

WPA Alabama Writers Project  
EX SLAVES TALES  
Sumter County, #4

AUZ13

#103

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*DAW*

THURSDAY MAY, 30, 1837

VOICE OF SUMTER

PUSHMATAHA

*Sumter 30*

This individual was a distinguished warrior of the Choctaw nation, and a fair specimen of the talents and propensities of the modern Indian. It will have been noticed, by those who have paid attention to Indian history, that the savage character is always seen in the modified aspect, among those of the tribes who reside in juxtaposition with the whites. We are not prepared to say that it is either elevated, or softened, by this relation, but it is certainly changed. The strong hereditary bias of the wild and unatamed rover of the forest, remains in prominent development, while some of the arts, and many of the vices of the civilized man, are engrafted upon them. The Choctaws have had their principle residence in that part of the country east of the Mississippi river, which now forms the state of Mississippi, and have had intercourse with the European race, from the time of the discovery of that region by the French, nearly two centuries ago. In 1820, that tribe was supposed to consist of a population of 25 thousand souls. They have always maintained friendly relations with the American people, and have permitted our missionaries to reside among them; some of them have addicted themselves to agriculture, and a few of their females have intermarried with the white traders.

Pushmataha was born about the year 1764, at the age of twenty was a captain, or a war chief, and a great hunter. In the latter occupation he often passed to the western side of the Mississippi, to hunt the buffalo, upon the wide plains lying towards our southern frontier. On one occasion, while hunting on the Red river, with a party of Choctaws, he was attacked by a number of Indians of a tribe called the Callageheads, near the Spanish line, and totally defeated. He made his own escape, alone, to the Spanish settlement, where he arrived nearly starved; having, while on the way gave a little horse, that he found grazing on the plains, for a single fish. He remained with the Spaniards five years, employing himself as a hunter, brooding over the plans of vengeance which he afterwards executed, & collecting the necessary information to the success of his scheme. Wandering back to the Choctaw country alone, he came by stealth, in the night, to a little village of the enemies by whom he had been defeated, suddenly rushed in upon them, killed seven of the inhabitants, and set fire to the lodges, which were entirely consumed before the occupants recovered from their alarm.

After this feat he remained in his own nation about six years, increasing his reputation as a hunter, and engaging occasionally in the affairs of the tribe. He then raised a party of his own friends, and led them to seek a further revenge for the defeat which still rankled in his bosom.--Again he surprised one of their towns upon Red river, and killed two or three of their warriors without any loss on his own side. But engaging in an extensive hunt, his absence from home was protracted to the term of eight months. Resting from this expedition but ten days, he prevailed upon another party of Choctaw warriors to follow his adventurous steps in a new enterprise against the same enemy, and was again victorious, bringing home six of the scalps of his foes, without losing a man. On this occasion he was absent seven or eight months. In one year afterwards he raised a new party, led them against the foe whom he had so often stricken, and was once more successful.

Some time before the war of 1812, a party of Creek Indians, who had been engaged in a hunting expedition, came to the Choctaw country, and burning the house Pushmataha, who was from home, intently occupied in playing ball, a game at which he was very expert. He was too great

a man to submit to such an injury, and, as usual, immediate retaliation ensued. He led a party of Choctaws into the Creek country, killed several of that nation, and committed as great destruction of their property as was practicable in his rapid march; and he continued from time, to time, until the breaking out of the war between the United States and Great Britain to prosecute the hostilities growing out this feud with relentless vigor; assailing the Creeks frequently with small parties, by surprise and committing indiscriminate devastation upon the property or people, of that tribe. Such are the quarrels of great men; and such have been the border wars of rude nations from the earliest times.

In the war that succeeded, he was always the first to lead a party against the British or their Indian allies; and did much injury to the Creeks and Seminoles during that contest. His military powers and success gained for him the honorary title, which he seems to have well deserved; and he was usually called General Pushmataha.

This chief was not descended from any distinguished family, but was raised to command, when a young man, in consequence of his talents and prowess. He was always poor, and when not engaged in war, followed the chase with ardour and success. He was brave and generous; kind to those who were necessitous, and hospitable to the stranger. The eagerness with which he sought to revenge himself upon his enemies, affords no evidence of ferocity of character; but is in strict conformity with the Indian code of honor, which sanctions such deeds as nobly meritorious.

It is curious to observe the singular mixture of great and mean qualities in the character of a barbarous people. The same who is distinguished in war, and in the council; is often the subject of anecdotes which reflect little credit on his character in private life. We shall repeat the few incidents which have reached us, in the public and private history of Pushmataha.

He attended a council in 1823, near the residence of Major Pitchlynn, a wealthy trader among the Choctaws, and at a distance of eight miles from his own habitation. The business was closed on the third of July, and on the following day, the anniversary of our independence, a dinner was given by Major Pitchlynn, to Colonel Ward, the agent of the government of the United States, and the principal chiefs who were present. When the guests were about to depart, it was observed that General Pitchlynn had no horse; and he was getting to be too old to prosecute so long a journey on foot, the government agent suggested to Mr. Pitchlynn, the propriety of presenting him with a horse. This was readily agreed to, on the condition that the chief would promise not to exchange the horse for whiskey; and the old warrior, mounted upon a fine young animal; went upon his way rejoicing. It was not long before he visited the agency, on foot, and it was discovered that he had lost his horse in betting at ball-play. "But did you not promise Mr. Pitchlynn," said the agent, "that you would not sell his horse?" "I did so in presence of yourself and many others," replied the chief: "but I did not promise that I would not risk the horse on a game of ball."

It is said that during the late war, Gen. Pushmataha, having joined our southern army with some of his warriors, was arrested by the commanding general for striking a soldier with his sword. When asked by the commander why he had committed this act of violence, he replied that the soldier had been rude to his wife, and that he had only given him a blow or two with the side of his sword to teach him better manners--"but if it had been you general, instead of a private soldier," continued he, "I should have used the sharp edge of my sword, in defence of my wife, who has come so far to visit a great warrior like myself."

At a time when a guard of eight or ten men was kept at the agency, one of the soldiers having become intoxicated, was ordered to be con-

ined, & as there was no guard house, the temporay arrest was affected by tying the offender. Pushmataha seeing the man in this situation, inquired the cause, and on being informed, exclaimed, "is that all?" and immediately untied the unfortunate soldier, remarking coolly, "many good warriors get drunk."

At a meeting of business at the agency, at which several American gentlemen, and some of the chief men of the Choctaw nation were present, the conversation turned upon the Indian custom of marrying a plurality of wives. Pushmataha remarked that he had two wives, and intended to always have the same number. Being asked if he did not think the practice wrong, the chief replied, "No, is it not right that every woman should be married--and how can that be, when there are more women than men, unless some men marry more than one? When our great Frather, the President, caused the Indians to be counted last year, it was found that the women were most numerous, and if one man could have but one wife, some women could have no husband."

In 1824, this chief was at the city of Washington, as one of a deputation sent to visit the president, for the purpose of brightening the chain of friendship between the American people and the Chactaws. The venerable La Fayette, then upon his memorable and triumphant tour through the United States, was at the same metropolis, and the Choctaw chiefs came to pay him their respects. Several of them made speeches, and among the rest, Pushmataha addressed him in these words:

"Nearly fifty snows have melted since you drew the sword as a companion of Washington. With him you fought the enemies of American.-- You mingled your blood with that of the enemy, and proved yourself a warrior. After you finished that war, you returned to your own country; and now you are come back to revisit a land, where you are honored by a numerous and powerful people. You see every where the children of those by whose side you went to battle, crowding around you, and shaking you hand, as the hand of a father. We have heard these things told in our distant villages, and our hears longed to see you. We have come, we have taken you by the hand, and we are satisfied. This is the first time we have seen you; it will probably be the last. We have no more to say. The earth will part us forever."

The old warrior pronounced these words with an affecting solemnity of voice and manner. He seemed to feel a presentment of the brevity of his own life. The concluding remark of his speech was prophetic. In a few days he was no more. He was taken sick at Washington in a strange land. When he found that his end was approaching he called his companions around him, and desired them to raise him up, to bring his arms, and decorate him with all his ornaments, that his death might be that of a man. He was particularly anxious that his interment should be accompanied with military honors, and when a promise was kindly given that his wishes should be fulfilled, he became cheerful, and conversed with composure until the moment when he expired without a groan. In conversation with his Indian friends shortly before his death, he said, "I shall die, but you will return to your brethren. As you go a long the path, you will see the flowers and hear the birds sing, but Pushmataha will see and hear them no more. When you will come to your home, they will ask, where is Pushmataha? and you will say to them, he is no more. They will hear the tidings like a scound of the fall of a mighty oak in the stillness of the woods."

The obly speech made by Pushmataha, on the occasion of his visit to Washington, was the following. It was intended by him to be the opening address, which had he lived he would doubtless have followed by another more like himself. We took it down as he spoke it. The person addressed was the Secretary of War.

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"Father-- I have been here some time. I have not talked; have been sick. You shall hear me talk to day. I belong to another district. You have no doubt heard of me--I am Pushmataha.

"Father-- When in my own country, I often looked towards this Council house, and wanted to come here. I am in trouble. I will tell my distresses. I feel like a small child, not half as high as its father, who comes to look in his father's face, hanging in the bend of his arm, to tell him his troubles. So, father, I hang in the bend of your arm, and look in your face, and now hear me speak.

"Father-- When I was in my own country, I heard there were men appointed to talk to us. I would not speak there; I chose to come here and speak in this beloved house. I can boast and say, and tell the truth, that none of father's or grandfathers, or any Choctaw, ever drew bows against the United States. They have always been friendly. We held the hands of the United States so long, that our nails are long like bird's claws; and there no danger of their slipping out!

"Father-- I have come to speak. My nation has always listen to the applications of the white people. They have given of their country till it is very small. I repeat the same about the land east of the Tombigby. I came here when a young man to see my Father Jefferson. He told it ever we got in trouble, we must run and tell him. I am come. This is a friendly talk; and is like a man who meets another and says how do you do? Another will talk further."

The celebrated John Randolph, in a speech upon the floor of the Senate, alluded thus to the forest chieftain, whose brief memoirs we have attempted to sketch:

"Sir, in a late visit to the public graveyard, my attention was arrested by the simple monument of the Choctaw Chief Pushmataha. He was, I have been told by those who knew him, one of nature's nobility; a man who would have adored any society. He lies quietly by the side of our statesmen and high magistrates in the region--for there is on such--where the red man and the white man are on level. On the sides of the plain shaft that marks his place of burial, I read these words: "Pushmataha, a Choctaw Chief, lies here. This monument to this memory is erected by his brother chiefs, who were associated with him in delegation from their nation, in the year 1824, to the government of the United States. Pushmataha was a warrior of great distinction. He was wise in council, eloquent in an extraordinary degree; and on all occasions, and under all circumstances, the white man's friend. He died in Washington, on the 24th of December, 1824, of the croup, in the sixtieth year of his age." Among his last words were the following:

"When I am gone let the big guns be fired over me."

This chief had five children. His oldest son died at the age of twenty-one, after having completed an excellent English education. The others were young at the decease of their father. A medal has been sent by the President to the oldest surviving son, as a testimony of respect for the memory of a warrior, whose attachment to our government was steady and unshaken throughout his life.

The day after the funeral of Pushmataha, the deputation visited the office in charge of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The countenances of the chiefs wore a gloom which such loss was well calculated to create. Over the face of the one of the deputation, however, was a cloud darker than the rest, and expression of his face told a deeper sorrow. Ask that young man, said the officer in charge of the Bureau, what is the matter with him? The answer was, "I am sorry." Ask him what makes him sorry? The loss, the answer was expected to be of our beloved chief--but no-- it was, "I am sorry it was not me." Ask him to explain what he means by being sorry that it was not him? The ceremonies of the funeral, the reader

will bear in mind, were very imposing. The old chief had said, "when I am gone, let the big guns be fired over me;" and they were fired. Besides the discharge of minute guns on the Capitol Hill, and from the ground contiguous to the place of interment, there was an immense concourse of citizens, a long train of carriages, cavalry, military, band of musick, the whole procession extending at least a mile in length; and there were thousand lining the ways, and filling the doors and windows, and then the military honors at the grave combined to produce in this young chief's mind a feeling of regret th t he had not been, himself, the subject of these honors--hence his reply, "I sorry that it was not me," and so he explained himself.

The young chief's mind was filled with the thought of all the honors that were bestowed upon him, and he felt that he had not been worthy of them.

He felt that he had not been worthy of the honors that were bestowed upon him, and he felt that he had not been worthy of them.

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Source

Exactly as told #4

By R. P. Tarrt

Sumpter Co.  
Livingston

Steal Negro Children from original owners  
re-sell them

### A Slave'y Time Tale

In SLAVE'y time dere wuz er kiver'd waggin en all de  
cullud fo'kes call hit de 'bacco waggin, but de white folks  
call hit de "Refugees".

Dis here waggin wid deze here ~~folks~~ in hit went up en  
down de big road er stealin' de nigger chillun en er takin' em  
off no tellin' whur at, en den er-sellin' em same ez dey's cattle.  
En some uv dem cullud fo'kes doan know right now whur dey come  
frum, er who dey Mammy en Pappy; en dey livin', some uv 'em,  
right here in dis here place right now.

Ole Many Taylor's one uv um, en ef yer doan b'lieve me,  
ax her whur she come frum en she tell yer good ez she rickerlecks  
hit 'twuz Vicksburg, but who her Mammy en 'er Pappy en ole Marsa  
wuz, she ain' able ter say.

"n ole Ma'y Ann Johnson, she rickerlecks she come frum  
Ferginny en dat's all she know. De way dem Refugees 'ticed dem  
chillun ter dey waggins, dey had er whole heap uv apples en oranges,  
en all kinds uv pretty little red trinkets, en dey'd hole 'em up,  
lac, en den call 'em come en git 'em. Den dey grab up de chillun,  
put 'em in de waggins, en yer'd nebber see 'em no mo'.

"at wuz mighty bad, sho wuz, 'twa'n't nuthin' nobody could  
do, dey jes' 'bleeged ter stan' hit. But 'twa'n't no worser'n

bein' sole erway fum all yer fo'kes, takin' de mammy fum de little chillun, en Oh Lawdy, sich er cryin'. But I 'members time when dey be er sellin' um en dat co't house square couldn't hole de fokes, white en cullud, little en big. Dey had a gre't big ole block, so high, en ev'y nigger dey had fer sale dey strip him, dat is, boys en gals, stark naked, kaze fo'kes didn't kyar nothin' bout seein' em naked dem days, en dat wuz so dem whut wuz er-buyin' c'ud 'aamine 'em en see ef dey wuz double-jinted and strong.

Den dey commence ter bid en em same ez en cows en hosses, En some uv de stronges' uv um run up ter er thousand. An all uv um bees er weepin' en er cryin' en er oringin' 'reun' 'hind de bushes, en er beggin' en er prayin' "Dean sell my chile, have mussy en me, Lord Jesus". But, shucks, dat didn't do um no good. Dem white fo'kes sole dem po' niggers to whosoever give 'em de mos'. En some uv dem mammy's whut suckel' dem chillun didn't neber see um no mo'.

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Federal Writers Project of Alabama  
EX-SLAVE TALES: Sumter County, District 4  
Ruby Pickens Tartt

- Bell, Oliver, "De Bes' Friend a Nigger Ever Had"  
Bishop, Ank, "Gab'el Blow Sof'! Gabr'el Blow Loud!"  
Clark, Laura, "Chillun In Ev'y Grabeyard"  
\_\_\_\_\_, "Earthy Ann" (Conjure woman) (*Richard Amazon*)  
Chapman, Amy, "De Masters Good But Overseers Mean"
- Crockett, Emma, No Title  
Dykes, Carrie, "Carrie Dykes--Midwife" (Child of a Slave)  
Frye, Hester, "No Lawd, I Ain't Ready"  
Garrett, Angie, "Mules Be Eatin' and Niggers Be Eatin'"  
Godfrey, Anne, No Title, life history
- Green, Jake, "A Conju's What Didn't Wuk"  
Greenlee, General, "On De White Folks Side" Re: Steve Renfro, Outlaw  
(Also included in the Folklore section for Sumter County)  
Grigsby, Charity, "I Knows I's Eighty-five But 'Spects I's More Den Dat"  
Harris, Jesse, "Blind Jesse and His 'Macordum'" (*Moved to Life Histories*)
- Horn, Josh, "Chasing Guinea Jim, The Runaway Slave" (*4ms*)  
Jackson, Martha, "Heaps of Dem Yallar Gals Got Sont Norf" (*2ms*)  
Johnson, Charlie, "Reckon You Might Say I's Jes' Faithful"  
Johnson, Hilliard, "Hoodoooin' De Dogs"  
Johnson, Minnie, "Four of My Chillun Ain't No Blood Kin"
- Jones, West T., No Title  
Lemon, Adelle, No Title  
Moore, Tom, "Tom Moore and His Death Money"  
Pollard, Carrie, "A Husband Couldn't Be Bought"
- Pushmataha, (a Choctaw Mingo) Article from Voice of Sumter,  
Tuesday, May 30, 1837  
Ross, Susanna, To Title  
Torbut, Bettie, "Slave Masters, Good and Evil"  
White, Maria, "Jumpy-up Songs and Songs in De Book"
- Wright, George P., (Free Negro, 1841) Mrs. Tartt wrote article re:  
Wright's selling his own children.  
Young, George, "Peter Had No Keys, 'ceptin' His'n"  
Unidentified, "How De Smart Nigger Got Sot Free"  
Unidentified, "A Slave'y Time Tale" mentions two names: Mandy Taylor  
& Mary Ann Johnson

*George Wright Sold  
His Five Children*  
Sale of Negroes

*Ruby Perkins Trust  
Lumpkin*

*Sumter*

A Trustee's Sale of negroes as advertised in The Republican Pilot of March 27, 1841, a newspaper printed and published at Gainesville, Alabama, at that time, ~~was~~ copied in the Gainesville Dispatch August 14, 1875. It ~~reads~~ as follows:

Trustee's Sale

By virtue of a deed in trust made to the undersigned by George P. Wright on the 18th of March, A. D. 1840, and recorded on the 10th of April, A. D. 1840 in the office of the clerk of the county court of Sumter County, Alabama, in Book E, folios 232 and 233 for certain purposes therein mentioned, we will proceed to sell to the highest bidder, for cash on Saturday the 17th of April next, before the Post Office in the town of Gainesville, Between the hours of 10 o'clock A. M. and 4 o'clock P. M. the following described negroes:

Eber, aged about 25 years;  
Eli, aged about 28 years;  
Ezekiel, aged about 23 years;  
Enon, aged about 18 years;  
and Ezra, aged about 16 years.

Robert Criswell )  
G. B. Mobley ) Trustees

March 8th, 1841

*adds*  
The Pilot ~~goes on to say~~ that there was apparently nothing unusual about the sale at that time and in Alabama, but when <sup>it is known</sup> you learn that George P. Wright was a coal black free negro and these negroes were his five sons, all of whose names begin with E., and that he had a

*Seager*

right to sell them under the law, a fine romance might have been made out of it by Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Jack Tom, another free negro in Gainesville, bought several of the boys. The other got good homes and people in Gainesville who knew of them said they didn't believe they ever complained of their changed status.

"Yassum, I's Bettie Tolbert, if dat who you lookin' for." It was early summer in western Alabama, and the visitor had stopped at the neat log cabin ~~home~~ of Bettie Tolbert, ex-slave, who lived near a farm road some six miles east of Livingston. Wielding a fan made from the wing of a turkey, her grizzly head surmounted by a turban deftly made of a very red bandanna, her wrinkled old face fairly shone with the kindly goodness characteristic of those of her race who had lived and loved and toiled during the period when their ~~beloved~~ Southland was yet young. A majestic spreading water oak supplied the shaded protection near the tiny porch where she sat in her split-bottom rocker, and from the topmost twig of a magnolia tree nearby, a mocking bird did flip-flops as he trilled his cheeriest notes.

"Were you born in this neighborhood?" she was asked.

"Yassum, I was born an' raised just across de field dar on Marse Abner Scarborough's plantation. Marse Abner and Miss Ruth were blessed ole people, an' when Marse Abner died right atter he done finish a sermon to all us niggers, -'cause he preach fust to de white folks, den on Sunday to de niggers, - a drove of us niggers follered him to de big house a cryin' an' takin' on mightily, cause he was a blessed man an' good to all his niggers.

"No'm, de place wa'n't so big I reckon, but I thought it was den. Look big now, 'cause I ain't never lef' 'roun here. I jes' stayed on wid de nex' of 'em what come along, 'cause I knowed good white folks when I see 'em, an' dey sho was, an' all de chillun was good. De ole place was 'bout five miles east of Livingston, on de Livingston an' Demopolis Highway. My mammy an' pappy b'longed to Marse Abner. Mammy's name was Mary Jane Scarborough, an' my pappy was Mack Tolbert, 'cause

you see he b'longed to Mr. Billy Tolbert who brung him from Virginny, an' dey bofe stayed on wid Marse Abner, -didn't never go back no mo'. I had three sisters an' one brudder, but dey all dead.

"I 'members us chillun hangin' on to Marse Abner's legs when he went to de gate to meet his oldes' son, time he come back from de war. Dat boy mos' shouted, an' hugged and kissed his pa, den called Uncle Elum, git his hoss. Den us chillun run out to play.

"No'm, us didn't go to school none no time, nor learn nothin' 'cept Ole Miss an' mammy showed us how to spin an' den weave de cloth. Dey was good to all, an' us had plenty; mo' dan us got now. But dat was 'cause Marse Abner was a blessed man.

"Now dar Mr. John May; he call his self a preacher too, an' married Mr. Billy Tolbert's daughter. Den Mr. Billy give him some niggers, an' he treat 'em so mean dat Mr. Billy say he great mind to take a gun an' shoot him. One day here come one of de slaves, buck naked wid de dogs a runnin' atter him fas' as dey could, an' de blood jes' a streamin'. Den Marse Abner he say, 'Billy, if you can't stop dat, I kin.' I don't know what he done to Mr. May, but he didn't set de dogs on dem niggers no mo' atter dat.

"I Reckon ~~dat~~ altogedder dar was 'bout fifty slaves on Marse Abner's plantation, an' a lot of young niggers comin' on, an' everything was peaceful. No'm, us never had no corn shuckin's, 'cause Marse Abner was a preacher an' didn't 'low nothin' sinful gwine on. Didn't hear no Brer Rabbit tales, an' didn't know nothin' 'bout hoodoo, 'cause I was wid de white folks all de time. An' us didn't know much what went on nohow, 'cause dey alway send de chillun out to play soon as somep'n happen what wa'n't reg'lar.

"One time I heard some of 'em say dem dogs run a nigger in de river an' every time he raise his nostrils out of de water for breath, de

overseer shoot at his head. But I don't know if dats true or no. Didn't nobody never ketch him dat I knows of, an' don't nobody know what come of him.

" I don't know what I kin call my fav'rit' song, less'n its 'Dat Ole Time 'Ligion', 'cause dats de one Ole Marse Abner sung jes' befo' he pass away dat day. Seems like I kin hear him now. Me sing! No'm I can't h'st no hymn; I ain't no songster. All I does is jes' foller de leader.

"Good-by Miss. I sho' is glad you stopped by to speak wid dis ole nigger. 'Spect nex! time you come along I'll done been called to glory lan' whar Marse Abner an' Miss Ruth is. Dat sho will be a happy time, bless de Lawd. I's mighty sorry miss, wish I had some purty flowers to give you. Jes' he'p yo'self to de magnolia blossoms, an' dar is some holly hocks in de back yahd, an' dars plenty of crepe myrtle; jes' he'p yo'self. Good-by, an' God bless you."

WFJ/ 7-7-37

Alabama.

#4 Sumter Co  
R.P. Bartt,  
Jack Kytte

I knowa Is Eighty-five  
But 'Speets Is more dan dar  
~~I 'Speets I's More Dan Eighty-Five.~~

Charity Grigsby lives in a tumbledown shanty about nine miles from Livingston on the old Eppes 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'se 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 'twuz 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 tolable 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'se eighty-five an' I 'spects I'se more dan dat. I'se de mammy of 'leven chilluns; I knows dat; but ain't but five of dem a-livin'. As you knows, I live 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'se 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 <sup>dey</sup> 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 tolable 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 larn 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. Lavender, had a ~~nigger-driver~~ 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, and de other end settin' on de ground. Well sir, it went off an' he killed hissef stid of dat sucklin' woman; an' dat was a awful time, 'caze de niggers got skeered an' run, an' dey sent Mr. Lavendar's pack of nigger dogs on 'em. De dogs kitched some an' chewed 'em nigh 'bout to death. It warn' none of us, but it were vlose.

"Us laid low, didn't go out nowhere. Us wasn't allowed 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, 'caze 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 see de light.

Charity Briggs, ex-slave

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, 'caze 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' forwards to ~~de~~ roas'in years comin' in."

##

R. P. Tartt

*Sumter*  
*Dit # 4*

Charity Grigsby, Ex-Slave

I wuz born Charity Grigsby, but I married Nelson Grigory - ain't much 'stingussh in de names, but 'twuz er little. My pappy wuz Dan'el Grigsby, en my mammy wuz Mary Moore. See, us b'longed ter old Mr. Jim Moore right up yonder 'bove Sumterville near Ramsey Station. You goes up de Gainesville en Livingston road en turns off at de cross road 'bout nine miles frum Livingston en goes due wes'. Tain't fur frum dere, bout six miles, I reckon. Twa'n't no big plantation, 'bout er dozen uv us dere, en Marse Jim didn't have no overseer lac de res' caze he had dem boys uv hissen whut seed ter us, 'twuz John en William en Jim. Dey wuz all tollable good ter us, whoop us ef us wuzn't 'bedient jes<sup>s</sup> like er mother raimin' er chile.

I can't say how ole I is - hit's done got erway frum me, but I wuz er gal durin' de Wa', en I knows I'ze 85 en I 'spects I'ze mo' en dat. I'se de mother uv eleven chillun, I knows dat, but ain't but five uv um er-livin'. I lives wid two, Mattie en Evie; dey treats me good. Hattie en Ellen en my boy lives in Bessemer; others is dead. Dat is all my individual chillun, but I'se had er few others. I can't recollect much ter tell; been er good while sence de "a", but when you calls hit ter my 'membrance I kin think hit up.

Dem nigger dogs, dey sho did run um, dough, en sometimes dey ketch um, but didn't never run me. I wuz in de house en waavin' en spinnin' lac Mist'ess showed me, en I didn't never git in no

Charity Grigsby.

(2)

trouble wid nobody. And Marse Jim wuz pretty tollable good ter us, but Mr. Ervin Lavendar wuz sho mean ter hissen, en his plantation wa'n't fur frum dere. En he had er pack uv dem dogs whut run de niggers en dem wuz skeery times, I tell you. Us didn't larn no schoolin' ner go nowhere ner have no corn shuckin' ner nuthin'; jes' 'quired ter stay in de cabins. I hyared 'bout Bre'r Rabbit en hoo-doo, took but I never takes up no time wid dat foolis'ness, never seed no sense in hit. Us got on all right 'thout all dat.

But some uv de others all de time in trouble. 'Twuz Mr. Fulton en he live jes' lac cross de fiel' yonder on one side ~~en~~ Mr. Lavendar, like I tell you 'bout, over yonder on dat side ole Marsa, en Mr. Fulton had er nigger driver en er overseer name Sanders, en I bet he wuz de meanes' one uv um all. You know, honey, dey planted wheat fiel's in dem days in de fall, en cut hit in de spring, en hit would come off time 'nuff ter make corn. En dey wuz er flock uv birds lac black birds only dey wuz wheat birds, en go in droves, en fly way over yonder, en dey have planks ter slap tergether ter keep de birds f'um out er de wheat, caze dey eats hit up. En one day Mr. Sanders tole one uv de women whut wuz one uv de suoklers on de place ef she wouldn't do whut he ax her ter do, dey wuz er black coffin over her haid, en she 'fused him. So while he wuz loadin' his gun dere in de wheat fiel', gettin' de munichun outer his pants, he wuz holdin' de gun barrel propped under his chin, jes' so, en de other end settin' on de groun'. Well sir, hit went off, en he kilt hisse'f stader dat sucklin' 'oman, en dat wuz er awful time, caze dey niggers got skeered en run'd off en dey sot Mr. Lavendar's pack er nigger dogs on um, en

Charity Gaijshy

3 -

dey coch some en chewed um nigh 'bout ter deaf, but dat wa'n't none uv us, but hit wuz too close. Us laid low, didn't go out nowhere, well us wa'n't 'lowed ter - couldn't go ter prayer meetin' er nothin', but er song all us used ter sing wuz:

Angels in de water, walkin' by de light  
Po' sinner stan' en darkness en cannot see de light.

Yassum, dat's all uv hit, en dat's 'nuff fer me, caze hit's true.  
Whut dey gwine ter be no mo' fer? Jes

Angels in de water, walkin' by de light  
Po' sinner stan' en darkness en cannot see de light.

I doan want no mo' myse'f, jes dat, dat's all. How come yer want some mo'? Doan dat satisfy yer? But de sun gittin' low en my chillun be comin' from de swamp en ain't no bread cooked fer um. Bring me dem quilt pieces en I'll tell yer some mo' when I gits my min' on hit caze hit's been er good while sence de Wa'. Us have 'nuff ter eat, but eF us could git any mo' us would lac hit....you know how 'tis, kin make out wid mighty little. Eat greens - us lookin' ferwerds ter de roas'in'neers comin' in.

Charity lives 9 miles from Livingston-Capes old road. left back in the woods. Place belongs to Mrs Cella Hawkins -  
She was sewing on a quilt. Seemed happy & well.

Charlie Johnson  
 Black's Bluff  
 Whitfield, Ala.  
 Sept. 23, 1938.  
 R. P. T.  
 Ruby Pickens Tartt  
 Sumter County.

"RECKON YOU MIGHT SAY I'S JES FAITHFUL"

His small cabin, one of the quaintest in the group at Black's Bluff, stood near the brow of a sage brush hill where the road led down through a small patch of sorghum cane to the Tombigbee River. Up that hill, he and his young masters had rideen on many a starlit night, coming home from the hunt. On the front gallery, an old darkey was dozing in the thin sunshine of the late September afternoon. I called to him, asking to be directed to Charlie Johnson's cabin.

"Here he is", he said, "I's Charlie Johnson, I's Aunt Hagar's brother you jes' been up de road ter her house fer to see her. Yas'm, hit am bad she don't talk no mo' caze she sho could tell you a heap er things. Co'se I wuz born right here on de Whitfield place, too, right down de road from here. Dis here's Black's Bluff, right on de Tombigbee River, 'bout twenty-four mile frum York, go roun' by de big road. En I done live here all my life 'cept six years I gwine t'ell you 'bout later. But what I'm speaking 'bout, I caint tell you nuthin' like Aunt Hagar could ef she had her mind en could talk. Co'se we brother en sister, but they's eight births 'tween me en her, en I's jes' twelve years old time uv de S'render.

"Dey's fourteen uv us chillun, en we all live here on Marsa Jimmie George Whitfield's place. He wuz us old Marsa, en Miss Susie us old Mistis, en I done had two young Mistises, too. Little Miss Susie, she jes' died here a year er so ago. All us chillun en my mammy en pappy lived in a cabin in de quarter. Dey's about ten er fifteen cabins, en <sup>ab</sup> about thirty-five er forty slaves ez I recollec', but us wuz sech large famerly dey give us a double cabin. En even den,

dar wa'nt enough beds ter go roun'. Sometimes de chillun jes' crawl in de fireplace en go ter sleep in de ashes. Co'se I don't know nuthin' 'bout no school. All us chillun work in de cotton fiel'. Want none er us house hands; them ez wuz too old ter work in de field's en warnt no 'count for nuthin' did de cookin' fer de fiel' han's en looked atter de chillun. Us worked in squads, 'bout thirty-five er forty niggers to de squad, en sometimes twelve mules er-turning. En dey fix de vittles fer de fiel' han's en many the time I toted it down to de fiel' when I uz little.

"Di'nt give you no time to wash up fo' you et. En sometimes you bin scattering fertilize frum de horse lot wid yo' han's en dey bring down de food, en you gotta eat en no chanst ter wash. Bring you greens, jes' big leaves, not cut up lack now, en you gotta pull hit offen de stalks wid yer teef. En we have peas en okry en corn pone, en when you pickin' cotton you take one bite outen de corn pone en throw hit down de row, en pick yo' cotton on down to hit, then pick hit up en eat ernuther bite en throw hit ergain till you et it up. Co'se I never threw mine so awful fur!

"When Christmas cum, didn't git no present, jes mo' meat en bread. Christmas en July, de fourth day uv July wuz de times we wuz 'lowed to celebrate. Den we wuz 'lowed ter celebrate. Den we had fiddling dances. We had a old slave could fiddle, en <sup>a</sup> gittar en maybe a banjo, but <sup>a</sup> any-how a fiddle, en we do square dances en swing de partners. Dem de onliest people could dance, de slavey time people - dese here free niggers cain't dance!

'Ole Man Foster, settin' on <sup>a</sup> log,

Han' on trigger, en eyes on <sup>a</sup> hog.'

Dat wuz <sup>a</sup> gr fav'rit tune. En

'Run, nigger, run

Paterroller ketch you!

Run, nigger, run

Almost day!

"De paterrolers wuz de white men go through de quarter see was de niggers behavin' deyse'f. Didn't none uv um git after me, dough. When de niggers run <sup>y</sup> arway, dey'd chase em wid dogs, en maybe dey'd be up a tree lack a possum, en de dogs bawling at de foot when de overseer come up. But dey didn't never bite, dey wuz trained not ter bite.

"En de onreliable ones, dey'd bell'um - Tempie en Snip wore a bell - en make um work in de fiel's so they couldn't run <sup>y</sup> arway en de overseer could keep up wid where dey wuz at. Dey'd be a iron band roun' de waist, en another iron band roun' de neck, en a thing stick up de back, way up, wid de bell on hit what dey couldn't git hit off - warn't no way ter reach hit!

"Dey wuz about ten er twelve overseers - Mr. Bailey, en Jim Dockin en Green en Swan, en William Kale, en Mr. Peyton. Some uv um wuz good en sum uv um bad...William Kale wuz a pretty fair ole fellow. Some uv um'd whoop yer. Dey'd be one man ter a limb, four uv um, one on each hand en one on each laig, en they throw you down on de groun' en de overseer whoop you wid a wide leather strop, wide ez <sup>a</sup> beaver tail...lack dis here, wide ez my hand.

"'Bout de mos' exitement happen on de place wuz de time Mr. Jim Peyton git killed. Mr. Bill Donald done tole him not ter come ter his house, hangin' roun' his sisters, en he tole him ter stay 'way. En he kep' comin', en Mr. Bill finely shot him one night. Dey took Mr. Bill Donald ter de silence...de silence, ma'am, whar dey takes crazy folks; dey said he wuz crazy.

"I ain't never done nothin' ner been nowhere ter see de world. 'Cept Fluridy. Ole Mistis had another plantation in Fluridy five mile this side er Tallahassee. Dey sont us down en we stayed five years. Dat wuz when I wuz little, en I lacks Fluridy de best. Reckon dat's

why, cause I wuz little. Dey wuz six mules to de wagon en us chillun rode en de grown folks walk. Hit took us three weeks, dey say, ter git dar, en we buy 'visions all long de road. En de alligators in Fluridy, dey wuz so bad! Monday wuz wash day, en de overseers come by in de mawning, en dey say, "Clean sheet, dirty sheet! Dirty sheet, clean sheet!" En dey whup de ones dat had on dirty sheets. En di'n't give us no time ter wash in ~~de~~ pot. Make us wash on de creek bank wid san'. En sometimes they be done finish washing some clo'es en lay dem out on de bank en whilse dey washing some others, de alligators creep up en git de clean ones. Den dey get whooped.

"I ain't never got whooped. Ain't never had nathin' happen ter me. Ain't been nowhar, either. My brother Frank en my brother Norris, Mr. Jimmie George tuk dem to de war wid him. Frank wuz he body servant. Dey went 'way ter de war in ~~de~~ kerridge en Frank wuz driving. But I stayed home wid ole Mistis en worked de place. En one time dey say de Yankees is comin' en we took de good mules, de bes' mules, 'bout fifteen uv 'em down de river bank en tied um en fed um down dere en put de sorry stock ter plowing in de fiel's fer de Yankees ter git. I seed plenty er sojers, Yankee sojers, in de roads atter de war, but de Yankees neber did come through here.

"En atter de S'render Papa took us chillun en moved over 'bout ~~de~~ mile frum Livingston, en us stayed dere 'bout ~~de~~ year. Den we come back hyar, en ain't never lef' no mo'. Dis hyar ain't my land, dis here de Whitfield place, but de Allison Lumber Company owns hit. I don't own nuthin', en I'm disabled ter farm en I ain't got nuthin' jes' living here wid my chillun. My first wife died, en my second wife quit me, en my third wife quit me too; jes' didn't want me cause I'ze so old, I reckon. En sometimes I lives wid one my daughters, en sometimes I stay wid another. Ain't got nathin' en don't reckon I ever will. Ain't been much han' ter go drummin' through de country, so I ain't never seen de worl'. Reckon you might say I'se jes' faithful.

Jany, 20, 1939.  
Adelle Lemon, (Negro)  
Gainesville, Ala.  
Life History  
R.P. Tartt--Writer.

ADELLE LEMON  
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There was something like despair in the faces of the two elderly mulatto women as I talked with them in their quaint old weathered cottage where they were born soon after the war between the States, <sup>They</sup> Adelle Lemon and her sister, Carrie.

Adelle came from the back gallery, a queer little old summer hat on her head and a dressed hen in her hands. A car had just killed the hen, their main dependence for eggs she explained, but any way they could eat it for dinner.

Adelle introduced herself by saying she was the married one, but <sup>added</sup> that Carrie the older one, who sat motionless with a grey shawl over her head <sup>was</sup> "what you might call er vergenium, that is" she added, "she doan know nothin 'bout no man". I was glad she explained for I knew they were not from Virginia.

Their parents came from North Carolina, <sup>they were</sup> "free niggers," Adelle was pleased to say, "because they wuz whitblooded".

As I stood there amid the rest and peace of the country ~~quiet~~ the faces of these two women suggested ~~the~~ "the phrase" as becometh Saints". These negroes are not dissatisfied though their days now are not all that life has ~~ever~~ meant to them, but they are beginning to wonder. Once they see the light of truth the experience of living in two eras will be anything but inspiring.

"You see Miss," Adelle said, "I wuz born back in '77, my grandmother on my father's side (John Pollard ~~was~~ was what he went by), was a white woman living long before the war in North Carolina. She fancied her <sup>but</sup>ter, so they told me, and had by him two little girls--These

chillun wuz half white. One of them wuz stolen and brought to Alabama when she was a girl, and that little girl wuz my grand<sup>ma</sup> <sup>Da</sup> She grew up in Tuscaloosa County. One day she wuz driving a pair of oxen to a wagon with a load of wood to town and a white gentleman stopped her in the road. Who are you and where did you come from, he axed her. She told <sup>the</sup> ~~as~~ best she could all that she remembered <sup>about her</sup> ~~of her early~~ childhood and he recognized her as the daughter of this white woman, what he knowed in North Carolina, he said he knowed her by de favor. Well she wuz sold from <sup>e</sup> ~~dare~~ to Judge Revis en he brought her on to Gainesville an dats how us got started here. She wuz my father's mother and he wuz most white hisse'f. You see de place wuz run over wid Yankee soldiers, dats how dat street up by de Square got hits name Yankee Street. Their wives stayed north an so they took sick as they could git. My father wuz a white man's barber, dats his picture right there. We didn't have much schoolin' in dem days, as de black folks wuz so low lifed en my papa wouldn't let us chillun go much. I kin read an write tho' a little but we got our trainin' fum de white folks an my mother run ~~er~~ laundry an we chillun did the pretties washin' in dis part uv de country en couldn't no body beat us flutin dem ruffles on de white folks dresses or doin' up shirts, we'd work 'til 12 o'clock some Saturday nights when Judge Revis come by here an' say Callie why dont you let dem chillun go to bed, don't you know de devil gonna git you working here on Sunday morning, but ma jes laughed, but we'd be glad cause we'd be so tired we didn't know what to do.

Well then I got married to David Lemon ~~er~~ nigger, but ~~er~~ good man an ~~er~~ farmer, We had six chillun an lived ~~er~~ piece out fum here in de country. David an Leslie live here now in Gainesville, de others done moved off. But me an' my sister is <sup>to</sup> ole ter work now. We's de olest citizens here an all crippled up wid rum'tism an inner-hostil neuralgy en some

times I doan feel lac we can make hit. The Chillun has their own families ter look after, Dey farm en bring us some taters en sypup sometimes but den in de skips we gits mighty hongry. My sister is done got on relief cause she aint got no body tet help her, but I can't git on 'cause I Lives here wid her, but looks lac to me it would cost de Government less to take care uv two together than to separate us en have more firs an more rent en lights an vittuals, than fer us both ter be here together but den dats de way hit works en I doan mean ter complain, jes tellin' you how it is, an how little we has. Now I can't beg no matter what, but all our white folks is passed on or they'd see 'bout us, an we just dōdn't fool eround wid dese black ones so there ain' much we can do en hit goes mighty hard .De lady thinks we could sell something but we done sole all we kin. You see we wuz used ter some comforts in life, we had beds en ~~er~~ table er so, we can't sleep on de floor emen if we iz got antiks as she calls them, and we allers had plain good food. De truck doan furnish no sugar ner coffee ner lard so hits all right we is glad ter git de flour an de res'an we makes de five dollars go ez fer ez we kin, but wood is, 50 cents an hit aint no big load ,we done bought six dis year an we is sick so much we has ter keep ~~er~~ fire goin' most day an night an hit bees so cold an we has ter burn ~~er~~ lamp mos all night. I aint ~~er~~ complainin' jes er wonderin' "

Adelle and her feeble sister live in the shadow of a church where they can sit with faces the weathered grey of their house, listening each Sunday to hymns filled with sentimental piety.

*Song*JUMPY-UP SONGS  
AND SONGS IN DE BOOK*Sumter Dist  
#4*

Maria White, who lives at Cuba, Ala., on the left of the highway entering the town, says:

"I can't tell no Wa' time tales, 'ca'se I jes' nacherly can't recollect um. All I know is I was born 'fo' S'render, but I don't know de year. 'Twuz August, though. My name is Maria White, en us live 'bout ten miles dis here side of Cuba Station on Mr. John Matthew's place. En doan ax me 'bout my mammy and daddy, 'ca'se dey all lingered on me and I'm boun' ter be troubled. Yes ma'am. Then she hummed:

I'm troubled, I'm troubled 'bout my soul  
Jes' let me get up  
In de kingdon, Lord I won't be troubled no mo'.

I wonder where is my sister  
She's gone on befo'  
Somewhere settin' in de kingdon, Lord,  
She won't be troubled no mo'.

En where is my mother?  
She's gone on befo'  
Somewhere settin' in de kingdon, Lord,  
En she won't be troubled no mo'.

"Yes ma'am, dat's my favorite song, and another one I loved to sing goes:

Hard crosses make you love Jesus  
Hard crosses make you love Jesus  
Hard crosses make you love Jesus  
My time is not long.

Look away in de snow fiel'  
Look away in de snow fiel'  
Look away in de snow fiel'  
My time is not long.

"Dat's jes' a jumpy-up song, Miss, one dat ain't in de book, but hit's a cute one, en dey's a heap mo' dem verses but I'm busy as er cat and I can't recollect 'em right now. But here's a ole-time nigger song my mammy useter sing when I was a chile  $\phi$  atter S'render.

Chorus: Befo' I be a slave  
I'll be carried to my grave  
There to meet my blessed Lord  
In de Vale.

-1-

I love Jesus  
I love Jesus  
I love Jesus  
Yes I do.

-2-

Weepin' Mary  
Weepin' Mary  
Weepin' Mary  
Weep no mo'.

-3-

Doubtin' Thomas  
Doubtin' Thomas  
Doubtin' Thomas  
Doubt no mo'.

Yes, befo' I be a slave  
I'll be carried to my grave  
Dere to meet my blessed Lord  
In de Vale.

"Dat's a pretty one, Miss; Mammy use ter git happy when dey sung  
dat one. En she liked:

Pray hard for to enter de gate  
Pray hard for to enter de gate  
Pray hard for to enter de gate  
Want to go where my Jesus gone.

Moan hard for to enter in de gate  
Moan hard for to enter in de gate  
Moan hard for to enter in de gate  
Want to go where my Jesus gone.

"I can't think up no songs seems lac, but us knows a plenty and  
one is:

Dis is de way I pray when trouble in my home  
Dis is de way I pray in my home, in my home  
Dis is de way I pray in my home.

Dis is de way I moan when trouble in my home  
Dis is de way I moan in my home, in my home,  
Dis is de way I moan in my home.

"En I'm moanin' now 'ca'se I got all dis here ironin' to do fo' Saddy, and dat's de way I pays my rent to Mr. Wedgewood whut makes de clay flower pot en he's holy sanctified. Dat's how come I don't lac ter sing dese little jumpy-up songs out loud. He say dey ought to come out of de hymn book. I dunno. Ain't never hurt me to sing um.

"No'm I ain't married, jes' me by myse'f and another sister whut's lingerin' on me."

Wash. Copy  
R.L.D.  
7-7-37

Source (?)

By R. P. Tartt

How de Smart Nigger Got Sot Free

I hear Pappy say one time dat Ole Massa tole four niggers on his place to go down back uv de place <sup>and</sup> en pick out <sup>a</sup> er three-foot tree, get er hig un fer de future, en ter cut 'til yer could see de ax smoke, <sup>and</sup> en de fus' one ter git de ax <sup>and</sup> dat hot to holler, en he gwineter sot him free.

Well sir, one nigger had de sense to tell Ole Massa jes' set down 'bout thirty minutes den he'd ga'ntee his ax would be <sup>a</sup> er-smokin'.

So Ole Massa went back in de Big House, shot de do' grabbed up his newspaper, <sup>and</sup> en commence <sup>to</sup> read de news. Now, 'twuz <sup>a</sup> black-smif shop, Pappy say, 'reckly beneef de house fo' yer gits <sup>to</sup> de tree, <sup>and</sup> dis here smart nigger done went by dere en got de blade uv his ax red hot. Den he begins ter cut, en de burnin' chips begins ter fly. But Old Massa didn't wait fer nobody ter holler, he jes' nachally smelt dat smoke en he throwed down dat newspaper <sup>and</sup> here he come!

En he teched de ax wid his glove, en hit set dat on fire, en so Ole Massa tole him go ketch his hoss en ride 'im, he gwineter make er nigger driver outen him, <sup>a</sup> en boss over dem others, en dat's sotten him free. I knows dat wuz <sup>a</sup> er directly job.

#

got married to a woman who was homesteadin' out there from out in Kansas and after she got po'ly me and her left and went back to Kansas.

|| Paw got twenty-two hundred dollars out of the place. 'Twas healthy all right, but the wind wuz so bad, blew you off yo' feet, hear 'bout. So I was kinder glad to leave. Hit wuz pretty lovely out there in them days. Of course, I made that claim before I ever found the woman; just lived by myself out there, never knowed nobody. We went to Cuba, Missouri, from there, and I had eighty-five acres of land, mostly wood. I cut wood and sold it. It was mostly rocky there - couldn't raise much. I had five or six acres in hay, but that country wa'n't whut you might call healthy, not like this here climate here. I like it here better than anywhere I been.

|| 'Fore I come here, I never passed ~~er~~ winter without seeing zero weather. But I got restless after the woman died. She died at the birth, after Harold my youngest boy. Had five births, and three of 'em died. The first two died, then I saved Junior, then Harold, and the woman died. Had three doctors, but I say the first one didn't

Laura Clark, about eighty-six years old, Ex-Slave

*R. P. Tarr*

I wuz born on Mr. Pleasant Powell's place in North Carolina, en when I wuz 'bout six er seven years ole, I reckon hit 'twuz, Mr. Garrett frum right up yonder in de bend 'bout eight miles frum Livingston gwine no'th on de Livingston en Epes road, bought ten uv us chillun in North Carolina en sarnt two white men en one wuz Mr. Skinner ter fech us back in waggins. 'n he foch ole Julie Powell en Henry ter look atter us. Wa'n't none uv dem ten chillun no kin ter me, en he never bought my mammy, so I had ter leave her behine. 'n I recollect Mammy said to ole Julie "Take keer my baby chile (dat wuz me) en ef I never sees her no mo' raise her fer God". Den she fell off de waggin where us wuz all settin' en roll over en over on de groun' jes' er cryin'. But us wuz eatin' candy whut dey done give us fer ter keep us quiet, en I didn't have sense 'nuff fer ter know whut ailed Mammy, but I knows now en I never seed her no mo' in dis life, en when I heered frum her atter 'srender she wuz done dead en buried. Her name wuz Rachel Powell, en my pappy's name I doan know caze he done been sole ter somewhur else when I wuz too little ter recollect. But my mammy wuz de muther uv twenty-two chillun en she had twins in her lap when us driv off. En my grand-mammy said when I lef' "Pray, Laura, en be er good gal, en mine bof white en black, en ev'ybody will lac yer, en ef yer never see me no mo' pray ter meet me in heaven". Den she cried. Her name wuz Rose Powell.

Us all started den fer Mr. Garrett's plantation down yonder in de bend, ten chillun en two ole uns, en two white men, en us wuz

travellin' solid er month. En fuss thing Ole Marsa say wuz "Now be good ter dese motherless chillun". Den he went ter Wa', en de overseers fergot all 'bout dey promise. En when Ole Marsa come back he done got his arm shot off, but he let bof dem overseers go, caze dey done whooped dat ole 'oman whut come wid us ter deaf. "he brought her two little boys, Colvin en 'Lias, but Joe, dey pappy, didn't come - he wuz sole 'fo Lias wuz bawn. En Joe never seed 'Lias.

En I sets cross de road here frum dat church over yonder en can't go caze U'm cripple' en blin', but I hears um singin':

Er motherless chile sees er hard time  
 Oh Lord, hep her on de road.  
 Er sister will do de bes' she kin  
 Dis is er hard world, Lord, fer er motherless chile.

En I jes' busts out cryin'. Dat wuz de song I had in view ter sing fer yer, hit's so mournful. I knowd 'twain't no reel, 'twain't nothin' lac no reel, caze I been b'longin' ter de church fer fifty-five years, en I doan fancy no reel. I'm glad I got hit ter my mine 'fo' you lef'. "ut my reckerleckshun is shaller. I ain't never read no verse in no Bible in my life, caze I can't read. Some my chillun kin, though. My husban' died en lef' me wid nine chillun, none uv um couldn't puik de others outer de fier ef dey fell in. I had mo' en dat, but some come here dead en some didn't. I got chillun dead in Birmingham en Bessemer, en day ain't er graveyard in dis here settlement 'roun' Prospect where I ain't got chillun buried. Hettie Ann, right up dere ter Mr. Hawkins graveyard, en 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 grug erbout en put through de shakkles so bad I done fergot some uv dey names, en I mos' blin' now en cain't hear

good neither. But my eyse is good nuff fer ter see ghosts, but I doan b'lieve in um, caze I'd see dem chillun some tåme ef dey wuz ghostees. I know 'd see my boy, caze dey showed me his head whur dat Miller boy hit him in de head wid er spade en split his head wide open, slip up behin' him en all he said wuz "Squeek", jes' lac er hog, en he wuz dead. 'n de murderer live right here en dey move en now I'm here, en when hit rain us jes' gets under de bed caze de house ain't got no top on hit.

But I can't say Marse Garrett wa'n't good ter us motherless chillun, but de overseer, Mr. Woodson Tucker, wuz mean ez anybody. He'd whoop yer nigh 'bout ter deaf, en had er whoopin' log en he strip um buck naked en lay um on de log en whoop um wid er wide strop, wider'n my han', den he pop de blisters whut he raise en 'nint em wid red pepper, salt, en vinegar, den put em in de house de call de pest house, en have er 'oman stay dere en keep de flys offen um till dey get able ter move. Den dey had reg'lar men in de fields wid spades, en ef you didn't do whut yer git tole, de overseer would wrop dat strop 'roun' his han' en hit um in de haid wid de wooden handle 'til he kilt um, den de mens would dig er hole wid de spades en throw um in hit right dere in de fiel' jes' lac dey wuz cows - didn't have no funeral nor nothin'.

Us had er heap er houses in de quarter right on bo<sup>F</sup> sides de Big House, en us could step outer one house ter 'tother. "hy doan you move outer dat sun "doodle", doan you know yo brain's addled? But Miss, I didn't work so hard er have no trouble either. I wuz in de house atter Marsa come home en foun' me splitten rails en plowin'. He 'lowed dey done put me in too hard er ship, en I wuz too little, so he tuck me to de house ter draw water en wash dishes, caze I wuz

er little motherless gal, but Ole Marsa done er good part by me, en I wuz married to my fuss husban', Cary Crockett, right dere in de parlor. He tole de overseers dat us wuz human en had feelin's same ez him, so he rejected de paterrollers en made um git off de place. I wuz treated good, caze I 'membered whut my gran'ma say, en whut ever dey tole me ter put my han' ter, I did, en I wuz obedien' en wuzn't hardheaded lac some de res'. I had no trouble, en wuzn't 'buked none. 'ut I'ze 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 en I jes sets en crys. I can't read no songs ter comfo't me, jes' kech em frum de preacher on de stan' en hole um, dat's de way I kech my larnin'.

Las' sermon I hyard, he tuck his tex' en said, "Doan nobody rob God". Den he say, "Ef yer is goin' ter 'tend ter serve God, serve Him in de full, caze God doan never bat er eye, ner turn His haid en he kin see yer. He frowns at ev'y sin, but He's er sin-fergivin' man". I use ter know er heap 'bout de Lord, but I'm so cripple' en bline since de ca'f jumped on my foot I can't go ter chu'ch no mo', so I done fergot.

You ax 'bout dem flowers on de po'ch - I sho wish dey wuz mine, you could have um caze dey ain't room nuff wid dem fer me ter sit whur I desire. Us ain't got no meal en here 'tis jes' Tuesday - no mo' tel Saddy. 'ho is bad; us jes' 'pends on de neighbors en borrys.

Ruby Pickens Tartt  
Livingston, Alabama

Sumter

GEORGE WRIGHT SOLD  
HIS FIVE CHILDREN

A Trustee's Sale of Negroes as advertised in The Republican Pilot of March 27, 1841, a newspaper printed and published at Gainesville, Alabama at that time, was copied in the Gainesville Dispatch August 14, 1875. It is as follows:

Trustee's Sale

By virtue of a deed in trust made to the undersigned by George P. Wright on the 18th of March, A.D. 1840, and recorded on the 10th of April, A.D. 1840 in the office of the clerk of the county court of Sumter County, Alabama, in Book E, folios 232 and 233 for certain purposes therein mentioned, we will proceed to sell to the highest bidder, for cash on Saturday the 17th of April next, before the Post Office in the town of Gainesville, between the hours of 10 o'clock A.M. and 4 o'clock P.M. the following described Negroes:

Eber, aged about 25 years;  
Eli, aged about 28 years;  
Ezekiel, aged about 23 years;  
Enon, aged about 18 years;  
and, Ezra, aged about 16 years.

Robert Criswell } Trustees  
G. B. Mobley }

March 8th, 1841

The Pilot adds that there was apparently nothing unusual about the sale at that time and in Alabama, but when it is known that George P. Wright was a coal black free negro and these negroes were his five sons, all of whose names begin with E., and that he had a

right to sell them under the law, a fine romance might have been made out of it by Harriet Beecher Stowe.

Jack Tom, another free negro in Gainesville, bought several of the boys. The other got good homes and people in Gainesville who knew of them said they didn't believe they ever complained of their changed status.

T.E.B.  
7/6/37

Aunt Susanna Ross, Belmont,  
Rt. 1, Box 71,  
Coatopa, Alabama,  
10 miles from Coatopa,  
September 29, 1938.  
Ruby Pickens Tartt,  
Sumter County.

SUSANNA ROSS

I had left the McDowell road far behind me and had been driving several miles along a winding, rutted wagon track through fields of unpicked cotton, when a sudden turn brought me abruptly to a cabin door. A tall patch of sorghum shimmering and swaying in the light afternoon breeze sheltered and concealed it on one side; behind it a limestone bluff shone whitely against the deep green of the cedars and pines which crowned it; and in the foreground, at a little distance, stretched the swamp, dark and impenetrable, and to the imaginative mind teeming with a mysterious, even threatening, life of its own. A blue haze rose from it and clung above it, and (perhaps it was the mood to which the lonely drive had keyed my senses) a brooding, disquieting, atmosphere hung over the entire scene.

As I stepped onto the gallery calling for Carrie, an ancient and emaciated Negress rose and embraced me. "How's my mammy?", she exclaimed patting and hugging me, "I'm more 'en glad to see you. How's my mammy! I alle all my white folks mammy when they comes to see how I'm gitting erlong. How's my mammy". Suddenly releasing me, she staggered backwards, arms flailing the air, and whether with the excitement of my visit or from causes of a physical nature, seemed unable to maintain her balance. I helped her into the only chair against her vigorous protest that she must go in the

house and fetch me one. "Never mind, Auntie," I tried to sooth her, "I'll sit here on the steps". "Whatcher want er set in de not sun fer!" she asked indignantly, and finally we compromised on an overturned washtub to which she insisted on transferring her aged bones, motioning me to move my chair closer to her good ear.

I produced some peppermint candy most of which she stowed away in a pocket hidden in the folds of her voluminous skirt, and while she munched contentedly on a stick, I studied her. Old and twisted as she was, she was scrupulously clean. Her print dress and the blue head handkerchief that bound her white hair were freshly laundered and crisp; and the last sparks of pride or vanity still glowed feebly, for through the holes that pierced her ears she had stuck fine straws, keeping them in readiness to receive the pair of earrings she hopes for but in all likelihood will never have. Her feet were gnarled with rheumatism, so distorted out of their natural shape that it would seem impossible for her ever to force them into a pair of shoes. Her eyes were cloudy and dim with cataracts and her hearing greatly impaired by age, but her expression was one of serenity enlivened by more than a little humor and curiosity, and her mind seemed remarkably keen.

"Tell me something about yourself, Auntie," I tried to draw her out. "How old are you?" "Oh, mussy, I dean know," she replied. "Here lemme call Carrie. Is you called Carrie yit? She cown in de fiel'. C-a-a-rie!" Her voice, ending on an up-note, rose with a strange sweetness and in a moment I heard an answering cry from the distance. "I reckon she heard me,

I'se so deaf I doan know. She'll be erlong in a minute. How old I'm is - Mistis, I doan know. I wuz asking Mr. Bill McCormick t'other day en he say, 'Why Aunt Susan, I don't know. Whut's de fust thing you remember?, En I say, 'Well, I 'member when we wuz chillun de dark day when dey keep us all in de house en wuz cryin' cause us wanted to play in de yard. Hit wuz summertime, cause I 'members they warn't no fire in de house.' En he say, 'Aunt Susan, were you here then?' En I say, 'Co'se I wuz. Ef I hadn't been here I couldn't er asked you 'bout hit!' En he sent me word later that I wuz a hundred years old en three days, en he sent me a dime to git some snuff; said he'd hear tell about that dark day but he didn't know they wuz anybody living whut had seen hit. Co'se dat wuz some time ago en Mr. Billy he daid now." I cain't read nor write ter keep up wid dose things. All I know is de plow, hoe, de bull whup, cat o'nine tails, en de bust slapper." She chuckled in glee as though the remembrance of them was pleasant to her. "De bust slapper, dat's whut we bust de blisters wid! All I know 'bout how ole I is at de time er de S'render I wuz weaning my fou'th chile. En dey didn't 'low chillun ter run about then lack n nowadays!" ending with a snort of disgust for the present generation.

I wuz raised by Dr. Billy Yarnell - we called him Marse Billy - in Missaissippi on the Little Missaissippi River near Yazoo City. We called hit de Little Missaissippi, some folks called hit de Yazoo River. Sometimes de high water come right right up under de house en we couldn't have no fires, but the houses wuz built way up high, so it didn't never hurt nothing. I worked in de fiel's pulling corn, you knows, wid de droners

behind singing de corn song lack dey give out de hymns." I asked her if she wouldn't sing it for me, but she refused even to recite the words. "Doan wanten even think about 'em", she said, "de Lord done freed my soul!" For to the older Negroes, secular music in all its forms is a sin against the church.

"Look at my hands," she said, "look at my feet. Hard work done dat. I wuz a hard worker, but I got whooped sometimes". "What did you get whipped for, Aunt Susan," I aksed. "Oh for runnin' erway", she laughed. "Sometimes I think de overseer fixing to whup me, en I runned away en when he ketch me he'd whup me for runnin'!" She chuckled again. "But Marse Billy, he good ter us. We had a holiday half er Sa'dy en all day Sunday ter res' en wash our clothes. En Marse Billy look after us when us sick. I 'members one Sunday good ez hit wuz yestiddy dey had company at de Big House en one er de house girls come 'cross de river - dey had two plantations, one on each side de river - en she come to git some Mexican peaches. I went down ter see 'bout hit en I wuz settin' on de foot log en er blunt-tail moccasin bit me on my toe. En de gal run off en lef' me, en I ran all de way ter de Big House en when I got nigh I saw de comp'ny settin' in de entry. So I run back ter de river, I didn't know whut I wuz doin' I wuz so skeered. Den de men came en put me on er hoss named Pant'er Tail en carried me back ter de house en Dr. Billy doctored hit en tied hit - he had all kinder medicines - en I never felt hit. I drank whiskey dat day", she mused. "Drank over a quart" - probably a contributing factor to the dimness of her recollection.

En another time after I come here I got bit on dat same foot. I wuz down in de bottom en I felt something sharp-like

en I says whut dat!" En I looked down en about dat time I felt hit again. En hit wuz a rattlesnake pilot had bit me twice on de foot. En we dug a hole in de groun' en split a live black chicken open en tied hit to de wound, en put my foot in de hole en poured in dirt en water en hit got all right dat time too.

I asked how she happened to come to Sumter County all the way from Yazoo City as it seemed stragge to me to find her spending her last years so far from her first home. "Oh mussy" she said, "I been here a long time. When de war come along dey run us away from home soawe wouldn't git hurt. Marse Billy sent us to Columbus en when we got dere de Yankee sit up on a high hill en hit wuz Sa'dy night. En dey say "Stay in de house en you won't git hurt." So the guns go "sw-o-o-o bam" all night long en the bomb shells all over de front yard next mawning. Hit wuz a wonder we wa'n't killed! So when de S'render come, I started back home, back to Yazoo City. I git on de train all right, but dey put me off in Selma. Den I walk to Uniontown, all de way on foot, en stay dere a while. Den walk ter Demopolis en I worked in de field dere en cooked fer ar livin'. Den I married en come here en I been here ever sence."

"Aunt Susan," I asked, trying to bridge the twenty mile gap between Demopolis and Belmont, "How'd you meet your husband," - "Meet him", she sniffed indignantly, "I never met him. He come looking fer me!"

"En now he daid en all my chillun daid. De Lord knew he wuz better able to take keer uv um den me, en he took em away frum me. Atter Peter died, he my husban', I stayed by myself till I started gittin' so crazy. One day I wuz out in de gyar-

den I heered singin'. No'm, hit didn't sound lack no angels,  
jes' sounded lack folks singing,

'I had Jesus in my fight hand  
Handful of Jesus.'

En I hollered to Carrie ter come here see did she hear whut I heered. En she say she doan heer nothin'! So that wuz about twenty-five years ago, en I asked Carrie could I come live wid her, en I been here ever since. Now I's old en I ain't good fer nothin', but lemme show you whut I been doin'." Hobbling in the house, she returned in a moment with a rug of brightly colored rags which she was making. She produced a pair of umbrella ribs with the utmost pride. "These here my knittin' needles! Back in slave'y times, I uzeter spin fer de loom, warp en filling too, cotton en wool, but knittin' is all I kin do now."

"Aunt Susan, do you smoke" I asked. "Do she smoke!" interrupted Carrie, who by this time had come up from the field and with "howdy's" to the company had taken a seat on the rickety steps. "Smoke en dip, too! She says, 'Carrie, I wants some snuff', en I git her a bottle en hit doan last no time. I say, 'Aunt Susan, ain't no sense in dippin' so deep! Hit doan do no good. Ain't a week pass I doan have ter scrub dis porch." She got up and, indignant at Aunt Susan's wastefulness, pointed out a dark brown stain near the edge of the gallery where the older woman had miscalculated in her expectoratory aim. "Look at dis, dis jes light dip for Aunt Susan!"

The sun was getting low in the West and a light wind suggestive of showers had sprung up. "Well, I must be going,"

I said. "Here's a dime, Aunt Susan, get yourself some snuff."  
"Thanky ma'am, thanky ma'am", she followed me to the gate to  
say. "Remember me in your prayer", she called after me. "Will  
you remember me in yours?" I asked, and she replied, "I'm duly  
bound to try."

10/6/38

S.B.J.

Tom Moore  
Coatopa R. F. D.  
Dec. 15, 1938  
R. F. Tartt

TOM MOORE and his DEATH MONEY

Old Tom Moore lives four miles from Coatopa in a large rambling  
old log cabin. He is a reliable negro farmer, who owns, as he says,  
three hundred and sixty acres of land which he adds, "nacherly I ain'  
never paid fer".

I had been told that Tom wanted to see me so I drove out to his  
place and found him with his wife Safrony sitting before a log fire.  
His two daughters, Malindy and Rachael, were in the yard making lye  
hominy in a huge black wash pot and his three sons Tom Jr., Israel  
and Moses were killing a big fat hog.

"Getting ready for Christmas", I said to Tom as he got up to greet  
me.

"Yassum de chillun is, but me en Safrony is so cripple up wid de  
rheumatism dat us jes sets en looks on. Us is now goin' on seventy-  
two - de same year chillun - en dats pretty aged, then we is so troubléd  
bout our boy whut got kilt dat us can't take no intrust in no Christmas."

I recalled having heard of his son's death when hit by an automo-  
bile. "Yes" I said, "I know it's mighty hard on you and Safrony and  
I'm very sorry for you." "Hit sho is hard Miss, but he's gone now so  
I say let de Lard take en don't grieve. 'Long as you can creep I says,  
'stand up', dats whut I says but whut I wants ter see you about is de pay.

"You see Miss dat man from Texas run into us boy a-drivin' home in  
de wagon en us oughter git de death money. I doan' never buck 'ginst no  
white folks, never is in my life. You hear em say Tom Moore is a'umble  
old nigger but dey kilt one near de twin oaks fillin' stashun at Erewersville

right round dat curve en his folks got their pay; en de kilt another one down here by Conkaby Creek where you turns in at en his folks got their pay; en dat white gentleman from Toomsby whut wuz passen' say "'Tom de others got their pay en you ought to git yours; er hit jes ain't fair,' - dats whut he say- and I say we sho' needs hit. And they tole me maybe you could he'p me git it.

"You see Miss I didn't make but seven bales on de whole entire place, en jes raise 'bout 300 bushel uv corn; didn't raise no potatoes dis year; my hogs eat 'em up. I made right smart uv peanuts tho', en 300 gallons uv mollasses en they is sho good, but 'lasses crop was short dis year on account of de dry drought. But I done studied so much 'bout gittin' dat money en me en Safrony jes nacherley done worked down cause when we wuz young we must er went too fast.

"Safrony frets cause I ain' no church member, they all b'longs to the Prospect Baptists Missionary en she jes' sets en prays en sings. I call myself tryin' to pray. I thought once I had religion but I doubted myself' - I believe tho' but jes ain' joined. I jes ain' solidated hit in my mind, en all I used ter know I jes nacherley in my trouble done forgot. I says, here terday en gone termorrow. Ole times is throwed erway en new times is took hits place, but if ole times is right we gotter go back, ef wrong hits done done away wid. But whut I needs right now is finanshul betterment en I's hopin' de government will do somepin fer dis po' ole nigger some time soon. Safrony dare is mos' los' her reason she's so troubled; says she sees ghosts wid polka dot dresses on en when she go ter shake hands ain't nothin' dare but smoke. She say she seed one jes' lack a woman, jes' lack folks - close ez from me to you walkin' by dat rail fence en she walk in every crook in de fence en Safrony say she jes' stayed in de road and when she got to de gap she jes lef' her standin' dere jes lack a woman then she passed away jes lack I'm looking at you en takes my eye offen you then you is

gone;- must be de air.

"Den she say she seed one en hit flew down jes lack a big white hen en hit de ground en bounce up; den hit growed tall as de eves un dis here house en don't keer how much fuss the chillun make hit won't leave til all us turn de corner uv de house. I ain' seed none yit, but Safrony do all de time en dey keeps her so bothered in her mind. I says hit might be Jerry comin' back trying to say something, but he wouldn't wear no polka dot dress!

Hit could be some of dem home remedies she taken cause us ain't got no money to go to no doctor, been had so many debts ter pay for de funeral. But Safrony says hit could be bad luck on account of when dey brought Jerry in a corpse dey had to take him out over some of de same road to de graveyard and you nacherley can't pass over de same ground twice or hit show will bring dem whuts lef' bad luck. Hit could be dat; den hit all happen so sudden lack didn't nobody think 'bout stoppin' de clock or turning dat lookin' glass to de wall so hit kin be a whole parcel uv things Miss, till I doan know which one but a spell is sho' on Safrony. Hit all happened one Saturday en us had ter hurry en get de grave dug en bury Jerry fore dust on Sunday caze we knowed hit nacherley won't do to carry him over in de house on Sunday or some of de res' would be gone fore dis year is up - an I'd done had enough bac luck th'out having no more 'ceasting goin' on. I ought ter been spectin' hit caze I'd dreamed 'bout white hosses, but I jes said ter my se'f 'shucks tain't nothin' to dat', but hit bothered me mightily an I tole Jerry dat same Satday, "be keerful wid dem mules, en Malindy wuz wid him en she say he wuz, en dey wuz on they side uv de road, en when he hit em she say she know'd Jerry was dead, en de man from Texas stop en she said, 'Please Sir, I can't move but drag Jerry over here. I know he's dead but lay him out in de grass side de road where can't

nobody run over him no mo'; en a man come by from Toomsby goin' ter Selma en de man from Texas say, 'Take deze niggers to de horsepital en I'll pay de bills;' en he tuck em en' dat same white man from Toomsby didn't know me, ain't never seed me, but he took dem chillun to de horsepital en he come back dat night en come right here ter dis here house en tole me 'bout whut done happen. He sho wuz a good white man. But you know Miss dat Texas man ain't never been heered uv since, en I had all dem bills ter pay. Miss, can't you get somebody to help dis po' ole nigger git his pay? I needs dat death money mighty bad."