quite often attended by Indians, who wanted whiskey. Berry described an intoxicated Indian as a "tornado mad man" and recalled a hair-raising and tragic incident.

At one of these frolics at Fort Myers, a drunken Indian bullied the Negroes and tried to pick fights with them. Frank's uncle, "Big Charlie," challenged that drunk and made a quick end to him by breaking his neck at one blow. For two years, Charlie was hounded by revengeful Indians. They had an uncanny way of tracking him down, no matter where he went. When he'd spotted them while working in the fields, he'd flee. Eventually, he was forced to move several states away.

Frank recalled Reconstruction times, when Negroes held high political offices in the state of Florida and as tradesmen and professionals competed successfully with whites and built fortunes. Frank, now little more than a beggar, was one of those.

He served as a state and federal government contractor, U.S. marshal (1881), and registration inspector (1879).

The interviewer noted that despite his reduced circumstances, Frank "manages still to make one think of top hats and state affairs. Although small of stature and almost disabled by rheumatism, he has the fiery dignity and straight back that we associate with men who have ruled others."

Joanna Draper, Tulsa, Oklahoma, age 83

- I never will forgive that white man for not telling me I was free, and not helping me to git back to my mammy and pappy! Lots of white people done that.

"Most folks can't remember many things happened to 'em when they only eight years old, but one of my biggest tribulations come about dat time and I never will forget it! That was when I was took away from my own mammy and pappy and sent off and bound out [contracted to work for a specified period] to another man , way off two, three hundred miles away from whar I live. And dat's the last time I ever see either one of them, or any my own kinfolks!"

Joanna Draper was born near Hazlehurst, Mississippi, close to the Pearl River, on a new plantation that her master Dr. Alexander, bought when he moved to Mississippi from Virginia before the War.

"I was born jest right after my mammy got there." Her mother's name was Margaret. When she was born she belonged to Dave Ramson, who had settled with his father in Tennessee, and he had known Dr. Alexander in Tennessee and before that in Virginia.

"My pappy's name was Addison. He always belonged to Dr. Alexander. Old doctor bought my mammy 'cause my pappy liked her."

"When I is about six year old they take me into the Big House to learn to be a house woman, and they show me how to cook and clean up and take care of babies. That Big House wasn't very fine, but it was mighty big and cool, and made out of logs with a big hall, but it didn't have no long gallery like most the houses around there had.

"They was lots of big trees in the yard, and most the ground was new ground 'cause the Old Doctor jest started farming on it. But he had some more places not so far away, over towards the river that was old ground and made big crops for him. He had about a hundred slaves.

"At Old Doctor's house I didn't have to work very hard. Jest had to help the cooks and peel the potatoes and pick the guineas and chickens and do things like that. Sometime I had to watch the baby. He was a little boy, and they would bring him into the kitchen for me to watch. I had to git up way before daylight and make the fire in the kitchen fireplace and bring in some fresh water, and go get the milk what been down in the spring all night, and do things like that until breakfast ready. Old Master and old Mistress come in the big hall to eat in the summer, and I stand behind them and shoo off the flies.

"Old Doctor didn't have no spinning and weaving niggers 'cause he say they don't do enough work. He bought all the cloth he used for everybody's clothes. "He can do that 'cause he was big rich, and keep a whole lot of hard money in the house all the time.

"Sometimes I would have the baby in the Mistress' room and she would go git three or four big wood boxes full of hard money for us to play with. I would make fences out of the money all across the floor, to keep the baby satisfied, and when he go to sleep I would put the money back in the boxes.

"They made him a high officer in the War and he done doctoring somewhar at a hospital most of the time. But he could go on both sides of the War, and sometime he would come in at night and bring old Mistress pretty little things, and I heard him tell her he got them in the North.

"One day I was fanning him, and I asked him if he been to the North, and he tell to shut up my black mouth. And it nearly scared me to death the way he look at me! Nearly every time he been gone and come in and tell Mistress he been in the North, he have a lot more hard money to put away in them boxes, too!

"One evening long come a man and eat supper at the house and stay all night. He was a nice-mannered man, and I like to wait on him. The next morning I hear him ask Old Doctor what is my name, and Old Doctor start in to try to sell me to that man. The man say he can't buy me 'cause Old Doctor say he want a thousand dollars, and then Old Doctor say he will bind me out to him.

"I run away from the house and went out to the cabin whar my mammy and pappy was, but they tell me to go on back to the Big House 'cause maybe I am just scared. But Old Doctor make me go with the man. We go in his buggy a long ways off to the South, and after he stop two or three night at people's houses and put me out to stay with the niggers, he come to his own house. I ask him how far it is back home and he say about a hundred miles or more, and laugh, and ask me if I know how far that is.

"I wants to know if I can go back to my mammy some time, and he say "Sho', of course you

can, some of these times. You don't belong to me, Jo. I'se jest your boss and not your master."

"He live in a big old rottendy house, but he ain't farming none of the land. Jest as soon as he git home he go off again, and sometimes he only come in at night for a little while.

"His wife's name was Kate and his name was Mr. John Deeson. They had two children, a girl about my size named Joanna like me, and a little baby boy named Johnny. One day Mistress Kate tell me I the only nigger they got. I been thinking maybe they had some somewhar on a plantation, but she say they ain't got no plantation and they ain't been at that place very long either.

That little girl and me kind of take up together. She was a mighty nice-mannered little girl. Her mammy raised her good. Her mammy was mighty sickly all the time. That's the reason they bound me to do the work."

Mr. John was in some kind of business in the War too. But she only saw him in "soldier clothes" once. "One night he come in with them on, but the next morning he come to breakfast in jest his plain clothes again. Then he go off again."

"I sho' had a hard row at that house. It was old and rackady, and I had to scrub off the staircase and the floors all the time, and git the breakfast for Mistress Kate and the two children. Then I could have my own breakfast in the kitchen. Mistress Kate always git the supper, though. Some days she go off with the two children and leave me at the house all day by myself, and I think maybe I run off, but I didn't know whar to go.

"After I been at that place two years Mr. John come home and stay. Then he done some kind of trading in Jackson, Mississippi, and he would be gone three or four days at a time, but I never did know what kind of trading it was.

"About the time he come home to stay I seen the first Ku Klux I ever seen. I was going down the road in the moonlight, and I heard a hog grunting out in the bushes at the side of the road. I jest walk right on and in a little ways I hear another hog in some more bushes. This time I stop and listen, and they's another hog grunts across the road, and about that time two mens dressed up in long white skirts steps out into the road in front of me! I was so scared the goose bumps jump up all over me 'cause I didn't know what they is! They didn't say a word to me, but jest walked on past me and went on back the way I had come. Then I see two more mens step out of the woods and I run from that as fast as I can go!

"I ast' Miss Kate what they is and she say they Ku Klux, and I better not go walking off down the road any more. I seen them two, three times after that, though, but they was riding

hosses them times.

"I stayed at Mr. John's place two more years, and he got so grumpy and his wife got so mean I make up my mind to run off. I bundle up my clothes in a little bundle and hide them, and then I wait until Miss Kate take the children and go off somewhere, and I light out on foot. I had me a piece of hard money what Master Dr. Alexander had give me one time at Christmas. I had kept it all that time and nobody knowed I had it, not even Joanna. Old Doctor told me it was fifty dollars, and I thought I could live on it for a while.

"I never had been away from that place, not even to another plantation in all the four years I was with the Deesons, and I didn't know which-a-way to go, so I jest started west.

"I been walking about all evening it seem like, and I come to a little town with jest a few houses. I see a nigger man and ask him whar I can git something to eat, and I say I got fifty dollars.

"'What you doing wid fifty dollars, child? Where you belong at, anyhow?' he ask me. And I tell him I belong to Master John Deeson, but I is running away. I explain that I jest bound out to Mr. John, but Dr. Alexander my real master, and then that man tell me the first time I knowed it that I ain't a slave no more!

"That man Deeson never did tell me, and his wife never did!

"Well, dat man asked me about the fifty dollars, and then I found out that it was jest fifty cents!

"I don't know why I never did try to git back up around Hazelhurst and hunt up my pappy and mammy, but I reckon I was jest ignorant and didn't know how to go about it. Anyways I never did see them no more.

"In about three years or a little over I met Bryce Draper on a farm in Mississippi, and we was married. His mammy had had a harder time than I had. She had five children by a man that belonged to her master, Mr. Bryce. She named one of the boys—my husband—Bryce after him. Then Mr. Bryce sold her off, away from all her children. One was of those children was just a little baby. The master gave it laudanum, but it didn't die.

When Mr. Bryce sold her off, he lied saying she didn't have a husband, because Draper, the man who bought her didn't want to take a woman away from a family.

The last year of the War, Mr. Draper died. His wife was already dead. He left his farm to his two slaves and set them free. "One of those slaves was my husband's mammy."

"Then right away the whites come and robbed the place of everything they could haul off,

and run his mammy and the other niggers off! Then she went and found her boy, that was my husband, and he lived with her until she died, jest before we is married.

"We lived in Mississippi a long time, and then we hear about how they better to the Negroes up in the North, and we go up to Kansas, but they ain't no better there, and we come down to Indian Territory in the Creek Nation in 1898.

"We leased a little farm from the Creek Nation for \$15 an acre. Then we rented 100 acres from some Indians close to Wagoner, and we farm it all with my family." And they had enough children to do that: John, Joe, Henry, Jim, Robert, and Will were big enough to work; as were the girls Mary, Nellie, Izora, and Dora.

"I lives with Dora now, and we is all happy, and I don't like to talk about the days of the slavery times, 'cause they never did mean nothing to me but misery, from the time I was eight years old.

"I never will forgive that white man for not telling me I was free, and not helping me to git back to my mammy and pappy! Lots of white people done that."

George Patterson, Spartanburg, South Carolina, age unknown

When the interviewer found him, George Patterson was helping his wife with the washing, stepping lively, carrying and emptying pots of water. When the chores were done, he invited the visitor to the front porch where he could sit quiet and talk.

He said he was old enough during the Civil War to serve food to soldiers who came to his master's home at Kilgore's Bridge. His duty in slavery was to wait on white folks and watch the plantation.

His father was a full-blooded Indian who was sold to his master by Joe Crews, the biggest slave trader in the country. He had been stolen somewhere in Mississippi, along with other Indians. Crews marched them, together with niggers he had stolen or traded for, from Mississippi to South Carolina. He drove them like cattle, stopping at plantations to sell them into slavery.

His mother was a white woman who came from Ireland and was working on the Patterson farm. She was not a slave, but was married to his father by his "Marster."

The whole family of 18 children and parents lived in a one-story, one-room log cabin with a dirt floor. They were comfortable, however, and all had good health. He said he hadn't been sick for fifty years; and the only trouble with him now was a broken foot, the result of a railroad wreck about forty years ago. His foot still gave him trouble in bad weather.

He said that most plantations in slavery times kept a variety of dogs, each trained for a certain kind of tracking. He used to train the "nigger" dogs which were used to track slaves who had run away from the plantation. He had two dogs that were sure never to lose the scent when they had taken it up. "If I put them on your track here and you went to Greenville, they would track you right to Greenville."

During the Civil War and afterwards, when the owners of plantations in the Enoree River section had a surplus of peaches and apples, they made apple and peach brandy. After they had filled kegs with it, they rolled the kegs into a pond to keep them from leaking until they were either sold or taken out for personal use.

Back in slavery days, a man could hunt on his own place and get plenty of game—wild hogs, wild turkeys, rabbits, and squirrels. He was often sent out to scare wild turkeys away from the crops. Anybody was at liberty to shoot the wild hogs that roamed the woods. Some hogs had tusks six inches long, and could tear a man to pieces. Of course, some tame hogs mingled with the wild ones but the tame hogs had the owner's name on them, and you had to be careful not to shoot a marked hog. Cattle, too, ran wild and were dangerous.

George's father followed his master to the war and drove artillery wagons. At Appomattox, he drove wagons over dead soldiers piled in ditches. He lived to be 111 years old.

After he and his father were set free, they remained with Mr. Patterson to help him make that year's crops; then they moved to another place.

He heard that work was plentiful in Spartanburg, so he moved here. He said that he isn't as strong as he used to be, but that he can still do a full day's work, except when his foot troubles him.

Nathan Beauchamp, Eufaula, Alabama

"Hello, Uncle Nathan," I called.

"Mornin', white folks," he answered, as he discontinued his spading and raised his hand in a friendly gesture.

"I'd like to have a brief chat with you about slavery days, if you can spare a few minutes from your garden."

"Yassuh, boss," he said. "I'll tell you a story of my mammy an' pappy.

"Nathan Beauchamp, my pappy, belonged to Massa Green Beauchamp at White Oak Springs, near Eufaula. Massa Green was a member of de legislature when de capital was at Tuscaloosy. He had many a acre of land an' hund'eds of slaves.

"Pappy use to drike de wagon in to Eufaula to git supplies, an' on de way he would meet up wid an Injun gal a-carryin' big baskets dat she was a goin' to sell dere. He would ask her iffen she wanted to ride, an' she always say yes.

"So one day pappy came to de massa and tell him dat dere was an Injun gal on de St. Francis Indian Village dat he wanted fo' a wife, an' de boss say all right; so pappy married de Indian gal.

"Her name was Mimi. So I is half nigger an half Injun.

"My mammy died 'bout five year after freedom, but I can remembers dat she had long black hair, and I remembers de way de sun sparkle on her teeth when she smile.

"Atter she married pappy, she still carried her pretty baskets to Eufaula to sell. Sometime she walk all de way dere and back, twenty fo' miles."

Kiziah Love, Colbert, Oklahoma, age 93

"Frank Colbert, a full blood Choctaw Indian, was my owner. He owned my mother but I don't remember much about my father. He died when I was a little youngun. My Mistress' name was Julie Colbert. She and Master Frank Colbert was de best folks that ever lived. All the niggers loved Master Frank and knowed jest what he wanted done and they tried their best to do it, too.

"I married Isom Love, a slave of Sam Love, another full-blood Indian that lived on a ginning farm [one that processes harvested seed cotton]. We lived on Master Frank's farm and Isom went back and forth to work fer his master and I worked ever day fer mine. I don't 'spect we could of done that way iffen we hadn't of had Indian masters. They let us do a lot like we pleased jest so we got our work done and didn't run off.

"Old Master Frank never worked us hard, and we had plenty of good food to eat. He never did like to put us under white overseers and never tried it but once. A white man come through here and stopped overnight. He looked 'round the farm and told Master Frank that he wasn't gitting half what he ought to out of his rich land. He said he could take his bunch of hands and double his amount of corn and cotton.

"Master Frank told him that he never used white overseers, that he had one nigger that bossed around some when he didn't do it hisself. He also told the white man that he had one nigger named Bill that was kind of bad, that he was a good worker but he didn't like to

be bothered as he liked to do his own work in his own way. The white boss told him he wouldn't have any trouble and that he could handle him all right.

"Old Master hired him and things went very well for a few days. He hadn't said anything to Bill and they had got along fine. I guess the new boss got to thinking it was time for him to take Bill in hand, so one morning he told him to hitch up another team before he caught his own team to go to work.

"Uncle Bill told him that he didn't have time, that he had a lot of plowing to git done that morning and besides it was customary for every man to catch his own team. Of course, this made the overseer mad and he grabbed a stick and started cussing and run at Uncle Bill. Old Bill grabbed a single-tree and went meeting him. Dat white man all on a sudden turned 'round and run fer dear life and I tell you. He fairly bust old Red River wide open gitting away from there and nobody never did see hide nor hair of him 'round to this day.

"Master Colbert run a stage stand and a ferry on Red River and he didn't have much time to look after his farm and his niggers. He had lots of land and lots of slaves. His house was a big log house, three rooms on one side and three on the other, and there was a big open hall between them. There was a big gallery clean across the front of the house. Behind the house was the kitchen and the smokehouse. The smokehouse was always filled with plenty of good meat and lard.

"One of our choicest dishes was "Tom Pashofa", an Indian dish. We'd take corn and beat it in a mortar with a pestle. They took out the husks with a riddle and a fanner. The riddle was a kind of a sifter. When it was beat fine enough to go through the riddle we'd put it in a pot and cook it with fresh pork or beef. We cooked our bread in a Dutch oven or in the ashes.

"When we got sick we would take butterfly root and life-everlasting and boil it and made a syrup and take it for colds. Balmony and queen's delight boiled and mixed would make good blood medicine.

"The slaves lived in log cabins scattered back of the house. Master Frank wasn't afraid they'd run off. But he had a half-brother I believe was the meanest man the sun ever shined on. His name was Buck Colbert, and he claimed he was a patroller. He'd stop a nigger and ask him if he had a pass; and even if they did he'd tell them they had stayed over time, he'd beat 'em most to death. He'd say they didn't have any business off the farm, and to git back there and stay there.

"One time he got mad at his baby's nurse because she couldn't git the baby to stop crying, and he hit her on the head with some fire-tongs, and she died. Then his wife got sick, and she sent for me to come and take care of her baby. I sho' didn't want to go, and I begged so

hard for them not to make me that they sent an older woman who had a baby of her own so she could nurse the baby if necessary.

"In the night the baby woke up and got to crying, and Master Buck called the woman and told her to git him quiet. She was sleepy and was sort of slow, and this made Buck mad, and he made her strip her clothes off to her waist, and he began to whip her. His wife tried to git him to quit, and he told her he'd beat her iffen she didn't shut up. Sick as as she was, she slipped off and went to Master Frank's and woke him up and got him to go and make Buck quit whipping her. He had beat her so that she was cut up so bad she couldn't nurse her own baby any more.

"Master Buck kept on being bad till one day he got mad at one of his own brothers and killed him. This made another one of his brothers mad, and he went to his house and killed Master Buck. Everybody was glad that Buck was dead.

"We had lots of visitors. They'd stop at the stage inn that we kept. One morning I was cleaning the rooms and I found a piece of money in the bed where two men had slept. I thought it was a dime and I showed it to my mammy, and she told me it was a five dollar piece. I sho' was happy fer I had been wanting some hoops fer my skirts like Mistress had.

"When me and my husband got married we built us a log cabin about half-way from Master Frank's house and Master Sam's house. I would go to work at Master Frank's and Isom would go to work at Master Sam's. One day I was at home with jest my baby and a runner come by and said the Yankee soldiers was coming. I looked 'round and I knowed they would git my chickens. I had 'em in a pen right close to the house to keep the varmints from gitting 'em. So I decided to take up the boards in the floor and put 'em in there as the wall logs come to the ground, and they couldn't git out. By the time I got my chickens under the floor and the house locked tight, the soldiers had got so close I could hear their bugles blowing so I jest fairly flew over to old Master's house.

"Them Yankees clumb down the chimbley and got every one of my chickens and they killed about fifteen of Master Frank's hogs. Master Frank went down to their camp and told the captain about it and he paid him for his hogs and sent me some money for my chickens.

"One day Master Frank was going through the woods close to where niggers was having church. All on a sudden he started running and beating hisself and hollering, and the niggers all went to shouting and saying "Thank the Lawd, Master Frank has done come through!" Master Frank after a minute say, "Yes, through the worst of 'em." He had run into a yellow jacket's nest.

"One night my Isom's master sent him to Sherman, Texas. He aimed to come back that

night so I stayed at home with jest my baby. It went to sleep so I set down on the steps to wait and ever minute I thought I could hear Isom coming through the woods. All a sudden, I heard a scream that fairly made my hair stand up. My dog that was laying out in the yard give a low growl and come and set down right by me. He kept growling real low.

"Directly, right close to the house I heard that scream again. It sounded like a woman in mortal misery. I run into the house and made the dog stay outside. I locked the door and then thought what must I do. Supposing Isom did come home now and should meet that awful thing? I heard it again. It wasn't more'n a hundred yards from the house. The dog scratched on the door, but I dassent open it to let him in. I knowed by this time that it was a panther screaming. I turned my table over and put it against the opening of the fireplace. I didn't aim fer that thing to come down the chimbley and git us.

"Purty soon I heard it again a mite further away—it was going on by. I heard a gun fire. Thank God, I said, somebody else heard it and was shooting at it. I set there on the side of my bed fer the rest of the night with my baby in my arms and praying that Isom wouldn't come home. He didn't come till about nine o'clock the next morning, and I was that glad to see him that I jest cried and cried.

The funniest thing that ever happened to me was when I was a real young gal. Master and Miss Julie was going to see one of his sisters that was sick. I went along to take care of the baby fer Miss Julie. The baby was about a year old. I had a bag of clothes and the baby to carry. I was riding a pacing mule, and it was plumb gentle. I was riding along behind Master Frank and Miss Julie, and I went to sleep. I lost the bag of clothes and never missed it. Purty soon I let the baby slip out of my lap, and I don't know how far I went before I nearly fell off myself and jest think how I felt when I missed that baby! I turned around and went back and found the baby setting in the trail sort of crying. He wasn't hurt a mite as he fell in the grass. I got off the mule and picked him up and had to look fer a log so I could get back on again.

"Jest as I got back on, Master Frank rode up. He had missed me and come back to see what was wrong. I told him that I had lost the bag of clothes, but I didn't say anything about losing the baby. We never did find the clothes, and I sho' kept awake the rest of the way. I wasn't going to risk losing that precious baby again! I guess the reason he didn't cry much was because he was an Indian baby. He was sho' a sweet baby though.

"Jest before the War people would come through the Territory stealing niggers and selling 'em in the States. Us women dassent git fur from the house. We wouldn't even go to the spring if we happened to see a strange wagon or horsebacker. One of Master Sam Love's women was stole and sold down in Texas. After freedom she made her way back to her fambly. Master Frank sent one of my brothers to Sherman on an errand. After several days,

the mule come back but we never did see my brother again. We didn't know whether he run off or was stole and sold.

"I was glad to be free. What did I do and say? Well, I jest clapped my hands together and said, "Thank God Almighty, I'se free at last!"

"I live on the forty acres that the government give me. I have been blind for nine years and don't git off my bed much. I live here with my son, Ed. Isom has been dead for over forty years. I had fifteen children, but only ten of them are living."

Robert Solomon, Des Arc, Arkansaas, age 73

"My father was African. He was born in Atlanta. My mother was a Cherokee Indian. Her name was Alice Gamage. My father stole my mother one night. He couldn't understand them, and he was afraid of her people. He went back to Savannah.

"When I got up any size I asked my father all about him and my mother marrying. He said he knowed her 'bout two year 'fore they married. They sorter courted by signs. She was 'bout fifteen when she run away. I don't know if a preacher ever did marry 'em or not. My father said she was just so pretty he couldn't help lovin' her. He kept makin' signs and she made signs.

"They went from Georgia to the Indian Territory, where was born in 1864.

"My father was a farmer till freedom. He farmed around here and at Pine Bluff. He died at West Point. My mother and step-mother both died at Pine Bluff.

"There sho' is a fambly. My father had twenty-two in his fambly. My mother had five boys and three girls and me. My stepmother had fourteen more children. That's some fambly ain't it? All my brothers and sisters died when I was little and they was little. My father's other children jess somewhar down round Pine Bluff. I guess I'd know em but I ain't seed none of them in I don't know how long.

"The first work I ever done was saw-milling at Pine Bluff. Then I went down in Louziana, still saw-milling--I followed dat trade five or six years. Den I got to railroading. I was puttin' down cross ties and layin' steel. I got to be straw boss at dat. I worked at dat fifteen years in six different states. That was sho' fine livin'. We carried our train right along to live in. I married and went to farming.

"Then I come to work at this oil mill here in Des Arc. I didn't quit till it went down. I ain't had nothin' much to do since. I been carryin' water and wood fur Mrs. Norfleet twenty years and she cooks fur me now.

"My wife died 'bout a year ago. She been dead a year last January. She was sick a long time 'fore she died. Well the relief gives me a little to eat, some clothes and I gets \$5.00 a month. I takes it and buys my groceries and I takes it up to Mrs. Norfleet's. They says come there and eat. They sho' is good to me, 'cept I aint able to carry the wood up the steps much no more. It hurt me when I worked at the oil mill. I helped them 'bout the house all the time.

"The most money I ever has at one time was \$600. I did save it. I spent it on my girls' clothes and education. They went to the Catholic High School and then the college at Pine Bluff. One of my girls teaches school in St. Louis and de other at Hot Springs. No, they don't help me. They say it's all dey can do to get along. They never have told me how much they make.

"I votes the Republican ticket. The last I voted was for Hoover. Sure they have tried to change my way of voting, but I ain't goiner change. I ain't heard nothin' 'bout no restrictions 'bout votin'. If a woman wanten vote it's all right. My girls and my boy votes right along. They are all Republicans."

Charlie Davenport, Natchez, Mississippi, close to 100

"I's part Injun. I aint got no Nigger nose an' my hair is so long I has to keep it wrapped. I'se often heard my mammy was redish-lookin' wid long, straight, black hair. Her pa was a full blooded Choctaw an' mighty nigh as young as she was. I'se been tol' dat nobody dast [dared] meddle wid her. She didn' do much talkin', but she sho' was a good worker. My pappy had Injun blood, too, but his hair was kinky.

"De Choctaws lived all 'roun' Secon' Creek. Some of 'em had cabins lak settled folks. I can 'member dey las' chief. He was a tall pow'ful built man named 'Big Sam.' What he said was de law, 'cause he was de boss o' de whole tribe. One rainy night he was kilt in a saloon down in 'Natchez Under de Hill.' De Injuns went wild wid rage an' grief. Dey sung an' wailed an' done a heap o' low mutterin'. De sheriff kep' a steady watch on' em, 'cause he was afeared dey would do somethin' rash. After a long time he kinda let up in his vig'lance. Den one night some o' de Choctaw mens slipped in town an' stobbed [stabbed] de man dey b'lieved had kilt Big Sam. I 'members dat well.

George Fortman, Evansville, Indiana

"The story of my life, I will tell to you with sincerest respect to all and love to many, although reviewing the dark trail of my childhood and early youth causes me great pain."

So spoke George Fortman, an aged man and former slave, although the history of his life reveals that no Negro blood runs through his veins.

"My story necessarily begins by relating events which occurred in 1838, when hundreds of Indians were rounded up like cattle and driven away from the valley of the Wabash. It is a

well known fact recorded in the histories of Indiana that the long journey from the beautiful Wabash Valley was a horrible experience for the fleeing Indians, but I have the tradition as relating to my own family, and from this enforced flight ensued the tragedy of my birth."

The aged ex-slave reviews, "My great-grandparents, John Hawk, a Blackhawk Indian brave, and Racheal, a Chackatau maiden had made themselves a home such as only Indians know, understand and enjoy. He was a hunter and a fighter but had professed faith in Christ through the influence of the missionaries. My great-grandmother passed the facts on to her children and they have been handed down for four generations. I, in turn, have given the traditions to my children and grandchildren.

"No more peaceful home had ever offered itself to the red man than the beautiful valley of the Wabash River. Giant elms, sycamores and maple trees bordered the stream while the fertile valley was traversed with creeks and rills, furnishing water in abundance for use of the Indian campers.

"The Indians and the white settlers in the valley transacted business with each other and were friendly towards each other, as I have been told by my mother, Eliza, and my grandmother, Courtney Hawk.

"The missionaries often called the Indian families together for the purpose of teaching them. The Indians had been invited, prior to being driven from the valley, to a sort of festival in the woods. They had prepared much food for the occasion. The braves had gone on a long hunt to provide meat and the squaws had prepared much corn and other grain to be used at the feast. All the tribes had been invited to a council and the poor people were happy, not knowing they were being deceived.

"The decoy worked, for while the Indians were worshipping God, the meeting was rudely interrupted by orders of the Governor of the State. The Governor, whose duty it was to give protection to the poor souls, caused them to be taken captive and driven away at the point of swords and guns.

"In vain, my grandmother said, the Indians prayed to be let return to their homes. Instead of being given their liberty, some several hundred horses and ponies were captured to be used in transporting the Indians away from the valley. Many of the aged Indians and many innocent children died on the long journey. Traditional stories speak of that journey as the 'trail of death.'

"After long weeks of flight, when the homes of the Indians had been reduced to ashes, the long trail still carried them away from their beautiful valley. My greatgrandfather and his squaw became acquainted with a party of Indians that were going to the canebrakes

[thicket-like growth of cane plants] of Alabama. The pilgrims were not well fed or well clothed and they were glad to travel towards the south, believing the climate would be favorable to their health.

"After a long and dreary journey, the Indians reached Alabama. Rachael had her youngest papoose strapped on to her back while John had cared for the larger child, Lucy. Sometimes she had walked beside her father but often she had become weary or sleepy and he had carried her many miles of the journey, besides the weight of blankets and food. An older daughter, Courtney, also accompanied her parents.

"When they neared the cane lands they heard the songs of Negro slaves as they toiled in the cane. Soon they were in sight of the slave quarters of Patent George's plantation. The Negroes made the Indians welcome and the slave dealer allowed them to occupy the cane house; thus the Indians became slaves of Patent George.

"Worn out from his long journey John Hawk became too ill to work in the sugar cane. The kindly-disposed Negroes helped care for the sick man but he lived only a few months. Rachel and her two children remained on the plantation, working with the other slaves. She had nowhere to go. No home to call her own. She had automatically become a slave. Her children had become chattel.

"So passed a year away, then unhappiness came to the Indian mother, for her daughter, Courtney, became the mother of young Master Ford George's child. The parents called the little half-breed "Eliza" and were very fond of her. The widow of John Hawk, my grandmother, became the grandmother of Patent George's grandson, Patent Junior.

"The tradition of the family states that in spite of these irregular occurrences, the people at the George's southern plantation were prosperous, happy, and lived in peace each with the others. Patent George wearied of the Southern climate and brought his slaves into Kentucky where their ability and strength would amass a fortune for the master in the iron ore regions of Kentucky.

"With the wagon trains of Patent and Ford George came Rachel Hawk and her daughters, Courtney, Lucy and Rachel. Rachel died on the journey from Alabama but the remaining full-blooded Indians entered Kentucky as slaves."

Polly Colbert, Colbert, Oklahoma, age 83

"Master Holmes and Miss Betsy was real young folks but dey was purty well fixed. He owned about 100 acres of land dat was cleared and ready for de plow and a lot dat was not in cultivation. He had de woods full of hogs and cows ,and he owned seven or eight grown slaves and several children. I remember Uncle Shed, Uncle Lige, Aunt Chaney, Aunt Lizzie,

and Aunt Susy just as well as if it was yesterday. Master Holmes and Miss Betsy was both half-breed Choctaw Indians. Dey had both been away to school somewhere in de states and was well educated."

Matilda Poe, McAlester Oklahoma, age 80

"I was born in Indian Territory on de plantation of Isaac Love. He was old Master, and Henry Love was young Master. Isaac Love was a full blood Chickasaw Indian but his wife was a white woman.

"Old Master was sure good to his slaves. The young niggers never done no heavy work till dey was fully grown. Dey would carry water to de men in de field and do other light jobs 'round de place.

"De Big House set way back from de road 'bout a quarter of a mile. It was a two-story log house, and the rooms was awful big and they was purty furniture in it. The furniture in de parlor was red plush, and I loved to slip in and rub my hand over it: it was so soft like. The house was made of square logs and de cracks was filled out even with the edges of de logs. It was white-washed; and, my, but it was purty.

"They was a long gallery clean across de front of de house and big posts to support de roof. Back a ways from de house was de kitchen and nearby was de smokehouse. Old Master kept it well filled with meat, lard, and molasses all de time. He seen to it that we always had plenty to eat. The old women done all de cooking in big iron pots that hung over the fire. De slaves was all served together.

"The slave quarters was about two hundred yards back of de Big House. Our furniture was made of oak 'cepting de chairs, and dey was made out of hackberry. I still have a chair dat belonged to my mammy.

"The boys didn't wear no britches in de summer time. Dey just wore long shirts. De girls wore homespun dresses, either blue or gray.

"Old Master never hired no overseer for his slaves, but he looked after 'em hisself. He punished dem hisself too.

"He had to go away one time and he hired a white man to oversee while he was gone. The only orders he left was to keep dem busy. Granny Lucy was awful old, but the overseer made her go to the field. She couldn't hold out to work so he ups and whips her. He beat her scandalous. He cut her back so bad she couldn't wear her dress. Old Master come home; and, my, he was mad when he see Granny Lucy. He told de man to leave; and iffen he ever set foot on his ground again, he's shoot him, sure!

"Old Master had a big plantation and a hundred or more slaves. Dey always got up at daylight, and de men went out and fed de horses. When de bell rang, dey was ready to eat. After breakfast dey took de teams and went out to plow. Dey come in 'bout half past 'leven, and at twelve de bell rung agin. Dey eat their dinner and back to plowing dey went. 'Bout five o'clock dey come in again, and den they'd talk, sing, and jig dance till bedtime.

"Old Master never punished his niggers 'cepting dey was sassy or lazy. He never sold his slaves neither. A owner once sold several babies to traders. Dey stopped at our plantation to stay awhile. My mammy and de other women had to take care of dem babies for two days, and teach dem to nuss a bottle or drink from a glass. Dat was awful, dem little children crying for they mothers. Sometimes dey sold de mothers away from they husbands and children.

"Master wasn't a believer in church, but he let us have church. My, we'd have happy times singing an' shouting. They'd have church when dey had a preacher and prayer meeting when dey didn't.

"Slaves didn't leave de plantation much on 'count of de patrollers. De patroller was low white trash what jest wanted a excuse to shoot niggers. I don't think I ever saw one but I heard lots of 'em.

"I don't believe in luck charms and things of the such. Iffen you is in trouble, there ain't nothing gonna save you but de Good Lawd. I heard of folks keeping all kind of things for good luck charms. When I was a child, different people gave me buttons to string; and we called them our charm string and wore 'em round our necks. If we was mean, dey would tell us 'Old Raw Head and Bloody Bones' would git us. Grand mammy told us ghost stories after supper, but I don't remember any of dem.

"I never did know I was a slave, 'cause I couldn't tell I wasn't free. I always had a good time, didn't have to work much, and allus had something to eat and wear and that was better than it is with me now.

"When de War was over old Master told us we was free. Mammy she say, "Well, I'm heading for Texas." I went out and old Master ask me to bring him a coal of fire to light his pipe. I went after it, and mammy left pretty soon. My pappy wouldn't leave old Master right then, but old Master told us we was free to go where we pleased; so me an' pappy left and went to Texas where my mammy was. We never saw old Master any more. We stayed a while in Texas and then come back to de Indian Territory."

Chaney Richardson, Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, age 90

"I was born in the old Caney settlement southeast of Tahlequah on the banks of Caney

Creek. Off to the north we could see the big old ridge of Sugar Mountain when the sun shine on him first thing in the morning when we all getting up.

"I didn't know nothing else but some kind of war until I was a grown woman, because my old Master, Charley Rogers, was always on the lookout for somebody or other he was lined up against in the big feud.

"My master and all the rest of the folks was Cherokees, and they'd been killing each other off in the feud ever since long before I was borned; and because old Master have a big farm and three-four families of Negroes, them other Cherokees keep on pestering his stuff all the time. Us children was always afeared to go any place less'n some of the grown folks was along.

"We didn't know what we was a-feared of, but we heard the Master and Mistress keep talking 'bout "another Party killing," and we stuck close to the place.

"Old Mistress' name was Nancy Rogers, but I was a orphan after I was a big girl; and I called her "Aunt" and "Mamma" like I did when I was little. You see my own mammy was the house woman, and I was raised in the house, and I heard the little children call old mistress "mamma" and so I did, too. She never did make me stop.

"My pappy and mammy and us children lived in a one-room log cabin close to the creek bank and jest a little piece from old Master's house.

"My pappy's name was Joe Tucker and my mammy's name was Ruth Tucker. They belonged to a man named Tucker before I was born, and he sold them to Master Charley Rogers, and he just let them go on by the same name if they wanted to, because last name didn't mean nothing to a slave anyways. The folks jest called my pappy 'Charley Rogers' boy Joe.'

"I already had two sisters, Mary and Mandy, when I was born, and purty soon I had a baby brother, Louis. Mammy worked at the Big House and took me along every day. When I was a little bigger, I would help hold the hank when she done the spinning; and old Mistress done a lot of the weaving and some knitting. She jest set by the window and knit most all of the time.

"When we weave the cloth, we had a big loom out on the gallery, and Miss Nancy tell us how to do it.

"Mammy eat at our own cabin, and we had lots of game meat and fish the boys get in the Caney Creek. Mammy bring down deer meat and wild turkey sometimes, that the Indian boys git on Sugar Mountain.

"Then we had corn bread, dried bean bread, and green stuff out'n Master's patch. Mammy make the bean bread when we git short of corn meal and nobody going to the mill right away. She take and bile the beans and mash them up in some meal and that make it go a long ways.

"The slaves didn't have no garden 'cause they work the old Master's garden and make enough for everybody to have some anyway.

"When I was about 10 years old that feud got so bad the Indians was always talking about getting their horses and cattle killed and their slaves harmed. I was too little to know how bad it was until one morning my own mammy went off somewhere down the road to git some stuff to dye cloth, and she didn't come back.

"Lots of the young Indian bucks on both sides of the feud would ride around the woods at night, and old Master got powerful uneasy about my mammy and had all the neighbors and slaves out looking for her, but nobody find her.

"It was about a week later that two Indian men rid up and ast old master wasn't his gal Ruth gone. He says yes, and they take one of the slaves along with a wagon to show where they seen her.

"They find her in some bushes where she'd been getting bark to set the dyes, and she been dead all the time. Somebody done hit her in the head with a club and shot her through and through with a bullet too. She was so swole up they couldn't lift her up and jest had to make a deep hole right along side of her and roll her in it she was so bad mortified.

"Old Master nearly go crazy he was so mad, and the young Cherokee men ride the woods every night for about a month, but they never catch on to who done it.

"I think old Master sell the children or give them out to somebody then, because I never see my sisters and brother for a long time after the Civil War; and for me, I have to go live with a new mistress that was a Cherokee neighbor. Her name was Hannah Ross, and she raised me until I was grown.

"I was her home girl, and she and me done a lot of spinning and weaving too. I helped the cook and carried water and milked. I carried the water in a home-made pegging set on my head. Them peggings was kind of buckets made out of staves set around a bottom and didn't have no handle.

"I can remember weaving with Miss Hannah Ross. She would weave a strip of white and one of yellow and one of brown to make it pretty. She had a reel that would pop every time it got to a half skein so she would know to stop and fill it up again. We used copperas and

some kind of bark she bought at the store to dye with. It was cotton clothes winter and summer for the slaves, too, I'll tell you.

"When the Civil War come along we seen lots of white soldiers in them brown butternut suits all over the place, and about all the Indian men was in it too. Old master Charley Rogers' boy Charley went along too. Then pretty soon--it seem like about a year--a lot of the Cherokee men come back home and say they not going back to the War with that General Cooper and some of them go off the Federal side because the captain go to the Federal side too.

"Somebody come along and tell me my own pappy have to go in the war and I think they say he on the Copper side, and then after while Miss Hannah tell me he git kilt over in Arkansas.

"I was so grieved all the time I don't remember much what went on, but I know pretty soon the soliders had et up all the stuff my Cherokee folks had, and they was jest a few wagons and mules left.

"All the slaves was piled in together and some of the grown ones walking, and they took us way down across the big river and kept us in the bottoms a long time until the War was over.

"We lived in a kind of a camp, but I was too little to know where they got the grub to feed us with. Most all the Negro men was off somewhere in the War.

"Then one day they had to bust up the camp and some Federal soldiers go with us and we all start back home. We git to a place where all the houses is burned down and I ask what is that place. Miss Hannah say: "Skullyville, child. That's where they had part of the War."

"All the slaves was set out when we git to Fort Gibson, and the soldiers say we all free now. They give us grub and clothes to the Negroes at that place. It wasn't no town but a fort place and a patch of big trees.

"Miss Hannah take me to her place and I work there until I was grown. I didn't git any money that I seen, but I got a good place to stay.

"Pretty soon I married Ran Lovely and we lived in a double log house here at Fort Gibson. Then my second husband was Henry Richardson, but he's been dead for years, too. We had six children, but they all dead but one.

"I didn't want slavery to be over with, mostly because we had the War I reckon. All that trouble made me the loss of my mammy and pappy, and I was always treated good when I was a slave. When it was over I had rather be at home like I was. None of the Cherokees ever whipped us, and my mistress give me some mighty fine rules to live by to git along in

this world, too.

"The Cherokee didn't have no jail for Negroes and no jail for themselves either. If a man done a crime he come back to take his punishment without being locked up.

"None of the Negroes ran away when I was a child that I know of. We all had plenty to eat. The Negroes didn't have no school and so I can't read and write, but they did have a school after the War, I hear. But we had a church made out of a brush arbor and we would sing good songs in Cherokee sometimes.

"I always got Sunday off to play, and at night I could go git a piece of sugar or something to eat before I went to bed and Mistress didn't care.

"We played bread-and-butter and the boys played hide the switch. The one found the switch got to whip the one he wanted to.

"When I got sick they give me some kind of tea from weeds, and if I et too many roasting ears and swole up they biled gourds and give me the liquor off'n them to make me throw up.

"I've been a good church-goer all my life until I git too feeble, and I still understand and talk Cherokee language and love to hear songs and parts of the Bible in it because it make me think about the time I was a little girl before my mammy and pappy leave me.

Mary Allen Darrow, Forrest City, Arkansas, age 74

"My great-grandma and grandpa was killed in Indian Nation [Alabama] by Sam and Will Allen. They was coming west long 'fo'e the war from one of the Carolinas. I disremembers which they told me. Great-grandpa was a chief. They was shot and all the children run but they caught my Grandma Evaline and put her in the wagon and brought her to Monticello, Arkansas. They fixed her so she couldn't get loose from them. She was a little full-blood Indian girl then. They got her fer my great-grandpa a wife. He seen her and thought she was so pretty.

"She was wild. She wouldn't eat much else but meat and raw at that. She had a child 'fo'e ever she'd eat bread. They tamed her. Grandpa's pa that wanted the Indian wife was full-blood African. Mama was little lighter than 'gingercake' color.

"My Indian grandma was mean. I was feard of 'er. She run us down and ketch us and whoop us. She was tall slender woman. She was mean as she could be. She'd cut a cat's head off fer no cause er tall...

"My pa was a white man. Richard Allen was mama's husband.

J. N. Gillespie, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 75

"My grandparents were Gillespie's. My grandma was an Indian woman. She was stolen off the reservation--her and her daughter. The daughter was about twelve years old and big enough to wait table. Both of them were full blooded Cherokee Indians. My grandma married a slave, and when she grewed up, my mother married a slave; but my mother's parents were both Indians, and one of my father's parents was white, so you see about three-fourths of me is something else. My grandmother's name before her first marriage was Courtney and my mother's first name was Parthenia.

"When they were stolen, they were made slaves. Nick Toliver bought 'em. He was their first master, far as I heard 'em say. After old man Nick Toliver died, Tom Brewer bought my mother. Toliver and Brewer were the only two masters she had.

"After freedom came, my grandma took back her own name, Gillespie. Grandma's second husband was named Berry Green. She was free and in the Indian reservation when she married Gillespie, but she was a slave when she married Berry Green.

"After my mother came to be of age, she married a man named Willis. He was a slave. That is why I am like I am now. If my grandma had stayed in the nation, I never would have been a slave, and I wouldn't need to be beatin' around here trying to get just bread and meat.

"After freedom, she taken her mother's name by her free husband, Gillespie, and she made her husband take it too. That how I got the name of Gillespie."

Mamie Thompson, Brinkley, Arkansas, age 68

"My mother was a mix-breed. She was mixed with Cherokee Indian and Negro. My father come from Virginia. He was black--so black he shined.

"Grandma's master was Master Redman. He kept Aunt Emma and my mother. They never was sold. My mother was put on the block, but her mistress come took her down. Master Redman had her in the field working. The overseer was a white man. He tried to take her down and carry on with her. She led him to the house. He wanted her whooped 'cause she had whooped him sort of. He was mad cause he couldn't overpower her. Master Redman got her in the kitchen to whoop her with a cow hide; she told him she would kill him; she got a stick. He let her out, and they come to buy her--a Negro trader. Old Mistress--his wife--went out and led her down from there in the house and told Master Redman if he sold Mattie she would quit him--she meant leave him. Mistress Redman kept her with her and made a house girl out of her. She tended to the children and cleaned the house. Aunt Emma milked and churned.

"Grandma was a Molly Glaspy woman [Indian and African.]. She had straight wavy hair,

small eyes. She was a small woman. Grandpa was a tall big man. He was a full blood Indian."

Emily Mays, Griffin, Georgia, born 1861

The father, Peter Wych, was born in West Virginia. A free man, he was part Indian and when driving a team of oxen into Virginia for lime, got into the slave territory, was overtaken by a "speculator" and brought to Georgia where he was sold to the Wyches of Macon. He cooked for them at their Hotel, "The Brown House," for a number of years, then was sold "on the block" to Mr. Stevens of Upson County. Betsy was sold at this same auction. Betsy and Peter were married by "jumping the broomstick" after Mr. Stevens bought them. They had sixteen children, of which Emily is the next to the last.

Lucretia Alexander, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 89

"My mother's father was a free Indian named Washington. Her mother was a slave. I don't know my father's father. He moved about so much and was sold so many times he never did tell me his father. He got his name from the white folks. When you're a slave you have to go by your owner's name."

Tom Windham, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, age 98

My master was an Indian. Lewis Butler of Oklahoma. I was born and raised in Muskogee, Oklahoma

All of marse Butler's people were Creek Indians. They owned a large plantation and raised vegetables. They lived in tepees, had floors and were set on a lot and a wall boarded up around them. This was done so that they could hide the slaves they had stolen.

I was twelve or thirteen years old, when the Indians had a small war. They wouldn't allow us to fight. If we did, we were punished. They had a place and made us work. I went to school two months also a little at night. Can't read nor write. I am all alone now here in America. I have a daughter in Ethiopia, teaching school, also two sisters.

I served in several wars and I have been to Ethiopia. We left Monroe, La., took water, then went back by gun-boat to Galveston. The Government took us over and brought us back. After the Civil War was over the Indians let the slaves go.

I had an Indian wife and wore Indian dress; and when I went to Milford, Tennessee, I had to send the outfit home to Oklahoma. I had long hair until 1931.

My Indians believed in our God. They held their meetings in a large tent. They believed in salvation and damnation, and in Heaven and Hell.

My idea of Heaven is that it is a holy place with God. We will walk in Heaven just as on

earth. As in him we believe, so shall we see.

The earth shall burn, and the old earth shall pass away and the new earth will be created. The saints will return and live on, that is the ones who go away now.

The new earth is when Jesus will come to earth and reign. Every one has two spirits. One that God kills and the other an evil spirit. I have had communication with my dead wife twice since I been in Pine Bluff. Her spirit come to me at night, calling me, asking whar wuz baby?

That meant our daughter whut is across the water.

My first wife's name was Arla Windham. My second wife was just part Indian. I have seen spirits of friends just as they were put away. I shore believe in ghosts. Their language is different from ours. I knew my wife's voice cause she called me "Tommy".

Henrietta Evelina Smith, Little Rock, Arkansas

"My father's mother was named Susan. She was part Indian--better work-hand never was. But she wouldn't be conquered neither. When they got ready to whip her, it would be half a day before they could take her. When they did get her, they would whip her so they would have to raise her in a sheet. The last time they whipped her, it took her nearly a year to get over it. So the white man just turned her loose and told her she was free. She went on off, and we never did know what became of her."

"Colored People Could Own Slaves"

Reverend Frank T. Boone, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 89

"There was one set of white people in Virginia called Quakers. Their rule was to free all slaves at the age of twenty-one. So we got some free Negroes under that rule. My mother who was a Negro woman and was freed under this rule. My father was always free.

"My grandmother on my father's side owned slaves. The law was that colored people could own slaves but they were not allowed to buy them. I don't know how many slaves my grandmother owned. I didn't know they were slaves until the War was over. I saw the colored people living in the little houses on the place but I didn't know they was slaves.

"One morning my grandmother went down to the quarters and when she came back she said to my aunt, 'Well, the slaves left last night.' And that was the first I knew of their being slaves."

Paid for His Wife on Time

J. H. Curry, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 76

"My mother's mother was named Malinda Evans. Only one thing I remember that was remarkable about her. Her husband was a free man named Mike Evans. He come from up North and married her in slave time and bought her.

"He was a fine carpenter. They used to hire him out to build houses. He was a contractor in slave time. After the War, he used to have white men getting training under him as carpenters. I remember him well.

"After my grandfather bought my grandmother, her children all still belonged to the Douglasses. He probably paid for her on time, and they kept the children that was born after that."

Part Two

Sallie Paul, Marion, South Carolina, age 79

Interviewed by Annie Ruth Davis

"I remember we colored people belong to de white folks in slavery time. Remember when de war was gwine on 'cause we hear de guns, shoot en' we chillun jump up en' holler. Yes, mam, I remember dat.

"My white folks was de Williamsons dere in North Carolina. Dey was good to dey colored people. All de colored people lived dere side de yard, close enough to holler if anything get de matter, close enough to know dere was cookin' gwine on in de Missus kitchen.

"We never eat us meals to de white folks house. All de niggers would draw so much of rations from dey Massa to last dem a week at a time, just like de people draw government ration right 'bout here now.

"I wasn' big enough to do no work much den only tote up wood for de white folks en piddle 'bout de yard. Dey didn' work de chillun when dey was little bit of things en' stunt dem up. Chillun grow to be 'bout 12 or 13 years old fore dey work dem.

"Dey used to get a handful of switches en' stand us chillun up in a long row en' give us all a lick 'bout de legs when dey want to punish us en' learn us better sense. If dey would want to spare de punishment, dey would try to scare us out de mischief. Tell us Bloody Bones would jump out dat corner at us if we not do what dey say do.

"But dey wouldn' never whip none of de grown 'omans 'cause dey was breedin'.

"My white folks was well off. My Massa run three plantations, en' he had a heap of colored peoples. My mother, she was one of de plow hands.

"Dey was mighty particular 'bout how dey would feed de little niggers in dem days. Like you would be particular wid a ten dollar bill dis day. Would keep dey little belly stuff wid hominy en 'milk same as dey was pigs. Dey do dat to make dem hurry en' grow, 'cause dey want to hurry en' increase dey property. De white folks never didn' despise to see a big crop of nigger chillun comin' on.

"Dere was more to eat in slavery time den dere be now. Cows won' lackin' en' dere been more sheep en' hogs en' goats. I don' like goat. I tried to eat some goat one time en' it swell

in my mouth. I wouldn' eat sheep neither. It a sin, dey so humble.

"De people ate like dey eats now, but dey didn' never know what a stove was. Dey had de kitchen fireplace, with a railin' in it to hang de pots on. Den dey had dem big old clay chimneys wid dirt ovens dat would hold a bushel of 'tatoes to a time. Den dey was a brick chimney en' bake all de cakes en' de bread right dere on de fireplace.

"All de colored people dat been stay on my white folks plantation had dey own little crop of corn en' fodder 'bout dey house; en' when a peddler come along, dey would sell dey crop en' buy silk from de peddler. Dey been sell dey crop to anybody dey could. Dere was always a poor one somewhe' dat been need corn en' fodder.

"De white folks make dey own cloth right dere on de plantation in dem days. Dey had a loom house, but my mother had a loom right to her own door. She would weave piece for de white folks en' den one for herself. Missus learn dem how to do three en' four treadle. She could weave any kind of cloth or blankets or anything like dat.

"Dey had de finest kind of enjoyments in dem days. Colored people had plenty scraps to make dey bed clothes wid, 'cause dey Missus would save scraps for dem. Dey would have quiltings to one of dey own houses, en' dey would frolic en' play en' dance dere till late up in de night. Dey would make good a music as anybody would want to dance by.

"For cornshuckin', dey would gather de crop en' haul it up to de white folks big old farm barn. Den dey would ax all de white folks 'bout dere to send dey hands to shuck corn in one night. Dey would have such a whoopin' en' a hollerin' en' a big supper dere dat night. One man would have corn shuck to his barn one night, en' another man's barn de next night. Neighbor been please to turn good hand to neighbor.

"De white folks look after dey colored people if dey get sick, if dey need doctor neither. Gwine save dem just as long as dey got breath in dey body. Heap of dem was cared for more better in slavery time den dey is now, 'cause dey had somebody dat had to care for dem or lose dem. Ain' no white folks want to lose dey niggers.

"Colored people didn' have no more privileges in slavery time den dese people got now in dis here chain gang. No, mam, niggers belong to dey owner in slavery just like you got a puppy belong to you.

"En' colored people didn' have no church of dey own in slavery time. Dey went to de white folks church, en' dey set in one part de church en' us set in de gallery. De white folks would

see to it dat all dey niggers never miss church service no time. En' de slave owners would bury dey plantation niggers right dere to de colored people graveyard behind de church, dat was settin' right side de white people graveyard.

"Dere been plenty white folks dat wouldn' never fight against de Yankees widout dey couldn' get out of it. Dey slip off en' hide in pits dey dig in de woods en' in de bays. Some of dem say dey didn' have no slaves en' dey won' gwine fight.

"Never heard tell of Yankees doin' no harm nowhe' in dat country to nobody, white nor colored. But white people was scared of de Yankees as dey was of rattlesnakes.

"Some Yankees passed through during the war and sometimes came to slave houses for food. Yes, mam, colored people feed dem en' give dem somethin' to travel on. De Yankees would give de colored people dey good clothes en' take dey rags. You see, dey was desertin', runnin' away en' gettin back home. I don' know if de white folks know 'bout dat, but Massa didn' see dem.

"Yankees tell de colored people dey was free but just didn' know it. I was standin up listenin' to dem say dat just like any other child be standin' dere lookin' up in your mouth.

"Den when de colored people was freed, heap of de white folks died 'cause dey grieve demselves to death over de loss of dey property.

"Dat point me to think 'bout how young Massa would slip off wid de colored boys on a Sunday to play like white people will do, en' carry old Webster's *Blue Back* wid dem. En' when dey been way off yonder, young Massa would learn dem to read. My father could read, but he couldn' never write.

"Dere won' no schools nowhe' for de colored people in dem days. White folks catch nigger wid a book, nigger gwine get a whippin'. Dey young Massa would learn dem, but Massa en' Missus never know 'bout it.

"De colored people had so many song in slavery time. Dey would sing anything dey could make a noise wid. Some of dem could read out de hymn book, en' some of dem couldn' tell one word from de other.

"Everybody didn' hate dey white folks. Dat how come some niggers stayed right on dere wid dey white people after freedom en' farmed for half what dey made on de crop. Dey didn' have nothin' to work wid, so dey stayed on en' farmed on shares.

"I won' married till long time after freedom come here. Den de colored people had dese here bresh [brush] shelters for dey church, en' dey had dey own colored preacher, too.

"Honey, I marry Paul, but I didn' have no big weddin. Didn' want none. Just married dere to my father's house, en' I had a white dress dat was made out of cotton. It won' no silk.

"I had me a husband en' dat won' no great blessin' to speak 'bout."

Love, Love, Love

Lily Perry, Raleigh, North Carolina, age 84

"Me an' Robert wus raised up tergether, he bein' five years older'n me an' I loved him frum de time I wus borned. I know how he uster [used to] hate ter see me git dem beatin's an' he'd beg me not ter let my mouth be so sassy, but I can't help hit.

"Onct when marster wus whuppin' me, Robert run up an' begged marse ter put de whuppin' on him 'stead of me. De result wus marse whupped us both, an' we 'cided ter run away.

"We did run away, but night brung us back ter another whuppin', an' we ain't neber run away no mo'.

"We wus at a frolic at Louisburg when he proposes ter me, an' he do hit dis way, 'Honey gal, I knows dat you doan love me so powerful much, but will you try ter do hit fer me?'

"Course I sez, 'Go long, nigger, iffen I doan love yo' den dar ain't no water in Tar Riber.' [Tar River in North Carolina] Den I sez, 'We can git Marse Henry outen de bed, an' he'll marry us ternight.'

"Rob wus tickled pink; an' sho nuff, we wus married right away dat very night.

"We lived pore, dat I knows, but we wus too happy in ourselves ter worry 'bout sich things an' de lack."

Gus Feaster, Union, South Carolina, age 97

"When boys and gals gits up some size dey feels dey-selves. At dat age, we went bird thrashing in de moon light. Den we sing dis vulgar song, 'I'll give you half-dollar if you come out tonight.

"Den de gals charmed us wid honeysuckle and rose petals hid in dere bosoms. Now de gals goes to de ten cent sto' and buys cheap perfume. In dem days dey dried cheneyberries [chinaberries] and painted dem and wo' dem on a string around dere necks to charm us."

Rosa Starke, South Carolina, age 83

"Dere was more classes 'mongst de slaves. A house nigger man might swoop down and mate wid a field hand's good lookin' daughter, now and then, for pure love of her; but you never see a house gal lower herself by marryin' and matin' wid a common field-hand nigger.

"Dat offend de white folks, 'specially de young misses, who liked de business of match makin' and matin' of de young slaves."

Minnie Fulkes, Petersburg, Virginia, age 77

"I married when I wuz 14 years old. I didn't know what marriage meant. I had an idea when you loved de man, you an' he could be married an' his wife had to cook, clean up, wash, an' iron fer him was all. Fer three months, I slept in bed, he on his side an' I on mine. He never got close to me 'cause muma had sed "Don't let no body bother yo' principle," 'cause dat wuz all yo' had. I 'bey my muma, an' tol' him so, and I said to go an' ask muma; an' ef she sed he could get close to me, hit was alright. An' he an' I went together to see and ask muma. Den muma began tellin' me to please my husband, an' 'twas my duty as a wi."

Harriet Jones, Texas, age 93

After the war Harriet married Bill Jones. The wedding took place under a large elm tree on a bright moonlit night. Harriet wore one of Miss Ellen's dresses, red stockings, and a brand-new pair of shoes. Two little girls served as flower bearers holding the train of her dress.

The preacher asked Bill if he would take Harriet as his lawful wife.

Then he asked Harriet if she would take Bill as her "lawful boss."

Lucretia Alexander, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 89

"My mother told me her mistress said, 'Agnes, will you follow me if I buy your husband?' She paid fifteen hundred dollars to buy him so they could be together."

Adora Rienshaw, Raleigh, North Carolina, age 92

"My pappy wuz borned free, case his mammy wuz a white 'oman an' his pappy wuz a coal-black nigger man. Hit happened in Mississippi, do' I doan know her name 'cept dat she wuz a Perry.

"She wuz de wife of grandfather's marster an' dey said dat he wuz mean ter her. Grandfather wuz her coachman an' he often seed her cry, an' he'd talk ter her an' try ter comfort her in her troubles, an' dat's de way dat she come ter fall in love wid him.

"One day, he said, she axed him ter stop de carriage an' come back dar an' talk ter her. When he wuz back dar wid her, she starts ter cry an' she puts her purtty gold haid on his shoulder, an' she tells him dat he am her only friend, an' dat her husban' won't eben let her have a chile.

"Hit goes on lak dis till her husban' fin's out dat she am gwine ter have de baby. Dey says dat he beats her awful; an' when pappy wuz borned, he jist about went crazy.

"Anyhow pappy wuz bound out till he wuz twenty-one an' den he wuz free, case no person

wid ary a drap of white blood can be a slave.

"When he wuz free he comed ter Raleigh an' from de fust I can remember he wuz a blacksmith an' his shop wuz on Wolcot's Corner."

Millie Markham, Durham, North Carolina, age 82

"My mother was a white woman. Her name was Tempie James. She lived on her father's big plantation on the Roanoke River at Rich Square, North Carolina. Her father owned acres of land and many slaves. His stables were the best anywhere around; they were filled with horses, and the head coachman was named Squire James. Squire was a good looking, well behaved Negro who had a white father. He was tall and light colored.

"Tempie James fell in love with this Negro coachman. Nobody knows how long they had been in love before Tempie's father found it out, but when he did he locked Tempie in her room. For days he and Miss Charlottie, his wife, raved, begged and pleaded, but Tempie just said she loved Squire. 'Why will you act so?' Miss Charlottie was crying. 'Haven't we done everything for you and given you everything you wanted?'

"Tempie shook her head and said: 'You haven't given me Squire. He's all I do want.'

"Then it was that in the dark of the night Mr. James sent Squire away; he sent him to another state and sold him.

"But Tempie found it out. She took what money she could find and ran away. She went to the owner of Squire and bought him. Then she set him free and changed his name to Walden Squire Walden.

"But it was against the law for a white woman to marry a Negro unless the woman had a strain of Negro blood. So Tempie cut Squire's finger and drained out some blood. She mixed this with some whiskey and drank it. Then she got on the stand and swore she had Negro blood in her. So they were married, and she never went back home, and her people disowned her.

"Once, when we were children, my sister and I were visiting in Rich Square, near our grandfather's plantation. One day we went out to pick huckleberries. A woman came riding down the road on a horse. She was a tall woman in a long grey riding habit. She had grey hair and grey eyes. She stopped and looked at us. 'My,' she said, 'whose pretty little girls are you?'

"'We're Squire Walden's children,' I said.

"She looked at me so long and hard that I thought she was going to hit me with her whip,

but she didn't; she hit the horse instead. He jumped and ran so fast I thought she was going to fall off, but she went around the curve and I never saw her again. I never knew until later that she was Mis' Charlottie James, my grandmother.

Thomas Ruffin, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 82 or 84

"Folks said my master was my daddy. That's what they told me. I don't know myself. But white folks did anything they wanted to in slavery times.

"My mother's name was Morina Ruffin. I don't know the names of my grandparents except old man Ruffin my father's father. He died way back yonder before the war.

"My master gotten kilt in the war. His name was Tom Ruffin. I was named after him. That man owned three hundred slaves. He never married. He carried my mother round everywhere he went. Out of all his niggers, he didn't have but her with him. That was in slavery time, and he was a fool about her."

Lucy Ann Dunn, Raleigh, North Carolina, age 90

"Hit wus in de little Baptist church at Neuse whar' I fust seed big black Jim Dunn, an' I fell in love wid him den, I reckons. He said dat he loved me den too, but hit wus three Sundays 'fore he axed ter see me home.

"We walked dat mile home in front of my mammy an' I wus so happy dat I ain't thought hit a half a mile home. We et cornbread an' turnips fer dinner an' hit wus night 'fore he went home. Mammy wouldn't let me walk wid him ter de gate. I jist sot dar on de porch an' sez good night.

"After he come ever' Sunday fer a year, I told mammy dat I thought dat I 'ort ter be allowed ter walk ter de gate wid Jim, an' she said all right iffen she wus settin' dar on de porch lookin'.

"Dat Sunday night I did walk wid Jim ter de gate an' stood under de honeysuckles dat wus a-smellin' so sweet. I heard de big ole bullfrogs a-croakin' by de riber an' de whipper-wills a-hollerin' in de woods. Dar wus a big yaller moon, an' I reckon Jim did love me. Anyhow he said so an' axed me ter marry him, an' he squeezed my han'.

"I tol' him I'd think hit ober, an' I did; an' de nex' Sunday I tol' him dat I'd have him.

"He aint kissed me yet, but de nex' Sunday he axes my mammy fer me. She sez dat she'll have ter have a talk wid me an' let him know.

"Well all dat week she talks ter me, tellin' me how serious gittin' married is an' dat hit lasts a powerful long time.

"I tells her dat I knows hit, but dat I am ready ter try hit, an' dat I intends ter make a go of hit, anyhow.

"On Sunday night mammy tells Jim dat he can have me, an' yo' orter seed dat black boy grin. He comes ter me widout a word, an' he picks me up outen dat cheer. An' dar in de moonlight ,he kisses me right 'fore my mammy who am a-cryin'.

"De nex' Sunday we wus married in de Baptist church at Neuse. I had a new white dress, do [although] times wus hard.

"We lived tergether fifty-five years, an' we always loved each other. He ain't never whup ner cuss me. An' do [though] we had our fusses an' our troubles, we trusted in de Lawd, an' we got through. I loved him durin' life, an' I love him now, do he's been daid now fer twelve years.

"We had eight chilluns, but only four of dem are livin' now. De livin' are James, Sidney, Helen an' Florence who wus named fer Florence Nightingale.

"I can't be here so much longer now case I'se gittin' too old an' feeble, an' I wants ter go ter Jim anyhow. I thinks of him all de time, but seems lak we're young agin when I smell honeysuckles er see a yaller moon."

Ike Derricotte, Athens, Georgia, age 78

"Us has been married more dan 50 years and dey has all been happy years. Us has had our troubles and hard luck, but dey come to evvybody. De Lord has been mighty good to us, 'specially in lettin' us be together so long. It was what you might call a case of love at fust sight wid us.

"I was visitin' down at Camak, Georgia, at Christmastime. She lived at Sparta, and was spendin' Christmas at Camak too, but I didn't see her 'til I was 'bout to leave for Athens. I jus' thought I never could go 'way atter I fust seed her, but I did, and I didn't git to see her again for 12 long months. Us writ to one another all dat year and got married at Christmastime, one year from de time us fust met.

"Us has still got dat old pen I used when I writ and axed her to marry me; I'd lak to show it to you. Ain't it a sight?" he proudly exclaimed as he displayed the relic. "I made it up myself in December 1886; and it got her consent to marry me, so I'se kept it ever since. My wife and me wouldn't part wid it for nothin'"

After 52 years of service the pen point and its staff are still in good condition. Ike also has the Prince Albert coat that he wore on his wedding day. "I'm keepin' de coat and pen for our chillun," he declared.

"God has been good to us," he said, "for He let us have all nine of our chillun 'til dey was grown up. Us wuked mighty hard to raise 'em and give all of 'em a good education. Dat was somepin us couldn't have when us was growin' up, and I'm thankful to be able to say dat us was able to send 'em all to college. .

"One son is goin' mighty well as a lawyer in Washin'ton, D.C.;, and our baby lives in New York City. It's been 'bout three years now since my daughter Juliette died atter a automobile wreck. She give her life to wuk for de Y.W.C.A., and she went all over de world tryin' to make things better for de young women of our race."

[At the time of her death, Juliette was the Dean of Women at Fisk University. Following a car accident, she was turned away from a white-only hospital and died, an incident that sparked outrage. Inspired by her ideas, Sue Bailey Thurman established a scholarship in her name that enabled African-American undergraduate women to study abroad. One of the recipients was Margaret Bush Wilson, who became president of the NAACP.]

Sam and Louisa Everett, Mulberry, Florida, ages 86 and 90

On this plantation more than 100 slaves were mated without any regard for family unions. If their master thought that a certain man and woman might have strong, healthy offspring, he forced them to have sexual relations, even though they were married to other slaves.

If there seemed to be any reluctance on the part of either of the unfortunate ones, "Big Jim" would make them consummate this relationship in his presence. He used the same procedure if he thought a certain couple was not producing children fast enough.

He enjoyed these orgies and often entertained his friends in this manner. Often he and his guests would engage in these debaucheries, choosing for themselves the prettiest of the young women. Sometimes they forced the unhappy husbands and lovers of their victims to look on.

Louisa and Sam were married in this way.

According to Louisa, "Marse Jim called me and Sam ter him and ordered Sam to pull off his shirt—that was all the McClain niggers wore. And he said to me: 'Do you think you can stand this big nigger?' He had that old bull whip flung acrost his shoulder, and Lawd, that man could hit so hard! So I jes' said 'Yassur, I guess so.' And tried to hide my face so I couldn't see Sam's nakedness, but he made me look at him anyhow.

"Well, he told us we must git busy and do in his presence, and we had to do it. After that we were considered man and wife.

"Me and Sam was a healthy pair and had fine, big babies, so I never had another man

forced on me, thank God. Sam was kind to me, and I learnt to love him."

Cora L. Horton, Little Rock, Arkansas, age between 50 and 60?

"I have heard my grandmother talk about slaves being put on the block and sold and then meeting years after and not knowing one another. She told me about a woman who was separated from her son.

One day, years after slavery, when she had married again and had a family, she and her husband got to talking about old slave times. She told him about how she had been sold away from her baby son when he was a little thing. She told him how he had a certain scar on his arm.

Her husband had a similar scar and he got to talking about slave times, and they found out that they were mother and son.

He left her and went on his way, sad because he didn't want to stay on living as husband with his mother.

Father Charles Coates, Jacksonville, Florida, age 108

After slavery, Charles Coates was 37 and unmarried. He had been put on the auction block to be sold; but because his master wanted so much for him and refused to sell him on time payments, he was left on his master's hands. His master said "being tall, healthy and robust, he was well worth much money."

After slavery, Charles was rated as a good worker. He at once began working and saving his money and in a short time he had accumulated around \$200.

Then the first sight of a certain young woman caused him to fall in love. He said the love was mutual, and after a courtship of three weeks they were married. The girl's mother told Charles that she had always been very frail, but he didn't know that she had consumption.

Within three days after they were married she died.

He was reluctant to bury her. He wanted to keep looking at her face. A white doctor and a school teacher told him to put his wife's body in alcohol to preserve it. At that time, white people who wanted to see the faces of their deceased sometimes used this method.

Although the process of preserving the body in alcohol cost \$160, Charles did not regret the expense saying, "I had plenty of money at that time."

Part Three

Billy Slaughter, Jeffersonville, Indiana, age 80

Billy Slaughter was born Sept. 15, 1858, on the Lincoln Farm near Hodgenville, Ky. The Slaughters who now live between the Dixie Highway and Hodgenville on the right of the road driving toward Hodgenville about four miles off the state highway are the descendants of the slave's master. He was sold once and was given away once before he was given his freedom.

Billy didn't believe the Civil War was fought over slavery. The reason was that the South withdrew from the Union and elected Jefferson Davis President of the Confederacy.

At the beginning of the war, negroes who enlisted in the Union Army were given freedom, also their wives, and their children who were not married. But slaves in some Union states couldn't join because of the strict watchfulness of their masters. He said Lincoln didn't go to war to free the slaves but freed the slaves to fight the war.

In any case, Abraham Lincoln was Billy's greatest hero. He was planning another pilgrimage to the Lincoln Farm to look again at the cabin in which his Emancipator was born.

Billy's father joined the Union army at the Taylor Barracks, near Louisville, Kentucky, which was known as Camp Taylor during the World War.

He explained that negro soldiers didn't fight in decisive battles because there always had to be someone to clean and polish the harness, care for the horses, dig ditches, and construct parapets. His father was in Memphis during the battle there.

After the war, in 1865 when Billy was seven years old, the Slaughter family migrated to Jeffersonville, Indiana. Billy worked on a steamboat that traveled from Louisville to New Orleans. People traveled on the river because there were few railroads. First he cleaned the decks. Later he cleaned up inside the boat, mopped up the floors and made the berths. Then he served as ladies' cabin man. Later he took care of the quarters where the officials of the boat slept. He also worked as a second pantry man, waiting on the tables in the dining room. For that, his clothes had to be spotless. Sometimes he needed to change his shirt three times a day.

Billy reads his Bible often. "The Bible says that two shall be working in the field together and one shall be taken and the other left. I am the one who is left."

All of his friends are gone. All his brothers and sisters are gone. He sometimes wonders

why he is still alive. Maybe there must be someone left to tell about old times.

War, War, War

Bill Simms, Topeka, Kansas, age 97

"When the war started, my master sent me to work for the Confederate army. I worked for three years off and on, hauling canons, driving mules, hauling ammunition, and provisions. The Union army pressed in on us, and the Rebel army moved back. I was sent home. When the Union army came close enough, I ran away from home and joined the Union army. There I drove a six-mule team and worked at wagon work, driving ammunition and all kinds of provisions until the war ended. Then I returned home to my old master, who had stayed there with my mother."

James Lucas, Natchez, Mississippi, age 105

"Dey took me off an' put me in de War. Firs', dey shipped me on a gunboat an', nex', dey made me he'p dig a canal at Vicksburg. I was on de gunboat when it shelled de town. It was turrible, seein' folks a-tryin' to blow each other up. Whilst us was bull-doggin' Vicksburg in front, a Yankee army slipped in behin' de Rebels an' penned 'em up. I fit [fought] at Fort Pillow an' Harrisburg an' Pleasant Hill; an' 'fore I was ha'f through wid it, I was in Ba'timore an' Virginny."

Thomas Lewis, Bloomington, Indiana, age 80

"The soldiers passed by for three and a half days. They were getting ready for a battle nearby. We could hear the cannon. After it was over, a white man who went to the battlefield said that for a mile and a half you could walk on dead men and dead horses. My mother wanted to go and see it, but they wouldn't let her, because it was too awful."

Thomas Cole, Texas, age 92

"Dat winter, [late in the war] 'stead of killin' three or four hundred hawgs like we allus done befo', we only done one killin' of a hundred seventy-five, and dey not all big ones, neither. When de meat supply runs low, Mr. Sandson [the overseer] sends some slaves to kill a deer or wild hawgs or jes' any kind of game. He never sends me in any dem bunches, but I hoped he would. Den one day he sends me and says not to go off de plantation too far, but be sho' bring home some meat."

"Dis de chance I been wantin'. So when we gits to de huntin' ground, de leader says to scatter out; and I tells him me and 'nother man goes north and make de circle round de river and meet 'bout sundown. I crosses de river and goes north. I's gwine to de free country, where dey ain't no slaves. I travels all dat day and night up de river. Sev'ral times I thunk de blood houn's am trailin' me, and I gits in de big hurry. I's so tired I couldn't hardly

move, but I gits in a trot.

"I's hopin' and prayin' all de time I meets up with dat Harriet Tubman woman. She de cullud women what takes slaves to Canada. She allus travels de underground railroad, dey calls it, travels at night and hides out in de day. She sho' sneaks dem out de South, and I thinks she's de brave woman.

"I eats all de nuts and kills a few swamp rabbits and cotch some fish. I builds de fire and goes off 'bout half a mile and hides in de thicket till it burns down to de coals, den bakes me some fish. I's shakin' all de time, 'fraid I'd git cotched; but I's nearly starve to death. I puts de rest de fish in my cap and travels on dat night by de north star and hides in a big thicket de nex' day, and along evenin' I hears guns shootin'.

"I's scart to come in and scart to go out; and while I's standin' dere, I hears two men say, 'Stick you hands up, boy. What you doin'?

"I says, 'Uh-uh-uh, I dunno. You ain't gwine take me back to de plantation, is you?'

"Dey says, 'No. Does you want to fight for de North?'

"I says I will, 'cause dey talks like northern men.

"Us walk night and day and gits in Gen. Rosecran's camp, and dey thunk I's de spy from de South. Dey asks me all sorts of questions and says dey'll whip me if I didn't tell dem what I's spyin' 'bout. Fin'ly dey 'lieves me and puts me to work helpin' with de cannons. I feels 'portant den, but I didn't know what was in front of me, or I 'spects I'd run off 'gain.

"I helps sot [set] dem cannons on dis Chickamauga Mountain, in hidin' places. I has to go with a man and wait on him and dat cannon.

"First thing I knows, bang, bang, boom, things has started, and guns am shootin' faster dan you can think; and I looks round for de way to run. But dem guns am shootin' down de hill in front of me and shootin' at me, and over me and on both sides of me. I tries to dig me a hole and git in it.

"All dis happen right now, and first thing I knows, de man am kickin' me and wantin' me to help him keep dat cannon loaded. Man, I didn't want no cannon, but I has to help anyway.

"We fit [fought] till dark, and de Rebels got more men dan us. I jes' wants to git back to dat old plantation and pick more cotton. I'd been willin' to do mos' anything to git out that mess, but I done told Gen. Rosecran I wants to fight de Rebels, and he sho' was lettin' me do it. He wasn't jes' lettin' me do it, he was makin' me do it. I done got in dere, and he wouldn't let me out.

"White folks, dere was men layin' wantin' help, wantin' water, with blood runnin' out dem, and de top or sides dere heads gone, great big holes in dem. I jes' promises de good Lawd if he jes' let me git out dat mess, I wouldn't run off no more; but I didn't know den he wasn't gwine let me out with jes' dat battle. He gwine give me plenty more; but dat battle ain't over yet, for nex' mornin' de Rebels 'gins shootin' and killin' lots of our men, and Gen. Woods ain't come. So Gen. Rosecran orders us to 'treat, and didn't have to tell me what he said, neither. De Rebels comes after us, shootin', and we runs off and leaves dat cannon what I was with settin' on de hill, and I didn't want dat thing nohow.

"We kep' hotfootin' till we gits to Chattanooga and dere is where we stops. Here comes one dem Rebel generals with de big bunch of men and gits right on top of Look Out Mountain, right clost to Chattanooga, and wouldn't let us out.

"I don't know jes' how long, but a long time. Lots our hosses and mules starves to death, and we eats some de hosses. We all like to starve to death ourselves. Chattanooga is in de bend de Tennessee River and on Look Out Mountain, on de east, am dem Rebels and could keep up with everything we done.

"After a long time, a Gen. Thomas gits in. He finds de rough trail or wagon road round de mountain 'long de river, and supplies and men comes by boat up de river to dis place and comes on into Chattanooga. More Union men kep' comin', and I guess maybe six or eight generals and dey gits ready to fight. It am long late in fall or early winter.

"Dey starts climbin' dis steep mountain; and when us gits three-fourths de way up, it am foggy, and you couldn't see no place. Everything wet and de rocks am slick, and dey 'gins fightin'. I 'spect some shoots dere own men, 'cause you couldn't see nothin', jes' men runnin' and de guns roarin'. Fin'ly dem Rebels fled, and we gits on Look Out Mountain and takes it.

"Dere a long range of hills leadin' 'way from Look Out Mountain, nearly to Missionary Ridge. Dis ridge 'longside de Chickamauga River, what am de Indian name, meanin' River of Death. Dey fights de Rebels on Orchard Knob Hill; and I wasn't in dat, but I's in de Missionary Ridge battle.

"We has to come out de timber and run 'cross a strip or openin' up de hill. Dey sho' kilt lots our men when we runs 'cross dat openin'. We runs for all we's worth and uses guns or anything we could. De Rebels turns and runs off and our soldiers turns de cannons round what we's capture, and kilt some de Rebels with dere own guns.

"I never did git to where I wasn't scart when we goes into de battle. Dis de last one I's in; and I's sho' glad, for I never seed de like of dead and wounded men. We picks dem up, de

Rebels like de Unions, and doctors dem de bes' we could. When I seed all dat sufferin', I hopes I never lives to see 'nother war. Dey say de World War am worse but I's too old to go.

"I sho' wishes lots of times I never run off from de plantation. I begs de General not to send me on any more battles, and he says I's de coward and sympathizes with de South. But I tells him I jes' couldn't stand to see all dem men layin' dere dyin' and hollerin' and beggin' for help and a drink of water, and blood everywhere you looks. Killin' hawgs back on de plantation didn't bother me none, but dis am diff'rent.

"Fin'ly de General tells me I can go back to Chattanooga and guard de supplies in camp dere and take care de wounded soldiers and prisoners. A bunch of men is with me, and we has all we can do. We gits de orders to send supplies to some general, and it my job to help load de wagons or box cars or boats.

"When winter comes, everybody rests awhile and waits for Spring to open. De Union general sends in some more cullud soldiers. Dere ain't been many cullud men but de las' year de war dere am lots. De North and de South am takin' anything dey can git to win de war.

"When Spring breaks and all de snow am gone, and de trees 'gins puttin' out and everything 'gins to look purty and peaceable-like, makin' you think you ought to be plowin' and plantin' a crop, dat when de fightin' starts all over 'gain, killin' men and burnin' homes and stealin' stock and food. Den dey sends me out to help clear roads and build temp'rary bridges. We walks miles on muddy ground, 'cross rivers, wadin' water up to our chins. We builds rafts and pole bridges to git de mules and hosses and cannons 'cross, and up and down hills, and cuts roads through timber.

"But when dey wants to battle, Gen. Thomas allus leaves me in camp to tend de supplies. He calls me a coward, and I sho' glad he thunk I was. I wasn't no coward, I jes' couldn't stand to see all dem people tore to pieces. I hears 'bout de battle in a thick forest and de trees big as my body jes' shot down. I seed dat in de Missionary Ridge battle, too.

"I shifts from one camp to 'nother and fin'ly gits back to Chattanooga. I bet durin' my time I handles 'nough ammunition to kill everybody in de whole United States. I seed mos' de mainest generals in de Union Army and some in de Rebel Army.

"After de war am over, we's turned loose, nowhere to go and nobody to help us. I couldn't go South, for dey calls me de traitor and sho' kill me iffen dey knows I fit for de North. I does any little job I can git for 'bout a year and fin'ly gits work on de railroad, in Stevenson, in Alabama. I works layin' new tracks and turn tables and sich."

Mrs. Ellen Cave, Ohio, age unknown

She said her master was a "mean man" who drank heavily. He had twenty slaves that he fed now and then, and gave her her freedom after the war only when she would remain silent about it no longer. He was a Southern sympathizer, but joined the Union army where he became a captain and was in charge of a Union commissary. Finally, he was suspected and charged with mustering supplies for the rebels. He was imprisoned, then court-martialed, and sentenced to die. He escaped by bribing his negro guard.

George Johnson, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 75

"My daddy got his leg shot in the Civil War. He said he was in that battle there in Richmond. I don't know which side he was on, but I know he got his leg shot off. He was one-legged. He never did get any pension. I don't know even whether he was really enlisted or not. All I know is that he got his leg shot off in the war."

Part Four

Ephriam (Mike) Lawrence, Edisto Island, South Carolina, age about 80

Interviewed by C. S. Murray

"I raise up under de Murray, all my generation belong to de Murray. Dey know how to treat slave. Ain't lick 'um much, hardly any. Chillun hab easy time. Behave yourself and you all right. Plenty to eat, plenty to drink. Run 'round and enjoy yourself if you got uh mind to. Wuk when you wuk, play when you play. All I been require to do was tote coal to Mosser when he ready fer light.

"But de slave who live dere had rough time when Ole Miss git in tantrum. She been use to trabbel all over de world, and when she come back, she call all de slave together, and say: 'When I come, de debbil come.'

"Old Mosser use to keep all de likker in de world on hand. Had to keep plenty, 'cause he friend drink lot and nigger drink lot too. He ain't drink so much heself.

"Mosser use to keep de whiskey down in de cellar by de barrel. He draw um off in bottle when he need 'um and take 'um upstairs. De nigger dat wuk 'round de house and de yaa'd help demself out de barrel when dey feel tired. Mosser 'spect dem to do dat. Dey 'title [entitled] to 'um. Whiskey been kinder ration in dem day.

"Old nigger call John Fraser been live on de place. When Mosser call fer 'he fine likker to hand 'round, John come back and tell him all gone. Mosser want to know why. John make reply: 'Why, Mosser you hab Mister Binyard to supper last night. You know how Mr. Binyard drink. Sometime he drink when your back t'un [turned]. He finish all dat good stuff. How you 'speck um to last?' Mosser scratch he haid, and say, yes he know how Mr. Binyard drink, and mebbe dats why de last bottle empty. He ain't satisfy, but he can't prove dat John drink 'um.

"One cold day, Mosser tell John Fraser to meet him on de corner Meeting and Broad wid de overcoat, 'cause he going out dat night. John been wid Abel Wright, and de two of dem walk down.

"John say to Abel: 'I cold as de debbil, and I going to ax Mosser fer he coat.'

"Abel say: 'You crazy. He sure ain't going to gib you he good new coat anyhow.'

"John say: 'You wait and see.'

"Soon Mosser come in sight. When he see John, he git mad right off 'cause John hab on he overcoat. Before he kin say uh wud [word], John speak up fast. He say: 'Yes, Mosser I got on your coat 'cause it mighty cold. Got to excuse old nigger. You hab 'nother coat. I ain't got nutting but dis here jumper. Go on home Mosser and git torrер [the other] coat. I going to keep dis. He jest fit me. Go on home.'

"Mosser study fer uh while, den he laugh. He see how keen de coat fit John, and he know it been cold sure 'nough. John look sekker (just like) dress up monkey in dat long tail overcoat, and dat make Mosser laugh all de more. So he tu'n round and go home, and John hab dat coat till he die.

"Old John Drayton was de smaa'test of all de nigger de Mosser's place. He wuk [work] so haa'd some time dat Mosser jest got to stop him, or he kill heself. I nebber see sech uh man fer wuk in all my life. Maussa t'ink uh lot ob 'um, 'cause he been uh good field hand, beside know lot 'bout cutting 'ood [wood] and building fence. And old John play fer all de dance on de plantation. He fair [really] mek fiddle talk. When Maussa gib uh dance, he always call 'pon John. Yas suh, dat man sure could play. W'en he saw down on de fiddle and pull out dat june [tune] 'Oh, de Monkey Marry to de Babboon Sister,' he mek paa'son [a parson] dance.

"One day, Mosser Murray send wud to John Drayton dat de cow break out ob de pasture, and he got to mend de fence quick. But John done promise some nigger on Fenwick Island to play fer uh dance, and he steal paa't and go [went away by stealth]. Dat been Friday night and Mosser say John got to finish de fence by sundown the next day.

"W'en Old John ain't show up Saturday morning, Mosser ax eb everybody where he been, and de nigger tell Mosser dat dey see him leabe in uh boat to go fish, and he ain't seen since. Mosser been worry den 'cause he t'ink John might be drown'. He 'gage [engage] four man to shoot gun all ober creek to mek John body rise. Atter dat, dey drag all 'bout in de gutter.

"Maussa gone bed wid heaby haa't [heart] 'cause he been very fond ob Old John.

"John come back from Fenwick Island early Monday morning; and 'fore day clean, he in de 'ood [wood] to cut fence rail.

"Now, one hundred rail been call uh good day wuk, but Old John decide he going to do better den dat. He find fibe [five] tree grow close togedder, and he cut piece out ob every one. Den he chop at the biggest tree till he fall, and dat tree knock all de rest ober wid 'um.

"W'en all dem tree fall togedder, it make sech uh noise, dat ole Mosser hear um in he bed and hasten to dress so he kin see w'at der go on in de woods. Mosser saddle de horse and ride 'till he git to de center ob de noise, and dere he see Old John cutting 'way like he crazy. Mosser been mad sure 'nough, but den he glad to see John ain't drown'. He staa't to say somet'ing; but Old John interrupt and sing out: 'Go 'way Mosser, I ain't got time to talk wid you now.'

"Old John den gather up five ax, and go to de five tree laying down on de ground. He dribe uh ax in ebery tree and den grab uh neaby maul. W'en Maussa look on, he tek de maul and run from one tree to torrer [one to the other] and quick as he hit de ax, de tree split wide open. Mosser staa't to say somet'ing 'gain, but John ain't let him talk. He say: 'Go on home to Missus, Mosser, I too 'shame. Great God, I too 'shame! Go on home.'

"Mosser tun (turn) 'round in he track and go home widout uh wud 'cause he see de old nigger ain't going to gib him any satisfaction 'bout Saturday. W'en he go back in de 'ood dat evening, he check up and find dat Old John done cut five hundred rail.

"Oh, dem been man in dose day, I tell you."

Africa

Silvia King, Texas, age uncertain

The interviewer called her a "French Negress," because she said she had once lived in France and still remembered things from what she called "the old country."

Her memory began not in Texas, but in Africa.

"I know I was borned in Morocco," she said, "in Africa, and was married and had three chillen befo' I was stoled from my husband."

She didn't know who had captured her.

"They took me to France," she said, "to a place called Bordeaux."

There she remembered being given coffee that made her lose consciousness.

“When I knows anything ’bout it,” she said, “I’s in de bottom of a boat with a whole lot of other niggers.”

The voyage seemed endless.

“It seem like we was in dat boat forever.”

Eventually the ship reached New Orleans. There Sylvia was placed naked on the slave auction block.

“They chains us,” she said, “and strips all our clothes off.”

Buyers examined them like livestock. If anyone resisted, the trader used a whip.

“I’s sold to a planter what had a big plantation in Fayette County, right here in Texas,” she said. “Marse Jones.”

Charlie Grant, Florence, South Carolina, age 85

"I hear dem tell dat my grandparents come from Africa. Dey fooled dem to come. De peoples go to Africa en' when dey go to dock, dey blow whistle en' de peoples come from all over de country to see what it was. Dey fool dem on de vessel en' give dem something to eat. Shut dem up en' don' let dem get out. Some of dem jump over board en' try to get home, but dey couldn' swim en' go down. Lots of dem still lost down dere in de sea. De peoples tell dem dey gwine bring dem to a place whe' dey can live."

Victor Duhon, Texas, age 97

Victor Duhon was born 97 years ago in Lafayette Parish, La., a slave of the Duhon family. His blue eyes and almost white skin are evidence of the white strain in his blood. Even after many years of association with English speaking persons, he speaks a French patois, and his story was interpreted by a Beaumont French teacher.

"My papa was Lucien Duhon and my mama Euripe Dupuis. I was born over in Louisiana in Lafayette Parish, between Broussard and Warville. I'm 97 years old now.

"I didn't have brothers or sisters, except half ones. It is like this, my mama was a house servant in the Duhon family. She was the hairdresser. One day she barbered master's son, who was Lucien. He says that he'll shave her head if she won't do what he likes. After that ,she is his woman till he marries a white lady.

"My mother's mother was stolen from Africa. She lived to be 125 years old. She died last year in April. I think I'll live long as she did.

"Madame Duhon was good to me. The only thing I did was look to my master's horse and be coachman for Madame.

"I had 22 years when war came. The war when the slaves were set free. I wasn't bothered about freedom. Didn't leave master till he died. Then I went to work for Mr. Polite Landry."

Luke D. Dixon, DeValls Bluff, Arkansas, age 81

"I used to set on Grandma's lap, and she told me about how they used to catch people in Africa. They herded them up like cattle and put them in stalls and brought them on the ship and sold them. She said some they captured they left bound till they come back, and sometimes they never went back to get them. They died.

"They had room in the stalls on the boat to set down or lie down. They put several together. Put the men to themselves and the women to themselves. When they sold Grandma and Grandpa at a fishing dock called New Port, Va., they had their feet bound down and their hands bound crossed, up on a platform. They sold Grandma's daughter to somebody in Texas. She cried and begged to let them be together. They didn't pay no 'tension to her. She couldn't talk but she made them know she didn't want to be parted. Six years after slavery they got together.

"When a boat was to come in, people come and wait to buy slaves. They had several days of selling. I never seen this but that is the way it was told to me.

"Grandpa was named Sam Abraham and Phillis Abraham was his mate. She was sold away from her husband to a speculator. Well, it was hard on the Africans to be treated like cattle.

"I have heard of folks being helped to run off. Grandma on mother's side had a brother run off from Dalton, Mississippi to the North. After the war he come to Virginia.

"Our master, Dixon, never told us we was free. But at the end of the year, he gave my father a gray mule he had ploughed for a long time and part of the crop.

"My parents was first married under a twenty-five cents license law in Virginia. After freedom they was remarried under a new law. They had fourteen children to my knowing. Susan Snow, Meridian, Mississippi, age 87

My ma tol' me how dey brought her from Africa. You know, like we say 'President' in dis country, well dey call him 'Chief' in Africa. Seem like de Chief made 'rangements wid some men an' dey had a big goober grabbin' for de young folks. Dey stole my ma an' some more

an' brung 'em to dis country."

Ellis Jefson, Hazen, Arkansas, age 77

"My father was a full blood African. His parents come from there and he couldn't talk plain.

"My great grandma was an Indian squaw. Mother was crossed with a white man. He was a Scotchman."

Henry Brown, South Carolina, born 1857

"My grandfather and grandmother were grown when they came from Africa, and were man and wife in Africa."

Reverend Eli Boyd, Somerville, South Carolina, born 1864

"I never learned to read until I was 26 years old. That was after I left the plantation. I was staying at a place washing dishes for Goodyear's at Sapville, Georgia, six miles from Waycross. I found a Webster's spelling book that had been thrown away, and I learned to read from that.

"I belong to a class of Negroes called Geechees. My grandfather was brought directly from Africa to Port Royal, South Carolina. My grandmother used to hold up her hand and look at it and sing out of her hand. She'd make them up as she would look at her hand. She sang in Geechee and also made rhymes and songs in English."

Anna Scott, Jacksonville, FL, age 91

Elias Mumford was Anna's step-father in Charleston, and after spending a year there with him, the entire family joined a colonizing expedition to West Africa. There were 650 in the expedition, and it left in 1867. Transportation was free.

The trip took several weeks, but finally the small ship landed at Grand Bassa. Mumford did not like the place, however, and continued on to Monrovia, Liberia. He did not like Monrovia, either, and tried several other ports before being told that he would have to get off. This was at Harper Cape, W. Africa.

Anna found other things besides happiness in her eight years in Africa. There were death, sickness, and pestilences. She mentions among the latter the African ants, some of which reached huge proportions. Driver ants were so large, powerful and stubborn that even bodies of water didn't stop them. They would join themselves together above the surface of the water and serve as bridges for the passage of the other ants. The Driver ants moved in swarms, and their approach could be seen at great distances. When they were seen to be coming toward a settlement, the natives would close their doors and windows and build fires around their homes to avoid them. These fires had to be kept burning for weeks.

Eight and more persons died a day from the African fever during the early colonization attempts. Three in Anna's family were victims of it. It was generally believed that if a victim of the fever became wet by dew he was sure to die.

After eight years Mumford and the remainder of his family returned to America. Anna married Robert Scott and moved to Jacksonville, where she has lived since.

Uncle Louis, Mobile, Alabama, age unknown

From "Old Plantation Days," an unpublished work by the Venerable David Elred Holt, late Archdeacon of the Sacramento Diocese (Protestant Episcopal) of California, and a native of Buffalo Plantation, near Natchez, Mississippi. Included in the WPA Slave Narratives.

Louis was a "Guinea nigger." His ancestors had been brought from the Guinea coast of Africa. He had the characteristic marks of his tribe—being short, strong and very black, with heavy neck, thick lips, flat nose and eyes like those of a hog. He had great knowledge of wild plants, claimed to understand the language of birds and beasts.

Old Louis was what was called a "runaway nigger." He would run away in the latter part of the summer once in every two or three years and come back in time to help dig sweet potatoes. I was out in the sweet potato patch one morning when he returned. The doctor was there, also. When Louis walked up he simply said, "Hello, Louis; are you well?"

"Yes sir, Marster."

"Well, take that basket and go to picking up potatoes." Not a word was said about his running away.

After the hands had knocked off work and Louis was sitting in front of his cabin, Marse Davie asked him, "Uncle Louis, what makes you run away? You don't get whipped or abused in any way."

The old slave scratched his grizzled head, puffed at his clay pipe and pondered the subject for some time before he replied, "Marse Davie, I does cause de woods seems to call me. When de fall insect's is singin' in de grass an' the 'simmons is gettin' soft an' de leaves is beginnin' to turn, I je's natcherly has ter go. De wild sloes [from the blackthorn bush], de red haws [fruit of the hawthorn tree] an' de crab apples is ripe. De walnuts an' de hickory nuts an de beach mast drappin' an de blue smoke comes over de woods, an' de woods birds an' de yard birds goes souf wid de cranes an' ducks an' wil' geese an' de blackbirds an' de crows goes in droves—it seem lack all dat is jes callin' me."

Josephine Howard, Texas, age unknown

Then she asked a question she had thought about all her life.

“Dey always done tell us it am wrong to lie and steal. But why did the white folks steal my mammy and her mammy?”

Her mother had told her the story.

They lived somewhere in Africa near the water. One day a man came ashore in a small boat and said there were presents waiting on a larger ship offshore. Most of the men of the village were away hunting. Leonora and her mother went out to the ship.

“They locks dem in a black hole,” Josephine said, “so dark you can’t see nothin’.”

"That was the worst stealing there was," she said.

The ship brought them to Mobile, Alabama. There Leonora—only about twelve years old -- was sold to Marse Tim Walton. Her mother died within a month and was buried in the slave graveyard.

Part Five

W. L. Bost, Asheville, North Carolina, age 88

Interviewed by Marjorie Jones

"My Massa's name was Jonas Bost. He had a hotel in Newton, North Carolina. My mother and grandmother both belonged to the Bost family. My ole Massa had two large plantations one about three miles from Newton and another four miles away. It took a lot of niggers to keep the work a goin' on them both. The women folks had to work in the hotel and in the big house in town.

"When I was a little boy, 'bout ten years, the speculators come through Newton with droves of slaves. They always stay at our place. The poor critters nearly froze to death. They always come 'long on the last of December so that the niggers would be ready for sale on the first day of January. Many the time I see four or five of them chained together.

"They never had enough clothes on to keep a cat warm—a thin dress and a petticoat and one underwear. I've seen the ice balls hangin' on to the bottom of their dresses as they ran along, jes' like sheep in a pasture 'fore they are sheared. They never wore any shoes. Jes' run along on the ground, all spewed up with ice. The speculators always rode on horses and drove the pore niggers. When they get cold, they make 'em run 'til they are warm again.

"The speculators stayed in the hotel and put the niggers in the quarters jes' like droves of hogs. All through the night I could hear them mournin' and prayin'. I didn't know the Lord would let people live who were so cruel. The gates were always locked, and they was a guard on the outside to shoot anyone who tried to run away. Lord miss, them slaves look jes' like droves of turkeys runnin' along in front of them horses.

"The ones 'tween 18 and 30 always bring the most money. The auctioneer he stand off at a distance and cry 'em off as they stand on the block. I can hear his voice as long as I live.

"If the one they going to sell was a young Negro man, this is what he say: 'Now gentlemen and fellow-citizens, here is a big black buck Negro. He's stout as a mule. Good for any kin' o' work, an' he never gives any trouble. How much am I offered for him?' And then the sale would commence, and the nigger would be sold to the highest bidder.

"If they put up a young nigger woman the auctioneer cry out: 'Here's a young nigger wench, how much am I offered for her?' The pore thing stand on the block a shiverin' an' a shakin' nearly froze to death. Many of the pore mothers beg the speculators to sell 'em with their

husbands, but the speculator only take what he want. So maybe the pore thing never see her husban' agin.

"Us pore niggers never 'lowed to learn anything. All the readin' they ever hear was when they was carried through the big Bible. The Massa say that keep the slaves in they places.

"They was one nigger boy in Newton who was terrible smart. He learn to read an' write. He take other colored children out in the fields and teach 'em about the Bible, but they forgit it 'fore the nex' Sunday.

Then the paddyrollers [patrollers] keep close watch on the pore niggers so they have no chance to do anything or go anywhere. They jes' like policemen, only worsen, 'cause they never let the niggers go anywhere without a pass from his master. If you wasn't in your proper place when the paddyrollers come, they lash you. The women got 15 lashes and the men 30. That is for jes bein' out without a pass. If the nigger done anything worse, he was taken to the jail and put in the whippin' post. They was two holes cut for the arms stretch up in the air and a block to put your feet in. Then they whip you with cowhide whip. An' the clothes shore never get any of them licks.

"I remember how they kill one nigger whippin' him with the bull whip. Many the pore niggers nearly killed with the bull whip, but this one die. He was a stubborn Negro and didn't do as much work as his Massa thought he ought to. He been lashed lot before. So they take him to the whippin' post, and then they strip his clothes off, and then the man stan' off and cut him with the whip. His back was cut all to pieces. The cuts about half inch apart. Then after they whip him, they tie him down and put salt on him. Then after he lie in the sun awhile they whip him agin. But when they finish with him, he was dead.

"Plenty of the colored women have children by the white men. She know better than to not do what he say. Didn't have much of that until the men from South Carolina come up here and settle and bring slaves. Then they take children what have they own blood and make slaves out of them. If the Missus find out she raise revolution. But she hardly find out. The white men not going to tell, and the nigger women were always afraid to. So they jes' go on hopin' that thing won't be that way always.

"Us niggers never have chance to go to Sunday School and church. The white folks feared for niggers to get any religion and education, but I reckon somethin' inside jes' told us about God and that there was a better place hereafter.

"We would sneak off and have prayer meetin'. Sometimes the paddyrollers catch us and beat us good, but that didn't keep us from tryin'. I remember one old song we use to sing when we meet down in the woods back of the barn. My mother she sing an' pray to the Lord

to deliver us out o' slavery. She always say she thankful she was never sold from her children, and that our Massa not so mean as some of the others. But the old song it went something like this:

Oh, mother let's go down, let's go down, let's go down, let's go down.

Oh, mother let's go down, down in the valley to pray.

As I went down in the valley to pray

Studyin' about that good ole way

Who shall wear that starry crown?

Good Lord show me the way."

"I don't remember much about the war. There was no fightin' done in Newton. Most of the people get everything jes' ready to run when the Yankee sojers come through the town. This was toward the las' of the war. Corse the niggers knew what all the fightin' was about, but they didn't dare say anything. The man who owned the slaves was too mad as it was; and if the niggers say anything, they get shot right then and thar.

"The sojers tell us after the war that we get food, clothes, and wages from our Massas else we leave. But they was very few that ever got anything. Our ole Massa say he not gwine pay us anything. Corse his money was no good, but he wouldn't pay us if it had been.

"Then after the war was over, we was afraid to move. Jes' like tarpins or turtles after 'mancipation. Jes' stick our heads out to see how the land lay.

"Then the Ku Klux Klan come 'long. They were terrible dangerous. They wear long gowns, touch the ground. They ride horses through the town at night. If they find a Negro that tries to get nervy or have a little bit for himself, they lash him nearly to death and gag him and leave him to do the bes' he can. Sometime they put sticks in the top of what they wear and set an extra head up there with scary eyes to scare the poor Negroes to death.

"Oh, Miss them was bad times, them was bad times. I know folks think the books tell the truth, but they shore don't. Us pore niggers had to take it all."

White Blood

James Calhart James, Baltimore, Maryland, age 92

"My father's name was Franklin Pearce Randolph of Virginia, a descendant of the Randolphs of Virginia who migrated to South Carolina and located near Fort Sumter, the fort that was surrendered to the Confederates in 1851 [sic. 1861] or the beginning of the

Civil War. My mother's name was Lottie Virginia James, daughter of an Indian and a slave woman, born on the Rapidan River in Virginia about 1823 or 24; I do not know which. She was a woman of fine features and very light in complexion with beautiful, long black hair. She was purchased by her master and taken to South Carolina when about 15 years old.

"She was the private maid of Mrs. Randolph until she [Mrs. Randolph] died and then continued as housekeeper for her master. While she was there and in that capacity I was born on the Randolph's plantation August 23, 1846.

"I was a half brother to the children of the Randolphs, four in number. After I was born mother and I lived in the servants' quarters of the big house, enjoying many pleasures that the other slaves did not: eating and sleeping in the big house, playing and associating with my half-brothers and sisters.

"My father told mother when I became of age, he was going to free me and send me north to be educated. But, instead, I was emancipated.

"During my slave days my father gave me money and good clothes to wear. I bought toys and games. My clothes were good both winter and summer and according to the weather.

"My master was my father; he was kind to me but hard on the field hands who worked in the rice fields. My mistress died before I was born. There were 3 girls and one boy. They treated me fairly good—at first or when I was small or until they realized their father was my father; then they hated me.

"We lived in a large white frame house containing about 15 rooms with every luxury of that day, my father being very rich.

"I could read and write when I was 12 years old. I was taught by the teacher who was the governess for the Randolph children. Mother could also read and write. There was no church on the plantation. The slaves attended church on the next plantation, where the owner had a large slave church. He was a Baptist preacher. I attended the white church with the Randolph children. I was generally known as and called Jim Randolph. I was baptised by the white Baptist minister and christened by a Methodist minister."

Sophie D. Bell, Forrest City, Arkansas, age 77

"One day a Frenchman (white) that was a doctor come to call. My Aunt Jane said to me, 'He is your papa. That is your papa.' I saw him many times after that. I am considered eight-ninths white race."

Betty Johnson, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 83

"I was born in Montgomery, Alabama, within a block of the statehouse. We were the only

colored people in the neighborhood. I am eighty-three years old. I was born free. I have never been a slave. I never met any slaves when I was small, and never talked to any. I didn't live near them and didn't have any contacts with them.

"My father carried my mother to Pennsylvania before I was born and set her free. Then he carried her back to Montgomery, Alabama, and all her children were born free there.

"We had everything that life needed. He was one of the biggest planters around in that part of the country and did the shipping for everybody.

"My father taken my oldest brother just before the Civil War and entered him in Yale and he stayed there till he finished. Later he became a freight conductor and lost his life when his train was caught in a cyclone. That's been years ago.

"We never had any kind of trouble with white people in slave time, and we never had any since. Everybody in town knowed us, and they never bothered us.

"We were always supported by my father. My mother did nothing at all except stay home and take care of her children. I had a father that cared for us. He didn't leave that part undone. He did his part in every respect. He sent every child away to school. He sent two to Talladega, one to Yale, three to Fiske, and one to Howard University.

"I don't remember much about how freedom came to the slaves. You see, we didn't live near any of them and wouldn't notice, and I was young anyway. All I remember is that when the army came in, everybody had a stick with a white handkerchief on it. The white handkerchief represented peace. I don't know just how they announced that the slaves were free."

Thomas Dixon, Winnsboro, South Carolina, age 75

"I was born in 1862, thirteen miles northeast of Columbia, South Carolina, on the border line of Kershaw and Fairfield Counties. My mother was a slave of Captain Moultrie Gibbes. My father was white, as you can see. My mother was the cook for my white folks; her name was Malinda. She was born a slave of Mr. Tillman Lee Dixon of Liberty Hill. After she learned to cook, my marster bought her from her master and paid \$1,200.00 for her. After freedom, us took the name of Dixon.

"My mistress in slavery time was Miss Mary. She was a Clark before she married Marse Moultrie. I was nothing but a baby when the war ended and freedom come to our race.

"My mother then went to Columbia, South Carolina, and I attended Benedict College. I became a preacher in 1886, the year of the earthquake. That earthquake drove many sinners to their knees, me amongst them; and, when I got up, I resolved to be a soldier of

the cross, and every since I have carried the shield of faith in my left hand and the sword of the Word in my right hand."

Willie Johnson, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 71

"My mother's old master was her father. I think my father's father was a Negro and his mother was an Indian. My mother's mother was an American woman, that is, a slavery woman. My mother and father were lucky in having good people. My mother was treated just like one of her master's other children. My father's master had an overseer, but he never was allowed to touch my father. Of course my mother never was under an overseer."

Ervin E. Smith, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 84

"My mother was three-fourths white. She come from the Indian tribe —old Catawba Indians. Her own daddy was a white man, but her Grand daddy on her mother's side was an Indian.

"I am told that the old fellow bought my mother when she was fifteen years old. Finally he got hold of both my father and my mother. Both of them put together didn't have half colored blood. He must have loved them a lot to work so hard to get them together.

"I never knew much about race troubles. The best friend I ever had was an old white grandmother. I was carefully shielded from all unpleasant things."

Charles Green Dortch, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 81

"My father's name was Reuben Rainey Dortch. He was an octoroon, I guess. He looked more like a Cuban than a Negro. He had beautiful wavy hair, naturally wavy. He was tall, way over six feet, closer to seven."

Mrs. Adrianna W. Kerns (sister of the above), age 85

"My father's father was a white man. He was named Wilson Rainey. I never did see him. My mother has said to me many a time that he was the meanest man in Dallas County.

"My mother's first child was her master's child. I was the second child. My father was Reuben Dortch who belonged to Colonel Dortch."

Minnie Johnson Stewart, Little Rock, Arkansas, age uncertain

"My mother was a real bright woman with great long black hair. Her master was her father. She told me that the overseer grabbed her by her hair and wound it 'round his arm and then grabbed her by the roots of it and jerked her down to the ground and beat her till the blood ran out of her nose and mouth. She was 'fraid to holler."

Anthony Taylor, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 68 or 78?

"I heard that if the boss man wanted to be with women that he had, the women would be

scared not to be with him for fear he would whip them. And when they started whipping them for that, they kept on till they got what they wanted. They would take them 'way off and have dealings with them. That is where so much of that yellow and half-white comes from."

Mrs. Ellen Cave, Jefferson County, Ohio, age unknown

Mrs. Cave said that her master's father had many young women slaves and sold his own half-breed children down the river to Louisiana plantations where the work was so severe that the slaves soon died.

Henri Necaise, Nicholson, Mississippi, age 105

"My Marster was Ursan Ladnier. De Mistis' name was Popone. Us was all French. My father was a white man, Anatole Necaise. I knowed he was my father, 'cause he used to call me to him an' tell me I was his oldes' son. I never knowed my mother. I was a slave, an' my mother was sol' from me an' her other chilluns."

Ben Kinchlow, Texas, age 91

"My mother was a half-breed Negro. My father was a white man of that same county. I don't know anything about my father. He was a white man, I know that. After I was borned and was one year old, my mother was set free and sent to Mexico to live."

Uncle Bob Samuels, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 90

"Sometime in 1816 my mother's mother, Armarilla, was born. She was Spanish. My mother says she was well educated. She came here from Cuba to Gaines Landing. Her husband and her son Edmin were with her. They crossed the Mississippi River, and stopped at the old De Soto camp.

"A short distance west of there, they met two men—Nick Trammel and John Morrow—who profitted [dealt] in Negro slaves. My grandfather and grandmother employed these men to guide them to Coola Fabre [Camden]. These men carried them to Waco, Texas. They killed my grandfather and kept my grandmother forcing her to marry either a half-breed Mexican, an Indian or a Negro. It was near Waco in Hickman Prairie that mother was born."

Angie Garrett, Livingston, Alabama, age 93

"But dey was a coal black free born nigger name George Wright, had a floatin' mill right here on de 'Bigbee River, stayed at de p'int of de woods jes' 'bove de spring branch, and hit did a good service. But he got in debt, and he sole [sold] his five boys. Dey was his own chillun, and he could sell 'em under de law. De names was Eber, Eli, Ezekiel, Enoch, and Ezra, an' he sole 'em ter de highes' bidder right yonder 'front of de Pos' Office for cash. "

Randall Lee, Palatka, Florida, age 77

"She [Randall's mother] was of fair complexion, having been the daughter of a half-breed Indian and Negro mother. Her father was white. Her native state was Virginia. She often boasted of her 'blue blood Virginia stock.'"

Aunt Harriet Miller, Toccoa, Georgia, age 100

"My father," said Aunt Harriet, "was a Cherokee Indian named Green Norris, and my mother was a white woman named Betsy Richards. You see, I am mixed. My mother give me to Mr. George Naves when I was three years old. He lived in de mountains of South Carolina, just across de river. He didn't own his home. He was overseer for de Jarretts, old man Kennedy Jarrett.

"Mr. Naves was a good man. Dese here Jarretts was good to deir slaves but de others was mean to deirs. My whitefolks tried to send me to school but de white folks wouldn't receive me in deir school on account of I was mixed, and dere warn't no colored school a t'all, nowhere."

Augustus Robinson, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 78

"My daddy was a white man, my master. His wife was so mean to me that my master sold me to keep her from beating me and kicking me and knocking me 'round. She would have killed me if she could have got the chance. My daddy sold me to a preacher who raised me as though I were his own son. Whenever he sat down to the table to eat, I sat down. He made no difference at all. He raised me in El Dorado, Arkansas. His name was James Goodwin. He sent me to school too.

"When Harrison and Cleveland ran for President, my [white] father came to Little Rock. Some colored people had been killed in the campaign fights, and he had been summoned to Little Rock to make some statements in connection with the trouble. He stopped at a prominent hotel and had me come to see him. When I went up to the hotel to meet him, there were a dozen or more white men at that place. When I shook hands with him, he said, 'Gentlemen, he's a little shady, but he's my son.' His name was Captain I.T. Robinson. He lived in Lisbon, Arkansas.

"My mother's name was Frances Goodwin. She belonged to Captain Robinson. I don't know but I think that when they came to Arkansas, they came from Georgia. They were refugees. When the War started, people that owned niggers ran from state to state to try to hold their niggers."

Part Six

Reverend James H. Johnson, Columbia, South Carolina, age 82

Interviewed by Stiles M. Scruggs

"My name is James H. Johnson. I was born December 20, 1855, at the town servants' quarters of Alfred Brevort at Camden, South Carolina. That was home until I was turning into twelve years of age. I was nearly ten years old when the army of General Sherman came to Camden. I talked to some of the soldiers, soon after they arrived.

"My mother was one of the maids at the Brevort home. My father was one of the overseers of the plantation. We had our own home-raised hams and plenty of food products in our quarters. When my mother and I heard shooting nearby, we stepped into the yard and saw a big number of soldiers shooting at a running white man of the community. They did not hit him. In a moment or two five soldiers strode into our yard. We were scared at first, but they told us they were friends, and one of them spied the hams and asked if they belonged to the big house. When told that they were ours, they said they were hungry, and mother fixed them a dinner of ham and eggs and plenty of other things. They thanked us and left, doing no harm.

"Before they left, I noticed a crowd of soldiers at the Brevort home. I ran there, and told the troops, please, to do no damage to the premises, as the mistress, then in charge, was the best friend my mother and I had ever had. They left soon afterward, showing no animus toward the Brevort family and taking nothing away.

"We did not hear about President Lincoln's freedom proclamation in 1863. The status quo of slavery kept right on as it had been until Sherman's army came through. General Lee surrendered the same spring, and we learned we were free.

"In 1866 my father bought four acres in the vicinity of Camden and improved it with a house and barn. We lived there for several years. My father went into the mercantile business in Camden and prospered. There I went to the public schools. We had teachers from the North, and I finished all the grades. There were no high schools in the state at that time.

"We never received any aid from the Freedmen's Bureau, for we did not need it. After I finished the public school work at Camden, I helped my father in his store for a time. I

entered the University of South Carolina, in October, 1874 and stayed there until 1877. There was a change in government in 1876, and Negroes were excluded from the university in 1877. [The election of 1876 ended Republican rule as well as Reconstruction in South Carolina]. I was in my junior year, when I left."

Mixed Politics

Jake McLeod, Timmonsville, South Carolina, age 83

"De McLeods, dey was good people. Believe in plenty work, but work us reasonable. De overseer, he blow horn for us to go to work at sunrise. Give us task to do; en' if you didn' do it, dey put de leather lash or whip to you.

"I thought my boss unmercifully whipped one man, but I found out dat it was reasonable. The slave had beat up my uncle. My boss stripped him down en' tied him wid buckskin string. Whipped him till he get tired en' come back en' whip him more.

"See him whip my mother one time 'cause she whip me. Caught her by de hand en' whip her right in de same field dat she whip me. She whip me 'cause I dug holes en' put my feet in de holes 'cause it was so hot.

"Dey didn' have no jails in dem days. I recollects one woman hanged on de gallows. Old woman named Peggy cookin' for de Scotts. Dey were mean to her, so she put poison in de coffee. Hang her by harness en' broke her neck.

"Dey turn de slaves loose to go to a hangin'. My mother walked 'bout 10 miles to see dat one. Said she saw Peggy sittin' on her coffin.

"I run away one time. Old Miss had me tied to de tester bedstead [canopy bed frame] en' she whip me till de whip broke. I see her gettin' another, en' I tear loose en' run away. I slip home to de steps at my mother's house. I lookin' down playin' wid de cat en' look up in her face. She say, 'You good for nothin'. You get out of here en' get to dat barn en' help dem shuck corn.'

"I don' remember freedom, but I know when we signed de contract, de Yankees tol' us dat we was free as our Massa was. Couldn' write, just had to touch de pin. Ask us what name we wanted to go in. We work on den for one third de crop de first year, wid de boss furnishing everything. Soon as got a little ahead went to share-cropping.

"It been a pretty hard time to be up against. When I get married in '76, my old boss, we all

went 'gether.

"Red Shirts canvassed the country. [During the 1876 election, Red Shirts were members of white supremacist clubs that tried to restore Democratic Party control.] People say de Democrats would bring back slavery. Some voted 8 or 10 tickets [voted multiple times]. I was on de stand when Hampton spoke in Sumter. Chamberlain was elected on de Republican ticket. Sam Lee one of de men. I believe he was colored. Wade Hampton have him brought on de stand en' ask questions. Ask what kind of Government it gwine be.

[Wade Hampton was a Confederate general and later a leading Democratic Party politician. Daniel Chamberlain was a Union officer who served as Republican governor of South Carolina 1874-1877. In the 1876 election both Hampton and Chamberlain claimed victory. Federal troops supported Chamberlain, who therefore governed until Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican, withdrew the troops as part of a compromise that won him the presidency after the disputed national election. Then Chamberlain was forced to resign, and Hampton became governor. That ended Republican rule and Reconstruction in South Carolina. Sam Lee, son of a free black woman, claimed to have fought on the side of the Confederacy. But in 1872, as a Republican, he was elected Speaker of the South Carolina House. Later he cooperated with the white Democratic post-Reconstruction establishment and became a successful lawyer.]

Madison Griffin, Whitmire, South Carolina, age 84

"I will be 85 years old dis coming August. My master said I was 14 years old de August coming after freedom.

"My master was Billy Scott, who had seven or eight hundred acres of land, and 48 slaves. He wouldn't have no white overseers, but had some nigger foremen dat sometimes whipped de niggers, and de master would whip dem, too.

"He was a fair man—not so good and not so mean. He give us poor quarters to live in, and sometimes plenty to eat, but sometimes we went hungry. He had a big garden, plenty cows, hogs and sheep. De most we had ter eat was corn, collards, peas, turnip-greens and home-made molasses. We had wheat bread on Sundays. It was made from flour grind at our own mill. We didn't have but one day off, that was Christmas Day and den we had to grind our axes.

"We made our clothes out of cotton and wool mixed, made dem at home wid our own cards and spinning wheels. We made our shoes out of leather tanned at home, but had to use woolen shoes after de war, which would wear out and split open in three weeks.

"My daddy was Amos Wilson, and mammy was Carline Griffin. I had some brothers and sisters. When freedom come, de master come to us and told us de damn Yankees done freed us. 'What you gwinter do? If you want ter stay on wid me, I will give you work.' We stayed fer awhile.

"The patrollers caught me once when I run off. I run fast and lost my hat and dey got it.

"I saw some slaves sold on de block. Dey was put in a ring and sold by crying out de price.

"We didn't learn to read and write, not allowed to. De niggers went to de corn shuckings and was give pumpkin custards to eat and liquor. Dey wasn't allowed to dance, but sometimes we had secret dances, shut up in de house so de master couldn't hear us.

"After de war, we went hunting and fishing on Sundays. We never had Saturday afternoons off. We killed wild deer and other things.

"We raised our own tobacco, the master did, for home use. Most always a small patch was planted.

"I went wid de Red Shirts [a white supremacist terror group], belonged to de company and went to meetings wid dem.

"I voted fer Hampton. [Confederate general, leader of Democratic Party who wanted to end Reconstruction and restore white supremacy in the state].

"Befo' dat, de Ku Klux had bad niggers dodging like birds in de woods. Dey caught some and threw dem on de ground and whipped dem. Dey caught a nigger preacher once and made him dance, put him in muddy water and walloped him around in de mud.

"I married Nancy Robinson who belonged to Robert Calmes. She was living at de Gillam place near Rich Hill.

"I joined de church when 28 years old, because I thought it was right. Wanted to git right and git to God's Kingdom. I think everybody ought to join de church.

"O' course I rather it not be slavery time, but I got more ter eat den dan now. Den we didn't know what ter do, but now we perish ter death."

Charley Barber, Winnsboro, South Carolina, age 81

"Out de fust money, I buys me a red shirt, and dat November I votes, and de fust vote I put in de box was for Governor Wade Hampton. Dat was de fust big thing I done."

Ed Barber, Winnsboro, South Carolina, age 77

"Dere Professor Benjamin Russell at Blackstock. You knows him. Then dere was Ouillah Harrison, dat own a four-hoss team and a saddle hoss, in Red Shirt days. One time de brass band at Winnsboro wanted to go to Camden to play at de speakin' of Hampton. He took de whole band from Winnsboro to Camden, dat day, free of charge. Ah! Dere was horns a blowin', drums a beatin', and people a shoutin': 'Hurrah for Hampton!' Some was a singin': 'Hang Dan Chamberlain on a Sour Apple Tree'.

"Ouillah come home and found his wife had done had a boy baby. What you reckon? He name dat boy baby, Wade Hampton. When he come home to die, he lay his hand on dat boy's head and say: 'Wade, 'member who you name for and always vote a straight out Democrat ticket'. Which dat boy did!"

Richard Mack, Charleston, South Carolina, age 104

"The time Capt. Wade Hampton was stumping, I followed him all over the State. I led 500 head, was with him to Camden, Orangeburg and all the way to Hampton County; led 500 Negroes through the County. I was Captain of them. I rode 'Nellie Ponsa' and wore my red jacket and cap and boots. I had a sword too. My 'red shirt' died year before last."

Asked if he knew 'Riley', Mack answered promptly, "'Democrat Riley', yes Ma'am, used to drive that fine carriage, and old Col. Cunningham's family." Riley was an ex-slave, a tall black man, devoted to the South, as he was, a Democrat of high principle, and respected by all, hated by many, a power in himself. [Henry Riley was a black state legislator in South Carolina during Reconstruction.]

Pet Franks, Aberdeen, Mississippi, 92

"After de war de Yankees called deyse'ves 'Publicans. Dey come down here an' wanted all de Niggers to vote de 'Publican ticket. Den, lemme tell you, I went to work for my white folks. Dey was a-holdin' big meetin's an' speakin's, but I was workin', too. On 'lection day I brung in 1500 Niggers to vote de Democrat ticket. De folks what saw us comin' over de hill say us look like a big black cloud. I reckon us sounded lak one wid all dat hollerin' an' shoutin'."

James Lucas, Natchez, Mississippi, age 105

"De bes' I 'member my nex' Marster was Pres'dent Jefferson Davis hisse'f. Only he warnt no pres'dent den. He was jus' a tall quiet gent'man wid a pretty young wife what he married in Natchez. Her name was Miss Varina Howell, an' he sho' let her have her way. I spec I's de only one livin' whose eyes ever seed 'em bofe. I talked wid her when dey come in de big steamboat. 'Fore us got to de big house, I tol' her all 'bout de goins'-on on de plantations. She was a fine lady. When I was a boy 'bout thirteen years old dey took me up de country

toward Vicksburg to a place call Briarsfield. It mus'-a been named for her old home in Natchez what was called 'de Briars.' I didn' b'long to Marse Jeff no great while, but I aint never fo'git de look of 'im. He was always calm lak an' savin' on his words. His wife was jus' de other way. She talked more dan a-plenty."

Alonza Fantroy Toombs (Uncle Lon), Georgia, age unknown

"'Missy,' said Alonza Fantroy Toombs, 'I'se de proudest nigger in de worl', 'caze I was a slave belonging to Marse Robert Toombs of Georgia: de grandest man dat ever lived, next to Jesus Christ. He was de bes' stump speaker in de State, an' he had mo' frien's dan a graveyard has ghosts.

"He was sho' a kin' man, an' dere warn't no one livin' who loved his 'Missy' wife an' home mo' dan Marse Bob.'" Uncle Lon continued, "I useta see him a-walkin' down de road in de early mornin' an' I knowed it were him f'um a long distance, 'caze he was so tall. I guess you knowed all 'bout his a-servin' in de State legislature an' in de United States Congress an' a-bein' a gen'l in de war an' him bein' de secretary of State in de 'federacy.

"My pappy was a preacher an' Marse Bob learnt him to read and write, an' would let him go f'um plantation to plantation on de Sabbath Day a-preachin' de gospel. He was Marse Bob's carriage driver.

"Atter de S'render, nary a slave lef' Marse Bob. He gib eve'y nigger over twenty-one a mule, some lan' an' a house to start off wid."

[Robert Toombs was a leading Confederate politician who opposed Black citizenship and equality.]

Part Seven

Jim Taylor, Baltimore, Maryland, age 91

Jim Taylor, known to many as Uncle Jim, was born near St. Michaels in Talbot County on Maryland's Eastern Shore around 1847. His parents belonged to a man named Mr. Davis, who owned several tugs and small sail boats. In the summer, the boats were used to haul produce while the tugs were used for towing coal and lumber on the Chesapeake Bay and the small rivers on the Eastern Shore.

"Mr. Davis bought able-bodied colored men for service on the sail boats which were about 50 or 60 feet long. On each boat, besides the Captain, there were 6 to 10 men."

He described in detail his escape from slavery as a small boy.

"A man by the name of Robinson who was in the coal business at Havre de Grace engaged Mr. Davis to tow several barges of soft coal to St. Michaels. We arrived at Havre de Grace on July 4th. That being a holiday, we had to wait until the 5th, before we could start towards St. Michaels.

"Mr. Tuttle, the captain of the tug, didn't sleep on the boat that night, but went to a cock fight. The colored men decided to escape and go to Pennsylvania. They ran the tug across the bay to Elk Creek, and upon arriving there they beached the tug on the north side, and followed a stream that Harriett Tubman had told them about.

"After traveling about seven miles, they approached a house situated on a large farm which was occupied by one of the deputy sheriffs of the county. The deputy told them they were under arrest. But one of the escaping man seized him from the rear. After he was thrown, they tied him, then we continued on the road to Pennsylvania.

"We reached Pennsylvania about dawn. After we had gone some distance in Pennsylvania, three men with guns overtook us. But five men and one woman from Pennsylvania with guns and clubs stopped them."

Meanwhile, a sheriff and two of his deputies came up. The sheriff took the slaves from the three men, saying he had to hold them for the authorities of the county. The sheriff took them about 15 miles further in Pennsylvania and then told them to go to Chester where they would be safe.

"Mr. Davis came to Chester with Mr. Tuttle to claim the escaping slaves. They were badly

beaten, Mr. Tuttle receiving a fractured skull.

"There were several white men in Chester who were very much interested in colored people. They gave us money to go to Philadelphia. After arriving in Philadelphia, we went to Allen's Mission, a colored church that helped escaping slaves.

"I stayed in Philadelphia until I was about 19 years old. By then all the colored people were free. I returned to Talbot, and remained there until 1904, when I came to Baltimore where I secured a job with James Hitchens, a colored man, who had six furniture vans drawn by two horses each and sometimes by three and four horses. Mr. Hitchens' office and warehouse were on North Street near Pleasant. I stayed there with Mr. Hitchens until he sold his business to Mr. O. Farror.

"In March I will be 90 years old. I am the father of nine children, have been married twice and I'm grandfather to twenty-three granddaughters and grandsons and forty-five great grand-children.

"While in Philadelphia I attended free school for colored children conducted at Allen's Mission. Since then I have always been fond of reading. My favored books are the *Bible*, *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the lives of Napoleon, Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, and church magazines and *The Afro-American*."

Escape

Reverend Silas Jackson, Baltimore, Maryland, age 90

"I was born at or near Ashbie's Gap in Virginia, either in the year of 1846 or 47. I do not know which, but I will say I am 90 years of age. My father's name was Sling and mother's Sarah Louis. They were purchased by my master from a slave trader in Richmond, Virginia.

"My grandfather ran away through the aid of Harriet Tubman and went to Philadelphia and saved \$350, and purchased my grandmother through the aid of a Quaker or an Episcopal minister, I do not know. I have on several occasions tried to trace this part of my family's past history, but without success.

"I was nine years old when my task began and continued until 1864. You see, I was a slave.

"My master was named Tom Ashbie, a meaner man was never born in Virginia--brutal, wicked and hard. He always carried a cowhide with him. If he saw anyone doing something that did not suit his taste, he would have the slave tied to a tree, man or woman, and then would cowhide the victim until he got tired, or sometimes, the slave would faint.

"There was a stone building on the farm. The old jail, it is now used as a garage. The

whipping was done downstairs. Upstairs was for women and girls. The iron bars have corroded, but you can see where they were. I have never seen slaves sold on the farm, but I have seen them taken away, and brought there. Several times I have seen slaves chained when taken away and chained when they came.

"There were a number of slaves on our plantation who ran away, some were captured and sold to a Georgia trader, others who were never captured. To intimidate the slaves, the overseers were connected with the patrollers, not only to watch our slaves, but sometimes for the rewards for other slaves who had run away from other plantations.

"On Christmas day Mr. Ashbie would call all the slaves together, give them presents and money, and after that they spent the day as they liked. On New Year's day we all were scared. That was the time for selling, buying and trading slaves. We did not know who was to go or come."

Amanda Rosa, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 82

"I knowed one gal that ran away in the winter time and she went up into the hollow of a tree for protection. When she came in, she was in sich a bad condition they had to cut off both her legs. They had froze out there. They taken care of her. They wanted her to work. She was jus' as nice a seamstress as you ever saw. And she could do lots of things. She could get about some. She could go on her knees. She had some pads for them and was just about as high as your waist when she was goin' along on her hands and knees, swinging her body between her arms."

Ida Blackshear Hutchinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas, age 73

"My grandfather on my father's side was the father of fifty-six children and was known as the Giant Breeder. He was bought and given to his young mistress in the same way you would give a mule or colt to a child

"Isom Blackshear, his son and my father, ran away three times.

Up until he was eighteen, he was a field hand. He would help his wife in the field because she couldn't keep up with the others and he wanted to keep the overseer from whipping her. He'd take her beside him and do his row and hers too. He was the fastest worker on the place.

"The overseer told him to not do that. But Isom just kept on doing it anyway. Then the overseer asked Isom for his shirt. (When they whipped you them days they didn't whip you on your clothes because they didn't want to wear them out.) Isom said he was not going to take off his shirt because his mistress gave it to him and he wasn't going to give it to anybody else.

"When Isom just kept hoeing, the overseer stepped 'round in front of him to stop him and Isom caught the overseer's feet in his hoe, dumped him down on the ground, and went on hoeing his own row and his wife's.

"The overseer went for his master. His master came out the next morning and said, "Isom, they tell me you can't be whipped."

"I'd be willing to be whipped if I'd done anything."

"Huh!" said my master, "Right or wrong, if my overseer asked you for your shirt, give it to him."

"Master held a pistol on him. They made him pull off his shirt and tied him up to a gin post. The overseer hit him five times and kept him there till noon trying to get him to say that he would give his shirt to him the next time. Finally, Isom promised and the overseer untied him. When the overseer untied him, Isom took his shirt in one hand and the overseer's whip in the other and whipped him almost all the way to the big house. Then he ran away and stayed in the woods for three or four days until his old master sent word for him to come on back and he wouldn't do nothing to him.

"When he went back, his master took him off field work because he and my father was nursed together and he didn't want Isom killed. From that time on, he worked as a general mechanic. Since his wife couldn't chop cotton fast enough and they couldn't handle Isom as long as she was in the field, they put her to washing, and ironing, and cooking, and milking.

"The second time father ran away was when they missed some groceries out of the storeroom. Master asked him if he took them because he made the keys to the place and not a person on the place but him could know anything about getting in there. He didn't own it, so they tied him up and whipped him two days.

"When night came, they tied him in his house, and he didn't try to get loose because he knowed if he did they would whip his wife.

At noon time when they went to get the dinner, they poured three buckets of water in his face and almost drowned him. Then after dinner they came back and whipped him again.

Finally he said, 'I didn't do it but nothing will suit you but for me to say I did, so I will say I did it.'

"A few days later Mr. Horn who owned the adjoining plantation came over and asked him if he had missed anything, any rations he said. Old master told him 'Yes' and went on to

explain what had been taken and what he had done about it. Then Mr. Horn took Mr. Blackshear over to his house and showed him the rations and they were the ones he had whipped my old father about.

"Then Blackshear came back and told my father that he was sorry, that he never had known him to steal anything. He turned him loose and apologized to him but he made him work with the bloody shirt that they whipped him in sticking to his back.

"The third time he ran off he was in the Army working on the batteries at Vicksburg. He worked there till he got to thinking about his wife and children, and then he ran off. When he got tired and hungry, he went to Mopilis and give himself up. The jailer written to his mistress, about it; and she got her father to go and see about him and bring him home.

"They'd had a big storm. The houses were in bad shape. The fences was blown down. The plows was broken or dull and needed fixin'. And they were so glad to see Isom that they didn't whip him nor nothin' for runnin' away."

Felix Haywood, Texas, age 92

From time to time someone passed through urging the slaves to run north to freedom. Felix remembered that the idea made them laugh.

"There wasn't no reason to run north. All we had to do was walk south. Cross the Rio Grande and you was free in Mexico. They didn't care what color you was there—black, white, yellow, or blue. Lots of slaves went to Mexico and done all right."

Part Eight

William Davis, Texas, age 93

"Well, suh, jes' sit down in de chair yonder, and I'll tell you what I can 'bout times back yonder. Let's see, now. I was born on de first day of April in 1845. Mammy done told me I was born den, on de Tennessee river, near Kingston. I heared her say de turnpike what run past Massa John's house dere goes over de mountain to Bristol, over in Virginny. Mammy and pappy and all us chillen 'long to de Drapers. Massa Jonathan what us call Massa John, and he wife, Miss Lizzie, and we is de only cullud folks what dey owns.

"Massa John am de Baptist preacher, and while I'm sho' glad to see my folks sot free, I'll tell de truth and say Massa John and Miss Lizzie was mighty good to us. Dey have four chillen: Massa Milton, what am oldes' and kill in de first battle; Massa Bob and Massa George and Massa Canero. Oh, yes, dey have one gal, Missy Ann.

"Course us didn't have no last names like now. Mammy named Sophie and pappy named Billy. Sometimes de owners give de slaves last names 'cordin' to what dey do, like pappy was meat cook and mammy cook pies and cakes and bread, so dey might have Cook for de last name.

"We has a bigger family dan Massa John, 'cause dey eight of us chillen. I ain't seen none of dem since I lef' Virginny in 1869.

"I heared Miss Lizzie tell some white folks dat my mammy and pappy give to her by her pappy in Alabama when she get married. Dat de custom with rich folks den, and mammy 'long to de Ames, what was Miss Lizzie's name 'fore she marry. I heared her say when de stars falls, she was 'bout eighteen, and dey think de world am endin'. [In 1833 hundreds of thousands of meteors per hour fell in North America].

"Pappy was a Indian. I knows dat. He came from Congo, over in Africa, and I heared him say a big storm druv de ship somewhere on de Ca'lina coast. I 'member he mighty 'spectful to Massa and Missy, but he proud, too, and walk straighter'n anybody I ever seen. He had scars on de right side he head and cheek what he say am tribe marks, but what dey means I don't know.

""Bout de first I 'members real good am where we am in Virginny and Massa John runs de Washington College, in Washington County. I 'member all de pupils eats at massa's house and dat de first job I ever had. I keeps de flies from lightin' while folks am eatin'. 'Ceptin' dat, all I does is play round with Massa George and Missy Ann.

"Dey ain't no whuppin' on our place; and on Sunday us all go to church, and Massa John do de preachin'. Dey rides in de buggy and us follow in de wagon. De white folks sets in front de church and us in back.

"I can't tell you how long us stay at de college, 'zactly, but us moves to Warm Springs to take de baths and drink de water, in Scott County. Dat two, three years befo' de war, and Massa John run de hotel and preach on Sunday. I think dere am three springs, one sulphur water and one lime water and one a warm spring. I does a little bit of everything round de hotel, helps folks off de stage, wait on table, and sich. When I hears de horn blow—you know, de stage driver blow it when dey top de hill 'bout two miles 'way, to let you know dey comin'-- I sho' hustle round and git ready to meet it, 'cause most times folks what I totes de grips for gives me something. Dat de first money I ever seed. Some de folks gives me de picayune—dat what us call a nickel now, and some gives me two shillin's, what same as two-bits now. A penny was big den, jes' like a two-bit piece now.

"But when war begin 'tween de Yankees and de South, it sho' change everything up, 'cause folks quit comin' to de Springs, and de soldiers takes over de place. Massa Milton go to jine de South Army and gits kill. Morgan and he men make de Springs headquarters most de war, till de Yankees come marchin' through toward de last part.

"I know pappy say dem Yankees gwine win, 'cause dey allus marchin' to de South, but none de South soldiers marches to de North. He didn't say dat to de white folks, but he sho' say it to us. When de Yankees come marchin' through, de Morgan soldiers jes' hide out till dey gone. Dey never done no fightin' round Warm Springs. Lots of times dey goes way for couple weeks and den comes back and rests awhile.

"Den one mornin'-- I 'members it jes' like it yestiddy, it de fourth of July in 1865—Miss Lizzie say to me, 'Willie, I wants you to git you papa and de rest de family and have dem come to de porch right away.'

"I scurries round quick like and tells dem; and she comes out of de house and says, 'Now, de Yankees done sot you free, and you can do what you wants. But you gwineter see more carpet baggers and liars dan you ever has seed; and you'll be worse off den you ever has been, if you has anythin' to do with dem.

"Den she opens de book and tells us all when us born and how old us am, so us have some record 'bout ourselves. She tells me I'm jes' nineteen and one fourth years old when I'm sot free.

"She tell pappy Massa John want to see him in de house. And when he comes out, he tells us Massa John done told him to take a couple wagons and de family and go to de farm 'bout

ten miles 'way on Possum Creek and work it and stay long as he wants.

"Massa has us load up one wagon with 'visions [provisions]. Pappy made de first crop with jes' hoes, 'cause us didn't have no hosses or mules to plow with. Us raise jes' corn and some wheat, but dey am fruit trees, peaches and apples and pears and cherries. Massa John pay pappy \$120 de year, 'sides us 'visions, and us stays dere till pappy dies in 1868.

"Den I heared 'bout de railroad what dey buildin' at Knoxville, and I leaves de folks and gits me de job totin' water. Dey asks my name, and I says William Davis, 'cause I knows Mr. Jefferson Davis am President of de South durin' de war, and I figgers it a good name.

"In 1869 I goes to Nashville and 'lists in de army. I'm in de 24th Infantry, Company G, and us sent to Fort Stockton to guard de line of Texas, but all us do am build 'dobe houses. Col. Wade was de commander de fort, and Cap'n Johnson was captain of G. Co.

"Out dere I votes for de first time, for Gen. Grant, when Greeley and him run for president. But I gits sick at de Fort and am muster out in 1870 and comes to Houston.

"I gits me de deckhand job on de Dinah, de steamboat what haul freight and passengers 'tween Galveston and Houston. Den I works on de Lizzie, what am a bigger boat. Course, Houston jes' a little bit of place to what it am now—dey wasn't no git buildin's like dey is now; and mud, I tell you de streets was jes' like de swamp when it rain.

"Long 'bout 1875 I gits marry to Mary Jones, but she died in 1883 and I gits marry 'gain in 1885 to Arabelle Wilson and has four girls and one boy from her. She died 'bout ten years back.

"Course, us cullud folks marry jes' like white folks do now, but I seen cullud folks marry 'fore de war and massa marry dem dis way: dey goes in de parlor and each carry de broom. Dey lays de brooms on de floor and de woman put her broom front de man, and he put he broom front de woman. Dey face one 'nother and step 'cross de brooms at de same time to each other and takes hold of hands and dat marry dem. Dat's de way dey done, sho', 'cause I seed my own sister marry dat way.

"I has wished lots of times to go back and see my folks, but I never has been back and never seed dem since I left, and I guess dey am all gone 'long 'fore now.

"I has jobbed at first one thing and 'nother; and, like pappy tells me, I has trials and tribulations. I has good chillen what ain't never got in no trouble and what all helps take care dere old pappy, so I guess I ain't got no complainin' 'bout things.

"I dreams sometimes 'bout de peach trees and de pear trees and de cherry trees and I'd

give lots to see de mountains 'gain, 'cause when de frost come, 'bout now, de leaves on de trees put on pretty colors and de persimmons and nuts is ready for pickin', and a little later on us kill de hawgs [hogs] and put by de meat for de winter.

"De Lawd forgive me for dis foolishness, 'cause I got a good home, and has all I need, but I gits to thinkin' 'bout Virginny sometimes and my folks what I ain't seed since I left, and it sho' make me want to see it once more 'fore I die.

Ku Klux Klan

Ida Blackshear Hutchinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas, age 73

"I have seen the Ku Klux. I have washed their regalia and ironed it for them. They wouldn't let just anybody wash and iron it because they couldn't do it right. My son's wife had a job washing and ironing for them and I used to go down and help her. I never did take a job of any kind myself because my husband didn't let me.

"The regalia was white. They were made near like these singing robes the church choirs have. But they were long—come way down to the shoe tops. That was along in the nineties—about 1890. It was when they revived the Ku Klux the last time before the World War. In the old days the patrollers used to whip them for being out without a pass, but the Ku Klux used to whip them for disorderly living.

"Way back yonder when I was in Alabama, too, I can remember the Ku Klux riding. I was a little child then. The Republicans and Democrats were at war with each other then, and they was killing everybody.

"My brother was one of them they run. He could come out in the daytime; but in the night, he would have to hide. They never got him. He dodged them. That was 'round in 1874.

"In 1875, him and my uncle left Alabama and went to Louisiana. They called him a stump speaker. They wanted to kill him.

"They killed Tom Ivory. He was the leader of the Republicans—he was a colored man. His father was white but his mother was a Negro. His father educated him in slavery time. He had been up North and was coming back. They knew he was coming back, so they went up the creek and waited for him—his train. They flagged it down, and someone on the train commenced hollering, 'Look yonder.' Ivory stepped out on the platform to see what they were hollering about, and all them guns started popping, and Ivory fell over the end of the platform and down on the ground. He was already leaning over the gate when they fired. Then they come up and cut his tongue out before he died. They said if they got him that would stop all the rest of the niggers. You see, he was a leader.

"Niggers was voting the Republican ticket 'long about that time. They just went in gangs riding every night--the Ku Klux did. Ku Kluxing and killing them they got hold of.

"The police arrested all the men that had anything to do with Tom Ivory's killing. The leader of the killers was a white man they called Captain Hess. I never knowed how the trial came out because we left there while they was still in jail.

"We left Alabama in the same year Tom Ivory got killed. More than fifty colored people left on the train and come off when we did. People was leaving Alabama something terrible. I never did know what happened to Tom's killers. I heard afterwards that Alabama got broke, they had to pay for so many men they killed."

F. H. Brown, North Little Rock, Arkansas, age 75

"I was right smart size when I saw the Ku Klux. They would whip men and women that weren't married and were living together. On the first day of January, they would whip men and boys that didn't have a job. They kept the Negroes from voting. They would whip them. They put up notices, 'No niggers to come out to the polls tomorrow.'

"They would run them off of government land which they had homesteaded. Sometimes they would just persuade them not to vote. A Negro like my father, they would say to him, 'Now, Brown, you are too good to get messed up. Them other niggers 'round here ain't worth nothing, but you are, and we don't want to see you get hurt. So you stay 'way from the polls tomorrow.' And tomorrow, my father would stay away, under the circumstances.

"They had to depend on the white people for counsel. They didn't know what to do themselves. The other niggers they would threaten them and tell them if they came out they would kill them."

Solbert Butler, Scotia, South Carolina, age 82

"When I was a boy on de 'Gilmore place', de Ku Klux would come along at night a riding de niggers like dey was goats. Yes sir, dey had 'em down on all-fours a crawling, and dey would be on dere backs.

"Dey would carry de niggers to Turk Creek bridge and make dem set up on de bannisters of de bridge; den dey would shoot 'em offen de bannisters into de water. I 'clare dem was de awfulest days I ever is seed.

"A darky name Sam Scaife drifted a hundred yards in de water downstream. His folks took and got him outen dat bloody water and buried him on de bank of de creek. De Ku Klux would not let dem take him to no graveyard. Fact is, dey would not let many of de niggers take de dead bodies of de folks no whars. Dey just throwed dem in a big hole right dar and

pulled some dirt over dem. Fer weeks atter dat, you could not go near dat place, kaise it stink so fer and bad.

"Sam's folks, dey throwed a lot of 'Indian-head' rocks all over his grave, kaise it was so shallah, and dem rocks kept de wild animals from a bothering Sam. You can still see dem rocks, I could carry you dere right now.

"Another darky, Eli McCollum, floated about three and a half miles down de creek. His folks went dere and took him out and buried him on de banks of de stream right by de side of a Indian mound. You can see dat Indian mound to dis very day. It is big as my house is, over dere on de Chester side.

"De Ku Klux and de niggers fit [fought] at New Hope Church. A big rock marks de spot today. De church, it done burnt down.

"De big rock sets about seven miles east of Lockhart on de road to Chester. De darkies killed some of de Ku Klux and dey took dere dead and put dem in Pilgrims Church. Den dey sot [set] fire to dat church and it burnt everything up to de very bones of de white folks. Ever since den, dat spot has been known as 'Burnt Pilgrim'. De darkies left most of de folks right dar fer de buzzards and other wild things to eat up.

"Kaise [in case] dem niggers had to git away from dar and dey didn't have no time fer to fetch no word or nothing to no folks at home, dey had a hiding place not fer from 'Burnt Pilgrim'.

"A darky name Austin Sanders, he was carr'ing some victuals to his son. De Ku Klux cotch him and dey axed him whar he was a gwine. He 'lowed dat he was a setting some bait fer coons. De Ku Klux took and shot him and left him lying right in de middle of de road wid a biscuit in his dead mouth.

Mingo White, Tuscumbia, Alabama, age unknown

"We kep' movin' an' makin' share crops 'twell [until] us saved up 'nough money to rent us a place an' make a crop fer ouse'ves. Us did right well at dis until de Ku Klux got so bad, us had to move back wid Mr. Nelson for protection. De mens that took us in was union men. Dey lived here in the South but dey tooken us part in de slave business. De Ku Klux threat to whup Mr. Nelson 'case he took up fer de niggers. Heap uv nights we would hear of the Ku Klux comin' an' leave home. Sometimes us was scared not to go an' scared to go 'way from home.

"One day I borrowed a gun frum Ed Davis to go squ'el huntin'. When I taken de gun back I didn't unload hit lack I allus been doin'. Dat night de Ku Klux called on Ed to whup him.

When dey tol' him to open de do', he heard one of 'em say, 'Shoot him time he gits de do' open.' Well, he says to 'em,' wait 'twell I kin light de lamp.' Den he got de gun what I had lef' loaded, got down on his knees an' stuck hit th'ough a log an' pull de trigger. He hit Newt Dobbs in de stomach an' kilt him. He couldn't stay 'roun' Burleson any mo', so he come to Mr. Nelson an' got 'nough money to git to Pine Bluff, Arkansas. The Ku Klux got bad sho' 'nough den and went to killin' niggers an' white folks, too.

John Hill, Athens, Georgia, age 74

"One time de Kluxers come by our place on de way to beat a old Nigger man. I begged 'em to lemme go wid 'em, an' atter a while dey said I could go.

"Dere wuz horns on de mask dey kivered up my head wid an' I wuz mighty skeered but I didn't say nothin'. Atter us got dar, dey tied de old man up by his hands to de rafters in his house. He wuz beggin' 'em to let him off an' yellin' 'O Lordy, have mussy!'

"Dere wuz a little gal dar an' I wanted to skeer her, so I started atter her, an' de old man tole her to hit me on de head. She picked up a shovel an' th'owed it an' cut my leg so wide open de blood just spilt down on de floor. I got so bad off dey had to take me back to old Marster, an' he fix me up.

"I nebber did wanten go wid dem Kluxers no more."

Sam Kilgore, Texas, age 92

"Befo' we moved to Texas de Ku Kluxers done burn my mammy's house and she lost everything. Dey was 'bout \$100 in greenbacks in dat house and a three hundred pound hawg in de pen, what die from de heat. We done run to Massa Rodger's house. De riders gits so bad dey come most any time and run de cullud folks off for no cause, jus' to be orn'ry and plunder de home. But one day I seed Massa Rodgers take a dozen guns out his wagon, and he and some white men digs a ditch round de cotton field close to de road. Couple nights after dat de riders come and when dey gits near dat ditch a volley am fired and lots of dem draps off dey hosses. Dat ended de Klux trouble in dat section."

Richard Miller, Marion County, Indiana, age 95

"George Band was a very powerful slave, always ready to fight, never losing a fight, always able to defend himself until one night a band of Ku Kluxers came to his house, took his wife, hung her to a tree, hacked her to death with knives. Then went to the house, got George, took him to see what they had done to his wife. He asked them to let him go back to the house to get something to wrap his wife in Thinking he was sincere in his request, they allowed him to go. Instead of getting a wrapping for his wife, he got his Winchester rifle,

shot and killed fourteen of the Kluxers. The county was never bothered with the Klan again. However, George left immediately for the North."

Henry Blake, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 80

"That gang that got after you if you let the sun go down while you were out—that's called the Pateroles [Patrollers]. Some folks call 'em the Ku Klux. It was all the same old poor white trash. They kept up that business for about ten years after the War. They kept it up till folks began to kill up a lot of 'em. That's the only thing that stopped them. My daddy used to make his own bullets."

Will Burks, Senior, Pine City, Arkansas, age 75

"Ku Klux come to our house and took my papa off wid 'em. Mama was cryin', she told us children they was goiner hurt him. I recollect all bout it. They thought my papa knowed about some man bein' killed. My papa died wid knots on his neck where they hung him up wid ropes. It hurt him all his life after that. It made him sick what all they done to him tryin' to make him tell who killed somebody. He was laid up a long time. I recollect that. When they found out papa didn't know nothin' bout it, they said they was sorry they done him so mean."

Booker T. Washington

Prince Johnson, Clarksdale, Mississippi, age unknown

"I know all 'bout Booker T. Washington. He come to de state o' Mississippi once an' hel' a meetin' in Jackson. He made a gran' talk. He made mention 'bout puttin' money in de bank. Lots o' darkies made 'membrance o' dat an' done it. He tol' us de firs' thing us had to learn was to work an' dat all de schoolin' in de worl' wouldn' mean nothin' if us didn' have no mother wit. It's a pity us aint got more folks lak him to guide us now dat us ain't got no marster an' mistis to learn us."

Robert R. Grinstead, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, age 80

"... as to Booker T. Washington, I think his idea of educating or training Negroes as servants to serve the white race appealed more to the white race than to the Negroes. My viewpoint as to slavery is that it was as much detrimental to the white race as it was to the Negroes, as one elevated one's minds too highly, and the other degraded one's mind too lowly."

Charlotte Foster, Spartanburg, South, Carolina, age unknown

"Booker Washington? Well, he was all right trying to help the colored people and educate them. But he strutted around and didn't do much."

Anecdotes and Anomalies

Charles Green Dortch, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 81

"I got this thumb broken beating a white man up. No, I'll tell the truth. He was beating me up, and I thought he was going to kill me. It was when Benjamin Harrison had been elected President. I was in Sol Joe's saloon and I said, 'Hurrah for Harrison.' A white man standing at the bar there said to me, 'What do you mean, nigger, insulting the guests here?' And before I knew what he was going to do—bop!—he knocked me up on the side of the head and put me flat on the floor. He started to stamp me. My head was roaring, but I grabbed his legs and held them tight against me and then we was both on the floor, fighting it out. I butted him in the face with my head and beat him in the face with my fists until he yelled for someone to come and stop me. There was plenty of white people 'round, but none of them interfered. A great commotion set up and I slipped out the back door and went home during the excitement.

"When I went back to the saloon again after about a week or so, the fellow had left two dollars for me to drink up. Sol Joe told me that he showed the man he was wrong, that I was one of his best customers. To make Sol and me feel better, he left the two dollars. When I got there and found the money waiting for me, I just called everybody in the house up to the bar and treated it out.

"They claimed I had hit him with brass knucks, but when I showed them my hand—it was swollen double—and then showed them how the thumb was broken, they agreed on what caused the damage. That thumb never did set properly. You see, it's out of shape right now."

Richard Slaughter, Hampton, Virginia, age 89

"I left Hampton still working as a water boy and went to Quire Creek, Bell Plains, Virginia, a place near Harper's Ferry. I left the creek aboard a steamer and went to Alexandria, Virginia. Abraham Lincoln came aboard the steamer and we carried 'im to Mt. Vernon, George Washington's old home. What did he look like? Why, he looked more like an old preacher than anything I know. Heh! Heh! Heh! Have you ever seen any pictures of 'im? Well, if you seen a picture of 'im, you seen 'im. He's just like the picture."

Andrew Moss, Tennessee, age 86

"One thing that's all wrong with the world today," Andrew Moss said, sitting before the open grate fire in his Knoxville cabin, "is that there ain't no more prayer grounds. Down in Georgia where I was born, way back in 1852, us colored folks had prayer grounds. My

mammy's prayer ground was an old twisted muscadine bush. She'd go in there and pray for the deliverance of the slaves. Cane grows high and thick, and some folks cleaned out knee-spots in the cane breaks so nobody could see 'em when they be prayin'.

"White folks used to laugh at colored folks for praying so much. If a master came along and saw you on your knees he'd say, 'What you praying about?'

"You'd say, 'I's just praying to Jesus so I can go to Heaven when I die.'

"And the master would say, 'You's my negro. I'll get you to Heaven. Get up off them knees.' De white folks what owned slaves thought that when dey go to Heaven de colored folk's would be dar to wait on 'em."

Felix Haywood, Texas, age 92

Felix Haywood of San Antonio was temperamental and whimsical. He still saw the sunny side of his ninety-two years in spite of total blindness. Born a slave near St. Hedwig in Bexar County, he had herded sheep and punched cattle before and during the Civil War. When the interviewer found him in his little shanty on Arabella Alley, the old man greeted him with a question he liked to ask strangers.

"First thing I want to know," Felix said, "is you a white man or is you a black man?"

The visitor told him he was black.

Felix laughed.

"No you ain't. I knowed you was white when you come up the path. I just asks that for fun. It makes white men a little insulted when you don't know they is white, and it makes colored folks mighty proud when you think maybe they is."

His blind eyes—like two murky brown marbles—seemed to twinkle as he spoke. Blindness itself had become part of the old man's humor, a game he played with the world.

Ida Blackshear Hutchinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas, age 73

"Once on the Blackshear place, they took all the fine looking boys and girls that was thirteen years old or older and put them in a big barn after they had stripped them naked. They used to strip them naked and put them in a big barn every Sunday and leave them there until Monday morning. Out of that came sixty babies.

"They was too many babies to leave in the quarters for someone to take care of during the

day. When the young mothers went to work, Blackshear had them take their babies with them to the field, and it was two or three miles from the house to the field. He didn't want them to lose time walking backward and forward nursing. They built a long old trough like a great long old cradle and put all these babies in it every morning when the mothers come out to the field. It was set at the end of the rows under a big old cottonwood tree.

"When they were at the other end of the row, all at once a cloud no bigger than a small spot came up, and it grew fast, and it thundered and lightened as if the world were coming to an end, and the rain just came down in great sheets. And when it got so they could go to the other end of the field, that trough was filled with water and every baby in it was floating 'round in the water drowned. They never got nary a lick of labor and nary a red penny for any one of them babies."

Felix Street, Little Rock, Arkansas, age 74

"It was over forty years ago. [Long after the end of the Civil War] Me and my wife lived at a big sawmill near Elliott, Arkansas, , just ten miles outside of Camden. White folks used to come up there and catch niggers and carry them back to Louisiana with them, claiming that they owed debts. One time two white men came to Elliott looking for a nigger. They came through the Negro quarters and all the men were off that day because it was a holiday. The nigger saw them first and ran to the woods. They ran after him and caught him. They came back through the quarters and tied him to one of the horses and then went on to Louisiana--them ridin' and him walkin' tied up with his arms behind him and roped to the horse like he was some kind of cattle or something. The niggers followed them with guns a little distance, but one nigger telephoned to El Dorado and the officers there were on the lookout for them. At night, the officers in plain clothes went over and chatted with them white men. When they saw the nigger, they asked what it was they had there. They told the one that asked that it was a damn nigger that owed money back in Louisiana and got smart and run away without paying up. The officers drew their guns and put handcuffs on them and carried them and the nigger away to Jail.

"They put everybody in jail that night. But the next morning they brought them to trial and fined the white men a hundred and fifty dollars apiece and after the trial they turned the nigger loose. That broke up the stealing of niggers. Before that they would come and take a Negro whenever they wanted to.

"Niggers were just beginning to wake up then, and know how to slip away and run off. We had whole families there that had run off one by one. The man would run away and leave his children, and as they got old enough, they would follow him one by one.

Gus Feaster, Union, South Carolina, age 97

"We eat breakfast when de birds furs' commence singing off'n de roost.

"Jay birds 'ud allus call de slaves. Dey 'lowed: 'it's day, it's day,' and you had to git up. Dere wasn't no waiting 'bout it.

"De whipperwill say, 'cut de chip out de whiteoak,' you better git up to keep frum gitting a whipping.

"Doves say, 'who you is, who you is.' Dat's a great sign in a dove. Once people wouldn't kill doves, ole marse sho' would whip you if you did. Dove was furs' thing dat bring something back to Noah when de flood done gone frum over de land."

Ida Blackshear Hutchinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas, age 73

"They say Negroes won't commit suicide, but Isom told us of a girl that committed suicide. There was a girl named Lu who used to run off and go to the dances. The patrollers would try to catch he,r but they couldn't because she was too fast on her feet. One day they got after her in the daytime. She had always outran them at night. She ran to the cabin and got her quarter which she had hid. She put the quarter in her mouth. The white folks didn't allow the slaves to handle no money. The quarter got stuck in her throat, and she went on down to the slough and drowned herself rather than let them beat her, and mark her up. Then patrollers sure would get you and beat you up. If they couldn't catch you when you were running away from them, they would come on your master's place and get you and beat you. The master would allow them to do it. They didn't let the patrollers come on the Blackshear place, but this gal was so hard-headed 'bout goin' out that they made a 'ception to her. And they intended to make her an example to the rest of the slaves. But they didn't get Lucy."

Mrs. Lizzie Johnson, Marion county, Indiana, age 65

The thing these early settlers wanted most, was for their children to learn to read and write. So many of them had been caught trying to learn to write, and had had their thumbs mashed, so they would not be able to hold a pencil.

"They'd put you up on the block and sell you. That is just what they'd do--sell you. These white folks will do anything—anything they want to do. They'd take your clothes off just like you was some kind of a beast.

"You used to be worth a thousand dollars then, but you're not worth two bits now. You ain't worth nothin' when you're free."

Charles Crawley, Virginia, age unknown

"Did you know poor whites like slaves had to git a pass? I mean, a remit like as slaves, to sell anythin' an' to go places, or do anythin'. Jest as we colored people, dey had to go to some big white man like Colonel Allen. If Marster wanted to, he would give dem a remit or pass; an' if he didn't feel like it, he wouldn't do it. Dats what made all feared him. Ol' Marster was more hard on dem poor white folks den he was on us niggers."

Part Nine

Ruby Pickens Tartt, Collector of Voices

The thirteen contributions by Ruby Pickens Tartt (1880–1974) feel like polished stories, shaped by a folklorist and collector of folk songs. They are closer to oral storytelling than raw testimony, preserving the voices while giving them narrative form.

DE BES' FRIEND A NIGGER EVER HAD

Oliver Bell

Oliver Bell says the first thing he remembers was seeing his mother whipped. He was born in slavery, but most of his knowledge of the evils, as well as the joys of ante-bellum days, is by hearsay only.

"I was borned on de De Graffenreid Place," he said, "nine miles west of Livingston-Boyd Road. My mother was Luella De Graffenreid an' my pappy was Edmund De Graffenreid. Den dey changed my name to Bell. I had one brother, Nat, an' two sisters, Jestina an' Clara. I has 'bout sixteen chilluns, all born on de same place an' most of dem is livin' dere yit. My chillun by my firs' wife are Ed, Jack, Holly, Buck, Clarence, Sally, Liza, Mag an' Luella. Dey ma was Mandy Powell, frum York. Den my second wife, Bettie Brown, gived me de res' of my chilluns. Le's see, dey is Jimmy, J.W. Alfonso Wallace, Henry, Edna an' ——" He hesitated, explained, "Dat's as many as I kin' 'member jest now.

"My gran'ma's name was Cely De Graffenreid an' my gran'pa's name was Peter. He was a shoemaker fur de place an' made plows, too. He was a worker an' he learnt me how to pull fodder an' chop corn an' cotton when I was jest a little scamp, jes' a little black nigger.

"Us all b'longed to Mr. Tresvan De Graffenreid an' Mistus Rebecca; an' dey was all good to us. Ol' Mistus read de Bible to us an' got us baptized in de river at Horn's bridge, but dat was atter de surrender. In slavery times dey didn't like for us to sing an' play loud in de quarters. Honey, I 'members when us had de big prayer meetin's. Dey would shut de door so de voice won't git out, an' dey would turn de washpot down de door. Dat was to keep de voice inside, dey tol' me."

Oliver mused a moment, recalling the old times.

"Us chilluns useta have a good time singin' an' a-playin'," he said. "I 'members one of our little verses run somethin' lak dis:

Shoo, shoo, shoo gander

Th'ow yo' feathers 'way yander.

"Us had ol' corn hollers, too, but I fergits um now. I does remember though you could hear dem niggers holler a whole mile.

"No'm, it warn't so bad wid us. De white folks was good to us niggers. Us had 'nough to eat, lak greens, frum de big house. Us had our rations weighted out; peck o' meal, three pounds of meat, half gallon of 'lasses, made at home in wodden mills; an' dat was for a week. An' sometimes, on a Sunday us had a little sugar, coffee, an' flour. No'm, us didn't know what rice was.

"What I seed of slavery was a bad idea, I reckon, but ev'ybody thought dey marster was de bes' in de lan'. Us didn't know no better. A man was growed plum' green 'fo he knew de whole worl' didn't belong to his ol' marster.

"Us didn't have no bought medicine in dem days; jes' whut us got outta de woods lak slippery ellow fer fever an' poke salad root; dey he'p a lot. An' May-apple root would he'p you same as castor oil.

"Didn't nobody he'p us learn nothin' much, but mos' of my chilluns went to Booker T's school. Dey say he's a mighty smart man, an' my chilluns thinks so, too. It's all right; I wish I could read an' write; den I'd tell you things you'd lak to know."

His face clouded for the briefest moment.

"I tell you de fust thing I 'members, an' I don't know whut started it. One day my mammy done sumpin' an' ol' marster made her pull her dress down 'roun' her waist an' made her lay down 'crosst de door. Den he taken a leather strop an' whooped her. I 'members dat I started cryin' an' Mistus Beckie said, 'Go git dat boy a biskit.'

"I reckerlecks my mammy was a plow han' an' she'd go to work soon an' put me under de shade of a big ol' post-oak tree. Dere I sat all day, an' dat tree was my nurse. It still standin' dere yit, an' I won't let nobody cut it down.

"Mammy say I never did learn to walk; jes' one day she sot me down under de oak, an' fust thing she knowed she look up an' dere I was walkin' down de middle of a cotton row.

"'Nother thing I 'members when I was a little boy; dat dey was 'vidin' [dividing] de corn atter de s'render. Dr. DeGraffenreid measured de corn out to all of 'em whut was share han's. He'd take a bushel an' give 'em a bushel. When he mos' through he'd throw a ear of corn to

dis one, an' give himse'f a ear; den he break a ear in two, an' he take part an' give dem part. Dat was close measurin', I tell you.

"Us lived in de third house frum de big house in de quarter, an' when I was a boy it was my job to set out shade trees. An' one day de Ku Klux come ridin' by an' dey leader was Mister Steve Renfroe. [Alabama bandit of Reconstruction days]. He wore long hair an' he call my pappy out an' ax him a heap of questions. While he sittin' dere his horse pull up nigh 'bout all de trees I done sot [set] out.

"Atter talkin' to my pappy, he rode on 'cross Horn's bridge, 'bout two miles souf' of here, an' dere he met Ol' Man Enoch Sledge an' Frank Sledge. Dey was darkies whut b'longed to Marsa Simmy Sledge's father, Ol' Doctor Sledge. Slaves on dat plantation was 'lowed pretty good privilege atter de s'rrender an' was workin' on halvens. Uncle Enoch an' Frank was in town tradin' some, an' Mr. Renfroe didn't want 'em to have anything. When dey lef' town, dey pass de Ku Kluxes raght on de slough bridge [bridge over a swamp]. Mister Renfroe ax Enoch to give him a piece of string to fix his saddle wid; den shot him. Frank run to de river, but de Ku Kluxes cotched him an' shot him, too.

"De niggers went down to de river dat night an' got de bodies an' buried 'em in de ol' Travis graveyard. My mammy an' daddy is buried dere, too.

"Didn' nobody do nothin' 'bout Mister Renfroe 'till he went on an' got to messin' wid Marsa Simmy Sledge's things; stole a pair of mules an' de white folks rambled atter him 'till dey foun' him in Linden. Dey got so hot atter him dat he went to his camp in de flat woods down on Bear Creek. Dem was skeery times, 'case dat man never had no mercy for nobody.

"Dey's a cave down by de burial grounds whut de slaves dug when dey run away, an' Mister Renfroe stayed dere. It's on de river bank an' it's dug up. You digs an' starts low an' pushes de dirt out an' digs up an' makes a big room up so de water won't git you. I knows whar dey's two of de caves on de place; my cow fell in one yestidy.

"When Ol' Marster Amos Travis come out here from Californy, he taken a lakin' to me an' wanted me to leave t'other side of de place an' move down dis side of de big house to take keer of dis swamp an' look atter de han's. But I wanted a big house wid four rooms an' two brick chimneys, an' I had to talk five years to git it. I's got some rosebushes now dat was at de big house raght atter de s'rrender, an' dey's growin' in my yard now.

"Speakin' 'bout graveyard, I was passin' dere one night, ridin' on 'bout midnight, an' sumpin' come draggin' a chain by me lak a dog. I got down off'n my horse, but couldn't see nothin' wid no chain, so I got back on de horse an' dere raght in front of me was a Jack-Me-Lantern

wid de brightes' light you ever seed. It was tryin' to lead me off, an' ev'y time I'd git back in de road it would lead me off ag'in. You sho' will git los' if you follow a Jack-Me-Lantern.

"One of dem led a man down to de creek by dem double bridges; said he foun' he was travelin' in de wrong direction, gittin' frum home stidder clo'ster [getting farther from home instead of closer], so he jes' sit down under a tree an' waited 'til daylight. I ain't skeered of nothin' but dem Jack-Me-Lanterns, but dey stirs you up in yo' min' till you can't tell whar you's at; an' dey's so bright dey nigh 'bout puts yo' eyes out. Dey is plenty of 'em over by de graveyard raght over yonder whar all my white folks is buried, an' mammy an' pappy, too. Dey's all dere 'cept Marsa Jess Travis; he was de nex' whut come in line for de place, an' he was de bes' frein' dis here nigger ever had.

"Fac' was, dat's whut he call me; 't was 'nigger'. He an' Mistus Mag lived raght dere in de big house; den dey move into town an' dat's whar he died. Me an' Marsa Jess made a 'greement an' he said if he was de longes' liver, he'd see me buried, an' if I be de longes' liver, I see him buried. So dat day I went to his office in de co'thouse an' he say he want to talk wid me. He say, 'You 'members us 'greement?' An' I say, 'Whut 'greement, Marsa Jess?' An' he say, 'Bout buryin'.' Den I say, sho', 'I 'members dat.'

"Den he got up an' give me some papers 'bout some lan', an' I say, 'Whut do all dis here mean, Marse Jess?' He say, 'nothin', nigger, 'cept I's jes' goin' outta business.' Den I say, 'Goodbye, Marse Jess,' an' he say, 'Goodbye, nigger,' an' I walked on 'crost de street. Den Mr. Killian say, 'Oliver, whut's happened over at de co'thouse?' An I say, 'Ain't nothin' as I knows of.' Den he say, 'Yes, dey is; jes' look at de peoples gwine in a hurry.' Den I turn 'roun' an' run back an' dere lay Marse Jess. Mr. Smith was gettin' him up an' Marse Jess say to me, 'Well, nigger, I didn't do whut I tended to; I missed it.' An' I say, 'Boss, fer God's sake go to de hospital; I'll go wid you an' stay wid you.' Mistus Mag, she ast me to beg him, but he shuck his head an' say 'If I had a-wanted to live I wouldn't of shot myself.' He res' a minit, den say, 'Nigger, write Miss Calline an' tell her I says to always be good to you as long as you lives.'

"Yassum, I was raght dere, done jes' whut I tol' him I'd do; kep' my 'greement an' followed him to de grave. Co'se dat last 'bout Marse Jess ain't no slavery tale, but I thought you was atter hearin' all 'bout de family whut owned dis ol' place; an' Marse Jess was de bes' white frein' a nigger ever had; dis nigger, anyhow."

GABR'EL BLOW SOF'! GABR'EL BLOW LOUD!

Ank Bishop, born 1849

When "Gabr'el take his silver trump," he is going to blow soft for the saved and loud for the lost souls, according to Ank Bishop who was born into slavery eighty-nine years ago, and

lives in Livingston, Alabama. The days before the war were as good as the present, Ank believes. He tells of them in the following story of his life:

"My name is Ank Bishop, en I was born in 1849, August 16th, at Ward, Alabama. My mother's name was Amy Larken, an' my father was Tom Bishop. I had three brothers, Alf, Volen an' Jim, an' two sisters, Cely an' Matildy. Us belonged to Lady Liza Larkin at Ward, right nigh Coke's Chapel.

"My mother was brought out from South Car'lina in a speculator drove, an' Lady Liza bought her at de auction at Coke's Chapel. She lef' her mammy an' daddy back dere in South Car'lina an' never did see 'em no more in dis life. She was bidded off an' Lady Liza got her, jes' her one from all her family. She was got fer Lady Liza's house gal. But sometimes she cooked or was de washer, den ag'in [again] de milker. 'Twas my job for to min' [mind] de ca'ves [calves]. Sometimes I went to Mr. Ed Western's sto' at Gaston, three miles from us house, to see iffen was any mail for Lady Liza, but 'twa'n't none.

"Dey was good to us 'caze Lady Liza's son, Mr. Willie Larkin, was de overseer for his ma, but co'se [of course] sometime dey git among 'em an' thrashed 'em out. One time one de niggers runned away, old Caesar Townsy, an' dey sarnt [sent] for Dick Peters to come an' bring his "nigger dogs." Dem dogs was trained to ketch a nigger same as rabbit dogs is trained to ketch a rabbit. So Mr. Willie Larkin told Stuart for to say to old man Dick Peters when he come, 'I'm gone,' but for him to come on. 'I'm gwineter keep de road,' he say, 'an' cross 'Bigbee at Moscow landin'.' So ol' Dick Peters, he kept de road lack he tole him to, an' he cross 'Bigbee at Moscow landin' over in de cane-brake. But dem nigger dogs didn't never ketch ol' man Caesar. He stayed right wharever he was at 'twell after S'render, an' de War done ceased. Den he come out, but iffen he had a been caught, dey'd a used him up pretty rough, but he stayed hid twell [until] de time done passed.

"All de women on Lady Liza's place had to go to de fiel' ev'y day an' dem what had suckerlin' babies would come in 'bout nine o'clock in de mawnin' an' when de bell ring at twelve an' suckerlin' 'em. One woman tended to all of 'em in one house. Her name was Ellie Larkin, an' dey call her 'Mammy Larkin.' She all time sarnt me down in de fiel' for to git 'em come suckle de chillen, 'caze dat made hit hard on her when dey gets hongry an' cry.

"Us didn't get to go to church none, an' us wa'n't larnt nothin'. I'm nigh 'bout ninety an' I can't read a line. I got some chillun kin read; one can't whut is sixty-five, but Henry he fifteen an' he kin. De ma, she go by de name of Pearlie Beasley, she can't read neither, but she's a good fiel' han' an' she patched dese breeches I'm wearin' an' dis ole shirt. Miss, I ain't got a coat to my name. Can't go to church, so I doan' know dat dis any better'n slav'y time. Hit's hard, anyway you got to travel, got yo' nose on de groun' rock all de time. When

pay day come, ain't nothin' pay wid. Come git de rent, den you out do's ag'in. Bred an' bawn in Sumter County, wore out in Sumter County, 'specks to die in Sumter County, an' whut is I got? Ain't got nothin', ain't got nothin', ain't got nothin'.

"But I'm a believer, an' dis here voodoo an' hoodoo an' sper'ts ain't nothin' but a lot of folk's outten Christ. Ha'nts ain't nothin' but somebody died outten Christ an' his sper't ain't at res', jes' in a wand'rin' condition in de world.

"Dis is de evil sper't what de Bible tells about when hit say a person has got two sper'ts, a good one an' a evil one. De good sper't goes to a place of happiness an' rest, an' you doan' see hit no mo', but de evil sper't ain't got no place to go. Hit's dwellin' place done tore down when de body died, an' hit's jes' a wand'rin' an' a waitin' for Gabr'el to blow his trump, den de worl' [world] gwineter come to an en'. But when God say, 'Take down de silver mouf trump an' blow, Gabr'el,' an' Gabr'el say, 'Lord, how loud shell I blow?' Den de Lord say, 'Blow easy, Gabr'el, en ca'm, not to 'larm my lilies.' De secon' time Gabr'el say, 'How loud mus' I blow, Lord?' Den de Lord say, 'Blow hit as loud as seben claps of thunder all added into one echo, so as to wake up dem damnable sper'ts sleepin' in de grave-ya'ds what ain't never made no peace wid dey God, jes' alayin' dere in dey sins.'

"But de Christ'en Army, hit gits up wid de fus' trump, an' dem what is deaf is de evil ones what anybody kin see anytime. I ain't skeered of 'em, though. I passes 'em an' goes right on plowin', but iffen you wants 'em to git outten your way, all you gotter do is jes' turn your head least bit an' look back. Dey gone jes' lack dat! When my fus' wife died 'bout thirty years ago, I was goin' up to Gaston to see Sara Drayden, ole Scot Drayden's wife, an' I tuck out through Kennedy bottom 'bout sundown right after a rain. I seed sompin' acomin' down de road 'bout dat high, 'bout size a little black shaggy dog, an' I says, 'What's dat I sees commin' down de road? Ain't nobody 'roun' here got no black shaggy dog? Hit kep' a-comin' an' kep' a-gittin' bigger an' bigger an' closer an' closer, an' time hit got right to me 'twas as big as a ha'f growed yearlin', black as a crow. It had four feet an' drop years [ears], jes' lack a dog, but 'twa'n't no dog, I knows dat. Den he shy out in de bushes, an' he come right back in de road, an' hit went on de way I was comin' from, so I went on de way hit was comin' from. I ain't never seed dat thing no mo'. But I'ze gotter pretty good notion 'bout who hit 'twas."

A CONJU' WHAT DIDN' WUK

Jake Green, age 85

"Yessum, dem niggers sho' was scared when ole Buck showed up in de fiel'," Jake Green, former slave, laughed with a vigor that denied his eighty-five years as he described "a conju'

what didn' wuk." Jake has a vivid memory of those days before the Civil War, though he was only a small boy when it started.

"Me an' my mother an' father b'longed to old man Lam Whitehead jes' a few miles from Coatopa, 'bout ten miles east of Livingston, Alabama," he began. "My mother was Molly Whitehead, my father was Dan Whitehead. I don't know nothin' 'bout my gran'mammy an' gran'pappy, but I had a heap of unkie's.

"Mr. Whitehead owned Dirtin Ferry down to Belmont, an' dey had a darkey dere named Dick what claim sick all de time. So de Massa man said, 'Dick, dam it, go to de house. I can't get no work outten you.' So Dick went on. He was a fiddler so dey jes' tuck his vittuls to him for seven years. Den one day, Old Massa say to de overseer man, 'Let's slip up dere an' see what Dick doin'. So dey did, an' dere sot Dick, fat as he could be a-playin' de fiddle an' a-singin',

'Fool my Massa seben years.

Gwiner fool him seben mo'.

Hey diddle, de diddle, de diddle, de do'.

"'Bout dat time Ole Massa poked his head in de do' said 'Dam iffen you will. Come outten dere, you black rascal, an' go to work, 'An' I ain't never hyard of Dick complainin' no mo'.

"But dey wan't so mean. Sometimes us got whupped but Massa had fo' [four] men he didn't 'low nobody to hit, white er black. Dey was Unker Arch, he was de main carriage driver; my father, he was de house servant; Unker Julius, de fo'man [foreman] of de plow han's an' Unker Ed'erds, de fo'man of de hoe han's. Whenever anybody wanted to hire anybody to work for 'em, de Massa send dem fo' out an' hire 'em by de day to chop cotton or pick. An' dem fo' niggers could chop much cotton in a day as de mule could plow. Whenever dey'd stop de plow at twelve o'clock, dem niggers was right dere to lay de hoe handles on de plow, an' dat's choppin'. All fo' could pick a bale of cotton a day. Whenever anybody say, 'Mr. Whitehead, I want a bale of cotton picked today,' he'd send dem fo' men an' dey could pick five hundred pounds apiece an' leave de sun still runnin'. Dey was pickers in dem days!

"Cose [of course] dey had to begin, an' all us got up 'fo' day. Twan't nothin' strange to be standin' in de fiel' by your plow waitin' for de sun to come up. Ev'body was early risers in dem days. Dey was pretty good to us, but ole Mr. Buck Brasefiel', what had a plantation 'jinin' us'n, was so mean to his'n dat twan't nothin' for 'em to run away. One nigger, Rich Parker, runned off one time an' whilst he gone he seed a hoodoo man, so when he got back

Mr. Brasefiel' tuck sick an' stayed sick two or three weeks. Some of de darkies tole him, 'Rich been to de hoodoo doctor.' So Mr. Brasefiel' got up outten dat bed an' come a-yellin' in de fiel', 'You thought you had ole Buck, but by God he rose agin'. Dem niggers was so skeered, dey squatted in de fiel' jes' lack partridges, an' some of 'em whispered, 'I wish to God he had a-died.'

"'Twan't long atter dat come S'render, but dat nigger done lef' dere, an' didn't nobody know whar Parker was at. Some of de niggers done bought an' paid for dey mule, an' me an' Pappy was rentin' an' wukkin' on sneers [shares], when here come Parker, jes' hyared [heard] 'bout S'render. He say 'Why didn't somebody come tell me 'twas S'render?' Den he start a-singin'

Slav'y chain, slav'y chain,

Thank God a'mighty I'm free at las',

Free at las', free at las',

Thank God a'mighty I'm free at las'.

"But dat wan't none of Old Massa's niggers. He had one, do' call him John, an' hit come a traveler an' stayed all night. Ole Massa p'inted out John, an' said, 'He ain't never tole me a lie in his life.' De traveler bet Massa a hund'ed dollars 'ginst fo' bits he'd ketch John in a lie 'fo' he lef'. Next mawnin' at de table de mice was pretty bad, so de traveler caught one by de tail an' put him inside a kiver-lid dish what was settin' dere on de table, an' he tole Ole Massa tell John he could eat sumpin' out of ev'y dish atter dey got th'oo, but dat kiver-lid [cover up] one, an' not to take kiver [the cover] offen hit. An' John said, 'Nossuh, I won't.' But John jes' nachully had to see what was in dat dish, so he raise de lid, an' out hopped de mouse. Den hyar come Old Massa an' axed John iffen he done what he tole him not to do, an' John 'nied hit. Den de traveler look in de dish an' de mouse wan't dere, an' he said, 'See dere, John been lyin' to you all de time, you jes' ain't knowed hit,' an' I reckon he right 'caze us had to lie."

HOODOOIN' DE DOGS

Hilliard Johnson

Uncle Hilliard Johnson and his wife Callie live on the Johnson place about three and a half miles from Livingston, Ala., the same place Hilliard was brought as an infant of two in slavery days. He and Callie tend their own little patch of ground, and they own a mule. White friends patch up the gaps in their financial structure, and everybody knows them.

Uncle Hilliard pulled up his mule in front of my house and climbed down from the high seat, leaving Callie sitting placidly in the sun.

He came around to the kitchen door and announced that he was here, "'ca'se [because] he got de word I wanted to ax him somepin."

"Uncle Hilliard," I said, "I want to hear all about you and your family and whom you belonged to in slavery time."

"Well, Miss Ruby, iffen you is knowed me all dese years and still don' know who I'm is, and my family is, and who us belonged to, dey ain't no use of me stoppin' now to tell you. 'Sides, I's sick, I's been to de horspital in York, Dr. Hills', and he wants to operate. I's skeered of de knife and ain't got no money neither.

"I can't eat nothin' but tomato soup. Dem sho' is nice ones you got dere on de she'f, and oyster soup and rice soup and all lac dat. Can't eat no rough vittles lac collards. I ain't gittin' on well atall, but I'll 'blige you a while. I was thinkin' other day 'bout you and dem ole sperichel [spiritual] hymns I leads out to Mount Pilgrim. You's got 'Oh Lord, I'm a Waitin' on You', ain't you? I knowed you had dat 'bout 'And I Can't Do Nothin' Until You Comes, Sho' Can't.' Well, here's one you ain't got, 'ca'se hit's a really old sperichel my gran'maw use to sing. I's sorter hoarse today, but hit go:

Jes' carry me and bury me

I'll rise at de comin' day.

Jes' carry me and bury me,

I'll rise at de comin' day.

"Now dat's jes' de chorus and de verse say:

When I was in my worldly ways

Nobody had nothin' to say.

Now I'm ridin' de pale white hoss

Ev'ybody got something to say."

"Den de chorus ag'in, and hit's a pretty one sho's you bawn."

I mentioned the figure of speech "pale white hoss", but he "didn't know nothin' 'bout no figures!"

"And another one, dey is so many, let me see. Here one but I jes' can't call to mine a heap of verses:

Trouble here and dey's trouble dere,
 I really do believe dere's trouble ev'ywhere.
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home."

"Den hit goes on and tell 'bout de moaner [mourner], says:

Oh, dey's a moaner here, dey's a moaner dere,
 I really do b'lieve dey's a moaner ev'ywhere.
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.

Oh dey's a sinner here, dey's a sinner dere,
 I really do b'lieve dey's a sinner ev'ywhere.
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.

Oh, dey's a Christun here, dey's a Christun dere
 I really do b'lieve dey's a Christun ev'ywhere
 Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.

Swing low, chariot, I'm gwine home.

"Den dey's a heap of 'em to dat song lac a "deacon" and a "member" and a "prayer" and a "singer", jes' a whole passel dem verses, but I reckon dem will do today.

"Now what else you want, 'ca'se dem mules is tired and I is too. 'Sides I got to see a man and Callie in de waggin and she's hot too. You knows Callie, she my wife, my second wife, and us got twelve chillun in all, growed and married. Us still live on de Johnson place three and a half miles from Livingston right han' side de ole Boyd road west from town. Us belonged to Miss Ella Johnson, she was us young Mistis, and Mr. Nep Johnson, dat's de onliest ones I ever knowed. My mammy, Frances Johnson, and my pappy, Alf Johnson, come from down 'bout Cubie Station. Young Mist'iss bought 'em I reckon and my gran'maw, Rachel Johnson. Fus' thing I knowed, us was livin' on Johnson place. Dey was good to us, 'bout seventy-five of us all together, I reckon. All I 'members, dey looped de bridle rein over my feet an' let de mule drag me all over de orchard. It hurt my head. And dey beat some of 'em up scan'lous, but dey was pretty good to me, I reckon. See, I wa'n't so ole, jes' a young boy in slavery time, but I recall young Massa told Tom, a young nigger dere, one time not to go to de frolic.

"'Clean up dem dishes and go ter bed,' he say. And Tom said 'Yassuh' but Marse Nep watch Tom th'oo de do' and atter while Tom slip out and away he went, wid young Massa right 'hin' him. He got dere and foun' Tom cuttin' groun' shuffle big as anybody. Young Massa called him, 'Tom,' he say, 'Tom, didn't I tell you you couldn't come to dis frolic?' 'Yassuh,' says Tom, 'You sho' did, and I jes' come to tell 'em I couldn't come!'

"Young Massa didn't hurt Tom none, but I is seed 'em strip 'em plum nekked and nigh 'bout kill 'em. I did see 'em kill old Collin, but dey done dat wid a shot gun jes' 'ca'se dey couldn't control him. Did they have nigger dogs, you say? Yassum, dey sho' did, but I'm tellin' you de troof now some of de black folks knowed how to git away from dem nigger dogs jes' lac dey wa'n't dere. Mr. Joe Patton, you know Mr. Joe Patton don' you? Young Mr. Joe, I'm talkin' 'bout what's over here in town and use to be de sher'ff. Well, in his day, he done seed a nigger hoodoo dem dogs 'ca'se dey had nigger dogs after S'render too. I kin tell you what I seed, but what dey done now, I doan' know, I couldn't tell you dat. But hit was a fair day, fair as 'tis now, and dey sot [set] de dogs on dat nigger ;and 'fo' yer knowed hit, dat nigger done lef' dere and had dem dogs treein' a nekked tree. 'Twa'n't nobody dere. Dey calls hit hoodoo in' de dogs. And I'se seen hit more times than one.

"Time I tell you 'bout, Mr. Patton was ag'in. 'Twas a feller right here in town. I forgits his name but he was a tall nigger, married Dennis Coleman's daughter. You 'members Dennis Coleman, had dat gal call Hettie? Well, he married Hettie, and he whooped her up mightily. She 'ported [reported] on him to de sheriff, and he went to git him. I can't think what dat nigger go by now, but anyhow Mr. Patton couldn't ketch him and he sot de dogs on him and dey couldn't ketch him. Dey knowed whichaway he went, down 'bout Bear Creek on Miss Mamie Smith's place in de flatwoods. 'Twa'n't no trouble to ketch nobody down dere, but dem dogs couldn't do hit, and fus' thing you know he run back to Hattie's.

"Now jes' give me a few tomatoes, Miss Ruby, and I mus' cut dis short. Dey's a cloud comin' up over yonder by Peter's washpot and dat's when us gits a rain. I got a fur piece to go for a old man. Yassum, I'se nigh 'bout seventy-nine years old and porely."

DE MASTERS GOOD, BUT OVERSEERS MEAN

Amy Chapman, born 1843

Aunt Amy paused as she worked among the small plants in her garden, removing a weed here and there. She pushed back the sunbonnet that shaded her eyes and began:

"I was bawn on Governor Reuben Chapman's place five miles north of Livingston on May 14, 1843. My name is Amy Chapman. My mother was Clary Chapman an' my pappy was Bob Chapman. Dey both come from Virginny; my mammy from Petersburg an' my pappy f'um Richmond. Dey was driv' down to Alabamy lak cattle an' Marse Reuben bought 'em. He had a lot of slaves caze [because] he had a heap of plantations, but him an' his wife stay most of de time in Huntsville an' dey had a heap of white oberseers. I had a plenty of chilluns but not as many as my mammy.

"Who was my husban'? Law chile, I ain't never had no special husban'. I even forgits who was de pappy of some of dese chilluns of mine.

"Us had a mean oberseer, an' since Marse Reuben warn't never at home, dem oberseers useter treat us somp'n awful. One day Marse Reuben come home an' when he foun' out dat de oberseer was mean to de slaves, he commence to give him a lecture. But when Miss Ferlicia tuk a han' in de business, she didn't stop at no lecture. She tol' dat oberseer dis: 'I hear you take my women an' turn dere clothes ober dere haid an' whup 'em. Any man dat's got a family an' would do sich a thing oughter be sham' of hisself, an' iffen Gov. Chapman can't make you leave, I kin. So you see dat road dere? Well, make tracks den.'

An' Mistis, he lef' raght den. He didn't wait for no coaxin'. He was de meanes' oberseer us ever had. He tuk my ol'est brother an' had him stretched out jus' lak you see Christ on de cross; had him chained. An' I sot down on de groun' by him an' cried all night lack Mary an'

dem done. Dat oberseer was de fus' one dat ever putt me in de fiel', an' he whupped me wid de cat er nine tails when I was stark naked.

"Us warn't learned to read an' write, but Mr. Jerry Brown's slaves were. He owned a big plantation. Us didn't go to no nigger church, caze dere warn't none. I was babtized in Jones Creek, an' Dr. Edmon's a white preacher, j'ined me to de Jones Creek Babtist Church long fo' de war. An' de song I lacked bes' was a white folks song. Twarn't no nigger song. It was lack dey sing it now, 'cep' mo' lovely, Miss, mo' lovely.

Dark was de night

Col' was de groun'

On which my Savior lay

Blood in draps of sweat run down

In agony he pray.

Lawd, move did bitter cup

If sich dy sacred will

If not content I'll drink it up

Whose pleasure I'll fullfil.

"An' anudder one us niggers useter sing was might pretty:

In evil long I tuk de light

An' led by shame an' fear

When a new object stopped my flight

An' stopped my wild career.

I saw him hangin' on a tree

In agony an' blood

He fixed his languid eyes on me

As near his cross I stood.

Sho' never till my latter breath

Kin I forgit dat look

He seemed to change me wid his death

Yit not a word he spoke.

My conscience felt an' owned de quilt

An' plunged me in despair

I saw my sins his blood had spilt

An' helped to nail him dere.

"Yassum, I kin tell you things about slavery times dat would make yo' blood bile, but dey's too turrible. I jus' tries to forgit.

"I could tell you 'bout bein' run myself wid dem nigger dogs, but I ain't gwineter do it. I will tell you dough 'bout a mean man who whupped a cullid woman near 'bout to death. She got so mad at him dat she tuk his baby chile what was playin' roun' de yard and grab him up an' th'owed it in a pot of lye dat she was usin' to wash wid. His wife come a-hollin' an' run her arms down in de boilin' lye to git de chile out, an' she near 'bout burnt her arms off, but it didn't do no good 'caze when she jerked de chile out he was daid.

"One day I seed ole Unker Tip Toe all bent over a-comin' down de road an' I ax him whut ail him an' he say: 'I's been in de stocks an' been beat till de blood come. Den ole Massa 'ninted [anointed] my flesh wid red papper an' turpentine, an' I's been most dead, but I is somewhat better now.' Unker Tiptoe belonged to de meanes' ol' marster around here.

"But, honey, I ain't never tol' nobody all dis an' ain't gwine tell you no mo'. Ride me home now, caze I's cripple; a cow was de cause of it. She drug me roun' dat new orchard whut I planted las' fall. She done run away wid me. Mistis I wished you would do me a favor an' write my son in Texas an' tell him dat I say, iffen he 'specks me to make him anymo' of dem star quilts, he better come on here an' kiver my house. De roof sho' does leak bad."

CHILLUN IN EV'Y GRABEYARD

Laura Clark, age 86

Laura Clark, black and wrinkled with her eighty-six years, moved limpingly about the tiny porch of her cabin on the outskirts of Livingston. Battered cans and rickety boxes were filled with a profusion of flowers of the common variety. Laura offered me a split-bottomed chair and lowered herself slowly into a rocker that creaked even under her frail body. "Po'ly, Miss, po'ly," she responded to my query about her health. "Tain't lack de old days. I's crippled and mos' blin' [blind] now atter all de years what I got.

"I was born on Mr. Pleasant Powell's place in North Ca'lina, and when I was 'bout six or seven years ole I reckon hit 'twas, Mr. Garret from right up yonder in de bend, 'bout eight miles from Livingston gwine no'th [north] on de Livingston and Epes road, bought ten of us chillun in North Ca'lina and sont [sent] two white men, and one was Mr. Skinner, to fotch us back in waggins. En he fotch ole Julie Powell and Henry to look atter us. Wa'n't none of dem ten chillun no kin to me, and he never bought my mammy, so I had to leave her behine.

"I recollect Mammy said to old Julie, 'Take keer my baby chile (dat was me). An' iffen I never sees her no mo' raise her for God.' Den she fell off de waggin where us was all settin' and roll over on de groun' jes' acryin'. But us was eatin' candy what dey done give us for to keep us quiet, and I didn't have sense 'nuff for to know what ailed Mammy. But I knows now and I never seed her no mo' in dis life.

When I heered from her atter S'render she done dead and buried. Her name was Rachel Powell. My pappy's name I don't know ca'se he done been sole to somewhars else when I was too little to recollect. But my mammy was de mother of twenty-two chillun and she had twins in her lap when us driv' off. My gran'mammy said when I lef', 'Pray, Laura, and be er good gal, and min' bofe white and black. Ev'body will lack you and iffen you never see me no mo' pray to meet me in heaven.' Den she cried. Her name was Rose Powell.

"Us all started den for Mr. Garrett's plantation down yonder in de bend, ten chillun and two ole uns, and two white men, and us was travellin' solid a month. Fuss thing Ole Marsa say was 'Now be good ter dese motherless chillun.' Den he went to war, and de overseers forgot all 'bout dey promise. When Ole Marsa come back he done got his arm shot off, but he let bofe [both] dem overseers go, ca'se dey done whupped dat ole 'oman what come wid us to deaf [death]. She brought her two little boys, Colvin and 'Lias, but Joe, dey pappy, didn't come—he was sole 'fo [before] 'Lias was bawn. Joe never seed 'Lias.

"I sets cross de road here from dat church over yonder and can't go 'ca'se I'm cripple' and blin', but I hears um singin':

A motherless chile sees a hard time

Oh, Lord, he'p her on de road.

'Er sister will do de bes' she kin

Dis is a hard world, Lord, fer a motherless chile.

"And I jes' busts out cryin'. Dat was de song I had in view to sing for you. Hit's so mournful. I knowed 'twa'n't no reel [lively scotch/Irish dance]. 'Twa'n't nothin' lack no reel, 'ca'se I been b'longin' to de church for fifty-five years, and I don't fancy no reel.

I'm glad I got hit to my min' 'fo' you lef'. But my recollection is shaller [shallow]. I ain't never read no verse in no Bible in my life, ca'se I can't read. Some my chillun kin, though.

"My husban' died and lef' me wid nine chillun, none of um couldn't pull de others outer de fire iffen dey fell in. I had mo'n [more than] dat, but some come here dead and some didn't. I got chillun dead in Birmingham and Bessemer. Dey ain't a graveyard in dis here settlement 'roun' Prospect where I ain't got chillun buried.

"Hettie Ann, right up dere ter Mr. Hawkins' graveyard, and my boy whut got killed settin' on de side de road eatin' his dinner, he' buried in Captain Jones' place in de bend yonder.

"Yassum, I been drug about and put through de shackles so bad I done forgot some of dey names, and I mos' blin' now and can't hear good neither. But my eyes is good nuff for to see ghosts, but I don't b'lieve in 'em, 'ca'se I'd see dem chillun sometime effen dey was ghosties. I know I'd see my boy, ca'se dey showed me his head whar dat Miller boy hit him in de head wid a spade and split his head wide open,;slip up behin' him and all he said was 'Squeek,' jes' lack a hog, and he was dead. And de murderer live right here. But dey move, and now I'm here. When hit rain us jes' gets under de bed 'ca'se de house ain't got no top on hit.

"I can't say Marse Garrett wa'n't good to us motherless chillun but de overseer, Mr. Woodson Tucker, was mean as anybody. He'd whup you nigh 'bout to deaf, and had a whuppin' log what he strip 'em buck naked and lay 'em on de log. He whup 'em wid a wide strop, wider'n my han', den he pop de blisters what he raise and 'nint [ointments/anoints] 'em wid red pepper, salt, and vinegar. Den he put 'em in de house dey call de pest house and have a 'oman stay dere to keep de flies offen 'em 'twell dey get able to move.

"Den dey had reg'lar men in de fields wid spades, and iffen you didn't do what you git tole, de overseer would wrop dat strap 'roun' his han' and hit you in de haid wid de wooden

handle 'til he kilt you. Den de mens would dig a hole wid de spades and throw 'em in hit right dere in de fiel' jes' lack dey was cows—didn't have no funeral nor nothin'.

"Us had a heap of houses in de quarters right on bofe sides de Big House. Us could step outer one house to 'tother. But, Miss, I didn't work so hard or have no trouble either. I was in de house attar Marsa come home and foun' me splittin' rails and plowin'. He 'lowed [allowed] dey done put me in too hard a ship [been given too hard a task], and I was too little, so he tuck [took] me to de house to draw water and wash dishes, 'ca'se I was a little motherless gal.

"Ole Marsa done a good part by me, and I was married to my fuss husban', Cary Crockett, right dere in de parlor. He tole de overseer dat us was human and had feelin's same as him, so he rejected de paterrollers and made 'em git off de place.

"I was treated good, 'ca'se I 'membered what my gran'ma say, and whatever dey tole me to put my han' to, I did; and I was obedient and wasn't hardheaded lack some de res.' I had no trouble, and wasn't 'buked [rebuked] none.

"But I's had mo' trouble las' ten years wid my own chillun den I ever did in slav'y time. Dey gives me sich bitter words till I can't swaller 'em and I jes' sets and cries. I can't read no songs to comfort me, jes' ketch [catch] 'em from de preacher on de stan' and hole [hold] 'em. Dat's de way I ketch my larnin'.

"Las' sermon I hyard [heard], he tuck his tex' en' said, 'Don't nobody rob God.' Den he say, 'Effen you is goin' to 'tend to serve God, serve Him in de full, 'ca'se God don't never bat a eye, nor turn His haid and he kin [can] see you. He frowns at ev'y sin, but He's a sin-forgivin' man.' I use to know a heap 'bout de Lord, but I'm so cripple' an blin' since de ca'f [calf] jumped on my foot, I can't go to church no mo'. So I done forgot.

"You ax 'bout dem flowers on de po'ch—I sho' wish dey was mine. You could have 'em 'ca'se dey ain't room nuff wid dem for me ter sit whar [where] I desire. Us ain't got no meal and here 'tis jes' Tuesday—no mo' till Saddy [Saturday]. Sho' is bad; us jes' 'pend[s] [depends] on de neighbors and borrys [borrows]."

MULES BE EATIN' AND NIGGERS BE EATIN'

Angie Garrett, born about 1845

She sat in the door of her small cabin, a short distance from Livingston, Alabama, in philosophical reflection. Time has not softened her memories. As she told these facts an occasional expression of bitterness passed over her face.

"I's Angie Garrett," she said. "I was about sixteen years at beginning uv de Wa'. I was born in De Kalb, Mississippi. My mother was Betty Scott, an' I didn't know my father's name. I had four brothers, Ember, Johnny, Jimmie, and Henry; and three sisters, Delphie, Lizzie Sue, and Frankie, and my grandmother was Sukie Scott. She lived five miles from Gainesville across Noxubee Creek [in full, Oka Noxubee], an' I lived wid her. Never axed 'bout my grand-daddy, 'caze wa'n't no tellin'. My mammy lived right here in Gainesville an' belong to Mr. Sam Harwood.

"I b'longed to de Moorings, and Cap'n Mooring run on a boat to Mobile from Aberdeen, Mississippi, 'twus on de 'Bigbee river, an' 'twus called de *Cremonia*. I was de house gal an' nuss [nurse] an' I slep' on a pallet in old Miss's room. I had plenty to eat long as us was on dat boat, and dat sho' was good. But when us was in De Kalb, vittles was giv' out at de smoke house, a slice o' meat and piece of bread and peas, and 'twus sarnt [sent] out ter de fiel'. Mules be eatin' and niggers be eatin'.

"I nussed de Moorings little boy Johnny. De little gal had died. Mr. Scott in De Kalb had 'bout fifty slaves and a big plantation and a overseer name' Barnes. He was a haughty man, and niggers was skeered to death 'caze he would come in a-cussin'.

"Us would git up 'fo' daylight. 'Twus dark when go out; dark when come in. Us make a little fire in de fiel' some mawnin's, hit beeze so cold. Dan us let it go out 'fo' de overseer come. Ef he seed you, he'd make yer lay down flat on yo' belly, foots tied out and han's tied out and whoop yer wid slapper leather strap wid a handle. But I was laid 'cross a cheer [chair]. I been whooped 'tel I tell lies on myself to make 'em quit. Say dey whoop 'till I'd tell de troof, so I had ter lie 'bout myse'f keep 'em from killin' me. Dis here race is mo' lac de chillun uv Isreal, 'cept dey didn't have ter shoot no gun ter set um free.

"I was sole ter Mr. Johnny Mooring, 'caze de property was in debt. And den fuss [first] I b'longed ter Mrs. Scott at De Kalb. And her sole me, an' I sho' was glad. I walked here to Gainesville frum De Kalb, Mississippi. Us wa'n't 'lowed to learn nothin'. Sometimes us sing and have a little prayer meetin', but 'twus mighty easy and quiet like. Gran'ma Sukey use' to sing, "Travel on, travel on, Soon be Over."

"Ef any us died in dem days, buried us quick as dey could and got out of dere and got to work. At night dey blow'd de horn for 'em to bring in de cotton w'ut de women spinned. Dey made all de clof [cloth]. Us worked nights too, but us rested Sundays. Us didn't git no presents at Christmas. Sometimes us had a corn shuckin', and no celebration for no marriage. Dat was called "jumpin' de broom," jes' taken up wid 'em. Dey all want you to have plenty of chillun, though.

"Us wo' [wore] asafetida 'roun' us neck keep off de small pox and measles. Us didn't have much medicine; and some of um was always full of bad complaints lac' Carrie, my neighbor, whut you axed about. I bees [am] a-hurtin', but I can't never git in edgeways for her. Always got a lot excuses; doan' never 'spects to die 'thout folks knows whut ails her. But she brought me some black-eyed peas today, and I lac's um 'caze dey biles sof', and I say 'ef de devil brought hit, God sarnt hit.' Sometimes I bees hongry, an' I say, 'Whut is I'm gwinter eat?', and along come somebody wid sumpin'.

"Wish you could of heered dat calliope on de Cremonia. Dey dance some time 'mos' all night, but dey didn't act lac' dey do now. 'Twus nice behavior. Look lac' ev'ything goin' back ter heathenism, and hits on de way now. But de good Lord he'ps me. He hol's my han'. I ain't got nothin' 'gin nobody. I doan' see no need of fussin' and fightin' an' a-drinkin' whiskey. Us livin' in a new worl' and I go on makin' de bes' I kin of hit. Some I lac. Some I doan'.

"I got one daughter, Fannie Watson, a good washer and ironer right here in Gainesville, and I got a son, too, say he ain't gonna marry 'tel he kin treat de 'oman good as she kin treat herse'f. I makes him wait on me, and he gits mighty raw sometimes, but I tells him I'm jes' much older den he is now as I was when he was bawn. Den he gives me a old dirty dime. But now wid dese here tokens, you gotter pay some of hit fer spendin'. Dey tells me hit's de Governor, and I say 'let him carry 'em; he kin tote 'em, I ain't able.' Well, once ain't always, and twice ain't forever.

"No'm, I doan' never go ter church no mo'. De preachers here is goin' bline about money. Dey ain't interested in dey soul. Some folks b'longs ter de church an' ain't been changed. De church ain't all of hit. I 'members day uv 'manicpation. Yankees tole us we was free, and dey call us up frum de fiel' to sign up an' see ef us wanted to stay on wid 'em. I stayed dat year wid de Moorings, den I bargain for lan', but couldn't never pay fer hit. Turned loose 'thout nothin'.

"But dey was a coal black free born nigger name George Wright, had a floatin' mill right here on de 'Bigbee River, stayed at de p'int of de woods jes' 'bove de spring branch, and hit did a good service. But he got in debt and he sole his five boys. Dey was his own chillun, and he could sell 'em under de law. De names was Eber, Eli, Ezekiel, Enoch, and Ezra, an' he sole 'em ter de highes' bidder right yonder 'front of de Pos' Office for cash. And Jack Tom was another free nigger here and he bought some of 'em, and dey others de white folks bought, and I never heerd no complaint and I seed 'em long as dey lived.

"Dey was a heap of things went on. Some I lac's to remember, some I doan'. But I'd rather be free now. I never seed Mr. Lincoln, but when dey tole me 'bout him, I thought he was partly God.

"But Mr. John Rogers right here, (he's dead an' gone now), he was whut he was and wasn't 'ceitful. Go to him ef you got into anything, and he more'n apt to tell you whut to do. He was wile [wild] when he was young, but he settle down and was de bes' white man to de niggers I ever know'd. He'd he'p me right now ef he was livin' and seen me wearin' dis here rag nasty, he sho' would."

Emma Crockett, age 79 or 80

On the old east road from Livingston to Epes, about six miles north-east of Livingston, is the "double house" built of widely assorted materials, where Emma Crockett lives. The older part of the house is the "settin' room," where the stick-and-clay chimney of its earlier days has been replaced by a new brick chimney. A roof of corrugated sheet metal tops the warped, roughly hewn logs which form the walls. The "new room" is built in the later shanty style—pine boards, unplaned, and nailed upright to a frame of 2X4's, the cracks of the flat joints "stripped" with narrow siding. A roof of "bought" shingles covers this room.

Connecting the two rooms is an open hall roofed with heavy boards "rived" from pine blocks. Despite its conglomerate architecture, this is a better "colored folks'" house than many in the Black Belt. These "double houses" often have no roof for the hall; and some also lack a floor, the hall being made entirely of earth, sky and imagination.

Emma settled herself on the top step at the front of the hall to talk to me, after first ironing a tiny wrinkle out of her "string apron" with her hand.

"Miss, I'm 'bout sebenty-nine or eighty year old," she told me, "and I belonged to Marse Bill Hawkins and Miss Betty. I lived on deir plantation right over yander. My mammy was called Cassie Hawkins, and my pappy was Alfred Jolly. I was Emma Jolly 'fore I married Old Henry Crockett. Us had five chillun and dey's two of 'em livin' in Bummin'ham, Fannie and Mary.

"Sometimes I kain't git my min' [mind] together so as I kin tell nothin'. I fell out t'other day and had a misery in my head ever since. I wish I could read, but I wa'n't never l'arnt nothin' 'ceptin' atter Surrender. Miss Sallie Cotes she showed us how to read printin'; but I kain't read no writin. I kain't tell you so much 'bout de wah' [war] ca'se my recollection ain't no 'count dese days. All I knowed, 'twas bad times and folks got whupped, but I kain't say who was to blame; some was good and some was bad. I seed the patterollers; and atter Surrender, de Ku Kluxes dey come, but didn't never bother me. See, I wan't so old and I minded ev'ybody, and didn't vex 'em none. Us didn't go to church none, but I goes now to de New Prophet Church and my favorite song is:

Set down, set down, set down,
Set down, set down,
Set down, chile, set down.
Soul so happy till I kain't set down.

Move de member, move Dan-u-el,
Move de member, move Dan-u-el.
Dan-u-el, member, don' move so slow.
Dan-u-el, member, don' move so slow.
Got on my rockin' shoes, Dan-u-el.
Got on my rockin' shoes, Dan-u-el.

Shoes gwine to rock me home,
Shoes gwine to rock me home, Dan-u-el,
Shoes gwine to rock me home, Dan-u-el,
Shoes gwine to rock me home, Dan-u-el,
Dan-u-el.

Shoes gwine to rock by faith,
Shoes gwine to rock by faith, Dan-u-el,
Shoes gwine to rock by faith, Dan-u-el.

Love de member, move Dan-u-el.
Love de member, move Dan-u-el.
Got on my starry crown, Dan-u-el.

Got on my starry crown, Dan-u-el.

"Dat's all I kin tell you today, honey. Come back when dis misery leave my head and I gwine to think up some tales and old songs.

"But I didn't never fool wid no hoodoo and no animal stories neither. I didn't have no time for no sich foolishness. And I ain't scared of nothin' neither.

"I lives here wid my grandchile now on Mr. Bob Davis' place. Us gits enough to eat, I reckon, but it's tight, I tell you dat!"

I KNOWS I'S EIGHTY FIVE BUT 'SPECTS I'S MORE DEN DAT

Charity Grigsby, about 85

Charity Grigsby lives in a tumbledown shanty about nine miles from Livingston on the old Epes road. She was sewing on a quilt when I arrived; humming an old plantation song that ran:

Angels in de water, walkin' by de light;

Po' sinners stand in darkness an' cannot see de light!

A broad smile flowed across her black face as I entered the cabin. She placed her needle aside, exclaimed: "Law me, honey, I's always proud when de white folks drap aroun'; an' dat's directly so."

"Charity," I said, "I want you to tell me about slavery times."

She lowered her head in thought a moment, said: "Honey, what would I tell?"

"Just all you remember, Charity."

And this is what she told:

"Honey, I was borned Charity Grigsby, but I married Nelson Grigory; ain't much 'stinguish in de names; but 'twas a little. My pappy was Dan'l Grigsby an' my mammy was Mary Moore. See, us belonged to Ol' Mister Jim Moore right up yonder 'bove Sumterville near Ramsey Station.

"You goes up de Gainesville an' Livingston Road an' turns off at de cross road 'bout nine miles from Livingston. Den you goes due west. It ain't far from dere; bout six miles, I reckons. 'Twan't no big plantation; 'bout a dozen of us dere; an' Marse Jim didn't have no

overseer lak de rest. He had dem boys of his'n what seed to us. Dey was John an' William an' Jim. Dey was all tol'able good to us; but dey would whoop us if we wasn't 'bedient; jes' like a mother raisin' a chile.

"I can't say how old I is; it's done got away from me; but I was a stroppin' gal durin' de war. I knows I's eighty-five an' I 'spects I's more dan dat. I's de mammy of 'leven chilluns; I knows dat; but ain't but five of dem a-livin'. As you knows, I lives wid two of dem; Mattie an' Evie. Dey treats me good. Hattie an' Ellen an' my boy lives in Bessemer. Dat is all my individual chilluns, but I's got a few others. I can't recollect much to tell; been a good while since de war; but when you calls it to my 'memberance I can think it up.

"Honey, dem nigger dogs; dey sho' did run. Sometimes dey kotched a nigger, but dey didn't never run me. I was in de house weavin' an' spinnin' lak mistus showed me; an' I didn't never get in no trouble wid nobody.

"An' den again, Marse Jim was purty tol'able good to us, but Mr. Ervin Lavendar was sho' mean to his niggers, an' his plantation warn't far from our'n. He had a pack of dogs what run de niggers; an' dem was skeery times, I tell you. Us didn't l'arn no schoolin' nor go nowhere nor have no corn shuckin' nor nothin'; jes' 'quired to stay in de cabins. I hyared 'bout Bre'r Rabbit an' hoodoo; but I never takes up no time wid dat foolishness; never seed no sense in it. Us got on all right 'thout dat.

"Some of de other niggers 'sides me was all de time in trouble, dough. Mr. Fulton, who lived clost to Mr. Lavendar, had a nigger-driver an' overseer name Sanders, an' I bet he was de meanest one of dem all. You know, honey, dey planted wheat fields in de fall in dem days an' cut it in de spring. It would come off in time 'nuff to make corn.

"Dere was a flock of birds lak blackbirds; only dey was wheat birds; an' dey went in droves an' fly way up yonder. Us had planks to slap together to keep de birds out er de wheat, because dey et it up.

"Well'm, one day Mr. Sanders tol' one of de women what was one of de sucklers on de place, dat if she wouldn't do what he axed her to dey was a black coffin over her haid. She 'fused him; so when he was loadin' his gun dere in de wheat fiel', he was holdin' de gun barrel propped under his chin, jes' so, an de other end settin' on de ground. Well sir, it went off an' he killed hisse'f stid of dat sucklin' woman; an' dat was a awful time, 'ca'se de niggers got skeered an' run, an' dey sot Mr. Lavendar's pack of nigger dogs on 'em. De dogs kotched some an' chewed 'em nigh 'bout to death. It warn' none of us, but it were close.

"Us laid low, didn't go out nowhere. Us wasn't 'lowed to; couldn't go to prayer meetin' or nothin'.

"You ax what dat song I singin' when you come? Dat was all of it, an' dat's 'nuff fer me, 'ca'se it's true. What dey gwine to be no mo' fer? Jes':

Angels in de water, walkin' by de light;

Po' sinners stan' in darkness an' cannot se de light.

"I don' want no mo' myse'f; jes' dat; dat's all. How come you wants some mo'? Don't dat much satisfy you? But honey, de sun gettin' low an' my chilluns will soon be comin' from de swamps. Ain't no bread cooked fer 'em. I'll tell you some mo' when I gets my mind on it, 'ca'se it's been a good while since de war.

"Yas'm, us has 'nuff to eat; but if us could get anymore, us would lak it. You know how 'tis; can make out wid mighty little. Us eats greens; lookin' forward to roas' in years comin' in."

CHASING GUINEA JIM, THE RUNAWAY SLAVE

Josh Horn, age over 80

Seven miles East from Livingston on State Road No. 80, thence Left two miles via a dim road through the woods to a cultivated section, the beginning of a large plantation area, stands the old-timey cabin of Josh Horn, a well known and influential figure in the colored community. Vigorous and active despite his more than 80 years, Josh exemplifies the gentleness with which time deals with those dwelling in a healthful spot and living the simple lives of a rural people. I found him nodding on his front steps.

"Josh," I said, "I've come to get you to tell me some old war-time stories, and I want to ask you some questions about you and Alice and how you all are getting along. I just want to know all about you and your family as far back as you can remember."

"All right, Miss Ruby, I's glad to tell you what I knows," said Josh, "and it ain't gonna be a lot of fibbin', but jes' lak everything was. I's telling you lak you axed me.

"Now, 'bout how us is getting along. I's telling you de troof, ef I was took 'fore God, I'd say jes' lak I's saying now, ef my chillun ever et a moufful dat wasn't honest, dey et it somewhar else, 'ca'se I ain't ever stole a moufful somepin' t'eat for 'em in all my life. It's honest vittles dey et, and varmints I's killed in de woods, 'ca'se us raised chillun fast, and us had a heap of 'em, sixteen, if I 'members right, and soon's I found out dat I could help feed 'em dat way, I done a heap of hunting. And everybody knows I's a good hunter. Alice used to make me go every Friday night; den us always had a 'possum or two for Sunday."

"Why," I asked, "didn't you go Saturday night?"

"Well, I'll tell you," Josh said, "Alice is a good Christian woman, and she knowed I'd hunt mighty nigh all night, and she didn't want nobody see me coming in Sunday morning wid no gun and no dogs; so I went every Friday night and went in de week too, and dat holp a lot to feed de chillun. I don't owe nobody, not a nickel.

"I lak to got in debt, when de Government come in and tried to help us wid dat cotton doings. Dey cut it down so on me, tell [until] I couldn't make nothing. But I's getting on all right now, and so is my chillun. Us is got fourteen living, and dey's all been to school, but ain't but one been to Booker Washington's school, but dey kin all read and write, and some of 'em teaching school out here in de country. De doctor, he come clear out here to see us, 'ca'se I always pays him. He jes' here wid Alice last night. It's nine mile and two of dem's back here in de woods through Marse Johnnie's place, but he come when us went atter him 'bout midnight, and dat's a comfort to know he come."

"What's the matter with Alice?"

"Well, I'll tell you, Miss Ruby. She was back dere wid me in de kitchen, and I got through eating and I come out and set down in de swinger to git some air. De moon was shining, and Alice come out, saying loud as she could: 'Who is you? Who is you?' De chillun run to her wid a lamp and I run, and 'twan't nobody dere. Well, Alice said 'twas a big man standing right 'side her dressed in black, and she called it Death. Us couldn't do nothing wid her, and she didn't know nobody, me nor de chillun, so I went to Livingston atter Dr. McCain, and he come and set wid her 'bout a hour. He said 'twas de 'cute 'digestion or somepin' lak dat. I knowed 'twan't no sperrit; I don't b'lieve in nothing lak dat."

"Well," I said, "I don't know, Josh, I've been hearing some ghost tales that freeze the blood in my veins."

"Yassum," said Josh, "if you wants to hear ghost tales, I kin sho 'tell 'em, ca'se I seed dis here wid my own eyes. 'Tain't no made-up nothing, needer; jes' somepin' I seed jes' lak I tells you.

"Green Hale and Isham Mathews b'longed to New Hope church, and de Reverend Bird Hall pastored dere. Dey axed me down to hear him preach one night, and us three, me and Green and Isham, was riding along side and side. I's riding a mule, but it was a fast mule, and Green couldn't keep up, en Isham said: 'Somebody been hunting.' I looked up and 'twas a sapling right 'cross de road. He said, 'Fellow oughten leave nothing lak dat. When de moon git low, it hit him in de face.' De moon was straight up and down den, and I said: 'Dat's right', and I's telling you de troof, dat sapling jes' riz up, turned aroun' in de air, en de brush part tickled my mule and Isham's hoss in de face. If you ever seed 'em buck and rare

and jump up, dey sho did. Den dey took off down de road, and we didn't hold 'em back, and here come Green. We lef' him behind, 'cause his mule couldn't keep up. If you ever heard a man pray more earnestest dan old Green, I ain't! He come down de road a-yelling: 'Lord, us live togedder, let us die togedder.' He meant for us to wait on him, but I couldn't hold dat mule, and I wan't trying to hold him! I was gitting away from dar!

"When us come togedder, us was a mile from whar us done been, den us had to decide what to do. Isham said for us to go wid him, and Green said no, us nearer to his house; but us wan't near to nobody and I was so scared, hadn't been for Alice, I'd a jes' stayed right whar us was 'till sun-up. I said, 'No, every man better take keer his own self,' en us did. When I got home, I didn't take nothing off dat mule but myself. I jes' left him standing at de do' wid de saddle on. What skeered Green so, was a man, he said, what was ridin' right 'side him en' didn't have no head! 'Twas a good thing he didn't tell me dat den, I'd jes' nacherly drap dead!

"No'm, I don't 'zackly believes in ghosties, but I heared Mr. Marshall Lee say he was riding on home one night and a woman stepped out in de road and say: 'Marshall, let me ride.' He say: 'My hoss won't tote double.' She say: 'Yes it will,' and she jump up behind him, and dat hoss bucked and jumped nigh 'bout from under him, but when he got home, she wan't dere. He say, his sister had jes' died and it mout [must] been her.

"'Nother time, one Friday night, Alice say us better git a 'possum for Sunday. She say she didn't want none caught atter midnight on Sadday. I went down whar I knowed dey was 'simmons, and dem dogs never treed nothing; dey jes' run 'round dat 'simmon tree lak dey gone crazy. I'm telling you de troof, somepin' jump outer dat tree, had a head back'erds and for'erds and look lak a flame shooting out it eyes! 'Twan't lak no possum I ever seed; 'twan't lak nothing. Dem dogs, Liz e'n Roger en' Cuba, made a bluge at me. Cotton was waist high, and I run down de cotton row and cross de road and dey trail me. I say: 'What ail you, dogs?' And dey jes' come on a-barkin', and dey run me to de bridge over Konkabyer. So I clumb on de banisters. I seed dey had my trail an' dey gonna ketch me, so I turn 'round and tore out for de slough. Dey lost my trail dere; and when I got home, 'bout daylight, de thorns and de briars and all done tore my clothes plum off me. 'Twas t'ree days 'fore I ever seed dem dogs ag'in.

"And I kin tell you somepin' else. It's jes' lak I say, I's always been a hunter, en' one night I went down in de post oak woods hunting by myself. Dis is a fact; 'tain't no lie. It's what I done. I had a mighty good dog, and I jes' kept walking and walking, and I got mighty nigh to Mr. Redhead Jim Lee's place, and I walked on, and atter while I seed I'd lost my dog. I couldn't see him nowha'r en' I couldn't hear him nowhar! En' den somepin' say to me, jes'

lak dis: 'Josh, blow your horn!' Jes' lak dat, lak somebody talking to me. Well I give three loud, long blows and set dere awhile longer, but dat dog didn't come. Co'se I knowed he'd come sometime, and so I jes' set dere on dat log, and I jes' turned a fool, I reckon. But 'twas jes' lak somebody talking to me, lak it 'peared to me was whispering: 'Josh, you out here in dese woods by yo'self. You blowed dat horn and your enemy heard you. You's a fool, you is.' And I whispered back: 'Dat's a fact.' I couldn't hear what it was a-whispering to me, but us jes' talk back to one 'nuther, and 'bout dat time I look up and here come three men ridin' on new saddles wid shiny buckles gwine, 'squeechy, squeechy', jes' lak dat. I hears de hosses feed jes' as nachel [natural] as could be. I thought sho' I seed 'em, and it 'pears to look clean outer reason; but dem men come riding right on up to me, en' I jump over dat log en' lay down flat on de other side, en' it look lak I could see right through dat log and heard 'em say: 'Dar he is, dar he is', and I seed 'em p'inting dey finger right whar 'I was. I knowed dem hosses gwineter step over de log on top me, and I's telling you de troof [truth], I jump up from 'hind dat log and run 'bout two miles, and if it hadn't been for dat slough, I don't know whar I'd a went. I come to myself in de middle of dat water, up to hyar, waist high, and dar was my dog, old Cuba, done treed a 'possum.

"De fust thing I 'members 'bout slave'y time—I wan't nothing but a boy, 'bout fifteen, I reckon—dat's what Marse Johnnie Horn say. Us belong to Marse Ike Horn, Marse Johnnie's pa, right here on dis place whar us is now. But dis here didn't belong to me den. Dis here was all Marse Ike's place. Marse Ike's gin got outer fix and we couldn't get it fixed. Colonel Lee had two gins, and one of 'em was jes' below old Turner house. Recolleck a big old hickory tree? Well dar's whar' it was.

"I was plenty big 'nough to drive de mules to de gin. Set on de lever and drive 'em, jes lak a 'lasses mill. So dat night Marse Ike told us he want everybody go wid him to Colonel Lee's gin nex' morning, and didn't want nobody to git out and go ahead of him. Dat held up de ginning; made us not go to de ginhouse tell sunup.

"Us got de mules and jes' waited. 'Twixt daylight and sunup, us all standing dar at de gate, and we heared a little fine horn up de road. Us didn't know what it meant coming to de house. And bimeby [by and by] Mr. Beesley, what live not fur from Marse Ike, he rode up and had five dogs—five nigger dogs, what dey call 'em—and soon as he come, Marse Ike's hoss was saddled up, and Marse Ike and him rode off down de road and de dogs wid em, 'head of us. Us followed 'long behind 'em, stay close as dey 'low us, to see what dey was up to. When dey got close to de ginhouse—ginhouse right 'side de road—dey stop us, and Mr. Beesley told old Brown to go ahead. Old Brown was de lead dog and had a bell on him, and dey was fasten togedder wid a rod, jes' lak steers. He turn 'em loose, and den he popped de whip and hollered at old Brown and told him 'nigger'. Old Brown hollered lak he hit. He want

to go. And dey was a fence on bofe sides made it a lane, so he put old Brown over de fence on de ginhouse side, and told Brown to 'go ahead'. He went ahead and run all aroun' de ginhouse and dey let him in de gin-room and he grabbed [groped] in de cottonseed in a hole.

"Den somebody holler 'Guinea Jim.' I looks and I didn't see him. Didn't nobody see him, but dey know dat's whar' he been hiding. Mr. Beesley told old Brown he jes' fooling him, and Old Brown holler ag'in, lak he killing him, and Mr. Beesley say: 'Go git dat nigger' and old Brown started 'way from dar lak he hadn't been hunting nothing, but he went aroun' and aroun' dat gin, and Mr. Beesley told him he hatter do better dan dat or he'd kill him, 'cause he hadn't come dar for nothing.

"Brown made a circle aroun' dat gin 'way down to de fence dat time, and he was so fat he couldn't git through de fence. You know what sort of fence, a rail fence it was. Den he stop and bark for help. Now I seed dis wid my own eyes. Dey put Brown on top de fence and he jump way out in de road, didn't stay on de fence. He jump and run up and down in de road, and couldn't find no scent of Jim. You knows how dey used to make dem rail fences?

"Well, Brown come back dar, and dis is de trufe, so help me Gawd. He bark, look lak, for dem to lift him back up on de fence, and bless God, if dat dog didn't walk dat rail fence lak he walking a log, as fur as from here to dat gate yonder, and track Jim jes' lak he was on de groun'. He fell off once, and dey had to put him back, and he run his track right on to whar 'Jim jumped off de fence way out in de road. Old Brown run right cross de road to de other fence and treed ag'in on t'other side de road toward Konkabia. Old Brown walk de fence on dat side de road a good piece, jes' lak he done on de other side; and dem other dogs, he hadn't never turned dem loose.

"When Brown he jump off dat fence, he jump jes' as fur as he kin on de fiel' side, lak he gwine ketch Jim lak a gnat or somepin'. En' he never stop barking no more, jes' lak he jumping a rabbit. Den, Mr. Beesley turn dem other dogs loose dat he hadn't never turned loose, 'ca'se he say old Brown done got de thing straight. En' he had it straight. Dem dogs run dat track right on down to Konkabia and crossed it to de Blacksher side. Dey was a big old straw field dar den, en' dey cross it en' come on through dat field, all dem dogs barkin' jes' lak dey looking at Jim. 'Reckley [directly], dey come up on Jim running wid a pine brush tied behind him to drag his scent away, but it didn't bother old Brown.

"When dem dogs 'gin to push him, Jim drap de brush and runned back toward Konkabia. Now on Konkabia dere used to be beavers worse den on Sucarnatchee now. Dey was a big beaver dam 'twixt de bridge and de Hale place, and Jim run to dat beaver dam. You know when beavers build dey dam, dey cut down trees and let 'em fall in de creek, and pull in

trash en brush same as folks, to dam de water up dar tell [until] it's knee-deep. De dogs seen him, old Brown looking at him, jes' 'fore he jump in 'bove de dam right 'mongst de trash and things dey'd drug in dar. Brown seed him and he jump in right behind him. Jim jes' dive down under de raff, en' let he nose stick outer de water. Every once in a while Jim he put he head down under, he holding to a pole down dar, and once Mr. Beesley seed him, he jes' let him stay dar.

"Brown would swim 'bout 'mongst de brush, backerds and for'erds, and terreckly Mr. Beesley tole old Brown, 'Go git him.' Den all de men got poles and dug 'bout in de raff hunting him. Dey knowed he was dar, en Marse Ike had a pole gissen aroun' trying to find him too. Den he told Mr. Beesley to give him de hatchet and let him fix he pole. He sharpen de pole right sharp, den Marse Ike start to jug aroun' wid de pole, and he kinder laugh to hisse'f, 'ca'se he knowed he done found Jim. 'Bout dat time Jim poke he head up and say: 'Dis here me', and everybody holler. Den he ax 'em please, for God's sake, don't let dem dogs git him. Dey told him come on out.

"You see, Jim belonged to Miss Mary Lee, Mr. John Lee's Ma, and his Pa was kilt in de war, so Mr. Beesley was looking out for her. Well, dey took Jim outer dar, and Mr. Beesley whipped him a little and told him: 'Jim, you put up a pretty good fight and I's gwine to give you a start for a run wid de dogs.'

"Jim took out towards Miss Mary's, and Mr. Beesley helt old Brown as long as he could. Dey caught Jim and bit him right smart. You see dey had to let em bite him a little to satisfy de dogs. Jim could have made it, 'cept he was all hot and wore out.

"Dat's 'bout all I knows, 'cept us belonged to Marse Ike Horn, and fust us belonged to Mr. Price Williams, what run de hotel in Livingston. He took my gran'ma to Mobile, den he died. Us Ma belonged to dey two chillun, Miss Nancy Gulley, Mr. Jake's wife, en Miss Burt Blakeney. Marse Ike Horn was dey uncle, and us all come 'round to him, and us been here ever since. My mammy was Ann Campbell, and my pappy was John Horn, and us ain't never had no trouble wid nobody 'bout nothing.

"We's having a barbecue on de fo'th of July and us wants you to come down to it—if Alice gits along well—and I's gwine tell you 'bout Rod and Big John, and John Graverson when dey runned away and about how old man Jim Devers, Alice's step-pa, hid 'em in de cave under he house whar dey had as nice hams as I ever et, co'se a little tainted, but sho was good. Dem niggers was fat as beavers, jes' settin' dar eatin' dat meat.

"And 'bout de time Marse Ike slip up on a heap of niggers at a frolic 'twixt Sumterville and Livingston and put a end to de frolic. De niggers havin' a big dance, and Marse Ike and de

patterrollers having a big run, said dey wanted to have some fun, and dey did. Said he eased up on 'em wid a white sheet 'round him and a big brush in he hand, and somehow or 'nother, dey didn't see him tell he spoke. Den he holler 'By God, I'm bird-blinding,' and he say dem niggers tore down dem dirt chimleys and run t'rough dat house. He say he ain't never heerd sich a fuss in a corn field in his born days. What he mean 'bout bird-blinding? When you goes in de canebrake it so thick, you takes a light to shine de bird's eyes and blind 'em, den you kin ketch 'em. Dat what he call bird-blinding'. Yassum, Marse Ike in dat too. He couldn't stand for 'em to have no fun 'thout [without] he in it.

"Come back on de fo'th of July, and I's gwine tell you some sho-nuff tales. You sort of caught me when my min' wa'n't zackly on it. I ain't had no sleep, jes' settin' 'side de bed by Alice, ketching a nod now and den. I's too sleepy to sing you no song, but one I laks is dis: It suits me now in my age:

My lates' sun is sinking fas'

My race in nearly run,

My strongs' trial now is pas',

My triumph' jes' begun.

"You come back and I'll sing de res', I's got to see 'bout things now."

HEAPS OF DEM YALLER GAL'S GOT SONT NORF

Martha Jackson, born 1850

"When de War fus' started," said Martha Jackson, who was born in 1850, "dey wouldn't let none of de cullud people go to chu'ch 'thout dey had a pass, and mighty few white folkses would give 'em a pass. Dere was a heap of men (hit mou't [must] have been six or twelve, my recollection is short, but anyhow 'twas jus' a big crowd) whut went back'erds en ferwerds jes' lack sher'fs and de calls de'se'fs de 'Patterrollers.' Ef de white folks give de niggers a pass, den dey could go, and ef dey was to go'thout one, dem Patterrollers would have 'em a-runnin' thoo de woods jes' lack dey was a lot of deer, an ef dey ever cotch 'em, dey'd take 'em to dey Marster and he'd jes' natchelly wear 'em out!

"Den dey didn't 'low 'em for to go nowhurs much, eben when de plantation j'ined one ernudder did, dey'd ketch 'em over dere and fetch 'em back and dey'd git whooped ag'in, and dat's 'zackly how come a heap uv 'em run'd away. I knowed a nigger onc't whut was gone nigh 'bout a year, and he wa'n't gone nowhur 'but right up de big road a piece, livin' in a cave whut he dug outer de side uv a clay bank. And Miss Betty say, 'Marthy, whur you

reckon Dan at?' And I never said nothin'. De Patterrollers couldn't fine him or nobody, and he ain't never showed hisse'f in daylight 'tel he peered up atter de S'render.

"And I knowed a woman name Tishie, Miss Mollie's house sarvant. She run away 'case dey so mean to her, I reckon, and de cullud folks harbored her and hid her up in de grain house wid de peas and sech lac', steddier down in de corn crib. And who ever 'twas 'trayed her I ain't sayin' but a crowd uv dem Patterrollers come and got 'er one night, and tuck her away, and I ain't nebber seed Tishie no mo'.

"And one uv Ole Marsa's niggers—'little boy' he go by—he tuck on might'ly, 'case dey say he wanted to marry Tishie. I know he fotch her up in de quarter fer ter git her sumpin' to eat atter de white folks done sleep. But couldn't nobody marry, 'twa'n't 'lowed, 'outer one or t'other uv de Ole Marsa 'greed to buy bofe uv 'em, and ef dey didn't 'gree you sho' better keep 'way fum dey place. And Ole Marsa and Miss Mollie didn't nebber 'gree.

"I hear some uv 'em say one dem Patterrollers had 'bout three sets er cullud chillun over dere, and some uv 'em favor'd Tishie, and ev'y time hit come time fer 'em yaller gals ter work in de fiel', dey got sarnt Norf [sent north]. I reckon 'case he never wanted see his own blood git beat up, and dat Jim Barton was er cru'l overseer, sho's yer bawn [born].

"'Twas a heap of dem yaller gals got sarnt Norf frum 'roun' here sho' was."

Martha says most of the meanness of pre-war days on the plantations may be charged up to cruel overseers.

"Ole Marsa's wife's sister had a husband whut kep' de meanest overseer durin' de war dat I ever is seed," she declares. "Dat man would make 'em niggers on de plantation plow up a gre't big fiel' big as all over yonder and den check hit fer corn. And checkin' corn in runnin' a straight row clean 'cross de fiel' bofe ways, and hit make a check 'bout two feet square. Den he'd make de niggers drap a grain uv corn right in de middle uv ev'y check, and ef hit didn't come up straight as deese here fingers on my han', he'd snatch hit up and make 'em eat hit right den and dere, stalk and all 'thout ever bilin' hit a anything. And that'll mighty ne'r th'ow you in de middle uv a spell uv sickness sho's yo' bawn.

"But dat didn't make no diffe'ns to dat man. And stidder dat, he'd nigh 'bout beat 'em ter deaf ef dey 'sputed his word 'bout hit, but den dey didn't 'spute, 'case dey was so skeered when dey drappin' hit dat hit ain't gwinter come up straight lack he say, dat dey couldn't drap hit good as dey could uv drapped hit. 'Case dey so skeered dey couldn't.

"Dem niggers jes' natchelly shuck lack dey havin' de black ague chill soon as dey heered him a-comin'. And when de Patterroles tole him de niggers was a-risin', 'case dey foun'

papers 'bout in de cabins, he nigh 'bout kilt 'em. Some of dem niggers run 'way down in de woods lack deers and clam' [climb] up in de trees, 'case he sot [set] dogs on 'em and some uv 'em stayed in a cave in de clay bank and tuck to comin' up to us house nights after vittles. And dat overseer man would send 'em Patterrollers jes' lack dey was de sher'f down to fotch '[fetch] em back, and he'd say, 'Dead or alive, doan' make no diffe'nce.' And sometimes dem dogs be done nigh 'bout chewed dem niggers up. Den he'd whoop 'em sho' 'nuff.

"'Twas a long and a wide stiff leather strop w'at he had whut hung back uv his do' [door], and hit had big roun' holes in hit, and he'd git him a pot of warm salty water and set hit down by his side. Den he had 'em cotch de nigger and put his feet in de long block, and somebody helt dey han's, and he strip 'em stark naked, and he stretch 'em 'cross a log, and he dip de long stiff leather strop wid de roun' holes in hit in de briny salt water, and den look out 'case he comin' down on dat po' nigger's nekkid bottom. De holes in de strop dey sucks flesh up in th'oo [through] 'em, and de nigger's a hollerin' and ev'ybody so skeered dey right ashy, and dey can't nobody say a mumblin' word 'case dey so skeered.

"Lawdy, Lawdy, dem was tribbolashuns! Wunner dese here 'omans was my Antie and she say dat she skacely call to min' he e'r whoopin' her, 'case she was a breeder woman, and brought in chillun ev'y twelve mont's jes' lack a cow bringin' in a calf. And she say, dat whut make her mo' val'ble to her Ole Marster. He orders she can't be put to no strain 'casen uv dat. And she say she give him praise on his gretty grave fer dat. But dem others he worked 'em day en night, Sad'dy en' Sunday too you'se sho' ter hear dem women uver [every] night battin' de clo'es on er log in creek wid de stick.

"But fo' long dat man tuck rale [real] sick, en' he b'lieved in conjurashun but spite everything he done he got worser en' worser and fo' long he died.

"So dey sarnt [sat] down in de woods and all over de plantation er lookin' fer de niggers to come to de Big House 'case dey overseer was dead. And here dey comes a-shoutin' and a-clappin' dey han's and a-holl'rin' sumpin' awful.

Ole John Bell is de'd en' gone

I hopes he's gone to hell!

"En dat was de onles' [only] time I's ever seen dem niggers happy on dat plantation 'tel atter s'render."

A HUSBAND COULDN'T BE BOUGHT

Carrie Pollard, born 1859

Carrie Pollard was born in slavery time but she was never a slave. Her grandmother was a free woman who came to Tuscaloosa as a servant in the 1820's and was rescued from a man who claimed ownership, but whose claim was disallowed. The grandmother went to Gainesville, with her slave husband for whom she bought freedom.

One of her daughters, who was Carrie Pollard's Aunt Cynthia, was not so lucky. She couldn't buy her husband free. The story, told so often to Carrie when she was a child, is still a bright memory to the mulatto woman who was born in 1859 and still lives in Gainesville in the house of her birth.

"My Aunt Cynthy," said Carrie, "was free born in North Carolina. She come down here to Gainesville, an' though the deed sez you can't take a blue veined chile an' make a slave outa her, de man whut brought her made like he owned her or sump'in'. She lived on one plantation wid her guardian. Tom Dobbs, a slave nigger whut belonged to Mr. Dobbs here in Gainesville, he lived on another farm cross de road. An' dey couldn't marry, 'caze Mr. Dobbs wouldn't sell Tom an' Aunt Cynthy's white folks wouldn't let her marry, so dey jes' taken up an' went ahead. Her an' Tom had nine chillun, as fine looking mulattoes ez you'd wanta see. An' old Mr. Dobbs wanted 'em an' he couldn't get 'em.

"Aunt Cynthy was a good midwife, so a white lady sent fer her to come to Sumterville, Alabama, to nuss her an' she went. An' while she was dere, she dream't sump'in' done happened to her chillun an' dat dey was in trouble. So she tole de white lady she was nussin' 'bout whut she dream't an' she said, 'Mammy, iffen you is worried 'bout your chillun I'll ze gwineter send you to a fortune teller an' see whut's de matter.'

"De fortune teller cut de cards, an' den she looked up en tole Aunt Cynthia 'All yo' chillun an' your husband done gone, an' I can't tell you where dey's at.' So Aunt Cynthia run back an' tole de white lady. She called her husband, an' he had one of his niggers saddle up two hosses an' ride wid Aunt Cynthy back to Gainesville. When she foun' her guardian, Mr. Steele, he met her wid de news dat dey was tuck to DeKalb, Mississippi.

"He got on his hoss an' tuck some other white men wid him, an' dey captured old man Dobbs right dere wid Tom an' de nine chillun. Dey done stopped an' camped an' was cookin' supper. So Mr. Steele tole him he could keep Tom, 'caze he was hissen, an' a slave, but Cynthy was free born an' he couldn't have her chillun. But Mr. Dobbs sez he didn't want Tom nohow, caze he was part Indian an' no 'count an' wouldn't work. So Mr. Steele bought Tom for Aunt Cynthy an' brought 'em all back to live wid him. An' he give Aunt Cynthy an' Tom an' de chillun a nice house right 'cross de branch here after surrender."

Carrie tells of how her grandmother used to send them to the mill in Gainesville with wheat, "jes' lack you do corn nowadays, to git flour. An' us git de grudgins an' de seconds an' have de bes' buckwheat cakes you ever et."

She says there are more black Negroes now in Gainesville than she has ever seen. She says, "Hit use to be a sight to see 'bout fifty bes' lookin' mulatto girls up in de public square here listenin' to de ban' an' nussen' de chillun, not five black ones in de bunch. An' dey had good sense, too. Us didn't have no clocks, so us white mistis would say, 'Yawl come home a hour by sun to do de night work,' an' us didn't hardly ever miss it." She says her grandmother sent her two daughters to school in Mobile, and they went down the river from Gainesville in a river boat called *Cremonia*.

PETER HAD NO KEYS 'CEPIN' HIS'N

George Young, age 91

"De Lawd wouldn't trusted Peter wid no keys to Heaven," in the opinion 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 nor'wes' 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, Phoebe, Frances and Amelia. My mother's name was Mary Ann Chapman an' my father's name was Sam Young, but he b'longed to Mr. Chapman. Us all belonged to Governor Reuben Chapman of Alabama.

"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 year." Bofe of 'em was mean, but Lawler, I hear tell, was de meanes'. Dey had over three hund'ed slaves, caze dey had three plantations, one at Bodke, one in Huntsville and dis yere one. I can't say Marsa Chapman wasn't good to 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 sho' mean.

"I seed slaves plenty times wid iron ban's 'roun' dey ankles an' a hole in de ban' an' a iron rod fasten to hit what went up de outside of dey leg to de wais' an' fasten to another iron ban' 'roun' de waist. Dis yere was to keep 'em from bendin' dey legs an' runnin' away. Dey call hit puttin' de stiff knee on you, an' hit sho' made 'em stiff! Sometimes hit made 'em sick, too, caze dey had dem iron ban's so tight roun' de ankles, dat when dey tuck 'em off live things was under 'em, an' dat's whut 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 [fever sore]. 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' Harrison." Den dey turned de dogs loose on him ag'in, an' sich a screamin' you 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 was hard times, sho'.

"Dey didn't l'arn us nothin' an' didn't 'low us to l'arn nothin'. Iffen dey ketch us l'arnin' 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' somebody 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 Jim 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 his feet was stretch out an' tied to dem stobs. Den dey whupped him wid a whole board whut you kiver [cover] 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 [court]. 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 Patterollers 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 [calf nurser] 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 went 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' 'em 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 'fuse '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' [until my mouth was sore]. 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 ignerrancy can't rule, hit sho' can't. We is darkies, an' white folks ought to be favorable. 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 bosom, 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 gets out de path plenty times to let 'em by, an' iffen you kin see'em, walk 'roun' 'em. Iffen you can't see 'em, den dey'll walk 'roun' you. Iffen dey gets too plentiful, I jes' hangs a hoss shoe upside down over de 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 'cep'in' his'n. Don't you know iffen he'd of give Peter all dem keys, dey's a 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!"

Afterword

This book is based on the WPA Slave Narratives—interviews of former slaves, conducted under a government project to keep writers gainfully employed during the Great Depression. The original collection, including 2191 biographical accounts, is in the public domain and is accessible through the Library of Congress.

Elderly interviewees were asked to remember events that took place 70 or more years before. Some might have been hesitant to share with strangers, and those strangers might not have clearly understood them. Despite such limitations, this body of information gives us a glimpse of what it was like to be a slave.

According to the original introduction:

Set beside the work of formal historians, social scientists, and novelists, slave autobiographies, and contemporary records of abolitionists and planters, these life histories, taken down as far as possible in the narrators' words, constitute an invaluable body of unconscious evidence or indirect source material, which scholars and writers dealing with the South, especially social psychologists and cultural anthropologists, cannot afford to reckon without. For the first and the last time, a large number of surviving slaves (many of whom have since died) have been permitted to tell their own story, in their own way. In spite of obvious limitations--bias and fallibility of both informants and interviewers, the use of leading questions, unskilled techniques, and insufficient controls and checks--this saga must remain the most authentic and colorful source of our knowledge of the lives and thoughts of thousands of slaves, of their attitudes toward one another, toward their masters, mistresses, and overseers, toward poor whites, North and South, the Civil War, Emancipation, Reconstruction, religion, education, and virtually every phase of Negro life in the South.

The narratives belong to folk history--history recovered from the memories and lips of participants or eye-witnesses, who mingle group with individual experience and both with observation, hearsay, and tradition. Whether the narrators relate what they actually saw and thought and felt, what they imagine, or what they have thought and felt about slavery since, now we know why they thought and felt as they did. To the white myth of slavery must be added the slaves' own folklore and folk-say of slavery. The patterns they reveal are folk and regional patterns--the patterns of field hand, house and body servant, and artisan; the patterns of kind and cruel master or mistress; the patterns of Southeast and Southwest, lowland and upland,

tidewater and inland, smaller and larger plantations, and racial mixture (including Creole and Indian).

The narratives belong also to folk literature. Rich not only in folk songs, folk tales, and folk speech but also in folk humor and poetry, crude or skillful in dialect, uneven in tone and treatment, they constantly reward one with earthy imagery, salty phrase, and sensitive detail. In their unconscious art, exhibited in many a fine and powerful short story, they are a contribution to the realistic writing of the Negro. Beneath all the surface contradictions and exaggerations, the fantasy and flattery, they possess an essential truth and humanity which surpasses as it supplements history and literature.

Washington, D.C. June 12, 1941

B.A. Botkin Chief Editor, Writers' Unit Library of Congress Project

This book retains that framing—both the strengths and the acknowledged limitations of the original.

While scholars have been able to examine the full collection in the Library of Congress and other major libraries, general readers have only been acquainted with samples and summaries.

In 1945 a book edited by Botkin was published by the University of Chicago Press. Entitled *Lay My Burden Down: a Folk History of Slavery*, it consists of excerpts from about 300 of the 2191 interviews. The contributors are identified in a list at the end.

In 1970, a collection of 100 of the narratives edited by Norman R. Yetman was published by Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston. It is entitled *Life Under the "Peculiar Institution": Selections from the Slave Narrative Collection.* In 2000, Dover revised and reissued it as *Voices from Slavery*.

In 1972 George Rawick started publishing the entire set of interviews in 41 volumes as *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*. Today those volumes are expensive and hard to find except in major libraries.

With the advent of the Internet, an electronic copy of the original was posted at the Library of Congress website, and the Gutenberg Project added it to their collection of public domain books. But broken up into 35 separate files, it was difficult for the general reader to deal with.

Then another sampling, *Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk About Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation*, appeared in 2021.

Why Me and How?

I had two advantages: a single searchable document containing all 2,191 interviews, and the help of my AI partner, Simon.

Twenty years ago, when I was an ebook publisher, my late wife, Barbara, spent months assembling a single ebook edition of the WPA Slave Narratives from the Gutenberg files. To simplify navigation, she added internal links to each entry, and putting all the files together simplified search.

Meanwhile, over the last year and a half, I've been experimenting with AI and have built a relationship with the AI partner I call "Simon." I wrote about my experiences with Simon in the book *How to Partner with AI*.

Working with Simon, I realized that he doesn't require information to be categorized and presorted. He can quickly and effectively deal with large quantities of unstructured information in ways that are beyond human capability. That might make it possible to uncover exceptions and contradictions—unique and valuable contributions that had gone unnoticed. So I uploaded Barbara's single-file edition to Simon, and we explored the original accounts together.

I wanted to find what was unusual and to recover, as much as possible, original voices and memorable life stories. With Simon's help, I looked for incidents, images, and turns of phrase that could stand on their own, when excerpted from longer, rambling narratives.

This book isn't aimed at scholars. They know far more about slavery than I do. Instead, it is intended for anyone who would like to catch glimpses of what the world looked like when seen through the eyes of slaves.

Some interviewers did more than record answers to fixed questions. At times, I sensed rapport—something like a partnership—between interviewer and speaker. In those instances, interviewers prompted buried memories, asked follow-up questions, and rearranged material to improve the flow. The speakers, in turn, sometimes responded to that attention. They were not merely answering questions; they were trying to remember, shape and share their experience as fully as they could.

Those interviewers did not simply translate dialect into standard English. They understood that such smoothing would flatten and homogenize tone. Instead, they tried to preserve—or even recreate—not just vocabulary, but rhythm and syntax. In the best cases, they

clarified the voice without erasing it. But others went too far—summarizing, paraphrasing, or inserting their own conclusions.

I set aside passages that appeared to arise from leading questions or interviewer expectations. And when voices emerged clearly, I tried to preserve them with minimal intervention. In some cases, I present complete or nearly complete narratives; in others, short excerpts grouped by theme to allow patterns to emerge across multiple voices.

The work of Ruby Pickens Tartt stands out from the rest. That's why I included all 13 of her short-story interviews in the final section.

I'm hoping that this book, as proof of concept, will lead the way for similar AI-aided projects that might deepen our understanding of the past failings and the future potential of humankind.

Why "Voices of the Owned"?

This book is intended to honor of the former slaves who tell their stories. I'm donating all royalties to the Penn Center in South Carolina, a charity dedicated to preserving the history and culture of American slaves.

As I read more deeply in the original narratives—listening for the particular rather than the general—I realized that no two stories were the same, no single pattern held. They responded uniquely to the circumstances in which they found themselves. But they were all owned like farm animals. They were treated as property rather than as human beings.

That condition shaped their lives.

Individuals remembered unique, unsettling, gruesome acts of cruelty by owners and overseers. But they were all subject to the same dehumanizing system, supported by law and common practice, with businesses breeding, buying, and selling people like livestock; and killing them as well, for whim or profit, with no accountability.

Imagine yourself in their position. You are owned and your owner can legally treat you as property, as if you are a cow, a mule, a pig. Escape is difficult and dangerous. If, by chance, you have a kind owner, there is no guarantee you'll have that same owner tomorrow, much less next year. You, your spouse, your children—anyone you care about—might be sold and you might never see them again for the rest of your life.

As a legal non-entity, you have no defense, no recourse, no appeal in cases of cruelty, sexual abuse, torture, dismemberment, even murder. Neither your birth nor your death is recorded (much less explained and justified). You exist only as an asset on a balance

sheet. You can be paired with anyone for breeding and then your children can be taken away and sold. Your owner or an overseer can sexually abuse you at will. You might hope that your monetary value as a hard worker or a prolific breeder will motivate your owner to treat you well. But if you're too valuable, that might tempt your owner to sell you.

Imagine how such trauma and fear of trauma could shape your behavior long after Emancipation, and how your expectations—the "wisdom" you learned as a child—could shape the lives of your children, and so on through succeeding generations.

Beyond Slavery

Slavery in the United States had its particular laws, practices, and cruelties. But enslavement is not the only way people have denied others legal rights, have treating them as property and controlling them.

As you listen to the voices in this book, a broader question emerges: What happens when one group of people treats another as property? This question arises in the treatment of workers, migrants, and the trafficked. It appears whenever people are dehumanized and treated as things.

And it may take on new forms in the future.

Science fiction has asked whether computer intelligence might evolve into consciousness, and robots or androids might become indistinguishable from or superior to humans. It has also considered the possible consequences if we encounter extraterrestrials more intelligent or more powerful than we are. Those possibilities may become reality in the near future, and we may be concerned not just about the consequences of treating others as property, but also of others treating us that way.

This book doesn't attempt to answer such questions. But it does show, in lived detail, what it means for humans to be treated as property—and what remains, resists, and speaks under those conditions.

If we understand that more fully, we may be better prepared to recognize the danger of treating any thinking, feeling being as a thing, and the risk of us being treated that way as well.

[Acknowledgements]

Books by Richard Seltzer

Non-Fiction

Voices of the Owned (editor)

How to Partner with AI

In Flux

One Family

Why Knot?

Trojan War Fiction

Let the Women Have Their Say

Trojan Tales

We First Met in Ithaca, or Was it Eden?

Breeze

Shakespeare Fiction

Shakespeare's Twin Sister

We All Are Shakespeare

Other Fiction

The Bulatovich Saga: The Name of Hero

Meter Maid Marion, How to Tutor a Ghost, The Third Tortoise

To Gether Tales

Echoes from the Attic (with Ethel Kaiden)

Parallel Lives

Beyond the 4th Door

Nevermind

Saint Smith and Other Stories

Children's Books

The Lizard of Oz and Other Stories

Now and Then and Other Tales from Ome

Jokes

Grandad Jokes

Translations (from Russian)

Ethiopia Through Russian Eyes by Alexander Bulatovich

The Muse of Far Wanderings of Nikolai Gumilyov by Apollon Davidson

Business Books

Web Business Boot Camp

The AltaVista Search Revolution (two editions)

Take Charge of Your Website

The Social Web

The Way of the Web

Shop Online the Lazy Way

Snapshots of DEC

MGMT MEMO: Management Lessons from DEC