



# A Brief Introduction to Slave Life: Slavery in the United States (From Interviews with Former Slaves)

*Ruby Lorraine Radford, Federal Writers Project*

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### **A Brief Introduction to Slave Life**

From Interviews with Former Slaves

### **A Guide for Children and Adults**

Part of the Federal Writers Project

The ex-slaves interviewed ranged in ages from 75 to 100 years old. Out of about thirty-five negroes contacted only two seemed to feel bitter over memories of slave days. All the others spoke with much feeling and gratitude of the good old days when they were so well cared for by their masters. Without exception the manners of these old men and women were gentle and courteous. The younger ones could pass on to us only traditional memories of slavery times, as given them by their parents; on some points a few were vague, while others could give clear-cut and vivid pictures.

Practically all the Negroes interviewed seemed to be of pure African blood, with black or dark brown skin, Negroid features, and kinky, tightly wrapped wool. Most of the women were small and thin. We found one who had a strain of Indian blood, a woman named Mary, who belonged to John Roof. Her grandfather was an Indian, and her grandmother was part Indian, having migrated into South Carolina from Virginia.

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