

Using the WPA Slave Narratives and Other Sources to Fill in the Gaps of Family History.

Cynthia Evans

Where to find WPA Slave Narratives - Online

They are housed at the Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/about-this-collection/>

State and Local Library/Archives.

If you can't find an interview online, check with your local State archive/library. Some may exist in these locations. You may also want to check with the Library of Congress.

Book containing narratives, including unedited versions.

George P. Rawick, editor, *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*

This book is available typically through interlibrary loan, and archives

What you can learn from the Narratives.

Not all the narratives offer the same information. In general, you may be able to find the following information:

Name of immediate family and other family

Name of plantation

Name of enslaver

Location of enslavement

Etc.

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Petitions from the Digital Library on American Slavery

“These offer “detailed information on about 150,000 individuals, including slaves, free people of color, and whites, extracted from 2,975 legislative petitions and 14,512 county court petitions, as well as from a wide range of related documents, including wills, inventories, deeds, bills of sale, depositions, court proceedings, amended petitions, among others. Buried in these documents are the names and other data on roughly 80,000 slaves, 8,000 free people of color, and 62,000 whites, both slave owners and non-slave owners.” - ***Digital Library on American Slavery.*** -

<https://dlas.uncg.edu/>

Learn more about the Digital Library on American Slavery

<https://dlas.uncg.edu/about/>

What you can find on the Digital Library on American Slavery Site

Each contain different information, including:

First person accounts of life

Information on ancestors/descendants

Name and location of plantation and enslaver

Etc.

Original full versions of material are available at local and state archives. The location is provided by the site, Digital Library on American Slavery.