Mississippi Assistant Commissioner, Labor Contracts of Freedmen, Aug.–Sept. 1865, Part 5

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AGREEMENT WITH FREEDMEN.

This Agreement made this 23d day of September A.D. 1865, by and between Mary Priest of the county of Chickasaw, and State of Mississippi, of the first part, and the person hereinafter named and undersigned, Freedmen of the same place, parties hereto of the second part.

WITNESSETH, That for the purpose of cultivating the Plantation known as Mrs Priests, in the county aforesaid, during the year commencing on the 1st day of January, A.D. 1865, and terminating on the 1st day of January, 1866. The said Mary Priest, party of the first part, in consideration of the promises and conditions hereinafter mentioned on the parties of the second part, agrees to furnish to the said laborers and those rightfully dependent on them, free of charge, clothing and food of good quality and sufficient quantity; good and sufficient quarters; medical attendance when necessary, and kind and humane treatment.

The woman Anthy shall have her own time sufficient to make her clothing, be found in wool, cotton and cards and wheel sufficient to make clothing for her two children and herself. Also one good pair of shoes.

The girls Matilda and Lavinia shall have besides good clothing, one calico dress each, one blanket each and one quilt also one good pair of shoes each.

And it is Further Agreed, That in case the said Mary Priest shall fail, neglect or refuse to fulfill any of the obligations assumed by her, or shall furnish said parties of the second part with insufficient food or clothing, or be guilty of cruelty to them, she shall, besides the legal recourse left to the party or parties aggrieved, render this contract liable to annulment by the Provost Marshal of Freedmen. And it is agreed on the part of the parties of the second part, that they will each well and faithfully perform such labor as the said Mary Priest may require of them for the time aforesaid, not exceeding ten hours per day in the summer and nine hours in the winter; and in case any laborer shall absent herself from, or shall neglect or refuse to perform the labor herein promised, and the fact shall be proven to the satisfaction of the proper officer, the party so offending shall be punished in such manner as the Provost Marshal shall deem proper.

In Testimony Whereof, The said parties have affixed their names to this AGREEMENT at Okolona, State of Mississippi, on the day and date aforesaid.

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