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WPA Alabama Writers Project
EX SLAVES TALES
Mobile County, #6

Ready to film: 4-19-77

Filmed: 5-5-1977

AWW

"Old Plantation Days" by David Eldred Holt, (The Reverend Mr.)
Late Archdeacon of the Sacramento Diocese
of the Protestant Episcopal Church of California
(formerly a native of Buffalo Plantation, near
Natchez, Mississippi.) No date re: manuscript.

An unpublished work edited for the WPA Federal Writers Project of Alabama
by: David Holt, Mobile, Alabama

Week ending May 7, 1937.

S-240

PSYCHOLOGY OF A RUNAWAY SLAVE
Compiled by David Holt

[UNCLE LEWIS]

David Holt
Ident. No. 0149-17374.
Federal Writers' Project.
District 2.
WPA Project 3014,
Mobile, Ala.

Of course you know that we always called the older colored men "Uncle" and the older colored women "Aunt". It was proper manners.

Old "Uncle" Louis was the oldest slave on the plantation, "Uncle" Toby having died. 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. He prided himself on his powers as a hunter and also claimed intimate friendship with ghosts and spooks. Being what was known as a "yard servant", he had picked up much of the talk of his white masters and spoke his own version of their language.

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?"

"Yas 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, I went to him for an interview.

"Uncle Louis, what makes you run away? You don't get whipped or abused in any way.

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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 jes natcherly has ter go. De wild plums, de red haws an de crab apples is ripe. De walnuts an de chinquepins an de hickory nuts an de beach ~~nut~~ mast is ~~drappin'~~ drappin' and the blue smoke comes over de woods, an de woods birds an de yard birds goes souf wid de ~~big~~ cranes an ducks an wil'geese an de blackbirds an de crows goes in droves--it seem lack all dat is jes callin me".

"Where do yo^y go?", I asked.

"Lorsy, Marse Davie, I never goes off de plantation. I always go to ~~the~~ de woods back o' de past'er. Ole Master knows whar I is an so does [#] Henry. Don't you know dat holler dat come down on de lef' han side of de branch-- de fus Holler you comes to, not more dan two hundred yards in de woods?". I knew it well.

"Don't you 'member a big green oak tree growin' on de right han' side of de holler bout a hunderd yard up de path?". Well, sir, dat tree is my home. I done toated some poles an some sedge grass up dar an made me a bed- but you can't see it from de groun'. When I gets up dar I can see all 'roun'. I seen you an Marse Joe de las' time you go fishin'. I lays dar all day an listen to de ~~talkin'~~ birds an critters talkin'. A chicadee tole me you was comin' long befo' I seen you. Den a jay bird caught a sight of you an he tole me. ~~Can't~~ Can't nobody come along widout de birds tellin' me. Dey pays no min' to a horse or a dog but when dey spies a man dey speaks. I done tame' a squi'l so he comes see me ever'day.

"De birds an Critters sho is good comp'ny. I done made frends wid up all but de owl an de hawk. Dey is jes natchally bad an de other critters hates'em. A ole red-breast~~ed~~ hawk come an lit

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in a ~~daid~~ daid pine tree. I seen him so plain til I knowed what he was thinkin' about. He was jes mad clean down in his craw and was cussin' ~~everything~~ ever'thin'. A little pe wee bird seen him an begin to fuss. A crow fly over and hear~~d~~ de pe wee, den fly down close an take a good look at mister hawk den he fly up and start callin' de other crows. In a little while a whole drove of crows is flyin' 'roun dat pine tree. Den de jay birds come an dey is callin' for a fight, but de ole hawk never move. Dea da mocking birds come an dey saif right in and starts pecking at de hawk until he dove into de woods and gets away, an all de birds begin to talkin 'bout ~~hugs~~ bugs an things."

The old man was wound up for an interminable talk on his favorite theme, the talk of critters, and to change the subject I asked: "Uncle Louis ain't you afraid of ghosts?"

"Lor', chile, I ain't feared of no ghos' or spook, as I's seed lots of both. All a ghos' do is jes show hise'f. You never hear of one doin' nothin' to nobody. Dey is sociable an wants to be near livin' people. When folks gets scared it hurts de ha'nt's feelins an dey goes somewhere else. Dey has all de feelin's dey had when dey was livin'. You would'n stay by wid folks dats fear'd of you an want to run away from where you is.

Las'night, when I was up in my nes', an my fire had died out, all 'sept one little chunk, an de moon was shinin' like day, I lay down, I did, an I ~~took~~ take a li'l nap o' sleep. Den I wakes up sudden an looks 'roun agin. Well, sir, de norf side of de hall was covered wid ghoses an spooks. Dey was layin' down, standin' up an leanin' agin trees, but mos'ly dey was jes sittin' on de groun', all lookin' at me hard as dey could, didout battin' an eye.

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The old negro was sitting in the twilight, talking in a low, impressive monotone, in a language we both understood but which I find difficulty in transcribing after all these years that intervene. A screech owl was a "miseryfying" in the family grave yard back of the quarters, a fitting abligato to the narrative. Though creepy sensaations crawled ~~up~~ up my spine, I still had my doubts.

"Uncle Louis, do you really believe you saw all that, and didn't dream it while you were curled up in your nest?", I asked.

The old man seemed agrieved at my doubts as he replied: "It ain't no belêevin' about it. I knows what I knows an I sees what I sees. De ghos' is what lives when de body is done wore out, but it don't die."

"It's all immagination", I said, in fefense of reason and Nature, as I understood these things.

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PSYCHOLOGY OF A RUNAWAY SLAVE.

(Compiled by David Holt.)

"I wants to ax you what does de ^Iimpagin^Tin^S' . Itss your ghos' that does the imaginin' so you can see other ghosses an spooks."

In recognition of Louis' knowledge and powers of reasoning ~~powers~~ my brother William wrote a diploma in Latin and ~~xxx~~ presented it to him. After that he was called "Doctor Louis."

I recall that it was about that time that I read a book on psychology but later discovered that there were those on the plantation who had a better working knowledge of the subject than was taught in the book.

Bibliography:

Old Plantation Days, an unpublished work by the Venerable ~~Rev~~ David Eldred Holt, late Archdeacon of the Sacramento Diocese, (Protestant Episcopal) of California and a native of Buffalo Plantation, near Natchez, Mississippi.

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Week ending May 7, 1937.

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(Edited ?)

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"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:

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Week ending May 7, 1937¹⁵

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PSYCHOLOGY OF A RUNAWAY SLAVE.

(Compiled by David Holt.)

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Week ending Aug. 15, 1936.
Week ending May 7, 1937.

Louise Porter (col.)
Identification No. 00000000
Federal Writers Project, Dist. 2,
WPA Project 694, (New No. 1061.)

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Walter Brannan

GUDGEON PSYCHOLOGE OF A RUNAWAY SLAVE.

(Compiled by David Holt.)
(Compiled by Louise Porter, Colored.)



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The negroes were then hidden ~~in~~ the delta marshes of upper Baldwin County, at the head of Mobile Bay, and the Clotilde was taken to Bayou ~~near~~ *Henry was a slave who served as* the mouth edge. The authorities took proceedings against ~~Captain~~ *Coachman and plantation foreman.* ~~the~~ case was tried with able lawyers on either side, the Captain of the Clotilde was kept out of the way ~~and~~ *#Henry was a slave who served as coachman and plantation foreman.* ~~and~~ Captain Meaher proved that he had been in and about Mobile all the time. The result was that he was acquitted. After everything had blown over the slaves were divided by Captain Meaher among different persons in interest. Many of the negroes were sent up the river to plantations, others were also employed in building redans and redoubts up the river,

Week ending Aug. 15, 1936.
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Louise Porter (Col.)
Identification No. 0149-4249.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist. 6.
WPA Project 694. (New No. 2661.)

Noted Personalities

CUDJOE LEWIS, THE LAST OF THE SOUTH'S NEGRO SLAVES



(Compiled by Louise Porter, Colored.)

On April 20, 1861, the last cargo of negro slaves imported to the United States was brought to Mobile, April 20, 1861 as given by the obituary of Captain Tim Meaher, who died in 1892.

The War between the States at this time was already on, and this black cargo created quite a sensation in Mobile and the South, hundreds going down to the foot of St. Anthony street to see the slaves gibbering in their tribal language. The planters of the South generally did not desire savages fresh from Africa, but desired those either born in the United States or the west Indian Islands, because they did not have to break them in for laboring purposes. The schooner Clotilde sailed from Lonanda in Africa with several hundred negroes, prisoners captured by the warriors of the tribe in a war with another tribe, and sold to American speculators. The Clotilde safely reached the Mississippi and was taken in charge by Captain Tim Meaher and run up Mobile Bay and river by night.

The negroes were then hidden in the delta marshes of upper Baldwin County, at the head of Mobile Bay, and the Clotilde was taken to Bayou Conner and burned to the hull edge. The authorities took proceedings against Captain Tim Meaher, and although the case was tried with able lawyers on either side, the Captain of the Clotilde was kept out of the way and Captain Meaher proved that he had been in and about Mobile all the time. The result was that he was acquitted. After everything had blown over the slaves were divided by Captain Meaher among different persons in interest. Many of the negroes were sent up the river to plantations, others were also employed in building redans and redoubts up the river,

Cont.

while the remainder remained in the neighborhood of Mobile river above Mobile on Meaher's land and that part of the suburb of Plateau known as "Affrisky Town", were up to the death of the last of these slaves (Cudjoe Lewis, the subject of this article being the last), the pure African Loanda tribal was spoken.

These last slaves were known as the "Tarkars", an African Tribe, captured and brought here on the ship "Clotilde". In this number was Razoola Lewis, but later known to every one as "Uncle Cudjoe Lewis".

Uncle Cudjoe lived in an old cabin, next door to the Union Baptist Church in the Plateau Community for nearly a century or until he died Friday, October 2nd, 1935, being the last of the number who came on the "Clotilde". He was a member of this church and served as janitor for seventy years, very active, and able to perform his duties until a few months before he died at the ripe old age of 105 years.

Uncle Cudjoe was intelligent and possessed with a keen memory. He could relate stories about his early life in Africa and the United States, and was often interviewed by representatives of the leading newspapers and magazines of the country. He loved his church and could quote intelligently many scriptures in the Bible.

Uncle Cudjoe's life was a great influence on the people of his community. He was respected by members of both races. Hundreds of whites as well as Negroes attended his funeral, paying homage to his bier. Members of both races spoke on the life and struggles of this historical character.

The population of Plateau is 2,537 (all negroes) being descendants

Cudjoe Lewis, the Last of the South's
Negro Slaves

Cont.

of Uncle Cudjoe and others who came with the last load of slaves.

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Dropped Stitches from Mobile's Past, by Erwin Craighad, in The
Mobile Register, Sunday, April 21, 1929.

"The Mobile Sun". (Negro paper.)



Week ending May 21, 1937.

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Mary A. Poole,
Identification No. 0149-4366.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist.2.
WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Ala.

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STORY OF DELLIE LEWIS, BORN IN SLAVERY.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole,)

Dellie Lewis, who lives at 352 Cuba Street, Mobile, Alabama, the subject of this sketch, was interviewed by the writer on May 18th., 1937. She was born on the plantation of Winston Hunter at Sunflower, Washington, County, Alabama, a station on the Southern Railroad.

Her parents were Larry and Julia Hunter. Her mother was drowned when a steamboat on the Alabama river blew up shortly after the surrender, Dellie was with her mother at the time, but she was saved.

The Hunter's sent Dellie to Mrs. Camila Hunter Myers who lived about 6 miles from Portland, Dallas County, Alabama. Their reason for sending her, Dellie said, was on account of it being bad for the white people or those of mixed blood to live near the river, they would get the "swamp fever," while the full blooded negroes were immune, but the whites and quadroons or mulattoes (mixed bloods) would be sure to catch the old "swamp fever."

Later she was sent back to her grandmother, Alvain Hunter Moses, who was house girl in the Winston Hunter home and her mother (Dellie's great grandmother), Emily Hunter was cook for the family, the latter lived to be 120 years of age, while Alvain Dellie's grandmother lived to be 110.

Dellie remembers the Hunter plantation home as a large white house and judged they had from twenty to twenty five slaves. As she recalled the quarters, there was a long lane or road with one room cabins along each side, each cabin had a little garden plot and the slaves could raise some vegetables or cotton, a few chickens or a pig for themselves.

Asked if she had any recollections of the Civil War, all Dellie remembered was seeing the Yankees marching up the road near Portland, Dallas, County, Alabama, and that she thought they were pretty with their blue clothes and brass buttons.

Week ending May 21, 1937.

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STORY OF DELLIE LEWIS, BORN IN SLAVERY.

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She said the Overseer of the Hunter plantation was a Mr. Munger who had money of his own, that there were no "poop white folks" in the near by vicinity, that they read "onery whites or buckers", as they were called, lived further back in the woods.

When the slaves were sick a doctor Lewis Williams, who attended the Hunter family, also looked after the slaves, many a time Dellie recalled, sitting on the doctor's lap while he doctored some of her childish hurts.

They had a church at Sunflower, Alabama, where the white folks and the slaves attended, also had meetings in the slave quarters, sometimes a preacher conducted these or some of the old men would take the lead.

Dellie said the house servants were taught to read by some one of the family but that her grandmother, Alvain Hunter, whom was a full blooded negro with no education seemed to have an "inner sense that enabled her to grasp knowledge of the Bible, so that she could repeat as if she was reading direct from the book", and when Dellie and her brother would be studying from their blue-back speller and make a mistake the grandmother would say:

"How's dat, go ober it"

Bud would then laugh, and say:

"How you know you kant read?"

Grandmother then would answer:

"Jes' don't soun' right, de Lord tells me when 'tis right, kant fool me so don't try."

The overseer blew a horn to summon the slaves to work. The Hunter slaves were allowed to visit other slaves after work hours or on Sundays, and other negroes trying to slip away and the "patrollers" caught them and asked whose niggers they were, they would say "Hunter's", and sometimes get by with it, as the patrollers knew if they molested Hunter's

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Mary A. Poole,
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WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Ala.

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STORY OF DELLIE LEWIS, BORN IN SLAVERY.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

slaves, they would be called to account as Hunter allowed no one to whip his slaves but himself, and then only for a grave offence.

The Hunters had special burying ground for their slaves, but Dellie could recall no funerals while living on the plantation.

Asked about marriages of the slaves, she said the Master or one of the old men read the services, the couple stepped over the broomstick for luck, and the Master gave a big supper for all hands also lots of music, singing and dancing followed.

Dellie remembers when the Grand Trunk Railroad cut their right of way through near Sunflower, Alabama, and had a chain gang of prisoners not slaves working on it as well as other laborers, and she and other colored girls raised on the Hunter place were sent with large cans of buttermilk to sell to the workers. A handsome young man named Triggs, one of the bosses, rode into the Hunter's yard one evening and asked Dellie for a drink of real cold water, as she handed it to him, he collapsed and scared her "most to death". He was cared for by the Hunter's, but never regained consciousness, kept calling Mrs. Hunter "Mother". He had a congestive chill and died.

The slaves carded and wove the cotton into cloth also carded the wool and had a long row of iron kettles to boil molasses, which was made from syrup crushed out of the sugar cane by a mill worked round and round by a mule.

After one of the Alabama river floods, when there was a shortage of food, the Government sent supplies of meat, meal and molasses, and the barrels were marked "U. S.", one of the negroes tired of waiting and being hungry suggested to others that the barrel said U. S. and that meant "U.S.", so they helped themselves to that barrell of molasses.

Week ending May 21, 1937.

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Mary A. Poole,
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STORY OF DELLIE LEWIS, BORN IN SLAVERY.

(Compiled by Mary B. Poole.)

They always had big Christmas celebrations with gifts for every one, and big quilting bee, the men holding the lights and the women quilting, until all quilts were finished, and if one of the boys could throw the quilt over one of the girls and catch her, he was entitled to a hug and a kiss. A big supper and dance for the workers followed.

Dellie said her grandmother was a midwife in later years, and always made tea of spice and cloves putting in a little whicky and gave it to a woman after childbirth as this always brought out all the bruised blood, also seh dried watermelon seed making a tea of same as a remedy for gravel in the kidneys.

For night sweats Dellie said the grandmother told folks to put an ax under the bed with blade of ax sitting straight up, or else put a pan of water under the bed.

If someone you had no use for insisted on coming to see you, put a fresh laid egg at the door where they had to step over it, and they couldn't come in, but Dellie, laughingly said she tried this and it failed to work.

If you are anxious for your sweetheart to return form a journey put a pin in the ground head down and point up, put and egg on point of pin, then unsert another pin in top of egg with the point inside, and when the two points met your sweetheart would return, but Dellie said she even tried this without success.

However, Dellie firmly believes in spirits, claims she had seen them and felt them around her, has even asked them in the name of the "Father and the Son" to tell her what they wanted of her, or wished to tell her.

The children of the plantation played ring games, "puss, puss in the corner," "nest door neighbor" and fox and the geese and all come over". The following two songs she recalled, as being sung in the ring games --

S-260
S-201

Mary A. Poole,
Identification No. 0149-4366.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist.2.
WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Ala.

STORY OF DELLIE LEWIS, BORN IN SLAVERY.

(Compiled by Mary B. Poble.)

"Old sweet beans and barley grows,
Old sweet beans and barley grows,
You nor I nor nobody knows,
Where old sweet beans and barley grows".

.....

"Go choose your east,
Go choose your west,
Go choose the one that you love best,
If she's not here to take her part,
Choose the next one to your heart".

.....

Dellie is and has always been an Episcopalian in belief, was married at 15 years of age in Montgomery, Alabama, to William G. Lewis, had three children one girl and two boys, the girl married and is living in St. Louis, Mo., and the two sons also married and are living in Mobile.. She had two grandsons one with whom she lives J. A. Lelande, who is principal of the A. F. Owens, school.

Dellie is strong in her faith and repeated this verse to the writer, which she says is her constant prayer.

"In Mercy not in wrath,
Rebuke me gracious Lord,
Lest when Thy whole displeasure rise,
I sink beneath Thy rod."

Dellie said Abraham Lincoln freed the slaves by signing the "Proclamation", the the Yankees, just thought the South too rich and getting richer by having the slaves work for them, which of course, was wrong as Mr. Lincoln said, all men should be equal.

Week ending May 21, 1937.

S-260
S-201

Mary A. Poole,
Identification No. 0149-4366.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist.2.
WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Ala.

STORY OF DELLIE LEWIS, BORN IN SLAVERY.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

Dellie said she thinks Booker T. Washington is a wonderful man, when he could take a genuine negro, who is like a mule full of meanness and tricks, and cultivate him like others would a plant and make him entirely different. Dellie also said she knows because she has run a colored boarding house and come in contact with all different classes of the negro race.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Personal conversation with Dellie Lewis, 352 N. Cuba Street, Mobile, Alabama.

mailed
6/3/37DELLIE LEWIS KNOWSCURES AND "CONJER."

"To begin at de beginnin', white folks," said Dellie Lewis, "I was bawn on de plantation of Winston Hunter at Sunflower in Washington County, Alabama. Its on de Southern Railroad. De fus' thing dat I remembers was when de Gran' Trunk Railroad cut dere right of way through near Sunflower. Dey had a chain gang of prisoners dat warn't slaves aworkin' on de road, an' me an' anudder little nigger gal was sent wid big cans of buttermilk to sell 'em. One day a handsome white gentman rode to our house an' axe me fo' a drink of cool water. He was de fo'-man on de road. Jus' as soon as I handed it to him he done fell offen his hoss on de groun'. I run to de Mistis an' she got some of de niggers 'roun' de place to ca'ay de gent'man to de big house, an' do you know it, white folks, dat man, he neber open his eyes again! He kep-pa callin' de Mistis his mammy, but he neber open his eyes to see dat she warn't his mammy. He died a little later wid a conjested chill.

"Den I remembers one of de Alabama River floods, dat sweep' ober de lan' an' washed away lots of de food. De government sent some supplies of meat, meal an' 'lasses. De barrele was marked U. S. an' one nigger, bein' tired of waitin' an' bein' powerful hongry tol' us dat de U. S., on de barrel meant Us, so us commence' to eat. When de oberseer come to gib us de meat an' 'lasses, us be done et it all up.

"Us slaves useta git up at dawn; de oberseer blowed a cow hawn to call us to work. De Hunter slaves was 'lowed to go avisitin' udder slaves atter work hours an' on Sundays, an' iffen we was to meet a patty-roller, an' he axe us whar we f'um an' who we b'long to all us had to say was; we's Hunter niggers; an' dat pattyroller didn't do nothin', kaze de Hunter niggers warn't neber whupped by no pattyroller. Some

niggers when dey was kitched eben dough dey warn't Hunter niggers, dey'd say it jus' de same, kaze dem pattyrollers was always 'fraid to fool 'long wid a Hunter nigger. Massa Hunter, he was scamp'n'.

"Durin' de Christmas celebration, us all had gif's. Us had quilting bee's wid de white folks, an' effen a white fent'man thowed a quilt ober a white lady he was 'titled to a kiss an' a hug fum her. Atter de colebratin' we all had a big supper.

"An' speakin' of cures, white folks, us niggers had 'em. My grandmaw was a midwife an' she useta gibe women cloves an' whiskey to ease de pain. She also gib 'em dried watermelon seeds to git rid of de grabel in de kidneys. For night sweats Grandmaw would put an axe under de bed of de sick pusson wid de blade asittin' straight up. An' effen yo' is sick an' wants to keep de visitors away, jus' putt a fresh laid aig in front of de do' an' dey won't come in. If you is anxious fo' yo' sweetheart to come back f'um a trip put a pin in de groun' wid de point up an' den put a aig on de point. When all de insides runs outen de aig yo' sweetheart will return.

"Yassuh, white folks, us useta hab games. Us useta play; 'puss in de canner; 'next do' neighbor' an' 'fox an' geese.' I kin gib you some of de songs we useta sing:

"Old sweet beans and barley grows,
Old sweet beans an' barley grows,
You nor I nor nobody knows,
Where old sweet beans an' barley grows."

"Go choose yo' east,
Go choose yo' wes,
Go choose de one dat you love best,
If she's not here to take her part,
Choose de nex' one to yo' heart."

"I is always been a 'piscopalian in belief, white folks. I ma'ied Bill Lewis when I was fifteen year old in Montgomery an' us had three chilluns. I is strong in my faith.

"In mercy, not in wrath,
 Rebuke me, gracious Lawd
 Les' when Dy whole displeasure rise,
 I sink beneath Dy rod."

"Yassuh, I remembers de war. I seed de Yankees amarchin' through our place an' down de road dat led to Portland in Dallas County. Dey was mighty fine looking wid all dere brass buttons and nice lookin' uniforms. Dey didn't gib us much trouble. Dey had a Cap'n dat was good an' kin'. I heered him say dat dere warn't agoin' to be no stealin' an' atraspin' through folks' houses. Dey slep' outen de yard for one night; den dey went on in to Portland.

"Mr. Munger was out oberseer, but he had money of his own. He was better dan mos' oberseers, an' dere warn't no po' white trash, den onery buckers libed further back in de woods.

"When us was sick Dr. Lewis Williams, who was de doctor of de massa, 'tended to us slaves. I remembers sittin' in de doctor's lap while he tried to soothe my ailments.

"Us house servants was taught to read by de white folks, but my gran'-mamy, Alvain Hunter, dat didn't have no learnin' but dat knowed de Bible backards an' forwards, made us study. When me an' my brother was learnin' outen de Blue Back Speller she say:

"'How's dat? Go ober it.'

"Den we would laugh an' answer, 'How you know? You can't read.'

"'Jus' don't soun' raght. De Lawd tell me when its raght.

You-all can't fool me so don't try.'

"When de marriages was preformed, de massa read de ceremony an' de couples would step off over a broomstick for luck. Den we all had a big supper, an' dere was music an' dancin' by de plenty."

Week ending April 23, 1937.

S-260 Racial Elements.

-1-
François Ludgère Diard,
Identification No. 0149-5252.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist. 2.
WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Ala.

COMICAL UNCLE BILLY ABRAHAM LONGSLAUGHTER, ITINERANT CHAIR CANER.

(Written by François Ludgère Diard.)

During the middle of the present month of April (1937) the writer while strolling along the Louisville and Nashville banana wharf, he came upon a very comical looking old negro fishing. The old negro had sitting beside him on the stringer of the wharf a basket containing wicker cane for making and repairing the seats and backs of chairs, ect. When the writer questioned the old negro as to how old he was, he replied with ante-bellum gestures:

"I'se eighty year old, honey, an' I war eight year old when Gen'ral Grant freed de niggers."

The writer for a moment was puzzled ~~as~~ well ^{as} great ly amused.

"But General Grant did'nt free the negroes, Uncle-----," the writer expostulated.

"Oh, yes, he did, honey, fo' I'se war right dar, when Gen'ral Grant came intuh Richmond, an' freed all de niggers."

"What about Abraham Lincoln?" asked the writer.

"He freed us, too, but he did'nt do no fight'n', 'cause he had to look afer de bizzness in de White House. He lef' de freein' part tuh Gen'ral Grant."

"Are you sure that Abraham Lincoln was'nt the whole means of you having your freedom to-day, Uncle -----? What about the Emancipation Proclamation?" asked the writer.

" Well, I tell you, white folks, Mr. Lincoln did'nt live long 'nough tuh help us niggers. He went tuh de Ford's Circus and got shot."

The old negro's talk becoming more amusing the writer asked him his name, and he replied:

COMICAL UNCLE BILLY ABRAHAM LONGSLAUGHTER, ITINERANT CHAIR CANER.

(Written by Francois Ludgere Diard.)

"Billy Abraham Longslaughter. De niggers all calls me Billy, but old Marster Longslaughter afore he died allers called me 'William!'"

"Where were you born, Uncle Billy?"

"On Marster Longslaughter's plantation near about Richmond, Virginy."

"Can you read or write, Uncle Billy?"

"Dey neber teach me no read'n' an' writ'n' 'cause I'se had tuh work in de fields."

"Where is your home now, Uncle Billy?"

"Most any place I goes, white folks. Ma wife she died 'bout forty year ago in Virginy' and I've been travelin' eber since."

"What do you do for a living besides fishing, Uncle Billy?"

"I h'aint neber fished in Mobile afore. I jes got here last night. I goes from town tuh town an' place tuh place, fo' I canes chairs."

The old negro pointed to his basket of chair-cane beside him on the stringer of the wharf.

"yo' see, white folks, when all dis here repression comes on an' dere war'nt no work fo' de people tuh do, jes lak all de young scallawags I hops me a train and I'se been travelin' eber since."

"Where do you go next from Mobile, Uncle Billy?"

"I s'pose I'se will leave tuhnight fo' New 'Leans, if I catches a freight train going dat way."

The writer during his conversation with the old itinerant chair-caner had abserved that a curious crowd of both white and negro people had gathered around to listen to Uncle Billy talk; and the writer, who took only little stock in some of the things the old negro had said, wishing to avoid a scene before taking his leave, ask him:

Week ending April 23, 1937.

S-260 Racial Elements.

-3-
Francois Ludgere Diard,
Identification No. 0149-5252.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist. 2.
WPA Project #3014, Mobile, Ala.

COMICAL UNCLE BILLY ABRAHAM LONGSLAUGHTER, ITINERANT CHAIR CANER.

(Written by Francois Ludgere Diard.)

"What families have you caned chairs for, Uncle Billy?"

"Lor', white folks, I caned a chair once fo' President Buchanan, and he used hit in de White House tuh sit on."

This made the surious crowd that had gathered laugh.

Uncle Billy Abraham Longslaughter, if telling the truth was still a remarkable man for 80 years of age. He was a straight and walked with the agility of a person of sixty years or younger. His face, however, was heavily wrinkled, his woolly hair snow white and very brisky, his clothes in a torn and dirty condition from hopping freight trains, his feet almost on the ground, and a white beard six th eight inches long.

(Note-- The writer had also talked with this smae old Uncle Billy during the first days of the "depression" and the establishing of a negro department of the Transient Bureau in Mobile, and to direct him to find that registration office. Old Uncle Billy at this time was carrying the same slat basket filled with chair-cane, etc. Other negroes along the Mobile river front said Uncle Billy was ^{his} given name ^{all} right, but that they doubted if "Longslaughter" was his sur-name, as they had also questioned him and he said it was Jones at one time and Smith, Jackson and Williams at another, and even other aliase^s. It was thought by some of these negroes, however, that old Uncle Billy, while he was without a doubt horn-in slavery times, pronounced his ante-bellum Marster's name as "Longslaughter," when it was some other similar name.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Personal interview with Uncle Billy Abraham Longslaughter itinerant chair-caner on April 14th, 1937, as he fished on the Mobile river front.

HE CANED A CHAIR FOR
PRESIDENT BUCHANAN.

Uncle Billy Longslaughter

On a bright April afternoon, while strolling along the Louisville and Nashville banana wharf and watching the crisp breezes from the gulf make small waves lick at the pilings, I met an old Negro man who was fishing for croakers off the pier. He had, sitting beside him, a basket containing wicker canes for making and repairing chairs. In the course of our conversation, I asked him his age.

"I'se eighty year old, white folks," he replied.

"Well," I said, "you must have been a slave back in the days before the war."

"Yassuh, boss. I were eight year old when Gen'l Grant freed de niggers." He spoke the words in a clear, strong voice and with a slight rolling motion of his gray bristly head.

"But General Grant didn't free the slaves, Uncle," I protested.

"Oh, yassuh he did too, white folks," he said respectfully; fo' I wuz right dere when de gen'l come into Richmond and sot us free."

"What about Abraham Lincoln?" I asked.

"Well, I guess he done a part of it, but he didn't do no fightin', kaze he hadda 'tend to de business in de White House. He lef' de freein' part to Gen'l Grant. I don' guess Mr. Abe lived long enough ter help us niggers much. He went to de Ford's Circus and got hisse'f shot."

"What's your name?" I asked.

"Billy Abraham Longslaughter. De niggers all calls me Billy, but ole Massa Longslaughter afore he died called me William."

"Where were you born, Uncle Billy?"

"On ole Massa Longslaughter's plantation near Richmond Virginy."

"Can you read and write?"

"Dey neber teach me no readin' and writin' kaze I had to work in de fields." His rusty hand rubbed across his woolly head, as my questions continued with the regularity of a metronome; nevertheless, Uncle Billy seemed always glad to answer them. I couldn't help but notice with what ease he moved about. He had the agility of a man twenty years his Junior though his face being caverned with wrinkles, gave him the appearance of great age.

"Where is your home now, Uncle Billy?" I continued.

"Most any place I goes, white folks. Ma wife, she died 'bout forty year ago in Virginy, and I been a trabelin' eber since."

"What do you do for a living besides fish?" I asked.

"Oh," he said, "I canes a few chairs," pointing to his basket of chair-canes beside him on the stringer of the wharf. "You see, white folks, when all dis repression came on an' dere war'n't no work fo' de people tuh do, jes lak all de young scallawags I hops me a train and goes on a trip."

"Where do you go next, Uncle Billy?"

"Well, I guess I mought run ober to New Orleens if I can catch me a freight train a goin' dat away."

"About your fixing chairs," I said. "Have you ever repaired any for well known people?"

"Lor', white folks, I caned a chair oncet fo' President Buchanan and he used it ter sit on in de White House. I'se made many a chair fo' famous people as I trabeled about. I guess I jus' keep on a goin' as long as I'se able, and when I goes on dat last trip

Alabama

- 3 -

across de quiet riber, I'se goin' ter make one for ole Gabriel,
so's he can res' hissself in between times he blows on dat hawn."

Wash. Copy,

4/27/37.

L. H.

ISAAM MORGAN

"Mistis, I was bawn in 1853, 'cordin' to ole Miss' Bible, near Lotts Landing on the Alabama River." It was Isaam Morgan who spoke from his porch at 1657 Sligo Street, Mobile Alabama. "I made a special trip back dar ^{a few months back} to de ole place, an' Mistis' daughter looked it up for me 'caze I done had forgot."

Mr. James Morgan was my Massa, an' his wife, Miss Delia, was my Mistis. My mammy's name was Ann Morgan, an' as for my pappy, I done forgot ^{his'n} ~~him~~ I was raised right dar in de white folks house, an' I had my own special place to sleep. I was de house boy, an' when I growed older I driv' Mistis aroun' in de ~~Carriage~~ Ca'iage.

"Us niggers ^{lived} ~~was treated~~ in sho-nuff style. Us had our regular quarters whar us lived in white log cabins chinked wid mud, an' ~~de~~ de slaves had built-in beds an' a ~~big~~ ^{re} big open fireplace whar ~~we~~ ^{dey} cooked. Us had plenty somp'n t'eat. All us had to do was to ask for it an' de Massa done de res'. Our rations was gib out to us eve'y s'adday. Some of de bes' food us ever had was 'possum an' taters. Us'd go out at night wid a big sack, an' a pack of houn's an' twarn't long befo' we done treed a 'possum. Atter we done treed him, de dogs would stan' aroun' de tree an' bark. Iffen de tree was small, us could shake him out, ^{climb} iffen it was big, one of de niggers hadda ~~climb~~ ^{climb} up it an' git ole Mr. 'Possum hisself. ^{Pie} Funny things about 'possums, Miss; de ~~hanna~~ bigger dey is seem lak de littler de tree dey pick to go up. It is sho-nuff fun, dough, to go a trailin' th'ough de woods atter a 'Possum or coon. De coon'll give you de bes' chase, but he ain't no good eatin' lak de possum. ~~I~~ I seen a coon one time when he

was cornered bite de tip of a houn's nose off..

"Massa Morgan sol' wood to de steam boats, an' us slaves hadda cut de wood, an' split it up into smaller pteces. Any time a slave worked over time or cut mo' wood dan he s'pose to, ^{us} Massa pay him money for it, ^{us} Caze whenever one of us slaves seen somp'n we lak, we ~~did~~ did jus' lak de white folks does now. ~~we~~ ^{us} bought it.

"Mass never whupped ^{none} ~~any~~ of his slaves; he jus' tole us whut to do an' iffen we didn't do it, he'd call us to him an' he would say in his sorta way: 'Nigger! How many mo' times is I gotta tell you to do lak you tole?' Dat's all he would say, an' believe me Mistis, he hadda a way of lookin' at you dat made you jump. When he bought a new slave dat wasn't use to doin' what he was tol', 'twarn't long befo' massa had him in line.

"No'm none of our slaves ever tried to run ~~away~~ a way. Dey all knowed ~~de~~ dey was well off. We didn't have no oberseer but ^{one} ~~one~~ ~~little~~ ~~white~~. He was a mean ~~un~~ too. ^{he} He tried to fight an' whup us slaves, an' one night six big nigger men jumped ~~on~~ on him an' ~~scart~~ scairt him mos' to death. Atter dat de massa wouldn't never have no mo' oberseers. He tended to dat business hisself.

"Whut we do atter we finished work? Go to ~~bed~~ Bed! Dat was de onl^y place we was fitin for. Us was so tired us wouldn't lie down ^{two} ~~2~~ minutes 'f^o us was 'sleep. On some moonlight nights us ~~was~~ was 'lowed to pick de cotton. Den us'd git a little res ' de nex' day.

"Massa an' his fambly used brass lamps an' candles for light, an' a few of us slaves had brass lamps too, but most of de niggers used torch lights.

"Some of ^{de} ~~the~~ plantations had a calaboose whar dey putt de slaves dat wouldn't behave. Dis calaboose was built of logs fastened together

wid stout ropes an' sunk into de groun', but Massa didn't need no calaboose to make his niggers behave.

"Yassum us had ~~various~~ remedies for ailments. We used wild hoar hound tea for de chills an' fever, an' sweet gum turpentine, an' mutton suet. Dey was all good uns too. ^{But Shucks?} Warn't nothin' much ever de matter wid us niggers, ~~dough~~.

"Yassum we used flint rock an' cotton to start de ~~fires~~ ^{fires} on de plantation, an' ~~Massa~~ Massa had a flint rock rifle, too.

"De slaves had dere own special graveyard, an' us'd make de coffins raght on de place dar. When someone die, he was taken in a ox cart to de grave, wid all de slaves a-walkin' 'long behine de cart singin' de spirituals.

"Our clothes was made mostly outen orsenberg wove on de plantation. We had wool clothes for de winter time dat was carded on de place. We had shoes made by our own cobbler an' tanned on de plantation. We ealled dese brogans.

"Atter de surrender, de Yankees camped near our place, an' bought ~~paigs~~ ^{paigs} f'um us. Dey offered me a hoss iffen I would go nawth wid dem, but I just couldn't leave de Massa even dough I did wanted dat hoss mighty bad. I was twenty-one years old when Massa came to me one day an' say: 'Isaam, you is a grown man now. You is got to boss your own business. It's up to you to fin' work. I can't keep you no longer. Good luck Isaam. You has been a good nigger, an' you is gonna make somebody a good worker.'

"Atter I lef' Massa I worked at diff. ^{ent} ~~ent~~ jobs, sich as: loader, roustabout on digferent steamboats ~~and~~, an' cotton picker. I worked on de May-Boyd, Lula D. an' de Gardner. One of de ole songs sang on de boats went somp'n lak dis:

De John T. Moore
De Lula D.
An' all dem boats is mine
If you can't ship on de Lula D.
You ain't no ~~man~~ man o' mine.

"I been ma'ied three ~~times~~ times, Mistis, an' lawd chile I done forgot de name of my fust wife. I guess she still livin' somewhere eaze she was ~~she~~ ^{was} too mean to die. My s²con' wife was named Dora, ~~an~~ an' she is daid. I got a wife now name Lily. She purty good.

^{ed a} Yassam you can take my picture, but lemme git my hat, caze ain't got no hair on my ~~haid~~ ^{haid}, an' I looks better wid a hat. I'se got to be fixed up stylish.

ISAAM MORGAN.

"Mistis, I was bawn in 1853, 'cordin' to ole Miss's Bible, near Lotts Landing on the Alabama River." It was Isaam Morgan who spoke from his porch at 1657 Sligo Street, Mobile, Alabama. "I made a special trip back dar a few months back to de ole place, an' Mistis' daughter looked it up for me 'caze I done had forgot."

"Mr. James Morgan was my Massa, an' his wife, Miss Delia, was my Mistis. My mammy's name was Ann Morgan, an' as for my pappy, I done forgot his'n. I was raised raght dar in de white folks house, an' I had my own special place to sleep. I was de house boy, an' when I growed older I driv' Mistis aroun' in de Ca'lage.

"Us niggers lived in sho-'nuff style. Us had our regular quarters whar us lived in white log cabins chinked wid mud, an' de slaves had built-in beds an' a big open fireplace whar dey cooked. Us had plenty somp'n t'eat. All us had to do was to ask for it an' de Massa done de res'. Our rations was gib out to us eve'y Saddy. Some of de bes' food us ever had was 'possum an' taters. Us'd go out at night wid a big sack, an' a pack of houn's an' twarn't long befo' we done treed a 'possum. Atter we done treed him, de dogs would stan' aroun' de tree an' bark. Iffen de tree was small, us could shake him out. Iffen it was big, one of de niggers hadda climb up it an' git ole Mr. 'Possum hisself.

"Funny things about 'possums, Miss; de bigger dey is seem lak de littler de tree dey picks to go up. It is sho-'nuff fun, dough, to go a trailin' th'ough de woods atter a 'possum or coon. De coon'll give you de bes' chase, but he ain't no good eatin' lak de 'possum. I seen a coon one time when he was cornered bite de tip of a houn's nose off.

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"Massa never whupped none of his slaves; he jus' tole us whut to do an' iffen we didn't do it, he'd call us to him an' he would say in his sorta way: 'Nigger! How many mo' times is I gotta tell you to do lak you tole?' Dat's all he would say, an' believe me Mistis, he had a way of lookin' at you dat made you jump. When he bought a new slave dat wasn't use to doin' what he was tol', 'twarn't long befo' massa had him in line.

"Na'm none of our slaves ever tried to run a way. Dey all knowed dey was well off. We didn't have no oberseer but once. He was a mean un too. He tried to fight an' whup us slaves, an' one night six big nigger men jumped on him an' scairt him mos' to death. Atter dat de massa wouldn't never have no mo' oberseers. He tended to dat business hisself.

"Whut we do atter we finished work? Go to bed! Dat was de onl'es' place we was fittin' for. Us was so tired us wuldn't lie down two minutes 'fo us was 'sleep. On some moonlight nights us was 'lowed to pick de cotton. Den us'd git a little res' de nex' day.

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"Atter de surrender, de Yankees camped near our place, an' bought aigs f'um us. Dey offered me a hoss iffen I would go nawth wid dem, but I jus' couldn't leave de Massa even dough I did wanted dat hoss mighty bad. I was twenty-one years old when Massa came to me one day an' say: 'Issam, you is a grown man now. You is got to boss your own business. It's up to you to fin' work. I can't keep you no longer. Good luck Issam. You has been a good nigger, an' you is gonna make somebody a good worker.'

"Atter I lef' Massa I worked at diff'ent jobs, sich as loader, roustabout on different steamboats an' cotton picker. I worker on de May Boyd, Lula D. an' de Gardner. One of de ole songs sang on de boats went somp'n lak dis:

De John T. Moore
De Lula D.
An' all dem boats is mine
If you can't ship on de Lula D.
You ain't no man o' mine.

"I been ma'ied three times, Mistis, an' Lawd chile I done forgot de name of my fust wife. I guess she still livin' somewhere caze she was too mean to die. My secon' wife was named Dora, an' she is daid. I got a wife now name Lily. She purty good.

"Yes maam you can take my picture, but lemme git my hat, caze I ain't got no hair on my haid, an' I looks better wid a hat. I'se got to be fixed up stylish."

Washington Copy,

10/11/37.

L. H.

Week ending June 4, 1937.

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Mary A. Poole,
Identification No. 0149-4366.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist.2.
WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Ala.

EX-SLAVE STORY OF UNCLE ISAAM MORGAN.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

Out in Maysville, a western section of Mobile, Alabama, at 1657 Sligo street, lives an old negro man, Isaam Morgan born near Lott's Landing on the Alabama river, Choctaw County and who told the writer that according to "Ole Missus" bible, he was born June 14th., 1853.

Isaam said he made a special trip some years ago to the old place and ole Missus' daughter looked up the records for him.

Asked by the writer who was his master he replied: "Mars'er James Morgan an' de Missus "Delia Morgan'", and that his mother was Ann Morgan, but that he did not know his father's name. A certain dignity the old negro possessed made the writer refrain from further questioning him.

Isaam was raised in the white folks house, had his own special place to sleep. He acted as house boy and as he grew older drove the "Missus" around in the carriage.

The Morgan home was a large rambling house with the regular slave quarters of log wood cabins, in which were home-made beds, or bunks, built into the wall, and they cooked in the open fire places. They always had plenty to eat, meat from the smoke house meal and other rations given out every Saturday, and any slave of "Marse Morgan" could get food stuff by asking for it.

When the ~~writer~~^{writer} asked Isaam about 'possums, his face lit up, and he said: "Us had mo' possum an' coons den us cud eat, a cro'd wud go out at night wid dogs. An' ef hit wuz yo' job ter tote dey bag dat had dey possums or coons in hit, dey kitched, hit wuz sure heavy an' yo' wuz glad ter git home. But no more possums an coons 'round dese days all run out". "But Isaam is sure if he could go back to the old place in Choctaw County he could still, "kotch plenty possums an' coons."

"Marser Morgan" said Isaam supplied the steamboats with firewood and sent the slaves out to cut the timber, then later they cut and split the wood the

EX-SLAVE STORY OF UNCLE ISAAM MORGAN.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

required size. Isaam also said any slave that worked overtime and cut more wood than required of them, Mars'er Morgan paid them for their extra work.

When the writer asked Isaam what the slaves did with the money he laughed and said: "Dey done jes' lak folks de now, what dey seed dey wanted dey bo't hit".

"Mars'er Morgan" never whipped any of his slaves, said Isaam, "he jes' tole yo' what ter do an' ef yo' didn't do hit, he wud call yo' ter him an' tell yo' all ober agin an' ax yo' how many mo' times does I have ter tell yo' ter do dis, now go on an' do hit, an' somehow der slaves did, as ole Mars'er wanted dem ter do, eben when ole Mars'er bo't ah new slave who warn't use ter doin' as dey wuz tole, dey warn't dere long till ole Mars'er had dem in line.

When the writer asked Isaam if any of them tried to run away, Isaam laughed again and said: "No ma'm, de slaves belonging ter ole Mars'er Jim knowed dey wuz well off". "Mars'er Jim," said Isaam had no overseer, he tried it once and told the overseer how to work the slaves and never try to whip or fight them that, if there was any of that to be done, "Mars'er Jim" would attend to all the whipping himself.

Isaam said the "Bugger", as the slaves called an overseer, tried fighting the slaves and "dey all jump'd dat man, and he sho had ter run ter save hissself, an' after dat ole Mars'er neber tried ter hab no overseer but hiss'e'f.

Asked what the slaves did after their days work was done Isaam said: Dey went ter bed, dey knowed dey shd ter be up by sun-up ter gib ole Mars'er good sarvice next day. Sometimes dey war, 'lowed ter pick de cotton on a bright moonlight night, an dey pic' hit clean, too. Den dey cud hab al lil' daytime fo' demse'f.

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EX-SLAVE STORY OF UNCLE ISAAM MORGAN.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

The Morgan family used brass lamps and candles, a few of the slaves had brass lamps, but mostly torch lights were used in the slaves quarters. Isaam said some of the plantations had a "calaboose" in which to put unruly slaves, which was built of logs strongly fastened together, and inbeded in the ground, making it almost impossible to get out, but Isaam added, "Mars'er Jim didn't need no calaboose ter make his niggers min'".

The slaves had their own special grave yard on nearly all the real plantations, their coffins were home-made and the body was carried in an ox cart or wagon, with all the slaves walking along in a procession chanting songs of their own spontaneous making.

The slaves wore clothes mostly made of orsenberg wove on the plantation, also some woolen clothes, some of which were bought and others from wool carded on the place. They had shoes especially in the winter as most all the plantations had a shoemaker and tanned their own leather. These shoes were known as brogans.

Isaam remembers after the Surrender the Yankees camped near the Morgan plantation for about two months and bought eggs and chickens from the plantation, that they ahd lots of mules and horses, and promised Isaam a horse if he would go with them. Isaam said he was so crazy when a boy for a horse of his own he was tempted to go, but "ole Mars'er Jim" kept such close watch on him he "jes' had ter stan an' watch hisn horse go on by.

Isaam said when he was 21 years old, ole Mars'er Jim tole him he "wuz a man an' mus' boss yore own business, an' ef not satisfi'd jes' had ter put up wid hit".

Isaam worked at different jobs and was a roust-a-bout on different steamboats, among them the old "May-Boyd", "Lula D", and the "Gardner". One of the

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EX-SLAVE STORY OF UNCLE ISAAM MORGAN.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

old songs sang on the boats he recalled for the writer, is as follows:

"The John T. Moore,
The Lula D.
And all them boats are mine,
If you cant ship on the Lula D.
You ain't no man o' mine".

Isaam when asked about old-time remedies used on the plantation, all he could recall was a tea made from wild hoar hound which was good for chills and fever; also sweet gum turpentine, and mutton suet would make a good salve.

Asked about the present generation, Isaam said the young folks are crazy these days, going too fast, and have to be watched to keep them working, no one had to stand over him when given a job, as he knew what he had to do, and did it.

Uncle Isaam admitted being married three times, but when asked the name of his first wife, Isaam said: "Lor', lady, ah done forgit der name o' dat woman". He tried to recall it but with no success, and to the writers different suggestions, he only shook his head, and said: No jes' a common name, but ah kaint git hit". The writer asked if she was dead he said no she was "too mean ter die" that they had three children, two boys and one girl, but he knew nothing of them. His second wife was named Dora, who was dead, and the present wife named Lilly. He had no children by the last two wives.

Isaam recalled using flint rock and cotton to start the fires on the plantation and that old Mars'er Jim had a flint rock rifle. In talking of splitting wood Isaam spoke of the ax he used which he called a "club ax"; and when asked what kind of an ax it was he picked up the ax in his yard (an ordinary chopping ax) and showed it to the writer, and which he held in his hand when his picture was snapped.

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Mary A. Poole,
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EX-SLAVE STORY OF UNCLE ISAAM MORGAN.

(Compiled by Mary A. Poole.)

He absolutely refused to have his picture taken without a hat on, making the excuse he had no hair on the top of his head and the writer could see he wore a stocking cap under his old slouch hat, evidently to protect his bald head. Finally he said he would put on his Sunday hat and going in the house Isaam soon reappeared with a "Derby" as his crown piece atop his head.

Uncle Isaam never learned to read or write, said he could have, if he had tried to pick it up when he sat in front of the fire at "Mars'er Jim" feet, but he was more interested in learning how to work than to read and now when he gets too worried and low spirited he gets someone to come in and read the Bible to him.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Personal conversation with Uncle Isaam Morgan, 1657 Sligo Street, Mobile, Alabama.

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François Ludgère Diard,
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*Jim Thomas &
Uncle Tony Morgan*

A SLAVE INTERVIEWS A SLAVE.

(Written by François Ludgère Diard.)

The following remarkable story of the interview made by one slave with another so much his elder is well worth preserving for future posterity. Jim Thomas, a slave owned by members of the Diard family of Mobile, interviewed on Oct. 1st, 1884, Uncle Tony Morgan, a remarkable slave then 105 years, and who had formerly been owned by the Toulmin family of Mobile. It was the custom for Jim Thomas, who could neither read or write but who had a wonderful mind, to talk with old ex-slaves and relate the stories he was told by them to the younger children of the Diard family and their young friends, while ~~he would be~~ working in the yard or in the landscape garden of the old Diard homestead on Spring Hill Ave.

"Did I knowed Gen'ral Jackson? Lor' bless yuh, honey, I knowed Jackson and George Washington afore him."

The above was given, in answer to Jim Thomas' question, by Uncle Tony Morgan, a negro centenarian, and perhaps the oldest living person not only in Mobile but in the whole State of Alabama up to the time Jim Thomas made the interview, which, as I've stated above, was on Oct. 1st, 1884. Old Uncle Tony Morgan was found almost daily during the latter years of his life sitting on a bench in front of his residence, near Pecan Street in the northwestern part of Mobile.

In answer to question as to his age and birthplace, Uncle Tony Morgan told Jim Thomas he was born in Danville, Ky., about the year 1779, and consequently was one hundred and five years of age in 1884. The old slave belonged to Judge H. Toulmin, the grandfather of the later Judge H. T. Toulmin of Mobile, who was appointed by President Thomas Jefferson judge of what was then Mississippi Territory. In 1805 Judge Toulmin came to Mobile, bringing Uncle Tony Morgan with him.

At the time, 1884, Jim Thomas said he talked with Uncle Tony he was quite infirmed and walked with the aid of a stick. His skin was dried and wrinkled

François Ludgère Diard,
Identification No. 0149-5252,
Federal Writers' Project, Dis. 2,
W.P.A. Project, Mobile, Ala.

A SLAVE INTERVIEWS A SLAVE.

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and had the appearance of parchment; on either eye was a cataract, which totally deprived the old man of sight; but, notwithstanding these many ills, his mind, said Jim Thomas, was perfectly clear, his speech rational, and his vivid recollection of events occurring almost a century before remarkable. His description of the country when he first came to Mobile, his tales of Indian depredations and butchery were highly graphic and generally correct, according to Jim Thomas.

When General Andrew Jackson marched from Mobile in 1814 to capture Pensacola, which was occupied by the British and Spanish troops commanded by the Spanish Governor Manriquez, Uncle Tony Morgan accompanied him as a wagoner and well remembered the capture of the city on November 6th. The old man told Jim Thomas an incident of General Jackson, which is strikingly characteristic. On the day before the capture of the city of Pensacola, Jackson was standing talking to a party of officers, when a shell from the enemy's gun burst near them. One of the party said to General Jackson: "Move away! they will kill you!" General Jackson, in response turned, and, shaking his fist towards the city, said: "D---n 'em, I will have them all in h---l to-morrow."

Uncle Tony Morgan told Jim Thomas he was one of the many negroes at Fort Mimms at the time of its capture. His description of the slaughter is most interesting. He told of how an officer from Fort Stoddert visited Fort Mimms the day before it fell and warned those within its walls to be on their guard and use every precaution in the protection of the fort, as Indians were in the neighborhood. The warning, however, as subsequent events demonstrated, was unheeded.

The night the inmates of Fort Mimms had a frolic of some sort, in which many soldiers and all joined and held high revel until nearly morning, when everybody, worn out by the night's dissipation, retired to rest, and soon the whole camp was sound in slumber, leaving the Fort almost wholly unprotected. About eight o'clock in the morning, the Indians headed by Weatherford rushed upon the

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A SLAVE INTERVIEWS A SLAVE.

(Written by François Ludgère Diard.)

Fort, yelling fiercely. The greatest disorder prevailed ~~within~~. The men, roused suddenly from slumber, jumped up stupefied by sleep, and, before they could realize their position, fell, pierced with arrows or balls. The major part of the garrison, headed by two officers, went out at the first alarm to shut the gates, but had hardly left the cover of the building when both officers were shot down. Others went out for the same purpose and succeeded in closing the gates before the savages could enter. The fight was kept up until twelve o'clock, when the Indians retired to the river and rested for a short while. Upon again resuming the fight, they shot burning arrows at the Fort, which was soon in flames. After the entrance of the Indians into the Fort the most horrible butchery was committed men, women and children were brained without mercy by the Indians using tomahawks.

The negroes captured at the Fort were mostly taken to the Holy Ground near Fort Jackson, Uncle Tony Morgan stated to Jim Thomas, where the City of Montgomery now stands. After the fall of Fort Mimms, it was thought the Indians would attack Fort Stoddert and all the women in that fort were hurried off to Mobile. Old Uncle Tony gave a graphic account of their appearance when they departed. ~~He~~ said some of them were hatless, some shoeless, others with half clothing, holding in their arms young babies, some with disheveled hair and almost frantic ~~through the conflicting emotions of fear caused by the idea of leaving their~~ husbands and sons ^{with that} to perish by the scalping-knife or ~~lest~~ ^{that} they themselves ^{might} should be murdered by the fierce savages before arriving ^{at} their destination. The old negro said he saw all these things, and remembered them as clearly as if they were were happening before him at the moment, said Jim Thomas.

Old Uncle Tony Morgan was employed during the years of 1807-1808 to

Francois L. Diard,
Jack Kytle

Tony Morgan

George Washington extolling the virtues of a plain, home-spun suit--granite-jawed Andrew Jackson defying the British at Pensacola--horror and massacre at Alabama's old Fort Mims--savages skulking near the fort, their bronzed bodies glistening in the hot August sunlight.

These were among memories of parchment-skinned Uncle Tony Morgan, who was interviewed on Oct. 1, 1884 by Jim Thomas, another slave. Uncle Tony was 105 years old then.

The story is told by Thomas, former slave of Mobile's Diard family. Uncle Tony was the slave of Mobile Judge H. Toulmin, grandfather of the later Judge H.T. Toulmin, who was appointed a judge by President Jefferson.

According to Jim Thomas, Uncle Tony told him: "Did I knowed Gen'l Andrew Jackson? Lord bless you honey, why, I knowed Jackson and Gen'l George Washington afore him."

Uncle Tony continued that he accompanied General Jackson when the war-loving Tennessean marched from Mobile against Pensacola in 1814. He said he was serving as a wagoner, and remembered distinctly that the British surrendered on November 6. He recalled an incident occurring during the battle, saying Jackson was standing talking with a group of officers when an enemy shell exploded near him.

"Move away, general," the old Negro quoted one of the officers as saying, "they'll kill you!"

And Jackson replied in a characteristic manner:

"Damn 'em--I'll have 'em all in hell tomorrow!"

Concerning George Washington, Uncle Tony told Jim Thomas that the great American leader visited the town of Frankfort, Ky., and while there made an address. He wore a homespun suit, which he pointed out as an example of what people might do in utilizing their products.

Frankfort was highly excited when Washington arrived in the city, and Uncle Tony told of a tiny urchin exclaiming with bitter disappointment in his voice:

"Why, Pa, he ain't nothing but a man!"

Uncle Tony's memory of what occurred at Fort Mims was vivid, according to Jim Thomas. The older slave related that he was one of many Negroes in the fort at the time. He said the defenders had been sleeping off ~~with~~ a night of dissipation the morning William Weatherford's warriors attacked.

Men, women and children were butchered in the ensuing slaughter and the buildings/fired ^{were}. The massacre continued until noon, Uncle Tony said, when the Indians retreated with scalps and several Negro prisoners to their camping site, called the Holy Ground. Here, the half-starved Negroes lived in constant dread they would be butchered by the war-inflamed Creeks.

Uncle Tony also recalled carrying the mail from Fort Stoddert, in Alabama, through the State and Mississippi. On several occasions he barely escaped being scalped by Indians, he

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said.

The old Negro related further that his father was a wagoner under Cornwallis when that general surrendered to Washington at Yorktown.

Concerning his age and birthplace, Uncle Tony told Thomas he was born in Danville, Ky., about 1779. He came to Mobile in 1805 with Judge Toulmin.

At the time of the interview the old slave was extremely feeble and lame, and walked with the aid of a cane. His skin was dried and wrinkled, and cataracts on his eyes had totally deprived him of his sight. Despite these handicaps, however, Thomas said the old man's mind was exceptionally clear, and his recollection of events occurring almost a century before were remarkable.

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The people of Frankfort, hearing of Washington's proposed visit, were on the tip-toe of expectancy to see him as he rode into the city. The word spread with persons anxious to catch a glimpse of him. A little boy perched high on a fence, related that Tony Morgan to Jim Thomas, the great "Father of his Country" ride by, and turning to his father said, with an air of disappointment in his voice: "Lar, Pa, he ain't nothing but a man."

Bibliography: Conversations with the late George Toulmin, and Judge H. Toulmin, who brought Uncle Tony Morgan to Mobile, who verified the above story as it was related by Uncle Tony in life to Jim Thomas, the slave of the Court Family, and who in turn related in later years to Francis Leary, and his brothers and sisters. Notes pertaining to Uncle Tony Morgan prepared by Francis Leary.

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François Ludgère Diard,
Identification No. 0149-5252,
Federal Writers' Project, Dis. 2,
W.P.A. Proj. 3014, Mobile, Ala

A SLAVE INTERVIEWS A SLAVE.

(Written by François Ludgère Diard.)

carry the mails from Fort Stoddert through Alabama and Mississippi, his journeys frequently extending to Leaf and Chicasahay rivers in the latter State. His adventures on these trips were sometime very thrilling. The Indians at this time were roaming at large through the woods, and on several occasions the daring mail-rider ~~had to~~ ^{ran} run the gauntlet for miles in order to save his scalp.

Old Uncle Tony Morgan's father was a wagoner under Cornwallis and was with him at the time of the surrender at Yorktown. Tony told ~~many~~ ^{many} ~~anecdotes~~ and incidents, related Jim Thomas, which were interesting, but whose publication would require a large volume.

An anecdote Uncle Tony Morgan told Jim Thomas of George Washington, though not borne out by history, but ~~it~~ is good and worth repeating. Washington visited the town of Frankfort, Ky., and while there made a public address to the citizens. He wore at that time a home-spun suit, which he pointed out to the people as an example of what they might do in utilizing their products. At the conclusion of Washington's speech, ~~he was replied to~~ by Judge Toulmin. ^{spoke}

The people of Frankfort, hearing of Washington's proposed visit, were on the tip-toe of ~~expectation~~ ^{expectancy} to see him; and as he rode into the city the streets were crowded with persons anxious to catch a glimpse of him. "A little boy perched high ~~up~~ on a fence," related Uncle Tony Morgan to Jim Thomas, "saw the great 'Father of his Country' ride by, and turning to his father said, with a tinge of disappointment in his voice: 'Lor', Pa, he ain't nothing but a man.' "

Bibliography: Conversations with the late George Toulmin, grandson of Judge H. Toulmin, who brought Uncle Tony Morgan to Mobile, who verified the above story as it was related by Uncle Tony in life to Jim Thomas, the slave of the Diard family, and which slave in turn related in later years to François Ludgère and his brothers and sisters. --Notes pertaining to Uncle Tony Morgan preserved by François Ludgère Diard.

Week ending April 7, 1939

FOLKLORE.

Ev. Slave Talk

Josephine F. Petterson.
Identification No. 0149-4365
Fed. Writers' Project, Dist. 2.
WPA Project 4454, Mobile, Ala.

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SALLY POWELL RELATES HER STORY.

(Written by Josephine F. Petterson.)

"Sally" lives in a little back room across the street from the house where the writer lives. Hoping to get a good story from her I asked her to come to my room when she was finished with her work, and she came, bringing her little can with some ice water in it.

Sally Powell did not know when she was born, but she thinks she is about forty years old. However, she is at least fifty from the way she looks and act. She is a light brown negro, stout, strong looking, with gray kinky hair and arms with muscles like a blacksmith. She talks like she had mush in her mouth and it is hard to understand her, especially when she gets down to a whisper, but she has no special dialect. She usually looks orderly and when she is dressed up for going to church she looks quite nice.

Sally's father had a big farm at Lower Peach Tree, Ala., where Sally was born. He was well off and had teachers at his home for the children, so she learned to read and write. She said her father often gave big dinners at her home inviting his business acquaintances, among which were many white people, and they "sure had good things to eat." In a whispering voice she told me, "You know my father was a white man's son." Sally's mother died when Sally was small and there were only two children in that marriage. Then her father married again and there were more children.

Sally was first married to a man from Camden, Ala. named Sonny Tarbell and they moved to Magazine Point in Mobile County. This man drank and gambled and Sally had to work very hard to support

Week ending April 9, 1939.

FOLKLORE.

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Josephine F. Petterson,
Identification No. 0149-4365
Federal Writers' Project, Dist. 2.
WPA Project 4454, Mobile, Ala.

SALLY POWELL RELATES HER STORY.

herself and husband, by whom she had two children, both dead now, and when they had been married two years they were separated. Then she married again. The second husband's name was Andy Powell, who also drank, beat her and made himself so obnoxious to the people in the neighborhood, that they gave him money and sent him off to the north to get rid of him. The Powells were then living in Mobile. During this time Sally took in sewing, and did whatever she could get to do. She said: "Lordy, I have worked and worked ever since I was big enough to work, now I can do nothing, the doctor says I have high blood pressure and the people at the welfare bureau will not help me. I have some of my half brothers living at Lower Feach Tree at the old homestead, which was divided and I was to have a part of it, but I could not stay there. I don't get anything out of it, of course, occasionally they send me two or three dollars."

At present Sally is staying at 156 Monroe Street, a boarding house, in a little back room which the landlady lets her have free of rent, as Sally has been with that family for about twenty-one years.

Sally is greatly concerned about her poverty, and said:

"If it wasn't for the Blessed Lord, I don't know what I would do."

On asking if she had heard any old sayings, superstitions or stories, she said she did not know any, "but" she said, "I have heard loud knocking sometimes on my door and then again on my window, and I was nearly scared to death and just prayed and prayed to the Lord. I think there is some money hidden during wartimes somewhere under the

Week ending April 7, 1939.

Josephine F. Petterson,
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FOLKLORE.

SALLY POWELL RELATES HER STORY.

Place."

Asking Sally if she knew any old songs she used to sing when young, she said she remembered one she just loved to sing when she was first married. The few lines are sung over and over again and are as follows:

"I wished I was single again,
When I was single
My pocket could jingle -
Oh! I wished I was single again."

Another one was "Shining on me,
Shining on me,
I wonder if the Lighthouse is shining on me."
(These lines were sung twice.)

Another one was like this:

"Preach the word
Preach the word,
If I never see you any more,
Just preach the word.

Live the life,
Live the life,
If I never see you any more,
Live the life

Week ending April 7, 1939.

FOLKLORE.

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Josephine F. Petterson,
Ident. No. 0149-4365
Fed. Writers' Project, Dist. 2.
WPA Project 4454, Mobile, Ala.

SALLY POWELL RELATES HER STORY.

Pray the Prayer,
Oh! Pray the prayer,
If I never see you any more
Pray the Prayer."

Sally sang these stanzas to me in that old-fashioned way with special variations on the first and last word.

Sally is a member of the "Church of Christ," a colored people's church, located on Washington Avenue and Palmetto Street, and she loves to go to church and sing. When she told this she became very enthusiastic and while she talked she made funny faces, banged the table with her fist and waved her arms and made other gestures and antics. Sometimes she spoke in a whisper and then again very loud, and for a while I listened to her exclamations;

"If it wasn't for the Good Lord," she again said, but as she did not have anything more interesting to say, the meeting adjourned, after I had given her some little recompense for the time she spent, and when she left she told me:

"If you ever want my company, just let me know."

Ila B. Prine
John Morgan Smith
Editorial Department.

AUNT NICEY PUGH

"I was bawn a slave, but I ain't neber been a slave, was Aunt Nicey's first remark to me as I came upon her pulling up potato draws in 'her garden, in Prichard, Alabama. "Dere wuz ^gleben chilluns in my family an' all 'em is daid ceptin' me an' one brother who is seventy-five year old at de present time. My pappy's name ~~was~~ was Hamp West an' my mammy was Sarah West. All my folks belonged to Massa Jim Bettis, an' was born an' raised on his place."

"When I was ^a little pickaninny I worked in Massa Jim's house, sweepin' an' a-cleanin' Us slaves had to be up at de house by sun-up, build de ~~fire~~ ^{fires} an' git de cookin' started. Dey had big open fireplaces wid pottracks to hang de pot on. Dats whar us boiled de vegetables. An' honey, us sho had plenty somp'n t'eat: greens, taters, peas, ^{rosens} ~~rosens~~ an' plenty of home killed meat. Sometimes my oldest brother Joe West an' Friday Davis, anudder nigger, went huntin' at night an' kotched mo' possums dan we could eat. Dey'd kotch lots of fish; 'nuf to las' us three days..

"I remembers one day when me an' anudder little nigger gal was a-goin' atter de cows down in de fiel', an' us seed whut I recon' was de Ku Klux Klan. Us was so skeered us didn't know what to do. One of 'em walked up to us an' say: 'Niggers, whar you a-goin'?'"

"~~He~~ ^{us} is jus' atter de cows, Mr. Ku Klux, ^{we} say. "Us ain't up to no debilment."

"'All right den,' dey say, 'jus' you be sho dat you don't git in to none.'

"Atter we got home ~~we~~ ^{us} told de massa 'bout de 'sperience, an' he jus' laugh. He tol' us dat we warn't goin' to be hurt iffen we was good; he say dat it was only de bad niggers dat was goin' to be got atter by dem Ku

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But all and all, white folks, dem was de really happy days for us niggers. Course we didn't hab de 'vantages dat we has now, but dere wus somp'n' back dere dat we ain't got now, an' dats secu'aty. Yassuh, we had somebody to go to when we was in trouble. We had a Massa dat would fight fo' us an' help us, an' laugh wid us, an' cry wid us. We had a Mistis dat would nuss us when we was sick, an' comfort us when we hadda be punished. I sometimes wish I could be back on de ole place. I kin see de cool-house now packed wid fresh butter an' milk an' ~~cream~~ cream. I can see de spring down amongst de willows an' de water a trickling down between little rocks. I can hear de turkeys a goblin' in de yard and de chickens a runnin' about in de sun, an' shufflin' in de dus'. I can see de ~~pond~~ ^{pond} in de creek jus' below our house, an' de cows as dey come to drink in de shallow water an' gits dere feets cool. ^A Yassuh, white folks, you ain't neber seed ~~nothin'~~ ~~nothin'~~ nothin' lak it so you can't tell de joy you gits fum ~~huntin'~~ lookin' for dew-berries an' a huntin' guniea baigs, an' settin' in de shade of a peach tree, reachin' up an' pullin' off a ripe peach and eatin' it slow. You ain't neber seed your people gathered bout an' singin' in de moonlight or heered de lark at de break of day. You ain't neber walked across a frosty fiel' in de early mornin', an' gone to de big house to build a ~~fire~~ ^{fire} fo' your ~~mistis~~ Mistis, an' when she wake up slow have her say to you: 'Well, how's my little nigger today?' ^A Nawsuh, ~~just~~ Jus' lak I told you at fus'. I was bawn a slave, but I ain't neber been one. I'se ~~been~~ ^{been} a worker for good peoples. You wouldn't calls dat bein' a slave would you, white folks?"

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Ila B. Prine,
Identification No. 0149-5302.
Federal Writers' Project, Dist. 2.
WPA Project 3014, Mobile, Alabama.

"AUNT" NICEY PUGH, A SLAVE.

(Written by Ila B. Prine.)

Out in Prichard, Alabama, a suburb of Mobile, is an old negro woman who says she was born May 17, 1852, at Gosport, Clarke County, Alabama.

When the writer called to see "Aunt Nicey" she was out in a little garden spot pulling up potato draws to plant. "Aunt Nicey" had on a blue dress, with a white head rag, and was very active for a woman her age. When asked if she had been a slave? She replied, "Yes mam, youse lookin' at one, I wuz bred an' born a slave, mah mamma an' father ahead ob me wuz slaves an' mah gran'mother an' gran'father, too wuz slaves. Mah mamma's name wuz Sarah West and mah father's name Hamp West, but he been dead fo' fo'ty years now. Mah gran'father's name wuz Tony West an' mah gran'mother's name "Lucy West but we chullen allus called her 'Granny Lucy, an' Lor', honey I 'members granny Lucy whippin' me one time c'ayse I et out ob one ob de tin cups when I wuz helpin' her feed de slaves, an' I 'members harin' grandpaw Tony tell 'bout de slaves bein' whipped when dey runned away.

"All o' mah folks b'longed ter Mister Jim Bettis, an' I wuz born a slave on his place. Dere wuz 'leven shillun in mah family, but dere ain't none ob dem libing but me an' mah brother Tom who's seventy five years old. Honey, all ob mah own chillun' but three is dead, as well as mah brudders an' sister's.

"Chile I 'members betta den 'bout dem days den I does now. When I wuz li'l I worked in Marse Jim and Miss Marfa's house sweepin' an' cleanin', and would wash de milk things when I got older. Us slaves had tuh be up tuh de house by sun up, build de fires an' git de cookin' started dey had big open fire-places wid pottracks tuh hang de pots on. Dat's whar us boiled de vegetables. An' honey us sho' had plenty tuh eat, greens, potatoes, peas, roastin' ears, an' plenty ob home killed meat. Den dere wuz mah oldest brudder Joe West, and Friday Davis anudder nigger went huntin' at night an' dey wud ketch more

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'possums an' rabbits, an' fish, bless you, dey cud git a grape vine full ob fish in no time. Dey had to git a pass from dere Marster, an' it wuz all right but, good Lor', honey, ef dey catch dem out widout dere pass, de "pattyrollers" would beat dem up".

When asked who the "pattyrollers" were, Aunt Nicey, said "Dey wuz white men, who whipped de slaves ef dey catch dem out widout a pass from dere Marster or overseer. I 'members one evein' Margaret Shaver an' I wuz goin' atter de cows down in de fiel' an' us seed whut I reckon wuz de Ku Kluf Klan mens. Us wuz so skeered us didn't know what it wuz, us tole Marse Jim dat we seed sumthin' whut had long years, an' wings, an' dey axed us who libed on dis place? An' us tole dem dat us didn't know, us wuz jes' going atter water, but dey didn't bodder us. Marse Jim jes smiled an' said dat dey wouldn't bodder us so long as us behaves. I sho' wuz skeery den, cayse at night atter de days wurk wuz done, us all would go to de house and ol' Miss wud gib us certain tasks, sich as cardin' de cotton an' de wool, den spinnin' de thread an' weavin' de cloth. Dere wuz one woman by de name ob Hannah Davis who done all de weavin' an' de cookin'. Den dere wuz anudder widder woman who did all de milkin. Dey sho' had plenty ob milk cayse Marse Jim had droves of catt cattle. Atter our task wuz finished in de big house at night, I'd be skeered tuh go tuh our cabin, an' sometimes I wud beg ol' Miss to let me stay wid heran' she would let me make a pallett but den I'd call her durin' de night to know ef she wuz wake, so ol' miss quit lettin' me stay dere, an' when I'd hab to go tuh de cabin by mahse'f an' I'd holler all de way dere, an' den mah mamma wud whip me.

I 'members gittin' whippin's cayse I wuz so 'omanish, and would git out mah place, but I thank Gad 'cayse I knows how tuh stay in mah place now, an' I hab been through so much, but I'se allus had he'p from de white folks,

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"AUNT" NICEY PUGH, A SLAVE.

(Written by Ila B. Prine.)

cayse I knowed how tuh stay in mah place.

"When we wuz 'li'l we didn't hab no games or plays cayse Marse Jim an' Miss Marfa didn't hab no chillun', an' I neber heard no tales about hoodoos, an hants or nothin' ob de sort. Dey neber teach us tuh read or write, cayse when de niggers larn anything dey wud git uppity an' want to run away. We would sumtimes hab Sat'dy afternoons off, den us would sweep de yards, an' set aroun' on benches in de ayrd an' talk. It wuz on dese benches dat de slaves et, dey had li'l tin cups and iron spoons, an' plenty tuh eat.

At Christmas times ol' Marster would hab de men to kill a big hog an' barbecue him an' de women would make 'lasses cake, an' ol' Marster Jim had some kinda seed dat he made beer out ob, and he would gib us come beer 'round Christmas. Dere warn't no odder time sich as New Years, or odder holidays, an' de only time dat dere wuz cornshucking wuz when it rained an' it wuz tuh wet tuh wurk in de fields. And as fer funerals, I don't 'member but three white folks dyin', an' dey wuz all killed. One man got killed in a gin machinery, and anudder wuz killed wurking on de big road, an' Miss Files, who wuz killed by a fifteen year old nigger boy, 'cayse she whipped him fo' settin' de dog on a fine milk cow, an' de dog tore de cows bag up an' ruined her. Miss Files sho' wuz a good 'oman an' dat boy wuz a debil he war so mean. He wuz a bright yellow nigger wid straight hair. Miss Files' husband wuz away from home an' de overseer and de mens on de place took de boy tuh de sheriff an' he wuz kept in jail a long time b'for dey hanged him, atter habin his trial.

"Nicey said she "neber will forget it, cayse dey all went tuh see dat nigger hung, cayse he war so mean, but dat wuz de only time she ebber seed a jail or a slave in chains".

Nicey said "dat Marse Jim's house warn't so big, but hit set in front

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ob de cabins, dat wuz built of logs and ceiled wid planks an' de chimneys dat wuz made of clay an' sticks. Dey didn't hab beds lack dey do now, de beds were built wid boards nailed to de wall, wid one leg at de corner away from de wall.

Dey wuz happy days, do. I sumtimes wish I cud be back on de ol' place. I kin see de dairy now whar dey kept de milk an' butter out in de back yard, dere wuz de big bored well, where dere wuz two buckets on de chain to draw de water wid, an' us wud draw de water an' put in de (cistern) round hole under de dairy to keep de milk fresh and sweet.

Den I 'members gatherin' de eggs an' de las' whippin ol' Miss gib me wuz, I had gone out and picked up a lap full of guiena eggs an' 'ste'd me bringin'dem tuh de house, I want tuh de peach trees tuh git peaches, an' broke four ob de eggs. Thinking 'bout dem trees, I 'members when ol' Marster planted dem an' den I 'members pickin' de peaches.

Anudder whippin' I got afore dat, wuz when I went wid brudder Joe tuh de wild turkey pen tuh bring de turkeys home an' I'se let one de turkeys git away, an' brudder Joe sho' beat me, an' den ol' Marster whipp him fo' whippin' me.

Aunt Nicey said; "Joe would build a trap dat wuz covered over an' den wud dig a hole under one side an' prop de trap up, den he wud sweep a long path clean leading tuh de trap, and place corn all along dis path, so de turkeys would eat right up to de trap and den goin tuh git de odder corn inside, den de trap wud spring down an' shet de turkeys inside, an' dey would nebbber look down tuh come out de hole, but wud look up an' try tuh git out dat way. Oh, dem wuz goo times, Marster Jim wuz so good, us nebbber had no overseer, an' he provided well, we jes had home made clothes an' shoes. De men wud shear

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de sheep an' us chillun wud pick de burrs out ob de wool and den wash it an' spread it on de grass tuh dry, den we'd card it an' den spin de thread, an' weave de cloth. Dat wuz harder tuh do dan spinning de cotton and weaving it. Our dresse were plain ansenberg, an' we would dye it wid cherry bark, dog-wood and gallberry, an' our shoes wuz made dere on de place by george Bettis one ob de slaves. Marse Jim had plenty ob hides an' he had George tuh make de shoes. Dey wuz plain heavy red tanned shoes. For Sunday us had mingled calico dresses, dat us wore tuh church when us went. Us didn't hab no church our own, but we'd sit in de back ob de white folk's church.

Sometimes us slaves would hab meetin' down in a li'l shed on de lower end ob de quarter when Marse Jim gib us a paper 'lowin' us to; but us had tuh be quite an' not make no heap o' noise. Marse Jim neber read de Bible tuh us, as I'members, 'ceptin' once, when mah paw wuz plannin' tuh run away 'cayse he an' anudder one ob de slaves had, had a fuss, so Marse Jim talk to dem an' den got his bible an' read to dem, an' talk to paw, 'cayse Marse Jim said paw wuz de smartest an' de honestest nigger he had. He den gib paw a pair ob wool pants atter dat. Marse Jim had twelve slaves an' he sho' tho't a heap o' paw, 'cayse when de Yankees come through, he called all de slaves an' exed dem ef dey wuz going away when dey wuz free, an' he said tuh paw. Hamp is you going away an' paw said I reckon so 'cayse I ain't got nothing, so Marse Jim gib paw twenty five cents and paw went off sum whar an' cum back de nex mawning wid a li'l piece ob meat. I'members when I just hyard dat I wuz free, I wuz out sweepin' de bac' yard an' Margaret Shaver come a runnin' an' tol' me, us wuz free. I knowed sumthin' wuz agoing to happen' 'cayse Marse Jim was so worried an' "Miss" Marfa cried so much an' dey didn't eat much b'fore den, an' when Marse Jim called us all up and axed us ef us wuz

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going tuh stay.

Miss Marfa den went in her room an' locked de door an' wouldn't let none ob us in. I 'members going to de door an' beggin' her tuh let me in.

Den on Friday, paw took us ober tuh Widow Harris' house to lib. Widow Harris wuz rich and she tuk me into her house tuh he'p de house girl, an' on de following Tuesday de Yankees come through, an' honey, I'se neber been as skeered in mah life as I wuz den. A great crowd o' men rode up on horses all dressed in ol' blue suits an' den dey turned all de horses loose an' come up tuh de door an' Miss Harris made me go to de door an' dey axed me fo' sum salt, so I went runnin' back to Miss Harris an' she tol' me to gib dem de salt den her an' de house girl an' I got under de bed. In a few minutes dey called again an' wanted matches so Miss Harris said gib dem de matches, den I runned back an got under de bed, an' dere we stayed all night on a pallett, Miss Harris an' us two slaves. Nes' mawning I got up an' went out in de yard an' dere wuz de men, an' dey axed me if I wanted a bone, an' I said yas suh, but I wuz skeered tuh death, I went running back in de house and crawled under de bed, an' de slave gal an' I got grease all ober us gnawing dat bone under de bed.

Atter while de mens called and said tuh me whut's yo' crying 'bout, an' I tol' dem I wuz cold an' dey laughed an' said, 'you needn't be afraid, we is going now, and you can go wid us if you wants to, 'cayse you'se free.

Den dey rode off, and, Lor', Missy, yo' ought tuh seed Miss Harris' place, dey had killed two ob her big, fine hogs an' barbecued dem, an' had opened a new barrel o' 'lasses an' lef' hit open an' dere wuz 'lasses all ober de place, hit run clean tuh de branch from de house. We wuz glad dey wuz gone, 'cayse jes' afore de Yankees cum Miss Harris an' us tuk big stone jars ob lard out tuh a big gully an' hid dem, an' covered dem over wid straw. Dem wuz good

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days eben do dey wuz plenty ob work to do, an' I wish I cud go back tuh de
table an' eat again lack we did den.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Personal interview with "Aunt" Nicey Pugh, Prichard, Alabama.