

Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Albert Burks ADDRESS 239 So. 20th
DATE Dec. 8, 1938 SUBJECT American Folklore
NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Sarah Grant, 845 H St.
Lincoln, Nebraska

1. Ancestry. Negro
2. Place and date of birth. Mayville Kentucky--1854
3. Family. Two
4. Place lived in with dates. Chillicothe 1867-1879--Lincoln 1880-1938.
5. Education, with dates. Fourth Grade
6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates. Washing and Ironing.
7. Special skills and interests. Quilting.
8. Community and religious activities. Mt. Zion Baptist
9. Description of informant. Little slender dusky colored old lady, hair pure white.
10. Other points gained in interview. Very mentally alert for her advanced age.

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"I think I was born at Mayville Kentucky, but I'm not real sure. Its been so long ago I just can't remember everything. I was in slavery and I have a very clear memory of my mother, but my daddy was sold when I was too young to know anything about him. My duties around the plantation was nursing the masters and mistresses children.

In some ways they were pretty good as slave holders were considered those days, but as they were not well fixed they had to hire out some of their slaves to other plantation owners. My mother was one of these and the people she worked for treated her very badly. She was only allowed to come home on Christmas eve and had to go back New Years.

Mama used to cry when she had to back to work because she was always scared some of us kids would be sold while she was away.

When I was big enough to go to the fields I never had enough to eat because field hands never got as much food as servants that worked around the house.

The Negro quarters were so crowded and there was so little to eat, that some of the grown up slaves would take some of us kids and camp in the woods. In this way there was always a chance that some

of the men folks could trap a possum or a coon, a wild turkey. And then too, some of the braver men would pilfer a hen house of some nearby plantation.

We were sold to some folks in Lexington Mo., and as my father was reported to have died from pneumonia, my mother married one of the slaves of a plantation adjoining our plantation. I'll never forget the battle of Lexington when General Price of the Union army defeated Mulligan of Confederate by cutting his men off from water. The women folks were the only ones at home because the white men were with the army and if the Negro men didn't pledge allegiance to the Confederate army the "Bushwhackers," would kill them so they had to go in hiding; many of them joined the Union army.

After the battle was over the women folks took us over to the battle field and sight that we seen will always be a night-mare as long as I live. Soldiers lying wounded so in misery that they was begging to be killed, dead and wounded horses strewn all over the ground. The old Mo. river was running red' no at my age I couldn't stand to see such a sight again.

When we was freed my step father hitched up a team that he had worked for an moved us to Chillicothe Mo. There we took up our lives as free people, we kids were sent to school and our teacher a white women was one of the finest persons that I ever knew.

I remember that on the first August first that we were a free people we had a big celebration in a white church. All the colored

folks for miles around and also many whites paraded through the streets to the church singing, "John Brown boys lies a molding in the grave." Our teacher was so over come with joy that she stood on the church steps and just shouted unashamed before all the people that were present. The wind was blowing hot and strong and my step father was on top of the church waving a large American flag all most as big as he was. It was all that he could manage to keep from getting blown to the ground.

Since that first celebration I have attended many others of some, but I'll never forget the first Emancipation proclamation celebration.