

***ISAAC
MASON***



***NARRATIVE
OF ISAAC
MASON
AS A SLAVE***

Isaac Mason

Narrative of Isaac Mason as a Slave

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Worcester, Mass., July 19, 1893.

I have known Isaac Mason very well since 1850. He has done a great deal of work for me and my household. I know him to be an honest, faithful and intelligent man. I have not had time to examine his book in manuscript, but I am sure his statements may be trusted, and that his experience will prove very interesting. I hope his book will have a good sale, and commend it to the public.

Geo. F. Hoar.

PREFACE.

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Having repeatedly been asked by my many friends to write the history of my life as a slave, especially by some who have heard me lecture on certain portions of that ever memorable period of my life, I have, after some hesitation as to its advisability, reluctantly concluded to accede to their wishes, and now present to them a truthful sketch of my eventful life in the dark days of slavery. As these checkered scenes of my early life reflectively present themselves to my mind at my advanced state of life, I wonder how I withstood all the abuse and cruelty of these early years. Our lives are largely composed of sorrow and joy, but my cup, it seems to me, has been full to overflowing with sorrow, but God has been my strength and my salvation, and has brought me thus far in the journey of life, and in him I trust, praying that, in his good time he will take me to that heavenly home where our earthly trials will cease and where there will be no more sorrow.

My story is told in a plain matter-of-fact way, and I hope my readers will overlook and excuse the defects which must necessarily abound throughout the book, owing to lack of educational advantages.

ISAAC MASON.

CHAPTER I. EARLIEST RECOLLECTIONS.

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In Kent County, in the northern part of the State of Maryland, there was at the time of my earliest recollections (and I suppose it yet remains), a small town known as George Town Cross Oats, having a population of about 500 or 600. It was in this town, on the 14th day of May, 1822, AD, that I inhaled my first supply of air, that my eyes, for the first time, were brought in contact with the beautiful light surrounding the terrestrial world, the earthly home of mankind, and the first sound of my infant voice was raised in shrill cries for a mother's tender care and parental affection. This was the place of my nativity and the date of my birth. It was also the time that my mistress became the owner of one more slave and so much richer by my birth. My mother was, unfortunately, numbered in the family of slavery, belonging to one Mrs. Hannah Woodland, and according to the institution of slave law, I legally, or illegally, became her property. Though my father was a free man still he had no claim to me. My mother's name was Sophia Thompson, and she served in the capacity of house servant. She was the mother of five children, four sons and one daughter, of whom I was the first born, and William Anderson, of the city of Worcester, Mass., the second. My father, Zekiel Thompson, was, as I said, a free man, and most of his time served as a farm hand on one of the farms owned by my mistress. Whether from his activity and knowledge of farm work or as an inducement to remain near his wife, I do not know, but he was permitted to hold the position of overseer of the work and farm hands.