

Albert Todd

703 Center St., San Antonio, Texas

Albert Todd, 86 years old, was born a slave to Capt. Hudson, in Russellville, Kentucky. His master was killed in the Civil War and he then came to Texas in a covered wagon. His Missus kept him a slave for three years after the War. He now lives with his wife, daughter and two sons at 703 Center St., San Antonio, Texas.

I suppose my memory is too jumpy, but I'll try to bring it along from the time I was born. I don't know the year, but it was in Russellville, Kentucky, and my master, Captain Hudson, had a fruit orchard.

My regular work was protecting my young missus, Nannie Hudson. She had to walk five miles to and forth from school every day and I was her protector. I was only 8 and she was 11. I sat on the steps until she got through learning, and then I brought her home. She came to be grown, married, and died, but I always loved her.

When the war comes, my master goes and gets killed. And my missus got disgusted with the orchard, packed up in two covered wagons and headed cross land to Texas. We finally get to La Vernia and get a farm and we worked plenty hard.

Our missus was good to us, but one white man neighbor got a new set of niggers every year. He would say if they didn't die, there wasn't any good work left in them after they worked for him for a year. He always cut off one of their ears so if they ran away, he'd know them.

My clothes were a long shirt, made out of a meal sack. That's all I wore in those days. I was a slave for three years after the others were freed, because I didn't know anything about being free. A Mrs. Gibbs got a hold of me and made me her slave. She was a cruel old woman and she didn't have any mercy on me. She gave me one sausage and one biscuit in the morning and nothing else all day. One day she was gone, and I stole some biscuits. She comes back and says, 'Did you take them biscuits?' She tells me if I tell the truth she won't punish me, but she knocks me down and beats me till I don't know anything. But after a while, her house burned, and she burned up in it. But before that, I was going to run away. I went to the road and

sat down, and then my sisters came along and found me and took me to a place where they were living, on the ranch of a man named Widman. We worked for him a long time, and then I was free from that Gibbs woman.