

Abner Jordan

Ex-slave, 95 years.

" I wus bawn about 1832 an' I wus bawn at Staggsville, Marse Paul Cameron's place. I belonged to Marse Paul. My pappy's name wus Obed an' my mammy wus Ella Jordan an' dey wus thirteen chillun on our family.

I wus de same age of Young Marse Benehan, I played wid him an' wus his body guard. Yes, suh, Whare ever young Marse Benehan went I went too. I waited on him. Young Marse Benny run away an' 'listed in de war, but Marse Paul done went an' brung him back kaze he wus too young to go and fight de Yankees.

Marse Paul had a heap if niggahs; he had five thousan'. When he meet dem in de road he wouldn' know dem an' when ha azed dem who dey wus an' who dey belonged to, dey' tell him dey belonged to Marse Paul Cameron an' den he would say dat wus all right for dem to gò right on.

My pappy wus de blacksmith an' foreman for Marse Paul, an' he blew de horn for de other niggahs to come in from de fiel' at night. Dey couldn' leave de plantation without Marse say dey could.

When de war come de Yankees come to de house an' axed my mammy whare de folks done hid de silver an' gol', an' dey say dey gwine to kill mammy if she didn' tell dem. But mammy say she didn' know whare dey put it, an' dey would jus' have to kill her for she didn' know an' wouldn' lie to keep dem from hurting her.

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De sojers stole seven or eight of de ho'ses an' foun' de meat an' stole dat, but dey didn' burn none of de buildin's nor hurt any of us slaves.

My pappy an' his family stayed wid Marse Paul five years after de surrender den we moved to Hillsboro an' I's always lived 'roun' dese parts. I ain' never been out of North Carolina eighteen months in my life. North Carolina is good enough for me".

DOC EDWARDS,
EX-SLAVE, 84 Yrs.

I was bawn at Stagville, N. C., in 1853. I belonged to Marse Paul Cameron. My pappy was Murphy McCullers. Mammy's name was Judy. Dat would make me a McCullers, but I was always knowed as Doc Edwards an' dat is what I am called to dis day.

I growed up to be de houseman an' I cooked for Marse Benehan, - Marse Paul's son. Marse Benehan was good to me. My health failed from doing so much work in de house an' so I would go for a couple of hours each day an' work in de fiel' to be out doors an' get well again.

Marse Paul had so many niggers dat he never counted dem. When we opened de gate for him or met him in de road he would say, "Who is you? Whare you belong? We would say, "We belong to Marse Paul." "Alright, run along" he'd say den, an' he would trow us a nickel or so.

We had big work shops whare we made all de tools, an' even de shovels was made at home. Dey was made out of wood, so was de rakes, pitchforks an' some of de hoes. Our nails was made in de blacksmith shop by han' an' de picks an' grubbin' hoes, too.

We had a han' thrashing machine. It was roun' like a stove pipe, - only bigger. We fed de wheat to it an' shook it 'til de wheat was loose from de straw an' when it come out at de other end it fell on a big cloth, bigger den de sheets. We had big curtains all roun' de cloth on de floor, like a tent, so de wheat wouldn' get scattered. Den we took de pitchfork an' lifted de straw up an' down so de wheat would go on de cloth. Den we moved de straw when de wheat was all loose

Den we fanned de wheat wid big pieces of cloth to get de dust an' dirt outen it, so it could be taken to de mill an' groun' when it was wanted.

When de fall come we had a regular place to do different work. We had han' looms an' wove our cotton an' yarn an' made de cloth what was to make de clothes for us to wear.

We had a shop whare our shoes was made. De cobbler would make our shoes wid wooden soles. After de soles was cut out dey would be taken down to de blacksmiyh an' he would put a thin rim of iron aroun' de soles to keep dem from splitting. Dese soles was made from maple an' ash wood.

We didn' have any horses to haul wid. We used oxen an' ox-carts. De horse and nules was used to do de plowin'.

When de Yankees come dey didn' do so much harm. only dey tole us we was free niggers. But I always feel like I belong to Marse Paul, an' i still live at Stagville on de ole plantation. I has a little garden an' does what I can to earn a little somethin'. De law done fixed it so now dat I will get a little pension, an' I'll stay right on in dat little house 'til de good Lawd calls me home, den I will see Marse Paul once more.