



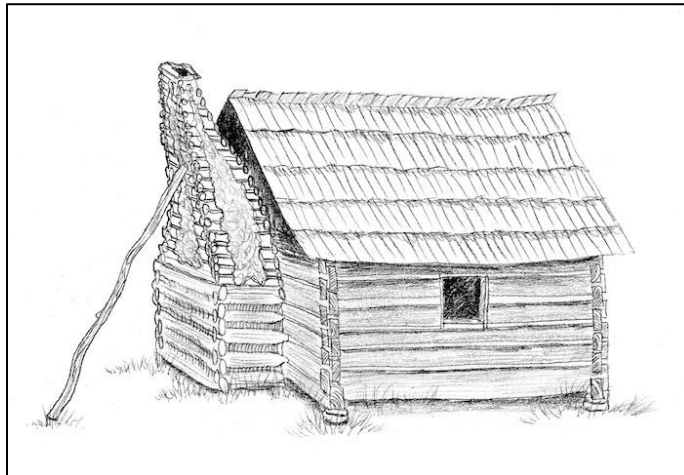
## KAS RADIO - Episode 3

### Slave Houses A *Think History* Radio Spot



#### Episode Transcript

Most slave houses on central Kentucky plantations were poorly built, small, one-room log or timber-framed cabins. Roofs were made of splits. Chimneys were often made of large sticks or small logs stacked together and plastered over with thick mud. Drafty and cold in the winter, slave cabins had hard-packed dirt floors and few windows.



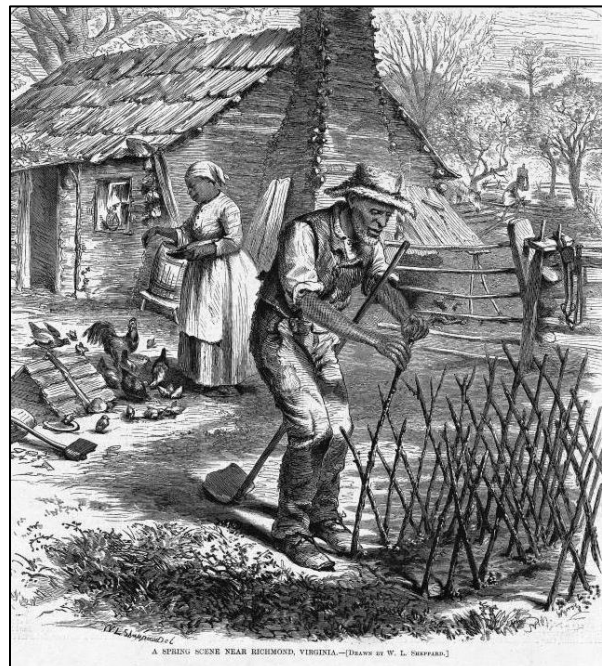
Some were two- to three-room buildings with perhaps a second floor. Plantation owners who wanted to make an impression occasionally built brick slave houses.

*A small, one-room, timber-framed slave house, possibly like the one shown here (left), sat on stone foundation piers behind the detached kitchen at the Barkley Plantation. Typical of slave houses, it had a small fireplace and would have had a wooden floor and a stick and mud chimney.*

Dan Bogie, formerly enslaved in Garrard County, recalled his home: *“We lived in a one-room cabin, with a loft above...about 100 yards from the house. We lived in one room with one bed.”*

Lewis Clarke, an enslaved man in Madison County, described another form of sleeping arrangement: *“In the corners, or at the sides, there were pens made, filled with straw, for sleeping. Very commonly two or three families are huddled together in one cabin, and in cold weather they sleep together..., old and young.”*

*Scene of a free Black man and woman outside of their cabin, planting a kitchen garden and feeding chickens. Though it appeared in Harper's Weekly Magazine in 1870, the image is reminiscent of enslaved domestic life before the Civil War.*



## To Read More

### **Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery** by John M. Vlach

(1993). University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

*Explores the structures and spaces that formed enslaved people's home environment. Vlach describes the plantation landscape from a firsthand sense of what it was like for enslaved Blacks to live and work in these spaces.*

### **A History of Blacks in Kentucky, Vol. 1, From Slavery to Segregation, 1760-1891,**

by Marion B. Lucas (1992). Kentucky Historical Society, Frankfort.

*Traces the role of Blacks from the early exploration and settlement of Kentucky to 1891, when African Americans gained freedom only to be faced with a segregated society. Extensive use of primary sources: slave diaries, Freedmen's Bureau records, church minutes, personal papers.*

### **Kentucky Slave Narratives: A Folk History of Slavery in Kentucky from Interviews with Former Slaves (1936-1938),**

by the Federal Writers' Project, Works Progress Administration (2006). Library of Congress, Applewood Books, Bedford, MA.

*First-person accounts of slavery and 500 black-and-white photographs of former slaves collected in the 1930s as part of the Federal Writers' Project (FWP) of the Works Progress Administration, later renamed Work Projects Administration (WPA).*

To learn more about **Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938**, go to <https://www.loc.gov/collections/slave-narratives-from-the-federal-writers-project-1936-to-1938/about-this-collection/>. Find the Kentucky Slave Narratives in Volume 7 here: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/mesn.070/?st=gallery>

"The Little Spots Allow'd Them": The Archaeological Study of African-American Yards, by Barbara J. Heath and Amber Bennett (2000). **Historical Archaeology** Vol. 34, No. 2 pp. 38-55. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25616787>

*Reviews archaeological, ethnographic, and historical evidence of yards associated with slave quarters in the New World and discusses excavations at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest slave quarter in central Virginia, occupied from ca. 1790 to 1812.*

### **Uncovering the Lives of Kentucky's Enslaved People** by M. Jay Stottman and Lori C. Stahlgren (2017). Heritage Spotlight 5, Kentucky Archaeological Survey, Lexington. <https://www.kentuckyarchaeologicalsurvey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Spotlight-No.5-Uncovering-the-Lives-of-Kentuckys-Enslaved-People.pdf>

*Summarizes archaeological research carried out at a typical early to late nineteenth century Kentucky plantation in central Kentucky. Focuses on the lifeways of the enslaved Blacks who lived and worked there.*

## Image Credits

1. Gary McWilliams (Pa Mac) (January 2013) used courtesy of Farm Hand's Companion.

[www.farmhandscompanion.com](http://www.farmhandscompanion.com)

2. A Spring Scene Near Richmond, Virginia. In **Slavery Images: A Visual Record of the African Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Early African**

**Diaspora**, accessed January 20, 2021.

<http://www.yorubadiaspora.org/s/slaveryimages/item/1372>