

Molly Parker

Interview with Molly Parker

—Preston Klein, Opelika, Alabama

HE WAS A GOOD OVERSEER AND TREATED SLAVES RIGHT

Down in lower Lee County I found Molly Parker, an old acquaintance, ailing, and with the wandering mind of the aged. She could find answers to some of my questions, but some she couldn't get straight. She was just as clean and neat as she had always been, clad in an apron dress that she would call a "Mother Huggard."

Molly is eighty-five years old and lives with her sister Edna in a simple cabin, with a little patch of flowers between it and the field where Edna is still young enough to work. Molly was a housewife's treasure in the days gone by, but now she is too feeble to do more than work her little patch of flowers.



Molly Parker, Lee County, Alabama

She was born in Virginia but was brought to Alabama when a child and sold to a Mr. Dunn, near Salem. Her mother and father were John and Fanny, the parents of four children, Molly, Edna, Sam and Albert.

"I was a big size housegirl, but I sho' could work," Molly recalled. "Mr. Digby blowed a big bugle early every morning to get us all up and going by bright light. Mr. Digby was a good overseer and treated all de slaves de best he knew how.

"I married Dick Parker on a Sunday and dey fixed us a big dinner wid more good things to eat, but I was too happy to eat much myself. I ain't had no chillun of my own, but I ho'ped mammy with hern.

"De Yankees done camped nigh our house, and I had to help cook and tote de grub down to 'em. Us read in de free paper 'bout us being free. Massa didn't tell us nothing, but us stayed on for a long time atter dat. Massa had a passel of slaves.

"Yes'm, I'se a member of de church. Why I jined? Jest for protection, I reckon.

"I'd hate to see slavery time ag'in, 'cause hit sho' was bad for some of de niggers, but us fared good though."