

Glossary

Basers. People who set the handclapping rhythm and guided the melody and harmony of the spiritual singing.

Basket name. The name used by slaves in their childhood.

Card. A wire-toothed brush used to disentangle fibers such as wool before spinning.

Caterwauling. Loud yelling.

Coffle. A group of slaves chained together.

Colicky. Abdominal pains.

Hank. Coil.

Harnesses. The frames of a weaver's loom that are moved to create a pattern in the cloth.

Heddles. Wires in a weaver's loom that hold the threads used to make cloth.

Hogsheads. Large barrels.

Keening. Mournful crying.

Linsey-woolsey. A coarse fabric made of linen or cotton and wool.

Pick. One pass of the weft through the shed in a weaver's loom.

Pone. A cake made of cornmeal.

Reed. A comb that separates the warp during weaving.

Ring shout. A form of worship when a group forms a wide circle and begins a shuffling step around the circle accompanied by their shouting chant to the rhythmic beat of a stick.

Scullery. A room used for washing dishes.

Settee. A couch.

Shed. The opening between warp threads where the weft passes through.

Shift. A dress that was like a long shirt.

Shot. One pass of the weft through the shed in a weaver's loom.

Sixpence. A coin worth six English pennies.

Sticker. A person who beat the rhythm with a broom handle on a wooden box for a ring shout.

Stone. Fourteen pounds.

Switch. A thin tree branch with whip-like flexibility.

Tow linen. Low-quality linen made of short flax fibers.

Treadles. Levers pressed by the foot to move the harnesses in a weaver's loom.

Twill. A diagonal weave in cloth.

Warp. The threads on a loom or in fabric that run the length. To warp a loom means to string these threads into place so that weaving can begin.

Wattle and daub. Reeds or branches woven together and covered with mud to form a structure.

Weft. The threads that fill the warp to make cloth.

Winding sheet. A shroud used for burial.