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AUG 4 1937N. C. District No. 2Subject HATTIE ROGERSWorker T. Pat MatthewsPerson Interviewed Hattie RogersNo. Words 1172Editor G. L. Andrews

## HATTIE ROGERS

"I was born a slave in New Bern, N. C., Craven County, the 2nd day of March 1859. My full name is Hattie Rogers. My mother's name was Roxanna Jeffreys. Her husband was named Gaston Jeffreys, but he was not my father. My father was Levin Eubanks, a white man. I was born before my mother was married. I called my father Marse Levin. We belonged to Allen Eubanks of New Bern, N. C. and his sister's son was my father. His sister was named Harriot and I was named after her. Marster didn't care who our fathers was jest so the women had children. My father died in 1910. My mother was 15 years old when I was born. When I was a little girl they moved us out to the plantation on the White Oak River in Onslow County where we had plenty to eat and wear. We made the stuff and we ate it. Our marster was good to us. Marster carried me around in his arms a whole lot. He would say to me, 'Come on Harriot, and let's go get a dram. If you're like your daddy I know you like it.'

"Our marster did not whip us or allow anyone else to whip us.

"When the Yankees took New Bern, two years before the war ended, we all were refuged to Franklin County to keep them from setting us free. All who could swim the river

and get to the Yankees were free. Some of the men swum the river and got to Jones County, then to New Bern and freedom. One of these was Alec Parker. The White Oak River was in Onslow County bordering Jones County. There was a lot of slaves who did this, but he is the only one I personally remember.

"When we got to Franklin County, we saw plenty of paterollers, and many of the men were whipped. Mother's husband was beat unmercifully by them.

"There was no churches on the plantation, but we went to the white folks church and sat on the back seats. The white people was friendly to us in the eastern part of the state. Indeed it was more stiff up in Franklin County. Some of the slave-owners was very mean to their slaves. I remember seeing some of the slaves almost beat to death. Lawsy mercy, that was a time. I saw a slave-owner whip a colored woman named Lucy, his servant. He was named John Ellis, Judge Ellis's son in Franklinton.

"My mother cooked for Judge Ellis then. John Ellis whipped Lucy because he found a piece of pickle outside the pantry door. He accused her of stealing it. There was a string attached to a bell, near where Lucy stayed. She was a house girl. He accused her of stealing the pickle and leaving it there when the bell rung, and she had to go in the house.

He made her strip to her waist and then he made her hug a tree. He whipped her with a cowhide whip until she could only say in a weak voice, 'Oh pray! Marster John'. Major Thomason was there, and he went to Marse John and said 'John, don't kill the dam nigger.'

"A lot of the white folks hid in the woods and in caves and swamps. They hired slaves out when they didn't need 'em themselves. They hid jewelry in hoss stables by digging holes, putting the jewelry in, and then replacing the straw.

"When the slaves was sent from White Oak to Franklinton before Lee surrendered they had to walk all the way. We children was carried in dump carts drawn by mules. My mars-ter nor none of his boys was ever in the Confederate Army. When they got us to Franklinton they put us in jail for safe keeping.

"If a woman was a good breeder she brought a good price on the auction block. The slave buyers would come around and jab them in the stomach and look them over and if they thought they would have children fast they brought a good price.

"Just before the war started when the birds would sing around the well, Missus would say, 'War is coming, them birds singing is a sign of war; the Yankees will come and kill us all.' I can see the old well now jest as plain. It had a sweep and pole. You pulled the sweep over by

pulling the pole and bucket down into the well. When it sunk into the water, the heavy sweep pulled it up again.

"I wouldn't tell anything wrong on my ole marster for anything. He was good to all of us. He offered my mother a piece of land after the war closed, but mother's husband would not let her accept it. My grandmother took a place he offered her. He gave her fifty acres of land and put a nice frame building on it.

"The man we belonged to never was married. He bought a woman who had two little girls, one named Lucy and the other Abbie. He took Lucy for a house girl to wait on his mother. She had eleven children by him. They're all dead except one. All the missus I ever had was a slave, and she was this same Lucy. Yes, sir he loved that woman, and when he died he left all his property to her.

"When the slaves on the plantation got sick they relied mostly on herbs. They used sage tea for fever, poplar bark water for chills.

"When the husbands and brothers and sweethearts were gone to the war the white ladies would sing. Annie Ellis and Mag Thomas would sing these pitiful songs. 'Adieu my friends, I bid you adieu, I'll hang my heart on the willow tree and may the world go well with you.'

"When I was three years old I remember hearing this

song. 'Old Beauregard and Jackson came running down to Manassas, I couln't tell to save my life which one could run the fastest, Hurray boys, hurray!'

"When the surrender came the Yankees rocked the place where we were in. We were in a box car. They wanted to get a light-colored slave out.

"The Yankee officers came and gave mother's husband a gun and told him to shoot anyone who bothered us. They put a guard around the car, and they walked around the car all night.

"My mother was dipping snuff when the Yankees came. One rode up to her and said, 'Take that stick out of your mouth.' Mother was scared when the Yankees tried to break in on us. She cried and hollered murder! and I cried too. I din't know about freedom. I was too young to realize much about it. When the war ended I had just been hired out. I was never sent off. I think slavery was an awful thing, and that Abraham Lincoln was a good man because he set us free."