Our master gave us some holidays. It was during these holidays that the young man could go wooing; the married man could go to see his wife; the father and mother could go so see their children.

We were not allowed books, pen, ink, nor paper, to improve our minds.

As a child, I was tied to a tree from Monday until Friday night, exposed by day to the scorching rays of the sun and by night to the stinging mosquitoes. I had nothing to eat and I was whipped daily.

Whenever I did anything wrong, I was sent to the cellar and stripped naked. My hands were tied to the overhead beams and my feet to a post. I was then whipped until the blood ran down to my heels.

As a house servant, I was better off than a field hand. I was better fed, better clothed, and did not have to get up when the bell rang. I could get up about half an hour later.

My violin is my best friend. Its sound keeps me company when I am sad.

Our children were taken away from us and sold to different owners far away from the plantation.

Experience has taught me that nothing can be more heart-rending than seeing a beloved mother or sister being tortured and not being able to help them.

As a house slave, I usually have better food and I am sometimes given the white family’s cast-off clothing.

We worked in all weathers. It was never too hot or too cold; it could never rain, blow, hail, or snow, too hard for us to work in the field. Work, work, work, was the order of the day. The longest days were too short for our master, and the shortest nights too long for him.

During the harvest season, I had to work in the fields daily. I was allowed to see my baby three times a day to nurse him. For the rest of the day he was cared for by an old woman, who was too old or too feeble for field work. The master took special care to see that there was enough food and that it was properly cooked and served to them as often as they wanted it.

The flesh on my back and limbs has been beaten to jelly. My shoulder has been laid bare. There are several cuts from a club on my head and there are marks around my neck from the rope that was used to tie me to a tree.

As a pregnant woman, I still work eighteen hours a day and I am expected to do so until the child is born.

I have been educated and promised my freedom when my owner dies, because I have provided a good service over a long period.