

DULCINA BAKER MARTIN
(Deceased-died July 8, 1937)
age 78 years.

I was born in Winchester, Kentucky, in 1859. I was a slave, but I was so young that I don't know much except what I remember hearing my family tell about happening. Mother and father were Martha and George Baker. They were owned by Jack Rutledge, but just why they didn't carry his name I don't know, because almost all slaves went by the name of their white folks.

Mother was a cook, and father was a carpenter. He traveled around and did carpentry work long before freedom. There were several children of us, but all died when they were little babies, except brother Henry and me. He lived to be a real successful Baptist minister and pastored a church in Winchester in later years.

We didn't live in a cabin. It seems like Rutledge liked Father pretty well, and let him build us a fair size house close to theirs. It was framed, and was a fairly nice place. Rutledge had a farm, and most of the food was brought in from it for the table, and we all fared real well.

When freedom came there was such a demand for carpenters that Father had all the work he was able to take care of. He saved a little money, and bought a little piece of land in Winchester, and built us a nice place. We used our front room in the house for church. It was good old Baptist, and they had some pretty good old fashioned meetings.

When I lived with Ole Miss, I remember a pack of soldiers coming and taking' all the saddle and buggy horses, and only leaving one old brokedown nag in the barn. Ole Miss cried and cried, but there ain't no use a crying' after the colt is gone. The soldiers took all the meat from the smokehouse, and that was something awful, because we didn't know what we were going to do for meat, for most folks was having' the same thing happen.

It wasn't so pleasant to have soldiers come and do things like that, but Mother, she says, she was always glad, because she felt the Union was being' helped to win the war by us having enough to feed the soldiers.

When we got a place our own selves, me and brother Henry were sent to school, and I went till I was fourteen years old. Mother was dead, and I went to live with my aunt, and I felt I ought to help make a living.

They used to talk about such things, like ghosts, and haints, and spirits. My aunt says, once there was a young Miss who died and her folks had buried her with lots of jewelry. One of the slaves looked hard and long at all that fine jewelry going into the ground. So when night comes, he goes to the graveyard and starts digging in the young Miss' grave. When he came to the casket and opened it, and was taking a ring off of her hand, the young Miss spoke to him. He started running', and she came up out of the grave and started running' too. When she got to the house, the family knew she wasn't dead as soon as they saw her, and they were sure glad,

and day set the slave free and gave him a lot of money and a fine horse.

Folks used to believe that cooking certain things on New Year's Day and certain other days of the year would bring good luck. They used to cook black eyed peas and dry beans for New Year's Day, and some folks cooked kraut.

When we were children, we went root and herb gathering', to get things for the winter medicine. We used to gather wild cherry bark, horseradish root, dandelion root, hickory bark, mullen, pennyroyal, poke root, and poke berries, and Lord knows what - things I clear forgot. Chicken gizzard skin was saved for medicine, and I reckon goose grease is still used for lots of things, even in this day and time.

When I was 21 I left Winchester, and came up to Wilmington, Ohio, and I married Scott Martin. After livin' in Wilmington about one year, we finally came to Springfield and bought the land I own now, and built a one-room shack on it. Later I added to it and made it bigger. Here's where all my children were born; seven of them; five girls and two boys. They are all dead except two girls and the two boys. My husband died five years ago, and I live on here and keep the place. One the boys helps me tend to things and plants my garden. I'd feel lost if I didn't have a garden. I used to plant it myself, but I guess that day has passed because I just ain't got no strength left to do much of anything.

Interviewed at her residence: 283 Raffensberger Ave.