

**Mississippi Narratives**  
**Prepared by**  
**The Federal Writer's Project of**  
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**For the State of Mississippi**  
**From the WPA Slave Narratives:**  
**Aaron Jones**  
**Age 92**

"I was born near Holly Springs and belonged to Mr Rufus Jones. He owned more than a section of land and about one hundred slaves. He had seven boy and three girl children."

"My mother was Melissa and cooked for the Jones family; my father was Kinch. He worked in the field and drove the family around. During the War, he was a messenger to warn the white folks when the Yankees was coming. My grandfather's name was Kinch Staffne, and my grandmother's name was Remember Me. My mother's mother was Judy. They all come from Virginia. The Jones family came from Virginia."

"We lived at the quarters. They were good log houses, with dirt and stick chimneys. They had dirt floors at first. Our beds was two-legged beds with one end fastened to the logs. They was pretty comfortable, with the ticks stuffed with shucks and rye. We had our own gardens and cooked in our cabins."

"We worked all day Sadurday. On Sunday we went to the white peoples church at Chulahoma and at Tallaloosa Hill. We had three days off at Christmas. Our people was mighty good to us --- least we thought they was."

"I played marbles and base but mostly I worked in the field hoeing cotton and such."

"The overseer was death and gaul, and that wasn't all. I mean he was pretty mean. He was common white trash. We was waked up before day to go to the field. He punished the niggers for disobedience and for fighting mongst themselves, by whipping them. Sometimes they were locked in the gin house or some other farm house. There wasn't any jail."

"I been married three times and followed all three to the grave. I had six or seven children. One daughter is living and I live with her on Cuppewa Creek. Two of my wives didn't bear. I stayed all night with my wives every night."

"I'm a member of the Missionary Baptist Church. We use to sing, 'Way over in the Promise Land, My Saviour calls me and I must go'. I never was arrested or in Jail in my life."

"When Ole Marster died and they was dividing up the property, I was 'praised for fifteen hundred dollars."

"The pat-a-rollers was tough. The niggers would slip off and go to candy pullings and quiltings at the neighbors farms and if the pat-a-roller caught them they would whip them pretty bad. One time the niggers was off at a candy stew and just as the leader called out 'Promenade and Sociate', a pataroller put his head in the window and said, 'Promenade and Sociate' yourselves.' Well, the niggers tore down the chimney and part of the wall getting away --- and he didn't catch them. So then they ran around to the road where he had to pass and strung up wild grape vines so they would stumble his horse or rake him off."

"I remember the War very well. We could hear the guns from the battle at Memphis and from Shiloh; and Van Dorn's Raid sounded like it was in our yard. We saw plenty of Yankees then, because they scattered all over the country. They use to come on our place and kill a calf or a pug with their bayonets and drag it off. They stold chickens and turkeys too. They persuaded Porter, one of the niggers to go North with them and he never was heard from again."

"The Ku Kluxers use to come and ask for water and pretend they was drinking buckets full, but they poured it on the ground. They played lots of tricks and pranks on the niggers."

"After the War I stayed on the place and worked by the day. There wasn't much money but the merchants in town got credit from the North and furnished supplies."

"Later on I sold beef, chickens, turkeys and things like that in town, for ten or twelve years."

"Slavery is pretty tough, but the Lard works all things for the better - I know He does. If it hadn't been for slavery, the niggers might still be in Africa. No telling where they would be."

Interviewer's note: Height, 6 feet 1 inch; weight, 185 pounds (weighed 220 pounds in his prime); color, dark brown with pure African features; lives with his daughter; no property, receives \$4.00 per month from the Government; can not read or write but is unusually intelligent.