

Mississippi Narratives

Prepared by

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Foreword: Height, 5 feet 2 inches; weight, 105 pounds; color, brown. Was hesitant about talking freely as she feared the white people were planning to enslave her again.

I remember some things about old slave days, but I don't want to say nothing that will get me in bandage again. I am too old now to be a slave. I couldn't stand it.

I was born near Meadville, Miss., in Franklin County. My mother was named Lanny and my father was Pete Jones. We all lived on a big farm with Ole Marster and Mistress. They were Mars Jim Smith and Mistress Luella Smith.

There was a large bunch of us niggers and they was very good to us. We lived in houses made out of logs with stick and dirt chimneys. The beds were almost bunks made into the wall.

After I got large enough to work I went to spinning and weaving cloth for the soldiers. I done that until I took the white swelling in my legs. Then they wais if I lived a long time, they would stop me from working and take care of me.

We had no time to make a garden of our own. We had to make cotton and corn for Marster Jim.

Then somebody went off and come back and said war had started. How glad we niggers was! We didn't have much work to do then.

Whenever we would hear the Yankees coming, we'd run down in the woods and hide until they left. They'd go into the smokehouse, get all the meat they wanted, kill chickens, geese, turkeys and ducks and take them away --- and nobody would try to stop 'em. Some times when the niggers didn't run and hide, they would give them plenty to eat.

Then the Ku Kluxers and Night Riders come around, and ever once in a while a nigger would slip off and join the Yankees.

We had plenty cornbread, peas, and meat to eat, and clothes what we made. Had to do our washing at night.

The overseer was mean at times. Then sometimes he was good. He was very poor.

After the war was over, Marster Jim come and told Pa he was free but we stayed there awhile before we started moving about.

I don't know exactly how old I am because the Court House at Meadville where they kept my age burned down.

I married at the jail in a ordinary cotton dress and was as proud as young folks are of silk.

I think this younger generation is a bunch of fools who never will amount to a hill of beans.