

1938

Project #1656
W. W. Dixon
Winnsboro, S. C.

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CHARLEY WATSON
EX-SLAVE 87 YEARS OLD.

"Dis is a mighty hot day I tells you, and after climbing them steps I just got to fan myself befo' I give answer to your questions. You got any 'bacoo I could chaw and a place to spit? Dis old darkie maybe answer more better if he be allowed to be placed lak dat at de beginnin' of de 'sperience.

"Where was I born? Why right dere on de Hog Fork Place, thought everybody knowd dat! It was de home place of my old Marster Daniel Hall, one of de Rockefellers of his day and generation, I tells you, he sho was. My pappy had big name, my marster call him Denmore, my mammy went by de name of Mariyer. She was bought out of a drove from Virginny long befo' de war. They both b'long to old marster and bless God live on de same place in a little log house. Let's see; my brother Bill is one, he livin' at de stone quarry at Salisbury, North Carolina. My sister Lugenie marry a Boulware nigger and they tells me dat woman done take dat nigger and make sumpin' out of him. They owns their own automobile and livin' in Cleveland, Ohio.

"Us live in quarters, two string of houses a quarter mile long and just de width of a wagon road betwixt them. How many slaves marster had? Dere was four hundred in 1850, dat was de year I was born, so allowing for de natural 'breeze, 'speat dere was good many more when freedom come. Our beds was made of poles and hay or straw. Was my marster rich? How come he wasn't? Didn't he have a Florida plantation and a Georgia plantation? Didn't us niggers work hard for our vittles and clothes? It make me laugh de way de niggers talk 'bout eight hours a day. Us worked by de 'can and de can't system'. What way dat you ask me? Well, was dis way; in de mornin'

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git so dark you
My marster's whi
hours. My mammy
they pulled fodd
"You
and spit and I
marster had she
and then he had
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and I never fou
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sometimes, so I
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right dis minut
time religion'.
"Us

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when it git so you can see, you got to go to work and at night when it
 git so dark you can't see you ceasted to work. You see what I mean?
 My marster's white overseer 'dopted de 'can and can't system' of work
 hours. My mammy had to plow same as a man, she did sir. Sometimes
 they pulled fodder and fooled wid it on Sunday.

"You is a pushin' me a little too fast. Let me gum dis 'bacco
 and spit and I can do and say more 'sackly what you expect from me. My
 marster had sheep, goats, mules, horses, stallion, jackass, cows and hogs,
 and then he had a gin, tan yard, spinnin' rooms, weave room, blacksmith
 shop and shoe shop. Dere was wild turkeys on de place, deer in de capebrakes
 and shad in de Catawba River. De Indians fetch their pots and jars to sell,
 and peddlers come to big house wid their humps on their backs and bright yards
 of calico and sich things de missus lak to feel and s'lect from. I see money
 then, but I never see a nigger wid money in his paws in slavery time, never!

"Us was fed good on corn meal, hog meat, milk, butter, 'lasses,
 turnips, beans, peas and apples, never hungry. Boss whip me once for fightin'
 and I never fought anymore, I tells you.

"My mistress name Miss Sarah. Her was a Hicklin befo' she marry.
 Their chillun was : Tom, Billie, Dan and Jason, all dead 'cept Marster Jason.
 De white overseer was Strother Ford. He give de slaves down the country maybe
 sometimes, so heard them say, but I didn't see him.

"Did us sing? Yes sir. What us sing? One was what I's gwine hist
 fight dis minute and sing wid your lieve. (Here Charley sang, "Give me dat old
 time religion'.)

"Us made 'simmon beer sometime and lye soap just 'bout in de same way,

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hopper was 'rected for dat. 'Simmons was put wid locust; hickory ashes was used to make soap. Every Christmas us got ginger cake and sassafras tea.

"Doctor Scott was de doctor for de slaves. Us niggers was mighty sad when his son Willie's gun went off by accident and kill him in 1868. De Doctor never smile again after dat cumbustion of dat gun. Does you 'member de time Mr. Till Dixon was drowned? He your unole? 'Twas de fourth of July, I 'member dat day, and a boy Freddie Habbernick was drowned in Catawba in 1903. Dat river take a many soul over dat other shore, I tells you."

S-260-264-M
Project 935
Samuel Addison
Richland County

EX-S

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"My pa name was Noy 1842. My ma was name Kate from McClellenville to lina. He also been al Kate. I had sense to "

I know a heap of dere hats. Dey was sis I wus in Dixie," an' thing. Dey say to me, my pa, "all your child as a frog" an' we ho"

I aint nebber of pant you call chamber. ways on de top. Ma wou she make a paddle any too. I didn' know 'b. put on me I wear nm. "

My master be gal been name Mary a"

Tarbin wus a un slaves or 'mount o' "

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