

MRS. M.S. FAYMAN
Cherry Heights, Baltimore, Maryland
Interviewed by Rogers
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I was born in St. Nazaire Parish in Louisiana, about 60 miles south of Baton Rouge, in 1850. My father and mother were Creoles, both of them were people of wealth and prestige in their day and considered very influential. My father's name was Henri de Sales and mother's maiden name, Marguerite Sanchez De Haryne. I had two brothers Henri and Jackson named after General Jackson, both of whom died quite young, leaving me the only living child. Both mother and father were born and reared in Louisiana.

We lived in a large and spacious house surrounded by flowers and situated on a farm containing about 750 acres, on which we raised pelicans for sale in the market at New Orleans.

When I was about 5 years old I was sent to a private School in Baton Rouge, conducted by French sisters, where I stayed until I was kidnapped in 1860. At that time I did not know how to speak English; French was the language spoken in my household and by the people in the parish. Baton Rouge, situated on the Mississippi, was a river port and stopping place for all large river boats, especially between New Orleans and large towns and cities north. We children were taken out by the sisters after school and on Saturdays and holidays to walk. One of the places we went was the wharf. One day in June and on a Saturday a large boat was at the wharf going north on the Mississippi River. We children were there. Somehow, I was separated from the other children. I was taken up bodily by a white man, carried on the boat, put in a cabin and kept there until we got to Louisville, Kentucky, where I was taken off. After I arrived in Louisville I was taken to a farm near Frankfort and installed there, virtually a slave until 1864, when I escaped through the kindness of a delightful Episcopalian woman from Cincinnati, Ohio.

As I could not speak English, my chores were to act as a tutor and companion for the children of Pierce Buckran Haynes, a well known slave trader and plantation owner in Kentucky. Haynes wanted his children to speak French and it was my duty to teach them. I was the private companion of three girls and one small boy, each day I had to talk French and write French for them. They became very proficient in French, and I in the rudiments of the English language. I slept in the children's quarters with the Haynes' children, ate and played with them. I had all the

privileges of the household accorded me with the exception of one, I never was taken off nor permitted to leave the plantation. While on the plantation I wore good clothes, similar to those of the white children.

Haynes was a merciless brutal tyrant with his slaves, punishing them severely and cruelly both by the lash and in the jail on the plantation. The name of the plantation where I was held as a slave was called Beatrice Manor, after the wife of Haynes. It contained 8000 acres, of which more than 6000 acres were under cultivation, and had about 350 colored slaves and 5 or 6 overseers, all of whom were white. The overseers were the overlords of the manor; as Haynes dealt extensively in tobacco and trading in slaves, he was away from the plantation nearly all the time. There was located on the top of the large tobacco warehouse a large bell, which was rung at sun up, twelve o'clock and at sundown, the year round. On the farm the slaves were assigned a task to do each day and in the event it was not finished they were severely whipped. While I never saw a slave whipped, I did see them afterwards, they were very badly marked and striped by the overseers who did the whipping.

I have been back to the farm on several occasions, the first time in 1872 when I took my father there to show him the farm. At that time it was owned by Colonel Hawkins, a Confederate Army officer. Let me describe the huts; these buildings were built of stone, each one about 20 feet wide, 50 feet long, 9 feet high in the rear, about 12 feet high in front, with a slanting roof of chestnut boards and with a sliding door, two windows between each door back and front about 2x4 feet, at each end a door and window similar to those on the side. There were ten such buildings, to each building there was another building 12x15 feet, this was where the cooking was done. At each end of each building there was a fireplace built and used for heating purposes. In front of each building there were barrels filled with water supplied by pipes from a large spring, situated about 300 yards on the side of a hill which was very rocky, where the stones were quarried to build the buildings on the farm. On the outside near each window and door there were iron rings firmly attached to the walls, through which an iron rod was inserted and locked each end every night, making it impossible for those inside to escape. There was one building used as a jail, built of stone about 20x40 feet with a hip roof about 25 feet high, 2-story. On the ground in each end was a fire place; in one end a small room, which was used as an office; adjoining, there was another room where the whipping was done. To reach the second story there was built on the outside, steps leading to a door, through which the female prisoners were taken to the room. All of the buildings had dirt floors.

I do not know much about the Negroes on the plantation who were there at that time. Slaves were brought and taken away always chained together, men walking and women in ox carts. I had heard of several escapes and many were captured. One of the overseers had a pack of 6 or 8 trained bloodhounds which were used to trace escaping slaves.

Before I close let me give you a sketch of my family tree. My grandmother was a Haitian Negress, grandfather a Frenchman. My father was a Creole. After returning home in 1864, I completed my high school education in New Orleans in 1870, graduated from Fisk University 1874, taught French there until 1883, married Prof. Payman, teacher of history and English. Since then I have lived in Washington, New York, and Louisiana.