

**Hallie Miller, Reporter**  
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**Folklore: Ex-slaves**  
**Gellia County, District 3**  
**JAMES CAMPBELL**  
**Age 86**



"Well, I'se bo'n Monro' County, West Virginia, on January 15, 1852, jes' few miles from Union, West Virginia."

"My mammy wuz Dinnah Alexander Campbell an' my pappy wuz Levi Campbell an' dey bof cum frum Monro' County. Dat's 'bout only place I heerd dem speak 'bout."

"Der wuz Levi, Floyd, Henry, Noah, an' Nancy, jes' my haf brudders an' sistahs, but I neber knowed no diffrunce but whut dey wuz my sistahs an' brudders."

"Where we liv? On Marsa John Alexander's farm, he wuz a good Marsa too. All Marsa John want wuz plenty wurk dun and we dun it too, so der wuz no trubble on ouah plantashun. I neber reclec' anyone gittin' whipped or bad treatment frum hi m. I does 'members, dat sum de neighbors say dey wuz treated prutty mean, but I don't 'member much 'bout it 'caise I'se leetle den."

"Wher'd I sleep? I neber fergit dat trun'l bed, dat I sleep in."

"Marsa John's place kinda stock farm an' I dun de milkin'. You all know dat wuz easy like so I jes' keep busy milkin' an' gits out de hard work. Nudder thing I lik to do wuz pick berries, dat wuz easy too, so I dun my shar' pickin'."

"Money? Lawsy chile, I neber dun seen eny money 'til aftah I dun cum to Gallipoli s aftah der war. An' how I lik' to heah it jingle, if I jes' had two cents, I'd make it jingle."

"We all had plenty an' good things to eat, beans, corn, tatahs, melons an' hot mush, corn bread; we jes' seen white flour wunce in a while."

"Yes mam, we had rabbit, wil' turkey, pheasunts, an' fish, say I'se tellin' you-all dat riful pappy had shure cud kill de game."

"Nudder good ole time wuz maple sugar makin' time, mostly dun at night by limestone burnin'. Yes, I heped with the 'lasses an' all de time I wuz a thinkin' 'bout dem hot biscets, ham meat, corn bread an' 'lasses."

"We liv in a cabin on Marse John's place. Der wuzn't much in de cabin but my mammy kept it mighty clean. Say, I kin see dat ole' fiah place wid de big logs a burnin' right now; uh, an' smell dat good cookin', all dun in iron pots an' skilletts. An' all de cookin' an' heatin' wuz dun by wood, why I neber seed a lump o' coal all time I wuz der. We all had to cut so much wood an' pile it up two weeks 'for Christmas, an' den when ouah pile wuz cut, den ouah wurk wuz dun, so we'd jes' hav good time."

"We all woah jeans clos', jes pants an' jacket. In de summah we chilluns all went barefoot, but in de wintah we all woah shoes."

"Ol' Marse John an' his family liv in a big fine brick hous'. Marse John had des chilluns, Miss Betty an' Miss Ann an' der wuz Marse Mike an' Marse John. Marse John, he wuz sorta spiled lik. He dun wen to de war an' runs 'way frum Harpers Ferry an' cum home jes' sceered to death. He get himsef a pah o' crutches an' neber goes back. Marse John dun used dem crutches 'til aftah de war wuz ovah. Den der wuz ol' Missy Kimberton—de gran'muthah. She wuz 'culiar but prutty good, so wuz Marse's chilluns."

"Ol' Marse John had bout 20 slaves so de wurk wuzn't so bad on nun ob us. I kin jes' see dem ol' bindahs and harrows now, dat dey used den. It would shure look funny usin' 'em now."

"I all'us got up foah clock in de mornin' to git in de cows an' I didn't hurry nun, 'caise dat tak in de time."

"Ouah mammy neber 'lowed de old folks to tell us chilluns sceery stories o' hants an' sich lik' so der's nun foah me to 'member."

"Travelin' wuz rather slo' lik. De only way wuz in ox-carts or on hoss back. We all didn't hay much time fer travelin'. Our Marse wuz too good to think 'bout runnin' 'way."

"Nun my fam'ly cud read er write. I lurned to read an write aftah I cum up Norf to Ohio. Dat wuz biggest thing I ebber tackled, but it made me de happies' aftah I learn't."

"We all went to Sunday School an' meetin'. Yes mam, we had to wurk on Sundays, too, if we did hav any spare time, we went visit in'. On Saturday nights we had big time foah der wuz mos' all'us dancin' an' we'd dance long as de can'les lasted. Can'les wuz all we had any time fur light."

"I 'member one de neighbah boys tried to run 'way an' de patrollahs got 'im an' fetched 'im back an' he shure dun got a wallop in' fer it. Dat dun tuk any sich notion out my head. Dem patrollahs dun keep us skeered to deaf all de time. One, Henry Jones, runned off and went cleah up Norf sum place an' dey neber did git 'im. 'Course we all wuz shure powahful glad 'bout his 'scapin'."

"We'se neber 'lowed out de cabin at night. But sum times de oldah 'uns wud sneak out at night an'tak de hosses an' tak a leetle ride. An' man it wud bin jes' too bad if ol' Marse John ketched 'em: dat wuz shure heaps o' fun fer de kids. I 'member hearin' wunce de ol' folks talkin' 'bout de way one Marse dun sum black boys dat dun sumthin' wrong. He jes' mak 'em bite off de heads o' baccer wurms; mysef I'd ruther tuk a lickin'."

"On Christmus Day, we'd git fiah crackahs an' drink brandy, dat wuz all. Dat day wuz only one we didn't wurk. On Saturday evenin's we'd mold candles, dat wuzn't so bad."

"De happies' time o' my life wuz when Cap'n Tipton, a Yankee soljer cumed an' tol' us de wah wuz ober an' we wuz free. Cap'n. Tipton sez, "Youse de boys we dun dis foah". We shure didn't lose no time gittin' 'way; no man."

"We went to Lewisburg an' den up to Cha'leston by wagon an' den tuk de guvment boat, Genrul Crooks, an' it brung us heah to Gallipolis in 1865. Dat Ohio shoah shure looked prutty."

"I'se shure thankful to Mr. Lincoln foah whut he dun foah us folks, but dat Jeff Davis, well I ain't sayin' whut I'se thinkin'."

"De is jes' like de worl', der is lots o' good an' lots o' bad in it."