

Heartfelt Memories Of Cora Lee Folson



By Dottie
Chapman Reed

Reed is a native of Water Valley and graduated from Davidson High School in 1970. She has launched a project to compile and share info about women in the county who have made an impact on the African American community. Her column appears bi-monthly, with occasional exceptions.

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18-year-old sister, Corinne. She died August 10, 1971 and is buried in the Bayson Chapel Cemetery.

Mrs. Cora had four sisters and three brothers. Her sister, Mary Folson Ealy, mentioned in a previous article, worked for many years for the Turnage family, owners of the only drugstore in Water Valley.

When I spoke to Rickey about his grandmother and the article written by one of her employers, he quietly observed that "she raised a lot of them."

Recalling my mother's years of domestic work, my heart connected with his for a moment as I heard that pause in his voice and in our conversation. Perhaps we both wondered what if we could have some of that time back.

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farming, and in a few instances teaching, available to them to help put food on the table and clothes on their backs.

Now I am delighted to learn more about Mrs. Cora and her relationship with the Caulfield family.

I knew her, her son and my late classmate, Willie B. Jones, her daughter, Nancy Telford and her grandsons, Steve and Rickey along

By Dorothy Caulfield Wiman

the world. I remember her peeling potatoes and letting me have a taste. She would parboil them and then mash them with the old potato masher that I still have. And, she made the best rice pudding and fried chicken. I remember her making desserts with Karo, and I began to fondly refer to her as "Karo," my Karo; and she called me, "Sweetnin'."

I remember Cora would look at the paper and I would ask her to read it to me. She told me her eyes were bad, but now I wonder whether she could read at all. I know African Americans back then had so few opportunities. It made me very sad when I thought about that.

She stayed with us when Mama and Daddy went to watch Ole Miss in the Sugar Bowl back in 1959. One night, I pulled the tall cab-

inet over on me and Cora saved me! Thank goodness there were mostly towels in it.

Not only did Cora cook and take care of us, she also ironed. When she ironed upstairs, she would be so hot, because we did not have air conditioning back then. Thankfully, she usually ironed downstairs in Mama and Daddy's bedroom. She kept the house straight, because we kids pretty much destroyed it with our running up and down, playing cowboys, army, baseball, and shooting squirt guns in the house. It's a miracle we are still alive after all that. I'm sure Cora had to tell on us a few times.

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