

MOM ELLEN GODFREY

(Ex-slave --- Age 100)

" I'm waitin' on the leese (RELIEF). He was to have my birthday the seven of October.

" Slavery time Maussa buy'em. We Maussa buy me one good shoe. Send slam to England. Gie me (give me) good clothes and shoe. I been a-weave. When the Yankee come I been on the loom. Been to Marlboro district. A man place they call Doctor Major Drake. Got a son name Cap and Pet. Oh, Jesus! I been here TOO long. In my 99 now. Come seven o' October (1937) I been a hundred.

" Three flat (big flat-boats) carry two hundred head o' people and all they things. We hide from Yankee but Yankee come and get we. Ask where Maussa! Maussa in swamp. I in buckra house. I tell Yankee: Them gone! Gone to beach! Yankee say:

" Tell'em to be in Georgetown to bow unto flag'.

" That time I been twenty-three years old. Old Doctor Flagg didn't born then. He a pretty child and so fat. Love the doctor too much. Born two weeks after Freedom. He Ma gone to town. Melia Holmes? She ain't no more than chillum to me. Laura and Serena two twin sister. When the Freedom I was twenty-three --- over the twenty-five. Great God, have-a-mercy! McGill people have to steal for something to eat. Colonel Ward keep a nice place. Gie'em (give them) rice, peas, four cook for chillum, one nurse. Make boy go in salt crick get'em clam. That same Doctor Flagg Grandpa. Give you cow clabber. Share'em and put you bittle for eat.

" Gabe Knox? (A very old colored man who has been dead ten years)  
I nurse Gabe! I nurse'em. He Pappy my cousin. I been a big young  
woman when he born.

" Albert Calina? He a Christian-hearted people. Christian-heart  
boy. I give my age. My birth<sup>A</sup>day get over I want to go right home to  
Heaven.

" I gone to see Doctor Wardie when I in my 95. He say:

" 'Great Dow! Looker Aunt Ellen! In you 95! What make you live  
to good age you take such good care you husband---Harry Godfrey.'

Conversation of Aunt Ellen Godfrey---age 99 years,

Conway, S. C. June 25th.

" Would gone wid you Missus, but I waiting on the 'Relief'. He wuz going to bring me the dress and shoe and ting. My birthday the seven of October coming. We Massa have give we good shoe. Right here Longwood Plantation. Massa was kind--you know. Send slam to England gie me good clothes and shoe. I been a weave when the Yankee come. I been on the loom to Marlboro destrict. A man place they call Doctor Major Drake. Got a son name Cap and Pet. Oh, Jesus, been here too long! In my ninety-nine now. Come seben of October been a hundred. Three flat "(flat boats used for rice field work) " carry two hundrad 'o people and all they things. We hide from Yankee but Yankee come and git we. Ask why "(where) " Massa. (Massa in swamp! I in buckra house. I say, 'Dem gone! Gone to beach.' Say, ' Tell'em to be in Georgetown to bow unto the flag.' Dat time I been twenty-three year old. Doctor Flagg didn't born, He a pretty child and so fat! Love duh Doctor too much! Born two weeks after freedom. He Ma gone Georgetown. Granny git'em there. Melia Holmes! Aint no more dan chillun to me! "(Aunt Melia is eighty-eight or nine ---beny and cripple)" She have two twin sister Laura and Serena. When the Freedom I wuz twenty-three years old.---over the twenty-five. Great God hab a mercy! Couldn't do dat! Colonel Ward keep a nice place. Doctor McGill people hab to steal for someting to eat. Gie'em rice---peas. Four cook for chillun. One nurse". (Aunt Ellen said 'Nuss') "

" Make the boy go get'em clam. That same Dr. Ward GrandPa. Great big sack 'o clam! Give you cow clabber. Shay'm". (Share them ---the clabber)" and put on bittle for eat.

" Hagar Brown! She darter (daughter) got a abscess in her stomach. Save Rutledge! I nuss (nurse) Sabe. I nuss'em. Her pappy my cousin. I been

big young women, I nuss Sabe.

" Albert Calina a christian-hearted people. Christian hearted boy. Relief come. I gie'em my age. My birthday over, I wante go right home to Heaven. Great Dow! 'Locker Aunt Ellen!' (That is what Dr. Wardie say when I gone (see'um) 'In you ninety-five! What make you good, you take care of you husband! ' Harry Godfrey waiting man! Marry twice time. He duh last---

" Andrew Johnson? Dropsy? I have wid every chillun---Oh, I buss (burst) one time. Buss here" (Illustrating by drawing line across stomach) " Till it get to my groin it stop! Every time I get family I swell. Never have a doctor 'Granny' for me yet. My Mary good old Granny. Catch two set 'o twin for me. Isaac and Rebecca; David and Caneexer.

" Sell all my fowl and ting---five dollars---me and old man two come to town to we chillun.

Been Marlboro four year. Yankee foot where they put on stirrup red. Most stand lak a Mr. Smoak--- Big tall--Abraham Lincoln own son Johnny! ' You jess as free as ribbon on my hat!' That what he say. I been weave. Sheckle!" (Aunt Ellen worked foot and hand and mouth in illustrating how the shuttle worked back and forth---and the music it made)".

" Conch? Eat 'm many time! Take'em bile! Grind'em up!

" Welcome Beas? She son get kill in Charston, Welcome Beas son courting my gal.

" Tom Duncan? He child to me. He wife Suzannah. I know duh fambly. I gone knock to guh door.

" Come in! Come in! Come in! 'Here duh beard! " (And Aunt Ellen measured on her chest to show how long Dr. Flagg's beard was).

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" Old Daddy Rodgers and merry wuz she !  
 The old man wuz cripple  
 And Mary wuz blind.  
 Keep you hat on you head.  
 Keep you head warm  
 And set down under that sycamore tree!  
 My kits! My kite!  
 My kite! My kite!  
 Two oxen tripe!  
 Two open dish 'o cabbage!  
 My little dog!  
 My spotted hawg!  
 My two young pig a starving!  
 \*Cow in the cotten patch. Tell boy call dog drive pig out cotton!  
 Heah duh song;  
 \*Send Tom Taggum  
 To drive Bone Baggum  
 Out the world 'o wiggy waggum!"

(This last song chanted out by Aunt Eleanor Godfrey, age 99, is really a gem. She said 'Bone Baggum' boney old white cow. 'Wiggy waggum' is a picture word making one see the soft, wagging tufts of white cotton)

Given by Aunt Eleanor Godfrey  
 Age 99 (100 come seven of Oct.)  
 June 25th, 1937  
 Conway, S. C.

(MOM ELLEN SINGS\*\*\*\*\*)

BONE BAGGUM (Bag o' bones?)

Send Tom Taggum (a man)

To drive Bone Baggum (a boney critter)

Out the world o' wiggly waggum. (cotton patch)

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Rock-a-bye!

Rock-a-bye!

Down come baby cradle and all!

Roll'em! Roll'em! Roll'em!

Roll'em and boll'em!

And put'em in the oven!

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"I KNOW when I was a woman Ben was boy!" (Ben now 88)

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" Go to writin'!":

If you want to know my name

Go to Uncle Amos house.

Big foot nigger and he six foot high.

Try to bussin' at my waterfall! (Kissin' her 'waterfall---  
head-dress.)

Oh, the gay gal

Settin' on the rider (fence 'rider' on 'stake and rider  
fence')

Gay gal waterfall.

Don't tech (touch) my waist

But bounce my shirt!

Don't touch my waterfall!"

"I sing that sing to'em and mah buss out and cry! 'My God! You talk ME?' I ain't want him! I kick him with that same word.

"They was Zazarus and Lavinia. Dead can't wash for myself. I go wash and lay Lavinia out. And he husband wanter (want to) marry with me. I kick him with that same sing. Hint to wise. If he couldn't understand that he couldn't understand nothing.

" Mr. Godfrey my last husband, he worth all the twó I got. I have the chillun. Wenus, Jane, Patient, Kate, Harry, Edmund, Jeemes---"

SOURCE: Mom Ellen Godfrey  
Age 100 October 1937  
Conway, S. C.