

UNCLE BEN HORRY

(Uncle Ben lives in his own cabin with his second wife, Stella. Formerly almost inaccessible, the new Coastal Highway has put Uncle Ben and Aunt Stella in the world. The rural electricity program has current right at their door. Aunt Stella was asked 'Why don't you have lights, Aunt Stella?' and she replied, 'White folks run me if I do that!' So you see the old couple still live with many old and old beliefs one being that the white man only is entitled to the good things - the better things. Like most old ex-slaves in South Carolina low country, they love and revere the names and memories of their old masters.)

"Right now, I oldest one from Longwood to Prospect - see dere? (Pointing to forest wall - great pines and live-oaks in front of the cabin) - Look! I know when he cleared and plant! Josh Ward have potato there. I have manure and plant tater. I been here, daughter!" (He pronounces it 'Dater' with a short 'a')

(Aside: "Stella, mind now! Don't quarrel me to-night! What you do?"

Aunt Stella: The second wife - some years his junior - probably 65 - "I do nuff!")

"Got to go up there and cook supper to the Schoolfield house." (This was Uncle Ben's announcement as he crawled into the car with a bucket in which were his shoes. He was walking down the Coastal Highway and not staying where he be-

longed - on the shoulder!) "Got to cook crab and ister
(oyster). Ain't got much to cook. They don't eat much.
Got a gal there to fry fish. They give me recommend for
cook. Been get the sea foods for 'em for five year.
Iron oven the way we raise." (Aside to his wife) "Stella,
if that man come there, see that sack there? Tell that
man I put fire there. Gie 'em fork and knife. Tell 'em
eat all he want!" (Uncle Ben arranges oyster roasts.)

"That man to Schoolfield house want me to stay and
sleep wid 'em. All women gone. Tell me keep the man and
lock up the house when he gone. I tell 'em too much o'
tief!"

Lillie: "Aunt Stella, ain't you fraid when Uncle Ben
stay out all night?"

Uncle Ben: "Stella keep pot o' water boil and tief come
she trow 'em!"

Visitor: "Uncle Ben tell Lillie bout your father and the
whiskey jug."

Uncle Ben: "You see, to Brookgreen we nuster plant rice
and my fadder had the barn key. He kinder boss man. He
nuster (used to) take me and go out woods night time."

(Aside to mother of child at pump - "Take care dat child!")

"Fadder take me out woods night time (What you
say, Primus?) and I hold storch (torch) for him see for

trash (thrash) out rice what he take out the barn. Rice been money dem time you know. And he take he rice and gone on down to town for get he liquor. And he come from town wid whiskey. Boss find it out. Five or six chillun and always give us rations. Broke that jug and when they call his name (put rations in pile you know - pile for every one been in famby) when they call my fadder name but a piece o' broken jug there is discourage him from whiskey - . He come from town and been drop the jug and it break up. And Boss know. Far as I can remember he keep give 'em that broken jug bout a year. You see he sponsible for key. Seem like I member right where we go beat that rice. Pine tree saw off and chip out make as good a mortar as that one I got. Dan'l, Summer, De-fine! Define the oldest brother my fadder have. Young Missus Bess, Florence, Georgia, Alice. Those boys the musicianer - go round play for the girl."

(Aunt Stella: Interrupting, "You orter be carry money with you. Get the meat. I ain't going no whey (where)."

Lillie: To Primus who has walked up.

"Handful back yet?" (Handful his wife's basket name.)

Primus: "No. This man bacco barn burn up."

Lillie: "What?"

Primus: "Mr. Len barn. Mast'er been asleep!"

Lillie: "Rich most cure all his'n. Taint mine! Rich tease

me. He say, 'MY bacco; YOUR kitchen!'

Lillie: "What you all think bout that tale the Elder tell Sunday bout his Great Uncle and the snakes!"

Stella: (To Uncle Ben) "What you tink bout it? You tink a man truss to go in cypress hollow wid rattle-snake?"

Uncle Ben: "Let me see how was it!" (Deep thought as he rubbed his face in his palm; smile as recollection came) "On Rutledge Plantation a man wouldn't take no beating. Found a large hollow cypress tree been rotten out long years. Gone in. Lie down sleep. Fore day wake up! Feel something crawl over him. Nother one crow like game chicken!" (Negroes all say rattlers crow!) "Smell him. Crawl over him. Crawl out. Get out."

Stella: "Revents had it wuz a man in a cypress tree and seven - how much wuz it? Twelve? These twelve monster snake crawl over him. If you move, he strike."

Uncle Ben: "Right there where Dr. Ward stay had a big old stable - see these two hole in my jaw. Had a stable high as that tree. Big Jersey bull gone in there eating that straw like we thrashing. Big rattle-snake pop 'um. Fall dead."

"How does we mark shoat? Under-bit; upper-bit. Swallow fork in the right year! And a square crop in the left!

"How much been task? A quarter (acre) if you mashing ground. Ten compass digging ground. Cutting rice one half acre a day."
(awful job.)

Stella: "Flow; harrow 'em."

Ben: "Ain't you mash 'em?"

Stella: "Mash a bed a day three task deep."

Ben: "Mashing raw ground half acre - some quarter. Mash 'em - take hoe full up them hole, level dem, chop dem big sod!"

Stella: (age 65) "You got a mis-sheen (machine). Ox pull dat mis-sheen!"

Ben: "Dat mis-sheen come in YOU day, darling! My day I trenching hoe trench dat! I done dat, Stella. You come on sow in trench lak (like) dey sow turnip. YOU day got mis-sheen! Ox pull 'em. Great I AM! Missus, fifteen to old islant (island), twenty silver islant, (I been Silver Islant. Cross old islant go Silver islant.) Josh Ward one some four or five hundred acre. Something been here, darling! Something been here! Left Brookgreen go Watsaw; left Watsaw gone Longwood. Plant ALL DEM piantation. I work there. Cut rice there. Cutting rice task been half acre a