

GEORGE CONRAD, JR.

Oklahoma City, Okla.

Age 77 yrs.

I was born February 23, 1860 at Connersville, Harrison County, Kentucky. I was born and lived just 13 miles from Parish. My mother's name is Rachel Conrad, born at Bourbon County, Kentucky. My father, George Conrad, was born at Bourbon County Kentucky. My grandmother's name is Sallie Amos, and my grandfather's name is Peter Amos. My grandfather, his old Master freed him and he bought my grandmother, Aunt Liza and Uncle Cy. He made the money by freighting groceries from Ohio to Maysville, Kentucky.

Our Master was named Master Joe Conrad. We sometimes called him "Mos" Joe Conrad. Master Joe Conrad stayed in a big log house with weatherboarding on the outside.

I was born in a log cabin. We slept in wooden beds with rope cords for slats, and the beds had curtains around them. You see my mother was the cook for the Master, and she cooked everything--chicken, roasting ears. She cooked mostly everything we have now. They didn't have stoves; they cooked in big ovens. The skillets had three legs. I can remember the first stove that we had. I guess I was about six years old.

My old Master had 900 acres of land. My father was a stiller. He made three barrels of whisky a day. Before the War whisky sold for 12-1/2c and 13c a gallon. After the War it went up to \$3 and \$4 per gallon. When War broke out he had 300 barrels hidden under old Master's barn.

There were 14 colored men working for old Master Joe and 7 women. I think it was on the 13th of May, all 14 of these colored men, and my father, went to the Army. When old Master Joe come to wake them up the next morning--I remember he called real loud, Miles, Esau, George, Frank, Arch, on down the line, and my mother told him they'd all gone to the army. Old Master went to Cynthiana, Kentucky, where they had gone to enlist and begged the officer in charge to let him see all of his boys, but the officer said "No." Some way or another he got a chance to see Arch, and Arch came back with him to help raise the crops.

My mother cooked and took care of the house. Aunt Sarah took care of the children. I had two little baby brothers, Charlie and John. The old Mistress would let my mother put them in her cradle and Aunt Sarah got jealous, and killed both of the babies. When they cut one of the babies open they took out two frogs. Some say she conjured the babies. Them niggers could

conjure each other but they couldn't do nothing to the whitefolks, but I don't believe in it. There's an old woman living back there now (pointing around the corner of the house where he was sitting) they said her husband put a spell on her. They call them two-headed Negroes.

Old Master never whipped any of his slaves, except two of my uncles--Pete Conrad and Richard Sherman, now living at Falmouth, Kentucky.

We raised corn, wheat, oats, rye and barley, in the spring. In January, February and March we'd go up to the Sugar Camp where he had a grove of maple trees. We'd make maple syrup and put up sugar in cakes. Sugar sold for \$2.50 and \$3 a cake. He had a regular sugar house. My old Master was rich I tell you.

Whenever a member of the white family died all the slaves would turn out, and whenever a slave would die, whitefolks and all the slaves would go. My Master had a big vault. My Mistress was buried in an iron coffin that they called a potomac coffin. I went back to see her after I was 21 years old and she looked just like she did when they buried her. All of the family was buried in them vaults, and I expect if you'd go there today they'd look the same. The slaves were buried in good handmade coffins.

I heard a lot of talk 'bout the patrollers. In those days if you went away from home and didn't have a pass they'd whip you. Sometimes they'd whip you with a long black cow whip, and then sometimes they'd roast elm switches in the fire. This was called "cat-o-nine-tails", and they'd whip you with that. We never had any jails; only punishment was just to whip you.

Now, the way the slaves travel. If a slave had been good sometimes old Master would let him ride his horse ; then, sometime they'd steal a horse out and ride them and slip him back before old Master ever found it out. There was a man in those days by the name of John Brown. We called him an underground railroad man, 'cause he'd steal the slaves and carry them across the river in a boat. When you got on the other side you were free, 'cause you were in a free State, Ohio. We used to sing, and I guess young folks today do too: "John Brown's Body Lies a'Molding In the Clay." and "They Hung John Brown On a Sour Apple Tree."

Our slaves all got very good attention when they got sick. They'd send and get a doctor for them. You see old Mistress Mary bought my mother, father and two children thrown in for \$1,100 and she told Master Joe to always keep her slaves, not to sell them and always take good care of them.

When my father went to the army old Master told us he was gone to fight for us niggers' freedom. My daddy was the only one that come back out of the 13 men that enlisted, and when my daddy came back old Master gave him a buggy and horse.

When the Yanks come, I never will forget one of them was named John Morgan. We carried old Master down to the barn and hid him in the hay. I felt so sorry for old Master they took all his hams, some of his whiskey, and all they could find, hogs, chickens, and just treated him

something terrible.

The whitefolks taught my father how to read and write, but I didn't learn how to read and write 'til I enlisted in the U. S. Army in 1883.

They sent us here (Oklahoma Territory) to keep the immigrants from settling up Oklahoma. I went to Fort Riley the 1st day of October 1883, and stayed there three weeks. Left Fort Riley and went to Ft. Worth, Texas, and landed in Henryetta, Texas, on the 14th day of October 1883. Then, we had 65 miles to walk to Ft. Sill. We walked there in three days. I was assigned to my Company, Troop G. 9th Calvary, and we stayed and drilled in Ft. Sill six months, when we was assigned to duty. We got orders to come to Ft. Reno, Okla., on the 6th day of January 1885 where we was ordered to Stillwater, Okla., to move five hundred immigrants under Capt. Couch. We landed there on the 23rd day of January, Saturday evening, and Sunday was the 24th. We had general inspection Monday, January 25, 1885. We fell in line of battle, sixteen companies of soldiers, to move 500 immigrants to the Arkansas City, Kansas line.

We formed a line at 9:00 o'clock Monday morning and Captain Couch run up his white flag, and Colonel Hatch he sent the orderly up to see what he meant by putting up the flag, so Captain Couch sent word back, "If you don't fire on me, I'll leave tomorrow." Colonel Hatch turned around to the Major and told him to turn his troops back to the camp, and detailed three camps of soldiers of the 8th Cavalry to carry Captain Couch's troop of 500 immigrants to Arkansas City, Kansas. Troop L., Troop D., and Troop B. taken them back with 43 wagons and put them over the line of Kansas. Then we were ordered back to our supply camp at Camp Alice, 9 miles north of Guthrie in the Cimarron horseshoe bottom. We stayed there about three months, and Capt. Couch and his colony came back into the territory at Caldwell, Kansas June 1885.

I laid there 'til August 8, then we changed regiments with the 5th Calvary to go to Nebraska. There was a breakout with the Indians at Ft. Reno the 1st of July 1885. The Indian Agency tried to make the Indians wear citizens' clothes. They had to call General Sheridan from Washington, D. C., to quiet the Indians down. Now, we had to make a line in three divisions, fifteen miles a part, one non-commissioned officer to each squad, and these men was to go to Caldwell, Kansas and bring him to Ft. Reno that night. He came that night, so the next morning Colonel Brisbane and General Hatch reported to General Sheridan what the trouble was. General Sheridan called all the Indian Chiefs together and asked them why they rebelled against the agency, and they told them they weren't going to wear citizen's clothes. General Sheridan called his corporals and sergeants together and told them to go behind the guard house and dig a grave for this Indian agent in order to fool the Indian Chiefs. Then, he sent a detachment of soldiers to order the Indian Chiefs away from the guard house and to put this Indian agent in the ambulance that brought him to Ft. Reno and take him back to Washington, D. C., to remain there 'til he returned. The next morning he called all the Indian Chiefs to the guard house and pointed down to the grave and said that, "I have killed the agent and buried him there." The Indians tore the feathers out of their hats rejoicing that they killed the agent.

On the 12th of the same July, we had general inspection with General Foresides from Washington, then we was ordered back to our supply camp to stay there 'til we got orders of our change. On August 8, we got orders to change to go to Nebraska, to Ft. Robinson, Ft. Nibrary, and Ft. McKinney, and we left on the 8th of August.

This is my Oklahoma history. I gave this story to the Daily Oklahoman and Times at one time and they are supposed to publish it but they haven't.

Now you see that tree up there in front of my house? That tree is 50 years old. It is called the potopic tree. That was the only tree around here in 1882. This was a bald prairie. I enlisted over there where the City Market sets now. That was our starting camp under Capt. Payne, but he died.

I joined the A. M. E. Methodist Church in 1874. I love this song better than all the rest: "Am I a Soldier of the Cross?"

Abraham Lincoln was a smart man, but he would have done more if he was not killed. I don't think his work was finished. I'll tell you the truth about Booker T. Washington. He argued our people to stay out of town and stay in the country. He was a Democrat. He was a smart man, but I think a man should live wherever he chooses regardless. I never stopped work whenever I'd hear he was coming to town to speak. You know they weren't fighting for freeing the slaves; they were fighting to keep Kansas from being a slave State; so when they had the North whipped, I mean the South had them whipped, they called for the Negroes to go out and fight for his freedom. Don't know anything about Jeff Davis. I've handled a lot of his money. It was counterfeited after the War.

I've been married four times. I had one wife and three women. I mean, the three wasn't no good. My first wife's name: Amanda Nelson. 2nd: Pocahuntas Jackson. 3rd: Nannie Shumpard. We lived together 9 years. She tried to beat me out of my home.