

Hafford was known as oldest woman in U.S.

You won't find "Aunt" Sallie Hafford's name in *The Guinness Book of World Records*. In fact, while the Afro-American woman was living in Bloomington, there weren't any records books as we know them today.

But Hafford, who came here to be near her children, kept a sack, which contained 116 peach seeds — one for each year of her life. At her death in 1912, she was believed to be somewhere between 112 and 116 years old.



Looking back

By Rose
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On the occasion of her 104th birthday in 1896, Hafford was interviewed by a Bloomington *Telephone* reporter. Her home was a tiny log cabin on Maple Heights.

Wrote the newspaper reporter. "Her form is bent, and her hair quite thin and gray, but her eyesight and hearing are still good, and her movements quick and decided."

Just before her death, she told the reporter she was born in Virginia on the James River, her first master being a man by the name of Col. Archer Fletcher. One of her earliest recollections was riding behind her mistress on a trip to see Gen. George Washington.

On an earlier occasion (in the

1896 interview) Hafford said her first master had been "Billie" Wilson, waiter to Washington. (A man by the name of Wilson was furnished with a mourning suit at the general's death and rode postillion in the funeral procession.)

Slave owners were not respecters of the family ties of their slaves, and Hafford was sold to a Georgia family and later sent to Kentucky. (The 1900 census lists her birth-

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