

**Mississippi Narratives**  
**Prepared by**  
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**Dicy Windfield**

Dicy Windfield, ex-slave, lives at Edwards Mississippi in Hinds County with grand children. She was born in 1843, was owned during slavery time by George Robinson at Bolton Mississippi. She is a small woman, weighs about one hundred and fifteen pounds and is about five feet in height. Her general coloring is a deep brownish black. She is in very good health and active. She relates this story.

"I sho' could tell yo' all a heap if I could keep from being so nervous lak an' think up all I knows, but I never lakes to tell nuthing 'less I'm sho' 'bout it. My grandparents an' pa an' ma was fust slaves in South Carolina. Dey all 'cept my pa belonged to Jim Brown, Pa, he belonged to a man by de name ob Lynch an' when him an' ma married he finally got brought over to Brown's plantation. Dey all lived deir till deir Marse Brown died; dis George Robinson married into de Robinson family an' dey all got sont here to Mississippi where Marse Robinson's plantation was. He had 'bout fifty slaves, I don't know how many acres he owned but he wont a very wealthy man 'cause he didn't live in no great big purty house, it was jes' common an' ordinary lak. Now den de slaves cottages was jes' no mo' dan huts ob jes' one room wid a narrow piazza across de front part ob 'em, de windows had wooden shutters an' de chimney was made ob mud, clay an' straw.

"Marse was a good man to his slaves. He seed dat dey was fed a plenty, dat is one thing mos' all slaves had. He could git rough a plenty at times an' he believed in plenty o' wuk an' wanted his slaves to be obedient. Dey mos an' generally always was. When a slave done some 'em wrong or run away marse would tie 'em an whup 'em, den he would sot de dogs on 'em. Den deir would be some dog yelping an'

nigger screamin'. When de dogs would catch 'em den he'd git 'em off. De niggers dreaded de dogs w'us dan dey did any kind o' punishment.

"My ma was a cripple fer years an' when she begin to git ole marse gib her freedom, pa was done dead den. Us chillun was 'spose to belong to him so's ma didn't want to leave. She tole ole marse she wanted to stay on an' he say dat he would take care ob her. She stayed on an' looked after de little slave niggers while deir mas was workin'. In dat way I was alwas' right wid my ma cause I was jes' eben years ole right in de middle ob de surrender.

"Marse George got scared ob de war thinkin' he would loose his slaves an' one day us was started off on de slow journey to Tuskaloosa. Dey called hit refugeein' us. We traveled in covered wagons an' on horse back. We camped out at night an' built big log heap fires. During de trip some ob de slaves would slip off, but dey found mos' ob 'em or dey would come back. When we finally got to Tuskaloosa Marse George rented a plantation an' started de farmin' up again but mostly fer food stuff to feed de slaves an stock.

In de fall ob de year when de crops was all gethered an' de wuk all wound up, Marse George would mos' always gib de slaves a barbeque. Dey would dance an' sing an' hab de time o' deir lives. Marse would gib 'em a cow er two an' some hogs. De women would bake plenty o' bread an' cakes on de open fire an' make coffee by de loads. Yo' could smell dem good things a cookin' all through de woods. After de feas' de slaves would dance an' sing all 'round de log heap fires. Dem was times wuth talkin' 'bout.

"Our clo'se was made ob plain rough homespun cloth made straight an plain. When it was cole us wore brogan shoes. I don't recollect no Sunday clo'se. I guess us wore 'em all alak as us didn't hab no whars to go on Sundays but to Church 'bout once a month.

"When I got 'bout eighteen years ole I was put to wukin' 'round ole Marse's house a doin' fust one thing an' den another. I was trained fer a house maid. I neber did hab to wuk in de fiel's.

"I wants to tell yo' how my grandma an' grandpa tole how dey passed away deir time when dey was young slaves in South Carolina. Dey would gether up at some shady level place an' pat an' dance. Dey didn't hab no kind o' musical instruments so dey held bones in each hand an beat 'em together an' some ob 'em would pop deir fingers. Now dey would do a heap ob dancin' 'round an 'round. One kind was called de kick up dance. Some times dese dances would las' till 'way in de night. Dey built big fires an' sho' nuf had a time.

"I was 'bout eight or nine years ole when de war to free us commenced. I don't recollect much ob de git up ob it as I was little. De niggers was to scared to even talk ob it. Dey didn't tell much to us after it started. I know one day de war had been gwine on fer some time but I didn't know nothin' 'bout hit; didn't know whut it was lak. I had gone to de spring down under de hill, I had filled my bucket an' started back to de house when all uv a sudden I heard some 'em terrible, it sounded lak everything all at once. I looked 'round an' what I seen come nigh scarin' me to death fer de war had come right up to what I was. War men was a ridin' fas' as wind; dey mus' hab been scared too fer dey was lyin' down on de horses, an' guns was a shootin' every which way.

"My brother jined de union army an served fer a long time. Marse George wont able to go to war fer he was sick mos' all de time but ten o' his boys went.

"After de surrender Marse tole us we was free as he was but us didn't lef' him 'till he died, an' dat wont long fer he went soon after de war ended, but 'fore he died he gib his niggers a school house an' a church house. Dey is still a standin' deir 'till dis day an his ole home is too.

"My folks homesteaded a farm after Marse died an when I was 'bout eighteen years ole I met de boy dat I married. Pa an' ma never would let us chillun run 'bout none so he was de onliest boy I ever did court. He had to go to de house to spark me clos' to whar ma an' pa was at, we wont allowed to go no whars together to 'mount to nothin'. We courted 'bout a year an ma gib us de biggest weddin' 'cause me an' my sister married de same day at our house. Hit was a double weddin'. A big bunch o' people fer miles 'round was invited. Ma had all kinds o' good stuff cooked up fer de weddin' feast.

"I only had one chile an' hit was a boy. I educated him so far as I was able. He farmed mos' ob de time when he growed up. After he married he run a silver shop at Edwards, Mississippi. He died an' I is a livin' wid his chillun.

Me an' my brother has bought two homes in our life time an' los' both ob 'em. I git relief from de Government an' is a making out very well.

I's glad de colored people is a havin' a easy time an' a gittin' educated. I don't understand all de new fangled ways ob livin'; sometimes I thinks it is all a little to fas'.