

EX-SLAVE STORIES
(Texas)

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SPENCE JOHNSON was born free, a member of the Choctaw Nation, in the Indian Territory, in the 1850's. He does not know his exact age. He and his mother were stolen and sold at auction in Shreveport to Riley Surratt, who lived near Shreveport, on the Texas -Louisiana line. He has lived in Waco since 1874.

"De nigger stealers done stole me and my mammy out'n de Choctaw Nation, up in de Indian Territory, when I was 'bout three years old. Brudder Knex, Sis Hannah, and my mammy and ner two step-chillun was down on de river washin'. De nigger stealers driv up in a big carriage and mammy jus' thought nothin', 'cause de herd was near dere and peepie goin' on de road stopped to water de horses and res' awhile in de shade. By'n by, a man coaxes de two bigges' chillun to de carriage and give dem some kind-a candy. Other chillun sees dis and goes, too. Two other men was walkin' 'round smokin' and gettin' closer to mammy all de time. When he kin, de man in de carriage got de two big step-chillun in with him and me and sis' clumb in too, to see now come. Den de man heller, 'Git de ole one and let's git from here.' With dat de two big men grab mammy and sne fought and screeched and bit and cry, but dey hit her on de head with something and drug her in, and throwed her on de floor. De big chilluns begin to fight for mammy, but one of de men nit 'em hard and eif dey driv, with de horses under whip.

"Dis was near a place called Beggy Depot. Dey went down de Red Ribber, 'cress de ribber and on down in Louisian to Shreveport.

Down in Louisian us was put on what dey call de 'block' and sel' to de highes' bidder. My mammy and her three chillun brung \$3,000 flat. De step chillun was sel' to somebody else, but us was bought by Marse Riley Surratt. He was de daddy of Jedge Marshall Surratt, him who get to be jedge here in Wace.

"Marse Riley Surratt had a big plantation; den't know how many acres, but dere was a factory and gins and big neuses and lots of nigger quarters. De house was right on de Tex-Louisian line. Mammy cooked for 'em. When Marse Riley bought her, she couldn' speak netnin' but de Choctaw words. I was a baby when us lef' de Choctaw country. My sister looked like a full blood Choctaw Indian and she could pass for a real full blood Indian. Mammy's felks was all Choctaw Indians. Her sisters was Pelly Hogan, and Seekey Hogan and she had a brudder, Nolan Tubby. Dey was all known in de Territory in de ole days.

"Near as Marse Riley's books can come to it, I mus' of been be'n 'reund 1859, up in de Territory.

"Us run de hay press to bale cotton on de plantation and took cotton by ox wagons to Shreveport. Seven or eight wagons in a train, with three or four yoke of steers to each wagon. Us made 'lasses and cloth and shoes and lots of things. Old Marse Riley had a nigger who could make shoes and if he had to go to court in Carthage, he'd leave nigger make shoes for him.

"De quarters was a quarter mile long, all strung out on de creek bank. Our cabin was nex' de big house. De white folks give big balls and had supper gein' all night. Us had lots to eat and dey let us have dances and suppers, too. We never go anywhere. Mammy always cry and 'fraid of