

EMMA L HOWARD
CLASSY MARTIN

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CLASSY MARTIN
ANNISTON, ALA

De Kalb # 2

Ex-Slave Stories-

" Ise sure I must ha' been grown when the War started; as grown as I ever has been. You say 'sixteen or seventeen;? I must ha' been -but I can't rightly make that conjuration-but I could plow as well as any fiel'-han' Ol' Massa had, an' put the harness on, besides-

" Ol' Massa, an' my Mistis had twelve chillen-one boy, an' leben girls-an' fifty of us cullid folks. We all lived in Etowah county-

" Ireckelect well when young Marster went off to the War- Ol' Mistis had been a laughin' kind of person, but it was a long time before she laughed anymore. Folks cried, and hollered, an' fell down like they was dead, when their men-folks marched away to War. We all plowed, an' hoed, an' made things someway, to eat and to wear, an' we got along very well-

" But the best time of my life, was before the War come on-Ol' Massa treated us like we was all one big family; we had plenty to eat, an' all we needed to wear-Ol' Mistis done the sewing for us all, white and cullid- But her an' Massa believed in teaching folks to work, an' all the chillen had to learn how to do everything-even to work in the field- Ol' Massa knew what was comin', an' he always say 'You better learn to work, for you gwine have it to do.' "

" As I say, we lived plentiful-Every Saturday we killed a pig, or a calf-or some kind of fresh meat-an' it never spoiled-they was always plenty of folks to eat it up. But a white man who had nearly a hundred slaves, on a plantation not far from us, wouldn't give his cullid folks enough to eat-they even went hungry; an' every once in a while, Ol' Massa 'ud make us cook up a lot of vittles-long tables pilin' full, an' ax them all over to eat.

"An' when we got through with our own work, we could hire out to other white families to hoe, or pick cotton-an' have some money for our - selves; but we always saved that, for we had plenty of everything, an' that would be somethin' to have on hand.

"Our "Big house" was up on a kind of a little hill; it was just as white-an' all on one floor-an' the kitchen an' dinin'-room was off to their-selves, with a little walk-way, with a shelter, leadin' to the big house. An out to one side, was a big room where the white folks entertained their friends-they called it a 'viliom'-an' such dances as they had there-

"The white folks 'ud come for miles away, in their kerridges, an' surreys, an' buggies- an' some come on horse-back. The women 'ud come ridin' up to the horse-block in them full, long ridin'-habits they wore in them days, an' they would slip they foot out of the stirrup, into the han' of the man who was ridin' with them, an' step down onto the horse-block, an' down to the groun'-an' sometimes they would hold their head so high, they would look like the groun' wasn't good enough to put they foot on-

"An' then a little black boy would take the horse an' hitch him, an she would go to the guess-room, an put on her dress with all them ruffles an' laces, over her wide hoops, an' a little curl would be peepin' over her shoulder, with maybe a rose tucked in it, an her little foot 'ud peep out from under the wide hoops, with its strap slipper, and clock stockin'-an she would stand, an' look in the glass at herself, an' then she would go out to the 'viliom, where the fiddles was makin' lonesome music, that just took your heart out, an' they would dance there till long after the roosters crowed for midnight."

"We had a big yard that stretched out all around the house, an' down to the road in front. We didn't have many flowers, but lots of trees, and cool, green grass; an' down across the road, was the houses for the culled folks-

They had two big rooms, with a chimney at each end, an' a hall between, an' two families lived in every house, one in each room-

"My Aunt, my ma's sister, was the cook up at the big house-an' my Ma was the overseer of the hands-Sometimes, they would ax Pa what to do next, an' he say, 'Ax the Boss-that her over yondah"-

"Ol' Massa never lived to see the S'render. He died a year before t the War was over. 'Did we drape the mirrors, an' the pictures when he lay dead?'-Yessum, we always do. Some folks say the breath of the dyin, will make the quicksilver all come off the back of the lookin'-glass-but that aint the real reason- Sometimes when the spirit's goin' out the body, it roams 'roun' in the house, an' if it sees itself in the glass-there will shore be another death in the house.

"A white man come down from the Nawth to visit on a plantation, that was a good ways off from us, and he shot himself, huntin', an' died-an' his mistis wouldn't let 'em hang things over the glass in the house, said there wa'nt no sense in it, an' one mornin' right after he lay a corpse, she was found lyin' on her floor, dead. They said it was her heart, but we knowed what it was.

"No'm, I don't believe in conjurin'-but some folks does-I heard of a woman who always chewed the bark of a tree, when she went along a walk under the trees, an' when she got sick, she was conjured, an' the flyin'-ants come out of the pores of her skin. They said that sure was so. Why, when they conjure, they gits to-gether all kinds of herbs and roots, and boils them to-gether with some kind of out-landish stuff, an' waves the hands over them, an mumbles somethin'-but we doan have no truck with things like that."

"When my ma got sick, an fell off till she was like skin an' bone, my sister sont for her to come to Bumminham, and she had a fine doctor up there from New Orleans-an' he cured her in three days. Didn't do nothin' but give a prescription, an' we bought the medicine from the Drug-store,

it was all just in knowin' how"-

"I hear a song on the Radio that took me back to them days-"In the Evenin' n' the Moonlight"-an' I thought of them days,before Ol' Massa died,an before the War come on,how on moon-light nights,after all the supper things was done,we would all sit out in front of the house-Ol' Massa, an' Mistis,an' Young Marster,an' all the little Misses,-would sit on the porch,an' on the long,white steps,an' young Marster would play the fiddle-an' some of the cullid folks would pick the banjers-an' we would all sing. The cullid folks would sing Swing Low,Sweet Chariot,Comin' for to Carry me Home-" an' more that I cant remember now.

"After the War,Ol' Mistis was struck by lightenin' an' kilt.An' then my Pa died,an' Ma rented a farm from a white family on the shares. They furnished the house,an' the land,an' the stock-an' we done the work. That year we made twelve bales of cotton,an' one hundred and fifty bushels of corn. No,the white folks didn't have to stand for out livin',until we made our crop; we had the money we had been savin'-enough to live on until the crop was gathered.

"Yes,we worked hard;but we had a good time too.Maybe on Monday, we would get a card for a dance on Wednesday nite- Ma would say,"If you get your work done,you can go-' No,we didnt take nothin'-They had long tables at the side,covered with fried chicken,biscuits,pies an cakes,an' when we danced off a set,we'd have to "Salute yer pardner" to the table, an' he would buy you any-thing you saw that you wanted,to eat."

"I have lived a long time,and have seen a lot.But now I cant remember much,I has worked so hard.I saw young Marster go off to the War,an' saw him come back,an now he has got a store in Etowah county,near Gadsden, An I saw my own boy go off to this las' war,he was in the Rainbow division but I cant see much more.I am blind in one eye,and can't see much out of the other-Six years ago,I thought I would go across the street,that street right out there,an'

I looked an' listened careful-but when I got about half-way,a car come in flyin' down the street,an' I would'a' been run over,if the driver hadn't been careful-

"My son got some glasses in New Orleans an' let me put them on, an I could see to thread a needle-I could see so good,I axed him to let me keep 'em a while-I thought I could piece quilts and quilt them,an' pass the time away,that way-but he had paid twelve dollars for them,an' he had to keep 'em,but he said he would send me some-but I guess he has forgot it.

This is the story of Classy Martin,negro,aged 92 or 93 years-

17th and Mulberry Streets,Anniston,Alabama-

*CLASSY MARTIN
ANNISTON, ALA*

HELPING OUT THE
HANDS NEXT DOOR.
(Photo)

"I'm sure I musta been grown when de war commence; as grown as I ever been. I guess I wuz 'bout sebenteen, but I can't make dat conjuration. I could plow as well as any fiel' han' Massa had and putt de harness on besides." Aunt Clussey spoke the words in a slow, soft drawl while she fumbled with a potato vine that was running rampant over strings that she had put there to support them on her front porch.

"Ole Massa an' Mistis had twelve chilluns -- one boy an' 'leven girls an' dere wuz fifty of us colored folks. We all lived in Etowah County.

"I recklect well when de young massa went off to de war. Befo' dat time Mistis had always been so laughing-like and gay, but atter de war commence, it were a long while befo' she laugh any mo'. Us did de bes' we could 'roun' de plantation a-plowin' and a-hoein', an' we managed to get somp'n t'eat senehow."

"But de bes' time of my life, white folks, was befo' de war.

All us niggers wuz treated lak us belong right in de white fa'mbly. We had plenty somp'n t'eat an' all we needed to wear; Mistis done de swein' for all us, white an' cullud, but her an' de massa believed in learnin' folks to work. All de chillun had to learn how to do eve'ything -- even to work in de fiel' -- Massa seem to sense dat de war wuz a-comin' for he always say 'You better learn to work kaze soon you gwine hadda do it!'"

"As I say, white folks, we lived a plentiful life. Eve'y Saddy we killed a pig or calf or some kind of reah meat, an' it neber spoilt. Dere wuz always plenty folks to eat it up. But dere wuz a white man who had a plantation next to ourn an' he neber give his slaves 'huf' t'eat.

Sometimes dey actually go hongry. Eve'y once and a while, Massa would make us cook up a lot of vittles an' ax dem ober to eat wid us. "When we got through with our work 'roun' de place, we could hire out to udder white families to hoe or pick cotton an' have some money for ourselves, but we always saved dat kaze we neber had to buy nothin'. de spirit dat is gain' cotton his body use to see itself in a mirror "Our big house wuz up on a little hill. De house wuz jus' as white as cotton an' it wuz all on one flo'. Warn't no second story to it. De kitchen an' dining room wuz off to dere selves, wid a walkway an' a shelter ober it a-leadin' fun' dem to de big house. Out to one side was a big room where de white folks entertained dere company. Dey called it a 'villion, an' dances wuz given dere. De white peoples 'ud come for miles aroun' in dere kerriges, surreys an' buggies, n' some eben come on horseback. De women 'ud come ridin' up to de horse block in dem long ridin' habits dat dey wore in dem days, an' dey would slip dey foot outin' de stirrup into de han' of de man dat wuz a ridin' wid dem. An' den a little black boy would take de hoss an' hitch to a pos', an' de lady she go to one of de gues' rooms an' putt on her dress wid all dem ruffles an' laces ober de wide hoops. Den she would go out to de 'villion where de udder ladies an' some men was fidancing. De fiddles would make music dat tuk your heart out, and de ladies an' gentmans glided 'roun' de flo' till long after de fust wi-rooster crow at midnight." an' de song of de thrush early in de mornin'.

I remember "We had a big yard dat stretched out all aroun' de house, an' down to de road in front. We didn't have many flowers but lots of trees, an' cool green grass, an' down across de road wuz the house an' for de cullud folks. Dey had two big rooms wid a chimney at each end an' a hall between an' two families lived in each house; one in each room."

"My auntie wuz de cook up at de big house, an' my ma wuz de oberseer of de hen's. Sometimes dey would ax pappy what dey wuz supposed to do nex' an' he tell 'em: 'Ax de boss -- dere, she ober yondah!'"

"O! massa neber libed to see de s'tender. He died a year befo' de war wuz ober. We drape de mirrors an' de pi'tchers when he died, kaze iffen de spirit dat is goin' outten his body was to see itself in a mirror dere will sho be anoder death in de house."

"A white man come down fum de north to visit on a plantation that wuz a good way off fum ourn an' one day he wuz a huntin' an' somebody shot him. His mistis wouldn't let 'em hang nothin' over de mirrors or drape 'em on de flo'. De nex' day she was foun' daid herself. De doctors said dat it was her heart but we knowed what it was. It was de spirits."

"I don't believe in conjurin', but some folks does. I heered a women who always chewed de bark of a tree while she wuz a walkin' along under dem trees, an' when she got sick, she wuz conjured and flying antses come out de pores of her skin."

"Yessuh, white folks, I has seed a lot in my days, an' I ain't a forgittin' none of it. I recalls de days befo' de war when us niggers sat out in back of de house in de moonlight an' young massa played his fiddle an' us'd sing, "Swing Low Sweet Chariot." I remembers de way de shadows of de moon fell across our house; de call of de whip-poor-will ober de ridge at night an' de song of de thrush early in de mornin'. I remembers de way de slaves looked when dey walked fum de cabins at de break of day while it wuz still dark an' dere figures moved slowly down de sawn furrows. I can see raght now dem niggers a-sweatin' in de fiel's an' de roustabouts a leadin' cotton. I can hear de voices of de tired folks a comin' home singing atter de sun done sunk behin' de mountain."

M. Fowler,
Fruithurst, Alabama-

Ex Slave Stories-
[EMMA L. HOWARD]

Massa William Shepherd, an' Miss Georgiana, his wife, come from Virginia-
an' his plantation was in Lowndes county, between Mac's Switch, an' ^{MORGAN-} Morgans
ville. They had two little girls, Nellie an' Maggie-Maggie was the younges'
an' her an' I was about the same age. I was the only light nigger in the fam-
ily, an' I was brought up in the house with the chillen. I slep' with 'em,
lived with 'em- Twice every week I went to my Mammy's cabin, an' took a bath
an' I had my own sof' shoes, an' my own night-gown an' jacket, an' lived , an
slep' an' played with my Massa's chillun-

Every mornin' before breakfas' it was my place to sweep the long back
porch, that reached clear across the back of the house, an' sweep roun' in
the yard, an' then I cleaned up, an' put on a clean dress, an' played the
res' of the day with the chillun-'ceptin ever' other day I churned.

We played hop-scotch, an' ring-a roun'-the-rosy, an' played house, an' lotsa
things I can't remember now-I must'a been about seven years old then-

I jus' can't tell you much about my brothers and sisters-In dem days every
white family what have servants, give each chile that got mahried a pus-
sonel servant, an' I never saw my oldes' sister- she was give away befo'
the family lef' Virginia. I remember sist' Celie, an' sist' Harriet, an' sist
Liza -she help' Aunt Evalina in the kitchen-

One song we sung den, dat always made me cry; it was, "Mammy, is Ol' Massa
gwine sell us tomorrow?" "Yes, my chile". "Whah he goin sell us?" "Way
down South in Georgia."

"Let me see if I can remember how many servants we had- Eddie was the laun-
dress; Arrie, she was the weaver; then there was Becky, an' Melia, an' Aunt
Mary, an' Ed, an' John, an' Uncle Pete, an' Uncle George, he was the house-man
an' was mahried to Aunt Evalina, the cook- An' Jake-he was the over-looker
(overseer)-he was a great, big, strong culled man- there was more, but I
cant remember-I was jus' a little girl then.

Our big house was white, an' all on one floor-There was the big parlor, an'
the guess-room, where the vis'tors stayed-an the other sleepin'-rooms.

The front porch was jus' a little porch, but it had columns in front-but the back porch was big an' wide an' reach all across the back of the house- The kitchen an' dinin'-room was off from the house a little way, but was joined by a long covered entry-so they could go back an' forth in all kin' of weather.

"Flowers? Oh, we had every kin' of flowers-Lotsa magnolia trees-I can jus' see the big white blooms against ^{an' the birds dartin' in an' out-} the slick, shinin' leaves now-an' we had cape jassamines, an' that purple flower with so sweet a scent-oh, yes, the lila c-an' the crepe-myrtle, we had both pink an' white. An' roses -jus' rosew ever' where. The "Quarters" was about a hundred an' fifty or two hundred yards from the house-We went along a path behin' the house about a hundred yards, an' the turned to the right an' went across to the quarters-The servants houses an' gardens had plank fences-but the big house had a picket fence. "

The well at the house, what we used, had a pump; but down in the back, not far far from the kitchen was a big well we used for the dairy an' the laundry. There was a trough from this well to the dairy, so we always had plenty of water, an' there was a stove there too, to heat plenty of water for the milk things-vessels and strainers an' cloths- Massa had a lot of cows, an' we churned two big churns of milk every other day. The dairy was big an' cool a n' we strained up the milk an' churned an' worked up the butter here, but we kep' it in the spring-house.

There was a spring at the foot of a little hill, with a wide, spreadin' tree shadin' it, an' Massa had a trench dug from the spring, an' walled with rock, a n' lined along the bottom with rock, an' pieces of plank was put a cross, a little ways apart, to hold the vessels steady, an' that was where we kep' the milk an' butter cool an' sweet, as with ice.

Down close to the well, not far from the dairy, waw the laundry-It had two rooms, an' Arrie, lived in one of them- Arrie was the weaver, an' she could wea ve stripes, as well as plain, an' they was as pretty as anything we could buy.

Louisa cleaned the parlor, and kep' Missis' room nice, an' then she didn't do any thing else but sew-an' sist' Liza helped her with it- After the weavin was done, then come the sewin-an' it took a lot of sewin' for the family- Everybody had two Sunday dresses, or suits, Summer an' Winter- an' then cloes for everyday- For the men's suits the wool had to be took off an carded an got ready to make- but we had plenty of wool from our own sheep, an had ducks an' geese-chickens, turkeys, guineas, --no we didn't have pea -fowls. But they had 'em on a plantation not far from us- an' the way they strut, an hold the heads so high, and their tails all spread out like a fan, my they was pretty-an' I can still hear 'em hollerin'-

When they killed the hogs for the winter' meat, they took some of the han' out of the fiel' or what ever they was doin' an let them help-an' we had a smoke-house full of hams an' middlins, an' when a rainy spell 'ud come, us chillen 'ud rake up chips an' leaves, an' make a smudge of smoke to keep the meat sweet-

Eva lina done the cookin', with sist' Liza to help-but when we had comp'ny Arrie'd help too-You say 'Arrie seem'd in demand?' Yessum, she was. Arrie was fine about everything-an she was so nice, an' helt herself so proud-lik she was almos' like the Quality-

Massa Shepherd an' Miss Georgiana was both mighty kin'-hearted, and treated their servants good- I remember once when Miss Georgina lay down to ta ke a nap, an' give me a bresh to min the flies offen her, an I got hot an sleepy an' lay down by her, an', went to sleep too, an when she woke up, an' I was a lyin' there by her, fas' asleep, she called Louisa an' laughed, an sa y, "Look how she keeps the flies off me"-

An' once, when Massa Shepard sent us chillen down to the Station with a note, an' he say, 'Now you go fas', an' get back'- But we played along the wa y, an' picked flowers, an' when we come steppin' baek, he say, "I tol' you to hurry'-an I helt out the flowers, an say 'We done brought you some flowers an he pulled off a little keen switch from a bush, an' picked me up, an' switched me all over my bare feet an' legs-an' when he put me down, I say,

"I'm goin' tell my mammy on you. She don't 'low nobody to whip me but her' an he throwed back his head, an' jus ' laughed, an' said to Miss Georgiana, 'Tha t little devil don't know I'm her Master' an' Miss Georgiana, she say, 'No, I don't 'pose she does"-

There wasn't but two things caused Massa Shepherd to whip any of his serva. Every one of the married families had their own house an' garden an' chickens-an' every family had to raise a pig, so that when Christmas come they could kill it, an' have a big time. He always give them plenty of evervthing, an' on Friday, after dinner, they had to stop work an' wash, an' on Sa t. they ironed and cleaned for Sunday. An' on Sunday mornin', Massa had give 'em dishes, an knives an' forks, an' even tablecloths, on Sunday he went aroun' an' eat a mouthful' in every house in the quarter. That wa s to see that every thing was done up, right-an if they wasn't, they got a whippin' the nex' day. The other reason , was, if any-body started to the fiel' on Monday mornin' without bein clean, an' ready to start out the week right, why they got whipped.

No, Ma ssa didn't do the whippin'. He set on his horse an' see it done-but Ja ke, the Over-looker , he done the whippin'-but he wasn't allowed to give more than a certain number of licks.

"Yessum, there was places, we heard of it, where they treated their servants b bad. The nex plantation to us, Governor Watts, he owned it- they say'd he ha d his servants whipped till the blood run-They had a white man for Ove looker, 'How did we feel about a white man that would hold a place like tha t?' We called him 'po'white trash'-He was so big an' strong, an he did n't show no mercy to the black people, an' his master didn't care if he did n't- One of his servants stayed at the Station where they shipped off all the things for the soldiers-corn, an' meat, an' sich like-that the white folks give out of their own cellars an' barns, an' smoke-houses, for the sol-diers-He stayed down at the Station, an' his master wouldn't let him have a ny shoes, an' the hot cinders, an' all burnt his feet-an' he boun' rags aroun' 'em, an' his master burned the rags off his feet-Many's the time,

I has gone down there with Miss Georgiana, an' the two little Missies, an' she would read the Bible to him- Massa Sheperd hated to see servant mistreated- He'd say, ' 'y God, kindness and politeness don't cost a red cent. ' "

Every meetin'-day, everybody went to church-to Hopehull Baptist church about six miles away- Massa Sheperd, an' Miss Georgiana, an' us three chillu? rode in the rock-a-way. That a kin' of kerriage, shaped mos' like a bowl- The drivers seat was high, in front, then at the back, there was a broad deep seat, an on at the back was a little seat, with its back to the ~~kerria~~ kerriage, an' a stoop let fown from it. That was where the little black boy set, who got down an opened an shut the gates. Then he jumped back up, an set there, with his feet on the little stoop-

The kerriage was pulled by two big horses, one a bay, an' one a grey- The coachman what set up on that high seat, had on a long double-breasted bla ck coat, shiny high boots, an' a tall silk hat- Massa had on a silk hat, too, but a tight waisted coat- But Miss Georgiana, she looked like a bea boka y. She didn't like to wea r hoops, because she had sprained her ankle on ~~ee~~-an' walked with a limp. But she liked to wear thin, cool, flowered dy dresses- dimity an' lawn-white with little flowers of blue an' pink, an' yellow scattered over it- an' lotsa ruffles an' lace, an' a scoop- they called the bonnets- made of soft, white straw, comin' close over the ears, an' fla rin high an' spreadin' over the face, an' filled in with flowers, an' tied with long streamers of ribbon.

The little missies, with their white ruffled pantalets, comin down nearly to their shoe-tops, under the full skirted dresses with the little tight waists- an' the little scoop bonnets, an flat-heeled shoes-- an' back behind was the gate-boy, an behind him, was the two wagons filled with the black se servants- We'll never see nothin like that again-

When the War was over, all the Shepard servants could read, an' mos' of them could write.

An' all of them had enough money to buy a little home for themselves. Why Massa Sheperd had made every family have their own garden, an' pig, a n' chickens-an' whoever went to town, even Massa, himself, would take the eggs, an' chickens, or whatever they had to sell, an' they got the money for the things they'd sell, an' put it away, an' they had it when they needed it.

When Massa Sheperd died the second year of the War, it was whispered a-roun' that he had been slow-poisoned. By the people who thought he was too good to his servants-They called us 'them damn free niggers of Shepherds'- After a while, just before the War closed, Miss Georgiana married Mr. Slater, a Government man-who got the supplies for the soldiers. Folks didn't think Miss Georgiana ought to have married him, Massa had left her so well off-a n' I don't think she was very happy long, for he run through with what she had-an' finally she moved away to Texas- Mr Slater had a place here in Montgomery, they called the 'fruit-farm', a n' they come here an' canned fruit, an' spent a little while every summer, for a good while.

We had always been so well treated that when the servants was made free, even after the S'render, we jus' stayed on, an' took care of everything, jus' as we always had.

But after awhile, they moved off to Texas, an' the black people settled do down for themselves, an' I was took as cook by a rich South Carolina family, Marchiel, in Montgomery, an' they treated me like I was their own daughter-I was allowed to go out three nights in a week, an' no more. No matter how much I cried, my Misses said, "I wouldn't let my own daughter go out, an' I wont let you-" I had to always be at home by eleven o'clock-We had a long plank walk from the front gate, up to the house, and around to the kitchen an' dinin'-room- Sometimes in the mornin', Ol' Massa say, 'Em. did you come in las' night when I say come?' an' I say, 'Yessir'-an' he say, 'I heard you goin' roun' the house, your shoes tappin' en the walk-better not be late'-

an' I say, 'No, sir-

When I got engaged to be mahried, the boy had to ask for me, an' he said he was swea tin' when he got through-Massa was on one side, an Missis on the other, a n Massa Marchiel say, If you doan take good care of her Ill take her back. She always got plenty to eat here.'

When their younges' daughter mahried she lef' her veil an' wreath for me- an' they give me the weddin-dress an' shoes, an' I was married from their house-

My husban' was a carpenter, an' we lived in this house where we lived when he was alive. When he died, I went to work for a family that once was the richest family in the State, an now, Mrs James Fitts Hill, one of the chillun I helped raise ,is a big worker in Parent-teacher work, an' I'll show you her picture I cut out of a paper- They come to see me every few days, an nex' week, they are comin' after me to go and spen' the day with them- The reason I has stayed so well, when I is so old, folks has always been so good to me-

EMMA L. HOWARD

Margaret Fowler,

Jack Kytte

IS MASSA GWINE 'ER SELL US?

"Mammy, is Ol' Massa gwine 'er sell us tomorrow?"

Yes, my chile.

Whar' he gwine 'er sell us?"

'Way down South in Georgia."

"Aunt" Emma L. Howard sat in a huge, old-fashioned rocking chair at her home, 170 Elmwood St., Montgomery, and sang the old slave song. When she had finished her mind unfolded back to the time years ago when she was a slave on the plantation of William and Georgiana Shepherd in Lowndes County, between Mac's Switch and Morgansville.

"Dat was one of de saddest songs we sung during slavery days," she mused. "It always did make me cry."

She thought a moment, smiled.

"I 'members I was de only light nigger in de family," she said proudly. "I was brung up in de house wid de white chillun. Twice a week I went to my mammy's cabin an' took a bath. I had my own sof' shoes an' my own nightgown an' jacket an' played games wid my massa's chilluns."

She explained her duties about the "big house" as sweeping the rambling porches and yards. Sometimes she churned. Afterward she would join the white children and play most of the

day.

"We played hop-scotch, ring-around-the-rosy and lots of other things I can't remember," she explained. "I musta been 'bout seven years old den."

Emma says she is 84 or 85, but she looks older. She remembers very little about her brothers and sisters. She can only recall "Sist' Cellie, Sist' Harriett and Sist' Liza." The latter helped Aunt Evalina in the kitchen.

Emma lifted her eyes toward the ceiling, endeavoring to recall the exact number of servants her master owned.

"Eddie was de laundress," she recalled, "an' Arrie, she was de weaver. Den dere was Becky, Melia, Aunt Mary, Ed, John and Uncle George, the house man, who married Aunt Evalina. Jake was de over-looker (overseer.) He was a great big cullud man. Dar was more, but I can't remember. I was jest a little shaver den."

She remembers that the "big house" was huge and white with a beautiful parlor and guest room, where the visitors were entertained. Gigantic white columns rose in front of the house, and clusters of magnolias surrounded it. The slave houses were located about 200 yards back of the house.

"Massa Shepherd and Mistus Georgiana was both good an' treated de servants kind," Emma said. "I 'members dat I used to keep de flies off Mistus Georgiana wid a big fan, an' once I went to sleep. She jest laughed when she foun' me sleepin' dar beside her."

"Massa would only whip a slave fer two things," she re-

called. One thing was if things warden't done up jest right at hog-killin' time, an' de other was if a nigger warden't clean when he 'ported for work on Monday mornin's. Ol' Massa didn't do de whippin's himself. Jake did it, but Massa sat dar on his horse to see dat only a certain number of licks was given.

"How did we feel 'bout a white man who would be overlooker? We called him 'po' white trash.' He wasn't thought much of by anybody."

Emma said that every one went to church on Sundays, and that she liked to sing the old religious hymns. When f reedom came all the Shepherd servants had been taught to read and write, she said, and ~~Mr. Shepherd gave~~ each family/^{had} enough money to buy a little home of their own. She said "de marster" would make each family keep pigs, hens and such; that he would market the products and place the money aside for them.

Mr. Shepherd died two years after the war started, and Mrs. Shepherd married again and finally moved to Texas.

"When de war was over," Emma said, "all de servants jest stayed on as long as Mistus Georgiana stayed, because she was so good to us."

Later in life Emma was a cook for a South Carolina family who moved to Montgomery. She married a carpenter while with them and settled down for herself. She is happy now and explains:

"De reason I has stayed so well is dat people has always been so good to me."

M. Fowler,
Fruithurst, Alabama-

Ex Slave Stories-

Massa William Shepherd, an' Miss Georgiana, his wife, come from Virginia-
an' his plantation was in Lowndes county, between Mac's Switch, an' Morgans
ville. They had two little girls, Nellie an' Maggie-Maggie was the younges'
an' her an' I was about the same age. I was the only light nigger in the fam-
ily, an' I was brought up in the house with the chillen. I slep' with 'em,
lived with 'em- Twice every week I went to my Mammy's cabin, an' took a bath
an' I had my own sof' shoes, an' my own night-gown an' jacket, an' lived, an'
slep' an' played with my Massa's chillun-

Every mornin' before breakfas' it was my place to sweep the long back
porch, that reached clear across the back of the house, an' sweep roun' in
the yard, an' then I cleaned up, an' put on a clean dress, an' played the
res' of the day with the chillun-'ceptin ever' other day I churned.

We played hop-scotch, an' ring-a roun'-the-wasy, an' played house, an' lotsa
things I can't remember now-I must'a been about seven years old then-

I jus' can't tell you much about my brothers and sisters-In dem days every
white family whajt have servants, give each chile that got mahried a pus-
sonel servant, an' I never saw my oldes' sister- she was give away befo'
the family lef' Virginia. I remember sist' Celie, an' sist' Harriet, an' sist
Liza -she help' Aunt Evalina in the kitchen-

One song we sung den, dat always made me cry; it was, "Mammy, is Old Massa
gwine sell us tomorrow?" "Yes, my chile". "Whah he goin sell us?" "Way
down South in Georgia."

"Let me see if I can remember how many servants we had- Edie was the laun-
dress; Arrie, she was the weaver; then there was Becky, an' Melia, an' Aunt
Ma ry, an' Ed, an' John, an' Uncle Pete, an' Uncle George, he was the house-man
an' was mahried to Aunt Evalina, the cook- An' Jake- he was the over-looker
(overseer)-he was a great, big, strong cullid man- there was more, but I
cant remember-I was jus' a little girl then.

Our big house was white, an' all on one floor- There was the big parlor, an'
the guess-room, where the vis'tors stayed- an' the other sleepin'-rooms

The front porch was jus' a little porch, but it had columns in front-but the back porch was big an' wide an' reach all across the back of the house- The kitchen an' dinin'-room was off from the house a little way, but was joined by a long covered entry-so they could go back an' forth in all kin' of weather.

"Flowers? Oh, we had every kin' of flowers-Lotsa magnolia trees-I can jus' see the big white blooms against ^{an' the birds dartin' in an' out-} the slick, shinin' leaves now-an' we had cape jassamines, an' that purple flower with so sweet a scent-oh, yes, the lila c-an' the crepe-myrtle, we had both pink an' white. An' roses -jus' rosew ever' where. The "Quarters" was about a hundred an' fifty or two hundred yards from the house-We went along a path behin' the house about a hundred yards, an' the turned to the right an' went across to the quarters-The servants houses an' gardens had plank fences-but the big house had a picket fence. "

The well at the house, what we used, had a pump; but down in the back, not far far from the kitchen was a big well we used for the dairy an' the laundry. There was a trough from this well to the dairy, so we always had plenty of water, an' there was a stove there too, to heat plenty of water for the milk things-vessels and strainers an' cloths- Massa had a lot of cows, an' we churned two big churns of milk every other day. The dairy was big an' cool an' we strained up the milk an' churned an' worked up the butter here, but we kep' it in the spring-house.

There was a spring at the foot of a little hill, with a wide, spreadin' tree shadin' it, an' Massa had a trench dug from the spring, an' walled with rock, an' lined along the bottom with rock, an' pieces of plank was put a cross, a little ways apart, to hold the vessels steady, an' that was where we kep' the milk an' butter cool an' sweet, as with ice.

Down close to the well, not far from the dairy, waw the laundry-It had two rooms, an' Arrie, lived in one of them- Arrie was the weaver, an' she could wea ve stripes, as well as plain, an' they was as pretty as anything we could buy.

Louisa cleaned the parlor, and kep' Missis' room nice, an' then she didn't do any thing else but sew-an' sist' Liza helped her with it- After the wea' vin was done, then come the sewin-an' it took a lot of sewin' for the family- Everybody had two Sunday dresses, or suits, Summer an' Winter- an' then cloes for everyday- For the men's suits the wool had to be took off an' carded an' got ready to make- but we had plenty of wool from our own sheep, an' had ducks an' geese-chickens, turkeys, guineas, --no we didn't have pea-fowls. But they had 'em on a plantation not far from us- an' the way they strut, an' hold the heads so high, and their tails all spread out like a fan, my they was pretty-an' I can still hear 'em hollerin'-

When they killed the hogs for the winter' meat, they took some of the han' out of the fiel' or what ever they was doin' an' let them help-an' we had a smoke-house full of hams an' middlins, an' when a rainy spell 'ud come, us chillen 'ud rake up chips an' leaves, an' make a smudge of smoke to keep the meat sweet-

Eva lina done the cookin', with sist' Liza to help-but when we had comp'ny Arrie'd help too-You say 'Arrie seem'd in demand?' Yessum, she was. Arrie was fine about everything-an' she was so nice, an' helt herself so proud-like she was almos' like the Quality-

Massa Shepherd an' Miss Georgiana was both mighty kin'-hearted, and treated their servants good- I remember once when Miss Georgina lay down to ta ke a nap, an' give me a bresh to min the flies offen her, an' I got hot an' sleepy an' lay down by her, an' want to sleep too, an' when she woke up, an' I was a lyin' there by her, fas' asleep, she called Louisa an' laughed, an' say, "Look how she keeps the flies off me"-

An' once, when Massa Shepard sent us chillen down to the Station with a note, an' he say, 'Now you go fas', an' get back'- But we played along the way, an' picked flowers, an' when we come steppin' back, he say, "I tol' you to hurry'-an' I helt out the flowers, an' say 'We done brought you some flowers' an' he pulled off a little keen switch from a bush, an' picked me up, an' switched me all over my bare feet an' legs-an' when he put me down, I sav-

"I'm goin' tell my mammy on you. She don't 'low nobody to whip me but her' an' he throwed back his head, an' jus' laughed, an' said to Miss Georgiana, 'Tha t little devil don't know I'm her Master' an' Miss Georgiana, she say, 'No, I don't 'spose she does'-

There wasn't but two things caused Massa Shepherd to whip any of his serve. Every one of the married families had their own house an' garden an' chickens-an' every family had to raise a pig, so that when Christmas come they could kill it, an' have a big time. He always give them plenty of everything, an' on Friday, after dinner, they had to stop work an' wash, an' on Sa t. they ironed and cleaned for Sunday. An' on Sunday mornin', Massa had give 'em dishes, an' knives an' forks, an' even tablecloths, on Sunday he went aroun' an' eat a mouthful' in every house in the wquarter. That wa s to see that every thing was done up, right-an if they wasn't, they got a whippin' the nex' day. The other reason , was, if any-body started to the fiel' on Monday mornin' without bein clean, an' ready to start out the week right, why they got whipped.

No, Ma ssa didn't do the whippin'. He set on his horse an' see it done-but Ja ke, the Over-looker , he done the whippin'-but he wasn't allowed to give more than a certain number of licks.

"Yessum, there was places, we heard of it, where they treated their servants b bad. The nex plantation to us, Governor Watts, he owned it- they say'd he ha d his servants whipped till the blood run-They had a white man for Ove looker, 'How did we feel about a white man that would hold a place like tha t?' We called him 'po'white trash'-He was so big an' strong, an he di n't show no mercy to the black people, an' his master didn't care if he di n't- One of his servants stayed at the Station where they shipped off a the things for the soldiers-corn, an' meat, an' sich like-that the white folks give out of their own cellars an' barns, an' smoke-houses, for the sol-diers-He stayed down at the Station, an' his master wouldn't let him hav a ny shoes, an' the hot cinders, an' all burnt his feet-an' he boun' rags aroun' 'em. an' his master burned the rags off his feet-Many's the time

I has gone down there with Miss Georgiana, an' the two little Missies, an' she would read the Bible to him- Massa Sheperd hated to see servan' mistreated- He'd say, ' 'y God, kindness and politeness don't cost a red cent. ' "

Every meetin'-day, everybody went to church-to Hopehull Baptist church about six miles away- Massa Sheperd, an' Miss Georgiana, an' us three chillen, rode in the rock-a-way. That a kin' of kerriage, shaped mos' like a bowl- The drivers seat was High ,in front, then at the back, there was a broad deep seat, an' on at the back was a little seat, with its back to the kerriage, an' a stoop let fown from it. That was where the little black boy set, who got down an' opened an' shut the gates. Then he jumped back up, an' set there, with his feet on the little stoop-

The kerriage was pulled by two big horses, one a bay, an' one a grey- The coachman what set up on that high seat, had on a long double-breasted black coat, shiny high boots, an' a tall silk hat- Massa had on a silk hat, too, but a tight waisted coat- But Miss Georgiana, she looked like a boka y. She didn't like to wear hoops, because she had sprained her ankle once- an' walked with a limp. But she liked to wear thin, cool, flowerdy dresses- dimity an' lawn-white with little flowers of blue an' pink, an' yellow scattered over it- an' lotsa ruffles an' lace, an' a scoop- they called the bonnets- made of soft, white straw, comin' close over the ears, an' flarin' high an' spreadin' over the face, an' filled in with flowers, an' tied with long streamers of ribbon.

The little missies, with their white ruffled pantalets, comin' down nearly to their shoe-tops, under the full skirted dresses with the little tight waists- an' the little scoop bonnets, an' flat-heeled shoes-- an' back behind was the gate-boy, an' behind him, was the two wagons filled with the black servants- We'll never see nothin' like that again-

When the War was over, all the Shepard servants could read, an' mos' of the could write.

An' all of them had enough money to buy a little home for themselves. Why Massa Sheperd had made every family have their own garden, an' pig, a n' chickens-an' whoever went to town, even Massa, himself, would take the eggs, an' chickens, or whatever they had to sell, an' they got the money for the things they'd sell, an' put it away, an' they had it when they needed it.

When Massa Sheperd died the second year of the War, it was whispered a-roun' that he had been slow-poisoned. By the people who thought he was too good to his servants-They called us 'them damn free niggers of Shepherds'- After a while, just before the War closed, Miss Georgiana married Mr. Slater, a Government man-who got the supplies for the soldiers. Folks didn't think Miss Georgiana ought to have married him, Massa had left her so well off-a n' I don't think she was very happy long, for he run through with what she had-an' finally she moved away to Texas- Mr Slater had a place here in Montgomery, they called the 'fruit-farm', a n' they come here an' canned fruit, an' spent a little while every summer, for a good while.

We had always been so well treated that when the servants was made free, even after the S'render, we jus' stayed on, an' took care of everything, jus' as we always had.

But after awhile, they moved off to Texas, an' the black people settled do down for themselves, an' I was took as cook by a rich South Carolina family, Marchiel, in Montgomery, an' they treated me like I was their own daughter-I was allowed to go out three nights in a week, an' no more. No matter how much I cried, my Misses said, "I wouldn't let my own daughter go out, an' I wont let you-" I had to always be at home by eleven o'clock-We had a long plank walk from the front gate, up to the house, and around to the kitchen an' dinin'-room- Sometimes in the mornin', Ol' Massa say, 'En, did you come in las' night when I say come?' an' I say, 'Yessir'-an' he say, 'I heard you goin'roun the house, your shoes tappin' on the walk-better not be late'-

an' I say, 'No, sir-

When I got engaged to be mahried, the boy had to ask for me, an' he said he was swea tin' when he got through-Massa was on one side, an' Missis on the other, a n Massa Marchiel say, 'If you doan take good care of her Ill take her back. She always got plenty to eat here.'

When their younges' daughter mahried she lef' her veil an' wreath for me- an' they give me the weddin-dress an' shoes, an' I was married from their house-

My husban' was a carpenter, an' we lived in this house where we lived when he was alive. When he died, I went to work for a family that once was the richest family in the State, an' now, Mrs James Fitts Hill, one of the chillun I helped raise, is a big worker in Parent-teacher work, an' I'll show you her picture I cut out of a paper- They come to see me every few days, an' nex' week, they are comin' after me to go and spen' the day with them- The reason I has stayed so well, when I is so old, folks has always been so good to me-

DEKALB COUNTY

District 2